



# American Heritage History of World War I

*S.L.A. Marshall*

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"In the Bosnian town of Sarajevo on the morning of June 28, 1914, a chauffeur misunderstood his instructions, made the wrong turn, tried too late to correct his blunder, and in so doing, delivered his passengers to a point where a waiting assassin did not have to take aim to gun them down. Two rounds from one pistol and the world rocked. The crime was the small stone that loosened brings the avalanche."

So begins Brigadier General S.L.A. Marshall's compelling narrative of the American Heritage History of World War I, a book that tells the story of the Great War from Sarajevo to Versailles.

Ten million men died; another 20 million were wounded. But it was not the numbers alone that made this the Great War. The flame thrower, the tank, and poison gas were introduced. Cavalry became obsolete; air combat and submarine warfare came of age. Old dynasties disintegrated; new nations appeared.

In this book, renowned military historian Marshall, a World War I veteran, describes and analyzes the origins, course, and immediate aftermath of the colossal conflict. The story begins with a look backward at a complacent world ensnared in a network of alliances. Out of this setting emerged the cunning diplomats and statesmen who maneuvered and blundered their countries into positions that made the war inevitable. Once committed, the nations of Europe aligned into two, mighty opposing forces, and went jauntily into war, each confident that the conflict would be over before it really began.

Marshall follows the personalities, strategies, errors, and the unremitting slaughter of the next four years. The story ends with the ill-conceived Treaty of Versailles, which sowed the seeds that would plunge the following generation into another world war.

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