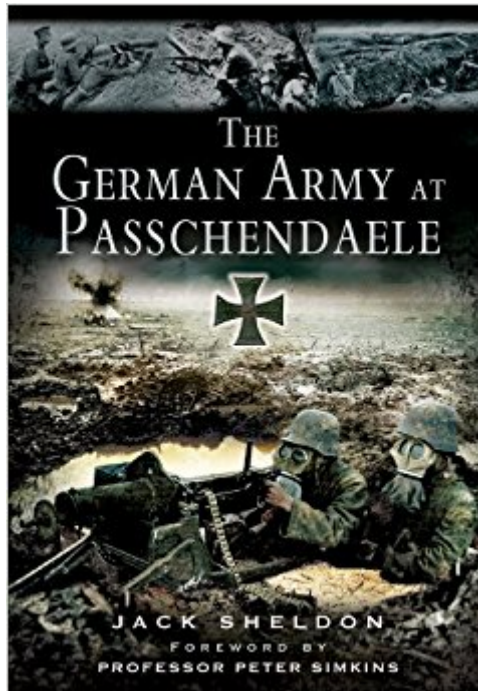




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The German Army At Passchendaele



Synopsis

Even after the passage of almost a century, the name Passchendaele has lost none of its power to shock and dismay. Reeling from the huge losses in earlier battles, the German army was in no shape to absorb the impact of the Battle of Messines and the subsequent bitter attritional struggle. Throughout the fighting on the Somme the German army had always felt that it had the ability to counter Allied thrusts, but following the shock reverses of April and May 1917, much heart searching had led to the urgent introduction of new tactics of flexible defense. When these in turn were found to be wanting, the psychological damage shook the German defenders badly. But, as this book demonstrates, at trench level the individual soldier of the German Army was still capable of fighting extraordinarily hard, despite being outnumbered, outgunned and subjected to relentless, morale-sapping shelling and gas attacks. The German army drew comfort from the realization that, although it had had to yield ground and had paid a huge price in casualties, its morale was essentially intact and the British were no closer to a breakthrough in Flanders at the end of the battle than they had been many weeks earlier.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

...A rare look at one of the war's most notable battles from the German side, and even better, an account that includes the perspective of the men in the trenches... an important read for anyone interested in the Great War. (NYMAS Review, Winter 2008)

Educated at Inverness Royal Academy, the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and the Universities

of Lancaster and Westminster, Jack Sheldon completed a thirty-five year career as a member of the Queen's Lancashire Regiment. In 1982 he graduated from the German General Staff course at the Führungsakademie, Hamburg and went on to fill international staff appointments and to command an infantry training battalion. His final post before retirement in 2003 was as Military Attaché Berlin. He now lives in France and has rapidly established himself as an expert in German First World War history. He was an honorary researcher for the Thiepval Visitor Centre Project, is a member of the British Commission for Military History and is the author of the highly acclaimed *The German Army on the Somme 1914 – 1916*, *The German Army at Passchendaele* and a number of *Battleground Europe* titles.

I have read all of Sheldon's "The German Army On...." Books. It is almost the Only way for an English speaking reader to get the German perspective on the major battles of the war. As such, in a sense, they are invaluable. Having said this, the books, including this one, are not scholarly narrative histories. Sheldon essentially adds brief historical commentaries on the battle in order to tie together memoirs of the German combatants. These books are designed to reproduce innumerable German reflections as experienced by the soldiers themselves. I enjoy them very much. But they are not true histories. Those wishing to read about these conflicts from the perspective of the military and political leaders who planned them and on a strategic and tactical level will be disappointed.

If you are looking for a book that tells you what Passchendaele was like for the individual German soldiers that fought it this is the book. Here you will find what war was like in the trenches from the side of those that fought it.

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