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The Battle of the Somme: World War One's Bloodiest Battle

Rupert Colley

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The Battle of the Somme: World War One's Bloodiest Battle The Battle of the Somme lives in our collective imagination as the epitome of pointless slaughter on the battlefield. A century on, the Somme has come to symbolise the futile horror of trench warfare. The first day of the Somme, 1 July 1916, was the blackest day in British military history – 57,470 casualties, including 19,240 dead. This concise account of the Battle of the Somme includes a summary of the First World War leading up to July 1916, plans and preparations for the Somme Offensive, the role of Douglas Haig, the First Day of the Somme and the continuing battle, followed by a summary of the war to 11 November 1918. There are tales of men who won the Victoria Cross at the Somme and those shot for desertion; and accounts of famous people who fought at the Somme, including future British prime minister Harold Macmillan; Siegfried Sassoon; mountaineer, George Mallory; Adolf Hitler; one of Britain’s first black professional footballers, Walter Tull; and authors J.R.R. Tolkien and Robert Graves; among others. Author, Rupert Colley, founder of the bestselling History In An Hour series, provides a short but compelling overview of this epic and devastating World War One battle.

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