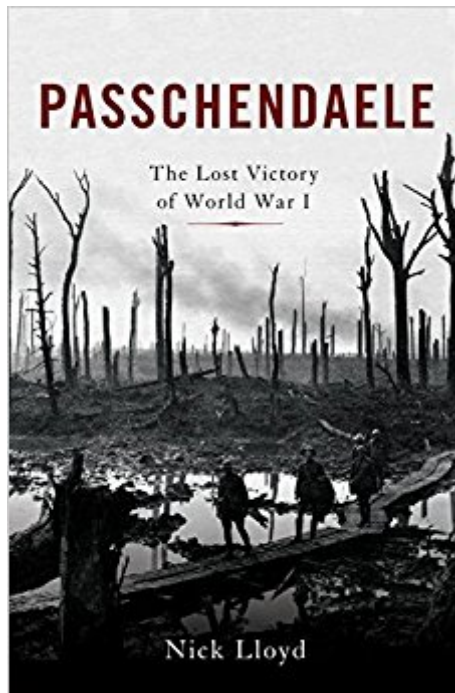




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# Passchendaele: The Lost Victory Of World War I



## Synopsis

The definitive account of Passchendaele, the months-long battle that epitomizes the immense tragedy of the First World War. Passchendaele. The name of a small, seemingly insignificant Flemish village echoes across the twentieth century as the ultimate expression of meaningless, industrialized slaughter. In the summer of 1917, upwards of 500,000 men were killed or wounded, maimed, gassed, drowned, or buried in this small corner of Belgium. On the centennial of the battle, military historian Nick Lloyd brings to vivid life this epic encounter along the Western Front. Drawing on both British and German sources, he is the first historian to reveal the astonishing fact that, for the British, Passchendaele was an eminently winnable battle. Yet the advance of British troops was undermined by their own high command, which, blinded by hubris, clung to failed tactics. The result was a familiar one: stalemate. Lloyd forces us to consider that trench warfare was not necessarily a futile endeavor, and that had the British won at Passchendaele, they might have ended the war early, saving hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of lives. A captivating narrative of heroism and folly, Passchendaele is an essential addition to the literature on the Great War.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Lloyd has retrieved an abundance of new material from archives, libraries and Red Cross files across western Europe. The German army's terrible suffering is duly explored, as well as that of Canadian and Anzac infantrymen. Published on the eve of Passchendaele's 100th anniversary, the book is harrowing but necessary." --Observer "[Lloyd's] narrative of the campaign is superb and written with clarity and dispassion... [he] has done his research thoroughly." --The Times "Lloyd's

research is superb; the book is well-illustrated with photographs and maps; he brings the battle and its political context vividly to life... this is in almost every respect a model of what a work of military history should be, and is now perhaps the definitive account of this phase of the war on the Western Front."--Daily Telegraph"Extensively researched... demonstrate[s] the war's sheer and utter waste of life and resources even as the old mainland Europe monarchical order brought about its own demise."--New York Journal of Books "Detailed and compelling... There will be other books about Third Ypres this year, but it's unlikely that any of them will be better-researched, more intelligent or fairer than this one. Without in any way minimising the awfulness of the battle, Lloyd makes its inception and course comprehensible. Both as narrative and analysis, this book is masterly."--The Scotsman"[Lloyd] retells the story of this infamous conflict with fresh knowledge and newly available materials, including letters, diaries, memoirs, and official reports from both British and German perspectives."--Library Journal "[Lloyd] confirms his position among the best young scholars of WWI in this comprehensively researched, convincingly presented analysis of the still-controversial 1917 battle of Passchendaele. [His] thesis is controversial, but his scholarship makes it impossible to dismiss." --Publishers Weekly"An eloquent re-telling of one of the First World War's most mismanaged battles. Lloyd movingly recounts the ordeal of German and British infantry in the mud and blood of Passchendaele." --Alexander Watson, author of *Ring of Steel: Germany and Austria-Hungary in World War I*"Nick Lloyd's timely re-appraisal of Passchendaele--that awful battle of mud and muddle--is a masterpiece. On the ground the abiding image is of heroic soldiers battling the mud, but tragically there was muddle in the British Government as it failed to find a winning strategy while at the operational level the debate raged between Plumer's pragmatic 'bite and hold' operations and Haig's continuing desire for the great breakthrough. Yet despite the mud and muddle, the sacrifice at Passchendaele laid the foundation for the success of the 100 Days Campaign of 1918, and eventual victory, however short-lived." --General The Lord Dannatt, Chief of the UK General Staff "Passchendaele was a pivotal battle for the Allies. Haig promised victory; Lloyd George predicted defeat. Nick Lloyd's account of the 'campaign of mud' is definitive, deftly analyzing the strategic debate, Haig's assumptions, the prime minister's equivocation, and the brutal combat for the heights above Ypres."--Geoffrey Wawro, author of *A Mad Catastrophe: The Outbreak of World War I and the Collapse of the Habsburg Empire*

Nick Lloyd is a senior lecturer in defense studies at King's College London and the author of *Hundred Days*. He lives in Cheltenham, UK.

## Great Story

Excellent overview of this battle, what went wrong as well as right, what should and should not have been fought, and more. Lloyd covers all the major controversies on the battlefield, from the temporal separation of Messines and later portions of the battle, Gough's leading the Messines campaign, the wisdom or not of the final Canadian push at Passchendaele proper, and more. He also tackles the larger strategic issues such as whether this was the best place for the British to fight, and beyond that, the work of a relatively new prime minister, Lloyd George, in trying to assert civilian control over the British military in general and Haig in particular. Haigh and Gough both come off poorly, as is right. Plumer comes off as well overall, but not perfect, and Currie, commander of the Canadian Corps comes off well. Lloyd George doesn't get a free pass. Lloyd says he understands George's restraints, but that, at the same time, he could likely have put further clamps on Haig. Regarding his fears that if he pushed too much, the coalition would fail, Lloyd says that LG never came close to testing that statement. Lloyd deals well with the German side of the lines, and this book is enhanced by multiple local-scale maps, well illustrated.

An extremely well done history of lost American battle in France in WW I

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