



# World War I: The Definitive Visual History from Sarajevo to Versailles

*R.G. Grant*

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## **World War I: The Definitive Visual History from Sarajevo to Versailles** R.G. Grant

2014 marks the centennial of the start of World War I -- DK will mark the occasion with the publication of "World War I: The Definitive Visual Guide," a vividly illustrated, in-depth account of the Great War.

Written by historian R. G. Grant, and created by DK's award-winning editorial and design team, "World War I" charts the developments of the war from a global perspective. Using illustrated timelines, detailed maps, and personal accounts, readers will see the oft-studied war in a new light. Key episodes are set clearly in the wider context of the conflict, in-depth profiles look at the key generals and political leaders, and full-color photo galleries showcase the weapons, inventions, and new technologies that altered the course of history.

A vivid portrait of the confrontation on land, sea, and sky, "World War I: The Definitive Visual Guide" offers readers a bold and thoughtful new look at this complex and explosive moment in history.

## **World War I: The Definitive Visual History from Sarajevo to Versailles Details**

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Author : R.G. Grant

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## From Reader Review World War I: The Definitive Visual History from Sarajevo to Versailles for online ebook

### Martha says

After reading Thomas Keneally's Daughters of Mars my curiosity about the first world war was tweaked. Since this year marks 100 years since the start of that conflict there have been a number of good books published on the subject and this large format, illustrated one is full of information, from gear, uniforms, and artillery to photos of troops and diagrams of battles.

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### Jennifer says

Two words - DK and Smithsonian.

This is an excellent overview of WWI. The layout separated by years (with a timeline) is rather helpful, and of course, the photos/artifacts accompanying the text are wonderful. There was a concerted effort to bring to light some of the lesser known battles and people who helped to shape the war, and a great deal of information on how this was actually the first "world" war. In fact, it's sad to think that many of the places that played a part in war a century ago are still places where there is fighting today: Gaza, Iraq, the Ukraine (seriously, do we never learn?).

Overall, there is a lot of breadth covered and it's done in a mostly objective manner (Kaiser Wilhelm was a little crazy). A great resource for classrooms, and a good reference for anyone wanting to understand the war - and why its legacy still lingers on after 100 years.

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### Jessica says

I wish I had had this primer before I embarked upon my 3 year quest for WWI knowledge. The information and artifacts were presented in a clear, straightforward manner, which allowed me to easily look up or cite information. I love visual histories, so I am now in the process of collecting the others that DK has done for major American conflicts. Highly recommended.

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### Carrie Turansky says

Beautiful illustrations and great research info for my writing. I recommend this book to anyone who is looking for information about WW1. This is a very large book!

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### J.S. says

This is a really nice book - almost coffee-table size (and quality!) but with good information inside. It gives a very decent overview history of WWI (I've read a handful of histories on the "Great War" but wouldn't

consider myself an expert) and the battles and such, but it also does a good job of putting it into the context of the time (although blaming it on the assassination of Franz Ferdinand is a bit simplistic). The layout is a bit dense and text a bit on the small side, but it's still very informative. Pictures are used heavily, although they aren't all "war" photos (and while there are a lot of actual "war" photos, I don't recall seeing anything I thought was overly graphic). There are also quite a few pages throughout that show various items, such as the guns (or grenades, tanks, airplanes, uniforms, etc.) of WWI that is interesting and gives it the museum-experience feel. I'm mostly familiar with DK books from when my kids were younger, and we bought several of the "encyclopedia" type of books they produce. But this one is on a much higher level than those books - with the same picture-heavy format but with excellent quality information. Overall, I really like this book and think it serves well both as an introduction to WWI and as a supplement to a more serious beginner study. And it looks great on the coffee table, too! (I received this book from the Amazon Vine program.)

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### **Bonnie says**

This was the perfect overview for World War I, its effects, and its significance in the larger picture of history. The pictures were incredible, the biographies were enlightening, and now after reading this, I have a few additions to my reading list and my travel list. Also, bonus points for not making this too depressing...the Vietnam visual history was a real downer. I mean, it's war, but...I guess I'm a fragile soul.

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### **Cate says**

What is not to love about a book that has been put together by The Smithsonian and DK? Sometimes they don't always hit the right note and produce a piece of work that appeals to all audiences, but with this book they hit all markets and made this period of our world history accessible to everyone.

Full of pictures, maps and excerpts from people who were actually there, this book provides an interesting collection of information about the World War I. I originally picked this book up as I am having to write a paper on trench warfare, and found facts in here that I had not come across anywhere else; the detailed maps were also a plus in my research, and would help in understanding this form of warfare to those not familiar with it.

For those who might be concerned that this book may be too much for younger readers, there is no need; although the pictures used are mainly 'war' photographs and paintings, there is nothing too graphic or disturbing about them, rather the opposite they exude a sense of sadness when viewed from this point in our history. The start of the book provides a timeline up to the outbreak of war, and then in a somewhat chronological order follows it through to the Armistice and then the aftermath and how the end of the war didn't just stop with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. The way in which this book has been put together gives the reader the museum experience without leaving the comfort of their own homes, and the heavy pages and striking cover add to this feeling of being in another place.

My reasoning for giving this lovely book only a four thumbs rating was the size of the text, I did find it rather small and densely packed in places, and would have been happier with more pages in the book if the text were larger. Overall though this a great book to use as an introduction to the era, and as a supplement to more serious studies; as a plus it also looks great on the coffee table too.

I would highly recommend this book to all who are interested in this era, or just want to expand their knowledge about, what was supposed to be, the 'war to end all wars'. It will make the reader think

considering that some of the places mentioned in the book are still fighting today, which will bring up the question of why?

Originally reviewed on: <http://catesbooknuthut.com/2014/10/22...>

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### **Kate MacMillan says**

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### **Ian says**

Being a Smithsonian book I thought this could be slanted towards the U.S. contribution. However I found it to be very balanced (although it could have emphasized the Canadian contribution). The book is very well laid out, with each section being two pages long. Thus it is easy to flip through and read sections that interest you and skip others.

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### **Jenny says**

This book does a fantastic job of making the details of the Great War accessible to just about everyone. I appreciate the detail that went into making the book, and the visuals help drive points home. I'll keep an eye out for similar efforts made by the Smithsonian and this publisher.

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### **Andrew says**

R.G. Grant's Smithsonian "World War 1: A Definitive Visual History" is an interesting collection of facts and illustrations about the first Great War. Some of the visuals are quite nice, and paint a grim picture of this

war. The book is not necessarily in any chronological order, and jumps between fronts and theatre's of war. War on the western front will be talked about up until 1916, and then the book will jump to a different theatre a year or two earlier.

The facts contained within the book offer little depth, which makes this an excellent visual tool but little else. The book offers little that isn't already covered in other coffee-table style books on this subject. Even still, reading about the First World War is always interesting, and the style presented within this book makes it well worth a read, especially if you are just starting to dig into the subject.

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### **Jbondandrews says**

I found the World War I book quite interesting to look at. The pictures very vivid and informative.

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### **the dark knight says**

Upto the mark.

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### **Robin Friedman says**

Studying the Great War With The Smithsonian

The Smithsonian Institution and DK Publishing have produced this new history, "World War I: The Definitive Visual History from Sarajevo to Versailles" (2014) to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Great War. Superlatives deserve to be approached with skepticism, but the term "definitive visual history" may be warranted in this instance. R.C. Grant, who has written many books on modern warfare, is credited as the author while Richard Overy, Professor of History at the University of Exeter is listed as a consultant.

The Smithsonian's WW I consists of about 350 pages divided into seven large chapters. It begins with an introductory chapter covering the conditions that led to the War between 1870 and 1914. The next five chapters cover the progress of the war on a year-by-year basis from 1914 to 1918 through the Armistice of November 11, 1918. The concluding chapter explores the aftermath of the war through 1923, including the Paris Peace Conference, the Treaty of Versailles, and the continued world instability which led to WW II.

The book is evenly divided between text and pictures. The text includes a great deal of information on every page. Each chapter begins with a timeline in a calendar format which summarizes the major events of the year under discussion. The discussion then proceeds in two-page sections on facing pages covering a small, specific aspect of the war. The topics covered include battles, leaders, political events, campaigns, and activities on the home fronts, including, for example the Russian Revolution, and the abdication of Kaiser Wilhelm II late in the War. The war on land, sea, and air is described as are the many fronts on which WW I was fought. There are insets in the text giving a short "before" and "after" summation for each event discussed. There are also extended cross-references in the book between related topics. The "before" and "after" format and cross-references provide continuity to the presentation and allows the reader to explore a subject in the middle of the book with some necessary perspective of what came before and after. It also leads to a degree of repetition, but repetition is the mother of learning. The text includes many sections labeled "eyewitness" in which contemporaneous voices are heard about the particular event under discussion.

The pictures in the volume are well-chosen and clearly presented and labeled. They are in a mix of color and black and white. The books include maps and military diagrams for readers interested in following the progression of the many battles described. There are photographs of the trenches and their hardships, of combatants, of propaganda tools, of soldiers and leaders, of weaponry, ships, guns, planes, and more.

The book provides a surprisingly detailed overview of the Great War. It gives a feel for the enormity of the conflict in terms of size and loss of life. It helps the reader understand the origins of the Great War, its course and increasing futility, its relationship to WW II, and its continuing impact. It is a necessary and important history to understand, but not an edifying one.

Although in nearly coffee-table size and with many photographs, this book is a work for serious reading rather than for browsing. It requires about the same length of time to read and digest as a standard, non-pictorial account of the Great War. The authors are careful to present issues and controversies relating to the War without drawing dogmatic conclusions. Rather, the book encourages readers to think about the Great War and its impact. This Smithsonian pictorial history makes an excellent choice for readers who want to read one book about WW I. Readers with a serious long-term interest in the War will also learn a great deal from this volume.

Robin Friedman

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### **Steve says**

This is really very good for a "coffee table" book. Lots of substance and historical analysis. It really helped me understand the developments during the war and particularly the German collapse in 1918. Also--in the plus ca change, plus ca meme category, a lot of the military developments by 1918 were picked right back up in 1939. Pictures and maps do an excellent job of illustrating and amplifying the text.

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