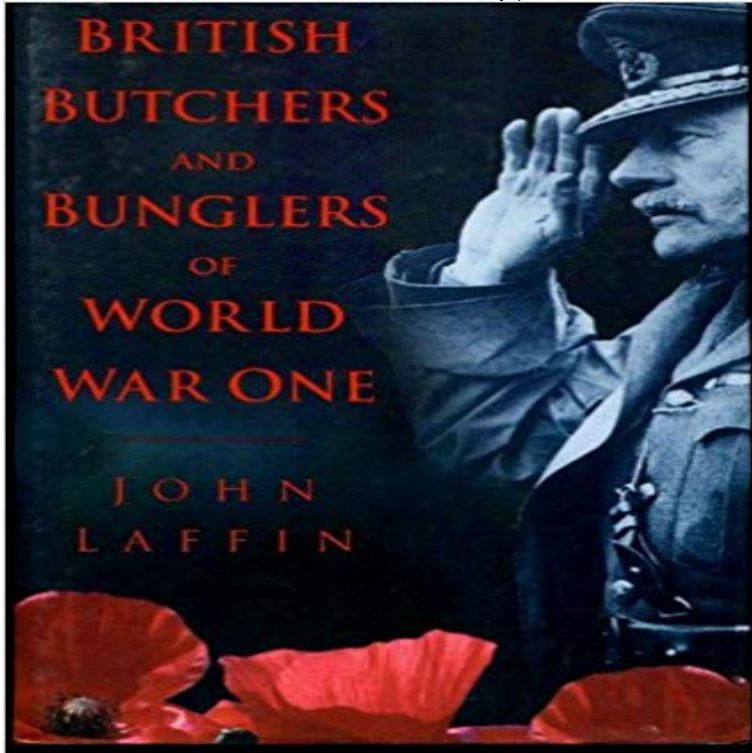


British Butchers and Bunglers of World War One



For too long, Dr John Laffin maintains, the military reputation of British Generals in World War I has not been examined critically enough, and he asks how those responsible for catastrophic defeats were able to retain their commands. Haig, whose army suffered 60,000 casualties on the first day of the Battle of the Somme in 1916, was still in command after five months more fighting and another 400,000 casualties. By the wars end the numbers of dead ran into millions - doggedly brave British Empire soldiers who, Laffin believes, were killed, wounded or broken by commanders who were vain, egocentric and incompetent. But the generals, who blamed the dead and junior in rank, cannot be excused on the grounds that there was nothing else that they could do. Even now, more than 75 years after that Great War for Civilization, this book raises questions that are uncomfortable. Laffin draws on the memories and writings of those who took part and quotes the judgements of other military historians to provide an analysis of just what went wrong in the generals leadership, and how it resulted in such appalling and tragic losses - and concludes that they were not merely incompetent but uncaring.

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