



# The Great War: A Photographic Narrative (Imperial War Museums)

*By Mark Holborn, Hilary Roberts*

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**On the occasion of the centenary of World War I in August 2014--an unprecedented, spectacular pictorial history of the first global war in 380 black-and-white photographs, many never seen before, from Imperial War Museums in London.**

This monumental, dramatic photographic narrative captures the war from the early arms race that developed around the massing of prewar battleship fleets to the final moments of the conflict with the sinking of the German fleet in Scapa. The photographs span the many battlefronts throughout the world: from the British Isles to the south Atlantic, across Europe and the Ottoman Empire, Sudan and East Africa, Jerusalem and Damascus. Here are soldiers from across the globe, vast battleships, dirigibles overhead, the streets of London, the first battle of Ypres, German submarines at sea, the beaches of Gallipoli, the battle of Jutland, the battle of the Somme trenches, and much, much more.

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**The Great War: A Photographic Narrative (Imperial War Museums)** By Mark Holborn, Hilary Roberts **Bibliography**

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**\*Starred Review\*** WWI was “great” only in the depth of its destruction and the extent of its crippling effect. The early idea that it was the war to end all wars died quickly when it became obvious, as the 1920s turned into the 1930s, that another big blowout was gathering momentum and would, like the previous one, come to involve regions beyond Europe. From the archives of the Imperial War Museums in Britain, illustrator Holborn and museum curator Roberts have culled 380 black-and-white photographs and here present them in a visual chronicle of WWI, to mark the 2014 centenary of the war’s outbreak. This large-size volume, as heavy in actual weight as it is in importance, brings graphic, intimate images of the war, which was indeed worldwide and horrific, face-to-face with viewers for whom WWI is ancient history. The war was fought on land and on the sea, in trenches and in the air, and the art of photography had advanced in sophistication and become universal enough in usage that all aspects of the war were captured for perpetuity, from enthusiastic troop mobilizations in 1914 to equally enthusiastic armistice celebrations in 1918. Chapter arrangement is by year, with introductions to each chapter, though brief, setting the military and political contexts of the photos to come. A major addition to world-history collections. --Brad Hooper

### Review

"A book of extraordinary power and clarity... it may well be the greatest anthology (yet) of World War I photographs...The sonata rhythm of the images, with their complementary and recurring themes, endows the ensemble with rare emotional power and reflective depth."

--Christopher Clark, *The New York Times Book Review*

"Intense and affecting...so many of these crisp images are haunting...Rich, riveting and often appalling visual history."

—Dwight Garner, *The New York Times*

### About the Author

MARK HOLBORN has edited a number of books on photography, and has worked with Annie Leibovitz, Irving Penn, Richard Avedon, Hiro, Susan Sontag, and Issey Miyake, among many others.

HILARY ROBERTS studied at University College London, University of London. She is the head of Collections of Imperial War Museums' photography archive and has coauthored Cecil Beaton: Theatre of War (September 2012), also with Mark Holborn.

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