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’ One of the lancers rode by, and stabbed me in the back with his lance. I then turned, and lay with my face upward, and a foot soldier stabbed me with his sword as he walked by. Immediately after, another, with his firelock and bayonet, gave me a terrible plunge, and while doing it with all his might, exclaimed, " Sacr é nom de Dieu! " ’ The truly epic and brutal battle of Waterloo was a pivotal moment in history – a single day, one 24-hour period, defined the course of Europe ’ s future. In March 1815, the Allies declared war on Napoleon in response to his escape from exile and the renewed threat to imperial European rule. Three months later, on 18 June 1815, having suffered considerable losses at Quatre-Bras, Wellington ’ s army fell back on Waterloo, some ten miles south of Brussels. Halting on the ridge, they awaited Napoleon ’ s army, blocking their entry to the capital. This would become the Allies ’ final stand, the infamous battle of Waterloo. In this intimate, hour-by-hour account, acclaimed military historian Robert Kershaw resurrects the human stories at the centre of the fighting, creating an authoritative single-volume biography of this landmark battle. Drawing on his profound insight and a field knowledge of military strategy, Kershaw takes the reader to where the impact of the orders was felt, straight into the heart of the battle, shoulder to shoulder with the soldiers on the mud-splattered ground. Masterfully weaving together painstakingly researched eyewitness accounts, diaries and letters – many never before seen or published – this gripping portrayal of Waterloo offers unparalleled authenticity. Extraordinary images of the men and women emerge in full colour; the voices of the sergeants, the exhausted foot-soldiers, the boy ensigns, the captains and the cavalry troopers, from both sides, rise from the page in vivid and telling detail, as the fate of Europe hangs by a thread.

Waterloo

Integrating trauma studies with historical research and social psychology, Landscapes of Trauma examines a range of battlefields from across history, including Waterloo, the Battle of Sedan, the Battle of the Ebro and the Battle of Normandy, to bring to light what these battlefields say about our collective and individual psyches. Hunt explores how war shapes the nature of trauma, not only by its innate horror but also by the historical and societal contexts it is fought in, from the cultural and social conventions of the period to the topography of the settings. This book provides a deep analysis of how war is experienced and remembered in different eras and by different generations. Moving beyond the clinical concept of post-traumatic stress disorder, Hunt discusses how trauma can be understood socially and historically, as well as through the lens of individual suffering. This book also investigates the psychological foundations of memorialisation, remembrance and commemoration that shape the legacy of the battles discussed. Using interviews with veterans, their letters, journals and diaries, as well as literary and historical sources, Hunt locates the battlefield as a place where humans explore the parameters of human behaviour, thought and emotion. This book is in important resource for students and scholars interested in the psychology of trauma and war, as well as military history.

From the prizewinning author of Europe, a riveting account of the heroic Second Light Battalion, which held the line at Waterloo, defeating Napoleon and changing the course of history. In 1815, the deposed emperor Napoleon returned to France and threatened the already devastated and exhausted continent with yet another war. Near the small Belgian municipality of Waterloo, two large, hastily mobilized armies faced each other to decide the future of Europe-Napoleon's forces on one side, and the Duke of Wellington on the other. With so much at stake, neither commander could have predicted that the battle would be decided by the Second Light Battalion, King's German Legion, which was given the deceptively simple task of defending the Haye Sainte farmhouse, a crucial crossroads on the way to Brussels. In The Longest Afternoon, Brendan Simms captures the chase of Waterloo in a minute-by-minute account that reveals how these 400-odd riflemen successfully beat back wave after wave of French infantry. The battalion suffered terrible casualties, but their fighting spirit and refusal to retreat ultimately decided the most influential battle in European history.

Within the grand narrative of the Battle of Waterloo – one that marks the end of Napoleon ’ s career as conqueror and the beginning of an extended peace in western Europe – little is known of the formidable efforts made by the Irish who supplemented the strength of the British Army and, in no small measure, directed the outcome of this vital moment in the history of the world. Through empirical research, Dan Harvey has delivered a book that reveals the manoeuvres that the Irish mounted against the French and the courage that they displayed at so many points within the confrontation. Harvey examines attacks from the French infantry, cavalry and Imperial Guard, revealing how Irish soldiers bore the brunt of Napoleon ’ s frontal assault; they suffered many casualties but were also witness to countless feats of valour. A Bloody Day brings the actions of the Irish at Waterloo into focus, unravelling the true import of their deeds on Sunday, 18 June 1815.

" [A] concise but authoritative narrative of the last action of the Napoleonic Wars " and its influence on French, British, German, and U.S. cultures (Military History Matters). The Battle of Waterloo ended a century of war between France and Great Britain and became a key part of their national identity, serving their political needs as the battle was refought throughout the 19th century in politics, books and art to create the myth of Waterloo. For Great Britain, Waterloo became a symbol of British hegemony while the multinational contribution to the battle was downplayed and for France it was remembered as a military disaster. Through looking at the battle ’ s significance in history, an insight is gained into how cultural myths and legends about a battle are made. Wellington and Napoleon both tried to shape the memory of the battle to their advantage. Wellington propagated the myth that the British won despite being outnumbered by a huge French army, while Napoleon chose to blame his subordinates for the loss, in particular Emmanuel de Grouchy. This book covers the battle ’ s influence on figures such as Jomini and Clausewitz, military theorists who wanted to find the objective truth of Waterloo and use it as a guide for future wars, as well as Victor Hugo (and Les Miserables) who challenged the myths of battle to transform it into a win for France from which the Republic would emerge. The way Waterloo was used for entertainment is also explored, as battlefield tourists came from all over the world to vicariously experience the legendary battle through visualizations such as the traveling panoramas in England and poetry of Sir Walter Scott.

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