

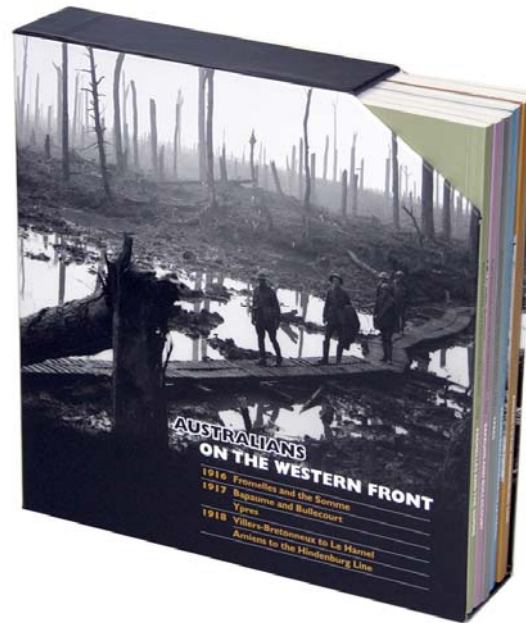
## Australians on the Western Front

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**Authors: Volumes 1, 2, 4 and  
5 researched and written by  
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**Reviewed by Nicole Snyder**



Australia's staggering contributions and losses on the Western Front during World War I are marked in history's pages: of the almost 300,000 Australian personnel who served in France and Belgium between 1916 and 1918, 46,000 lost their lives. This five-volume set chronicles Australia's involvement on the Western Front and is interspersed with personal insights of servicemen at the front line. Each book is accompanied by maps and abundant photography that heeds witness to razed villages and the wretched state of troops fighting for months on icy fields and in boggy trenches.

The first book, 1916 Fromelles and The Somme, begins at the mid-point of the Great War and the introduction of Australian troops into France and Belgium. Atrocious losses are detailed in the ill-conceived Battle of the Somme and devastation at Fromelles and Pozières.

1917 Bapaume and Bullecourt, continues the offensive during the cruel French winter and later in Flanders. Lieutenant General Sir William

Birdwood's rise accompanies political scuffles and tactical errors in attempting to take the Hindenburg Line. Ypres focuses on the hard-fought battles at Messines, Menin Road, Polygon Wood and Broodseinde, and the gruelling campaign at Passchendaele.

The final volumes, Villers-Bretonneux to Le Hamel and Amiens to the Hindenburg Line, start with Lieutenant General Sir John Monash assigned commander of the new Australian Corp. Among heavy fighting, the allied mood grows more optimistic as depleted Australian and American troops capture the Hindenburg Line prior to the armistice on 11 November 1918.

Australians on the Western Front is an accessible and visually striking series that commemorates the contributions of our service personnel more than 90 years ago. The set is recommended to readers seeking an engaging coverage of this period in our fledgling Federation's history.

***Editor's Note: We have a copy to give away to a reader. Email dfm with 'Western' as the subject by mid May 2009 to go into the draw.***