



Collision of Empires: The War on the Eastern Front in 1914 (General Military)

Prit Buttar

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Although the myriad of alliances and suspicions that existed between the Russian, German, and Austro-Hungarian empires in the early 20th century proved to be one of the primary triggers for the outbreak of the First World War, much of the actual fighting between these three nations has been largely forgotten in the West. Whilst battles such as Ypres, the Somme, and Passchendaele have been inscribed deeply on the public consciousness, with the exception of perhaps Tannenberg, the conflicts in the East do not hold the same recognition. In his new book, Prit Buttar seeks to correct this imbalance with a magisterial account of the chaos and destruction that reigned when three powerful empires collided. His harrowing narrative is driven by first-hand accounts and new, detailed archival research to create a dynamic retelling of the tumultuous events of the first year of the war, examining the battles of the Masurian Lakes and Tannenberg in East Prussia, followed by the Russo-Austrian clashes in Galicia, the failed German advance towards Warsaw, and the vicious fighting in the Carpathian mountains. Buttar reveals how delays in adapting to a modern war and inadequacies in supply and support arrangements, combined with a failure to plan for a long war, left the Central Powers struggling to keep up with events, and having to come to terms with the dreaded reality of a war on two fronts while Russia was driven towards revolution. A war that was initially seen by all three powers as a welcome opportunity to address both internal and external issues would ultimately bring about the downfall of them all.

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