

Book on : the chief- douglas haig and the british army - gary sheffield

[History](#)



The Chief- Douglas Haig and the British Army - Gary Sheffield Douglas Haig stands out as one of the most controversial army commander in the British history and, the history of the World War. Sheffield best captures the controversy surrounding the army general in his book “ The Chief- Douglas Haig and the British Army - Gary Sheffield.” Using this controversy the author enables the readers to visualize the position of the imperial British in world politics and the World War I. The author achieves this objective by the themes in the book that relate the role played by the general in the western front.

The book presents a thoroughly researched biography that includes the role played by Douglas in the war. Although the writer does not side with the main character in the book, he avoids using an apologetic language. By evaluating various command decisions executed by Haig, the writer demonstrates that the massive loss of life resulted from his incompetence (Sheffield, 2011). The British considered Haig as a national hero or as the savior of the nation. Ten years after his death, his reputation started to fade constantly. Using this example the writer brings out the theme of enlightenment in the society. Initially the British recognized and honored Haig for the role that he played by leading the British army into victory. The British considered the result of victory without considering their input or losses experienced to achieve the victory. The book demonstrates that even though the British emerged victorious in World War I, they suffered many casualties that nullify their victory. The writer recounts how many British soldiers perished in death trenches that were among the Haig’s combat strategies. The writer depicts Haig as a serial blunderer who never had an

opportunity to learn from his faults.

Through the biography, the author successfully demonstrates the myth through which Haig and his army existed. Haig did not believe in mechanization of his operations but instead maintained the traditional combat methods. Haig also never used aircrafts in his operations and, this caused most of the losses suffered by his people. According to Haig sending as many men as possible into the field was the only way of winning the battle. This led him to neglect the use of advanced technology and mechanization in his operation. This account demonstrates the theme of mythology in the society. The writer demonstrates that the society in focus lived unrealistic lives. The writer also demonstrates enlightenment of the society that replaced the uncertainty and myth of both the military officials and the civilians.

Sheffield also tackles the execution of defaulters in relation to British victory. The writer highlights execution of defaulters to strengthen his views concerning the controversial victory. Although Haig is responsible for deaths of many British soldiers, he greatly improved the army both materially and morally (Sheffield, 2011). The galvanization of the British Legion and building high standard loyalty among the force are some of his immediate efforts in the force. This indicates that although Haig committed many blunders while he was the commander of the British army, he has a positive thing that people can remember.

I would recommend “ The Chief- Douglas Haig and the British Army - Gary Sheffield” to history scholars who have interests in World War I history. The book has been compiled from primary sources and, hence it is detailed as

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well as fascinating.

Reference

Sheffield, G. 2011. The Chief- Douglas Haig and the British Army - Gary Sheffield" London: Aurum Press, Limited.