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The Platoon: An Infantryman on the Western Front 1916-18

Joseph Steward

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John Joseph Steward fought in the Great War, from the Battle of the Somme to the final offensives of 1918, and he was an acute, unflinching observer of the conflict he took part in - of life and death on the Western Front. He was a writer, too. He recorded his experiences in accurate detail and later in life he wrote a graphic fictionalized account of his wartime career - the story of his war, his comrades and his platoon. His narrative is published here for the first time, edited, annotated and with an introduction by Andrew Robertshaw and Steve Roberts. Their research into Steward's story is a fascinating example of how such work can be used to give a vivid insight into the experiences of a Great War ancestor.

About the Editors

Andrew Robertshaw is Curator/Manager of The Royal Logistic Corps Museum in Deepcut, Surrey. For the past twelve years he has been coordinating a group conducting an archaeological dig of British trenches and other sites on the Somme. He frequently appears on television as a commentator on battlefield archaeology and the soldier in history. His publications include A Soldier's Life, The Somme 1st July 1916, Digging the Trenches (with David Kenyon) and Ghosts of the Somme (with Alastair Fraser and Steve Roberts).

Steve Roberts is a retired police officer and an ex-regular soldier. He has a keen interest in military history and as a result of his grandfather's service a particular passion for the Great War. He specializes in researching the individuals who served during the period and has worked in this field on a number of television projects. He is a founder member of the Great War archaeology group No Mans Land and also a battlefield guide regularly taking groups to France and Belgium. He has previously co-authored Ghosts on the Somme (with Alastair Fraser and Andrew Robertshaw)

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