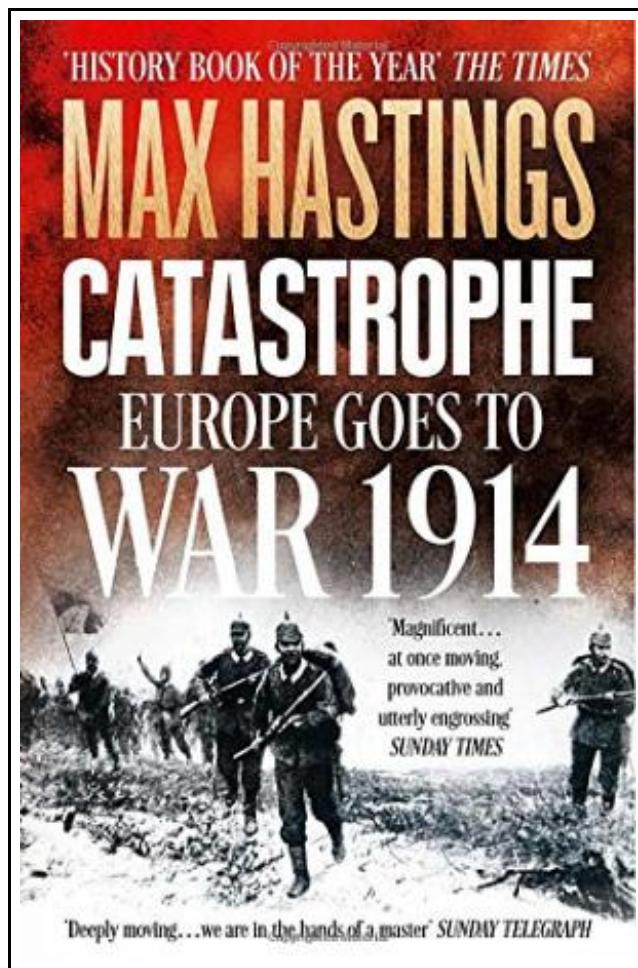


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HarperCollins Publishers, United Kingdom, 2014. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 196 x 128 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. The Amazon History Book of the Year 2013 is a magisterial chronicle of the calamity that befell Europe in 1914 as the continent shifted from the glamour of the Edwardian era to the tragedy of total war. In 1914, Europe plunged into the 20th century's first terrible act of self-immolation - what was then called The Great War. On the eve of its centenary, Max Hastings seeks to explain both how the conflict came about and what befell millions of men and women during the first months of strife. He finds the evidence overwhelming, that Austria and Germany must accept principal blame for the outbreak. While what followed was a vast tragedy, he argues passionately against the poets view , that the war was not worth winning. It was vital to the freedom of Europe, he says, that the Kaiser's Germany should be defeated. His narrative of the early battles will astonish those whose images of the war are simply of mud, wire, trenches and steel helmets. Hastings describes how the French Army marched into action amid virgin rural landscapes, in uniforms of red and blue, led by mounted officers, with flags flying and bands playing. The bloodiest day of the entire Western war fell on 22 August 1914, when the French lost 27,000 dead. Four days later, at Le Cateau the British fought an extraordinary action against the oncoming Germans, one of the last of its kind in history. In October, at terrible cost they held the allied line against massive German assaults in the first battle of Ypres. The author also describes the brutal struggles in Serbia, East Prussia and Galicia, where by Christmas the Germans, Austrians, Russians...

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