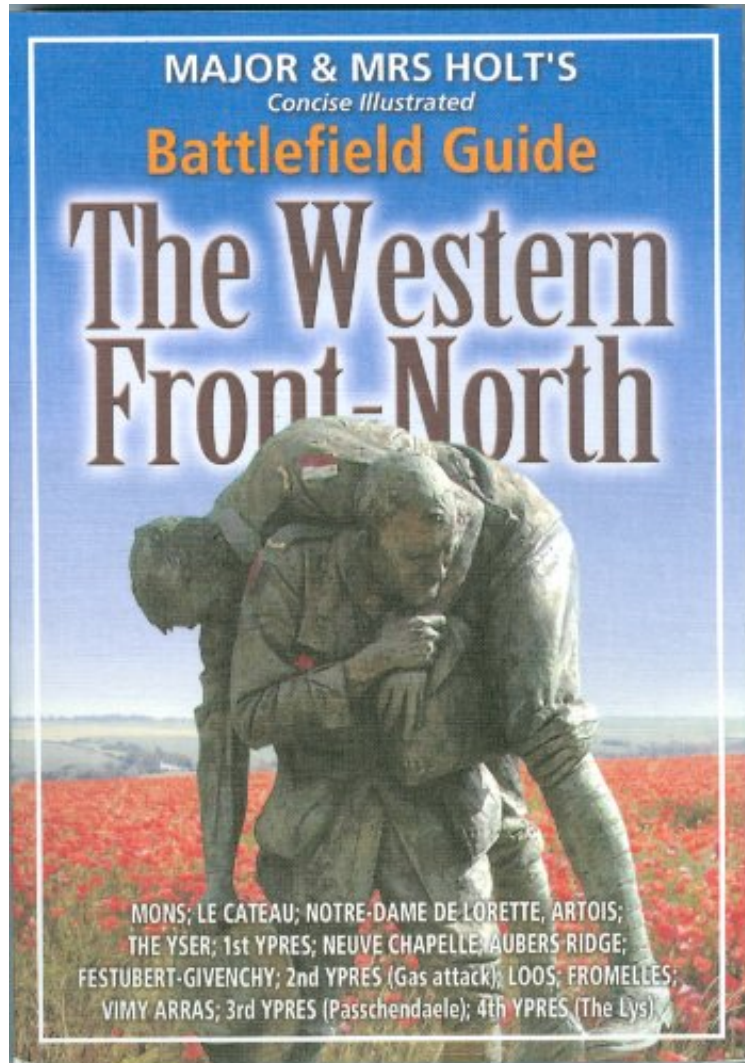


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Tonie Holt, Valmai Holt : The Western Front - North: Battlefield Guide: Mons, le Cateau, Notre Dame de Lorette, First Ypres, Neuve Chapelle, Aubers Ridge, Festubert, Second ... (Major and Mrs Holt's Battlefield Guides) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Western Front - North: Battlefield Guide: Mons, le Cateau, Notre Dame de Lorette, First Ypres, Neuve Chapelle, Aubers Ridge, Festubert, Second ... (Major and Mrs Holt's Battlefield Guides):

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Back to the Front By Miriam K. Tourism, aided by easy Chunnel access, has made World War One's Western Front a significant British tourist destination. Veterans groups and family history researchers have joined history buffs and day trippers to make the battlefields, cemeteries, and memorials of the Great War a busy place. Predictably, sites associated with British and Commonwealth forces have been especially favored. While it always helps to know Flemish or French, neither are necessary to visit Ieper (French Ypres, British slang Wipers), Vimy, or the Somme where English is a second language. If you're planning such a trip, you'll quickly encounter Tonie and Valmai Holt. Their numerous books and maps (twenty-three at last count, and growing) are the standard against which other battlefield guides are judged. Start with this volume (and its companion, *The Western Front - South*) and you'll be on your way. The Holts have driven all the fields, and provide detailed maps and directions to take you on the roads and tracks that cross them. {They assume you brought your car from Britain, and provide all their distances in miles rather than kilometers.} They miss very little. Tiny cemeteries, roadside shrines, wall plaques, and local amenities are all here (and keep in mind there are well over 100 cemeteries maintained just by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.). It sometimes gets a bit overpowering, and the casual traveler may want to consult a "best of" list or focus upon the sites that the Holts illustrate with attractive color photos that make this a fine souvenir of any trip. Be aware that their guides can send you to some moving experiences that are off the main paths: their advice at the Somme took us to the Devonshire Trench Cemetery and the 38th (Welsh) Division Memorial. Their books are obviously works for the tourist. The Holts offer only brief historical summaries, so you will want to read a good general history of the 1914-1918 war before heading out. {We recommend John Keegan's *Illustrated History of World War One*, but there are many others.} You also need to remember that the Belgians and French, while welcoming visitors, want to live modern lives in the areas liberated from the Kaiser's forces. Surprisingly few sites retain the "feel" of the trenches (the Holts will steer you to them), and cemeteries and memorials far outnumber museums. The Holts admire valor and sacrifice, and they will tell you why those sites deserve respect. Some of their harshest criticisms are directed at those who poorly maintain a site. Two weeks and nearly a thousand kilometers of driving last summer from Ieper to St. Mihiel with the Holts convinced us they are the guides of choice. Take them with you when you go back to the Front.

Mons, le Cateau, Notre Dame de Lorette, First Ypres, Neuve Chapelle, Aubers Ridge, Festubert, Second Ypres, Loos, Fromelles, Vimy Ridge, Third Ypres, Cambrai, Fourth Ypres. Interest in the battlefields of The Great War has increased exponentially in the last 10 years and credit for this must rest in large measure on the shoulders of Major and Mrs Holt. Not only did they pioneer the concept of 'Battlefield Tour' holidays but their books, of which this is the latest, have long been regarded as the Bible for tourists making the pilgrimage to the scenes of battles whether in Flanders, Normandy, Gallipoli or Arnhem. The Holts, appreciating that today the areas visited has broadened considerably have researched a much wider book than their earlier Somme and Ypres Guides. This is the first part of the results of their labours and the second covering the Southern battlefields will follow later in the 2004.

From the Author During the 20 or more years that we personally conducted thousands of people around the battlefields of the First and Second World Wars we not only underwent a continuous learning process from our travellers about the details of military history but also what their prime interests were. At first, 99% of the interest in the First World War was for the Ypres-Passchendaele area and for the Somme. However by the turn of the Millenium visitors were looking further afield and at that time only the seminal book by our old friend Rose Coombs gave any travelling information about other parts of the Western Front.