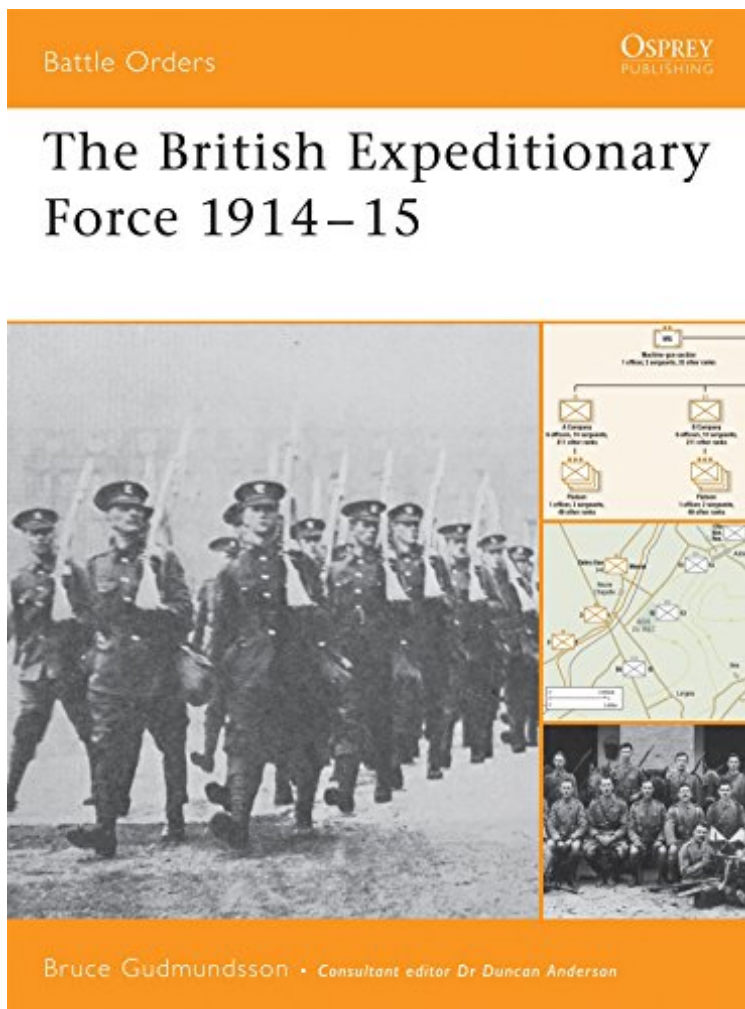


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[Mobile library] The British Expeditionary Force 191415 (Battle Orders)

## The British Expeditionary Force 191415 (Battle Orders)

**Bruce Gudmundsson : The British Expeditionary Force 191415 (Battle Orders)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The British Expeditionary Force 191415 (Battle Orders):

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Useful Data but Lacks a Good OBBY R. A ForczykBruce Gudmundsson's The British Expeditionary Force 1914-15 provides a good amount of data about the organization and equipment of the original BEF sent to France in the First World War. This volume, like most in the Battle Orders series, provides useful charts and tables about unit structures from corps down to battalion level, along with some discussion of tactics and operations. Unfortunately there is a glaring omission in this volume, namely a comprehensive order of battle that actually lists the units in the BEF, particularly the specific components of divisions. For example, if a reader wanted to find out what division the 2nd South Lancashires was part of, he would not be able to find it in

these pages - which is rather odd for a series that focuses on order of battle. Unlike other volumes in the series, like the one on the Korean War, the author tends to focus on general organization, rather than specific organization. Furthermore, there is little effort made to discuss when specific units arrived or were activated, or who led them. In sum, the reader is presented with a very detailed, but generic look at the BEF. The volume includes nine maps, many of which focus on the battles of Neuve Chapelle and Aubers Ridge in early 1915. Actually rather little insight is provided about tactical innovation, except for the author's rather obvious observation about the need for more and better artillery preparation prior to an attack. There is no real discussion of weightier issues, such as how to deal with the tactical problems posed by machineguns arrayed in depth or the need for specialist trench raider units. Nor is the effect of heavy losses by the BEF in late 1914, particularly at First Ypres, mentioned but this certainly had an effect upon organization and tactics. The author does provide the usual sections on mission, doctrine/training, C3I and tactics. Specific characteristics of units - such as the difficulty in getting replacements for the Irish battalions or the weaknesses of the two Indian divisions - are not mentioned. I was also surprised that the bibliography failed to note Martin Middlebrook's excellent "Your Country Needs You," which provides much data about the BEF than this volume. Readers seeking an OB for the BEF will have to purchase Osprey's Men-at-Arms #81. Overall, the charts are nice, but this volume feels more like an addendum to someone else's book, rather than a stand-alone piece.

Over 200 divisions fought on the Western Front during the first year of World War I and those best suited to the challenges of trench warfare were the six infantry divisions of the original British Expeditionary Force (BEF). Their superiority was partially due to the high quality of the divisions' personnel and the first-class equipment provided to them. This book describes the organization and equipment of the BEF at the outbreak of the war in 1914, and relates how its structure changed both to accommodate the waves of Territorial and New Army units that were raised and to adapt to the rigours of conditions on the Western Front.

From the PublisherDefinitive guides to the actions and evolution of fighting forces, these comprehensive studies on the organisation, strength, command, deployment and evolution of forces in key military encounters, use a highly detailed 'unit-by-unit' examination.About the AuthorMajor Bruce Gudmundsson, USMCR (Retired) is an historian who specializes in tactical innovation: the way that military organizations respond to radical change. The author of four major books and several 100 articles, he has taught at the Marine Corps Command and Staff College, the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, and Oxford University.