



# The Somme Chronicles: South Africans on the Western Front, 1916

*Chris Schoeman*

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This is the story of South African soldiers during the 1916 Somme offensive, which took place between the Allied forces and the Germans along the Somme River in France and was one of the bloodiest conflicts of the First World War, resulting in over a million deaths in six months. In July 1916, the men of the 1st South African Infantry Brigade were involved in recapturing the village of Lingeaval and clearing Delville Wood of enemy soldiers, but they suffered extreme casualties. After six days of fighting, of the Brigade's 3433 soldiers, only 750 were left standing. The rest were dead or wounded. This book tells the stories of the men of the Brigade via their letters, diaries, and interviews that the author conducted with survivors many years ago.

Not much has been written about South Africans during World War I. Surprisingly, it is a relatively untapped period of military history. This fascinating new book covers the iconic battle of Delville Wood, the most famous event involving South Africans during the war.



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