

Mark Bostridge

Author

Mark Bostridge was born in 1961 and educated at the University of Oxford where he won the Gladstone Memorial Prize. His books include the highly acclaimed biographies, VERA BRITAIN: A LIFE, shortlisted for the Whitbread Biography Prize, the NCR non-fiction Award, and the Fawcett Prize; FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE. THE WOMAN AND HER LEGEND, winner of the 2009 Elizabeth Longford Prize for Historical Biography and THE FATEFUL YEAR.



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Publications

Non-Fiction

| Publication Details | Notes |
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**VERA BRITTAİN
AND THE FIRST
WORLD WAR**

2014

Bloomsbury

Vera Brittain and the First World War tells the remarkable story of the author behind Testament of Youth, published to coincide with the film of Testament of Youth, whilst charting the book's ascent to become one of the most loved memoirs of the First World War period. Such interest is set to expand even more in this centenary year of the war's outbreak.

In the midst of her studies at Oxford when war broke out across Europe, Vera Brittain left university in 1915 to become a V.A.D (Voluntary Aid Detachment) nurse, treating soldiers in London, Malta and Etaples in France. The events of the First World War were to have an enormous impact on her life. Four of Brittain's closest friends including her fiancé Roland Leighton and her brother Edward Brittain MC were killed in action, sparking a lifelong commitment to pacifism. In 1933 she published Testament of Youth, the first of three books dealing with her experience of war. In equal measures courageous, tragic and deeply fascinating, Testament of Youth is one of the most compelling and important works of war literature ever to have been written by a British woman.

**THE FATEFUL
YEAR: ENGLAND
1914**

2014

Penguin

The Fateful Year by Mark Bostridge is the story of England in 1914. War with Germany, so often imagined and predicted, finally broke out when people were least prepared for it.

Here, among a crowded cast of unforgettable characters, are suffragettes, armed with axes, destroying works of art, schoolchildren going on strike in support of their teachers, and celebrity aviators thrilling spectators by looping the loop. A theatrical diva prepares to shock her audience, while an English poet in the making sets out on a midsummer railway journey that will result in the creation of a poem that remains loved and widely known to this day. With the coming of war, England is beset by rumour and foreboding. There is hysteria about German spies, fears of invasion, while patriotic women hand out white feathers to men who have failed to rush to their country's defence. In the book's final pages, a bomb falls from the air onto British soil for the first time, and people live in expectation of air raids.

As 1914 fades out, England is preparing itself for the prospect of a war of long duration.

**FLORENCE
NIGHTINGALE**

2009

Penguin

Mark Bostridge's Florence Nightingale is a masterful and effortlessly enjoyable biography of one of Britain's most iconic heroines.

Whether honoured and admired or criticized and ridiculed, Florence Nightingale has invariably been misrepresented and misunderstood. As the Lady with the Lamp, ministering to the wounded and dying of the Crimean War, she offers an enduring image of sentimental appeal and one that is permanently lodged in our national consciousness. But the awesome scale of her achievements over the course of her 90 years is infinitely more troubling - and inspiring - than this mythical simplification.

From her tireless campaigning and staggering intellectual abilities to her tortured relationship with her sister and her distressing medical condition, this vivid and immensely readable biography draws on a wealth of unpublished material and previously unseen family papers, disentangling the myth from the reality and reinvigorating with new life one of the most iconic figures in modern British history.

**LETTERS FROM
A LOST
GENERATION**

1998

Northeastern

University Press

Nothing in the papers, not the most vivid and heart-rending descriptions, have made me realise war like your letters' Vera Brittain to Roland Leighton, 17 April 1915.

This selection of letters, written between 1913 & 1918, between Vera Brittain and four young men - her fiance Roland Leighton, her brother Edward and their close friends Victor Richardson & Geoffrey Thurlow present a remarkable and profoundly moving portrait of five young people caught up in the cataclysm of total war.

Roland, 'Monseigneur', is the 'leader' & his letters most clearly trace the path leading from idealism to disillusionment. Edward, 'Immaculate of the Trenches', was orderly & controlled, down even to his attire. Geoffrey, the 'non-militarist at heart' had not rushed to enlist but put aside his objections to the war for patriotism's sake. Victor on the other hand, possessed a very sweet character and was known as 'Father Confessor'. An important historical testimony telling a powerful story of idealism, disillusionment and personal tragedy.

**VERA BRITTAİN:
A LIFE**

1995

Virago

Vera Brittain is most widely known as the woman who immortalized a lost generation in her haunting autobiography of the Great War, TESTAMENT OF YOUTH.

Writer, pacifist and feminist, she condemned her provincial background but remained acutely conscious of the conventional elements in her own character; she revealed a richly emotional life in her writing but was outwardly sober and reserved; she possessed a fierce desire for fame and recognition but was ready to sacrifice both on matters of principle.

This biography - comprehensive, authoritative and immensely readable - confirms Vera Brittain's stature as one of the most remarkable women of our time.
