



# Race to the Front: The Materiel Foundations of Coalition Strategy in the Great War

*Kevin D. Stubbs*

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When war broke out in Europe in 1914, nearly every combatant foresaw a short decisive conflict. Experience would soon prove, however, that this belief was sorely misplaced. Eventually, excessive economic dislocations would topple every authoritarian regime. Only the intervention of the United States would save the British and the French from collapse. This book traces the trilateral struggle between the Entente, the Central Powers, and the United States to determine the outcome of the war. Stubbs focuses on a few essential factors vital to understanding this three-way race: the acquisition of war materiel, food, human resources, and the movement of each.

In an analysis of coalition strategies, it is not enough to study the memoirs and memoranda of General Staffs or political figures engaged in war. One must also examine the roles played by each population, their industries, economy, means of transportation, and the financial decisions that make such strategies possible. In short, the material foundations of war set the boundaries within which strategic maneuvers occur. Ultimately, the United States determined the outcome of the First World War, not simply because it provided the last untapped reservoir of manpower, but due to its overall economic contributions to the allied effort.

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