



## **The School of Hard Knocks: Combat Leadership in the American Expeditionary Forces (C. A. Brannen Series)**

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# The School of Hard Knocks: Combat Leadership in the American Expeditionary Forces (C. A. Brannen Series)

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This important new history of the development of a leadership corps of officers during World War I opens with a gripping narrative of the battlefield heroism of Cpl. Alvin York, juxtaposed with the death of Pvt. Charles Clement less than two kilometers away.

Clement had been a captain and an example of what a good officer should be in the years just before the beginning of the war. His subsequent failure as an officer and his redemption through death in combat embody the question that lies at the heart of this comprehensive and exhaustively researched book: What were the faults of US military policy regarding the training of officers during the Great War?

In *The School of Hard Knocks*, Richard S. Faulkner carefully considers the selection and training process for officers during the years prior to and throughout the First World War. He then moves into the replacement of those officers due to attrition, ultimately discussing the relationship between the leadership corps and the men they commanded.

Replete with primary documentary evidence including reports by the War Department during and subsequent to the war, letters from the officers detailing their concerns with the training methods, and communiqués from the leaders of the training facilities to the civilian leadership, *The School of Hard Knocks* makes a compelling case while presenting a clear, highly readable, no-nonsense account of the shortfalls in officer training that contributed to the high death toll suffered by the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I.

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