

From the moment the first machine gun rang out over the Western Front, one thing was clear: mankind's military technology had wildly surpassed its medical capabilities. Bodies were battered, gouged, hacked, and gassed. The First World War claimed millions of lives and left millions more wounded and disfigured. In the midst of this brutality, however, there were also those who strove to alleviate suffering. Lindsey Fitzharris's *The Facemaker* tells the extraordinary story of such an individual: the pioneering plastic surgeon Harold Gillies, who dedicated himself to reconstructing the burned and broken faces of the injured soldiers under his care.

Gillies, a Cambridge-educated New Zealander, became interested in the nascent field of plastic surgery after encountering the human wreckage on the front. Returning to Britain, he established one of the world's first hospitals dedicated entirely to facial reconstruction. There, Gillies assembled a unique group of practitioners whose task was to rebuild what had been torn apart, to re-create what had been destroyed. At a timewhen losing a limb made a soldier a hero but losing a face made him a monster to a society largely intolerant of disfigurement, Gillies restored not just the faces of the wounded but also their spirits.

The Facemaker places Gillies's ingenious surgical innovations alongside the dramatic stories of soldiers whose lives were wrecked and repaired. The result is a vivid account of how medicine can be an art, and of what courage and imagination can accomplish in the presence of relentless horror.

LINDSEY FITZHARRIS is the author of *The Butchering Art: Joseph Lister's Quest to Transform the Grisly World of Victorian Medicine*, which won the PEN/E. O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award and has been translated into multiple languages. Her television series *The Curious Life and Death of . . .* aired on the Smithsonian Channel. She contributes regularly to *The Wall Street Journal*, *Scientific American*, and other notable publications, and she holds a doctorate in the history of science and medicine from the University of Oxford.

READ BY LINDSEY FITZHARRIS



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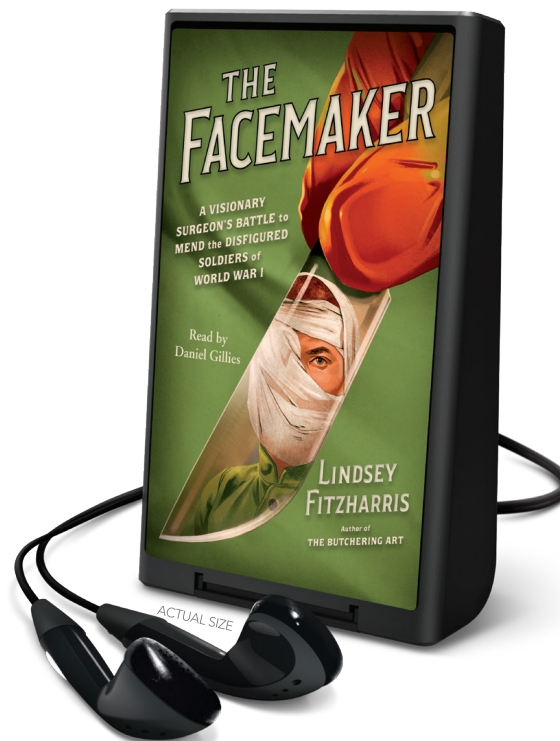
THE FACEMAKER

LINDSEY FITZHARRIS



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