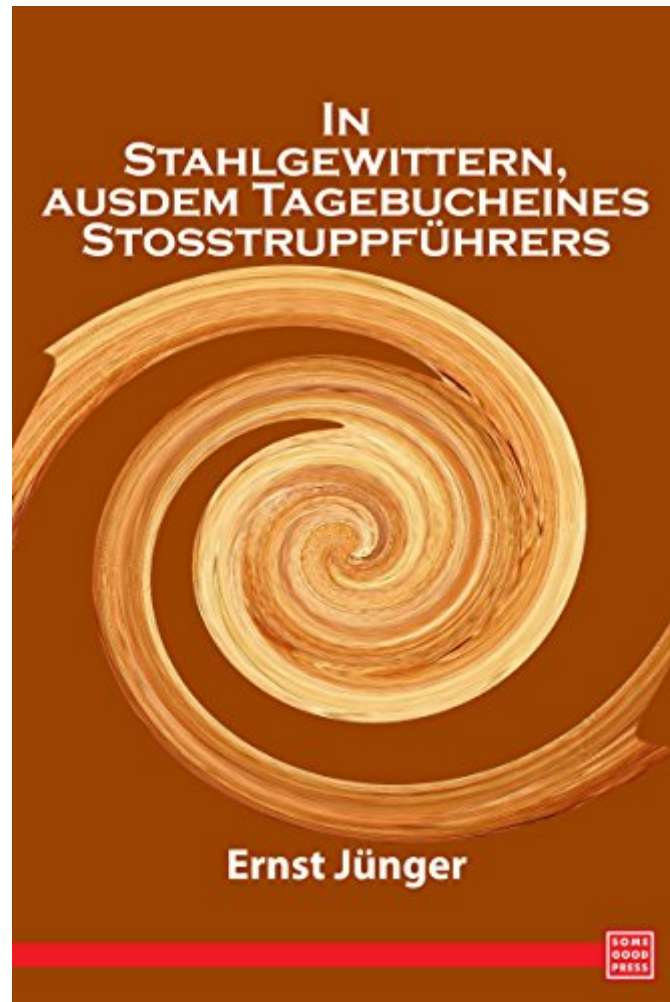


The book was found

Storm Of Steel (German Edition)



Synopsis

Storm of Steel begins with Jäger as a private entering the line with the 73rd Hanoverian Regiment in Champagne. His first taste of combat came at Les Éparges in April 1915 where he was first wounded. After recuperating, he took an officer's course and achieved the rank of Ensign. He rejoined his regiment on the Arras sector. In 1916, with the Battle of the Somme underway, Jäger's regiment moved to Comblès in August for the defence of the village of Guillemont. Here Jäger was wounded again, and fortunately absent shortly before the final British assault which captured the village as his platoon was annihilated. In 1917 Jäger saw action during the Battle of Arras in April, the Third Battle of Ypres in July and October, and the German counter-attack during the Battle of Cambrai in November. Jäger led a company of assault troops during the final German Spring Offensive, 21 March 1918 when he was wounded again. On 23 August he suffered his most severe wound when he was shot through the chest.

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Customer Reviews

Ernst Jäger's memoirs of his service as a junior officer with the 73rd Hannoverian Fusilier Regiment on the Western Front are different than any other war memoirs I've read. Jäger provides a cold, insightful, yet evenhanded view of the war in the trenches. He respects the English

soldiers he's up against, hears funny stories about pre-war Cambrai from the elderly French couple in whose house he's been quartered, and is invited along with his comrades to share bountiful suppers with Flemish farmers. While passionate about the honor he must uphold as a soldier and his support of the "idea", he refuses to demonize his enemy. His descriptions of the fighting are horrific. At Guillemont, during the battle of the Somme as they are digging out their foxholes, he notices that the "earth" is composed of layers, representing each company that had been fed into the furnace, annihilated, ground to bits only to be replaced by the next company and the next. . . Whole units disappear without a trace. For JÃ nger the battlefield has its metaphysical element: Gas mask-clad pickets become demons that he converses with, fields of dead and dying exude a sweet smell that drives the living giddy, men disappear for no apparent reason and are never seen again. Yet for JÃ nger even though 10 out of 12 soldiers fall, the desolation of war emphasizes and even spiritualizes the joy produced by the noble drive to endure and overcome battle. The fire of war produced over the four years of his service an ever purer and nobler warrior ethos. For this description alone is perhaps the book worth reading, since it provides us with a link to an aristocratic/military ideal which put service to that ideal above everything else, even one's own survival.

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