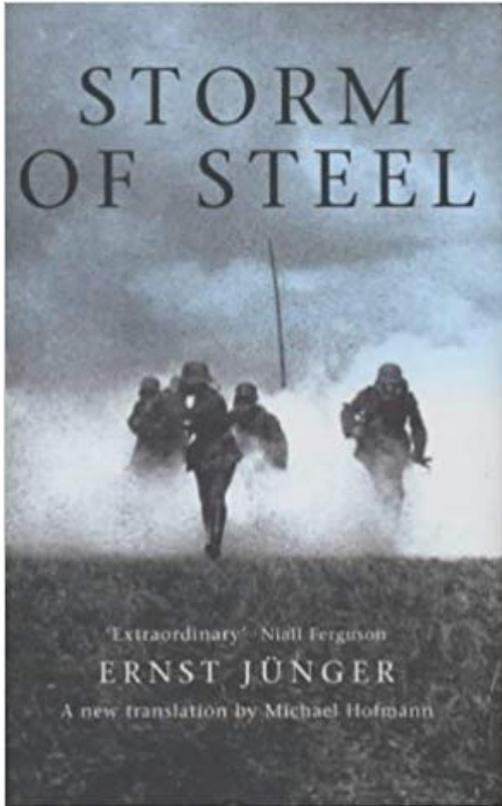


## Storm of Steel *by* Ernst Junger, Michael Hofmann



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**ISBN:** 0713995947

**ISBN13:** 978-0713995947

**Author:** Ernst Junger, Michael Hofmann

**Book title:** Storm of Steel

**Pages:** 320

**Publisher:** Allen Lane; New Edition edition (August 28, 2003)

**Language:** English

**Category:** Military

**Size PDF version:** 1312 kb

**Size ePUB version:** 1796 kb

**Size FB2 version:** 1652 kb

**Other formats:** azw mbr doc rtf

Ernst Junger served in the German front line, fighting both the British and the French for most of World War I. Young, tough, patriotic but also disturbingly self-aware, he exulted in the war, which he saw not just as a great national struggle but - more importantly - as a unique personal struggle. Leading raiding parties, defending trenches against murderous British incursions, simply enduring as shells tore his comrades apart, Junger kept testing himself, braced for the death that would mark his failure. Published shortly after the war's end, "Storm of Steel" was a worldwide bestseller and can now be rediscovered through Michael Hofmann's translation.



## Reviews of the *Storm of Steel* *by* Ernst Junger, Michael Hofmann

Daigrel

Since this is the centennial of WWI I thought I would read a few books relating to it this summer. I had heard that this was a good book. I therefore ordered it and in anticipation of its arrival I read the reviews of it here on Amazon (This is the BEST feature of Amazon and will keep its stock selling for multiples above its P/E for decades) in more depth. I realized that some of this great novel had been expunged because of parts that cast a favorable light on the National Socialist. I then searched another book purveyor and ordered an earlier translation which was a reprint of a 1929 edition by Howard Fertig publishers, no attribution given to translation.

The Amazon edition, translated by Michael Hofmann and published by Penguin arrived first. I began to read it and enjoyed it. The translation is good, crisp, and has a nice flow and rhythm to it. I was on the 3rd chapter when the 1929 edition arrived. At this point I began to read the 1929 edition. By the time I had gotten to where I was with the Michael Hofmann edition I was stunned! The narrator, Ernst Junger, portrayed in both books were totally different. The narrator of the 1929 edition was a classically educated man that was strongly patriotic. The Hofmann translation was of a faceless, unthinking, soldier.

At this point I read them in parallel. It left me profoundly depressed to think that anyone would have the temerity to boldly blot out entire pages of a priceless autobiography. Whatever you may think of German nationalism and the German character, no one, not Hofmann, nor penguin has the right to butcher and slant a great work of literature. If you are a student of military history you want the 1929 edition as Junger takes the time to explain military tactics and the necessity for discipline and practice, practice, practice in the military arts. Hofmann has deemed this not fit for our enlighten.

After reading both of these translations I am left with a deep feeling of alienation and angst. How many "translations" have I read that have completely edited out the meat of the book? As an American, born free, and will live free or die, I regard as enemies of mankind those who take it upon themselves to tell us what to think. I just want an unedited text. Let me draw the conclusion.

For the above reasons I pronounce an anathema upon the Hofmann translation. Seekers of truth and authenticity I must wave you off; regard this translation as radioactive.

Kagrel

I cannot overstate how fantastic this book is. Junger's writing style is both easy to read and beautiful at the same time. He brings the reader into the world of a German soldier in the most gruesome, intense and awesome (in the traditional understanding of the world) conflict in history up to that point. It reads like fiction. Junger's descriptions of combat, both in the trenches and in the open, will make your heart race, your mouth dry and give you goosebumps. This book is not all guns and guts though - the true picture of war as mostly boredom sprinkled with bits of fighting is drawn out. He humanizes his comrades and foes alike. In short, he makes the war experience imminently accessible to a person like me - mid-20's male, no military experience, reading the book over a century after the Guns of August sounded.

What makes this book unique is the author's takeaways from his time fighting in The Great War. He loved it. He never felt more alive and human than when he was in the midst of fighting for his life. It is jarring for the modern reader, especially someone who is familiar with the experiences of WWI soldiers, to hear this perspective. This is not to say that he glosses over the horrors of what he lived through - he comes to this conclusion in spite of recognizing the hell of war. His view is more nuanced than "War is all glory" or "War is only hell". He saw himself and other men do things they could have never imagined possible - both magnificent and horrific.

There are many fantastic books I read that I would not recommend to those who do not have an interest in military affairs or history. This is not one of those books. It is accessible to anyone who enjoys excellent writing. Junger's Storm of Steel is a literary classic.

Doomblade

If you've made it this far, chances are you are interested in WWI, so Buy it Now. This book is a great, straightforward account of what the front lines of WWI were like. It's a raw, and sometimes humorous account of life in the trenches This book will stick with you long after you've finished it. I stumbled on this book on accident and wish I knew about it sooner, it's really an amazing story. I recommend skipping the long winded forward though, or maybe go back and read it after the fact.

Marirne

The Author, Ernst Junger,, will go onto to produce a number of pivotal political/philosophical/social commentaries that apply not only to Germany but to western civilization itself. This book is where it all started for Junger - talking about the events of WWI which shaped his views, latter expressed in his works of Fiction and Non-Fiction. This book discloses the reality of war. You can come away with a deeper understanding of war regardless of any political persuasion. Trench warfare, and the horrible new instruments of war introduced during WWI made this particular war so much more terrifying. Junger not only gives the details but he documents - day by day - the impact on the human spirit given these new terrible circumstances. What is pivotal is the transition this particular war encapsulates: From Victorian qualities to Mass extermination - a transition fully documented by Junger. This book should also dispel any lingering hatred of the German people. As you read his daily encounters, Junger makes plain that the German soldier was just like any other human being yet in some ways very unique ( and not in the pejorative way ). Read and learn - Junger has a story to tell about man and war; it's a story told unlike any other. God spare us from another one like WWI.

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