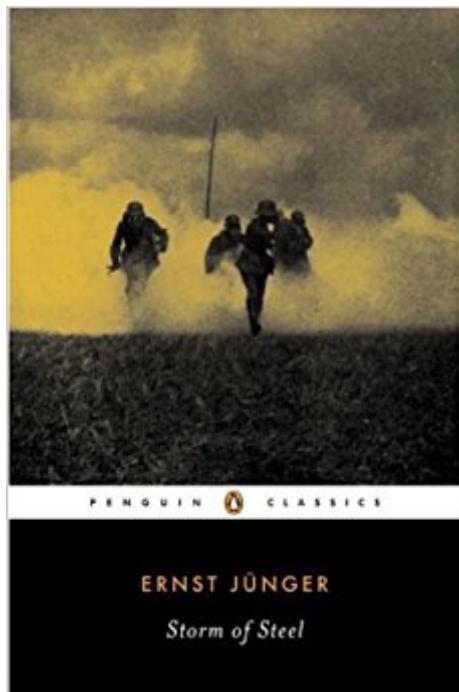


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# Storm Of Steel (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition)



## Synopsis

The memoir widely viewed as the best account ever written of fighting in WW1A memoir of astonishing power, savagery, and ashen lyricism, *Storm of Steel* illuminates not only the horrors but also the fascination of total war, seen through the eyes of an ordinary German soldier. Young, tough, patriotic, but also disturbingly self-aware, JÃ¶nger exulted in the Great War, which he saw not just as a great national conflict 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, JÃ¶nger kept testing himself, braced for the death that will 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 brilliant new translation. For more than sixty-five years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,500 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

âœThe definitive World War I account from the German point of view.â • "Margaret Atwood, Entertainment Weeklyâœ*Storm of Steel*â is what so many books claim to be but are not: a classic account of war.â • "London Evening StandardâœExtraordinary . . . Michael

Hofmann's superlative translation retains all the coruscating vitality of the original. • "Niall Ferguson, author of Civilization, Colossus, and The Ascent of Money

Ernst Jünger (1895–1998) was born in Heidelberg. He ran away from school and volunteered to join the German army. Fighting throughout the war, he recorded his experiences in several books, most famously in *In Stahlgewittern* (Storm of Steel).

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 (This is the BEST feature of 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 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 enlightenment. 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.

As probably the best description of what war in the trenches in WW I was like, Junger's book is one of the more depressing things I've ever read. This despite the jaunty, devil-may-care attitude he takes throughout, or maybe even because of that attitude. Junger spends no time on extraneous details, in particular there is no discussion of how the war started, who was right or wrong, etc. He simply tells what he experienced during his time on the Western Front which started in late 1914 a few months after the war started and continued until he was seriously wounded (for the umpteenth time) two months before the Armistice. In his narration, rarely are his opponents anything other than fellow men caught in jobs which require them to kill each other. They are not evil monsters who need to be disposed of. There is nothing personal about Junger trying to kill them. (As such, it is kind of weird that the Nazi's wanted to use Junger for propaganda purposes in WW II.) On the contrary, Junger often sees his enemy as honorable, brave and very much in the same situation as he is, albeit better supplied. A couple of things about the book itself were disturbing and distracting. As I said the tone is jaunty and almost comic with Junger almost jovial as his friends are killed and maimed. I'm not going to judge him for this as one has to do what works for anyone stuck in this kind of horror but it is discordant for those of us who have not experienced it. Even more, I wonder if it is an artifact of the translator. There are a lot of places where the language used is VERY colloquially British. Two occasions come to mind: One where Junger is assigned to "a building that had been reduced to a pile of rubble, and having so little cover that the first half-accurate shell would knock it for six." I am having a real hard time believing that a German officer writing in German would use an expression from cricket, a game that I don't think of as being played much in Germany. The other was during an incident where Junger goes forward to have a look at what was happening out in front of the lines. The English text reads "I surrendered to my curiosity, and had a shufti at the artillery in the valley below." "Shufti" derives from the arabic word for "look" and has become British slang for having a look, apparently brought back from World War II although it was a common enough expression among all English speakers when I worked in the Middle East in the 1970's. My point is that it struck a very discordant note coming from this German, even in translation. It makes me wonder how much of the tone of this translation has been generated by the translator rather than the author. Still, the story of Junger's war is the best I've read and I recommend this highly to anyone interested in WW I history as well as anyone interested in the experience of modern war generally. Certainly it is an excellent balance to all of the excellent but fairly clinical history that has been produced recently on the hundredth anniversary of a war that killed over 17 million and wounded over 20 million more.

This is a truly compelling account of WW1 trench warfare from the German side of the line. I've read the most famous accounts from the English side - by individual soldiers: - A Rifleman went to War, McBride; First Day of the Somme, Middlebrook; Her Privates We, Manning - all of which are compelling and "feel" authentic. - Junger's account... almost unbelievable and the most compelling account of all. I read it in two evenings and had a hard time putting it down. He tinkered with the original account several times afterwards. An account based on his wartime diaries. The pace and structure is a little uneven, but these are literary quibbles. Although there is a self consciousness about some of the passages that sound "off". But these are minor quibbles because the overriding narrative is so utterly compelling and in the original sense of the term awesome. Much goes obviously unsaid, as is true of the aforementioned accounts. And, for me, it is what is NOT said that is the most haunting of all. - Younger is an extraordinary narrator. And, above all, the translation is absolutely first rate. Though this is a German translated by a "English" German into English English. You'll need to know what "bumph" is and "lorries" are. Highly recommended

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