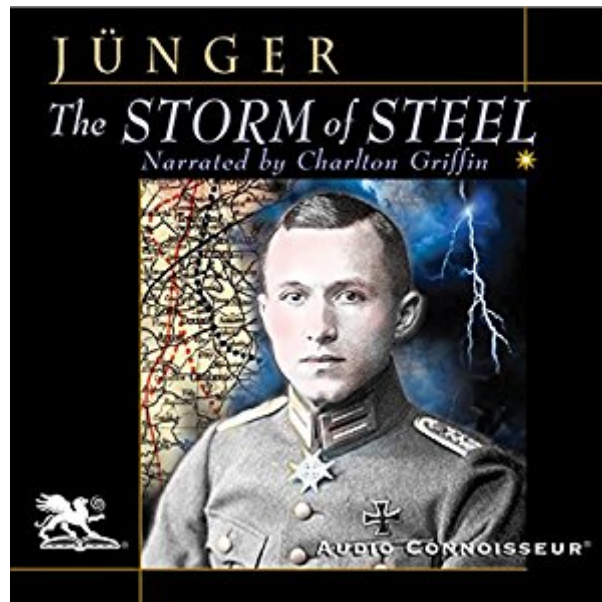


The book was found

The Storm Of Steel



Synopsis

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. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 9 hours and 46 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Audio Connoisseur

Audible.com Release Date: April 19, 2010

Language: English

ASIN: B003IF380S

Best Sellers Rank: #19 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Military > World War I #45 in Books > History > Military > United States > Veterans #58 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Historical > Europe > Germany

Customer Reviews

Ernst Jünger'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. Jünger 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 Jäger 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 Jäger 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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