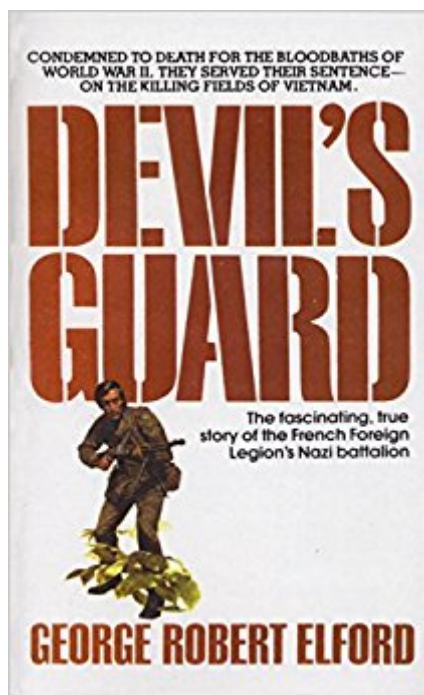


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Devil's Guard



Synopsis

The personal account of a guerrilla fighter in the French Foreign Legion, reveals the Nazi Battalion's inhumanities to Indochinese villagers.

Book Information

Mass Market Paperback: 336 pages

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Customer Reviews

I've read too many war biographies or "war stories" for not being suspicious when reading a book of this kind. Too many times, and especially when the author writes under an assumed name, the author's background and achievements, if true at all, become embellished. Only after a few pages into this book I became suspicious. Wagemueller is very vague about his background. Wagemueller claims that he was a "Kopf Jager" and Sturmfuhrer in the Waffen-SS. Nowhere does he mention what military unit he belonged to and how he and his unit came to end up in Liberec/Czechoslovakia at the war's end. "Kopf Jager" is slang for Waffen-SS Feld Gendarm which means that he belonged to a Waffen-SS Division although he doesn't mention which one. Towards the end of the war in April 1945 remnants of several Waffen-SS divisions fell back into eastern Czechoslovakia from Poland and Hungary. Some of them including 3rd Totenkopf, 10th Frundsberg, 5th Viking and 9th Hohenstaufen were reorganized into attacking Soviet forces in Austria where eventually most of them kapitulated in May, 1945. Only one Waffen-SS division, the 20th Estonian-I Waffen-SS Panzer division, fell back from Poland and was positioned in Liberec, north of Prague, where it eventually kapitulated in the beginning of May, at the same time Wagemueller claims he was there. This division was made up by Estonians and with very few German nationals. Moreover, unlike many

Waffen-SS divisions, the 20th Estonian-I didn't have its own Feld Gendarmerie. From this I see the following possibilities: i) The author is not German as he claims but he is Estonian. ii) The author wasn't a "Kopf Jager" or Feld Gendarm but something else, maybe a cook. iii) He was never at Liberec because he belonged to another division but wanted to disguise his background. For what reason? iv) The author was a Wehrmacht soldier who wants to embellish his background pretending to be a SS-Sturmfuehrer. v) The author was never in Indochina but relies on war stories from others. vi) Purely fiction. Publishing year is 1971. Someone wrote this book in order to educate the US public on how the war in Vietnam ought to be fought. vii) All is true and accurate, however unlikely. These questions lingered in my mind when reading the rest of the book. I know it to be true that many Germans and former Waffen-SS and Wehrmacht soldiers fought in the Foreign Legion in Indochina and that some units were made up by Germans only. I do think that the author probably did participate in that war. Too much, such as names and places, are correctly described for not to be true. However, based on my own experience with guerilla warfare, I have a hard time believing his account of the operations and the battles he supposed to have fought. I found many of them to be over the top exaggerated. Although Wagemueller seems to know about guerilla warfare he seems to make it easier than it really is. However I do agree with the author about what it takes to defeat a guerilla such as Vieth Minh or Viet Cong. In the end I read the book more as fiction based on historical facts and I found it to be an easy and interesting read.

It didn't take too long reading this book to figure out it was fiction. I stuck it out and read the whole thing but I was under the impression when I ordered it that it was a true story. Its fiction.

I think this is a great book. There is much controversy of whether or not this is a real story or not. Just because it wasn't noted in history by our historians, doesn't mean it didn't happen. I would like to believe it is a true story. But it gives you a good look at how to counter terrorism and they were effective in their ways of fighting. Whether it is real or not, it is a good story and it gives you different look at the German soldiers and their side of the story.

I am a reader of many books of the war on the eastern front. I'm not sure why so many people are trying to convince others this book is fiction, but I'll leave you with this, health then conscripted into the Légion étrangère (French Foreign Legion). Other ranks had to serve five years, NCOs ten years, and officers fifteen years. These were some of the men who a few years later marched past the Russian Embassy in Saigon, singing the march of the Waffen-SS: Wir tragen den

silbernen Adler am Arm Im Herzen die Freiheit und Ehre Den Glauben an Gott und den Willen zum Kampf Den Willen zur Waffe und Wehre Ja wir sind Soldaten, wollen Soldaten sein und bleiben, Treue Kameraden, kämpfen für das Vaterland! (We carry our silver eagle on our sleeve, In our hearts freedom and honor. The belief in God, the will to fight, The will for arms and defense. Yes, we are soldiers, are and remain soldiers, True comrades, fighting for the Fatherland.) Good-by
Transylvania Sigmund Heinz Landau

Lot of noise about this book, about the author, authenticity. I for one find the details of the various campaigns too much to argue against. Bottom line - we have Nazis battling Communists in Indochina about 1950. Now there are very few books where a Nazi is the good guy, and to see what I mean one must read the book. The protagonists make no excuses, and do not shy away from the war as far as what their own perspective is or was. They took their "talents" to Vietnam, via the FFL, and showed the Communist terrorists that there are others who can play it dirty. The Nazis butchered 6 million people, the book suggests that if this number horrifies you as it should, consider the post WW2 Communists, who butchered hundreds of millions of people, and literally enslaved hundreds of millions more. I am no apologist for the Nazi regime, however, they seem to get the wrap as being the most evil regime in world history. I disagree. They are a strong second or third, behind Stalin and the Soviets with their partners in genocide the Red Chinese, who killed upwards to a quarter of a billion people in 3 decades according to some estimates. Enough moralizing, the book is non stop action, and a valuable tool in anti-guerilla warfare. I found it fascinating and anyone who isn't a lefty weirdo would probably enjoy this book as much as I did.

Former SS troops serving in the French Foreign Legion--makes for a great story premise, regardless of the historical accuracy. I'll leave the story summary to others. An issue with this version is there appears to be a gap in the text. The narrator seems to magically go from Switzerland to being in the Legion without explanation or context. There are also many scanning issues, with spelling/punctuation errors. Definitely could use a thorough edit pass. Still, quite readable.

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