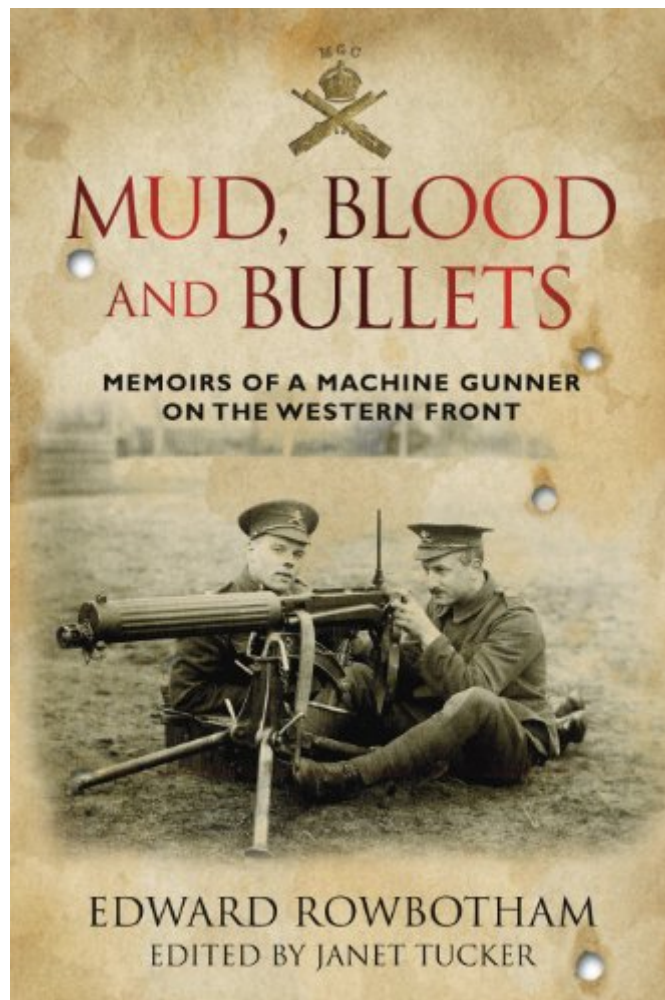




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Mud, Blood And Bullets: Memoirs Of A Machine Gunner On The Western Front



Synopsis

It is 1915 and the Great War has been raging for a year, when Edward Rowbotham, a coal miner from the Midlands, volunteers for Kitchener's Army. Drafted into the newly-formed Machine Gun Corps, he is sent to fight in places whose names will forever be associated with mud and blood and sacrifice: Ypres, the Somme, and Passchendaele.

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Customer Reviews

I was expecting something different- a detailed personal account of WWI - in the trenches and mud and blood and smoke. I got that, but not in the way I was expecting and then I was delighted to get much more than I bargained for. This is the personal account of a man, who lived through a time that was alien to most of us and unfathomable in its charming honesty, humanity and kindness. Most books about this dramatic time in the march of civilization focus on the horror of it all. Yet, Mr.

Rowbotham gives us that which a great many professional and widely published authors only wish they could give their readers; he gives us himself, without any hold back or imaginary embellishments. His spirit and intense kindness come right off the page. I was frequently shocked with Edward's honesty when he describes battle and the horrible times he spent in the trenches. He is not only truthful with us, but to himself. He asks for no pity or overly indulged self-examinations about what war does to the individual. You come to know it. Edward is blessed with the simple man's life. It seems that no matter what he does, the fates have him squarely under their collective thumbs and what's more, he seems to know it and asks no quarter or special favor for knowing it. Most men would have come away from such monstrous intrusion into their world bitter or terribly scarred mentally or even deeply introspective. Not Edward Rowbotham. He is a man of soft steel, warm oak, the most flexible hemp. He is bothered and yet, full in acceptance of his experience. He gets on with it, regardless and finds no time for self-pity or to fill the philosophical voids left by surviving such a calamitous personal experience. I loved, also, the wonderful little vignettes Edward gives us into the lives of his people- his small collection of friends and family and the way of life- from clothing, to food, to courting. It is like a ride to that era in a time machine. I strongly recommend this book. It is so unusual in writing style and overall subject matter, it is a delightful peep hole into an lifetime we seldom get to know about.

This memoir is a fascinating glimpse into a ground-level (literally) soldier's view of WW1. It is also a window to life in another time, not too long ago. Janet Tucker lovingly assembled her grandfather Edward Rowbotham's handwritten memories of his life and the central event he lived through -- fighting for three grueling years in the trenches of Northern France during WW1. Amazing! One gets a clear impression of just how decent a man he was (even war couldn't change that) and how human beings can persevere through just about anything. There is a certain Christian nature to this account. Rowbotham might credit the divine for seeing him through, but he is subtle here-- this isn't an overtly spiritual book. Like many influences in his life, he seems to mention his Christianity in a matter-of-fact way. Very enjoyable -- I just wish Ms. Tucker had included some of the photos she refers to in "Acknowledgements" section. I think they would have added a poignant touch.

I just read this and love it, it's basically a story of a British working class guy of working class background in WW1, his stories about the girls he was dating and his story during the 3 years he fought give you a feeling of what it was like. Not too long easy read

I always enjoy the memories of old soldiers. They possess an insight that historians can only brush because they lack the first person experience. I wish more veterans would sit down and pass those memories on to the next generation. Maybe Veterans Day would be No More War Day.

This book is a must read for any student of WW1. The main character wends his way from battle to battle as his friends drop one by one. Very lucid first hand accounts at the ground level of warfare. If you are tired of the wave top view that you get from books written by and about the senior officers then this book is for you.

The manner in which this is written allowed me to read all aspects of his life. Often with these types of books the authors younger life is boring and of no interest. Unfortunately we learn very little of what the battles were actually like to be in. A good read for anyone interested in this era.

A fabulous book well written

What these men went through is beyond our imagination. I take my hat off to these men, real soldiers who followed their orders into battle knowing it was sure death. How many are still being recovered now one hundred years later is beyond belief.

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