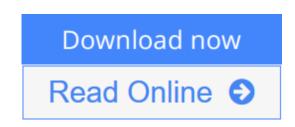


Blood on the Snow: The Carpathian Winter War of 1915 (Modern War Studies (Hardcover))

By Graydon A. Tunstall



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The Carpathian campaign of 1915, described by some as the "Stalingrad of the First World War," engaged the million-man armies of Austria-Hungary and Russia in fierce winter combat that drove them to the brink of annihilation. Habsburg forces fought to rescue 130,000 Austro-Hungarian soldiers trapped by Russian troops in Fortress Przemysl, but the campaign was waged under such adverse circumstances that it produced six times as many casualties as the number besieged. It remains one of the least understood and most devastating chapters of the war-a horrific episode only glimpsed previously but now vividly restored to the annals of history by Graydon Tunstall.

The campaign, consisting of three separate and ultimately doomed offensives, was the first example of "total war" conducted in a mountainous terrain, and it prepared the way for the great battle of Gorlice-Tarnow. Habsburg troops under Conrad von Htzendorf faced those of General Nikolai Ivanov, which together totaled more than two million soldiers. None of the participants were psychologically or materially prepared to engage in prolonged winter mountain warfare, and hundreds of thousands of soldiers suffered from frostbite or succumbed to the "White Death." Tunstall reconstructs the brutal environmentheavy snow, ice, dense fog, frigid winds-to depict fighting in which a man lasted on average between five to six weeks before he was killed, wounded, captured, or committed suicide. Meanwhile, soldiers warmed rifles over fires to make them operable and slaughtered thousands of horses just to ward off starvation.

This riveting depiction of the Carpathian Winter War is the first book-length account of that vicious campaign, as well as the first English-language account of Eastern Front military operations in World War I in more than thirty years. Based on exhaustive research in Vienna's and Budapest's War Archives, Tunstall's gripping narrative incorporates material drawn from eyewitness accounts, personal diaries, army logbooks, and correspondence among members of the high command.

As Tunstall shows, the roots of the Habsburg collapse in Russia in 1916 lay

squarely in the winter campaign of 1915. Packed with insights from previously unexploited primary sources, his book provides an engrossing read—and the definitive account of the Carpathian Winter War.

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Editorial Review

Review

"With bold, powerful brush strokes, Tunstall paints a picture of horrendous death in the Carpathian Mountains. Austria-Hungary and Russia each lost about one million men, making the battle more costly than the better known ones of Verdun and the Somme 1916. Meticulously researched and well written, this is military history at its finest. A must read."—Holger H. Herwig, author of *The Marne, 1914* "Snow falls on the mountains, wolves howl in the distance, and two doomed armies learn the truth of the old adage, 'there is no enemy more formidable than nature.' An essential book for all World War I libraries."—Robert M. Citino, author of *The German Way of War* "A must read for anyone interested in the Great War's Eastern front."—Richard L. DiNardo, author of *Breakthrough: The Gorlice-Tarnow Campaign, 1915*

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About the Author

Graydon A. Tunstall teaches history at the University of South Florida and is executive director of the Phi Alpha Theta history honour society. He is author of World War I and its Effects upon World History, Planning for War against Russia and Serbia: Austro-Hungarian and German Military Strategies, 1871-1914, and a forthcoming volume on Fortress Przemysl.

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