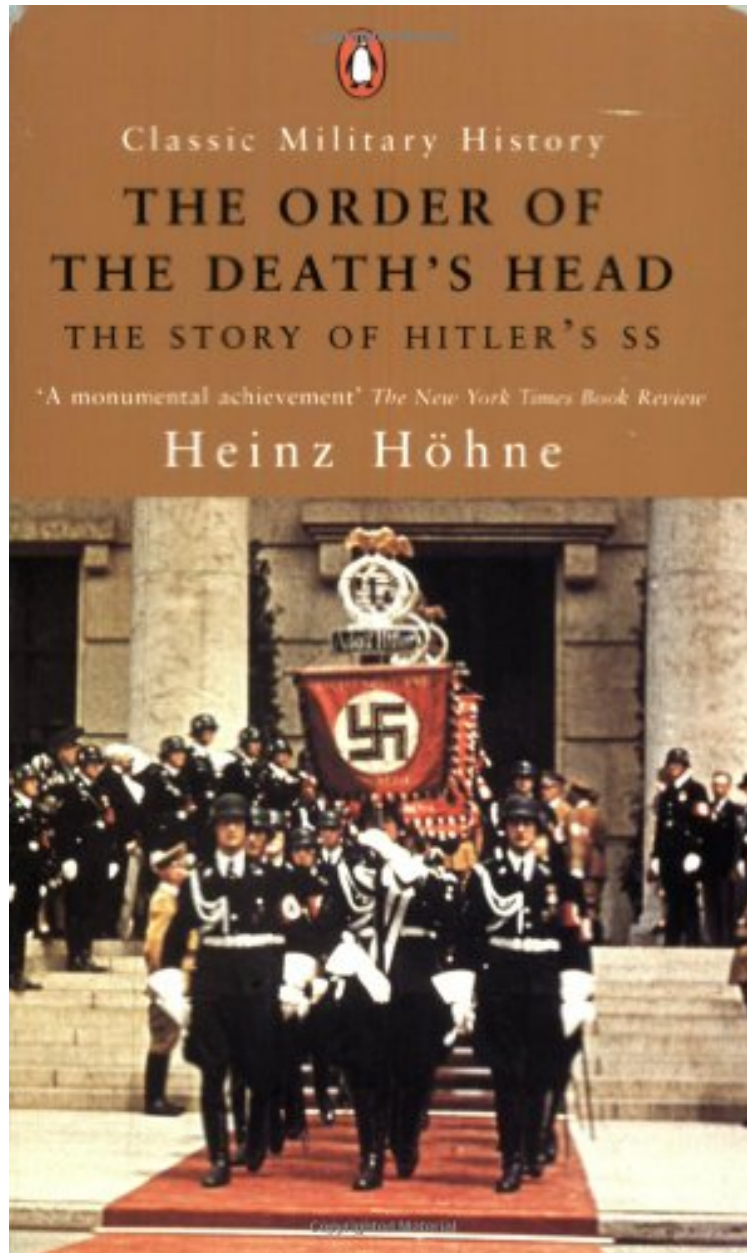


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The Order of the Death's Head: The Story of Hitler's SS (Classic Military History)

Heinz Zollin Hhne

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The SS was the terror of Europe. Swearing eternal allegiance to Adolf Hitler, it infiltrated every aspect of German life and was responsible for the deaths of millions. This gripping history recounts the strange and, at times, absurd true story of Hitler's SS. It exposes an organization that was not directed by some devilishly efficient system but was the product of accident, inevitability, and the random convergence of criminals, social climbers, and romantics. Above all, this eye-opening book describes in fascinating detail the chaotic political conditions that allowed the SS-despite rivalries and bizarre conditions-to assume and exercise unaccountable power.

Language Notes
Text: English (translation) Original Language: German
About the Author
Hohne, a journalist specializing in Nazi and intelligence history, was head of the Foreign News Department at *Der Spiegel*.
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Their uniform was black and they were the terror of a nation. Their badge was the death's head and they swore eternal allegiance to the Führer. Their flash was the runic double-S and they murdered men in millions. Hardly an aspect of the nation's life seemed safe from their interference; they provided the sentries on the Reich Chancellery and the guards in the concentration camps; they manned the divisions which carried the death's-head symbol to Europe; they occupied key positions in agriculture, the health service, racial policy and scientific affairs; they crushed their way into traditional diplomatic festivities; they had their watchdogs among the ministerial bureaucrats. They called themselves the *Schutzstaffel* [guard echelon SS] of the National-Socialist Party and in the words of SS-Hauptsturmführer [Captain] Dieter Wisliceny they considered themselves a new form of religious sect with its own rites and customs. In fact the SS world was a bizarre nonsensical affair devoid of all logic. The theories hitherto advanced to explain the SS phenomenon have been equally bizarre, though superficially logical. In fact, history shows that the SS was anything but an organisation constructed and directed on some diabolically efficient system; it was a product of accident and automatism. The real history of the SS is a story of idealists and criminals, of place-seekers and romantics; it is the history of the most fantastic association of men imaginable.