

PRESS RELEASE

Pen & Sword Books Ltd

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Save the Last Bullet

The Memoir of a Boy Soldier in Hitler's Army

Author: Heidi Langbein-Allen

Highlights

- An exceptionally rare memoir of a boy soldier in Hitler's army
- A moving account of desperate fighting against the Red Army in the closing stages of WW2
- After a miraculous survival the author is punished by the Allies with forced labour
- Thanks to his determination Willi achieves a successful and distinguished career
- Strong serialisation prospect both in the UK and US, where his daughter lives
- Promising foreign rights potential particularly in Germany.

Willi Langbein was just thirteen when the Nazis took him away from his parents under the pretence of protecting him. Their real reason was to turn him into cannon-fodder for use against Hitler's enemies. Deployed to the collapsing Eastern Front in the last days of the war, Willi, now aged fourteen, and his schoolmates were ordered to stave off the relentless Russian advance. None were expected to return alive from the final battles of the Third Reich.

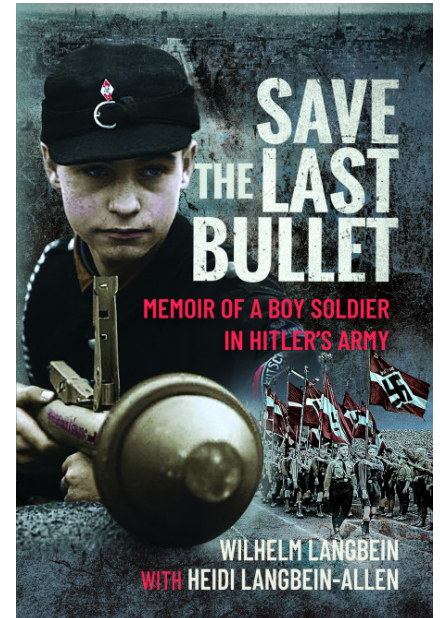
Yet, against all odds, Willi does survive but his ordeal is far from over. He returns home to find everything he knows destroyed. Numb and confused, he is mandated to serve one year of forced farm labour. After his release, he gradually realizes that all he was taught to believe in was a lie and he sinks into depression. Eventually, thanks to his friendship with a kind British soldier, he begins to heal. It begins to dawn on him that he can play a part to ensure that the evil he witnessed is never repeated. Ultimately, he succeeds by earning the Medal of European Merit in 1979 for his contribution to the advancement of European democracy.

Willi's graphic and moving story, told from a Nazi child soldier's perspective, is an inspiring memoir of lost innocence and despair, but also of determination and hope restored.

About the Author

Having lost two schoolyears as a child soldier in Hitler's Army, WILHELM LANGBEIN graduated from high school in 1951, aged 21. In 1959, he married his Spanish pen pal, Teresa Vives. They had two daughters, Heidi and Graziella. After gaining a degree in law and philology from the University of Cologne, he joined the German Department of Defense in 1962. In 1979, he was awarded the medal of European Merit for his contribution to the advancement of democracy in Europe. He spent his final assignment as head of the Legal Division of the NATO EFA Development, Production and Logistic Management Agency before retiring in 1992. He passed away in 2018.

HEIDI LANGBEIN-ALLEN was raised in Germany, France and Spain and lives in the USA with her husband, a retired US Navy veteran. She wrote her Father's memoirs from his taped recollections and records of interviews. An excerpt aired in the top-rated World War Two podcast fightingthroughpodcast.co.uk in May 2021 and a chapter appeared in the San Diego Writer's Association 2021 Anthology A Year In Ink.



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Author photographs can be made available upon request.