Adolf Hitler’s
MEIN KAMPF:
A Collectors Guide

Discover the fascinating history behind one of the best selling books in the world

Blue - Rare 50th Birthday Edition
Red - Three Million sales commemorative given to Nazi Party members only
Far Right - Red version of 50th Anniversary edition
This Book

The book was produced to document various versions of Mein Kampf and to assist collectors in identifying valuable and non-valuable versions.

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Second Edition

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Mein Kampf books have become collectable both for their influence on history and for their scarcity.

Original pre-War and Wartime versions are prized collectables and can be very expensive.

Franz Eher Nachfolger first published 500 copies of Mein Kampf on July 15, 1925 as Mein Kampf: Eine Abrechnung which means My Struggle: A Retrospect. The book was not very popular, but the publisher received many requests for a second printing. It is not known if those requests came from the public, from party members themselves, or from distributors who were encouraged by party members to make the requests.

By that time, Hitler had produced a second volume titled Die Nationalsozialistische Bewegung or The National Socialist Movement and it was published in December 1926. These were combined into one volume after 1930.

After Hitler became Chancellor, there were three main versions of Mein Kampf:
- Volksausgabe or People’s Edition (shown to the right)
- Hochzeitsausgabe or Wedding Edition
- Soldiers Edition

The wedding edition was given as a traditional gift for free to newly married couples. There were various editions showing a color shield representing the province on the front cove. They usually had brown covers and a blue leather spine.

This Mein Kampf cover was used on the paperback and as the dust cover for the hardback books. It commonly covered the blue hardback edition which is the most common version. There were other colors including Red (1942 red version shown below).

Below is the blue 1935 Hardback shown 782 Pages Plus Advertisements on final pages.
In 1940, the Soldiers Edition was released. This edition was a smaller version with a red cover which was easier for a soldier to carry. It was also printed in a **Germanic font**.

A special edition, The Jubiläumsausgabe or Anniversary Issue, was published in 1939 in honor of Hitler’s 50th birthday. It was available in dark blue or bright red with a gold sword on the cover. It is commonly called the Jubilee edition in English.

All of these versions contained both Mein Kampf volumes. In 1930 and later, the editions were combined into one book and no longer carried the volume identifiers of 1. Band and 2. Band on the covers.

First Printing Volume 1 1925 with 392 pages hard cover, and Volume 2, 1926 with 354 pages. Both editions are 6 1/4 x 9 1/8 inches.

The first page photo of the separate volumes(above) differs from photos used in the Volume 1 and 2 combined editions. This photo was used again on the 50th Birthday edition.

Left, 1932 paperback version of Volume 1 (1. Band)
The 50th Anniversary Hitler’s Birthday Edition. Jubiläumsausgabe or Anniversary Issue, also called the Jubilee edition. In a blue or red cloth version with dust cover. An edition with the dust cover is very rare. It is believed only 9000 copies were made and those were given or sold to party members.

Below is a red edition with a different spine and dust jacket image.
A deluxe leather edition was produced in two volumes in 1938 and 1939, possibly other years as well. It had a paper jacket protecting two volumes bound in brown leather. There was also a box that held the two volumes.

Below, dust jackets and below that the title page was bound with a protective tissue paper separator. The tissue paper was for the printing process. The pages might stick together due to the heavy ink on the photo page. It did not have time to fully dry before the book was assembled. The photo is different from the regular other editions produced at this time.
To celebrate the sale of three million copies, three-hundred books of a special deluxe edition were printed and bound in leather. These were not sold to the public. They were given as gifts to select members of the Nazi party. The complete edition contained 359 and 351 pages of handmade paper and a leather with a gold-embossed leather cover. 100 books were made in blue leather, 100 books in black leather and 100 books in red leather. This was an interesting choice since these were not the Nazi party colors (red black and white).

This edition is very rare and almost impossible to find.
The first English translation is known as the Dugdale version was released in October 1933. It was an abridged version by Edgar Dugdale.

Edgar Dugdale was a Zionist. His motivation to produce a translation was likely to use the book as a justification for an independent Jewish nation. Eventually, after the war, it was used exactly for this purpose in the United Nations.

He began translating on his own in 1931. The London publishing firm Hurst & Blackett had already purchased the rights to publish an abridgment in the United Kingdom. Edgar Dugdale offered his version to them for no charge in April 1933. After further editing, it was released in October 13, 1933. This version was titled My Struggle.

The US publishing firm Houghton Mifflin purchased the rights to the Dugdale abridgment on July 29, 1933. The title was changed for the American version to My Battle. Dugdale is given credit for the translation in the U.S. edition, but not in the UK version. Dugdale’s wife, Blanche, was the niece of Lord Balfour and did not want to the attention so asked that their name be omitted from the UK version. Otherwise, both versions are the same.

This version was heavily criticized because it was abridged. The translation itself is also poor.
Reynal and Hitchcock Translation

Houghton and Mifflin licensed Reynal & Hitchcock the rights to publish a full translation in 1938. The New School for Social Research was hired for the translation task and appointed a group of translators. It was later determined that some of those given credit in the book had nothing to do with the translation (source: Mein Kampf A Publishing History In Britain and America). This version is no longer published and was plagued with many errors and mistranslations. This version was released on February 28, 1939.

The book was red cloth covered with gold leaf spine lettering. There was no image on the front. The dust jacket shows that the title was changed to Mein Kampf for this version instead of My Struggle or My Battle.

Reynal and Hitchcock spine and front cover dust jacket.

1939 edition shown with different dust cover. This cover was issued after the Stackpole edition was released which said on the dustcover that no royalties were paid to Hitler. Their marketing was successful so Reynal and Hitchcock had to counter with their own Profits To Refugee Children campaign. They could not claim no money went to Hitler because they were contractually obligated to pay 6% royalties. No royalties were actually paid to him due to legal battles with Stackpole and then the start of WWII.
Stackpole Translation

Stackpole and Sons of Pennsylvania released an unexpurgated translation by William Soskin (however the copyright filing lists the translator as Barrows Mussey but it appears that they may have each translated half of the book, each of the two volumes appears to have been translated in a different style) shortly before Houghton Mifflin released their version.

After Houghton Mifflin filed suit to stop the distribution, the Federal Second Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in Houghton Mifflin’s favor and ordered Stackpole to stop selling their version.

The case was an interesting one and set a legal precedent because Stackpole and Sons argued that Hitler could not transfer his copyright to anyone in the United States because he was not a citizen of any country. The court established that persons with no citizenship have the same copyright status in the United States that any other foreigner would. Houghton Mifflin Co. v. Stackpole Sons, Inc., 104 F.2d 306, 307 (2d Cir. 1939). The fact that German publishers were in possession of the Mein Kampf manuscript meant that common law copyright applied.

Only 12,000 copies of Stackpole’s version were printed which makes it moderately rare.

The Houghton Mifflin correspondence regarding the case with Stackpole are part of the records stored by Harvard University Library Call Number MS Am 1925-1925.4

The Stackpole Translation is very poorly made and contains many errors. Some of these are documented in the book Mein Kampf: A Translation Controversy.
Stackpole edition with and without dust jacket. Note how Hitler’s name changed as war approached from Herr Hitler or Mr. Hitler to just Hitler.
Hurst & Blackett’s Murphy Translation

The first complete English translations of Mein Kampf came from James Murphy in 1939 and was published by Hurst & Blackett. Murphy was previously hired by the German Propaganda Ministry to make an English translation for their use. This version was published in Germany but no credit is given to Murphy. Comparing the rare Propaganda Ministry edition to the Hurst & Blackett edition shows the text is similar, however, many complex sentences are split into shorter sentences in the later version. There are also some interesting changes in the number and placement of offensive words which were not present in the original German text.

Publishing of this version ended in 1942 when the printing company was bombed by Germany during an attack.

1939 Hurst and Blackett Edition of Murphy Translation. They imitated a blue cover and gold swastika eagle of the German edition. It was also sold with a yellow paper band advertising that royalties go to the Red Cross. Note it says royalties, not profits.
1982 Reprint of Hurst and Blackett edition by CPA Book Publishers. This edition was published at least through 1999. It is an interesting specimen but has no collector value. 380 pages.

Left, 1943 Houghton Mifflin dust jacket.

Left-Below, 1943 dust jacket for Murphy translation.

In August 1944, the Germans moved 500 Greek and 500 Albanian Partisan prisoners into the camp. During January 1945, there were 5,991 men in the camp. However, as the war in the East forced the evacuation of the camps close to the Russians, more and more prisoners of war were funneled into this camp. When finally liberated on April 29, 1945, by the US 14th Armored Division of the Third Army, this camp held 100,000 prisoners of war of all nationalities. On April 13, 1945, more than 10,000 men from Stalag Luft III arrived from Nurnburg.

Mail that had been addressed to them while they were in Sagan was received by men from Luft III. POW mail during this time period presents an interesting variety of camp cancels because of the movement of prisoners. Prisoners of VII A were permitted to write two letters and two postcards per week.

The camp cancellation stamp is used on the title page of this particular book.

This text is available again, for the first time since it was printed in Nazi Germany, at www.HitlerLibrary.org or at any bookstore.
Official Nazi Translation into English. Top, title page. Bottom, close up of Stalag VII A POW camp stamp. For unknown reasons, the red cloth cover was painted black before the book was assembled. The spine is dark navy leatherette.
The Murphy translation by Hurst and Blackett was split into 18 weekly volumes and sold by Hutchinson & Co Publishers LTD in England.

Hutchinson used the tabloid magazine format to promote their other war books. They also intended to sell a cover which could be used to bind the 18 weekly parts into one book.

The original order form stated that “Owing to the rationing of paper Mein Kampf can only be delivered to those who sign the Order Form and hand it to their newsagent.”

The tabloid set was published in London by Hutchinson & Co. in association with Hurst & Blackett, 1939. Houghton Mifflin sued and successfully obtained an injunction.

They total 600 pages in the original 18 weekly parts. The pamphlets are heavily illustrated. The 18 pamphlets consisted of part I, 40 pages, parts II- XVIII, 32 pages each. Each sold for 6 pence or around 10 cents.

The cover says “Royalties on all sales will go to the British Red Cross”, however the Red Cross never agreed to the use of their name. In the early days of the war, the British obviously had few qualms about allowing publication of Mein Kampf.

The printed wrappers contain advertisements for related publications such as: “I was Hitler’s Maid”, “Hutchinson’s Pictorial History of the War”, “How to Conquer Hitler”, “These Germans - an Estimate of Their Character.”

Book and Title Page of Hurst & Blackett Ltd illustrated edition. This is the same as the 18 week edition with the Murphy Translation. This edition was also produced in a version with the eagle imprinted in the front. Available in red and navy.
Hutchinson/Hurst & Blackett illustrated edition with eagle imprint. The book contents were identical to the 18 week edition. The separate binder used to combine all 18 weeks looked very similar to this edition.
The Hutchinson print of the Murphy translation was divided into 18 Weekly Editions.

The first seven editions had yellow and red covers. The eighth edition was red and white. The remaining editions had red covers. They sold for 6 pence or about 10 cents in US dollars at the time.
Hurst & Blackett Ltd edition with dust cover (Left) and title page below. 1933. Hardcover, 285 pages, 24 photos, measures 24x16cm. Note that they used a different title page photo than on other editions.

Below, H&B London 1939 edition with alternate cover.
Cranston Translation

Senator Alan Cranston worked for the International News Service in the 1930s during his youth. He could speak fluent German.

Cranston’s unauthorized translation of Mein Kampf was intended to show Hitler and his book as evil. It even went so far as to call Hitler the “Greatest Liar On Earth”. The translation was never intended to be objective. The translation was much harsher than the American or previous English translations.

After reading the original German version of Mein Kampf, Cranston tried to alert the public through his media contacts about Hitler’s plans. After Cranston read the English translation (the Dugdale Abridgment) which he believed was a diluted version, he made his own unauthorized translation which was published just before Hitler invaded Poland.

Cranston criticized American translations of the time by saying they omitted details and each country where Mein Kampf was published was only allowed to know part of the full plan it exposed.

The Cranston edition compressed the original 270,000 words down to 70,000 filling 32 newsprint size pages. It was published in 1939 by Noram Publishing Co. of Greenwich, Conn. and sold for 10 cents when the book was selling for $3.00.

Houghton Mifflin used the courts to stop the distribution of this paper but it is estimated 500,000 issues were sold.
Cranston Translation with Commentary
Manheim Translation

Houghton Mifflin had licensed the rights to Mein Kampf from Reynal & Hitchcock and had to pay royalties on each book sold. They commissioned their own translation called the Ralph Manheim Translation in 1943. Having their own translation meant they did not have to share their profits.

There were various covers used over the years. To the left is one from 1943. For some reason, Manheim covers have always been rather odd. The latest version is solid black with tiny letters, almost as if it is embarrassed to advertise what it contains.

The Manheim translation has been one of the longest in-print translations. It is not a great improvement over the Murphy translation however. It has many errors and omissions plus the translation style is very cumbersome and it is filled with unfamiliar words, untranslated German passages, and no useful footnotes which makes it difficult to read and has caused many readers to quit in frustration. The Manheim translation and has been replaced by the Ford Translation in many schools and libraries which is the newest and most accurate edition.

Collector Tip

How do you know if a book came off the official Nazi printing presses?

Look at the bottom of the pages where you usually find footnotes. Thumb through and on the right hand pages you should see what looks like foot notes

For example, from the Official Nazi English edition, what looks like a footnote saying 1* appears on page 3, then 2 H.M.K appears on page 17 and 2* on page 19 and the pattern repeats several pages later. This was some method used by the printer to keep track of pages. HMK means Hitler’s Mein Kampf. and was spelled out in German language editions such as the Wedding edition and in the soldier’s edition it is Hitler, M.K. in Germanic script.

If your book does not have these marks, then it did not come off the Nazi presses.
Foreign Translations

Mein Kampf has been translated into various languages including French (Mon Combat J. Gaudefroy-Calmettes and A. Denombynes from Nouvelles Éditions Latines), Danish (Min Kamp), Indian, Iranian, Japanese, Chinese, Korean and others.

Many of these foreign translations are inaccurate and some are heavily embellished. Many were made based on the older English translations such as Manheim’s version. This means they carry all of those errors and more that were introduced when the translators could not understand the complex sentences or meanings or references. Foreign translations sometimes take wild liberties with the story and replace sections with their own interpretation instead of using an actual translated passage. Some foreign versions, such as the French translation, censored large parts of the original German text which were critical of France.
The Ford Translation

In 2007 Elite Minds Inc., an educational products company, launched a program to investigate the need and requirements to produce a new translation of Mein Kampf. They wanted a new and easy to understand translation which could also be used in creating a Mein Kampf audio book. This project was completed in 2009.

This translation is known as the Ford Translation. This is the easiest to understand translation to date. Previous translations were direct word-for-word translations from German to English. Due to the differences in the two languages, and the fact that Hitler dictated Mein Kampf like a speech, many of the sentences translated this way were hard to understand and unnecessarily complex. Older translations also used many uncommon and confusing words. The new translation has been polished and edited to make it easy to understand and listen to in the audio book format. Thousands of errors that were present in past translations have been corrected and important notes have been inserted to make it easier to understand. Past translations referenced people, places, and events without explaining what they were or what they meant. The modern, or non-German reader was left confused because these names and places are uncommon today. Older versions also edited out many instances of Hitler’s sarcastic wit which has been lost to readers until the release of the Ford Translation.

You can find many of the errors in previous Mein Kampf translations and see how they have been corrected in the eBook Mein Kampf: A Translation Controversy which is available at www.HitlerLibrary.org

The Ford translation is also the first full version of Mein Kampf ever available in an audio format.

The new Ford translation is available in both printed versions and in an audio format. The book is available from any bookstore, but make sure you ask for the Ford translation, otherwise you may receive one of the older, hard to read translations.

You can listen to a free sample of the audio at www.HitlerLibrary.org
Collectability Notes

Mein Kampf books published before the end of World War II are considered collectable. Those published after the war are not collectable. The most collectable versions are the ones in German. The Easton Press company produces nice looking leather bound classic books including Mein Kampf. This leather bound edition appears on book sites and auction sites frequently with outrageous prices anywhere from $300 to $1000. This edition is an older translation and only has value in the leather binding with its coffee table appeal which is under $30.

Advertisements and Press

Mein Kampf was popular for satire and criticism. A number of privately published commentaries appeared before and during the war as well.

Two examples of anti-Kampf literature produced in 1939. These were critical analyses of Mein Kampf and Hitler’s plans. Both of these books are available for download at www.HitlerLibrary.org
Jan 2, 1939 Time Cover, Hitler Man Of The Year.

There are many news magazines with stories about Hitler and the war from Time and Newsweek which are still commonly available.

This new printing from Easton Press only has value for those people who wish to display the nice cover. It is a modern reprint with no collector value and is not recommended for reading.
YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO STUDY IT, SON!

No, lad, your "homework" won’t include any of these strange foreign, un-American teachings... all of us are fighting to make sure of that.

You’re proud to be an American and we are seeing to it that you can always hold your head high. Millions of Americans are working together — on the battlefront and in the production front — to assure a decent world now and a better world when you are grown up.

And while we are working and fighting, we're learning, too — learning how to make a lot of things better with light metals and plastics and chemicals — designing and building machines that will not only provide more of the good things of life but will also mean jobs for the fathers of boys like you — and for you, too, when the time comes.

That’s really the reason why all of us at Kearney & Trecker are doing all we can... building the machines that are needed to make the weapons to win the war. Yes, son, it will be a better, brighter world when our fight is won.

Milwaukee MACHINE TOOLS
WHATEVER tomorrow’s headlines may be, the big news of the war today and tonight is being written in the mighty industrial plants of America.

Here at Philco, for instance... research engineers who have helped to make America the center of the world in electronic achievements are at work on vital war assignments. Laboratories and production lines that have done their share to give America more radios, refrigerators and air conditioners than all the rest of the world combined, are now producing the eyes and ears of mechanized warfare... intricate communications equipment and powerful radios for tanks and airplanes. Other divisions of Philco have turned their skill to the making of artillery fuses, shells and industrial storage batteries.

Repeated a thousandfold throughout the nation, the unassailable spirit and strength of this united effort gives us cause for our faith in Victory. And for our faith in a more abundant future... in the fuller life that will be the heritage of the scientific miracles born from the stress of war.

PHILCO CORPORATION

America is conserving its resources for Victory. As you save on sugar, rubber, gasoline and all products of peace-time consumption, remember too to preserve the use of the things you own. Through its national service organizations, Philco offers, at reasonable and uniform charges, the means of prolonging the life of Philco products.

RADIO, PHONOGRAPH, REFRIGERATORS, AIR CONDITIONERS, RADIO TUBES • INDUSTRIAL STORAGE BATTERIES FOR MOTIVE POWER, SIGNAL SYSTEMS, CONTROL AND AUXILIARY POWER

This cartoon by Wm. H. Summers is one of a series being drawn for Philco by America’s leading editorial cartoonists. Posted on the walls of the Philco factories, they interpret the spirit of Philco’s soldiers of industry and the significance of their work in the nation’s united effort for victory.

Free Limited Offer... While available, a full size reproduction of the original drawing by Wm. H. Summers will be furnished gladly upon request. Simply address Philco Corporation, Philadelphia, Penna., and ask for Cartoon Number 18D.
Reynal and Hitchcock advertisement for Mein Kampf and other books.

American propaganda postcard
ADOLF HITLER
MEIN KAMPF

Das grundlegendste Werk des Nationalsozialismus

Ausgabe in zwei Bänden kartoniert je RM. 2.85


Eine Abrechnung (Band 1)


Umsatz: Jeder Band ca. 400 Seiten

Die nationalsozialistische Bewegung (Band 1)

Der Staat / Staatliche Führer und Staatsbürger / Persönlichkeit und politischer Staat / Staat und Partei / Der Kampf der ersten Zeit / Die Würde mit der rotenden Firma / Der Staat ist am Münchner Ring / Grundzüge über Sinn und Organisation der NSDAP / Der Führer als Macht / Propaganda und Organisation / Gewerkschaft / Deutsche Bündnispolitik nach dem Kriege / Historisierung und Doppelpolitik / Nutzungs als Recht

Lerne Hitler durch sein Buch kennen!

Verlag Frz. Eber Nachf., München 2 NO (Hansabaum)
This is a Russian propaganda postcard. It is not directly referring to Mein Kampf, however in Mein Kampf Hitler criticizes those German patriots who ‘wear the hat with ox horns above their face’.
Left, a page from the German paper Der Adler - 1940.03.11 with a small advertisement for Mein Kampf.

March 21, 1942 Liberty Magazine showing Hitler burning Mein Kampf to keep warm.
Punch Magazine was a popular satire publication in England. Above they poke fun at Mein Kampf.
Disney Cartoon from November 1943. The fox uses Mein Kampf to trick Chicken Little.
German poster promoting 4 million copies of Mein Kampf sold.
This is an original box used to ship Mein Kampf to a mail order purchaser in Germany.

Anti Mein Kampf postcard from WWII printed in the USA.
This is a poster printed by the US Government during or before WWII. It misquotes Mein Kampf (though the sentiment is accurate).

**Conclusion**

I hope this guide has provided some useful information and helped you determine if a copy of Mein Kampf you have is valuable. You can find more information about Hitler and Mein Kampf at www.HitlerLibrary.org including many free downloadable publications.