

erwin rommel the desert fox

Erwin Rommel the Desert Fox: A Legendary German General and His Impact on World War II

Introduction

Erwin Rommel, famously known as the "Desert Fox," remains one of the most iconic and celebrated military commanders of the 20th century. His tactical brilliance, leadership qualities, and daring campaigns in North Africa have left an indelible mark on military history. Despite serving in the German Wehrmacht during World War II, Rommel's reputation extends beyond political affiliations, earning him admiration from allies and enemies alike. This article delves into the life, military career, and enduring legacy of Erwin Rommel, exploring how he earned his nickname and why he is remembered as one of history's most brilliant field commanders.

Early Life and Military Beginnings

Childhood and Education

Erwin Rommel was born on November 15, 1891, in Heidenheim an der Brenz, Germany. Coming from a modest family, Rommel displayed an early interest in engineering and the military. His disciplined nature and keen strategic mind set him apart from a young age.

Joining the German Army

Rommel joined the German Army in 1910 as a cadet and quickly demonstrated exceptional leadership skills during World War I. His bravery and tactical ingenuity earned him several promotions and decorations, including the Iron Cross.

Rise to Prominence: From World War I to Interwar Years

World War I Service

During WWI, Rommel served on the Western Front and later in Romania. His actions in the battles earned him recognition, including the Pour le Mérite, Germany's highest military honor at the time.

Interwar Period and Military Development

Following the war, Rommel continued his military career, gaining experience in various staff and command positions. He was instrumental in developing tank tactics and mechanized warfare, which would later influence his campaigns in North Africa.

The North African Campaign and the Birth of the "Desert Fox"

Appointment as Commander of the Afrika Korps

In 1941, Rommel was appointed to lead the newly formed German forces in North Africa — the Afrika Korps. His mission was to support Italy's faltering campaign against the British in Egypt.

Strategic Brilliance in the Desert

Rommel's leadership in the North African desert was characterized by bold maneuvers, rapid advances, and innovative tactics. His ability to adapt to the harsh desert environment and outmaneuver larger Allied forces earned him a formidable reputation.

Key Battles and Campaigns

Some of Rommel's most notable engagements include:

- The Battle of Gazala (1942): A significant victory that allowed him to capture Tobruk.
- The Second Battle of El Alamein (1942): Although a defeat, Rommel's tactics during this period showcased his strategic prowess.
- The Battle of Alam Halfa (1942): A tactical defensive success against numerically superior Allied forces.

The Tactics and Leadership Style of Rommel

Innovative Military Strategies

Rommel was known for his daring tactics such as:

- Rapid flanking maneuvers
- Use of deception and feints
- Flexible defensive strategies

Leadership Qualities

His leadership was characterized by:

- Personal bravery and leading from the front
- Inspiring troops with his presence and strategic vision
- Maintaining morale under difficult conditions

Challenges and Decline

Overextension and Supply Issues

Despite his successes, Rommel faced logistical challenges, including supply shortages and stretched supply lines, which hampered his operations.

El Alamein and the Turning Point

The defeat at the Second Battle of El Alamein marked a turning point in the North African campaign, leading to the retreat of Axis forces. Rommel's forces were eventually pushed back into Tunisia.

Relationship with Hitler and Military Politics

Rommel's relationship with Adolf Hitler was complex. While he was loyal, Rommel often disagreed with Hitler's strategic decisions, especially regarding the Eastern Front and the conduct of the war.

Rommel's Role in the Final Years and His Legacy

Involvement in the German Resistance

In 1944, Rommel was implicated in the July 20 Plot to assassinate Hitler. Although not directly involved, he was pressured to commit suicide to protect his family and reputation.

Death and Posthumous Reputation

Rommel died on October 14, 1944, from a poison administered by the Nazis. His death was officially attributed to injuries sustained in a car accident, a cover-up for his resistance activities.

Enduring Legacy

Rommel's military genius and leadership qualities continue to be studied in military academies worldwide. He is remembered as a tactician who combined daring and innovation with a sense of honor, earning admiration even among his adversaries.

Why Was Erwin Rommel Known as the "Desert Fox"?

Origin of the Nickname

Rommel's reputation as the "Desert Fox" originated from his cunning, swift, and unpredictable tactics in the North African desert. His ability to strike quickly and retreat strategically made him a formidable opponent.

Symbol of Military Excellence

The nickname encapsulates Rommel's mastery of desert warfare, emphasizing his adaptability, strategic brilliance, and daring leadership.

Impact of Rommel's Campaigns on World War II

Strategic Significance

Rommel's North African campaigns tied down significant Allied resources and delayed their advance into the Mediterranean and Middle East.

Lessons in Military Tactics

His innovative tactics influenced modern armored warfare and combined arms operations.

Historical Perception

Rommel remains a controversial figure—admired for his military skills, yet associated with the Nazi regime. His legacy is often viewed through the lens of his professional conduct and strategic genius.

Conclusion

Erwin Rommel, the "Desert Fox," exemplifies a military leader whose tactical brilliance and daring leadership continue to inspire military strategists and historians. His campaigns in North Africa showcased innovative tactics and resilience under extreme conditions. Despite the complexities of his political affiliations and the tragic end of his life, Rommel's legacy endures as a symbol of military excellence and strategic ingenuity. His story remains a compelling chapter in the annals of 20th-century warfare, emphasizing the importance of leadership, innovation, and honor in the face of adversity.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was Erwin Rommel and why was he known as the 'Desert Fox'?

Erwin Rommel was a German Field Marshal during World War II, renowned for his leadership in the North African desert campaigns, earning him the nickname 'The Desert Fox' due to his tactical brilliance and success in desert warfare.

What were some of Erwin Rommel's most significant achievements in North Africa?

Rommel led the Afrika Korps to several notable victories, including the successful campaigns at Tobruk and Gazala, and pushed Allied forces back across Egypt, demonstrating innovative tactics and strategic acumen.

How did Erwin Rommel's military tactics influence desert warfare?

Rommel pioneered mobile warfare tactics, emphasizing rapid movement, surprise attacks, and flexible strategies that became a hallmark of desert combat and influenced future military doctrines.

What was Rommel's relationship with Adolf Hitler and the Nazi leadership?

Rommel was initially seen as a loyal supporter of Hitler, but over time, his views became more complex; he was respected for his military skill but eventually distanced himself from the Nazi regime, especially after the July 20 plot.

What role did Erwin Rommel play in the German resistance against Hitler?

While Rommel was not a formal member of the resistance, he was sympathetic to some opposition efforts and was indirectly involved in the events leading to his alleged involvement in the July 20 plot, which contributed to his downfall.

How did Erwin Rommel's career end during World War II?

Rommel was implicated in the July 20, 1944, assassination attempt on Hitler; he was forced to commit suicide in October 1944 to avoid execution, ending his military career prematurely.

What is the legacy of Erwin Rommel today?

Rommel is remembered as a talented and innovative military commander, admired for his leadership in North Africa and often seen as a complex figure who exemplified both strategic brilliance and moral ambiguity.

How accurate is the portrayal of Rommel in popular media and history?

Rommel is often depicted as a noble and honorable soldier, which aligns with many historical accounts, though some critics debate the full extent of his involvement with Nazi policies; his legacy remains a subject of historical debate.

What lessons can modern military strategists learn from Erwin Rommel's campaigns?

Modern strategists study Rommel's emphasis on mobility, surprise, and flexible tactics, highlighting the importance of adaptability and innovation in warfare.

Was Erwin Rommel a supporter of Nazi ideology?

Rommel's personal beliefs were complex; while he served the Nazi regime and participated in its military campaigns, he was not known to be deeply committed to Nazi ideology and is often viewed as a professional soldier rather than a political supporter.

Additional Resources

Erwin Rommel: The Desert Fox is a name that resonates deeply within military history, evoking images of strategic brilliance, daring tactics, and the harsh realities of desert warfare. As one of the most renowned German generals of World War II, Rommel's legacy is characterized by his innovative leadership in the North African Campaign, his tactical ingenuity, and the complex moral questions surrounding his career. This article aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced review of Rommel's life, military achievements, leadership style, and enduring influence.

Early Life and Military Background

Erwin Rommel was born on November 15, 1891, in Heidenheim, Germany. Coming from a modest background, Rommel's early interest in engineering and the military set the stage for a distinguished career. He joined the German Army in 1910 and quickly demonstrated exceptional tactical skills during World War I, earning recognition for his leadership and bravery.

Key Features of Rommel's Early Career:

- Rapid rise through the ranks due to tactical competence
- Experience in trench warfare and leadership in the German Imperial Army
- Awarded the Iron Cross, both First and Second Class, for bravery

His early experiences shaped his understanding of modern warfare, emphasizing mobility, surprise, and flexibility—traits that would define his later campaigns.

Leadership in North Africa: The Desert Fox

Perhaps the most defining chapter of Rommel's military career was his command of the Afrika Korps during World War II. His arrival in North Africa in 1941 marked the beginning of a series of audacious campaigns against Allied forces, earning him the nickname "The Desert Fox" for his cunning and swift maneuvers in the desert terrain.

Strategic and Tactical Innovations

Rommel's leadership was characterized by several innovative tactics:

- Rapid Mobile Warfare: Exploiting the vast desert landscape with fast, coordinated tank and motorized infantry movements.
- Use of Intelligence and Deception: Employing camouflage, fake radio traffic, and surprise attacks to unsettle enemies.
- Adaptive Supply Strategies: Overcoming logistical challenges in supply lines through innovative solutions.

Pros of Rommel's Military Tactics:

- High mobility and flexibility in desert terrain
- Effective use of local terrain knowledge
- Aggressive offensive maneuvers that kept opponents off balance

Cons and Challenges:

- Overextension of supply lines leading to logistical difficulties
- Reliance on aggressive tactics that sometimes strained resources
- Limited strategic depth, making him vulnerable to larger Allied forces

Major Campaigns and Battles

Rommel's most notable engagements included:

- Operation Crusader (1941): Aiming to relieve the Siege of Tobruk, though ultimately a setback.
- Battle of Gazala (1942): A significant victory that led to the capture of Tobruk.
- El Alamein (1942): His strategic retreat marked a turning point, as the Allies halted his advance.

Rommel's ability to conduct bold offensives and his resilience under pressure earned him admiration from both allies and enemies. His campaigns in North Africa demonstrated innovative use of armored warfare, predating the broader development of blitzkrieg tactics.

Leadership Style and Personal Characteristics

Rommel's leadership was distinguished by a combination of tactical brilliance, personal charisma, and a reputation for fairness and respect for his troops.

Features of Rommel's Leadership:

- Leading by Example: Frequently participating in front-line operations.
- High Morale: Inspiring troops through personal bravery and clear communication.
- Decisiveness and Flexibility: Adjusting tactics swiftly based on battlefield conditions.

Pros of His Leadership Style:

- Elevated troop morale and cohesion
- Ability to adapt quickly to changing circumstances
- Respect from both subordinates and adversaries

Cons and Criticisms:

- Overconfidence in certain situations, leading to risky decisions
- Sometimes overly reliant on aggressive tactics at the expense of logistical sustainability
- Limited strategic planning beyond immediate battlefield success

Rommel's Moral and Political Complexities

While celebrated for his military acumen, Rommel's career also has layers of moral and political complexity. He was known to be opposed to the Nazi regime's atrocities and was implicated in the July 20 plot to assassinate Hitler, although his involvement remains debated.

Key Aspects:

- Moral Stance: Rommel was perceived as a more honorable soldier, often respecting enemy soldiers and civilians.
- Relationship with the Nazi Regime: He maintained a delicate balance—supporting the war effort but not fully embracing Nazi ideology.
- Post-Plot Actions: His alleged involvement in the conspiracy against Hitler led to his forced suicide in 1944.

Pros:

- Reputation for personal integrity and professionalism
- Opposition to war crimes committed by others in the regime

Cons:

- Ambiguous association with the Nazi regime
- His role in the broader context of a brutal war remains complex

Legacy and Impact

Erwin Rommel's legacy endures in military history as a symbol of tactical innovation and honorable conduct in warfare. His campaigns influenced armored warfare tactics and strategic thinking well beyond his lifetime.

Influence on Military Thought

Rommel's emphasis on mobility, surprise, and adaptability became foundational principles in modern armored and mechanized warfare. Military academies study his campaigns for lessons on battlefield leadership and operational art.

Historical and Cultural Perception

- Positive View: Admired for his military genius, leadership qualities, and personal integrity.
- Controversial Aspects: His association with the Nazi regime and participation in a totalitarian war cloud his legacy.

Enduring Popularity

Rommel remains a popular figure in military history, often portrayed in books, films, and documentaries as a model of soldierly virtues and strategic brilliance.

Conclusion

Erwin Rommel: The Desert Fox exemplifies the complexities of military leadership in a tumultuous era. His tactical innovations, daring campaigns, and personal qualities made him one of the most respected generals of the 20th century. While his association with the Nazi regime complicates his moral standing, his military achievements continue to inspire and instruct. Rommel's legacy is a testament to the enduring power of strategic ingenuity, personal integrity, and the enduring human fascination with the art of war.

Summary of Features:

- Pros:
 - Innovative tactics and operational flexibility
 - Leadership by example, inspiring troops
 - High personal integrity and respect for enemy soldiers
- Cons:
 - Overreliance on aggressive tactics risking logistical overreach
 - Ambiguous political associations
 - Strategic limitations beyond battlefield successes

Rommel's story is a blend of brilliance and controversy, serving as a reminder of the complexities inherent in leadership during wartime. His name remains synonymous with desert warfare, tactical

innovation, and the enduring debate over morality in war.

Erwin Rommel The Desert Fox

erwin rommel the desert fox: Desert Fox Samuel W. Mitcham, 2019-03-12 Just who was Erwin Rommel? War hero or war criminal? Hitler flunky or man of integrity? Military genius or just lucky? Now, bestselling military historian Samuel W. Mitcham Jr. gets to the heart of the mysterious figure respected and even admired by the people of the Allied nations he fought against. Mitcham recounts Rommel's improbable and meteoric military career, his epic battles in North Africa, and his fraught relationship with Hitler and the Nazi Party. *Desert Fox: The Storied Military Career of Erwin Rommel* reveals:

- How Rommel's victories in North Africa were sabotaged by Hitler's incompetent interference
- How Rommel burned orders telling him to commit war crimes
- Why it wouldn't have helped Patton if he really had read Rommel's book
- How Rommel was responsible for the Germans' defense against the D-Day landing
- Why the plot to overthrow Hitler was fatally compromised when Rommel was gravely injured in an Allied attack
- The reason Rommel agreed to commit suicide after his part in the plot was discovered by Hitler

Mitcham's gripping account of Rommel's life takes you through the amazing adventure of the World War II battles in North Africa. Again and again, Rommel outfoxed the Allies—until the war of attrition and Hitler's blunders doomed the Axis cause. Illustrated with dozens of historical photos, this illuminating biography paints a fascinating and tragic picture of the man known as the Desert Fox.

erwin rommel the desert fox: *Erwin Rommel* Charles River Charles River Editors, 2017-01-25

*Includes pictures *Includes Rommel's quotes about his life and the war *Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading

Be an example to your men in your duty and in private life. Never spare yourself, and let the troops see that you don't in your endurance of fatigue and privation. Always be tactful and well-mannered, and teach your subordinates to be the same. Avoid excessive sharpness or harshness of voice, which usually indicates the man who has shortcomings of his own to hide.

- Erwin Rommel

One of his biographers called him a complex man: a born leader, a brilliant soldier, a devoted husband, a proud father; intelligent, instinctive, brave, compassionate, vain, egotistical, and arrogant. As that description suggests, every account of Erwin Rommel's life must address what appears to be its inherent contradictions. Fittingly, and in the same vein, he remains one of the best remembered generals of World War II and history at large, despite the fact he was on the losing side, and he was defeated at the most famous battle of his career, the decisive Battle of El Alamein. Nonetheless, the Desert Fox has been a legend on both sides of the Atlantic for over 70 years, thanks to the crucial role he played in history's deadliest conflict. Before his legendary encounters against the British and Americans in North Africa, Rommel gained much fame for his role in the invasions of Poland and France before was sent to North Africa in February 1941. In describing Rommel, the Italian officer Alessandro Predieri talked about his two very rare and precious gifts: The first is luck, which you will remember, Napoleon prescribed to his generals...The second gift is that of being able to keep his bearings in the midst of all the confusion of modern desert warfare. His instinct tells him immediately where a difficult situation is going to develop, and off he goes with his Kampfstaffel [Headquarters Group], which he treats like a Praetorian Guard, and puts things right, charging around like a junior officer. With the Axis forces trying to push through Egypt towards the Suez Canal and the British Mandate of Palestine, American forces landed to their west in North Africa, which ultimately compelled Rommel to try to break through before the Allies could build up and overwhelm them with superior numbers. The Second Battle of El Alamein was a turning point in the two-year conflict between Allied forces and a combined German-Italian force in North Africa. While the scale of the battle paled in comparison to the battles of the Eastern Front, where the majority of German troops were concentrated, it still marked an important victory

in World War II, especially from the British perspective. After leaving North Africa, Rommel spent much of the later part of the war strengthening German defenses across the Atlantic in anticipation of an amphibious Allied landing, which would come in June 1944. But the murky role he played in the notorious July 20 plot on Adolf Hitler's life in 1944, the closest an assassination attempt got to killing the Nazi Fuhrer, would bring about the Desert Fox's untimely demise in October 1944, even as the Soviets and Western Allies were tightening the vise on Germany. Compelled to take cyanide by authorities, the Desert Fox insisted he was innocent until his dying day, and his popularity forced the Nazi government to claim his death was brought about by a heart attack or a cerebral embolism. In fact, Rommel was given an official state funeral, and Winston Churchill would go on to praise him. He also deserves our respect because, although a loyal German soldier, he came to hate Hitler and all his works, and took part in the conspiracy to rescue Germany by displacing the maniac and tyrant. For this, he paid the forfeit of his life.

erwin rommel the desert fox: The Desert Fox Erwin Rommel, 1946

erwin rommel the desert fox: Rommel the Desert Fox Desmond Young, 2004-09 Out of print since 1979, Desmond Young's classic study of Erwin Rommel--the leader of Germany's Afrika Korps--which had 30 hardcover printings, is now back. 10 black-and-white photographs.

erwin rommel the desert fox: Rommel's Desert Commanders ,

erwin rommel the desert fox: Rommel Ralf Georg Reuth, 2020-01-15 Erwin Rommel is the best-known German field commander of World War II. Repeatedly decorated for valor during the First World War, he would go on to lead the German Panzer divisions in France and North Africa. Even his British opponents admitted to admiring his apparent courage, chivalry and leadership, and he became known by the nickname "Desert Fox." His death, in October 1944, would give rise to speculation for generations to come on how history should judge him. To many he remains the ideal soldier, but, as Reuth shows, Rommel remained loyal to his Führer until forced to commit suicide, and his fame was largely a creation of the master propagandist Joseph Goebbels. Stripping away the many layers of Nazi and Allied propaganda, Reuth argues that Rommel's life symbolizes the complexity and conflict of the German tragedy: to have followed Hitler into the abyss, and to have considered that to be his duty.

erwin rommel the desert fox: Rommel Desmond Young, 2013-01-30 This book contains the story of Rommel, the famous German Field Marshal of World War II, commonly known as Desert Fox. Many of the earliest books, particularly those dating back to the 1900s and before, are now extremely scarce and increasingly expensive. We are republishing these classic works in affordable, high quality, modern editions, using the original text and artwork.

erwin rommel the desert fox: General Field Marshal Erwin Rommel JASON. BURNS, 2025-04-08 Jason Burns' biography, General Field Marshal Erwin Rommel: The Desert Fox, is a riveting and masterfully crafted exploration of one of World War II's most enigmatic figures. Burns takes readers on a compelling journey through Rommel's life, from his early military career to his rise as a legendary commander in the North African campaign. The narrative is both engaging and informative, blending personal anecdotes with thorough historical context. Burns does an excellent job of portraying Rommel's complex personality--his tactical brilliance overshadowed by the moral dilemmas he faced during the war. Readers will find themselves drawn into the intricacies of his strategies, as well as the ethical choices that defined his legacy. One of the standout features of this biography is Burns' ability to humanize Rommel. He skillfully examines not only the general's military prowess but also his relationships with his men, his leadership style, and his political struggles. The book is enriched with detailed accounts of key battles, making it a valuable resource for both history enthusiasts and casual readers alike. What I appreciated most about The Desert Fox is how it challenges readers to think critically about the nature of war and leadership. Burns does not shy away from the darker aspects of Rommel's career, providing a balanced view that respects historical facts while acknowledging the complexities of his character. In conclusion, Jason Burns has written a remarkable biography that brings Erwin Rommel back to life on the pages of history. Whether you're an armchair historian or a seasoned military scholar, this book is a must-read that

will leave you with a deeper understanding of one of history's most fascinating military leaders.

erwin rommel the desert fox: Rommel: Desert Fox Desmond Young, 1987-02-18 Early in 1941, the famed British Eighth Army was on the route to victory in North Africa. Just a few months later, this same army was on the verge of total defeat, as the Germans had won victory after victory and were threatening to overrun Egypt and the Middle East. Here is the classic biography of the man who masterminded this great turnabout, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, commander of the German Afrika Korps. The man who burned Hitler's order to execute British raiders and who gave Allied prisoners the same food and medical treatment as his German troops. The tough general who personally conducted reconnaissance under fire in an open car while his tank commanders hid in armored turrets. The author of this book, Brigadier General Desmond Young, fought against Rommel in North Africa, was captured by him, and after his release at the end of the war visited Rommel's family and talked with many of his fellow officers. Thus, he is able to tell us about intrigues that went on in the German High Command during the war, he is able to give a blow-by-blow description of such decisive battles as Tobruk and El Alamein, and he is able to give personal anecdotes about Rommel and to sort out the facts from the legends that have sprung up around this extraordinary general.

erwin rommel the desert fox: Rommel's Greatest Victory Samuel W. Mitcham, 1998 The Desert Fox, Erwin Rommel, was the foremost strategist and tactician of his generation, and his defeat of the British forces at the important Libyan port of Tobruk in spring 1942 was the crown jewel of his military campaigns: a victory so stunning it forced a vote of confidence in the Churchill government. Mitcham Jr. (history, Hendersonville State U.) chronicles Rommel's march to Tobruk, noting the leader's ability to discern the best places and times to strike. He includes several maps and bandw photos. Annotation copyrighted by Book News, Inc., Portland, OR

erwin rommel the desert fox: The Desert Fox: Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps Pasquale De Marco, 2025-08-14 ****The Desert Fox: Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps**** tells the story of Erwin Rommel, one of the most brilliant and successful generals of World War II. Rommel's leadership of the Afrika Korps in North Africa is a legendary tale of military prowess and strategic brilliance. This book provides a comprehensive overview of Rommel's life and career, from his early days as a young officer to his rise to prominence as a commander in World War II. The book also examines Rommel's legacy, both as a military commander and as a historical figure. The book is divided into ten chapters, each of which covers a different aspect of Rommel's life and career. The chapters are: * The Desert Fox * The Afrika Korps * The British 8th Army * The Battle of El Alamein * The Tunisian Campaign * Rommel's Retreat * Rommel's Return to Europe * The Legacy of Rommel * The Afrika Korps in Popular Culture * The Battle of El Alamein in Popular Culture The book is written in a clear and concise style, and it is accessible to readers of all levels of knowledge about World War II. The book is also illustrated with numerous photographs and maps. ****The Desert Fox: Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps**** is the definitive biography of Erwin Rommel. It is a must-read for anyone interested in World War II, military history, or biography. If you like this book, write a review!

erwin rommel the desert fox: History in 30 Percy Bennington, 2017-12-04 Be an example to your men in your duty and in private life. Never spare yourself, and let the troops see that you don't in your endurance of fatigue and privation. Always be tactful and well-mannered, and teach your subordinates to be the same. Avoid excessive sharpness or harshness of voice, which usually indicates the man who has shortcomings of his own to hide. - Erwin Rommel The 20th century was a century full of conflict and strife, not seen before on a global scale. While there were multiple conflicts that spanned over many years, the two World Wars marked the century. During both World Wars, the Germans were found on the losing end, but that is not to say that those armies were void of brilliance, quite to the contrary. The German Army of World War I was one of the most well-rounded and destructive war machines in history, and if anything, the death knell to the German side during the First World War was the fact that the Germans had weak allies and spent considerable resources and time to try to prop up other empires like Austria and the Ottoman Turks. World War II was an entirely different story. The Germans were angry after the First World War, and

using public sway and anger, Adolf Hitler took power in the 1930s. Unlike the earlier army, the German Army of the Second World War committed some of the most grotesque and unforgivable atrocities in the history of mankind. This isn't to say that the German commanders and soldiers were all bad, and of all the men who fought for the Reich, the one with the most sterling reputation is Erwin Rommel, the Desert Fox. Rommel rose through the ranks of the German Army in the years preceding the outbreak of World War II, and he proved to be a cunning and insinuating soldier who was one of the most brilliant cavalry commanders in the history of warfare. Eventually, the evil that surrounded him engulfed him, and his pure brilliance went untapped. While there is a great division when it comes to historical opinion with respect to Rommel's merits as a general as well as the moral choices he made, both historians and the public continue to be intrigued by this man who has been dead for over 70 years. People at large continue to consider Rommel one of the greatest generals of the 20th century, an opinion shared by many of his contemporaries on both sides of World War II. For example, British General Harold Alexander hinted at both his strengths and weaknesses, commenting, He was a tactician of the greatest ability, with a firm grasp of every detail of the employment of armour in action, and very quick to seize the fleeting opportunity and the critical turning point of a mobile battle. I felt certain doubts, however, about his strategic ability, in particular as to whether he fully understood the importance of a sound administrative plan. Happiest while controlling a mobile force directly under his own eyes he was liable to overexploit immediate success without sufficient thought for the future. History in 30: The Life of Erwin Rommel, Nazi Germany's Desert Fox provides a quick but comprehensive look at the life of the general.

erwin rommel the desert fox: Generalfeldmarschall Erwin Rommel Desert Fox 1891-1944 Gustavo Urueña A, 2016-07-13 Generalfeldmarschall Erwin Rommel Desert Fox Dates: *15 November 1891 - +14 October 1944), Rommel, son of a high school professor joined 1910 voluntarily in the army and fought in the first phase of the war with the Infantry Regiment 124 on the Western Front. After receiving first class for bravery in the Argonne the Iron Cross, he was employed as a company commander in the battalion Württemberger Mountaineer in Romania, to the west and to the Italian front. On October 25, 1917 Lieutenant Rommel was the fiercely defended height Matajur storm and bring about 8,000 Italian prisoners, which he received the Pour le Mérite was one of the few young infantry officers of the war. In 1919 he was transferred to the Army because of its benefits. After long time commanded an infantry company, was Rommel 1929 tactics instructor at the Infantry School in Dresden. After further use as battalion commander, he commanded successively the important military schools in Potsdam and Wiener Neustadt.

erwin rommel the desert fox: The Desert Fox in Normandy Samuel W. Mitcham, Greenwood Publishing Group, Incorporated, 1997-05-01 As 1943 came to a close, Field Marshall Erwin Rommel was given his most challenging and important assignment to date--to repel the impending Allied invasion. The German high command anticipated that 1944 would be the year for the long-awaited amphibious cross-channel invasion. This invasion could be a critical strategic opportunity if the Germans successfully repelled it, but a failure to do so would severely hinder their ability to reestablish military superiority in Europe. Covering the Battle of Normandy from the German point of view, this book examines the impact that the Desert Fox had on the strengthening of German defenses in Normandy and elsewhere. Dubbed by the Propaganda Ministry as The Atlantic Wall, Rommel realized how deceptive this term was upon his inspection of German defenses in 1943. Convinced that the Allies knew more about the actual state of German readiness than many of his officers did, the Desert Fox set out to fortify German positions.

erwin rommel the desert fox: Fighting the Desert Fox John Delaney, 1999 In the spring of 1941, Britain's position in North Africa appeared secure. The Italians had been spectacularly defeated, and there was even the possibility that Italy would drop out of the war. The situation changed dramatically with the arrival of Rommel and the Deutsches Afrika Korps. Instead of fighting an incompetent and ineffective Italian High Command, the Allies found themselves up against the latest strategic and tactical concepts, carried through by a dynamic, aggressive leader. For the British this was a time of trial. On several occasions they seemed to be on the brink of total defeat,

and by August 1942 the Afrika Korps stood facing the British Eighth Army at El Alamein, a mere 70 miles from Alexandria.

erwin rommel the desert fox: *Rommel's Desert Commanders* Samuel W. Mitcham Jr., 2007-02-28 Perhaps the most famous and admired soldier to fight in World War II was Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, who achieved immortality as the Desert Fox. Rommel's first field command during the war was the 7th Panzer Division—also known as the Ghost Division—which he led in France in 1940. During this campaign, the 7th Panzer suffered more casualties than any other division in the German Army, at the same time inflicting a disproportionate number of casualties upon the enemy. It took 97,486 prisoners, captured 458 tanks and armored vehicles, 277 field guns, 64 anti-tank guns and 4,000 to 5,000 trucks. It captured or destroyed hundreds of tons of other military equipment, shot down 52 aircraft, destroyed 15 more aircraft on the ground, and captured 12 additional planes. It destroyed the French 1st Armored Division and the 4th North African Division, punched through the Maginot Line extension near Sivry, and checked the largest Allied counteroffensive of the campaign at Arras. When France surrendered, the Ghost Division was within 200 miles of the Spanish border. No doubt about it—Rommel had proven himself a great military leader who was capable of greater things. His next command, in fact, would be the Afrika Korps, where the legend of the Desert Fox was born. Rommel had a great deal of help in France—much more than his published papers suggest. His staff officers and company, battalion, and regimental commanders were an extremely capable collection of military leaders that included 12 future generals (two of them SS), and two colonels who briefly commanded panzer divisions but never reached general rank. They also included Colonel Erich von Unger, who would no doubt have become a general had he not been killed in action while commanding a motorized rifle brigade on the Eastern Front in 1941, as well as Karl Hanke, a Nazi gauleiter who later succeeded Heinrich Himmler as the last Reichsfuehrer-SS. No historian has ever recognized the talented cast of characters who supported the Desert Fox in 1940. No one has ever attempted to tell their stories. This book remedies that deficiency.

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