

THE DEATH OF ERWIN ROMMEL AS TOLD BY HIS SON

THE GERMAN GENERAL WHO WAS ONCE HITLER'S FAVORITE

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Erwin Rommel was Hitler's favorite general for a time.

Erwin Rommel was, for a time, Hitler's favorite general. In 1940, as the commander of a Panzer division, Rommel was appointed to the command of the German forces in Africa - Africa Corps. Here, his tactical genius was recognized by the enemy, and the ability to inspire his soldiers and make maximum use of limited resources convinced Hitler to promote him to the rank of Field Marshall.



In 1943, Hitler charged Rommel to coordinate the fortification of the "Atlantic Wall" along the French coast, the defensive line that the Germans wanted to use to repel the inevitable Allied invasion in Europe (which would take place in June 1944).



Erwin Rommel and Adolf Hitler in 1942

By the beginning of the war, Rommel was confident in Germany's power. **But at the start of 1943 his trust in Germany's ability to win the initiated conflict began to crumble as days went by, and so did his faith in Hitler.**

Traveling in Germany, Rommel was outraged by the devastation caused by Allied air raids and the eroded public morale was not a good sign for him.



He also found out about the concentration camps, the forced labor, the extermination of the Jews, and other atrocities committed by the regime that he was serving. Gradually, he concluded that the German victory was a lost cause and that the extension of this war would only do more damage to Germany.

The field marshal came into contact with members of a group who planned to overthrow Hitler and negotiate a separate peace with the Allies. Rommel did not agree with the assassination of Hitler, believing that such a gesture would transform the Führer into a martyr. He believed that arresting Hitler and placing him under trial would be the best solution.



By the beginning of 1943, Rommel's faith in Germany's ability to win the war was crumbling

On July the 17th 1944, Rommel was seriously injured when the car he was in was attacked by a British plane. He was immediately carried to the hospital and then sent to Germany for medical treatment and recovery. Three days later the famous assassination attempt against Hitler took place (July 20's Plot). The attempt failed, and during the investigations and reprisals that followed someone mentioned Rommel's name, involving him in this plot.



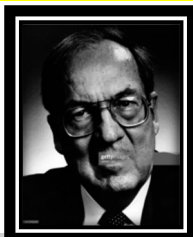
The still smoking of the German Horch staff car purported to be that of Erin Rommel

Though there are chances that Rommel was never aware of the plot, the defeatist attitude he adopted was enough to arouse the Führer's anger and suspicion. For Hitler, it was clear that Rommel had to be removed. But how can you eliminate the most popular and appreciated soldier in the German army without letting the people know that you ordered his death?

The solution was simple: Rommel was forced to commit suicide and propaganda announced that the marshal died because of the injuries he suffered on July the 17th.

THE DEATH OF A GERMAN HERO AS TOLD BY HIS SON

A TRULY EXCEPTIONALLY DETAILED ARTICLE OF HIS FATHER'S DEATH AS IT HAPPENED ON THE ACTUAL DAY



ROMMEL'S SON

Rommel's son, Manfred, was 15 years old and served as part of an antiaircraft crew near his home. On October 14th, 1944 Manfred was given leave to return to his home where his father continued to convalesce. The family was aware that Rommel was under suspicion and that his chief of staff and his commanding officer had both been executed.

Manfred's account begins as he enters his home and finds his father at breakfast

"...I arrived at Harlingen at 7:00 a.m. My father was at breakfast. A cup was quickly brought for me and we breakfasted together, afterward taking a stroll in the garden.

'At noon today two Generals are coming to discuss my future employment,' my father started the conversation. 'So today will decide what is planned for me, whether a People's Court or a new command in the East.'

'Would you accept such a command,' I asked.

He took me by the arm and replied, 'My dear boy, our enemy in the East is so terrible that every other consideration has to give way before it. If he succeeds in overrunning Europe, even only temporarily, it will be the end of everything that has made life appear worth living. Of course, I would go.'

Shortly before noon, my father went to his room on the first floor and changed from the brown civilian jacket which he usually wore over riding breeches, to his African tunic, which was his favorite uniform on account of its open collar.



Rommel & his Wife (date unknown)

At about noon a dark-green car with a Berlin number stopped in front of our garden gate. The only men in the house apart from my father were Captain Aldinger [Rommel's aide], a badly wounded war-veteran corporal, and myself. Two generals - Burgdorf, a powerful florid man, and Maisel, small and slender - alighted from the car and entered the house. They were respectful and courteous and asked my father's permission to speak to him alone. Aldinger and I left the room. 'So they are not going to arrest him,' I thought with relief, as I went upstairs to find myself a book.

A few minutes later I heard my father come upstairs and go into my mother's room. Anxious to know what was afoot, I got up and followed him. He was standing in the middle of the room, his face pale. 'Come outside with me,' he said in a tight voice. We went into my room. 'I have just had to tell your mother,' he began slowly, 'that I shall be dead in a quarter of an hour.' He was calm as he continued: **'To die by the hand of one's people is hard.'** But the house is surrounded and Hitler is charging me with high treason. 'Given my services in Africa,' he quoted sarcastically, 'I am to have the chance of dying by poison. The two generals have brought it with them. It's fatal in three seconds. If I accept, none of the usual steps will be taken against my family that is against you. They will also leave my staff alone.'

'Do you believe it?' I interrupted. 'Yes,' he replied. 'I believe it. It is very much in their interest to see that the affair does not come out into the open. By the way, I have been charged to put you under a promise of the strictest silence. If a single word of this comes out, they will no longer feel themselves bound by the agreement.'

I tried again. 'Can't we defend ourselves...?' He cut me off short. 'There's no point,' he said. 'It's better for one to die than for all of us to be killed in a shooting affray. Anyway, we've practically no ammunition.' We briefly took leave of each other. 'Call Aldinger, please,' he said.

Aldinger had meanwhile been engaged in conversation by the General's escort to keep him away from my father. At my call, he came running upstairs. He, too, was struck cold when he heard what was happening. My father now spoke more quickly. He again said how useless it was to attempt to defend ourselves. 'It's all been prepared to the last detail. I'm to be given a state funeral. I have asked that it should take place in Ulm. [a town near Rommel's home] In a quarter of an hour, you, Aldinger, will receive a telephone call from the Wagnerschule reserve hospital in Ulm to say that I've had a brain seizure on the way to a conference.' He looked at his watch. 'I must go; they've only given me ten minutes.' He quickly took leave of us again. Then we went downstairs together.

We helped my father into his leather coat. Suddenly he pulled out his wallet. 'There are still 150 marks in there,' he said. 'Shall I take the money with me?'

'That doesn't matter now, Herr Field Marshal,' said Aldinger.

My father put his wallet carefully back in his pocket. As he went into the hall, his little dachshund which he had been given as a puppy a few months before in France jumped up at him with a whine of joy. 'Shut the dog in the study, Manfred,' he said and waited in the hall with Aldinger while I removed the excited dog and pushed it through the study door. Then we walked out of the house together. The two generals were standing at the gate. As we walked down the path, the crunch of the gravel sounding unusually loud.

As we approached the generals they raised their right hands in salute. 'Herr Field Marshal,' Burgdorf said shortly and stood aside for my father to pass through the gate. A knot of villagers stood outside the drive...

The car stood ready. The S.S. driver swung the door open and stood to attention. My father pushed his Marshal's baton under his left arm, and with his face calm, gave Aldinger and me his hand once more before getting in the car.

The two generals climbed quickly into their seats and the doors were slammed. My father did not turn again as the car drove quickly off up the hill and disappeared around a bend in the road. When it had gone Aldinger and I turned and walked silently back into the house... Twenty minutes later the telephone rang. Aldinger lifted the receiver and my father's death was duly reported.

It was not then entirely clear, what had happened to him after he left us. Later we learned that the car had halted a few hundred yards up the hill from our house in an open space at the edge of the wood.

Gestapo men, who had appeared in force from Berlin that morning, **were watching the area with instructions to shoot my father down and storm the house if he offered resistance.** Maisel and the driver got out of the car, leaving my father and Burgdorf inside.

When the driver was permitted to return ten minutes or so later, he saw my father sunk forward with his cap off and the marshal's baton fallen from his hand."



Hitler's wreath is carried in Rommel's funeral procession Oct. 18, 1944

According to official statements, Rommel had died because of suffered injuries. To support the tragic death of the general, Hitler declared a day of mourning to commemorate Rommel, burying him with full military honors.



Rommel's Funeral



Rommel's Grave



Bust of Rommel at Al Alamein War Museum in Egypt, which was built by Anwar Sadat in honor of Rommel. The museum was later expanded into a general war museum but Rommel remains a central figure.

Also known to the Allied Forces as 'The Desert Fox' for his brilliant desert battle tactics. After the failed 1944 assassination plot in the map room at one of Hitler's bunkers, Hitler alleged that many of his military leaders were conspirators in the plot and had them executed. Hitler also suspected Rommel as a conspirator and sent a car to Rommel's home to pick him up and have him shot.

On the way to his execution, Rommel was presented with two opportunities: 1. poison yourself in the car - and you get a state funeral, or 2. you get a "show process" in the Volksgerichtshof and all your merits will disappear. Rommel cheated the firing squad and swallowed a poison capsule!

It was never proven as to whether or not Rommel was a conspirator.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ERIN ROMMEL GO TO THE FOLLOWING LINK

COPY AND PASTE THE BELOW LINK INTO YOUR BROWSER

<https://ww2gravestone.com/people/rommel-erwin/>

SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF ERWIN ROMMEL

COPY AND PASTE THE BELOW LINK INTO YOUR BROWSER

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=80&v=dwsEhVLZWio

Erwin Johannes Eugen Rommel (15 November 1891-14 October 1944), popularly known as the Desert Fox was a German field marshal of World War II. He earned the respect of both his troops and his enemies. Rommel was a highly decorated officer in World War I and was awarded the Pour le Mérite for his exploits on the Italian Front. In World War II, he further distinguished himself as the commander of the 7th Panzer Division during the 1940 invasion of France.

His leadership of German and Italian forces in the North African campaign established him as one of the most able commanders of the war and earned him the appellation of the Desert Fox.

He is regarded as one of the most skilled commanders of desert warfare in the conflict. He later commanded the German forces opposing the Allied forces during the invasion of Normandy. Rommel is regarded as having been a humane and professional officer. His Africa Corps was never accused of war crimes, and Allied soldiers captured during his Africa campaign were reported to have been treated humanely. Orders to kill Jewish soldiers, civilians, and captured commandos were ignored.

Later in the war, Rommel was linked to the conspiracy to assassinate Adolf Hitler. Because Rommel was a national hero, Hitler desired to maintain him quietly. He forced Rommel to commit suicide with a cyanide pill, in return for assurance that Rommel's family would not be persecuted following his death. He was given a state funeral, and it was announced that Rommel had succumbed to his injuries from an earlier strafing of his staff car in Normandy.



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