



The Rommel Papers

Erwin Rommel, B.H. Liddell Hart

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An essential collection of the wartime writings and diary of World War II German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, edited with commentary by one of the great military theorists of our time

When Erwin Rommel died by forced suicide at Hitler's command—he left behind in various ingenious hiding places the papers that recorded the story of his dramatic career and the exact details of his masterly campaigns. It was his custom to dictate each evening a running narrative of the day's events and, after each battle, to summarize its course and the lessons to be learned from it. He wrote, almost daily, intimate and outspoken letters to his wife in which his private feelings and—after the tide had turned—forebodings found expression. To this is added by Rommel's son Manfred the story of the field marshal's last weeks and the final day when he was given the choice of an honorable suicide or an ignominious trial for treason. An engrossing human document and a rare look at the mind of the "Desert Fox," *The Rommel Papers* throws an interesting light on the Axis alliance and on the inner workings of Hitler's high command.

The Rommel Papers Details

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From Reader Review The Rommel Papers for online ebook

Zhang Tao says

1 of 3 books I read this month of 3 most famous Germany's generals in WWII.

Rommel was considered as Germany's greatest fighting general, respected even by the British, who gave him the nickname of "Desert Fox". A few things stand out in this book: 1) He is always at the front with all other soldiers in battle. It was a miracle that he was not killed (only injured) in battle before Hitler killed him. This not only shows his courage as a general, also his way of knowing whatever happens real time in war, to make fast decisions whenever needed. 2) The fact that each night he will summarize what happened and what lesson he can learn from that date. This way he can always stay ahead of everyone else in term of new insights/tactics etc. Interestingly Rommel also talked about the negative from his fame: everyone will believe he can produce miracles, no matter how difficult the situation is, so eventually he cannot live up to that kind of expectations.

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Iain says

Rommel continues to impress as a cogent, lucid author. Though at times his account suffers from a lack of knowledge into his adversary's true dispositions, whereupon Liddell-Hart does an excellent job with editorial notes.

A must read for anyone interested in Rommel's campaigns or WWII history in general.

Jefferson Costa says

Splendid reading - if you like tactics and strategy this is for you

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Rose says

I really enjoyed reading this book. It was very well written and informative. Perhaps what I liked best about it was how much of the content is Rommel's own words. His writing style seems to be much like his leadership; crisp, to the point and wasting nothing. It portrays him as his men probably saw him; efficient, trustworthy and a leader to follow with pride.

What this book doesn't delve into is the reasons for Rommel's appointment to North Africa, which was a post of very little significance. Erwin Rommel was very loyal to his country but disapproved of the Nazi regime. Since he was such a darling to the public and so much in their sight, Hitler and his crew thought to stuff him out of sight in a place where his light would be hid under a bushel. He was understaffed and under armed, but his military genius proved greater than his handicaps, and he was eventually recalled to the European front, but not given a free hand. The book does explain the reasons behind his assassination, but this is mostly focussed on his military genius and exploits rather than delving into his political leanings and the effect that they had on his career and finally, his life.

Mohamed Tarik El foul says

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TXGAL1 says

THE ROMMEL PAPERS is a definite read for those who have interest in World War II. Rommel, The

Desert Fox, was the ultimate military tactician as well as consummate leader of men.

Had the powers that be thoughtfully listened to and followed the input of Rommel, it is quite possible that WW II may have ended with a different winner. It's hard to justify the loss of ground and troops due to constant lack of fuel, food, and sufficient supplies.

Germany's failure in Africa and Normandy was due to the interference of political objectives and a madman versus sound military planning and implementation. Cue the scapegoats when it finally became clear that Germany was losing the war.

It is tragic that a Rommel, revered by his troops and officers, was tagged as said scapegoat. Of course, it could never get out that he had continually advised the Reich of tenuous situations that were not addressed. Cowards demanded their pound of flesh.

Rommel was presented with a choice: take your own life or don't and we will take the lives of your family and staff. What a choice to have to make.

The input by Manfred Rommel, the 14-yr old son of Erwin & Lu Rommel at the time of the Papers, is especially enlightening and touching.

I definitely recommend this book, but know that it is heavy on military tactics used by both Rommel and his opponents on the battlefield.

Bob says

An amazing diary written by Irwin Rommel during WWII prior to his assassination. He was considered one of the greatest generals in history. His commentaries in his diary on leadership are timeless and are just as pertinent today as they were 65 years ago. There are numerous leadership comments he makes here that I use with my staff today and they are better than anything any consultant group tries to sell my organization! A must read.

Sumit says

marvelous book mainly on account of following following points

- 1) Incredible insight into much famed and little known Blitzkrieg by master himself
- 2) Unparalleled account of Axis PoV of African campaign.
- 3) Intricate details of desert warfare
- 4) Most important of all, timely pointers explaining how conduct of war (both strategically and tactically) is changing because of advancement in technology
- 5) An amazing example of how a leader should lead his/ her followers from the front and set up an example for them to follow when going gets tough.

Book as I have mentioned above is an extremely well written account of North African campaign in 1941-42. It becomes a little drag towards the end when author shifts his focus to topics of Italian and Invasion

battles. But that can possibly be because little Rommel written material for that period was available.

A must book for not only people who are interested in WW II, but also a suggested reading for someone who wants to have a deep insight into working of one of the greatest modern time army leader.

rating:- ****

Carl says

On the whole written by Rommel (the book includes chapters from his son, the Normandy section wrote by Fritz Bayerlein, and edited and commented on throughout by B. H. Liddell Hart.), it provides a fascinating account - largely - of the back and forth fighting in North Africa.

It is an excellent account from the German perspective, and it provides a great insight into Rommel's thinking. However, Rommel avoids talking about - nor does the editor mention it - the massive intelligent intercepts (from one Colonel Fellers) that aided in his decision making and actions. Likewise, there is no reflection: Rommel nor Liddell Hart talk about the numerous logistical and strategic failures Rommel committed during the course of the North African campaign. More modern works deconstruct the "genius" that Liddell Hart propagates, and highlight the mythos that surrounds Rommel.

Liam says

Predictably, this book did not even come close to equaling Generalfeldmarschall Rommel's account of his service during WWI, *Attacks*, which is deservedly considered a classic work in the field of military art & science, in addition to being an eminently readable combat narrative/memoir. This was predictable because the present book was assembled from his surviving papers, after both his life and the Second World War had come to an end, in the first instance by his widow Frau Lucie Rommel and their son Manfred (who also wrote two fairly lengthy sections of the book) but later with the help of B.H. Liddell Hart.

Generalfeldmarschall Rommel's former Chief-of-Staff Generalleutnant Fritz Bayerlein also contributed to the book, both in terms of writing a fairly long section to cover a gap in the narrative and also general assistance.

Although it was not a particularly easy book to read, parts of the narrative were interesting, and the opportunity to even partially get an idea of what was going through the head of this extraordinarily talented officer was well worth the time and effort. This is not a good book to attempt as an introduction to military history, but for more experienced readers who don't need to look-up military terminology etc. it should be a worthwhile read.

Steve says

I'm not exactly sure how you "review" non-fiction, maybe based on the merit of how well it delivered its content and kept a certain pacing?

Most of this book is basically a timeline of Erwin Rommel's involvement in WWII through letters he sent back home to his wife. Along with the letters the author/editor includes information relevant along with the letters. Rommel was quite a shutterbug and included are photos of his expeditions and a good number of maps to help us get an idea of what he is going through in each section.

The content is very informing, especially the progression of Rommel from early invasion of France to his time at the Atlantic wall.

The German perspective leaves a sense of awe in the beginning of the war. The way I interpreted it, war was a big game towards the beginning. The conduct between Rommel's encounters with the French and British show a great level of professionalism on both sides. You lost, you surrendered, you get put in timeout until the end of the war. But the war didn't end, it dragged on and with it Rommel gets deeper and deeper into the inner workings of the Third Reich.

I don't want to stir up any ideals of things like when patriotism is used wrong, honor, duty, your country. There was a reason this man was the Third Reich's propaganda poster boy and yet held in high esteem by his opposing combatants. He was honorable (whatever that means), won a lot because he took big risks, and took each loss as a learning opportunity.

BJ Haun says

An interesting read, though a dense one. I'm usually a speedy reader and can get through a 500-page book in about a week , but this one took me almost a month to grind through.

This book is mostly comprised of notes taken by Rommel himself during WWII, with a heavy focus on tactics and strategy (Rommel was apparently planning write a book after the war, much like he did in WWI with "Infantry Attacks"), interspersed with letters to his wife and son, and the occasional journal entry. In places were the relevant documents were either lost (the Rommel family hid many of these documents after the Field Marshal's death) or destroyed (Rommel destroyed parts to avoid implicating himself and others) the narrative is picked up by General Bayerlein, whom served with Rommel in both Africa and Europe, and Manfred Rommel, Erwin's son whom was with his father in the final days.

If you are looking for a biographical piece (like I more or less was), you might be better off looking somewhere else. This text focuses highly on Rommel's own view of the war as it happened, and less of the man himself, though you do get a feel for him. Still, I found it to be a interesting look at "the other side of the hill", as the book phrases it.

Tin Wee says

A long book but well worth the time. Field Marshall Erwin Rommel took the time off between battles to reflect on the leadership, strategy and tactics of the wars he was conducting. His human side comes out strongly in the letters to his family that are interspersed chronologically between his account of the various battles. His accounts provide insights on how he managed to win a series of spectacular victories despite an inferiority in tanks and personnel, and how he ultimately lost the war because of a cursed supply line and subsequent micro management by the political leadership. He also provides insights to how technology will

shape the direction of modern war. Strongly recommended if you are a military history buff.
