



# **The Fatal Decisions: Six Decisive Battles of the Second World War from the Viewpoint of the Vanquished**

*William Richardson, Seymour Freidlin*

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Six key Second World War conflicts where decisions of the Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler contributed to his eventual downfall. Each theater of operations written up by a German general who was on the spot and involved in carrying out the uncompromising orders of the Führer. This is an 'other side of the hill' collection of accounts which gives valuable insight into the machinations of a sycophantic hierarchy immediately surrounding Hitler. Instead, had the dictator paid heed to his highly competent commanders rather than his toadies the outcome would have been very different for every one of us. Happily for the world, he thought he knew best, selecting counselors closest to his uncompromising heart.

1. Battle of Britain is told by Werner Kreipe, Chief Operations Officer, Third Air Fleet, December 1939 - June 1940.
2. Battle for Moscow Günther Blumentritt, Chief of Staff in 1940. Later Chief of Staff of Army Group D. In 1944 he command of 12th SS Korps and in 1945 Commander of First Parachute Army.
3. Battle of Alamein Fritz Bayerlein, 1941 Chief of Staff Afrika Korps. Commander of 3rd Panzer Division and finally Panzer Lehr in 1944.
4. Battle of Stalingrad Kurt Zeitzler, Chief of Staff XXII Korps, 1940 to 1941; Chief of Staff Army Group D, April 1942; Chief of the Army General Staff, 1942 to July 1944.
5. Normandy Bodo Zimmerman General Staff in 1939 and Chief Operations Officer to Commander-in-Chief West from 1940 to 1942; also to Army Group D from 1942 to 1945.
6. Battle of the Ardennes (Bulge) Hasso-Eccard von Manteuffel Commander of the Fifth Panzer Army.

Siegfried Westphal with his narrative connects the six accounts. During the war Westphal served as Operations Officer under General Erwin Rommel in North Africa, Chief of Staff under General Albrecht Kesselring in Italy and Chief of Staff to General Gerd von Rundstedt in 1944-45, therefore admirably qualified to draw the accounts of his once fellow serving officers together to give a vivid picture of military life under, arguably, the most vicious dictator the world has ever known.

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