





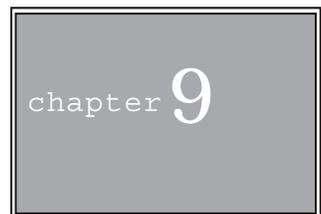
German General Erwin Rommel had received command of the German forces in the African Hemisphere just before Pearl Harbor was attacked.

Through him, the Nazi military divisions of Africa were formed and polished into one of the greatest WW II armies in the world. Under his direction, the Germans on the continent of Africa, known as the Deutsche Afrika Korps, rampaged over the hot desert sands and oilfields of Libya, Egypt, and Tunisia.

The focus of all three tremendous desert war-fronts were lightning air battles, armored surprise movements and the struggle to keep oneself supplied and alive in the scorching Sahara desert. For many months, the allied enemies of Rommel tried, but could not convincingly trap the Afrika Korps.

Into the deserts drove the master tactician Rommel. Out he would drive the allied forces. Into the deserts drove the large British Army, out scooted the Desert Fox. In and out, up and down went the desert soldiers, but Rommel always came back.

Not until the arrival of General Montgomery, a stubborn, self-centered commander, did the battered and tired, yet heroic British 8th Army finally begin to slowly drive out the elusive Desert Fox for good. However, a lengthy stalemate arose at El Alamein, and for much of 1942 was the scene—and strategic pivot—of heavy and



NEARLY 10000 MILES FROM GUADALCANAL

bitter fighting.

Early in the autumn, Rommel was cut-off from reinforcements, of war-machine materials, and supplies. The supplies, especially the gasoline supply line, helped nail the coffin on the Afrika Korps. The RAF from Egypt and Malta hammered away at supply ports of Tripoli and Benghazi.

Fuel depositions from Italy were shrinking each month. For example, early in September, some 5,000 tons of oil were supposed to have reached African shores from southern Italy. Only about 1,000 tons had arrived; some 1,500 tons stayed in Italy, and 2,800 tons had been sunk.

Concerning U.S. forces, our participation was meager for most of the year; practically all participation was from air force units—few and scattered. In conjunction with the RAF, they “dropped their eggs” on enemy positions. The main help of the U.S. air force was supply. U.S. units often complained about being undermanned and undermaintained. This would remain a vivid American problem until early 1943, the next year.

In Africa, from the German air force viewpoint, the essence of Germany’s air force was in Russia. Still, as the Allies began to get stronger in Africa, the Axis remained the same. Concerning requested air assistance made by Rommel to Berlin, all he received were token crumbs. Field Marshall Goering from Berlin would only tell Rommel that the Allies were weak in Africa and that his complaints were just “latrine innuendos,” not deemed believable. “All America can make,” he directly