



# **Strafer Desert General : The Life and Killing of Lieutenant General WHE Gott CB CBE DSO MC**

*N.S. Nash*

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Unexpectedly selected by Churchill to command 8th Army in 1942 in place of the sacked Auchinleck, 'Strafer' Gott was targeted by German intelligence as he flew to Cairo to take up his new post. Six ME109s intercepted his aircraft and, after shooting it down, deliberately machine-gunned the crash scene. Gott became the only Allied general to be successfully targeted by the Germans and, as a result, Montgomery was given command and the rest is history.??But as this long overdue and well researched biography reveals, 'Strafer' deserves to be remembered for his exceptional?talents, meteoric career and record of gallantry. As a young officer in The Great War he won the Military Cross (many thought a VC would have been more appropriate) and he repeatedly attempted to escape. In 1939 he was commanding his Battalion as a Lieutenant Colonel and two years later he became a Lieutenant General. He was recognised as a superb Desert General whose aggression, originality and leadership qualities were supported by charm, warmth and compassion.??While it is fascinating, if unproductive, to surmise what would have happened had Gott and not Monty fought Rommel, it can be confidently said that relations with our allies would have benefitted.??Drawing on primary source material, this first biography of an outstanding soldier and commander is not only a rewarding and revealing read but an important addition to the bibliography of the Second World War.??As featured in the Dover Express, Ashford Herald and Folkestone Herald.

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