

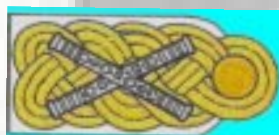


Hitler's Fieldmarshalls

Listed in alphabetical order



1. Werner von Blomberg
2. Fedor von Bock
3. Walter von Brauchitsch
4. Ernst Busch
5. Karl Donitz
6. Hermann Goring
7. Ritter vom Greim
8. Wilhelm Keitel
9. Albert Kesselring
10. Ewald von Kleist
11. Gunther Kluge
12. Georg Kuchler
13. Ritter von Leeb
14. Wilhelm List
15. Erich von Manstein
16. Erhard Milch
17. Walter Model
18. Friedrich Paulus
19. Dr. Phil Raeder
20. Walther Reichenau
21. Freiherr von Richthofen
22. Erwin Rommel
23. Gerd Rundstedt
24. Ferdinand Schorner
25. Hugo Sperrie
26. Maximilian von Weichs
27. Erwin von Witzelben



Hitler's Fieldmarshalls

This is an incredible collection of displays of all 27 of Hitler's Generalfieldmarshalls. The complete set of 27 original signed displays is available for \$17,500. Where I have duplicates, the nicest of the signed pieces will be included in the collection. The collection is in a high quality padded ring binder with a slip case. Price includes shipping and insurance.

Facsimiles of these displays are available at \$29.90 each. The facsimile signed items are very high resolution (2800dpi) and are difficult to tell from the original signed piece.

Since I created this catalog of displays I have obtained signed photos of a number of fieldmarshalls. Purchaser of the original collection has his choice of either the display with signed document or signed photo.

Other Sets

Diamonds Recipients

We have created similar displays using authentic signatures and documents of the 27 Knights Cross/Oakleaves/Swords/Diamonds recipients.

Top 20 Luftwaffe Aces

We are working on similar displays of the top 50 Luftwaffe aces.

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Werner von Blomberg

Hitler's First Fieldmarshall

Minister of Defense

Died March 14, 1946

Werner von Blomberg was born in Stargard, Germany, on September 2, 1878. He joined the German Army and served as a second lieutenant in the 73rd Fusilier Regiment. He attended the War Academy (1904-07) before joining the General Staff in 1908.

On the outbreak of the First World War, Blomberg was General Staff Officer with the 19th Reserve Division. He served on the Western Front where won the Pour le Mérite. By the end of the war he had reached the rank of major. Blomberg's two brothers were both killed in the conflict.

Blomberg remained in the army and in 1920 was promoted to lieutenant colonel and was appointed Chief of Staff of the Doeberitz Brigade. Four years later General Hans von Seeckt appointed him as chief of army training.

In 1927 Blomberg was promoted to the rank of major general and was appointed chief of the Troop Office. In this position he clashed with Kurt von Schleicher and in 1929 was sent to East Prussia to serve under Walther von Reichenau.

In 1932 Blomberg was head of the German delegation at the Geneva Disarmament Conference. The following year Adolf Hitler appointed him minister of defence and in 1935 minister of war and commander in chief of the German Army. It was Blomberg's idea to get all soldiers to pledge an oath of personal loyalty to Hitler. In April 1936 Blomberg became Hitler's first field marshal.

Blomberg believed Hitler's Night of the Long Knives massacre was justified to maintain order against Ernst Roehm's rowdy army of SA legions that threatened to eclipse the German Army itself by sheer manpower. He was outmaneuvered, however, by Hermann Goering, who was jealous of Blomberg's power and used the Gestapo to obtain embarrassing information about his pretty young second wife, who turned out to have been a prostitute with a criminal record. In January 1938, Blomberg resigned when he discovered Goering was planning make his information public. Blomberg and his wife were ordered to spend a year in exile on Capri. The scandal allowed Hitler to take direct control of the army.

After the war Blomberg was captured by Allied troops and gave evidence at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial. Werner Blomberg died while being held in detention on March 14, 1946.

Pictured above, right, is Blomberg (center) relaxing in the Alps with Goring (left) and Hitler (right).

This display is accompanied by a rare official Third Reich document signed by Blomberg May 18, 1934.





Fedor von Bock

Generalfeldmarshall

Army

Died May 4, 1945

Fedor von Bock was born in Kustrin, Germany, December 3, 1880. He joined the German Army and during the First World War was awarded the Pour le Mérite (Blue Max). By 1918 Bock had reached the rank of major.

He remained in the army and unlike a large number of senior officers was not purged by Adolf Hitler and in March 1939 led German troops into Czechoslovakia. He was promoted to Generaloberst and was involved in the invasions of Poland and France. Bock was shocked by the way the Schutz Staffeinel (SS) treated Jews in Poland but decided against an official protest. In 1940 he was one of twelve new field marshals created by Hitler.

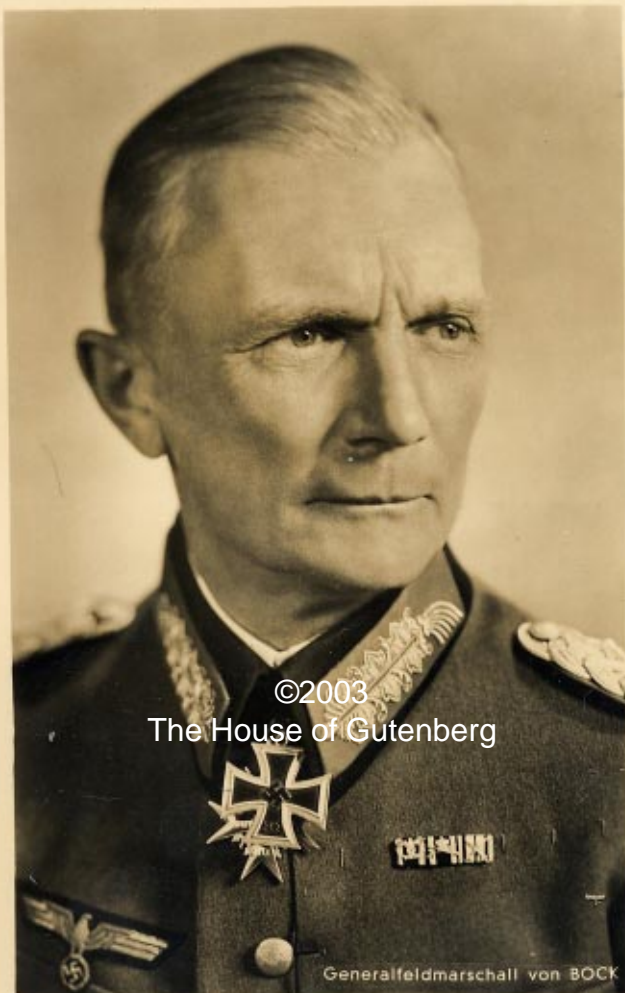
Bock was given the task of capturing Moscow. In July 1941 he captured

Minsk and three weeks later he had reached Smolensk.

Bock was now only 225 miles from Moscow but Adolf Hitler took the decision to divert some of his army to Leningrad and Kiev. It was not until October that Bock was able to resume his advance on Moscow.

Bad weather forced Bock to halt his advance on Moscow and in December, 1941. Hitler replaced him with Gunther von Kluge. After only a month's rest, he was sent once again to the Soviet Union to take control after the death of Walther von Reichenau.

In 1944 Bock was approached by his nephew Henning von Tresckow, about the possibility of joining the July Plot against Adolf Hitler. He refused but did not pass details onto the Gestapo. Fedor von Bock and his wife and daughter were killed on 4th May 1945 during an Allied air raid on Hamburg.



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Generalfeldmarschall von BOCK





Walther von Brauchitsch

*Generalfeldmarshall
Commander-in-chief of the Army*

Died October 18, 1948

Heinrich Alfred Hermann Walther von Brauchitsch was born in Berlin October 4, 1881 - the son of General der Kavallerie Bernhard von Brauchitsch. He was raised around the Imperial Court and began his military career when he was commissioned into the Prussian Guard Corps in 1900. After Hitler came to power the German Army rapidly expanded and as a result, von Brauchitsch became Chief of the East Prussian Military District. In 1938 Hitler promoted him to Generaloberst.

Almost as soon as he was appointed Generaloberst he became aware of the conspiracy of army officers against Hitler. Though considered by his peers to be one the best and brightest generals of the German Army, and he disapproved of many of Hitler's plans, von Brauchitsch refused to become involved in the conspiracy. As Army Commander-in-Chief he was in a position to give the conspirators the crucial support needed

to overthrow Hitler and the Nazi regime.

Though personally averse to Nazism, Brauchitsch soon became bound to Hitler. He borrowed 80,000 Reichmarks from Hitler in order to obtain a divorce and remarry.

When the conspirators went into high gear with their first attempt to overthrow Hitler and the Nazi regime in September 1938, they repeatedly tried to persuade Brauchitsch as Commander-in-Chief of the Army to lead the anticipated coup. But the only assurance he gave them was his famous reply: "I myself won't do anything, but I won't stop anyone else from acting."

Following the collapse of the 1938 coup attempt, Brauchitsch ignored all further appeals to use the army to overthrow Hitler before Germany is plunged into world war.

Brauchitsch displayed outstanding organizational talent in coordinating Hitler's blitzkrieg campaign against the West. He was instrumental in the planning and carrying out of the attacks on Poland, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia, Greece and the Soviet Union. Hitler rewarded him and eleven other generals with the ultimate military prize - the field marshal's baton. After the early successes he became more and more subservient to Hitler, complying with Hitler's orders against his own better judgment.

As Operation Barbarossa opened, Brauchitsch as Commander-in-Chief was forced to implement Hitler's infamous order which condoned the mass extermination of captured Soviet prisoners of war and civilians. Aghast at Hitler's decision to divert the panzer divisions of Army Group Center north towards Leningrad and south towards the Caucasus, Brauchitsch knew that it would doom the Wehrmacht's goal of capturing Moscow. Yet he makes no attempt beyond submitting memos in writing to change Hitler's mind. Hitler blamed von Brauchitsch for the failure to capture Moscow, heaping so much abuse on the unfortunate field marshal that he later suffers a heart attack. In failing health, Brauchitsch was unceremoniously relieved of command and retired in December 1941 and Hitler took direct control of the Wehrmacht.

He died in a British military hospital October 18, 1948.



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Ernst Busch

*Generalfeldmarshall
Commander-in-chief North-West*

Died July 17, 1945

Ernst Busch was born in Essen-Steele July 6, 1885. His military career began in 1904 when he was commissioned a Lieutenant. By 1915 he was a Captain and was a company leader in the 56th Infantry Regiment. He was wounded two times during WWII. In 1918 he was assigned as commander of the 2nd Battalion of the 56th Infantry Regiment where he was awarded the Pour le Merite (Blue Max).

In the post war years he held numerous positions and by 1935 he had been promoted to Major General.

In 1938 he was promoted to General of the Infantry and given command of the VIII Army Corps. He was given the fieldmarshall's baton February 1, 1943 and shortly after that he was named Commander-in-Chief of Army-Group Center.

Busch had received his Knights Cross in 1940 and in August 1943 he became the 274th recipient of the Oakleaves.

On May 7, 1945 he surrendered to the British and died in British captivity at Camp Aldershot, near London, two months later.





Karl Donitz

Grossadmiral

Commander-in-chief German Navy

Died December 24, 1980

Karl Donitz was born in Berlin-Grenau on 16th September, 1891. He enlisted as a sea cadet in 1910 and after naval training was commissioned as an officer in the German Navy in 1913.

During the First World War Donitz served on a cruiser in the Mediterranean before being transferred to submarines in October 1916. He was captured on 4th October 1918 and remained a prisoner of war until July 1919.

Donitz remained in the German Navy and in 1935 was put in charge of the new U-Boats being developed. However he clashed with Hermann Goering who was unwilling to supply the necessary capital to spend on the navy. Donitz said that he needed 1,000 submarines to win any future war with Britain but by 1939 he had only 57.

Donitz developed the idea of fighting in wolf packs. Between 1940 and 1943 U-boats took a heavy toll of Allied shipping in the

Atlantic, Arctic and the Mediterranean.

In January, 1943 Adolf Hitler appointed Donitz as Commander in chief of the German Navy.

The Allies gradually began to introduce successful anti-submarine strategies. This included the convoy system, long-range aircraft patrols, improved antisubmarine detectors and depth charges. By May 1943 German U-Boats were forced to withdraw from the Atlantic.

Donitz gave permission for a radically improved U-boat to be built in 1944. Working closely with Albert Speer, the Minister of Armaments, Germany were producing 42 of these all-electric boats a month by 1945. However, they were too late to make an impact on the outcome of the Second World War.

Hitler named Donitz head of state after his suicide on 30th April, 1945. After forming a new government Donitz negotiated Germany's surrender on 8th May.

At the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial Donitz was found guilty of war crimes and was sentenced to ten years in prison. After his release in October, 1956, he wrote his autobiography, *Memoirs: Ten Years and Twenty Days*. Karl Doenitz died on 24th December, 1980.

The picture below is a younger Doenitz during WWI. He was a Warrant Officer on U-39 and later commanded U-25 and U-68. U-68 sunk after having trouble with a dive and he was captured, spending 9 months in British captivity.





Hermann Göring

*Reichsmarschall
Commander-in-chief of the Luftwaffe*

Died October 15, 1946

The son of a distinguished army officer, Hermann Göring was commissioned in the Prussian army on 22 June 1912. In 1914, he served with an infantry regiment in the Vosges region before he was hospitalized with rheumatoid arthritis. While recovering, his friend Bruno Loerzer convinced him to transfer to the German Air Force. Later that year, Göring completed his training with FEA 3 and joined FFA 25 in 1915, often flying as Loerzer's observer. After training to become a pilot, he scored his first victory on 16 November 1915. Serving with various units over the next three years, he accumulated seventeen more victories. Following the death of Wilhelm Reinhard,

Göring assumed command of Manfred von Richthofen's JG 1 on 8 July 1918.

When Göring joined the Nazi Party in 1922, Hitler gave him command of the SA Brownshirts. Badly wounded in the Munich beer hall putsch of 1923, Göring fled the country for four years. Upon his return, he aided Hitler's rise to power and later became President of

the Reichstag, Prime Minister of Prussia and Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe. As founder of the Gestapo, Göring was instrumental in creating the first concentration camps for political dissidents.

Hitler's designated successor was captured by the American Seventh Army at the end of the war. In 1946, Göring was tried for conspiracy to wage war, crimes against peace, war crimes and crimes against humanity. He was found guilty of all charges and sentenced to death by hanging. Two hours before his scheduled execution, Göring committed suicide by taking a poison capsule.

Pictured below is the "Blue Max" he was awarded in WWI



Ritter von Greim

Generalfeldmarshall

Luftwaffe

Died May 24, 1945

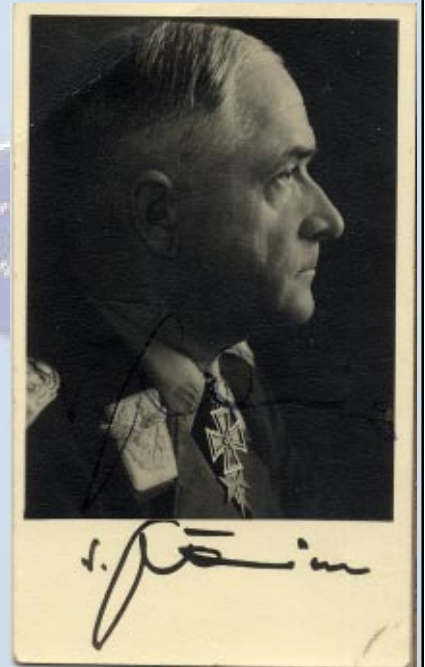
Robert Ritter von Greim was born in Bayreuth, Bavaria, Germany June 22, 1892, the son of a policy officer. He entered a military school and in October 1912 he joined the Bavarian Regiment of Artillery. He commanded a unit at Lorraine, but became more interested in flying. Two months after completing his flying training he got the first of 28 victories. He was awarded the prestigious "Blue Max" on October 23, 1918.

After Hitler's ascension to power von Greim helped Goring in the reconstruction of the German Air Force and his career started evolving fast. By 1938 he was a Generalmajor. In 1942 he successfully supported von Kleist's panzers. The next year he was promoted to Generaloberst. He continued to receive decorations and with the Swords to his Knights Cross, he became Germany's most decorated pilot.

von Greim never openly opposed Goring or Hitler, even though he was greatly opposed to the Nazi philosophy. He was ordered to report to Hitler's Berlin bunker in April 1945, so von Greim and his lover, the famous test pilot, Hanna Reitsch, flew to Berlin.

Hitler promoted him to Generalfeldmarshall and made him Supreme Commander of the Luftwaffe. A month later he was captured by the Americans and on May 24, 1945 he ingested a cyanide capsule, dying in seconds.

Robert Ritter von Greim, a hero of two wars, died at the age of 52. The private photo, right, was hand signed by von Greim.





Wilhelm Keitel

Generalfeldmarshall

Luftwaffe

Died October 16, 1946

Wilhelm Keitel was born September 22, 1882 in Hanover, the son of a landowner. He joined the German Army and in 1902 became a second lieutenant in the 46th Field Artillery.

During World War I he served on the Western front, becoming a member of the General Staff in 1915. He was seriously wounded in 1917 in Flanders but recovered to join the post-war Freikorps and then returned to the army. He was an instructor for some years before assuming the command of an artillery regiment. In 1929 he joined the Organizations Department.

In January 1933, Adolf Hitler gained power and immediately Keitel's old friend, Werner von Blomberg, was appointed Minister of Defence. Soon afterwards Blomberg introduced him to Hitler. Keitel was impressed and became a devoted supporter of the new leader.

In 1937 he was made a general and in 1938 he became Chief of the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces. He was made a Generalfeldmarschall (field marshal) in 1940.

During World War II Keitel proved a weak and cautious commander: he advised Hitler against invading France and opposed Operation Barbarossa. Both times he backed-down in the face of Hitler and tendered his resignation - it was not accepted. In 1942 he again stood up to Hitler over Field Marshal

Siegmund List. Despite this he was a loyal Nazi, he signed the orders instructing the execution of Jews and Communists and allowed Himmler a free hand with his racial controls in captured Russian territory. His defense of List was his last act of defiance to Hitler, after that he did not challenge another of Hitler's orders and was referred to by his colleagues as Lakaitel (the nodding ass). Keitel was instrumental in foiling the attempted coup of the July 20 Plot in 1944, and sat on the following Army Court of Honour that handed many officers over to Roland Freisler's court.

He signed the surrender to the Red Army on May 9, 1945 and was arrested on the 13th. He faced the International Military Tribunal charged with: Conspiracy to commit crimes against peace, planning, initiating and waging wars of aggression, war-crimes and crimes against humanity. His defence that he was just following orders was rejected, he was found guilty on all charges and hanged October 16, 1946.

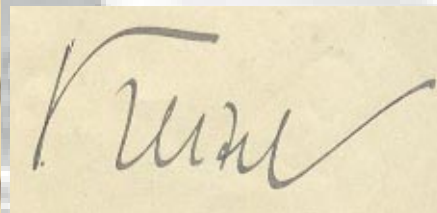
This display is accompanied by an original OKW document signed by Keitel.



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Generalfeldmarschall KEITEL



Der Chef des Oberkommandos der Wehrmacht

Berlin 28 35, den
Tirpitzufer 72 - 76
Hornbrecher: 31 81 01

An den

Chefadjutanten der Wehrmacht beim Führer
und Chef des Heerespersonalamtes

Herrn Generalleutnant S c h m u n d t .

In Ergänzung meiner diesjährigen Beurteilung bitte ich dem Führer die Beförderung des Generalmajor W i n t e r, Chef der Wehrmachtzentralabteilung, (R.D.A. 1. 10. 41 (28)) zum 1. Juli 1943 vorzuschlagen.

Generalmajor Winter scheidet demnächst aus dem Oberkommando der Wehrmacht aus und erhält eine Frontverwendung.

Im über 5-jähriger aufreibender und selbstloser Tätigkeit als Chef der Wehrmachtzentralabteilung hat sich Generalmajor Winter bleibende Verdienste für die Gesamtwehrmacht sowohl in der Zusammenarbeit der Wehrmachtteile untereinander wie auch mit den obersten Reichsbehörden erworben.

Seine mehrfachen Bitten um Frontverwendung mußten bisher unberücksichtigt bleiben, da die durch seine Ablösung entstehende Schädigung der Interessen der Gesamtwehrmacht nicht zu verantworten war.

In Würdigung der in seinen Beurteilungen dargelegten Charakter- und Leistungseigenschaften ist zu erwarten, daß er jede seinem Dienstgrad entsprechende Frontverwendung voll ausfüllen wird.

(2) 4



54

11
Beförderung am 1.7. von Albstadt nach
1.6.43. Bernau

Turn

39



Albert Kesselring

General Field Marshal/Luftwaffe
Died July 15, 1960

Albert Kesselring was born November 13, 1885 in Markstedt. In 1904 he joined the 2nd Bavarian Foot Artillery Regiment where he was trained as a balloon observer. After the war he remained in the Reichswehr and in the early 1930's he was assigned as Commander of the 4th Artillery Regiment near Dresden.

In 1933 he was transferred to the sub-rosa Air Force and was promoted to the rank of General der Flieger in 1937. The next year he was assigned as the Commander of Luftwaffe Group 1 in Berlin. He rose quickly through the senior ranks and in July 1940 he was promoted to the rank of Generalfeldmarschall. Following a brief tour of duty in the East, he was assigned as Commander-in-Chief South, which included the Mediterranean. It was here that he supported Rommel's operations in the North African desert - at times providing the only resupply open to Rommel.



Kesselring was a masterful tactician. His defense at Cassino prevented the Allied entry into Rome for seven months.

In March 1945 he was moved to the Western Front to replace von Rundstedt. It was here that he was captured by the Americans.

He was tried and convicted as a war criminal during the Military Central Tribunal. He was sentenced to death, but the sentence was commuted as a result of ill-health. Many historians feel that it is doubtful that he should have been tried in the first place. Kesselring will be most remembered in military history for performing the most masterful retrograde actions in the history of modern warfare. He was able to fight a delaying action that prevented the encirclement and capture of all of the German forces on the Italian peninsula. It is most likely that this was the real reason he was tried and convicted. Nothing in his military history indicates that he might have ordered atrocities.

Kesselring was one of only 27 to receive the Diamonds to his Knights Cross. He died July 15, 1960.

Pictured above, right, Gen Heidrich briefs Kesselring during the Battle of Cassino.





Ewald von Kleist

Generalfeldmarshall

Panzer

Died 1954

Edwald von Kleist was born in August 1881 in Braunfels to an aristocratic family. He was a strong monarchist who was close to the Von Hindenburg family serving as a commander of a cavalry division from 1932 to 1935. Temporarily retired, he was recalled in August 1939 at the age of 58 as commanding general of XXII Army Corps (Motorized). In April 1941, he was sent to the Balkans where his troops captured Belgrade.

In 1942, Hitler sent von Kleist to the Caucasus with orders to take the oil wells there by the autumn of that year. At first, von Kleist made progress in this campaign. Official Nazi policy was to treat the non-Germanic peoples of the east as inferior races, but von Kleist realised the advantages of gaining the co-operation of these people and used officers who knew them well. As a result he gained the support of many people who fought with the Germans against the Communists.

In January 1943, Hitler made von Kleist a Field Marshal in recognition of his services at a time when the Russian campaign was deteriorating.

After receiving the generalfieldmarshall's baton, he was awarded the Swords to his Knights Cross. As Hitler's efforts in the East deteriorated, von Kleist was removed and placed in command of the Fuhrer Reserve.

Near the end of the war, von Kleist was taken prisoner by the Americans and turned over to the British. In 1946, after being held at Island Farm, he was extradited to Yugoslavia and then to the Soviet Union, where he died in October 1954 in the Vladimir POW Camp near Moscow.



Ewald von Kleist Signed Document

Panzerarmee - Oberkommando 1

A.H.Qu., den 20. 4. 42

Liste

Verleihungsliste für Kriegsverdienstkreuze 2.Klasse m.Schw.

Lfd. Nr.	Z u n a m e	Vorname Rufname	G e b u r t s - Ort Tag	Dienstgrad	Truppenteil
45.	Gälzow	Max	Neuwargeshow 19.4.08	Obergefr.	4./560
46.	Frechen	Michael	Kr. Schlawa 3.11.99	"	4./560
47.	Vorwald	Heinrich	Köln 29.10.99	"	"
48.	Fuchs	Indwig	Zweibrücken 7.2.99	"	"
49.	Gräfe	Franz	Duisburg-Hamborn 25.4.98	"	"
50.	Kordowski	Johann	Orypel Kr. 26.1.99	"	"
51.	Mattis	Hermann	Marlenwerder 23.12.98	"	Pi. Park-Kp. 560
52.	Zimmer	Johann	Duisburg 27.2.99	"	"
53.	Wietheoff	Heinrich	Bochum 15.8.00	"	"
54.	Brass	Ernst	Düsseldorf 28.2.99	Uffz.	"
55.	Riedel	Franz	Lebbertich 2.8.00	Obergefr.	"
56.	Hoffmeister	Wilhelm	Stoekum 20.7.98	"	"
57.	Knobbe	Johann	Bischofsheim 17.5.99	"	"
58.	Engel	Ernst	Dortmund 13.2.99	"	"
59.	Klam	Karl	Odenbach 2.5.98	"	"
60.	Krahl	Felix	Grelbach 25.8.99	"	"
61.	Kumser	Ernst	Duisburg 16.10.14	Uffz.	Pi. Masch. Zug 560
62.	Detle	Hans-Heinr.	Aschersleben 8.1.03	"	"
63.	Dresen	Friedrich	Uerdingen 3.8.98	Obergefr.	"
64.	Gammel	Edmund	Walsum 6.2.15	"	"
65.	Schlügel	Otto	Duisburg 12.2.99	"	"
66.	Siepmann	Heinrich	Mündelheim 25.5.05	Gefr.	"

Vorstehende Angaben stimmen mit denen der Besitzurkunden und Vorschlagslisten überein.

Generaloberst



Gunther von Kluge

General Field Marshal Army

Died August 19, 1944

Gunther von Kluge was born in Poznan, Germany October 30, 1882. He joined the German Army and served in the field artillery during the First World War.

Kluge remained in the army and by 1933 had reached the rank major general. The following year he was placed in charge of Wehrkreis VI in Westphalia.

In 1938 Kluge objected to the aggressive foreign policy adopted by Adolf Hitler and as a result was dismissed from office. However, on the outbreak of the Second World War Kluge was recalled and placed in charge of the 4th Army that invaded Poland.

In the summer of 1940 Kluge led the 4th Army that invaded France. He was rewarded on 19th July, 1940 with the promotion to the rank of field marshal.

Kluge also took part in Operation Barbarossa. His 4th Army took Smolensk in July, 1941 before being sent into the Ukraine. Three months later he was ordered to attack Moscow. However, following a counter-attack by the Red Army, the operation came to a halt in December, 1941.

Kluge replaced Fedor von Bock as head of AG Centre at the beginning of 1942. He immediately clashed with Heinz Guderian and with the support of Adolf Hitler removed Guderian as the leader of the Second Panzer Army.

On October 27, 1943, Kluge was badly injured when his car overturned on the Minsk-Smolensk. He was unable to return to duty until July 1944. Kluge soon discovered that many of the leading generals were arguing for peace negotiations with the Allies. He shared these views but Adolf Hitler was unwilling to accept that he was on the verge of defeat.

Kluge was approached by Henning von Tresckow to join in the plot to overthrow Hitler. He refused but was kept informed about the conspiracy. After the failed July Plot the Gestapo informed Hitler of their suspicions that Kluge was unreliable.

On August 16, 1944, Hitler sent a letter to Kluge in France suggesting that he came back to Germany for a rest. He refused. Certain of his eventual implication in the assassination conspiracy he committed suicide by swallowing cyanide on August 19th. This display is accompanied by a document hand signed by Kluge.



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Generalfeldmarschall von KLUGE

G. Kluge

Generalleutnant
Befehlshaber im Wehrkreis VI



**Official Letter of Congratulations
to a Knights Cross recipieng
signed by
Gunther von Kluge**

Im Namen des Führers und Reichskanzlers

Dem

Hauptmann Rudolf Glitz

Münster i/W.

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ist auf Grund der Verordnung vom 13. Juli 1934 zur Erinnerung an
den Weltkrieg 1914/1918 das von dem Reichspräsidenten Generalfeld-
marschall von Hindenburg gestiftete

Ehrenkreuz für Frontkämpfer

verliehen worden.

Münster i/W, den 30. Oktober 1934.

Nr.

172/34



M. Kluge

Generalleutnant
Befehlshaber im Bezirks VI

Georg von Kuchler

Generalfeldmarshall

Heer

Died 1954

Need to research von Kuchler



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Georg von Kuchler Signed Document (front)

DH 1.3

Oberkommando Heeresgruppe Nord
Dienststelle

Anlage 1
zu Nr. 976.

H. Qu. , den 15. März 1943

Beurteilung zum 1. April 1943¹⁾

Beurteilungsnotizen
(für Offz., auschl. San., Bet., Ing.-Offz., Offz. (W))

über den

Name für Beurteilungsnotizen

Oberstleutnant (E) 1.8.42 (41) Georg Henschel
Dienstgrad *) RM (Ord. Nr.) Vorname Name

Obkdo. H. Gr. Nord/O. Qu. Feldzeugkommando IV 24.4.1897
Mob.-Dienststelle Friedensdienststelle, ggf. Waffengattung bzw. WBR u. Fr. Et. Teil *) geboren am

E - Offizier reakt. am 1.8.35
Eisenbahn bzw. Jüdischer *)

Anlass der Vorlage bzw. Abgabe *)

26. 8.39 - 19.11.39 Abt. Leiter Abt. I beim Feldzeugkommando IV
20.11.39 - 19.10.42 Sachbearb. W.u.G. beim A.O.K. 18/O. Qu.
20.10.42 - jetzt Sachbearb. f. Inf., Art., allg. H.u. Gasgerät und Pl.
beim Obkdo. H. Gr. Nord/O. Qu.

Verwendungen im jetzigen Kriege mit Daten (vom bis)

Deutsche Auszeichnungen des jetzigen Krieges mit Verleihungsdaten und Angabe, ob und zu welchen Auszeichnungen vorgeschlagen:

30.1.41 Kr. V. Kr. 2. Kl. m. Schw.
1.3.42 Kr. V. Kr. 1. Kl. m. Schw.
1.8.42 Ostmedaille

1) Nicht Zutreffendes streichen. - 2) Genaue Angabe bei Erg. Offz., Offz. z. D., b. Rel. z. B. - 3) Friedensdienststelle gem. DMK A oder B für alt. Offz. und Offz. z. D.; falls daraus oder aus der Mob./Dienststelle nicht ersichtlich, auch Waffengattung; WBR u. Fr. Et. Teil für Rel. Offz., WBR für Offz. z. B. - 4) Eisenbahn für alt. Offz. und Offz. z. D.; Angabe, ob Offz. mit Kriegsschulenausbildung, ob und wann erhalt., u. b. Erg. Offz., a. b. Pöschel, u. b. Rel. Offz. übernommen, ob ehem. Wk., ob ehem. Kriegsoffz. (DMK C1); Jüdischer für Rel. Offz. und Offz. z. B. und Angabe, ob und seit wann Pg. oder in welchen Gliederungen der NSDAP. - 5) Nur bei Beurteilungsnotizen auszufüllen, z. B. Verlegung in den Stab der 15. 3. D. als O 1 am 1. 12. 42

Kurze Beurteilung (Persönlichkeitswert, nationalsozialistische Haltung, Bewährung vor dem Feinde, dienstliche Leistungen, geistige und körperliche Anlagen und Eignung):
Offener Charakter. Geistig reger, gewandter Offizier. Nationalsozialist. Hatte noch keine Gelegenheit sich vor dem Feinde zu bewähren. Leistet als W.u.G.-Bearbeiter der H. Gr. auf Grund seines Organisationstalents und seines guten Urteilsvermögens große Dienste.

Starke Seiten: Pflichtbewußt und fleißig ist er ein sehr zuverlässiger und selbständiger Arbeiter.

Schwache Seiten:

1325

Zusammenfassendes Urteil
(Durchschnitt, über Durchschnitt, unter Durchschnitt): Ein erfahrener W.u.G.-Bearbeiter über dem Durchschnitt.

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Georg von Kuchler Signed Document (back)

Eignung für welche nächsthöhere Verwendung? ⁶⁾ für welche besondere oder anderweitige Verwendung? ⁷⁾ Vorschlag für Verwendung in nächster Zeit ⁸⁾ :	Zur Überführung zu den Truppenoffizieren geeignet. Belassung in seiner jetzigen Stellung.
Sprachkenntnisse dabei abgelegte Prüfungen (Jahr):	.. # .
Eröffnung zu welchen Punkten, wann, wie (mündlich oder schriftlich und durch wen?	
Strafen (Strafgrund, Tag der Beurtei- lung oder Strafverhängung und Stelle, die die Strafe verhängt hat), Beleh- rungen, Verwarnungen, Mißbilligungen des D. R. G.:	keine
Dem Beurteilenden bekannt seit unterstellt seit	} 25.2.43

Unterschrift
 Generalmajor und
 Chef des Gen.Stabes H.Gr.Nord
 Dienstgrad und Dienststellung

Beitrag des Chefs des Generalstabes der vorgelegten Abt. Behörde (nur bei Gen. St. Offz. usw.):

Zusätze vorgelegter Dienststellen:

Einverstanden.
Tüchtige Kraft auf seinem Fachgebiet; sehr tätig.

H.Qu., den 24.3.43

Generalfeldmarschall u.
 Oberbefehlshaber d. Heeresgr. Nord

⁶⁾ Gilt für alle Offz.; für Truppenoffz. hinsichtlich Eignung zur Führung des nächsthöheren Verbandes, für Gen. St. Offz. hinsichtlich Eignung zum Armeestab, Korpsstab, Armeelc, Armeelc, Korpslc, Div. lc, zur Veretzung in den Gen. St., zur Kommandierung zum Gen. St. — ⁷⁾ Z. B. als höherer Adjutant, Erzieher, Führerschüler, Lehrer, auf Grund von Sprachkenntnissen, im Auslandsdienst, auf Grund von Hochgebirgsaufstiegen usw.; für Gen. St. Offz. hinsichtlich Eignung für Verwendung im Gen. St. Schneller Verbände, im Quartiermeisterdienst, im Lc-Dienst, im Transportwesen, als Lehrer für Gen. St. Lehrgänge (Taktik bzw. Qu.-Dienst); besondere Anlagen für Kriegsgeschichte, Wehrwirtschaft. — ⁸⁾ Z. B. „noch halbjährige Belassung in bisheriger Stelle“ oder „alsbaldige Verwendung als Hpt. Rdr. (mot)“



Ritter von Leeb

Generalfeldmarshall

Heer

Died April 29, 1956

Wilhelm Ritter von Leeb was born September 5, 1876 into an old military family. He entered the Germany army as a cadet in 1895 and held a variety of staff positions during WWI.

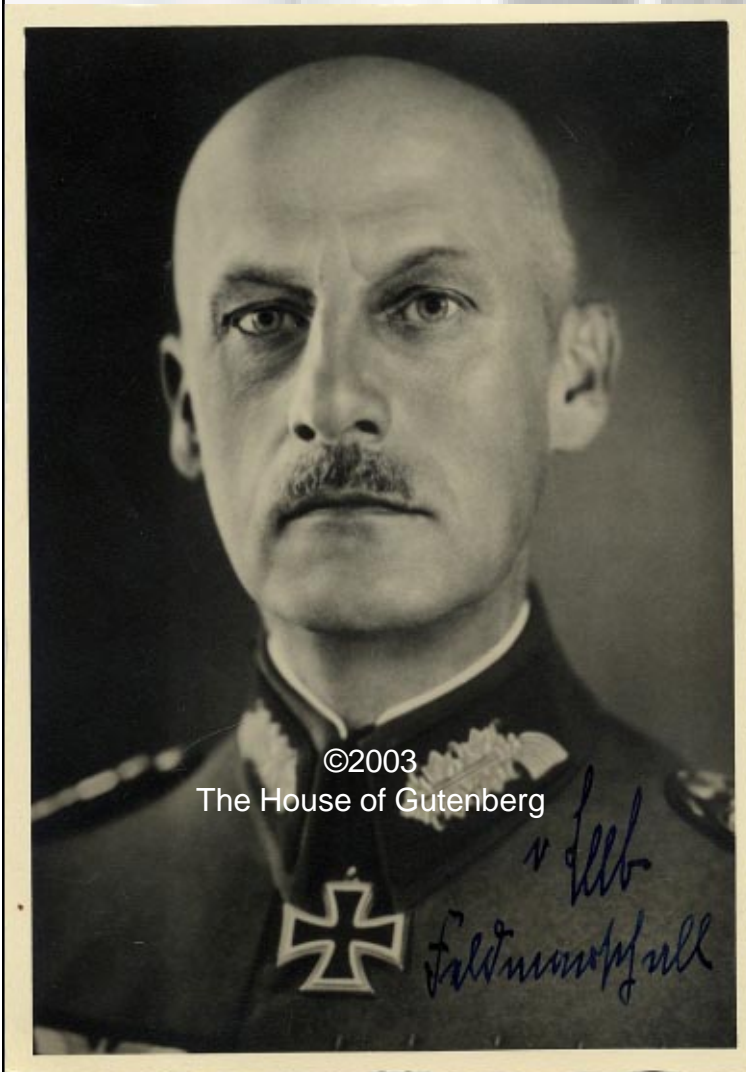
After WWI he joined the Frikorps and then served in the Reichswehr. In 1929 he was promoted to general major and served as commander of Military District VII.

In 1934 he was promoted to General der Artillerie and was named commander of Army Group II. He was dismissed from the army in January 1938 and then recalled to command an army in the Sudetenland during the 1938-39 crisis with Czechoslovakia.

In 1939 he was promoted to general and given command of Army Group C, which held the front along the Rhine facing the Maginot Line. Though he voiced disapproval of the High Command's plan to invade neutral Belgium and expressed doubt over the chances of victory against the Allies, he served credibly in the campaign in Flanders and France in 1940.

He was given the fieldmarschall's baton and given command of Army Group North during the invasion of Russia in 1941.

He was responsible for advancing along the Baltic coast toward Leningrad. While he was quite successful, his advice to Hitler to retreat from the Leningrad area resulted in Hitler's dismissing him. He remained inactive for the remainder of the war and died at Hohenschwangau near Fussen, Bavaria April 29, 1956.





Wilhelm List

Generalfeldmarshall

Heer

Died August 17, 1971



Wilhelm List, the son of a doctor, was born in Germany May 14, 1880. He joined the German Army and served throughout the First World War. After the war List joined the right-wing Freikorps terrorist group.

He remained in the army where he became a tank specialist and eventually became chief of the Army Organization Department. He made gradually progress in the new German Army and in 1930 he was promoted to major general and was appointed head of the Dresden Infantry School.

List developed more moderate political opinions and in 1931 he upset Adolf Hitler by disciplining young officers who were supporters of the Nazi Party.

In 1935 List was appointed by General Fedor von Bock as commander of the 4th Army Corps. Although List was still privately critical of Hitler he was unwilling to take any actions that would damage his army career. As a result he did not protest against the treatment of Werner von Blomberg and Werner von Fitsch in 1938.

After the Anschluss List was sent to Vienna as head of the Army Group in Austria. The following year he took part in the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

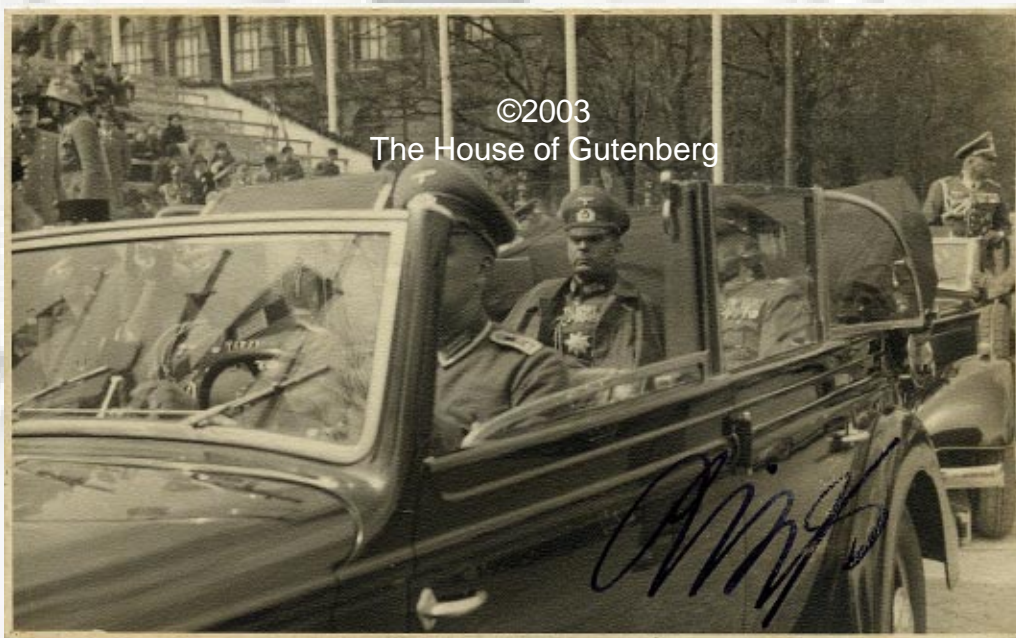
In September 1939, List served under General Gerd von Rundstedt in Poland. While visiting the country Wilhelm Canaris was shocked to discover that List had given permission for the mass executions of Jews by SS Units.

During the Western Offensive he led the 12th Army. He made good speed and his infantry reached the Meuse only a day after General Paul von Kleist and his panzer units. List intervened in the dispute between Kleist and Heinz Guderian that threatened to damage the success of the invasion of France. As a result Guderian came under List's command for the rest of the campaign.

Adolf Hitler was pleased with the role that List had played in the opening year of the war and on May 10, 1940 he was promoted to field marshal. He was then given the task of planning the invasions of Greece and Yugoslavia. He remained in the Balkans until being dismissed in October 1941.

List was recalled in July 1942 to command the Army Group in southern area of the Soviet Union. List led his troops into the Caucasus to capture the valuable oil fields. Hitler was disappointed by List's performance in the Caucasus. Despite the protests of Franz Halder and Alfred Jodl, Hitler dismissed List September 9, 1942 and he spent the rest of the war at his home in Garmish-Partenkirchen.

After the war List was charged with war crimes and in February 1948 he was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was released in December 1952 on the grounds of ill health. Wilhelm List died August 17, 1971.



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Erich von Mannstein

Generalfeldmarshall - Panzer

Died June ;11, 1973

Erich von Manstein, the son of an artillery officer, was born in Berlin November 24, 1887. He was an Imperial court page before spending six years in the cadet corps. He joined the German Army and in 1906 was commissioned in the 3rd Footguards.

After the outbreak of the First World War Manstein served in Belgium before being wounded in Poland. After recovering he returned to the Eastern Front before being sent to France in 1917.

Manstein remained in the army and in 1936 was appointed chief of operations. Promoted to the rank of major general he served under General Ludwig Beck as Oberquartiermeister. Considered to be uncooperative by Adolf Hitler he was sent to Silesia as commander of the 18th Division.

In the invasion of Poland Manstein served as chief of staff to the Army Group South under General Gerd von Rundstedt. In 1940 Manstein worked with Guenther Blumentritt and Henning von Tresckow to develop the plan to invade France. Manstein and his colleagues suggested that the German Army should attack through the wooded hills of the Ardennes. Hitler originally rejected the proposal but he eventually approved of a modified version of what became known as the Manstein Plan. Manstein was sent back to Silesia and did not take part in the successful operation until the final stages when he served under General Gunther von Kluge.

In February 1941, Manstein was appointed commander of the 56th Panzer Corps. He was involved in Operation Barbarossa where he served under General Erich Hoepner. Attacking on 22nd June 1941, Manstein advanced more than 100 miles in only two days and was able to seize the importance bridges at Dvinsk. The following month he captured Demyansk and Torzhok.

Promoted to field marshal Manstein was sent to capture Leningrad. This led to a series of bitter battles and over the next few months lost over 60,000 men.

In November 1942, Adolf Hitler ordered Manstein to rescue Fredrich von Paulus and the 6th Army at Stalingrad. He got his three panzer divisions to within 35 miles of the 6th Army but a Red Army counter-attack forced him to retreat to the Ukraine.

Manstein regrouped and the following year inflicted a heavy defeat on the Soviets at Krasnograd. Hitler overruled Manstein's desire to push the Soviet troops to the Sea of Azov. Instead he was ordered to Kursk.

Manstein continued to argue with Hitler about overall strategy and in March 1944 he was dismissed from office. After the war Manstein was charged with war crimes.

Manstein was found guilty and he was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment. However, for medical reasons he was freed in 1953. Erich von Manstein died on 11th June 1973.



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Erhard Milch

Generalfeldmarshall - Luftwaffe

Died January 25, 1972

Erhard Milch was born in Wilhelmshaven, Germany March 30, 1892. He joined the German Army and became an artillery officer. In the First World War he served on the Western Front until being transferred to the German Army Air Service where he trained as a aerial observer. Promoted to captain he became commander of Flight Squadron 6 in October 1918.

Milch resigned from the army in 1921 and entered the aviation industry. He worked for the Junkers Aviation until 1926 when he became director of the national airline, Deutsche Lufthansa.

Milch joined Hermann Goering in secretly establishing the Luftwaffe. In 1933 he became Goering's deputy as State Secretary in the Reich Air Ministry. In this post Milch was responsible for managing armament production.

Rumours circulated that Milch's father was Jewish and his family was investigated by the Gestapo. Goering solved the problem by persuading Milch's mother to sign a legal affidavit stating that her husband was not Erhard's true father. The authorities were then able to certify him as a honorary Aryan.

In 1938 Milch was promoted to colonel general and the following year commanded Luftflotte V during the Norwegian campaign. After the successful defeat of France in June 1940, Milch, along with two other Luftwaffe officers, Albrecht Kesselring and Hugo Sperrie, was granted the title field marshal. The following year he was given the title Air Inspector General.

After the poor showing of the Luftwaffe in the Soviet Union Milch joined Joseph Goebbels and Heinrich Himmler in suggesting to Adolf Hitler that Hermann Goering should be replaced. Hitler refused and in June 1944 Goering forced Milch to resign as director of air armament. Milch now served under Albert Speer, who was minister of armaments. After the suicide of Adolf Hitler Milch fled to the Baltic Coast but was arrested May 4, 1945.

Found guilty at Nuremberg of war crimes he was sentenced life imprisonment. He was released in June 1954, and during his retirement wrote *The Rise and Fall of the Luftwaffe*. Erhard Milch died at Wuppertal-Barmen January 25, 1972



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General der Flieger MILCH





Walter Model

Generalfeldmarschall - Army

Died April 25, 1945



Walter Model was born January 24, 1891 in Genthin, near Berlin. He began his military career as a cadet officer in the 52nd Infantry Regiment. During the First World War he fought on the Western Front. When the war came to an end, he remained with the 2nd Infantry Regiment as one of the Reichswehr's 100,000 man army.

Model showed an early interest in armored warfare and rose to the rank of Generalleutnant in command of the 3rd Panzer Division, where his aggressive attacks against the Soviets earned him the Knights Cross and the command of the 2nd Panzer Group. Model was not considered a strategist, but

Hitler used him to restore the situations on a threatened or tottering front and there he achieved extraordinary success. Near the end of the war Model found his 300,000 man group surrounded and they had to surrender after their ammunition had been expended. On April 21, 1945, he commented "My only aim was to serve Germany. With this, he walked into the woods and shot himself.

Pictured above, right, Model visits some of his troops during the winter of 1944/45. Below is his simple gravestone.





Friedrich Paulus

Generalfeldmarschall - Army

Died February 1, 1957

Friedrich Paulus was born the son of a reform school administrator September 23, 1890 in Breitenau, Germany. He attempted to become an officer-cadet in the German Navy but was rejected because of his lack of aristocratic blood. After briefly studying law at the University of Munich he joined the German Army in 1910. The following year he was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the 3rd Baden Infantry Regiment.

On the outbreak of the First World War Paulus was adjutant of the III Battalion. In 1915 he was assigned to the staff of the 2nd Prussian Jaeger Regiment and two years later to the operations staff of the Alpine Corps. During the war he served on the Eastern Front and the Western Front.

During the war it was clearly seen that Paulus lacked leadership qualities.

He remained in the army after the war and was appointed adjutant to the 14th Infantry Regiment at Konstanz. In 1922 he was given general staff training. One senior officer commented that Paulus was: "slow, but very methodical". Another complained that he "lacked decisiveness". However, he continued to be promoted and in 1930 he became a tactics instructor with the 5th Infantry Division.

In June 1940, he was promoted to lieutenant general and three months later became deputy chief of the General Staff. Paulus then carried out a strategic survey on the Soviet Union for the proposed Operation Barbarossa. In December 1941, Paulus was given command of the 6th Army and promoted to general. He took up his appointment in January 1942 and fought his first battle at Dnepropetrovsk in the Soviet Union. The advance of the 6th Army was halted by the Red Army and the following month Paulus was forced to order his men to move back in search of better defensive positions.

May 9, 1942, General Semen Timoshenko, with 640,000 men, attacked the 6th Army at Volchansk. Paulus, seriously outnumbered, decided to move his troops back toward Kharkov. The 6th Army was rescued by General Paul von Kleist and his 1st Panzer Army when they struck Timoshenko's exposed southern flank. Paulus was now able to launch a counter-attack and by the end of the month all Soviet resistance had come to an end. A total of 240,000 Soviet soldiers were killed or captured and Paulus was awarded the Knights' Cross.

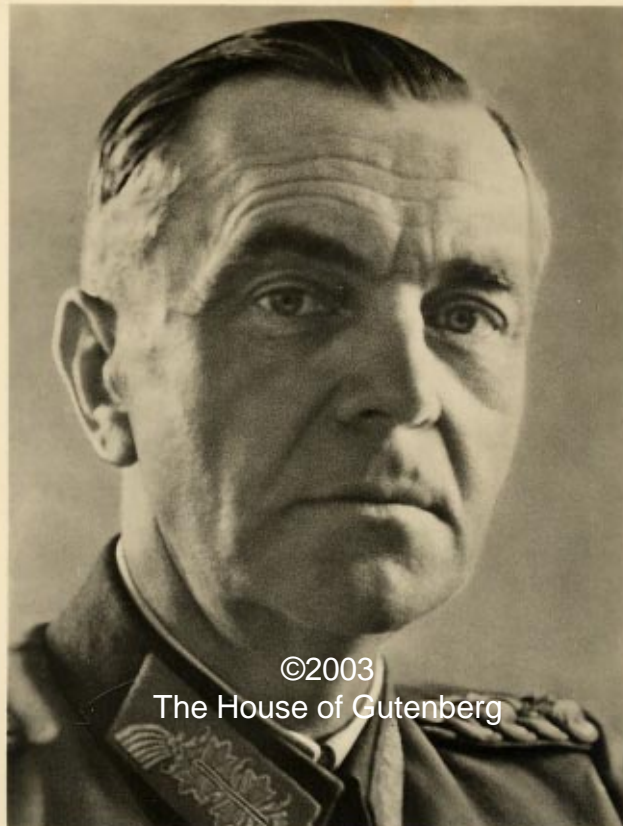
In the summer of 1942 Paulus advanced toward Stalingrad with 250,000 men, 500 tanks, 7,000 guns and mortars, and 25,000 horses. By the end of July a lack of fuel brought Paulus to a halt at Kalach. It was not until August 7th that he had received the supplies needed to continue with his advance. Over the next few weeks his troops killed or captured 50,000 Soviet troops but on August 18th, now only thirty-five miles from Stalingrad, he ran out of fuel again.

Adolf Hitler now ordered Paulus to take Stalingrad whatever the cost to German forces. However, Paulus, who had lost 40,000 soldiers since entering the city, was running out of fighting men and on October 4th he made a desperate plea to Hitler for reinforcements.

A few days later five engineer battalions and a panzer division arrived in Stalingrad. Fighting a war of attrition, Stalin responded by ordering three more armies to the city. Soviet losses were much higher than those of the Germans, but Stalin had more men at his disposal than Paulus.

On January 30, 1943, Adolf Hitler promoted to Paulus to field marshal and sent him a message reminding him that no German field marshal had ever been captured. Hitler was clearly suggesting to Paulus to commit suicide but he declined and the following day surrendered to the Red Army. The last of the Germans surrendered February 2.

Paulus remained in a Soviet Union prison until being released in 1953. He died of cancer February 1, 1957.



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Paulus





Erich Raeder

Grossadmiral - Navy

Died November 6, 1960

Erich Raeder, the son of a headmaster, was born in Wandsbek, Schleswig-Holstein April 24, 1876. After a classical education he entered the Imperial Navy in 1894 and made rapid progress to become Chief of Staff to Franz von Hipper in 1912. During the First World War he saw action and in 1928 was promoted to admiral and head of the German Navy.

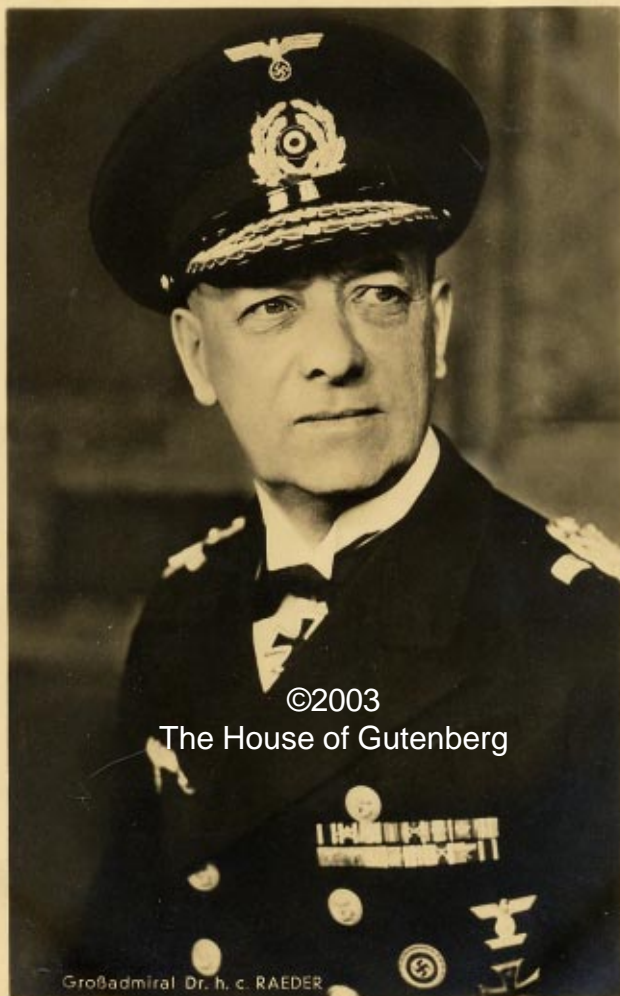
Raeder disliked the domestic policies of the National Socialist German Workers Party but supported Adolf Hitler in his attempts to restore Germany as a great power. In 1939 Hitler promoted

Raeder to the rank of grand admiral, the first German to hold this post since Alfred von Tirpitz.

Raeder's strategy was to build a German Navy that could challenge the British Navy. This brought him into conflict with Hermann Goering who as director of the German economy directed more resources to the Luftwaffe than the navy.

In 1939 Raeder sent Adolf Hitler a proposal for capturing Denmark and Nor-

way. He argued that Germany would not be able to defeat Britain unless it created naval bases in these countries. In April 1940 Hitler gave permission for this move but he was disappointed by the heavy losses that the German Navy suffered during the achievement of this objective. Hitler grew increasingly disillusioned with the performance of the German Navy and after the failure to stop a large Arctic convoy he accused his commander of incompetence. Raeder resigned in January, 1943 and was replaced by Karl Doenitz as Commander in Chief of the navy. At the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial Raeder was sentenced to life imprisonment. He was released in 1955. Erich Raeder died in Kiel, on 6th November, 1960. This display comes with a beautiful official document signed by Raeder.



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Großadmiral Dr. h. c. RAEDER





Walter von Reichenau

Generalfeldmarschall - Heer

Died November 6, 1960

Walter von Reichenau, the son of a Prussian general, was born in Germany on August 16, 1884. He joined the German Army when he was eighteen and in 1904 became an officer in the 1st Guards Field Artillery Regiment.

In May 1914 entered the War Academy in Berlin where he underwent General Staff training. On the outbreak of the First World War he was sent to the Western Front. During the conflict he won the Iron Cross and by 1918 had reached the rank of captain.

After the war Reichenau was a General Staff officer with the Wehrkries VI before serving as commander of the 8th Machine Gun Company. He was promoted to major in 1923 and joined the Wehrkries III in Berlin. This was followed by a period as commander of the 5th Signal Battalion at Stuttgart and Chief of Staff to the Inspector of Signals at the

Reichswehr Ministry.

In February 1931, Reichenau was named Chief of Staff of Wehrkries I in East Prussia where he served under General Werner von Blomberg. Reichenau's uncle, Friedrich von Reichenau, was an ardent supporter of the Nazi Party and in 1932 he introduced his nephew to Adolf Hitler. Reichenau was immediately converted and soon afterwards he arranged for Blomberg to meet Hitler.

When Hitler gained power in January 1933, Werner von Blomberg became Minister of War and Reichenau was appointed head of the Ministerial Office of the Reichswehr Ministry. Reichenau now became chief liaison officer between the German Army and the Nazi Party. Reichenau and Blomberg worked together to force Kurt Hammerstein-Equord, a committed anti-Nazi, to retire as Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Blomberg persuaded Adolf Hitler to appoint Reichenau to the post but after a group of senior army officers complained, President Paul von Hindenburg vetoed the selection and General Werner von Fritsch was chosen instead.

In August 1935, Reichenau was promoted to lieutenant general and was appointed commander of Wehrkries

VII in Munich. The following year he was appointed general of artillery and in 1938 Adolf Hitler wanted to appoint him as Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Leading figures in the German Army complained and Gerd von Rundstedt, Franz Halder and Ludwig Beck all refused to serve under him. Hitler was forced to change his mind and on 4th February, 1938, General Heinrich von Brauchitsch was appointed instead. Reichenau now replaced Brauchitsch as Commander-in-Chief of Army Corps 4.

In September 1939, Reichenau commanded the 10th Army for the invasion of Poland. The following year he led the 6th Army during the Western Offensive in Belgium and France. On 19th July, 1940, Hitler promoted him to field marshal.

Reichenau, a strong opponent of an invasion of the Soviet Union, also took part in Operation Barbarossa during the summer of 1941. Leading the 6th Army his troops managed to capture Kiev, Belgorod, Kharkov and Kursk. Reichenau encouraged his soldiers to commit atrocities against the Jews in the territory under his control.

In September 1941, Reichenau wrote to Adolf Hitler suggested that they should start recruiting Ukrainians and White Russians to fight against the Red Army. Hitler rejected the idea and told Reichenau to stop interfering in political strategy. Later that month Reichenau wrote to Hitler again on this subject warning of the dangers of large-scale partisan warfare in the Soviet Union.

In an attempt to keep fit Reichenau used to go on a daily cross-country run. In January, 1942, he ran several miles in temperatures well below minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit. When he returned he complained of feeling unwell and later that day he had a severe heart attack. After being unconscious for five days it was decided to fly him back to Germany. Walter von Reichenau died on 17th January 1942, when the plane carrying him to Leipzig crash-landed.



Woffram von Richthofen

Generalfeldmarschall - Luftwaffe

Died July 12, 1945

Wolfram Richthofen was born in Gut Barzdorf, Germany in 1895. He joined the German Army in 1913 and served throughout the First World War and saw action on the Western Front and the Eastern Front. In March 1918, Richthofen, the cousin of Manfred von Richthofen, Germany's leading flying ace, qualified as a pilot with German Army Air Service.

After the war Richthofen studied engineering before rejoining the German Army. When Hermann Goering announced the formation of the Luftwaffe in 1933, Richthofen immediately joined and become one of the organizations chief technical assistants.

In 1936 Richthofen went to Spain with the Condor Legion. During the Spanish Civil War he was leader of combat formations and was appointed as chief of staff to Hugo Sperrle. In September 1938 he was promoted to major general and remained to support General Francisco Franco until returning to Nazi Germany in May 1939 when he became commander of the legion.

After the outbreak of the Second World War Richthofen led the 8th Air Corps and in Poland directed the attempt to destroy Warsaw. He also played an important role in the blitzkrieg tactics used during the Western Offensive. This included the use of Junkers Stuka dive bombers to give air support to Walther von Reichenau and his 6th Army in Belgium and General Paul von Kleist and his forces in France.

In the Battle of Britain his 8th Air Corps had the mission of winning air superiority over the Royal Air Force. Like other leaders of the Luftwaffe, Richthofen was shocked to discover that the Supermarine Spitfire and Hawker Hurricane were able to out-perform German aircraft during the battle.

In April 1941, Richthofen provided air support for the German invasion of Greece. After the battle for Crete he was awarded the Oakleaves. He then commanded the 2nd Air Force in Italy before being sent to support Field Marshal Erich von Manstein and the Army Group South during the invasion of the Soviet Union.

Richthofen then had the task of supplying General Friedrich von Paulus and his 6th Army that was encircled in Stalingrad. Over a 72 day period the Luftwaffe delivered 8,350 tons of supplies. Casualties were high with 488 aircraft and over 1,000 crewmen lost.

February 17, 1943, Adolf Hitler decided that Richthofen should become Germany's youngest field marshal. The following year Richthofen developed a brain tumor and in November 1944 retired from active duty. Wolfram Richthofen died July 12, 1945. This display is accompanied by an official von Richthofen hand signed document.



Wolfram von Richthofen
Generalfeldmarschall



von Richthofen Signed Document



Im Namen des Führers
und Obersten Befehlshabers
der Wehrmacht

verleihe ich

dem

Leutnant

Herbert R i c h s t e i n

8./K.G. 30

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das

Eiserne Kreuz 1. Klasse

...Hauptquartier., den 22. Juli.....19.43

Der Chef der Luftflotte 2



W. Richthofen
Generalfeldmarschall

(Dienstgrad und Dienststellung)

7130



Erwin Rommel

German Panzer Commander
"The Desert Fox"
Died Oct. 14, 1944

Erwin Rommel was truly a remarkable leader. He never smoked and drank wine rarely. He was extremely chivalrous and demanded that his captives



be treated with respect. He always ate and lived exactly as his soldiers did. Rommel was, and continues to be one of the most respected of the World War II leaders by both his adversaries and allies.

Erwin Rommel was born November 15, 1891 in Heidenheim, Wurttemberg to schoolmaster Erwin Rommel, Sr. and his wife, Helene von Luz. In July 1910 he became a cadet with the 134th Wurttemberg Infantry Regiment. He received his baptism of fire in August 1914. His expertise as a military tactician was soon apparent. Under his brilliant leadership he consistently turned the action from one of defense to offense. He had no problem in disobeying orders when he felt it appropriate. As an example, a superior ordered him to withdraw from a position because he had only 150 men against a brigade of 50 officers and 2,000 men. Rather than withdrawing, he captured the entire battalion. His action in this particular campaign resulted in 9,000 prisoners to his 6 dead and 30 wounded.

Needless to say he was more than a little upset when the superior he had disobeyed was awarded Germany's highest award for bravery, the Pour le Merite (Blue Max) for the action Rommel was responsible for.

Rommel remained in Germany's reduced size post-war army and rose through the ranks. In the early days of World War II he was invincible. By the time he had swiftly breached the Maginot Line, he had captured 10,000 prisoners, destroyed over 100 tanks, 30 armored cars, and 27 guns for a loss of 35 of his men killed, 59 wounded, and one tank destroyed.

By late 1942 Rommel's respect for Hitler started to decline. He publicly stated that Hitler was a lunatic, determined from sheer obstinacy on a course which would lead to the loss of the last German soldier and ultimately the total destruction of Germany. Incredibly Hitler did not listen to his finest tactician and stumbling blocks were constantly placed in his path. Finally Rommel received Hitler's order - suicide or to appear before a people's court. On October 14, 1944 Rommel took poison. Hitler, in his paranoia, had killed one of his finest subordinates.



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Generaloberst ROMMEL

Gerd von Rundstedt

Generalfeldmarshall - Heer

Died February 24, 1953

Gerd von Rundstedt, the son of a military officer, was born in Aschersleben, Germany, on 12th December 1875. He joined the German Army and served throughout the First World War. By 1918 he had reached the rank of major and was chief of staff of his division.

After the war Rundstedt rose steadily in the small 100,000 man army and in 1932 was appointed commander of the 3rd Infantry Division. Later that year he threatened to resign when Franz von Papen declared martial law and ordered his troops to eject members of the Social Democratic Party from state government offices. However, Rundstedt eventually agreed to carry out the task.

In February 1934, Rundstedt joined with General Wilhelm Leeb to block the pro-Nazi Walther von Reichenau who General Werner von Blomberg wanted to succeed Kurt Hammerstein-Equord as head of the German Army. He also tried to protect General Werner von Fitsch when he was ousted after false claims were made about his sexuality.

Rundstedt was unhappy with the growing power of Adolf Hitler over the army and resigned from office on 31st October 1938. Although 64 years old, Rundstedt was recalled to the army on the outbreak of the Second World War and in September 1939 led Army Group South into Poland.

Rundstedt was promoted to field marshal in July 1940 and took part in the planning of Operation Sealion. When the invasion of Britain was called off Rundstedt took control of occupation forces and was given responsibility to develop the coastal defences in Holland, Belgium and France.

In June 1941 Rundstedt took part in Operation Barbarossa when as commander of Army Group South he led 52 infantry divisions and five panzer divisions into the Soviet Union. Unlike those forces led by General Wilhelm Leeb and General Fedor von Bock, Rundstedt made slow progress during the first few weeks of the campaign.

Rundstedt strongly opposed continuing the advance into the Soviet Union during the winter. He advised Adolf Hitler to call a halt but his views were rejected. When Rundstedt demanded he should be allowed to withdraw he was replaced by General Walther von Reichenau.

Hitler recalled Rundstedt to duty in March 1942 and was sent to France where he was given responsibility of defending the Atlantic coast. Rundstedt organized the building of permanent fortifications with huge naval guns along 1,700 miles of coastline.

After the Normandy landings Rundstedt urged Hitler to negotiate a peace settlement with the Allies. Hitler responded by replacing Rundstedt with General Gunther von Kluge.

Rundstedt was captured by the US 36th Infantry Division in May 1945.

Gerd von Rundstedt was released in July 1948 and lived in Hanover until his death on 24th February 1953.



Ferdinand Schorner

Generalfeldmarschall

Commanding General Army Group A

Died July 6, 1973



Ferdinand Schorner was born in Munich in 1892. By the age of 18 he had dropped out of school and volunteered for the Bavarian Army. After his service period was complete, he returned to Munich and finished his primary schooling. When World War I broke out in 1914, Schorner had reserved an officer's commission. During World War I Schorner was a part of the German Alpine Corps. Schorner and the Alpine Corps saw some of the bloodiest battles of the war like the Verdun Battles in 1916. Schorner commanded a platoon for most of the war. On October 1917, when the German 14th Army attacked the Italian Defense line near the Isonzo River, Schorner and his company captured hill 1114 on the infamous Kolovrat Ridge. For this deed he was awarded the Pour Le Merite (Blue Max).

During 1923, Schorner helped suppress Adolf Hitler's Munich Putsch. When Adolf Hitler was released from prison, Schorner joined the NSDAP. Schorner remained a Company Commander all through Hitler's rise to power. By 1934, Schorner was promoted to Major and served in the German General Staff. On September 13, 1939, Schorner and his Regiment showed great courage during the Polish campaign by capturing Hill 374 and Zbolska Heights. In 1940 Schorner still commanded the 98th Gebirgs. Regiment and now held the rank of Oberst. Schorner and the 98th Gebirgs Regiment saw action in both France and Belgium. On April 6, 1941, the Division played an important role in the Invasion of Greece. Schorner and his men crossed the 7,000 foot mountain range. This action cut off the Greeks supply route to Salonika. The 6th Mounted Division along with the 2nd SS Panzer Division 'Das Reich' captured Athens only weeks later. Because of this feat, Schorner was given the Knight's Cross.

When the German Invasion of the Soviet Union began (Operation Barbarossa), the 6th Gebirgs. Division was assigned to the Arctic sectors in the Eastern Front. The 6th Gebirgs. Division saw many casualties during this campaign. Schorner's primary job was to keep the Pechenga Nickel Works in German hands. When the Soviets opened an offensive against the Arctic sector, the 6th Gebirgs. Division took part in the Defensive; it is said that during these battles, Schorner took part in hand to hand combat with his men. In January 1942, Schorner was promoted to the rank of Generalmajor and he now commanded the Mounted Corps Norway. In 1943 Schorner was given command of the 40th Panzer Corps in the Ukraine. On April 5, 1945 Schorner was promoted to the rank of General Feldmarshal. He was the next to last Heer soldier to attain the rank of General Feldmarshal. On April 24, Berlin was trapped by Soviet forces. On April 27 Hitler went so far to announce, "On the occasion of my death Ferdinand Schorner will take command of the German Army." Berlin fell hours later to the Soviet hordes. Schorner then deserted and took a plane and tried to escape to Bavaria. This never happened. Schorner crashed landed in Austria and remained there until he was detained by the Americans. The Allies then gave him to the Soviets. A Soviet Court sentenced Schorner to 25 years imprisonment. Schorner only served 10 years. He then returned to Germany (West Germany). On his arrival to West Germany, Schorner was convicted of the manslaughter of Wehrmacht soldiers. He served 4 ½ years in prison. When Schorner was released from jail in 1963, he stayed in Germany and lived the rest of his life in poverty.

Pictured below is a facsimile of his signature. This display is accompanied by a 6-page document signed by Schorner.



Ferdinand Schorner



Hugo Sperrle

Generalfeldmarschall - Luftwaffe

Died April 4, 1953

Hugo Sperrle, the son of a brewer, was born in Ludwigsburg, Germany February 7, 1885. He joined the German Army in 1903.

On the outbreak of the First World War Sperrle was transferred to the German Army Air Service where he served as an observer for four years.

After the war he joined the right-wing Freikorps group. He rejoined the German Army after the airforce was banned under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles.

When Hermann Goering announced the formation of the Luftwaffe, Sperrle immediately joined and was given the rank of major general. In 1936 Sperrle went to Spain as head of the Condor Legion. His chief of staff was Wolfram von Richthofen, the cousin of the First World War flying ace, Manfred von Richthofen.

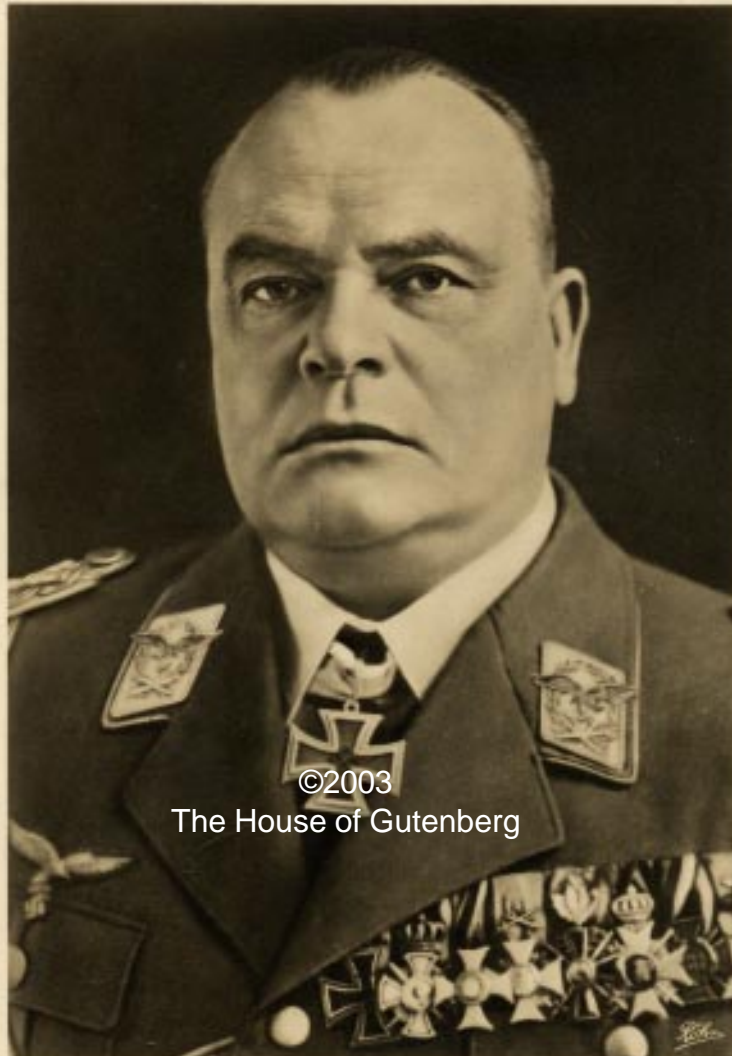
The Condor Legion was initially equipped with around 100 aircraft and 5,136 men. Sperrle demanded higher performance aircraft from Germany and he eventually received the

Heinkel He111, Junkers Stuka and the Messerschmitt Bf109. The Condor Legion participated in all the major engagements in the Spanish Civil War including Brunete, Teruel, Aragon and Ebro.

In October 1937 he returned to Nazi Germany to become commander of Air Fleet 3. Sperrle invented dive-bombing tactics, planned the London blitz, and defended the Normandy coastline in 1944. However, he was unable to stop the Allied landing in Normandy in June 1944. Two months later he was dismissed from office.

After the war Sperrle was charged with war crimes but was acquitted of all charges at Nuremberg. He died in Munich on 4th April 1953.

This display is accompanied by an official document hand signed by Sperrle.



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Der Kommandierende General
und Befehlshaber der Luftwaffen-Gruppe 3

Hugo Sperrle
General der Flieger.



Hugo Sperrle Signed Document





Maximilian von Weichs

Generalfeldmarschall - Heer

Died September 27, 1954

Maximilian von Weichs was born in Dessau November 12, 1881 of noble lineage. His actual name with title was: Maximilian Reichsfreiheer von und zu Weichs an der Glon. Like many of his relatives, he entered the military in 1900 as a cavalry officer.

During WWI he served on the Western Front as flag-officer of the General Staff. At the end of the war he entered the Reichwehr with the rank of captain. By 1930 he had been promoted to colonel and in 1933 to general. He was assigned to organize a panzer division for the new German army.

With the advent of WWII, von Weichs distinguished himself in Poland, France and the Netherlands.

In 1943 he was given the fieldmarshall's baton and was transferred to the Eastern Front.

In April 1944 he was named Commander-in-Chief of all Axis forces in Hungary.

During the last days of the war he was captured by the 7th US Army near Landsberg. He was indicted for war crimes but was too ill to be tried. He died in Bonn September 24, 1954.



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Erwin von Witzleben

Generalfeldmarschall - Heer

Died August 8, 1944

Erwin von Witzleben was born in Breslau, Germany December 4, 1881. He joined the German Army in March 1901 as a second lieutenant in the 7th Grenadier Regiment.

On the outbreak of the First World War Witzleben he was appointed Adjutant of the 19th Reserve Brigade. He served on the Western Front where he won the Iron Cross. In April 1917, Witzleben assumed command of a battalion in the 6th Infantry. The following year he became General Staff Officer to the 108th Infantry Division.

In 1934 Witzleben was promoted to major general and appointed commander of Wehrkreis III, replacing General Werner von Fitsch, who was named Commander in Chief of the Army.

An opponent of Adolf Hitler and his government in Nazi Germany, Witzleben joined with Erich von Manstein, Wilhelm Leeb and Gerd von Rundstedt to demand a military inquiry into the death of Kurt von Schleicher following the Night of the Long Knives. However, the Defense Minister, Werner von Blomberg, refused to allow it to take place.

Witzleben was furious when his friend, General Werner von Fitsch, was dismissed as Commander in Chief of the Army on a trumped up charge of homosexuality. He was now a staunch anti-Nazi who began considering the possibility of a military coup against Hitler. The Gestapo became aware of his criticisms of Hitler and in 1938 he was forced to take early retirement. Witzleben plotted with anti-Nazis such as Ludwig Beck, Franz Halder, Wilhelm Canaris, Hans Oster, Wolf von Helldorf, Kurt Hammerstein-Equord and Erich Hoepner and they considered the possibility of a military coup.

On the outbreak of the Second World War Witzleben was recalled to the German Army. In the invasion of France Witzleben commanded the 1st Army. His troops broke through the Maginot Line in June 1940 and then occupied Alsace-Lorraine. As a result of this action Witzleben was promoted to the rank of field marshal.

Witzleben remained in France and after the failure of the Operation Barbarossa he once again began plotting against Adolf Hitler. The Gestapo was informed that he was once again being critical of the government and in 1942 Witzleben was called back to Germany and retired.

Witzleben spent the next two years at his country estate. He kept in touch with anti-Nazis and in 1944 became involved in the July Plot. After Claus von Stauffenberg planted the bomb the conspirators thought that Hitler had been killed and Witzleben was installed as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and Erich Hoepner as Commander of the Home Army.

On July 21, 1944 Witzleben was arrested and during his trial he was humiliated by being forced to appear in court without his belt and false teeth. Erwin von Witzleben was found guilty of treason and on 8th August, 1944 was executed by being hung by piano wire from a meat hook.



Berlin, N. W. 23.

Holsteiner Ufer 16 a.

Fernruf Mb. 1933.

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*Sanzleiger Glückwunsch,
für Huzor!*

Witzleben.

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The private photo on the right was hand-signed by Witzleben

