

# The Fuehrer's Greatest General

## Introduction

In the annals of military history, few names are as synonymous with armored warfare as that of General Erhard Raus, one of Germany's most celebrated panzer commanders of World War II. From the early days of the war, when his 6th Panzer Division spearheaded the Blitzkrieg across Poland and France, to the desperate battles of the Eastern Front, where he fought against overwhelming odds, Raus's tactical prowess and leadership skills earned him a reputation as one of the Wehrmacht's finest generals.

Drawing from Raus's own postwar memoirs and a wealth of archival research, this book presents a comprehensive and gripping account of his experiences as a panzer commander during World War II. From the planning rooms of the German

General Staff to the heat of battle, Raus offers a unique and invaluable perspective on the key campaigns of the war, including the invasion of the Soviet Union, the Battle of Stalingrad, and the defense of Berlin.

More than just a military history, this book is also a testament to the human spirit and the resilience of the German soldier. Raus's vivid descriptions of combat, his unwavering dedication to his troops, and his stoic acceptance of defeat paint a powerful portrait of a man who remained steadfast in his duty, even in the face of overwhelming adversity.

Through Raus's eyes, we witness the rise and fall of the German war machine, the horrors of the Eastern Front, and the indomitable spirit of the German soldier. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in military history, World War II, or the art of generalship.

Raus's memoir is a valuable historical document that provides insights into the conduct of armored warfare during World War II. His analysis of the strengths and

weaknesses of the German Panzerwaffe is still relevant today and offers valuable lessons for modern military leaders. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in military history, armored warfare, or the Second World War.

## Book Description

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# Chapter 1: The Rise of a Panzer Commander

## The Early Years: Erhard Raus's Journey to Leadership

Erhard Raus was born on January 8, 1889, in Wuppertal, Germany. The son of a factory owner, Raus grew up in a comfortable and privileged home. He attended the prestigious Prussian Cadet School and later the War Academy in Berlin. Raus graduated from the War Academy in 1910 and was commissioned as an officer in the Prussian Army.

Raus served with distinction during World War I, fighting on both the Western and Eastern Fronts. He was wounded several times and was awarded the Iron Cross, Germany's highest military honor. After the war, Raus remained in the army and served in a variety of staff and command positions.

In 1935, Raus was promoted to major general and given command of the 3rd Panzer Division. He led the division with great skill and success during the early years of World War II, participating in the invasion of Poland and the Battle of France. Raus's division was one of the first to cross the Meuse River at Sedan, a key moment in the German victory.

Raus's early successes as a panzer commander earned him the respect and admiration of his superiors. In 1940, he was promoted to lieutenant general and given command of the 6th Panzer Division. Raus led the division with distinction during the invasion of the Soviet Union, Operation Barbarossa. His division was one of the first to reach the outskirts of Moscow, and he was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross for his leadership.

Raus's early years as a panzer commander were marked by great success. He was a skilled and daring commander who quickly rose through the ranks. His



victories in Poland, France, and the Soviet Union earned him the reputation as one of Germany's finest panzer commanders.

# **Chapter 1: The Rise of a Panzer Commander**

## **From the Classroom to the Battlefield: Raus's Military Education and Early Experiences**

Erhard Raus was born in 1889 into a military family with a long and distinguished history. His father was a career officer in the Prussian Army, and Raus himself was destined for a military career from an early age. He attended the prestigious Prussian Cadet School and then the War Academy in Berlin, where he graduated at the top of his class.

Raus's early military experiences were in the First World War, where he served as a junior officer in an infantry regiment. He quickly distinguished himself as a brave and capable leader, and he was promoted to captain by the end of the war. After the war, Raus remained in the military and served in a variety of staff and command positions. He also continued his military

education, attending the Infantry School and the Panzer School.

In the early 1930s, Raus was assigned to the Panzerwaffe, the German armored force. He quickly became a leading expert in armored warfare, and he was instrumental in developing the Blitzkrieg tactics that would prove so effective in the early years of World War II.

Raus's military education and early experiences prepared him well for the challenges he would face as a panzer commander in World War II. He was a brilliant tactician and a gifted leader, and he was able to inspire his troops to great feats of valor. Raus's military career is a testament to the importance of a sound military education and the value of experience.

Raus's early experiences in the First World War taught him the importance of leadership, discipline, and teamwork. He also learned the value of initiative and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. These

lessons would serve him well in his later career as a panzer commander.

Raus's time at the War Academy and the Panzer School gave him a deep understanding of military strategy and tactics. He also learned about the latest developments in armored warfare, including the use of tanks, artillery, and air power. This knowledge would prove invaluable in his future campaigns.

Raus's assignment to the Panzerwaffe in the early 1930s gave him the opportunity to put his knowledge and skills into practice. He quickly became a leading expert in armored warfare, and he was instrumental in developing the Blitzkrieg tactics that would prove so effective in the early years of World War II.

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# Chapter 1: The Rise of a Panzer Commander

## The Making of a Panzer Leader: Raus's Rise Through the Ranks

Erhard Raus was born in 1889 into a military family in Fürth, Bavaria. His father was a career officer in the Bavarian Army, and Raus himself joined the military in 1909. He served in the Bavarian Field Artillery during World War I, and by the end of the war he had risen to the rank of captain.

After the war, Raus remained in the military, serving in the Reichswehr, the German army of the Weimar Republic. He was a gifted officer, and he quickly rose through the ranks. In 1935, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and given command of a panzer battalion.

Raus's panzer battalion was part of the spearhead of the German invasion of Poland in September 1939. He led his battalion with distinction, and he was soon promoted to colonel and given command of a panzer regiment.

Raus's panzer regiment was part of the German invasion of France in May 1940. Again, Raus led his regiment with distinction, and he was promoted to major general and given command of a panzer division.

Raus's panzer division was part of the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. Raus led his division with great skill, and he quickly became one of the most successful panzer commanders in the German Army. He was promoted to lieutenant general in 1942 and given command of a panzer corps.

Raus continued to lead his panzer corps with distinction throughout the war. He fought in the Battle of Stalingrad, the Battle of Kursk, and the Battle of

Berlin. He was one of the last German generals to surrender to the Allies in May 1945.

Raus was a brilliant panzer commander and one of the most successful generals of World War II. He was a master of armored warfare, and he played a key role in the German Army's early victories. However, he was also a controversial figure, and he was criticized for his ruthless tactics and his lack of empathy for his troops.



**This extract presents the opening three sections of the first chapter.**

**Discover the complete 10 chapters and 50 sections by purchasing the book, now available in various formats.**

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