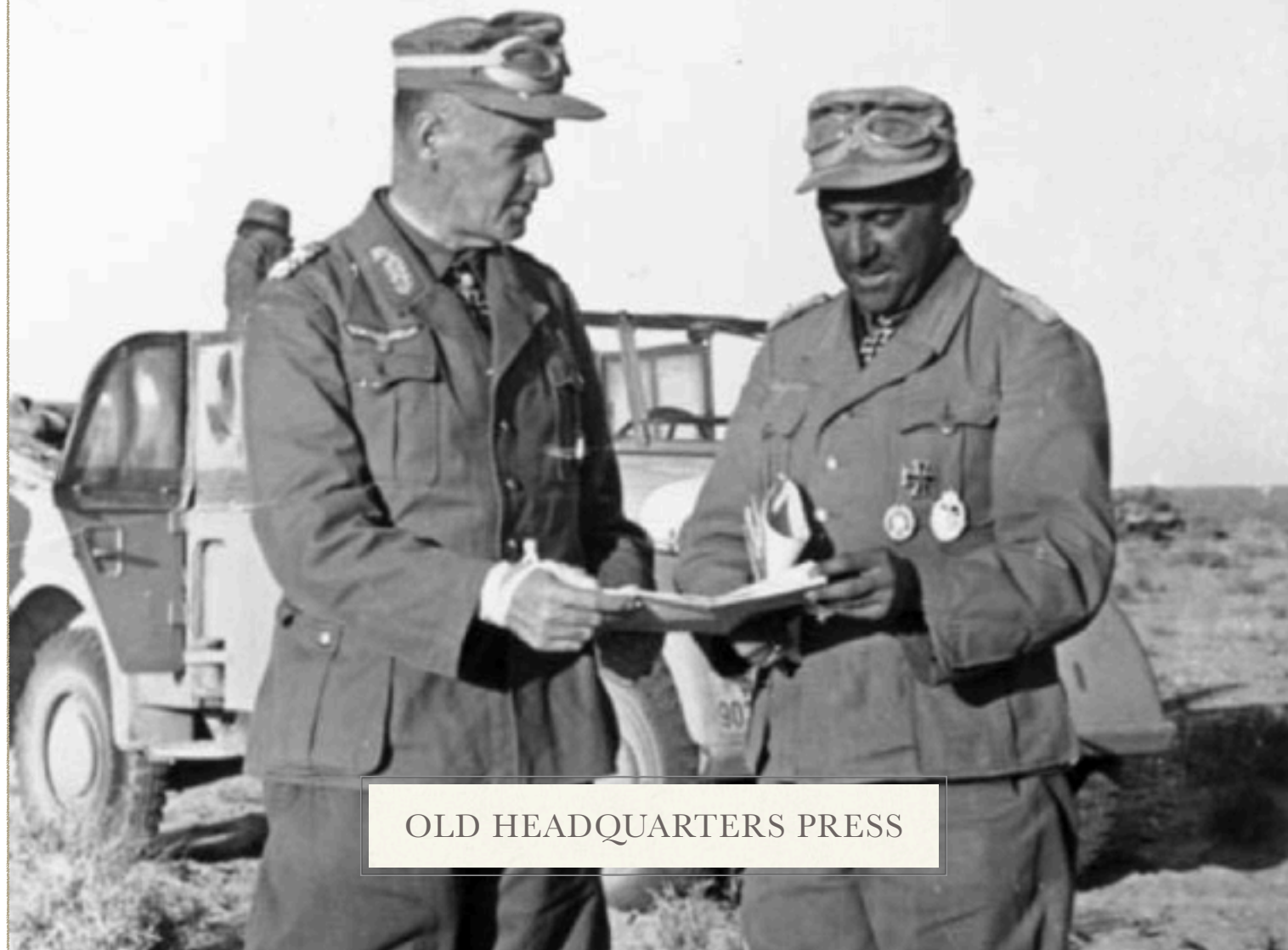


Bruce I. Gudmundsson

# CASSANDRA'S CURSE



OLD HEADQUARTERS PRESS

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# How to Read this Book

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The purpose of this book is to give you the background you need to work through a decision-forcing case. In particular, this book gives you the information that you will need to play the role of Ludwig Crüwell, the commanding general of the German Africa Corps.

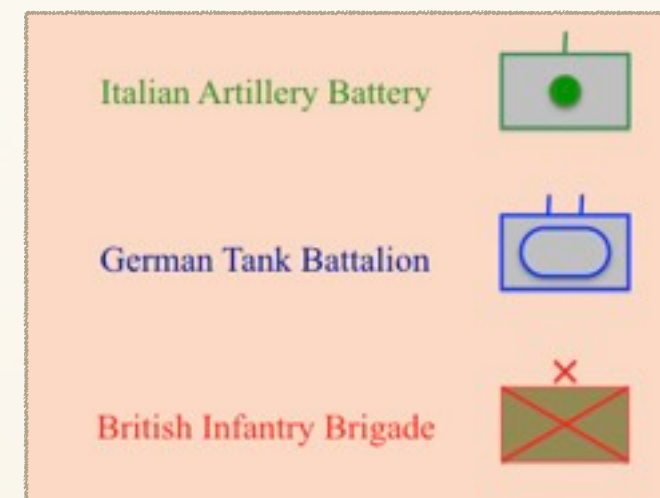
As with other sorts of case materials, this book is designed to be read ‘in character’. Thus, as you read the book, try to imagine that the year is 1941, that you are Lieutenant General Crüwell, and the situation being described is the reality that you must deal with. (To help you do this, the text has been written in the present tense.)

The book is laid out so that you can read it in a conventional fashion, starting at the beginning and ending at the end. Nonetheless, you should not read the book as if it were a novel or a short story. Rather, as you read through the text, you should frequently ask yourself how the facts you have just encountered will affect the decisions you make at the helm of the Africa Corps.

The text of this book is full of items that may be new to you. As you encounter these, ask yourself about their relevance to

your plan. If you feel that you need more information about a particular word or picture, feel free to click on it. In most cases, you will find that it is linked to either an explanatory article or, in a few cases, a film clip. (This feature will only work if your reading device is connected to the internet.)

The organizational diagrams in this book use standard NATO symbols. Symbols depicting British Empire forces have brown backgrounds and red outlines. Those representing Axis units and formations have gray backgrounds. (Symbols with blue outlines indicate German organizations, while those with green outlines designate Italian outfits.)





## THE PROTAGONIST

Your name is Ludwig Crüwell. You were born, on 20 March 1892, in Dortmund, in the Rhine Province of the Kingdom of Prussia, where your father owned a company that published textbooks and hymnals. After earning your baccalaureate (*Abitur*) from a classical secondary school (*Gymnasium*), you briefly studied law and economics, in Munich (Bavaria) and Grenoble (France). On 6 March 1911, you reported for duty, as an officer candidate, to the 1st Hanoverian Dragoon Regiment, then located in the fortress city of Metz.

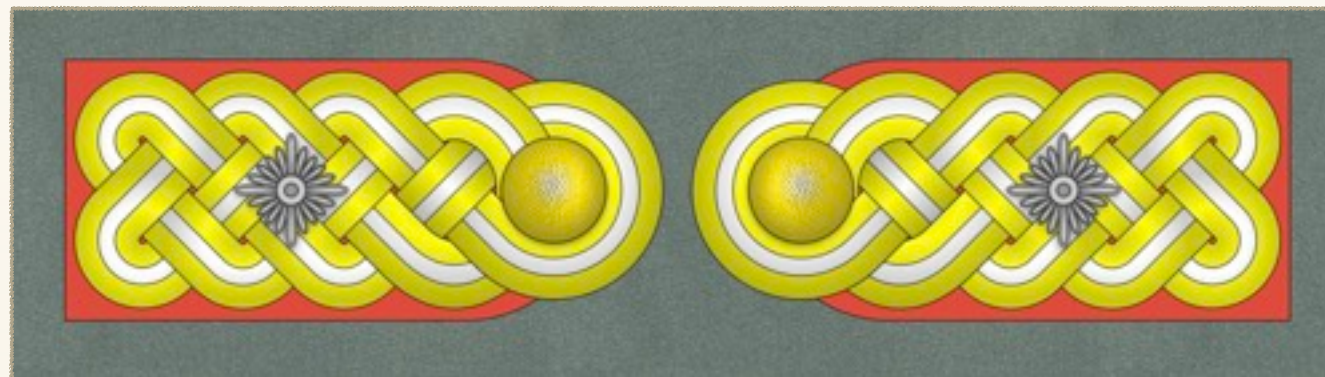
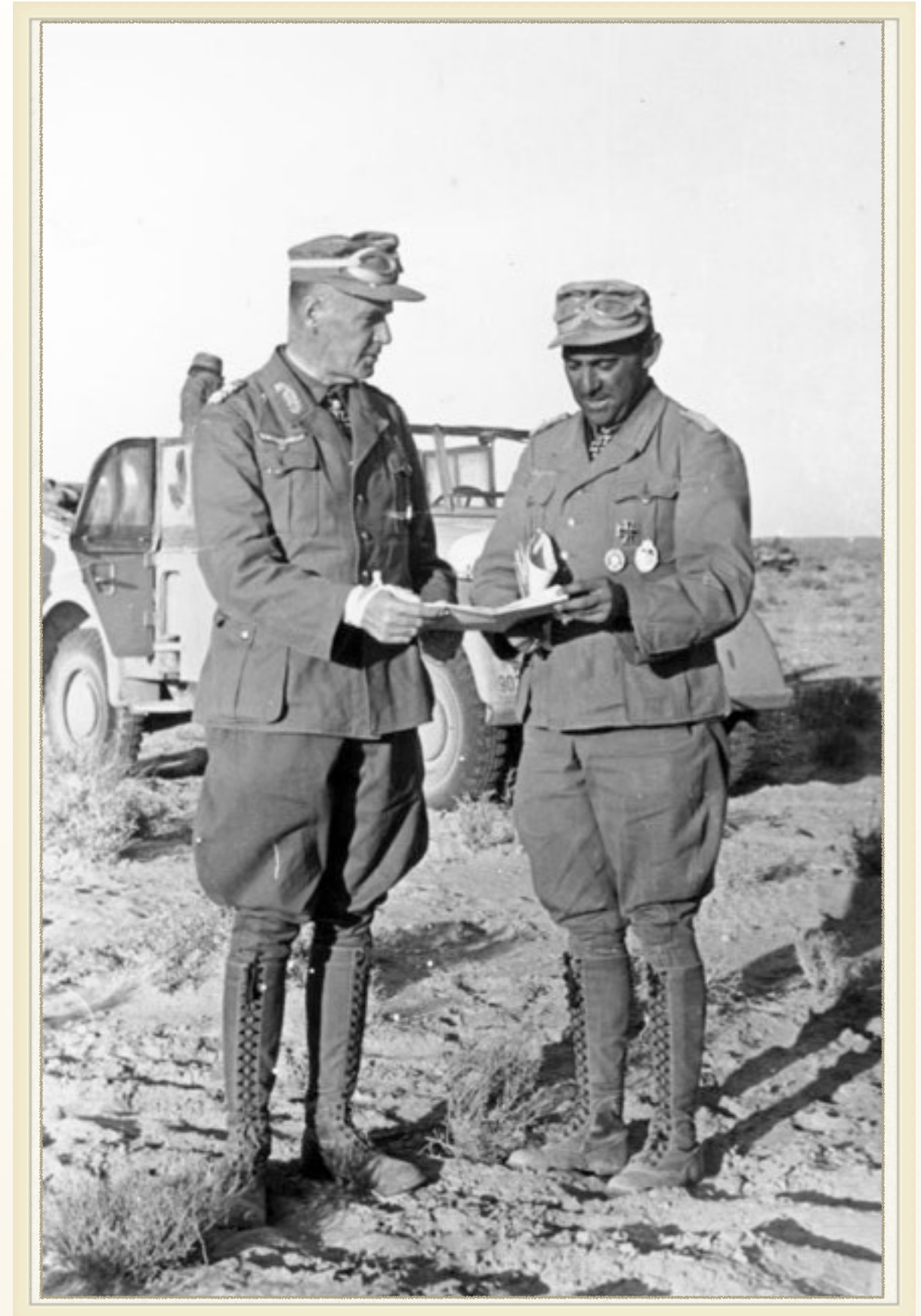
Between 1 October 1911 and 30 June 1912, you attended the War School (*Kriegsschule*) at Bad Hersfeld (in the Electoral Principality of Hesse.) After graduation from the course for prospective junior officers, you returned to your regiment, where, on 18 August 1912, you were commissioned as a second lieutenant.

During the First World War, you served as a patrol leader (August 1914 through September 1916), senior staff officer (*Adjutant*) for your regiment (September 1916 through May 1917), junior staff officer (*Ordnanzoffizier*) for the 233rd Infantry Division (May 1917 through October 1917), company commander in the 450th Infantry Regiment (November 1917 through January 1918), senior staff officer of the 233rd Artillery Command (January 1918 through March 1918), and senior staff officer of the 19th National Guard (*Landwehr*) Infantry Brigade (March 1918 through November 1918.)



After the First World War, you were one of the relatively small number of officers who were retained by the army of the German Republic. Between 1919 and 1934, you served in the main office of the Ministry of Defense, on the staff of the 2nd Cavalry Division, and as a squadron commander in the 12th Cavalry Regiment. In 1934, you transferred to the Motorized Combat Troops (*Kraftfahrkampftruppen*), the branch that would eventually become the Armored Troops (*Panzertruppen*.) Between 1934 and 1939, you commanded an anti-tank battalion and, after your promotion to colonel, the 6th Tank Regiment.

The outbreak of the Second World War found you in charge of a department of the Army General Staff. During the battle for France of May and June 1940, you served as chief-of-staff of the 16th Army. Soon thereafter, you took command of the 11th Armored Division, which you led in both the Balkan campaign of the spring of 1941 and the invasion of the Soviet Union of the summer of that year. On 1 September 1941 you were promoted to the rank of lieutenant general and appointed to the command of the Africa Corps.



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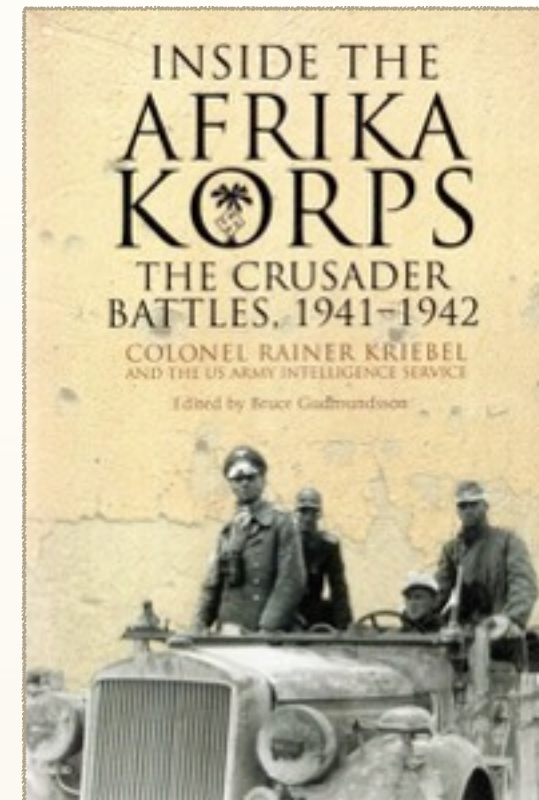
## THE AUTHORS

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The lion's share of the text in the pages that follow was written by Rainer Karl-Theodore Kriebel. In January of 1926, Kriebel, who was then just a few days short of his eighteenth birthday, joined the German Army. In the thirteen years of peacetime service that followed, he served in the ranks of an infantry unit, led squads and platoons, commanded a machine gun company, and, on the eve of the outbreak of the Second World War, graduated from the famous General Staff Academy (*Kriegsakademie*) in Berlin.

During the French campaign of 1940, Kriebel served the liaison officer between an armored group (composed of several armored corps) and the Army General Staff. In October of 1940, he became the senior operations officer ("Ia") of the recently formed 15th Armored Division (*15. Panzer Division*). In the spring of 1940, he accompanied his division to Libya. Thus, at the time of the events described in this work, he had been serving in North Africa for more than six months.

Readers can find Rainer Kriebel's full account of what the English-speaking world calls "the Crusader battles" in a volume called *Inside the Afrika Korps: The Crusader Battles, 1941-1942*. Originally published by Greenhill Books, this volume is now available from Stackpole.



The assembly of this reading, to include the layout, selection of passages, choice of illustrations, and writing of explanatory notes and introductions, is the handiwork of Bruce I. Gudmundsson. An historian, case teacher, and lifelong proponent of the use of games in military education and training, Gudmundsson discovered Rainer Kriebel's manuscript in a box in Archives II, at College Park, Maryland, while looking for something else. He can be reached at [decision.forcing.case@gmail.com](mailto:decision.forcing.case@gmail.com).