

# Mortain 1944: Hitler's Normandy Panzer Offensive Campaign 335



## Mortain 1944: Hitler's Normandy Panzer offensive (Campaign Book 335) by Steven J. Zaloga

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

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The Mortain Counteroffensive, also known as Operation Lüttich, was a German offensive launched on August 7, 1944, during the Battle of Normandy in World War II. The offensive was the brainchild of Adolf Hitler and was intended to relieve pressure on the German forces in Normandy and possibly even drive the Allies back into the sea. The operation was a major failure, however, and resulted in the loss of a significant number of German tanks and personnel.



## **Background**

After the successful D-Day landings on June 6, 1944, the Allied forces quickly established a foothold in Normandy. By early August, the Allies had liberated much of the Cotentin Peninsula and were pushing inland towards the German stronghold of Caen. In response, Hitler ordered the launch of a major offensive to drive the Allies back into the sea.

The plan for the offensive was developed by Generalfeldmarschall Erwin Rommel, the commander of Army Group B. Rommel proposed a two-

pronged attack: one force would attack the Allied flank near Avranches, while another force would attack the Allied center near Mortain. The objetivo of the offensive was to cut off the Allied forces that had advanced beyond Caen and to destroy them.

## **Planning**

The German forces that were assigned to carry out the offensive were the 7th Army, the 15th Army, and the Panzer Group West. The 7th Army was responsible for the attack on Avranches, while the 15th Army and Panzer Group West were responsible for the attack on Mortain.

The Germans had a significant advantage in numbers and firepower. They had approximately 500 tanks, compared to the Allies' 250 tanks. They also had a large number of artillery pieces and aircraft.

## **Execution**

The offensive began on August 7, 1944, with a massive artillery barrage. The German tanks then advanced behind the barrage, followed by infantry. The Allies were caught off guard by the attack and were forced to retreat.

The German forces made rapid progress at first, but they soon encountered stiff resistance from the Allies. The Allies had been expecting the offensive and had prepared strong defenses. They also had the advantage of air superiority, which allowed them to attack the German forces from the air.

The fighting around Mortain was particularly intense. The Germans managed to break through the Allied defenses in several places, but they

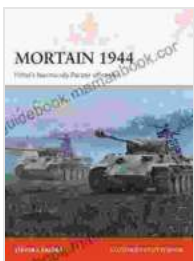
were unable to achieve a decisive breakthrough. The Allies counterattacked and eventually forced the Germans to retreat.

## Results

The Mortain Counteroffensive was a major failure for the Germans. They lost approximately 50,000 men and 400 tanks. The offensive also weakened the German forces in Normandy and made it easier for the Allies to drive them out of France.

The Mortain Counteroffensive is often seen as the turning point in the Battle of Normandy. After the failure of the offensive, the German forces in Normandy were doomed. The Allies went on to liberate the rest of Normandy and eventually all of France.

The Mortain Counteroffensive was a desperate attempt by Hitler to turn the tide of the war in Normandy. The offensive failed, however, and resulted in a significant loss of German lives and equipment. The failure of the Mortain Counteroffensive marked the beginning of the end for the German forces in Normandy.



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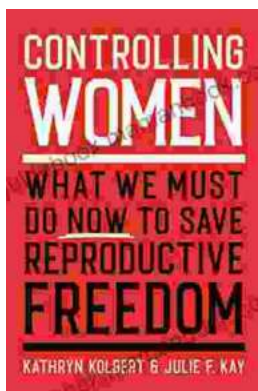
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