



COUNTDOWN TO VALKYRIE: THE JULY PLOT TO ASSASSINATE HITLER

Nigel Jones

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Although there were more than 40 plots to assassinate Adolf Hitler, none came closer to success than the July Plot of 1944. The attempt was masterminded by Count von Stauffenberg, a member of the German General Staff, who had been rushed back from Africa after losing his left eye and right hand. For his injuries, he had been decorated as a war hero. Never a supporter of Nazi ideology, he was increasingly attracted by the approaches of the German resistance movement. After a attempt to assassinate Hitler in November 1943 failed, Stauffenberg developed a new plot to kill him at the Wolf's Lair Headquarters on 20th July 1944. Besides the Fuhrer's assassination, Stauffenberg organized plans to take over command of the Germany forces and sue for peace with the Allies.

The attempt ultimately failed. Only one bomb was detonated and Hitler was only injured: his life was probably saved because the bomb, hidden in Stauffenberg's suitcase, had been placed behind a heavy table leg which reduced the impact of the blast.

In remarkable detail, with photographs, explanatory maps and diagrams, author Nigel Jones dissects the lead up to the attempt, the events of the day in minute-by-minute detail, and the aftermath in which the conspirators were hunted down.

No other work on the July Plot contains such accessible detail and full explanation of this attempt on Hitler's life. In addition to a forensic analysis of the day, the book includes short biographies of the key characters involved, the first-person recollections of witnesses, and a 'what if' section explaining the likely outcome of a successful assassination.

REVIEWS

"A compelling and exciting account packed with vivid detail. A superb read." James Holland

"An engrossing narrative which is a testament to the courage of a few genuine German heroes." Joe Craig, Executive Editor, US Military History Book Club

"A thrilling account of the incredible assassination conspiracy. Nigel Jones provides an exciting, informative and ground-breaking history"-Tim Newark, Editor, Military Illustrated

"A detailed and lively account of the plot to assassinate Hitler in 1944" Professor Gary Sheffield, University of Birmingham

"An engaging history by a talented and accomplished writer" Roger Moorhouse author of Killing Hitler

"...succeeds admirably in presenting for a general audience not only the doomed course of Operation Valkyrie but its background: the failures of other assassination plots, the difficulties of organizing resistance in a totalitarian state, the desperate courage of the men and women who risked their lives." Publisher's Weekly, 01/2009

" a gripping account of one of the most extraordinary events in the history of Nazi Germany." The New Statesman, 01/2009

"the fullest, most detailed account yet of this key episode in the history of WWII." WWII History, Winter 2009

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