

LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM HENRY DWIGHT GOTT, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.

When the Army gives a General a nickname, it is usually an accurate one.

To every British soldier in the Middle East General Gott is "Straffer Gott".

He has one of the biggest wadis in the whole of North Africa named after him. In "Straffer's Wadi" all last summer were hidden the bulk of what afterwards became the main striking force of the 8th Army.

Straffer Gott has been promoted quickly. Less than a year ago he commanded the Support Group of the 7th Armoured Division, then he was given command of the Division itself. At the time of the relief of Tobruk during the second Libyan campaign he took over a corps and was promoted acting Lieutenant General.

It is no secret that General Auchinleck regarded General Gott and his tanks as the key point in the Libyan battle. "The main weight of this offensive will fall on Straffer's broad back", he said.

It is a broad back. General Gott is 6 ft. 2 ins. He is a heavily built man. His body is that of a heavy weight boxer; his face is that of a professor. He has a vast domed forehead. His eyes are blue, his nose is sharp. He is clean-shaven, talks softly.

He probably knows more about the Western Desert than any other senior British officer. Of it he said, "To him who knows it, the desert can be a fortress; to him who does not, it can be a death-trap". Nothing truer was ever said.

His services in the Western Desert during the year 1941 earned for him three decorations, the C.B.E., a D.S.O. and a bar.

Gott was born in 1897. He received his commission in the 60th Rifles in February 1915 and served on the Western front during the last war.

WAR OFFICE