



Fighting in Hell: The German Ordeal on the Eastern Front

Peter Tsouras

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The German war in Russia was so brutal in all its extremes that all past experiences paled beside it. Everything in Russia - the land, the climate, the distances and above all the people - were harder, harsher, more unforgiving and more deadly than anything the German soldier had ever faced before. One panzer-grenadier who fought in the West and in Russia summed it up: 'In the West war was the same honourable old game; nobody went out of his way to be vicious, and fighting stopped often by five in the afternoon. But in the East, the Russians were trying to kill you - all the time.'

The four detailed reports of campaigning in Russia included in this invaluable book (Russian Combat Methods in WWII, Effects of Climate on Combat in European Russia, Combat in Russian Forests and Swamps and Warfare in the Far North) were written in the late 1940s and early 1950s, as part of the US Army programme to record the German strategies and tactics of World War II directly from the commanders. The authors were all veterans of the fighting they described, and frankly admitted that the soldiers sent to Russia were neither trained nor equipped to withstand the full fury of the elements there.

The German high command had been under the impression that the Red Army could be destroyed west of the Dnepr, and there would be no need for conducting operations in cold, snow and mud. Fighting in Hell shows what really happened, through first-hand accounts of the commanders who were there.



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