

Waldemar Trojca
Markus Jaugitz

STURMTIGER and STURMPANZER in COMBAT



Trojca





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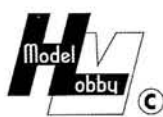


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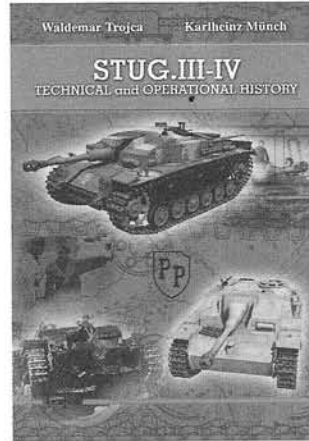
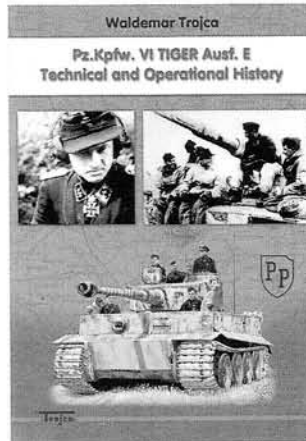
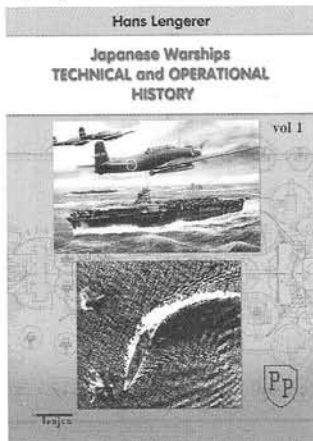
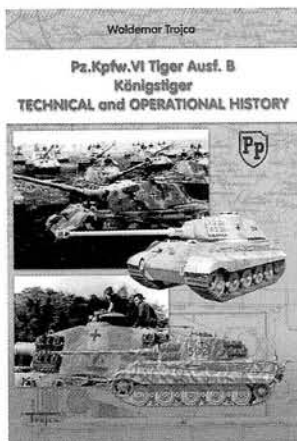


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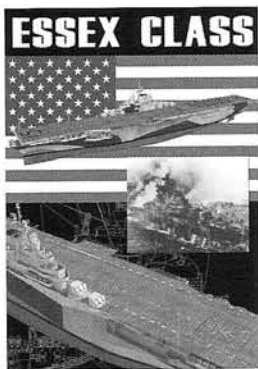
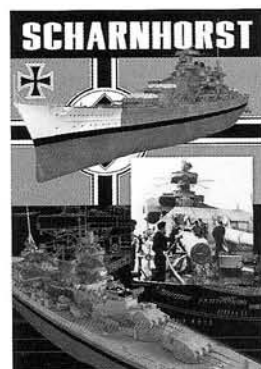
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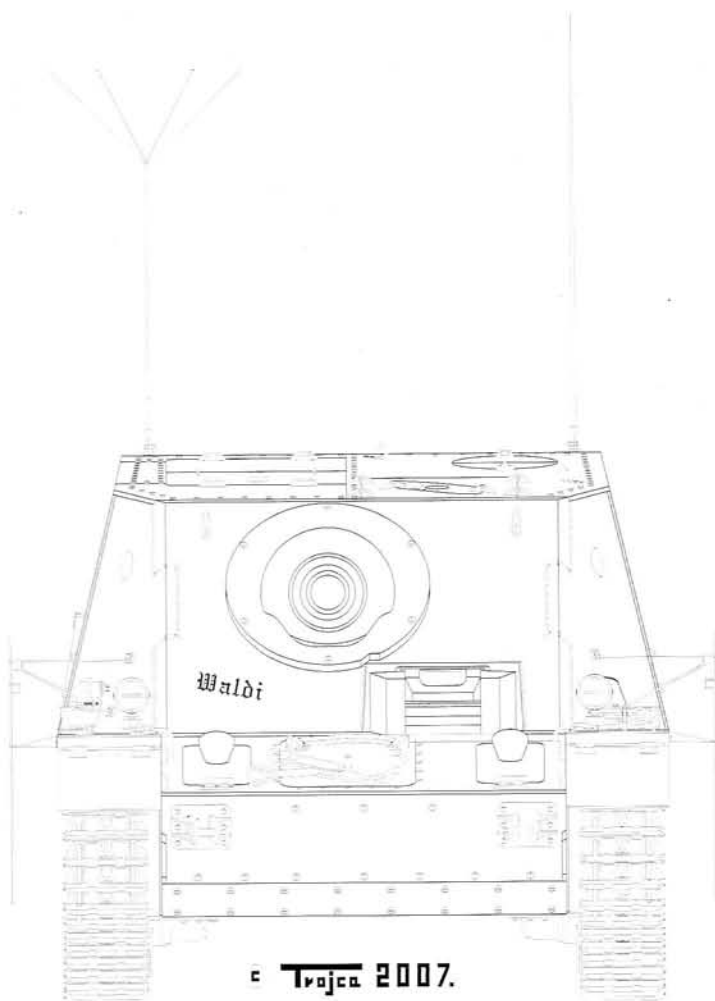
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Introduction

This book is divided into a technical part, in which the development of the assault infantry gun (*Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz*), the assault tank (*Sturmpanzer*) and the assault howitzer (*Sturmmörser*) are treated, and a historical part, in which the operational histories of the formations that were equipped with these vehicles.

Since a comprehensive book concerning *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216* is currently being prepared, a lengthy treatment of that formation will not be done here.

The operational history of *Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 237* will be examined, since *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 219* was formed from it.

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Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz (Assault Infantry Gun) Description of the chassis, the superstructure and the weapons.

The first indications of the development of such a weapon are to be found in the writings of Armaments Minister Albert Speer. He wrote about it after a meeting with Hitler on 20 September 1942:

As a result of the fighting in Stalingrad, it is clearly necessary to have a heavy gun in a vehicle as heavily armored as possible to fire rounds that have a mine-like effect so as to be able to destroy entire buildings after a few rounds. It is not imperative to be able to fire at a great distance or to move quickly. Of decisive importance, however, is good armor [protection]. Everything possible is to be done to have at least 6 of this type of vehicle, if possible, 12, in production no later than 14 days from now. If it is not possible to mount a heavy infantry gun in the turret of a *Panzer III* or *Panzer IV*, than an attempt must be made to mount this gun in an assault gun.

There had already been some experience with a heavy infantry gun on a self-propelled chassis. Among the lessons learned during the Polish Campaign of 1939 was the fact that the motorized artillery battalions and the motorized infantry-gun companies had difficulty keeping pace with the armored fighting vehicles. For that reason, a heavy-infantry gun was mounted on the chassis of a the B model of the *Panzer I* in an experiment at the end of 1939.

The trials were concluded in January 1940 and, by the end of April 1940, a total of 38 of those self-propelled guns were manufactured. These were formed up into motorized heavy infantry gun companies—*schwere Infanterie-Geschütz-Kompanie (mot. S.)*¹—which consisted of six guns each. They were attached in direct support of six different armored divisions

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| • <i>schwere Infanteriegeschütz-Kompanie (mot.S.) 701</i> | 9. <i>Panzer-Division</i> |
| • <i>schwere Infanteriegeschütz-Kompanie (mot.S.) 702</i> | 1. <i>Panzer-Division</i> |
| • <i>schwere Infanteriegeschütz-Kompanie (mot.S.) 703</i> | 2. <i>Panzer-Division</i> |
| • <i>schwere Infanteriegeschütz-Kompanie (mot.S.) 704</i> | 5. <i>Panzer-Division</i> |
| • <i>schwere Infanteriegeschütz-Kompanie (mot.S.) 705</i> | 7. <i>Panzer-Division</i> |
| • <i>schwere Infanteriegeschütz-Kompanie (mot.S.) 706</i> | 10. <i>Panzer-Division</i> |

These vehicles, just like the assault guns, received their baptism of fire in the Campaign in the West in May and June 1940.

A successor model was manufactured as early as October 1940, when a *s.I.G. 33*—*schweres Infanterie-Geschütz 33* (Model 33 Heavy Infantry Gun)—was mounted on the chassis of a *Panzer II*. After testing, numerous requests for modifications were made, which were incorporated into the series production. The manufacturing firm of Alkett produced 12 of these vehicles in the winter of 1941/1942, whereby the *s.I.G. 33* was mounted on a lengthened and widened *Panzer II* chassis.

Six each of these self-propelled guns—officially known as the *15cm s.I.G. 33 auf Fahrgestell Panzerkampfwagen II*—were issued to two new infantry-gun companies: *schwere Infanteriegeschütz-Kompanie (mot.S.) 707* and *schwere Infanteriegeschütz-Kompanie (mot.S.) 708*. The former was attached in direct support of *Schützen-Regiment 155*, and the latter to *Schützen-Regiment 200*. Both of those regiments were part of the *90. leichte Afrika-Division*.

After this weapon proved itself in the field, a successor model was contemplated. This meant an improved version of the infantry gun, the *s.I.G. 33/1*, which was to be mounted on the chassis of a *Panzerkampfwagen 38(t)*. In March 1942, the manufacturing firm of BMM was contracted to develop a prototype. The project was delayed, however, and the first 25 vehicles—known as *15cm s.I.G. auf GW 38(t)*—were not delivered until February 1943.

After his conversation with Hitler, Albert Speer immediately established contact with the manufacturing firm of Alkett. Two days later, on 22 September 1942, Speer noted in his diary that Hitler was extraordinarily satisfied when it was reported to him that the first six assault infantry guns would be finished by 7 October and that six more would follow by 10 October. Furthermore, the remaining 12 guns were to be produced that October as well.

Twenty-four *Sturmgeschütz III* chassis were delivered to Alkett, which was responsible for constructing the superstructure and mounting the *s.I.G. 33/1* guns that had been made available. The chassis that were delivered ranged from the B to the E models. In the end, the chassis could only be differentiated by the hinges on the maintenance hatches for the steering brakes. Models B, C and D had large hinges, while the E model used smaller ones.

In addition, the assault infantry guns had new engine access panels with larger cool-air openings and armored protection above them.

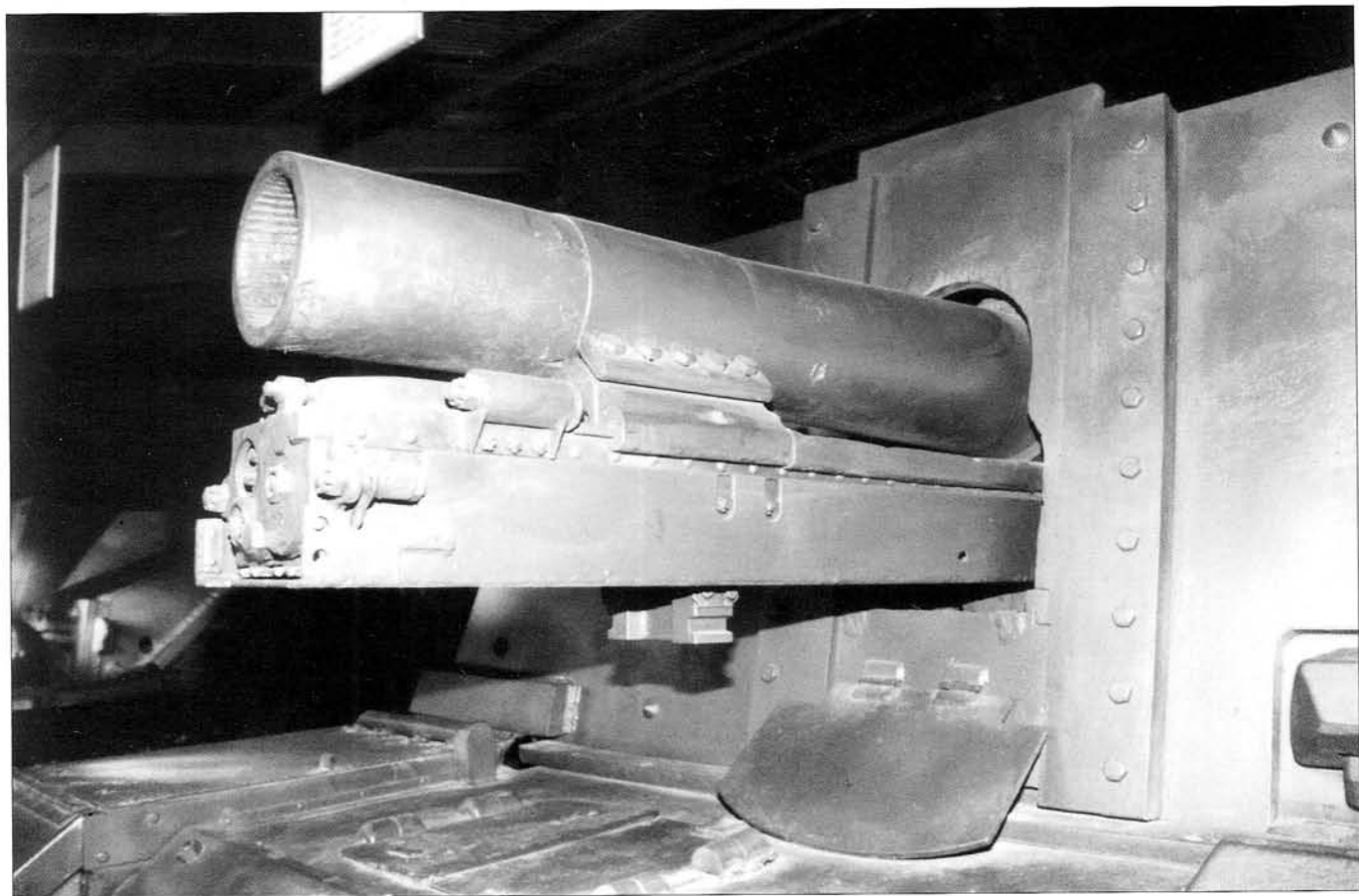
The thickness of the armor plating was 80 millimeters on the front, 50 on the sides, 15 on the rear and 10 on the roof. Thirty rounds for the infantry gun were stored in the superstructure, with precedence given to high-explosive rounds. For self-defense, a mount for a *MG 34* was built into the front right-hand side of superstructure.

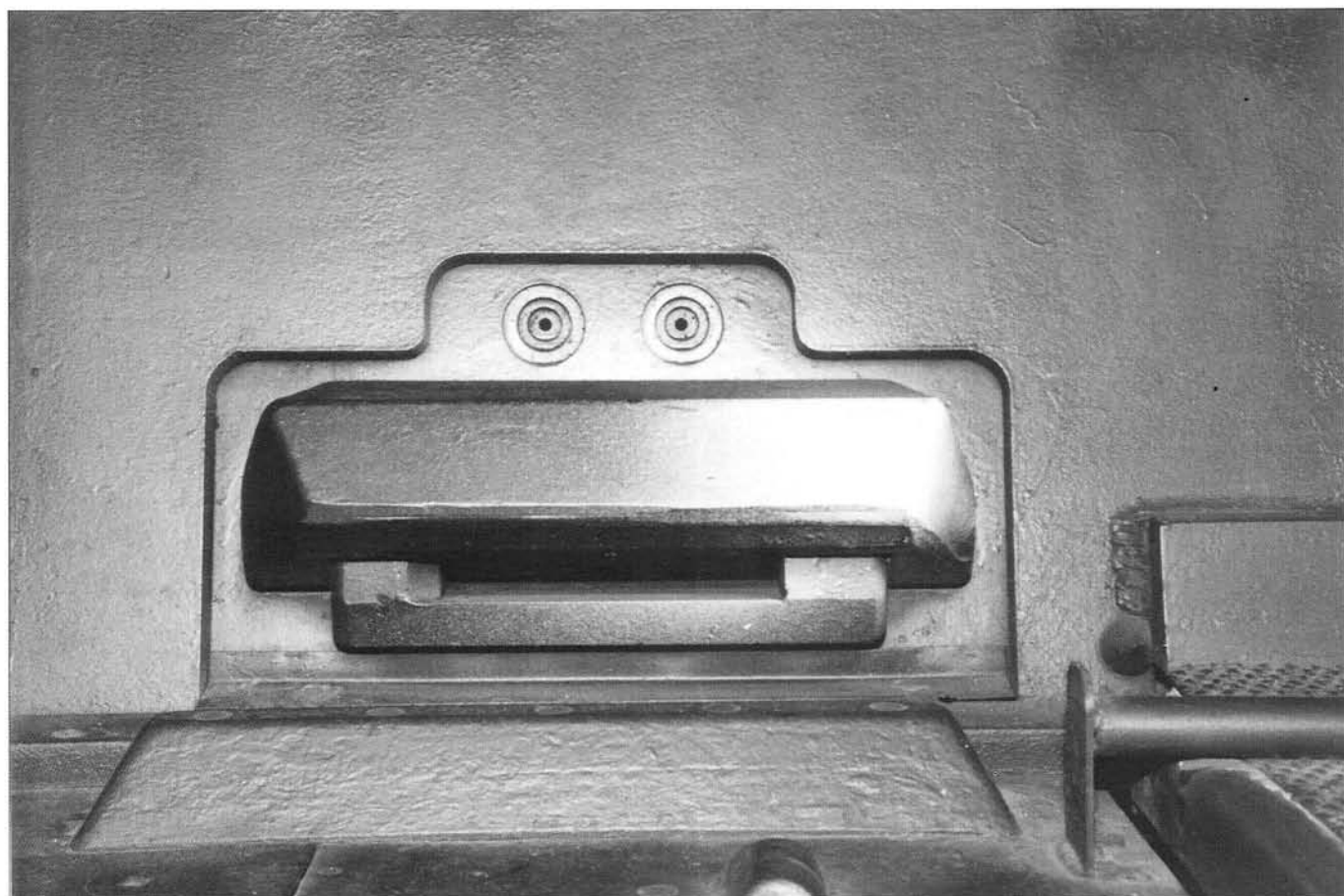
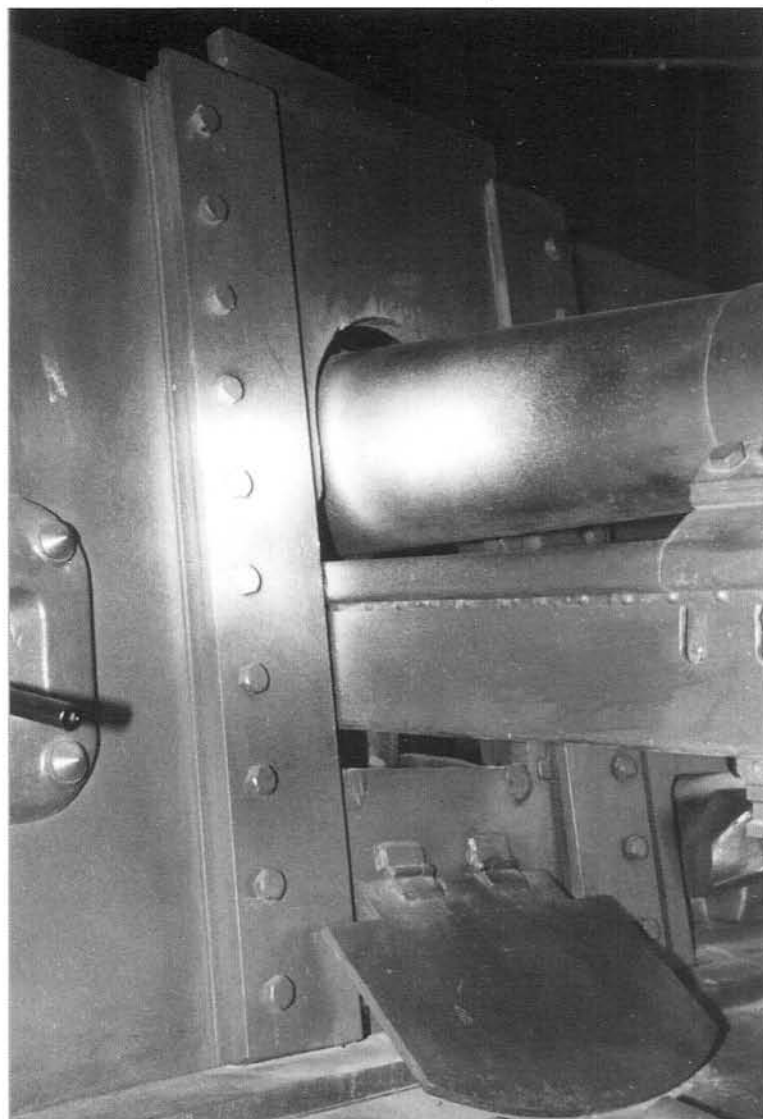
For all of this, the *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz* was only an expedient solution. All of the lessons learned from it would later be incorporated into the *Sturmpanzer*.

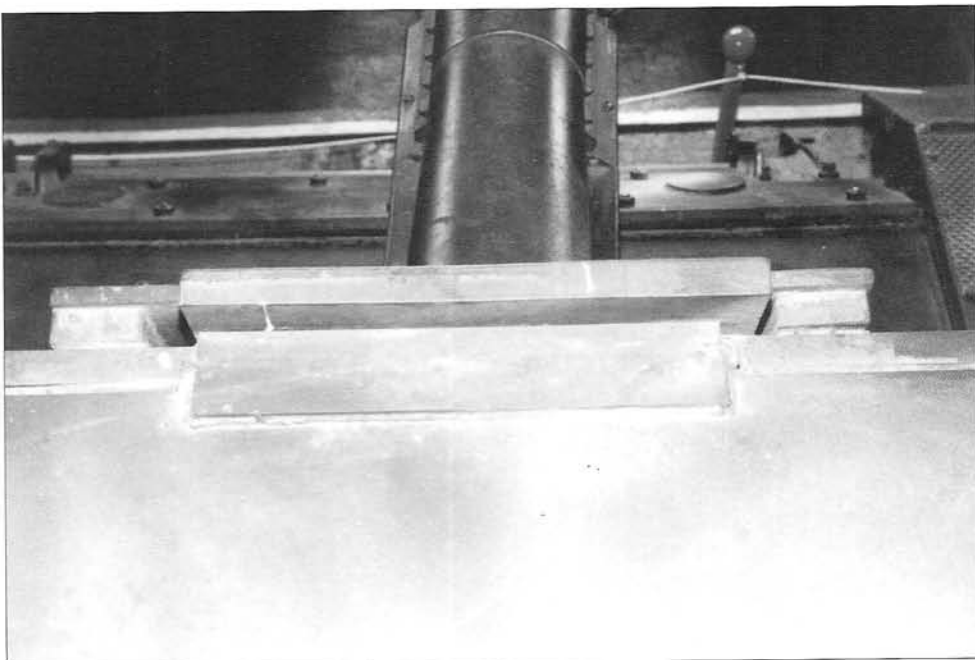
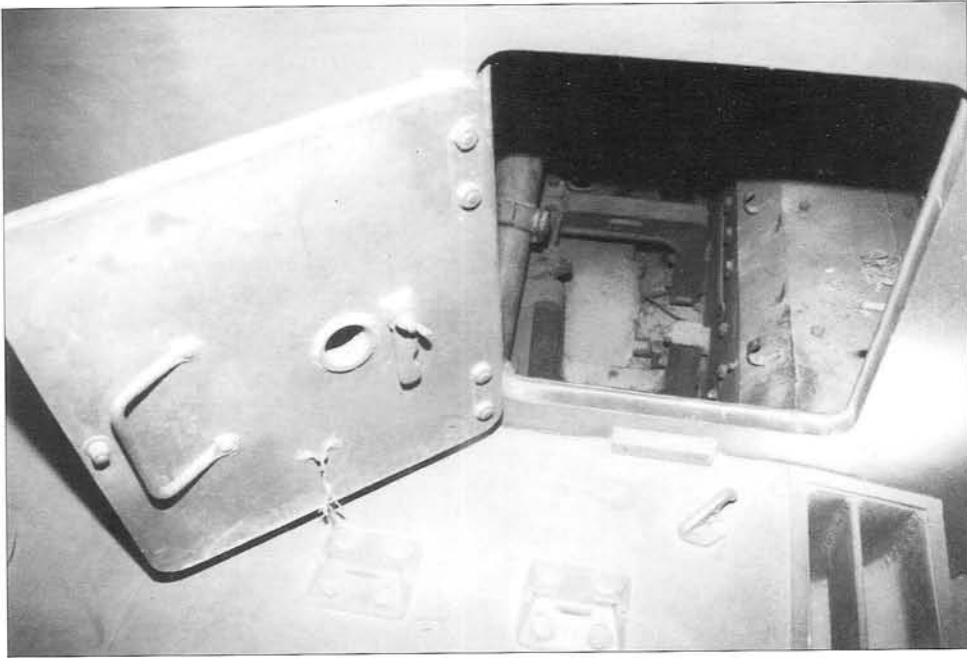


Sturm-Infanterietank (Kubinka, Russia) and the next 3 pages • und weitere 3 Seiten









Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 177, 244 and 245

Of the 24 assault infantry guns contracted, 6 each were issued to the following assault-gun battalions fighting in Stalingrad: Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 177, Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 243, Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 244 and Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 245. At the end of October 1942, the first 12 guns and personnel arrived at Tschir. They were distributed equally to **Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 177 and Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 244.**

In a teletype message dated 3 November 1942, the operations section of the 6. *Armee* headquarters indicated that the guns were demonstrating considerable deficiencies, which had to be rectified before committing them. Since all of the guns were mounted on old assault gun chassis—B to E models—typical signs of aging were appearing on the running gear, the tracks, the steering brakes, the carburetors, the engines etc. In addition, the teletype stated that there were no gunnery tables or crew manuals on hand. Means to conduct observation were also missing. As an expedient measure, scissors scopes had to be mounted.

The personnel sent along with the guns were also not a big help. Some of them were soldiers who had come from horse-drawn artillery formations. Not a single one had received instruction on the *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz*. Some of the drivers had only received their driver's licenses the day before they departed for Stalingrad.

In accordance with orders dated 5 November 1942, the six assault infantry guns of Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 177 were attached to the *LI. Armee-Korps* for *Operation Hubertus*. The guns formed the 3rd Battery of the battalion and saw their first combat operations on 8 November. The intent of the operation was to destroy a Soviet bridgehead in the northern part of the city in the workers' settlement of Spartakowka (north of Orlowka Creek). The fighting in that sector continued on 9 November, and the Soviet-occupied schoolhouse of Spartakowka was destroyed.

Despite these efforts, the Germans were unable to clear the bridgehead. Many armored vehicles were knocked out by Soviet antitank rifles. On 11 November 1942, the 3./Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 177 received orders to turn over its six assault infantry guns to Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 245. The battery was then employed in the city center in the house-to-house fighting along with Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 244, whose 3rd Battery also had the assault infantry guns.

On 19 November 1942, 12,000 Soviet artillery pieces opened a seemingly unending barrage, which signaled the start of the Soviet counteroffensive. In only three days, by 22 November 1942, the advancing Soviet forces linked up the pincers of their enveloping movement at Kalatsch. By doing so the 6. *Armee* was encircled in Stalingrad, along with the aforementioned assault-gun battalions.

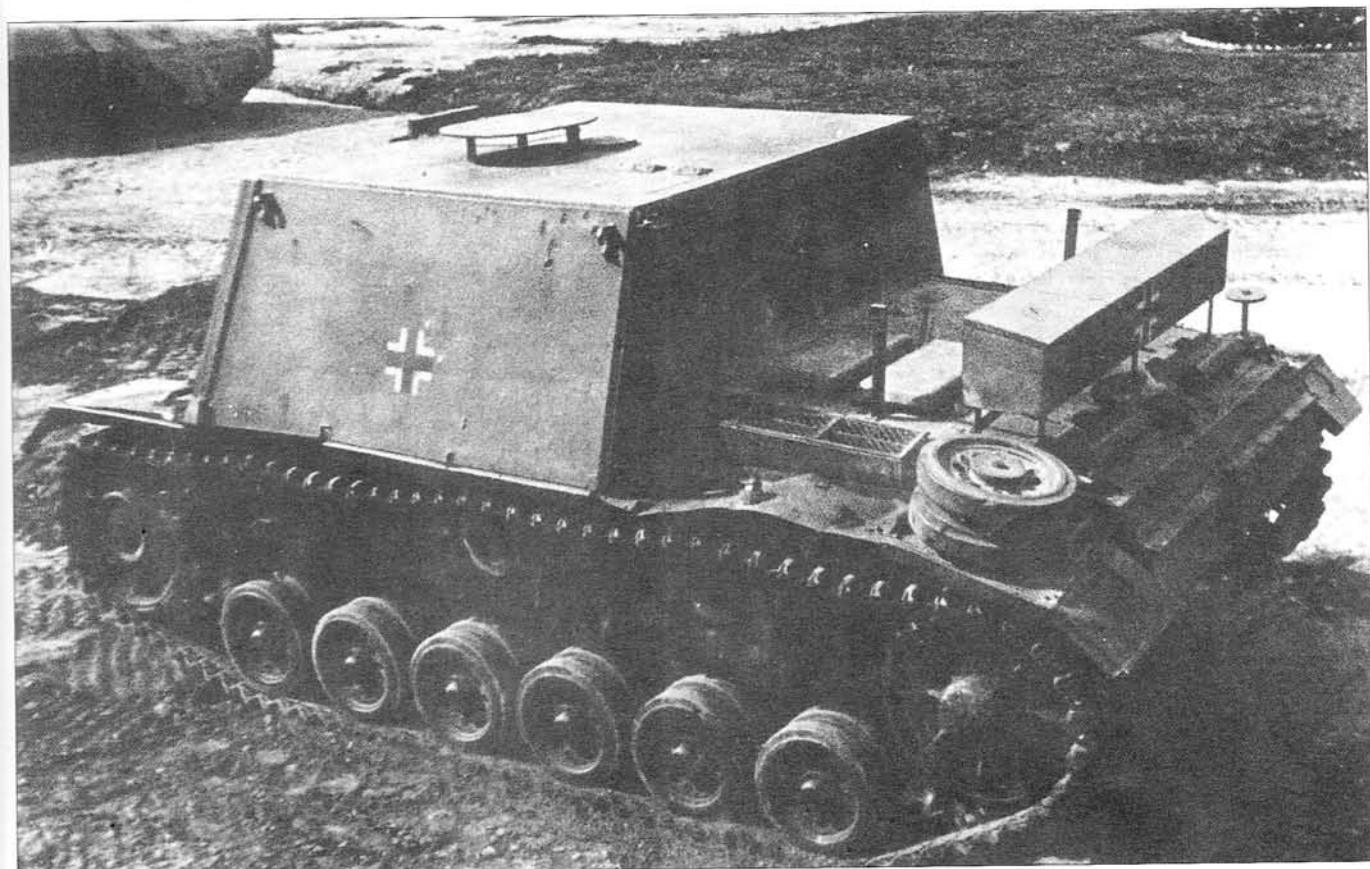
No other information is available concerning the subsequent fighting of the two assault infantry gun batteries.

Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz-Batterie/Lehr-Bataillon XVII and the 23. Panzer-Division

Since the remaining 12 assault infantry guns, which were being transported by rail, could not be issued to the formations in the pocket, a *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz-Batterie/Lehr-Bataillon XVII* was established by the *XVII. Armee-Korps*. It was intended for this battery to be employed as part of the relief effort for the 6. *Armee*.

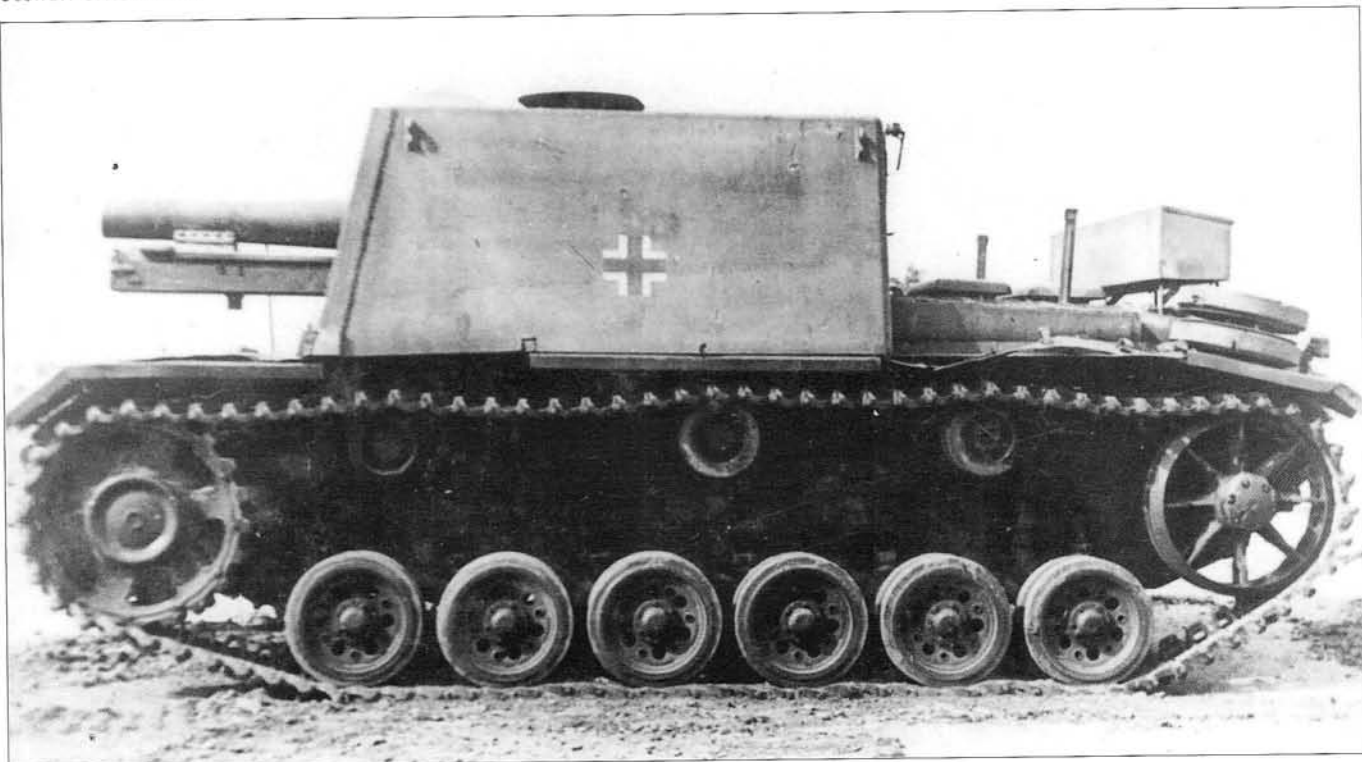
There are indications that the battery was attached in support to the 22. *Panzer-Division*, which moved out to counterattack on 20 November 1942 with 44 other armored fighting vehicles and about 60 SPW's. The relief effort had to be abandoned on 26 November, however. In the weeks and months that followed, the battery was primarily involved in the fighting withdrawal in the southern sector of the Eastern Front (Don / Donez / Mius).

In April 1943, the 22. *Panzer-Division* was disbanded and its remaining elements—among them what remained of the assault infantry gun battery—were transferred to the 23. *Panzer-Division*, where it was listed as the *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz-Batterie/Panzer-Regiment 201*. The battery was employed with the division during the defensive fighting in southern Russia and, later on, at Dnjepropetrowsk and the defense of Nikopol. The last time these guns are mentioned is in the quarterly report of the division in September 1944, which indicated there were five assault infantry guns remaining.



Unfortunately, there are no German photographs of the *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz* being used in Stalingrad. This photograph shows a vehicle captured by the Soviets. • Von den in Stalingrad eingesetzten Sturm-Infanteriegeschützen gibt es leider keine deutschen Fotos. Das Bild zeigt ein von den sowjetischen Truppen erbeutetes Geschütz.

The white winter camouflage can only be seen in a few places. • Der weiße Wintertarnanstrich ist nur noch an einigen Stellen erkennbar.





This *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz* is located in the Russian Tank Museum at Kublinka. • Dieses Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz befindet sich noch heute im russischen Panzermuseum in Kubinka.



Since the remaining 12 *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütze* could no longer be sent to the encircled forces in Stalingrad, *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz-Lehr-Bataillon XVII* was equipped with them. • Da die restlichen 12 Sturm-Infanteriegeschütze nicht mehr den in Stalingrad eingeschlossenen Verbänden zugeführt werden konnten, wurde hieraus die Sturm-IG-Batterie - Lehr-Bataillon XVII gebildet. [KHM]

Some of the guns were outfitted with winter tracks. Due to the cramped fighting compartment, numerous items, such as these helmets, were stored outside the vehicle. • Die Geschütze sind teilweise mit Winterketten ausgestattet. Wegen der Enge im Kampfraum wurden diverse Gegenstände, so auch die Helme, außerhalb des Fahrzeuges aufbewahrt.





The crew of this vehicle has provisionally mounted replacement roadwheels in front of the superstructure. The rear roadwheel is missing its rubber rim. • Die Besatzung dieses Fahrzeuges hat einige Ersatzlaufrollen provisorisch vor dem Aufbau untergebracht. Bei der hinteren Laufrolle fehlen die Gummibandagen.

The crew of this vehicle added roadwheel mounts on its own initiative. *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz-Lehr-Bataillon XVII* had been assigned to the *22. Panzer-Division* in the meantime. • Bei diesem Geschütz hat die Bestzung bereits in eigener Zuständigkeit Laufrollenhalterungen angebracht. Die Sturm-IG-Batterie - Lehr-Bataillon XVII wurde zwischenzeitig in die 22.Panzerdivision überführt. [KHM]





A battery officer and a crewmember. Additional wooden crates have been added to the rear deck. For the most part, the camouflage has already been washed away. • Ein Batterieoffizier und ein Besatzungsmitglied. Auf der Motorabdeckung werden zusätzliche Holzkisten mitgeführt. Die Tarnfarbe ist schon weitgehend abgewaschen. [KHM]

After the 22. Panzer-Division was consolidated with the 23. Panzer-Division, the remaining Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütze were also consolidated into the division. Note the replacement roadwheels on the left and right of the superstructure. • Nach der Verschmelzung der 22. und 23. Panzerdivision werden auch die verbliebenen Sturm-Infanteriegeschütze in den Verband übernommen. Man beachte die Ersatzlaufrollen rechts und links am Fahrzeugaufbau.





Advance of the 23. Panzer-Division in the southern portion of the Eastern Front in the summer of 1943. G4 can be seen in the foreground. • Vormarsch der 23. Panzerdivision an der Südfront im Sommer 1943. Im Vordergrund "G 4", also Geschütz 4. [KHM]



A rear view of a *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz*. The left mudguard has already been heavily damaged. • Rückansicht eines Sturm-Infanteriegeschützes. Die linke Kettenabdeckung ist bereits schon stark beschädigt.

The *Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütze* advanced together with other armored vehicles of the division. • Die Sturm-Infanteriegeschütze rollen gemeinsam im Verband mit weiteren Panzern der Division vor. [2xKHM]





This gun also used the hull of a *Sturmgeschütz III* (Models B through D) as its starting point. • Auch dieses Sturm-Infanterigeschütz basiert auf der Wanne eines Sturmgeschützes Ausführung B bis D. [KHM]

Moving forward on dusty roads. Neither sideskirt mounts nor *Zimmerit* were added to these vehicles. • Voran auf staubigen Straßen. An den Sturm-Infanteriegeschützen wurde weder ein Zimmeritanstrich noch Schürzenhalterungen angebracht





G2 has taken up its position. The 15-centimeter heavy infantry gun has been covered with a tarpaulin. • Sturm-Infanterietank "G 2" hat Position bezogen. Das 15 cm sIG wurde mit einer Plane abgedeckt.

G2 has also been painted on the baggage stowage bin on the rear of the vehicle. • Die Kennzeichnung "G2" wurde auch auf der Gepäckkiste am Fahrzeugheck aufgemalt. [2xKHM]





The 15-centimeter gun also had a psychological effect, often causing Soviet forces against which it was used to surrender.

- Das 15 cm siG war u.a. eine Waffe mit moralischer Wirkung, die oftmals die sowjetischen Soldaten kapitulieren ließ. aufgemalt. [KHM]

Of interest in this photograph is the insignia painted on the left mudguard. Prior to the start of *Operation „Zitadelle“*, new „deception“ insignia were introduced that were intended to cause confusion among the enemy.

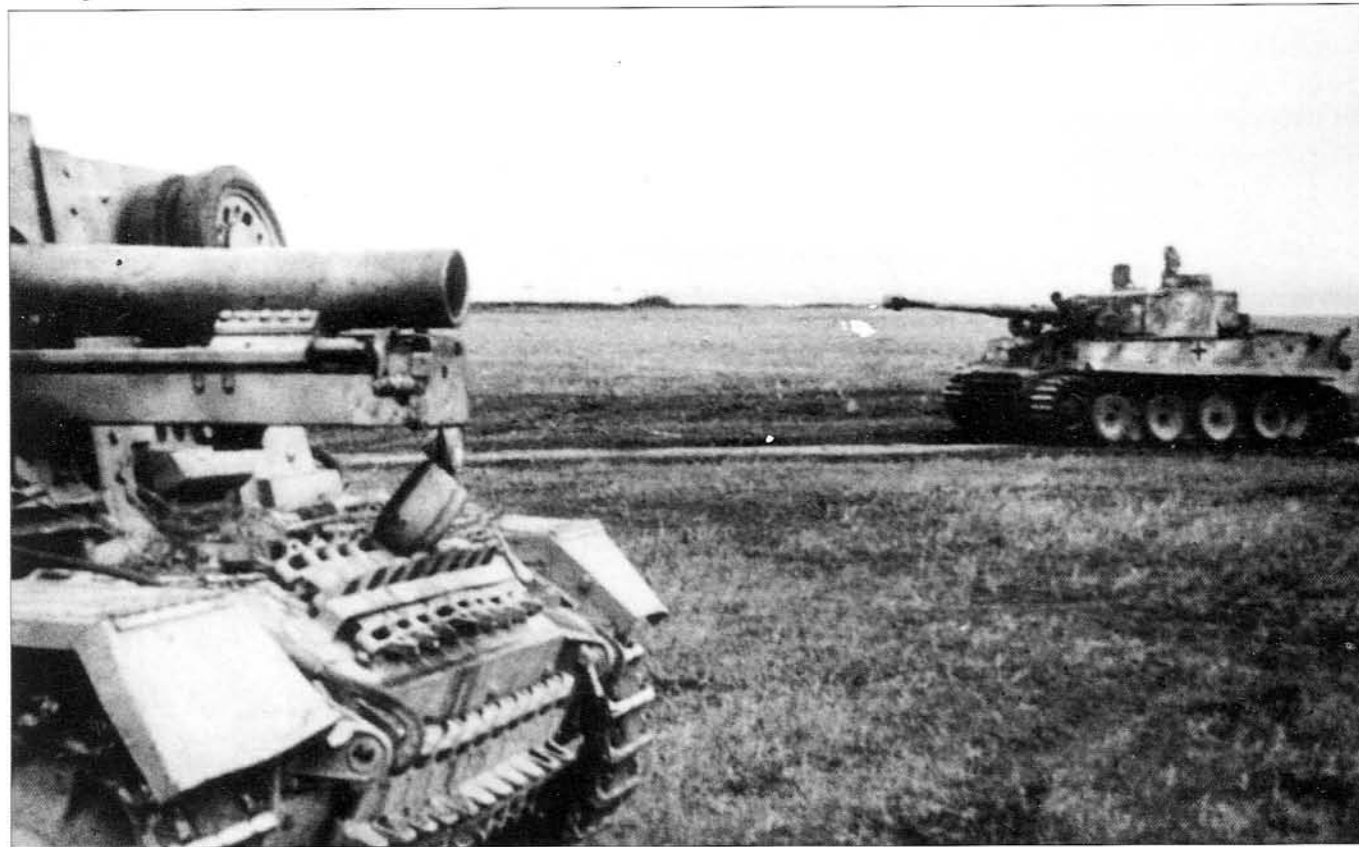
- Besonders interessant an dieser Aufnahme ist das Kennzeichen auf der rechten Kettenabdeckung. Vor Beginn der Operation *Zitadelle* wurden neue „Tarnkennzeichen“ eingeführt, die beim Gegner Verwirrung stiften sollten





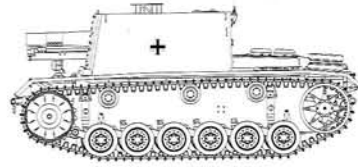
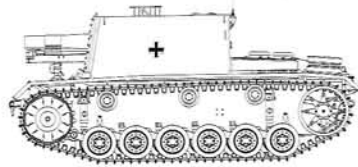
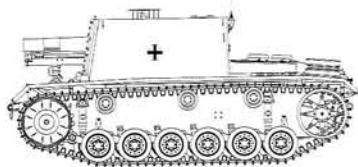
Rear view of G3. The gun is also carrying a 200-liter fuel drum with it to extend its range. • Rückansicht von Geschütz "G 3". Es führt zusätzlich ein 200 Liter mit Betriebsstoff mit sich

A Tiger I passes a Sturm-Infanterie-Geschütz. Additional mounting points for spare track links have not only been added to the front of the hull, but also to the armor plating above it. • Ein "Tiger I" passiert ein Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz. Auch an diesem Fahrzeug sind sowohl am Fahrzeugbug, wie auch auf der Platte darüber, Halterungen für Ersatzkettenglieder befestigt.

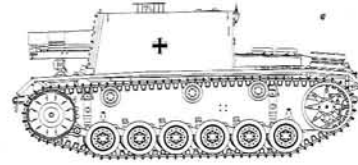
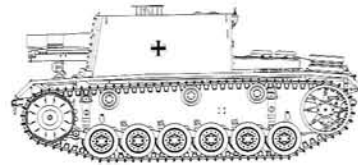
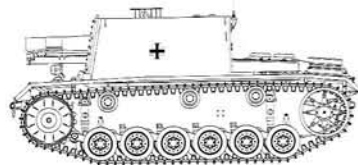


3./ StuG.Abt, 177
05.11.1942

1. Zug



2. Zug



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Sturmpanzer (Assault Tanks) Description of the chassis, the superstructure and the weapons.

Separate from the development of the assault infantry gun, Alkett presented Hitler with designs for a heavy infantry gun on a *Panzer IV* chassis in October 1942. Hitler then requested that a time line for the production of 40 to 60 vehicles quickly be presented to him, taking into consideration that the main gun required for it had to be constructed first. Above all, the newly developed s.l.G. 33 was to have the capacity for firing thin-walled rounds with a high-explosive effect for house-to-house fighting.

Since there were production bottlenecks at the time the contract was issued, among other things, it was arranged to also use the chassis of vehicles sent back for repair. Parallel to Alkett's efforts, the manufacturing firm of Skoda received a contract to develop a gun that could fire the same ammunition as the s.l.G. 33.

On 7 February 1943, Hitler was shown photographs of models of the new 15-centimeter heavy infantry gun mounted on a *Panzer IV* chassis. The *Führer* expected the first 40 vehicles to be finished by 12 May 1943, to which an additional 20 would follow.

Skoda finished six of the new 15-centimeter *Sturmhaubitze 43 L/12's* in March and 14 guns each in April and May. The completely new vehicle was listed unofficially as *Gerät 581 Sturmpanzerwagen 604/16 (Alkett sIG auf PzKpfw IV mit kardanischer Aufhängung)*.² Its special-purpose vehicle number was 166.³

By April 1943, Hitler directed that the new type of weapon was to be placed under the control of *Generaloberst* Guderian's inspectorate of armored forces. Fifty of the new vehicles were to be employed operationally, with 10 in reserve. Hitler was to determine the special missions for them. Hitler himself directed in a conference held in May 1943 that this newly developed weapon was to be referred to in the future as a *Sturmpanzer* (assault tank).

Until now, the vehicle has been referred to in writings as the *Sturmpanzer "Brummbär"* ("grizzly bear"). The *Sturmpanzer 43* was first referred to by this name in an Allied report (DTD Report No. 3066). The Germans never used this name when the vehicle was fielded. The forces in the field simply referred to it as a *Sturmpanzer* or, in common soldier jargon, as a *Stupa*.

The superstructures for the vehicles were fabricated in the army depot in Vienna, with support from the Austrian firms of Saurerwerk and Simmering-Graz-Pauker. The chassis that were delivered were produced by the Nibelungenwerk.

In the spring of 1943, the first series production was completed, with 20 vehicles finished in April and 40 in May. Hitler was presented with an original *Sturmpanzer* for viewing and inspection for the first time on 14 May 1943.

All of the vehicles in the first production series were issued to *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216*. They were employed for the first time during *Unternehmen Zitadelle*, where they were a success. The only disadvantage was the strain placed on the *Panzer IV* chassis by the weight, which led to frequent damage in the running gear and differentials.

Despite that, the assault tanks proved themselves at the front in the months that followed. So much so, that Hitler personally directed that production of at least 20 *Sd.Kfz. 166's* a month was to be initiated.

In December 1943, a second production series was started, whereby a number of different modifications were incorporated. The running gear continued to be overburdened, however. At the end of January 1944, it was planned to stop the second production of 60 so as to take stock of how well the new running gear with rubber sprung steel roadwheels.⁴

Additional modifications were executed in the vehicle's third series, especially in the driver's compartment. In addition, Skoda was directed to reduce the weight of the 15-centimeter *Sturmhaubitze 43*. Along with other measures, this was achieved by reducing the armor plating on the gun mount. The basic construction remained unchanged, however, and the reworked gun was designated as the *15cm Sturmhaubitze 43/1*. According to Allied reports that concerned a captured *Sturmpanzer*, the weight-saving measures resulted in an 800-kilogram lighter gun.

The forces in the field also requested modifications, including opportunities to conduct better close-in defense. For that purpose, a *MG 34* was to be installed in a ball mount. These and other recommendations led to a complete reworking of the superstructure in the first half of 1944. The "new" *Sturmpanzer 43* was produced in the fourth series production by the manufacturing firm of Deutsche Eisenwerke in Duisburg until March of 1945.

According to documents maintained by the army's weapons office, the following number of vehicles was produced:

April 1943	20
Mai 1943	40
June 1943	—
July 1943	—
August 1943	—

"End Item 581" Assault Armored Vehicle 604/16 (Alkett heavy infantry gun on *Panzer IV* chassis with gimbal mount).

Sonderkraftfahrzeug-Nummer = Special-purpose vehicle number = *Sd.Kfz.*

Editor's Note: Unlike the usual *Panzer IV* roadwheels that had rubber rims, the modified roadwheels were steel rimmed but sprung/cushioned with rubber internally. These types of road wheels were usually fitted on the first two pairs on each side of vehicles that were particularly nose heavy, like the *Sturmpanzer IV* and the *Jagdpanzer IV/70*. This roadwheel design was copied from the KV 1.

September 1943	—
October 1943	—
November 1943	—
December 1943	10
January 1944	20
February 1944	15
March 1944	16
April 1944	12
Mai 1944	3
June 1944	40
July 1944	30
August 1944	20
September 1944	19
October 1944	14
November 1944	3
December 1944	23
January 1945	1
February 1945	13

Taking into account losses at the front, the army's weapons office indicated the following numbers of vehicles were on hand:

1 January 1944:	31
1 July 1944:	163
1 December 1944:	184

Towards the end of the war, a long-range round developed by Skoda was tested. The round weighed only 27 kilograms as opposed to the round it was designed to replace (38 kilograms). The range was around 6,200 meters, which represented an increase of around 45%.

In all, 38 rounds of ammunition for the main gun were carried on board.

Sturmpanzer IV (First Model / First Series)

Sixty vehicles were produced in the first series run. Of those, eight came from repaired E and F model *Panzer IV* chassis. The remaining 52 were built on chassis that had been intended for the G model *Panzer IV*.

The E model chassis were left "as is", that is, the supplemental armor plating on the hull sides remained, as did the longer exhaust stacks. Air-intake grills were screwed onto the access plates for the steering brakes, as had also been done in the case of the *Panzer III*.

For the E and F model chassis, 30 millimeters of supplemental armor was screwed on the front part of the hull. In addition, new coolant and ventilator valves were mounted, the same ones used on the model G chassis.

The smoke grenade launcher found in the middle of the rear hull on the E model and on the left side on the F model was eliminated. The vertically welded piece of flat iron used to mount the launchers was not removed, however.

The auxiliary power unit with a DKW engine, along with all of its fittings, which were housed in the engine compartment, was also removed. The opening for the exhaust pipe for the DKW engine, which was located in the hull rear, was closed off with a quadratic plate. The exhaust stack for it was also removed.

Most of the upper superstructure, including the turret, was removed. Only the armor plating for the engine compartment remained. The new superstructure was mounted on the area that had been opened up.

The driver received an armored, slightly extended station, in which a driver's sight—a *Fahrersehklappe 80*—was installed. That type of driver's scope was already being used in the *Tiger I*. On the driver's side on the left-hand superstructure armor, there was a cap. Underneath it was the final section of the ventilation pipe for the brake housing ventilation fan.

The 15-centimeter *Sturmhaubitze 43* was mounted slightly off-center to the right and above the driver's station. The front armor was 100 millimeters thick. A ball mount protected the gun mount, the recoil mechanism and the recuperator against damage; a short length of armor protected the rear portion of the barrel. On both sides of the fighting compartment toward the rear there was a plug, which was secured to the vehicle by means of a chain. The plugs could be pushed out so that they became a firing port for a pistol or submachine gun.

There was a two-piece entry hatch at the rear of the fighting compartment. To the right and left on the rear wall were welded two armored

covers that were open on the bottom. They protected the ventilation shafts for the fighting compartment. On the top side of the armored covers were antenna mounts. On the top right and left of the inside of the fighting compartment were ventilation shafts, which started in the area of the main gun. It was intended for these shafts to evacuate the strong gunpowder fumes that developed after firing.

There were three two-part hatches on the roof of the fighting compartment. There was a round one for the vehicle commander and two right-angled ones for the gunner and loader. In the front part of the gunner's hatch was an opening for the aiming sights—a *Selbstfahrlafetten-Zielfernrohr 1a*, usually abbreviated as *Sfl.Zf. 1a*. There was also an opening in the forward portion of the loader's hatch. When the hatch was raised, a MG 34 could be fastened there, in a fashion similar to that of the G model of the *Sturmgeschütz III*.

On the right side of the vehicle, behind the fighting compartment, was a large container for basic issue items and tools. In addition, two mounts were welded on the back of the vehicle for spare roadwheels, each mount holding one roadwheel. During the *Führer* conference on 6 March 1943, it was ordered that all assault guns, as well as all *Panzer III*'s, *Panzer IV*'s and *Panthers* were to be fitted with skirts. Since this order also applied to the assault tanks, the skirt mounts were fitted on all of these vehicles as well.

Sturmpanzer IV (Second Model / Second Series)

When production resumed in December 1943, it was intended to eliminate all of the deficiencies that had surfaced on the first production model.

The chassis of the J model *Panzer IV*, which was currently in production, was used for the second production series of the assault tank. Once again, the auxiliary power unit with the DKW engine was removed from the vehicle.

The basic shape of the fighting compartment was retained, although the number of plugs for firing ports was raised to two per side.

The armor protection on the main gun barrel was lengthened.

The roof of the fighting compartment was changed and the number of hatches reduced. The gun commander retained his two-piece circular hatch, as did the loader, with his two-piece right-angled hatch. The gunner's hatch was eliminated. The gunner's sight was fed through a small opening, which was covered by a movable piece of armor plating. Since the protective cover could jut out over the front of the fighting compartment at certain firing angles, a protective support was attached to this area along the front slope of the armor.

Since the system for ventilating the fighting compartment did not work well in the first series, a fighting compartment ventilator was installed on the roof to replace the ventilation shafts. As a result, the two armored covers on the rear wall of the fighting compartment were no longer installed. Only one antenna mount was installed; it was located on the right side.

As before, angle iron was welded in front of the front half of the gun commander's hatch to deflect small-arms fire and shrapnel. This was also done to the front of the loader's hatch, as well as on it.

In the area of the driver's station, armor plating was affixed in front of the lower portion of the driver's scope, which was intended to prevent rounds from penetrating into this weak area between the fighting compartment and the chassis.

The large basic issue item / toolbox was moved to the left side of the vehicle. In some photographs, the air intake pre-filter (felt) can be identified on the right, rear mudguard, just as it was found on the H model *Panzer IV*.

Two new fixtures for holding two spare roadwheels each were affixed to the rear of the engine compartment armor. A protective plate was found above the exhaust stack. When loading ammunition, the main-gun rounds could be placed there.

Based on complaints from troops in the field that the skirt mounts were deficient and many skirts were lost as a result, new, triangular mounts were affixed starting in October 1943. These were also mounted on the assault tanks of the second series.

Finally, a coat of *Zimmerit* was applied to the vehicles.

Sturmpanzer IV (First Model / First Series — Modified)

Of the total of 60 vehicles of the first series, about half were brought back by *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216*. These vehicles were overhauled in the Army depot at Vienna and brought up to series two standards.

The fighting compartment roof was modified to that of the second series, but the armored covers for the ventilators on the fighting compartment rear wall were left in place.

Whenever a model E chassis was encountered, the hallmarks of that particular variant were upgraded. (For example, the long exhaust stack and the modified access panels for the steering brakes.)

The old-style mounting brackets for the skirts were replaced by the triangular ones. Finally, these vehicles also then received a coating of *Zimmerit*.

Sturmpanzer IV (Third Model / Third Series)

In the main, the hallmarks of the second series remained unchanged.

There were some modifications in the area of the driver's station. The *Fahrersehklappe 80* was replaced with periscopes. In the case of some vehicles, a protective covering against rain was added.

Due to production-related issues, some of the chassis had a cast-iron idler wheel, as well as a pre-filter system.

Sturmpanzer IV (Fourth Model / Fourth Series)

Starting in June 1944, the J model *Panzer IV* chassis was used as the basis for the newly produced assault tanks, since it had just been introduced for the *Panzer IV* as well. In the meantime, the entire superstructure had been reworked. The six-cornered shape was replaced by a right-angled construction. A MG 34 in a ball mount was added to a small extension of the fighting compartment above the driver's station. The fighting compartment roof was redesigned. Two ventilators—one in the forward area of the roof on the right-hand side and the other on the roof of the machine-gun extension—were intended to provide better ventilation of the fighting compartment. Two smaller panels, parallel to one another and located in the rear right-hand area of the roof, were probably also introduced for this purpose. The gun commander received a new hatch, which was identical to those on the G model of the *Sturmgeschütz III*. As a result of the periscopes, the gun commander then had a better view of the battlefield. In addition, an anti-aircraft machine gun could be installed in a moveable mount on the protective ring. On the outside back wall of the fighting compartment, there was a small extension, to which the entrance hatches were attached. The mount for the radio antenna continued to be found on the right, rear outer superstructure wall.

The large stowage bin for tools and basic-issue items, the spare roadwheel mounts and the sideskirt mounts were the same as on the third series.

Of particular note on the last production series of this vehicle were the steel roadwheels, which had been introduced in the intervening period. The following arrangements of steel roadwheels have been noted:

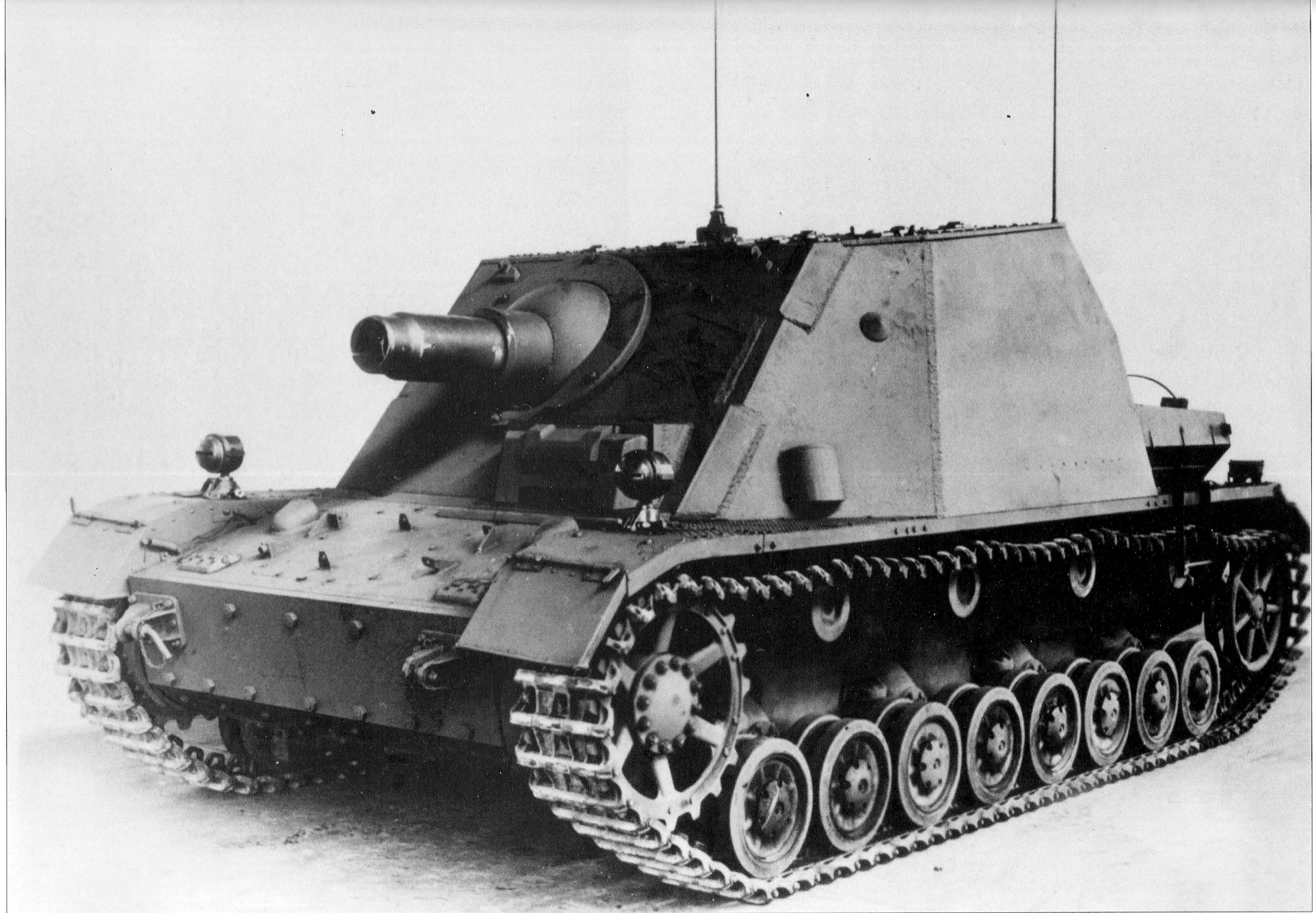
- All four pairs of roadwheels on each side in steel.
- The first and second pairs of roadwheels on each side in steel.
- The first and last pairs of roadwheels on each side in steel.

Depending on the production time, chassis started to have the new exhaust configuration starting in the fall of 1944. These were two vertically mounted exhaust stacks, which were called "flame killers" by the soldiers.

Until September 1944, the factories also applied *Zimmerit* to assault tanks.

This vehicle has already had the sideskirts installed. Additional track links have been affixed to the front of the hull. • Beim diesem Fahrzeug sind bereits die seitlichen Schürzen montiert und zusätzlich Ersatzkettenglieder am Wannenbug befestigt.



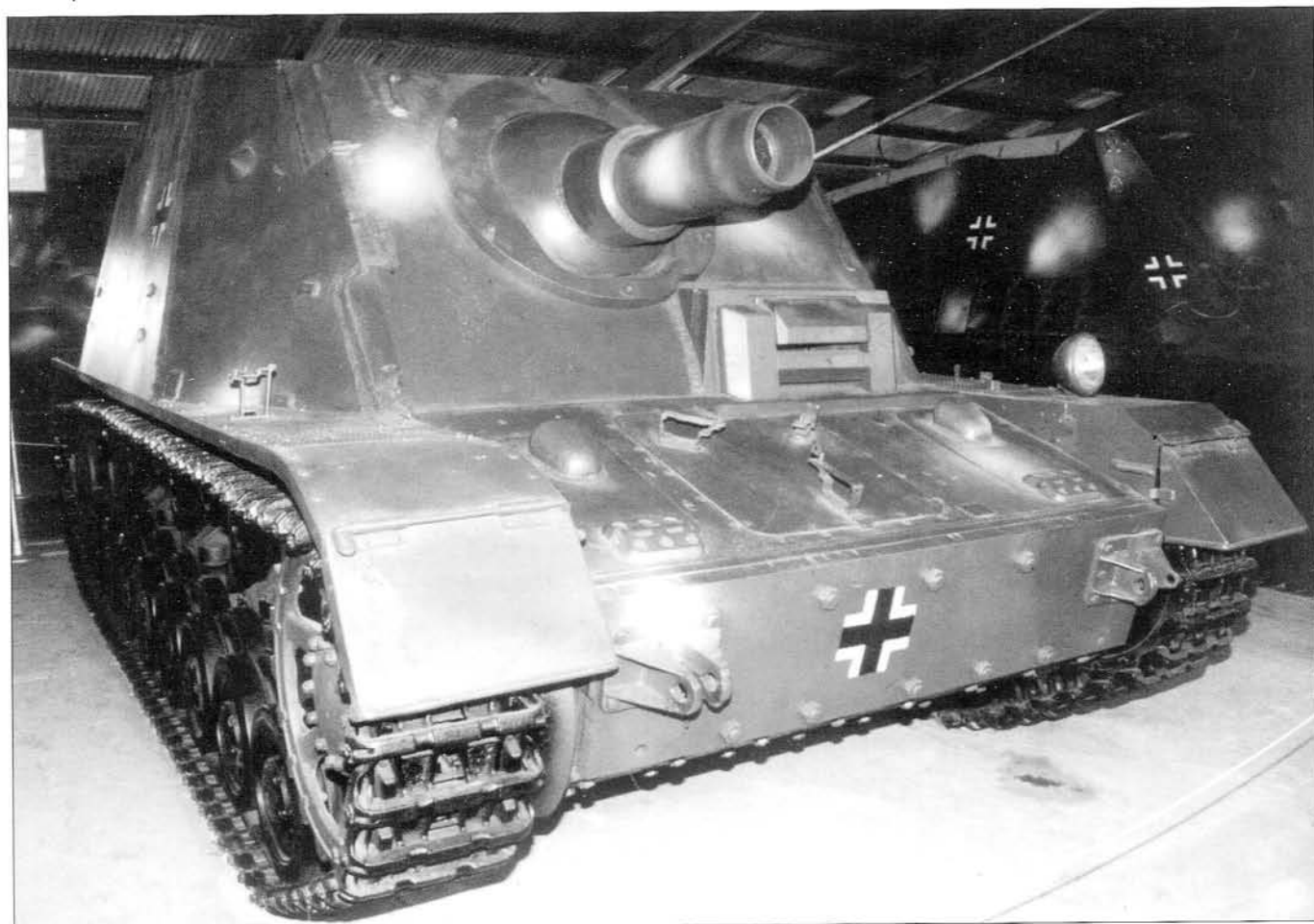


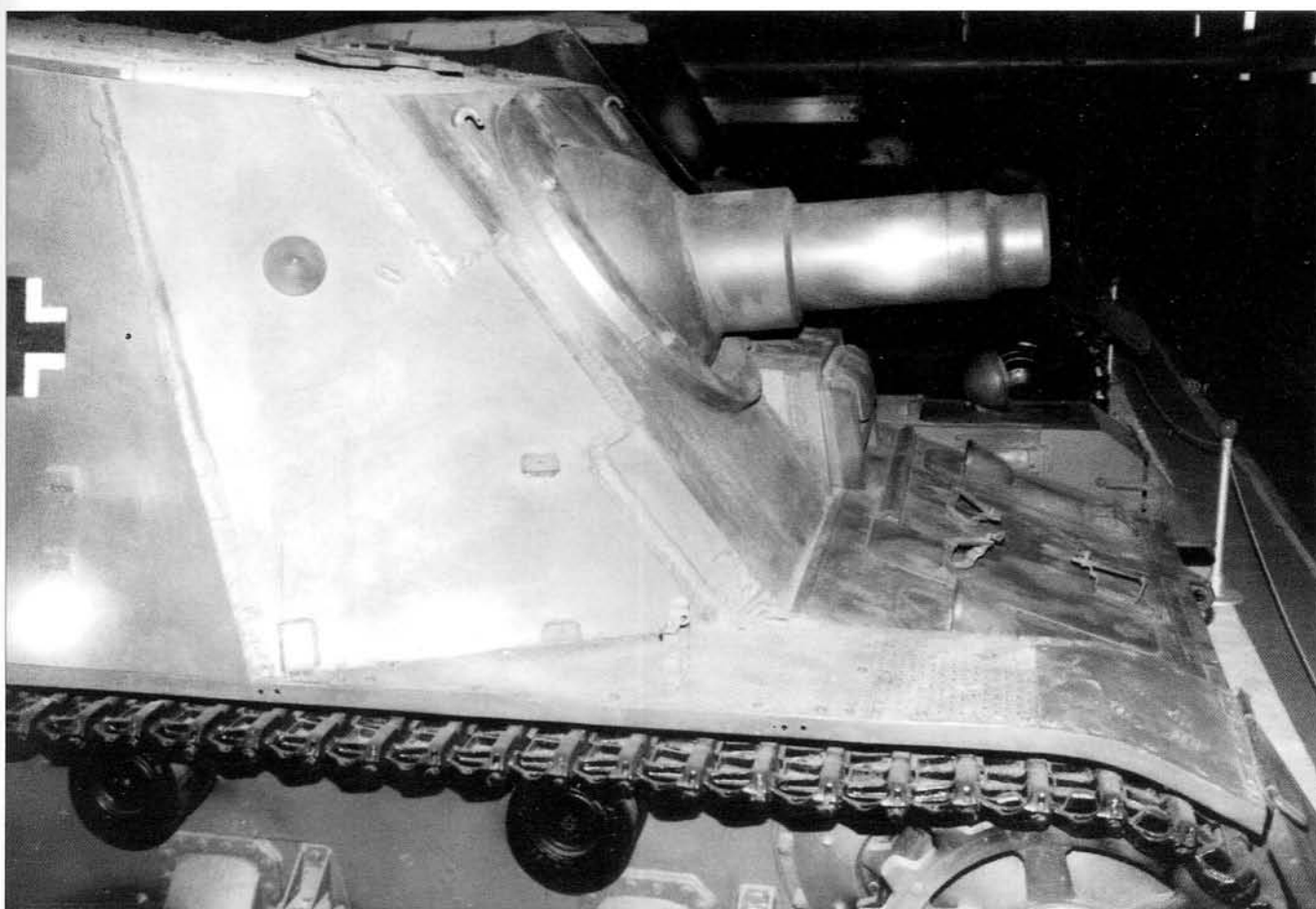
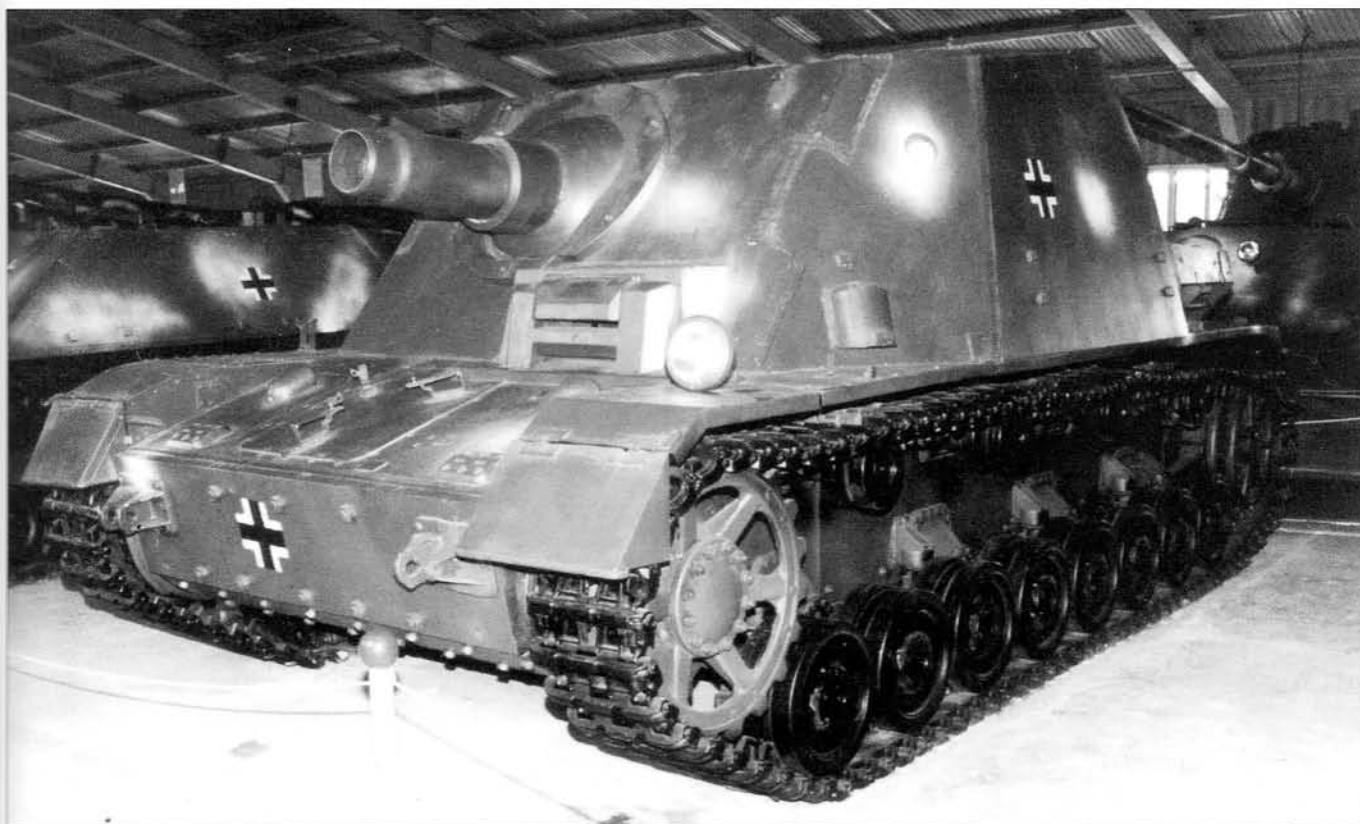
One of the first assault tanks using the chassis of the F model of the *Panzer IV* as its starting point. Note the shape of the first 15-centimeter Model 43 assault howitzer. Additional armor plating has been bolted to the front of the hull. • Einer der ersten produzierten Sturmpanzer auf Basis des Fahrgestelles des Panzerkampfwagen IV Ausführung F. Man beachte die Form der ersten 15 cm Sturmhaubitze 43. Am Wannenbug ist eine zusätzliche Panzerplatte angeschraubt.



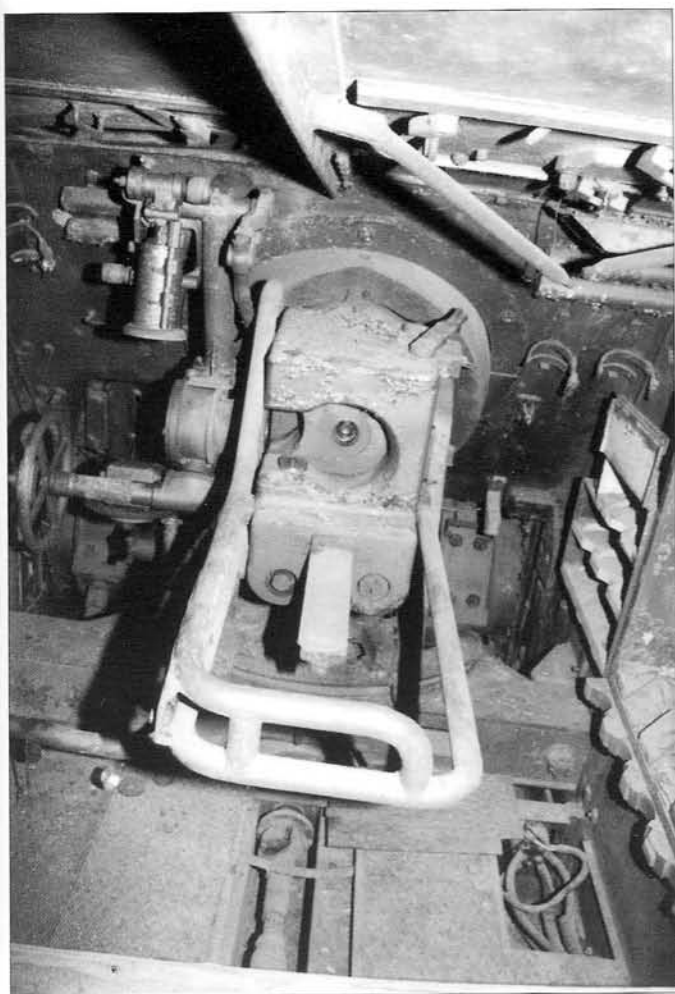
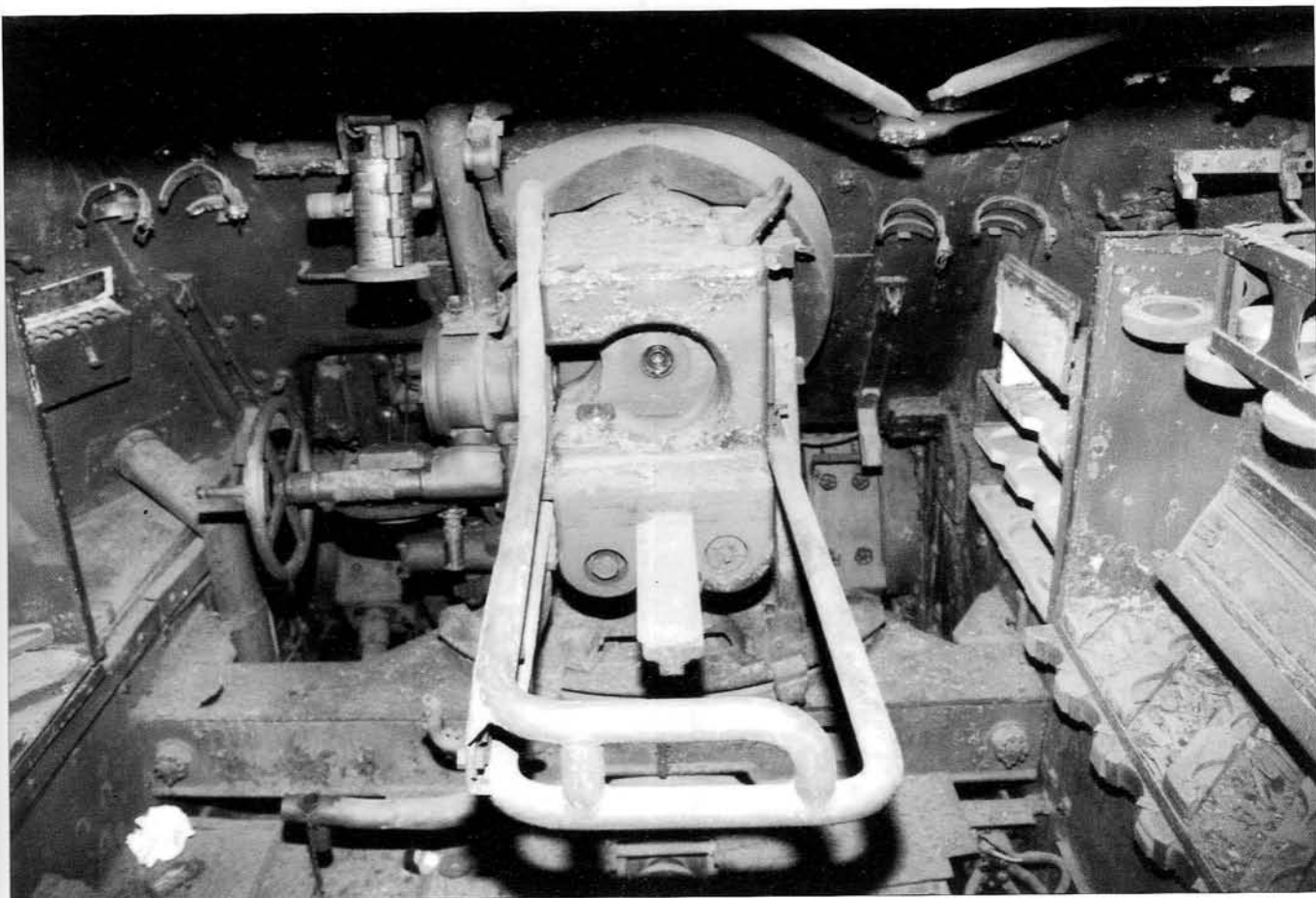
This photograph has been retouched. The numeral „540“ did not belong to this vehicle's numbering system and was apparently arbitrarily applied. Note the shape of the opened gunner's hatch. • Bei diesem Foto handelt es sich um eine reduzierte Aufnahme. Die Zahl „540“ passt nicht in das Nummerierungssystem und wurde anscheinend willkürlich aufgemalt. Man beachte die Form der geöffneten Richtschützenluke.

Sturmpanzer IV - Ausf. I - 1.Serie (Kubinka, Russia) and the next 3 pages • und weitere 3 Seiten





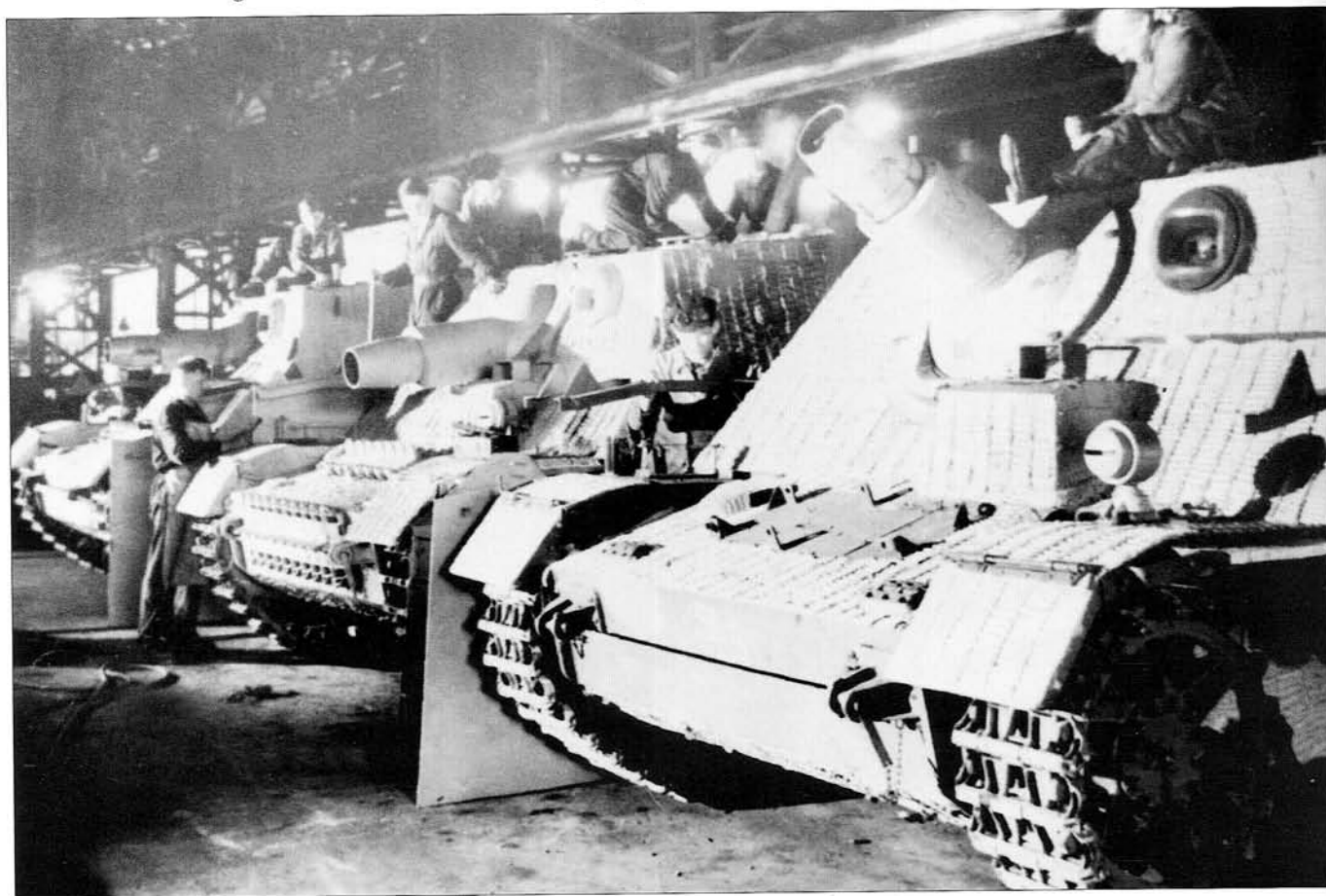






In the final production bay, the sideskirts have been set aside for mounting on the vehicles, and the next 4 pages • In der Halle der Endabnahme werden bereits die Schürzen an den Fahrzeugen bereitgestellt. und weitere 4 Seiten.

The *Zimmerit* coating has not only been applied to the superstructure but also to the mudguards. Only the area of the vehicle's hull has been spared. • Die *Zimmerit*beschichtung ist nicht nur an den Aufbauten angebracht sondern auch auf den Kettenabdeckungen. Nur der Bereich am Fahrzeugbug ist ausgespart.

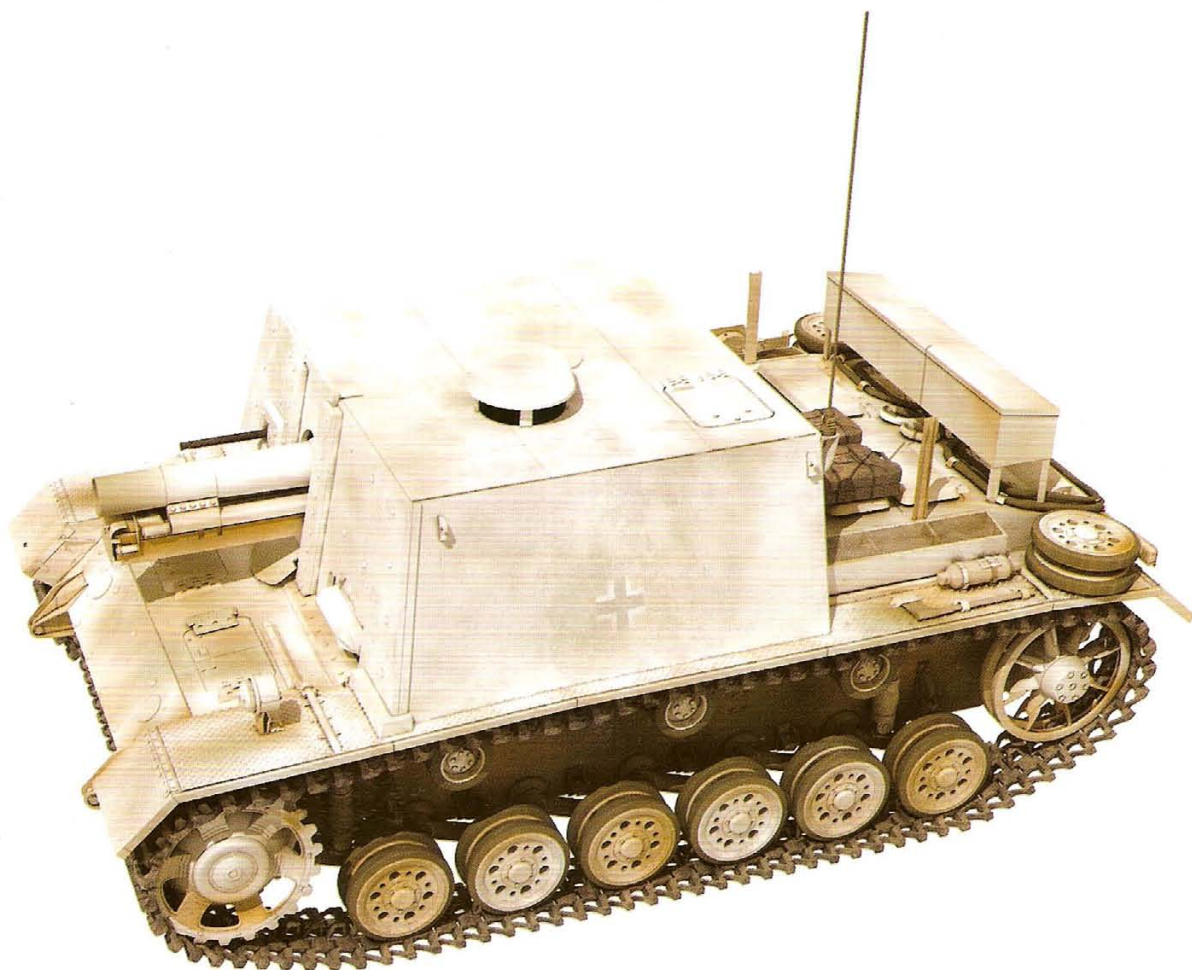




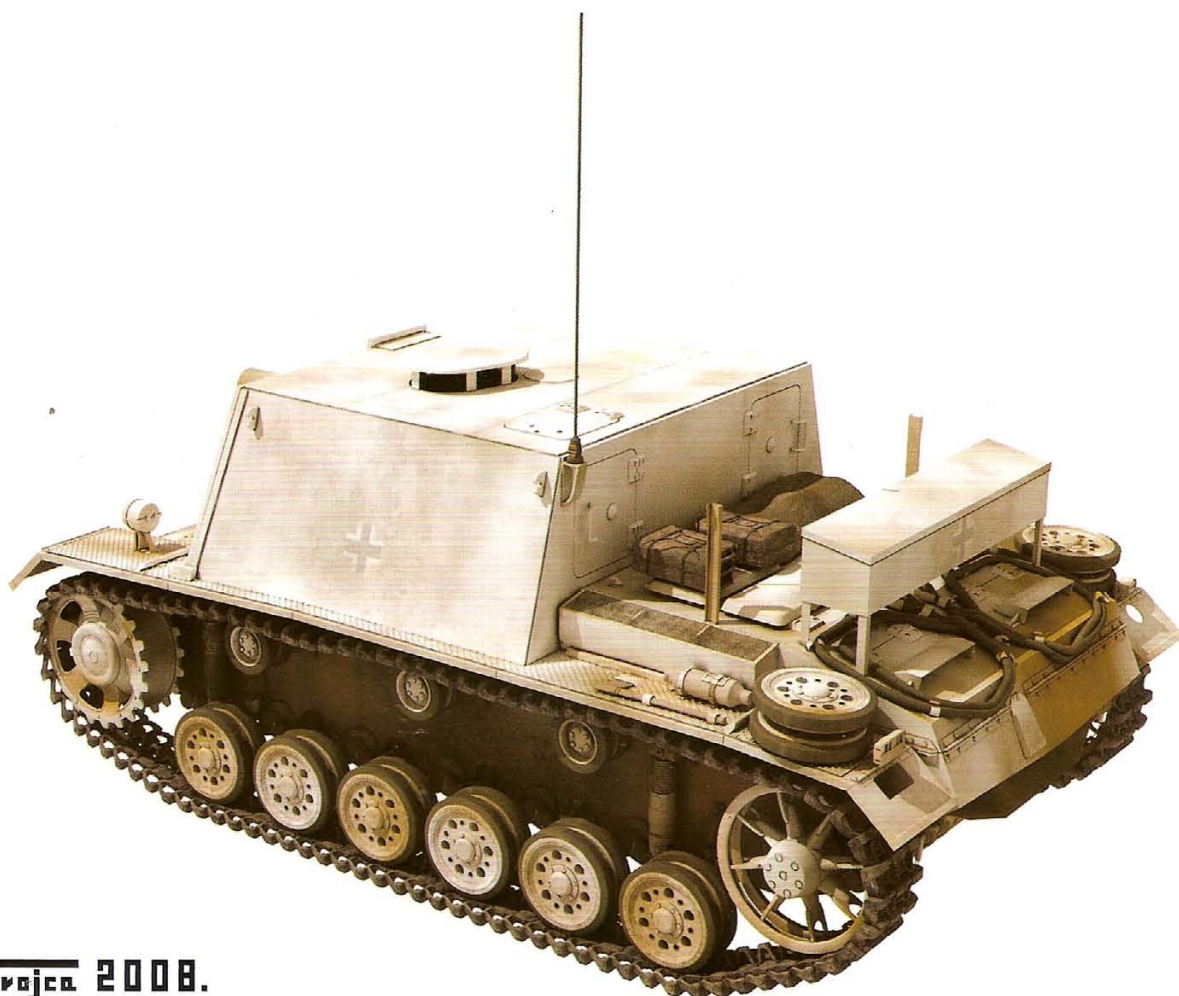
Sturm-Infanterietank, StuG.Abt. 177, the area of Stalingrad, Russia, November 1942.

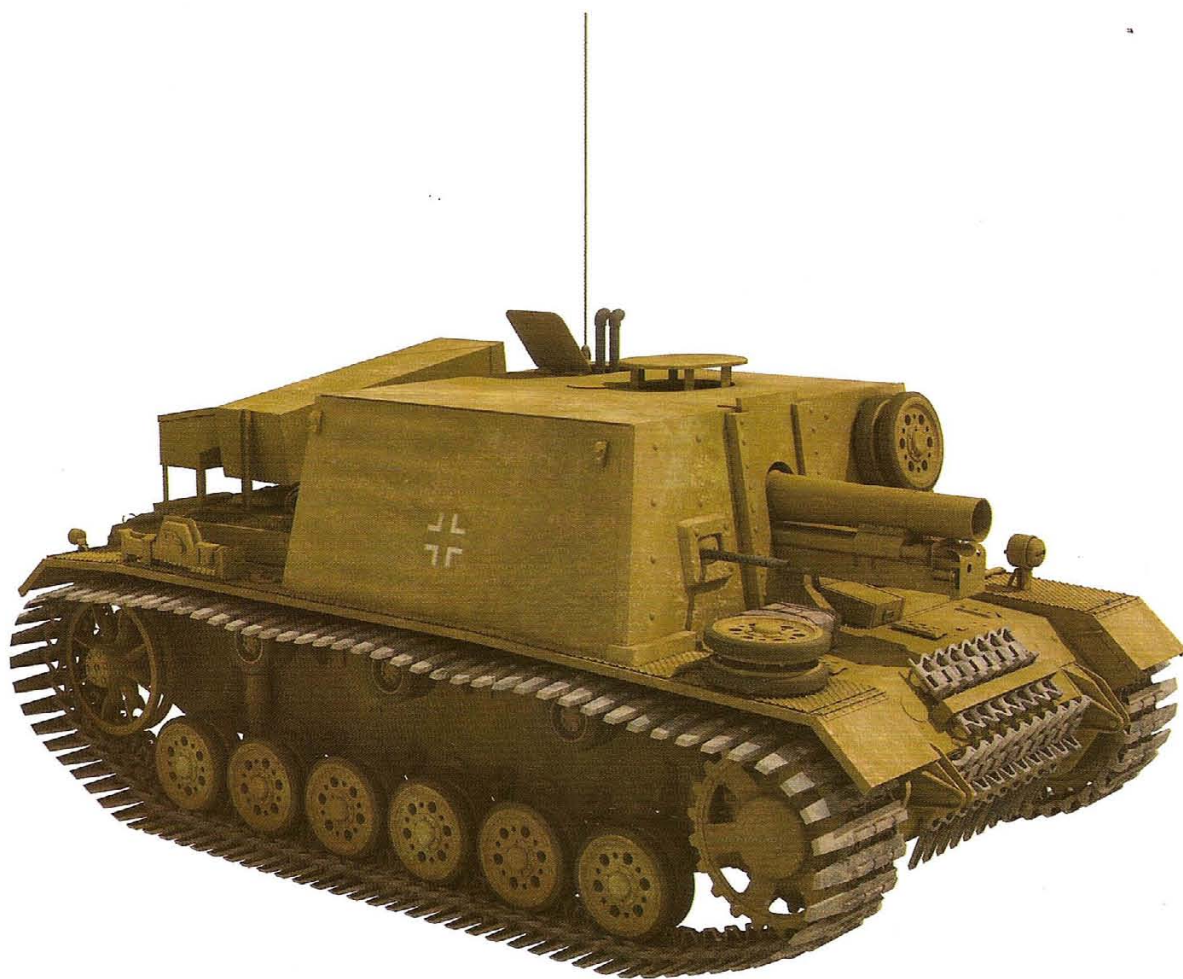


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Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz, Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz-Batterie. Lehr Bataillon XVII (22. Pz.Div.), the area of Don, Russia, December, 1943.





Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz, Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz-Batterie. Lehr Bataillon XVII (22. Pz.Div.), the area of Mius, Russia, February, 1943.



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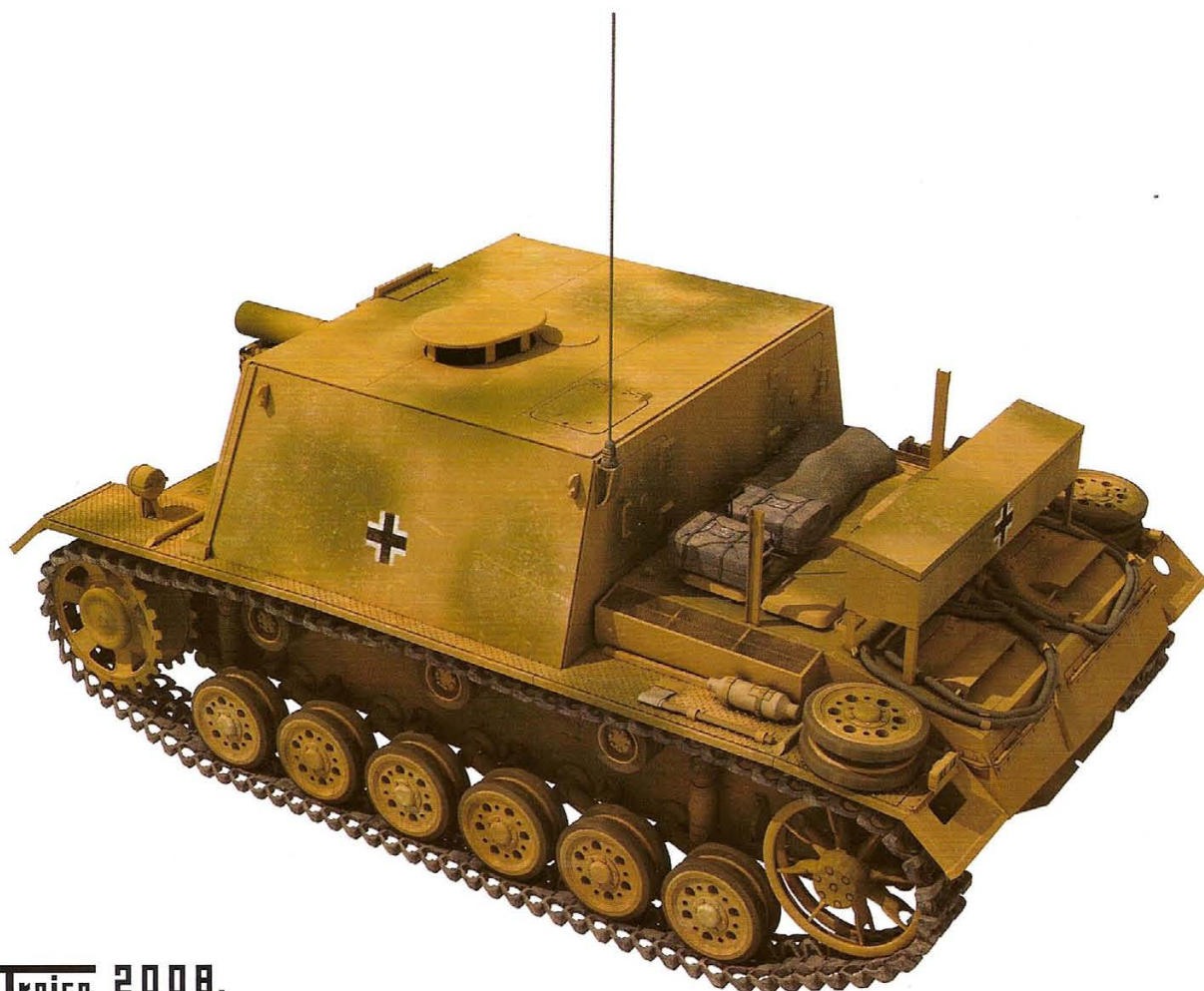


Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz, Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz-Batterie/ Pz. Rgt. 201 (23. Pz.Div.),
Russia, May, 1943.





**Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz, Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz-Batterie/ Pz. Rgt. 201 (23. Pz.Div.),
Russia, May, 1943.**





**Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz, Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz-Batterie/ Pz. Rgt. 201 (23. Pz.Div.),
Operation *Zitadelle*, the area of Kursk, Russia, July, 1943.**





**Sturm-Infanterietank, Sturm-Infanterietank-Batterie/ Pz. Rgt. 201 (23. Pz.Div.),
Operation *Zitadelle*, the area of Kursk, Russia, July, 1943.**



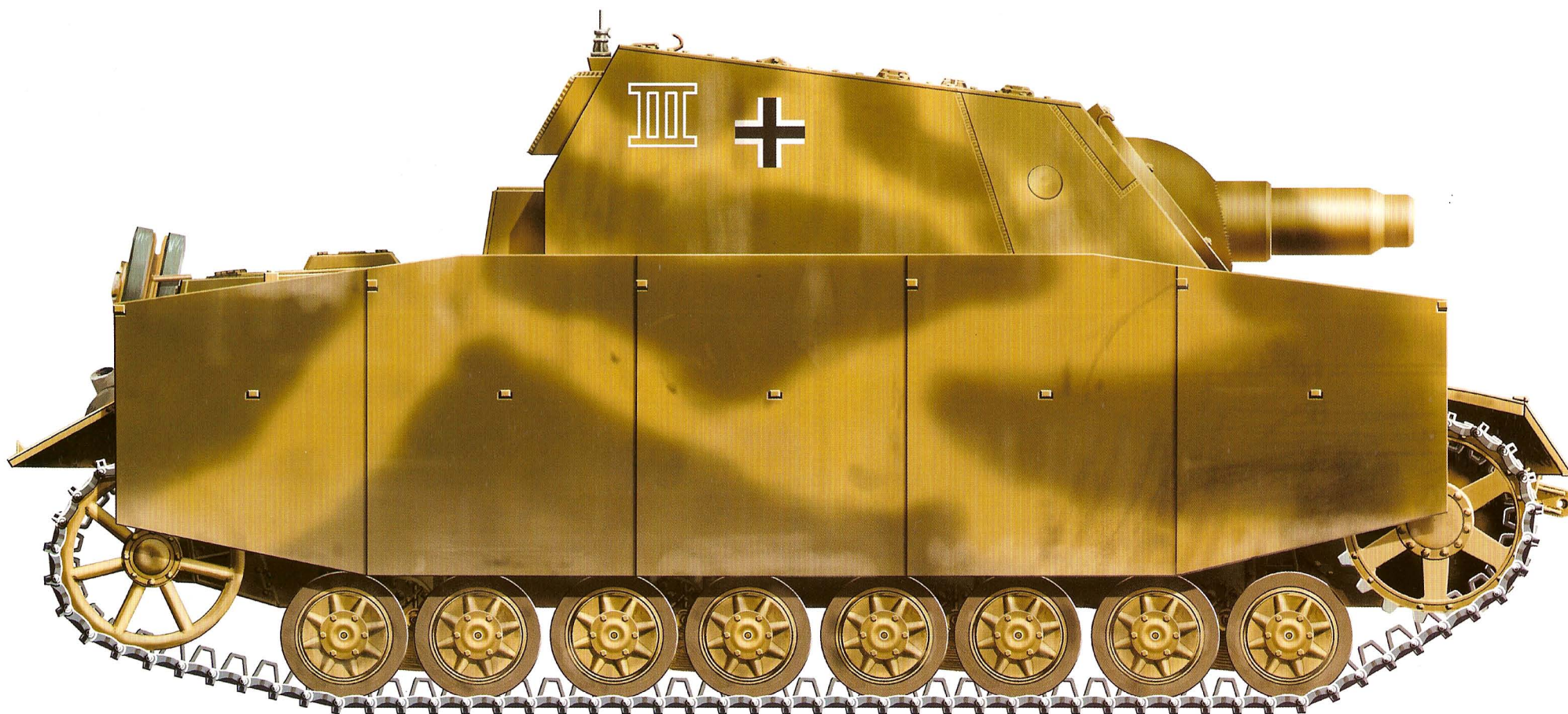
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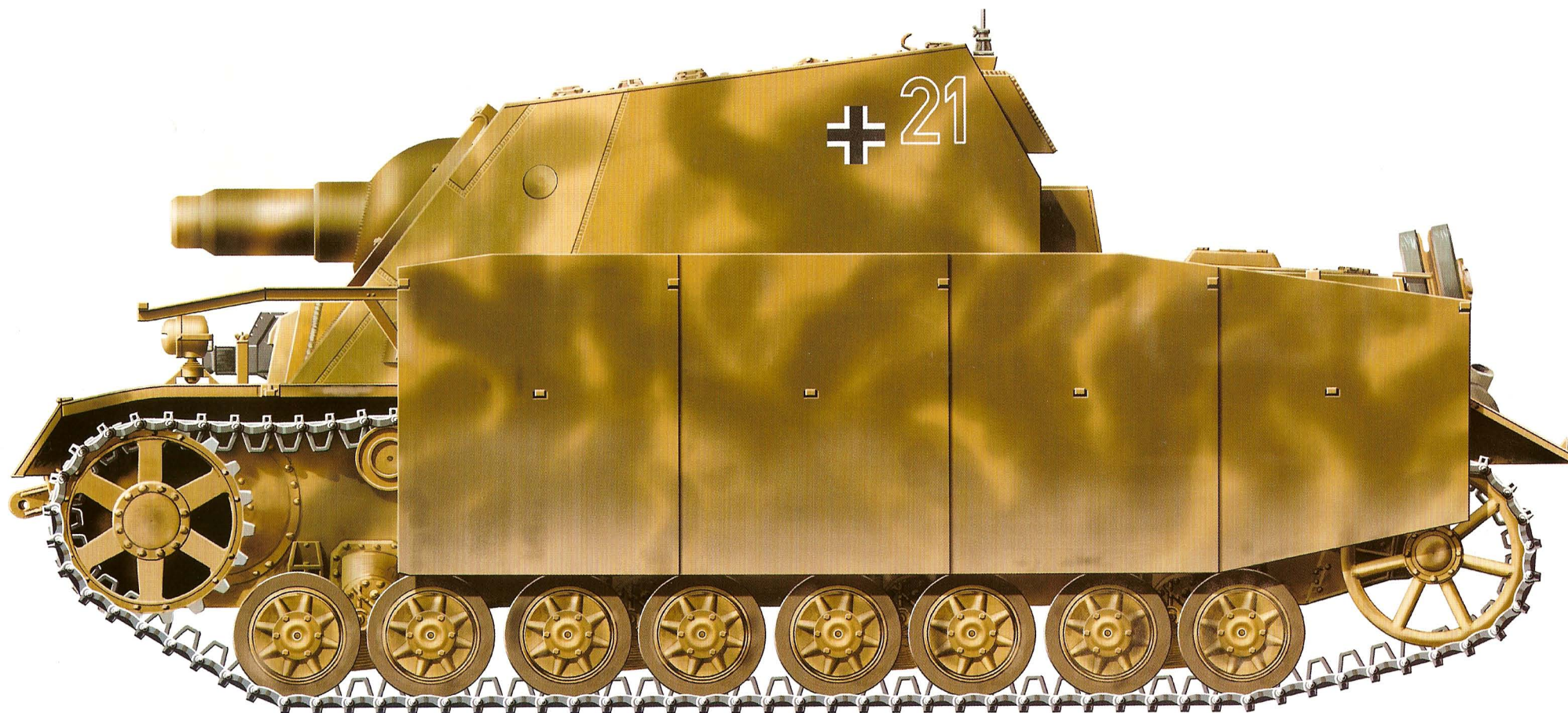
Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz, Sturm-Infanteriegeschütz-Batterie/ Pz. Rgt. 201 (23. Pz.Div.),
Operation *Zitadelle*, the area of Kursk, Russia, July, 1943.



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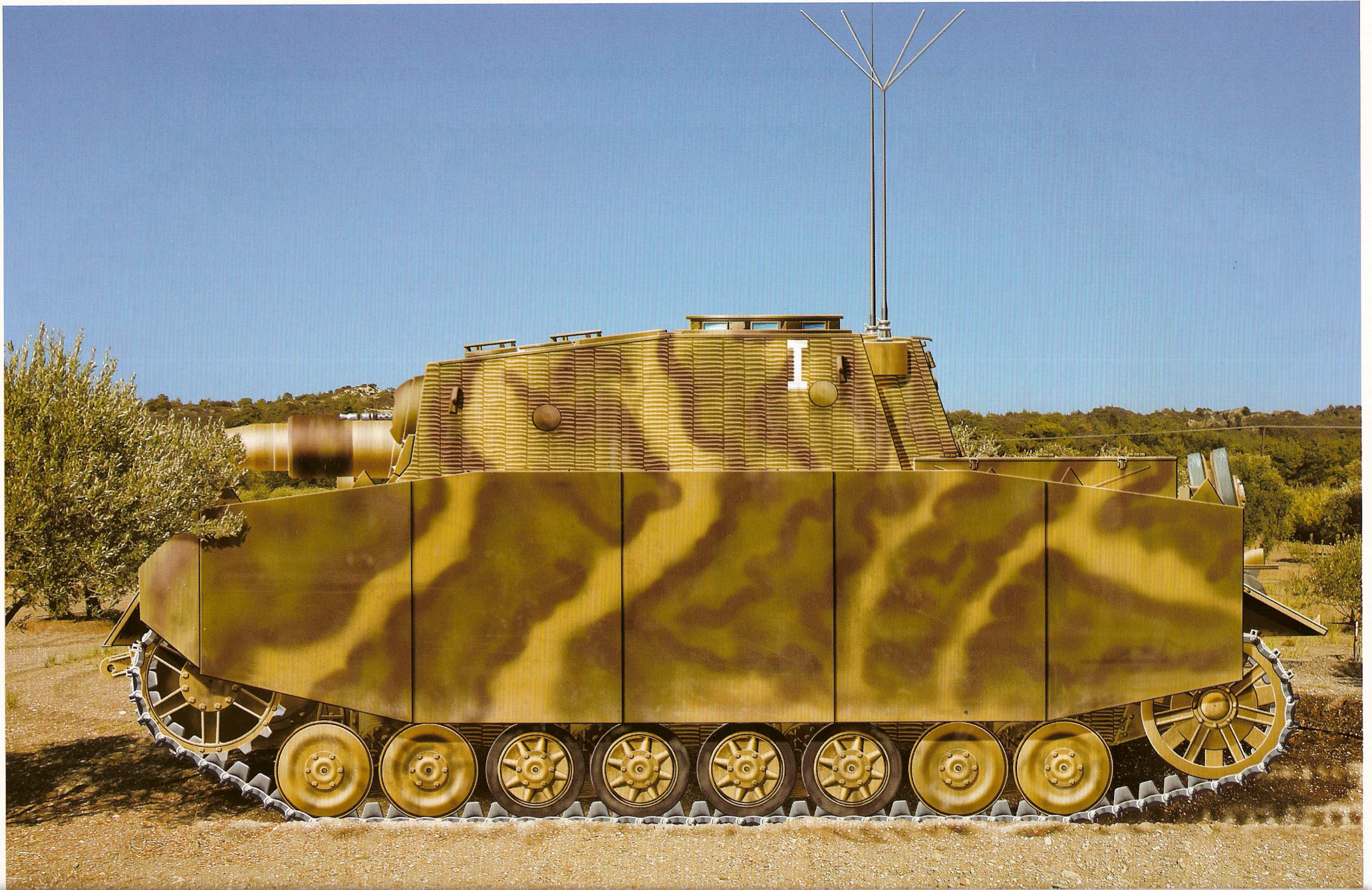
Sturmpanzer IV, Stab III./Pz.Jg.Rgt. 656, Operation *Zitadelle*, the area of Kursk, Russia, July, 1943.

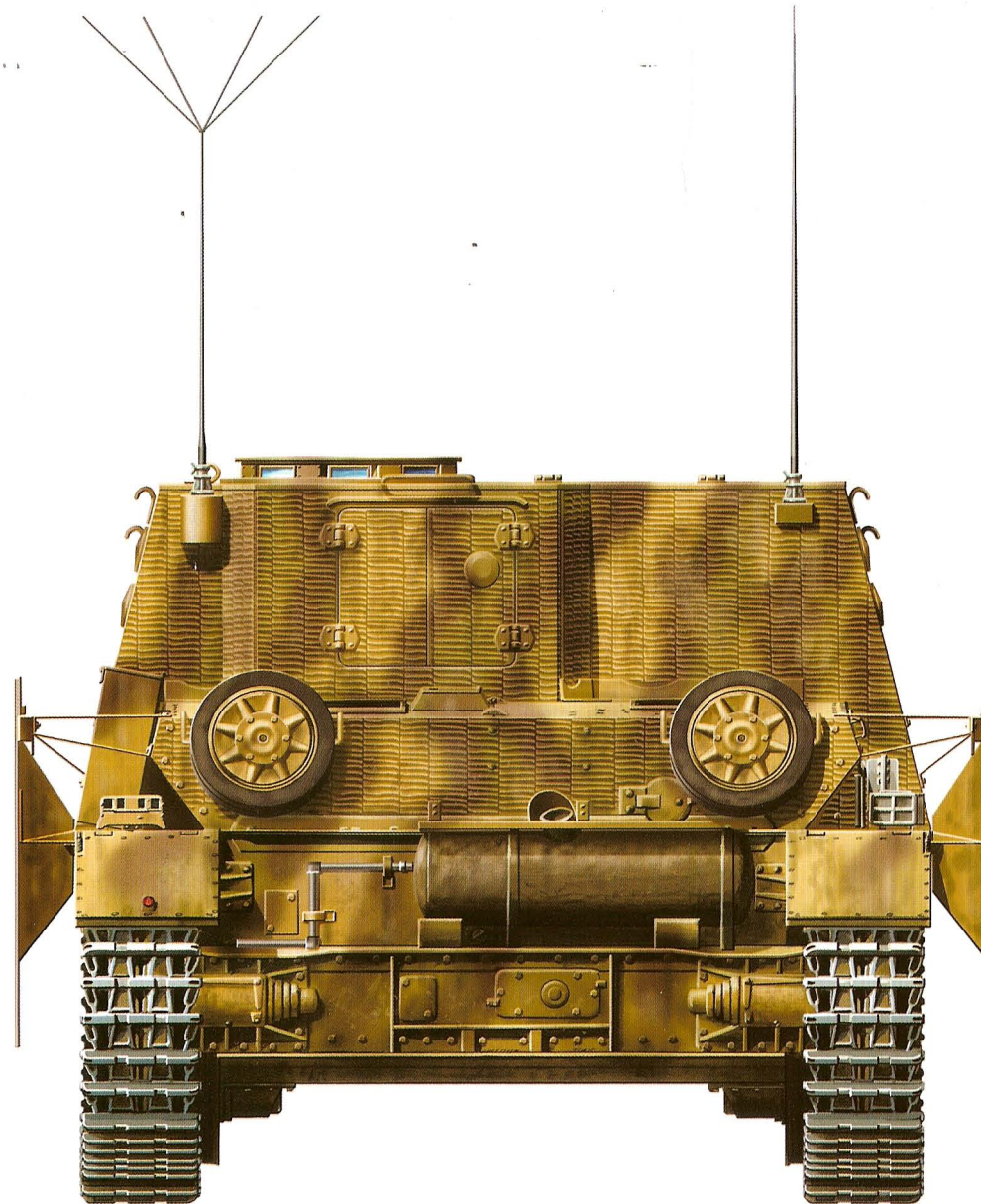
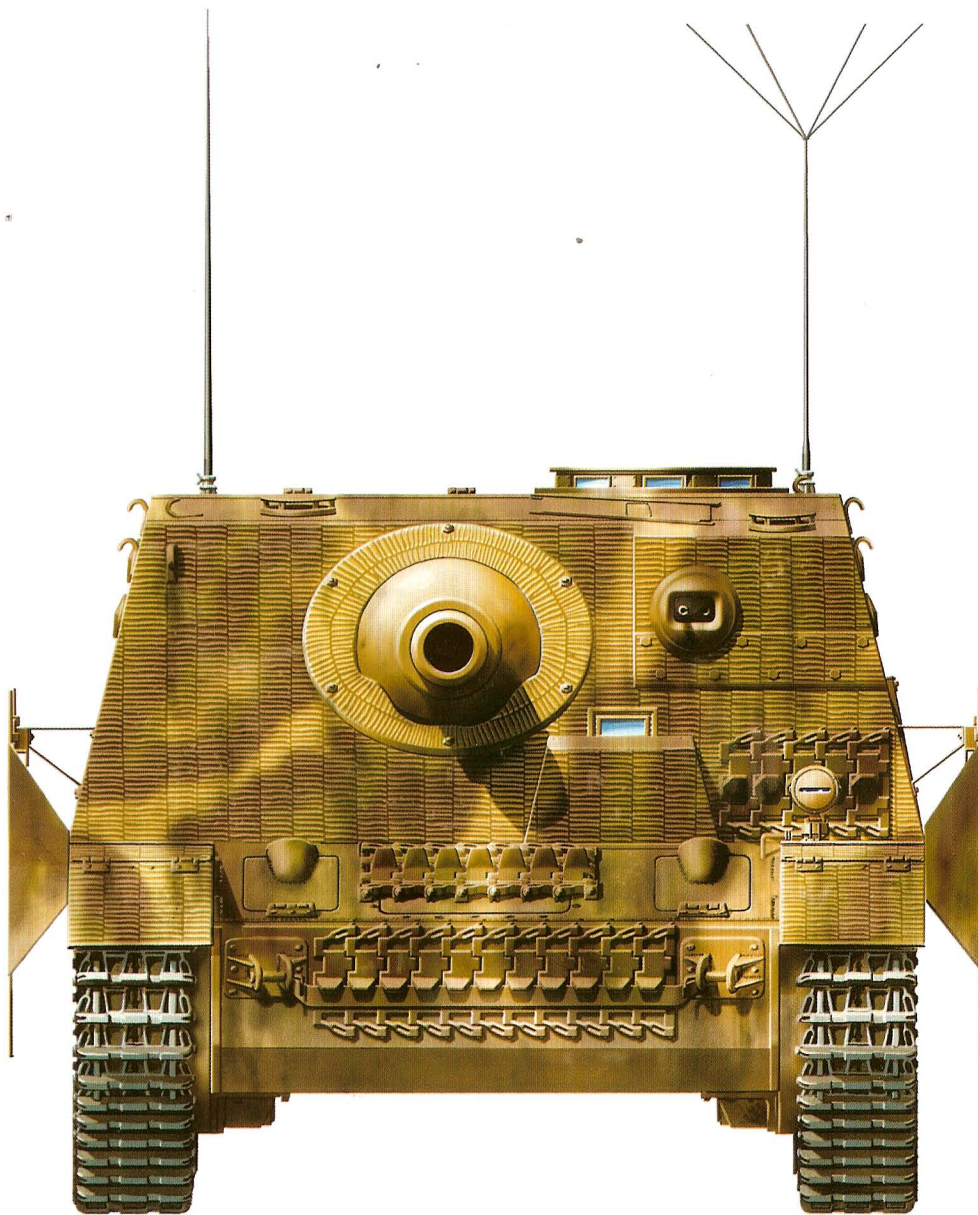


Sturmpanzer IV, III./Pz.Jg.Rgt. 656, Operation *Zitadelle*, the area of Kursk, Russia, July, 1943.

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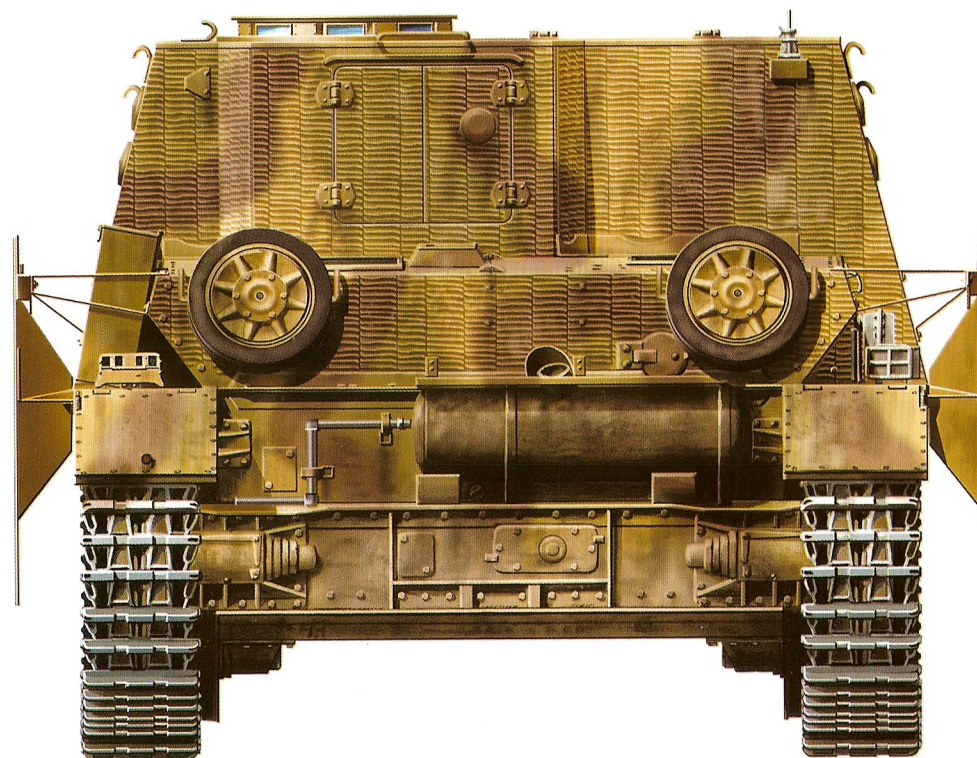
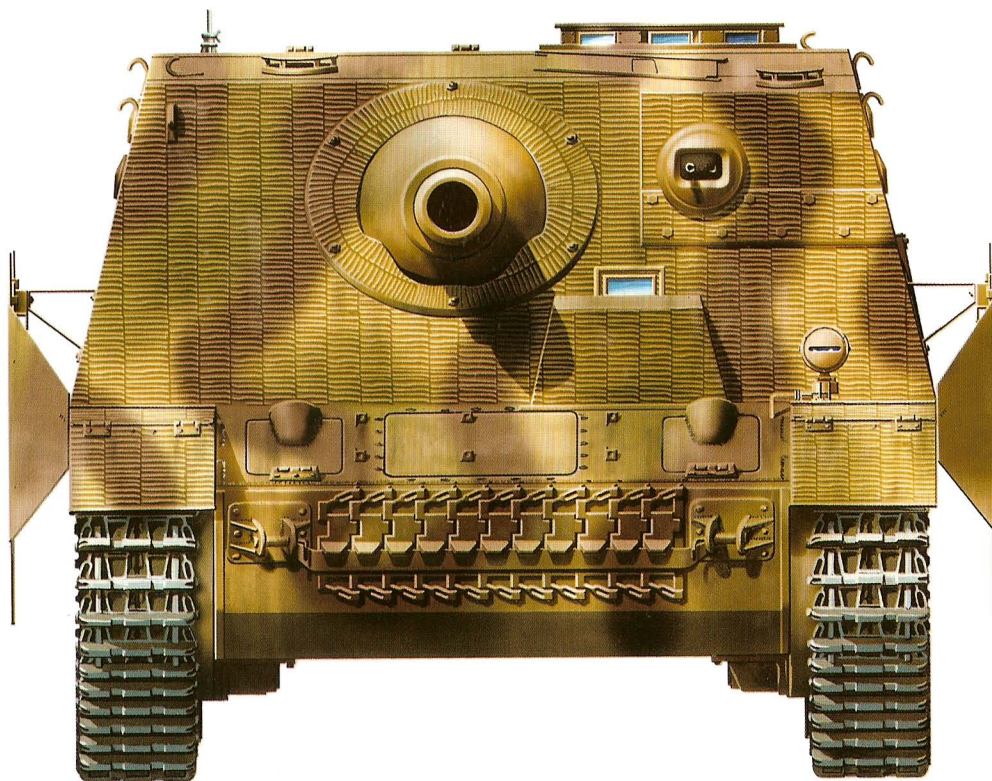


Sturmpfanz IV, Stab./Stupa. Abt. 216, Italy, 1944.

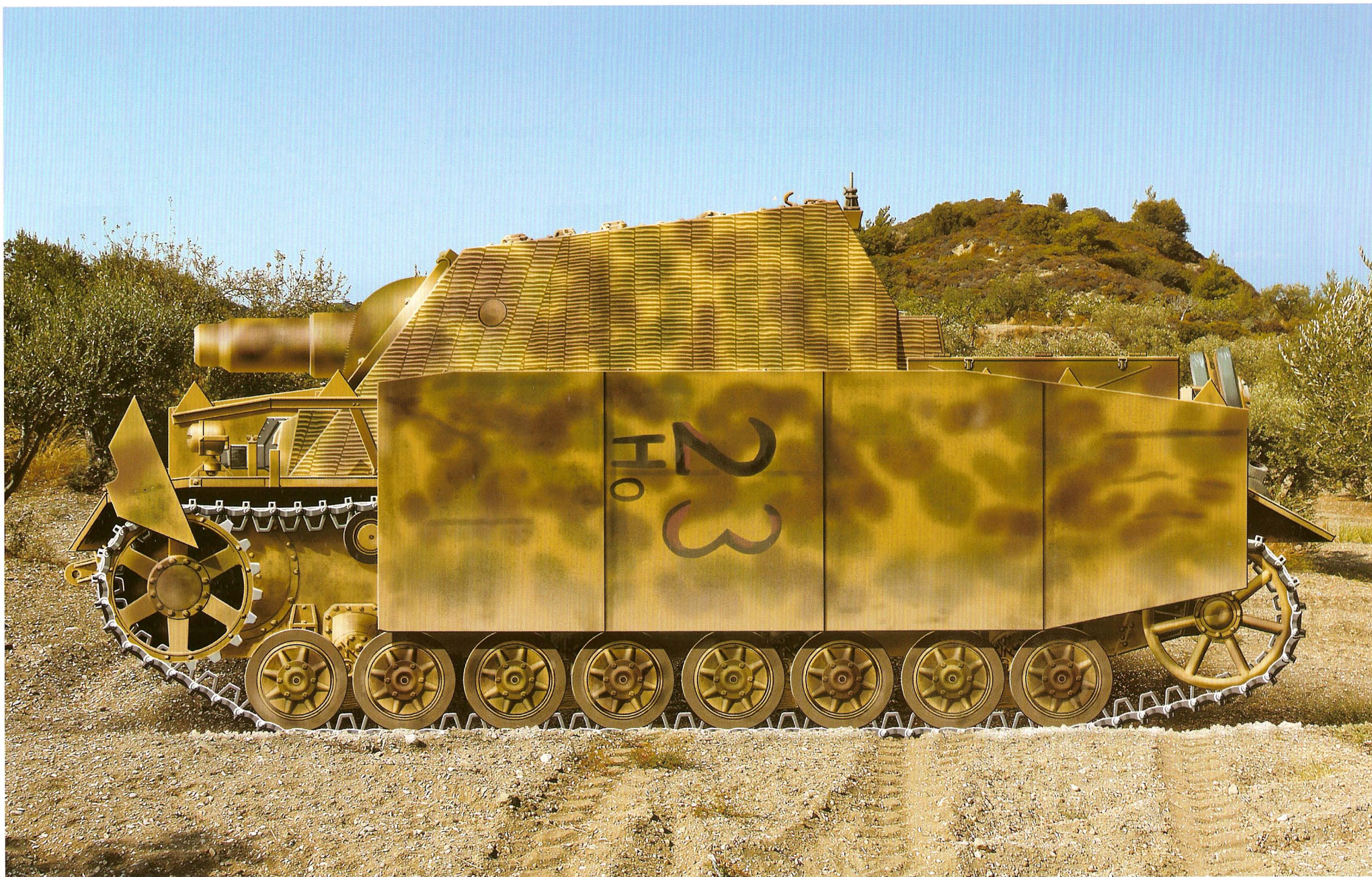
Халхет 2007



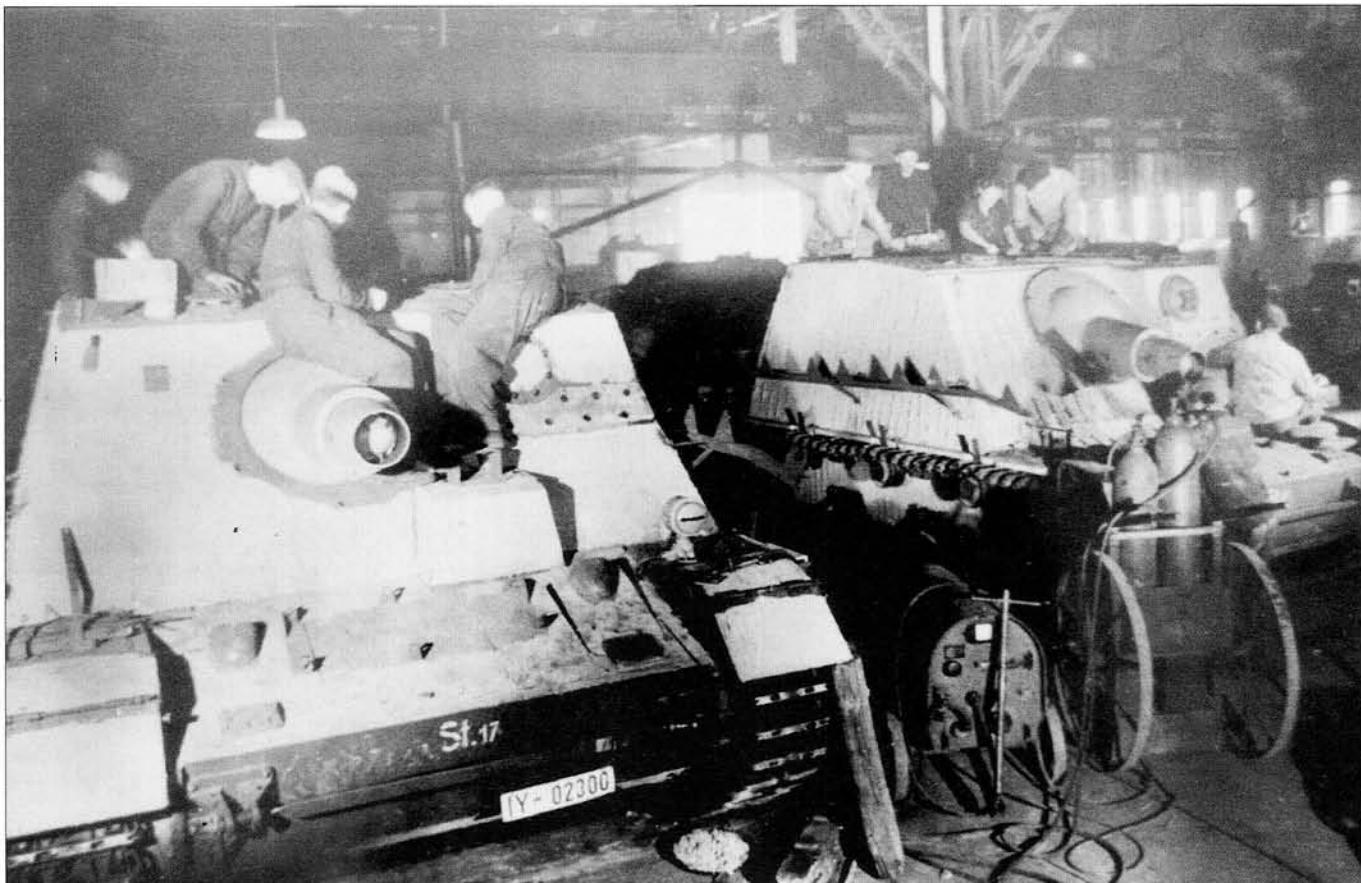
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 216, Italy, 1944.



Sturmpfanz IV, Stupa. Abt. 216, Italy, 1944.



Sturmpanzers IV, Stupa. Abt. 216, Italy, May, 1944.



Montage der der Ausführung IV des Sturmpanzers bei den Deutschen Eisenwerken in Duisburg. • Montage der der Ausführung IV des Sturmpanzers bei den Deutschen Eisenwerken in Duisburg.

A coat of *Zimmerit* was applied at the factory. On the second vehicle, the MG 34 has not been mounted in its ball mount.
 • Die Zimmeritbeschichtung ist bereits werksseitig angebracht. Beim zweiten Fahrzeug ist das MG 34 in der Kugellafette noch nicht eingebaut.





Outside, the vehicles were sprayed with a uniform coat of sand-yellow camouflage. • Im Außengelände wird einheitlich der sandgelbe Grundtarnanstrich aufgesprüht.

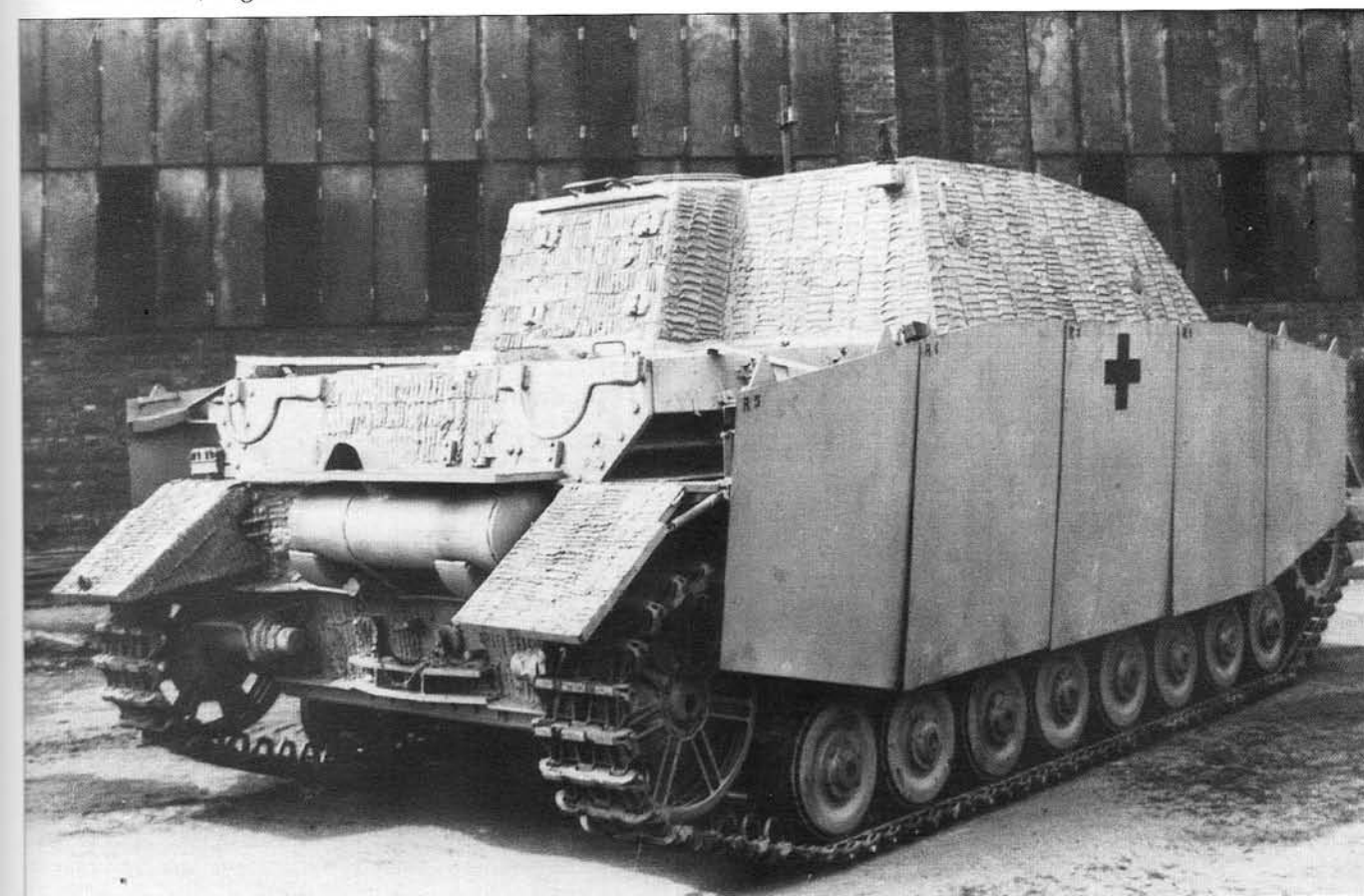
The late-style cast iron idler wheel was mounted. Basic issue items, such as tools, were provided later on by the Army Procurement Agency. • Als Heckrad wurde das späte gusseiserne Modell montiert. Sonstige Ausrüstungsgegenstände, wie das Werkzeug etc. wurden erst vom Heereszeugamt befestigt.

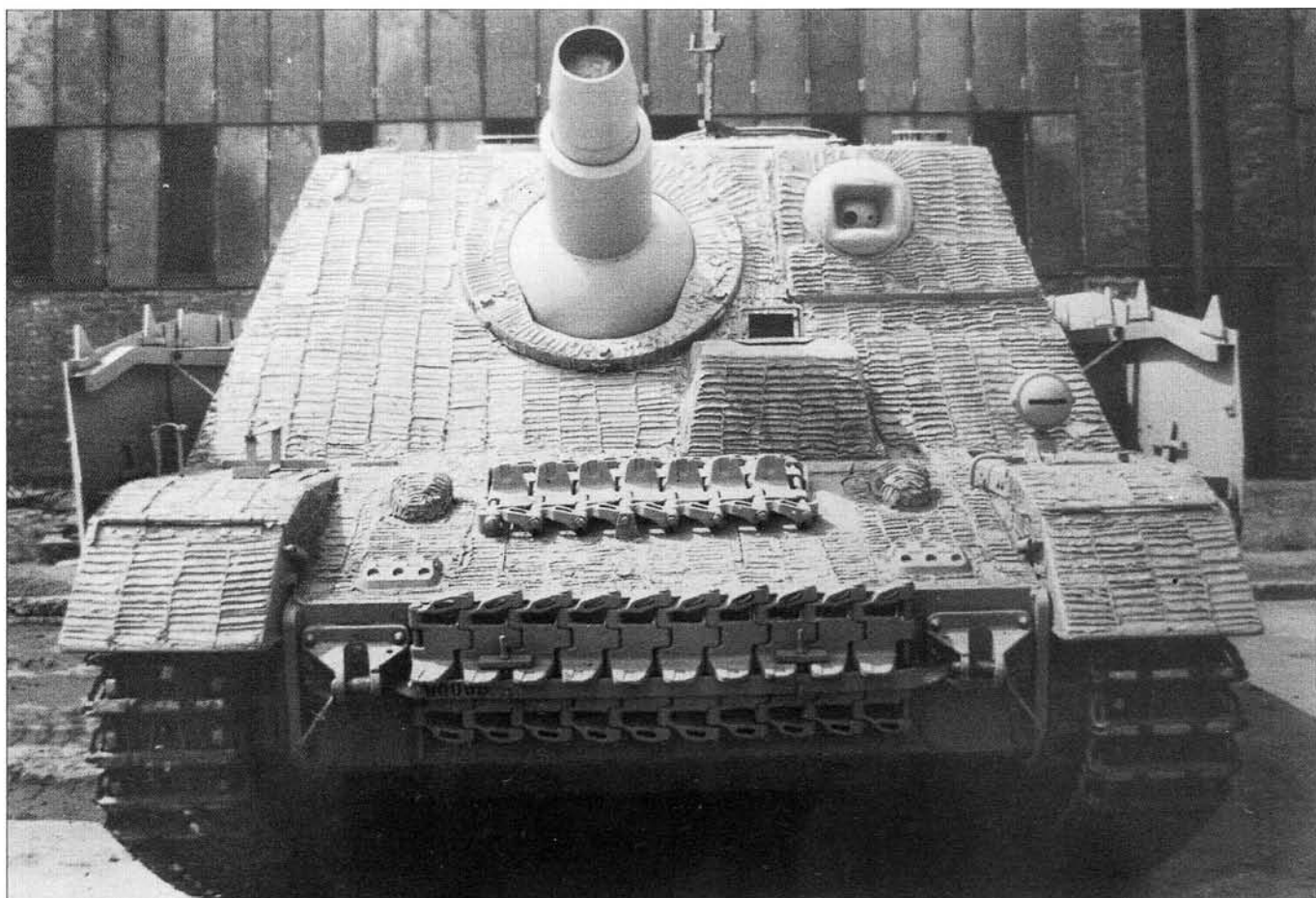




With this production batch, the factory installed eight steel roadwheels per side. • Bei dieser Serie wurden bereits werksseitig acht Stahllaufrollen pro Seite montiert

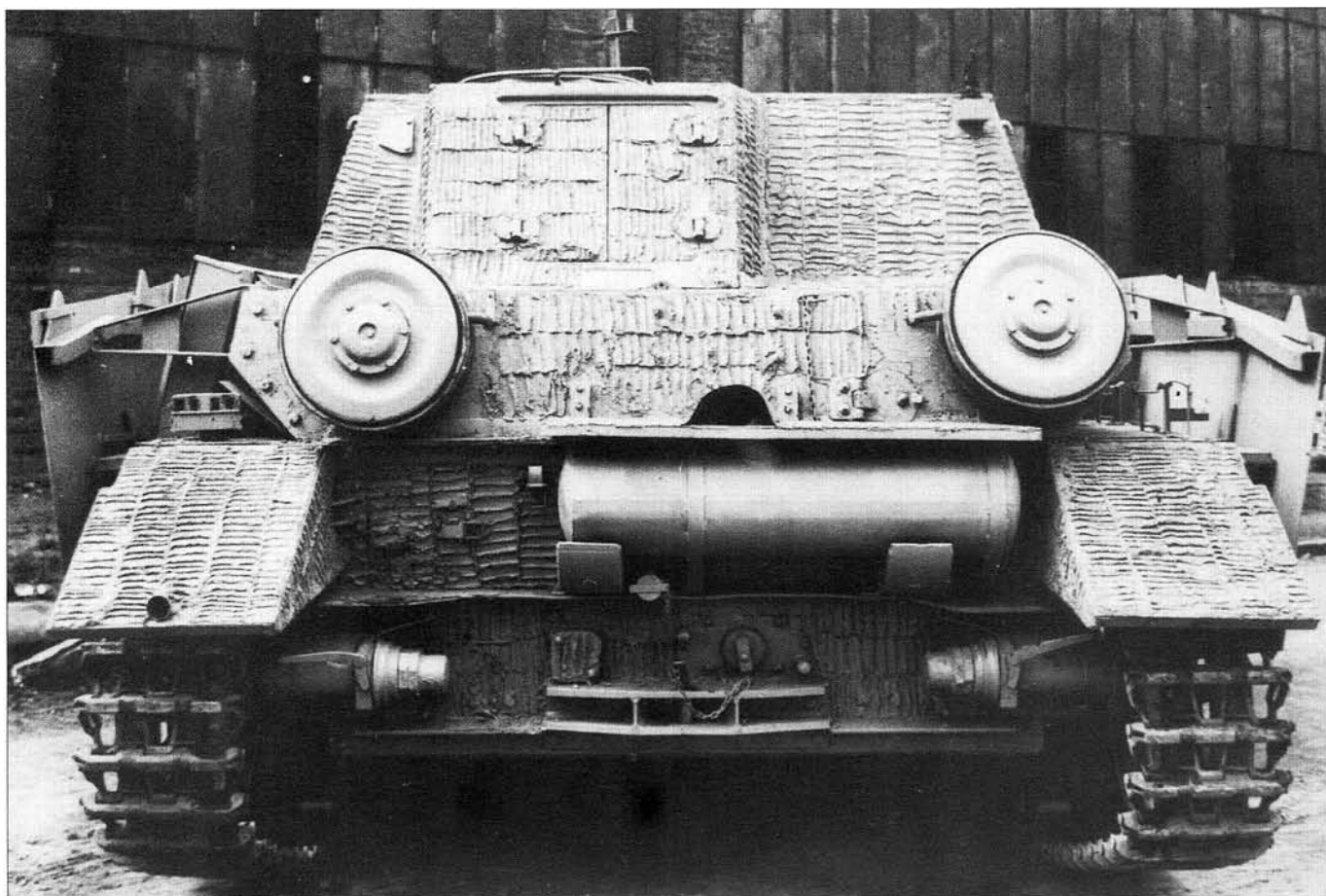
Following that, the sideskirts were mounted and the necessary markings and insignia, such as the *Balkenkreuz*, were added.
• Danach wurden die Schürzen am Fahrzeug befestigt und die notwendigen Beschriftungen und Kennzeichnungen, wie das Balkenkreuz, angebracht

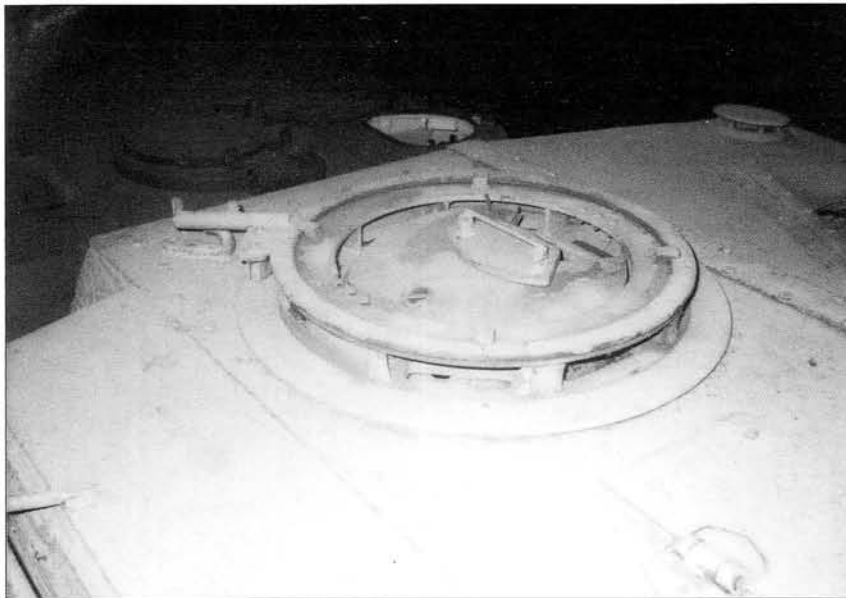
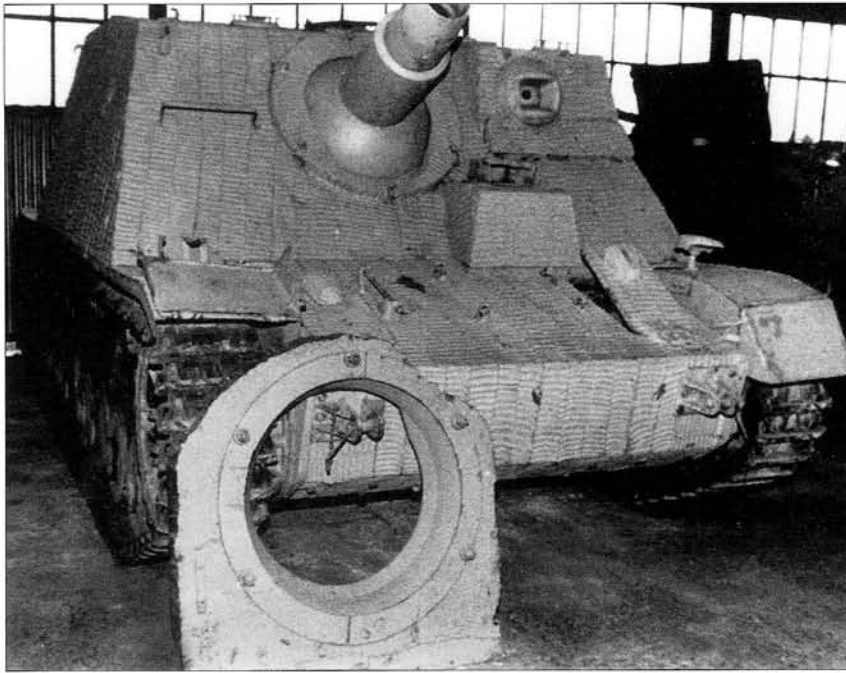




The chassis number 90009 has been added to the track-mounting fixture on the front of the hull. • An der Kettenhalterung am Fahrzeugbug ist die Fahrgestellnummer "90009" aufgemalt

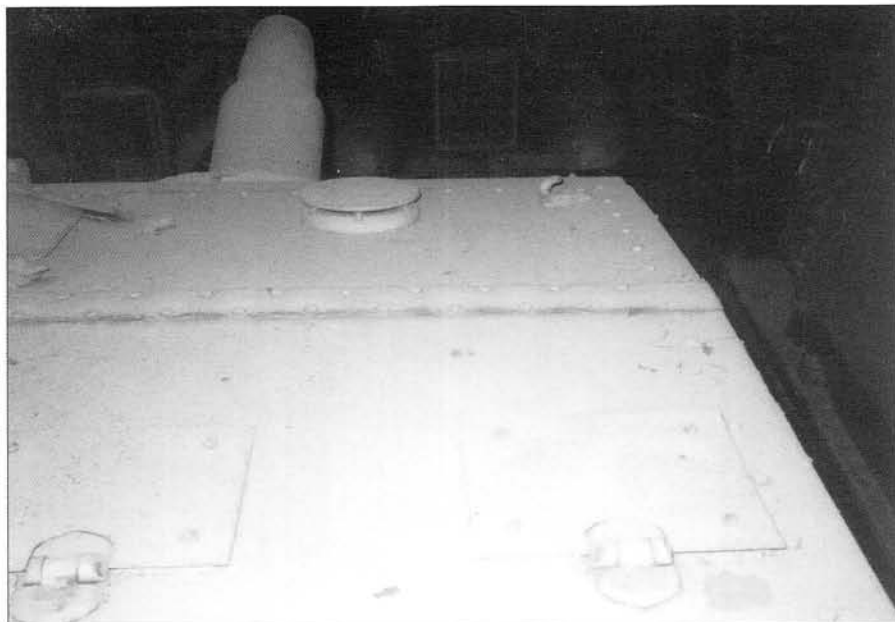
Rear view of the assault tank. Later on, there were some vehicles with the late-style vertical exhaust stacks. • Rückansicht des Sturmpanzer. Später gab es auch einige Fahrzeuge mit den späten vertikalen Ausufftöpfen

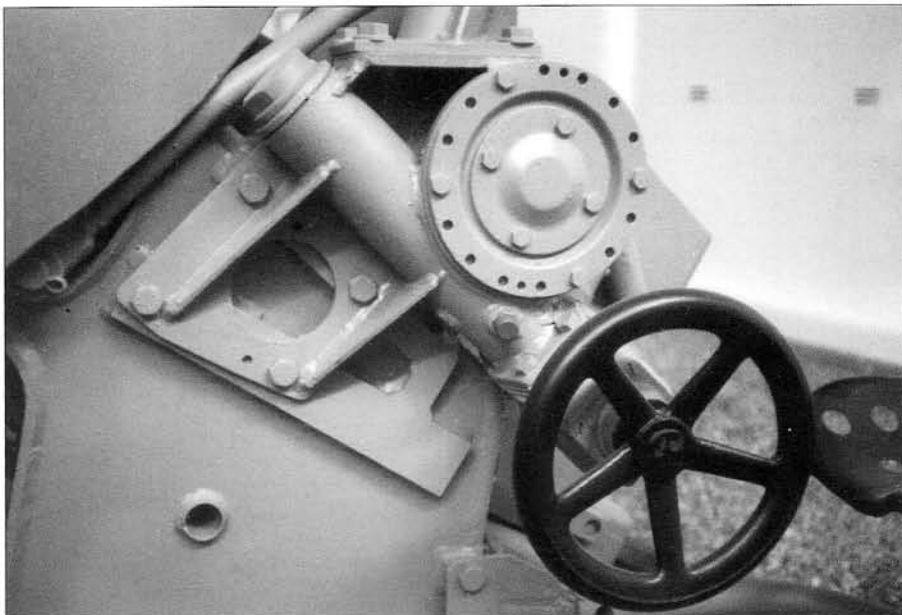
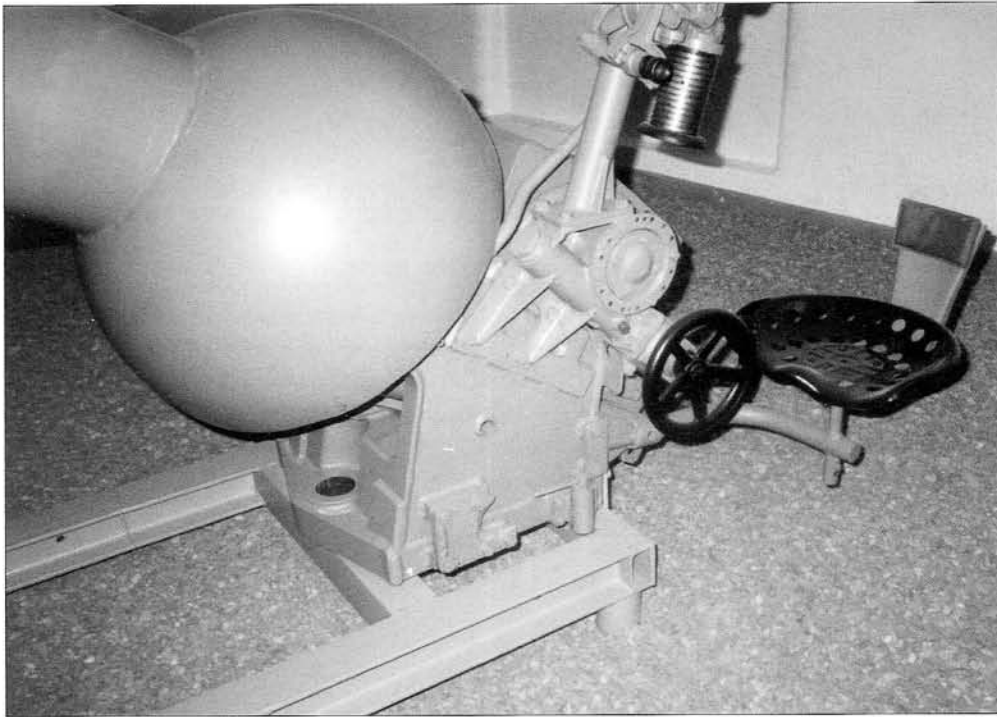
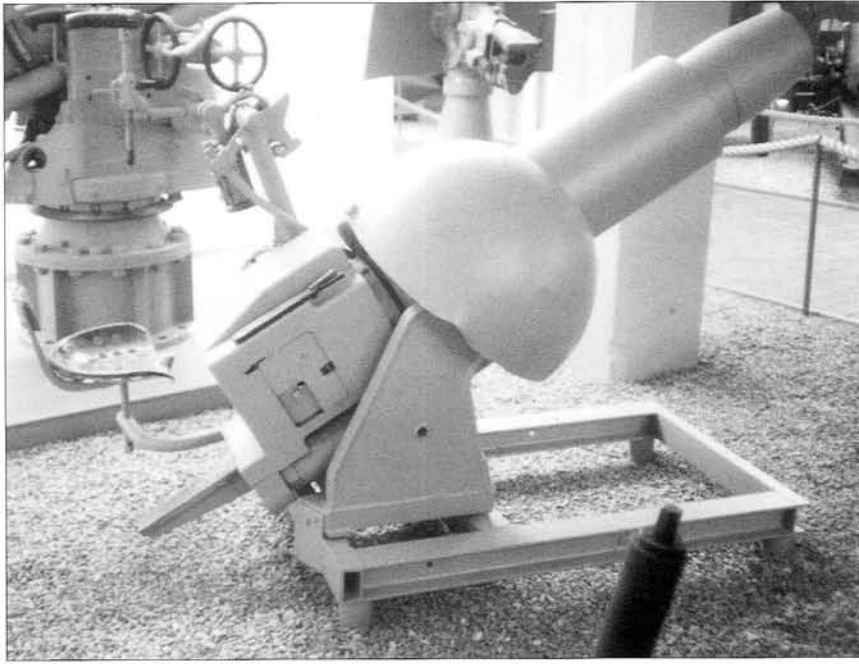




Sturmpanzer IV - Ausf. IV - 4.Serie (Saumur, France) and the next 2 pages • und weitere 2 Seiten







Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216 / III./schweres Panzerjäger-Regiment 656

The first assault tank formation, *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216*, was ordered formed at the end of April 1943. The battalion consisted of a headquarters, a headquarters battery, three line batteries and a maintenance platoon. According to the table of organization and equipment in effect at the time, the battalion had a total of 45 assault tanks.

At the beginning of May, all of the personnel of the battalion were sent to Amiens, where intensive training was conducted on the assault tanks after they were issued. At that time, the battalion temporarily became the *III./schweres Panzerjäger-Regiment 656*, a regiment formed primarily for the upcoming *Unternehmen Zitadelle*. The first two battalions in the regiment had likewise been separate battalions, however, they were equipped with the *Ferdinand* tank destroyer.⁵ On 10 June 1943, the battalion was transported to the area of operations of *Heeresgruppe Mitte*. At the end of the same month, the battalion moved to an assembly area not far from the Orel-Kursk rail line, from which it moved out to attack on 5 July for *Operation Zitadelle*. The battalion was in that sector for all of July, before it was moved back to a rest position at Briansk with its remaining 18 operation assault tanks at the beginning of August. At the end of August, the battalion was moved to Dnjepropetrowsk. At Dnjepropetrowsk, the necessary maintenance and repair work was done on the assault tanks in the nearby tank factory at Tritosnaja. Starting on 10 September, the battalion was constantly fighting in the bridgehead at Saporoshe, which had to be abandoned on 15 October.

Following the fighting during the retreat, *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216* went to Nikopol where, starting in the middle of November, it was involved in the defensive fighting for the bridgehead there, along with the *Ferdinands* of *schwere Panzerjäger-Abteilung 653*.

As a result of the large number of vehicles needing repair, both battalions were pulled out of the line in December 1943 and sent back to the Army depot in Vienna, where the armored vehicles were given a general overhaul. As a result of the Allied landings at Anzio and Nettuno at the end of January 1944, the battalion, which had regained its status as a separate battalion, was expeditiously dispatched to Italy to counterattack the beachhead. Together with the *Tigers* of *schwere Panzer-Abteilung 508* and the *Panthers* of *Panzer-Regiment 26* (26. *Panzer-Division*), the battalion was in combat starting in the middle of February with its 28 assault tanks.

Following that round of fighting, the battalion was moved to the area around Pisa where, at the end of May, it was sent back in the direction of Rome. It was possible to slow down the Allied breakthrough east of the city for a short while. This was followed by constant defensive fighting, interrupted by short periods of maintenance.

At that time, the battalion also had a 4th Battery (established in the spring of 1944), however, it was detached from the formation and used to form the nucleus of *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 219*.

At the end of 1944, *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216* was in the Bologna area and, along with other German formations, helped slow down the breakthrough of the Allied forces into the Po Valley.

When the Allied advance came to a standstill in the winter, the time was used by the formations to refit and reorganize. At the beginning of April 1945, the Allies started their large offensive in the Po Valley. At that time, the battalion still had 42 operational assault tanks, however, all of them were lost on the way to Lake Garda or had to be blown up.

See Karlheinz Münch, *Combat History of schwere Panzerjäger-Abteilung 653* (Winnipeg: JJ Fedorowicz Publishing, 1997) and Karlheinz Münch, *Combat History of schwere Panzerjäger-Abteilung 654* (Winnipeg: JJ Fedorowicz Publishing, 2002) for more information on the two other battalions of the regiment.

In May 1943, the factory-new assault tanks were issued to *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216* in the Amiens area. The mounting brackets for the sideskirts are not yet present on the vehicles. • Im Mai 1943 werden die fabrikneuen Sturmpanzer der im Raum Amiens liegenden Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216 zugeführt. An den Fahrzeugen befinden sich noch keine Halterungen für die Schürzen





At the beginning of Operation „Zitadelle“, two assault tanks follow a Panzer III of Funklenkkompanie 313. • Zu Beginn der Operation Zitadelle folgen zwei Sturmpanzer einem Pz.Kpfw. III der Funklenkkompanie 313.

An assault tank converted from the E model of the Panzer IV. Note the air intakes of a Panzer III, which were screwed on to the old steering brake maintenance access panels. • Ein auf Basis eines Pz.Kpfw.IV Ausf. E aufgebauter Sturmpanzer. Man beachte die Lufteinlässe des Pz.Kpfw. III, die auf den alten Lenkbremsen-Wartungsluken angeschraubt sind.





A tarpaulin has been placed over the gun. • Um das Geschütz ist eine Abdeckplane angebracht.



A proud crew! Note the *Balkenkreuz* and the turret numerals. • Stolz Besatzung! Man beachte das Balkenkreuz und die Turmnummer.



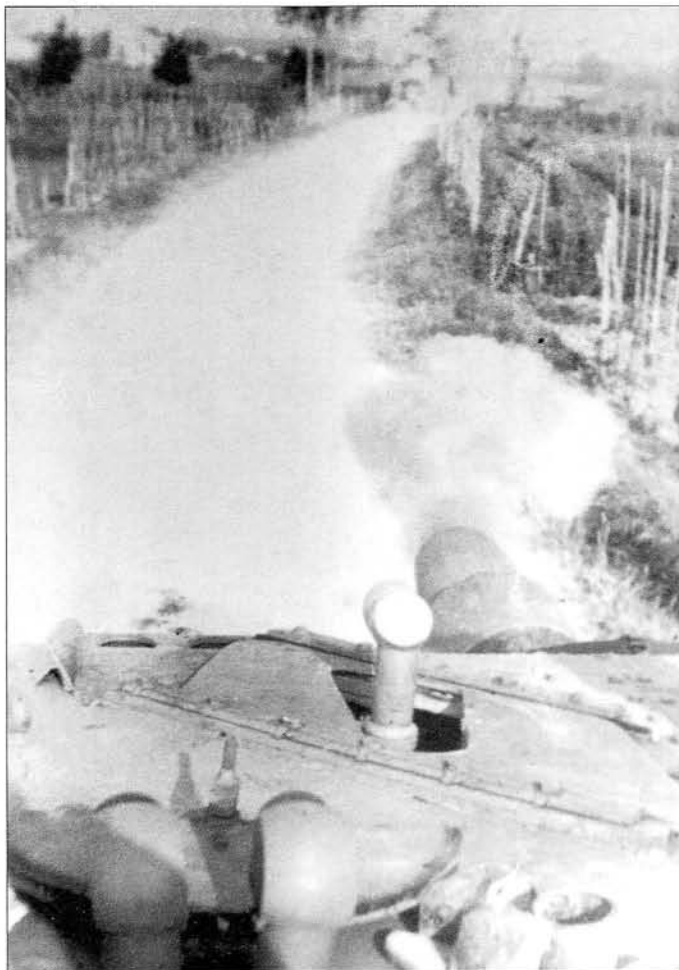
In an assembly area. The vehicles do not have a coating of *Zimmerit* yet. In this instance, these vehicles also have the *Panzer III*-style air intakes. • In Bereitstellung. Die Fahrzeuge haben noch keinen Zimmeritanstrich. Auch hier sind auf den Lenkbremsen-Wartungsluken Pz.Kpfw. III Lufteinlässe montiert.



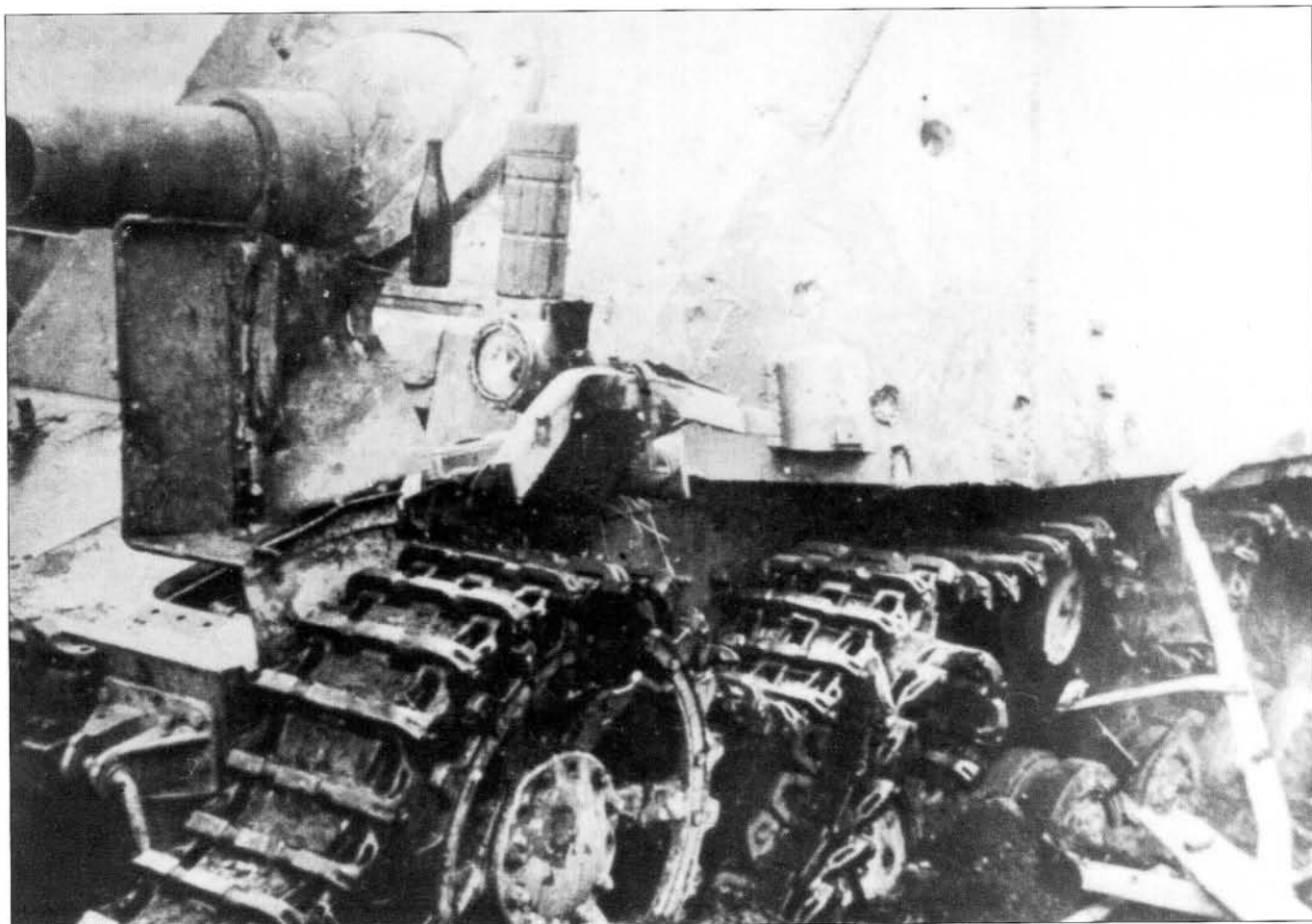
Supplemental armor plate has been added to the front of the hull. • Am Wannenbug ist zur Verstärkung eine Panzerplatte angebracht.



A total loss. This assault tank was destroyed on the right-hand side by an artillery round. • Totalschaden. Der Sturmpanzer wurde durch einen Artillerietreffer auf der rechten Aufbauseite zerstört.



The gun commander observes the progress of the fighting through a scissors scope. The vehicle's gun optics can be seen in front of it. • Der Kommandant beobachtet mit dem Scherenfernrohr das Kampfgeschehen. Davor ist das Selbstfahrlafetten-Zielfernrohr zu erkennen.



Several hits in the running gear and the superstructure have rendered this assault tank combat ineffective. • Mehrere Treffer am Laufwerk und im Aufbaubereich haben diesen Sturmpanzer außer Gefecht gesetzt.

Assault tank „52“ supports the advancing *Ferdinande* at Kursk. • Der Sturmpanzer „52“ unterstützt beim Kursk die vorrückenden Jagdpanzer „Ferdinand“.





This *Sturmpanzer III* belongs to the battalion headquarters. • Der Sturmpanzer "III" gehört zum Abteilungsstab.

At Kursk, many assault tanks were knocked out by Soviet antitank guns. • Viele Sturmpanzer wurden bei Kursk durch sowjetische PaK ausgeschaltet.





This assault tank was later recovered by the Soviets and displayed in Moscow as a spoil of war. • Dieser Sturmpanzer wurde später von den sowjetischen Truppen geborgen und in Moskau als Kriegsbeute ausgestellt.

An assault tank slowly follows the battalion commander, Major Kahl. • Langsam folgt ein Sturmpanzer dem Abteilungskommandeur, Major Kahl.





Thanks to the presence of the accompanying assault tanks, this vehicle convoy feels safer. • Die Fahrzeugkolonne fühlt sich durch den begleitenden Sturmpanzer sicher.

Well camouflaged in an ambush position. • Gut getarnt in Lauerstellung.





A provisional rain guard has been affixed above the *Fahrersehklappe 80* of this assault tank. • Über der Fahrersehklappe 80 dieses Sturmpanzers ist ein provisorischer Regenschutz befestigt.



Assault tanks, *Panthers*, and other armored vehicles have assembled for a mission in an Italian village. • In einem italienischen Dorf sind Sturmpanzer, "Panther" und weitere Panzerkampfwagen in Bereitstellung gegangen.





A well-camouflaged assault tank advances! • Ein gut getarnter Sturmpanzer rollt vor!.

After damage to the differentials, the drive sprocket was completely removed and the track "detoured". Note the additional filter system. • Nach einem Schaden im Vorgelege, wird der Antrieb vollständig ausgebaut und die Kette "umgelenkt"- Man beachte die zusätzliche Filteranlage.





A Panzer III ammunition carrier follows an assault tank. • Ein Munitionspanzer III folgt einem Sturmpanzer.

A disabled assault tank is towed away. And next page. • Ein ausgefallener Sturmpanzer wird abgeschleppt end weitere Seite.



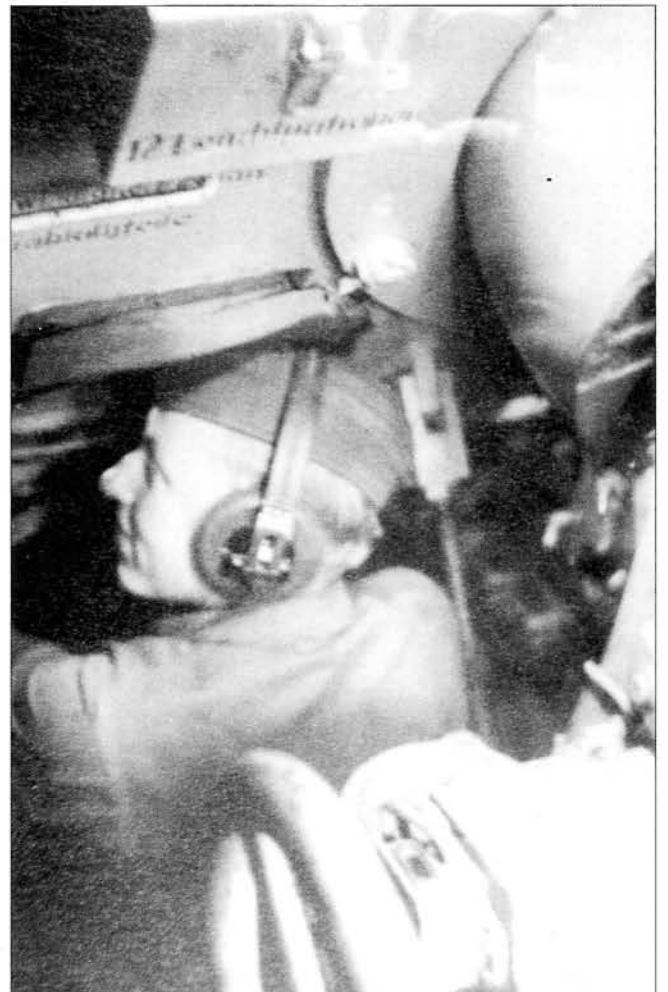
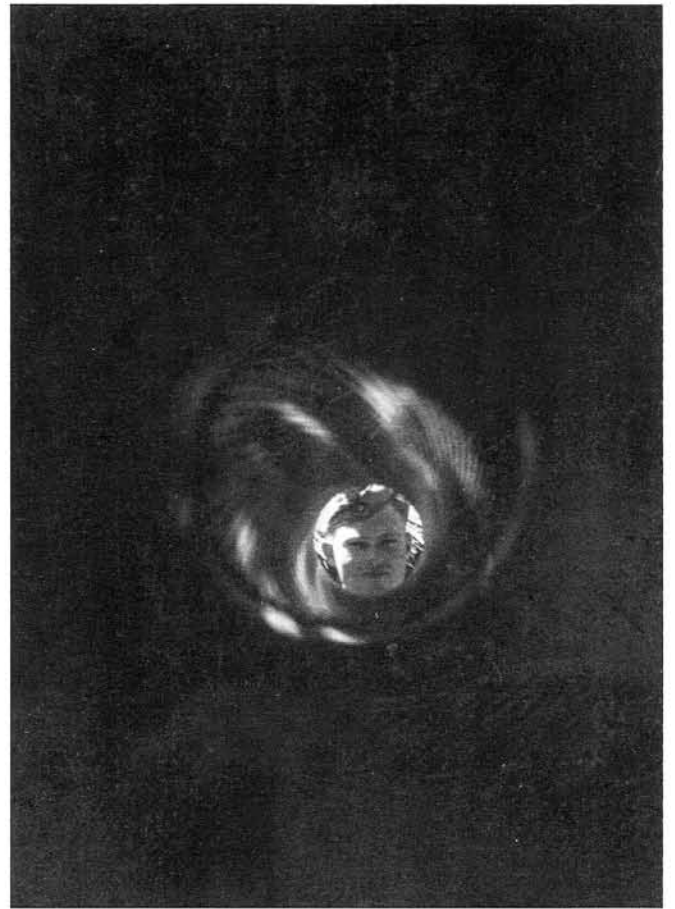


A Sturmpanzer IV, Italy, 1944. and the next 5 pages • Sturmpanzer IV in Italien, 1944. und weitere 5 Seiten.















A short break during rearming. Several 15-centimeter rounds are already lying on the rear deck. • Kurze Pause beim Aufmunitionieren. Auf dem Motorraum liegen bereits mehrere 15cm Granaten.



Souvenir photo. This photograph demonstrates the large size of the round. • Erinnerungsfoto. Diese Aufnahme verdeutlicht die Größe des Geschosses.



The crew awaits orders. • Die Besatzung wartet auf den Einsatzbefehl.

After the new assault tanks were issued, they were thoroughly tested. • Nach der Zuführung neuer Sturmpanzer werden diese ausführlich getestet.





A late version of the vehicle in Italy. • Ein späte Ausführung mit aufgesessener Besatzung in Italien.

One way to catch a ride. • Eine außergewöhnliche Mitfahrgelegenheit.



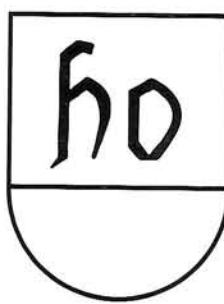


An imposing view of this „heavyweight“. • Ein imposanter Anblick dieses „schwergewichtigen“ Panzer.

Sturmpanzer Abt. 216



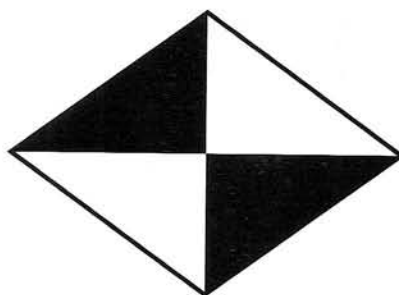
12.1943 - 08.1944



09.1944 - 03.1945



03-05.1945



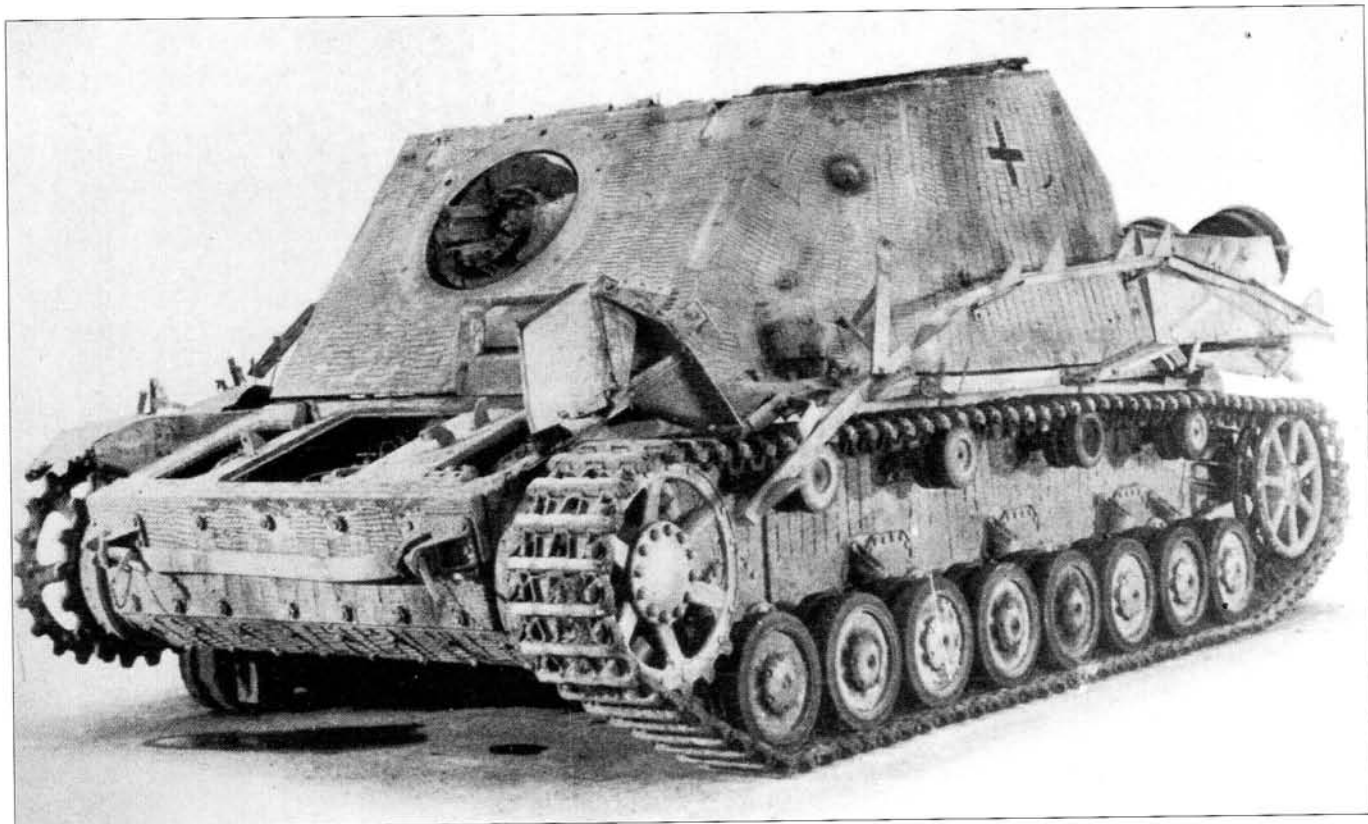
03-05.1945

 red

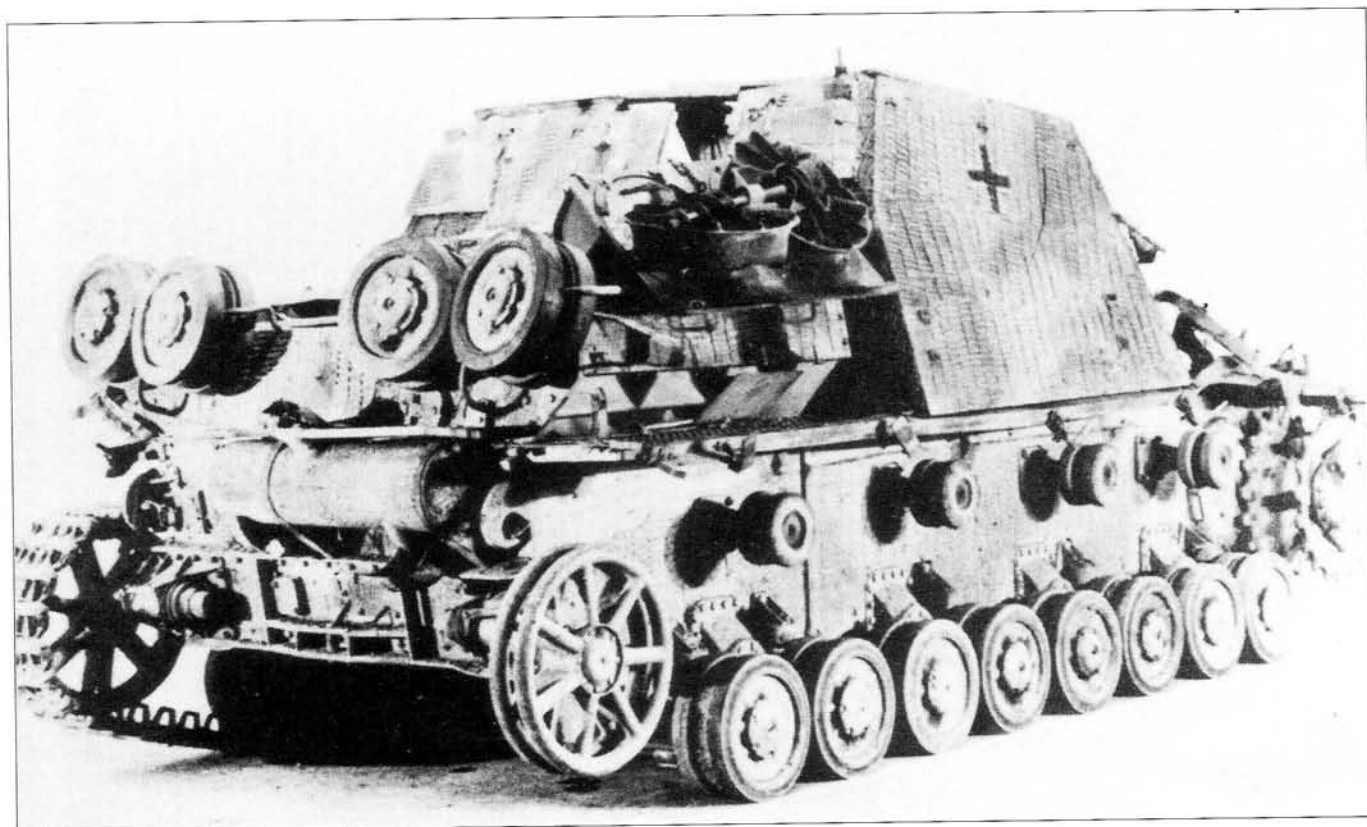
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An assault tank of the battalion headquarters—tactical number „I“—moves forward. The vehicle commander is assessing the situation. • Die Nummer "I" des Abteilungsstabes rückt vor. Der Kommandant macht sich ein Bild der Lage.

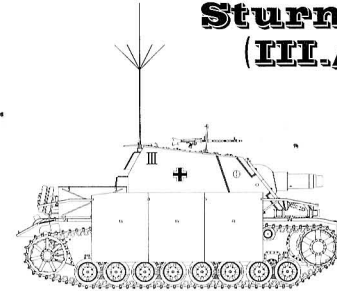
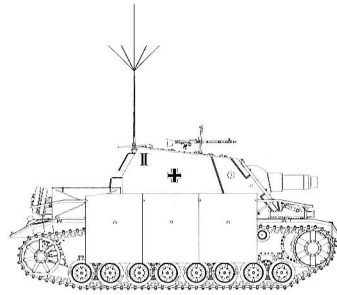
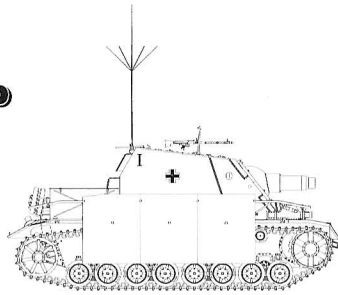


The British were able to recover a damaged assault tank in Italy. • Die Briten konnten in Italien einen beschädigten Sturmpanzer bergen

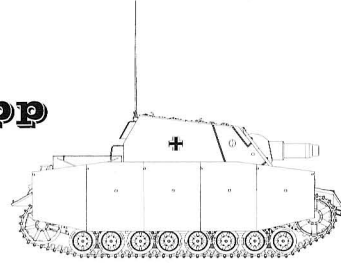


Sturmpanzer Abt. 216
(III./Pz.Jg.Rgt. 656)
07.1943

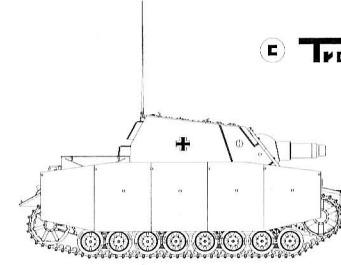
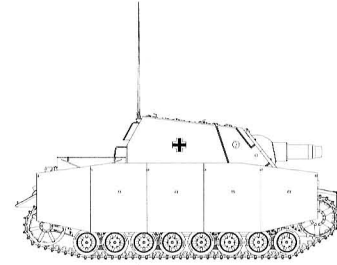
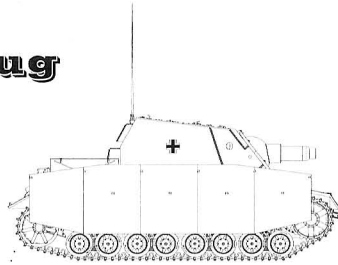
Stab



1. Kp.
Kompanietrupp

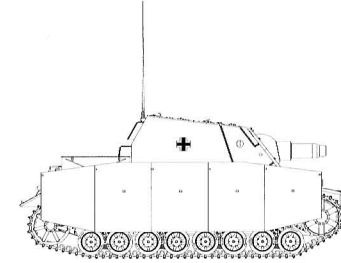
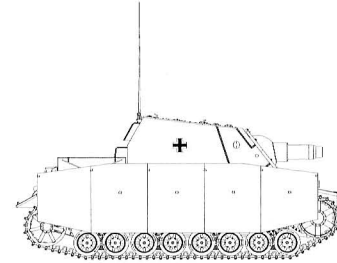
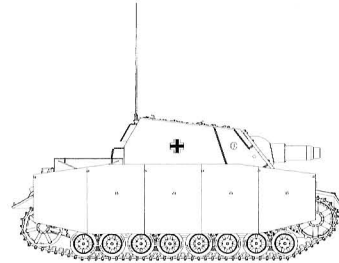
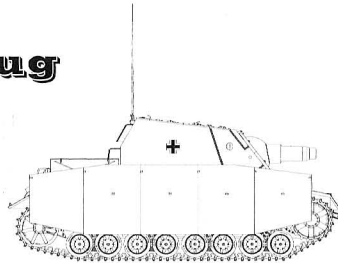


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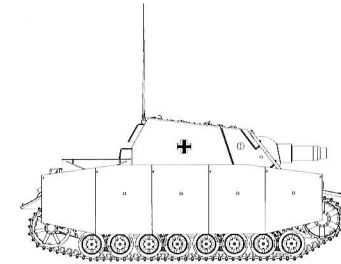
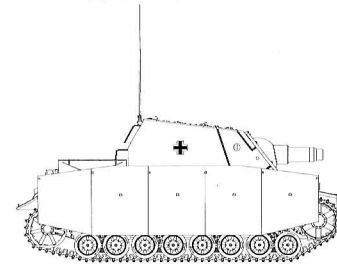
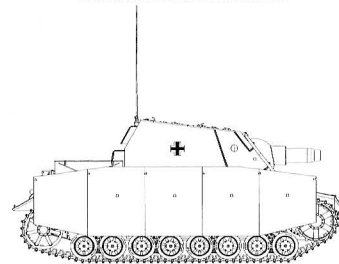
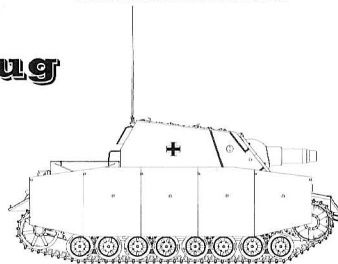


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2. Zug

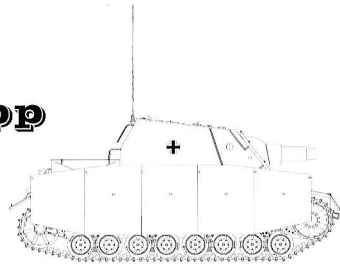


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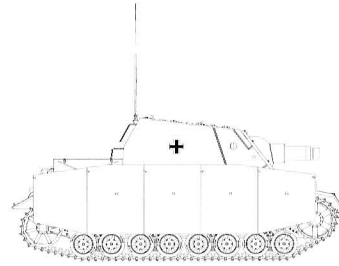


Sturmpanzer Abt. 216
(III./Pz.Jg.Rgt. 656)
07.1943

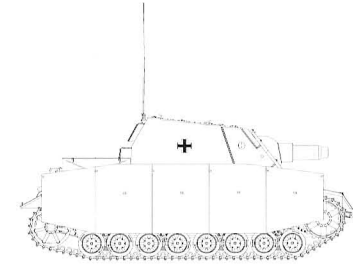
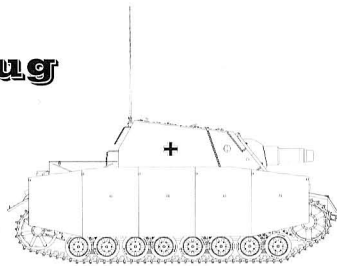
2. Kp.
Kompanietrupp



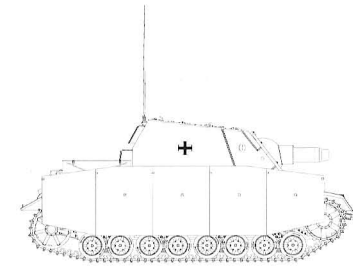
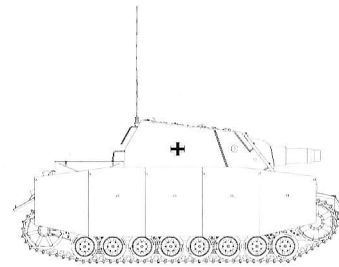
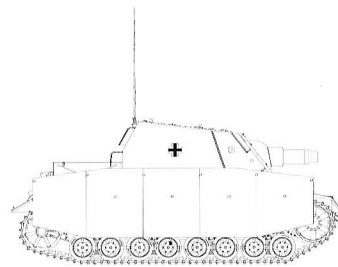
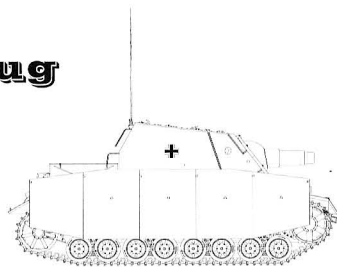
1. Zug



2. Zug

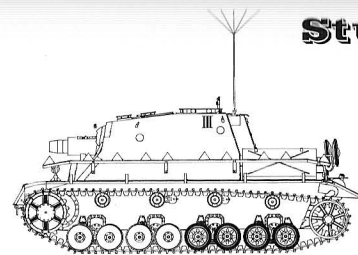
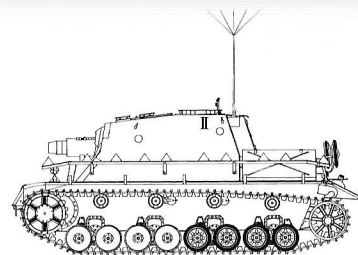
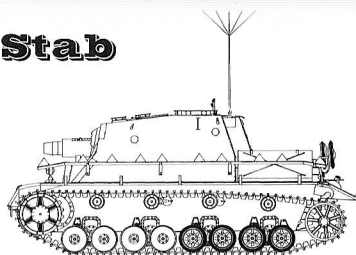


3. Zug



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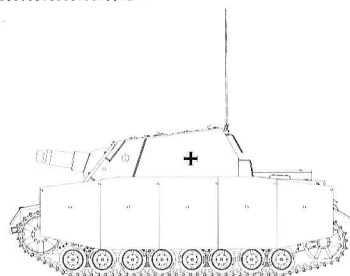
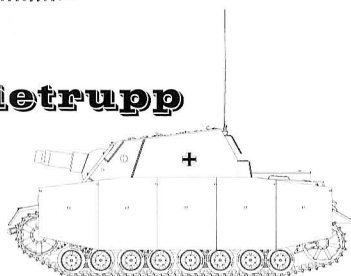
Stab



Sturmpanzer Abt. 216

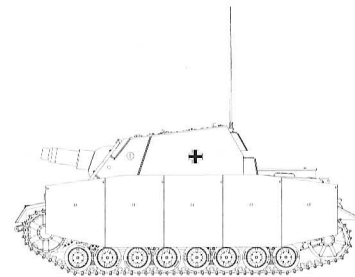
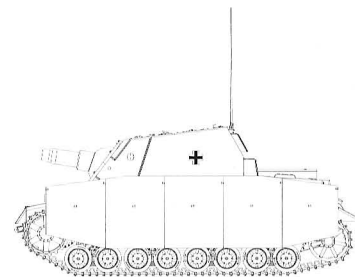
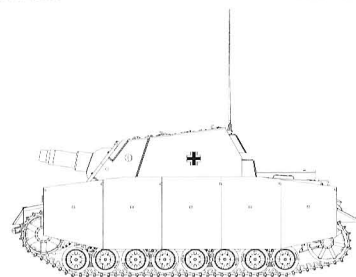
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**1. Kp.
Kompanietrupp**

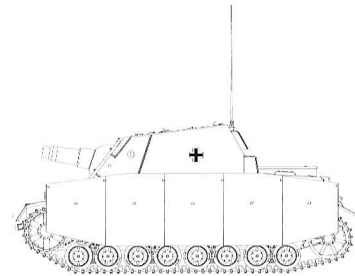
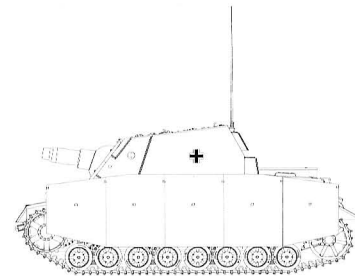
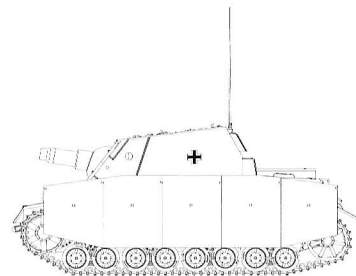


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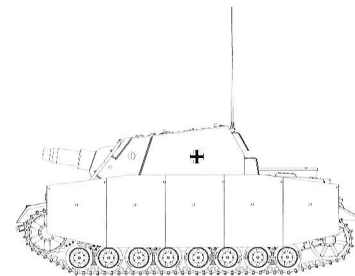
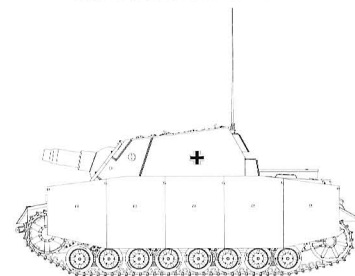
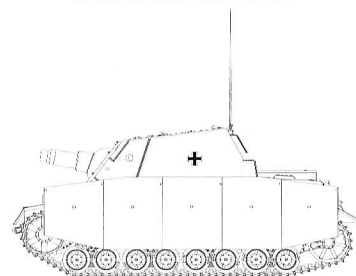
1. Zug



2. Zug



3. Zug



Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 217

On 20 April 1944, the establishment of *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 217* was ordered. Originally, it was intended for the formation of the battalion to take place at the Oldebroek Training Area in Holland. That order was quickly amended to read that the site for the formation was to be the Grafenwöhr Training Area. The personnel for the formation were partially provided by *Panzer-Kompanie 40*; others came from *Panzer-Ersatz-Abteilung 18* in Kamenz. The battalion commander was Major Lemor.

In order to establish the formation as quickly as possible, orders were issued that the *I./Panzer-Regiment 25* had to turn over all of its wheeled vehicles to the assault tank battalion. The first 19 assault tanks were issued at the end of May 1944.

Although the battalion had only six weeks to train, orders were issued for it to move immediately to the Invasion Front in Normandy. The trains departed Grafenwöhr on 1 and 2 July 1944. The destination was Condé s. Noireau. Because the railroad network in France had been too badly damaged, both the wheeled and tracked vehicles had to be detrained far behind the front. Many of the battalion's vehicles became disabled due to the high demands placed on them during the 170-kilometer road march.

Once at the front, there were operations at Caen (near Crimbosq on 7 August 1944), Cintheaux and Quilly (8 August), as well as Notre Dame de Courson (15 August). On 19 August 1944, the battalion reported 17 operational assault tanks. Another 14 assault tanks were in the maintenance facility. While some elements were captured in the second half of August in the Falaise Pocket, most of the battalion succeeded in retreating to the east.

In the area around Rouen, 12 repaired assault tanks were issued to the battalion, intended for *Leutnant Menzel's Einsatzgruppe*. Since they ran out of fuel on the way there, the *5. Armee* was unable to provide fuel and the British armored spearheads were not far away, the assault tanks had to be blown up.

On 7 September 1944, *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 217* was attached to the *LXXXI. Armee-Korps* and further attached to *Panzer-Brigade 105*. It was intended to employ the battalion in the Lüttich (Liege) area. In addition, the Deputy Chief-of-Staff for Operations for the Commander-in-Chief West reported that the battalion had been moving up from the Venlo area toward Hasselt ever since the evening of 6 September. On 8 September, the local area commander for Lüttich committed 10 assault tanks against US forces. Of the remaining 17 assault tanks that had been promised, only four later reached the front there. During the fighting for Lüttich, the elements of the battalion committed there were able to fight their way out. On 10 September, six assault tanks were employed with *Panthers* from *Panzer-Brigade 105* south of the Limbourg — Eupen road.

Of the 10 assault tanks employed during the period from 9 to 17 September 1944 as part of *Panzer-Brigade 105*, the battalion lost 5. On 18 September, assault tanks were employed east of Herzogenrath in support of the *49. Infanterie-Division*. That division reported that nine assault tanks were operational on 20 September.

After that round of fighting, the battalion was moved to the Grevenbroich area. In the weeks that followed, it was employed in the greater Aachen — Hürtgen Woods area. There were individual engagements at Immendorf, Obermaubach and Vorweiden. In October, the inventory of assault tanks had shrunk to 22. For that reason, the remaining assault tanks of the 3rd Company were divided among the 1st and 2nd Companies. The remaining crews without vehicles were sent back to *Panzer-Ersatz-Abteilung 18*.

Within the framework of the Ardennes Offensive, which started in December, *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 217* advanced as far as St. Vith, but it had to pull back toward Losheimer Graben at the turn of the year.

Starting in January 1945, the battalion was constantly pulling back and was only committed piecemeal. In February, *Hauptmann von Trotha* assumed command of the battalion. At the time, the number of operational assault tanks had shrunk to six. Thirty assault tanks needing repairs could not be fixed, since the necessary countershafts could not be delivered. The battalion crossed the Rhine River between Bonn and Remagen.

After a battlefield reconstitution in the Bergisch-Gladbach area, the battalion was employed in March against the Americans advancing on Siegen. Due to the constant lack of fuel, the operational assault tanks were only able to be employed in a limited fashion.

In April, what remained of the battalion was captured in the Ruhr Pocket.



Well-camouflaged, the assault tanks of the battalion roll through a French village toward the front. • Gut getarnt rollen die Sturmpanzer der Stupa-Abteilung durch ein französisches Dorf an die Front.

Among the initial batch of issued assault tanks were some 2nd variant models, but most were the 3rd variant. • Die ersten zugewiesenen Sturmpanzer sind noch einige Ausführungen II aber überwiegend Ausführungen III.





This assault tank was totally destroyed by an explosion in the vehicle's interior. A few Allied soldiers inspect the wreck of this vehicle, which was not frequently encountered in Normandy. • Dieser Sturmpanzer wurde durch eine Explosion im Fahrzeuginnern total zerstört. Einige alliierte Soldaten begutachten das Wrack dieses nicht zu häufig an der Normandiefrent gesehenen Geräts.

This assault tank was also completely destroyed. The vehicle number—36—can still be identified, however, and the next 3 pages • Auch dieser Sturmpanzer ist total zerstört. Die Fahrzeugnummer "36" ist noch erkennbar. und weitere 3 Seiten

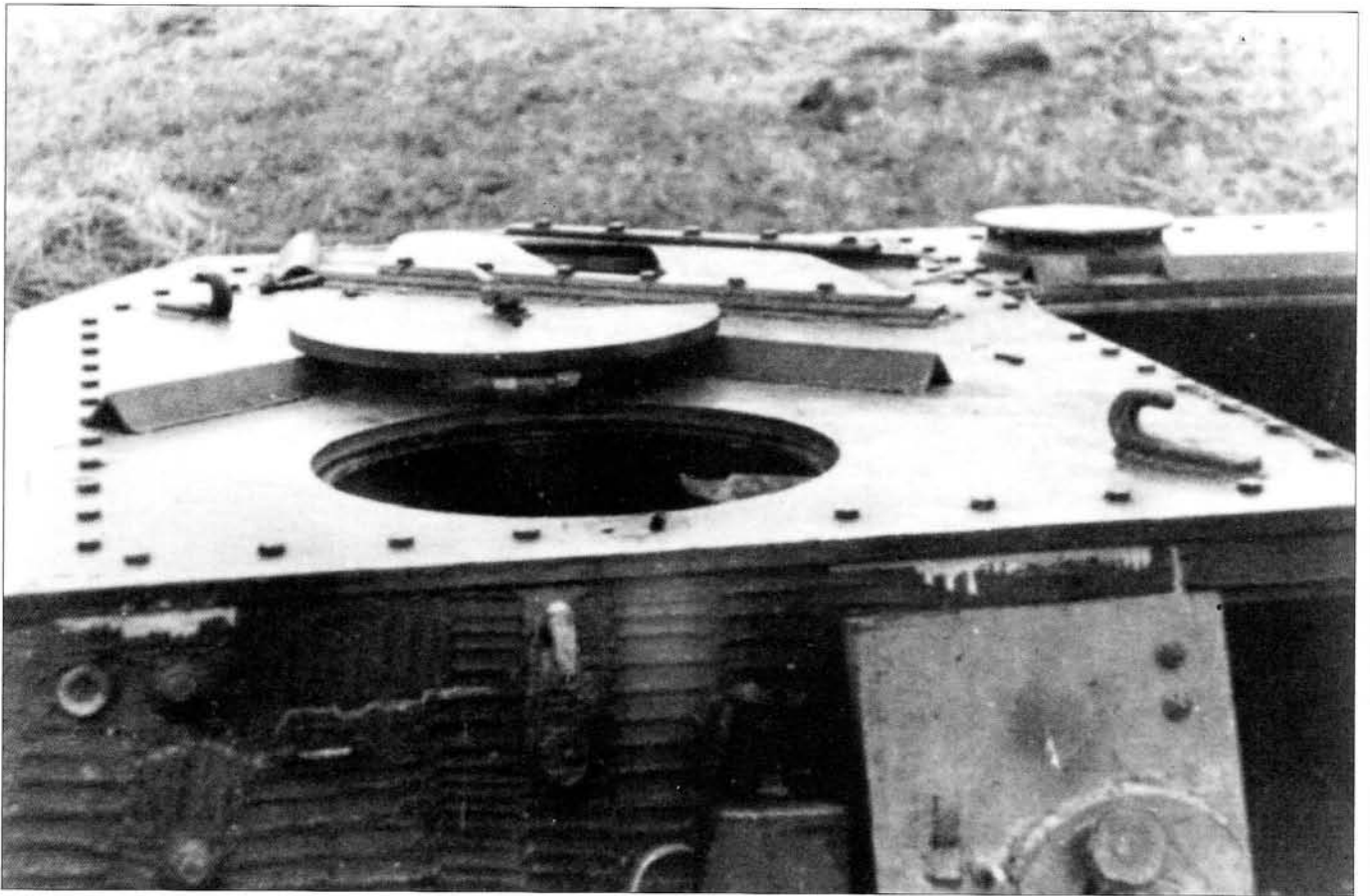




The 15-centimeter assault howitzer is missing and the superstructure has been displaced to the side. Note the *Balkenkreuz* on the right front mudguard. • Die 15cm Sturmhaubitze 43 fehlt, der Aufbau ist seitlich versetzt. Man beachte das Balkenkreuz auf der rechten vorderen Kettenabdeckung.

The vehicle's rear deck has also been considerably damaged. • Auch das Fahrzeugheck ist erheblich beschädigt.





The reader can plainly see how the vehicle's superstructure was moved forward by the explosion. • Man sieht deutlich, dass sich der Aufbau durch die Explosion auch nach vorne verschoben hat.

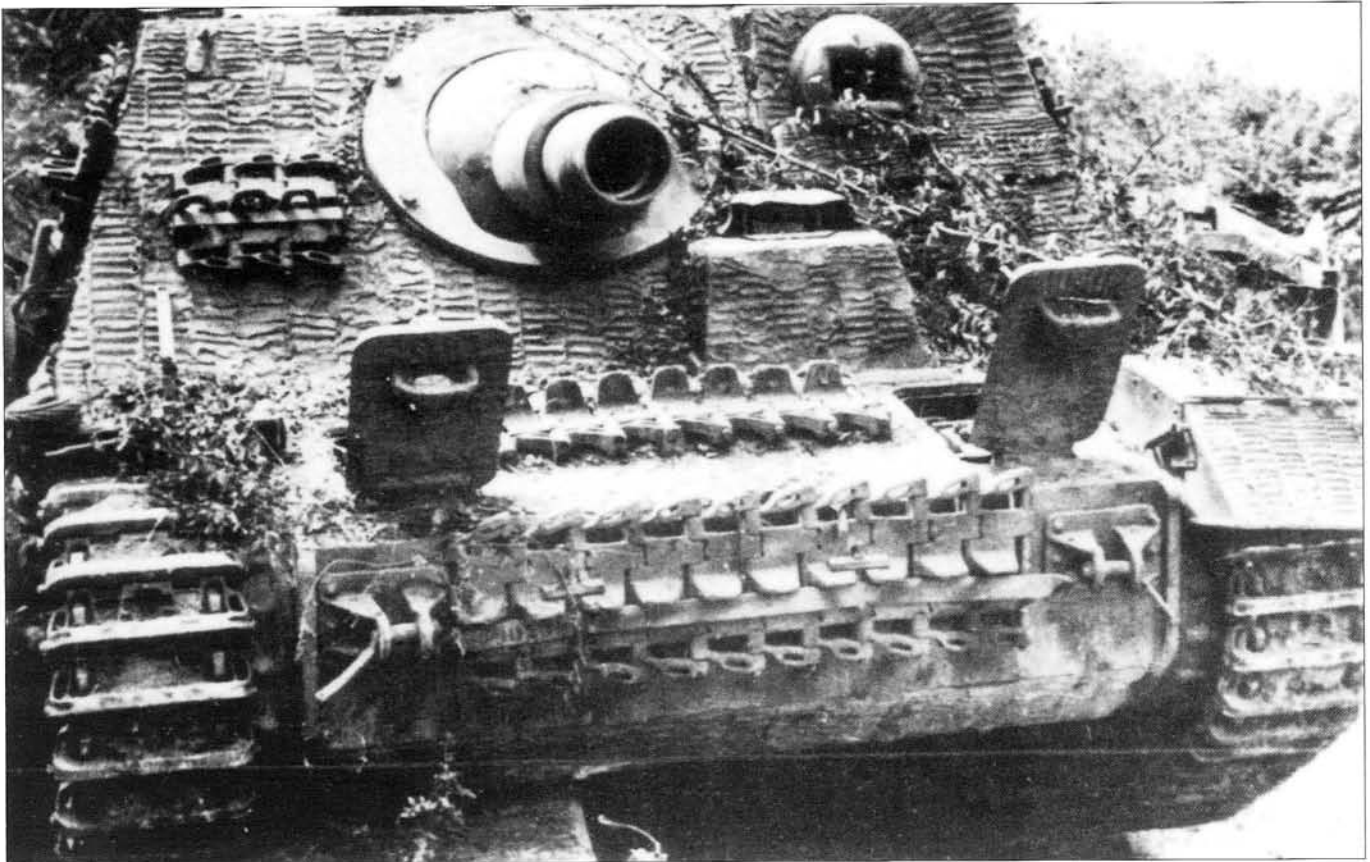
As a result of the explosion in the vehicle's interior, parts of the commander's and loader's hatches were torn off and scattered. • Durch die Wucht der Explosion im Fahrzeuginnern wurden Teile der Kommandanten- und Ladeschützenluke abgerissen und weggeschleudert.





Allied soldiers inspect the wreck. • Alliierte Soldaten begutachten das Wrack.

As part of its replenishment with replacement vehicles, the battalion received some of the 4th variant of the assault tank. This vehicle fell into enemy hands at the end of August 1944. • Im Rahmen der Nachschublieferung erhält der Verband auch die neue Ausführung IV. Dieser Stupa fiel Ende August 1944 in gegnerische Hand.





After the retreat from the west, the companies of the battalion took up quarters along the German/Dutch frontier. • Nach dem Rückzug nach Westen ziehen die Kompanien im deutsch-holländischen Grenzgebiet unter.



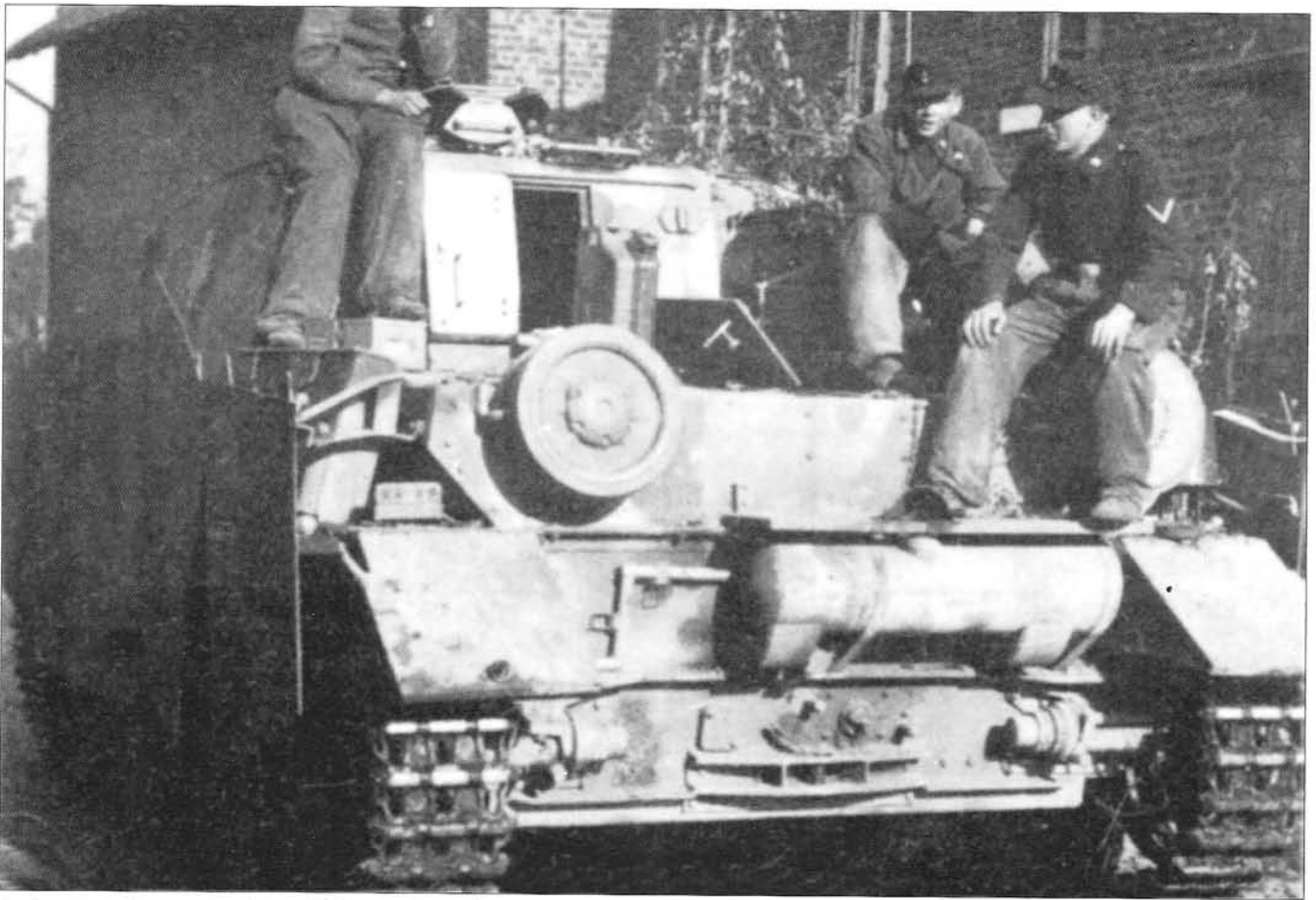
A view of the left-hand side of the superstructure. The machine-gun plugs are seen hanging. The gun commander has made himself comfortable at his station. • Blick auf die linke Aufbauseite. Die MG-Pfropfen hängen herunter. Der Kommandant hat es sich in seiner Luke bequem gemacht.



Apparently, this assault tank was not given the three-tone camouflage scheme. A few of the sideskirts have been removed. It appears the vehicle is being refueled. • Anscheinend haben die Sturmpanzer noch keinen dreifarbigen Flecktarnanstrich. Einige Schürzen wurden abgenommen, wahrscheinlich wurde das Fahrzeug betankt.

This assault tank was captured practically intact by the Allies and can be seen today at the armor museum at Saumur (France). • Dieser Sturmpanzer wurde von den Alliierten bei den Rückzugsgefechten fast unbeschädigt erbeutet und steht heute im Museum in Saumur in Frankreich.





A short break near the front. This assault tank in Baesweiler still has an old-style roadwheel in the mount on the rear deck.
 • Kurze Verschnaufpause in Forntnähe. Dieser Sturmpanzer in Baesweiler hat noch eine Ersatzlaufrolle älterer Ausführung in der Halterung am Heck

This assault tank was lost during the fighting at Bilstein in the middle of September 1944. • Bei den Kämpfen bei Bilstein ging dieser Sturmpanzer Mitte September 1944 verloren.





Another one was lost to enemy fire not too far from the village of Heggen. Note that the assault tank has been completely outfitted with steel roadwheels. • Ein weiterer fiel unweit der Ortschaft Heggen durch Feindbeschuss aus. Man beachte, dass der Panzer komplett mit Stahllaufrollen ausgerüstet ist.

A deserving crew receives awards near the front. The well-camouflaged *Sturmpanzer* is positioned behind a stone wall and is covered with vegetation. • Eine bewährte Besatzung wird in Fronnähe ausgezeichnet. Der gut getarnte Sturmpanzer steht - mit Laub bedeckt - hinter der Steinmauer.





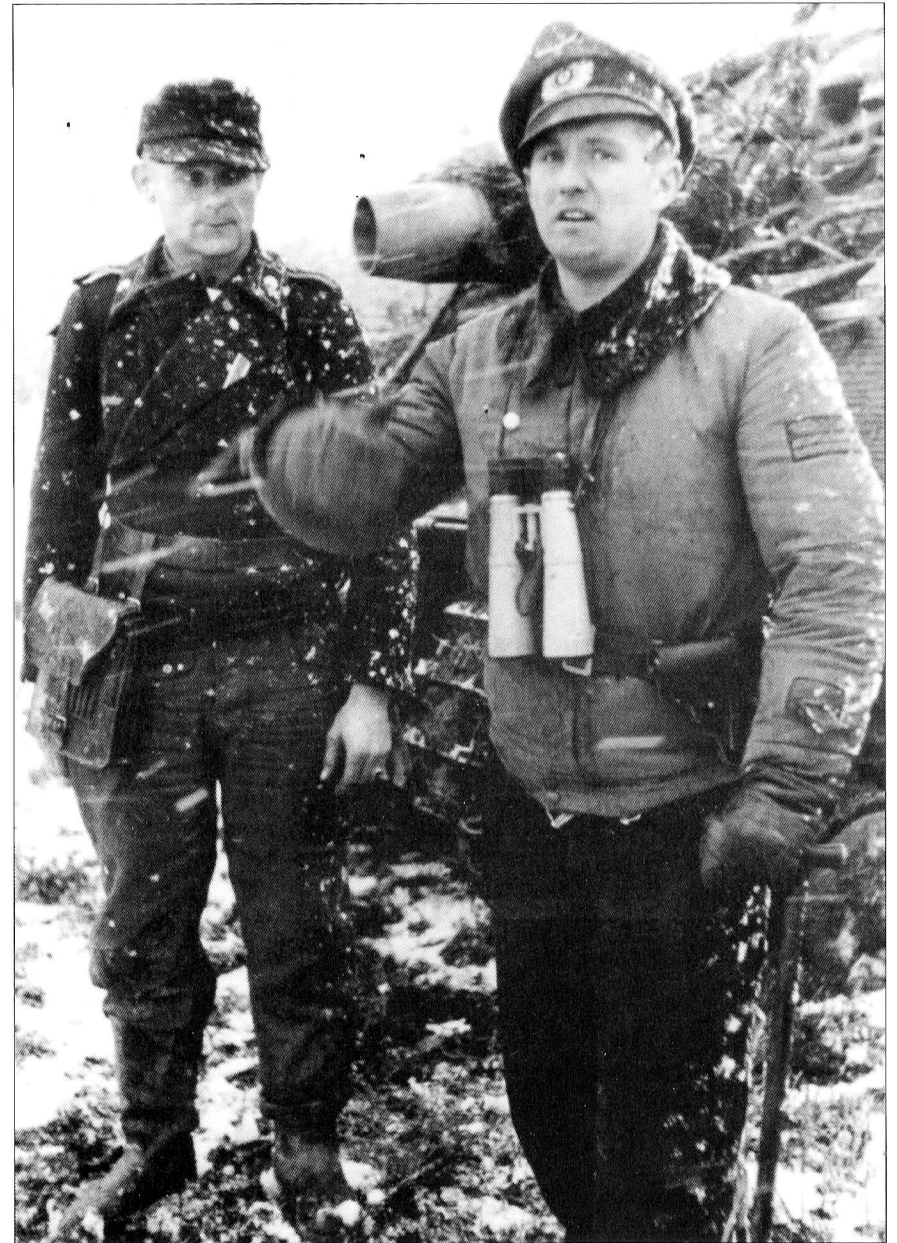
Advancing German infantry is supported by several assault tanks. The vehicle has a striking camouflage scheme. Note the *Balkenkreuz* at the driver's station. • Vorrückende deutsche Infanterie wird von mehreren Sturmpanzer unterstützt. Das Fahrzeug hat einen auffälligen Tarnanstrich. Man beachte das Balkenkreuz auf dem Fahrererkker.



The Ardennes Offensive has started. The company commander of the 1./Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 217, Oberleutnant Gauglitz, personally directs the assault tanks. and the next 2 pages • Die Ardennenoffensive beginnt. Der Kompaniechef der 1./Sturmpanzer 217, Oberleutnant Gauglitz, weist persönlich die Sturmpanzer ein. und weitere 2 Seiten



The vehicles have been camouflaged with vegetation. • Die Fahrzeuge sind mit Laub getarnt.

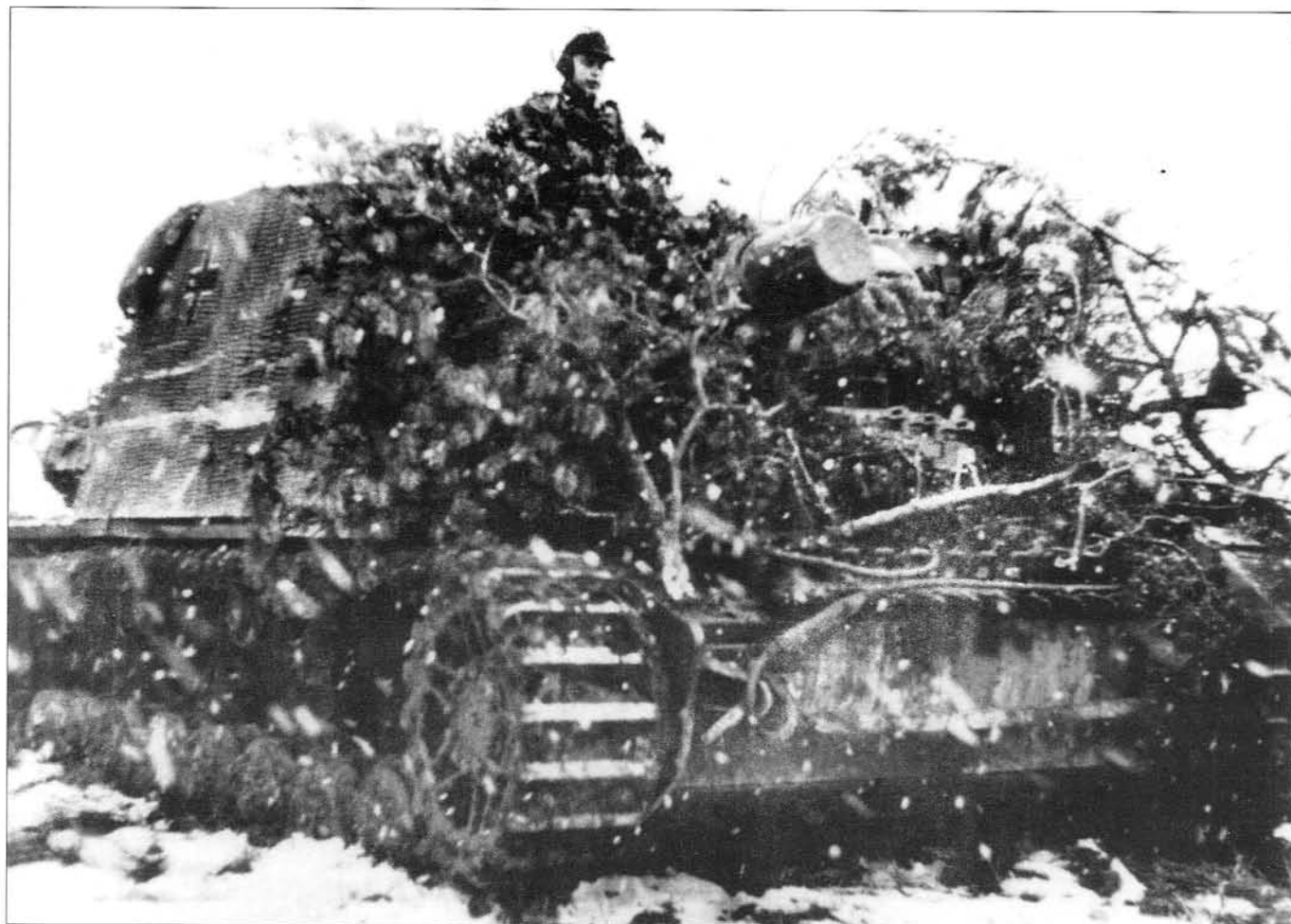


Oberleutnant Gauglitz was a recipient of the Knight's Cross. Despite his war-related disability, he remained with the troops in the field. • Oberleutnant Gauglitz ist Träger des Ritterkreuzes, und blieb trotz seiner Kriegsversehrung bei der Truppe.



The company commander observes the effectiveness of his guns. At the time, the battalion was attached to the 12. *Volks-Grenadier-Division* in support. • Der Kompaniechef beobachtet die Zielgenauigkeit der Geschütze. Der Verband ist zu diesem Zeitpunkt der 12. Volks-Grenadier-Division unterstellt.

The guns of the 1st Company move forward in heavy snowfall at the start of the offensive. • Bei dichtem Schneetreiben rücken die Geschütze der 1. Kompanie zu Beginn der Offensive vor.





The assault tank has been given a complete coat of *Zimmerit* and features a three-tone camouflage scheme. • Der Sturmpanzer ist mit einem vollständigen Zimmeritanstrich versehen und trägt einen dreifarbigem Tarnanstrich.

All of the skirts have been removed. This assault tank also has only steel roadwheels. • Alle Schürzen sind abgenommen. Auch dieses Fahrzeug ist an allen Rollenwagen mit Stahlaufrollen ausgerüstet.





A wooden crate has been added to the left side of the superstructure in a field-expedient manner by the crew. • Behelfsmäßig wurde eine Holzkiste an der linken Aufbauseite von der Truppe angebracht.

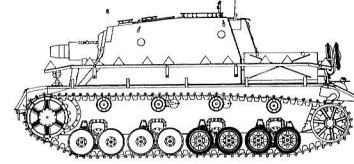
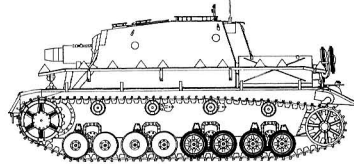
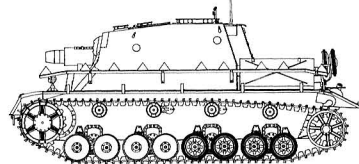
The reader can see the dismounted anti-aircraft machine-gun mount behind the vehicle commander. It was mounted on the vehicle commander's hatch. • Hinter dem Kommandanten sieht man die umgeklappte Fla-MG Halterung. Diese wurde an der Kommandanten-Kuppel befestigt.



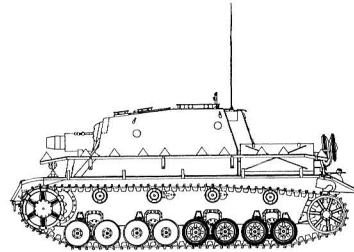
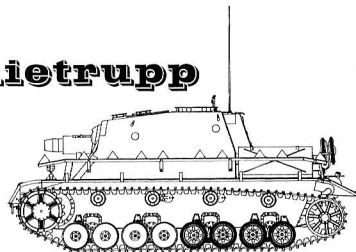
Stab

Sturmpanzer Abt. 217

07.1944

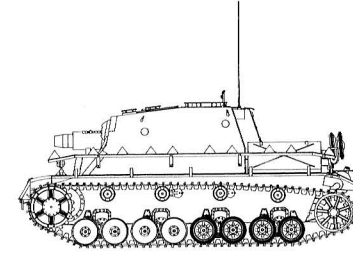
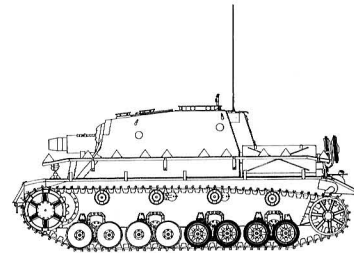
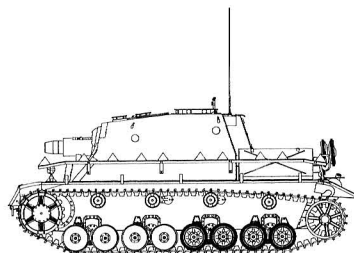
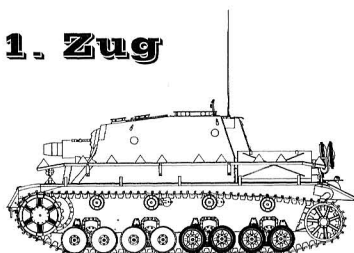


**1. Kp.
Kompanietrupp**

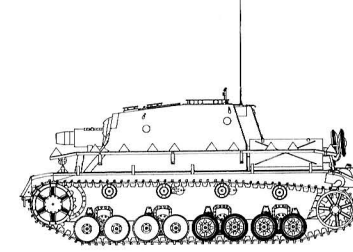
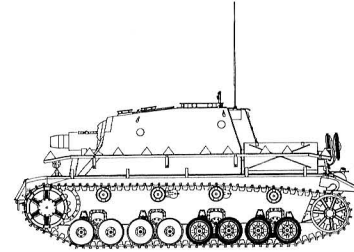
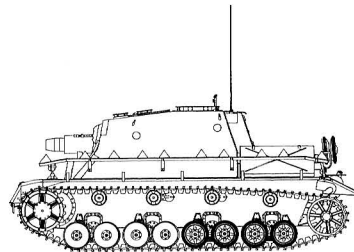
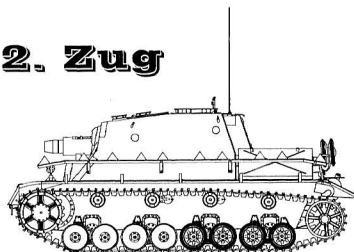


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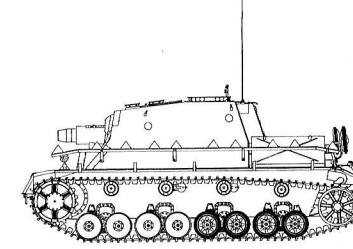
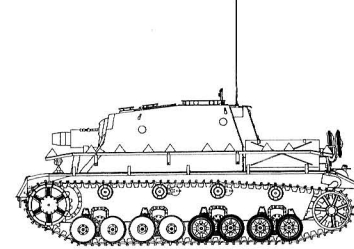
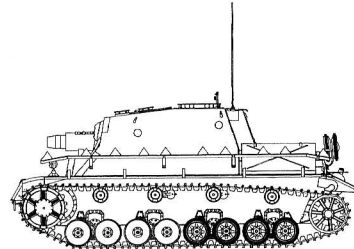
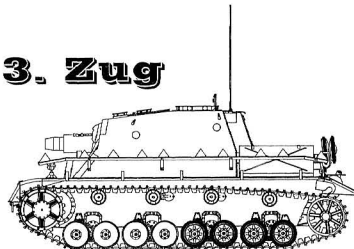
1. Zug



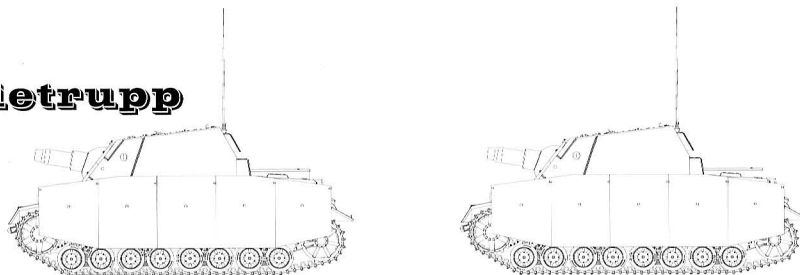
2. Zug



3. Zug



**2. Kp.
Kompanietrupp**

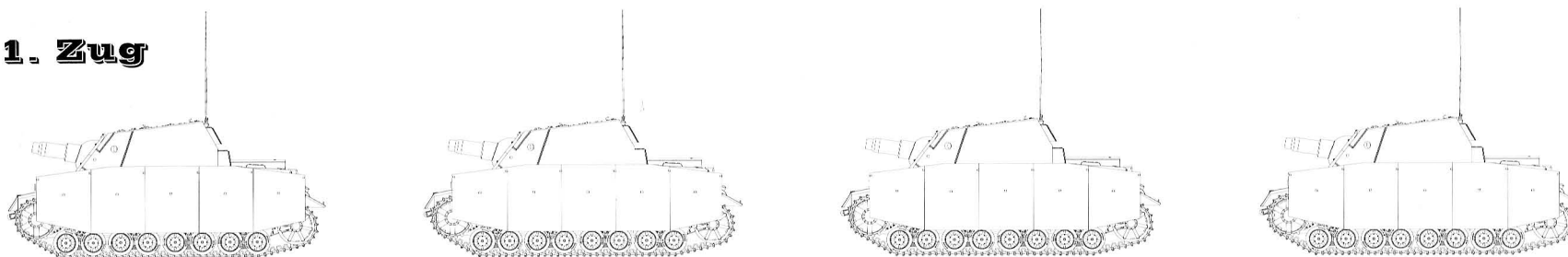


Sturmpanzer Abt. 217

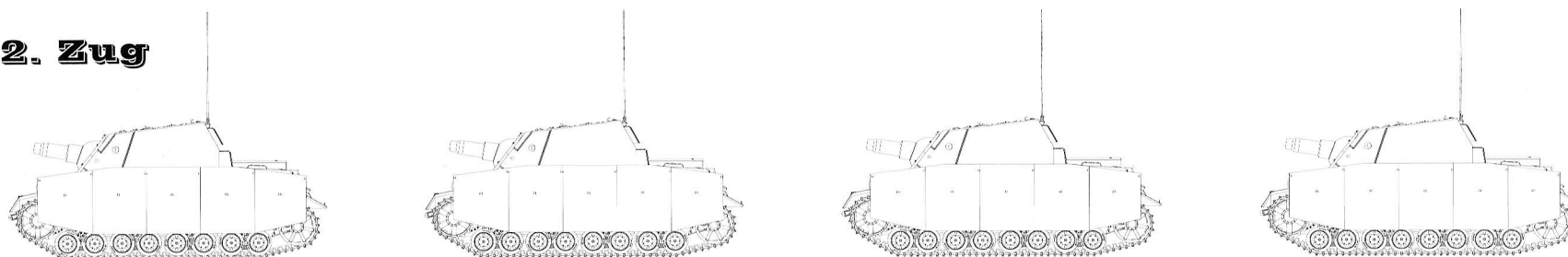
07.1944

2. Kp. = 3. Kp.

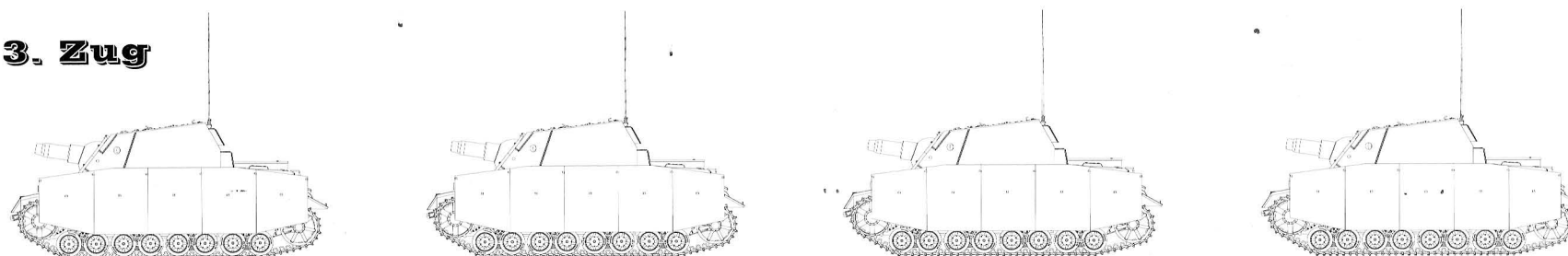
1. Zug



2. Zug



3. Zug



Sturmpanzer-Kompanie z.b.V. 218 / Sturmpanzer-Kompanie z.b.V. 2 218 / Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 218

Sturmpanzer-Kompanie z.b.V. 218 and *Sturmpanzer-Kompanie z.b.V. 2/218* were established in August 1944 for a special assignment. On 13 August, *Sturmpanzer-Kompanie z.b.V. 218* was sent to *Heeresgruppe Mitte* for employment in Warsaw. There, it was attached in direct support of *Panzer-Abteilung (Fkl) 302*, a battalion equipped with remotely piloted demolition carriers. The elements were used against the uprising of the Polish Homeland Army in Warsaw.

After being employed in Warsaw, the company remained within the area of operations of *Heeresgruppe Mitte*. It was intended in January 1945, to pull the company out of the line so as to become the cadre for the formation of *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 218*. That did not happen, however.

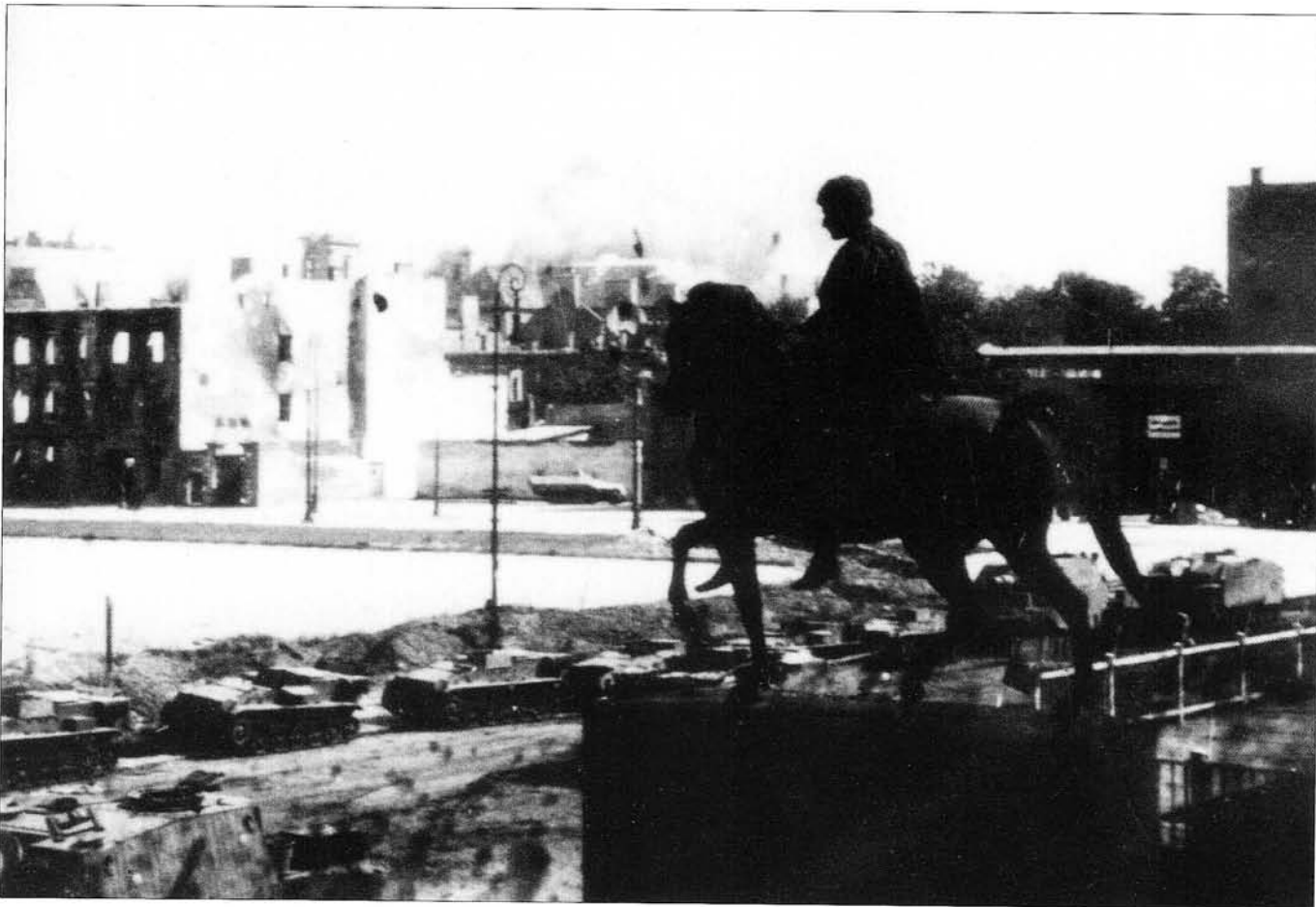
After the start of the Soviet offensive in the middle of January, the company was decimated and had only one assault tank left. The remnants were assembled along with other battered armored formations and placed under the command and control of *Kampfgruppe Großdeutschland*. Later, they were wiped out in East Prussia.

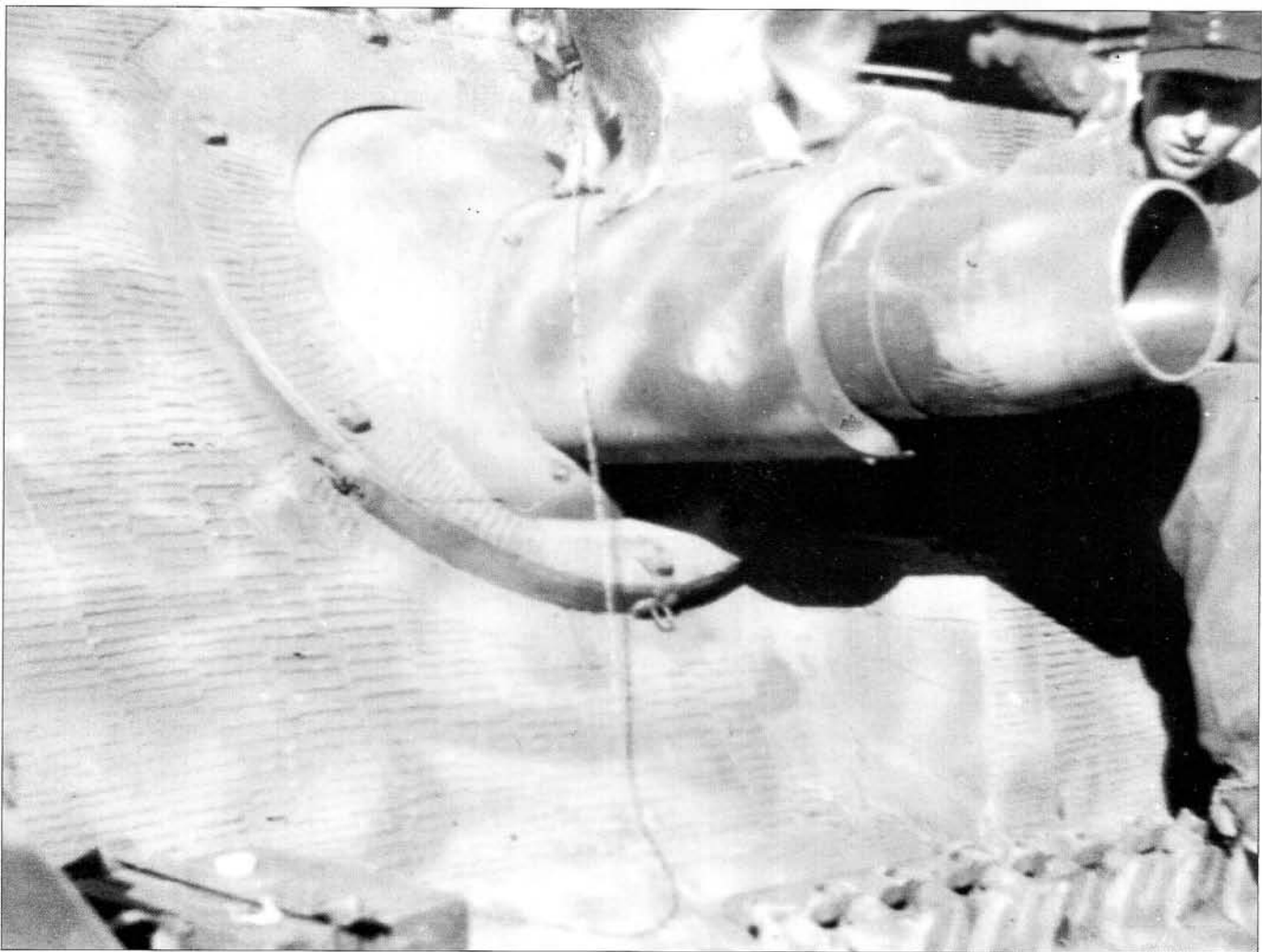
On 20 August 1944, *Sturmpanzer z.b.V. 2/218* was dispatched to *Heeresgruppe F* in the Paris area exactly one day after it was formed and had received its personnel and complement of assault tanks (10). It is not known how the company was employed in the fighting in northern France. The personnel of the company were sent to *Panzer-Ersatz-Abteilung 18* at the end of the year and were supposed to be used in the formation of *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 218* there.

Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 218 was ordered to be formed by the Inspector general of the Armored Forces on 6 January 1945. Its organization was supposed to be as follows: Headquarters, headquarters company, three line companies, a supply company and a maintenance platoon. It was equipped with 45 *Sturmpanzer 43*'s.

In February 1945, orders were received that the battalion was supposed to be equipped with *Sturmgeschütz III*'s. In March 1945, the battalion reported it had 43 operational assault guns. At the end of March, the battalion formed part of *Panzer-Abteilung Krampnitz*, along with *Panzer-Abteilung 2108* and *Panzer-Abteilung Potsdam*. That battalion was used in the middle of April to rebuild the 7. *Panzer-Division*.

Assault tanks and demolition carriers have taken up battle positions. The company was attached in support to *Panzer-Abteilung (Fkl) 302*. • *Sturmpanzer und Ladungsträger haben Gefechtsaufstellung bezogen. Die Kompanie ist der Panzer-Abteilung (Fkl) 302 unterstellt.*





This small monkey served as a mascot for the assault tanker. • Dieses Äffchen dient dem Stupa-Mann als Maskotchen.

One or two assault tanks were often given to radio-control units in support. With their own aimed fire, the assault tanks attempted to keep enemy fire from buildings away from the demolition carriers. • Den Funklenkeinheiten sind oftmals ein oder zwei Sturmpanzer angegliedert. Die Sturmpanzer versuchen das feindliche Feuer auf die Ladungsträger aus Gebäuden heraus durch gezielten Beschuss niederzuhalten.

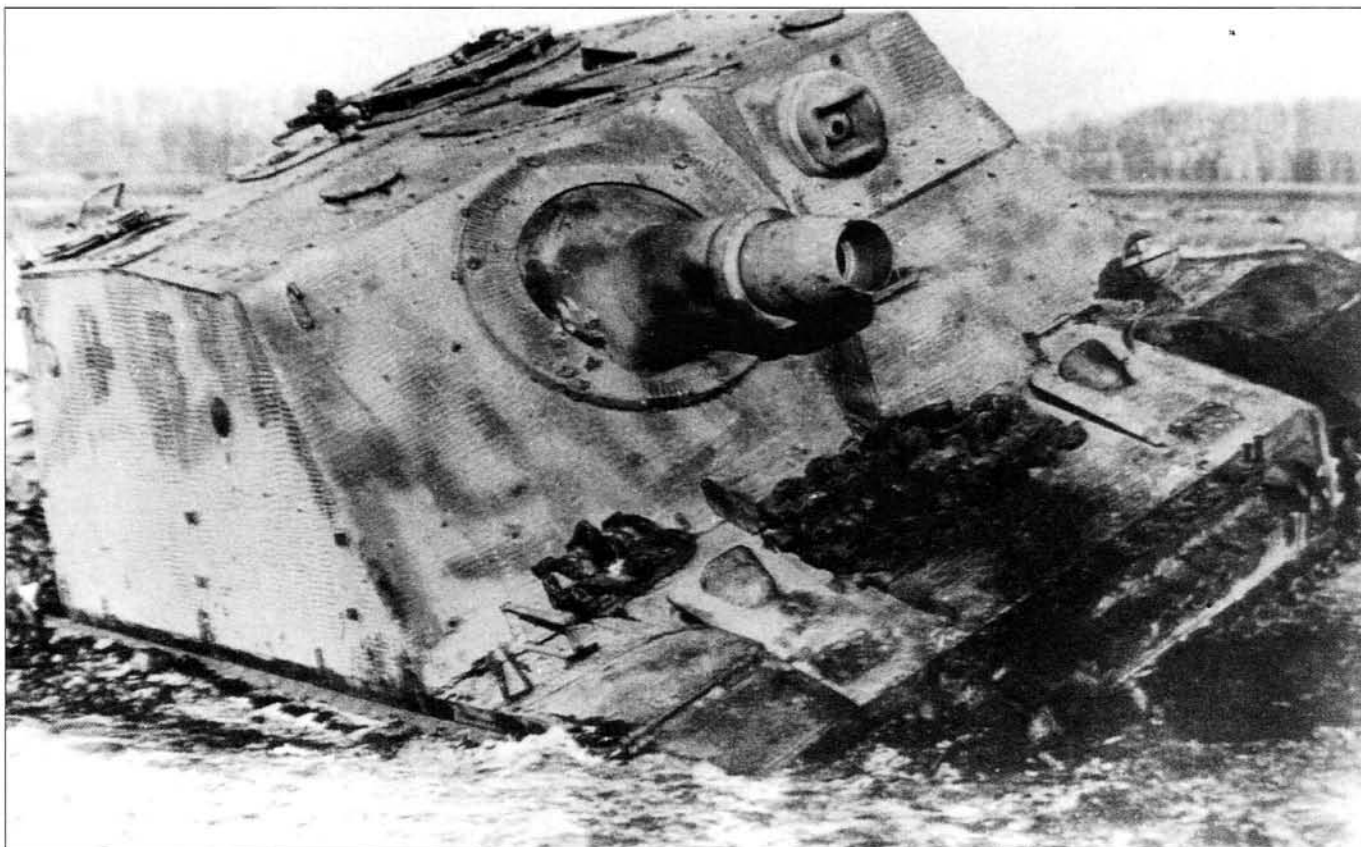




The assault tanks were also attached to infantry elements as support. • Unabhängig davon werden die Stupa aber auch den Infanteristen an die Seite gestellt.

The company received the 4th variant of the assault tank when it was formed. At the time of issue, *Zimmerit* was still being applied to the vehicles. • Die Kompanie erhielt bei ihrer Aufstellung Sturmpanzer der Ausführung IV. Zu diesem Zeitpunkt war an den Panzer noch Zimmeritanstrich aufgebracht.





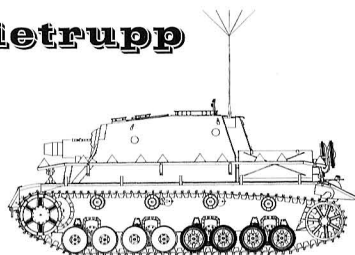
The battalion remained in the east after the fighting in Warsaw and was attached for a while to *Panzer-Korps „Großdeutschland“*, among other formations. • Der Verband verbleibt auch nachden Kämpfen in Warschau im Osten und wird unter anderem dem Panzerkorps Großdeutschland unterstellt.

This assault tank was lost during the fighting in the spring of 1945. • Bei den Kampfhandlungen im Frühjahr 1945 geht dieser Sturmpanzer verloren. Auffällig ist an diesem Fahrzeug das Laufwerk. Er hat acht Stahllaufrollen, wobei sowohl gegossene wie auch gepresste Abdeckkappen verwendet wurden.



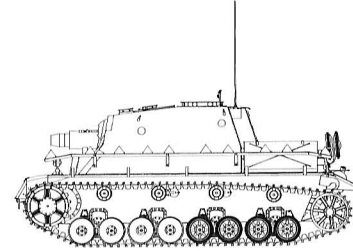
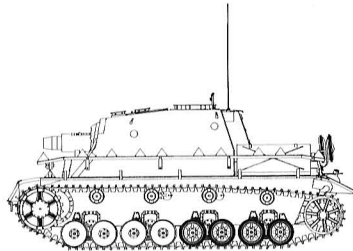
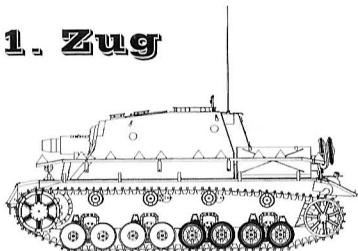
**1. Kp.
Kompanietrupp**

**Sturmpanzer Abt. 218
08.1944**

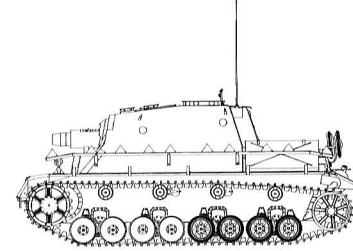
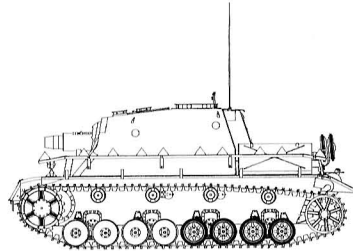
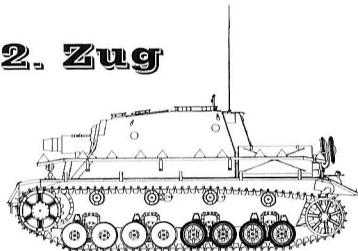


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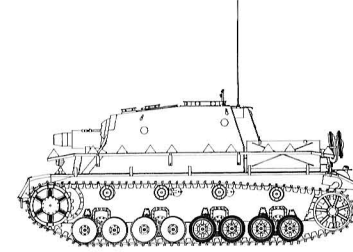
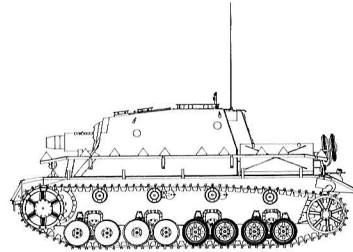
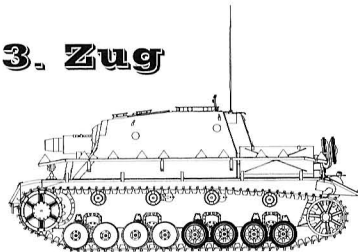
1. Zug



2. Zug



3. Zug



z.b.V. 1./Stupa.Kp. 218 = z.b.V. 2./Stupa.Kp. 218

Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 237 / Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 219

Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 237 was established at the Wildflecken Training Area from March to June 1943. Its cadre personnel came from combat-experienced assault gunners from the 1./Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 185 and the 2./Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 201, as well as personnel from *Sturmgeschütz-Ersatz- und Ausbildungs-Abteilung 200* in Schweinfurt. At the time of its formation, its senior duty positions were filled as follows:

Commander: *Hauptmann* Paul Friedrich Schaupensteiner

Adjutant: *Oberleutnant* Helmut Plate

Liaison Officer: *Leutnant* Hans-Otto Meyer

Battalion Physician: *Oberarzt* Dr. Franz Koschatka

Headquarters Battery

Commander: *Oberleutnant* Ernst Neumann

Maintenance Platoon: *Kriegsverwaltungsrat* Paul Vacqué

1./Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 237

Commander: *Oberleutnant* Bodo Spranz

Platoon leaders: *Leutnant* Bernhard Sowada, *Leutnant* Erich Nagel and *Leutnant* Hans-Diether Nagel

2./Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 237

Commander: *Oberleutnant* Siegfried Plath

Platoon leaders: *Oberleutnant* Fritz Arnold, *Leutnant* Hans Breunig and *Leutnant* Hans-Georg Göhlitz

3./Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 237

Commander: *Oberleutnant* Günther Liethmann

Platoon leaders: *Oberleutnant* Erich Rewerts, *Oberleutnant* Fritz Otto and *Leutnant* Werner Fiehler

In June, the battalion was sent to Lichterfelde and Langenlipsdorf in the Oehna — Jüterbog area to receive its major items of equipment. For its symbol, the battalion chose three jumping greyhounds, which was placed on all of the vehicles.

On 20 July 1943, the battalion was loaded on trains and sent via Vitebsk to the Smolensk area.

Its first operations took place on 7 August 1943 at Jarzewo. On 9 August, enemy infantry attacked with armor support. The battalion's first "kills" were booked there, of which five were credited to *Oberleutnant* Liethmann and his crew. Despite the success, several of the battalion's guns were also lost, and the first casualties were suffered, including the first dead and many wounded. On 11 August, the 3./Sturmgeschütz-Abteilung 237 claimed 15 enemy tanks, with *Oberleutnant* Liethmann again knocking out five. The fighting continued to 13 August. Thanks to the combined efforts of all the combat arms, the Soviet penetrations were sealed off and then turned back. Despite that, the forward positions were pulled back on 14 August. This fighting took place in the sectors of the 4. Armee and the 9. Armee of Heeresgruppe Mitte.

The enemy did not attack with overwhelming forces again until 29 August, when he was able to achieve a large penetration. All counterattack efforts collapsed in the face of heavy enemy artillery fire. Only some of the assault guns of the battalion were still operational.

During the night of 29/30 August, orders were received to change positions. The battalion moved through Dorogobusch to Jelna, where it defended against enemy breakthroughs with large armored forces. The positions were held north of the main road, while the enemy was successful in achieving large penetrations further to the south, where total confusion reigned.

The guns rolled over a bridge to the east bank of the Jelnia. Several *Flak* were there, but virtually no infantry. On the enemy side, three kilometers away, there was a massed armor approach. The Soviet tanks fired into Jelnia until it was burning, but they did not attack. After orders to pull back were issued, the *Flak* and the infantry evacuated their positions. While they were doing that, the assault guns of the 1st Battery were mixing it up with the Soviet tanks. Soviet infantry advanced into Jelnia. *Hauptmann* Schaupensteiner, the battalion commander, and his 2nd battery were still positioned on the western edge of Jelnia, where they defended. Schaupensteiner was able to reestablish radio communications with the 1st Battery for a short period and order it back.

Starting on 31 August, the combat elements of the battalion were in constant combat. In spite of continuous aerial attacks by large formations, none of the guns were lost. The Soviet attacks, supported by aviation, continued with unabated harshness until 5 September. Despite all that, it was possible to hold the front through a series of attacks and counterattacks. It was during that period that the battalion's assault howitzers finally arrived.

At the tank ditch at Nowo-Tichowo, the 1st Battery and the battalion commander offered the enemy a bitter armored engagement. All types of Soviet armor, including the first American Shermans, were knocked out. The German losses were relatively small, although *Oberleutnant* Hofrichter of the 1st Battery was killed on 5 September. The damage sustained by the guns could be repaired, for the most part, by the maintenance sections and the readiness status of the battalion largely retained. During those days of fighting, the 2nd Battery was employed on the north side of the breakthrough corridor west of Jelnia. On 7 September 1943, the 3rd Battery again successfully defended against an armored attack.

After that section of the front had quieted down somewhat, the battalion was sent to the sector of the 342. *Infanterie-Division*. On the morning of 15 September, that sector was subjected to barrage fire, supported by ground-attack aircraft. The enemy's attacks were halted by German immediate counterattacks. An enemy tank formation was turned back by the 3rd Battery when it knocked out several of its number. *Leutnant* Keil and his crew knocked out four of the enemy. Despite rain and poor visibility on 16 September, another four enemy tanks were knocked out. In the afternoon, however, a withdrawal was initiated. In the process, *Leutnant* Keil had to blow up his gun. Another vehicle that became stuck and could not be recovered was set on fire by *Oberleutnant* Liethmann. The combat elements were first moved to Kolomj and then to Stanchina.

During the night of 15/16 September, the 1st Battery was located with Maydorn's regimental command post in the main line of resistance at Bereskino and only a few hundred meters from an enemy tank concentration. During an attempt to knock out enemy tanks with handheld weapons, *Wachtmeister* Ruh was killed. Three T 34's, with mounted infantry, were knocked out under the glare of illumination rounds.

On 17 September, the battalion moved back toward Bernike. While conducting that movement, 80 Soviet tanks rolled up against 3 assault guns. Despite the odds, they were stopped. During that night, a T 34 with mounted infantry appeared between the guns; the German crews had fallen asleep due to exhaustion. The T 34 pulled back, however, apparently shocked to find itself in the middle of German positions.

On 18 September 1943, a large number of Soviet tanks again headed west. Two screening assault guns knocked out eight Soviet vehicles, while an 8.8-centimeter *Flak* scored continuous hits against the enemy. *Leutnant* Breunig of the 2nd Battery was killed at Jasweno. The front was then pulled back to Baltutino. On the following night, the 1st Battery sustained numerous casualties (wounded) and suffered a lot of battle damage to its vehicles as the result of bombs from slow-flying ground-support aircraft.

On the morning of 19 September, a group of T 34's were positioned in front of the battery that *Leutnant* Sowada led. In the space of five minutes, the T 34's were dispatched. *Schwere Panzer-Abteilung* 505, with its *Tigers*, was called in to support the immediate counterattack, but it was not able to help due to difficulties in traversing the terrain. The 2nd Battery covered the immediate counterattack. *Leutnant* Sowada and *Wachtmeister* Wegener advanced as far as the Soviet trains and, in the process, had set a number of tanks in an assembly area on fire.

During the night of 19/20 September, elements of the 1st Battery were pulled back more than 40 kilometers to the southwest. Early in the morning, the first Soviet tanks appeared in front of the blocking position; all of them were knocked out.

On 20 September, the battalion moved to the sector of the 35. *Infanterie-Division*, where the enemy was driven to flight by means of an aggressively conducted counterattack by all three batteries, which did not have any infantry support. An enemy immediate counterattack was thwarted and 35 enemy vehicles knocked out in the process. During those operations, the gun of *Oberleutnant* Liethmann got stuck in an infantry trench. It received antitank-gun fire, and the gunner was killed; the battery commander and the loader were badly wounded. *Oberleutnant* Arnold assumed command of the battery. The gun could not be recovered, because a new main line of resistance had to be occupied due to constant enemy attacks during the night.

At first light on 22 September, the battalion radio vehicle, which was at the command post of *Infanterie-Regiment* 111, was cut off by enemy forces that had advanced during the night. The 3rd Battery succeeded in relieving the command post. They found the dead crews of a battery of heavy field howitzers and a battery of *Flak* there. They were able to recover the battalion radio vehicle, however. The enemy fled in panic, but launched an immediate counterattack after he had reorganized. Three enemy tanks were knocked out. During the enemy's counterattack, *Oberleutnant* Arnold was badly wounded. The village of Tuchatwchewo had to be abandoned. *Leutnant* Fiehler went to the trains with three guns. The adjutant, *Oberleutnant* Plate, assumed command [of them] and brought the enemy to a standstill as a result of his counterattacks. That night there was an exhausting road march to Samjatlino along the Smplensk — Roslawl road. The roads had been softened by rainstorms and guns also had to be towed.

On 23 September, the guns moved out at 0430 hours toward Jarj. While on the move, they were attacked. They launched an immediate counterattack and knocked out seven antitank guns in the process. Heavy fire continued to be received, however, and two guns were damaged. *Oberleutnant* Plate and *Leutnant* Fiehler were no longer able to follow the column with the damaged guns in tow, because it was necessary to conduct repeated screening operations against pursuing groups of enemy. One of the two guns bottomed out and had to be abandoned.

On 25 September, the efforts to repair the conditionally operational guns failed. Orders were issued to continue pulling back. One gun from the 3rd Battery broke through a bridge over the river at Monastyrschina. It sank in the river, and the entire crew and an infantryman, who was riding along, drowned. The guns that followed bogged down while making a detour and had to be blown up. After evacuating Smolensk and Roslawl and the pulling back of the front, the battalion was moved to Linkowitschi in the Orscha area for maintenance and battlefield reconstitution. In the previous weeks, the battalion had knocked out approximately 400 enemy armored vehicles, with about 200 being credited to the 1st Battery.

The following awards were presented:

3 October 1943: Oakleaves to *Oberleutnant* Spranz for knocking out 74 armored vehicles. Four of them were in close combat and 44 of them were during the previous eight weeks.

12 October 1943: Knight's Cross to *Leutnant* Sowada after knocking out 21 armored vehicles.

18 October 1943: Knight's Cross to *Wachtmeister* Wegener after knocking out numerous armored vehicles.

26 October 1943: Knight's Cross to *Oberleutnant* Liethmann

16 November 1943: Knight's Cross to *Oberleutnant* Arnold after knocking out 51 armored vehicles.

In the middle of October 1943, the battalion was moved to Sawa in the Gorki area, where there were hard days and intense defensive fighting against strong enemy forces. The 1st Battery lost several vehicles due to enemy action. *Leutnant* Sowada and his platoon were bombed by *Stukas*, but none of the guns were damaged. The infantry position they were supporting, however, was destroyed.

On 21 and 22 October 1943, the battalion was moved through Orscha and Mogilew to Slobodka, northwest of Tschaussy. From 25 to 27 October, the battalion supported *Generalleutnant* Vinzenz Müller's 56. *Infanterie-Division* in its defensive fighting and immediate counterattacks in the bridgehead.

On 26 October, *Oberleutnant* Rewerts' gun was knocked out by antitank-gun fire, and he was wounded. Rewerts was the acting commander of the 3rd Battery. Two guns of the battery got stuck in no-man's-land. They were recovered only after repeated efforts involving the cooperation of gun crews from all of the batteries.

On 28 October, *Oberleutnant* Bertram was given acting command of the 1st Battery. From 28 to 31 October, the 1st Battery was employed in cleaning up penetrations at Skwarsk, Barischewka and Prilepowka (northeast of Tschaussy). In the attempt on 31 October to take back the main line of resistance by means of an immediate counterattack, the battery commander's gun was damaged and immobilized in the forward lines. *Oberfähnrich* Loos was wounded in the efforts made to recover the vehicle. He was then run over by his own gun, his legs pinned beneath the tracks. Half of the vehicle had crushed his legs before it was finally stopped by someone on the outside and could be directed off of him. While all of this was happening, the escort infantry pulled back. The acting battalion commander, *Oberleutnant* Plate, had gone forward to the front slope to observe the operation. He covered the retrograde movement of the gun with the wounded on board, but was killed by a round to the head.

During the days that followed, the battalion, which was under the temporary command of the adjutant, *Oberleutnant* Meyer, was in an assembly area in the division rear area at Kamarnitzkaja and Slobodka. On 4 November 1943, the battalion, minus the 1st Battery, road marched on the main route through Mogilew and Orscha in the direction of Smolensk, where it was to report to the 18. *Panzergranadier-Division*.

On 7 November, *Leutnant* Fiehler assumed acting command of the 3rd Battery; on 14 November, his battery turned back an enemy tank attack. Following that, he and his battery succeeded in scattering a tank concentration, before he was wounded while trying to recover a stuck assault gun. *Leutnant* Keil then assumed acting command of the battery. Keil was then killed on 15 November by a round to the head while conducting an immediate counterattack without infantry support on the village of Durnaja. On 16 November, *Leutnant* Lindner assumed acting command of the battery, but was wounded on the same day, whereupon *Oberleutnant* Meyer, the battalion adjutant, assumed acting command not only of the battalion, but also of the 3rd Battery.

From 17 to 19 November, the 2nd Battery conducted continuous immediate counterattacks against Soviet infantry that had either penetrated the lines or infiltrated them at Guracki and Dubrowno. During these attacks, there were several men wounded and several assault guns became immobilized or otherwise non-operational due to enemy antitank-gun fire or getting stuck in the marshy terrain. By 20 November, the situation had stabilized somewhat as a consequence of the heavy casualties the Soviets had sustained. The tracked vehicles were then loaded on trains on 22 November and transported toward Mogilew, while the wheeled elements road marched there.

In the meantime, on 16 November, the 1st Battery was loaded on trains at the Resta rail station between Mogilew and Tschaussy and moved into the area of operations of *Heeresgruppe Süd* after being routed through Bychoff, Rogatschew and Slobin. The battery detrained at the train station at Usa, some 25 kilometers northwest of Gomel, on 17 November. Immediately after detraining, the combat elements were committed at Bartschenok, where the Soviet forces that had penetrated were already positioned in front of the infantry and artillery command posts there. After stabilizing the situation and clearing the trenches in a night operation at Prissno, the main line of resistance had to be cleared of the enemy as far as Bartschenok the next morning. On 20 November, after bitter fighting, an enemy bridgehead across the Ssosh at Tschernjatzkaja Poljana was eliminated.

From 25 to 27 November, the battery pulled back through Rogin to Negowka while moving along the Gomel — Mogilew road. In this movement, it was joined by the XXIII. *Armee-Korps* of *General der Infanterie* Friessner and the 296. *Infanterie-Division* of *Generalleutnant* Kullmer. The battery loaded on trains on 29 November in Ssoltanowka and detrained at Slobin on the next day. The battery was then placed in direct support of the 299. *Infanterie-Division* at Shdanowa along the Dnjepr.

On 2 December 1943, reconnaissance operations were conducted on the rail line southwest of Slobin in the areas of the rail stations at Mormal and Jaschtschitz. An assembly area was established in Alexandroff. Operations were conducted at Bor and Jaschtschitz on 4 and 5 December. After coordinating with the corps and the field army's artillery command, the battery was loaded on trains at Bobruisk on 10 December and transported via Krasnyi Bereg — Slobin — Rogatschew to Mogilew. It detrained on 12 December and linked up with the battalion in the military facility in the woods there.

Elements of the 3rd Battery arrived in Mogilew on 23 November. On 26 November, platoons under *Leutnant* Rathjan and *Leutnant* Fiehler were successfully employed against Soviet infantry supported by tanks at Ossaritschi and Golgi-Mach.

Despite these local successes, orders were received to pull back to the west across the Rusa. Early in the morning of 27 November, Soviet infantry that had advanced across the Rusa had to be ejected from the German trenches. Supported by antitank guns, later attacks were turned back.

On 30 November, the command post of *Grenadier-Regiment 480* at Roman-Nowinski had to be relieved. From then until 5 December, the 2nd and 3rd batteries had screening missions in the Nosselky — Ussutschek — Ostrowy — Wolkowitschi areas and also had to cover retrograde movements.

Oberleutnant Rewerts, returning from the hospital, took back command of his 3rd battery and marched with it during the night of 7/8 November to Nikonowitschi, 30 kilometers south of Mogilew, where the Soviets were attempting to break across the Gomel — Mogilew road. On 13 December, the battery changed positions, moving back to Ostrowi / Chodadituchi, with the combat elements in Wolkowituchi. From then until the end of the year, there were no combat operations.

On 27 December, one platoon of the 1st Battery linked up with the battalion at Nikonowitschi in the area of operations of the 267. *Infanterie-Division*. It was joined on 30 December by another platoon.

On 3 January 1944, the 1st Battery, along with other forces, was pulled out of the front to conduct anti-partisan operations on 4 January in the field army's rear area. The planned operation had to be called off shortly before it was to start, however, because an unexpected attack on the main line of resistance started at the same time and the forces that had been withdrawn for the partisan operation were urgently needed.

The 2nd and 3rd Batteries were moved to Pribor, not far from Nikonowitschi, where *Oberleutnant* Rewerts was wounded once again on 5 January while in the middle of an immediate counterattack. *Leutnant* Sowada assumed acting command of the 3rd Battery, which remained bogged down in Pribor. On 6 January, the 1st Battery assumed readiness positions right behind the main line of resistance. It initially had five guns; by 11 January, it was down to a platoon. The crews stayed in tents along the road. The trains, together with the supply elements of the 3rd Battery, set up quarters in the collective farm at Woronino.

On 17 January 1944, the assembly area along the road was evacuated, and the 1st Battery initially moved to Dubowoje and then on to Mogilew on 21 January. *Leutnant* Fiehler's 3rd Battery was attached to the XXXIX. *Panzer-Korps* in the area of Tschaussy. A base camp was established at Ostreni and the trains were in Petrowitschi.

On 22 January 1944, the 1st Battery moved to Blagowitschi and, until 13 February, moved repeatedly from there to Kamarnitzkaja — Schtschekotowa and back again. On 14 February, it was loaded on trains at the rail station at Resta. The battery detrained at Witebsk on the next day.

On 14 February, the battalion was officially redesignated as *Sturmgeschütz-Brigade 237*. Other than the name, nothing much else changed with the redesignation.

The brigade was attached to the VI. *Armee-Korps* and directed to provide support to the 106. *Infanterie-Division*. Without being committed, the batteries were loaded on trains again at Witebsk during the evening of 19 February and moved back through Orscha to Star Byschoff, where they detrained on 20 February. The Soviets had advanced across the Dnjepr and were marching unimpeded between Rogatschew and Star Byschoff to the west.

The 1st Battery was employed on 22 February in the woods at Wiljachowka in support of *Grenadier-Regiment 12*. On 24 February, it saw action at Mogutschi. The area the enemy had penetrated expanded to the north toward Star Byschoff. The battery was employed to defend against enemy attacks at the Taimanowa cemetery on 25 February; on the next day, it moved to the east bank of the Dnjepr in the area of operations of the 18. *Panzergrenadier-Division* in the Woronino area. From 3 to 7 March, the battery conducted screening operations south of Star Byschoff at Dubowoje and Komaritschi. The battery was constantly engaged against enemy tanks and antitank guns.

On 8 March, the 1st Battery moved via Woronino — Mogilew to the vicinity of Tschaussy, where it remained in position until 14 March in Antopolje, at which time it was moved back to Mogilew.

On 25 March, the brigade was once again employed in the vicinity of Tschaussy. *Oberleutnant* Meyer was given acting command of the 1st Battery at Ssutoki to conduct an immediate counterattack (the battery commander was on leave). The commander's gun received heavy antitank-gun fire at the far edge of the village. When the gun flew in the air, everyone assumed it was antitank-gun fire. A second gun, which was attempting to recover the first, identified an antitank gun and engaged it until it also flew in the air. Once again, it was assumed that antitank-gun fire was the blame. During the attempt to take on the ammunition from the two immobilized guns, the assault gun of *Leutnant* Hofmann also flew in the air. He then saw that they had run over German mines.

During the recovery effort in the evening, a gun that was towing and already damaged ran over two more mines, with the result that the loader, Weiser, was killed. He was the only personnel casualty of the four crews that had been affected. By first light, the damaged guns had been towed approximately two kilometers behind the main line of resistance. There, they were plastered with artillery, but no further damage ensued. That same night, the entire 2nd Battery had bottomed out, with the result that the recovery section was also urgently needed there. By the evening of 26 March, all of the damaged guns were towed to the base camp. On 29 March 1944, another gun was damaged by a direct hit from a mortar round on the edge of the fighting compartment. On the same day, the 1st Battery moved to Mogilew, where *Hauptmann* Spranz took his leave of the brigade. He was transferred to the assault-gun school at Burg, where he was to serve as a class advisor.

After the damage to the guns and vehicles had been repaired, the brigade reported it was operationally ready again.

It loaded on trains in Mogilew on 22 and 23 April 1944. Rolling through Orscha and Minsk, the trains headed west, until stopping and detraining in Maloriya in the Kowel area. On 29 April, the 1st Battery established an assembly area in the woods south of Dolsk. It was first committed there on 30 April, when it defended against an attack in the Turiczany area in the sector of a mountain infantry division. From 1 to 3 May, operations were conducted along the Turja and at the bridgehead, where a number of tanks, including American ones, were knocked out. The battery occupied positions in the Ochotniki woods on 6 May and then moved to the "trapeze" woods at Targowisce on 12 May. The maintenance facility set up in Dorohusk, near Cholm; the trains were located at Luboml.

Many formations were concentrated in this sector, especially those capable of defeating armor, since the German Armed Forces High Command expected a Soviet offensive there, which had as its objective the Baltic. Starting in the middle of May, there was a break in combat activity along the entire front. Bobruisk, Mogilew, Orscha and Witebsk were declared "strongpoints", whereby they were supposed to be held by any and all means.

The men were kept busy with diversions while in the "trapeze" woods: soccer, trips to the movies in the "Ufa Palace"⁶ in the woods, cards and a lot of sleep. On 6 June, the invasion along the English Channel was launched.

On 13 June, the batteries moved to Nowkoszary (sector of *Infanterie-Regiment 39*) and then to Szaino, where *Leutnant Fiehler* was killed during a counterattack on 21 June. By then, the Soviet grand offensive had started in the brigade's former area of operations in the center of the front. On 19 and 20 June, partisans in the rear area of *Heeresgruppe Mitte* set off thousands of demolitions against railways, bridges and lines of communication. From 22 to 24 June, the Red Army moved out against the 3. *Armee*, the 4. *Armee* and the 9. *Armee* with a massive superiority in numbers (6:1 in personnel and 10:1 in weapons). The Red Army broke through the German lines along a frontage of 350 kilometers, and the "strongpoints" were encircled. On 28 June, there was no more front.

On 28 June, the battery moved to the "tank" woods northeast of Kruhel in the vicinity of Kowel. It was in support of *Grenadier-Regiment 78* there. On the evening of 5 July, the retrograde movements started in the area of Kowel. On the following day, the battery defended against an enemy attack in regiment size with only weak infantry elements in support. The Soviets fled after taking heavy casualties. There was a firefight with tanks at short range at the cemetery. Together with four Panthers, a penetration by enemy tanks on the flanks was cleaned up in a few minutes.

On the following night, the withdrawal continued. The "Buffalo" Position east of Maciejow was occupied. A *Panther* battalion was already there in position. On the morning of 8 July 1944, there was a strong tank attack, supported by ground-attack aircraft. A few of the tanks thrust into Maciejow, which was burning, but they were knocked out there. The position was held. Up to 11 July, there were constant operations, during which a few enemy tanks were again eliminated.

During the night of 11/12 July, the 1st Battery changed positions to the north. Moving through Rudnia — Stara Huta — Ratno, it went to Gornike on the Pripet River. On 15 July, it moved to Samary and the Hungarian 12th Division (Reserve). Constant counterattacks were launched in the woods north of Piaski on 17 July. Nerve-wracking defensive operations were also necessary. Early on 18 July, orders were received to pull back toward the north through Divin and Mokrani to Maloriya.

On 16 July, as a result of the movement of the front, the maintenance platoon was ordered to move from Dorohusk to the area around Radzyn. The vehicular column moved through Adampol, where the brigade trains were located, toward the west and into an area that was not secured by German forces. At Mosciska, it was ambushed by partisans. Only two vehicles were able to escape. By the time reinforcements from the trains arrived, all of the vehicles had burned out and the corpses of seven mutilated soldiers were found. Another three were missing. Since there was no longer a maintenance platoon, the non-operational guns sought help in vain from other maintenance shops capable of working on armor. Some clever gun commanders headed toward the rail line, where they were loaded on trains, either by dint of *Schnaps* or the force of arms.

The combat elements of the 1st Battery were ordered by the corps to move south toward Szack on the evening of 18 July. During the night march, the battery commander's vehicle ran over a mine, which caused the column to come to a standstill until the track could be repaired the following morning. That afternoon, several tanks were knocked out south of Szack. The battery was operating on the open right flank of the corps sector. It was ordered to pull back to the north across the Pripet and, on 20 July 1944, was ordered to load on trains for Mlodawa.

The hope that things would return to some normalcy and quiet upon crossing the Bug did not materialize. By the morning of 21 July 1944, the Soviets had already crossed the Bug. They moved west with horse-drawn columns and the fires from the Germans did not hold them up. At Osawa, a counterattack was launched with weak forces from a training unit; the attacked transitioned to defense.

The 1st Battery's combat elements moved to the trains area at Adampol on 22 July, where *Hauptmann Liethmann* took his leave of the unit. He had been transferred back to Germany for general-staff-officer training. The combat elements then marched to the west, moving through Hola, until they ran into a traffic jam caused by the trains and columns pulling back. The brigade staff unexpectedly showed up in Davidy, where the guns had been employed to screen.

Editor's Note: *Ufa* was a major German film production studio which, like most major studios at the time, also maintained its own chain of movie theaters. The remark here is obviously not meant to be taken seriously.

On 23 July, the 2nd Battery, under the leadership of *Leutnant* Lindner, was employed in the Radzyn area, 25 kilometers southeast of Lukow. It is not known what happened there, but the *Leutnant*, seven noncommissioned officers and 16 enlisted personnel have been reported as missing ever since. Also reported as missing on that day was the brigade physician, Dr. Koschatka, as well as his driver.

The brigade headquarters and the 1st Battery pulled back from Davidy during the afternoon of 23 July. East of Radzyn, abandoned vehicles from a higher headquarters were discovered in the open terrain. There was a radio vehicle among them. During the attempt to recover it, the assault gun, which was going to be the tow vehicle, bottomed out in the ground softened by the heavy rains. Two more guns, which gradually came to help, also bottomed out before they could be warned. In feverish work lasting for hours, they succeeded in freeing the vehicles just as they heard the sounds of approaching Soviet tanks a few hundred meters away. The intended "booty" vehicles were also freed up. The guns then rejoined the column, which reached Miedzyrzec in the dark. It was not known whether the village was occupied and, if so, by whom. It turned out to be German forces.

During the afternoon of 24 July, 25 tanks were reported approaching Miedzyrzec. The battery's five guns occupied ambush positions south of the city. When the first tanks appeared about 1000 meters away at the edge of a patch of woods, they were informed by a local of the trap, whereupon they opened fire. The guns were ordered not to return fire. This did not tempt the enemy to continue his movement toward the battery. When the assault guns finally did return fire, the tanks quickly disappeared into the woods. On 25 July, the battery served as the fire brigade for the front lines, operating to the south and west of the city. Several tanks were knocked out, including a captured assault gun. That evening, the battery received orders to cover a retrograde movement during the night at Dotha and Rogosnika, some 40 kilometers further east.

Early in the morning of 26 July, the battery was directed to return to Miedzyrzec as soon as possible. When it got there, Soviet infantry had already penetrated into the city. Tanks south of the railway line were turned back. Without any infantry support, the guns attempted to hold the city by constantly shifting positions. During the afternoon, the guns were pulled out of the city to the north, after march columns of Soviet infantry companies advanced toward the eastern outskirts of the city. In the open terrain the advancing enemy was brought to a standstill through an immediate counterattack. During the morning of 28 July, a large enemy concentration was identified north of Miedzyrzec and scattered. That afternoon, the corps ordered reconnaissance to be conducted at Krzewica, 10 kilometers northwest of Miedzyrzec, on the main road running Siedlce — Minsk — Warsaw.

During the attempt to go around the village, which ran along the main road, with one gun to the east and one to the west, the commander's vehicle received a flank shot in the running gear from an antitank gun. For this reconnaissance operation, there was also a third assault gun involved. It was no longer capable of moving cross-country, so it was posted along the road to cover the movement of the other two guns. The third gun took out the antitank gun before it was able to fire a second round against the commander's vehicle. At that point, the battery and, by extension, the brigade had only one completely operational assault gun. It was transferred to another element, while the two damaged guns were transported by rail to Posen.

On 29 July 1944, the wheeled vehicles from the line batteries and the headquarters moved through Sokolow and headed for Warsaw. The trains of the 1st Battery were already assembled there. There were already indicators of an uprising there. On 31 July, the brigade moved via Modlin to Plönnen, where it was intended to reconstitute it.

On 1 August 1944, the Polish uprising started in Warsaw under General Bor-Komorowski. It was not supported by the Soviet forces.

On 13 August, the brigade was loaded on trains at Plönnen and transported to Möckern, moving via Thorn — Schneidemühl — Berlin — Magdeburg. The assorted scattered elements and the guns that had been sent back for repair showed up by and by at the replacement battalion in Posen, often arriving after having taken adventurous routes. The repair work started on the guns. In the middle of August, all of the vehicles—wheeled and tracked—were transferred to the replacement battalion and the personnel sent to Möckern.

On 12 August 1944, *Oberleutnant* Bertram was awarded the Knight's Cross for his actions at Miedzyrzec. In the course of the recent operations, the battalion had lost 7 officers, 26 noncommissioned officers and 45 enlisted personnel as either killed in action or missing.



A successful crew is congratulated. Additional armor has been bolted to the front of this assault gun. And the next 3 pages •
 Glückwünsche an eine erfolgreiche Besatzung. Am Wannenbug dieses Sturmgeschützes ist eine zusätzliche Panzerung
 befestigt. Und weitere 3 Seiten









Summer of 1944. This crew has 12 „kills“ to its credit. Note the striking camouflage pattern on this assault gun. • Sommer 1944. Auch diese Besatzung hat bisher 12 Abschüsse zu verbuchen. Man beachte den auffälligen Zimmeritanstrich am Sturmgeschütz.





The supplemental armor plating added to this vehicle can be seen to good advantage. • An diesem Geschütz kann man gut die zusätzlich angebrachte Bugpanzerung erkennen.

A large number of the assault guns have already had the *Saukopf* mantlets installed. The name „Erika“ can be seen on the front of the hull. • Der Großteil der Sturmgeschütze ist bereits mit Saukopfblende ausgerüstet. Am Fahrzeugbug kann man den Namen „Erika“ erkennen.





Note the mounting of additional track links to the right and left of the main gun. • Man beachte die Anbringung der zusätzlichen Kettenglieder am Aufbau rechts und links neben der Kanone.

This 10.5-centimeter assault howitzer also has a few „kills“ to its credit. • Auch diese 10,5cm Sturmhaubitze kann schon einige Abschüsse aufweisen.





This 10.5-centimeter assault howitzer also has a few „kills“ to its credit. • Auch diese 10,5cm Sturmhaubitze kann schon einige Abschüsse aufweisen.

The foot soldiers were always happy to hitch a ride. This gun has had no *Zimmerit* applied. • Die Landser freuen sich über jede Mitfahrgelegenheit. Das Geschütz hat keinen Zimmeritanstrich.





Another good view of the previously shown assault howitzer. The name „Hildamaus“ has been painted on the front of the hull. • Nochmal ein guter Blick auf die bereits abgebildete 10,5 cm Sturmhaubitze. Am Wannenbug kann man den Namen „Hildamaus“ lesen.



In July 1944, the battalion supported elements of the Hungarian 12th Division (Reserve). • Im Juli 1944 unterstützt die Abteilung Verbände der 12. ungarischen Reserve-Division. So auch diese Sturmhaubitze.

A portion of the track mount on the hull front has been torn away. • Ein Teil der Kettenhalterung am Fahrzeugbug ist weggerissen.



In the middle of September 1944, the brigade was transferred to the *Panzertruppe* and reorganized and redesignated as *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 219*. The battalion was moved to the Döllersheim Training Area (Camp Zwettl in the wooded section), where the reorganization and training took place. The supply company from *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 216* in St. Pölten was dispatched to the battalion.

For the former assault artillerymen, the new *Sturmpanzer* took some getting used to. With a top speed of 16 kilometers an hour while moving cross-country, there could be no thought of being tactically employed like tanks. During combat operations, it was intended for the assault tanks to move 300-500 meters behind the tanks or assault guns. Indirect firing was not recommended. Firing range was up to 3,500 meters with a charge 6. There was only high explosive ammunition available to engage tanks.

Unfortunately, even at that point in time, there were no training publications available for this weapons system, even at the training center at Erlangen. The battalion was reorganized into three line companies and a supply company. The trains and other supply elements were transferred to the supply company from the companies. The line companies had only the crews for the combat vehicles, a signals section and a company *Spieß* with clerk.

Officer Duty Positions

Headquarters

Commander: Major Paul Friedrich Schauensteiner

Adjutant: Leutnant Waldemar Preiss

Liaison Officer: Leutnant Warnfried Heynemann

Battalion Physician: Assistenzarzt Otto Vinke

Battalion maintenance Officer: Oberleutnant Paul Vacqué

Headquarters Company

Commander: Oberleutnant Meyer, Hans Otto

Scout Platoon: Leutnant Brucks, Friedrich

Engineer Platoon: Leutnant Karl-Heinz Burmeister

Supply Company

Commander: Oberleutnant Heinz Schütt

Liaison Officer: Leutnant Walter Affeld

Weapons Officer: Leutnant Walter Heinzelmann

Physician's Assistant: Unterarzt Dr. Wilhelm Marasch

1./Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 219

Commander: Hauptmann Ludwig Bertam

Platoon Leaders: Leutnant Hugo Block, Leutnant Heinrich Lücking, Leutnant Adolf Garthe (excess)

2./Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 219

Commander: Oberleutnant Rolf Meißner

Platoon Leaders: Leutnant Bernhard Sowada, Leutnant Heinrich Becker

3./Sturmpanzer-Abteilung 219

Commander: Oberleutnant Fritz Otto

Platoon Leaders: Leutnant Hans-Diether Hofmann, Leutnant Helfried Müller, Leutnant Anders Rathjen (excess)

Armored Maintenance Platoon

Leader: Leutnant Herbert Stöcker

Maintenance Technician: Technischer Inspekteur (K) Michael Guillot

The weeks in Zwettl were filled with required duties, training, instruction and a lot of soccer.

The battalion was alerted on 15 October 1944. Preparation attempts for an uprising by Horthy in Budapest had become known. The 1st Company was given all of the assault tanks that had been received up to that point (10), along with the necessary supply vehicles. The commander, the adjutant and the liaison officer went with the company, which was loaded on trains at Göpfritz on 16 October. The rail movement—through Vienna, Győr (Raab) and Komárom—proceeded very slowly due to aerial attacks along the route and bomb damage to the rail bed. When the trains arrived at Budapest on 19 October, the situation had already been handled diplomatically on 16 October. The government and Horthy had stepped down.

The company did not detrain; instead, it was transported back north of the Danube. Once it reached Galanta on 22 October, the movement was expedited and St. Martin in Slovakia was reached that night, after moving through

Sered—Pistyan — Waag — Sillein. Due to the dangers posed by partisans, the company did not detrain until the following morning (23 October). The rest of the battalion was in the military facility. The formation of the battalion and its receipt of personnel, armored vehicles and other types of vehicles continued. The Tatra and Lower Tatra Ranges around St. Martin were firmly under the control of the partisans. *SS-Brigade "Dirlewanger"* was nearby. It was a penal formation for all members of the German armed forces and it had had experience and success in dealing with uprisings and partisans. A planned combined exercise with it did not take place, however. The time was spent with weapons firing, training of all types, social get-togethers and soccer and hand ball matches, including some against local teams.

The battalion was loaded on trains from 3 to 6 December 1944. Although the assault guns had been loaded on normal 24-ton cars, the assault tanks required special flat cars capable of 27 tons. The railroad had difficulty getting those types of cars.

The train moved along the Waag River and through Sillein — Pistyan — Galanta — Komarom. The 1st Company retrained during the evening of 8 December at Kisber. The next day, the battalion road marched to Stuhlweißenburg. The Red Army had reached the southern banks of Lake Balaton on 7 December.

The combat elements of the 1st Battery moved to Baracska (in the direction of Budapest) on 10 December. Baracska is 35 kilometers from the middle of Budapest. Defensive operations were conducted on 12 December against attacks directed at the main line of resistance at Martonvasar and, on 14 December, an attack southwest of Kismarton was supported.

During the evening of 17 December, the battalion changed positions and moved to Kapolnasnyek on the northeast corner of Lake Valence. Immediate counterattacks were launched on 18 December south and Southeast of Kapolnasnyek. During the evening of 19 December, one assault tank was lost due to a direct hit. Another change of position took place during the night, with the battalion moving to Pazmand. The Soviet offensive started northeast of Lake Valence on 20 December, with the objective of encircling Budapest. Large attacks supported by tanks were turned back at Kapolnasnyek. Another assault tank was a complete write-off. It was discovered, however, that the assault tank had not been lost to enemy action. There was no doubt that its barrel had blown up. It was also determined that that was what had happened to the first assault tank. The 1st Company had to turn over its assault tanks to the 2nd Company. On express orders from the commander of the 1st Company, none of its crews fired the main gun in any of the operations that followed.

The few days of combat operations had shown that the system involving the supply company did not function, especially since the trains and the supply company were located in Varpolata, which was too far away from the combat elements. The supply vehicles and the maintenance sections were then divided among the line companies again. The forward base camps were thus closer to the combat elements again, which had always worked well with the assault guns.

The battalion headquarters was in Vereb on 20 December. During the evening, elements of the 1st Company pulled back to Lowasbereny. On 22 December, the assault tanks were moved forward to Vereb. When the support vehicles and the non-operational assault tank of the company were being brought forward, an enemy tank thrust from the south cut through the column between Lowasbereny and Vereb, but it did not cause any significant damage. Those vehicles pulled back to Csakvar. The enemy tank attack had the objective of encircling Budapest from the west. That is most likely why it allowed the column to escape relatively unscathed. On 24 December, the ring around Budapest was finally closed. The rear elements of the battalion first pulled back from Csakvar to Felcsut (near Bicske and 35 kilometers west of Budapest) on 23 December. They then moved through Tatabanya to Kisigmánd and Nagyigmánd (10 kilometers south of Komarom). The Soviet armored thrust also passed by Vereb, where elements of the 2nd and 3rd Companies under *Oberleutnant Otto*, together with some *Panthers*, were encircled. All of them were able to break through to the west later on, however. During the course of this fighting, the forces on the ground were effectively supported by the *Stukas* of *Oberstleutnant Rudel*. On 24 December 1944, *Leutnant Sowada*, a Knight's Cross recipient, was killed at Vertessomló (5 kilometers south of Tatabanya) by a direct hit from an antitank round. On 25 December, the third assault tank flew in the air as the result of a burst barrel. It was *Leutnant Becker's* vehicle. In each instance, four men of the crew were killed. In one case, the driver escaped with serious injury. In the other two instances, it was the gun commanders who were badly wounded. After exhaustive investigations of the ammunition, which was safeguarded, explosives experts from the German Army High Command determined in January 1945 that some of the casings had been filled with dynamite, presumably at an ammunition factory. On 26 December 1945, the headquarters and the companies moved to Asványrő and Darnószeli (25 kilometers northwest of Raab); the maintenance facility moved to Kimle. The headquarters and the 2nd Company were loaded on trains at Altenburg (Hungary) on 9 January 1945. They moved via Raab and Komarom to Kisber on 10 January, where they detrained. On 11 January, the combat elements moved into assembly areas northwest of Stuhlweißenburg.¹

During the night of 15/16 January 1945, the 2nd Company moved through Varpolota to Hajmasker (near Veszprem). Two night later, on 17/18 January, it moved to Balatonkenese. From that location, the 23. *Panzer-Division* attacked in the direction of Stuhlweißenburg. That evening, the company reached Sar-Szentmihály (7 kilometers southwest of the middle of Stuhlweißenburg). Several T 34's were knocked out, and the enemy suffered heavy casualties. The IV. *SS-Panzer-Korps*, which had moved out to the south at the same time, broke through the deeply echeloned enemy front and established two bridgeheads over two canals at Kaloz (30 kilometers southwest of Stuhlweißenburg). The attack was continued toward the southeast, and it reached the Danube on 26 January.

On 4 January 1945, the IV. *SS-Panzer-Korps* had launched an offensive between Lake Balaton and Budapest to relieve the city. By 8 January, it had advanced some 25 to 30 kilometers west and north-northwest of Budapest against increasingly stronger defensive efforts. By 13 January the relief effort had to be called off.

Ground gains were also made to the east south of Lake Valence. The assault tanks suffered engine and transmission problems, but they were able to reach the supply company in Enying (30 kilometers southwest of Stuhlweißenburg) under their own power. From there, they were towed by the recovery section to Vespem. At Vespem, they were loaded on trains on 25 January and sent to the maintenance facility at Romand, albeit in a roundabout fashion, where they detrained on 28 January. It was at that time that the assault tanks that had become disabled in December and had been sent to the armor repair facility in Brieg in East Prussia were returned to the battalion.

During the operations south of Lake Balaton, *Leutnant* Garthe was knocked out in his assault tank at Hercegfalva on 23 January. Reinforced enemy counterattacks commenced on 26 January. By 28 January, the enemy launched a major offensive along the Southern Front. As a result, the attempts to relieve Budapest from the south had to be called off. On 2 February, the front was pulled back and shortened. Budapest surrendered on 13 February 1945; only small elements succeeded in breaking out. Starting on 5 March 1945, the enemy started to be reinforced south of Lake Balaton. This shaped the German immediate counterattacks and combat operations from 7 to 15 March. Starting on 19 March, the front was ordered shortened again and a new defensive line to be established from Stuhlweißenburg to Komárom. After the advance of Soviet forces from Stuhlweißenburg to the west of 22 March, the positions between the lakes were abandoned on 24 March. At 0100 hours on 25 March, during a march rest with four assault tanks at Nagyvaszony, the assault tank of *Wachtmeister* Delbos received a direct hit from a Soviet ground-attack aircraft's bomb. Along with Delbos, the rest of the crew was killed: *Unteroffizier* Dieter Roja, Sepp Schandl and Zeiler. As a result of additional gaps in the front, a new line was to be occupied in Seemitte (to the north) on 27 March. On 29 and 30 March, the Red Army reached the Austrian border in the Steiermark area (Steinamanger and Günz) with some of its elements. During the combat operations of the previous weeks, the gun crews, the recovery section and the maintenance personnel had had to undergo considerable difficulties in keeping the assault tanks operational or making them operational again. One assault tank was lost as a result of a direct hit from a bomb (described above) and immobilized assault tanks had to be blown up. On 29 March 1945, the remnants of the company fled before the advancing Soviets. They moved through Nowa — Lenti — Murska — Sobota to Radkersburg, which was reached on 30 March. Before getting there, the last assault tanks had to be blown up due to a lack of fuel. The remaining vehicles road marched through Graz to Brück, where they were loaded on trains on 4 April 1945. The transport moved through Leoban — Linz — Budweis — Iglau to Frauenburg, where they detrained on 12 April. As early as 11 January, the 1st and 3rd Companies, which had no assault tanks left, were sent by rail from Asvanyraro to Kirschfeld (near Znaim), where they were supposed to be issued new assault tanks. Although the 3rd Company received new assault tanks, the 1st Company was issued captured T 34's and American Shermans. On 23 March 1945, the 3rd Company, under *Oberleutnant* Otto, rolled back to Hungary on trains. Because of the Soviet advances, it was no longer able to link up with the battalion. It was committed in the sector of the front north of the Danube in the border area between Hungary and Slovakia. It fought around Gran and Waag as a separate unit. On 25 April 1945, when *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung* 219 was ordered disbanded by the field-army group, the 3rd Company was absorbed into an unknown tank regiment.

Effective 15 February 1945, *Major* Schaupensteiner transferred command of the battalion to *Hauptmann* Trumpa. Schaupensteiner took his leave of the battalion on 27 March in Kirschfeld. In the middle of April, the captured tanks that the 1st Company had been issued, had to be turned back in to the tank support point, which was being moved from Znaim to Budweis. On 15 April, the rest of the battalion moved from Kirschfeld to Stritschitz (near Budweis).

The 1st Company was moved to the Döllersheim Training Area near Oberndorf on 22 April. The 2nd Company, which had rejoined the battalion from Hungary via a circuitous route, likewise went to Döllersheim. The two companies were supposed to be retrained as antitank personnel and schooled on the *Hetzer* tank destroyer. When it became known that the battalion was only going to be employed with the infantry, the battalion commander, made an agreement with the field-army group: Effective 25 April, *Panzer-Jagdbrigade* 123 (*Trumpa*) was to be formed (minus the battalion's 3rd Company). It was directed to Waidhofen an der Thaya to be formed.

The brigade, in addition to the headquarters, was to consist of three elements, each composed of three companies. Each company was to be further broken down to "hunting detachments" of squad strength, which were equipped with bicycles. Each man was to have a *Sturmgewehr* 44 and two *Panzerfäuste*. Personnel that were lacking were supposed to be sent. Personnel only showed up in dribs and drabs, mostly officers and noncommissioned officers, who had been combed out of higher headquarters, military administrative headquarters or field elements, such as night fighter units, that could no longer get any weapons. As a result of the capitulation on 8 May 1945, the brigade was supposed to pull back to the west and surrender to the US forces along the demarcation line at Freistadt. When the brigade arrived there on the morning of 10 May, it was disarmed, but it was not allowed to cross the demarcation line, since the deadline had passed at 2400 hours. Forces in the field, refugees and fleeing civilians who were east of the line were supposed to be handed over to the Soviets. After conferring with *Generalleutnant* Kullmer, the Commanding General of the XXX. *Armee-Korps*, the units were disbanded and released from their service obligations. Many soldiers crossed the demarcation line in small groups or individually and made their way home. Others wound up in Soviet captivity or in US prisoner-of-war camps, where some of them were turned over to the Soviets.

After two attempts once the Soviets had arrived in Freistadt, *Hauptmann* Trumpa succeeded in getting most of his "brigade" out of the Soviet sphere of influence and leading it to the American camp in the Rosenberg sector. Those soldiers who made it there were released shortly thereafter. During its fighting in Hungary, *Sturmpanzer-Abteilung* 219 had lost 2 officers, 7 noncommissioned officers and 14 enlisted personnel, although these casualty figures do not include those sustained after 2 March 1945.



When the battalion was formed, it also received some older assault tanks for training purposes. This vehicle was a 3rd variant. It has a drive sprocket that was also used on the F and G models of the *Panzer IV*. • Bei der Aufstellung der Abteilung erhält der Verband zur Ausbildung auch einige ältere Sturmpanzer. Dieses Fahrzeug der Ausführung III. ist mit einem Antriebsrad ausgerüstet, wie es bei den Panzerkampfwagen IV Ausführung F und G standart war.

Gunnery training at a training area. • Schießausbildung auf dem Truppenübungsplatz.





As part of the unit-level training, the assault tanks also tested their skills at being employed as platoons. • Im Rahmen der Verbandsausbildung wird auch der zugmäßige Einsatz der Sturmpanzer erprobt.

Part of the driver training for the assault tanks also included negotiating small water obstacles. • Zu der Ausbildung der Sturmpanzerfahrer gehört auch das Überwinden kleiner Gewässer.

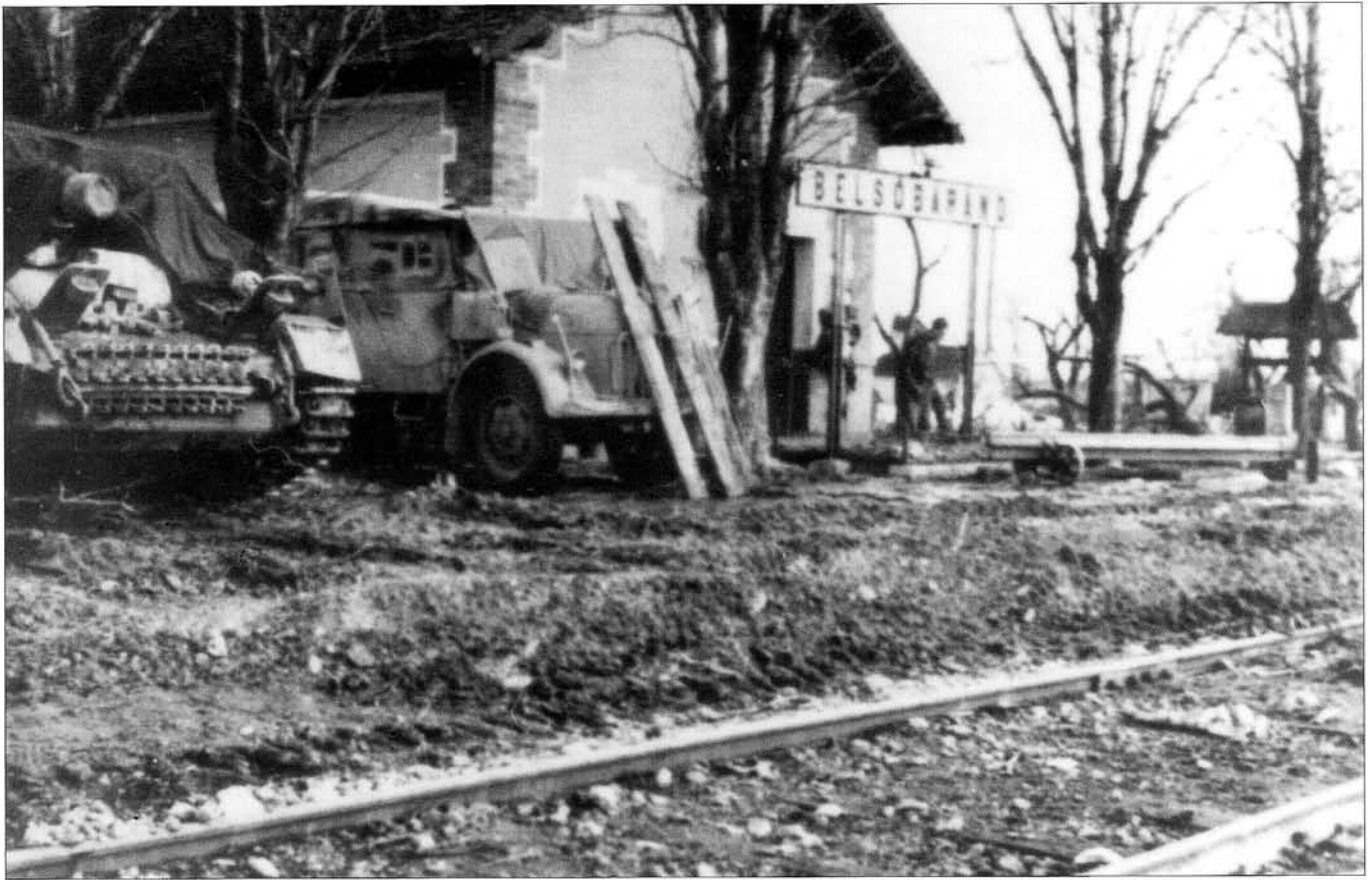




Instructors and officers observe the fording of a creek. • Ausbilder und Offiziere beobachten das Durchwaten des Baches.

A striking camouflage pattern featuring large flecks can be seen on this assault tank. • Auf dem Sturmpanzer ist ein auffälliger großfleckiger Tarnstrich aufgebracht.





After training, the battalion was moved to Hungary at the beginning of December. Elements of the battalion were put up in Belsobarand. • Nach der Ausbildung wird die Abteilung Anfang Dezember 1944 nach Ungarn verlegt. Teile des Verbandes werden bei Belsobarand untergebracht.

After the first snowfall, the assault tanks received a white coat of paint. • Nach dem ersten Schnee erhalten die Sturmpanzer einen zusätzlichen weißen Winteranstrich.

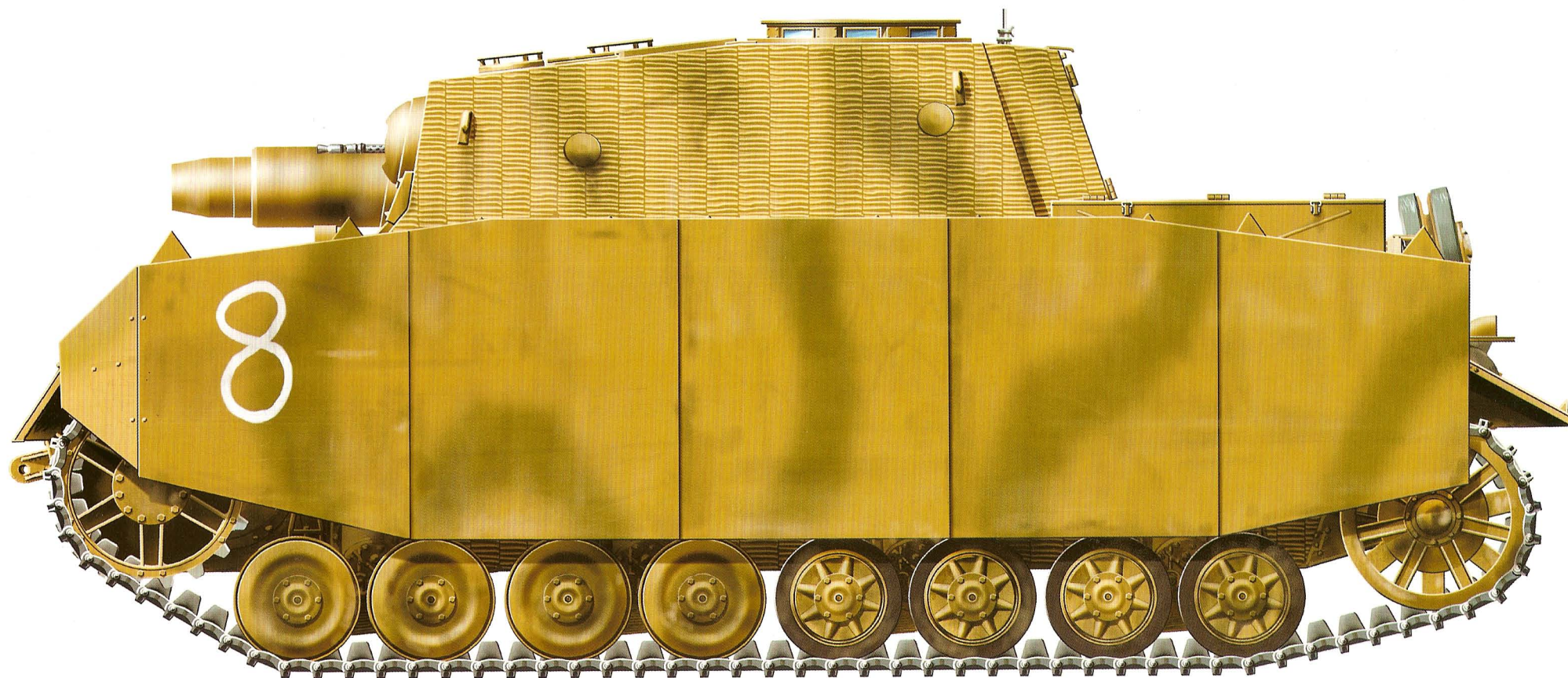




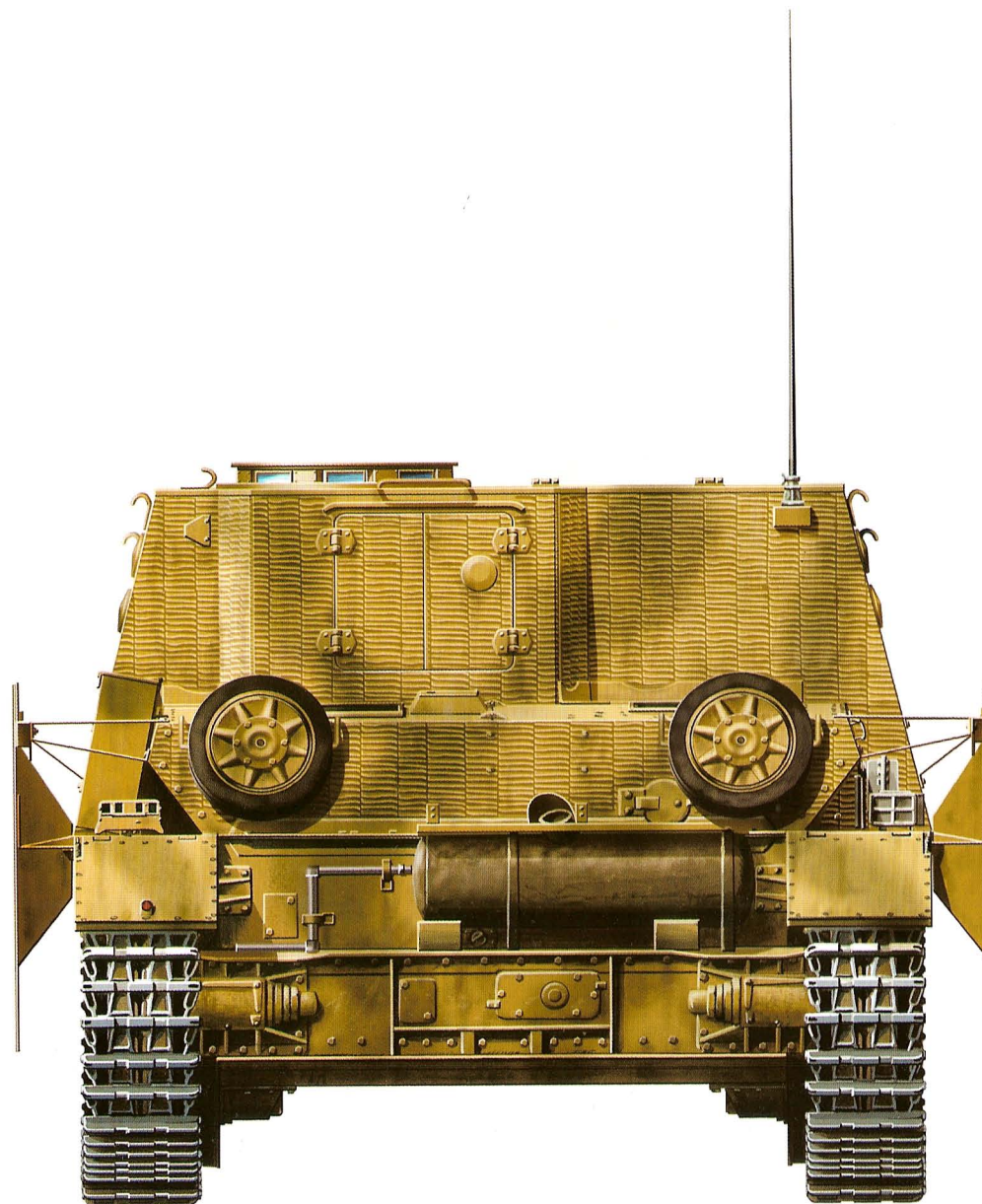
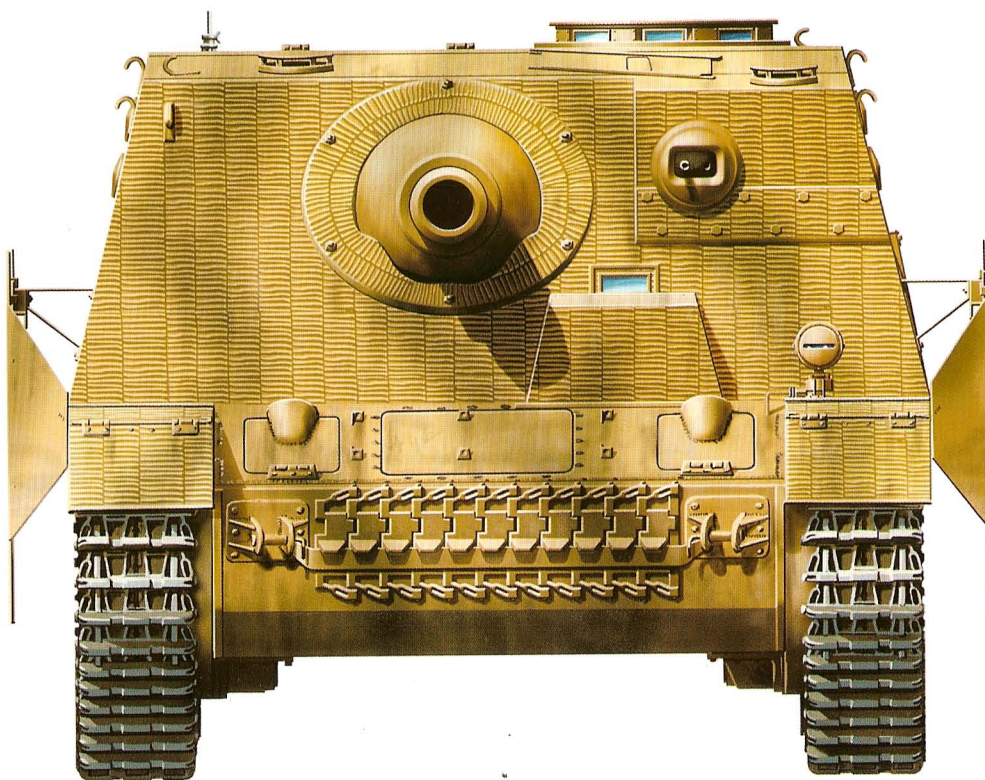
The maintenance personnel were constantly busy. In this photograph, we see a later version of the 18-ton prime mover towing a damaged vehicle. • Immer wieder müssen die Instandsetzungsdienste tätig werden. Hier schleppt eine späte Ausführung eines 18 to Zugkraftwagen einen Schadpanzer ab.

This assault tank has been given a thorough coating of *Zimmerit*. It has even been placed on the mudguards. • Der Sturmpanzer ist mit einer umfassenden Zimmeritbeschichtung versehen. Sogar auf den Kettenabdeckungen ist dieser aufgetragen.





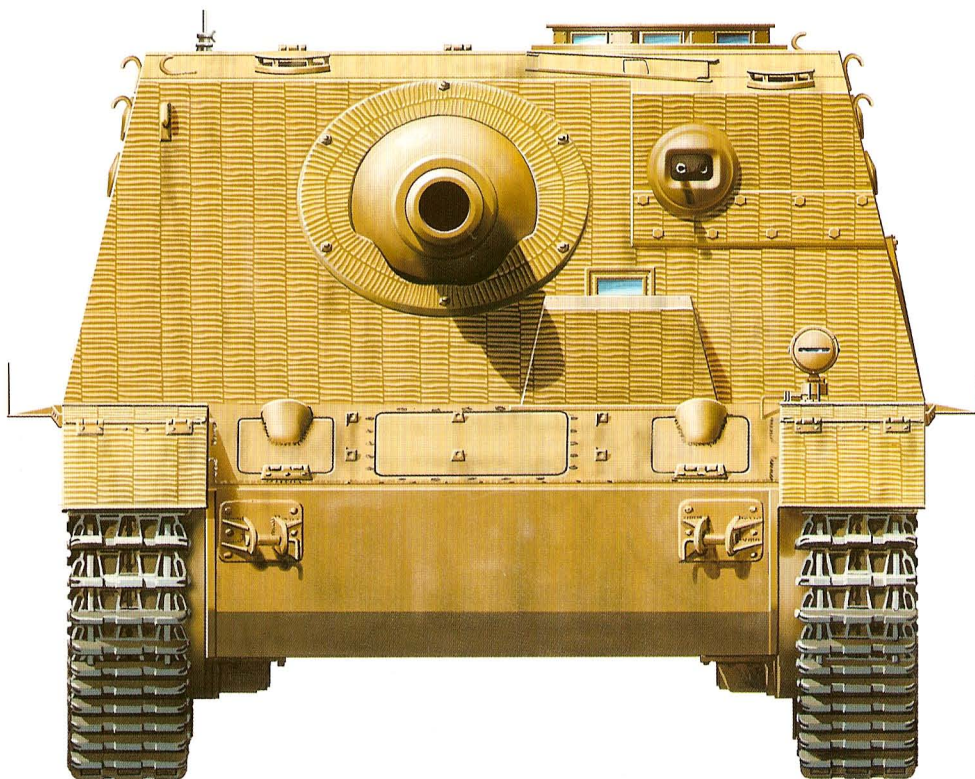
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 217, Grafenwöhr, Germany, May, 1944.



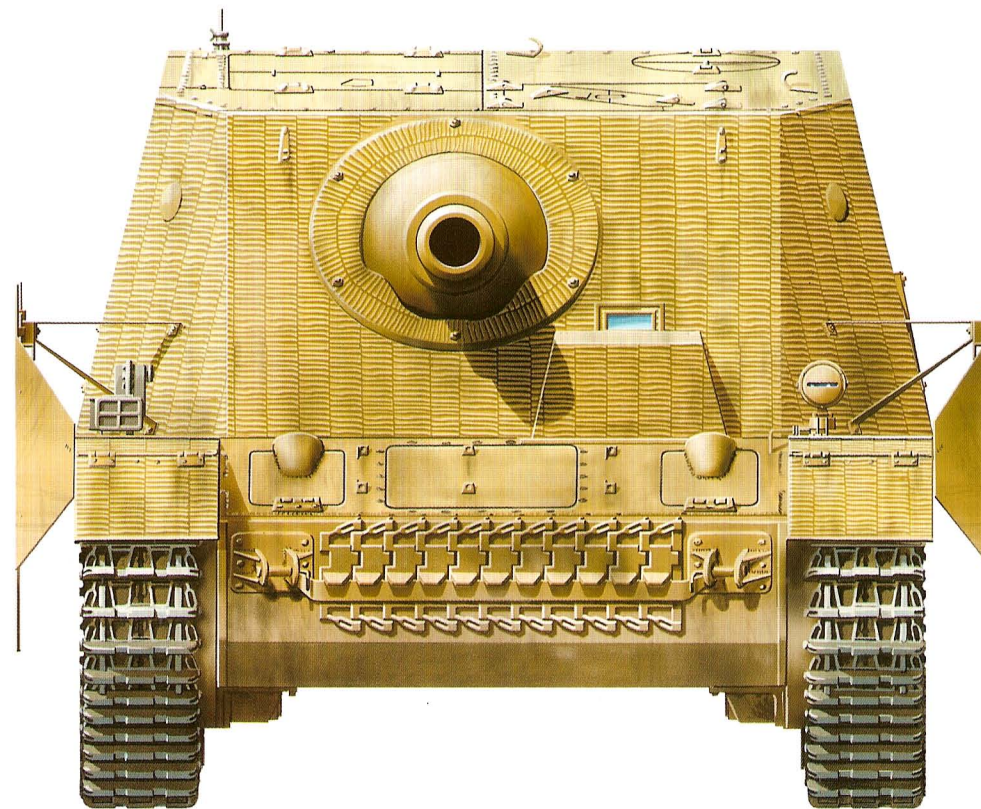
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 217, Grafenwöhr, Germany, May, 1944.



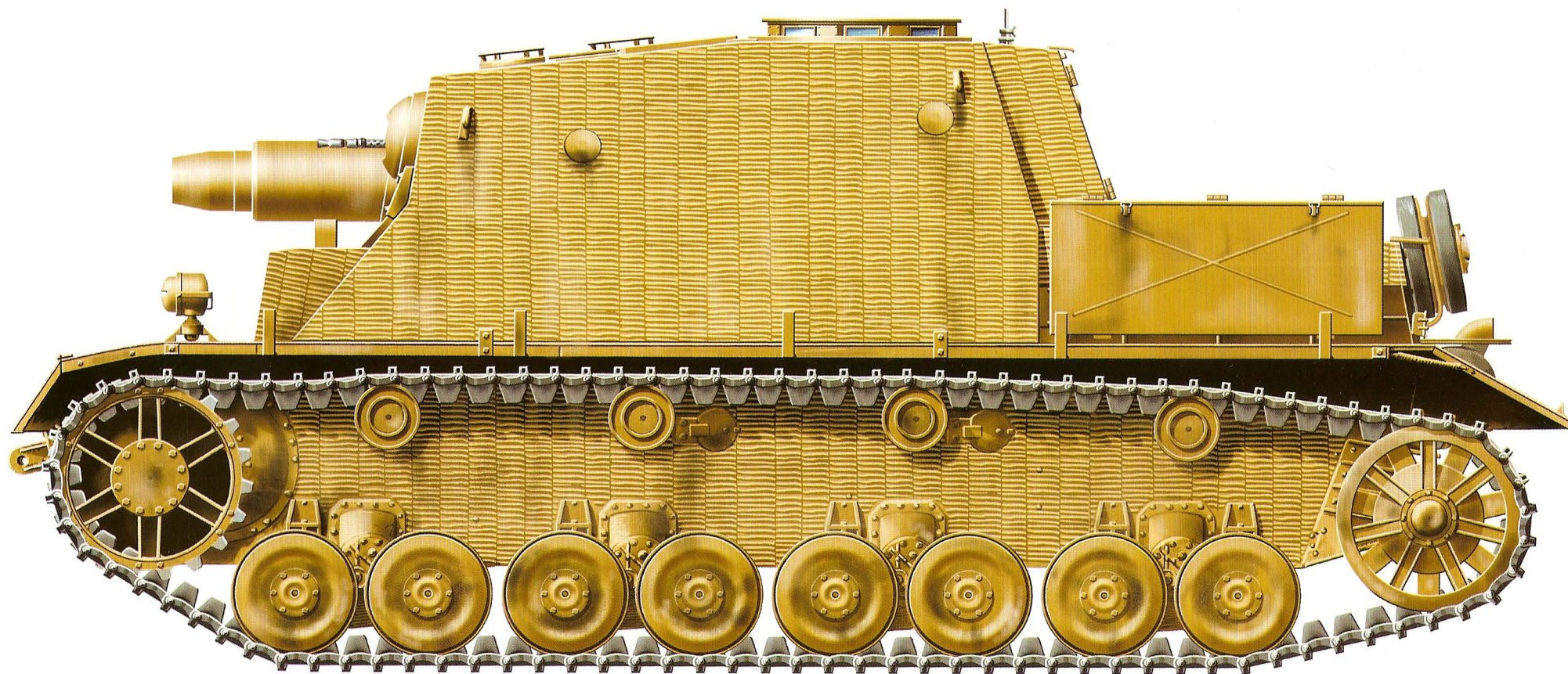
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 217, Grafenwöhr, Germany, May, 1944.



Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 217, the area of Caen, France, Juli, 1944.



Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 217, Grafenwöhr, Germany, May, 1944.



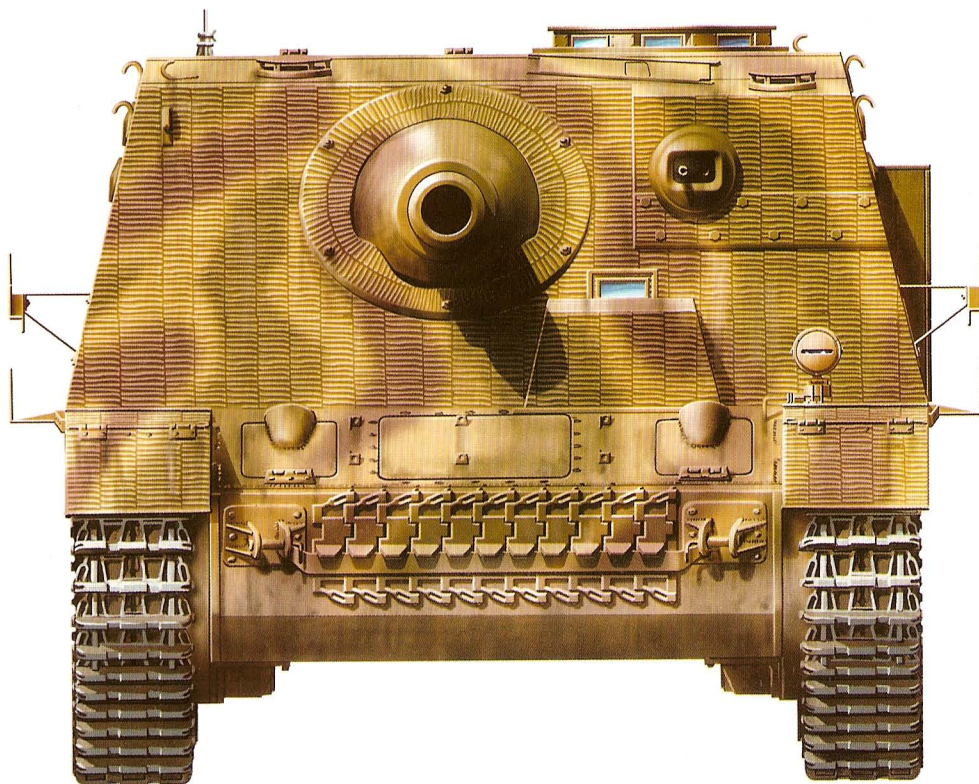
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 217, the area of Caen, France, Juli, 1944.



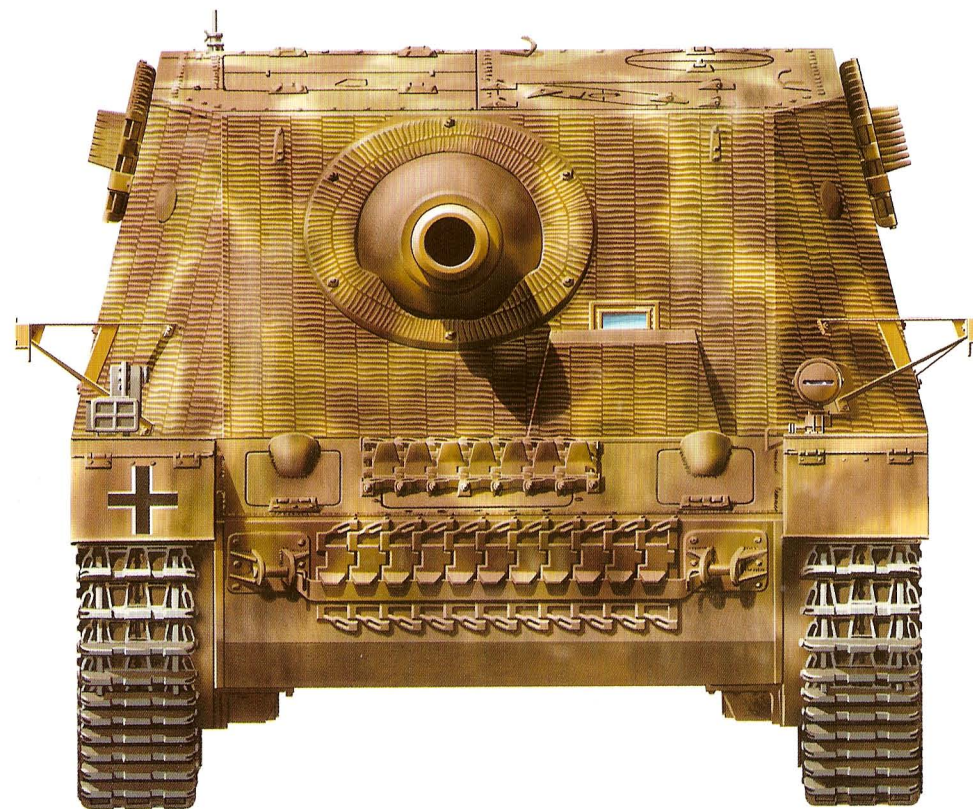
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 217, the area of Falaise, May, 1944.



Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 217, the area of Falaise, May, 1944.



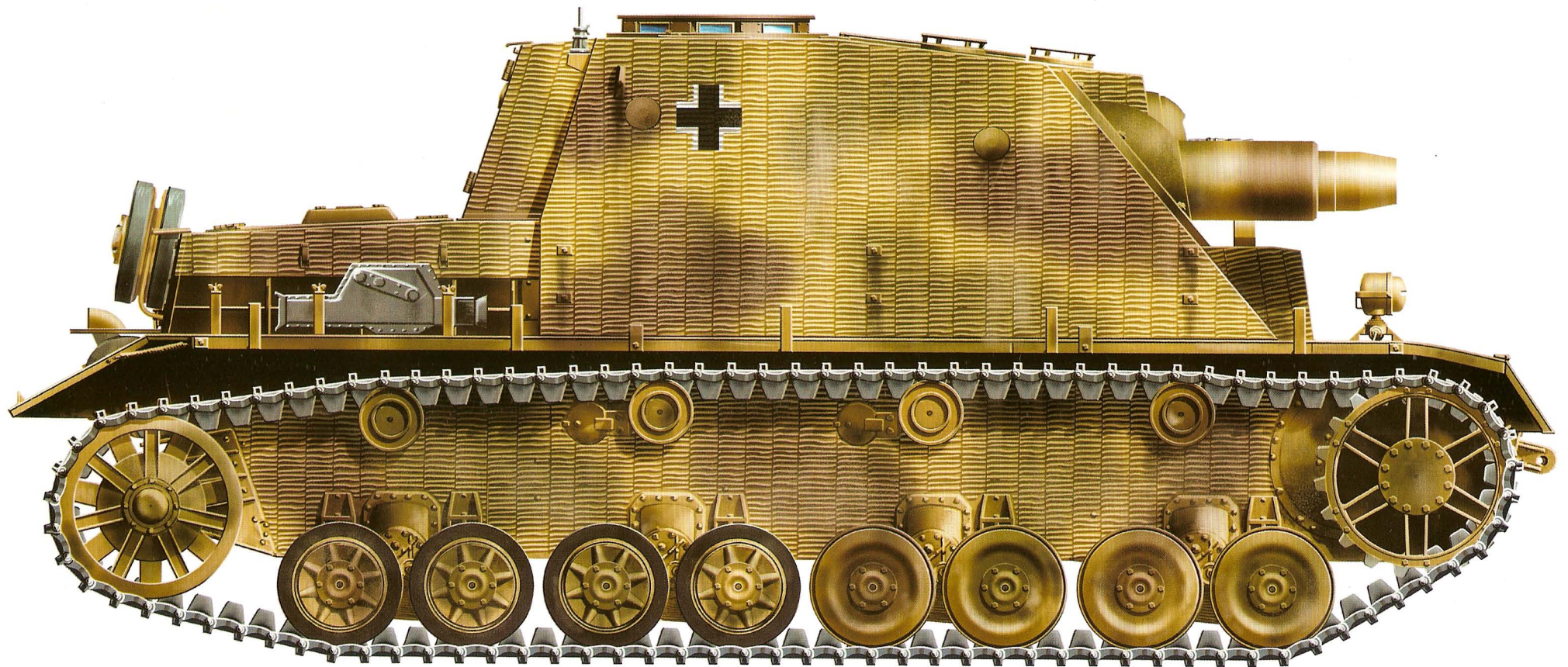
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. 1./Stupa. Abt. 217, operation *Wacht am Rhein*, the area of St.Vith, Belgium, December, 1944.



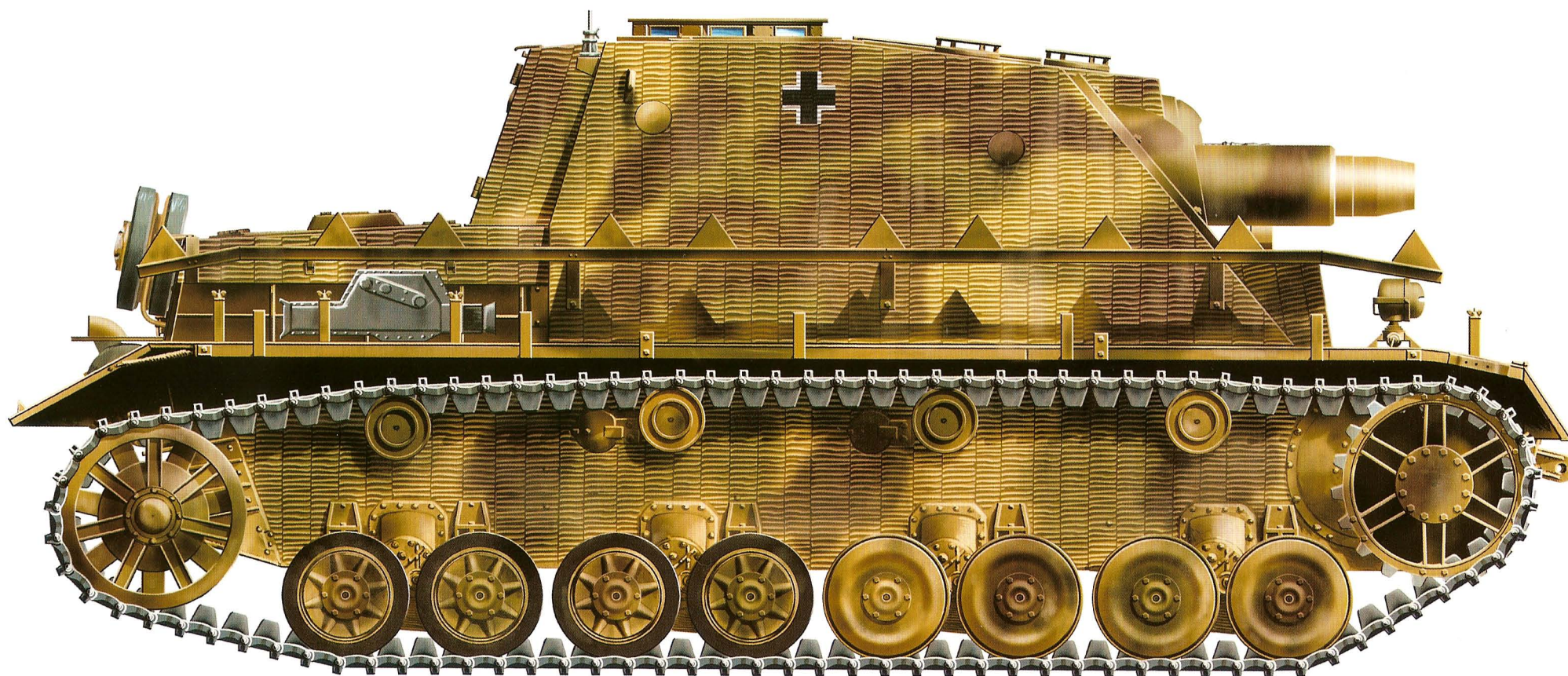
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 217, the area of Falaise, France, May, 1944.



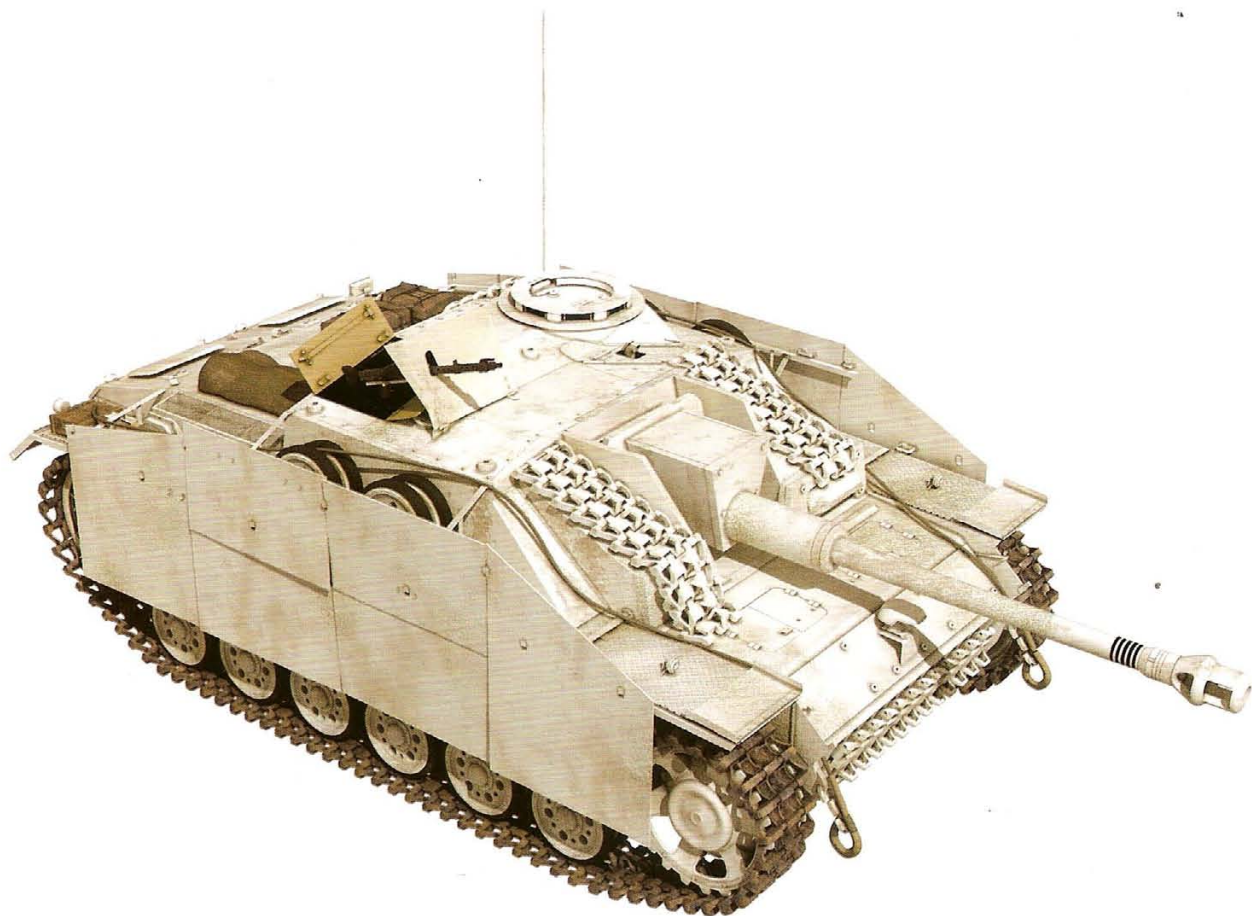
Sturmpanzer IV, 1./Stupa. Abt. 217, operation *Wacht am Rhein*, the area of St.Vith, Belgium, December, 1944.



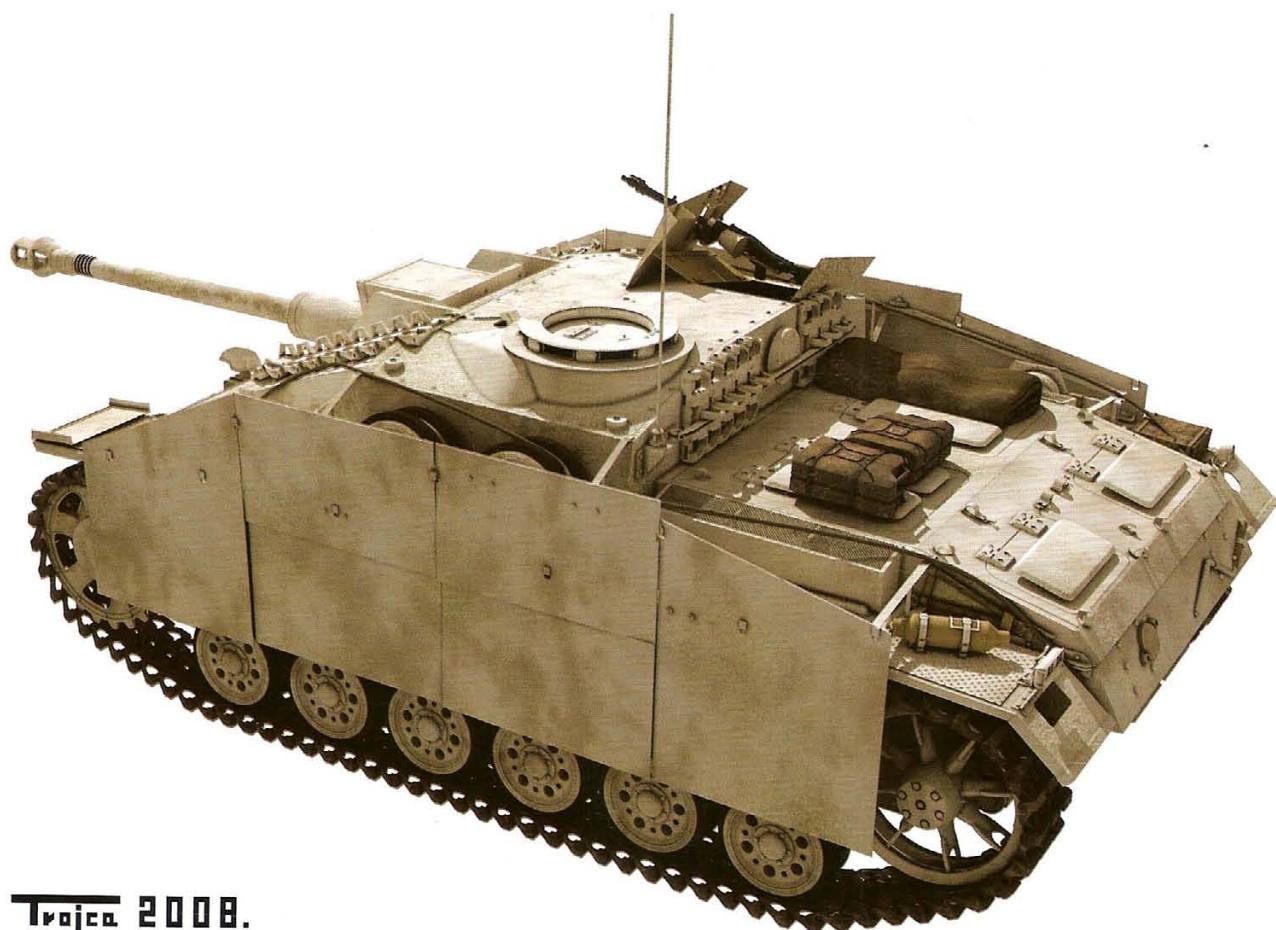
Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Abt. 217, operation *Wacht am Rhein*, the area of St.Vith, Belgium, December, 1944.



Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. 2./Stupa. Abt. 217, operation *Wacht am Rhein*, the area of St.Vith, Belgium, December, 1944.



StuG.III Ausf. G, StuG.Brig. 237, the area of Witebsk, Russia, February, 1944.





StuG.III Ausf. G, StuG.Abt. 237, the area of Jelnia, Russia, September, 1943.





10,5 cm Sturmhaubitze 42 Ausf. G, StuG.Abt. 237, the area of Jelnia, Russia, September, 1943.

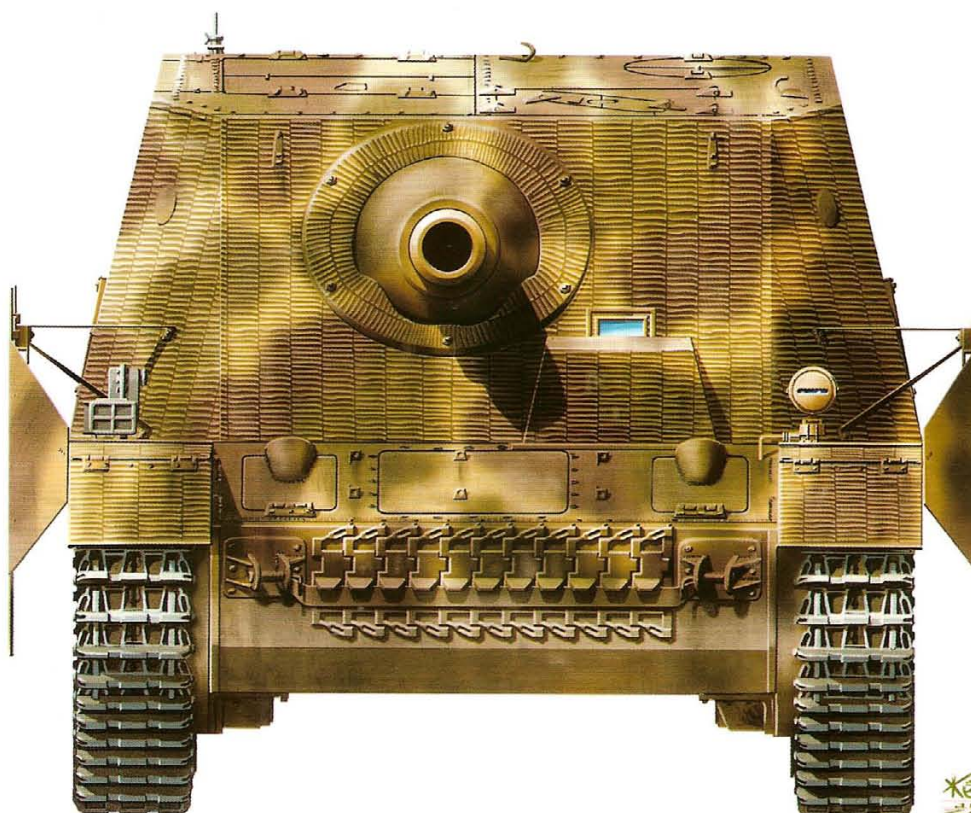




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10,5 cm Sturmhaubitze 42 Ausf. G, StuG.Abt. 237, the area of Jelnia, Russia, September, 1943.

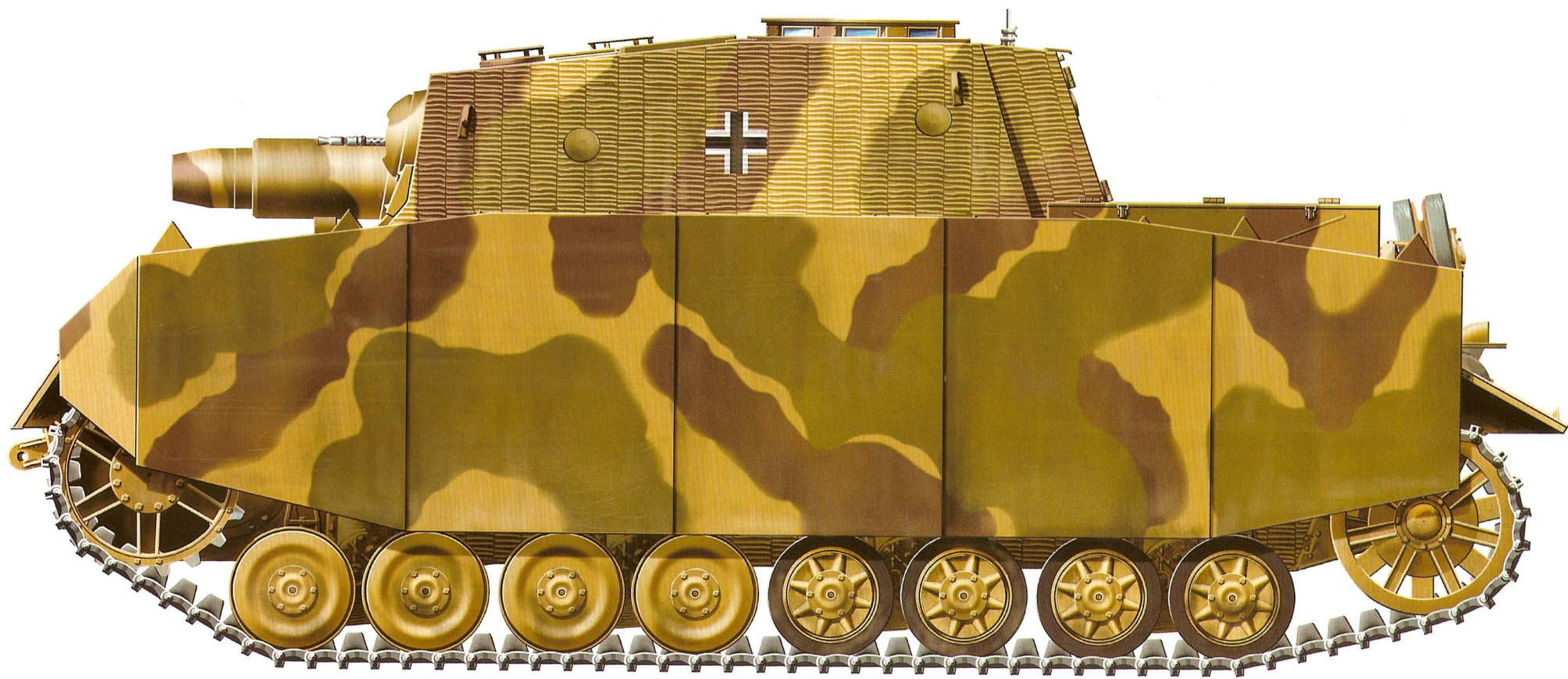
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 219, Germany, November, 1944.



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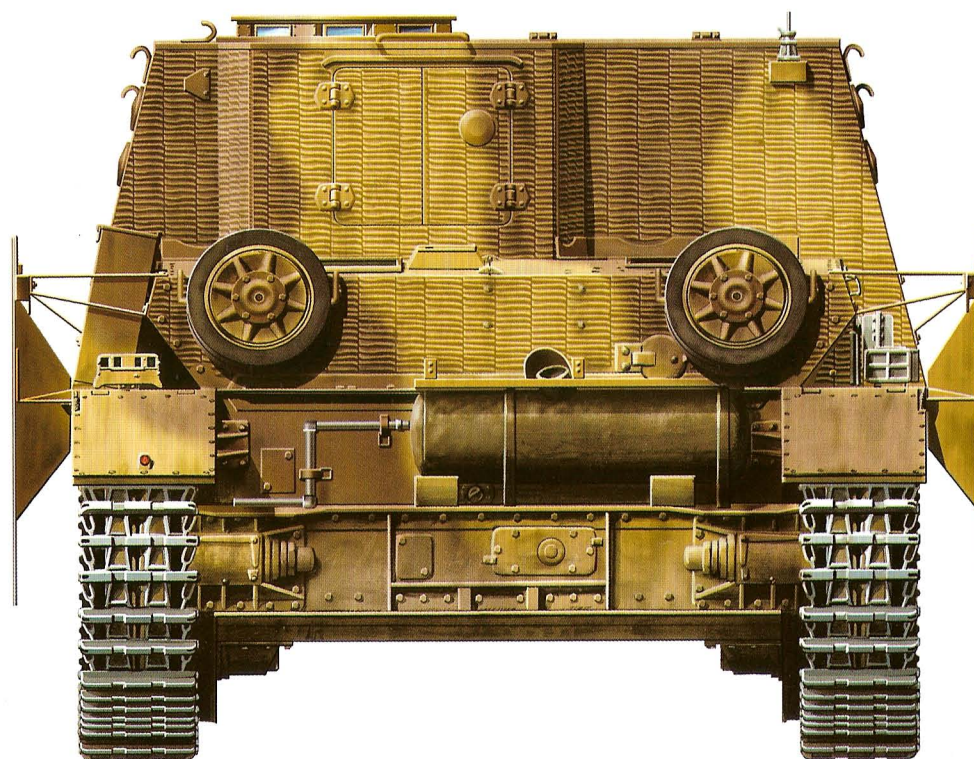
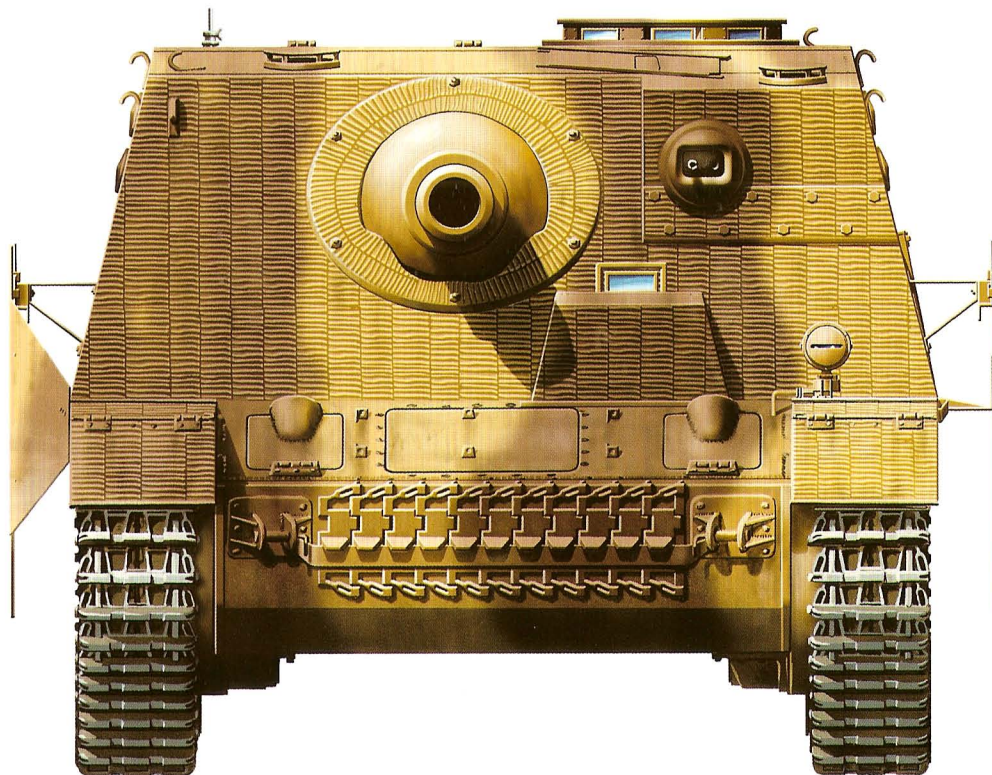
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 219, Germany, November, 1944.



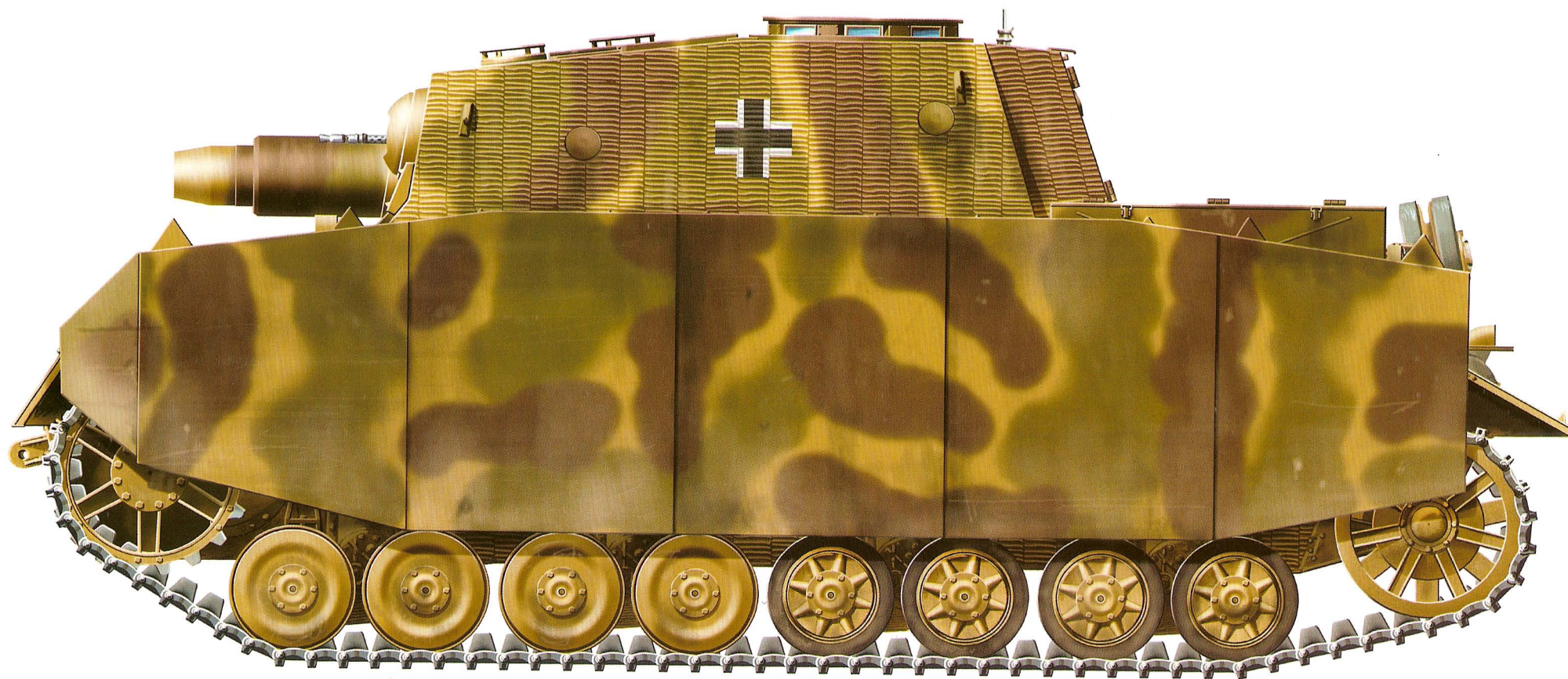
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 219, Germany, November, 1944.



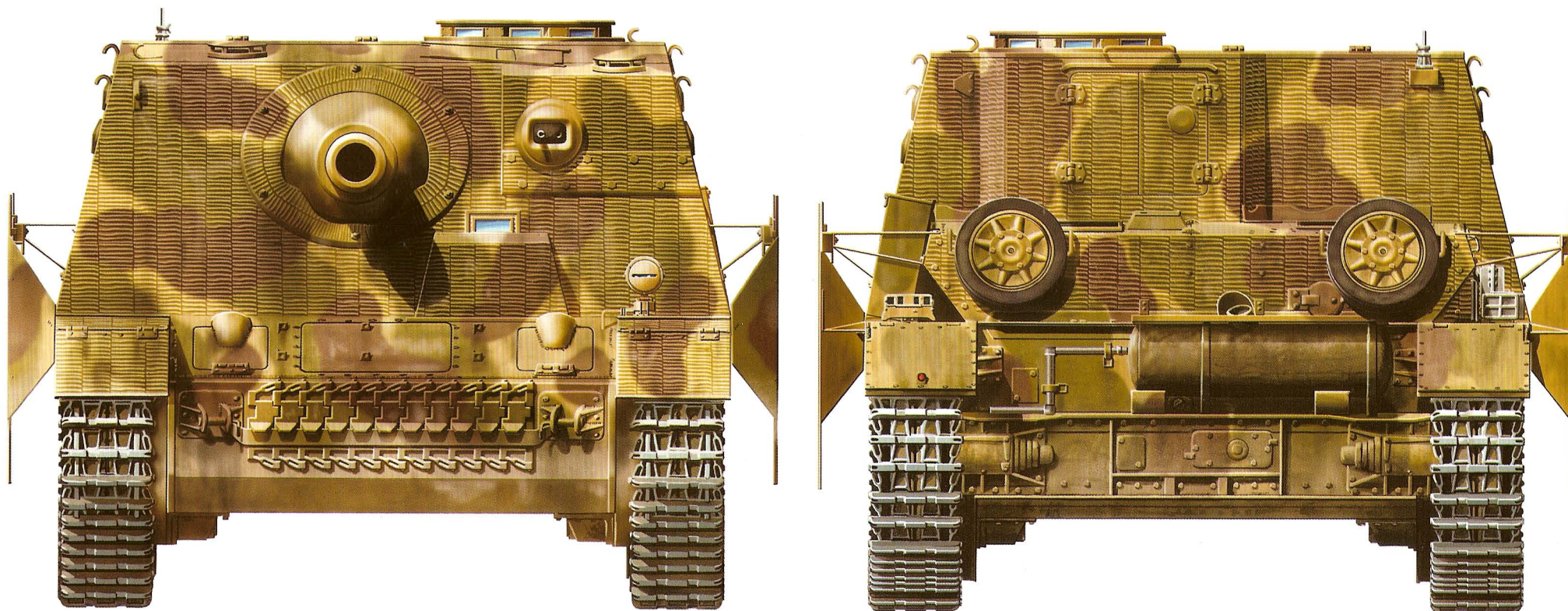
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 219, Germany, November, 1944.



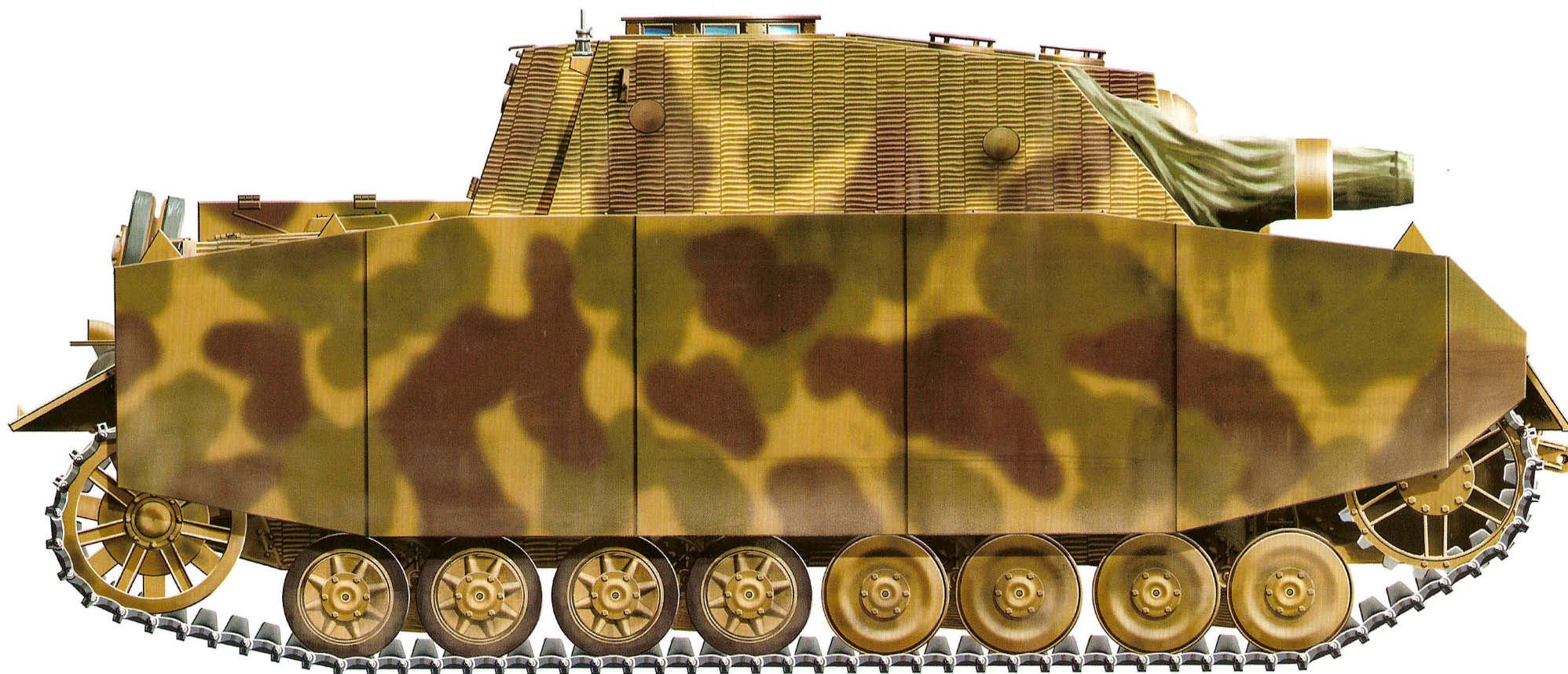
Sturmpfanz IV, Stupa. Abt. 219, Germany, November, 1944.



Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 219, Germany, November, 1944.



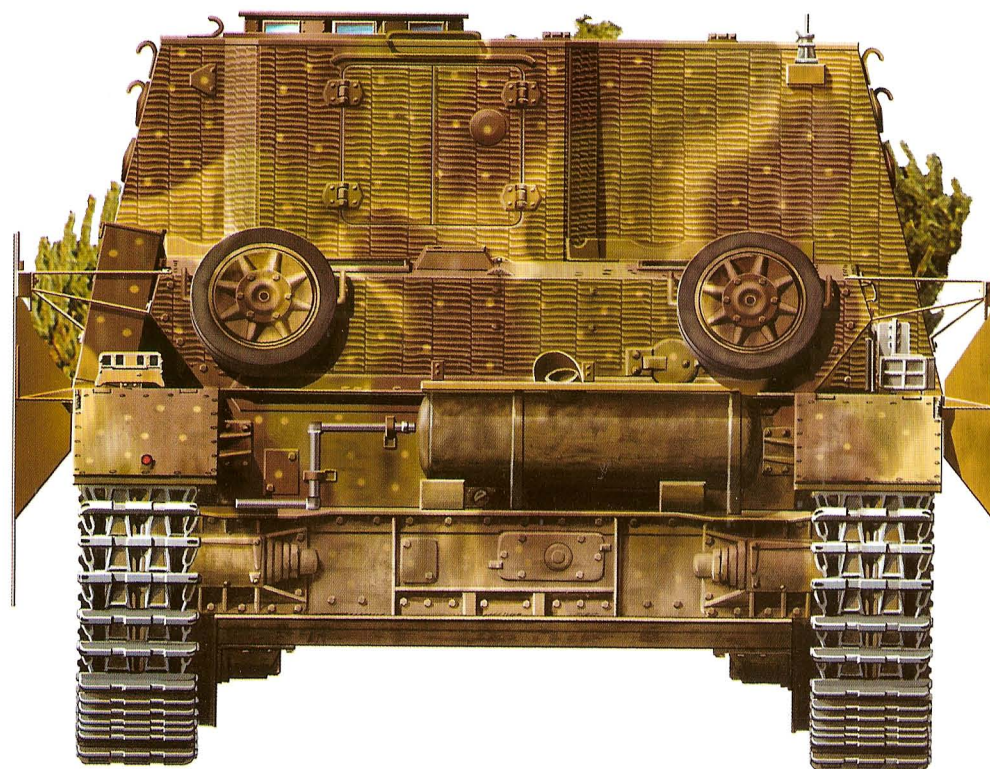
Sturmpanzer IV, Stupa. Abt. 219, Germany, November, 1944.



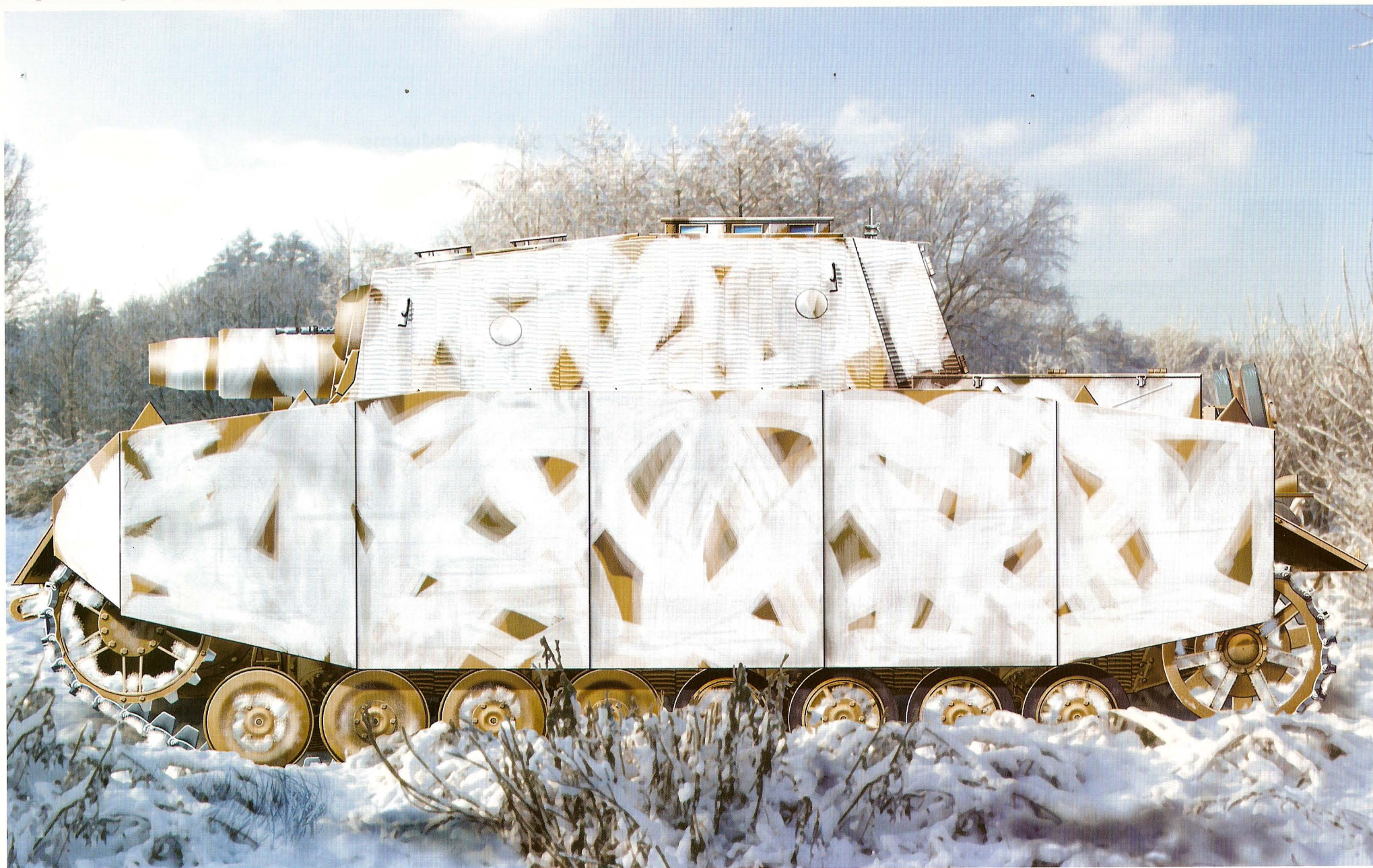
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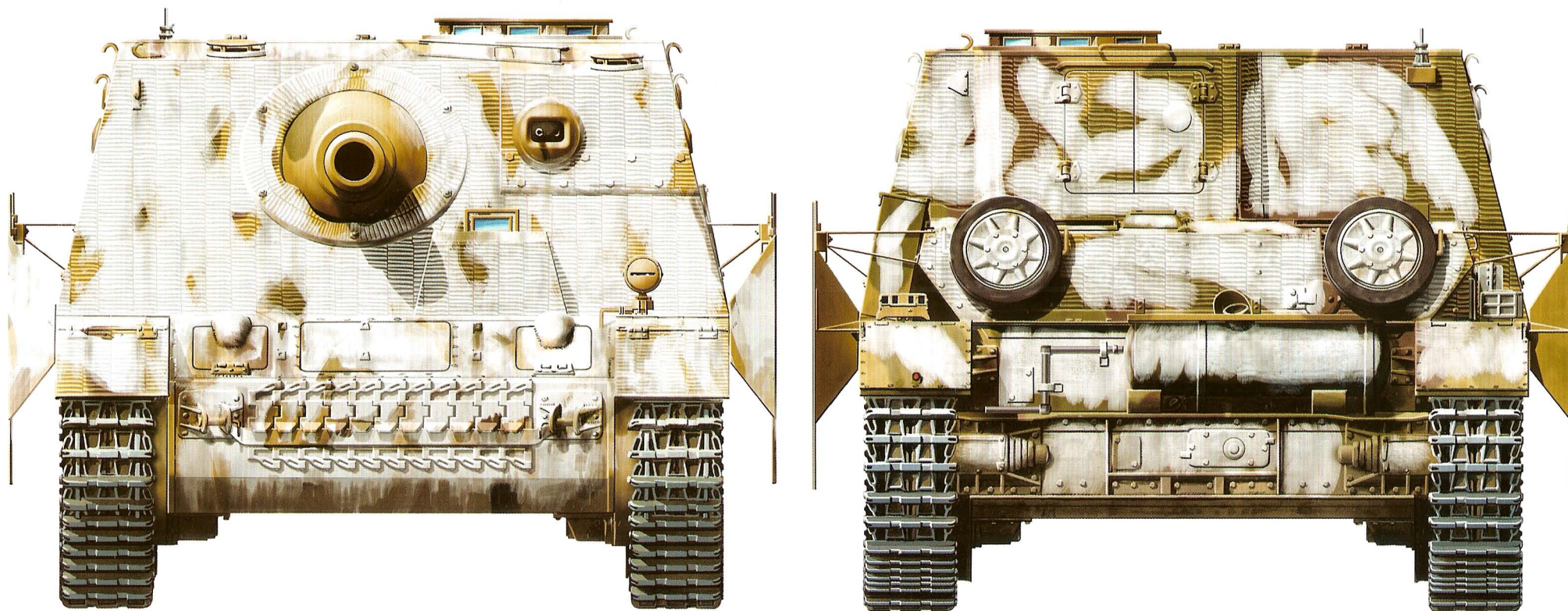
Sturmpanzer IV, 3./Stupa. Abt. 219, Ungarn, December, 1944.



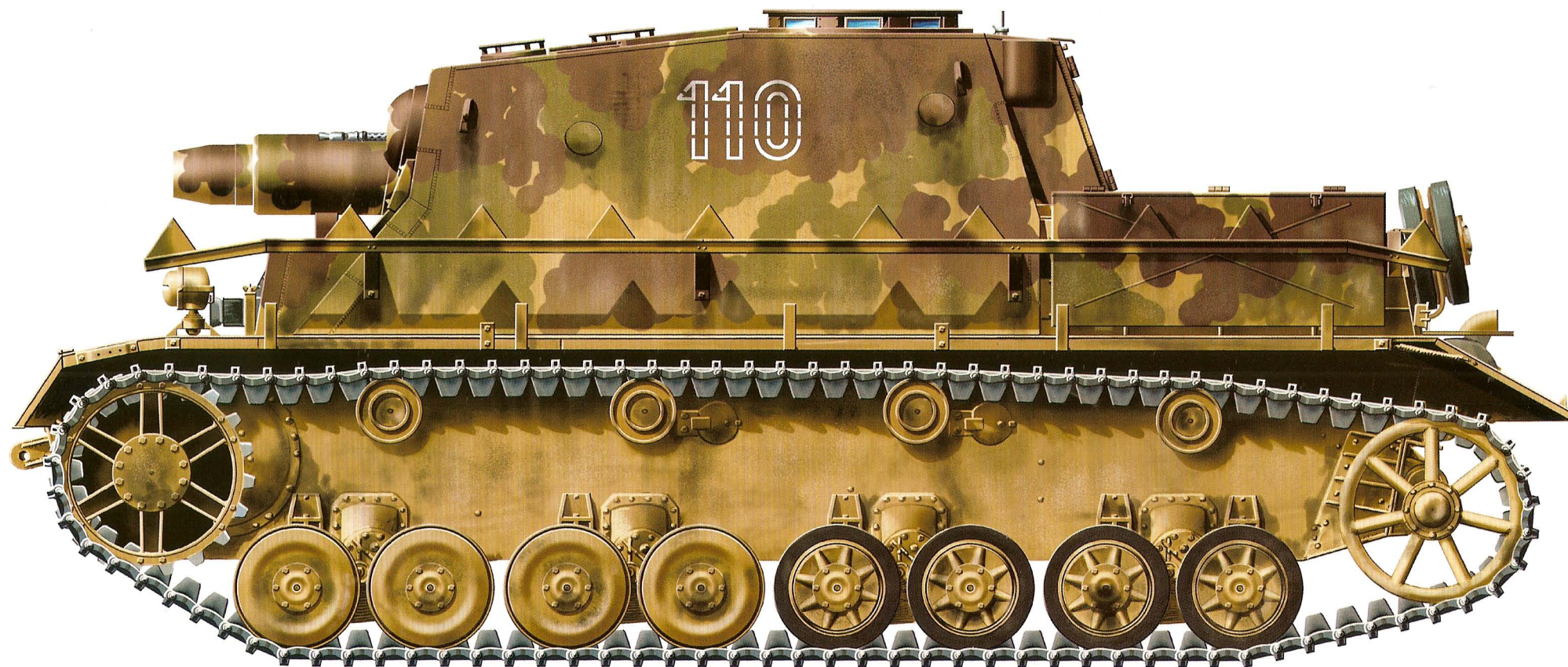
Sturmpanzer IV, 3./Stupa. Abt. 219, Ungarn, December, 1944.



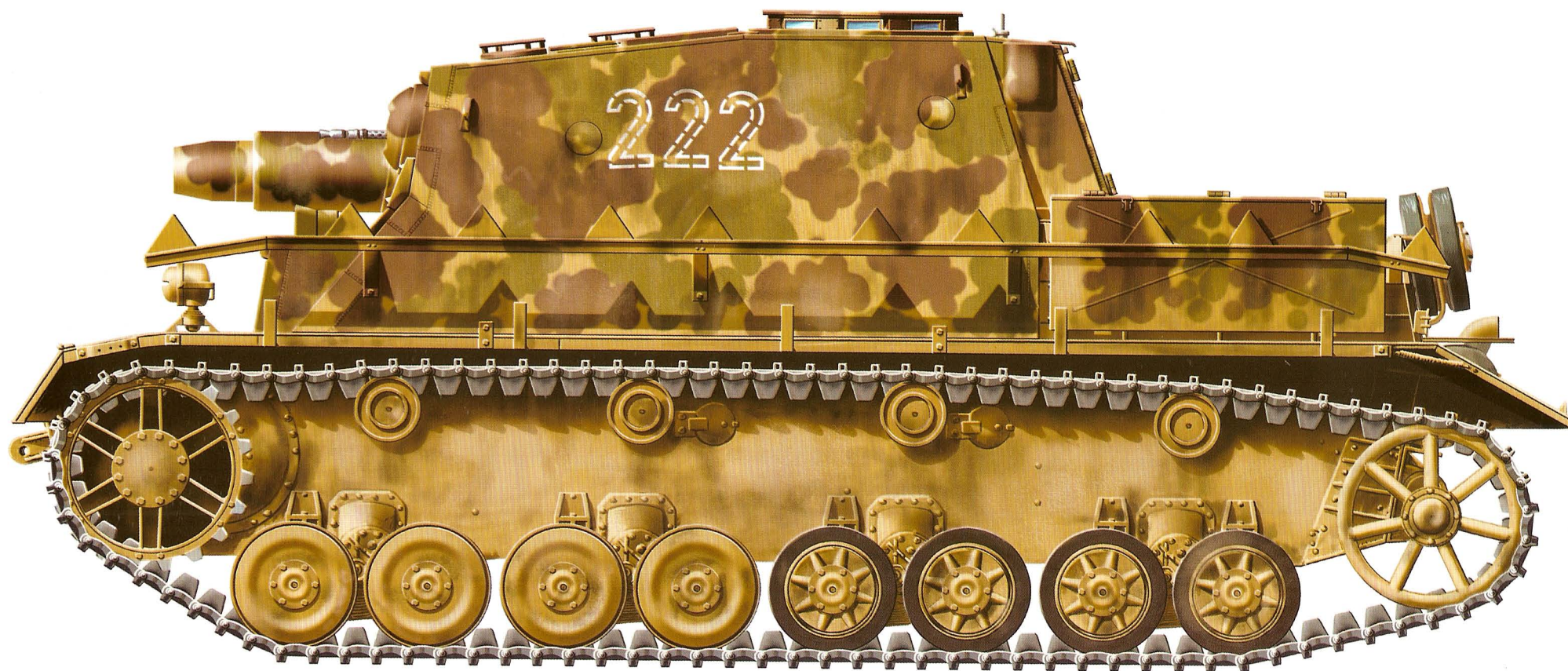
Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Abt. 219, Ungarn, Januar, 1945.



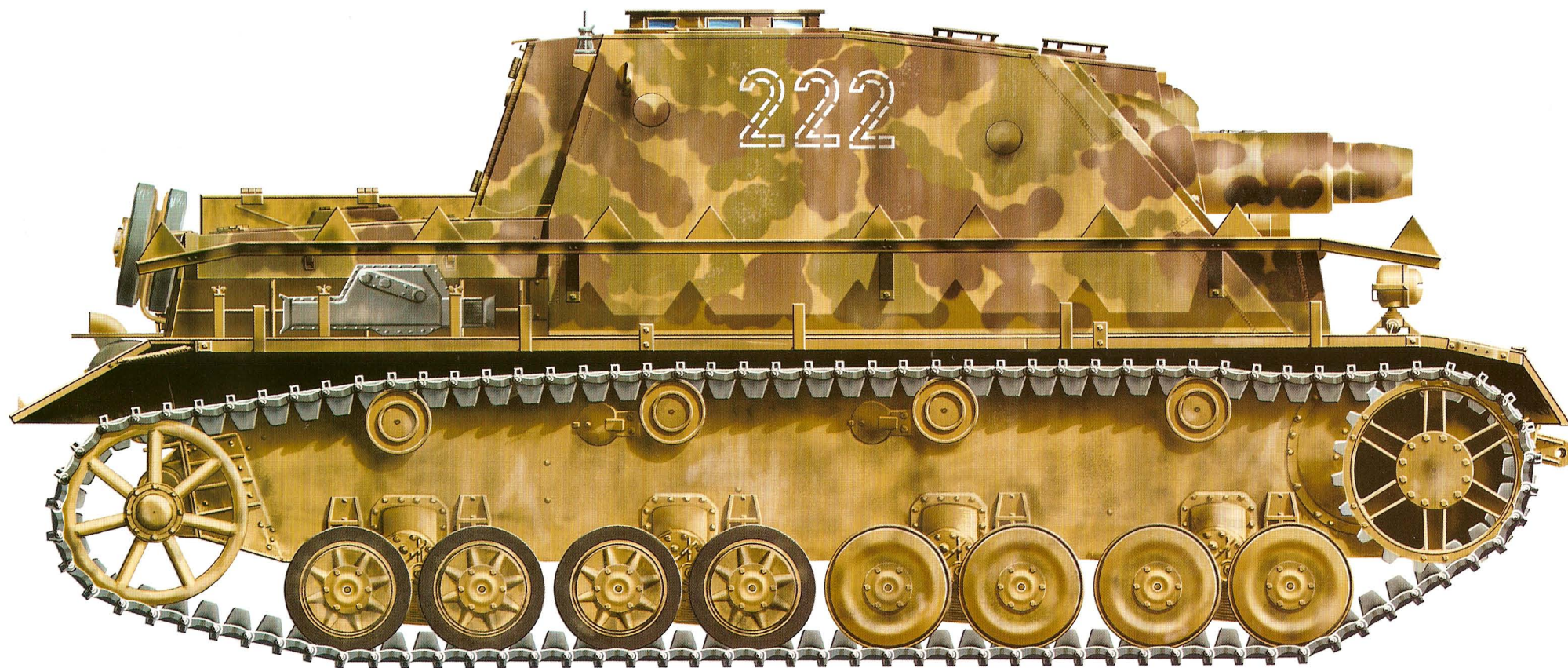
Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Abt. 219, Ungarn, Januar, 1945.



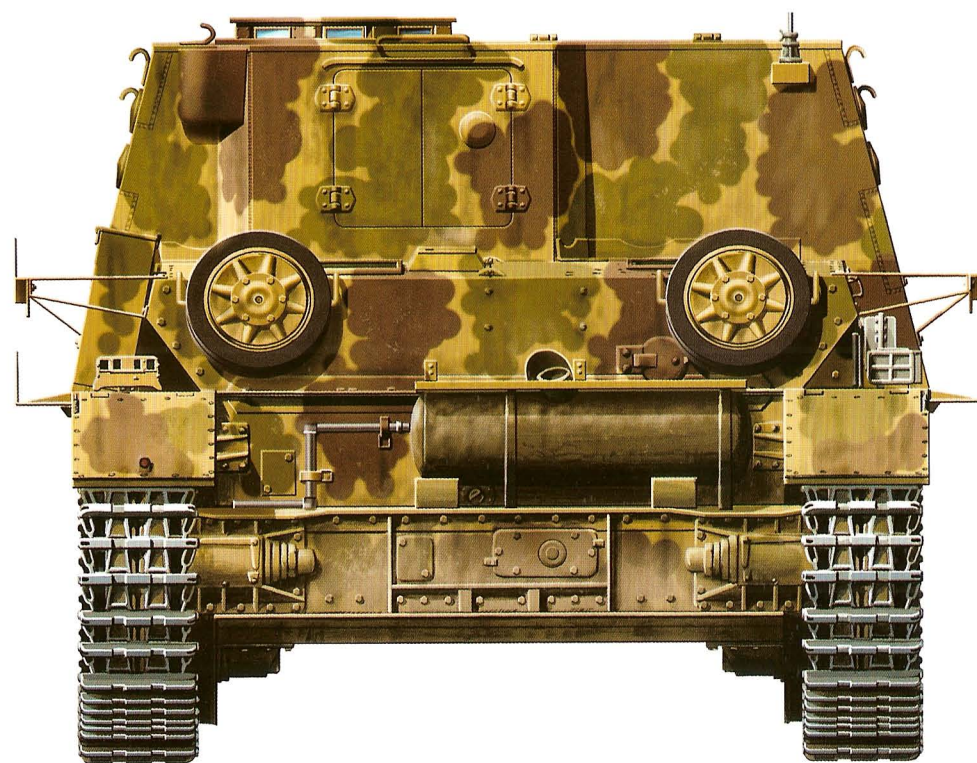
Sturmpanzer IV, 1./Stupa. Abt. 219, Ungarn, March, 1945.



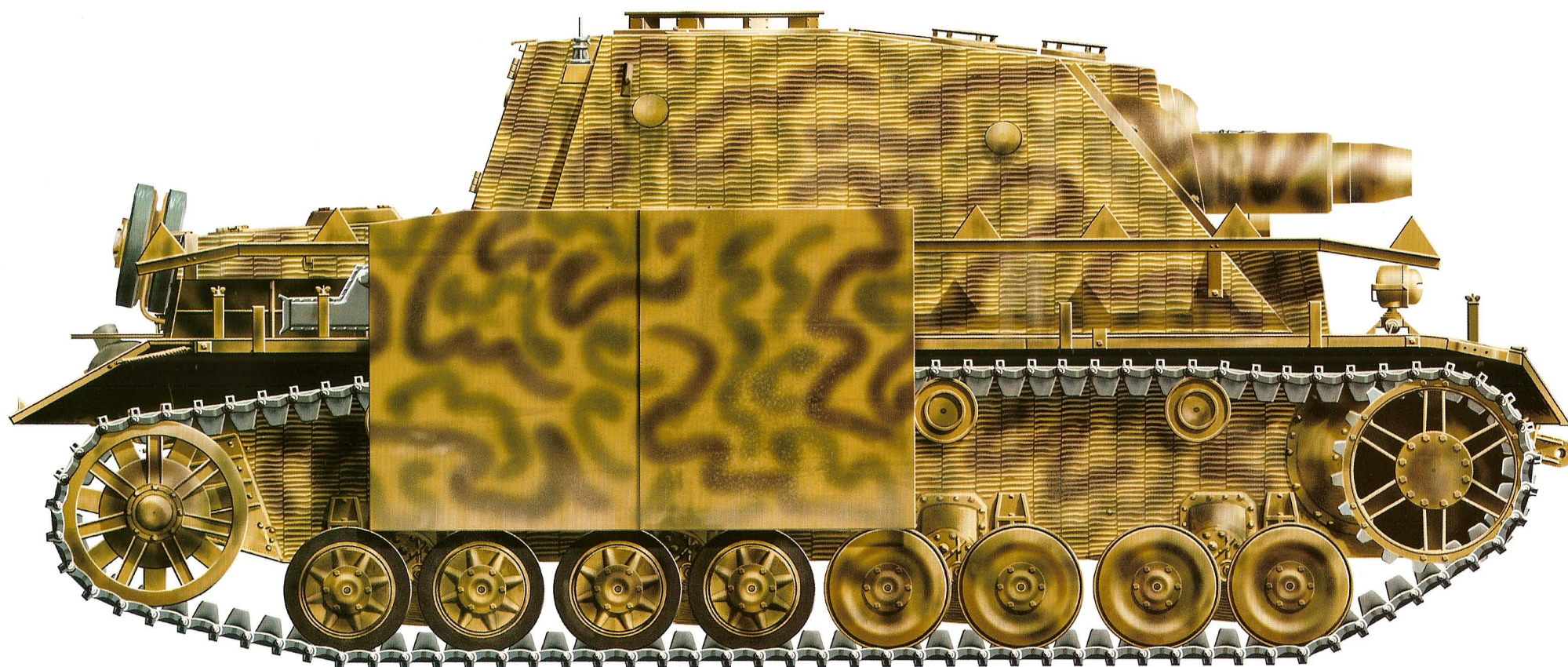
Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Abt. 219, Ungarn, March, 1945.



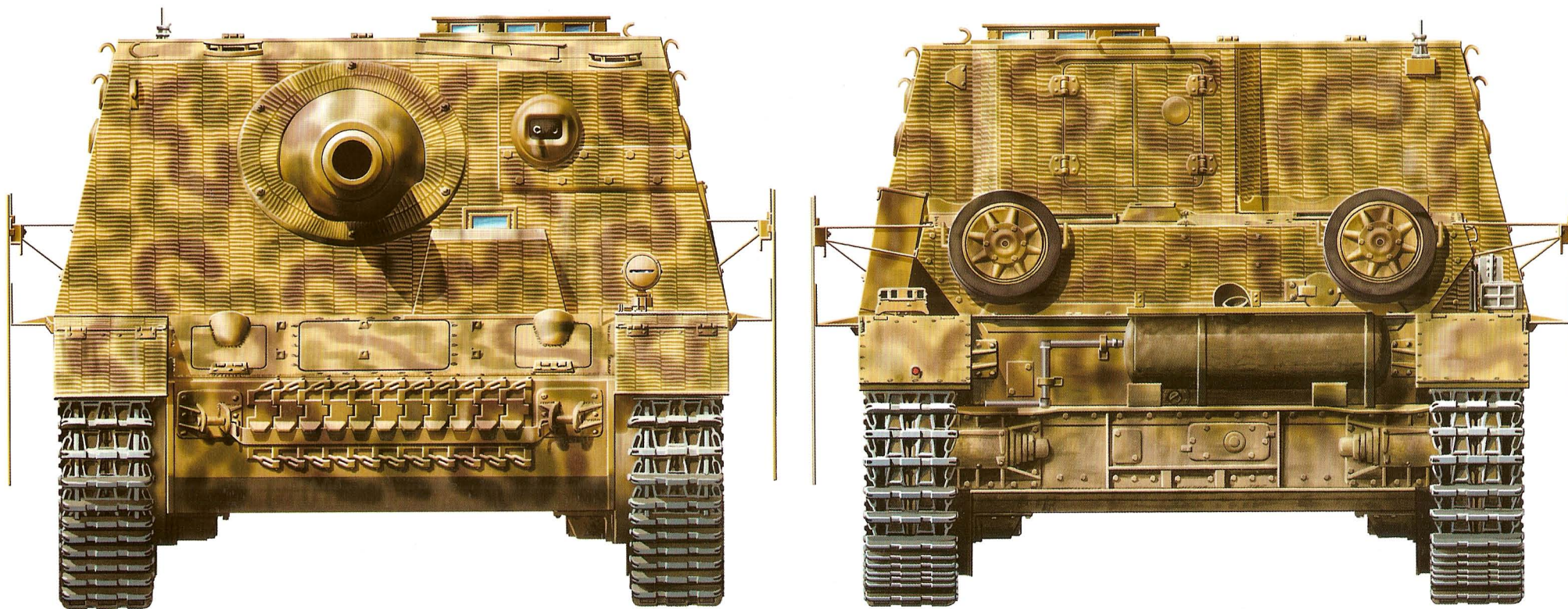
Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Abt. 219, Ungarn, March, 1945.



Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Abt. 219, Ungarn, March, 1945.



Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Kp. z.b.V. 218, Warsaw, Poland, August, 1944.



Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Kp. z.b.V. 218, Warsaw, Poland, August, 1944.



Several assault tanks of the 1st Company were lost as the result of faulty ammunition. This destroyed assault tank only had steel roadwheels on its front set of bogies. • Mehrere Sturmpanzer der 1.Kompanie gegen durch fehlerhafte Munition verloren. Bei diesem zerstörten Panzer waren nur der vordere Laufrollenwagen mit Stahllaufrollen ausgerüstet.



Leutnant Rathjen and crew from the 3rd Company.
• Leutnant Rathjen von der 3.Kompanie mit seiner Besatzung.



There were different variants among the Model 43 15-centimeter assault howitzer. • Es gab unterschiedliche Ausführungen bei der Ausführung der 15cm Sturmhaubitze 43.

After damage to the front differentials, the forward set of roadwheels was removed and the track was shortened to the second set. By doing so, it became easier to tow the vehicle. • Nach einem Vorgelegenschaden wurde der vordere Rollenwagen entfernt und die Kette über den zweiten Rollenwagen gespannt. Somit war ein unproblematisches Abschleppen möglich.



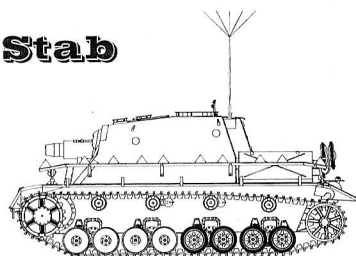


Two other disabled assault tanks had to be abandoned. This vehicle was from the 2nd Company. Note its tactical number: „222“. • Zwei weitere ausgefallene Sturmpanzer müssen zurückgelassen werden. Es handelt sich um ein Fahrzeug der 2. Kompanie. Man beachte die Nummer "222".

The differentials were also removed in the case of this second vehicle. On assault tank „110“, only the front set of roadwheels are steel. Both assault tanks have a vertical mount for an anti-aircraft machine gun on the commander's cupola. • Auch beim 2. Sturmpanzer ist das Vorgelege ausgebaut. Bei der "110" sind die beiden vorderen Rollenwagen mit Stahllaufrollen ausgerüstet. Beide Sturmpanzer haben vertikale Halterung zur Aufnahme einer Fla-MG an der Kommandantenkuppel.



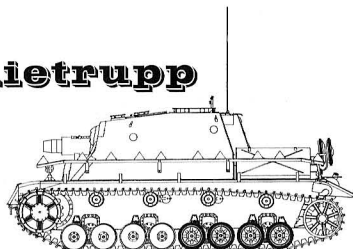
Stab



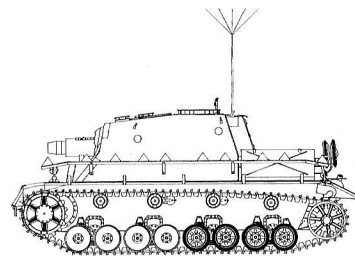
Kommandeur
Mjr. Paul Friedrich Schuppensteiner

1. Kp.

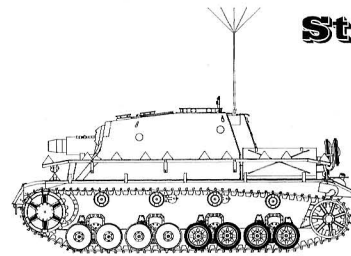
Kompanietrupp



Hpt. Ludwig Bertam



Adjutant
Lt. Waldemar Preiss



Stabsbatterie Chef
Obt. Hans Otto Meyer

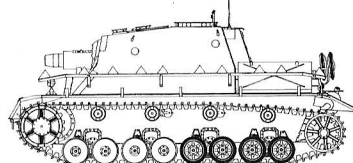
Sturmpanzer Abt. 219

12.1944

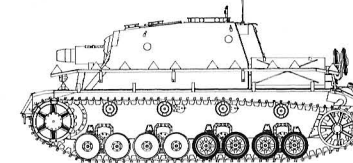
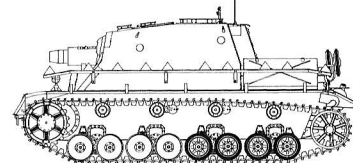
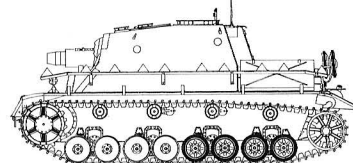


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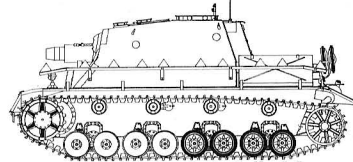
1. Zug



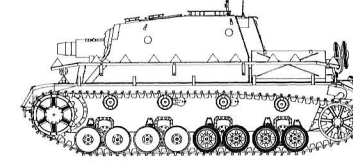
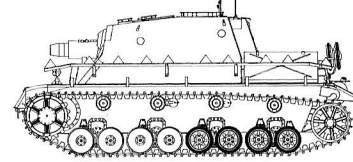
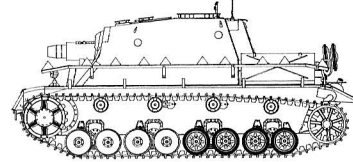
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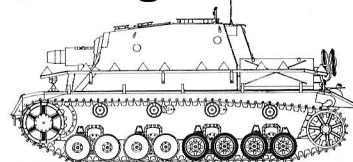
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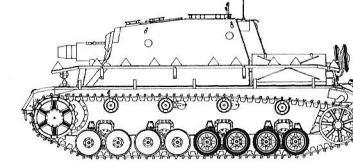
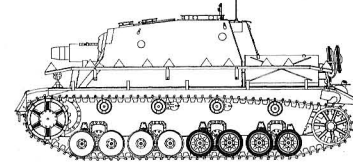
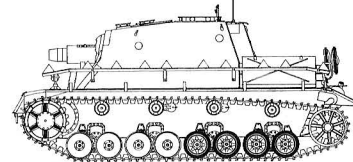
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3. Zug

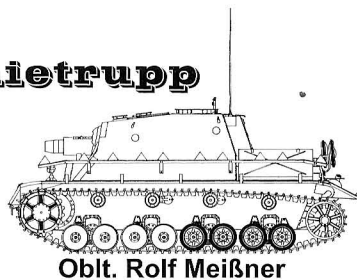


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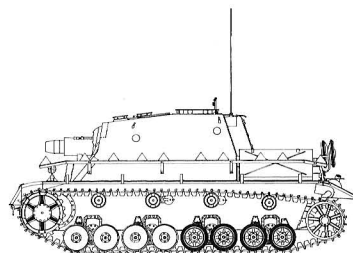


**2. Kp.
Kompanietrupp**

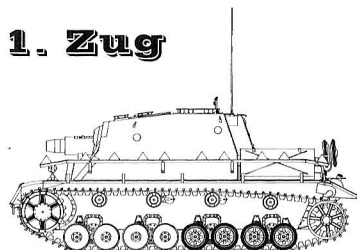
12.1944



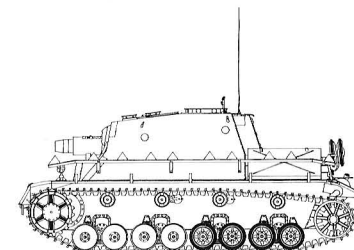
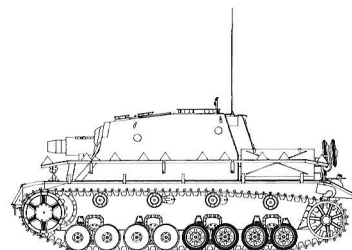
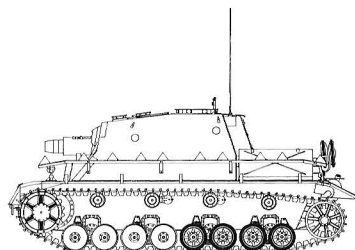
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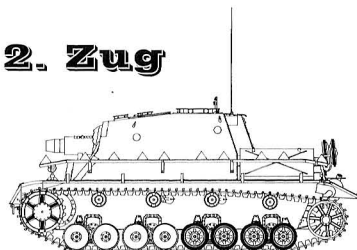
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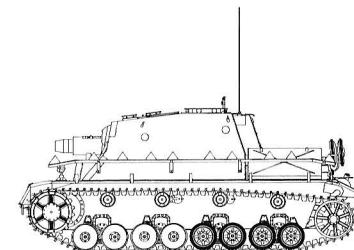
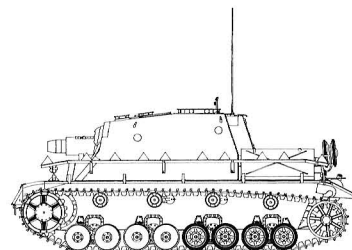
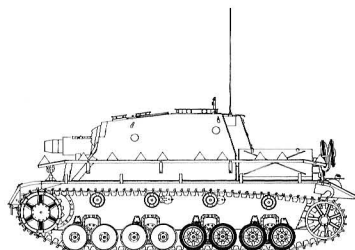
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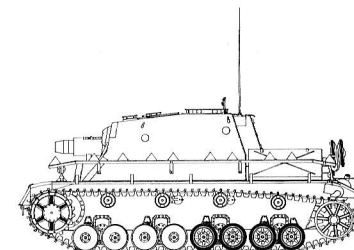
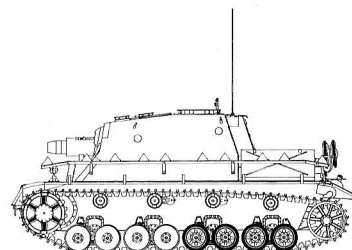
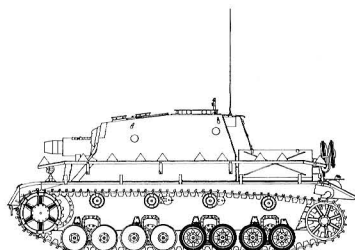
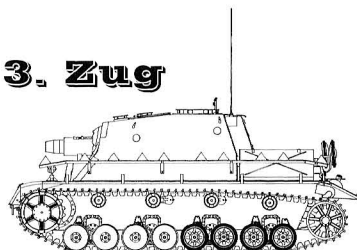
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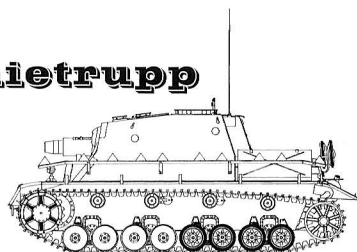
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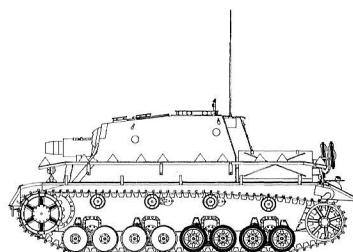
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3 Kp. Kompanietrupp



Oblt. Fritz Otto

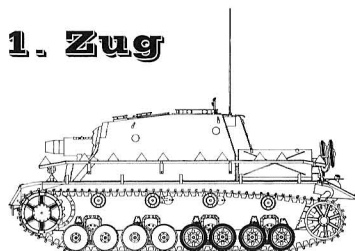


Sturmpanzer Abt. 219

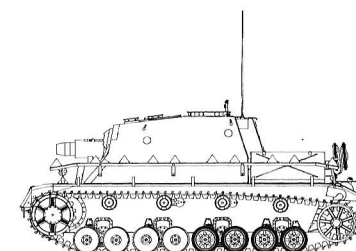
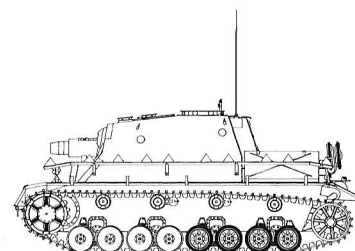
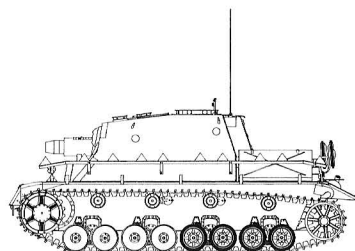
12.1944



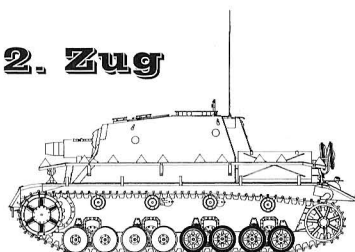
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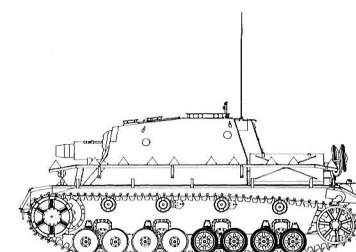
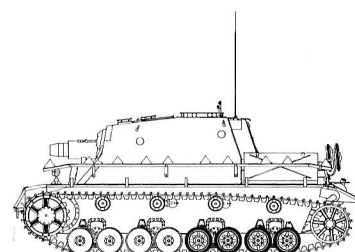
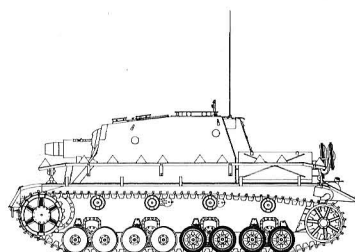
Lt. Hans Diether Hofmann



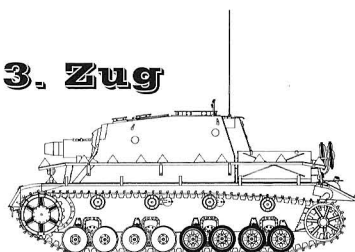
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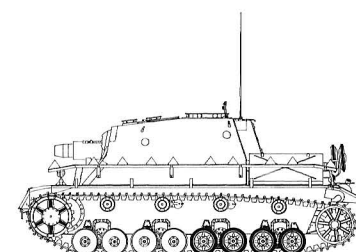
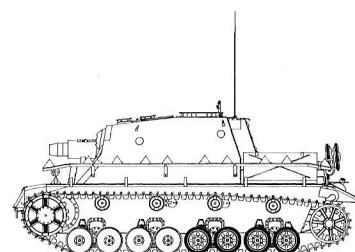
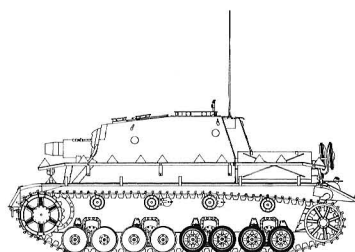
Lt. Helfried Müller



3. Zug



Lt. Anders Rathjen



Sturmörser¹ (Assault Howitzers)

The assault howitzer—also referred to as the *Sturmtiger*, the *Panzerörser* and the *Sturmpanzer VI*—was actually developed by accident.

The manufacturing firm of Rheinmetall developed the so-called rocket depth charge (38 centimeter) for the Navy. It was originally intended for this round to be fired to engage enemy submarines that were off the coast. The weapon was to be fired on a turntable that was permanently built on the position. The firing mechanism itself was to be mounted on a self-propelled chassis, so that it could move the weapon to any number of firing sites. The Army leadership viewed the development with interest, and viewed the weapon as a means to engage reinforced positions. It asked for its own development, whereby the weapon was redesigned and the maximum range increased from 3,000 meters to 5,000 meters. The new weapon was designated as the *38cm Raketen-Werfer 61 (RW 61)*.

It proved more difficult to find a suitable chassis for the weapon. On the one hand, the vehicle was supposed to be able to move rapidly and yet, at the same time, have sufficient armor protection. In the end, the decision fell in favor of the chassis of the *Panzerkampfwagen VI "Tiger"*. Since the demand for this vehicle was the number one priority for all fronts, it was decided to only use *Tigers* that were no longer capable of being made operational at the front and had to be sent back to the *Reich* for overhaul. When that happened, the turret was removed and the hull changed to accept the new superstructure.

This development was mentioned for the first time in a report by Speer concerning a briefing to Hitler on 4 and 5 August 1943. He wrote:

The *Führer* considered the recommendation to produce a *Tiger* howitzer that used the 38-centimeter launching device of the Navy as extraordinarily valuable. He agreed to the recommendation by *Generaloberst* Guderian to initially produce an experimental vehicle. Target production is envisioned at 10 vehicles a month.

On 20 October 1943, the *Panzerörser 38 auf Tiger* was put on display for the *Führer* at the Arys Training Area in East Prussia. Although very impressed by the weapons system, he decided not to have it mass produced. Instead, the experimental model was to be tested at the front.

The first proper demonstration of the vehicle took place on the occasion of Hitler's birthday on 20 April 1944. Hitler continued to be enthusiastic about the weapons system and ordered that 12 superstructures and rocket launchers be prepared, which were then to be mounted on *Tigers* needing homeland depot-level repair. After successful operations in the East at Warsaw, the experimental model was brought back to Berlin and provided with a steel superstructure at the Alkett firm.

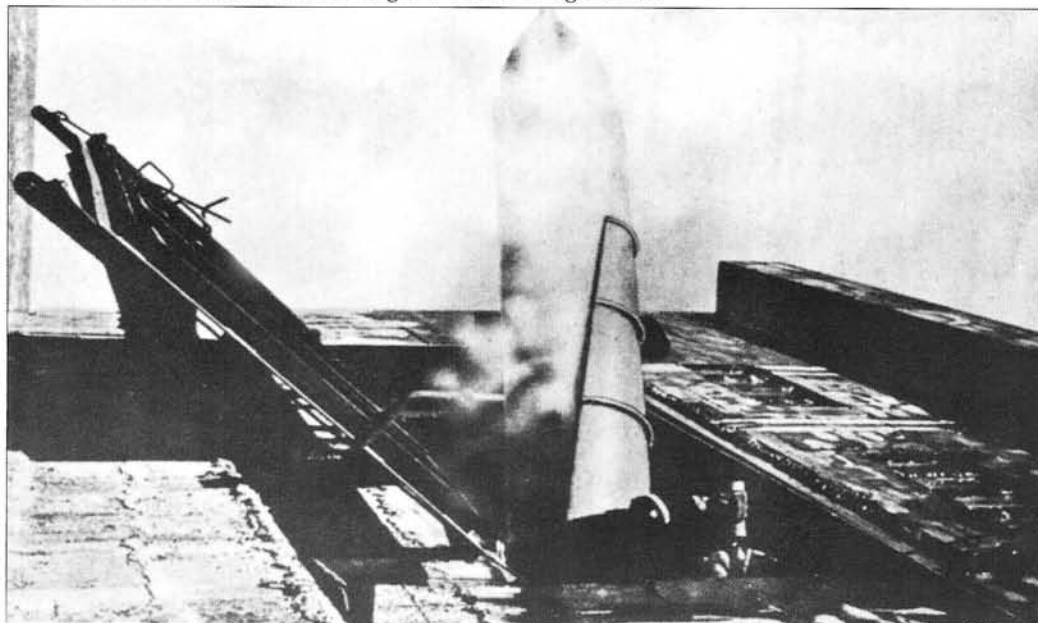
All of the *Tiger* repair vehicles were brought up to the latest technical standards by Alkett, so that it is only possible to identify the actual production months and peculiarities based on vehicle chassis numbers. A few of these chassis numbers are known and are documented in the respective formation sections.

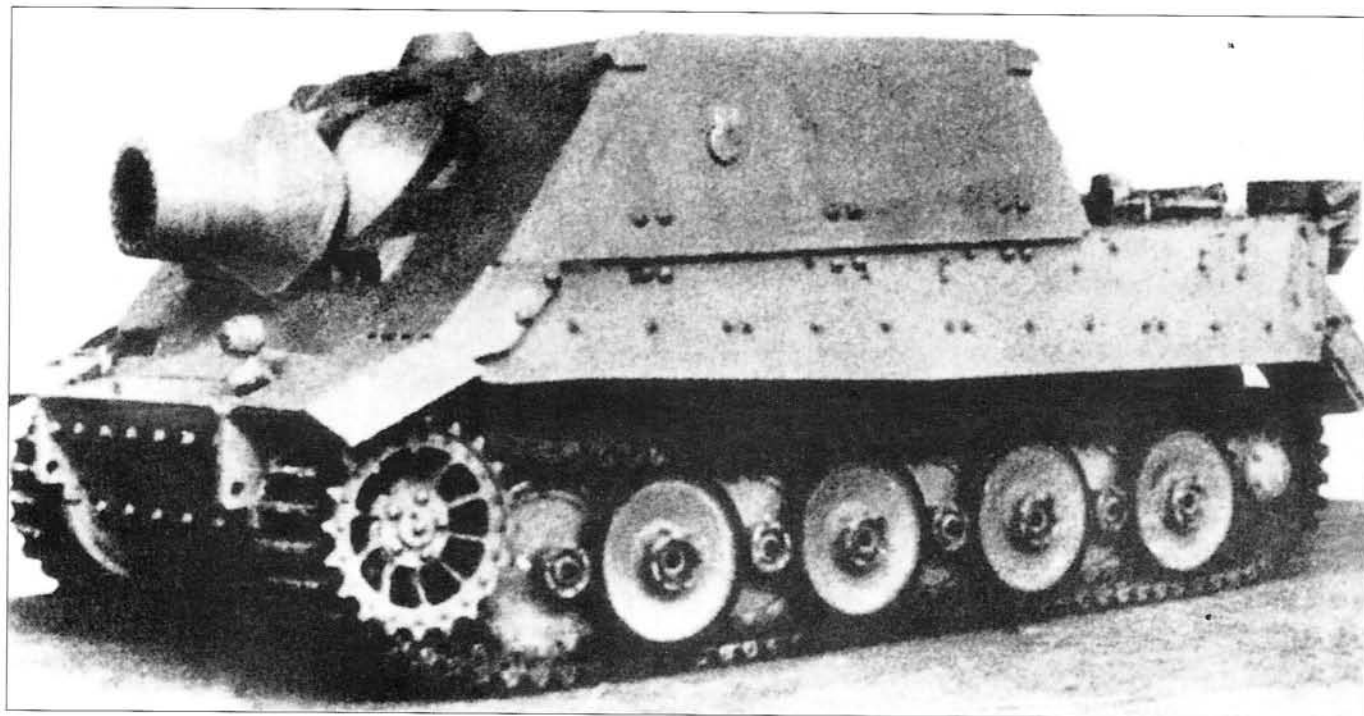
The differences were primarily in the gun tubes. The round—the 38-centimeter high-explosive rocket—had 32 nozzles in its base, through which the propellant gases escaped when firing, allowing the rocket to be propelled. So that excessive gases did not enter the fighting compartment, the gases were diverted in the gun jacket through drilled holes and expelled.

In some cases, 31 holes have been identified on the gun tubes, but there are also photographs of tubes with 30 and 20 holes. In addition, there were different types of weights located at the end of the gun tube.

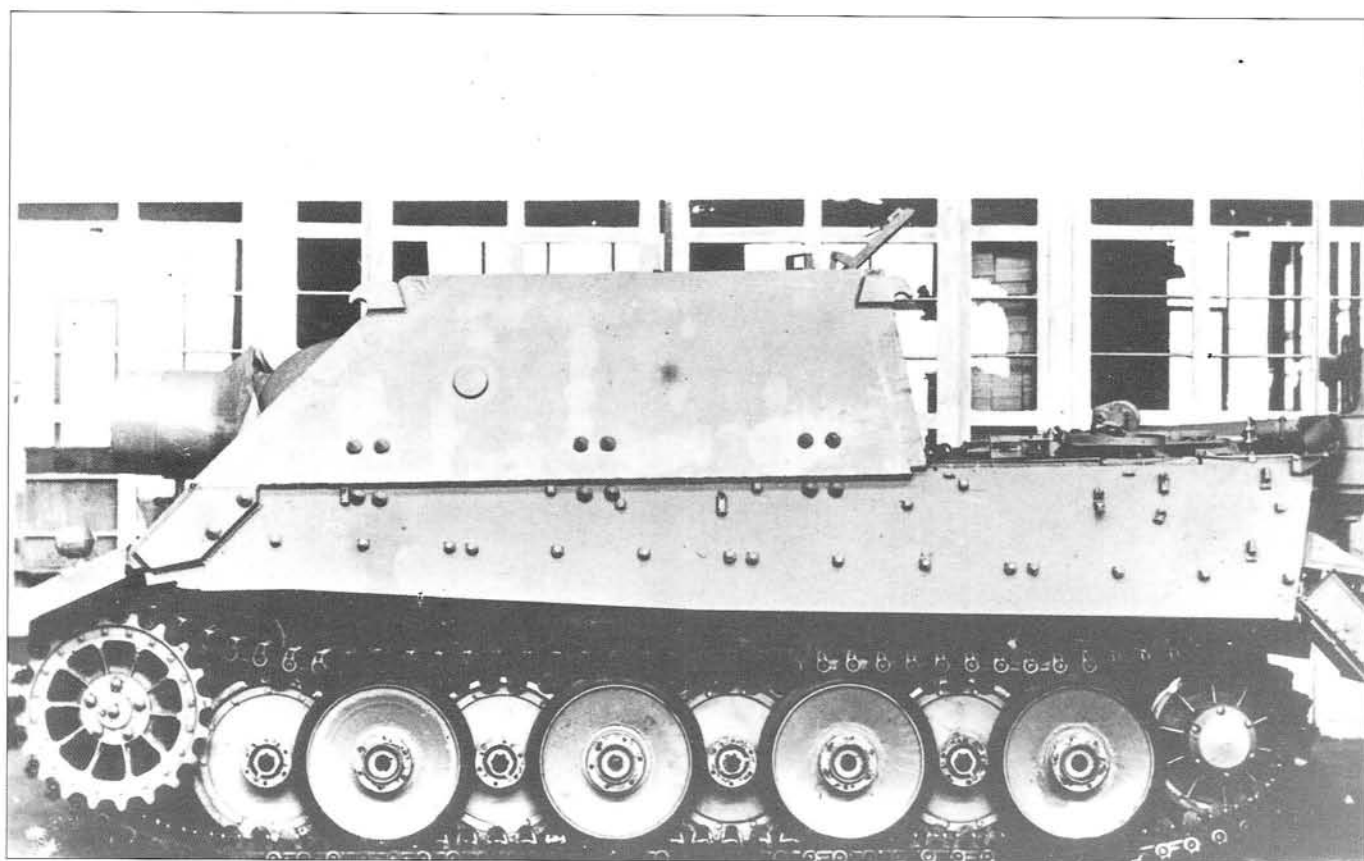
The word *Mörser* does not mean mortar, despite its obvious relationship to the English word. Instead, it refers to a 21-centimeter or larger howitzer.

A 38-centimeter rocket round is fired from a naval firing mount. • Ein 38cm Raketengeschoß wird aus einer Abschussvorrichtung der Marine abgefeuert.





The prototype of the Sturmmörser was still equipped with roadwheels with rubber rims. The outer roadwheels have been removed. • Der Prototyp des Sturmmörser war noch mit dem alten Laufrollen mit Gummibandagen ausgestattet. Die äußeren Laufrollen sind abgenommen.





Demonstration of the *Sturmtiger* for Hitler. The lifting shackles on the crane can be seen to good advantage. • Vorführung des Sturmtiger-Prototyps vor Hitler. Gut erkennbar das Hebegeschirr am Ladekran.

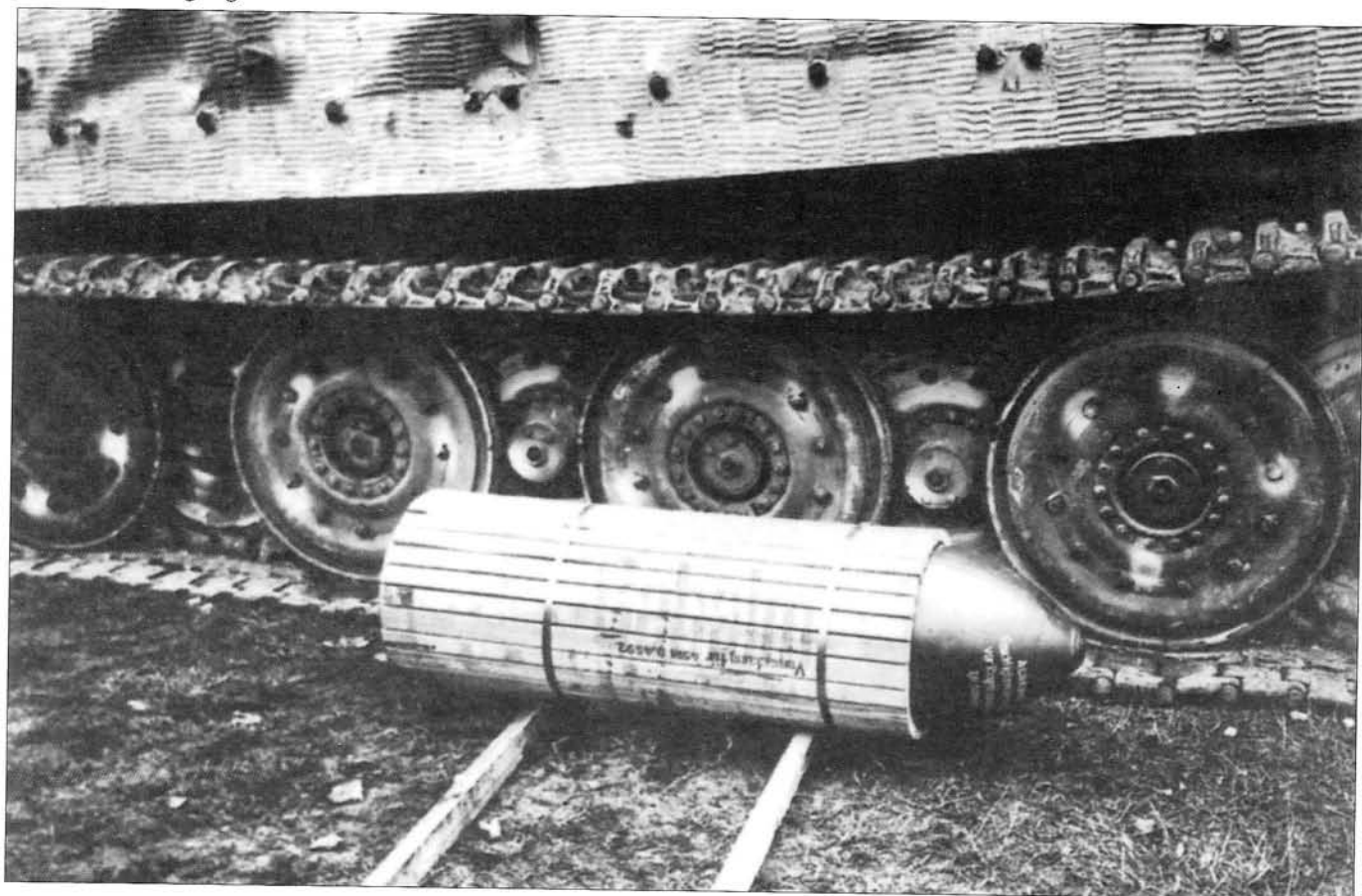
Hitler was fascinated by research and development and had everything explained to him in great detail. • Hitler war fasziniert von der Entwicklung und ließ sich alles ausgiebig erklären.





For training the *Sturmpanzer* crews, an illustrated training guide for loading and stowing ammunition was produced. The gun mantlet had only 30 openings for venting the gases. • Für die Ausbildung der Sturmpanzerbesatzungen wird eine bebilderte Darstellung des Aufmunitionier- und Ladevorgangs zusammengefasst. Das Mantelrohr hat nur 30 Gasaustrittsöffnungen.

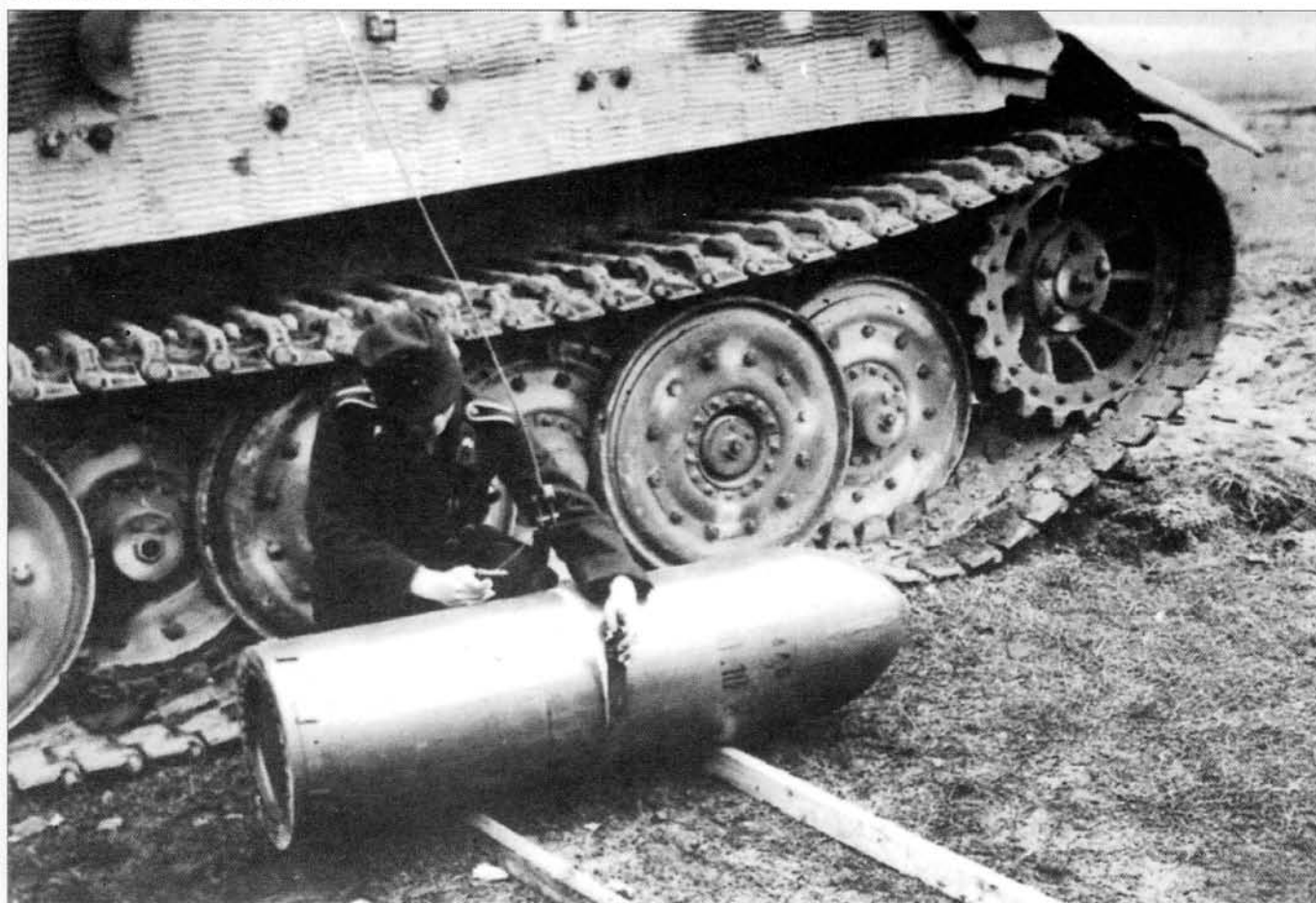
After the round had been brought up, it was rolled to the vehicle. • Nachdem das Geschoss herangeführt worden ist, wird es zum Sturmpanzer gerollt.





A member of the crew then removed the wooden jacket... • Danach entfernt ein Besatzungsmitglied die hölzerne Schutzummantelung...

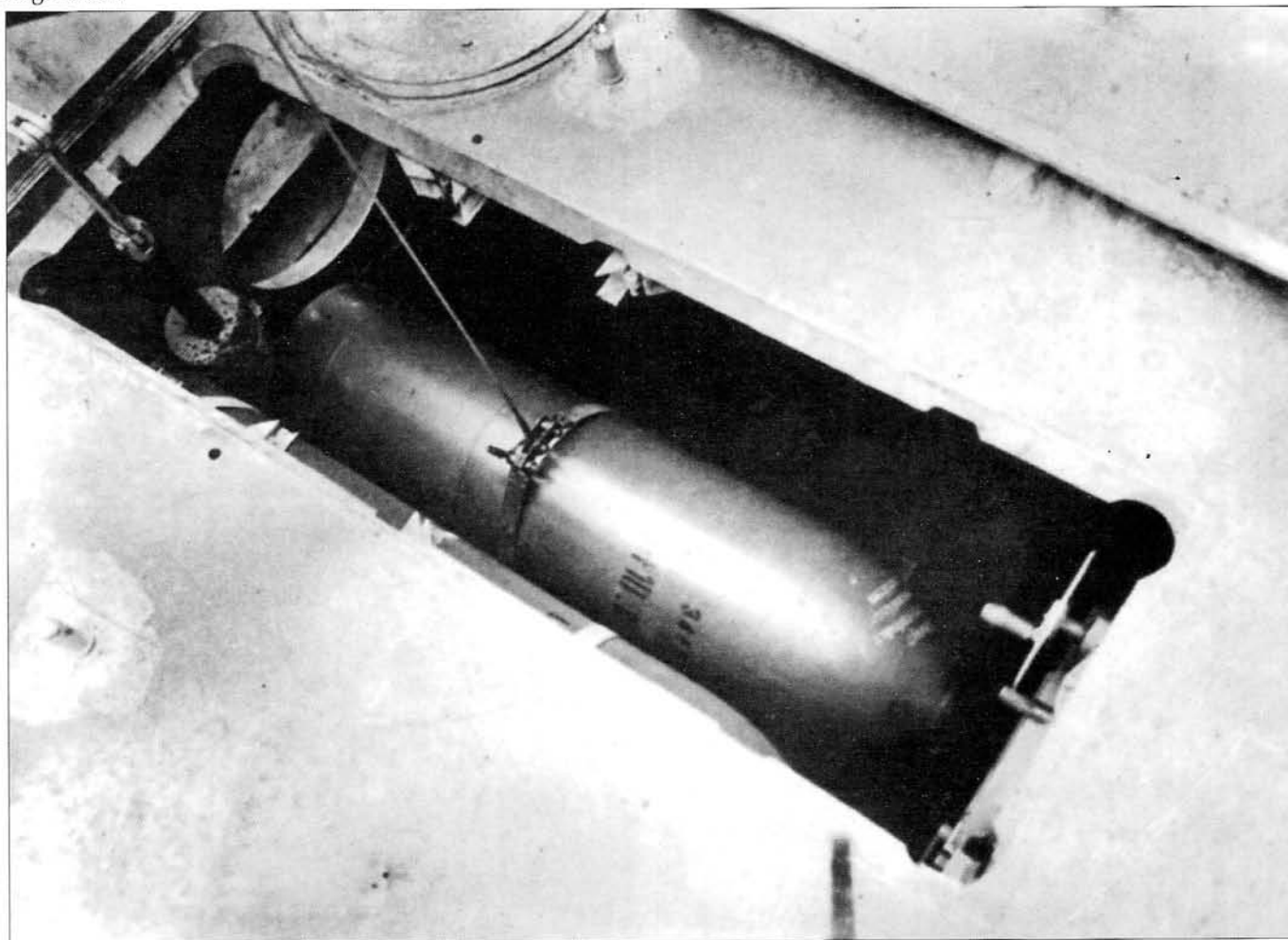
...and then fastened the lifting device from the on-board crane to the round. • ...und befestigt die Hebevorrichtung des Bordkranes an der Granate.

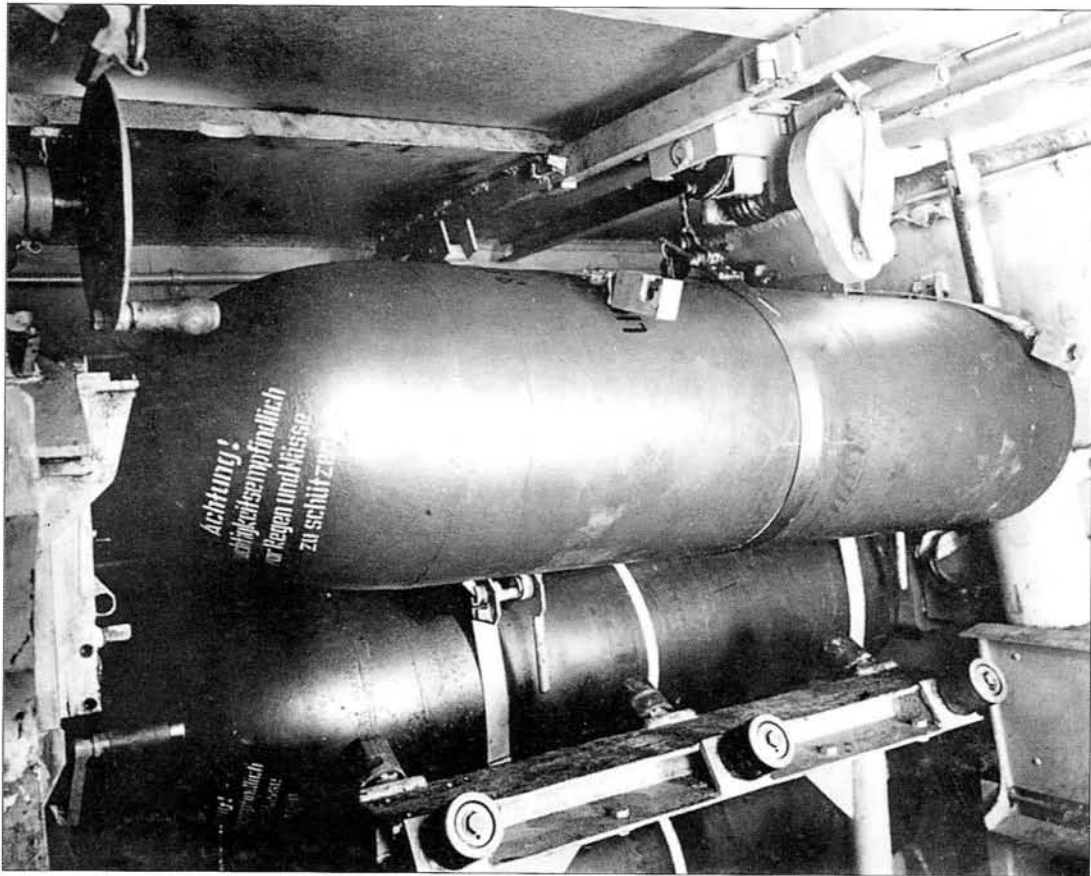




The round was then lifted up carefully. Two members of the crew on the ground steadied the round. • Vorsichtig wird das Geschoss nach oben gezogen. 2 Besatzungsmitglieder am Boden sichern die Granate.

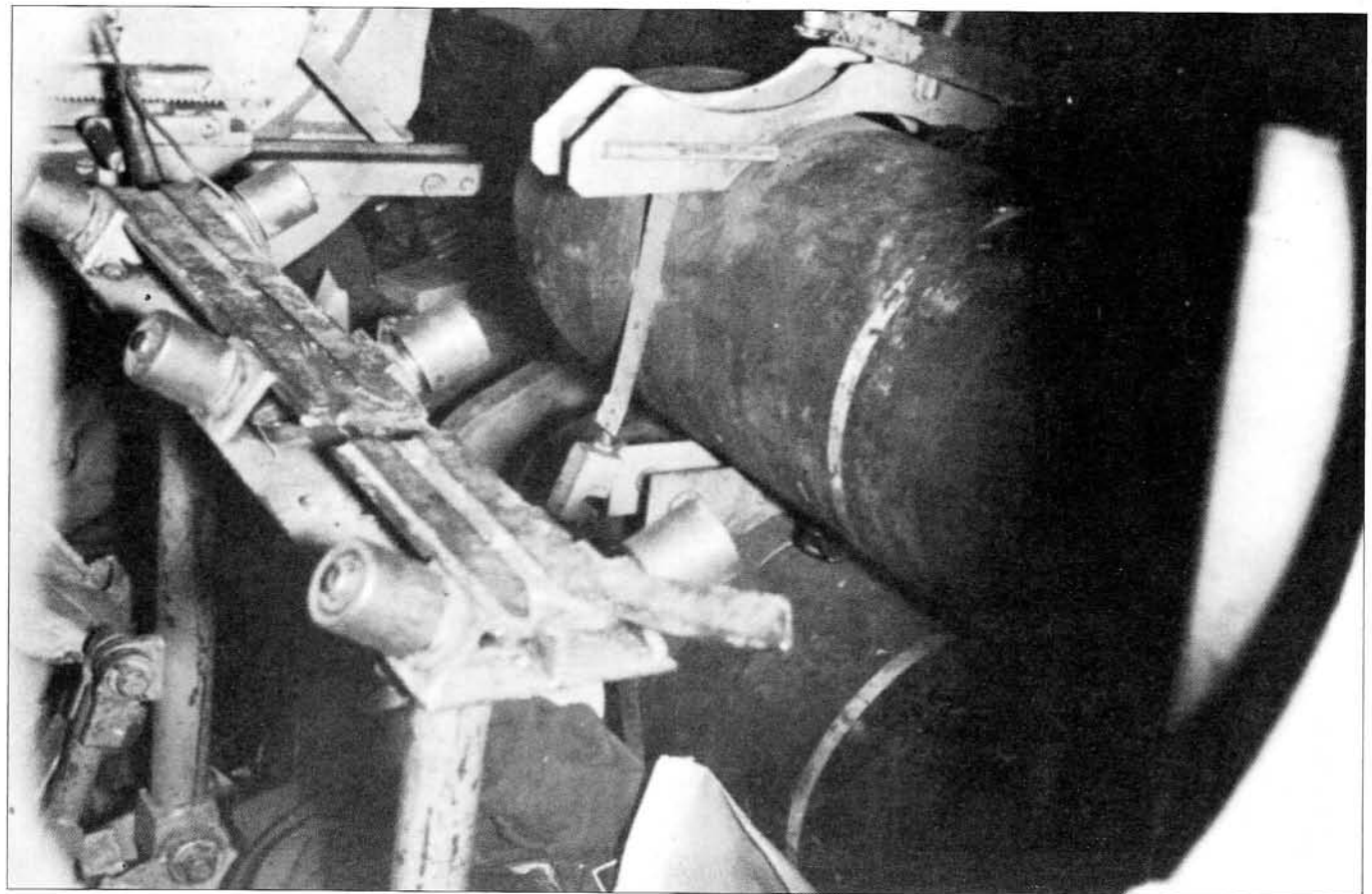
Once up top, the crane was pivoted and the round was led into the fighting compartment interior through the loading hatch. • Oben angelangt, wird der Kran geschwenkt und das Geschoss durch die Ladeluke in den Fahrzeuginnenraum abgelassen.

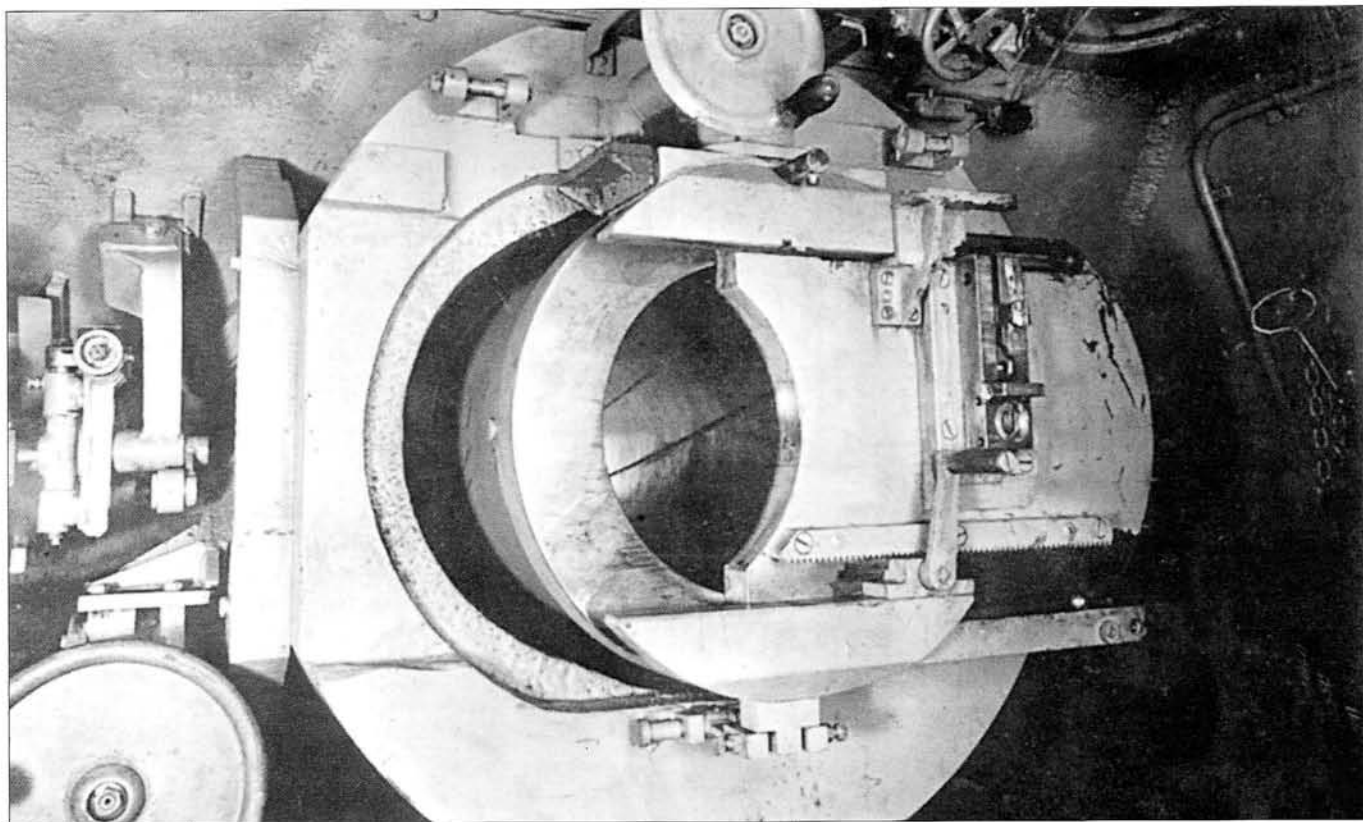




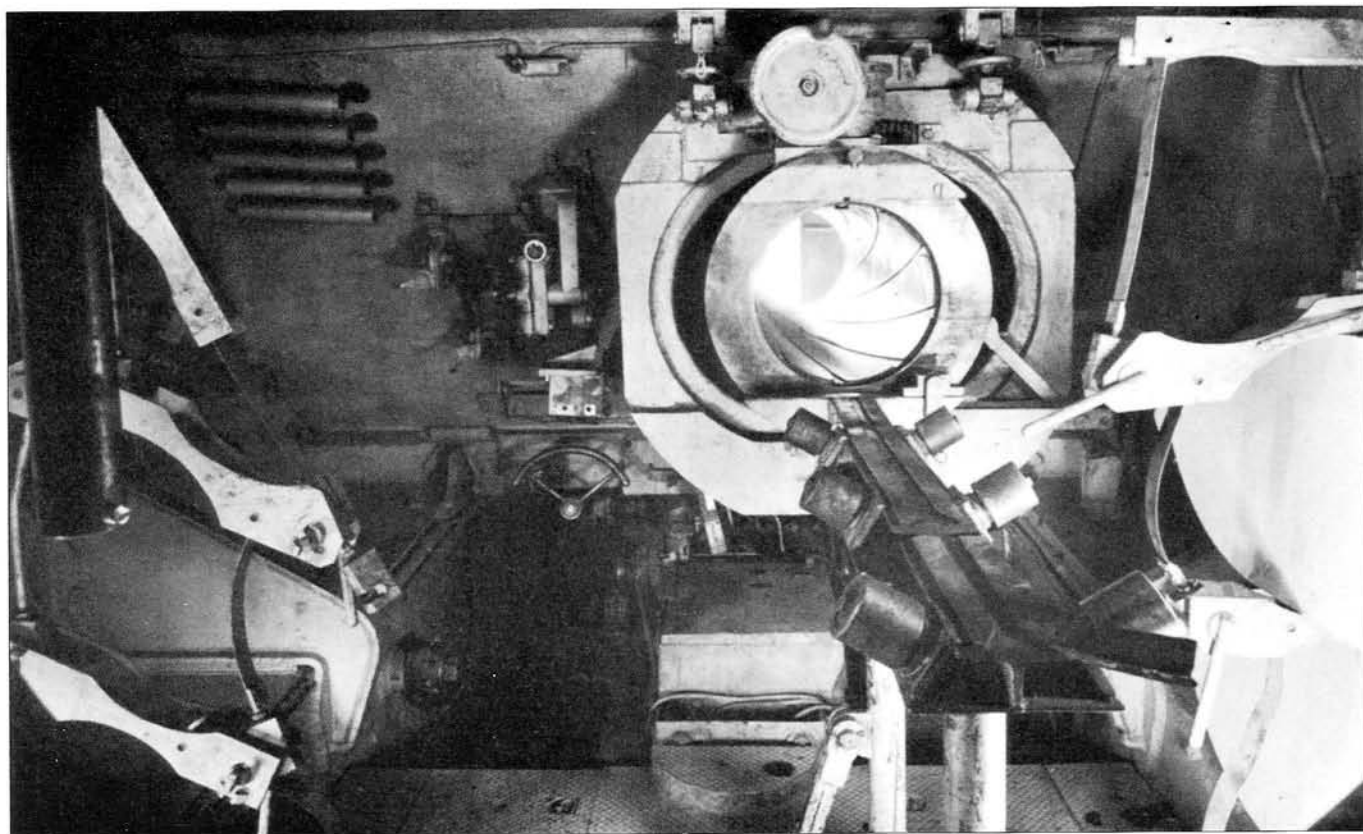
Up to 14 rounds could be stowed in the vehicle's interior, with one of them pre-loaded and another on the loading tray. • Im Aufbauinnern können bis zu 14 Geschosse gelagert werden, davon je eines im Rohr und eines auf der Ladeschale.

Six rounds were stowed to the left and again to the right in the vehicle's interior. • Rechts und links im Fahrzeuginnern werden jeweils 6 Granaten verstaut.





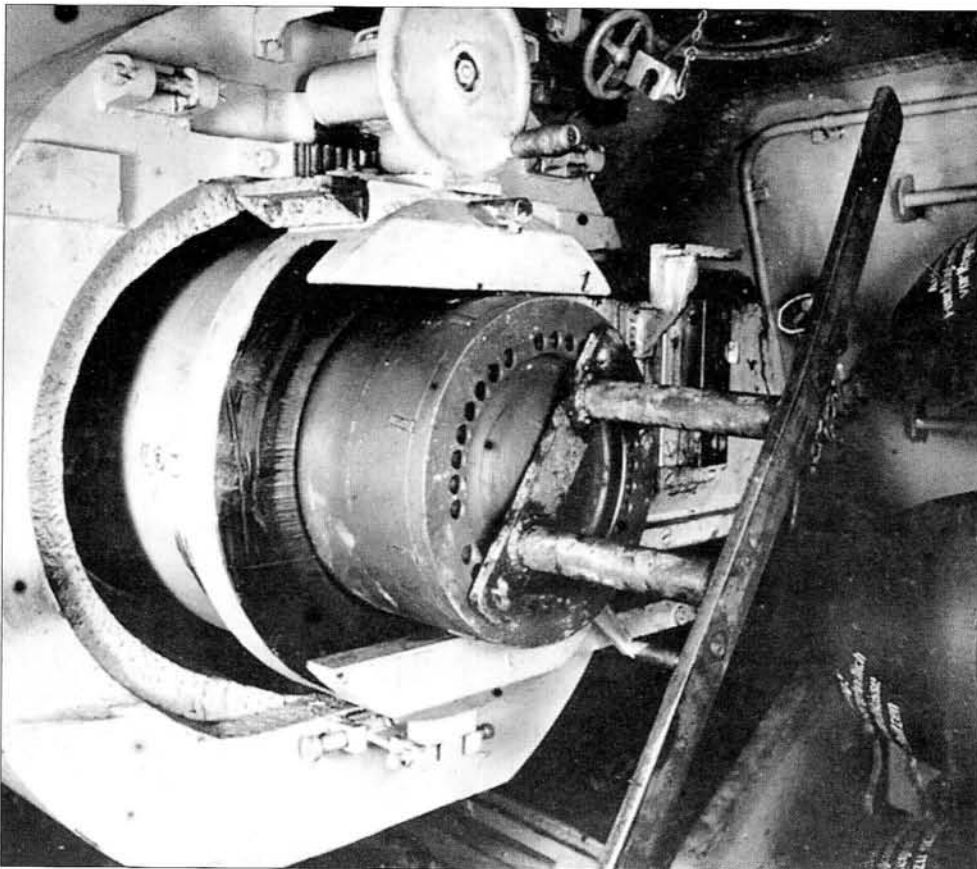
The breech is open and allows a glimpse into the interior of the barrel. • Der Verschluss ist geöffnet und gibt eine Blick auf das Seelenrohr frei.

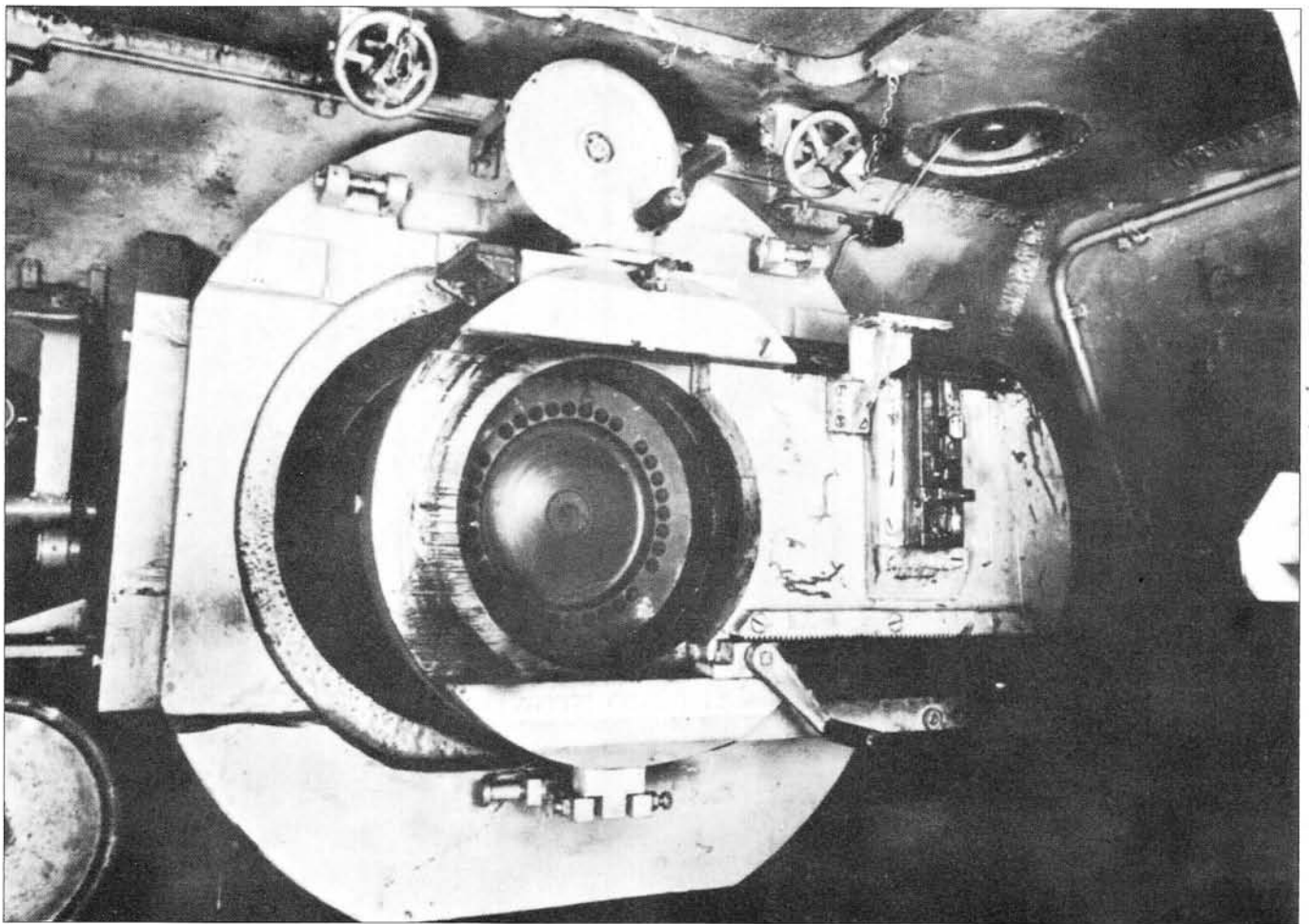




A member of the crew attaches an igniter to the round on the loading tray. • Ein Besatzungsmitglied bringt an einem auf der Ladeschale befindlichen Geschoss den Zünder an.

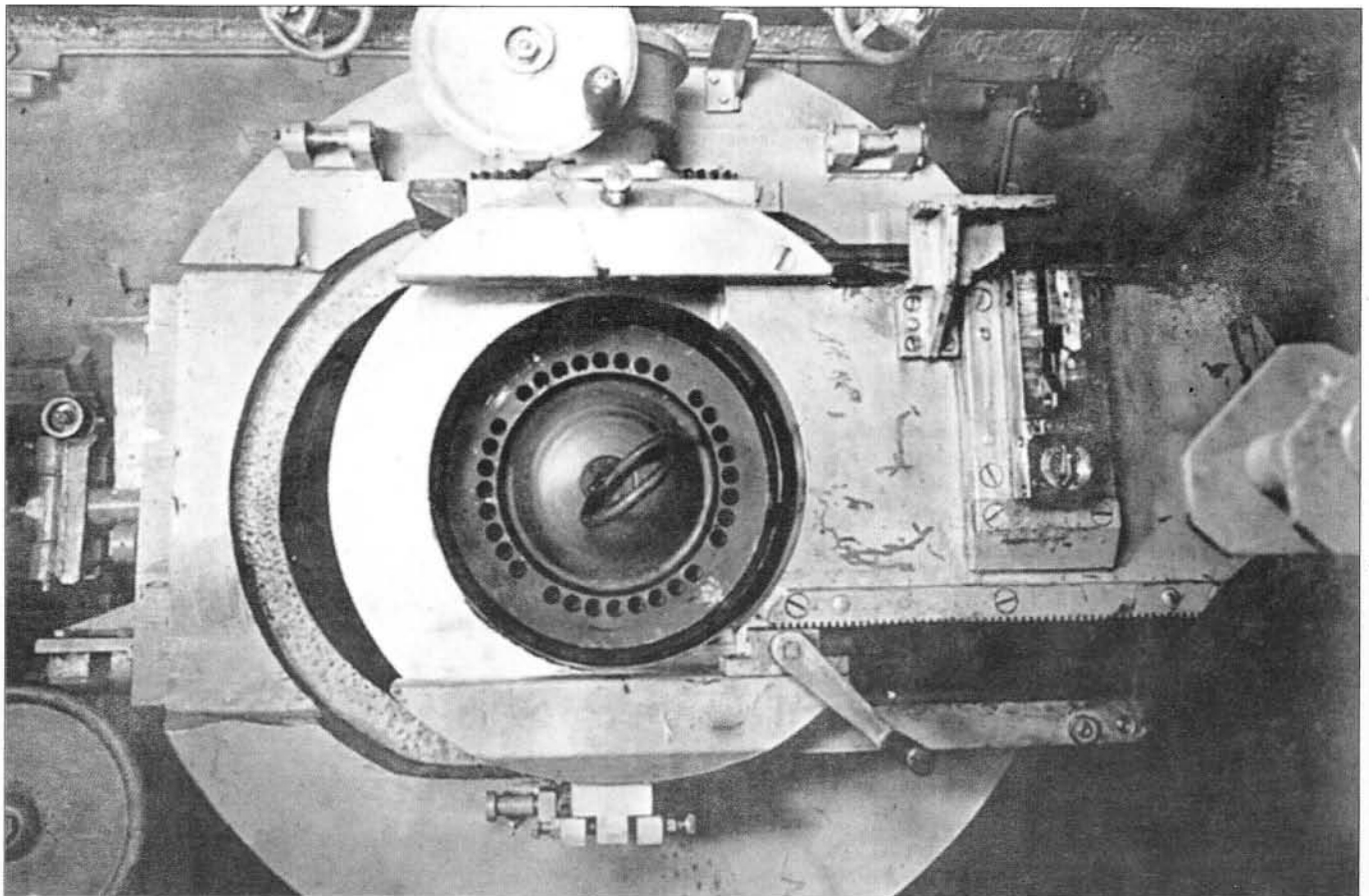
The armed round was then pushed into the barrel. • Danach wird das scharfe Geschoss in das Rohr geschoben.

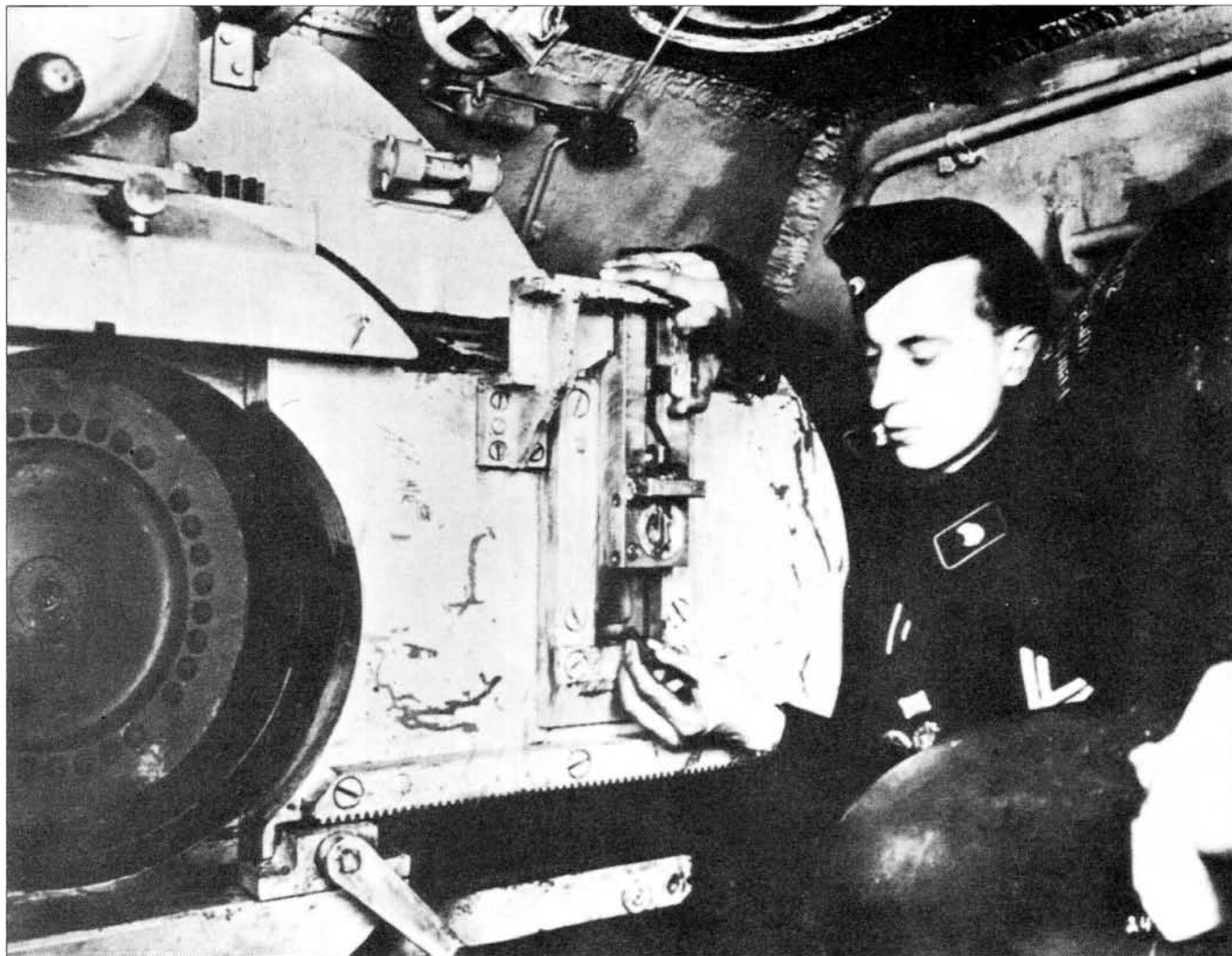




The round is almost completely in the barrel. • Die Granate ist jetzt fast vollständig im Rohr.

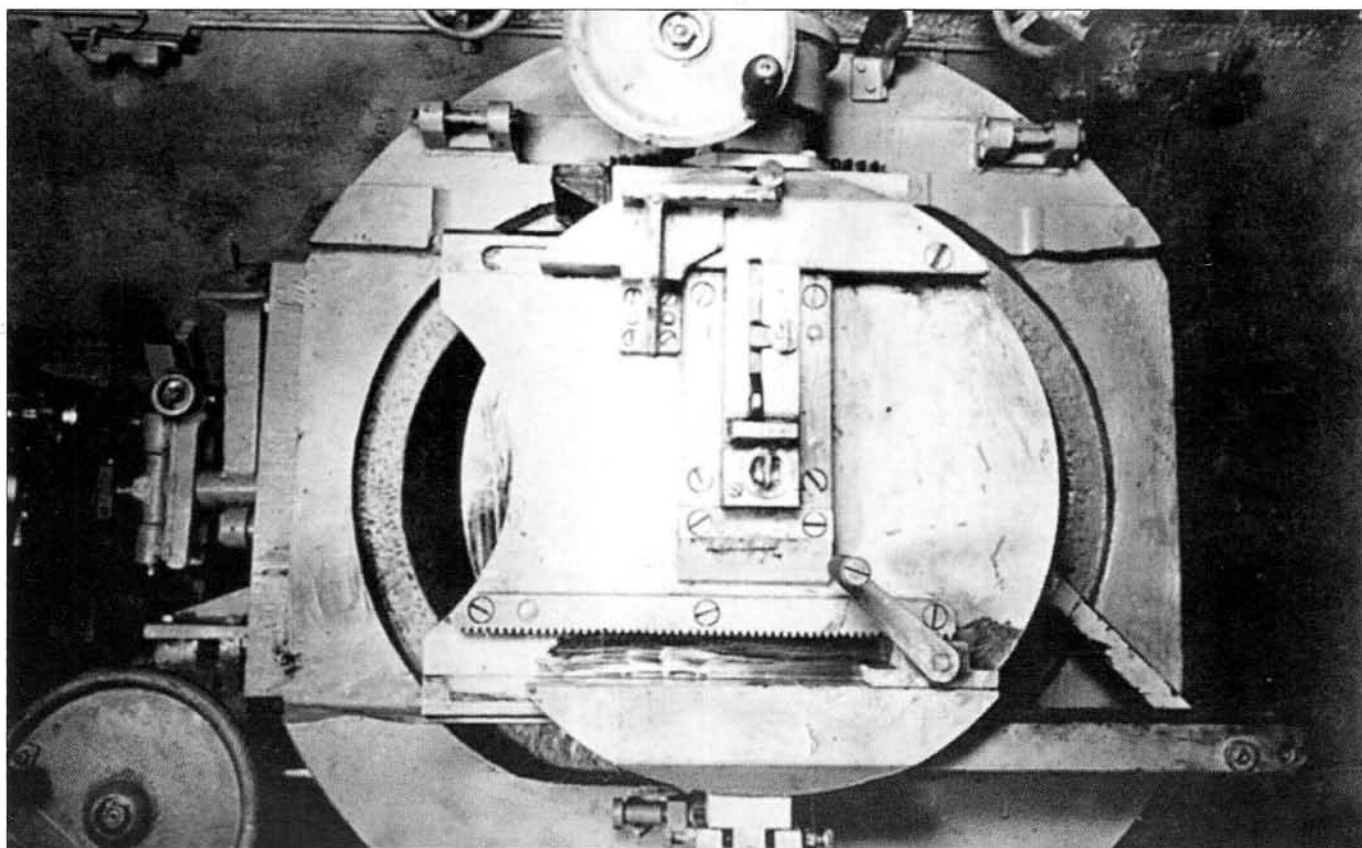
The firing igniter can then be screwed in... • Jetzt kann der Anfeuerungszünder eingeschraubt ...





...and the igniting device placed in the mount on the breechblock. • ...und die Zündpatrone in der Halterung im Verschußkeil eingesetzt werden.

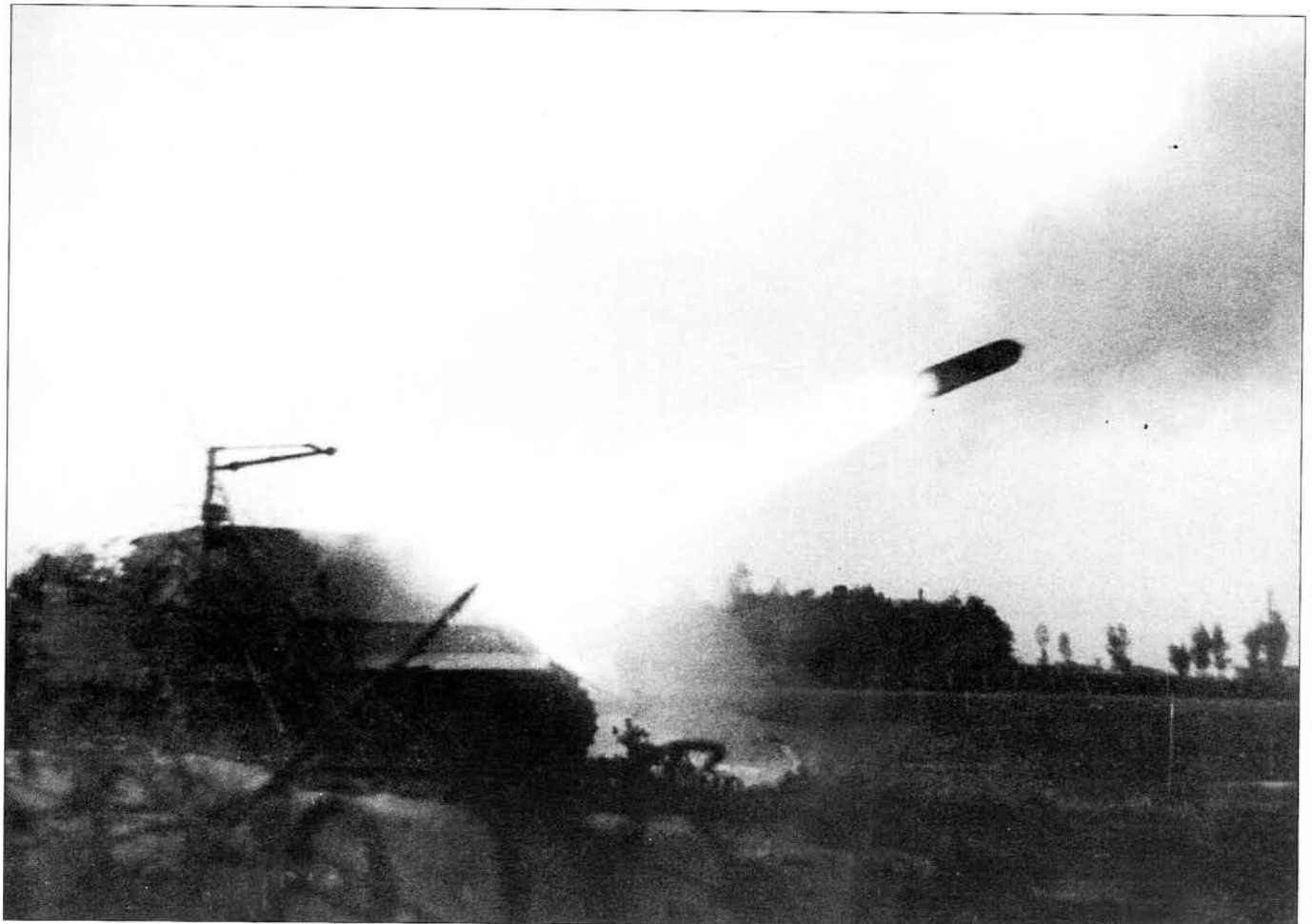
The breech was then closed. • Danach wird der Verschluss verriegelt.

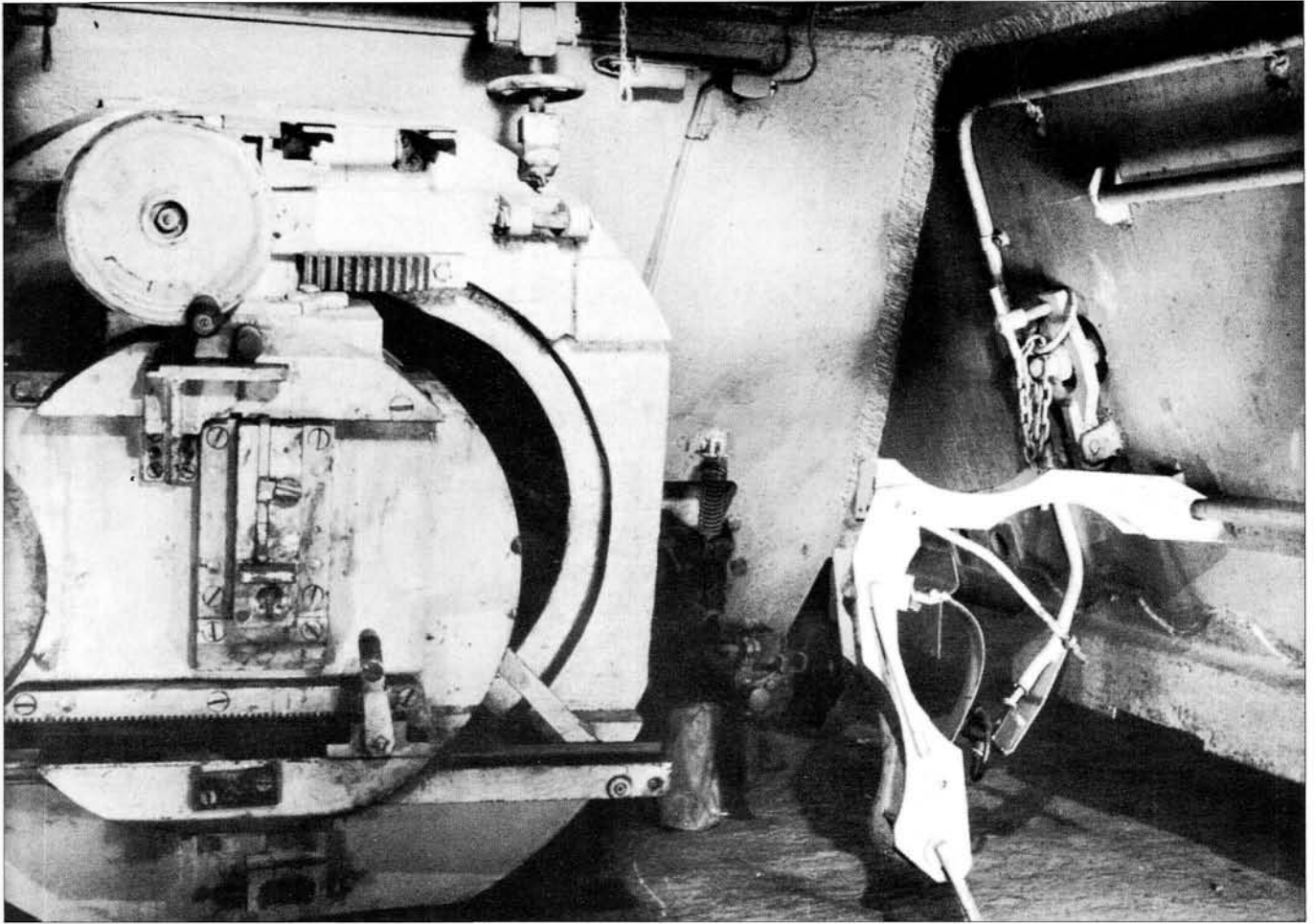




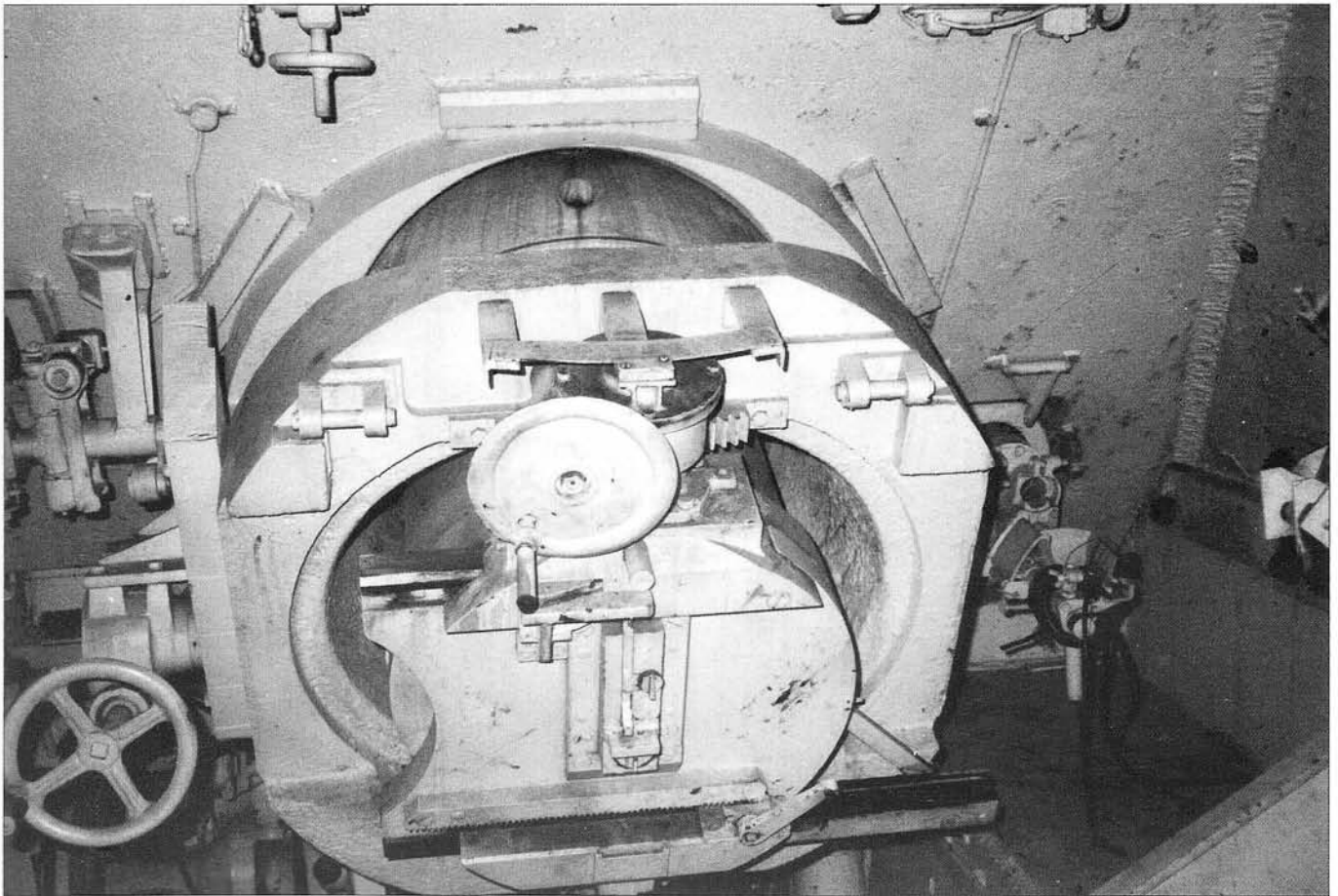
The mortar was then ready to fire. • Jetzt ist der Mörser einsatzbereit.

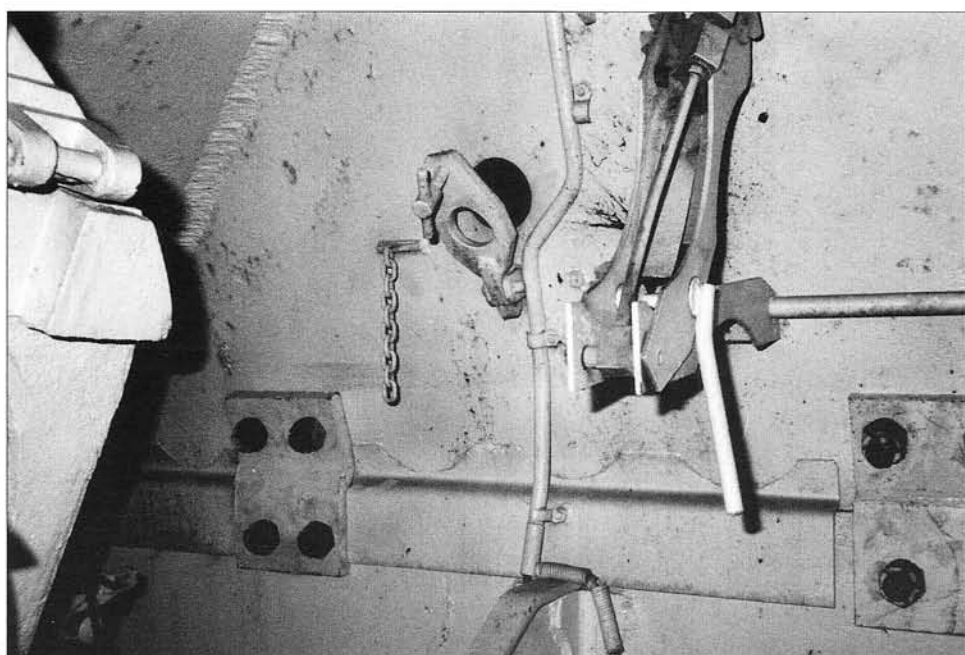
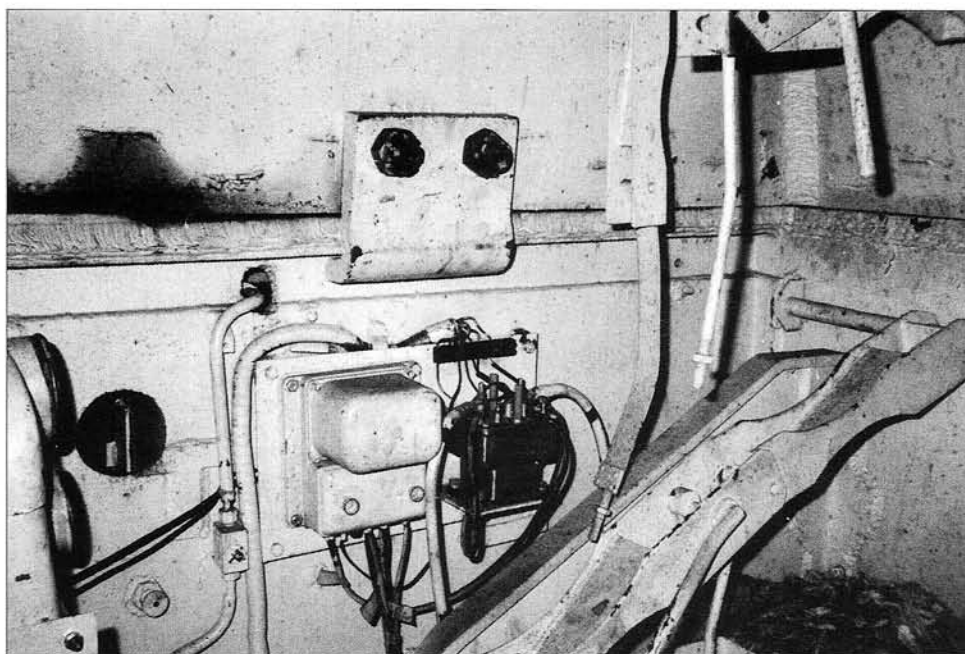
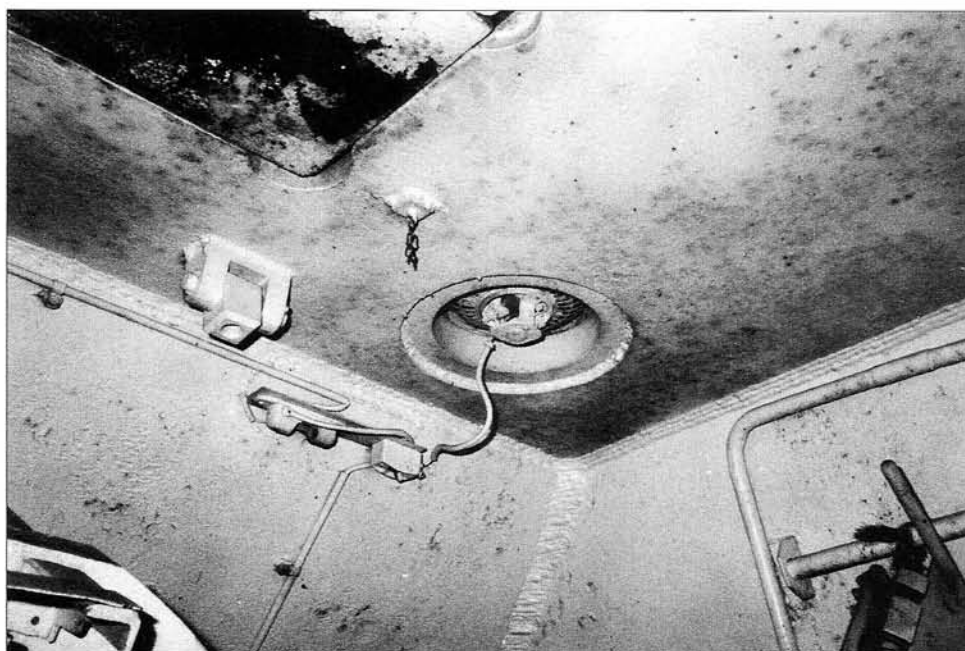
Fire! The round leaves the barrel. • Abschuss!! Die Granate verlässt das Rohr. [KHM]

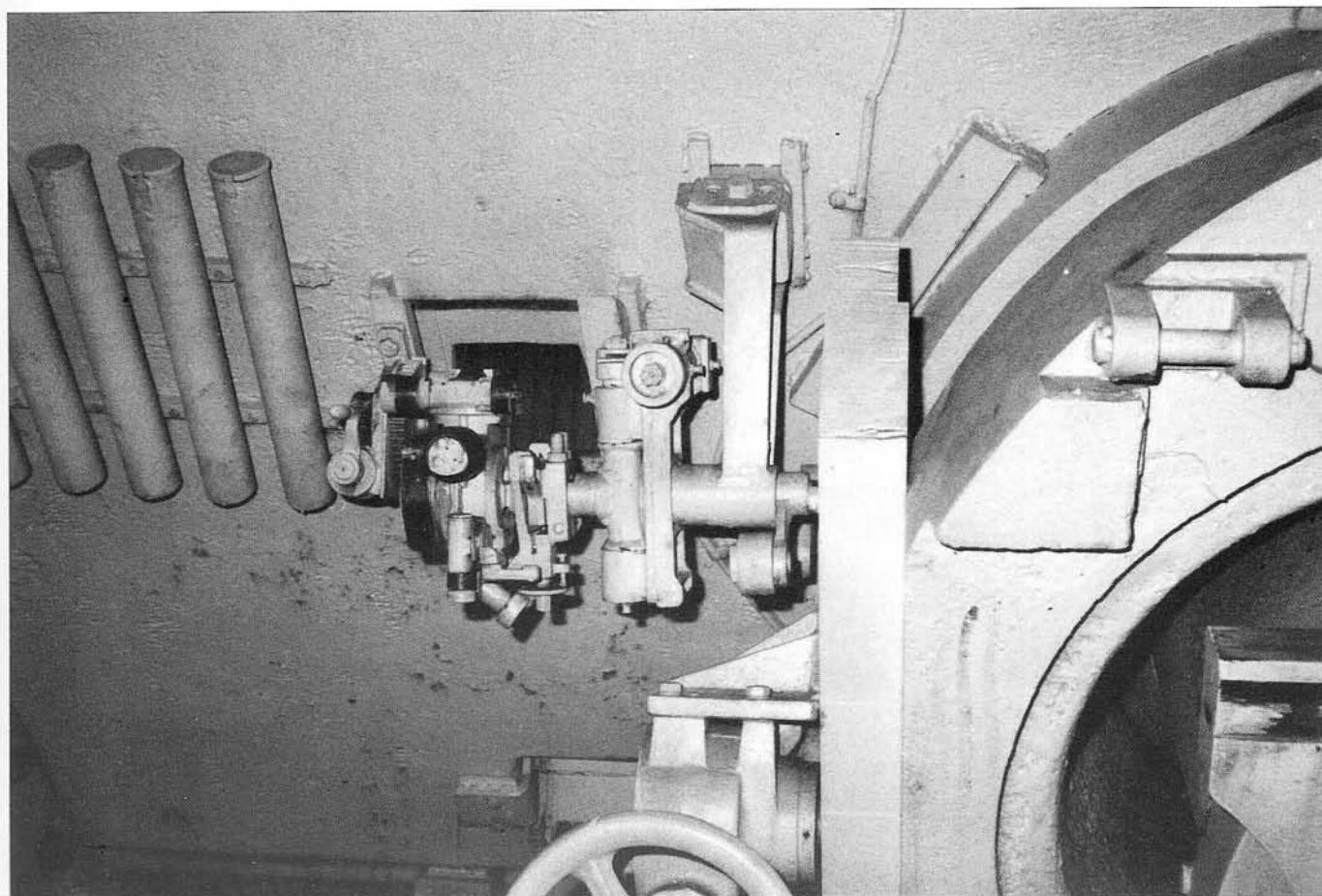
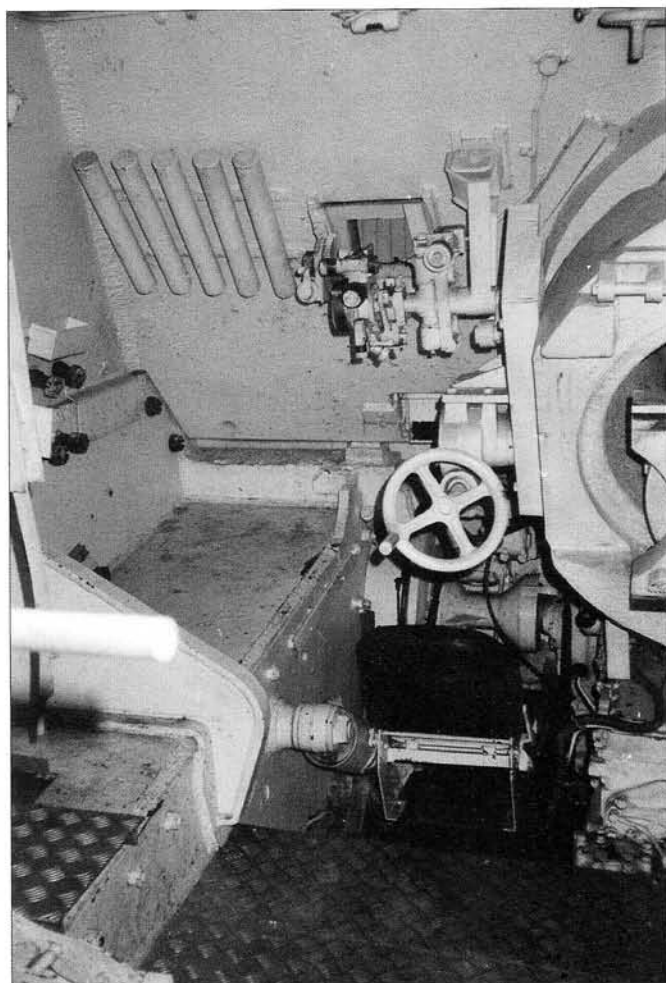
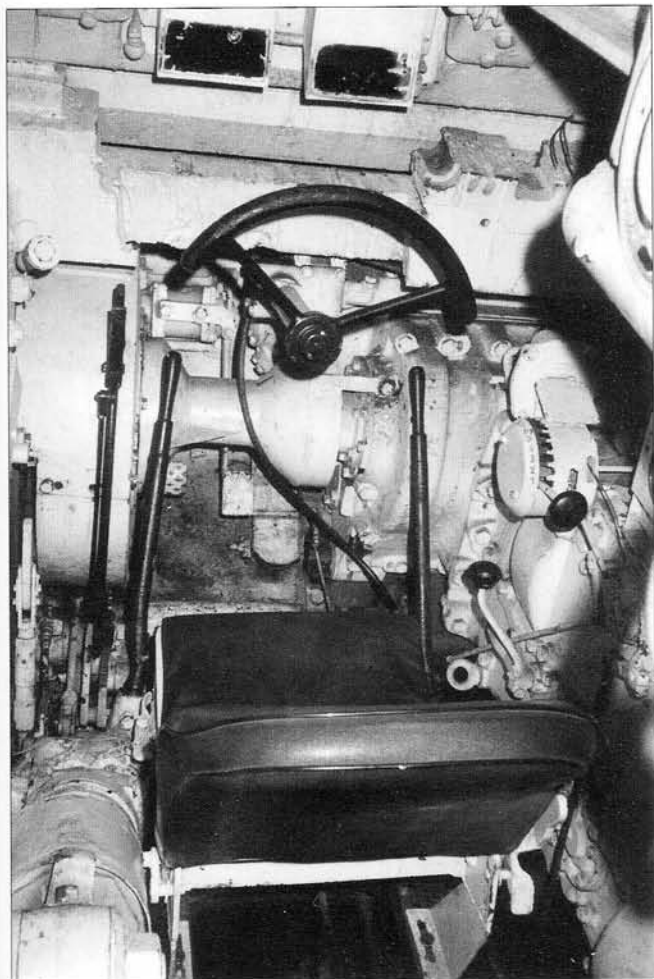


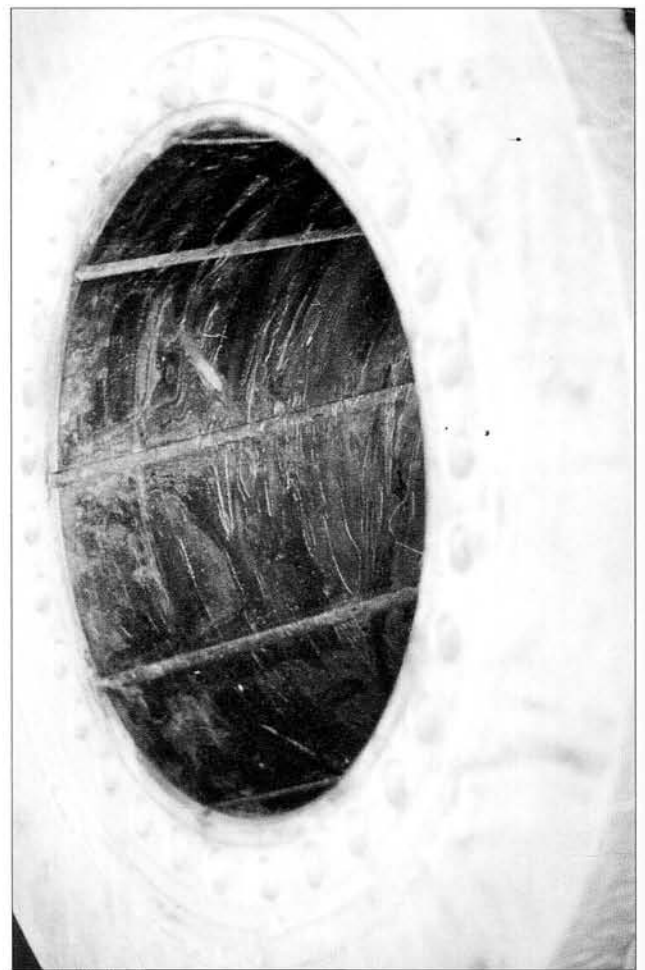
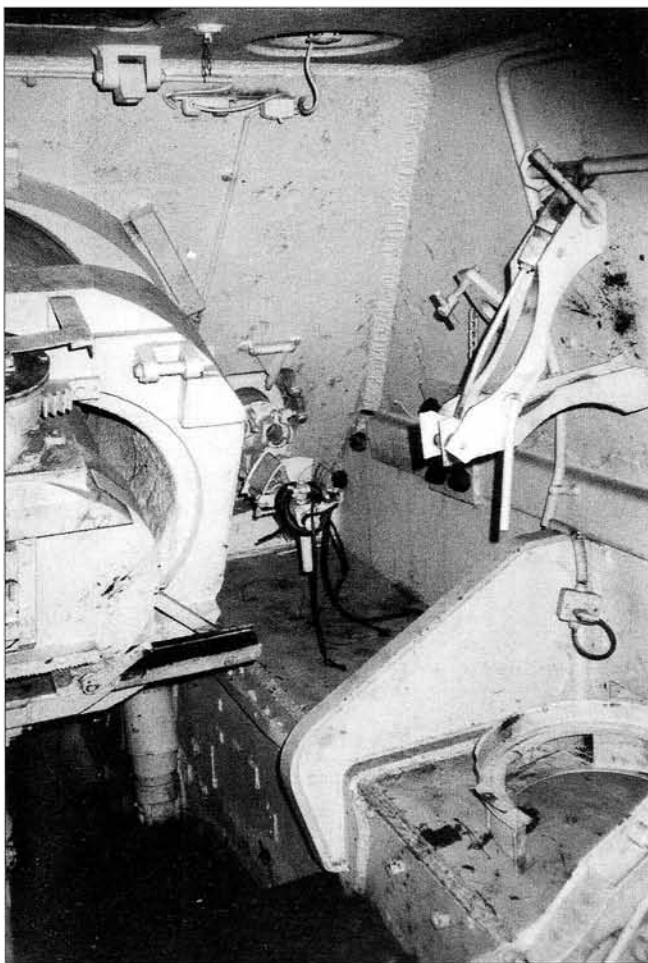
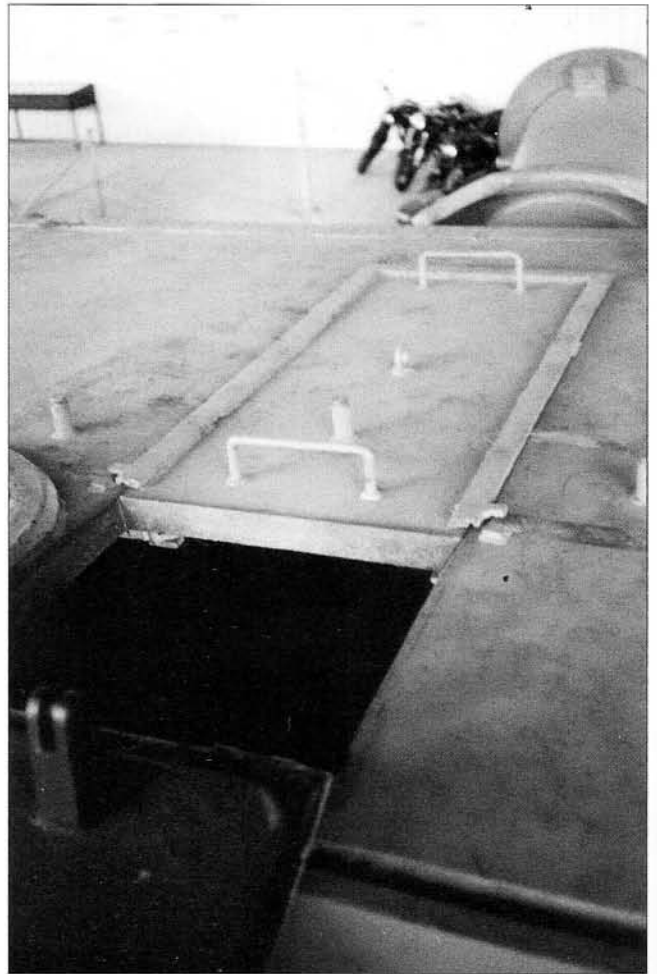


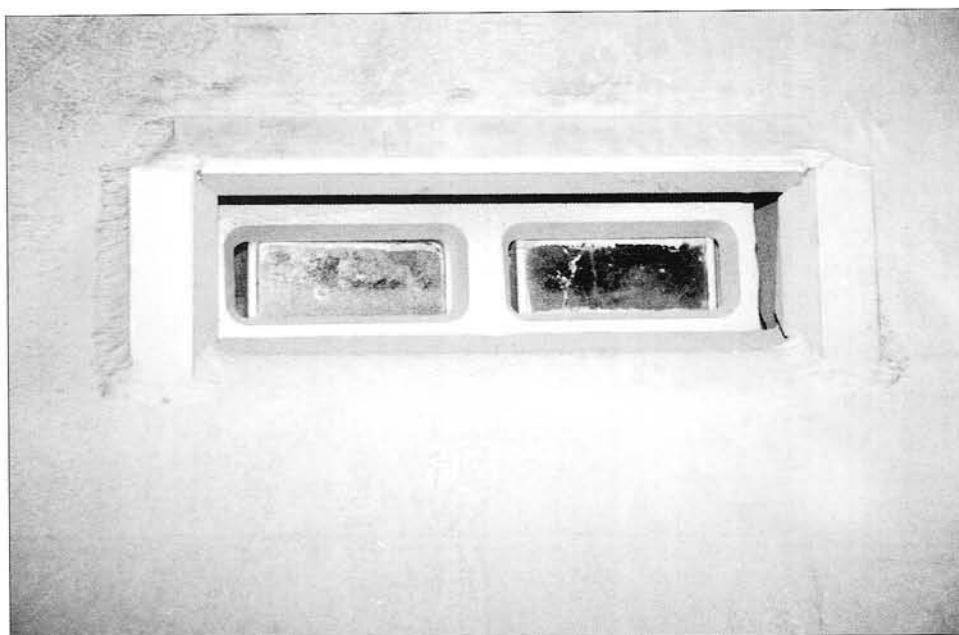
The following four pages show details of the Sturmtiger • Sturmtiger details. and weitere 4 Seiten.











Sturm-Mörser-Kompanie 1000 / Sturm-Mörser-Batterie 1000

Sturm-Mörser-Kompanie 1000 was established by orders dated 13 August 1944. One day prior, on 12 August 1944, the prototype of the *Sturmtiger* (chassis number 250174) was sent to Warsaw, along with service personnel from the firm of Alkett. The *Sturmtiger* was unloaded from the train on 15 August. Another *Sturmtiger* (chassis number 250237) arrived at Pruszkow, outside of Warsaw, on 18 August. Both vehicles were employed in the greater area of Warsaw for approximately four weeks. They were given the mission of destroying blocks of buildings occupied by the Polish insurgents.

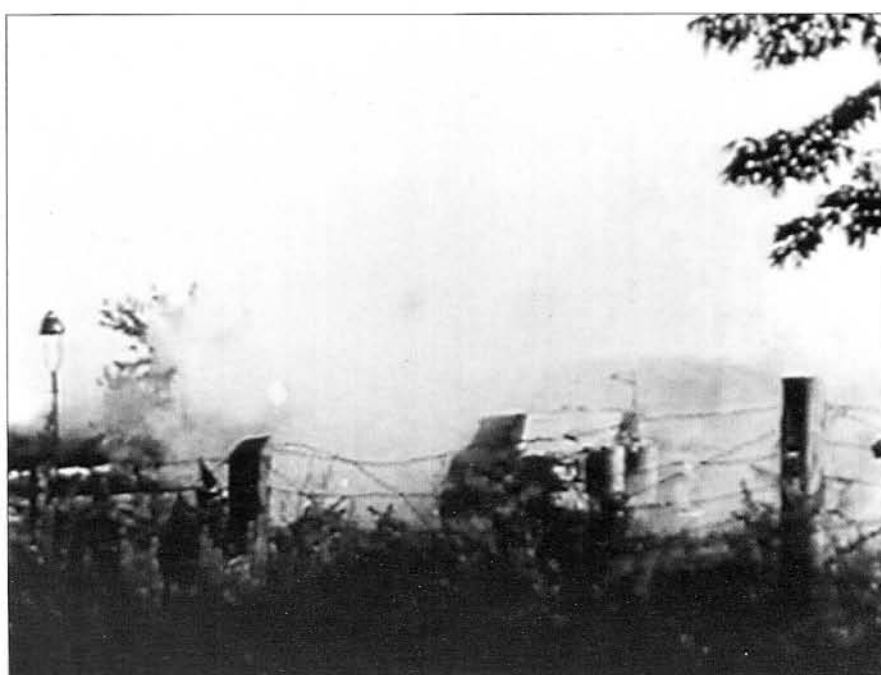
Around the same time, a platoon of *Sturmtigers* was sent to the Western Front. Both of those vehicles were unloaded in Meaux on 25 August. This platoon was moved to Hungary on 10 September 1944, where it was attached in support of the newly formed *Panzer-Brigade 109*. The two vehicles reported themselves as operational on 23 September. When no operations developed in the Bratislava (Pressburg) area, orders were issued on 20 October 1944 to move the two *Sturmtigers* to the Warsaw area. Two days later, however, this order was amended. The entire company was to move to the Camp Senne Training Area and be refitted. In December 1944, *Sturm-Mörser-Kompanie 1000* was sent to the Elsdorf — Gemünd area for employment in *Unternehmen "Wacht am Rhein"*, the German Ardennes Offensive. The company had three operational *Sturmtigers* at that time. Initially, they were to be employed in the area of operations of the 15. *Armee*. This was later changed to the *LXVII. Armee-Korps* and, finally, to the 6. *Panzer-Armee*.

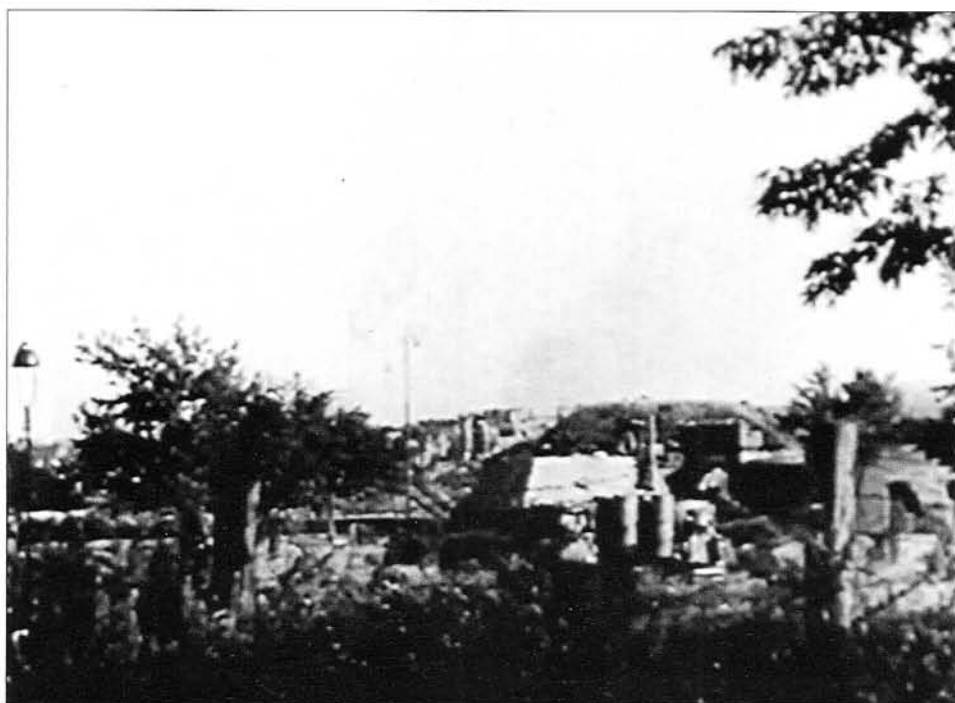
No other information is available concerning the company's employment during the Ardennes Offensive, the subsequent retreat or the final fighting in Germany. With an effective date of 23 January 1945, however, the company was redesignated as *Sturm-Mörser-Batterie 1000* and transferred administratively to the artillery.

It is also uncertain what *Sturmtigers* were actually issued to the company/battery. The *Sturmtiger* with the chassis number of 250174 was also listed on the property books of *Panzer-Ersatz-Abteilung 500* for a while. Other *Sturmtigers* had the chassis numbers 250327 and 251168, as well as 250091 and 250230. In the case of the last two numbers, it is presumed that these were for the vehicles used to raise the battery from four to six vehicles.

One of the two *Sturmtiger* of *Sturm-Mörser-Kompanie 1000* is shown in action in Warsaw during the Warsaw Uprising. The vehicle shown was photographed during the period 15 - 18 August 1944. Most probably a prototype, it is shelling emplacements of the Polish insurgents. and the next 5 pages • *Sturmtiger* (Prototyp ?) im Einsatz, Warschau, August 1944. und weitere 5 Seiten







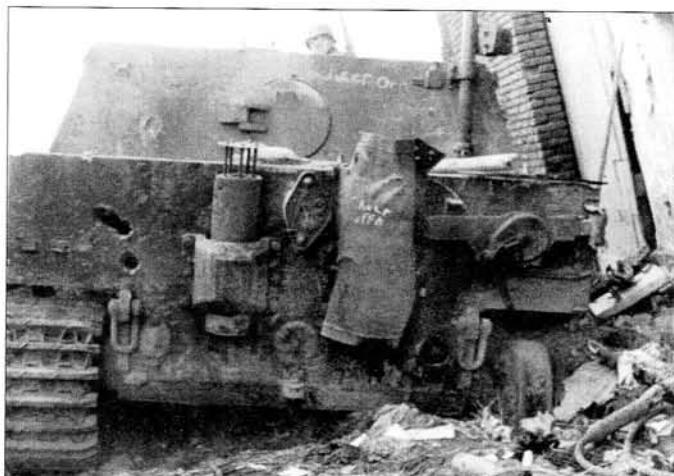






This *Sturmtiger* fell into the hands of US forces near Düren at the end of February 1945. • Dieser Sturmtiger fiel den US-Truppen als erster Ende Februar 1945 bei Düren in die Hände der US-Streikräfte.





The handle has been positioned up on the entry hatch on the superstructure. In the case of some *Sturmtigers*, this handle was also placed on the exterior of the right side. • An der Anstiegsluke am Aufbau ist der Griff oben befestigt. Bei einigen Sturmtiger war dieser auch an der rechten Seite außen angebracht.

Several directives to „keep off“ have been placed on the vehicle. • Am Sturmtiger sind mehrere Hinweise „keep off - fernbleiben“ angebracht.



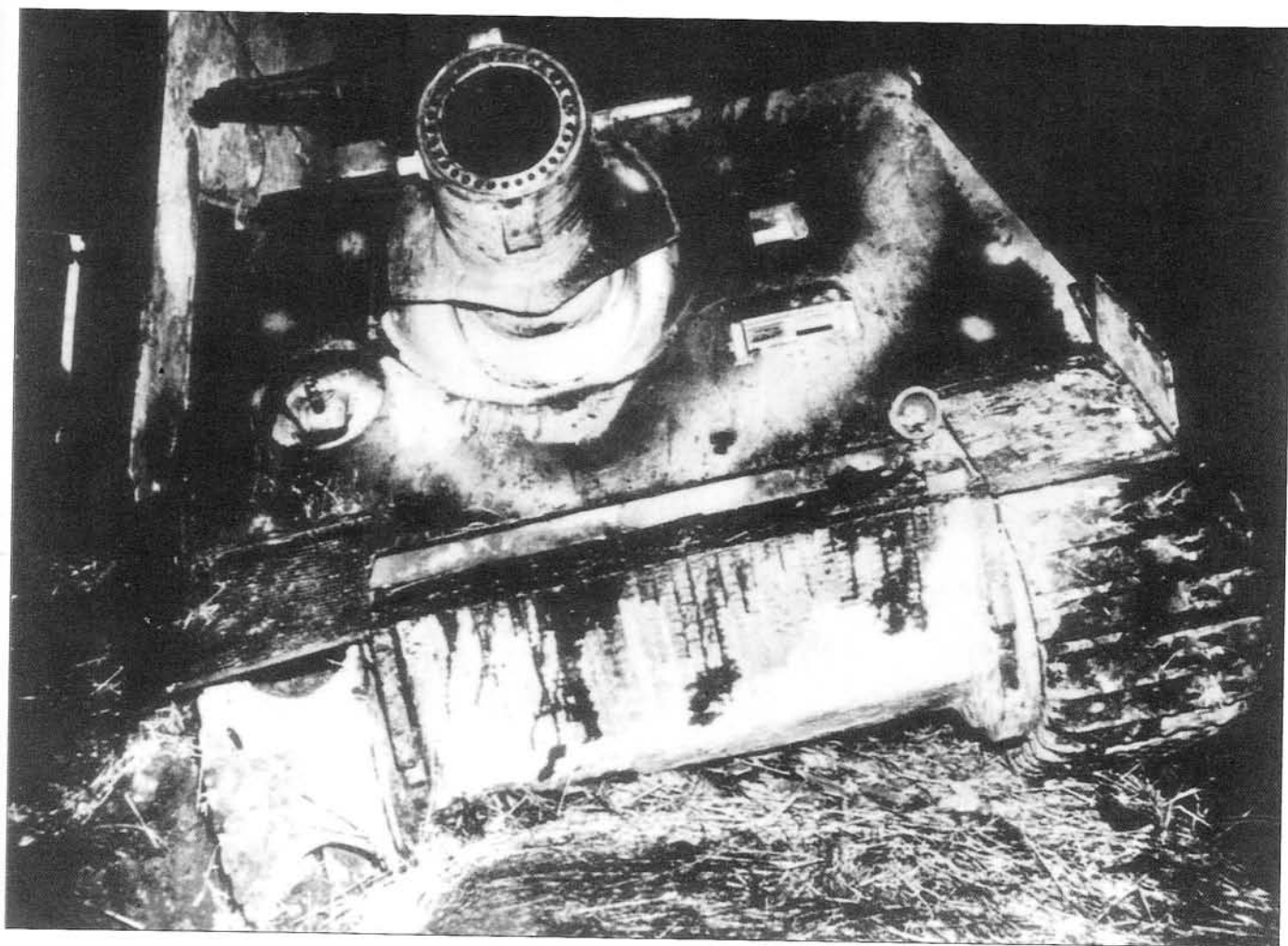
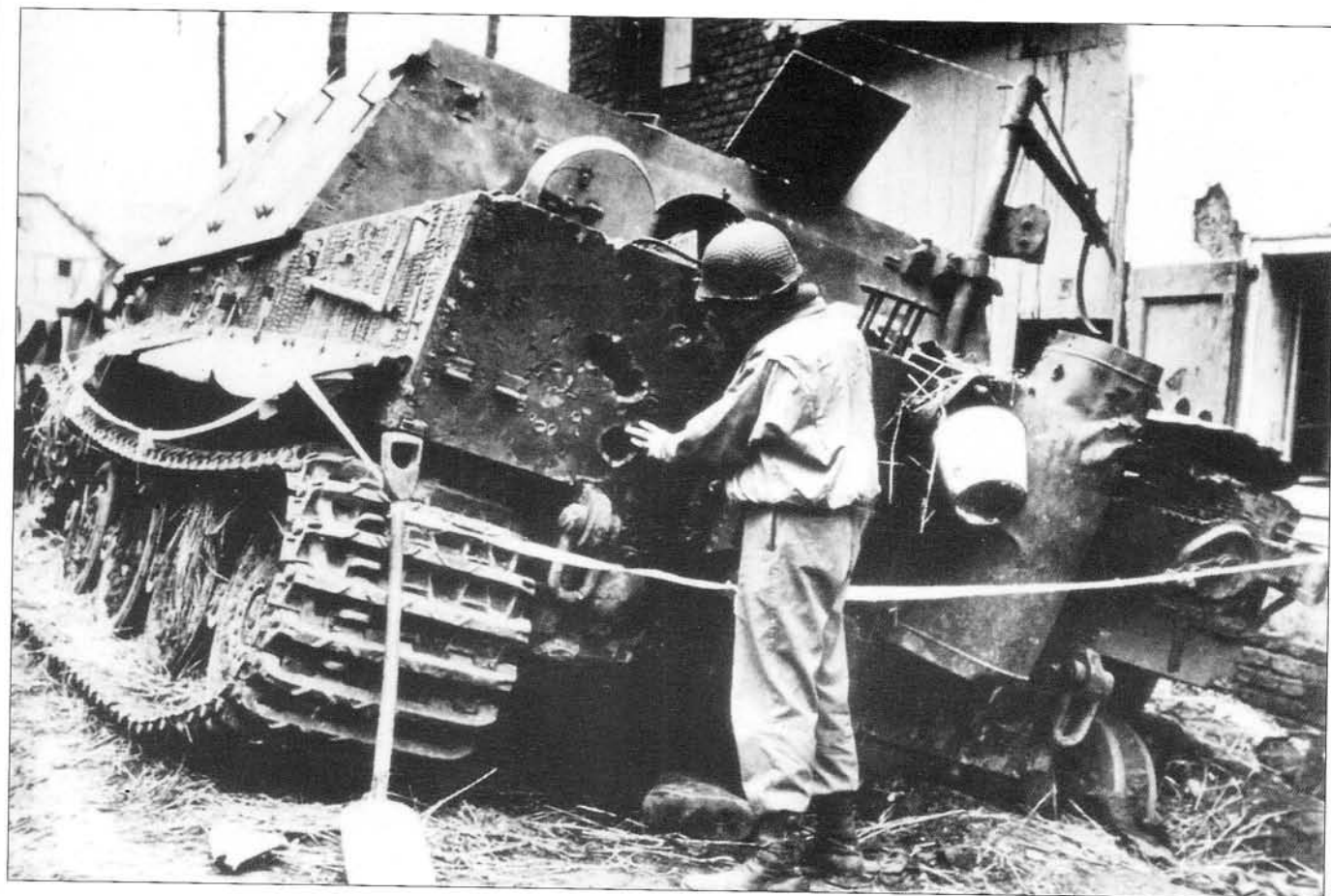


View from the front left. A military policeman guards the vehicle. The *Sturmtiger* was located in Oberembt, near Düren. •
 Ansicht von links vorn. Ein Militärpolizist bewacht das Fahrzeug. Der *Sturmtiger* stand in Oberembt bei Düren.

No tactical numbers or national insignia can be identified on this *Sturmtiger*. and the next 2 pages • Am *Sturmtiger* selbst
 sind keine taktischen Zeichen oder Hoheitszeichen - wie Balkenkreuze – erkennbar. und weitere 2 Seiten



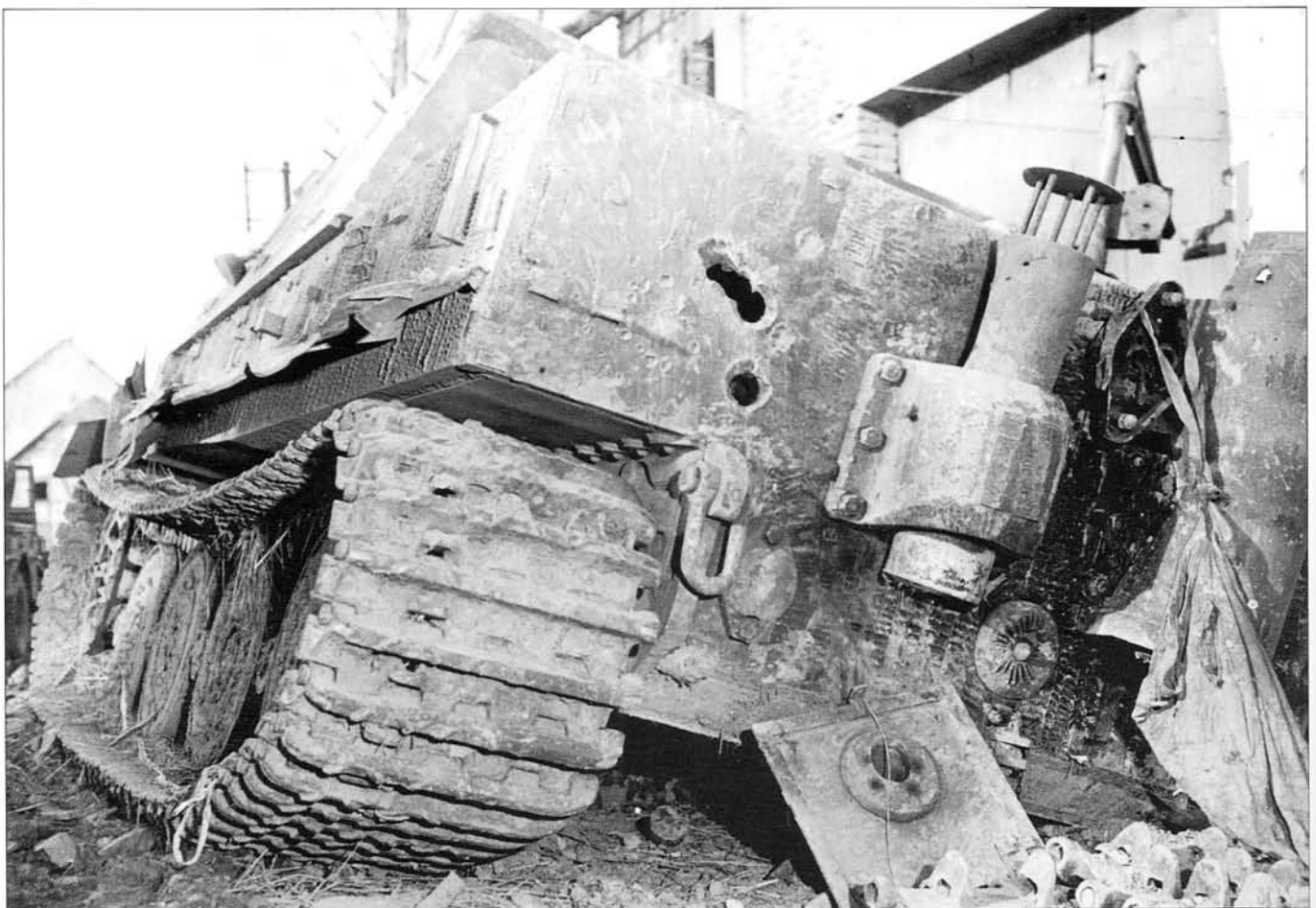






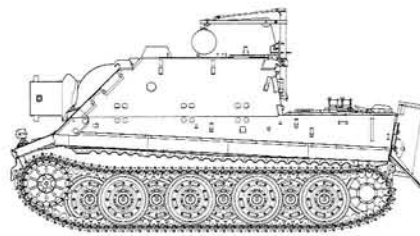
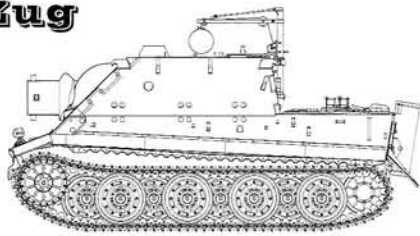
This photograph was also taken at the end of February. A dead crewmember, covered with straw, can be seen in the foreground. • Dieses Foto ist auch bereits Ende Februar entstanden. Im Vordergrund - mit Stroh bedeckt - ein gefallenes Besatzungsmitglied.

This *Sturmtiger* received a hit in the area of the rear deck, which penetrated the hull in the engine compartment. • Der Sturmtiger erhielt Treffer am Fahrzeugheck, welche die Rückseite der Wanne beim Motorraum durchschlugen.

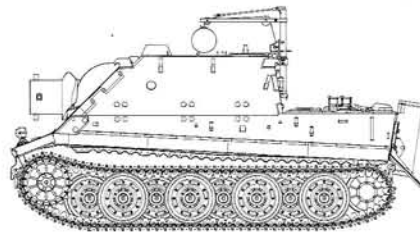
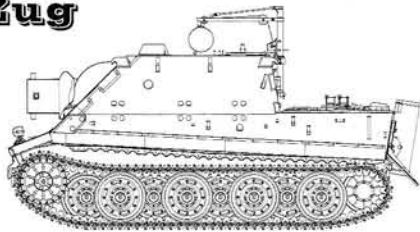


Sturmmörser Kp. 1000 **10.1944**

1. Zug



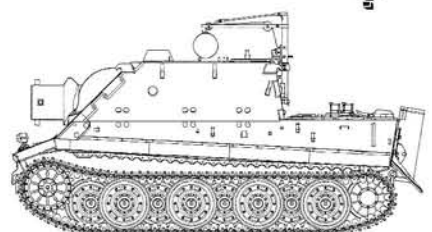
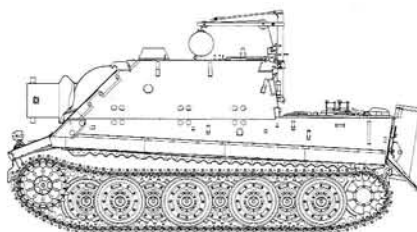
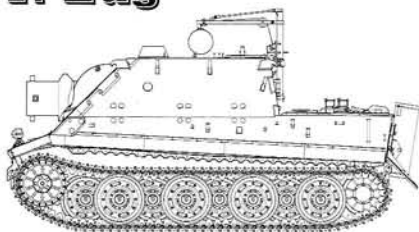
2. Zug



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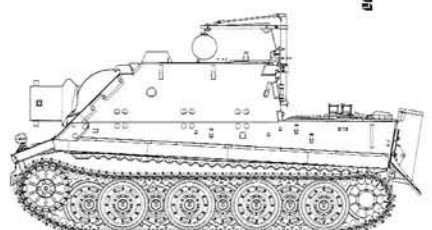
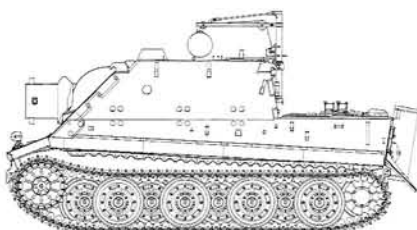
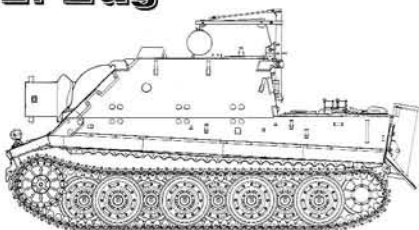
Sturmmörser Battr. 1000 **02.1945**

1. Zug



?

2. Zug

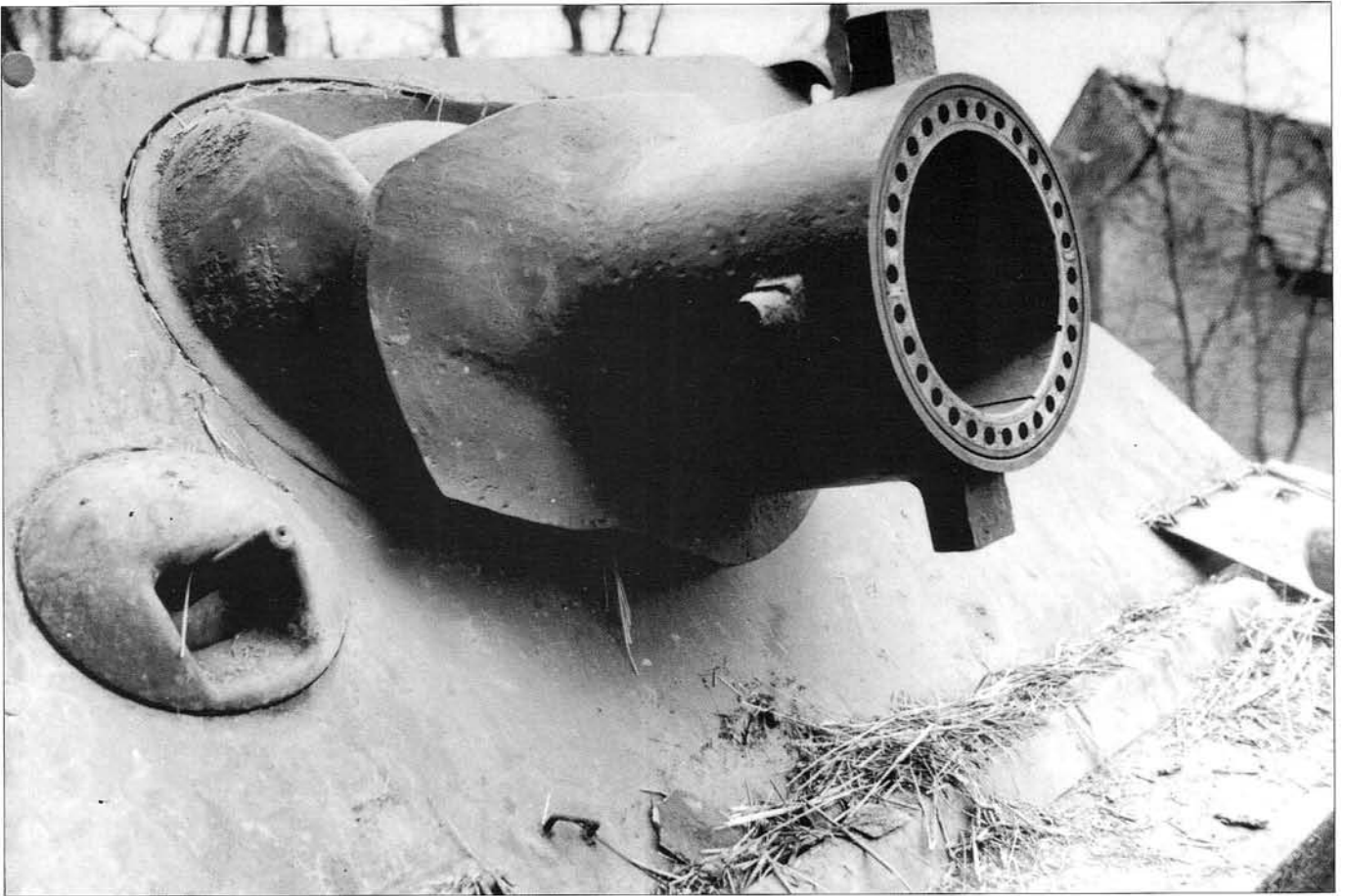


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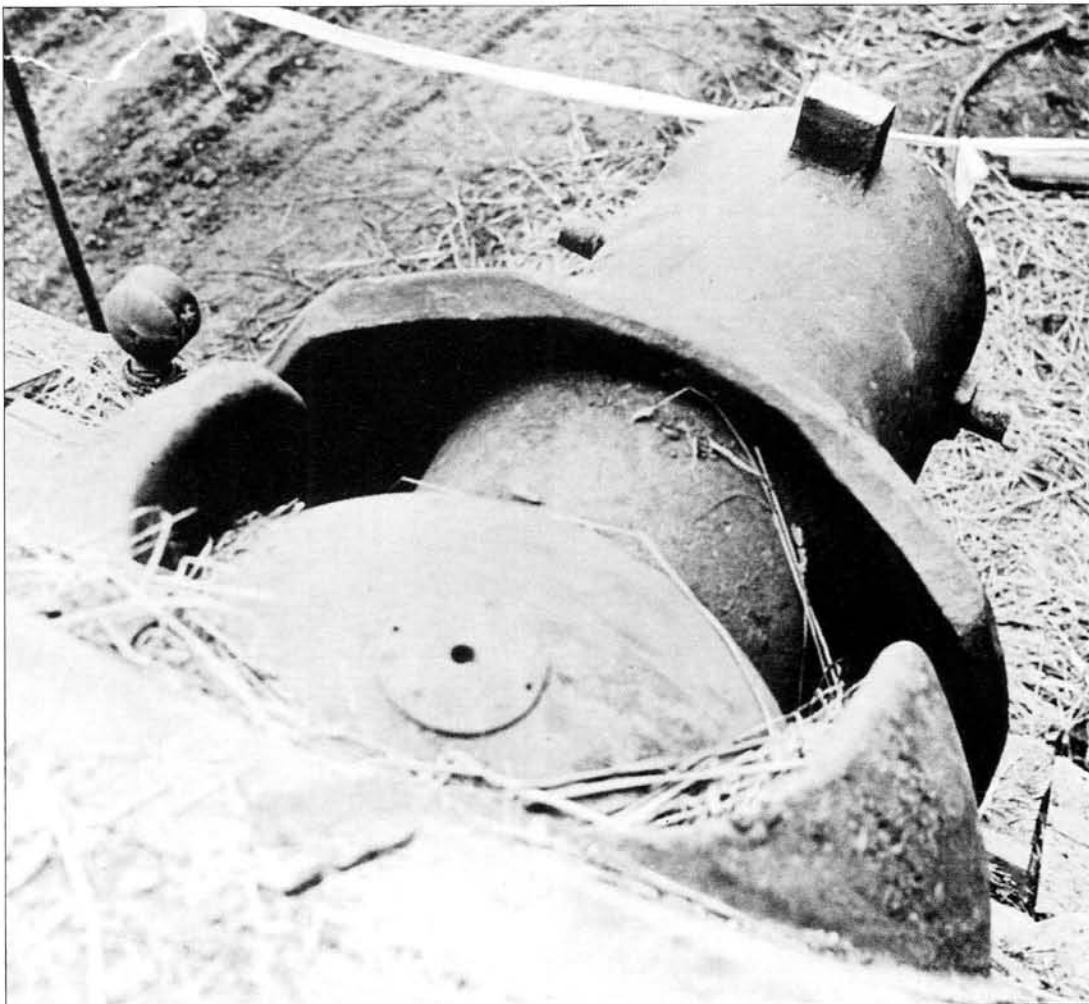
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Another view from the front. • Ein weitere Aufnahme von vorne.



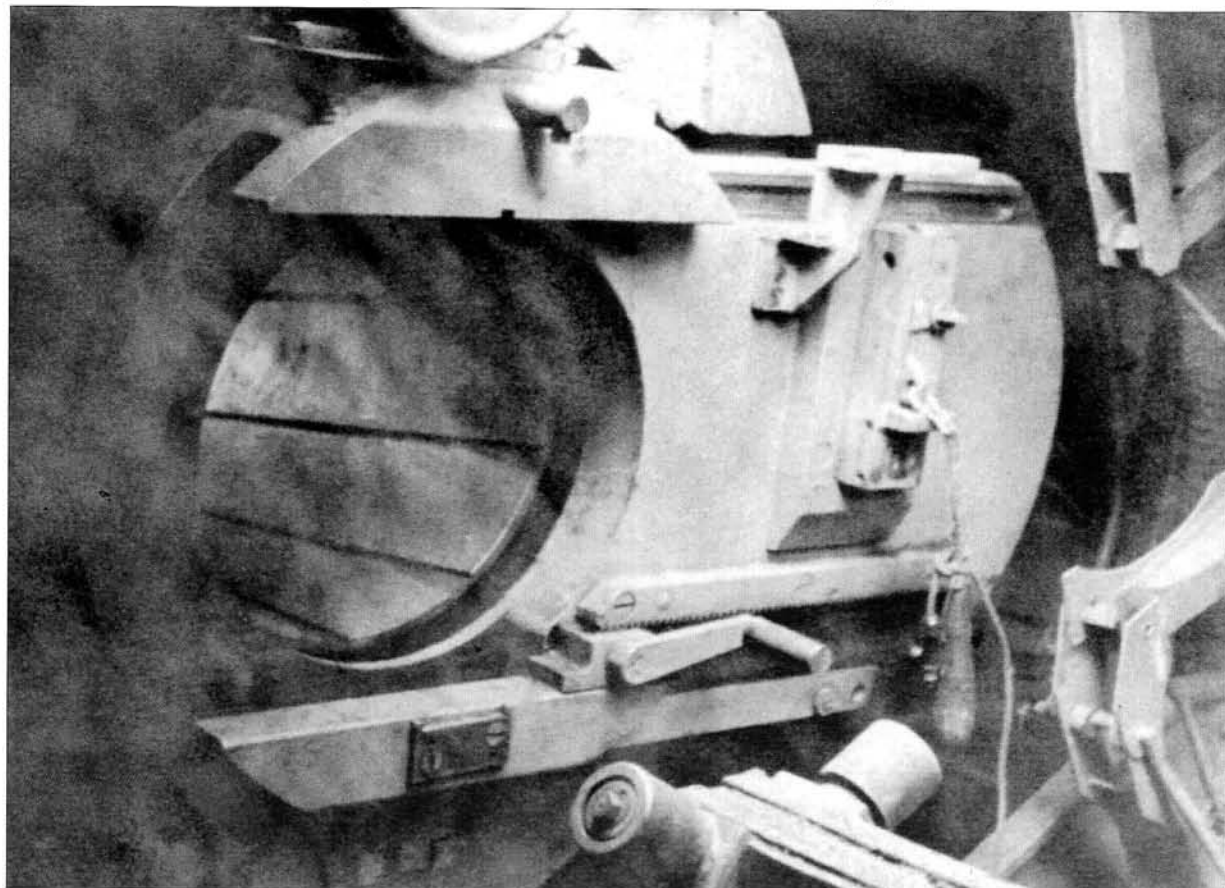
A view of the barrel. Thirty-one escape vents have been bored into the barrel. The counterweight is missing. • Blick auf das Rohr. Im Mantelrohr sind 31 Bohrungen zu erkennen. Das Gegengewicht fehlt.

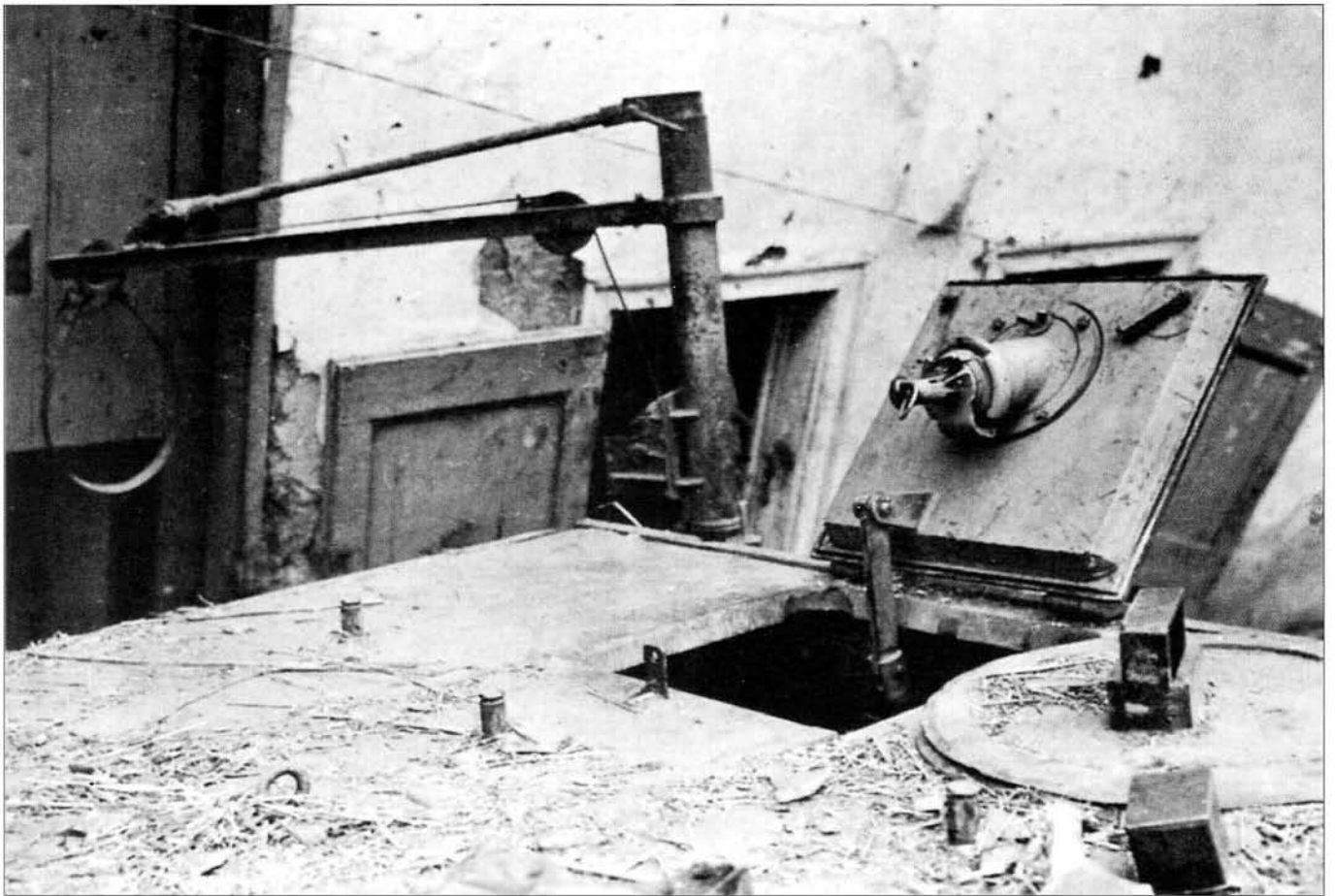




A GI takes a critical view of the round in the barrel. • Ein GI wirft einen kritischen Blick auf das im Rohr befindliche Geschoss.

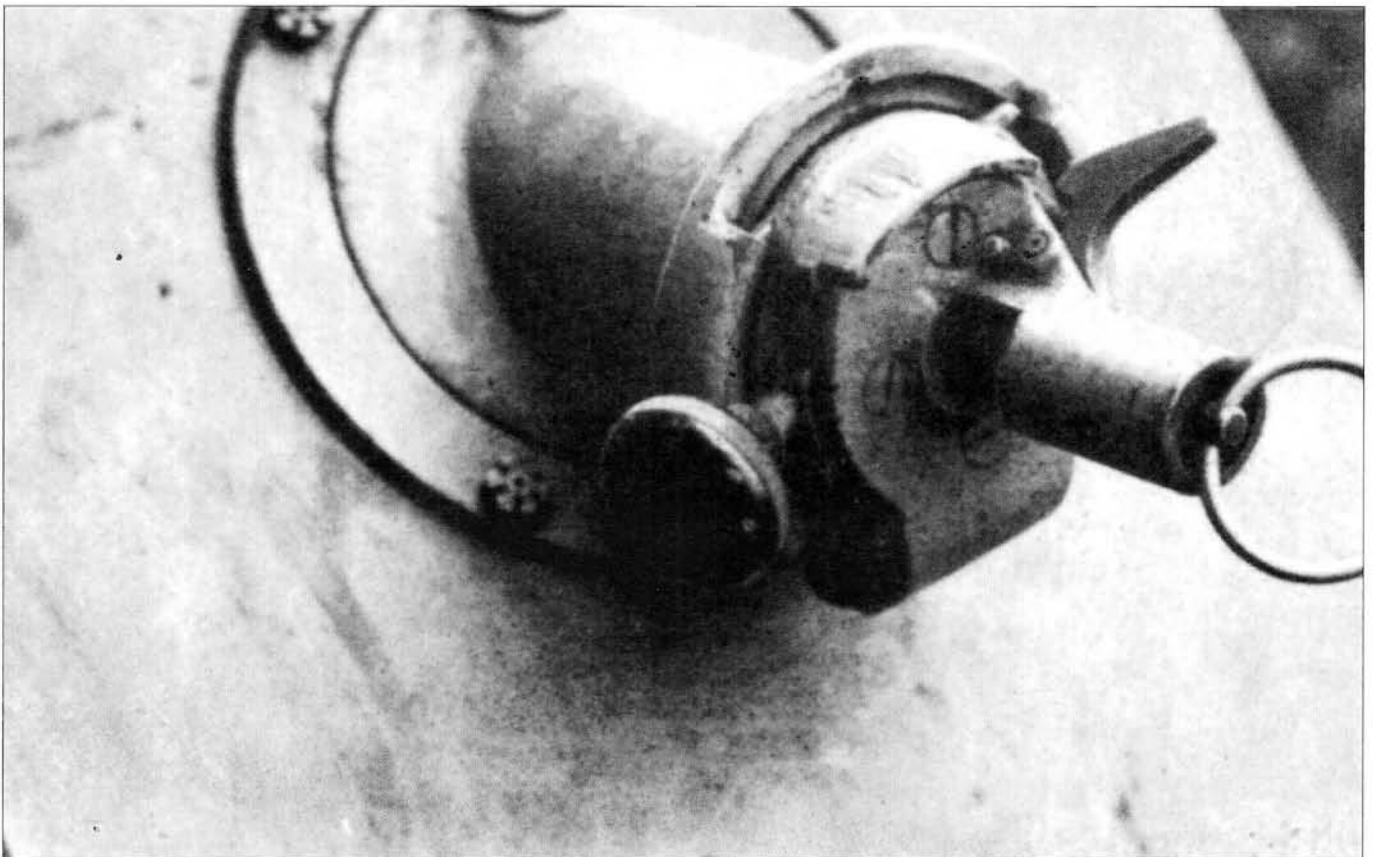
A view of the interior and the opened breech. • Blick im Innenraum auf den geöffneten Verschluss.





A launching device for smoke grenades was built onto the rear hatch. • An der hinteren Luke war eine Wurfvorrichtung für Nebelkerzen eingebaut.

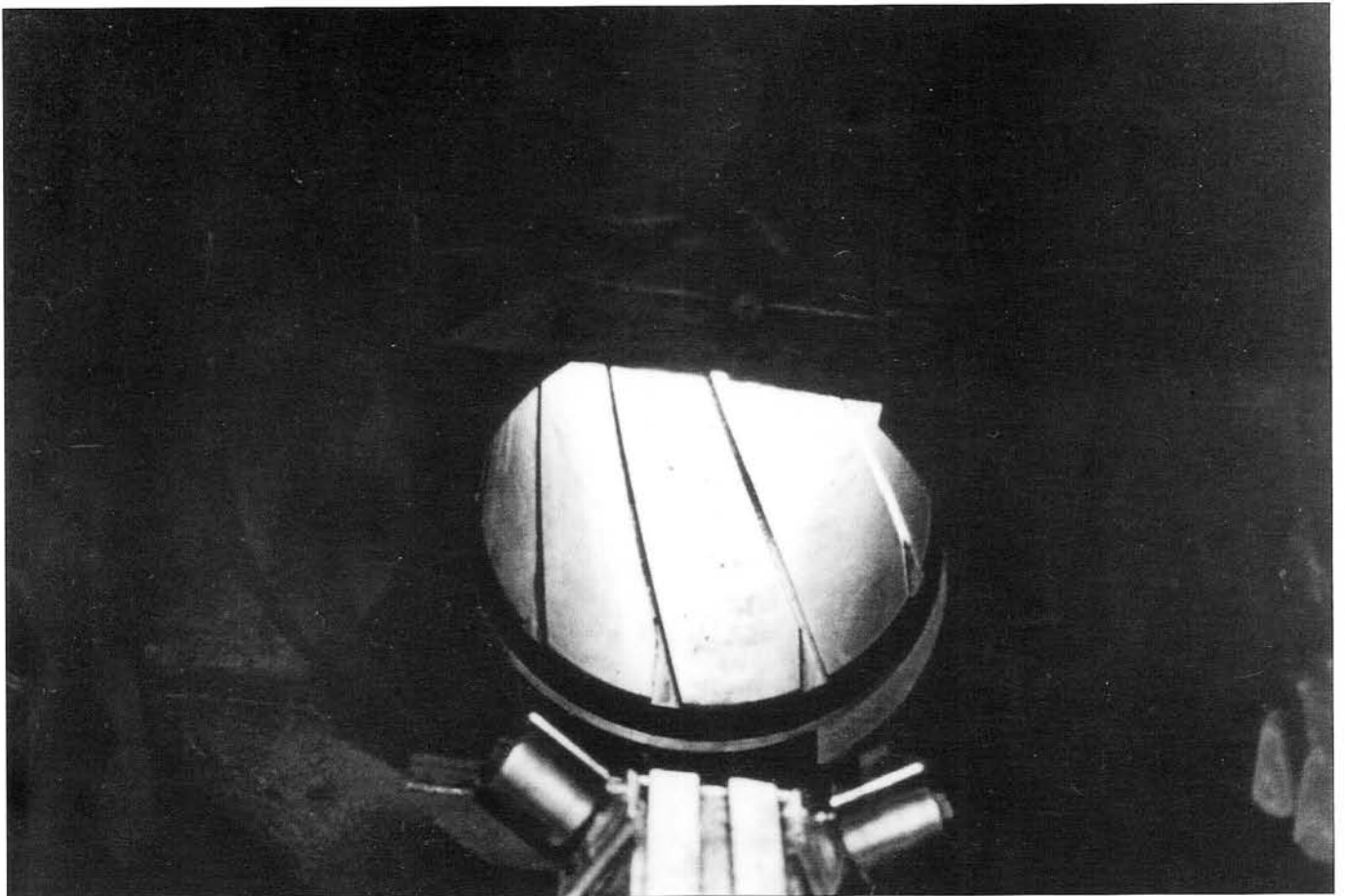
Note the igniter cord for the smoke grenade. • Man beachte den Abreiszünder für die Nebelkerze.





Three removed igniters for the rounds lie on the tarpaulin on the floor of the hull. • Auf der Plane am Wanneboden liegen drei ausgebaute Zünder für die Granate.

A view of the rifling in the barrel. • Blick auf die Züge im Rohr. [2xKHM]





A white line has been drawn around the round in the middle. It was at that location that the lifting device of the crane had to be fastened. • Um die Granate herum ist mittig eine weiße Linie aufgezeichnet. An dieser Stelle mußte das Hebegeschirr des Kranes befestigt werden. [KHM]

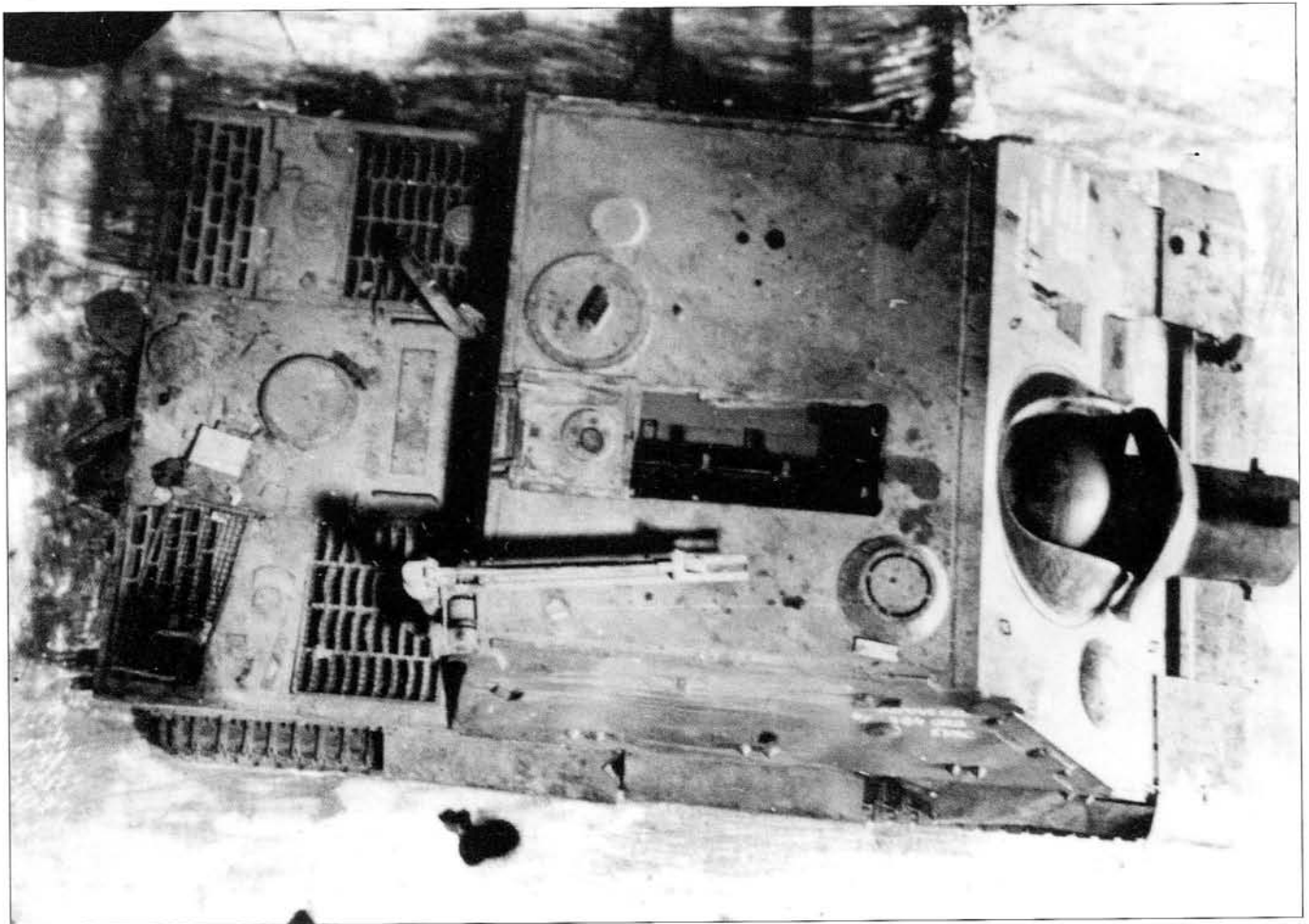
With the assistance of a captured *Bergepanther*, the *Sturmtiger* was towed away. • Mit Hilfe eines gleichfalls erbeuteten *Bergepanthers* wird der *Sturmtiger* abgeschleppt.

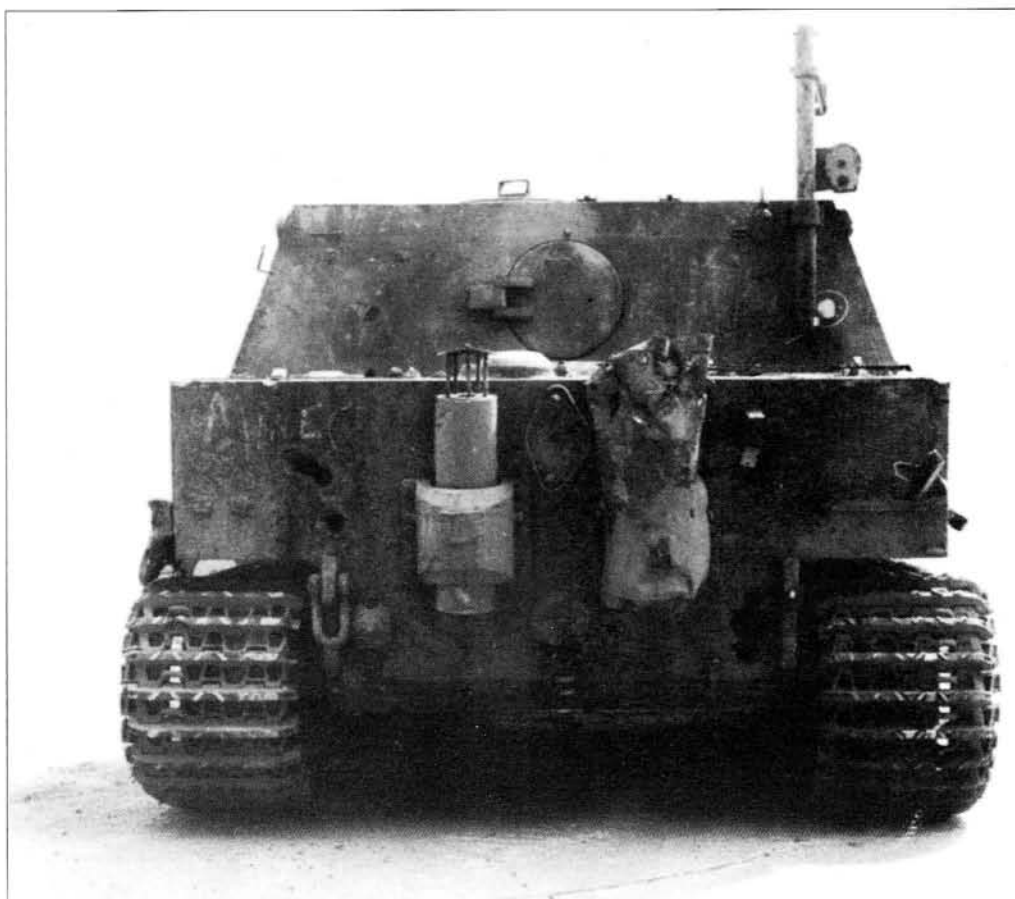
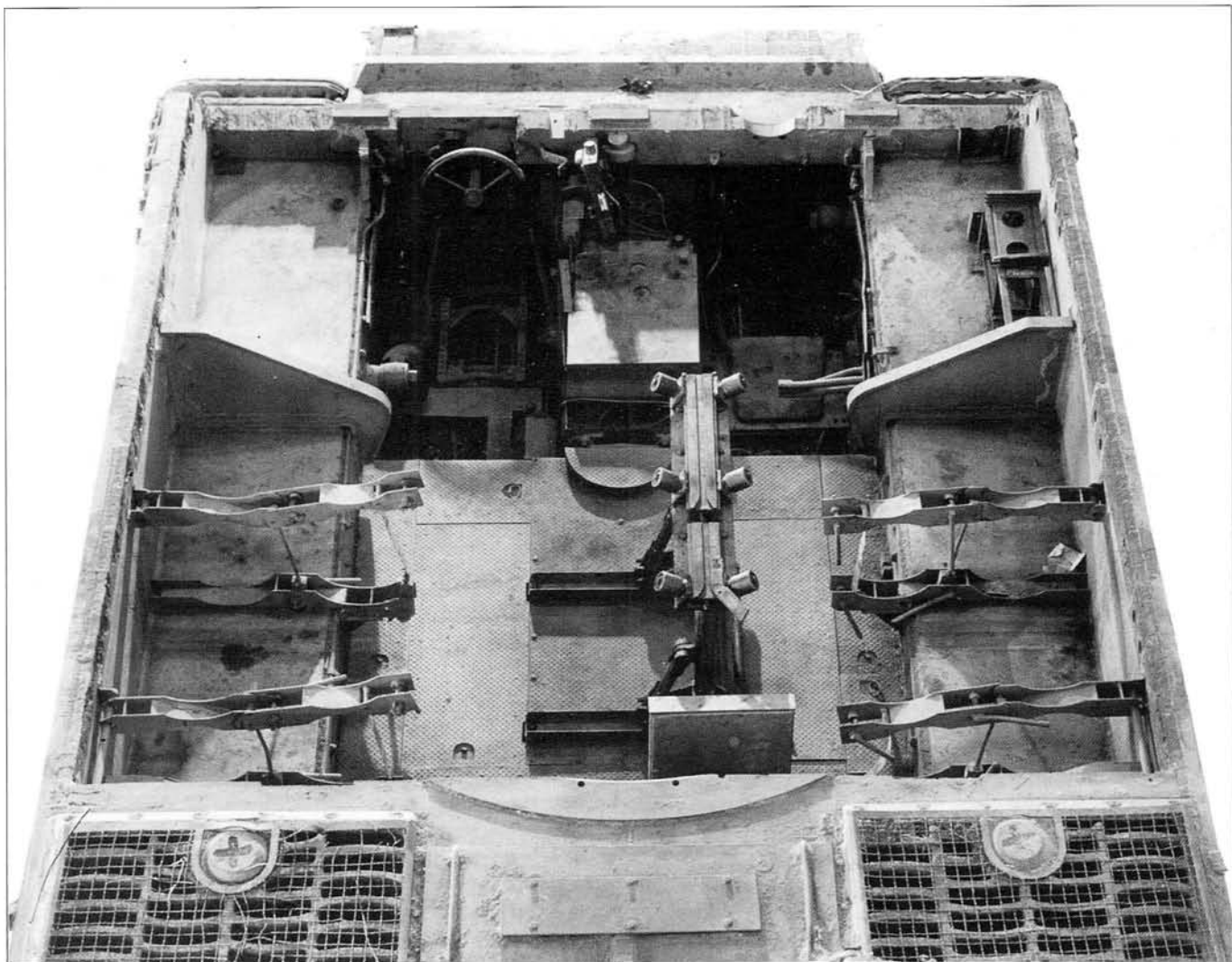




The *Sturmtiger* was sent to the United Kingdom. and the next 3 pages • Der Sturmtiger wird nach England überführt. Dort wird der Sturmmörser ausgiebigen Test unterzogen. und weitere 3 Seiten







Sturmörser-Kompanie 1001 / Sturmörser-Batterie 1001

Sturmörser-Kompanie 1001 was established by orders dated 23 September 1944. The company commander was *Hauptmann von Gottburg*. The first four *Sturmtigers* had chassis numbers 250471, 250051, 250103 and 250043. This company was also committed in the Ardennes Offensive. The company participated in the fighting around Düren and Euskirchen, before it pulled back toward the Rhine after the failure of the offensive.

Effective 23 January 1945, the unit was redesignated as *Sturmörser-Batterie 1001* and assigned administratively to the artillery. Its allocation of *Sturmtigers* was increased from four to six.

At the beginning of February 1945, the battery was on the eastern banks of the Rhine at Drolshagen (Near Bonn). Since the necessary repair parts and fuel were no longer available, the crews destroyed three of the vehicles when the US forces approached. The *Sturmtiger* with chassis number 250043 was captured by the US 8th Infantry Division on 11 April 1945.

This knocked-out *Sturmtiger* is checked out by GI's. Note the penetration below the driver's optics. A destroyed 38-centimeter round lies in front of the vehicle. • Dieser abgeschossenen *Sturmtiger* wird von GI's inspiziert. Man beachte das Einschussloch unterhalb der Fahrersichtoptik. Ein zerstörtes 38cm Geschoss liegt vor dem Fahrzeug.

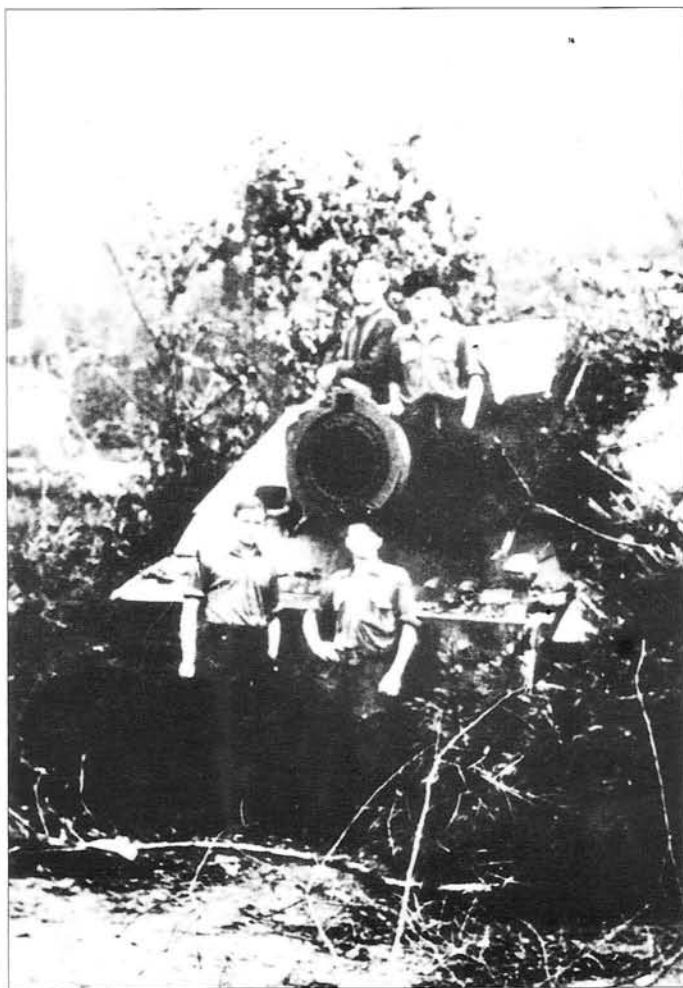




The same vehicle seen from another perspective. The height of the superstructure is quite noticeable when compared to the two US soldiers. • Derselbe Panzer aus einer anderen Perspektive. Durch die beiden US-Soldaten wird die Höhe des Aufbaues erst deutlich.

A girl takes a seat on the main gun barrel. • Danach traut sich ein Mädchen, auf dem Kanonenrohr Platz zu nehmen. [2xKHM]

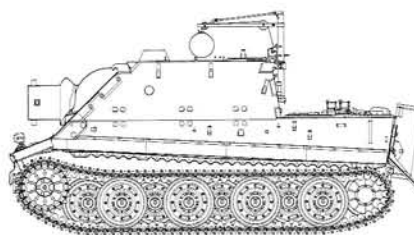
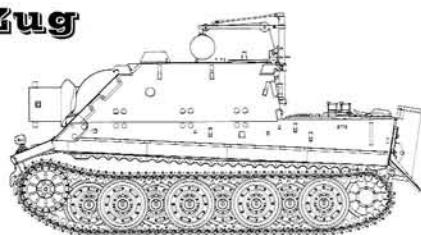




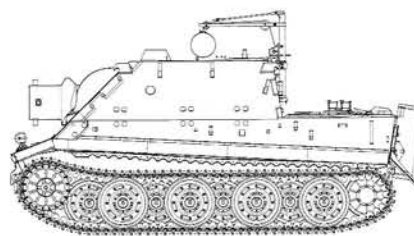
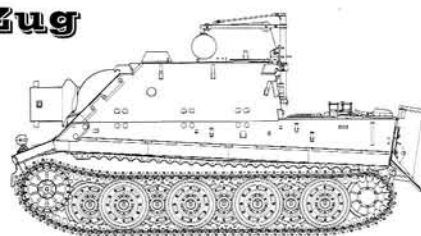
After the Ardennes offensive failed, German forces pulled back toward the Rhine. The battalion waits for a chance to cross the river. Of interest is the unusual counterweight on the barrel of the main gun. Additional armor plating has been mounted on the front slope of the vehicle. The last *Sturmtiger* of *Stürmmörser-Kompanie 1001* being transported by MAL 45 of 3. T.F.L. across the Rhine (from Rodenkirchen to Westboon) in March 1945. Of interest is the unusual form of the counterweight on the barrel of the main gun. Additional armor plating has been mounted on the front slope of the vehicle. • Nach dem Scheitern der Ardennenoffensive ziehen sich die deutschen Truppen in Richtung Rhein zurück. Die Einheit wartet auf eine Übersetzmöglichkeit über den Rhein. Man beachte die außergewöhnliche Form des Gegengewichtes an der Kanone. Am Fahrzeugbug ist eine zusätzliche Panzerung befestigt.

Sturmmörser Kp. 1001 **09.1944**

1. Zug



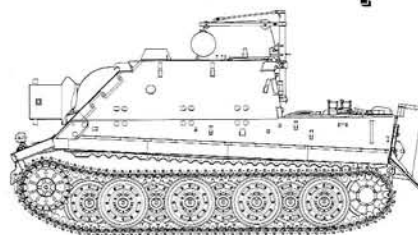
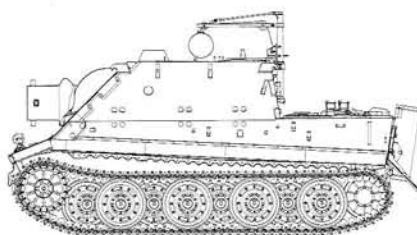
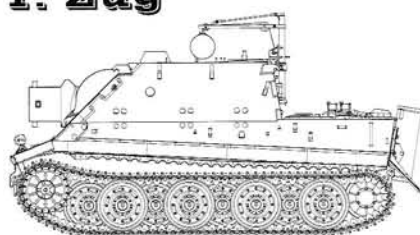
2. Zug



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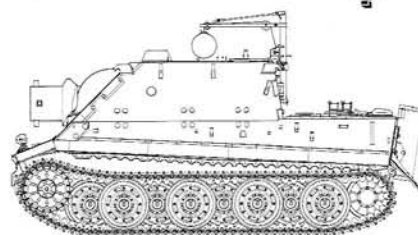
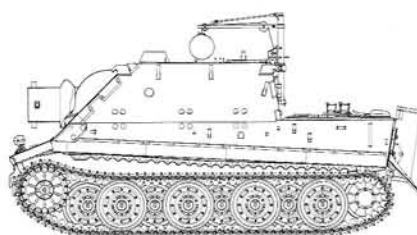
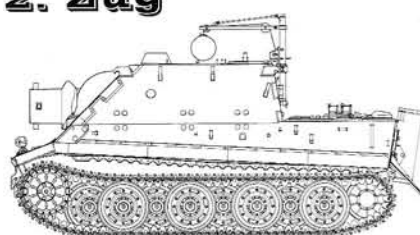
Sturmmörser Battr. 1001 **02.1945**

1. Zug



?

2. Zug



?

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Sturmörser-Kompanie 1002 / Sturmörser-Batterie 1002

Sturmörser-Kompanie 1002 was established by orders dated 14 November 1944. The company commander was *Oberleutnant Zippel*. After receiving its equipment, the company was allocated to the Commander-in-Chief West in December 1944. All four of its *Sturmtigers* were employed in the fighting in the Reichswald.

Effective 23 January 1945, the unit was also redesignated as *Sturmörser-Batterie 1002* and assigned administratively to the artillery. Its allocation of *Sturmtigers* was increased from four to six.

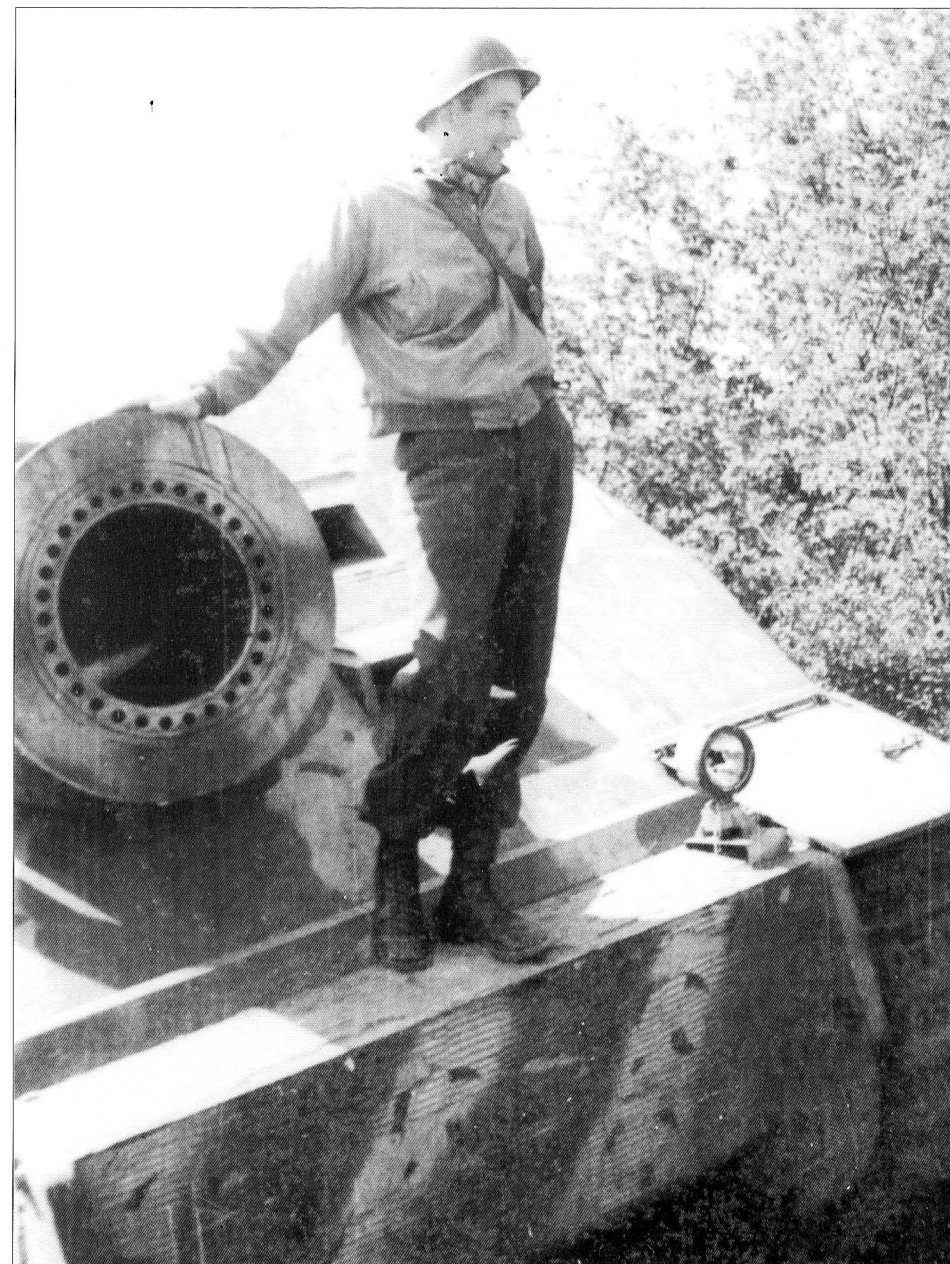
In March 1945, the unit crossed the Rhine at Reinsberg. It was involved in combat operations as part of the general withdrawal. It fought at Dorsten and Kirschellen, as well as at Polsum, Marl and Datteln later, on 14 April 1945, the last *Sturmtiger* in the battery fired at least one more time in the vicinity of Minden, where it sought to engage advancing tanks of the US 737th Armor of the US 5th Armored Division.

Souvenir photos taken with a captured „steel giant“. The ring-shaped counterweight was added to the main gun's barrel. A coat of *Zimmerit* can also be seen. and the next 5 pages • Erinnerungsfoto mit einem erbeuteten "Kampfkoloss". Am Geschütz ist das ringförmige Gegengewicht angebracht. Es ist auch kein Zimmeritanstrich zu erkennen. Im April 1945 konnten die Alliierten dieses Sturmtiger bei Eberndorf erbeuten. Er war am Schachteingang einer Kohlenmine untergebracht und zog sich nach Abfeuern des Geschoss immer wieder in die gut getarnte Stellung zurück. Und weitere 5 Seiten [KHM]





A new camouflage pattern was painted over the original camouflage on the hull. • Auf der Panzerwanne wurde auf den vorhandenen Tarnanstrich ein neues Tarnmuster aufgemalt.

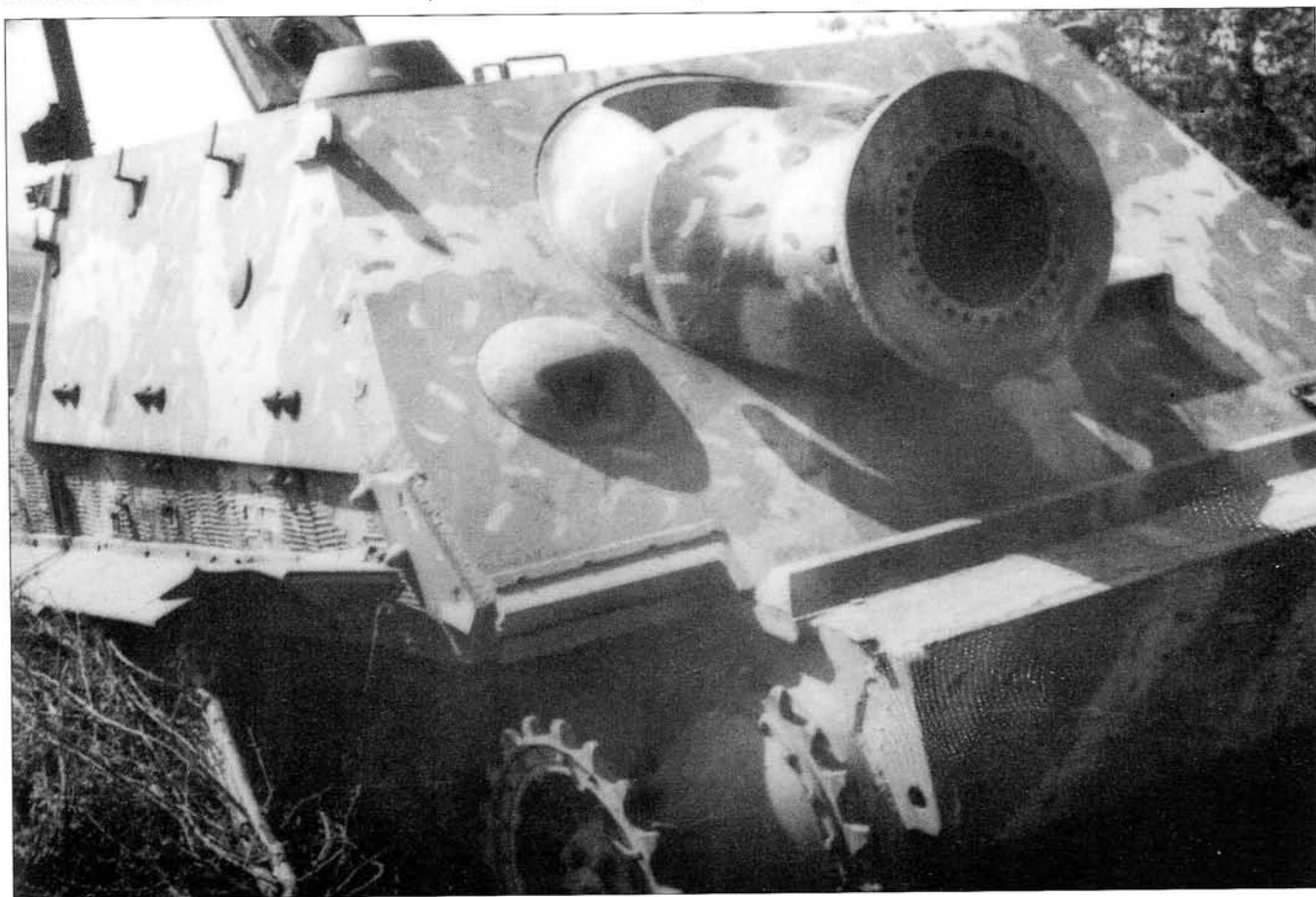


The front mudguards are missing. No other damage to the vehicle can be seen. • Die vorderen Kettenabdeckungen fehlen. Weitere Beschädigungen am Fahrzeug sind nicht erkennbar. [KHM]



This photograph shows details of the front and side armor, as well as the roof of the fighting compartment, to good advantage. • Auf dieser Aufnahme erkennt man Details der Front- und Seitenpanzerung sowie des Aufbaudachs.

The superstructure of the *Sturmmörser* was fastened to the *Tiger* hull with only six bolts on each side. • Der Aufbau des Sturmmörser war nur mit sechs Bolzen pro Seite an der Fahrzeugwanne befestigt.

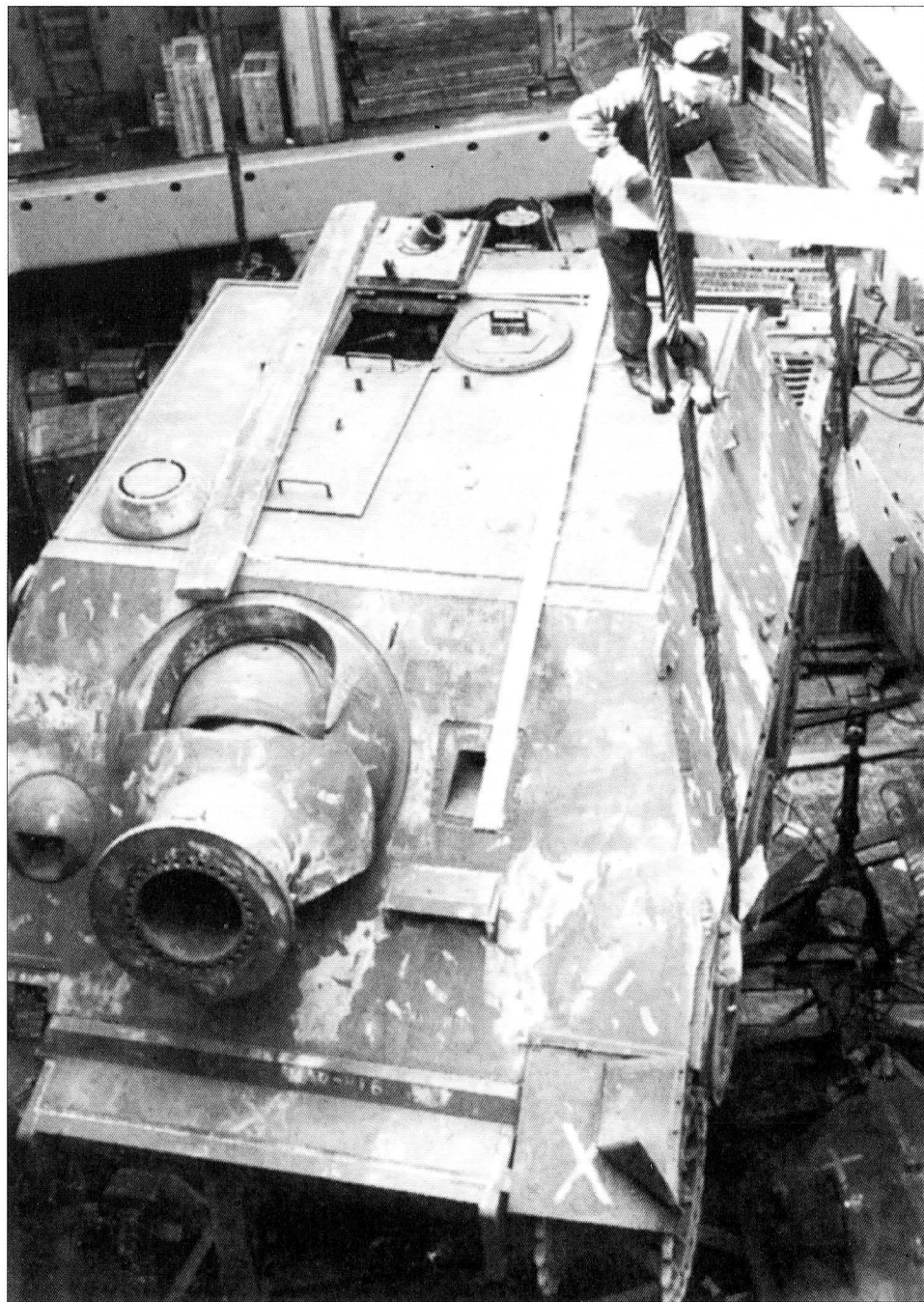
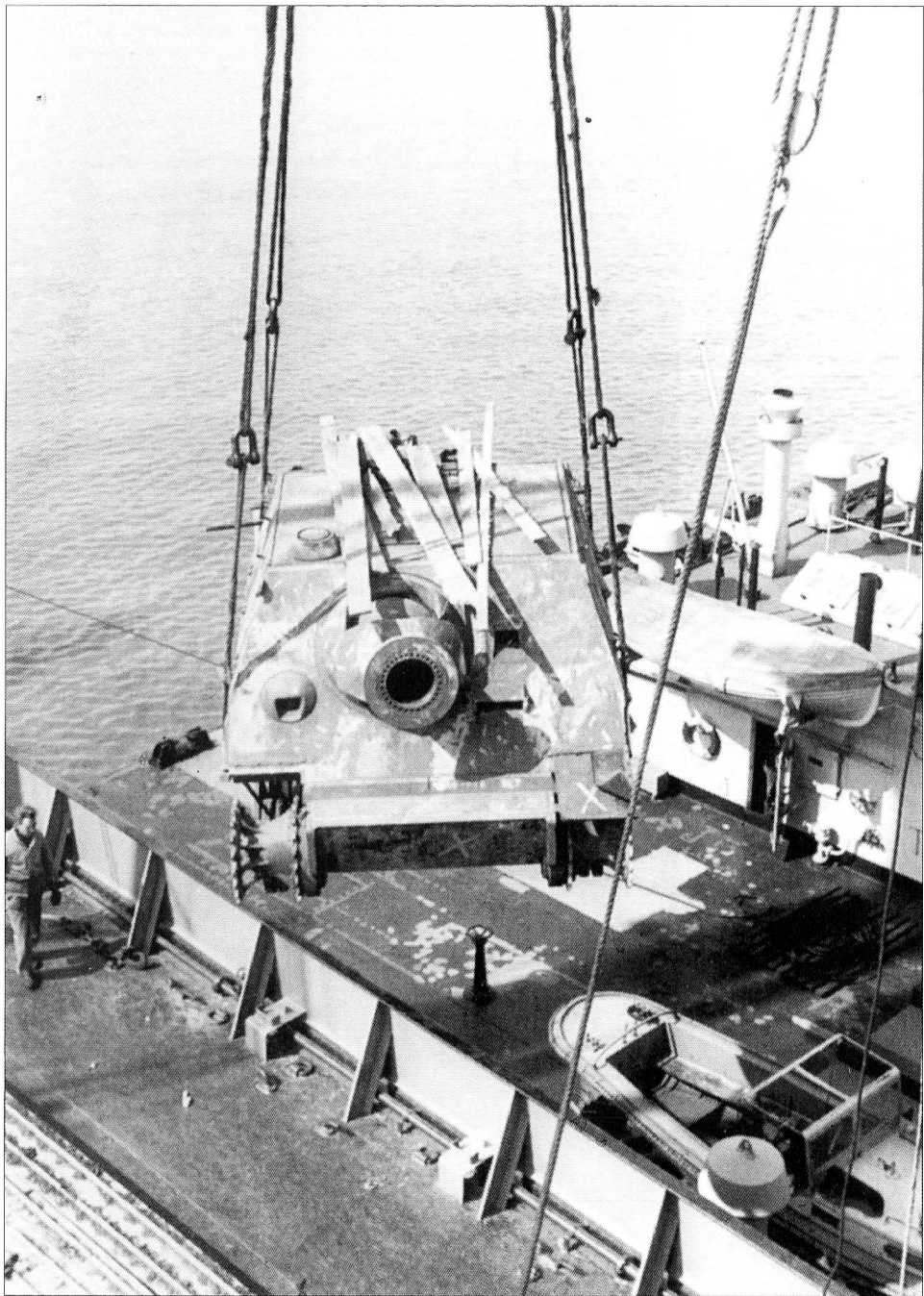




This *Sturmpanzer* was also sent to the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in the United States. And the next 2 pages. • Auch dieser Sturmpanzer fiel relativ unbeschädigt in die Hände der US-Truppen. Und weitere 2 Seiten.









A GI takes a look at the interior of a *Sturmörser*. The sideskirt (protective sheet metal?) on the right side shows signs of battle damage. And next page. • Ein GI inspiziert den Innenraum des Sturmörser. Die Schutzbleche auf der rechten Seite zeigen einige Beschädigungen. Und weitere Seite. [2xKHM]





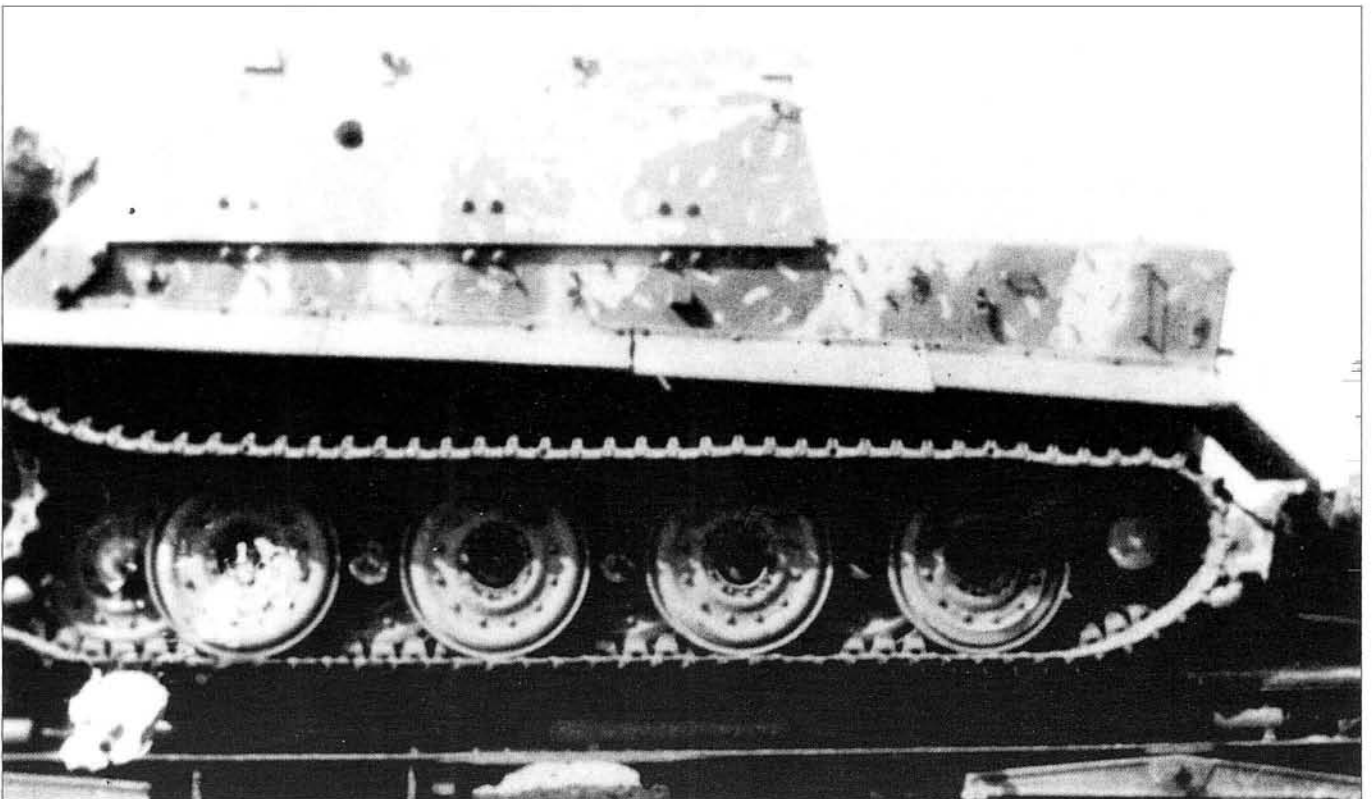
This photograph demonstrates the dimensions of the barrel. This GI was able to crawl into it without a problem. The Bosch headlight is missing on this vehicle. • Diese Aufnahme verdeutlicht die Dimensionen des Geschützrohrs. Problemlos konnte der GI hineinkriechen. Der Bosch-Scheinwerfer am Fahrzeugbug fehlt

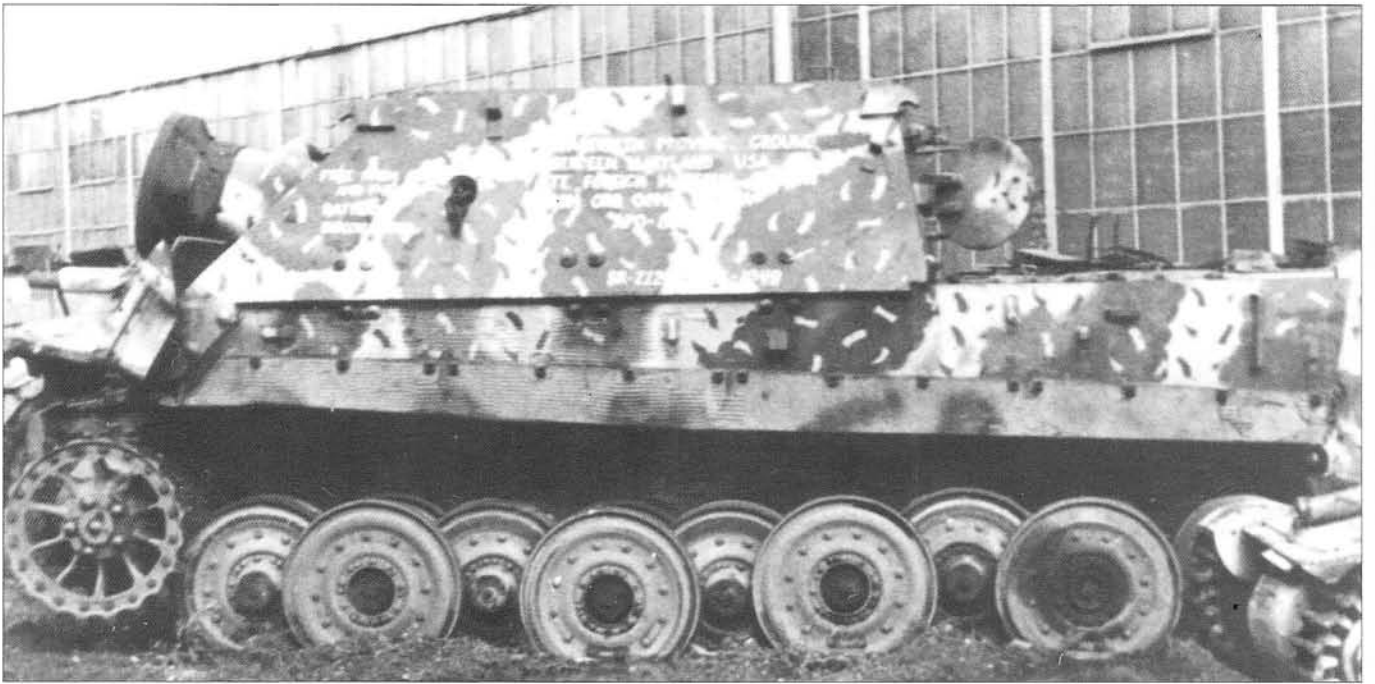
Seen to good advantage is the round counterweight on the main gun and the gas escape ports at the mouth of the barrel. • Gut erkennbar ist das runde Gegengewicht an der Kanone und die Bohrungen an der Rohrmündung für den Gasaustritt [2xKHM]





This *Sturmpanzer* was also sent to the Aberdeen Proving Grounds in the United States. After the mudguards were removed, the previous camouflage pattern could be seen, and next page • Auch dieser Sturmpanzer wurde in den USA zu den Aberdeen Proving Grounds gebracht. Nachdem die Kettenabdeckung abgenommen war, erkennt man den vorherigen Tarnanstrich, und weitere Seite







This *Sturmmörser* fell into US hands in the Nordrhein-Westfalen town of Drolshagen. Note the additional armor plating on the front slope of the vehicle. • Dieser Sturmpanzer fiel den US-Streitkräften im nordrhein-westfälischen Drolshagen fast unbeschädigt in die Hände. Man beachte die zusätzliche Panzerplatte am Fahrzeugbug. Das Fahrzeug ist anscheinend nur in sandgelb gestrichen. Auch der sonst übliche Zimmerit-Anstrich an der Wanne fehlt





During the final fighting in the East, the Soviet forces were able to capture the prototype of the *Sturmörser*. The prototype was outfitted with a steel superstructure and steel roadwheels after it returned from employment in Warsaw. The vehicle is currently on display at Kubinka. • Beim Endkampf im Osten erbeuteten die sowjetischen Streitkräfte den Prototyp des Sturmörser. Dieser wurde nach seiner Rückführung aus Warschau mit einem Stahlaufbau und Stahlaufrollen ausgerüstet. Der Panzer steht heute im Museum in Kubinka

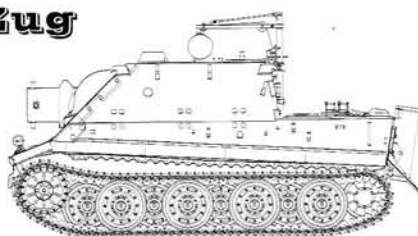


The same vehicle seen from another angle. The bolted-on supplemental armor plating on the front of the hull can be seen to good advantage. • Das gleiche Fahrzeug aus einer anderen Perspektive. Gut erkennbar die aufgeschraubte Zusatzpanzerung am Wannenbug

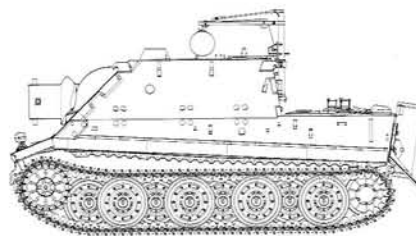


Sturmmörser Kp. 1002 11.1944

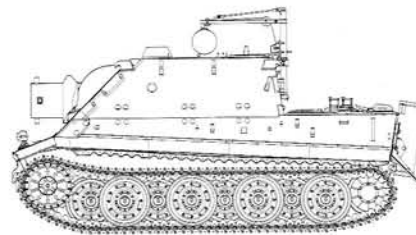
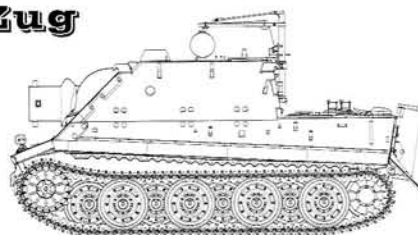
1. Zug



Oblt. Zippel



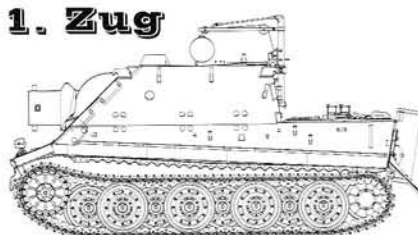
2. Zug



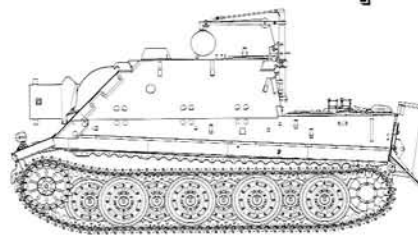
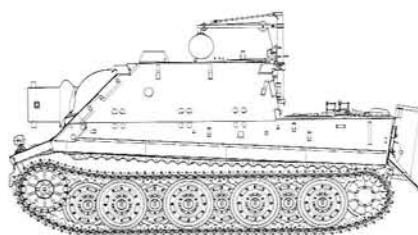
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Sturmmörser Battr. 1002 02.1945

1. Zug

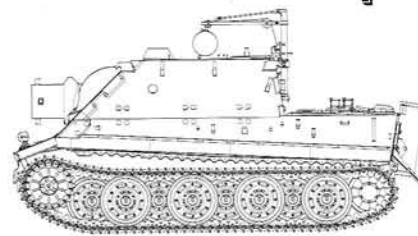
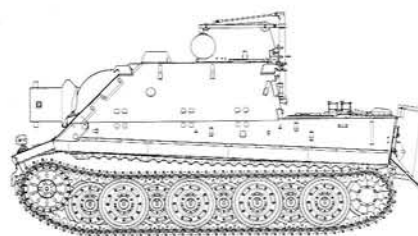
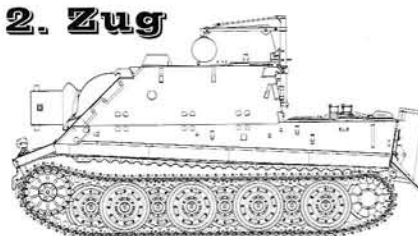


Oblt. Zippel



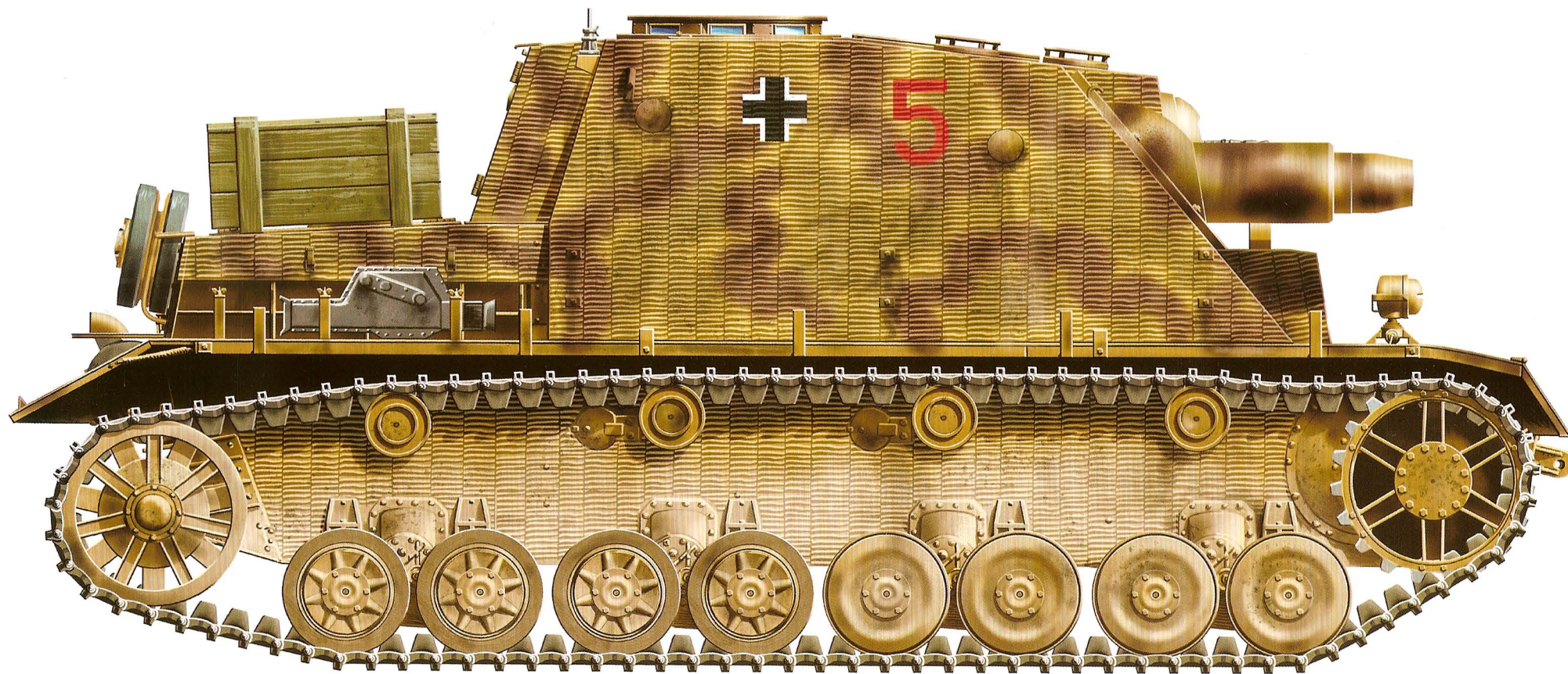
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2. Zug

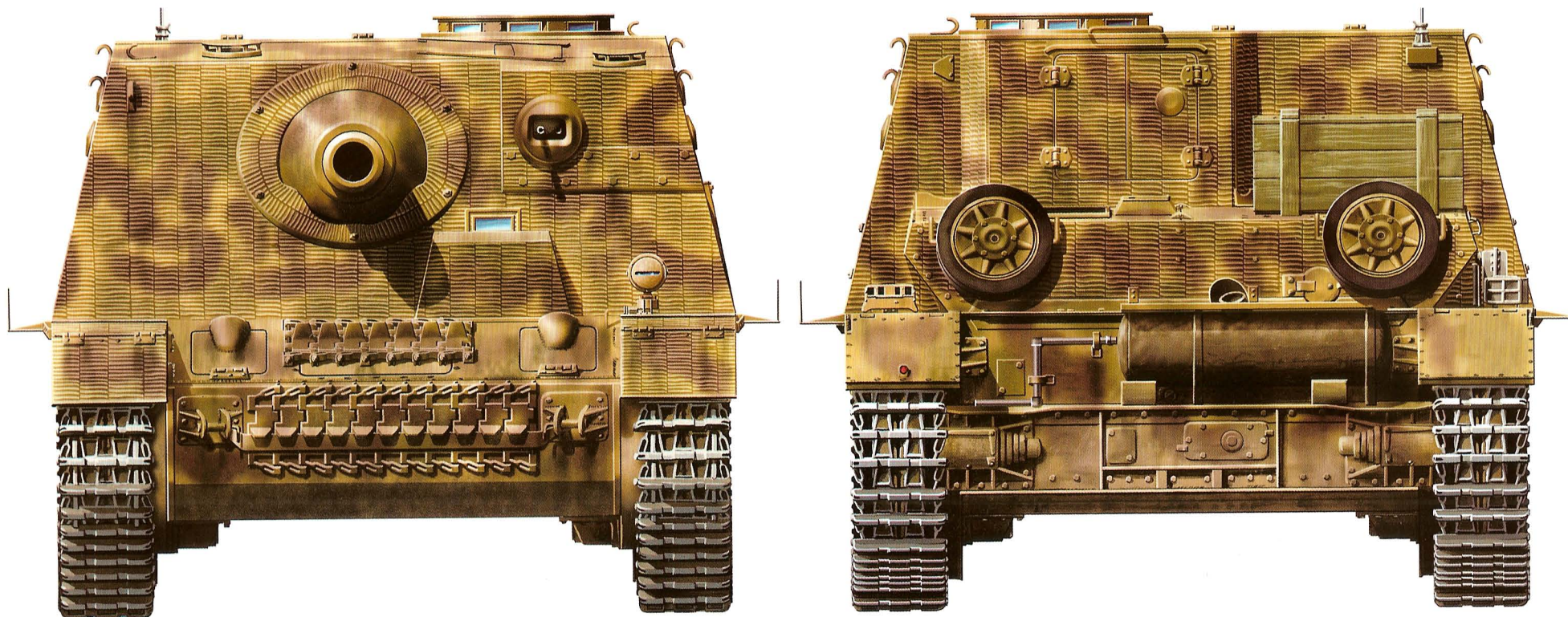


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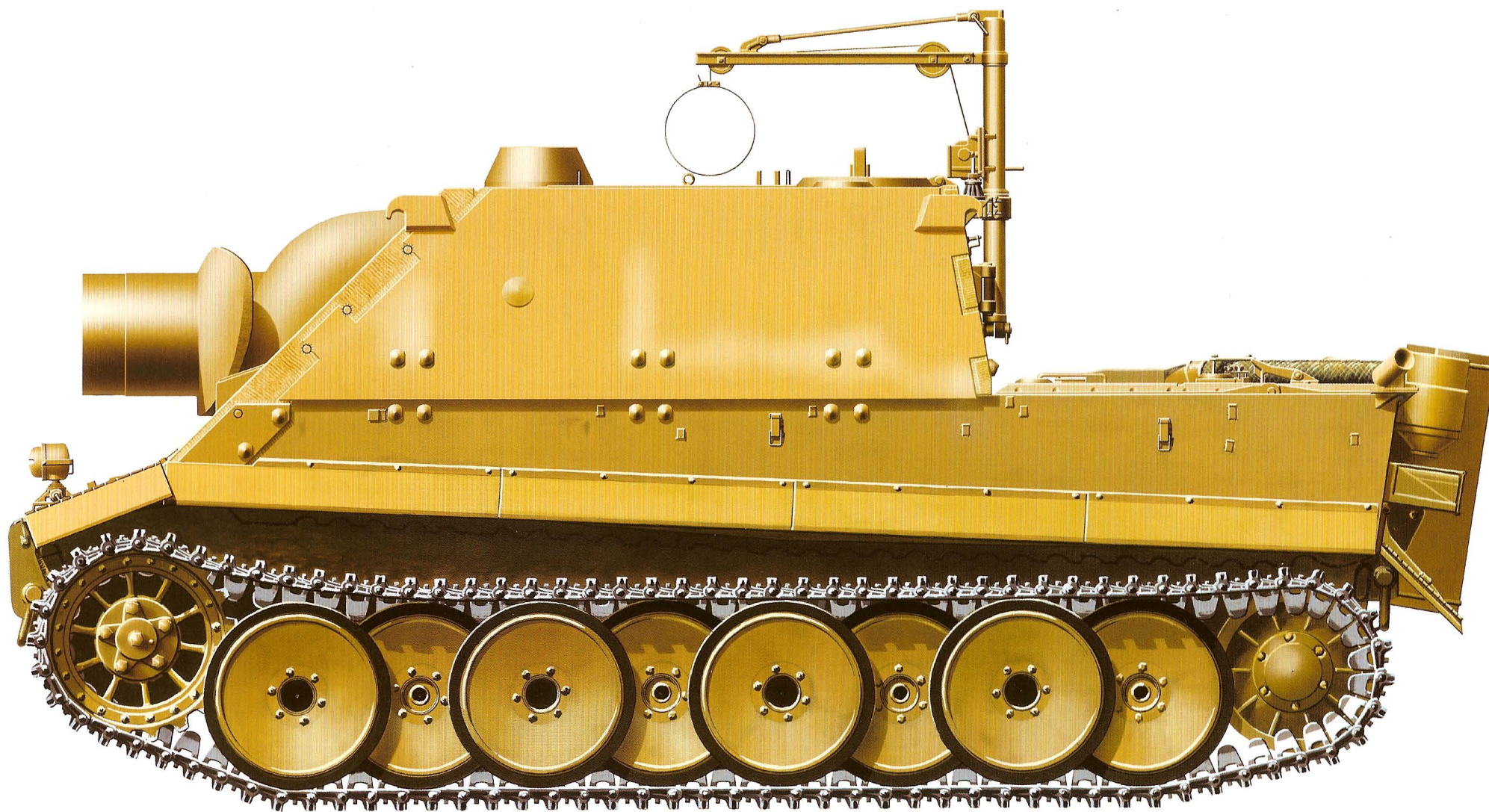
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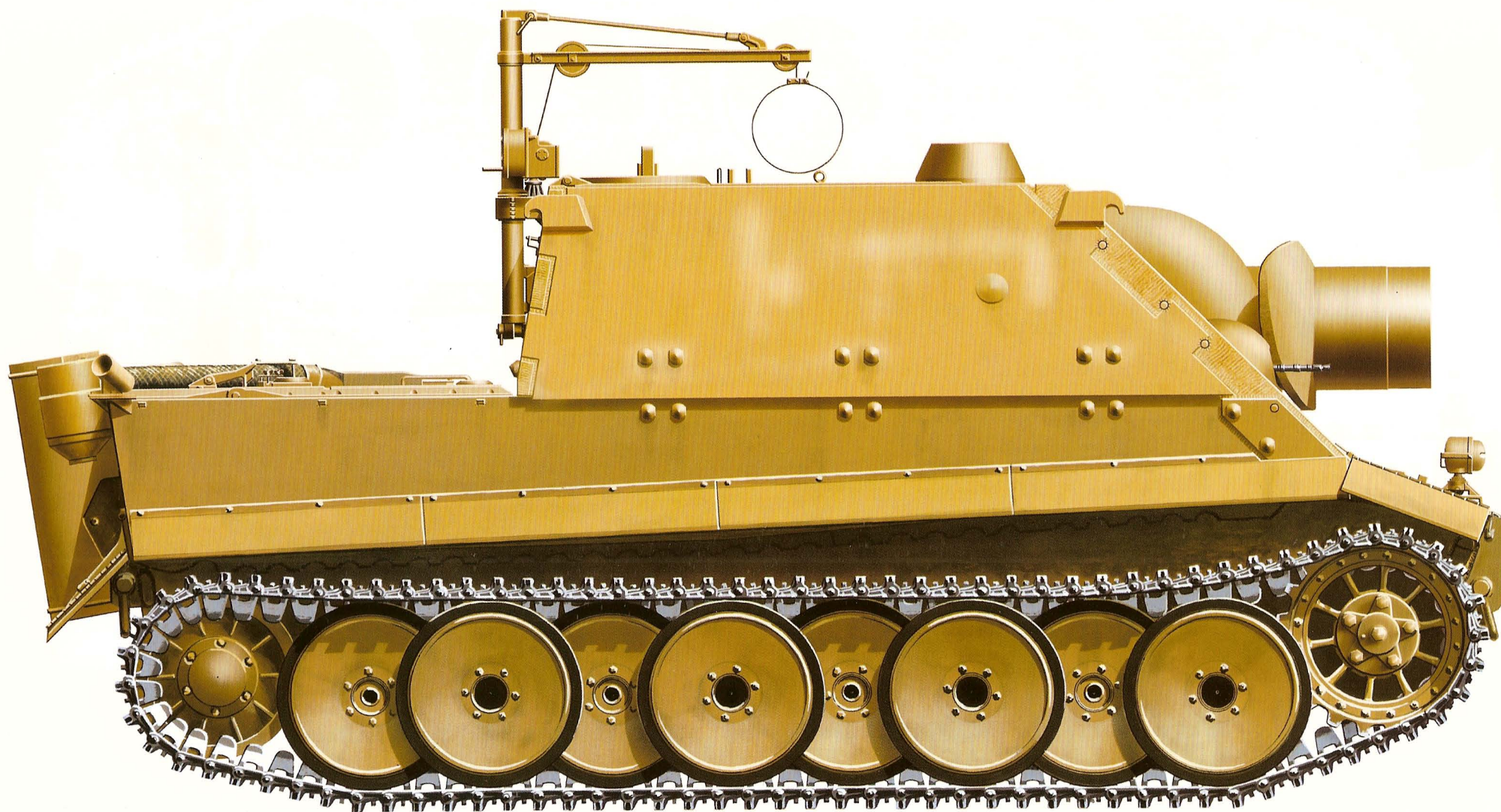
Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Kp. z.b.V. 218, the area of Warsaw, Poland, September, 1944.



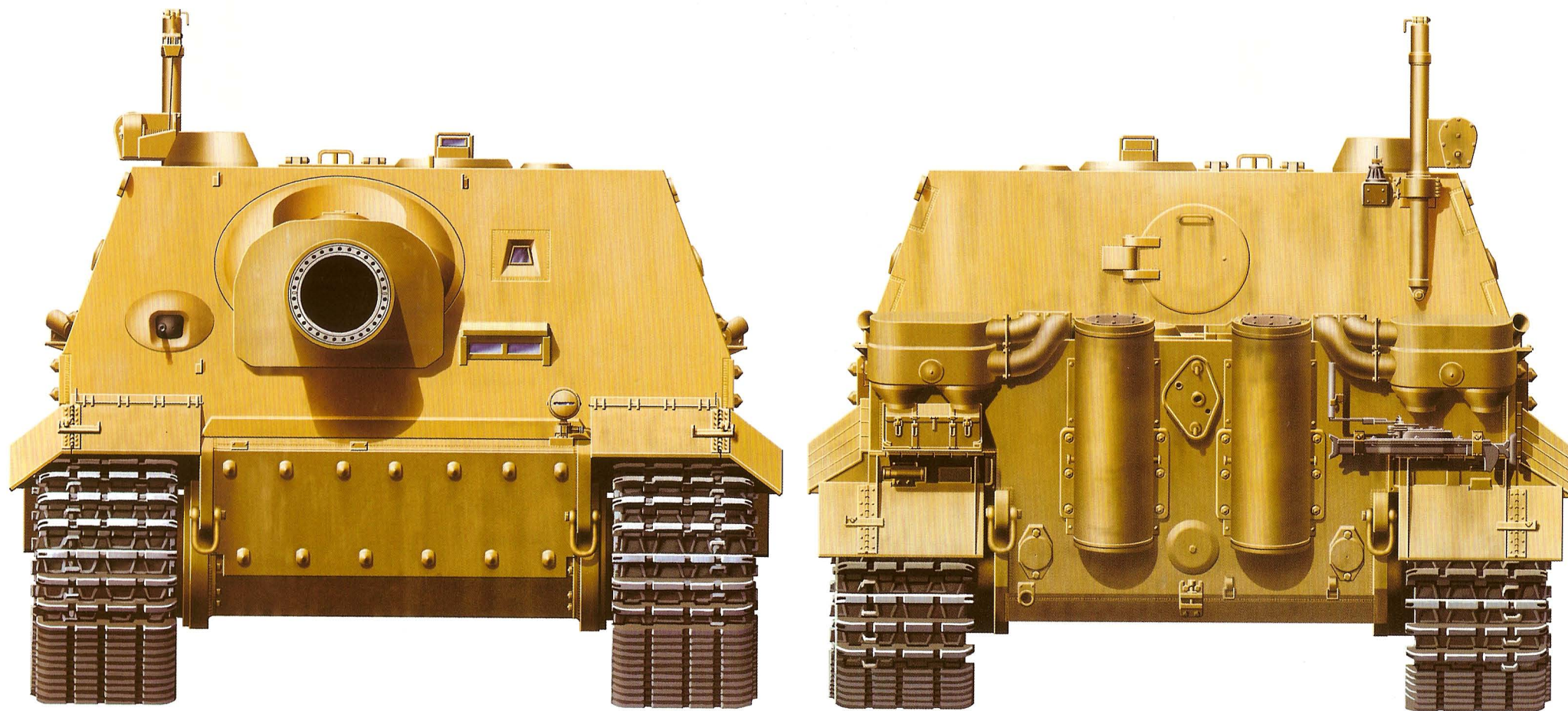
Sturmpanzer IV, 2./Stupa. Kp. z.b.V. 218, the area of Warsaw, Poland, September, 1944.



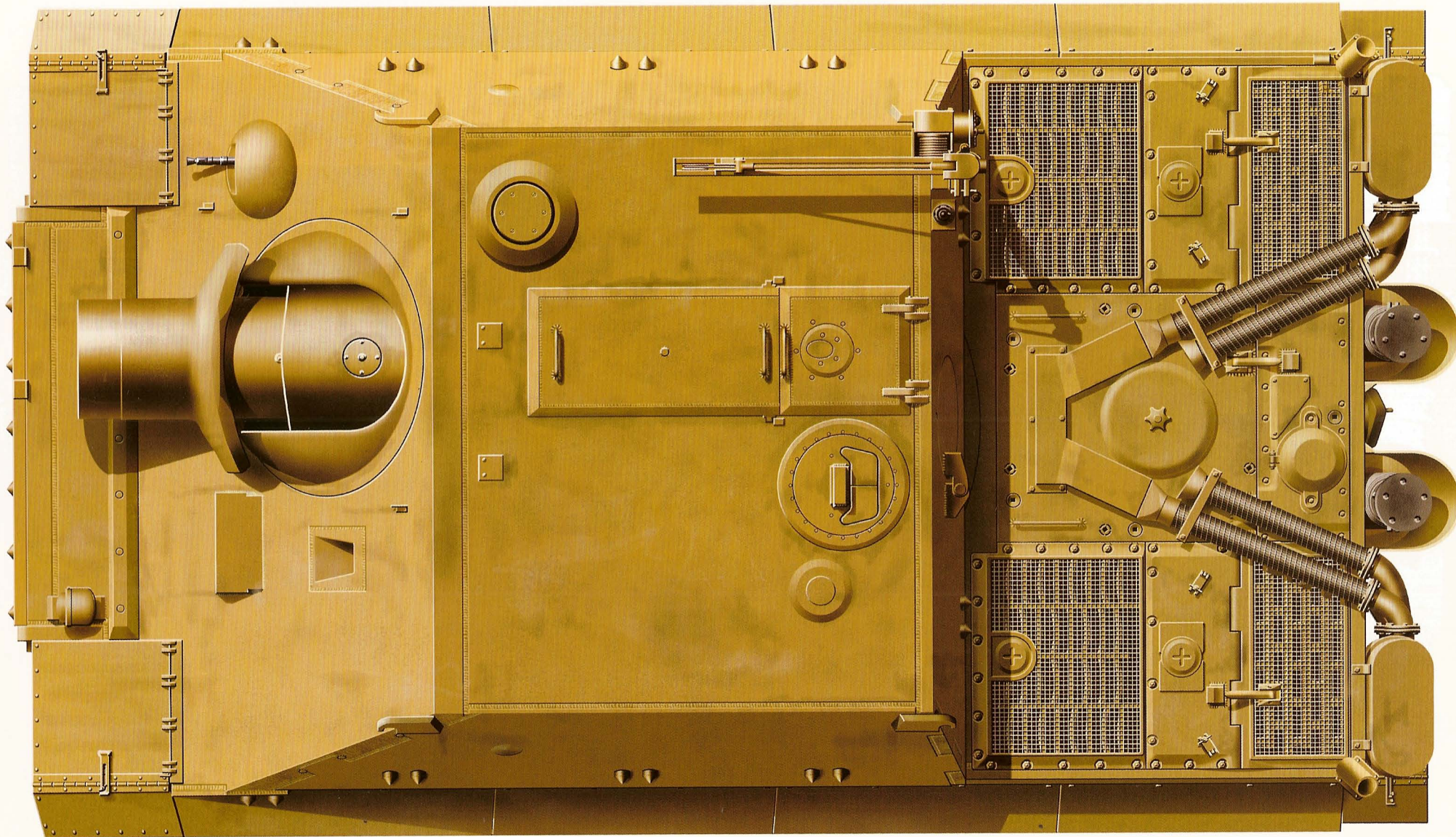
Sturmtiger (prototype), Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1000, Warsaw, Poland, August, 1944.



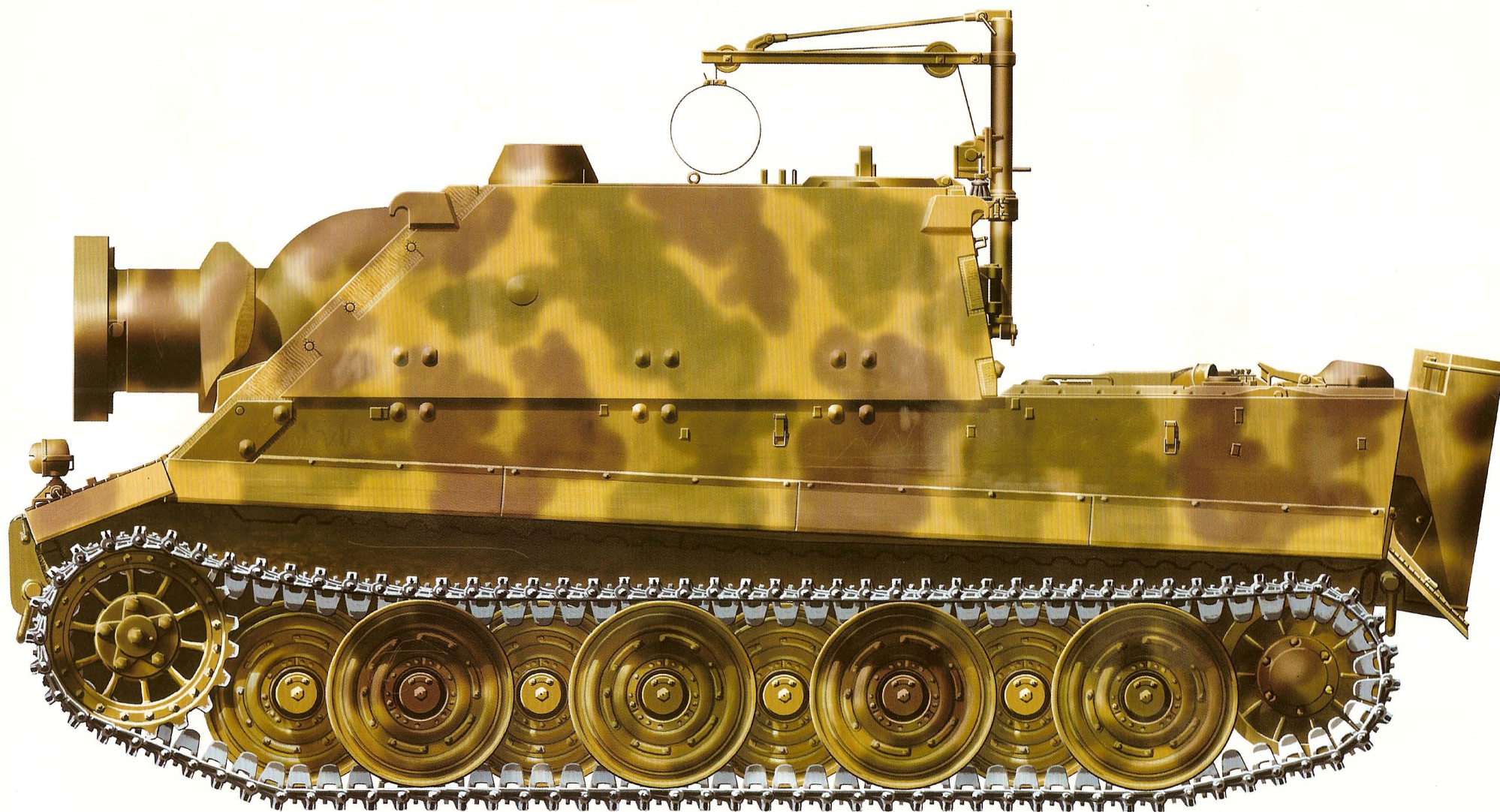
Sturmtiger (prototype), Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1000, Warsaw, Poland, August, 1944.



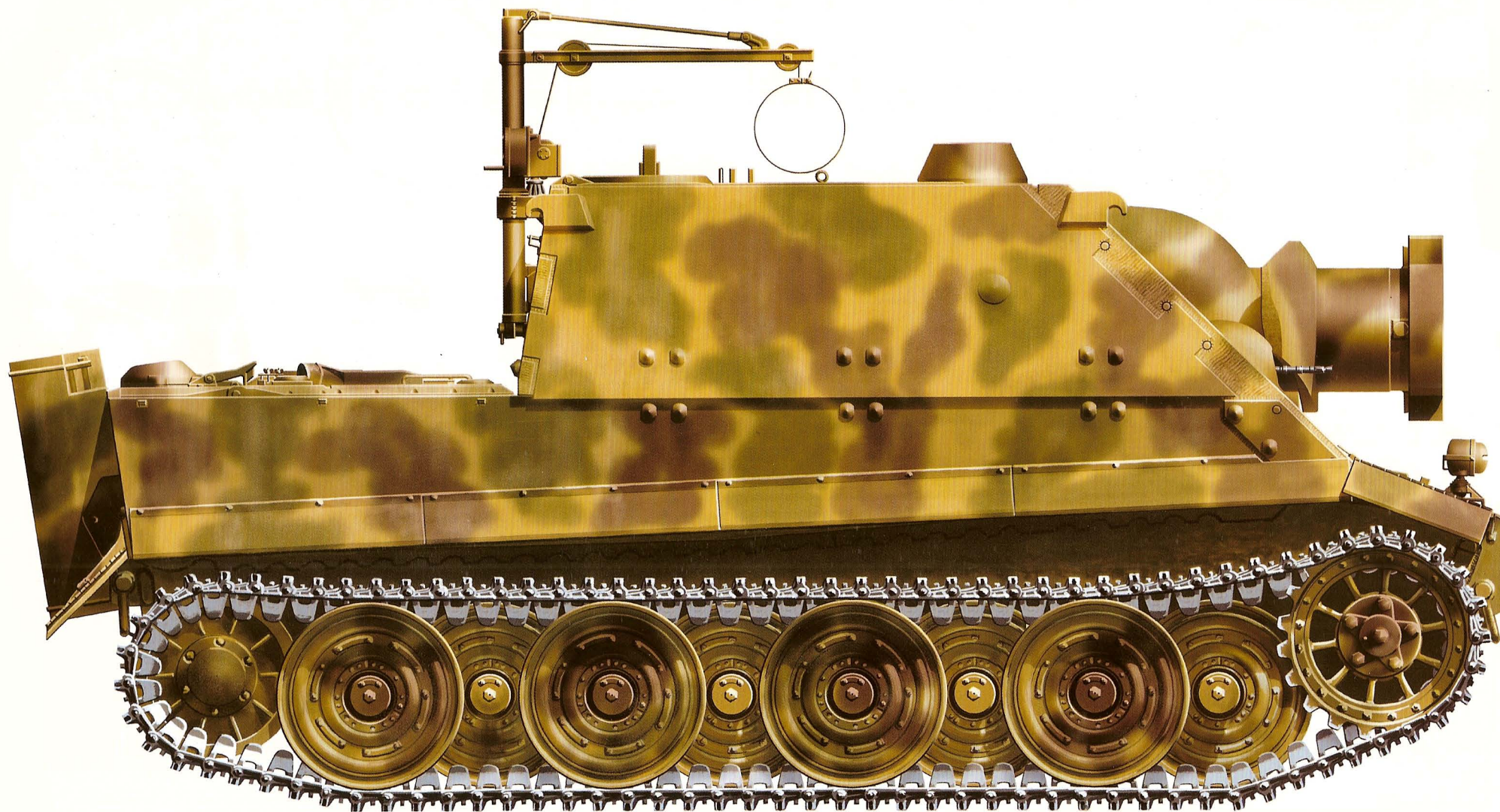
Sturmtiger (prototype), Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1000, Warsaw, Poland, August, 1944.



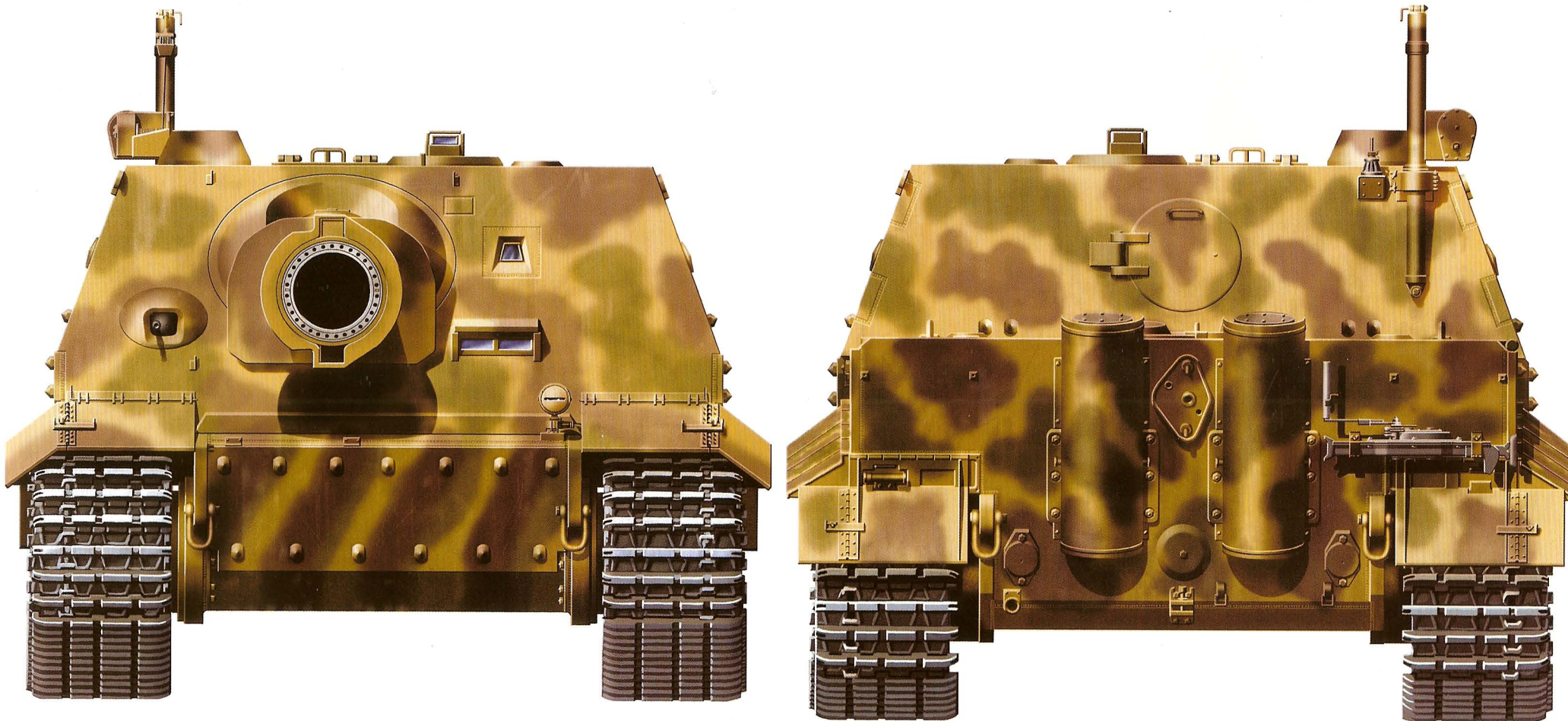
Sturmtiger (prototype), Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1000, Warsaw, Poland, August, 1944.



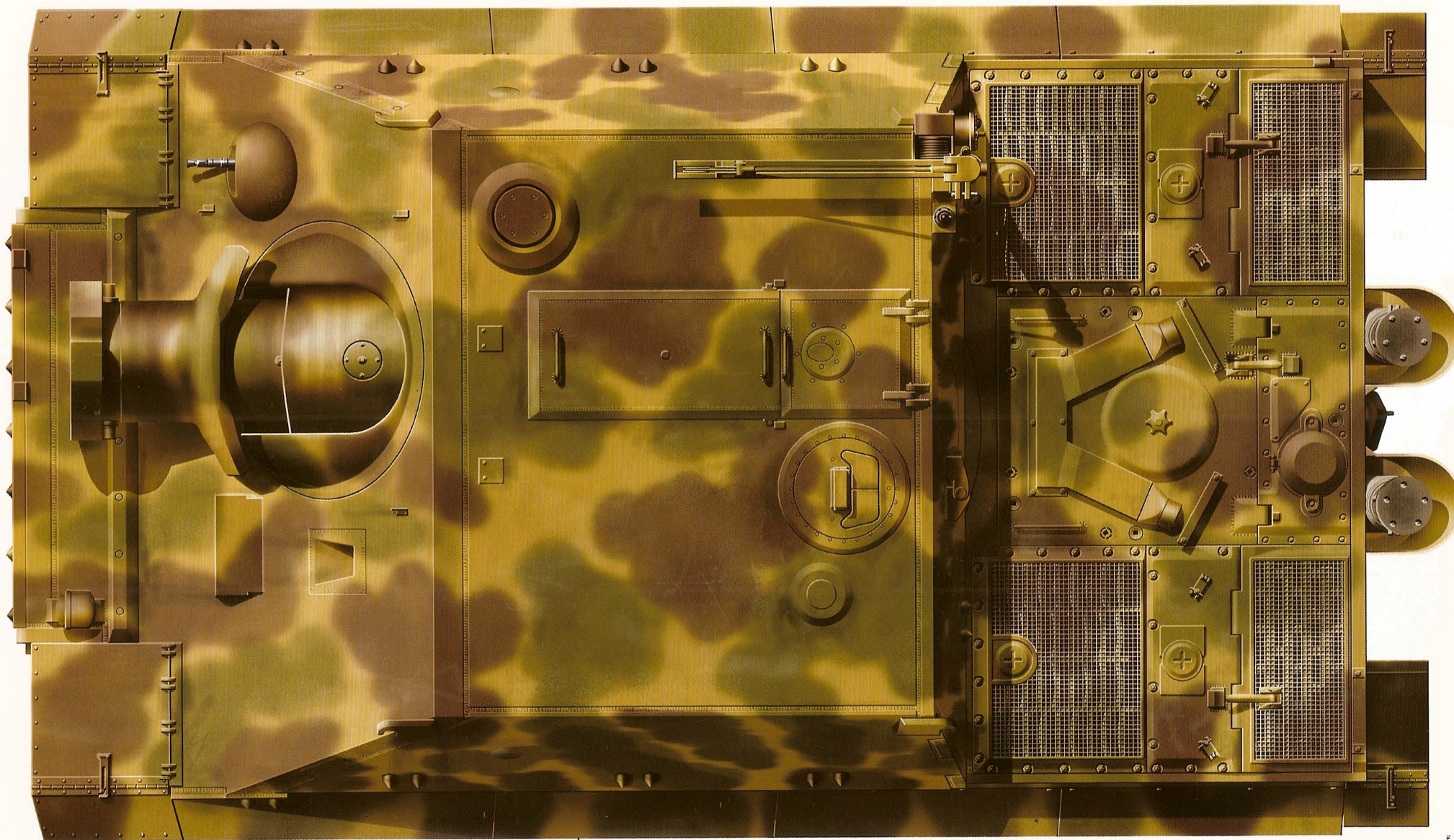
Sturmtiger (prototype), Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1002, the area of Berlin, Germany, May, 1945.



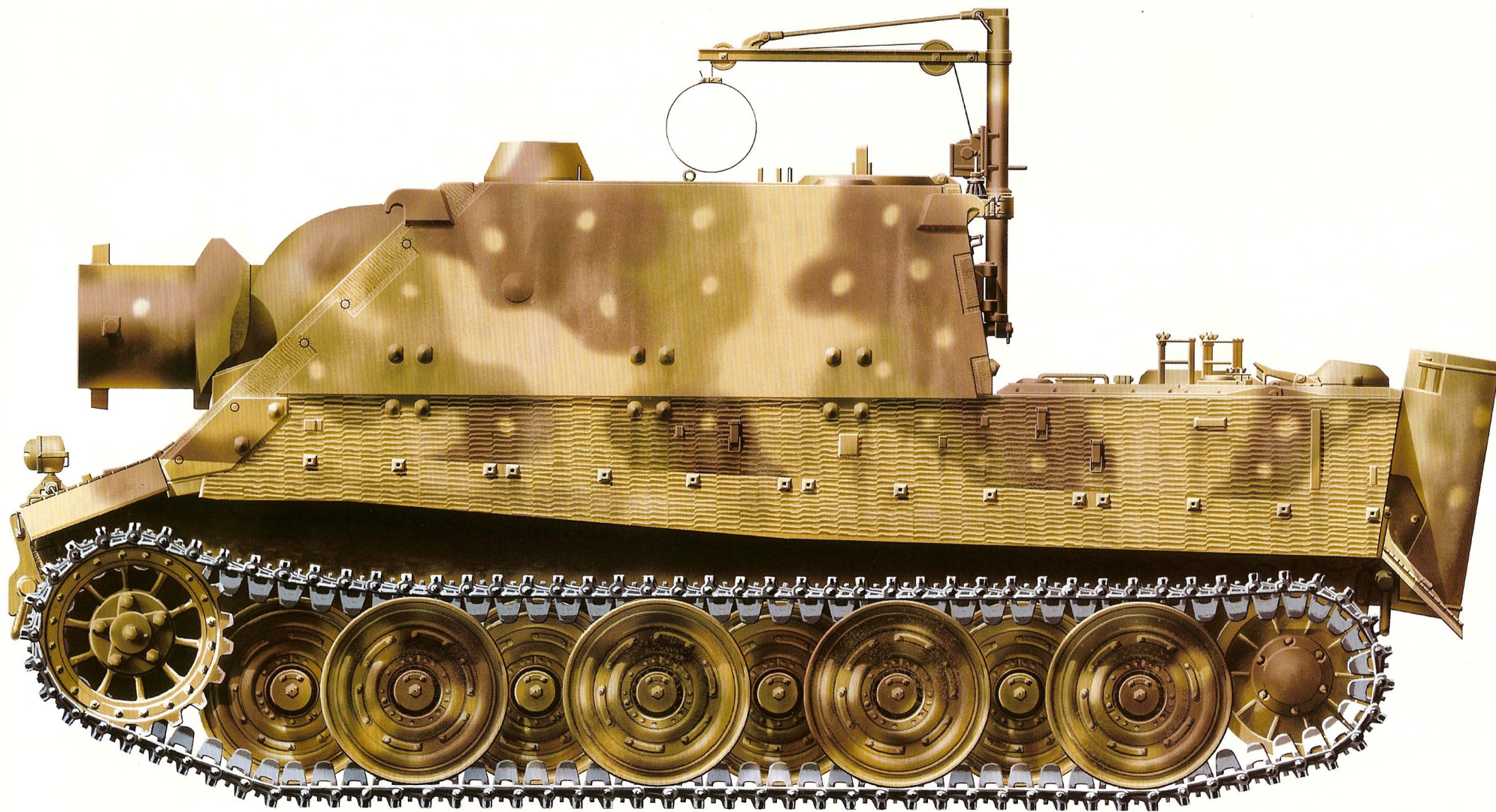
Sturmtiger (prototype), Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1002, the area of Berlin, Germany, May, 1945.



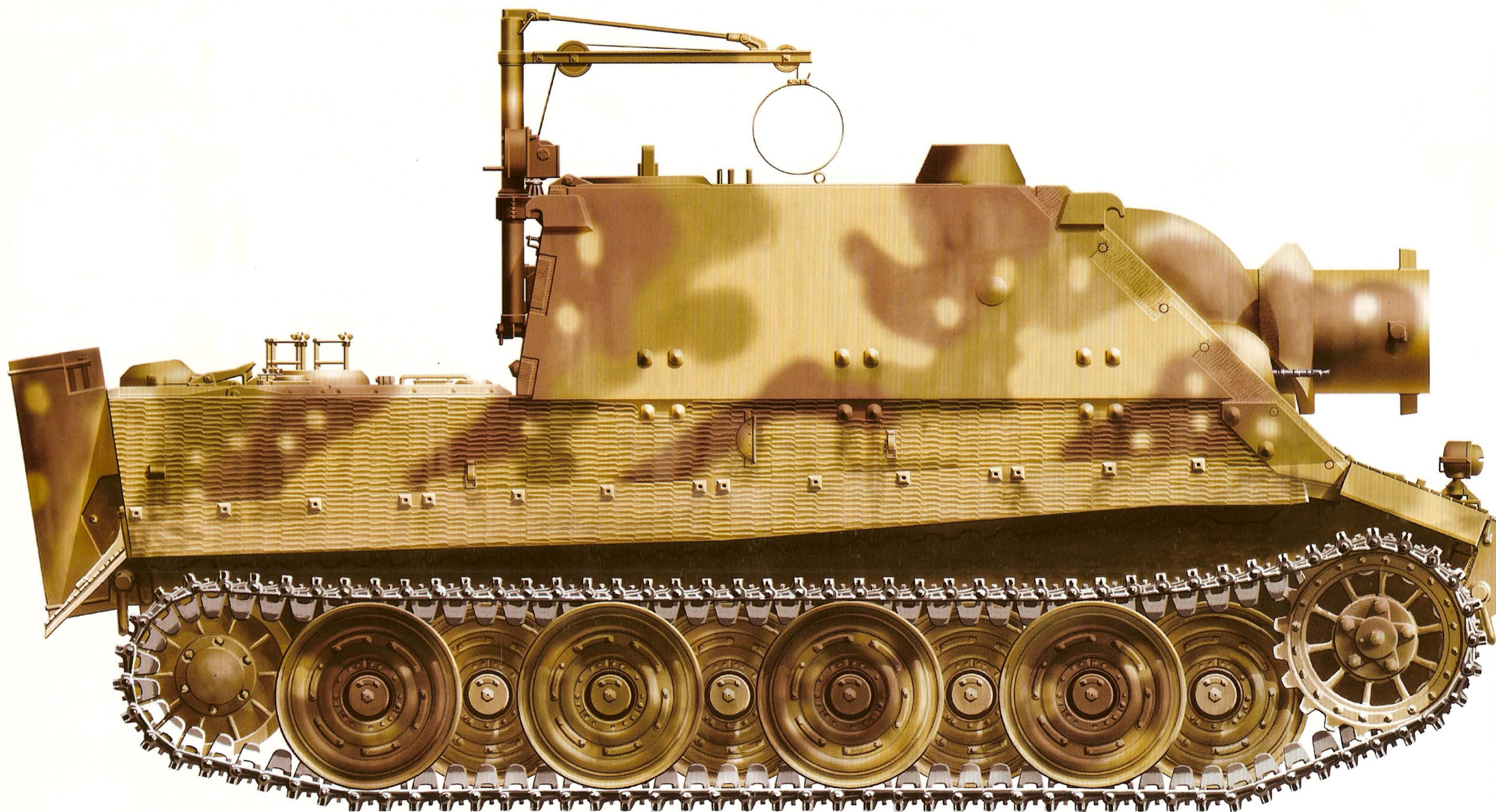
Sturmtiger (prototype), Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1002, the area of Berlin, Germany, May, 1945.



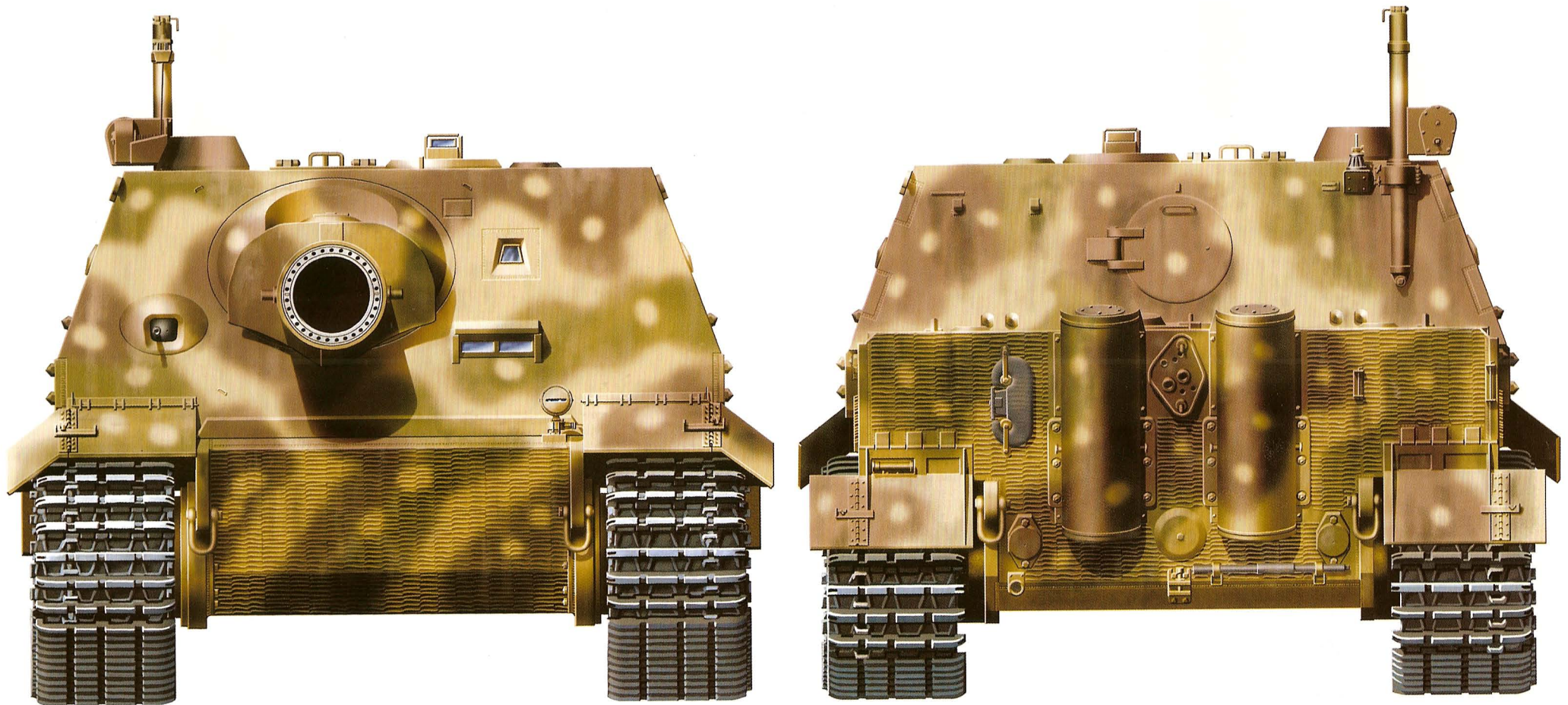
Sturmtiger (prototype), Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1002, the area of Berlin, Germany, May, 1945.



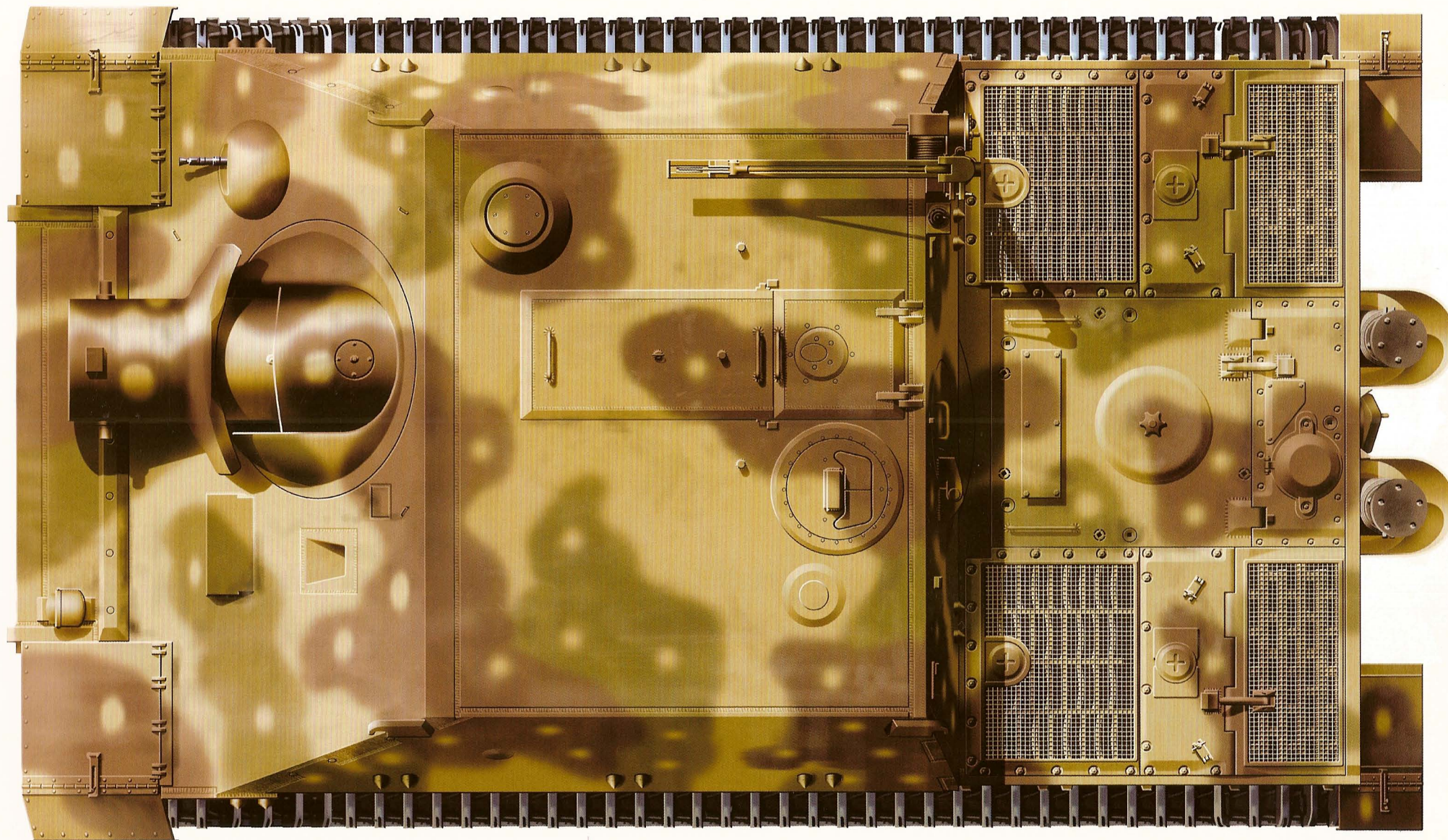
Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1000, operation *Wacht am Rhein*, the area of Elsdorf, December, 1944.



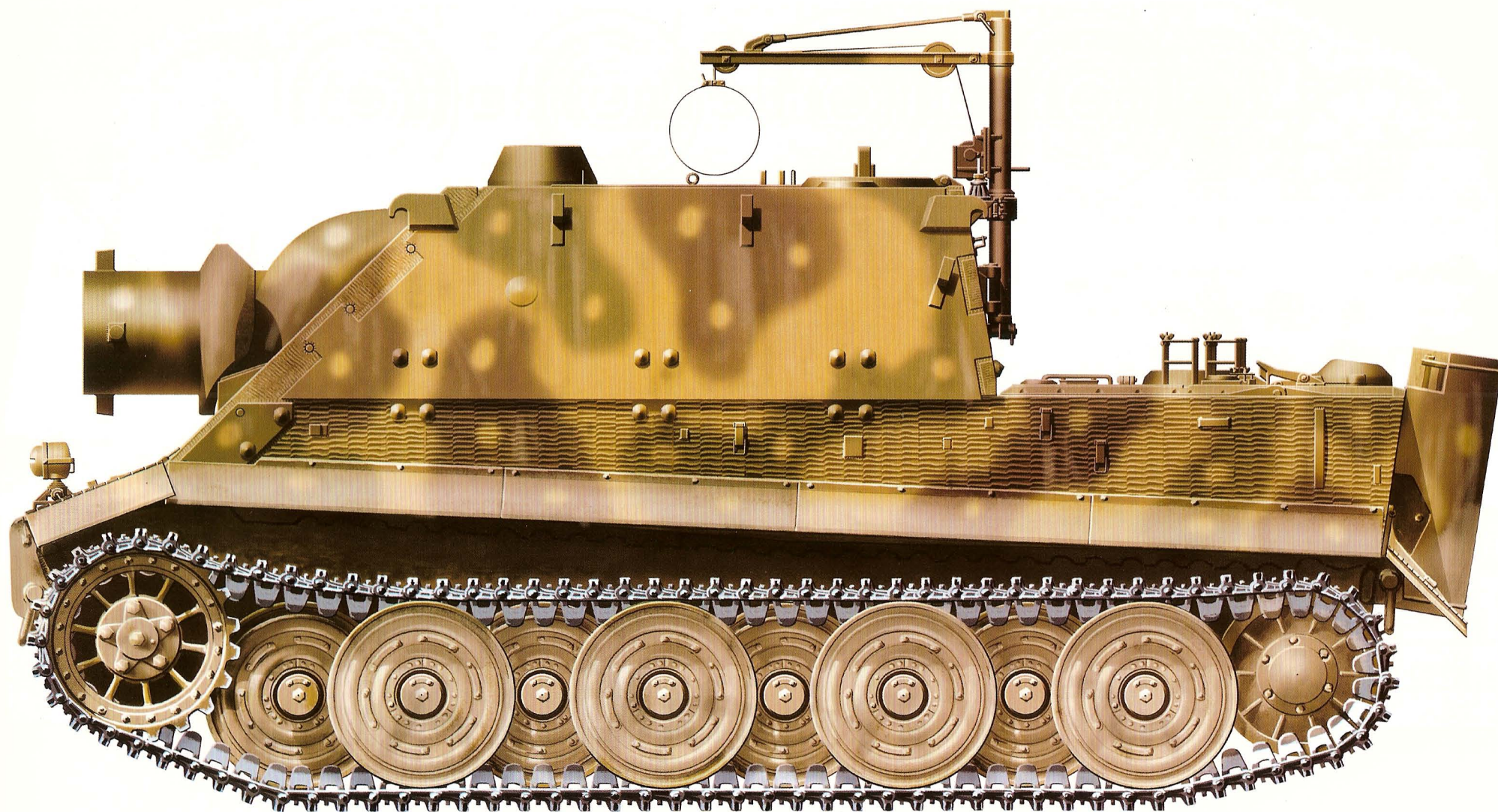
Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1000, operation *Wacht am Rhein*, the area of Elsdorf, December, 1944.



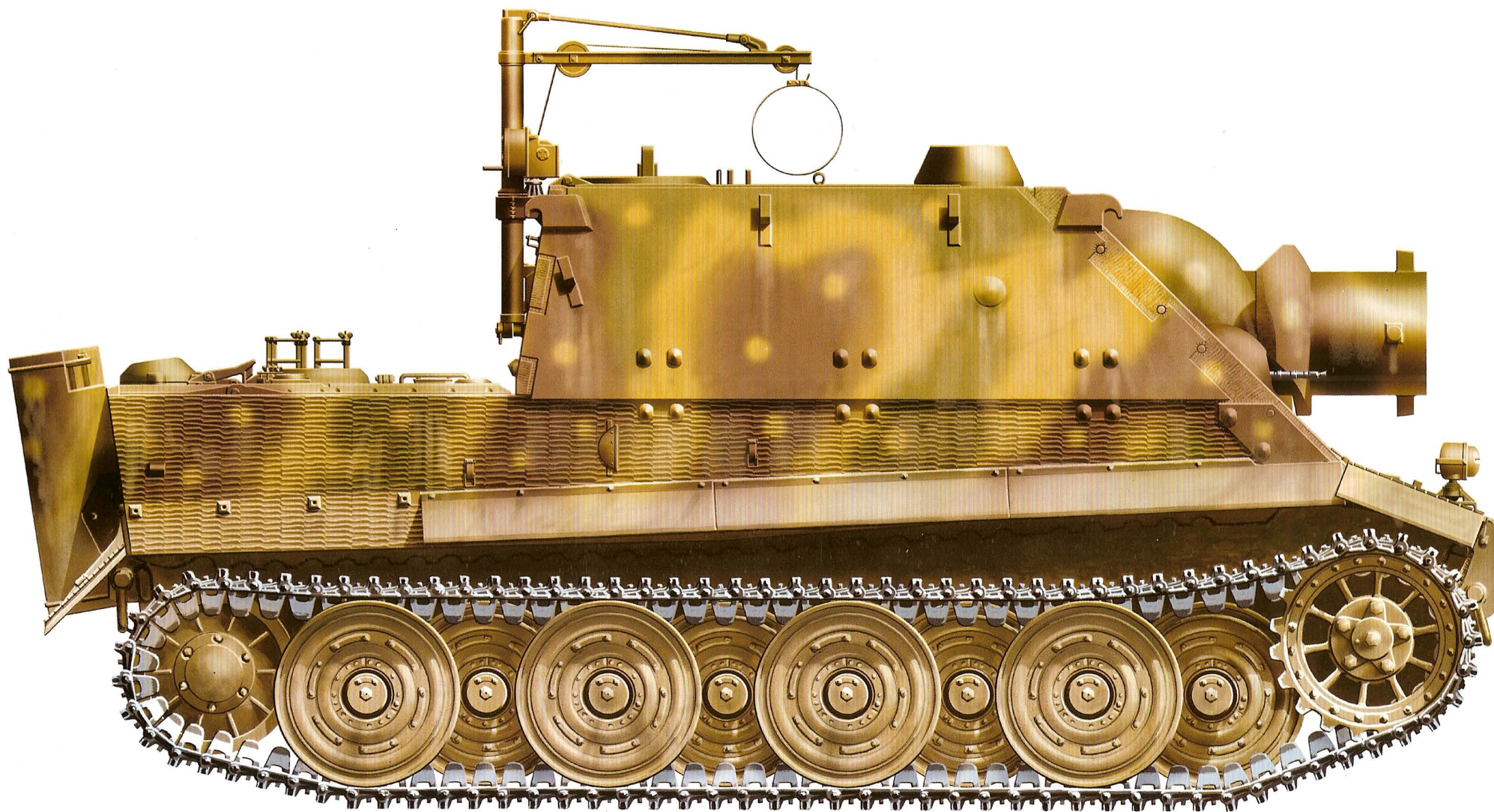
Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1000, operation *Wacht am Rhein*, the area of Elsdorf, December, 1944.



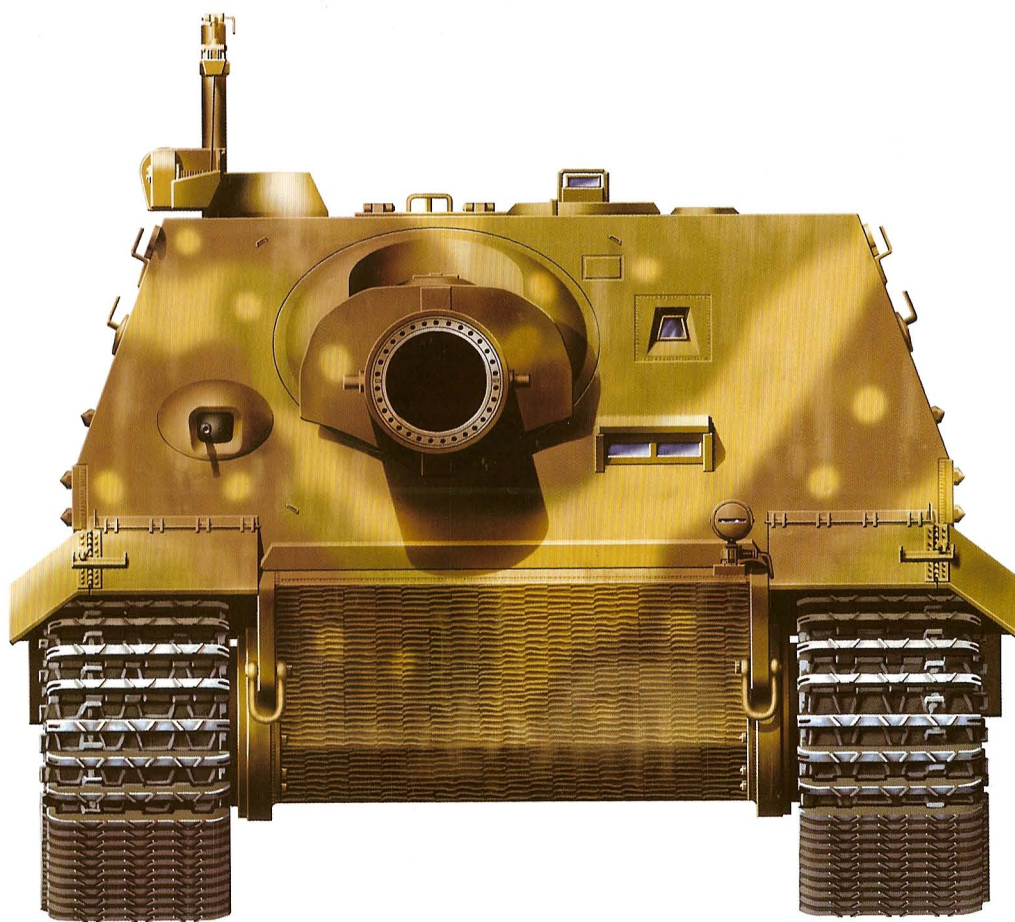
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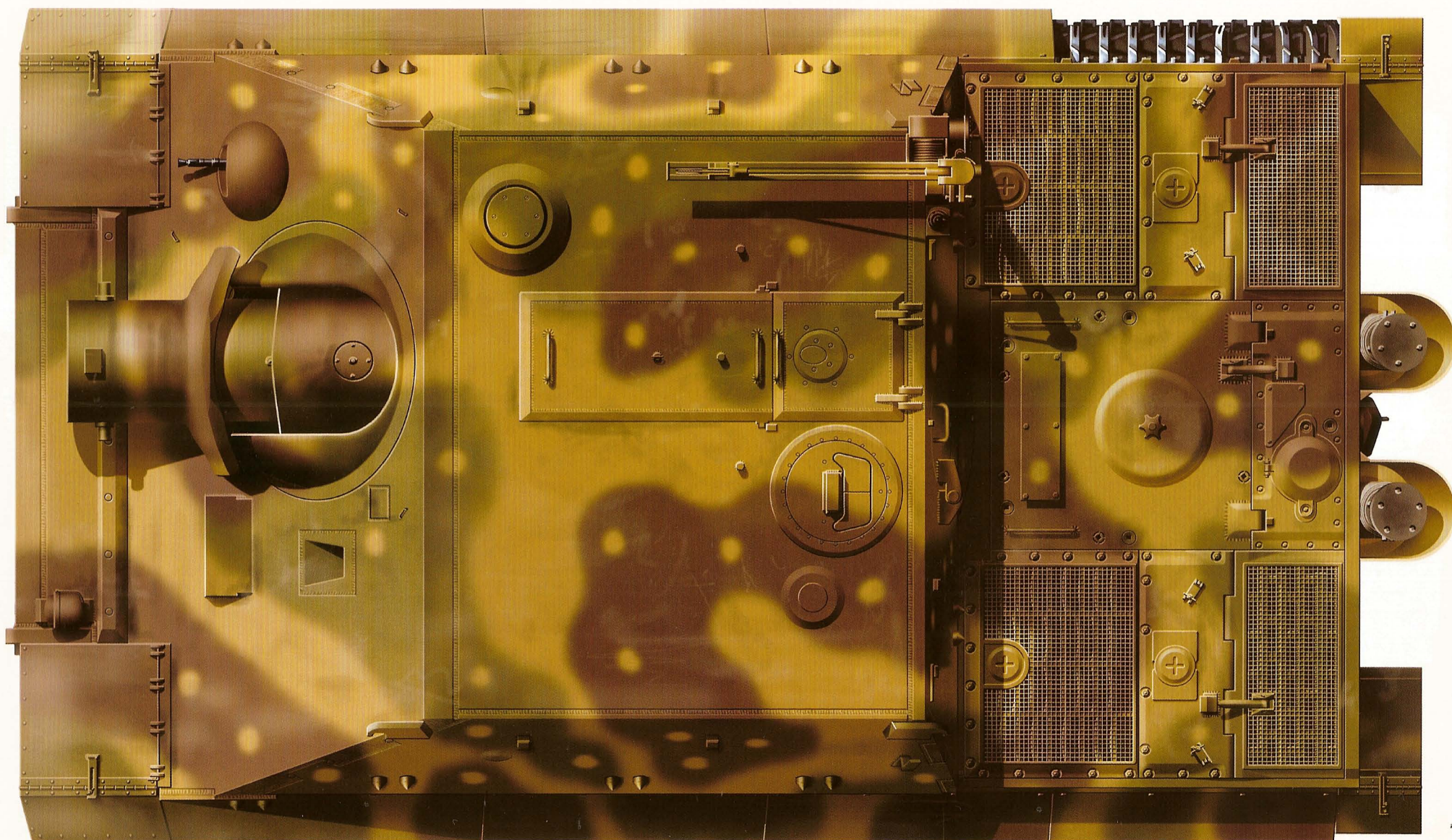
Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1000, the area of Düren, February, 1945.



Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1000, the area of Düren, February, 1945.



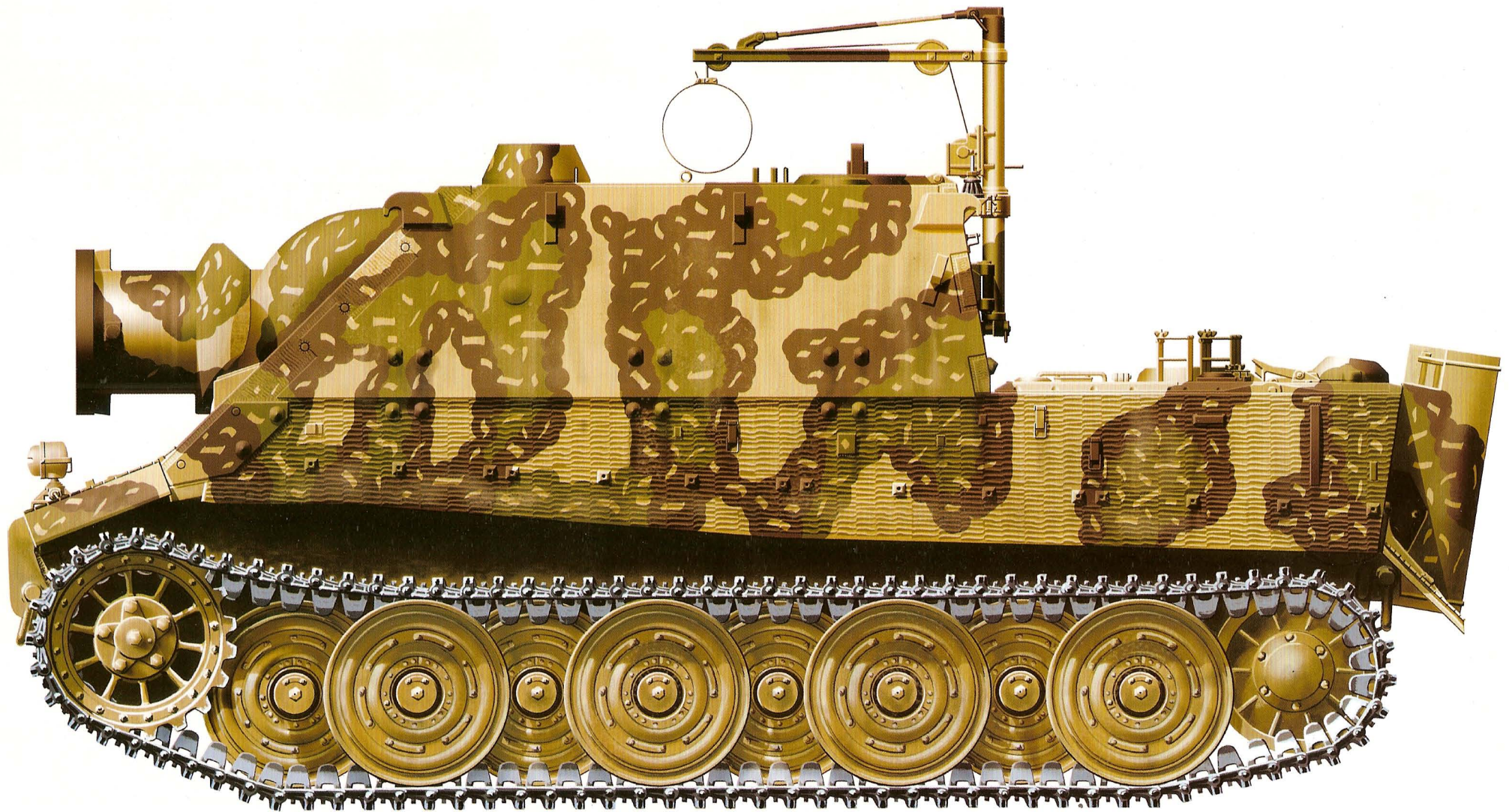
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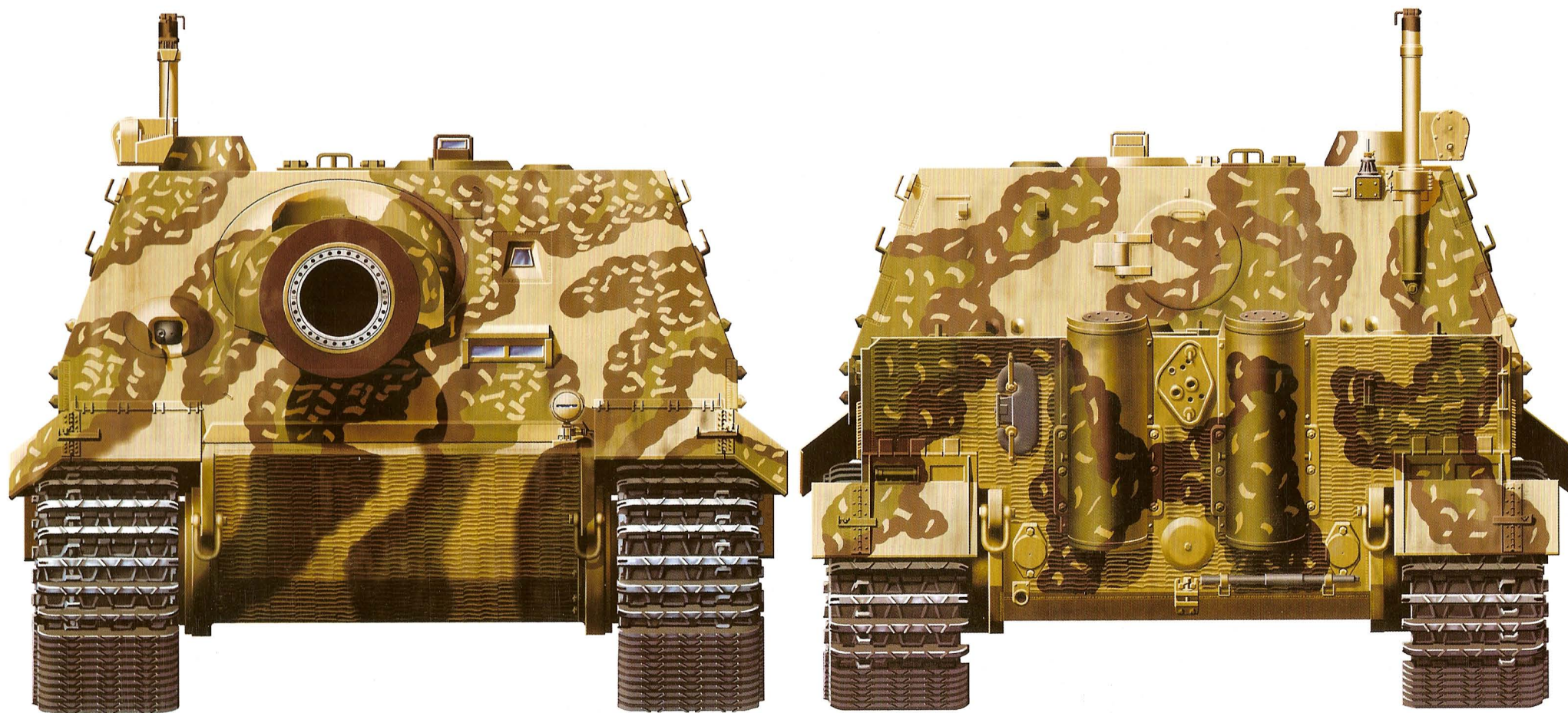
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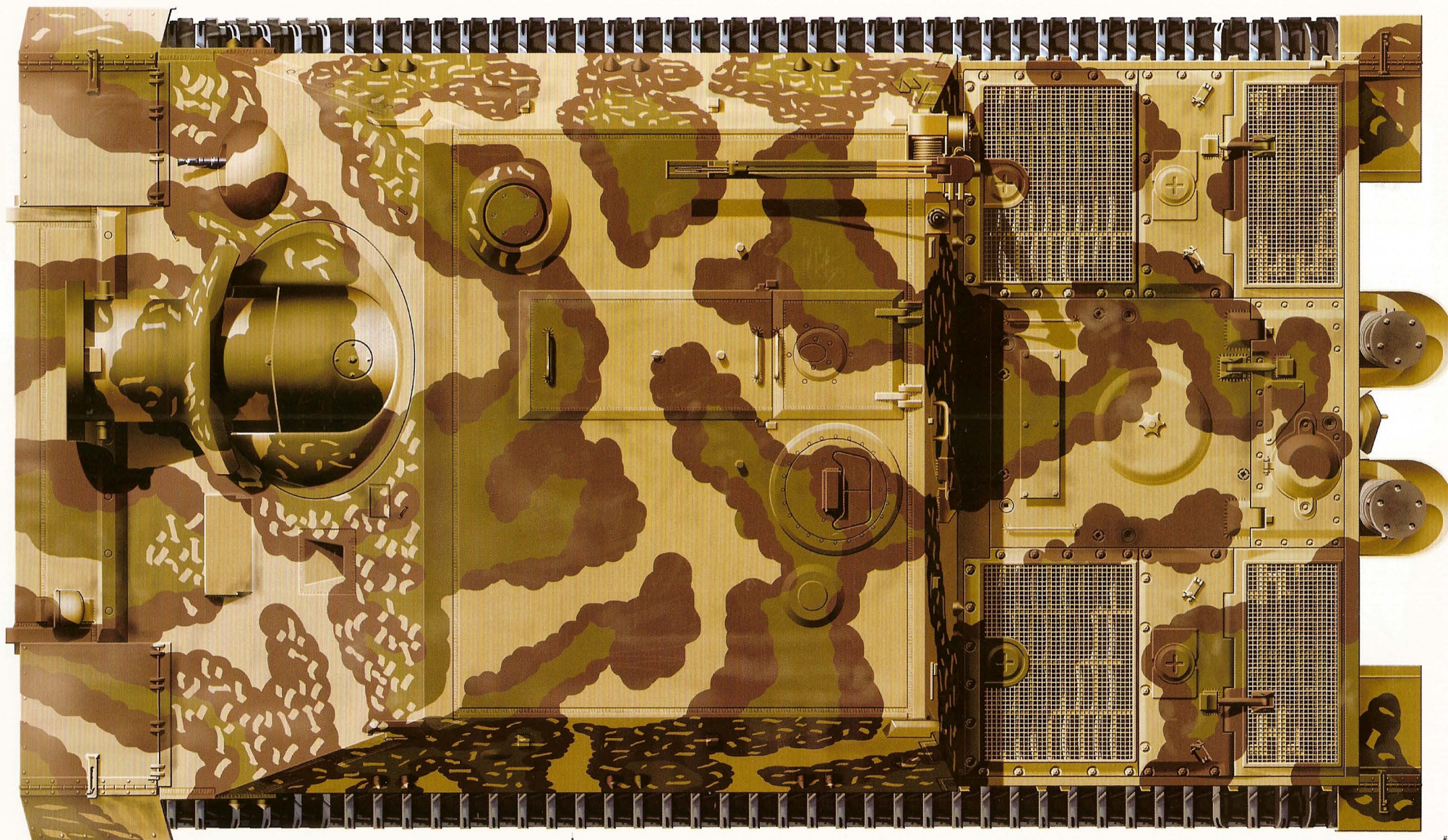
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Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1002, Germany, April, 1945.



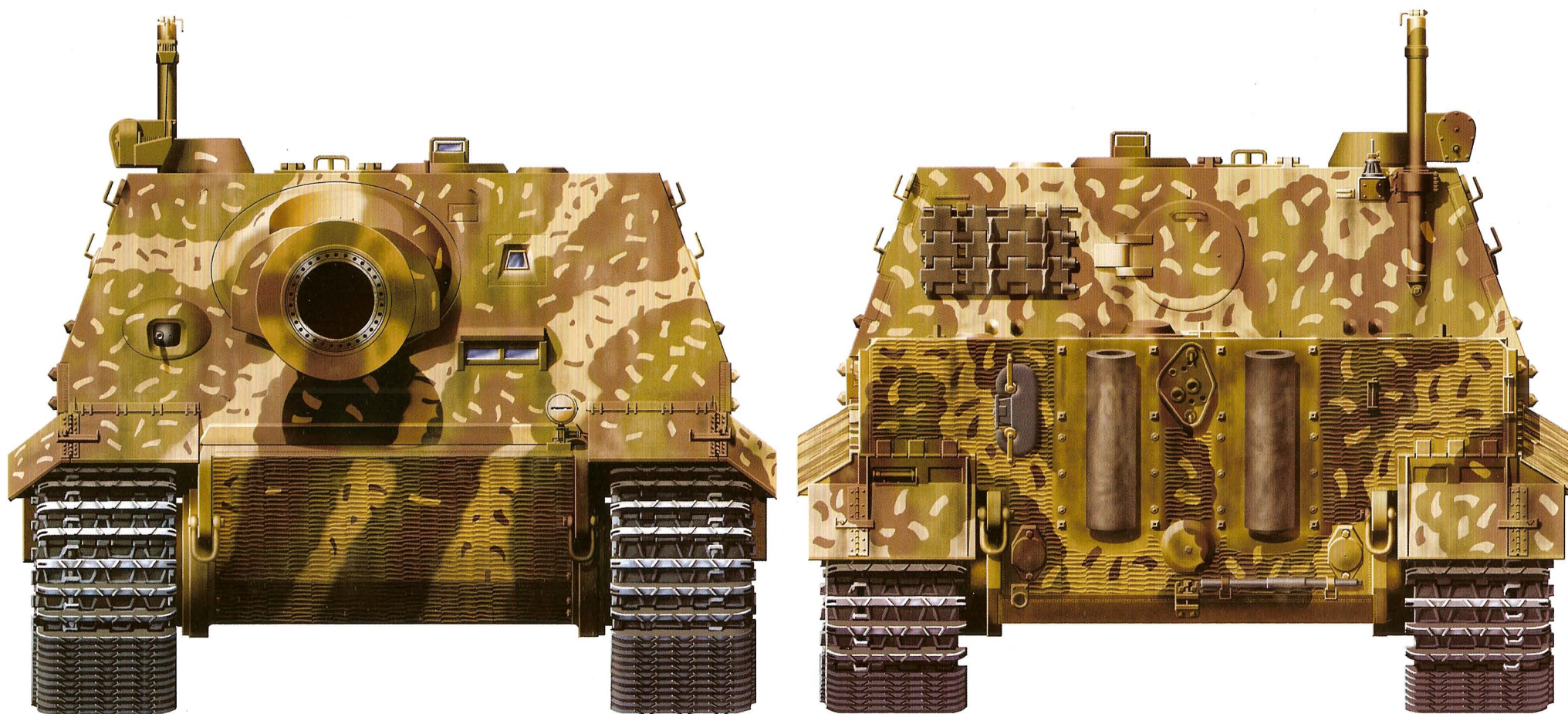
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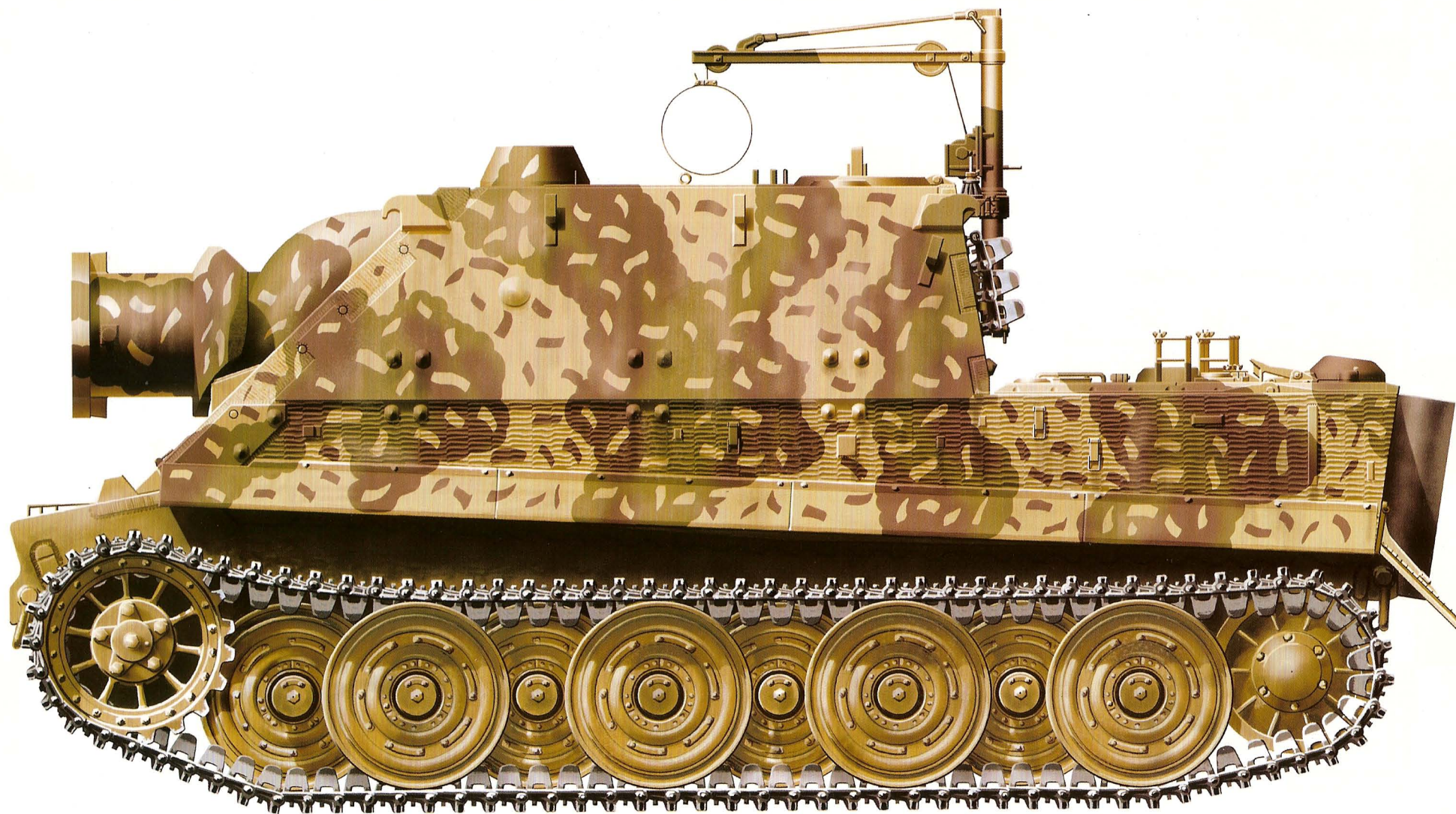
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Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1002, Ebendorf, Germany, April, 1945.



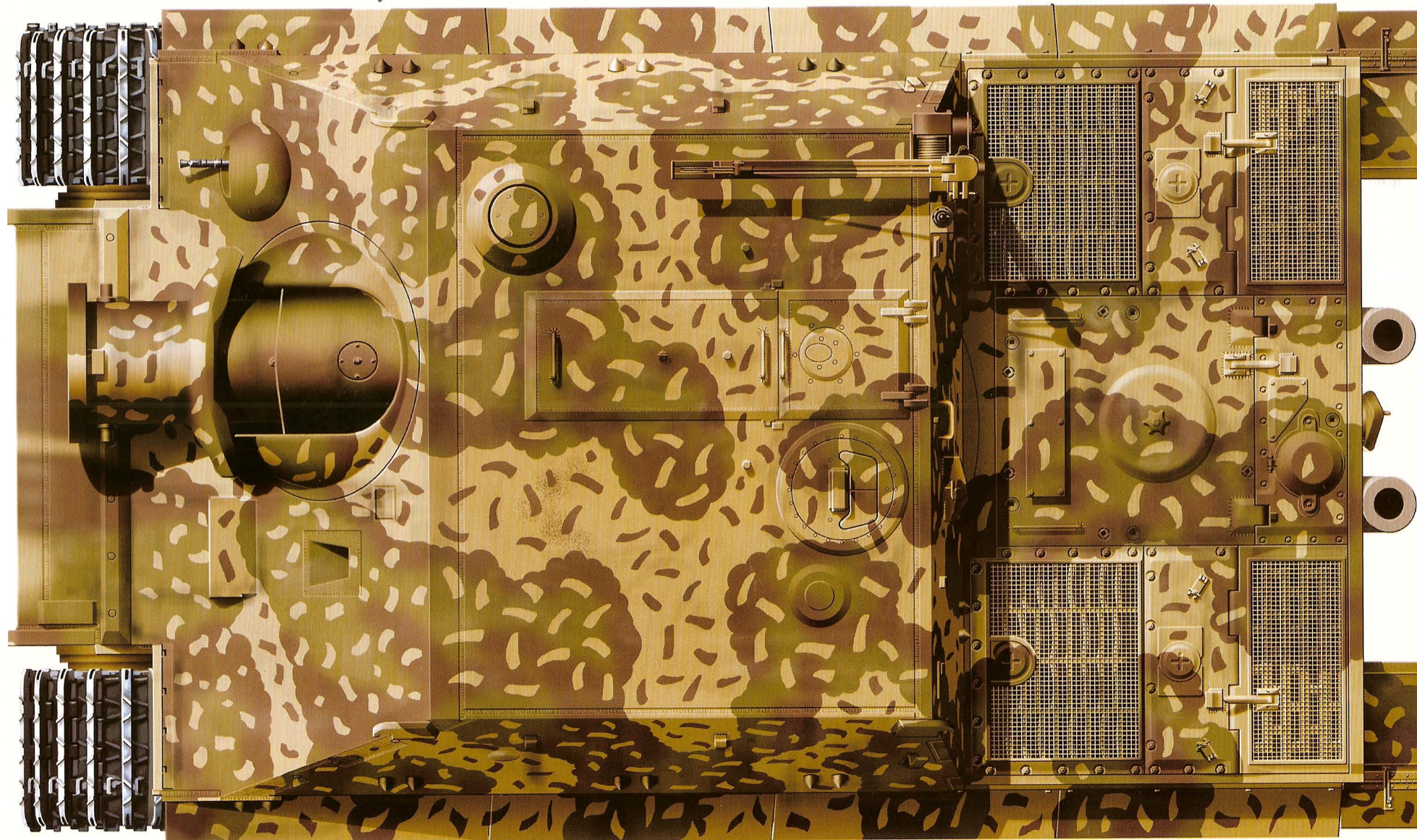
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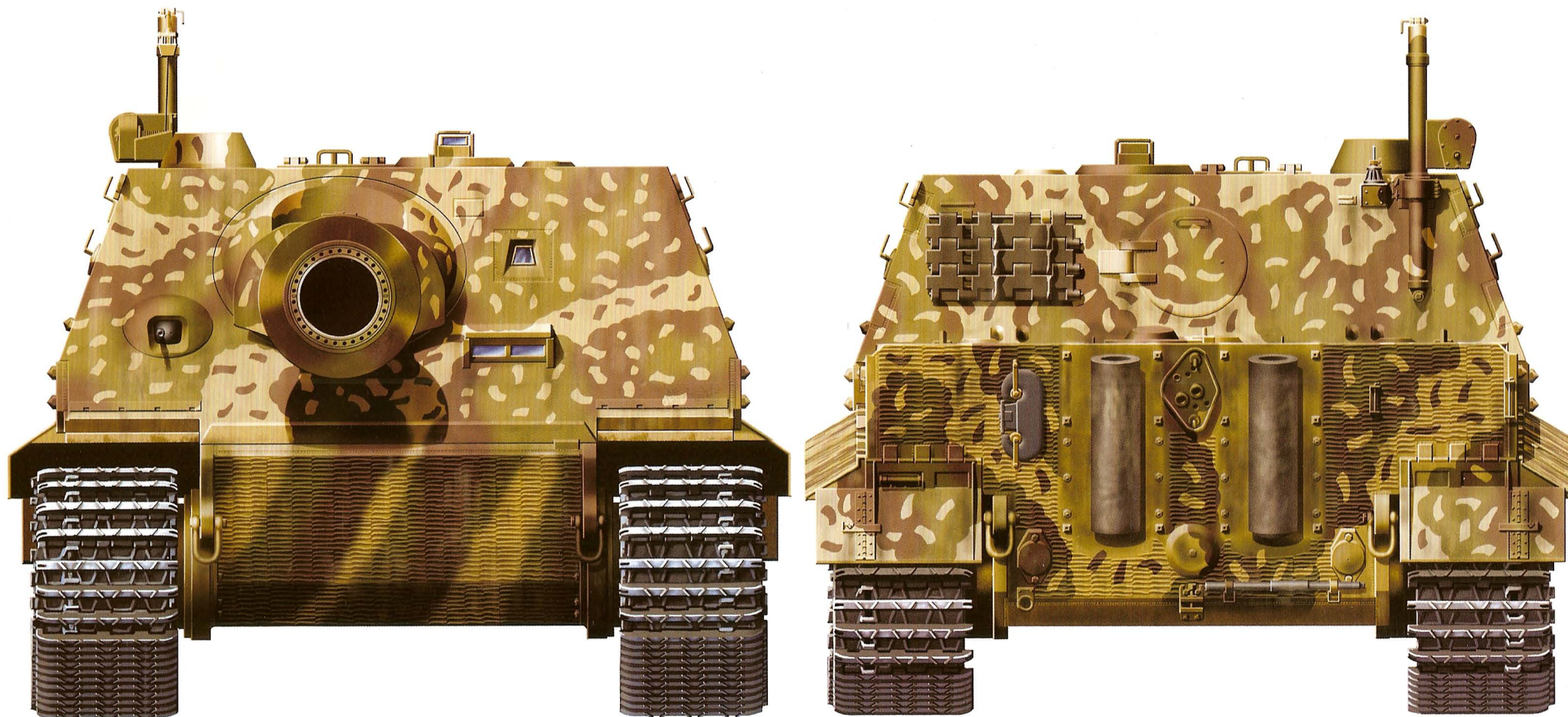
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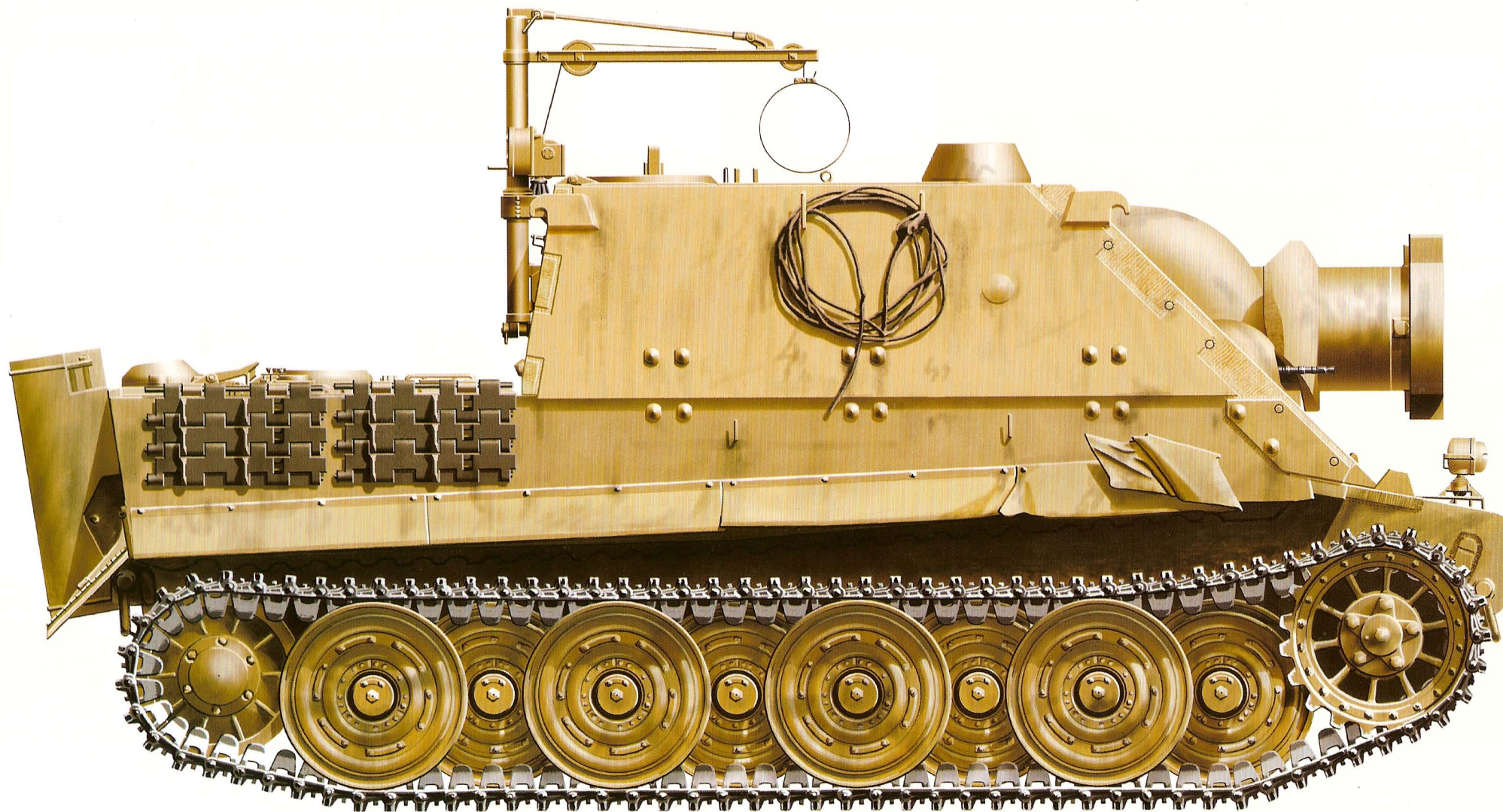
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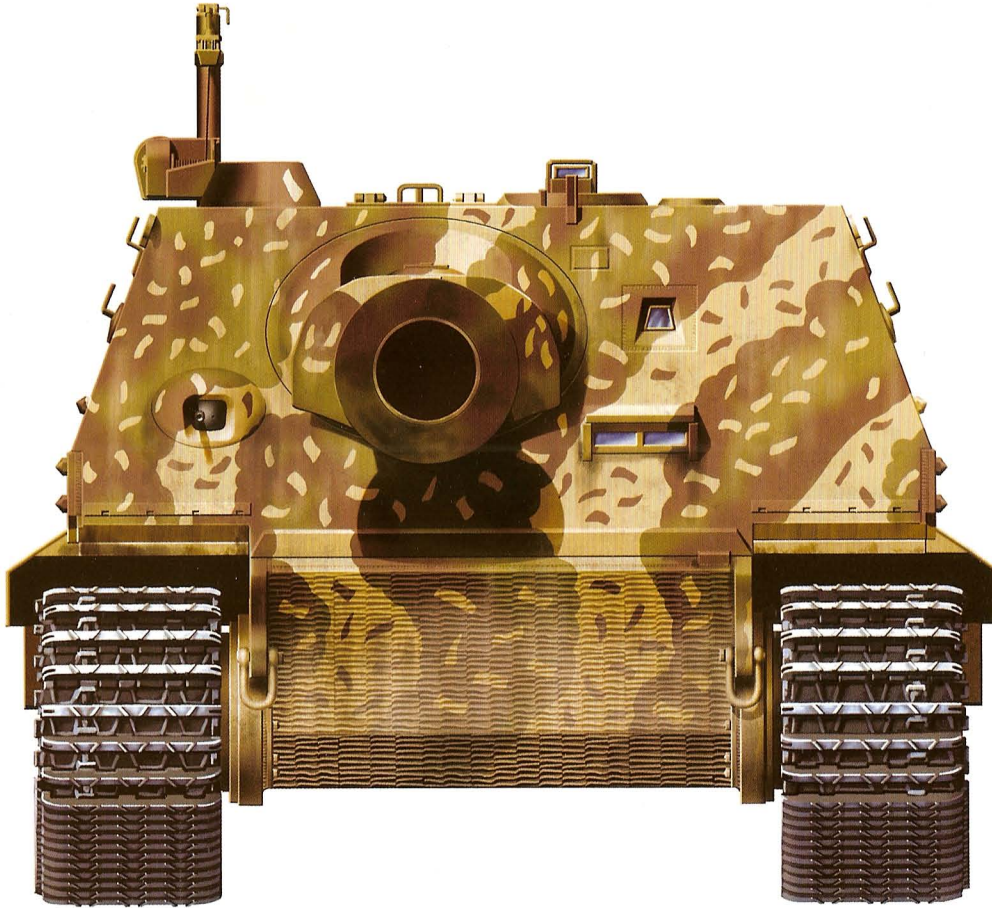
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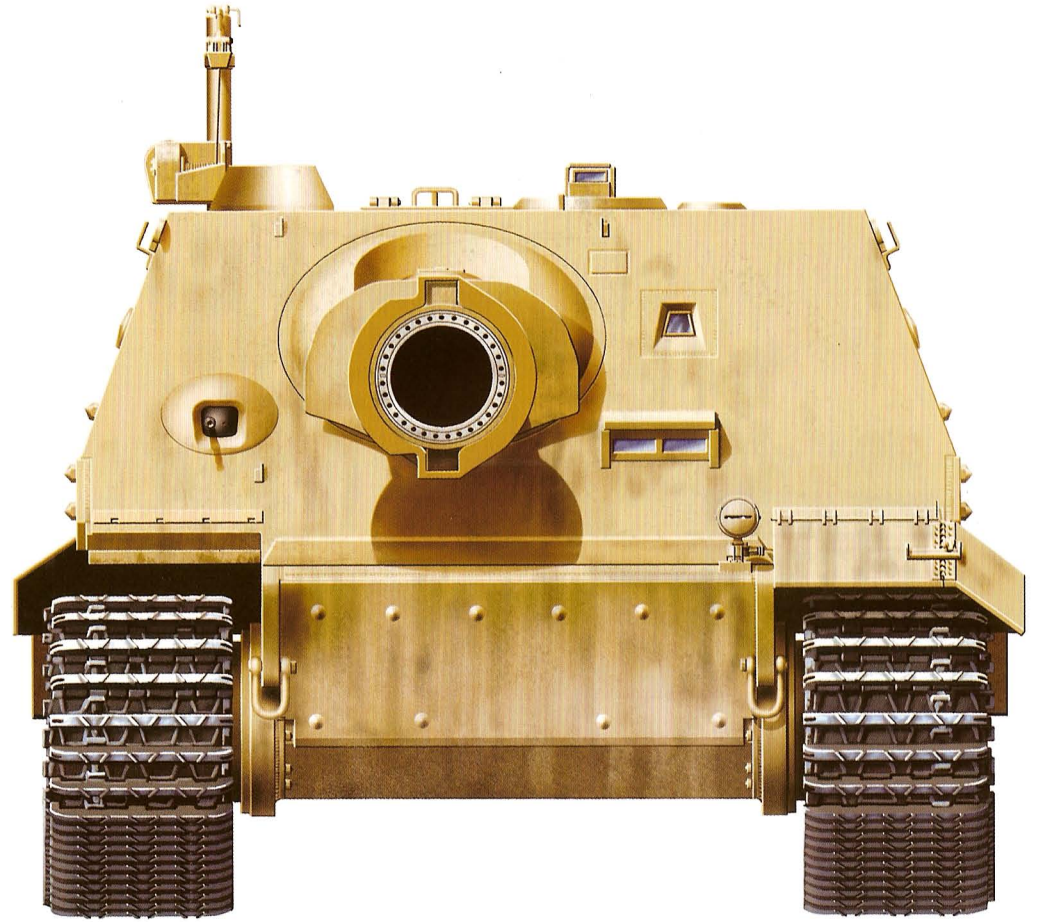
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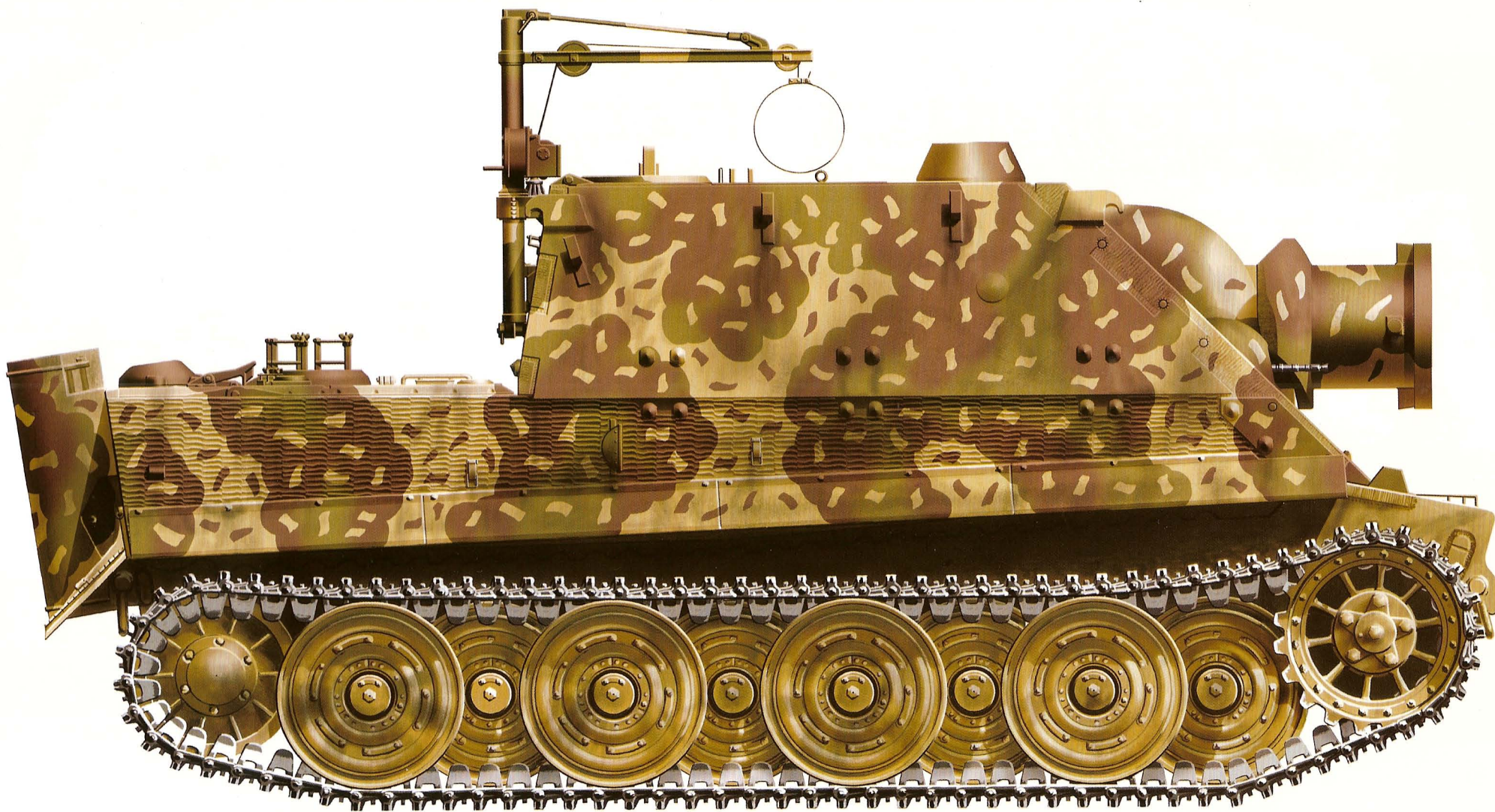
Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1002, the area of Drolshagen, Germany, April, 1945.



Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1001, Germany, April, 1945.



Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1002, the area of Drolshagen, Germany, April, 1945.



Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1001, Germany, April, 1945.



Sturmtiger, Sturm-Mörser-Kp. 1001, Germany, April, 1945.

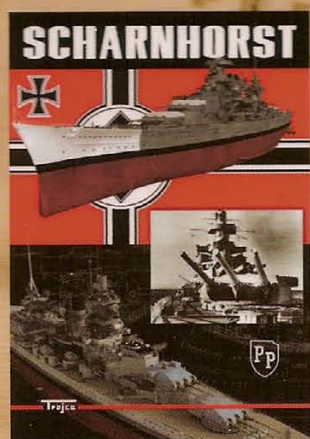
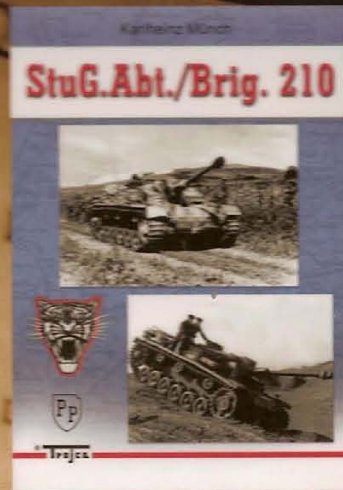
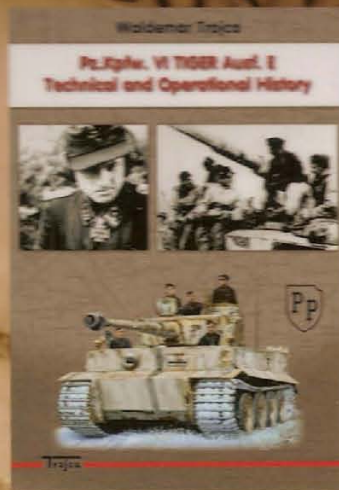
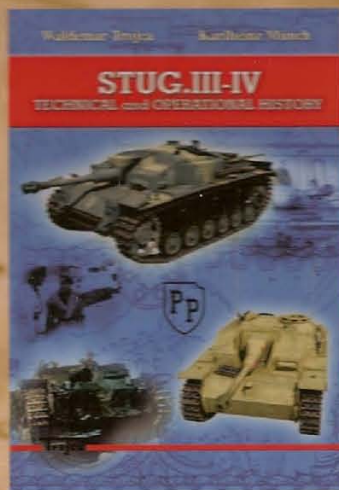
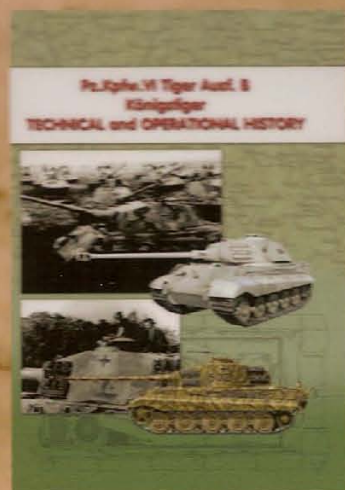




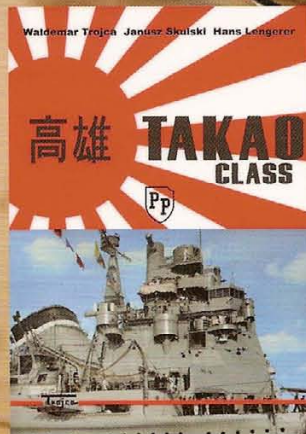
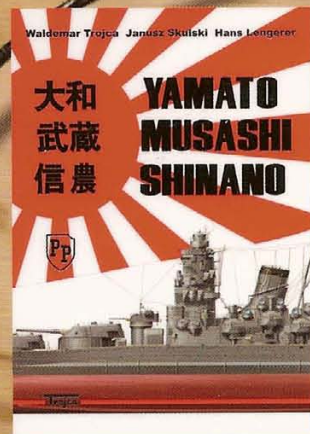
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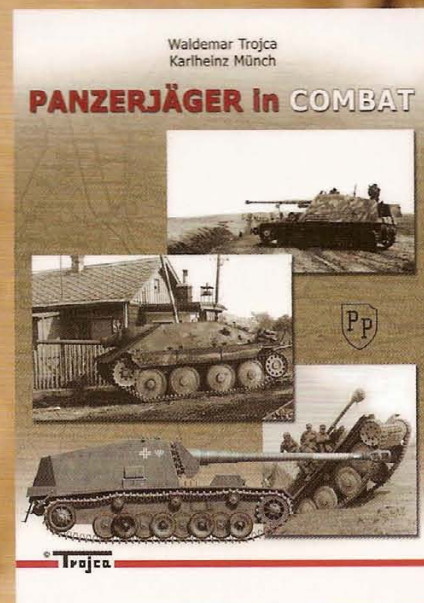
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