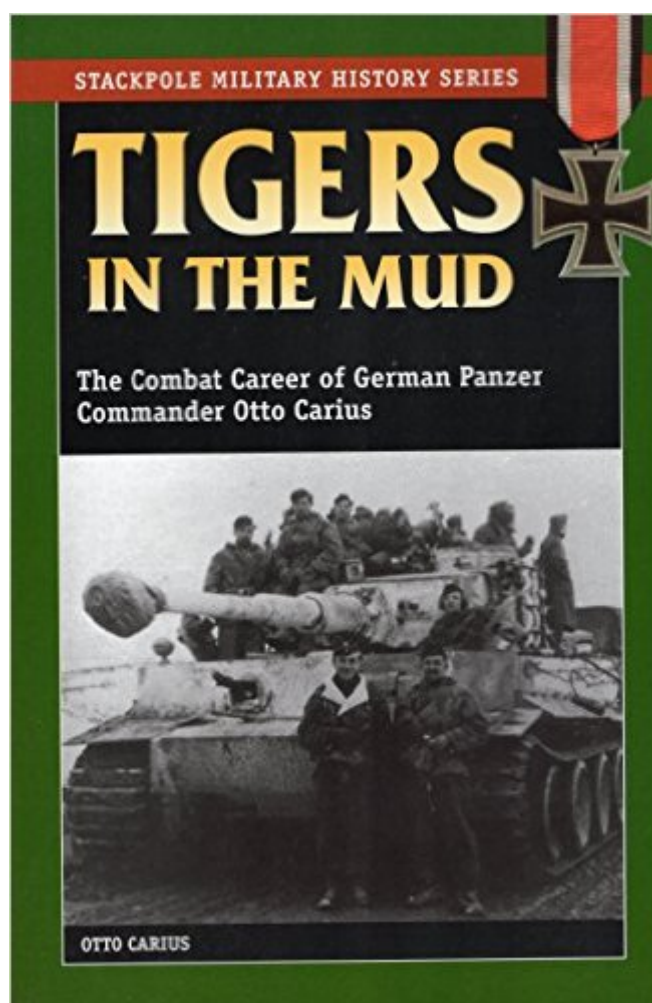


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Tigers In The Mud: The Combat Career Of German Panzer Commander Otto Carius (Stackpole Military History Series)



Synopsis

WWII began with a metallic roar as the German Blitzkrieg raced across Europe, spearheaded by the most dreaded weapon of the 20th century: the Panzer. No German tank better represents that thundering power than the infamous Tiger, and Otto Carius was one of the most successful commanders to ever take a Tiger into battle, destroying well over 150 enemy tanks during his incredible career.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Otto Carius was one of the most successful Panzerkommandanten ever to take a Tiger tank into battle, destroying some 150 tanks and being decorated with the Oakleaves to the Knights Cross. Stackpole are to be heartily congratulated for this cheap paperback edition of a long-out-print Fedorowicz classic, a classic of Eastern Front literature and a marvellous account of Panzer warfare. When World War II broke out Carius had volunteered for 104th Infantry Placement Battalion in May of 1940. Following training, he was assigned to the 21st Panzer Regiment and experienced his first battle as a loader on a Panzer 38(t) during the "Barbarossa" operation in June of 1941. After about a year of war experience on the Eastern Front, Carius was accepted in an Officer Candidate Course and following its completion, was assigned to the 502nd Heavy Tank Battalion in April of 1943. Equipped with the new Tiger tanks, he was assigned as a tank commander to the 2nd Company of 502nd Tank Battalion. That summer, the 2nd Company was deployed to the Russian Leningrad Front and took part in several operations in that area. During

that time, 502nd Tank Battalion was ordered to reinforce the front along with 11th SS Freiwillige Panzergrenadier Division "Nordland" at Narva Bridgehead. During one of his engagements, Carius destroyed four Soviet SU-85s and successfully withdrew without losses. In June of 1944, the company was transferred to Dunaburg (Daugavpils in Latvia) to defend the city from a concentrated Russian offensive. In the July of 1944, Russians outflanked the German defensive lines via the motorways west of Minsk and Borissov to Witebsk (same route was used by Germans in 1941).

The famous Tiger Ace, Otto Carius, has provided a valuable memoir of his experiences in WWII. This book is an asset whether you are a professional soldier, WWII historian, or Tiger tank aficionado. Valuable lessons are gained by learning the problems associated with fielding new technology in the time of war. While the Tiger tank proved to be an awesome weapon while operational; its' Achilles heel was the tremendous amount of logistic and maintenance support required to keep it running. I was reminded of Stephen Crane's "The Red Badge of Courage" when reading about Carius' first engagement as an officer, but by the end of the book one thing that is not in dispute is the personal courage of Carius and many of the tankers he led, especially Albert Kerscher. They would slug out the battle from extreme close ranges often so close that traversing the main gun was not possible! The drama of tank warfare on the Eastern Front is simply told in this book and valuable lessons can be learned by those in the profession of arms. Much like Patton, Carius relays his frustration that the German and Anglo-American forces did not join together and turn on the forces of the Soviet Union. The desperation of German forces to retard the advance of the Red Army allowed many Germans to escape and avoid Communist Oppression is noteworthy. Yet these brave German soldiers were an embarrassment to the Post-War Germany and unlike the US where our veterans are dubbed the "greatest generation," German veterans are shunned and instead monuments go up to the draft dodgers and deserters. In light of the recent prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib prison, his comments concerning the treatment of Prisoners of War by the Americans are interesting.

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