

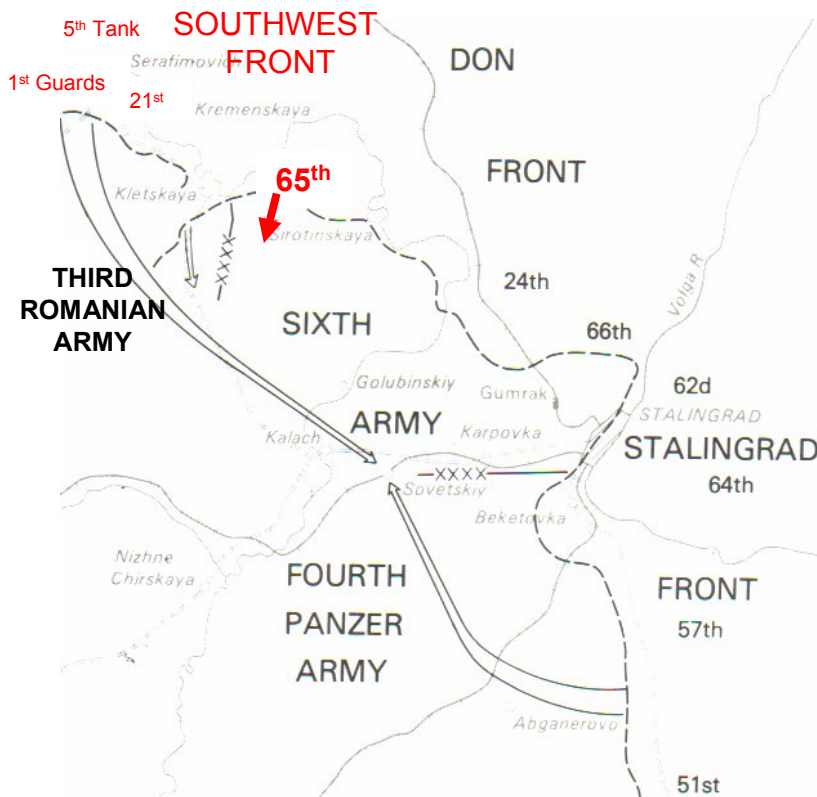
# OPERATION URANUS, November 1942



By November of 1942 the 6<sup>th</sup> Germany Army stood on the brink of success in seizing the Soviet city of Stalingrad. Unfortunately, in order for the Germans to achieve the mass of combat power necessary to feed the fight within the city the Germans thinned their lines to the north and south of the fighting, replacing German Units with allies. Unfortunately, their Romanian allies did not have the same amount of anti-armor, fire support, and mobile reserves as the Germans. The Soviets recognized this weakness and the opportunity it provided in September when Marshal Zhukov and General Vasilevskiy visited the front. They returned to Moscow, briefed Stalin, and he approved the operation named URANUS.

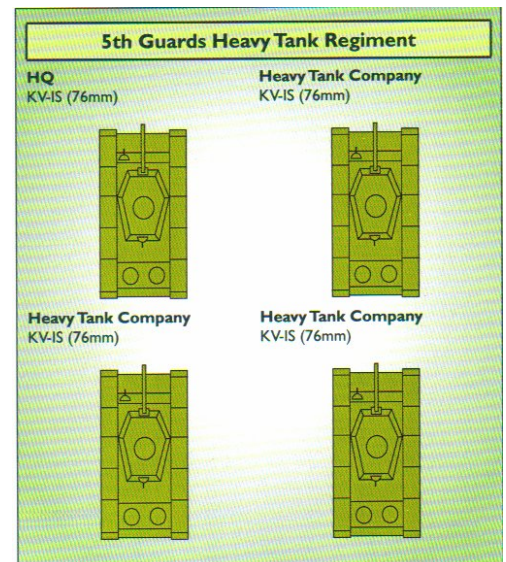
The balance of the Southwest Front's combat power would rupture the Romanian Third Army's lines and exploit into 6<sup>th</sup> Army's rear crossing the Don and Chir Rivers. 65<sup>th</sup> Army was the left flank of the Southwest Front's attack. The 65<sup>th</sup> Army attacked four German divisions and turned south providing the pivot for the rest of the Front's forces and denying the Germans the opportunity to rejoin the Romanians to their north.

65<sup>th</sup> Army's attack was lead by the 4<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> Guards Rifle Divisions. I have used the **27<sup>th</sup> Guards Rifle Division** as my unit, as they were still on active duty in East Germany through the fall of the Berlin Wall. 5<sup>th</sup> Guards Heavy Tank Regiment supported 27<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Guards Rifle Divisions during Operation Uranus.

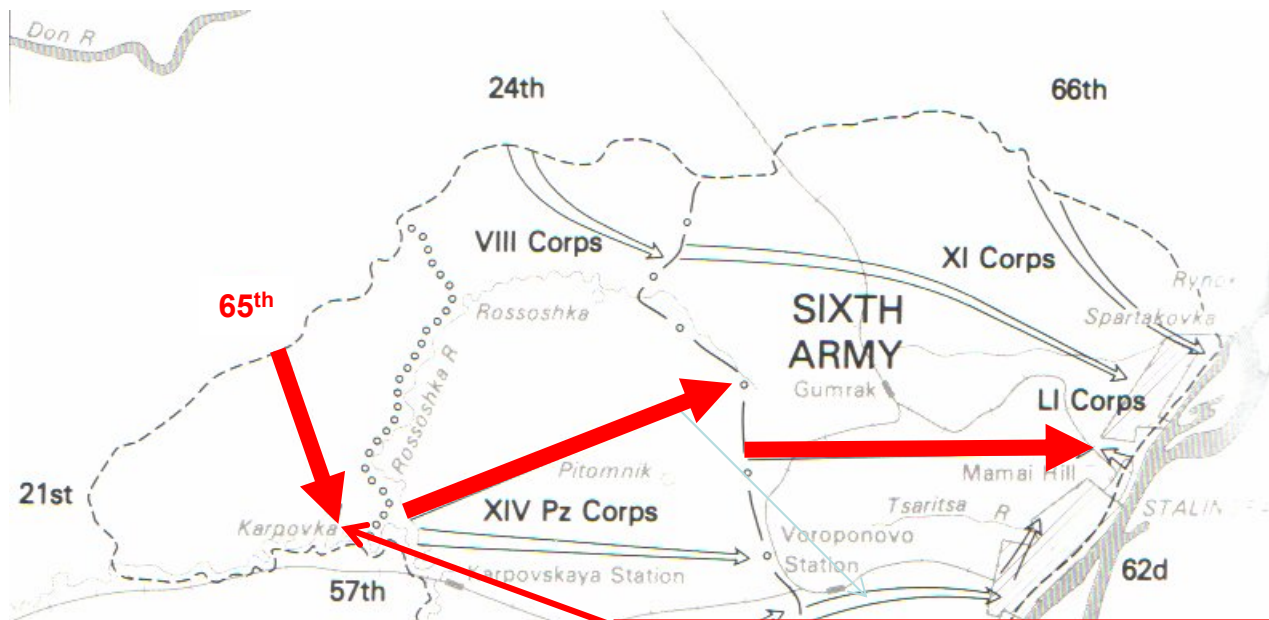


## 5<sup>th</sup> Guards Heavy Tank Regiment

The 5<sup>th</sup> Guards Heavy Tank Regiment was formed in October 1942, and equipped with the new KV-1s in order to support Operation Uranus. The vehicle incorporated a turret that was lighter than before and received alterations to the road wheels, drive train and hull. It shed 15mm of hull thickness and improved the commander's position and fighting compartment. It was lighter and faster than the previous KV-1s, but sacrificed some protection. 5<sup>th</sup> Guards Heavy Tank Regiment supported 65<sup>th</sup> Army, specifically the three Guards Rifle Divisions throughout the destruction of the German 6<sup>th</sup> Army. The Regiment distinguishing itself near Kazachiy Kurgan northwest of Stalingrad in December 1942.



## Mike Turner – Soviet '42 Guards Infantry Battalion



Once encircled, 65<sup>th</sup> Army became the Don Front's main effort as they began the destruction of the German 6<sup>th</sup> Army. 65<sup>th</sup> Army attacked from the northwest to the southeast toward Karpovskaya Station. Again 27<sup>th</sup> Guards Rifle Division lead the way along with 4<sup>th</sup> Guards Rifle Division. The 27<sup>th</sup> Guards Rifle Division distinguished itself in heavy fighting in and around the Karpovka Station versus some of the last mobile assets of the XIV Panzer Corps.

### Resources

**Russian Tank Units 1941-1942, by Richard Marsh**

**Moscow to Stalingrad: Decision in the East, by Earl F. Ziemke**

**Stalingrad to Berlin: The German Defeat in the East, by Earl F. Ziemke**