

0. OPERATION URANUS - Story Preface

1. STALINGRAD

2. SOVIET RESISTANCE

3. THE SIEGE OF STALINGRAD

4. VASILY ZAITSEV

5. TANIA CHERNOVA

6. STALINGRAD SNIPERS

7. THE DUEL

8. IS IT TRUE?

9. OPERATION URANUS

10. HITLER FORBIDS SURRENDER

11. GERMAN SURRENDER

12. THE SWORD OF STALINGRAD



This image depicts a photo from the Ukrainian Central State Archive. It shows Soviet troops advancing at Kalac during November of 1942. This action was part of the effort to push the German army out of the Soviet Union. The photo was taken by an unnamed Soviet photojournalist.

Thinking his conquest of Stalingrad was assured—or—perhaps pondering what to do if the Sixth Army failed him, Hitler spent the first part of November (1942) at Berghof, his now-destroyed home on the Obersalzberg Mountain. (Nearby Eagle's Nest, Eva Braun's favorite spot, is still a popular Berchtesgaden tourist destination.) The serenity of the mountain location, however, would provide little solace for the Nazi leader in the months to come.

While Hitler rested amidst the stunning beauty of Bavaria, Stalin listened to his commanders finalize their brilliant plan ("Operation Uranus") to take back Stalingrad. For seven centuries, Russia had successfully defended herself against invaders—why should this time be different?

Initially unsure the Red Army could effectively mount a surprise counter offensive, Stalin was ultimately persuaded by Marshal Zhukov. The plan could work, but only a few men would know about it. Even field commanders were kept in the dark.

Plans to launch the attack on November 9 were changed to November 19th, due to weather. As the Red Army began to move, some of the German commanders wondered: Were the Russians commencing a counter attack?

Hitler, wrongly convinced the Soviets did not have enough reserves to mount a significant assault, was also mistaken about something else.

At a time when German women were not permitted to work in factories, Soviet women were out-producing Nazi factories four-fold. For every 500 tanks made in Germany, 2200 tanks were turned out in Russia. Many of those tanks were about to bear down upon the 6th Army and the 4th Panzer Army.

Within days after the counter-offensive began, General Paulus and his men would be trapped with no reasonable method of escape.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/OPERATION-URANUS-Stalingrad-Deadly-Battle-of-WWII>

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See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/OPERATION-URANUS-Stalingrad-Deadly-Battle-of-WWII>



Berghof - Area View from Eagle's Nest

Image online, courtesy the berghof.greyfalcon.us website.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Berghof-Area-View-from-Eagle-s-Nest>



Eagle's Nest - Panoramic View

Image online, courtesy the teachbytravel.com website.

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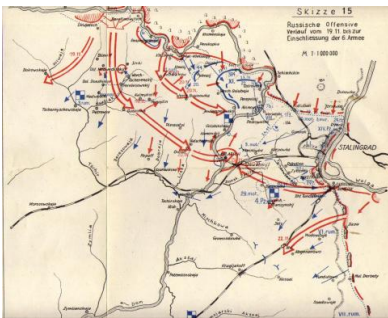


Bavaria - Hitler's Retreat at Berchtesgaden

Image online, courtesy berghof.greyfalcon.us website.

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Russian Military Operation - Map

Map image online, courtesy Flames of War.

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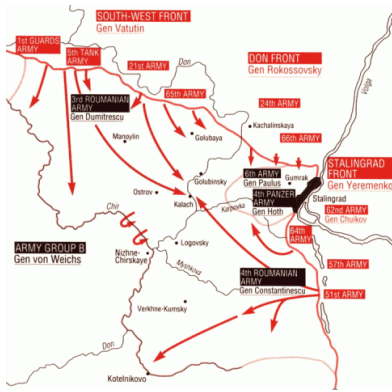
Marshal Zhukov and Operation Uranus

Image online, courtesy russianlife.com blog site.

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Operation Uranus - Map

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