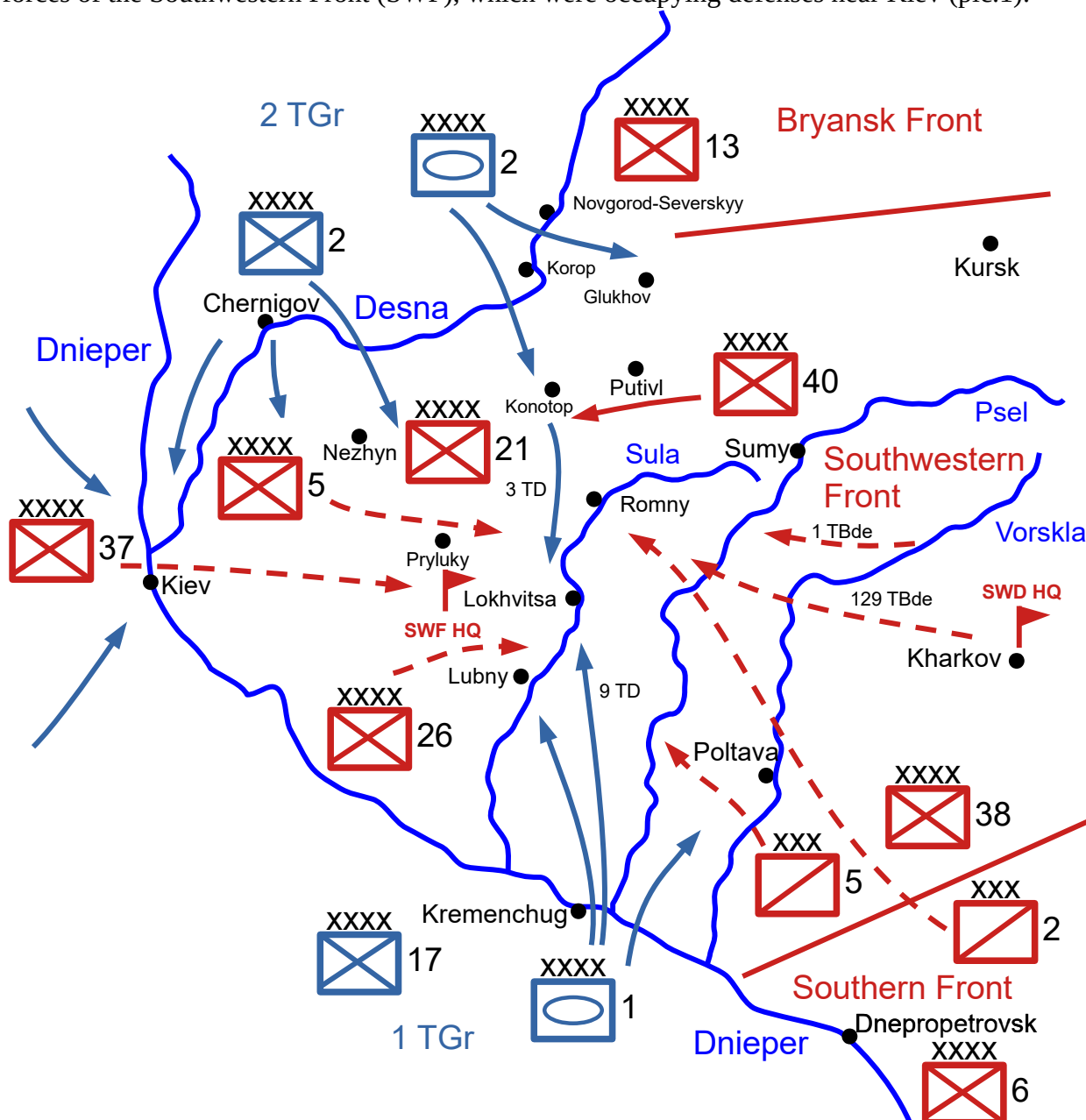


Kiev Defensive Operation

July 7 - September 26, 1941

At the end of August 1941, the German 2 TGr (2A and 2TA), advancing north of Kiev, turning south, captured two bridgeheads on the Desna River - near Korop and Novgorod-Seversky. A southern German 1 TGr (1TA and 17A) captured and expanded the bridgehead in the Kremenchug region on the left bank of the Dnieper. Two German groups tried to encircle the main forces of the Southwestern Front (SWF), which were occupying defenses near Kiev (pic.1).



Pic.1 - General operation map

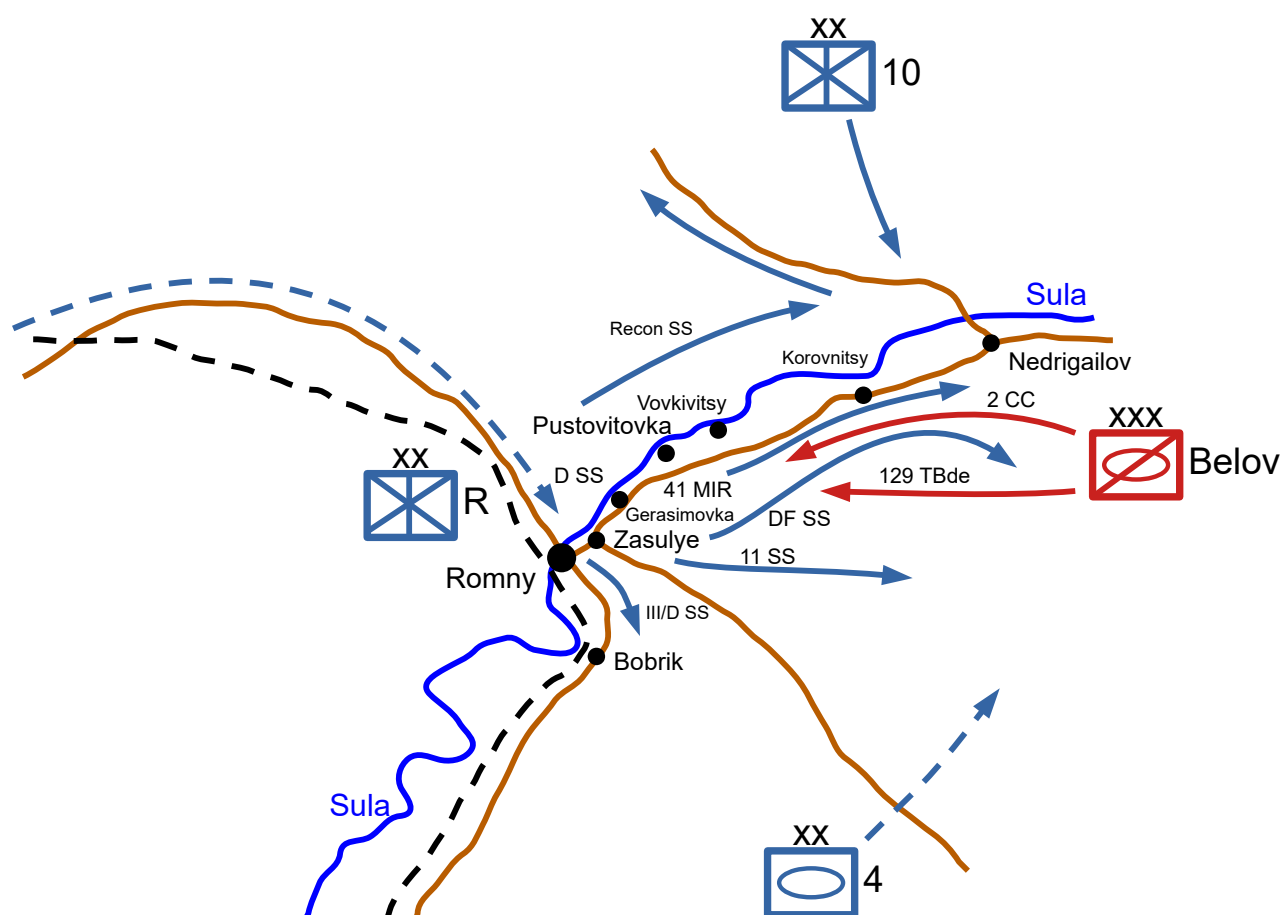
The Bryansk Front tried to hold back the German tank divisions by inflicting a counterattack of 40A in the Putivl area (Roslavl-Novozybkovskaya operation). However, the troops of the Bryansk Front, due to lack of time to prepare a counterattack and the mistakes of the command, were unable to stop the enemy's breakthrough to the south.

At September 14, 1941 German troops captured Lohvitsa and Lubny. 9TD (1TA) approached to Lohvitsa from the southeast, and 3TD (2TA) approached from the north. On

September 15, the encirclement around the 5, 21, 26 and 37 Soviet armies of the SWF closed. The HQ of the SWF was also encircled. On the night of September 18, the Stavka allowed the 37A troops to leave Kiev. The order to encircled armies of the SWF to break through to the east, was given on the evening of September 17.

38 and 40As, which were outside the encirclement, were supposed to support the exit of the encircled troops of the SWF by attacking Romny and Lubny. In the defense zone of the SWF, from the Southern Front, 2CC (5, 9CDs) was transferred, on the basis of which the Cavalry Mechanized Group (CMG) of General Belov was formed: 2CC, 1, 129TBdes and 100RD. The CMG units of Belov were tasked with delivering a strike in the direction of Romny, to assist the encircled troops of the SWF. To the south of CMG Belov, a group of 5CC and 110TBde operated, deployed from the 38A sector.

On September 19, 9CD (2CC) received an order to attack in the direction of Romny and capture the bridges across the Sula River. 136CR holds the crossings over the Sula River near Vovkivitsy. 72CR holds the crossings over the Sula River near Pustovitovka. The 108CR is advancing on Gerasimovka in cooperation with the 72CR squadron, having the day task of capturing the northern bridge in Zasulye. The 5CR is advancing directly on Zasulye with the task of capturing the southern bridge across the Sula River (pic.2).



Pic.2 - Situational map

129TBde was transferred to the front line immediately after its formation, so the personnel recruited from different units were not well-coordinated together. The brigade consisted of three tank and one motorized rifle battalions and included tanks: KV-7, T34-22, BT-32, T26-25. The brigade concentrated: 129MRMGBn - Korovnitzy, 129TR - Terny, Styahailovka (together with 9CD). At 14:30 19.09, the 5CR received 2 tanks (129TBde) with which it launched an attack. By 17:00, a company of KV tanks is expected, which will assist the 5CR attack on the bridge.

In order to prevent the encirclement from breaking through, its outer perimeter is reinforced by elements of German motorized divisions: 10MID and MID SS "Das Reich". 41MIR (10MID) moved behind 3TD, occupied a bridgehead on the Sula River east of Romny. The main forces of the 10MID are advancing on the crossings on the northern bank of the Sula River near Korovnitsy. MID SS "Das Reich", by forced march was transferred through Priluki to the area west of Romny. 41MIR passes into its subordination. The engineering battalion SS "Das Reich" ensures the division's crossings across the Sula River. The division was ordered to advance in the general direction towards Korovnitsy with the support of 3 battalions from AR SS.

Motorcycle and reconnaissance battalions conduct reconnaissance on the northern bank of the Sula River. III/MIR SS "Deutschland" and 1./mcbn SS "Das Reich" operate south, near Bobrik.

Appendix A. MID SS "Das Reich"

Report #130 MID SS "Das Reich" 20 September 1941

Recently, enemy aircrafts have been dropping large numbers of phosphorus incendiary balls during low-altitude attacks. These incendiary balls resemble plums in size and appearance and consist of a solid mass rich in phosphorus. They spontaneously ignite on contact with air. When ignited, they create small intense sources of fire. To defuse these balls, must take the following measures:

1) *The incendiary balls have not caught fire yet.* Pick them up with rubber gloves or a wet rag and collect them in a container filled with water. Avoid touching with hands and clothing. Next, need to pour them along with water onto an open sandy area away from people and equipment and let them burn out.

2) *Incendiary balls are already caught fire.* It is necessary to cover the source of fire with dry sand or extinguish with water. Dig up pieces of phosphorus and let them burn on an open sandy area, as indicated in pt 1.



Pic.3 - Knocked out German StuG ausf.B ("Derfflinger") from SPG coy SS "Das Reich".

Appendix B. Romny area, September 1941

For the first time, a gypsum deposit near the Romny town was explored in 1867. Unique geological and tectonic monument is Mount Zolotukha, which is a so-called geological salt dome. Here, starting from the XVIII century, alabaster was mined. In 1931, an assumption was made about the possibility of oil-bearing capacity in the area of the Romny salt-dome structure. Thus, for the first time, an exotic mountain near Romny were associated with salt stocks, thereby making a positive and correct forecast of the oil and gas content of these local objects, because in those years the connection of oil fields with salt domes in other regions was already well known.

In a well #2 drilled in 1936 for potassium salts, on the periphery of the Romny salt dome, the first oil-saturated core was recovered, and in the next well #2bis during testing in June 1937, the first 2 tons of oil were obtained from the breccia of a salt stock from a depth of 239 meters. This marked the discovery the new for Dnieper-Donetsk oil and gas region, as well as the first oil in Ukraine. Exploration work at the Romny oil field continued until 1939. After that, drilling of production wells began. Until 1941, 11 wells were in operation. An oil field was under development until 1951, over the years of operation 10,000 tons of oil were produced. Further study showed that the oil deposits are not have a commercial importance (in total, more than 100 wells were drilled, in 53 of them oil-bearing signs were established).



Pic.4 - Knocked out Soviet T34 tank (129TBde) on the oil field (Mount Zolotukha) east of Romny.

In 1980 Mount Zolotukha received the status of a geological reserve of local importance. The protected area is 16 hectares. The mountain height is 110-120m (40m relative). It has an asymmetric structure: the northern and western slopes are steep, the southeastern slope smoothly turns into a plain. The mountain is a salt stock that raises and crosses layers of rocks of different ages from a depth of about 5 km. The salt body is Devonian in age and mushroom-shaped, with a cap located at a depth of about 50m.



Pic.5 - Knocked out Soviet KV1 tank (129TBde) on the oil field (Mount Zolotukha) east of Romny.