

ON THE DON.

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Quiet flows the Don. So spake the author in Poems. Yet sang the Cossack in his Traditional song "Why does the gentle Don flow so troubledly". The flowing river is watched by another mighty flood; the surging column of weapons destined to be engaged in the bloodiest battles ever fought. This is the prelude to the shattering conflict for Stalingrad; the clash of armies on the flat terrain, growing in intensity over the banks of the Don and across the swamps and plains to the Volga.

Here are men who fought the invading hosts until the Don flowed red. Again the words of that Cossack song come to mind; "Not with the plough is our dear, glorious earth furrowed. Our earth is furrowed with the Hoofs of horses". Yes, and churned into a shapeless mass by artillery; peck-marked and burned beyond recognition. The Battle for Stalingrad had begun.

Village after village is contested. The armoured might of the Soviet Union is employed against the advancing ironclads of General von Bock. The all-out effort to reach the City was still to come. September and October had yet to reveal vastly heavier and more bitter fighting.

In an advance fire-control post we meet a few of the men of the Red Army directing the Artillery by telephone, while overhead German bombers are hotly engaged by light ground defences.

Infantrymen with their long bayonets fixed engaged the hated enemy which, regardless of cost, and in many places trampling over the bodies of their own dead, were flung wholesale against the Russian lines.

Watch the Russian Sniper picking off a few unwary huns.

The fighting rearguard action brought its toll of Nazi prisoners. Appalling losses were sustained by the Germans. Counter attacks by Marshal Timoshenko's men brought them back to the blazing wreckage of many a humble hamlet. Such a tragic moment is pictured here. The Don was flowing red and reflecting the glow of angry fire; fire which was to be mirrored by the Volga flowing beside the heroic City of Stalingrad.