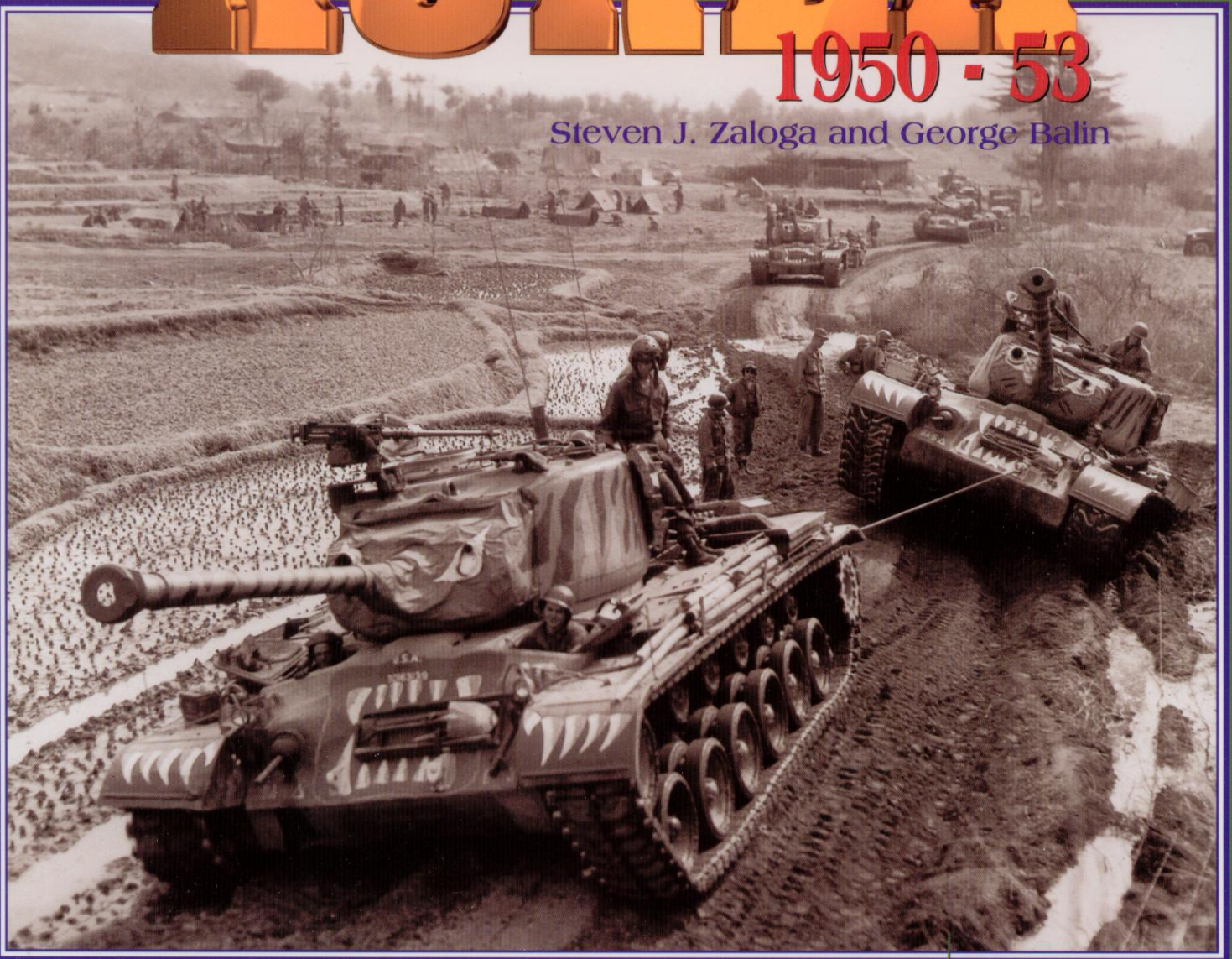


ARMOR AT WAR SERIES

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Steven J. Zaloga and George Balin

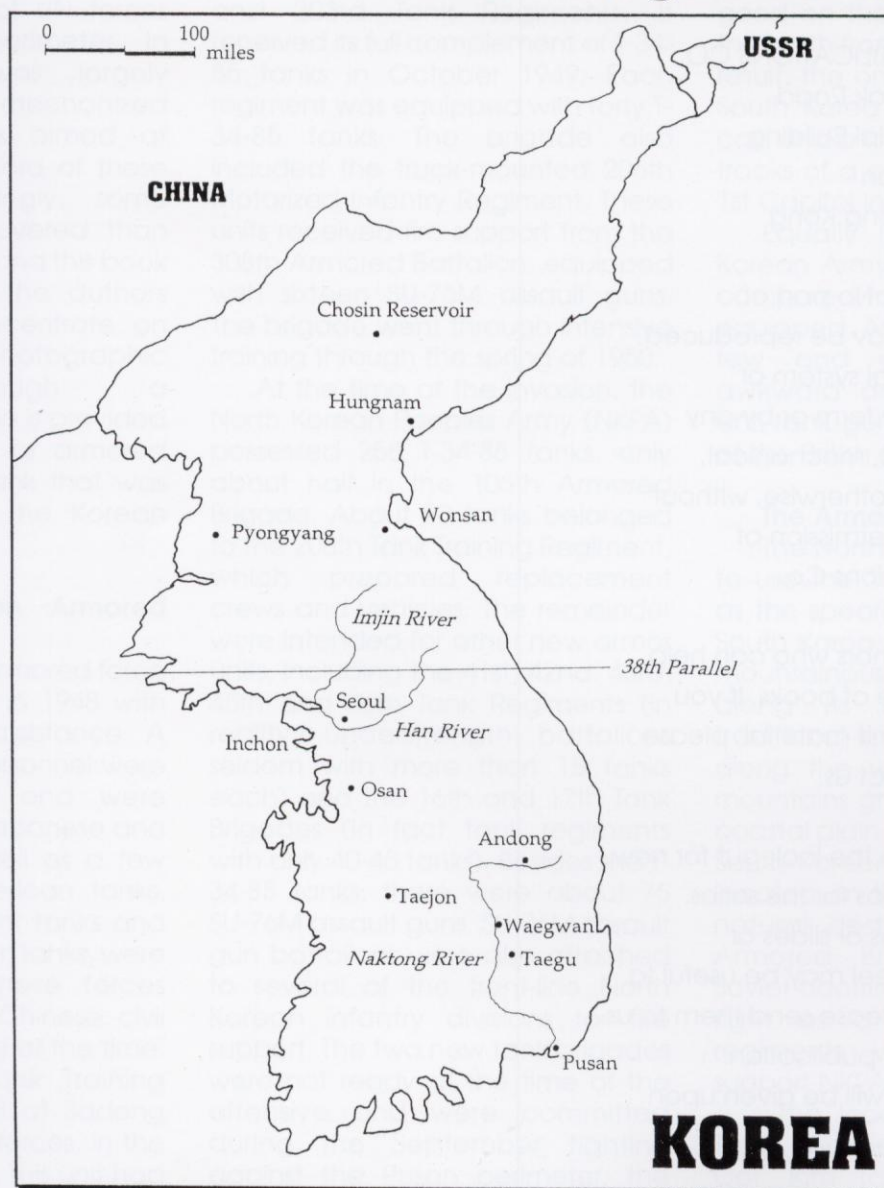


CONCORD
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Tank Fighting in Korea

The Korean War of 1950-53 was the first conflict to see the widespread use of tanks and armored vehicles since the end of World War 2. Although the Korean War is perhaps best remembered for the bloody stalemate after May 1951, for the first nine months of the war, tank warfare was a critical element in the fighting. The North Korean invasion was successful in large measure due to their skilled use of T-34 tanks and the lack of South Korean anti-tank defenses. After months of bitter fighting, the US defeat of the North Koreans was not possible until enough armored strength could be brought to bear. The rapid advance of UN forces from the Pusan perimeter in September 1950 was largely possible due to mechanized tactics. This book is aimed at providing a visual record of these battles. Not surprisingly, some battles are better covered than others in the archives, and this book reflects that reality. The authors have chosen to concentrate on tanks in the photographic coverage. Although a representative selection is provided of other major types of armored vehicles, it was the tank that was the key weapon in the Korean fighting.

The North Korean Armored Force

The North Korean armored force began to be formed in 1948 with Chinese and Soviet assistance. A small cadre of tank personnel were organized in China and were trained on captured Japanese and American tanks, as well as a few Soviet T-34s. The American tanks, mostly M3A3 Stuart light tanks and M4A4 Sherman medium tanks, were from Nationalist Chinese forces captured during the Chinese civil war that was still raging at the time. In 1948, the 15th Tank Training Regiment was formed at Sadong by Soviet occupation forces, in the suburbs of Pyongyang. This unit had two T-34-85 tanks and instruction was provided by a team of about 30 Soviet tank officers. The regiment was commanded by Senior Colonel Yu Kyong Su, who had served as a lieutenant in the Soviet Army in

World War 2 and later commanded the North Korean 4th Infantry Regiment. His selection for the command of this important unit was helped by the fact that he was the brother-in-law of premier Kim Il-Sung's wife.

In May 1949, the 15th Tank Training Regiment was disbanded and its cadets became the officers of the new 105th Armored Brigade. This unit was intended to serve as the shock force of Kim Il-Sung's invasion of South Korea, so no efforts were spared to prepare it for combat. The brigade consisted of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Tank Regiments, which were later renumbered as the 107th, 109th and 203rd Tank Regiments. It received its full complement of T-34-85 tanks in October 1949. Each regiment was equipped with forty T-34-85 tanks. The brigade also included the truck-mounted 206th Motorized Infantry Regiment. These units received fire support from the 308th Armored Battalion, equipped with sixteen SU-76M assault guns. The brigade went through intensive training through the spring of 1950.

At the time of the invasion, the North Korean Peoples Army (NKPA) possessed 258 T-34-85 tanks, only about half in the 105th Armored Brigade. About 20 tanks belonged to the 208th Tank Training Regiment, which prepared replacement crews and vehicles. The remainder were intended for other new armor units, including the 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 45th and 46th Tank Regiments (in reality, understrength battalions seldom with more than 15 tanks each) and the 16th and 17th Tank Brigades (in fact tank regiments with only 40-45 tanks). Besides the T-34-85 tanks, there were about 75 SU-76M assault guns. SU-76M assault gun battalions were also attached to several of the front-line North Korean infantry divisions for fire support. The two new tank brigades were not ready at the time of the offensive and were committed during the September fighting against the Pusan perimeter; the new independent regiments were mostly committed in late September in the Inchon area.

While the North Korean armored force seems puny by today's standards, in 1950, this was the most

formidable force in Asia except for the Soviet Army. Japan's armored force had been destroyed in the war, and China's armor force was a motley collection of captured Japanese and American tanks. The US Army had no substantial tank force in occupied Japan beyond a few companies of M24 Chaffee light tanks, and had withdrawn the medium tanks used in the occupation of South Korea in 1949. South Korea had no armored force. The US government was very concerned by the belligerent speeches of the Syngman Rhee government, and was afraid that giving the South Koreans armor would encourage them to make good on their promises to liberate the north from the communists. As a result, the only armored vehicles in South Korea were 37 M8 armored cars and a small number of M3 half-tracks of a cavalry regiment of the 1st Capitol Infantry Division in Seoul.

Equally important, the South Korean Army was poorly prepared compared to the North, and badly equipped. Anti-tank weapons were few and consisted mainly of awkward and ineffective 57mm anti-tank guns (an American copy of the British 6 pounder).

The Armored Invasion

The North Korean Army planned to use the 105th Armored Brigade as the spearhead of its invasion of South Korea. Korea is an extremely mountainous country, particularly along its eastern coast. The traditional invasion route has been along the western coast, as the mountains gradually give way to a coastal plain. Equally important, the South Korean capitol of Seoul was located on this area, so it was the natural destination of the 105th Armored Brigade. Contrary to Soviet doctrine, the brigade did not fight as a single unit, but its regiments were doled out to support NKPA infantry divisions.

The lead unit was the 109th Tank Regiment, commanded by Col. Kim Tae Ryon, which was attached to the NKPA 3rd Infantry Division. These units were the first across the border at 0500 hours of 25 June 1950 near Sachang-ni in the westernmost section of South Korea. This unit overran the

Republic of Korea (ROK) 17th Infantry Regiment. The other NKPA units soon followed. Col. Choe U Sik's 203rd Tank Regiment was attached to the NKPA's 1st Infantry Division and attacked along the Kaesong-Seoul "Unification" highway. The 107th Tank Regiment overran the ROK 12th Regt. of the 1st Infantry Div. at Kaesong and the 13th Regt. near a ford over the Imjin river near Korangpo. The South Koreans claimed to have knocked out 11 T-34 tanks during the Imjin fighting, but later interrogations of NKPA tankers revealed that none had been lost although several had been damaged. Col. Choe U Sik's 107th Tank Regiment, supporting the NKPA 4th Infantry Division, attacked along the Yonchon-Seoul road, to the east of the other two tank regiments. It crushed several units of the ROK 7th Infantry Division.

Most South Korean troops had never seen a tank before, and the ineffectiveness of their 57mm guns and 2.36 inch bazooka was demoralizing. Several Korean infantry units attempted to stop the tanks with improvised satchel charges or TNT blocks wrapped around grenades. Many brave Korean infantrymen died trying to stop the fearsome tanks, some 90 soldiers of the 1st Division alone being lost using these desperate tactics. The helplessness of the South Korean infantry at the hands of the North Korean tanks led to tank panic which weakened the ROK defenses.

After overcoming the remaining defenses of the ROK 7th Infantry Division, the NKPA 107th and 109th Tank Regiments met up at Uijongbu on 27 June which served as the staging point for the main attack on Seoul. Following the capture of Seoul on 28 June, the brigade moved to the Han river. In panic, the main railroad bridge over the river was blown up prematurely with heavy ROK traffic still on it, killing several hundred soldiers and civilian refugees. This catastrophe left significant elements of the ROK army trapped on the northern side of the Han river, along with most of their heavy equipment. After overcoming the ROK troops on the northern bank of the river, the NKPA

engineers needed several days to lash together improvised means for the tanks to cross the downed sections. The first tanks were not across until 3 July.

The 109th Tank Regiment took part in the capture of the port of Inchon on 3 July. On 5 July, the NKPA made their first encounter with American troops, when 33 T-34-85 tanks of the 107th Tank Regiment engaged elements of Task Force Smith of the 24th Infantry Division near Osan. US 105mm howitzers began engaging the tanks with high-explosive ammunition which killed many NKPA infantry riding the tanks Soviet-style, but failed to stop the tanks themselves. The US infantry fired on the tanks with two 75mm recoilless rifles, which proved useless. A 105mm howitzer battery waited until the tanks were within 500 yards and managed to knock out the two lead T-34-85 tanks using HEAT ammunition. However, there were only six HEAT rounds which were quickly exhausted, and the normal high explosive ammunition proved ineffective in stopping the remaining tanks. The battalion's main anti-tank weapon, the 2.36 inch bazooka, was equally ineffective, and no fewer than 22 rockets were fired without effect. The Task Force managed to disable only four tanks before being forced to retreat. Task Force Smith lost about 150 men, over a third its strength in the one-sided battle.

On 9 July, the 105th Armored Brigade (recently given the honorific title of 105th Seoul Tank Division) reformed near Suwon for further operations. Up to this time, the brigade had only lost two tanks to mines and two more in the fighting with Task Force Smith. The NKPA's heaviest armor losses occurred on 28 June when seven of the brigade's 16 SU-76M assault guns were knocked out by counter-battery fire from the 105mm howitzers of the ROK 6th Infantry Division near Chunchon. By now, the United Nations operation to thwart the NKPA invasion was beginning to take shape, but air actions against the armored spearheads were ineffective in early July, contrary to pilots' claims.

US Tanks Arrive

The four US Army divisions with the Eighth Army in Japan (7th, 24th, 25th Infantry and 1st Cavalry) each had an attached tank battalion (the 77th, 78th, 79th and 71st Tank Battalions respectively). But because of the narrow roads and delicate bridges in Japan, they in fact only had a single company from each battalion equipped with the M24 Chaffee light tank. These were rushed to Korea.

The first of these to see combat was Company A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion which supported the 21st Infantry Regiment of the 24th Infantry Division at Chonjui on 10 July. They were hopelessly outclassed by the Korean T-34-85s; they scored several direct hits on the T-34-85s, only disabling one. Two M24s were lost in the first day of fighting when their poorly maintained gun recoil systems malfunctioned, wrecking the guns and the turrets. Three more M24s were lost the following day. The M24 was vulnerable, not only to the T-34's 85mm gun, but also the NKPA's 14.5mm PTRS anti-tank rifles, which the American tankers labeled "buffalo guns". The poor performance of the M24 against the T-34-85s demoralized the crews, and the tankers proved to be very skittish in supporting the infantry in the ensuing battles for the Kum river line, even without NKPA tank opposition. By August, only two tanks of the original 14 in the company survived. The other two tank companies also were roughly handled: Co. A, 71st Tank Battalion lost most of its tank by early August, and Co. A, 79th Tank Battalion suffered several unequal skirmishes with T-34s. US Army commanders soon lost confidence in tank support and pleaded instead for better anti-tank weapons. Supplies of 3.5 inch "super-bazookas" were airlifted to Korea in mid-July.

NKPA infantry from the 3rd and 4th Divisions overcame US resistance along the Kum river without tank support in mid-July. The 107th Tank Regiment of the NKPA 105th Armored Brigade moved across the river around 16 July to support the assault on the surviving elements of the US Army

24th Infantry Division at Taejon. Taejon was the first time that the 3.5 inch bazooka was available and they were first used in action on 20 July, knocking out two T-34-85 tanks in the first encounter. Through the course of the day, tank hunting teams destroyed or disabled several more T-34-85s in the streets of Taejon, including a team led by the divisional commander, Maj. Gen. William F. Dean. Dean took the personal lead in a tank hunting mission to convince his troops that the new bazookas could destroy the previously invincible T-34 tanks, especially in the close confines of a town. Altogether, the NKPA lost about 15 tanks in the fighting for Taejon, their heaviest armored losses to date. Seven of these were due to bazookas and five were caused by air attacks. Nevertheless, the 24th Infantry Div. suffered about 30% casualties in the fighting with the NKPA tanks and infantry, and Taejon was lost.

The Pusan Perimeter

With the fall of Taejon on 20 July, the US Army and South Korean forces pulled back over the Naktong river to the Pusan perimeter at the southeastern-most tip of Korea to await further UN reinforcements. The main source of North Korean tank casualties in late July was due to the poor road conditions in the mountainous country leading towards the Pusan perimeter. The tanks began to show the first signs of wear caused by the intensive actions of the previous weeks of fighting and by the harsh terrain; some tanks had to be cannibalized for parts. More heavy tank losses were suffered by the brigade at Kumchon on 23 July when several tanks were destroyed in mine fields and several more were knocked out by bazookas during a bloody battle with the "Wolfhounds" of the 27th Infantry. It was the first time an NKPA armored attack had been stopped by US infantry and proved the effectiveness of the new 3.5 inch bazookas in the hands of determined troops. The minefields and infantry resistance delayed the NKPA tank advance, and on 28 July, the UN air attacks finally

began to have effect when at least five tanks were knocked out by rocket and napalm attacks. By early August, the operational strength of the brigade was down to only about 40 T-34-85 tanks, with many others waiting by the roadside for repair. Although the air attacks did not destroy the number of tanks claimed, they did disrupt the supply of spare parts and replacement tanks.

The air attacks led the armored brigade to change its tactics, and large scale movements were confined to night to avoid the UN aircraft. Attempts to cross the Naktong River were rebuffed at least twice by air attacks which claimed another five tanks. In the meantime, another US tank action took place. Three broken down M26 Pershing tanks had been discovered at the Tokyo Ordnance Depot and were quickly refurbished and shipped to Korea. They formed a Provisional Tank Platoon alongside a small number of M24 Chaffees. They were used in attempts to defend Chinju from the NKPA 6th Infantry Division on 28 July, but they broke down during the fighting and were abandoned.

In the wake of the disastrous pummeling of Task Force Smith in early July, the US Army began mobilizing tank units to rush to Korea. The US Army was a hollow force since its World War 2 demobilization, and only three tank battalions were adequately prepared: the 6th Tank Battalion (an M46 Patton unit), the 70th Tank Battalion (the tank training battalion at Ft. Knox with M4A3 and M26 tanks) and the 73rd Tank Battalion (M26 Pershing tanks from the infantry school at Ft. Benning). The 70th Tank Bn. obtained its M26 tanks by removing the monument tanks from pedestals around the base, and obtained two more companies of M4A3E8 tanks from Rock Island Arsenal. (The M4A3(76)W HVSS was known by the troops in Korea as the M4A3E8, and it is referred to as such here.) Besides these, the Eighth Army in Japan managed to scrape together 54 rebuilt M4A3E8 Shermans and form them into the 8072nd (later the 89th) Medium Tank Battalion. The

first company from this unit arrived in Korea in late July and was committed to combat on 2 August 1950. The Marine Corps activated Company A of the 1st Marine Brigade, and reequipped them with M26 Pershing tanks (they had been equipped with M4A3(105) howitzer tanks). These units began to reach the embattled Pusan perimeter at the southeastern tip of the Korean peninsula in early August 1950.

The first medium tank unit in action was the 89th Tank Battalion, equipped with three companies of M4A3E8s and one of M26 Pershings; the surviving M24s of the 79th Tank Battalion were attached as a fifth company. The battalion's introduction into combat was not auspicious. A tank company of M4A3E8 Shermans led an attack near Masan on 2 August, and were ambushed by a NKPA 45mm anti-tank platoon which knocked out eight tanks in quick succession. This unit saw no tank fighting in early August but was extensively and successfully used in support of local infantry actions. As US Army and Marine tank strength began building up in the Pusan perimeter, the UN forces began to conduct a more vigorous defense, including some local counterattacks. The tide was beginning to turn in favor of the UN very slowly and the US Army was regaining its confidence in its tank units.

The NKPA 105th Armored Brigade finally made it across the Naktong river and took part in the attacks on Taegu on 12 August 1950. The 2nd Battalion of the 109th Tank Regiment was wiped out by severe UN air attacks on Chonjui around 13 August, with the regiment losing 20 tanks and having several more damaged. The surviving tanks of the 105th Armored Brigade was dispersed, and supported NKPA infantry assaults on the towns of Taejon, Yongdong, Kumchon, Waegwan, Taegu, and Yongchon, all along the Pusan perimeter, rather than being concentrated for one major blow. Finally, on 15 August, an independent tank battalion with 21 T-34-85 tanks from the tank training center arrived to make up for the losses of the previous weeks of

fighting. During the river crossing of the Nakdong near Waegwan, the brigade was again subjected to merciless air attack.

US Marine tanks were the first to defeat the invincible NKPA T-34-85s. On 17 August 1950, a column from 107th Tank Regiment began an attack on defensive positions of the 1st Marine Provisional Brigade near Waegwan in the Nakdong Bulge of the Pusan perimeter. The lead T-34 was hit by bazooka fire, which it shrugged off. On rounding the bend, it came face-to-face with a Marine M26 Pershing. The North Korean tankers were overly confident, having dominated US tanks in earlier battles. They seemed to think that the M26s were M24s, and recklessly charged forward. The Marine tank fired two 90mm rounds into the lead tank in quick succession, causing a massive fire. One crewman leaped from the tank but was gunned down. The second tank was hit repeatedly by recoilless rifle and bazooka fire, but continued to fire its own weapons. Two Pershings fired several rounds into it, at which point it finally exploded. The third T-34 was pummeled in similar fashion. The final T-34 retreated and was knocked out by an air attack. The reputation of American tanks began to rebound after this brief engagement. The T-34-85, once dreaded as invincible, was now derisively called the "Caviar Can".

The next heavy tank fighting took part further north near Tabudong where the 27th Infantry Regiment was attacking to relieve pressure on Taegu. Company C, 73rd Tank Battalion was assigned to support the infantry. On the night of 27 August, the NKPA began their last major tank action down the valley. Tracer fire came barreling down the road through the center of the valley, leading to its nickname, "the Bowling Alley". The NKPA attack was roughly handled by the infantry and Pershing tanks, and in two days of fighting, the North Koreans lost 13 T-34-85 tanks and five SU-76M assault guns.

After the tank skirmishes at Tabudong and Waegwan, the NKPA was very reluctant to commit their surviving tanks in any significant

number. Furthermore, it became increasingly risky for the NKPA to mass armor, as the UN air forces had become much more prevalent over the Pusan perimeter and tanks were a high priority target.

The fighting showed the weakness of the North Korean tankers. While their training was adequate when faced with poorly equipped infantry or light tanks, they were not well trained for sustained tank combat. Their gunnery was slow and inaccurate. Strangely enough, many North Korean tankers began by firing a high explosive round. Even if it hit the Pershing, which as often as it did not, it did nothing against the Pershing's thick armor. The Pershings were able to destroy the T-34-85s with a single shot because of better gunnery training, but often used more than one round to make certain that the Korean tank was burning. Most US tank losses during the Pusan perimeter fighting were due to encounters with the 45mm Model 1942 anti-tank gun or mines.

The North Korean infantry, almost as poorly equipped as the South Korean Army so far as anti-tank weapons was concerned, would often try to overwhelm tanks by massed infantry attack, hoping to pry open a hatch. It was a costly tactic, but sometimes worked, especially at night or in close terrain. Some taste for the fighting typical of the Pusan battles can be gathered from an account of the first tanker to win the Medal of Honor in Korea.

On 31 August 1950, the NKPA attempted a breakthrough over the Nakdong river near Agok. A small US infantry detachment holding the sector was supported by two M26 tanks from Co. A, 72nd Tank Battalion, a M19 40mm GMC and an M3A1 half-track. The tanks blew up a bridge the Koreans were trying to build across the river, but about 500 NKPA infantry managed to wade across the river. They overran the half-track, and forced the US infantry to withdraw. The M19 withdrew with the infantry to a second defensive line while the two Pershings held the NKPA infantry back with machine gun fire. One M26 had to be abandoned due to

mechanical problems, leaving only the single M26 commanded by Master Sgt. Ernest Kouma.

Kouma manned the .50 cal machine gun, and fought off several attempts by Korean infantry to climb on the tank using his pistol and grenades. The close-quarter fighting lasted for nine hours by which time Kouma had been wounded twice. By early morning, the tank had run out of machine gun ammunition, so Kouma ordered the tank to withdraw. The Korean infantry began clambering onto the tank, trying to pry open hatches. The only way to knock them off was to use the turret traverse to swing wildly from side to side. On its eight mile retreat back to US lines, Kouma's Pershing expended the last of its 90mm ammunition destroying three Korean machine gun positions. On reaching his company resupply area, Kouma tried to resupply his tank with ammunition and return to the fight. He was forcibly evacuated for medical attention. When US forces retook the area later, they found that Kouma's tank had killed about 250 NKPA infantrymen. Sgt. Kouma was subsequently decorated with the Medal of Honor.

The Inchon Landings

By September, the UN forces in the Pusan perimeter had gained numerical superiority over the NKPA forces besieging them. The US Army and Marine Corps had about 400 tanks in the perimeter, while the 105th Armored Brigade was down to only about 40 tanks. However, the area outside the perimeter was very mountainous, and the UN commander, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, opted for a bolder approach to turn the tide against the NKPA. In a brilliant and risky gamble, an amphibious force designated X Corps was prepared to land behind the main NKPA forces at the port city of Inchon. Inchon was located on the Yellow Sea coast, slightly to the west of Seoul. MacArthur hoped that the sudden appearance of a strong UN force positioned at Seoul deep in the rear of the main NKPA forces would cause them to go into headlong retreat.

The X Corps assault force for the Inchon landing was the 1st Marine Division, supported by the 1st Marine Tank Battalion, followed by the US Army 7th Infantry Division with its 73rd Tank Battalion. The landings were conducted beginning on 16 September often using LVT-3 amtracs, since the coastal mud in the beach area was too thick for the Marines to wade ashore from landing craft. The assault landed in three areas, in the early morning at Green Beach on Wolmi-do peninsula, and in the afternoon at Red Beach and Blue Beaches on either side of Wolmi-do. The ferocious tides in the approaches to Inchon and the limited resources did not permit a simultaneous landing.

The only North Korean armor encountered in the initial landing at Wolmi-do was a BA-64 armored car which was blown apart by a 90mm round from a Marine M26 Pershing. The main assault at Red Beach and Blue was conducted by the 1st Amphibian Tractor Bn. and the US Army 56th Amphibious Tank and Tractor Bn. which included some LVT(A)4 for fire support.

The North Koreans had been warned by Soviet intelligence of the planned landing based on information from British intelligence agents who were spying for the USSR. However, Kim Il-Sung ignored the warnings and concentrated instead on renewed attacks on the Pusan perimeter. The North Korean leader expected that a collapse of the Pusan perimeter was imminent, and that the amphibious assault on Inchon and Seoul would be preempted by the need to rescue surviving US forces at Pusan. Instead, the US forces in Pusan were on the verge of breaking out, and Seoul was only weakly defended.

The NKPA only had the inexperienced 42nd Mechanized Regiment (18 T-34-85s) in the Seoul area, but once news arrived of MacArthur's assault, the 105th Armored Brigade was ordered to withdraw back north, and the 43rd Tank Regt. (10-15 T-34-85s) was transferred from Wonson. A company of less than ten T-34-85 tanks of the 42nd Mech Regiment tried to intervene during the late

afternoon of 16 September, but three were knocked out by air strike, and three more by Marine M26s. On 17 September 1950, six T-34-85 tanks, their crews blissfully munching on their breakfast, stumbled into the 5th Marines who were moving on Kimpo airbase. The Marines were supported by M26 Pershing tanks of the 1st Marine Tank Battalion, and all six T-34s were destroyed in a storm of recoilless rifle and tank fire without loss to the Marines. A short time later, the burning NKPA column was passed by Gen. MacArthur, who commented "Considering that they're Russian, these tanks are in the condition I want them to be!" Most of the tanks in Inchon and Seoul were destroyed by Marine bazooka teams. A total of 24 T-34-85s were destroyed from 16 to 20 September, thereby eliminating the 42nd Mech Regt. Another 12 T-34-85s from the 43rd Tank Regt. were knocked out on 25 September, including at least seven by Marine tanks. The main task of the Pershings in the Seoul fighting was in providing close fire support during the street fighting. The NKPA had erected barricades across most of the major streets, and the Marine tanks were used to help break up these defenses in savage street fights.

On 20 September Co. B, 73rd Tank Bn. supporting a drive by the 31st Infantry ran a gantlet of North Korean defenses along the Suwon road, losing one M4A3E8 to Korean tank fire, but destroying eight, mostly entrenched, T-34-85 tanks. A portion of the unit later repulsed a North Korean tank attack near the airstrip, destroying three T-34-85 tanks after they had ran over four scout jeeps. In the final tank action by the battalion near Seoul, Co. A entered Suwon from the western side of the town, and knocked out four more T-34 tanks. The column, in support of Task Force Hannum, continued south towards Osan, where four more T-34-85s were encountered and destroyed.

Relieving the Pusan Pocket

While MacArthur was landing at Inchon, plans were underway to begin a breakout operation by the

Eighth Army from the Pusan perimeter. The North Koreans had reinforced their forces opposite the pocket with the 16th and 17th Armored Regiments prior to the beginning of another major offensive on 1 September. However, this offensive, although very costly to both sides, failed to crush the Eighth Army.

The Eighth Army counteroffensive was scheduled for a day after the Inchon landings, 17 September in order to take advantage of any panic that might set in amongst the North Korean troops after word arrived of the Inchon landings in their rear. A broad offensive began with the aim of convincing the NKPA to retreat. As news of the Inchon landings arrived at NKPA headquarters, a general retreat by the NKPA northward began as expected. The NKPA force, which had been cocky and victorious only weeks before, had been severely worn down by their early September offensive against the increasingly strong US forces. By the time that the retreat order was issued, many units were shattered and demoralized. The units were ordered to fall back on Seoul, but many soldiers instead headed into the mountainous country along the eastern coast, realizing that the US forces were less likely to follow them there. By this time, the 105th Armored Brigade was already withdrawing based on previous orders. There were large numbers of T-34-85 tanks that had broken down during the initial assaults. Many of these had functional weapons, so they were moved into defensive positions along key routes in the hopes of acting as mini-pillboxes to stop the UN advance.

The commander of the Eighth Army, Gen. Walton Walker, had served with George Patton in World War 2, and decided to use a mobile force to spearhead the link-up between the Pusan perimeter forces and MacArthur's X Corps amphibious invasion force in Seoul. He chose a battalion from the 7th Cavalry Regiment reinforced with seven M4A3E8 tanks from C Company, 70th Tank Battalion. The spearhead was called Task Force

Lynch. The task force set out late on the night of 21 September with the objective of seizing the Nakdong-ni ferry crossing site 35 miles north of Tabu-dong. The motorized force moved very quickly against light resistance. With tanks in the lead, the column was finally halted at Naksong-dong when the two lead M4A3E8 tanks were knocked out by an emplaced 76mm gun. The gun position was overcome by infantry, and shortly afterwards, Task Force Lynch encountered the rear elements of the retreating NKPA forces. An enemy ammunition train soon fell victim to tank fire, and a further 20 artillery pieces, 50 ex-US Army trucks and four T-34 tanks were captured. A NKPA infantry column was caught in the middle of the Nakdong river and decimated. The success of the Task Force in taking its objective led Gen. Walker to order it to continue its lightning advance to the northwest. At the lead was the 3rd Platoon, Co. C, 70th Tank Battalion under Lt. Robert Baker. Baker's column linked up with the X Corps' 73rd Tank Battalion near Suwon around midnight, 26/27 September, the first contact between the Pusan perimeter troops and MacArthur's invasion force. Task Force Lynch had crossed 102 miles in only 11 hours. Baker's tank platoon, however, had lost contact with the other elements of Task Force Lynch which were still behind him. Later that night, Task Force Lynch was attacked by about ten T-34-85 tanks. The remaining tanks from 2nd Platoon, Co. C, 70th Tank Battalion moved forwards from the rear of the task force to engage them. Two Shermans were quickly knocked out by dug-in T-34-85s, but the third M4A3E8 moved forward and destroyed both. Another T-34-85 got into the infantry truck column and crushed about 15 jeeps and trucks before finally being blasted by a 105mm howitzer at a range of 10 yards. Four other T-34s were destroyed by bazooka teams. That afternoon, the two surviving T-34-85s were chased through the village of Habung-ni and Pyongtaek where they were finally hit in the rear by tank fire from the 70th Tank Battalion. This encounter was one

of the largest tank-vs.-tank engagements during the break-out.

One of the most unusual tank encounters took place several weeks later near Songhyon-ni when Co. B, 70th Tank Battalion was supporting the 8th Cavalry. Around dawn on 12 October, a M4A3E8 leading a column was disabled by a mine. Much to the surprise of the crew, a T-34-85 appeared out of the early morning fog and rammed the stalled Sherman tank. The two tanks were so close, that neither could fire its gun. The M4 crew put their tank into reverse and backed off far enough to traverse the gun and fire a single shot into the T-34-85 at point-blank. The round struck the T-34's barrel, splitting the tube down the center and preventing it from firing. A second US tank pulled alongside and destroyed the T-34-85 with a point-blank shot into the turret. Moments later, two more T-34-85s appeared out of the fog, but were quickly destroyed at a range of only 50 yards by the M4A3E8 and a neighboring M26 Pershing tank. Later in the day, the column destroyed five more dug-in T-34-85s in the approaches to Songhyon-ni.

The 6th Tank Battalion saw very little tank fighting until 22 October when Co. A encountered eight T-34-85s and one SU-76M and knocked them all out in a brief and one-sided firefight. Eight other T-34-85s were found shortly afterward, all abandoned by their crews.

The Tank Fighting Summarized

The heaviest tank-vs.-tank fighting of the Korean war took place from August to October 1950. There were hardly any encounters with North Korean armor after November 1950. Although the North Korean armored force had substantially outnumbered the US forces at the beginning of the war, by August 1950, the US forces began to enjoy the numerical advantage. A total of 258 T-34-85s were available at the beginning of the war. US intelligence assessments later estimated that about 150 more tanks were provided from Soviet stocks during the war. By the end of 1950, US tank units in Korea had received 1,326 tanks consisting of 138 M24 Chaffees, 679 M4A3E8

Shermans, 309 M26 Pershings and 200 M46 Pattons.

A 1954 operational survey concluded that there had been 119 tank-vs.-tank actions during the war, 104 involving US Army tank units and 15 involving the 1st Marine Tank Battalion. On the US side, the tanks that were involved were the M4A3E8 in 59 actions (50%); M26 in 38 actions (32%), M46 in 12 actions (10%) and M24 in 10 actions (8%). Most of the tank battles were on a very small scale, and only 24 engagements involved more than three North Korean tanks. A total of 34 US tanks were knocked out by North Korean T-34-85 tanks or SU-76Ms, of which only 15 were totally lost; the rest were repaired and returned to action. The US tanks knocked out 97 T-34-85 tanks, and claimed a further 18 as probables. Not surprisingly, the M24 proved the most vulnerable to enemy tank fire. Most M24 tanks hit by the T-34-85's 85mm gun were lost, with several crew members also being lost as well due to the thin armor. At least four M24s were knocked out by T-34-85s.

The T-34-85 was generally less able to resist hostile tank fire than the US tanks. It could be penetrated by any of the US medium tanks, while it had difficulty penetrating the M26 or M46 tanks. Furthermore, if penetrated, the T-34-85 crew was far more vulnerable to injury. A US inspection of T-34-85s found that 75% of the T-34-85 crews were killed when hit by tank fire, compared to only 18% of US medium tanks hit by T-34 fire. This was in part due to the US tanker's practice of hitting a tank repeatedly until it burned to make certain that it was knocked out. In general, the study concluded that the T-34-85 was an excellent tank, but that the North Korean crews were not as well trained as their American opponents. The US lost 136 tanks in 1950, the main source of loss (69%) was due to mines. In terms of performance, the T-34-85 and the M4A3E8 were on fairly equal terms so far as basic performance was concerned. Although the M4A3E8 had a gun of smaller caliber, the widespread availability of HVAP ammunition made it quite capable

of penetrating the T-34-85s armor. Likewise, the T-34-85 had no particular problem penetrating the armor of the M4A3E8 at normal combat ranges. Because of the mountainous and hilly terrain in Korea, most engagements were fought at very close ranges. The M26 and M46 were a clear overmatch for the T-34-85. They enjoyed thicker armor and heavier firepower. In many respects, they were more comparable in size to the Soviet IS-2M Stalin heavy tank, rather than the T-34-85 medium tank.

A total of 239 T-34-85 wrecks and 74 SU-76M wrecks were counted by UN intelligence in October 1950, surprisingly close to the figure of 258 T-34-85s initially supplied by Russia. Of these, 102 were attributed to aircraft (60% of these to napalm) and 13 to bazookas. The Air Force claimed to have destroyed 857 tanks in air attacks, several times the number actually present, and about eight times higher than actual results. Many of the others were too badly damaged to determine the cause. The aircraft figures may be a bit high, as some were probably knocked out by bazookas or mines before being hit by air strikes. The figures for losses to bazookas is obviously too low.

The opinion of US tankers towards the various types of US tanks changed in 1951 once the T-34-85 threat disappeared. The M24 was universally disliked because of its thin armor and weak firepower. But after the autumn of 1950, its use was confined to scouting, the role for which it had been intended. The M26 was not a particularly popular tank due to serious automotive shortcomings. The M26 was often described as being "lousy" and some tankers thought it was "a complete flop". It was powered by the same engine as the M4A3E8, but was ten tons heavier, and its transmission was poor. Those tankers with experience in the M4A3E8 preferred it over the M26 since it was very reliable, easy to maintain, and far more nimble to drive. Its automotive performance in the hilly Korean countryside was much superior to the M26, and its

firepower was perfectly adequate against the T-34. The M46 cured many of the problems encountered with the M26 due to the introduction of a new engine and cross-drive transmission, and so was the preferred version of the two tanks. Still, some M4 units continued to prefer the ever dependable Sherman.

Chinese Intervention

By October 1950, the NKPA was in full retreat on both the east and west coasts of Korea. While some Korean units would still hold and fight tenaciously, the NKPA was a defeated force. Under Douglas MacArthur's direction, the UN forces were pressing hard for the Yalu river which separated Korea from China. It was a serious strategic miscalculation, as the Chinese were concerned that the US Army would carry its attack over the border (as was suggested by MacArthur at various times). The Chinese military leadership was reluctant to become involved in the war, as its main priority at the time was to launch an amphibious assault against Taiwan to end the civil war by defeating the remainder of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Chinese armed forces. The Korean war would divert them from this mission. The Chinese Fourth Field Army detached the XIII Army Group under the command of Peng Te-huai and moved its units to the Yalu. Three armies (38th, 39th, 40th) moved against the US Eighth Army on the west coast of Korea, while the 42nd Army moved against the ROK and US Marine forces on the eastern coast near the Chosin reservoir. Counting the two armies in reserve, the XIII Army Group had 18 divisions in or near Korea, which had been detected by US aerial reconnaissance.

The XIII Army Group was not the cream of the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). The best units had been reserved for the planned operations against the remaining Nationalist Chinese forces on Taiwan. The infantry divisions that made up the Peoples Volunteer Army (PVA) were poorly equipped, even by Chinese standards. Hardly one soldier in three had a small-

arm, mostly captured American small arms from defeated Nationalist Chinese units, and two-thirds were armed only with grenades. Artillery support was modest, and tank support was non-existent. The Chinese PLA tank force at the time was entirely dependent on American tanks captured from the Nationalist Chinese or Japanese tanks provided by the Soviet Union. These were concentrated opposite Taiwan. What little tank support the Volunteer Army received was from the surviving North Korean force. Many of the units of this army were former troops of the Nationalist Chinese forces, in some cases nearly entire divisions. What the Volunteer Army lacked in quality, it made up in quantity.

Prior to the intervention, China held negotiations with the Soviet Union, requesting assistance in the war. Stalin was reluctant to enter the war for fear that it would broaden into a general war in which the nuclear-armed US forces would inevitably win. Stalin granted Mao Tse-tung's request for air support, dispatching the first MiG-15 fighter units. The Soviet general staff also toyed with the idea of providing an armored force to stiffen the poorly equipped Chinese army. The plan was to deploy a tank army consisting of two or more tanks divisions and a mechanized division to spearhead the intervention. In the end, Stalin vetoed the idea, but agreed to send ten Soviet tank regiments to defend four major cities in Manchuria and near the Korean border in China which would confront any US force that crossed into China. This armored force included the entire production run of the 200 new IS-4 Stalin heavy tanks, the most modern Soviet heavy tank in service. Stalin also agreed to build up a Chinese armored force using Soviet equipment, including both T-34-85 and IS-2M tanks.

On 31 October 1950, the 8th Cavalry, being supported by Co. B, 70th Tank Bn, was subjected to a punishing barrage of 120mm mortars and 132mm Katyusha multiple rockets. At midnight, the unit was struck near Unsan by a

massed infantry attack of Chinese troops of the 115th and 116th Divisions. Losses in the unit were heavy including 10 M26 tanks, 3 M4A3E8s, 1 M32A1 recovery vehicle, and nearly a battalion of infantry. China had entered the war. On the afternoon of 1 November 1950, A Co., 6th Tank Bn. engaged seven North Korean T-34-85 tanks near Chongdo-dong, knocking them all out. It was the last major tank engagement of the Korean war, and the furthest north that the US Eighth Army would reach in the Korean War.

On the east coast of Korea, the ROK Army had continued to move up the coast. By the time that the Marine Corps 1st Division was landed at Wonson on 27 October, the North Korean forces in the area had already been routed. The Army 7th Infantry Division landed at the port of Hungnam where they captured a trainload of SU-76M assault guns recently arrived from the Soviet Union. The main objective of the Marine force was the Chosin (Changjin) reservoir area, which contained the main North Korean hydroelectric power system. The ROK 3rd Division, already fighting towards Chosin, encountered the Chinese 5th Regiment, 8th Army on 25 October. Chinese prisoners captured on 29 October (mostly ex-Nationalist troops) said that there were large Chinese forces in the area. Within days, a major assault by the Chinese forces, called the First Phase Offensive, struck UN forces all through North Korea. The Chinese counter-offensive lasted through 6 November, and as suddenly as they had appeared, the Chinese mysteriously disappeared back into the hills. The first phase of the Chinese offensive had succeeded in halting the forward advance of the UN forces.

MacArthur planned to renew the UN attack northward again on Friday, 24 November. Unknown to US intelligence, the Chinese Volunteer Army had been reinforced by the IX Army Group, bringing Chinese strength in the Korean frontier area to 31 infantry divisions. In response to the UN offensive, the Volunteer Army

launched its 2nd Phase Offensive on 25-26 November with catastrophic consequences on the US forces. The 25th Infantry Division, supported by the 89th Tank Bn, was defeated southeast of Unsan, the 2nd Infantry Division (supported by the 72nd Tank Bn.) was forced into headlong retreat, and the ROK II Corps in eastern Korea was routed. By early December, the whole of Eighth Army was in retreat through Pyongyang on the west coast, while on the east coast, the X Corps' Marine 1st Division were trapped in the Chosin reservoir area. To the weary American soldiers, the retreat became known as the great "bugout". The Marines succeeded in withdrawing from the Chosin area, in a legendary operation described best by the memorable remark "Retreat hell, we're just attacking in a different direction." After linking up with the Army 7th Infantry Div. near Hagaru, the X Corps was evacuated from the ports at Wonson and Hamhung back to Pusan where the units had arrived less than six months before.

The Chinese Volunteer Army launched its 3rd Phase Offensive on 31 December 1950, forcing back the 8th Army to the Han river and capturing Seoul yet again. This was the high point of the Chinese advance. Reinforcements began to be sent to Korea, and the Eighth Army was able to stabilize its defenses south of the Han river. By mid-January 1951, the Eighth Army had 670 tanks. These included 45 British tanks (Centurion Mk. 3s with the 8th Hussars and a single squadron of Churchill Mk. VIIIs with C Sqd., 7th RTR). American tanks included 64 M24 Chaffees, 317 M4A3E8 or other Sherman variants (such as M4A3 (105) howitzer tanks); 50 M26 and M26A1 Pershings and 97 M46 Pattons. The Army staff in Washington was doubtful of the value of armor in Korea, and refused requests from the theatre for additional tank battalions. In fact, the tanks proved extremely valuable in the Eighth Army counteroffensive which defeated the Chinese 4th Phase Offensive in February 1951 leading to the crossing of the Han river (again) and the liberation of Seoul (again).

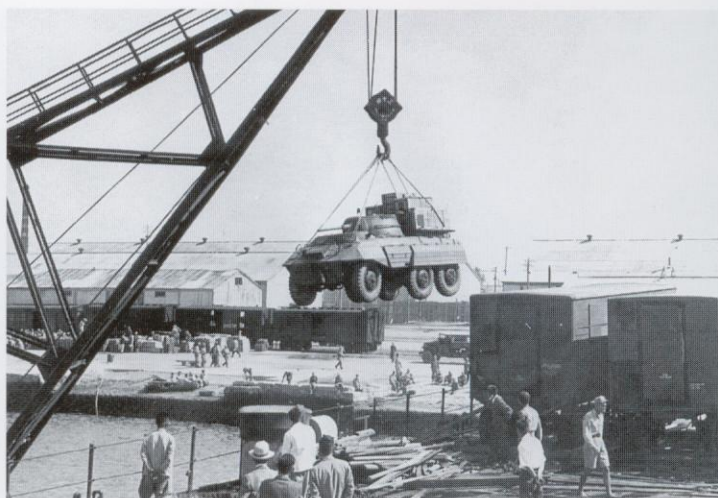
By April 1951, the UN forces managed to push the Chinese back to the 38th Parallel where the war had started, and the Chinese 5th Phase Offensive was eventually stopped and defeated.

By May 1951, the US government had decided against any attempts to push beyond the 38th Parallel, and a long series of protracted peace negotiations were eventually begun. This did not mark the end of the fighting, only the end of the highly mobile type of warfare that had characterized the first nine months of the war. With the beginning of the bloody stalemate, both sides hunkered down for the grim "war of the outposts". Most subsequent operations involved local efforts by either side to eliminate key defensive positions of the opposing forces. There was fierce fighting along the Kansas Line, the Jamestown Line, around "the Hook", "the Punchbowl", "Heartbreak Ridge" and "Pork Chop hill". Under the new conditions, the importance of armor in Korea diminished. Tanks saw extensive use through the end of the war in 1953, but mainly as dug-in artillery support. Tanks were useful in the hilly terrain since their accurate weapons could be used to blast enemy bunkers from across valleys and ridges. New tactics were developed to exploit this firepower, including the use of special tank roads and prepared positions which allowed the tanks to rapidly move from sector to sector where they were most needed. But Korea became an infantry and artillery war after the spring of 1951 until the war ended in 1953.

The photos here are all from official US sources. The majority of the photos are from the US Army Signal Corps, and were obtained from the Defense Audio Visual Agency, the US National Archives, and the Military History Institute (Carlisle Barracks). Most of the other photos were obtained from the US Marine Corps photo collection, now housed mainly at the US National Archives in Washington, DC. In addition, other photos were located in the US Air Force and US Navy collections, also in the National Archives.



During the US Army occupation of southern Korea after World War 2, several US units had tank support like this M4A3 (105) 105mm howitzer tank that was attached to the 31st Infantry Regiment in Seoul in January 1948. These were all withdrawn by 1949. The circular insignia on the bow transmission housing is the red and black insignia of the 7th Infantry Div. to which the unit belonged.



The US was reluctant to arm the new ROK Army with tanks for fear it would encourage the Syngman Rhee government to invade the north. Its only armored strength consisted of 37 M8 armored cars attached to the cavalry regiment of the 1st Capitol Division in Seoul. Here, one of the M8s is delivered from a US freighter at Inchon on 11 October 1949.

The 1st Capitol Division also had a small number of M3 half-tracks, this particular example in action on 7 July 1950 after the outbreak of the Korean War. This has a locally improvised mount for the .50 cal machine gun, consisting of a standard truck ring mount attached to an added armored pulpit. Close inspection of the serial number on the open engine hood will reveal the prefix "KA" - Korean Army, instead of the original "USA" - US Army.



The first US tanks to arrive in Korea were M24 Chaffee light tanks from the Co. A's of several tank battalions stationed in Japan. This is probably a M24 of Co. A, 79th Tank Bn., dug in south of Seoul on 9 July 1950.



An M24 Chaffee of the 25th Recon Co. 25th Infantry Division waiting for orders during the initial fighting in Korea in July 1950. These light tanks were completely ineffective against the better armored and better armed NKPA T-34-85 tanks.

The first tank-vs.-tank action of the Korean War took place when Co. A, 78th Heavy Tank Battalion supported the 21st Infantry Regt., 24th Infantry Div. at Chonjui on 10 July 1950. Two of the three Chaffees were lost when their poorly maintained recoil systems failed, and their recoiling guns smashed the turret. Rebel's Roost is believed to have been the surviving tank from this incident.



The 24th Infantry Regiment, a segregated black unit, scored one of the few early US Army victories on 21 July when it recaptured Yechon. The unit had no tank support, but used machine-gun armed jeeps like these for scouting and fire support. The jeep has a World War 2-style frame on the front to protect the crew from wire traps strung across roads. The markings on the jeep bumper show this to be a jeep from Co. H.

Most infantry divisions deployed to Korea had an anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) battalion consisting of eight M15A1 combination gun motor carriages (CGMC) like this one, and eight M16 multiple gun motor carriages (MGMC). These were sometimes used in their intended role of air defense, as in the first few weeks of the war, the NKPA was supported by Yak-9 fighters and IL-10 Shturmovik attack aircraft. This vehicle belonged to the 24th AAA Bn. of the 24th Infantry Division.



The standard US Army infantry support weapon in the Korean War was the M20 75mm recoilless rifle. This was often used in encounters with North Korean tanks, but was seldom effective as its high explosive projectile had little armor penetrating power.



An infantry team demonstrates the new M20 3.5 inch rocket launcher during training on 20 July 1950. This bazooka could penetrate the armor of the T-34-85, except for the thicker front turret armor. It usually took several hits to score a penetration, and even then, the energy of the warhead was often so spent that little internal damage was done to the T-34-85 tank.



At the outset of the war, US infantry units in Korea were armed only with the M18 2.36 inch rocket launcher, seen here to the right. It proved totally ineffective against the T-34-85. In early July, the first supplies of the larger M20 3.5 inch "super-bazooka" (seen here to the left) were airlifted to Korea, and first used in the battle for Taejon on 20 July.



The first combat use of the M20 bazooka took place on 20 July 1950 at Taejon. In order to inspire his demoralized troops and convince them that the new bazooka really worked, the commanding officer of the 24th Infantry Division, Maj. Gen. W. F. Dean actually led a bazooka team through the streets of Taejon to hunt down NKPA tanks. This T-34-85 tank, number 424, was the victim of his bazooka team. It was photographed in August, after the town had been recaptured by the US Army.

A recon company from the 24th Infantry Division on the move on 21 July 1950. The lead vehicle is a M8 armored car, still widely used in US reconnaissance units in Korea. The column is probably in retreat, as the turret is traversed to the rear.



Three M26 Pershing tanks were found in Tokyo depots and hastily shipped to Korea. They were used to form a provisional tank company, but in their first engagement at Chinju against the NKPA 6th Infantry Division on 28 July, all were lost due to mechanical problems. This photo was taken of the unit during training at Taegu on 20 July 1950 and there is an M24 Chaffee and an M8 armored car in the background.



The crew of an M24 Chaffee of the 25th Recon Co. searches the horizon warily on 24 July 1950 looking for the lead elements of the NKPA. At this point, US forces were withdrawing into the mountainous area of southeastern Korea to await further reinforcements.



An M16 MGMC of the 25th Infantry Division on 27 July 1950 being used for divisional air defense. This weapon consisted of an M45D quad .50 cal machine gun mount in the rear of a M3A1 half-track.



A M15A1 CGMC crew protects a supply area of the 25th Infantry Division in southeastern Korea on 24 July 1950. Due to the occasional appearance of North Korean aircraft, these weapons were usually retained in the divisional rear for air defense. In later months, with the North Korean air force destroyed, they were more commonly sent forward to provide direct infantry fire support.



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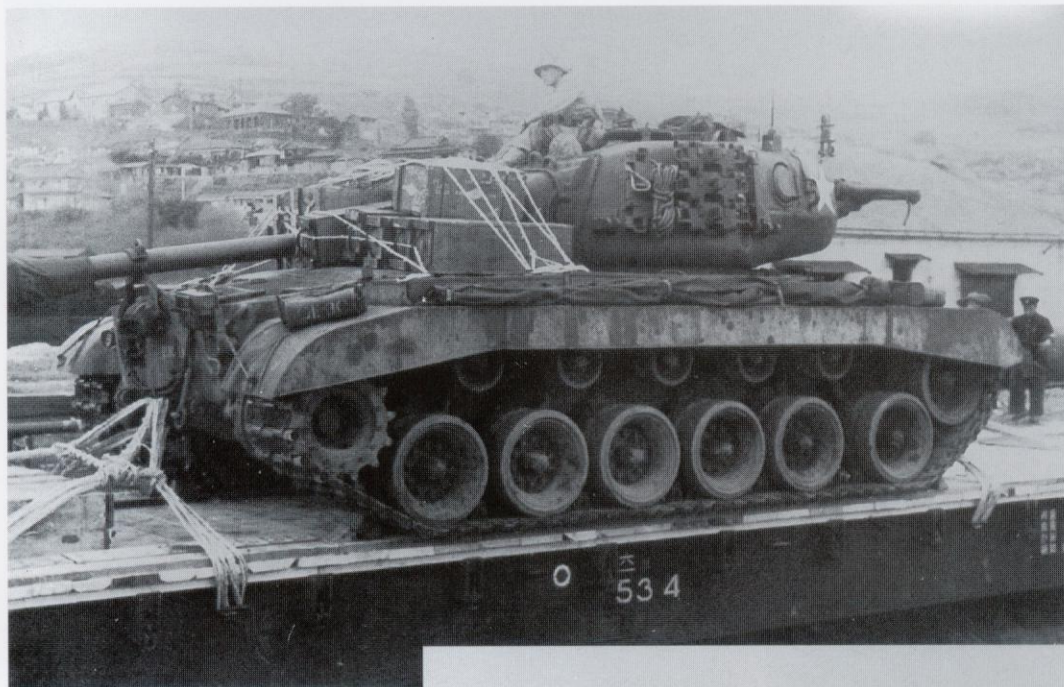
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The poor performance of the M24 Chaffee in Korea led to urgent calls for medium tanks. The Tokyo Ordnance Depot scoured the Pacific region for M4 tanks, and managed to scrounge several dozen from Okinawa, Hawaii and several islands. They were refurbished by the depot before being shipped off to Korea with the 89th Tank Battalion.



This shows the modified M4A3E8s prepared by the Tokyo Ordnance Depot. Several of the small changes include the addition of a stowage rack for a spare bogie wheel on the right turret front, and a spare drive sprocket ring on the right hull side. This also gives a good view of the official markings pattern for US Army M4 tanks.



The first US tanks began to arrive at Pusan in early August 1950. Here, a US Marine Corps (USMC) 1st Marine Tank Bn. M26 Pershing tank sits on a flat-car on 3 August 1950 before being prepared for combat.

The first medium tank unit to see extensive combat was the 8072nd Tank Battalion, later renamed the 89th Tank Battalion. This M4A3E8 of the battalion is seen in a staging area in the Pusan perimeter before being committed to action. Notice the technical changes incorporated on these Shermans by the Tokyo Ordnance Depot.





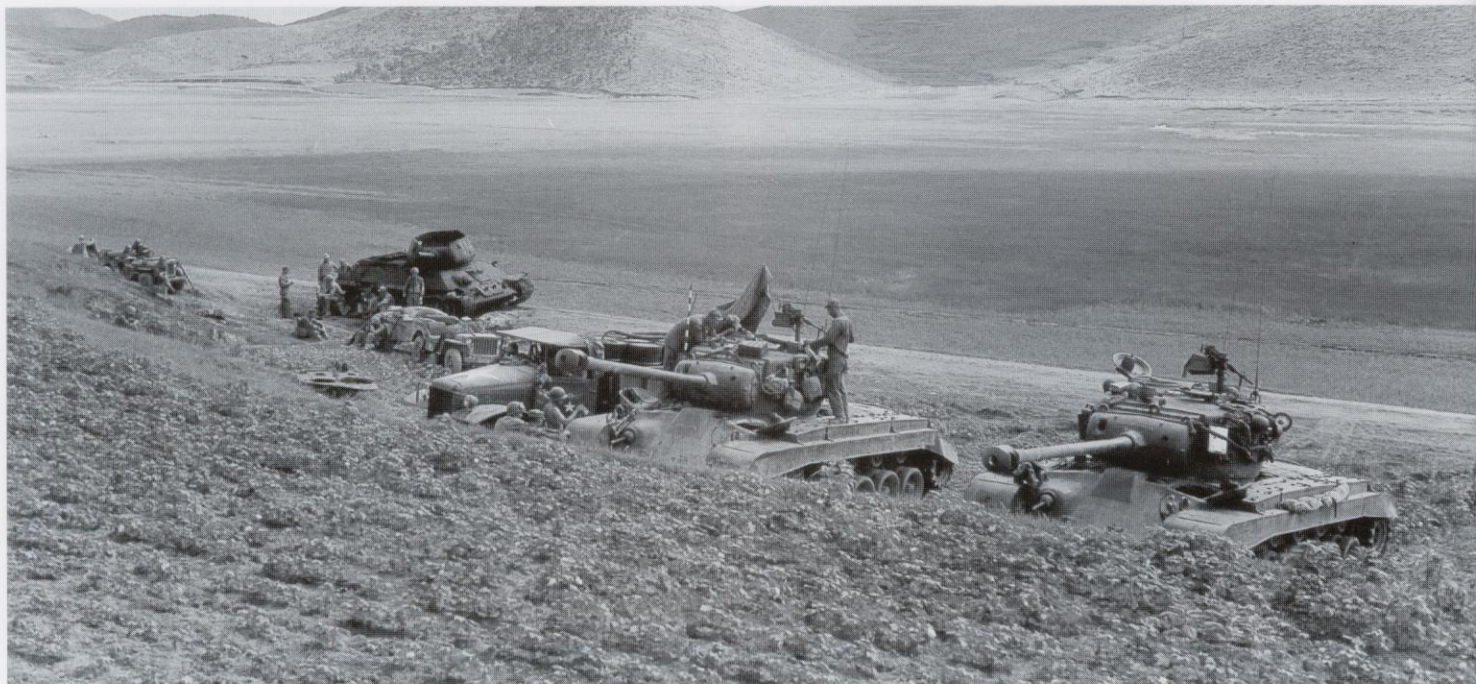
A M4A3E8 of Co. B, 89th Tank Battalion on a mission in support of the 25th Infantry Division in the Pusan perimeter on 9 August 1950. The bumper codes at the rear of the vehicle are not in the standard pattern and may have been a deliberate attempt at disinformation.



A NKPA SU-76M assault gun of the 308th Armored Battalion, 105th Armored Division, knocked out by the 35th Infantry along the road to Chinju on 12 August 1950. The vehicle is in sorry shape, with its left track broken, its gun out of battery in full recoil from damage to its recuperator and the engine evidently causing problems with the engine housing open. It had probably broken down before being knocked out by the US infantry.



The crew of a M15A1 CGMC of the 25th AAA Bn. prepare to move into action on 13 August 1950 during the fighting in the Pusan perimeter. The rear bumper markings on the M15A1 include a hand-painted warning to keep 15 yards behind during convoy transit, as the tracked configuration of the M15A1 allowed it to brake much more suddenly than conventional trucks.



Shortly after destroying several T-34-85s of the 107th Tank Regiment, these two M26 Pershings of the Marine 1st Tank Battalion are in hull down positions along a road in the Naktong Bulge area. In the background is the T-34-85 tank of the battalion commander of the 2/107th Tank Regiment, tank #314, destroyed during the fighting. The turret roof, which was blown off from an internal ammunition fire, can be seen to the left of the Marine truck, about a hundred feet away from the tank.



These T-34-85s were victims of the first encounter with M26 Pershings of the 1st Marine Tank Battalion on 17 August 1950. Several tanks of the 2/107th Tank Regiment began an attack on defensive positions of the 1st Marine Provisional Brigade near Waegwan in the Naktong Bulge of the Pusan perimeter, but were destroyed by tank and bazooka fire in a short engagement. The nearest T-34-85 has suffered a catastrophic internal ammunition fire which blew off the turret roof. This photo was probably taken a few hours after the encounter when the tanks were pushed off the road by the Marines.

The crew of a Marine M26 Pershing of the 1st Marine Tank Battalion chow down near their tank during a pause in the fighting in the Naktong Bulge on 16 August 1950. The vehicle tactical number, 14, can be seen in yellow paint immediately forward of the open shell ejection port on the turret side. The tanks were usually numbered with the company letter, followed by the platoon number and an individual tank number, but as only Co. A was deployed, the company letter was omitted.





A M24 Chaffee sits as a roadblock on the way to Degu (Taegu) during the Naktong Bulge fighting on 17 August 1950. With medium tanks finally arriving, the M24s were retained for patrol work. The crewman on the ground is armed with the standard tanker's self-defense weapon, the M3 "grease-gun".



Dust kicks up in the air as a tank column from the 1st Marine Tank Battalion supports the 5th Marines near Yongsan on 18 August 1950. The nearest tank is a M4A3 (105) 105mm howitzer tank, usually used in headquarters companies for fire support. It has been fitted with a M1 bulldozer blade. In front is a M26 Pershing.



A SU-76M burned out along the road to Taegu in Waegwan sector of the Pusan perimeter during the fighting on 20 August 1950 by the 27th Regimental Combat Team (RCT), 25th Infantry Division. The vehicle has suffered an ammunition fire in the rear compartment which blew debris out of the rear, and set the four rear roadwheels on fire.

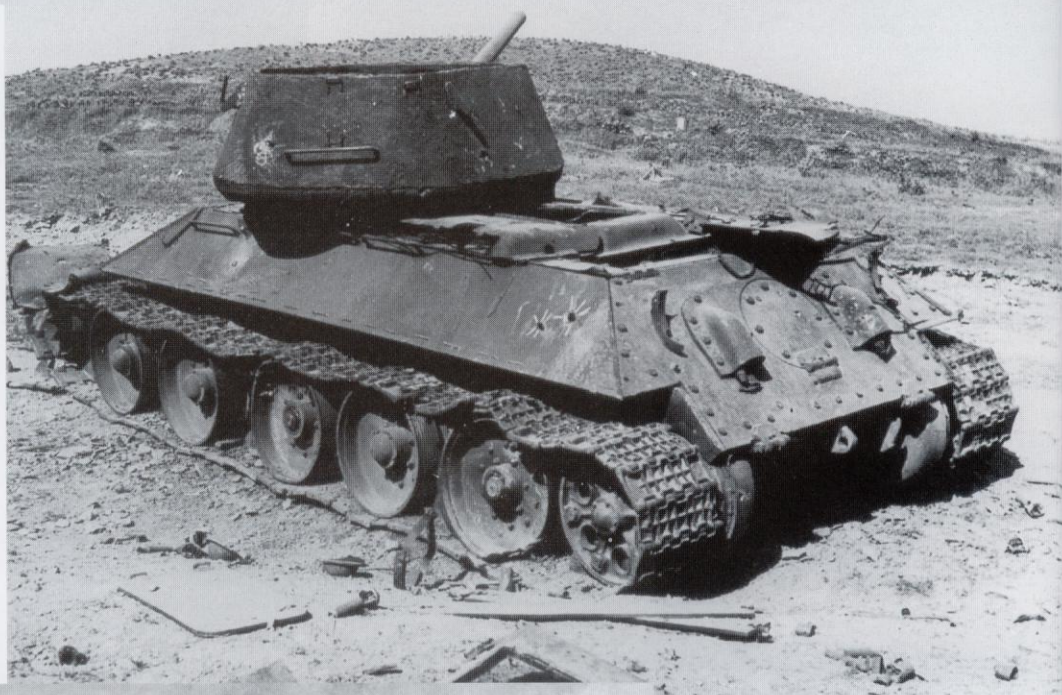


M26 Pershing tanks of Co. B, 89th Tank Bn. are used for improvised artillery support of the 29th Infantry Regt. on 25 August during the fight for the Pusan perimeter. This was not an approved tactic for tanks. The tanks have been driven up earth ramps to increase their maximum elevation.



An Army M26 Pershing tank named "Margaret" moves up in the Pusan perimeter on 27 August 1950. The M26 was the most common US Army heavy tank in Korea in 1950, though it was gradually replaced with the M46 Patton in subsequent years.

A T-34-85 sits completely burned out on 28 August 1950 near the Nakdong River. At least three penetrations have been marked in chalk by an inspection team, and from the size of the holes, the tank was probably hit by HVAP ammunition from the 76mm gun of a M4A3E8. The impact has completely blown off the usual external fuel tank, and the ammunition fire in the turret has blown off the roof.



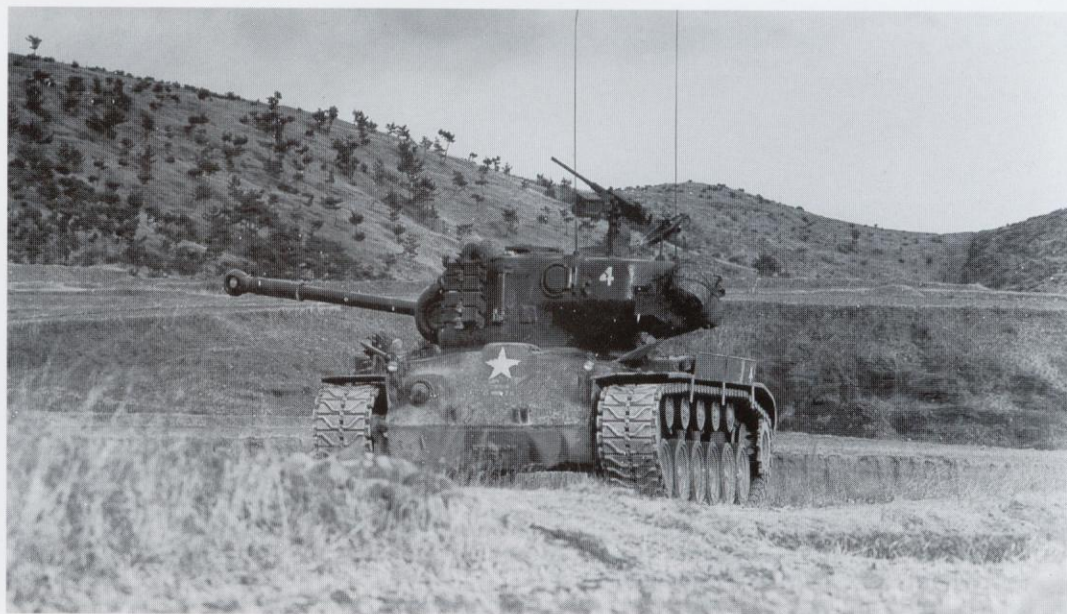
Due to intense secrecy, photos of these counter-battery radar sections were seldom permitted. This field artillery observation battalion was photographed moving forward in the Pusan perimeter on 29 August 1950. The M5A3 high speed tractors are towing a counter-battery radar in the lead, and its generator trailer behind. These new radars could detect and track enemy artillery projectiles, allowing the US field artillery to locate and destroy Korean artillery positions with considerable accuracy. This was the first time such radars were used in combat.

A M26 Pershing of the Marine 1st Tank Regiment along the Pusan coast during training. Notice that by now, the Marines are adding stowage racks for machine gun ammunition boxes along the fender. This was due to the heavy consumption of .50 and .30 cal machine gun ammunition when fighting NKPA infantry at close quarters.



A Marine M26 Pershing of the 1st Tank Battalion during operations on 2 September 1950.

A M26A1 Pershing of the Marine 1st Tank Battalion. The M26A1 had several improvements and can be distinguished by the new single baffle muzzle brake of the M3A1 90mm tank gun. Notice that the dust skirts have been removed, and the center sections repositioned to form a side stowage rack for ammunition boxes. This became a standard field improvisation on M26 and M46 tanks in Korea.





M26 Pershings of the 1st Marine Tank Bn. in action on 3 September 1950. An observer is on the ground between the two tanks, but he would evacuate his position before they fired due to the concussion of the muzzle blast. On 3 September, the Marine tanks took part in fighting against the new NKPA 16th Armored Brigade, knocking out several T-34-85s near Yongsan.



A Marine M26 Pershing advances into Yongsan during the fighting there on 3 September. The M26s knocked out four T-34-85s west of the town in the fighting and found a fifth abandoned after the day's fighting.



Two T-34-85 tanks of the NKPA 16th Armored Brigade, knocked out by Marine M26 Pershings during fighting near Yongsan on 3-4 September are inspected by Marines of Co. B, 1/5th Marines. The nearest tank has taken a hit on the front side of the turret which evidently led to a vehicle fire which burned the tank out. Notice that the intense heat of the fire has burned the rubber rims off the road-wheels.



Marine and Army tanks set up a defensive perimeter for a supply area near Yongsan during the fighting there on 3 September 1950. The M4A3E8 Sherman in the background is probably from the 72nd Tank Bn. which took part in the action in support of neighboring US Army units.

Two SU-76M assault guns spearheaded a NKPA attack against the US Army 23rd Infantry on 3 September 1950 during the Naktong offensive. This one was knocked out by a 3.5 inch bazooka, but the other escaped. This vehicle carries a tactical marking (#211) on the superstructure side, and still has its original Soviet production serial number (481206) above the commander's visor on the superstructure front.



A M26 Pershing of 72nd Tank Bn. crowded with troops of the 9th Infantry, 2nd Infantry Division, moves forward during the fighting at Yongsan on 3 September 1950. These units had been involved in the heavy fighting around Yongsan since 1 September, the start of the NKPA's final Naktong offensive.

A M16 MGMC of the 82nd AAA Bn. knocked out in the fighting around Yongsan. Notice the large penetration on the hull side which set the vehicle on fire. During the Yongsan fighting, the M16s were used to provide fire support against NKPA infantry.



A T-34-85, probably of the 16th Armored Brigade, knocked out in the Nakdong fighting on 4 September 1950. This vehicle is numbered 800, which suggests that it was the tank of the brigade or regimental commander. The number can barely be seen, as the fire that engulfed the tank charred it.



Another T-34-85 of the 16th Armored Brigade knocked out near Yongsan by an air attack, probably napalm, which has completely burned the tank. The tank is numbered 819, and had a small star behind the number. This particular style of T-34-85 turret with two split turret roof vent domes is typical of post-war production types from one of the Soviet tank factories.

The ferocity of fighting along the Nakdong led even support units to arm their vehicles. Here, an Army M32 armored recovery vehicle in the Taegu Ordnance Depot has been fitted with a M20 75mm recoilless rifle instead of the usual .50 cal machine gun.



A M16 MGMC crew of the 92nd AAA Bn. supporting the 1st Cavalry defends a bridge south of Tabu-dong on 6 September 1950. By this stage of the war, the North Korean air force had been destroyed, and anti-aircraft vehicles like these were used to provide ground fire support. Although the heavy fire power of the quad .50 cal machine guns was very effective against massed infantry, the lightly armored, open configuration of the half-track made them very vulnerable to close-in infantry attack.

The 73rd Tank Battalion's M26 Pershing tanks were moved to the Pusan docks on 10 September 1950 to prepare them for the planned assault on Inchon, scheduled for 15 September. Here, the crews of Co. A dry their laundry prior to loading aboard landing ships.





The Marine 1st Tank Bn. began being withdrawn to the Pusan docks around 14 September for preparations for the Inchon landing. Here, the battalion takes part in some of the final missions before its departure.

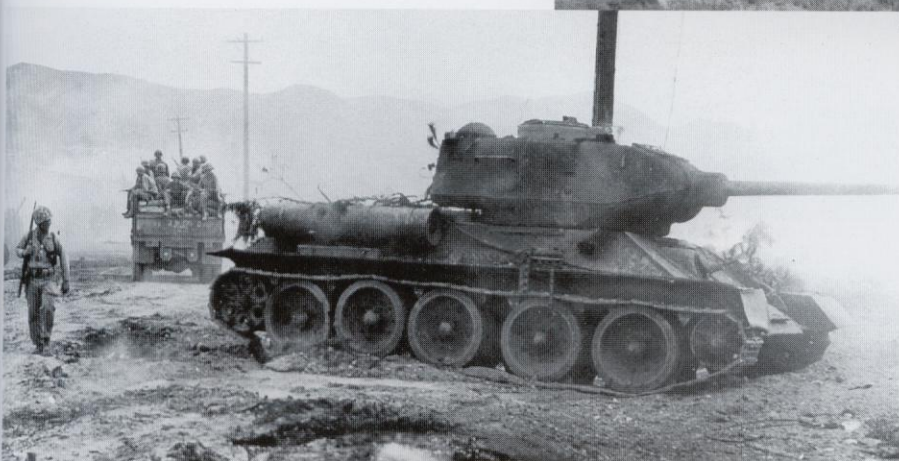


A Marine 1st Tank Battalion M4A1 (105) howitzer tank is well camouflaged with thatch on the outskirts of Andong during the September Naktong fighting.

A LVT-3 amtrac of the Marine 1st Amphibian Tractor Bn. heads towards Blue Beach 2 at Inchon during the amphibious landing there on 16 September 1950. The side markings (1A) indicate the embarkation group, and the color of the side bands (blue, green or red) indicate the beach assignment.



A M4A3 (105) howitzer tank of Co. A, 1st Tank Battalion on Green Beach, Wolmi-do peninsula in Inchon harbor on 16 September. The landing detachment consisted of two dozer tanks, six M26 Pershings, one flamethrower tank and a M32 ARV and were landed from three LSUs at 0645 in the third wave of the assault to support the 3/5th Marines assault.



A T-34-85 of the 42nd Mech (Tank) Regt. knocked out in fighting with Co. B, Marine 1st Tank Battalion on 16 September 1950 near Red Beach outside Inchon. This NKPA unit had been sent from Sinuiju to Seoul in early September and had eighteen T-34-85 tanks.



M26 "B41" of Co. B, Marine 1st Tank Battalion supporting the 5th Marines during the fighting around Inchon on 17 September 1950. A careful inspection of the squad on the engine deck will reveal the whole panoply of weapons including a M20 3.5 inch bazooka, a BAR and at least one M1 carbine. This company saw most of the fighting in central Seoul.



A fine character study of the 4th platoon commander's tank, Co. E, Marine 1st Tank Bn. during a break in the fighting around Inchon on 14 September. The vehicle tactical number in yellow indicates the company, platoon and individual vehicle. The hull marking is the temporary division insignia with embarkation number painted on it preceded by TK, for the 1st Marine Tank Battalion. Notice that the loader is wearing the World War 2 pattern helmet, still standard during the Korean war.

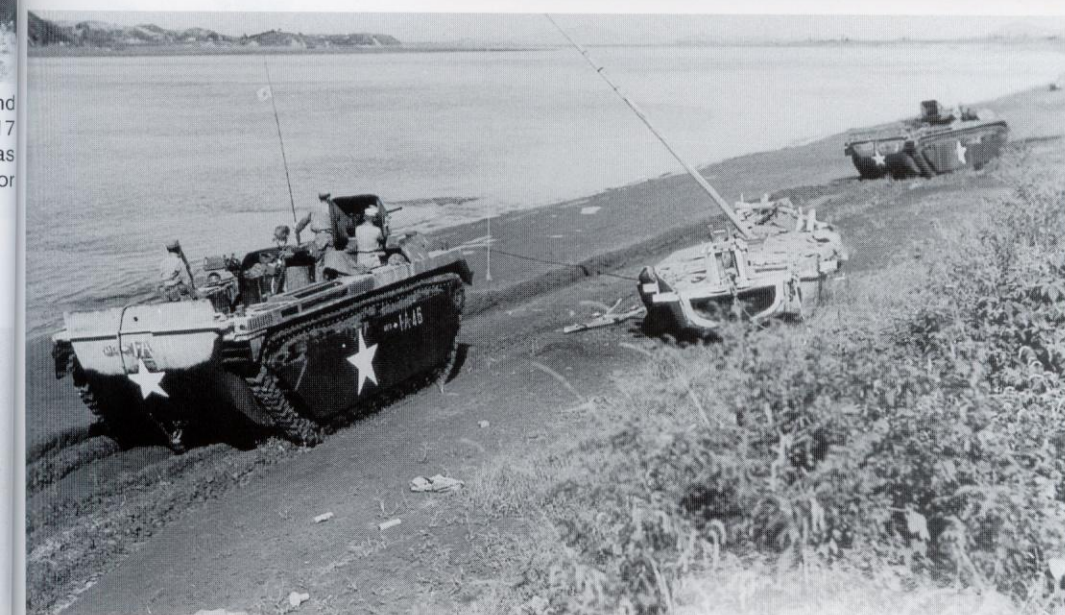


NKPA prisoners are escorted past the burned wreck of another 42nd Mech (Tank) Regt. knocked out on the Inchon-Seoul highway on 14 September 1950. Judging from the tow cables on the roadway, the tank was probably towed off the road by the tractor in the foreground to clear it for traffic.



A M26 Pershing of 1st Platoon, B Co., Marine 1st Tank Bn. leads an attack by a squad from 5th Marines on 19 September during the drive from Kimpo airbase to the Han river. It carries the TK <2> marking on the side stowage bins as well as the hull front.

B. The Han river crossing was
 19 accomplished by the US Army 56th
 ny Amphibian Tractor Bn. and the Marine
 1st Amphibian Tractor Bn. on 20
 1st September. Here, a LVT(A)-4 amtank
 ern of the Army 56th Amtrac Bn. supporting
 the 3/5th Marines crosses the Han near
 Ohaeng-ju, about 6 miles from Seoul.



A pair of Marine LVT-3 Bushmasters patrol along the Han river during the crossing operation. The thick mud along the river bank required some careful site reconnaissance so that the amtracs would not become bogged down while entering the river.

An Army LVT(A)-4 amtank watches as a Marine LVT-3 Bushmaster makes the Han river crossing on 20 September. Extensive small arms fire greeted the assault parties on the other shore.





Amtanks and amtracs continued to pour over the Han river through 21 September to support the attack on Seoul. Here group of LVT(A)-4 amtracs of the Army 56th Amtrac Bn. pass a Marine LVT-3C Bushmaster on 21 September.

A Marine LVT-3 Bushmaster supports operations by the 5th Marines on the east side of the Han river on 20 September 1950. The amtracs were frequently used to transport the assault squads in several miles from the beach, but their thin armor was not well suited to operations out of the water, and prolonged land operation could wear down the tracks.



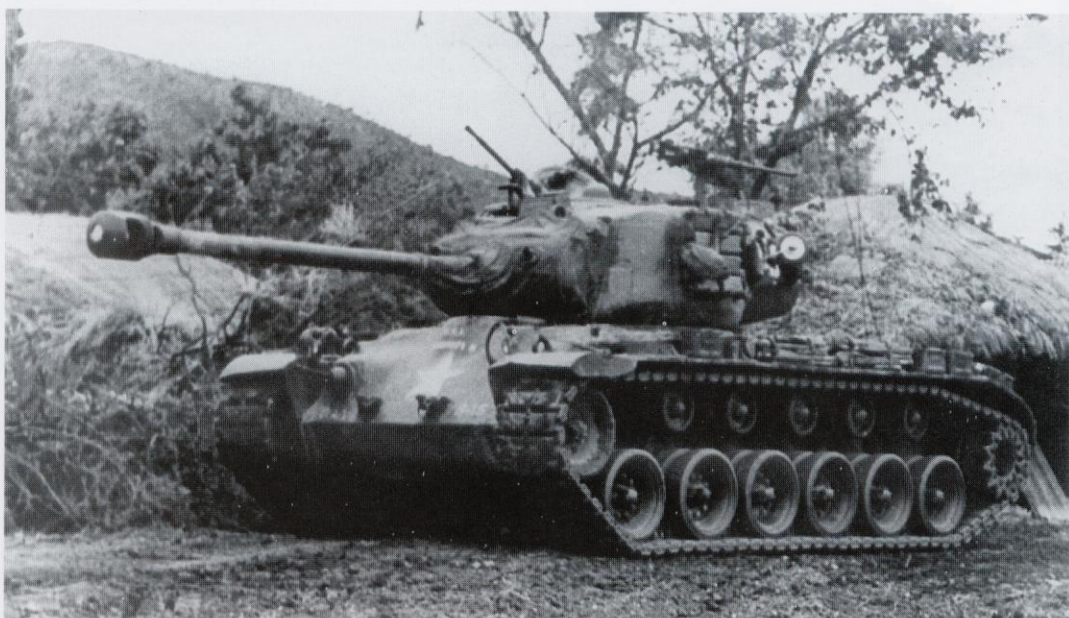
A M4A3 (105) howitzer/dozer is used to prepare approaches for the amtracs on the Kimpo side of the Han river on 20 September. Tanks were ferried over to the Seoul side of the river using bridge sections. The extensive spare track fittings on the side were intended to provide extra armor for the crew.



Co. A, Marine 1st Tank Battalion M26 Pershings move into Seoul on 26 September to provide fire support for the Marine assault. Much of the fighting in the center of Seoul, including the "battle of the barricades" was supported by Co. B M26 tanks.



A Marine M26 tank moves up to provide fire support in Seoul on 26 September 1950. This is probably a tank from Co. A, the most battle-hardened company in the battalion which had served in the Pusan perimeter battles.



While the Marine Corps 1st Division and the Army 7th Division conducted the Inchon amphibious operation, the Eighth Army in the Pusan perimeter began a breakout operation aimed at joining the X Corps at Seoul. This is a M26 Pershing of Co. B, 70th Tank Bn. in operation near Taegu on 17 September 1950. The battalion lost 7 M26 Pershings and a Sherman dozer on 17-18 September, mainly to mines, but destroyed two dug-in T-34-85 tanks.



The M45 was a 105mm howitzer tank version of the M26. Here, a M45 of the 6th Tank Battalion is crossing a ford in the Kumho tributary of the Nakdong river while supporting the 1st Cavalry Div.

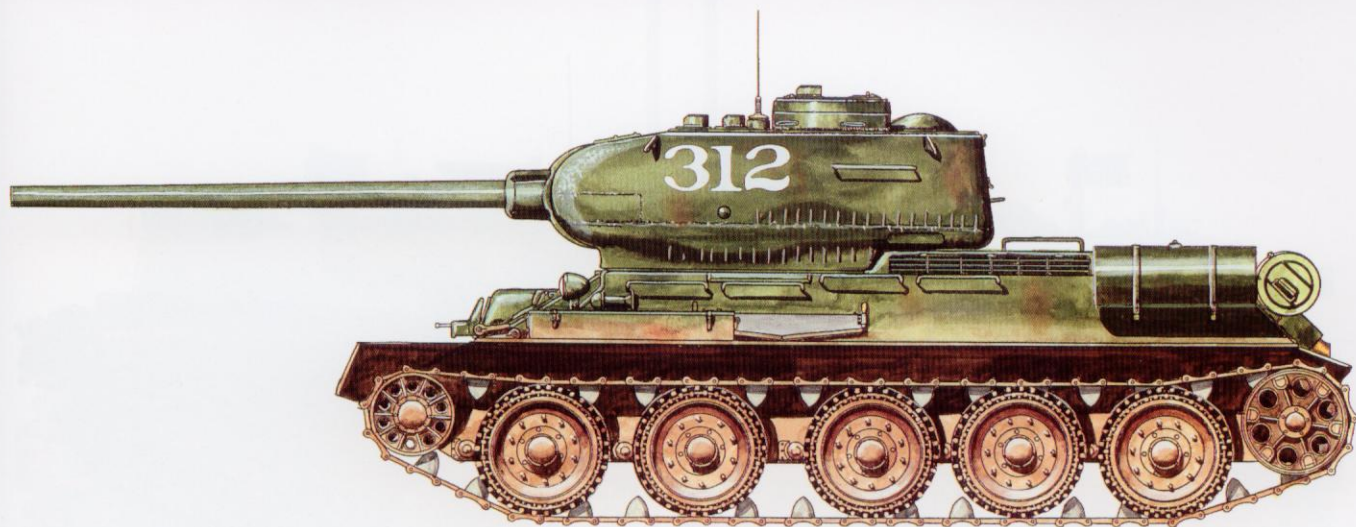


A captured Korean 45mm anti-tank gun adds its punch to a M4A3E Sherman tank during the fighting along the Nakdong by the US Army 2nd Infantry Div. on 18 September 1950.

The 45mm Model 1942 anti-tank gun was one of the most effective opponents of US tanks in Korea. Derived from the same Rheinmetall 37mm anti-tank gun used by the German Wehrmacht in World War 2, its barrel had been thickened and lengthened for better anti-armor performance. It could not penetrate the frontal armor of a M26, but the North Koreans often positioned them near the base of ridges, and gut-shot the US tanks through their thinner belly armor when they crested the hill. Some were put into use by the US Army as seen here near Nakdong with the 2nd Infantry Division on 18 September 1950.

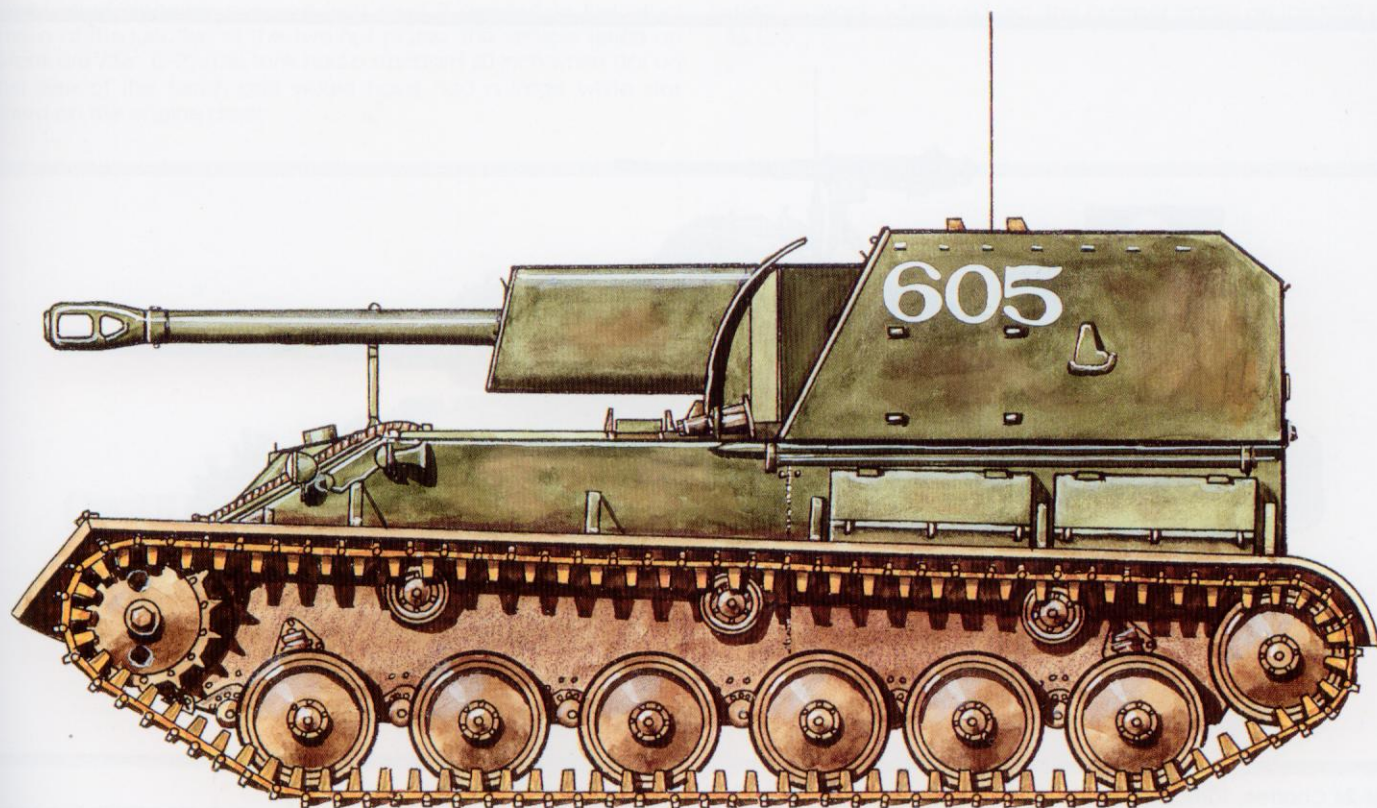


A M45 of the 6th Tank Bn. comes ashore during the Nakdong river fighting on 18 September 1950. The tanks are following a ford marked in the river by an engineer battalion that had surveyed the site earlier.



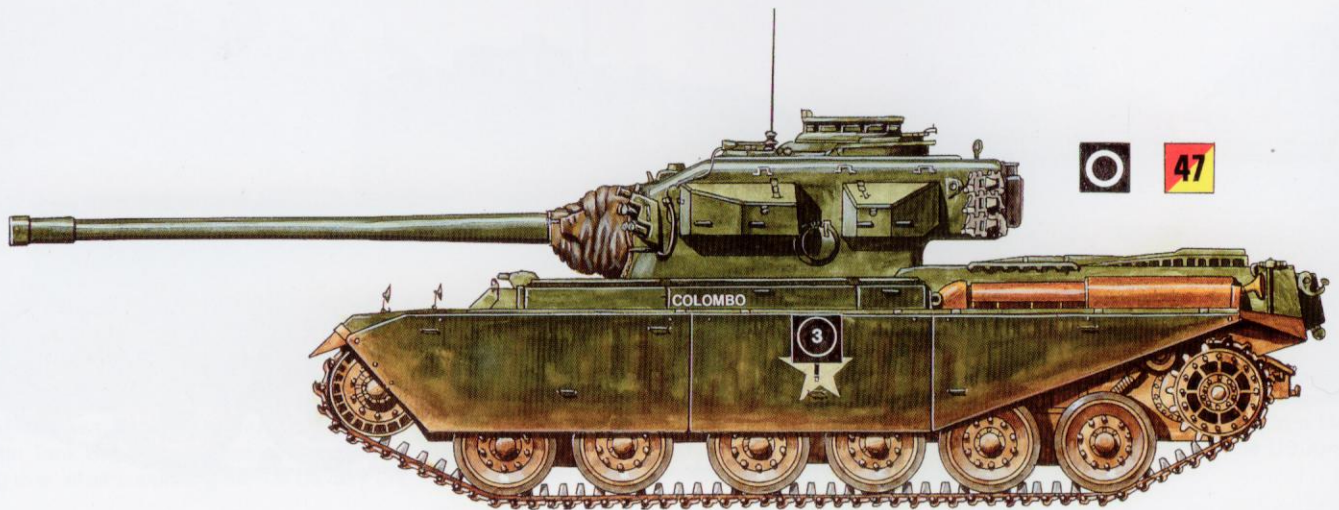
T-34-85, North Korean 109th Tank Regiment, 105th Armored Brigade, July 1950.

The three regiments of the 105th Armored Brigade numbered their tanks with three digit tactical numbers. The first number indicated the regiment, while the other two digits were applied consecutively through the unit. So tanks numbered 100-139 were from 107th Tank Regt.; 200 to 239 were from the 203rd Tank Regt., and 300 to 339 were with the 109th Tank Regt. Each regiment consisted of three battalions of 13 tanks (commander's tank and three companies with four tanks each). So the regimental commander was 300, the 1st Battalion commander was 301, the 2nd Battalion commander was 314 and the 3rd Battalion commander was 327. This particular tank was in the 3rd company of the 1st battalion. The tanks were painted in a standard overall Soviet dark green, a very dark black-green when fresh that faded to a medium green after long exposure to the sun.



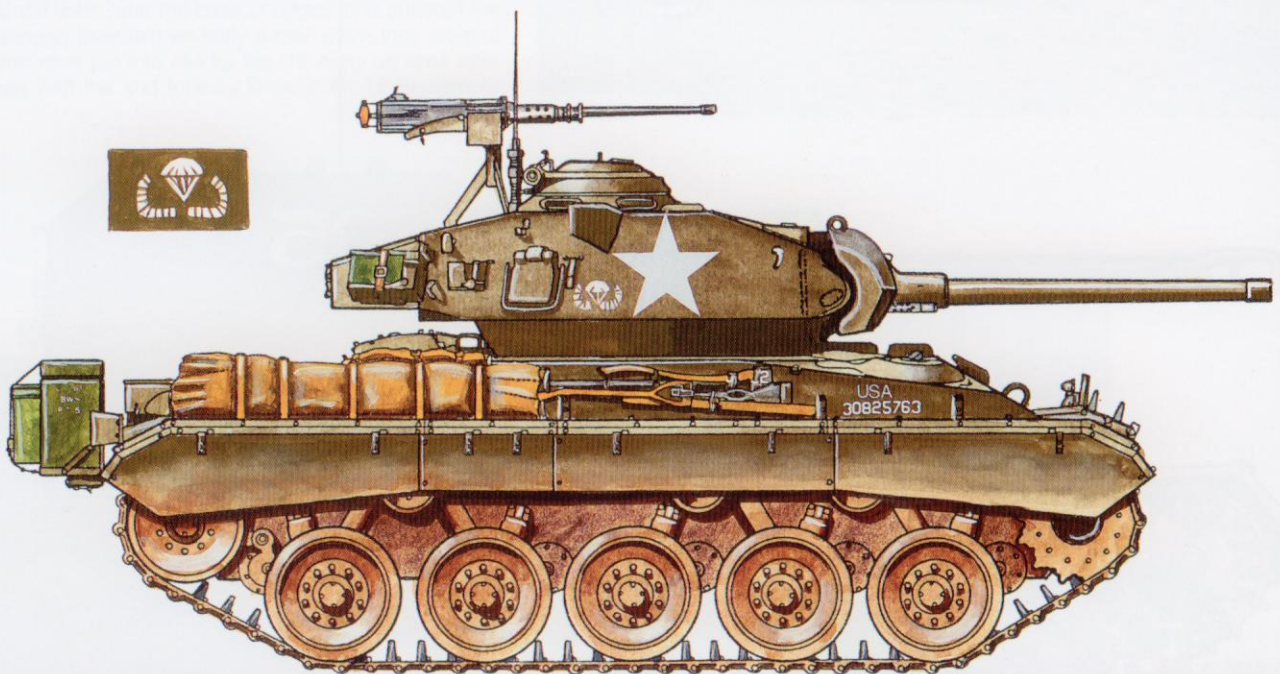
SU-76M, North Korean 308th Assault Gun Bn., 105th Armored Brigade, July 1950.

This SU-76M assault gun was finished in the standard markings of the 105th Armored Brigade. The battalion numbers were 600 to 615, and this was a vehicle of the 1st company. BA-64B armored cars of the 303rd Recon Bn. started with "7" such as "718", but the most common vehicles in the unit were ten M-72 motorcycles with sidecars and light machine guns. Like the T-34-85 shown above, the SU-76M and all other North Korean armored vehicles were finished in standard Soviet dark green.



Centurion Mk. 3, C Sqd., 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars, Han River, February 1951.

British tanks in Korea appeared in wartime khaki (like US olive drab) or in the post-war Deep Bronze Green, as seen on this Centurion. In 1951, British armor serving in support of the 29th Brigade generally carried the white allied star; in the case of the Centurion, this was carried on the side plates and on the stowage bin on the left of the glacis plate. Each tank was named beginning with the squadron letter, here "Colombo". Other names included Caughoo, Colorado, Cameronian, Colonist, etc. HQ tanks started with "H" such as "Halcyon". These names were on the side stowage bins. The tanks also carried tactical insignia marked on a black metal plate. These were attached on either hull side and on the rear of the turret. They were not permanently fixed, and so moved about a bit. In this view, the lower strap of the attachment dangles below the plate. The circled "3" indicated 3 Troop, C Squadron. On the front and rear were standard tactical signs including the red and yellow RAC flash, and the 29th Brigade insignia, a white ring on black square. The vehicle license number (O1ZR46) was carried on a black stripe at the front and rear. Photos of this tank elsewhere in the book show the precise placement of these other insignia.



M-24 Chaffee, Tank Company, 187th Airborne Combat Team, Task Force Baker, May 1951.

This M24 is in fairly standard US Army markings for the time with a few exceptions. It is painted in overall in olive drab (FS 34087). The national insignia was supposed to be painted on the bow, engine deck and turret sides; in fact the bow star was usually left off as it tended to act as an aiming point. The turret sides are marked with a standard 20 inch star. The engine deck would have a larger star, probably 36 inch diameter. The eight-digit vehicle serial, preceded by USA, is painted in white on the side of the hull superstructure near the co-driver. This particular vehicle did not have the standard bumper codes, but if used they would have been 187 ABN on the left fender and TK (vehicle number) on the right. One of the unusual details of this particular vehicle, and many other tanks in the company, was the use of a small set of stylized airborne wings painted on the turret side behind the star.



M46 Patton, Co. C, 73rd Tank Bn., Han River, February 1951.

Some of the M46 Patton tanks of the 73rd Tank Bn. were painted with this colorful tiger marking in February-March 1951. The fenders were painted to resemble the tiger's claws and paw. The vehicle bumper codes were painted on the upper edge of the glacis plate, as they often became covered with mud if painted in the usual location at the junction of the two hull plates. The vehicle serials on this tank are 73A C-22. This tank had a standard 20 inch white star on either side of the turret, and would have had a large white star painted on the engine deck.



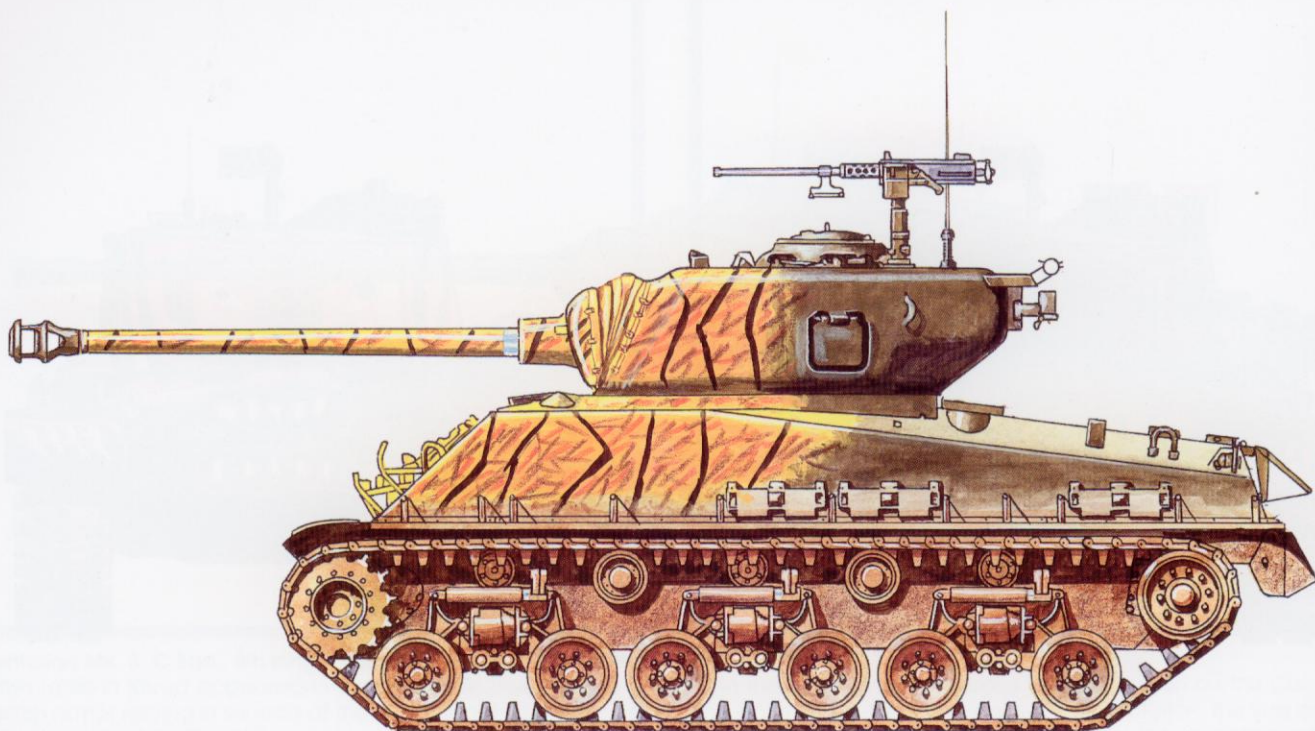
M46 Patton, Co. C, 6th Tank Bn., Han River, February 1951.

This was one of the more effective tiger faces painted on a tank during the Han offensive. This scheme is often shown incorrectly, but the plate here is based on a color photo illustration from the period. The turret and parts of the hull were painted in yellow, with stripes and detail in black, white and red. The bumper codes on this tank are 8A 6A C-3.



M46 Patton, Co. C, 6th Tank Bn., Han River, February 1951.

This side view shows the tiger illustration details as they extended down the side of the tank. The tanks in the unit often carried the vehicle tactical number in white on the turret side. The eight-digit vehicle serial was left on a patch of olive drab on the side stowage box.



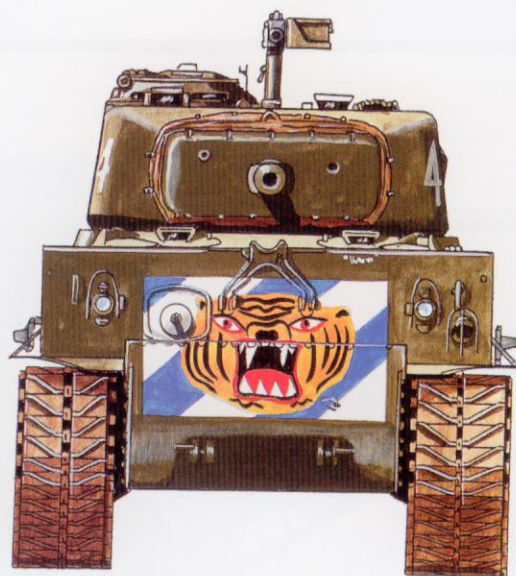
M4A3E8, 5th Infantry Tank Co., 24th Infantry Div., Han River, February 1951.

The tank company supporting the 5th Infantry's RCT had one of the most elaborate tiger schemes. On this particular tank, the color extended about half-way down the tank side; other tanks had the whole turret side and hull side covered. The pattern consisted of yellow with black stripes. The space in between was filled in with dry-brushed swatches of other colors, probably brown and olive drab.



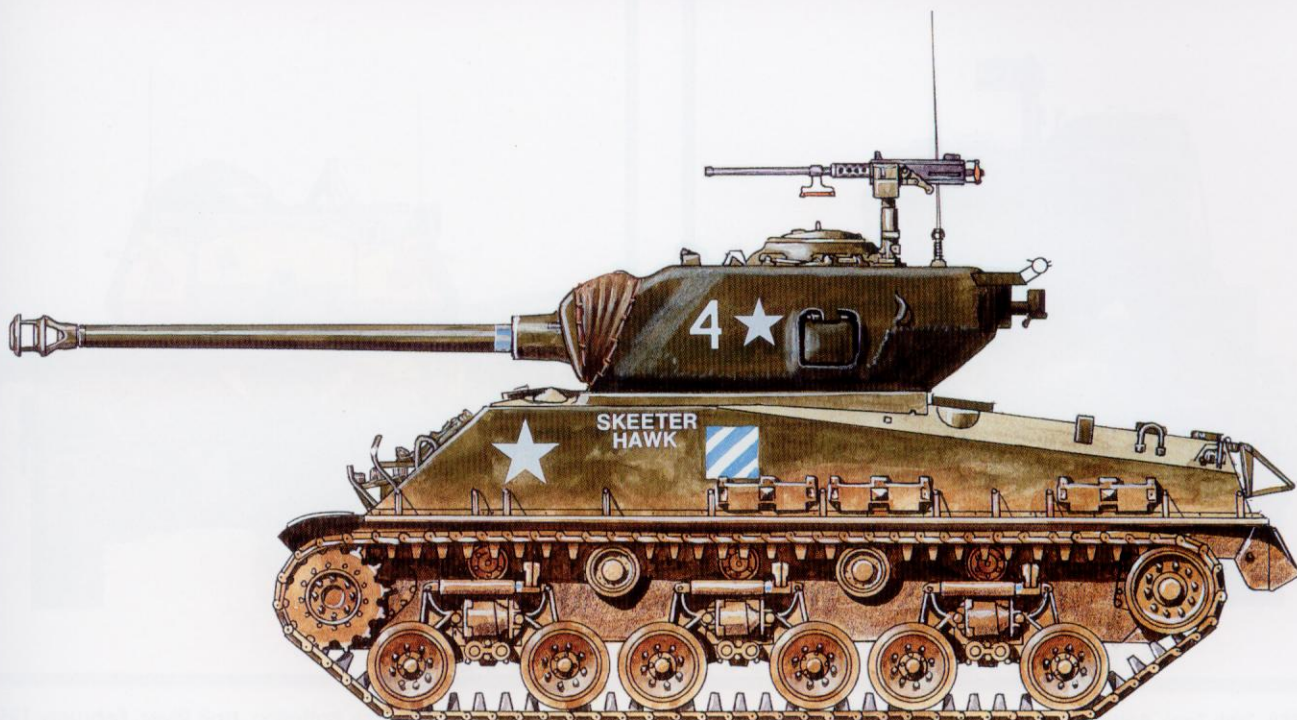
M4A3E8, 5th Infantry Tank Co., 24th Infantry Div., Han River, February 1951.

This is a front view of the same vehicle shown in the accompanying side view. The basic scheme extends around to the front of the tank, and is completed with a set of eyes and a mouth. The vehicle bumper codes are 5-I TK45. A large white air identification star was carried on the engine deck.



M4A3E8, 64th Tank Battalion, Han River, February 1951.

The tiger's head insignia on this tank is based on the shoulder patch of the 3rd Infantry Division which is blue and white, diagonally striped square. The actual faces on each of the M4A3E8s and M26s of the battalion differed from vehicle to vehicle. Some of the tanks had a tiger's face painted from profile rather than from the front.



M4A3E8, 64th Tank Battalion, Han River, February 1951.

This is a side view of the tank shown in the accompanying front view. Tanks of the unit continued the divisional identification by painting the divisional shoulder patch insignia on the hull side. This particular tank is named "Skeeter Hawk". The national insignia are somewhat unusual and not standard. The turret star is much smaller than usual and further back on the turret. The hull star is smaller than usual.



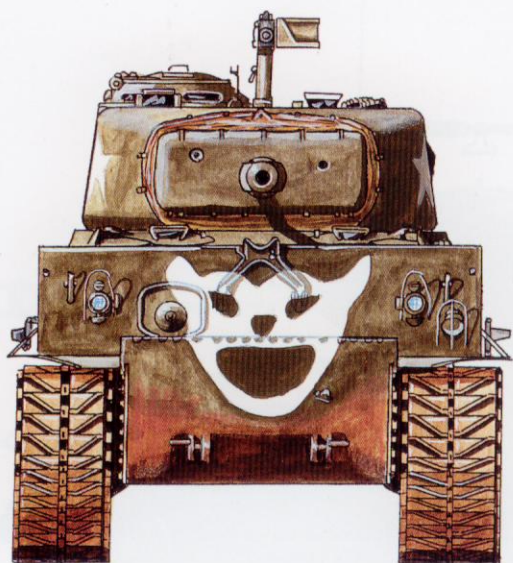
M4A3E8, Co. C, 89th Tank Battalion, Han River, February 1951.

Unlike most of the tiger markings of this period, C Co. chose a somewhat more unusual scheme, based on the company nickname, Rice's Red Devils, named after their company commander, Capt. Clifford Rice. The insignia consists of eyes, a mouth and a simplified nose. The bumper codes for this vehicle are 89 C-7. The unit insignia also involved the turret white star, which had the unit name, Rice's Red Devils, painted near it with "RED" painted in red on the star. Details of this insignia will be found in accompanying photos in the book.



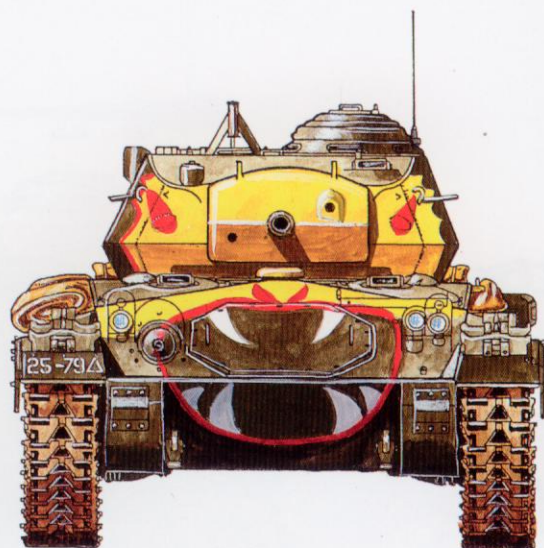
M4A3E8, Co. C, 89th Tank Battalion, Han River, February 1951.

This was one of the first examples of the tiger faces and was designed by Lt. Fred Wilkins and painted by Sgt. Joe McCoy. The scheme included a basic yellow background with small squiggles in olive drab or black. The yellow extended a short way back on the turret (about 18-24 inches) and about 18 inches on the hull sides.



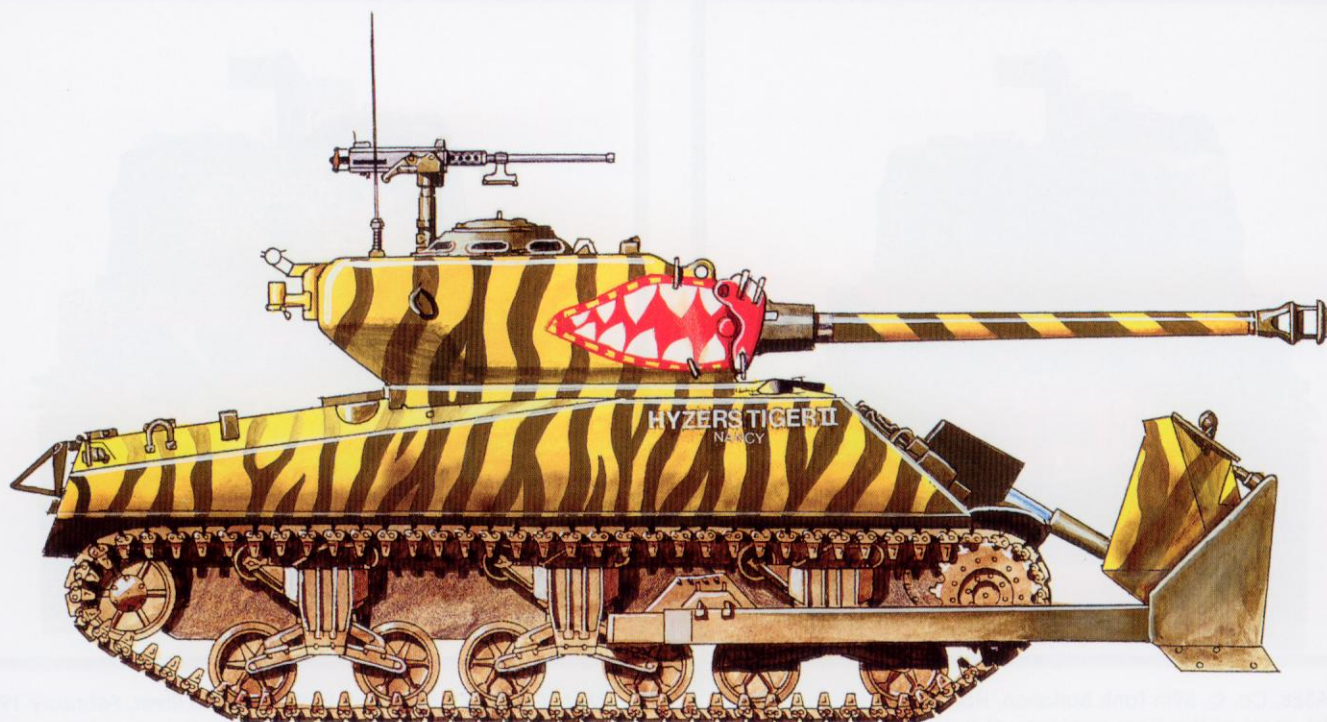
M4A3E8, 70th Tank Battalion, Han River, February 1951.

While Co. A of the 70th Tank Bn. painted elaborate tiger faces on their tanks, some of the other tanks of the battalion had a much simpler silhouette painted. It's possible that this was a primer coat, and that a full tiger face was planned later. In any event, many of the tanks of the battalion ended up in combat with this simple face on front. White stars are carried in the standard positions on the turret and hull sides.



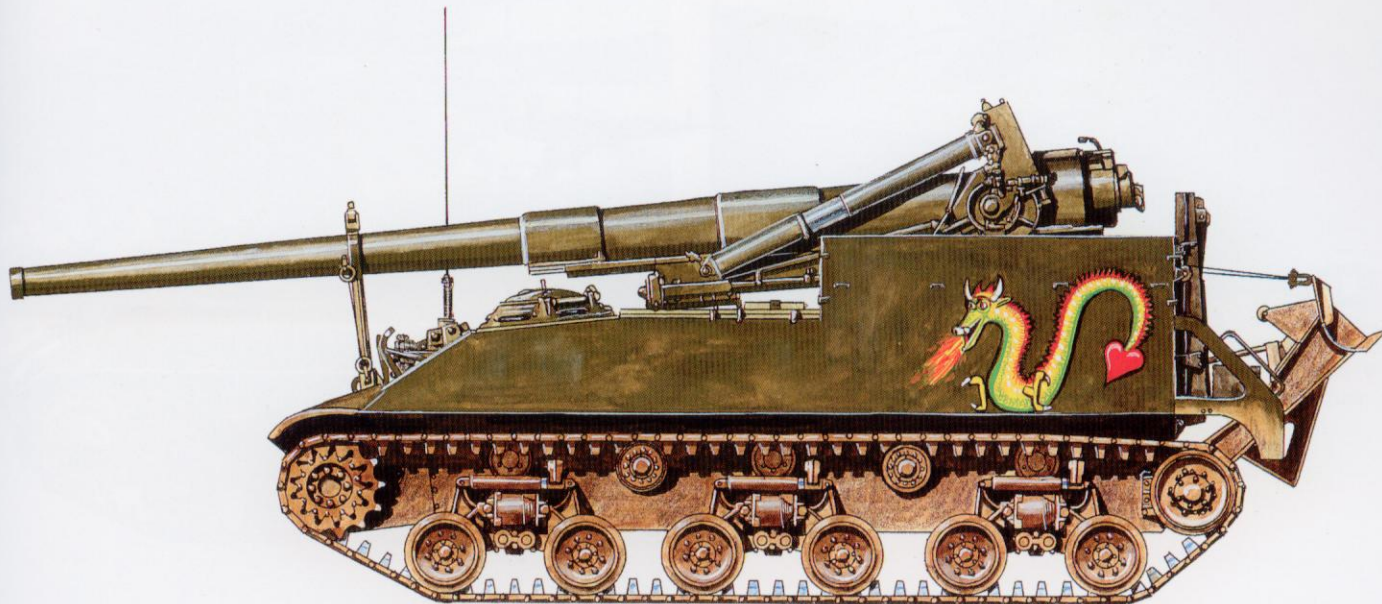
M24 Chaffee, 79th Tank Battalion, Han River, February 1951.

This is another example of a simplified tiger face, here painted on a M24 light tank. The mouth has been painted over the bow on top of the usual olive drab paint. It is possible that on some tanks, this was painted over black. The front of the turret is painted yellow, and two red eyes are painted on either side of the gun mantlet. The bumper code on the left fender is 25-79Δ.



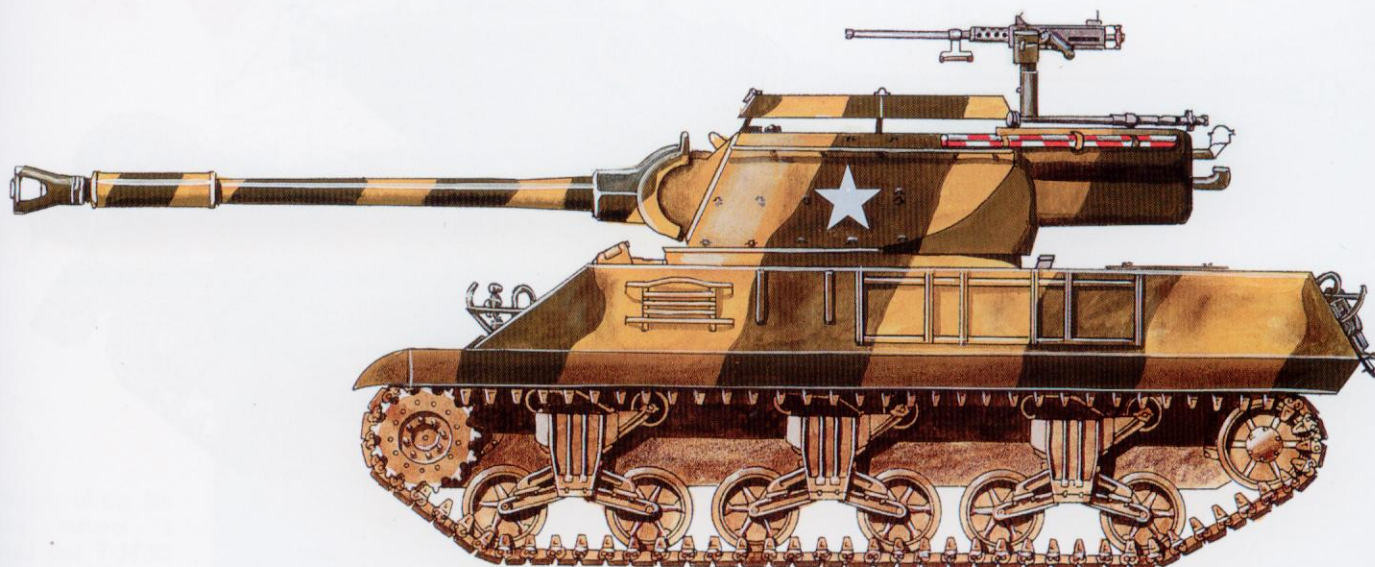
M4A3W(76) with M1 dozer, 3rd Engineer Combat Bn., Han River, February 1951.

Hyzer's Tiger II is an unusual bulldozer tank attached to the 3rd Engineer Combat Bn., 24th Infantry Div. Unlike most M4s that served in Korea it is still fitted with the old VVS suspension. The tank was named after Peter C. Hyzer, who commanded the battalion, and the name "NANCY" is painted below this in white. The tiger scheme consists of yellow stripes over the usual olive drab finish, with a garish red and white mouth. Further details of the tactical numbers on the front of this tank will be found in the accompanying photos.



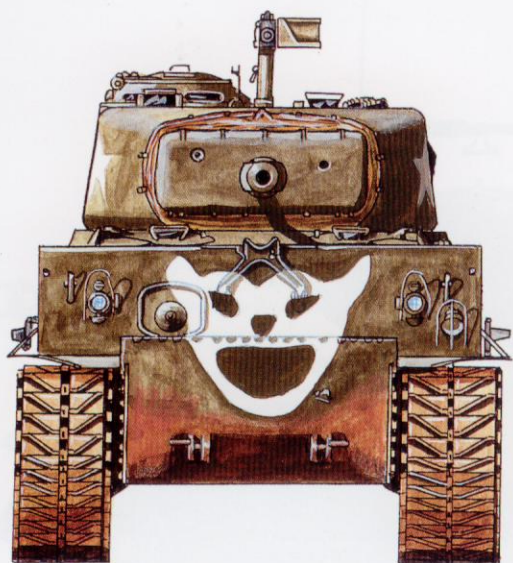
M40 155mm Gun Motor Carriage, US Army 204th Field Artillery Bn., August 1951.

Not wanting to be left out of the painting competition, this field artillery battalion painted a colorful dragon on the side of the superstructure of its M40 155mm GMC sometime during 1951, and probably inspired by the tiger faces painted on many tanks. The vehicle otherwise is very simply finished in overall olive drab.



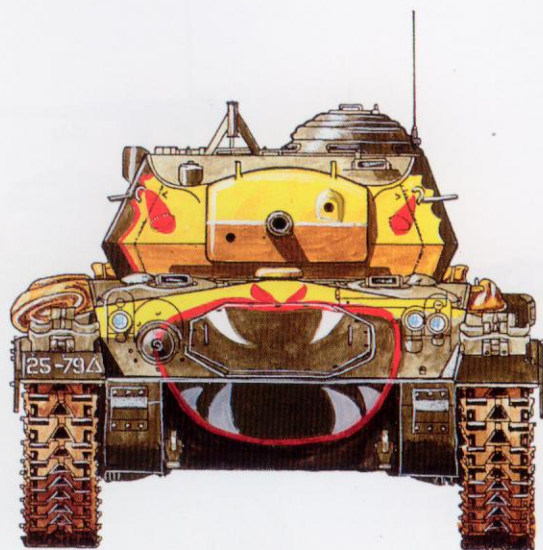
M36B2, South Korean 53rd Tank Battalion, White Horse Mountain, October 1952.

The South Koreans began forming a small number of armored units in April 1951 at their infantry school. They were initially equipped with M36B2 tank destroyers and M24 Chaffee light tanks. They were normally finished with the white allied star, though in 1953 some of the Chaffees had this replaced by the South Korean flag. During the fighting in 1952, some of the M36B2 tank destroyers had a camouflage pattern applied to their tanks of earth yellow over the basic olive drab finish.



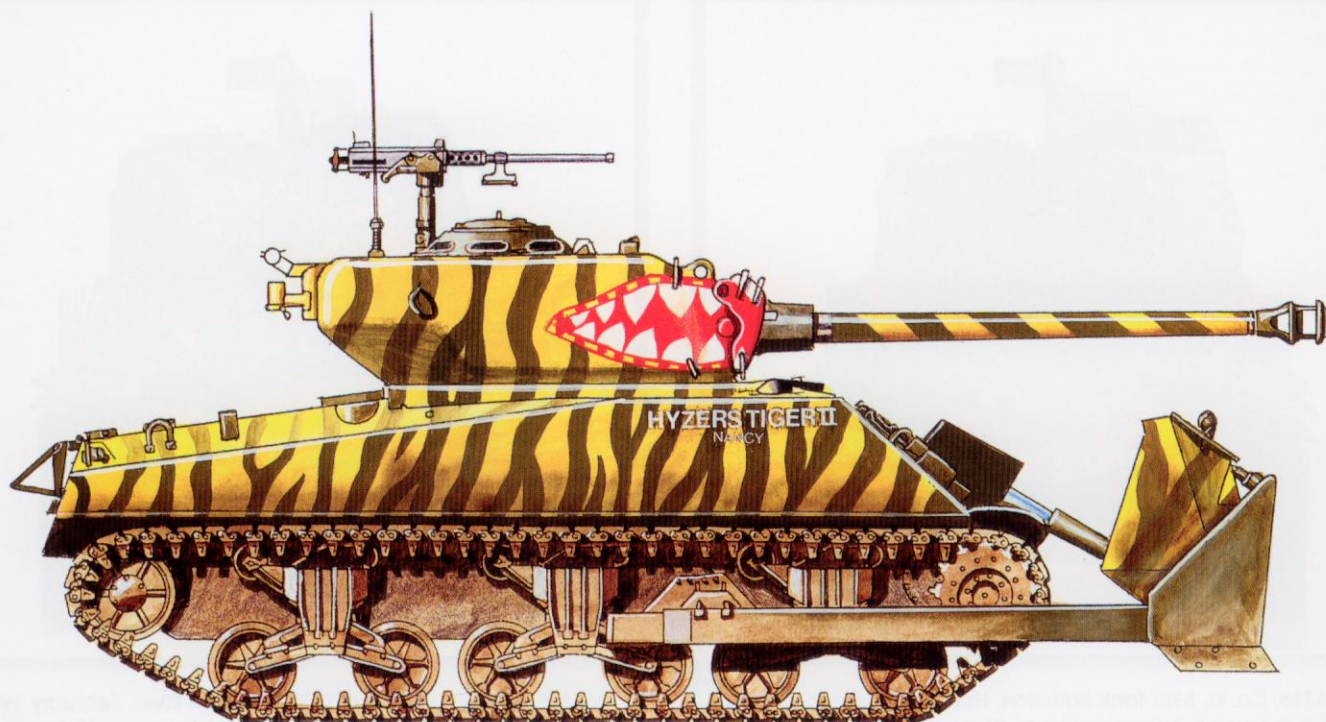
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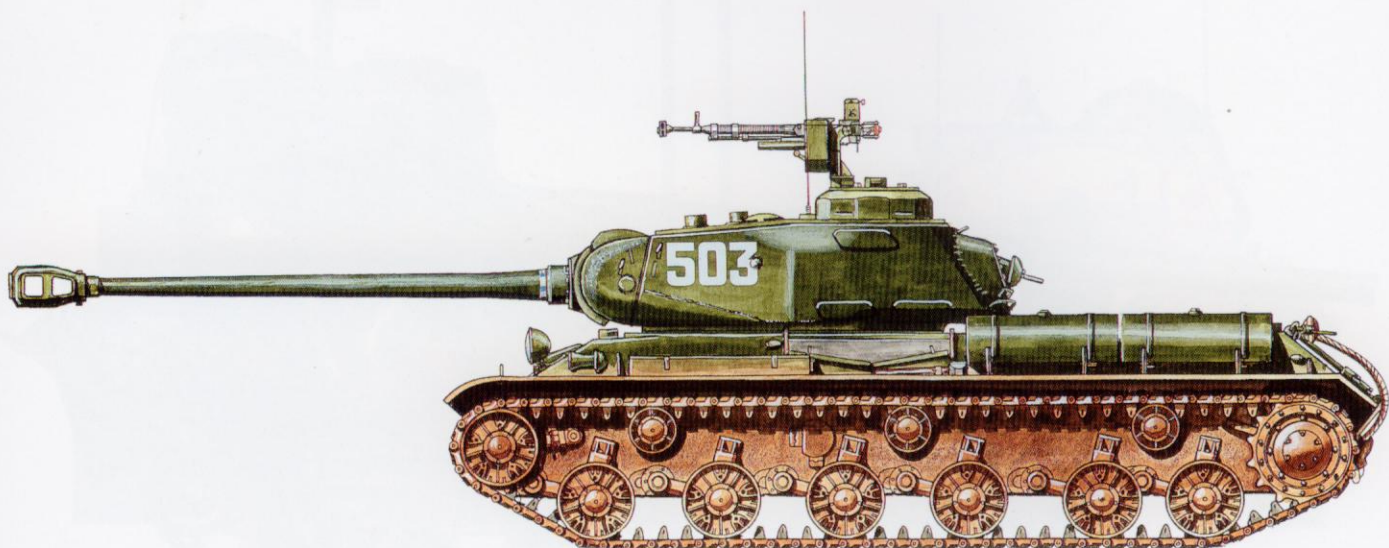
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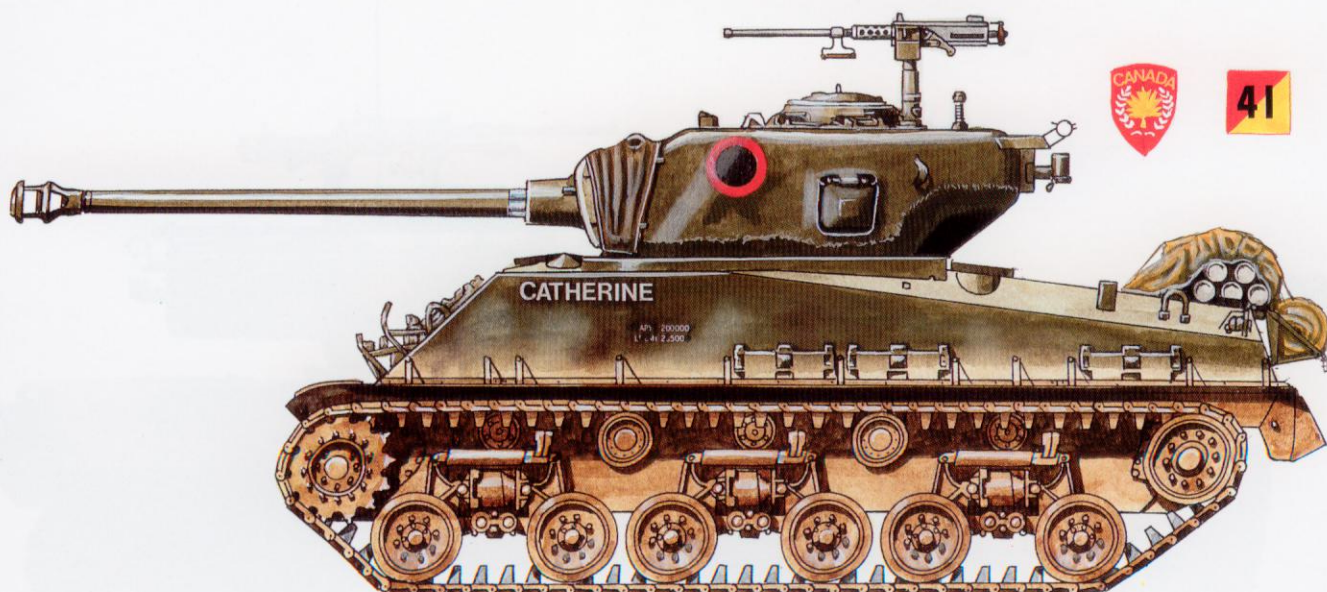
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IS-2M Stalin, Chinese Volunteer Army Tank Regiment, North Korea, 1952.

The Soviet Union began supplying the Chinese PLA with T-34-85 tanks and IS-2M heavy tanks in 1951. These were generally formed independent tank regiments, often consisting of three battalions of T-34-85 medium tanks and a single battalion or company of IS-2M S tanks. At least one of these units was dispatched to North Korea on the basis of photographic evidence, but there is no evidence it actually saw combat. The vehicle had a standard, Soviet-pattern three digit number painted on the turret side, and was finished in overall Soviet green.

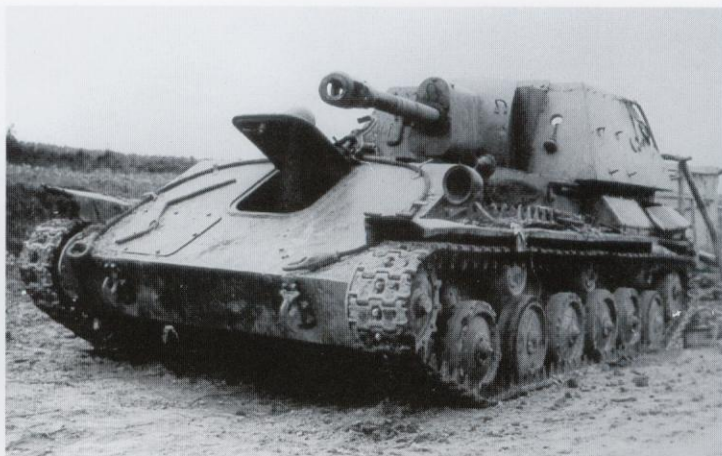


M4A3E8, C Squadron, Lord Strathcona's Horse, 25th Canadian Infantry Bde., Imjin River, 1952.

When first sent to Korea, Lord Strathcona's Horse was equipped with M10 tank destroyers. These were traded in for the more practical M4A3E8 from US Army stocks. As a result, the vehicles were finished in standard US olive drab. The C Squadron circle insignia was painted over the allied star on the turret, and appears to have consisted of a red ring over a black center for better contrast. The tank followed British markings practice with an RAC flash on the upper glacis plate in front of the driver and the Canada flash on the right side in front of the co-driver. The inset insignia here are shown 50% overscale for greater detail. The tank was named in the normal fashion, starting with the squadron letter, in this case, Catherine.



A T-34-85 knocked out during the fighting in the Naktong area near Waegwan on 17-18 September. Fire has consumed the rubber rims of the roadwheels, probably started by an internal ammunition fire.



A SU-76M assault gun captured during the Naktong fighting on 20 September 1950. This vehicle is unusual in that it is a World War 2 production type with the more steeply cut-back rear superstructure; most SU-76M in Korea were the post-war types.



A T-34-85 that had been camouflaged in a house in Suwon burns after it was hit by tank fire from a M4A3E8 of the 73rd Tank Bn. on 21 September 1950 in the fighting near Inchon.

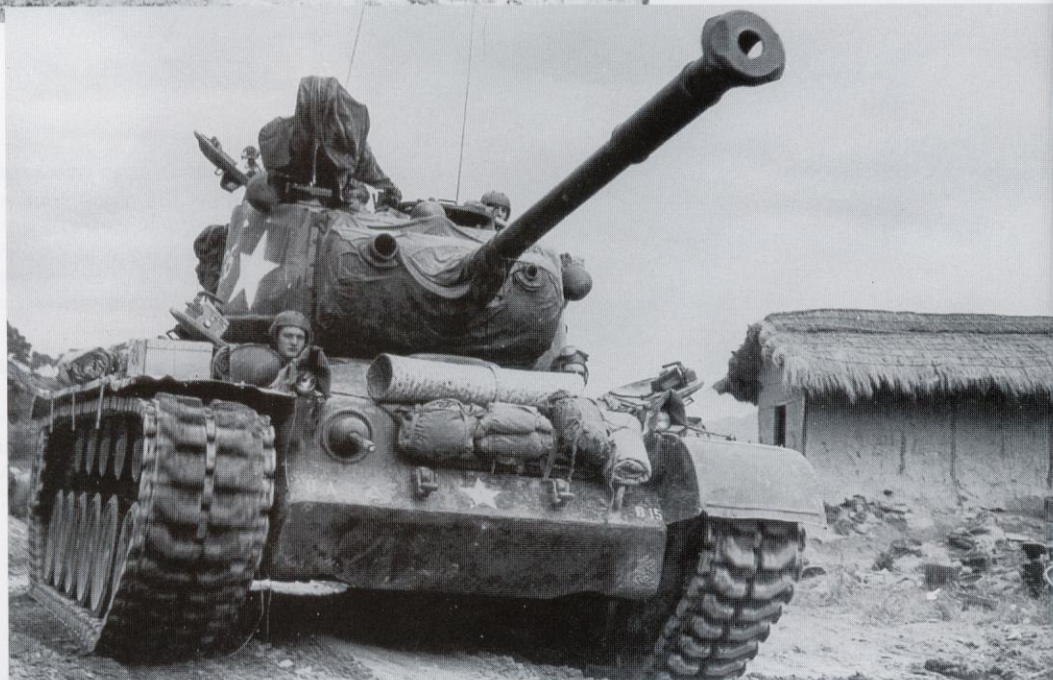
Troops of the 5th Cavalry inspect a knocked out T-34-85 near Waegwan on 20 September 1950. This tank appears to be numbered 801, which would make it a tank of the 16th Armored Brigade. This unit was largely destroyed in the Naktong fighting.





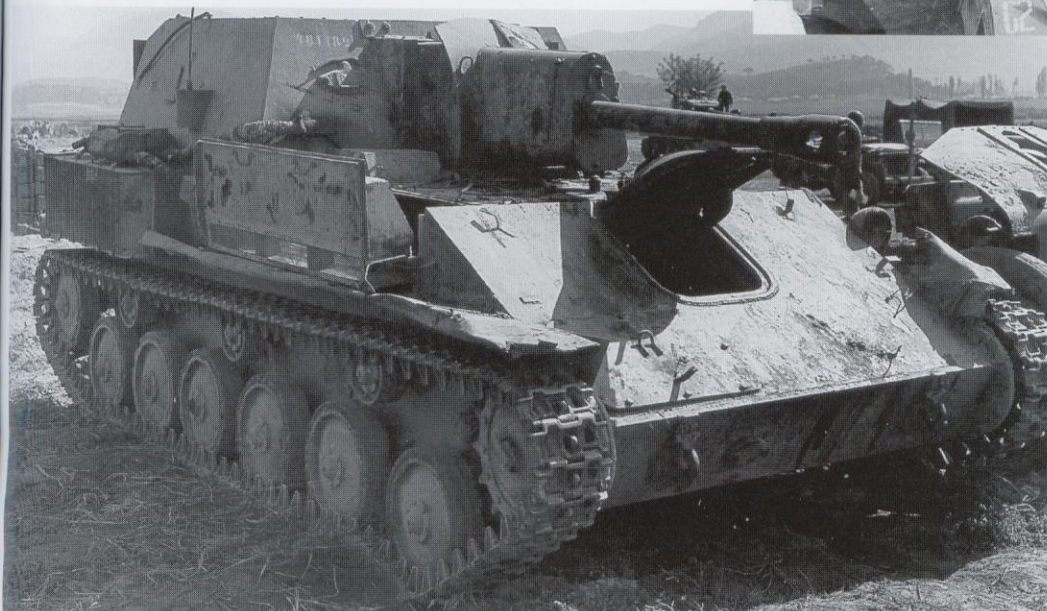
Another T-34-85 knocked out in the 5th Cavalry sector near Waegwan. The T-34-85 had part of its ammunition stowed in a bustle in the turret rear, which tended to blow off the roof if ignited as was the case here.

A M46 Patton tank of Co. B, 6th Tank Bn. near Kumho in the Nakdong sector on 20 September 1950. Although M46 tanks were in operation in Korea since August, they did not become common until later in 1950.

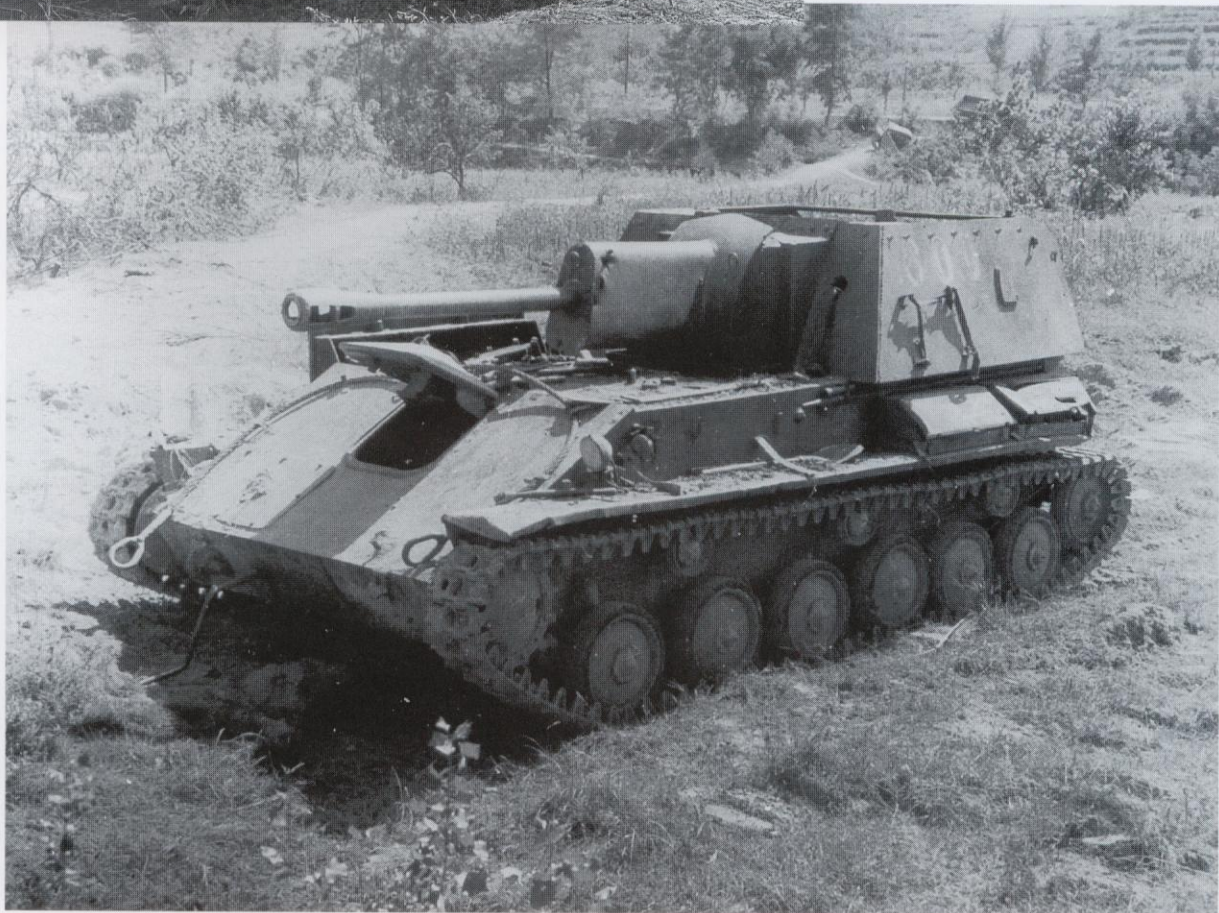


Troops of the 5th RCT, 24th Infantry Div. pose on an abandoned SU-76M assault gun near Waegwan on 20 September 1950. This vehicle has evidently suffered an engine breakdown, as its side engine access hatch is open, and tow-cables are attached to the front tow hooks. By this stage of the campaign, the Korean armored vehicles were in a parlous state due to their extensive use since the June invasion and the lack of spare parts or maintenance.

British troops of the mortar platoon of the Argyle Sutherland Highlands prepare their Universal Carriers near Taegu on 21 September 1950. The UN operations in Korea involved troops from over a dozen countries, of which the British contingent was the third largest after the US and ROK forces.



A captured SU-76M in the hands of the 2nd Infantry Division on 23 September 1950. Although there were only about a third as many SU-76M as T-34 tanks, the SU-76Ms were more widely encountered as they were attached to most frontline infantry divisions for fire support.



A SU-76M abandoned near Kumchon on 21 September 1950. The vehicle tactical number appears to be 809. This SU-76M seems to be another victim of engine failure; the SU-76M used two automobile engines mated at the crankshaft which led to frequent mechanical problems.



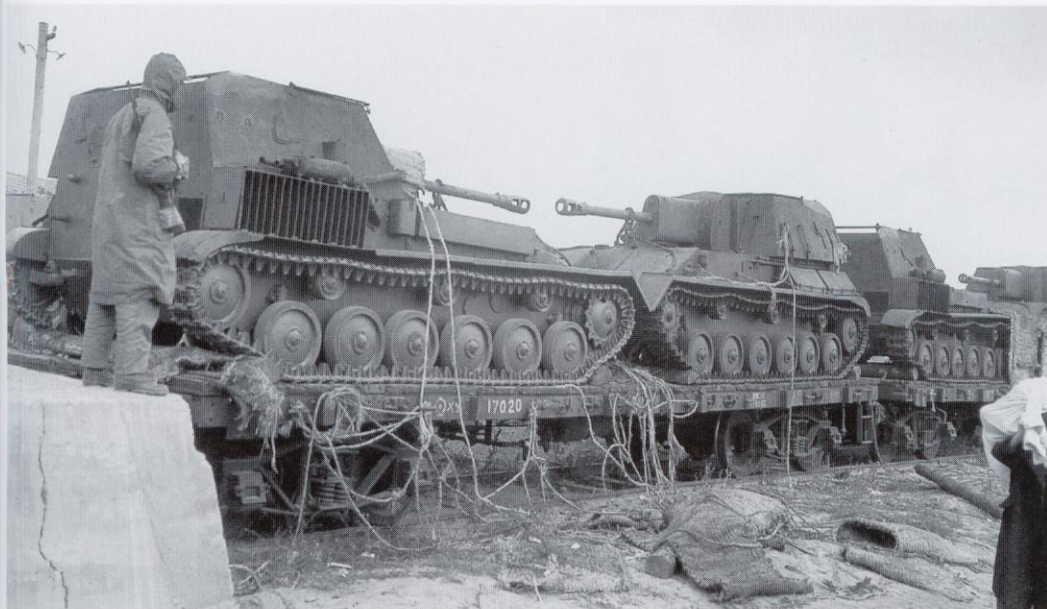
The BA-64B armored car was used in small numbers by NKPA armored units for scouting. After removing its turret, fenders and driver's armored visor, the 21st Infantry put this captured example back to use.



One of the most unusual tank encounters of the war took place on 12 October 1950 near Songhyon-ni when this T-34-85 suddenly appeared out of the fog and rammed a M4A3E8 tank of Co. B, 70th Tank Bn. The Sherman backed up and fired a single shot which split the gun barrel. A second US tank pulled alongside and destroyed the T-34-85 with a point-blank shot into the turret.

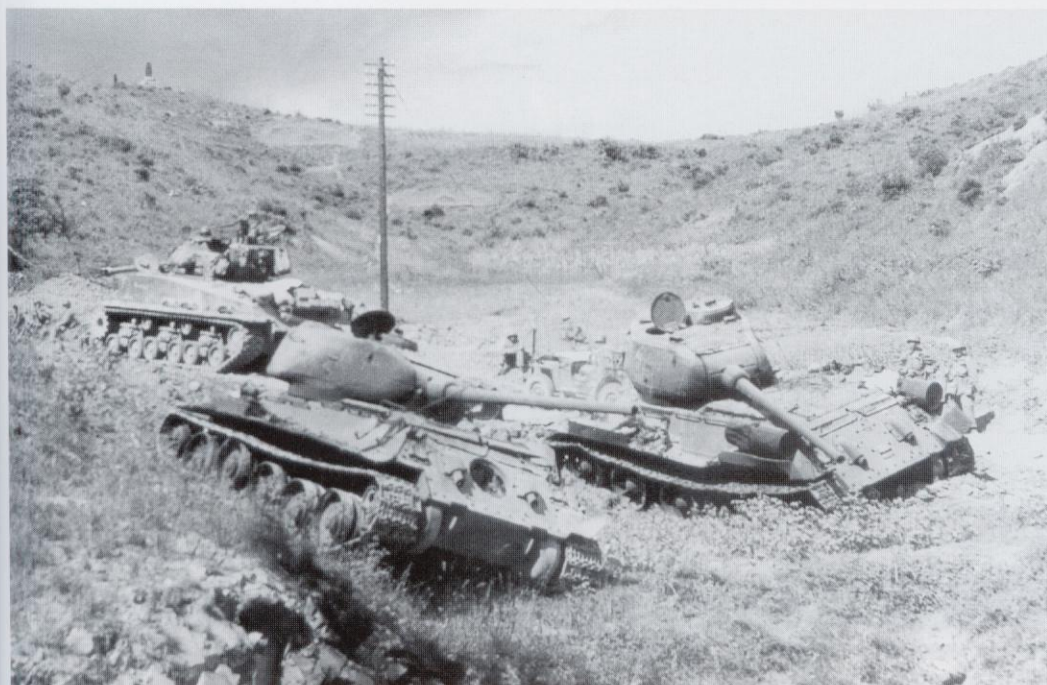
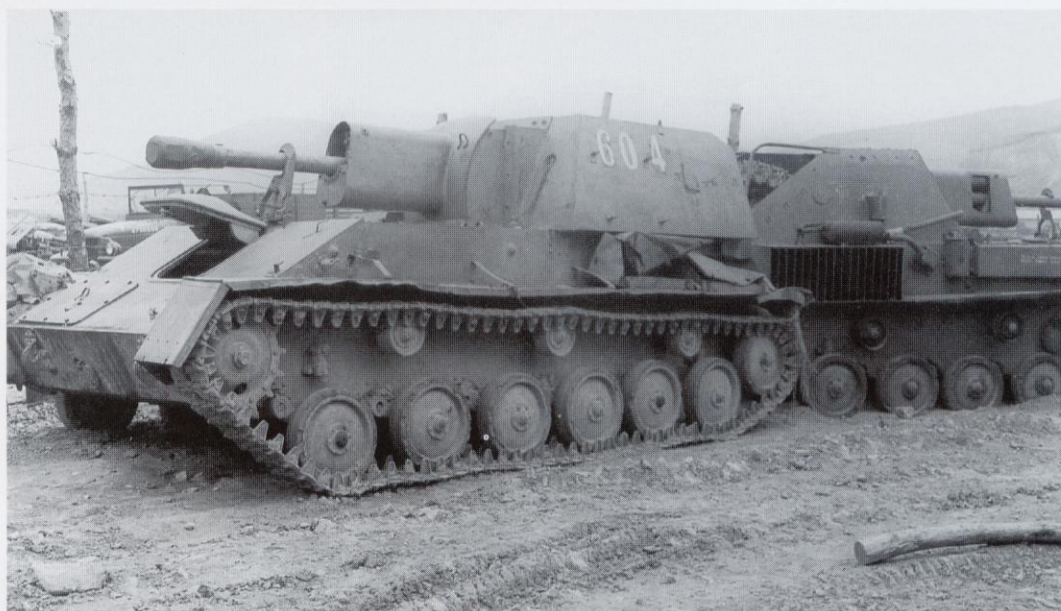


On 27 October, another amphibious landing was conducted at Wonson, on the eastern coast of Korea by the 1st Marine Div. By this time, the NKPA was in total disarray, and the landing was unopposed. The M26 tanks of D Co., Marine 1st Tank Bn. were fitted with the full deep wading trunks for the operation to allow the tanks to be landed in the shallow harbor from LSUs. Here, one of the tanks sits near the airbase with its wading trunks still attached.



A large number of SU-76M assault guns were captured intact at the port of Hungnam on the eastern coast on 5 November 1950 before reaching the NKPA army. These reinforcements had probably been shipped from the USSR only weeks before.

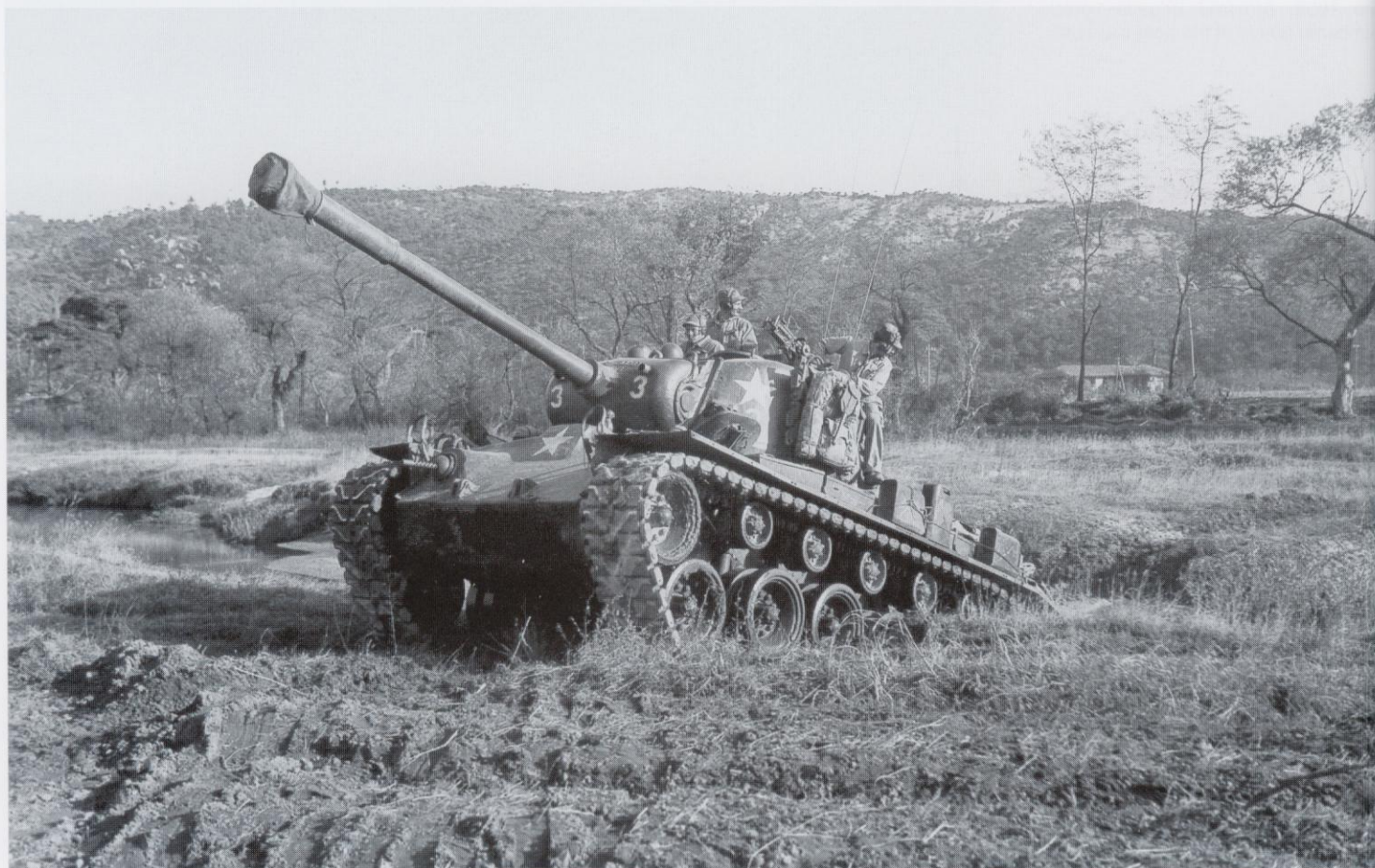
A pair of SU-76Ms at a depot somewhere in Korea in the autumn of 1950. This provides a good contrast between the wartime and post-war variants that can be distinguished by the shape of the superstructure sides. The 105th Armored Brigade vehicle numbered 604 is of the post-war type.



The area south of Seoul remained littered with tanks from the fleeing NKPA forces. Many of these tanks were destroyed by air attacks, and others when the US forces drove northward from the Pusan perimeter. These two T-34-85 tanks lay burned out near Taejon on 10 November 1950, the scene of an earlier NKPA victory over the 24th Infantry Div.



A M32A1B3 armored recovery vehicle of the Marine 1st Tank Bn. in operation near Hamhung on 10 November 1950. Because each tank company operated independently in support of Marine regiments, it was the usual practice to allot at least one of these per tank company.

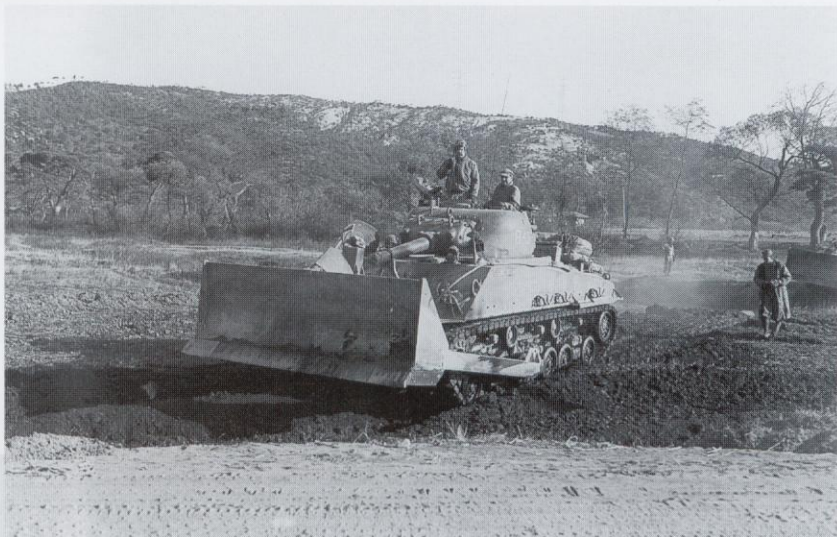


A Marine M26A1 near Hamhung on the eastern coast of Korea on 10 November 1950. Around this time, it became the practice in some Marine units to paint the vehicle tactical number on the mantlet.



The most potent US Army artillery vehicle was undoubtedly the M40 155mm gun motor carriage which consisted of a 155mm gun mounted on a modified M4A3E8 chassis. Here the crew of a M40 from Battery B, 937th Field Artillery prepare a fire mission on 25 November 1950.

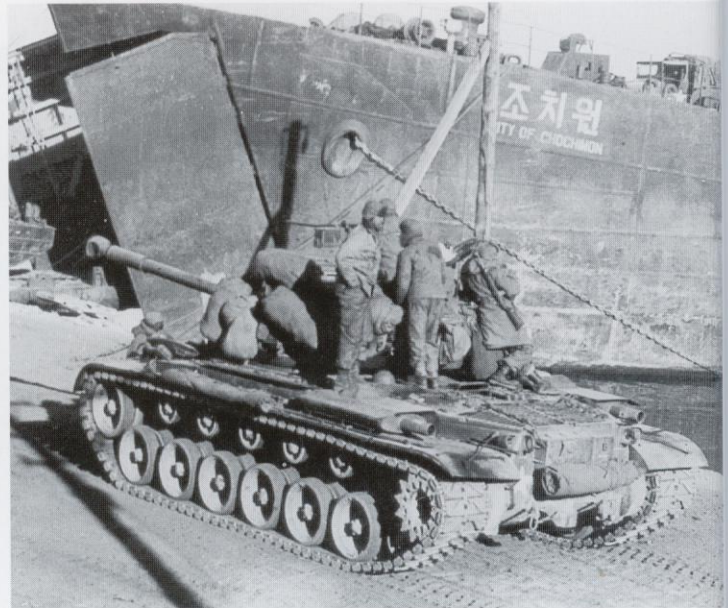
A Marine M4A3 (105) howitzer tank (B43) with M1 dozer blade supporting Co. B, 1st Tank Battalion operations near Hamhung, 10 November 1950.



Britain's largest tank unit, the 8th Kings Royal Irish Hussars, had barely arrived in Korea before the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA) bore down on the Eighth Army. The unit's Centurion Mk. 3 tanks were assigned to act as a rearguard at Pyongyang, the North Korean capitol, covering the withdrawal of UN forces through the city on 3 December 1950.



A Centurion Mk. 3 tank of the 8th Hussars sits at a roadblock in Pyongyang on 10 December as the UN forces withdraw southward to the 38th Parallel. Although one of the best tanks in UN service during the war, the Centurions would see almost no tank fighting. Ironically, one of the few Centurion engagements was against a captured Cromwell tank.



An M26A1 Pershing of the Marine 1st Tank Bn. moves forward in Wonson harbor prior to the unit's evacuation. The battalion, as usual, was broken up into companies, and parts of the battalion were deployed forward with Marine regimental combat teams further north in the Chosin reservoir area.



M46 Patton tanks of the 64th Tank Bn. take up defensive positions at Kagae-dong in support of the 3rd Infantry Div. in an attempt to stem the tide of the Chinese PVA advance on 7 December 1950. The 3rd Infantry Division had moved into the Hamhung-Wonsan area in November to relieve the 1st Marine Division which was moving forward towards the Chosin reservoir area.



On 6 December, the 5th and 7th Marines, trapped by Chinese forces near the Chosin reservoir, began an attack southward to breakout. Here, a column of M26A1 Pershings support the attack. This was one of the epic battles in Marine Corps legend, fought against great odds in appalling weather.



By 9 December, the Marines had crossed the Koto-ri bridge through the Funchilin Pass. The Pershings were used as the rearguard of the column, as there was some fear that their heavy weight would damage or collapse the bridge. In the process, they lost five tanks to Chinese anti-tank fire. Here, the survivors continue to move southward in support of the 7th Marines while Chinese POWs walk past. As is evident from the photo, the sub-zero temperature was a cruel enemy to both the American and Chinese forces.



A pair of Marine M4A3 (105) howitzer/dozer tanks near Hamhung after the Chosin retreat. This gives a good view of the connections needed to attach the M1 bulldozer blade to the tank.



Lead elements of the 5th and 7th Marines reached Hamhung from the Chosin reservoir on 10 December. To the side of the road is a knocked out T-34-85 tank.

By late December, the 8th Hussars had retreated to the Han river with the remainder of the UN forces. This does not look like a comfortable place for a tank to get stuck. This view shows the standard markings on the Centurion at this stage: the red and yellow RAC flash on the right fender, the black square with white circle (of the 29 Brigade) on the left fender, and the UN white star marking on the forward stowage bin.





A fine overview of Colombo of C Troop, 8th Hussars, commanded by Lt. M. Radford. Radford was later mentioned in dispatches for his heroism in the fighting along the Imjin river. This photo was taken on 20 December 1950 when the 8th Hussars were deployed in defensive positions along the Han river.



Another view of Lt. Radford's Centurion, Colombo, dug in a ridge overlooking the southern bank of the Han river on 20 December 1950. This gives a good view of the rear markings including the RAC flash, brigade square, UN star and vehicle license (O1ZR46) on the rear hull plate, the black and white stripped distance marker on the exhaust guard underneath and the circled 3 plate on the turret rear. This vehicle is shown in the color plates.



No British tanker would feel at home without tea, as the crew of Colombo takes a break on 20 December 1950. This view shows that the circled 3 tactical insignia was in fact a metal plate attached to the turret rear (and hull sides). Also evident is the vehicle license number.



A US Army truck convoy passes the wreck of an old adversary, a T-34-85, near Taegu in the Naktong river area on 21 December 1950.



The dockyard at Hamhung is lined with captured SU-76M assault guns, some in US markings, prior to the evacuation of the port on 24 December 1950. This was part of a trainload of SU-76Ms captured at Hamhung, and seen earlier in this book. There were plans to turn these vehicles over to the South Korean army.



After the withdrawal from the Chosin reservoir, the Marine 1st Tank Battalion remained in eastern Korea. It was assigned the task of ferreting out North Korean soldiers who had escaped northward into the hills after the failed September Naktong offensive. Here, the crews use their .50 cal machine guns on M26A1 and M4A3 (105) tanks to fire on NKPA forces in the hills. The stragglers occasionally raided UN convoys, but were too poorly equipped or fed to pose a threat to large units.

This T-34-85 was recovered near Andong, and from the inscriptions on its side, it is probably one of two T-34-85s that was sent back to the US Army Aberdeen Proving Ground. Two of these tanks still remain in the Ordnance Museum's extensive vehicle collection.



Another view of the Andon T-34-85. Scrawled on the turret side is the inscription "Conserve Vodka, Drink Habacolski", no doubt a local joke whose meaning has been forgotten 45 years later.



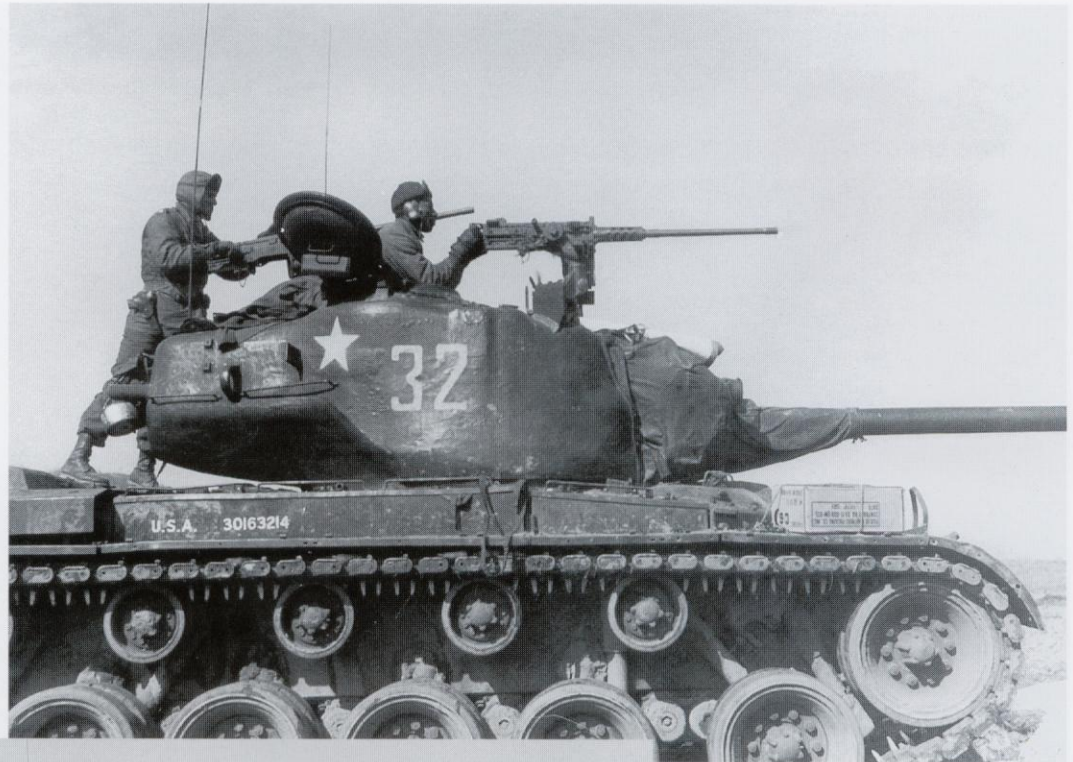
A M4A3E8 supporting the 35th Infantry, 27th Infantry Div. advances through the massive gates guarding the entrance to the walled city of Suwon during Operation Wolfhound. Although Operation Wolfhound failed to seriously engage Chinese forces in the area, the successful use of armor in the operation in spite of the terrain reinforced Army appreciation for their value in Korean combat.

Infantry use the cover of an irrigation ditch and a neighboring 64th Tank Bn. M46 Patton tank against Chinese snipers in neighboring hills during the advance of Task Force Punch on 5 February 1951. This was part of Operation Thunderbolt, the drive to recapture Seoul.



A tanker on a M26A1 Pershing tank of Co. D, Marine 1st Tank Battalion takes aim at NKPA troops in the hills near Chochon-dong, during anti-guerilla sweeps there on 5 February 1951. These tank patrols were popularly dubbed "rice-paddy sweeps" by the tankers.

The commander of a M46 of the 64th Tank Bn. fires on enemy forces during the mission by Task Force Punch near Seoul on 6 February 1951 in support of the 27th Infantry. The 64th Tank Bn. was the only segregated black tank battalion to see combat in Korea, and like many units, was gradually integrated as the war dragged on.



A M16 MGMC provides fire support for the 27th Infantry of Task Force Punch southwest of Seoul on 7 February 1951. By this stage of the war, the M16 was no longer needed in the air defense role. Its high rate of fire made it ideal as an anti-personnel weapon against massed infantry attack.

By the time of the Korean War, the US Army had few M3 halftracks left in inventory due to plans to replace them with fully tracked infantry carriers. As these were not available, the M39 armored utility vehicle was often used as an improvised troop carrier. It was not designed for this role, and troop exit out of the central compartment was awkward. Here, a M39 of the 7th Infantry moves forward during Operation Thunderbolt on 10 February 1951 southeast of Seoul.



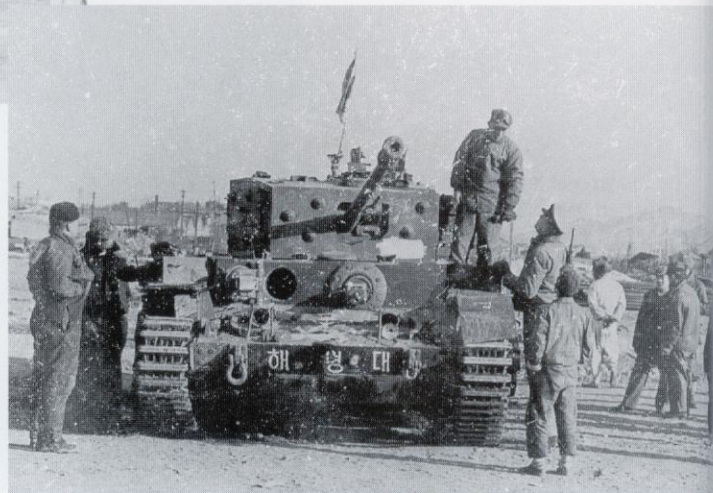


By mid-February, the UN forces had closed in on Seoul again. A M24 Chaffee of the 79th Tank Bn., 25th Infantry Div. overlooks Kimpo airbase on 10 February 1951. By this stage of the war, the US Army had reverted back to using fluorescent air recognition panels, seen here on the rear turret roof, to prevent accidental attack of allied forces by UN aircraft.



A Centurion Mk. 3 of the 8th Hussars supports the British 29th Brigade during fighting near Seoul on 10 February 1951. The next day, a tank from C Troop encountered a British Cromwell tank that had been captured during the retreat and put back into action by Korean and Chinese forces. It was the only tank-vs.-tank fighting for the Centurion in Korea.

This rare photo shows one of the Cromwell tanks lost by the 8th Hussars during the Chinese offensive. It was put into North Korean service, and is seen here after its recapture by UN forces near Inchon.

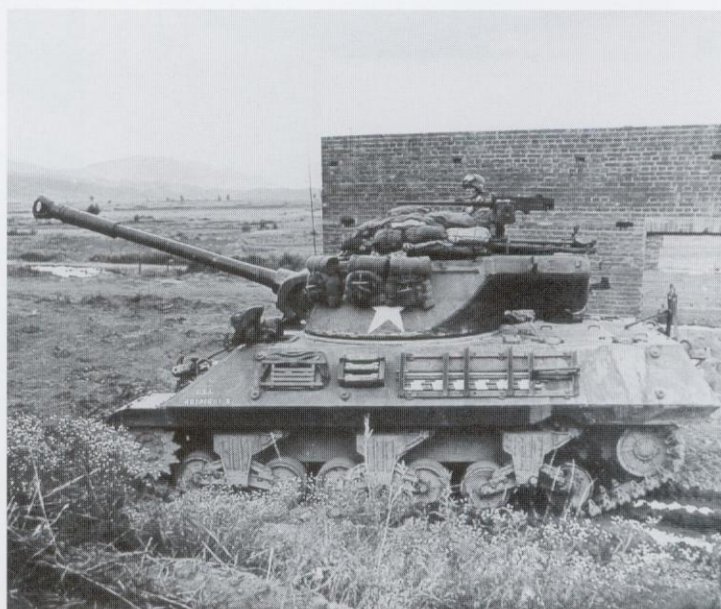


A well camouflaged M24 Chaffee of the 64th Tank Bn. rests behind a ridge line while supporting the 3rd Infantry Div. south of Seoul in February 1951. Behind it is one of the battalion's M46 heavy tanks. This M24 is unusual in that it has pattern-painted camouflage on the turret, which was uncommon in Korea.



During the fighting along the Han river in mid-February 1951, several US tank battalions decided to paint their tanks with gaudy tiger faces. This was apparently started as a psychological warfare effort, the idea being that superstitious Chinese infantrymen would be scared by the fearsome faces. This is one of the most colorful of the schemes, painted on a M4A3E8 of the 5th Infantry Regiment's Tank Company.

A BAR rifleman of the 5th Infantry fires from behind the cover of a M4A3E8 during fighting along the Han river on 23 February 1951. This tank has the gaudy tiger face painted on the front, and the tiger stripe markings extend down the hull and turret side. Also evident on this tank is a large white star on the engine deck, the usual white stenciled bumper codes, 5-I (5th Infantry) and TK + the individual tank number.

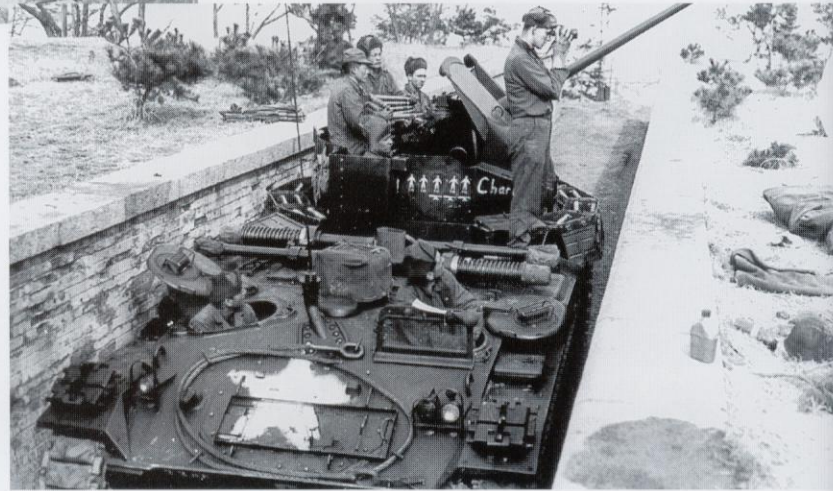


The South Korean army began to form its own tank force in April 1951 with M24 Chaffee light tanks and M36B2 tank destroyers, like this vehicle of the 53rd ROK Tank Company.





A M19 MGMC of the 3rd AAA Bn. overlooks the Han river while providing fire support for the 15th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Div. The M19 was never used in combat in its intended role for air defense, but was used extensively in Korea to provide infantry fire support. Its high rate of fire was appreciated, but commanders tended to use it like a tank in which case it often got into trouble in close combat due to its open configuration.

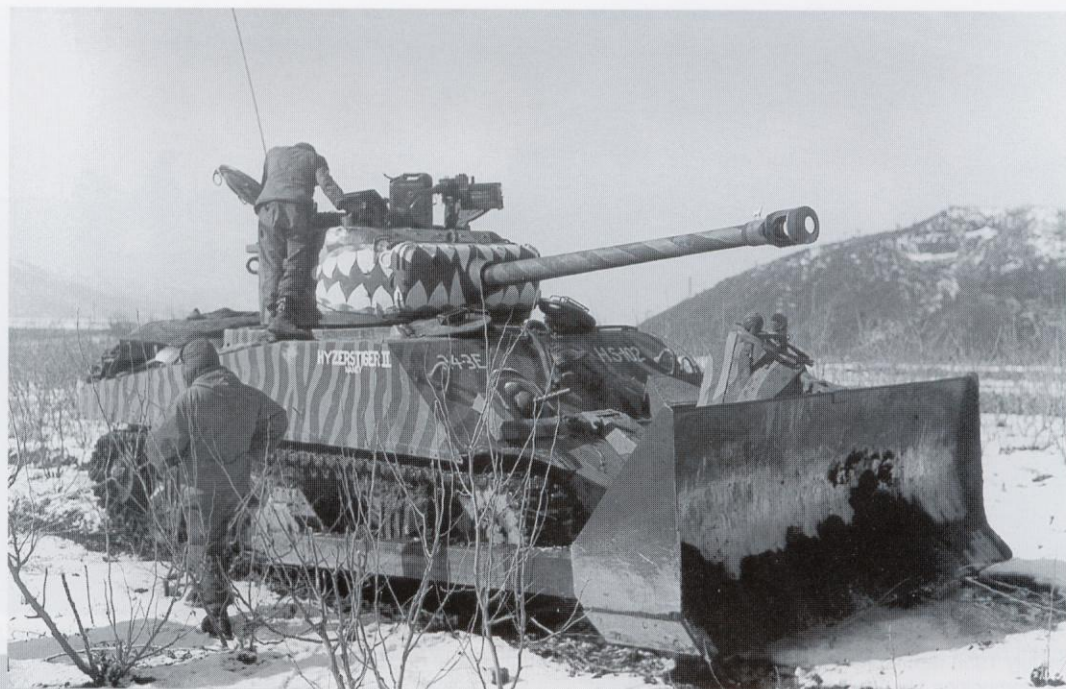


Another M19 MGMC of the 3rd AAA Bn. in the Han river position. This vehicle has kill markings for every ten enemy soldiers claimed, and three small symbols below for three enemy machine guns.

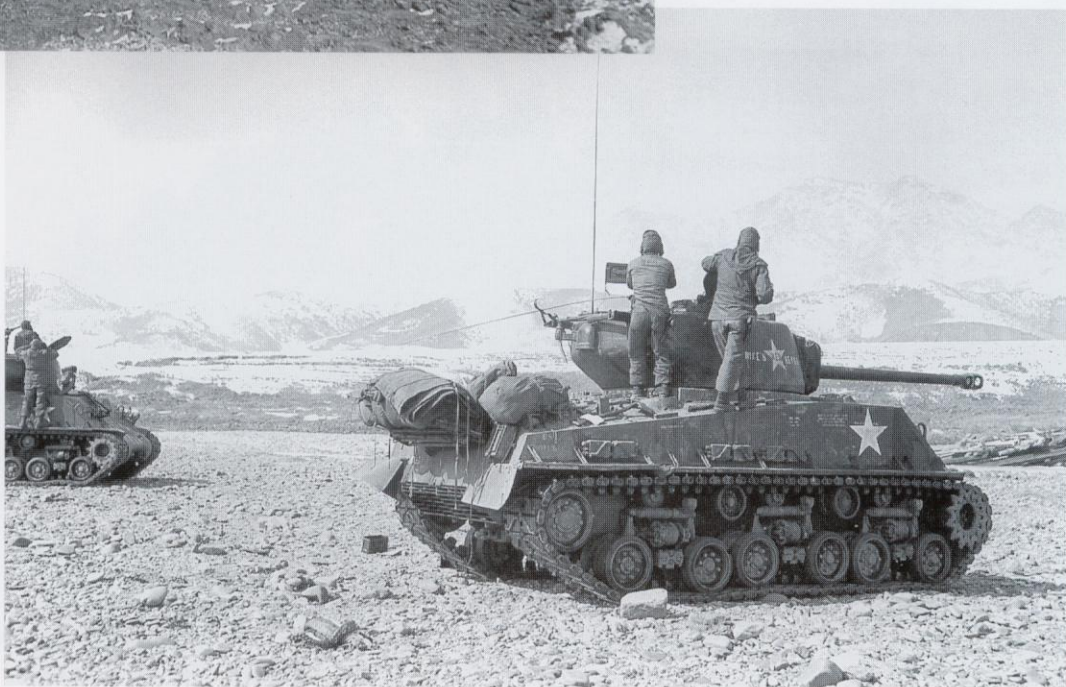


One of the more stylish of the tiger markings was applied to the M46 tanks of the 6th Tank Bn., seen here at Yangpung on 7 March 1951 while supporting the 24th Infantry Div. The battalion's vehicles were numbered sequentially.

Hyzer's Tiger II is an unusual bulldozer tank attached to the 3rd Engineer Combat Bn., 24th Infantry Div. Unlike most M4s that served in Korea, it is still fitted with the old VVS suspension. The tank was named after Peter C. Hyzer, who commanded the battalion.



A broken down M4A3E8 of the 64th Tank Bn. has tow-bars attached and is awaiting another tank or armored recovery vehicle. Faintly visible on the glacis plate is an elaborate tiger's head marking over the blue and white striped patch of the 3rd Infantry Div. This tank, Skeeter Hawk, is shown in the color plates.



A M4A3E8 of "Rice's Red Devils", Co. C, 89th Tank Bn., named after the company commander, Capt. Clifford Rice. This unit had colorful "devil" faces painted on the front of the tanks. On the turret was the company name in white and red.



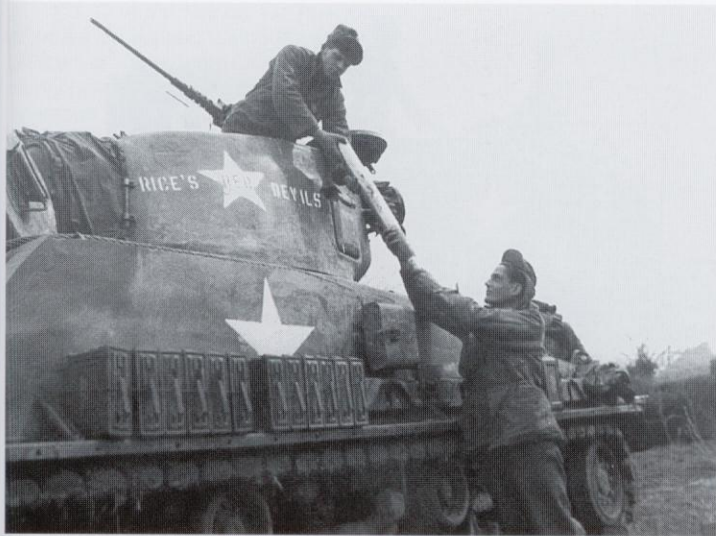
Another view of Rice's Red Devils during Operation Ripper in March 1951. The 89th was the longest serving tank battalion in Korea, having been formed in July 1950 with tanks scraped up from scrapyards throughout the Pacific. Here, the crews are loading up ammunition, as is evident from the large number of ammunition storage tubes on the engine decks.



A good view of the red and white devil markings on the Co. C M4A3E8s of 89th Tank Bn. This marking is also shown in color in the color plates.



A column of tanks from Rice's Red Devils. As can be seen, the marking was applied with consistency on all the tanks in the company.



A M4A3E8 of Co. C, 89th Tank Bn. is loaded with ammunition. This gives a good view of the marking on the turret side. Appropriately enough, the "RED" in the name is painted in red over the white star marking.



A good detail shot of the reloading process on a M4A3E8 of Rice's Red Devils. Note that the crewman loads the round with the nose downward, to prevent an accident in which the detonator at the base of the round might strike metal and accidentally discharge.



"Colt 45" was a flamethrower tank attached to Rice's Red Devils, and seen here attacking enemy bunkers during the fighting along the Han river. On these tanks, the flamethrower device was mounted instead of the hull machine gun. This M4A3E8 has the characteristic spare bogie wheel and drive sprocket of the original 89th Tank Battalion vehicles, implying it is one of the older tanks in the unit.

A M19 40mm MGMC moves to the front, towing a standard 1-ton trailer. This vehicle was based on the chassis of the M24 light tank, and mounted twin 40mm Bofors anti-aircraft guns. The same turret was later adapted to the M41 light tank chassis, resulting in the better-known M42 Duster.





The M39 armored utility vehicle was often used as an improvised weapons carrier in Korea, and here is seen mounting a quad M45 .50 cal machine gun turret with the 32nd AAA Bn. Other units mounted mortars, machine guns and other weapons on this versatile chassis.

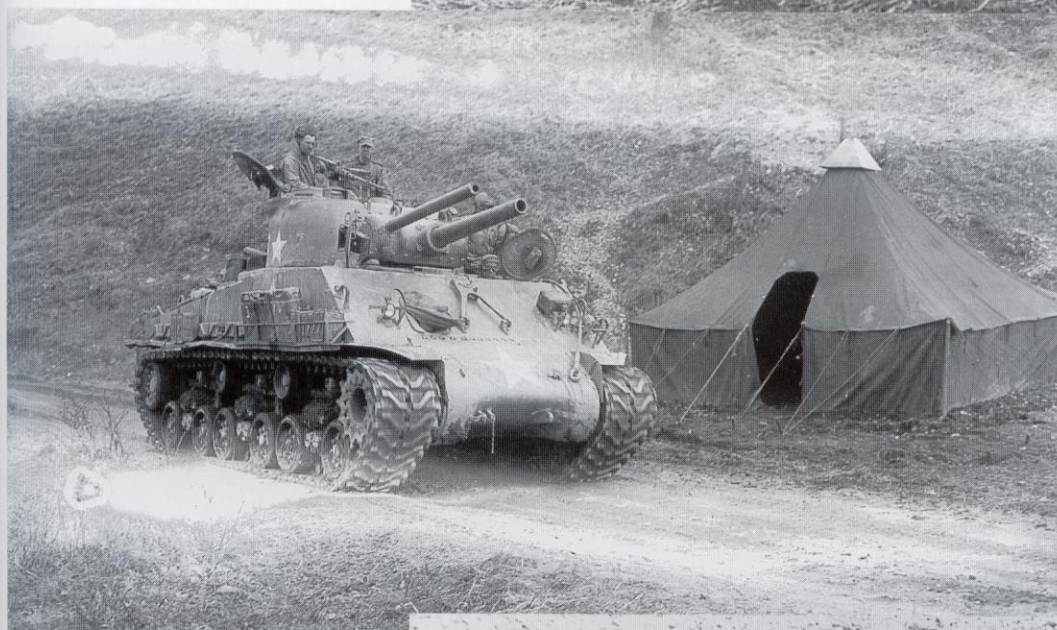


Another derivative of the M24 was the M41 155mm howitzer mortar carriage. This vehicle was a combination of the M24 light tank chassis with the M1 155mm howitzer. This particular vehicle served with the 999 Field Artillery of the 24th Infantry Div.



A M16 .50 cal MGMC of the 21st AAA Bn. provides fire support for the 35th Infantry, 25th Infantry Div. during fighting along the 38th Parallel on 10 March 1951. This particular vehicle has the extended winch bumper, and the crew has added a .30 cal Browning machine gun over the right side of the cab.

Co. C of the Marine 1st Tank Bn. provides fire support during the second phase of Operation Ripper near Hongchon on 14 March 1951. This operation was the latest step in the Marine drive to reach the 38th Parallel which was accomplished the following month.



A M4A3 flamethrower tank of the Marine 1st Tank Bn. during Operation Ripper on 17 March 1951 after Hongchon had been captured. The flamethrower tank was equipped with a POA-CWS-H5 flamethrower mounted alongside the normal 105mm howitzer.

A M24 Chaffee and M39 armored utility vehicle of the 24th Recon Co., 24th Infantry Div. move across a river during the final operations south of the 38th Parallel in preparation for Operation Rugged. After nearly 21 days of continuous combat since crossing the Han river, the 24th Infantry was finally halted by determined Chinese resistance.





A M24 of the 79th Tank Bn. supports the 25th Infantry Division in mountainous terrain south of the 38th Parallel on 29 March 1951. This tank has a simplified tiger face painted on the front, which is shown in the color plates.



Near Chongpyong, a colorfully marked M46 of the 6th Tank Bn. helps extract another M46 from a muddy rice paddy on 2 April 1951. These colorful tiger markings remained in use until later in the spring. They gradually disappeared once they became scruffy and were overpainted during periodic overhaul.



As the UN forces regained the 38th Parallel in late March 1951, it was time for celebration after a hard winter of fighting. UN correspondents from several countries posed in front of a M4A3E8 tank on the 38th Parallel, the border between North and South Korea.



A M46 tank of the 64th Tank Bn. mounts up infantry from the 3rd Infantry Div. during operations along the Imjin River on 7 April 1951. Careful inspection of the glacis plate of the lead tank will reveal that it has a tiger's head insignia on the 3rd Infantry blue and white square, much like the M4A3E8s of the unit.



A M37 105mm howitzer motor carriage of the 58th Field Artillery Bn. supports the 3rd Infantry Div. during fighting on the Imjin river on 12 April 1951. The M37 was based on the M24 light tank chassis, and was intended to replace the old M7 105mm HMC on the M4 medium tank chassis.



The M24 Chaffee remained in service in 1951, but it was limited to divisional reconnaissance companies like this M24 of the 45th Recon Co., 45th Infantry Div. during fighting on 18 April 1951. The M24 was popular with its crews so long as it was not faced with serious anti-tank weapons. It could be penetrated by the 14.5mm PTRS "buffalo guns" occasionally used by Korean and Chinese infantry.



An Army field artillery battery is escorted by infantry in a M39 armored utility vehicle on the Central Korean Front on 23 April 1951. The artillery unit is still equipped with the old M7 105mm HMC, which had been replaced in many other units by the M37 105mm HMC.



A Marine unit moves forward on the central front under the watchful eye of a M26A1 of the 1st Tank Battalion. Leading the infantry column is a M29 81mm mortar team with the lead marine carrying the bipod, followed by the tube, and then the baseplate.

M24s of the 6th Tank Bn. move up to the front on 23 April 1951 in support of the 24th Infantry Div. in response to the Fifth Chinese Offensive. At the time, the 24th was one of the most forward deployed US units, defending along the Hantan river to the northeast of Seoul.



A M24 of the 3rd Recon Co., 3rd Infantry Div. named "Eagle Claw" in action against Chinese infantry near Songdong-bong on 20 May 1951. This was part of an offensive by IX Corps called Plan Detonate that was aimed at draining remaining Chinese strength north of Seoul.

A M32A1 armored recovery vehicle recovers a M4A3E8 that had struck a mine on 3 July 1951 while supporting the 3rd Infantry Div. Once the frontline had stabilized along the 38th Parallel in the spring of 1951, most tank losses were the result of mines encountered during local raids and probes.



A M39 armored utility vehicle shows the devastating effect an anti-tank mine has on such a light armored vehicle. The drive sprocket and lead road wheel have been shattered by the force of the blast, and the driver was probably seriously injured. This vehicle belonged to Co. A, 89th Tank Bn. and the incident occurred near Chonyon-ni on 8 August 1951.

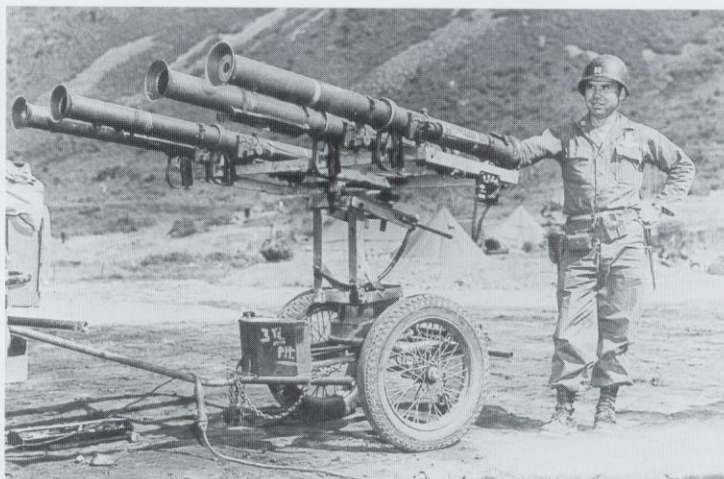


As the Korean War stalemated along the 38th Parallel, the role of tanks changed. The US Army deliberately decided to refrain from major offensives into North Korea, and as a result, there was little need for the tanks' mobility. As a result, they became used for artillery fire support. Here, some M4A3E8s from the 72nd Tank Bn. provide fire support for the 23rd Infantry, 2nd Infantry Div. north of Pia-ri on the east-central front on 18 September 1951. The 72nd Tank Bn. was one of the few US units to regularly camouflage paint their tanks, and a close inspection of the photos will show a pattern of field drab over the usual olive drab finish. The prominent white stars have been removed, and tactical markings are limited to a white tactical number and the usual vehicle serials.

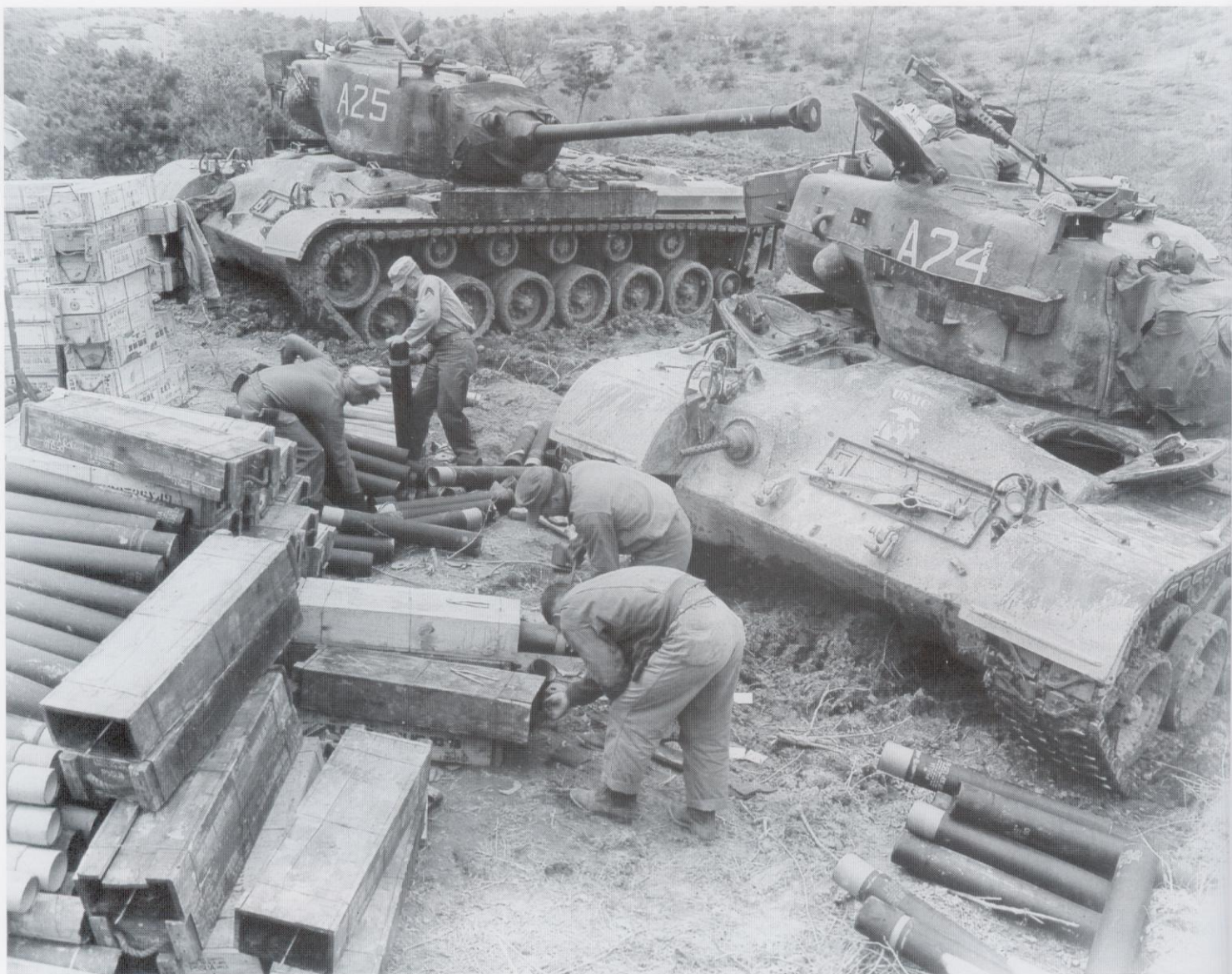
Although the threat of Korean tanks had disappeared after 1950, the 3.5 inch bazooka was still widely used for fire support. Here, Capt. Albert Barron shows his idea of useful improvisation consisting of a mobile mount for four bazookas. These were connected to a small control device that allow them to be fired in quick succession like a mini-multiple rocket launcher.



The most potent artillery weapon of the Korean war was the M40 155mm gun motor carriage. The 155mm gun was accurate and long ranged. Here, an M40 named "Bulldog's Bark" of Battery B, 937th Field Artillery, engages in a nighttime artillery mission near the 38th Parallel.



The Marine 1st Tank Battalion was reequipped with M46 Patton tanks after the spring 1951 campaign to make up for its losses. Here, Co. A rearms for a fire mission on 25 April 1952. By this time, the division had been moved to western Korea, south of Panmunjom, and was holding a defensive perimeter called the Jamestown Line.



A good detail shot of the rearming process. The 90mm ammunition was delivered in two-round wooden crates, while the rounds themselves were stored in black fiberboard tubes for added protection. The markings on the Marine M46s at this time were very simple, the tactical number in white on the hull front and turret sides, and the USMC globe and anchor insignia on the bow between the driver's hatches.



A recently repainted M46 of Co. C, Marine 1st Tank Bn. in defensive positions south of the Jamestown Line on 6 May 1952. This provides a very clear view of the standard tactical Marine markings at this phase of the war.

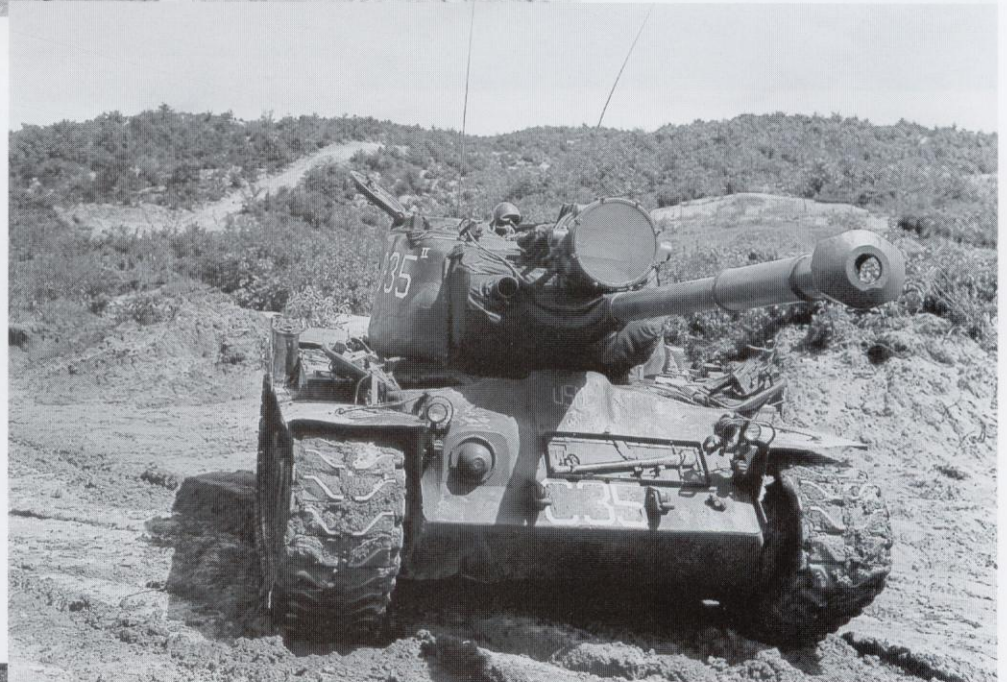


A pair of M4A3E8 tanks provide fire support for a Marine unit along the Jamestown Line on 9 June 1952. The tanks have mud camouflage over their olive drab finish. Their unit identification is not known, but they may be from the tank company of the neighboring 1st Korean Marines.



During the skirmishes along the Jamestown Line in the summer of 1952, Marine am tanks were kept near the coast as their thin armor and cumbersome performance in the mountains limited their utility. The 1st Armored Amphibian Tractor Bn. deployed many of its LVT(A)-5 am tanks in a defensive line around the Kimpo airbase to provide fire support. Here, the crew resupplies their am tank with 75mm ammunition from a neighboring bunker.

In the summer of 1952, the first supplies of General Electric tank searchlights became available to assist in night fighting. These were intended to be used against Chinese night infantry attacks. This is an M46 of Co. C, Marine 1st Tank Bn.

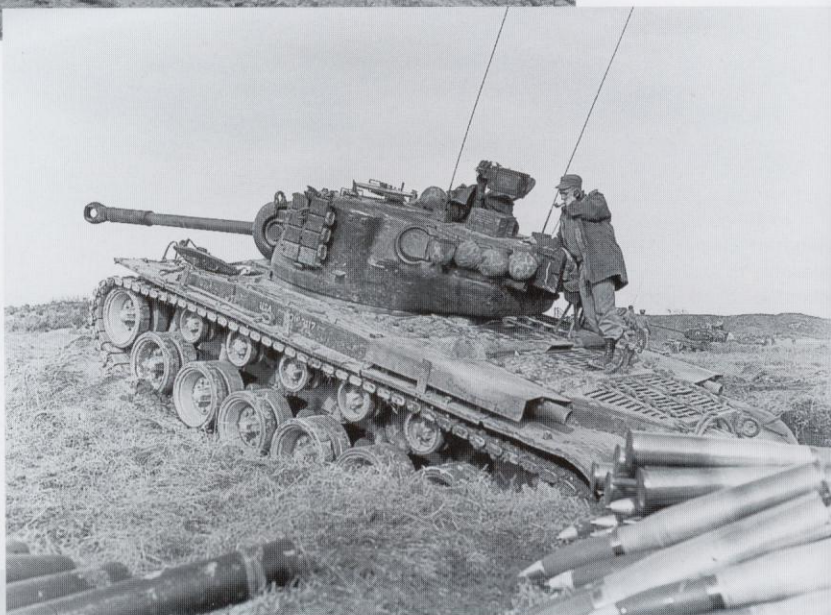


The Marine Corps retained a role to protect several off-shore Korean islands, and so kept its amtracs in theatre for possible missions. Here a group of LVT-3C Bushmasters take part in an exercise on Tochok-to island on 18 November 1952.



A M46 of the Marine 1st Tank Bn. moves its position on 20 November 1952. By this time, the Marine frontline had calmed down after an intensive battle around a position called "the Hook" in late October. - This is probably a tank from Co. A, which often left off its company letter in its tactical markings.

A Marine M46 waits for fire instructions during a lull in the fighting in December 1952. At the time, the Chinese PVA was directing its attention against the Commonwealth Division to the east. In the foreground is a stack of fuzed high explosive rounds for a possible fire mission.



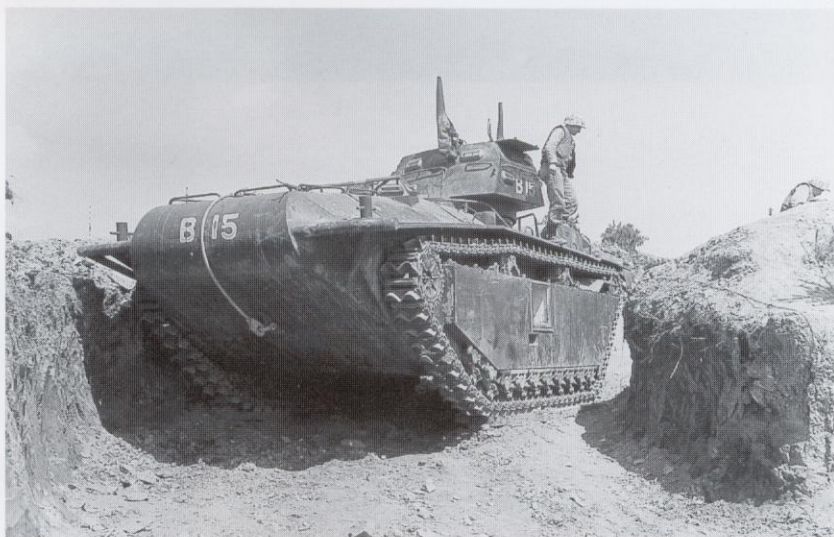
A LVT-3C moves over an improvised landing in March 1953. The 1st Marine Amphibian Tractor Bn. was used for river patrols along the Imjin in 1952-53. The elaborate barrel and PSP dock here was needed as the river banks were so soft and muddy that the amtrac could get trapped.

Whether involved in fighting or not, tanks still have to be maintained. Here a Marine crew cleans the barrel of a M46 Patton during a lull in the fighting on 24 March 1953.



During the outpost fighting in 1952-53, Chinese or Korean troops would infiltrate through UN lines with captured bazookas to attack entrenched UN tanks. Here, a Marine dozer M46 is fitted with an improvised anti-bazooka screen made from chain-link fence.

The bulky size of the LVT(A)-5 is very evident in this photo here of a vehicle from Co. B, 1st Armored Amphibian Tractor Bn. in defensive positions around Kimpo airbase on 9 April 1953. This variant of the amtrac had a new bow to provide greater bouyancy in water, and the turret was modified with an armored roof and a greater number of vision devices.





One curious improvisation on some Marine M46s in the final months of the fighting were these improvised casing catchers mounted on the left side of the turret near the loader's hatch. These were intended to catch the spent ammunition casings. So much ammunition was expended during artillery fire missions, that the basket was more convenient than having to police up the area for spent casings after each fire mission.



A Marine M4A3 (105) flamethrower tank with the POA-CWS-H5 flame-gun practices against a wall near Panbu-dong. These flamethrower tanks were most extensively used in 1951 during the fighting along the 38th Parallel, but their utility diminished once the frontline stabilized.

As the war ended, the ROK began to remark its tanks with the Korean flag instead of the white allied star, as seen on this M24 Chaffee light tank.



TANK WARFARE IN KOREA 1950 - 53



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