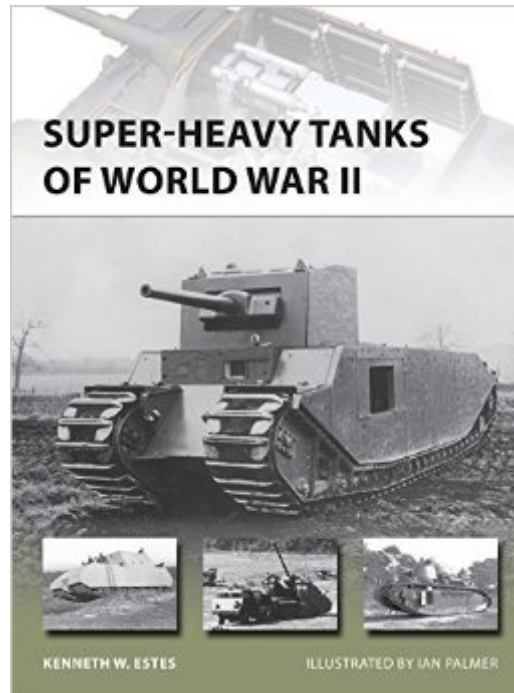


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Super-heavy Tanks Of World War II (New Vanguard)



Synopsis

This title explores the conception and design of a range of enormous and powerful tanks that came to be designated as 'super-heavy'. The fascinating super-heavy tanks of World War II were heirs to the siege machine tradition - a means of breaking the deadlock of ground combat. As a class of fighting vehicle, they began with the World War I concept of the search for a "breakthrough" tank, designed to cross enemy lines. It is not surprising that the breakthrough tank projects of the period prior to World War II took place in the armies that suffered the most casualties of the Great War (Russia, France, Germany). All of the principal Axis and Allied nations eventually initiated super-heavy development projects, with increasingly heavy armor and armament. Much as the casualties of World War I prompted the original breakthrough tank developments, as Germany found itself on the defensive, with diminishing operational prospects and an increasingly desperate leadership, so too did its focus turn to the super-heavy tanks that could turn the tide back in their favor. Although only a small number of super-heavy tanks were built, much less saw active service, their impressive appearance and specifications - not to mention the possibilities of what might have been - have captured the interest of AFV enthusiasts, historians and military personnel. This illustrated and detailed study explores and compares these designs in unprecedented depth.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Humans have always been fascinated with the massive, the gargantuan. Stroll down to your nearest natural history museum and see where the crowds are - checking out the whale skeleton or the

mock up of the T-Rex. Similarly there will always be a fascination amongst certain military buffs for the really fancifully large AFV. This entry in the New Vanguard series by Osprey follows the template of the others. We get concise histories, concise details of deployments (not really a feature here!) and a range of photos and colour plates. The author admits to a fairly arbitrary definition of 'super heavy' in relation to tanks but that doesn't detract - even the smallest vehicles here were huge for their time (he's picked the 70t mark). The work fairly scoots through an introduction taking the reader from 1918 to 1940. There is mention of the massive tanks the Germans and French were planning but which got curtailed due to the end of the war (no mention of the 65t Italian F2000 surprisingly) and then the work moves onto the meat and potatoes of a nation by nation discussion of plans, prototypes and the almost utterly elusive fruition to deployment. The French come first with their Char 2C which was actually built and operated albeit not really functional in 1940 for various reasons. Then there is discussion of the British and their TOG tanks, behemoths that in many respects look very 'WW2 British' - ie somewhat antiquated when placed against the more stripped down functionality of US and Russian arms. And of course they never saw production. German super heavies are then discussed though the legions of German WW2 AFV fanatics will probably find little to nothing new here but for the general reader it is interesting.

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