



# Hold the Westwall or Perish With It: The History of Panzer-Brigade 105, September 1944

Timm Haasler

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Hold the Westwall... tells the story of an experiment that failed: The creation of separate armored brigades within the Panzertruppe in 1944. Formed at the direction of Hitler in response to the dramatic situation that was developing on the Eastern Front in the summer of 1944, the brigades 10 in all were to be a form of fieldarmy-level ready reserve and strike force. These brigades, which featured a tank battalion, a mechanized infantry battalion, a company of mechanized combat engineers as well as a substantial amount of organic antiaircraft firepower, could have been the iron fist envisioned by Hitler had they not been so hastily formed and then committed in ways never doctrinally called for. This book represents the first study in English of this failed experiment, concentrating on the formation, deployment, virtual destruction and ultimate deactivation of Panzer-Brigade 105. Instead of being deployed on the Eastern Front as originally intended, the brigade was rushed to the West to the increasingly perilous and unstable situation there for the Germans in the fall of 1944. Making use of virtually every known primary source available concerning the brigade, as well as conducting extensive interviews of surviving members and reviewing all relevant secondary literature, author Timm Haasler has woven together a fascinating glimpse into the short life of this littleknown element of the late-war Panzertruppe. The story is presented not only from the German side, but also from the viewpoint of the various US forces that were employed against the brigade. As a result, the reader comes away with a comprehensive understanding of the tactics employed by both sides in the US attempt to breach the Westwall better known as the Siegfried Line to most American readers in the Stolberg area of Germany in September 1944. In the end, although almost completely wiped out, the brigade was able to slow down and then ultimately stop the US advance in its area of operations, thus delaying a rapid penetration through the frontier defenses of German, which might have hastened the end of the war. Hard cover, 6" x 9", 582 pages, 147 photographs, 22 maps and extensive charts and documentation.

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