










1



2

The Winter War			
Belligerents			
 Finland		 Soviet Union	 Finnish Democratic Government (puppet)
 Foreign Volunteers			
Commanders and leaders			
Kyösti Kallio, President <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Risto Ryti, Prime Minister• C.G.E. Mannerheim, CinC		Joseph Stalin, General Secretary, CP <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kirill Meretskov, CG, 7th Army• Kliment Voroshilov, Defense Commissar• Semyon Timoshenko, Defense Commissar	
Strength			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Troops: 240,000 (peak)• Tanks: 32• Aircraft: 114 operational out of 200• Navy: 2 coast defence ships, 5 subs		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Troops: 425,000-760,000• Tanks: 2,514-6,541• Aircraft: 3,880	
Casualties			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• KIA/MIA: 25,904• WIA: 43,557• CIA: 800-1,100• Tanks: 20-30• Aircraft: 62 		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• KIA/MIA: 126,875-167,976• WIA: 188,671-207,538• CIA: 5,572• Tanks: 1,200-3,543• Aircraft: 261-515 	

3

Historical Background

- Prior to 1808, Finland was a part of Sweden. 
- To punish the Swedes for refusing to aid him in his Continental blockade against Britain, Napoleon persuaded Alexander I of Russia to declare war on Sweden. The prize was Finland, which remained a part of Tsarist Russia from 1808 to 1918. 
- In 1918, General Carl Gustaf Mannerheim's White Guard (supported by Germany) defeated the Bolshevik-supporting Red Guard, who were supported by Soviet Russia.
- An abortive attempt to form the Kingdom of Finland with the Kaiser's brother-in-law as king collapsed with Germany's WWI defeat in 1918. Mannerheim went to London and Paris and the Republic of Finland was recognised. 




4

- The Soviet-Finnish War of 1939-40 was brought about by Russia's enigmatic foreign policy of 1939. On 24 August, the USSR and Germany signed a nonaggression pact.



5

- From 1 September – 6 October 1939, Germany invaded Poland, beginning World War II.
- On 17 September, Russian troops marched into Poland  to claim a share of Poland after its defeat by Germany.
- Shortly thereafter, the Soviets started putting pressure on her "lost provinces" to regain the territory lost in 1918.
 - Through mutual-assistance pacts, trade agreements, and military occupation, it gained virtual control of Latvia , Lithuania , and Estonia .
 - Finland refused to submit when presented with Soviet demands on 5 October 1939. On 13 November, the Soviet-Finnish diplomatic negotiations came to an end, and the Finnish delegates to Moscow returned to Helsinki.
- On 30 Nov. 1939, without notice, Russia attacked Finland .

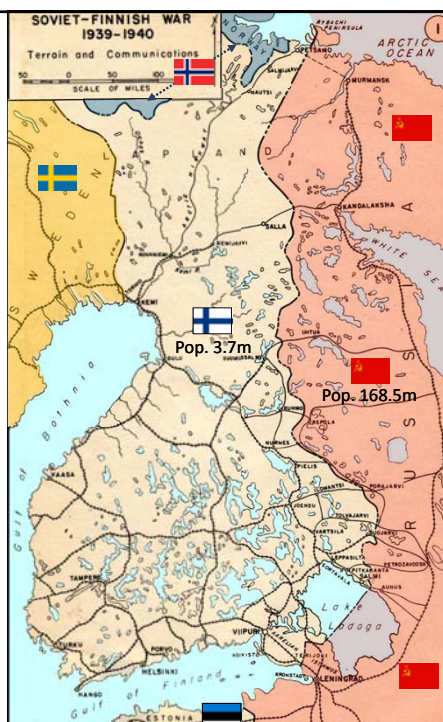


6

Terrain and Communication

- Unlike Poland, Finland offers poor maneuvering ground for mechanized warfare.
- Roughly 15 per cent of Finland is covered by some 60,000 lakes, and much land is swamp.
- Mechanized warfare is also impeded by the fact that 60 per cent of the dry land is covered with dense forests.

In normal times, more than half of the population of 3,700,000 is employed in the timber industry and its by-product plants.



7

- A line drawn from the head of the Gulf of Bothnia to the eastern edge of Lake Ladoga divides the country into two distinct parts.
- The southern part to the south is more important. Most of Finland's industry and 95 per cent of her population are concentrated in this area. The terrain here is quite flat and dotted with lakes.
- Northern Finland is relatively uninhabited and, although containing numerous lakes, is more mountains than the southern part.
- The eastern boundary roughly follows the divide separating the watersheds leading to the Baltic and White Seas.



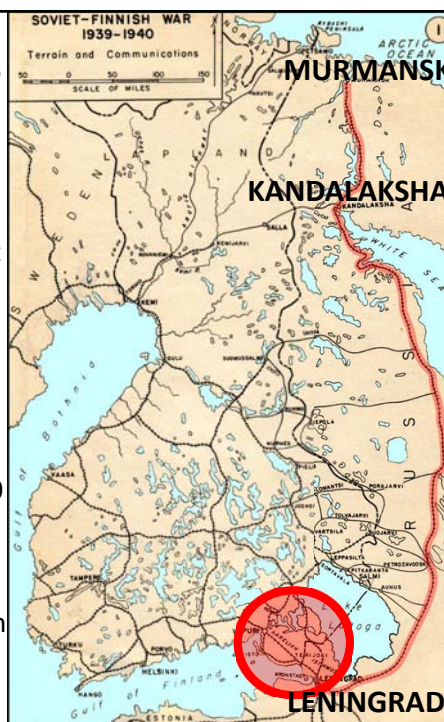
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- Southern Finland has excellent railroad networks. There are two rail lines from Finland to Russia, both running to Leningrad along the Karelian Isthmus.
- One railroad of particular importance is the line to Sweden through Kemi. This was Finland's only land connection with the outside world after she became involved in war with Russia.
- Severance of this line would have added to Finland's difficulties, but would not have been decisive as long as the Gulf of Bothnia sea lanes were open.



9

- The traditional route of invasion is along the Karelian Isthmus. This is the natural approach to Finland.
- Russians could also invade by water, but the Finns would have advantage.
- The Russo-Finnish boundary from the Arctic Ocean to Lake Ladoga is a great forest area crossed by only a few roads. Invading Finland by this route would rely on a very tenuous line of communications.
 - The east-west motor roads were poor and few in number.
 - The border was anywhere from 50 to 150 miles from the Leningrad-Murmansk railroad.
- The RR is single-track from Leningrad to Kandalaksha and double-track from Kandalaksha to Murmansk. The total length is 845 miles.



10

- The only gateway through which the Allies could send troops to Finland without violating the neutrality of Norway and Sweden was Petsamo on the Arctic Ocean.
- Petsamo is ice-free year-round and is connected to southern Finland by the so-called Arctic Highway. This single-lane bituminous road is kept open throughout the winter.
- In the campaign against Finland the Russians naturally wanted to gain possession of Petsamo, but as a route of invasion the Arctic Highway offered numerous difficulties.



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12

Soviet Strategic Demands

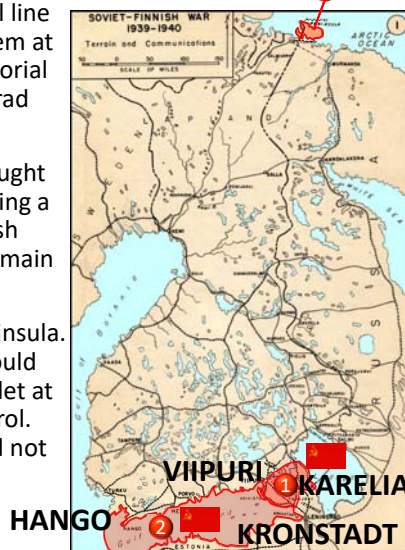
The Soviets sought added protection for Leningrad both by land and sea: **RYBACHI**

1. She demanded all of the Karelian Isthmus up to but not including Viipuri.

This would give her possession of the natural line of defense formed by the lake and river system at the northern extremity of the isthmus. Territorial gained would add to both security of Leningrad and ease of any future invasion of Finland.

2. To protect Leningrad from the sea, Russia sought full control of the Gulf of Finland by demanding a lease on the Hango peninsula and four Finnish islands between Helsinki and Kronstadt (the main Soviet naval base in the Gulf of Finland).

3. Soviet also demanded all of the Rybachi Peninsula. Most was already held by Russia, but this would give greater control over Finland's Arctic outlet at Petsamo, already under de facto Soviet control. A 1919 treaty guaranteed that Finland would not establish any naval units in the Arctic Ocean.



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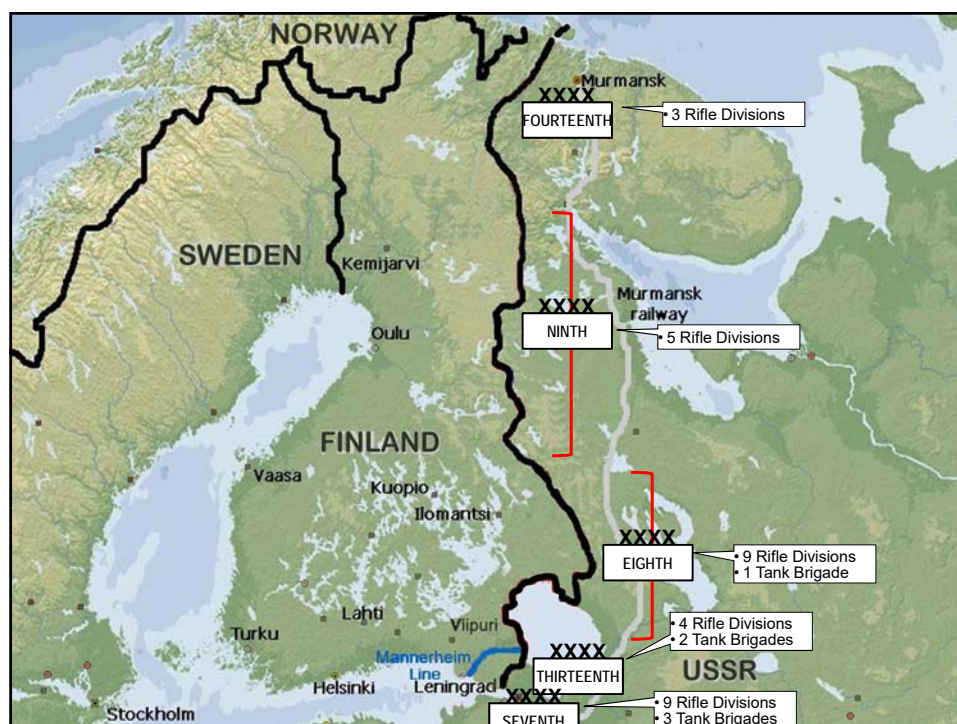
Russian Plans and Preparations

- The USSR planners intended to apply Germany's "*blitzkrieg*" strategy. The plan involved:
 - Land attack along every line of approach to southern Finland.
 - A naval blockade of Finland and rapier-like sea-borne invasions.
 - Carpet bombing to cut Finland's interior communications and terrorize the population into submission.
 - A simultaneous "fifth-column" Communist uprising would throw the country into civil strife and assist in its occupation.
- The main objective was seizure of the Kemi-Sortavala-Leningrad railroad.
 - To sever Finland's only land connection with the outside world.
 - To provide a good base of operations for a penetration into southern Finland, supplied from Leningrad rather than Murmansk.
- Another initial objective included the capture of Viipuri and the annihilation of Finnish forces between that city and Sortavala.
- After achieving the main objective, a final drive would be launched toward the general line Helsinki-Oulu.

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- The Russians assembled five armies consisting of thirty divisions and six tank brigades. The entire force numbered 500,000 men and 2,000 tanks.
 - The Seventh Army (9 divisions and 3 tank brigades) and Thirteenth Army (4 divisions and 2 tank bdes) were on the **Karelian Peninsula**.
 - The Eight Army's **Southeastern Front** from Aunus to Porajarvi had 9 divisions and 1 tank brigade.
 - Ninth Army's **Central Front** from Repola to Kurtti had 5 divisions.
 - Fourteenth Army's **Northern Front** (Murmansk) had 3 divisions.
- All divisions had tank units assigned, even if smaller than brigades.
- Armies and divisions had organic **artillery**.
- An estimated 800 **Soviet Air Force** planes were assigned to bomb cities, interior communications, and Finnish positions.
- The **Russian Baltic Fleet** would blockade the Finnish coast with two large battleships, three cruisers, seventeen destroyers, eighty submarines, and auxiliary vessels.
- The **Russian Arctic Fleet** would blockade the north with destroyers, patrol vessels, and submarines.

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Finnish Plans and Preparations

- Tiny Finland could not hope to hold out indefinitely against a power like the USSR. Best case was to stop or impede the Soviets in the hope that:
 - Other nations would come to Finland's assistance in time; or
 - The Soviets were diverted by an attack in another quarter.
- Throughout the peace following WWI, the Finns knew that they would someday have to fight the USSR and were psychologically prepared.
- Though retired in the 1920s, General Mannerheim urged defensive preparations and had sent promising young officers to study in the military schools of France and Germany. When appointed President of the Council of National Defense in 1931, he organised a compulsory military service bill (1932) and reorganised the armed forces.
 - Before mobilization, the Regular Army consisted of 33,000 officers and men, distributed among 1 antiaircraft, 9 infantry, 2 cavalry, 4 field artillery, and 3 coast artillery regiments.
 - Upon mobilization, this first-line force was expanded into six active divisions totalling about 127,000 men.
 - Finland also fielded six reserve divisions, with about 100,000 men.

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Another 100,000 were organized into a territorial militia known as the Civic Guard. They drilled and maneuvered at regular intervals were closely associated with the Regular Army.

These 327,000 were augmented by additional recruits during the period of hostilities. The total forces mobilized in Finland, including Army, Civic Guard, Navy, and Coast Guard, numbered ~400,000.

Finnish Order of Battle 30 November 1939

HEADQUARTERS

Marshal C. G. Mannerheim



KARELIAN ISTHMUS

Karelian Army - LTG H. Österman

II Army Corps, LTG H. Öhquist

1st Division (Shield Force Unit)
4th Division
5th Division
11th Division

III Army Corps, MG E. Heinrichs

"R" Brigade (Shield Force Unit)
8th Division
10th Division

LADOGA-KARELIA

IV Army Corps, MG J. Heiskanen
12th Division
13th Division
4 detached battalions

GENERAL HQ RESERVES

6th Division - in Luumäki
9th Division (minus Artillery) - Oulu

SOUTHERN COASTLINE

7 battalions

NORTHERN FINLAND

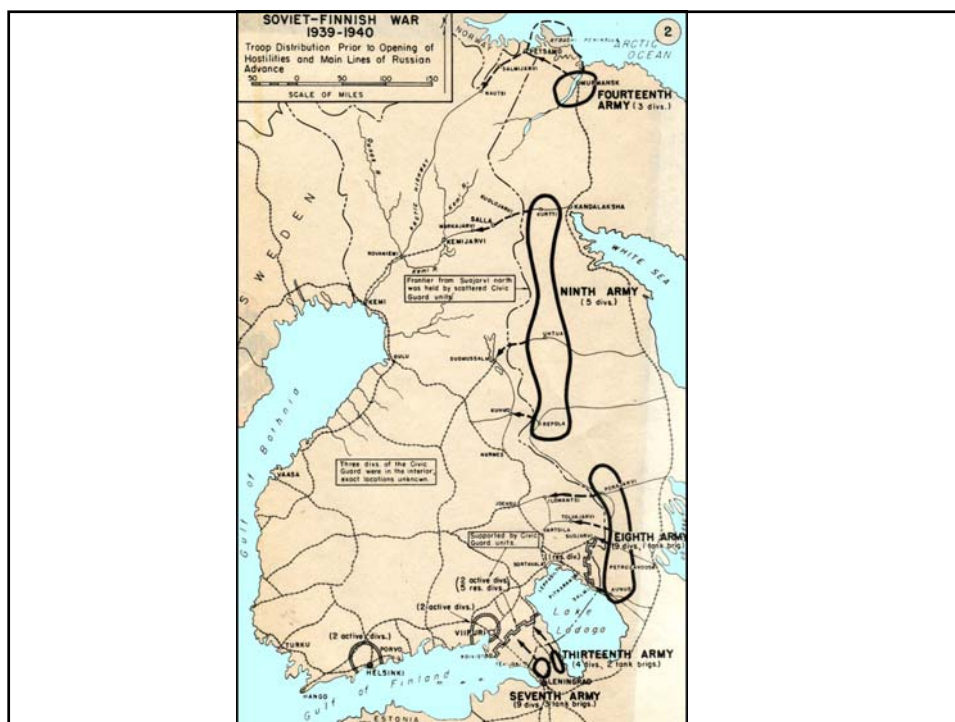
North Finland Group, MG W. Tuompo
2 battalions
No. Karelia Group, LTC E. Raappana
3 battalions
Lapland Group
1 battalion

ÅLÅND

1 regiment

Russian divisions were much larger than Finnish divisions, but Finnish regiments and battalions were larger than Russian. This gave a definite advantage to the Finns when fighting small scale skirmishes in the forests of the eastern Karelia and Lapland.

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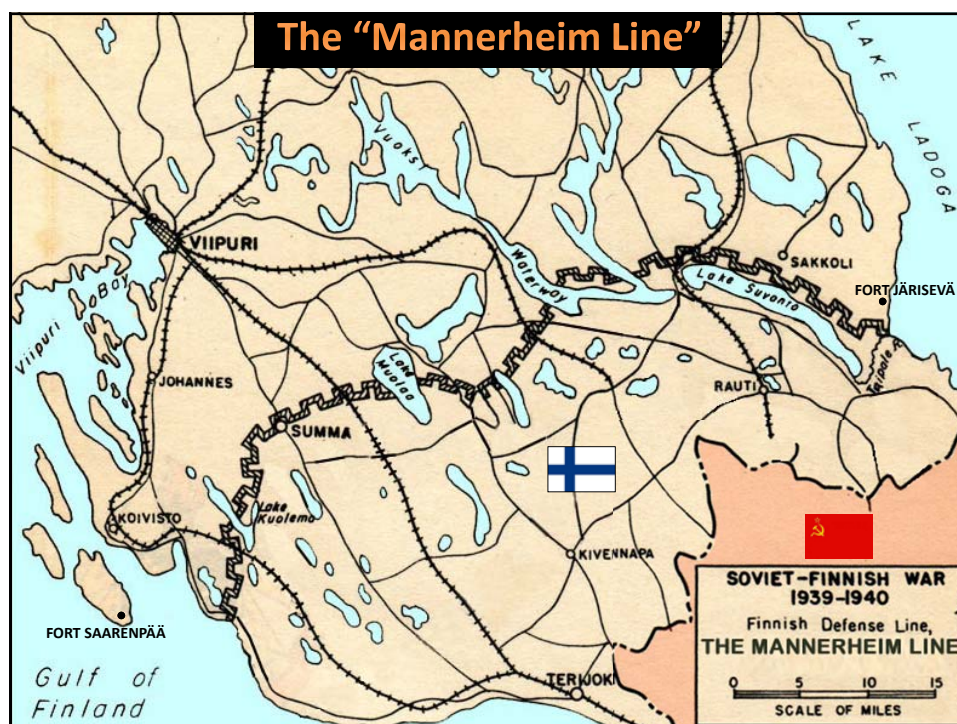
- 100,000 women served in the **Lotta Svärd** organization associated with the Civic Guard. They were trained military clerks, cooks, nurses, air raid wardens, and even AA gunners. This enabled most manpower to fight, by women taking on administrative and maintenance tasks.



From a poem by Johan Ludvig Runeberg. Lotta Svärd accompanies her husband to war in 1808. He is killed but she remains on the battlefield, taking care of wounded soldiers.



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21

Flexible Defence

- While Finland's National Defense Council Chair from 1931-1939, Mannerheim oversaw construction of the so-called Mannerheim Line across the Karelian Isthmus facing Leningrad (now St. Petersburg). The defences were intended to discourage potential aggressive moves by the Soviet Union, and if necessary to delay more than repel an invasion using the Finnish strategy of flexible defence.
- The "Mannerheim Line" across the Karelian Isthmus was **not a fortification** but rather a series of strongholds, with 157 machine gun positions and eight artillery positions built of concrete. There were no underground defensive works.
- Unlike the French Maginot Line and other similar forts made with huge bunkers, pillboxes, and lines of dragon's teeth, the Mannerheim Line was mostly built by utilizing the natural terrain, trenches, obstacles, fallen trees and boulders. The Finns also mastered camouflage techniques, which they put to good use.
- The Gulf of Finland coast was guarded by Fort Saarenpää, the side of Lake Ladoga by Fort Järisevä. These coastal artillery positions had 5", 6" and 10" guns.



Along the Mannerheim Line

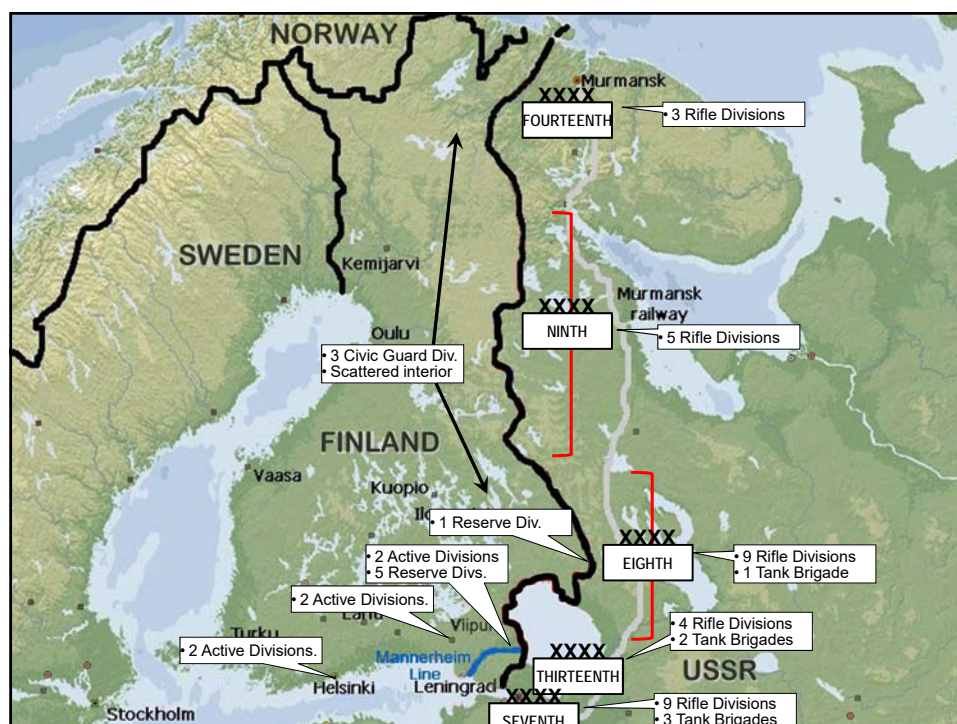
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- At the outbreak of hostilities the Finnish military forces were distributed as follows:
 - The Army of the Isthmus with two active divisions and five reserve divisions held the fortifications on the Karelian Isthmus;
 - One reserve division occupied the Southeastern Front;
 - Two active divisions were in reserve behind the Karelian Front;
 - Two active divisions were near Helsinki as a strategic reserve;
 - Three divisions were somewhere in the interior; others were on the Karelian and Southeastern Fronts; and some were frontier guards along the Russo-Finnish boundary north of Suojärvi.
- The Finns offered no serious opposition to Russia in the air or on the sea.
 - The Navy had 18 vessels; some on Lake Ladoga. But seacoast defences proved effective against Soviet attack.
 - Finland had only 150 airplanes.



J 8A Gloster Gladiator at Veitsiluoto with Åke Söderberg as pilot.

23

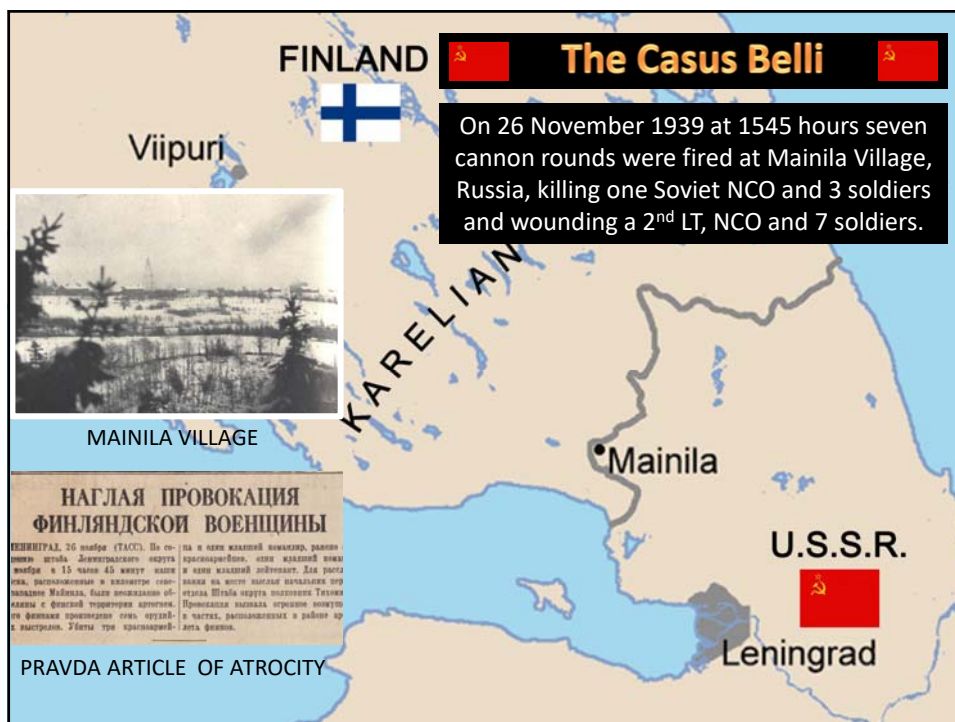


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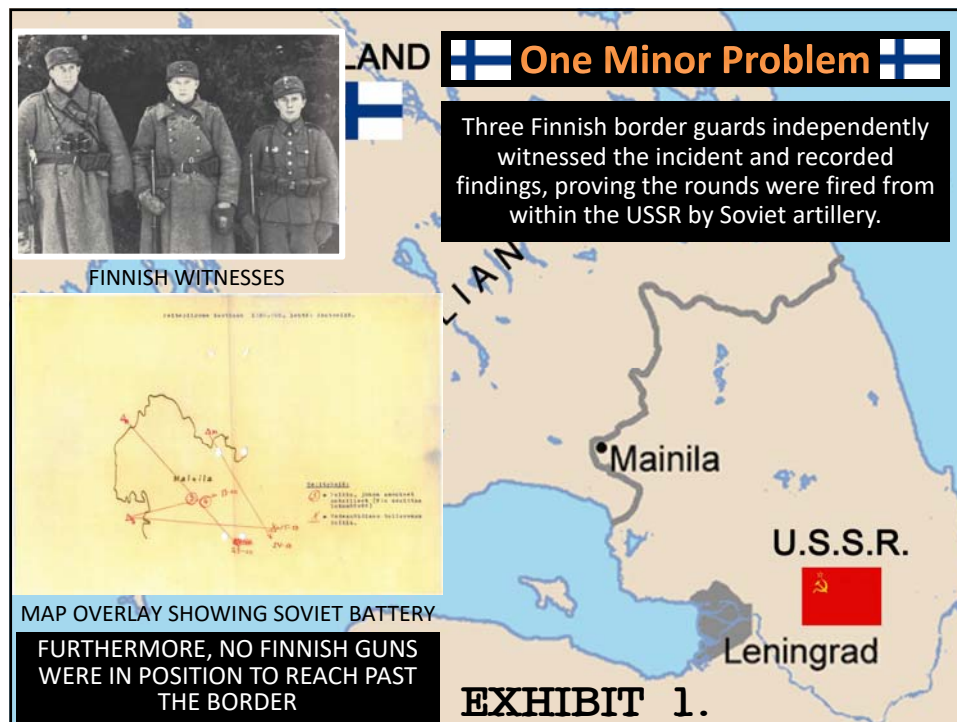


SM-1 Minesweeper

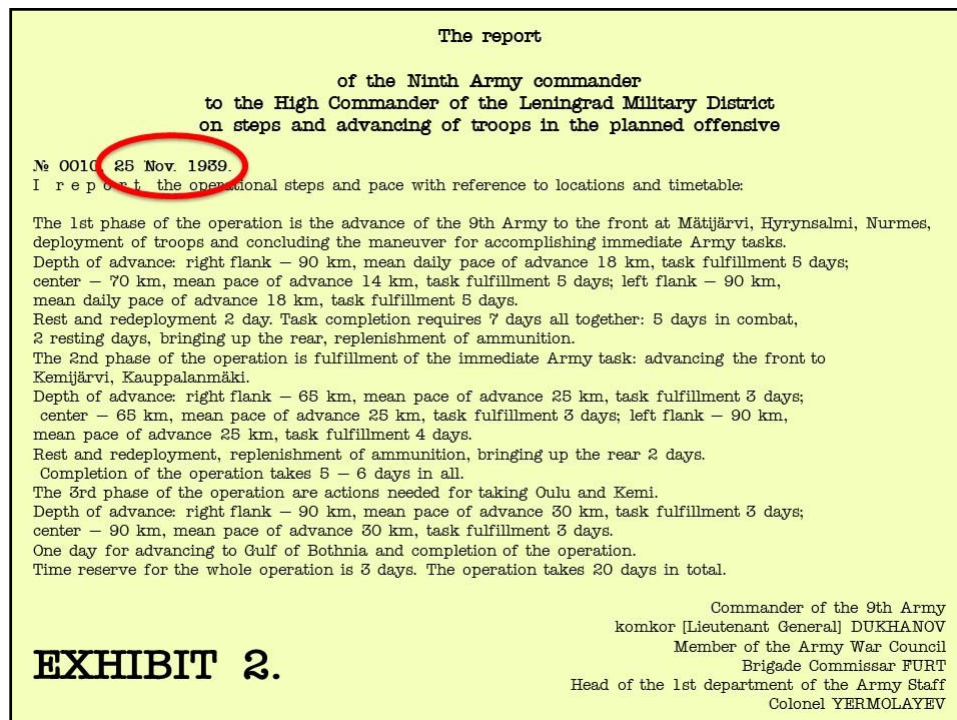
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28

False-flag Operation: The Mainila Incident

A false-flag operation is a “deliberate” effort to provoke - in politics, to get a “formal” *casus belli*, as pretext to start a war.

There had been many Finnish border incidents during twenty years that had not started a war. But now Stalin wanted one and got it, using Mainila as the pretext.

Not only did the Soviets try to copy Nazi Germany’s blitzkrieg tactics, they adopted Hitler’s tactic of staging a false attack as justification for a “retaliatory” attack.

To “justify” invasion of Poland, for example, SS troops attacked a German radio station and blamed the attack on Poles.

29

THE WINTER WAR

30 November 1939 – 13 March 1940

Operations fall in three phases, corresponding to the three months.



Nov-Dec 1939

**SOVIET ATTACK
BOGS DOWN**



January 1940

**RELATIVE QUIET
AS SOVIETS
REGROUP**



Feb-Mar 1940

**THE SOVIET
DRIVE TO
VICTORY**

Soviet ‘blitzkrieg’ didn’t work, so they fell back on brute force. They got their land, but Finland remained an independent state.

30

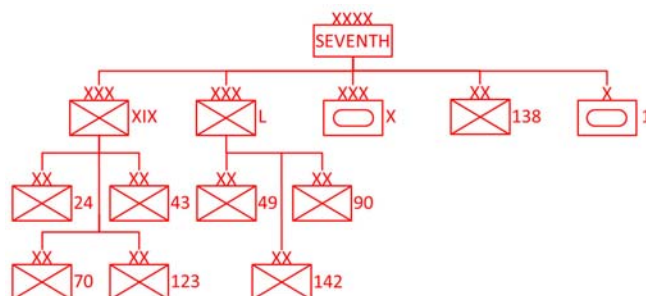


31

Soviet strategic thinking

Soviet political and military leaders thought that a decisive strike across the Karelian Isthmus would bring a swift victory.

The Soviet Seventh Army was assigned the task. It had some 120,000 infantry supported by 1,500 artillery pieces, 1,400 tanks and roughly 1,000 aeroplanes.



LTG Yakolev



LTG Garelenko



GEN Metetskov

The original plan was to support land-based assaults with naval forces from the Ladogan and Baltic fleets. These naval operations were abandoned due to weather conditions.

32

The Defence

- Facing the Soviets was LTG Hugo Österman's Army of the Isthmus with 26,000 infantry armed with 71 artillery pieces and 29 AT guns.
- II Army Corps was on the west side of the isthmus and III Army Corps on the east side in delay positions. As hostilities began, troops were meant to hinder and weaken the enemy while they performed a fighting retreat to defensible lines.



LTG Hugo Österman



- The Ladogan Flotilla had an icebreaker, two tugs converted to gunboats, a minelayer and two patrol boats (right). Once snow began, only the icebreaker was active.



33

On 30 November 1939, without waiting for a declaration of war, Soviet troops entered Finland.



34



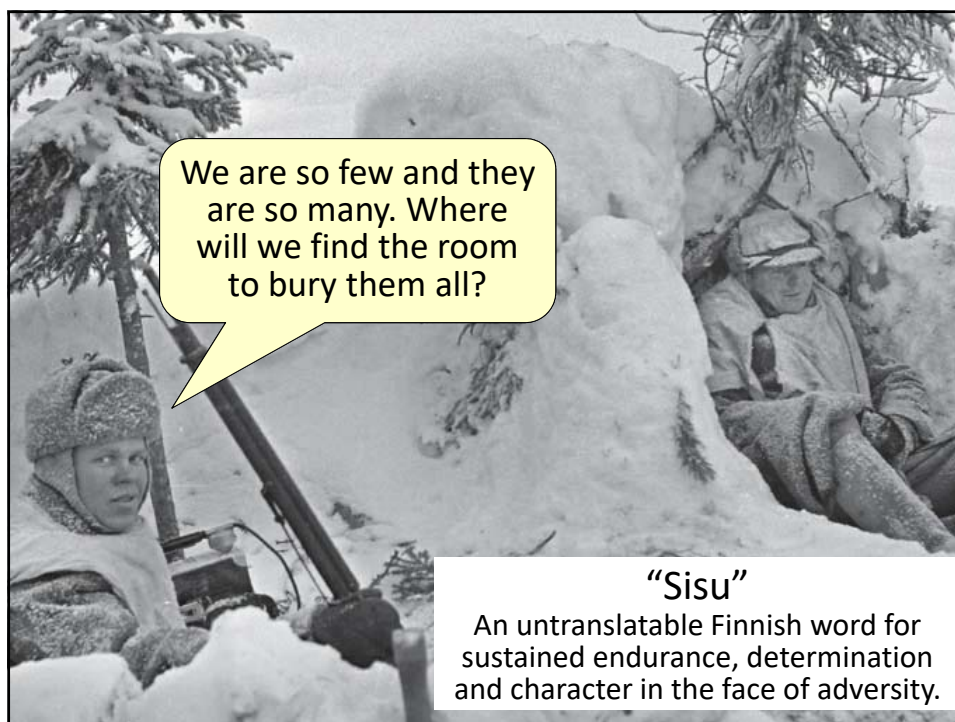
35

The Winter War begins

- Massed Soviet artillery opened up and the first red-starred bombers appeared over Finnish cities.
- For many Finnish soldiers this was their first experience of combat. Several recounted afterwards that at first it felt strange aiming and firing their weapons against other human beings. But there was no shortage of Soviet troops to shoot at.



36



37



38

RRAB-3 "Molotov Breadbasket"



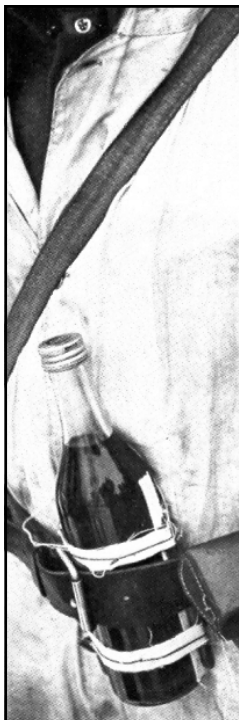
The Soviet "rotationally dispersing aviation bomb" combined a large high-explosive charge with a cluster of incendiary bombs. It was used against the cities of Finland during the Winter War of 1939–1940.

The bomb was 2.25 metres (7.4 ft) long and 0.9 metres (3.0 ft) in diameter. As it fell, a small turbine on the nose released a spring loaded casing which, on opening, scattered 100 or more incendiary bombs; the main HE charge in the tail of the weapon continued to fall as a conventional bomb.

Soviet foreign minister Molotov, architect of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact signed in late August 1939, declared on Soviet State radio that bombing missions over Finland were actually airborne humanitarian food deliveries for their starving neighbours. The Finns sarcastically dubbed the Soviet cluster bombs "Molotov bread baskets."

39

"Molotov Cocktail"



- When the Soviet Union attacked Finland in force with thousands of tanks, Finns perfected the design and tactical use of the petrol bomb to attack Soviet tanks called the "Molotov cocktail." Finns declared it "a drink to go with the food".



- The bomb used a slightly sticky mixture of gasoline, kerosene, tar, and potassium chlorate. Further refinements included attaching wind-proof matches or a phial of chemicals that would ignite on breakage, making them safer to use by removing the need to pre-ignite the bottle. Leaving bottles partially empty made them more easy to break.
- Finn LTG Unio Sarlin standardised a Molotov cocktail containing a mixture of ethanol, tar and gasoline in a 750 ml (0.79 US quart) bottle with two long pyrotechnic storm matches attached to either side. He had them mass-produced by the Alko Rajamäki distillery. 542,194 were produced during the Winter War.



40

Finnish anti-tank tactics

- Finnish policy was to separate armoured vehicles from infantry.
- Russian tanks were allowed to penetrate defences, and even induced to do so by 'canalising' them through gaps. Small arms fire was concentrated on the infantry.
- The tanks that penetrated were taken on by gun fire in the open and by small parties of men armed with explosive charges and petrol bombs in the forests and villages.



41

Finnish Anti-tank Tactics II



- Finnish tank destroyer tactics involved a soldier digging a small man-sized hole and waiting for his prey to roll over the top. Sitting tight hugging several kilos of satchel charge was a true test of a person's *sisu* (grit). Despite a near 70 per cent mortality rate among such troops, there was no end of volunteers to carry out these missions. This photo was taken in the Summa sector on 14 December 1939.

42

The Finnish Motti


- This word means “one cubic metre of firewood.” Woodcutters were paid by motti, and so would finish one pile and move on to build another.
- A IV Corp OPOrd dated 4 Jan 1940 directed a Comm Centre Motti to be set up near East Lemetti, one of the largest pockets of Soviet resistance at the time. The term quickly “motti” spread to mean any isolated pocket.
- During the IV Corps offensive, Finnish intention was to destroy the enemy. The road-bound Soviets were bypassed if strong or encircled if not, forming many pockets of Soviet troops.
- In the northern battles, mottis didn’t usually hold out for long but in the Ladoga Karelia, insufficient Finnish troops enabled the encircled Soviets to dig in and set up powerful defences, with internal tank and artillery support and aerial resupply.
- Destroying mottis was difficult, and required new tactics. Propaganda had little effect. The options were frontal attack or slow, steady pressure. A single commander (e.g., battalion) was charged with reducing “his” motti. They proved inventive and masters of motti warfare. Cables were run around the motti to coordinate pressure kept on until the enemy tried to break out or were so weakened that they couldn’t effectively resist attack.








43














44

Battles of the Winter War



The Centre - Northern Finland	
Battle of Petsamo	30 Nov 1939 to 12 Mar 1940  
Battle of Salla	30 Nov 1939 – 13 Mar 1940 
The Battle of Suomussalmi	5 - 8 Dec 1939 
The Battle of Suomussalmi	8 - 30 Dec 1939 
The Battle of Mäntyvaara	19 - 20 Dec 1939 
The Battle of Raate-Road	1-7 Jan 1940 

The Ladoga Karelia	
Battle of Kollaa	7 Dec 1939 to 13 Mar 1940 
The Battle of Tolvajärvi	12 Dec 1939 
Counterattack of Finnish IV Corps	12 - 14 Dec 1939 
Attack of Finnish IV Corps	6 - 17 Jan 1940 

The Karelian Isthmus	
Battle of Taipale	6–27 Dec 1939 
Battle of Summa Phase 1	16–22 Dec 1939 
Counterattack of the Finnish II Corps	23 Dec 1939 
The Battle of Kelja	25 - 27 Dec 1939 
Defense on Muolaa Church-Isthmus	14 - 15 Feb 40 
Battle of Summa Phase 2	1–15 Feb 1940  *
The Battle of Honkaniemi	26 Feb 1940 

45

Russian Failure

The Soviet first phase “blitzkrieg” is an object lesson in failure.
Nothing went as planned:

- The fifth-column attack failed.
- The air attack failed.
- The naval attack failed.
- The land attacks bogged down.
- International political initiatives failed.

46

The Fifth Column sputters



- On 1 December, Otto Kuusinen, a Finnish Communist who had fled to Russia in 1918, was set up as premier of a puppet "Finnish People's Government" at Terijoki, a few miles inside Finnish territory.
- Kuusinen called on the workers of the country to arise against their capitalist tyrants. He was ridiculed in Finland.
- The underground Finnish Communist Party was in shambles and could not incite a mass revolt in Finland.
- Most working-class Finns stood behind the legal government. The Finns were united against Soviet invasion (later called the "Spirit of the Winter War").
- When the war didn't go as planned, the "state" was disbanded.



47

Soviet Air Operations



- Initial Russian air attacks on Finland did not achieve objectives.
- The Finns had advance warning of imminent attack when diplomatic negotiations broke down 13 November. Finland mobilised her reserves for refresher training in October, when the original Russian demands were presented. When the USSR attacked on 30 November, mobilisation was nearly complete.
- Soviet air attacks on principal cities and lines of communication were not in sufficient force or sufficiently accurate to do much damage.
- Since 80% of the population lived in the country, the Red Air Force could not terrorize the people into quick submission.
- Snow began to fall on 2 December, and on the two succeeding days a terrible blizzard concealed military objectives. Cloudy skies hampered the operations of the Russian Air Force until mid-December.
- The shortness of the winter day also hampered air operations. On 21 December, there were only four hours of daylight in southern Finland.

(Photo: Soviet Tupolev SB bombers in the sky above Helsinki 30 November 1939.)

48

30 November 1939 - Helsinki

Three hours after the Winter War began, Soviet planes bombed Helsinki killing 97, wounding 260 and destroying 55 buildings. Helsinki was bombed eight times during the Winter War.



49

Finnish casualties were reduced by effective air-raid and AA precautions.



2 cm FlaK 30 anti-aircraft gun of Finnish 12th Division, Finland, 1940

50

The Soviet Union enjoyed air superiority throughout the war.

The Red Air Force supported the invasion with about 2,500 aircraft (the most common being the Tupolev SB-2 (ANT-40) bomber).

Material damage by bomber attacks was slight, as Finland did not offer many valuable targets for strategic bombing.

With few modern highways, Finnish railway systems were the main target for bombers. Damaged rail tracks were easily and the Finns usually had trains running in a matter of hours.

The Soviet air force learned from its early mistakes, and by late February they instituted more effective tactics. For example, 40 Polikarpov fighters struck the Ruokolahti airfield on 29 Feb 1940 and destroyed three aircraft on the ground and three taking off for the loss of only one I-16.



51

- While the Soviet air force's 2,500 planes outnumbered the Finnish Air Force by 20:1, Finnish pilots and anti-aircraft gunners inflicted significant losses on the Soviets.

- Finnish fighters shot down 240 confirmed Soviet aircraft, against the Finnish loss of 26. Finnish AA gunners shot down between 314 and 444 Soviet aircraft.

- So few Finns were shot down that they had greater strength at the end than in the beginning although pilot shortages meant only 100 flew at a time. Finland had seven aces.

- The FAF adopted the same guerilla tactics used by ground forces, making airfields of little more than a frozen lake and a windsock.



Soviet soldier loading ammo in new Polikarpov I-153 Chaika biplane (obsolete when it left the factory).

52



53



54

- The Soviets launched 2,075 bombing attacks on 516 localities, killing 957 Finnish civilians.
- Overall, Finland lost but 5 percent of total man-hour production time due to bombing. Nevertheless, bombings affected thousands of civilians.
- The city of Viipuri, a major Soviet objective, was hit by 12,000 bombs.



- Yet even as bombs were dropping in January 1940, Soviet newspaper *Pravda* ("Truth") and radio reports continued to stress that no civilian targets in Finland had been struck, even by accident.

55



Soviet Naval Operations



- The Soviet naval attack on Finland was ineffective.
- Although they occupied some undefended outer islands, they were unsuccessful in landing on the mainland.
- The Baltic Fleet bombarded Porvo, about 20 miles east of Helsinki, and attempted to land troops, but was driven off.
- Turku and Hango were also bombarded from the sea, but planned landings were postponed because of the severity of the Finnish coastal-defense fire.
- Three Russian destroyers, two submarines, and some auxiliary vessels were either crippled or sunk.

Gnevny-class destroyer in Baltic Fleet
Gremyashchiy (Гремящий; "Thunderous")



56

Finnish Coastal Artillery – Dominant Protection



120mm/40 A coastal gun

120mm/50V2 on double mount

152mm/35Mk 1

Dual 305mm (12'')/52 O guns

Obukhov 305mm guns firing

57



Октябрьская революция

(Oktyabrskaya Revolyutsiya or October Revolution)





Gangut-class battleship 1911
 24,800 tonnes, 181.2m x 26.9m,
 52,000 shaft HP (38,776 kW),
 Complement of 1,149

- 4 × triple 12 in (305 mm) guns
- 16 × single 4.7 in (120 mm) guns
- 1 × single 3 in (76 mm) AA gun
- 4 × 17.7 in (450 mm) torpedo tubes

Bombarded Finnish 10-inch (254 mm) coast defense guns on 18 December 1939 at Saarenpää in the Beryozovye Islands before the Gulf of Finland iced over. Failed to inflict any permanent damage before driven off with heavy damage.

58

Operations on the Northern Front

- Operations on the Northern Front were mostly limited to the Phase 1. There were some pitched battles, but most fighting was guerilla warfare.
- The Russians advanced in columns stretched out over many miles of the snow-covered roads through dense forests and frozen lakes.
- As the enemy advanced, the Finns retired before them, burning buildings and destroying everything useful.
- From the surrounding forests the long Russian columns were attacked by ski patrols, which struck at kitchens and supply trucks and then retired before the Russians could close in and destroy them.

Mannerheim's orders to his Civic Guard units in the north were to strike the Russian supply lines. These orders were faithfully carried out. The Finns adopted the strategy used by the Russians on Napoleon in his retreat from Moscow. When the opportunity did come to engage in battle, the Russian troops were so cold, hungry and exhausted that they were no match for their numerically inferior foes.

59

The Battle of Petsamo

30 November 1939 – 12 March 1940

Belligerents



Finland



Soviet Union

Commanders and leaders



Captain Antti Pennanen



Komarmy (GEN) Kirill Meterskov



Komarmy (GEN) Valerian Frolov

Units



Detachment Pennanen

- 10th Er.K. (Separate Company)
 - 5 Er.Ptri, 4x76mm M1887 guns
- 11th Er.K. (Separate Company)
- 3rd? Er.K. (Separate Company)



14th Army

- 104th Rifle Division
- 57th Rifle Division
- 14th Rifle Division (Liinahamari Harbour)

Strength

- 900

- 52,500

Casualties

- KIA/MIA: 89
- WIA: 115
- CIA: 16



- KIA/MIA: 181
- WIA: 301
- CIA: 72



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- The Fourteenth Army had no difficulty in taking Petsamo **1** on the second day of the invasion. Landing parties from the Arctic Fleet were assisted by troops moved overland.
- From Petsamo, an advance was made south along the Arctic Highway. By 15 December, the Russians had taken the nickel mines at Salmijarvi. **2**
- On 19 December their advance reached Nautsi. **3** Partly as a result of Finnish resistance and partly because of supply difficulties in the extremely cold weather, the Russians retired about twenty miles north. The temperatures took a sudden drop to 25 degrees below zero, Fahrenheit, in mid-December.
- Reinforced and resupplied, the Reds again advanced to Nautsi, but never got any farther. The only Finnish troops in Petsamo at the outbreak of hostilities were one infantry company and a battery of field artillery with four old guns, model 1887.
- The Finns on the Northern Front never exceed one battalion, even with addition of Swedish and Norwegian volunteers.



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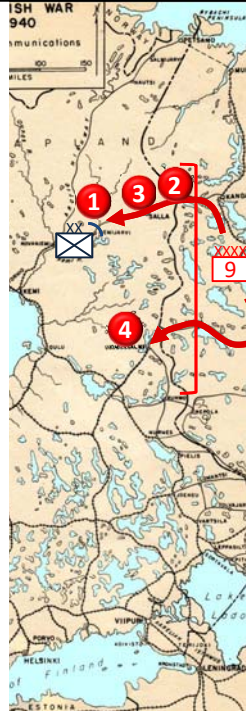
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The Battle of Salla	
30 November 1939 - 30 March 1940	
Belligerents	
 Finland +  Swedish Volunteers	 Soviet Union
Commanders and leaders	
 MG Kurt Martti Wallenius	 Komkor (LTG) Mikhail Dukhanov 
 LTG Ernst Lindner	 Komarmy (GEN) Vasily Chuikov 
Units	
 North Finland Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lapland Group Detachment Roininen (Er.P 17) Swedish Volunteer Corps 	 9 th Army <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 122nd Rifle Division 88th Rifle Division
Strength	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,500 9,400 Scandinavian Volunteers (10 Feb) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45,000-55,000
Casualties	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIA/MIA: 650 33 WIA: 450 50 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIA/MIA: 4,000 WIA: CIA: 2,100 

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The Central Front

- Operations on the Central Front were also limited almost entirely to the first phase of the campaign. Guerilla warfare was again prominent.
- The northern thrust of the Russian Ninth Army, on the Central Front was directed toward Kemijarvi, **1** the northernmost town with rail connections. The Russian 122d Division advanced and seized Kuolojarvi **2** on 4 December.
- By 15 December, this division moved through Salla **3** to Markajarvi. At Kemijarvi, the Reds found a Finnish Civic Guard division entrenched at Kemi River.
- On 19 December, an active division from Mannerheim strategic reserve at Helsinki arrived to assist the Civic Guard division. In a smashing offensive the Finns drove the 122nd Division back to Salla. Reinforced by the 88th Division, the Russians on this front later advanced to Markajarvi, where they remained to the end of the war.
- The central thrust of the Russian Ninth Army was directed toward Suomussalmi **4**, which is also connected to the southern railroad system.



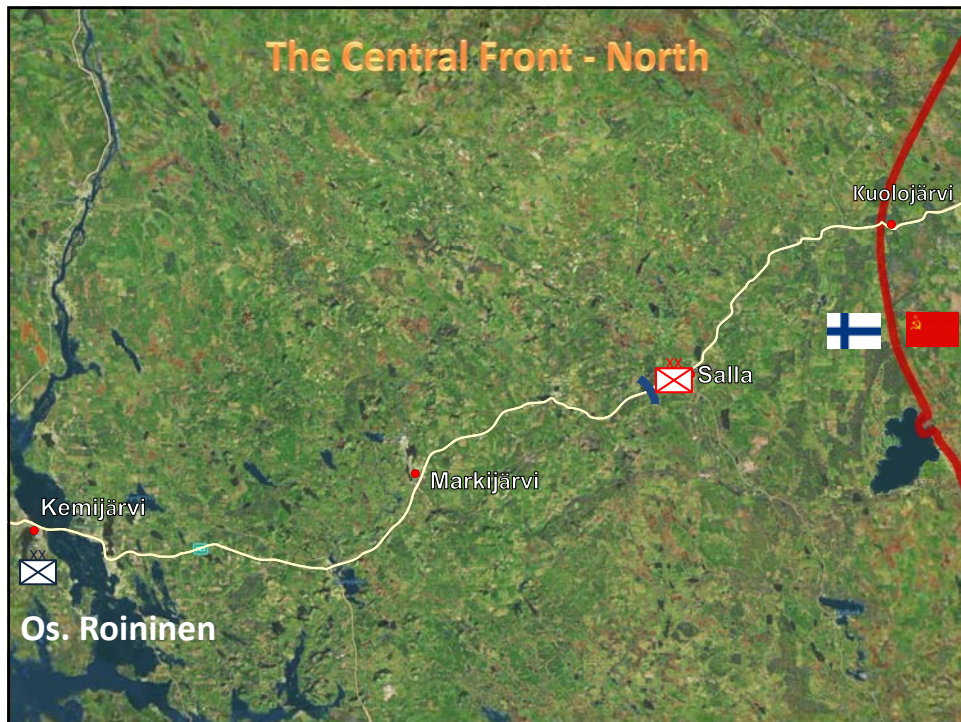
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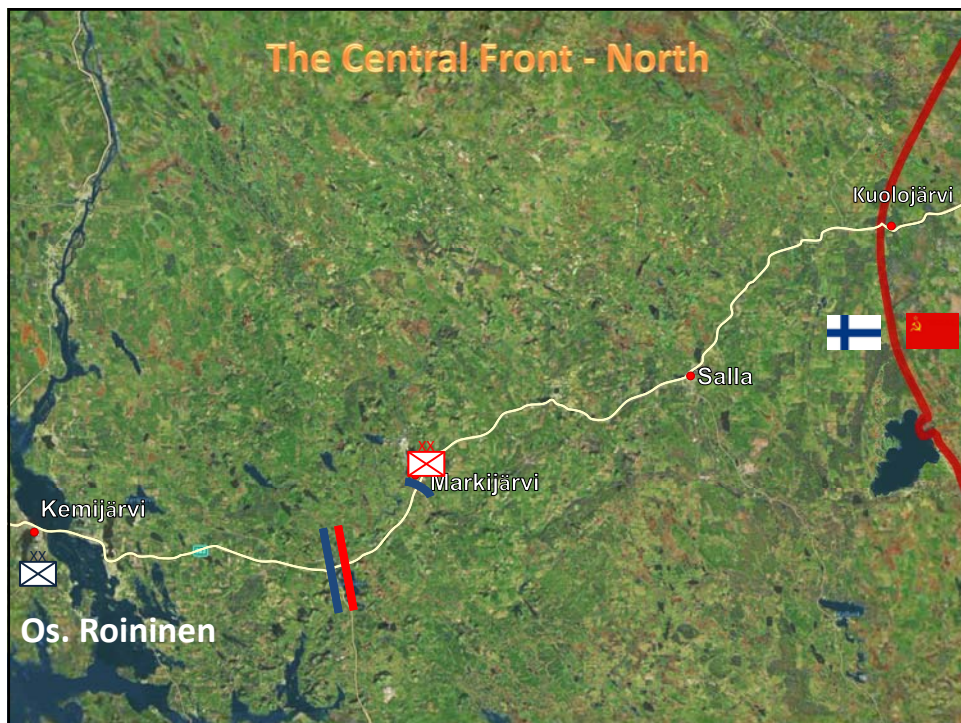
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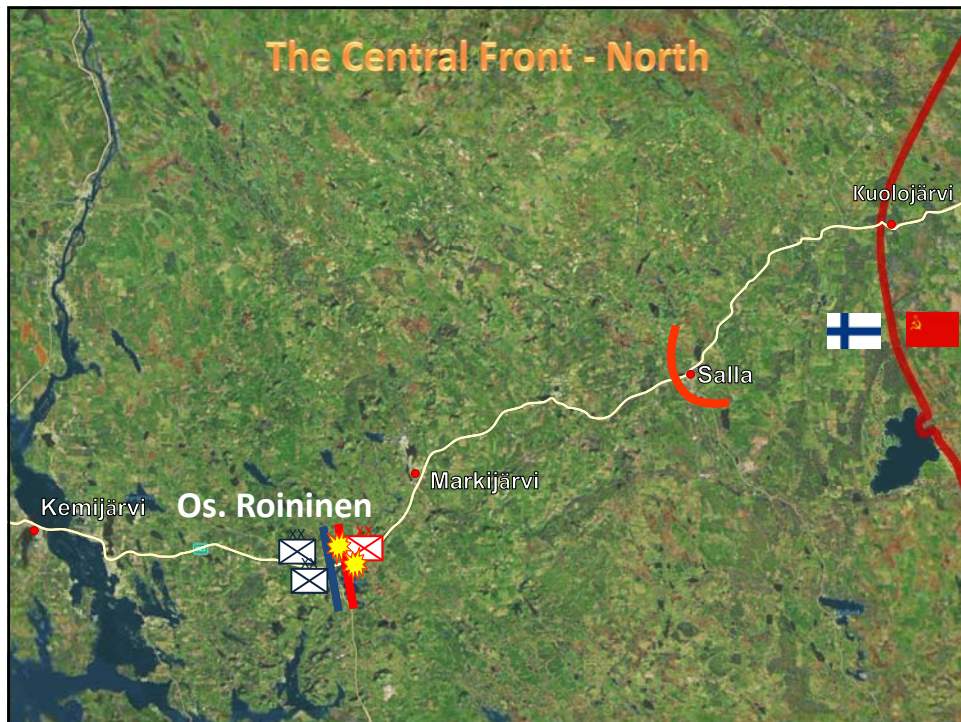
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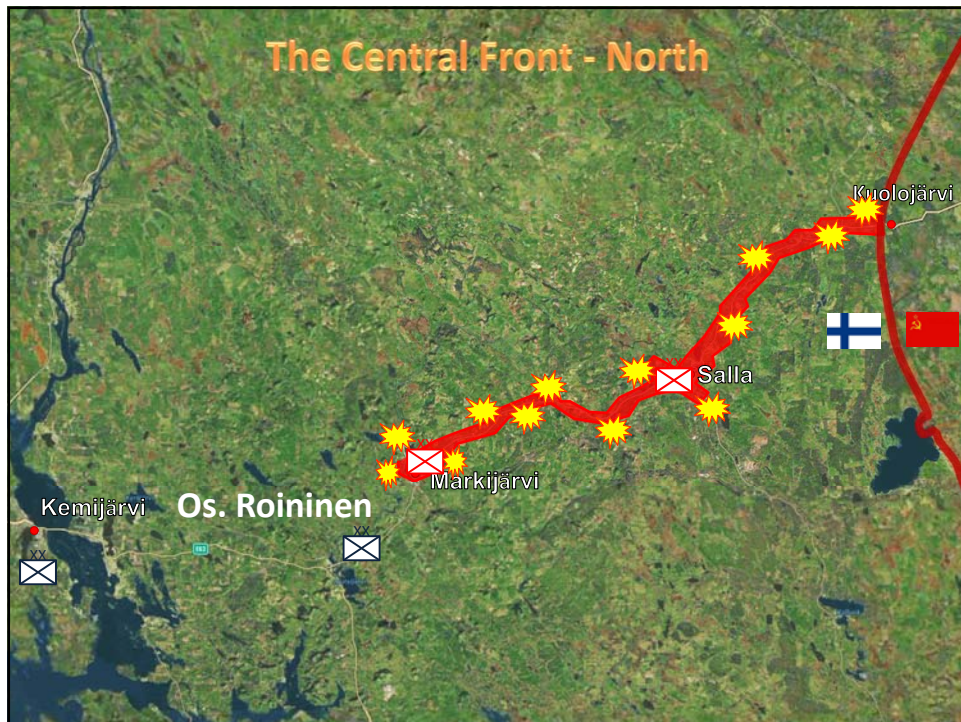
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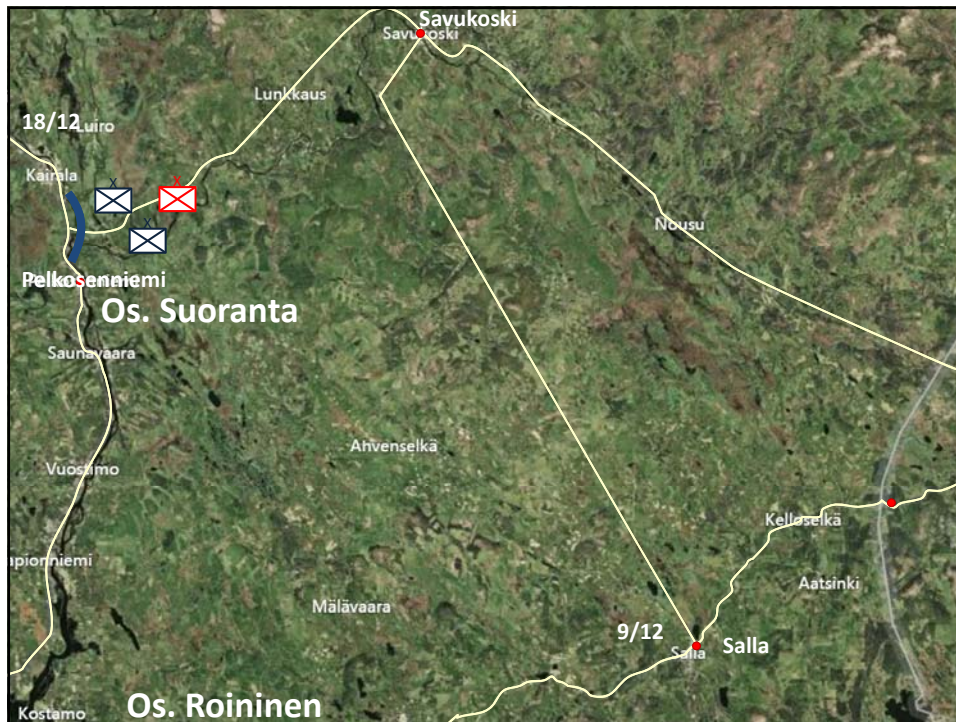
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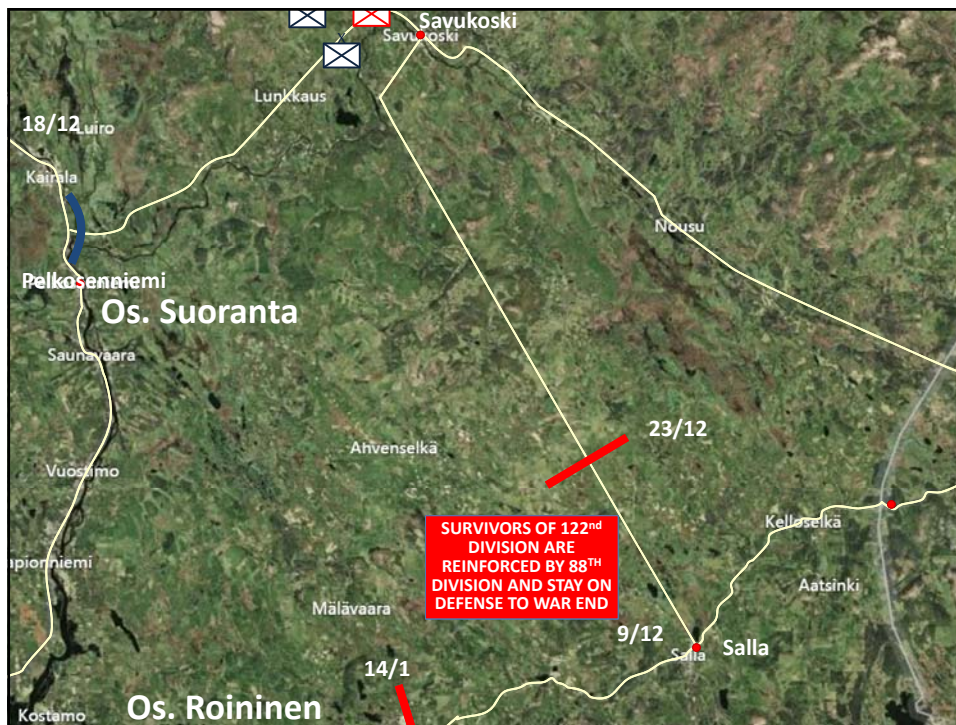
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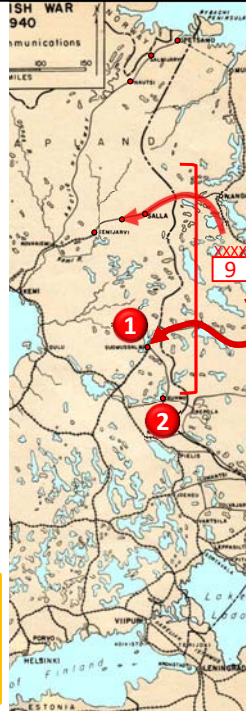
The Battle of Mäntyvaara	
20 December 1939	
Belligerents	
 Finland	 Soviet Union
Commanders and leaders	
 LTG Hjalmar Siilasvuo	 Kombrig (Brigadier) Alexei Vinogradov  (Exec. 11/1/40)
Units	
 2 companies of Er.P. 17 on rest from front	 122 th Rifle Division <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One battalion
Strength	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 523 advancing via forests to backside of Finnish troops which were in Joutsijärvi . The battalion wanted to reach the main Salla-Kemijärvi road at Mäntyvaara
Casualties	
 4% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIA/MIA: 17 • man to man fighting with knives, rifles as mauls and fists. Finnish and Soviets were higgledy-piggledy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIA: 346 • MIA: 177 

79

The Central Front - South

- Further south in the Central Front, the Russian Ninth Army initiated another drive towards the town of Suomussalmi **1**, which is also connected to the southern railroad system.
- One of the most interesting battles now took place. In the Battle of Suomussalmi, a Finnish division with some Civic Guard units almost completely destroyed the Soviet 44th and 163rd Rifle Divisions. The Finns killed thousands, took thousands of prisoners and captured great quantities of war materials.
- Even further south, the 9th Army's final division (54th) attacked the junction town of Kuhmo **2**, stopped by Civic Guards. They renewed the offensive in Phase 3 and only the end of the war saved the 54th from utter annihilation.

Fighting in the Central Front – South will be covered in detail in a separate presentation, which will detail the **Finnish Motti** defense strategy.



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The South-eastern Front

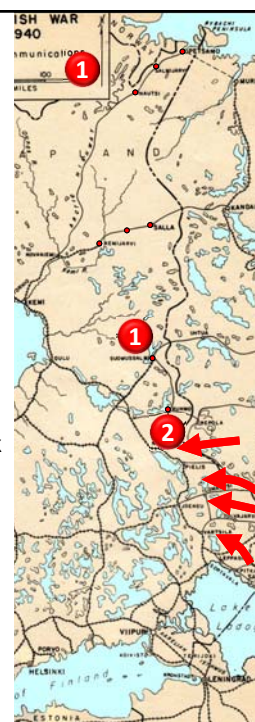
- To protect their Karelian defensive line from an envelopment around Lake Ladoga, the Finns organized a defensive position from the vicinity of Salmi to Suojärvi.
- The Red Eighth Army concentrated on two main drives.
 - The northern drive would outflank Finnish defences. The main effort of the northern drive was directed toward Tolvajarvi; secondarily Ilomantsi and Suojärvi.
 - The southern drive would push through at Salmi and advance along the shore of Lake Ladoga.
 - Success would enable reinforcement by rail.
- The initial strength of the Russian Eighth Army, including reserves, was nine divisions and a tank brigade. By the end of the war, thirteen Russian divisions had been used on this front.
- The Finnish strength was originally one reserve division and an unknown number of Civic Guard troops. The Finns were reinforced by an active division on 11 December.











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The South-eastern Front

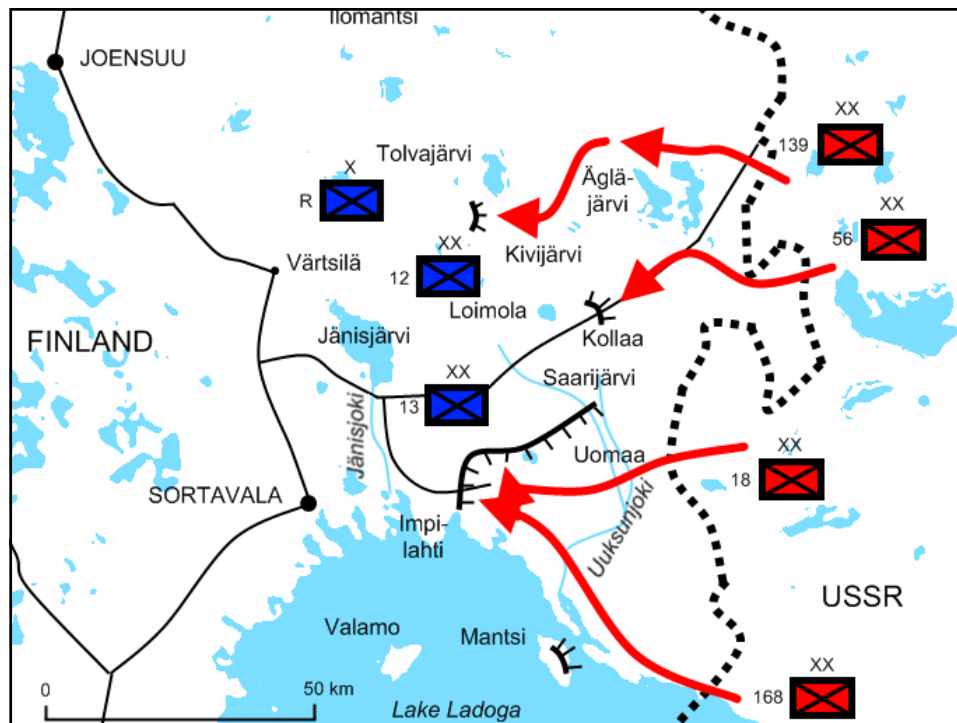
- The Finns made a successful counterattack at Tolvajarvi. Two Russian divisions, the 75th and 139th, were practically destroyed. Only urgent Soviet reinforcements enabled the line to hold. This front remained quiet until the end.
- Action on the shore of Lake Ladoga was almost continuous from the beginning to the end of the war.
- While the initial drive broke through the Finnish defenses and reached Leppasilta on 11 December, counterattacks forced the Russians to retreat to Pitkaranta, where they were again attacked on 18 December.
- On 6 January, the Finns cut off two Red divisions and a tank brigade. Supplies were flown in by air, but these proved insufficient, and the 18th Division surrendered on 18 February. The tank brigade followed suit on 29 February.
- The 168th Division held out until the end of the war.











82

The Battle of Tolvajärvi	
12 December 1939	
Belligerents	
 Finland	 Soviet Union
Commanders and leaders	
 Colonel Paavo Tavela LTC Arjo Pajan, JR 16	 Kombrig (Brigadier) Nikolai Belyaev
Units	
 IV Corps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tavela Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> JR 16. 16th Infantry Regiment Rkasjanen Detachment 	 8 th Army <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 139th Rifle Division <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 718th, 609th, 364th Rifle Regiments 75th Rifle Division (reinforcements)
Strength	
• 4,000 (1 Regt + 4 Bn and 30 arty)	• 20,000 (3 Regt, 30 tks, 60 arty, 376 planes)
Casualties	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIA/MIA: 100 WIA: 250 CIA: 150 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> KIA/MIA: 5,000 WIA: >5,000 CIA: 

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84

The Battle of Kollaa	
7 Dec 1939 to 13 Mar 1940	
Belligerents	
 Finland	 Soviet Union
Commanders and leaders	
 LTG Woldemar Hägglund COL Lauri Tiainen, 12 th Div (til 31/1) COL Antero Svensson, 12 th Div	 Komarm (GEN) Ivan Khabarov (til 13/12) Komarm (GEN) Grigori Shtem (fm 12/12)
Units	
 12 th Division	 8 th Army • 76 th , 56 th , 164 th , 128 th Rifle Divisions
Strength	
One division (10,000)	Four divisions, 1 tank brigade (50,000+)
Casualties	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIA/WIA: 1,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KIA/MIA: 8,000 • WIA: • CIA: 1,000 

85

Arne Juutilainen "The Terror of Morocco"




LT Arne Juutilainen
(1904-1976)
Served with the French Foreign Legion from 1940-1935 in Morocco. He implemented guerrilla tactics at Kollaa.

When asked by Hägglund

Kestääkö Kollaa?
(Will Kollaa hold?)

Juutilainen replied:

Kyllä kestää, ellei käsketä karkuun juoksemaan.
(Kollaa will hold, unless the orders are to run.)*



12th Division CG
LTG Woldemar Hägglund

*A week earlier, Juutilainen had received a regimental order to withdraw, which he disregarded.

86

(Simo Häyhä) "The White Death"



CPL Simo Häyhä

(1905-2002)

5'3" farmer, hunter, skier and competition marksman. In less than 100 days as a sniper, he had 505 confirmed kills



2LT Häyhä after recovery from wounds

Asked how he got so good, he replied, "Practice."

Finnish battlefield humour

Häyhä related a story in his memoirs: "After Christmas we caught a Ruskie, blindfolded him, spun him dizzy and took him to a party in the tent of The Terror of Morocco. The Ruskie was joyed by the carousing and was disgusted when he was sent back."

87

Operations on the Karelian Isthmus

- The Russians advanced slowly, channelled between lakes along narrow corridors covered by snow-camouflaged minefields, tank traps, and MG emplacements.
- By 23 December, they had reached and bogged down in front of the Finnish main line of resistance, the Mannerheim Line, defeated by weather, terrain and Finns.



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