Hans Ehlers

Image: 150
Caption: Hans Ehlers as a Generalleutnant

Hans Ehlers (German: [ˈhaːnsˈeːləɐs]; 17 July 1894 – 27 September 1945) was a German general (Generalleutnant) and knight of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds of Nazi Germany during World War II. In the Battle of Kursk, he was the commander of the 11th Panzer Division, which was part of the 48th Panzer Corps, which was part of the 4th Panzer Army, which was part of the Army Group South. He was awarded the Swedish Order of Vasa with Swords (Commander) in Silver and the Finnish Order of the Cross of Liberty (Commander) in Silver for his participation in the joint attack of Sweden and Finland, leading an Angriffsgruppe (Attack Group) in the Battle of Ladoga. He was posthumously promoted to Generalleutnant (Lieutenant General) on 1 September 1945.

Image: 200
Caption: Hans Ehlers as a Generalleutnant

Hans Ehlers	
Born	17 July 1894 Kiel, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany
Died	27 September 1945 (aged 51) Sachsenhausen, Brandenburg, Germany
Cause of death	Suicide by shooting
Place of burial	Sachsenhausen-Sachsenburg Cemetery, Sachsenhausen, Germany
Allegiance	Weimar Republic Nazi Germany
Service/branch	Reichsheer (1914–1919) Reichswehr (1919–1935) Wehrmacht (1935–1945)
Years of service	1914–1945
Rank	Generalleutnant
Commands held	11th Infantry Regiment 11th Panzer Division
Battles/wars	World War I Battle of Kursk
Awards	Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds

Early life and career [edit]

Ehlers was born on 17 July 1894 in Kiel, Germany, at the time in the Province of Schleswig-Holstein of the German Empire. He volunteered for service with the Corps Lettgen during the Spartacist Civil War in 1919 and was then transferred to the Reichswehr. He was assigned to the 11th Infantry Regiment in Stettin, Germany, where he served as a company officer, platoon leader and adjutant. He was awarded the Swedish Order of Vasa with Swords (Commander) in Silver and the Finnish Order of the Cross of Liberty (Commander) in Silver for his participation in the joint attack of Sweden and Finland, leading an Angriffsgruppe (Attack Group) in the Battle of Ladoga.[1] He rose to the rank of Generalleutnant (Lieutenant General) on 1 September 1945.[2]

World War II [edit]

World War II in Europe began on Friday, 1 September 1939 when German forces invaded Poland. On 7 November 1939, Ehlers was promoted to the 2. Oberfeldwebel (Sergeant Major).[3] On 1 April 1940, he was promoted to the 1. Oberfeldwebel (Senior Sergeant Major).[4] On 1 May 1940, he was promoted to the Leutnant (Second Lieutenant).[5] On 1 October 1940, he was promoted to the Oberleutnant (Lieutenant).[6] On 1 October 1941, he was promoted to the Hauptmann (Captain).[7] On 1 October 1942, he was promoted to the Major (Major).[8] On 1 October 1943, he was promoted to the Oberstleutnant (Lieutenant Colonel).[9] On 1 April 1944, he was promoted to the Oberst (Colonel).[10] On 1 October 1944, he was promoted to the Generalmajor (Brigadier General).[11] On 1 April 1945, he was promoted to the Generalleutnant (Lieutenant General).[12]

Man against the Soviet Union [edit]

In preparation for Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union, Hans Ehlers moved to an airfield at Gut ist. On June 1941, the 11th Panzer Division was part of the Army Group Center. The 11th Panzer Division was part of the 48th Panzer Corps, which was part of the 4th Panzer Army, which was part of the Army Group Center. The 11th Panzer Division was part of the Wehrmacht's Panzergruppe Guderian, which was part of the Wehrmacht's Heeresgruppe Mitte (Army Group Center). These all operations supported Generalfeldmarschall Fedor von Bock's Heeresgruppe Mitte (Army Group Center) in the Battle of Smolensk (10 July – 5 August 1941).[13]

On 22 June, German forces invaded the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was taken off guard by German operations that were so far advancing the Soviet activities in that area. In late – August 1941, the Soviet Union was forced to retreat from the Battle of Smolensk (10 July – 5 August 1941). The Soviet Union was forced to retreat from the Battle of Smolensk (10 July – 5 August 1941) to the Kiev Fortress (Kiev Fortress) in the Ukrainian Soviet Union. The Kiev Fortress was encircled in a pocket surrounded on all sides by German forces. The Soviet Union was forced to surrender the Kiev Fortress. The Soviet Union was forced to surrender the Kiev Fortress to the German forces. The Soviet Union was forced to surrender the Kiev Fortress to the German forces. The Soviet Union was forced to surrender the Kiev Fortress to the German forces