

curve, and as the monsters reached this position, both went up in bright flames after three shots. As another 52 ton tank came from the right, it was just now clear to us that the Soviets planned an attack on two sides of the city. But this tank was also knocked out, and 15 minutes after it was hit its ammunition started exploding. In order to more effectively repulse an attack from two sides and to secure the flanks, another 8.8 cm Flak was brought into position. Two enemy tanks wanted to attack our gun from behind without our noticing them. Before they could accomplish this, they ran into the other Flak. After a roadwheel was knocked off, the first tank rapidly turned away but the second tank drove straight at the 8.8 cm Flak. Within only a few seconds after a short fire fight, its fate was sealed. With their clothes burning, two of the crew managed to save themselves and get free.

It is only 0600 hours and eight tanks have already been knocked out. What will still come? Mortar rounds land singly in our position. Our field of fire must be increased. On all fours the *Kanoniere* crawl to the surrounding trees and cut them down after strenuous work. It was good that these

trees were downed because we uncovered two mortars, after which a tank drove up beside them to deliver ammunition. Unfortunately the tank was too far away to effectively engage but the mortars were soon knocked out of action by our *Sprenggranaten*.

Up to midday the artillery fire kept increasing in intensity. We reckoned that this preparation meant that the enemy would attack. Just in time, *Infanterie* were assigned to us for close defense. Suddenly the artillery fire stopped and we could hardly believe our eyes. More and more enemy infantry came over the ridge and it waved like they were coming through the cornfield. Together with the *Artillerie*, we now shot at the attackers. Our fire hit effectively and while the high explosive rounds of the artillery detonated, our *Flak Sprenggranaten* exploded several meters over the Russians' heads. Death and destruction were delivered to the ranks, and the masses dissolved in headless confusion.

Several worked their way forward up to the village and were within rifle range of us. Machine-guns clattered continuously. Our heavy Flak was used to set several houses on fire so that the rest of the Russians could be driven out of their hiding



An 8.8 cm Flak 18 prepared to fire at ground targets on 4 August 1941. (GF)