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The 4th Panzer Division rolled into Russia as part of Army Group Center in 1941. In December, the division was ordered to defend a stretch of the front near Moscow. The 4th was forced back by the Russian winter offensive to a position near Orel, where it stayed for all of 1942, fighting the Russians in a battle more reminiscent of WWI than WWII. Most of the tanks of the division were destroyed in the battle near Orel, leaving the division in 1942 looking mostly like an infantry division. The division continued to fight on the Russian front until the end of the war, although it had ceased to exist as a division by the end and was represented by small scattered pieces fighting here and there.