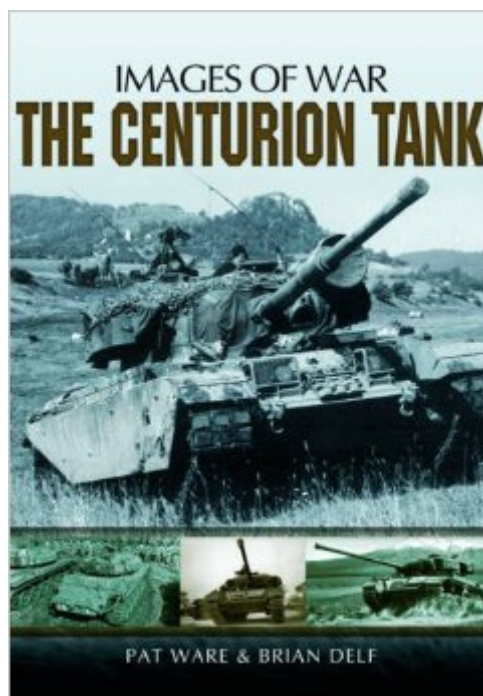


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The Centurion Tank



Synopsis

Few tank designs have been as effective, versatile and long-lived as that of the British Centurion. Conceived during the Second World War as the answer to the superior German Tiger and Panther tanks and to the lethal 88mm gun, this 52-ton main battle tank incorporated the lessons British designers had learned about armored fighting vehicles during the conflict, and it was free of the major faults that had impaired the other British tank designs of the time. The Centurion was so successful that it served in the British Army and in numerous other armies across the world from 1945 until the 1990s. Pat Ware's highly illustrated history of this remarkable tank covers its design and development, its technical specifications and the many variants that were produced. He tells the story from the design brief of 1943, through testing and trials to the tank's entry into service. In addition, he traces the course of the Centurion's subsequent career, as it was up-dated, up-gunned and adapted to operate in varied conditions and conflicts all over the world including Korea, the Indo-Pakistan wars, Vietnam and the Arab-Israeli wars. His expert account of this remarkable fighting vehicle is accompanied by a series of color plates showing the main variants of the design and the common ancillary equipment and unit markings. His book is an essential work of reference for enthusiasts.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is the second book from the series 'Images of War' to cross my desk this week. As that part of the title suggests, these are primarily devoted to images of the subject matter although they do also provide more than sufficient information in support of the excellent photography. In this instance,

however, the work also benefits significantly from the professional and technically accurate drawings of the Centurion Tank - in its many guises and from all angles, provided by illustrator Brian Delf. It was the emergence of the superior German 'Tiger' tank which led to a call for a new British weapon in 1943 requiring a vehicle armed with a 17 pounder gun which was able to travel easily across undulating countryside. The resultant Centurion met those expectations and was regarded as being so good it remained in use for far longer than was ever envisaged. Throughout those years there were, of course, many variants as the tank continued to be improved and, in this excellent work, we find those variations illustrated from every angle - except from underneath. This allows the reader to compare earlier versions to each successor before marvelling at the way in which in which obsolete hulls were also modified to support repair and recovery crews and the laying of bridges and ramps. It was, of course, the fighting capability of this weapon which remained its primary purpose and this is given more than adequate coverage in a readable style which makes the whole subject all the more interesting. Indeed, almost every aspect of the tank, its crew, weapons, engines, technical data and, as already mentioned, variants are all given reasonable coverage. Whereas the photographs are of the highest standard, none show the vehicle in active combat.

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