

Semyon Tilipman With His Fellow Comrades Captain Yunoshev And Captain Zhuk



This is me, Semyon Tilipman (first from right), and my fellow comrades captain Yunoshev (in the side-car) and captain Zhuk (behind me). This photo was taken in Chernyatin, Chernovtsy region, after our troops liberated Chernovtsy in May-June 1944.

After the offensive and liberation of Chernovtsy our army was moved to the rear. We were to be remanned and meanwhile deployed near a settlement in a forest from where we went to Chernovtsy for spoils of the war: food and other. There we got a German diesel fuel vehicle with a telephone facility. Communications people also took communication cables and everything else they might be in need of in future operations. There were special trophy units that gathered trophy weapons. I had a trophy German carbine. I don't even remember how I got it. We also took trophy fuel that was always in demand. I shall not hide the truth that we also got alcohol as trophy.

Besides communications regiment there were communication companies in our regiment. Commanding officers of two of them were my friends: captain Zhuk and captain Yunyshev. Captain Zhuk was sent to the penal battalion due to trophy fuel. He got some fuel stocks as trophy, but instead of reporting to the fuel department he used it for the needs of his company. At that time commanding officers reviewed the recent operations to award the distinguished ones. When they were reviewing performance of officers and soldiers of captain Zhuk's company they recalled this fuel. There was one 'osobist' - they called so officers of special department [NKVD units in the Soviet army]. This 'osobist' participated in a dinner party where he got to know about the fuel during the conversation and then wrote a report about captain Zhuk misusing the fuel. Zhuk was reduced to the rank of a private and sent to a penal battalion. He was a still a communications operator. It was next to impossible to survive in those battalions. They could only hope for good luck. They were always ahead of any offensive. I received a letter from him and even tried to find him later. Zhuk was wounded, but I don't know what happened to him further on. I don't know whether he survived.

Captain Yunyshev's story is different. After the war he was in Meissen, in Germany, with his unit and I was in Dresden. Some time in 1947 he visited communications department in Dresden. We met and he told me that he was having an affair with a German woman. He said 'You know their attitude to German women in our country and I am in love with her. What do you think about it?' 'You know that you can be expelled from the Party and reduced in ranks, etc.' Later I heard that he was transferred to a unit in Western Ukraine fighting 'banderovtsy'. He was shell-shocked and demobilized. Then he got married with Ukrainian woman and lived in Kharkov with his wife. My younger son Evgeni and I went to Tbilisi via Kharkov by train in the 1970s. We met with Yunyshev. He was a teacher. I corresponded with him all the time. In the late 1980s I went to Moscow where chairman of our regiment veteran organization, who was my subordinate during the war, told me that Yunyshev died.