

The Interviewee And Yavorskaya



It happened on the Ukraine front in Antratsit city. We held the line during April, May, and June 1943. Germans did not disturb us, neither did we. Peaceful life was around us: Ukraine, summer - amazing time...

I was a battalion commander, a senior lieutenant. I do not remember how it happened, but there appeared a photographer, and took a photo of us together with Boulatnikov, a headquarters commander. We were standing in the street, when a very young girl passed by.

I said 'Let's have our picture taken!' And she agreed. After that she left and I know nothing about her name or place of residence. She lived in Antratsit, and she was about 17 or 18 years old - that was all I knew about her.

At that time I served in the 51st army, where I managed to get thanks to my teacher of physics. After my first wound I went back to Stalingrad (Volgograd at present). By that time Paulus troops had already been encircled, but not taken yet.

So I was moving to the south by train. I was lying on the upper berth (my wound still bothered me). Three officers were sitting below: two lieutenants and one junior lieutenant. They were talking, suddenly I looked at that junior lieutenant ... and understood that I knew him! 'Konstantin Vassilyevich! Hi!' He looked at me. I said 'Konstantin Vassilyevich, don't you recognize me? You are my teacher of physics, and I am Lesman ...' - 'Oh, Boris!' We embraced ...

He was a junior lieutenant. He said 'Boris, where are you going?' - 'To our headquarters.' - 'Listen, come with me, to our army. We will be there together.' - 'But can it cause any troubles for me?' - 'No, you will go to the front line, not to back areas!' - 'Where shall we go? To the front headquarters?' - 'No, it is not necessary! We will go directly to the army headquarters.' And so we arrived there.

They asked me 'Do you want to serve in our army?' - 'Yes, I do.' - 'Good. What position did you occupy before you were wounded?' - 'I was a company commander.' - 'Good.' And I found myself in

the rifle division no. 302 as a company commander. Thanks to my teacher I became one of them through and through.

We liberated half of Ukraine, when Germans managed to defeat our division, and we were taken off from the front line and sent to Voronezh region, to heartland (it happened in July). [Voronezh is a city in the Central Russia, 500 km far from Moscow.] There we got new weapon, new soldiers, because we had lost many people.

I was appointed a battalion commander (about thousand people). And you remember that I was a twenty-years-old senior lieutenant! Two forty-years-old captains and several senior lieutenants much older than me were subordinate to me. I fought for my country very well.

About 40 years have passed. In 1983 or 1982 I was invited to Antratsit to participate in some celebration. We were 7 (former soldiers). Hospitality of local citizens was fantastic - we had been among those who liberated their city. They arranged tasty meal for us and invited to the local museum, where showed an exposition devoted to our division and regiment.

And I brought with me that photograph of unknown girl, because I wanted to find her. I showed it to director of the museum. He made copies (at present copy of that photo is an exhibit of that museum) and said 'We will find her.' I left, several months passed.

Suddenly I got a letter from a woman named Yavorskaya.

She informed me that it was her, the girl we had our photo taken with. By that time she was already a grandmother (having several grandchildren). We corresponded for some time, but it resulted in nothing.