

Meyer Goldstein During The War With Finland



Meyer Goldstein, December 1939, during the Finnish War. In the beginning of 1939 the Germans captured Poland, and our troops entered the Baltic countries and western Ukraine. The country was on the verge of war, but only few realized that. I was summoned to the military registration and enlistment office. They sent me home, to Korsun, and ordered to wait for a call-up. So at the end of November we were put in echelons and taken to the Leningrad military district. The Finnish War began. We found ourselves in barracks in Gatchin. It was extremely cold - about 50 degrees Centigrade below zero. And all we had were summer uniforms. We had three-story plank beds. There were so many people that at night we could turn only on order. In the morning all of us were taken outside for physical exercises. But many of us were from the south and were not used to colds. So, the very second day many got sick, including me. Relations in the army were friendly. Nobody offended me as a Jew. On our way there in the train some people laughed and shared

Jewish jokes, teasing me, but in my military unit nobody did that. I was respected. I was put in the platoon of signalers. One day we were walking, choosing observation posts. A lance corporal went in front of me. We had to follow a narrow path because everything around us was undermined. He was probably distracted by something and stepped aside. Immediately there was a terrible explosion. I ran to him and saw that he lost his leg completely. That was the end of his fighting. He was rushed into hospital and I heard nothing else about him. There were many victims in the Finnish War.