

Eva Ryzhevskaya



This is me, a major. The picture was taken in Budapest in 1945 when our regiment was in Hungary. In 1940 I graduated from the medical institute. I got a mandatory job assignment to Donetsk oblast, Gorlovka. I worked as an ambulatory surgeon in the medical office of the coal mine. The majority of my patients were coal-miners. I thought I had come there to stay. I had no idea that our peaceful life would be over soon. In spring 1941 I was summoned to the military enlistment office. Medical officers were supposed to be drafted into the army, no matter what they were specialized in. I was sent to the operative dressing platoon of medical battalion 264 of division # 244 of the Ukrainian front as an attending surgeon. In March 1945 we were transferred to Breslau, Germany,

which bordered on Poland. We deployed a hospital and the wounded were brought to us. We understood that the war was about to end, but our work was still intense. There were a lot of wounded, and unfortunately some soldiers perished in the last spring days of the horrible war. Breslau was the place where on 9th May 1945 we heard the announcement that the war was over with the unconditional surrender of Germany. It is difficult to put in words the feeling of unalloyed happiness at that moment. We went on an excursion touring Germany and Austria on the occasion of Victory Day: we traveled by bus for ten days and stopped in different cities. I managed to see the world-renowned opera house in Vienna. I got the chance to see that wonderful city. In 1945 our hospital was transferred from Breslau in Germany to Hungary. We were supposed to treat repatriates and Soviet citizens who were released from concentration camps. There were people who were afflicted with contagious diseases such as typhus fever, diphtheria etc. There were no doctors specializing in infectious diseases among us. Hungarian doctors gave us the medical reference on treatment of infectious diseases in German and Latin. They also provided us with pills and antibiotics. We were told that we wouldn't be demobilized until all our patients had been cured. I didn't know what would happen to those people in our motherland, but we were supposed to cure them.