

Alexander Grin



This is me, with a medal 'For Courage' on my chest. This photo was taken during my army service in the Sakhalin Island in 1947.

I am wearing my Soviet army military uniform of the 1940s.

One of my fellow comrades took this photograph. I sent it to my parents.

I started my service in the rank of sergeant and when the war was over I was Guards first sergeant. I was awarded an order of the Great Patriotic War and a medal 'For courage'. We got awards for successful flights. I joined the Party at the front.

In summer 1945 we relocated to the Far East. We were to start the war with Japan. Crews of commanding officer, second pilot, navigator and board mechanic flew to the Far East. I was a radio operator/gunner at that time already.

In August we arrived in Vladivostok. We installed tents on the bank of the Chornaya River in the suburb of Vladivostok and lived there for quite a while. Then we took a boat to Sakhalin Island about 800 km from Vladivostok.

This was August 1945. The war was over on 11 September. We were to drop bombs on Japan, but we didn't. I served in Sakhalin till 1950. They didn't demobilize anybody from our military unit. It was hard to bring replacement for us so far away we were.

We went on training flights and bombing. There were deserted islands along the seashore. They became our training grounds and we bombed them vigorously.

Our political officers propagated communism to us. There were political hours more often than once a week. I got tired of the army by that time.

They demobilized us in May 1950.