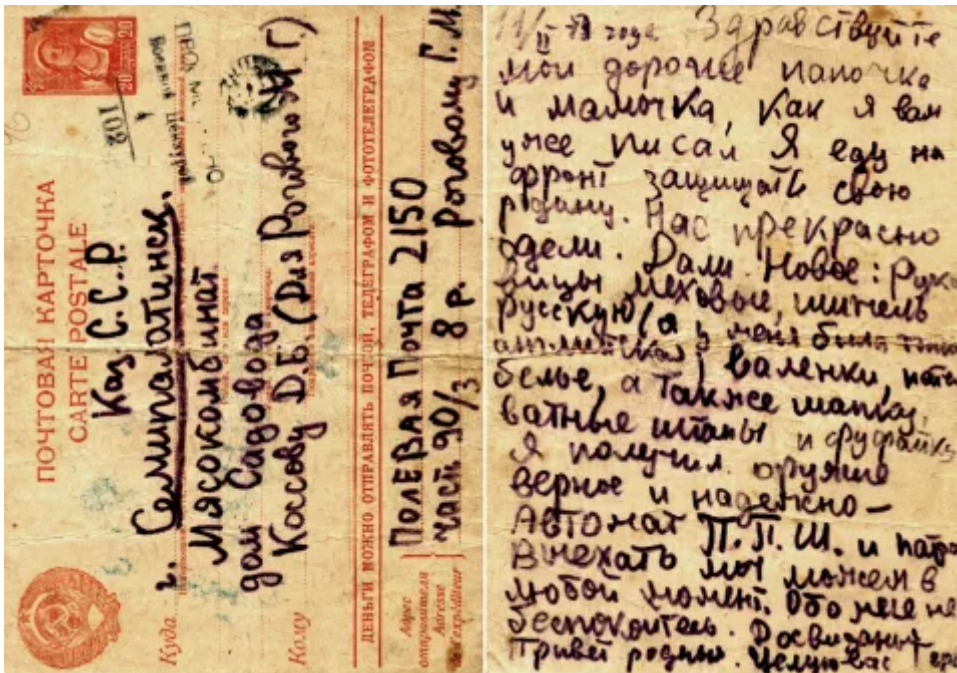


Hertz Rogovoy



This is the picture I sent to my parents, when they were in evacuation. That is when I was wounded and hospitalized in 1942. My father got this postcard and he was afraid to show it to my mother. She found out later from my letters that I was in the hospital. Recipient's Address: Dom Sadovoda, Meat Processing Plant, Semipalatinsk, Kazakh SSR. Attention to Kosov D.B. (for Rogovoy? G.). Sender: field post office, 2150 unit 90/3 8 Private Rogovoy G.M.

The text on the reverse of the post-card as of February 11, 1942: "Hello, my dear daddy and mommy. As I've written before, I am on my way to the front to defend my motherland. We are excellently clad, provided with new things: fur mittens, a military jacket, felt pants and a sheepskin. I've also got good weapon - gun PPSH and cartridges. We should be off any time. Please do not worry about me. Good bye. Say hello to the relatives. I am kissing you. Hertz."

At the age of 17 I joined the army as a volunteer. First I was sent to the reserves troops, but in 1941 I was sent to Moscow whereabouts. They fought for Moscow. I was there being a boy. There were four lads my age in our squadron. I made friends with two of them, Esikov and Khabarov. They were Siberian volunteers. One of them finished 8 grades, the other - 9. We belonged to 42nd army. We began from Mozhaisk and reached Istra. These were my first battles. We were armed with huge triple passage rifles, the ones used during World War I. We also had gun machines of the same epoch. There were few guns in 1941. The battles were fierce. But the frosts were the most gruesome for me. The winter of 1941-42 was severe and cold. First our uniform was not apt for such winter. Then we were given felt-boots and sheepskins, so we did not suffer from cold so much. At that time I got my first military award, the medal "For military merits". I was wounded close to Istra during the air raid. During bombing the shell fragment pierced my shoulder-blade. I took it out somehow, but later it started to suppurate heavily and I was sent to the hospital. I stayed there for a month and then I was sent home, because I was not the age of the draftees.

My parents were evacuated in Voronezh oblast [Russia]. I went there. My parents and I settled in a village not far from Voronezh, 650 km to the east from Kiev. I decided to finish the 10th grade, but did not manage since I received the notice to appear in the military enlistment office in 1942. It was the drafting of my age. I turned 18. The draftees were brought together on the collecting point, and from there were supposed to go Lipetsk [about 640 km from Kiev] mostly on foot, at times in carts. There was a training regiment in Lipetsk, where we were trained to march in a squadron before being dispatched to the front. We were inquired about our education. Since I finished 9 grades, it was decided to send me to the military school. Again I headed on the road - by trains, steam boat and car. We were brought to the military school in Balakhna [Russia, 1100 km from Kiev], a town about 50 km away from Nizhniy Novgorod. It was Simferopol gun and mortar military school, evacuated in Balakhna. The studies lasted for 5 months, and then we got the rank of the junior lieutenant. It was the 3rd month when the horrible battle by Stalingrad started. The entire school, 450 people, was sent to Stalingrad. I had never felt more fear, terror and hatred to the Germans during entire war experience. The city was devastated, shells and mortar bombs were aimed at one and the same place, making a powder out of sand, which could be compared to that sold during my childhood in Kiev, finely fine brick powder for samovar cleaning. We went by Kalach and I saw the camp of our captured soldiers, frozen to death in dug-outs, with frozen blood, with wounds not being bandaged. I saw the tiers of frozen, coated in ice cadavers of the captured soldiers together with the wood for burning. I saw huge moats with corpses. Just imagine a moat as deep as 3-storied building, and not the house length, but the block length. In spite of the winter time we could feel cadavers smell.