

KAZAKHSTAN CITIZENS IN THE 455TH SHOOTING REGIMENT. THE BREST FORTRESS. JUNE – JULY, 1941

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Article is devoted to actions of Kazakhstan citizens – the defenders of the Brest fortress serving in the 455th shooting regiment. According to all available data from searchers of 100 Kazakhstan citizens from about 1000 people 3 rifle battalions and the regimental divisions which were on June 22, 1941 in fortress had their first battle there. A half of them were lost in the same place. For the others it was the difficult way of war. 29 people came back home, from them 26 soldiers were in captivity therefore in Soviet period didn't speak about them. Thus, only today we can restore historical justice and tell about heroes from Kazakhstan of June-July, 1941 in the Brest fortress.

Keywords: the Brest fortress, 455 shooting regiment, the Great Patriotic War, on June 22, 1941, Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan citizens – defenders of the Brest fortress

For January 20, 2016 I have in the lists of 455 of a shooting regiment 100 names of Kazakhstan people – defenders of the Brest fortress. That was typical for most of Kazakhstan people of 455 shooting regiment that 86 people were recruits from the North Kazakhstan area.

According to different data in the 455th shooting regiment there were about 3500 people, mostly they have been out of fortress walls. There could be approximately one thousand fighters of 455 shooting regiment inside the fortress. However anywhere there are no full data on this figure.

455 shooting regiment was created during the Soviet-Finnish conflict (1939–1940). The regiment became a part of the 42nd shooting division of 28th shooting corps of the 4th army of the Western Special military district. After the termination of military operations on the Soviet-Finnish border as a part of the 42nd shooting division, the regiment is transferred to Latvia, and since August, 1940 – in Kartuz-Berezu of the Brest region.

In March, 1941 455 shooting regiment had arrived to a new place of a dislocation – to Brest.

The first rifle battalion of a regiment was placed in the 8th fort (4–5 kilometers to the south of Brest). The second rifle battalion for June, 1941 was constructing a fortified area at the Melniki village (nowadays territory of Poland). The third rifle battalion and regimental divisions were placed in defensive barracks of the Citadel, in the western direction of the Brest (Three-arch) gate.

Their arrangement for June 22, 1941

Beginning from the Brest gate the kitchen and the dining room, headquarters of a regiment, division 3 of a shooting regiment and other divisions took place on the first floor.

Barracks of a regiment came to an end at an arch, connecting defensive barracks to barracks of 333rd shooting regiments. In this

area on the second floor there was a hostel where lived the young commanders who arrived to military units on the eve of war after the graduating from military colleges. Then, there were the barracks of 44th shooting regiment. The artillery park of a regiment was placed out of fortress, around a garrison cemetery that, naturally, complicated military operations of fighters on the first minutes and hours of war.

The commander of 455 shooting regiment, the major Litsit Jan Adamovich (1898-22.06.1941) stayed with his family on Terespolsky strengthening. He was lost during the first hours wars in attempt to break to the regiment. Other commanders and officers lived with families in Brest or in nearby villages on rental apartments therefore on the night of June 22 they weren't and couldn't head a regiment exit from fortress or defense of fortress. In fortress on the night of June 22 there were only persons on duty on a regiment, and group of young lieutenants in the hostel who arrived some days before war from military colleges.

Veterans remember that several days before war something unclear occurred, it was ordered to them to hand over all types of weapon and even the untouchable stock (US), in exchange promised to give out the new weapon. However didn't give out ...

Today it is known that fights in the territory of barracks of 455 shooting regiments lasted 3 days, and on June 24 were almost finished. However it didn't mean that everything was in an order and in other days.

Before war, 1941

The private Yankov Vasily specifies in the autobiography that in May, 1941 he was accepted in ranks of Communist party [1].

Pavel Shulga's letter, staff clerk in the summer of 1941:

– The service goes well. Only the brother Ivan and the nurse Sasha: it is restless and disturbing somehow on border ...

June 21

Lukanin A.A. remembers.:

– Began commonplaces in the morning, physical charging, a breakfast, political education, then there was a practical training which passed behind fortress. It was Saturday, warm day. In free time everyone went about the own business, trying to put simple soldier's economy in order.

In the evening (on June 21) the commander of a company of air defense lieutenant Polyakov caused all calculations of installations on instructing. The meeting passed in the Lenin room. To the right of Polyakov the commander of 1 platoon lieutenant Soroka sat. As usually, the assistant to the commander of a platoon Osipenko sat down close to them. But he received holiday and went home to the village of Ruzaevka, nowadays Tselinograd area, and his place was taken by the sergeant Pugachev...

It was talked of that for June 22nd the inspection on verification of the maintenance of the equipment was outlined. The task was to check rifles, machine guns, cars and staff of platoons and offices again and again.

After meeting me and my fellow countrymen Stulintsevy, Chentonovy, Balashevy, Nedosekov and Kozhushko went to the cinema. Movies were shown open-air in the summer. Usually on a wall of barracks the white square piece of a cloth was hung up, and against the screen on wooden tripods the movie camera was established.

Red Army men, free from service, watched the movie "Ruslan and Lyudmila" in the evening. Nearby neighbors from 33 engineering regiments watched the movie "Circus".

A. Lukanin had a joyful mood, just he received the letter from the familiar girl. He tremblingly waited for it letters. Colleagues Volobuyev, Zakharin, Rudnev, Lagutin and Matveev knew about it and quite often joked on it. Mail was brought without it, and when Arkady came, his colleagues forced him to dance, so he danced, there was such an order [2].

Chief of headquarters of the 4th army L.M. Sandalov writes:

– ...till 24 o'clock on June 21 there were no any events for reduction of troops in combat readiness.

At 24 o'clock the commander, the chief of headquarters of army, generals and officers of army management were called on an order of the chief of headquarters of the district in headquarters of army. The headquarters of the district didn't give any concrete orders, except as "everybody to get ready".

The commander of army general-major A.A. Korobkov under the responsibility ordered to dispatch in all connections and separate parts the sealed "red envelopes" with instructions about an operations procedure on fighting alarm. However commanders of connections knew contents of documents in packages as participated in their development.

Approximately at 2 o'clock in the morning wire communication of headquarters of army with the district and troops stopped on June 22. Communication managed to be reestablished only at 3 hours and 30 minutes. Break of wires was found by our operators in Zaprudy and Zhabinke.

After communication restoration the commander of army received the order of the top military commander of the Western Special military district transferred clear text on telegraph (BODO) about reduction of troops in combat readiness. At the same time it was specified to bring first of all silently out of the Brest fortress the 42nd shooting division and to alert the 14th mechanized corps; the aircraft was allowed to transfer the base on the background airfields.

Till 3 hours 45 minutes the commander of army personally by phone gave two orders: to the chief of headquarters of the 42nd shooting division to alarm a division and to bring it out from fortress to the area of collecting; to the commander of the 14th mechanized corps to get in combat readiness.

At 4 hours 15 minutes or 4 hours 20 minutes the chief of headquarters reported that the opponent began a shelling of Brest. These minutes the reception from headquarters of the district of the following order came to an end:

– The order of the national commissar of defense for immediate execution ...

Having adopted the order, the commander of army at the same time reported on the top military commander of the district about an artillery raid to Brest, the short battle-order № 01 was immediately given to troops of the 4th army about reduction them in combat readiness.

The commander of army personally told by phone to the commandant of the 62nd strengthened area and chiefs of headquarters of the 42nd and 6th shooting divisions, the order was transferred to the others with couriers.

But orders and commands on reduction of troops in combat readiness were late. War already began, having taken troops of the 4th army unawares [3–1].

June 22

Arkady Lukanin woke up at a quarter to four. All serenely slept. Volobuyev smiled to something in a dream. On a bed of the foreman Hrenov who asked to leave to the city the day before, the commander of a company Polyakov slept.

Suddenly, the earth began to shake and shudder. Huge force explosions shook barracks. Plaster and glasses broke up. The barracks were filled with ashes and dust. The command was sounded: “Alarm! Arm yourselves!”

In some seconds all were in formation.

– Company, listen to my command! – Pol-yakov shouted and took two steps backwards and aside. But he didn’t manage to finish speaking. Enemy machine gun fire shot his breast. The lieutenant fell dead.

We ran out from barracks, we went to Three-arch gate. But we heard machine gun fire from a church. There were killed and wounded people. Arkady helps the wounded commander to reach the cellars of 33rd regiment. A lot of wounded people were already there [2].

L.M. Sandalov writes:

– At 4 o’clock, when dawn only began, German-fascist troops suddenly opened the gun-fire ...

The most intensive gun-fire was conducted on military camps in Brest, and especially on the Brest fortress which was literally covered with ruptures of artillery shells and mines [3–2].

Many people rushed to fortress gate on an exit, but there were already Germans. The first battle was accepted at the river Mukhavets. Fighters saw logs, and with their help began to transport on the other coast, including the private of a company of air defense Ilya Labutin.

The lieutenant Anatoly Vinogradov tries to phone to Brest. Unsuccessfully. On the second floor at regimental school all prepare for defense. The gun-fire began again. People hide in cellars.

Then confusion passed. It came time to work. Fighters start taking advantageous positions, release windows, doors.

Matukhna Mikhail on the night of June 22 was a man on duty. He accepted the first battle at the church building, then defended at windows and doors. He participated in fights for the officers’ dining room [4].

Yankov Vasily – during the first hours of war tried to break through to the artillery park, unsuccessfully. He participated in fights under command of lieutenant Vinogradov.

Vasily Yankov remembers:

– From the first minute under a continuous gun-fire and fire from air many, many of our fighters were lost, those who couldn’t come round, from what had occurred on the earth, as there was a clear morning, and suddenly there came the second night from ruptures of bombs and shells, the atmosphere of fortress was filled with a smoke and dust, there was nothing to breathe. Our regiment was located at the central entrance, passing the bridge through Mukhavets on the right side. The first counterattack was beaten

off. On the first floor we installed anti-tank tools for reflection of tanks on a main entrance in fortress. During reflection of the tanks moving to a main entrance the commissioner Fomin came to us, one captain and two political leaders came – I don’t remember their surnames – and courageously began to work for tools with us [1].

Kovtyukh Fedor [5], Moskalyuk Mikhail [6], Protsenko Afanasy [7] and Lukanin Arkady [1] also specify in the memoirs that battled near barracks of 455th shooting regiment under command of lieutenant Vinogradov.

A.D. Romanov in the book “The Bug on Fire” remembers an episode: “... Three-arch gate. Fascist tanks several times tried to get here. Under the arches of gate, the corporal Pyotr Krapivin and tens more heroes fell and died not giving the way to the armored machine...”

But for a long time it wasn’t possible to identify the personality of this defender. And only after comparison of all available options from the memoirs of A.D. Romanov it at last worked well.

From A.D. Romanov’s memoirs:

– ...at the coast we got under machine gun fire of fascists, three men died. It was necessary to crawl away. To one of fighters, obviously explosive bullet, pulled out all lower part of his face. Being covered with blood, without bandaging, he continued to shoot back.... Meanwhile, having passed the bridge, one more tank rushed to the way of central drive of Three-arch gate. And here on its way a fighter with a manual machine gun blocked its way. He lied to the earth and opened fire at once. The steel machine ran on him when the fighter fired on one of tank caterpillars. The face of the hero was crippled: he had a bloody medley instead of the lower jaw. So he died under the caterpillars of the enemy tank, without having given way to it. Later the hero was identified by the Komso-mol ticket which was found in his soldier’s blouse pocket. It was the cadet of regimental school of 455th regiment – Pyotr Krapivko. He had armor-piercing cartridges in the disk of machine gun. And the tank which sustained serious damage was compelled to stop in the Citadel courtyard. Here it was set fire, and the crew was destroyed [8].

It is hard to say – could be this way, or maybe a little in a different way a combat between a Red Army soldier and SHTUG tank happened at the Three-arch gate. Except Romanov none of defenders of the Brest fortress don’t mention this episode. But here the name of the hero defender can be told:

– Red Army soldier Krapivka Pyotr Spiridonovich – born in 1920, the birthplace – the village of Smirnovka

of the Mamlyutsky district of the North Kazakhstan Region. Called to the Red Army by Mamlyut regional military office 20th of October, 1940. Cadet of a machine-gun platoon of regimental school of 455 shooting regiment. Died on June 22, 1941.

Probably, as there were no other witnesses of his death, according to registration data of Brest fortress memorial complex he doesn't pass.

Pyankov Victor, the private, broke through. He didn't like to remember this day. He considered that this day there was a big treason; the administration took away all weapons before this day. All commanders were in the city. There was a panic. All looked for and collected the weapons. Victor was a good athlete therefore with several soldiers from the regiment, whom he knew badly, not his fellow countrymen, crossed the river Mukhavets and began to make the way to their colleagues. This time he didn't get captivated and managed to unite to parts the receding Red Army.

Galiyev Yakov, Yemelyanov Vasily, privates, were captivated.

June 23

In a card file of the mentioned **MK BKG** there is a surname Shulga. Burlakov N.N. remembers:

– ...on the night of June 23rd arrived the clerk of a regiment Shulga and says that many men escaped from fortress, and that the chief of a regiment senior lieutenant Scriabin told that we don't have enough forces to keep the fortress, it is necessary to leave and connect to troops ... [9].

The whole day on June 23 – an artillery fire and then propaganda, the leaflets with appeals to surrender appear.

Lukanin Arkady remembers:

– Also such case is remembered. Fomin's command was transferred from one soldier to another: "Not to put on helmets. It will be easier to distinguish enemies".

The command appeared very opportunely. Fascists advanced to the next attack. I lay down at an entrance to barracks. I saw his helmet and distinguish that the fascist creeps on a lawn. After a while there comes the second fascist. He is very well visible against the twilight. Our shots were well-aimed. The enemy didn't break through to barracks [2].

Germans are close to the fighters of 455 shooting regiment in church and the officers' dining room. They make the way through the attics and throw grenades. There was a hand-to-hand fight.

Vasily Yankov remembers:

– The major came to us on the second day in the evening. I saw him for the first time, then I was told that it was Gavrilov. The major was very calm like there is no war. He greeted us,

passed, looked at our arrangement and asked who we have from commanders. We answered: "Nobody". At night the major Gavrilov and three commanders with him came to check our arrangement. After checking the major told: "Here is your commander, political leader, comrade Kashkarov" [1].

A group of volunteers consisting of 13 people on the night of June 24 had to get through the neighboring buildings to warehouses of ammunition supply and stock up with cartridges, grenades, etc.

The group of fighters tried to escape from fortress. Stulintsev Nikolay, the private broke out from the Brest fortress.

Badayev Nikolay, Vaganov Vasily, Zhukov Yakov, Petukhov Ivan, Filimonov Vasily, Chernokutov Nikolay, Shibanov Vasily, privates, Shileyko Georgi, the deputy political leader were captivated.

June 24

Since morning again the gun-fire, radio calls for surrendering. There are fighters with a white rag.

Connection with the regimental commissar Efim Fomin is established. Was decided to gather for meeting in the evening.

Fascists occupy kitchen of a regiment.

Powder warehouses blow up. Shelling of terrible force.

Attempt of break on the bridge at the Brest gate was carried out.

Vasily Yankov specifies in the autobiography:

– For two days I was in heavy fighting, then during the short rest the regimental commissar Fomin read the order on rewarding of many fighters with awards of the Red Star, including me, and to me gave the rank of the junior political leader [1].

The break out under the leadership of the lieutenant A. Vinogradov began after a lunch is remembered by many defenders who survived after war. The Germans also wrote that not more than a company of Russians tried to escape after a lunch.

– The senior soldier of a group decided to organize a break of an enemy military round and to go to the forest. Day tended to the end. The river was well seen to fire. As soon as fighters plunged into the water, machine gun fire was distributed, bullets whistled. Shouts of wounded men were heard. The survived fighters got out on the coast. They tried to get to the forest, but it was light, and they are surrounded. The fight goes on. Osbornev and Lagutin were lost, Kakokin and Tyunin are fatally wounded. The lieutenant Vinogradov and the private Nedosekov are seriously injured. Wounded Lukanin faints. He woke up already in some warehouse where many wounded fighters were [2].

Davydov Pyotr, Tyunin Vasily, privates were lost in fortress.

Zhdanov Vasily, Zakharin Pavel, Lukanin Arkady, Mitin Vasily, Nedosekov Alexander, Yankov Vasily, privates are captivated.

Kozhushko Afanasy broke out from the Brest fortress.

June 25

Mishonin, Protsenko Afanasy, privates are captivated.

Some part of fighters on the night of June 26 again unsuccessfully attempt of break out.

June 26

Together with his comrades, Starodumov Andrey left on break. He was captivated.

– on June 26th, the headquarters of temporary group made the decision to organize the break. The vanguard is formed... Fighters who couldn't swim adapted wood desks. The fight began again. I plunged into the water in full equipment, but soon understood that I won't reach the coast, the clothes became heavy and pulled me down. I got back to the shore, took off clothes and again plunged into the water. There were three of us on the opposite coast. We decided to reach the artillery park of a regiment one by one. I reached a garage and decided to wait, voices of Germans were audible. Then I got through the bypass channel and was surrounded by fascists, – Andrey Starodumov remembers [10].

Matukhna Mikhail:

– on June 26th the commander gave the order to force the river. Military march under cover of two machine guns. The frontier guard leaded our group. We had big losses during the march through the bridge. Here on the bridge through the river Mukhavets we lost my fellow villager Vasily Kalugin [4].

Burlakov Nikolay, Matukhna Mikhail, Orlov Vasily, privates, Lipkin Konstantin, the sergeant, Sedletsky Ivan, the lieutenant are captivated.

June 27

Teplyakov Ivan, Nochevny Pavel, Starodumov Andrey, Shanaurin Nikolay, Ibrayev Kurmangali, privates are captivated in the Brest fortress.

June 28

Moskalyuk Mikhail, the private of 76 mm tool battery, from the first day participated in fights under command of lieutenant A. Vinogradov. Since June 26 repeatedly went to attacks under command of the junior political leader from 333 shooting regiment.

– On June 28th after bombardment the junior political leader gave the order to re-

establish communication with headquarters. Performing this task we faced fascists. I was wounded and captivated. Junior political leader was killed in this battle [6].

Moskalyuk Mikhail, the private, Kacharovsky Vasily, the senior sergeant are captivated.

June 30

Kovtyukh Fedor, the private is captivated

July 2

Balashov Leonid, the private is captivated

July 4

Neukrity Fedor, the private is captivated.

Almost dead, hungry, without weapons. Fighters stood three days, then there were separate fights. The maps of capturing of our fighters testify it. As we see in the last researches of R. Aliyev certain fighters have been killed and captivated even in August, 1941 and Germans already were in every place of the fortress.

The inscription: "We will die, but we won't leave fortress" was found in September, 1949 in these battlefields.

The war for prisoners

Galiyev Yakov, the wounded, passed camp of Germany from 1941 to 1943, since 1943 was in Holland in a working battalion, in one and a half months prior to arrival of British army he ran away with his German colleague and hid for one and a half months with the help of the Dutch gendarmerie; he got to British, was in Liverpool, in Great Britain. In March, 1945 he was sent to Odessa to transit point [11].

In a card file of the mentioned memorial complex the Brest fortress-hero the defender of fortress M.E. Beloveshkin remembers: "...in 1941 we made attempt to run from a chemical place (camp for prisoners of war). The sergeant Tsibulsky... and Shulga were in our group. Shulga was killed in attempt of escape" [12].

Starodumov Andrey was in concentration camps in Poland and Germany, in the spring of 1945 he was taken out to the Danish city of Arhus, from where escaped to local guerrillas [10].

Lukanin Arkady passed the extermination camp of Byalo Podlyask. Escape. There were 10 people: Lukanin, Kovalyov, Zakharin, etc. Till the night they made the way to the east, but they were captivated and sent to the north Poland to Lublin prison. And again escape. This time successfully. They went to Belgium, and then they got over to Holland [2].

Stulintsev Nikolay broke from fortress. Then receded. In July, 1941 fighters were handed over in captivity by the commander traitor. In an echelon it is sent to Germany, in captivity I was till 1945 It was released by the Soviet soldiers. Then he was enlisted

in the 435th regiment of the 8th guard division. He protected a prisoner-of-war camp of Vlasov's soldiers. After demobilization in 1946 he came back home [13].

Vasily Yankov in captivity was in camp of Mosburg, and then made unsuccessful escape, for what he was put into a concentration camp of Ulm city (the Western Germany). In 1945 he was released by allies [1].

War for those who could unite to the receding parts of Red Army

At the end of 1941 Vasily Pyankov was wounded in hand. Hospital. Then he worked in a food supply station. He studied. He was called again already as an officer. According to documents of "The Memorial" organization on request for him appeared a number of documents. But for the end of 1944 there was some oddity. He was missing. And then it becomes clear that he was taken prisoner. He was released and repatriated home later.

The private Samofalov Fedor broke from Brest Fortress. He is mentioned at defense in M.A. Moskalyuk memoirs. According to the last letter № 3142 and date 29.09.41, he succeeded to break from the fortress and to connect to parts of Red Army. Probably, he was lost at the fronts.

Labutin Ilya, private, driver of 2nd company of air defense of 455 shooting regiment. He broke from Brest Fortress. He was at war at the front. He stayed alive. 17.05.1945 he was

awarded by the medal "For Services in Battle" as the Red Army man.

Studying the Table it is possible to note that the conscription of 1940 was in Northern Kazakhstan. A number of fighters of nearby areas could get to this team, however recruits of 1939 and recruits of different regions in single quantity couldn't get on service to the Brest fortress. It means that the ways of getting on service in the fortress and conscriptions from different regions of Kazakhstan aren't rather studied. I believe that documents of those years, reminiscence of the survived people can still be found lying in archives, military registration and enlistment offices which will give new materials for studying of heroism of defenders of the Brest fortress.

From 100 Kazakhstan citizens of 455 shooting regiment who we found – 50 fighters died in the fortress.

16 people were captivated and died.

26 people were captivated and survived.

5 people broke out and died.

3 persons broke and fought at war on different fronts, remained alive.

My search

In 2013 I addressed with letters on the help in searches of defenders of the Brest fortress to Akim of the North Kazakhstan area, to heads of department of defense, regional committee of national security.

Kazakhstan citizens defenders of the Brest fortress. 455 shooting regiment

Number	Region	Conscription of 1939	Conscription of 1940	Total
1.	North Kazakhstan area	2	84	86
2.	Semipalatinsk area	–	2	2
3.	Pavlodar region	2	–	2
4.	Kokchetav area	2	–	2
5.	Almaty	1	–	1
6.	Akmolinsk area	1	–	1
7.	Aktyubinsk area	1	–	1
8.	East Kazakhstan region	–	1	1
9.	Kustanay area	1	–	1
10.	Turgay area	–	1	1
11.	From other regions of the USSR. Born in Kazakhstan	1	–	1
12.	Officers – 1 person from North Kazakhstan area	–	1	1
	Total	11	89	100

The answer to the letter addressed to a virtual reception on the website of Akim of the region.

Dear Laila Seysenbekovna.

On your initiative the question of the publication of names of Kazakhstan citizens defenders of the Brest fortress is considered. Data on North Kazakhstan citizens defenders of the Brest fortress will be published in regional newspapers "Soltustik Kazakhstan" and "Northern Kazakhstan" on June 15, 2013, and also in regional newspapers of area.

As a result of this work the widow of the defender V.F. Pyankov, the relative Aleksandra Osminkina – Natalya responded; we were written by employees of the museums and archives, journalists.

Still it is necessary to search a lot. As well as in all history of defense of the Brest fortress in summer of 1941, there are a lot of white spots in fights at barracks of 455 shooting regiment and participations of Kazakhstan citizens in them.

Eternal glory to heroes!

I express gratitude to employees of the Memorial complex "Brest Fortress-Hero".

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