

FERGHANA VALLEY AND PRISONERS OF WAR OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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ANNOTATION

In this article given information about prisoners of the World War I which have come to the Fergana valley, history, life and their activities on the period of the 6-7 years and returning their Motherlands.

Key words: war prisoners, World War I, zone, officer, under-officer, feldfebel, Austria, Hungary, Germany's war prisoners, evakpunkt, distinct, tenpin, Volos, coal mine, oil mine, hospital, castle.

The First World War is the greatest human tragedy at the beginning of the 20th century. At the beginning of the war, humanity had no idea what tragedy, what consequences awaited the European peoples and the world as a whole.

The causes, course and consequences of the First World War of 1914-1918 have not yet been fully studied. People began to forget the essence of the global conflict and its tragic consequences. One aspect of the problem is the problem of military captivity. A large number of prisoners of war - soldiers and officers - became victims of the war. Unfortunately, the history of their captivity, living conditions, detention, the exact number of prisoners, the history of their further fate have not been fully studied, especially in Turkestan, in particular in the Fergana Valley.

This war is the first military conflict on a global scale in history. It lasted 4 years, 3 months and 10 days (from August 1, 1914 to November 11, 1918). 38 states were involved in it - that's 1.5 billion of the world's population. Total mobilization of 73.5 million people, of which 10 million were killed, 20 million were wounded. The total amount of damage is \$208 billion.

The greatest losses were suffered by Russia - 2 million 300 thousand dead, Germany - 2 million, Austria-Hungary - 1 million 440 thousand, France - 1 million 383 thousand. Great Britain - 876 thousand, Italy - about 700 thousand, Ottoman Empire - 244 thousand, USA - 126 thousand dead soldiers (these figures are approximate and vary depending on the source).

In this tragic war in Russia, millions of prisoners of war soldiers and officers and civilians of the Triple Alliance were captured. By 1917, there were about 5 million foreigners in Russian captivity, incl. about 2.2 million prisoners of war of the Austro-Hungarian and German armies. The results of the study show that of the total number of prisoners of war there were about 190 thousand Germans, about 1.9 million Austrians and Hungarians, among whom approximately 450 thousand were Austrians, about 500 thousand were Hungarians, about 250 thousand were Czechs and Slovaks, over 200 thousand - Yugoslavs, over 120 thousand - Romanians, as well as many Galician Ukrainians, Poles, Italians, Turks (over 50 thousand), etc. [1].

Places intended for permanent housing of prisoners of war (located within Siberia and the Urals) were overcrowded in the very first months of the war. The current situation required an urgent solution to the problem of their placement. It was then that the Turkestan region became an area for the permanent placement of prisoners of war. Taking into account their nationality, Austrians, Hungarians, Poles, Romanians, and Czechs went to Eastern Siberia and Turkestan.

Prisoners of war of the Austro-Hungarian and German armies appeared in Turkestan in September-October 1914, the total number of which is indicated differently in different sources. For example, V.A. Germanov indicates about 150,000, M. Gorshenina describes from 150,000 to 350,000 [2].

Prisoners of war were quartered in special camps, barracks and other premises. At first, the internees lived under the control of military authorities, but from about mid-1916, most of them were released from protection to live under police supervision in specified places and without the right to leave [3]. After some time in the camp, officers had the right to rent private apartments for themselves. The results of the research showed that the maintenance of prisoners of war at that time was normal, adequate food, rest, the opportunity to perform prayer services in accordance with their religious beliefs - these are the few things that filled the lives of Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Poles, Romanians on Turkestan land, far from their homeland.

Fritz Willfort is one of them, an Austrian army officer who experienced captivity from 1914 to 1922 in the Fergana Valley. During his entire time in captivity, he kept a diary, which he managed to safely transport to his homeland. His notes consisted of about 3,000 pages of typescript and were not originally intended for publication. The former prisoner of war entrusted the literary processing of the text to the famous Viennese literary critic Dr. Hans Prager.

A voluminous book of memoirs by Fritz Willford "Turkestan Diary" (six years in Russian Central Asia) was published by the Vienna university publishing

house W. Braumuller in 1930.

F. Vilfort was captured at the beginning of the First World War in Galicia - December 24, 1914. For him and his comrades, the Russian military authorities designated the Turkestan region as a place of detention. A railway train with 1000 prisoners (including about 200 officers) traveled from Ukraine to Turkestan for more than a month.

The author of the “Turkestan Diary” was sent to the city of Namangan. After an unpleasant incident, he was transferred deep into the Turkestan region to the Jizzakh camp. But in mid-1916, as is known, a powerful popular uprising was provoked in Jizzakh against the conscription of local Muslims for rear work. At the same time, many Europeans suffered, and then the prisoners of war were taken from the dangerous center of unrest from sin further - again the Fergana Valley, this time to the city of Skobelev - to the center of the Fergana region. On August 21, 1916, a transport with prisoners ended up at Gorchakova station and the prisoners were placed on the territory of the military fortress of the city of Skobelev.

Relations with the local population were good. The local population was always helped with food, housing, financial and moral support. The published memoirs of that time by former prisoners of war who left for their homeland have been preserved. The local residents who worked side by side with the prisoners of war also have many memories.

Two months after the start of the war in October 1914, Tsar Nicholas II approved the regulations developed by the Russian War Ministry, which became a normative act of the Russian Empire. It determined the status of prisoners of war. The document was based on the decision of the 1907 Hague Convention “On the Laws and Customs of the Land Forces”. The provision stated: “Prisoners must be treated humanely, as ‘legitimate defenders of their country’.” Their property and personal rights should not be violated. They were required to receive free

food for their work. On March 8, 1915, an addition was made to the Regulations, which also provided for monetary remuneration for work.

During 1914-1915 documents are being prepared with the basic requirements for prisoners of war and the rules for the use of their labor in various areas of economic activity. Regulations on prisoners of war, rules on the release of prisoners of war to agricultural enterprises. According to the last two rules, prisoners were used in agriculture, industrial enterprises, as well as urban services, primarily in unskilled work in road repair and construction.

Officers, unlike lower ranks, were not required to perform compulsory labor. Some of the prisoners could find well-paid jobs in the city. Prisoners of war officers and officials from prisoners of war soldiers were supposed to be responsible for the behavior and order among the soldiers entrusted to them, but they did not have the right to impose fines or penalties. Penalties were imposed on prisoners of war by warriors: non-commissioned officers with the authority of sergeant-major, as well as those serving as platoon officers with the rights of non-commissioned officers. However, lower ranks did not have the right to impose penalties on captured officers. If a prisoner of war committed a crime, not only the military authorities, but also the civilian authorities had the right to arrest them.

Sick prisoners of war were placed in city or county hospitals. In Skobelev, the dead were buried in the second Christian cemetery. Most often they died from tuberculosis, pneumonia, cirrhosis of the liver, typhus, dysentery and influenza. The property of deceased captives of lower ranks, i.e. uniform items had to be handed over to local quartermaster warehouses. The remaining things (civilian dress, underwear, shoes, etc.), if they were in satisfactory condition after disinfection, should be transferred to other prisoners of war; things that were in unusable condition, then they should be destroyed. Documents, letters, insignia, notebooks had to be sent to the Central Information Bureau of St. Petersburg.

Among the German and Austro-Hungarian prisoners of war there were a large number of highly qualified specialists in professions in demand in Turkestan - builders, agronomists, engineers, mechanics, doctors, teachers, musicians, sculptors, artists, merchants, architects, etc. Old-timers remember that prisoners always They helped people of local nationality in everything.

Prisoners of war in the Fergana Valley worked in road construction, the oil industry, coal mines, railways, hospitals, schools, military units, factories, agriculture, and party bodies. They actively participated in the socio-political life of the Fergana Valley. In order to get acquainted with the situation of prisoners of war and their living conditions, a delegation of the Swedish Red Cross headed by Hoken von Schulman arrived in Tashkent in March 1916, and in December the secretary was a delegate of the Danish embassy in Petrograd, Captain A. Brown. In general, by the end of 1916 and the beginning of 1917, the situation of Austro-Hungarian prisoners in Turkestan improved. After the February events of 1917, the camp regime for prisoners of war was even more simplified. Most of the prisoners acquired a certain freedom; it became possible to leave the camps during the day, walk freely in civilian clothes on the streets, and establish contacts with the civilian population. On June 22, 1917, a special commission considered the issue of allowing marriages with local women.

The city of Skobelev was the center of the Fergana Valley. According to historian A.M. Matveev, before 1917 there were about 40,000 prisoners of war of the Austro-Hungarian and German armies in the Fergana Valley. In addition to prisoners of war, there were several thousand civilian prisoners and refugees. Of these, 13,500 were in Skobelev, 6,000 in Khujand, 8,000 in Kokand, and thousands of prisoners of war also worked in Osh, Jalal-Abad, Andijan, and Namangan districts. In addition, in the cities of the Fergana Valley, prisoners of war performed various jobs, for example, 306 people worked as workers at the Khilkova station, 139 at the Dragomirova station, 172 at the Ursatievskoye

station, 421 at the Kyzyl-Kiya mine, 170 at the Chimion oil field, 170 at the Santo oil field. 242, at the Shurab mine 150, etc. [4].

After the overthrow of the tsarist government in the Fergana Valley, unprecedented political activity of working people in cities and villages intensified. The October Revolution and the nationalization of the enterprises of the cotton, oil mill, soap, leather, all oil and coal industries (including Kyzyl-Kiya, Sulyukta, Chimion, Santo) as well as the Fergana railway, all this exacerbated class confrontations in the region. The Fergana Valley became the center of the independence movement, which in Soviet times was called Basmachism.

Since April 1918, in Turkestan, the former Soviet government began to form military detachments from prisoners of war (Austrians, Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Romanians, Yugoslavs), the number of which exceeded 23 thousand people [5].

In the spring of 1918, two combat detachments were formed in Kokand, which included Mikhail Novikov, Arpat Schwartz, Janos Guzich, Laku Lapsh and dozens of other prisoners of war.

A cavalry regiment named after K. Liebknecht was created in Andijan, the Czech, former prisoner of war E.F. Kuzhelo was appointed commander, in addition, the 2nd cavalry regiment was created in Namangan, the commander was Hungarian M. Vrobets.

I.F. Kuts, a participant in the events of those days, recalls: "I already met Kuzhelo when I was a member of the Military Council of the Namangan Group of Forces. He is Czech by nationality. Served in the Austro-Hungarian army. I was captured. From the very first days of the revolution, he took an active part and joined the Communist Party" [6].

Kuzhelo was a skilled soldier, and soon showed extraordinary leadership abilities. This was noticed and the Czech was appointed commander of a separate

international cavalry brigade. Kuzhelo fought competently, his brigade suffered minimal losses. His fame quickly spread throughout the Fergana Valley. Without the slightest exaggeration, we can say that at that time there was no Red Guard commander in our area more popular than Kuzhelo. Cheerful, cheerful, selflessly brave, he was considered invincible among the people. The enemies were afraid of him and one reminder of Kuzhelo plunged them into horror. In battle, he behaved fearlessly, was the first to rush into the attack and carried the fighters along with him. Kujelo was respected not only by his friends. He was awarded the Order of Lenin (1933), and two Orders of the Red Banner of Battle. For military distinctions, he was awarded an honorary revolutionary weapon [7].

Beginning in mid-1918, the authorities began to actively recruit prisoners of war into the ranks of the communists and called them internationalists.

There were 166 foreign communists in the Kokand artillery machine-gun team, the cavalry squadron and the fortress company. In October 1919, there were about 4,000 internationalists on the Trans-Caspian and Fergana fronts alone [8].

By mid-1920, there were 812 foreign communists in the Fergana region, of which 268 were Hungarians, 237 Germans, 28 Yugoslavs, 26 Poles. [9] Among them were: Litvinenko, Gen, Eingern, Berger (in Skobelev), Suda (in Kokand), Zimich, Vizner (in Namangan), Rat (in Osh) and others.

Some of the prisoners of war who went over to the side of the former Soviet government took important positions in party and government structures. Here are the names of some of them: Gelfgot Gottlieb - Deputy People's Commissar of Health, Hoffman Heinrich - head of the post and telegraph office in the city of Skobelev, Bronstein A. - head of the city hospital of Skobelev, Prigan Emil - member of the regional bureau of German communists under the Central Committee of Turkestan, Kuzhelo E.F. - in 1921 - 23 - commander of a cavalry regiment of the Turkestan Front, 1923 - 31 - in leadership positions in the Cheka and in the police, director of a number of factories, manager of a trust, chairman

of the Economic Council of the Far Eastern Territory, in 1931 - 32 - director of the Nikolaev Shipyard.

In 1918, the Central Commission for Prisoners and Refugees (Tsentröplenbezh) was created, then transformed into the Central Directorate for Evacuation of the Population of the NKVD (Tsentrevak). Russia, through Centervac, through the exchange of prisoners, returned to their homeland compatriots who had been in captivity for several years. In turn, prisoners of war from warring countries were sent to their historical homeland.

The center for the evacuation of former foreign prisoners of war (plenbezh region) in the Fergana Valley was Kokand, where the region was located. evacuation point According to archival, museum, literary sources, official documents from the Kokand region. Tens of thousands of prisoners of war of the Austro-Hungarian and German armies were sent home.

Instead of a conclusion, we can say that despite the fact that the First World War took place far from the borders of our country, it has a direct involvement both in our country and in all of humanity, since it changed the map of the globe, brought boundless troubles to humanity, millions people were left homeless, children, fathers, many women became widows. Countries became impoverished from the losses caused by the war, three world empires collapsed.

Today, in many countries around the world, events and forums are held that talk about the horrors of that war. Children and grandchildren of the participants in this war, based on historical photographs, public archives, albums, souvenirs, and new documentary information, fill in the pictures of those times, the history of the fate of the participants in the war and post-war life, and also clarify the location of the graves of the victims. The general public is informed that most people participated in this brutal war not of their own free will, but on someone else's orders. One of the painful issues of the war years was the question of prisoners of war. When studying the life history of Austro-Hungarian and

German prisoners of war, it turned out that this issue is poorly studied on a global scale and does not have scientifically based principles of analysis. As for the history of prisoners of war who were in the Fergana Valley, this is not mentioned in any history book, despite the fact that their number here reached tens of thousands. For 7-8 years, until returning to their homeland, they lived and worked in five districts of the Fergana Valley.

Information about prisoners of war was collected based on materials available in regional, city, district archives and libraries. Based on these materials, an attempt was made to identify their number, profession, age, place of birth and future fate.

The purpose of the study is to explain to young people (using the example of prisoners of war based on reliable information) that war is a terrible tragedy.

V.V. Putin spoke about this at the opening ceremony of the monument on Poklonnaya Hill to the heroes of the First World War: “The First World War, its commanders and soldiers are finding their rightful place in history (as we people say, “better late than never”), and in our hearts we acquire that sacred memory that we deserve by right of the First World War. Justice will triumph on the pages of textbooks, in the media, films and, of course, in the memorials that we opened today. This must continue. Large-scale educational work is needed, serious research into archival data is needed, which will make it possible to find out exactly the cause and course of this war, to compile a list of its participants, so that new generations will learn about the fate of their ancestors and create the history of their families. It is fundamentally important to perpetuate the memory of the soldiers, to find and arrange burial places of the First World War, of which there are quite a few in Russia - there are hundreds of them. Soldiers from different countries are buried there, forever linked by a common tragedy. History reminds us all of what aggression and selfishness, the exorbitant ambitions of state leaders and political elites that take precedence over common sense, lead to.

However, instead of preserving the most prosperous continent in the world - Europe - they expose it to danger. It would be good to remember this today. It is high time for humanity to understand and accept one most important truth: violence defeats violence. The path to peace and prosperity, undoubtedly, is made up of good will, dialogue between all countries and an understanding of the lessons of past wars, as well as knowledge of who started them and why. The monument to the soldiers of the First World War is not only a tribute to a great feat, but also a warning that the world is fragile, we are obliged to take care of the world, to remember that the most valuable thing on earth is a clear sky and a peaceful, calm, stable life” [10].

In these difficult and alarming times, the intensification of ideological processes, destructive ideas, and idolatry forces us to be vigilant. Young people must realize that there are forces trying to kindle the fire of war, striving to dominate the modern world, who are trying to poison the minds of people with harmful ideas. For example, according to the conclusion of international research institutes, as a result of the latest coups and confrontations in 2012, weapons worth 307 billion US dollars were sold worldwide; the cost of one bomb used in military operations is 30 thousand US dollars. Therefore, it is not difficult to guess why the number of hotbeds of war on the globe is constantly increasing. Judging by information disseminated by global media, as a result of wars and mass clashes, more than 300 people died in Tunisia, more than 800 in Egypt, and 14 thousand people in Libya. The report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights notes that in Syria, as a result of the ongoing armed conflict, 5 thousand people die every month. In total, more than 93 thousand people have been killed since the beginning of the conflict. The population of the country, in order to save their families, their lives from bombing, violence, constantly exploding shells, is forced to leave their homeland.

The war, which has lasted more than 30 years in Afghanistan, and the civil

war in Ukraine have forced people to seek refuge in other countries. Today, as a result of military conflicts occurring in different parts of the world, the economy and public life are collapsing, the blood of innocent people is being shed, centers of culture, historical monuments, enterprises, and residential buildings are turning into ruins.

Thus, the rapidly changing political situation in the modern world, the emergence of new hotbeds of war in various parts of the world, cause concern among peace-loving peoples, including in our country. Our main goal is to remind young people that war brings destruction, pain and suffering.

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