

Boris Girshov's School-Leaving Certificate



This photo shows my school-leaving certificate full of excellent marks.

I got it in Usvyaty in 1940.

When a teenager, I was strong. I prepared myself for military service. I studied very well and got excellent school-leaving certificate.

The local military registration and enlistment office offered me to enter a military school, but I decided to have higher education, therefore I left for Leningrad where there were a lot of military educational institutions.

My relative uncle Ieronim lived in Leningrad. He helped me very much. Together with him we visited different military educational institutions, but everywhere they admitted only servicemen.

By chance we got to know that the Naval Medical Academy was opened for everyone. We went there and handed in documents. There was a large entry: 20 persons per 1 place.

It was necessary to pass through 13 examinations. I managed to do it and received good average mark. I also managed to get a pass examination in health (50% of entrants were eliminated by the medical board). It was enough for me to enter the Academy.

So that was the way I became a cadet of the Naval Medical Academy. When I was a student of the 1st course, Daddy came to Leningrad. That meeting was our last one. I keep it in mind most probably on account of the following.

I remember that he came to me depressed, because he had lost his wallet. He was going to give me some money, but failed. Moreover, I had to give him money for return ticket (and my stipend was rather scanty). Till now I remember his wails apropos of this.

In 1941 the war burst out, by that time I finished the 2nd course of the Naval Medical Academy. As Germans quickly approached Leningrad, Voroshilov (commander of the Leningrad military district) ordered to raise a brigade of marines consisting from underclassmen of military educational institutions, including our Academy, Frunze Military School, Dzerzhinsky Military School, Kronstadt Military School, etc.

The brigade was quickly created and we were brought to the Luga firing line near Gostilitsy. We started preparing for defense. For the company they gave us rifles (model of 1891), several submachine guns, hand grenades and bottles with Molotov cocktail (to fight against tanks).

The Luga firing line was situated about 100 kilometers far from the city. We dug entrenchments, implemented close reconnaissance. Germans located us and bombed several times. Then we were brought into action.

Our brigade suffered heavy casualties: Frunze, Dzerzhinsky and Kronstadt battalions were annihilated.

My first battle I remember till now: explosions of bombs and death of my comrades around me.

It happened in August or September 1941.