

War And Prisoners Of War

Sobirov Nemat Sabirovich – associate professor, candidate of philosophical sciences

Soliyev Rakhimjon Ibrokhimovich – teacher of German language

Ibragimov Vakhobjon Yusupovich - teacher of German language

Ferghana state University

Abstract

In this article detailed information was given about prisoners of the World War I which came to the Fergana valley, their history, lives and activities at the period of 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 and castle;

The first world war was the greatest human tragedy at the beginning of the XX century. At the beginning of the war, humanity had no idea about a tragedy, and what consequences awaited the European peoples and the world as a whole.

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

This war is the first ever military conflict on a global scale. It lasted 4 years, 3 months and 10 days (from August 1, 1914 to November 11, 1918). It involved 38 States - 1.5 billion of the world's population. The total mobilization of 73.5 million people, including 10 million killed, 20 million wounded. The total amount of

damage is \$ 208 billion.

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

In this tragic war in Russia in captivity were millions of prisoners of war soldiers and officers and civilians of the Triple Alliance. By 1917, the Russian captivity was about 5 million foreigners, including about 2.2 million prisoners of war of the Austro-Hungarian and German army. The results of the study show that of the total number of prisoners of war, the Germans were about 190 thousand people, Austrians and Hungarians about 1.9 million, among which about 450 thousand are Austrians, about 500 thousand-Hungarians, about 250 thousand-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 accommodation of prisoners of war (located within Siberia and the Urals), were crowded in the first months of the war. The situation demanded an urgent solution of the problem of their placement. It was then that the Turkestan region became an area of permanent accommodation of prisoners of war. Taking into account national belonging Austrians, Hungarians, Poles, Romanians, Czechs went to Eastern Siberia and Turkestan.

Prisoners of war of the Austro-Hungarian and German army appeared in Turkestan in September-October 1914, the total number of which is stated differently in different sources. For example, V. A. Germanov specifies 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 the military authorities, but from about the middle of 1916, most of them were released from protection to live under police supervision in stated places and without the right to leave [2]. After some time living in the camp, the officers had the right to rent private apartments for themselves.

The results of research showed that the content of prisoners of war at that time was normal, adequate food, rest, the opportunity to perform prayer services according to their religious beliefs - this is a little more filled the lives of Germans, Austrians, Hungarians, Poles, Romanians in Turkestan land, far from their homeland.

Fritz Willforth is one of them, an officer of the Austrian army who experienced captivity from 1914 to 1922 in the Ferghana valley. He kept a diary during his time in captivity, which he managed to safely transport to his homeland. His notes amounted to about 3,000 pages of typewriting and were not originally intended for printing. The former prisoner of war employed the literary processing of the text to the famous Viennese literary critic Dr. Hans Pracher.

The voluminous book of memoirs of Fritz Willford "Turkestan diary" (six years in Russian Central Asia) was published in the Vienna University publishing house of V. Braumuller in 1930.

F. Villfort was captured at the beginning of the First world war in Galicia on December 24, 1914. For him and his comrades, the Russian military authorities designated Turkestan as a place of detention. The railway echelon with 1000 prisoners (including among them there were about 200 officers) went from Ukraine to Turkestan more than a month.

The author of the "Turkestan diary" was sent to the city of Namangan. After an unpleasant incident, he was transferred to the depths of the Turkestan region in the Jizzakh camp. But in the middle of 1916 in Jizzakh, as is known, a powerful popular uprising was provoked against the call of local Muslims for rear work. Because of that, many Europeans suffered, and then the prisoners of war were

taken out of the dangerous hotbed of unrest from sin to further - again the Fergana valley, this time to the city of Skobelev - in the center of the Fergana region. 21 August 1916 year the transport with prisoners proved to be at the station Gorchakov and placed prisoners on territory military of fortress of the city Skobelev.

Relations with the local population were good. The local population always helped with food, housing, and gave material and moral support. Published memories of the time of former prisoners of war who left for their homeland were preserved. Many memories and the locals, who together with prisoners of war worked side by side.

Two months after the outbreak of war in October 1914, Tsar Nicholay 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 Hague Convention of 1907 "on the laws and customs of the land forces". The regulation stated: "The attitude to prisoners must be humane, as the 'legitimate defender of their country'." Their property and personal rights were not to be violated. For work they were obliged to receive free food. On the eighth of March, 1915, an addition was made to the Provision, providing also with monetary compensation for labor.

During 1914-1915 documents with the basic requirements to prisoners of war and rules of use of their work in various spheres of economic activity are prepared. 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 economy, primarily in unskilled work on road repair and construction.

Officers, unlike the lower ranks, were not involved in compulsory labor. Some of the prisoners could find a well-paid job in the city. Pow officers and officials of the pow soldiers had to be responsible for the behavior and order

among the soldiers entrusted to them, but they had no right to impose a fine, penalties. Penalties for prisoners of war were appointed by soldiers: a non-commissioned officer with the authority of a Feldwebel, as well as performing the position of platoon with the rights of non - commissioned officers. However, the lower ranks had no right to impose penalties on captured officers. If a prisoner of war committed a crime, not only the military authorities but also the civil 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 the deceased prisoners of lower ranks, i.e. items of uniforms had to be surrendered to the local quartermaster warehouses. The rest things (civilian clothes, linen, shoes and others), if they were, in satisfactory condition after disinfection should, give other prisoners of war; things which were in unfit condition should be destroyed. Documents, letters, insignia, notebooks, had to be sent to the Central information Bureau of St. Petersburg.

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

Prisoners of war in the Fergana valley worked in the construction of roads, oil industry, coal mines, Railways, hospitals, schools, military units, factories, agriculture, party organs. They actively participated in the social and political life of the Fergana valley. In order to get acquainted with the situation of prisoners of war and their living conditions in March 1916, a delegation of the Swedish red cross headed by Hocken von Schulman arrived in Tashkent, and in December, the Secretary - delegate of the Danish Embassy in Petrograd, captain A. Brown came

to Tashkent. In General, by the end of 1916 and by the beginning of 1917, the situation of Austro-Hungarian prisoners in Turkestan had improved. After the February events of 1917, the camp regime for prisoners of war was further eased. Most of the prisoners gained some freedom, there was an opportunity to leave the camp during the day, to walk freely in civilian clothes on the streets, to establish contacts with the civilian population. On June 22, 1917, a special Commission considered the issue of permission to marry local women.

The city of Skobelev was the center of the Fergana valley. According to the historian A. M. Matveev until 1917 in the Ferghana valley there were about 40,000 prisoners of war of the Austro-Hungarian and German army. In addition to prisoners of war, there were several thousand civilian prisoners and refugees. About 13,500 prisoners of war worked in Skobelev, 6,000 in Khujand, 8,000 in Kokand, and also thousand of prisoners of war in Osh, Jalal - Abad, Andijan, Namangan counties. In addition, in the cities of the Fergana valley, prisoners of war performed various works, for example, 306 people worked as workers at the Khilkov station, 139 at the Dragomirov station, 172 at the Ursatievskoye station, 421 at the Kyzyl-Kiya mine, 170 at the Chimion oil field, 242 at Santo, 150 at the Shurab mine, etc. [3, p.120].

After the overthrow of the tsarist government in the Fergana valley unprecedented political activity of working people increased in cities and villages. The October revolution and the nationalization of the cotton, oil, soap, leather, all oil and coal industries (including "Kyzyl-Kiya", "Sulukta", "Chimion", "Santo") as well as the Ferghana 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 basmachestvo.

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

people [4, p.153].

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

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

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

There were 166 foreign Communists in the Kokand artillery machine-gun team, horse squadron and fortress company. In October 1919, there were about 4,000 internationalists on the Transcaspian and Fergana fronts alone [5, p.57].

By mid-1920, there were 812 foreign Communists in the Ferghana region, including 268 Hungarians, 237 Germans, 28 Yugoslavs, 26 Poles [6] among them were: Litvinenko, Gen, Eingern, Berger (in Skobelev), Suda (in Kokand), Zimin, Wiesner (in Namangan), Ratz (in Osh) and others.

Some of the prisoners of war who passed on to the former Soviet government, took important positions in the party and government structures. Here are the names of some of them: Gelfgot Gottlieb-Deputy people's Commissar of health, Hoffmann Heinrich-head of the post and Telegraph office in Skobelev, Bronstein A.-head of the city hospital Skobelev, Prigan Emil-a member of the regional Bureau of the German Communists under the Central Committee of Turkestan.

In 1918, the Central Commission for prisoners and refugees (Tsentroplenets) was established, then it was transformed into the Central office for the evacuation of the NKVD (Tsentrevak). Russia through Centraevak by exchange of prisoners returned home compatriots who had been in captivity for several years. In turn,

prisoners of war, of warring countries, were sent to their historical homeland.

Centre of the evacuation of foreign ex-prisoners of war (region plebes) in the Fergana valley was Kokand, where the region an evacuation center was located. According to archival, Museum, literary sources, official documents, tens of thousands of prisoners of war of the Austro-Hungarian and German army were sent home through the Kokand region of evacuation.

Instead of concluding, 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 the whole of humanity, as it changed the map of the globe, brought endless misfortunes to humanity, millions of people were left homeless, children, fathers, many women became widows. Countries were impoverished from the losses caused by the war, three world empires collapsed.

Today in many countries of the world arrangement are held, forums at which about horrors of that war are spoken. Children, grandchildren of the participants of this war participants, on the basis of historical photographs, public archives, albums, Souvenirs, new documentary information fill the pictures of those times, the history of the fate of the war and postwar life, and specify the place of the graves of the victims. The General public is informed that most people participated in this brutal war not of their own volition, but on someone's orders. One of the painful questions of the war years is the question of prisoners of war. When studying the life history of the Austro-Hungarian and German prisoners of war, it turned out that this issue is poorly studied on a global scale, has no scientifically sound principles of analysis. As for the history of the prisoners of war who were in the Ferghana valley, this is not mentioned in any book on history, despite the fact that their number here reached up to ten thousands. They lived and worked in five counties of the Fergana valley for 7-8 years, until returning their Homeland.

Data on prisoners of war on the basis of materials available in regional, city, regional archives and libraries were collected. On the basis of these materials, an

attempt was made to identify their number, profession, age, place of birth and fate.

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

This was stated by Vladimir Putin at the opening ceremony of the monument on Poklonnaya hill to the heroes of the First world war: "The First world war, its commanders, soldiers find their rightful place in history (as our people say, "better late than never"), and in our hearts the sacred memory is acquired, which is deserved by the right of the war of the First world war. Justice will prevail on the pages of textbooks, in the media, in films and, of course, in the memorials that we have unveiled today. This must be continued. Large-scale educational work, serious research of archival data is necessary which will allow to learn precisely the reason and a course of this war and it is necessary, to make the roll-call list of its participants that new generations learned about destiny of the ancestors, added history of the families. It is fundamentally important to perpetuate the memory of the soldiers, to find and arrange the burial of the First world war, who are not few - there are hundreds of them in Russia. There rest the warriors of different countries, who are forever linked by a common tragedy. History reminds us all of the consequences of aggression and selfishness, the excessive ambitions of state leaders and political elites, who take precedence over common sense. However, instead of preserving the most prosperous continent of the world – Europe- they expose it to dangers. It would be good to remember this today. It is high time for humanity to understand and accept one most basic truth: violence strikes violence. The path to peace and prosperity, of course, is composed of goodwill, dialogue of all countries and understanding of the lessons of past wars, as well as knowing who and why they started. The monument to the soldiers of the First world war is not only a tribute to the great feat, but also a warning that the world is fragile, we must protect the world, remember that the most valuable thing on earth is a clear sky and a peaceful, calm, stable life." [6]

In the current difficult and alarming time, the intensification of ideological processes, destructive ideas, idolatry forces us to be vigilant. Young people should realize that there are forces trying to ignite the fire of war, seeking to dominate the modern world, which 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 last coups and confrontations in 2012, weapons worth 307 billion U.S. dollars were sold worldwide, the cost of one bomb used in military operations is 30 thousand U.S. dollars. Therefore, it is easy to guess why the number of hotbeds of war on the globe is constantly increasing. Judging by the information spread by the world media, as a result of wars and mass clashes, more than 300 people died in Tunisia, more than 800 in Egypt, and 14 thousand in Libya. The report of the high Commissioner for human rights at the UN notes that in Syria, as a result of the ongoing armed conflict, every ' month 5 thousand people are killed. In total, since the beginning of the conflict, more than 93 thousand people have fallen victims. The population of the country in order to save their families, their lives from the bombing, violence, incessantly exploding shells, forced to leave their homeland.

Thus, the rapidly changing political situation in the modern world, the emergence of new hotbeds of war in different parts of the world, cause alarm 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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