

A Life of Service and Honor

Visual sources can tell a whole story. In a box, while I was cleaning, I found a frame containing three photographs of a person dear to my parents. It was a far-off relative, Яковлев Николай Семёнович (Iakovlev Nikolae Semyonovich), born on August 9, 1921, in the city of Odessa, Ukraine. A man with an upright posture and a story worth telling. These photographs are important to my family, as the man was a close person and a source of pride for us.



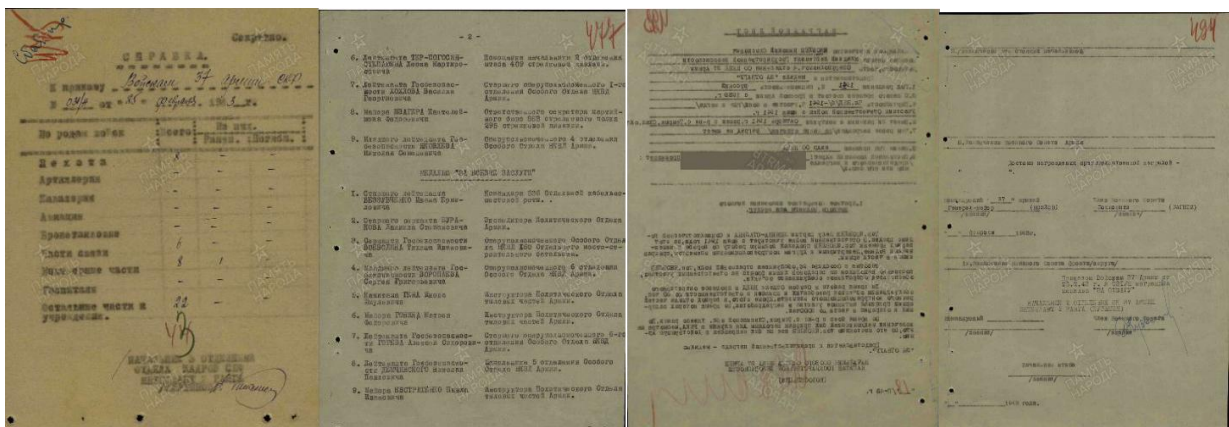
Photo 1. Photo taken in November 1939

Young Nicolae was drafted into the Soviet Army of the USSR on 24.09.1939, Being only 18 years old, as an officer. He had to leave his family. According to the studied documents, he was a part of the army no.37 of Soviet Army (штаб 37 А: штаб КОБО). They had the main mission to defend the southwestern position and to prepare for possible military attacks in the Bessarabia region in the summer, 1941. The army included several cavalry and infantry corps. Also they had artillery and tank units. On June 11-24, 1941 the 37th Army carried out the deployment of forces in the border zone under the pretext of military manoeuvres. With the beginning of the „Great Patriotic War” for the USSR, on June 22, 1941, the fighting force no.37, in which



Nikolay was enlisted, participated in border battles, trying to stop the advance of German soldiers in the southwestern direction. There, Nikolai Semyonovich showed himself significantly in the battles and was then awarded the medal for „Victory Over Germany in the Great Patriotic War” 1941-1945. The document awarding the medal was proceeded on 05.09.1945.

The document:



In 1944 summer, Nikolai Semyonovich, participated in the Iasi-Chisinau military operation. During the operation, the Army in which he was incorporated, was responsible for breaking through the German-Romanian defensive and rapidly advancing westward, contributing to the destruction of enemy forces.

Another important moment in his history is when he received the Order of the Red Star, being in the position of principal lieutenant. This Order is considered the most important award of those times.



Тов. Яковлев являясь Опер. Уполномоченным ОКР "СМЕРШ" при батальоне участвует во всех мероприятиях направленных на скорейшее уничтожение гитлеровских банд. Тов. Яковлев ежедневно бывает во всех подразделениях батальона и выезжает в подразделения находящиеся в других пунктах дислокации, помогает командованию в деле поддержания революционной бдительности и законности среди личного состава пресекая всякие возможности проникновения в часть контрреволюционного и шпионско-диверсионного элемента. Со времени формирования батальона тов. Яковлевым выявлено двух лиц проводящих антисоветскую агитацию среди личного состава, которые были арестованы и ВТ осуждены оба к 10 годам И Т Л. Неоднократно проводил беседы среди офицерского и сержантского состава о бдительности, сохранении военной тайны, особенно на территории других государств. При передислокации батальона от г. Цытихатки до Болгарии обслуживал все подразделения и проводил в них работу по внедрению Советской законности. Культурный, выдержанный, настойчивый че-

The document: "Товарищ Яковлев являясь Оперативно Уполномоченным ОКР «СМЕРШ» при батальоне участвует во всех мероприятиях направленных на скорейшее уничтожение гитлеровских банд. Товарищ Яковлев ежедневно бывает во всех подразделениях батальона и выезжает в подразделения находящиеся в других пунктах дислокации, помогает командированию в деле поддержания революционной бдительности и законности среди личного состава пресекая всякие возможности проникновения в часть контрреволюционного и шпионско-диверсионного элемента. Со времени формирования товарищем Яковлевым выявившего двух лиц проводящих антисоветскую агитацию среди личного состава, которые были арестованы и ВТ осуждены оба к 10 годам И Т.Л. Неоднократно проводил беседы среди офицерского и сержантского состава о бдительности, соранений военной тайны, особенно на территории других государств. При передислокации батальона от г. Цытихатки до Болгарии обслуживал все подразделения и проводил в них работу по внедрению Советской законности. Культурный, выдержанный, настойчивый человек. "

The translate of the document

(Comrade Yakovlev, being the Operational Commissioner of the SMERSH OKR at the battalion, participates in all activities aimed at the rapid destruction of Hitlerite gangs. Comrade Yakovlev visits all units of the battalion every day and travels to units located in other deployment points, assists the assignment in maintaining revolutionary vigilance and legality among the personnel, preventing any possibility of counter-revolutionary and espionage-sabotage elements penetrating the unit. Since the formation of Comrade Yakovlev, who identified two individuals conducting anti-Soviet agitation among the personnel, who were arrested and BT were both sentenced to 10 years and T.L. He repeatedly conducted talks among the officer and sergeant staff about vigilance, preserving military secrets, especially on the territory of other states. During the battalion's redeployment from the city of Tsyatihatki to Bulgaria, he served all units and carried out work in them to implement Soviet legality. A cultured, self-possessed, persistent man.")



Photo 2. Photo taken in 1943, in Krasnodar, Nikolae and his comrades

We notice that it is a group photo in which Nikolae also appears with his comrades, his age at the moment when the photo was taken was 22 years old, in the Soviet army he had the position of second lieutenant of state security.

The photo has a black background, it is difficult to deduce the place where it was taken, it seems that they were in a room. The photo is small 3x4 cm, it was kept in the wallet by his wife, later passed on to her niece, who keeps it to this day.

The photo is intact, because the most of the time it was kept in a frame.

We notice that the three men are having a conversation and were in their free time at the front, in which they are demonstratively smoking, as long as we notice that they were holding cigarettes in their hands. We deduce that they had an important position, taking into account the fact that not everyone could afford to smoke cigarettes in those turbulent times.

We notice that the clothing is also specific to a Soviet army soldier with a higher status (lieutenant), in the given picture the weapon holder is clearly visible. Which was used for defense.

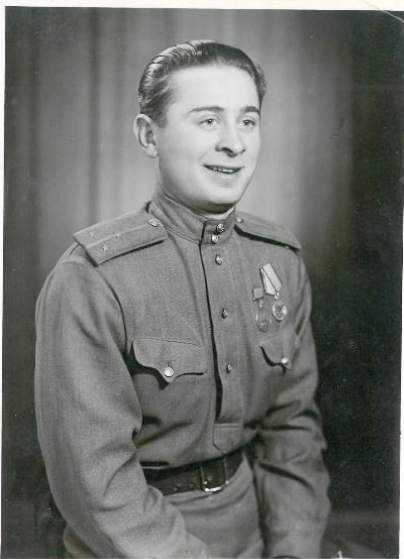


Photo 3. Taken in 1949

We observe that the firsts of the merits and military medals obtained, are attached to his chest. Comparing the picture with the photo 1(1939), we see the change in the uniform, this one having epauletts, smaller buttons made of a more visible material. The change of the uniform at that time tells us about his role in the arm.

A hidden story of our families is a secret from Nicolae's past kept by all family members. The truth is that their family is of Jewish ethnicity, his grandparents coming from a very rich family. His grandfather managed to hide this fact, changing his surname and getting rid of the evidence of Jewish ethnicity before 1910. Being a flexible person, he easily adapted to the new identity, offering his children an easier future, as well as Nicolae, who was born with Ukrainian documents. Getting the name Яковлев. The only thing that remained were the facial features that resembled Jews, also they were not going to the church.. Considering that they were a part of a Jewish family and hiding this, Nicolae and his wife after the Second World War had got a good place to work.

In conclusion, Яковлев Николай Семёнович, after the Second World War, lived in Bulgaria, later moved to the city, Chisinau from the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, working at the KGB(The Committee For State Security). Those who knew him, remember him as an optimistic, confident, eager to share stories and experiences. After World War II, he told stories of his daily activities, how he saw wounded people whom he had no power to help.

However, in the memory of those close to him, Nicolae remained a strong man, and the memory remains alive through the photos and medals, left by his family, but also the little stories transmitted and left from generation to generation.

Bibliography:

1. https://m.pamyat-naroda.ru/heroes/person-hero91729402?last_name=%D0%AF%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BB%D0%B5%D0%B2&first_name=%D0%9D%D0%B8%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%B9&middle_name=%D0%A1%D0%B5%D0%BC%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%B8%D1%87&birth_date=%7B%22date_start%22%3A%221920-12-31T22%3A15%3A36.000Z%22%7D&page=1