



**Aleksander
A. Maslov**

FALLEN SOVIET GENERALS

***Soviet General
Officers
killed in battle,
1941–1945***



**Translated and edited by
DAVID M. GLANTZ**

CASS SERIES ON SOVIET (RUSSIAN) MILITARY INSTITUTIONS

FALLEN SOVIET GENERALS

CASS SERIES ON SOVIET (RUSSIAN) MILITARY INSTITUTIONS

Series Editor: David M. Glantz

ISSN 1462-1835

This series examines the nature and evolution of Soviet military institutions in peace and war and the human dimension of the Soviet Army.

1. Aleksander A. Maslov, translated and edited by David M. Glantz, *Fallen Soviet Generals: Soviet General Officers Killed in Battle, 1941–1945*. (ISBN 0 7146 4790 X cloth, 0 7146 4346 7 paper)

CASS SERIES ON SOVIET (RUSSIAN) STUDY OF WAR

Series Editor: David M. Glantz

ISSN 1462-0960

This series examines what Soviet military theorists and commanders have learned from the study of their own military operations.

1. Harold S. Orenstein, translator and editor, *Soviet Documents on the use of War Experience*, Volume I, *The Initial Period of War 1941*, with an Introduction by David M. Glantz. (ISBN 0 7146 3392 5 cloth)
2. Harold S. Orenstein, translator and editor, *Soviet Documents on the Use of War Experience*, Volume II, *The Winter Campaign 1941–1942*, with an Introduction by David M. Glantz. (ISBN 0 7146 3393 3 cloth)
3. Joseph G. Welsh, translator, *Red Armor Combat Orders: Combat Regulations for Tank and Mechanized Forces 1944*, edited and with an Introduction by Richard N. Armstrong. (ISBN 0 7146 3401 8 cloth)
4. Harold S. Orenstein, translator and editor, *Soviet Documents on the Use of War Experience*, Volume III, *Military Operations 1941 and 1942*, with an Introduction by David M. Glantz. (ISBN 0 7146 3402 6 cloth)
5. William A. Burhans, translator, *The Nature of the Operations of Modern Armies* by V.K. Triandafillov, edited by Jacob W. Kipp, with an Introduction by James J. Schneider. (ISBN 0 7146 4501 X cloth, 0 7146 4118 9 paper)
6. Harold S. Orenstein, translator, *The Evolution of Soviet Operational Art, 1927–1991: The Documentary Basis*, Volume I, *Operational Art, 1927–1964*, with an Introduction by David M. Glantz. (ISBN 0 7146 4547 8 cloth, 0 7146 4228 2 paper)
7. Harold S. Orenstein, translator, *The Evolution of Soviet Operational Art, 1927–1991: The Documentary Basis*, Volume II, *Operational Art, 1965–1991*, with an Introduction by David M. Glantz. (ISBN 0 7146 4548 6 cloth, 0 7146 4229 0 paper)
8. Richard N. Armstrong and Joseph G. Welsh, *Winter Warfare: Red Army Orders and Experiences*. (ISBN 0 7146 4699 7 cloth, 0 7146 4237 1 paper)
9. Lester W. Grau, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan*. (ISBN 0 7146 4874 4 cloth, 0 7146 4413 7 paper)

FALLEN SOVIET GENERALS

SOVIET GENERAL OFFICERS
KILLED IN BATTLE, 1941–1945

ALEKSANDER A. MASLOV

Translated and edited by
DAVID M. GLANTZ

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 1998 in Great Britain by
FRANK CASS PUBLISHERS
Published 2016 by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017 USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © 1998 Aleksander A. Maslov

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Maslov, Aleksander A.

Fallen Soviet generals : Soviet general officers killed in battle,
1941–1945. – (Cass series on Soviet (Russian) military institutions)

1. Generals – Soviet Union 2. World War, 1939–1945 –
Casualties – Soviet Union

I. Title

940.5'4'00922'47

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Maslov, Aleksander A., 1961–

Fallen Soviet generals : Soviet general officers killed in battle, 1941–1945 /
by Aleksander A. Maslov : translated and edited by David M. Glantz.

p. cm. – (Cass series on Soviet (Russian) military institutions : 1)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-7146-4790-X (cloth). – ISBN 0-7146-4346-7 (pbk.)

1. World War, 1939–1945 – Biography. 2. Generals – Soviet Union –
Biography. 3. Soviet Union. Raboche-Krest ianskaià Krasnaia
Armiia – Biography. 4. World War, 1939–1945 – Registers of dead –
Soviet Union. I. Glantz, David M. II. Title. III. Series.

D736.M32 1998

940.54'6747—dc21

97-39035

CIP

*All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or
by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise,
without the prior permission of the publisher.*

ISBN 978-0-714-64790-6 (hbk)

ISBN 978-0-714-64346-5 (pbk)

ISBN 978-1-315-03788-2 (eISBN)

*In blessed memory of the generals and admirals
of the Red Army and Soviet Fleet,
who fell on the fields of battle of the Great Patriotic War
during the struggle with fascism*

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	viii
<i>List of Tables</i>	ix
<i>Foreword</i>	xi
<i>Introduction</i>	xiii
1. Military Leaders who Perished during Defensive and Offensive Operations in 1941 and 1942	1
2. General Officer Corps Combat Losses during the Second Period of War (1942-1943)	81
3. Senior Officer Combat Deaths during the Concluding Period of War (1944-1945)	126
4. Special Categories of General Officer Losses	194
In the chaos of war: general officers who perished in special circumstances	194
Not by direct enemy fire: more about Soviet generals who were blown up by mines	210
Posthumous generals: senior officers killed in action during wartime and promoted to the rank of general posthumously	227
5. Conclusions	245
<i>About the Author</i>	270
<i>Index</i>	271

Illustrations

Soviet Generals killed in battle in 1941	20–2
The Khar'kov Disaster, May 1942	52–4
Soviet Generals killed in battle in 1942	64–5
Soviet Generals killed in battle in 1943	92–4
Soviet Generals killed in battle in 1944	150–2
Soviet Generals killed in battle in 1945	172–3

Tables

Table 5.1	Distribution of irrevocable general officer losses by rank	253
Table 5.2	Distribution of irrevocable general officer losses by force branch	253
Table 5.3	Distribution of general officer losses at various command levels	254
Table 5.4	Distribution of general officer losses by duty position	255
Table 5.5	Distribution of general officer losses by type of armed force	256
Table 5.6	Distribution of general officer losses by campaign, year and period of war	256
Table 5.7	Distribution of general officer losses by main (strategic) wartime operation	257
Table 5.8	Distribution of general officer losses by major battle	258
Table 5.9	Distribution of general officer losses by wartime <i>front</i>	259
Table 5.10	Distribution of general officer losses by year group of promotion	259
Table 5.11	Distribution of general officer losses by loss category	260
Table 5.12	Distribution of general officer losses by type of enemy weapon	261
Table 5.13	Distribution of general officer losses by type of service	263
Table 5.14	Distribution of general officer losses by location of death	264
Table 5.15	Distribution of general officer losses by territory or country	264

This page intentionally left blank

Foreword

Today, over 50 years after the end of the Second World War, the wartime Red Army remains largely faceless to the Western and, often, even to the Russian reading public. This is not surprising considering the fact that, until recently, the Soviet–German War itself was largely an unknown war. Western and Soviet historians alike have made immense strides in recent years to lift the veil of obscurity and to expose the gruesome details of this most horrible of mankind’s wars. Survey histories now chronicle the war’s awesome course, operational histories describe many of the war’s most extensive and important operations, and memoir literature reveals the role of leading military figures in charting the war’s course. There are major gaps, of course, but these gaps are being painstakingly filled as archival materials slowly surface and are exploited.

Despite all of this work, the Red Army remains essentially faceless. Books have described the lives and exploits of a few notable high-level commanders of the stature and station of G. K. Zhukov, K. K. Rokossovsky, I. S. Konev, and others, but few have related the experiences of the countless officers and soldiers who served under these famous men. Other books have documented the overall scale of human sacrifice in the war and, using cold and emotionless charts, they have surgically recounted the tally of dead and wounded in each major battle and operation. Still other works have painstakingly provided the order of battle on both sides; sterile lists of formations, units and subunits which fought, bled, and sometimes perished in the crucible of war. As valuable as these sources are and as revealing as they are of the horror of the war, most lack personality and any sense of the human dimension. The casualty figures and seemingly endless unit enumerations cover up the stark fact that individuals, man and sometimes woman alike, made up these gruesome casualty lists and manned and shared the fate of these units.

This book begins the arduous process of correcting this cruel reality.

Combining the skill of the researcher with a dogged determination to overcome bureaucratic constraints, brutal historical censorship and national bias, Aleksander Maslov has begun to give the Soviet soldier his due by restoring a 'human face' and human dimension to those millions who perished in the war. Although it is only a beginning, and others will have to pay similar homage to those who survived the war, Maslov has shown what can be done if the will is found to do it.

As gruesome and depressing as this book's title sounds, it does far more than simply catalogue the names of the dead and the forgotten. While resurrecting the names and fates of these fallen generals, it also resurrects their lives, their accomplishments, and, in many instances, their personalities. After spending over 50 years in near total oblivion, they can now once again live through their deeds and in the memories of their descendant families and nations. Through this magnificent effort, Maslov has put a face on the most faceless portion of the Soviet general officer corps. While doing so, and by including hitherto unavailable and often forbidden biographical data, he has also written an insightful social history of the prewar and wartime Soviet general officer corps.

This book itself represents a magnificent promise. It charts an ambitious, difficult, challenging, but immensely valuable course for future research. Maslov will follow with volumes on Soviet general officers who died in captivity and others who perished during wartime from disease, illness and other infirmities. I hope and trust that he will then complete this historic and unprecedented work by accepting the greatest but most potentially rewarding challenge of all, by doing the same service for the millions of fallen Soviet soldiers, who also live in utter obscurity. When he has done so, he will join the front ranks of those who have struggled to restore the Soviet soldier to his rightful place in modern history. It has been an honor to play but a small part of the process.

As translator and editor of this book, I have remained as truthful as possible to Maslov's text. The bulk of the work remains as he has written it. I have added some operational context and occasional explanatory materials to make the book more understandable to Western readers. Some words simply do not translate well from Russian to English. Therefore, in places and where appropriate, I have used substitute terms more familiar to Western audiences. I also keenly understand the problems of translation and the pitfalls the translation process entails. Therefore, I alone am responsible for any errors and omissions this book contains.

David M. Glantz
Carlisle, PA, USA
January 1996

Introduction: A history of the compilation of a single list – once again about Soviet military secrets

A comprehensive list of Soviet Armed Forces generals, admirals and division and corps commissars who were killed in the Great Patriotic War, which is the subject of this volume, was first compiled by a group of responsible figures in the Main Cadres Directorate [*Glavnoe upravlenie kadrov – GUK*] of the USSR's Ministry of Defense [*Ministerstvo oborony – MO*]. This group was headed by the then chief of the Cadres Directorate, the well-known Soviet military leader and wartime army commander, Army General A. P. Beloborodov. The resulting list was then published in 1963 as a book in the 'closed press', which bore the title, *The Military Cadre of the Soviet Government During the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945*.¹ Until recently, this book was classified '*sekretno*' [secret].²

It took General Beloborodov's group almost 20 years of independent work to compile such an exhaustive list, and, as far as the list's detailed contents are concerned, I believe the most vital and important question remains, 'What were the true reasons for, and the scale and nature of, Soviet Army irrevocable general officer corps' losses during the Great Patriotic War?' Materials found in the Russian Federation's military archives provide the essential nucleus of the broad range of sources used in this volume.

It is indeed unfortunate that the list of general officer losses, which appears in Appendix No. 2 of the formerly secret publication cited above, differs rather significantly from information which is now becoming available. This is particularly disturbing because, inasmuch as the secret reference book was prepared for higher army and state leaders, both before and since declassification of the list, the Ministry of Defense's Main Cadres Directorate has had ample opportunity to reveal the full truth and, above all, to release all of the supporting documentary materials. Researchers have been and still are constantly experiencing great difficulties in their efforts to obtain the appropriate documentary materials, which are maintained by the Russia

Federation's Ministry of Defense, the Federal Security Services, the Chief Military Prosecutor, the Military Court of the Russian Federation's Supreme Court, and similar organs of the former USSR.

The book's list of general officer losses contains the names of 428 men (421 generals and admirals and 7 division and corps commissars). The book's main weakness is its incompleteness. Whom did the authors leave out? As it turns out, they primarily left out generals who perished as a result of illegal punishment, that is, Stalinist repression. Among those repressed military leaders who were excluded from the list were Lieutenant General of Aviation F. K. Arzhenukhin, chief of the Air Force Academy; Major General of Aviation P. S. Volodin, Air Force chief of staff; Major General S. G. Galaktionov, commander of 30th Mountain Rifle Division; Major General A. A. Glazkov, teacher at the Frunze Military Academy; Major General N. M. Glovatsky, commander of the 118th Rifle Division; Major General A. N. De-Lazarim, teacher at the Chemical Defense Military Academy; Major General A. A. Kazekamp, student at the command course at the General Staff Academy; Colonel General of Aviation A. D. Loktionov, commander of the Baltic Special Military District; Major General S. M. Mishenko, instructor at the Frunze Military Academy; Major General I. Kh. Pauk, teacher at the General Staff Academy; Major General M. I. Petrov, teacher at the Artillery Academy; Lieutenant General of Aviation and Hero of the Soviet Union P. I. Pumpur, commander of the Moscow Military District Air Forces; Major General G. I. Sokolov, chief of staff of the Kiev Special Military District's 6th Army; Major General of Technical Forces M. M. Kaiukov, deputy chief of the Artillery Directorate; Lieutenant General of Technical Forces N. I. Trubetsky, chief of the General Staff's Military Construction Directorate; Major General of Aviation and Hero of the Soviet Union S. A. Chernykh, commander of the 9th Mixed Aviation Division; Colonel General and Hero of the Soviet Union G. M. Shtern, chief of the Antiaircraft Directorate; and a number of other military figures.

The list omits the names of far fewer generals and admirals who perished in other officially designated categories of irrevocable officer corps losses. But, even in these categories, some names which should be there are missing. For example, the name of Vice Admiral V. V. Khoroshkhin, the commander of Volga Military Flotilla's 2nd Brigade of River Boats, cannot be found among the list of those who perished at the hands of enemy combat fire. Likewise, the name of Major General I. I. Larin, the Member of the Military Council of 2nd Guards Army, is missing from the list of those who committed suicide. Nor is the

INTRODUCTION

name of Major General V. S. Rikhter, the chief of staff of 6th Rifle Corps, found among the list of those categorized as missing in action. Further, the name of Major General of Artillery M. I. Skorodumov, chief of the Evening Section of the Artillery Academy, does not appear among the list of those who died of illness. Finally, the list of accidental deaths does not include the name of Major General of Signal Forces A. G. Lapkin, chief of the Military Electro-Technical Academy, and so forth. All of these names should have appeared on the comprehensive list in their respective loss categories.

The list's brief enumeration of individuals who held the military rank of 'division commissar' and 'corps commissar' cannot withstand any criticism whatsoever, at a minimum because it fails to mention the relative significance of each name however it appears on the list. For example, the list states that division commissars R. L. Balychenko and S. Z. Rabinovich and corps commissars M. Ia. Apse, and I. P. Petukhov perished in 1942 and 1943 as a result of repression; division commissars M. S. Nikishev and F. I. Shlykov were killed during the course of combat operations; and corps commissar N. N. Vashugin committed suicide. These brief entries tell the reader very little about the true rank of each individual officer and the circumstances and significance of his death.

Therefore, my research indicates that the overall number of losses among generals and admirals, in accordance with the officially designated categories of the former secret list, is not less than 35 men fewer than the actual number. According to my research data and materials, the total Soviet general officer losses amounted to at least 450 men. Here one should bear in mind that the actual number of general officers referenced in the reports of the Main Cadres Directorate are actually somewhat fewer than the total of 421 persons listed, since wartime military leaders turned up on the list who actually remained alive! These survivors who were erroneously listed among the dead include Majors General G. S. D'iakov, K. I. Samoilov, and S. I. Oborin, who, in actuality, were subjected to repressive measures, but who did not perish during the war!

Moreover, it remains unclear on what grounds the names of Major Generals A. A. Vakhrushev and V. A. Vitvinin, who died of illness on 19 May 1945 and on 15 May of that same year, respectively, as well as Major General V. V. Tsirkovich, who, as it was pointed out, died of wounds on 24 October 1945 (he occupied the post of deputy commander of rear services of the 1st Far Eastern Front's 59th Rifle Corps), were included in the Main Cadres Directorate list of wartime dead.³

These contradictions and errors pose two extremely important

questions which must be addressed. First, why did the materials of the Main Cadres Directorate prove to be of such low quality and, second, why was the list, which was prepared for the state military and political elite in such a secretive manner, so far from the truth? After working for such a prolonged period with documents, records, and materials located in the 4th Department and other Departments of the Main Cadres Directorate, which were responsible for an accounting of the generals and admirals of the Russian (Soviet) Army, I have concluded that there are several answers to these questions.

The answer to the first, and less important, question, that regarding the accuracy of the data, seems rather simple. It appears that general officer personnel data found in the special card index containing the service record documents of higher military leaders was poorly recorded and maintained. To be more precise, in face-to-face meetings with responsible workers within the 4th Department of the Main Cadres Directorate, they explained to me that the analyzed material was compiled more than thirty years ago on the basis of the then existing information available in the card files of the generals' and admirals' service records. We then determined that some of the record documents of general officers who became irrevocable casualties in the period 1941–45, and of other generals and admirals as well, were, indeed, absent from the card files.⁴

However, the answer to the more important question regarding the list's inaccuracy is more complex, and even sinister. Rather than being particularly technical in nature, to a considerable degree the inaccuracies are also ideological in origin. After studying in detail many thousands of service record cards belonging to Soviet generals who served from 1940 to 1990, it became clear that the cards of repressed military leaders were deliberately very inaccurate, and a considerable amount of biographical information and, in particular, precise facts about the fate of these persons was missing from them. The service record card [*UPK*] of Major General of Tank Forces N. D. Gol'tsev vividly and eloquently illustrates this fact. General Gol'tsev's last service in the field forces during 1941 was in the armored forces of the Southern Front's 18th Army. Originally, Red Army cadre organs recorded the information that General Gol'tsev was missing in action during 1941 while conducting a reconnaissance mission. On the basis of this information, and by virtue of Order No. 0266, dated 28 May 1942, the Main Directorate for the Formation and Manning of the Red Army (*GUFUKA*) struck the general from the officer corps' list as 'missing in action in 1941'. During the war, however, the *GUFUKA* received new unverified information that General Gol'tsev was actually

INTRODUCTION

a prisoner of war. But a subsequent entry on his service record card clarified the situation. It read:

According to information received from the 3rd Main Directorate of the USSR *KGB*, N. D. Gol'tsev was arrested on 13 October 1941, and, on 13 February 1942, he was condemned to the highest measure of punishment [shot] by a Special Meeting of the former USSR *MGB* for betraying the homeland. The verdict has been carried out.

Further, Gol'tsev's service record card indicated that a KGB officer, named Major Korshkov, had reported that information to the Main Cadres Directorate, and a responsible directorate employee, named Korolev, had made the entry on 16 June 1955. Judging General Gol'tsev's fate from a contemporary perspective, the fact that, for more than ten years, the cadre organs of the Soviet Armed Forces knew nothing about the true fate of not just a simple soldier, but a Red Army General, is absolutely staggering. Moreover, this occurred at a time when the Main Cadres Directorate should have recorded all changes in the biographical information of generals, and all necessary and exhaustive materials about the fate of General N. D. Gol'tsev and others similar to him were available in the secret depositories of the central home office department of Beria and Abakumov at Lubianka in Moscow, which was literally located side by side with the building of the People's Commissariat of Defense's [*Narodnyi komissariat oborony – NKO*] Main Cadres Directorate.⁵ However, the fact is that the henchmen of these Stalinist executioners, as a rule, did not trouble themselves with any sort of accounting about the bloody work they performed, either to the people or to the government or, especially, to the army leadership. As a rule, during the Stalinist period, the Main Cadres Directorate could not bring itself to send inquiries regarding the fate of this or that military leader to Beria's representatives because they feared punishment 'for excessive curiosity'. The executioners themselves decided when, what, and to whom to report.

It is also important to note that during the so-called period of the 'Khrushchev thaw' [1960–64], it is apparent to all that the authors who prepared the materials on the analyzed lists could have corrected the omissions and tidied up the record documents of the generals by directing suitable inquiries to the appropriate Soviet *KGB* organs. However, for reasons which are not altogether clear, this was not done. As a result, after the declassification and publication of the lists by the *Military-historical Journal* (*Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal – VIZh*) in 1991–94, the list's immense number of errors and inaccuracies, and, even more important, its omission of tens of names, cast the Ministry

of Defense of the former Soviet Union and, to a considerable degree, the Ministry of Defense of the present sovereign Russian Federation in a very unfavorable light in the eyes of public opinion.⁶

After publication of the lists began in 1991, I immediately subjected the *Military-historical Journal* to sharp criticism.⁷ In addition, the journal's editor began to receive equally critical comments from other researchers and readers.⁸ A letter, sent to me on 19 August 1991 by the editor of *VIZh*, pointed out:

If you have at your disposal information which considerably broadens the publication of General Sidorov [who authored the journal articles], we are prepared to examine it and publish it on the pages of the journal. The editor well understands that it is not possible for a single author's collective to answer this complex question with 100 per cent accuracy, no less a single author. This painstaking work requires the efforts of many people.⁹

Another letter to me from the journal editor, dated 18 October 1991, expressed the journal's willingness to examine my materials for potential publication.¹⁰ Subsequently, in 1991, I repeatedly turned to the leadership of the Main Cadres Directorate with requests that they cease publication of their lists in *VIZh* until the materials could be thoroughly checked and revised. In response, I received a number of letters from the editor of *VIZh* and other involved organs. A letter dated 28 August 1991 and signed by a section chief of the 4th Directorate of the *GUK* named Colonel Ivanov expressed confidence that close cooperation could be established between us for the sake of exposing the truth.¹¹ Another letter from a responsible employee in the Main Cadres Directorate, dated 20 November 1991, expressed similar hopes.¹² On 13 October 1992, Colonel Ivanov again wrote to me, stating, in part:

We cannot manage this extremely labor consuming and painstaking work without the help of the archives, military registration offices, and readers like you. Therefore, please accept our gratitude for your selfless activity in this research work, and we hope for further cooperation in exposing the truth.¹³

The chief of the 4th Directorate of the *GUK*, Lieutenant General A. D. Sidorov, who took part in declassifying the examined lists and preparing them for publication in *VIZh*, responded positively to my observations and criticisms. He had performed the task of chief editor of a considerable portion of the published text and, subsequently, offered considerable assistance to me and others in our investigative work. In a letter to me dated 16 September 1992, the general declared:

INTRODUCTION

Accept our heartfelt thanks for active participation in perpetuating the memory of military leaders who perished during the Great Patriotic War. We willingly accept your assistance in determining their fate and elaborating upon the circumstances of their deaths. If you have information which elaborates on and adds to the well-known facts, you can send it to our address or to the address of '*The Military-historical Journal*'. After suitable checking, it will be used by us.¹⁴

One must admit that the observations, comments, and criticisms of readers had a noticeable effect in 1991. In its November issue (No. 11) of that year, *Military-historical Journal* temporarily ceased publication of its articles on general officer losses, having sent its materials back to the Main Cadres Directorate for elaboration and checking. Six months later, however, the journal again resumed publication of information about general officer losses, and the information still contained errors.¹⁵ Unfortunately, the process of double-checking and elaboration had failed to produce any sort of positive results. It then became clear that *VIZh* was continuing to publish the list of general officer losses directly from the book, *Military Cadres of the Soviet Government During the Great Patriotic War*, essentially without attempting in any way to correct the numerous errors and shortcomings in the existing text. The Russian military-bureaucratic machine, which has always been distinguished by its clumsiness and sluggishness, once again displayed its most negative qualities by acting in stereotypical fashion and by failing to be active in reconsidering the obsolete.

Moreover, for motives which are not altogether clear, now the names of Major General of Artillery K. S. Dergach, the commander of 35th Rifle Corps artillery, who perished during the Battle for Berlin in April 1945, and Engineer Vice-Admiral A. A. Zhukov, deputy commander of naval defense at the city of Leningrad, who committed suicide on 24 January 1943, which were included in the original list in the book, have now been excluded, and these individuals have not appeared in the *VIZh* materials.¹⁶ It is true, however, that a new military leader, whose name was not included in Appendix 2 of the book in the first place, now appears in the journal's lists. He is Major General of Tank Forces V. K. Maksimov, the deputy commander of 7th Guards Mechanized Corps, who fell on 19 April 1945 during the Battle for Berlin.¹⁷

With regards to my other observations concerning errors and inaccuracies in both the book materials and the information published in *VIZh*, in 1991 and 1992, I sent them to the Main Cadres Directorate and to the editor of *VIZh*. In total, they amounted to several hundred corrections. Meanwhile, my research and the research of others

continues to uncover new errors. What sort of errors are these? In the first place, they involve inaccurate data concerning the rank, duty position, time of service, place and circumstances of death, and burial place of many military leaders. The following corrections are very characteristic examples: V. M. Alekseev had the rank of lieutenant general of tank forces and not lieutenant general, I. Ia. Maloshitsky was commander of the 180th Rifle Division and not deputy chief of staff of 49th Army, V. I. Ivanov became missing in action in summer 1941 and not in August 1942, N. F. Batiuk died in the Southwestern Front and not the Stalingrad Front, A. I. Zygin was killed by an exploding mine and did not die in combat, and the ashes of I. P. Apanasenko repose in the city of Stavropol' and not in Belgorod.¹⁸

It is most unfortunate that, during the course of their publishing the lists, the *VIZh* editors failed to incorporate all the new observations and corrections concerning general officer losses. Of necessity, at first the editors provided all information in full from the so-called basic list; that is, the list from the formerly classified book almost without any alteration. Then, immediately after it had completed publication of the first variant of its list, in its June 1994 issue (No. 6), the editors of *VIZh* announced to its readers that, after studying the new information, they would published additional materials which included various corrections to the original.¹⁹

On 25 November 1994, the editor of *VIZh* sent me a letter which expressed gratitude for 'great assistance in the more precise definition of information about generals, admirals, and political officers of equivalent rank who perished in the Great Patriotic War.'²⁰ Further, the editor explained:

We intend to return to that theme during the course of 1995 and to publish corrections to originally published materials as well as additions to existing lists, and, it goes without saying, archival information from writers after careful checking. We are now preparing appropriate inquiries. When answers have been received, we will determine the issue in which we will place the corrections. Certainly, we should like it to be in the May issue of 1995. Wait for new letters from us.²¹

It is unfortunate, indeed, that the *VIZh* editorial staff failed to implement that plan successfully. Even now, as I write these lines, the editors have failed to check and recheck the newly received information completely, ostensibly because of the immensely time-consuming nature of the work. As representatives of the journal's editorial board informed me in a meeting at the end of June 1995, the journal's

INTRODUCTION

editorial staff is permitted to assign only one colleague to complete this critical task, and he remains burdened with a whole series of other responsibilities. In addition, they stated that the archives of the Federal Security Bureau (the former USSR *KGB*) and other involved organizations do not always provide timely answers to their inquiries. Inevitably, all of this will likely have a telling and adverse effect on the timing of the publication of corrected information in the journal, and, most important, on the publication of additional lists of irrevocably lost former military leaders. Therefore, those on the *VIZh* editorial staff simply have not sought any such corrected information, although there are very strong grounds to presume that the problem will be solved in a very professional manner.

Given this situation, what approach should Russian military historians take in their work? In the first place, I believe that the objective of the investigation of the list, in particular, and the subject of general officer losses, in general, is artificially narrow. The first question to arise is quite natural, Why, besides generals and admirals, does the material include only divisional and corps commissars? Rather than focusing on this narrow circle of officers, even if this segment is the more prestigious one, we should be thoroughly examining the overall number of losses among *the entire former command-leadership cadre of the Soviet Armed Forces*. To accomplish this larger task, we must clarify the losses suffered by the higher officer corps, whose members had military ranks usually equivalent to generals, namely *kombbrig* [brigade commander], *brigvrach* [brigade doctor], *briginzhener* [brigade engineer], *brigiurist* [brigade legal officer], *brigadnyi komissar* [brigade commissar], *komdiv* [division commander], *divvrach* [division doctor], and so on. Only after this question has been answered scientifically and definitively can we obtain valuable information and reach critical conclusions about the 'cost in general officers' of the Soviet Army's victory over the *Wehrmacht*. Moreover, only after all this has been done can we prepare the necessary critical comparative studies on such key topics as senior officer losses of the Soviet and German Armies during the war and many others vital issues associated with the cost of war.²²

What then should be the most correct and, as a consequence, the most effective method for calculating officer corps' losses? In light of the fact that the service record documents (service record cards, service record lists, personal files, and so on) of the personnel in all investigated categories are maintained in the archives of many different organizations (the Military Procuratura, the Military Collegia of the Supreme Court, the Federal Security Service and in the Russian Federation's Ministry of Defense's Central Archives [*TsAMO*], the

Main Cadres Directorate [*GUK*] archives, and the Central State Archives of the Soviet Army [*TsGASA*]), and in Military Commissariats located where the personnel's relatives now reside, and elsewhere, it is probably impossible to reveal the names of all such persons with 100 per cent accuracy. Initially, however, I believe that the names of all Soviet generals and admirals, and those who possessed military ranks equivalent to that of general, must be determined. This can be done only by detailed study of all appropriate decrees of the USSR Council of People's Commissars (*SNK*), the USSR Council of Ministers (*SM*) and orders of the USSR People's Commissariat of Defense (*NKO*), in accordance with whose orders senior (*starshie*) officers became higher (*vyshie*) officers.

Having determined a finite list of generals' names, it will then be necessary to examine the fate of each general based upon all the existing collected information. In this research phase of the investigation, one must also exploit the widest range of primary sources rather than rely only on information from often erroneous official documents. If Russian historians pursue this line of investigation in their research work, the resulting list of general officer losses will be almost entirely correct. I believe that difficulties will inevitably surface only during the final stage of this investigative work, when it becomes necessary to attempt to account for persons who were awarded the rank of general or admiral posthumously after the war. In this case, it is necessary to examine a very voluminous mass of documents, since there is no 100 per cent guarantee that any colonel was not awarded the rank of general 20 or 30 years after his death. No less important, after the completion of such work, the archives of the Russian Federation's legal security organs must provide historians with exhaustive information on 'prohibitive' [repressed] persons. In the first place, whenever the specific category of losses of higher officers due to repressive acts is the subject of the study, this certainly should include information about the ultimate fate of such individuals.

Several Soviet military historians have attempted to determine the exact number of irrevocable general officer corps losses. Two such attempts require closer examination. In 1989 the now famous military historian D. A. Volkogonov calculated and published a highly sensational total figure of almost 600 wartime general officer losses. It is true that he failed to clarify his precise loss categories and said only that, 'During the course of the entire war, we lost around 600 generals (killed, died of wounds, missing in action, etc.).'²³ In the first place, the definition, scope, and range of Volkogonov's loss categories remain obscure. For example, it is not clear whether he included all wounded

INTRODUCTION

generals or only those who perished in fascist captivity in his loss figures. In addition, with respect to another aspect of military demography, Volkogonov tended to include both those servicemen who died in imprisonment and those who remained in enemy bondage until the end of the war, even if they returned safely to their Homeland after war's end in his calculation of irrevocable prisoner of war losses.

Finally, Volkogonov does not clearly differentiate between military commanders with military ranks and higher ranking political officers. Specifically, it is not clear whether his list contains only generals and admirals or also *kombrig*, *komdiv*, etc. For example, Volkogonov introduces the names of L. S. Grushuk, K. G. Rudenko, and T. K. Cherepin among those generals which he assessed as missing in action during the war.²⁴ According to my data, all three were high level political officers rather than generals. To the point, L. S. Grushuk and T. K. Cherepin served in the rank of brigade commissar, and K. G. Rudenko was a division commissar. Indeed, all three were removed from the Red Army officers corps' list during the course of the war as missing in action. However, now it is believed that T. K. Cherepin perished in the autumn of 1941, and it became clear in 1943 and 1944 that L. S. Grushuk and K. G. Rudenko remained alive, living in temporarily occupied territory. Orders issued early in the war, which removed them from the army officer corps list as missing in action, were later rescinded. At that time of the rescission, K. G. Rudenko was deprived of his rank as division commissar and demoted to the rank of captain.²⁵

Therefore, it is quite evident that, for the sake of clarity, D. A. Volkogonov should have published not only his numbers but also a precise list of lost military commanders, together with short accompanying biographical sketches of each, which was within his power at that time!

It has now also become clear that other Russian military historians have relied fundamentally on the list of irrevocable general officer losses and other numerical materials contained in the book, *The Military Cadre of the Soviet Government During the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945*. This explains why there are so many serious problems in the recent calculation of Soviet Armed Forces losses, which appears in the book, *Grif sekretnosti sniat: Poteri Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh sil SSR v voynakh, boevykh deistviyakh i voennykh konfliktakh* [The classification secret has been removed: the losses of the armed forces of the USSR in wars, combat actions, and military conflicts], which was published in Moscow in 1993.²⁶ This prestigious, supposedly scientific, authoritative, and highly detailed publication also contains many errors.

For example, it states that the Red Army lost four colonel generals during the war years (1941–45), while the actual number was six, specifically, I. G. Zakharkin, M. P. Kirponos, K. N. Leselidze, A. D. Loktionov, V. I. Pestov, and G. M. Shtern.

Therefore, the research work necessary to determine definitively the names of all Soviet military leaders who fell from 1941 to 1945 is now fully underway. Much, however, still remains to be done. It is very important that this vital effort should not die out. As has often been the case in Russian and Soviet history, very good beginnings often unceremoniously drown in the heights [and depths] of the bureaucracy.²⁷

Aleksander Alekseevich Maslov
Shalygino, Ukraine
August 1995

NOTES

1. A. P. Beloborodov, chief ed., *Voennye kadry Sovetskogo gosudarstva v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny 1941–45 gg.: Spravochno-statisticheskie materialy* [The military cadre of the Soviet state in the Great Patriotic War 1941–45: reference-statistical materials], (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1963), 551–93.
2. For a survey of recently declassified publications in Russia on the history of the Great Patriotic War, see the article, David M. Glantz, 'From the Soviet Secret Archives: Newly Published Soviet Works on the Red Army, 1918–1991: A Review Essay', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (June 1995), pp.319–32. This article will be most informative for Western readers, as well as for those in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Hereafter cited as *JSMS* with appropriate volume and pages.
3. On the examined list, A. A. Vakhurshev, V. A. Vitinin, G. S. D'iakov, S. I. Oborin, K. I. Samoilov, and V. V. Tsirkovich have the ordinal numbers 59, 63, 96, 251, 319 and 382 respectively. See *Voennyi kadry Sovetskogo gosudarstva v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine 1941–1945 gg.* [Military cadre of the Soviet state in the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945], (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1963), pp.557, 560, 576, 583 and 589.
4. Thus, for example, the service record cards of the generals of 1940, S. M. Mishchenko, A. I. Achkasov, D. I. Vadeinov, and others, are absent from the card files. There is some basis to suppose that the information of Soviet military-historical literature about the presence in the Soviet Armed Forces at the end of the Patriotic War of 5,586 generals and admirals is erroneous. See *Istoriia Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny Sovetskogo Soiuza 1941–1954 gg., T-6* [History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941–1945, Vol. 6], (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1965), p.127, V. S. Riabov, *Velikii podvig* [Great feat], (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1970), p.267, and other publications.
5. Lavrentii Beria and V. S. Abakumov were leaders of the *NKVD [KGB]* and *MGB*.

INTRODUCTION

6. This material has been published in the *Military-historical journal* [*Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal*] Nos. 6, 9, and 11 (June, September and November 1991), Nos. 6–12 (June–December 1992), Nos. 1–12 (January–December 1993), and Nos. 1, 2, 4, and 6 (January, February, April, and June 1994). Hereafter cited as *VIZh* with appropriate number and page.
7. See, *Tribuna* [The Tribune], No. 4 (April 1992), p.26; *ibid.*, No. 5 (May 1993), p.28; *Ukrain'skii istoricheskii zhurnal* [Ukrainian historical journal], No. 1 (January 1993), p.70; *JSMS*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (June 1994), p.292; *JSMS* Vol. 7, No. 3 (September 1994), p.564; and other publications.
8. As early as the 1980s, I appealed to the editor of *VIZh* to publish a list of the irrevocable general officer corps losses during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. In response, on 6 January 1989, I received information in written form from the editor pointing out that the mission could not be fulfilled at present because the generals were too numerous, and it would occupy too great a space in the journal. Answering our inquiry about the total quantity of losses, in a letter of 27 June 1990, the editor wrote to us, ‘We do not agree with your data. The total number of general officer losses is more than 1,000 men. We cannot provide an exact figure since it requires calculation.’ From the author’s archives.
9. The list of losses from the Main Cadres Directorate were prepared for publication in *VIZh* under the signature of Lieutenant General A. D. Sidorov. The letter is from the author’s archives.
10. From the author’s archives.
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. See *VIZh*, Nos. 6 and 7 (June and July 1992).
16. *Voennye kadry Sovetskogo gosudarstva v Velikoi Otechestvennoi voine 1941–1954 gg.* [Military Cadre of the Soviet Government During the Great Patriotic War 1941–1945], (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1963), pp.560, 562. It is possible that K. S. Dergach has been excluded from the number of losses by the journal editors in view of the fact that the general’s rank was awarded to him posthumously on 11 July 1945, after the war had ended. Naturally then another question arises: Why is M. A. Pesochin, who died from wounds on 3 May 1945 while serving as a colonel, included in the number of general officer losses when he was appointed major general posthumously in 1955, that is fully ten years after his death?
17. A. D. Sidorov, ‘Otdali zhizn’ za Rodinu’ [They Gave Their Lives for the Homeland], *VIZh*, No. 8 (August 1993), p.17.
18. See *VIZh*, No. 9 (September 1991), p.52 and subsequent entries in the series. In connection with the numerous mistakes in *VIZh* concerning the ranks of the military leaders, I sent periodic letters to the Main Cadres Directorate. An answer signed by deputy chief of the 4th Directorate Kharseev said, in particular, ‘Your letter of 9 November 1991 has been examined. Thank you for the active position you have taken in perpetuating the memory of those who perished defending the Homeland. As regards your observations, I must report to you that, in accordance with the Regulations concerning the passage of military service in the USSR Armed Forces’ officer corps, the following military ranks are defined: combined arms, aviation, navy, medical service, and judicial. From the moment of the acceptance of the Regulation the old military ranks are no longer used.’ It goes without saying that because of this unprofessional approach to the matter, at present, readers do not know that many lost and killed military leaders were, for

- example, not simply major generals, but major generals of tank forces, artillery, etc. The 4th Directorate of the *GUK* reported to us that such an approach to defining officers' ranks was incorrect, for in the given instance and in a special sense, there was no reason to change the initial rank, for example, the rank of field marshal found in the 19th Century Russian Army was identical to the Soviet and therefore, it seems, Field Marshal M. I. Kutuzov was identified by that new military rank. Our arguments, by all indications, were understood, and, as a consequence, the errors in the ranks of military leaders became considerably fewer in *VIZh* publications, particularly in 1994. See also, *VIZh*, No. 8 (August 1993), p.16; No. 1 (January 1993), p.25; No. 11 (November 1991), p.26; No. 1 (January 1993), p.24; and No. 10 (October 1991), p.42. For example, these materials mistakenly indicate that V. I. Ivanov perished, but at a time when the *GUK* and other sources had no sort of information about the circumstances of the general's death. General Batiuk died in July 1943, and the Stalingrad Front ceased to exist after February 1943.
19. S. D. Andreev, 'Otdali zhizn' za Rodinu' [They Gave Their Life for the Homeland], *VIZh*, No. 6 (June 1994), p.20.
 20. From the author's personal archives.
 21. Ibid.
 22. An article on the number of losses suffered by senior officers occupying general's duty positions, such as colonels commanding divisions and corps, could be rather valuable.
 23. D. A. Volkogonov, *Surovaia drama naroda* [A Severe Drama of the People], (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1989), p.279.
 24. D. A. Volkogonov, *Triumf i tragediia* [Triumph and Tragedy], (Moscow, 1989), Book 2, Part 1, p.248.
 25. *TsAMO*, card files of the Red Army political officer corps. From the service record chart of colonel (division commissar) K. G. Rudenko. K. G. Rudenko later retired from the reserves as a colonel.
 26. See G. F. Krivosheev, ed., *Grif sekretnosti sniat: Poteri Sovetskikh Vooruzhennykh sil SSSR v voynakh, boevykh deistviia i voennykh konfliktakh* (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1993).
 27. In the pages of the *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* we have already related in brief to English-language readers the most complete image of all categories of examined losses on the basis of earlier unavailable and secret documents from the Russian archives. This book completes the first phase of that effort.

Military Leaders Who Perished during Defensive and Offensive Operations in 1941 and 1942

It was the fault of Stalin and the entire military-political leadership of the Soviet Union that in June 1941 Soviet forces in the border military districts were forced to fight in extremely unfavorable and often disastrous strategic, operational, and tactical circumstances. By exploiting tactical and, frequently, operational surprise, German forces immediately seized the strategic initiative and quickly penetrated Soviet defenses along the western and northwestern strategic axes. In the northwest, German Army Group North, spearheaded by the powerful Fourth Panzer Group, lunged deep into the Baltic region toward Leningrad. Within weeks German armored forces had crushed defending Soviet Northwestern Front formations, seized Riga, and crossed the Dvina River deep into Latvia. At the same time, German Army Group Center attacked the flanks of the Soviet Western Front forces defending the exposed Bialystok salient. German Third and Second Panzer Groups' rapid advance north and south of the salient quickly propelled German forces into the Minsk region and, within weeks, encircled the bulk of three Soviet armies in the Bialystok and Minsk pockets.

Forced to conduct heavy defensive combat at a time when invading German Army forces possessed marked superiority in manpower and weaponry over them, the Red Army's covering armies deployed along the western border were caught in numerous encirclements of various scales and suffered immense irrevocable (killed, seriously wounded, or missing in action) and sanitary losses (lightly wounded or ill) and staggering losses of military equipment. During the first period of war alone (22 June 1941–19 November 1942), the Soviet Armed Forces lost

FALLEN SOVIET GENERALS

a total of more than 11 million men, half of which (6.1 million men) were irrevocably lost, and the remainder (5 million) of which fell ill or less severely wounded.¹ All categories of soldiers, enlisted men, sergeants, officers, and generals suffered equally catastrophic losses.

Combat during the June 1941 border battles in Belorussia was particularly severe, as German forces rapidly advanced deep into the country along the critical Minsk-Smolensk-Moscow axis. According to German sources (the evidence is not available in Soviet military-political literature), by 10 July 1941, German forces had already taken 323,000 Red Army soldiers and officers prisoner in the Bialystok and Minsk regions.²

Several Soviet general officers also perished in Belorussia during this most difficult initial period of war on the Western Front. On 23 June 1941, the day after war began, the assistant commander of Western Special Military District fortified regions, Major General I. P. Mikhailin, was killed during a sudden enemy air strike near the town of Volkovysk.³ This general, as well as Major General S. M. Kondrusev, who was fatally wounded in the Ukraine, were the first Soviet generals to perish at the front.

The next day Western Front general officer losses continued to mount. On 24 June Major General of Tank Forces V. P. Puganov, the commander of 14th Mechanized Corps' 22nd Tank Division, died on the field of battle while the division was attempting to halt the German armored thrust north and south of Brest. The 22nd Tank Division found itself in a particularly difficult situation as it attempted to carry out counterattack orders. During its harrowing march forward into hastily selected combat positions, its fuel reserves were exhausted or destroyed by incessant enemy air attacks, and, once in its forward positions, the *tankists* were ordered to carry out desperate attacks against overwhelmingly strong enemy panzer forces. A terrible meeting battle ensued near the city of Kobrin between the already worn out division and seemingly endless waves of advancing German armor. During the fierce and uneven battle, at 0500 hours on 22 June 1941, General Puganov was killed by an enemy shell fragment and, within several hours of brutal combat, the 22nd Tank Division was utterly destroyed and ceased to exist.⁴ After the combat carnage had ended, the general was buried in a communal grave.

At the end of June, Major General D. P. Safronov, the commander of the 143rd Rifle Division of the Western Front's reserve 47th Rifle Corps, was killed in action. During the initial days of war, this reserve division, together with its parent rifle corps, deployed forward from its garrison in the city of Bobruisk and met advancing German forces in

the Slonim and Baranovichi regions southwest of Minsk. In heavy combat around Slonim, the division and the 47th Rifle Corps suffered heavy losses and were ultimately encircled with the remnants of Soviet 3rd, 4th, and 10th Armies in the huge Minsk pocket. Although some division soldiers succeeded in breaking out of the pocket to rejoin their withdrawing comrades, General Safronov was killed in action on 26 June in the immediate vicinity of Baranovichi during the failed breakout attempt, while heroically trying to lead his men to safety.⁵ The exact location of his burial site remains unknown.

At about the same time, the experienced and energetic commander of Western Front's reserve 21st Rifle Corps, Major General V. B. Borisov, was killed in combat near the small town of Rodoshkovichi, while his corps was deploying forward in the Lida area north of Minsk. Earlier, during the Soviet–Finnish War, General Borisov had become a ‘cavalier’ of the Order of Lenin for successfully leading his rifle division at the front, and 350 of his division's soldiers and officers had been awarded with orders and medals.⁶ In one prewar testimonial about V. B. Borisov, prepared when he was serving as chief of the 3rd Section of the Belorussian Special Military District's 1st Department, the department chief, Colonel L. M. Sandalov, wrote that Borisov was, ‘... a very strong, energetic, and enterprising commander. Possesses great capacity for work, while completing his work quickly and accurately.’⁷ While serving on the Belorussian Military District staff, then General (and future Marshal) R. Ia. Malinovsky also gave General Borisov an exceptionally high evaluation. In an assessment sent in August 1939 to the Administration on Command and Leadership Personnel of the *RKKA* [Workers and Peasants Red Army], General Malinovsky wrote the following about Borisov: ‘His work and repeated exchanges of opinions with him on current party and political questions gives me the right to consider him, unconditionally, as devoted to the Socialist Homeland.’⁸ At the time of his death, the divisions of General Borisov's 21st Rifle Corps had engaged German forces in piecemeal fashion, and their remnants were withdrawing in disorder toward Minsk. The corps commander was killed by an enemy shell while riding in a tank and organizing the withdrawal of 37th Rifle Division, during almost continuous enemy attacks and heavy artillery and mortar fire.⁹

At the very end of June 1941, the commander of the Western Front's powerful 6th Mechanized Corps and well-known military leader, Major General M. G. Khatskilevich, fell in battle near the town of Slonim. Immediately after the German offensive began, the Western Front commander, Army General D. G. Pavlov, ordered

Khatskilovich's corps and the 11th Mechanized Corps to mount a counterthrust against German forces advancing eastward through Grodno on the northern flank of the Bialystok salient. The corps counterattack failed when fuel and ammunition shortages and heavy German air attacks decimated the armored force. Thereafter the corps' remnants fought in encirclement between Bialystok and Minsk and suffered appalling casualties. While struggling in encirclement, General Khatskilevich was the very model of courage and bravery for his soldiers. He was killed (exact date unknown) while in a tank fighting with numerically superior enemy forces and was buried in the village of Ozernitsa in Grodno *oblast'* [region].¹⁰

On 30 June 1941, almost simultaneously with the death of General Khatskilevich, and, supposedly, in the same region, the artillery commander of 6th Mechanized Corps, Major General of Artillery A. S. Mitrofanov, was fatally wounded while fighting to escape encirclement along with 6th Mechanized Corps forces. According to an eye witness, he soon died, but his exact burial site is also unknown.¹¹

During the disastrous border battles, even army commanders shared the fate of tens of thousands of hapless Red Army soldiers. On 8 July 1941, while traveling by vehicle along the road to the Western Front headquarters in the region of the city of Mogilov, the well-known commander of 13th Army, Lieutenant General P. M. Filatov, was fired on by enemy aircraft and severely wounded. Earlier in his career, Soviet military authorities had recognized Filatov's exploits at the front during the Russian Civil War by awarding him with two Orders of Red Banner and, during the interwar years, by awarding him with the Order of the Red Star for his successes in combat training. General Filatov's 13th Army, which was initially in Western Front reserve in eastern Belorussia, exerted immense efforts to contest the enemy advance, in particular at Minsk and along the approaches to the Dnepr River, and, as a result, it suffered grievous losses. For example, after the intense battles, the army's 160th and 143rd Rifle Divisions retained only one-third of their original combat strength.¹² Evacuated to Moscow, General Filatov died on 14 July 1941 despite the best efforts of his doctors.

Red Army forces of the Northwestern Front, which defended the Baltic region, also suffered serious command cadre losses during the initial days of war. Among those who perished in unequal combat against German Army Group North and Fourth Panzer Group were Generals N. A. Dedaev, V. F. Pavlov and E. N. Soliankin. Major General Pavlov, the commander of 16th Rifle Corps' 23rd Rifle Division in 11th Army, was killed near the village of Ionava while

attempting to organize his units for a crossing of the Viliia River. At the time, 11th Army forces had been driven from their border defenses west of Vilnius and were withdrawing in disorder deep into Lithuania. An enemy shell struck the vehicle in which the division commander was riding, and the vehicle immediately burst into flames. In the ensuing fire, General Pavlov's body was completely burned and disfigured beyond recognition.¹³

Major General E. N. Soliankin, the commander of 3rd Mechanized Corps' 2nd Tank Division, fell heroically on the field of battle in southern Lithuania while his division was attempting to halt the precipitous advance of German XXXXI Panzer Corps. Late on 23 June 1941, Soliankin's division, which contained both KV and T-34 tanks, attacked the forward elements of German 6th Panzer Division near the village of Raseinai. The sudden attack with tanks, whose existence was unknown to the Germans, prompted temporary panic in German units. However, the Germans regained their composure just as Soliankin's division ran out of fuel and ammunition. Within days the Soviet division had been totally destroyed, and, on 26 June, its commander was killed. General Soliankin was removed from the Soviet officer corps' list by *NKO GUK* Order No. 031, dated 3 September 1941, as having perished in battle against German-Fascist aggressors.¹⁴

The superb organizer and personally fearless Major General N. A. Dedaev played an exceptional role in the heroic ten-day Soviet defense of the city of Liepaja, on Lithuania's Baltic coast. The city's garrison was rather small and numbered only 13,000 soldiers from various types of forces. Moreover, not long before the beginning of the war, because of the limited water area of the harbor, all combat ships had been transferred to new bases in the Gulf of Riga.¹⁵ The principal combat force garrisoning the city was General Dedaev's 67th Rifle Division. Dedaev already possessed considerable combat experience, having been an active participant in the Russian Civil War and the Soviet-Finnish War. While serving as a colonel and assistant commander of the 29th Cavalry Division, on 15 May 1938, he wrote the following in his autobiography:

I began work approximately in 1910 [at 13 years of age]; I worked in the town of Syzran' as an apprentice typesetter in a book store and at the Pol'za Press in Vatrakova, as an apprentice-locksmith, a grease-monkey, a worker in a flour mill, an office messenger for the store, 'K. A. Il'in and Sons', and, from 1914 through 25 April 1915, as a typist for the office empowered by the Governor to purchase bread for the army in the city of Kuibyshev.¹⁶

Further, Dedaev noted:

In 1925–26, I participated in the liquidation of political bandits in the mountains of Chechnia and Dagestan with the 29th Stalingrad-Kamyshinsk Cavalry Regiment of the 5th ‘Comrade Blinov’ Cavalry Division. I was twice wounded – in the head and neck area and the shoulder, and with contusions. After a cavalry battle on 7 January 1920 at Konstantinovskaia-on-the-Don with a regiment of cavalry and infantry from the White 7th Division, I was awarded the Order of the ‘Red Star’ No. 5989 ...¹⁷

All such attestations and characterizations of Dedaev’s service remained positive. For example, an attestation written in 1925 by the commander and commissar of the 5th ‘Comrade Blinov’ Cavalry Division, I. R. Apanesenko, concerning Dedaev’s performance as commander and commissar of the Kamyshinsk Cavalry Regiment, stated:

He completed the higher cavalry school in 1924. Energetic and decisive. Possesses initiative. Understands the situation ... Disciplined. Demanding. Can handle his subordinates. Capable of imparting his knowledge to his subordinates.¹⁸

While he was serving as the assistant commander of the 5th Cavalry Corps from June 1938 through March 1939, then Colonel Dedaev received the following appraisal: ‘Possesses a sufficiently strong will. An energetic and persistent commander. Displays initiative. Persistently carries out planned measures.’¹⁹

In March 1940, while awarding General Dedaev with the Order of the Red Star for distinction in combat against Finnish forces, the commander of 15th Army noted that, while performing as commander of the 25th Motorized Cavalry Division, *Kombrig* N. A. Dedaev:

... was always located well forward in the most difficult situations, while infecting his soldiers and command personnel with the example of his courage. Ruthless to those who display cowardice. Participant in the liberation of the workers of the western Ukraine. In battles with the White Finns, he showed himself to be a true patriotic son of the great Socialist homeland. Skillfully directed all operations. Often made skillful and timely decisions in difficult situations. Serves as a model of bravery and is always located forward in the most difficult of conditions, infecting all with his courage.²⁰

Dedaev continued to elicit praise from his superiors right up to the beginning of the Great Patriotic War. On 19 October 1940, the