

IN MEMORY OF ALTYNHASH

A Kazakh poet Bakhytzhan Kanapyanov in one of his trips to Chernobyl zone in the library of Writers union of Ukraine found a poem by Mihail Levchenko, published in the divisional newspaper “Patriot Rodiny” in 1944.

It was impossible to find an author of the poem.

Mikhail Alexandrovich Levchenko is from Poltava, started as a soldier in a war and became sergeant. He was a regimental officer, a copy editor of the divisional newspaper of the 4th Ukrainian front. He was wounded and had military awards. The graduate of the university, Ukrainian poet Anatoly Slavuta-Logvinenko helped to find him.

The letter by Mikhail Levchenko: “My letter was written after Altynshash Nurgazinova’s feat and I was a witness of it. I and employee of the newspaper “Patriot Rodiny” were among the group of soldiers and officers surrounded by the Nazi (I consider it was somewhere under Katowice). The situation was difficult. Then a little Kazakh girl came forward and organized the defense. We forced way through of the entrapment, but Altynshash died. Posthumously she was awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union. My poem was presented to her parents. The years passed, the time erased some details of this event, but the image of heroic Kazakh girl that has saved my life will always be in my memory”.

The search continued.

The guard lieutenant Nurgazhinova Altynshash Uskenbayevna was born in 1924 in Moscow. She was in the Red Army from August 1941. She was called up by Stalin district draft board induction center of Moscow. She fought in Central, Voronezh and Ukrainian fronts.

She was wounded in December 1942. Then she was under treatment in the medical unit of the 24th separate infantry brigade of the 1st tank army in November 1943. In 1944 after the hospital, she was a Komsomol organizer of the 1st battalion of 835 rifle regiment of 237 infantry division.

Then she was under the treatment again in the hospital. From July 1944 she was a Komsomol organizer of the 2nd battalion of the 207 rifle regiment of 70 infantry division. The battalion, where Mikhail Levchenko did military service. She died in October 2, 1944. She was buried on the northern-western part of Guto-Polyanska of Lukmyansky province in Poland. Posthumously she was awarded the Order of the Red Star.

These detailed facts of biography of Altynshash Nurgazhinova's short but heroic fate without any lyrical digressions are published with hope and expectation: her relatives or friends, her fellow soldiers will respond.

Other people live now in flat 13 of the house 19 on Bolshaya Polyana in Moscow where Altynshash lived with her parents before the war. There is no any photo of Altynshash Nurgazhinova to imagine her face.

And only simple poem by young Mikhail Levchenko written in October 1944 ascertains the fact that she brewed up two tanks and at the cost of her life she saved wounded soldiers. It passes understanding, after wounds she rushed to attack.

It seems to us that everyone who knows about the heroism of our compatriot never seeing her photo, her face, will express the wish to kneel in front of young Altynshash, younger sister of Aliya and Manshuk. And there will be a pinching feeling disappointment that instead of the high title of the Hero of the Soviet Union she was posthumously awarded the order of the Red Star. But it does not matter. We know about your act of bravery, Altynshash.

So many things happened in her short fate! Moscow, Russia got to know about you after so many years. Better late than never. Your name Altynshash is in the people's memory.