International Conference

"Soldier's Fate: Theory and Practice of Archival Research"

Moscow, 23-24 November 2018



The conference "The Fate of a Soldier: Theory and Practice of Archival Research" began its work in Moscow. The objective of the conference is to summarize the experience of researchers in different countries with various types of archival documents containing information about the dead soldiers and prisoners of war, as well as electronic databases. A separate direction within the framework of the conference will be the practice of working with the "Books of Memory" and passports of military graves, clarifying the names of Fatherland defenders buried on memorials and mass graves.

Join the live broadcast on the website of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation: https://www.oprf.ru/press/conference/3064

The conference is attended by more than a hundred specialists in military history, archival science, source study and activists of search teams. Among them are foreign

researchers and search engines from ten states: Moldova, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Ukraine. All these countries somehow affected the Great Patriotic War: on the territory of some battles were fought, the natives of others went to the front and did not return.

The conference was organized by the Search Movement of Russia All-Russian Social Movement with the support of the Interstate Fund for Humanitarian Cooperation of the Commonwealth of Independent States Member States, the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation and the Historical and Archival Institute of the Russian State Humanitarian University.

Section of the conference: Prisoners of war and the crimes of the Nazis

Serghei Danilijuk Causeni, Moldova

Translated by Inna Vayner, JewishGen Bessarabia SIG Leader and Coordinator

Serghei Danilijuk is a resident of Causeni, Moldova, a local historian, researcher and photographer who worked on numerous cemetery projects for JewishGen Bessarabia SIG. Serghei was a guest for Bessarabia SIG at the 38th International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, Warsaw, August 2018, where he made two presentations: "Jewish Shtetl in Moldova without Jews: How the Jewish Past can be remembered" and "Jewish Cemeteries in Bessarabia/Moldova: Current Status and Future Projects". Serghei Danilijuk is continually working for Bessarabia SIG and is a great friend of our group. Following is very significant presentation, and I am glad that it will be posted at JewishGen Bessarabia SIG website Yefim Kogan, JewishGen Bessarabia SIG Leader and Coordinator

On June 22, 1941, Romania entered the war against the Soviet Union as a German ally. The heroic resistance of the Red Army, coupled with the low combat capability of the Romanian troops, slowed down the advancing of the invaders into Soviet Union territories.

As a result, when the German-Romanian troops marched further east, the territory between the Dniester and Prut was annexed by Romania. The territory between the Dniester and the Bug was named Transnistria and was also under the control of the Romanians.

Transnistria was divided into 13 counties:

- 1. Mogilevskiy
- 2. Zhugastru
- 3. Tulchinskiy
- 4. Rybnitsky
- 5. Baltskiy
- 6. Dubossarskiy
- 7. Ananievskiy
- 8. Goltskiy
- 9. Tiraspolskiy
- 10. Ovidiopolskiy
- 11. Odesskiy
- 12. Berezovskiy
- 13. Ochakovskiy

The following counties appeared in Moldova and Bukovina:

- 1. Akkermanskiy (center in Chetatya Albe, today Belgorod-Dnestrovskiy)
- 2. Beltskiy (center in Beltsy)
- 3. Kagulskiy (center in Kagul)
- 4. Orgeevskiy (center in Orgeev)
- 5. Khotinskiy (center in Khotin)
- 6. Sorokskiy (center in Soroki)
- 7. Izmailskiy (center in Izmail)
- 8. Storozhinets (center in Storozhinets)
- 9. Tigina (center in Bendery)
- 10. Lapushna (center in Kishinev)
- 11. Chernovetskiy (center in Chernovtzy)

The "Jewish question" arose immediately in the occupied territories. It was decided that the fascists and the Romanian nationalists would expel and destroy almost the entire Jewish population. In July 1941, Mihai Antonescu displayed a merciless attitude towards the Jews and called for their eviction. German soldiers of the SS units, Romanian soldiers and gendarmes, Ukrainian nationalists and police, German colonists, Vlasovites¹, and the local collaborationists² followed Antonescu's exhortation and took an active part in the destruction of the Jewish population.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian Liberation Army

² http://berkovich-zametki.com/2005/Zametki/Nomer11/Fisher1.htm

According to E. Brik's book The History of the Jews of Moldova³, "The figures of the dead Bessarabian Jews, that is, the Jews living in the territory of modern Moldova, were estimated by different scientists and researchers in the range from 87,000 (Natan Ak) to 250–300,000 (Rabbi Moses Rosen)".

Since it was impossible to immediately transfer all Jews across the Dniester, the authorities decided to set up camps for them in Bessarabia where they would be kept until the evacuation began. In August 1941, the following camps were set in Bessarabia:

District	Locality	# of prisoners	
Beltsy	Limbeniy Noy	2634	
	Ryshkan	3072	
	Reutzel	3253	
Soroki	Vertyuzheni	22969	
Khotin	Sekuren	10400	
	Edinets	11762	
Lepushna	Kishinev	10400	
	Total	64446 persons	

In 1941, after the Romanian and German troops occupied the territory of the MSSR, the following camps were organized for the prisoners of war and the civilians. Civilian camps were also designated as Jewish ghettos (since the majority of the residents in these camps were Jews):

Beltsy Uezd⁴

Beltsy - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto) Gancheshti – civilian camp (Jewish ghetto) Falesti – POW (Prisoner-of-war) camp #7

Bendery Uezd

Bendery, Protyagaylovskaya Street, the territory of the Blank's mill – POW camp #5 Bulboka, 700 meters north-west of the village - POW camp Larga, in the church - POW camp

Dubossary Uezd

Dubossary, in the building of the former military units - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

Cahul Uezd

Korpeshty - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

³ E. Brick "History of Moldova Jews". Kishinev 2017

⁴ district

Miskovey - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto) Gaidar - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

Chisinau Uezd

Chisinau - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

Chisinau, Bendery St., school #6 - POW camp

Chisinau, st. Levskaya, Bendery, in the premises of the synagogue - POW camp

Chisinau, Prunkulovskaya St., 8 – POW camp

Voineshty - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

New Onesti - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

Oneshty – civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

Straseni – POW camp

Orhei Uezd

Vishnivtsi - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

Rybnitsa Uezd

Rybnitsa, at the town Prison - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto) Rybnitsa – POW camp

Soroka Uezd

Ataki – POW camp

Vertuzhany - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

Kosoutsi (in the forest) - civilian concentration camp (Jewish ghetto)

Soroki – civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

Tiraspol Uezd

Tiraspol - civilian camp (Jewish ghetto)

Tiraspol – POW Camp # 5, # 11

It's important to mention that the prisoners of Romanian POW camps got there through the territory of Moldova.

Camp #1 Slobodzeya-Yalomitsa – delo⁵#1, 2 (both cover years 1941-1942, delo #3 (1941) Camp#2 Feldesheora (Feldiora)-Brashov Фельдешеора (Фельдиора)-Брашов - #; (1942), 5 (1941 - 1944)

Camp # 3 Independence Galats - # 6 (1941), 7 (1941 - 1943), 8 (1942), 9 (1942 - 1943)

Camp number 4 Vaslui - # 10, 11 (both - 1941 - 1943)

Camp # 5 Tiraspol - # 12 (1943 - 1944), 13 (1941 - 1943), 14 (1941 - 1944)

Camp # 6 of Dorneshta (Calafat) - # 15 (1941 - 1942), 16 (1941 - 1943)

Camp # 7 Beltsy (Buzeshty) - # 17, 18 (both - 1941 - 1942)

Camp # 8 Bolgrad - # 19, 20 (both - 1941 - 1942)

Camp # 9 Vulkan - # 21, 22 (both - 1941 - 1943)

Camp # 10 Alexandria - # 23 (1941), 24 (1941 - 1943)

Camp # 11 Tiraspol - # 25 (1942), 26 (1941 - 1943)

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⁵ Archival case

Camp # 17 Timisoara - # 27 (1941 - 1943), 28 (1943)⁶

In addition to the well-known places of execution and the ghetto, there are still most likely many places that are not marked in any way, and the memories of them are only kept in people's recollections.

The State Archives of the Republic of Moldova and Transnistrian Moldavian Republic archive are a good source of information about the Holocaust. Fund# 1026, the archives of the Information and Security Service (formerly the KGB), as well as the funds of the Central State Archive of the Transnistrian Moldavian Republic are particularly good sources. The archives of Transnistria store information on Transnistria itself, as well information pertaining to some territories of Republic of Moldova: to be exact Kaushanskiy, Suvorovskiy, and Novo-Anenskiy districts for the period from 1944-75. Of particular interest in these funds are the Decisions of the Executive Committee, as well as the affairs of the prosecutor's office and the courts, related to the localities in these districts. These documents, especially those dated 1944-1947, often contain information showing assessment of the damages caused by the invaders. Not only are the documents themselves interesting, but the paper these documents are written on is noteworthy as well. Due to lack of blank paper, many solutions, protocols and outlines were done on the back of captured documents. Often these documents belonged to the occupying authorities, thus making these documents of a great historical value.

As was mentioned above, the numbers of those perished in the Holocaust differ significantly. It is difficult to determine the personal fate of these people because they were often murdered with their close relatives, leaving no one who could retain memories of them. There do exist lists compiled by executive committees on the victims of the Holocaust in the territory of MSSR, created while the memories about them were still relatively fresh in 1944-1945. These lists are stored in the above-mentioned archives, but these records are incomplete and inaccurate. Unfortunately, that is all that's been preserved.

Another source is The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names that contains the names and biographical details of approximately 4.7 million people murdered in the Holocaust. Today, this is by far the most comprehensive database of Holocaust victims.

An unexpected source that could shed light on the names of the victims are Jewish cemeteries. On the territory of Bessarabia (which is somewhat larger than the territory of modern Moldova, even with Transnistria), there are more than 70 cemeteries were Jews were buried. Most of them are abandoned and neglected. Over 30 out of 70 cemeteries have been indexed and digitized by **JewishGen** (www.jewishgen.org). Some graves have references to relatives or friends killed during the war. See Bessarabia SIG Cemetery Projects at JewishGen: https://www.jewishgen.org/Bessarabia/RES_ProjectList.asp?doctype=14

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⁶ http://forum.vgd.ru/101/54684/





Such information is very valuable because it came directly from relatives in an attempt to preserve memory of their dear ones. It is important to document this information because as cemeteries become abandoned, the information can disappear forever.



Let's review one of these cases. The village of Verkhnyaya Marianovka is located in the Causeni district of Moldova. Until 1940, it was a German colony. With the advent of Soviet power in 1940, the Germans left with the Romanians. The village became almost empty. The authorities decided to use the village as a large home for the disabled and the elderly. A nursing home from the city of Chisinau, that had been previously located at the church of Alexander Nevsky, was transferred to this village, along with disabled and elderly people from various places of Moldavian Republic. According to the archival documents, the First World War invalids were kept there as well as people dependent on the state, for example: the blind, the orphaned, and others.

"So, in July 1941, the village of Verkhnyaya Marianovka served as a home for about 350-500 disabled and elderly people. All Jewish residents, about 120-180 people in total, were massacred in the most cruel and inhuman manner. In just one day, about 140 people were shot. This is proven by the "Act of forensic examination of the corpses dated January 19, 1945" that was based on the results of the exhumation of people killed by the Nazis in 1941. The act states that "the pit is 6×8 meters in size and 1.8 m deep, the soil is loamy, the corpses are buried superficially at a depth of 40-50 cm ... 35% of them are male corpses, 65% are women, 2 are corpses for children, 12-14 years old ... The murderers were using firearms (rifles, machine guns). The breaches of the cranial bones were produced with a blunt weapon (butt of the riffle) and one skull pierced (with a bayonet, dagger)." Before being shot, people were starved, systematically beaten, and subjected to vile humiliation.

The destruction took place selectively: it was the Jews who were chosen. Employees of the nursing home handed over the Jews who were in their care. The record of the interrogation of witness and former nursing home resident, Elizabeth – Betia Aleksandryanu – Altman, has survived to this day.

M C C P	13. Состав семьи отногоз
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⁷ https://kladokop.wordpress.com/category/21%80%d0%b0%d0%b7%d0%bd%d0%be%d0%b5/page/%d/

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According to her (Betia Aleksandryanu), she was half Jewish since her mother was Jewish but father was Romanian. She was also taken to the barracks where the Jews were kept, but in the morning, one of the guards recognized her and released. Thus, she was the only one who escaped from that barrack. The rest were murdered.

The home for the disabled itself appears to have continued its work after that. This is evidenced by one of the documents found in the archive of the PMR.



This is a response to the Alexander Nevskiy Nursing Home's request for food delivery for 1942. The reverse side of a financial document was used to write this request by the new administration of the Home for Persons with Disabilities in 1945.

Immediately after liberation, the home started working in full capacity. It lasted until 1963, after which it was disbanded, and the disabled were transferred to other institutions in the country. The place itself was maintained for some time by the locals, who placed a gravestone on it from a German cemetery nearby. This crime was investigated without delay. An exhumation was performed. The perpetrators were identified, and they got their punishment. Six people were convicted of complicity in the murder of about **180 people** and sentenced by the court to various sentences ranging from 8 to 20 years.

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"УТВЕРЖЦАЮ" MAPHEER/ 25. мая 1945 г.

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Марьянов в оне НКВ МССР поступник даниме с том, что в оне Верхи марьяновке, Кауманокого разова, Вендерского уезда, МССР, группа с осветски настроеники, ин и 1941 году, после откода частей Предсей Армии и прихода сокупационных войок, заклянось предательством сове оках граждам в маналим и доставлящих маретелькому отряду граждам еврейской национальности, которых карательные органы рикупационы Насотей расотремивации. На основании этих данных арестовании привлечены в начес об иннемых по настоящему делуг ГЕРМАНОК Н.А., АТАНАСИУ М.П., НОНС А.П., НЕГРУПОВ А.О., ГИДЕНКО А.А. и ДУНГУ В.И.

Произведенным по делу расследованием УСТАНОВЛЕНО:

В селе Верх-Марьяновие, Каушанского района, был дом инве лидов, где находились инвалиды и лица пожилого возраста.

На выполнение задания карательных органов оккупационных властей из явими оставоке обвиняемые по делу: ГЕРМАНИК, АТАНАСИУ, КОНОЛОВ, НЕГРУЦОВ, ГИДЕНИЮ и БУПГУ.

ГЕРМАНИК нак примарь распределил всех по определенным ко пусам дома инвелидов для сбора евреев, после чего все пошли по ст

участкам - палатам, выявияли граждан еврейской национальности, ра девали их на месте до гола, вытоялии на узицу и избявая палками, с нали в одко помещение, содержаль вместе мужчам и женами под котра и не давыли им пиши и води на протижение 7 дней, 7 д. д. 14 (-16,32,3 37,48-56,69-75,50,83,114-119,130,133,135-140,166-168,1747.

- 2 -

(20)

Воего группой предателей АТАНАСИУ, КОНОНОВЫ, НВГРУЦОБЫ ГИПЕНКО и ЛУНГУ было собрано инвалядов еврейской национальности о 180 человек, которые впоследствии все были расстреляны карательны органами октупационных властей. Из помещения, где содреждико собым граждане еврейской национальности, на расстрел в сарай выподил предателящи - АТАНАСИУ, КОНОНОВЕМ и НЕГРУЦОВЕМ. /д. д. 14-16, 32, 33, 48-56, 80, 81, 114-119, 135-140/.

После расстрела всех 180 человек евреев, АТАНАСИУ, КОВОНС НЕПРУПОВ, ГУДЕНКО и ЛУНГУ вывозили трупи расстрелянных из сарвя заратес заготов-лениу вму, Среди трупов были тяжело раневие, нес ко человек живых, но их тажие вместе с трупеми пожили на подводу, возили и обрасывали в жму и зажидали землей. Лял, 48-56, 80, 83, 95 114-119, 135-140,146,147,149,150,153,184,166-168,169,171,178,179/

Кроме того ГЕРМАНЖ Николай Андресвич, на протяжении вое периода пребывания в должности примаря поддерживал тесную овазь с пер-ом поота жандармери мУНТЭНУ, с которым был также завлом и в кой овазы по 1940 года. Будучи примаремы, активно выполняя вое при распоряжении сикупационных властаей, содействовал в вывосе в Гум у распоряжения сикупационных властаей, содействовал вывосе в Гум должности до

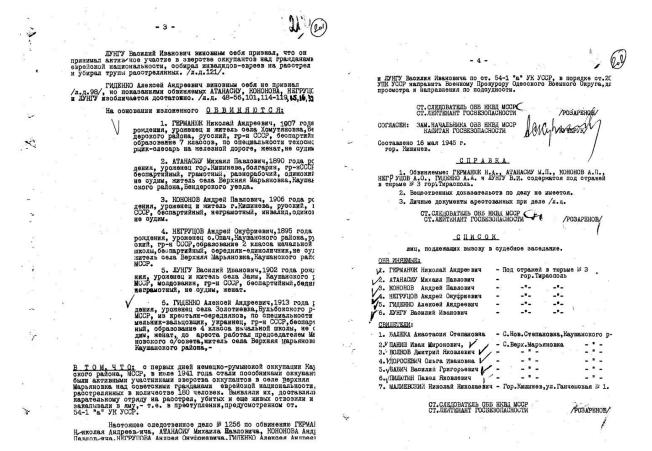
ГИДЕННО Алекоей Андреевич, после внезда из оела В. марьян примаря ГЕРМАНИИ, добровольно поотупил на службу примаря и работе сентября 1941 года, ак от яваря 1942 года, активно выполняя вое прив и распоряжения октупационных властей. /л.д.16,100,101.

Допрошенные в качестве обвиняемых: ГЕРМАНЕК Николай Андр виновным себя в пред"явленком му обвинении признал в том, что он с первых дней прибытил оккупационных войси в село В. Меряновку от примарем села, содействовал в вывозе всего имущества и продуктов, надлежащих дому инвеляцов, имел тесные связи с румноким шегом пс жендармерки МУПТНЮМ и был участкиком зверства оккупантов над гре нами еврейской национальности, отрицая факт своего присутствия пр расстреле ев реев. /л.д.77/.

АТАНАСИУ Михаил Павлович, виновным себя признал в том, ч был актив-ным участияком зверобна сккупантов над гражданами евг ской нацковальности - стоили их на расстрел и после расстрела уби их трупы, занапывая в вму. /п.д. 18/.

КОНОНОВ Андрей Павлович, виновным оебя признал, что был тизным участняком эзерства оккупантов над грасцанами еврейской ве нальности – присутствовал при их расстренах, вывозил трупы расстренах и вместе о трупами вывозил тяжело раненых и закапивал в яму в выми. / А.д.58/.

НЕГРУПОВ Андрей Онуфриевич виновным себя признал, что он принимал участие в эверстве оккупантов над гражданами еврейской и циональности, собирал инвадидов-евреев на расстрел и убирал трупърасстреляник. /и.д. 35/.



Today, the names of at least three of the convicted people are carved on the city memorial dedicated to the Victims of totalitarian communist repression. We consider this fact outrageous and unacceptable.







And now, when we have all the documents in our hands, from interrogation records to court rulings, we will seek justice as much as possible.

During research, I identified the exact burial site and later, with the participation of researchers from the public organization "August," we confirmed the presence of numerous remains at this place. Unfortunately, for some reason, exhumation and a memorial plate installation was postponed indefinitely.

Both German and Romanian authorities intended to supply the army at the expense of the occupied territories. Yegor Yakovlev talks about what the Third Reich was preparing for Russia in his book, *The Extinction War*: " ... The first victims of these directives, drawn up in accordance with the Bakke plan, were Soviet prisoners of war. Economic theorists doomed them to starvation. An example of a sentencing order is the order for the 11th Army from Army Group South, where it was emphasized that prisoners of war should receive food "depending on its availability", and the nutritional value of food should be 1300 calories." A. Schneer says in his book *Captivity*: " the Germans, as a rule, did not feed the prisoners during the first days of captivity, forcing them to fast for the whole week, that would suppress the will, the desire for

 $^{^{8}}$ E. Yakovlev The War of Distraction. What the 3d Reich was preparing for Russia. St. Petersburg 2017

resistance, humiliate, and prevent attempts to escape. ⁹" In connection with all these circumstances, it becomes clear that many prisoners of war either died from inhuman conditions or while doing heavy work on their way to the place of detention.

Sometimes the prisoners were buried in civilian cemeteries.

Here are some examples.

Mikhail Beliy

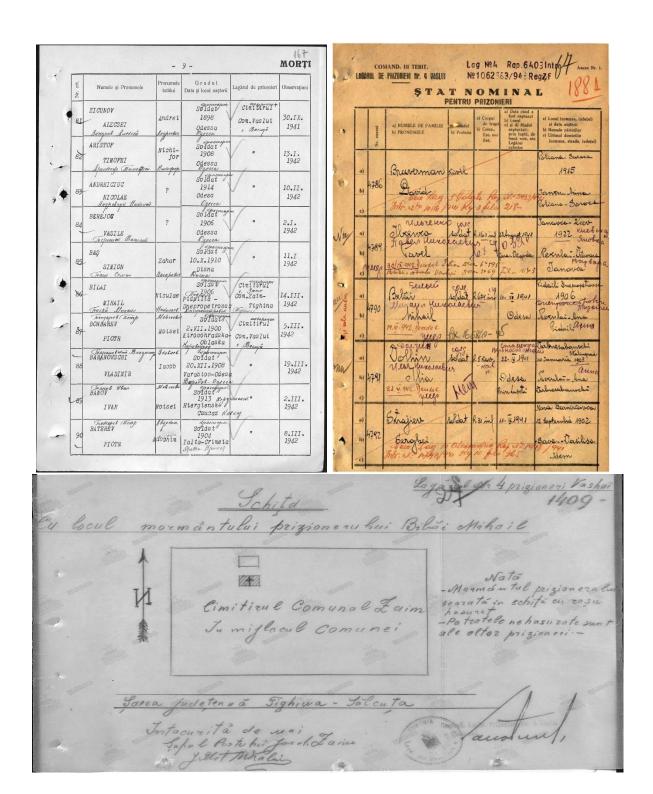
The Red Army soldier, Mikhail Bely, was captured near Odessa, most likely on October 11, 1941. In March 14, he died in captivity and was buried in the village of Zaim. The Bender-Galati railway line, built in the 19th century for the needs of the army during the Russian-Turkish war, passes through this village. Based on Aleksey Zelinskiy documents, it looks like there was a small camp of war prisoners in this village.

It was not possible to locate the exact site of the grave directly on the spot despite the fairly accurate directions. A lot of nameless wooden crosses were found on the site.

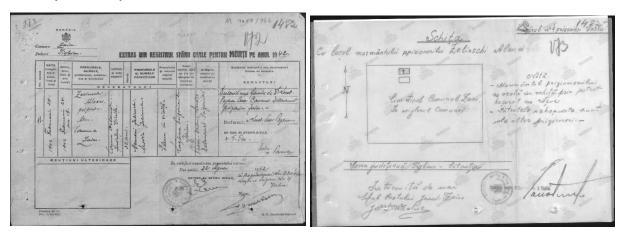


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⁹ A. Shneer Captivity, M. 2005



Aleksey Zelinskiy



As we can see, the grave of Alexei is located directly next to the grave of Michael.

In addition to the two cases mentioned above, the search for the grave of a war prisoner in the city of Kaushany, as well as others, is being conducted. We will carry out further work on the search for other prisoners of war in civilian cemeteries. Since it is often impossible to establish the exact burial site, it is planned to install memorial signs at the entrance to the cemetery.

While studying documents, we encounter certain difficulties. Here is an example of how careful study of a document helps to overcome problems. In March 17th, a relative of a prisoner of war appealed for help in finding his burial place: "I beg you to help finding the burial place of my uncle-Burlachenko, Stepan Kalinovich 1923., who was called for military duty in Odessa. We know that he was a prisoner of war, and that he died in Romania (Moldova?)" 10

¹⁰ http://oldstory.info/index.php?/topic/47640-

<u>%D0%B1%D0%B5%D1%81%D1%81%D0%BC%D0%B5%D1%80%D1%82%D0%BD%D1%8B%D0%B9-</u> %D0%BF%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BA/page st 10

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Above his name was a penciled-in postscript: "VIRSAT", which initially suggested that he died in this camp. Translation of the word literally can mean "merged" or "poured", but after analyzing the lists and following the fate of other prisoners of war with the same postscript, it was concluded that this means transfer to another camp. As a result, the traces of Burlachenko were found in camp number 10 Alexandria-Korben, where he was transferred on 1/01/1943 and where he died on 6/10/1944, a few months short of the day of liberation.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that there is still a lot of research work that can be done to search for the burial place of war prisoners and Holocaust victims. It is absolutely necessary to carefully identify such places and carry out work to preserve the memory of those who perished in the WWII.