

World War I in unpublished memoirs by V.M. Tseitlin, officer of Russian Imperial and Red Army

Written by Zharskiy A.P, Mikhailov A.A., Sheptura V.N.

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Annotation

Among the annals of history of the World War I, numerous memoirs occupy a prominent place. Although a considerable part of the memoirs by the participants and the witnesses of the event are still unpublished and do not involved in the process of research of the war epoch-making events. The purpose of the article is a complex analysis of unpublished memoirs by the officer by Russian Imperial and Red Army, a known specialist in military communication – Vasiliy Mikhailovich Tseitlin (1883-1933). The memoirs were found by the authors in the annals of the military history museum of artillery, military engineers and communication troops. The memoirs covers the period from August, 3rd 1914 to the end of May 1918. The text (typewriting) is issued in form of a diary, but clearly made pass due the described events. The used spelling (by standards adopted after 1917), certain anachronisms attests to that fact. At the same time, some evaluations and views come laden with the imprints of direct impressions by the author. The memoirs by V.M.Tseitlin are very detailed and rich in facts. Its author in different times commanded by the artillery battery (in troops of North-west Front), served in the command staff of the 1st Army corps, acted for the head of the command staff of 60th division, participated in several major operations, observed closely both the front-line and the command staff life of the army. Later on, he joined Red Army. V.M.Tseitlin made a great contribution in development of

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military communication, he wrote a variety of writings dedicated to it, performed military historical research work. In his memoirs, V.M.Tseitlin aimed not only at giving the description of the events but to its analysis in order to determine the cases of military failures of the Russian Army. The authors of the article aimed at determining typical patterns for ideology of the front officer in his views and to distinguish it from the personal views. Analysis of V.M.Tseitlin memoirs allowed getting a clear understanding of many of the realities of the military daily life and the same time to understand the essential processes connected with battle action organization, Russian Army munitioning, functioning of the command structures etc. The evaluations by V.M. Tseitlin sometimes quite hasty and by no means always impartial, but that fact does not deteriorate the value of his memoirs as a primary source.



Keywords

World War I, source, unpublished memoirs, fighting, military communication, the supply of the army, artillery, ordnances, Russian commanders, staffs, the outlook of Russian officers.

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