

FYODOR USHAKOV: THE MODEL OF PRUDENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

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Ushakov Avenue is a wide green road stretching through the historical centre of Kherson. It begins from the railway station and ends at the Dnieper's embankment. The avenue bears the name of the famous admiral Fedor Fedorovich Ushakov whose glory came to us in the Catherinian Era.

Captain Ushakov spent only two years of his life in Kherson; he was appointed commander of the 66 cannon ship «The St. Pavel» here. However, this short stay made a significant mark in the history of Kherson. Captain Ushakov arrived at the place of his service with 700 sailors and 3000 carpenters in the midst of the plague epidemic of 1783.

In those distant times there was no redemption from this terrible disease. Ivan Polnomochny was one of the few literate sailors in Ushakov's crew. He left his memories of the Kherson plague: *«An awful disease was increasing. Prisoners carried corpses like logs and buried them into pits ... Over 50 people into one pit. Dresses and other clothes lay around and no one dared touch them, because everyone wanted to save his life. The Chief General Klokachev (Vice Admiral, the first commander of the Black Sea fleet) and many other officers died of the infection ... There were 800 prisoners from Taganrog who transported dead bodies, and they all died. That was a terrible time! Heaven forbid anyone see this...».*

Captain Ushakov was aware of the mortal danger and pulled back a large squad to the steppe, preventing disastrous consequences. Only in late autumn did the epidemic begin to recede. Kherson was a terrible sight after the illness, which spared no more than 10% of the city's residents. But not a single member of Ushakov's crew died. It was truly a miracle. Fyodor Ushakov was promoted to a higher rank and awarded the Order of St. Vladimir for skilful coordination. It was

the act of not just a disciplined officer, but also of a person with a strong sense of responsibility, iron will and commitment to duty.

At the beginning of 1785 the carpenters and naval specialists of Ushakov's crew completed the construction and the equipping of Kherson's 66 cannon frigate «The St. Pavel». On May 1 of the same year, the new vessel under Ushakov's command left for Ochakiv. Over time many exploits were added to the future admiral's track record. In March 1790 counter admiral Ushakov was honored to be commander of the Black Sea Fleet by the order of Grigory Potemkin. He also developed a new tactic of warfare at sea and scored many victories over the Turkish fleet. Under Ushakov's command the fleet conquered the Ionian Islands in the War of the Second Coalition against France.

The Islands in the north of the Kara Sea, a bay in the Gulf of Anadyr, and a cape on the northern coast of the Sea of Okhotsk are named after Fyodor Ushakov. Warships, medals and streets bear Admiral's name. Kherson is no exception. The city's main avenue used to have different names: Postal Street, Pestel Street, Krasnoarmiisk Street and Howard Street. Since 1947 the avenue has been named after Ushakov. In 1970 a bronze monument to the naval commander was erected in front of the main building of the Kherson State Maritime Academy.

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