

= Maria Limanskaya =

Maria Limanskaya (also mistakenly referred to as Anna Pavlova) was a female soldier of the Red Army for three years during World War II . She became known as the Russian woman who directed traffic at the Brandenburg Gate in 1945 after the Battle of Berlin . She has since become a symbol of the Allied victory over Nazi Germany .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life and military service = = =

Born in 1924 as Maria Limanskaya , she joined the Red Army in 1942 , at the height of World War II . She was 18 . At that time the Soviet Stavka (" high command ") increasingly lacked trained reserves to reinforce the entire 2 @, @ 000 @-@ kilometre (1 @, @ 200 mi) front , and as a result began to conscript underage men and women . Almost 800 @, @ 000 women would eventually serve in the Red Army throughout the war . Little is known about Limanskaya 's military career other than several occasions where she was nearly killed . At one point , she left a building a few seconds before it was leveled by a bomb attack . She also contracted malaria .

= = = Brandenburg Gate and victory icon = = =

After the Battle of Berlin ended in early May 1945 , Limanskaya was assigned to direct traffic at the Brandenburg Gate during the Potsdam Conference in late July . While conducting her duties , she was photographed , filmed , and also interviewed by Eugeny Haldey , a journalist employed by Tyelyegrafnoye Agyentstvo Sovyetskogo Soyuza (" Telegraph Agency of the Soviet Union " ; TASS) , a state news agency . Her picture was widely published in newspapers and magazines worldwide and she quickly became an iconic image of the victory over Nazi Germany . She furthermore had a brief conversation with the British leader Winston Churchill as his entourage was passing by the gate on their way to Potsdam . Limanskaya later said about her meeting Churchill , " [he] looked precisely the way I imagined him , puffing on a cigar " .

= = = Later life and marriage = = =

After the war , Limanskaya returned to civilian life and got married . The marriage did not last and she was forced to bring up two daughters by herself . Limanskaya later remarried , this time to a fellow veteran named Victor with whom she remained for 23 years , until his death . She is believed to have lived out the last years of her life in the village of Zvonaryovka , Saratov . Limanskaya is survived by five great @-@ grandchildren , three of whom now live in Germany . For unknown reasons , she is often mistakenly referred to as " Anna Pavlova " in television documentaries and other media presentations .

= = = Printed = = =

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