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This image depicts Churchill presenting Stalin with the "Sword of Stalingrad," at the Tehran Conference in 1943. The photo was later published in the *Illustrated London News*. Online via the "[Sword of Stalingrad](#)" website.

Ten months after the German surrender, Winston Churchill recognized the extraordinary suffering and heroism of the [Stalingrad people](#). He presented the jeweled "[Sword of Stalingrad](#)" to the Soviet leader. It bears this engraving:

To the steelhearted citizens of Stalingrad, a gift from King George VI as a token of the homage of the British people.

Anyone flying over the demolished city during the rest of the war could witness its mass destruction. Valentin Berezhkov later described what he saw:

We pressed to the windows in silence. First individual houses scattered in the snow came into view, and then a kind of unbelievable chaos began: lumps of walls, boxes of half-ruined buildings, piles of rubble, isolated chimneys.

But looking further, Berezhkov also saw signs of new beginnings:

Visible against the snow were the black figures of people and every now and then there was evidence of new buildings.

At the end of the war, Field Marshal Paulus was called as a witness at the Nuremberg War Trials. He was not charged with war crimes. Taken prisoner after his surrender, he had [aged](#) dramatically. He died in Dresden February 1, 1957. He never saw his wife again.

Tania Chernova survived the war. She continued to "break as many sticks" as she could. William Craig (page 404) interviewed her for [Enemy at the Gates](#):

More than a quarter century after her vendetta against the enemy, the graying sniper still refers to the Germans she killed as "sticks" that she broke. For many years after the war she believed that Vassili Zaitsev, her lover, had died from grievous wounds. Only in 1969, did she learn that he had recovered and married someone else. The news stunned her for she still loved him.

The Soviet people sustained massive losses throughout the war. In *Stalingrad* (at page 428), Antony Beevor summarizes the

...nightmare which had begun almost four years before and cost the Red Army nearly 9 million dead and 18 million wounded. (Only 1.8 million prisoners of war returned alive out of more than 4.5 million taken by the Wehrmacht.) Civilian casualties are much harder to assess, but they are thought to run to nearly 18 million, bringing the total war dead of the Soviet Union to over 26 million, more than five times the total of German war dead.

On a Stalingrad (now Volgograd) hill called Mamayev stands the largest statue in the world. Three times higher than the American Statue of Liberty, "[Mother Russia](#)" is a tribute to the memory of all those [who suffered](#) in the deadliest battle in military history.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-SWORD-OF-STALINGRAD-Stalingrad-Deadly-Battle-of-WWII>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-SWORD-OF-STALINGRAD-Stalingrad-Deadly-Battle-of-WWII>

Media Stream



Surviving Children of Stalingrad

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Mamayev Hill

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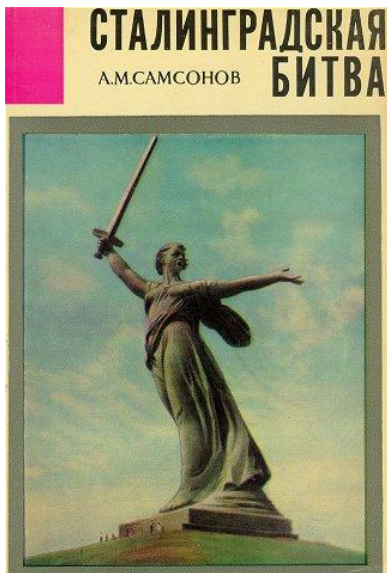


Mother Russia - Largest Statue in the World

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Mother Russia - Statue

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Suffering People of Stalingrad

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