



THE SIGNATORY OF THE DECLARATION OF THE
COUNCIL OF THE UNION OF LITHUANIAN FREEDOM
FIGHTERS OF 16 FEBRUARY 1949,
THE FIRST DEPUTY OF THE CHAIRMAN OF
THE PRESIDUM OF THE COUNCIL OF THE UNION
OF LITHUANIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS,
SINCE 1953, THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
OF THE UNION OF LITHUANIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS
AND FIGHTERS OF LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE,
BRIGADIER GENERAL

ADOLFAS RAMANAUSKAS-VANAGAS

The State Funeral Ceremony
on 5 and 6 October 2018
in Vilnius



ADOLFAS RAMANAUSKAS-VANAGAS
1918-1957



Adolfas Ramanauskas was born on 6 March 1918 in the U.S.A. In 1921, A. Ramanauskas returned to Lithuania with his parents.

In 1937, A. Ramanauskas graduated from the Lazdijai Žiburys secondary school and started studying at the Klaipėda Pedagogical Institute, but after Nazi Germany took over the Klaipėda region, he graduated from the Panevėžys State Pedagogical Institute. In 1940, he graduated from the Kaunas Military School (the 15th Graduation). In 1940–1942, he worked as a teacher at the Guroniai and Aukštakalnis schools in the Lazdijai region. During the June Uprising, A. Ramanauskas was the commander of the Druskininkai Property Protection Unit from 23 June to 7 July 1941. In 1942–1945, he taught at the Alytus Teachers' Seminary.

When the second Soviet occupation began, in April 1945 he decided to take part in an armed struggle for the freedom of Lithuania. He was sworn in on 2 June of the same year and chose the pseudonym “Vanagas” (Hawk). In addition, he put another 120 freedom fighters on oath.

In the beginning, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas headed a partisan squad in Nemunaitis. He was a gifted organizer, so he managed to unite guerrilla squads in the Merkinė and Alovė Counties into the Merkinė company of 140 men and led

them. It became part of the Dzūkai group in the autumn of 1945. Later, the company was reorganized into a battalion and A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was appointed as the commander. In 1945, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was appointed the commander of the Merkinė battalion. In December 1945, he led the attack on Merkinė.

On 7 October 1945, he married a partisan of the Dainava Command – Birutė Mažeikaitė (aka Vanda) – in the Nedzingė church. Their daughter Auksutė was born in 1948.

On 23 April 1946, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was appointed as the First Deputy Head of the Dainava Command. On 24–25 September 1947, the partisans conducted elections by secret ballot. A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was elected as the Head of the Dainava Command. In 1948, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was elected as the Commander of Lithuanian partisans in southern Lithuania.

A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas participated in 9 battles and headed some of them. On 9 April 1946, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was awarded the Zeal Stripe (Uolumo Juostelė) for doing organizational work to help the resistance movement; he was also given the Bravery Stripe for heading the attack on Merkinė. In 1949, he was awarded the 2nd class Freedom Fight Cross with Swords for his contribution to the resistance movement. In 1950, the Presidium of the Council of the Union of Lithuanian Freedom Fighters conferred the 1st class and 2nd class Freedom Fight Crosses with Swords on A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas for courage, self-sacrifice, smart leadership and organizational work.

After a long and dangerous journey on foot from Dzūkija to the Radviliškis district, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas participated in a partisan meeting of Commanders-in-Chief from



Partisan commanders of the southern Lithuania area on the way to Žemaitija. Kneeling, from left: Juozas Jankauskas-Demonas, Aleksandras Grybinas-Faustas, Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas, Urbantas Dailidė-Tauras. Winter of 1948–1949

entire Lithuania in a bunker in Minaičiai village on 2–22 February 1949. During the meeting, the partisans founded the Union of Lithuanian Freedom Fighters and the partisan leadership – the only legitimate government in the Soviet-occupied Lithuania – was formed. In addition, the Council of the Union adopted the Declaration of 16 February 1949. A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was one of the signatories of the document. In the meeting, he was confirmed as the leader of the partisans in southern Lithuania.

In autumn 1949, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was appointed as the Commander-in-Chief of the defensive forces of the



At a meeting of partisans of the Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania group. Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas, the brigade commander, awards the Bravery Stripe to Sofija Budėnaitė-Ramunė. Lionginas Baliukevičius-Dzūkas, a staff officer, reads out the commander's order

Union of Lithuanian Freedom Fighters and the First Deputy of the Chairperson of the Presidium of the Union Jonas Žemaitis-Vytautas. Partisans also granted him the rank of lieutenant colonel.

A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas, who was hard working and principled, set a good example to other freedom fighters. Qualities of both a teacher and an officer were reflected in his activities. Knowing that besides the armed resistance, an ideological political struggle was being waged, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas paid particular attention to the partisan press. Together with his comrades, he prepared and published such newspapers, as "Trečias skambutis" (The Third Ring), "Laisvės varpas" (The Bell of Freedom), "Mylėk tėvynę" (Love Your Homeland),



Dainava District Partisan Staff Printing House. 1948.
Stand (from the right): Dainava district commander Adolfas Ramanauskas-Vanagas, commander of the Kazimieraitis brigade Jonas Jakubavičius-Rugys, partisan Viktoras Kazlauskas-Vanagas and the assistant commandant of the district Lionginas Baliukevičius-Dzūkas. Vaclovas Voveris-Žaibas, the leader of the Iron Wolf group, is seated

“Partizanas” (The Partisan), etc. As the partisan leader, he had earned great authority and tried to control the partisans’ discipline as rigorously as possible. He did not tolerate and punished those self-willed, who tarnished the name of freedom fighters.

When J. Žemaitis-Vytautas resigned due to poor health in 1951, the First Deputy Chairman of the Presidium of the Council of the Union A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas became the Acting Chairman. After the arrest of Jonas Žemaitis-Vytautas in 1953, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was the highest-ranking Lithuanian official and the leader of the Union, fighting for Lithuania's independence. Even Soviet occupants dubbed him the "General of the partisans".

After the armed struggle for freedom ended, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas and his family went into hiding from 1953. While in hiding, as the Commander-in-chief of the Defense Forces of the Union, he drafted, stamped and signed certificates, and distributed them to the most active supporters of the partisans. At that time, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas wrote his memoir "Partizanų gretose" (In the Rows of Partisans), consisting of three parts. After the restoration of Lithuania's independence, the memoir was published under the title "Daugel krito sūnų..." (Many Sons Have Fallen...). The fact that A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas wrote his memoir testifies to his unshakable faith in the future Lithuania as a free country. He also believed that it was necessary to write a true history of the struggle for freedom. He left his memoir with the people whom he trusted and they hid it in different secret places in southern Lithuania, hoping that they could preserve at least some part of the memoir.

During the years of guerrilla warfare, the KGB was searching fiercely for the partisan leader A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas and his wife, who was also a partisan. The search was led by the highest-ranking KGB officials of the Lithuanian SSR. The KGB managed to arrest the Ramanauskas family only after 11 years of guerrilla warfare on 12 October 1956. On that

day, A. Ramanauskas and his wife Birutė were betrayed and arrested in Kaunas. They were immediately transferred to the KGB prison in Vilnius. From the very beginning, the partisan leader was cruelly tortured. Severely injured and unconscious, A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was taken to the Lukiškės prison hospital. A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas was morally and physically tortured for almost a year. On 24–25 September 1957 in Vilnius, the leader of the partisans was sentenced to death by the Supreme Court of the Lithuanian SSR. He was executed in Vilnius on 29 November of the same year.

The wife of A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas – partisan B. Mažeikaitė-Ramanauskienė – was sentenced to 8 years in labor camps by the Soviet court.

After the restoration of Lithuania's independence, the highest awards were bestowed upon A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas for his merits. On 22 December 1997, he was granted the status of a military volunteer. On 26 January 1998, the President of the Republic of Lithuania issued the Decree granting A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas the rank of brigadier general. The awards conferred on him by the partisan leadership were also legalized: the Freedom Fighters' Merit Cross Second Class with Swords and the Freedom Fighters' Merit Cross First Class with Swords. On 6 March 1998, the President of the Republic of Lithuania issued the Decree, bestowing the 2nd Class Order of the Cross of Vytis (Commander's Grand Cross) and on 1 February 1999, the Decree, bestowing the 1st Class Order of the Cross of Vytis (Grand Cross) upon A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas.

After an extensive long-term research and search carried out by experts of the Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, they successfully identified the burial site of A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas in the Vilnius Cemetery of Orphans in June 2018.

A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas wrote in his memoir: “We are all equal brothers-in-arms. There is neither lord nor servant, neither kulak nor farm-hand; since we all are fighting not for a manor, nor for a high-ranking and profitable position. We all have only one desire - to win freedom for Lithuania and, God willing, to participate with all the people in the feast of unimaginable joy, with the entire nation to pursue a truly free, cultured and independent life based on the principles of democracy. “

Today, after assessing the activities of the General A. Ramanauskas-Vanagas, we can undoubtedly say that he was a fighter for Lithuania's freedom, an idealist, one of the most significant figures in the post-war armed resistance movement.

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ADOLFAS RAMANAUSKAS-VANAGAS'

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on 5 and 6 October 2018

in Vilnius

5 October, Friday

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-9.30

Conveyance of the remains to the inner courtyard
of Vilnius University St. Johns' Church.

10.00-20.00

Members of the public pay their last respects at Vilnius
University St. Johns' Church.

18.00

Mass at Vilnius University St. Johns' Church.

6 October, Saturday

10.00-12.00

Members of the public pay their last respects at Vilnius University St. Johns' Church.

12.00

Coffin leaves Vilnius University St. Johns' Church.

Lithuanian Armed Forces pay their last respects in the inner courtyard of Vilnius University St. Johns' Church.

The hearse leaves for the Cathedral Basilica of St. Stanislaus and St. Ladislaus of Vilnius.

13.00

Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Stanislaus and St. Ladislaus of Vilnius.

*Mass held by His Excellency Archbishop
Metropolitan of Vilnius
Gintaras Grušas.*

14.00

The hearse leaves on its journey to Antakalnis Cemetery.

15.00

Burial in Antakalnis Cemetery.