

THE KHRESILI BATTLE (1757)

Solomon I gained the Imeretian throne in 1752. The young king inherited a heavy legacy of his father. Kingdom of Imereti was dissolved into princedoms. The main castles such as those of Kutaisi, Baghdati, Shorapani and Tsutskhvati were under the ownership of the Turks.

Even upon his enthronement Solomon I demonstrated his anti-Turkish attitudes. However, due to insufficient strength it was not until 1757 that he manifested himself in active opposition.

In 1757 the intruding enemy troops were located in Khresili (Tqibuli region), Imereti. The King encountered quite large enemy forces. The Battle of Khresili was fought on December 14, 1757. An important part of the enemy forces was killed in the battle, others were taken captive. Only a small part managed to escape. The Turkish military leaders such as Gola Pasha, Kemkha Pasha of Akhaltsikhe and Basha Agha were killed in the battle.

As for the Georgians, the King's disloyal grandfather Levan Abashidze was killed and Rostom the Eristavi of Racha fled and escaped.

The Battle of Khresili was the start of the war for liberation of Western Georgia. It was the first military encounter of King Solomon I with the invading forces.