

Rachmiel Blumberg With His Grandson Nevil Blumberg



This is my father-in-law Rachmiel Blumberg and my son Nevil in this picture. This photo was taken at our home in Tallinn in 1961. We stayed with my husband's family for about five years. Our son was born in 1961. We gave him the name of Nevil. My mother-in-law chose this name for him. Before the war she had a close friend living in Viljandi. Her name was Rita. She gave birth to a son, and his name was Nevil. When the Soviet rule was established in Estonia, Rita and her family moved to Australia. She had relatives there. Rita was trying to convince my mother-in-law and the family to join them, but Rachmiel refused bluntly. He was a patriot of Estonia and was sure that

nothing bad could happen to him in his own country. My mother-in-law asked me to name my son Nevil. I liked the name. The Soviet regime did not only fight religion, but also, the national identity, and all national rituals, including the Estonian and Jewish ones, were forbidden. However, my father-in-law could not imagine that his grandson was not going to have the brit milah ritual. At his request a mohalim from Leningrad arrived at our house to conduct the circumcision. My husband had a job and was a member of the party by then. He was not very happy about our decision to have our son circumcised. What he was saying was that we shouldn't expose our baby to pain. Nevil was three months old then. To prevent my husband from feeling that he was violating the party rules, we let him be away from home at the time. Of course, Hana and I also worried that this would cause the baby some pain, but Rachmiel insisted that the tradition was observed to the full. I had very close, kind and warm relationships with my husband's parents as long as they lived. My husband's mother and I were so close that even my friends felt jealous about us. They were saying that such a relationship between a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law could not be true. However, this is what it was like between us. I didn't know how to make Jewish food and had a rather vague idea about Jewish traditions. She taught and educated me. We observed Jewish traditions in the family. We celebrated Jewish holidays.