

Leo Ginovker's Birth Certificate



This is my birth certificate. It was issued by the public rabbi of the city of Revel (now Tallinn) and has a stamp and states that the register of Jews born in the city of Revel in 1914 contains a record nr.10 that says that on 15th August 1914, Yesel Ginovker of Dubrovny, Mohilev region, and his lawful wife Haya had a son who was given the name of Leo according to the laws of Jewish religion. I have lived in Estonia under four different regimes. I do not remember anything of the tsarist regime as I was too young then. During the Estonian bourgeois republic [1918-1940] I studied in school and worked in our family business. That was the happiest time of my life. With the arrival of the Soviet power I was deprived of my civil rights, deported twice, and spent 12 years in deportation. Then life improved but I always remembered that I was a 'socially dangerous element'. Now, in Independent Estonia, I'm just a pensioner. I've lived a long life. I'm not religious. However, both in my childhood, in my maturity, and now in my old years, I've always known and remembered that I'm a Jew. I've always felt Jewish. During the anti-Semitic campaigns in the USSR, I was in deportation, so I wasn't oppressed or dismissed from my job. I think I've been lucky.