

Efim Shukhman With Fellow Soldiers



This photograph was taken in the beginning of the war in Leningrad, it is impossible to tell the exact date.

You can see here Efim Shukhman, senior brother of my mother and my uncle (1898-1943). As it was written in the notification about his death, he perished on July 14, 1943.

He served as a sniper. After daddy's death, my mum received only one letter from Efim, where he consoled her. He wrote that she should not be afraid, because he would be helping her - she was his beloved little sister. It was he who gave money for her wedding. Uncle Efim loved mother very much, she was his favorite.

She was the youngest and he was the eldest in the family. Uncle Efim sent mother a parcel with food products and wrote a note saying that he would never leave her and help her to bring up the children. The person in the centre of the photo - Efim's friend, who became a friend of our family after the end of the war.

In 1950s he visited my aunts Ghita and Zita. He was a member of the initiative group, which gathered money for the monument [later it was erected in Kamyen on the grave of Jews executed by shooting].

All his family was also shot there. And I remember him very well; I only do not remember his name and surname. He went through the war and after it he wanted very much to immortalize memory about the lost Jews, notwithstanding the attitude to Jews of that time. And he succeeded: at

present this monument stands on the place of execution.

I remember June 21 in 1941 (it was my birthday - I was born in 1935, hence in 1941 I was going to be 6 years old) - it was Saturday. And all our relatives gathered at our place to celebrate my birthday on Sunday, the 22nd of June 1941 - the day when the war burst out. All our relatives came.

At that time we lived in Ossinovaya Roscha [suburb of St. Petersburg], my daddy served there in a military camp. Two my grandfathers came too. One of them - Avraham underwent surgery a short time previously;

I remember very distinctly that his hand and shoulder were bandaged. I remember him eating. My mum prepared kosher food especially for him: staying in hospital, he did not eat hospital meals, his daughters brought it to him especially.

My birthday was celebrated by all our relatives. All our relatives came from Belarus and other places. We all gathered round the festive table. I had a separate children's table, where we were sitting together with my cousin. I remember two my grandfathers and my aunts at that day.

I remember Efim Shukhman, senior brother of my mum. He was the first to move to Leningrad at the end of 1920. He worked as a shoemaker in a co-operative in Leningrad, and he was very good shoemaker.

It was Efim who contributed greatly to subsequent moving of his sisters and younger brother Naum to Leningrad. He perished at Nevsky Pyatachok at the approaches to Leningrad on the 15th of January 1943.

[Nevskaya Dubrovka is a settlement on the right bank of the Neva river, where the troops of the Leningrad front twice (in Sept. 1941 and in Sept. 1942) forced a crossing over the Neva river and captured the beach-head on its left bank (the so-called Nevsky Pyatachok, meaning 'a very small plot of land near the Neva river').

They hold their positions for about 400 days and participated in bloody battles.] I still keep this notification about his death. He served as a sniper. After daddy's death, my mum received only one letter from Efim, where he consoled her.

He wrote that she should not be afraid, because he would be helping her - she was his beloved little sister. It was he who gave money for her wedding. Uncle Efim loved mother very much, she was his favorite.

She was the youngest and he was the eldest in the family. Uncle Efim sent mother a parcel with food products and wrote a note saying that he would never leave her and help her to bring up the children.

Mother wrote a reply to Efim, but soon we received this notification about his death. Uncle Efim is included in the electronic Memory Book [Terminal of the Electronic Memory Book can be found inside the monument of Victory (it is a branch of the city Historical Museum) in our city (situated in Moscow avenue, on the way to airport).

Everyone, who was lost during the battles of Leningrad, was put into the electronic data base. And everyone can come there, name a lost person and get a printed out document. Sofia Furman has this sort of document regarding Efim, who perished near the Sinyavinskiye Vysoty, in Tartolovo settlement].