

Moisey Marianovski And His Schoolmates



A group of students of a school in Moscow at the entrance to the school. This is me, Moisey Marianovski, on the right in the upper row. I put my hand on the shoulder of my friend Ivan Volodin, who perished near Stalingrad in 1942. This photo was taken in Moscow in 1936.

I was named Moisey after my paternal grandfather Moisey Marianovski, which was quite common in Jewish families. I was born in Novyy Bug near Kirovograd in 1919. I don't remember anything about the Novyy Bug town. I was too young when we moved to Kirovograd. It was a nice little town buried in verdure and acacia blossom. Our whole big family lived in one room in a shared apartment. Most of our co-tenants were Jewish. There was a big Jewish population in Kirovograd.

I had no nanny. I didn't go to a kindergarten either. There were no kindergartens then. My sisters and brothers looked after me and taught me letters and numbers. They also gave me common errands to do. I went to a primary school at the age of 8. This was the nearest Russian school. I studied well. I finished 5 years in this school.

In the early 1930's Ukraine was struck by terrible famine. Only God knows how we survived this famine. Mama had swollen legs. She always gave me whatever food she could, but I was still always hungry and even fainted from starvation. Fortunately, our family survived. In 1932 my older brother Yasha was in the army in Moscow. He became an officer. He wrote that there were better food supplies in Moscow and it was easier to find a job here. In 1933 our family moved to Moscow. Shimon went to work at the electrical plant named after Kuibyshev. He was a worker. Later I followed into his steps in Moscow.

We lived in Izmailovo district in Moscow. At that time this was a suburb of Moscow. We moved into a 19-meter room in a shared apartment. We hardly had any furniture. There was very little space. When my brother went to work I took his place on the bed. We were very poor. Those were hard times. We hardly ever ate to our hearts' content, but at least we did not starve. Gradually our life

was improving. I finished secondary school in Moscow. I worked at the plant and studied. This was hard. I worked the 2nd shift at the plant and had no time to do my homework. I also had to help mama about the house. Besides, I also wanted to meet with my friends, so I did have little spare time. I was glad I earned my own living. We lived in this room in the shared apartment till the early 1940's.

I joined Komsomol at school. I led an active way of life. We enjoyed living in Izmailovo. We used to play football and volleyball in the nearby forest. We had makeshift playgrounds and everything else, but we had lots of fun. My friends were our neighbors' children. Later we went to the army together. There were many Jewish families living in the vicinity, but we never divided people by nationality. There were never any demonstrations of anti-Semitism, particularly that I had no typical Semitic features. Later I became a member of a workers' collective. My friends and my sisters' and brothers' visited us at home and mama always welcomed them. We celebrated Soviet and family holidays, but we did not celebrate Jewish holidays. We were not religious. We were far from observing any holidays or traditions. We were young and had other interests. We were fond of sports, went to parades and sang Soviet revolutionary songs about "how good it was to live in the Union of Soviets".

I was good at all subjects. However, I liked physics and history more than other subjects. I did not consider continuing my education since I had to work to earn my living. Before finishing school I quit the electrical plant and went to work to the car manufacture plant named after Stalin. This plant is now named after Likhachev. I worked at the turner's unit and also, worked at school. On 5 October 1940 I was recruited to the army.