

## Mera Shulman Among Graduates Of The Agricultural Academy



This photograph was taken in Riga in 1951. That spring day I graduated from the Agricultural Academy and got my first higher education. I do not know exactly who took this photograph, but I suppose that it was a specially invited photographer.

I entered the Riga University in 1947. I studied there for 2 years at chemical department. Then I became pregnant and allergic to smells unavoidable in chemical laboratories. I changed the College and continued my studies at the Agricultural Academy (technological faculty for food-processing), which graduated engineers. I was admitted to the 3rd course. After graduating I was sent to Tallinn [Estonia]. I left my little son in Riga with my parents. In Tallinn I took up a post of technologist at sausage workshop. I lived there 4 months and then handed in an application requesting to send me back to Latvia for work, so that I could be closer to my son and my parents. Besides I underlined that I knew Lettish and had no idea about Estonian. They complied with my request and sent me to Tukums (70 kilometers from Riga).

I worked there as a master at butchery for two years and a half. They gave me personal transport: telega [telega is a four-wheel carriage] with a horse. I left the service in 1954, when my husband graduated from College in Leningrad. I took my son away from my parents and we moved to my husband to Leningrad. I got a job at the Electrosila Factory [Leningrad Corporation for construction of electric machines - one of the largest USSR factories in this sphere] together with my husband. I was set to do not very interesting work, because my speciality was not adequate for the job. I held that position during 10 years. And after that to my great surprise and surprise of all my relatives, I entered the Leningrad Northwest Correspondence Polytechnical College. While studying I did not interrupt my work and graduated from the College in 1968.

Here I'd like to say that it was my father who did his best to help me in getting both secondary and higher education. In evacuation we stayed in a small sovkhos [5](#) in Chkalov (Orenburg at present) region, which was situated 110 kilometers far from the railway. I worked at the cattle-breeding farm, I had to assist cows during the act of delivery. Fortunately the cows managed to do it without

me! There was only a four-year school. In 1942 my father was mobilized. He found himself in the building detachment in Novotroitsk city (500 kilometers far from the place, where we stayed). At first he built cesspools, but soon they took into account his first profession (a footwear cutter) and sent him to a studio to work as a shoemaker for army needs. Father imparted his anxiety that his daughters had no place to study, to his chief. After much effort his chief obtained for father an authorization to take us to him. So, we arrived and settled in the corner of a large barrack partitioned off by a curtain. In the barrack there lived 60 Red army men. There we went to school: I went to the 9th form and my sister to the 5th one. It was there where I received the school-leaving certificate, Which gave me an opportunity to enter the Riga University after we came back from evacuation.