

Samuel Rachelgauz



Here you can see Samuel Rachelgauz, my aunt Rieva's husband, and our house in the background. This photo was taken in Tomashpol in March 1944 on the day when my uncle and Soviet troops

were liberating the town from fascists.

My father's sister Rieva was born in 1910. Rieva had good education. After finishing a seven-year school she finished a Soviet Trade School and then a Trade College. Rieva was a member of the Communist Party and worked in the regional party committee in Vinnitsa. She married Samuel Rachelgauz, a Jew, who was a military, in 1939, and followed him to wherever he had to go on his military service across the country. They lived in the Far East and Siberia and when Samuel retired they returned to Vinnitsa.

In March 1944 Soviet troops liberated Tomashpol. My uncle, Aunt Rieva's husband Samuel Rachelgauz, came to the town with them. He didn't know us and we had never seen him before, but Aunt Rieva, who was in evacuation in the Urals, kept writing her husband that if he came to Tomashpol he should find our family. She didn't know about us. Rieva described her relatives to her husband: my father, grandfather, my mother and Aunt Leya.

I shall never forget this day. My sister had another attack of typhus and my brother and I were lying beside her covered with all rags that we could find in the house. Aunt Leya was trying to keep my uncle in the doorway telling him that we had lice and were infectious, but Samuel came into the house, took my sister in his arms and began to cry. Then he took a loaf of bread out of his bag. My mother screamed to him that he should give us only a little bit and my uncle began to give us small pieces.