

Tsylia Aguf



This is me on 1 September, 1947, my first working day at the Russian secondary school in Kiev. On their first day pupils always give flowers to their new teachers. At the beginning of 1944 my father-in-law obtained a special permit required to return to Kiev. [Until the middle of 1944 Kiev was still closed for those who wanted to return from evacuation.] Postwar Kiev made a hard impression on me. I cried bitterly when I came to Kreschatik, its main thoroughfare, and saw it ruined. When we returned to Kiev I began to look for a job. I couldn't find any. I was openly told that I didn't have a chance to get a job with my Jewish name, Tsylia. Then, quite incidentally, I got a position as a human resource inspector in an office. This office hired workers to restore Kreschatik. I liked the job. We also received food packages. My colleagues treated me very nicely. Once they even came to help me chop wood. In the summer they once left a huge watermelon in my office for me. They

also talked with our management, and I began to receive more food in my food packages: more bread, cereal and flour. I went to complete my studies at the Pedagogical Institute in Kiev in 1945, and my husband was in his 5th year at the Kiev Art Institute. I graduated from the Institute in 1947 and got a job in the Russian secondary school in the center of the city. I liked my job. I got along well with my colleagues, and the children's parents were satisfied with my work.