

Pyotr Bograd And His Cousin Leya



This photograph was taken at my home in Moscow in 1992. My American relative Leya Bograd is visiting me. She asked me to wear my military uniform.

I took part in the Great Patriotic War from its very beginning. At first I fought on the Western border. I was at the southern border of Austria and Yugoslavia in the direction of Zagreb [today Croatia] at the time, when the war ended.

I finished the war in the rank of lieutenant colonel, I was promoted to this rank at the age of 23, in early 1944. I graduated from the MV Frunze Military Academy in 1948. Due to my Jewish identity I was not promoted from my rank of lieutenant colonel for 11 years.

Only in 1955, when I was commander of a mechanized regiment I was promoted to the rank of colonel. I was promoted to my current rank of general major with a long delay. It's extremely hard for a Jew to be promoted to the rank of general in our country.

In the course of my long-term service in the army I received the following awards: an Order of the Red Banner, two Orders of the Patriotic War, 1st Class, an order of the Patriotic War, 2nd Class, three Orders of the Red Star, Order for Service to the Motherland, 3rd Class, a Bulgarian order 'For courage' and 25 medals.

My grandfather's younger brother Leib moved to the USA before the revolution of 1917. He had five children. I only know about his daughter, Leya, born in the USA in 1920. We met in the 1990s.

Though I knew about her before, we couldn't communicate since this wasn't allowed in the former USSR and was punishable. We met, when I visited the USA, and she visited me in Moscow.