

Mikhail Sivashinsky



This is the last picture of my cousin Mikhail Sivashinsky, the elder son of my mother's brother Vulf Sivashinsky. Mika, as we called him, is 16 years old here. The photo was taken in Leningrad in 1940.

He got married at an early age, when he was 19, to Esphir Berkovna Starobina, a friend of his sister Sima; they studied together at the pharmaceutical technical school. After finishing school Esphir worked in a drugstore.

Their first son Mikhail was born in 1924 and in 1940 they had another son, Semyon. They lived with Esphir's parents in a huge communal apartment, which belonged to the Starobins before the Revolution.

When the Great Patriotic war broke out, Esphir and Semyon got evacuated to Omsk, Siberia.

Vulf and his elder 17-year-old son Mikhail volunteered to the front. In September 1941 Mikhail perished in the battle near Gatchina in Leningrad region.

Almost everyone born in 1924 like he was murdered in this war: they were just 17, nothing but schoolboys, with no experience of a soldier, so they would perish in the very first battle. Mikhail was everybody's favorite in the family.