

Semyon Falk's Family



This is a picture of my family, photographed after my wedding in Chernovtsy in 1954. From left to right, sitting are my father David Falk, my mother Sura Falk (nee Keselman), her granddaughter Irina Danilyuk (nee Falk), and my Aunt Hana Moroz' husband. Standing are me, my wife Riva Brukental, my sister Tsylia Rabinovich (nee Falk), my sister-in-law Lilia Falk (nee Medvedeva) and my brother Abram Falk. My brother talked me into entering Lviv Polytechnic University where he was studying. I passed all entrance exams within five days and was admitted to the Faculty of Geodesy. After finishing the first year of my studies I continued my studies at the Faculty of Food Industry. I finished college in 1951 and got a mandatory job assignment to work as a production engineer at a distillery in the small village of Hlyboka, about 20 kilometers from Chernovtsy. The plant was under construction then. The chief engineer of this plant had been arrested shortly before I arrived. The plant was ready for commission, but it couldn't be completed without a chief engineer. Therefore, I was appointed chief engineer. This distillery became one of the best enterprises in the country. We incorporated a number of modifications and changed the production process. Engineers from all over the Soviet Union came to study at our enterprise. I was the chief engineer there for seven years. I got married in 1954. I met my wife on a train on the Chernovtsy-Lviv route when I was traveling to visit my parents in Lviv during vacation. There was this Jewish girl and I liked her at once. She was sitting beside me and we started a conversation. We exchanged contacts. Some time later I went to see her when I came to Chernovtsy on business. We went for a walk and to the cinema. I met her family. Then I began to travel to Chernovtsy on weekends. We were dating for nine months before we decided to get married. My wife was born in 1932 in Lipkany. Riva's father, Leiba Brukental, was a cabinet-maker at a woodworking plant. Her mother, Sophia Brukental, was a housewife. Riva's parents were very religious. Riva was the youngest in the family. Her older brother, Victor, was born in 1925, and her sister, Etia, was born in 1928. Her family was in the ghetto in the town of Bar near Vinnitsa from 1941 to 1944. They had a very hard life in the ghetto, but they all survived. After the war Riva's family moved to Chernovtsy where they settled down in an abandoned house. They were very poor. After finishing school Riva tried to enter medical college twice, but failed. She finished the Chernovtsy Financial College and worked as an accountant. Riva and I went to Lviv before our wedding. My parents were happy that I

was marrying a Jewish girl. They liked Riva at once. We had our wedding in Chernovtsy. We had a civil ceremony and then a traditional Jewish wedding with a chuppah, traditional Jewish songs and dances at Riva's home. My parents came to the wedding from Lviv, and my brother and his wife came from Bashkiria. My mother's sister Hana and her husband also came. After the wedding we stayed in Chernovtsy for several days. Then we left for Hlyboka. We received another room and my wife went to work as an accountant at the distillery. Our only son, Victor, was born in 1956.