

Zhenia Kriss's Cousin Anatoliy Yufa



My Aunt Rosa's son Anatoliy Yufa. The photo was taken in Kiev in 1938. He was photographed for documents to be submitted to Kiev University for entrance exams. My father's older sister, Rosa, born in 1888, was a housewife. Her husband, Yufa, was a clerk. During the war Rosa, her husband and their daughter, Asia, were in evacuation. Rosa died in the middle of the 1960s. Asia lives in Saint-Petersburg. Anatoliy perished in Kiev in the first days of the occupation. When the war began, I was in the town of Rubezhnoye, Donetsk region, where we [fourth-year students] had training at

the chemical factory. We headed home immediately. I stayed at home for two days. We were sent to harvesting in Poltava region. We, students, understood that harvesting was our important contribution. We worked at Lemeshovka village [120 km from Kiev]. Our group of girls sorted tobacco leaves. We were to hang tobacco leaves on poles in the sheds and cut smaller leaves. In August 1941 it became clear that the front was moving closer. We could hear explosions and the roar of war. I went to the central facility of the collective farm, where we were working, looking for our fellow students. It turned out that our rector, Gusko, lecturers and some students had left for Kharkov a few days before, forgetting about us. That was when I got scared! We didn't have any documents or bread cards. The other girls sent me to the university in Kiev, as I was the leader of our Komsomol unit. It never occurred to me that it was dangerous to go alone, and none of them offered to keep me company. I felt it was my duty to take care of my friends. I reached Kiev by taking trains whenever possible and going on foot. I came home. The ceiling in the kitchen had fallen down after a bomb explosion near our house. There was a note from my parents on the table. It said that my brother Froim had gone to the front and that they and my sister had gone into evacuation. My father wrote that they would try to reach Fergana in Uzbekistan where my father's sister Lena was working at the hospital. I walked to the university. There was military training in the yard. Some students that were not recruited to the army were preparing to join the Territorial Army. I saw Aunt Rosa's son Anatoliy. He was blinded in one eye by a slingshot when he was a child and was unfit for the army. Anatoliy took part in the defense of Kiev with a group of volunteers from university. Almost all of them perished. Anatoliy returned to the city, which was already occupied, and was hiding in an attic where his schoolmate had taken him. Shortly afterwards this same schoolmate reported him to the Germans, and Anatoliy was shot at Babi Yar.