

Alexandr Mendelev



This is my father Alexandr Mendelev. This is a photo from our family album. It was taken in Narva in the 1930s after my parents got married. After finishing the gymnasium my father entered the Medical Faculty of Tartu University. During his studies my father joined a rightist Jewish students' organization. I don't remember its name. Mama mentioned it to me, but at that time her stories were no more than the past that was never to come back to me. Therefore, I didn't go into details. All I know is that there was also a leftist Jewish students' organization, and there were frequent fights between them. Mama told me that my father had his nose broken in one of the fights right before his wedding. There were such political storms at Tartu University. After finishing the gymnasium Mama was thinking of where she should go to study. She wanted to become a

pharmacist and work in a pharmacy. Once she was offered a job in a pharmacy in Pösse, a small Estonian town. Mama accepted the offer. My father was a student of the Medical Faculty of Tartu University. It happened so that my father decided to work during summer vacations and the place was the very pharmacy in Pösse. This was where he met my mother and they fell in love with each other. I don't remember where they got married, but I know they had a traditional Jewish wedding. My father was to go back to continue his studies, but he did not want to leave his young wife behind. There was no extramural department for medical students at the university, and my father went to the extramural Legal Faculty. After the wedding my parents settled down in Narva. My grandparents owned a house. They leased apartments in the house, but my parents rented an apartment in the house across the street from Mama's parents. Before I was born my parents also lived in Kemerli for some time. My father worked as an accountant there, but I'm not sure this is correct information. Some time later they returned to Narva. I was born in Narva in 1938. I was the only child in the family. My parents gave me the name of Ruth.