

## Cilja Laud With Her Father Isaac Perelman



This is me and my father Isaac Perelman. The picture was taken in Tallinn in 1947. On 22nd June 1941 German troops invaded the USSR. The Great Patriotic War began. Father was mobilized almost right away, but not in the lines, but in the city of Kirov. There were plants, where military uniforms were made and Father was in charge of the glove making department for the Soviet army. He spent all the years of the war there and all we could do was write to each other. He came back home only in 1947. After returning he went to work at the plant Esticable. He started working in the workshop, but not as a worker, but as a foreman. He had pyelonephritis and was sick all the time. He worked while he could stand on his feet. He was not only working at the plant, he was also elected chairman of the comrade's court in our housing administration. When his consulting hours were over, people came home to see him. There was not a single time, when Father would tell

anybody to make a preliminary appointment. He received people at home and helped them. There were so many people willing to see him! He was not merely loved, he was trusted. I think it is even more important than love. When Father was marking his 60th birthday, there were more than 50 people at home! Everybody found fantastic words for my father. I went to school pretty late, at the age of eight. My Russian was very poor, with a strong accent, and I could hardly speak Estonian. Of course, after the war there were no German schools in Tallinn, only Russian and Estonian ones. At first, Mother decided that I should go to an Estonian school, but the teacher at elementary school, an Estonian, did not speak Russian, only Estonian, and I could not understand her. Luckily, Mother transferred me to a Russian school, where the teacher was an elderly Jew. If I misunderstood something in Russian, she retold me that in Yiddish. Since Yiddish and German were similar I could understand her. I learned Russian over time. I also was well up at Yiddish. We lived with my maternal grandparents. If they wanted to conceal something from me, they started speaking Yiddish. Thus, I learned the language. Though, I speak Yiddish only with a Russian and Estonian accent, but still I am fluent in that language and my listening comprehension skills are also good. I did pretty well at school.