

Anastasia Shif, Elkona Borishansky And Ilya Shif



This snapshot was taken in Leningrad in 1962 in Vladimirskaya Square. It shows, left to right, my mother, Anastasia Nikolaevna Shif, Uncle Elkona Borishansky [my father's cousin,] and my Dad - Ilya Iosifovich Shif. My uncle Elkona lived and worked in Moscow. He was a construction engineer. He had a wife and two daughters. He often visited us. During one of his visits we took this picture. My mother, Anastasia Nikolaevna Shif (nee Kuznetz) was born in 1902 in St. Petersburg. She didn't know her own family, other people brought her up, and I know nothing about her parents. Unfortunately, I don't know anything about how my parents met or about their wedding. At first they didn't have anywhere to live and rented a tiny room. But after two years a room became vacant in the flat where my father's brother [Elkona] was living, and my parents took it. That is where I was born in 1933. We lived together in the same flat with my uncle's family until the war broke out in 1941. The family was a religious one and followed all the traditions. During the war my father went to the front as a private. He served on the Leningrad front. Their unit was surrounded, and for several months they tried to break through this encirclement. Father told me about brutal fighting, especially with the Finns, during which our badly uniformed, poorly armed forces sustained great losses. Father got along very well with his fellow soldiers and officers. Though he was just a private in a reconnaissance unit, he was a rifleman. He got wounded and was sent to the rear to a hospital in Sverdlovsk. When he was released from hospital he came back to Leningrad and somehow got a pass so that my mother and I could also return from Chkalovskaya region (where we had been evacuated). So in June 1944 Mom and I got back to Leningrad. After the war my dad worked as a director of a 'Lentextiltorg' shop.