

Isaac Ryvkin



This is a photograph of my husband Isaac Ryvkin. It was taken in 1944 at the front-line (Baltic region). In 1947 I got acquainted with my future husband, Isaac Samoilovich Ryvkin. He was seven years older than me. He was a professional soldier, technician-lieutenant, and Communist Party member. He joined the Party at the front. He fought at the Leningrad and Moscow fronts. Isaac was awarded a Medal for the Defense of Leningrad, and a Medal for the Defense of Moscow. My husband was religious, but we didn't observe Sabbath. On Jewish holidays he went to the synagogue, but without me. In 1948 we got married. The wedding ceremony was in accordance to the Jewish tradition, under the chuppah. We did it to meet the wishes of my husband and parents. There was no rabbi at our wedding, the ceremony was conducted by a shochet, and there was no

synagogue in Gomel. The wedding ceremony was carried out in our courtyard. The chuppah was made from a canopy and four poles. We signed the ketubbah: a marriage certificate. The ceremony was carried out on a point of order, as my father remembered a lot, and my husband grew up in a religious family. Our Russian neighbors weren't invited to our wedding, only our relatives. One of the English language teachers got to know about our wedding from somewhere and asked my friend, 'Is it true that there was a Jewish wedding at the Rivkins?' I felt uncomfortable in her presence and refused to meet her anymore. After demobilization, my husband left for Leningrad, where his elder brother lived. Later in 1948, I arrived in Leningrad. When in 1948 the State of Israel reappeared, my husband was 'on cloud nine' with happiness. We lived on Bolshaya Moskovskaya Street, near the Vladimirsky square. We had an eleven meter room in a large communal apartment, where there were nine more rooms. All our neighbors were Russian. We were the only Jews there. Our relations with the neighbors were normal. We had no incidents regarding nationality problems.