

Evgenia Shapiro's Aunt Rebecca Rudnitskaya With Her Husband Vladimir Rudnitskiy



My father's sister Rebecca Rudnitskaya [nee Shapiro] and her husband Vladimir Rudnitskiy. The photo was taken in Leningrad in the late 1940s. My aunt was born in Borisov in 1917. She finished Russian grammar school in Borisov. My father studied in Leningrad at the time. He received an apartment, and Rebecca and their parents moved in with him. She was impressed by the Soviet propaganda of equal possibilities for men and women and took to men's professions. She worked as a carpenter at a plant in Leningrad and then learned to drive vehicles. At the end of the 1930s she was a driver for the secretary of a district party Committee in Leningrad. In 1938 she married Vladimir Rudnitskiy, a Jew. He was a pilot. In 1939 their older daughter, Ludmila, was born; in August 1941 Ella followed. In October 1941 the blockade of Leningrad began. Rebecca's husband was recruited to the front. Rebecca got a job with a crew of undertakers. She drove a car picking up corpses and received 50 grams of bread, which was more than the standard ration. When the 'Road of Life' was opened, Rebecca and her daughters were moved to Siberia. After the war they all returned to Leningrad. Rebecca's husband also returned from the front. Rebecca was a shop assistant. Her parents survived in the blockade. Rebecca had another daughter after the war, Galia. In the early 1970s Rebecca's husband died. After his death Rebecca spent three years lying on the sofa with her face turned to the wall. She didn't say a word in all this time and had hardly anything to eat. She died in 1977. They were both buried in the Jewish cemetery in Leningrad. Rebecca, her husband and their children weren't religious and didn't observe any Jewish traditions.