

Genrikh Len With His Sister Polina Ezrokh



My sister Polina and me in evacuation in Kuibyshev, I am six here, and Polina - four years old..

When the war began, in August 1941, we went to Kuibyshev (formerly Samara), where father was assigned a job of quality control of planes at a military plant. He was working by methods of the non- destructive tests.

After Mum's death in 1942 father became a widower in his 32 years of age, with two small children and mother-in-law to support. We returned to Leningrad in 1946.

Father started to live with his mother, my Grandma Eugenia. The living space belonging to my mother and us had been lost in the war perturbations. Father got married two more times.

He worked at his direct speciality, recently it was Research-and-Production Association "Positron" in Leningrad, but he was barred from defending his candidate's thesis as a Jew.

He was not religious, knew some Yiddish, but spoke and wrote Russian in everyday life; he did not serve in the army. He died in Leningrad in 1972.

We returned to Leningrad in 1946. Father got married for the second time, and we had a stepmother. I was not on very good terms with stepmother, so my sister Polina stayed with Daddy, and I moved to live with Grandmother Eugenia.

We lived for several years in Zagorodny Avenue, it was a large communal (shared) apartment consisting of 12 rooms, where Jews and Russians coexisted, sometimes in piece and sometimes at enmity. By the way, such a well-known man as Nechiporenko, people's actor, had also lived in that apartment for some period, with his daughter, with whom we were friends.

The apartment is shared until today. Later grandmother Eugenia left to live in Moscow to her daughter who had her own family, and father got married for the third time. Then our family had rented a house in the town of Vsevolozhskoye, where Grandmother Golda settled with us.

Polina and me went to school there, and father used to give the money for our life. We lived there from 1950 to 1961. In 1961 we received 2 rooms in Leningrad, as people who lost their accommodation during the war.

Grandmother Golda and Polina moved to one of the rooms in Troitskoye Pole, and I moved to the second room in the city centre.