

Mirrah Kogan With Her Parents And Her Friend Zhenia Lerner



These are my parents (sitting in the front), my friend Zhenia Lerner (first from the left in the uniform) and I. The photo was taken in Kuibyshev in 1943 where my mother Edis Kogan and my father Leib Kogan evacuated in 1941.

In May 1942 near Barvenkovo, Kharkov region, our troops were encircled. I and my friend Zhenia Lerner were taken prisoners by the Germans. In June 1942 we ran away. For eight months we wandered around, living in hiding. In January 1943 in Voronezh region we were liberated by the Soviet Army.

Zhenia and I had to go through an investigation. It was a war and we had been in the rear of the enemy for eight months. We were in a few holding centers and got stuck in Yelets due to typhoid. In April 1943 we came to a big holding camp in Podolsk near Moscow. We stayed in a barrack. We were interrogated by an investigation officer. We told him about our adventures. They were checking every part of our story thoroughly. After some time I received a certificate confirming that I went through the investigation successfully.

After this investigation was over Zhenia and I got a short leave. We went to my parents in Kuibyshev where they were in evacuation since August 1941. I didn't recognize my father and mother at the railway station in Kuibyshev so old they had grown. They spent eight months without having any information about me.

In October 1943 Zhenia and I got an assignment to the NKVD authorities. I was sent to Kizil, in Perm region, to a camp for German, Romanian, Italian, Czech and Hungarian prisoners-of-war. I was appointed as chief of the sanitary unit. Zhenia was with me.