

Samuel Eirus' Mother And Her Brother



This photograph was taken in 1924 in Tartu. It shows my mother and her brother Mulya. It is written on the reverse side 'To my dear sister Alexandra'.

My Mom told me about her childhood very little. Her family lived in the town of OPOCHKA. [OPOCHKA is situated 130 km far from Pskov.] Her mother had got 3 children: 2 girls and a boy.

I know nothing about the way my mother and her relatives got to Estonia. I was born in Tartu where my father and mother lived at that time.

I think that they lived there for a rather long period of time: my mother's husband and her brother Mulya, for example, played together in the orchestra - I guess it means that the family settled down for good in Tartu.

During the war in evacuation Rose (wife of Mulya, my mother's brother) and her little daughter Raya lived with us for some period of time. Raya was about 4 years old at that time.

At first they were evacuated to Kara-Kalpakia [autonomy of Uzbekistan]. Rose's surname was Vareyatova (the surname of my mother's brother and my mother's maiden name). Rose's husband perished at the front line. Raya was ill. They corresponded with us and Mom invited them to us (to Bashkiria).

After the end of the war Rose and Raya returned to Estonia.

I do not remember how old was Rose at that time, but we were in touch with her, we corresponded. She often visited us together with Raya.

In fact it was not a problem to go to Estonia from Leningrad: we used to go there by bus (no visa was required, because Estonia was of one of Soviet Republics). Much later when Rose died, we attended her funeral...

We were in touch with Raya for a long time. She married a Russian guy, they had got 2 children. The boy's name was Igor and I do not remember the girl's name. Raya's surname was Zhanzharova.

When everything was balled up [Perestroyka in Estonia, Estonians started oppressing communists and Russians and people wanted to run away from Estonia. A lot of them arrived in Russia. But Raya had got friends abroad and decided to leave for Canada together with her children.

Unfortunately she suddenly died from heart attack. We attended her funeral together with my brother, who is in Israel now. But Raya's children did left for Canada. We lost touch with them...

Much later my brother's daughter found them through the Internet, they corresponded and already visited Raya's children in Canada!