

## Olga Bernstein's Brother Matvey Bernshtein



My brother Matvey Bernshtein. This photo was taken on the occasion to his promotion to a higher rank. Matvey is wearing a uniform of Soviet officer. Kandalaksha town of Rostov region, Russia, year 1950.

My older brother Matvey Bernstein was born in 1915. When he grew older my parents sent him to a Jewish kindergarten across the street from our home. We all went to this Jewish kindergarten. At the age of 8 Matvey went to a Jewish school in Kiev. After finishing the 7th grade Matvey went to study in a school of economics and became an accountant. Matvey made a quick career. He became chief accountant at the age of 19-20. He supported us and I remember that we bought a sofa and a wardrobe before the war. This was thanks to my mother and brother. Many people couldn't afford these at the time. In 1939 my brother went to serve in the army. He went to the army at the age of 24. There was an order issued by Voroshilov about privileges to those who didn't have a father and whose mother was their dependent that they could go to the army at the age of 24. He turned 24 in 1939. He went to serve in Strii town [about 600 km from Kiev] in

Western Ukraine. In 1941 the Great Patriotic War began. So he went to the front from there.

Matvey corresponded with us during the Great Patriotic War. In 1944 after liberation of Ukraine my brother wrote us to where we were in evacuation that he was sending us a document allowing us to go to Kharkov [500 km from Kiev], where he was chief of the planning department of his regiment. He also gave us money for this trip through a captain. Of course, this captain never showed up and we never got this money and then my brother mailed this letter to us. He met us in Kharkov. In Kharkov my brother received an apartment where my mother, my sister and her daughter and I lived with him. A few years later my mother and I moved out. Matvey was a captain at the end of the war and continued his service as a professional military. He met a Russian girl from Moscow at the front. Her name was Anastasia. He married her after the war. My mother didn't mind. They had three nice kids. My brother served in Kandalaksha Rostov region and his last location was in Slavinsk Donetsk region, 500 km from Kiev. He was chief financial in a military registry office. He would have been eager to move to Kiev upon demobilization, but he didn't have an apartment so he stayed to live where he had been on service. My brother died of ulcer in 1972, when he was 57. His children moved to Germany in the 1990s. They are wonderful people. It's a pity I've lost contact with them. Matvey's wife Anastasia died in Slavinsk in the 1980s.