

The Interviewee And His Father



In 1945 I got to know that Dora Isaacovna, my stepmother, the second wife of my father died. When I got to know about it, I was urgently granted leave of absence and went to my father in Chapaevsk. I spent with him one week in February 1945 and had this photo taken in some photo-studio.

My father's name was Moissey Boris. He was born in 1899 in Melitopol (Ukraine), if I am not mistaken. My mother's name was Millerman Anna Naumovna. She was born in 1901.

After the revolution of 1917, in 1920s my father worked in GPU (State Political Department) as an investigator (he was a lawyer); and my Mum worked as a typist and a secretary in our soviet revolutionary bodies.

When the White Army soldiers came to Kherson (where she lived and worked at that time), she was arrested. She was kept in prison and was sentenced to death. Later the White Guard members were dislodged, she was released from the prison, and my father got acquainted with her holding an investigation. They got married in 1921 or 1922.

My father had no juridical education. He studied at the Aircraft Engineering College in tsarist Russia, but did not graduate from it. We have his photo in pilot's uniform: civil, not military.

After the revolution of 1917 he studied at some juridical courses and later worked as a legal adviser at different institutions. My mother only finished school, because in 1917 she was 16 years old - and reorganization of the country already started. She worked as a typist, and after her marriage she did not work, she was a housewife.

My father and my mother were not religious, because they were brought up and lived among Russians. My mother knew Yiddish. Both my father and I did not. I understand Yiddish a little, because I knew German well. We did not speak Hebrew at all.

My grandmother left, and members of our family started speaking only Russian. Among those relatives of my fathers, whom I was acquainted with, only uncle Abram was extremely religious, in contrast to my father's brothers and sisters.

My Mum died very young in 1935 in Kerch. After the death of my mother I remained with my father. Several years later he married a Jewess; her name was Dorah Isaacovna Shuster (probably later she changed her surname for Lesman). Her family members also did not celebrate any religious holidays.

We lived in Kerch. Dorah Isaacovna was very nice to me. She died very young from blood cancer in Chapaevsk, where they were evacuated together with my father. [Chapaevsk is a small city in Samara region. From the beginning of 1920s they produced there chemical weapon, for example, mustard gas. The production process was not accompanied by any sanitary actions, and resulted in monstrous pollution of environment.

Practically, the city became unsuitable for life; however manufacturing was not closed. They had to replace all employees of the factory approximately every three months. Three months period was enough for a healthy man to become an invalid. At present in Chapaevsk they produce explosives. The situation with sanitary norms did not change a lot, and half of the citizens suffer from oncological diseases. The city is recognized to be a zone of ecological disaster ([http: // www.svoboda.org](http://www.svoboda.org)).]

After the end of the war my father worked in Simferopol (Crimea) in regional consumers union. [Simferopol is a large city in the south of Crimea.] He was an extremely good lawyer - even Moscow lawyers invited his suggestions. He died at the age of 96 in Leningrad. All his life he lived in Crimea and only his last five years he spent here. He died in 1995.

Before war my father worked as a civilian legal adviser at a military training ground, which was based near Kerch. As my father was not subject to call because of his disease, in 1941 he together with his wife and child was evacuated to Chapaevsk of Kuybyshev region. [Kuybyshev is a city in Urals, Samara at present.]