

Basia Gutnik's Father Grigory Gutnik



My father Grigory Gutnik. This photo was taken in Kiev in 1940. My father, who was born in 1904, studied at a commercial school and worked at various places. After their wedding in 1926, he and mama lived with my maternal grandparents. I was born in 1928. During the famine of 1933, Papa worked at the creamery. He used to bring us butter, soap and sunflower seed husk to burn in the stove. We exchanged the soap and butter for bread and flour. Papa was a very devoted son. He used to visit his parents every day. He also supported them. He gave money to my grandmother to go to Essentuki to cure her liver. Once, grandfather was in a car accident and was taken to the hospital. When the doctor asked him whether he needed crutches he replied proudly 'Here are my crutches - one son and another'. He was very proud of his sons. My father and mother lived with my mother's parents, and since her father was religious, they observed all the Jewish traditions and

celebrated holidays. But my father didn't do this because of religious conviction, but so that he would not hurt his father-in-law's feelings. He loved to read, and read fiction, scientific, and philosophical literature, and discussed it with his brother and sisters. My parents and I celebrated the Soviet holidays - on the 1st of May we attended the parade and then went into the woods. When the war began my father was not subject to recruitment. He went to build fortifications in the outskirts of Kiev. .In 1941 Papa got a job at a military plant. Then he said he was ashamed to be in the rear any longer. In 1942 he received a subpoena to appear at the recruitment office in Mineralniye Vody. Maria and I went to see him off to the recruitment office. Mama and grandmother were hysterical and stayed at home. Papa perished in Poland in 1944. P