

Alter-Girsh Bunin With His Family



This is my maternal grandfather, Alter-Girsh Bunin, with his family.

The picture was taken in Bishkek, in 1943.

This is my grandfather, all his eight daughters and their children in evacuation. Grandfather's daughter Rosa with her husband Nikolai Amurov took in all her sisters and her father.

We lived like that during the whole Great Patriotic War. I can't say who is who in the picture.

By the summer of 1941 Mother's sister Rosa and her husband worked in Kyrgyzstan after graduation from the First Medical Institute. They immediately sent us some money and an invitation to come to their place, Bishkek station.

Since Grandfather was old and sick, we were afraid to take him with us in such hot weather, so I went together with Mother and left Grandfather in that house in Zavoronezh.

After long transfers on different trains we came to Bishkek, to Aunt Rosa and her second husband, Nikolai Amurov. Mother immediately found a job as an economist at the railroad, but from the very first minute understood that she couldn't allow herself to be intimidated as the wife of an 'enemy of the people,' so she wrote in the questionnaire that she had been a widow since 1936.

Mother worked as an economist-planner during the evacuation at the Railroad Administration in Kyrgyzstan.

In October 1941 all our relatives from Leningrad came to visit us in Kyrgyzstan: Aunt Maria, Aunt Hanna and Aunt Pasha. Eshka had her preliminary diploma practical work in Kazan, so she and her daughter joined us later.

All husbands of my mother's sisters served in the army and stayed in besieged Leningrad during the blockade. Only Aunt Hanna's husband, Solomon Kaplan, was a civil engineer and worked at a plant during the blockade.

There were eighteen people in the two-room apartment of my aunt Rosa: the eight Bunin sisters, their eight children, Grandfather, who came later, and a distant relative of one of my aunts, who kept our household.

We lived in harmony like that during the whole war, helping each other. All children went to school. That's all I remember about wartime.

Starting from 1944, at the end of the war, my aunts began to receive invitations from their husbands and returned to Leningrad.

In 1945 Mother was assigned to work in liberated areas, in the town of Brest, where she worked as head of the planning department of railroad restaurants until her retirement age in 1959.