

Michael Aronovich



This is a picture of my husband Michael Aronovich during his military service in Briansk in 1940. The photo was taken to be sent to his parents, Haskel and Charna Aronovich. My husband was born to a worker's family in Kiev in 1921. His family didn't observe any Jewish traditions. His father Haskel Aronovich was a communist and sincerely believed in Lenin's ideas. His mother Charna - she called herself Tsylia - was a housewife. Michael went to the army after finishing school in 1939, was at the front during the war and was awarded orders and medals. After the war he served in the occupying forces in Austria, Germany and Romania. He demobilized in 1947 and was admitted to the Faculty of Technology at my college. I liked Michael. He was a tall and strong man. He wore his military uniform and coat with the shoulder straps removed, like many other guys that returned from the front. About 1948, during the period of anti-Semitic campaigns and the struggle against

cosmopolitans, my husband changed his name to Michael. He said that he wanted his children to have a common patronymic to have fewer problems in life. We had the same group of friends for a long time. Michael and me spent time together, but we never talked about a closer relationship. We didn't face any anti-Semitism. We only read about 'enemies of the people' in newspapers and we never doubted anything published officially by the mass media. I met my future husband at the college. However international my views were I wished to marry a Jewish man, although I didn't observe any Jewish traditions at the time. In summer 1950 I went to attend a traditional meeting of fellow students in Kiev. I met with Michael in Kiev and we realized that we were in love with each other. We spent several days going for walks and kissed in the parks, but then I had to go back to work. We corresponded for a year and in summer 1951 Michael came to see my parents in Makeevka to get their consent to our marriage. A month later we had a civil ceremony at the registry office in Makeevka. My mother made me a fancy dress of crepe de Chine, and Michael's parents bought him his first suit. We could only afford to buy one ring - for me. We didn't have money for a ring for Michael, and, besides, men didn't wear wedding rings since they were considered to be a vestige of the bourgeois past. We had a small wedding party. We didn't have a Jewish wedding. We just invited our close relatives and friends.