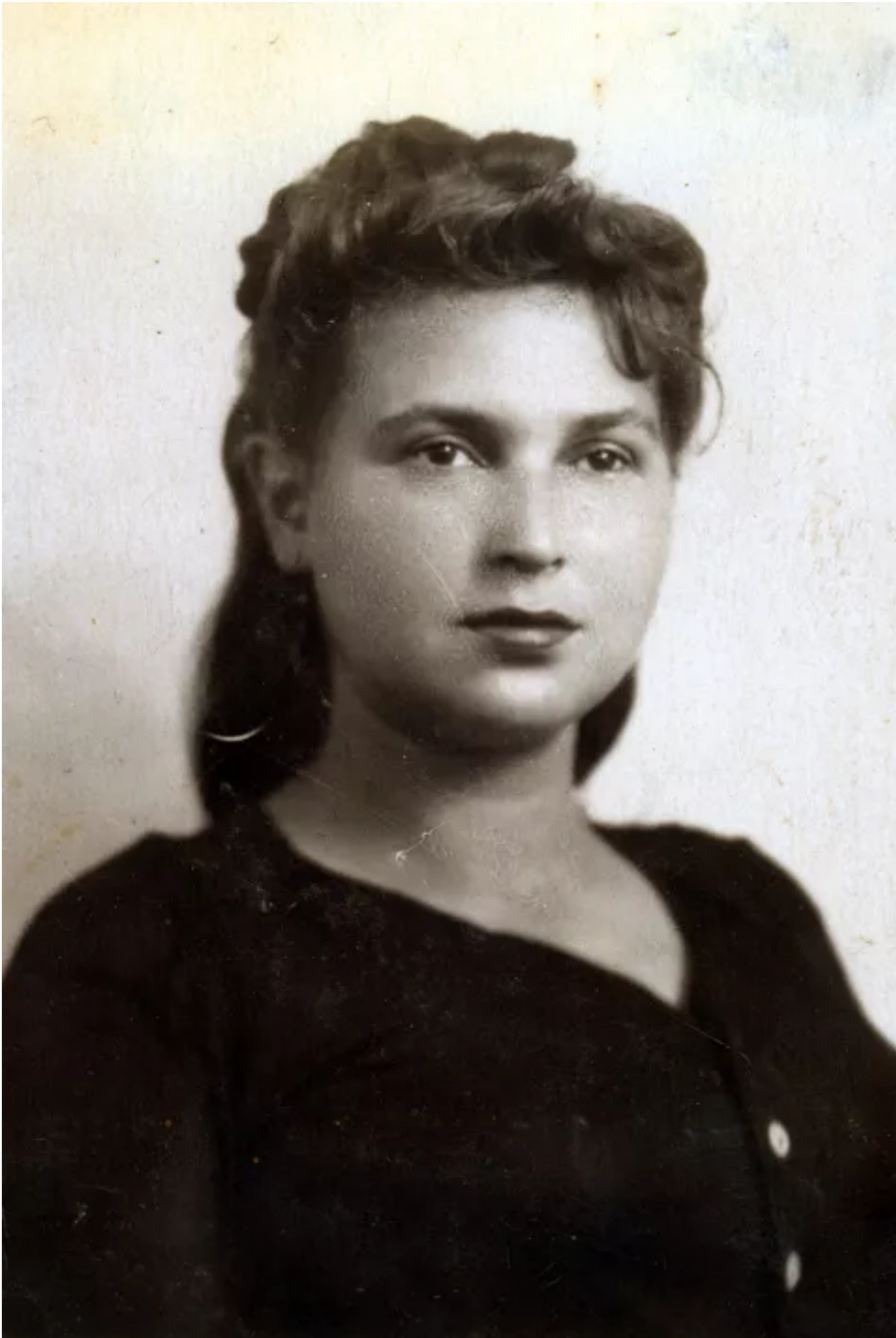


Irina Voinova



This is a photograph of me taken in 1952. I was 26 years old at the time and worked at the 'Svetlana' plant as a lathe turner. I tucked the collar in and was photographed like that. It was the photo for the plant's 'board of honor.' My photo was always hung there, as I was a good worker and completed my job ahead of schedule. In the winter of 1942, I was evacuated to Barnaul. They transported us in cattle cars -- these were goods wagons with plank beds. We probably traveled for two months, if not more. The day after our arrival we were stripped of our clothes: they took away our greatcoats and new boots that had been distributed to us in the vocational school. In exchange they gave us quilted jackets -- we called them something unprintable! -- and boots with wooden soles. In Barnaul, we produced bullets. I worked as a turner. In Barnaul the temperature was minus

40 degrees centigrade. Everybody's hands and legs were frostbitten. When we stayed at the workshop overnight we would hide somewhere under a short flight of stairs to sleep. We were paid salaries for our work. It was quiet in Barnaul, it didn't feel as if there was a war on. People went about their daily lives. For some reason boys ran and sold water in glasses, a glass cost 10 kopecks. It was a hard life, but sometimes we arranged parties in barracks, sang, danced. We were young, we were only 15 to 20 years old. We arrived in Leningrad in January 1945. The war was still on, but the blockade had been already broken. When I got there, my aunt had already left and our flat was occupied by someone else. I had nobody. I spent the first night at the Moscow railway station. And then I was taken to the flat by Roza Mutovkina ? my girl-friend, with whom I escaped from Barnaul. Up to 1948 I lived in a hostel, and in 1948 those who wanted were given little rooms in wooden Finnish houses in Levashovo [near Leningrad]. From there we commute quite a distance each morning to get to the plant, but on the other hand I had my own quarters. I got married and gave birth to two children there, and the four of us lived in this little room.