

## Naum Bitman's Father



My father Shyka Bitman, born in 1905, photographed in Kiev in 1945 near our building. My father was in the army at the time.

Mamma met my father during one of such komsomol trips. It might have never come to going out with him, had he not been insistent and even rude. Mamma was dating a Jewish boy at that time. My father met him once and said: "If you keep coming here I will cut off your head". That guy stopped coming, and in the end my mamma married my father. Neither her sisters and brothers nor my grandmother could treat him as member of the family. He was different. He was Jewish, of course, but different. It was a tragedy for my mother.

My father was born in 1905 in Belopolie village in Ukraine. His name was Shyko Noiyahovich, his last name was Bitman. He came from a family of working people. But his parents had passed away by then. His father had been a carpenter, he had worked in the cultural center "Pischevik".

My parents got married in 1936 and they were living in our apartment. Older sister Asia had already been married by then. Mother and father were living in a 12-meter room. I was born in 1937 and there were three of us sharing that little room.

Before we left Frunze my father got a vacation and went to Frunze to visit us. We were not there at the time. Father demobilized in 1945. He was in the construction unit in the army. He didn't talk much about the war. Once, when I was grown up, he told me that went across the whole country

and abroad during the war. But he didn't participate directly in combat action. He had common awards like any other participant of the war: "For the Victory over Germany", etc.

Father was in the army for some time in 1945. I remember him coming home riding a horse. We even have a picture of him on a horseback. After demobilization from the army he returned to work in the club of food workers where he had worked before the war. Later he worked in commerce and then - at a gas station.

My father died rather early, in 1964. Mamma wasn't working by then After my younger brother was born she became a housewife. Grandmother Haiya that couldn't come to terms with my father. she lived just few weeks longer than my mother and also died in 1964.