

Rahil Shabad With Her Friends



This is I having practice in Vyshniy Volochek. The picture of my friends and me was taken in the yard of the hospital by our fellow student Sasha Voronezhskiy. The picture was made in 1941. I am sitting to the right. My friend Liza Neslavskaya is next to me. Other girls are Zina Bakhareva and Nastia Kozina. Having graduated school I decided to enter medical institute. I was an active member of society. I was very diligent and exigent. If I was given a task I strove to fulfill it no matter what impediments might arise. I made up my mind to become a doctor because mother's health was feeble and I hoped that I would be able to help her get better. There was a tough competition in Moscow Medical Institute. I did not enter the institute like many other entrants. I went to Kursk and entered Medical Institute there. The institute was newly founded, viz. 2 years. It was in the premise of former prison. I lived in the hostel. I was keen on studies. Student's life appealed to me. In a year and a half I got ill. My elder brother Evsey came and took me to Moscow. In a year I transferred to Moscow Medical Institute, but I was in the first year again. Remarkable people, best doctors of the country, great scientists taught us medicine. They did not only teach us mere medicine, they nurtured good human qualities in us, to be responsible for our actions. Consequently I worked in Moscow municipal committee of the peoples' control before it was reformed and my boss once said that I would become a good attorney as I fought for the justice and the right cause. I told: "I would not make a bad doctor either". We were taught to write the history of the patient thinking that a criminal investigator was behind us. We were very responsible for our actions. There were Jews in the institute but we did not cluster together by national groups. We chose friends by interests. In 1941 I finished 4 courses of the institute and had practice in Vyshniy Volochka together with 10 girls. I clearly remember the outbreak of war, on the 22nd June of 1941. It was a warm sunny day boding no tribulation. We went swimming to the river. When we were on the way back from the beach we heard on the radio (there were loud-speaker outdoors)

that the war was unleashed. We immediately began to think what to do. We went to the chief doctor of Vyshniy Volochek. He told us: "It's up to you", he did not have time to bother with us. Then we decided that it was time for us to come back to Moscow. It was hard and painstaking to get to Moscow. We turned grown-up swiftly being serious and sensible. The roads were crowded with people carrying children and their things, we understood that it was a calamity. When we came back to Moscow, our institute had been already evacuated. Our documents were scattered around the institute building. It was October 1941. We started looking for the documents and managed to find them. It was written in our documents that each of us was a doctor, having finished only 4 courses, but not a full course of studies. I and my brothers Evsey and Naum came to the military enlistment office and voluntarily joined the Soviet Army. Naum was in the artillery troops and in 1942 he was killed in action in the bounds of Kerch. Evsey was sent to tank troops.