

## Pessya Sorkina



This photograph was taken in 1928 and I do not remember where. It shows me at the age of 14.

My father had got four sisters: two of them lived in Boychekovo [Belarus], one of them in Vitebsk, and the fourth one in Riga. I knew two of them who lived in Boychekovo and a sister who lived in Vitebsk. But I know nothing about his sister from Riga: at that time we did not visit them, because Riga was abroad, not Soviet.

One of my uncles, my mother's brother lived in Sverdlovsk [founded in 1781, now Ekaterinburg, an administrative center of Sverdlovsk region], another one lived in Mogilev [a city in Belarus], her third brother lived here in St. Petersburg. My mother's younger sister lived in Moscow. And her elder sister got married and left for America, when I was a little girl. Now I am very sorry that I know nothing about her family. My niece (she is a teacher of English language) comes to my place and reproaches me: 'You do not know their address!' You see, I worked at a secret military factory, therefore it was impossible for me to correspond with a person from America. I had their photographs, but we hid them somewhere: at that time we were afraid that NKVD officers would come suddenly: you know, the age was gravid. At present I cannot find their photographs... I guess, they have already died, and their children, too. Unfortunately I do not remember their surname.

I told you already that Daddy had got four sisters. Two of them lived in Boychekovo and I knew them. Germans dug them alive during the war. Those Daddy's sisters decided not to leave Boychekovo for evacuation, because during the World War I (in 1914) German soldiers were billeted on Boychekovo (and in their house, too). Daddy's sisters thought that Germans in 1941

would be analogous to those ones, but it was a mistake. We never saw them after the end of the war.

One of Daddy's sisters was evacuated from Vitebsk [now Belarus] to Perm [the city was founded in 1723]. I knew that Daddy's sister, we were in touch with my cousin brother and sister (her son and daughter) for a long period of time. I guess they have already died.

The 4th father's sister lived in Riga. Together with other Jews they were burnt in the local synagogue. I was not acquainted with her (Riga was abroad), but I know her son. We correspond with him (he is my cousin!). He was the only son of that Daddy's sister who survived (he was evacuated). The others: brothers, sisters - all of them were burnt in that synagogue. But I did not know them. When my brother was sent to Riga, I started visiting it frequently.

Now my cousin lives in Israel. Recently he called me from Israel and congratulated on the occasion of the New Year.

One of my mother's brothers lived in Sverdlovsk, another one in Mogilev, the 3rd one lived here in Leningrad and died during blockade. One of mother's sisters lived in Moscow. Another sister lived in America (she left there before the beginning of the war).

My mother's brother (who died during the blockade) had got three sons (my cousins). The elder son was a schoolboy. They left the city for evacuation across the Ladoga Lake by a truck and he froze to death, because he was hungry. And the rest children (a girl and a boy) managed to evacuate. By now they are about eighty years old. The boy left for America, Ohio State. And his sister processed all the necessary documents, but did not go for some reason. Last year she visited her brother in America. She regrets that she has not left for America: it's good to live there for elderly people (she says).