

David Epshteyn



This is my father David Epshteyn. The picture was taken in Tallinn in 1939. My father was born in 1894 in Tallinn. There was a Russian lyceum in Tallinn. It was called Nikolayevskaya after the Russian Tsar. Father and his siblings finished that lyceum. Father obtained higher education at Berlin University. He graduated from the Medical Department, then he went through internship in urology. Upon graduation from the university my father had to confirm the diploma, issued in Germany. He was supposed to pass exams in the Medical Department of the University in Yuriev - now the city of Tartu. It was called Yuriev in Tsarist Russia. As soon as Father passed the exam, he was entitled to practice medicine on the territory of the Russian Empire. My parents got married in 1924 in Tallinn. After getting married, Mother moved to Tallinn from Narva. My parents rented an apartment on Suide Street. When I was born, our family moved to a four-room apartment in a two-story house on Kaupee Street in the center of Tallinn. Our family lived there until the outbreak of the Great Patriotic War. We left for evacuation from that house. I was born on 23rd February 1930.

I was named Liya. Father worked as a urologist. Mother was a housewife. It is not known to me whether when being a student Father was a member of any Zionist organization, but he was a convinced Zionist. Father contributed money as an aid to Palestine, and in 1933, Father, the husband of his sister Berta, and his relative David Gofstein went to help build Palestine for three years. It was not a duty or an order. Father thought it was a matter of honor to help Palestine. Jews from all over the world built Tel Aviv. Father, Roubinovich and Gofstein also took part in its construction, though by that time they were good experts in their field and respectable married men. We had a large four-room apartment. Father made a lot of money, so we were well-off. Mother often went abroad with some of our relatives. My parents did not buy expensive furniture. They were not inclined to buy things, which were too conspicuous. In 1939 Father bought a car. At that time it was a rare thing, but he did it to please Mother. Besides, he had to visit patients at night at times, and so a car was very handy. On weekends we went out of town and spent time at the coast and in the forest.