

## Yakov Honiksman



This is me as a graduate of Kuibyshev Pedagogical College. The photo was taken in Kuibyshev in 1942 for documental submittals. On 1st September 1939 World War II began. On the same day our town was bombed. My mother said that I had to get away. My friends and I decided to leave. We formed a group of 20-30 people and started moving to the east. We were planning to cross the Bug River to get to the Soviet Union. When the Great Patriotic War began in 1941 I went to evacuation. I heard there was a barge from Chistopol' to Kuibyshev I got on this barge. The only luggage I had was a suit that I put in my case. I put this case under my head to sleep on it. When I woke up in the morning I didn't find either the case or the suit there. When I reached Kuibyshev I remembered that this was one of the 24 towns in which I wasn't allowed to reside. When the barge was nearing the harbor I jumped off to avoid document control officers. I decided to find the Pedagogical College.

The Pedagogical College was located at 65, Stepan Razin Street. There were a few people unloading books and I decided to join them. I worked a little and addressed their supervisor. I said I was hungry and he sent me to their canteen where I had a bowl of soup and returned to work. We worked until evening. This same supervisor sent me to Nadia, the manager of their hostel. Nadia accommodated me in a room where I was alone; other students were still on vacation. The next day I went to work again. Then I went to get registered at the college. They admitted me to the third course. I unloaded books until the academic year began and had meals at the canteen. There was only one thing I didn't like: this supervisor Nadia came to my room every night. She was about 30 and I was 19. She was a beautiful woman, but I had other things to think about. I became a student. I got a residence permit to live in this hostel even though I had a 'category 24' passport and wasn't allowed to live in Kuibyshev. They stamped my passport along with other passports without taking a closer look. Students received 400 grams of bread per day. I became deputy editor of our students' newspaper, even though my Russian was poor. I shared my ideas with the editor, a student of the Faculty of Biology, and he wrote the articles.