

Ilya Iosivich Shif



This is my Dad, Ilya Iosifovich Shif. He was born in 1904 in Minsk. From 1911 until the Revolution [1917] he studied in a Jewish school in Minsk. From 1920 till 1926 he worked in Minsk as a worker. In 1926 he moved to his elder brother's in Leningrad, where he worked as a metalworker at the Metal plant and later was an accountant at the same plant. That's where he met my mother. During the war my father went to the front as a private. He served on the Leningrad front. Their unit was surrounded, and for several months they tried to break through this encirclement. Father told me about brutal fighting, especially with the Finns, during which our badly uniformed, poorly armed forces sustained great losses. Father got along very well with his fellow soldiers and officers. Though he was just a private in a reconnaissance unit, he was a rifleman. He got wounded and was sent to the rear ? to a hospital in Sverdlovsk. When he was released from hospital he came back to

Leningrad and somehow got a pass so that my mother and I could also return from Chkalovskaya region (where we had be evacuated). So in June 1944 Mom and I got back to Leningrad. After the war my dad worked as a director of a 'Lentextiltorg' shop.