

Haya-Fanny Smolenski With Her Son, Boris Smolenski



This photograph shows my aunt, Haya-Fanny Smolenski, nee Heiman, and her son, Boris Smolenski. It was taken in Tallinn in the 1950s. Haya-Fanny, born in the 1880s, was my mother's third sister. Before the war, she, her husband, Simon Smolenski, and their five sons lived in Tartu where they had a sewing workshop. Aunt Fanny could sew very well. After the war she lived in Tallinn with her youngest son, Boris, and worked as a cutter at a clothes factory. During the war three of the Smolenski sons were killed. Two of them, Meishe and Ammi, served in a fighter battalion [5](#) and died in the summer of 1941. Ruven Smolenski was a lieutenant in the Estonian Rifle Corps [6](#) and died in combat action on the Estonian island of Saaremaa in 1944. He was buried

there in a common grave. Immediately after the war, as soon as Aunt Fanny returned from evacuation with her youngest son, Boris - her husband Simon died in evacuation - she started her attempts to obtain permission to bring Ruven's body to Tallinn in order to have him buried in a Jewish cemetery according to Jewish tradition. She reached the top military authorities and obtained the permit. Among hundreds of dead people Aunt Fanny recognized her son by his special feature - a tooth, broken when he was still a child. Fanny's youngest son, Boris Smolenski, now lives in the USA and works as an engineer. Aunt Fanny died in Tallinn in the late 1960s.