

Leonid Potievskiy



This is my brother Leonid Potievskiy, photographed during the war, to have the photo sent to us; only he didn't know where we were and we saw this photo only after the war.

My brother Leonid studied in the Jewish school, in the same school where I went. He was very smart and he always tried to help our mother. At that time he preferred the company of other boys of his age and I had my own friends.

My brother finished school in 1939 and decided to become a cabinetmaker like Uncle Gedali. My brother was not subject to recruitment to the army since he was the only breadwinner in the family.

The Great Patriotic War came as a surprise to all of us. I had finished the 9th grade and was going to visit my uncle Gershl in Korosten. On 22nd June 1941 the war was declared and on the next day my brother Leonid was recruited to the army.

We didn't hear from Leonid from 1941 to 1945. We didn't know whether he was alive or had perished. We wrote to Malin from Yangiyul and got the response that there was no information about him.

Once in April 1945 I was at work on one of my first days when all of a sudden a little bird flew into the window. An accountant, an older woman, said, 'Tsylya, you'll hear good news.' In about half an hour our distant relative came to tell me that Leonid was back. I ran all the way home to see my brother.

There was a bunch of people at home – our neighbors came to see him, too. Our friends and acquaintances came to greet us on Leonid's return. He was wounded and then shell-shocked at the front. In April 1945 he was demobilized and came to Malin.