

Semyon Tilipman's Sister Ghenia Tilipman



This is my sister Ghenia Tilipman. This photo was taken in Odessa, in 1940.

Ghenia was born in 1924, in the apartment on the second floor of a two-storied wing in the yard in 84, Arnautskaya Street in Odessa. I remember when Ghenia was born. There is a Jewish traditional celebration of birth with lekakh mit bronfn [honey cake with vodka in Yiddish]. My mother made delicious lekakh. Our neighbors - the Kapel family, uncle Moisha and aunt Riva and uncle Meir came to celebrate. Ghenia was a long waited girl in the family. I also remember something else. Once our parents went to the theater and we, kids - I, my brother Fima and Ghenia, were at home. We put Ghenia to our mother's bed. Ghenia was about five years old. The wing of the house where we lived was old. A mouse or even a rat got into the bed and bit Ghenia on her temple. My brother Fima and I chased after it but gave up when it got between our wardrobe and the wall. A day later it was discovered in a small drawer in the samovar table where we kept spoons and forks. Ghenia had injections against rabies made, but everything turned out to be all right and she didn't even have a scar afterward.

Ghenia studied at school - it seems, it was school # 68. She studied well and was a nice girl. She read a lot. She studied to play the piano, but when she began to have cramps in her fingers she gave up her studies. Our parents bought her a piano, but there were termites in it and they sold it before the war. Ghenia had many friends, but I don't remember them. Ghenia finished school in 1941. During Great Patriotic War my parents and sister Ghenia perished in Domanevka camp for Jews in 1942. When I returned to our house after the war the neighbors gave me a card that Ghenia's friend wrote her from the front. I didn't even know that she had a young man who was writing her from the front.