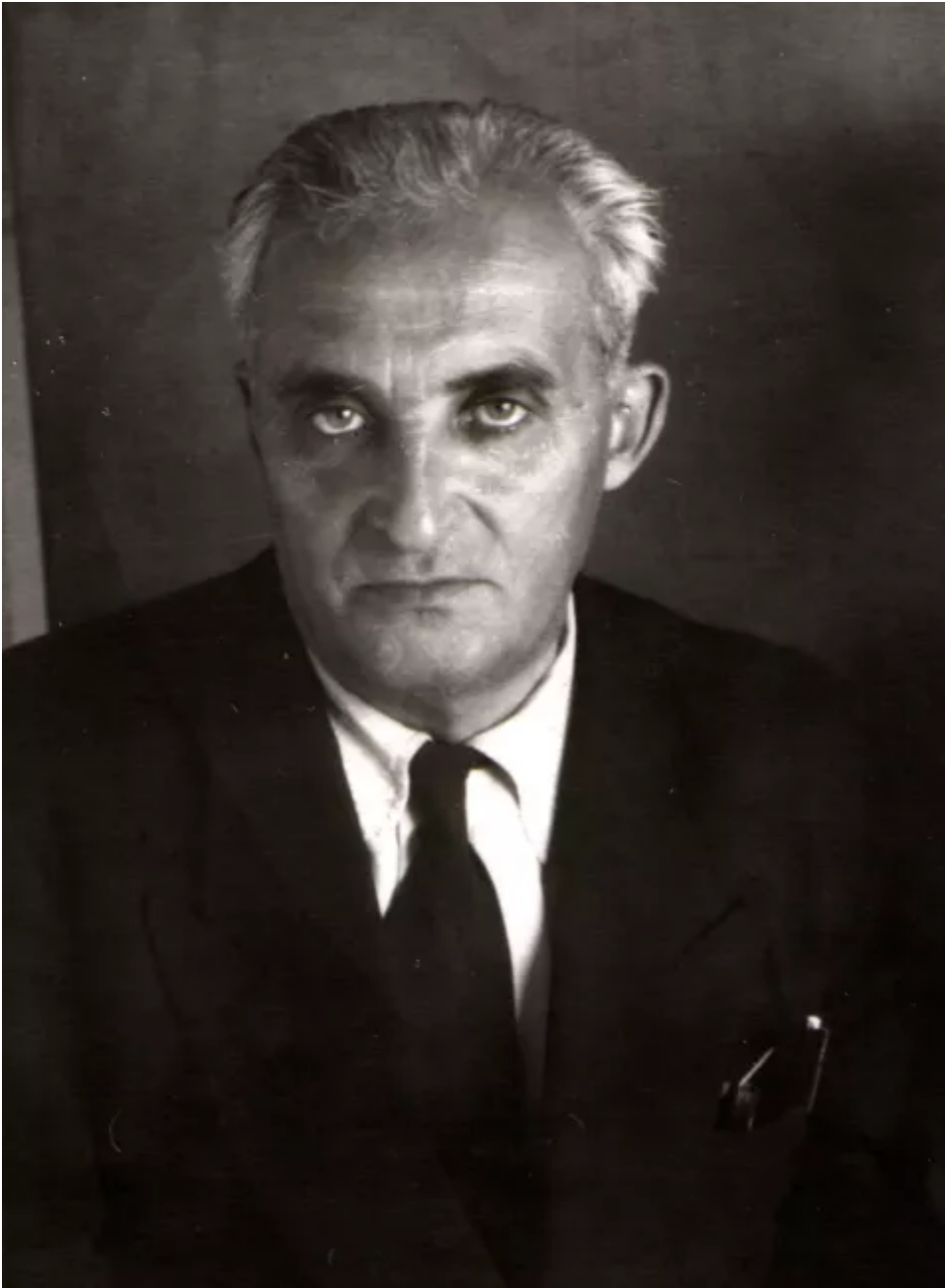


Semyon Vilenskiy's Father Samuel Vilenskiy



This is my papa Samuel Vilenskiy in 1955 in Moscow.

My father reached the biggest success in the forestry business in 1920-30s. After the Civil War my father was manager of the office responsible for restoration of the Eastern Siberian Railroad in Khabarovsk [about 6200 km east of Moscow]. My father worked in field offices moving from one location to another. My father often traveled to Moscow. I remember papa came to Moscow once a month and went to the Bolshoy Theater with my mother. In the 1930s my father worked as chief of the forestry department of the Ministry of Aviation Industry. Aircraft were manufactured from compressed wood at the time. My father was a brave man and had good organizational skills. At some time he was manager of the office dealing in external sales of wood: 'Les Eksport' [meaning Wood Export] in Arkhangelsk [about 1000 km north of Moscow].

In 1941 my mama was seriously ill, she had a mental disorder and had to stay in hospital. My father wanted to send me away from Moscow for the summer and he sent me to his acquaintance, whose Russian [Common] name was Polina Mikhailovna, or Perlia Mendeleyevna Cheushevskaya, this was her Jewish name, in May 1941. After my mother died in 1942 she became my stepmother, but my father and she only saw each other several times. This was a recreation center in the steppe near Orenburg. [about 1200 km southeast of Moscow]. She was director of this recreation center. On 22 June 1941 the war began.

Some time after the war my father and the Ministry of Forestry moved to Kuibyshev [about 800 km southeast of Moscow], and in 1943, after the turning point in the war, when it became clear that fascists would never come to Moscow, my father and his Ministry returned to Moscow. I stayed in the recreation center with my stepmother. I was 13, when the war began. My stepmother was eager to please me fearing that I might run away and then my father might leave her. In 1943 she was made responsible for organizing an evacuation hospital. It was slowly moving to the west till it joined the combat forces. She perished at the end of the war dragging a wounded military from a battlefield.

When I was arrested, in 1946 the management of aviation industry where my father was working, called him offering that he signed up a disavowal from his son. This was to be a pure formality, and my father could keep his job they said. My father asked for some time. He went to see his friends in the Ministry of Forest Industry and asked them to send him to the most distant and backward forestry. They sent him to Shakhun'ya in the very wilderness of Kostroma region, 500 km from Moscow where he became director. My father worked there till I returned to Moscow in 1955. My father took every effort to expedite my rehabilitation.