

Rebecca Schiff And Her Third Husband Ruvim Rubinstein



This is my mother Rebecca Rubinstein and her third husband Ruvim Rubinstein at the registration of their marriage. The picture was made in Tallinn in 1966.

Upon our return from evacuation my mother started working as a manicurist in the salon. My father died in the hospital on 19 December 1944. In 1946 mother got married. Her second husband Arthur Kartner was Estonian. He was a dictator, a very obstinate man, but faithful. He was really reliable and honest. Arthur never prevaricated. He was very decent man, but there were very few women who could live with him. He even washed dishes himself as it seemed to him that mother did it worse. He liked to put things in order in mother's purse.

In 1964 Arthur Kastner died. In 1966 mother got married once again. Her husband was a Jew Ruvim Rubinstein.. Mother was 60. Ruvim as almost 15 years older than she, but he looked good- tall, slender and brisk, with thick grey hair. He was a very handsome man with a good posture. Women liked him when he was old. Ruvim was very well educated and tolerant. My mother was his third wife. He got divorced twice. My mother was against divorces considering that a lady was entitled to get married only being a widow. She considered divorces to be even. This is the way she was brought up in her family.

Ruvim was born in Warsaw, Poland. His father was a very rich dealer. When he was conferred with the title of the merchant of the first guild, the family moved to Russia, Saint Petersburg. There were a lot of children in the family and all of them got a good education. Ruvim went to private lyceum, where the children of famous Russian people were studying. When Ruvim finished lyceum and wanted to continue studying at the university, he was not admitted. At that time there was admission quota for the Jews in higher educational institutions - 5% out of the total number of students. Ruvim went to Belgium and graduated from legal department of the university. He came back in Russia in 1917. Ruvim told that when the cabman took him home, they were stopped by policemen and told to take a bypass road from Nevskiy avenue. Ruvim asked the policemen what happened that he replied that there was some revolt. But it was October revolution ! Ruvim lived at

home for a bit, and then understood that he would not survive the new regime and left for Estonia. His family refused to immigrate from Russia. Ruvim did not know what happened to them. He began working as a lawyer in Tallinn. He did so well, that soon Ruvim purchased a large house in the center of Tallinn jointly with his companion. When soviet regime came to power, their house was seized. The funniest thing was that even after sequestration they still had to pay the house tax. Ruvim was not exiled. Maybe they merely did not have time. He was in evacuation during the war, and then he came back in Tallinn. After war soviet regime did not have any claims against him. He worked as a legal counsel until retirement. Of course, mother and Ruvim differed a lot, both from the point of upbringing, education and character, but sill they were happy together. Ruvim observed Jewish traditions and mother started lighting candles on Sabbath, mark Jewish holidays at home. On holidays mother and Ruvim went to the synagogue together and I also joined them for festive dinner.