

The Interviewee And His Son



In 1973 together with my wife we came to Severomorsk, where my son served at that time. We came there to celebrate his birthday and spent there 4 days. There we had our photograph taken. He was a junior lieutenant at that time.

In Kerch I served during one year (in 1947-1948), until they sent me back to Sevastopol and half a year later - abroad, to the Danube River.

Suddenly they called me and told that there came an order from Moscow to send me on Danube, to the Danube Military River Flotilla. 'Very good!' I got my documents and left for Izmil. [Izmil is a city on the Danube River near the Romanian border.]

After my arrival they said 'You go abroad for postwar creeping.' Danube was stuffed with mines: Germans dropped them, Russians dropped, Americans and French did it. It meant that Danube was completely unsuitable for navigation: mines were everywhere. As for me I was an experienced specialist in creeping:

I did it on the Black Sea and on the Azov Sea, too. On the Azov Sea I was blown up and thrown overboard, nearly died... And there it was necessary to creep all Danube long: through Germany, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, and Bulgaria. It was necessary to creep, and I was appointed for that job - I do not know for what sins or battle services.

We were in the process of training for about a month, our commander estimated our achievements, taught us the way to behave (you know, in the USSR authorities always taught people how to behave), etc. And we started: from Germany to Bulgaria twenty two times! That means that we shuttled over each area 22 times, because Germans made special magnetic mines, which reacted only to the 22nd pass of a ship: the first ship passed by - nothing happened, the second one passed - nothing happened, and only the 22nd one caused explosion.

That means that twenty one ships could pass over that dangerous place safe, and the 22nd one had to be lost. That is why we moved there and back over every area 22 times, and then passed on

to the next one - again and again along the whole river. Only after we finished, navigation was opened.

In Yugoslavia I managed to spend about 20 days in a hospital. In Novi Sad city there was a Hospital of Yugoslavian National Army - Hospital no.3. I caught cold, and had 22 furuncles and running temperature. I could not sit, lie down, I ate and slept upright. At first I was treated by our doctors, but it went from bad to worse, and they decided to send me to a hospital. They brought me there and left alone. I was placed in the officer's ward: 5 beds (4 Yugoslavs and me). But they loved us: 'Oh! Here is our friend captain!' I was a lieutenant commander (a captain). They spoke Russian a little, and I knew Yugoslavian a little.

I spent there about 20 days, and then my guys visited me and told me that they were going to leave for Vienna (Austria). 'What shall we do with you?' I answered 'It's enough, I am going to leave the hospital!' The hospital command did not object: I was a Soviet officer, they gave me a certificate of health and I left. But still I was sick. It lasted 2 months more, but not in a hospital. Therefore they gave me a holiday and I went to Simferopol, to my father's.

On April 30 I was already in Simferopol in the face of my father. May 1st was my birthday. At that time I got acquainted with my future wife - it happened in the House of Officers during some celebration. We got married when I returned home from abroad finally. In 1949 in Sevastopol our son was born.

Her name was Serafima Rabinovich, a Jewess. If I am not mistaken, she was born in Belarus (in Mogilev) in 1928, on 31st December.

I brought up my son not as a Jewish child. Of course he knows that he is a Jew, but it is not of great importance for him: he is a citizen of the Russian Federation. He is not religious at all; he does not know Jewish language and takes part in no Jewish events. He had no difficulties while entering college: he had passed examinations well and became a student of the Leningrad Electrotechnical College (faculty of Automatic Control Systems). As far as the College also prepares specialists for the Army (through the special additional military course for male students), having graduated in 1972, he was sent to the North Fleet. Three years he sailed on board a rocket warship as a chief of computer center, a lieutenant. He visited Cuba and Egypt. After that he became a civilian, he is a civilian now.