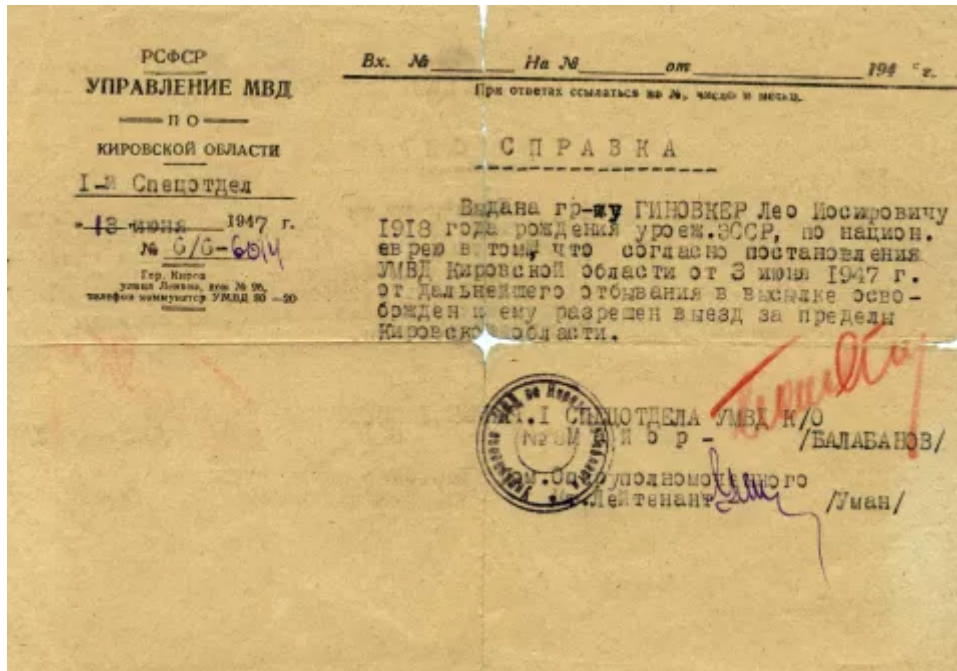


Leo Ginovker's Release Document From Deportation



This document was issued to me by the First Special Department of MVD (Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs), Kirov office, on 3rd June 1947. It says that I am released from deportation and allowed to leave Kirov region. Our whole family witnessed the arrival of the Soviet authorities in Tallinn in June 1940 [see Estonia in 1939-1940]. All our property - the factories, several houses, the shop, the boat, and cars - was nationalized at once, and radios were confiscated. One more family settled in our apartment. On 14th June 1941, at 2am, our doorbell rang. When we opened the door, a commissar and four soldiers carrying rifles came in. We were all told to get up and sit around the dining table, and the commissar read the decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Estonian SSR saying that our family was being resettled out of Estonia. In this decree and from that point on we were termed 'socially dangerous elements' because we owned private property and used hired labor. Afterwards we (me, my father, Max and Samson) were deported to Kirov region. We settled next to the town of Kilmez. Everyone was intimidated and afraid of being sent off to reformatory camps. Max, Samson and I got jobs as accountants in three different kolkhozes, but our father didn't work. We rented rooms; my father and I lived together. We worked under labor contracts; kolkhozes would give us some food, mainly vegetables. I remember constant hunger, but everyone suffered during the war. While in deportation, we didn't feel discriminated on grounds of our ethnicity because all the deported were equally deprived of civil rights regardless of ethnic origin. My brothers and I lived and worked in Kirov region until 1947. For good work, I was even awarded the medal 'For Heroic Labor'. This was the reason that I was given my certificate of release a few days earlier than my brothers. We had the right to settle anywhere in USSR except Tallinn.