

Anna Schwartzman With Her Daughter



This is a picture of me with my daughter, Charna Galkin [nee Schwartzman]. It was taken in Chernovtsy in 1964. Charna is 16 years old on this photo. I met my future husband, Iosif Schwartzman, a Jew, in evacuation. After the war we moved to Chernovtsy. Our daughter was born on 24th January 1947. We named her Charna. She gave my life a purpose. 1947 was the year of a terrible famine. I didn't enroll my daughter in a nursery because children were starving there. Of course we were starving as well. I had little milk, and she had to be put on formula early on. She ate hot serial and potatoes without butter but grew up a healthy, good child. I stayed at home with Charna until she turned 5. We had no one to help us, neither I nor my husband had parents any more. Charna never knew what grandparents are. I signed her up in a kindergarten and went to work for the Chernovtsy leather goods factory. I was hired as a lab assistant in a testing plant where new models of handbags were developed. My husband worked at the rubber shoe factory. We lived modestly. When Charna turned 8 she was enrolled in a Russian school. She had no Jewish friends at school and at university. She graduated from school in 1965 and started working as a teacher in a kindergarten while studying by correspondence in the English Department of the Romano-Germanic College at Kiev University. She graduated from university in 1971. I retired in 1979, and that same year my daughter got married. I don't know how and where she met her future husband, Nikolai Galkin. He was Russian and lived in Moscow. Charna moved there. Once a year she visited Chernovtsy. In Moscow she worked as a kindergarten teacher. She loved kids but didn't have any of her own. To my questions regarding her marriage, Charna's reply was always that everything was fine. Much later I found out from her girlfriend that her husband constantly beat her, and screamed that his Jewish wife had ruined his life. Unfortunately I only found this out after her death. She died from a heart attack in 2001. After her funeral and cremation in Moscow I took her ashes and buried them in the Jewish section of the cemetery in Chernovtsy. I had erected a tombstone on her grave. Next to Charna's name there is room for mine on this tombstone. There I will lie, beside my little girl, when it's my time.