

Sima-Liba Nerubenko's Husband Grigory Nerubenko



My husband Grigory Nerubenko. Photo made for the Board of Honor of the factory in Lvov in 1950s. I fell in love with Grigoriy Nerubanko, a Ukrainian young man when I was at the Institute Technological Institute in Kharkov. He came from a family of workers in Donbass. He was born in 1911 and he was a serious and positive young man - he had his objectives and knew what he wanted in life. He was a communist. He was successful with his studies and was well-mannered. His mother was a communist and his father died in an accident at the railroad when he was young. Grigoriy's mother raised four children. Grigoriy was an older son in the family and his mother hoped that he would help other children to get education upon graduation from the Institute. Grigoriy also fell in love with me. My parents were horrified to hear that I was meeting with a non-Jewish man. They said they would never accept him into the family. I graduated from the Institute in 1936 and got a job assignment of production engineer at a glass factory in the vicinity of Leningrad. Grigoriy had another year to study. Grigoriy was a man of his word and wanted to return to his mother upon graduation to help his family, but his mother knew that was seeing a girl and she said to him "Go to Sima - she is your happiness".

I graduated from the Institute in 1936 and got a job assignment of production engineer at a glass factory in the vicinity of Leningrad. In 1937 Grigoriy and I got married in Kharkov. I lived in the hostel, but when we got married we received a room. We were happy. We didn't have a wedding party. We had a civil registration ceremony at a registry office. I wore my fancy cambric dress and Grigoriy had his suit and a tie on. I took my husband's last name and became Sima Nerubenko. I informed my parents and brothers about this important event in my life. My brothers greeted me, but my parents wrote me that they were not going to recognize my husband and me with him. It was hard for me and I tried as hard as I could to come to find their understanding, but they were inexorable. For few years I communicated only with my brothers.

We lived in Leningrad a little less than a year. Grigoriy was getting promotions and was offered a more perspective job at the glass factory of the Krasny May town, Kalininskaya [Tverskaya at present] region. We received a nice one-room apartment at the building for non-manual employees of the factory. I worked as production engineer at the factory.

In 1938 my son Vladimir was born. I wished so much to take my son to my hometown. I decided to go there in 1939. On that summer all children came on a visit. My father wished Grigoriy had come. He said "It's O'K that he is not a Jew as long as he is good man". My husband couldn't come with me. He was in the army and took part in the Finnish campaign.

Of course, during the WWII I was in better conditions than other wives whose husbands were at the front and they had to evacuate from their homes. My husband worked all the time he could. There were weeks when he came home for few hours and returned to the factory. We received food packages and milk for children. In December 1944 Grigoriy got a job assignment in Lvov. He was offered to be manager of the construction of the factory of glass insulators. He went there immediately. I packed our belongings and children and I followed him.

My husband spent a lot of time at work - upon completion of the construction of the plant he became its director and worked there for many years. I was a housewife. In 1947 our third child Victor was born. I understand that we had a better life than many other families at that time. My husband held a high position and had a good salary. Grigoriy was a member of the party. He joined the Party during the great Patriotic War when many people were joining he Party. He wasn't a convinced communist, though, but he had to be one to make a career or he would never become director of a plant. He was a reserved and taciturn man and always tried to protect me from any troubles.