

Esfir Dener



The life story of Esfir Dener is quite an adventurous one, with hard periods and lucky escapes following each other. She was born in 1925 to a traditional Jewish family in Falesti. She recalls how central her grandfather was in her life, teaching him the importance of honesty, knowledge, and help of those who suffer, which guided her during her later years. When the Great Patriotic War began in 1941, Esfir Dener and her family had to leave their homes, and were deported to Siberia, where they were sentenced to 25 years in exile. After years of hard work in a saw-mill, Esfir managed to escape from the camp – she never saw her parents again. In the years following, Esfir lived in a constant fear that she will be caught; and in spite of her efforts to get false papers and change her surname through a marriage, she was found and arrested, and sentenced to three years of imprisonment in work camps. She was released in 1956. At the time of the interview, Esfir Dener lived in Kishinev, and nurtured a good relationship with her former colleagues and friends. She still believed that her legal passport is the most precious thing in her life.