

February, 2023

David Rakover. Isaak Kronfeld was my mother's father.

For many years my family was in the dark as to what exactly happened to their husband and father Isaak Kronfeld, after the night he was taken from their home in Kagul by NKVD (Soviet secret police) in 1940.

He was subsequently arrested, interrogated and convicted of state crimes based on trumped up charges. Years later the family learned (from one of his camp mates) that he died in the prison. In the 1950's he was rehabilitated postmortem, as many more others, who were the victims of Stalinist's repressive system.

It's only recently, after opening up of NKVD archives, a document detailing his arrest and interrogation came to light. I translated major parts of this document into English, so that younger generation of our family can learn more about those years of our history.

Bessarabia In 1940

On June 26, 1940 - the Soviet Union issued an ultimatum to Romania demanding the area of Bessarabia that was under Romanian's control be given up to the Soviets. Two days later Romania accepted the ultimatum and on June 28, 1940 Soviet's red army entered the area. What followed was a series of arrests and imprisonments among the local population of anyone deemed not to be reliable to accept Bolshevik ideology or based on a slanderous accusations or denunciation by one's neighbors or acquaints driven usually by desire to look favorably by the new administration or to be spared terrible fate of being a target of a secret police by making up evidence about others.

[Secret police archives opened in Moldova \(read the NKVD file on Isaak Kronfeld\)](#)

In December of 2022, my cousin Gary who recently visited Kishinev called me. He told me that (after Moldova became an independent country after the breakup of the Soviet Union) as part of getting on a road to

democratization and openness - NKVD (secret police archived) became available to the general public. While in Kishinev he actually stopped by the archival office and requested any documents related to the arrest and imprisonment of our grandfather Isaac Kronfeld, who was arrested shortly after Soviet army occupied the region of Bessarabia in 1940 after Romania accepted Russian ultimatum to give up this territory. As incredible as it sounds, the file detailing arrest and interrogation was released. After being arrested, interrogated and convicted of crimes on a trumped up charges, Isaak Kronfeld was imprisoned in 1940 and died at the age of 45 in the Siberian gulag with his family never seeing or hearing from him after the night he was taken from his family.

Picture of a family probably around 1938-39.

Place is Kagul (I think). From right to left: oldest daughter Klara, her father and mother Isaak and Manya Kronfeld, couple with the baby standing are Manya's sister Eva and her husband Saki and baby Miron (he is now probably over 80 years old, lives in Germany), standing girl is my mother Rimma (middle daughter), sitting are (probably) grandfather Mendel with his wife (not sure name), standing Manya's suster with husband Klara and Nuzu, standing next is sister Raya and next to them other siblings unfortunately I know no names. Little girl is the youngest daughter Luyca (my cousins Gary's and Emil's mom).

