

Nuchim Furman



This is my father Nuchim Furman. The picture was made in Siauliai in the 1920s.

My paternal grandpa, born in 1860s, was the merchant of the first guild. He lived with his family in Moscow. His name was Dovid Furman. I cannot recall grandmother's name. Dovid was a very wealthy man. He owned stores and he was somehow connected with Mikhail Ragalin. Father had only one brother Ilia. He reached 100 years old and died in Moscow in 1990s. During soviet time Ilia worked as an accountant in some soviet enterprise. I had been friends with his son Eduard. I went to Moscow with my wife and Eduard with his wife and two sons came to see us. Several years ago Eduard died having survived his father by less than a decade.

My father Nuchim was born in Moscow in 1890s. Upon graduation from lyceum, he became a merchant and started helping father. My parents got married in Moscow in 1915. Though, both families- father's and mother's were rather modern, the wedding was Jewish. Parents were wed in chuppah in the central Moscow synagogue. In 1916 I, Yakov Furman, the first-born came into the world. Lithuanian ending "as" was added to my last name when parents moved to Lithuania. When the revolution was about to start my sagacious parents did not think twice and moved in Lithuanian town Siauliai, where mother was born.

Upon return from Russia, my parents started living in grandpa's big house. Grandpa opened a large leather store, where father also was involved in business. In spite of good money in the family and prosperity, father felt himself a stranger. He grew up in Russian capital, where Siauliai. He had to go to synagogue like everybody did, but he was a modern and democratic man in his heart. Our

house was breathing with Jewish culture.

I was the first child in the family. In 1919 a girl Irina was born and in 1921 my younger brother Dovid was born. The house, where we were living, was very large. It was one-storied mansion, where grandparents, our and Meyer's family were living. We had all conveniences in the house, which was very rare. We had a toilet and a bathroom in a separate corridor. The water was pumped from the well and it was distributed between bathroom and kitchen. We had an expensive, nice solid furniture. I remember carved cupboard and a wardrobe, nice beds with the tester, sofas, a huge table with velvet cloth, pictures and Chinese porcelain vases. There was a large garden, where I spent my childhood. There was an orchard with apple, pear trees.. In summer and spring mother cooked jams, I still remember that sweet aroma which was felt in every room. There was also a husbandry -chicken and geese. Housekeeper took care of all chores, but at times we hired people for harvesting.