

Sarah And Samuel Blank



These are my parents, Sarah and Samuel Blank. The photo was taken shortly before my birth in 1910 in Gzhezhov. I cannot say anything about my parents' families. I didn't know my grandparents. Even if my parents told me something about them, it is dead and buried. I don't even know where my parents, my father, Samuel Blank, and my mother, Sarah Blank, were born. Our family lived in Poland, not far from the German border, in a town called Gzhezhov. It was a small town at that time. I just have scraps of memories from that period of time. I remember there were military barracks not far from our house. The soldiers sang beautiful songs in the evening. We were indigent. Father was a barber and his earnings were barely enough to scrape through. Mother was a seamstress. We rented an apartment in a dilapidated house, like most houses in our street.

We ate what we could find. Our family was not particularly religious. I don't recall any holidays and any traditions and rites connected with them. Sometimes, my parents went to the synagogue, probably on Jewish holidays. The children were not told about that. Father was to be drafted into the army with the outbreak of World War I. The most dreadful thing for him was not the feeling that he might be killed, but the feeling that he might kill someone. To avoid the army, Father started drinking some yucky potion that made his hands shake. He couldn't be mobilized with that ailment. Later, his hands didn't stop trembling. It wasn't as strong any longer, but didn't go away completely. Father adjusted somehow, and still worked as a barber. Mother raised the children and worked as a seamstress. She was a very intelligent lady. She had fine taste. I was the eldest child, born in 1910. I was namely Amalia, but at home they called me tenderly Mali. My sister Fanny was born in 1911 and my brother Solomon in 1913.