

## Amalia Blank And Her Family



This is our family picture. From left to right: I, my father Samuel Blank, my sister Fanny Blank, my mother Sarah Blank, my brother Solomon Blank. The photo was taken in Berlin in 1922. 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. 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. Jewish was spoken at home. Of course, we knew Polish. We went to a Polish school as there was no Jewish school in Gzhezhov. I finished two grades of elementary school there. In the 1900s and 1910s Jewish pogroms took place in Poland. Then the situation calmed down and then they started again in 1919. We lived on the border of Poland with Germany and Mother decided that we should run away there. I do not know how she managed to arrange for Father to cross the border, but he was the first from the family to do that. Then she had us go, and finally she crossed the border. Then we moved to Berlin, where we started a new life. I never returned to Poland. Only my parents spoke German, but I learned it very quickly. Soon I was so fluent in German that I could go to a German school.