

Rosa Gershenovich's Maternal Grandparents Avrum-Yankel And Ruhl Green



My mother's parents, Avrum-Yankel Green and Ruhl Green, on a photo taken in Odessa in the 1910s. My grandfather, born in the 1860s, had a beautiful voice and was a cantor. He got invitations from synagogues in different towns and was very popular wherever he sang. I don't know what family he came from, but he was a deeply religious man. He sang at the synagogue in Odessa in the last years of his life and died in Odessa in 1918. I was only 4 years old, but I can still remember my grandfather's voice. I never heard anything like that again. His wife, Ruhl Green, was about the same age as he. She was born in the 1860s and was a quiet, modest Jewish woman. She

always supported her children. After my father perished she moved in with us to give my mother an opportunity to go to work. She looked after me. She was a taciturn old woman. She wore long black gowns and covered her head with a shawl. Times were hard during the Civil War [6](#) and we didn't even have enough bread. My mother and grandmother exchanged our possessions for bread and milk for me. But even then my grandmother tried to observe Jewish traditions. She lit candles on Saturdays, prayed, and went to synagogue. We only spoke Yiddish in the family. This was the only language I knew as a child. My grandmother died in 1921 as quietly as she had lived. She went to bed and didn't wake up one morning. My mother buried her near my grandfather's grave in the Jewish cemetery in Odessa. I didn't go to the funeral, but stayed at our neighbor's. Regretfully, I was not able to find their graves after the war. My mother told me that my grandmother and grandfather had many children, but only three of them lived: my mother's older sister, Surah, born in 1875, and her brother Ershl, born in 1880. Surah lived in Rybnitsa, a small town in Moldavia, and Ershl lived in Odessa. We were very close with both of them. Surah was married to Ershl Shnaiderman, my paternal grandmother's brother. Marriages between relatives often take place in Jewish families.