

Bella Kisselgof And Her Mother Sofia Rivkina



This is a photo of my mother, Sofia Rivkina, and me, Bella Kisselgof. I was 2 years old when this photo was taken in Enakievo in 1938. My mother, Sofia Rivkina, was born in 1906 and died in 1992. I was born in 1936 in Enakievo. Before they moved there, my parents lived in Gorlovka, but not for long. They lived in a huge wooden barracks with many rooms on both sides of a long corridor. Mama worked as a typist in the Department of Mines, and my father had a job in logistics.

They got along well with their Russian and Ukrainian neighbors. Soon my parents moved from Gorlovka to Enakievo. Mama was a housewife and Papa worked at the headquarters of the 'Red Profintern' mine located in Verovka on the outskirts of Enakievo. We spoke Russian in the house. My parents switched to Yiddish only when they wanted to keep something a secret from me. During my grandparents' visits the adults communicated in Yiddish and spoke Russian to the children. After the revolution my parents became atheists. We didn't celebrate holidays or observe Jewish traditions in the house. I was also raised an atheist and an internationalist. Such was our era.