

Dora Nisman With Her Sister Esther Waisman



This is me and my sister Esther. The photo was taken in Chernovtsy in 1931. I already had a job at a shop and my sister worked as a dressmaker as well. In 1928, when I was 16, I went to the owner of a garment shop looking for a job. She interviewed me and I got employed. She was from Bucharest. I worked in this shop for about 8 months when my friends came from Chernovtsy and convinced me to leave Kishinev for Chernovtsy. I rented an apartment from a very nice Jewish

family from Bessarabia: Mendele Rakhman and his wife, two children and two sisters. They had a big apartment. They liked me and didn't charge much. I found a job at the Queen Blouse, the most popular shop in Chernovtsy. The owner spoke German. She was Jewish and came from Chernovtsy, but she found it more aristocratic to speak German. There were signs in German in all stores like the names of goods, information about working hours or warnings - just the usual stuff that can be seen in ordinary stores. Children were taught German. They had a better command of German than Yiddish. My sister Esther, born in 1905, was great help to her parents. When she was 15 she did the laundry for the whole family. My mother tailored fabrics, and Esther made clothes and did the laundry. It was mandatory to have some new clothes for Pesach, and they tried to have something made for every member of the family: pants, shirts and even underwear for my father. My father's colleague, an accountant, fell in love with Esther. He was moving to Palestine and promised Esther to take her with him. He had to pay 40,000 lei to get a permit for Esther. It took him some time to save this amount of money. Esther was getting ready to go. I made a couple of dresses for her, and my mother made pillows and blankets. When Esther was finally ready to go she received notification from the authorities that the quota had been closed and she couldn't leave. She got married after she turned 40. In 1945, Mark Stein, her husband to be, came to Chernovtsy. He was 47 and had a daughter. His wife had perished in a ghetto in 1942. He didn't want more children, and Esther always regretted that she didn't have children of her own. She worked as a dressmaker. Mark died in 1982, Esther in 1992 in Chernovtsy.