

Sarra Shpitalnik With Her Parents Beila Molchanskaya And Shlomo Molchanskiy



This is me with my parents Beila and Shlomo Molchanskiy. This photo was taken in Kishinev in 1929. Every summer we rented a dacha in the suburb of Kishinev - Malaya Malina. It was customary to rent a room at a dacha. When I was born in 1928, my parents rented an apartment in the house across the street from where my grandmother lived on the corner of Tsyrelson Lane and Oktavian Gog Street. This house belonged to former Russian aristocrats: the Meche-Nikolaevichs. Maria Petrovna Meche-Nikolaevich liked our family, and I was her favorite. She had two good-for-

nothing sons. Though I was only three years old, I remember how adults said that one was gay and the other one a card gambler. To cut a long story short, they brought their mother to bankruptcy. Fleshel, a Jewish man, bought this house and the annex in the yard. We lived there till I turned seven. Those were happy years. There was a neglected garden near the house where our neighbors' children and I played Indians and made a great wigwam in the bushes. There was also beautiful 'bull-de-neige' in the garden very rare in Kishinev. In the backyard there was a big scary dog on the chain. When I was two I once wandered there alone and the dog bit me on my cheek. My mother and her friend, who also rented a part of the house, soaked my cheek with a wet towel while they waited for the doctor. The doctor was everybody's favorite in Kishinev, Doctor Slissel, he said, 'Great that you didn't call for me at once, or I would have seamed the injury and she would have a scar, but now it will heal all right'. My father always tried to raise me as a brave child. Since the doctors told my mother that she could have no more children, he saw in me all of his unborn children: he loved children. For example, he put me on a two-wheel bicycle in my early childhood. By the way, I never learned to ride a bicycle. Well, my father wanted me to get rid of this fear of the dog and about a year later he took me to the back yard: 'Don't fear this dog, it's a good dog and you might have just slipped on the chain.' Well, then the dog almost tore off my father's lip and this time the doctor had to seam it.