

## Meir Molchanskiy And Haya Molchanskaya With Their Older Son Haim's Family



These are my paternal grandparents, Meir Molchanskiy and Haya Molchanskaya with their older son Haim's family. This photo was taken in Dombroveni in 1937. Sitting: my grandmother Haya, her granddaughter Perl Molchanskaya, my grandfather Meir. Standing: granddaughter Shyfra Molchanskaya, Haim's wife Montia Molchanskaya, Haim Molchanskiy, his son Huna Molchanskiy. They were photographed in their yard, behind them is a Moldovan carpet to form a background. My paternal grandfather was born in Bessarabia in 1854: I don't know the exact location. He lived in the Jewish farming colony in Dombroveni. My grandfather Meir rented and later purchased a plot of land. I don't know any details of their everyday life, but I know that Grandfather Meir was deeply religious. When he visited us in Kishinev I always went to the prayer house in the yard of our house

to call him for dinner. He prayed there with his head and shoulders covered with a tallit and had a tefillin on. He wore a long black tunic and a cap on his head. My grandfather had a big white beard and a moustache. His sons studied in cheder. I think that my grandmother Haya was the head of the family. My grandmother was born in Vertyuzhany near Dombroveni in 1860. She observed Jewish traditions and wore a wig. I remember when Grandmother Haya visited us in Kishinev, she used to press her hands to her cheeks while she watched Grandmother Hava and my mother do the housework, and she would say, 'Women, women, how you live and how I live' She had a very hard life: cooking, washing and fixing her husband and sons' clothes. My grandmother came to Kishinev wearing her only velvet dress. She also said when she died and the Lord asked her, 'Haya, what did you do on Earth?' she would say, 'Before the potatoes got cooked my sons ate them and when I baked loaves of bread, they were gone before I put them on the table.' Haim, the oldest son, and his wife Montia lived in Dombroveni with my grandparents. They had five children: Iosl, Leib, Huna, Shyfra and Perl. In the late 1930s Iosl illegally crossed the Dneestr to the USSR and we didn't hear from him for a long time. My father's brother Avrum and his wife Golda lived in Vertyuzhany. I don't know what Avrum did for a living. He had eight children. The family was very poor. Rachil, one of his daughters, also moved to the USSR in the late 1930s. Grandmother Haya tried to help them and sometimes she even sold a piece of land.