

Rosa Freisond's Mother Motl Freisond



My mother Motl Freisond photographed after the war after we moved to Mogilyov-Podolskiy. This photo was taken in Mogilyov-Podolskiy in 1940.

My mother Motl was born in Yaryshev in 1866. Her brothers studied in cheder and when they were doing their homework my mother sat closer to them and they showed her letters teaching her to read. My mother picked Hebrew and could write and read in it.

My parents got married in the early 1900s. They had a traditional Jewish wedding, of course. People in Yaryshev were religious and observed all traditions. After the wedding my parents lived in their own house that as my mother's dowry. Her father and brothers gave it to the newly weds. Our family lived in this house before the Great Patriotic War.

My father was a cattle dealer and my mother was a housewife. We were neither wealthier nor poorer than other Jewish families in Yaryshev. We didn't know any other way of life and were content with what we had. There were four of us, kids, in the family. My mother had 11 babies, but the others died in infancy. I don't remember, when my oldest brother Lev, Jewish Leiba, was born. My sister Lubov, Liebe, was born in 1907. Then my sister Lisa, Jewish Leya, was born in 1909. I was born in 1918 and named Rosa, Reizl in Jewish. My parents were religious. My parents followed kashrut strictly. My father went to the synagogue on Sabbath and Jewish holidays. My mother went to the synagogue on Yom Kippur. We celebrated Sabbath and Jewish holidays. On Friday morning my mother cleaned the house and baked brown bread for a week ahead and two white challah loaves for Sabbath. On Friday morning. My mother made us chicken broth with homemade noodles or gefilte fish. In the evening the family got together. My mother dressed up and lit candles in beautiful bronze candle stands, her dowry. She covered her face and prayed over the candles. Then we took down to dinner. My father didn't go to work on Saturday. In the morning he went to the synagogue and when he returned, he read us stories from the Bible. We spoke Yiddish at home,

and my father usually translated for us from Hebrew so that we could understand the stories.

When my mother was with us we celebrated all Jewish holidays. Of course, we did it in secret - if someone got to know about it, I wouldn't have worked one day as a teacher. On Sabbath my mother lit candles and prayed and we had a festive dinner, but for me it was a tribute of respect of my mother and not a need. I had to go to work on Saturday. My mother and sister tried to do no work on Saturday, but I didn't feel like following this rule. Before Pesach my mother baked matzah in the gas oven and cooked gefilte fish and chicken broth. She watched it that we didn't have any bread at home on Pesach. At home and at school we celebrated Soviet holidays: 1 May, Victory Day, 7 November, Soviet army Day, 8 March - international women's day and New Year. My mother died in 1968. We buried her in the Jewish cemetery according to the Jewish traditions, as she had requested. My sister or I didn't celebrate any Jewish holidays after she died.