

Hova Herman



This is my mother Hova Herman, nee Nepomniashchaya. This photo was taken in Tomashpol in 1927, shortly before she married my father.

According to my mother there were thirteen children born in the family. Most of them died in infancy from diseases. Only five children, including my mother, survived. The children didn't get any education. They had to go to work at an early age.

My mother was born in 1907. She was the thirteenth child in the family. My mother had no education whatsoever. She spoke Yiddish and Ukrainian like any other resident of Tomashpol. She

knew prayers by heart and prayed all her life. She went to work at the factory at the age of approximately 13.

My mother was a reserved person. Perhaps, it resulted from her lack of education. Anyway, she never told me about her young years or how she met my father. All she said was that she married for great love which was not the case with her sister Leya and brother Moishe. My other relatives told me some details of her meeting and marrying my father.

I don't know how my parents met, but they fell in love with each other for the rest of their life. This happened in 1927. My mother had typhus and my father, who wasn't even her fiancé at the time, nursed her to recovery. She was thin and her hair was shaved, but he took her to his home to introduce her to his parents.

My grandmother Perl was horrified: besides being poor she was a plain and sickly looking girl. She didn't give her consent to their marriage. She intended to find a rich fiancée for her son and took him on her sledge to another village where matchmakers found a match for my father.

The family legend says that the horses got stubborn at some distance from the village – and this was happening in a severe winter with a lot of snow – and Perl couldn't make them move another step however hard she tried. She had to go back to Alexandrovka with my father and give her consent to their marriage.

They had a traditional Jewish wedding in summer 1928. The bride and bridegroom stepped under the chuppah at the synagogue in Tomashpol and then rode back to Alexandrovka where they had a wedding party with all relatives and fellow villagers present.