

Reizl Shatkina's Family



Sitting in this photo are my mother's parents, Grandfather and Grandmother Rozenberg. My older brother, Boruch Shatkhin, is sitting in my grandmother's lap. My mother, Reizl Shatkina, nee Rozenberg, is standing behind them. This photo was taken for my grandmother and grandfather in a photo studio in Chernevtsy in 1912.

My mother's family lived in the Jewish town of Chernevtsy. After the revolution of 1917 it became a district town. I don't remember my maternal grandparents. My grandfather, whose surname was Rozenberg, died shortly after my parents got married.

Of all my mother's relatives I only knew her older brother, Haim Rozenberg, who lived with his wife Riva and their three children in Chernevtsy. Haim owned a small fabric store. However, this store must have been profitable. Haim was considered to be a wealthy man. My mother, Reizl Rozenberg, was born in 1886. She told me she came from a big family, but I didn't know any of her brothers or sisters.

My mother's parents were religious and raised their children religiously. My mother's teacher was a melamed from the cheder. He taught my mother and her sisters to read prayers in Hebrew. I don't know whether my mother could read or write in Hebrew. She couldn't write or read in Ukrainian or Russian. My mother's family spoke Yiddish at home. They also had a good conduct of Ukrainian to talk with their Ukrainian neighbors.

I don't know any details about how my parents met. I think there could have been matchmakers involved. Even when I was in my teens, all weddings were prearranged by shadkhanim, if both

young people lived in the same town. Borovka is located in about 15 kilometers from Chernevtsy. My parents had a traditional Jewish wedding in Chernevtsy. Afterward my mother put on a wig.

After the wedding my parents moved to Borovka. My father had sold his parents' house to have money for the wedding and the start of their marital life. My parents rented half of the house from an older Jewish couple. It was an ordinary mazanka house. There was a front door in the central part of the house and two doors in the fore room: the door on the left - to the landlords' part of the house, and the one on the right - to our lodging.

There was a big kitchen and a Russian stove in it. The stove heated the kitchen and a room. We had a small yard. Our landlords grew onions, garlic and beans in their part of the yard. There was a shed where my mother kept wood for winter and chickens. My father worked in the store, and my mother was a housewife and also helped my father in the store.

In 1912 my older brother Boruch - Boris in Russian - was born. I was born in 1914. I was named Frida after one of my grandmothers - I don't remember which of them. In 1916 my second brother Abram was born. My younger sister Betia was born in 1919. My parents observed Jewish traditions, and both their sons were circumcised, as required.