

Maria Zabozlaeva's Mother Taiba Ogushevich



My mother Taiba Ogushevich (nee Buch). This photo was taken for the passport in Saratov in 1942.

My mother Taiba Ogushevich, nee Buch was born in Saratov in 1905. She finished a secular grammar school in Saratov. She could speak some French and occasionally read us poems in French. She was very kind and handy: she could sew, embroider and knit. My mother made her clothes herself. She didn't wear any shawls or hats. She also made clothes for her acquaintances. Her clients were mostly Jewish women. All her friends and acquaintances called her affectionately Tusia. When in grammar school my mother went to dancing-party at the House of Officers where she met my father. They were seeing each other secretly from their parents since they met against the Jewish tradition of matchmaking. They got married for love in 1927. They never spoke about their wedding and I never came to asking about it. My mother and father lived in a house with my grandfather in Niznyaya Street in the Jewish neighborhood. There was a synagogue and a mosque in this street. Our neighbors were Tatars for the most part. There were few lilac bushes, a cherry tree and an apple tree near the house. There was also a summer tent house and vines around it that my father planted. There was a wood shed in the backyard until some time. We didn't keep any livestock. There was a big kitchen and a Russian stove in it. There were few small rooms in the house. Our parents had a bedroom and we, children, also had our quarters in the house. There was plain furniture: chairs and a bed with knobbles, a wardrobe and a dressing table.

My mother was a housewife and did everything in the house. There was no specific religiosity in the family, but while grandfather Semyon was alive they used to go to rabbi Gorelik who performed the duties of shochet to have their chickens slaughtered, and they followed kashrut. My mother was a terrific cook. She made delicious Jewish food. At Rosh Hashanah we had Gefilte fish and at Pesach we always had matzah. Our mother made chicken broth with kneidlakh. Our mother set the table and we waited until grandfather and uncle Michael came home from the synagogue to start a meal. Our uncle always came to our house, sat at the table to drink a glass of wine and then went to his home.

My mother and father had three children: I was the oldest and was born in 1929, and my brother Michael was born in 1936. We were born in Saratov. I didn't go to a kindergarten since my grandmother Sophia was looking after me. I liked playing in the yard and spending time with my grandfather Semyon. When Michael was born I began helping my mother to look after him. He was a quiet boy and didn't cause any problems. Shortly before the war in 1941 my younger sister Vera was born.

My parents didn't discuss any political subjects in the presence of their children, but I cannot tell what they talked about when they switched to Yiddish. They were not members of the Party. I understand that my parents had a loyal attitude toward the Soviet rule. They didn't have a fear of the regime.

We actually didn't socialize with other people. Only my mother's clients came to our house. For celebrations we got together with the family and there were usually about 12 people sitting at the table. I also remember that when there were 13 people sitting at the table my mother didn't sit down. We had a close family.

In June 1941 we heard about the war on the radio when Molotov spoke. Life was hard during the war. Saratov was quite at a distance from the front and plants from occupied territories evacuated to our town. Those plants repaired tanks and manufactured shells for Katyusha units. Saratov worked for the front and provided food to the front. My father also worked from morning till night and my mother sewed for the front.