

Meyer Tulchinskiy With His Parents



This is a photo of my father Lev Tulchinskiy, my mother Tsypa Tulchinskaya and me. It was taken in Kiev in 1925. My mother was born in 1892. She was the oldest of the girls in the family. I don't know what kind of education she had. She could write in Hebrew and Yiddish, which was rare for a woman. She liked reading and read classic literature in Yiddish and Russian. She could also write well in Russian. She had many friends and corresponded with them all her life. She was helping her parents with the shoemaking business before she got married. My mother told me little about the years of her youth. I don't know when and how she met my father. I only know that my parents had their wedding in Tarashcha during the Civil War. They were hiding from gangs in Tarashcha and I don't think they had a real wedding party. The situation wasn't good for celebrations. There were Denikin, Polish and Petliura units in town. The power in town changed from one to the other, but they all persecuted Jews, of course. He was probably religious when he was young. He probably observed Jewish traditions, which was common in all Jewish families back then. He never finished his studies because he got disappointed with religion. It was the time of chaos. My father took to another extreme: he participated in the Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War. I believe he was wounded in 1919 and had to stay in hospital. My father and mother moved to Kiev from Tarashcha in the 1920s. They rented an apartment in the center of the city. I was born there in 1924. My parents spoke Yiddish with each other. Sometimes they communicated in Russian, when they also wanted me to be involved in the conversation, or if someone else was in the house and didn't speak Yiddish. I'm surprised that my parents didn't even try to teach me Yiddish. Regretfully, my parents didn't celebrate any Jewish or religious holidays or observe any traditions. I rarely visited my mother's mother in Tarashcha. My relatives spoke Ukrainian to me, and I don't remember celebration of any religious holidays. My relatives got together at Soviet holidays at our place. I was the only child in the family. My mother had babies several times, but they all died.