

Leib Kogan



This is my father Leib Kogan. The photo was taken in Odessa in 1925.

My father studied at cheder for three years. After my grandmother died he went to work as a servant for a wealthy Jew in the town. In the late 1880s, when he was 15, he moved to some relatives in Odessa. He became an apprentice of a typesetter at the printing house of the publisher Kozman. My father was eager to study somewhere, but he was too poor. However, by self-education he learned Russian, German and some French besides Yiddish and Hebrew. In a few years he managed to get a job as a typesetter at the same printing house.

He met my mother in the early 1900s. My parents got married around 1905. I am sure that they had a traditional Jewish wedding since both of them came from religious families and were raised religiously. After their wedding my parents rented an apartment in the building where Hanna lived – we always had very warm relationships with her. When my father got married his relatives helped him to get a job of a clerk in a fabric store, since working in the printing house was hazardous because of the lead dust. My mother continued to work at the Ptashnikov factory.

My father was a worker at a plant after the October Revolution and later he tried to make shoe polish. I was a little child then and don't remember the details. Later my father began to work with my mother. She worked at home as a seamstress. She had a hemstitch machine and a sewing machine. He fixed her equipment and made bed sheets.