

Faina Gheller's Mother Zalivanskay And Father Naum Zalivanski



My mother Bertha Zalivanskaya (nee Weisman, Rabinovich after her first husband) and my father Naum Zalivanski (Zelevianski before).

I don't know when or on what occasion this photo was made.

My father Naum Zalivianski was born in Grodno in 1900. His mother tongue was Yiddish, but he could also speak Russian, but he could hardly write in it.

He studied three years in cheder in his town. He could not continue his studies. He had to go to work to help his parents to support the family.

He accepted the [October] Revolution of 1917 enthusiastically. During the Civil War he and his brother served in the Red Army. He volunteered to the Red Army. He was a private in the 10th infantry regiment.

My father demobilized in 1921 and returned to Tambov where he worked as a tailor: he cut fabrics in shops and also worked at home to earn more. I

n 1930 he married a Jewish woman named Rosa (I don't know her maiden name).

In 1931 their daughter Mirah was born. In 1933 they moved to his wife's relatives in Saratov [about 900 km from Moscow]. Shortly afterward his wife died. He lived with his deceased wife's relatives before he met my mother.

In 1934 my parents got married. They met through matchmakers that was quite a custom with Jews at that period of time. They registered their marriage in a registry office.

They were Komsomol members and activists and they didn't have a Jewish wedding. They invited their closest ones to a small wedding dinner. My father had a daughter from his first marriage. Her name was Mirah.

My father and Mirah moved into my mother's 16-square-meter room in Nizhniaya Street. There was a 12-square-meter kitchen with no windows.

My mother didn't have children with her first husband and she believed she couldn't have children at all. For this reason she married a widower with a child.

They didn't marry for love, but they respected each other. My mother loved her stepdaughter. Then my parents got three children of their own. After they were born my mother quit the factory and became a housewife. My father was the breadwinner in the family.

We were very poor. I went to school in 1948 wearing the dress that both of my sisters had worn before me. My mother patched it and my father made me a bag. Life was poor, but interesting. We had plain food.