

Mikhail Falkov's Family



This is the most complete photo I have of the Falkov family, taken in Ludza in the 1910s. The first from left is my father, Mikhail Falkov, the second from left in the front is his mother, Goda Falkova, nee Gordina, the third from left in the front is his sister Polina Falkova, the first from right is his brother Yasha Falkov, next to him is their father Ilya Falkov, the first from left in the back row is my father's sister Ljuba Falkova, next to her are his other two sisters Raisa and Mina Falkova.

My granddad, Ilya Aron Moyshevich Falkov, was born in Ludza in 1867. [Ludza: a town that belonged to the province of Vitebsk until 1917, now it belongs to Latvia]. He completed two grades of a provincial elementary school. He knew ancient Hebrew, Ivrit, the Talmud, Jewish history and Russian literature well, or so my father told me. I was named Elina after my grandfather. My grandfather dealt with timber processing, first for private owners, and then for the management of the Moscow-Vindava [today Ventspils] railroad. It appears that he then peddled metalwork, traveling from village to village, selling his hardware to peasants. My grandfather died of a heart attack while sitting at the table in Ludza in 1924.

His wife, Goda Peisahovna Falkova, nee Gordina, was born in 1870, but I don't know where. She was a housewife, she sew and knitted. I don't know anything about her siblings. My father's parents got married in 1895 in Ludza; they lived on 31, Ostrovsk Street. Grandmother Goda Peisahovna lived with us in Riga, but I don't remember her. She simply wasn't allowed to be with me. She died of tuberculosis in Riga in 1939 and was buried in the Jewish cemetery.

My father, Mikhail Ilyich Falkov, was born in Ludza on 23rd December 1899. Papa left his parents' house at the age of 14 for Pskov [today Russia], where he studied at an institute. He returned home in 1918 before moving to Riga. In all probability, he entered the Faculty of Mechanics of the Latvian University in 1919.