

Raissa Makarevich's Family



This is our family, first row left to right: my older sister Fenia, me, and my younger sister Rosa. Behind us left to right are: my mother's stepsister Lisa, my father Gersh Makarevich, and my mother Leya Makarevich. Our house is in the background. This picture was taken in Kiev in 1935.

After my parents got married, they rented an apartment in a three-story building on Bratskaya Street, in Podol. Their landlord was a Jew, his name was Lukashevich. There were fifteen apartments in the building and they were all leased. Our apartment was on the first floor.

My parents got married in 1917, and in 1919 they had their first daughter, my older sister Feiga. At home we called her Fenia. Fenia went to school and took music classes. (It was fashionable to give children music lessons.) After she finished school she worked as an accountant at the plant. Later, she married a Jew named Raikhstadt. Fenia was in evacuation during the war. After the war she continued to work at the plant. She died in Kiev in 1987. Her husband is alive, he is ninety years old. During the war he was at the front, got captured, and went through several concentration camps. He managed to hide the fact that he was Jewish and miraculously survived. He lives with his daughter and my cousin Lina.

In 1920 my older brother Naum was born. He was named after Daddy's brother Naum. Naum died as a baby. Mamma told me that, because it happened during the pogrom in Kiev, they couldn't bury the baby's body. People were afraid to leave their homes and there was nobody to bury the dead. Daddy hired a cab and took his dead son to the cemetery to bury him.

This period was terrible, when Jewish people were killed for no reason. Mamma told me that across the street from us, at Bratskaya 9, a rabbi and an Orthodox Christian priest lived in the same building. During the pogrom, the priest hid the rabbi's family and the families of all of the

neighboring Jews, including our family. Bandits did not dare to enter the priest's home. This priest was a very kind and honest man. In 1938, during the period of repression, both the rabbi and the priest were arrested. They disappeared without a trace - they were probably killed. I have dim memories of the rabbi and the priest, but I remember the rabbi's daughter, Donia, well. We used to play with her. I never saw her after the war. They say she perished at Babi Yar.

We had a two-room apartment and everything we needed. We had metal beds, but, then again, we also had a leather sofa, embroidered and starched little napkins, little china elephants on the shelf. These were the symbols of being well-to-do. Our kitchen was really big, but this may have just been my impression as a child.

We all left Kiev on the same truck on which my husband and colonel Vlasov had arrived: Larissa and I, my older sister Fenia, my younger sister Rosa, and my parents.

My older sister Fenia died in 1987 in Kiev, and my younger sister Rosa lives in Cleveland, USA. I visited her in 1990.