

Samuel



This is my papa Samuel Vilenskiy, when he was young. This photo was taken in 1921 in Moscow. My papa must have been photographed for a document. Unfortunately, this is the only photo of my papa, when he was young.

My father reached the biggest success in the forestry business. After the Civil War my father was manager of the office responsible for restoration of the Eastern Siberian Railroad in Khabarovsk [about 6200 km east of Moscow]. My father worked in field offices moving from one location to another. My father often traveled to Moscow. I remember papa came to Moscow once a month and went to the Bolshoy Theater with my mother. In the 1930s my father worked as chief of the

forestry department of the Ministry of Aviation Industry. Aircraft were manufactured from compressed wood at the time. None of the Vilenskiy family ever joined the communist party.

Papa and mama met in Moscow. Papa was a friend of mama's brother Grigoriy. Grigoriy was a financial officer during the Soviet period. Papa visited Grigoriy at his home. He married in 1919. My parents just had a civil ceremony in the registry office.

After my parents got married my father received two rooms in a 4-bedroom communal apartment in the center of Moscow. The building was constructed in 1914. It's still there, an old house. There was a sculpture of a knight at the entrance. I was born here in 1928. In 1920 my sister Bertha was born. Mama and papa had a good life before the war raising their children and meeting with friends and relatives. The family got together with grandmother and grandfather to celebrate Jewish holidays. My parents, their relatives and friends gave up their parents' religion and traditions. They were atheists.

My father was a brave man and had good organizational skills. At some time he was manager of the office dealing in external sales of wood: 'Les Eksport' [meaning Wood Export] in Arkhangelsk [about 1000 km north of Moscow].