

Dobre Rozenbergene And Her Family



This is our house in Jurbarkas - my father, Motle Most, is on the right, my brother Isroel is sitting on the rail, my mother Brocha is on the left, I am standing by the rails. My maternal grandmother Elke is in the center. The picture was taken in 1930.

My father had already been a well-to-do merchant before getting married. The newly-weds moved into a new house, purchased for them. It wasn't far from the place, where my parents spent their childhood and adolescence. Grandmother Chaya Riva lived in that place at that time. In 1925 my mother gave birth to her first son. He was named after Grandfather Isroel. I was born on 23rd August 1928. I was called Doba in honor of my maternal grandfather David. At home I was tenderly called Dobele.

I remember my childhood well. We lived in a large two-storied house with two entrances. The left one was occupied by our family, and the right one was unoccupied at times. There were times when Mother leased the second half of the house. In the late 1930s her cousin moved in there. There were four large rooms on the first floor of the left wing of the house; a large dining room, called salon by my mother. Her friends came to see her on the weekend. They had coffee or tea with cakes, did some handicraft, having a chat about their children, families and the problems with upbringing. A large oval mahogany table was in the center of the room. It was covered with a velvet cloth. Velvet curtains matched the table cloth. There was a small coffee table in the corner by the fireplace. My mother usually had her afternoon coffee there. In the evening a fire was made in the fireplace. Armchairs with matching velvet upholstery were by that small table.

My parents' big bedroom was next to the dining-room. There was a large carved bed in the center of the room with the tester. There were a small bed-room and a room, where my maternal grandmother Elke lived. My brother was independent since childhood. He occupied one of the rooms on the second floor. There was a large kitchen on the first floor with a stove. The stove was stoked with firewood. The stove was also used for cooking. On weekdays Mother and Grandmother didn't even get close to the stove. The food was cooked by a housekeeper, a Jew. That old lady - I can't recall her name - had worked for us before the Soviets came to power and was very loyal to our family.

Our yard was big. There was a huge shed, where peasants – suppliers – put their grain. Usually Father and his assistant sat at the table by the shed and entered all his trading deals in a large logbook. Usually when the deal was closed common Lithuanian peasants came to our place, where Mother and Grandmother treated them to a lavish dinner. They often kept late hours, telling Mother about their families. At times they asked my mother for advice as they fully trusted her judgment. Mother asked villagers questions regarding our husbandry. We had a small kitchen-garden and an orchard, where my mother, grandmother and the housekeeper worked. Mother kept poultry – hens and turkeys – in a separate coop. We also had a cow and Grandmother made fresh butter and sour-cream herself. Our house had a nice forged fence. There was a small hut, where a Lithuanian woman – the guard – was on duty.