

Faina Melamed's Father Efim Melamed, His Brother Pavel And Sister Enia Melamed.



This is my father Efim Melamed (first from right), his brother Pavel Melamed and sister Enia Melamed. This photo was taken in Odessa in the 1890s.

My father was born in 1895. I have an excerpt from the synagogue roster that indicates that he was born in Uman. I don't know how the family happened to be in Uman at that period of time. My paternal grandfather Yakov Melamed - whose date of birth I don't know, regretfully -, was born and lived in Odessa. Grandfather Yakov had education. He spoke Yiddish and Russian and had a good conduct of English. He was a rich man, an industrialist. He had a luxurious apartment in 20, Petra Velikogo Street and his own carriage and horses. My paternal grandmother Sara Melamed, nee Shpolianskaya, was born in Odessa too. My grandfather was a gambler and used to lose a lot of money. My grandmother divorced him and raised her four children herself. My father studied at school and received religious education at home. He and his brother studied Hebrew and Torah with a teacher who visited them at home. He also had private classes of playing the violin. My father's family had a talent for music. When the World War I began my father served as a private in the tsarist army. When the October Revolution began he went to the Red army. He served in the troops under command of red commander Yakir. I think he did it because he knew about pogroms and the attitude of tsarist power to Jews. He believed that the new regime would bring wealth and prosperity to all. He had a cavalry unit under his command. At home we used to keep letters of gratitude and awards of my father that disappeared later. My father was wounded in his face and had his jaws and tongue seamed. When he met with my mother in Golovanevsk he had long hair and looked like a gypsy, but my mother liked him anyway. My parents got married in Golovanevsk in 1920.

My father's older sister Enia was born in 1891 in Odessa. She received elementary education in a Jewish elementary school. Enia got married at an early age and moved to Moscow. I don't know who her husband was. Enia was a housewife and raised children. She had two sons: Senia and Yasha. Yasha became an engineer. He managed construction of furnaces. Senia also had some official position. I don't know any details. They lived in Moscow. Enia died in Moscow in 1965. Her sons also passed away.

My father's brother Pavel was born in Odessa. For some reason he had the same date of birth indicated in his passport as my father: 1895. We, children, even used to laugh at it. However, they were not twins. One of them had a different date of birth, of course. Pavel finished the vocal department of Odessa Conservatory. He became a singer and worked in Moscow Philharmonic under the pseudonym of Pavel Riazanski. He often went on tours. Before the Great Patriotic War, when we were in Samarkand, my father saw a poster with his brother's picture and name of Pavel Riazanski on it. My father ran to the Philharmonic immediately. It was a wonderful meeting. There was a party. A lamb was slaughtered for the occasion and guests danced on tables. I remember uncle Pavel as a cheerful and charming man. His wife Elena was a Jew. They had three sons: Lyonia, Edik and Igor. Pavel died in the 1960s. He was buried in Moscow. Their older son Edik played in a military orchestra 21 years. He fell ill. His family thought there was something wrong with his stomach, but it turned out to be worse: cancer. He died young in the 1970s. I remember well that it happened in March. I saw Lyonia when he was a small boy when my uncle came on tours. Igor, the youngest, visited us few years ago (in the 1990s). He came from Gorkiy with his wife. They stayed with us. We received them very well. We went to a restaurant. Now I have no information about Lyonia or Igor's life.