

Boris Molodetski At The Age Of 3



This is me, Boris Molodetski, at the age of 3. This photo was taken in Odessa in 1924.

My parents, Gersh Molodetski and Chaya Molodetskaya, got married on 7 June 1919. They had a civil ceremony. There was no religious wedding. My parents settled down in a basement in the end of Bazarnaya Street. I was born in Odessa on 10 August 1921. I remember myself in a small damp room on the ground floor of a brick house in 10, Bolshaya Arnautskaya Street. For me the greatest pleasure was to get into my father's bed when he brought coal from the basement in the morning and watch him stoking the stove. We had a cooperative of tenants and housing manager. Tenants arranged meeting to discuss any maintenance issues in the yard. When in 1925 a three-bedroom apartment on the 2nd floor in our house got vacant a meeting of tenants decided to give it to us.

My mother was a housewife. She was raising me. She never let me play with other boys in the street. She told me that they would teach me bad things. I was sitting on the balcony suffering terribly. My mother took me for walks always holding me by my hand. During such walks I learned to read on store signs. It was the second half of NEP, and there were many colorful signs on private stores. My aunts Sheva and Mary didn't have children and were spoiling me a lot. They often made me clothes. They lived with maternal grandmother Matlia and were our neighbors. My mother and father spoke Russian at home, but when they decided that there was something I shouldn't know they switched to Yiddish. I knew some words in Yiddish.

At the age of 8 I went to Russian school #48. Before going to the 6th grade I wore stockings on the waistband, knee-long pants and a fustian jacket. When in 1930 aunt Minna came from America she

gave me a woolen pullover. This was a tiptop. In summer I wore canvas shoes on rubber soles, hopsack trousers and a white shirt and I believed I was dressed luxuriously. I didn't always have boots in winter: there were coupons for winter boots. At home I wore slippers that my mother made to save.