

Lubov Rozenfeld's Mother Sophia Rozenstein, Her Older Sister Dosia Rozenstein And Younger Brother Yuliy Rozenstein



My mother Sophia Rozenstein - on the left, her older sister Dosia Rozenstein and younger brother Yuliy Rozenstein. Skvira, 1911. Signed on the backside: 'To dear parents on 14 August 1911. In the eternal memory Dosia, Sonia, Yeilik'.

My grandmother Bela (Jewish name Beilia-Ryklia), born in 1876 Skvira Kiev province in the 1850s. She married Zus Rozenstein, born in the 1870s. According to Buzia, he was 'extremely handsome and came from Berdichev'. They lived in Skvira. My grandfather was a sales agent for Zinger sewing machines. They had three children: the oldest Dosia (Jewish name Dvosia) born in 1901, named after grandmother Dvosia; my mother Sophia was the second (Jewish name Esther-Sosl) Rozenstein, born on 14 October 1905, and the youngest son Yuliy (Jewish name Yeilik) born in 1907. Grandfather Zus disappeared in Derbent in 1909 where he was on business trip. Grandmother Bela was a housewife, but she couldn't get adjusted to the suddenly changing life. My mother told me they followed the kashrut strictly, didn't work on Saturday, the family still celebrated holidays, grandmother Bela and even the children fasted on Yom Kippur.

My mother Sophia Rozenstein lost her father at the age of four and began to work at an early age selling oil and sunflower seeds in Kiev. During the Civil war my mother lived through several pogroms in Skvira. During pogroms Jewish families found shelter in the judge's home whose name I don't remember, regretfully. During one pogrom my mother didn't want to go to the judge's home and dragged Yuliy to a frozen swamp where they lay on the ice all night through. The pogrom makers didn't come to the swamp. Bela and Dosia hid in their neighbor's home. After the pogrom the family returned to their plundered home, but they all survived. My mother told me that armed villagers were opposing to pogrom makers. At 14 my mother went to work as a courier at the sugar supply office in Kiev. She attended an amateur performers' club. She told me they studied singing, dancing, dressing and washing there. They staged play and had lots of fun. My mother used to say: 'Who would have I become if it hadn't been for the revolution? would have sold things at the market in the sticks'. My mother had a strong voice. She went to study singing at a music school and later - at the College of music and Drama. After finishing this college my mother went to work as chief editor of music radio programs at the radio committee.

My mother's older sister Dosia Rozenstein began to work in her childhood: she went to Kiev to sell newspapers and sunflower oil at the market. After the revolution she finished the medical College in Kiev and became a pediatrician. She married Dmitriy Zaslavskiy, a Jew. In January 1930 Dosia gave birth to a boy whom she named May, perhaps because he was conceived in May. May was handsome and charming, grandmother Bela's first grandson, much loved by all relatives.

My mother's brother Yuliy Rozenstein whose education was funded by my grandfather Meishe, didn't want to get a higher education. He was smart even when a child. My mother recalled that there was a little train driving along a narrow gauge railway in Skvira. She and Yuliy sitting on a footboard used to take oil to sell at a market in Kiev. Later he sold cigarettes. Yuliy learned to play chess and became a candidate to master of sports and a field judge of the all-Union category. He earned money in clubs teaching newcomers to play chess. In the early 1930s, Yuliy, as a Party member, was appointed chairman of a Jewish kolkhoz [16] in the Crimea.