

Lubov Rozenfeld Father's Family



The Rozenfeld family. From left to right: my father's brothers Solomon Rozenfeld, Ruvim Rozenfeld, my grandmother Gitia Rozenfeld, my father's sister Anna Rozenfeld, my father Mikhail Rozenfeld, my father's brother Semyon Rozenfeld, Kiev, early 1930s.

My grandmother Gitia was born in 1885. She married Peisia Rozenfeld who was a baker, in the early 1900s. I don't know how they met. They lived in Kiev. According to her relatives my grandmother was a cheerful person, though she didn't have a sweet life. The Rozenfeld family observed Jewish traditions, went to the synagogue on holidays, celebrated Jewish holidays, and on Friday evenings my grandmother lit candles. They spoke Yiddish at home. My grandmother and grandfather had seven children: my father Mikhail Rozenfeld was the oldest. He was born on 11 February 1905. Two years later his brother Lev was born, but he died from hunger and diseases. The next son Solomon Rozenfeld was born on 25 December 1909. After Solomon Zina was born in the early 1930s. She died in her infancy during famine. In 1912 Anna Rozenfeld was born. My father's brothers Semyon and Ruvim Rozenfeld came one after another: Semyon must have been born in 1914 and Ruvim - in 1915. All boys went to cheder and then - to the Jewish elementary school.

Shortly after Ruvim's birth my grandfather Peisia died from typhoid, when he was quite young. Grandmother Gitia was to raise seven children alone. She had to send my father to a children's home to save her other children and his life, at least, he was given food there. In the children's home my father learned the profession of a mechanic and supported the family working. He was very talented: besides working as a mechanic he wrote for a radio agency and later worked for the RATAU [Radiotelegraph agency of Ukraine], as a censor in the Department for Literature.

Solomon served in cavalry after he turned 16, later he served in artillery and was a professional military. He married his cousin Maria Polischuk, my grandmother sister Risl's daughter. They had two daughters: Ninel and Svetlana. Ninel told me that Solomon had a mop of black curly hair, beautiful dark eyes and little moustache in the fashion of the 1940s. He was a swinger and was ambitious.

I don't remember my father's sister Anna but I heard that she was cheerful and beautiful. She had dark hair. She was married, but I don't know who her husband was. They had a son named Pyotr. I don't know what happened to her husband, but she was miserably poor, and my father actually raised Pyotr.

My father's brothers Semyon and Ruvim were tall and handsome: Semyon had dark eyes, and Ruvim had blue eyes. In 1934 Semyon went to serve in the soviet Navy and a year later Ruvim joined the Navy. They served in the Pinsk Fleet. Semyon was good at writing and worked for the Navy newspaper during his service. Semyon had a fiancée before the Great Patriotic War, but before they got married the Great Patriotic War began. Ruvim married Fira, a Jewish girl, shortly before the Great Patriotic War in early 1941. They had a daughter, whose name I don't know. They all perished in 1941 in Babi Yar.