

Liza Usherenko's Family



This is our family. From left to right: my sister Sonia Usherenko, my mother Vera (Dvoira) Usherenko, nee Grinberg, my sister Adel Chervits, my father Moisey Usherenko and I.

When I was one year old Falkovich who is it? allowed my parents to move into an outhouse in the yard. There was one bigger and two very small rooms. One of them was my parents' bedroom. There were two beds and my pram in it. My stepsisters Sonia and Adel lived in another small room until they got married. Yakov had left for Moscow by then.

There was an old wardrobe and a carved cupboard in the big room. My Mummy finally got a little kitchen of her own and she was washing and cleaning every bit of it. My father took a very good care of this house. He made everything with his own hands, as they never had any money to buy things. We were actually starving and Papa never got enough food. He was tall and handsome and could do and make just anything. He fixed this clock with his hands of a laborer with fish bone splinters in them. It's a very beautiful XVII- XVIII century table clock that was the only beautiful thing in our house.

My parents spoke Yiddish with one another, thinking that Adel and I didn't understand much of it. But we understood and could speak a little in Yiddish, although our mother tongue was Russian. My parents didn't quite follow any Jewish traditions. We didn't lit candles at Sabbath. My father went to the sauna in Podol each Friday (a Russian tradition). However, my mother's sister Hai-Ginesia was lighting candles until her last day. My mother probably believed that God would forgive. My parents followed all covenants of the God. They were always faithful to one another, never stole or took possession of anything. They probably had a good intention to observe the Sabbath, but my father had to go to work on Saturday and my mother had to cook and give him some food. We always had matsa at Pesach, but we hardly had any celebrations at Jewish holidays, as we were so poor. Our family seldom went to the synagogue.