

Hana-Leya Levin



This is my mother Hana-Leya Levin. She was photographed for her Lithuanian passport. This photo was taken in Kaunas in 1935. My mother's parents' surname was Fisher. My grandfather died young leaving six children behind. Besides my mama, Hana-Leya, born in 1913, I only knew her brother David and sister Paula. Mama had another brother and two sisters. Unfortunately, I cannot remember their names. When my mama was telling me about them, I didn't think it so important. After my grandfather died the family moved to Kaunas. My grandmother was a housewife, when my grandfather was alive, which was common in Jewish families. The children were still young, all of them being of school age, and my grandmother did have a hard time in her effort to provide for them. Even when Grandfather was alive, the family was far from wealthy, and after he died they were actually left in poverty. It's hard to say how my grandmother managed, but all of the children received good education. They finished a German gymnasium in Kaunas. After finishing the gymnasium Mama studied in a Jewish religious school in Germany. She told me this school

accepted the girls with good academic records and fluent German. The Jewish community paid their trip to Germany. Mama spent two years at this school. All children were raised to become decent, kind and hardworking people. It wasn't only my mother saying this. I heard this from those people who had known my mother's family as well. After Mama returned from Germany she went to work. She spoke fluent German and went to work as personal assistant to the owner of a large shoe factory. This company had some contractual relationships with Germany, and Mama was responsible for correspondence administration. My parents got married in 1936. They had a traditional Jewish wedding. My father insisted that my mother left her job after getting married. My father had a nice apartment in Kaunas where the newly weds settled down. My mother's family accepted my father. They had warm and kindly relationships. My father even employed my mother's sister and brother. I was born in 1937, one year after my parents' wedding. I was given the name of Revekka.