

Anna Gandelsman



This is my mother Anna Gandelsman, photographed in Kharkov in 1919 when she was 17 years old. My mother Anna Gandelsman was born into the family of a poor Jewish fiddler in the town of Priluki, Chernigov province, in 1902. Her father Boruh Gandelsman, born in the 1860s, performed at Jewish weddings and parties. His family didn't have a stable income and they were very poor. My grandfather also tried to teach children to play the fiddle, but there were very few parents that could afford to pay for classes and this work didn't produce any profit. My mother went to live with her cousins. There were four sisters, their last name was Tsyfrinovich and my mother was raised by them after her father died. They were her mother's cousins. My grandmother Hana sent my mother to be raised by her cousins because she understood that educated and modern women living in St.

Petersburg would be able to give her daughter a lot more than she could. My mother grew up a modern emancipated young lady under their influence. She couldn't even speak Yiddish and when my father introduced her to his parents they couldn't communicate because they didn't speak Russian. My mother finished grammar school in St. Petersburg and after the Revolution she and her aunts moved to Kharkov. In Kharkov my mother entered a course in law. She never worked as a lawyer but she was a very educated woman. In 1925 my mother met my father and they got married in April 1926.