

Beniamin And Rohl Joheles



These are my parents: my father Beniamin Joheles and my mother Rohl Joheles, nee Galanskaya. This photo was taken in Kaunas in 1922, when my mama was pregnant with me. Our Lithuanian neighbor kept this photo and our other belongings during the occupation. My father was born in Vilnius in 1898. I don't know whether he attended cheder, but I think it was mandatory for all boys. I have no information about where my father studied. My father knew Yiddish, Russian, Lithuanian,

Polish and German. He was trained to become an electric mechanic at a company in Germany and later stayed to work with this company. He became a highly skilled mechanic. By the time he met my mother at his older brother Grigoriy Golunski's place, he lived in Kaunas and worked as an electric mechanic at the railway station. My mother came from the town of Varena at the border of Lithuania and Poland. She was born in 1901. I think she finished two or three grades of elementary school, but I don't know any details. My parents had their wedding in Varena on 22nd July 1921. My parents got married under a chuppah at the synagogue and had a traditional Jewish wedding. It couldn't have been otherwise in Jewish families at the time. My parents rented an apartment in Kaunas. I was born on 22nd May 1922 in Kaunas. I was named Feige, but since my early childhood everybody called me Fania, which is a Russian name. Mama told me she got severely ill when I was born. She had to send me to my grandfather and grandmother in Varena where I lived the first year of my life. My grandparents often showed me my parents' pictures in a photo album, and when my parents came to pick me, I said 'Mama, papa - album'.