

Frima Bursuk With Her Friends Cora Berik And Sonia Beznos



This is my mother Frima Bursuk, nee Derman (on the right) and her friends Cora Berik (on the left) and Sonia Beznos (in the center). The photo was taken in Chernovtsy in 1937. My father and mother had known each other since their childhood. My father came to Ataki to propose to my mother when he already had a well-paid job and bought an apartment in Chernovtsy. My parents got married in Ataki on 1st June 1928. We lived in a three-bedroom apartment on Gonta Street in Chernovtsy before and after the war. My brother leguda was born in 1930, I followed in 1931 and my younger brother Munia in 1934. My mother was a housewife. My father worked as merchandise expert at a big wholesale depot. We were a wealthy family and could afford to keep a housemaid and a nanny to look after the children. When we reached the age of five we started to learn Yiddish. We didn't go to cheder, our Yiddish teacher came to teach us at home. He was also an English teacher at school and college. I had a good command of Yiddish before the war, but since then I've forgotten a lot, although I can still read easier texts. My family was a traditional Jewish family. We spoke Yiddish in the family, observed all traditions and celebrated all religious holidays. I remember Sabbath at our home. On Friday evening my mother always cooked a festive dinner. We always had good food, but it was particularly special on Friday evenings. At Sabbath there was stuffed fish, stuffed chicken neck and carrot tsimes. My mother always baked challah for the Saturday meal herself. She covered the challot with a napkin with some quotations from the Torah embroidered on it. I remember my mother telling me that the paraphernalia of Sabbath were two candles, two challot and a glass of wine. I remember big silver candle sticks for Saturday candles. My mother lit two candles and I recall her enlightened face when she moved her hand three times over the burning candles. It wasn't allowed to turn on the light or heat up food on Saturday. I remember that our neighbor came to do that and we had steel boxes with kerosene lamps burning inside keeping the pots with food warm all the time. My father blessed the kids. We sang zmiros during and after meals. My parents always went to the synagogue on Saturday. When my older brother and I were old enough they began to take us with them.