

Basya Chaika's Mother, Rachel Gorenstein, With Her Younger Sister Liza Gorenstein.



On the left: my mother, Rachel Gorenstein, with her younger sister Liza Gorenstein. My mother here is 10, Liza - 7 years old. Both girls are students of a gymnasium. The photo was made in 1906 in Kiev. I did not know my grandfather, Moshe-Leib Gorenstein, too, because he died before I was born, but at home we had his big portrait in our home. In the portrait, my grandfather is a handsome and respectable man with a beautiful full beard and with a yarmulke. He worked in commerce; he had his own bank in Kiev, according to his daughter - my mother, they had a big rich house. My grandfather was actively involved in charity - he sponsored Kiev scientists and

engineers. According to my mother, their home was Jewish, with celebrating every holiday, Sabbath, and weekly synagogue attendance. My mother said that on holidays, poor people who came over received gifts from my grandfather and some were invited to sit around the table. Grandfather Moshe and grandmother Basya had six children. All the children finished gymnasium. Grandfather Moshe did not live to see his daughter Rachel-Rose as a wife or as a mother. In 1918 he had already passed away, and my mother had no proper Jewish wedding. (Kiev of 1918, with its pogroms and anti-Semitic gangs, was not a good place for Jewish weddings). My mother immediately crossed to another life, so to speak, a Soviet one, and it was dangerous to tell about that previous life during the Soviet times. My mother told me about herself and her father only after the war, and she begged me to keep my mouth shut.