

## Evgenia Ershova's Mother Sonia Gutianskaya



My mother Sonia Gutianskaya, photographed after their wedding, prior to her departure from Sobolevka. The photo is signed "To my beloved sister Hontsia. May this photo be the symbol of our love." The photo was taken in Sobolevka in 1928. My mother was born in 1903. She finished her

studies at the four-year Jewish elementary school and then probably continued studying with private teachers. My mother didn't have any certificates or diplomas, but she wrote very well in Russian and read a lot. My parents met in Sobolevka around 1925 while my father was there on a business trip. There were quite a few sugar factories in Vinnitsa. Almost every town or village had one, and my father often visited Vinnitsa on business. There was also a sugar factory in Sobolevka. My father traveled to Sobolevka almost every month. I don't know any details of my parents' meeting each other, but I know that they married in 1928. They had written letters to each other for three years and saw each other quite often. They had a civil registration ceremony in Sobolevka. They didn't have a wedding party. The three of them just had dinner: my mother, father and my mother's sister, Hontsia. There were no other relatives of ours left in Sobolevka. My father had quit his job by then, and they left for Kiev. They decided to begin a new life in a big city. My parents rented two rooms in a house in Demeyevka [neighborhood in Kiev]. My father got a job as an accountant at the Krasny Rezinschik rubber plant. He worked there until the war began. In 1929 my older sister Eleonora (Ella) was born. My mother stayed at home in the first years of her marriage. She did the housework and looked after my sister. Ella was a weak and sickly child. In the early 1930s my father's sister Fania, her son and my grandmother Buzia came to live with us. By that time my father had purchased this apartment from his landlords. My parents and Ella lived in a smaller room and the bigger one was occupied by Fania and her son and my grandmother. Aunt Fania told me that they lived as a big family. The rooms were small and poorly furnished, and the family was not very wealthy. Only my father and Fania worked. There was a flower and kitchen garden near the house. My mother grew flowers and vegetables. Sometimes my father's brothers Boris and Veniamin visited us. Sometimes we visited them. We celebrated family holidays together, birthdays and anniversaries, and we celebrated state holidays like the 1st of May and October Revolution Day. These revolutionary holidays were days off and we had the table covered with a fancy tablecloth and there were lace coverlets on the armchairs. It made the atmosphere very bright and festive. Our life during the evacuation was very hard. After my father perished my mother went to work at the Krasny rezinschik plant. She worked at the shop where they made boots for the army. After World War II my mother continued working at the plant, but she fell ill with cancer in 1963. She died in 1964.