

Victor Feldman And His Mother Rachil Ghendler-Feldman



This is me as a one-year old, and my mother Rachil Ghendler-Feldman, in our apartment in Bazarnaya Street. The photo was taken in Odessa in 1916. My mother was born in Odessa in 1887. She finished a grammar school and wanted to continue her education. One of her aunts agreed to sponsor her and pay 35 rubles per month. My mother went to Zurich, Switzerland, in 1905 where she studied at the Medical Faculty. She and her girlfriend rented an apartment. She finished two years [of her studies] in Switzerland and returned to Odessa where she met my father, Semyon Feldman. In 1907 my father was arrested for participation in an underground meeting of the Socialist Democratic Party and for armed resistance to the police in Odessa. He was put in a prison in Odessa and was exiled afterwards. My mother had to marry him on the day of his departure to be able to follow him. She submitted a request for permission to enter into a marriage in prison to the general Governor of Odessa. She obtained his permission and they invited a rabbi to prison to have a Jewish wedding. Later they also had a civil ceremony. My parents returned to Odessa in 1913. My mother continued her medical education. In 1915 she graduated from the Emperor's University in Novorossiysk [Odessa University from 1919]. In the same year, on 29th October, I was born. I was an only child. I was named Victor since my parents didn't want to give me a Jewish name. My mother finished a grammar school and knew Latin. Victor means winner in Latin.