

Ronia Finkelshtein's Father Abram Finkelshtein



My father Abram Finkelshtein. This photo was taken to be sent to his relatives. It's actually a postcard and on the back my mother wrote greetings to her sister Sonia on the occasion of her son

Boris' birthday. Photographer G.A. Harlab, Poltava, 1917. My father was the oldest child in the family. He was born in 1890. Two years later his sister Runia was born, Lisa followed in 1895 and Yunia in 1898. My father and Yunia finished cheder and the girls studied at home with a teacher. When my father was 13-14 years old he left for Poltava [350 km from Kiev]. Poltava was a big industrial town. My father was a laborer, then he finished an accounting course and got a job as an accountant. My father worked as an accountant in Poltava in 1913 and could provide well for his family. I don't know how my parents got acquainted. Aunt Nyura told me that my father was engaged when he met my mother, but when he saw her, he fell in love with her at first sight. He left his fiancée and married my mother. My mother's parents were religious, so my parents had a traditional Jewish wedding. My grandmother told me that there was a chuppah installed in the yard of their house: a velvet canopy on four posts. My mother wore a fancy wedding gown and a white veil covering her head and face. My father wore a new suit. The rabbi said a prayer, gave his blessing and pronounced the marriage contract. My mother's relatives, neighbors and my father's friends came to the wedding. There were tables laid in the yard and klezmer musicians playing at the wedding party. My father rented a room on the first floor in the center of Poltava. My mother became a housewife. My sister, Luda, was born in 1914. The girl was very pretty, blonde and had blue eyes, but there was something wrong with the way she was fed. The baby died of dyspepsia at the age of 7 months. My mother was grieving and wore mourning clothes for a long time. The revolution of 1917 didn't change my parents' life style. My father continued to work as an accountant and my mother remained a housewife.