

Ronia Finkelshtein



This is me, 2 years old. The picture was taken in the photo shop at 20, Oktaibrskaya Street in Poltava to be sent to my Aunt Sonia in Kolomak. I was born on 22nd August 1920. I was named Ronia after my deceased great-grandmother on my mother's side. It's an ancient Jewish name. We lived in a 20 square meter room my father was renting from a Jewish landlord. We had a leather settee, my wooden bed and my parents' bed with nickel balls. My father had a desk with carved legs and a bookshelf. There was a small yard near the house with a big lime tree, two old apple trees, a few jasmine bushes and a dogrose plant. My mother was a very nice and kind woman. She

took care of my father, me and my grandparents. My father first worked as an accountant and then as an inspector at the Oil Sales Company. He loved me a lot and spent plenty of time with me: he bought me books and toys and allowed me to do anything I wanted. Naturally, I loved him more than I loved my mother. When I turned 5 I went to the group of a German governess, Mata, who had finished the Froebel Institute. There were 6 children in her group, Jewish and Ukrainian. We went to walk in the park and she spoke German with us. I learned to read and speak German that way. She also taught us manners, and we played a lot. There were several parks in the center of Poltava: a beautiful pioneer park and a birch garden.