

Rafael Genis And His Family



In this photo you can see my family. My father Yankle Genis is sitting and holding my sister Tsilya on his lap. My mother, Feiga Taube Genene, is standing, to the right of her is my brother Dovid Genis, before him my brother Isroel Genis, on the left Liber Genis and the little guy is me. The photo was taken in 1928 in Rietavas. After the wedding my parents settled in the house, given by Grandpa Bentsion to my father. In 1916 the first-born, my elder brother Dovid, came into the world. Liber was born two years later, Isroel ? in 1920 and in 1922 ? Abram. On 21st June 1923 I was born. Mother was expecting a difficult parturition, so she left for Klaipeda to give birth there. Thus, I came into the world in Klaipeda and my birth certificate in Lithuanian and German was issued there. I was named Rafael. In 1927 a long awaited girl, Tsilya, was born. Everybody adored the baby. The elder ones carried her in their arms and played with her like with a doll. When she grew

up, all of us pampered her. We, the elder kids, were made to work about the house and in the garden, and Tsilya was our little princess. When the babies were born, Father built another house on the same plot of land. It was a large two-storied house. Father leased the old house to a tinsmith. He had his workshop in the house and his family was also living there. We moved to the new place. There was a bakery on the first floor. It was the same as in Grandpa's place. Our house was big, but we mostly used four rooms on the second floor. Apart from the bakery and the butcher's shop there was a kitchen on the first floor. The only electric bulb was in the kitchen. There was not enough electricity for the town in the prewar times. When it got dark, candles were lit in other rooms. There was a large flap table in the center of the kitchen. The whole family ? ten people ? got together there for breakfast and lunch. Mother made a rule for everyone to have meals together at a certain time. If someone skipped lunch, they didn't get anything. Mother didn't have time to serve meals separately to us, therefore during the meals all of us got together.