

Rachel Gitelis' Grandmother Brana Roizmarin



My grandmother on my mother's side Brana Roizmarin. The photo was taken in the town of Ladyzhin in the 1910s. My grandmother was born in Ladyzhin in 1853. Her parents were merchants, just like my grandfather's family. Her family was not rich either. The Jews of Ladyzhin at

that time were all petty merchants. I loved my grandmother. She was very nice and kind. She wore long skirts and a shawl. She went to the synagogue on Fridays, Saturdays and holidays. All her children went to the synagogue with her. She owned an inn, and I spent most of my time with her. She had a house with a few rooms that she rented out to visitors coming to town. Her tenants were actors, musicians and chazzanim. There was always music playing in her house, and her guests sang a lot. My grandmother didn't have a garden or any livestock, but she was always busy anyways, with so many people to be tended. She didn't have any kitchen or housemaids. She came to our house every Friday, and my mother and her baked bread to last for the whole week. They baked it in a special oven in the stove where my mother usually kept meals for Saturday to keep them warm. They also baked delicious matzah for Pesach. My grandmother died in 1934 when she was about 80. She was buried in the Jewish cemetery near the Chumka. All our neighbors came to her funeral. The Kaddish was recited in the cemetery and for seven days we all sat on the floor wailing for her.