

Ruvín Gitman With A Friend



This photo, taken in Kopaygorod in 1932, shows me with our neighbors' child while on a visit to a relative of my mother who lived in Kopaygorod. The photo was taken at the request of my grandfather Itsyk. He had one of two copies of the picture and my mother had the other one. I was born on 20th August 1924. I was my parents' first child. According to Jewish tradition the mother gives a name to the first child. I was named Ruvín after my mother's grandfather. My parents had another son in 1926. He was named Iermiuya after my father's grandfather. Iosif was born in 1929 and my little sister Masia was born in 1934. My parents worked from morning till night and all the children helped them. I shepherded geese when I was five, and then, after I grew older, I began to

shepherd the cattle. My father grew grain of high quality and vendors eagerly bought his crops. My father was a very good farmer. His cows produced at least three buckets of milk each. My mother milked cows three times a day. My father was a good gardener, too. We had a nice orchard and a kitchen garden. In the autumn my father hired employees to help him with the harvesting. He paid them well. Our family was very religious. My parents observed all the religious traditions and taught us to do the same. My mother didn't wear a wig, but she always covered her head with a shawl. My brothers, my sister and I received a religious education. We studied Hebrew, and read the Torah and the Talmud with our teachers. I can still remember when and what prayer one needs to say. I also remember the prayers. However, during Soviet times I didn't have the opportunity to deepen my knowledge of Judaism. We spoke Yiddish in the family, and Ukrainian and Russian with our Ukrainian and Russian neighbors. The Jews in Koryshkov visited each other and kept in touch. They often got together for dinner. They also socialized with their Ukrainians neighbors. Ukrainians knew that they were not expected at Sabbath and left us alone on this day. People were very tolerant towards each other's faith. There was no anti-Semitism.