

Mina Gomberg's Maternal Grandmother Clara Rapoport



My grandmother on my mother's side, Clara Rapoport [nee Kolodnaya], on her 23rd birthday in 1905 in Belaya Tserkov. My grandmother was born in Belaya Tserkov in 1882. She had some education. Her mother tongue was Yiddish, but she could also speak Ukrainian. She was introduced to my grandfather, Alter-Iona Rapoport, by a matchmaker. My grandparents got married in 1904.

They had a big wedding with a chuppah, many guests and klezmer musicians. They had six children: four daughters called Minna, Dvoira, Eta and Surah, and twin sons that died in infancy. They observed Jewish traditions and celebrated Sabbath and holidays. They dressed up to go to the synagogue and had nice dinners with their friends and relatives afterwards. Going to the synagogue was more of a tribute to tradition than profound faith to them. I like to recall the 1900s when it became a habit in our family to have coffee in the evening. On Friday evening the family got together on the veranda in summer, or in the living room in winter, for a coffee party: they got together to talk and enjoy their time together. There wasn't any connection with Sabbath, but it was nice to take a rest from the routine of weekdays. Coffee was imported into Ukraine and only wealthy families could afford to buy it. My grandfather died of typhoid in 1919 at the age of 39. After his death my grandmother and her four children used to hide at their Ukrainian neighbor's house, because they were afraid of the pogroms. In the late 1920s my grandmother had pneumonia and moved to her daughter Dvoira in Kiev. Dvoira was married by that time. My grandmother died in 1938. She was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Kiev.