

Berta Gutnomen-Gutman



This is a picture of my mother, Berta Gutnomen-Gutman, nee Aronovich. The photo was taken in Dvinsk in 1914.

My mother and grandmother lived in Griva district in Dvinsk. Financially they lived under very low standards, and my mother had to read books under the blanket. She was persecuted at home for wasting kerosene and candles. Daddy was much older than mum. I don't remember exactly how

much older. My mother's attitude towards my father wasn't so romantic. He bought a carriage, a horse and used to take her for a ride. I learned that from my sister. Mum communicated more with her than with us.

We were three brothers. The eldest was Yakov, born in 1905, and then came my twin brother, Solomon, or Salya, as we called him, was 20 minutes older than me. I was very small - no bigger than a scoop. Daddy took mum to the maternity house. Later, when he went back there on a cart to find out who was born, he was told, 'A boy!' - and he answered, 'Okay, that's fine!' Then, a couple of hours later, he went there again asking, 'Well, how's that boy?' And they told him, 'You've got another one!' Daddy apparently told the carter, 'Just don't you go in that direction again!' That was later told as a joke. We had a governess in Dvinsk.