

Dina Kuremaa And Her Family



This is a family picture taken shortly after the wedding of my elder sister Miriam Shpolyanskaya, nee Naimark. My sister Zelda Putte, nee Naimark, was married at that time and came from Riga, where she lived with her husband, to attend Miriam's wedding. From left to right, the 1st row: Zelda, our mother Berta Naimark, nee Aizman, and Rocha. The 2nd row: Miriam, her husband Naum Shpolyanskiy and I. The picture was taken in Tallinn in 1945. Miriam was the first out of my sisters who got married. Her wedding was in August 1945. She married a Jew, Naum Shpolyanskiy, who came to Tallinn from Ukraine. Eldest sister Zelda married a Lett and moved to his place in Riga. Her married name was Putte. Rocha did not change her maiden name and remained Naimark. Rocha had a diploma of a nurse. She worked for a hospital and entered the evening Pharmaceutical Department of Tallinn University. Rocha was the only one in the family, who got higher education. Upon graduation she went to work as a pharmacist, then she was the head of the pharmacy. After World War II we gradually started speaking Estonian, not Yiddish. Mother spoke Yiddish, and my sisters and I mostly spoke Estonian. Mother kept Jewish traditions. It was hard. There was no place to buy kosher food, we had to stand in a long line even to get ordinary food. There were times, when there was no place to buy matzah for Pesach and we baked it ourselves. Then the municipal authorities gave the community a small wooden house, which was turned into a synagogue or, more precisely, a prayer house. Matzah was sold there. On Friday Mother always marked Sabbath in accordance with the tradition: lit candles and prayed over them. Mother was the only one who was able not to work on Saturday. At that time Saturday was an official working day and people had to go to work. We tried to mark Jewish holidays the best way we could. Mother loved cooking Jewish dishes and taught me how to cook them. Even now I often cook such dishes as gefilte fish, tsimes, salted beef tongue and others. My family likes them a lot. We always fasted on Yom Kippur. Almost every Sabbath, Mother went to the synagogue. All of us went there on Jewish holidays - my mother, sisters and I.