

Zoya Lerman's Maternal Grandfather, Arkadiy Gilik, And His Daughter, Raissa Gilik



My maternal grandfather, Arkadiy Gilik, and his daughter Raissa Gilik, my mother's sister, in a photo taken in Kiev in 1926. Late in the first decade of the 1900's, my grandmother married Arkadiy Gilik. I know very little about my grandfather, only what my grandmother told me. My grandfather was born in 1886 and died in 1926, long before I was born. I can remember his face dimly from the photo of him that I saw once. My grandmother told me that he was great at woodcarving. His carving decorated cupboards and pieces of furniture. My grandmother described his patterns in every detail to me. He used to carve pheasants or fruit and climbing vines on the doors. My grandfather died quite young, when he was about 40 years old. He may have died from cholera or some other disease. My grandfather and grandmother were religious people. They went to synagogue, although I don't know how often. They always celebrated the Sabbath and traditional Jewish holidays at home. My grandparents had six children: two sons and four daughters. After my grandfather died my grandmother had to raise their children alone. My grandmother never remarried.