

Abram And Sophia Nitsberg



These are my maternal grandparents, grandfather Abram Nitsberg and grandmother Sophia Nitsberg.

My mother kept this picture as a keepsake when she left her paternal house in Chernigov. She left for Kharkov to study. The photo was taken in Chernigov in 1910.

My mother's family lived in Chernigov. My maternal grandfather was born in Chernigov in the 1850s.

Grandmother Sophia was also born in Chernigov. I don't know exactly when she was born nor do I know her maiden name.

All I know is that she was ten years younger than my grandfather. Grandmother's Jewish name was Sarah.

But the grandchildren called her Sonya. Grandfather was a stubby man of medium height. He had a long beard.

He wore a black silken kippah on his head. Grandmother was short and buxom. She wore traditional Jewish clothes:

long black skirts and dark long-sleeved blouses. She wore a black kerchief on her head and during solemn occasions she wore a black lace shawl.

Grandmother was very kind; her eyes radiated kindness.

Probably all grannies are kind, but mine seemed to be the kindest.

Grandfather worked in a sort of work association. He sold fish. I don't know what his job was like; all I know is that he didn't own the business. Grandmother was a housewife.

My grandparents had a cow. They also had a kitchen garden and planted vegetables there to feed the family.

They lived well and didn't starve. Grandmother contrived to feed her many children.

I don't know for sure, but I think my maternal grandparents must have been religious.

It couldn't have been otherwise at that time. Grandfather paid a lot of attention to the secular education of his children.

My mother finished a full course at Chernigov lyceum, and I think she wasn't the only one who got educated in the lyceum.

All children knew Yiddish, which was their mother tongue, but they also were proficient in Russian and spoke foreign languages.

The children didn't get primary Jewish education.