

## Sofia Ryzhevskaya And Samuel Ryzhevskiy



These are my parents Sofia Ryzhevskaya, nee Gitina and Samuel Ryzhevskiy. The picture was taken after my father returned from the lines after World War I in Krivoy Rog in 1917. My mother told me the story of how she met my father, Samuel Ryzhevskiy. One of my mother's relatives asked to invite my father to the family get-together on the occasion of the engagement of my mother's sister Manya. Father attended the party. He saw my mother there and fell in love with her. When he came back home, he wrote a letter to my grandfather in Ivrit, in which he asked for the hand of the middle daughter, Sofia. Grandfather was so moved that the letter was written in Ivrit that he blessed the coming marriage. The wedding took place in Ingulets in accordance with the Jewish traditions in 1913. My parents left for Pismennoye after the wedding. Of course, Mother

had a hard life after getting married. The living conditions at her parents' house had been much better, as they were much better off. Nevertheless, we never heard our mother complain. She was constantly busy with the chores, but she always found time to talk to her children and help them out. The first-born of our family, Mikhail, born in 1914, was named after our paternal grandfather. When World War I was unleashed in August 1914, my father was drafted into the tsarist army. When my father was in the lines, my pregnant mother went to her kin in Ingulets. My elder brother was born there. Father didn't manage to see his first-born, as he was in the lines. Father was a signaler in the army, and he was responsible for telephone communication. There were times when he had to restore torn wire in the moment when the adversary was firing. Father was awarded with a St. George Cross for bravery. It was a very precious award, and there were very few awardees. He came back from the lines in 1917. Father came straight to Ingulets. Mother said that her relatives played a joke on my father. They brought somebody's three-year-old child, and when my father saw that toddler he took him in his arms and started kissing him. Then he was shown his own son. Father stayed in Ingulets for a while, and then he took Mother and Mikhail to Pismennoye.