

Evgenia Shapiro's Grandparents Nehama And Isaac Shapiro



My grandparents on my father's side, Nehama and Isaac Shapiro, on their wedding day in Borisov in 1907. The picture was taken at the Rozenblum photoshop. My grandfather was born in Borisov in 1876. He was deaf and dumb and had no education. He was a tailor. He was a very good tailor, but he didn't have many clients, as it was difficult to communicate with him. He made men's clothes. According to Jewish rules a man wasn't supposed to even look at a woman if they weren't

acquainted, and so my grandfather never made women's clothes. He observed all religious traditions and celebrated Sabbath and Jewish holidays, although he wasn't fanatically religious. He didn't wear a hat or have a beard. He was a very kind and nice man - one could see it in his eyes. My grandfather had a drinking problem, though. My father often told me how his mother took him by the hand in the evening and how they went from tavern to tavern looking for my grandfather. By the time they found him he was usually dead drunk. They often found him on the roadside. He felt different from other people because he was deprived of their capability to hear and talk. Drinking helped him to forget about it for a short time. Their family was poor. There were two rooms and a small hallway in their house. There were holes in the floor through which mice came into the house in winter. There were two beds, a cupboard and a big table in the rooms. All children slept near the stove. There were no books in the house. My grandmother was born in Borisov in 1890. She could read and write a little. Her parents forced her into marriage in 1907 when she was 17. They were very poor and so they were keen to see their daughters married off at a young age. They made Nehama marry the first man that agreed to marry her. Her wedding party was small. It was a traditional Jewish wedding with a huppah. They borrowed a gown for the bride and a suit for the bridegroom from their neighbors. My grandfather was 14 years older than my grandmother. They had three children: my father Jacob, Lipa and Rebecca.