

Sima Shvarts' Aunts Fruma, Rakhil And Chaya Vainstein



My mother's sisters. From left to right: Fruma, Rakhil, and Chaya Vainstein. The photo was taken around 1912 in Rzhishev. My grandparents had seven children: one son and six daughters. I don't remember when they were born, but I can name them all. The eldest daughter was Etya, then came their son Naum, then Dvoira, then my mother, Risl, then Chaika, Rakhil, and Fruma. At that time, even though our family was not rich, none of the women worked outside the house. When they got married, their husbands provided for them. The year before my birth, only two elder sisters and the brother was married. Those who were younger than my mother were still single.

They were seamstresses. Two of them lived in Dnepropetrovsk and one in Kiev. My mother and I moved to Kiev from Rzyshev in 1918. Among my mother's siblings Rakhil, Basya, Chaika and Fruma were also in Kiev. Fruma was still single. She got married a few years later and her husband took her to Moscow. The husband of my mother's sister Rakhil was a high-ranking party worker. At the time there were many private houses. So, the husband told us that there were several flats owned by somebody called Parkhomovsky in Zhilyanskaya Street. And Rakhil and her husband had no flat in Kiev. So, he went to Parkhomovsky, intimidated him with something and said that if he didn't give him the flats, they would be confiscated from him. So, Parkhomovsky gave him two flats - their family stayed in one, and my mother and I, in the other one. They had two sons, Boris and Mark Kamenkovich. They were younger than I but we were good friends. We remained friends for life