

Dora Slobodianskaya's Parents Wolf And Golda Melman



This is the wedding picture of my parents Wolf Melman and Golda Melman [nee Shnaiderman]. The photo was taken in Faleshty in 1924. My father met my mother when he became an apprentice to my mother's father. After finishing cheder at the age of 11 my father studied to become a fur

specialist. His tutor, Shloime Shnaiderman, lived in the same neighborhood. He was my mother's father. My mother was 7 years old then. When they grew up they fell in love with one another. Grandfather Shloime gave his consent to their marriage. They got married in 1924 when my mother was 19 and my father 23 years old. They had a traditional Jewish wedding with a chuppah. Two years after the wedding my father bought a house from a Jewish family that moved to Argentina. The house was in the main street of town. When my father bought the house he quit his job in my grandfather's shop and opened his own leather shop. He purchased black and gray sheep and lambskin from farmers in the neighboring villages. He put sheepskin in a tanning solution that had a terrible smell. Afterwards the sheepskins were dried in the yard. When they were dry my father removed the inner layer of the leather and treated the skins with a fur polishing solution. Then they were placed in a big drum with sawdust. It had to be rolled with a handle for 12 hours before the sheepskins were ready for further handling. They were brushed and then my father made hats, collars and coats. He had a special sewing machine for leather. After the harvest in fall Moldavians came to buy hats from my father. My father had two to three apprentices. They learned at his place for a couple of years and after their apprenticeship my father paid them for their work. Jews settled down in central parts of towns because they were tradesmen and craftsmen in their majority and had more business opportunities and clients, if they lived close to the center. Land was expensive and the cost of a house was based on the width of the façade of the house. Therefore, Jews made facades of their houses narrow to reduce the cost. Our house was like this - built with its narrow façade facing the street and advancing into the backyard with its wide part. The rooms were in a row and accessible from a long hallway. The first and biggest room was my father's shop. The next one was the dining room, then came the kitchen, my parents' bedroom, a nursery room and a living room. There was a door to the backyard leading onto a verandah annexed to the back of the house. There was a cellar where my mother stored eggplants, carrots and parsley during winter. She also kept tinned vegetables and fruit. There was a big shed in the backyard of the house. My father bought wheat in fall and kept it in this shed. There was a toilet behind the shed. We had several fruit trees in the backyard. There was a fence around the house and a gate with a lock.