

Yakov Voloshyn With His Family



This is a photo of our family. In the 1st row from left to right sitting are: Raisa Bratslavskaya, the daughter of my mother sister's whose name I don't remember; she is next, the one with her hands on the back of the chair; my sister Rosalia Khananova, nee Voloshyna; my cousin Emil Goldshtein holding a ball; his parents Charna Goldshtein, nee Alshtein, and her husband Abram Goldshtein son are sitting next to him. In the 2nd row from left: my mother's sister Hanusia Menachimovich, nee Alshtein, and her husband Israil Menachimovich, my mother Malka Voloshyna, nee Alshtein. In the 3rd row from left: my mother's sister Hanusia's foster son Moisey Menachimovich; Lubov Bratslavskaya, the daughter of my mother's sister whose name I don't remember; Fishel Bratslavski, her husband; I and my father David Voloshyn. This photo was taken in Kiev in 1931. My mother's family lived in Bershad, Vinnitsa region. My grandfather Shmul and his wife had 13 children. My mother was born in 1890. I don't remember whether my mother told me about her childhood and youth or any details about the family. I don't know where my mother studied. Probably after the Revolution of 1917, when the Pale of Settlement was abolished, six of my mother's sisters moved to Kiev. I remember three of my mother's sisters (they can be seen in the photo in the 2nd row) her older sister Hanusia and younger sisters Charna and a third sister whose name I don't remember. Hanusia married Israil Menachimovich, a Jewish man. He was a polygraphic worker. Hanusia was a housewife after getting married. They didn't have children and adopted Moisey, a Jewish orphan boy. My mother's sister Charna married Abram Goldshtein, a Jewish man. Abram was a clerk in an office and Charna was a housewife. They had a son named Emil. He was a little younger than I. I don't remember the name of my mother's third sister. Her husband's name was Fishel Bratslavski, he was also a Jew. I don't remember what Fishel did for a living, but my mother's sister didn't work. They had two daughters: Lubov and Raisa. They were a little older than I. I don't know how my parents met. They got married in 1911 or 1912. I think they had a traditional Jewish wedding with a chuppah and rabbi: this was a common custom at the time. After the wedding my parents moved to Uman, a small town in Poltava province. In 1913 my older sister Rosalia - Reizl was her Jewish name - was born in Uman. I was born in 1915. I was named Yakov and this name was put in my birth certificate. My father was a shop assistant in a food store. My mother did housekeeping and looked after the children. Ours was a family of average income.

We had enough food and clothes. My mother didn't wear a wig and I don't think many women in Uman even knew what it was like. My mother wore a kerchief and father only wore a hat to go out. My parents wore common clothes. They spoke Yiddish to one another and Russian to me and my sister. My father had religious books. Each of my parents had a prayer book that they took to the synagogue. My father went to the synagogue on Sabbath and on Jewish holidays and my mother only went there on holidays. We always observed Sabbath at home. In 1921 my sister went to a Russian 8-year school. I went to the same school in 1923.