

Hanna Levitas And Her Family



From left to right: my Mom, Hanna Peisakhovna Levitas; my Daddy, Yankel Bentsionovich Levitas; my brother Boris and my paternal grandmother. This photo was taken a year before I was born in Brusilovo.

The name of my paternal grandfather was Bentsij Levitas. He was a hatter. He had five sons and two or three daughters. I don't remember what my grandmother's name was. The parents of my father were born in Brusilovo. Unfortunately, that's all I remember about my father's parents.

My father, Yankel Bentsionovich Levitas, was born in 1881 or 1882 in Brusilovo. Father finished cheder, then became a hatter. His brothers were tailors and blacksmiths. Four of his brothers left for America when I was two or three years old. One of his brothers lived in Canada and was engaged in construction of trams, what the others did I do not know. My father wasn't able to go away as he didn't have enough money for it. Those of his brothers left, whose work turned out to be more profitable and who were able to make some money. The sisters remained with my father.

My mother's name was Hanna Peisakhovna Levitas, nee Lakhterman. Mom, too, finished cheder. She worked as a dressmaker and when my parents got married, Father also became a tailor. Our family was of an average well-being. We had no nannies. I was brought up by my father and mother. If I didn't obey – they would give me a slap in the face. When we were small, we went to cheder. Later, my sister and I studied in the Ukrainian school. I went to school in 1920 and studied there for three years.

I had several brothers and a sister, but all my younger brothers died at an early age in an orphanage, when Father had to send us there. It happened in the time of the Soviet regime. At that time Father didn't have enough money to keep us, and he had to send us to the orphanage, where we lived for three years. The only ones who survived were me, my sister Manya, born in 1913, and my two grown-up brothers: Boris and Syoma. Syoma was born in 1905, and Boris in 1908.