

Abram Yudelevich



This is my father Abram Yudelevich - the student of lyceum. Photo Studio Visit-Portrait in Kaunas. The picture was made in the 1900s.

I have never seen any of my paternal ancestors. I know that my grandpa Lazar Yudelevich, was born in the 1860s in Jonava. He was a rabbi. His wife, my grandmother Gitel Chazan was ten years younger than grandpa. She died rather early, in the 1920s or earlier. When she died, grandpa left for Palestine. He got married there for a second time. I do not know his second wife's name. There was grandfather's portrait in the house. I vaguely remember him. He looked stately having a beard, wearing a kippah on a small beautiful grey-haired head. He was as if still in grief, whispering something to himself. This is all I know about my grandparents.

Lazar and Gitel Yudelevich had three children. The eldest was my father Abram Yudelevich. My father was born in Jonava in 1894. He has been an atheist since early childhood, and that strongly displeased grandpa, who was deeply religious. I do not know if father went to cheder. He went to Russian lyceum in the town of Suwalki [Poland, 10 km away from the border of Lithuania and Poland and 170 km from Vilnius]. Upon graduation he decided to enter university. He dreamt to become a lawyer. Grandpa Lazar was very displeased with father's decision. He hoped that his son would follow in his footsteps, but my young father was adamant. That is why grandfather practically cut him off a shilling. Father went to Russia to enter the institute. I do not know how he happened to be in Siberia. He entered Tomsk university [about 3000 km from Moscow]. Father studied there for couple of years and got transferred to Yekaterinburg [Russia, 1500 km from Moscow], where he graduated juridical department. Father came back to the motherland in 1918 right after Lithuania became independent [Lithuanian independence]. In couple of years, namely in 1923 father proposed to mother. Parents had never told anything about their wedding. I think it was carried out in accordance with Jewish traditions. At any rate before war at home there was parents' wedding certificate issued by the rabbi.