

Taube Pagirskaya With Her Friend



To the right is my mother Taube Pagirskaya with her friend. The picture was made in Jonava in 1920. I do not know anything about her friend.

My mother Tauber Pagirskaya was born in 1898. Mother as well as her siblings got a good education at Russian Commercial Lyceum. Upon graduation mother lived with her parents before getting married. She did not work. I do not know exactly where my parents met. I think they knew each other when they were young. I have the picture of my young parents and mother's siblings, taken at the beginning of the 20th century by the boat, traveling to Jonava across river Neris. My parents got married in 1923. 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.

My parents did not stay in Jonava for a long time. They moved to Kaunas shortly after wedding. They rented an apartment in the heart of the city. They barely stayed there for a year. In 1925 my elder brother David was born. The family needed a more spacious apartment, so they had to move. Another apartment was in the house leased by Boris Shlapoberskiy. Father was a private lawyer and made pretty good money. The amount of rent was 800 litas. At that time it was a lot of money. Parents could afford a trip to the spa. It was in style and decent to take a vacation for couple of days or weeks to go seaside in any season. My brother was a feeble and in 1928 my mother expecting a child in couple of weeks, took brother to the seaside. They went to a village not far from Klaipeda [300 km from Vilnius]. Soon father came there as well. I, Iosif Yudelevich, was born in that village on the 25th of December 1928. Before long the family came back in Kaunas.

I remember the apartment, where I spent my childhood. There were five rooms in it- one room was after another. The first two rooms were occupied by father: one room was a reception, where his clients and visitors were waiting for him, and another room was father's office. Father's secretary Kozlovskiy was at the reception desk. Father's customers sat on the leathern couches waiting for my father to receive them. At that time my father was one of the most famous lawyers on civil cases in Kaunas. There was a large desk in father's office with a lamp and ink well ,a small adjoining table for negotiations and book shelves containing the works on jurisprudence, books by ancient Greek and Roman philosophers and regulation documents. There were few fiction books. Most of them were written by Russian classics - Tolstoy, Turgenev etc. I do not remember whether there were books by Jewish writers at home. There was a large dining-room behind father's office. There was a large round dining table, the one we are sitting now, arm- chairs, chairs, beautiful carved cupboard, bedroom furniture and children's furniture used by brother and I . Of course, there was a kitchen, but I cannot recall my being there.