

## Gita Jafet And Her Family



This is my father's family: grandmother Gita Jafet is the 2nd on the left. In the center are my uncle Mikhail, aunt Zina; my uncle Alexandr is the 3rd on the right, next to him is my aunt Doba. I don't know the others. This photo was taken in Riga in the 1930s.

My grandfather Azriel and his wife Gita had three sons and four daughters. From what I know, all of the boys finished cheder and received a Jewish education. My father, Rafail Jafet, born in 1893, was the oldest son. The next son, who was given the Russian name of Mikhail was born many years later, in 1906. There were the girls born in-between. Perhaps, Mikhail also had a Jewish name, but I know him by the name of Mikhail. He moved to Kaunas in 1923. In Kaunas Mikhail married Zina, a Jewish girl. They had two sons: Ariy, born in 1925, and Grigoriy, born in 1933. Mikhail owned a small store, which supported the family well. When the Soviet regime was established in 1940, the shop was confiscated, and Mikhail found a job in the fire brigade. When the Great Patriotic War began, the family evacuated. They went to Kazakhstan, and when Rostov region was liberated, they moved to Rybinsk. After the Great Patriotic War Mikhail, Zina and their younger son settled down in Riga. After the war Mikhail continued his work as a fire brigadier. He died in the early 1960s, while Aunt Zina lived almost 30 years longer.

Alexandr, or Alex, as he was called, born in 1913, was the youngest in the family. He also had a Jewish name; I think it was Zalman, since his family called him Zisia. Alexandr had elementary education. He also moved to Kaunas where he married the daughter of a sawmill owner. He worked at this sawmill. In 1941 Soviet authorities deported him and his wife Rosa to Siberia. I think it might have been a mistake. They might have been looking for my father, who lived abroad, and Alex suffered for having the same surname as my father. At least, there were no evident reasons to deport him: Alex' family wasn't a wealthy one. Alex' wife died somewhere on the way. Alex spent over 17 years in exile in Irkutsk region. When he returned to Lithuania, there was none of his kin left there. He and Rosa had no children. He lived in Lithuania till 1973, celebrated his 60th anniversary there and left for Israel where he lived with his sister Doba.

Doba, the youngest daughter, studied at the Medical College in Moscow. When her father moved to Berlin, she followed him. She studied at the Berlin Medical University where she met her future husband. I don't remember his name. In the early 1930s Doba and her husband moved to Palestine where they worked as doctors. Doba had no children.