

Susanna Sirota



I am five years old and I am photographed with my favorite doll. We gave this photograph to my kindest aunt Esther. This photo was taken in Priluki in 1928.

I was born in Lubny in 1923. It was hard to find a job at that time. My mother's older sister Rosa lived in Lubny at that period and my parents moved there. I don't remember Lubny. After a short while we returned to Priluki. My first childhood memory is my brother's birth. He was born in another room in our home. Everybody was excited and I contracted this excitement. The Jewish midwife told me, 'if you suck your finger your mother will die.' I never sucked my finger again. I liked my brother a lot when he was small. When he grew older we used to fight, but in general we got along very well.

My brother was born in Priluki in 1927. He was named Leonid and was called Lusik affectionately. Our family rented two rooms in a house with a porch. We had an entrance on one side and our Ukrainian landlords lived on the other side of the house. Later we moved to another apartment owned by Rachlin, a Jew. We lived there until the Great Patriotic War.

My mother worked as a cashier in a store and my father picked up any job he could find: he worked as a loader or laborer. We went to a kindergarten. I can still remember the smell in it: it was so trite and I hated going there, but I had to. When I went to school I spent vacations in pioneer camps since they were free.