

Izia Antipka With His Sister Lidia Goldstein



This is me with my sister Lidia, wearing what my mother made for us and photographed at my grandmother's request at the Odeon photo shop in Orgeyev in 1934.

I was born on 10th January 1925. I was named Izia [full name Israel] after my grandfather. This name, Izia Antipka, was written down in my birth certificate. In 1930 Mama gave birth to my sister Leya. Later she changed her name to the Russian Lidia, or Lida for short.

I wouldn't say that our family was really religious. Mama came from a more traditional family, though she didn't cover her head like her mother and grandmother, but she tried to observe all Jewish traditions. We always celebrated Sabbath. My father went to the synagogue wearing his fancy suit. Jewish men used to have two suits in Orhei: a casual dark blue and a fancy brown one. My father had a fancy brown striped suit. On Friday Mama cleaned the apartment and cooked everything for Saturday, though on Saturday she didn't invite Moldovans to help her stoke the stove or serve the food. However, she didn't take a needle or scissors to work on Saturday. My father took me with him to go to the synagogue of shoemakers. The synagogue was in a small one-story building, but it was beautiful and had Venetian glass in its windows. Though my father went to the synagogue, he didn't follow the kosher rules. He liked pork a lot. It's even sinful to say that on Friday evening he used to send me to the Verbitskiy store to buy delicacies: smoked pork, which I liked with fat streaks and my sister liked the fillet part of it, my father also ate dried pork and fat. We also bought kosher goose sausage for Mama.

We spoke Yiddish to one another, but we also knew Romanian that we spoke to our neighbors. My parents also spoke Russian and often switched to it, when they didn't want my sister or me to understand what they were talking about, but we understood what they were saying. We celebrated Jewish holidays at home according to traditions.

At the age of seven I went to a Romanian elementary school. Most of my classmates were Jewish children. There were no prejudiced attitudes toward us and we also got along well. After I finished the elementary school my mother wanted me to go to the gymnasium, but I didn't quite want to continue to study. I liked doing things with my own hands and I went to the vocational school of the Jewish association Tarbut where students were trained in crafts.