

Frida Palanker's Mother Polina Veprinskaya



My mother Polina Veprinskaya, nee Shapiro, was born in Odessa in 1899.

My father was a tailor and my mother was a housewife. She also learned to sew before she got married. She was an apprentice of a tailor and her specialty was making skirts. She didn't work after she got married, because it was traditional for a Jewish woman to be a housewife. Although

the family wasn't wealthy my mother only made skirts for herself and her daughters.

At Sabbath my mother lit candles and cooked delicious dinner. My father worked on Saturday, as Saturday was a workday. They celebrated Jewish holidays. I remember Papa putting Hanukkeh geld (small change) under his children's pillows. At Pesach my parents used to buy matsa at the synagogue. My mother crushed it in the mortar and then sifted the flour to make sponge cakes. Mama cooked stuffed fish and made chicken neck with liver and fried flour and boiled chicken. We didn't have bread in the house at Pesach. My mother had Pesach dishes that were used only on this holiday. It was set of dishes for dinner, casseroles and frying pans. My uncle Yasha and his wife and sometimes Ion and his family came to join us for the celebration Uncle Yasha, the oldest man in the family, read a prayer. At Yom-Kipur my father and mother fasted, but my mother made food for us, children, on these days.

In spring 1942 my little brother starved to death and a month after him my mother died. My mother and my brother were buried in common graves. I didn't have money to bury them decently.