

Arkadi Milgrom's House In Krasilov



The house in the center of the Krasilov where I grew up. In 1900s my paternal grandfather Iosif Milgrom turned his house into an inn for local farmers and merchants. There were rooms and a kitchen in the living quarters and in another half of the house there were visitors with their wagons, horses and loads. Visitors had meals that my grandfather's beloved wife and my grandmother made. Photo was taken in the 1970s. It's half-ruined. Its left side, ruined already, had served as an inn, and its right side had been the living quarters of our big family. My ancestors came from Krasilov, a small town that before the revolution of 1917 belonged to Volyn province in 430 km from Kiev. In my childhood the population of the town accounted to 7 thousand people and Jews constituted about 40%. During the Soviet rule the town gained a status of district center of Kamenets-Podolskiy region, and now it belongs to Khmel'nitsk region. The nearest district town was Proskurov [present regional town Khmel'nitskiy in about 400 km from Kiev]. The road to Proskurov crossed Krasilov and another road connected Krasilov with Starokonstantinov town. There was a relatively big square in the center of the town where there was a market twice a week. Local Jewish families lived in the central part of the town. There were shops and stores also owned by Jews on one side of the square. There were grocery stores, baker and butcher stores, a glass and woodwork shops, garment shops, soap works and a forge. There were cabs taking people to the railway station and back to the center, saddle makers, carpenters and tinsmiths. In general, the town had all necessary facilities and provided its products to neighboring villages. There were also long one-storied buildings that served as inns near the center. Some of them were for visiting villagers: they rode their wagons under a tent. These shops and inns operated until the late 1920s when NEP was liquidated. There was local intelligentsia in the town: Polish doctors Velikanets and Skhish and Mankovski, Polish owner of a sugar refinery. He had Polish and Ukrainian workers at his refinery. After property expropriation Jewish owners, who had to give their shops to the state also had to go to work at this refinery. There were two synagogues in the central square of Krasilov. Local Jews mainly visited a big beautiful synagogue with a splendid prayer hall ornamented with stucco molding and richly ornamented balcony and gallery on big holidays. They came to another synagogue, also two-storied, but not so richly ornamented to pray on weekdays. There was a Beit Midrash nearby, a mikvah and sheds. In the early 1930s, when Soviet authorities were destroying

all religious institutions the bigger synagogue was removed and the smaller synagogue and its auxiliary facilities were used to grain and vegetable storage. There was a stand for town leadership made in the center of the square to watch parades during Soviet holidays.