

Gersh Kabakov



This is my uncle, father's brother Gersh Kabakov. The picture was made in Minsk in 1912 on the occasion of graduation from lyceum. It is written overleaf: "In this picture is Gersh Kabakov graduated from Minsk commercial school in 1911. The 10th of January 1912.

I did not live to see my paternal grandparents. I do not know exactly where they were born, but I know for sure that they came from Byelorussia. When they reached mature age, they lived in Minsk.

Grandfather Morduch did not have a house, but a spacious comfortable apartment in the downtown area. Grandmother Sofia Kabakovà died at the age of 25-26 while having parturition of her younger daughter in 1900. Grandpa remained with 3 little kids.

My father was only four, the eldest Gersh was 6 and Sofia was a new-born. My grandfather's second wife was Feiga. She was called Feigale or Fanya at home. They did not have common children. Fanya raised my father and his siblings. My father, his brother and sister loved her very much, like their mother, but they called her auntie.

Grandfather Morduch Kabakov worked as an accountant for his rich relatives Kabakovs. There were two lines of Kabakovs in Minsk- one wealthy and another one, where my grandpa belonged to, was not very rich. The business of the Kabakovs my grandpa worked for was very prosperous. They even had their own synagogue. There were only 50-60 telephone subscribers, 20-30 out of which pertained to public institutions and one of them belonged to the rich family of Kabakovs. At that time it spoke for welfare.

Though, my grandfather, the accountant, was not a poor man either. All his children finished lyceum and obtained higher education in Warsaw and Saint Petersburg, which was rather problematic for the Jews of that time. My grandpa Morduch Kabakov died of heart stroke in 1916. Grandparents Kabakovs were buried in Jewish cemetery of Minsk. Their tombs were not preserved after Great Patriotic War.

Grandpa Morduch Kabakov was very religious. He strictly observed all Jewish traditions. The solemn holiday of Yom-Kippur was the most revered by grandpa. On that day all Jews, including women went to the synagogue. They had stayed there all day long and fasted until the first evening star. If some of the children broke the fast, grandpa was infuriated and in father's words the violator got in the neck.

Father's elder brother Gersh Kabakov was born in 1892. He finished Realschule in Minsk. He studied in Poland in Warsaw University. Then he became timber engineer. He lived in Moscow and died in 1966. He was buried in Vostryakovskoye cemetery in Moscow. His son Matvey Kabakov is currently living in Moscow. He is an engineer like his father. Now he is a great expert in machine-building.