

Blyuma Perlstein's Relatives



This family picture was taken in Yanovichi before my mother Charya-Ita Perlstein died in 1941. Mom is third from left, in the middle, with gray hair. First from right sits mother's brother Mendel-Chaim Pakson; second from left sits her brother's wife Pesya with their grandchildren.

My mother, Chasya-Ita Leibovna – we called her Chasita – was born in 1871 in Yanovichi borough of Vitebsk region. She learnt only the Yiddish language and knew it very well. She had big prayer books in Yiddish and she always read prayers to us. Mother spoke mostly Yiddish and a little Russian, since we lived close to Russians. But she couldn't write in Russian. Mom didn't wear a wig, she only wore a kerchief.

Mom's elder brother Mendel-Chaim also lived in Yanovichi with his family and worked as a carter, delivering food products. He was executed by the Germans. His daughter Genya was a housewife. Genya's husband, Lev Shaikevich, lived next door to us. Genya and Lev had two kids. In 1941 the entire Shaikevich family was executed by the Germans in the neighboring Akhryutki village.

My mother died a natural death in 1941 in Leningrad of blood poisoning, penicillin was not invented yet in those years.