

Raisa Shulyakovskaya With Her Siblings



This photo of me, my brothers Yefim and Lev (Shulvakovsky) and sister Nina (Gertzevna, nee Shulyakovskaya) was taken in 1916 in Slutsk.

My parents got married in 1905. I don't know what kind of wedding they had. They lived in Slutsk at first. They had four kids: Yefim, Lev, Nina and me, Raisa. My elder brother Yefim was born in 1907. He started to work as a tutor at the age of 13 or 14, as his teachers recommended him to pupils who lagged behind. He visited them at home, taught them, received payment and gave it all

to Mom. Grandpa Shulyakovsky told him, 'Never become a teacher.' Grandpa had had experienced this work; he worked as a teacher all his life.

We had a seven-year education system at that time and there were evening courses, for those who wanted to complete nine-year education. Yefim finished such evening educational courses and left for the district center to work as a teacher. Later he became the Head of the Rayono. Then he moved to Minsk, graduated from university and worked at school as a teacher and a headmaster simultaneously. Later he took a post-graduate course in Leningrad. He worked at the post-graduate department of the Device Construction Institute and taught history. After he graduated from the post-graduate department, he was assigned to Sverdlovsk.

My other elder brother Lev, born in 1908, was a hydrologist-oceanologist. He graduated from the Agricultural Institute, the Melioration Faculty, became a doctor of sciences and a professor. He worked at the Hydrometcenter during the war, provided the army with information about the freezing of rivers and oceans. He wasn't at the frontline. He wasn't married. He didn't observe any Jewish traditions.

My elder sister Nina was born in 1910. She was a candidate of medical sciences, taught pathological anatomy first at the Minsk Institute, later in evacuation in Sverdlovsk. In 1943 she wrote to Moscow, her professor invited her there, thus since 1943 she was in Moscow. They had a four-year study period at the Medical Institute at that time. She entered it even a little bit earlier than it was allowed, because there were no passports. She defended her thesis in Moscow already at the age of 24 and studied for three years at the post-graduate department.

I was born in Slutsk in 1912. At the time, my parents were renting a house on Shkolnaya Street in Slutsk. In 1915 Dad left for World War I. When Dad was at the frontline, Mom worked somewhere. I was three years old at that time. He was a common soldier. I have a picture which Mom sent to Dad during World War I. Dad made a note on the picture: 'In memory of World War I. Received on 18th June 1916.' He came back from the war in 1918. I remember how I got scared. He entered from the back entrance. I stood there and suddenly a man with a beard walked in.