

Berta Mazo's Paternal Grandfather And His Cousin



My paternal grandparents were very religious. They spoke both Yiddish and Russian with each other. My grandmother was a housewife; she was a real cordon bleu. At their house there was a Russian stove, and she baked there wonderful rolls (I liked them very much!). There was no need in assistants, because grandparents had got 3 daughters, and all of them helped about the house. As far as I remember, there was no electricity or running water. They observed all Jewish traditions, including kashrut. They attended synagogue and celebrated Jewish holidays. Grandparents wore everyday clothes (grandmother usually put on a skirt and a jacket, and she did not wear a wig). They never discussed political problems, and were members of no organizations. In Malaya Vishera there was a large Jewish community: Jews of different professions lived in different city districts. Of course my grandparents communicated with other Jews. Among them I remember a dentist (he lived with his family in a two-storied house near the river) and a therapist. I do not remember their neighbors, because grandparents' house stood apart from others and their next-door neighbors lived rather far from it.

Later my parents moved to the house on the opposite side of the street. Family of the well-known bass singer Efrem Flaks lived there. My Mom was a friend of his sister Maria Borissovna, and I was a friend of his little son Boris. They were Jews, but not very religious.

In 1927 my sister Serafima Mazo was born. When we moved to Leningrad, I was a pupil of the 5th form. It happened in 1928. Grandmother and grandfather remained in Malaya Vishera, and after grandmother's death in 1929 grandfather moved to our place. He died before the war and was buried at the Preobrazhensky cemetery.