

Raisa Roitman With Her Family



This is our family: my mother Tabl, father Shapsha Rubel, I, Raisa Roitman, and my little brother Motle Rubel. The photo was taken in Vad-Rashkov in 1936.

My parents got married on 11th November 1924. I was born on 21st April 1926. I was given the Jewish name of Ruklya, but I was registered with a more modern Russian name – Raisa. My parents called me Raisa, only Great-grandmother Haya called me by my Jewish name. In 1930 my brother Motle was born. I remember the day when my mother was giving birth to my brother. Father was going to and fro. The moans and screams were heard from the bedroom. Then I heard the cry of the baby. I remembered it for ever. I loved my brother at once. I had a kind of adult and maternal feelings for him.

I remember my childhood very vividly. I recollect our house – a small adobe low-set house, consisting of two small rooms and a kitchen. There was a stove in the kitchen, which was heated with firewood. It was used to cook food. Later on we had a Primus, and Mother used the stove only for heating purposes and during preparation for Sabbath, when a lot of dishes were supposed to be cooked and kept warm for the next day. On Sabbath we often went to Grandfather Moishe. All the children and grandchildren got together in the drawing-room. The table was laid with such festive dishes as gefilte fish, chicken broth and tsimes. Challah and wine were in the center of the table, and Grandfather was saying a benediction. After that, I, the favorite granddaughter, came up to everybody with a wine carafe on the tray and everybody was supposed to sip wine from that vessel. We also observed the kashrut.

I had a lot of friends, mostly among boys. In winter the Dniestr was frozen and we used it as a skating rink. I didn't have my own skates. I usually borrowed them from some boys, who helped me skate on ice. In summer, I liked to stroll in the central park, located on the bank of the Dniestr, on the picturesque turn under the hill. There was a large and nicely decorated Orthodox church on the central square. The bell toll of the church was very beautiful and we liked to listen to it. I also liked going to the market, located not far from the church. The counters were full of all kinds of vegetables and fruits of different colors. There was also a wholesale of grapes.