

Matilda Levi As A Baby



This is me as a baby. The picture was taken in 1919 in Karnobat.

I was born in 1919. When I was a baby my mother didn't have any milk after some time, so the priest's wife suckled me. I had a brother, Mois Behar, born in 1921, who died of dysentery when he was two. These were times when dysentery couldn't be cured. So I grew up alone and the eggs and milk were all around me. We had milk for breakfast and my father, since there were hens in our yard, would come and say, 'I've got it from the hen's butt, eat your egg.' But I began drinking milk only when I got pregnant because I had to. Otherwise I didn't even taste milk. My father ran after me in the yard, but I didn't want to drink. However, I ate yogurt. If it wasn't ready or it hadn't ripened in the evening, and it was sheep's milk, it ripened perfectly, if it wasn't ready, I was sent to buy some. And they cut some for me; it could be cut with a knife, in a large baking dish. The dairyman cut some and the milk was so thick that it didn't seep water. So I brought home some milk from the main square and it was our dinner. Butter was harder to find. We had salami [sausages] when we made some for ourselves but it was hard work. We used to make different kinds of jam: we did that in the yard, in a large copper baking dish slaking the mixture with a big stick. I helped a little: cleaning the plums, looking after the hens in the yard and so on.