

Roche-Leya Meyertal



This is my maternal grandmother Roche-Leya Meyertal. The picture was taken in Tartu in 1940.

Mother's family lived in Tallinn. My maternal grandmother, Roche-Leya, was born in Tartu on 29th November 1884. Grandmother was illiterate. She started working at the age of 13. She rolled cigarettes. Grandmother stopped working when she got married. I don't know where my paternal grandfather, Zalman Meyertal, came from He was born in 1880.

Mother's parents lived in Tallinn. Grandfather was a cobbler, Grandmother was a housewife. She raised five children. The eldest, Isaac, was born in 1905 and the second, Hirsh, in 1907. Mother's third brother, Pesach, was born in 1910. My mother Miriam-Deborah was born in 1913 and the youngest, Sheine, in 1916.

All children got good education. My mother and her sister finished the German lyceum in Tallinn, studied music. Mother's three elder brothers got higher education. They studied in Estonia and then in Czechoslovakia, in Prague, in the technical high school. Subjects were taught in German; all Estonian inhabitants knew German.