

Sima Libman With Her Parents



In this photograph, I am pictured when in my early years with my parents, Sofia and Elhanon Rogovski. It was taken in Tallin in 1927. My parents got married on 28th June 1923. The wedding ceremony took place in the synagogue in Rakvere, where Grandfather Benyamin lived. At that time my father lived in Tallinn with Aunt Beile and her husband in a small apartment near the synagogue. It was the area where many Jewish families rented cheap apartments. The streets were narrow with mostly one-storied wooden buildings which were heated by stoves and had only electricity and running water facilities. Now these streets aren't there any more: everything has been rebuilt. In 1923, my father brought his newlywed wife into Aunt Beile's small apartment. I was born there in 1924. After my uncle died, we moved into a more spacious apartment in a different building, two-storied this time. We occupied the entire first floor, and our Estonian landlord lived on the second one. We had a large front room, a kitchen, a dining-room, a bedroom, and Aunt Beile's room. She lived with us all the time, and I called her 'grandma.' When my mother arrived in Estonia she could only speak Russian. So Russian was my first language. As my mother talked to Grandmother Beile while at home, she was soon able to speak Yiddish: she had heard it spoken in her family from a young age. Later, she could understand and speak Estonian to servants and shop-keepers. I laughed when I heard her Estonian. My parents were very sociable people: especially my father. He was a very witty and cheerful person. They both loved being around people, visited friends often, and their friends visited us. Our home was open to people. My mother knew how to dress inexpensively but fashionably and elegantly. She invented her own designs for dresses and suits. Sometimes she used her old clothes, combining them with new material. As a result she obtained some very elegant clothes, and her lady friends thought that she had bought them from an expensive tailor.