

Naftole-Hertz Shein



This is my father Naftole-Hertz Shein. The photograph was taken in Valga in 1929.

When Grandfather Sholom-Iosif got married, he made a living on cattle breeding. Then he was involved in timbering. The elder sons, Efroim, my father and Leib did not get secular education, they went only to cheder. They were elder sons and had to work to help their father. They were hard-working. Our family was rather well-heeled, but it was gained by hard labor. The daughters and younger sons got both Jewish and secular education. Though father did not manage to go to lyceum, he knew how to count well, was knowledgeable about timber, graders of wood, measuring timber. He was well up in everything related to work.

I never asked my parents how they met each other. All I know is that all father's siblings had pre-arranged marriages. I think my parents also had a pre-arranged marriage. They got married on 2nd February 1930. I don't know where their wedding took place.

Mother left Riga for the small town of Valga. My paternal grandfather gave them a house as a birthday present. It was located on the same street, where my grandparents' house was. I spent my childhood in that house. Of course, the mode of life in a small town was different. There were patriarchal rules in the family, according to which the parents were revered. Mother had to call on her mother-in-law just to greet her and ask how she felt. Father was the bread-winner. He worked very hard to maintain the family. Mother was a housewife and practiced playing the piano.