

Yelena Tets



This is my mama Yelena Tets (nee Shreiberg). This photograph was taken, when Mama and her fiancé, my father, went to visit his parents in Liepāja. Photographer E.Grenzing. This photo was taken in 1911.

My mother's family lived in Latvia, in Jekabpils. That was my grandparents' home town. My grandfather Hirsh Shreiberg dealt in forestry. He owned a few storage facilities. Grandmother Fania was a housewife, which was common for Jewish women at the time. The family was quite wealthy. There were five children in the family. My mother was the oldest. She was born in 1888. Her Russian name was Yelena, and her Jewish name was Hinde-Dina.

Mama's parents strictly observed Jewish traditions. They celebrated Sabbath on Friday evening. My grandmother lit candles and prayed over them and then the family had a dinner. My grandfather didn't work on Saturday and went to the synagogue. On holidays the entire family went to the synagogue. My grandmother followed kept a kosher home and taught her daughters to do the same. The boys studied at cheder. My grandfather also ensured that his daughter received Jewish education. The children also received a secular education. They spoke Yiddish, Russian and German.

My mother, her brothers and sister studied at the private Jewish gymnasium where subjects were taught in German. All children, except Ida, entered the Medical Faculty of the Tartu University. My grandfather died in 1913. Probably that's why Ida, the youngest one, didn't receive higher education. The fee was rather high, and the family couldn't afford to pay for her after my

grandfather died. My grandfather was buried at the Jewish cemetery in Jekabpils according to Jewish traditions.

All brothers of my mother graduated from the Medical Faculty of the Tartu University. My mother entered the Dentists' Faculty of this university where she met my father's sister Ida. They became lifelong friends.