

Anna Gurvich



This is my sister Anna Gurvich. The picture was made in Kaunas in 1927. Anna is 17 here.

My parents got married in 1909. In 1910 my elder sister Anna was born and in 1913 - brother Jacob, named after grandfather Jacob Gurvich. I, the youngest, was born on the 20th of April 1920. I was named Eta. The newly-weds went to Kaunas, where they settled in the house of grandfather Jacob. In 1910 my elder sister Anna was born and in 1913 - brother Jacob, named after grandfather Jacob Gurvich. I, the youngest, was born on the 20th of April 1920. I was named Eta.

I barely remember my early childhood, by the age of seven. These were years of happiness, when my parents were with me. I remember happy times, when father came home from work, hugged mother and played with me. I was the little one as elder siblings went to lyceum at that time. Mother ran the house. There was a lady Teresa to help mother with the chores. Polish Teresa was a grown-up woman, a widow. Her husband died shortly before she came to work for us. Teresa, who occupied a small room partitioned from the kitchen, became a kind angel for our house. She spoke Yiddish fluently, cooked Jewish dishes under mother's supervision and soon became a good cook. Our four-room apartment was immaculately clean. As in most Lithuanian houses, one room was after another- kitchen, then dining-room, then parents' bedroom and children's room. The furniture was rich- made mahogany and ebony and the floors were parquet. The curtains were velvet with golden strings. On Friday mother ran the process of cleaning. The furniture was polished, the floors were cleaned even more thoroughly. Friday evening mother lit candles and we marked Sabbath. No matter that father was unreligious, he did not work on Saturdays. Sometimes he went to the synagogue, when his wife asked him to. When mother was with us, Jewish holidays were marked. In spring 1927 our mother died.

Now sister Anna was in charge of the household. She turned 17, when mother died. She finished Yiddish lyceum. Sister only formally ran the household. Our loyal Teresa practically ran everything. Of course, she did not manage to do everything the way mother did. We could feel that there was no feminine warmth in the house, but Teresa exerted her every effort. In 1930s Anna had worked in the state archive.

At the beginning of 1943, when it was declared that women were drafted in Lithuanian division, Anna was drafted. She became a radio operator. She had served with the Lithuanian division until the end of war. Anna lived in Riga after demobilization. Anna was single, she loved my son and helped me with everything.