

Evgenia Galina, Abram Breizman And A Relative



This is a picture of me, sitting, my older brother Abram Breizman standing behind me and our distant relative. The photo was taken in Zhytomyr in 1938. My brother, Abram, was born in 1923. He was circumcised as required by the rules. I was born on 2nd March 1925. My parents named me Genia. At school I was called by my Russian name of Evgenia. Our parents loved us and created an atmosphere of love and respect in the family. There were no conflicts at home and they didn't tell

us off or punish us. The most serious punishment for us was to hear that our father didn't approve of something we had done. We spoke Russian at home. My father and mother spoke Yiddish sometimes, but they only communicated in Russian with my brother and me. My grandmother spoke Yiddish. She could speak a little Ukrainian, but she was illiterate and couldn't even write. I can speak a little Yiddish, but I cannot read or write in Yiddish. My brother Abram started school in 1930 and I in 1932. We studied in a Russian secondary school. Boys and girls studied together. I was a sociable girl and had many friends at school. There were Russian and Jewish teachers in our school. Quite a few of my classmates were Jewish, too. I never faced any anti-Semitism at school. I don't believe there was any before the Great Patriotic War. My best friend was the daughter of a Christian priest. She was my classmate and lived nearby. My other friends were: Stasia, a Polish girl, Maria Frolova, a Russian girl and Sonia Milman, a Jewish girl. There were no specific attitudes towards Jewish children at school. My favorite subjects at school were Russian and Ukrainian languages, literature and chemistry. My brother was fond of mathematic and physics. I became a pioneer when I was in the 4th grade. There was a plain ceremony in the vestibule at school where a bust of Lenin was installed. We recited the oath of pioneers and had red neckties tied around our necks. I cannot say that I was an active pioneer. I took part in parades on Soviet holidays and attended pioneer meetings. I didn't become a Komsomol member at school since I finished the 9th grade in 1941.