

Engelina Goldentracht With Her Brother Julen Zorin And Grandfather Aron Stravets



My brother Julen, our grandfather Aron and I in Kiev in 1936 during grandfather's visit from Ekaterinoslav. In 1934 the capital of Ukraine was transferred from Kharkov to Kiev, and my father was assigned to be director of the NKVD cultural center in Kiev. We received a big three-bedroom apartment in Rosa Luxemburg Street in Pechersk. [It was an elite neighborhood in Kiev where all government institutions were located and where high governmental officials lived.] Our family never celebrated Jewish holidays. My mother didn't allow our grandparents to speak Yiddish to us. My parents spoke Russian, although Yiddish was their mother tongue. Sometimes my grandfather Aron visited us on my birthday. My birthday was often at the same time as Chanukkah and my grandfather gave me and my brother sweets and money. This is how I knew that we were Jews in my childhood and about Chanukkah, a Jewish holiday. My grandfather Aron died in 1937. I went to the best Russian secondary school in Kiev in 1932. My brother went to the same school. In this school children of the party elite studied. There were Ukrainian, Russian, Jewish and Polish children there, but we didn't segregate between children of different nationalities. We were all raised as patriots. We had no doubt that we were living in the best country of the world. There was no issue about nationality among us.