

Pesia Redko



This is my mother Pesia Redko photographed for the family album. This photo was taken in Kiev in 1952. My mother was born in Ilinty in 1886. My parents got married in the early 1900s. They had a traditional Jewish wedding. It could have been no different at that time. After the wedding the newly-weds settled down in the small wooden house on the bank of the Bug River, about 20 meters from the bank on Zemskaya Street, where our family lived till 1932. Our family occupied one half of the house, and the other half belonged to my mother's older brother Avrum, his wife and two children. There were two rooms and a kitchen in each half of the house. There was a small yard and a shed in the yard. There was a well, from where the families fetched water. For washing they heated it on the Russian stove. My mother was more religious than my father. On Friday evening the family got together for dinner. My mother started preparations for Sabbath in the morning. She made gefilte fish and potatoes and put a pot with cholent into the oven for the next day. Even

when my father was away from home for a few days, he always came back before Sabbath. My mother lit candles and recited a prayer and then we sat down to dinner. The next day my mother went to the synagogue. Sometimes she took me and my younger sister with her. Before Pesach my mother baked matzah in the Russian stove. We, children, enjoyed preparations for holidays. We hardly ever had enough food on weekdays, but my mother tried to make as much food as possible for holidays. She saved money to have chicken, gefilte fish, and make strudels from matzah with jam, raisins and nuts for holidays. There was a general clean up of the house before Pesach. Bread crumbs were removed and fancy crockery was brought down from the attic. I don't remember any details about the celebration of Pesach in our home, or whether my father conducted the seder: it was so many years ago? I remember that we also celebrated other Jewish holidays: Chanukkah, Sukkoth, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, but no details. I was seven to eight years old then, and now I am 80. My mother died a couple of years after this photo was taken, in 1954. We buried her in the Jewish cemetery in Kiev according to the Jewish ritual.