

Evgenia Shapiro's Grandparents Fania And Yuri Gershenovich



My grandparents on my mother's side, Fania and Yuri Gershenovich, on my grandmother's 45th birthday. My grandfather was born in Borisov in the early 1880s. He was an educated man, but I don't know where he studied. He owned a haberdashery store. He brought goods for his store from Warsaw and other Polish towns. His family resided in a nice two-storied house. The store was on the first floor and their apartment was on the second floor. There were many religious and non-religious books in Yiddish in their home that my grandfather used to bring from Warsaw. They spoke Yiddish in the family, but all of them could understand and speak Belarus. My grandfather also spoke Polish and Hebrew. They kept a cow and had a housemaid to take care of the cow. She also cooked and looked after the children. My grandmother was also born in Borisov in the 1880s. I have no information about her education, but I know that she could read and write. She was a cashier in the store. She didn't spend all her time there - she went upstairs to do things around the house from time to time. When a client came he would call her through a window. My grandfather spent most of his time on business trips. When he was at home he used to read the Torah and other books and spent time with the children. He went to the synagogue on Saturdays. After the revolution of 1917 my grandfather worked as an accountant in an office in Borisov. My grandmother was a housewife. They stopped observing traditions after 1917. They were influenced by the Soviet propaganda speaking of the equality of all people and stating that religion was something people didn't need. My grandparents had six children: five daughters and a son. My grandparents perished in 1941 when the Germans exterminated the Jewish population of Borisov. All Jews were taken to the outskirts of town and shot. Their bodies were thrown into a freshly dug pit.