Riva Jashinskaya

This is my mother Riva Klug. The picture was made in Vilnius in 1912.

My mother's maiden name is Yashinskaya. Her father, my maternal grandfather Iechiel Yashinksiy was born in 1850s in some Lithuanian town. I do not remember its name. I do not know who his parents were. All I know is that the family was very religious. Grandfather went to cheder, eshiva, and then entered rabbi school. I do not know whether the latter school was. I assume it was in Panevezys. During the studies Iechiel Aria understood that rabbi were usually very poor, depending

on the community and parish, who pay for their maintenance. He saw them wearing one and the same clothes all the time, their wives barely scraping through, their children wearing hand me downs. Right before finishing school, before taking final exams, Iechiel refuse to become a rabbi. He decided to be a craftsman. He became an apprentice of one very good tailor and agreed with him that he would pay for accommodation, meals and training after starting making money. My grandfather's teacher turned out to be a very decent man and when grandfather became a tailor he took no money from him. Besides, he gave good clothes to grandpa and money to start business. In a year or two grandpa had his own tailors' workshop, where about 8 people were working. Dad said that he paid the ladies with gold as there going to save it for their children's training or weddings, and men were paid money.

Soon Iechiel Aria married my grandmother Leya. She was born in Dublin, the capital of Ireland and spent her childhood there. When she turned 15 or 16 , her family moved in Lithuania. I do not exactly where they grandpa and his young wife got settled. It was a small town, located not far from Ukrmerge. Here they had lived for many years. Grandfather had tailors' business, and grandmother raised children according to Jewish traditions. There were ten of them and every year or a year and a half a new baby was born. In 1920s grandparents moved to Ukrmerge, where they lived to see the Soviets come to power, and then the beginning of Great Patriotic War and occupation. They died here during one of the first actions in summer 1941.

My mother Riva Yashinskaya was born in 1891. She got a home Jewish education. She knew how to read and write in Yiddish and knew the prayers in Ivrit. Mother was very beautiful, but in 1914 she had chicken pox, which left the scars on her face. At that time she was living in Vilnius. Grandfather taught her the basics of sewing and she worked as a seamstress. My parents met in Vilnius. Father and his brother Elieser came here on some holiday. In spite of mother being four years older than him and with the pox marks, which she took hard, father fell in love with her. My parents got married in early 1916. I never asked them where they were wed, but I know that it was in accordance with Jewish rites .