

Anatoliy Khotianov



This is my father, Anatoliy (Navtoliy) Borisovich Khotianov, still single, walking in a garden in Vitebsk in 1915. He found a birch and decided to have his picture taken. This was his best suit. Normally Father wore pants and a jacket.

Grandmother Khotianova died in 1896, long before I was born. Her small children were left with Grandfather. There were five of them: the eldest brother Lev ; sisters Frida born in 1886 and Riva; my father Navtoliy [Anatoliy], he was the fourth to be born; and another brother, whose name I don't remember, I think it was David.

When Grandmother died, Frida was ten years old, and my father was five. I don't know the age of the other children. Grandfather didn't want to marry again.

He wasn't able to raise the children himself and gave them away to various families in order to teach them crafts. He sent Lyova to a shoemaker, who made the upper parts for shoes.

Frida found herself in the family of a seamstress and my father was given to a tailor's family. I don't know where the other children were raised. Grandfather left Vitebsk.

Later Father tried to find Grandfather. He found out that he left for Harbin. He must have left for the place in order to earn money. Besides, there was a synagogue there. But Grandfather vanished in Harbin.

Father received a reply to his inquiry, stating that Boris Khotianov had been run over by a car at the beginning of the 1930s. He was buried in Harbin.

Mother lived with her parents, the Kurnovs, when my father returned from the front in 1916 and started to work with them.

Grandfather Mendel hired him to work as an assistant. Mendel taught him the tailor's craft, though Father already had considerable experience.

When Mother and Father fell in love with each other, there was no match-making.

My father was completely alone by that time. His father, my grandfather Boris, had disappeared from Vitebsk long ago. They had a splendid wedding, with a lot of guests and presents. They were a very nice couple.