

Hertz Rogovoy



This is my father Moishe Rogovoy. His photo was taken shortly before the wedding in the Kiev photo shop Union, located at Konstantinovskaya street in 1912.

My father's family lived in Kiev before revolution of the year of 1917, during the times of pale of settlement. Only few Jews were allowed to live in Kiev. The privilege was given to the lawyers, doctors, merchants of the 1st and 2nd Guilds and certain craftsmen, whose services were in demand. Craftsmen were allowed to reside on the streamside part of Kiev, Podol. This latter is now the center of Kiev being the outskirts back in those times. My father's family used to live on Mezhygorkaya street.

My father came from a large family. My father eldest brother's name was Hertz, and I was named after him. My father, Moses Rogovoy, was born in 1879. Apart from two sons, my grandparents had three daughters- Golda, the eldest, Berta, the middle, and Feiga, the youngest. I do not know when they were born.

My father's family was by all means religious. At that time there were no unreligious families. I do not know what Jewish education my father got. I know he knew how to read Hebrew and pray. He had, as all religious Jew was supposed to have, tallit, tefillin, prayer books. The family stuck to Jewish traditions, and children were raised as Jews. My father went to Realschule, but I do not think he finished it. Of course he was fluent in Yiddish [it was his mother tongue] and he was also proficient in Russian, and wrote literately.

Before 1917 my dad worked as salesman in the store that belonged to Swarzman, the Jewish manufacture, merchant of the 1st Guild. His store was located in Podol. Swarzman highly appreciated my father, and in course of time he even promoted my father to the title of the merchant of the 2nd Guild.

Hertz, my father's eldest brother, worked with my grandfather at the brewery plant. He was married and had three sons: Moshko, Shulim, Boris and one daughter Sarah. According to the Jewish laws my father was not entitled to get married before all his sisters had been married, because he was younger than them. [Editor's note: this interdiction was probably a local tradition, as it doesn't appear in halakhah.] Golda and Feiga got married off quickly. I do not remember Golda's husband. Kiev Jew Mendel Lipskiy proposed to Feiga. They had daughter Bronya and son Grigoriy. It was difficult for the father to marry off Berta. She was very homely, and there were no wooers. That is why my father could not get married. Finally, my father was able to find a fiancée for Berta, whose name was Lisyanskiy, an elderly Jew, Nikolay's army soldier, who served full term in the army, i.e. 25 years. My father married off Berta, and in the end he was able to think of his marriage. He was 33 by that time [1912]. Almost all marriages were prearranged. My father rendered to a matchmaker [shadkhan], who told him about a beautiful eligible maid in Zhitomir [Ukraine]. My father went to Zhitomir [140 km from Kiev] to propose to her.

Father's wooing was successful and at the beginning of 1912 my parents got married in Kiev. It was a traditional Jewish wedding. Parents had a marriage certificate issued by rabbi.

I was born in August, 1924. I was named Hertz after eldest brother of my father, who died a year before, 1923. He was buried in Lukianovskoy Jewish cemetery in Kiev.