Beila Shevalovich

This is my mother, Beila Shevalovich (nee Michel), the picture was taken in Kaunas in the 1930s.

I don't know anything about my maternal grandparents. They passed away long before I was born. The only thing I know is that my mother's maiden name was Michel. My mother had a sister. She was about five years younger than she. Her name was Rosa. She married a Jew called Katzenis. Rosa was a very beautiful, stately woman. She lived in Kaunas with her husband and two sons.

My mother, Beila Michel, was born in Kaunas in 1898. She finished a couple of grades of school, and knew how to read and write. My mother was brought up with a love for reading. Both her and my father's parents, simple craftsmen, were more worried about daily bread and earnings. My parents were wed in accordance with all the Jewish traditions– under a chuppah. Their marriage certificate was issued by a rabbi. I was born on 23rd February 1924. I, the first-born, was named Frida. Two years later my mother gave birth to a girl, Paya. In 1932, when my sister and I had grown up a little bit, my mother was expecting another child. She and my father wanted a boy, but wonderful and beautiful twin-girls were born – Chaya and Iyegudis.