

Sholom Rondin's Mother Rachel Levenchuk



My mother Rachel Levenchuk - tutor at the Jewish children's home.

My father perished in the town of Bragin (near Gomel) when he was 20. His comrade brought his belongings home at the beginning of 1920. When my mother became a widow at 20 she stayed with her husband's parents.

I was born at the hospital in Gomel on 13 April 1920. In a week's time my grandmother Khashe Rondina came to the hospital to take my mother and me home. On the next day in 8 days after I was born - the rabbi came to conduct the ritual of circumcision. It was at the time of the Soviet regime and the rabbi's certificate was not valid and my mother obtained my official birth certificate at the registry office. I was named Shlomo after my deceased father.

Shortly after I was born my mother began to work as a teacher at the Jewish children's home. After the Civil War in 1918 there were many orphaned Jewish children and my mother was invited to take this job, as she had some education that was rare at that period of time. She taught the children in Yiddish. My mother wanted to take me to the children's home, but my grandmother didn't allow her to do this. My mother lived with my grandmother for about 3 years until she got married and moved to her husband. I saw her almost every day. She lived nearby and often brought me new clothes and gifts.

Her 2nd husband was a Jew, a shoemaker. I don't remember his name. He was a very sickly man and he died. My mother had two daughters from that man that died in infancy. I lived with my grandmother and I was very small, so I only have dim memories of this period. My mother and grandmother had very good relationships. My mother took me to her new home several times, but in the evening I demanded that she took me back to my home. And she took me to my grandmother's home. We communicated very little with my mother's parents. It's hard to explain why we weren't close with them. They had a big family and besides, they lived at some distance from us. We visited them rarely and they came to see us very rarely. I wasn't quite attached to them, although they were glad to see me and gave me small gifts, but I didn't feel like visiting

them at all. My home was with my grandfather and grandmother Rondins. They loved me and I loved them.

In 1928 or 1929 my mother remarried again. Her third husband was a painter. His name was Misha Karminskiy. He was a Jewish man. My mother lived with him for a long time. He was a good man. He treated me well when I came to visit them. In 1930 my sister Milia was born. At the beginning of 1940 my mother had another daughter - Dusia. My mother quit her job at the children's home that housed children of different nationalities at that period of time and became a housewife. Her husband continued working as a painter