

Aron Pizman With His Mother Nehama Pizman And Father Isaac Pizman



Our family, from left to right: my mother Nehama Pizman (nee Abramson), I and my father Isaac Pizman. This photo was taken in Mogilyov-Podolskiy in 1932.

My father could not read or write in Russian or Ukrainian. He moved to Mogilyov-Podolskiy at the age of 18, in 1927. He went to work as a shoemaker in a shop. At the beginning he worked in a crew of shoemakers and then got his own booth shop near the fire brigade in the town. My father did well at work. He was hardworking and had fair thinking, but he had no education.

My mother Nehama was born in 1909 in Mogilyov-Podolskiy, she had no education whatsoever. When she was six, her father Leib died in an accident in 1915. I don't know how my father and mother met, but this happened after he moved to Mogilyov-Podolskiy, of course. They fell in love with one another and decided to get married. My father's sisters were hoping that their brother would marry a wealthy girl and would support them, but he married a girl from a poor family who had no dowry. They could never forgive my father or mother for their lost hopes. Even when my father's sisters lived with us during the occupation since our house was within the ghetto, they were still very cold toward my mother.

My parents got married in 1929. They had a civil ceremony in a registry office and then had a small wedding dinner with their closest ones. My father's sisters and their husbands came to the wedding from Chernovtsy. After the wedding my parents lived in the room that my father received from his work. I was born in 1930. My younger brother David was born in 1939.

My father was an atheist and so was my mother. My brother and I were raised like all Soviet children. We celebrated Soviet holidays at home: 1 May, 7 November, the Soviet army Day. My parents wore ordinary clothes and didn't have their head covered. We didn't observe Jewish traditions or celebrate holidays at home.

My parents had no education and in 1934 a visiting teacher began to teach my father under the likbez curriculum. My mother and I were also present at these classes, and we also learned to read, write and count - everything that my father studied. I could read and write at the age of 5. In 1937 I went to a Ukrainian general education school. I liked going to school. Our young teacher Rosa Goldsmidt noted that I had been taught before school and made me her assistant. I was very proud of it and behaved decently in class. We were taught from the first form that there was no God, but this was nothing new to me since I heard it before from my father. We were also taught to explain that they were wrong believing in the non-existent God. I became a pioneer in the 3rd form. I was one of the first to become a pioneer - only pupils with good marks were admitted.

Before the war we didn't think about nationalities. I didn't identify myself as a Jew. We were taught that all citizens of the USSR had one nationality - Soviet. Now, when I recall school, I understand that there were many Jewish teachers and school children.