

Anatoliy Khotianov And Rakhil Khotianova



These are my parents right after their wedding: my father Anatoliy (Navtoliy) Borisovich Khotianov and my mother Rakhil Mendelevna Khotianova (nee Kurnova) in 1916 in Vitebsk.

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.

Soon after the wedding they got two rooms in the building next to my grandparents' house. Mother found out that some living space became vacant near Grandmother, and the clothes' factory rendered it to her father, the factory's employee. When my parents moved in there, Mother wanted to occupy the 3rd and 4th rooms as well, to have the whole apartment. Father always kept other people in mind and understood that they were also in need. He allowed her to occupy only the rooms, which the factory rendered.

Mother had two children before I was born. Daniil was born in 1917. He was a very handsome child. When he died, Mother kept his lock. Everybody said that he had been very handsome. He had very big eyes. Once, a woman approached him in the street. She picked him up from the ground and said, 'How handsome you are.' He fell ill and died. It happened in 1920. Mother believed that he fell ill because an evil spell was cast on him. However, there was another reason. Nina, mother's sister,

was rinsing the washing on the bank of the river. She took Daniil with her. She took off his shoes and put his feet into the ice-cold water. The child caught a cold and fell ill with meningitis. Meningitis was a fatal illness in those years. Mother gave birth to a daughter, Ida, in 1919. She starved to death when Mother was sick with typhoid in Vitebsk. Father was in the army at that time. I don't know anything else, since I wasn't born yet.