

Boruch Breizman



This is my paternal grandfather, Boruch Breizman. The photo was taken in Zhytomyr in 1939. My paternal grandfather, Boruch Breizman, was born in Ivnitsa in the 1860s. I have no information about my his family. I don't know anything about my paternal grandmother either. She died when my father was just a child. I don't even know her name. My grandfather became a widower with two children. My father, Morduch, born in 1884, was the oldest child. His younger sister Sophia, Sosl in Yiddish, was born in 1886. When the mourning after his wife was over my grandfather remarried. I knew his second wife, Liebe, my father's stepmother. Grandmother Liebe was over ten years younger than grandfather. They had five children. Grandfather Boruch was a very educated and religious man. I remember my grandfather when he was an old man. He had gray hair and a big gray beard. He didn't wear payes. He wore a dark shirt and a dark jacket. He wore a hat when going out and a black kippah made of silk at home, only it wasn't a small kippah like they wear nowadays, but a bigger one that almost covered his ears. My grandfather was a melamed. I don't know if there was a cheder in Ivnitsa. Pupils came to my grandfather's home. The family was poor. My grandfather apparently didn't earn enough to feed the family and Grandmother Liebe became

the breadwinner. She was a very business-oriented woman. She began to bake bread and rolls at home. A window was kept open and my grandmother sold her bread, cakes and pastries through that window. After they moved to Zhytomyr my grandparents rented a small house in the center of Zhytomyr. Their wooden house was in the yard of a two-storied stone house where their landlords lived. There were several other wooden houses that their landlords rented out. They were Jews and preferred to lease their houses to Jewish families. After the family moved to Zhytomyr my grandfather began to work as a teacher in a state Jewish primary school. Besides he gave classes at home teaching Jewish children the cheder program. He also wrote poems that he sent to magazines and newspapers in Palestine. He even received royalties for them. It was little money, but still it helped. During the Soviet power this was out of the question and my grandfather began writing poems that he sent to newspapers before Soviet holidays. Those poems were published and my grandfather also received some money for them. In the 1930s the Jewish school was closed and my grandfather lost his job. He continued studying and reading religious books at home, he could do it the whole day then. My grandfather couldn't get any job, so my grandmother began to sell her baked goods again.