

Aaron Sirota



This is my paternal grandfather Aaron Sirota. The photo was taken in Priluki in 1925.

My grandfather was a bookbinder. My grandfather was born approximately in 1867. I don't know where the surname of Sirota came from. We were the only family with this surname in the town. My grandfather came to Priluki from Zhytomir. I don't have any information about his family or why he moved to Priluki. I don't know exactly when my grandfather got married, but I think it happened before 1890. I am sure he had a religious wedding.

My grandfather was religious. He prayed with his tallit on and he had a mezuzah at the entrance to his house. He touched it every time before entering his home. My grandfather had a seat of his own at the synagogue where he went on Saturday and all holidays. My grandfather studied in cheder and knew Yiddish and Hebrew. There were many religious books in his house. He cherished them, kept them on a special shelf and didn't allow anybody to touch them. There were Russian classic books in the house as well. Everybody could take and read them, but not Grandfather's books.

I've never been in the bookbinder's shop where Grandfather worked. I don't even know whether my grandfather owned it or worked for a master. Since my grandfather had this profession he was well-read and understood that the main wisdom was to let other people live their life. My grandfather spoke Yiddish to my grandmother at home, but he also had fluent Ukrainian, the main language of communication in Priluki. Grandfather Aaron died in 1930, when I was seven. He had spent almost a year in a 'yellow house' – this was how we called a mental hospital in our town – before he died.