

Sophia Bein



This is Sophia (Jewish name: Sonia) Bein, my aunt, the youngest daughter in my mother's family. This photo was taken in Moscow in the 1930s.

My mother's family was wealthy. The Kniazers lived in a big apartment of a two-story building on Podolskaya Street. The synagogue of butchers was located on Izmailskaya Street, where Grandfather Kelman went, not far from where Itl lived, so my father may have met my mother at the synagogue. My grandfather and grandmother went to the synagogue and observed Jewish traditions, followed the kashrut and celebrated Sabbath. However, business came first with my grandfather, so the family didn't consider it a sin to sell meat to their customers on Saturday. Grandmother Nesia died in the early 1930s.

There was one son and a few daughters in the family.

Sonia, the youngest and the most beautiful of all sisters, married Isaac Bein, a pianist, who became a wonderful conductor and worked in the opera in Bucharest until 1940. They moved to Kishinev in 1940, after the Soviet power was established. He conducted our symphonic orchestra before the Great Patriotic War. He evacuated to Central Asia with the Philharmonic. From there he moved to Moscow where Isaac became the conductor of the orchestras of two popular theaters: Stanislavskiy and Nemirovich-Danchenko Theaters. At the age of 90 he established an opera team in the huge machine-building plant named after Likhachev, the Likhachev plant. Sonia and her family lived in a small room in a communal apartment. Sonia was very kind and happy about anything they had in life. She died an instant death from a heart attack in the early 1980s. Isaac died in the 1990s.