

Yankl Dudakas And His Brothers Simon And Mende



This photo was taken before I went to serve in the army in 1953 in Kaunas: I, Yankl Dudakas, am in the center, my brother Simon is on my left, and Mende is on my right. I got tinsmith's training. At first I started working for a distant relative before I got a job in a shop. There was a good team in this shop. I was given an opportunity to go to an evening school where I managed to finish the seventh grade. I joined the Komsomol and was quite an active Komsomol member. I was sincerely committed to Communist ideals. I remember what a hard blow Stalin's death in 1953 was for me. I was secretary of a Komsomol unit then, and after the death of the leader I admitted almost all the young people in the shop to the Komsomol. I myself joined the Communist Party. My father was amazed at my political activities. I remember literally his words in this regard: "Why are you laying your sound head into a sick bed?" However, I was attracted by the Communist ideas. They are truly attractive and very humane. In 1953, when I was drafted into the army, I was already a party member. My family has always been close. I stood on my own feet and supported my brothers. My brother Mende finished a lower secondary school and obtained the specialty of a shoe material cutter. He married Valeriya, a Russian woman. Her life story is also very interesting. She didn't remember her parents. They said her parents were Jewish and perished in the ghetto during an action. Some locals rescued Valeriya and raised her as a Christian. Mende and Valeriya have two children: daughter Yida, born in 1959 and son Lev, born in 1967. My younger brother Simon also became a tinsmith. He married Anna, a Jewish girl. Their daughter's name is Ella. In 1972 my brother and his family decided to move to Israel.