

Emilia Kushnir's Father, Yosif Yefimovich Leibman



My father, Yosif Leibman, in a photo taken in Warsaw in 1910 at the "ORMUZ" studio, Leszno 24.

My father was born in 1884 in the town of Radomyshl, in the Zhitomir region. I know practically nothing about his parents. I only know that my grandfather's name was Khaim Leibman and my grandmother's name was Surah-Milka. I don't know her maiden name.

My father first went to Chelyabinsk and then to Sverdlovsk. There he found a job at the Urals Gold Trust Company; it was in a district full of gold and platinum. Later he took my mother and me from that village, and we lived in the village at the gold field, 250 km from Sverdlovsk. In the beginning it was very hard. We had no food but bread purchased with bread cards. There was a canteen, but only workers of that company were allowed to eat there. So, my father would go first to the canteen (he had a pass), and if the waitress was kind, she would leave his pass untouched, then I had a chance to use the same pass, then my mother. But if they marked the pass, my mother and I remained hungry.

When the new political developments and wars started in Israel, my father got very interested in them. He took all Jewish problems very closely to heart. He subscribed to the Soviet Jewish journal and listened to all the "Voices" (radio stations that were forbidden in our country and whose radiocast was jammed); he wanted to know the truth. My father died in 1974.