

## Chaim Poltorak And His Friends



This is a picture of my brother-in-law, Chaim Poltorak, and his two friends. Chaim is in the center. This picture was taken when he was on the front. He sent us this photo in 1944. My husband, Dawid Birencwajg came from Sosnowiec. His father's name was Abram, his mother was Tema. There were six children in all. Four daughters and two sons. One daughter was called Rachela, the second one Sala, the third one Laja, and the fourth one was Bluma. And my husband's brother was Judka. Laja got married to Chaim Poltorak. When the war broke out, we were in Lodz, then Lwow. Meanwhile, they had started catching us for labor. That is - deportations! They deported us, but they said it was for work. My husband said, 'We can sign up for work.' I said I didn't want to? Some plants in Russia were recruiting employees and my husband said, 'Well. How long can this war last? Winter, summer, it will be over soon, we will go home.' We went to this city and the in-laws also went with us. Entire transports went there from Lwow. The city was called Vyksa. We didn't move

during all the war, but Chaim Poltorak, went to Kosciuszko's army, to the 1st Kosciuszko Infantry Division. . When I found out the war was over, we started trying to go back to Poland. And we traveled and traveled until we reached Poland. We went to Pieszyce, in the Regained Territories. And the one who was in the army, came to the station! He was there as a military settler. That means that he was in the army, later when he left the army he got this farm which used to belong to the Germans. What great happiness, he said, 'I'll take you from here.' The brother-in-law gave us a room in Pieszyce in a wooden house which used to belong to the Germans, no toilet, no water, nothing. He said, 'You sleep here, I'll bring you bread and milk in the morning.' I put the children to sleep, there was no light, I woke up in the morning waiting for that bread and milk and there was nothing. Nothing. No bread, no brother-in-law. I said to my husband, 'You know, let's leave the children here, go out into the street and perhaps we can find someone we know.' Although my husband was a very resolute and stubborn man, he let me talk him into it. We went out, there were lots of people from Lodz there and, somehow, there was no more happiness. They told us there was a committee there, the Central Committee of Polish Jews, which helps, distributes food rations. And this brother-in-law appeared after some two or three weeks. He came, I didn't even ask about the milk, and said, 'Come, I'll take you to a different place, a better apartment.' A short time later, he went to the United States, and he died there in a car accident.