

Leonid Dusman's Father Moisey Dusman With Members Of The Maccabi Sport Society



This is a picture of my father Moisey Dusman and other members of the Jewish sport society Maccabi. My father is the second person from the left, standing. The photo was taken in Odessa in 1913. My father was born in Odessa in 1894, and his brother Mark in 1898. They both studied at the private grammar school owned by Panchenko. At 13 my father had his bar mitzvah and got a tallit and tefillin. Later he showed me the velvet bag for his tefillin. However, I never heard that my father went to the synagogue. He was hot-tempered like all other young men in Odessa, and he liked to go fishing in the sea for a day in my grandfather's boat. He liked hunting, which is a rather unusual hobby for a Jewish man! He had many hobbies at that time. My father and his brother Mark went in for sports at the Jewish sport society Maccabi. At 17 my father became a volunteer with the Jewish self-defense movement. There were many such units in Odessa in those years to fight against pogrom-makers. During the February Revolution in 1917 the units of Jewish self-defense joined the Red Guard Troops [armed detachments of workers during the February and October Revolutions]. My father was in the Red Guard Troops. After the February Revolution, when Jews got all their civil rights, my father and his brother finished a military school. My father was never interested in politics and didn't join any party. He wanted to be an engineer because he was very interested in technical things. However, my grandmother Fania said, 'Who has ever heard of a Jewish man to be an engineer? I would understand if you wanted to be a doctor, but an engineer ? that's beyond my understanding'. My father and his brother became doctors. My father studied at the dentistry school of Margolin and became a dentist. [When the Great Patriotic War broke out] on Sunday, 22nd June 1941, all our family was at our summerhouse. At 7am we were ready to go fishing to the sea when all of a sudden the commandant of the recreation center came to see us.

He said, 'Moisey Isaacovich, it's an emergency situation - we are at war! You have to go to the administrative office'. After two weeks my father put on the uniform of a major of medical services. He went to the sanitary battalion of Chapaev division #25, deployed in Odessa. The division was getting ready for the defense of Odessa. My father came home on leave once. During that period many watermelons were sold in Odessa. We ate some watermelon, and then it was time for my father to leave again. He kissed us goodbye and said, 'Guys, take care of your mother'. These were his last words. On 8th October his military unit relocated to Vodoprovodnaya Street. My mother visited him there. When my mother left she saw a truck. She called his name, and he waved to her. This was the last time she saw him alive. He perished in the vicinity of Sevastopol in 1941.