

Nachman Elencwajg In A Jewish Tailor Cooperative



This is a photo which was taken after World War II. I was working as a tailor in Zagorze. I'm sitting second from left. It was a former German manufacture; you still can see German sewing machines. After the war was over, I came back to my home town, Miedzyrzec. The situation in Miedzyrzec was that there were only several dozen Jews there. There was a local Jewish committee, headed, in fact, by a guy I knew. But it came to nothing for me because he refused to help me in any way. When aid packages came from the US, clothing, I didn't get anything either. Because the committee passed a resolution not to accept any new arrivals because they didn't want Jews to settle there but to go to the ex-German territories instead. As a result, they only helped you if you wanted some document, a paper from the court or something like that, but they didn't allow you to stay. I didn't know what to do but I met a friend of mine whose brother worked in Zagorze Slaskie, here in Lower Silesia, and he said that brother of his would find us a job. I didn't hesitate for long, nothing kept me in Szczecin, I had left nothing in the apartment there so, just like that, with the keys to the Szczecin apartment still in my pocket, I pulled myself together and went to Zagorze. And that's how I found myself in Lower Silesia. In Zagorze I worked as a tailor at the former Zimmerman's plant. But that lasted for only three weeks because me and some colleagues set up a cooperative. I even sat on its board because I was young and the older guys didn't want to. The cooperative was called Zgoda and had some thirty employees, all tailors. Some time later a course for technical managers was organized in Wroclaw and they sent me to attend it. When I had completed it and secured the right papers, some acquaintances of mine fixed a job for me in Wroclaw, at another cooperative, on Nowowiejska Street. Then I worked at several other tailor cooperatives, first as a technical manager, then as a quality surveyor.