

The Jawetz Family



This is a photo of our family: I'm the first from the left, then the second is my mother, Adela, in the middle is my sister Alla, then my father, Leon, and my elder sister, Lusia. The photo was taken in 1945 in Cernauti, after we returned from Uzbekistan. My parents adopted a little girl from there: Alla. My father worked at the hospital. The girl's father was at the front. Alla was born on 31st March 1942, in Kermine. She was called Haia Katzefman, and we gave her the name Alla, and then, after she moved to Israel, she got the name Haia back. I think the fact that she was Jewish was a coincidence. Her mother was hospitalized, and complained that she had a six week, or six month old child, I don't remember exactly, and my father said he would ask my mother if she wanted to take care of a child for two or three weeks. My mother agreed, and when Alla's mother died, people came to take her to an orphanage, but my parents didn't give her away. We decided to leave for Ukraine immediately after the liberation. They didn't want to release my father from the hospital; under the Russians it wasn't easy at all to change your job, but we all managed to leave. I also worked during the holidays at a shop that supplied the army with vegetables, I went to the villages, I had a cart and I gathered vegetables. When I wanted to go back to school in the eighth grade they didn't want to release me from work. I don't know how we solved it in the end, but they released me after all. We left Kermine by train in 1944. I don't remember how many times we changed the train. Generally the train was full with military on their way to the front. The trains were loaded with warfare. It was a train with several cars. I remember it was extremely crowded, we had nowhere to wash ourselves, and there were lice. I don't know where we got food from. It took us about two weeks to get home. At first we went to some relatives in Cernauti for a week, and then we went home to Hlyboka, where we lived from 1944 until 1946. Our house had a foundation for another two rooms. I remember I found an anti-tank bomb in the sand. My mother was very frightened.