

Jakub Fischbein In His Youth



This is my father, Jakub Fischbein, when he was 20 years old. This photo was taken at a photographic studio in Stanislawow or Tysmienica near Stanislawow. In the 1930s my father's parents sent this picture and a few others to their two sisters, who must have emigrated in the early 1920s and lived in New York. I don't know whether they were my grandmother's or grandfather's sisters. After the war my father began corresponding with them. They sent us back these pictures, because we lost everything - nothing survived. My father, Jakub, was born in 1902. He could write and read in Yiddish, so he must have gone to cheder as a child. He was circumcised

and most likely he had a bar mitzvah. I'm sure he also went to a Polish school. In addition to that, he studied at the teachers' seminar in Stanislawow. He was an extramural student, commuting to some classes and taking exams. I think it was a Polish school because it gave him teaching qualifications. What kind? I can't say. Maybe general? First he was getting ready for the kibbutz, through an illegal relocation to Palestine. Then he came across the communist movement. He was a young man, very young, when he joined the KPP section of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine. He had no stable employment, because ? as I like to joke today ? he was a professional communist and no one would give him a job at a public institution. In such closed communities everybody knows everything about everybody else. As far as I remember, my father did someone's accounting. He occasionally gave lessons, usually to Jewish children. I don't know where and how my parents met. I don't know anything about their wedding, but I assume some rituals were observed. My father adored his mother and he wouldn't have wanted to disappoint her by simply signing marriage papers at the magistrate. They probably had a wedding with a rabbi, most likely in 1927 or 1928.