

Yankel Rozenfeld And His Brothers



Upper row on the left: my uncle Yankel Rozenfeld, his brother Shymon Rozenfeld is behind him. Lower row from left to right: my uncle Michael Rozenfeld, his wife Fira, uncle Shymon's wife Vera and uncle David Rozenfeld. This photo was taken some time in 1928 when David and Michael visited their home town of Boguslav. My father had five brothers, he was the oldest of all children. The boys studied in cheder and were raised religiously, but they got under the influence of revolutionary ideas and became atheists. Shymon was born around 1893. After the Revolution he worked in commerce and in the middle of the 1930s he moved to Kiev with his family. My father helped him to get a job as the director of the canteen at the vocational school where my father worked. When the Great Patriotic War began Shymon joined the Territorial army [see fighting battalion]. He perished either during the defense of Kiev or in the city occupied by Germans. His wife Vera and daughter Ania evacuated to Astrakhan where they lived throughout the war. Ania lives in Kiev now. She is the only one of my cousins still alive. My uncle Yankel, born in 1898, was closest to me. He finished a Jewish elementary school and this was all the education he got. He worked at a store during the Soviet regime. He lived in Boguslav with his wife Sarra and two children: Rachil - we called her Chilia - and Naum, whom we called Nyuma. Rachil died of a heart disease at the age of 16. Naum and I were friends and I often visited them in Boguslav. Uncle David was born around 1900. He received a higher education and lived his life in Moscow. He held high official posts. At the end of his career he was the capital construction manager at the Ministry of Transport of the USSR. David died in 1970. He had three children: Alla, Ania and Mark. Alla died recently and Ania and Mark live in Moscow with their families. The youngest brother Michael was born around 1903. I don't know where exactly he studied. He lived and worked in Rostov. He was the art director and producer of Rostov Drama Theater and in his last years became its director. Michael was a very sociable man. I met him on my way home from Middle Asia after demobilization in 1945. I stayed with him in Rostov for a few days. Uncle Michael died in 1961. His daughter Sophia, who was the director of a kindergarten in Rostov for many years, emigrated to the US with her daughter in the 1970s and we lost contact with her.