

Max Sternschein At A Wedding



This is a photo taken at a wedding of a cousin of my mother, I think, but I don't remember her name, and you can see some relatives of my mother on this picture. I don't know all the people in this picture, but the ones I know are: the first woman in the second row from left is an aunt of my mother. She was married to the man standing in the first row, the second from left; they were the Brulls. I think the bride was a relative, if not a daughter of theirs. The second man from left in the back row, was a brother of this aunt. Near him is Aunt Suzi, uncle Max Sternschein's wife. The woman in the center of the photo, with the white collaret is Aunt Paula Meierhofer, who was also a cousin of my mother's. The second man from right in the first row is Uncle Max, and to his right, his daughter Ani. Uncle Max had been to Berlin when he was younger, to his sister Grete, and learnt artistic photography, so when he came back to Cernauti he opened a studio that became well known among the ballerinas and actresses of the time, he had a very good reputation. He was married to Aunt Suzi, as we kids used to call her, and he had two children: Ani and Vili Sternschein. When the Russians came, in 1940, Ani had just finished high school, she had passed her graduation exam. And Russians imposed that everybody who had graduated from high school was to go to Bessarabia to teach there. Uncle Max was desperate, but he couldn't do anything. So he married Ani in a hurry with a medicine student, one of her pretenders, so that she wouldn't be all alone and with no protection there. But the German front came, and they were massacred there, they weren't heard of again. He was still hoping to hear from Ani, his daughter. Uncle Max sent people to look for them, my mother kept asking everybody who went to or was coming from Bessarabia, and the answer was always the same: no Jews were left alive. Uncle Max had a very hard time accepting this, he adored his daughter. Soon after the war, Uncle Max left for Buenos Aires because his wife, Suzi, had relatives there, and of course they left with Vili. Uncle Max died there some time in the late 1950s, I think. I wanted to keep in touch with their son, Vili, I even contacted the Red Cross who gave me his address, I wrote him a letter, but he never replied. I know he got married to a Jewish woman, a pharmacist, who left from Transylvania with her family. He became a diamond polisher there. I don't know who the other people in the picture were, probably from the Brull family.