

Fayvel And Falk Glezer And The Members Of The Amateur Jewish Group



This is an amateur Jewish drama group. The title of the performance is written in Yiddish and translates to 'The blood laughter.' Standing in the center wearing a bow-tie is my brother Fayvel Glezer, the one on the left in the upper row is our brother Falk. The girl beside him is Rimma. She was killed in Latvia like they were. On Fayvel's right is my cousin Paya. The second on the right in the lower row is my friend Basia, our teacher is in the center. Ethel Sluzhitel is the second on the left in the lower row. This photo was taken in Birzai in the 1930s. Fayvel was born in 1921 and Falk in 1923. Both of them went to the Jewish school in Birzai. Afterwards my brother Fayvel went to work in a craftsman's shop in Birzai. My brother Falk, who was good at technical things, studied in a gymnasium. After finishing it he moved to Kaunas where he entered a Jewish secondary school. In those years young Jewish people took an active part in political activities. Some young people were fond of Zionist ideas related to the restoration of a Jewish state. However, the poorest strata of the Jewish community, suffering from the ruling regime, strongly believed in Soviet Russia. My sister and brothers joined the underground Komsomol. My sister and brothers' friends had frequent gatherings in our home. They also gathered in a nearby forest where they played the accordion and danced, and they also read Marxist books and propagated their ideas. My parents were aware of their older children's hobbies. They couldn't help being concerned about them. By that time my father's sister Riva had spent a few years in jail for her underground Communist activities, and my father was afraid his children might suffer the same punishment. One day before the holiday of the 1st of May young people put red flags everywhere in the town. The following day arrests started, and my parents decided that Hanna had to leave town to escape arrest. Hanna went to Kaunas and worked at a students' diner.