

Iosif Perlman And His Family



This is my husband's family. From left to right, 1st row: Iosif's brother Benno Perlman, my husband's mother Braine Perlman and his sister Mary. 2nd row: my future husband Iosif Perlman, his brothers Henrich and Zvi. This photo was taken in Saldus in the 1920s.

My husband Iosif Perlman was born in Saldus, Latvia, in 1901. His father's name was Leizer Perlman, and his mother's name was Braine. I don't know what his father did for a living, but his mother was a housewife. There were seven children in the family. I don't remember his older brother's name. He moved to Palestine in the late 1910s. Then there were daughters Sofia and Mary, sons Henrich, Benno, Zvi and my future husband Iosif, the youngest in the family.

Their family was a religious Jewish family. The boys studied in cheder till the age of 13, when they had their bar mitzvah. All children finished a gymnasium. During the tsarist time Sofia and her father moved to Moscow. Sofia was going to enter the Moscow University, and her father went with her to support her there. However, they had no opportunity to return to Latvia due to the revolution in Russia, when Latvia became an independent state in 1918. Residents of the Soviet Russia were not allowed to travel to Latvia or even correspond with their relatives. They stayed in Moscow and did not see the rest of their family before 1940, when Latvia was annexed to the Soviet Union. Iosif and his brother Henrich went to visit them there.

My husband's older brother Zvi and his family moved to Africa in the 1930s. Benno and Henrich were married and Mary got married as well. Henrich wife's maiden name was Yakobson. Their daughter was born in 1933, and in 1936 they had a son. Iosif was regimented to serve in the Latvian army after finishing the gymnasium. He told me that soldiers lived in barracks, but Jewish soldiers were allowed to go home on Saturday. After the army he entered the Electric Engineering Faculty of Riga University where he studied radio equipment and telecommunications. In the summer students had training at enterprises. Iosif had his training at the Union radio factory in Riga for two years in a row. The factory produced radios and telephone equipment. Iosif finished the university course, but he never defended his diploma. However, he was a good specialist and had a relevant job.

When the war began, Iosif's family didn't want to evacuate. Henrich, his older brother, went to the Territorial Army, and from there he joined the Latvian division. The rest of the family ended up in the ghetto: Iosif's mother, his sister Mary and her family, Henrich's children, Henrich's wife and two children and Benno and his family. Iosif's father Leizer Perlman died in Moscow in 1941, shortly before the war began. He was buried at the Vostriakovskoye Jewish cemetery in Moscow. The rest of the family have no graves. There is only a memorial at the place where they were shot.