

Leon Kalaora In A Jewish Forced Labor Camp



Here you can see me with workers from the forced labor camp in Klisura village. First from left to right is Moni Solomonov, who was from Varna. After 9th September 1944, the day of the communist takeover in Bulgaria, he went to live in Burgas. I am next to him. The third one is Leon Haravon. He was a very honest and emotional man. He was shot as a partisan during a fight. Next to him is my brother Izi [Izak]. The man but last on the photo was a very nice and kind man but I've forgotten his name. He and Leon Haravon were great friends. After the Law for the Protection of the Nation came into force in 1941, I was sent to a number of labor camps. I had to work first in the labor camps in the village of Beli Izvor, Ardino region in 1941, and in the village of Klisura, Tran region, in 1942. In my second labor camp in Klisura, Tran region, I personally kept in touch with the Serbian partisans who fought against the Germans. In the evenings one could often see the following scene in the camp: the silhouette of Leon Surojon playing the violin on a hill bathed in moonlight. His favorite piece, which also became my favorite later, was 'Funny Story' by Dvorzak. The commander of our labor group also sat among us and listened to him. During that time we had complete access to his tent. So, one day we stole his weapon without him finding out. Everyone in the camp worked very hard and the food was complete rubbish. I remember the hunger. We were hungry all the time. The food was always bean soup with hardly any beans in it. So, we, the prisoners, made jokes over our plates, calling, 'Hey, show up!' to the little bean at the bottom of our plates...It was very miserable.