

Rywa Yavnai



This is my sister Rywa Yavnai, nee Weinryb, shortly before she emigrated to Palestine. The photo was taken in Zamosc in the 1920s. Rywa was born in 1906. She completed six classes of the grammar school in Zamosc and was the first member of our family to emigrate to Palestine. That was about 1925. At first she worked on a private farm that belonged to some Arabs. They lived in spartan conditions there. Malaria was rife. They didn't have houses, just shacks. Only later did they manage to form kibbutzim. Rywa went to live in the kibbutz Ein Harod. My sister had a fiancé, as I suppose you could call him, back in Zamosc. His name was Szalom Luksemburg. He was preparing to emigrate, too, but kept putting it off, and in the end she left without him. She met her future husband in Palestine. His name was Josif Yavnai and he came from Lithuania. He had been called Slept, but when he arrived in Palestine he changed his name to a Hebrew one. He was very well

read and at the same time hardworking. I remember that I used to send him books from Poland. In time Rywa and Josif became independent. They started off by breeding chickens, then they went into orchard cultivation, and eventually they bred cows. That improved their material situation immensely. They left the kibbutz and went to live in a place called Kfar Vitkin. As far as my sisters go, I have to say that they were all different types, had different characters. Rywa, the youngest, went through a lot before she made it to anything. When she emigrated to Palestine she had to learn to live in extremely harsh conditions. That took its toll on her character. She was hardened. She was of the opinion that you shouldn't ask too much of life.