

Evsey Yatsovskiy With His Family



This is a pre-war picture of my husband's family: to the right sitting is his father Jacob Yatsovskiy, the third to the right sitting is his mother Maria Yatsovskaya, my husband's brother Alexander is standing next to her (the 4th to the right), my husband Evsey is standing second to the left. I don't know the rest. The picture was taken in Kaunas in 1930.

Evsey was born in Kiev in 1918. He came from an intellectual Jewish family. Evsey's parents were from Kiev. Before the outbreak of the October Revolution they moved to Lithuania to escape pogroms and the communist regime. Evsey's father, Jacob Yatsovskiy, was a real merchant, businessman, who knew how to make money. He did really well. Jacob owned a movie house in Kaunas, as well as a video library, which he founded with a Lithuanian companion. Apart from the cinema business, Jacob Yatsovskiy also represented some world-known Swiss firm, which produced lacquer and paint. Jacob donated a lot of money to charity and helped the poor. His wife, Maria, found another way to spend her husband's money. There was a coup d'etat in Lithuania in 1926 and the nationalists came to power. Four communists were executed in the central town square. Touchy Maria was deeply impressed by that and she soon became a member of an underground communist organization. Maria easily talked her husband into contributing rather large amounts of money to the communist party. Maria and Jacob had two sons: Evsey, and his younger brother Alexander.

Evsey was a very gifted artist. He was late for the entrance exams for the arts department and he entered the construction department of the university instead. He was a great interlocutor. I liked to listen to his stories. It seemed to me he knew everything. In 1940, Evsey was drafted into the Lithuanian army. He served in Marijampole. On weekends he came to see me in Kaunas. He couldn't stand not seeing me no longer than a week. I introduced Evsey to my parents. My father wasn't very happy. He wanted a prince for his favorite daughter, but he turned out to be the heir of the owner of the movie houses. Even if I brought a real prince in the house, my father wouldn't have approved of him, as he sincerely believed that nobody was worthy of me.