

## Grigoriy Galunskiy With His Family



This is my mother's oldest brother Grigoriy Galunskiy with his family. He is in the background, his wife Esther Galunskaya, nee Grinblat is on his left and their daughter Ida on his right. His son Yakov is sitting in the foreground. This photo was taken somewhere in Russia. Grigoriy sent it in the 1930s. Grigoriy Galunskiy, the oldest of the siblings, was born in 1896. He became a communist. Mama told me he was under arrest frequently and once he was even sentenced to death. Then the rabbi himself spoke for Grigoriy. Though it was Saturday, he signed a petition, which saved Grigoriy's life. After 1919 Grigoriy lived in the USSR and later he moved to Vilnius as Consul of the Soviet Russia in Lithuania. The capital of Lithuania at that time was Kaunas and Grigoriy, his wife Esther and their children lived in Kaunas. My mother, who loved her older brother, left Varena to live with them. Mama told me that Grigoriy's children loved her dearly. Grigoriy's wife was a Jewish

woman from Kaunas. She was also a convinced communist. Esther was a dentist by profession. She provided her services to prisoners in the local jail. After finishing his military service in Lithuania, Grigoriy was appointed consul in Trieste, Italy. My mother never saw him again. It was only in the late 1930s when a newspaper published the information that Grigoriy Galunskiy, a famous Bolshevik, had died in Odessa. My father decided not to mention to my mother that her beloved brother had died hoping that she would never find out, but she did. Her neighbor visited her and together they were looking at old photographs, when the neighbor expressed her regrets about my mother brother's early death. She also mentioned that she had read about it in the newspapers. Her brother's death was a tragedy for my mother. She mourned for him for seven days sitting on the floor wearing torn clothes. I don't know what happened to Grigoriy's wife or children. I failed to find them after the Great Patriotic War however hard I tried.