

Samuel Eirus' Uncle And His Friends



This photograph was taken in 1929 and I do not know where.

Here you can see my uncle Jacob (first row, first from left) and my father (first row, first from right).

Unfortunately I know nothing about the rest men. I am sure that they are friends. I guess the photo was taken on some festival occasion, because I never saw my father wearing a tie on weekdays.

Neither my father nor anyone from our family was religious. I mean they never showed it anyhow... I also remember no icons, nothing of that kind. Our family members were indifferent to prayers and kippot.

I am sure in it because they were communists, especially my grandmother and her sister Rive (they were true revolutionaries, faithful to principles of communists). But!

Recently I found a photo of my father where he wore some sort of a badge in the form of Magen David (it was fixed to his coat's lapel).

My father was born in Estonian city Vyru in 1905. I already told you that my paternal grandfather was a professional revolutionary, and he managed to educate all his sons. My father spoke Russian, Estonian (I do not take these 2 languages into consideration), German and French.

By the way I do not know if he knew Yiddish or Hebrew. Besides, he finished a musical school and played in the Estonian National Orchestra. I keep a photo showing him together with the orchestra musicians. Pay attention that musical education was not free at that time.

My father was a real professional: he was able to perform serious musical compositions. I remember my Mom told that he wrote notes himself. Some musical scores he arranged for his balalaika [a national Russian musical instrument]. I remember him frequently writing notes at home...

I do not know when Jacob was born. In Leningrad he married a Russian girl Antonina. They had got a daughter. When he was arrested in 1937, his wife changed her surname for her maiden name. I think she also changed their daughter's surname...

At that time a lot of people did it: they were afraid to be relatives of enemies of the people. Authorities used to inform former coworkers of every new enemy of the people.

I know nothing about Antonina's profession, but they often visited us and I remember that they were a family of real intellectuals. You see, that was the time of liquidation of Russian intelligentsia.

They were engineers, very good specialists. Unfortunately I know very little about them. Asking my Mom, I tried to learn something only about my father. Of course I had to ask more...