

Harlev Dov



This is a photo of my eldest brother, Harlev Dov (born Boris Hercenberg). It was taken in Jerusalem in 1938. My oldest brother, Boris, was born in 1908, in Liepaja. Boris began school in Glazov and went to a Russian school there until 1917. There he learned Russian, and spoke it for the rest of his life. When my parents returned to Jelgava from Glazov, Boris was sent to a German gymnasium. He was 18 when he graduated. How he learned Hebrew, I don't know. But he and a friend of his named Shura Davidson emigrated to Palestine in 1926. He had money to go to Berlin. My mother's brother, Uncle Igo Kutisker, who had lived in St. Petersburg earlier, then lived in Palestine. To get enough money to leave Germany, Boris sold his stamp collection and went to Palestine. In 1928 he married Sonya Liven. She was also very active in Betar. Boris only got to know Sonya in Palestine,

but my father used to work with this girl at Lancman's in Riga, where she was a bookkeeper. So, my father knew his future daughter-in-law. Later, Sonya's sister Rosa took over this position as a bookkeeper. When my brother got married, Rosa and her mother, Frau Liven, came to us in Jelgava, to introduce themselves. In 1929 my brother changed both his first name and his surname. Instead of Boris Hercenberg he became Dov Harlev. Har - means hill, Lev - means lion, I think. My brother Boris and I kept writing to each other all our lives. Even during the war we managed to keep in touch with each other. He helped us with parcels that he sent with the assistance of the Red Cross. In 1989, during Gorbachev's time, people started visiting Israel. One of our relatives went to Israel, so I told him, "Please pass word to my brother that I want to come and visit him. But I don't have the money for a ticket. Get him to send me an invitation." When I came into the Visa department, a woman in uniform was sitting there. She read my form and said, "You haven't seen your brother since 1926, and he is 80 now! You will get the permission very soon! Order the tickets!" I called my brother at once and told him this. I spoke to my brother again when he was 80. In 1989 I went to Israel. I stayed with Rafi, my brother's son.