

## Ivan Moshkovich



This is the only prewar picture of me I have. It was as if by miracle that we didn't lose it. The photo was taken in the village of Dolgoye Pole, Uzhgorod district in the 1940s. I was born in 1928 and named Ivan. My Jewish name is Moshe-Tzvi. Two years after I was born my parents moved to Dolgoye Pole. There was no cheder in the village. Their parents hired a melamed who taught children at home every day. Each family had their own melamed. They taught Hebrew, Yiddish and the Torah. They also taught everything that Jewish children were supposed to know. They taught all the required prayers: over bread, milk and water, the kashrut and traditions. We knew the prayers for weekdays and holidays and we knew how to celebrate holidays and their history. At the age of six children went to the cheder in Geivitza. My father taught us at home, we didn't have a

melamed. We could read and write in Yiddish and Hebrew. My father was a very religious man. He knew all prayers by heart. We observed all Jewish traditions in the family, celebrated Sabbath and all Jewish holidays. We went to cheder when we turned six. I went to study at the lower secondary state school in the village when I turned seven in 1935. In 1918 the language of teaching at school became Czech. There were 14 Jewish families in Dolgoye Pole at the most and there weren't many Jewish children at school. There were about 40 families in Dolgoye Pole. The village was small and there weren't many children in each class. It was a small school. There was no anti-Semitism and there couldn't be any. Children usually adopt their parents' attitudes and the adults treated the Jews with respect. In 1938 the Hungarians returned to Subcarpathia. Only this was a fascist Hungary, an ally of Germany. The attitude of the Hungarians toward the Jews was dramatically different from the attitude of Czechs. We began to learn Hungarian at school. It was no problem since we could speak Hungarian. The Hungarians introduced Christian religion classes at school. Jewish children didn't have to attend these classes. Jewish boys of ten years of age had to do mandatory work in Hungarian military barracks near the village: painting, cleaning and carrying bricks. We worked two to three hours every day. If the commanding officer disliked our job he could make us redo it. We knew that the war began in 1939. We didn't have a radio, but some families bought newspapers. They shared what they read with other villagers and the news spread in the village. The Germans attacked Poland, and on 22nd June 1941 Germany also attacked the Soviet Union. There was a war all around, but there were no military actions in Subcarpathia. The Hungarians were allies of Germany. The Germans came to Subcarpathia at the end of 1943. There were Germans in our village. They gave orders and commands and oppressed the Jews, but there were no severe actions on their part before April 1944.