

Yoyl Vaksman And Nysl Alterman



My father Yoyl Vaksman is on the right. My mother's elder brother Nysl Alterman is next to him. The picture was taken in Kishinev in 1946.

My father was born in Kishinev in 1906. After he finished cheder he was a cobbler's apprentice, and then he became a cobbler himself. By the time of drafting into the Romanian Army he became a cobbler of the fifth grade and this was written in his military pass. I don't know who nurtured Communist ideas in my father, and when, but he always used to sympathize with the Communist Party, though he himself was not a member.

My uncle Nysl was born in 1902. He was also a cobbler making uppers. He had a wife, Feiga, and two children. During the Great Patriotic War Nysl was evacuated with his wife and children to the town of Guryev, not far from Astrakhan.

On 22nd June 1941 the Great Patriotic War broke out. My father was demobilized in several days. But he didn't go to the front, he was mobilized to do physical work for the army. He worked at the military plant in Ulyanovsk.

Father wrote to us and even sent us money from Ulyanovsk. In the summer of 1946 Father came back, which made me really happy. We didn't want to leave him for a minute. The three of us laughed and cried, clustered together. Father couldn't get over my brother's and his parents' death for a long time. Uncle Nysl came back from evacuation with his family. He became disabled. His leg was amputated after he was afflicted with diabetes. Father and my legless uncle found a small deserted house and began fixing it. They looked for old construction materials, ransacked the shambles and finally were able to fix two little rooms in the house. One of those rooms was taken by Nysl's family, and the other by my family and Uncle Avrum.