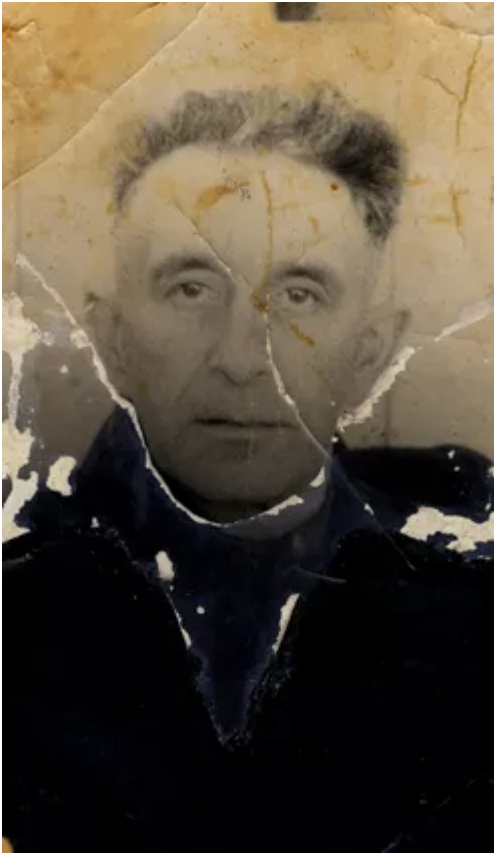


Kushiel Stein



This is my father Kushiel Stein, The picture was made in 1952 in Siauliai.

My father had Hebrew name Kushiel. He was born in Vaskiai in 1904. I do not know what education he got. He most likely finished elementary Lithuanian school as he had excellent oral and written Lithuanian. Father did not serve in Lithuanian army. I remember someone from our family told that he drew a 'blank' card. He became a cabman at the age of 14. During on of his trips in Lithuania, he met my mother. Despite her being four years older than him, he fell in love with her once and for all. My parents got married in 1927.

My parents started renting an apartment after wedding. It lived in the same house where my father's parents-in-law were living. Grandfather Shneer rented an apartment on the second floor and we lived on the first floor. In 1929 my elder sister Chana was born. I came into the world on 19 May 1933.

Our family was not rich. We did not have our own apartment. Most of the money earned was spent on rent. Our family occupied three rooms. The house was wooden. It was heated by stove. We had solid handmade furniture. There was nothing extra, only necessary things. We ate at a dining table in a drawing room. Mother also used this room for work. She had two sewing machines. Mother was often invited in rich Jewish homes, where she got orders for the whole families. There was a wooden shed in the back yard. There were horses in that shed. Those horses helped father earn money. He delivered cargo throughout Lithuania. Apart from being a cabman, father also sold horses. He bought and resold horses. Sometimes, he purchased old horses and sold them to

sausage factories. I went to large markets with him couple of times. Horses were also sold there. I remember I was very sorry for those old horses, which were to be slaughtered.

Our family had a modest living. I remember that parents had a long discussion before buying us anything as they wanted to save money and to buy cheaper things. Besides, mother made most of the clothes for us. As for the food, it was lavish and delicious, though no dainties. We had meat every day, not only on the weekend.

In winter 1942 father had been taken in the army. When 16 Lithuanian division was formed, all men got the notifications from military enlistment office. Father often wrote to us. We were agog to see the mailman. Father was in the reserves, but still he was at the leading edge, in the vicinity of Kursk, he was even contused. He was in Lithuanian division until the end of war. He happened to be in Sovetsk, Kaliningrad oblast, when the war was over.

Father was demobilized before soon -in late May 1945 he came back in Siauliai. He found his friend Kasimiras, who gave him a small room in his apartment. Kasimiras helped father buy a horse and father became a cabman again. Now he and Kasimiras worked for some town enterprise- supplied bricks, cleaned shambles in town. Father was a modest man and could not get what he wanted, without being able to occupy a free apartment. Finally, in 1946 we were given apartment in the outskirts of the town. It was an apartment with large bedroom kitchen with a stove. There was a shed in the yard, where we could put a horse.

My father died in 1954 in my hands. There were people in the community, who took care of Jewish funerals. Father was buried according to the Jewish rite- he was carried across the town and buried in shroud without a coffin. Jews prayed at home and at the cemetery. Shivah was observed.