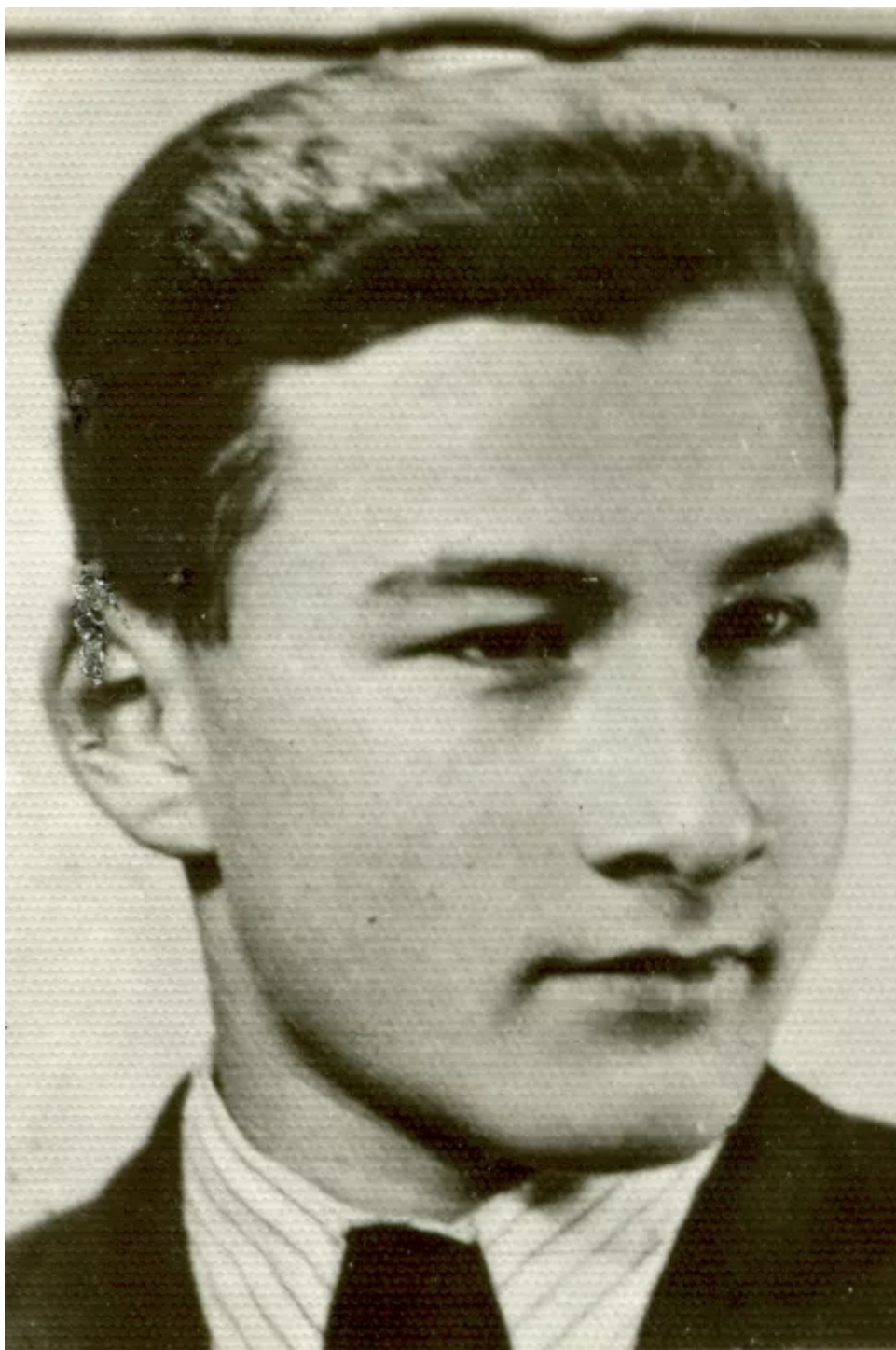


Henryk Bertram



This photo was taken probably in 1939 or 1940. That's the last photo of my brother Henryk Bertram. I found it after the war in the Jewish Historical Institute. Henryk was in the ghetto of Cracow and then he was sent to Belzec with all the family.

I was the oldest of us brothers and sisters. My brother Henryk was four years younger. My sister Ernestyna, or Nusia - that's what we called her - was seven years younger than me. Each of us went to a different school. Nusia went to 'Konopnicka'. That was a girls' school. And on the next street was the boys' school. Henryk went to that boys' school first, and then he moved. After that

he went to evening school, to an evening grammar school on the Main Square, and worked at the same time. My brother and sister and I never spent time together. All we did together was eat breakfast, or dinner or supper. And other than that each of us went his own way. For all meals the whole family always sat at the table together. But other than that everyone went their own ways and I didn't know anything, what kind of life my sister led, what my brother did, where he went to school, if he had a tutor. I didn't know anything.

When I finished elementary school, seven classes, Dad asked me whether I wanted to study or work. I said: 'I want to study'. So they enrolled me in a school of commerce. But my brother didn't want to study, he preferred to work, preferred to be earning. And he learned his trade from my father. So in his workshop Dad had both an apprentice and my brother.

In the summer of 1939 I was with my Mom, brother and sister in Zawoja [a mountain resort in Poland]. And Dad called to tell us to come home immediately, a week early. We arrived more or less a week before the outbreak of war. Then Dad decided that I would stay with the family and my brother, four years younger, would go out into the world. But my aunt, Granddaddy's sister, advised my father that I should leave home and escape, and my brother stay, because he was younger. The Germans were taking boys of my age and sending them to the German-French front; those were the rumors. If it hadn't been for my aunt I wouldn't be here and perhaps my brother would still be alive; perhaps he would have survived.