

Rywa Yavnai With Relatives



This is my sister Rywa Yavnai, nee Weinryb, first from the left, with the family of our cousin Ita. The man in the second row is her husband - Natan Mendel. In the center is their child. I don't remember her name. The photo was taken in Grabowiec in 1931. Ita was the daughter of my Uncle Szalom Weinryb. Uncle Szalom was the owner of a mill in Grabowiec, which was 20 kilometers from Zamosc. The co-owner of the mill was Mr. Licht, who was the father of Natan Mendel. The area was fertile and the grain good, so they lived fairly plentifully. At that time tarpaulin-covered wagons like gypsy carts ran between Zamosc and Grabowiec. They were used to transport people and goods. We would travel in such wagons to visit them. My sister Rywa was born in 1906. She completed six classes of the grammar school in Zamosc and was the first member of our family to emigrate to Palestine. That was about 1925. At first she worked on a private farm that belonged to some Arabs. They lived in spartan conditions there. Malaria was rife. They didn't have houses, just shacks. Only later did they manage to form kibbutzim. Rywa went to live in the kibbutz Ein Harod. My sister had a fiancé, as I suppose you could call him, back in Zamosc. His name was Szalom Luksemburg. He was preparing to emigrate, too, but kept putting it off, and in the end she left without him. She met her future husband in Palestine. His name was Josif Yavnai and he came from Lithuania. He had been called Slept, but when he arrived in Palestine he changed his name to a Hebrew one. He was very well read and at the same time hardworking. I remember that I used to send him books from Poland. In fact, I have to say that both my brothers-in-law were very decent people. In time Rywa and Josif became independent. They started off by breeding chickens, then they went into orchard cultivation, and eventually they bred cows. That improved their material situation immensely. They left the kibbutz and went to live in a place called Kfar Vitkin.