

Zuzanna Mensz' Cousins Masza And Ida Halperin And Other Cousins From Skryhiczyn



This is a group of my cousins from Skryhiczyn. A woman in the center (third from left in the second row) is my mom's aunt Masza Halperin. Second from left in the second row is Ida Merzan, her daughter. The photo was taken in studio in Dubienka, I think.

The whole big family Rottenberg lived in Skryhiczyn. There was Skryhiczyn-Dwor [Manor] and Skryhiczyn-Folwark [Farm], three kilometers apart. All that was owned by one family, the Rottenbergs. The land was divided between the heirs [According to the book Rottenbergowie znad Buga it happened in 1926.] and my Mom got her 17 acres at Skryhiczyn-Folwark. There were five more houses in Skryhiczyn-Farm apart from ours, among them Aunt Masza Halperin's [sister of Zlata Horowicz, my grandmother. The age gap between the sisters was so great Masza was of my mother's age despite being her aunt], and in Skryhiczyn there was the manor and the houses of our Uncles Motel and Josel, and of the Kaminers, who were from our family as well. There was a sawmill between the Manor and the Farm, where the Szydowski family lived, also our relatives.

Many of the younger members of our Skryhiczyn family left for Israel [Palestine] before the war. During my first visit to Israel in 1959 I met people from Skryhiczyn I didn't know, but I'd known their parents. Why would they emigrate? I suppose their primary motive was the idea. They were Zionists, they wanted the state Israel to come into being. But apart from that, those young people had no perspectives in Poland. The seemingly huge estates did not allow to pay for the children's education. Well, at least not many of them did study. Ida Merzan, who came from Chisinau already after completing high school, literally forced her mother to send her younger sisters to school. She arranged for them to have a teacher, a friend of Zlatka, and she coached them a bit. She then sent them to the elementary school in Dubienka. Ida's sister Hanka, who rode on horseback, used to say: 'I don't need to learn geography, I know how to get to Dubienka anyhow.' They did go to school eventually, however, and they all worked for Korczak at the Orphans' House. Ida's two

sisters later emigrated to Israel and set up their families there.