

Yevsey Kotkov's Older Brother Yakov Kot Glastun



This is my older brother Yakov (Yankel) Kot Glastun. This photograph was taken in the 'Souvenir' studio, Kiev, on December 15, 1917. There were five of us kids in the family. My oldest brother Yankel, Yakov Abramovich Glastun, was born in 1902. He was a tinsmith, like all of us. He lost his eye on the front during the WWII. He died in 1958 in Kiev. His daughter Musia lives in Israel now.

When we were children, we lived with our parents in a basement in the main street in Rovno. There was some hay on planks that served as a bed for my mother and her children. The remaining area served as my father's shop. He made whatever he had orders for, like tins, cups, buckets, cans, etc. They used a bucket for a toilet. Life was not much fun. It was cold, and we didn't have enough to eat. My father was a failure, a rough and wild man, always dirty. Mommy used to cry a lot. Father beat us. He offended the girls, too, and none of us wanted to stay with him. My father used to go and ask some rich Jewish family whether they had anything they wanted to give away. He used to bring back a huge bag and we were so happy that there were so many clothes for us. In the early 1920s my brothers and I changed our last names. We didn't think it sounded very nice to have the last name Kot , which in Russian means Cat. It was easy to change one's name at that time. There were no passports. I went to an office and asked them to add 3 letters to my last name ? and it became Kotkov. Yakov took his wife's last name ? Glastun, and the youngest ? Izia ? changed his last name to Katkov.