

Minta And Iosif Samoil Tucarman



These are my parents, Minta and Iosif Samoil Tucarman. This photo was taken in Iasi in 1937 at a studio called Foto Select on Cuza Voda Street. The photographer was deaf and dumb. He spoke very slowly, barely understanding the words. He could not pronounce the word 'smile,' he could only say 'smi.' He was a great man and most demanding. One can see how skilled he was in taking photos.

My father was born in Iasi in 1889. He owned a grocery store, then a ferrous and nonferrous metal shop. He went about his business in the shop and saw to the house as well. He was very good at it. He was the warden of the Haim Hoffman synagogue located behind our house. He kept the Jewish tradition in the sense that he would go to the synagogue every Friday evening, on Saturdays, yearly holidays such as Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Ever since I turned ten or eleven, after I did my homework, I would help my father many times in the shop, or out shopping, or selling. He couldn't manage it by himself. Many customers thought they could fool me, but I was very well trained, I was good at it.

My mother was born in Iasi in 1889. She would not let a Friday evening go by without her lighting the candles. I can see her right before my eyes: she put her little shawl on her head, she lit the candles. 'I pray for our welfare, your welfare, let us all be healthy and safe from evil!' She would utter these words in Yiddish although my parents spoke Romanian flawlessly. Like in any Jewish house, both they and my maternal grandmother would talk in Yiddish every time they did not want us children to understand what they were talking about. My mother played the most important part in our education.

When my youngest sister was born, the birth was very difficult. They did not use the forceps to help her, and as a result she had heart problems ever since, for 15 years. She had an embolism and that was the cause of her death. She used to say: 'Iosif, dear, my children, don't leave me!' I can still hear the words she said when she was aware that she had to leave us. She died in 1939. My father was 50 when my mother died. He was left alone with four kids and he did not remarry.