

Sally Uzvalova's Father Borukh Barzak And Mother Tonia Barzak



My parents: my father Borukh Barzak and my mother Tonia Barzak, nee Roitberg. The photo was taken in 1930 in Soroki.

My father and all his brothers worked very hard. The boys finished cheder (4 years) and after they had to go to work. Their parents couldn't afford to give them education. My father worked at the state tobacco plantation since he was 11. He took a piece of mamalyga (Editor's note: corn pudding) and a clove of garlic or an onion to work. Working hard he made some saving and at 27 he owned a house and two stores.

In 1923 my father was recruited to serve in the Rumanian army two years. He served in Yassy where he met my mother's older brother Mark. Mark invited my father to his home at weekends. My father met my mother and fell in love with her. It was love at first sight. My mother was a striking beauty when she was young. She became "Miss Yassy" several times. My father asked my grandparents their consent for marrying their daughter. They told him that my mother didn't have a dowry. My father didn't give up and they got engaged. After their engagement my father took my mother to the jewelry store and bought her a golden ring and a watch. This was his first gift to my mother. He was madly in love with her. This was a heavenly love and they kept it through their marriage.

In 1925 after the service term of my father was over, my parents got married. My father was 25 and my mother - 19. They had a wedding party in my mother parents' home. My mother's parents had just completed the construction of an annex to their house where they were going to locate their sewing shop. My parents had their wedding party in this annex. They had a traditional Jewish wedding. The rabbi from a big synagogue conducted the ceremony. There was a big wedding feast after the ceremony. There were many guests. My father's relatives from Soroki came to the wedding. After the wedding my father took his young wife to Soroki. My father didn't have a house. At the beginning my parents rented a house from an old gray-bearded man Volovskiy.

In some time my father purchased that plot of land from him and built two big houses. He started construction of the 2nd house after I was born.

There were room maids in our family. I had a room maid of my own. My mother helped my father to do business. She started to work in my father's fabric store. My mother supervised the shop assistant and advised her customers on what to select. Many people came to the store to take a look at the beautiful wife of Borukh Barzak. And they bought more from the store. My mother helped my father in many ways.

My father was a very kind and honest man. Older Jews called him "a giter id" - a good Jew in Yiddish. Other people often came to ask my father's advice.

My father and mother were very religious. My father had a seat near the Eastern wall at the synagogue and my mother had a seat on the upper floor. My father made charity contributions and took care of some poor families giving them money to buy matsah for the holidays. My father made contributions to the synagogue. The synagogue provided food products to poor families to celebrate Pesach.

We spoke Rumanian at home. I only heard Yiddish when I visited my grandparents.

My parents followed the kashrut. We also had kosher utensils for dairy and meat products for everyday use. We often went to visit my grandparents on Jewish holidays. There was a rule in the family that the sons and their families celebrated Shabbat and holidays in their parents' home. At

Shabbat my grandmother lit candles and said a prayer over them. My grandmother baked halas, made Gefilte fish and strudels.