

Aizic And Ozias Calmanovici As Soldiers



The one on the left is my father Aizic Calmanovici. The other one is his older brother, Ozias Calmanovici. They were serving in the army. There was a two-year age difference between them, so they may have served together. Back then the military service lasted 3 years. Young men were drafted at the age of 18, I believe. In any case, they didn't get married before they did their service. I know my father served in a mountain rangers unit in Bukovina.

My grandparents from my father's side were Iosif and Perla Calmanovici. They lived in Sulita, in the county of Botosani. [Sulita – former borough, a village at present – it is located 35 km south-east of Botosani.] They were merchants in the borough of Sulita, which was a small borough where the majority of inhabitants were Jewish – there were around 300 Jewish families.

My grandmother told me that she had 13 or 14 children. A very large number. Poor soul. She wasn't allowed to have an abortion. If you're a religious person, I think you aren't allowed to do that, regardless of your religion. They married at 15, 16 back then, that's how it was. But in the end, 4 of them lived, whom I have met: my father, two other brothers and a sister. The eldest was Ozias, followed by Ana, then my father and then Marcu. The others died. Perhaps they were older than them.

Ozias Calmanovici got married in Falticeni with a rich girl – her name was Fany. He got a rich girl and a cruel fate. The legionnaires took everything they had. They had a manufacture store in Falticeni. They too were relocated to Botosani, and then they left to Israel right after World War II, the whole family. They had 4 children: Iosif – Ioji –, Paul, Ada and Letti. 2 daughters, 2 sons. They had 4 children, but one of them, Lettica, poor soul, died 6 years ago [in 2006], and now only three of them are left.

My father's name was Aizic, but people also called him Mose. His Jewish name was Mose, but his official name was Aizic. My father was born on August 8, 1900. I loved him very much, and each year I knew when his birthday was. He had no higher education. In small towns, you didn't need higher studies if you were a merchant. If they earned good money, merchants didn't go to the faculty. My father only graduated primary school, and so did my mother. If they were rich, why would they need schooling? Until 1941, when the legionnaire regime came to power, my father was a merchant. My father inherited his father's and grandmother's store, he continued to run their store. They sold haberdashery, shoes, perfumes, small ware, everything.

In 1943 – I remember precisely, it was during autumn – my father was taken hostage by the legionnaires – but no longer remember whether it was with the help of the Police or of the army. And I thought they were going to shoot him, that they would ask him to do some things, and if you didn't perform what they required of you, then they would shoot you. For you were in danger of being shot during the legionnaires' regime. Had they wanted money... But they didn't want money. My aunt Rica, my mother's sister, went to the house of one of the officers – I couldn't tell you exactly who, but I believe he was from the Police –, whose daughter she had befriended, so that she could negotiate with him. Nothing could be done, the legionnaires were very mean. We were desperate, as father was there and they could have shot him at any time. But my father escaped with his life. He was held hostage for a few months, until April 1944. Until the Russians came. If the Russians hadn't come, I believe he wouldn't have survived, they would have shot him.

The Joint founded a canteen in Botosani in 1945. And my father, poor soul, he had a superb handwriting, it was very beautiful, and very accurate, and at first he was hired at the canteen as administrator, then he was in charge of primary book-keeping, and I don't know exactly what other position he had there. I believe this canteen was open until 1948. The Joint canteen was located near the co-operative that was founded in 1948. It wasn't an agricultural or a craftsmen's co-operative, it was a co-operative whose object of activity were countryside stores. And then they employed him at the co-operative in the billing department. For he wasn't an accountant. And he

had that job in the billing department until I don't know when. The co-operative's offices were located in the courtyard in front of the Community – the Jewish Community of Botosani. And they were missing a cashier at the Community. And they knew about my father, perhaps father visited the Community center, I couldn't tell you that, and they employed him as a cashier. And he was required to write everything that needed to be written, records, stuff. For father's handwriting was very beautiful and accurate, he wasn't illiterate. And he worked at the Jewish Community until his death, in 1969.