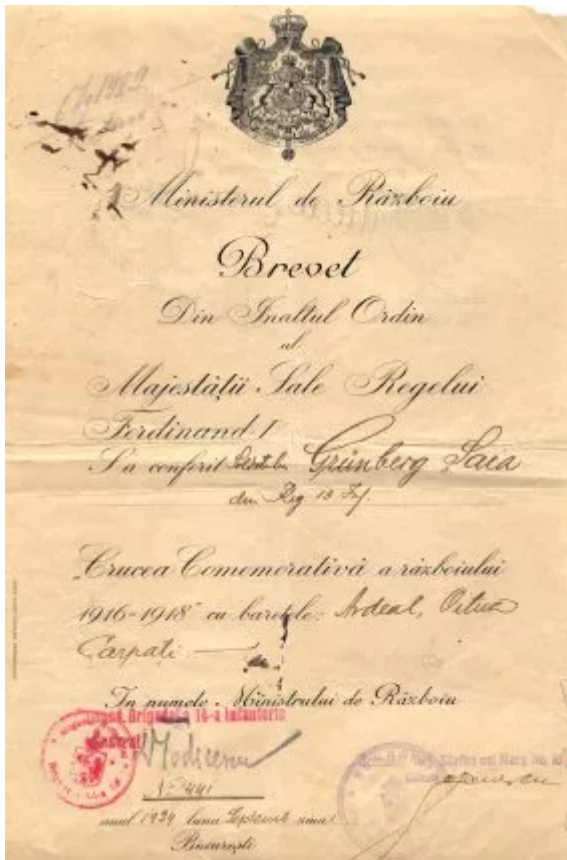


Medal Citation For Saia Grunberg



This document is a citation for the Commemorative Cross of the War 1916-1918, with the Ardeal, Oituz and Carpati bars of medals. It was awarded to my father, Saia Grunberg, for his military service during World War I, in 1924.

My father, Saia Grunberg, was born in Iasi in 1887. He spoke Romanian, and he studied at a business high school in Iasi. He worked as an accountant and as a proxy for another Jew named Horovitz. I never knew my father, he died in 1921, when I wasn't even a year old. Everything I know about him is from stories my mother told me.

One year after they got married, in 1915, my elder sister Angela was born. My father had already left for war; in 1914, he was drafted to the Romanian army. During World War I he fell prisoner to the Austro-Hungarians, in Slovakia. He was held hostage until the end of the war, in a place called Trentschin-Teplitz. My mother didn't know where he was for a while, she was desperate, so she kept on going to Bucharest, to the army's general staff, and she persisted until she found out that he was alive. My father came home in 1918.

My father spoke Italian very well, and when he came back from the war, he was sent by his employer to Italy, and, with his gift for languages, he became fluent in Italian in six weeks. So those Italian partners, who were in the weaving industry, grew interested in him, and fond of him as well, so they gave him a new job, supervising their new representation in Galati. We almost moved to Galati, because of my father's business interests there, but my grandfather wouldn't hear of it, he didn't want to leave his synagogue and his rabbis.

My father set up the business with the help of two of his Social Democrat friends, he had no money of his own to invest. This was his occupation between 1918 and 1921, but nothing much came out of it, because he soon died. He fell ill with flu, got a septicemia and died. He was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Iasi, named Pacurari; my maternal grandfather recited Kaddish for him.