

Herman And Bajla Beitner



This is a picture of my parents, Herman and Bajla Beitner. It was taken in the 1930s in Katowice.

'Balcia,' I remember that's how my father called Mom. When they were speaking Jewish to each other Mother would call Father 'Herszel,' but when they were speaking Polish - Herman.

Mother was pretty, a brunette, I think. She had short hair, somehow tied, but it wasn't a bun. She wasn't tall, she wasn't plump. She was calm, kind.

They loved each other, Father and Mother, yes, I remember this. They were very gentle with each other. But Mother felt that Father wasn't energetic enough with us, or with the work he was doing.

Mother was always worried that she didn't have enough money. As I remember it, it wasn't so bad, because we used to go on holidays in the summer with our entire family, there was a piano in the house, I used to learn how to play it.

That didn't last long, because I was lazy and didn't have good musical hearing. But I remember that my parents always talked about being in debt. Father used to borrow money, possibly from his brothers Tobiasz and Chaim.

My parents didn't read much. They didn't have an intellectual education, no needs. They were simple people. Among themselves they spoke about family, business, that there wasn't enough money.

I'm sure they didn't talk about politics. I remember that before the war there started to be talk about whether there'd be a war. They were afraid. Mother thought we should have left for Palestine.

Father was a member of the General Zionist Organization. He was the treasurer there. My parents wanted to move to Palestine, but they never had enough money for the tickets, to go with the entire family.

So we never left. Zionist views were popular among Father's brothers. Uncle Tobiasz and Uncle Chaim bought some land in Palestine, but somehow they didn't manage to leave on time, because if they had, they would have probably survived the Holocaust.