Leon Beraha

This is my husband Leon Yosif Beraha in his military uniform during the Fatherland War [WWII]. He volunteered with a group of friends and they reached Hungary. There the seniors found out that the boys were under age and sent them back home. At that time the lawful age in Bulgaria was 21 and Leon was only 18. I volunteered for the military infirmary at the Sofia railway station. I wanted to be the first person to help Leon in case he was wounded. I became a member of the UYW on 5th May 1942, right after I finished the 3rd grade of the Jewish junior high school. Leon was redirected to our group as a more experienced UYW member. At the age of 15 I carried out my first action with him, and at 16 we decided to be a couple. For three or four years we were only holding hands. In Iuchbunar there was a conspiracy, a traitor within our organization and a lot of members were imprisoned. My future husband was also arrested. He simulated that he was an imbecile, he was released as an underdeveloped person and was acquitted for lack of evidence. His second arrest was a more serious one. In fascist times [in the late 1930s - early 1940s] he worked as an

electrician. At that time the newspapers wrote about the Totleben conspiracy. The gang of Totleben bandits was raging, etc. My husband and his brother electrified a hospital. In an outhouse behind that hospital they hid two outlaws. Actually the conspiracy was called this way because the hospital was on Totleben Street in Sofia. During a police action a shooting started. Anyway, the authorities never proved that it was my husband who had shot. Yet, all this resulted in his internment to the forced labor camp in Dupnitsa. They dug trenches there. By a 'happy' coincidence my family was also interned to Dupnitsa. Leon was released from the labor camp on 9th September 1944. Like many other young men, who had left-wing convictions, he volunteered and joined the Bulgarian army in the Fatherland War.