

Mordohay Sabitay Madzhar



This is a photo of my father, Mordohay Sabitay Madzhar, taken in Sofia in the 1980s. My father was born in Dupnitsa in 1892. He inherited his father's gut processing trade, which had nothing to do with the kashrut; the guts were sold to Bulgarians who produced sausages. My father was a very kind man and was not strict; he never hit me. I remember that once he was very angry with me, and yet he didn't beat me. There was a ritual for the children to make small bags for Purim in which everyone would drop a coin. I had collected a lot, 3-4 levs and my father knew that. When I went out on the street the other children were playing some kind of game and were staking money. They talked me into joining them and I lost my money. How could I tell my father? So I did the following: I broke a glass into small pieces and put it in my pocket so that when they asked me where my money was, I would tap the pocket and they would hear coins chinking. But my father saw through the trick. He shouted at me a lot, but he didn't hit me. He was a kind-hearted man. He very much believed in people, he was kind of naive. He had many Bulgarian friends. That's why during the Law for the Protection of the Nation we didn't experience much hardship. We had friends in the villages and in town, who brought us flour and bread; there was a miller, who was a friend of my father. The baker also respected him. I remember that since we used coupons to buy food, I would give the baker a coupon for one loaf of bread, and he would give me more loaves. My father was a well-known man and everyone was willing to help him. But sometimes his faith in people got him into trouble. Once he came to work in Sofia with a fellow man from Dupnitsa. They earned a lot of money, but his so-called partner cheated him and gave him nothing. My father was very kind, but maybe because of his job and his fellow workers, butchers, who are on the whole ruder, wild and unrestrained, he was very brave. I can't say that he was rude, but he reacted very fast in dangerous situations. I remember once during the war [WWII], a man came into our yard and broke our windows, probably because he hated Jews. My father jumped outside with an axe and ran after him. He found the man hiding in the toilet in the yard, holding a knife. Attacking with the knife, he cut my mother's hand and my father hit him so hard with the axe that I thought he killed the man.

The man was alive, thankfully, but my point is that my father was afraid of nothing. He had two brothers, Rahamin and Aron, and four sisters ? Miriam, Buka, Vida and Rashel. All of them except Buka left with their families for Israel after the war.