

Ida Alkalai With A Friend



This is a photo of me and my friend Estrea. I don't remember her family name. She was born in Nevrokop. The photo was taken in Dupnitsa in the 1940s. Estrea is wearing a yellow Jewish star in the photo.

When we weren't allowed to go out, because we were being prepared for deportation, my father went out to sit for a while in front of the door. Then a fascist-oriented neighbor hit him and ordered him to go inside immediately. We weren't allowed to go out even in front of our houses. There were shops with notices reading, 'Forbidden for Jews.' There were special shops for Jews. But we didn't have notices on the doors of our houses. There were people in Dupnitsa who were against Jews even before the war. But most of the people supported us.

We got along very well with most of the Bulgarians. When we were about to be deported in 1943, all our belongings, everything which was stored for a girl who will get married such as sheets, towels, clothes, blankets, we gave to Bulgarians. But when they told us that we wouldn't be deported, the Bulgarians gave us our belongings back. Then we had to stay in our houses and weren't allowed to go out. Probably they waited for the trains to arrive to get us deported to the concentration camps.

The Aegean Jews, who were killed in the camps, passed through Dupnitsa. Some of those Jews spent a few days in Dupnitsa in some warehouse and the Bulgarians brought them food. I also remember that during fascist times Bulgarian friends visited my husband's father to take him out to a friend's house, when Jews were forbidden to go out after 8pm. He would take off the yellow star and they would hide him while walking on the street. During the war there was a curfew and we were allowed only to walk along the river.