

Grandfather Usher Soifer



This is Usher Soifer, the grandfather from my mother's side. I think the photograph was taken in Bucecea in the 1920's.

My mother's parents were Bacea and Usher Soifer, they lived in Bucecea. [Bucecea is located in the county of Botosani, 22 km west of Botosani.] My grandfather worked in the woods of a boyar. I don't know what he did exactly, he went into the woods and took care of things, supervised - in the employment of a boyar. And my grandmother was a housewife. They had a nice house, with three rooms and a kitchen. My grandfather's financial situation was better. They also raised livestock, but that was before I was born. They didn't raise fowl. I don't even know what animals they raised, it was either a horse or a cow. And it was there, in that shed, that my grandfather improvised a bathtub. He ordered a wooden bathtub, he bought a small cauldron, and we'd take baths there with walnut leaves and salt. We could stretch inside the bathtub. Only the family used this bathtub. They had a small flower garden.

My grandfather was kinder than my grandmother, more forgiving. When he had business to attend to and he came to Dorohoi, he would take me with him by train. And he would take me along to state offices, he used a piece of string - of a certain length - and tied it around one of my coat buttons and pulled me along. My grandfather was kind and pious. He was bearded and wore a kippah on his head - that's what Jews wore to cover their head.

My grandfather died in Bucecea when he was 68-69, approximately. I was around 10-12, so it must have happened in 1932-1933. I didn't attend his funeral. They left me and my sister at home with Toni - a first-degree cousin of my mother's -, and my parents went to Bucecea, at the funeral.