Isak Anzhel

Here in the photo is Isak Anzhel - my brother. The photo was probably taken in a photo shop. On the back of the photograph there is an inscription in the handwriting of Isak Anzhel: 'To Haim and Rashel Levy's family. I'm sending my picture as a souvenir. Isak Anzhel. Yambol 15th June 1918. Levy family - Sofia.' I don't remember who Haim and Rashel Levy are.

I have three older brothers from my father's first wife, whose name was Yafa. Their names are Isak, Hiskia and Marko. When I was born, my oldest brother Isak had already left for his studies abroad, I don't know where. Hiskia [Harry] didn't live with us either, I don't know why, probably he was studying or working, too. Only the third son, Marko, was living with the family. He was born in 1906, which means he was fifteen when I was born. My mother treated us the same.

My father died in 1932 and was buried in Sofia when I was eleven years old. After my father's death our family became very poor and we decided to move to Sofia. My two brothers, Isak and Hiskia, had already settled here. We rented the attic rooms of a massive house on 21 Kiril i Metodii Street, between Bratya Miladinovi and Hristo Botev Streets. In the house and on the street lived more Bulgarian families. The house still exists today. After that we moved to another house on the same street, afterwards we lived on Pirotska Street and later on Bacho Kiro Street.

My two brothers were already working. They had their own deli shop and a little later they bought a winery. They covered some of our expenses but that was insufficient and I was forced to work after school. At first I worked in a little bookshop for five levs per day and studied at Konstantin Fotinov School on Hristo Botev Street. When I was at school in the morning I worked in the afternoon and vice versa.

The financial situation of the family of my other brother, Isak, was better than ours, too. They had their own apartment on Stefan Karadzha Street, today opposite the Satire Theater and at that time it was opposite the Italian School. They used to live on the last floor. I remember that they had a built-in fireplace in their apartment. His wife's name was Kler. There was an air of softness about her and she always had a smile on her face. They had two children, Yafa and Isak, who, when I wasn't at work, for example on Sunday, I would take to the cinema. Isak also used to help my family: me, my mother and Marko, with small sums.