

Juliet Saltiel And Ruben Fridman



This is me with my brother Ruben Yosif Fridman. The photo was taken in the early 1940s in Sofia.

My elder brother's name was Ruben. He was born in Sofia in 1923 and died in Israel in 1999. He was an electrician. From his wife Ester (nee Sachi), he had three children: Yosif, Sima and Dafna. They live in Haifa in Israel. His wife was a housewife and now she is a pensioner. As far as I know it was Ruben who took care of our mother until she died.

I remember that before and during the Law for Protection of the Nation my family lived at different addresses. We lived in a rented flat in Ruse, after that - in Sofia, where we changed our addresses very often. I remember that in my early childhood we lived in Beli Iskar Str. near the railway station. After that we moved to live in Tetevenska Str. Then we changed our address to a two-storey house in Skobelev Blvd. We lived in two rented rooms in the attic. We had electricity, running water and even a radio. I remember we loved listening to radio Sofia.

I remember the period of the Law for Protection of the Nation very well. When we went out we had to wear these disgraceful yellow stars; we got insulted and even humiliated by random people in the streets whom we even didn't know. We had an obligatory curfew hour; besides, Jews were banned from entering certain shops, restaurants, theaters and so on. There was an invariable sign at these places: 'Forbidden for Jews'. But what is more - the Jews were not allowed to keep running their private pharmacies, most of them - situated in Sofia's center, so Bulgarians got an advantage of taking control over the pharmacies. Of course, there were restrictions for tradesmen of Jewish origin as well (and the Jews were then predominantly retailers). Students of Jewish origin could not continue their education at universities. There was also one-off tax, for example if one had a bank

account of 100,000 leva 30 per cent or 40 per cent of that sum simply got confiscated.