

Juliet And Yosif Fridman



This is me with my father Yosif Fridman. The photo was taken in 1935 or 1936 in Sofia.

My father Yosif Fridman was born in the village of Luninets, Minsk Region [Luninets is in Brest region, Belarus] in 1897. Unfortunately, I know nothing of other possible children of my father's parents; neither can I say if he had any siblings. As far as I know, my father was a soldier in the Russian army and took part in the October Revolution in 1917 [Revolution in which the tsarist regime was overthrown in the Russian Empire and, under Lenin, was replaced by the Bolshevik rule]. He fled from Russia most probably in the period between 1920 and 1922. I can't remember anything else about that. When he moved to Bulgaria, he received the so-called Nansen's citizenship, which means he had an emigrant status in Bulgaria but did not have a citizenship [he was a Russian subject, but received certain civil rights in Bulgaria]. His Nansen's citizenship, however, expired after 9th September 1944 [The day of the communist takeover in Bulgaria. In September 1944 the Soviet Union unexpectedly declared war on Bulgaria.] and he was forced to move to Israel [then Palestine], where he died in Yagur in 1961.

Dad sometimes was very joyful, sometimes - extremely strict. Strict mainly with my mother and my half-brother [Leon Levi, from Juliet Saltiel's mother's first marriage] whom he didn't want. He thought of my half-brother's ailment as a stain and he would always tell him off. However, as a whole, he was a just man and he didn't have any problems in his communication with people. In certain cases, he loved singing - in Russian or in Yiddish. His favourite song was 'Ei, uhnem!' [Russian: Come on, altogether!]. I remember him also singing religious songs in Ivrit (I cannot reconstruct them in my memory now), because my father was very religious in contrast to my

mother. For example, my mother used to prepare matzah for Pesach; but secretly from my father she also ate bread. He used to observe all the traditions and often went to the synagogue. He used to wear his tallit. And he filled us, his children, with strong respect.