

Rasela Glasberg



This is my mother Rasela Glasberg. This is the only photo which remains to me of her. And it's only a copy sent by my brother Herman Glasberg.

My mother's maiden name was Rasela Licvornic. She was born in Marginea, also in the vicinity of Radauti, in October 1898. My mother was the second born, but she was born late, after my grandfather from my mother's side remarried. My mother's sister was the offspring of my grandfather's marriage with his first wife, so the two of them were stepsisters. Just like my father, my mother's education consisted only of primary school, too. They lacked the material means to go to high school. My mother, at least, would have been prone to study. She greatly enjoyed reading, she was self-taught. She recited Heine [Ed. note: Heine, Heinrich (1797-1856), German poet] and Goethe [Ed. note: Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von (1749-1832), German poet, playwright, novelist, and scientist.] in a very literary German.

We spoke German at home. I spoke German fluently. I'm still pretty good at it even now. I belong to the generation that lived and suffered - even if only as a child - the errors of World War II and the times that followed in the wake of it, which were ridden with poverty, precarious living conditions, lack of education and so on. I believe 99% of the Jewish population in Radauti was deported to Transnistria. We traveled through Moghilev, and were taken to Djurin [nowadays Dzhurin, in the Vinnytsya region in Ukraine] in Transnistria. We were six all in all, the five of us - three sons and our parents.

Mother improvised a sort of chair on which to place the sewing machine, and my older brothers - I couldn't really do it, I was too little, only 2-3 years old - would take turns spinning the sewing machine's wheel with the help of a small stick; she sewed as much as she could for the diverse

population there - especially Ukrainian, Russian and Moldovan women, those who spoke Romanian, that is, to a smaller degree. As payment for her sewing we would get a handful of flour or cornmeal, or they would bring us the smaller potatoes that couldn't be peeled - we would boil them as they were, whole -, and on many occasions my mother would ask them to bring us the potato peels as well. That was the reality of our life.

At a certain point, my mother contracted exanthematic typhus, and was taken to the hospital in Moghilev, and we had no clear idea whether or not she would survive. I know that we went there only once, by cart, with one of our neighbors, and we talked with mother at the hospital's window. Even I remember that, although I was only a little child - by 1943-1944 I was 4 years old going on 5 - but it remained stamped in my mind.

We returned home by means of a cart that we hired there [in Djurin]. I don't remember exactly how long it took us to get home, for anyway, it's a long distance to travel, but I remember this image, that in the spring of 1945, when we returned, the snow was thawing and there were many puddles to cross. We traveled by cart day and night, and we managed to reach our home in Radauti.