

Leon Gatlan



This is my paternal grandfather, Leon Gatlan. This picture was taken in Vaslui in the 1910s.

My paternal grandparents were from Moldova, and they lived in Barlad. My grandfather's name was Leon Gatlan, but he was also registered as Leone in some records, and people called him Leibe. This was a Hebrew diminutive form. He was born in Harlau, in Iasi County, but he later moved to Barlad.

My grandmother, that is, my father's mother, was named Clara, but they called her Haia - this was her Jewish name. She was born in 1876, in Vaslui. I don't know what her maiden name was, because I never even met her. I know from old photos that she had two sisters, Pesy and Eufrosine, but their names are all that I know about them. All the members of the Gatlan family were Jewish.

I don't know how they got to have this name, which is their initial name. It's a Romanian name, but, since they lived in Moldova, it must have been the name they bore from the very beginning, because people didn't use to change their names back then; this is something they do nowadays.

I don't know the names of any other ancestors of mine. I know that they were generally located in Moldova and spent the last part of their lives in Barlad. They had been living in Barlad for a long time. The house in Barlad was rather large and roomy as far as I could see, but how it looked is something I don't remember very well.

I don't know if they were landowners, but they did have some land which was a sort of leasehold. I saw a photo of my grandfather on a horse: he must have been either a landowner proper, or a leaseholder who took care of the estate.

I don't know much about my paternal grandmother. Frankly speaking, at my age, I feel sorry I didn't really talk to my parents about my grandparents when I grew up. Maybe this was also my parents' mistake. Now I have to make connections between the few things I heard and what I see in pictures. I try to make the best out of my few memories. My grandfather died before I was born, but I don't know in what year - I believe it was in the 1930s.