

Elizabeth Waiser's Father Isaac Braverman



My father Isaac Braverman. Photo made in Bairamcha, Saratsk district, Izmail province, Romania, in 1936.

My father helped my grandfather in the store since he was in his teens. He managed very well and it gained good experience. At 18 my father became a clerk at a garment store. My father was a very decent employee and his customers were very pleased with his services.

My father was a very reserved and calm man. After their wedding my parents rented a 3-room apartment. My father worked at the store and my mother was a housewife. The owner of the store noticed my father's skills and appointed him as supervisor at the store.

Soviet power was established in 1940 in our town. Few people in the town were arrested including my father's master. The Soviet authorities explained to employees of the store that there no more masters and everything belonged to the people. My father continued to work as supervisor in the store.

On 22 June 1941 the Great patriotic War began. My father insisted that we left Bairamcha. He said that he could only pray for his sons that were in Russia but he wanted to rescue my mother and me. My father was ordered to evacuate fabrics from the store. He loaded a cart and there was little space left for us to load few pillows and some clothes. We headed for Nikolaev where my father handed all fabric over to the sales and consumer department obtaining a confirmation that he had handed over all goods. My mother egged him to leave some fabric for a dress for me, but my father said that he had never in his life touched something that was not his. He said that if we were in need God would help us to get what we needed. We got on a train and moved on. We reached the town of Guriev in Kazakhstan.

We moved to Novobogatinsk where we found a place to live. It was a 4-room house. Our landlords lived in two rooms. We moved into one room and another room was occupied by a family from Moscow: a mother, a grandmother and two children. My father got a job at a store.

In 1944 when Odessa region was liberated we returned to Bairamcha. Half of the town was ruined. There were very few locals that survived. All Jews were exterminated by fascists and non-Jews perished during air raids and bombing. Many houses were empty. We moved into one of such houses. When Chairman of the town council heard that we were back he called my father and said to him: " Isaac, you have a beauty of a daughter. Look, she won't even find a match to marry in Bairamcha, because fascists killed all Jews. I feel sorry for the girl and you have to take her out of here". My father decided to move to Chernovtsy. We packed our things and moved to the village of Storozhenets not far from Chernovtsy. We were allowed to move into an empty house.

My father went to work at the hardware store.

In 1955 my father came on a visit to take a look at his grandson. Once he went out, slipped and fell in the street and broke his hip. We had to take him to hospital. After he came home from hospital we realized that he couldn't go on living just by himself and he stayed with us. We put a wardrobe in the middle of the room and put my father's bed in the corner. I looked after my father. My father said to me before he died "I don't know what I would have done without you". My father died in 1969. My husband and I buried him at the Jewish cemetery in Chernovtsy according to Jewish tradition. The rabbi said kadesh over my father's grave.