

The Wedding Of Isak Katalan



This is the wedding of my mother's brother, Isak Katalan, and his wife Vizurka from Dupnitsa. The year is 1942. From right to left holding flowers is Marta, the sister of the groom and my aunt, next to her is my mother Ernesta Molho, next to her is David, the brother of the groom. Next to the bride, wearing a hat is Lina, the wife of one of the bride's brothers, whose name is Hertsel. Next to her in the black dress is the bride's mother. Behind them is the bride's father Menahem. First on the left is the bride's brother Hertsel. The children standing in the front row are my brother Josef and I. We gathered in my maternal grandmother's garden. The back of the photo is designed like a postcard. There is writing in pencil: 'Isak Katalan 1942.' There is no seal of a photographic studio.

My uncle Isak Katalan married in 1942. He had two children, Zelma and Zhak, who now live in Poland. After 9th September 1944 my uncle Isak became a judge in the People's Court and then moved to live in Sofia. There he started work in the Legislation Commission. He was one of the creators of the Labor Code. He always occupied high-ranking positions. He was the founder of the Football Association 'Botev' in Plovdiv and chairman of the Philatelist Association in Bulgaria. His wife knew German and worked in the German bookstore in Sofia.

On 9th March 1943 we were at my grandmother's; there was no bathroom in our apartment and we used to go and have a bath there. We always stayed there for a while before we went home. Isak Katalan, my uncle, was a member of the communist party. He came home in the evening and told us, 'Sit down and listen to me. Jews are about to be deported. There are lists made. Probably not everyone will be deported, but you never know. Now, when you go home, prepare a suitcase or a small bag for each one of you.' And really, on 10th March the deportation started.