

Ida Alkalai With Some Friends



This is a photo of me and my friends on an excursion. It was probably taken near Dupnitsa in the 1940s. I'm the first from the right in the first row. At the beginning of the 1940s, when the anti-Jewish laws were adopted, we were very worried. My father continued working. He was close to a lot of villagers, who kept on buying goods from him. Otherwise, all the Jewish workshops, bank and organizations were closed. During the internment of Jews in 1943 in Sofia, a family of four came to live with us. That was the Kohen family. They were my mother's relatives. We had a kitchen, living-room and one more room. We gave them the living-room. They stayed with us for some months. From my father's brothers only Uncle Daniel had a radio, a 'Telefunken.' During fascist times they

hid it so that no one would see it. There was an order to confiscate all Jewish radio sets. We listened to the news on the war. During World War II, Uncle Rahamim, my mother's brother, was interned from Sofia to Dupnitsa and lived at our place. I remember that he was with us during the bombardments. He watched the planes passing through the sky and told me in Ladino that those were stars up there. When we weren't allowed to go out, because we were being prepared for deportation, my father went out to sit for a while in front of the door. Then a fascist-oriented neighbor hit him and ordered him to go inside immediately. We weren't allowed to go out even in front of our houses. There were shops with notices reading, 'Forbidden for Jews.' There were special shops for Jews. But we didn't have notices on the doors of our houses. There were people in Dupnitsa who were against Jews even before the war. But most of the people supported us.