

Survivor of war and regime

This photo is a visual document of great importance, both to my family and to the history of World War II. The given image depicts my grandfather, Ursachi Vasile Feodorovici (01.091921-28.091995), the person on the left of the image, an ordinary soldier, when he was only 19 years old, at the beginning of the Second World War (years 1939-1940), next to a comrade in arms. This was carried out on the Romanian front and had as its main purpose the preservation of a memory from a tumultuous period, marked by continuous struggles to achieve state stability.

Regardless of the difficulties and the seriousness of the situation they were in, the soldiers still managed to create memories, which indicates an interactive way of spending time on the front by taking group and individual photos. These were sent in letters to relatives to assure them that they were still alive.



At the same time, the background of the image represents a simple wooden construction, possibly a military barracks or a temporary shelter, which indicates that the photograph was taken in an environment specific to life on the front. The physical condition of the photo, with yellowed, slightly damaged edges, proves once again its age and the fact that it was preserved for a long time and passed down from generation to generation.

The uniform worn by these two soldiers belongs to the land troops of Romania during the Second World War, this fact being highlighted by elements such as the specific beret on the head, the model of the vest, trousers and sturdy boots. All these clothing elements are in accordance with the standard equipment used by the Romanian army in that period (fig.1). and proves that he was part of the regular military troops and was equipped according to all standards. To his right, his comrade wears a similar uniform, a sign that they were part of the same military unit. Unlike my grandfather, his comrade's uniform is in better condition, which indicates that he was either of a higher stature or had recently joined the Romanian troops. It is not known if the two met again after the war, but this photo remains a testament to the camaraderie and strong bonds between these two established on the battlefield.



From the information I have, once Vasile Ursachi reaches the age for military service in Romania, he becomes an ordinary soldier in the Romanian army, which indicates his subordinate status, but essential in the military structure. Later, with Romania's entry into the war in 1941, he fights on the front alongside his Romanian comrades and at the same time *fulfills the function of a direct*

subordinate of King Mihai I of Romania. Therefore, he participated in this war for a year and a few months, the first year being spent on the Romanian front, but with the Russian invasion in 1944), King Mihai left the country, and in the midst of preparations, ***he proposed to his subordinate, Vasile Ursachi, to come with him***, but because of his patriotism and love for his family, he refused. Later, he was transferred to another front, having already been forced to fight against the Romanians for 1-

2 months. After these two months, spent on the Soviet front, he decides to escape and return home because of the fear of being considered a traitor to the country and being detained. Thus, under these circumstances, he swims across the Prut and returns to the forest near his native village. He chose this place very rationally from a strategic point of view, since he needed help from another person in terms of food and water resources. He hid there for 3 months with the fear in his heart of not being caught by the Russian soldiers. In the end, he manages to avoid the tense situation, regarding his status during the Second World War as a direct subordinate of King Mihai I. Parallel to these events, his brother Ursachi Gheorghe Feodorovici (b. 1924) also fought in the Second World War, he was drafted into the Russian army according to the order dated 05.10.1944 and who did not survive the fighting decisive from the year 1945. Unfortunately, this case is an example of great pain for his family, with the loss of a child, brother or even husband. So, following the Soviet offensive towards the Vistula- Oder direction (1945), he suffered disastrous consequences, a deep explosion wound of the left thigh, penetrating the abdominal cavity. From Soviet documentary sources we learn that he was interned on

02.02.1945 and died on 02.03.1945, being buried in a German cemetery, on the eastern side of the Oder River. Following this tragic event, the loss of his brother, Vasile Ursachi does not hesitate to continue his life, at the same time trying to heal his soul wounds. He endured this emotional pain, telling this story with pain in his eyes and regret of losing a loved one. Over the years this thought has not left him for a single moment, even feeling a certain state of guilt in what happened.