

## Dimosthenis (Demosthenes) Mouliotis

Dimosthenis Mouliotis, born in 1922 and raised in Ioannina, Central Western Greece, describes his experience as a Greek Christian during the Italian/German occupation, 1941 – 1944. , his father, Kostantinos, and Dimosthenis were farmers growing livestock and cultivating corn, wheat and tobacco. He did not have any Jewish friends. He got to know them as suppliers of their products and buyer of his merchandise. He was selling cows for beef. He remembers that their Rabbi had a special way of slaughtering them.

The Jews were merchants of fabrics, house goods, groceries, meat, dairy, etc. They closed their stores on Saturdays. The Jewish stores were on Anexartisias (Independence) Street. They were no distinctions between Christians and Jews. The Jews lived insight the Castle and in the immediate surrounding area (Kormanio). There were also Christian homes in the neighborhood. They were considered as hard working people, honest, straight forward and minding their business

At the beginning of the war, the Germans came first, but left after a while, when they installed the Italians as the occupying administration. The Italians were rather mild and became friendly with the Greeks. They were bartering with the locals, e.g. their extra bread and food for corn or wheat. The Germans came back for good when Italy surrendered. The Italian gave their guns, ammunition, and other material to the Germans. They stayed for a while and were used as laborers and second class citizens, like the occupied Greeks,. After a while the Germans sent them to prisoner camps. The Germans were barbaric. They would send to forced labor or even kill people for minor infractions.

The Germans, through the Greek Police, asked the Christians in the Jewish neighborhoods to mark their house with a cross. There were rumors that the Germans would expel the Jews. A lot of Christians (friends, partisans, even the Police) suggested to Jews to run away. They promised to help them escape in the mountains and surrounding villages. Dimosthenis does not recall of anybody who took that advice. He does not remember Jews wearing a yellow star.

He remembers a very cold Saturday morning with light snow, (he does not remember the date) the Jews were mounted to about 50 army covered trucks, guarded by German soldiers, and transported out of the city. He does not recall any massive looting of houses and stores. The Germans caught a couple of people entering houses and executed them. After the Jews left, the city organized a commission to distribute the Jewish merchandise to victims of the war (injured or lost family members). He does not remember anybody who all of a sudden became wealthy after the Jews left. He believes they are unfounded rumors

Very few Jews came back, about 70 out of 1,000. Eventually almost all emigrated to Israel or elsewhere. When they returned, they got their houses and stores back. The proprieties not claimed were auctioned off by the city.