

Mikel Finkel At His Parents' Grave



The one who is lighting the candle is my husband, Mikel Finkel, at his parents' grave in the Jewish cemetery in Botosani. The one on the left behind the grave is Moise Ciubotaru - he was the one who washed the dead -, and the man on the right is an in-law of my husband, Meer Blaicher. From Blaicher, Meer Blaicher's youngest brother, was married to my husband's eldest sister, Janeta.

I married here, in Botosani, in 1951. I met my husband through some relatives, namely one of my father's brothers-in-laws, Leon Segal. This uncle of mine was in the scrap iron business, and my husband was passing by, across that market, my uncle knew him, and told him: 'I have a niece, would you like to get married?' For he had 2 sisters who left to Israel, and he stayed here, and his parents were elderly people. And I came to Botosani, my aunt, Fremita, was still living here; I stayed at their place for a day or two, and I met him, somewhere downtown. I am old now, but I was beautiful back then, and I was dressed neatly, elegantly, and he liked me.

My husband was born here, in the city of Botosani. His name was Mikel Finkel, Mahal [Makl] was his Jewish name. He was born in 1925, just like me. He attended 4 grades here in Botosani, that was all. There was a Jewish school on Karl Marx St., that's where he went to school. And from where he lived, on Zimbrului St., it was very far for him to come home to eat. But there was a kitchen there, at the school, and, in order for him not to come home to eat lunch, he ate there. My father-in-law gave them beans, this and that, so that he could study. My husband said: 'I ate there until I entered 5th grade.' That was all. They wanted him to continue his studies, but there were no spots available, he couldn't fit somewhere, at a school, so that he could continue his studies. His parents were old, also, he started working this and that. What could he do? I used to tell him: 'You see, if you had gone to school, perhaps you would have married a girl that was more well-read, more refined. But since you didn't?'

I met his parents. My mother-in-law's name was Gitla Finkel. I know that my mother-in-law had a younger sister, Clara, who left to America and married an upholsterer there, his name was Abram Zamist. They had a daughter and a son. They sent word for my husband to go there, to America, but he didn't want to leave his parents here, for they were elderly people, and he said he wouldn't leave. My father-in-law's name was Alter Finkel - his Jewish name was Haim losuf -, he was born in Cernivtsi. He was a rather severe person, he didn't talk much with younger people, namely with me. My mother-in-law did, she talked with me. As they say, she was a smart woman, my mother-in-law. They weren't too well-off, my father-in-law bought cereals, he traded cereals. When I got married, my father-in-law was an egg-checker, meaning he checked the eggs in a store. That's how it was in those days, this was a job, too.

We lived with my parents-in-law, at their place on Zimbrului St. My parents-in-law lived in the kitchen, which was a separate building, and we lived in two rooms. My mother-in-law died in 1955, and my father-in-law died in 1960.