

Milka Ilieva With Her Daughter Tinka Ivanova



This picture of me and my daughter Tinka was taken at the time when I was already happily married to my second husband, Georgi Iliev, who is of Bulgarian origin. I met him in Ruse in 1953. This photo was taken there two years later.

In 1952 I met my second husband, Georgi Iliev. The same year I found a job with the Regional Council. Georgi worked there, too. He was single and I was in the process of getting divorced. What I liked about him was that he was serious and modest. We got married in Ruse in 1953. Some very big troubles followed on the part of his relatives. The reason was that I was divorced and had a child. His relatives had the mentality of villagers and couldn't put up with this. Even his father, who had been sent to Germany as a very qualified professional, he worked in the local locomotive plant, said after he came back, 'It doesn't matter if she's divorced; she has a child. But she's a Jew!' However, I knew what a wise Jew should do. I stayed silent and waited. I thought this was their viewpoint. I couldn't press my position on them.

Many years passed before we went to visit them. Until the day my husband's uncle, who was studying law in France, came back to Bulgaria. He came to visit us. Our son was still a baby then. We sat at the table and started talking, and we talked for long hours, we talked sincerely to each other. He told me a lot of things about France. I don't know what he said to his sister, my husband's mother, but after two days she rang the doorbell. I invited her as if we had last met two hours ago. So, step by step they started to invite us to visit them.