

## Ganka Penova Beraha



This is my wife Ganka Penova Beraha, nee Pashkova. The photo was taken in Ruse before our wedding in 1949. 2nd June 1946 is a remarkable date in my life, because then I met my wife: Ganka Penova Pashkova. I was a soldier in the Military Command Office. I saw her by accident. Opposite the office there was a small park. I saw three or four girls sitting on a bench reading. Later I found out that they were just finishing their last year of high school in Oriahovo. I went closer to them. There were roses around. I said to myself, 'I like this girl' and picked a rose. It was then that I noticed that they were reading the philosophy dictionary of Rosenthal and Yudin. My first thought was that she was 'a girl of ours', a Jew. After all, she was reading the famous dialectical and historical materialism of Rosenthal and Yudin. I gave her the rose in front of her friends. We started talking; I showed them around town because they were from Oriahovo. They had come on an excursion. Then Ganka and I started writing letters to each other. Later, I visited her in Oriahovo to help her with her graduation exam, because I had already graduated two years before. We continued to write letters to each other for three more years. All the time I wanted to tell her that my brothers and some friends were leaving for Israel, while I wanted to stay here and

study to become an engineer. That was my childhood dream. In the end I wrote her a sincere letter, saying, 'Bear in mind that I am poor. I have no money so think carefully whether you want our relationship to continue. You must know my situation.' At that time we no longer had a house, because we had sold our house in Kazanlak. But she agreed. 'You might be just a porter, but I love you.' We exchanged letters for three years, then I went to Burgas where she was studying at university, we got engaged and after two or three months we got married. We married on 14th January 1949 in Ruse. Then I went to study at university in Sofia. My wife was born on 8th February 1927 in the village of Galiche, Vratsa region. She isn't Jewish. Her grandfather Garto Pashkov died in the Balkan War in 1913. My wife lived in Oriahovo. She finished her secondary education there. After that she graduated from the Pedagogic College in Burgas. Her specialty was Bulgarian philology. She worked as junior high school teacher, but when she came to Ruse, she decided to train for a new job. She started work as a lab chemist in the lab of the Ruse plant for agricultural machines named after Georgi Dimitrov. She worked there for 35 years. She became a shock worker of the socialist labor.