

Raina Blumenfeld And Her Relatives



This is a photo of the yard outside the house in which we lived in the 1930s. From left to right in the back row is uncle Buko, aunt Buka's husband, my paternal grandmother Reina, on the right in the same row are my father's younger brother Yakov and Buka's elder daughter Kalina, who was the first one to emigrate to Palestine in 1932. In the middle row is my cousin Nissim, his mother Buka, Yakov's wife Sarina, who is holding my sister Ziumbiula. On the left in the first row are me, my sister Rebecca, my brother Israel and my aunt Esther's two girls, Reina and Matilda. This photo makes it obvious that we lived in a comparatively poor environment. Each family inhabited a specific part of the house, which was built up so that it formed a common yard. After 1928 my father Yosif improved his financial position; being a plumber and tinsmith, he built a separate house with hot water and toilet inside, which was an extreme rarity in those years. The background of the photo is my aunt Buka's house. The house my father had built was at the corner of Pernik and Positano and for that time, it was one of the best in the quarter. It had two rooms, kitchen and a toilet inside, which was a great rarity at that time. We had hot water from a coal-heated boiler, too, which my father, being a very skilled craftsman, had connected to the stove. Four children were born in that house - one boy and three girls (including me). All the children used to sleep in the same room. My parents occupied the smaller room. We grew up in such conditions. Buka had four girls and one boy. One of the girls went to Palestine illegally in 1932-33. She was followed by my aunt's son. At that time they were forced to go to Palestine illegally, using different routes. In 1939 my aunt Buka, her husband Buko and their children Reni and Mati decided to emigrate to Palestine, too. They took their chance with a small Turkish sailing vessel, which wasn't quite stable and somewhere close to the Turkish coast it sank. The whole family drowned. Only a few people survived this disaster.