

## Raina Blumenfeld's Family



On this photo are my parents with their four children. I am with my father Yosif Sabitai, my brother Israel is in the middle at the back, my sister Rebecca is on the right, and my younger sister Ziumbiula is in my mother Sarina Sabitai's arms. The photo was taken in the 1930s. Since my paternal grandmother's name was Reina, the girls in all the families of her children were named after her. My birth name was also Reina and I graduated from high school under that name. But when I was appointed to work for the Ministry of Interior, I received documents where my name was written Raina. Due to that printing error, my name is Raina now. Despite that fact all my relatives and friends know me as Reina. My mother's parents, Shabat and Rebecca, came from the town of Berkovtsa. My mother became orphan at a very early age - her mother died when she was 5 or 6. I don't even know my grandparents' family name. Her father remarried, but his second wife was a nasty woman who treated my mother very badly. From her father's second marriage she had five stepbrothers and stepsisters. Being a child herself - she helped to look after them and took on

too much - she became a hunchback as a result of the heavy work. My father was born in Sofia in 1900. He was a tinsmith and plumber. In 1928, a year before I was born, the winter was severely cold. Many water pipes and taps had cracked. That created plenty of work for my father and, putting a lot of efforts into it, he managed to make his fortune. And in the place of the one-roomed house, he built a house with 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). In 1928 my father established a Jewish society called Mitzvah Zion. This society engaged in charity and helped poor citizens of Jewish origin in Sofia. My father took part in the public life of Jews in Sofia. Together with the other well-off citizens of Jewish origin, he helped with the allocation of financial funds and different articles to his poorer compatriots through the Mitzvah Zion society.