

Sarra Shpitalnik, Her Husband Moisey Shpitalnik And Her Father Shlomo Molchanskiy



This is me, second from left, my husband Moisey Shpitalnik and my father Shlomo Molchanskiy. This photo was taken in Kishinev in 1952. My husband and I arrived from Floreshty and celebrated the New Year with the rest of the family in the house of aunt Sonia Gerstein. My father is conducting an off-camera improvised choir. When I was in my fifth year of studies I went to Kishinev on vacation. I stayed with my aunt Sonia Gerstein. When I visited my acquaintance, I met a fifth-year student of the Agricultural College, who rented a room from her. His name was Moisey Shpitalnik. We liked each other and began to correspond. Moisey finished his college: students of the Agricultural College had graduate exams before we did since they were to do seeding in the fields, and received a job assignment to Floreshty. He came to Chernovtsy and said we had to get married immediately, so that I could get my job assignment in the same town. So we did. We got married in 1951 and moved to Floreshty where we lived for five years. I was a French teacher at school and my husband was a senior agronomist. There were 90 Jewish families in Floreshty at that time: a significant number considering that this was the postwar period. In our Moldovan school almost all the teachers were Jews: Lev Shoichet, mathematics teacher, he had graduated from a university in Bukhara, Shapiro - the Russian language and literature teacher, Schwartzman - biology teacher, Riva Chamelis - chemistry teacher, and Liya Darkhova - history teacher. Only one Moldovan teacher and a history teacher in the senior classes were non-Jewish. I don't think that I was a good pedagog: my students walked over me. When writing my diploma thesis in our university library, I got acquainted with bibliography and I started thinking about it. After I went to Floreshty my parents returned to Kishinev. At first, they stayed in a through room in their relatives' apartment, but later they collected some money. I translated the novel by Polevoy, Boris, 'Gold', into Moldovan and received a significant fee for this work. We paid this money to the owner of an unfinished house in Bayukany, as he needed money to finish the construction, and we bought half of this house from him.