

Yelizaveta Zatkovetskaya With Her Second Husband Abram Aral



I, Yelizaveta Zatkovetskaya, with my second husband Abram Aral. The photo is signed: 'In the memory of the hard years we've lived through, and the ones that resulted in our living together. May this poor photo remind us of our good life. 1947'. This photograph was made, when Abram and I decided to get married.

On 14 March 1944 Kalinindorf was liberated from the fascists. In late December 1944 we arrived at Kalinindorf from evacuation. Our house was there, but the door was locked. A Ukrainian woman and her son had moved into our house. She came back in the evening with a friend of hers and chairman of the village council. They allowed us to live in half of the house, but we were happy about it. Hungry and exhausted, we fell asleep on the floor. Tsylia and I went to work in the kolkhoz. People were helping us giving us whatever they could. In January 1945 the Supreme Soviet issued an order about opening children's homes for all homeless children. In Kalinindorf a children's home was opened in the building of the Jewish school built before the war. The executive committee authorized me to take the responsibility for restoration of the building and opening of the children's home. We gathered bricks to make a stove and washed and cleaned the walls and windows, bought beds, desks, blankets and bed sheets. The villagers also donated whatever they could. On 16 March 1945 I conducted the opening ceremony. At first I was acting director of this home till they appointed a nice man for this position. He returned from the front where he had lost his arms. I became a teacher. I assisted director with everything. We celebrated 9 May 1945 - Victory Day, in the children's home. God, it was happiness!

Some time later men began to return from the front. My first husband Perets perished on the front in 1941. In early 1946 Abram Aral, our neighbor, returned. We were friends with his family before the war. Abram had a wife and two children: Sonia, 6 years old and a baby son. When the war began, Abram was recruited to the army. When his family finally decided to move, it was too late. There were Germans all around. They were shot by fascists in 1941. Abram's sister from

Zaporozhie, whose husband perished at the front, came to live with him. Abram and his sister often came by to see us and Tsylia visited them. We were sad about our deceased dear ones often talking about them. Some time later Abram and I felt that there was more to our relationship than just the memories: our late and much suffered for love came to us. I moved in with Abram and we got married in 1947.

We got along very well. My husband was good to Mikhail and my son began to call him 'papa'. In 1948 our son was born. I named him Alexandr after Avrum's brother Shmidyk. I worked in the children's home and my husband worked as a storekeeper in the military registry office. In 1956 our second son was born. I named him Yuriy after my father (Yefim is 'Yuhym' in Ukrainian, and I found the name with the same first letter).

We never traveled on vacations: at first our children were small and there was nobody to look after them and later we were hard up and couldn't afford a family vacation, though my husband and I worked and had a garden and a vegetable garden where we grew vegetables and fruit, but we lived on our salaries. We were doing well and our children had all they needed, but we never afforded any luxuries. We lived like everybody else: from one pay day to the next one.