

The House Of Silo Oberman



The Oberman house at present.

The house I live in was built by the grandfather from my mother's side, in 1852. It was given to my mother as a dowry when she got married. But so much did my parents benefit from this dowry that my father had to work his whole life to pay for it and then he died. The house was built with money borrowed from the Land Credit. My father continued paying my grandfather's installments when he was no more. It was called a dowry, but in fact it was a burden, and he paid his whole life the installments my grandfather had to pay. The house was mortgaged, and they would have taken it away, so he had to work and pay for it. It was taken by the N.C.R., National Center for Romanianization, for all Jewish properties were taken away. [Editor's note: A "Decree law was issued in 1940, for the Romanianization of factories' personnel - to be enforced after December 31, 1941. As a corollary, the 'National Center for Romanianization' (N.C.R.) was constituted, "the legal entity with regard to public law, whose purpose was to help integrate the property which entered state patrimony and aid the Romanianization of economic life."

<http://www.itcnet.ro/history/archive/mi1997/current10/mi47.htm>]. The house was given back to him in 1944. I have the restitution document issued by the N.C.R.

The house has three wings. I live in wing A, but there is also wing B and C. They no longer exist anymore. The house didn't have a bathroom and we lived in the 3rd wing [wing C], which was pretty modest, despite the fact that we were the owners. There were 2 rooms, a hallway, and a kitchen. The furniture was old, of Viennese make, with spring mattresses, meaning it had beds with carved frames. We also had a sideboard built in the old style. It was a large sideboard, with a marble top, it had a mirror, a sofa with velvet, flowery upholstery, which also showcased a large mirror. It was old furniture, but that's how it was done in those days.

During my grandfather's lifetime, the illumination was done using gas lamps, and then it evolved and electricity was installed. During my parents' lifetime, illumination was done both with gas lamps and with electricity as well. [Editor's note: Coal gas was first produced at the end of the 18th century from coal. Later lighting gas was produced of oil, too, instead of coal. The gas spread light

burning in so-called gas mantles. Gas lighting started to be replaced by electric lighting at the beginning of the 20th century, mainly in the cities, of course.] For instance, during my lifetime, we had both electric lighting, but we also had gas lamps on the walls, which we lit. We drew water from the courtyard, where there was a water pump.

We also had a garden, with fruit-bearing trees. We had some very handsome apricot trees, unique in the city of Braila. We also had sour cherry trees, ungrafted apricot trees, peach trees, for the courtyard is large, with a large area. We also raised livestock, poultry and pigs. Had the grandfather from my mother's side lived, he would have been very upset that my father raised pigs. Our religion doesn't allow the raising of pigs. The pigs we raised were kosher. Yet my father didn't care for these things, and he raised and slaughtered the pigs himself. You couldn't find such pork products in the whole of Braila, that's how good they were.