

Lazar Gurfinkel's Parents Michael And Sarah Gurfinkel



My father Michael Gurfinkel and my mother Sarah Gurfinkel shortly after their wedding. The photo was taken for the foreign passport they needed for their honeymoon trip to Italy. As a child my mother lived in Khotin with her father's sister Feiga's family. There was no grammar school for girls in Khotin. My mother and Feiga's children studied at home with a teacher who came to teach them Hebrew, Yiddish and the Torah. Another teacher came to teach them the educational program of elementary school. Then she went to grammar school in Kamenets-Podolsk, not far from Khotin. After finishing grammar school my mother returned to Khotin. She didn't continue her studies and didn't work. She was a young lady preparing to get married. My mother was a friend of my father's sister Fania. Fania introduced her to my father sometime in 1911. My mother was very beautiful. My father and mother liked one another and got married shortly afterwards in 1912. They had a civil ceremony in the town hall and a traditional Jewish wedding with a chuppah. They rented a big hall for ceremonies in Khotin and had the chuppah and the wedding party in that hall. After their wedding my parents spent their honeymoon in Italy. When they returned they stayed with Feiga for some time, but then they moved in with my father's parents. The owner of the pharmacy where my father was working moved to live with her son and sold the pharmacy and her house to my father. The pharmacy and the house were in the same building, so my parents had their own dwelling. In the beginning my father managed in the pharmacy alone, but then his work-load increased. At that time prescribed medication had to be prepared within two hours, and my father hired a young assistant to help him. My older brother, Moisey, was born in 1913, and my sister Pesia, named after my mother's mother, followed in 1916. She was called Polia at home. I was born in 1924. I was named Leizer after my grandfather on my father's side who died in 1913. In Hebrew my name is Eliezer, which means 'God is help'.