

Rebeca Gatlan



This is a picture of my mother Rebeca Gatlan, when she was young. The picture was taken in the 1920s, in Braila. My mother's name was Rebecca Scharf - she bore my grandmother's maiden name - and she was born on 16th October 1911. My mother was a gorgeous woman.

My mother didn't have an occupation. She was a housewife, but she wasn't anything like those ladies who just sit around doing nothing; she took part in the activities related to our household, she didn't spend her time having coffee in the living room. When she would go some place, she would leave me with the nanny.

We didn't have a nanny for a long time, she just stayed with us until we were nine or ten. When she left, I was still a child, and we were living on Galati Street. We also lived on Vasile Sasu Street, but not for long, and I don't remember when. I still know where the house is located, but what I distinctly remember is the other house, the one at 5 Galati Street - in the center of the town, close to the kindergarten and the clock.

My mother would light the Sabbath candles on Friday night. My father wasn't very religious, and people often told him he was an atheist. But he wasn't. Circumstances forced him to deviate from his faith a little. We kept the Sabbath, but didn't overdo it. We didn't eat the same special dish on every Sabbath, like Jews who really observe the tradition do; and we didn't use separate covers for dairy products and meat. However, my mother did have vessels that she used only for meat and fish, and vessels that she used only for milk.

My parents were moderate in observing the Sabbath; they didn't go to the synagogue on Saturday, because they weren't bigots. They only did it when the major holidays came. My mother tried to guide us on a religious path, but she didn't manage all the time, because our father was around.

My mother was the housewife's type. After my father died, she began to read a lot - as she was getting older, you'd say. Not a single morning went by without her reading something.