

# Klara Kohen And Her Husband Ezra Samuil Kohen



This is a picture of my husband Ezra Samuil Kohen and I, taken in our home in Sofia in 1999. My husband Ezra Samuil Kohen and I met in Sofia - we were both students at Sofia University. Ezra studied chemistry and later he started working in Himkombinat [Chemical plant] in Dimitrovgrad. He had a first cousin in Stara Zagora. His first cousin brought him to Stara Zagora in order to introduce us to one another and it occurred that we actually knew each other already. Thus our relationship began. We went for walks and chatted. We were fiancés for two or three years before we got married - he used to come to Stara Zagora in order to meet his cousin and me. We used to

write to each other. My parents didn't oppose to our wedding. The reason was that before that I had had a love affair with a young Jewish man, who graduated in medicine. He insisted on leaving for Israel because the graduates were immediately distributed to work [in Bulgaria]. I would have needed to marry him and leave with him. At that time my mother wrote a letter, which read: 'My heart would start bleeding if you also move there just like your sister did...' And then that boy and I split up because of my mother. The second time I decided to get married she didn't interfere. She and my father decided that since they had already stopped me once, they wouldn't tell me what to do again. And so she didn't withhold me from doing it. My mother had a really strong desire to move to Israel and be with her children there. To the very last moment she thought that I would also leave. She didn't expect me to say 'no'. Finally my parents left for Israel as my mother's desire to leave and join my sister and her family there got the upper hand of it. The fact that many of their friends had already left was also of importance. My husband was very ambitious. He passed a post-graduate course here, in Bulgaria, after his graduation in the former Soviet Union. It wasn't good for him that upon taking his doctor's degree at 60 [this was after 10th November 1989 when the democratic changes started in Bulgaria] he was retired in no time because he was a communist. It was a huge blow for him! He initiated legal proceedings against the Institute of Hygiene, where he used to work before that. He was finally reinstated in his former office, but it seems that he jeopardized his own health by doing so, as two years ago he was diagnosed with stomach cancer. After the operation it occurred that he had metastases, moreover he had diabetes and two heart attacks. Finally he died of a heart attack. But all that came as a result of his retirement and the fact that he couldn't live through it.