

## Josef Elazar's Family



This is our whole family: my maternal grandmother and grandfather with their daughters and grandchildren. Aunt Buka Nisim, nee Elazar is very left, next to her are my aunt Paola's son - Nisim Gadol and my grandfather, Josef Elazar. Next to him is Jozhi, or Josef Avramov, the son of my aunt Zelma and my grandmother, Ester Elazar, nee Beraha. Next to them are David Abelda, who is the son of my aunt Lunna and my aunt Sofi Elazar. From left to right standing are my aunts Zelma Avramova, nee Elazar and Lunna Albelda, nee Elazar, my cousin Ester Avramova, my aunt Paola Gadol, nee Elazar, I and my mother, Victoria Angelova, nee Elazar. The photo was taken in the ?Kemilev? photo studio in Sofia 1945. I am the oldest of all the grandchildren. My grandfather Josef had a long beard and he used a walking stick. He was born in the village of Sovoleno near Kiustendil in 1875 and he traded with chick-peas. I've heard stories that the courtyard of his house was filled with sacks of chick-peas that my grandfather sold. My mother told me that once she stumbled over those sacks and twisted her knee badly. She recalled that a popular healer fixed the knee with just one touch. My grandparents' family lived quite poorly. They had seven children - six daughters and a son, Solomon, who went to France when he was only 19 years old and never returned to Bulgaria. My grandfather was the only one who provided for their living. My grandmother was a housewife. Later on my grandfather became a chazzan at the synagogue in Kiustendil until the whole family moved to Sofia. All my relatives from Kiustendil went to Israel after 1948. My grandfather was religious, but he wore civil clothes. He had many books in Hebrew, and he also had the Talmud and read prayers all the time. My mother's oldest sister was named Buka - it is a tradition for the oldest daughter to be named Buka; after that came Sofi, Zelma, my mother Victoria, Lunna and the youngest sister, Paola. My youngest aunt died when she was 92 - in an old people's home in Israel. All my mother's sisters got married in Sofia without having any dowry because they were all very poor. After they moved to Sofia they all found jobs and contributed to the family's income. My mother wanted to have some qualification, attended a typing course and started work as a typist. She met my father at this course. They all lived in the house on Pirotska Street then. We didn't all live together on Otez Paisii Street anymore because some of my aunts had already got married. Only my mother, my grandparents and I lived in that house which was in

an inner courtyard. All my aunts lived with their families.