

Matilda Albuhaire's Maternal Grandparents Mair And Esther Levi On Vacation



These are my grandparents. The photo was taken in the 1920s. They were on holiday at Chepino [currently Velingrad]. This is how they used to go on holidays then. There were no R&R homes at that time. My mother's elder brother, Buko and my mother are not on the photo. Her three other brothers, Vitali, Eliezer and Marko, are on the photo. Marko was still a pupil. I can tell a lot about my maternal grandparents. My grandpa's name was Mair Levi. I know nothing about their ancestors' origin. My grandfather was born somewhere in Galicia, in Eastern Europe, however he was a Sephardi, not an Ashkenazi Jew. They were Sephardi Jews, who used to observe all traditions. My grandfather was a rich merchant of fabrics and ready-made clothes. They had a large store in Plovdiv and a house in the city, which still stands there. Grandpa was married to Esther Levi. My grandma came from the Karlovo area. My grandparents had 4 sons and 2 daughters. My grandparents used to speak Ladino, but all the others - my uncles and aunts spoke Bulgarian. My grandpa was a tall and handsome man, with a cloth cap and, because he was rich, he was able to go abroad to buy clothes, fabrics, etc. He used to go to Vienna regularly for medical treatment. He actually died in Vienna in 1923. My grandparents didn't live in the Jewish quarter. Once they took me on holiday. I went to Chepino with them, where they used to go to the mineral spas. It was quite a trip from Plovdiv to Chepino by cart and oxen team. There were no holiday houses then. Everything had to be brought from home - mattresses, utensils, bed covers.