

Magdalena Berger's Stepmother Joli Grossberger



This is my step-mother Joli Grossberger. The picture was taken in the parlor of our apartment in Sombor in the summer of 1939, at the conclusion of my dance class and a recital that was organized for that occasion. You can see the dining-room in the background and my mother's piano in front on the right. My mother died when I was eight years old but I faintly recollect her as a very sensitive and artistic woman. When she was not in the sanatorium, she enjoyed playing the piano and painting, but she was sick most of the time until she died in 1934. Joli was religious. She did not wear a wig but I think she did go to the mikvah (ritual bath). In the few years that my stepmother lived in Sombor before the war, she did not make many friends and did not socialize much. Her mother and the rest of her family would come to visit her in Sombor but she did not travel back to Romania. My stepmother was a very strict and conventional woman and kept me under close observation even when I was in my late teens.