

Adela Hinkova



This is a photo of me when I was one year old. It was taken in 1918 in Vidin. I'm holding something in my hand, which must be a children's bag, knitted by hand. I was born on 17th September 1917 on New Year's Eve, on Erev Rosh Hashanah. That's why I love this holiday so much. I had long hair when I was a girl and I asked my mother to cut it, because it was bothering me. And she did it. I don't know how old I was then. My most vivid memory is from when I was seven years old. I dreamed of going to a children's preschool, because I was the youngest one, everyone was going to school and I was left at home alone. So, the time finally came when I could go to a preschool in the Jewish school there, in the hall on the ground floor. My mother bought cotton print and sewed me a dress, of which I was very proud. A small piece of material remained and they made me a sack. They put a wooden slate, not a notebook, a small pencil as chalk and a sponge in there. I used it to draw pictures at home. I loved that. As a child I didn't have a doll, I had no toys, only a rope to jump on and play 'eshetsi' [small bones from the front leg of a ram to play with, very smooth and painted in various colors]. When the earth was damp, we played draughts. We had no other games. When I started going to the preschool, I decided that I was too old to play with the 'eshitsi.' I wanted to hide them from my brother and I went behind the house. We had a woodshed and it had tiles on the roof. I decided to hide them under the tiles. I climbed over a chair, but on going down I fell and hit my mouth on a chopped-off tree. One of my front teeth, which had just come out, broke and went black. It remained such until I was 45 years old and I had a crown placed on it. My mouth was swollen for a long time. I couldn't eat, drink, smile, or talk. So, the winter came and I couldn't go to the preschool anymore.