Leontin Israel

This is my husband's mother, Leontin Israel, nee Demayo - a Hungarian Sephardi Jew - photographed in the 1890s in the Hoefele and Klein studio in Budapest. She had lived in Budapest and Vienna before she got married. She spoke only German and Ladino at home. She met Marko Israel, a respected merchant from Plovdiv in Vienna, on one of his business trips. They got married and Leontin came to Bulgaria. She learned Bulgarian, but she spoke in a very funny way. All of

Marko's friends, relatives and neighbors loved her, because she was very nice. They had six children, five girls: Rashel, Sarika, Rene, Elizabeth and Hanika, and a boy, Salvator, my husband. I didn't meet my mother-in-law Leontin, because she died young, but I know that my husband was very attached to her. She was a very nice, respected and beautiful woman. Their family had a wonderful house in the center of Plovdiv, which has been demolished.