

Elsa Perahya In Haydarpasha



This is my first wife, Elsa Angel, in front of her house. This photo was taken by me on September 1931. The Elsa and Klara Angel sisters lived on Ferit Bey Street in Talimhane. Their house was just opposite the Turkish state school. Later the school was transferred somewhere else and the building started to be used as 'Askerlik Subesi' [Military Department]. Their father, Yaakov Angel, passed away when they were children, so they had been raised by their mother, Fortune Mazaltov Angel, and their maternal grandparents, the Kasavis. I was a member of the Social Benevolence Association of Haydarpasha in my youth. From 1931 to 1936 I served as the president of the literature division of this association, 'Cercle Litteraire,' as we used to call it. We used to gather in the Cercle's locale twice a week, usually after 8pm, organizing conferences, debates, concerts, meetings and the like. We went to the famous hotel of the time, the Belvu in Fenerbahce to dance. Naturally, many love affairs blossomed during these gatherings. I also got to know my first wife, Elsa, in this organization. Elsa and I got married on 30th June 1936 in the Kal Kadosh Galata Synagogue, which became The Museum of Turkish Jews in 2001. We spent our honeymoon in the Belvu Hotel in Fenerbahce. Then we moved into my mother-in-law's house. We didn't want her to live all alone. She had been widowed at an early age and was used to living together with her daughters Elsa and Klara.