

## Sofi Uziel's Family



This is a family photo, taken in Sofia in 1935. The woman standing is my mother Ventura Benaroya, nee Levi. The man hugging the child is my father Haim Nissim Benaroya, and my eldest brother is on the very right. I am second from left, the man next to me was our neighbor. My father, Leon Nissim Benaroya, knew seven languages. He was a corn-merchant - he used to purchase grain from Kiustendja and sold it in Europe. As a soldier during World War I he had been very badly wounded and had lost one hundred percent of his working capacity. My mother was a manlike, hard-working woman. Life made her such. My mother's brother Avram - he was my mother's benefactor - opened a grocery on the corner of Positano Street and Sredna Gora Street. There my mother achieved her proficiency in calculating and in reading Bulgarian. At that time marriages among young people weren't a love-match. Parents used to do the matchmaking. Thus my mother's brother Avram arranged the marriage between my parents. They had a religious marriage in March, 15 days before my father went to war, but I don't know the year. I have two brothers: Nissim Benaroya, born in 1915, and Rafael Benaroya, born in 1928. Rafael used to work for the Boyana Film Center and Nissim was a hat maker. After he went to Israel, Nissim worked as builder. We were a very close family. My mother was a great woman! No woman would stand living without a man for such a long time, without going for a walk, without getting dressed up to go out. She only knew home, home, home? She knew nothing else, poor thing.