

Solomon And Rebecca Saltiel With Their First-Born Son Albert Saltiel



These are my parents Solomon and Rebecca Saltiel with my eldest brother, Albert. The photo was taken in Sofia in 1917.

My parents were Solomon Avram Saltiel and Rebecca Eliya-Kyoso, which is her father's family name. They were born in 1892 and had secondary education. They spoke Bulgarian and Ladino. My mother was a housewife and my father was a cobbler. He had a workshop where he repaired shoes. I do not know how they met or if the marriage was arranged or not, because I was not born yet. They had a religious wedding in Sofia. They dressed in accordance with the tradition at those

times.

I had three brothers. The eldest was Albert, who was born in 1916. Haim was born in 1918 and the youngest, Yako, in 1928. They all spoke Bulgarian and Ladino, had a secondary education and studied in the same Jewish school as I did.

We were not doing very well financially. We were not extremely poor, but we were not rich either. We lived in my maternal grandparents' house so that we would not have to pay money for rent. Our home had two rooms, where the six of us lived. My parents slept in one of the rooms and my three brothers and I slept in the other. At first we did not have a kitchen or closet so we made a small kitchen in the corridor. We used coal-burning stoves for heating. We did not have a garden or animals.

In the beginning there was a maid, who helped our mother, but my mother looked after us mostly – we did not have a nanny or a governess. I did not go to a kindergarten. I spent my childhood at home with my mother and playing games with the children.

We had mostly secular books and a few religious ones. My parents read books, but only when they had some free time. My father's obligation was to earn money to support us, and my mother's – to cook and buy food.