

Lenka Koen



This is my grandmother's sister, Lenka Koen (nee Kalef). I think she might be wearing a traditional Serbian dress here, but I'm not sure. The photo was taken in the Cabinet Portrait studio in Belgrade.

My grandmother, Matilda Kalef, and her sister Lenka were very close. They saw each other often and visited one another. She was a housewife and I assume her husband was a merchant. They lived at 27 Gospodar Jovanovo Street on the corner of Kralja Petra Street, in a big apartment on the

first floor.

When we didn't have a piano we went to Lenka's house to play until we got our own at home. We got our own pianino maybe four or five years before the war. Then we played the piano at home.

Lenka was married to Josip Koen and they had four children: Isak, Marko, Maci and Elica. They were all killed during the war. Her husband was taken away with Jakov Kalef and killed among the first of the adult Jews killed in Belgrade. Elica was transported from Belgrade with her new born baby. Since she knew she was going to die she threw her baby, Avram, out the train window, with the hope that someone would rescue the baby. I learned this story from my mother and she heard it from a survivor whose name my mother never told me.