

Zelma Katalan



This is my paternal grandmother Zelma Katalan. There is some writing in pencil and child's handwriting on the back: 'To grandmother from granmama.' The photo was taken in a studio in Plovdiv in the 1940s.

Zelma Katalan, nee Natan was born in Plovdiv. Her husband, Yako Katalan, was born in Plovdiv too. I don't know what he graduated in and what education he had, but he was a bank director. I don't know the name of the bank he was in charge of. Their family was wealthy and they could afford to give their children a good education. They had four children - my uncles Isak and David Katalan, who graduated in law in Strasbourg, and their two sisters: my mother Ernesta, who studied at the French College in Ruse, but didn't graduate, and Marga, who has a secondary education.

My grandmother was a small woman who wore her hair in a bun. She was a very energetic and jolly woman, although she became a widow early on, as did my other grandmother. She would also give me cereals and sweets and she never told me what to do.

She was often sick; she had heart problems. When she had a heart attack, they would call for the family doctor, who was a cardiologist. They also had another family doctor, who specialized in internal diseases, Dr. Moskona. Unfortunately I don't remember his first name. I remember that he would put leeches on people to lower their blood pressure. My grandmother's heart pressure often increased. When I was a child, I didn't know that her blood pressure was the cause of her heart attacks.