

Naftali And Mazal Pinkas



This is a photo of my maternal grandparents Naftali and Mazal Pinkas. When the photo was taken in 1936 they lived in the old Jewish neighborhood in Vidin. As far as I know, my mother's parents were of Romanian origin. Honestly, I don't know why they settled in Vidin at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century. All I know is that at that time Jews were looking for a better place to earn their living. My maternal grandparents were neither rich, nor poor. I only clearly remember Grandfather Naftali. I loved him very much. My grandfather was a confectioner. He had a confectionery in Kaleto, the old Jewish residential district in Vidin. He owned the confectionery and sold ice-cream and Jewish sweets made by Grandmother Mazal, such as masapan [made of sugar and almonds] and burmolikos. For Pesach she made biskuchicos con lokum [Ladino: pastries with Turkish delight], roskitas [Ladino: ring-shaped buns], petikas de almendra [Ladino: almond sweets], which we loved a lot. Grandmother Mazal was famous for being one of the most beautiful women in Vidin. Everyone couldn't help looking at her. She commanded much respect in the town. She dressed very nicely and was fashion-oriented. We loved her dearly. She walked with great dignity, because her father had been a chazzan in the synagogue in Vidin. In contrast, my grandfather was a very quiet, unpretentious man, and a craftsman. He was very hard-working and didn't talk much. He displayed a lovely sense of humor sometimes, while my grandmother was more delicate.