

Surica Goldstein



This is my mother, Surica Tobias, before she got married. The picture was taken in Bucharest, at a photo cabinet in the Jewish quarter of Dudesti, in 1920. My mother is the one sitting on the bed, the first from the left. The other women are friends of hers, but I don't know their names. My mother, was born in 1895, in Piatra Neamt. Unfortunately, her mother died at her birth, so she was raised by an aunt of mine, Tipora, my mother's sister. Her father was a tailor in Piatra Neamt. It was him who taught her this craft, which she exercised with great ability, especially in the times when our family's financial situation was precarious. In 1920, she left for Bucharest on her own, to find a job. It was a matchmaker who helped her meet my father. In 1922, he was serving in the Romanian army, and they got married before he had gone out. First they got engaged, on 3rd June 1922. A few months later, they became husband and wife. They had a Jewish wedding, before the rabbi, under the kippah, but they also went to the civil authorities. The party took place in a house on Romulus St. My mother kept in touch with the matchmaker who had introduced my father to her. I remember they would sometimes meet and talk about family, hardships and children. Although their union was arranged, my parents got along with each other very well all the time. They respected each other and had an enduring marriage. My mother took care of everything at home: washing, cleaning, looking after the children and my father, as we could never afford a nurse or a maid - there never was any question about that. She would dress according to the fashion of the time and had the advantage of being able to make her own dresses. On holidays, after preparing the house for the celebration of Pesach, Purim or Chanukkah, my mother would go to the Choral Temple, not to the Malbim Synagogue, where my father used to go. She loved to go there because she wanted to see other people and to be seen by other people. The Choral Temple was a place where friendships and relationships would be started more easily? Every year on Yom Kippur, my mother would say: 'Oh, what an easy fast we had this year'. It was obvious she had a lot of practice in the field of fasting. My brother and I would sometimes eat surreptitiously, but my mother pretended not to spot us. All her life, she was endowed with an extraordinary vitality