

Joseph Saltiel



This is my father Joseph Samuel Saltiel. The photo was taken in Thessaloniki in the 1910s. My father was born here in Thessaloniki on 5th June 1881. He spoke Spanish and German and, of course, Greek. He was beautiful, tall, dark-haired, attractive. He was not very funny; he was serious, probably more serious than he should have been because he had three girls and that bothered him. He dressed in a suit wearing a tie, and was never neglected, hat of course and gloves, he was always very well dressed. A very elegant man. He read the newspapers, L'Indépendant, Le Progrés, maybe not every day but he read them very frequently. My father wasn't very courageous and even if he had political preferences he would never express them publicly. He wasn't that kind of a man. But he was very wise. Let's say that two people had an argument, they

would go to him to make the compromise because he was very just, correct and wise. They all trusted his sincerity and his logic. Middle man, intermediary, compromiser may be the correct word. He would ask: What are your differences with him? And yours? Why don't you do this or that and he tried to make them see sense and find an acceptable answer to whatever their problem was. At home we didn't discuss things, current events, actuality, politics, rumors or anything. He wasn't the kind to have long conversations. He didn't talk a lot, he wasn't funny.. He wasn't communicative, nor expansive. I never remember him laughing out loud; he was always a little distant, even when he was with his friends, distant! You couldn't reach him easily but I was number one to his love.