

Maier Letzler



The photo was taken in a studio from Ploiesti, in the 1910s. This is my maternal grandfather, Maier Letzler. My grandfather dressed like a rabbi: in black, with a long caftan; he used a walking cane. My grandmother, Eva Letzler, died at a relatively early age. She got ill and she died approximately at the end of the 1920's. My grandfather re-married, but not officially - with Jews, if you live with a woman for a long period of time, it's as if you were married to her. He had a woman whose name was Eva too. Eventually, they also got married at the civil status office. Being a rabbi and a shochet, widely known in the Jewish community of the town of Ploiesti, he wasn't allowed to re-marry immediately after he became a widower. My grandfather was very religious. He shepherded a shul in Ploiesti. My grandfather had received a 100% Jewish education, just like my grandmother.

I don't think they had schools organized by the State or something like that. They went to the yeshivah, where they studied in Ivrit, but also in Romanian. They used Yiddish at home. I don't think they spoke other languages. I met him, as he would come visit us on holidays. It's understandable how my mother got her religious education. We, the children, were not very religious, and every time our grandfather came by, he asked our mother why she tolerated her children being disrespectful. My sister was more liberal in thought, almost a Communist, not very religious. She didn't go to the synagogue very often, and all these would make our grandfather say: 'How come you let her stay home instead of going to the synagogue on Saturday? Is this the way to raise your daughter? With this kind of thoughts?' Grandfather Maier Letzler died before World War II, approximately in the 1930's. I don't know where his relatives were scattered, if he had any.