

## *The story of the family of Bessarabian Bulgarians*

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*My great-grandmother Maria was born in Moldova. Her parents and grandmother had moved from Bulgaria to Moldova during the Russo-Turkish War.*

*She told me her grandmother's stories about their suffering in enslaved Bulgaria. Constant violence, hunger, disgrace was intolerable for them and made them desperately flee to the neighboring country. She had not yet been born when her family fled with the colonists to the Principality of Moldova.*

*In the beginning it was very complicated. After 2 years my great-grandmother was born. At the age of 17, she had to get married. Gradually their village grew and new colonists and other new villages appeared. Little by little, Russian and Romanian began to enter their language.*

*Now my family is spreading to the villages of Taraclia, Tvarditsa and Vali Pergei, in Moldova.*

*Only 5 years ago my great-grandmother returned to her native Bulgaria. She decided she wanted to see the beginning of her family, even if it was dangerous because of her age - she was 82 years old. She really liked the nature, the people and decided to stay here.*



*My great-grandmother Maria is 17 years old.*



*My great-grandmother is now 87 years old.*



*My great-grandmother Maria with her first husband*

