

The Struhl Family In Front Of Their House



The photo was taken in 1941 in Gyergyoszarhegy. This was our family house and the store. In front of the entrance to this shop, from left are my siblings, Dora Struhl and Andor Simon (born Struhl), at the entrance: my father, Arnold Struhl, and my sister, Hermin Struhl, in the window my mother, Fanni Struhl, nee Pascal. When I was a small child, we had a large shop. But since my father gave people a lot of credits, he also ended up having buyers who didn't pay. And my father had debts too, because he got goods on credit, but if he sold them on credit, and they didn't pay for them, my father didn't have means for paying his debts. As a result, he was close to bankruptcy, but Dorika saved him. First, she didn't sell goods on credit anymore; she sold the merchandise only against cash. Besides she introduced the 'currents.' Currents were things that were much in demand; she made every endeavor to have these on stock all the time, and above all she sold them a little cheaper than others. She was traveling and purchasing things all the time, she was extremely busy, and thus she improved the business. Before deportation we had managed to recoup the losses quite well. After the Second Vienna Dictate, in 1940 these laws were introduced, saying that a Jew can't be a trader, can't own a shop. So we gave the shop to an Armenian trader, who took over not the shop as such, but the merchandise. He took over all the merchandise as it was. And we closed the shop. There were two Armenian traders in the village, and one of them took over my father's business. In 1940, when the Hungarian authorities came in, they took over public administration here in Transylvania, it was then when they started to pursue my brothers. We suffered insults, because the population was instigated by the authorities. They broke our windows, these kind of things occurred. And we suffered personal mistreatment, not me, but my sister. Then the gendarmes took away the boys from Gyergyoszarhegy, because they were pronounced to be unreliable for sympathizing with communism. My brothers didn't enroll in any political organization, but once my younger brother, Andor, had written on a box in the shop: 'Long live communism!' Well, he was a child, he was fourteen. And if he wrote that, then certainly the other boy must be a sympathizer too, right? After the gendarmes had taken them away to Gyergyoszentmiklos, my sister Dorika went there and tried to arrange for them not be taken to a forced domicile. The notary public was from Hungary, the judge was from Hungary - all these posts in Transylvania were taken

by people from Hungary. Dorika went there and took steps to see what would become of them: would they be imprisoned, would they be killed? Dorika was such a diplomat, one rarely sees. She was both beautiful and clever. She couldn't get along with one of them so well, but the other was nice, he listened to her. Dorika could ask, beg them so nicely not to do any harm to these boys, and at the end he said, 'I will take care that the boys will be taken to a convenient place.' That's how they got to Tolnatamasi, to Transdanubia. There was a Jewish family, the Revai family, and they had a daughter, Zsuzsi. They were forbidden to go elsewhere, but they could move within that place, and they became friends with this family, and they were accepted into it. Not as to live there, of course, because it was settled for them where to stay. I don't remember precisely where they had accommodation. However, this Revai family supported them a lot.