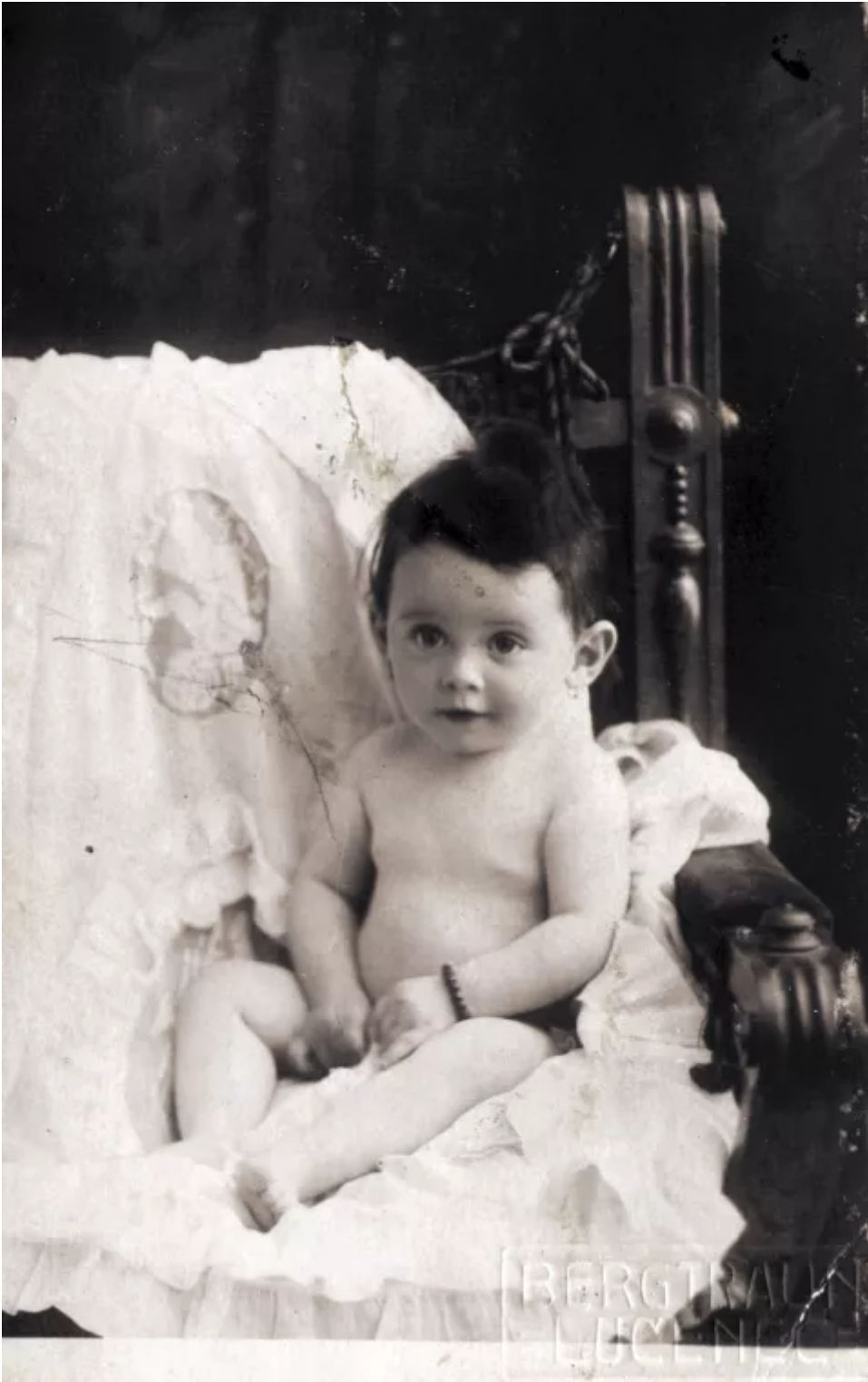


Eva Vari As A Baby



This is me a small child. This photo was taken in Debrecen, my hometown in 1925. I'm not 100% sure, but I think this photo was taken on my first birthday. In those days the parents only made photos of their children if there was an important date or anniversary. I also remember when I was older we went to the photo studio once a year, on my birthday. I don't know where these photos are, this is the only one left. I believe they were lost during the Holocaust.

I was born in Pest in 1924. Then my mother divorced in order to move back to Debrecen, I wasn't even a year old I believe, and we lived together (with my maternal grandparents). And as far as I know she met my stepfather there in Debrecen.. To me he was like a father. He was called Laszlo Lowinger and then became Ladanyi. He was born in 1905, was the same age as my mother. I have no idea what he was trained in. My stepfather's father was a watchmaker but whether he learned this trade I cannot say. He tried his hand at anything in order to live.

When I was small, I remember that we were on very good terms with her parents. They lived in Miskolc. We moved from Debrecen to Miskolc, but I have no idea why. We lived in a very mixed area of Miskolc. On a small plot there were four small bungalows, there was a concierge woman and three residents. The one we lived in, my parents, grandparents and I, was a two-roomed apartment with a kitchen and a WC in the yard. The grandparents and I (in one room), and my parents in the other. There were books at home. There was no library, that would have been impossible, but there were good books which I read too. I read a lot. They did employ someone to do a big wash, but otherwise there were no servants.

I visited the synagogue on high holidays as then my grandmother went. And it was such a meeting place. I didn't like it because it didn't seem to be about what it should be. Religion in itself, neither Judaism nor any other, really appeals to me. Because I feel it is bigoted. But then this is up to the individual, to do as they think right. I remember two synagogues in Miskolc. There was one on Paloc Street, not far from us, my grandfather went there, and there was the Kazinczy synagogue which was the biggest one. Fashionable, elegant clothes were made for high holidays and everybody dressed up and showed off. If I went up to the women's section of the synagogue, then prayer was not the chief activity but conversation and gossip. I didn't really like that.