

Jakob Fried, Suzana Petrovic's Grandfather, With Family



Photo of my mother's family, taken in Szentes, 1918 . Standing: Jolan Fried (nee Klein), sitting, from left: Elizabet, Jakob and Ilonka. My grandfather had been in the Austrian Army during World War One and he is in his uniform here.

My mother Ilona Hacker (nee Fried) was born in Szentes, that is south-eastern Hungary, where that small town is. Her parents were Karl Fried and Jolan Klein and they lived in Szentes.

They were a middle class family-- neither rich nor poor. The daughters finished secondary school for girls and my mother finished gymnasium (high school). She wanted to study at the university, but that summer she married and nothing came of her studies.

Grandfather was a bookkeeper in a big textile department store and grandmother was at home and took care of the house. There was a wonderful, big garden filled with fruits, flowers, a chicken coop. My parents sent my brother, who was ten years older than me, and me here every summer because it was on the Tisza and it was a pleasant place for relaxing. Grandmother had a big pantry and always fed us well. In contrast to my father's family they were less religious. They went to synagogue for all the big holidays.

When the Hungarians massacred Jews and Serbs in Novi Sad in January 1942, my mother sent my brother and me to live in Szentes. My grandmother, who began to be very worried, asked my grandfather to bury all the family valuables from her family and ours in the back yard. But he could not bear to dig up his beautiful garden and hid everything in the attic.

In spring 1945, both of them, along with my mother and me, were coming back from Theresienstadt. Grandfather died on the way and the Jewish community of Galanta buried him properly. My mother, to her horror, found her home had been burned to the ground, along with everything in it. The only thing left from the secret cache were some few small diamonds. Nothing else. So my grandmother had nothing left. She soon emigrated to Israel with Elizabet and her husband to Israel.