

Andor Almasi As A Romanian Soldier



The person on the right is my husband. The photo was taken when he had to do the army service, before WWI. He was a Romanian soldier. He spoke Romanian perfectly. He must have been at least 20 years old. He was a conscriptee. I didn't know him yet.

My father-in-law was from Nyaradszereda [today Miercurea Nirajului], and he had six children. Almasi was such a character, he wanted that one [of his sons] stayed home in the shop, and managed it further. He had a beer bottle-filler - that was his occupation. He had a large house just in the center of Nyaradszerada, in one side there was their apartment, in front of it, in the same yard there was the workshop. He bought from the Burger brewery in Marosvasarhely a wagon beer, they transported it on the narrow-gauge railway, carried it home, and there were three or four women who poured it into bottles. He had cart and horse, and a lad carried the Burger beer to the innkeepers all along the Nyarad river's side until Korond [today Corund], because there was an inn in every village, so he handed over the beer bottles there. The Burger palace was in the Kossuth Lajos street, but he didn't live there. The Voros Kakas was a Burger palace too.

My husband didn't want to [take over the business] at all, therefore his father didn't give him any assistance. He provided him lodgings and meal, nothing else. Thus the poor fellow could hardly finish the five grades. My husband spoke Romanian perfectly, despite the fact that he was born in Nyaradszereda. His father originated from Beszterce [today Bistrita], his grandparents were glaziers. The grandparents from Beszterce were called Apfelbaum, but my father-in-law Magyarized his name into Bernat Almasi. The fact is that a nice Romanian gymnasium was built, it still exists in

Beszterce, that they glazed in for free. He received for this a document saying that all the Almasi children can study there for free. This was very convenient for my father-in-law, he had two sons [apart from Andor]. He sent both of them to the grandfather, and they attended there the Romanian gymnasium. I know nothing about his time in Beszterce. His benefit was that the county-court was placed in Nyaradszereda, and the former lawyers didn't speak well or didn't speak at all Romanian, they all studied at Hungarian universities, and my husband spoke Romanian perfectly. In the morning he was helping my father-in-law, and in the after-noon he went to offices to translate from Romanian to Hungarian, from Hungarian to Romanian. That's how he finished the five grades.

When my father-in-law saw that he finished the five grades, and he was preparing for the doctorate, he said: 'Well, I have no hopes anymore.' Thus everything got open for him, and he gave him money to buy himself a dinner-jacket and patent-leather shoes, since he had to wear already that collar and patent-leather shoes. And he gave him [money] to rent an office. But not too much: he bought a typewriter and a cheap sofa with two armchairs. My father-in-law went further, he got up on the cart, next to the coachman, and he told everybody he was delivering the goods: 'If you have any problems, I have a lawyer son in Marosvasarhely, go to him, he will solve it at a low price.' The office was open and then we had the wedding in 1931. He opened the office a few months before. His lawyer office was in the center, he rented two rooms, it was large, [the surface was] 5x4 m or 5x4 m. It was on the floor, the windows gave to the street. Actually he dared to tell my parents in the last minute that he wanted to marry me. As a student he didn't dare even to open his mouth, though my parents saw well that we were dating. But they weren't against him, because he was a very nice person. And he earned enough money to live on in the first month already.