

Laszlo Galla And His Mother Erzsebet Gunst



This is a photo of me with my mother, Erzsebet Gunst. I could be a couple months old in this photo. I think this was the first picture ever taken of me.

When World War I broke out, my father was already 34, but he was still immediately called up. I remember that he went into the Lugos regiment - Lugos is now part of Romania - then they were sent to Serbia. He spent the entire war there, in Dalmatia and its environs, right up until the final retreat. He was constantly away for four years, though he got leave time by time. I wasn't conceived at home, but in Belgrade. My father was given leave, but a very short one, and they knew in advance when it would be, so my mother traveled down to Belgrade. They met there in the officers' wing of the barracks - my father had joined up as an ensign officer and was a captain when discharged - and they spent a few days there, and I was conceived there in February 1916.

When I was circumcised, my father wasn't at home yet. So they sent him a telegram and he came home quickly. The commissioned personnel, which he belonged to, were somewhere in Dalmatia and were living in some royal or aristocratic palace. When they found out that I had been born, they filched a beautiful album containing members of that aristocratic family, and the fellow officers sent that as a present for me.