

Mihaly Strausz, Vera's Uncle



This is my uncle Mihaly [my mother's brother]. [He and two of his brothers] lived there with their parents [in Kallosemjén].

They passed themselves off as farmers, but they didn't actually do anything. Then they were deported [in 1944], they all died in Auschwitz.

Maternal grandfather's name was Jakab Strausz, grandmother's name was Betti Weisz. Their wedding was in 1843. They lived in Kallosemjén, this is in Szabolcs county, next to Nagykálló.

It was a typical Szabolcs county Hungarian village: a small, dirty village, with wooden fences. They [the Jews] didn't live separately, but there was quite a Jewish life, they came together in the synagogue.

The synagogue was very nice, and it was on the main square. On one side there was this shop, which belonged to Auntie Ella [mother's sister], on the other side there was the synagogue, and on the third side was the Christian church.

There were quite a lot of Jews, and they came in from the neighboring farms. Just like my aunt and her husband.

My grandfather was a smallholder: he had two acres or four acres, I don't know. They were not rich people. He grew tobacco and melons. I remember that there was a big tobacco-drying barn in the courtyard, and there was a beehive.

He went out to work on the land. His sons sold it, I think. His only employees were those who were at the house, just one or two people, from time to time.

They had the sort of village house, which was large enough to have enough room for the many children they had.