

Vilmos And Vilma Farkas, Vera's Grandparents



My paternal grandparents. I don't know anything about my paternal grandfather, because my father came to Pest early, they rarely went back, and it was already part of Romania by then. I think my cousin heard all kinds of details from his father [and he wrote down what is below].

"My grandfather was born into the large family of drayman Izsak Farkas on March 15, 1848. It is a family legend that when great-grandfather arrived to register the newborn, the news of the great events [the revolution of 1848] in Pest had already reached Szatmar.

So then, when drayman Izsak Farkas announced that he intended to give his son the name Wilhelm, the notary angrily slapped his pen down on the desk and shouted: What? Wilhelm? The German world is over now. The boy's name is Vilmos Farkas!

The name 'Zev', which means wolf (Farkas), keeps recurring amongst the Hebrew names of male members of the family."

"Grandfather didn't really go to school. [...] In his bachelor years, grandfather went to Szatmarnemeti, where he went into service for a Jewish grain broker called Swarz, as a sacking laborer. [...]

After a time his master made him a storeman. However he had a very great ambition: he had a desire to study, he wanted to learn to read and write. [...] So the reason for his having gone into town was that he had hoped to realize his dream.

He learnt to read [from the rabbi] in Hungarian and Hebrew, to write nicely, with fancy letters. [...] When, at the end of the day he returned home from the grain-store he washed, and changed into clean clothes, and the family sat down for supper. Then he arranged family matters, before finally retreating to his beloved books.

"When grandfather got married, he must have been around 22 years old, judging by the number of children he had. He married Vilma Katz who was also from a poor family. She was 17 years old when they got married [...].

Vilma Katz gave birth to eleven children. Two of them died, and they raised nine - five boys, four girls.