

Tibor Bato



This is my father on the inauguration of a memorial plaque during WWI. He was asked several times to participate on such inaugurations as a member of the military escort. In the First War, my father was sent to the front. He was taken prisoner and learned Russian while there, what's more he learned almost all Slavic languages spoken by war prisoners around him. He was wounded four times, and each time went back to the front. His leg was full of shrapnel (from grenades) until the end of his life. My father was a many times decorated officer. So he was one of the few - and this wasn't something given out cheaply - reserve officers who were allowed to wear their uniform at all times. When I was naughty at school and my parents were called in, I always sent my dad in his uniform. It always made a very good impression and everything was smoothed out immediately. My father was born in Budapest in 1896. He studied for four years in an English gymnasium in Cairo, where his father was organizing the network of the Adria Insurance Company in Egypt and the Middle East. My father and grandmother moved back to Europe so that my father could finish his Hungarian education. He then went to Vienna and studied commerce at the Oriental Academy. After World War I, my father lived in Berlin, where he worked at Shell Oil. When he moved back to Hungary, he was the representative of Shell's Hungarian office. After the anti-Jewish laws were enacted, he started his own company, which bought oil from Shell and distributed it. My father was arrested with a group of about 40 people who had prominent positions. They were sent off in the summer of 1944. He disappeared. Without a trace.