

The Struhl Family



This photo was taken in March 1936 in Gyergyoszarhegy, in our family house. In the upper row, from left to right are my siblings: Hermin Struhl, Margit Gluck (nee Struhl), Jeno Struhl, Dora Struhl. In the middle row, from left are: my brother Jozsef Struhl, Fanni Struhl (nee Pascal), my mother, Arnold Struhl, my father, the wife of Jozsef Struhl (Minus). In the bottom row from left: I and my brother Andor Struhl with our dog, Lili. The photo was taken at Pesach, when the family used to get together. In 1936 only me and my younger brother lived at home. My brother Joska was already married, so he came with his wife. My father observed Pesach and the seder tradition rigorously. I can still recall one thing: my father was putting the matzah one upon the other, and covered it with the matzah cloth. The matzah cover was embroidered nicely and we had silver, but we didn't have separate Pesach cutlery. We made a hole out in the yard, put the cutlery there, and koshered it by pouring hot, boiling water over it. Then we took it out from this hot hole, and this way the same cutlery could be used on holidays as well. Our family wasn't too religious. My father didn't even speak much about religion, and since we lived in a real Hungarian, Szekler community, we were assimilated somehow, we weren't very religious, only my father was. Mother wasn't, she would have eaten treyf too. But this wasn't the case, as we kept a kosher household. On Friday evening we had barches. Mother made meat soup on Friday; we had meat soup for dinner. She put pasta in the meat-soup. But Mother made something else too. She cooked a very special meal, a duck dish, which originated from the Regat, it wasn't a Transylvanian dish, and Friday night we ate that. It was made of the giblets of the duck, it was a stewed soup. Mother made the sauce of a very light roux, slices of lemon and raisins were put in the sauce. On Saturday we had roast, Mother made roast from a part of the hen. We cooked the potatoes in their jacket on Friday already, and on Saturday we just warmed up the potatoes, cut them into slices, and put them in the roast chicken sauce. It was very good. And we had pickles; I suppose we had cucumber then too. I remember that Mother pickled it in big jars, but it wasn't vinegary, but 'watery cucumber.' My mother wore only a kerchief, because she didn't even have a wig. Nobody wore a wig in her family. They were religious, but not very much so. However, my father wouldn't have broken Sabbath. Somebody told me here in Marosvasarhely - she was a needlewoman and did sewing for us - that when she was a child in Gyergyoszarhegy, my father gave her candies: 'Come and make fire in the stove, come and

light the lamp.' She told me this, but I can't recall this being so, because I know we made a fire ourselves. Perhaps this happened before we were born, that is, me and my younger brother, Andor, who recently died; we were the last two children in the family.