

Gyula Foldes And Julia Foldesne Altman



This is a picture of me and my mother, Julia Foldesne Altman, at the Palatinus open-air swimming pool on Margaret Island, Budapest. The photo was taken in 1936 or 37. My mother used to go with the two of us, my brother, Bandi Foldes, and me or sometimes only with me. My mother, who was left to bring us up, was strict and often smacked us. Here is an example of when. It must have been 1937 when Szalasi and the Arrow Cross Party won an election and the Arrow Cross organized a march on the Boulevard. [Editore's note: At that time the united party of the extreme right forces was not yet called Arrow Cross but Hungarian National Socialist Party.] We supposedly loved this and on the inner corridor inside the apartment, Bandi and I cried out, 'Perseverance, long live Szalasi!'. My mother was having a surgery at the time, she said to her patient, 'Excuse me for a second, just stay here!' She must have put the saliva pump in her mouth. My mother came out and we got a big smack and were told not to shout. My parents lived all their life in a rented apartment. Before I was born they lived on 82 Kiraly Street. There were two rooms there and the windows looked onto Csengery Street. Then they moved to Liszt Ferenc Square because there was trouble because next to the house was an inn, the drunks misbehaved and my parents poured buckets of water on them. I was born on 4 Liszt Ferenc Square. It was a smaller apartment and my father thought, as did my paternal grandfather, that a bigger one was necessary and he looked at one in the area. He was offered one on 6 Terez Boulevard, where no one had lived for months because a prostitute had lived in it who had been strangled by her boyfriend, so people didn't want to move in. My mother and father weren't so bothered by this and they got it cheaply. They moved there in 1934. It had five rooms, my mother's dental surgery was there, a waiting room and two hallways. The surgery went under the name of Mrs. Foldes Dr Julia Altman. The house was owned by a certain Mr. Sugar, a bachelor. He wasn't a nice man. He had an ugly, little dog which we always chased with a friend of mine in order to annoy the dog and Mr. Sugar. There was always a row with the concierge, Uncle Sarkany, who said we had to be quiet and not make a row. There was a lift in the house but we preferred to run down the stairs.