

Eshye Galpert's Family



This is our family, from left to right: I, my mother Perl Galpert, nee Kalush; my older sister Olga Weinstein, nee Galpert; my father Eshye Galpert; my younger sister Yona Stein, nee Galpert. The photo was taken in Mukachevo in 1927. I think my parents had a prearranged marriage since it was common practice with Jewish families to address matchmakers - shadkhanim, regarding this issue. My parents had a traditional Jewish wedding in 1919 when Subcarpathia belonged to Czechoslovakia. My father had a small store in the biggest room in our house with an entrance from the front door. There were three rooms and a kitchen in the house. We entered the living quarters through the store. My father sold all common goods in his store. He worked in the store alone, there were no other employees. We, children, also helped him in the store. My father earned enough for the family to make ends meet. We were neither rich nor poor. We didn't starve and could afford to support the poor on Thursday so that they could have a decent Sabbath. To help the poor was considered to be a holy duty, a mitzvah. On Thursday contributions for the needy were collected at the synagogue and my father always gave some money to the collectors. There were three children in the family. My sister Olga was born in 1920. Her Jewish name was Friema. I was born on 20th June 1923. I had the name of Arnucht written in my Czechoslovak birth certificate. I was named after my maternal grandfather Aron. During the Hungarian rule [1939-1945] I was called Erno and during the Soviet rule [1945-1991] I became Ernest, but my close ones always called me Ari. My younger sister, Toby, was born in 1925. She is called Yona in Israel. Yiddish Toyb for Toby means 'dove' and dove is Yona in Hebrew. My father, Eshye Galpert, was a Hasid and dressed according to the fashion. He wore a long black caftan and a black kippah, and a black hat and a streimel on holidays. He had a big beard and payes. My mother wore a wig and dark gowns. We only spoke Yiddish at home. We, children, spoke fluent Czech and studied in a Czech school, but our parents didn't speak any Czech since they were born in Austria-Hungary. The older generation and my parents, too, spoke Hungarian to their non-Jewish acquaintances.