

Jozefin Schultz With Her Children



This is my natural mother, Jozefin Schultz. On her left side is my sister Etel, and I am on her right. My mom was born in 1887 in Ovar. I don't know what sort of school she finished. She was a housewife. I heard, that she was very good at sewing, and she used to sew bodices and shirts for peasant women, but she didn't work. I have no idea how she meet my dad. I don't even know where they got married either. I suppose, they must have married in 1910 or 1911, since I was born in 1912. My maiden name is Piroska Schultz. My sister, Etel, who is only 15 months younger than me, was born in 1913, and we had little brother, Pistike, who was eight years younger. I was born in Balassagyarmat, Etel in Ovar, which now belongs to Slovakia, because, my dad, - I just heard this, because I was very little at that time - I don't know how it came about, but he worked in Berlin for a while. But I don't know how long for. And when my sister was born in October, the rumblings of war had already started. And then, dad came home. But mom came home to her parent's house in Ovar, to give birth. I know it for sure, that when dad came home, we came back to Balassagyarmat, because I know, that we lived in Balassagyarmat, in Ipoly Street during the war. My mom was pretty, very pretty, and her twin sister was also very pretty. And very kind, too. She had a bun. She had nice, brown hair, and she wasn't too tall. At home, she never had her hair tied up. Only, when she worked on something like cleaning, or something like that, but not for religious reasons. She wore a long skirt, I know that, and she wore apron on top of it. I don't remember her face so much anymore. It was such a long time ago. Mom kept a kosher household. When I was a child, there were separate milky and meaty dishes at our place in Balassagyarmat. We didn't go to the synagogue every Friday, only on holidays. At Pesach, I know for sure that we didn't have any bread. I don't remember, whether we cleared away any breadcrumbs beforehand at home. I only remember, that at her sister, Aunty Netka's place, it was observed carefully. There were separate Pesach dishes, and there were separate milky and meaty dishes, anyway. And I also know, that Etel and I spent the seder at Aunty Netka's. Only we children went there. Mom and dad didn't come. I remember that Mom used to make kneidl for Chanukkah, but there was no celebration. I don't remember if we lit candles, I don't really remember all these things, but one thing is sure, that she didn't attend mikveh, and she didn't wear a wig. I only have very vague memories of the

time in Balassagyarmat, only one or two things are very vivid in my memory: for example once, Etel was sick; on Friday evening the candles were lit and Dad lit a cigarette, which is forbidden, among other things, for Jews at holidays. And mom got angry with him. And Dad suddenly threw the candle holder onto the floor in his anger. Once, when I was already eight, there was a big commotion, and lots of whispering, but we could still hear that Mom had died. Our brother was a five-month old breast-fed baby at the time, and people said all kinds of things, of course, not to us children, but we heard that they could see my dad carrying my Mom on his back and throwing her into the Ipoly. The police questioned him too. Of course, there wasn't a word of truth in it, because Mom committed suicide. I don't remember my poor mother's funeral, but I seem to recall a long wooden box standing on something and there were a lot of people. I know that she didn't get along with my father. She was unsatisfied with her life, and with my Dad not being religious. She died in 1920. I was only eight at the time, and then we never asked about it. Later, when I had grown up, I was more curious, but then there was no longer anybody to ask what had happened.