

Marika Krpez's Family



The picture was taken in 1941 in Subotica. We are pictured at the house where we lived at the time. I, Marika Deutsch, am in my father, Lazar Deutsch's arms. He had just arrived from forced labor. Next to him is my mother, Jelena (nee Vasic). When war broke out, my father was in the reserves and he managed to make it to Subotica on foot where the Hungarian troops had already entered on April 10, 1941. Shortly after that all Jewish males began to be taken away for forced labor, at first near Subotica to build and fix roads and train tracks. In 1941, after about two or three months, my father was sent home for a short leave. At the beginning of 1942 he and all other males over 18 were taken for forced labor. He went from camp to camp, changing work camps 15 times. Most of these camps were in present-day Hungary. Between 1941 and 1943, my father was in a work camp in Transylvania (today in Romania) and that is where I saw him again. Until the arrival of the Germans, the Hungarians allowed visits to the camps, and my mother and I went to see him. In the autumn of 1943, my father had learned that he was going to be sent someplace far away, and he asked my mother to bring me to visit him. At that time most men were being sent to Ukraine to clean up the ruins and to dig trenches. But they did not send him there. On the 9th of November 1943, my mother and I started out on the visit to the work camp in Miskolc. We traveled by train. There was an open section in the wagon where there was a police officer with a feather in his hat?these officers were well-known for their brutality. The train stood still and my mother started to get off, not knowing that we had yet to arrive at the station. At that moment, we suppose the officer pushed her, because she lost her balance and, together with me, fell onto the tracks. The train started moving and my left fist was on the track and was run over by the train. I screamed and a railroad employee ran up to us and helped us get to the station. Here they gave me first aid. An express train was stopped which took us to Miskolc. They operated on me immediately. I also had a concussion. My father found out what had happened to me from the Hungarian commandant of the camp, and he got permission to come visit me in the hospital. The last time we saw each other was November 19, 1943, when he accompanied my mother and me to the station. We traveled to Budapest, where we stayed with my father's sister, Serena, and from there we continued on to Subotica. In Subotica, I went frequently to have my hand treated at the Jewish hospital, which at that time had been forcibly relocated to the basement of the building. At the end of 1944, my father Lazar was sent to Mauthausen. He arrived there on foot and met up

with his sister Klara's husband and others from Subotica, who relayed to us that he died there of typhoid.