

Heinrich Nussbaum



This is a photo of Heinrich Nussbaum, my grandfather on the father's side. It was taken in Budapest in the 1910s. He came from Transylvania, from a community called Zsombor, I think; this is somewhere between Kolozsvár and Zilah. This is the only thing I know, except that he was born in 1864 and lived in Budapest. He had a wife, called Zseni, with whom he had four children, and all four were boys. He was an active military officer, but I don't know what rank he achieved. Well then, what active military officer goes to church, and especially a Jewish officer to the synagogue? He was completely atheistic. As a soldier, he was transferred to Zsámbék. This is an area in the North,

and they went there with the four children. But he would have liked to have a daughter anyhow, and my grandmother died in childbirth together with the child in 1908, who, by the way, was a boy. So the father was left there with the four children, and then World War I started. As an active soldier, my grandfather always wore his uniform. One can see what a sharp-featured man he was. When I look at this picture, it seems that it certainly couldn't be from the end of the war, maybe it was from the beginning of the war, when the Kaiser gave his 'leaf [of a tree]-promise. 'I have weighed all the possibilities - he said -, and we are declaring war on Serbia; by the time the leaves fall from the trees, the soldiers will be back.' And the war lasted almost five years.