

Gabor Paneth And His Parents Lajos And Margit Paneth



This is my parents and me. My mother is in mourning clothes because her father died shortly before this picture was taken. My father Lajos was born in 1887 in Papa. He grew up in a very religious environment. He went to the local Jewish elementary school and also spent a year in yeshiva. He then graduated from the Teacher Training College in Papa and became an elementary school teacher. He first taught in the Jewish elementary school in Nagymarton (one of the so-called sheva kehilot, the "seven communities" of Jews in the present-day province of Burgenland, Austria), but was soon transferred to Liptoszentmiklos, in what is now Slovakia. He met his first wife Margit Erdos here. She was a beautiful woman, the daughter of an atheist social democrat. They married in 1910 and moved to Budapest. My father started to become more and more secular because of the bad experiences he had had with the Jewish community when still in Liptoszentmiklos. During World War One, he served on the Russian front, and he reached the position of lieutenant. During the Counterrevolution, the 1918 civil revolution, he was put on the redundancy list for political reasons. In 1925 he got a job again as an elementary school teacher in a state school. He worked there until World War Two, and then continued teaching after the end of that war as well. His first wife, who had chronic heart disease, died in 1924, and Lajos married again a year later. My mother came from an assimilated, Neolog (Conservative) family of Budapest. Her father, Adolf Bergsman, was a traveling salesman of textiles. They lived in an elegant bourgeois neighborhood. My mother graduated from the Academy of Music and became a piano teacher. My parents married in 1925. I was born a year later. I think I don't have a sister or brother

because my mother wasn't completely healthy. We lived in a big three-room flat in an elegant neighborhood of Budapest, which we shared with my maternal grandfather until his death in 1939. My mother did not work. We lived on one salary, that of my father. Before the Great Depression we were quite well off, we had a day servant and went on holiday to Austria every summer for 6 weeks. I went first to a Jewish elementary school and then to a state school. I graduated in April 1944, already with a yellow star on my clothes.