

Seder Night In The Home Of Ilona Seifert's Paternal Grandparents Bernat And Julia Riemer



This is a Seder night at the home of my parental grandparents, the Wollners. The photo was taken in their Budapest home in the 1920s. Every other year, the first Seder was always held at the home of my maternal grandmother (Riemer) and the second at the home of my paternal grandmother (Wollner). The following year, the order was reversed. There were more children at my paternal grandparents', and there were about thirty-four to thirty-six of us there in their large apartment, which was big enough to hold all the children, in-laws and grandchildren. The seder ritual was conducted by my grandfather and his sons-in-law. While the men were praying, we children were playing hide-and-seek under the table. The men sat at one end of the table, with the women coming next, and then the children. We children had small, colored drinking glasses, and we even got a tiny drop of wine to drink. We had a lot of fun together at the end of the table. When Seder night was during the week, we started the celebration early and it didn't last too long because of the children's bedtimes. But when it fell on Saturday, it went on late into the night. My grandparents were very religious. They were not orthodox, but they observed all the holidays. They didn't work on the Sabbath, and the bakery and shop were closed, but on Sundays they were open. At Pesach, they had to 'sell' the whole bakery. This was a kind of mock-sale, as it was always sold to one of the leading baker's journeymen. At holiday times, the family assembled. The children and grandchildren came, though other relatives usually did not, with the exception of my uncle, Miksa Riemer (my grandfather's brother) who was widowed. He was always invited.