

Matilda Kleinova, Serena Silagy And Irena Simkova



These are the Braun sisters: Matilda Kleinova, nee Braunova, Serena Silagy, nee Braunova and Irena Simkova, nee Braunova, my mother. The photo was taken in the 1920s. My mother's oldest sister was Matilnéni, alias Matilda. Matilnéni had two husbands. Her first husband was Juraj Weiss. Her first son with this husband was Kliment. After the war he was hounded by the StB. He died tragically, as the StB came to his apartment in Cukrova Street in Bratislava. He didn't want them to arrest him, and so he jumped out of the fourth floor. He committed suicide. Matilda's second son, Ondrej, who we called Bandi, Weiss was a musician. He used to play in cafés. He died during the Holocaust, in the gas. He was one very merry boy. See, a typical Braun. He didn't have any children. The third son, Ludovit Klein, was already from my Aunt Matilda's second marriage. He lived in Munich. He died a natural death. He survived the war in Hungary. Later he emigrated in Lima, and then to Munich. Matilnéni died of cancer, already before the Holocaust, in Nitra. The most tragic fate was that of Serena Braunova. Szemcinéni [Hungarian: Aunt Szemci]. She married a man by the name of Bela Szilagyi. Bela Szilagyi was a very respected Nitra lawyer during the times of a mayor named Mojto [Frantisek Mojto]. He died already before the war, in 1937. Serena was the richest of my mother's siblings. After her husband's death she owned fields and properties in the city and its surroundings. But later, riches cost her her life. Someone told her to sell her properties, that it would save her from deportation. But as soon as she sold them - for a symbolic price, of course, they immediately put her on a transport, with the comment 'return undesirable'. Serena and Bela had no children. My mother, Irena, is of course one of the daughters of Viliam and Cecilia Braun. She was born in 1897 in Nitra. They called her Csibi. No one knew her by any other name than Csibinéni. Csibe, which means chick, that's from Hungarian. Because she was this typical little chick, merry and chipper. My mother was amazing. Unfortunately she got cancer. Just the year before she died, we'd still been skating and skiing together. In 1953 she died suddenly in Zilina of cancer.