Lenke Spiegler

This is a picture of my mother, Lenke Spiegler (nee Markus). The photo was taken in the photo studio of Siederhoffer in Budapest in the 1900s. My mother had ten brothers and sisters; she was the eleventh child. They weren't born here in Ujpest but somewhere in the provinces, but they came to Budapest. It was a Neolog family, but quite religious. My parents got married in 1907. My

father, Gyula Spiegler, barely spoke Hungarian. At the engagement he kissed my mother, who smacked his face. He said - because he couldn't speak Hungarian properly - 'I wish I had never got this smackering'. My parents spoke Hungarian with us, children, but they spoke Yiddish to one another, moreover, they corresponded in it as well. My mum's mother tongue was Hungarian, but she spoke Yiddish. In those days Jews used to speak mostly Yiddish. So they spoke this distortion of German, [that is Yiddish] moreover, they corresponded in it, too. When my father was taken to World War I, we already had a crockery shop. My mother ran it well during the war, while my father was on the battlefield. She bought a load of vessels and she only had to pay the advance, she even paid the tip because one couldn't find merchandise at that time. My parents were tired people because they ran a shop; they went to work at 7am and worked until the evening, 6pm. Later, in 1927-28, my father opened an enameling factory in order that his daughters should have dowries. At that time there was deflation as well, the crisis of overproduction, and my father wasn't a cartel member. And then the enameling factory ruined my father because the cartel ruined him. They had a contract with a big company; it was called Hutter and Stran, where they made the enamel in stoves. And they cancelled the order and there was no work, but the day and night workers had to be paid regardless. At that time the factory had been running for about six years, but it went broke. It cost us the crockery shop. It cost us our house. They auctioned off everything we had.