

Paula Riemer And Her Relatives



This picture was taken around 1915 in Arad. My mother Paula Mittelmänn is second from left, next to her (first from left) is her brother Sandor. He holds a pictured newspaper. First from right that's Dora Mittelmänn, next to her there's Rozsi Mittelmänn, my maternal grandfather Armin Mittelmänn's siblings. The picture was taken in a studio named Mrs. Kosach and Schwartz. Its address: Arad, Weitzer St. 3.

My mother spent many summer holidays at her grandmother, who lived near Arad, but also had some relatives in Arad. My mother was around 18 here, and her brother Sandor was one year younger. This picture was taken probably during one of these summer holidays.

After the deportation, when I came back, I began to look for my things in Szaszregen, where they took us away from, and I found a pile of paper in the kitchen of an empty house. Among these I found several pictures and documents. But it looked like a garbage heap. Probably that's how I found this picture.

My maternal grandfather's name was Armin Mittelmänn. He was born in Lippa, near Arad, in 1863, and from there he got to Marosvasarhely, in fact first to Szaszregen. Grandpa had two sisters, one of them called Dora Mittelmänn, the other one was Rozsi, she was the younger, but they seemed very old to us. I loved them very much. Dora got married as a 'spinster' to Jozsef Lazar and they lived in Vasarhely. They had no children, because her husband was an old Jewish man, but he was a very honest, straight and religious man. He was an egg merchant, he had an egg warehouse in Marosvasarhely, but I don't remember where. They were Neologs too, Dora didn't wear a wig, but they observed the Jewish rules, they had a kosher household, and they went to the synagogue on holidays, of course. At that time, while Jozsef Lazar was still alive, they had a house on Hosszu street [today it's the December 1st 1918 boulevard]. The house is still there, on the side where the Radio Studio is, I can't tell which one, but it had a typical way up. They had a very nice, shiny, tidy home, furnished with contemporary furniture, and they had a bedroom, a dining room, and everything a middle-class house used to have. They had no maid.

The name of Rozsi's husband was Jakab Spitzer, he was originally from Arad, they lived there, too. He died in the World War I, he died a glorious death, so got aunt Rozsi like young widow to Marosvasarhely. She did the household of my grandfather after grandmother died young. Auntie Rozsi cooked very well, nobody could bake so good like she. I remember she could bake very delicious Purimi cookie [pastry]. When my grandpa got married, she moved to her sister, Dora. They lived together, because Jozsef Lazar was very old and he died short time after, so they lived together with the help of my grandpa. Grandpa supported them financially, because there were no pension then and they weren't rich. They moved from there [from Hosszu street], the house was sold and since they had no income, grandpa supported them. They moved to a little apartment in the so-called Foghaz street [today it's Retezatului street], opposite to the prison. There was an apartment house there, and they lived together in a one room apartment until they were deported. They were younger than grandpa, but even so they were over 70 when they were deported from Marosvasarhely. They used to visit grandpa on Friday evening, and we used to chat then - there was no radio then, it was a big deal to have one then. When grandpa got his first radio, one with an earphone, I was still a little girl, it was around 1929, and the whole family gathered around the earphones and listened to the radio.