

Marton And Jozsef Grunstein In The Labor Battalion



This photo was taken at the time when my brother-in-law, Marton Grunstein was doing work service; it is written on its back: 'I send this to my wife and my child, Nagybanya, 1942. Photo taken by Karoly Simon.' I can't see Marton on the picture, though he must be there. My husband [Jozsef Grunstein] is in the second row, he's the second from left.

[Editor's note: It is an interesting photo. It seems as if some of the persons wore civil clothes, in the meantime they still have cap buttons on their hats, though until March 1943 Jews doing work service were allowed to wear military uniforms, but they couldn't wear stripes and cap buttons. (Although there were corps leaders who, out of their own initiative, before 1942 already obliged Jews to wear their civil clothes.) We don't know the reason of this.]

The eldest brother of my husband, Marton was born in 1909. I don't know what education Marton had; however, he worked at the food-supply administration as a bookkeeper. He established a family here, in Marosvasarhely - I don't know the name of his first wife -, and he had a daughter. They were deported from Marosvasarhely, his daughter was four years old. My brother-in-law was a very miserly person. My husband, when he came here to work [before the war], didn't stay at them, just ate at them, and he told me his brother had taken the money for the meals. His second wife was Piri Grunstein, nee Rosenfeld; she was the little sister of my mother. They had a son, he's called Andras. My brother-in-law divorced her, thus in 1958 my aunt and the boy, who was eight years old then, emigrated to Israel, and there she changed her name into Peled. When we visited them in 1969, her son was in the army. I don't remember where he lived and what he did for a living. Both my husband and I loved very much this aunt of mine. I don't know what the name of my brother-in-law's third wife was; she wasn't Jewish, and my brother-in-law divorced my aunt because of her. Marton died in Marosvasarhely in 1992.

My husband went to school in Bethlen; he was studying a lot using electric light, until he went blind. All this happened when he was some fifteen-sixteen years old; so they took him to Kolozsvár, and he was operated. They told him he must stop learning. Thus he learnt to work in leather, but I

don't know where. Before the war he worked already in leather in Bethlen, then he moved to Marosvasarhely. Here he was selling broadcloth in a private shop; he met his first wife, Helen Grun there. She was from Beszterce. In Kolozsvar she stayed at an uncle, who raised her, then she came to Marosvasarhely to work, she was a clerk in a hardware shop. In the meantime, in 1935 my husband was enrolled in the army. He was in the Romanian army in Szatmarnemeti; he was twenty-one at that time. He was allowed to leave for one day, when they got married. After he demobilized - this was around 1937 -, they lived in Marosvasarhely in the Cuza Voda street, in his wife's house until deportation. He had a son, he was called Erno, and was born in 1940. [Editor's note: According to photo number Erno Grunstein was born approximately in March 1941.] They were deported together with the wife and daughter of Marci. My husband and my brother-in-law, Marci were taken to work service; the two of them came back, but their wives and children perished in Auschwitz.