

Emanuel Weiss, Regina Weiss, And Anna Eva Gaspar



This picture was taken by my mother. This is my grandmother, my grandfather and myself. It was taken in Nagyvarad around 1941-1942. I made a picture in the same place, but she was standing there instead of me. By then we already belonged to Hungary, because Transylvania was reannexed, and my mother's youngest brother was in Arad, in Romania, the border was not too far away, and we sent him a photo, this is a copy of that picture. They sent it back to me from Israel some twelve years ago, because I had no pictures left, because I wasn't able to find anything in the house, the neighbors took away everything. They put the furniture to the Fustos family, so by the time I arrived home the apartment was completely empty, there were some people living in it, they moved in there.

My maternal grandfather, Emanuel Weiss, Mano in Hungarian, was a deep religious, decent man. He was an observant Orthodox. He observed the Sabbath, the Pesach and all the other holidays. He used to pray every morning, he wore all the religious clothes on his head and his arms. When they visited us in the town, and we lived in the same place, he never missed the morning prayer. He was deeply religious. I saw him praying in tallit. I got out of the room, but my presence never bothered him. It was mandatory to read the prayers. Once I asked him why, if he has to say the same prayer every morning. You are not allowed to recite it because you could omit a word. That's why one has to read it. And he read the Talmud almost all the time. He read a few Hungarian novels as well, he was allowed to. He always used to say these novels had only two kinds of outcome, the people [the characters] either died or got married. He was a very educated old man, I was the only one who argued with him quite a lot.

My grandmother Regina Weiss was religious too, but she didn't wear a wig. I remember them very well, because I spent every summer in Zerind, if we didn't go for holiday somewhere else. But if we did, we only went to Borszek to take some fresh air, but even then we spent a part of the summer holiday in Zerind.

I can still see the large old house, it was in the center of the village. There was a dining room, a living room, a bedroom for my grandparents, a spare room, a separate room for my uncle - he was single at that time, he got married later, when I was a big girl already - and there was a kitchen and a bathroom too. We had a pump in the yard. Once a week, the coachman, uncle Gyuri, pumped up the water into a reservoir, which was in the loft, and we had water in the bathroom for one week. We had a boiler in the bathroom and stoves in the rooms. There wasn't and there still is no gas in Zerind, we used to heat with wood. One of my uncles built a new, modern apartment near the grandparent's house, and they lived there. There were four or five rooms also. But I saw that building only after the war. They kept cows in the yard and they used to give milk for free to the poor. My grandfather was really charitable, and he helped the poor very much. They milked the cows every morning and every evening and there were some people who came with their pots and got milk for free. There were a few poor people in the village, and they knew already who got milk for free in the morning and who in the evening. It wasn't necessary to be Jewish to get milk for free. There was no anti-Semitism then. They knew my grandfather was the wealthiest in the area, but nobody said a word against him.

I never heard my grandfather discussing politics. My grandparents were not interested in politics. All what I know is that my grandmother Regina sat down near to the radio, and when Hitler spoke, she scolded him all the time. This was their only political manifestation.

My grandparents always spent the winter in the town, in Varad. They were old and they had to be under permanent medical supervision. They were in Varad when the annexation took place, and that's why they were deported. If they remained in Zerind, they would have avoided the deportation... But unfortunately they were taken away. When this happened, my poor grandfather was around 83-85 and my grandmother 74.