

Oto Konstein With His Sister And Maid



This photo shows our maid Matilda Sinko, my sister Tea and me.

Matilda Sinko was a housemaid who started working with my maternal grandparents when she was only 13 years old.

After my grandmother died, Matilda came to stay with my parents, my sister and me. Matilda was a wonderful, intelligent person; she spoke German, Hungarian and of course Croatian fluently, she had a beautiful handwriting, and made beautiful needlework.

Apart from cooking, cleaning and helping in the household, Matilda played with my sister and me. She didn't have family of her own, so she considered us her own children; she loved us and we loved her.

Matilda was treated as if she was a member of our family, and long after the war was over, I considered her as my grandmother. It was customary for Jewish families in Cakovec, and I suppose elsewhere, to have housemaids that stayed with a single family and that became a part of that family.

Although she was Catholic and not Jewish, she learned Jewish traditions and customs by living with us. When the war started, she went to her hometown Prelog and lived there until sometime in 1980s when she died.

My wife and me went to visit her in Prelog, just a few days before she died, but then we didn't expect that she would die so soon.