

Szerena Jager With His Husband, Jozsif And Their Children



The photo was taken in Saratel, on the veranda of our house. The first from right is my mother, she was around thirty-nine years old; she had a net on her head, and a little hair in the front, so one couldn't notice that her hair was cut. Next to her is standing my little brother, Salamon. He didn't go to school yet, he attended the cheder though. Then the person with a hat is my father; he was handsome. The little girl next to my father is Mirjam. On the left side is my eldest brother, David, and I'm standing next to him; I was fifteen years old. I had chestnut plaits, I had long hair; my mother braided it into two plaits, then plaited it together, fixed it up, and tied it with two pink ribbons.

The photo was taken by a photographer; I think he lived in our yard, because the Hungarians took away our storeplace and gave it to a railwayman, who came from Hungary, and had a camera. They didn't gather Jews yet to a single place; they only occupied Transylvania, and they needed place. I don't remember precisely how, but a neighbor gave me back this photo.

My father was called Jozsif Jager; he was born in 1901 in Szeretfalva. I don't know for how long he studied, because he was fourteen when his father died at a young age, and he became the breadwinner. I'm not aware of the circumstances of my parents' meeting each other; however, theirs was a love match. My mother was called Szerena Jager, nee Rosenfeld. My mother's family was from Harina [in Romanian Herina], which is a few kilometers far from Szeretfalva, and some fifteen kilometers far from Beszterce, but they were poorer than my father's family. Though she was a widow, grandmother Jager was well-off, and she didn't want my father to marry my mother, so my father gave money to grandmother Rosenfeld to be able to buy my mother a dowry. They got married in 1923.

At the beginning they lived in lodgings in Saratel, at the parents of one of my classmates, not far from my grandmother's house; later they built a house on the lot given by grandmother Jager.

We were five siblings, three girls and two boys. David was born in 1925, I was born in 1927, Mirjam in 1930, Fajge in 1933, then Salamon was born in 1938.

My elder brother, David got his name after our grandfather. He was cross-eyed, he was born with this defect; the sun was shining and he looked into it...

Mirjam had a twin sister, who died during childbirth because of the umbilical cord. My poor mother cried so much; when she went to the graveyard, she used to look at the rows and say: where these are, there is room for one more; and that's what happened indeed: she gave birth after all this to Fajge, who also died as a child. Mirjam was deported together with us, and she died in Auschwitz.

Fajge was my favorite among my siblings; we were sleeping in the same bed, and she always went to bed earlier to heat up my place. It was war time, the Hungarians came in, and Fajge got ill right when the tanks were passing through Szeretfalva, so they couldn't take her to the doctor, we had to wait until the tanks went off, then we took her to Kolozsvár, to the Matyas hospital. The doctor said we came too late, her appendix was perforated. Yet I stayed there with her, but later they told us to bring her home, because her abdomen got full with pus. We were so close to each other that she couldn't die until I didn't go out of the room. She was ten years old, when she died in 1943. Fajge is buried in Szeretfalva, in the Jewish cemetery. The cemetery still exists.

In 1944 Salamon was very little, he didn't even go to school yet, when he was deported with us, and he died in Auschwitz.