

Helen Bacher



Mammy and an other teacher are on this photo. The one on the right, who holds the rake, is my mother, Helen Bacher. Mammy already had her qualification. And this was the other teacher, a Romanian woman, but I don't know her name.

My mammy attended the convent for eight years in Gyergyoszentmiklos. She also finished two years of I don't know what, so she qualified as a teacher. Of course she had a Hungarian qualification. She said then 'I'll go to look for a job.' She went home, my grandfather lived a few kilometers from Gyergyovarhegy, on the hillside, in a completely Romanian village. Only an Armenian family lived there, and there was a teacher in that family too, who was commuting to Ditro [today Ditrau], to Gyergyoszarhegy [today Lazarea], and the husband worked in a factory, he was a clerk. My grandfather was desperate that a daughter would go to a foreign place to work, to Marosvasarhely or somewhere else. Back then it was something inconceivable. And my grandpa wouldn't let her go. My mother was crying, and she said: 'Why did you let me learn then?' He answered 'Listen to me! - that's how my mother related it to me - If you learnt well the lesson in Hungarian, and you speak Romanian perfectly, here is a four grades primary school - there was a Romanian school in Gyergyoalfalu [today Joseni] -, pay a visit to the schoolmaster, and ask him if he could employ you.' My mother had no choice, she went there, they employed her, and she was teaching there. There was a schoolmaster, a teacher and a Romanian teacher, so there was room for my mammy too, because there were quite a lot of children. So mammy was teaching in Romanian, but not for long, since dad came and married her. And in older times it wasn't fashionable that a woman who got married went to work. My father didn't let my mother work as a

teacher, he used to say: 'What's in your mind? What would people say, that I can't support a wife?'

There was a difference of age of 6 years between my brother [1905] and me. My mother didn't want more children, and she already was so modern and clever - though there weren't contraceptive pills yet. My father wanted a girl. My mother withstood it for 6 years, then she gave up, and she became pregnant, that's how I was born after 6 years. A scene took place then, because they say I weighted 5 kilos and I was wonderful, and when they placed me into my father's arms, he went to my mother's room and told her: 'Well dear, with all this pain why didn't you born one more such beautiful child?' And my mother got so angry, that she didn't talk for three days. Since she was struggling for three days. There was a midwife at a village, it turned out at the end that she wasn't a midwife in fact. She was struggling for three days, but there weren't any problems.