

Vilma Havas And Iren Grosz



This is a picture of my mother Vilma Havas (nee Neudorfer), standing, and her older sister Iren Grosz (nee Neudorfer) from Brasov. The photo was taken sometime at the end of the 1920s in a photo studio in Des. In 1960 I visited Aunt Iren in Israel. She gave me this photograph then because I had nothing else left of my mother. My mother, Vilma, was the fourth daughter, she was born in 1896. My parents never talked about how they met, nor about their marriage. They got married in 1916, and my oldest brother Gyorgy was born a year later. I was born in 1922. When I was a child, my parents were amongst the wealthy middle-class. Due to the economic depression it became harder and harder to make a living. My father was the manager of a bank in Des then. The bank went bankrupt and with it we lost a considerable part of our wealth. My father then returned to his career as a lawyer, but he didn't make enough money. Therefore my grandmother decided to move

to Brasso, to live with her other daughter, Iren. I was around eight or nine then. Because of the difficulties we had to sell the most valuable things from our house: furniture, porcelain and crystal. As our poverty grew we moved into smaller and smaller apartments. It was very useful for us that my mother knotted Persian rugs because from the 1930s until our deportation it practically supplemented the family's income. With the help of Aunt Iren from Brasso, my mother bought a stocking ladder-mender in 1938 and took on jobs. From then on we lived in somewhat more normal conditions. Iren and her husband, Grosz, were wealthy. A baron called Grodl had a lumber mill and a sawmill near Brasso, in Kommando. Uncle Grosz was the foreman for the baron and they stayed there all summer, and spent the rest of the year in Brasso. As a child I spent all my summer holidays at Aunt Iren's in Kommando, and those were the happiest days of my life. They didn't observe the religious holidays either. Nobody in the family was religious. They had two sons, Laci and Geza. Aunt Iren emigrated to Israel with Laci and her daughter-in-law after World War II. Laci now lives in Nazareth. Geza remained in Brasso and started a family there. Iren died at the age of 94 in the early 1970s.