

Zsuzsa Maszler And Family



This is me and my family. I am sitting on the lap of my father, Lipot Maszler, and my sister, Judit, is on the lap of our mother, Margit. My mother was born in 1890 into a big family - she had 10 brothers and sisters. Her family was quite religious. Her father had two kosher butcher shops in Obuda. She married my father in 1920. He had been married before, but his wife died in childbirth in 1916. They moved to Pilisvorosvar and lived in the house my father inherited from his parents. My father worked as a business agent for the local coal mine. He went to synagogue every Friday, but on Saturdays he had to work. If he was free on Saturday, he went to shul and took us along. My mother made challah on Friday and she taught us how to light the Sabbath candles and what blessings to say. I still remember some of them. Judit and I went to the local elementary school. It was a mixed school, with Jews and Gentiles alike. In 1942, the doctor told my parents that we should leave Pilisvorosvar because it was bad for my health. This is why we moved to Budapest. The rabbi arranged for my father to work in the community. When the Hungarian fascists took power in October 1944, we young people were marched to one of the train stations, crammed into wagons and sent off to Ravensbruck. Then those who were in condition to work were taken to the Messerschmitt factory. Judit and I worked in the turnery until the middle of April. Then we were deported, weak and ill with typhoid, to Mauthausen, and we were already standing in front of the gas chambers, naked, when somebody came running and shouting, 'Hey, Hungarians, we are liberated!' After liberation, we spent three months in a hospital in Guzen. We left the hospital when the Russians took it over from the Americans. I met my husband, Odon Kobstein, during the war when he and some other Jewish boys who were in forced labor units were put up for the night in our building. During the day they worked in a factory near Budapest. We married in 1947. We did not have a religious wedding, only a civil ceremony. We moved into a small flat in Budapest and we found a small place to set up a mechanics workshop. It was never nationalized because it was small and we had no employees. My husband repaired only three things: motorbikes, bicycles and sewing machines. I had been a dressmaker before the war and, at first, I wanted to go back to

dressmaking. But my husband asked me to help in the shop. I could never have any children because of the illness I had as a child. But my dear husband told me that he loved me all the same.