

The Nussbaum Brothers: Laszlo, Jenó, József, Sandor



'For our dear gentle parents, your boys.' - is written on the back of this photo, which was taken in Budapest in 1922. The four brothers are in the picture in the order of their birth: Laci, Jenó - my father, József and Sandor Nussbaum. All the four children were born in Budapest, but their father was transferred to Znaim. They attended all their schools in German. They spoke the language in which they studied. Their correspondence was in German, too. Their father would have liked to have a daughter too, but his wife died in childbirth together with the child. Their father married again after many years. He got married to a woman from Vienna. Her name was Paula, she was a German, and thus spoke German. The children also spoke German, so when they wrote something to their father they did it in German so as their stepmother could understand it, too. The plural 'our parents?' was because they accepted their father's second wife as their own mother. They got a new mother just when they were in their teens. Their German was very good; the woman spoke German, so they wrote this [the text written on the back of the picture] in German as well. In 1918, when they still lived in Budapest and my grandfather wasn't so old, he decided: I have four children and I'd like them all to go to university. But his requirement was that they all go to different places, though he wouldn't pick where. He sent the first child, Laszlo, to Paris, to the Sorbonne University. With the second child his restriction was that he couldn't go to France. He could go anywhere, except to France, and he couldn't study philosophy like the first one had. This one, Jenó, my father, went to Italy, to Florence, and he studied mathematics; he got a diploma and a doctorate. Then the third child could go anywhere but these two countries and he could not choose these two professions. So the third one, József, went to Berlin and became a doctor. The fourth child, Sandor, went to a different country and chose a different profession as well, commerce in Prague, to be precise. Grandfather used to call it: 'Spreading my germs all over Europe, because I had enough of this war, but I want children everywhere.'