

Julia Foldesne Altman



This is my mother, Julia Foldesne Altman, in her dental surgery in Budapest sometime in the 1930s. My mother was born in Gyongyos in 1900. She was a GP and dentist. Her father, Ignac Altman, must have had good connections in the right places because he said that he would like his daughter to be accepted into the Medical Faculty. And given that he didn't join the communist movement during the Hungarian Soviet Republic my mother entered university in the fall of 1919. In 1924 she graduated from the Medical Faculty of Pazmany Peter University and got her dentistry qualifications later. When she finished university she didn't come to Pest immediately because it was usual, it may have been obligatory to go and work as a doctor in the provinces. She went to Vaja near Nyirbator. She had a suitor there, a Christian boy, who had been at university with her. But nothing came of it, it wasn't serious. My mother came to Pest, there was a dental surgery on Jozsef street for the prisons, and she got a post there. I was born in 1922 in our apartment on 4 Liszt Ferenc Square. It was a small apartment and my father thought, as did my paternal

grandfather, that a bigger one was necessary and he looked at one in the area. He was offered one on 6 Terez Boulevard. They moved there in 1934. It had five rooms, my mother's dental surgery was there, a waiting room and two hallways. The surgery went under the name of Mrs. Foldes Dr Julia Altman. My mother, who was left to bring us up, was strict and often smacked us. Here is an example of when. It must have been 1937 when Szalasi and the Arrow Cross Party won an election and the Arrow Cross organized a march on the Boulevard. [Editore's note: At that time the united party of the extreme right forces was not yet called Arrow Cross but Hungarian National Socialist Party.] We supposedly loved this and on the inner corridor inside the apartment, Bandi and I cried out, 'Perseverance, long live Szalasi!'. My mother was having a surgery at the time, she said to her patient, 'Excuse me for a second, just stay here!' She must have put the saliva pump in her mouth. My mother came out and we got a big smack and were told not to shout.