

Margareta Blum, Zoltan Blum's Sister



This is a photo of my sister Margareta Blum whose Jewish name is Malvina. It was taken when she was at school but I don't know exactly in which year in the 1930s.

Because I had no photos with my relatives, meaning that I have no photos before the second World War, somebody from Fizesul Gherlei gave me one with my bother Eugen and this one with Margareta. My only sister, Margareta was born in 1921.

When I was little we used to visit my uncle and aunt. I remember we came with our parents here, in Gherla, especially before the high holidays.

They took us to the Jewish bathhouse [mikveh] before Rosh Hashanah and before Yom Kippur. We didn't have a Jewish bathhouse in our village and the closest one was in Gherla.

Sometimes they took us to the tailor's and ordered new clothes for us. In that period we went to my uncle's with my mother and father, but we went only with them, children were not allowed to walk back and forth by themselves, but only with their parents.

On Saturday, we only washed at home. On every holiday, we would all have a large meal. No matter how poor a Jew was, he had to have a decent meal on holidays.

My mother laid a white tablecloth (which wasn't for everyday use) and two candles. As the candles were lit, we would say the 'Baruch ata...' prayer.

My parents owned a store until 1943. Then things got really hard... After 1943 we had to wear the Yellow Star. Of course we had to.

When we were among kids of our age - Romanians and Hungarians - we felt ashamed. It's not like they pointed their fingers at us or beat us. It's just that we were sort of embarrassed.

We were deported from Fizesul Gherlei together with the family except my brother Matei and Ernet who were sent to the Hungarian labor detachments.

In May 1944 we were sent to Cluj and the way from Cluj to Auschwitz was by train. We were put in cattle cars. [Editor's note: 16,148 Jews were deported from Cluj in the period 25 May - 9 June 1944.]

We finally got to Auschwitz [Mr. Blum's voice is more and more feeble], and they made us get off. The whole family was there.

The Nazis were selecting the newly arrived and two groups were being formed: men and women. My brother Eugen and I were pointed in one direction, while my mother and my sister were sent to the other group.

I don't know what became of them. That was the last time I ever saw them... Some inmates later told me that they spotted them at work - which means they weren't sent straight to the gas chambers.

This is how we ended up in the Auschwitz-Birkenau labor camp.