

Rozsi And Mihaly Eisikovits



After my mother got married, she was very happy when I was born.

This picture was taken in 1920, and I was some six months old. My mother is next to me.

I, Mihaly Eisikovits, was born in Szamosujvar, on 11 January 1920 in an orthodox Jewish family.

When I was 4, I already knew the morning prayers we had to say as we wake up.

I finished elementary school in Szamosujvar, in the Romanian Jewish school.

I learnt Yiddish and other disciplines they taught us step by step, beginning with the most elementary things.

In the morning we went to the teacher, his name was uncle Izrael, he was Romanian.

There were seven grades in the Jewish elementary school, I finished four and then I entered the Petru Maior high school.

I finished a few grades there, but with difficulty, because there was a teacher, called Sigheartau, who didn't like Jewish pupils at all.

For example he told me: 'Cum te cheama? [What's your name?] Eitico...' - he couldn't read my name properly. 'Eitico..., mai, Itic ii mai simplu, hai, Itic la harta!' [Eitico..., hey, Itzik is easier, come on Itzik, to the map!]

Talking of that I like to say that I wasn't the only Jew who couldn't take anymore the Romanian high school from Szamosujvar. It was the atmosphere.

The headmaster himself, Precup, wasn't really digging the Jewish pupils.

When they needed money, they sent the Jewish pupils home to bring the school fees, because we had to pay for school then.

And they established the school fees in accordance with the income.

The Jews always had to have money, they surely had money even under their skin - this was the idea - so they established high, hard school fees for us.

The other children had to pay as well, everybody had, but there were pupils who paid in other forms, they found other methods.

The pupils from the villages paid very small fees, they brought instead food for the house: potatoes, onions, this and that. I know that some pupils paid the fee this way. We paid it otherwise...

We used to go often to the grandparents from Nagyiklod.

For example, as soon as we got the vacation, we immediately went to Nagyiklod.

We could take out our shoes there, we could go barefoot. And we could go to the Szamos riverbank and we could steal sunflower and corn, we roasted it, and we came home looking like devils, smudged with coal.

I was together with my sibling, my cousins from Iklod and some Romanian boys from the neighborhood, we were on good terms with them.

Iklod was separated in two parts: Nagyiklod and Kisiklod. The Romanians lived in Nagyiklod, the Hungarians in Kisiklod.

Kisiklod is on the right side of the Szamos, on a slope, it is a very good fruiting county.

Nagyiklod is on the plain, there were long, large melon beds. Iklod had the most delicious melons!

Well, we also went into the melon beds. Because one of my uncles, Mendel Rosenfeld, had melon beds, as well - my poor late father was also an expert in melons.

This uncle loved doves very much. He made a one and half floor high dove cot in front of his house. He had doves by the hundreds.

When he came out to feed them, he carried the corn with a bowl, and the doves rushed at him.

He was expert, he separated them, there were hen birds, and he knew the breeds. I can still see it even now! I was a child, around 5 or 7.