

Sidonia Illes



This is me, in Halmeu, after 1955; I had come back from Cernauti and I wanted to go and see what had become of my grandmother's (Braha Moskovits) house. You can see her house in the picture, the yard with the vine arbour. It used to have a good harvest. This was a beautiful yard, the most beautiful in Halmeu as I know, with lots of flowers. You can even see the wooden porch. It broke my heart to see it in ruin like that. The new residents of the house were afraid that I would claim the house back, but I had no such intention, I told the person I came only for the memories. My grandmother's house in Halmeu had three rooms: a guest room that was nicer than the other two, a large living room and a third room with four beds; there were also a kitchen with a stove and an attic. My grandmother didn't keep animals. She had a large, beautiful garden, separated from the courtyard, with many flowers, and an orchard. My grandmother didn't have servants; nor did my relatives, despite their having a better position than us. The wives stayed at home and did all the work. In my grandmother's town, Halmeu, there weren't only Jews, there were also many Romanians. But I remember my grandmother's neighbors were Jews. On the opposite side there was a house, behind there was a sort of chateau and in front there was a garden. In general, the neighbors got on very well with one another. Right now, I don't remember whether my grandmother would tell us things or stories, but I know she was highly respected by the entire community; she was like a mother to them all. She was greatly esteemed by the people and she was like a town's sage. Anyone who would set foot in her house would get a treat.