

Samuel Izsak With His Family



These are my paternal grandparents and their children. The boy on the right is my father, Izsak Izrael Izsak. Next to him is my grandmother, Regina Izsak, nee Simon, and my aunt Terez Izsak. In my grandfather Samuel Izsak's lap that's my uncle Jozsef Izsak, and beside them is my aunt Sari Izsak. The photo was taken in the 1890s in the Cabinet Portrait Caroline photo studio in Szaszregén. My Izsak grandparents lived in Mezőszabad, near Marosvásárhely at the time. I don't know on what occasion they visited Szaszregén.

I don't know exactly when my grandfather was born, but according to the family tree he died in 1914. I was born the next year, in 1915, and they named me after him. He was the judge - now we call it mayor - of Mezőszabad for a year, sometime at the end of the 19th century. I think his family

was the only Jewish one there. I don't know whether he was a member of any organization or party. I don't even know whether he had any particular political beliefs.

My grandmother was born around 1864, but I don't know where. Her mother tongue was Hungarian, and they dressed entirely according to the Central-European fashion of the time. They were beautiful and healthy people. My grandfather had a small beard when he was young. They lived a civilized life and were in trim. At the beginning of the 20th century they moved to Marosvasarhely.

My father was born in Mezőszabad in 1885. I don't think there was a school there, so I presume he either finished his elementary education with a private teacher or in Marosvasarhely. He didn't go to cheder, nor to talmud torah. He finished his higher education in Brassó. He studied at the higher commercial school in Brassó and graduated from there.

József Izsak was working as a clerk at the kerosene factory. He was an extremely cultivated person, with an exceptional gift for languages. He could speak and write in eight to ten languages. He knew oriental languages: Persian, Turkish and Ivrit. He also knew Romanian, Italian, German and French. He had a very large library. Every time I visited him he gave me some books. He was single, and, as far as I know, he was deported from Kistarcsa [today Hungary] for political reasons. I have no idea exactly what these reasons were. He perished in Auschwitz in 1944.

Aunt Sari Izsak, born in 1887, was a playwright. Several of her pieces were performed in Marosvasarhely. I don't remember any titles, nor the drama company that performed them. I do remember though one play being performed in the auditorium of the community center. My whole family attended it. I was still a child. I only recall that the piece received a burst of applause and my aunt had to take a curtain-call and she was given a basket of flowers. The public expressed its respect that way. Sari never got married.

Terez Izsak was born in 1896. I don't know anything about her, only that she died in Auschwitz.