

Gyorgy's Mother



This is my mother, Szeren Neufeld, with me in her arms, when I was one years old. The picture was taken in May, 1916 in Kolozsvar. She was the opposite of my father, direct, talkative, generally in high spirits. She was a housewife, by that time women didn't have an occupation. However, she took part in many social, charitable works. In Kolozsvar there was a women association which upheld a day-care (nursery) centre with about one hundred and fifty or two hundred children. There were few real orphans there, they were mostly poor children. For years my mother was the

deputy president of the women's organisation which ran the centre. I can still remember when they built the Jewish hospital in Kolozsvár and started furnishing it. They put sewing machines in ten or twelve rooms and employed women to tailor and sew pillows, pillowcases, bed sheets for the hospital. My mother supervised and shared out the work there. She also organised the Kolozsvár branch of the WIZO-Women's International Zionist Organisation. She often met [Moshe] Carmilly who also dealt with these Jewish organisations as the chief-rabbi. The orphanage was supported by the women's organisation. They assured the finances from donations. They organised tea-parties [as a game of balls to get everybody into the game] where the guests had to pay. For instance my mother invited five of her acquaintances and they had to pay a rather insignificant sum agreed upon in advance and they talked for about one or two hours. The five guests in turn, had to invite five other guests. Each of them and their guests also paid. It was made a principle that they could not invite those who had previously organised such parties, as they wanted to involve all the Jews from the town. Those who were really very poor and were left out, were helped from the money gathered.