

Izsak Brull In Ukraine



This is my father, Izsak Brull. The photo was taken in Kharkov, Ukraine. It's written on the back of the photo, "As a reminiscence to my loving parents from the land of Ukraine." I don't know anything else about it. My father was born in 1894 in Banffyhungyad. He was a thin, small man. In 1913-14 he graduated from the Applied Arts College and after that he went to war. He didn't speak about the years when he was called up as a soldier. He didn't speak about escaping from Russian

captivity or his travels either. He didn't keep in touch with his parents; he just sent a few photographs of himself to them. That's how the photos, which we found after his death, remained in the family. From 1914 until the 1920s we only know about his life and travels, which we made out from these papers, and how he entered the ceramic industry. He went to Budapest when he was young. At first he attended the Industrial and Agricultural College in Budapest. And then he was a turner and then he made ceramics. In Budapest he worked at Zsolnai's and other similar factories, but only to learn the skill. He worked in the mechanic Kalman Vas' workshop, too. He was also in Switzerland and learnt about ceramics there. Afterwards he came back to Kolozsvár and until 1935 was at Iris, the Kolozsvár porcelain plant. He got into the Kolozsvár plant through some sort of mechanic contact, just as it was starting. He was an intelligent, skilled, very flexible and quick-witted man. He saw a future as a mechanic in the porcelain factory. The factory was set up in the 1920s; it was Romanian, that is, with local capital. A lot of German engineers were brought in from Germany to run it. These engineers deliberately tried not to teach the local employees their techniques because they got much higher wages than in Germany. Nobody leaves Germany for Kolozsvár - a completely strange place - for fun, only for better pay. They knew that the less they taught people their skills the longer their high wages would last. My father then, one could say, pilfered his mastery and learned how to make porcelain. Slowly he became a technical expert at the Kolozsvár porcelain factory.