

Ilona Seifert With Her Sister And Mother Iren Riemer And The Fräulein



My mother (seated), my sister (right) and me (the short child) with Fräulein Herta (standing in back). Fräulein Herta was from Graz, Austria, and came to live with us shortly after my birth. She spent eight years with us, and so our first language was German. We spent the whole day with our "Fraulein" talking, singing, and playing with dolls.

The whole extended family went down to Abbazia at the same time each summer on holiday, and stayed for a month. We traveled together, by train. Oh, that was a big journey! It took almost a whole day. We had to change trains at Fiume, not easy with our large amounts of luggage. In Abbazia we all lived in the Breiner Hotel, which was a strictly kosher hotel. I remember that the meat table and the meat section were set with red covers, and the milk table and section with nice blue tablecloths. You could eat either meat or milk-based meals, but the two parts were kept separate. The Breiner was the only kosher hotel in Abbazia, so all our Jewish acquaintances also stayed there. The family all went together, my mother, my sister and I, and, of course, our Fräulein. Since she worked all year, it was natural that we wouldn't leave her out and go on holiday without her! My mother's younger sister with her two sons also went, as did their grandparents, and I think, others as well. There were always a lot of children in Abbazia, as well as acquaintances, relatives, and neighbors. Everyone knew everyone else. There was also always a rabbi who spent his summer holidays there, because the place was kosher enough for him. He conducted a religious service every Sabbath, as there was a synagogue there, too.