

Magdalena Springer



This here is my mother, Magdalena Springer, nee Iszakovics. The photo was taken in 1947 in Brasov, when she was 33 years old. She sent this picture to her sister, Klara Stern, nee Iszakovics, in Targu Mures, who had been deported to Auschwitz, but returned from there.

My mother was born in 1914 in Targu Secuiesc, and she graduated from high school in Odorheiu Secuiesc. She married my father, Carol Springer, in 1936. It was an arranged marriage: my father's family had met my mother's some time before, and they had established that their children would meet and marry, and so it was. The wedding took place in Odorhei, in my maternal parents' garden; I think the rabbi came there. After my mother married my father, she came to live with him

in Bucharest, where he worked as a dentist. I was born in Bucharest in 1937, and my sister, Alice, in 1938.

My mother was a very severe person; my sister and I always had to obey her every word: the words 'no' or 'I don't want to' weren't in our vocabulary. For example, we were allowed to go to the cinema once a week, and we had to be home at 8; that actually meant that at 5 minutes to 8, at the latest, we had to be home. Punctuality was a must. We had to take good care of our clothes, to study, to be honest, not to postpone things. We had to clean our shoes, to sew our own buttons, or hem our dresses, even though the servant could have done that. But my mother wanted us to do it, so that we would know how to do it later. If she said we had to do some cleaning in our room that meant no going out that day. But in society she was a pleasant, coquette and merry woman.

My mother wasn't very religious, she didn't wear a wig or a kerchief; but on Friday evenings she always lit the candles, and we had poultry soup with home-made noodles, the traditional sponge cake [challah], then boiled meat with potatoes, tomato sauce, apple pie and fruit in the end.

After World War II, in 1945, we moved into my paternal grandfather's house in Brasov. My mother was a housewife all her life. She died in 1987 and was buried in the Jewish cemetery here, in Brasov; I asked the community to send for a rabbi from Bucharest to be at the funeral. I sat shivah after she died.