

Coal Pontoon No. 3



This picture was taken in 1944 on coal pontoon No. 3 in the Bratislava harbor. Sitting on the left is my father, Julius F., and beside him is Mr. Zatkan, with whom we were hiding from the deportations at the time.

In the past, my father had often done business with Romanian boatmen. They used to buy fashion goods in the store, and he'd made friends with them. He also got to know a few customs officials, and other people from the harbor. So it was also thanks to them that we knew people at the Bratislava harbor. In those days there used to be pontoon piers in the harbor, on which dwelled units that people lived in. Steamboats used to anchor by these pontoons, and would stock up on coal and water. Father found a place for us and our mother with a friend of his on coal pontoon No. 3, where the Zatkan family lived. The coal pontoons floated on the water on two hollow cylinders. When things got bad, we crawled in one of those hollow cylinders. It didn't take long for someone to inform on them, that they were hiding us. We had to leave there in a hurry. My mother and brother went home, and I went to another of my parents' friends. His name was Vida.