

Ilona Mestitz



This is mom, Ilona Mestitz. The picture was taken in Marosvasarhely in 1920. We loved her because she was very nice. She always had elegant things.

In the early 1920s the furniture factory in Dozsa Gyorgy Street was set on fire three times; I remember we were still children. The workers began to organize themselves: probably not officially, but by their own accord, and I don't exclude the possibility that this was triggered by some sort of provocation. In those times this was the first industrial company in Marosvasarhely, and probably the fact that it was owned by a Jew was also a factor. We were at Grandmother Laszlo's house when we saw the two-horse carriage racing along by the corner and we were very anxious about what could have happened. We had a black and a yellow varnished horse carriage, two horses, a car and a truck. And suddenly we saw dad and mom hurrying away with the car, and then we heard the sirens screaming. That was the first time the factory burned down. The problem

after it was set on fire for the second time, was that there wasn't enough time to insure the factory again. When it was set on fire for the third time, everything burned down and the insurance company paid nothing. We never found out whether it was a worker or somebody else who set it on fire.

Mom completely lost her head, because my brother Andras was still a babe-in-arms. She rushed home, took off her elegant coat and her hat, grabbed her jewel-box, took Andras in her arms and ran out of the house to take him to Auntie Margit, her older sister, or to my grandmother - I don't know exactly where. On the way almost all of her jewelry fell out, but a young lady from the office followed her and picked everything up. Mom went by car to save the children because it wasn't only the factory that had caught fire, but also other buildings from the yard. The attendants protected the house as best as they could, and the fire fighters were also there. The water level in Poklos creek was very low, and there was no water. All the young people came there to help out. Afterwards we sold the big house and everything we had there.