

Mano Sebestyen And Family On Vacation



This is a bath, on a pier, with a lot of strangers. Fourth from the left is Mano Sebestyen, my maternal grandfather, beside him is his wife, Mrs. Mano Sebestyen, born Hermina Schon, visibly pregnant. She's holding a child's hand, that's possibly the oldest, Erno. The others are strangers to me. I know they often went to Balaton, so it's likely this was taken there. I can't really say much about these excursions, they were a very long time ago. Maybe they told me about them, but I don't remember. Their clothes are very interesting.

My maternal grandfather was Mano Neufeld. They magyarized it to Sebestyen, but I don't know when. My maternal grandfather had six true, and six step-siblings. I only remember three of the daughters' names: Hanna, Frida and Terez. Of the true siblings, there was Aunt Hanna, who married Mano Alexander, and they lived in Satoraljaujhely. They had a lot of children. There was Odon, Sandor - whose wife's name I remember as Cora. Dudus [a nickname] I don't recall what his other name was. Elza, Ilona - who lived in Szerencs and, if I remember correctly, her husband was a doctor - and finally Erno. Erno's wife, I believe was called Margit, and their son was Gyurika [diminutive of Gyorgy (George)]. We had a close, loving relationship with their family. You could say they were the most religious branch of the family.

My grandfather was the principal of a school of commerce for many decades, and at the same time, he was a court handwriting expert. I knew him from my early childhood. He was a very kind, good man. He loved me a lot, but I can't say much about him. I have more memories of my grandmother. I really had two mothers, my grandmother Hermina and her daughter Leonora. Grandmother lived with us.

My maternal grandparents had four children, none of them are still living. Though my grandmother had her teacher accreditation, she didn't work. Women traditionally took care of the raising of children then. In the 1920s, it was not an easy thing to raise four children from one income. My uncle, Erno Sebestyen was the oldest. He worked a bit as a lawyer and was able to live through the

war with false documents, working in a factory. There was a pretty big age difference between Erno and their next child, Lilike who was born in 1901. She died young around 1930. The family never got over her death. It was a tragedy for us, she got blood poisoning and they couldn't cure her. Then came my mother, Leonora Sebestyen, born in 1904 and probably died in Ravensbruck. My mother spoke very eloquently and attended the acting school for a while. But nothing came of that, most likely, due to financial reasons, she had to quit. She became a housewife and lived at home.

My grandparents' youngest child, Lajos Sebestyen, was born in 1908. Both the boys, Erno and Lajos were trained as lawyers, and for my grandfather to afford that expense, his two daughters had to find husbands from wealthy families. That was the cost of educating the boys. The girls succeeded. Note well, that the boys couldn't really practice because, by the time they were qualified, the Jewish laws came in. The older brother, my uncle Erno Sebestyen, probably lawyered a little bit, but Lajos never did. Lajos got married in the early 1940s, to Magda Wollak. They had an tropical fruit grocery on Erkel street. Lajos died in a labor camp in the Ukraine. The last we heard from him was in 1943. I still have the letter, in which he wrote that in a few days, they're taking him with the 41st or 42nd battalion, and to try to help him, but we didn't succeed. The Arrow Cross shot Magda into the Danube.