

Janos' Aunt Ilona



This is Ilona, my father's only sibling. She married Zsigmond Brechel, the son of a very well-to-do family from Beszterce [now Bistrica, Romania]. That was a patriarchal Jewish family in Beszterce. They had a brewery called Hohrich and Brecher. They made a quality of beer that was very well known in Transylvania.

There was a brass mesusah that big on every door in the brewery. Uncle Zsigmond worked in banking, and for awhile he was the Director of the Romanian-Hungarian Bank in Kolozsvár [now

Cluj, Romania], and then Arad. Then the bank somehow didn't do too well, and the family asked Uncle Zsigmond, who understood banking, but didn't like to work, to run the brewery. When the Jewish laws were passed, Count Balazs Bethlen took on the brewery as a strohman [false director, or frontman]. Then they deported the family. They would have saved my uncle. Mengele told him to step a bit to the left, but after a little thought he went over to my aunt. He was immediately....the first day. In Auschwitz. They had a daughter, Eva, who was also killed, but there's no way to tell where.