

Matilda Werner With Her Grandson Andrei Popper



This is my maternal grandmother, Matilda Werner, with me in 1917 in Arad.

My maternal grandmother, Matilda Pollak, who became a Werner after she got married, was a housewife. Grandfather Carol and Grandmother Matilda lived in Simand. In 1892, they moved to Arad. Grandmother Matilda was in charge of the household; she went to the synagogue for the two great holidays: the New Year and the Day of Atonement. She didn't keep the kashrut and wasn't too religious; she did light the candles on Sabbath. In Arad, the Werner grandparents lived in the center of the town, in the house that had been bought by my great-grandparents. It was the first house that the Communists demolished. When the nationalization of the houses came, their house was on the list, even though my mother was the rightful owner. This is the house where I was born.

I was born on 29th June 1915. I was my parent's only child. At the time of my birth, my father was already a prisoner. They would take a photo of me every month and send it to him in Siberia. In the evenings, my mother would pray with me so that God could bring my father home. I first saw him when I was five. He came back from the war in 1921. We lived in Arad until 1923, when we moved to Buteni, I was eight. But my grandmother continued to live in Arad.