

Max And Berta Lovith



This photo was taken at my parents' wedding here, in Kolozsvár, in 1921. It was taken by a professional photographer. They look very young. They absolutely married out of love and both of them were attached to each other. My mother Berta had short dresses like this that were made in the salon. She always wore high heels and silk stockings. She had her hair pulled back. Later she got it cut in a French style. My paternal grandfather, whom I never met, was called Lovith. My grandparents lived in Simferopol, which is a seaport somewhere down south in Ukraine. I'm only speculating about my grandfather's financial circumstances because my father and I never talked about it since he was a very busy man. They must have been very well off before World War I, if they could afford to send their son to Switzerland to study to be a watchmaker. It seems that my father, Max Lovith, was a very qualified person. I don't know his exact qualifications but he had some degree beyond secondary school and he was also well read. At the time, the best watches were made in Switzerland and that's where my father studied for years. He learned his profession thoroughly since watches were his passion. He must have known German really well if he was studying in Switzerland. When World War I broke out and Russia entered the war, my father, as a Russian citizen, was called to return home. He put on his uniform and left for the front where he fought throughout the war and finally was brought to Transylvania as a prisoner of war of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was in a big group of Russian prisoners of war that were brought here, around Zilah, to work in Szurduk Forest. The prisoners were doing lumbering on the estate of Baron Jozsika. It must have been my grandfather who managed to arrange that my father could spend Saturdays with us. My father must have become a regular visitor. That's how my parents met. My father wasn't tall but he was muscular and looked fit. Apart from his looks he was also an intelligent, educated and well-read Russian man with Swiss schooling. When the war was over, and the prisoners were freed and could go back to Russia, my father stayed here, but I think he kept in touch with his family [in Simferopol] through letters. My father got married to my mother, Berta Pardesz. It was certainly a religious ceremony because they talked about the khasene, which means marriage ceremony in Yiddish and furthermore, they had to get married under the chuppah. After their marriage they lived with my mother's parents until they moved to Kolozsvár.