

## Mano Sebestyen And His Family



Where this was taken could hardly be called a photo studio. I see the background, part of a forest. That's my grandmother, Hermina Sebestyen standing in the center, she's very pretty and still looks young. Her left hand is on my grandfather Sebestyen's shoulder. They had four children; my mother, Leonora, is on the far left, next to her is Lili, in very cute little lace dresses. In grandpa's lap is Lajos, the smallest, and next to him, on the right you see Erno. I don't know anything more about this picture. I just wrote their names on it. 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, Lili 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.