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Summary

Károly Lówy, born on November 24, 1925 in Temesvár (Timișoara, Romania). His father had inherited and developed his own businesses, at which he failed around 1930. He fell back on his bookkeeping training and became chief accountant at Electrobanat, a big enterprise. His mother, Józsa Bachruch (sp?) had a small textile shop. The family was not religious, but observed the major Jewish holidays. They did not keep kosher. They belonged to the Neolog synagogue, which he described as a very beautiful building with an organ and a cantor who was a first-class singer.

Temesvár was a well-to-do town, with a mixed population of ethnic Germans, Romanians, Hungarians, and Serbs. The Jews spoke Hungarian and considered themselves Hungarians. He does not remember ethnic or religious conflicts from his childhood. There were Roman Catholics, Protestants, Serbian Orthodox, and Jews in town.

The official language in schools was Romanian. He went to a Jewish elementary school, then to the Piarist high school, which he and other Jewish students had to leave in fifth grade [around 1940], due to new official Romanian regulations. He continued his studies in the Jewish high school, which enjoyed excellent teachers and a free-spirited atmosphere. The Jewish high school had no accreditation, however, and he could only take the high school leaving examination after the war, in 1945, in Arad.

When northern Transylvania was reoccupied by Hungary in 1940, he remembered that his father had an emotional reaction. They had, however, no reliable information, only some rumors about Hungarian rule in that part of Transylvania.

Around 1942, when he was 17, his father, uncle, and he had to perform forced labor that was mandatory for Jews. He and his classmates were mostly doing construction work; heavy physical labor from 6:00 in the morning to 2:00 in the afternoon, after which they attended school. Jews also had to turn over money, jewelry, radios, bicycles, etc. His mother's business was taken over by a Romanian citizen, and his mother and father continued to work as employees. Initially, Jews received the lowest food ration, then no ration at all. The family also had to give up their beautiful apartment into which a Romanian official moved, and had to move into that official's smaller apartment in a poorer part of town. His paternal grandmother from the village Kisjenő (Chișinău) had to move in with them, because the houses of Jews in villages were confiscated. German stores had sign: "Jews are not welcome" (Juden unerwünscht)

Discrimination did not, however, exceed these measures. The Jews from Romania were not deported.

They only heard rumors about deportations from the Hungarian occupation region, but did not credit those rumors. They also heard about some Jews who fled through Torda (Turda).

The Iron Guard had a presence in Temesvár, but not an overwhelming one.

He had a very low opinion of Soviet troops: they took away private possessions, raped women, etc. Soviet officers were quartered in the family apartment, one of them, an Armenian, protected the family.

After the war he went to the newly opened medical school in Temesvár. He also met his future wife, who became a language teacher.

They moved to Cluj where he worked as a pediatrician for the rest of his professional career. Initially, he treated the Roma community that lived in the former Jewish ghetto. It was only much later, while living in Kolozsvár (Cluj) that he learned about the Hungarian Holocaust, mainly through the research of his son, Dániel Lőwy. He was involved as an interviewer in the Spielberg project, conducting five interviews with survivors.

He is the author of 11 books, fiction, and non-fiction.