

## A POPULAR VERSIFIER OF TISZAVASVÁRI

The aged pensioner József Magyar (born in 1887), living at Tiszavasvári (Szabolcs County), applies himself to making verses. His poetry may be divided into five periods and in each of these periods he wrote verses of a different genre. He did his military service during the years 1908—1911; it was then that the community of his fellow soldiers set him off on his poetic career and inspired him first to write „correspondence in verses”. During World War I he got into another military community which, however, consisted of married men. These people were not interested in poetic love letters full of longing and desire; their interest was focused upon the events of war. So, at that time, József Magyar developed his „war poetry”. Having been demobilized in 1918, he returned to Tiszavasvári and became the poet of the poor peasantry, this being his third poetic period. He wrote best men’s rhymes for peasant weddings and his verses were collected into a volume for the use of best men. In 1920 he became a road surveyor. By then he has acquired a considerable skill in writing poems and thus became the versifier of a higher stratum of his rural community. At that time he wrote „occasional poems” for funerals, name-days, feasts at pig-killings, school celebrations and other festive occasions. His last period, that of „mature poetry”, was reached in the years following Hungary’s liberation from Fascist oppression. No longer did he make verses to order, but aimed at expressing in his poems the beauties of nature and the results of Socialist construction. József Magyar is one of the great many popular versifiers who are living in villages and farms all over Hungary.

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