

## Vera Joseph And Petr Faktor



These are my cousins from the Faktor family, who then escaped to England. In this photograph, taken in Prague in 1932, Petr was 2 years old and Vera was 7. They're the children of my mother's sister. My mother had one sister. She was originally one of five children, but three of them died during the Spanish Flu epidemic in 1918 or 1919, and only my mother and her five years older sister, Marie, were left. She also survived the war, and this thanks to the fact that she and her husband Frantisek Faktor escaped to England in 1939. Before the war, Marie attended the same family school in Tabor as my mother. But afterwards she didn't work, she was at home with the children. Her husband was a mechanical engineer. They were married in 1924, and up until the

beginning of the war they lived in Prague in the Vinohrady quarter, where they had some sort of factory. The Faktors have two children. The son is named Petr, he was born in 1931, and the daughter is Vera, married name Joseph. She was born in 1925. Both of them live in England today, Vera in Sussex and Petr in London. Now they're both already retired, but before that Petr and Uncle Faktor had a photo equipment company. They even did business with Japan, where they often traveled. The company still exists, because Petr's son took it over. Vera soon had children and stayed at home with them. Her husband, who we call Joe - that came from his surname, Joseph - is an engineer and worked for some company. They've got three children, two boys and a girl. And four grandchildren. My cousin also has three children, but nine grandchildren. I'm no match for him, with my three, of which I'm so proud. So many grandchildren, it's beautiful. I'm horribly envious of him. When the Faktors were leaving for England, their son Petr was five years old, so his home was already there. After the war they didn't even consider returning. As far as it was possible, meaning as far as the Commies permitted it, we would see each other and to this day every little while one of them is in Prague. My cousin Vera to this day speaks Czech beautifully, because she was already ten years old when they emigrated, and so she's got the foundations of Czech from a Czech school, while Petr doesn't. If he had a little bit of 1st grade, that would already be a lot. But at home, as I've mentioned, they spoke only English. My mother's sister and her husband also for a long time kept it a secret from their children that they're actually Jews. I don't know why. I don't know to what degree their friends are conservative, I didn't ever ask them about this. What's more, my mother's sister never lived in any particularly Jewish fashion.