

Herszl Elencwajg



On this photograph you can see my father. It was made few years before his death in 1922. I was two years old when he passed away, but sometimes I think I have some pieces of memories about him. But maybe these are just my imagination... I hardly remember my father at all. I know that, as a bristle-maker, he earned quite well. Besides making the bristles, he also tied the products into greater bundles, preparing them for export. He went from one producer to another and tied for them. Because everyone made the bristles but not everyone tied them. My father died at the age of 38. He developed a lung condition, there was no penicillin; after eight days he gave up and died. This evokes a scene in my mind when my sister carries me out to the hall - because my father died at home - and the mirror in the living room is covered. I don't know whether I can remember this or

whether it's simply the subsequent accounts tricking my memory. I also know that my father's family had its roots in Miedzyrzec. My father had a brother and two sisters. One sister, Reszla, died, and the brother and the other sister, Cipe, both went to America. The brother left even before the war, and reportedly he also made bristles. And the sister left in 1921. Her name was Elencwajg, married name Lewiter. I visited her in New York in 1985; she said she remembered bathing me when I was a baby. My father also had two cousins, and the female one's father, my father's uncle, was called Hersz. I remember he was an elderly gentleman and he died before the war. But there was only one Elencwajg in Miedzyrzec - my father.