

Jakub And Rosa Fischer



My grandparents Jakub Fischer and Rosa Fischer (nee Reiss). Here they are! What a beautiful couple! The photo was taken in the 1910s, but I don't know where. My grandfather was a gentleman's tailor. He was born in 1856 in Beroun. Rural Jews had to speak Czech, of course, because otherwise they would have found it hard to make a living. So their nationality kind of alternated - I call it 'movable'. He came to Prague to learn about tailoring. In Prague he trained as a tailor; he was apparently good, for he soon got his own business, a tailor's salon on Jungmann Square, by which time he was already speaking German. I didn't know him; he had died in the year when I was born. I suppose he learned German only in Prague, because of business reasons. He was trained at tailor Mr. Orlik's, the brother of the famous Czech painter Emil Orlik. There I suppose they spoke German. The most money he earned was from sewing clothes for professors at the German University of Prague; in those days they wore uniforms. So I guess that he must have sewn

the uniform worn by Einstein when he was in Prague. My dad's father had ten employees, so he was pretty wealthy. It was a comfortably situated family. I think granddad was a practicing Jew. He is said to have been a great joker, too. We must have inherited his love of animals, because we've always had various creatures around us. Granddad had a boxer which was well-trained; it used to guide my dad home at night when he'd been drinking. It was customary for mom to find him in the morning lying on the floor, the dog in his bed. They also had a parrot that could speak; my grandfather kept it in the workshop where they did the sewing. Grandfather Jakub died in Prague in 1921. My grandmother was born in 1856 in Stirin. I can remember that she was still a practicing Jew. She spoke German and, of course, Czech. That was normal. With the staff you spoke Czech, at home German. I never knew my grandfather Jakub, as he died in the year I was born, but I got to know my grandmother for a few years. Grandmother Rosa was a small, plump, charming old lady. It was fun with her, for she had a sense of humor. She didn't live with us, though. At first she was on her own, then she lived for a time with her son, my uncle Oskar, as he didn't have any children, whereas at our place was the family. My grandma died when I was about ten; she is buried in the Jewish cemetery in Prague.