

Anna Krauskopfova And Her Son Rudolf Krauskopf



This is a picture of my grandmother Anna Krauskopfová and her son Rudolf. The picture was taken at the beginning of the 1930s in Prague.

My grandmother on my mother's side was named Anna, née Glucksmannova. I think that she was born sometime in the 1870s, in Horni Litvinov. I don't know anything about her family or possible siblings. I don't think that she had any sort of higher education. She was a Czech Jew; at home they made a point of speaking Czech.

Grandma ran the household. Although she used to go shopping at the market, she had a driver in livery for it. I don't know what sort of family she came from, but she was probably used to that. Once a week one of the seamstresses from the factory would come over and organize her wardrobe, do the laundry, ironing and sewing. Everyone in the factory liked my grandmother, as the kindly boss's wife. On her name day, St. Anna, the workers had a day off, a band was hired and there was a dance in the factory courtyard. My grandmother met with her friends, who were all of Jewish origin, in a coffee-house, which I recollect with horror, as my nanny used to take me there sometimes, and I then had to curtsy to each of the ladies and kiss their hand. Then I got something sweet and the nanny took me home again.

My grandmother was unfortunately ill; she had problems with her thyroid gland, which I've inherited from her. She died in Prague in 1932, when I was a little girl. She's buried in the Jewish cemetery.

Uncle Rudolf was born in 1898 in Prague. His wife was Jewish, Aunt Lilly, born Rubinova in 1905. They had two sons, Pavel and Jiri. Jiri was born in 1926 and Pavel nine years later. Jiri and Pavel were like brothers to me, and my aunt meant more to me than my own mother. I loved her very much. They were my main family. Uncle Rudolf used to say: 'Every normal person marries a woman and has as many children with her as he himself wants. Instead of two children I have three, and instead of one woman two.' And then he would explain it: 'When we buy something for my children, Ruth has to get the same. And when my wife is having something sewn for her, the same has to be sewn for Ruth as well.'

Rudolf and his family lived in Prague. At first they lived with us in our house, but then they moved into a beautiful, large apartment, which was also in Vysehrad. They belonged to the wealthier part of society. Later Rudolf took over the factory from my grandfather, and proved to be very good at it. Rudolf would tell how Grandpa first sent him to some associate, who also owned a factory, so he could get himself some work experience. When Rudolf arrived for his first day of work, he was wearing a fancy suit and a hat. He came, introduced himself, and asked what it was that he was supposed to do. And the person told him: 'Well, in the first place, take those clothes off, put on some coveralls, and then you're going to go sweep the courtyard.'