

Ferenc Pap's Grandfather Iles Pap



This is my grandfather, Illes Pap. He wasn't religious at all. He needed no father, no religion, nothing. As a teenager he was sick and tired of the environment at home [in Dunafoldvar, later in Bekescsaba] and he went to Budapest. He finished university there. He attended the Hungarian-German major, but he studied something at the Faculty of Philosophy too. The family believes that he gained two doctorates: one in linguistics and one in philosophy. He got married sometime at the beginning of the century. My grandfather went to Kassa [today: Kosice, Slovakia] as a teacher, where auntie Ibolya and my father was born. Three or four years after that, they went to Szolnok [where his smallest daughter, Klara, was born]. After a short time they came to Budapest. After the collapse of the so-called Soviet revolution [the Hungarian Soviet Republic] they went illegally to Vienna. My grandfather sent from there all kinds of CV's and self-recommendations, and the Jewish high school of Temesvar [today: Timisoara, Romania] accepted his application. He taught Hungarian and German at the Jewish high school in Temesvar. There was a high school called Liceul Militar [military high school] and he taught Hungarian and German there as well. There's a little story related to him. My grandfather was a passionate smoker. Many times there was a cigar hanging out of his mouth even when he entered a class. Besides this, he had moustache too. They drew him like this, with the cigar. Well, he was a huge man and his students nicknamed him 'Th'oldster'. A few of his ex-students are still living in Kolozsvar [today: Cluj-Napoca, Romania]. My grandfather was very strict, like some teachers are. He was especially strict with his own son [Ferenc's father]. He taught him, and even more, he was also his form-master at one time. My father told me many times that he always had to be perfectly prepared, otherwise it meant big trouble. He was a well-built, physically robust man, and my father reminisced many times, fairly shuddering, but also with humour, that he once ate for breakfast an omelette made of twelve eggs.