

Ilona Seifert's Grandfather Bernat Riemer



My parental grandfather, Bernat Riemer. The photo was taken in Budapest sometime in the 1920s. He studied baking as an apprentice and then became a baker's journeyman. He worked diligently, and later bought the bakery where he had worked. Next to the bakery was his shop, where he sold different kinds of breads, baker's wares, and all kinds of other foodstuffs. The bakery also made challah. Besides this, grandfather had a soda water workshop. Grandfather's businesses made him rich. At grandfather's place, a cook prepared the meals, and there was also a maid to care for the large apartment. There was a huge bedroom, a huge dining hall (where forty-two of us sat for

dinner on Seder night), plus a parlor, and two or three bedrooms where the children slept. In the dining room there was a large sideboard and another smaller one, both packed with beautiful porcelain and glassware. There were Jews and non-Jews among the employees of the bakery, but their religion didn't matter to grandfather. He had such a developed social sense, that everyone who worked for him, including all the members of his family, sat down to eat lunch at the same table at noon every day. The family's apartment was almost next door to the shop, and in the dining room stood a long table, where twenty-two to twenty-four people would have their midday meal. Grandfather didn't distinguish between family and employees, but everyone had to be extremely punctual for lunch. Grandfather was awfully fussy about that. Granddad and Grandma always went to Carlsbad for three or four weeks every summer, and they always brought back a lot of porcelain, and, of course, souvenirs for the children and grandchildren. Grandfather died in 1927. Following his death, the bakery and the shop closed down. His children did not have the time to manage them, because they all had their own bakery businesses to run.