

Juda Nussbaum



This is the only picture I have of my father, Juda Nussbaum. It was taken at home, in Cracow, just before the war. We lived in Kazimierz at 21 Miodowa Street at that time. Father bought a new camera and probably my brother was trying it out. A Roller Flex, a very modern one. I remember Germans taking our camera.

A few photographs survived because Father had given them to a Polish lady called Wladzia. Father had told me where he was leaving what - I even had it written down on a piece of paper, but no one would give me anything back. Wladzia alone, the poorest of all of them, she really was very poor, she alone gave me everything back. I mean the photographs, Mom's silver powder box, which I have to this day, and a ring. Nothing particularly valuable, but nostalgic.

Father didn't have a degree. He only had his secondary school certificate, but he knew an awful lot of languages. He had simply taught himself. He was one of the first Esperanto speakers in Cracow. Together with his friend, the well-known Polonist Dreher, he wrote pamphlets for learning Esperanto. He also worked on dictionaries, Polish-Hebrew and Polish-French, with that same friend. He was a journalist, a critic with Nowy Dziennik [New Daily, a Zionist daily published in Cracow], which had editorial offices on Orzeszkowa Street. Father had some personal charisma and an awful lot of friends. There were always heaps of guests at our house, those friends of father's, who weren't married and didn't have children.

Father was such that whatever had just come out, he liked to buy. The first radio with a magic eye, a wind-up gramophone, with a tube, and beautiful records. There was a bathroom, a telephone, a refrigerator, there was everything there could have been. I didn't know that he borrowed money.