

## Bernard Bloch



This is a photo of a picture of my grandfather on my father's side, Bernard Bloch. It was done in Teplice sometime around the year 1900. My grandfather was born in Meclov in the year 1836. He came from a family of German Jews. His father made a living as a horse trader, he went from village to village in the Sumava region; he always slept over someplace, and returned home once a week, for Saturday. On Sunday he'd again leave to go out on the road. My great-grandfather wanted his children to already have some sort of education, so he used to send Grandpa to cheder. Cheder was a school for Jewish children, organized by the Jewish community. After the reforms under Joseph II Jews were officially allowed to attend public schools, nevertheless the practice in the countryside was that children went to cheder, where they learned to read and write, studied Hebrew and basic prayers. Cheder was basically a substitute for elementary school. My grandpa had a brother, Adolf, who settled in America. His daughter Stella later married my father's oldest brother, Oskar. My grandfather found a job with a shipping company in Karlovy Vary. To this day, kaolin [china clay], which is the basis for the manufacture of porcelain, is mined in the Karlovy Vary region, so naturally there was a porcelain and other ceramics industry there. My grandfather delivered raw materials for that shipper to the local factories, and it was there that he apparently

got to know that type of enterprise. Then Grandpa courted a girl from Volduchy near Rokycany, my grandmother Jenny Koretz. I unfortunately don't know much about her family. At that time in Uncin, which was located between Teplice and Usti nad Labem, there was a ceramics factory for sale, which my grandfather was very interested in. He bought the factory with my grandmother's dowry, his savings, and money that his employer lent him. The factory, which had been well run even before him, prospered under his ownership as well. I never got to personally know my grandmother or grandfather on my father's side. Their mother tongue was German. Both were from purely Jewish families, nevertheless I don't know what their personal relationship to Judaism was like. Judging by the attitudes of their children, I suspect that they were conscious of their Jewish identity but weren't religious. I think that more likely they financially supported Jews that found themselves in need.