

Ludwik Hoffman's Family House In Drohobycz



On this photo, you can see the house I grew up in. A friend of mine two years ago was traveling through Ukraine and was also in Drohobycz. He knew my pre-war address in Drohobycz and he took this photo.

The house in which we lived was a two-story house with a large garden at Shevchenky street [today's name of the street; before the war: Mickiewiczza], built, according to the documentation, in 1904. It was a modern-style, brick townhouse that stands in Drohobycz to this day. Those houses were built by people who had hit it big on oil, which means we didn't build it, only bought it. They were built according to European standards, in the fashion of the Vienna buildings, that's how it looked. On the first floor there lived one Szmer Zanthaus, my father's business partner, with his family, he already had three or four children. We lived on the first floor, and the apartment was divided in such a way that we occupied one part of it, and in the other there lived some lawyer. Probably the previous owner had intended it for rent, and that's why the four- or five-room apartment had been divided into two.

We occupied two rooms and a kitchen, and the other tenant had two rooms, a kitchen, and a bathroom. The man had already been there when my father was buying the house. His name was Wilner, I think, and he was a lawyer. Probably my father's partner had let him the apartment, and because of tenant-protection laws, he couldn't be evicted. He lived there until 1935 when he finally moved to Lwow. We took over the whole apartment then. The toilets were in the hall. The apartment was furnished in a modern way, we had a gas stove, the coal-fuelled kind of one [sic]. I don't remember whether we had a telephone. We're not listed in the 1938 phonebook, so I guess we didn't. In the store, though, they had one absolutely. A rare novelty of the time was the radio. My aunt had one as early as 1932, whereas we bought our first radio in something like 1935 or 1936.

