

Benedikt Duschnitz



This photo was taken in Ruzomberok in the 1920s, and shows my grandfather Benedikt Duschnitz, who was president of the town's Jewish community at that time.

Grandpa was a very lively and educated man for the times. In our eyes, he knew everything. He was interested in new inventions, and would then tell us about them. Once he told us that a certain Russian scientist, Dr. Voronov, had performed a transplant of monkey glands. That this transplant, which rejuvenates people, is really very expensive and so on. Back then my sister and I were getting an allowance, and we managed to save up ten crowns. We then gave them to our mother, to give it as a contribution for the transplant that our grandfather had told us about.

My grandfather was a heavy smoker, and so used to cough. He used to eat black licorice candy that he had stored in a silver box. The candies had numbers on them. We asked him: 'What are those numbers for?' He told us that they were Negro [African-American] coins. My sister was a little older and knew that coins were minted. He told us that in Africa they grew on trees. He didn't lose any time, and got up early in the morning and in one garden that belonged to friends of ours he hung those candies on a tree. Can you imagine how we used to worship him when he knew how to play with us like that?!

Grandpa Benedikt Duschnitz lived to a relatively advanced age. He died on 16th August 1933 at the age of 77. He had a heart attack.