

Jakub Fischer's Certificate Of Apprenticeship



This is a certificate of the apprenticeship of my grandfather Jakub Fischer, who was trained as a tailor. It says here that it was issued in 1872 in Prague. My grandfather was a gentleman's tailor. He was born in 1856 in Beroun. Rural Jews had to speak Czech, of course, because otherwise they would have found it hard to make a living. So their nationality kind of alternated - I call it 'movable'. He came to Prague to learn about tailoring. In Prague he trained as a tailor; he was apparently good, for he soon got his own business, a tailor's salon on Jungmann Square, by which time he was

already speaking German. I didn't know him; he had died in the year when I was born. I suppose he learned German only in Prague, because of business reasons. He was trained at tailor Mr. Orlik's, the brother of the famous Czech painter Emil Orlik. There I suppose they spoke German. The most money he earned was from sewing clothes for professors at the German University of Prague; in those days they wore uniforms. So I guess that he must have sewn the uniform worn by Einstein when he was in Prague. My dad's father had ten employees, so he was pretty wealthy. It was a comfortably situated family. I think granddad was a practicing Jew. He is said to have been a great joker, too. We must have inherited his love of animals, because we've always had various creatures around us. Granddad had a boxer which was well-trained; it used to guide my dad home at night when he'd been drinking. It was customary for mom to find him in the morning lying on the floor, the dog in his bed. They also had a parrot that could speak; my grandfather kept it in the workshop where they did the sewing. Grandfather Jakub died in Prague in 1921.