

The Ginz Family



This picture was taken in 1939 in Prague, close to the Prasna Gate. It was probably taken during our Sunday walk. From the left there is my brother Petr, me, my father Otto Ginz and my mother Marie Ginzova. I remember from my childhood that Esperanto played a very important role in the life of my parents. Quite often we would have visitors from all over the world, and I remember, for example, how once at Christmas a black man from Nigeria, an Esperantist of course, came to visit us. And when we were walking along the street with him, one primitive lady, when she sighted him, began to run away and yell 'A devil! A devil!'. Our household was always a hive of activity and fun, and we always had visitors over, and also our Ginz relatives, grandma and my father's brothers and sisters. My father's four siblings and mother lived in Prague and we would visit them regularly every week. On Sunday we would go for a walk in the park, together with the children of the other uncles and aunts we would run on ahead and play, and the parents would walk behind us and talk. Back then we had to be nicely dressed though - white stockings and shiny shoes - so we wouldn't cast a bad light on the family. We went to visit my mother's siblings' families in Hradec Kralove about twice a year, and they visited us as well. We attended the synagogue on only the major holidays. Our mother led a kosher household at home, but in a somewhat liberal fashion. At Passover, for example, I remember that we had matzot, but at the same time we ate bread and rolls. Dishcloths and utensils for meat and milk were separate, we didn't eat pork, we bought meat at a kosher butcher and as children we were brought up in a Jewish spirit. We observed all Jewish holidays. Chanukkah usually came out to be around Christmas time, we would light the menorah, and for Christmas we would go to Hradec Kralove to my mother's Christian family, and would celebrate Christmas there with them and would get gifts. It was a rich and happy childhood, which unfortunately lasted a very short time. .