

Paulina Keiner And Her Sister, Zofia Minder



This is my mother, Paulina Keiner (nee Kleinberg), with her eldest sister Zofia Minder (nee Kleinberg) in the streets of Cracow. This must be already the end of the 1920s. On the photo from left: unknown person, Aunt Zofia, unknown person, Mother.

Wilhelm and Antonina Kleinberg had six children: first they had three daughters, and then three sons. I was very friendly with my aunts and uncles. The eldest daughter was Zofia, born in 1894. Aunt Zofia was the most wonderful person in the family, and basically she looked after the whole family. That was typical for larger Jewish families in Galicia: caring for relatives and for people from the surrounding community in general.

Zofia was terribly overworked and highly regarded as a tailor, because she'd been to these cloth-cutting academies in Prague. Even the wife of Beck, the minister, would stop off in Cracow to be measured up by Aunt Zofia on her way to Krynica. My aunt lived and had her studio at 3 Golebia Street. Later on she got married to Izydor Minder, a lawyer, Cracow Bund activist and eminent bibliophile. Zofia and Izydor had one son, Jerzy, three years older than me.

The second daughter of Wilhelm and Antonina Kleinberg was my mother, Paulina, born in 1896. Mama studied chemistry for two years at the Jagiellonian University, but unfortunately she couldn't continue her studies for lack of money, and she became a typist and secretary. In 1922 she married my father.

When Granddad Wilhelm turned 52, and he was ill, Zofia called a family gathering and it was agreed that they would all make a monthly contribution, if you like, for my grandparents, pay them something like a pension. And that way my grandparents survived - vegetated - through to the war in the small apartment on Sarego Street, because basically the pension that they'd drummed up was very meager. Only Roman - the dentist - and Edward - the oil engineer - were doing a bit better for themselves; the rest of the children had to work hard. And my grandparents were poor, but

proud. I remember that once we were living in Rabka we would send my grandparents postage stamps so that they could afford a card to write to us.