

Balbina Baum



This is a portrait of my wife's mother, Balbina Baum. I don't know when or where it was taken, maybe in Kielce in the 1930s.

I met Fela [Mr. Gringras's partner, whom he refers to as his wife, although they never formally married] when she was 17, and I was 23, when I was at the Polytechnic.

I used to go visiting that friend of mine, Baum, Fela's brother. Well, and I got friendly with the family, somehow. Fela was still at gymnasium.

She was born in 1917, 20th September 1917. She went to Zimnowodzina's, the girls' school in Kielce. She left school, but she didn't matriculate. That's what I seem to remember.

Fela's father was a tailor and also the co-proprietor of a shop with dress materials. The shop was on the street front and the workshop at the back. It was a large family.

Several of the brothers had a shop together on Kolejowa Street, later Sienkiewicza. They took in work, took measurements and sewed on the spot, in the shop. Her family lived on Czysta Street, later Fosza, in a house that may still be there.

Fela's mom - I don't know what she was called [Balbina], and her father - Szymon.

They were probably a few years younger than my parents, but I don't know when my parents were born. I don't know where Fela's parents came from. My wife's family were religious, but moderately

so.

Her father certainly wore a kippah, and probably went to synagogue every Saturday; they lit the candles every Saturday, but there wasn't any particular emphasis on their Jewishness, no.