

Ferenc Friedmann



This is my dad, Ferenc Friedmann, in the courtyard of his sister Aunt Julia's in Eger in 1939. He had a mustache and he paid special attention to twirling it. He was a very meticulous man. His shoes were always shining. So, he laid great stress on his appearance. Dad was a master tailor, and a gentlemen's tailor at that. There was another tailor opposite us, he was a peasant tailor, as it was called back then. A gentlemen's tailor made proper suits. My dad was a very accurate, meticulous master tailor, he turned out beautiful work. Dad had his workshop in the same house we lived in. We could only go down to the workshop when Dad didn't see us because he didn't like it when children were hanging around there. Dad was a very strict person, but he was a good man; he loved his family and he was very fond of children. He had three employees, two apprentices and an assistant. The assistant had already finished his apprenticeship. The assistants weren't Jewish, and the apprentices weren't either. The apprentices were peasant boys from the countryside; they

stayed in his workshop for two or three years - it was regulated how long they stayed. Dad taught them to sew and then he tested them. The apprentices slept in the kitchen. They brought in their beds in the evening, put them on the floor and that was it. The apprentice got the fire going in the workshop early in the morning, made a fire in the stove for these heavy irons and put them into the fire to heat them up. Dad went down to the workshop at 7am. The workshop was the size of about half of this room [about 6 square meters], and his only wish was that someone would inherit it from him. Dad earned a good living. It wasn't only Jewish clients who came to his workshop, but all those who could afford it. He was an expensive tailor. There was a jeweler, who didn't have money - he had quite a lot of children and he was also Jewish - and he said: 'I can't pay you, but I will give a piece of jewelry to each one of your daughters'. So each of us got a ring, and I almost didn't get one because I was the fourth child. Considering that Dad was poor, he always paid especial attention not to cheat anybody. In those days merchants from Pest used to consign fabrics to tailors from the countryside. Dad sold the fabrics but he never cheated the merchant or his clients, regardless of whether he made a profit or not. If he was given anything in consignment, he accounted for every cent. So he was very honest, he never wanted to make a fortune on someone else's account. Dad didn't have many Jewish friends because he made friends mostly with tailors. Some of them had some land or a small vineyard, and they used to get together and have a little booze-up. Dad used to join them.