

Irma Weissova In The Front Of Her House



This is my maternal grandmother, Irma Weissová. She was born on March 5, 1882, in Prievidza. She was widowed young, when she had seven children. She lived with our family until she died on June 11, 1969, in Kosice. Most of my grandmother's children survived World War II. Her oldest son, Vojtech, was a lawyer. Before the war, he went with his brothers to Tanger, Morocco. They were businessmen in some international trading zone. The second son, Alexander, spent the war years in Indochina and Saigon, Vietnam. Edmund and Ladislav were in Morocco when the war broke out in Europe. You could say that their business saved their lives. By working abroad, they avoided deportations and the Holocaust. After liberation, Ladislav came back as an enthusiastic builder of Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, he was persecuted, fired from his work, and forced to find a job as an unskilled worker. After some time, he was rehabilitated. Today he lives in Prague and is married

to a woman who is not Jewish. Another son, Tibor, worked as a sales representative for a company in Slovakia. He was deported from Zilina and died in Auschwitz. My parents, grandmother and my Aunt Josefína all survived in hiding. My father, Tibor Silberstein, was born in Kremnica in 1914. He was a businessman. In World War II, he also was in the anti-fascist resistance. I was born in 1949 in Kosice. I learned I was Jewish when I was 6 and at school for the first time. A girl mocked me for being a Jew. I had no idea what it meant and why she was making fun of me. I only understood that it was some mockery. I reacted very simply and physically attacked her, not driven by the meaning of an insult at all. I probably beat her and she complained at home. When the case was examined, since her parents came to school complaining that I had hurt their daughter, the teacher had to examine the origin of the conflict. I told her exactly how it all had started. I learned for the first time that there is something called Jewry and Jew.