

Grunvald Felix, Vera Tomanic's Uncle From America



The picture was taken in 1935 in Osijek. First from the left is my uncle Felix Grunwald, next to him is my aunt Berta, third from the left is my mother Elza and next to her my father Pavao. I am in the front row first from the left, next to me is my grandmother Eleonora, and next to her my younger sister Lilie. My mother's parents, Marko Grunwald and Eleonora Grunwald (nee Spiezer) regularly went to synagogue and observed all the holidays, but Grandmother Eleonora did not keep a kosher kitchen. Grandmother and Grandfather had three children, Elza, Berta and Felix. Grandfather Marko was born in 1861 in Marijanaci, near Osijek. In Bistrinci he had a mixed-good store. He died in 1917. Grandmother Eleonora was born in 1871 in Barcs, Hungary. When she married my grandfather, she helped him run the store. After his death, she moved, with her daughter Berta, to our apartment. Her youngest child, my uncle Felix, enlisted in the army in Bistrinci in 1915 while still a minor. When he understood that this had been a mistake, he deserted, and went by boat to America. There he trained to be a butcher and opened a butcher shop. In 1935, for the first time after deserting, he came to visit his family again. I remember that he harshly criticized how our butcher shops processed poultry. After America, the work here looked crude. He died in Cleveland in 1954.