

Icchok Grynberg's Uncle, Charles Grynberg, And His Family



This is a picture of my, Icchok Grynberg's, uncle Charles with his wife after he left for the US. Uncle Charles was the brother of my father. I don't know who took this picture. Uncle Charles visited my father in Goworowo in 1938 and gave him this picture. So, I suppose, the picture must have been taken in 1937.

I don't know my great-grandparents. Unfortunately, I also didn't know my grandparents very well. The only person of their generation who was still alive during my times was my grandmother - my father's mother. She had two names - Shejna Gitl. She was always coughing. This I remember. My paternal grandfather was born and lived in Goworowo, that's between Rozan and Ostroleka. He was a baker. He was very religious and considered a wise man. His name was Gerer Chusyd [he was a follower of the tzaddik dynasty from Gora Kalwaria, the Alters, called 'Gerer rebe' in Yiddish]. I was born after he died, and because there is a tradition among Jews to name a child after a grandfather or father when he dies, I was given my grandfather's name: Icchok Ajzik. His last name was Grynberg. My father, Gedala Grynberg, was born in 1889. He had two brothers and a sister. Their names were: Chajim, Calel and Rywka, whom we used to call Riwke.

Among young Jews it was rare for someone to get an education. There was only one thought that occupied Jews: to emigrate. To leave and be able to make money. Whoever had arms and legs and could emigrate - left. First a man went, leaving wife and children. Later, when he was able to, he invited his entire family to come over. And from our town, Goworowo, many people emigrated. They usually went to America, Brazil, Uruguay, Mexico or Cuba. I really wanted to get an education. I wanted to study to become a doctor. When I couldn't go to high school but saw other children go there with books, I would hide under a tree and cry. It was a small town. To get an education you had to go to Warsaw or some other big city. But there you had to have a place to sleep, make a living, have money. For me it was impossible.