

Rabbi Schap

Today, when we are unaware what awaits us and our dear ones, I can't help remembering and thinking of the fate of Rabbi Schap's family. I remember the colorful personality of the rabbi, the shoet and mohel, very well. Among the modern Jews of Prostejov, shaven and bareheaded, Rabbi Schap always wore a long black coat, a high black brimmed hat; he had a long grey beard and maybe his side-locks were also hidden behind his ears. A well-known story was told about Rabbi Schap. When Rabbi Schap presented himself to the leaders of our community, he was asked: "Do you have any children?" The Rabbi replied: "Nein". Nein, in German means - no. Afterwards it became clear that the rabbi had nine children. Nein, in Yiddish is – nine. I was a child then and I got to know seven of the children in the Schap family. The Rabbi and his wife probably worked hard and lived in very modest conditions, in order to grant high education for most of their children. Ilona became a medical doctor; Motke, the only one who did not study, emigrated to Palestine, Julia was a professional nurse. In Ghetto Theresienstadt, I met the handsome tall dentist Mudr.Felix and his beautiful young wife when they came to the Ghetto from Uhersky Brod. I was close to the three younger boys, although they were much older than me. The three of them were still students then: David, Leo and Karel. Only the rabbi's elderly wife, Julia, Motke and Felix survived the holocaust. I also found out that Felix opened a dentist's clinic for children in Prague after the war and that he later left Prague in 1968 probably for Switzerland. Many years have passed. I am now older than the Rabbi was then. The pain and the sorrow have not lessened....