

Ferenc Sandor's Grandfather Ferenc Rosenthal's Train Pass



My grandfather Ferenc Rosenthal's train pass. He was a brother of Cecilia, my great grandmother, and this rather unfortunate thing happened: he married his own niece, my great grandmother's daughter, a very beautiful young girl. But then my granddad was a full-fledged schoolteacher, and when he took fancy to Janka, the 17-year-old niece of his, the poor creature was duly married to the schoolteacher. He was twenty-four when he got his degree. The general nickname for teachers in those days was "light" or "lamp." People called my grandfather was that. He told my grandmother that he once met an upper class Jew who remarked: "I wear velvet and you wear rags, yet you are the one called 'the lamp!'" Grandfather lived completely in the spirit of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. When Grandfather was about three or four years old, the Emperor Franz Joseph stopped in Sopron on his way somewhere. They lifted him above the crowd, and he yelled, "Uncle Emperor, Uncle Emperor!" The story goes that Franz Josef even waved back to him, but, of course, one cannot be sure of that. My grandfather wrote reviews of performances staged at the theatre in Sopron. I had the chance to read a few of them. And if the primadonna happened to show her ankles in some performance, he went to see that play thirty times in a row. He must have been a man of brains for sure.