

Zuzana Hertzкова After World War II



This photograph was taken in Brno in 1945. It's my first photo from after the war. I needed it for some ID document. You can see in this photo that my hair, which they had cut in the concentration camp, hadn't grown back yet.

After the war we came back to Brno. We didn't even have a place to return to. Our parents and my sister's husband died in Auschwitz. I don't know what happened with our parents' apartment. We were accommodated in a hotel for repatriates. Since my sister and I wanted to live alone, we were looking for an apartment. Nobody opened the door to us, though, and our feet started to hurt and were completely swollen from all that walking.

My sister came up with the idea that we should get a police escort since that would elicit greater respect in people's minds. We went to the police station and said we had returned from the concentration camp and in fact, it was visible on us at first sight because we had very short hair. My sister explained that it was impossible for us to find accommodation because nobody opened the door to us. A policeman was finally assigned to us and owing to this, we managed to find a small two-room apartment that had originally belonged to a deported woman.

We earned our living as tailors - we worked for one Jewish woman who sewed clothes unofficially. Our parent's property was irrecoverably lost - we had to provide for ourselves. During the Holocaust, we lost our parents and experienced awful things but I think all that suffering strengthened our faith even more.