

Anna Mrazkova With Her Cousin Erika Alterova



This picture was taken by a street photographer after the war. He snapped my cousin Erika Alterova and I on a walk around Prague. My mother decided that we'd move to Prague, as our house in Luze was dilapidated, and there was nothing to keep us there. We still didn't know what had happened to Dad, and were hoping he'd survived. But we said to ourselves that Luze is a small

town, so if he returned, the neighbors would tell him where to look for us. My sister had to finish public school, and I had only four years of high school, and my mother thought it would be best for us to finish school in Prague. So we moved to Prague, to my cousin Vera's, who'd gotten an apartment after her first husband died during a death march. The first year after the war, I worked in Prague in a Jewish old-age home as a night nurse. I attended typing and shorthand courses, but I didn't like it too much, I told myself that that wasn't anything for me. I decided to become a nurse, and took a two-year course at a nursing school in Jecna Street. Later, while working, I took an extension in that two-year specialization, and after taking night courses got my diploma. I worked at the Research Institute in the clinical department in nutritional research, later I transferred to the experimental department, where we did experiments on animals. Right after the war I joined the Communist Party, my reason was that the Communists had fought against Hitler. However, when the trials started, I saw the light. It was quite a major shock for me. I went to see the party chairman, who was by coincidence a doctor, also a Jew, and told him that I could no longer be in the Party, if he didn't see it that way too. Then at one meeting someone proclaimed that Jews are evil, and that they didn't deserve anything else anyways, and it was then that I decided that that was the last drop. I wrote a letter that I was leaving the Party, and also took the luxury of saying why. It bothered me how they were behaving towards Jews, and what they were saying about them.