

Lilli Tauber's Uncle Richard Schischa



This is a picture of my uncle, Richard Schischa, my father's brother. The photo was taken in Vienna in the 1970s.

My uncles, Ludwig and Richard Schischa, took over my grandfather's house and shop in Neunkirchen after his death in 1927. My mother got a silver spoon from him on the occasion of my birth shortly before his death.

Uncle Ludwig never got married. He lived with his parents in Neunkirchen and died very young before the war, I think of tuberculosis.

Uncle Richard continued to run the business. He lived with his wife, Helene, and my grandmother Anna. His wife was from Nitra, Slovakia. Her father was a vet. In 1938 their house was Aryanized, and Uncle Richard, his wife and their 5-year-old son, Heinz, tried to flee to Palestine. The first illegal transports left from Bratislava going downstream the Danube river all the way to Bulgaria. They were already on board a ship with the child, but shortly before the ship was about to cast off, the order was given that all children had to leave the ship and board another one. My uncle and aunt never saw their son again. Of course they never got over their grief.

Uncle Richard and Aunt Helene returned to Austria at the end of the 1940s. They first lived in Vienna, where my uncle worked as a laborer in a carpentry. When their house in Neunkirchen was returned to them, they moved back there and reopened the shop.

Aunt Helene suffered from fits of depression and was treated with electric shocks. I don't know if the electric shocks were the reason, but after one of those treatments she got a horrible stomachache. An ambulance brought her to hospital in Vienna. They operated on her and found out that her stomach was caught in her diaphragm. She never came round from the anaesthetic. That happened in 1962. After her death they found the clothes of her murdered son in her wardrobe.

Uncle Richard stopped to go to the synagogue after the war, but he recited the Kaddish at my father-in-law's funeral. Uncle Richard died of a heart attack in 1972.