

Otylia Ryngiel



This is a photo of my aunt Otylia Ryngiel, nee Bertram, my dad's sister. The picture was taken in Cracow in the 1930s.

My father had three brothers and a sister called Otylia, my aunt Tyla. She married a Ryngiel. Otylia Ryngiel, she was called. And they lived in Mannheim [Germany].

In 1938 her husband had to leave Germany because of Hitlerism. He used to come to Poland via the border crossing in Zbaszyn, and then he would come to Cracow and go to some place in Podgorze district. Dad told me that he was worried that he would commit suicide, that he would

jump into the Vistula. But he didn't jump. In 1939 my aunt sent him a telegram: 'Our panes smashed'. They had a beautiful shop, you see, a fashion house selling clothes. And Uncle Jakub didn't know what that meant. He thought that 'our panes' [in Polish 'szyby'] was some minister in Africa... And she moved out of their four-roomed apartment and sent all the furnishings from the four rooms here, to an apartment where some Poles lived. That's what my uncle said. And they both died, probably in Belzec. When I went out that day, back then on 5th September, to my friend's place to ask him if he wanted to escape with me, I met her. And she said goodbye to me and kissed me. I didn't know it was for the last time.