

The Frischmann Family



This photograph is from the time of World War II. It shows my father, Alfred Frischman, standing on the right.

My father is wearing civilian clothing. I don't know why exactly he didn't fight in the war.

The man in the uniform with decorations on his lapel, standing beside my father, is his brother, Alois Frischmann. Alois Frischmann was a doctor, and lived in Chocen, right beside Vysoke Myto, where our family lived.

My uncle was a completely 'Czechified' jew. He was a very good tennis player and was the local tennis functionary.

In fact, after the war they named after him a street that ran beside the tennis courts in Chocen, Alois Frischmann Street.

Not long after that, when exactly I'm not sure, as of course no-one announced it to me, they renamed it.

Once when the communists were already in power I arrived there on a visit, and what do I see but that it's been renamed to U Tenisu [Tennis St.], which is what it's called to this day.

My uncle was never involved with any resistance activities, as opposed to his brother [Arnost Frischmann], but also came to an unfortunate end, because he was denounced by a colleague of his, for continuing to practice at a time when jews were no longer allowed to practice medicine.

I still remember that, he simply kept on practicing despite the ban, because people were used to him, and he must have been a good doctor.

That's quite obvious, because all warnings of 'it's dangerous for you, and for me' were for nought. People said 'Mr. Doctor, you have to see me. You have to come. And you say you have a jewish

star? So come at night.' In the end the whole town knew about it.

Chocen had a population of six or eight thousand, and no one said a thing, until one fellow doctor denounced him.

I know his name, but I don't want to name him, because his descendants would want proof, and that of course doesn't exist. Because of this my uncle was shot before the start of the Holocaust.

In the middle of the first row stands Anichka Frischmannova - the daughter of Arnost Frischmann - a little girl with a big bow in her hair.

Beside Anicka sits her mother, Otylie Frischmannova [née Krausova], the wife of my father's brother Arnost Frischmann. Otylie is wearing a fashionable dress typical for those days.

I'm not sure why her husband, Arnost Frischmann, is missing from the photograph, perhaps he was taking the picture.

The man in uniform with medals on it, sitting on the right, is my father's brother, Rudolf Frischmann. During the World War I, Rudolf met Jan Masaryk, the brother of the first Czechoslovak president.

In fact, it was said that he saved Masaryk's life. How, that remained a secret. Of course it could be true, or not, but one thing is certain, and that is that when my uncle Rudolf died, my aunt got a newsstand.

I have one or two letters from Jan Masaryk, which I later gave my aunt's sister. Rudolf Frischmann's family continued to have ties with Jan Masaryk long after World War I. Uncle Rudolf's wife was my mother's cousin - so we were de facto doubly related.

Aunt Marie was born Stukartova, which is a quite famous German name, but she was Jewish. My uncle Rudolf and aunt Marie met each other at my parents' wedding.

Unfortunately I was a witness to my uncle Rudolf's death. In those days they lived in Usti nad Labem, and during the night he had a stroke.

My aunt told me to run and go get a doctor, and I had no idea where I should run - they lived in this villa, so my aunt ran out in a nightshirt to show me the way and told me run quickly and tell the doctor to hurry, that for sure it was a heart attack.

She also said that the doctor was a German, but that hopefully he'd come anyways.

So I ran to the doctor's house, in those days there were no after-hours services and one had to go to the doctor's home, I woke him up and told him that it was urgent, a heart attack.

He took his time and kept saying 'come on, what's the hurry', he delayed purposely, so that when he finally arrived, all that was left for him to do was pronounce him dead.