

Helena Kovanicova With Cousin Helena And Friend Oskar



This photo was taken on the banks of the river Labe in 1939. Sitting on the left is my cousin Helena Vohryzkova, in the middle Oskar Laufer and I'm on the right. The place where we had our picture taken was called "na Šajbě."

This photograph was taken during the time when our relatives, the Vohryzeks, lived with us in Brandys nad Labem. Up to then the Vohryzeks had lived on the estate in Doubravice, which was in the Sudetenland, and when the Sudetenland was annexed by the Germans in 1938, they had to move away from there, and they then lived for some time with us in Brandys nad Labem.

I was better friends with my cousin Helena than with her older sister Hana, because she was closer to me in age. Before the annexation of the Sudetenland, Helena studied at business academy in Teplice. I don't know if she managed to finish it, but in Brandys she didn't attend any school any more.

Oskar Laufer was the son of the Jewish Laufer family from Brandys. His father, a doctor, was a good friend of my father's and actually of our whole family. Together with Dr. Laufer my parents owned two parcels of land not far from Brandys nad Labem, where we sometimes spent Saturdays and Sundays. We called his son Osi.

In the picture I've got long hair, although for a long time I wore only a short pageboy haircut, with the nape of my neck shaved to a point. Before the war I grew out my hair because of dance classes, unfortunately I never managed to attend any dance classes. Because I had straight hair and I liked wavy hair, I slept with rollers each night.