

Viera Slesingerova With Her Husband Jaroslav Slesinger



This picture of me and my husband, Jaroslav Slesinger, was taken after World War II in Svaty Petr in the Giant Mountains. We put the camera on the rock in front of us and took the photo that way. My husband was born in 1903 in Chocen, and came from a Czech family. He qualified as an engineer and worked as a state official in Slovakia before the war and as an engineer for Pragovka car factory after the war. I met him through friends. We got married in 1950 and had a very nice marriage. He didn't come from a Jewish family, but he was one of the few genuine 'philosemites'. He never considered converting, but there wasn't a shred of anti-Semitism in him. I didn't long to

be married to a Jew, in fact, I felt that I didn't want my children to have to go through what I had. When my children were young, we used to go to Chocen, which is where my husband came from. His dad and sister were still alive then. Later on, we used to go on vacations, usually to the Svaty Petr area in the Giant Mountains, where we stayed in a rented room. At the beginning of the 1960s, my husband had a heart attack, so we had to cancel our holidays in the mountains. We then bought a cottage by the Sazava River in Samopse, which is between Sazava and Ledeczek. My husband was very fond of that place, for it was so beautiful. Nobody else lived around us and there was a weir below the cottage. However, I didn't like the fact that we were alone there and that there was no settlement nearby. Whenever I grumbled about it, though, my husband would ask me if I really wanted to have people looking in at us. After his death, however, I stopped going to the cottage. My son Honza got divorced around that time and he, too, didn't go there, so I decided to sell the cottage, but he asked me to keep hold of it, as he was very fond of the place. He started going there again and has since spruced it up with his girlfriend. There is electricity and much greater comfort now. I don't go to the cottage very often, because it's not the same without my husband. But I enjoy the peace and quiet of the nature there and I always think how pleased my husband would be at the way Honza has improved it.