

Anna Kopska And Other Employees Of Alois Brod



This picture was taken in Vrdy-Bucice in the 1910s. In this photograph are all of the people that worked for Grandpa Alois Brod.

So both people that worked in his store as well as those that took care of the rest of his household. I recognize only Anna Kopska, our later cook, she's the young woman on the far left.

Unfortunately, I can't identify the others in the photograph: when I had the opportunity to ask someone about them, it didn't interest me, and now I no longer have the opportunity.

Anci Kopska was an integral part of our family. She was born in 1892 in Vrdy-Bucice, and when she was 16, she started working for my grandfather.

In this photo Anci might have been at most twenty. She was already a widow. Her marriage is a mystery, apparently she had been married for only a short time, her husband was some coachman and died of tuberculosis.

Anci never talked about it. But she had a son, Pepek, who she had when she was around 18, certainly still during the time of Austria-Hungary. I don't know where he grew up, the first time I saw him was when he returned from the war as a grown man.

Anci also worked for my parents, and after the war she took care of me and my family.

During the time of the First Republic it worked that way, that every middle-class family, like ours was, had a governess and cook. We got especially lucky with our Anci.

Not only because of her being an excellent cook, but also because of her immense devotion and good-heartedness that helped us very much during the war.

Of the things that Anci cooked for us, I'll for example never forget her blueberry dumplings. No one makes those any more these days. They were large dumplings, most likely from cottage cheese dough, they had a very thin shell, it was an art to make them so that the shell didn't tear.

Another delicacy for me was her sauerbraten, also absolutely unrivalled. And her plaited Christmas cake, that probably doesn't even exist any more today.

Maybe it wasn't only her recipe, but in general nothing made now can equal the Christmas cakes that were made before the war. They had an indescribable taste and indescribable aroma.

When you broke them in half, the dough formed these little needles. And they were full of raisins and almonds and all kinds of goodies. So that was an amazing thing.

Anci did a lot for us during the war as well. She sent us packages to Terezin and we even received some of them in Auschwitz, it was a huge help.

It wasn't just finding the food for us, though that wasn't an easy thing in a time when everything was given out for food coupons. But to send a package wasn't easy as well.

When she met up with some anti-Semitic clerk at the post office, he was very taken aback as to why she was sending packages to Jews. She would rather quickly leave and sent it to us from someplace else.

During the war Anci also took care of our apartment on Masna Street.

After the war I returned to it and lived in it together with her. She protected our property during the war.

When I married, she also accepted my wife very well, and when we had our daughter, she was her grandma in a way and shifted all of her love to her.