

Reconnaissance Company Training In The Czechoslovak Army



This is a picture of me, Alexander Gajdos, at that time still Goldberger. I changed my name at the beginning of the 1950s. This photo was taken during my army service by Ruzomberk, Smrekovica. It was during the postwar period, I don't remember the exact year. I was a member of a reconnaissance company in Trencin. We also absolved ski training. I don't think that this training was mandatory. Those that wanted, could take it. I had already served in the army before that as well. During the Slovak National Uprising, I joined the rebel army and at the end of the war I also joined the 1st Czechoslovak Army Corps. There I was accepted into junior officers' school. I got a

nice uniform, a weapon and served there until June 1945. I graduated from junior officers' school in the army corps with the rank of lance corporal. Since then I've worked my way up to lieutenant colonel in the Czechoslovak Army. After finishing school I left with the other soldiers, as part of our training, on foot from Poprad to Martin. We walked for three or four days. In Martin we met President Benes, who'd come from Kosice. There we boarded some vehicles and they sent us as reserves to Moravia, where there was still fighting going on. But the soldiers up ahead of us always managed to break through the front, and so we never participated in direct fighting. In this way we followed the front all the way to Prague. In Prague, we as soldiers used to go on 'maneuvers.' We'd for example train for fighting in the streets of the city. It was up on Bila Hora [White Mountain]. Grannies were running out in gas masks and shrieking, 'Jesus Mary, the Germans are back.' They didn't know that they were just exercises, and that we were only using blanks. There was noise in the streets and the so the grannies wanted to get into the shelters. We told them: 'Granny, it's only make-believe, it's not real.' At the end of June they sent us back to Slovakia, to the army column in Nitra, from where they discharged me into civilian life.