

Helena Kovanicova With Her Brother Viktor Munk And Aunt Elsa Edererova



My brother Viktor Munk and I with Aunt Elsa Edererova (nee Nachodova). This photograph was most probably taken in 1932, the same year as our brother Jiri was born. We children didn't know at all that he was supposed to be born, no one told us anything, and you couldn't see it on our mother, so it was this surprise. In the summer we used to go on vacation with our parents to Spindleruv Mlyn, and that year, 1932, Aunt Elsa came with us as well. The photo was taken in St. Peter by Spindleruv Mlyn, where we had gone for a walk. St. Peter was near Spindleruv Mlyn in a beautiful valley, from which you could see Goat Ridge, you got there by taking a road in the forest.

We used to go there often for lunch, there we'd always unpack bread and butter. Aunt Elsa Nachodova was born in 1899. In adulthood she lived in Prague at 4 Anglicka Street, where she had her own apartment, beautifully furnished with antique furniture. It was made up of two rooms, a kitchen and a small servants' room. In her apartment from the front hall one first entered the dining room where my aunt had old furniture and a tall sideboard, a large table and chairs. In her bedroom she had modern furniture that had been custom-made to the dimensions of the room. There was a wardrobe, two couches, between them a small bureau, plus a low table with a glass top and beside it two armchairs. On the glass table she used to have a bowl with a string of pearls. Elsa had to support herself, and that's why she made a living teaching foreign languages. She gave private lessons in her apartment, as well as at the language school in Ve Smeckach Street. For a long time she was single, and in the end she married some Mr. Grund. He was, however, a fraudster, he robbed her and fleeced her of all her modest savings. He was from Vienna, and claimed that he was a 'von' [i.e. from a noble family]. Later Elsa married for a second time, Mr. Erich Ederer, who worked as a traveling salesman and was very kind. Once at Pentecost my aunt and Mr. Ederer took me on a trip to Karlovy Vary. Mr. Ederer had many friends there, together we went to many nice pubs, they ordered me cocoa and scrambled eggs for breakfast, which I wasn't used to. They also took me to a variety show. They were both very kind to me. Once during the school year my aunt even wanted to take me somewhere abroad, but my father was strict and didn't allow me to go, because I would have missed school. My aunt was a real fashion plate. She was always perfectly dressed, even despite the fact that she had to buy it all herself. When I visited her, she took me everywhere with her, and so I know that she'd for example go to the luxurious 'Prokop a Cap' textile store on Wenceslaus Square, where she'd occasionally pick some textile from their samples, which they would then order for her from England, for example. I remember this store mainly because there was a neon stork above the entrance that would open and shut its beak. She had her shoes custom made by a renowned shoemaker on Na Příkopě Street, across from Slovanský Dům. Once a week she'd go with my uncle to the Luxor coffee shop to play bridge.