

Eva Duskova After The War



This is my oldest post-war photograph, because on it I still have short hair. In the concentration camp our heads were shaved bald. This photo is from September 1945, but who took it, I don't know. It was probably taken at home in Litomyšl. After the war I was also again able to go to school, to high school. That was the school year 1945/46. Back then I was accepted into 'kvarta' [fourth year] on a probationary basis - event though I already belonged into 'kvinta' [fifth year], where they, for understandable reasons, didn't take me - with the condition that by the end of the school year I had to pass exams in all the subjects in junior high school. Whereas I know that for example here in Prague one of my girlfriends only had to do exams in Czech and math, while I did them in natural sciences, chemistry, and I don't know what else. In the beginning it was very tough,

but then I got used to the work. I used to study late into the night, the kvarta subjects, plus all of the other stuff. After the war, only three of us children returned to Litomysl, what's more, of various ages, so the school offered us this possibility, but we had to prepare ourselves on our own. First this one student who had just graduated tutored me for the exams, and then one professor from a technical school, and one lady professor, perhaps also from a technical school. They would come to see me and stuffed my head with knowledge. Because before I had only gone up to the fourth grade of elementary school, and I had studied a bit privately and a tiny bit also in Terezin, secretly, but I knew virtually nothing. The last three quarters of a year that we had been in that Lenzing, I knew only painful, hard work. So I had a completely, but completely blank brain. I didn't remember anything at all, whatever I learned in the evening, by morning I had forgotten it. But I made such an effort to pass those exams that I succeeded. At first I had all fours and fives [Es and Fs], but in the end I graduated near the top of the class. But I wouldn't say that I caught up with everything, even though for those exams it was enough.