

Erika Alterova



This photograph with the inscription 'To Annie - your cousin and friend Erika. In Prague on 12th October 1946' was given to me after the war by my cousin Erika Alterova. The picture was taken in Bond Street Studio, London. Erika was the daughter of my mother's oldest brother, Jiri Alter, who was an astronomer. When Hitler came to Czechoslovakia, Uncle Jiri got an offer to go work at an observatory in England. He took the offer, and left with his family for safety. In England Uncle Jiri's daughter, my cousin Erika, wanted to join the Czechoslovak army, but as they didn't take women she joined the English one. She learned perfect English, so even native Englishmen couldn't understand why it said in her passport that she was a Czechoslovak citizen, they couldn't believe that she wasn't a native Englishwoman. Jiri's son, my cousin Bedrich, left for Palestine. Uncle Jiri's youngest son, Arnost, was arrested for illegal activities back when the transports weren't on yet, he was the first of the family to perish, even before we were deported.