

Helena Weinerova



This is a photo of my mother, Helena Weinerova (née Winternitzova). The photograph was taken on 4th July 1946. My mother and I left Bergen-Belsen for home in July 1945. We traveled several days by train, roundabout through Sumava and Pilsen to Prague. Traveling in the compartment with us was my friend Lucka Brilova, who was originally from Teplice, which before the war had been a region where Germans lived. Lucka spoke Czech very poorly, because she'd attended German schools. I remember that Lucka telling me in the train to quickly teach her "Kde domov muj?" This was because we had decided that we were going to sing the Czechoslovak national anthem when we reached the border. My mother and I arrived at the Smichov train station. We had a couple of

bags, a large bag of crackers and some things we'd received in packages from the Red Cross. So from the train station we called our neighbor from Moran, Liska the confectioner, with whom we'd hidden the cart that my parents had used to transport goods to the general store before the war. Mr. Liska came to Smichov to get us. I remember that I was wearing some drop-front sailor pants and wooden shoes, nothing else ? there wasn't any clothing. When we were arriving in Moran, people were staring at us, and everyone was shouting something at us. Mrs. Schneiderova called out ?Liduska, your typewriter is at our place!? Everyone in Moran was terribly kind to us. Our neighbor on the first floor offered that Mom, Pepik and I could live with her. This was because we had no place to live, as the two rooms that we used to have before the war behind the store were occupied. She owed us a lot, so she subtracted it from the debt. Then the brother of my former school principal rented us a room with a kitchen, because he was in the hospital. Of our entire family, only I, my mother, brother, my cousin Inka and one distant cousin from Jindrichuv Hradec survived. My mother died in 1964, she had a bad case of Alzheimer's disease.