

## Anna Mrazkova As A Child In Luze



This is a picture of me as a little girl, I'd say about seven, at home in Luze, darning some sort of scarf. In Luze our family had been living for generations in an old family home at 202 Jeronymova Street; alas today our house is no longer there. We had five rooms and two kitchens ? one large and one smaller one. The street was named Jeronymova, but people used to call it Zidovna [from ?Zid? the Czech word for Jew], as earlier there had been a Jewish ghetto there. At the time I lived there, Luze was a relatively small town ? there were only about 1360 people living there. But located in Luze was the center of the Jewish religious community for surrounding towns as well. All

Jews from the area belonged to the Jewish religious community in Luze. In Luze we normally associated not only with Jews, but everyone else, too. My best friend wasn't Jewish. We knew each other from nursery school, her father was a basket-maker. We got along very well, but then I left for high school in Prague, and she for Pardubice. We had a gentile servant, then later we just had a helper that used to come over, and during the war we understandably had no one. One servant was named Baruska, our dolls were named after her, she was very nice. Another was Andula, she was also awfully nice and loved us a lot. During the war, when we weren't allowed to associate with so-called Aryans, Andula used to do so proudly, so much that my mother was afraid for her, and told her that she shouldn't come over, for her own safety. I attended Sokol from the age of three, my father used to attend it as well, and when my sister Eva was born, they also had her registered at about the age of three. I liked Sokol a lot, but later we stopped going there, so as not to endanger the rest of the Sokol members by associating with them. I exercised together with my father at the last pre-war all-Sokol Slet [Rally] at the Strahov Stadium in 1938. To this day, I've still got the garland that I had on my head back then! The last rally was very nice, I've got beautiful memories of it. The atmosphere was pleasant, and none of us back then wanted to admit that things would soon so drastically change for the worse, that Munich and the war would come.