



Memoirs by Lilly Sławikowska

“In the Times of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire
and Afterwards”

Lilly Sławikowska was born in Nagy-Becskerek, now Serbia, in 1902, and died in Vienna in 1994. Her parents were Stanisław Sławikowski, a colonel in the army of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire, after 1918 a colonel in the Polish Army, and Gizella Varády, a granddaughter of a Hungarian insurgent of 1848.

In her memoirs Lilly Sławikowska describes her happy childhood spent in the towns of Nagy-Becskerek and Temesvár with her parents, her four brothers and sisters and a multinational, numerous and more distant family. In 1914-1918 our Author lives in Vienna. She provides an interesting description of the outbreak of the First World War and everyday life in the capital of the great monarchy just before its fall. In Vienna she maintains contact with and visits her distant relatives, among others also Tadeusz Rittner, a writer and playwright. After the fall of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire the Sławikowski family moves to Kraków (Cracow) and takes an active part in the work towards rebuilding of the Polish state. The Author's father, Stanisław Sławikowski joins the Polish Army and in the rank of a colonel fights in the Polish – Soviet war in 1920. His brother, Eugeniusz, becomes a career's officer and is later executed by the NKVD in Katyń in 1940.

In the twenty years between the two world wars, Lilly Sławikowska goes in for sports and in 1936 she wins the title of the tennis champion for the Małopolska (Cracow) region. At the beginning of the Second World War, the Author goes to stay with her sister, Mrs Gizela Maszlanka in Lwow, and both ladies, together with Gizela's seven-year-old daughter, are deported to Kazakhstan for six years. The description of their return to a different Poland and the fifties closes the unfinished memoirs, cut short by the Author's deteriorating eyesight.

Lilly Sławikowska's memoirs are accompanied by memoirs and diaries of other people commenting on the events described by the Author.

Thumaczyła: Magda Mierowska