



Iby's Story, Chapter 7

My state of health was poor so I was taken to hospital and I was in hospital for a number of weeks and I personally didn't think that any of my family had survived and I had therefore really no wish to go back to a place where, which would be full of memories and where I wouldn't know anybody and I didn't really want to go home. And I didn't really know what I was going to do, so we went up to the military and asked whether they wanted or needed any interpreters because I spoke English, French, German, Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, and just a small amount of Russian. I thought maybe I could be useful there. So they decided, I was interviewed and they decided that yes.

They said that they were moving on from there, would I mind moving on and I said, 'Not at all' and they picked me up from the hospital the next day and the nuns gave me a little cardboard suitcase and I had asked them to burn all the clothes except for the greatcoat because I thought I could use that and they gave me an old blanket and an old sheet and I had made out of it some blouses and knickers and a pair of trousers and a bolero, that's all that came out of it and they gave me a towel and a piece of soap and a toothbrush and that was all I had in my case. So when they came to pick me up in the jeep they said, 'Where's your luggage?' and I said, 'That's my luggage' and that was the luggage I took with me when I went to work for 1027 Military Government Detachment.

I worked with the Military Government or Control Commission Germany until September 1946. In the meantime my mother had returned to Bratislava as had my brother and my cousin. My father hadn't and my mother managed to trace me through the Red Cross and asked me to go back home. I wasn't very keen to go back home because as I told you, I thought there would be nobody, I didn't think it likely that many people of my own age group would have survived and I had met Bert by now and Bert, his wife had died. He had two children and since it was thought that the radiation that I had received, it was likely to make me sterile, I thought it would be, not a bad idea to get married into a ready-made family.

At the end of November 1946 Bert came to Bratislava and that was quite an interesting journey too and we got married on the 3rd of December and we had

to have three weddings because we were married first by the Mayor, according to the Czechoslovak rules we then had to go to the Embassy to be married according to the English laws, when I was given a British passport and the Army only recognised the church wedding so I had to hire an evangelical church, get a Church of Scotland padre from the Prague Embassy down to conduct the wedding according to the rights of the Church of England, so that the Army should accept it. Bert then, we had a few days together and Bert went back to Germany and he was posted to England in the beginning of March 1947 and I came to England actually the 17th of March 1947 and I've lived here ever since.

Besides my two stepsons I've got a son who lives in Norway and a little granddaughter aged eight and I got a daughter lives in London and she got two children, Julia who is nineteen and James who is thirteen.