

Maria Antal



This is a picture of me taken during a holiday in Balatonszeplak in 1938. My auntie Rene regularly invited us to her villa because she had a rich husband and they had a villa in Balatonszeplak [near Lake Balaton]. Grandmother organized it so that she would look after each set of grandchildren for two weeks at a time. In Lepence there was a guesthouse where we went with acquaintances. But we never went abroad. I went to elementary school in Szemere Street. I knew I was of Jewish origin and that we wanted to go to America because of this, and perhaps the schoolmistress knew as well, because when it was a Jewish holiday she said to me, 'You can also stay at home if you want'. She didn't understand that my father didn't insist on me being half-Jewish. The schoolmistress took it that we were doing it to save our lives, but that we surely wanted to keep the holidays. School was in the morning, I had lunch at home, and so did my father. After lunch I did homework and went to skate, and sometimes to my girlfriend's to play. My father began to give violin lessons because he was a great musician, although that wasn't what he had studied, and he tried to teach me, but I think it didn't go well. I would have liked to play the piano very much, but buying a piano was out of the question.