

Dina Kuremaa And Her Family



The photograph was taken shortly before the outbreak of war. This is our family from left to right, the 1st row: my sister Rocha Naimark, my father, Ezekiel Naimark, my younger brother Zelek-Michl Naimark, my mother Berta Naimark, nee Aizman. The 2nd row: I, my sisters Zelda Putte, nee Naimark and Miriam Shpolyanskaya, nee Nairmark. The picture was taken in Tallinn in 1941. Each summer Mother and we, the children, left town and went to Nõmme. She rented a house there for the entire summer. Many of our acquaintances were on recreation in Nõmme with their children. Grandmother, Anna and Father came in the evening after work and on the weekend. We lived in Nõmme in summer 1940, when Estonia became a Soviet Republic. Then I was told how Soviet troops entered Tallinn, but I didn't see that myself. I remember only how my mother unexpectedly packed our things and we left Tallinn in early August. I remember I was surprised to see very many militaries in uniforms unfamiliar to me, walking around on the streets of Tallinn. When the Soviet regime came to power in Estonia, our life changed. Our Jewish lyceum was closed down and remade into a Jewish school with the teaching in Yiddish. All of us became pioneers. At that time I didn't quite understand what it was all about. I did what others did and became a pioneer like others. The new-comers from the Soviet Union were housed in the apartments of other people, but it didn't happen with us, maybe they didn't have time for it. My father's workshop was nationalized and turned into a cobblers' artel. Father transferred all equipment to the artel and kept on working there. Strange as it may be our family avoided deportation, carried out by the Soviet regime on 14th June 1941. A lot of people who used to own stores and workshops were exiled to Siberia from Estonia within one day. Men were sent to the Gulag, and their families were exiled. Now I wonder how come our family was not touched.