

Jerzy Pikielny



This picture of me was taken about 1937 or 1938 in Lodz. I didn't go to school until third grade because I was always ill, I often had bronchitis. At first I went to a private co-educational school called 'Our School.' Most of the students were Jewish. Two Jewish women ran it. We had teas with our class tutor in her apartment. We spoke with her about almost everything. I don't remember her name, unfortunately. At 'Our School' we spoke freely with the teachers about the opposite sex, something unthinkable at the all-male school I later attended. Naturally, the classes at 'Our School' were given in Polish. There were religion classes, which dealt mainly with Jewish history. I don't

remember the names of the teachers. I do remember some of my classmates, though. One of them, younger than me, was Tadeusz Noskowicz. We didn't know each other while at school, it was only after the war that we met and realized we'd attended the same school. Tadeusz emigrated in 1968, he settled in Sweden and worked as a doctor there. Another one was called Manfred Sawicki. He was born in Germany but in, I think, 1938 the Germans deported all the Jews with Polish citizenship to Poland. He came to Poland with his whole family. Manfred moved to South America after the war. We had a classmate we were all in love with, Jola Potaznikow. I know she was in the ghetto and then probably in Terezin, where she met a boy, a Czech, whom she married after the war. Unfortunately, she died giving birth to her child shortly after the war. There were also this brother and sister, Zosia and Michal Linde. She was in my class and he was a grade higher. They both survived in the USSR. From sixth grade on I attended an elementary school which was part of a boys' gymnasium. It was known as 'The Communal Gymnasium.' The school was located at 105 Pomorska Street. Boys of different denominations attended it. I was already aware of the differences between that and my former school. The main one was the relationship between teachers and students, which was not as casual at the gymnasium.