

Etta Ferdmann



That's me on my birthday. The picture was taken in Narva in 1939.

I do not know how my parents met. Narva was a small town and Jews always met in the synagogue at charity events. There are a lot of places where two young people can meet each other. All I know is that it was not a prearranged marriage. In spite of the fact that Grandmother Yachna was an

ardent follower of traditions, prearranged marriages were not common in our family. All her children had a love wedlock. My parents got married in 1933. They had a traditional Jewish wedding with a rabbi and chuppah.

I was born in 1934 and named Etta after my grandmother. My grandmother Yachna lived in a large, six-room apartment with her numerous children. The family was clustered together – all my grandmother's children were living there with their spouses and children. My parents also settled in that apartment after their wedding. Each family had a separate room. The only single person was my father's brother Mikhail. The whole family had meals together at a huge table. We were very friendly. Our family spoke to me in Yiddish or Estonian. My parents spoke either Russian or Yiddish. During family reunions with Grandmother, only Yiddish was spoken.