

Dora Feiman



This is me after finishing the gymnasium. I was photographed after I went to work and received my first salary. This photo was taken in Tartu in 1938.

I went to the gymnasium. Later, it became a six-year Jewish school. After finishing the sixth grade, I went to the seventh grade in the Estonian gymnasium for girls, who mostly came from wealthy families. This was the best gymnasium in Tartu. The daughter of our landlord taught English over there. She convinced my parents to send me there. I was to study in the gymnasium for six years. My father had to pay for my education there twice a year and also, he bought my school uniform for me.

There were many Jewish students in the Estonian gymnasium. After the Jewish gymnasium was closed many Jewish girls went to study at the Estonian gymnasium. The teachers and students had a friendly attitude toward us. I never once faced a single demonstration of anti-Semitism in all the years of my studies.

By the time I was to finish the gymnasium my father was severely ill. My older brothers were still in University and the family had to pay for their education, while I had to work to support the family. Before my father fell ill he worked at a tannery, owned by a Jew called Uzhvanskiy. I went to work as an apprentice accountant at this factory and later became an accountant. After finishing the gymnasium my younger brother also went to work. My brother and I were hoping that when our older brothers graduated from University and went to work we would be able to continue our education, but we were disappointed.