

Jerzy Pikielny's Lodz Ghetto Identity Card



This is a picture of my Lodz ghetto identity card. In 1939 I was due to start gymnasium. But the Germans closed all the schools. They also banned Jews from crossing Piotrkowska Street, except at the two ends. Later there was a school in the ghetto for some time, but my parents wouldn't let me go there. I was home schooled. At the end of November or early in December 1939 the Germans told us to leave our house. There were just the three of us at the time - Grandma, Mom, and me. Suddenly around twenty SS men in black uniforms and some Volksdeutsche entered our apartment. We had two hours to leave it. We spent a night at my classmate Rutka's parents'; they were neighbors from the house opposite. They were called Zylberberg. Later we moved to my uncle Henio's parents-in-law, who lived in Lodz on Pomorska Street. We stayed at that house until my father was assigned an apartment in the area it was already known would be in the ghetto. The address was 40 Zgierska Street. We moved in in January 1940. I started to work in a company collecting and recycling rags. It was 1941 I think. At that time Jews deported to the ghetto from the Sudety region had set up a workshop by the Sortierungs- und Verwertungstalle f. Abfaelle [Ger.: waste processing plant], producing artificial jewelry. These were brooches cut out of metal plates. I began to work with them. Later I worked at an electrical and mechanical workshop, Betrieb 39 Elektrotechn.-Abtlg [Ger.: Plant no. 39, Electrical and Mechanical Branch], repairing electric motors. I worked there until the ghetto liquidation. We stayed in the ghetto until the very end, i.e., August 1944.