

Feiga Tregerene With Teachers And Pupils Of The Jewish School



This is our Jewish school. My mother, Chaya Glezer, is the second in the third row. She was a member of the parents' committee. Sitting in this same row is our favorite teacher. She's wearing a dark dress. She is the one, in whose home our carnival costumes were made. I can't remember her name. I'm the fourth on the left in the fourth row. The first in the third row is my brother Falk, and the third on the left is Fayvel. The one on the right in the upper row is Ethel Sluzhitel. She perished at the front. I can't remember the others. This photo was taken in Birzai in the 1930s. I was born on 17th February 1927 in Birzai. There was one four-year Jewish school in Birzai. All subjects were taught in Yiddish. When I started this school at the age of seven, my brother Falk had just finished it. We had wonderful teachers. They were truly committed to the idea of Jewish public education. I made a number of new friends at school. They were Jewish boys and girls. Basia was one of them, and there was Perez, whose parents owned a large store in the center of Birzai. He was probably the best provided for child at our school. My mother was an active member of the parents' committee. This committee was established to provide assistance to teachers. My mother attended its weekly meetings. Parents collected contributions to organize celebrations on holidays, buy costumes and supplies and support the needy schoolchildren. Besides general subjects that were taught in Yiddish, we were told about the Jewish history and religion, and this was when I came to know the origin of my people's holidays and traditions. I liked preparations for Jewish holidays most of all. We staged amateur performances, which were sketches from the Jewish life, for each holiday. Purimspiel was the merriest performance on Purim. Once I even played the role of Queen Ester, the savior of the Jewish people. Our mothers and older sisters made costumes for holidays in our favorite teacher's apartment, which almost became a sewing shop. Our teacher enjoyed preparations to holidays as well. We also gave performances on Simchat Torah and Chanukkah. I enjoyed going to school, and my school years were happy and flew by quickly.