

Anna Lanota's School Class On A Trip In Cracow



This is my school class on a trip. I think we were then in Cracow.

I am standing third from left. The girl standing next to me was called Wegmajster. At the bottom there are Gucia Bulwa, Joskowicz and Ruzka Lewin. First from left standing is our class teacher Mr Ellenberg and first from right maths teacher Mr Szarybroder.

I hated school. The drill annoyed me, the fact that you had to go, this had to be done, that had to be written down. I did it all, but it was unbearable. I was a good student.

Most of all I liked learning Polish literature, German, and German literature. Languages were taught over a very long period then, six years, so to this day I know German and Hebrew well.

I liked nature too, because we were taught that on excursions outside the city. I liked Latin as well, perhaps because the teacher was nice. There were a lot of lessons. They started at 8 and I would go home at 4.

Gymnasiums such as the German or Jewish ones had restricted state approval, which meant that they could award the school-leaving certificate but the examination had to be invigilated by someone from the education office.

The questions for the school-leaving exam were the same as in Polish schools. You took Polish, mathematics, Latin and I think physics, a written and an oral exam in every subject. I took my school-leaving exam in 1932.

They sent us an invigilator from the education office who was a German and a Nazi. I think they must have sent him to the Jewish gymnasium on purpose.

He flunked 14 out of 30 girls, often for silly things, for instance for turning their heads and looking behind them. Several of them he refused to admit to the oral exam.

The girls who didn't get their school-leaving certificate that time got together and straight afterwards went to Palestine together.

The same man from the education office had been at the school-leaving exams in the boys' Jewish gymnasium, and the lads had warned us what kind of a person he was.