

Tatiana Tets



This is me. I was two and a half. I was photographed in my father's chair in his study after a walk. This photo was taken in Riga in 1930.

Two years before I was to go to school, my parents sent me to a private German kindergarten. Of course, our nanny Emma was very good and could teach me all necessary things, but it was common practice in Latvia that parents sent their children to kindergartens before school. Children need some time to learn to socialize with other children and prepare for school. Emma took me to the kindergarten in the morning. We learned music, handicrafts, painting and played games. We spoke German and had French classes every day. We went home in the afternoon. I spent most of the time of the day with Emma. Her daughters were a little older than me, and we were friends. I still keep in touch with one of them, and another girl has joined a better world, unfortunately. I had Jewish, Russian and Latvian friends. Some were my friends in the kindergarten and others were my parents' or neighbors' children.

At the age of eight I went to a private Jewish gymnasium where subjects were taught in German. I did well at school. Many of my classmates were my friends from the kindergarten. They came from wealthy Jewish families, and their parents could afford to pay for their studies at the private gymnasium. It was a secular school, but there was a course on Jewish history, religion and traditions. We also studied Russian and French.