

Naum Balan And His Classmates



This is me, second from left, and my classmates on a tour in Odessa, near the monument to Suvorov, the outstanding Russian commander, in front of Odessa regional museum. The photo was taken in Odessa in 1939. In 1935 I went to the elementary school located not far from where we lived. It was a one-storied cobble-stone building. My first teacher, Sophia Yakovlevna, was a Jew. I studied well, but due to my misconduct Sophia Yakovlevna sometimes told me to leave the classroom. Once I made her so angry that she grabbed me by my collar and pulled me to the door along with my desk. My bag fell on the floor and my apple and slice of bread with butter and jam, which my mother had given me, rolled onto the floor. Sophia Yakovlevna kept pulling me telling me to send my mother to school. My mother had to go to school to talk with the teacher. However, I finished elementary school and always kept good relationships with Sophia Yakovlevna. I was very happy that she survived the occupation during the war. She failed to evacuate and stayed in Tiraspol. When I went to secondary school I became a pioneer. I had all excellent marks at school. After finishing the 5th grade my schoolmates and I went on tour to Odessa. We walked in the town and went to museums. I also remember spending vacations in a pioneer camp at the seashore.