

Hedvig Endrei At The Age Of Two



I am two years old in this picture. On the back it says: 'Hanika (that was my Jewish name) is standing in line for milk.' The picture was taken on 22nd November 1917. It was winter, I was wrapped in this big shawl and I had a milk-can, too. My mother always put an apron on me as well. I don't know where we used to go to buy milk, perhaps to the Market Hall, because we lived on Vamhaz Boulevard at that time. This picture was taken at home, before my mom and I set out to get milk. I don't remember who took the picture. At that time one had to stand in line for many things, for coal, milk, everything. It was right after the war [actually during WWI]. I was a picky

eater as a child, my mother cooked for me separately. Cold cuts were very expensive at that time, but my mother always bought it for me so that I would have something to eat. She bought 5 decagrams, exactly scaled. I ate very much cod-liver-oil. I remember that we kept it between the windows. There was a spoon in it, we only used that spoon for that, because it smelled and tasted like cod-liver-oil. I had a sweet tooth, I loved chocolate. They sold Meinl's chocolate at that time, which came in a round box, and I got some of this chocolate every time after I ate some cod-liver-oil. I got so much of it that in the end I got pimples because of it. When I was a child there wasn't as much soap as now. I remember the Albus soap. We washed our hair with bar-soap and rinsed it with vinegar. It made the hair shine beautifully. In the apartment on Vamhaz Boulevard we had a pantry right next to the kitchen. My mother transformed that into a bathroom, there was a tin hip-bath in it, we bathed in that. We warmed the water in a washing pan on the stove and poured it into the tub. On Raday Street we had a normal bathroom, there was a stove in it too. There was a window between the kitchen and the bathroom, and that always had to be open, because I had to wash my underwear and when my mother cooked she always looked in to see if I washed with soap or with a brush. This might have been when I was twelve. When my brother and I were children, my mother also watched how we bathed, and if I changed my underwear. We always put on clean underwear on Fridays. A washwoman also came, but often the maid did the laundry. There was a laundry room in every house, and a mangle in the staircase, under the stairs. We mangled the clothes, it was easier to iron them this way. There was coal iron and many got a headache from the coal-gas, when the coal wasn't hot enough. In old times every girl had to be good at music, even if she wasn't a professional musician. Usually one had to be good at everything: cooking, cleaning, needlework, darning, had to know how to darn underwear, and we also had to be familiar with music. That's why my mother sent me to piano classes. I went to play the piano every Tuesday afternoon, to a teacher on Erkel Street. I learned to play the piano for four years, and I had a piano on Raday Street, but when they assigned the yellow star houses, ours didn't become one, and there was no space for the piano where we moved, so it was left behind. It was a big piano, not a cottage piano. It wasn't a good brand piano, we didn't have enough money for that.