

Zelda Naimark With Her Teachers And Classmates From The Jewish Lyceum



This is a picture of the junior class of the Jewish lyceum dating back to the time, when my elder sister Zelda Putte, nee Naimark, studied there. The 5th to the right in the 1st row is Samuel Gourin, the headmaster, to his right is a teacher of the junior school, Zelinskaya and the mathematics teacher, Motl Zhitomirskiy. My sister Zelda is the 3rd to the left in the last row. I probably didn't know the rest of the students, or cannot recognize them in the picture. The picture was taken in Tallinn in 1929. My elder sisters Zelda and Miriam did not do very well at school. They finished the 6th grade. Father said if they could not study, they should work. He was not going to waste money on them. My eldest sister, Zelda, worked in Father's workshop. In accordance with his patent he could keep one worker and one apprentice. Thus Zelda became his apprentice and then a worker. My second sister, Miriam, worked at the spinnery until evacuation. A Jew was the owner of the factory. The third sister, Rocha, kept on studying in the lyceum. I went to the first class of the Ivrit lyceum when I was seven. I cannot say that I was a very good student, maybe I was a mediocre one. I wasn't good at mathematics. Sometimes I got bad marks. Usually I got good marks and rarely excellent marks. From the 1st till the 6th grade I studied in the lyceum free of charge, and from the 7th grade my parents had to pay tuition. When I went to lyceum, uniforms were introduced. The everyday uniform consisted of a navy blue dress with a white collar and cuffs and a navy blue cap with a white rim. There was also a festive uniform: a navy blue skirt and white blouse. We wore it on Jewish holidays and Estonian state holidays. We studied two foreign languages at the lyceum - German and Russian. My father spoke broken Russian, Mother spoke no Russian. I spoke pretty good German, but Russian was hard for me. Many students in our lyceum were the members of children's Zionist organizations. There were three of them in Tallinn: Betar, Hashomer Hatzair and Maccabi. My elder sisters were members of Maccabi. I didn't join any Zionist organization. I don't even remember why.