

Cilja Laud



This is me on my second birthday. The picture was taken in Tallinn in 1940. I was born in 1938 and named Cilja. Though Mother was a housewife, I had a baby-sitter since I was an infant. She was German, Frau Opperman her name was. She was very strict. She was not pleased when I was chatting with my parents, nothing to speak of my grandparents. Opperman raised me very strictly and feared that they might spoil me. Of course, when I spent time with them, they really pampered me. Mother said that Frau Opperman loved oranges. Thus, Grandpa brought oranges to Frau Opperman for her to allow me to go for a walk with him or go to see my grandparents. In that case, she could not say no to him. I do not remember much about my prewar childhood in Tallinn. I

remember sitting on the lap of Frau Opperman, who was reading books to me. I can recall how my parents took me to the zoo for me to see the animals. I also remember the walks along Kardiorg Park with my father. I also remember that I was a bad eater, but Frau Opperman always made me eat all the food on my plate. When she turned away, I hid the food under the table cloth. When she left the room I threw the food out the window or to the roof of the neighboring house. I must have been started speaking German as I spent a lot of time with my baby-sitter. I spoke only German before we left for evacuation. Of course, my parents were fluent in German, but they often spoke Yiddish. In general, many languages were spoken at home.