

Teofila Silberring With Her School Friend Lusia Helzel



This is me, and the girl on the right is my schoolmate Lusia Helzel. The picture was taken shortly before the war, probably in 1939, in Cracow.

After five years of elementary state school I became a pupil at the Dr Hilfstein Hebrew Gymnasium; Dr Hilfstein was its founder. That was a beautiful school, on Podbrzezie Street, apparently of very high standard, with state entitlements. All the subjects were in Polish, and there was also Hebrew. Only Jewish children, but well-off ones studied there, because the fees were about 50 zloty; that was an awful lot. There were very good relations, very good conditions at the school.

Lusia Helzel - that's her maiden name, of course - lives in Israel now. Her father was a friend of my father's. They had a large shop selling radios in the Main Square, near St. Mary's Church. I remember that just before the war he brought Father a radio with a magic eye. That was still a novelty then. He always brought us the gramophones and records. Lusia was in the camps. Which ones, that I don't know. But straight after the war I met her. We lived together for two years or so, and then she left for Israel.