

Feiga Tregerene With Teachers And Pupils Of The Jewish School



This is our Jewish school in Birzai. In the center is our teacher wearing a hat, I can't remember her name. I, Feiga Tregerene, am the third on the right standing on the porch. Sitting on a step on the porch is my cousin Paya Glezer, she's wearing a white sweater. My friend Basia is beside her, she's in Israel now. The girl wearing a coat was a Komsomol member. She left with my brothers and other Komsomol members on the first day of the war and was killed by the Fascists in Latvia. I can't remember her name, or any other names. This photo was taken in Birzai in the 1930s. I was born on 17th February 1927. I was given the name of Feiga after my mother's sister, who died in infancy. We lived in a Lithuanian surrounding, and my first friends were Lithuanian girls. We played together without giving a thought to what nationality one or another girl was. There was one four-year Jewish school in Birzai. All subjects were taught in Yiddish. When I started this school at the age of seven, my brother Falk had just finished it. We had wonderful teachers. They were truly committed to the idea of Jewish public education. I made a number of new friends at school. They were Jewish boys and girls. Basia was one of them, and there was Perez, whose parents owned a large store in the center of Birzai. He was probably the best provided for child at our school. My mother was an active member of the parents' committee. This committee was established to provide assistance to teachers. My mother attended its weekly meetings. Parents collected contributions to organize celebrations on holidays, buy costumes and supplies and support the needy schoolchildren. Besides general subjects that were taught in Yiddish, we were told about the Jewish history and religion, and this was when I came to know the origin of my people's holidays and traditions.