

Ninel Kunina



This is a photo of me, taken in 1943 when I was a schoolgirl. I went with my classmate to the photo studio in Lesnoy Prospekt, which still exists, and the photographer took a photo of her, too. I am in an old gown, which some neighbors or acquaintances gave me. At the time nobody had anything.

In the summer of 1943 Mom took me, a 13-year-old, on the staff, as an apprentice sales person. At school there were holidays, but I worked at the store all the same. But now I had to go for work by eight o'clock in the morning and left at ten o'clock in the evening. I was so desperate to sleep. What work could they assign to a 13-year-old girl? I had the job to deliver buckets with water to women, who were storing up peat for heating, they dug peat straight out of earth. It was very hot there and peat glowed, igniting spontaneously. And another time, when cabbage leaves were

brought to the store, I had to sell these leaves. At the end of summer I sold aerated water with saccharin. From the 1st of September I went to school. I wasn't awarded with a medal 'For the Defense of Leningrad,' because I didn't have a job before January of 1943. Such an unfair law!