

Jozef Seweryn's Class



This is my class. I'm standing in the last row. There is a little arrow with the number 4 over my head. The photo was taken in Wieliczka, a town near Cracow, in 1928.

I didn't go to cheder. There were no religious education classes in the elementary school I attended on Jozefinska Street. Like most children from Podgorze, I took religious education classes at the elementary school on Kosciuszki Street; there were special Jewish religious education classes there. We used to meet in one of the rooms on the first floor and one Jew met with us and taught us Judaism. A private tutor prepared me for my bar mitzvah. He came and informed me, taught me religion. By the time I was 13, I had been taught everything that a Jew has to be taught. I had my bar mitzvah and then I forgot everything. I didn't have time for it, I went to school and I was also earning some money working at a store, which sold dentistry supplies; and I had to help my grandfather on top of that. When was I supposed to have time for religion?

When I was a boy I really liked reading Karl May's books, and also other books, about the war. I practiced boxing. I was interested in photography. This really started by chance. When I was little, I would often have my picture taken and I liked it so much that I started to take pictures myself. I went to the theater on school outings. They would stage various instructive plays. And I always went to the cinema, whenever I wanted. I liked going to the cinema.