

Minna Birman



This is me, Minna Birman, at the age of 15. This photo was taken in Odessa in 1938.

After my father was arrested I left school and entered a Jewish Machine building Technical School. My mother felt positive about it. She was afraid of being arrested and hoped that they wouldn't send my brother to a children's home now that I was a student. I received a stipend at school and I could learn a profession soon. Prisoners' children were thrown out of educational institutions, but when filling up my application form in the line item 'father' I wrote 'my father doesn't live with us at present'. I didn't lie, but I didn't tell the truth either. Later it became known that director of my school knew that my father was in prison, but she kept silent about it. I studied at school for three

years. I didn't join Komsomol, since I didn't want to join an organization of executioners. I thought: Komsomol and Party members were involved in beating my father and I couldn't be in the same organization with them. My mother argued with me. She thought this was dangerous conduct, but I stood my point.