

Pessya Sorkina



This photograph was taken in 1915 and I do not know where. Here you can see me when I was one year old

My maternal grandparents lived in Riga, there my Mom got married, and there I was born.

Peno railway station was a little settlement. There was a saw-mill, but I can't recall it very well. I remember only one street where we walked every day. It was in fashion in the provinces to go to the railway station. A long-distance train stopped there every day for 3 minutes. So it looked like a TV show: the train arrived, the passengers looked through the windows. All Peno inhabitants gathered on the platform and walked hither and thither to show their dresses. The train was off and everyone went home. That is why I remember the road very well. In Peno I remember no equals in age.

There we rented a house. It was wooden. I do not remember whether there was electricity supply.

There were no automobiles at that time, we used horses, especially to get from Peno to Ostashkov and back. We usually went along the Peno River. At that time I could not imagine an automobile! For the first time in my life I went by train when we moved to Leningrad.

We never went to restaurants to have dinner. Mom was a culinary expert and she had a housemaid. We ate very well. At that time people did not stint themselves: we ate and drank everything we wanted. And now I know that a lot of food is taboo for me.

My brother and I were at home, we did not attend kindergartens. Mom took care of us. When we lived in Penno, a teacher came to teach us at home. Later we together with my brother lived at our grandmother and grandfather in Ostashkov, and Mom and Daddy remained in Penno.

In Ostashkov grandmother and grandfather also rented a house (like we did in Penno). The house had an attic, where we lived together with my brother. In our room there were a table and two beds. And Mom and Daddy lived in Penno, they used to visit us. I remember that they usually brought presents for us: sweets, cookies. We knew that the train arrived once a day. Parents had to go from the railway station to our place by a cab (about three kilometers). We heard the patter of hoofs and understood that they arrived! They brought us presents! I remember that we shared the sweets with my brother. I usually hid my portion under my pillow and he ate everything immediately and worried at me to give him my sweets. At that time cookies and sweets were shaped in a very interesting way. I remember cookies with faces of twofaced Janus: one side was smiling and the other one crying. But you see, all this happened million years ago...

We came to Ostashkov to study at school and started from the 3rd form. By the way in our class I was the shortest and the youngest. And the rest pupils were older and much taller than me. I told you already that we started our school studies in Penno: a teacher came to our place to teach us, because there was no school there. I remember that we studied some foreign language (German or French: English was not in fashion).