

Rachel Randvee



This is a picture of me at the age of eight. This photograph was in my first passport that I received in 1937. My mother was seriously ill at the time; she was put into a hospital in Tartu for a long time and wasn't allowed any visitors. So my father decided it would be best for me and my sister Riva to spend the summer visiting his relatives in Latvia. I was issued a passport so I could cross the Estonian-Latvian border unattended. Aunt Asne rented a room for us in a Jewish summer hotel at a Riga seaside resort so we would only eat kosher food. For Sabbath we always went to Riga to our grandma's and attended the synagogue on Saturday mornings. Before 1937, we had spent every summer in Estonia. When I was little I often fell sick, my lungs weren't strong enough and the doctors were concerned about me getting tuberculosis. That's why almost every summer my parents rented a summer house in a community of Hiiu [island] near Tallinn. The houses were

located in the middle of a pine wood - forest air was supposed to restore bad lungs. I stayed there with my governess. Occasionally Riva stayed with us, too, but our parents visited only for Sabbath and worked the rest of the time.