

Rena Michalowska As A Child In Tysmienica



This is me in Tysmienica near Stanislawow, when I was five or six years old. It was taken by a professional photographer. I'm not sure, but I think that it was taken near the house of the local dentist - it was one of the imposing building in Tysmienica. My grandparents sent this photo to their sisters to USA. After the war these aunts of my father's sent it back to us, because we stayed without any family pictures or documents after World War II. The house where I lived with my parents was the only house in town which went above the ground floor; it had two floors. It was a brick house, with a gallery which ran along one side. There was a one-story annex, perpendicular to it. At the end of the gallery there was a toilet ? no water of course. There was a big courtyard with a garden divided into three sections. When I was four or five, my father decided that an only daughter, surrounded by three aunts, a grandmother and a mother, cannot be raised at home only. There was a parish in Tysmienica, where some nuns lived. And they had a nursery there to which I was sent, for a very, very short time. That career was short-lived, for one day I came back from

that nursery with a song on my lips: "Wzieli do wojska Moska pejsatego. Aj, aj. Aj, waj, waj." [A derogatory song about a Jewish man; literally: "They took one Moshe with side curls to the army. Ay, Ay. Ay, vay, vay."] I wasn't sent to the nursery again. Mostly I hung out at my grandmother's workshop watching how all those products are being made. But I remember holidays away from home which I spent with my mother and grandmother in the Carpathian mountains. I was no more than six then. The place was called Dora and was located near Jaremcze. Jaremcze was a well-known health resort and Dora was close by, but not that famous, so it was cheaper. We spent our summer there ? Grandmother came for a short stay and me and my mother stayed longer.