

Magda Frkalova At The Bolmut Farm



This is a photograph of me, Magda Frkalova, on the Bolmut farm in 1939. After arriving at Bolmut, my parents registered me at high school in Trnava. It was a Catholic high school, and besides other things, there were nuns teaching there, too. I've got to say that they were very good women, and truly never showed anything against Jews. But I can't say that with regards to my classmates. It would happen that my classmates would drop some sort of remark, or that they'd badmouth you. But they never said it to your eyes! Now a little more about that farm in Bolmut that my father used to manage. It measured 340 hectares, and we had eight pairs of horses and fifteen cows there. We didn't have those fifteen cows only for meat, but mainly for milk. My mother, along with one maidservant, made butter from it. We even had a centrifuge for the butter, so we were properly equipped for it. The remaining milk that wasn't used for butter would be taken to a dairy in Trnava. My father employed one farmer who was his right-hand man, and then several helpers ? these were called ?bireshes.? There were eight families of them, and they also lived on the farm. But that wasn't all. During the spring, when grain and other things were being sown, and also in the summer, during harvest time, my father employed seasonal workers. These seasonal workers were also housed on the farm, and there could even have been as many as 30 of them. On the farm we cultivated grain: wheat, rye, corn and other things. We also had a large onion field, where we grew onions. We also grew beets, which we then sold to a sugar refinery. My brother and I of course had to help out on the farm. Mainly in the garden, which belonged to the house. We didn't like doing it, and often complained that we didn't even have a summer vacation like other kids. We couldn't go anywhere as long as there was work at home in the garden, or on the farm. And that was almost always. I, for example, helped out with the thresher. The grain would be thrown into it, and it would separate the grains from the chaff; I'd keep track of the amounts. How many sheaves had been thrown into it, and how much grain we had. Later, when I was older, I helped with the payroll for the workers. I'd record how much who worked, and based on that I'd then calculate his wages, which I'd then pay him.