

David Wainshelboim's Class



This is me, photographed with my class in the Romanian elementary school, I'm the 3rd on the right at the bottom. My friend Nikolay Orlov is the 1st from the left in the 2nd row. He kept this photograph and gave it to me after I returned to Kishinev after the Great Patriotic War. This photo was taken in Kishinev in 1936.

I was born in 1928. I had a wonderful childhood. My mother, father and grandmother loved me dearly.

I went to a Romanian elementary school at the age of seven. My father knew that to be able to enter a college and deal with science – and this was the only future he could imagine for me – I had to study the state language. I don't remember the elementary school. After finishing it, I passed entrance exams to the Romanian state-owned gymnasium. I received the highest grade in the exam, and the teachers were good to me. There were many Jewish boys at school, and I can't remember a single incidence of prejudiced attitude or anti-Semitism towards any of us. What mattered was the attitude of the boys to their studies, and it was even more important than the grades they received. I had the highest marks and my teachers and fellow students respected me all right.

There were Zionist organizations in the town. There was Maccabi for young people, and many students were fond of these ideas. All I cared about was science and I took no interest in politics. I liked Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. I wanted to become a doctor like my father, who was ideal in my opinion. Since I turned eleven I often visited my father at work and even helped him taking samples to the private bacteriological laboratory.