

Livia Diaconescu



This is a picture of me, taken when I was in the 1st year of high school, wearing the Jewish High School uniform during World War II, in Focsani. My school badge is visible: it reads LEF (Liceul Evreiesc Focsani - The Jewish High School in Focsani), no.28. There were engineers and teachers in the staff: Sami Lazar, who was the president of the Jewish community until a few years ago, taught law, Romanian history, and some geography; Mr. Gabor, who was the headmaster; Mrs. Ida Kholf, a teacher whom we loved and who taught us Romanian language and grammar in an exemplary way. I liked the Latin teacher and the one who taught German, and did so beautifully. I also liked the physical education teacher, because I liked physical education. My father bought me skates, took me to the Maccabi, put me on the ice and let me learn to skate by myself. He wasn't a

Maccabi member. I could keep in touch with the girls from the Jewish School, as I would meet them in the religion class; in the period when I attended the Romanian school, I studied religion separately, with the Jewish children. One time, at the Jewish high school, during the war, I was so naughty that the rabbi told me to leave the classroom. I met Iosefina Grunberg in the schoolyard. She wanted to go home, but was afraid to, because it was time for the boys from the Romanian high school to come out. I offered to help. We went out on the street together and the boys tried to scare us. But they mustn't have been too brave, after all, since they let a girl intimidate them! As the windows of our classroom opened on to the street, our boys heard us and wanted to join me and beat up the other kids. Luckily, the rabbi, who was usually a soft man, had the strength to forbid them to get out; a fight between the Romanian and the Jewish students was not a good thing to happen.