

Istvan Domonkos's Commutation Ticket Picture



I am in the picture. We had it made for my commutation ticket in 1936, when I was 15 years old. We had commutation tickets at that time, because we moved out to the summer cottage in Rakoscsaba early in the summer, and we moved back late in the fall, and we went to school from there. I was in the 5th grade of the science secondary school, which can be seen from the stripe on the cap. After the four classes of elementary school both my brother Peter and I went to an eight-grade science secondary school, to the Kemeny Zsigmond Science Secondary School. My brother, Peter was always one class ahead of me. But only one class, because he was born in November, and he lost a year. He was a very diligent student; he was a much better student than I was. This was a big advantage for me, because I got his used books, and moreover I could get a lot of help. He was an excellent mathematician, and I wasn't that good at that subject. Though later, owing to my technical studies at the university I learned many things. Sometime in fourth or fifth grade I got

out of hand a little bit, I even had to take a make-up exam in mathematics. Somehow I didn't get a good start with trigonometry. In my opinion our teacher did well when he said, 'I will flunk this boy, because he is able to learn. Let him learn it in the vacation.' In that vacation I did have to study hard to pass the re-take exam. But I passed with no problems. At the science secondary school the Jewish and non-Jewish children were on good terms at the beginning. Even though everyone knew who was Jewish and who wasn't. They strictly enjoined us to go to the Friday evening worship service, and the Christian children to go to church on Sundays. But around 1938 or maybe a little bit earlier, when this instigation went on, a small group of anti-Semite boys was formed. We didn't come to blows, at most they found fault with us. By graduation the thing deteriorated. So when we had to go to have our picture taken for the class photograph, I was shocked to see a Hungarian jacket on the sofa at the photographer's, which the Jewish children weren't allowed to put on. This was an astounding shock. This happened in 1939, by that time they had already enacted the first anti-Jewish law.