

The Brothers Rudolf Gal And Heinrich Goldberger With Their Families



This photograph was taken in Zilina, around the year 1932. From left to right it shows me, back then I was named Alexander Goldberger. After the war I changed my name to Gajdos. Standing beside me is my sister Viera Goldbergerova, then my mother Sidy Goldbergerova and my father's brother Rudolf Gal, who was an architect. As a small child I attended nursery school. In our part of the country it was called 'ovoda.' I had a fairly good teacher. I even enjoyed going to that nursery school. I don't have any particular memories of the nursery school. I remember only how we were playing in the schoolyard. Then I transferred to the elementary Jewish school in Zilina. It had five grades - from Grade 1 to Grade 5. It was attended by both boys and girls, together. A fair number of Christian children went there, too, because it was a better school than the others. I particularly didn't like math and German. My favorite subject in school was gym. We had one excellent teacher that knew how to handle us. We really like him a lot. Of course, we exercised a lot, and mainly played handball. It was simple, and all we needed were two goals in the schoolyard. Banged-up hands and legs of course belonged to the game. Our gym teacher was named Braun. We also went on short trips in the region around the town, especially to Duben and to nearby castles. In the Jewish school we of course also had to go to Judaism class. Not going, that was impossible. Our attitude to religious upbringing amounted to us always fooling around on the rabbi. I don't remember his name anymore. He was an old man, and we used to do terrible things to him. For example, I remember that we had a bell, and halfway through the class we rang it, and someone exclaimed: 'it rang.' To which he said, 'if it rang, it rang' and class was over. In the hallway we ran into the principal, who was a huge man with a cane, and he asked us where we were going. We told him that the rabbi had said that the bell had rung. He said: 'But it couldn't have rung yet.' The principal also used physical punishment. For example, this one slower boy used to be in our class, and he'd always do something to the girls. For example when they were exercising, he'd steal their clothes from the changing room, and so on. Outside of school we had this group of Jewish boys, we went everywhere together and spent a lot of time together. There were about five of us. Besides us

there was one more group of Jewish boys, and so we used to fight each other, throwing stones and so on. We were about ten or eleven years old.