

The Marcussohns On Vacation



These are the Marcussohns on vacation in Brasov in 1929. The photo was taken at the Oscar Adler photo cabinet in that city. My mother, Eveline Marcussohn, was sitting on a bench, while the three men of the family are standing, even though my younger brother, Octav Marcussohn, had barely reached the age of scooter riding. Up on the right is me, Gavril Marcussohn, almost a man at 16 years old, tall, wearing a grown-up's clothes, a belt and a watch. Up on the left is my father, Leibis Marcussohn. My father, Leibis Marcussohn, was born in Iasi, in 1888. He studied in Vienna, at the Commerce High School. He looked after us and loved us in a way that was more intelligent than my mother's, because he was more intelligent and more cultivated. He never scolded me and beating was definitely out of the question. He was a literature enthusiast, he could read German, and he

had a German library. My father was an accountant and a tradesman. He wasn't a religious man. He had his own business - he sold welding devices and carbide -, but didn't actually own a company. He worked with his brother-in-law, Filip Weisselberg, for a while, and, after he and my mother divorced [before World War II, in the 1930's], he bought a house in another neighborhood and continued his welding devices business. My father died in Bucharest, in the 1960's. My mother, Eveline Marcussohn [nee Weisselberg], was born in Husi, in 1892. Her education consisted of some years of high school. She wasn't a religious person. She was a rather simple woman, and she spoke some French. My grandfather only sent the boys to college. One of them became a chemist, another one became a lawyer, and another one became an accountant; but the girls never got to college. Girls were despised. Men are the ones who lead. Even at the synagogue, women have to stay separated from the men. My mother was a housewife. She loved us as much as she could, looked after us, and fed us - we weren't picky when it came to food. She was a gentle woman. She got upset once in a while, but didn't beat us. Neither my brother nor I ever got beat by our parents. My mother made aliyah in the 1960's. My brother and other relatives were already living in Israel. She stayed in an old age home in Tel Aviv. I visited her there and, when I returned, I got the news of her death. She died after I had visited her. She was 89 when she passed away [in 1981]. My brother, Octav Marcussohn, is nine years younger than I am. He was born in 1922, in Bucharest. I used to teach him, kid with him, take him walking in the streets. We were close, although we didn't think alike. I was a left-winger, while he was a right-winger, but we didn't fight each other over this. He didn't think like I did, he was anti-Soviet and a Zionist. He went to the Mathematics Faculty in Bucharest. The Ministry of Education wanted to send him to Moscow for a PhD. This prospect scared him so much, that he fled to Israel, in the 1950's. He is now a retiree in Tel Aviv. He didn't work while in Romania. In Israel, he was a math school teacher. He has been a retiree for a long time now. He doesn't have children and he was never married. My name is Gavril Marcuson [the initial name, Marcussohn, was shortened to Marcuson in 1968]. I was born in Bucharest, on 28th October 1913. I usually stayed in Bucharest during my vacations as a child. I remember I once went to Sinaia, which I enjoyed a lot. My father once took me to the seaside [at the Black Sea] for a few days. Back then, Mamaia [one of today's major Romanian seaside resorts] was a totally primitive place and the beach only had some wooden shacks. Another time I went to visit a sister of my mother's who lived in Botosani, and I spent my entire vacation there. In Bucharest, I would go to the stadium of the National Academy of Physical Education, which wasn't far from our home. I would run or jump, but, most of the time, I sat and looked at the athletes who were training. I had a very introverted temperament. My vacation was a sort of mixture of biking or athletic trials and very intense readings, which were rich for a boy my age. I was also interested in language issues, not just in literature. I could read French well - actually, very well, if I'm allowed to brag. I could read German and English. I could speak refined French, not just read it. I used to read mainly French literature, but I also read Romanian literature.