

Gavril Marcuson With Friends



This photo was taken in the streets of the town of Sinaia in 1939. I was at a summer school. From left to right: me, Gavril Marcuson, an English friend, writer Paul Lahovary, and another English attendant. 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 had a very introverted temperament. I was 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 used to read mainly French literature, but I also read Romanian literature. These last years, I've been reading almost exclusively Romanian classic writers - from the chroniclers, the Vacaresti brothers, the pre-Eminescu poets and prose writers. I rarely open a French book. I have, of course, my favorites

among the French poets too. Before the war, in the 1930's, I would go to the Hasefer Bookstore [Ed. note: It means 'The Book'; today there is The Hasefer Publishing House.], where they sold books written by Jews or about Jews that couldn't be found in the other bookstores. The place also hosted fine arts exhibitions. I spent pleasant moments in that bookstore. I seldom actually purchased something, because I didn't have money, but I would go in and skim through the books - there was an intimate environment. I believe the manager's name was Steinberg, he was a cultivated man. The bookstore was at the entrance of the Villacrosse Passage [Ed. note: in the historic center of the capital]. There is an apartment house on that spot now.