

Thomas Molnar's Class Picture



This is the picture of my class from school year 1940-1941. The teacher is Armin Fleischmann. In the upper row 4th from right is Beno Benedek, he is in Canada and I correspond with him permanently. In the 2nd row 3rd from left is Miki Kaszas. Miki Kaszas was my classmate at high school too. When I come to Pest I always meet him. He plays the violin, but only as a hobby. I don't know what he did professionally. I am in the 3rd row, 4th from left. This was the Bethlen Square Jewish elementary school. I had my bar mitzvah at the Bethlen Square synagogue, but not exactly when I was 13, because the Arrow-Cross men were here at that time, only after the liberation in 1946. We were still living on Thokoly Street when I started going to the Bethlen Square Jewish elementary school, which was about a kilometer away from our apartment. Usually I went on foot there and back, and during these walks I first encountered anti-Semitism. Some ragamuffins used to bother the Jewish children, shouting abusive words, like dirty Jew, stinking Jew etc, and I learned at once that because of being Jewish I was different from the other Hungarian children. We never came to blows, and later I didn't have any other personal experiences, because I went to the Jewish elementary school, then to the Jewish high school, and this diminished the chance of anti-Semitic affairs. I was quite a diligent pupil at the elementary school, with all excellent grades, but I didn't really like school. I hated especially the religious subjects and I hated that on every Saturday morning and on all the Jewish holidays I had to go to the synagogue.