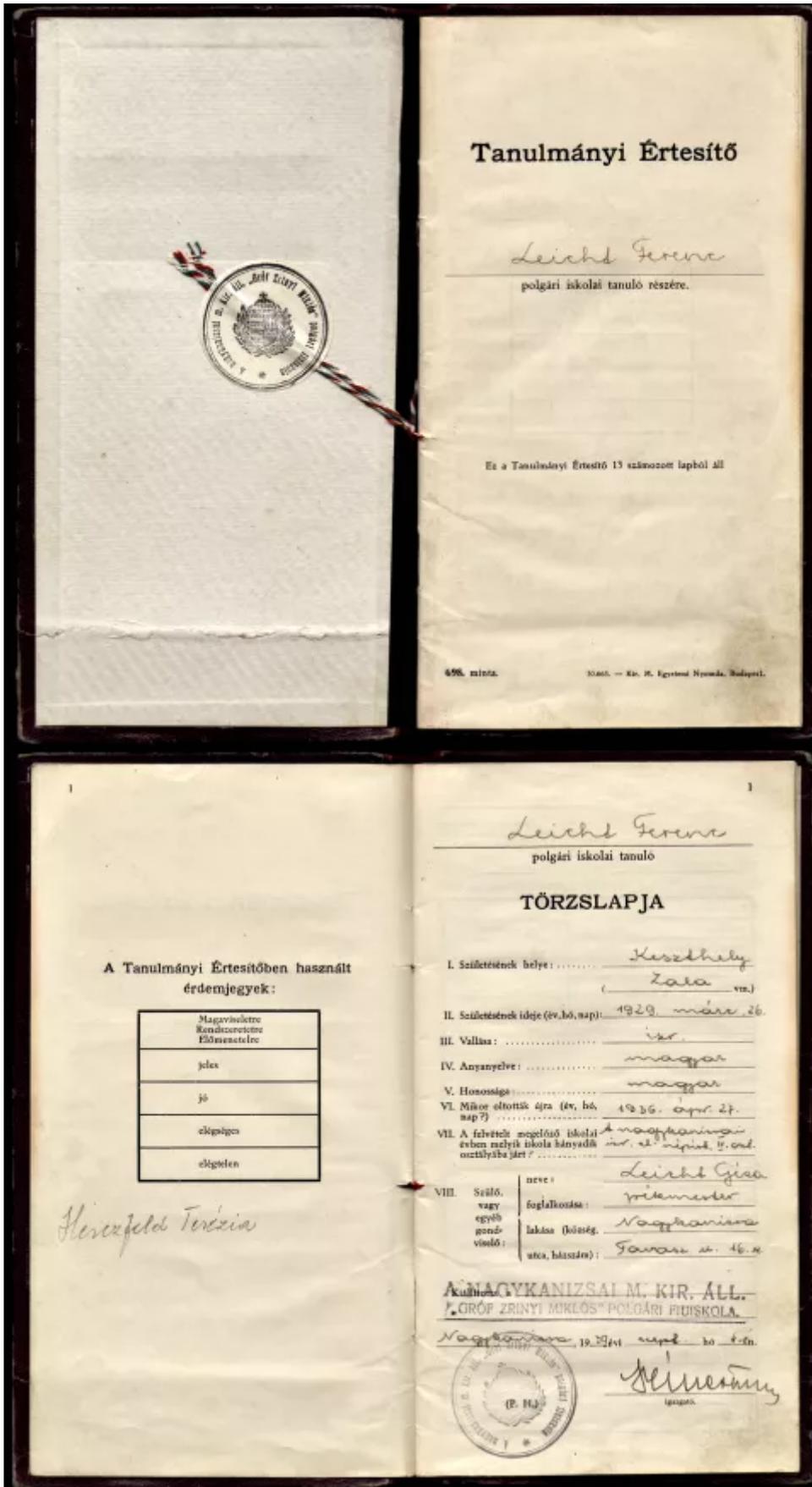


Ferenc Leicht's Middle School Report Card



This is my middle school report card from 1939.

In 1939, at the age of 10 I applied to the Piarist high school in Nagykanizsa. They enrolled 5 Jewish children, but they didn't enroll me as the 6th. This was overzealous from their part, because the anti-Jewish laws only limited the number of those who could be enrolled at universities, and I never forgave them for this.

My homeroom teacher at the Zrinyi Miklos boys' middle school was Gizella Arato, may she be healthy if she is still alive, or may her memory be blessed if she has already died - she was an antique teenage girl, they considered a 26 year old single woman an old maid, she was the strictest teacher in the school. She was incredibly strict, she taught Hungarian and German, and took both very seriously, with grammar, spelling, reading and everything. At that time it was a recommended pedagogical method at school to beat the children. With cane or hazel switch, which was as thick as my thumb. And despite the fact that I was one of the best students in Hungarian and German, at the Jewish school we had learned German from the 2nd grade of elementary school, she spanked me regularly if I was wrong. Otherwise she wasn't anti-Semite, if someone made a mistake, she spanked everyone indiscriminately

In middle school the children already went to the 'Levente', and we had to wear a 'Levente' uniform with yellow stripes. The 'Levente' activity was a compulsory extra curricular activity, twice a week, but only for Christians. They didn't admit Jews, even though we worked as much as the 'Levente' members exercised, we were called 'auxiliary training youth'. They prepared us for the forced labor. In the center of the town people laughed at us when we shoveled trash, swept and did other things. But it didn't really bother me, because I was the son of the baker from the end of the town, and who knew me besides our customers?! And those who knew me, let's say those to whom I delivered the rolls every morning - never thought of laughing at me. But there were a lot of Jewish children from wealthy families there with me, for example the son of the wealthiest lawyer in town, and people made fun of them with great pleasure. Being a scout wasn't obligatory, but they never admitted any Jews into the scout troops. I would have done that with greater pleasure. .

Most of the teachers at middle school were very anti-Semite, respect to the rare exceptions. For example I was by far the best in national defense class, I had 1, at that time grading was inversely. I could recount all the imbecility that was in that book, and there was a lot of bullshit in it. The teacher told the others: 'Shame on you, this Jewish child, who doesn't have anything to do with this knows it, and why don't you learn it?'

The fact that I was Jewish only meant for me that on Fridays and Saturdays I had to go to the synagogue. I hated the rabbi, dr. Erno Winkler, the poor thing, he was also killed unfortunately. He taught religion from the 1st class of elementary school until middle school, but I could never stand him. It happened that he slapped me in the face, I don't know anymore why, perhaps I was wrong in something. And what is unforgettable: he taught us to be Hungarian irredentists. He was, too. But he didn't teach us the Jewish religious laws, he didn't teach us what was allowed and what wasn't.