

Teachers Of The Elementary School In Krasnik



This picture of the teachers of the Krasnik elementary school was taken in the 1930s. Teachers (in the middle, from left): unknown, Mr Klec, Feliks Luszawski, Ferdynand Ruchaj, Olga Gancarz, Wladyslaw Pytlakowski, Father Franciszek Dziurzynski, Mieczyslaw Koszalko, Edward Gancarz.

In Krasnik there were no clashes or conflicts between the Jews and their Christian neighbors up until the beginning of the 1930s. Although some ridiculing went on, it never got serious. We, Jewish lads, walked freely all over town; there were no streets that we were afraid to go down. But soon after Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933 our Polish friends, whom we had played with, started throwing stones at us. Fortunately we were on very good terms with our Polish teachers. I remember their names: Gancarz, Koszalko, I even remember the priest who taught religious studies, although Jews didn't take part in that subject. The headmaster himself, Mr. Pytlakowski, who taught us history, was a member of the National Democratic Party, but he has remained in my memory as a decent man. But his two sons used to throw stones at us.

I completed seven grades of elementary school. Already at age nine or ten I started working at my father's workshop. He was a poor Jew and couldn't afford to pay any assistants. So when I started work in the workshop, Mr. Pytlakowski agreed that I could attend evening classes at the elementary school. So in the mornings I worked in the workshop, and in the evenings I studied. I went to school until March 1935, with two short breaks. At that time I was already active in the Jewish Trade Unions. On 1st May 1933 I organized a strike at school, which involved us not going to class but taking part in demonstrations. I was thrown out of school for that, but there was this very kind man, Mr. Laszkiewicz, who kept an eye on the school, a professional photographer, and through his intervention I was taken back. I was thrown out a second time, for the same thing, the next year, but in 1935 they didn't get the chance to throw me out because I was already in prison. All in all, I went to Mr. Pytlakowski's school for over ten years.