

Yehuda Maimon



This is my school mate from the Hebrew Gymnasium Poldek [Leopold] Wasserman who lives in Israel now. His picture is on the cover of the book written by my schoolfriend Lusia - Lea Shinar. After five years of elementary state school I became a pupil at the Dr Hilfstein Hebrew Gymnasium; Dr Hilfstein was its founder. That was a beautiful school, on Podbrzezie Street, apparently of very high standard, with state entitlements. All the subjects were in Polish, and there was also Hebrew. Only Jewish children, but well-off ones studied there, because the fees were about 50 zloty; that was an awful lot. There were very good relations, very good conditions at the school. We lived very comfortably and at our school there weren't any poor children. Anyway, as I've already said, the Hebrew gymnasium was more for the well-off. It was like an automobile show outside our school. There was this one boy, Rath, apparently they're in Vienna now, they survived the war. They had a company, 'Iskra', pencils and crayons. A very rich company. He used to come in a beautiful Chevrolet, I think it was, with a servant in glace, white gloves, who used to carry his briefcase. He would carry it into his young master's classroom, put it under his desk, take his coat off, and after lessons come for him. The Libans, two sisters, used to come in a carriage with a maidservant in a veil. There were nannies like that, in navy blue veils; you addressed nannies like that using the

term 'Schwester'. The Libans had quarries in Plaszow; it used to be known as 'Liban's Hill' - that was where the camp was later. And there was this one other boy, called Fangielbaum, his parents had a shop, 'Muza Harmonia' on Grodzka Street on the 2nd floor; there were the latest records and radios. They were very wealthy too. Lusia, a friend, who came to Cracow recently, told me when she came that he's alive and is in Israel. She brought me here some photographs of friends from before the war. Lusia (Lea Shinar), came to promote her 6th book, 'Losy krzyzuja sie w Warszawie' ('Paths cross in Warsaw'). Apparently it's about the ghetto; I haven't had time to read it. Here, in this book, are our schoolfriends, now living in Israel. Poldek Wasserman and Fredek Thieberger, we used to call him Frycek. During the occupation they took part in the attack on the cafe 'Cyganeria'.