

# David Kohen In The Youth's School Temperance Society 'Strong Call'



This is the picture of Youth's School Temperance Society 'Strong Call' at Haskovo's mixed school. The picture was taken on 15th June 1935. I'm the fifth from the left in the last row.

In Haskovo there was a Jewish school that consisted of four classes and a prep-class. There were as many as 20 pupils in a class. The school building had one storey only: a high ground floor. Once, I remember, I was punished not to go home for lunch for misbehaving. We, the kids then had the so-called gangs: a small group of friends with whom we played and walked around with. The boys from my gang then came and the 'captain' of the group put his back under the window so that I stepped on it and managed to escape. I ran home, had lunch and they helped me enter the classroom through the window again. The teachers didn't realize that I had escaped. Usually we had only half-day classes and I don't remember why on this day we had classes after lunch, too.

We had two teachers in Ivrit. The first one, Saul Levi, was a good teacher, but a bad pedagogue. He used to punish us for the least misbehavior. He beat my palms with a steel ruler. We didn't like him and had our revenges in our own ways. We had slings and our pockets were always full of pebbles. There was a garden near the Jewish school where a local inhabitant, Aunt Vanya, grew vegetables. The garden was at a lower level than the street and was irrigated by this old-fashioned mechanism driven by a donkey. Saul Levi was used to walking along the garden on the street, reading a newspaper. We used to wait for him to pass by, his attention wholly occupied by the newspaper. Then we ordered 'Fire!' and shot five or six pebbles onto his back after which we hid. We had some other teachers who used to punish us, but they had milder ways of doing so.

The Jewish school was a four-year one. After that I attended a Bulgarian three-year junior high school and a Bulgarian five-year high school.