

Henriette Mizrahy's Streetcar Pass



This is a 1942 streetcar pass for line number 5 belonging to my mother, Henriette Mizrahy [nee Schonfeld].

On 29th March 1941 I was leaving for Palestine with the ship 'Regele Carol I'. 29th March was my mother's birthday and a holiday for the Mizrahy household... So the day of 29th March 1941 came. It was a late winter morning with clouds and thaw. We woke up at dawn. We wished our mother 'Happy birthday!' with voices drowned in tears. She thanked us with the same emotions. My father, who had been discharged recently and had had his dignity of being a good Romanian citizen offended, sought to encourage us and to inspire us with a minimum of optimism. 'Trust me' - these were the last words which he told me on the platform of the North Railroad Station, as I was leaving towards the unknown, towards Palestine. 'Yes, I trust you, but I don't trust Antonescu!' Many years later, my father would still recall this dialogue.

When Romania was still neutral we received postcards from home; they were written in French, in order to escape more easily the British censorship, which was official during the entire war. Those postcards mainly contained news from and about the family. Yet, my father, with his unequaled humor, would slip a joke from time to time, like 'tiens-les de court' ['keep your eyes open']... After Romania entered the war - and, particularly, towards the end of 1941 -, the direct correspondence was no longer an option. For a year or two, I still got mail via Turkey, where my father knew a man who got his letters, put them in another envelope, and sent them to me. Then this way of communication could no longer be used either. The only news we got from one another were the messages sent through the International Red Cross; we were only allowed to send them once every three months and they could not exceed 25 words.