

Sophia Degtiar's Railway Card



This is my mother Sophia Degtiar's railway card, issued in Bucharest, Romania in 1936, by CFR, Romanian railways. My mother worked as a typist in the railroad office. My mother was born in Beltsy in 1908. She finished a gymnasium. She was 18 when her mother died. My mother lived with her brother and worked in Istanbul for a year. She also studied in an English college. Then she didn't like it there for some reason and returned to her father. She worked as a typist in a bank and then became a document operator. My mother was of average height and very pretty. She met my father and after his service was over, they moved to Bucharest where they got married in 1930. I don't think they had a wedding party. They didn't have a marriage certificate issued by the synagogue, but they had one issued by a civil registry office. They rented an apartment in Bucharest. I have vague memories of our apartment in Bucharest. My nanny and I stayed in the biggest room. There was a dining room with a radio and a big table in it. My parents rearranged the fore-room for a bedroom. They had one big double bed in it. My parents must have spoken Russian at home since I started talking in this language. My parents didn't observe Jewish traditions or celebrate Jewish holidays at home. Perhaps, my mother baked something on Purim or Chanukkah. My mother was a typist at the railroad office. My nanny was Polish I think. She was a devoted Catholic and took me to the Roman Catholic Church regularly. At first I listened to the priest when he pronounced his prayers. Once, I started singing myself, when everybody else was quiet. After that my nanny stopped taking me with her. Later she left us. My mother was desperate as she had to go to work and needed a baby sitter. She told me, as she was wondering what to do about the situation, she saw a young nice-looking girl walking towards her. My mother asked her, 'Where can I find a nanny?' And the girl replied, 'But I can work for you!'