

Judita Sendrei's Father, Matija Bruck's Passport



This is a photo of my father's passport. It was issued in Berlin in 1918 and dated as valid through March 31, 1919. It is a passport issued by the Austro-Hungarian Empire and it is bilingual - German and Hungarian, so it must have been from the time that he was studying there. My father, Matija Bruck, was born in Bacsalmas, Hungary on December 21, 1890 and died on January 11, 1961 in Subotica. My father came from a very poor family. He used to tell us how he went to another Jewish family's house for lunch every day. It was known exactly which family he would go to on which day. He suffered a great deal during his education. After graduation, he went to Berlin where he enrolled in medical school. However, during the first anatomy class, even before dissecting the corpse, he fainted. He quickly realized that medicine was not for him and he transferred to the chemistry department. During the days he gave classes and tutored children, and in the evenings he studied. After graduating from the university, he found work. Before that, he noticed that the grapevines on his father's small parcel of land produced very weak grapes. Experimenting in the different laboratories where he worked part-time to gain experience, he invented a material for protecting grapevines. He did not have enough money to pay for registering the patent, which was called 'COSAN,' so he went into partnership with a friend who paid the money for him and with whom he later shared the dividends equally. He received the dividends continuously until 1934, with the arrival of Hitler the dividends were discontinued. They still use his patent all around the world, under different names, and today they are still making it in the 'Zorka' factory in Sapac, Yugoslavia. From the proceeds of the dividends he bought a 30-hectare vineyard in the Backa vineyards, a house in Belgrade on Sava Kovacevic Street (with 14 apartments) and a villa in Palic, where we spent our vacations. Father was a great lover of Palestine and he went there for the first time in 1934. He was a socialist at heart. Upon his return from Palestine, with great animation, he told us

of his impressions, especially about kibbutzim which he liked very much.