

Samuel Eiferman As A Young Man



This is me in 1949. I was only 24 years old.

I wasn't able to return to my native village, Sipot. I hadn't seen my village since 1941, when we had been deported. I found my home empty - it had been looted back then, in 1941. I stayed for a day in the village and the sight was discouraging. There were no Jews left and other people had moved into their houses. The village had a new mayor whom I didn't know. I went to him and filed a statement that expressed my consent about assigning my house to another family. The mayor then issued a certificate stating that I made no material claims. I rushed with that paper to Storojinet and I crossed the border with Romania through the town of Siret. I had to give up all my possessions in order to be allowed to cross the border, you see.

On 6 April 1946 my mother and I returned to Romania. The Russians had allowed us to cross the border on condition that we would go to Israel. Many Jews took that opportunity. Although we were only supposed to transit Romania, my mother wouldn't go any further, so stayed here.

The first time we came to Braila, my mother and I were lodged by the Herscovici family who lived at the last number on Republicii St. We stayed one year with them. Then we moved at the corner of Unirii St. and Republicii St., where Mrs. Gross lived. She had a dye store downstairs. She didn't charge us anything. Back then, it was still easy for Jews to find a place to stay. The old Jewish houses were usually occupied by one elderly woman who lived alone in as much as 10 rooms. Our landlady, Mrs. Gross, owned a store, but she didn't have any children.

In 1946, when I returned to Romania, I was assigned to the town of Caracal; I went there a couple of times, but didn't like it, so I came to Braila. I still didn't hold the papers that allowed me to settle

in the country. In 1951, when I wanted to get married, I had to apply for Romanian citizenship. I was received by Commissioner Ieseanu; I explained what my situation was and he issued an identity card for me.