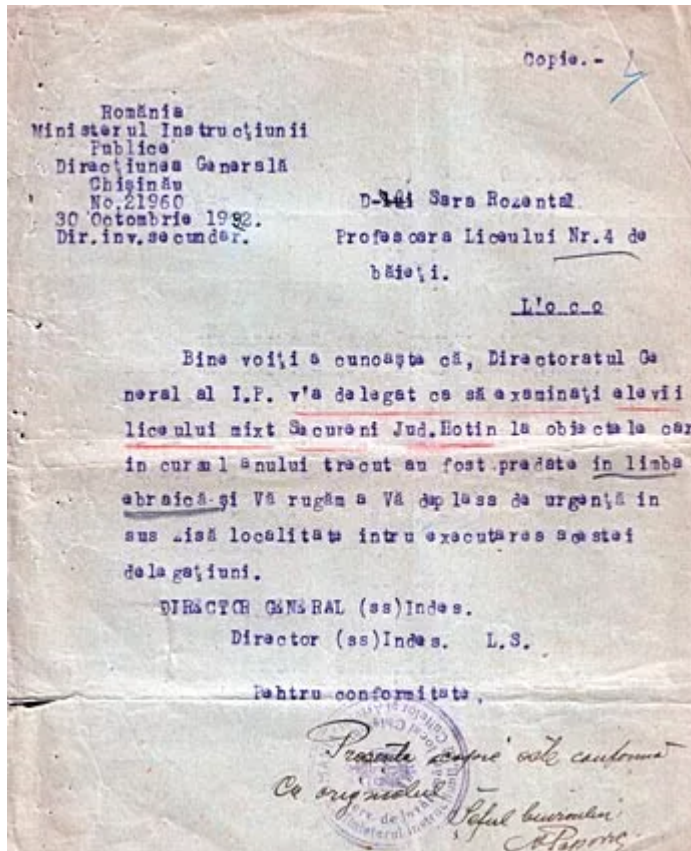


Sarah Fichgendler's Official Letter From The Kishinev Department Of Education



This is a letter from the Department of Education of the town of Kishinev dated as of 30th October 1922 appointing my mother, Sarah Fichgendler, nee Rosenthal, to be an examiner in the grammar school in Secureni Hotin district. The translation of the letter is as follows: 'Miss Rosenthal, teacher of lyceum #4 for boys, local. This is to notify you that the management appoints you to examine students of the lyceum in Secureni Hotin district in the subjects taught in the previous year in Hebrew and to request that you promptly depart to the subject location to perform this mission. Chief director. Director.'

My mother was born in 1887. When she was four, my grandfather died. My grandmother Ester raised her to be a future Jewish wife. My mother learned to cook and sew and knew Jewish traditions well. However, my mother was eager to study. She had a strong character and ran away from Telenesti at the age of 16. She went to study in the Jewish grammar school. After finishing it she got a certificate of a teacher. My mother moved to Tiflis, that's what Tbilisi was called at the time, to her brothers Max and Gedaliye. I don't remember under what circumstances they had left there. She worked as a teacher.

When she was in Tbilisi this was the period of genocide against the Armenian population in Turkey in 1915-1916. My mother told me that in Tbilisi a committee was organized to provide assistance to Armenians and she worked in this committee. She said when Armenians came to talk to her, they complained, 'You are a Georgian and you provide more help to Georgians,' and vice versa, when

Georgians talked to her, they said, 'You help Armenians more than Georgians.' They never guessed that she was neither Georgian nor Armenian, but a Jew. My mother helped Georgians and Armenians equally.

In 1917 my grandmother fell ill in Telenesti. My brothers decided that one of them had to go there and of course, it was to be my mother. She went to her mother and stayed in Bessarabia. This was at the time when Bessarabia was annexed to Romania in 1918 and the border was closed. My mother moved to Kishinev and was a teacher of Hebrew in a lyceum for boys.