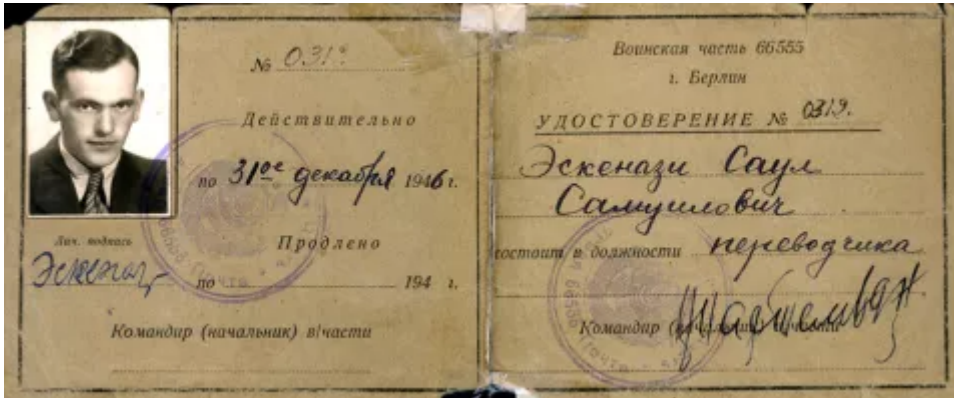


Interpreter Identity Card Of The Strategical Department In Berlin



Here you can see my identity card, which I received after the victory when I started working at the strategical department in Berlin.

It was our secret service and counterespionage department. All inhabitants of Leningrad, and not only of Leningrad know what the Big House is. [Big House is a building in St. Petersburg (Leningrad), where since 1932 People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs was situated.

The Big House became a symbol of lawlessness and terror. According to a legend, the sense of the name is the following: 'The Big House is the highest building in the city. From its windows everyone can see Siberia.']

Here you can realize the level of nonsense: they refused to send me to the front line as a private because of my political unreliability (as they thought), and in Berlin they trusted me more than difficult affairs. To tell the truth, I fought fairly, I did not hide from bullets, never betrayed my comrades - so, I proved my reliability.

Certainly, my perfect knowledge of German language was of great importance. Once again I had to thank the Bucharest lyceum. I rented an apartment, I took an officer's post. I was engaged in translations, but not only in translations. I cannot tell you everything even now.

Anyway, thanks to my work in strategical department in Berlin I became able to catch pilfers, when I began working at school. No ruses could help them! If it was necessary to find out who had broken a glass, they addressed me.

Once I even managed to return a motorcycle to its owner (that motorcycle was stolen by pupils of our school). You will not believe, but I was even invited to work in militia.

But in general, I did not like that work. People ought to stand aside from such places. And I decided to start new peaceful life.

In 1946 I got demobilized. And in the USSR I had nobody and nothing. I did not know how to start the new life. I wanted to go to Leningrad. But Leningrad was a closed city: people were allowed to go there only if they had been born there or had work there.

My front-line comrade helped me to get to Leningrad having sent me an invitation. His name was Alexey and I do not remember his surname. What is ridiculous: when I arrived in Leningrad, I did not find him there.

His neighbors told me that he had fallen in love with a girl from Tadjikistan and had urgently left for her. He even left no address. So I had no opportunity to thank him for his assistance.

It ensured my coming to the city, which became my home very soon. You remember I thought that I would remain Wandering Jew for ever. Really, nobody waited for me, nobody was pleased with my returning. I was alone both in the city and in the whole world.

I understood it, but at the same time my heart was pleased that I was alive. I fought against Hitler, I would have fought against that bastard on the side of any country. Step by step I realized that the country on which side I fought, was my native country.

So on 14th August 1946 I appeared in Leningrad. And on 16th August entrance examinations at the College of Foreign Languages began. I sent my documents to the French language department. The most difficult examination was composition.

My Russian was very poor. Only regarding round oaths, I had no match. There I was worth an academic status of professor. But unfortunately entrance examinations required different sort of knowledge.

And one very beautiful girl wrote that composition for me. Don't look at me that way: you see, now I am old and bald, but 60 years ago I was rather handsome.

Moreover, I was a front-line soldier! That is why she herself suggested to do it and did it. And the rest examinations I passed myself and got very good marks.

I became a student. But the College director told me 'Your knowledge of Russian language will not permit you to study in our College. I allow you to study till the first session.'

Here I'd like to tell you that during years of my study in that College I got only one good mark, all the others were excellent. It is interesting that that good mark I got for military translation. Guess why: because I had to translate into Russian. It was ridiculous, taking into account that I had finished war in the rank of captain-translator.

It was very important for me to be an excellent student, because they received 25% higher stipend. And I could rely only upon myself. I lived in a hostel. My stipend (even increased one) was not enough for living.

I earned money additionally: worked as a docker, helped to carry books in libraries, etc. And I was an excellent student. I had time for everything. At that time I had a feeling (more likely subconscious) that I was living not only for myself, but also for all my family members.

I graduated from the College so successfully that acquired the right of teaching not only at schools, but also in higher educational institutions. It was written down in my diploma.