

Here are recollections that Judah Asimov wrote in his final year. The grammar isn't perfect. But it's worth noting that Judah didn't begin learning English until he was nearly 30. English was his fourth language and the only one to use the Roman alphabet. He was already fluent in Yiddish, Hebrew and Russian. Copied verbatim, these stories convey the cadence of his voice and the loving person that he was. – Nanette Asimov

By Judah (Jack) Asimov, 1896 - 1969

To start about myself, I must start with my Fathers great grandfather, after whom I where named Judah.

As I grow up this is what I been told about him, He was one of the great scholars, and evidently the name Asimov came to some of his predecessor, as all in the family where dealers in Rye, that is planted in our part of Russia in fall and it is covert with deep snow all winter, that it keep warm the seeds, and this kind of Rye is called in Russia (Asimy chleb) and when last names were given to the Jewish people they gave him the name (Asimy) which to me it came as Asimov.

So my fathers great grandfather Judah inherited the name and in our town Petrowitchi in the middle of town a great piece of land, actually the land of all the town belongt to a (Pomeschik) a land owner for dozens of mile all around, but the towns people owned it on a tax payable basis to the land owner,

each one had the right to transfer or sell it out right subject to the tax to the land owner, so he exchanged it for a third of land at the west end of town, and got himself a few rubel and left to travel in the towns wherever he could reach by foot from town to town with a book that he authort, not to sell but to give away to the shullun, and the main thing is to tell the Jewish people that they should mend their ways, and become more pious, he had two sons that I know about by their names Abraham Ber and Moishe Iacov, if he had other children is not known to me, I also don't know at what age he left his family when he went away to preach to the Jewish people.

His son Abraham Ber was my Fathers grand father, He died when I was about three years old, and I remember that somebody brought me over to his bed that he shal bles me and he gave me some kind of a red jelly, but his face I never could visualize.

The stories I was hearing about him, was that he was a born natural smart man, and that he was a great scholar, that goes without saying, also they used to tell me that he was like his predecissors a dealer in Rye and other products and he was in town a great charitable man.

To him and his first wife where born twelve children and except my grand father who was the twelfed one all died infants, now imagine how much my grand father meant to him, his name was Mendel, but he was not a scholar, he was not ignorant in the jewish reading and praing, but no talmud, what he mist in the

studies he made up in cleverness, and I don't know how but year after year he used to get elected in the society of Psalm of David Sayers, and in the (Chevro-Kadisho) this is wollunteers used to be employing themselves with the holly thing of burial of the dead, to him they used to come the first thing to decide where any of them shall get the burial place, and that was not a easy job to preform to satisfy every body but his decision prevailed allways.

I mentiond Before that my great grand father had a brother Moshe Iakow. Him I remember when he was very old half blind he was a scholar and for years he was a cantor for the high holly days in the old shul, when I remember him, he was allready on a ten rubel a year pension, but if they would allow him he would still want to be a kantor, he never believed that somebody could perform better then him, any way he had two dauthers and so there was no Asimov left from him.

I also mentiond that Abraham Ber with his first wife, evidently he had a second wife and with her he had a son also named Judah, and he also was not only not a scholar, but he was a very everage man, in my time he married and had a daughter while I was in the United States I heard that she becamse a M.D. but I do not know anything more about her.

My father (ZTL) was the first burn to my grand father and even I was not the first born to my father I had a sister who died befor I was born but to my grand father I was the first grand child and the beloved one, In shul he used to hold me with

himself, and I was so loved by him, that he would without thinking for a minute give his life for me or kill somebody for me.

I remember one episode, I was at that time a few months over eight years, and we had in our house a gentile girl servant steady she was with about 12 or 13 she came to us when I was old maybe 4 years or less when I remember her she was talking jewish just as good as I and when I started at the age of 5 CHEDER in winter or any bad wheater she used to take me there and lunch time to bring to me my lunch, waite and whatch I should eat and take back the dishes from the lunch and in the winter nights (as we you to used to study from 8 AM to 8 PM) she used to come for me, She even learned how to pray with me in hebry (MADE ANI) in english "I give thanks unto Thee, O King, who livet and enduret, who hast mercifully restored my soul unto me; great is Thy faitfulness." All this she used to chant with me in perfect hebry. And this girl once when I was by 8½ years old came with my lunch and find me crying, and was so apset that I refused to eat the lunch, she run home not to father, but to my grand father and when he came in CHEDER he did not want to know why I am crying, but for him was enough that I cry and if I would let him he would realy injure my REBBI I held him back by clomoring into him and crying it was my fault, and the REBBI tryed to help me but the older boy was stronger and older" I was allways with some older boy's in CHEDER but they allways knew less then I " and that how by jelosity, he hit me and I felt that I was in the right and started to cry and could not stop. So when grand father got settled from his anger he took me

home for to day is enough and told the REBBI if he will not watch it should not happen again he will not let me to continue in his CHEDER, this is the example of his love for me, and it last it even when I became older I remember a other episode I was allready a old boy of 10 or even 11 years old a Friday night my father (ZTL) came with me from shul and we had our traditional meal, and then I said something my father (ZTL) did not like the way I said and scolded me, I got angry and ran to grandfather to complain about my father (ZTL) and my grandfather never had to know who is right or who is wrong one thing he knew if it touched me I am the right one regardless, he came holding me by my hand to our house and started to scold my father (ZTL) that I said to myself no matter how my father (ZTL) would scold me I will not run any more to my grandfather, I could not stand how he scolded my father (ZTL) and what more I was understanding that time to think if I will some time have a son and he will have a sone and his son will complain to me I will never mix in between my son and grand son. And I remembered it and fullfelt it that you could not say or Stan or Marcia that I ever took part between them and their children, and this was the resolution from that episode.

In 1916 I had to leave home for a reason that when I will come to it I will explain, but for now is enough to say I was in Borisoglebsk at that time, and I received a telegram to come home immidiately, I came walked in our house and the first thing I noticed is on the window my grandfathers SIDUR (prayer book) I asked what is doing grandfathers SIDUR here, the answer was that why we called you home, I unterstood

allready the tragedy that my grandfather is dead, I could not forgive them that they did not called me sooner home but I was told when he first became sick they hoped for a quick recovery, and then it happened so quick that under no circumstance I would be able to come in time while he was yet alive, and with the funeral they will not wait as is our custom to bury in the same day of dead. And so is my beloved grandfather taken from us and I was not around to see him at his death.

My Father & Mother

To talk about my Father (ZL) I must start with my mother, she came from a family that her mother counted more than her father, who was a very simple man but a very honest and pious, but my grandmother his wife lieved to a grate old age, I believe she pased the hundred mark, she had 8 childreen my mother was the oldest, and she had two sisters & five brothers, they where all very smart people for exemple the oldest of the brothers Nochum Jacob when he was about eleven years old, made a litle box polished it and painted it and inside he fitted a quart botle, took it to their garden where they grow for their use all kind of vegetables, and took a bud from a cucumber, placed it inside the bottle, and watched it grow, when he considered it enough, he cut it out of from the stem leaving that cucumber inside the bottle filled it with preserves that it should last, and it startled the neighborhood how did he put such a cucumber inside such a small hole. This is a exsemple how all of them where smart people, but her brother SCHMEREL had (SMICHO OF HEIROO) that means he was ordained to be a rabbi but he

preferred to be a business man, her brother (ELIE) he beside being a great scholar in talmud also had a russian high school diploma, it was more education than a american high school, he was in the years 1912-14 a salesman for a coal minning Co. and a corosponded of a paper in the city of (BACHMUT) which has now days a new name that I don't know. That is the family my mother was a desendent, my mother was well versed in Jewish ritual she used to pray all kind of prayers with other woomen who did not know how. In one thing she was the molst autstanding woomen, in her charieties, in my time there was poor Jews that used to go from town to town begin, the usual donation was a half copike or a piece of bread, but not my mother all the beggars knew that they used to let to come to her not when they were in the neighborhood but when they felt hungry, and my mother used to feed them with some you would call here yogurt, and cheese all of her preparations we used to have our own two cow's, and of cource some time a plate of Schave, or a piece of hering, but allways she feed every body that came to her door, besides my father (ZL) used to bring a "EIRACH" a guest for Saturday, that was allready for three meals, I remember ones a Preacher came to our town and my father (ZL) liked his preaching, so he invited him to come for PESACH but usually before PESACH the snow used to start melting so he told him to come two weeks before and two weeks after pesach it was impossible to leave and so we had him for five weeks living with us, in our house.

One more thing happened that while I am telling how mine mother was charitable A preacher came to our town and for the

first time in my ten or eleven years I have seen a preacher, dressed in a white shirt with a tie and good clothes and he want start preaching unless some body guaranty fifteen rubel a unheard summ of money that time, but his name meant something to my father (ZL) and he guaranteed the summ of money, but the townspeople when he went collecting did not want to give for this preacher more then for any other one, my mother thought over the cituation and told my father (zl) to pay the full summ by himself, because she said the people think now that if they give they give it like for you, the people had no obligation and she said we will somehow, get along if we will pay out that much money ourself, and will not ask any more anybody. Many times she could have spend the charity money she divided, for her own needs, but to her never was spent a kopike better then for charity.

Now I come to my father (ZL) him I loved with all my heart I started CHEDER at the age of five and some months, and then I started to help in my Fathers (ZL) business. Watching whille I was home to see that some body shall not take that he or she did not pay for, We hade a mill that was in the widht of our lot which was about my estimation now 70 feet, and the widht from the mill that went in the length of our lot was about 35 feet and we used to make from bookwheat the clean grain that is called here (KASHA) after that we had a 10 food openning, which was used as a entrass with hoe and buggy to the yard and after the oppenning started our living house which was 40 feet long and 25 wide, at the finish of the house there was buildings for a length of 65 foot and a width of 25 feet divided for

different purposes of storing and selling from store, besides from the finish of the width of the store room over the width of the lot was a place where our cows used to stay and the horses and their feed used to be stored, our lot was altogether 150/70 feet, and there was a lot of work that had to be performed, I remember in the year 1909 a fire destroyed almost a half of the town, it was all wooden structures and no insurance, but it did not reach us, so after the fire we were stock with a lot of merchandise because the fire was in late fall and O/A of the muddy roads was impossible to ship out the merchandise to Roslavl so night in night out I used to circle our lot with the Blg's, and watch that no body shall started a fire.

My father (ZL) was a dealer in all kind of grain. Like rye, oats, barley, and so on, beside bookwheat which he used to buy in quantities and in our mill we used to convert it to clean grain that was ready to be cooked and eaten (by the way we allways had a man who used to work the mill, take care on the horses) my father (ZL) used just see that we shall have enough bookwheat that the man shall be able to make a living under the circumstances that existed at that time, the last man who worked for us was Mr. Revsin, the father of Boris Revsin, you meet one of Borises sons. My father (ZL) used to deal in linen the raw kind and they come under different names in Russian they are known as (penka, len, poskany,) and some more names, my father (ZL) was a great specialist to sort out by grades and by qualities he tried to teach me, but When I was about 11 years of age he told me what I can teach you in a year there is a way for you to learn in one day, he hired 5 horses in sleds and we loaded

them with (Penka) and told one of the peasants to go around with me every where I will tell him and send us off to Roslavl and he told me to go first to Mironov who had a great factory that used to produce Oils from which was manufactured the best paints, also a Factory that used to work out the best ropes that England used to use on her ships, and also he was a great partner of a bank that was known under the name (Ruso-Asiatsky bank) and tell him that I am the son of Aaron and watch what he is going to do with the penka how he will look at it, but no matter how much he will offer I should go with the Penka to Korobovsky who was his brother in law and partner in all the above mentioned enterprises, and from him I shall go to a dealer by the name of Fain who was just a intermediary if I would sell to him he would resell to the above mentioned factory, but I should not sell to him no matter how much he will offer, but then I shall go to the Factory of Mironov, there he told me is a hired man a Mr. Maksim and see what he will do with the Penka and between them all you will learn more than I can teach you in a year, I followed all the instructions and the peasants were mad but the one who had to go with me promised them a special reward of a full bottle of vodka that they shall go along, the result was I lost 10 rubel from the prize Mr. Mironov offered me in the morning and Maksim on the factory, and I was tired and cold and all night we traveled back to Petrovitchi and my Father (ZL) was so happy that I learned and was able to retell to him all the happenings and he did not mind the 10 rubel at all, the lesson was worth to him, that I should understand what the buyer is looking for.

(My father was a real believer in g-d) and here is a story that happened to prove the dealers in town had a unwritten understanding that one shall not go in, to the others dealers vilages, of course when a pesant came with merchandise to some body's door he could buy as the best of his jugement, some times even over paying to shwo up, so ones happened a man from our home town on the instruciones from one of the dealers came in one of our main vilages and bought the (konoply) this is the seeds freom the (PENKA) and this mostly we would collect for what the pesant owe us, and one thing if the pesant got a hold of case, he would not bring it to you we would have to wait for our money till next year, and we would have to trust him even some more.

When it came the news to us of course he was sorry but when the man meet him and told him that what are you saying now, my father (ZL) told him you know after meals I allways say grace, and it is said "Blessed art thou, O Lord our G-d King of the universe, who feedest the whole world with thy goodness, with grace with lovingkindness and tender mercy." It does not say with (Konoples) what is coming to me will be repaid some way. So I do not vory, because I am sure you will not get more than it is comming to you.

I was one of eight childreen my mother gave birth to, two died in their infacy a little girl, 2 years before I was born, and a little boy of 6 months in 1904, because we did not have in our home town a Dr. but a feldsher (it would amount here the

equivalent of a registered nurse, not with the qualifications of the modern instruments).

Father (ZL) never raised a hand on any of us because he always reasoned with us even if that what he told us to do was an order, that we must fulfill, but once he gave me his open hand right in my face and that was when I was old not quite 18, and here is how it happened.

My father was informed that a certain land owner has a forest that he wanted to sell, My father (ZL) had a friend from his boyhood and they were inseparable, they had an agreement that since there is always people that like to make a quarrel between friends, so no matter who should tell either of them something about the other, they shall first talk it out and it can happen 3 things 1) the teller told an outright lie, 2) the teller twisted a few words and it gave a different meaning to what was said and 3) it could happen that he gave a correct account of what was said, but it was said without malice and in error and if an apology is in order it should follow but no anger and no separation, and this is the friend my Father (ZL) invited to go with him to that land owner to buy the forest, and I was with them, we had to travel about 12 or 13 miles to that land owner, on the way we met a peasant a so called friend and we stopped to talk to him, one of his questions was where we are going and we told him we are going to that certain village, we came there and after a little bargaining we agreed on the price, and we had to go to a (VOLOSTH) that is a village, that had an official who could notarize the trade, before it would be possible, to make all the

official papers, and just in that moment when we were ready to go out to the vilage, in walks a man from our home town, he to meet the same peasant and he told him our destination, I do not know if he also knew about that the land owner want to sell or he was curios, why we went to that vilage since it is not one of the official vilages that we would allways travel, any way he walks in and said "I am a partner, if not I will offer \$500.00 rubel more) so in order not to loose the buy or start a auction we agreed, and he left, we went to that vilage and made the papers on two names, not mentioning that new man in any way, and we came home, and immidiately we let know that man that we bought and noting he can do and that he is not and never was our partner, That man called us to the Rabbi for a (DIN TORAH) the rabbi should decide if he is a partner, I said to the rabbi that this man is equal to a robber on a lonely road and if he ask for everething you have you give, but latter if you can recover it you do, but the rabbi listend to all four of us, and he decided in favor of the man, that he is a partner, I jumed up and hollerd out some (DIN TORAH) a robber get his robbery to hold, and right then and there my Father (ZL) gave me his five right in my face how dare you to say anything in front of the rabbi's deccition this is arrogance against the rabbi, it is his decition and we will abide by it.

A few weeks latter my fathers (ZL) best friend the partner comes over to tell us that he made a bargain with that man to give him a few hundred rubel for his part, and since he is in the pappers not mentiont, so we are rid of him, we agreed, a few days latter he comes over and tells that a man from a near by

village is willing to give us a 1000.00 rubel profit above all our expenses, and his suggestion is we should accept the offer, we decided to accept, when the time came to work in that forest we find out that the best friend, and the man all 3 are partners, and with the 500.00 rubel they got rid of us, and then the friendship went out of the window, My father was not an enemy but they stopped talking and no body have seen them together again as they used and no matter how much some wanted to know the real story we never told any body, so nobody would be able to come to the X friend and tell him something.

A year or a little more than a year that "Good Friend" became sick and they took him to Smolensk in a hospital, after a while in town past by a rumor that he is very sick, that already was too much, and my Father (ZL) immediately went to Smolensk he found him yet alive, but he did not know already anything and he could not recognize any thing my Father (ZL) waited there till he died, and then he came with the family back, and after his funeral he wanted to help his widow with any thing he could, but she did not accept from him anything, but confessed because he did not have the required money to bring to the deal and the new man put up all the money, and still kept him for a partner, my father (ZL) was harsh broken all my time that I remained in Russia, about the incident.

I began this writing with our lot that we had, this lot and all the rest of Petrovitchi belong to the land owner and how it was originally sold to the towns people I do not know, but each owner of a lot could have sold him to some body else, provide

the tax of a fixed amount has to be paid to the land owner the owner in my time was a woman of Polish descent, and every year she used to send her representative to tell the town that the land owner by her grace does not want this year the tax, and this was going on for many years, that the townspeople forgot this is a tax.

In 1909 the woman land owner died, and a nephew of hers inherited all her land, and he came in Petrovitchi, and announced that he will not ask anybody the tax from the previous years, but for this year everybody must pay the tax. My father (ZL) went to his designated place to pay the tax, he sees, that after he accepts the money he gives the people a paper to sign, when his next came he asked a question, why does the one who pays have to sign, in his estimation the one that receives the money has to sign a receipt, that the tax is paid, the new owner was there himself and said this is because I say so and that is how I want and you sign to, so my father (ZL) walked out without paying and without signing.

My father (ZL) came home and one of the rich men in our home town came to us with a how come you make yourself an exception, everybody signs but you he told me he will ruin the town. My father (ZL) told him there is nothing that he can do, because if he accepts money he must give the receipt, and that was the happy thing that happened, because in the paper that he gave the people to sign it said that they agree that the payment they made for this year is rent instead of tax, and of course rent could be raised any time he wants, and so he took

my father to a law court where a other land owner was the judge, but in a case like that he could not give out a final decition, but we had the right to apeal the case, and then the townspeople realized what it mean all of a sudden to become tenants, and we were with him in all kinds of courts, my father (ZL) was traveling to Mogileff on Dnepr and than to Petersburg there he went with Petrovitcher Rabbi (ZL) to see the DUMA representative Mr. Vinaver, but it was never decided, because of the revolution in 1917, if that man would have shown up I believe he would be killed there.

OUR ANCESTORS

My Father in Low

I never knew him personaly, he died I was not quite five years old. Mamma remembers him, he loved her very much, she was about six years when he died.

When I started to grow up, then I started to hear the stories about him. He was a great scholar in talmud, between so many great shoolars, that our home town had. Petrowitchi was known between the small and large towns that suranded our town that Petrowitchi has a lot of great shcolars, acording to the population of Petrowitchi, but all of them without a exception would talk about him with grate Reverence, in fact it was enough for somebody in a scholastic argument about a certain point to remember that Reb Isaac Berman explained the point this way or that way and the argument stoped rightaway.

He was married to some body else before he married Mamma's mother, and all I know he had some sons and a daughter, from which I knew two David and uncle Joseph, I have heard, about a other son Mordchai who died before I even knew Mamma, and he was not married himself, he posed over three hundred rubel, which in Russia at that time was a great fortune, he wanted to leave the money to his little sister, but mamma even as a child was very clever and from the going on in the house where the talk was that the money shall go in a trust fund to be given to needy persons as loans without interest thereoff, and sinse he is single they the poor people will remember him a long while after he is deceased. Mamma refused to accept the money, saying that she agrees that the money will be better used in the trust fund, What happened to the money, Mamma does not know for sure, but in town they used to talk that for a while the money was used for treh purpose he prescribed, but then it was in hands that di d not care to much and after it was loaned out to so many people that some never bothered to repay, and from the frund was in our time when we grew up nothing left, not even the people who where intrusted to manage the fund.

Mamma had three brothers all younger then her, and since her Father died when she was not quite six years old, and her mother had to take over the business, with the Russian peasants from the suranding villages, so mamma became a mamma to her three brothers at her early age.

Mamma was given by her mother a hired peasant girl to help her, but she had to manage and allways tell the girl what to do. Mamma worked hard as a little girl, and still harder when she started to grow up. Her mother remarried to a man who was a very respected person in our home town, he was the owner of a store where he was selling all kind of articles used in a houshold from cotton, needles, to pottery, to all kind of trimmings and so on, he had also many childreen some of them that we knew and more, that we did not know, but one daugher, he brought in with him to become a sister to mamma, and since her mother was buisy with her business and the man she married was crippled with artritities, actualy so he could not move, he used to seat allways, he even hardly could move his hands, so mamma and her new sister became partners and managers of the store. Finaly it fall on mammas shoulders all toegether, because her sister, was either to smart or maybe in my estimate to dum, but mamma had to travel to Vitebsk to buy the merchandise and then stay in store to sell, because mamma had a smile and a kind word for everebody and everybody loved to buy from her and even when her sister was in store she would many times tell the customer to ask mamma about this or that.

Right after the Kerensky revelution Mamma traveled to Vitebst as usual to buy merchandise when she finished her buying and came to the train to go back home, and there on the station is Kornilow with a Army to start his revolt, any way the trains don't move but mamma managed to hear that on a other track there is a train that is ready to move out I don't know how she managed to transfer all of her packages to that train and she

came to Roslavl without losing any of her packages, I happened to be that day in Roslavl, and helped her to get a horse and buggy and we with the merchandise came home without any more trouble.

That was the last time mamma traveled to buy merchandise, because at that time I had something to say to, we were officially considered as will get married and I did not want her to take that kind of risk any more, because the bands, under so many names like Petlura, Deniken, and many more started to operate all around Russian cities and we never knew where they will show up next.

About a week or few days more before the communist revolution I became sick with typhoid fever, I was sick for three weeks, mamma not knowing that it is contagious visited me every day while I was sick, My mother used to warn her that she puts her own life on the line she should better watch for herself, but I think, Mamma was destined to help and work for everybody and worry, that how she were when she was young and that how it is now, so I do want my children to understand her why she worries even now for every body. When I woke up from my sickness the first thing I remember I asked for a paper to read, I sat up started to read and could not understand what is going on in the paper, it talks something like Kerensky the traitor and Lenin signed some kind of a decree, but mamma was there to explain that for the time I did not know what is going on, the communist revolution of October 25, November 6, our time happened, and we are now under the soviets.

That how we changed from one Era to a other Era. And me not knowing what is giong on. Up to now I did not mentioned any thing about Mammass Mother, that is because I can not say so much about her, she was like any other Jewish wooman of that time, she was not educated, because Jewish education was for man, but she had one qualificacation she was very smart in town if they wanted to compare some wooman in clevernes, they used to use two sayings, "she is a other Tammorow, or what would you like she she be "a other Tammorow" I think this is proove enough that Mammass mother was a clever wooman, she was under the circumstances then quite comfortable,

As you know, I was in love with mamma from the time I met her when I came on a sathurday afternoon, to play to her brothers who were with me in the same CHEDER, but none of her brothers had her clevernes or her ability and when I find out that they have a sister, and I spok to her a few times I made up mine mind to come to her brothers, any time I had the chance, in order I should be able to talk to their sister, for a great number of years, she used to talk with me at her home wilingly, but she had friends out of my age they were a couple of years older than her, and I was a year younger, so she used to dress herself leaving me with her brothers, and going away to her friends, and here I like to relate a epise, what happened to prove how much Mammass mother was clever, it happened when I was allready a sixteen or a seventeen year old boy, in the height of the winter season when the peasants used to bring their agreecultural merchandise to sell money was at time at a premium, We had no

bank in our home town so the store keepers who used to sell their merchandise to the peasants had to go every while to the store keepers and collect from them the cash until they would have to travel either to Roslavl, Smolensk or some even to Moskow, and so it happened my father (ZTL) send me to a fabrick goods seller to get all the cash they had and I don't remember how much I got, going back home with the money I meet Mamma and I never could let her pass by without starting a conversation with her, so naturally I ask her, where she is going, she said to getyt some cash from the same store keeper I got the money, so I told her I took from them just now all they had, you know what? Here is half of it to you, and we started together back, When I came home my father (ztl) was wathing for me and seeing I was late and in the maine while some more merchandise was deilvered so he asked my mother to run and see if she can get some money from a aother store keeper, and when he seen me coming and ask how much did I get I told him the amount, but half of which I gave to Mamma, he got angry and told me I should immidiately go to her mother and try to get the money back, Here mother had forseen this will happen and she also send her out to get some other store keepers money, and when I came and said that we must have the money she said I did not used the money, because I knew your Father (ZTL) will send you to get the money as it is realy a big day and he needs all the money he can get, so here it is.

In the zars time we the jewish people were not permitted to have public libraries but private people had the right to poses books, so a little before my time the young people from our

town organized a library, which some of them they bought on dues money, and some of them was donated by a jewish agency that were trying to help the young people from the small town's. They got a permit for a private library in the name of a very reliable man from our town, and they organized who shall manage with it and who should sit once a week to collect the books, and exchange them for others, When I became older and joined the group as a member I started to work dilignetly, and after a while I became the strong man but of course the manager was left in name the brother in law of the man in who's name the permit was given.

And I was a good public reader of Jewish books. After the March revolution, we did not needed any more the favor of that man and we took away the managing name from his brother in law. A few weeks after the revolution I traveled to CHISLAVITCHI that is the town where my mothers mother and her brother lived to stay with them for a week or so, and in my absence the young people on a meeting decided now that we have the rights let us organize a amature group and try to put up show's in Jewish or some even in Rusian language. For the first show they selected "David Pinsky" a play by the name of (Family Zvi)

The main character in the play is a old man called Moishe Zvi, and he has a grand dauther, and she has a groom, and there is neighbours also with childreen and the plot that some of the youngsters are not so religes as the olders would like, but when a pogrom begins the groom of the grand daughter, offers his life

to save others, it is a tragic play, I was chosen in absentia to portray the old man Reb Moishe Zvi and mama was given a fine girl type to portray, and when I came home I found out a little story that happened in my absence. Mama had a girl friend who thought of herself that she is ten feet tall, although she was the same size as mama, minus mama's brain and sense and to me she was just a fool and I did not like her at all, of course she was offered a minor role to play, and she said she will be glad to play, but on one condition that I shall be eliminated from playing Moishe, because she will not be a play with me, so they saved me a job to refuse to play in the same play with her. We played as amateurs in more than ten plays and we were so good that from the surrounding villages and towns they used to come to see us play, mama even played in Jacob Gordon's Play (CHASIE DE ESAMO) while she was in seventh month with a baby that later we named Isaac and no body could have told that she is pregnant at that time.

Mama was very easy to learn the lines, she did not depend on the box man who used to read in a low voice, in order the players shall not make mistakes, but for some it was no help at all for mama she did not need any body's help, she learned the lines and did not make any mistakes, because she used to live the life of Pesenue the pious wife of Hershele Dubrovner in good Mensch & Tyre as I remind myself now she was the best, but she never was the initiator of any thing only when it came to laughter, there she was always first, used to inspire the whole crowd.

As I started to remember things we never had a Dr. in our town, but two (Feldshars (Here we would call them sanitars in the army) but that was our medical help if some body would get very sick we had to travel with the sick person or child to a bigger town or bring a Dr. in town and that would cost big money and of course if a Dr. was brought to town everybody who had some kind of a illness had to see the Dr and then it depended who was with the Dr. friendly one or the other feldshar, that is how we lived, in 1915 before the world war one broke out I started to work, that we shall get in town a real Dr. the town shall pay him a 1000.00 rubel a year collecting from either the inhabitants or we should tax like the kosher meat, or some other product that we shall give to somebody to sell and no body else shall sell that product, and then we shall pay the Dr. 30 copikes a visit, but it did not help me, because one of the feldshars was a brother in law to the richest family in town.

In fall of that year in town showed a pharmacist, who would like to open a pharmacy store, because before he can have license to open a pharmacy store in a big town he has to have worked as a pharmacist under a Dr. who should certify that he worked in his town and he filled all the prescriptions accurately and we meet, I explained to him, that what he does not know is that we have no Dr. in our town, and he said he knows that but will I help him to bring a Dr. to our town, He knows one a friend of his who would be glad to come, and he will provide him with 750.00 rubel, but I shall provide him with a apartment, and that I undertook upon myself to provide, and we got Dr. Gugel a real Dr. for the first time in our town.

And he was with us for two years, about four miles from us in a small villege was the Volost, this where we had under the zar, seating a george, and all the civil cases used to be before him, usualy he was one of the grate land owners from around, and also where, the gentile people used to register there their weddings, born childreen and dead, with us jewish people it had nothing to do, only in a case where sombody should bring some kind of a claim against some body, but this was very seldom, we used to have a (DIN THORA) by our rabbi, and so all the above mentioned registrations.

In fall of 1918 the volost became a raionny, for three times as much villeges as in the zars time and they oppened there a hospital, and Dr. Gugel became The Dr. of the hospital, and mooved there, after a while he desapeared, I never knew when he left, but the hospital got a other Dr. Kovarsky, but he lieved at the hospital, and used to come in town twice a week, we requisitiont for him a house where he could accept pations, it lasted not long and he disapeared, and that ho it was going on, just when mama had to give birth to her first baby we were in the intermidiate time when no Dr. was around not in town not in volost, but there was a woomen (ACUSHORKA) she was the kind that had schooling how to see a woomen give birth, and that was the best we could have done, we got her, but it took three days and two nights, for mama untill the baby came and she could not stay all this time with us, so she told me what to do to help, and when I shall come for her even if it is in the middle of night, I was for all the time with mama she used to

walk the floor and lean on me, and finally when we started to expect the time is near I did not let the Acushorka to leave the house and she was the one who finally brought out the baby a boy who weight four and one half Russian Lb. Tiny baby but a life one with open eyes and working hands, closing and oppening constantly, but a very quiet baby cried very little, but we had to wait 5 weeks before we was permitted to have the (BRIS) and we named the baby Isaac after the grat scholar the father of mama, for about two years the baby was the healtiest posible, and then it happened the baby got Pneumonia, and for seven days and nights, not mama or I left the baby for a minute alone, the medicine was, (bankes) cups that we used to wet in alcohol, and put a burning little pice of paper inside and apply to the body under the shoulders and on the left side, and after we used to remoove them, we used to wet a pice of linen in cold water and bind it all of around under the arms down cover at with a (cleionke) I would call it here a plastic and then wrap it in a dry piece of linen about four inch wide and about seven or eight feet long and that we used to repeat every four hours, day and night an the sevethn day the baby brock out in a sweat, and the baby was on the way of recovery.

After we came to America you contracted in Ellis Island the measles, after that I don't remember any more sicknesses.

The house where mama lieved was on a coner, facing West, to the north there was no more houses, it was stores, stable, to south & East, hehiend the stable to the east there was a garden, planted with all kind of vegetables, and ehiend, that garden there

was one house and a street leading to fields and a little further there was a church school, where my boy friend who helped us to come to the USA was attending and behind that school to the south was a single house where two old maids lived, and mama used to visit with them when she was in her teens, once they presented her, with a book containing a collection of all kinds of animals, and birds from different lands, with the descriptions under each animal or bird, mama gave the book to the baby to play, and read to the baby the names of the birds and the animals, after a while you could open any page and the little Isaac, could name them all, and not by reading, because he did not learn yet to read, but we could not take the book with us, when we left for the USA, because from the book, was nothing left but shreds of paper, so what could you do to a baby you love so much.

It was sometime in the month of Aug. 1916 that my father (ZL) found out that a certain land owner likes to sell a parcel of his land with the trees on it, but he won't sell unless the buyer will buy the entire parcel, so here is the problem under the zar's law, no Jew was allowed to become a land owner, but a lot in a town where the Jewish people were allowed to dwell.

My father then decided to try to do something about, the first peasant village where we were dealing with called (Celuty) we assembled the peasants and gave them a proposition, since the land owner won't sell unless the entire parcel is bought, so we will make two agreements with the land owner, that the peasants buy it all, not mentioning us, and another agreement that the new

land owners sell us the trees, we will pay for the trees the full amount the land owner was asking, and after we will take of the trees the peasants will have the land for themselves free of charge.

The peasants of course liked the idea and agreed to do exactly as we told them and the transaction was consummated, and now we are the owners of the trees, all we need is the permit from the office of the forestry, for which we applied.

The permit came in the first days of March 1917, and right a week or two and the Revolution broke out, we decided to wait until about middle of September of 1917, because soon the peasants will get busy with field work, and we will not be able to get workers and then to pull out the trees after they are cut off it has to be done in winter when the snow is on the ground and on sleds is easy to pull them out, some of it we would work out to sell for wood to heat the ovens, and some of it would be worked out to make out thin boards, that with them is covered the wooden houses (We did not have iron or tar coverings on the houses as in in the big cities). Any way we decided to wait, but in Oct. of 1917 happened the communist revolution, and every thing was confiscated and of course, we where not allowed even to get a cube of wood for our own use it was left to the villege of (Celuty) since they had the privilege of having a deed on the land collectively for the entire villege.

As I got well in the first part of November 1917 I looked around, that the new deekrees fromm the new government is not

to allow private business, and grain for bread and for other commodities started to get scarce and prizes begin to rise, I called a meeting from the business people in town, and gave them a proposition, they should loan a committee which they shall select money, according to his standing and for that money the committee will buy from them all the grain like rye, buckwheat, barley at the existing price at the time they will have it for sale, and we the committee will sell at cost to the people, it was not accepted at the first meeting, but when the dealers have seen, that they are being watched and it is for them almost impossible to ship out grain from town.

I called a second meeting and it was accepted in principle, but the question arose who shall loan how much, I first assessed my father (ZL) with the highest amount in my estimation I would want anybody to loan, and then it started each one was for it, that the other should make a big loan, in the end everybody gave the amount he was assessed, and we started to buy at "two rubel fifty copik a pud" and within 2 months it reached that we were paying 25 rubel per pud but we had so much at the cheap prices, that we divided the people into 4 categories, the very poor we gave free of charge according to their family just a bare minimum, and then we had whom we gave at self average cost the day when we gave them the flour, and almost every day as we bought some more we had to assess the self cost, because every day it started to get higher and higher prices, the third category we charged a small amount of profit in order we should be able to pay the higher man for his work, and for rent of the store the 4th category we were charging market prices, because

they could afford to pay only they could not buy any place because in the main while the government closed up all the private stores, and the grain that was bought by the dealers from the peasants became an underground business, bringing it in at night (WE DID NOT HAVE STREET LIGHTS) and for a while every thing was going smoothly, and then somebody I have never found out who it was, sent in a complaint to the raion committed that there is going on a private business in grain and that the petrowitcher soviet either is in it or too weak to stop that.

One fine morning I received a call from the soviet to come immediately as there is a representative from Raion to investigate about the business in private dealings in grain. I went there with the books to prove that this is a cooperative business and not my private. The representative a man who knew me and I used to figure as a friend warned me that friendship with duty has nothing to do, and that he wants to see the store with all the grain and flour for himself, and talk to the hired man and question him, of course I took him there, and we find there a number of people who were getting flour he questioned one and he said he is getting it free of charge, another one said he pays a very high price, anyway I explained the system how it works, and although the investigator was Jewish he considered himself first a communist party man and asked why is here no gentile people getting flour, I explained that when I was organising this cooperative buying at a town meeting I explained what I intend to do, but they declined from participating, because they did not believe there is going to be an inflation, second most of them are in occupational service, like blacksmiths,

woolen boot makers, carpenters, and so on and they perform for the peasants their work and it is allways a barter trade, the peasants pay not with money, but with farm products, his decition was to call a town meeting by the evening and hear what they have to say, and of course now that the grain what we had was at a small cost as to the prises they would have to pay if they should be able to get provate, beside the flower that the government was giving out at a startvation minimum, it was very atractive to them, and they all wanted to be partners, so we had to abolish the four category system, and give at the cost prise of that moment to every body, jew or gentile so many LB. Per copita as additional to the govenment minimum, and of course withhin a few weeks this enterprise was liquidated, it was a fine help for the jewish people while it lasted approximately till the middle of Feb. 1918.

About a month befor (PESACH) I strock with a other idea, that the poor people need motzos, and there is no way to get it, so here I called together some of the young people my friends and gave them the idea that we shall hire a poor mans house and we shall open a free bakery for the poor people to bake their matzos with the help of the girls, to spread the matzos and boys to do the hard work to knead the flower with water quickly as per the jewish law and to hith the over, and be the bakers, all with out pay help, and wood for the purpose, to collect between the haves wood for their ovens, and so it was, we all worked about 3 weeks and every body had that year matzos.

In June of 1918 (I don't remember the exact date) mama and I were married, and the government decreed to open stores where whatever merchandise they will send in for the population, shall be given out through the store, and they named the stores (EPO) and I became the accountant of the store and worked for so many pounds of flour and so many pounds of salt and sugar and if they send in some manufactured goods a month, and on this we had to make the best, but we had our own cow, and we got a part in the land owners land that was around Petrowitchi that we had to sow and plant potatoes, rye, carrots, and cucumbers and that was in addition to the pay, but I was free from going into the army, and that how it lasted until we left for the United States.

In our home town Petrovitchi there was a very rich man, he had a daughter Sarah, and he bought for her a husband a great scholar, by giving him a great sum of money as a dowry, and the new son in law started to make a living by lending money to people at great interest rate. I was at that time a very young boy, and two things happened to make me remember the episode, it was a winter, that my father (ZL) decided to save the best quality of a certain "FLAKS" and sell the usual one and that how he collected a certain amount of that merchandise a very high grade, and when he decided to sell the prizes fell very low and he held it over a while longer, the snow started to melt and we were not able to move the merchandise even if he would wanted to sell and we were left with it, and here is the month of May, and my father "ZL" was in need of money for business, and in June the merchandise is not sold he decided to take a loan

from the above mentioned son in law the great scholar, the sum was \$500.00 for three months time, so the charge went this way 12% \$5.00 per month, \$15.00 for 3 months, for cashing his Ck to a bank in Roslavl \$1.50 to pay back after the 3 months to the same bank for his account \$1.50 and he gave a Ck to be cashed for \$482.00.

My father "ZL" traveled to Roslavl cashed that Ck. And that year happened the Petrovitcher Rov (rabbi) was at that time in Roslavl and being desirous to save car fare he ask my father "ZL" to take him home, and of course my father "ZL" was happy to accommodate him, and he brought him home. In order to repay the loan we would have to be in Roslavl on time in order the note shall not be protested, and the usual way he used to do is to take a blank note which used to say not over a certain amount and say just sign, and he used to fill them out by himself. Summer time we would not travel to Roslavl quite as often as during the winter season, so my father "ZL" met once the (Great Scholar) and told him if he will hold his note in Petrovitch, he will repay a week earlier, that means if he will not repay he will still have sufficient time to send to his bank in Roslavl.

The man since he never did anything, used to take daily walks usually pass our house which was about 100 feet from a nice wooded area, where it was a delight to walk around. Every time he used to pass by and if he have seen me he used to say "don't forget to tell your father, that he shall remember the 25,

now to me at that time it meant nothing, but as I would start to tell it to my father "ZL" he used to say I know I know!

One day my father and I were by our house and he passes by and said "REB AARON tommorow is the 25th" and walked by, my father looks to me and said "if he means that tommorow is due the loan to him, he is in error, it is only not quiet 2months" but I will make sure with the rabbi he will for sure remmember when I brought him from Roslavl after the snow, and sure thing my father "ZL" was right.

Next day my father "ZL" walkes over to the mans house takes out the money and casually remarks it so quick past 3 months it seems to me it is not even 2 months the man get red in his face and calls out to his wife "Serrul is it right to do a favor to some body, and takes out a little book from his pocket and shows you see it is black on white that to day is the 25th and you said you will pay one week ahead so that it is the time you should repay the loan.

My "father ZL" shrug with his shoulder and said, well it looked to me that the time past so quick, but you must be right if in your book is marked that way, but the money he did not give him, and said you know what maybe you should take a look in your Ck. Book. He get red in his face again and said "AHAMZOOH" it means a clever idea, goes in a other room, brings out the Ck book and of course it is only a day or so over 7 weeks, he looks again and sais "SCHGIACE ME YOVIN" it means Who can discern his errors? You keep for a other month,

but my father "ZL" told him take the money and refund a 3rd of my interest, no no keep the money for a other month, he never in the whole month passing by our home and seeing me mentioned remember the 25th, but my father "ZL" never again borrowd money from him.

Any way the flaks is left over, and it is imposible to sell, some time late in July or in the beginning of Aug. of that year, my father "ZL" was in Roslavl and he went to see Mironov (I mentioned him in a previous letter), he was a multimillionaire, part owner of a "fabric" that used to produce the best ropes for Englands Ships, a "fabric" that worked over the grain from which it used to grow the flaks into oil for the best paints, and beside partner in the "Rusko Asian Bank with branches all over Russia. Mironov promised, that he we will buy it, the definite day came and past and no Mironov, in the evening my father "ZL" went to the slutzkins they were 3 brothers who used to deal direct with Riga, where a English representetive used to buy all kinds of flaks for a English firm "Malkolm."

Any way it came to talk about our packege of flaks that is still not sold and on a question fro what prize he would sell, my father "ZL" being depressed that Mironov did not show up, mentioned a prize, and one of the brothers, said allright we bought it, the only thing they already knew that Mironov one half hour earlier, and is allready in the Inn where he stoped for the night, and in the morning, Mironov came to us but my father "ZL" told him you did not show yesterday and at night I sold it to the Slutzkin Bros.

He went straight to them and gave them for my Father's word \$150.00 over the prize he said yes to them, in Petrovitch no other would have kept his word, telling them since they knew that he was already here, and came for the special purpose to buy our flaks, they were in the wrong to do a thing like that, that it was a fraudulent buy, but not my father "ZL" to him a word no matter under what circumstances was a word, that how he was, to conclude Mironov after the communist revolution, one morning came on his horse and Drojky, it is a vehicle, that was common to the rich in Russia, but the workers already took over the factory, so in anger he drove to the flaks factory and there happened the same thing, so he drove over to the Bank thinking, that he will stop them there from getting any cash, but he was not let in the Bank to, so he drove to his home and said he will not leave the house until the bums will be destroyed, an order came for him to vacate the house, and he died.

When we received the letter from the Petrovitch-er Rov that somebody wants to know if there is somebody left from his family, he would like to correspond with them, of course we answered that letter, and were invited to come to the United States, the trouble was that no permission was given to leave the Soviet Union, knowing whom I have in Klimovitchi, as we belong yet there, I took a chance and went to see my friend, and receiving from him that the uезд has no objections to our leaving, and a letter to the Gomel Royony Comitet, to help me, and been told that to get passports it will be necessary to have 2 photos of each, mama and me, so we had to go to shumiatshi,

wehre a photographer was living there, Marcia at that time was about 5 months old, we left here over and we went early morning to shumiatshi whitch was about 4 hours traveling time there one way, Mama nurseing Marcia, so I don't know how the child made out without being nurse, but Mama had a tough time in sumiatshi on account she had to dispose of the surplus milk she had, we had to buy a rubber thing to help her, when we came home, Marcia was half death, but we had on hand 2 photos of each of us.

In a day or so I left for gomel, I have previously described my happenings there but no photos were required, and as I left for Moskow without stoping over at home so I had the photos with me, In moskow was at that time a son of the Petrovitch-er Rov employed as an accountend, and he lived in a B'ldg without heat, but the brick walls were 42 Inch thick and all brick, and at that time the Rov his Father was there and a brother my age and a sister a year or so younger any way I stayed with them too, The room was a big one and we were all sleeping in different corners covering with the coats that we were wearing in the day time, our menue was black bread and herring, we could not get even onions for it.

Two happenings is outstanding in my mind, and the third I well never forget, I needed money to get along and all I had was 3 coins of 10 gold rubbel donomination and Itzke them Rofs says he knows a place where I could get a lot of money for one, while the other two I will need to pay Federal Tax for the pasports, so he took me there, and I sold it for a good prize, and

as soon we walked away from there we heard a disturbance from the GPU there were searching for the black market dealers, the 2 of us where walking but fast.

The second thing when I was told in the narcomindel, that the pasport's will be given to me next day but I should come prepared with 3 photos of each, and 2 golden 10 rubel, so how can I get a other picture of mama when she is in Petrovitchi, again my friend Itzeck tell's me come with me I know a place, of course one thing wherever we had to be we had to walk, and we came to a corner the frost was so big that our shoe's were freezing, and there stays a fellow with a pot full of hot coal and a big camera, and when we told him our problem he said just pay me this omount and I will give you in one 1/2 hour the two pictures, that 1/2 hour we got real frozen wathing for the pictures, we got them and walked away, but something told us turn around, and what do we see a red army millicia tells the guy to leave the corner and never to come back.

The tird top it all, next morning I myself was going to the Narcmindel, I have never notices any thing like from under my feet a man stands right in the front of me and in his hands he holds a silver cigaret case, and says to me did I had now a bargain imagine all he asked me is 500 rubel instead of 5000 rubel which I would give him and had for my self a bargain, and right there the man who sold him the cigaret case comes over to us, with 4 diamonds as I understand now they must have been at least each one between 3 and 5 carrats and tells the man if he wants a quick guy 10000 rubel he can have it to which the man

said but I have not so much money on me, and turns to me with a wink of his eye and says hold him here I'll be right back with the money, I see it is a big bargain so I figure I will stay a while maybe I will make my self a commission, but no sooner the man is gone as the diamond holder turns to me and says what does he think I will wait for him just give me 9000 rubel, and let him pay you the 10000 rubel, and it done an me it is just plain glass, so I started to walk away, but he walkes with me so I walked in a hole of a big B'ldg, and the man kept on walking, but after a while I looked out and I see the 2 are busy with a other man so I walked away very Quickly.

Petrovichi

A small town in Russia, Province of Smolensk, actually. Officially, we were during the zar's time considered as belonging to the province of Mogilev on Dneper. This was a special favor granted to Jewish population by a very good land owner fo the time when under Nicolai the 1st the jews had to be driven out from the Russian town's into the provinces where they allowed them to live.

That good land owner who owned a lot of land all around Petrovichi and the town was hithhin the border of Smolensk carried over the border sign on the other side of town and said Petrovichi is now of the province of Mogdilev, and the Jews did not have to move.

In my time we were economically connected with Roslavl, where we used to buy and sell every kind of merchandise we dealt at that time, as it was our natural way to do business there.

When I start to remember Petrovichi the inhabitants were allways happy, I cant say that we had there very rich people, there was a number of them my father and my mother in law were among the more wealthy ones, but we never knew from pogroms or any thing like that.

Mamma and I were born on the same block only on the corner, the street was between us, Mamma's two brothers were going to the same Jewish private school, on a saturday when we were free from school I used to go to her brothers to play, when I gave notices that the brothers have also a sister, I don't remember, but I was very young when I started to like to talk to her, but she used to dress up and go away with or to girl friends, giving me the impression that she doesn't care for me, until a little over 50 years ago we got married, that was right after the communist revolution, but regardless we had a truly Jewish wedding, where the whole town's people Jew and Gentile came to the front of the shul where our wedding took place under the open sky.

You Isaac were our first born, and we were very happy with our new baby when you were 6 months on a Saturday afternoon a whole lot of our friends walked out to the forest about 2 miles from the town, of course mamma and I were among the, and all the way there I carried you and danced with you on the palm of

my hand holding you up high, you were the only baby among us.

One day the Rabbi of our home town who was by the way a great friend of us received a letter from the U.S.A. asking if his only sister he left a baby when he left Petrovichis is stil there alive, or what happened to her, the rabbi gave that letter to us. We started to write one onother and uncle Joe invited us to come to the United States, there was only one obsticle Communist Russia does not allow exit of her inhabitants, so here I have to return to my young years and tell you a story, which will show you have things come to pass even before you prepare for what is comming.

In the Gentile part of the town there was a boy who became very friendly with me, he must been with a couple of years older, and there was in Petrovichi a church school where mostly they taught them there Religion how to pray and so on, even as much the children should be able to sighn their names, and read a little, and so he used to come to me that I should help him with his ward work.

One day I missed him it is allready a few days he did not show up, so I went to his house to find out what happened to him. His mother with curses upon his head told me he never told them that he is going away, but somebody else told them that they should not look for him as he is leaving town, and so I never again heard from him, untill one day after the Communist

Revolution he showed up with a communist party ticket, and took over the town.

When we meet we became friendly again just as never we parted but the difference now he is the big shot, but I influenst him just as the time befor he left, I will illustrate with one episode of many many more.

We hade in our home town a cap maker not quite to smart, but a Jew, somehow he had a fight with a other moron for a pale, and cursing the more he, so the moron reported have cursed the soviets with their order, where a moron like him can even dare to argue with him who is such a fine capmaker, anyway The capmake was arested and taken to Jail in Volost which was about 5 miles from town, The father of the capmaker came to me since I am in good terms with the leader I should help him, because this was a known thing if they should send him over to the CHEKA he will right or wrong be executed. So I started to talk to my friend making out that the capmaker is insane, and he has a wife and child, and any way how will it look if where he is leader shall the people be so dissatisfied as to curse the soviets, after a few hours we both drove out to that volost and with the help of a third party, also a friend of my friend, and we became all three of us grate friends and decided there is no use to show the higher up that Petrovichi has an insane man who dared to curse the soviets, and we took him back home wit us, from that day the third man who was also gentile became my best friend as I did him a favor not to let show that there is where they are the leaders of the communist revelution dissatisfied people.

The 2 men my friends both were good speakers, Arators and even now that I heard many good speakers I will still call them arators, that how really good they were. The friend of my yout became the chairman of the Raion CHEKA and the other one the chairman of Gub CHEKA in Gomel who had juresdiction over hundreds of towns.

Higher then him was only the chairman of the CHEKA in Moskow, so when uncle Joe invited us to come to the U.S.A. we allready had you and marcia, and I traveled to Klimovichi to my friend, he should give me a letter to the chairman of the GUBCHEKA that he should give me a paper to the forreighn secretary in Moskow that the GUBCHEKA has no objections to our four leaving The Soviet Union.

My friend gave me the letter, which I read before he sead it, Dear Friend as our comrad likes we shall let him go to his brother in U.S.A. there is no objection on the part of the RAION CHEKA and within the law if you could do something I personaly will apriciate if you will help him, I took the letter and traveled to Gomel and went to see my third friend for whom people are afraid even to say GUBCHEKA, I came there in the evening he and his wife were just sitting down to their supper, they invited me to have supper with them I politely exused myself as I have eatten before I left the Hotel but I will have a cup of tea, after their meal which took a long time longer than I tought I will be able to indure I handed him our mutuals friends letter, he read the letter long enough to sead me out of my mind,

exactly what I feel that time I don't think I could describe, then he packeted the letter and said to me come at 9.30 A.M. to the GUBCHEKA and ask to see me, I left to go back to the hotel.

At 9.30 A.M. I was at the door of the GUBCHEKA for our appointment, yea, I was permitted to his office immediately, he looked over my petition to be permitted to go to THE U.S.A. and said you need for this a federal stamp costing 6 rubel, on my question where can I get a stamp He said in Post Office, so I pictured myself to go, he stopped me where are you going? To the Post Office for the stamp I replied, How will you go out from here I suppose you know that every body is permitted entrance, but no body is permitted out? If I did not die right there I hope to live a little longer, but I did not show how sad I was or at least I thought that I am not showing my feelings, and asked in a calm voice so how can I get the required stamp, he picked up a number printed on a piece of paper and gave it to me and said now go, the soldier will permit you out. I got the stamp came back and he signed the necessary papers and told me to go to Moscow to the NARKOMINSTRANICH DEL for passport's.

Moscow

When I got the signed papers in Gomel, I decided to go immediately to Moscow in order to do that I had to go by train back to Roslavl, and I stopped there to wait for a other train for travel to Moscow, because my money supply were very low, usually my credit were good with anybody that knew me, and now I find out that my best friends, when I told them that I am

on my way to Moskow for pasport's to the U.S.A. and I am short of money, not one would trust me with a rubel, so I wired mamma she should by telegraph send me some money to the maine P.O. where upon demend they should pay the money out to me. Mamma was my true friend and did exectly as I have instructed her When I came to Moskow I find out where the main P.O. is located and upon my demend they paid out the summ of money mamma wired.

I stopped there and a friend of mine who got priviously a Job ther as a accountant, He had his brother living with him in one room with one bed with no heat no wood or coal to be gotten and the temperature way below 0. And so on the floor covered only with my coat and without taking of my close for the almost a week that took me to get the pasports, (by the way we still have them) stayed there, I am sure that at this time in my life I would frose there the first night.

It paid up in the long run, while I rushed true all this work so quick I was able to come to Petrowitchi and sell out every thing we had and Dec. 24 we left all four of us back to Moskow that The Office of White Star Line shall take charge on our travel to the U.S.A., the frost was wery sever when we riched by a hired hoss and buggy to the station Pochinok and Marcia being only not quite six months old was coughing without a stop, in order to reach Smolensk, we had to wait a whole night, in a cold house the owner was a gentile wooman and she did not wanted to make a fire in the stove until after midnight, but by mammas pleading and a few rubel she finily warnt up the room we were

in. No Dr. was available there as the one Dr. who lives there was away from the village for Xmas.

In the morning we took the train for Smolensk and we came to my usual Inn, where I used to stay when I used to come to Smolensk and when I asked for a Dr. the innkeeper wanted us to leave, but finally we agreed, we shall first get a Dr. and if he will tell that we have to move we will do just that, the Dr. convinced them that leaving for us is impossible and there is no danger as it is not contagious.

Late that night Marcia started to chuck herself and could not catch her breath talking to the owner of the Inn I find out that on the other side of town there is a child specialist, so I went there to bring him to help us with Marcia. I reached there about 11 P.M. the house was dark I put my finger on the bell without a stop, finally a woman came out and ask me what do I want by ringing without a stop the bell I told her that we are on our way to the U.S.A. and my 6 months little girl at such inn is chuking to death and that I been told that the Dr. can save her, She proved to be a Jewish woman and a very good natured one, but what can she do, her husband is at a meeting of the Smolensk Soviet, I asked for the address where they meet, in the beginning she said it will be impossible for me to enter to the soviet meeting, but she could not take my tears and said I will go with you and we will see there what can be done.

She got the Dr. out and he came with me after 1 A.M. to the inn examined Marcia Prescribed a prescription and we took a horse

& buy to the all night drug store which was on the way to his home, and all he wanted is I should pay the driver for himself he did not took from me even the prize of a cigar.

We stayed a full week in smolensk Marcia improved herself wonderfully and we left for Moskow, there the Office of White Star Line send me to the Latvian embacy to get a transit viza, to enter Latwia for the purpose of bordreing a Ship for U.S.A. it took me about two days until I got The Viza, and finily we left The Soviet Union for Riga,

When we past the border and Latwian personal entered the train I thought now we on our way. It was not so, because we were scheduled to go by France and that morning France entered Saar and it became umposible to travel to France, We had to be rerouted to Danzig which was at that time Poland, and from there they took us to Liverpool England by a small ship I became so sick that what heppend on that ship I don't remember a thing How Mamma managed with you 2 how she was able to take care I will never know or understand.

We riched Liverpull and there we were instructed, to go to the U.S.A. council for vizas of entering the U.S.A. but he refused somting was in the papers of uncle Joe were missing, and he advised me to go to the Hias, somebody whom I never in life meet, stoped me and said this is how my trouble started, and now I am here allready six weeks and I don't see the end of it. I felt terebly but I did not Said anything, and left for Ias when I interdused myself they told me well you are lucky, because you

had to go true Sherburg France and the council had all your papers there, but Haias knowing that all the paengers were rerouted true Liverpool they went to the council's Office and pick up the papers and just this morning they brought them over. I got from Hias the missing papers and we were able to catch the Baltic which took us to the U.S.A.

On the Baling it was in reverse Mamma was sea sick, and I was quite well and I had to take care on all four of us. A few dollars that were in Haias Office for us from uncle Joe helped that the stewards shall help me with certain food for the children, and anyway we had a rough time a storm started while we were on the Ocean, and the ship was bending from side to side we had with us in cabin a trunk and he was sliding from corner to the other with a big bang without a stop and we could not help it. I walked out on the deck and when I looked on one side I thought the ship reaches the sky when I looked on the other side It looked to me that the sea is so deep without a end.

One more episode that stuck in my mind is for one of the meals we were served some kind of a hard cookie, I took a bite and I felt something funny I took it out from my mouth and there it was a big dead some kind of a fly, I did not believe that time that there is dishonest persons, so I ran over to the only steward that spoke to me in Jewish, and showed him the cookie with the dead fly bedded inside he asked me to see it I gave it to him, he didn't even look at it just threw it in garbage pail, and turned to me what was it you telling me, I felt I could tell you a

lot, but better is to keep it quiet, I turned around and walked away from him.

That is how we came February 3, 1923 early in the evening to the shores of U.S.A. and we start watching people going down the plank to shore, but we were told, that we will stay till morning on the Baltic.

Early next morning we were told to start walking, I was holding you on my arms, mamma was holding Marcia on her arms and we were together walking for a while, I did not notice how and when it happened mamma and Marcia disappeared. They brought me with you in my arms in a large room the noise there, was impossible, some dark fellows were jumping one over the other and fighting I did not know that time that they are Italians, and it is a game they are playing

I started from one to another inquiring maybe somebody seen my wife with a baby in her arms, either they did not understand what I am talking about, or they did not want to be involved, anyway no body gave me any information. How I felt even now I can't describe, but after a few hours later I noticed a color fellow speaking with somebody Jewish I rushed to him, and he told me not to worry because here is different quarters for men and for women.

I did not see mamma and Marcia until Feb. 7th on the morning when uncle Joe came with them to the hearing, but they did not let me speak with uncle Joe or with mamma, They

questioned first a englishmen of course I did not know what they are talking, until I heard him saying in plain jewish I don't want even to go down in a land where they have the adacity to divide between him and his wife we are going back, so I asked myself where can I go back. No we will stick it out, then there was a other man and they asked him what he intend to do here, he answered that he will do anything an everything possible to suport my family noting is to hard for me.

When my next came tot be questionedand they asked me the same question, I liked the answer from the other man, and repeated the same answer. And they let us of. Uncled joe told me then that he had written to me what I shall answer, but that letter if it came to Petrovitchi it was long after we left.

Now we are in the United States Of America and everything starts New and I will try to write in due time about our ancestors, and our early years in America.