CHILDHOOD IN A SHTETL



Abraham P. Gannes

$15.95

This work is an idyll of childhood spent in a shtetl called Winograd (Vinograd) in the Ukraine in which Dr. Abraham Gannes records the rich elements of shtetl life that formed the essence of his personality and shaped the vision of his faith and the course of his life.

With the aid of information from histories, documents, and autobiographical accounts of others, he records also the shocking and tragic events that upset the tranquillity of a good life when the upheavals caused by World War I and the Russian Revolution brought about a fearful and wracking change among the various sectors that made up Winograd society. Gannes describes what happened, how he responded to all the experiences, good and bad, that affected his life at that time, especially the events that occurred during the period before he, age 10, his sister, age 13, and their mother left their home in Winograd to join husband and father in America after a separation of nine years.

It was a farewell to a childhood enriched by a loving grandfather, by the warmth of a closely knit family and by an inspiring teacher in Heder. It was a childhood also in which the charms of the countryside and the beauties of nature invigorated the spirit, and the many activities of the people, religious and secular. The celebration of the holidays, the gatherings in the market place, the kindness of the priest brought well-being and cheer to him and to all the town.

Abraham P. Gannes was born on June 10, 1911 in Ukraine and arrived in the United States in 1921.

Holding a B.A. from the College of the City of New York, an M.A. from Columbia University and a Ph.D. from Dropsie College, Dr. Gannes has pursued a life long career in Jewish education. He was the executive director of the Greater Miami Bureau of Jewish Education, the executive director of

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Dedicated to the memory of

Great Grandparents Pini and Nessia Rosenfeld

Grandparents Shaya and Sarah Antonovsky

Grandparents Dov Ber and Faitsee (Faga) Ganapolsky

Parents Zvi (Harry) and Liba Ganapolsky

יהא זכרם ברוך

and to the townspeople

who had the courage to immigrate to the land of

liberty and freedom,

and to those who settled and rebuilt their lives

in the ancient homeland.

Pogroms in Russia and Poland, 1917-1921



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Preface

I arrived in the United States with my mother and sister on September 25, 1921 on the Finland of the Red Star Steamship Line. Port of embarkation was Antwerp, Belgium and disembarkation a pier on the Hudson River, not Ellis Island, the usual landing site for most immigrants. My mother was thirty-five, my sister thirteen, and I was ten years old. The medical examination and passport control were superficial and brief.

My father, in America since 1913, whom I did not remember or recognize, came on board ship to welcome us and it was an emotional, tearful, and memorable reunion. Soon we were on the way by taxi to his store-apartment on East 2nd Street on the lower Eastside of New York.

The very next day, my sister and I were registered in Public School 188 and placed in special classes for immigrant children. I was also enrolled in the Downtown Talmud Torah, an Orthodox Hebrew School located on Houston Street. Yiddish was my language and although the public school teacher, Augusta Homnik, knew Yiddish, instruction was in English only. I learned to write and speak it quickly and after a few months I was transferred to the regular fifth grade for ten year olds. Thus began my life in the Goldene Medinah (The Golden Land).[1] In truth it was a new beginning for me, of growing roots in, and adjusting to, a new society, of learning and absorbing its history, language and culture,

of becoming an American in a society so radically different from the closed community in the Ukraine.

In high school and especially at the College of the City of New York which I entered in September 1929, I began to write short stories about my childhood in Winograd, a small shtetl in the Ukraine. I wrote six or seven short essays describing my life before and after the Civil War and the pogroms which I had experienced. The English literature professor liked my writing and gave me high grades but inquired how I came to write them. When told that I was born in the Ukraine and that I had arrived in the United States at the age of ten, he was convinced that the stories were true, encouraged me to continue writing them and even complimented me, saying that they resembled the style of the novelist, Ring Lardner.

Unfortunately the stories were lost. In those days I had no plans to record my childhood experiences since I was intent on pursuing my education and working at the same time late afternoons and evenings to help support myself and the family.

Yet, over the years, I continued to tell my wife, children, grandchildren, friends, and relatives the stories of my childhood, forever etched in my memory. But I did not record them.

A few years after retirement, at the age of seventy seven and at their insistent urging and encouragement, I agreed to retrieve and record those early experiences. Soon I realized that no matter how interesting and vivid my recollections were, they had to be told in the context of Jewish life in the shtetl and of the historic events of the period, especially the outbreak of the Russian Revolution and the Civil War (1917-1921) and its consequences for Russia and the large Jewish population in the Ukraine. Furthermore, to authenticate and fortify my experiences, it was imperative to find other recorded or oral recollections and documents written by other Winograder or their descendents.

Unfortunately, my parents and their generation of townspeople were gone, their firsthand experiences and memories of the tragic events which compelled them to emigrate were almost entirely lost. Yet a few elderly close relatives and townspeople were still alive in the United States and in Israel, some of whom had written down their recollections or had them recorded by their children or grandchildren. I made contact with the living relatives and townspeople, met them in Israel and in this country, and urged and encouraged them to record or tell me their stories. References are made to all these sources in the body of the text and the acknowledgements.

But this too was not enough. I embarked on an intensive research program—reading the history and literature of the period, always on the lookout for references to my shtetl, Winograd. My research bore fruit. Thus the personal stories and recollections and the successful research helped fill in the gaps and gave me the opportunity to tell a more comprehensive story of my childhood in historic context. It turned into a rewarding "detective" tale. In the process of research and investigation I found long lost relatives and descendants of Winograder eager to recall the past and to encourage me to bring to life the shtetl Winograd, a small dot among the hundreds of shtetlach in the Ukraine.

The thrust of my memoir is not only to tell my children, grandchildren, relatives and friends, the story of my early years in the shtetl but also to provide the general reader with a picture of life in a typical shtetl, of a world long gone, mostly forgotten and perhaps remaining only in nostalgic memory. I pray I have succeeded in doing so, and hope it will serve as a living memorial to my forebears who lived out their lives in the shtetl and to my fellow townspeople and their descendants now scattered over the face of the globe.

Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to many individuals in this country and in Israel - family members, relatives, townspeople and their descendants, colleagues and friends - for their assistance and enthusiastic encouragement in the preparation of this manuscript.

Foremost among them are those who provided me with first hand resource material and documents about life in the shtetl written by those who were born there or recorded by their children or grandchildren. The memoirs, tapes and letters are listed in the bibliography. I am deeply grateful to: Dina Abramovicz (Yivo Research Librarian), Sarah Zeldis Altman, Dr. Arthur Anton, Dr. Stanley J. Antonoff, Celia Weiner Antonoff, Louis Antonoff, Bezalel and Bracha Antonovsky, Sarah (Tania) Antonoff Arkin, Molly Bellin, Elisheva Cohen Bernstein, Shoshanah Lukach Brodsky, Harry Brodsky, Murray Brodsky, Elaine Antonoff Fisher, Abraham Ganapolsky, Esther Glener, Haya Resnik Hammer, Paula Polsky Hodes, Shulamith Krasnovsky Houminer, Rachel Kol-Tuv, Jean Tenofsky May, Abraham and Saul Mindich, Haya Friedman Nir, Roman Olshanitsky, Catherine Parkhurst, Barbara Parks, Claire Robin, Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Roth, Tom Saichek, Amalia Zunder Schiff, Lillian Kliegman Sperber, Hanna Antonovsky Steier, Sylvia Sherman Sternberg, Alan Wachtel, Esther Polsky Weiner,

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A special heartfelt thank you to my immediate family for stimulating and urging me to write the story of my childhood and for their critical comments and advice. My beloved wife Miriam, vicariously "lived" through the early years of my life, helped me clarify many of my experiences, read, re-read and proofread the manuscript. Words cannot express the debt I owe to my son, Howard Joseph Gannes, for the many time consuming hours and days he spent putting several drafts of the manuscript on the computer, helping me prepare it for publication and most of all, in "reliving" with me the tumultuous days of my childhood, more than seventy years ago, and at the same time gaining an insight into a world that has long passed.

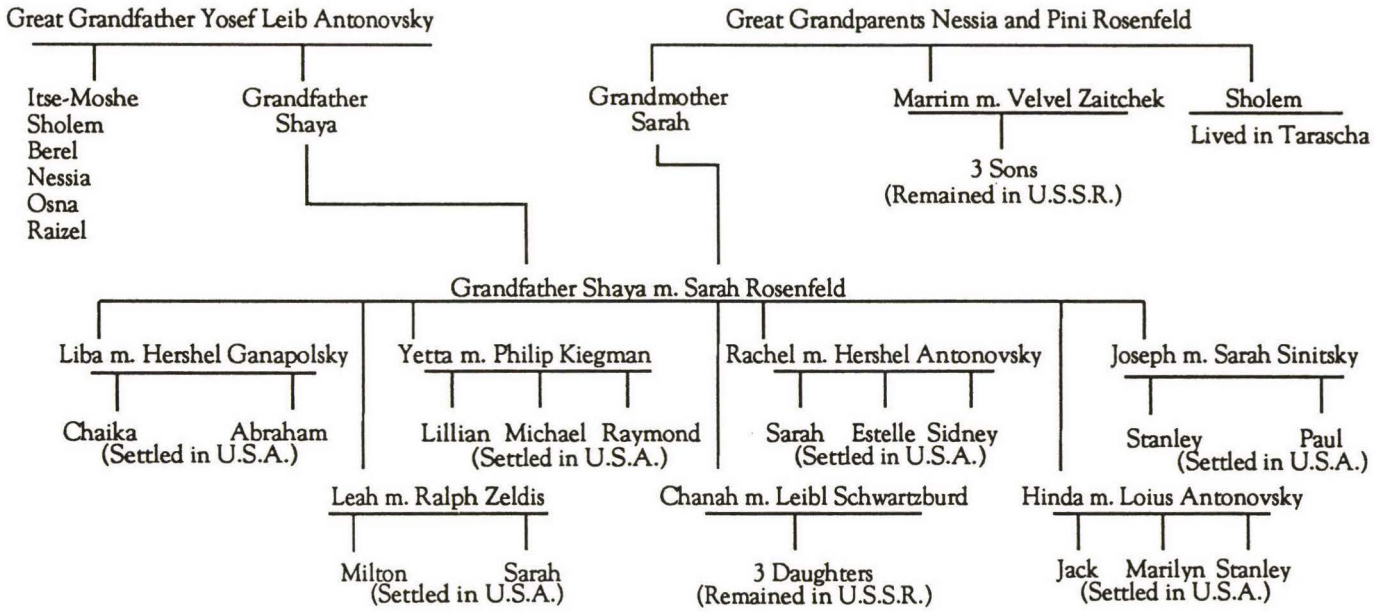
At the age of eighty one, I offer the traditional prayer of thankfulness to the Almighty for sustaining me in good health and enabling me to complete the work dedicated to my forebears and to the inhabitants of my shtetl, Winograd, and their descendants scattered throughout the world.



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Source: Jewish History Atlas
by Martin Gilbert
MacMillan Publishing

Antonovsky Family in Winograd



Family Roots

I was born in 1911, exact date unknown, in Winograd[2], a small shtetl, in the Province of Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine. My mother remembered that I was born two days after the Jewish holiday of Shavuot, a holiday which usually occurs in late May or early June. When we came to America and I was enrolled in P.S. 188, my father gave my date of birth as June 10, 1911, although he had no documentation to prove it. Thus was established my official date of birth.[3]

My parents were Hershel (Zvi in Hebrew, Harry in English) and Liuba (Liba) Antonovsky Ganapolsky. I was named after Abraham, my paternal grandmother's father, a pious cantor, with a good singing voice and since I too had a good voice, my mother said that I was well named.[4] In Yiddish I was called Avrum for short and although the Russian equivalent for Abraham was Abrasha, it was rarely used by me or by other members of the family. My sister Chaya (Chayka) was born in 1908 and in America was named Ida, but in our family she was always called by her Jewish name.[5]

Maternal Antonovsky Family

The origin of the name Antonovsky is uncertain. It is possible that when the Czarist government ordered or obligated Jews to adopt family surnames, they were likely to adopt the name

of the area where they lived or, more likely, the name of the landowner Antonov or Antonovsky. Adoption of names of cities or of prominent landowners of a province or county was common in Eastern Europe.

When did the Antonovsky families settle in Winograd? This too is not certain. As will be noted later, the Tenofsky family (the name may have been shortened from Antonovsky) traces its origins in Winograd to 1740 and this date probably applies to my maternal and paternal families as well, or perhaps even earlier. Those who settled in Haifa retained the name Antonovsky, while those in the United States shortened it to Antonoff or Anton.

Yeshaya (Shaya) and Sarah Rosenfeld Antonovsky were my maternal grandparents, called Zaide and Bubba, respectively, in Yiddish. Bubba Sarah was one of two daughters of Pini and Nessia Rosenfeld, my great-grandparents. Zaide and Bubba Antonovsky had seven children: Liuba (Liba), Leah, Yetta, Chanah, Rachel, Hinda, and Joseph, who was the youngest. Throughout the years of their marriage, Bubba and Zaide, hoped and prayed for a son, who would in the future, according to the tradition, recite the Kaddish, the prayer for the dead, for them. In addition, a son would give them immortality by continuing the family name. When Joseph was born in 1902, they were overjoyed and there was great rejoicing in the family. No wonder he became the favorite of his six sisters. Little did they realize, however, that fifteen years later, Joseph would recite the Kaddish for his mother. She was an attractive woman and a doting grandmother. My sister and I were the only grandchildren she lived to see and love. She contracted a contagious disease and was isolated. I vividly recall standing outside of her window with my mother and sister to say goodbye to her as she lay on her deathbed. My mother lifted me up and I waved to her. She saw me and my sister and with tears streaming down her cheeks and, sick as she was, she tried to lift herself up and wave to us. My

mother too was weeping and so were we. She died soon afterward. Her death was a shock to Zaide Shaya, his children, and the entire family and she was deeply mourned.[6] Zaide Shaya never remarried.

When Bubba Sarah died, the daughters and son did their utmost to assist Zaide Shaya in his business affairs. They were the housekeepers, the cooks, the bakers, the maids, the seamstresses, and gave their diligent attention to their widowed and bereaved father. Everyone in town admired this caring family as a baalehbatishe (a respected, stable) household. Joseph, the only son and the youngest of the family, was a favorite as were my sister and I as the only grandchildren. He went to work at the age of eleven, was of great assistance to his father, his sisters, and especially to my mother who was trying very hard to make a living for her family after my father's emigration to America in late 1912. Yetta, at a very young age, went to live with great-grandparents, Pini and Nessia Rosenfeld and worked in their general store until she departed for America where she arrived in January 1914 at the age of nineteen. She was a beautiful young woman, fell in love with Philip (Pini) Kliegman, and when he decided to emigrate to America, she decided to follow.

Before his marriage to Bubba Sarah, Zaide Shaya had served in the Russian Army and could read, speak and write Russian fluently. As I remember him, he was of medium height, with twinkling and smiling dark brown eyes, bearded, gentle and even tempered, "modern" in dress, except that on the Sabbath and holidays, he wore a black silk caftan. In town he was known as Shaya Leib's (his father's name). He was an innkeeper by occupation and a jack-of-all-trades of sorts because innkeeping alone could not sustain him and his large family of seven children. There were several inns in the shtetl. Zaide Shaya's inn was the largest and the best known one, especially when it was rebuilt after the fire, described elsewhere in the book. The inn

generally was a stop-over station for merchants and traders on the way to and from the larger towns and cities. The stopovers were important not only for the trade transactions, but significantly for the news and stories the merchants brought with them of regional and world's affairs. To supplement his income, he engaged in a variety of business ventures. In the winter months, he made loans to peasants to help tide them over until the spring. At harvest time he bought grain, and other agricultural products from them, had the wheat milled at the flour mill, resold it to them, to bakers, and merchants who passed through town and stayed at his inn. At the weekly yarid (market day) where cows, horses, goats, farm products were sold, he acted as auctioneer and middleman and earned commissions. He also dealt with merchants passing through town. With the help of his daughters and son, he managed to make a good living.

He was also involved in town affairs, was a leader in the Bes Medrash (synagogue), had good relations with gentile town officials and with the town priest, was well liked and trusted by the peasants.[7]

My father was in America and I had no memories of him. But my mother, maternal and paternal grandparents, great-grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins provided the loving and tender care any child would want.

Zaide Shaya was a loving and doting grandfather and surrogate "father." Everyone called me Avrum Shaya's. Except for the time I spent in the Heder, I was his constant companion. One of my fond earliest memories is rising early in the morning and accompanying him on his daily chores. On Fridays he always took me with him to the steam bath in preparation for Shabbat. He loved to show me off to the tradesmen and merchants who stayed at his inn. He would stand me up on the table and have me sing for them (I must have been five or six at the time). I watched him insulate the house in advance of the

winter months. Double windows, separated by sand, were installed and in the winter I loved to watch the ice figures and formations on the outside windows. To keep the house warm (there was no coal) double hollow walls were constructed between the "living room" and bedroom and straw was used as fuel. We would sit with back and hands against the wall to keep warm. The main oven, built in the kitchen for cooking and baking, provided additional heat. The cozy and warm alcove behind the oven was one of my favorite spots in the winter.

When I was about six, Zaide Shaya gave me a pony as a gift and made sure I would ride it safely. The pony was kept in the barn and I learned to feed it and take care of it. Pickling and canning tomatoes, apples, cucumbers, cabbage and fruit in barrels and jars was an activity I joined in with other members of the family. Memory of it still whets the appetite. Churning butter and cheese, observing the milking of the cow and witnessing the birth of a calf, were pleasant experiences.

At times, Zaide Shaya would take me to the fields of farmer friends, put me on one of the wagons and I would enjoy watching the threshing of the wheat. At other times he would take me along during the fruit and vegetable picking seasons.

Uncle Joe treated me like a younger brother and showered me with love and affection. He was nine years my senior and at the age of fifteen he was mature and had a job. He himself recalls that he began working at the age of eleven. He was of great help to my mother. When she purchased hundred pound bags of wheat from the farmers, Uncle Joe carried them to the town flour mill and made sure to bring the flour back for sale to merchants and tradesmen.

He made me wooden ice skates and a sled and taught me to use them. Sledding and ice skating were a joy and pleasure during the eight day Hanukkah festival, a time for games, play and fun. We children did not mind the bitter cold, the ice and the

deep snow. Snow ball fights were a common activity. Of all things, I still remember the winter headgear I wore to protect face and ears, the "bashlik" (the Russian word for head covering). For Hanukkah Uncle Joe made me a dreidl (spinning top). For Purim he made me a wooden gragger (noise maker) and for Lag B'Omer a bow and arrows, using the hoops of old barrels. He made sure the lantern I carried on the way to Heder in the early evening was filled with kerosene and safe. Whenever he went to the farms he took me along. I was his constant companion and he watched over me with great affection. Throughout the years Uncle Joe remained a beloved life long friend.

Yetta, Zaide Shaya's third daughter, was the first of the family to emigrate to America. My mother, the oldest and already married, was waiting and hoping eagerly and anxiously to be reunited with my father in America. The outbreak of World War I thwarted her high expectations. It was a deep and bitter disappointment. After nine years of separation they were reunited in September 1921.

In the early 1920's Zaide Shaya's four daughters, my mother Liba, Leah, Rachel and Hinda (Hilda) and son, Joseph, fled illegally from Russia and were on the way to America. Before leaving, Leah married Raphael (Ralph) Zeldis of Tarascha, a nearby town. Rachel was married to a childhood sweetheart Hershel (Harry) Antonovsky, a cousin, in Bucharest, Romania. Yetta, already in America, married Philip Kleigman in 1917. Hinda and Joseph, were single, arrived in America in 1923, and were married there, Hinda to cousin Louis Antonovsky and Joseph to Sarah Sinitsky, whose parents were natives of Winograd. Chanah, the only sister who remained in Winograd, married Leibel Schwartz (or was it Schwartzbard) of Tunivka, a nearby village.

As I reflect on the flight of Zaide's six children to America, I often wonder whether he and his daughter Chanah regretted

their decision to remain in Winograd. How lonely and unhappy they must have felt when they returned to a life that could no longer be the same for them and for those who for compelling reasons also decided to stay on. How much Zaide must have missed his daughters, son, and grandchildren (my sister and me) and those grandchildren he would never live to see! True there was exchange of letters but they hardly could express their deep yearnings and feelings. Speaking for myself, the first few years in America I thought of him and Aunt Chanah often and expressed these feelings to my mother and the rest of the family.

The frustration and disappointment was even keener when in the middle 1920's, Zaide Shaya and Aunt Chanah would have wanted to be reunited with the family but could not do so because of the American immigration restrictions and those of the Soviet Union.

Zaide Shaya's six children settled in the New York area. They worked very hard to establish themselves, found employment in factories, opened their own businesses, managed to eke out a meager livelihood at first, struggled to overcome the hardships of adjustment to the American life style, learned to speak English and attained American citizenship. They raised two or three children families and gave them a public school education. One barometer of their acculturation is the fact that nine of their fifteen children, despite all the difficulties they encountered, were college graduates. The other six children were high school or business school graduates but, due to economic circumstances, found employment to help support the family. I was the first of the children to work my way through college, receiving BA, MA, and Ph.D. degrees. At the college graduation in 1933, twelve years after my arrival in America, my parents wept openly for joy. All of Zaide Shaya's great-grandchildren are college graduates, a high degree of achievement. The saga of the Antonovsky family and their descendants is yet to be written.

How did Zaide Shaya's three brothers and three sisters fare in the 1917-1921 turbulent period and what was their fate? All of them had raised large families and, like all Winograder, had experienced the chaotic conditions and the pogroms. Life was precarious and the outlook for the future was bleak. Most of them remained in the shtetl; the younger people moved to Kiev and other cities. Some of them and their children immigrated to the United States or settled in Haifa.

Brother Itse-Moishe and wife Bracha had no children. They emigrated to the United States in the 1920's and I remember them and how difficult it was for them, at an advanced age, to adjust to America. Brother Sholem and wife Basya had several children and were among those who settled in Haifa. I met them in Israel in 1961 but have no information about them. Brother Berel had eleven children but only one of his children, Zelda, settled in the United States and married cousin Baruch, son of Moshe and Rivka Antonovsky, who also emigrated to America with their six sons. Aunt Rachel, as already noted, married their son, Hershel (Harry). Zelda and Baruch were childhood sweethearts and Baruch would not leave Winograd without her. Cousin Zelda and Aunt Rachel, two beautiful young women and married to two handsome brothers, were life long close friends and so were their daughters. Both were named Sarah in memory of my Bubba Sarah and, to distinguish between them, were nicknamed Tania and Gypsy. It appears that marriage among the Antonovsky families was common in Winograd. It is difficult to ascertain how many Antonovsky families there were in Winograd and in nearby towns, possibly as many as twenty five or forty estimated by cousin Louis Antonoff and Uncle Joe, respectively. All of them were related somehow. Relatives lived in Lisinka, Boyarke, Bushinka, Zvinigrodka, Rizhnivka, Tunivka, Zhaskov and others.

With respect to Zaide Shaya's sisters, Nessia married Krasnovsky and had three children. One of them, Moshe, emigrated to Haifa, with his two infant children Shulamith and Dov. Shulamith married Joshua Houminer. They live in Jerusalem and have a daughter named Nessia after Shulamith's grandmother Nessia, my mother's aunt. During my trips to Israel I came to know the Houminer family well.

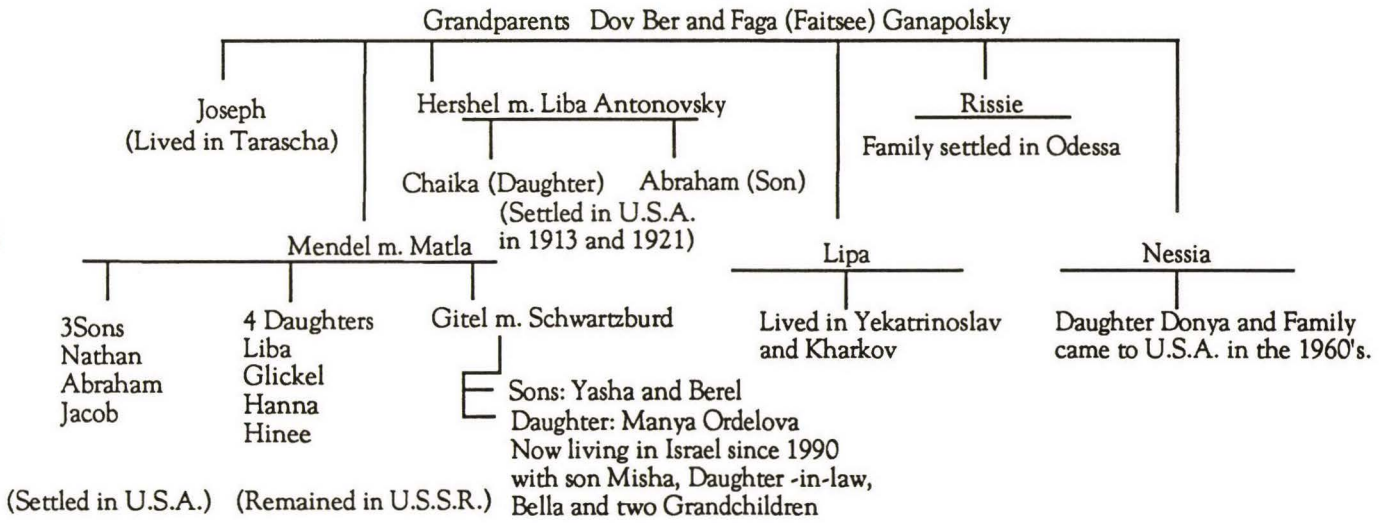
Osna, Zaide Shaya's second sister, married into the Zunder family and had two or three children, two whose names I remember (Leib and Aharon). Members of the Zunder family settled in Haifa. In 1990, I met two Zunders, Tuvia Zunder and his sister Amaliah Zunder Schiff. Leib Zunder's daughter, Natasha, settled in the United States and was married to a Cohen. I believe that Aharon settled in Argentina where his descendants now live. The third sister, Raizel also married and moved to Lisinka with her three children.

Paternal Ganapolsky Family

My paternal grandparents were Dov Ber and Faitsee (Faga) Ganapolsky, well known and respected in the shtetl for their piety and religious observance. Actually the name was Hanapolsky but since there is no "H" in the Russian alphabet, the letter became a "G." My guess is that Hanna was the matriarch of the family whose origin was in Poland and hence was called Hanapolsky, the one who hailed from there. There were several Ganapolsky families in the shtetl. It is likely that they settled there when Russia seized the biggest part of Poland when it was divided in the latter part of the 18th century.

The family was poor by the standards of the time but it had "yichus" (status) as being well educated and versed in classical

Ganapolsky Family in Winograd



Judaism. Zaide Dov Ber was a glazier by occupation but spent most of his time in study. I remember him as a kindly, tall, bearded man of ruddy complexion and light brown-reddish hair, always dressed in the Orthodox traditional black garb. He was a Hasid and periodically visited the Hasidic Rebbe Twersky of the nearby shtetl Talna. He was probably named after Rabbi Dov Ber, known to Hasidim as the Maggid (Preacher) of Mezerich, a founder of Hasidism. Zaide Dov Ber was one of the leaders and pillars in the Kloiz, the synagogue of the Hasidim in the shtetl. As a young child I knew about his visits to the Talna Rebbe and it left a lasting impression on me. Yet, I do not remember spending much time with him or with Bubba Faitsee. But whenever I came to visit, I found him at study with a book in hand. He always asked me questions about my studies in the Heder and when I answered correctly, his face lit up with pleasure. Periodically, I attended services with him in the Kloiz where I was identified as Avrum Shaya's and also as Hershel's son. I was in awe of Zaide Dov Ber. I do not remember what Bubba Faitsee looked like but I know she was a deeply pious person, always wore the traditional wig and was knowledgeable in Tse-enah Ure'enah, the women's Bible study book. She always welcomed me warmly and treated me with sweets, leaving me with fond memories of her.

An annual experience and activity I participated in was at Zaide Dov Ber's house. A week or more before Passover, his house was thoroughly scrubbed and prepared (kashered) for the holiday. A large room and oven were prepared for baking the matzot. It was an activity in which children too, participated. In my mind's eye I still see the scene. The unleavened bread, made from flour and water, was kneaded hastily by the women in order to prevent fermentation; the men, using small wheel rollers (something like glass cutters), cut the ridges and then put the matzot one at a time in the heated oven. Zaide Dov Ber showed

me how to use the roller to make the ridges which I did with joy and enthusiasm. The matzot were made with great precision in accordance with Halachic tradition. Another personal small incident comes to mind. Growing payot (side burns) was a religious tradition and custom. Zaide Dov Ber always made sure mine hung straight down on my cheeks. Zaide Shaya, on the other hand, pushed them behind my ears. Was this merely symbolic or was it a different approach to religious practice?

According to their grandson, Abraham Ganapolsky, Bubba Faitsee was the bread winner in the family, busily engaged in buying and selling textile merchandise, especially at the weekly market day. As Abraham expressed it, she was "der shpiegel in shtut," a woman who, by her virtuous and industrious pattern of life, "mirrored" the best of traditional Jewish values. He also recalls an embarrassing incident that happened to Zaide Dov Ber which demonstrates that he was not a businessman. Once Bubba Faitsee asked him to travel to Kiev to buy merchandise. When he got there he lost his way. Meeting a Jew, he asked for directions to the factory. The Jew, seeing a bearded man wearing the traditional kapota (caftan), took stock of him and agreed to accompany him to the factory. On the way he robbed him of his money, beat him, and fled. Crestfallen, Zaide Dov Ber finally found the factory and shamefacedly told his story. The man who knew the family was sympathetic and sold him the merchandise to be paid for in installments. When he returned to Winograd and told his story, townspeople, behind his back, joked about the incident, saying "everything happens to him."

Zaide and Bubba raised a family of four sons and two daughters: Joseph, Mendel, Hershel (my father), Lipa, Nessia and Rissie. The sons received a traditional Jewish education and were steeped in the study of Talmud. Two of them, my father and Lipa, also studied and read modern Hebrew literature.

Joseph, the oldest son, a teacher of Talmud, moved to Tarascha, a nearby town. I know very little about him except for what my father told me much later of his thorough knowledge of Talmud and the classic rabbinic literature. Also, in the history of Tarascha published in the United States in the 1930's by the Tarascha Progressive Society, Joseph's picture appears on the title page and is described by the author and editor, as a leader, teacher, and correspondent source of information about the town and the murderous pogroms during the Civil War.[8] Joseph was married and as far as I know had no children. Abraham Ganapolsky also remembers that not only was Joseph a highly educated person but was also well-to-do. This information was a surprise to me, unless, in addition to teaching, Joseph was engaged in the textile business.

Mendel, the second son, was a respected teacher of Bible and Talmud. Abraham claims that his father "sat in the synagogue day and night studying and teaching." He tried his hand at everything that would help him support his wife and eight children. "Eliezer Sokolsky, a wealthy merchant," Abraham relates, "studied with my father in the Kloiz several times a week. On Saturday night, my father was a frequent visitor at his home for study and refreshments. Sokolsky made him small loans without interest for the purchase of merchandise. In the synagogue, my father was designated as the person 'tsu shlogen malkes,' the person who administered whippings or lashes on the eve of Yom Kippur." There was a tradition among pious Jews to atone for their sins by submitting to whipping or lashes. The whipping was symbolic and those who submitted to it, dropped a few coins in the plate for my father, the amount dependent on their financial condition. My father, would say: 'If I had a steady income of five rubles we would be making a living.' "At a later time" Abraham writes, "my father obtained the synagogue contract to sell yeast for baking bread and from then on he had

a steady source of income. I helped my father by selling yeast on market day to Jews and Christians."[9]

I remember Uncle Mendel as a tall heavy set red bearded man and very pious and recall that, poor as he was, he lent my mother ten rubles to pay the tuition fee for me to begin the study of Talmud.

My father, Hershel (Harry) was the third son and like his older brothers he received an intensive traditional education. Before and after marriage, he engaged in the textile business and often travelled to Kiev and Tarascha on business. For reasons noted later, he left Winograd for America in December 1912 and arrived in New York on February 2, 1913 from Hamburg, aboard the ship Amerika.

The fourth and youngest son, Lipa, was educated in the classical tradition, but also was a maskil, a Hebraist, steeped in the study of the Hebrew language and literature. Education was his main vocation. But he also had bookkeeping skills. On a part time basis, he served as the bookkeeper of Moshe Teplitsky, a wealthy merchant. Influenced by the Heder Metukan (improved Hebrew schooling) movement, he opened a Hebrew school to which parents, desirous of giving their children a more modern Jewish education, transferred them from the traditional Heder[10]. My uncle Joe Antonovsky and cousin Abraham Ganapolsky (Lipa's nephew) were among the children enrolled in this school.

Uncle Lipa's attempt to establish a modern Hebrew school was a departure and break from the traditional Heder education, marking the recognition and desire of the younger generation to change the educational system. The shtetl was not ready for it. Not satisfied with the enrollment and the negative attitude of the traditionalists, he left the shtetl for Yekatrinislav, a large city, where he taught the modern Hebrew language and its literature. Uncle Lipa's advocacy of needed change in the time honored

educational system was a deep disappointment to his God fearing and pious parents.

Soon after the outbreak of the Revolution and Civil War, he settled in Kharkov where he took a position as bookkeeper in the government because teaching Hebrew was forbidden. He married cousin Chaya Rachel, Aunt Rissie's daughter, but had no children. Uncle Lipa was my father's favorite and whenever possible they corresponded in Yiddish or in Hebrew. In America, when I inquired about Uncle Lipa's background, my father informed me that Lipa was an auto-didact and an avid follower of the 19th century maskilim such as J.L. Gordon, Abraham Mapu and a reader of the writings of Hayim Nachman Bialik, Ahad Ha-Am and others. These writers were the pioneers in the renascence of the Hebrew language and literature. My father, too, when he was still in Russia, read their writings. In America, I found among my father's books, Hebrew books and periodicals in addition to the writings of Yiddish authors. In the 1940's and 1950's I began to correspond with Uncle Lipa periodically. I have no information about his life in Kharkov or the year of his death.

What was the fate of the Ganapolsky family members who remained in Winograd or in other towns, Zaide and Bubba, their sons Joseph, Mendel and Lipa and their daughters, Nessia and Rissie? Like other families in the shtetl, they experienced and endured the chaotic conditions and the terror of the pogroms, and witnessed the tragic devastation of the shtetl. Did Zaide and Bubba die peacefully or were they victims of the pogroms? No one in the family has this information. Joseph, who lived in Tarascha, narrowly and miraculously escaped the pogroms, and described them vividly in his letters to the Tarascha landsleit in New York. Fortunately, Lipa, too, escaped death and fled to Kharkov from Yekatrinislav. Daughters Nessia and Rissie remained in Winograd. Regretfully, my family had no contact

with them. Both married and had children. Nessia's daughter, Donya, her husband, and their two children arrived in the United States in the early 1960's and settled in the Midwest. Abraham Ganapolsky remembers that Aunt Rissie had six daughters and a son. The son died in Winograd but Rissie's daughters, of whom we have no information, moved to Odessa.

Mendel's three sons, Nathan (Nuchem), Abraham, and Jacob (Yankel) emigrated to America. The oldest son, Nathan, emigrated before World War I and settled in Milwaukee. It appears that several Winograd townspeople preceded him, arriving at the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of this century.[11] I know little of Nathan's family except that he had a son, Walter, and a daughter, Mickey.

The second son, Abraham, now living in Miami Beach, Florida, left the Ukraine in 1924. As he tells it, he began to work at the age of thirteen. Up to then he had studied in the Heder and in Uncle Lipa's Hebrew School. Like his brothers, Nathan and Jacob, he did not engage in intensive Talmud study, to the disappointment of Zaide Dov Ber. Conditions were changing and he had to go to work to help his father. He was employed by Abraham Zaichek at a salary of two rubles a week which was increased to three rubles a week and to sixteen rubles a month when he became a manager. Fish and herring were imported from Kherson. When the disturbances, robberies, and pogroms began, he fled to Kiev where he found work in the Yevraiski (Jewish) Bazaar. In 1924 he left Russia with the intention of joining his brother, Nathan, in Milwaukee. Immigration restrictions compelled him to emigrate to Cuba, arriving there in 1925 with about $60 in his pocket. He tried his hand at construction and factory work and peddling in small towns until he established himself in Havana in the haberdashery business, built a men's clothing factory, opened two retail stores, invested in real estate, ultimately owning 102 apartments. When Castro

came to power in 1959, his property was confiscated. He almost had to start all over again but finally was able to flee from Cuba and settle in Florida. Abraham and his wife Shoshanah have a son, Dr. Israel Ganapolsky, who is well established with his wife and four grown daughters in Puerto Rico.

Jacob (Yankel) arrived in the United States in the 1920's, stayed with us for a short time, and then moved to Milwaukee and went into the retail and wholesale haberdashery business. I know little about his life in the shtetl except that he too received the traditional Jewish education in the Heder. Later in life when he already had established himself in Milwaukee, he became active in the Hasidic synagogue of which the spiritual leader was a descendant of the Talna Rebbe, Rabbi Twersky, and for a time before his death, served as the president of the synagogue. The tradition of Zaide Dov Ber was continued after a fashion. He and his wife Sarah raised three sons, Howard, Morton, and Milton. Morton, a pharmacist, died at a young age. Howard obtained his Ph.D. in Social Work, is a professor at the Columbia School of Social Work and has authored several books. Milton's interests are in the dramatic arts; he holds a Ph.D. degree and, has taught dramatics at Hunter College, New York, and is the author of several plays.

Mendel's daughters, Gitel, Liba, Glickel, Hanna and Hinee, remained in Winograd with their parents and grandparents. Gitel's brother, Abraham, remembers that she too wanted to emigrate to America but her mother would not allow it because in her view, America was a treifa (non-kosher and irreligious) country. Brother Abraham remembers that Gitel herself, a strictly observant person would not give him his breakfast until or unless he said his morning prayers.

In the middle 1970's, by a strange coincidence, I received a letter from Gitel, who was then living in Dnyevsk in the Ukraine. At the time she was in her late 70's and we began a correspon-

dence in Yiddish for several years. In her letters she described the tribulations she, her husband, daughter, Manya, and her father, Mendel, endured during World War II, fleeing from the Germans to the Ural Mountains and after the war returning to Dnyevsk where her husband died. Gitel did not know whether her brothers were still alive and I put her in touch with Abraham. In recent years, Israel Ganapolsky visited Gitel's family in Dnyevsk. In December 1990, Gitel's daughter, Manya Ordelova, and grandson Misha and family emigrated to Israel, settling in Netanya. In June 1991, I had an emotional reunion in Israel with Manya, her son, Misha and daughter-in-law Bella, her two grandchildren Danny and Katya, and Bella's parents. I learned first hand of the problems they encountered in going through the throes of absorption into Israel's society: housing, employment, education, acculturation and integration. I came away with confidence that, despite the difficulties, they will succeed in building a new life in Israel.

Manya told me some more details about the family. Her brother, Yasha, a partisan, was killed in World War II. Brother, Berel, in his middle 60's still lives in Dnyevsk with his family. Her mother's sisters remained in Winograd in the 1920's and later moved to other cities. They are no longer alive but Manya knows little about their children, some of whom live in Odessa.

About Mendel Ganapolsky, her grandfather and my uncle, Manya told me that he had come to live with his daughter Gitel in Dnyevsk, had fled with her family to Siberia where he died at the age of 83 and was buried there. In 1945 when they returned to Dnyevsk, Mendel's body was brought back for a Jewish burial in Dnyevsk. It was a sad ending for Mendel, the deeply religious and pious second son of Dov Ber and Faitsee Ganapolsky.

In 1945, at the age of sixteen, Manya visited Winograd with her aunt Liba whose husband had relatives there. Very few Jews

lived in the shtetl at the time but more Jews and relatives lived in Lisinka.

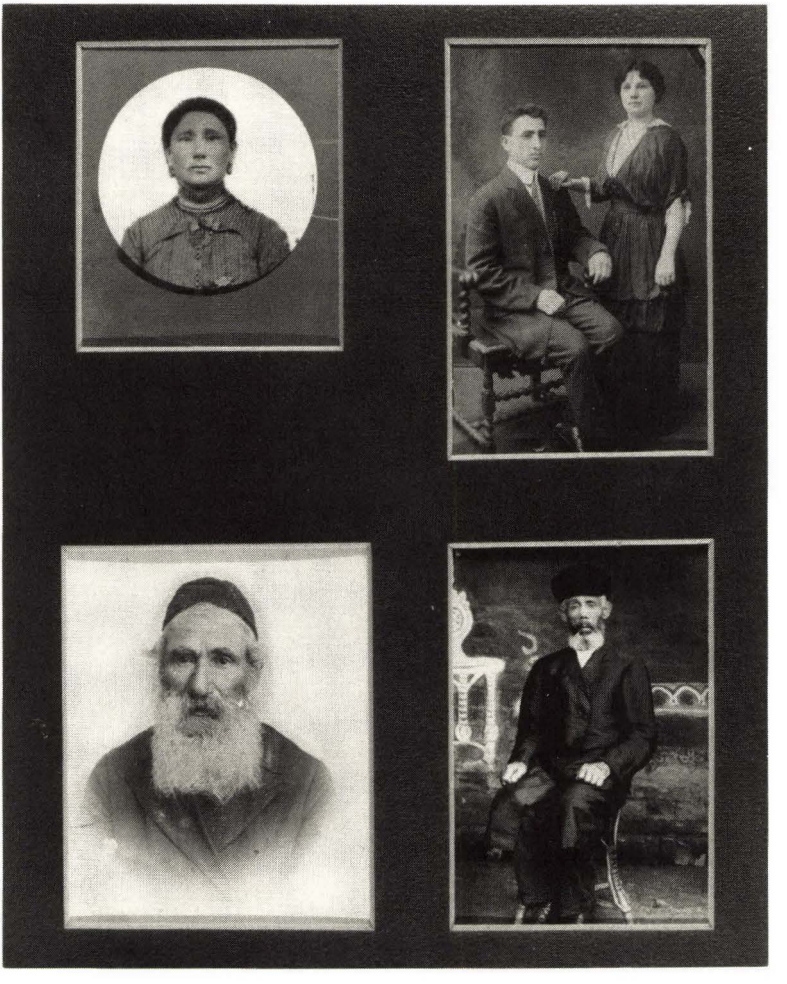
In the United States the family name was shortened to Polsky with the exception of cousin Abraham who retained the full name. In 1936, uncomfortable with the name Polsky because of its Polish connotation and Poland's rabid anti-Semitism, I decided to take the first part of the family name and change it to Abraham P. Gannes.

The influence on my formative years of grandparents, uncles and aunts, and that of the closed Jewish society, was profound and lasting. The decision, in later years, to make Jewish education my life's work, may be attributed, in part, to the early childhood positive and meaningful traditional studies in the Heder, to my teacher, Reb Hersheleh, and, especially, to the example set by Uncle Lipa.

The effect on me of my mother's family was greater than that of my father's family. We lived with the former for a time, since my father was in America, and my mother, the oldest of the six sisters, was very attached to her parents and siblings, relying on them for moral and even financial support. My sister and I, the only grandchildren, were the beneficiaries of their doting affection and attention.

My mother's family was business inclined and oriented, in contrast to the paternal family's deep interest in study and in the pursuit of learning. Zaide Shaya was a business man, religiously observant but more modern in outlook and dress. Having served in the Russian Army and regularly exposed to the stories and news reports of world events brought by the travelers who stopped at his inn, Zaide Shaya was more "worldly." Zaide Dov Ber tried his hand at a trade but his heart was not in it. A devoted Hasid, he spent his time in study and in activity at the Kloiz, and did not miss an opportunity to visit the court of the Talner Rebbe.

The events and experiences of the turbulent years of my childhood and the direct and indirect influence of both families, matured me early, shaped my life and gave me an understanding of Jewish life and destiny.



Clockwise:
Grandmother Sarah Antonovsky
Philip and Yetta Kliegman
Grandfather Shaya Antonovsky
Great-Grandfather Yoseph Leib Antonovsky
Credit: Lillian K. Sperber



Great grandparents Pini and Nessia Rosenfeld, daughter Marim Zaitchek and boys, Liba Antonovsky and Hershel Ganapolsky - My parent's engagement, 1906



Itse Moshe and Bracha Antonovsky



Chanah and Leibel Schwartzburd
and daughters



FAMILY PORTRAIT
Yetta and Husband Philip Kliegman and children Lillian and Michael, Joseph, Hilda, Rose and Husband Harry, Leah and Husband Ralph Zeldis and son Milton.
Credit: Stanley J. Antonoff



Liba Ganapolsky and children Chaike and son Abraham (Author) 1914



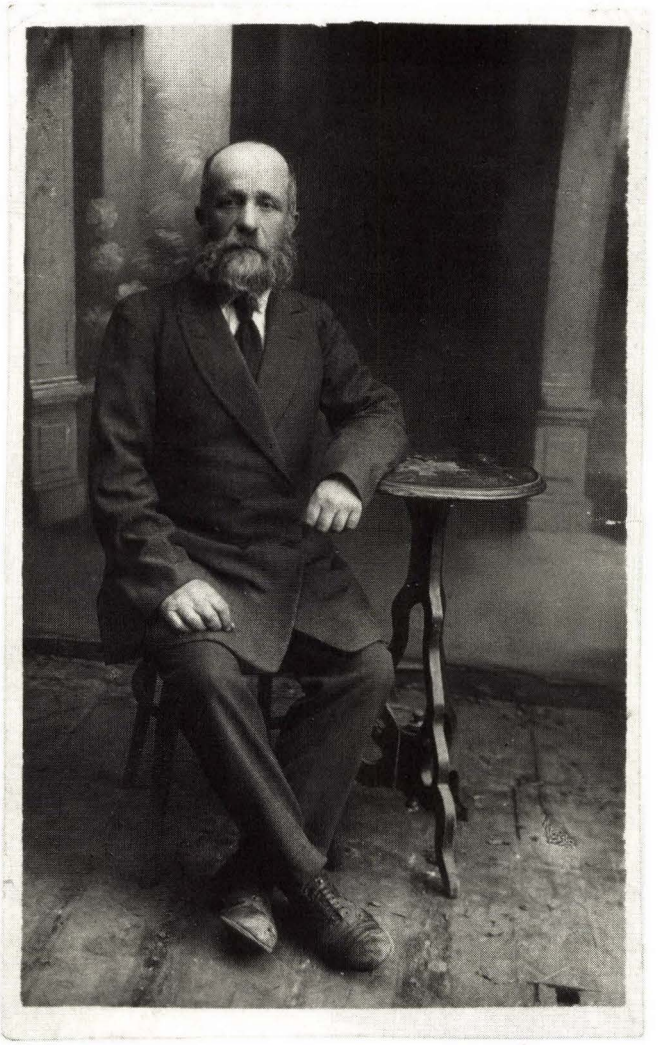
Author and sister Chaike passport picture 1921



Brother and sister Lipa and Nessia Ganapolsky



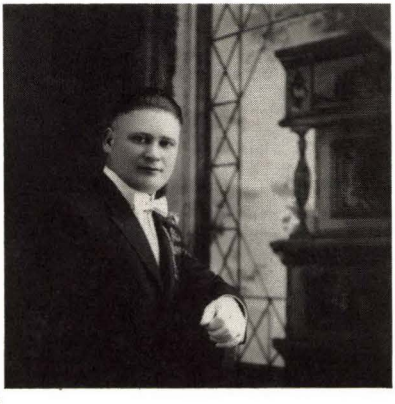
Mendel Ganapolsky
Credit: Manya Ordelova



Joseph Ganapolsky



Abraham Ganapolsky
Credit: Manya Ordelova



Nathan Ganapolsky
Credit: Milton Polsky



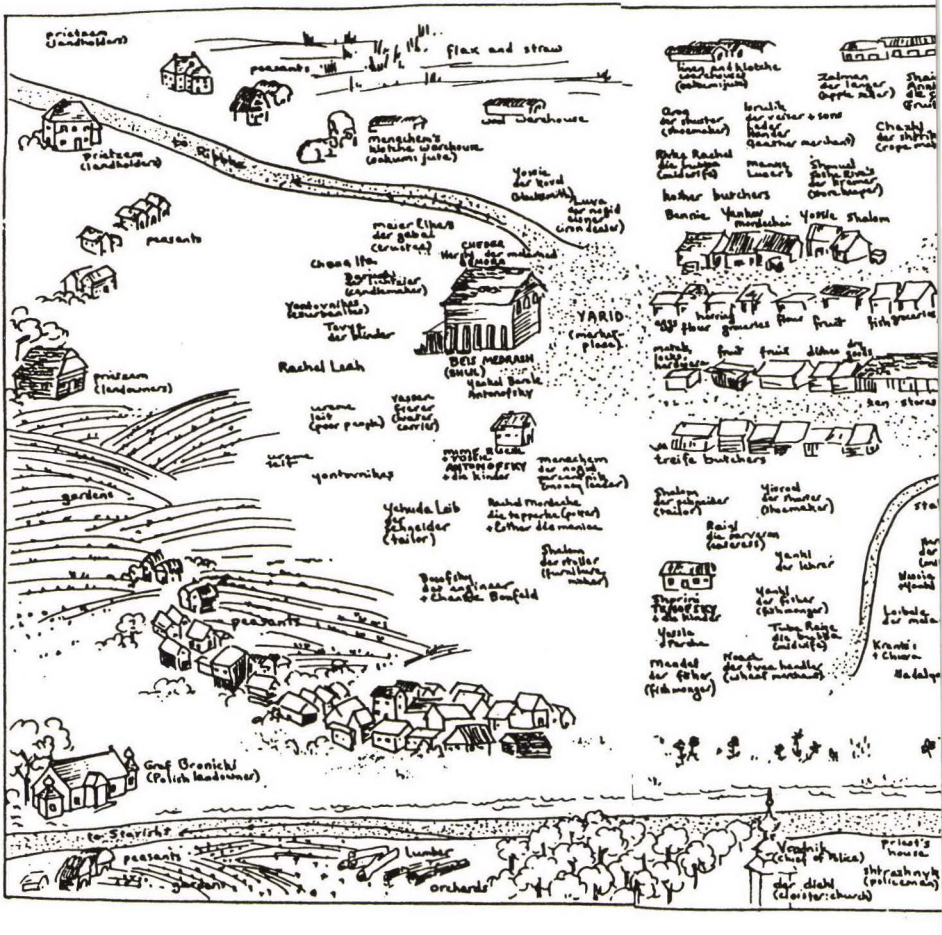
Jacob Ganapolsky
Credit: Milton Polsky



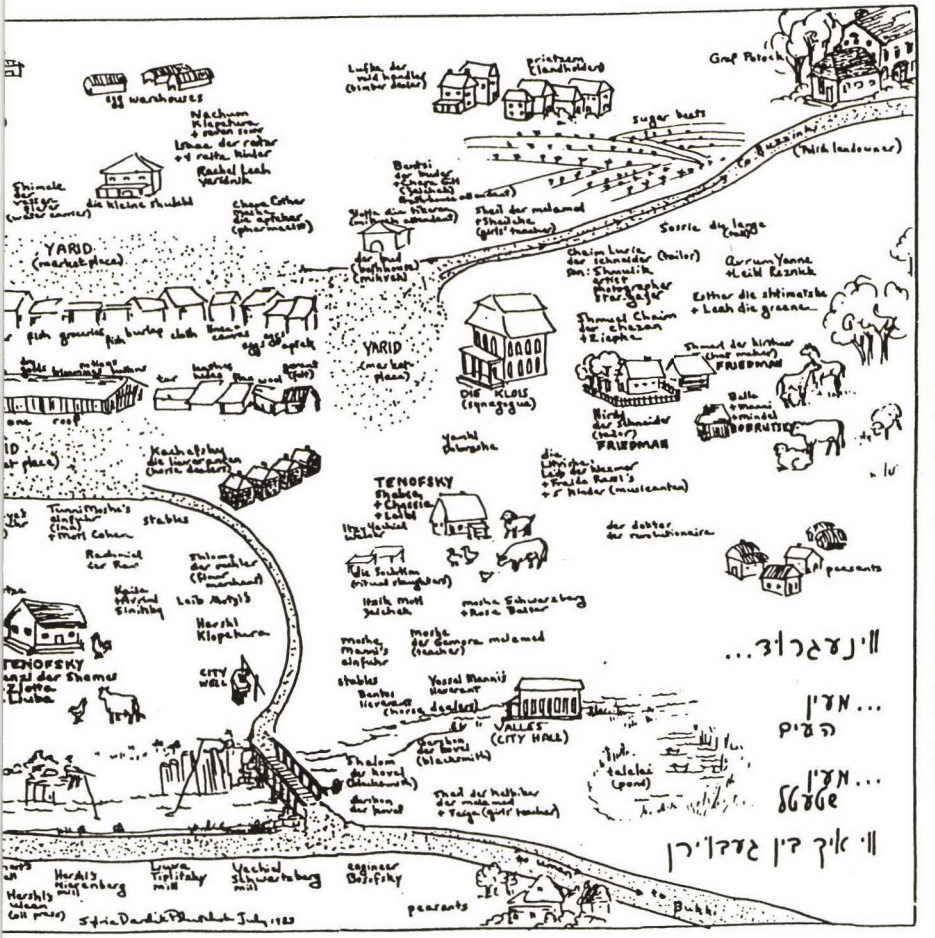
Sisters Rissie, Nessia, Gitel Ganapolsky and daughter Manya.
Credit: Manya Ordelova



Gitel Ganapolsky and Yossi Schwartzburd Family



Liuba Tenofsky Map



UNZER SHTETL VINOGRAD

Credit: Jean Tenofsky May
Artist: Sylvia Plutchok

My Shtetl Winograd, a Profile

"Remember the days of old
Consider the years of many generations
Ask thy father and he will declare unto thee
Thine elders and they will tell thee"
Deuteronomy 32:6

The Ukraine, with its fertile and rich soil, was the granary, the "bread basket" of Czarist Russia. Kiev[12] the capital and other large cities of the Ukraine - Odessa, Kharkov, Uman - had substantial Jewish populations but the great majority of Jews lived in the rural towns, hamlets and villages in a confined geographic area, called the Pale of Settlement, in the first two decades of this century. It is estimated that close to two million Jews lived in the Ukraine in 1917.

When Poland was partitioned by Prussia, Austria and Russia at the end of the 18th century many Polish provinces with large Jewish populations fell to Russia's lot. To keep old Russia free of Jews, the Czarist regime forced all Jews to reside in the Pale of Settlement located in the western and southern provinces of former Poland.

When the Czar Alexander II, whose liberal policies had evoked hopes of freedom among Jewish intellectuals, was assassinated, his successor, Alexander III, brutally crushed any semblance of liberalism. The May Laws of 1882 decreed by the

government legislated restrictions on Jews forbidding them to engage in anything to do with land, to live outside of towns and hamlets. Right of domicile was limited by restricting freedom of movement, namely the right to move from one village or hamlet to another without special permission. "Numerous Clausus" laws were enforced with respect to university studies; residence in the larger cities of Russia proper was limited only to those who had special permits; economic restrictions were enforced and military obligations increased. The harsh and restrictive laws destroyed the Jewish high hopes of liberalization and emancipation acts initiated and legislated by Alexander II. As a consequence the restrictive May Laws gave great impetus to the beginnings of mass emigration to the US, western Europe and Palestine. The 1880's also marked the beginnings of the Hovevei Zion Movement (Lovers of Zion) and Bilu (the pioneering movement to colonize the ancient homeland).

My shtetl Winograd (called Winorod in Yiddish), in the Kiev Province, about sixty or seventy miles from the capital, was a small dot, one of the hundreds of villages and towns (shtetl in Yiddish), located in a lush and fertile farming area, rich in vast fields of wheat, corn, barley, dairy farms, orchards, cattle ranges, and also rich in lakes, mountains rivers and forests. Winograd means "a town of vineyards" but as far as I know grapes were not grown in the area. Grapes were a rare fruit which I never tasted in my childhood. After so many years, I cannot rid myself of the memory of the luscious fruit, vegetables and dairy products available in great abundance and which I ate with relish and which still whet the appetite. An abiding memory is joining members of the family during the fall season in preserving fruits and vegetables in large barrels and also churning butter, cheese and cream. I vividly remember the open spaces, the vast fields of wheat and grain, the sunflowers, the forest and mountain in

the background, the river at the edge of the town and the women doing their wash in it.

Yet, after more than seventy years, far removed from the scene and lacking full documentation, it is difficult to reconstruct with full accuracy the town, its physical appearance, population, occupations, institutions, the way of life and the relations with the peasant population prior to the 1917 Revolution, when I was six years old. To bring to life the world of my childhood, a society no longer in existence, and to describe fully the tragic trauma the inhabitants endured during the 1917-21 period, their dispersion to the ends of the world, is a story that can be told only in part.

My memoir, therefore, is based on personal memories, some clear, some hazy, fortified and corroborated by many stories heard in my youth and by recollections of relatives and former townspeople, who fled the shtetl in their youth, and by the stories they told their children and grandchildren, included in the bibliography.[13] Abraham Mindich, estimated that "the town was about one half mile wide and a mile long with all the stores and shops located in the middle of the town. There was also a space next to the stores where farmers brought their fruits and vegetables every Monday to sell to the Jewish population and to buy manufactured goods in the stores. All around the town empty land separated us from the gentile farmers (muzhiks), spread out for miles around us. One part of the empty space was reserved for Monday's fair where the farmers brought their horses and cattle to sell and buy."[14]

On my visit to Haifa in August 1990, I was pleasantly surprised to find a map layout of Winograd drawn by Sylvia Plutchok hanging on the wall of the Carmiah Synagogue; donated by Liuba Tenofsky, a native of Winograd in honor of her 90th birthday. In addition, on the memorial tablets were the names of the Winograd founders of the synagogue. In Hebrew

the word Carmiah means God's vineyard, an apt name in honor of the shtetl.

The Tenofsky map is extremely illuminating with respect to the physical layout of the Jewish community, the occupations, the synagogues, the location of the peasants and the landowners, Graf (count) Bronitski and Graf Pototski.

The market place and the adjoining cluster of stores occupy the center of the town. The individual homes of the rich and the poor are scattered and located in different sections. The warehouses are located on the upper northern tier and the mills on the southern outskirts near the river. The Bes Medrash synagogue is on the west side, left of the market place and the Kloiz synagogue on the right side. A small synagogue (die kleine shulchl) is shown north of the market place. Was this synagogue for the poor? I vaguely remember there was a third synagogue, although relatives in the United States and Israel remember only the two big ones. Yet Liuba Tenofsky remembers the small one on the outskirts, near the warehouses. The inns (one of them Zaide Shaya's) are shown on the south and east and the location of the butcher shops and horse dealers on the south and east respectively. The city hall (Volost) is on the east end. The map shows no evidence of planned laid out streets or sidewalks.

The orchards, forests and lumber industry, peasant homes and farms and the estates of the landlords are shown surrounding the Jewish community on the east, west, south and north. Shown also on the map are a small pond, the river on the southern edge of the town, running from east to west, the town well, the priest's estate, the cloister (church) the policeman's estate and the roads leading to nearby towns, names of which I remember.

The Jews lived close to the soil but did not own land nor engage in agriculture. Their farming activities were limited to the cultivation of small gardens and orchards near their homes and

to the ownership of a cow, a goat, a horse, and chickens. Zaide Shaya owned a cow and a goat and great-grand parents Pini and Nessia grew in their small garden, apple, pear and cherry trees, the latter of which was a favorite. Louis, Barney and Jack Antonoff recall the spacious home their family owned, the orchard, the garden cultivated by the family, the chickens they raised and the domestic animals they owned. Sholem Lukach describes in his memoir the large family estate, the stables, the garden and orchard. Shoshanah Brodsky and Shulamith Houminer also remember their spacious homes and gardens. In short, the well-to-do families, all of them with many children owned well built, spacious homes, domestic animals, raised chickens and other fowl, and grew their own fruits and vegetables.

The beautiful natural surroundings of Winograd and the neighboring shtetlach served as summer dachas (vacation spots) for urbanites. Many years later my father told me that Sholem Aleichem, the Yiddish writer and humorist, beloved by the masses, spent the summer months in Boyerke, a neighboring shtetl.

Information about the early beginnings of Winograd and its population at the turn of the century and at the time of the 1917 Revolution is scant. Relatives born in the shtetl, now residing in the United States, Canada and Israel, have vague recollections about the size and general population, Jewish and gentile, and other features of the town. Tarascha, a neighboring town, where Uncle Joseph Ganapolsky lived, traces its beginnings to the early years of the 18th century and the Tenofsky tree traces its family's presence in Winograd to 1740. It is also possible that Jews lived there a century earlier in the period of the Khmelnitski pogroms (1648).

However, information about the town's population in the middle and end of the 19th century was made available to me and

to Catherine Parkhurst by the reference librarian of Yivo[15], Dina Abramowicz. Two brief paragraphs, included in the Russian Jewish Encyclopedia published at the beginning of this century, referred to Boyerke and Winograd as follows: "In 1847 the combined Boyerke-Winograd Jewish population consisted of 497: 253 men and 244 women." In 1847 Boyerke and Winograd were listed as one township. In 1897, the towns were listed separately. In that year, Boyerke's "total population was 1793 of which 720 were Jews." Winograd's total population was "4064 of which 1523 were Jews, based on statistics of 1882." It was also noted that in 1903 Winograd "was opened for free Jewish settlement." It is likely that in 1897, the Jewish population was higher than 1523 since this figure was based on 1882 statistics. Noteworthy is that in 1882, more than 35% of Winograd's total population were Jews.

The information about Winograd which Yivo sent Catherine Parkhurst and which appeared in the Polish Encyclopedia, provided more details about the town, the wealthy landowners and the Jewish population in 1863 as follows: "Winograd, appears in documents as Winnogrovodka, a small settlement at the head of a river, county of Zwinogrodski, on the border of Taraszchan county and Uman. Winograd N.W. of Zwinograd, on the way from Stawistch, in the Province of Kherson. It has 265 houses, 2800 people (in 1863 - 1619 Russian Orthodox, 14 Catholic, 559 Jews), Church, townhall, brick factory and weekly green market, church made of wood, cross on top, surrounded by 90 acres of property. Builder of church unknown. Township also includes farm called Tolste Rogi of 1 1/2 acres. Earlier, settlement with key keeper Zwinogrodski who worked for Count Bronitski and that property encompassed 5294 people and 26,344 acres of land in county Zwinograd and a few farms in county Taraschan. Among the settlers, the majority of upper class were orthodox. In the area, there was the grave of Bakunova

in which according to legend lies the Cossak Bakun who was killed with his whole family by Tartars. Entire property used to belong to Count Bronitski. Recently sold to the ministry of Apanazy (Udielov). Township now divided into seven settlements with seven towns having 2403 houses, 13,194 people, 17,588 farms (9066 owned by individuals, 337 owned by church and 8155 owned by Apanazy."

Based on this information we now know the Jewish population to have been 497 (in combination with Boyerke), 559 and 1523 in 1847, 1863 and 1882 respectively. With respect to the total population of 2800 in 1863, the Jews made up 20%. In 1882, the Jewish population had increased to 35% of the total population. Count (Graf) Bronitski owned 26,344 acres of land in the Zwinograd county in which were established seven settlements, among them Winograd. In 1863, the seven towns were already listed separately. From the 1847 data it is evident that Winograd was established long before then. In addition, as noted elsewhere, the Tenofsky family traces its beginnings in the town to 1740.

Of historical interest is the story of the great fire in Winograd as remembered by Sholem Lukach:

> "It happened on a Friday in May 1900, fire struck our town. Ours was a small town, called Winograd, in the province of Kiev, Zwinigrodka county. Most of the houses were small made of wood with straw thatched roofs ...As was the custom on Fridays, the housewives began to prepare for the Sabbath. Moshe Eidel's wife lit the stove to prepare the Sabbath food which was cooked in a primitive oven fired by wood and straw. Accidentally, a spark ignited the straw roof and since the houses were close to one another, to the town's misfortune, they caught fire which spread throughout the town.
>
> "The wind was strong that day and the fire spread from one end of town to the other. The commotion was great, people running about, screaming: Fire! Everyone

grabbed a pail and ran to fetch water from the town well since there was no fire brigade in those days. But to no avail. Most of the town was on fire ... Men and women rushed around in great confusion. They succeeded in salvaging some of their possessions and carried them to an empty lot on the outskirts of the town. Only a few houses with sheet metal roofs escaped the fire among them our house .... In great confusion, mothers and fathers looked for their children who were in the Heder ... My Rebbe was Yisroel Moshe, nicknamed the blind one, because of his poor eyesight. ... The Rebbe gathered the children outdoors and instructed us not to move until he and his wife brought us personally to our parents. I remember that his wife, Ethel, took me and several other children to our mothers.

"On that unfortunate Friday, the townspeople gathered on an empty lot. News of the fire spread in the nearby towns of Boyerke and Lisinka. Soon, help arrived from them in wagons loaded with food. Had it not been for their help, it would not have been possible to observe the Sabbath. Towards evening the women lit the Sabbath candles and the men gathered for services. On that night, all the families slept in the open. The next day, the townspeople scattered and began to dig out and salvage whatever was left. The houses continued to smolder for several days. Most of the children gathered near the egg warehouse owned by Menahem Brodsky, the egg merchant and exporter, to observe the destruction of the eggs in the fire. It was a game for them.

"Luckily, our house remained intact because its roof was of sheet metal. My mother invited the Krasnovsky family to live with us because our house had seven rooms and a big warehouse. The Krasnovsky's had managed to salvage some of their hardware merchandise from their store, located in the center of town. They restarted their wholesale business in our warehouse. ...

"In about a year, the town began to recover from the catastrophe. Houses and stores were built all with sheet metal roofs and red bricks. The Krasnovsky family

> prospered in their business until it moved to its new house and store. From that time on, we have been close friends with this family. They invited us to their family celebrations and when their son, Zvi, was married, we were among the first celebrants. They did not forget what we did for them when they were without house and store. Their economic status was better than ours. When my father needed a loan, he received it from them without interest. That's how they conducted their business. Other Jews too prospered and as it is said: After a fire people become well-to-do."[16]

The fire very probably motivated some of the townspeople to move to nearby towns such as Lisinka, Zvinigrodka, Rizhnivka, Tarascha and Uman.

Relatives estimated the Jewish population in 1917[17] was 300 to 500 families for a total 3000 souls out of a total general population of 9000 to 10,000. I tend to favor the 500 figure based on the percentage of the Jewish population to the total population. The shtetl proper was almost 100% Jewish with the possible exception of the aptek (pharmacy) and the liquor store[18] owned by non-Jews, and the Volost (City Hall) and the government officials. Jews lived in a compact and limited geographic area, surrounded by the Christian farming community and the wide open spaces.

Public affairs, for Jews and non-Jews, were conducted at the Volost, a public building, standing amidst the thatched roofed houses, where vital statistics were kept, taxes collected, documents issued and the Czar's decrees issued. My Aunt Chanah obtained my birth certificate in the Volost by bribing the officials, a common practice. The only telephone and the pocht (post office) were located there. The Winograd civil authority also served the nearby peasant villages. Law and order was maintained by a very small police force, consisting of a constable called a Shtrazhnik and a Uradnik, the chief of police, who lived next

door to the Russian Orthodox Church. The priest's estate and gardens and private well were also nearby.

I remember the onion domed Orthodox Church, overlooking the town, a half mile away from the shtetl, across the river. On Sundays, Christmas and Easter, the ringing of the church bells was loud and clear. The priest was a close friend of the family. On many occasions he risked his life during the pogroms by hiding the family in the cold storage cellars on his beautiful estate.

The shtetl, with some exceptions, was a jumble of individual private wooden houses with thatched roofs. There was no sewage system, no indoor plumbing, no sign of sidewalks or paved streets, no electricity, no street lighting, no street or house numbers; kerosene lamps and lanterns and candles were used; there was little coal; straw and wood were used for heating. With no indoor plumbing, outhouses were built or the outdoors were for human waste. I stepped into such an "outdoor toilet" and was cleaned up from head to foot. Water spilled freely in the streets formed muddy puddles, and shaggy dogs roamed the streets and hung around the butcher shops waiting for bones, bits of meat and fat thrown to them. After so many years, I remember a fearful and traumatic experience. One early morning, at the time we were living with great-grandparents Pini and Nessia, and my mother was baking bread, I set out to visit Zaide Shaya to accompany him on his early morning chores. A pack of barking dogs surrounded me. Hearing my terrified yells, mother ran out and chased them off with a broom. The fear of dogs remains with me to this day.

The snowfall in winter was heavy and there were times we had to dig ourselves out but it was also fun to ride in the sleighs and to use our sleds. After the rains and melting snow, the mud was knee deep and I remember being mired in the mud many a time and calling for help to be pulled out. During the rainy

season, the muddy roads, in and out of town were often intractable. We waited impatiently for the spring sunshine to dry the mud, usually close to Passover. We children loved the spring time when trees and flowers were in bloom and we were able to romp and play in the fragrant outdoors.

Deep wells were the source of the water supply. Well to-do households paid water carriers for their daily water supply, while others came by themselves to draw their daily water needs. Another source of water was the large barrel outside every house for collection of rain water. Melting snow was also a source of water supply. The town lacked a fire brigade and houses with thatched roofs were especially vulnerable to fires.

Unforgettable is the horror of the fire that burned Zeide Shaya's inn to the ground. The fire, cause of which I do not know, broke out on a Friday and the effort to contain it failed. A human assembly line was organized and water drawn from the nearby well. Pails of water were passed from hand to hand and poured on the fire but to no avail. I remember watching the operation at a distance and also watching as the roofs of nearby houses were doused and wetted down.

Uncle Joe remembered this event vividly since he too had joined the water brigade. The inn was rebuilt soon thereafter with loans from family, relatives and friends. Family members moved in with relatives. The new inn, of bricks, wood and metal roof, was much bigger and rooms more spacious. The larger side of the long rectangular building served as the inn and the smaller side were the living quarters of the Zaichek family (Bubba Sarah's sister's family). My immediate family moved in with a relative, Shaya Elya's family. Shaya Elya's father Mordechai[19] was the shtetl's shochet (ritual slaughterer) and at a later time we moved in with great-grandparents Pini and Nessia Rosenfeld, and my mother began to work in the general store. The Rosenfeld house was more "modern", had a sheet metal roof, a cellar, shuttered

windows and a small garden. Mother, sister and I had two rooms to ourselves. Yet there was no water or indoor plumbing. A large rain water barrel stood outside the back door of the house. Yet despite the lack of modern facilities we take for granted today, life was bearable and pleasant. I do not recall feelings of deprivation because of the primitive physical conditions. Living was accepted as it was.

Jews in the main were tradesman and merchants - as tailors, cobblers, carpenters, store keepers, water carriers, wagoners, seamstresses, horse and cattle traders, wheat, egg, sugar and textiles merchants, shochtim (ritual slaughterers) and butchers, tanners, midwives, blacksmiths, teachers, lumber dealers, and flour mill owners. From personal knowledge and keen memory Liuba Tenofsky listed the occupations in the shtetl and named those engaged in them. Her map has added much to my story and fortified my recollections and those of my relatives. As was the custom in those days, townspeople were known and called by their first names and occupations. For example, Liuba's father was known to all as Henzl, the shamas. My grandfather's inn was called Shaya's Einfur (Yiddish for inn) although everyone knew his family was Antonovsky. Other examples cited are: Yossie der kovel (the blacksmith); Aron der shuster (the shoemaker); Luva der nogid eisner (the rich iron dealer) and so on. In a few cases, Liuba added the names of families most of whom were probably related to her. Would that Liuba had given all the family names of those she listed. Liuba also remembered the names of the two wealthiest landowners, Bronitski and Pototski[20]. The occupations of more than fifty families are specifically named. In addition, the map shows ten stores under one roof, in which were sold all kinds of merchandise and many other retail stores in which were sold herring, flax, wool, flour, eggs, burlap, crockery, groceries, hardware, leather, hides, fish, fruit, cloth, linen, canvas, meat and fowl. There probably were thirty or forty such

retail stores to meet the needs of the Jewish inhabitants and the peasants of our town and of the surrounding villages and farms. There were, in addition, warehouses, flour mills, stables, an oil press, exporters and importers, rope makers, bath house attendants, furniture makers, an artist photographer, potters, candle makers, lumber dealers and others. With respect to the peasants, it is clear that in addition to agriculture, they also engaged in forestry, in raising and trading in sheep, cattle and horses.

Some townsmen took their merchandise on the road, travelled to nearby farms and villages, sold their merchandise and made house repairs and, in exchange, brought back eggs, fowl, dairy products, and in this way, eked out a living. Relatives travelled to Kiev, a commercial and trade center, to purchase merchandise for later sale at the yarid. The townspeople were not the proverbial "luftmenschen," that is people "living on air," so to speak, but hard working men and women, doing their utmost to earn a respectable living. Rare was the family where the women did not work to help supplement their husband's meager and precarious earnings. Burdened with the responsibility of raising large families and of attending to a multitude of household chores, the women, none-the-less, served as seamstresses, midwives, hat makers, store keepers and clerks. To help feed their large families, they raised chickens and geese, churned cheese, cream and butter and preserved fruit and vegetables. Their role in the economy of the shtetl was crucial.

Boys and girls lent their assistance. Boys helped their fathers with their daily chores. After Bar Mitzvah, the usual pattern was to become an apprentice to a craftsman, to assist in their fathers occupation, or to seek their own way of making a living.[21] At the age of thirteen or fourteen, girls became apprentices to seamstresses and other women's occupations, household helpers and store clerks.

Uncle Joe began to work with Zaide Shaya at the age of eleven and cousin Abraham Ganapolsky worked as an apprentice to a sugar and herring importer. Uncle Harry Antonovsky (Antonoff), at the age of fifteen, already travelled to Kiev on business for his father, a well to do wheat merchant. Girls too did their share, "taking care of the smaller children, learning to cook, bake, clean, sew and iron."[22] This was the pattern followed in Zaide Shaya's family. The six daughters, at an early age, learned all the household chores and carried them out effectively. Aunt Rachel became an excellent seamstress, a vocation most helpful to her in later years in America, when she was employed in the garment industry. Aunt Yetta, before departing for America, worked in great-grandfather's general store. Members of the large Mindich family engaged in several trades and businesses, as wholesale egg dealers, hardware and grocery store owners, owners of a flour mill, cooking oil and cereal producers. In Saul's immediate family of nine children everyone had to join the effort to make a living. Saul began working at the age of thirteen, was apprenticed to a leather merchant, and later engaged in all kinds of businesses with brothers, father and grandfather. During the period of the Civil War, he and his brothers engaged in the sale of salt, sugar and oil on the black market.[23]

In short, Jews were the middlemen and suppliers of goods and services. In exchange for agricultural and dairy products, Jews supplied the rural population with farm implements, clothing, housewares and a variety of manufactured goods. Under normal conditions, the economic system was one of balance and mutual interdependence. However, a sense of insecurity, the fear of official government anti-Semitic policies and imminent pogroms were ever present. As recalled by relatives, Jews were second class citizens, without permission to move from place to place and always fearful of peasant hostility or government policies.

There was no doctor, hospital or clinic in the shtetl. The pharmacist (feldsher in Yiddish) was consulted or called in occasionally to attend the sick and to prescribe medication. Application of leeches and cupping (shtelln biankis in Yiddish) was a general practice. Zvingrodka was the nearest town which had a hospital and doctors, Jews and non Jews. For a short time, there was a doctor in town. Haya Nir's father, Abraham Friedman, rented the family's new building to an out-of-town doctor, allegedly a communist. He served the town well and befriended the family. One day, Cossacks surrounded the building, seized the doctor and shot him.

Transportation was by horse and wagon. Wagons, carpenters and the blacksmiths were busy as more townsmen traveled to nearby communities and especially to Kiev. Transportation on dusty roads in the dry and rainy seasons was difficult. In the rainy season, wagons had to be pushed or pulled often times. In times of war and peace, travelers were always subject to robbery and ambush. Travel by train to Kiev and other large cities was possible but it seems travel by horse and wagon was more common. I first saw an automobile when an army vehicle drove through the town in 1917 and was surrounded and followed by old and young, marveling at the miracle of the horseless carriage.

The shtetl had its rich, well-to-do and the poor. The negidim (word for rich in Yiddish) were the flour mill and warehouse owners, the sugar and tea merchants and the "bankers" (money lenders).

Monday and Thursday were market (yarid) days and busy ones for Jews and peasants of the surrounding villages. Winograd Jews also travelled to the yarid held on other days in nearby towns to trade, buy and sell. The yarid played an important role in the shtetl's economy and welfare. In my mind's eye I see the peasants bringing in their loaded wagons and animals and crowding into the market place. I see the storekeepers, their wives and helpers,



The Market Place. Artist Ezekiel Schloss
Credit: Board of Jewish Education of New York

awaiting them and displaying their wares: farm implements, hardware, wool, leather goods, fish, flour, textiles, sugar, dishes, etc. Jews and gentiles were busily engaged in buying, selling, bargaining, wheeling and dealing and bartering. I see my grandfather Shaya and Uncle Joe among them. The atmosphere is charged with commotion, confusion and excitement. The well-to-do and the poor, are there, all trying to strike a deal and make a few rubles. For us children, too, it was a thrilling and exciting day. Although we were at the Heder most of the day there was time for us to roam through the market place in the center of the town, to observe the active bargaining and trading. In the evening, the talk at the table was mainly of the yarid, the transactions and the financial returns.

On market day, Jews and gentiles mixed freely, but the shtetl really lived in isolation. Jews and gentiles lived in the same geographic area but lived almost in two separate worlds, maintaining only tenuous social, religious and cultural relations. Nonetheless, daily contacts were maintained and the relationship was one of mutual trust or mistrust. Instances of peasants working for and with Jews were not uncommon. Zaide Shaya was friendly with the peasants, visited them periodically and took me along on these visits. I recall riding on the wagons, observing the threshing of the wheat, the binding of sheaves and, in season, joyfully watching the picking of fruits and vegetables, often eating them with relish. Farmers and their families visited Zaide Shaya periodically and came more frequently to great-grandfather's general store to buy supplies and at Easter time (called Pascha) to buy colored eggs. However, I do not remember ever playing with or having a Christian friend. I met Christian children but friendship with them was not encouraged and probably forbidden. The shtetl was a self-contained ghetto, living side by side with the peasants in close geographic proximity, but not really living together.

Yiddish was the language of the home, the Heder and the street. Russian was used in the main for trading purposes. Members of the family generally did not attend the Russian schools and their knowledge of the Russian language and literature was limited. I knew little of the language but began to speak it haltingly and hesitantly when I was about eight, using the few words that I heard in Zaide Shaya's inn, which I still remember and recognize when I hear Russian spoken. My sister, three years older, who was admitted to the Russian elementary school because of the influence of the local priest, was more fluent in the language.

Like all the hundreds of small towns in the Ukraine, Winograd maintained the traditional community institutions. First and foremost were the synagogues which served as the daily, Sabbath and holidays houses of worship and the focus for adult education. The Bes Medrash[24] and the Kloiz served as the cohesive force, the core and heart of community functions and activities, for the celebration of joyous and festive occasions, and for assembly in times of emergencies, tragic events, impending dangers and pogroms which befell the shtetl periodically. As always in the Jewish tradition, in times of stress, Jews turned to their spiritual fortress, the synagogue, so brilliantly portrayed in the epic Hebrew poem "Im Yesh et Nafshecha Ladaat" (Should You Wish to Know) by the poet laureate Hayim Nachman Bialik.

The poet touches on the central role of the synagogue in Jewish life and tradition: "Should you wish to know the source from which Jews drew their strength and fortitude in evil days of slaughter and atrocities...; should you wish to know the fount from which Jews drew patience, firmness, trust and heavens' comfort and iron will to endure endless suffering....; should you wish to know the fortress, the sacred treasures of their yearning souls.... then go to the synagogue and there your heart will tell you

that you are stepping on the threshold of our life giving source and there you will behold the treasures of our soul."[25]

Maintaining the synagogue was a major responsibility of the rich and poor alike. Committees of town leaders, appointed or elected, handled the synagogue affairs, engaged the town rabbi, the cantor and shamas and made sure they received compensation for their services, meager as it was. The cantor and shamas had to supplement their income. Henzl, the shamas, bought and processed wool into felt, used in boots and coats. There was no official membership policy. The synagogues were open to all the townspeople. The main sources of income were the regular contributions by the well-to-do, the donations by worshipers when given the honor of Aliya, i.e. to ascend the Torah reading podium to chant the blessings, the contributions made on happy family celebrations, the purchase by individuals of pews in prestigious sections of the synagogue, the most expensive one being in the Mizrach (facing East toward Jerusalem) section near the Aron Kodesh, and the "sale" of honors to the highest bidders on the High Holy Days.

As a child I frequently attended two synagogues, the Bes Medrash with Zaide Shaya, and the Kloiz with Zaide Dov Ber, of which they were highly respected members and leaders. Zaide Dov Ber's four sons, including my father, spent many years studying in the Kloiz.[26] Zaide Dov Ber as already noted was a devout follower of the Talner Rebbe, a member of the Twersky family.[27] The Kloiz, according to Tenofsky[28], was a huge imposing two story structure attended by the well educated, scholarly individuals and by men of substance and wealth.

The synagogues were Orthodox in tradition and practice. The Kloiz was a Hasidic congregation which followed the Sephardic liturgy, called Nusach Sepharad, but which did not deviate from the traditional prayerbook, except for some rearrangement of the prayers plus additional classical prayers and

Biblical selections. The worshipers were adherents of Hasidism and the service was characterized by greater enthusiastic and joyful chanting of the prayers. Zaide Dov Ber and his sons were respected Hasidim.[29]

The Bes Medrash was a place of Orthodox worship and study for those who were, presumably, "opponents" of the Hasidim, called Mitnagdim[30]. Liuba Tenofsky, whose father Henzl, was the shamas (sexton) of the Bes Medrash, remembered it as a large and beautiful building and had a sketch made of it, featuring the different parts of the synagogue: the Aron Kodesh (the Holy Ark) which contained the Torah scrolls and which faced Mizrach, the Balemer (the central podium where the Torah scroll was read), her father's seat on the Balemer, the pews on the three sides, fronting the Holy Ark and the Balemer, the separate entrances to the synagogue for men and women, the mechitzah (the partition separating men and women), the women's section, the social and study halls, the cantor's and choir's places. A feature shown on the sketch, which I do not personally remember, are the stained glass windows above the Holy Ark.[31]

According to Liuba "The Bes Medrash was big enough for 500 taleisim (prayer shawls) or congregants." This is a surprising figure and probably an overestimate. However, if her estimate was correct the Bes Medrash was indeed a large synagogue and house of study.

The synagogues were not only places of worship but also of religious study. Daily study of Torah and Talmud was conducted in the early mornings, late afternoons and on the Sabbath. Abraham Ganapolsky remembers that his father, Mendel, was a teacher in the Kloiz. Rabbi Yerachmiel conducted regular study groups at the Bes Medrash. Religious education had high priority and women too studied Yiddish. Liuba remembers three or four women teachers of Yiddish and lists them on the map.

Equal in importance to the synagogues was the traditional Heder educational system, a private enterprise, conducted by Rebbes who were learned individuals but not ordained rabbis, and supported by parent tuition fees and community funds for the very poor. I describe the school system in greater detail in the chapter on education.

The synagogue, the Heder school system and home practice and observance gave Jewish life in the shtetl its vitality and rootedness in the midst of a precarious economic existence and ever threatening physical danger, due to social and political changes and unrest.

The more prosperous in town put into practice the mitzvah (commandment) of compassion and acts of kindness and charity for the sick, the poor, needy brides, and the orphans via the Gemilut Hesed Fund (Charity). Townspeople recall the individual and community care and concern for the needy. Loans to the poor without interest was a common practice. Charity was also extended to poor peasants. Zaide Shaya made small free or low interest loans to peasants during the winter season. The Maot Hittim Fund (literally money for purchase of wheat) provided the poor with provisions for Passover.

Bikur Holim (visiting the sick) and Malbish Arumim (clothing the naked) were part and parcel of community responsibility as was the practice of Hachnasat Orchim (hospitality). Shoshanah Brodsky recalls the tradition in her family to invite guests for the Sabbath. Liuba Tenofsky notes that accommodations were made available for the Yomtovniks (holiday guests), that is, for Jews who lived in nearby villages which were too small to have their own synagogues. On major holidays and festivals, the Yomtovniks came to town for the observance and worship in the Bes Medrash. Thus, the town is characterized in the recollections of its former inhabitants as one of compassion, concern and

friendliness for the poor and the indigent, carrying out in practice traditional values.[32]

The Hevra Kadisha (Sacred Society), a carefully selected group of pious individuals was responsible for taharah (body purification of the deceased), for supervising burial arrangements, for burying the dead and for care of the cemetery, about a mile away on the outskirts of the town. This responsibility was always regarded as a sacred duty, a religious act of great merit. The dead were dressed in tachrichim (shrouds). Caskets were not used in those days. Care of the dead and burial expenses were paid by the families of the deceased.

The town Bet Din (religious court) was headed by Rabbi Yerachmiel, assisted by pious and respected scholarly laymen. Community conflicts, individual and family disputes and religious matters were brought to the court for adjudication. The town was not without individual, family and community conflicts and disagreements. When there was a serious conflict, rabbis from nearby towns were called in to adjudicate the issue.

Rabbi Yerachmiel preached only twice a year, on the Sabbath between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, called the Sabbath of Repentance (Shabbat Shuvah) and on the Sabbath before Passover when he explained and clarified the laws and practices of the festival. He engaged in personal study and led the daily study periods in the Bes Medrash in addition to his duties as the head of the Bet Din, as needed. The rabbi was the honored and respected spiritual leader in town and the arbiter of Halacha, the Jewish way of life.

The town Mikveh, the women's ritual bath, as prescribed in the tradition, was a basic institution for the maintenance of Jewish family purity. Another institution was the Hekdesh (poor house) for the care of the indigent, the mentally disturbed and the retarded.

In historic perspective, despite governmental restrictions, constant threats and fear of oppression, violence, periodic social upheavals, wars, and pogroms, Jewish life in Winograd until the Civil War of 1917-1921 was stable most of the time. Even during the World War I years, economic conditions in the shtetl were not severe. Some families prospered, selling wheat, food commodities and horses to the Czarist army. Salt, sugar, oil and other products were sold on the black market, but famine prevailed in the large towns and cities. Many of the young men were drafted, but dodging the draft, in one way or another, was common practice due to the harsh treatment of Jews in the armed forces and the pogroms fomented by the government.[33] According to S. Mindich "everyone who owned a horse and wagon was drafted to transport foot soldiers to the next town where they were transferred to other horse and wagon transports, on the way to the front. Travel generally was limited and there was no local mail nor any mail service from abroad."[34] Little was known in the shtetl about the war on the front. Thus during the war economic conditions were generally good. During this period, the town had its share of a few prosperous well-to-do (negidim), a majority of "the middle class," the poor and the indigent.

Our shtetl was not a poverty stricken town. Food was abundant and ample in our daily, Sabbath and holiday diet. In the fish family, herring and potatoes (bulbes in Yiddish), kapchonka (smoked fish), carp, sardines, smelts were favorites as were the meat and fowl dishes. Kolbas (a kind of salami) was relished. In dairy foods, I loved the knishes, kreplach, varnishhkes, varenikes, pirogen, other milk dishes and also the cherry and plum preserves. Meat and borsht were staples, and garlic rubbed on bread crust, walnuts and halvah were favorite snacks. Sugar, salt, kerosene and oil were also in good supply. Fruits, vegetables, nuts, sunflower seeds and all the grain products, grown in the rich Ukraine soil, were available in great abundance. Predomi-

nant beverages were tea, chicory, kvass (apple cider) and milk. A samovar, an urn with a spigot at its base, for boiling tea, was a standard household item. Cocoa and chocolate, oranges were expensive and rare items in the diet. Strudel, lekach (cake), apple cake, kugel (pudding), taiglach (honeyed balls of baked dough) and the like were among the Sabbath and holiday delicacies. My mother and her sisters were experts in preparing and baking them. In short, the people were well fed and also well dressed.

The seamstresses, tailors and shoemakers were busily engaged in making clothes and shoes for Jews and non-Jews. The farmers and tanners provided the hides and leather products respectively and the textile dealers supplied the cloth bought in Kiev and other cities

Jews raised large families, followed the Jewish traditions faithfully, plied their trades and engaged in commerce with their peasant neighbors and with those of the nearby villages, living in peace with them. While not exactly serene all the time, life was tolerable and Jews were allowed to live a peaceful life. As always, Jews learned to keep to themselves and to adjust to the prevailing conditions, harsh as they may have been.

The family was the core of social, cultural and religious life as expressed and experienced in the life cycle of the Jew, in the home, in the synagogue, the school and the community - an intimately integrated society. Friendly neighborliness and concern prevailed among the townspeople, most of whom were family or blood related, directly or indirectly. The Jewish way of life was pervasive and the shtetl was in essence a small Jewish universe, revolving around the Jewish calendar. Jewish daily living and especially the Sabbath and the holidays and festivals, provided Jews with spiritual sustenance and relief from the hardships and daily drudgery of eking out a living.

With tongue in cheek, it has been said that a Jew was always in good spirits. Until mid-week, he remembered the joy and

delicacies of the Sabbath just passed, and from mid-week on, he began to look forward with great anticipation to the coming Sabbath. As expressed by the philosopher Achad Ha-Am, Jews may not have kept the Sabbath, but undoubtedly the Sabbath kept the Jews alive throughout the millenia.

The weekly Sabbath preparations and observance stand out in my memory. Heder study was over at noontime and we children loved Friday. At daybreak or earlier, the women were already baking the braided challot (bread), busily engaged in cleaning the house, smearing with clay the earthen kitchen floor, polishing the brass candlesticks, cooking the Sabbath meal, preparing the cholent (a dish consisting of meat, potatoes, and/or beans to be placed in the banked ovens for keeping it warm for the Sabbath lunch meal) because cooking or warming food on the Sabbath was prohibited. The kerosene lamps were filled to the brim so as to keep them burning in the evening and into the night because making a fire was prohibited. In some homes, a Sabbath goy (Gentile) took care of the chores prohibited to Jews on this day. All the stores were closed early and business came to a halt. The serenity of the Sabbath set in.

Friday afternoons, I accompanied Zaide Shaya to the Turkish bath, full of men and boys. The hottest spot was the top bench but it was too hot for me and I refused to climb up there. We returned home and, dressed in our Sabbath best, off we went to the Bes Medrash for the Friday evening service ushering in the Sabbath Queen. The synagogue was full, the service was short and the atmosphere was one of spiritual warmth. "Gut Shabbes," we greeted every one as we left. The shining candles in all homes we saw on the way home provided a delightful and unforgettable sight.

"Gut Shabbes" we called out as we entered the house. The table was already set: the lit candlesticks, the wine and braided challot on the white tablecloth. Zaide Shaya chanted the prayer

Eshet Chayil (a woman of valor who can find) in praise of Bubba Sarah, made the blessings over the wine and bread, followed by the Sabbath meal, the Zemirot (songs) and the closing prayer. This was the typical Friday evening observance, a treasured memory of my childhood.

The life cycle rites and rituals of observance, birth, festive occasions, weddings, sickness and death were observed punctiliously by the rich and poor alike.

The town Klezmer (musicians) were kept busy at joyous occasions. My parents told me that when they were married in 1907, the festive celebration lasted seven days, with feasting, dancing and singing. Months or weeks before the wedding, several traditional ceremonies were held; one of them was the one of bethrothal, called tnaim (conditions). At the ceremony, held on a Saturday night with only close relatives in attendance, conditions for the betrothal and wedding were set down in writing. The tnaim were read, enthusiastic mazal tov was voiced and plates broken. The latter was in accordance with the tradition to remember the destruction of Jerusalem on joyous occasions. A sumptuous meal was served and the wedding date was set. Days before the wedding, both households were busily engaged in baking, cooking and making other preparations for the wedding which took place a day after Shavuot. It was held in the outdoor courtyard of the Bes Medrash under the canopy of the heavens.

They gave me no account of the gifts they received, but the four large silver serving spoons and the four small gold spoons, which I have in my possession were part of the "droshe geshank" (gifts) they received. The jewelry my mother was wearing in the picture I have of her, was given to her at the betrothal ceremony or at the wedding. In any event, the merriment and festivities lasted a week. This was the shtetl's way of celebrating weddings.

Life was not all dull nor did it consist of hard work only. There was a lighter side to life. Liuba Tenofsky told her daughter, Jean, many stories of laughter and gaiety, of childish games and pranks, of dancing at weddings, of giggling and singing with girlfriends, of romantic crushes, of pranks and larks in the meadows near the river when boys and girls dared to have a peek at each other, and of lots of simchas and holidays when "zay hobn zich oisgeputzt" (got all dressed up) in new shoes and homemade finery.[35]

The early years of my childhood before the Civil War were happy ones, full of fun and pleasurable experiences with friends and Heder classmates. My sister and her friends played games, danced and sang as did my maternal aunts and their boyfriends and my uncle and his peers.

The Kehillah (community), although loosely organized, functioned effectively and responsibly through the traditional institutions. The Kehillah set the pattern of community living and social behavior, mediated disputes, set educational standards, cared for the poor and the needy, dealt with the civil authority and, in time of crisis and danger, coordinated their efforts for protection. The town could not boast of well known writers, intellectuals and scholars, but its homogeneous population consisted of personalities, endowed with the qualities which enabled them to meet the religious, social, educational, cultural and economic needs, typical of the hundreds of small towns in the Ukraine, in the decades prior to the Revolution and the Civil War.

When tragedies, contagious epidemics, fires and pogroms struck the town, the entire community was mobilized and energized to prepare for self-defense, to appeal to the local gentile officials, and in case of need, to raise ransom money for "the redemption of captives", seized by pogromchiks and for the protection of life and limb in the shtetl. Community action was

imperative during the Civil War (1917-1921) which wrought radical social and political changes in the Ukraine and which brought in its wake unprecedented violence and atrocities. Ultimately the Civil War led to the disintegration of normal life in the shtetl and to the decision to abandon it.

On the face of it, our shtetl was a bastion of Orthodoxy, remaining faithful to its way of life, traditions, values and practice. However, the more I think about it and recall personal experiences as a child and reflect on the conversations I had many years later with my father and relatives living in America and in Israel, the shtetl was not completely divorced or isolated from the penetration of new ideas and from the ferment in the larger cities, especially in Kiev. Winograd had its share of apikorsim (non-believers), Zionists, Hebraists, Socialists, Bundists, Maskilim (adherents of the Haskalah - the Enlightenment Movement). Followers of these ideologies were few in number in the shtetl but they were among us and found expression in one way or another.

In her memoirs, Hennie Lukach described her determined effort for self education in the Yiddish and Russian language and literature, and her decision to live in a big city (Yekatrinoslav) where she was exposed to music and literature. She read widely including the writings of Freud and his disciples and of the great Russian writers. At the outbreak of World War I, she returned to Winograd where she worked as a seamstress but did not abandon her serious reading habits. She was active in a reading circle which subscribed to Russian newspapers and, from time to time, invited speakers to discuss and debate the issues of the day. She taught her nephew, Moshe, encouraging him to read Russian literature, to the displeasure of her father, an observant and pious Hasid. She had the audacity to answer her father's opposition: "You lead your life as you understand it, but allow me to lead my life as I understand it." This kind of blunt answer, rejecting a traditional time honored value, could hardly have

been possible in earlier days.[36] As an active member of a Zionist group, she decided, early in life, to emigrate to Palestine.

Others like her left the town to study at universities in Kiev, Odessa, Nikolaev and other cities. The desire for higher education and exposure to Russian and Yiddish literature and culture was strong among young men and women.[37]

"My father", wrote Abraham Mindich, "was an extraordinary man of the world who traveled extensively, both in the United States during the Russo-Japanese War and throughout Russia.... He was one of the very few who subscribed to a Russian newspaper from Kiev which he used to read to his friends.... He was respected by his neighbors and could discuss current events eloquently."[38]

I was six years old at the outbreak of the November 7, 1917 Revolution and remember that somewhere in Winograd, perhaps near the "city hall," a statue of the Czar was thrown down and smashed and was followed by a celebration of Jews and Gentiles alike. Abraham and Saul Mindich remember the event: "I remember marching in parades when the revolution occurred .... At the time the Jews thought that they would gain freedom from oppression and start a new life."[39] "The Jews and most of the people were demonstrating with banners and songs .... I joined the crowds, believing in the Bolshevik ideals and promises, and I was foolish enough to believe that they were really honest. But like many demonstrations they ended up with robbery, looting and killings."[40] But this was not to be when his uncle was accused of being bourgeois, arrested and his property and flour mill confiscated. Saul Mindich was deeply disillusioned with the freedom promised and not kept by the Bolsheviks.[41] This was the typical reaction and attitude of Jews as they realized the devastating effect of Bolshevism on the middleman economy Jews engaged in traditionally. Little did the Jews realize the tragedies that would befall them in the coming years.

A few days earlier, on November 2, 1917, the British Government issued the Balfour Declaration, viewing with favor the establishment of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine. The hope of rebuilding the ancient homeland struck a deep and emotional response among the Zionists in the shtetl. Young as I was, the joy and celebration in the Heder, the home and synagogue still ring in my ears. It was as if the Messiah had arrived and the fulfillment of the return to the ancient homeland was imminent. The Balfour Declaration motivated many families to emigrate to Palestine, mostly after World War I.

Cousin Louis Antonoff records that his father, Shlomo, an enthusiastic Zionist, left for Palestine before the outbreak of World War I to explore business opportunities with the intention of bringing his wife and eight children to Eretz Yisrael. He bought land and deposited money in a Palestine-English bank. He returned to the shtetl and was welcomed with great enthusiasm by the townspeople. He brought back with him wine and oranges (rarely seen or tasted) and a joyful celebration (kiddush) was held in the Bes Medrash. He was making plans and preparations for moving the family to Palestine but the outbreak of the War in 1914 postponed his plans. Sadly, Mishke age 19, one of his sons, was killed in a pogrom in our shtetl. Another son, Motel, age 24, during a pogrom, hid in a cold, damp cellar, contracted pneumonia and died as a result of it. In 1919, the family left the shtetl, endured the hardships, crossed the Dniester River to Bessarabia illegally, spent months in Romania and after an arduous journey, arrived in Palestine. The father established himself in the construction business. However, the murder of a second son by an Arab, led him to leave Palestine and bring his family to the United States in 1923.[42]

After the War, inspired and motivated by Zionist beliefs and convictions, as many as fifty Winograd families found their way to Palestine, among them the Antonovsky, Krasnovsky, Resnick,



Top to bottom
Nachman Gussak
Left to Right
Hayim Labovsky, Shlomo Antonovsky, David Resnik, Tuvia Lukach, Bezalel Antonovsky, Sholem Lukach, Abraham Friedman, Leib Schwartzburd, Yaakov Zunder, Tuvia Zunder
Credit: Hanna Antonovsky Steier

Lukach, Cohen, Friedman, Zunder, Brodsky, Olin families and other families. The recollections of Sholem and Hennie Lukach of their life in the shtetl, the arrival and settlement in Haifa and the hardships they endured to establish themselves are illuminating and fascinating and reflect the experience of other Winograd families.[43] The Winograd families found employment during the difficult times in the 1920's, built a synagogue which they called Carmiah and were active in the municipal Council of Hadar Hacarmel, one of the now thriving neighborhoods of Haifa. One of the Lukach daughters is the wife of the mayor.[44]

With regard to changing religious beliefs, I remember how a relative made fun of what she called Biblical "fairy tales, myths and miracles" I was learning in the Heder. "Did I really believe the stories about God's miracles in Egypt and at the crossing of the Red Sea? Did I really think the Messiah would arrive on a white donkey and bring all the Jews back to Eretz Yisrael?" she asked. I was about six or seven years old at the time.[45]

Cutting the hair and wearing a sheitl (a wig or peruke) for modesty's sake from the time of their wedding was a tradition and custom among observant women. My great-grandmother and paternal and maternal grandmothers followed this practice. My mother and her contemporaries did not cut their hair or wear the sheitl but without rebuke of mothers and grandmothers, indicative of the changing times. In earlier times, weddings were arranged by families or by matchmakers as was that of my parents. But this practice too had changed and was on the way out. Romances thrived and the love affair between my Aunt Rachel and relative Hershel Antonovsky, was an example. As a very young man, Hershel travelled to Kiev frequently and always brought his sweetheart gifts which she shared with us children, especially chocolate candy and cocoa.

The activities of the young men and women were also symbolic of the changing times. They loved to sing, dance and

act. The open fields on the outskirts of the town were favorite places for Sabbath walks and for other occasions. Traveling circuses pitched their tents in the open spaces periodically, and the young people flocked to see the performances. An amateur dramatic group put on plays from time to time. A literary circle met regularly to read the stories of Sholem Aleichem, other Yiddish writers and Russian books and newspapers. A Zionist group attracted those who were contemplating or planning immigration to Palestine. A Hebrew literary circle, in which Uncle Lipa was an active member, read the writings of the Hebraists of the day and Hebrew periodicals, such as Hamelitz (Interpreter or Advocate) and Hatzefirah (the Dawn), the first Hebrew magazines, published in the nineteenth century. Modern, spoken Hebrew was the language of communication.

Etched in memory is a "musicale" presented in a barn by the young men and women of the town with active participation of Aunts Rachel (Rose) and Hinda (Hilda) and how joyfully they sang:

Groiser Got mir zingen lieder
Unzer hilf bist du alein
Biz die zun vet untergayn
Nemt tsunoif di snopos brieder
Biz die zun vet untergayn

Almighty God, we sing our songs
You alone are our help
Until the setting of the sun
Gather the sheaves brothers
Until the setting of the sun

Many years later I learned that the song was called "The Song of Bread", consisting of five stanzas composed by M.M Warshavsky. They also sang the popular Yiddish romantic songs, such as, Margaritkelech (Daisies) and Lomir Zich Iberbeten

(Let's Pardon One Another)[46], as well as the popular Russian folk melodies. A line of a comical song the source of which I could not find, still rings in my ears:

Hotshmach iz ah blinder, er hat ah sach kinder,
Vie zanen zeine kinder,
Mir zanen alle do

Hotsmach is blind, a man with many children.
Where are his children?
We are all here.

Uncle Joe was a good dancer and danced the Russian Kozatski. Incidentally, for many years at family celebrations and weddings in the United States, Uncle Joe entertained us with this popular Russian dance.

In the second decade of this century, cultural, religious and social changes were on the march, and had penetrated the closed society of the shtetl. The town was no longer rigid, inflexible or monolithic in its beliefs and practices, and the generation gap between the young and the old was growing. The 1917 Revolution with its concomitant conflicting ideologies made these changes patently and abundantly clear.[47]

The early disintegration and destruction of the shtetl's way of life began with the increased emigration between 1910-1914 by husbands, single men and women, seeking a new life mainly in the United States, Canada, Cuba, Western Europe, South America and Palestine. Those who left before World War I and the 1917 Revolution were motivated by several interrelated factors: The social, economic and political future was bleak. The rising government sponsored anti-Semitism, the memory of the 1903 Kishinev pogrom, the 1911 Mendel Beilis blood libel case,[48] the turmoil and the instability of the Czarist regime, following the Russo-Japanese war, and the 1905 Revolution, which threatened the existence of the Jewish population in the

large cities and in the towns and villages in the Ukraine. Avoidance of military service was a strong motive for leaving. Harsh treatment of Jews in the armed forces was common knowledge. Bribery, self-imposed starvation, simulated illness, secretly planned bodily injury and hiding were some of the methods used to escape the draft. Some went AWOL when the opportunity presented itself, hid themselves or fled to America with the assistance of relatives already living in America.[49] Yet Jews served in the Czarist army during World War I and later, during the Civil War, in the Red Army, and even in the counter revolutionary White Guard.[50] The winds of change had penetrated the shtetl "closed society." Furthermore, many sought to escape the restrictive rigid Orthodoxy still prevailing in the shtetl. In addition, stories and letters about freedom and the economic opportunities in the New World, stimulated individuals and families to uproot themselves.

World War I stemmed and postponed the rising tide of emigration. The turbulence and pogroms that followed in its wake, wrought havoc and the destruction of the former Russian Empire, and in the process, destabilized the Jewish community, bringing to an end forever the thousand year old Jewish life in the Ukraine. Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian Jews abandoned their homes and their way of life in the small towns and villages and were on the march seeking to rebuild their lives in lands which offered security, economic opportunity and stability. The 1919-1924 wave of emigration was unprecedented in Jewish history and marked the beginning of the transformation and establishment of the vibrant American Jewish community and the Yishuv (community) in Eretz Yisrael, ultimately causing a significant shift in the relocation of Jews throughout the world.

Confronted with anarchy and devastation Jews had a choice of several options: They could answer the call of Zion, and many families chose this path. Emigration, legally or illegally, to

America and other countries was the choice of thousands. A third option, once freedom of movement was permitted to Jews, was to leave the shtetlach for the big cities. Integration and assimilation into the Russian majority was the aim. An alternative to emigration and assimilation was the reconstruction of Jewish life and nationality, permitted and encouraged by the Soviet regime, in the existing large Jewish urban communities or in the Crimea or in Birobidjan, an autonomous Jewish region in the Soviet Union.

Most Winograder found their way to the United States. Inspired by their Zionist beliefs and convictions, some families settled in Palestine; others migrated to Canada,[51] Argentina,[52] and other countries. With the removal of residence restrictions after the Revolution, Winograder abandoned the shtetl and settled in Kiev, Kharkov, Minsk, Odessa, Moscow, Leningrad, Levov and other large cities.[53]

How many families remained in Winograd? In 1926, the Jewish population of Winograd was 1108.[54] By that date, as many as 250 families had emigrated from Russia, or had abandoned the shtetl to settle in the large cities of the Soviet Union. Taking into the consideration those who had fled and those who still remained in 1926, my estimate of 3000 Jews living in Winograd in 1917, is correct.

Suffering from economic, social and religious deprivations and shattered by family separations, life in Winograd was difficult, insecure and uncertain in the 1920's and 1930's. They barely eked out a living and to a large degree were dependent upon limited financial assistance they received from relatives in the United States and elsewhere. I recall that members of the family, whenever possible, and the Winograder Benevolent Society periodically sent funds and packages to their impoverished townspeople.[55]

In the middle 1930's, the United States and the Soviet Union resumed diplomatic relations. Winograder living in America and in Palestine, came to visit the shtetl, or were in telephone contact with their relatives.

In 1942 most of the Jews perished at the hands of the Nazis at Babi Yar. Yet a few families were still living in Winograd at the end of World War II. But Jewish institutions and any semblance of Jewish life were non-existent. The synagogues had been turned into stables and the cemetery desecrated.

As I reflect on my childhood, the first ten years of my life in the shtetl, with vivid memories of joys and pleasures, terror and fear, famine and despair, I am overcome by a deep sense of gratitude that my family and others were fortunate to escape from the land of oppression and pogroms and come to this democratic country, the "Goldene Medinah," the "golden land" of freedom and opportunity. At the same time, I am overcome by sadness and grief for the disintegration and almost complete annihilation of my shtetl, which for more than two hundred and fifty years maintained and sustained a vibrant traditional Jewish life and which now remains but a hazy memory. Its inhabitants were uprooted and dispersed the world over, leaving behind a way of life rooted in tradition and the Yiddish language, and undergoing the trauma of adjustment and integration in new societies and seeking to rebuild their lives anew.[56]



Liuba and Liova Tenofsky and daughter Zhenya. 1921
Credit: Jean T. May



Friends Osnabeila and Leika Antonovsky, Elka Pukotinsky and Liuba Tenofsky. 1910 Credit: Jean T. May



Shloime Tenofsky, Shloime Pukotinsky, Liova Tenofsky. 1914
Credit: Jean T. May



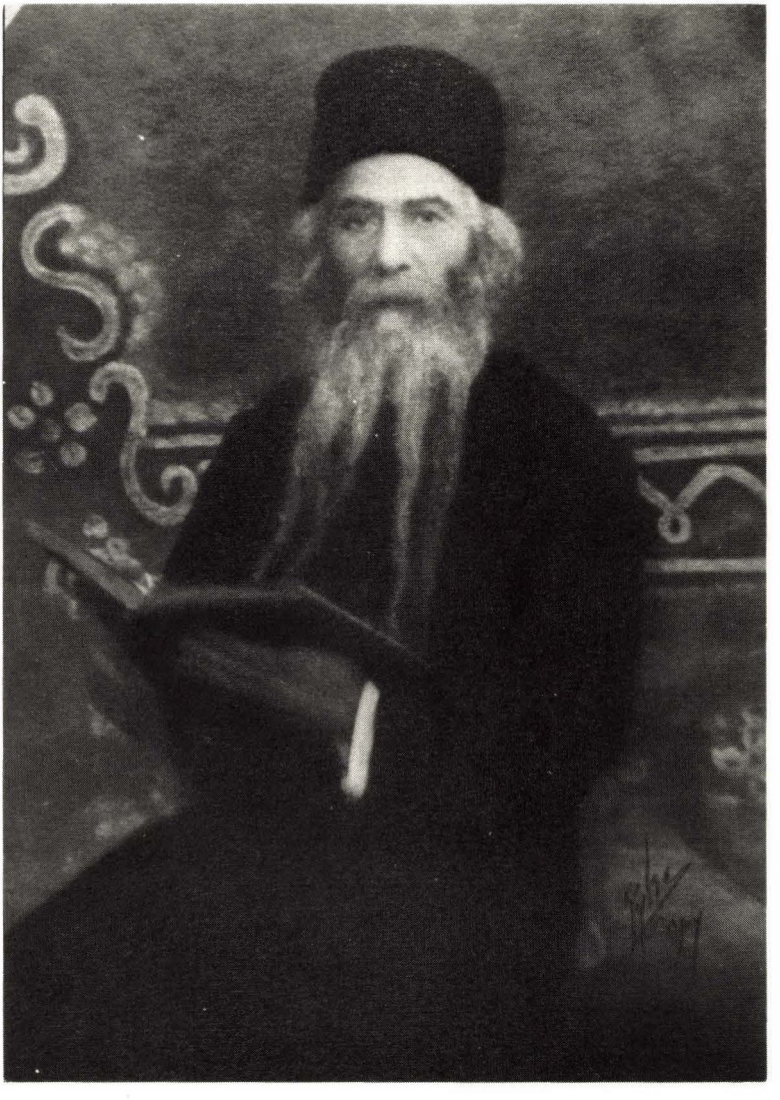
Elka and Shloime Pukotinsky
Credit: Jean T. May



Moshe and Sarah Krasnovsky, Shulamith and Dov.
Credit: Shulamith K. Houminer



Rivke Rachel Yedlin. Great grandmother of Alan Wachtel.



Eliezer Dovid Yedlin. Great grandfather of Alan Wachtel.



Saul and sister Betty Mindich. Approx. 1914
Credit: Bernard Mindich



Isaac and Suska (Sophie) Brodsky.
Credit: Clara Brodsky Willner



Samuel Zaichek. 1914
Credit: Tom Saichek



Samuel Zaichek and brother. 1914
Credit: Tom Saichek



The Rebbe and the children. Artist Ezekiel Schloss
Credit: Board of Jewish Education of New York.

Early Childhood Education

"I described the days of yore
No legend, no fabrication,
The heart speaks, the pen writes with tears as it was." [57]

How far does memory go? What events, painful and pleasurable, made indelible, unforgettable and lasting impressions on my conciousness? The earliest moment in my memory is the day my mother brought me, wrapped in a prayer shawl, to the "Dardeke" Heder (the one room school for very young children). I was about three and a half years old. The Dardeke Heder was the early childhood level of education.

The melamed, a heavy set, tall and pudgy man, nicknamed "der kelbiker" (a fatted calf) welcomed me warmly and immediately assigned me to a seat on a backless bench at a rectangular table. The other children made room for me and immediately the melamed opened an elementary prayer book and with a pointer pointed to the Hebrew alphabet and as I looked at it a sweet candy was dropped on the page from above me. It marked the sweet and pleasant beginning of my Jewish education. I soon learned that the nickname "der kelbiker" was not a pejorative term but one of affection. I wish I could remember his full family name but his first name was Shail (probably Sha-

ul or Saul). As far as I know adults too called him by his nickname.

In a sing-song fashion I quickly learned the alphabet, Ivre (Hebrew reading) and soon thereafter learned the first Hebrew prayers. By rote we learned the "Modeh ani lefanecha... I am grateful to you Living and Enduring King, for restoring my soul to me in compassion. Your faithfulness is beyond measure," a prayer to be recited upon waking in the morning, and the prayer "Shma Yisrael, Adonai Elohenu Adonai Echad, Hear O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One," to be recited in the evening at bedtime. My maternal grandfather, Zaide Shaya, recited the Shma with me on the evening of the first day in the Heder and, in the morning, the Modeh Ani. It was evening and morning the first day of my Jewish education and a very pleasurable one. Zaide Dov Ber was overjoyed that I had begun my Heder study. But for Zaide Shaya it was a special day because I was his first male grandchild to embark on an "academic" traditional Jewish education.

We learned to recite the daily prayers and to recite them aloud at the appropriate times of the day. The education we young children received was put to practice in our daily lives. All of us wore a Tallit Koton, (a ritual four fringed undershirt) and learned to kiss the "tsitsit" (the fringes) upon recitation of the Shma. Yiddish, our native (mama loshen) tongue was the language of instruction and speech. We recited the prayers aloud and learned to rattle them off from memory. To this day I can still do so. One item sticks in my memory. There was a superstitious belief that counting people was prohibited. Only God counted people. Hence, in counting people, one should say: not one, not two, not three, etc. For this purpose, the melamed taught us to learn by rote a prayer in which every word counted for a number. I still remember the first two lines of this prayer: "Ana Bechoach Gedulat Yemincha, Tatir tse-rura, Kabel

Rinat Amcha, Sagvenu, Taharenu, Norah, By Your might of hand release the chains of the bound. Accept the song (prayer) of your people. Strengthen and purify us, Mighty One." Twelve Hebrew words make up the two lines I remember, two more than needed to count the males in a required minyan. The rest of the words which I have forgotten I had to look up in the traditional Friday evening service.

We also learned a variety of blessings and were instructed when to use them. Two of them that I learned and recited and that children today with some exceptions are not familiar with, are the blessings recited upon seeing a rainbow and upon hearing thunder. For the rainbow the blessing was the following: "Baruch Ata Adonai, Elohenu Melech Ha-olam, Zocher Ha-brit Ve-ne-eman Bivrito, Ve-kayam be-ma-amaro, Praised be You, Lord our God, King of the universe who remembers his covenant, is faithful to it and keeps his promise." Upon hearing thunder: the first part of the blessing is the same as all the blessings but ends ."..She-kocho u-gvu-rato ma-le olam, Praised be You ... whose power and might fill the whole world."

We learned and used other skills related to home observances and holidays. We learned to sing from memory the Shabbat and holiday kiddush. One experience I remember clearly. It was in the early Spring of the year and we were learning to recite the four Passover questions asked by the youngest male child at the Seder. The melamed instructed us to begin the questions in Yiddish as follows: "Tateh, ich vell dir fregen feer kashes, Father I will ask you four questions," and I too joined in. But after class the melamed took me aside and told me I should start the four questions by addressing my grandfather: "Zaide (Grandfather) ich vell dir fregen feer kashes" because my father was in America. I knew my father was in America but it was brought home to me forcefully on that day in the Heder. It still lingers in my mind.

What also stands out in my memory is the melamed's wife, Faiga, who always seemed to be plucking chicken feathers for the feather filled bed covers (perena in Yiddish) she was making for her own use or for sale to others. It appeared that she enjoyed hearing the children chant aloud their lessons and treated us with kindness and friendly smiles. Faiga also taught girls to read and write Yiddish and Hebrew prayers.

I studied in this Heder for about a year and a half. At the age of five I was enrolled in the second stage of traditional education - the Chumash Heder. The rebbe was Reb Hersheleh who had a reputation as being the best in the shtetl. He was also the mohel (the one who performed the circumcision rite). I later learned that he was the one who circumcised me. With Reb Hersheleh and his family I formed a long time association. I loved this teacher from the very beginning of my studies with him. He was a man of medium height, very energetic, with twinkling eyes and very pleasant disposition. As was the custom in those days, the rebbe had ready at hand a "kanchik" (cat-o-nine tails strap) for disciplining children, in accordance with the dictum: "he who spares the rod, spoils the child." I do not remember ever seeing Reb Hersheleh use it or at least he never used it on me. The very fact that it was hanging on the wall within our sight put the fear of the Lord in all of us. What I do recall is that we were fun and mischief loving children. When the rebbe was out, perhaps attending a service at the closeby Bes Medrash, we smeared the leather straps with garlic, thinking and believing that when used, the "kanchik" would snap and break. I never saw this happen, the smell of garlic was strong and the rebbe knew what we had done. He never said a word.

The Heder was close to the Bes Medrash and in the twilight we went to the Bes Medrash for the Mincha (afternoon service) and Maariv (evening service). The room, we studied in Reb

Hersheleh's home, was spotless and he himself, was dressed neatly, always wearing a black kapota (caftan).

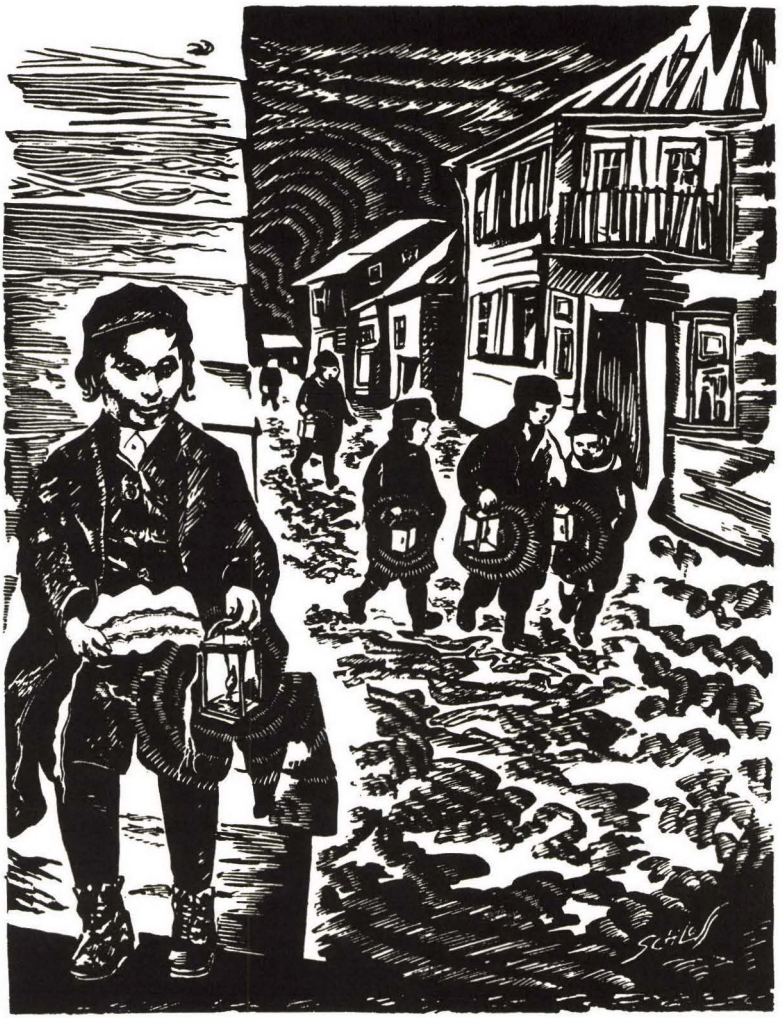
The major objective of the "middle" school was the study of Chumash (the Pentateuch or Five Books of Moses) with Rashi, the popular commentator of the middle ages. The Chumash which is inscribed punctiliously by hand by a pious scribe on the Torah Scroll and which is studied and chanted in the synagogue the year round, occupied a place of sanctity in Jewish life throughout the millenia. The Chumash is the very life blood of Jewish belief, tradition and practice. Word for word teich (translation) of the Bible Hebrew text into the spoken Yiddish and rote sing-song memorization were the pedagogic methods used, accompanied by rocking back and forth. The Rashi script was cursive and unvowelled and was different from the vowelled Hebrew text of the Chumash. Thus at an early age I learned to read the Rashi script and also learned to read other unvowelled Hebrew texts. We began with the study of Leviticus which deals with sacrifices, the priestly laws of purity, holiness and sanctification of human life. According to the Midrash "because little children are pure and the sacrifices are pure, let those who are pure come and occupy themselves with pure things." I must admit that I remember little of this beginning study of Leviticus, except some of Rashi's commentaries. The fondest memories are the stories and midrashim of the other books of the Chumash: Genesis, Exodus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Unforgettable was the dramatic story of the six days of creation and the word for word method of instruction: first in Hebrew and then in Yiddish translation as follows: Bereshis, un unfang (in the beginning), boro Elohim, hawt Gawt bashofen (God created), es hashamayim, der himmel (the heavens), v'es hooretz, di erd (the earth) ... and so on until the end of chapter one. We memorized the first three sentences of chapter two beginning with: Va'ye-chulu, azoi zeinen farendikt gevoren (and thus

were finished) hashamayim, der himmel (the heavens), v'hooretz, di erd (and the earth), v'chol tso-vo-om, zayer gantser chayil (all their hosts) ... and so on. These sentences, chanted at the beginning of the Friday night Kiddush (the blessing over the wine), became a direct link to home observance, making the Chumash a living reality. Generally, the translation of "loshen kodesh" (the holy Hebrew tongue) into Yiddish, sanctified the every day vernacular speech.

Fascinating, too, was the legend about Abraham and his idol worshiping father, Terach. Left in charge by Terach of a shop full of idols, the child Abraham broke all the idols except for the biggest one, left holding an ax in his hand. When questioned, Abraham told Terach that the idols had quarreled among themselves and the biggest one had destroyed them all. It was a subtle way of condemning idol worship. The fact that my name was Abraham made the legend even more exciting. There were no grades and no tests and no graduation diplomas. Texts, not age, determined the level of education.

The study of the Torah portion of the week was an integral part of our education. Zaide Shaya "examined" me usually on Friday and was proud of me when I rattled off the contents of the portion and selected Rashi commentaries. At times, Reb Hersheleh was present at this weekly examination. There were no other tests that I can recall. Nor do I recall ever using a notebook and other school paraphernalia.

Study in the Chumash Heder, five and a half days a week from early morning to early evening, was an exciting and enjoyable experience. I often arrived at the Heder so early that Reb Hersheleh had barely gotten out of bed and was still at prayer. As proof of my eagerness to get to Heder early I still have a physical memento from those days. One morning I was in such a hurry that I spilled the hot tea I was drinking on my thigh, leaving a permanent mark. To this day, everytime I look



Leaving the Heder. Artist Ezekiel Schloss.
Credit: Board of Jewish Education of New York.

at it, the reason for the mark lingers on. The sharp pain I felt that morning so many years ago did not diminish my eagerness for Jewish study. My early and continuing love affair with Judaism I ascribe to Reb Hersheleh. I was an apt and eager student and was one of his favorites. To be sure Reb Hersheleh was not a trained pedagogue in the modern sense. Nevertheless he was an excellent teacher.

Much has been written about the Heder melamed, his ignorance, incompetence, impatience, stern "pedagogic" methods and discipline, and the wretched livelihood he barely eked out from low tuition fees. As a result, the maligned melamed took out his frustrations on his helpless students, the literature tells us. Depending on the circumstances, the personality of the melamed may be characterized as good, bad or indifferent. What should be borne in mind is the difficulty he encountered in teaching different age children of different intellectual capacities at the same time. Teaching was not a lucrative vocation, to say the least, but it was considered a sacred duty, carried out by the melamdim with high dedication. The melamed's piety, religious observance and dedication to what he was teaching, and his close and positive relationship to the families of his students[58] are worthy of praise and recognition. Broad generalizations about every Heder melamed are unfair. Reb Hersheleh did not impress me as an incompetent, ignorant and frustrated teacher. He had social status in the shtetl. He was a genuine born teacher, loved his work and believed in what he was teaching. He taught us Torah with the objective that we practice its teachings in our daily lives. He was an excellent story teller, especially enthralling us with the legends and midrashim about Biblical personalities. Directly and indirectly he succeeded in inculcating in us the love of Torah.[59] I recall joyfully the time I was allowed to attend the Heder in the early evening hours by myself, proudly carrying the kerosene lantern in the darkness of

the night. The study in the evening was a kind of "an enrichment" program for good students.

I adored the Jewish holidays. Passover, the holiday of freedom, commemorating the Exodus from Egypt, was a favorite. I looked forward to the holiday with great excitement and anticipation and also to a week's vacation from the Heder.

The home preparations were the most elaborate in the Jewish holiday calendar. The house was scrubbed and cleaned from top to bottom and the Passover dishes, silverware and glassware brought out. It was a time of renewal and a time for buying or making new clothes and shoes. I participated in the preparations and the rituals. Thus, with a goose feather, wooden spoon and candle, I helped Zaide Shaya in the search and removal of the last traces of leaven in the house, and burning it the next morning. I also knew that in accordance with the tradition the "chometz" (leaven) was "sold" to a gentile for the duration of Passover.

I cannot forget the new clothes my mother had made for me, especially the new leather boots. They squeaked when I walked, and this was a sign they were brand new and not hand me downs. How proud I was strutting around in them!

In the Heder we learned the Haggadah and all the rituals connected with the Seder, and the home celebration in accordance with a set order. We practiced the chanting of the kiddush and the four questions, asked by the youngest member of the family. I was the youngest in my maternal family and it was my responsibility to ask the questions, chanting each phrase in the Hebrew and translating it into Yiddish. I chanted them with gusto to the delight of everyone at the table.

Moreover, it was spring time. Trees and flowers were in bloom, the landscape was turning green, the winter mud was drying up, the air was crystal clear, the birds were singing. All of nature was coming to life again bringing to mind the word of

Song of Songs: "The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land". Is it any wonder that as children we especially enjoyed the Passover holiday?

In Biblical times, Passover marked the beginning of the grain harvest when a sheaf (omer) of new barley was reaped ceremoniously and the flour offered as a meal offering in the Temple. The Counting of the Omer during the forty nine days between Passover and Shavuot, a tradition observed in the daily service throughout the ages and to this day by the observant, was a daily ritual for us children. But the seven week period was also a time of sadness and semi-mourning because of the political struggle against Roman domination, led by the military leader Bar Kochba, assisted by Rabbi Akiva. Hence it became a tradition to abstain from festivities and rejoicing such as wedding ceremonies during this period. Lag B'Omer, the thirty-third of the Counting (in Hebrew the letters Lamed and Gimel add up to thirty three numerically) celebrates the suspension of the plague among the students of Rabbi Akiva. In Jewish tradition this day came to be known as The Scholars' Holiday and festivities were permitted.

Lag B'omer was a day of joy and celebration. The heroic military feats of Bar Kochba and the stories and legends of the scholar Rabbi Akiva, held us spellbound. On this day we played at war with bow and arrow. Studying Torah was a major obligation and activity, but on this holiday we went out into the fields, marching, singing and shooting off arrows. Playing at this game was permitted because Rabbi Akiva and his students had joined Bar Kochba in the freedom fight against the Romans.

Shavuot (Pentecost), the second of the three major pilgrimage holidays, commemorates the wheat harvest in the Land of Israel and the Revelation at Mount Sinai. Reb Hersheleh

enthralled us with the stories and legends of Matan Torah (the giving of the Torah), the most dramatic event in Jewish tradition. Moshe Rabenu (Moses our teacher and law giver), Har Sinai (Mount Sinai) and Aseret Hadibrot (the Ten Commandments), were living, inspiring, everlasting moments and highlights in the study of Torah.

We learned the cantillation of Akdamot, the long Aramaic poem extolling the omniscience and omnipotence of God and the glory of Torah. We chanted it at the synagogue service. To this day when it is chanted at the synagogue service, I am reminded of days of yore in the Heder.

We loved the idyllic story of Ruth which describes the harvest in the Land of Israel. Ruth had come with her mother-in-law, Naomi, from Moab and had adopted the Jewish religion. Her statement to Naomi "Your people shall be my people and your God my God" made a deep impression. This book, too, was read on Shavuot.

Like Passover, it was a happy and carefree time for us children, a time to enjoy the beauty of nature and the balmy weather. Flowers bedecked the home and synagogue. Milk products were the customary food, symbolizing the Torah which is likened to milk. Dairy products were available in great abundance and my mother prepared delectable goodies, especially those made of cherries, cheese and rice which I loved.

Few are my recollections of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur except the solemnity of the high holy days in the home and synagogue, shofar blowing, the haunting Kol Nidrei prayer, the round chalot (twist bread for Shabbat and the holidays), the honey cake and other special delicacies. However, I do remember the Kaparot (atonement) ceremony the day before Yom Kippur. I held a pure white fowl over my head, twirled it three times and repeated three times "Zeh caparati, zeh halifati" (this fowl is a sacrifice in my stead). Before the ceremony, I recited

the paragraph Bnei Adam (Children of Man), consisting of Biblical verses concerning God's readiness to deliver man from darkness and misery. The custom is related to the scapegoat ceremony in the days of the Temple in Jerusalem, when the High Priest symbolically transferred the sins of the community on the scapegoat and sent it off to the desert.

The autumn festival of Succot (booths) commemorates the wanderings in the wilderness when the children of Israel lived in booths. The third of the three pilgrimages is described in the Bible as the feast of the ingathering at the end of the agricultural year. For centuries, after the exile, Jews did not till the soil. Yet, they devised ways of experiencing the festival vicariously; it reminded them of their pastoral past in the Land of Israel, when it was celebrated with thanksgiving for God's blessings and the produce of Mother Earth. The ceremonies and prayers on this holiday are symbolic of those ancient days, including the prayer for rain. In the Heder we learned and recited the prayers and blessings for the Lulav (the palm branch) and the Etrog (the citrus fruit). At home helping to build and decorate the fragile Succah and eating in the Succah, remains with me as an enjoyable childhood experience. There was no Heder during the eight day festival and that in itself was a joy for us children. The highlight occurred on the eve of the Simchat Torah (Rejoicing of the Torah), the eighth day of the festival.

Every child carried a paper flag or banner on which were painted a lion and hare and the words: "Be swift as a hare and strong as a lion to carry out the commandments of the Torah." On the flag was perched a large red apple and on top of the apple a lit candle. I still picture all the townspeople gathered in the Bes Medrash, the Torah Scrolls taken out of the Holy Ark, the seven Hakafot (processional circuits) around the synagogue, the men taking turns in carrying the Torah Scrolls and the singing and the dancing. We children joined the processions and heard the

Yiddish expression "Derlebt iber ah-yohr" (may you have a good year and be privileged to celebrate again next year) repeated over and over again.

The Succot festival coincided with the harvest season for the peasants and farmers in the countryside. They were busily engaged in harvesting and ingathering the abundant produce of the rich Ukrainian soil; the fields and orchards were ripe with wheat, corn, oats barley and luscious fruit. Needless to say, Jews benefited greatly from this overflowing and bountiful agricultural wealth. Perhaps it is a nostalgic feeling of pleasant childhood days, but it seems to me, after so many years, that the pears, plums, cherries, apples, other fruit and vegetables were of unusual size, luscious and tasty.

In the dead of winter, on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat, known as Hamisha Asar B'Shevat, we celebrated the New Year of Trees, marking the first day of Spring in Eretz Yisrael. Trees were regarded as special gifts of God and there are many allusions to trees in the Bible. Torah is considered to be the Tree of Life. On this day, we ate bokser (carob tree fruit), raisins, almonds, figs and dates. Geographically, the Land of Israel was a far away land, but on this holiday it was part of our lives; spiritually we were there vicariously.

Purim marks the triumph of Persian Jewry over anti-Semitism and imminent destruction in Persia. We were as familiar with the main characters of the Purim story - King Ahashverot, Queen Vashti, Queen Esther, Mordecai and the wicked Haman - as we were with all the personalities in the Pentateuch. It was a merry, jovial and full of fun semi-holiday. We children were the delivery emissaries for Shalach Manot (gifts of the holiday delicacies) sent to relatives and friends. The Megillah (Scroll of Esther) reading in the synagogue, the raucous noise we made with the home made graggers (noise makers) every time the name of Haman was mentioned, the delicious hamantaschen

(poppy seed cakes), the "Purim Spiel" (the humorous spoofs and parodies of the holiday stories) and the Purim Seudah (sumptuous meal) added zest and joy to our lives.

Tisha B'Av was a fast day of mourning for the destruction of the first and second Temples in Jerusalem in ancient times. Solemnity and sadness pervaded the Bes Medrash as the book of Lamentations was chanted. Reb Hersheleh prepared us for this day. The stories and legends were well known to us and the prayers for the return to Zion were impressed on our young minds.

Hanukkah, the eight day festival of lights, commemorating the struggle against religious persecution and the triumph over the Syrian - Greeks, was a favorite and joyous holiday. The victory led to religious freedom, the re-dedication of the Temple and national independence. For us children in the Heder, most thrilling was the story of the undefiled cruse of oil which contained sufficient oil for one day's lighting of the Temple Menorah, but miraculously, the oil lasted for eight days. Most welcome was the custom of Hanukkah gelt (small coins) given to children.

My mother made me a small purse and I visited relatives and neighbors to collect Hanukkah gelt. The dreidl games, the sizzling latkes and the Yiddish songs infused us children with unforgettable feelings of happiness. The four sided dreidl (spinning top) had four Hebrew letters on it, spelling out the words Nes Gadol Haya Sham (a great miracle occurred there) alluding to the miracle in Jerusalem. Using nuts or small coins, we played this kind of put and take game, risking the Hanukkah gelt or nuts we had collected. There were no toys or exchange of gifts but lots and lots of fun! The Hanukkah menorah, I recall, was made of nine scooped out potatoes filled with oil and wicks; nothing fancy but it left a lasting impression. With great joy and enthusiasm the candles were lit and placed in the

window as a sign of victory and freedom. I well remember the popular song, "Oy ihr kleine lichtelach. Ihr dertzelt geshishtelach." (O you little candles, you tell stories of old) in addition to the traditional blessings and songs. For the elders, the candles vicariously did away with time and space and recalled the heroism and victory of the Maccabees in the ancient homeland. For us children it was pure joy and fun. How thrilling it was to walk through the dark streets in the snow and see the flickering lights in all the windows, an unforgettable memory!

Are my memories only of the schooling I received in those early years? Was my childhood completely barren of normal joys, happy moments and even pranks? Not at all! The memories of a happy and carefree childhood are vivid, even though birthdays were not celebrated; nor did I know anything about toys. Generally pets were forbidden. Playing with a dog took time away from Torah study and hence was taboo. Yet, games were not unknown to us. Running, climbing, jumping, string, button, nut, hide and seek games and those connected with the holidays, were part of our children's way of life. Whistling was considered a pagan habit and frowned on, but we rubbed holes on peach, apricot or plum pits with stones and, lo' and behold, we had whistles. It was our own invention and we loved making and using them. When a baby boy was born, it was the custom for the Heder boys to come to his home, to welcome him, loudly and joyfully, with the prayer: Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. The parents were overjoyed and rewarded us with cookies, cake and nuts.

Climbing the tall cherry tree in great-grandparents garden was a favorite activity. I was wearing a new pair of pants and was careful not to soil them. It was summer time and the cherries were red, large and ripe. I could not resist the temptation to climb the tree and gorge myself on the luscious fruit. I climbed

up and began to pick and eat the cherries. Losing my footing, I fell out of the tree, tearing my new pants, spattering cherries all over myself and sustaining scratches on hands and feet. I was a mess but not seriously injured. How I was punished I do not recall. To this day, cherries continue to be a favorite fruit.

The observance and celebration of the Shabbat, holidays and festivals were all part of normal and wholesome home and community wide experiences enjoyed by adults and children alike. This was our way of life.

Study in the Heder, joyous celebration of the holidays, tender loving care of family and zestful, full of fun everyday experiences characterized my early childhood days. The Russian Revolution brought this period in my life to an unanticipated end.

At the same time that I was attending the Heder, I began my modern Hebrew language education, due to the direct influence of Uncle Lipa, who, as already noted, opened a modern Hebrew school. Not satisfied with the enrollment and negative attitude of the traditionalists, he moved to Yekatrinoslav. Before leaving, he persuaded my mother to arrange for me to study modern Hebrew Regretfully, I do not recall the teacher's name but I began to study Hebrew at the age of six or seven. The first Hebrew song I learned was:

Al chalon(2) amdah tsipor yafa
Yeled ratz el tsipor tsipor afa, afa
Bocheh yeled bocheh, ayeh tsipor yafa
Ein tsipor al chalon, tsipor afa, afa

On the window stood a beautiful bird
The boy ran to the bird, the bird flew away
The boy cries, where is the beautiful bird?
There's no bird on the window, it flew away

I liked Hebrew very much and made excellent progress.[60]

After two years in the Chumash Heder, I was ready for the next phase of my education, the study of Talmud. Arrangements were made with Reb Moshe, a Talmud teacher of excellent reputation, to accept me in his Heder. I began my studies in this Heder but the outbreak of the Russian Revolution and its aftermath disrupted Jewish life.

In sum, the educational system in our shtetl followed the traditional pattern then prevailing in Eastern Europe and in the shtetlach of the Ukraine. The three level system, based on the age of the children, had three major goals: Kriah (fluent reading), Mikrah (Bible study, mainly of the Five Books of Moses) and Mishna-Gemara (Talmud Study). The Heder was a private business and parents paid a monthly or semester tuition fee to the melamed. The lowest tuition was paid to the dardeke melamed, the highest to the Talmud melamed.[61]

In most communities, schooling was provided for the orphaned and children of the poor. Uncle Joseph Ganapolsky who lived in Tarascha, a nearby shtetl, was active in that community and taught in the community Talmud Torah. I have no information about a Talmud Torah in Winograd. I do recall, however, that our Heder and a "rival" Heder, whose students we called "lemelechas", a pejorative term for the poor, had "fights" periodically. I wonder whether these were the poor children supported by the community. Generally it is reported in the literature that the community Talmud Torah was inferior to the private Heder, in program, teachers, cleanliness and achievement. The Heder system was a conservative institution, a private enterprise and not a dynamic, changing or communal institution. Religion as such was not taught as a separate subject. Concentration was on the study of the Pentateuch and Rashi commentary. It was studied as a holy book, as God's word to the chosen people. No attention was given to time and place or to historic perspective. It was as if Abraham and Moses

lived at the same time, in accordance with the principle of "ain mukdam ume'uchar ba-Torah" (there is no differentiation or distinction of time) in the study of Torah.

Jewish education for males was universal but only a selected few continued their education in the study of Talmud in our shtetl. Most of the boys discontinued their formal education at the age of twelve or thirteen and went to work as apprentices or became their fathers' helpers, perforce compelled by the prevailing economic conditions.

The residue that remained with them was the knowledge of the prayer book and synagogue skills, limited knowledge of the Pentateuch, and the practices, observances and values learned in the home. The home was the important "informal school" for the direct inculcation of Yiddishkeit, the emotional and practical knowledge of Judaism. With some exceptions, few of the townspeople I knew and met in the United States, were knowledgeable in the Bible and the classical literature. My father and some of his friends were the exceptions. In their recollections, relatives in the United States and in Israel speak of their fathers and grandfathers as pious, observant and learned individuals.

What was the ultimate fate of the time honored Heder school system? At the end of the nineteenth century and at the beginning of this century, criticism of the system began to grow, especially in the large towns and cities. The criticism was two fold: The study of Bible and Talmud, exclusively, was outdated, and could no longer meet the needs of changing times. Secondly, the old fashioned melamdim, low in social status, poorly compensated, untutored in pedagogic skills and knowledge, were ill equipped to educate children and youth. Heder education was in need of radical change.

A more progressive and modern school system was introduced, called the Heder Metukan. The curriculum included the

study of modern Hebrew, Jewish history, Zionism and general studies. The system became popular and widespread in Russia and Poland before World War I and the Russian Revolution. Thousands of children, including girls, were enrolled in the new Heder. Yet, the new system could not easily change the deeply rooted and entrenched traditional Heder, especially in the small shtetlach. After the Civil War, due to the harsh restrictions, the old and the new Heder virtually disappeared in the Soviet Union.

Historically, the Heder educational system made a distinct contribution to Jewish life throughout the generations. At a 1912 conference of scholars, intellectuals and political party leaders, the poet laureate Hayim Nachman Bialik had this to say about the Heder: "Who is responsible for the Heder's decline? Is the decline fault ours? Yes, it is ours! If a mother deserts her child and the child's body is covered with sores and wounds and his spirit is undermined - the mother is responsible, and similarly, the son is guilty who deserts his defenseless mother. The Heder is our mother. The Heder has nourished tens of generations. From the Heder emerged our great scholars, teachers, poets and the educated. We deserted the Heder and left it to its fate."[62]

With respect to the Russian school before 1917, Jewish children were not admitted except through influence and/or bribery. Also, Jews for the most part chose not to send their children to the Russian school even if they were accepted, for fear of the negative influence on their children's Jewishness. Few would consider sending their boys to the Russian school.

For generations the three level Jewish educational system was designed exclusively for the male population among whom literacy was 100%. In the Jewish tradition women were not obligated to observe the commandments. Formal study of the Hebrew sources - Bible, Talmud and related classical studies -

was denied to them. There was even the extreme statement, in the classical literature, not necessarily accepted and practiced, that "If a man gives his daughter a knowledge of Torah, it is as if he teaches her obscenity." Girls were admitted to the Heder Metukan and in some instances, separate orthodox schools were established to provide girls with a Jewish and general education.[63] This was not the practice in Winograd. Only a few girls were given private instruction in Hebrew and Biblical texts. In some instances girls applied for admission to the Russian school. My sister, for example, who was three years older and was not permitted to receive the formal traditional Jewish education, was admitted to the Russian elementary school due to the influence of the friendly local priest. Other girls too were admitted: Among them were Haya Nir, Haya Hammer, Gitel Cooper, Esther Weiner and others. In these cases, too, the priest's influence was crucial. Some were fortunate to be able to continue their Russian education in the gymnasium, the Russian secondary school. Since there was no gymnasium in Winograd, they continued their secondary education in Tarascha and Lisinka. In her memoir, Hennie Lukach tells of learning Yiddish and Russian but does not name the teachers.[64]

The home was the women's sphere of influence. Bearing children, performing of general household chores, scrupulous observance of Jewish rituals, inculcation of Jewish values and practice, were their responsibilities. Women were the guardians of the Jewish home, a formidable responsibility.

Girls received their practical Jewish education by observing their mothers and grandmothers, by participating in the performance of household duties, and later, by carrying them out in their own homes. It was essentially an education of "learning by doing," and through daily Jewish living. Yet, women were not illiterate. For them, reading the prayer book, learning various blessings, reading and writing Yiddish were almost obligatory.

It is recorded that in some communities special Hadarim (plural of heder) were established to teach women the Aleph Bet and the prayer book. The ability to write a Yiddish letter was considered a high priority and achievement. As girls matured and married, the Yiddish education enabled some of them to read Tse'enah Ure'enah, the most popular free translation into Yiddish of the Torah (Teitch Chumash), of other Biblical selections and traditional commentaries in the Pentateuch, interspersed with legends and ethical teachings. For generations, women who had no access to the original Hebrew sources, read the book in the synagogue and imparted this fascinating information to their children. How did some of the women learn to read the prayers and how did some women learn to read and understand Tse'ena Ure'ena? As already noted, my melamed's wife, Faiga, was a girls' teacher. Liuba Tenofsky remembered several women teachers and named them on the map of the shtetl. Liuba described the women's participation in the synagogue service: "In the middle aisle of the women's section there were four tables reserved for "Zuggers" (Yiddish for spokeswomen), a special honor for the few women who could read Hebrew and would "daven" (pray) on behalf of all the illiterate worshipers. "The Zuggers" would plead with God, everyone else would echo the prayers and the tears would flow in a mass communal catharsis. "The Zuggers" were highly respected and even rewarded with a few kopeks (coins) by the congregants for their worthy service."[65]

A relative, Eta Ganapolsky, was a Kiev gymnasium graduate, had a good knowledge of Yiddish and Russian and was a teacher of both languages.[66] A popular teacher, she gave private individual and group lessons at her home or at the homes of her students. She was an active member of the Yiddish and Russian reading circle, mentioned in the Lukach and in other memoirs.

Later, in the United States, townspeople, women and men, too, spoke of her as a teacher, with respect and admiration.

Eta was my sister's teacher and I believe my aunts' and probably my mother's Yiddish teacher. All of them read and wrote Yiddish fluently. My mother, an observant woman, also had a good knowledge of Tse'enah Ure'enah, enjoyed the stories in the Teitch Chumash and was able to follow the synagogue service. I recall that in later years in the United States when my mother was widowed, her former shtetl friends would gather regularly in her apartment, to read aloud the news and stories which appeared in the Yiddish press. She also had a high reputation among family members and her landsleit for her Jewish culinary abilities, the recipes she had learned from her mother (strudel, knishes, taiglach, special Passover goodies).

Revolution and Pogroms

"Neiye Velten-Neiye Kraink"
(New Worlds-New Troubles) Yiddish folk expression

The year 1917 was a momentous turning point in the history of Russia and the world, but was fraught with continuing tragic consequences for Russian Jewry. Russia experienced two revolutions that year, in February[67] and October.

In February (March) 1917, a Social Democratic government headed by Alexander Kerensky as Prime Minister of the Provisional Government came to power. The March Revolution, was the culmination of volatile events in the twelve years following the 1905 [68] Revolution, the ineffectiveness of the Duma, the parliament of representatives, which had been reluctantly approved by the Czarist regime, the social, economic and political unrest, the ideological conflicts, and the uprising of the Petrograd workers, leading to the abdication of Czar Nicholas II.

The Kerensky government promised complete political freedom and granted equality to minority ethnic nationalities, including the recognition of Jews as citizens with full civil, political and national rights. In the attempt to steer a middle course of Russian's revolutionary tide and rebirth, Kerensky planned and hoped to establish a liberal Social Democracy. For

a short period he became the symbol and personification of the new order for many Russians during the Spring of 1917.

The nine month Kerensky government did not last long enough to test its policies of liberalism and was unable to fulfill its promises to stabilize the economy and to arrest the rising unrest and the anarchic conditions. The decision not to abandon the Allied Powers in the war against Germany, was a fatal miscalculation and a paramount cause for the downfall of the Kerensky government. The Russians were tired of the war and demoralized by the mounting military defeats. The army was in disarray. A million soldiers were either killed or wounded. Desertion was rampant and thousands of peasant soldiers, with weapons in hand, deserted and felt free to return to their villages and to seize by force the land, which they and their ancestors longed for, for so many years, from aristocrats and wealthy land owners. Tens of thousands of refugees, fleeing from territories conquered by the Germans, perished from starvation and disease. Workers in the cities rioted and seized the opportunity to take over the factories.

Furthermore, ideological divisiveness among the political parties, the separatist movement of the Ukraine, the rising star of Bolshevism doomed the Kerensky regime, and the country drifted into chaos and anarchy during the summer of 1917. [69]

Encouraged by the Germans, the Bolsheviks under the leadership of V. Lenin and L. Trotsky seized power in October (November) 1917, dissolved the Constitutional Assembly (Duma) of the Kerensky government, established the dictatorship of the proletariat and signed the Brest Litovsk Peace Treaty with Germany on March 2, 1918.

Bolshevism was threatened from within and without by fanatic nationalism and separatism, ethnic rivalry and by outside forces. Counter-revolutionary Whites, under the leadership of former Czarist generals, sought to overthrow Bolshevism and to

restore the monarchy. Forces of the Allied Powers joined in this effort. In addition, the Ukrainian peasants rose up in rebellion in the struggle against the aristocracy, wealthy landowners, Germans, Russians, Poles, Jews and Bolsheviks. However, the ambitions and aspirations of non-Russian nationalities to achieve independence from the central Bolshevik government in Moscow, complicated the Whites' and other efforts to overthrow Bolshevism. The Whites insisted that nationalist aspirations be set aside until Bolshevism was defeated and until an elected Constituent Assembly could determine the fate of the non-Russian nationalities. The biggest stumbling block was the Ukraine [70] which refused to place victory over Bolshevism above its national aspirations for freedom and independence. The Whites looked upon the Ukrainian nationalist ambitions as an attempt to subvert Russian unity. The Ukraine became a main battleground over which the Whites, the Reds, the Ukrainians, the peasants and anarchists fought for four long years, from the fall of 1917 to the summer of 1921. The Civil War raged with intense ferocity in the cities, towns and villages, bringing in its wake untold and unparalleled devastation, destruction and loss of life. The main personae in this historic, bloody and tragic drama were the Bolsheviks Lenin, Trotsky and other Soviet leaders; the White Army Generals Kornilov, Kolchek, Denikin and others; the Ukrainian nationalist Petlura and his henchmen; the rebellious peasant anarchist leader, Machno, and his cohorts.[71]

The impact on the millions of Jews who lived in the Ukraine was shattering, devastating and unprecedented. My shtetl, Winograd, was in the Ukraine and the story of the events there has to be retold.

After the fall of the Czarist regime in 1917, the Ukraine declared its intention to establish an independent People's

Republic, a national state, separate from the central Moscow government.

The Rada (governing Council) declared its readiness to grant full national autonomy to the Jewish minority (about two million Jews, representing 5% of the population). Jewish political parties were represented on the Rada and a People's Ministry of Jewish Affairs was created with a Jewish Minister in charge to concern itself with Jewish affairs.[72]. Democratic elections for a national Jewish assembly were planned in the Ukraine but did not materialize, due to ideological differences among the Jewish political parties and, especially, because the wave of pogroms made the country unsafe for the representatives to assemble.[73].

The Bolsheviks came to power in October (November) 1917, after the dissolution of the Constitutional Assembly, and on January 9, 1918 the Ukraine Rada resolved officially to declare its full independence and to sever connections with the Soviet Union. "Jews were represented in the ranks of the Bolsheviks, and at the beginning, in those of Denikin's army. The Ukrainian movement on the contrary attracted but a handful of Jews."[74] Ironically, the Jewish representatives on the Rada, out of concern for the welfare and physical security of Ukrainian Jewry, were opposed to the dismemberment of the Russian Empire, and voted against the decision. This action of the Jewish representatives was suspect in the eyes of nationalist Ukrainians and they were accused of favoring communism and, as a result, propaganda against Jews increased and anti-Semitism intensified. The Bolsheviks were willing for the Ukraine to remain independent provided it continued to be part of the USSR. The Bolsheviks considered the Rada a government of traitors to socialism. The Ukraine refused and its national army resisted the Red Army in its attempt to overthrow it. During the

long and bitterly fought Civil War, Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine, changed hands fifteen times.

When the Brest Litovsk Peace Treaty was signed on March 3, 1918, the German army occupied and remained in control of the Ukraine, Poland and the Balkan states. As a condition of the Treaty, Russia recognized the independence of these western border states.[75] A Ukrainian Hetman (a corruption of the German word Hauptman - head man) was put in charge of the Ukraine, to check the separatist movement, to restore order and to stabilize the government. The landed gentry and rich landlords favored the establishment of a government under German control and looked to the Hetman, supported by the German army, to restore their land seized by the peasants. They envisioned a Ukraine, allied with the Russians in a loose union of autonomous states under the aegis of a democratic Russian federation. The Hetman regime was an anathema to the peasants because German agents commandeered food and other supplies which they shipped to Germany to feed the army. The peasants were also forced to give back the land which they had expropriated from the wealthy landlords. Their fight against the Hetman regime was bitter and bloody.

The hope of Jews that the German armed forces would or could control the outbreak of pogroms came to naught. The Hetman regime was powerless and transitional. The withdrawal of German troops soon after the defeat of Germany by the Allied Powers and the ensuing Peace Treaty, signed in Versaille, left the Ukraine in utter chaos. A national Directorate was formed with General Semayon Petlura as its head in January 1919. At the early stage of the Directorate, two Jews were called in to serve as Associate Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Commerce. Arnold Margolin was one of them. Several Jews were appointed members of Ukrainian diplomatic missions abroad to uphold the national demands of the Ukraine before the states of

Western Europe and America.[76] However, "The Directorate during the first three months of its rule failed to show sufficient determination in combating pogroms against Jews. In its enthusiasm for the main object of the struggle for national self-determination and independence, the Directorate was bent primarily on the formation of a powerful army without any restrictions as to the type of recruits. The result was that there were found in the ranks of that army, side by side with genuine Ukrainian patriots, quite a few elements of the most undesirable Black Hundred type and even criminal and other dangerous characters."[77]

The Directorate initiated a campaign against pogroms and its perpetrators. Orders were issued urging Cossacks to refrain from attacking innocent men, women and children and also to arrest and punish the perpetrators.[78] But the Ukraine government was not strong enough to fight Denikin's White Army and the Bolsheviks and, at the same time, to maintain law and order and to restrain the roaming irregular and undisciplined bands, which committed atrocities against the unfortunate Jewish inhabitants. These conditions caused Margolin to resign his post.

On March 11th, 1919, Arnold Margolin sent the following communications to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Ukrainian Government, Mr. Matsievich:

> "The heavy, responsible task which rests on all members of the government is now further complicated by the tragic fact that the Jewish pogroms do not cease, and by the realization that the administration has proved powerless to check the terrible violence and murders which took place in Proskurov, Ananiev, etc. I well know that the government does all that is in its power to fight the pogroms. I also know that the helplessness of the government in this struggle weighs heavily upon all its members and deprives them of that spiritual balance and that calmness which are so indispensable for fruitful labors for the welfare of all the peoples of Ukraine.

My own sufferings as a Jew, however, are further intensified by the consciousness that the results of the anarchy from which the other elements of the population suffer in the main only economically, prove dangerous and fatal to the very existence of the Jewish people.

"In view of the above circumstances I do not feel capable of continuing my labors as Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs and I therefore request to be permitted to relinquish the above named post."

(Signed) A. Margolin
ODESSA, MARCH 11, 1919.[79]

For more than two years there was no consolidated or stable government and the Ukrainian armed forces with its fanatic nationalist aspirations fought bitterly against the Red and White armies.

The upheaval and turmoil that followed, the instability of the Ukraine Directorate and the uprising of the peasants, marked the beginnings of the pogroms in the Ukraine which intensified with the increasing violence of the Civil War on all fronts.

The Jewish population was caught in between the warring partisan parties and became the victims of the most vicious and merciless pogroms and acts of brutality. In the eyes of the warring parties, the Jews were the real enemy and only for the despised Zhidy (Jews) did all of them reserve unanimous hatred. Pogroms became almost a part of every day life in the Ukraine. On one side, were the Bolsheviks and its Red Army. On the other side were Petlura's Directorate, the undisciplined and uncontrolled marauding peasant and demobilized soldier bands, and Denikin's White Army. To a large degree the masses of Jews found themselves outside the conflict. Yet the contending sides poured their wrath and vengeance on the unprotected Jewish population in the cities and especially in the small towns and villages where the majority of Jews lived. The leaders called

upon "the tormented people of the Ukraine", "the holy toilers", "the people of God" to a battle of death against the Bosheviks and Jews."[80] Murderous pogroms were committed in Kiev and other cities and soon spread to the country side. Many places changed hands ten times or more and Red and White army groups and wandering peasant bandits fought and killed each other mercilessly. Each change in the shtetlach was followed by assault and vengeance against the hapless Jews. Ransoms and consumer goods were exacted of them which in many instances ran unto millions of rubles. After payment was made, orders were given to slaughter them: men, women and children. The Russian word pogrom, which signifies ruin and devastation, originally applied to the rampages of an invading army, became an international word, the synonym for pillage, robbery, rape and massacre, almost associated exclusively with the atrocities Jews suffered and endured.

The history of the pogroms is long and tragic. Hatred and persecution of the Jews are deeply rooted and endemic in Russian history and "the land of the pogroms" is an apt name for the Ukraine. Jewish historians Elias Tcherikower and Simon Dubnow cited a multitude of reasons for the calamity which fell on the Jewish population: the "heritage and memory of bloodshed" in past centuries; the social, political and economic dislocation, the strongly entrenched and rooted anti-Semitism, the direct and indirect anti-Semitic teachings of the Church, and the prominence of individual Jews in the communist party and in the Bolshevik government. The historians have linked the catastrophes of the 1917-1921 Civil War to those of the past: the Khmelnitski massacres of 1648, when 700 Jewish communities were decimated with 200,000 victims, with the 18th century murderous pogroms perpetrated by rebel peasants, leaving 60,000 dead[81]; the pogroms endured by Jews during the years that followed and the atrocities in the late 19th

and early 20th centuries. As the 19th century drew to a close, pogroms had become a regular feature of life. Extensive pogroms followed the assassination of Alexander II in 1881. Violent waves of pogroms continued for the next two decades.[82] In the five year period 1902-1907, especially after the Russian defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, pogroms occurred in 600 places, mostly in small shtetlach, incited by the police, the Church, the right wing newspapers, carried out by the infamous Black Hundred, which were tolerated by the Czarist regime. The right wing conservatives, monarchists and the church relied heavily on anti-Semitism as an instrument of politics. In their view, the Jews were the source of Russia's woes.

The noted historian Richard Pipes, wrote: " ... The Jews presented the single most dangerous threat to the political and social stability which they regarded as the main concern of state policy. Jews destabilized Russia in two capacities: As revolutionaries and as capitalists. The police authorities were convinced that they formed the principal element in the revolutionary parties. Nicholas II only echoed them when he claimed that nine tenths of the revolutionaries and socialists were Jews. But Jews also upset the socio-economic equilibrium of Russia by introducing free market operations. The obvious contradiction in the claim that the members of the same religious group were both beneficiaries and mortal foes of capitalism was resolved in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a scurrilous forgery concocted by the Czarist police, which claimed that in the pursuit of their alleged historic mission - the destruction of Christianity and world domination - Jews resorted to every conceivable means, even to the organizing of pogroms against themselves ...."[83]

With respect to the role of the Church in this period, Pipes wrote: "The Church depicted the Czar as the vicar of God and condemned disobedience to him as a sin. In this connection the

Orthodox Church resorted to anti-Semitic appeals.... Without endorsing pogroms, the Church did not condemn them either.... In 1905 and after, Orthodox Church publications placed on Jews responsibility for the revolutionary ferment, accusing them of conspiring to destroy Christianity and take over the world."[84]

The Church was quiescent and far removed from committing pogroms. In some places individual priests protected and saved Jews. The Church observed the pogroms with equanimity and took no official action to stave off the atrocities against the "suspected and maligned Zhids" (a derogatory Russian word for Jews).[85]

In short, the Civil War reawakened fanatic nationalism and blind hatred for Jews and the memory of bloodshed in past centuries. It is no accident that in the stormy and relentless war against Bolshevism, wandering bands of demobilized soldiers of the Czarist armies and the undisciplined peasant bandits called themselves the "Khmielnitski Guard" associated with historic memories of attacks on Jews in the past.

The Kishinev (Bessarabia) pogrom on Easter Sunday 1903, when 50 Jews were murdered in cold blood and more than 600 were seriously injured, was the most infamous one of the period. It stunned the world with its brutality. The epic poem "In The City of Slaughter" by Hayim Nachman Bialik, gives a harrowing account of the merciless slaughter of innocent men, women and children. Prior to the Holocaust, Bialik's description has not been surpassed in Jewish history, for its denunciation and condemnation of the atrocity and the scorn he felt for the hapless Jews, the unresisting victims.

The poet takes us to the scene and we see the courtyards and walls splattered with sticky blood. We see a heap upon which a Jew and dog were beheaded and pigs wallowing in their mingled blood. We climb up to the attic where we see stomachs ripped

open, heads smashed, a murdered child at the breast of its slain mother and all around we see eyes of pain and terror, questioning why. We climb down to the cellar where young women were defiled and murdered while their fathers, brothers and lovers found shelter behind the barrels.

"See", the poet says bitterly, "where the sons of your people, the descendants of the Maccabees were hiding." The poet takes us to the graves where he cries out against God as "a pauper Lord": "Poor was He during your life, and poorer still of late ... when to My door, you come for your reward, I'll open it wide. See I am fallen from My High Estate ... I grieve for you, my children. My heart is sad for you; your dead were vainly dead; neither I nor you know why you died or wherefore, for whom, nor by what laws; your deaths are without cause. What says the Shechinah? In the clouds it hides, in shame. In agony it alone abides ...."[86]

Soul stirring was the effect of this pogrom on Russian and world Jewry and on humanitarian intellectuals and writers in Russia and the world over. The pogrom awakened the tragic feeling of the need for action. Jews everywhere were seized with the same impulse, namely, the organization of self defense. If the government failed to defend Jews, it was incumbent upon them to defend themselves. Bialik's condemnation of Jewish weakness and lack of self defense contributed to the effort to organize self-defense guards. In Homel, Odessa, Zhitomir, Uman and other cities Jews prepared for self defense. In some instances, they succeeded in preventing pogroms, but in others, government troops intervened and shielded the attackers. Self defense groups were not tolerated and the authorities took measures to suppress "lawlessness" and members of self defense groups were disarmed and arrested. [87]

The reaction throughout the Jewish world was one of revulsion and horror. In Russia too, intellectuals and writers

expressed sympathy for the victims, among them Leo Tolstoy and the humanitarian Korolenko. In the United States, the nascent Jewish community took measures to demonstrate, protest and raise huge sums for relief, and the voice of the American community was heard throughout the world and Russia. Hundreds of meetings were held, sermons of condemnation delivered by Jewish and Christian clergy and numerous resolutions and petitions adopted by the government and hundreds of communities. The American press expressed its outrage in articles and editorials throughout the country.[88] In 1905, Judah Magnes led a demonstration march of 150,000 from the east side of New York up Fifth Avenue and organizations, such as the Federation of Galician and Bukovinian Jews acted on behalf of the stricken Jews in Russia.[89] Landsmanschaftn were active on behalf of Russian Jews and Socialists and Zionists initiated a fund to aid clandestine Jewish self-defense units in Russia.[90]

The effect on emigration to the United States, Palestine and other countries of the Kishinev pogrom, was striking. Beginning with pogroms at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of twentieth century, thousands opted to leave the land of oppression and persecution. But even the Kiskinev pogrom, strongly embedded in Jewish memory and history, did not compare to the raw cruelty, bestiality and rabid fanaticism endured by the Jewish community during the 1917-1921 Civil War.

In the early years after the Revolution, in 1917 and 1918, pogroms were committed in the Ukraine, but few believed in those days that the violence would turn into a mass movement of bloodshed. The change occurred in 1919. Almost at the very beginning of the Petlura Directorate, there began a series of outrages and pogroms in Orwich, Berdichev, Zitomir and in hundreds of shtetlach, including my own and the neighboring towns. Anti-Semitism increased in intensity when the Ukraine

Army was defeated and demoralized by the Red Army in March 1919, and the pogroms took on a mass character, fatal for the Jewish population. The Petlura pogroms during the first half of 1919 were followed by those perpetrated by Denikin's White Guard in the second half of 1919. General Anton Denikin's Volunteer White Army, composed of former Czarist army officers, soldiers and Cossacks, came up from the south, and passed through the Ukraine, on the way to Moscow to do battle with the Red Army. Ironically, in the early stages of the Civil War, some Jews joined Denikin's and Kolchak's Volunteer White Army in the fight against Bolshevism. But virulent and sadistic anti-Semitism was ingrown in Denikin's high command. The officers committed cruel acts against Jews without restraint, suspecting and accusing them of sympathy for communism. Jewish officers and privates were removed from all fronts of the White Army. Denikin turned down a petition to issue a declaration guaranteeing civil equality to Jews. The Jewish masses were declared outside the law.[91] Denikin imposed a regime on the Ukraine marked by the rejection of Ukrainian nationalist aspirations and by a vicious hatred of Jews. The vulnerable and defenseless Jews were subjected to indescribable atrocities. The women were considered officers' spoils and thousands of them were violated brutally. The Jewish delegations to Denikin were told that officially violence was prohibited but that he did not have the power to deter and restrain the military officers of the former nobility class, who did not differentiate between Bolsheviks and Jews. With the slogan "Kill the Jews, Save Russia", atrocities were committed such as neither Russian nor Jewish history had recorded. The Denikin pogroms surpassed those of the Ukrainian military forces and the peasant bandits in cruelty.[92]

The impoverished peasants, hungry for land, sought to dispossess the landed gentry, to divide up the land, to seek relief

from the former Czarist regime and the threat of Bolshevism. They supported the struggle for Ukrainian national independence and were bitterly opposed to the Bolshevik policies of land expropriation and collectivization. The disruption of trade, commerce and industry, the rampant famine, speculation and the black market stimulated the search for consumer goods such as kerosene, salt, sugar, oil, boots, hardware and manufactured goods. Whatever consumer goods were available in the cities and towns, were in the hands of middlemen, tradesmen and storekeepers, the traditional occupations of Jews. Consequently, Jews were the targets of the peasant uprising. Among the peasants there was deep hatred for the city dwellers who in their mind were non-Ukrainian, and consisted in the main of Russians and Jews. For historic reasons, Jews were city and small town dwellers. At the beginning of the 20th century the Jewish population of Kiev was 31%; Podolia 41%; Volin 51%; Uman 58%; Berditchev 78%. In the small towns the percentage of Jews was high and it is in these places where major pogroms occurred. In the first two decades of this century, the population of the Ukraine numbered twenty six millions, twenty one millions of them living in agricultural villages. No wonder their hostility to city dwellers was so intense. Furthermore, the literacy level of the peasantry was low. Only about 16% could read and write. The ignorant masses were easily incited to violence against the Jews, especially by the propaganda of the counter-revolutionaries.

To the pogromchiks, Bolshevik and Jew were synonymous, in view of the fact that individual Jews, mainly in the large cities, were active in political and in revolutionary circles and held key positions in the communist party and the Bolshevik Government. The Revolution was interpreted as a Jewish plot for world conspiracy, dominance and destruction. The legend and propaganda of Jewish responsibility for Bolshevism served as a pretext

and justification for the pogroms. "The Jews created the commune," was the outcry of the peasants, and Denikin's troops carried flags with the slogan "Kill the Jews, Save Russia." The only armed force that did not systematically terrorize the Jews was the Red Army. Although several hundred Jews were killed in pogroms committed by Red soldiers, the Red Army command condemned them and punished the perpetrators.[93] The disappointment and lack of confidence in all the anti - Soviet partisans, which were rooted in anti - Semitic campaigns and propaganda, the fear for physical security and the waves of pogroms, pushed the Jewish population to lean toward the Bolsheviks. The destiny and security of the Jews lay in the military power of the Bolsheviks. This did not only affect Jewish youth, workers and intellectuals but also the masses of Jews. True, the Bolshevik ideology undermined their social, economic and religious foundations. Jews derived little benefit from the Revolution. For them communism was a calamity and a disaster. The majority of Jews engaged in trade and commerce and, historically, gravitated to liberalism and an open market economy. But anti - Semitism was basically alien to communist thinking and the Red Army fought against pogroms. The Bolsheviks offered better chances of survival. For this reason, when the Reds retreated from a big city or a shtetl from an assault by Petlura's or Denikin's forces, they were followed by "caravans" of Jews on foot - not only workers and sympathizers but in the main by old men with their phylacteries and prayer shawls under their arms, children and women with babies in their arms. This fact alone strengthened the legend about Jews and their sympathy for and allegiance to communism, enraging the pogromchicks and creating a further bond of the Jews with the Soviet power.[94] The Jews came to regard the Bolshiviks as their protectors.

According to the Communist Party statistics of 1922, Russians made up more that 72% of Communist membership; 5.2% were Jews, mainly from the large cities. The Jews in the small towns were hardly represented. Only 1.9% Jews served in the Red Army[95]. However, the reasons for the legend and accusation lay in the role rather than the quantity of affiliated Jewish communists and the role of Jews in the government before and after the Revolution, holding important positions in different organs of the Revolution. Jewish influence and power was blown out of proportion and overestimated. But the role of Leon Trotsky in creating and building the Red Army outweighed the statistics of Jews in government and in the Red Army. In his *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Trotsky wrote: "The attempt to explain the policy of the soviets and the course of the whole revolution by an alleged predominance of non-Russians is pure nonsense."[96] Trotsky had little sympathy for Jews and Judaism. More than anyone else, Trotsky was responsible for the popular identification of revolution with Jews. In the attempt to destroy Bolshevism, all the counter-revolutionary partisans treated Jews as enemies.

With respect to the Jews, the Soviet Constitution abrogated all limitations, permitting freedom of movement, residence, occupation and education. Jews as individuals were granted full equality, changing their status as citizens fundamentally. However, only the Yiddish language was recognized officially. Religion, dubbed as the opium of the masses, was outlawed as were Zionism and the Hebrew language. National autonomy was abolished. The local community councils and the national committee were ordered closed. The Decree of July 27, 1918 by the Council of People's Commissars directed all Soviets of workers, peasants and soldiers' delegates to take steps to destroy the roots of the anti-Semitic movement: "The Council of Peoples Commissars declares that the anti-Semitic movement

and the pogroms against the Jews are damaging to the interest of the revolution of the workers and peasants and calls on the labouring people of socialist Russia to fight this evil by all possible means. National hatred weakens the revolutionary ranks and the united labour front, irrespective of nationality, and can only help our enemies. The Council of the People's Commissariat orders all the Soviets (local councils) to take all appropriate measures in order to uproot the anti-Semitic movement; the organizers of pogroms and those inciting to pogroms should be outlawed."[97] The government order was signed by Lenin.

In 1919 alone, the pogrom casualties numbered 120,000: 70,000 by Petlura's Death Battalion and the marauding Ukrainian peasant bandits and 50,000 by Denikin's White Guard. It has been estimated that 2000 pogroms were carried out in the 1917-1921 period in which 250,000 Jews lost their lives and untold thousands were maimed, injured and violated.

Petlura was unsuccessful in the effort to achieve sovereign independence for the Ukraine, was defeated and forced to flee to the west. He settled in Paris and on May 25, 1926 was gunned down by Sholem Schwartzbard, a native of Ukraine, who from personal experience knew of the bloodshed committed by Petlura's Death Battalion. He assassinated Petlura to avenge the pogroms and to let the world know what Petlura and his hooligans had done to the Jews. He was arrested and imprisoned for a year and a half. When brought to trial, Schwartzbard and other eye witnesses described in great detail the outrages and atrocities perpetrated by Petlura and his aides, and was exonerated of the crime by the French court.[98]

The defeat of Denikin's White Army in 1921, was the last hope of re-establishing the old order and the Soviet regime was firmly established throughout the land. The names Petlura and Denikin became household words of terror and bloodshed

among Jews of the Ukraine. As a child of seven, I already knew their names and to this day they evoke fear of death and destruction.

About the 1917 - 1921 pogroms, the Polish poet and humanist Sienkiewicz wrote: "A disastrous, horrendous fire broke out over the entire Ukraine - wanton slaughter and murder .... No one could believe that so much violence and suffering could befall a nation.... All institutional and human cords were torn asunder, control vanished as if Hell itself had broken loose and sent its fury over the world ... Cities, towns and forests were on fire ...Thousands of human beings perished without memorial and without redeemer."[99]

The 1919 report by the Committee of the Russian Red Cross of Kiev stated : "The recent epidemic of pogroms is distinguished from those that preceded it, first by its long duration and then by its refined cruelty, by the merciless thoroughness and naked blood thirstiness with which the crimes were carried out."[100]

The report of the International Red Cross speaks for itself:

"Hundreds of thousands of Jews have been robbed of their last shirt; hundreds of thousands have been maltreated, wounded, humiliated; tens of thousands have been massacred. Thousands of Jewish women became the victims of bestial instincts of savage hordes. Hundreds of thousands of Jewish women are haunted daily by the one idea that tomorrow they will no longer be able to hold their heads erect. The panic which seized on the Jewish population of these regions is without precedent in all history. ... The Jewish masses in the Ukraine are on the verge of madness and many have actually lost their reason. These unfortunate beings, having lost all that makes life worth living, their nearest, their homes, everything they had, all means of existence, mutilated physically and broken morally, how can they solve the problem of their existence? Where are they to find

shelter? How to save the children from dying of starvation and cold, and all the accompanying miseries?"[101]

The Hebrew word "Khurban" (utter destruction) associated in Jewish history with destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in the first century is an apt description of the physical, spiritual and economic annihilation of Ukrainian Jewry. Prior to the Holocaust of World War II, the pogroms in the Ukraine were the most devastating and unparalleled in recorded Jewish history.

Due to the chaotic conditions prevailing in the Ukraine and the poor communication with the outside world, it was only in April 1920 that the first reports of the massacres of the Jews in the Ukraine reached the United States and a preliminary memorandum was issued by the Committee on Protest Against the Massacres of Jews in Ukraine, lands entitled "Massacre of the Jews in Ukraine, December 1918 - October 1919."

The pamphlet is based on information of eye witness accounts and material collected by various Jewish communities and official agencies, press dispatches, delegates of the Ukrainian Jewish Central Committee to the United States,[102] statements and reports by the Committee of the Jewish Delegations to the Peace Conference in Paris, and by former officials in Petlura's Government. The Committee of the Jewish Delegations in its bulletin of August 15, 1919 states: "News reaching us from various sources concur in their statement that pogroms have taken place in the Ukraine and that the Jews have been victims of such atrocities which the world had never known since the middle of the seventeenth century, the dark time of Bogdan Khmelnitski ...."

The following is a description of a typical pogrom: [103] "A band rushes into a shtetl, gangs break up all over the streets, penetrating by small groups into Jewish houses, sowing death, massacring without respect for age or sex, violating the women

before doing them to death, extorting money under threat of death, but when the money is handed over, killing the victims just the same; the bands take hold of everything that can be moved, break up stoves and walls and take up the floor in search for anything hidden. When one group leaves, another arrives, sometimes a third and so on until nothing absolutely that can be removed is left... The clothing is removed from the dead bodies as well as from those whose lives have been spared. A deputation of Jews or Christians appeals to the "authority" for mercy and stopping the massacre. The authority relents but requests a contribution to be paid by the surviving population and makes other demands for boots, meat and other food items."

In view of the instability of the Russian government, with the best of will and intention, the United States could do little to exert its political influence. It resorted to relief aid. The American Relief Organization was set up under the leadership of Herbert Hoover to provide food, clothing, medicine and a vast variety of humanitarian services for the hundreds of thousands of refugees who had escaped from the pogroms, and who also had difficulty in obtaining the necessary documents for emigration.

The American Jewish community mobilized its resources to relieve the disaster and misery which befell their fellow Jews in the Russian Civil War. In the five year period after World War I, American Jews raised the unprecedented sum of $47 million for relief, carried out in main by the American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS). The JDC, organized in 1914 under the chairmanship of Felix M. Warburg, became the major Jewish agency for aiding uprooted Jewish populations in Eastern Europe. At the end of World War I, the JDC faced the unparalleled task of rescuing and rehabilitating hundreds of thousands of Jews, suffering

from pogroms, disease, famine and destruction of their homes. Formed in 1909, the HIAS, the international immigrant and refugee service, responded to the growing needs of the Eastern European immigrants, providing them with legal entry services, basic subsistence, employment assistance, citizenship instruction and location of relatives. Offices were opened in Eastern Europe to provide services to the refugees, fleeing from the pogroms and atrocities. The JDC and HIAS worked in close cooperation. The JDC and the HIAS lent their active assistances to those who had fled illegally and helped them obtain the documents necessary for emigration to America and other countries.[104] They were joined by the landsmenshaftn[105] which worked diligently to provide relief for their fellow townsmen in the Ukraine. By the summer of 1922 and the end of 1923, the JDC had sponsored more than 1200 relief missions by landsmanshaftn delegates who had distributed several million dollars in villages and towns of the Pale of Settlement.[106]

Joining actively in the relief work were numerous international bodies including the Independent Order of B'nai Brith, the Jewish World Relief Conference, the United Committee for Jewish Emigration and the Jewish Colonization Association (ICA).[107]

The Peace Conference dealt with the vexing problem of nationality and national ethnic rights in the newly established independent states in Europe, including the rights of Jews. Proposals for the recognition of Jews as a national, political minority were rejected. The Jewish delegates to the Conference worked hard in the interest of all minorities and as a result, the new states undertook the obligation "to protect the interests of all inhabitants. ... who differ from the majority of the population in race, language or religion. ... The provisions shall be recognized as fundamental laws; they constitute obligations of international concerns and shall be placed under the guarantee of the

League of Nations."[108] Thus Jewish minority rights were recognized and guaranteed, but as time will demonstrate not fully implemented.

The Soviet Union was not a participant in the 1919 Treaty of Versailles or in any of the other treaties. However, it recognized the principle of self determination for its many national and ethnic groups. Soviet Jewry was recognized as a nationality and anti-Semitism was declared punishable as a counter- revolutionary crime.

The utopian expectations and messianic hopes that communism would uproot anti-Semitism did not come to fruition. During the seven decades of the Soviet regime, Jews experienced increasing hostility and discrimination. The collapse of communism and the removal of Jewish immigration restrictions led to the unparalleled exodus and emigration to Israel and the United States.

Pogroms in My Shtetl

My childhood came to an abrupt end with the outbreak of the Revolution and the Civil War which ensued. My formal education was about to be discontinued. In the Fall of 1917 and in the beginning of 1918, I was still attending the Heder but study hours were irregular and daily study uncertain. My teacher, Reb Hersheleh, and fellow students were unusually quiet, subdued and serious. We were distracted by rumors of imminent dangers and ready to run to hide somewhere. We were almost as familiar with the names of Petlura and Denikin as we were with Biblical personalities.

In 1918, I was considered ready for the next stage of my education, the study of Talmud. Reb Moshe, the Talmud teacher, had already examined and accepted me as adequately prepared and my mother had already paid in advance the ten ruble tuition fee, borrowed from Uncle Mendel. But I never began the study of Talmud at the age of seven. The Revolution brought it to an end. It seems I became an adult overnight. It was a maturing period in my young life leaving me with vivid memories of fear and terror, of hiding in attics and cellars, of hunger, of leaving home and kin forever, of sad farewells to grandparents, never to be seen again, of the arduous journey across Europe to reach our eagerly awaited destination, the United States, and reunion with my father.

Sporadic pogroms were committed in Winograd, the first one on November 13, 1917[109], and others at the beginning of

1918. According to the statistics gathered by the Ministry of Jewish Affairs of the Ukraine Rada, sixty pogroms occurred in different provinces of the Ukraine in the September-December 1917[110] time period. Winograd was among them as were the shtetlach whose names I remember from my childhood. The list of sixty places did not include others from which no reports were received. Some were on the verge of pogroms and lived in great fear awaiting the imminent onslaught of the pogromchiks. Among them were also the big cities of Kiev, Kharkov, Kremenchung, Odessa and Uman.[111]

At the end of 1918 and at the beginning of 1919, the Petlura and the Denikin pogroms and those committed by the roving peasant bandits turned into a mass movement of bloodshed. In a letter to the Ministry of Jewish Affairs of the Rada, dated October 27, 1918, a Winograd reporter whose name is not recorded wrote: "For three months we have lived in fear and without any government protection. From time to time, bands numbering thirty to forty riders, fully armed, enter our shtetl, drive the Jews into the synagogue, surround it, threaten to shoot them, and demand tribute to be paid immediately. While waiting for payment of ransom they move from house to house and plunder them. On the road close to our town seven Jews were ambushed and murdered and when several wives and mothers arrived in the village and begged for the return of the bodies so as to give them proper burial, they too were murdered. Many Jews were murdered in nearby towns such as Ryznivka, where the peasants killed seven Jews."[112]

In a letter dated August 29, 1918, community leaders of Zhaskov, a town I remember and where we had relatives, wrote: "It is months now that our shtetl and nearby towns, Lisinka, Stavistch, Winograd and others are in great danger... Near Winograd, five travelers were attacked and taken hostage. Their families were informed that if a ransom of 10,000 rubles was

paid and their wives brought the money personally, the men would be freed the next day. When the women brought the money, they and the men were killed."[113] At the same time, Tarascha, where my Uncle Joseph Ganapolsky lived, also reported horror stories of slaughter.

A relative, Moshe Antonovsky and his wife, lived in Lisinka where, in a nightmarish pogrom, in 1918, forty Jews were killed and fifty injured. An elegy in Hebrew and later translated into Yiddish by the composer Joseph Tolchinsky, and written in the form and style of the martyrology recited on Yom Kippur, described the horrors of the tragedy. One of the verses reads: "Horrifying is the death of Moshe Antonovsky and his devoted wife. He did not a widower remain, nor she a widow. Both were tortured unto death.... With grenades, the pogromchiks the cellar destroyed and all of them in hiding to pieces torn asunder...."[114]

Normal living in Winograd was disrupted. The shtetl economy was in shambles. Trade and commerce were in disarray. The weekly yarid, if it took place, was limited in scope. In the early days of the Civil War, the peasants from the surrounding villages and farms continued to bring their produce to market and to exchange it for precious commodities-sugar, salt, kerosene, flour, and farm implements, with the barter system in effect. Hard currency-gold and silver-was a scarce commodity. Jews began to hoard the sought after food staples for the difficult days ahead. They also began to bury gold and silver valuables. I distinctly recall seeing Zaide Shaya and great-grandfather Pini hide their valuables in attics or cellars, but mostly burying them in holes dug in the kitchen floors or other hiding places. Almost all the townspeople I was in contact with remember this common practice. Saul Mindich remembers the exchange of valuables for gold pieces which were then hidden in his shoe heels.[115] Later, when they fled, the valuables which they retrieved served as

important lifesaving resources for travel purposes, the purchase of food and bribery of contraband agents and peasants for illegal crossing of the Dniester River to Bessarabia.

Suspicion of peasant neighbors was rife and the tension and anxiety intense. The long standing friendly relations with gentile neighbors were changing and hanging in the balance. Although some of the peasant neighbors and the town priest hid, fed, and saved Jews at considerable risk, others joined the Petlura armed soldiers or the marauding peasant bands with pillage, rape and murder in mind. Instances of bribery to stave off attacks were not uncommon. Life in the shtetl was precarious and on the verge of collapse.

Sholem Lukach recalled: "Some of the gentiles were worried and troubled and regretted the dangers facing their Jewish neighbors. But the majority, especially the young people, caused so much trouble that it was impossible to leave the house or leave town. Travel on the roads was risky and dangerous. Highwaymen and bandits ambushed the wagons, stole the merchandise, killed the travelers or held them for ransom."[116] Few Jewish merchants ventured out on the roads. Few came to stay in Zaide Shaya's inn.

Winograd's townspeople living in the United States and Israel remember the fear and terror they and their families experienced, the injuries they sustained, the widespread pillage and destruction of property, the death of immediate family members and neighbors and the abuse of women.[117]

Members of the affected families tell slightly different versions of the brutal murder of the seven men and women. Shoshanah Lukach Brodsky of Tel Aviv, the daughter of Benjamin (Benny) Lukach, a highly respected person in Winograd, whose brother and mother were two of the victims, wrote me about the event: "When I was five years old, a terrible tragedy befell our family. My brother and seven other men were

transporting merchandise in wagons for transfer to the train to Kiev. Bandits ambushed and robbed them of their merchandise and sent the empty wagons to Winograd demanding a large ransom for their release. The townspeople gathered in our house, agreed to send the ransom money as well as the wives or mothers of the captives insisted on by the pogromchiks. When the women arrived at the designated place, the men and women were killed, my brother and mother among them. As I recall this tragedy, I still shiver and quiver to this very day. In addition, my father and other families paid a huge sum to retrieve the bodies and to bring them back for burial. The town was in shock. From that time on our town was under attack. The murder of my mother and brother and the constant fear led us to leave.... I was about six when we left and after a difficult journey, we got to Romania." [118]

Liuba Tenofsky remembered the tragic event which struck the town, although her version is slightly different. The results, however, were the same. Her Aunt Ruchel and Uncle Yossie and their two sons were among the victims. This was Liuba's story as recorded by her daughter, Jean Tenofsky May:

"The story of my mother's Aunt Ruchel starts with a goy (gentile) named Vanya. The son of a peasant, he always came to town with his father and spent many hours in Zaide Henzl's house, bringing the wool and picking up the felt cloth. Vanya, a smart youngster, knew everyone by name and always teased the Jewish children. When he grew older, he began chasing after the girls, trying to make friends, speaking to them in Yiddish. His advances rejected, he turned bright red and cursed them. He finally left the area but when the next calamity befell Winograd, the leader of the bandits was none other than Vanya. They captured Aunt Ruchel's husband and their two sons and carried them off together with other men and boys...leaving Winograd in a state of panic...." [119] According to Liuba, when the demand

came for ransom "the town leaders hurried with Henzl to his cellar to get the sack of ransom money.... Aunt Ruchel joined the other women to deliver the ransom maney. Before long, the sad news reached the town that when the women arrived the men had already been massacred and the women were hacked to pieces."[120]

Sholem Lukach, after serving in the Russian army for several years, managed to desert, and after experiencing risks and dangers, was on the way home to Winograd in 1918. In his memoir, he too tells the same story and other aspects of life in the shtetl as they affected him and his family:

> "The peasant driver told me that several Winograd men had been killed but he did not know their names... No sooner did I arrive in town and got off the wagon, a group of children recognized me and ran to bring the news to my family that I was back. When my mother who was in the store at the time, heard the news, she hurried home to see whether it was true.... She and my father were overjoyed but one person looked distraught and sad. He was my father's business partner, Benjamin (Benny) Lukach, and when I inquired what was wrong, I was told that Benny's wife and son had been murdered.... Imagine the terrible mood this story cast upon me.... In the meantime, townspeople filled the house, happy to welcome me back. No one spoke of the event nor of what was happening. The atmosphere was somber and uneasy. I thought to myself: was this the freedom the Revolution had brought? Was this what it was about - killing innocent people? Despite the sad news and the uneasy feeling, I was glad to be home with family and friends.... On the Sabbath, a joyful thanksgiving service was held in the synagogue in honor of my safe return and after the service the townspeople were invited to refreshments (kiddush) at our home and it appeared as if the whole town was there.... Learning from friends that a Labor-Zionist group had been organized in town,

I raised my glass in a toast to Zionism. Conditions were so precarious and chaotic that instantly I became a confirmed Zionist."[121]

"I went back to work in the family business of buying and selling beef cattle, but conducting business was almost impossible. To engage in our business, we had to do it in partnership with gentiles since they were free to travel on the roads in safety.... For Jews it was dangerous. Out of necessity, I took in as a partner a gentile, Petra by name. I taught him the business and sent him to buy and sell cattle. Prices were high. He bought and sold and because I could not do the buying and selling myself I had to believe him and take him at his word.[122] When he accumulated some money, he left me and joined the Petlura anti-Bolshevik party.... A pogrom compelled me to leave town. At the time the Red Army, still in its formation stage, was in great need of equipment and especially food supplies. The Reds usually entered the towns and villages seeking necessities—wheat, horses, beef cattle, etc. In many villages, the crops were poor but the peasants were forced to meet the Reds' demands. When the Reds came to Winograd to collect the supplies, this is what happened: They ordered the peasants to gather at the community hall and gave them the list of their demands to be delivered in forty-eight hours: 100 pairs of horses and several hundred puds of wheat (a Russian pud equals 13.5 kilos). The peasants took the list, organized themselves with the help of Petlura's armed men, returned at night and attacked the Reds, killing forty of them. Only two or three escaped. The Jews were ordered to bury the dead, the peasants saying to them: 'Since you are their friends, that is to say, you too are communists, you are duty bound to bury them.' We were busy with the burial all day long. When the Red Army staff command got wind of the incident in our shtetl, two Red Army groups were dispatched to Winograd. The town was surrounded, the peasant holdings burned and wheat and other supplies confiscated. Warning the Jews that the peasants would

seek revenge, the Reds advised the Jews to leave the town. Many left in a hurry, some following the Reds and others–like our family–left on their own in a different direction. Petlura's men attacked us on the road, took away all our possessions, and stripped us almost naked. We headed for Rezhnivka. On the way I recognized one of the bandits, my former partner, Petra. When he saw me, he approached me and said: 'Do not be afraid. We will not harm you. Go to Palestine. There is no place for you here.' He accompanied us several hundred meters and left. His words entered deep into my head: Good sound advice! We reached Rezhnivka barefooted. The townspeople provided us with clothing and mother sewed cloth shoes for us. The next day we set out on foot for Zvinigrodka where we stayed about a month. In Zvinigrodka, too, attacks were frequent except that the Reds kept the pogromchiks under control. We later returned to Winograd."

Lukach summed up the situation as follows: "The peasants were rabid anti-communists and fought bitterly against the Bolshevik regime. Food was scarce in the big cities where the black market was rampant. Confiscation of wheat, cattle and other commodities was the order of the day. Who was to blame for the shortages? The Jews of course! At first it was not felt in the small towns but not for long.... At first there was robbery and pillage. But soon when nothing was left, murder followed."[123]

The Lukach family suffered a loss in July 1919: "Our home was under attack. We fled and found hiding places among friendly peasants. However, my father had fallen asleep of which we were unaware. The attackers stabbed him. When we returned home we found him bleeding profusely. There was no doctor in town except for a feldsher (pharmacist) who could do nothing for him. All we could do is apply cold water compresses. Hiring a horse and wagon was virtually impossible because of the danger on the roads but we managed to arrange it. When peasants saw us on the road they seemed surprised that Jews were

still alive. When we reached the hospital in Zvinigrodka, it was empty - no nurses or doctors. We found a gentile doctor who examined my father and said it was too late for an operation. Father's death was a shock.... We brought his body back to Winograd where a pogrom was in progress. Burial was dangerous on that day and it was difficult to assemble a minyan (a quorum of ten men) for the burial ritual."[124]

Brothers Harry (age 90) and Murray Brodsky (age 84), Winograd natives, remember their life in the shtetl: "Winograd was a peaceful shtetl. Occasionally on Mondays, when the yarid took place, the peasants would get drunk and cause trouble. The police, who were getting paid off, would control the rabble rousers.... The shtetl remained quiet during the war.... When the 1917 Revolution broke out, everything remained the same at first. However, the regular police was discharged and the revolutionary police took over. There was still enough food after the revolution. In late 1918 pogroms took place frequently in the Ukraine. It was the local peasants who carried out the pogroms in Winograd. These troublemakers robbed and caused damage to property."[125]

Murray Brodsky, who left the shtetl in 1919, remembered a pogrom which his family experienced: "A pogrom occurred on a Sunday.[126] The Reds arrived in the shtetl and demanded of the peasants tons of wheat, corn, and other products. The peasants refused, organized themselves and killed all the Reds. Suspicious of the Jews, the peasants rounded up all the young men, brought them to the synagogue and beat them severely. My two brothers, Shulka (Solomon) and Joe were among them. A gentile, Gorst by name, a friend of the family, brought to our home a Professor Tutumac, the leader of the pogromchiks. My mother served him refreshments - tea, cake, and jelly. My father wrote a note requesting the release of his two sons, asking Tutumac to sign it. He refused. Gorst too begged him to sign and finally he did.

Whereupon my mother prepared a platter of goodies which I brought to the synagogue and also the signed release note. I handed the platter and note to the leader. He immediately gave orders to release my two brothers."[127] Continuing his story, Murray Brodsky wrote: "The rabbi in town had a nephew in Zvinigrodka who came for a visit to Winograd. It appears this nephew was one of the leaders of the Bolsheviks in Zvinigrodka. The pogromchiks seized and killed him and took the rabbi with them when they left the shtetl. They brought him to a nearby village and sent word demanding ransom money for his release. The money was sent and the rabbi was set free. The entire shtetl welcomed him back. The rabbi was still wearing his tallis (prayer shawl) and his tefilin (phylacteries).... From then on, pogromchiks would come to town at night and kill Jews. The Jewish war veterans who had returned from the war organized a self-defense group and patrolled the streets. For a time it was peaceful until the pogromchiks organized on a big scale. The Jews were defenseless.... The Reds came again and again, made their demands for supplies, were surrounded but fought back with machine guns.... Whoever was able fled, following the Reds on the roads. At first our family was together but soon we were separated. My mother and brother Joe fled to his hometown, Talna. My father and brother Shulka fled to Zvinigrodka. My brother Phil and I remained in Winograd. This happened on a Monday. On Wednesday, the Reds returned, burned the peasants' homes and left immediately. We followed them. As we passed the rabbi's home, the rebbetsin (the rabbi's wife), who had baked bread, gave it to all who passed by. We were happy to receive it. We finally reached Zvinigrodka.... We returned to Winograd before Yom Kippur. In the synagogue, the Shamas (sexton) urged all the townspeople to be on the alert. The problems became worse and once again we fled to Zvinigrodka."[128]

Liuba Tenofsky described the tragic death of her father, Henzl, the shamas of the Bes Medrash: "My father died a martyr's death during a vicious pogrom in 1920. Bandits on horseback rounded up all the Jews and set fire to the Bes Medrash. Henzl ran to the Aron Kodesh (The Holy Ark), seized a Sefer Torah (The Torah Scroll), held it tightly and ran out of the synagogue, also holding on to his grandson, Ellie. The bandits, with whips in hand, chased him until he fell down in the dirt road and gasped his last breath, still holding the Sefer Torah in his arms."[129]

In the pogroms which followed, the Torah scrolls and their ornaments and other religious objects of the synagogue, the Torah reading pointers, the embroidered Holy Ark curtains, and the candelabrum, were stolen, smashed, trampled upon or burnt. It is possible some were hidden or transferred to places of worship in larger cities. Perhaps one of the Torah scrolls was taken to Haifa, a fact no Winograder could confirm.

Abraham Mindich[130] remembered the dangers and pogroms experienced and endured by his family:

> "The White armies under Kolchak, Denikin and Petlura while fighting the Reds, perpetrated many atrocities against the Jews when they occupied the cities, even if it was temporary. They demanded ransom money, ammunition and horses from the Jews and blamed the Jews for siding with the Reds. Very often we had to hide in cellars and attics to avoid being killed.
>
> "In some cases the town provided police protection against hoodlums but, when the guerrilla bands came to town, they pulled the police out of their station and killed them in the market place.
>
> "Our house, landscaped with trees in front looked more like a muzhik's (peasant) house and most of the time our family and friends used it as a hiding place because it did not attract the attention of the terrorists.
>
> "One Saturday morning, a band of guerrillas entered the town and somehow entered our home. They

started searching the house. My father had bought some surplus army pants and they accused him of treason. They demanded a huge sum of money or they would shoot him and the rest of the family on the spot. My brother Joe and I climbed out of the window. In the back of our house was a house under construction and not occupied. Our neighbor asked us to join them in the attic of this house. We were hiding there and heard shots in the streets. After a couple of hours we came down to find that the guerrillas had left and our father had been saved after paying them a huge sum of money.

"In the summer of 1919, a contingent of seventy-five Red soldiers, several of whom were Jewish volunteers...came to our town to draft young men. The peasants, instigated by a group of guerrillas, surrounded the town. The next night they pulled out the sleeping soldiers, housed in Jewish homes, and shot them on the spot. The next morning as I was walking in the marketplace, I saw the bodies of dead soldiers everywhere. During that night, two soldiers, on lookout duty, escaped and reported the incident to their Army superiors. For the next two weeks the town was under siege. The muzhiks and guerrillas blamed the Jews for supporting the communists and demanded large sums of money, threatening to kill all the Jews in town. The Jews had accumulated a large store of guns and ammunition to form a vigilante group to fight off small bands of guerrillas, but in this case the opposition was too large and overwhelming. The guerrillas demanded all the guns and ammunition which had to be surrendered. After two weeks, the Bolshevik government sent a detachment of about two hundred soldiers, equipped with cannons and machine guns, to punish the guerrillas and peasants. When word came that the soldiers were coming, the Jewish population, fearing reprisals from the guerrillas, decided to leave the town while it was possible. As the soldiers entered the town they began burning all the farms on the way. The soldiers did not stop in town, but marched right through, with the Jewish population

following them, old and young alike. They marched to the next city about forty miles away where the army garrison was located. The city was Tolna, where we had several relatives. We lived there for several months, until we received word from the town council to return to our homes.

"When we returned we found many of our belongings had been stolen by the peasants and it is at that time that my family decided to sell our homes and leave for America. Since most of the Jews had the same idea, there were no buyers for the homes. We sold our house for forty geese, which we used for preparing food for the road.

"Guerrilla bands roamed the roads. Business was at a standstill because the Jews whose business was trading with other large cities were afraid to travel. We constantly heard of Jews being massacred on the roads and in surrounding towns. On one occasion, a band of terrorists rode into town and, while going through the market place, shot two neighbors....

"We packed for several days and one night, when it was rumored that a band of guerrillas was on the way to town, we left town at about midnight, accompanied by my uncles and their families, each one with a wagon and team of horses. The destination was Uman, a big city, about one hundred miles away. The caravan of wagons was traveling in darkness, until our wagon turned over, falling on my mother. The men picked up the wagon and we proceeded on our trip with my mother moaning the whole day, suffering great pain.

"On the way, we were almost attacked by a band of robbers, but having good horses, we were able to outrun them. We finally reached Uman at night and found lodging in an inn and a stable for our horses. A doctor was called to put my mother's arm into a cast and we remained at the inn. The next morning when my father went to feed the horses, he found that they had been stolen. After making contact with the underworld, it was discovered that the union of truckmen stole the horses

and demanded a ransom of several hundred rubles for the horses. We paid the money, received the horses, and remained in that city for several months until my mother was able to travel again.

"We decided to get to the border and cross the Dniester River to Romania illegally via smugglers. The river was frozen during the winter and many Jews crossed it by avoiding the border patrol."

Saul Mindich's stories, sad, tragic and even semi-comical, like those of his relatives and other townspeople, are illustrative of the turbulence and trauma Winograd endured:

"When the bandits came into town, they rounded up as many Jews as they could find.... Jews would run and hide. Those who couldn't were locked up in the synagogue and held for ransom. If the ransom was not paid, the soldiers threatened to burn the synagogue and the Jews in it .... A committee was formed, the ransom was raised by taxing each family according to the committee's judgement ...."[131]

"One day, I was sitting in my grandfather's house looking out of the window and saw an armed rider shoot a Jew I knew very well, and take off as if nothing had happened. The Russian police did not try to stop him nor did they bother to see whether the man was alive. The man remained lying on the street all day because we were afraid to go outside. Fed up, we organized a self defense patrol. We obtained some guns and stayed in one house, sending out people to patrol the streets. If we noticed someone who looked suspicious coming into town, we informed the patrol guards who alerted the townspeople, thus avoiding many tragedies ....

"For a while things were not too bad. But the groups of bandits began to multiply. They claimed they were fighting the communists but their real purpose was to rob and kill Jews.... There was a rumor that bandits were about to pass through town... The whole town got

ready to evacuate ... and began the exodus, taking all they could carry with them. The roads were jammed with people .... No one knew from which direction the bandits were coming. We split up, everyone going his own way. Most of the Jews knew the peasants, some of whom were very friendly and hid them on their farms. Quite a few risked their lives to do so."[132]

Mindich describes in detail the horrors he experienced and his miraculous escape from death. When he finally returned to town, completely exhausted, he found the town under siege and many Jews locked in the synagogue. Relatives who had been badly injured including his grandmother begged him to run for his life. Ignoring their warning, he ran toward the synagogue, heard screaming and crying. A bandit picked him up and threw him through the window into the crowded synagogue .

"The ransom was raised ... We were free to leave. We were like a herd of stampeding cattle all of us rushing out to save ourselves but the bastard soldiers whipped us without mercy."[133]

At another time, "about forty or fifty Red cavalry troops ... stopped overnight ... and took over an inn ...."[134] Early the next morning, Kolchak White Cossack troops surrounded the town, pulled out the sleeping Reds and shot them .... It was too late for us to run and hide. Luckily they did not molest us. They asked us to dig large graves and made us bury the murdered soldiers. Some of them were still alive and begged for mercy but there was nothing we could do since the Cossacks were watching us to make sure everyone was buried."[135]

As a teenager he experienced separation from family, beatings in the attempt to flee, hunger and also miraculous escapes to nearby towns.

It is quite evident from the aforementioned reports that Winograd changed hands frequently - one day the Reds, the next day the counter revolutionaries. The local peasant attacks were on the increase. Whenever the Reds retreated, the pogromchicks

came to look for communists and their sympathizers, suspected and accused the Jews of hiding them.[136]

How many pogroms Winograd experienced, how many were killed and injured is difficult to ascertain. The Tcherikower volumes in which Winograd is mentioned and the recollection of relatives and townspeople were my sources of information. I estimate that Winograd experienced as many as twenty attacks. In Uncle Joe's opinion, all families suffered injury, loss of life, and destruction of property. The names of Petlura and Denikin and the devastation and brutal murders they and their followers committed still evoke bitter memories. Some townspeople hesitated about recalling their bitter experiences of so long ago. Others, however, were eager to tell their stories, keeping in mind the Yiddish folk expression: "Ibergekurnene tsores is goot tsu dertselln." (It is good to tell about troubles endured and overcome).

On reflection, I now understand more fully the stories and experiences I tell below, in context of the historic events of the times and the recollections of relatives and townspeople, who were ten or more years older than I, when they abandoned Winograd.

A pogrom in Boyerke, a neighboring shtetl, brought shock, fear and terror in Winograd. As I remember it, Jews were driven in to the lake or river, shot and drowned. The horror of this event is unforgettable. When the news was brought to Winograd, pandemonium broke out. Fearing that our shtetl would also be attacked, everyone sought a safe hiding place. Fortunately our town was spared.

When I began to write this memoir, I happened to come upon a book in which townspeople of Boyerke described this heart rending incident to Michael Weisser: "The first pogrom hit Boyerke in April 1917 during the Easter season, always a time of tension between Jews and gentiles in the region. Sometimes

during Easter week a group of armed peasants marched into the middle of the shtetl, chased the Jews into their houses, and then went from house to house looking for pious males, who were easily indentified by their long beards. They herded a group of bearded men including Mary's father into a lake near the settlement and shot them. Mary recalls running down to the lake and, as she caught sight of her father's lifeless body floating on the water, hearing a peasant yell at her "Where is your God now?" From that day on, Mary, though remaining a Jew, lost all faith in religion." [137]

Etched in Memory



Portrait of a Boy.
Artist Ezekiel Schloss
Credit: Board of Jewish Education of New York

Uncle Joe is Accused of Spying

Once again the village was overrun by a Petlura or Denikin band and again we went into hiding. The hiding places were found out, some Jews rounded up and driven to the Bes Medrash which was placed under guard. The situation was tense and ominous. On a wall of a building opposite the synagogue Uncle Joe was stood up for execution. He was accused of spying and of planning to buy contraband arms. He had been picked up on the road to Tunivka, a nearby village, and searched. As he remembered it, he was running away from the pogromchiks. He was also carrying a letter to a friendly farmer, listing for purchase quantities of fruits, vegetables and eggs.

The soldiers suspected that the products listed in the letter were a code for smuggling in contraband guns and ammunition. He was arrested, badly beaten up and was about to be shot. Jews in the synagogue, family members among them, were to witness his death, as a stern warning not to engage in contraband activities. We were all in shock. I do not know where Zaide Shaya was at this critical time. Aunt Leah came forward, pleaded his innocence and begged the soldiers not to shoot him. She was roughed up a bit and referred to the officer in charge. She argued that Uncle Joe was only a boy of 16 and had been sent to buy a much needed food supply. She reminded the officer that Uncle Joe was the innkeeper's (Zaide Shaya's) son, the inn where the soldiers stayed and that they knew Shaya was an honorable man.

This argument evidently made an impression. But he demanded payment of 20,000 Kerensky rubles, the currency of the day, for Uncle Joe's release. He gave her two hours to come up with the money. Aunt Leah promised to raise the ransom money. In the meantime, the Jews were kept under guard in the synagogue. Women were wringing their hands, men were

praying and children crying. What a terrifying scene it was!

Frantically, Aunt Leah ran into the synagogue, related what she had to do and begged those present to provide whatever funds they had with them. She then ran to neighbors and relatives, still in hiding, and succeeded in collecting the 20,000 rubles. She managed to find the town priest, a close family friend, and persuaded him to intercede. She hurried back to the site where Uncle Joe was held and turned over the money to the officer in charge. Uncle Joe also recalled that the town priest interceded on his behalf. Uncle Joe was freed as were the Jews in the Bes Medrash. Everyone wept for joy. But for me it was a joyous moment when my beloved Uncle Joe was saved, but at the same time it was a terrifying and harrowing experience![138]

"I Am My Mother's Only Son"

The Whites once again entered the shtetl, pursuing the Reds who were on the run, but some not fast enough. Several were caught and shot on the spot. At the first rumors of the approach of the Whites, we went into hiding in the attics, cellars and tightly shuttered homes, fearful of rape, looting and demands for unavailable provisions and goods.

Leaders of the Whites occupied Zaide Shaya's inn. Family members took shelter somewhere else. Zaide Shaya was ordered to provide the Whites with 200 pairs of boots. His pleas that he could not possibly fill the demand were dismissed. He was threatened with severe punishment personally and warned that the shtetl would suffer terribly if he did not comply with the demands within 24 hours. He ran from household to household and somehow managed to assemble 100 pairs of used and new boots. Fearing for his life, he gave the boots to the Whites and mercifully he was not harmed. He may have been spared because they stayed at his inn. This story, Zaide Shaya told the family a few days after the event.

On that occasion, I personally witnessed and experienced a sad and heart rending incident. When the Whites entered the shtetl, my mother, sister and I hid in Zaide Pini's tightly shuttered house, located in the center of the village. Trembling with fear we prayed the Whites would not select the house for plunder and even murder. The house was in complete darkness. Terror and continuous shooting kept us awake all night. We looked out through the slits in the wooden shutters but could see nothing. But we heard the voice of a Red soldier cry out in Yiddish: "Hat rachmonos oif mir; hat rachmonos oif mir. Ich bin ein entsiger by mein mama" (Have mercy on me. I am my mother's only son). We heard a shot and then silence. I began to cry and mother held me tight. I was about eight years old. The Whites

left the shtetl the next day and we came out of hiding. We learned that ten Red soldiers had been captured and shot. To this day I still hear that poor soldier's cry: "Hat rachmonos oif mir."

The Soldier in the Alcove

The town changed hands frequently, one day the Whites, the next day the Reds, took control. Life was disrupted, the streets were empty, schools were closed, stores were shuttered and daily services at the synagogues were discontinued. Peasants did not come into town. Everything was at a standstill. Roads were hazardous, transportation was halted and food could not be delivered. White and Red leaders alternately occupied Zaide Shaya's inn and he had to provide them with food and shelter. Evidently he was able to remain calm, without fear and was not harmed. In many instances, he acted as go-between the bands and the town inhabitants when ransom was demanded.

With the approach of the Whites, Jews went into hiding, fearing for their lives. The Reds generally were more friendly to Jews, rarely threatening them, although on occasion requesting food and clothing. Fewer Jews went into hiding but fear was still there. Jews tried to be neutral but were suspected of collaboration with the Reds. On one occasion, the Red soldiers remained in the shtetl several days and, as rumors spread that a White band was close to the shtetl, the Reds left in a hurry. Jews went into hiding as always. Zaide Shaya was out in the community attending to urgent matters. Returning to the inn, Zaide Shaya looked through the barn and the rooms. When he entered the kitchen, he heard a noise coming from the alcove behind the oven. Cautiously he stepped up to the alcove and was surprised to face a soldier pointing a rifle at him. Upon seeing Zaide Shaya, the soldier put the gun down. Asked what he was doing there, he said that he had slept in the alcove and had not known that his comrade Red soldiers had fled during the night. Zaide Shaya knew that should the soldier be found in the inn, not only would the soldier be shot, but he and the family would be in serious

danger, accused of hiding Reds. Furthermore he knew that should the gun be found in his possession, he would be shot immediately. What was he to do with the man? The soldier was not Jewish but could be hidden with Jews, Zaide Shaya suggested. He refused and wanted to return to his unit. He asked the soldier to give up his gun. The soldier agreed if Zaide Shaya helped him escape. Dressing him in peasants' clothes, Zaide Shaya directed him to safety by way of the orchards and fields of Tunivka, a peasant village. The soldier vowed to return and to protect the family. Zaide Shaya told us the story and showed us the gun which he immediately hid in a safe place.

A few weeks later the Reds returned. The soldier came to thank Zaide Shaya for his courageous act and advised him to leave the area. He reported that conditions were worsening, that serious pogroms were increasing in the neighboring shtetlach and Jews were not safe anywhere in the Ukraine. He advised flight in the direction of the roads controlled by the Reds. I believe this incident and the soldier's report and advice contributed to the family's final decision to leave the shtetl.

The Town Priest - A Righteous Gentile

The onion - domed Russian Orthodox Church, dominated our shtetl. Jews rarely came near it and we children were also cautioned to stay away from it. In Jewish history, generally, the Church was the millennial symbol of Christianity's anti - Semitic teachings, calling Jews Christ - killers, attempting to convert them, overtly and covertly inciting their adherents to terror and pogroms and, holding them responsible for the economic and social chaos, anarchy and communism. Fear of the Church was a constant in Jewish life. At a very young age, without knowing and understanding why, we were made aware of the deep differences between Christians and Jews. The word "goy" was, to say the least, a pejorative term. I remember hearing the church bells on Sundays and Christian holidays, but knew nothing about the Christmas and Easter observance, except that colored eggs were sold in great-grandfather's general store at Easter time. Easter was called Pascha, a name similar to Pesach, Hebrew for Passover, but I did not know why. Early in life, I learned that the goy was different in speech, behavior, dress and holiday celebrations. It made a lasting impression.

Young as we were, we children learned a Biblical phrase in Deuteronomy which expressed the attitude to idol worshipping nations and, later, applied to Christianity: "Shaketz te-shak-tsenu ve-ta-ev te-ta-avenu ki cherem hie" (You shall utterly detest and abhor it, for it is a cursed thing). We learned the phrase as part of Bible study, but knew from personal experience that it did not apply to the priest (der gallach in Yiddish) and most of the peasants in our town. As far as we knew, relations with the priest were friendly before and after the Revolution and Civil War. On numerous occasions the priest protected and hid the Jews and intervened on their behalf during pogroms. Christian families,

too, had compassion for their Jewish neighbors, hid, fed and saved them. Relative Shulamith Houminer, a very young child when the family fled the shtetl for Palestine, remembers the stories her mother told her about family experiences: "During the pogroms, a leading Christian family hid us in their attic. Despite the fact that the head of this family joined the Whites and that it was risky to hide Jews, they agreed to hide us. Our families were close friends and the Christian family did not abandon us. My brother, Dov, was only six months old at the time and mother was unable to breast feed him and Dov's feet appeared to be paralyzed. The woman of the house brought us food, water and milk. The woman was amazed how quiet Dov and I were and that we did not cry." [139]

In his memoir Sholem Lukach wrote: "During a pogrom in July 1919, my father was killed. Our house was attacked and all of us fled and hid in the home of friendly peasants." On another occasion, when the Petlura forces were inciting the peasants to kill Jews, "a small number of Christian inhabitants were deeply concerned about the conditions and protected us, but a great majority, especially the young people, caused a lot of trouble. It was impossible to leave the house and the town." [140]

In the documents about the pogroms, gathered by the historian Elias Tcherikover, instances are reported of protection of Jews by priests and peasants. Zaide Shaya and other members of the family, including my mother, always spoke of the priest as a friendly, generous person and protector of the family. Uncle Joe remembered him well and recalled that when "der gallach", whose name he did not remember, arrived in Winograd to take up his clerical post, he stayed at Zaide Shaya's inn for about four months, until the construction of his residence was completed. From then on, the priest was a frequent visitor and the relationship between the families was cordial and friendly.

The priest had a son and daughter. From time to time,

realizing that my father was in America, he gave my mother his children's outgrown or new clothes for me and my sister. A picture of my mother, sister and me, which is in my possession, shows me wearing a Russian type outfit of pants, white blouse and wide belt. My mother told me the outfit was a gift from the priest.

What I remember most vividly are the several occasions when the priest hid us in the cold storage cellars on his estate, especially when the Whites were stationed on his estate. I remember the estate as one of beautiful gardens, with a variety of fruit trees, a small pond and the magnificent residence, close to the Church. Hiding us was extremely risky and dangerous for the priest and his family, but he had the courage to hide us and protect other townspeople from actual or imminent pogroms. We stayed in the cellars a few days and he managed to provide us clandestinely with food and water and also pails and pots for waste. The unselfish acts of the priest taught me an unforgettable lesson: Not all Christians are anti-Semites; there are among them compassionate, humane and courageous individuals ready to risk their lives for fellowmen not of their persuasion.

As already cited, the priest's intervention and influence saved Uncle Joe from prosecution and enabled my sister and other girls to be admitted to the Russian elementary school, a privilege denied to Jewish children. I wish I knew his name, for he was truly a righteous gentile, worthy of deep appreciation, respect and honor.

Where Is Your Compassion, O God?

With the increasing rumors and reports of pogroms in nearby shtetlach, the fear in our shtetl was mounting. The names of the counter-revolutionaries became household words of terror, looting, rape, pillage, fire and murder. There was even growing fear and suspicion that some of our peasant neighbors were joining the roaming bands of the terrifying Cossacks. One day, a small band of peasants rode into town on prancing horses, the leader on a white horse. Aunt Leah recognized the leader and called out to him. Whereupon, he drew his sword and hit her on the head, calling out "filthy Zhid" and rode off. Fortunately she was not badly injured. The die was cast and it appeared that even our neighbors could not be trusted.

There was a report that a particularly murderous band was approaching. Everyone scrambled to find a hiding place and we went into hiding in a cellar with other families, most with infants and small children. We were all warned to be absolutely quiet, not to utter a sound, not to move, not even to whisper. Suddenly an infant began to whimper. My mother seized the infant and tightened its swaddling clothes and held it tightly to her breast. We were terrified that our hiding place would be discovered and we would be murdered. Luckily, the child stopped crying and we were safe. Aunt Rachel later reported that in the place where she was in hiding, an infant began to cry. The mother, in the effort to keep the child quiet, held it tight, covered its mouth and unknowingly smothered it.

Early in the morning, when all appeared to be quiet, several men left the cellar and soon came back to report that the band had left the shtetl. No lives were lost but some homes were burnt to the ground, including the general store and home of great-grandfather Pini. The family gathered around the ruin and sadly

but stoically accepted the destruction, thankful that no one had taken refuge in the house.

However, silver and other valuables[141] had been hidden in the collapsed cellar, and it was imperative to get them out. The entrance to the cellar was found and dug out. Uncle Joe, then about sixteen, volunteered to go down and try to find the valuables. It was dangerous and risky but he insisted. Anxiously we watched him enter the cellar carrying a kerosene lantern. He soon emerged from the cellar carrying the package of valuables. Almost immediately the opening to the cellar collapsed.

Jews of the Ukraine sang a sad song, one stanza of which I still remember:

Vu ah boidem, vu ah kellar vu ah finster ort
Ligt ah Yisrolikl un zugt ah Yiddish vort
Eicha vu azoi, far vos shweigst du dem goy
Vu iz Tate dein rachmonos un dein getroy
Fun dem himmel gib a blick
Un oif die Ukrainer ah kuk
Farlesh shoin das fier
Un loz shoin zein genug

Wherever there is an attic
Wherever a cellar, a dark place
There lies a Jew who utters a Yiddish word
Eicha - how is it, that You (God) forebear punishing the goy
Where is Your mercy, compassion and trust for Your people in time of distress.
Look down from heaven
Upon Your people in the Ukraine
Extinguish the fire and let it be enough

The folk song, a cry from the heart, beseeching God to look down from heaven and see that the Jews have become the scorn

and the derision of the nations, is styled on the book of Lamentations:

"...See O Lord and behold how abject I am become! (1:11)
"See O Lord and consider to whom Thou hast done thus! (2:20)
"Remember O Lord what is come upon us;
Behold and see our reproach.
Our inheritance is turned unto strangers
Our houses unto aliens.
We are become orphans and fatherless
Our mothers are as widows. (5:1-3)
I call upon Thy name, O Lord, out of the lowest dungeon.
Thou heardest my voice; hide not
Thine ear at my sighing, at my cry" (3:55-56)

Jews were asking the eternal question expressed in ancient times by the Prophet Ezekiel: "Lord God wilt Thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?" Ezekiel 11:13. They lamented their fate and destiny and, in their distress, turned to God, beseeching Him for compassion and protection. But they did not lose their faith and hope for Jewish continuity.

Letter from America

Imagine the thrill, excitement and ecstasy, when in 1919, a letter arrived from my father in America. This was the first mail mother received since the outbreak of World War I in August 1914. The entire family, neighbors and the rabbi of the shtetl gathered at Zaide Shaya's to hear mother read the letter joyfully and tearfully. It was read over and over again. We literally danced for joy with tears running down our cheeks. Father was alive and well! He was working and had saved up some money and, now that the war was over, would send for us to come to America. He and other husbands had organized the Winograder Benevolent Society and had made plans to send for their families. A delegate, Joseph Escow, would be sent to Bucharest, Romania, to help the wives make arrangements for passage to America.

Accordingly, father urged us to leave Russia as soon as possible and get to Bucharest to meet Joseph Escow. Mother, my sister and I ran to bring the good news to the Ganapolsky family. Grandparents Dov Ber and Faytsie, too, had received a letter from father. The whole family was there. We hugged and kissed. Our grandparents silently wept for joy. Uncle Mendel read their letter and mother read hers. He also read a letter from his son, Nathan, who lived in Milwaukee. He too had left Russia in 1912. The excitement was overwhelming. There and then father's nephews, Jacob and Abraham (Uncle's Mendel's sons) resolved to leave the shtetl and to join their brother in America as soon as conditions permitted.

How I wish the letters from America had been preserved! Other families received mail from husbands and relatives in America. The news spread quickly, creating great excitement and raising the hopes and dreams not only of the recipient families but of every one in the shtetl. This was at a time of pogroms, terror and fear. At the Shabbat services that week "gomel," a prayer of thank-

fulness recited for recovery from a serious illness or escape from danger, was recited. The whole town rejoiced with us.

From the moment the letters arrived, I began to dream about America. It was in my mind all the time and I wanted to know everything about it. I imagined America to be a land of wheat fields, fruit trees, wide open spaces, mountains, rivers and lakes. I began to wonder about meeting my father. What was he like? Would he recognize and like me? What would life be like in America? With great anticipation and eagerness my sister and I began to ask repeatedly, how soon would we leave and how long would it take to get there.

What were my mother's feelings during the many years of separation with little or no communication with father? Father had left for America in 1912 and except for his attempt and failure to bring us to America just before the outbreak of war in August 1914, mother had not heard from him. At the age of twenty six, in the prime of life, she was left with two young children to fend for herself, while waiting for the "shifskarten" for passage to America. To be sure both families were supportive, especially the help of Zaide Shaya and Uncle Joe. During the first two years of my father's absence, we lived with Zaide Shaya, who provided us with all our needs. But mother did not want to depend solely on the family and was determined to become financially independent. She did so by buying wheat, having it milled into flour, and selling it. Life was not easy, but she had the strength of character, resilience and fortitude to meet the exigencies as they arose.

I can only surmise and imagine her loneliness, anxiety and fear that she would never see him again. My sister and I missed our father, but as young as we were, we shared mother's concerns and worries and, intuitively, understood her suffering. But she was not alone in her loneliness. There were other young women like her, close friends whose husbands had emigrated to

America. Two or three of my Heder classmates were also "fatherless." The others and their children constituted a support group, sustained by the hope and expectation to be reunited with their husbands in America within a short period of time. As it turned out, the separation lasted more than nine years. What were her feelings when she received the letter in 1919? Her joy was boundless. She hugged my sister and me repeatedly, shed copious tears and read the letter to us often. She was more than eager to be reunited with father, but had no immediate answer as to when we would begin our long journey to America. All she said was we would begin to make preparations soon. Times were difficult and no one knew what the next day would bring.

She wrote to father immediately expressing her delight that he was alive and well and of her intention to get out of Russia. My sister and I wrote a few sentences in Yiddish, noting our desire to see him soon. I remember that mother enclosed a picture of the three of us, taken in 1914 but which had not been sent because of the war. At the time of the photograph mother was twenty eight, my sister six and I was three.

The well preserved picture shows mother, a smiling beautiful young woman, wearing all her finery and jewelry: a full length black skirt, a white blouse trimmed with lace, a filigreed necklace, a gold pin and a locket with gold chain. My sister was wearing a two piece white dress, black shoes and a band with a bow on her hair. I was wearing a Russian style white jacket blouse, dark breeches and black boots. The outfit was a gift from the town priest. The picture which my father received in 1919 or 1920 and mother's jewelry are among my treasured possessions to this day.

Until we fled from Russia, crossing the Dniester River illegally, the letter from America kept our dreams and hopes high and helped alleviate the terror of the pogroms we experienced, and the hunger and hardships we endured. The hope of reunion in America sustained us.

Flight

"The Lord said to Abram: Go forth from your native land and from your father's house to the land that I will show you." Genesis 12:1

When and why was the decision made to abandon our shtetl and seek a haven elsewhere? I believe it was in the Fall or Spring of 1920. The warning and advice of the Red soldier saved by Zaide Shaya was a factor. For us, my father's letter from America received in 1919, was a key factor in the decision to begin the long journey to America. But the major reasons for leaving were the constant terror, fear and threat of continuing pogroms. The civil war, especially in the Ukraine, wrought havoc in the small towns and villages where Jews lived. Mounting murder, rape and plunder led to despair, frustration and hopelessness and to the decision to seek refuge in the larger Russian cities or to leave the country for America, Palestine and elsewhere.

A poignant and emotional childhood memory is the sad leave taking from great-grandparents Pini and Nessia Rosenfeld. They were advanced in years and Bubba Nessia was physically handicapped with a club foot. Transportation was not available. We had to flee on foot. Zaide Shaya and other members of the family discussed the matter with them. They reached the conclusion that for them it was hazardous to leave, that they were old and, for the safety of the rest of the family, it was best to flee from the murderous pogroms which would surely come.

The moment came to say good-bye, to take our leave, and as it turned out, forever. Bubba Nessia's cry still rings in my ears: "Kinder luzt ins nit iber" (Children do not leave us). We embraced them, weeping bitterly and bid them a sad farewell.

Aunt Rachel later told us that Bubba Nessia, shaken by emotion, entered the house, lay down in the alcove behind the stove and died of a heart attack. To this day, whenever I look at the picture of my great-grandparents Pini and Nessia, which hangs in our home, it reminds me of the heart rending moment. I vaguely remember a tearful and emotional visit to the cemetery by family members to bid farewell to Bubba Sarah and relatives. Young as I was, intuitively I felt the sadness of the moment, leaving our birth place and family roots and setting out for strange and unknown places and an uncertain future. Without understanding it at the time, I was experiencing the millenial Jewish trauma and tragedy of persecution, migration, up - rootedness and exile. What happened to great grandfather Pini, no one in the family knew.

My mother gathered a few belongings and tied them up in a small bundle. Among her possessions were two candlesticks, four large silver serving spoons and four small gold spoons, gifts she had received at the time of her engagement to my father. These cherished treasures are still in my possession. We literally left with the clothing on our backs. I was miserable when I had to wear underwear mother made of potato sacks for me and my sister. Luckily I had a good pair of leather boots. Homes and businesses could not be sold. Townspeople abandoned them or resorted to the barter system, exchanging them for food and transportation.

Family members and hundreds of men, women and children from our shtetl and other villages, carrying their few possessions on their backs, were on foot on the dusty road. Friendly Red soldiers waved us on. We were all refugees, beginning a momentous journey to unknown destinations. We at least knew what our goal was: to get to America. For me and my sister, the trek on the unknown road, was the first time we had ever been outside of our shtetl. It was the beginning of a long,

arduous and dangerous journey to escape from the Ukraine and eventually to sail for America. Travel on the roads, on foot or by horse and wagon, was hazardous. Robbery and ambush were common experiences.

We arrived in a large town, Zvinigrodka, forty miles from Winograd, where we had relatives.[142] There for the first time we walked on paved cobblestone streets crowded with horses, carriages and throngs of people. With wonder and amazement we experienced electric lights, street lamps and automobiles. What a change from the primitive physical conditions in the shtetl! After a stay of several weeks, we were on our way again.

Our destination was Uman, a large and important commercial center in the Ukraine, then in the hands of the Bolsheviks. I wondered why we did not head for Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine. I learned that Kiev was under the control of the counter revolutionary, Petlura, and hence not a safe haven, especially for Jews.

The scene at the Zvinigrodka railroad station was hectic, with hundreds of people milling around, waiting for a train to arrive. Uncle Joe was wearing a soldier's uniform. Where did he obtain it? Was it perhaps the uniform which the Red soldier who had been saved by Zaide Shaya had left in the alcove? When the long awaited train finally arrived, it was full of Red soldiers, inside the train, on the roof and just everywhere where there was a place to stand. In great confusion, many were screaming, pushing and surging their way forward in the attempt to get on, but were pushed back by military guards. Only soldiers were allowed to board. Uncle Joe pushed his way in with me tagging along and we squeezed in. Hidden in his boots were my mother's candle sticks and, in my boots, the silver and gold spoons. My mother, sister and other family members were left stranded at the station. The family was reunited in Uman. They had managed to get there by horse and wagon and part of the way on foot.

On a second train trip, my mother, my sister and I were together. What I remember about this trip was a man sitting in a far corner of the train singing a Yiddish song in a plaintive voice, over and over again, the first stanza of which was:

"Arum dem feier, mir zingen lieder,
Die nacht iz teier, zie kumt nit vieder
Un vet dos feier farlosken veren
Sheint oif der himmel mit die shtern"

"Around the fire, we sing our songs
The night is precious, it will not appear again
When the fire's out
The starry heavens will brightly shine."

Who was this man? Why was the song so sad and nostalgic? I wish I knew.

We were in Uman for weeks or was it months. Several experiences in this bustling city stand out. We lived in a dark and dank unfurnished room on the ground floor. We sat, ate and slept on the damp floor. An outside faucet was the source of our water and a filthy outhouse took care of our personal needs. Food was scarce. Black bread and some food items were available on the black market at exorbitant prices. Mother had with her a precious commodity: sugar. Weak, brewed tea was available at a nearby teahouse and mother, who loved tea, indulged herself in this "luxury." She sent me and my sister to the teahouse to fill a small container with tea, which with a little sugar, we all shared. At the teahouse we heard that a public soup kitchen was open twice a day but for children only. For mother to allow us to stand on a bread line was intolerable. She was upset, distressed and ashamed. But the prevailing famine and hunger made the decision for us. Thus, my sister and I stood on long lines twice a day and received each time a ladle or two of soup and a small piece of black bread, which served as our meals for the day. I am not sure but I believe the soup kitchens in Uman were set up by

the American Joint Distribution Committee or the International Red Cross. In the market place, mother was able to buy horseradish the price of which was cheap. For weeks, horseradish was a staple in our daily diet. Believe it or not to this day I still like it. We suffered hunger but with a diet of black bread, watery soup and horseradish supplemented by weak tea with sugar, we managed to survive.

From Uman we moved westward, headed for the border town, Kaminka. Transportation by horse and wagon was an expensive luxury. We reached Kaminka on foot.

Stealing Across the Border

Kaminka, a small town, is about 20 miles from the Dniester River, the border between the Ukraine and Bessarabia. The town was a well known and popular last station in the Ukraine for thousands of refugees who sought to cross the Dniester River illegally to Bessarabia. Our family group included my immediate family of three, Zaide Shaya, Aunt Chanah, Uncle Joe, Aunt Hinda (Hilda), Aunt Leah and her husband Raphael, Aunt Rachel and her fiance, Hershel. Relatives and other family groups from our shtetl joined us, all told about 40 men, women and children. The plan was to steal across the Dniester River and to reach Bessarabia with the help of bribed agents and guides on both sides of the border. The price was set and prepaid per person. Who negotiated the arrangements and how much it cost I do not know. As it turned out, there were more people in the group than paid for, causing some confusion and much anxiety. An exact count was taken and additional payments made.

Before setting out on foot for the border - it was a twenty mile walk - a heated and serious discussion arose in our family about Zaide Shaya's decision to return home, to our shtetl. An incident about bread may have been a factor in his unshaken decision not to continue with us. Bread was a precious and much sought after commodity but not easily available. It was indeed "the staff of life" in this period of famine and hardship. Hard black bread, full of straw and often mouldy, was available at an exorbitant price; white bread was virtually priceless. Zaide Shaya evidently could not digest the black bread and in his weakened condition yearned for a loaf of white bread. Uncle Joe could not tolerate his misery and insisted that no matter what the cost was on the black market, Aunt Chanah should buy a white bread for him. A serious argument ensued. Aunt Chanah, the keeper of some

of the money Zaide Shaya possessed, refused. Whereupon Uncle Joe threatened to strike her if she did not buy the bread. Striking an older sister was an affront and unprecedented behavior. He meant it too. Zaide had his loaf of white bread. This incident may have convinced him that he would not be able to endure the hardships ahead, that he would collapse on the long march to the border and would become a burden on us, thus obstructing the precarious escape from Russia. In addition, Zaide Shaya was beaten by thieves and robbed in Kaminka and this incident was another reason for his decision to return to his home town.

The discussion about his decision to return was upsetting. He alone would return, he insisted. We, that is my mother, sister and I, were headed for reunion with my father in America, he argued. If Uncle Joe, Uncle Raphael and Hershel returned, they would be drafted into the army. They and the women faced a bleak future in the Russian turmoil of the time. They all would be better off in America, he insisted. In the end, Aunt Chanah decided to return home with him. He pleaded with her not to do so but to no avail. Tearfully and sadly we said our good-byes, not realizing that it was forever. With tears streaming down his face, Zaide hugged me and my sister, his only grandchildren. He blessed us and in a voice choked with emotion he cried out: "Avrum, Chaike ir zolt mich nit fargessen" (Do not forget me). Now after so many years, his words still ring in my ears. I must admit I was his favorite and he was both father and grandfather to me. Was I not known in the shtetl as Avrum Shaya's? Parting from my beloved Zaide was a sad and emotional wrench for me. I realize now after so many years that the separation was never fully healed. The separation from children and grandchildren[143] marked the end of the nuclear Antonovsky family.

In late winter 1921, Zaide and Aunt Chanah returned to Winograd and resumed their life without benefit of a closely knit

family. It was a fateful decision. Correspondence with them, as far as I know, was sparse. Chanah later married and, from time to time, family members sent her and Zaide a few dollars. Immigration restrictions in the Soviet Union prevented them from leaving Russia. Zaide died in 1929 at the age of 65. Family members sat shiva for him. At one time I wrote to Aunt Chanah and asked her to obtain a record of my birth and she sent me the certificate I needed. After World War II, we learned indirectly that she and her husband Leibel and their three children and some remaining Jews in the shtetl were killed by the Nazis at Babi Yar, with the assistance of Ukrainians.

With determination, deep anxiety and worry, we began our long march from Kaminka to the border. What a miserable, painful and tortuous walk it was, especially for me and my sister, who was three years older, and, of course, for my mother. We dragged ourselves most of the way. We were not alone. Other families and relatives from the shtetl were with us on the dusty unpaved road and when we stopped from time to time, we fell to the ground exhausted, cold, famished and thirsty. All we carried with us was a bundle containing our meager possessions. It was dark when we arrived at our destination, the Dniester River, and were met by the guide, who informed us that the crossing would take place during the change of the guards. In the meantime we would stay in the barn of a friendly (bribed) peasant. Physically exhausted, we threw ourselves on the hay strewn floor and tried to sleep. We had no food and my sister and I were weak from hunger. One woman among us, however, had a loaf of bread which she stubbornly refused to share with any one, claiming that she needed it for her family. My mother and other women were furious but the woman paid no attention to their pleas. When we children were dozing off and my mother saw that the woman appeared to have fallen asleep, she crept up to her and tried to steal the loaf of bread. The woman awoke and

began to scream at my mother, calling her a thief. Others awoke, realized what had happened and quieted the woman down for fear the guards at the river would hear the commotion and our plan to cross the river would be foiled. The woman did not share the bread. My mother was a potential "bread thief" but failed.

It must have been after midnight that the agent-guide arrived and instructed us to follow him very quietly to the river edge. We hid in the high grass and reeds until signalled by the guide to proceed. The crossing was hazardous since the ice was beginning to thaw. We began to walk across the frozen river single file, and I was the last one, to cross the river. Mother was worried. The ice was thawing and we had to walk gingerly and quickly. Since I was the last one, my mother was afraid the ice would break and I would fall in.

It took about an hour or less for all of us to reach the Bessarabian side. We were safe at last. We hugged each other silently as did other families. It was now early dawn. Confronting us was a steep mountain and as we looked up we saw a man waving to us and motioning to begin the steep climb. He was the second agent who had arranged the clandestine illegal crossing. We began the exhausting climb to the top. The realization that we had succeeded in escaping from the Ukraine, lifted our spirits and eased the physical effort to climb the mountain. The agent welcomed us and we followed him on foot and arrived at an inn in the town of Vertejen. We were safe. A meal awaited us and we gulped down the food and liquids. Before eating, my mother drank several glasses of tea with lemon. The woman with the loaf of bread was shame faced and apologized to all the mothers. The Jews in this small town, a transit station for refugees, befriended us, warned us of the risk of staying in the town and urged us to leave as soon as possible for a safer place. We stayed a few days in Vertejen and soon were on the way to Kishinev and Bucharest, Romania. This time we travelled in style and "luxury" by horse

and wagon.

In his memoir, Sholem Lukach describes the crossing of the Dniester:

> "We reached the bordertown, Kaminka, and found many of our townsmen there; the town was full of refugees waiting to cross the river. Crossing the border was difficult and risky. There were Jewish go-betweens in partnership with Gentiles who received substantial payment when they brought the refugees to villages close to the border. We reached Kaminka in January. The Dniester River is a very long and about one kilometer wide. In winter, when the river is frozen, it is easier to cross it. In March, it is already not possible to cross except by boat when it is very risky. We still had some gold valuables and brother, Mottel, had some money too. All of it was taken from us. From Kaminka, we travelled several kilometers by wagon and then by foot. Our Christian guide was not trustworthy. At night, he left us stranded in the middle of the field. We did not know what to do. We had young children with us. I carried my sister's two year old son, Abraham and Mottel carried his three year old daughter, Dorothy, all the way. About an hour later, our guide returned and informed us that he had difficulties with the villagers about where we were to cross because they demanded payment. We had no money left and had to give them the sugar and flour we had with us. Then they let us cross. It was Friday night and the soldiers on both sides of the river knew that Jews do not travel on the Sabbath; the watch was lax. We crossed the river and reached the town of Vertejen. It was early Sabbath morning. Jews were already on the streets. We approached a house but were not permitted to enter because of the regulation not to admit refugees. However, a Jew took us in on condition the men attend the synagogue service. They offered us tea, bread and herring but all we wanted was to sleep. Another Jew agreed to take us in and allowed us to sleep under the

oven where no one would suspect people would hide. That's how the Sabbath passed and we were happy we had crossed the border."[144]

Abraham Mindich described the hazardous illegal crossing of the Dniester River:

"We reached the town of Kaminka at the border and learned that some of our uncles and cousins were already on the other side where they received money from a delegate from America. After spending several months in that town, arrangements were made for my mother, who was in her ninth month of pregnancy, to be smuggled across first while the river was frozen. My mother made the crossing with Bella during the night and that same night she gave birth to Sam. Since it was getting warmer and the ice on the river had melted, we made arrangements with a smuggler to cross by boat. On the first attempt, the smuggler who brought us to the border by horse and wagon, got drunk and fell asleep in the field. At this time, two armed robbers held us up and robbed us of jewelry and money. When the smuggler sobered up, it was too late to cross the river because the border patrol which was supposed to let us cross, had changed and we had to return home. A second attempt was made about a month later with a group of about thirty people. We hid in the ruins at the border, while the smugglers took across about six or seven people at a time in their boat.

"My family was the last of the group to cross. When we were about to get into the boat, the border patrol was about to change. We had to rush to the boat and shove off fast. By doing so, the boat filled up with water and I remember holding both sides of the boat and I was in icy water up to my thighs. I thought we would never make it. But we reached the opposite shore before the patrol could reach us. After climbing a steep mountain, we reached the farm house on the other side which meant freedom. We slept over at the farm and in the morning, the farmer drove us in his wagon to the town where my mother was stationed. On the way we were

> stopped by the police and requested to show our passports which we did not have. They were bribed and we were released. We reached our mother who presented us with the new baby Sam.[145]

Not all illegal crossings were successful as was the case with members of the Mindich family who were shot at and wounded by the border patrol, arrested and returned to their home town.[146] Haya Nir's family (the Friedmans) stayed in Kaminka five months, unsuccessfully tried to cross the river several times, were robbed of their meager possessions, but finally bribed their way across. The family's destination was Palestine. Louis Antonoff's family spent three months in Kaminka, waiting for the opportunity to cross the river. His father, Shlomo, finally arranged with an agent he met in the synagogue to take the family across by boat. Climbing the steep mountain to reach Vertejen, Louis' mother, who was carrying her son's nine month old child, fell and dropped the child. In her haste to pick it up, she broke her arm. In Vertejen, the family was welcomed and accommodated by Jews, but were advised to leave as soon as possible for security reasons. They left for Kishinev, found temporary jobs and stayed for nine months, until with the help of HIAS, they arranged passage to Palestine by way of the Black Sea and Turkey.[147]

Kishinev, Bucharest and other cities in Bessarabia and Romania were full of thousands of refugees in dire need of food, shelter, clothing, health care, documents, visas, passports and transport to their desired destinations. It was estimated that 400,000 - 500,000 Jews fled from Russia on account of pogroms.[148]

The synagogues served as refugee centers. The Jewish inhabitants gave them assistance, opening their homes to them, providing them in many instances with food and clothing and helping to find jobs for those, who had to remain, while waiting for funds from relatives and landsmanshaftn in America or

elsewhere. The American Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) and the Jewish Colonization Association (JCA) had established refugee centers in the larger cities and were instrumental in providing the refugees with the minimum necessities of life, obtaining the necessary documents and arranging transportation for them to the countries which were willing to accept them. For example, 14,292 and 119,036 immigrants arrived in the United States in 1920 and 1921 respectively. Hundreds of others immigrated to Palestine, Canada, Argentina and other countries. The rescue and rehabilitation of refugees was an overwhelming and gigantic undertaking carried out with great care and compassion by the Jewish world relief organizations.

As a boy of ten I knew little of geography except for the names of the nearby shtetlach or the names of those overheard in conversations. But the names of Kaminka, the Dniester River, Vertejen, Kishinev, Bucharest associated with our safe escape from Russia remained with me always.

On The Road to America

The stay in Bucharest, Romania, was brief and temporary (several months) and not an unpleasant experience. We lived in a rat infested room, that is five of us, mother, my sister and I and Aunt Rachel and her fiance Hershel. We slept on the bare floor. Mother thought that the time had come for Rachel and Hershel to marry since it was not proper for them to sleep in the same room. She soon arranged for them to be married. Aunt Leah and her husband, Raphael, who had also rented a room in the same building, were also present at the ceremony, conducted by a young rabbi in his home. He charged no fee and even served us light refreshments. That night mother took my sister and me for a long walk so that the young couple (both age 21) could have privacy. Uncle Hershel told us the next day that he was up half the night beating off the rats.

Food was plentiful in Bucharest. We learned to eat and love a local favorite national food, marmaliga, which is something like corn bread. Young as I was, I became "the linguist" in the family. I quickly learned some commonly used words and expressions and served as the interpreter on all marketing and shopping trips. Incidentally, the love of foreign languages and the innate ability to learn them quickly stood me in good stead all my life.

In Bucharest we met Joe Escow, the Winograd delegate sent by the husbands and relatives already in America to assist wives and children, relatives and friends to apply for visas and passports, to book passage on ships, to provide them with shifskarten (tickets for the ship) and the funds for room and board and expenses for travel to ports of embarkation. Antwerp, Belgium, was our destination and port of embarkation. Aunt Rachel and Uncle Hershel, for some reason, could only get visas and passports to Canada.[149] Uncle Joe and Aunt Hilda did not travel with us across Europe. They remained in Kishinev and

Bucharest for about two years. Uncle Joe worked as a baker's helper in Kishinev and a tailor in Bucharest and saved up some money for the fare to the United States. Uncle Philip and Aunt Yetta (Antonovsky) Kliegman sent them money for shifskarten. With the help of HIAS, they obtained their visas and passports and arrived in the United States in 1923. Joe Escow was a tall, handsome, heavy set man. We welcomed him with unrestrained emotion and joy., We looked upon this clean shaven, well dressed and cigar smoking man as "der Americaner" (the American) and as our savior. We children were enthralled with him especially when he distributed candy and chewing gum, with the warning not to swallow it. Chewing gum was my initial introduction to "Americanization." With a broad and happy smile, he looked at our eager faces and wide open eyes and assured us that our fathers were anxiously and eagerly waiting to see and to welcome us with open arms.

The women plied him with questions about their husbands and life in America, all talking very excitedly and emotionally. He had difficulty answering all the questions at once but he quieted them and gradually reported briefly about each one of their husbands. When he began to question them about the shtetl, they refused to talk about it. I remember the women saying: "Shpeter, shpeter (later). We want to hear about America." He complied with their request and described briefly life on the East Side of New York. They listened attentively, swallowed every word, laughing and weeping at the same time.[150] Joe Escow was not the only delegate in Bucharest. There were hundreds like him sent by the JDC and landsmanshaftn of other shtetlach, to ease the way of the refugees on their journey to the "goldene medinah."

In some instances the large and financially able landsmanshaftn sent delegates directly to their home towns and villages, but in the main the JDC sponsored the missions. At the

time of the Escow mission, the Winograd population in America was small and the Winograd Benevolent Society was as yet loosely organized.[151] When news of the pogroms and the desperate conditions in the shtetl reached the Winograder, they harnessed their meager resources, decided to send a delegate and turned to the JDC for assistance. The Escow mission was under the auspices of the JDC with a contribution by the Winograder.

How much money did Escow have at his disposal? How much was contributed by the Winograd landsleit? How much by the JDC? How many did he help? The Lukach, Mindich, Antonoff memoirs mention the Escow mission, but give no details as to how he assisted their families. Some Winograder sent a family member to arrange passage for their relatives. "In 1921, my parents and uncle, who had come to America before World War I, decided to rescue our Winograd relatives. My uncle, who was single, went to Bucharest, made proper contacts and succeeded in bringing to America seventeen of our closest relatives for whom my father paid $300 a person." [152]

With the help of the HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society), a household word among the refugees, we received the precious documents, Romanian visas and passports. Imagine the joy and emotions when we held them in our hands. We were on the way to America!

We now set out on the long trip to the port of embarkation. Travel on trains and, the passage through different countries across Europe, Hungary, Germany and others, was an exciting and pleasurable experience. I enjoyed looking out at the country side. I saw the huge crowds at railroad stops, heard about the severe unemployment everywhere and the high runaway inflation, especially in Germany.

A frightening incident occurred on the trip. The train had stopped at a certain station and I do not know in which country. Passengers were allowed off the train to buy refreshments. Uncle

Raphael Zeldis (Aunt Leah's husband) insisted on getting off, against his wife's wishes. For some reason he was delayed and the train started moving. Aunt Leah was frantic and frightened and so were we. Then we saw him jumping over a low fence and running hard to get on the train. Aunt Leah who was pregnant fainted. Fortunately he managed to get on. Aunt Leah would not talk to him until mother made peace between them.

Another personal incident stands out. In a big city - name forgotten- we were traveling for the first time on an open trolley car. It was a thrilling experience for me and my sister. We were directed where to get off, but in my eagerness to do so and before the trolley came to a complete stop, I jumped off and landed on my chest. Luckily I was not badly hurt. Mother was very frightened but did not punish me. She was happy I was not injured. I had learned a good and unforgettable lesson.

At last we arrived in Antwerp, a beautiful city, with wide boulevards, tree lined streets and many parks. It was June 1921. We stayed in a moderately priced hotel but for all of us it was the height of luxury - clean room and bath, good food and pleasant surroundings. The experiences were joyous and happy ones. For the first time we went to a circus, enjoyed a ferry ride and saw a silent movie. What the movie was about I do not remember but I do remember a large ship sailing on a large body of water. I could not read the titles or words which were in French. I saw the ship and water in front of me and wondered how it was all possible. The experience was a revelation and an introduction to the wonders of modern times.

We were scheduled to leave for America in late July or early August 1921. During the stay in Antwerp, Aunt Leah gave birth to a boy, cousin Milton.[153] Aunt Leah, Uncle Raphael and the new infant sailed for America as scheduled but without us. I had contracted the measles a few days before departure and was hospitalized. It was a bad time for my family. The officials of the

Red Star Line were sympathetic and re-scheduled our embarkation, but mother was deeply disappointed. The stay in the hospital was pleasant, the nurses treated me with kindness and concern. The only trouble was I could not understand French. It took a few days for me to learn a few French words and make myself understood. When I came out of the hospital, mother was overjoyed and treated me to a sailor suit which I wore proudly all the time, especially on arrival in the United States and showed it off to my father.

We set sail on the Red Star SS Finland -second class- in the second week of September 1921. The crossing was rough. The seas were stormy and for all the passengers, mostly refugees from Eastern Europe, it was a harrowing and frightening experience but more so for those who were in steerage. Looking at the mountainous waves and experiencing the unstable rolling of the ship, we thought at any moment the ship would go under and all of us would drown. Most of the passengers were badly seasick and bed ridden. For some reason, I was not affected by seasickness and spent much of the time on the deck looking out at the dark green, forbidding and stormy ocean.

I had a minor sore on my left hand and on my shaved head. My mother, having heard about the strict health examination all immigrants were required to undergo, was worried that I would not be admitted into the country. As it turned out later, the minor sores were not even looked at by the examining doctor. It was a case of tears of sorrow for those who were turned back for reasons of health and tears of joy for the others.

At last one day, when the sea was calm, we saw seagulls flying near and around the ship. We realized we were near land. Then the Statue of Liberty appeared in the distance. The closer the ship came to the Statue, the greater was the excitement among the passengers. All were on deck. They hugged each other, wept and laughed, cheered and screamed. We children joined in. Adults

expained to us that the Lady with the Lamp besides the golden door was the symbol of America welcoming the refugees to the land of freedom. I recall the moment, as a ten year old boy[154], I first saw the statue in the distance. Years later I learned the poem by Emma Lazarus which is inscribed on the Statue's pedestal:

"Keep ancient lands, your storied pomp", cries she with silent lips:
"Give me your tired, your poor your huddled masses yearning to breathe free.
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore,
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me
I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

We disembarked on September 25, 1921[155], not at Ellis Island, but at one of the piers in New York on the Hudson River in New York. Why not Ellis Island, where the great majority of immigrants landed? I do not know. Was it because we travelled second class instead of steerage or was it because so many ships arrived on that day that some were steered to the Hudson River piers? My father, whom my sister and I did not know nor recognize, came on board to welcome us joyfully and tearfully. With tears running down his cheeks, he embraced, hugged and kissed mother first and then my sister and me. We clung to him, my sister on one side and I on the other. Mother wept copiously and silently. When we began to talk and father asked mother how she had fared all those years without him, I said in Yiddish: "Zee iz shtarker fun izen" (She is stronger than iron). No truer statement could have been made. Father and mother laughed and hugged me. For her and for us the nine years separation was at long last over. My father was a tall man with ruddy complexion, reddish hair and appeared to be hale and healthy. He was 40 years old and mother was 35. I experienced the noise and confusion of the traffic and looked in amazement at the tall buildings and treeless streets on the way to our apartment on the

lower East Side. Mother tore up our passports and threw them out. She was through with the shtetl, the pogroms and Europe and the loneliness, the travail and the hardships she had endured stoically and courageously during the separation from father for nine years. She looked to a new beginning for herself and for us.

Epilogue

The tumultuous political, social events and the turmoil of the first two decades of this century, culminating in the Russian Revolution and the four year Civil War that ensued, shook the world, changed the lives of millions of people and left an indelible mark on Jewish history, destiny and demography. They set in motion a new era and a turning point in history.

I told the story of my childhood and the shtetl, based on personal recollections and those of relatives and townspeople, in context of the historic and tragic events of those days. I was born into a confined Jewish world, "a ghetto without walls," struggling to overcome the stresses of the socio-economic upheavel and to maintain its doomed Jewish way of life. My childhood was shaped by the world that passed.

Looking back, I treasure the lingering and enduring memories of the little boy of nine I figuratively left behind in the shtetl, the joys and pleasures, the abiding influence on my life and yes, the fear and terror of the pogroms and the flight forever from the land of persecution.

As a young child, I experienced and felt deeply the travail of the elders, their pain and misery of breaking with the past, of leaving and abandoning their homes and way of life and their strong desire to seek a new life in far corners of the earth. I marvel at the courage, stoicism and steadfastness of family, relatives and townspeople and their ability to endure the hardships, constant danger and uncertainty of survival. Destitute and uprooted as

they were, they did not despair, nor lose their hope and optimism for the future. The harsh and hazardous experiences they endured provided them with the strength and determination to rebuild their lives anew.

The story of the Winograder and their descendants, their absorption, integration and acculturation in their new homes, especially in the United States and in Israel, in the face of a multitude of difficulties, is yet to be told, including my personal story from 1921 to the present. However, the written memoirs, recollections and recorded family oral histories I have accumulated, lead me to believe unequivocally that the Winograder saga, in many lands, is one of eminent success in all sectors of life. Those who settled in Haifa, stuck roots in the ancient homeland and rebuilt their lives in the pioneering and the developing pre-Jewish State.

In the American milieu, accommodation to the new world, was difficult. The maintenance of the shtetl Jewish life style was limited, virtually impossible and, for the most part, abandoned. Living mainly among Jews, they spoke Yiddish, read the Yiddish press, found some comfort in the thriving Yiddish culture, sent their children to the public schools, striving, at the same time, to find a source of livelihood. For more than five decades (1923-1977), the Winograder Benevolent Society served as a strong bond of the past and the future, and as an effective and useful institution. During this same period, they struck roots in the general American community as well as in the evolving Jewish community. Their story is another chapter in the successful absorption of millions of immigrants in this country.

The unanticipated and unprecedented mass immigration of Jews from the Soviet Union in recent years marks another significant turning point in Jewish history. Today's immigrants are mostly descendants of the Jews, who for a variety of reasons chose to remain in the Soviet Union in the 1920's, including

remnants of my family, and those who settled in the large cities of the Soviet Union.

The recent wave of immigration from the Soviet Union is a modern day miracle and the continuation of the mass emigration which began more than seven decades ago.



Amazing indeed were the dramatic and traumatic events in recent years, hardly foreseen by the most sophisticated forecasters: The demise of communism, the disintegration and dissolution of the Soviet Union and the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. We witnessed history in the making and the impact of the change will be profound on the new republics of the former USSR. In light of the turbulent and chaotic social, economic and political conditions and the rise of ethnic nationalism, who can predict the effects the unprece-

transformation will have on the Jewish citizens? Virulent anti-Semitism has reared its ugly head again, the long memory and fear of potential pogroms lingers on, the desire for Jewish identity and the need to forge a new link with the Jewish people, has not been extinguished. The Jews of the Ukraine cannot forget the massacre of Jews at Babi Yar by the Nazis with the direct assistance of Ukrainians. Despite the condemnation of anti-Semitism by the present Ukrainian leadership, the centuries long endemic anti-Semitism still exists and persists in the memory of Jews. As the Jews were accused of being responsible for the rise of communism, so they are now accused of its demise and the collapse and disintegration of the Soviet Union. What assurance is there for their physical security?

Yet, there still exists the belief in the possibility of the revival of the organized Jewish community and its institutions in the now independent, former USSR republics, in the light of the imminent radical, political, social and economic changes, which it is hoped may lead to democracy and a free market economy. For the first time since 1917, a Confederation of Jewish Communities and Organizations has been established and a Vaad (Council) appointed, to concern itself with Jewish affairs and to serve as the liaison with Israel and world Jewry. The main thrust, however, is to revive and rebuild Jewish life, renew ties with their roots and rejoin world Jewry. Jews in the independent republics will face serious dilemmas and an uncertain precarious future, dependent on the control of anti-Semitism by the republics, and the ability of the Vaad to find the human and financial resources to reconstruct the community infrastructure - the educational, cultural and religious institutions - for the revival and revitalization of Jewish life, after a lapse of more than seventy years.

In the meantime it is estimated that one million Soviet Jews will settle in Israel and hundreds of thousands in the United

States and elsewhere. As an immigrant in 1921, I can readily experience and feel emotionally and vicariously the trials and tribulations of the 1990's immigrants, their anguish, pain, anxiety and concern, but also their hopes and expectations to rebuild their lives in their new homes. I also feel and believe, based on past experience, that they too will succeed as eminently as did their predecessors, in reshaping their lives in the US and in Israel and become fully integrated in the two major centers of world Jewry.

Footnotes

[1] Many years later when I was a teacher in the Hebrew High School of New York, one of my students, Kasriel Steinhardt introduced me to his parents, Joseph and Augusta. He was surprised to learn that his mother had been my first teacher in the United States. His father too had been a teacher in P.S. 188. I told Augusta how well I remembered her and the lasting impression she made on me. From then on our friendship flourished.

[2] Winograd is interchangeable with Vinograd. Those who settled in the U.S. used the former which I decided to use.

[3] In the 1930's I was required to authenticate my date of birth for the Board of Education of New York. My father's citizenship certificate on which I was named was not considered adequate. I wrote to my Aunt Chanah, still residing in Winograd, told her what was my official date of birth recorded in school records and requested she obtain an official statement in the town City Hall, confirming June 10, 1911, as my date of birth. She was able to do so and sent me the document.

[4] Cousin Abraham Ganapolsky, my father's nephew and several years my senior, bears the same name.

[5] My son was named Chayim (Howard) in her memory.

[6] Two granddaughters, born to daughters Leah and Rachel in America, were named Sarah in her memory.

[7] The major source of information about Zaide Shaya was his son Joseph (Yossel) Antonoff, recorded by grandson Stanley J. Antonoff. Stanley was named in his memory as were the sons of daughters Hinda and Rachel.

[8] Rovin (Rovinsky), Jacob, Tarascha (in Yiddish), A History of a Small Town in the Province of Kiev, Ukraine, Part I, 1935, 43 p., Part II, 1937, 67 p.

[9] Letters in Yiddish sent to me by cousin Abraham Ganapolsky.

[10] Reported by cousin Abraham Ganapolsky. Uncle Joe was also a student in this school.

[11] The Antonovsky family tree prepared by Sarah Antonoff Arkin lists an Antonovsky, a Chudokov, and several other Winograd families living in Milwaukee at the turn of the century. Max Edlin known in Winograd as Chaim Mordechai Yedlin arrived in Milwaukee in 1913 because other Winograder, as many as thirty according to him, settled there. Nathan Polsky, who he notes was a cousin, was among the former townspeople he met. Edlin's story of life in the shtetl, in Milwaukee and later in Peoria, IL was recorded by his granddaughter Barbara Parks and made available to me by his grandson Alan Wachtel of Palo Alto, California. Edlin was related to Rachel Lukach Kol-Tuv of Haifa. Arthur Anton of San Jose, California

traces his family in Milwaukee to the end of the nineteenth century when his grandfather, Shia Antonovsky settled in the city. Arthur's father Max (Mordechai) was born there in 1898 and most of the family still resides in Milwaukee. Members of the Solocheck and Zaicheck families settled in Milwaukee as described in the Solocheck family tree, made available to me by Tom Saicheck. His grandmother, Mollie Solocheck was married to Samuel Zeicheck and lived in San Diego, California. Mollie's father was my Zaide Shaya's first cousin.

[12] Kiev was an important commercial crossroads of Western Europe and the Orient. Jews settled in Kiev in the eighth century and over the centuries the city became an important center of Jewish industry, commerce, education and culture. For example, in 1910, there were 5000 Jewish merchants (42% of the city's merchants) in Kiev. Despite restrictions, expulsions and pogroms, the Jewish population in 1917, grew to 87,000 (19% the population). It was the home of renowned rabbis, scholars, teachers, writers, publishing houses and newspapers. In the spring of 1919, the population had grown to 114,000. In the twenty years 1919-1939 with the influx of refugees from the 1919-1922 pogroms in the towns in the Ukraine, the Jewish population grew to 175,000 (20% of the population). Kiev became the center of Yiddish culture officially fostered by Moscow with a network of schools and higher educational institutions for thousands of students. The apex was the Department of Jewish Culture of the Ukrainian Academy of the Sciences which later became the Institute of Proletarian Culture. It ceased to exist with the liquidation of Jewish institutions at the end of the 1930's.

When the Germans occupied Kiev in September 1941, with the aid of the Ukrainian Militia, thousands of Jews were killed at Babi Yar, near the Jewish cemetery.

Jews continued to live in Kiev. In the 1970's, 152,000 Jews lived in the city constituting 10% of the total population.

[13] Especially helpful were the recollections of Uncle Joseph Antonoff recorded by his son Stanley J. Antonoff; cousins Louis, Barney, Jack and Anna Antonoff recorded by Louis's daughter Elaine Fisher; Jack Goodman recorded by cousin Sarah (Tania) Arkin; the stories of cousin Abraham Ganapolsky; the recollections of cousin Shulamith Krasnovsky Houminer of Jerusalem; Shoshanah Brodsky of Tel Aviv; the stories of Elisheva Cohen - Bernstein, Bezalel and Bracha Antonovsky and Hannah Antonovsky Steier of Haifa; the stories of the Brodsky brothers in Florida; the *Abraham Mindich Memoir*; *The Liuba Tenofsky Memoir* recorded by her daughter Jean Tenofsky May and the Winograd map layout and synagogue sketch prepared by Liuba and provided by Jean May and Liuba's niece Nancy Weinstein; the *Sholem and Hennie Lukach Memoir* provided by their daughter Rachel Kol-Tuv of Haifa; Saul Mindich's autobiograhpy provided by his son Bernard; Max Edlin tapes provided by his gradson, Alan Wachtel; the stories of Haya Friedman Nir of Haifa and Haya Resnik Hammer of Jerusalem.

[14] Mindich, Abraham, *From Vinograd to Now*, 1985, 38p.

[15] Yivo - Institute of Yiddish Research in New York.

[16] Sholem Lukach Memoir

[17] Uncle Joe and Louis Antonoff, respectively.

[18] One relative recalls that the "shenk" (Yiddish for the liquor store) was owned by a Jew.

[19] Shaya Elya Olin and his family emigrated to Palestine and settled in Haifa where he was a highly respected pious and erudite scholar.

[20] During the Peasant Uprising in 1917, the estates of the wealthy landowners were burned, the land confiscated and divided and their owners massacred.

[21] Tenofsky Memoir p9. Abraham Ganapolsky stories.

[22] Tenofsky Memoir.

[23] S. Mindich, p 16-20.

[24] I used the modern Sephardic transliteration of Hebrew words, except for a few words, such as Bes Medrash and others, in the Ashkenazie mode, for sentimental reasons.

[25] *The Writings of Hayim Nachman Bialik* (Hebrew), D'vir Publishing, Tel Aviv, 1950, p17, Free translation by A.P. Gannes.

[26] Abraham Ganapolsky relates that his father Mendel taught many others in the Kloiz.

[27] Many years later when we lived in Philadelphia I visited Rabbi Twersky, a son or grandson of the Talner Rebbe. He remembered the Ganapolsky family in Winograd. Jacob Polsky, my father's nephew, who lived in Milwaukee, was a member and leader of the Hasidic shtiebel (small synagogue) whose spiritual leader was Rabbi Twersky. Howard W. Polsky (Jacob's son) a professor at the Columbia School of Social Work, together with Yaella Wozner published the book *Every Day Miracles: The Healing of Wisdom of Hasidic Stories* in 1988.

[28] Tenofsky Memoir, p8.

[29] Hasidism, a religious and social movement, the founder of which was Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov (Master of the Good Name) 1700-1760, was a revolt against a one sided expression of Judaism, presented in cold, intellectual discussion understood only by the few. In Hasidism's view all are equal before God, the poor, the ignorant, and joyful devotion, prayer and humility are more acceptable than intellectual achievements.

[30] Mitnagdim criticized the Hasidim for the use of the Sephardic liturgy, the establishment of separate synagogues and the neglect of Torah and Talmud study. But as far as I recall from what my father told me, in later years, there was no conflict

in Winograd. Both synagogues lived in peace and engaged in the same Torah and Talmud study.

[31] See the synagogue sketch.

[32] The Winograder who settled in Haifa established a Gemilut Chesed Fund (the Fanny and Nahman Gussak Fund) as did those who settled in the United States. Sholem Lukach remembered the assistance received by landsleit in Haifa from the ones in the United States. Among them were Jacob and Aaron Polsky, the Mindich and Leibl Tenofsky families. On many a Sunday, I observed the Fund of the Winograder Benevolent Society in New York, of which my father was chairman, make loans to newly arrived landsleit. The Fund also sent money to the shtetl in the 1920's.

[33] Mindich, p52-53

[34] Ibid p44-45.

[35] Tenofsky Memoir, p. 55-56

[36] Hennie Lukach Memoir.

[37] Recollections of Barney Antonoff.

[38] A. Mindich, p4.

[39] Ibid.,p6

[40] S. Mindich, p73-74.

[41] Ibid. , p58-59.

[42] The story of this family, its life in the shtetl, in Palestine, and in America, was recorded by Elaine Fisher, Louis Antonoff's daughter. Shoshanah Brodsky, of Tel Aviv, wrote me that Mani Antonoff married her sister Rani Lukach and was the first of the family to settle in Palestine after the War. Times were difficult and the Lukach and Antonoff families hastened to get to Palestine to help Mani and Rani. In 1923, Mani was on the way to Petach Tikvah on business when he was ambushed by Arabs and murdered.

[43] Lukach Memoir

[44] Recollections of Shulamith (Krasnovsky) Houminer and Elisheva Cohen-Bernstein and Shoshanah Brodsky. Shulamith was brought to Palestine in 1921 as a young child by her father Moshe Krasnovsky, whose mother was Nessia Antonovsky , my grandfather Shaya's sister, my mother's aunt and Shulamith's grandmother..

[45] Anna Antonovsky and her brother, Henoch, came to America in the early 20's, worked in the sweatshops, joined the garment union and continued to adhere to their radical socialist or communist views. In the late 30's, they visited the Soviet Union and Winograd. They reported that little was left of the shtetl. The synagogues and

the cemetery were in ruins and little was left of the traditional Jewish life. They painted a rosy picture of the USSR but would not consider returning there. At times, when we met, I reminded her of the fun she made of my Jewish studies as a young child. She was amazed at my recollection. I in turn asked her: "Do you think communism will bring the Messiah?" She laughed and said: "I deserve this from you, but I do not know the answer." She knew that I was continuing my Jewish studies, but was skeptical about the future of Judaism in America. After the 1939 pact between Germany and the Soviet Union, she and her brother lost their faith in the Soviet Union and Communism.

[46] The words and music in Yiddish, Hebrew and English and hundreds of others are included in the excellent *Anthology of Yiddish Folk Songs*, four volumes, edited by Aharon Vinkovetsky, Abba Kovner and Sinai Leichter, Mount Scopus Publications by the Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1983.

[47] The fictional novel, the *Gates of Brass* by Hayim Hazaz, already cited, illustrates vivdly the conflicting ideologies and generation gap in the winter of 1917.

[48] Beilis was accused of murdering a twelve year old Christian boy for ritual purposes, was jailed for two years, brought to trial, and finally acquitted by a jury of Ukrainian peasants after the exposure of false witnessess. Jews never recovered from this traumatic experience.

[49] Lukach Memoir, p17. Sholem Lukach went AWOL. S. Mindich, p32-33,55. describes how his father avoided the draft.

[50] Margolin, p28.

[51] Canada was a transit place for eventual immigration to the United States. Uncle Harry and Aunt Rose Antonoff were admitted to Canada but soon entered the United States illegally. When the US Immigration and Naturalization Service declared amnesty for Canadian illegal immigrants, they obtained American citizenship.

[52] Members of the Zunder family (relatives) emigrated to Argentina; other Zunders settled in Haifa and now live in Tel Aviv; others found their way to America.

[53] The Tenofsky family tree lists family members who reside in many lands including the United States, Israel, Canada and the Soviet Union. Jean Tenofsky May visited relatives in several cities in the Soviet Union in 1990.

[54] Recorded in the *Black Book of Localities whose Jewish Population Was Exterminated by the Nazis*, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 1965.

[55] Relative Zelda Antonoff, living in New York, spoke to her mother and other relatives in Winograd in 1935. As noted elsewhere, relative Anna Antonovsky visited the shtetl in the middle 30's and gave a pessimistic report of conditions.

[56] When I attended meetings of the Winograder Benevolent Society in the 1920's and 1930's, I began to understand and appreciate the yearning of the members for the "alta haym" (the old home), the nostalgia for the days of their youth in the shtetl,

the traditional Jewish way of life, no matter how restricted it was, and so difficult to maintain in the American secular society. I recall how in later years the remaining elders wanted their children and grandchildren to belong to their Benevolent Society and to form associations with each other, a kind of continuity and attachment to their roots in Winograd, an unrealistic hope. The society ceased to function in late 1977 after serving the needs of its members for more than fifty years. Max Bonfeld and several others continue as trustees of the Winograder cemetery on Springfield Blvd, St. Albans, NY where my parents, sister and other relatives, of blessed memory, are buried.

[57] Free translation by A.P. Gannes of Hebrew poem "Aleph" by Shimshon Meltzer.

[58] Lifschitz "the Heder", p297. Shmarya Levin, the author of *Childhood in Exile*, was very critical of his elementary Heder melamed who whipped the children mercilessly at the least provocation and described him as a sadist: "He used the thongs with the same cruel joy for a slip of memory as for a misdemeanor.... I do not know whether my melamed was the only sadist among the melamdim, but I do know that the elementary teachers had a free hand to whip their pupils and they used it. The teachers of the Pentateuch were a trifle more restrained, and the teachers of the Talmud students used the whip very rarely.... Until this day a shudder runs through my body when I think of the horrible world in which we passed the tenderest years of our childhood." p.59-61. Yet, Levin describes in glowing terms a melamed, an outstanding teacher and mentor, who taught him the structure, grammar and beauty of the Hebrew language, inspired him to delve into the inner meaning of classical texts, led him to sustained study of Talmud and encouraged him to question and analyze difficult passages and also to write in Hebrew and Yiddish.

[59] Later in life I learned he was a fine Talmud scholar and well versed in the classical commentaries. In the 1920's when he arrived in the United States, the Winograder Benevolent Society welcomed and honored him. Almost all the male members of the Society had been his students and held him in high regard. He served as teacher and shamas in a synagogue on Stone Ave in Brooklyn, NY. I came to see him often and when he learned that I was continuing my Jewish studies he invited me to study Talmud with him. I was about sixteen or seventeen then. I agreed and many Sundays I came to study with him for several hours. His influence on me had not diminished.

When Reb Hersheleh was on his deathbed, he requested I visit him at the hospital. The family called me and I came to see him at the Beth Israel hospital in Brooklyn. He was very weak and could hardly speak. Yet he recognized me and held my hand a long time. He whispered something but I could not understand him. His rabbi son said to me that his father was probably blessing me. He died shortly thereafter at the age of 86 and was buried in the Winograder cemetery, right near my father's, mother's and sister's burial place.

[60] When I arrived in the United States and was enrolled in the Downtown Talmud Torah, my knowledge of Hebrew and Bible stood me in good stead. In less than three years I graduated from this highly intensive Orthodox Hebrew school. In the 30's

and 40's I corresponded in Hebrew with Uncle Lipa. He was no longer teaching Hebrew because of the Soviet restrictions against Zionism and Hebrew. He was serving as a bookkeeper in a government department. As I recall, his letters were full of nostalgia, and needless to say, he was pleased with my knowledge of Hebrew and my Zionist associations.

[61] Scharfstein, Zvi, *Ha-Heder B'yameinu*, (The Heder in Our Times), a comprehensive study of the Heder. Description of the typical Heder curriculum p 169.

[62] Scharfstein, Zvi, p211-219.

[63] Scharfstein, Zvi, *Toldot Ha-chinuch* Vol I, p367-369.

[64] See Lukach Memoir. Haya Nir's mother engaged a private teacher to tutor her in Teich Chumash. Haya Hammer began to learn elementary Hebrew at home.

[65] Tenofsky Memoir, p 8.

[66] In a letter from her daughter, Pauline Hodes. Eta was an active leader in and contributor to a variety of Jewish communal organizations in the United States and in Israel.

[67] The Russian dates are according to the old calendar. Add thirteen days to February and October to determine the dates according to the accepted international calendar.

[68] The 1905 Revolution which was the first to free the Russians from the worst abuses of the aristocracy also included 700 pogroms against the Jews mainly in the Ukraine. Jews had not yet really won civil rights and protection. Tcherikower p20-21.

[69] A. Bruce Lincoln, *Red Victory*, a *History of the Russian Civil War*, Simon and Schuster, NY 1989, 637 p. Chapters I and IX ("The Ukraine in Ferment").

[70] Arnold Margolin, *The Jews in Eastern Europe*, Chapter I: "The Jews and the Russian Revolution" p 1-50. In the 1917-1921 period, Ukraine unsuccessfully fought for independence. With the demise of communism and the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania gained full independence and Ukraine and ten other former Soviet republics established a Commonwealth of Independent States. It marked the end of an era.

[71] Lincoln, Chapters I and IX ("The Ukraine in Ferment")

[72] Abraham Revutsky, In di Schvere Teg Oif Ukraine (The Difficult Days in the Ukraine), Jewish Publishing Co. Berlin 1924, 318p. Revutsky describes the so called Jewish autonomy in the Ukraine, during 1917-1920 when M. Zilberberg, V. Latski, Bertholdi, Pinchas Krasne, Eliezer Kaplan, Menaheim Ussishkin and he, served at different periods as Minister of Jewish Affairs and members of the Rada.

[73] It was not until December 1989 that a National Assembly of Jewish delegates was held as a result of the glasnost (openness) policy of the Soviet Government. The historic Conference established a Vaad, a federation of Soviet Jewish organizations, to concern itself with Jewish life in the Soviet Union, relationship to Israel and to

hammer out a vision for the future. In June 1990, the Vaad sent five delegates to the Jewish Agency Assembly, a historic first for Soviet Jewry's participation in the affairs of world Jewry and Israel. A national conference of the Vaad was held in Moscow in January 1991, attended by more than 1000 delegates representing 400 organizations from 78 cities in the Soviet Union. The future of the Vaad and Soviet Jewry was on the agenda. There was general agreement as to the need to preserve freedom of emigration and the continuation of the mass exodus. With respect to the future of Jewish life in the Soviet Union, there was divergence of opinion. Some held there was no future; Jewish life was at risk in view of the ethnic conflicts and advocated emigration to Israel. Others felt that millions of Jews will continue to remain in the Soviet Union and efforts should be made to help decrease assimilation. The Vaad will play an important role in the future of Soviet Jewry.

[74] Margolin, p 130.

[75] Pipes, Richard, *The Russian Revolution*, Chapter XIII, Brest Litovsk, p567-605.

[76] Margolin, p18-20.

[77] Ibid, p139.

[78] Margolin quotes Order #77 of April 13, 1919 as an example of the attempt to control the pogroms, p128. Petlura gave hypocritical assurances that he condemned pogroms. Petlura partisans attempted to white wash him and the Directorate for the epidemic of pogroms.

[79] Margolin, p143.

[80] Quoted in Lincoln, p320

[81] The pogroms in Uman in 1919 replayed the scenes of 1768.

[82] In the Kiev province, 48 cities and towns were subjected to atrocities.

[83] Pipes, p70.

[84] Ibid. p89.

[85] Ibid. p 13.

[86] Efros, Israel (editor), *The Complete Poetic Works of Hayim Nachman Bialik*, Vol I, Histadruth Ivrith of America, NY 1948, 267 p. Translation of "In the City of Slaughter" by A.M. Klein, p129-143. See also description of Kiskinev pogrom and other cities in Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland* Vol III p 66-86; Elbogen, p376-389.

[87] For a description of the political and social conditions and the pogroms committed against Jews and the efforts at self defense, see Dubnow, Vol III chapters XXXI-XXXV, also Elbogen p 385-6, 391,395.

[88] Adler, Cyrus (editor) *The Voice of America on Kishineff*, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1904, 481p.

[89] Goren, Arthur A., *New York Jews and the Quest for Community*, Columbia University Press, 1970, p21-22.

[90] Dubnow III p76.

[91] Margolin cites the report on pogroms by the well known Zionist, Doctor Rabbi V. Temkin at the Conference of Jewish Organizations at Karlsbad in 1921, p 128.

[92] Heifetz, Elias, *The Slaughter of Jews in the Ukraine in 1919*; Margolin, p 146-152.

[93] Margolin p132: "Little is known abroad of the pogroms of the Red Army which broke out when its discipline in the Ukraine began to weaken, of the horrible acts of Budenny's Red Cavalry."

[94] Tcherikower p. 15-16

[95] Tcherikower, p. 13

[96] Trotsky, Leon, *The History of the Russian Revolution* Volume I, p.233. In April 1990, the Associated Press reported that Trotsky resisted Lenin's offer to succeed him because he feared that his origins would hurt the communist cause, according to a new historical study by the Soviet historian, Victor Danilov. In a 1923 speech Trotsky was quoted as saying: "The fact is, comrades, that there are personal aspects of my work, which although playing no role in my personal life and day-to-day existence, is nonetheless of great political significance. This is my Jewish origin ...We should not give our enemies the opportunity to say that our country was being led by a Jew." See also Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, Harper and Row, NY 1987. Johnson points out that Jews who were active in revolutionary affairs were "non-Jews", individuals who had severed their affiliation with the Jewish community. p 50-55. Jacob Maazeh, Rabbi of Moscow said: "It is Trotsky who storms over the country, but we will pay the reckoning for Bronstein (Trotsky's family name)." Quoted in Levin, *Childhood in Exile*, p.253.

[97] Quoted on p 969 in article by S. Ettinger in *A History of the Jewish People*, edited by H.H. Ben-Sasson, Harvard University Press, 1976.

[98] *Eye Witnesses to Jewish History*, edited by Azriel Eisenberg, Hannah Goodman, Alvin Kass p267. Saul Friedman, *Pogromchik: The Assassination of Simon Petlura*, New York, Hart, 1976 p1-26. "Memoirs of an Assassin", quoted in the Golden Tradition, edited by Lucy S. Davidowicz, p448-457.

[99] Tcherikower, Introduction p26.

[100] Quoted in *A Century of Jewish Life* p497.

[101] *Ibid* p499 -500.

[102] Abraham Revutsky, former Minister for Jewish Affairs in the Ukraine Rada, described in great detail the massacres in specific communities in the Ukraine. Dr. Abraham Koralnik, well known journalist, bemoaned the fate of the forgotten pogrom victims.

[103] Committee of the Jewish Delegations: "The Pogroms in the Ukraine under the Ukrainian Governments (1917-1919)" Historical Survey with documents and photographs, 286 p .

[104] Elbogen, p 501-502. Two representatives of the JDC, the distinguished scholar Israel Friedlaender and the prominent community worker Bernard Cantor, were murdered by pogromchiks in 1920 in the Ukraine.

[105] Many of these organizations including the Winograder Benevolent Society sent delegates to Romania to assist fellow townsmen.

[106] Michael R. Weisser, *A Brotherhood of Memory*, description of the response of the JDC and the landsmanshaftn, pp 112-134

[107] Elbogen, p 504-506

[108] Quoted ibid p 506.

[109] Tcherikower, *Anti-Semitism and Pogroms in the Ukraine, 1917-1918*, p. 197, 317.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Quoted in Tcherikower, p. 172-173

[113] Ibid, p. 313-315. Whether this story is the same story reported by the Winograd reporter is hard to tell. Pages 179 to 326 include documents and recorded materials found in the Archives of Kiev.

[114] The entire elegy in Hebrew and Yiddish is quoted in Tcherikower, p. 316-321.

[115] Mindich, p57.

[116] Lukach Memoir, p. 17-19

[117] Jack Goodman remembers the death of his father at the hands of the bandits. Elisheva Cohen-Bernstein knows that her grandfather was put to death in a pogrom. Uncle Harry Antonovsky's oldest brother, Joseph, was severely beaten on the head, developed epilepsy and died at a young age in the United States. While at prayer, Max Edlin's scholarly and pious father, Lazer David, was badly beaten by White counter revolutionaries and his wife died of starvation. Molly Bellin's gradparents' house was set on fire and burnt to the ground. Members of her family who remained lost their lives. Gitel Cooper remembers witnessing the town rabbi's and the cantor's sons put to death and houses put to the torch.

[118] Letter by Shoshanah Lukach Brodsky, dated September 23, 1990.

[119] Luiba's recollections, p26-27

[120] Ibid

[121] Lukach Memoir, p. 17

[122] Ibid, p. 18-19

[123] Ibid

[124] Ibid, p. 18-20

[125] Brodsky, Harry, "From the Ukraine to New York (1918, Jan. 1923)", five typewritten pages, prepared by his daughter, Clara Willner.

[126] Letter by Murray Brodsky, dated February 1991.

[127] Ibid. This incident may be the same recalled by Sholem Lukach.

[128] Ibid. This story too may be the same one described by Lukach but it provides more details.

[129] Tenofsky Memoir, p. 20

[130] A. Mindich, p. 6-12, edited selections

[131] S. Mindich, p78. There is evidence that those who had served in the Russian Army organized a self defense group to defend the town, but it lacked the equipment to ward off the large number of organized and better armed roaming bandits. Haya Nir's relative, Shmerl Friedman was an organizer and leader of the defense group.

[132] Ibid. p79-81.

[133] Ibid, p85-88.

[134] Probably my Zaide Shaya's inn.

[135] S. Mindich. p89-90

[136] Louis Antonoff wrote me that as far as he knows, there were no communists in Winograd.

[137] Weisser, Michael R., *A Brotherhood of Memory, Jewish Landsmanshaften in the New World*, Basic Books, N.Y. 1985, 303p. Quotation on page 251. After reading this story, I wrote to Weisser, advising him that I remembered it from my childhood. He put me in contact with relatives who wrote me that they remembered Winograd and had friends there.

[138] In 1976, when Uncle Joe and Aunt Sarah were celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary, I told this story to family and friends in attendance.

[139] Shulamith Houminer memoir.

[140] Sholem Lukach Memoir.

[141] As indicated elsewhere burying gold and silver objects was a general practice and I was witness to it. Sometimes I think that using a metal detector, one could possibly find hidden treasures in or near the homes of the shtetl.

[142] In 1897, Zvinigrodka's Jewish population was 6389 (32% of the total population). It was considerably higher in 1917. In 1926, after the emigration of many families, the population was 6584 (36.5% of the total population). Most of the Jews were murdered when the Nazis occupied the town. By 1959, only 700 Jews remained and by 1965 there no longer was any organized Jewish life. (Encylopedia Judaica).

[143] Zaide Shaya had 18 grandchildren: 12 were born in the US; one in Belgium, five in the Ukraine (my sister and I) and Aunt Chana's three daughters. It is sad that he only knew two (my sister and me). He died before Aunt Chana's children were born. He did not know the other grandchildren except that in his memory, three were given his Hebrew name, one born to Uncle Joe, another born to Aunt Hinda and a third to Aunt Rachel (Rose). In addition, two granddaughters were named Sarah in memory of Grandma Sarah who died of a contagious disease at a young age.

[144] Sholem Lukach Memoir.

[145] Mindich, p11-12.

[146] Ibid p13.

[147] Louis Antonoff tapes.

[148] Tartakower, Arieh and Grossman, Kurt R., The Jewish Refugee, p. 22-25. In 1922, there were still 45,000 refugees in Bucharest. In earlier years, the number in Bucharest was much greater.

[149] Soon after their arrival in that country, they managed to cross the border illegally into the United States. After many years, their stay in the United States was legalized and they became American citizens.

[150] At a later time, I learned more about Joe Escow. A close friend of my father, Joe was a tailor by vocation and worked in one of the leading department stores in New York. He was one of the single men who came to the United States together with the married men. While in Bucharest he met a pretty single woman Bluma in our group from Tarasche a nearby shtetl whom he married soon after her arrival in the United States. I met him frequently at meetings of the Winograder Benevolent Society and often reminisced and joked about the meeting and experience in Bucharest. Years later - in the 1970's- I met his wife, still a very attractive woman. Joe was no longer living. We talked about the old days with great nostalgia. She was amazed when I recalled the days in Bucharest and in the shtetl. Bluma at the time was the President of the Winograder Society, although she was not born in Winograd, but in Tarasche, a nearby shtetl. She told me about her two sons. One was the President of Rockland State Junior College and the other a political science professor at a college in the MidWest. Soon after our meeting, I telephoned her son, Dr Seymour Escow and identified myself. He came to see me and I briefly told him about

myself, the experiences in the shtetl and about his father and mother. Coincidentally, as the then Director of the World Zionist Organization Department of Education and CultureAmerican Section, I arranged for a group of Rockland State College students to come to Israel for a year of study. This program has been conducted since then. With my assistance, Dr Escow himself brought a group of Junior College Presidents for a VIP visit to Israel. I note these facts for two reasons: One is the convergence of events leading to unexpected reunions and experiences. The second is to point up the far reaching success in the American milieu of children of immigrants within one or two generations. In 1989 I learned that Bluma was still alive. I contacted her by phone. Unfortunately she was very ill but when I identified myself, she still remembered me. I wrote to her, inquiring whether she had records of the Society, but did not receive a reply.

[151] The Winograder Benevolent Society was officially organized and chartered in 1923. My father was a charter member.

[152] Molly Bellin's letter, dated March 25, 1992.

[153] During World War II, Milton served in the United States Army and was in the Battle of the Bulge, serving as a cook. He saved two scrawny, starved Jewish boys who had hidden in the forest and came to scrounge for food, adopted them, brought them to the United States, where they became successful business men.

[154] Many years later, my grandson, Leonard Zvi, age ten, whose middle name is after my father, invited me to tell his public school classmates my story of coming to America. The children listened attentively with open eyes and mouths to the story of the escape from Russia, the trip across Europe and my arrival in America. My emphasis was on liberty and the meaning of America to immigrants and recited for them the poem by Emma Lazarus. The teacher too listened and was enthralled by my tale. She told me it was moving, patriotic and meaningful for the children and for her, too.

[155] In the middle 30's when the Board of Education of New York, in order for me to obtain a teacher's license, required date of arrival in the United States, proof of age and citizenship and also in the middle 40's when I applied for derivative citizenship papers, I visited the Red Star Lines in the Battery area of New York to verify age and arrival in the United States. Since I remembered the name of the ship, the archivist, found the family listed on the ship's manifest. The Immigration and Naturalization official who handled the application for my derivative citizenship papers informed me that a brother instead of a sister arrived with me. I had to convince him it was a mistake and that I had no brother.

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Edlin, Max, recorded by granddaughter, Barbara Parks.
Goodman, Jack, recorded by Sarah (Tania) Antonoff Arkin.

To Eleanor, Lloyd, Judith and Michael

Valued friends. With deep affection and regard.

Abraham P. Gannes

&

Miriam Gannes

17 October 93



the Philadelphia Council for Jewish Education, faculty member and chairman of the administrative committee of Gratz College, Philadelphia, executive director of the Cejwin Camps, the pioneer Jewish educational camp in the United States, and, in the last ten years before retirement, the executive director of the Department of Education and Culture of the World Zionist Organization - American Section. After retirement, Dr. Gannes served as senior lecturer and researcher at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem for one year.

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Childhood in a Shtetl makes an important contribution to our knowledge of both the difficult, terror filled living and rich Jewish life of East European Jewry during the early part of the twentieth century. It succeeds admirably in melding personal memoir and historical insights about a critical period in Jewish history.

—Alvin I. Schiff, Ph.D. distinguished Professor of Education, Yeshivah University. Former Executive Vice President Emeritus, Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York.

You are transported as you read into the world of the shtetl. You become aware of a culture that fashioned the character of parents and grandparents, elements of which have shaped who and what you are regardless of where American ways and values have taken you.

If you were a product of a shtetl culture and were brought to America as a child, the reading will become a dramatic and uplifting exercise in recall and remembrance.

Children, grandchildren have a lively curiosity about the lives of their forbears, and its good for them to know the nature and the quality, the history and the values, of the world of their fathers and ancestors.

—Max Nadel, former Chairman, English Department of the Bronx High School of Science, and educational consultant, Board of Jewish Education of New York.