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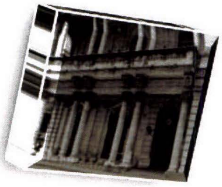


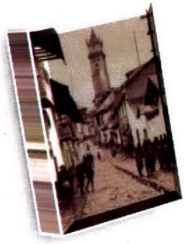


# THE LONG JOURNEY:

## Remembering The Lives of Yoel HaKohein a"h and Gittle a"h Lipszyc













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I consider it a great honor to be a part of this work to memorialize my in-laws, *R' Yoel HaKohein a"h* and his wife *Gittle a"h* Lipszyc. As a new *kallah*, I was informed in no uncertain terms, that it would take me 20 years to possibly be accepted as a part of the Lipszyc-Lerner clan. While I do have a sense of humor, it isn't quite the Lipszyc-Lerner humor, and I tended to be quite sensitive at the time, so at first I felt very hurt. Then I figured "who cares?" My children will be Lipszyc-Lerner-Kramer-Roth-Silverman- Mandels; and in the course of time I forgot about it. I suppose that maybe now, with my being accepted to work on this project, it might be an indication of my acceptance into the family.

Over the years, since the passing of "Babbie" *a"h,* and the first book dedicated to her memory, painstakingly compiled by Freidy Fischman, various members of the family have spoken about writing another book, dedicated to the memory of both "*Babbie*" "*a"h and "Zaidie" a"h.** Earlier this year, my husband, Itchie, returned home from New York with the news that he, Hersch, and Mirel were planning on finally making the book. Being a former English major, and a compulsive proofreader, I asked to be a part of the venture, and to be allowed to proofread and edit the manuscript. I envisioned a beautifully put-together book, including a family tree, photographs of the family both together with Babbie and Zaidie and recent shots, as well as a website, on which each part of the family could upload recent photographs and happenings. And I hope that that will still come to pass. However getting the information we need in order to properly honor Babbie and Zaidy is like pulling teeth. I know that even with her living in New York, where so much of the family is based, Freidy had a difficult time getting information. You can imagine how much more challenging it is for me, based in *"ek velt,"* in Crimea! So we decided that since we do want to produce something on time to honor Zaidie's *yahrtzeit* on *Tes Elul*, we will publish the limited materials which we have now, in the hopes that these stories will jog your memory, and you will contact me with more information, so we can put together something much more comprehensive. As you read our narrative, please make notes (preferably on the computer, if possible,) to fill me in on any missing facts.

Along with the stories and family history, please also send me updated contact information for your entire family (including email addresses and cell phones, as well as street addresses and land lines,) any old pictures you have with Babbie and Zaidie (scanned,) and new family pictures. Please label each picture, so we know who is who.

The best email address for you to send me information is chossid@gmail.com , and I have Google Talk on that address as well. My cell phone in Ukraine is +38068-468-8211. It's usually the best way to contact me. My home phone is +380652-510-773. The problem with this line is that it's in my bedroom, which is kept locked. So **if** I'm home, and **if** I hear the phone ringing, I have to find the key, run and unlock the door, find the phone….. and by then it has usually stopped ringing, of course! So if you call on that number, please let it ring a long time! We're Greenwich time +2, which translates as 7 hours ahead of New York. You are welcome to call here any time – we rarely sleep. Just please remember that when it's Friday noon in New York, it's Shabbos here already.

* Without any lack of reverence meant, *chas v'sholom*, in the interest of making this more readable, I'm going to leave out *a"h* most of the time from here on. I will also refer to my in-laws as Babbie and Zaidie most of the time, as, although they were Mami and Papi to their children, Tanta Gita and Uncle Yoel to their nieces and nephews, and Rabbi and Mrs. Lipszyc to still others, to their *k"ah* numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren they were always lovingly Babbie and Zaidie.

While many of us only knew Babbie and Zaidie when they lived in New York, primarily due to the war, they became world travelers -- beginning in Poland, going on to live in Belgium and France, then running from the Nazis *yemach shemom*, through Spain and Portugal, and continuing on through Cuba, Colombia, and the United States. Even in America, they resided not only in New York, but also in Charleston, South Carolina. They both learned the languages in the countries where they dwelt, thus they spoke Yiddish, Hebrew, Flemish, French, Spanish, Portuguese, and English. Babbie could just as easily converse with a French Canadian as with a native of France; with a Cuban, Colombian, or Spaniard – she was conversant and comfortable with many dialects and accents, and would put visitors at ease by speaking with them in their own native tongue. Since they spoke so many languages, on their escape route they were often chosen to be translators by the mayors and other leading political figures, and were even put up in their homes. So let's start at the beginning, joining them on their excursion through life, seeing what we can learn from their exemplary lives, to apply to our own.

Yoel (Joel) *haKohein* Lipszyc, "Zaidie," was born in Iwaniska (or Stopnica) near Lodz, Poland, on Sunday the 6th of December, 1914, (*"Chai" Kislev* 5675.) This fact alone is interesting, because until the family was sitting *shiva* for him, we thought his birthday was the same as Babbie's. I remember Babbie *a"h* telling me about the first time they met. She was on the second floor, at the top of the stairs, in her father's home in Antwerp. She looked down, and saw a very young looking *bochur* without even a sign of a beard, and she didn't want to even meet him; but since he was there already, she had to go ahead with it. She asked him when his birthday was, and he countered by asking when **her** birthday was. When she told him, he said it was so amazing – his was the same day! (This would make him seem to be the same age, and he'd only have to remember one date!) Anyway, I'm getting way ahead of the story. Yoel was the oldest child of Yitzchok Meyer *haKohein* and Toba Genendel (*nee* Lederman) Lipszyc, *Gerer chassidim*. His younger siblings were: Yehudah Aryeh *H"yd*, Perel Bluma (*Tanta* Perel *a"mush*,) Chaya Ettel (*Tanta* Helen *a"mush*,) Uncle Avraham *a"mush*, Yisroel *H"yd*, and Sarah *H"yd*.

One interesting story about Zaidie's youth is the following, which shows that even as a youngster he must have been on an exceptionally high level. One morning, in Iwaniska, Zaidie was playing not far from the *shul* with his friends, when he noticed a man with a very holy countenance walking briskly down the street, towards the *shul*. His face was absolutely glowing. The man approached Zaidie and asked him where the *bris* was taking place. Zaidie said to his friends 'Wow! Such a special person.' When he realized his friends hadn't seen the man, he quickly decided to follow him inside. He ran after the man, and saw him enter the *shul*. Opening the door to follow him in, he couldn't find him anywhere. "Where is he?" he inquired. "Where is who?" the congregants asked him in return. "The man who just entered, with the holy, shining face! Where is he?" He then walked over to ask his father, who told him to be quiet and not to speak about the experience to anybody. There was a *bris* taking place, and obviously Zaidie had had the great *zechus* to be able to see *Eliyahu HaNavi* entering to be a part of that *simcha!* (Babbie heard this story from her in-laws *a"h*.)

Zaidie wanted to learn in *Yeshivas Chachmei Lublin*. This *yeshiva* was started and directed by the *Gerer Rebbe's* brother-in-law and was considered the top yeshiva at the time. When he applied to be accepted, he was told that in order to be admitted he would have to memorize an entire *mesechta* by heart and that he would be tested on it. Zaidie decided that if he could study a

*mesechta* by heart on his own, he wouldn't need to continue in the yeshiva. So he didn't return to be tested. However, he did study and memorize a *mesechta* just to make sure that he could in fact meet the criteria of the *yeshiva*.

Just a little over one and a half years earlier than Zaidie entered this world, on April 30th, 1912, (*Iyar* 13, 5673,) in Dobra (Cracow,) also in Poland, though in Galicia, a baby girl was born to Sholom and Mirel (*nee* Klagsbrun) Lerner, *Alexanderer chassidim*. Little Gittle (our "Babbie,") was the sixth of *k"ah* eleven children.

When Babbie was a teenager, her mother passed away. She wanted to do everything she could to help her father, so he shouldn't be worried about how they'll be able to manage. The first Friday, probably after *shiva*, she decided to make *challah*. She carefully divided the dough into portions for each loaf, and then divided the dough for the first loaf into six strands. Just as she'd seen how her mother *a"h* had done every week, she carefully braided the dough. When she was finished with the first loaf, she proudly called in her father to look at the beautiful *challah* she'd created. He told her how nice it was, and then asked 'and what's this piece next to it?' She'd accidentally braided the *challah* with five of the six strands, and forgotten the last piece.

Babbie mentioned that as a girl she used to go to a *mesibos Shabbos* group *Shabbos* afternoons, where the inimitable Recha Sternbuch, who later saved the lives of many children and adults during the Holocaust, was the leader of her *mesibos Shabbos* group.

I already mentioned above, how Babbie and Zaidie met. Obviously, in spite of his youthful appearance, (after all, he was a good one and a half years her junior,) she was duly impressed with his good *midos* and his learning, and the two were married in Antwerp, in 1933. Many years later, when Zaidie became sick, someone who had known him when he was younger said that the children don't understand how learned their father was; he said "What your father forgot, alone, is more than most people learn in a lifetime!"

Uncle Avraham, Zaidie's younger brother says that as far as he can recall, the first time when, as a child, he met his brother Yoel was on the occasion of his wedding with Gitta, so that the connection between the two is inseparable in his mind. The wedding was a very big affair which took place in Antwerp where, during the seven days of *sheva brachos*, both Lipszyc and Lerner families celebrated one long continuous *simchas chosson v'kallah*. He was then a child of about 6 years old and this is one of his very first and cherished remembrances. Unfortunately, there were far too few opportunities to be together, as Babbie and Zaidie were forced to flee from Europe on the eve of World War II.

Babbie and Zaidie lived in Antwerp, and then France. Since there were few *chassidic* families in Paris at the time, Babbie and Zaidie became close friends with Rabbi & Mrs. Zalman Schneerson, cousins of the *Rebbe Rayatz*. They were an elderly *chassidic* family who lived in the same building with them, and were very *mekarev* Babbie and Zaidie.

When Itchie was still a *bochur*, Zaidie once asked him to help him do something in the house, and they agreed upon a time when they would do it. Just as they were about to start, Itchie received a call that the Rebbe was coming down soon to *farbreng*. He apologized to Zaidie, and promised that he would do the job himself upon returning from the farbrengen. Zaidie was a bit upset at his attitude, and said, "what, you think you're a *chossid* of the Rebbe? I have a stronger connection,

and am a bigger *chossid* than you, to both the Rebbe and the *Frierdike Rebbe*." He then told him several stories, including the following one.

One time, Reb Zalman Schneerson told Zaidie that he just received a telegram from the Rebbe advising him that he was coming to Paris to see a foot specialist and he needed to be picked up from the train and taken to the doctor, etc. but didn't want the whole "*taramke*" that would go along with such a trip, if his Chassidim would be aware of it. Thus, the Rebbe requested that although the person picking him up should be a *frume*, he shouldn't be a *Lubavitcher chossid*. Reb Zalman, knowing that Zaidie was a *Gerer Chossid*, figured that he would be the best choice for such a mission. Zaidie, having heard of the *Rebbe Rayatz*, responded with pleasure, "of course, it would be my *zechus*." When the *Rebbe Rayatz* and Zaidie got into the carriage, the Rebbe asked for his name, to which he replied, *"Yoel ben Yitzchok Meir HaKohein."* Nothing else was said for the rest of the trip as the Rebbe seemed to have gone into deep thought. Zaidie said that those were the only words that he spoke to the Rebbe.

Reb Zalman suggested that Zaidie take this opportunity to go into *yechidus* with the Rebbe. He said that he was a *Gerer chossid* and therefore felt it would not be proper to go for *yechidus* to a different Rebbe. Reb Zalman then suggested that he simply go to the Rebbe for a *brocho*, especially as Babbie was expecting at the time. Zaidie had no problem going to a *tzadik* for a *brocho* and agreed. When the time came, it was a group *yechidus*, with others seeing the Rebbe as well. In the middle of the *yechidus*, the Rebbe motioned to everyone except Zaidie to go out. The *gabbai* assumed that he was still needed, but the Rebbe motioned to the *gabbai* to also go out of the room. Zaidie noticed this and became anxious, for several reasons: 1) This was obviously not the norm. (Zaidie was a *Gerer chossid* and knew from his own experience that the *gabbai* usually remained with the Rebbe; besides, if Lubavitch had a different custom, then the Rebbe wouldn't have had to motion to the *gabbai*.) 2) The Rebbe had already suffered a stroke which had affected his speech, and Zaidie was afraid that he wouldn't understand what the Rebbe would say to him. 3) The Russian Yiddish dialect is different than the Polish or Galician dialect of Yiddish, and he might therefore not understand the Rebbe. And 4) Most of all, he was afraid that if the Rebbe had dismissed even the *gabbai*, maybe he was going to give him a *chelek* for something he may have done incorrectly.

The Rebbe motioned to Zaidie not to worry and waited until the *gabbai* closed the door behind him. The Rebbe then told my father 'Tell your wife that the *"dunner"* (literally thunder, but sometimes used to connotate lightning,) isn't meant for her.' That was all that the Rebbe said and it was clear that the audience was over. Just as obviously, Zaidie couldn't fathom what the Rebbe had meant, but he did not reply. What was most frustrating was the fact there was no doubt in Zaidie's mind that he did not misunderstand the Rebbe's words. In spite of his difficulties with speech and the different dialect, the Rebbe's words were clear and not subject to misunderstanding. After his audience with the Rebbe, Zaidie went to *shul* to learn, and then to *daven*. By the time he finished learning, *mincha*, his further studies between *mincha* and *maariv*, *maariv* and the *shiur* following it, and he came home, Zaidie had quite forgotten about his audience with the Rebbe and evidently didn't tell Babbie.

Several months passed, the Rebbe had already left Paris, and Babbie and Zaidie were spending some time with Reb Zalman and his wife. Babbie was downstairs in her kitchen with Rebbetzin Schneerson and her two children while Zaidie was upstairs in the library of the Schneerson's apartment, learning together with Reb Zalman. There was a terrible storm at the time, with

lightning, thunder and wind. All of a sudden, the Rebbetzin came running breathlessly upstairs and said animatedly in French *'Mssr.* Lipszyc your wife was hit by lightning!' Reb Zalman was much older at the time and limped, but nevertheless made it down the stairs even faster than Zaidie.

Babbie was in shock. She was revived and a doctor was called to make sure that she was alright, especially since she was pregnant. *Boruch Hashem,* amazingly neither she nor the child were hurt. Later, in recalling what had happened (most likely by Rebbetzin Schneerson,) it seemed that a bolt of lightning had entered the room through the window, came close enough to Babbie to cause her to go into shock, and then reversed its path and exited through a second hole in the same window it had entered. On hearing this, Zaidie recalled his strange audience with the Rebbe and told everyone how the Rebbe had foretold this and asked him to tell his wife that 'the *"dunner"* isn't meant for her.'

While the Rebbe was in France, he stayed in a hotel, occupying rooms on two floors. One floor was for his personal use and the other floor was used for prayers, audiences, etc. The hotel had no elevator and due to the Rebbe's stroke, walking up and down the stairs was problematic for him. The windows were very high and wide. The hinges were removed from them, and a box with pulleys and ropes was built to serve as a make-shift elevator to transport the Rebbe between the two floors. Since the *chassidim* didn't want to leave the Rebbe alone in this box, and at the same time, didn't want to have to pull more weight than was absolutely necessary, a short, slight individual would be required. Zaidie, fitting the requirements, was selected, and thus merited once again serving the Rebbe.

While living in France, in Paris, Zaidie and Babbie ran a small restaurant. This was in the already difficult pre-war days, when there were more patrons who couldn't afford to compensate them for their meals, than paying clientele. People would come and stay over Shabbos. More often than not, they would not pay either because they didn't have the money on them or Zaidie simply invited them as guests, knowing that they couldn't afford to pay. One paying customer used to come in daily to buy a bowl of soup and bread. One day he came in and uneasily said to Babbie "I can't afford to pay you anymore." Babbie told him not to worry, as she'd gladly serve him as usual. He then proceeded to order a full three course meal with wine. Babbie began to speak to him -- "every day when you paid, soup and bread was good enough…" Zaidie quickly and quietly pulled Babbie aside and said "He is our guest now; if he wants a three course meal with wine, give it to him." Obviously, with their generous *hachnosas orchim*, the restaurant provided them with very little revenue. The situation soon reached the point that the business was not producing income at all. In order to pay off debts, Babbie didn't hesitate to pawn off many of the beautiful wedding gifts that she had received, including her sterling silverware and other valuables. When the business was forced to close down and Babbie and Zaidie went back to live in Belgium, Babbie was scared to tell her father that she had lost all her valuable gifts. *Boruch Hashem*, her siblings helped her pay the pawn shop to redeem the gifts.

When Zaidie was still in Paris, working as a *shoichet,* he was invited to and participated in a large convention of European *askonim.* There were well over 1,000 participants on the floor of the convention hall. As he was walking, he suddenly felt an acute pain in his back as if someone had stabbed him with a knife. (This is how he described it later, but using modern terminology, and in sync with what was happening, a "laser beam" might be a more apt description.) Zaidie turned around and saw a "*yunger man*" standing off in the distance staring intently at him. At the time he didn't know who he was, but he later found out that he was the son-in-law of the then Lubavitcher

Rebbe (the *Rebbe Rayatz*.) Many years later when speaking of this incident to Babbie, she added that when Zaidie was '*nisht haint gedacht*' in the hospital, in the 1950's, and at Hersch's prodding, she had gone into her first *yechidus* with the Rebbe for a *brocho* for Zaidie. When she explained that her husband was in the hospital and needed a *brocho* for *gezunt*, the Rebbe said, "*ich ken doch aier man, ich hob em getrafen of dem kinus...*" ('I know your husband; I met him at the convention...') Babbie was surprised, because Zaidie always told her when he met special people, and he had never mentioned such a meeting. So when she next went to visit Zaidie in the hospital, she told him about the *yechidus* and what the Rebbe had said. She asked him why he never mentioned that he had met the Rebbe. Zaidie looked at Babbie in surprise, and said, "the Rebbe saw me from a distance, in a crowded convention hall of more than a thousand people, and I'm supposed to think that by the Rebbe that is considered as if we met?!?"

According to the family tree, Babbie gave birth to one child during this time, Yehoshua *a"h*. However, Babbie spoke to us about two children that she lost in Europe. One died during infancy. Babbie used to say how important it is to eat whatever one desires during pregnancy, because if not, the child will be wanting. She seemed to feel that that was why her baby did not live. She also spoke about another son who lived about two years or two and a half years, and used to go to shul with Zaidie, and how people would remark about his beautiful appearance.

Be it as it may, the war began at about that time, very rudely and abruptly disrupting everyone's lives.

During the early period of the occupation, Zaidie was once rounded up together with a great many other Jews. One of Babbie's brothers, Uncle Motche, who was about 14 years old at the time and was not incarcerated, stood outside the gate. Zaidie told him to run home and tell Babbie all the details of what had happened and where they were. He knew that Babbie would know what had to be done. She gathered together as much money as possible and approached the compound's *kommandant* to buy Zaidie's release. The German obviously demanded a high ransom. Babbie paid and got a permit to release Zaidie. When he was told that he could leave, he refused to leave until all the others who had been rounded with him were also released. Neither Babbie's pleas nor Zaidie's comprehension of the severity of the situation would change his insistence on bailing out all the other Jews who had been apprehended together with him. Babbie once again had to pawn off all her valuables, as well as to borrow money from others, in order to secure the release of all those Jews. She worked hard after she escaped and set up a new home in America, to make sure she repaid this debt.

Another time, while still residing in Belgium, Zaidie was again rounded up and put into a detention camp by the Nazis *yemach shemom*. Somehow Zaidie got the guard to agree to stand at the far side of the yard at a certain time of the night. He managed to dig a space under the barbed wire & helped 250 men escape in one night, but he didn't leave with them. Zaidie wanted to do a repeat performance the next night. The following morning, the guard went over to him and told him "*Rabbiner*, they know what you did. You must leave right now!" Noticing a laundry truck that was in the yard at the time, Zaidie immediately jumped onto the back of the truck, hiding under the dirty laundry, escaping just in time to avoid the consequences of his deed. Just imagine how many people were in that yard that Zaidie though they wouldn't miss 250 or 500 of them!

Although the situation was growing more and more critical, and Zaidie was very aware and concerned about the dark clouds hovering over Europe, he still did everything possible in the little

time remaining, to help other Jews get travel permits and find ways to leave the country. He borrowed money and used it to help many others escape the imminent inferno called the Holocaust. Many of those people promised to repay the money. Although some were fortunate enough to establish successful businesses in America after the war, they did not remember their debt to Babbie and Zaidie. When Babbie approached them to help her later, in her time of distress, they were not there for her. Even though the pain was very great, (to the point that she mentioned her disappointment), she nevertheless refused to mention the names of those ungrateful people.

Zaidie was very aware of the world political situation and at that point he knew that they had to leave Belgium already. He told everyone whom he thought might be interested that he was planning on leaving and if they wanted to join his family they could. At one point one of the interested people complained that Zaidie was telling too many people. He told him that they were much less likely to successfully escape if the group was a large one. Zaidie's reply was that if the *Ribbono Shel Oilom* wants, they'll all make it out safely. Who can say 'I'm more important than someone else?'

The escape route of Babbie and Zaidie and their growing family took them through France, Spain and Portugal, with Babbie giving birth to Hersch (Tzvi Noach) in Portugal in 1941, and Sarah a year later, in Cuba.

Once, while they were running from the conflagration of European Jewry, they were standing in a train yard. There were tracks running in every direction, and Babbie, who was pregnant at the time, found herself momentarily separated from the rest of the family. Suddenly, two trains were approaching her from opposite directions, with the tracks very close together. She would have been killed, *chas v'sholom*, crushed between them. In a flash, she felt strong arms pulling her to safety, away from the oncoming trains. When she turned to thank her benefactor, there was nobody in sight. Thus, Babbie as well, felt that she had the privilege of being saved by none other than *Eliyahu HaNavi*.

With the situation in Portugal becoming exceedingly dangerous, Zaidie had to make arrangements (papers, tickets etc.) to get the family out of the country. Obviously, everybody else was trying to do the same and the organizations that were responsible to facilitate these needs were less than cooperative. When Zaidie was finally able to make the necessary contacts, he was told to come to pick up the papers on Saturday. It was made imminently clear to him that if he didn't take care of it on Shabbos, (not Friday or Sunday,) the papers would be assigned to someone else. Zaidie walked to the place on Shabbos. When they showed him where to sign, he refused and pleaded that they should leave it available and he would come in on Sunday to sign and pick it up. Of course, they refused and told him either sign or lose his chance to leave.

While pleading, arguing and cajoling, he memorized the numbers identifying the documents. After Shabbos, he went there to attempt to pick up the papers. He was told by the watchman that there was no one there and he would have to come back on Monday. Zaidie told the watchman that he was told that the papers would be available and he could pick them up from the watchman that evening. The watchman of course knew nothing about this and said that he couldn't help him. Zaidie told him that the person probably had forgotten to tell him, but if he looks in the office, he would notice that the papers were there. To strengthen his argument, he told him the numbers that he had memorized, identifying the papers. When the watchman saw that the papers made out to our family matched those numbers, he gave them to him.

When they finally left Portugal, on the last vessel scheduled to leave port, one of the Jews died aboard the ship. The ship had already left the harbor and under the circumstances, the risk of returning could have been fatal. However Zaidie insisted that the ship return to allow the Jew to reach *kever Yisroel* (internment in a Jewish cemetery.) When others aboard objected that the risk was too great, and the captain of the ship said that the deceased would be cast into the ocean once they reached the open sea, Zaidie pleaded and explained that he was a *kohein* and was therefore not permitted to be on the same boat with a cadaver. The captain turned the ship around and arrangements were made to assure proper burial of the deceased according to Jewish law.

During that trip, a second Jew died while the ship was still at sea. Although, the captain was adamant that the body be cast overboard, somehow, Zaidie was able to convince him to keep the body aboard until the ship reached land so that that person as well could have a proper burial. Don't ask how he explained the contradiction to his previous claim that as a *kohein* he could not be on the same boat with a cadaver; somehow he managed it.

The destination of the ship upon which the family was traveling was America. However, when it approached the shores of the United States, as with so many other ships coming from Europe at the time, they were denied entry and the ship was forced to turn back. Many lives were lost due to this denial of landing rights by the American government, and Zaidie once again used his powers of persuasion to convince the very reluctant captain to change his course and take them to Cuba. (I know there is a story here about Zaidie organizing the people on the ship to threaten that they would all jump overboard if *chas v'sholom* the boat would have gone back to Europe.)

Upon reaching the shores of Cuba, Zaidie applied immediately for visas into the United States. At that time, America wanted young families to come and build up America. They did not want more elderly people, who they looked upon as a burden. They promptly gave visas for each member of the family. Zaidie, just as promptly gave the visas to older people. He waited awhile and then applied again, receiving more visas, and again disbursing them to the elderly. This he continued to do for about five years. It took that long for the officials to catch on to what was going on. Finally, the last time he applied, many weeks went by without his receiving visas. When he inquired, he was told that the captain on the ship had the visas for the Lipszyc family and would give them directly to Zaidie when they would arrive in Florida.

While in Cuba, Babbie and Zaidie struggled to send care packages back to their families in Europe. Once, very disheartened and frustrated, because they hadn't heard from anyone in awhile, Babbie, commented to Zaidie that who knows if the relatives are even receiving any of the things they're sending; probably they were being stolen by the Germans. Zaidie responded that even if just one thing from each package was being given to their families it was worth sending. Remember that they were in serious financial straits at that time. To make some money, Babbie used to sell butter. She had to run up three or four flights of steps so the butter wouldn't melt in the extreme tropical heat.

Once Zaidie told Babbie that another immigrant in desperate need had asked him for money. He was holding some *tzedaka* money from the *kehillah*, the Jewish community in Cuba, so he gave that money to the man. Babbie was upset and asked how Zaidie could give away *kehillah* money to someone when he knows the man has no money with which to repay the debt. Zaidie's response was 'well who else would ask him for money, a rich man?' Of course Babbie and Zaidie had to repay the loan themselves.

The following incident, which happened with Mendel, when the family lived in Cuba, gives us some insight into how Zaidie operated and how he raised his children. The teachers in Cuba wrote the homework assignments on the upper right hand corner of the board before the students entered the class, so the students couldn't tell the teacher that they didn't have time to write down the assignments before dismissal. Since they were experienced teachers who prepared well in advance, the homework was based on what would be taught each day. On the occasion that Mendel's teacher taught long division, she was running behind schedule. Normally, she would explain the concept, put some examples on the board to be done during class, and review it. Only then would they be able to do their homework. In this particular instance, however, there wasn't enough time to do the examples in class. His homework usually took about 20 minutes to do; however, since this time he didn't know how to do it, Mendel was getting nowhere fast. Zaidie noticed that he was struggling and asked him where he was having difficulty. Mendel showed him the problem and Zaidie sat down with him to explain how to do it. (He didn't do the problem; he used different numbers to explain.) Then he asked Mendel what was wrong. He said that he could see on his face that something was still wrong. Mendel said his teacher had shown it differently; he didn't know how to explain it, but he could see that they were using two different methods. Zaidie told him as it was getting late, he should go out to play awhile and they'd get back to the homework later. Presently he called Mendel in and they went over the exercise. This time he did it the way the teacher had. Zaidie had spent the time when Mendel was playing, figuring out how the teacher had done the problem. When he saw that Mendel understood it, he gave him a few problems to try and then had him do the assignment. Now he was able to do it quickly. In school the next day the teacher said she wouldn't mark the homework wrong but gave extra credit for those who did get it right. Thanks to Zaidie's dedication, Mendel got the extra credit.

When they were ready to leave Cuba, the elderly man who was the official *shoichet* there, approached Zaidie to help his grandson leave Cuba and attend a *yeshiva*. The boy's parents were not particularly religious and since the *shoichet* was getting on in years, he was afraid that his grandson would fall by the wayside. Zaidie discussed with him how to accomplish this with minimum problems. The *shoichet* brought his grandson to the port, and gave Zaidie the boy's passport, ticket and a signed authorization to take the 13 year old boy to New York to attend *yeshiva*. Zaidie then brought him to New York and made all the necessary arrangements with Rabbi Gourary to take him into *yeshiva*.

When the family arrived in the United States in 1946, Zaidie had a hard time getting a job. To get into the union of the *shoichtim* was very difficult. In addition, Zaidie's strict adherence to *halachah* was not a popular approach. Finally, after many months, an opportunity was offered to become a *rav* and *shoichet* for the Jewish community in Charleston, South Carolina. It included as well being the *baal korei, baal tefillah* (*shacharis* for all holidays), and blowing *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah. The *sh'chita* itself was in Raleigh, North Carolina. Zaidie would need to spend the week in Raleigh and come home only for *Shabbos*. At that time Babbie and Zaidie had *k"ah* five children, Babbie was expecting Itchie. Although from a financial standpoint, the opportunity seemed attractive, Zaidie was reluctant to move into a community where there was no quality Jewish education to speak of, therefore he wasn't sure if he should take the position. For what would become of the children's *chinuch*? In those days, it wasn't easy to contact one's Rebbe. The *Gerer Rebbe* was in *Eretz Yisroel*, and Zaidie had to give an answer that very night, as to whether he was interested in the position or not. Then he remembered that he had heard that the *Rebbe Rayatz* now lived in Crown Heights, and having been impressed with him when he met him 10 years earlier, he decided that

he would go and ask his advice. Coming to 770 Eastern Parkway, Zaidie went upstairs to the floor where the Rebbe's room was. Being a *Gerer chossid,* he was used to their custom that whenever someone wanted to speak to the Rebbe, he would go to the Rebbe's room and knock on the door. If the Rebbe answered to enter, one went in, if not, one didn't. But when he got to the Rebbe's floor he saw three doors facing him. 'Which door is the Rebbe's?' he wondered. Which door should he knock on? And so he was wandering from door to door trying to see if he could find some sign of which one was the correct door. The Rebbe's secretary stood nearby, watching this young man walking from door to door, stopping and gazing intently at each one. Finally he asked him, "What are you looking for?" To which Zaidie responded with a question, "what does anyone look for in a Rebbe's house?" Rabbi Simpson began to laugh. Zaidie, somewhat taken aback, asked, "what's so amusing?" To which Rabbi Simpson replied, "Young man, that's not how things work here; this isn't Ger. You don't just walk into the Rebbe; you need to make an appointment first." Zaidie said that he needed to see the Rebbe. Rabbi Simpson said, "The Rebbe said that he can't see anyone today." Zaidie pleaded with him to give his name to the Rebbe -- perhaps he'll make an exception. Rabbi Simpson explained that it wasn't possible, because the Rebbe wasn't feeling well. Zaidie asked to at least take in a *kvittel,* because he needed to ask the Rebbe an urgent question for which he needed an immediate answer." Rabbi Simpson was adamant that he wouldn't disturb the Rebbe for any reason. During this back and forth conversation, Zaidie was getting more and more agitated, and raised his voice a bit. Suddenly he heard a voice calling, "Elia, Elia." Not catching which direction it was coming from, Zaidie turned around. Realizing that he was mistaken, he quickly turned back to see Rabbi Simpson already entering the Rebbe's room. He was very upset, thinking that "if you're already going into the Rebbe, why couldn't you at least have taken my name?" Thinking that he seemingly had no connection here, Zaidie started going down the stairs to leave. Unexpectedly, Rabbi Simpson came running and called after him, "*Reb Yid, ver zeint ir?*" Zaidie, still upset turned around and replied "now you ask? Why didn't you ask before you went into the Rebbe?" Rabbi Simpson quietly answered that the Rebbe had called him in and said "Let that young man in immediately, I owe him a favor!" "So," Rabbi Simpson continued, "who are you, and what favor does the Rebbe owe you?" Zaidie immediately raced up the stairs calling back, "If so, the Rebbe's waiting, I can't talk!"

The Rebbe advised Zaidie to take the offer in Charleston, and as to his query about the children's *chinuch,* the Rebbe said, "your oldest son you should leave in a *yeshiva* in New York, and regarding the rest of the children, *"Eier Rebbetzin vet zei gut mechanech zein. Ihr kent zich farlozen oif eier Rebbetzin."* ('Your Rebbetzin will educate them well. You can rely on your wife.') I believe Menachem was then just under Bar Mitzvah age, so he would remain in New York, in *yeshiva.*

When Zaidie exited the Rebbe's room, Rabbi Simpson was waiting for him and made clear his intention not to let him leave until he told him who he was and what favor the Rebbe was referring to. From that moment a lasting friendship was born between the Simpson and Lipszyc families, to the point that Zaidie and Babbie considered Rabbi & Mrs. Elia Simpson as surrogate parents. Throughout the years the *Rebbe Rayatz* kept up a strong interest in Babbie and Zaidie, and insisted on Rabbi Simpson keeping him informed of all the details of what was happening with them. There are numerous letters from the *Frierdike Rebbe* to Rabbi Mendel Feldman (Rabbi Simpson's son-in-law) and Shimon Aharon Simpson (one of Rabbi Simpson's sons, who the Rebbe sent to learn *sh'chita* from Zaidie) in which the Rebbe always refers to Zaidie in very affectionate terms "...a warm Jew with beard and *peyos*," "...one of our brotherhood," (a term

generally reserved only for Chabad *chassidim*,) etc. During our stay in Charleston, the Rebbe showed a special *kiruv* to Zaidie and Babbie.

When Zaidie heard that Babbie's father had passed away in Eretz Yisroel, Babbie was pregnant with Itchie. He didn't know what to do, so he consulted with Rabbi Simpson, who advised him not to tell her until after the pregnancy, so as not to harm her or the baby. When Babbie found out her sister Tzirel *a"h* had died, after the Holocaust, she stated that the next baby girl born to her she would name for her, and was probably inclined to think the baby would be a girl. When Babbie was expecting Itchie, she had a dream in which she saw her sister Tzirel leaning on her father's shoulder refusing to look at Babbie. Babbie ran to her, but she kept turning away. Her sister, hooking her arms around her father's neck, kicked out at Babbie's stomach. At that point she woke up. Babbie couldn't understand two things. Why would Tzirel, who was no longer alive, be with her father, who she believed was alive, and why would she kick her sister away? Babbie realized that if Tzirel was upset and kicked her away, the baby would be a boy, whom, of course, she wouldn't be able to name for her. She awakened Zaidie and informed him that they are going to have a baby boy. "Now you figured out that you're going to have a boy? At 2:00 in the morning?" Zaidie asked. When Babbie tried discussing with him why Tzirel was with her father, however, he remained noncommittal. It was only later, after Itchie's *bris* that Babbie found out about her father's passing.

Everyone seems to be unanimous in their memories of Zaidie learning in the wee hours in his melodious voice…

"My earliest memories of Papi were really when I used to wake up in the middle of the night, in Charleston, (which happened quite a few times,) hearing Papi learning *Gemmorah* with his sweet *Gemmorah niggun*, and that's how I fell back asleep…"

"My earliest and constant memories are of hearing Papi being *maaver the sedra* in his lovely melodic voice; the music of the *tropp* penetrating my sleep in the wee hours of the morning… a very comforting sound!"

"Much of the time, I saw him singing or humming, which left me with the strong impression that despite his problems, he was an upbeat person. One of the songs that I heard him sing during *shalosh seudos* was the song *Tzur Mishelo*. It was to the well known tune, however, with a slight twist that made it uniquely Zaidie's. I recall walking with Zaidie to and from *shul* for a period of time. Listening carefully, I would hear him humming a tune softly. Other times, I watched as he sat with his *seforim*. Then too, he would hum gently as he learned."

"When in his home, it was not easy to sleep after 5:00 am as he was up and learning in a loud tone by then."

"This will remain in my memory as clearly as if it was yesterday. I remember when Papi lived on 40th Street in Boro Park, I cannot recall a single time that I woke up, whether it was day or night, that when I passed by the kitchen, I didn't see Papi sitting at the kitchen table with a Rambam in front of him, when he wasn't humming and learning."

Zaidie not only had a beautiful voice but a very powerful voice as well, and it carried far. Once Zaidie and Babbie were at the doctor's office and the doctor used an inappropriate word. When the doctor left the room, Zaidie turned to Babbie & said sadly; "ehr *nizt azolcher nisht sheina*

*verter*". His voice unintentionally carried out into the hallway, where the doctor heard Zaidie's comment, and he returned to the room to apologize. After that, the doctor was much more careful with his language. Anyone who knew Babbie and Zaidie also knew how they cringed at improper language -- even words like "stupid," "crazy" or "shut up."

Once, when the family lived in Charleston, Babbie and Zaidie decided to send some of the children to overnight camp. When Babbie told them they would be going to camp, Leible, who was then nine years old, was very excited. Wanting very much to show his appreciation, he went into the bathroom and started washing the floors and walls. The more he washed the more of a mess he made! He was making splotches all over, peeling off paint, puddles of dirty water were all over the floor... The place looked like one great big mess! When Babbie came in and saw what was going on she asked Leible what he was doing. Getting a little nervous he explained that he was feeling so grateful, he wanted to do something nice for Babbie. Babbie hugged and kissed him and she made him feel great by telling him what a beautiful present it really was!

Zaidie was at often at *shul,* being *mashgiach* for food companies, hearing a *din Torah* or any of his various duties as a *rav, kohein, shoichet, mohel,* etc...While living in Charleston he often travelled to New York for rabbinical conferences or to shop for various kosher items. Sarah remembers always looking forward to Purim to hear how Zaidie would *lein Megillas Esther* -- a special treat for the womenfolk on Purim day. His clear, beautiful voice so exquisitely portrayed the story so one actually heard it as a proclamation rendered to all *Yidden.* Pesach Zaidie always translated the *Haggadah* ensuring that everyone understood it all, therein making sure everyone was fully aware of the extent of the miracles *Hashem* wrought for us.

One morning, during the week of *selichos*, Zaidie went to shul to *daven shacharis* and noticed that carpenters were doing some work in the *shul.* When he questioned them what they were constructing so close to Rosh Hashanah, he was told that some seats were sold for women to *daven* downstairs with the men. Zaidie told them to stop and called the officers of the *shul* to have them give the orders to halt their work. The officers said that it was too late to make any changes and that they could talk about it after *Yom Tov.* Zaidie told them that if there were women *davening* downstairs, he would not attend services in *shul.* Since he always *davened* with a *minyan*, the officers felt that he was not serious about not attending *shul,* being that there was no other *shul* in town. Zaidie assured them in no uncertain terms, that he would *daven* at home even without a *minyan* but would not attend a mixed *minyan.* When the officers, saw that he was serious they understood the scandal that would happen on Rosh Hashanah if the town's *rav/shoichet/bal korei/bal tokeah* would not be present on Rosh Hashanah. They pleaded with Zaidie, who consented to allow women to be downstairs provided they were in the back, a platform had to be constructed with the chairs on top of the platform, and curtains totally surrounded this area.

In those days there were very few commercial flights. Most traveling was done on trains and ships. Zaidie made overtures and even had appointments set up with the president of one of the largest train lines to add a kosher dining car to their lines! The previous Rebbe sent letters to Rabbi Mendel Feldman to help Zaidie in this project. Unfortunately, he became ill just at that time and this project did not reach fruition. Imagine, we would have had the head start and probably a monopoly on kosher meals on all planes, trains and maybe even buses.

The *shul* in Charleston organized a concert to benefit the community. They hired Cantor Malavsky and his family to sing. Although this was a major community function, Zaidie refused to go since

the cantor's daughters would be singing, although he did tell Babbie to go. Zaidie's absence was noticed by everyone present. Even the cantor was aware of what happened.

It was while Zaidie was a *shoichet* in Charleston, South Carolina, that he became very ill. Babbie took him to a New York hospital, where he remained for an extended period of time. The older children, who were already enrolled in school, first went for the summer to Camp Daniel Morgan in Atlanta, and then after camp, they stayed for a few months with the family of Philip and Helen Friedman, before rejoining Babbie in New York. However, since Itchie was only two years old, Babbie felt that it would be most practical to leave him in their home in Charleston, with Viola, the woman who used to help her in the house. Being that this happened in 1949, in the segregated Deep South, and since Viola was black, this didn't set very well with the establishment. Without saying anything to my mother, the heads of the Jewish Community simply showed up one day and told Viola that Babbie had sent them to take Itchie. Since she knew these people from the many times that they had come to the house in the past to speak to Zaidie, she believed them and had no other choice, she felt, but than to let them take him away. They then gave him to a couple who unfortunately were not able to have their own children, telling them that Babbie has five other children and a sick husband and would certainly be willing to give him up for adoption. Meanwhile, Viola was highly insulted by the way she believed Babbie had handled the situation, and sent off a letter to her telling her how upset she was, that she had taken her son away like that, without even having the decency to notify her about it in advance. Imagine Babbie's utter shock when she received this letter informing her that someone had taken away her youngest child, basically kidnapping him, and she had no idea where he was! In those days, telephones were a luxury which Babbie could ill afford and Viola even less. She immediately wrote to her that obviously she had no idea what Viola was talking about, as she should be able to see clearly from the fact that she had just sent her the monthly expense money in the mail, their letters having crossed. She asked to be told exactly who had taken away Itchie. Next she had to write to them, to ask what was going on. They tried to calm Babbie, and explained that it didn't look good for the Jewish community that the rabbi's son was being "brought up" by a colored person. Babbie felt that was her decision to make, not theirs, and wrote that then they should have told her, and she would have taken him to New York. However, when she asked them to please put Itchie on a plane and send him to her, they tried convincing her that she should meanwhile leave him where he was, as she has other things to worry about now, with a sick husband in the hospital and a household and other children to take care of. She shouldn't worry, he's being well taken care of. In spite of their reassurances, Babbie insisted that she wanted her son back immediately. Then began the stalling tactics. Each time there were different excuses, always trying to convince Babbie to meanwhile leave Itchie in South Carolina. This dragged on and on. After months of broken promises and all kinds of diversionary tactics, Babbie finally got them on the phone and said that this would be the last time she'd be calling. If her child wouldn't be returned to New York immediately, she would have to get on a plane, which she truly couldn't afford, neither the cost nor the loss of time, and come to pick him up in person. At this point, the leaders of the community, realized that they couldn't stall any longer -- that she was really going to be on the next plane out, if she didn't get her child back right away. So they went to the couple and explained that Babbie was apprehensive, since she didn't know what kind of people they were, and was having second thoughts about letting them adopt Itchie. They went on to recommend that this couple bring Itchie to New York so that Babbie could see for herself what good people they were, and for sure she would agree to the adoption. This poor couple, not realizing that these so-called respected leaders of the community had concocted the entire scenario, was only too willing to follow their advice. They brought Itchie by plane to New York. (Throughout his childhood and well into his teens, Itchie kept having what he thought of as *déjà vu* of a scene with him as a child, standing on the seat of an airplane, looking

out the window and crying. He couldn't imagine where that recurring vision came from, since he had no recollection of ever having been on a plane as a youngster. He never mentioned it to anybody. It was only after Babbie told this story to Leah, as a *kallah*, that he realized that this was most likely the scene he was constantly reliving.) Babbie, of course, was totally taken aback when she realized that the people who brought back her son, and had been taking care of him for the past half year, were under the false impression that he was up for adoption. When she explained that she would never even entertain the idea of giving up one of her children, they tried asking her why, if she already has five other children, and a sick husband, shouldn't she give him up to a loving couple which will give him all the good things in life? Babbie asked incredulously, "do you really believe that because I have five others, that I have no room in my heart to love my sixth child?!" Seeing that they couldn't convince her, and noticing that she was pregnant with *ka"h* yet another child, they tried something else. "Okay." they said, "We understand. You already love this child. But perhaps since you haven't yet had a chance to get to know the child you are now carrying, would you consider giving that child to us?" Babbie's first reaction was to just show them to the door. However, and this is what was so unique about her, instead she thought to herself, "How sad. These people are so desperate for a child, they will try anything. How can I help them?" Suddenly, she had an inspiration. With tremendous love, and sensitivity to their pain, she told them, "Listen, my children are not up for adoption, however, why don't you go to Israel. There are *nebech* so children there who were left orphans from the war. Certainly you will find the child you seek in Israel."

Uncle Avraham tells how he remembers vividly the great emotion of their very first meeting two decades after the war. At that time there still was regular commuter traffic by sea so that, of all places, they met at New York harbor when he and his wife Esther arrived by boat to participate in Sarah's and Avraham Hochman's wedding. Zaidie and Babbie were there amidst a huge crowd of people awaiting relatives. He doesn't know how, but they immediately recognized each other in spite of so many years of separation. However, all four of them were speechless, and couldn't stop touching and embracing one another.

Five years later, Zaidie went to *Eretz Yisroel* and stayed with Uncle Avraham and Tanta Esther in their home in Ramat HaSharon where Babbie joined him after visiting with family in Belgium. That was a step further in their special relationship of love and admiration for Babbie.

Uncle Avraham says that the memory of certain episodes come popping up in his mind. They davened in his *shul* and Zaidie was asked to be the *shliach tzibur* for *kabolas Shabbos*. Everybody was enchanted by Zaidie's "performance" and even years later people kept saying how much they enjoyed his *tefillah*.

But this was also around *Shavuos*. When *Yom Tov* arrived they needed to find a special *minyan* for Zaidie the second day, since in *Eretz Yisroel* there is only one day of *Yom Tov*.. So they decided to walk all the way to *Yeshivas Ponovitch* in *Bnei Brak* where they held such a *minyan* for visitors from abroad. It took them more than two hours of walking through the fields. Having to be at his office in Tel-Aviv, Uncle Avraham had to leave Zaidie there. After *davening*, Zaidie went to the home of Esther's sister Leah, *a"h* who lived around the corner from the *yeshiva* and where he could have a meal and a rest. Her husband took him back in the evening. Zaidie made such an impression on Leah, *a"h* that she simply didn't have enough words to describe later on, how much they enjoyed his gracious manners and his soft speaking.

Another episode concerns one of their trips to Yerushalayim, where Zaidie wished to pay his respects to the *Gerer Rebbe*. Being still in the army, Uncle Avraham wore his uniform with short sleeves, which didn't prevent the Rebbe from receiving them as honored guests, in a most friendly manner. The Rebbe asked Zaidie many questions about their parents and the family and about his own whereabouts in the States. The conversation was quite lively and lasted much more than a regular audience. At the end, in a most unusual gesture, he stood up from the high stool on which he was sitting and came with them to the door before taking leave.

Zaidie said that he only went into two *yechidus'n* with the Rebbe, and was afraid to ever go in again (except for *chasunas, bar-mitzvas,* other *simchas,* etc.) Both times were regarding Menachem. According to Babbie and Zaidie, the first time was when Menachem finished High School. He finished with the second highest Regent scores in the state of New York. He was awarded a totally free scholarship to attend the college of his choice. Zaidie wanted very much for him to take advantage of this golden opportunity. However, the Rebbe had spoken very strongly against college education and Menachem didn't want to go. [According to Menachem's version, he did want to go and had written a letter to the Rebbe and the Rebbe answered him in the negative. If so, perhaps after that, unbeknownst to him, Zaidie may have gone into the Rebbe to argue his cause.] Zaidie went into *yechidus* and asked that the Rebbe allow Menachem to go to college. The Rebbe emphatically said "no!" So he asked, "How is it that the Rebbe himself went to college, yet he's not letting others go?" The Rebbe gave Zaidie a strong look and said, "that is why I can tell you, with first- hand experience, that it's not a place for him."

The second *yechidus* was when a *shidduch* was spoken for Menachem while he was still a young *bochur* of about nineteen. It was a very auspicious shidduch - money, *yichus*, wonderful kudos, etc. Zaidie wanted it very much. But when he went in to *yechidus* to ask the Rebbe, the Rebbe said, "Don't bother him with *shidduchim* as long as he's in *yeshiva* learning." Zaidie asked in surprise, "This is the first time I hear of a Rebbe going against a very clear *mishna*, '*shemoneh esrei l'chupa'?!?*" ('One should get married at eighteen.') The Rebbe gave Zaidie a very stern look, albeit just for a moment. Zaidie later related "at that moment I lost all my *koichos*, and never got it back." Zaidie explained that as a *shoichet* of *gasus* (steers,) although he was short and thin, he was quite wiry and powerful. Yet after that look, he felt all his strength leave his body and never did he return to his previous strength. The Rebbe then pointed to the bookshelves behind Zaidie and said, "On those shelves is the *mishnayos* in question. If you'll bring it here, I'll learn it with you, the way it should be learnt." Zaidie immediately regretted having challenged the Rebbe, apologized and said it was not necessary. He then left the *yechidus* room. As soon as he stepped out of the room, he slapped himself on the forehead and thought, "What did I do? I had a chance to learn a *mishna* with the Rebbe, and I turned it down?!?" When he told this story to Itchie, it was at least a dozen years after it happened, and he was still very agitated for not having taken advantage of the moment. So Itchie told him with a smile, "Don't be upset, at that moment you truly became a *chossid*." It was then that Zaidie added that since twice in *yechidus* he wasn't able to control himself from challenging the Rebbe, he had decided that he shouldn't go into *yechidus* anymore.

Shmuel recalls that when he got married, Zaidie was already not well. Yet he could see his good qualities that were a natural part of him. He immediately bought him presents of *seforim* way beyond what he could financially manage. He was a good-hearted person, which showed through and through. He was also an *Ohev Yisroel* to the point of *mesiras nefesh.*

As a *chossid*, Zaidie was always very meticulous in following the *derech* of the Torah *lifnim mishuras hadin*. Once he was hired for a job that had been vacant for eight months. The day before he was to start working, he received a phone call from the previous employee who yelled at him that he was stealing his job and how could a so called Orthodox Jew do such a thing? He replied that the job had been vacant for eight months, so how could he be considered as stealing the job? The person replied that if the job stays vacant for a year, they would be forced to rehire him. Zaidie called up his prospective employer the next morning and explained he could not accept the job, even though he knew that the chances of the former employee actually getting back the job was nil.

On the day of Itchie's *chasuna*, he spoke to Rabbi Elia Simpson, who had been the *gabbai* of the *Frierdike Rebbe*, and was to be the *mesader kedushin*. He told Itchie the following: "I want you to know who your mother is. Once after your mother was leaving from *yechidus* with the Rebbe (*Rayatz*) the Rebbe turned to me and said "*dorten geit a bar daas*," (a term usually reserved for a man of high intelligence and with a tremendous amount of common sense.) "And I don't have to tell you," Rabbi Simpson continued, "that it was well known that the Rebbe *hot zich nit gevorfen mit vertlach*," ('didn't just throw words around.') "But what I will add is that in all my years as the Rebbe's *gabbai*, I never heard the Rebbe say that about a man, let alone about a woman."

The first Shmuel came to their home, he was nervous and shy but Babbie had a knack for making everyone feel warm and comfortable and it did wonders for him. She always treated him (and all of her sons and daughters-in-law as a wonderful "Yiddishe mama." She was very smart and good. To find both traits in one person is rare, but she had both. The first time Shmuel's great-uncle Rav Mordechai Gershon Spalter, the well known Soniker Dayan, met her, he told him she was a *bar daas*.

One more thing on the same note, all of Babbie's siblings, including her older brothers, after their father (Reb Sholom Shoichet *a"h*) was *niftar* used to discuss their problems with Babbie to get her advice. It was openly recognized by the whole family that she was truly a *bar daas*.

It was well known that Babbie's *bitochon* in the *Ribbono Shel Oilom* was unshakeable and unique. Although her children are known as *baalei bitochon*, none of them doubts that if you rolled them all up together and combined all of their trust in *Hashem* together, it would fit into Babbie's pinky with room to spare. Itchie remembers that when his eldest daughter Elkie was about to become a *kallah*, they hadn't yet told anyone except Babbie. She phoned him one day and said, "Itchele, soon with *Hashem's* help you're going to be making a *chasuna*. A *chasuna* costs a lot of money. Have you thought about where you're going to get it?" "Ma," he answered, "*der Eibershter vet helfen*," ('G-d will help.') To which Babbie countered, "Itchele, you know quite well that by me, Hashem has a lot of credit, but right now you need cash!" Of course, as always, Babbie's prayers were answered immediately. Two days later, they received a call from an attorney, literally out of the blue, that he just found that there was a yerusha that would be coming to them from Leah's parents, and it would probably be available in about three months. They received it the week before the wedding, and it was exactly the amount needed to pay for all the costs connected with the *simcha*. There was no question that this came about because of Babbie's *tefillos*. While the *Eibershter* tends to come across for Itchie at the very last minute, finding out about the money three months ahead of time, was certainly in order to calm Babbie.

Once, Babbie's children all pooled their money together to get her a special Mother's Day present. They were very excited when they went to give it to her. Babbie accepted the gift very graciously and gave each child a kiss. The next day, after the excitement had died down, she told them "don't think you're getting away with one day – Mother's Day is every day!"

Babbie's way of seeing both sides of a story was legendary, as we see from these next stories.

Babbie always made sure that her children showed proper *derech eretz* for anyone older than themselves. She also made it clear to them that the teacher is always right. Babbie was once called to school because Leible had done something wrong. Leible, knowing that he was usually the one to be blamed when something went wrong, was arguing that this time he had done nothing wrong. As much as he denied it, Babbie kept siding with the teacher. Leible was very hurt that he wasn't believed. About four weeks later he came home unexpectedly early one day. When he entered the house he heard Babbie talking with her friend. Babbie was telling her friend what had happened in school, and said "but what am I supposed to do? I know from the way he was talking that he wasn't to blame, but I can't let him think that the teacher is wrong."

When Mirel was engaged, Babbie told her "I know you *takeh* have a big job running the house and everything. But your husband has to go out to work every day; he works hard, and when he comes home he is very tired. You have to make sure that when he comes home his food is ready for him. Don't ask him to help you with work in the house because he's going to be very tired; and make sure that when he comes home you are dressed, and not in your housecoat. You have to be dressed nicely for your husband so he should be happy to see you." Not long after that, when Menachem was engaged, Babbie told him "I know you *takeh* work very hard a whole day, but yours is an eight hour day and Miriam's is a twenty-four hour day. So, when you come home, if she doesn't have the food on the table, don't make a big deal over it. Nu, so maybe you'll have to wait another twenty minutes or even an hour -- it's not the end of the world! When it comes to washing the dishes and cleaning up – make sure you're there to help Miriam. And if she didn't have time to get dressed up and she's still in her housecoat when you get home, it's also not the end of the world -- after all she has a twenty-four hour job. You have to understand and help her."

When Mirel gave birth to Moshie she came to recuperate by Babbie. In middle of the night Babbie woke up and saw Uncle Shmuel walking the hallways with Moshie to put him back to sleep. Babbie tried insisting on taking the baby from him, but Shmuel refused -- amazingly, he got *his* way with Babbie and stayed up with the child. In the morning Babbie told off Mirel (the *heilige 'kimpeturin'* mind you.) "Shmuel has to work a whole day – how will he be able to work if you keep him up at night with the baby?!" A few years down the road, Moshie Lipszyc was born. Miriam also came to recuperate by Babbie. In the middle of the night Babbie woke up and saw Miriam walking the hallways with Moshie, trying to put him back to sleep. Babbie tried insisting on taking him from her, but no dice, Miriam proved to be as formidable an *akshon* as any Lipszyc. The next morning Babbie told Mendel off. "A whole day Miriam is with the baby and at night she also has to be the one to take care of him?!" Itchie was still a young boy at the time and was very confused, until he realized that Babbie was a *shviger* to her children as opposed to being a *shviger* to the *eingehairte*.

It was not until much later that Babbie's and Zaidie's children found out that although it seemed like they were always to blame, their parents we very protective and would protest vehemently when

they felt that they had been mistreated by teachers or others. They, of course, were kept in the dark about this.

For example, one time Leible got into trouble with either his teacher, who brought him to Dr.Wadler, or directly with Dr. Wadler himself. In any case, Babbie was bawling out Leible and Leible was trying, quite unsuccessfully, to defend himself. Babbie didn't seem to buy into Leible's claims. Babbie demanded that Leible had to go into Dr. Wadler's office and apologize to him. As much of an *akshon* as Leon was, Babbie got her way. However, after Leon left to school, Babbie immediately picked up the phone and called Dr. Wadler. She gave him a real tongue lashing, asking how was it possible for him not to see that in this case Leon was in the right and not the teacher. Of course, Babbie explained to Dr. Wadler, that for *chinuch* purposes she still demanded that Leon apologize to them, and she hadn't even given Leible an inkling that she felt he was right.

It was early spring and the fire marshals had closed the school for some infractions. Although, everyone was told to go home, our eighth grade teacher, who was new and quite young, decided instead to take the whole class boating in Prospect Park. While boating, the boat sprang a leak and we all had to wade to shore dragging the boat. The teacher then chose Itchie and his close friend Charlie Gordon to find their way to the boat rental stand, tell them what had happened, and return with them to pick up the rest of the class. To make a long story short, they lost their way. Eventually they found the place and convinced them to send someone with them by boat to find the rest of the class. But they were unsuccessful. The guy they sent along with them was fuming because he was sure they'd made up the whole story. When they got back to the rental station the people who worked there told them that the teacher had come back with the class and corroborated their story. However, he had then taken the other students home, leaving Itchie and Charlie alone in the park. He had figured it was already late, and they could find their own way home. Needless to say, they had no knowledge of where they were nor how to get home. They wandered for hours, until they found a police station and told them that they were lost. Unfortunately, they thought it was so funny, and they were laughing, so the police didn't believe them, and they chased them away. Eventually they were able to convince them that they were really telling the truth. They checked and saw that the police were looking for two lost children who fit their descriptions. When Itchie hadn't come home at the regular time, between 4:30 and 5:00, Babbie had called the school. Imagine her fright when she heard that school had been let out at 2:00! She called all of Itchie's classmates and heard that they were all home and had no idea where Itchie and Charlie were, so she had called the police. The police brought the boys home at nine p.m. Babbie was frantic, and Shmuel and Mirel had come to support her. Of course, Babbie was furious with Itchie, and even when he explained what had happened she blamed him anyway. But afterwards, she ran right to the telephone, called Rabbi Tennenbaum and complained about the *heder achrayus* of a teacher to leave two lost little boys alone in the park without trying to find them.

Zaidie and Babbie set very high (but reachable) expectations for their children. The arguments that their classmates got lower marks was not accepted, they were worried about their children, not their classmates. If, of course, some classmate received a higher mark however, they were made to feel the full brunt of why they didn't do as well.

A complaint about teachers or even about someone older than us was not tolerated. We learned very quickly that if we were punished (unfairly did not seem to exist in our parents vocabulary) we

were better off not telling our parents since it would result only in additional punishment from our parents for "obviously" deserving it.

Menachem was a lefty, and Babbie and Zaidie were concerned about the fact that he would be different than everyone else and wear his *tefillin* on the right hand, instead of the left. Babbie spoke to his teacher (unbeknownst to him of course) about training him to write with his right hand. The teacher explained the potential mental harm that pressure to become a righty might cause. Although Babbie dropped the matter, the teacher did in fact "encourage" Menachem to right with his right hand. Every time she saw him using his left hand, she would tell him to use his right hand instead. She even went so far as telling him that if he used his left hand, she would mark the paper ZERO even if he got everything correct. And sure enough, once she gave him a zero for his homework. He was very young at the time and couldn't figure out how she knew that he hadn't done the work with his right hand.

The true sense of bringing up children was seen by Babbie and Zaidie as using a stern hand together with loving kindness. Once, Mirel and her family came to Brownsville to stay for either a *Shabbos* or *Yom Tov*. One of her boys was nudging her for something, and she repeatedly refused him. After repeatedly crying and nudging, Babbie said to Mirel, "*loz em shoyn hoben.*" ('Let him have it already.') Mirel asked "why didn't you give in when we nudged?" Babbie answered with a smile "you are not my *einikel*," to which Mirel responded "Nu, he's also not my *einikel*." But sure enough, Babbie *hot oisgefirt* (won.)

Once, as the grandchildren were playing, it got a little rough and Zaidie came to check up on them. They stopped and waited with a bit of concern, yet Zaidie said not a word. It took him awhile to quietly untie the rope and free the victim; and all along we heard him humming as he worked. When he finished, he gave us a long meaningful look and left it at that.

When Itchie taught third grade in Oholei Torah, Heshy Spalter was in his class. Once he was misbehaving and Itchie smacked him. He started crying and said he's going to tell Babbie that he hit him. Itchie warned him that he might be surprised at the consequences. He told him that if they ever told Babbie that a teacher hit them, they would get twice as much from her, as she explained that "probably he didn't hit you as much as you deserved." Well it seems that Heshy knew his Babbie better than Itchie knew his mother. He told Babbie that Itchie hit him and Babbie gave Itchie the scolding. "How dare you hit someone else's child…" Of course, she also threw in that it was her *einikel* that he had dared to hit. Actually, says Itchie, Heshy did him a tremendous favor. Since he dared not hit him again, and he couldn't treat him differently than the other kids in the class, as a result he learned to teach without administrating corporal punishment.

Hersch once told Babbie that the mother of one of the boys in his class was talking to the teacher and told him how great her son was. He asked her why she never told other people how great her children were, and she answered that it was her job as a mother, to make sure that other people would say how great we were. Itchie had a similar story. While still quite young, right after receiving a real scolding and tongue lashing, as only Babbie could give, he overheard a number of other women praising his good manners to Babbie. He felt really hurt that everyone else appreciated his good qualities, while Babbie didn't seem to notice them. So he said in a broken voice, "Why do other people say nice things about me, and you only say negative?" Babbie, always sensitive to our moods, took her son in her arms and said lovingly, "Itchele, I would rather

say everything negative about you and leave the compliments for everyone else to say, than for me to always compliment you, and let the others say your faults."

Babbie and Zaidie were always known for their generous *hachnosas orchim*. Although their home was small, there was always room for guests. Their children remember sleeping many in one bed, or giving up their rooms altogether and sleeping on a mattress on the kitchen floor, under the table. Why under the table? To make sure nobody would step on them if they came into the kitchen at night!

While Babbie loved to play animatedly with the babies, singing *"hup, hup, hup, yingeluh,"* and lullabies, and everyone knew that Babbie Lipszyc had a very special shoulder, that babies loved, and which would quiet them. Zaidie, on the other hand, was not the demonstrative type. We might only catch glimpses of him standing mesmerized and with a special sparkle in his eyes, near the crib of one of his grandchildren, watching & marveling at these tiny miracles, when he thought nobody was looking. He was generally a quiet person. His words were few and measured carefully, which is well known to be a sure sign of an intelligent person.

Zaidie was a very quiet and unassuming individual. Since Babbie was the gregarious, outgoing type, most people did not realize that Zaidie was even around until he threw a zinger into a conversation that had everyone shocked and rolling. He had an extremely sharp wit with which he contributed to a conversation in very small doses. Because he delivered his wit in a very serious manner, people were never sure if he was joking or not. One such incident took place in Tobie's last year of high school. Babbie had gone to Tobie's 12th grade PTA and came home to a house full of guests. Luckily this was the only PTA my mother had ever gone to for Tobie, since she doubts that she would have gotten as great a report as she did at that one. In any case, Babbie came home in a great mood and started telling everyone who was assembled around the dining room table how much *nachas* she *shepped* from all of Tobie's teachers -- with the exception of one. Looking straight at Tobie, she said that this one teacher said she talks too much. From the head of the table Zaidie said "you should have told him that something she needs to get from her mother as well." Babbie was the first to laugh and everyone cracked up.

In the seventies Uncle Avraham took advantage of his sporadic official trips to the States to visit with Babbie and Zaidie and later, in the beginning of the eighties, unfortunately to see Zaidie also in the hospital. "I'll never forget, on all these occasions, his smiling eyes watching me, filled perhaps with a measure of pride for his 'little' brother, but first and foremost with a sentiment of love and a feeling of contentment of being a little while together."

After Zaidie had the stroke, when he was bedridden, Shea Hochman would come by during recess to put Zaidie's *tefillin* on him. There were times when he wanted to keep them on much longer, and wouldn't allow Shea to remove them. It was only when Babbie would remind him that he needed to go back to learn, that he would very reluctantly part with them.

Itchie was far away, on *shlichus* in Detroit at this time. Although he wanted to be able to visit Zaidie more often and be there for him physically, he knew what would mean the most for his father. Zaidie, like many *Gerer chassidim* kept a most demanding schedule, getting up at daybreak to learn and *daven*. Who can forget staying with Babbie and Zaidie, getting up at 7:30 in the morning when Zaidie returned from *shul* to hear his *kiddush*, and then getting up a bit later to *daven* ourselves? Every morning, Itchie would get up early, and learn *chassidus*, recording the

learning on the tape recorder, and sending the tapes to Zaidie, so he could listen, and learn, in spite of his illness.

"I am so grateful that I can look back with pride at my distinguished grandparents. That is a privilege that I treasure, even as I realize that **it contains a responsibility to be a source of *nachas* in return."**

"The *mesiras nefesh* your grandparents had to instill in their children a *Yiddisher chinuch* is immeasurable; it is incumbent on you to make the most out of your *yeshiva* years in their *zechus*." Rabbi Itche Meir Gourary – *mashpia* of Yeshivas *Tomchei T'mimim Lubavitch*, Montreal singling out Yitzy (Yitzchok ben Menachem Yaakov) Lipszyc during a *yeshiva farbrengen* to give him *divrei hisororus*.

Zaidie wanted to be brought for burial to Yerushalayim. And, indeed, his yearning for *Eretz Yisroel* was deep and genuine and his love for *Eretz Yisroel* was unconditional. His wish has been fulfilled, *BE"H*. He now lies side-by-side with Babbie, resting in peace on *Har Hazeisim* in Yerushalayim.

Yehi Zichrom Boruch

*"V'hachai yitein el libo."*

Let us all take time to reflect on our own lives at this time, and to learn from Zaidie *a"h* and Babbie *a"h*, emulating that which we can learn from them, and not be afraid to make changes in our lives. To give to others without stinting, to stand up for Torah values no matter how difficult, to have more *hachnosas orchim*, to be more loving, to inject some humor into difficult situations, to think before acting, to learn more, and to have more bitochon.

May we speedily be re-united with Zaidie *a"h* and Babbie *a"h*
and all of our loved ones
with the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who participated in this tribute to Zaidie *a"h* and Babbie *a"h*. I apologize if I inadvertently omitted anybody, and I also apologize for any mistakes, omissions, typos, and poor editing, especially towards the end. Due to the dearth of material until the last few days, the entire compiling and writing was done in two days. As we do want to have this on time for the *yahrtzeit*, it *poshut* doesn't leave any time for proof reading and editing. Some materials have not yet been included, but will *I"YH* be added in the future. A very special thanks to Dovid Aharon, who re-typed Freidy's original book, and has been invaluable in doing research for this project.

**Contributors:** Rochel Braunfeld, Rabbi Mendel Feldman, Bashie Filler, Freidy Fishman, Sarah Hochman, Shea Hochman, Chanie Krinsky, David Lederman (Bat Yam,) Col. Avraham Lif, Dovid Aharon Lipszyc, Hersch Lipszyc, Leible Lipszyc, Menachem Lipszyc, Moshe Lipszyc, Yitzchok Meyer and Leah Lipszyc, **Rabbi Yoel** *a"h* **and Mrs. Gittle** *a"h* **Lipszyc,** Yisroel and Laiky Spalter, Tobie Rosenfeld, Heshy Spalter, Shmuel and Mirel Spalter, Toni Turner, Mendel Yarmush

Leah-Mindle Lipszyc — 7 Elul, 5767 — Simferopol, Crimea

## APPENDIX J: Historical Family Photographs



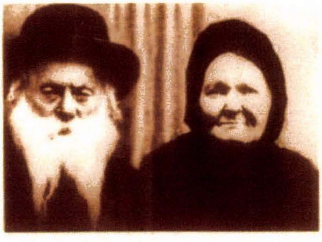
Meyer Volf a'h & Feiga Sara a'h Lederman



Yitzchok Meyer a"h & Toba Genendel a"h Lipszyc



Sholom (R' Shulem Shoichet) and Mirel LERNER



Hersh Meir & Rivkah LERNER



Itche & Tova KLAGSBRUN

# The Lerner – Klagsbrun Family



## The Lipszyc Family in Lille, circa 1930

**This picture was taken a year or so before the birth of the youngest sister Sarah, *Zichrom livracha.* Standing behind from left to right are Yoel *z"lv*, Toba Genendel *z"lv*, Yitzchok Meyer *z"lv*, and cousin Zyngier from Paris.**
**In the first row are Perla, a year old little Yisroel, Avraham, Leon and Helen/Chaya.**



## Zaidie *a"h* officiating at the *chasuna* of Frieda (Lederman) and Isaac Voloj, November 24,1945 Bogota, Colombia

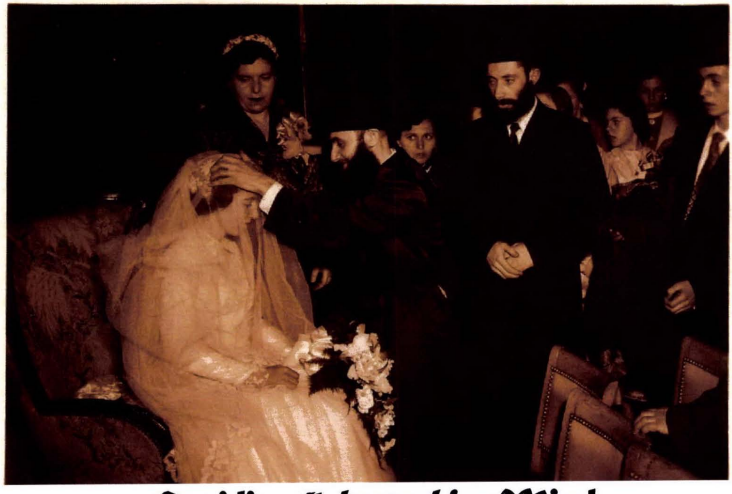


Babbie *a"h* & Zaidie *a"h* at
Mirel's & Shmuel's *chasuna*



Mirel's & Shmuel's *chasuna*





Zaidie a'h bentsching Mirel

Mirel's & Shmuel's chasunas



Menachem's and Miriam's chasuna



Menachem's and Miriam's *chasuna*



Zaidie a'h

Tanta Esther & Babbie a"h





Zaidie a"h with Uncle Avraham & Menachem



Uncle Avraham with Tobie, Itchie, & Menachem



Babbie a"h holding Itchie



Leah & Itchie

# APPENDIX II: Towns Where Zaidie & Babbie were born



Stopnica (Stupnitz) Poland 1945








Iwaniska (Ivansk) Poland
Remains of Jewish cemetery on right





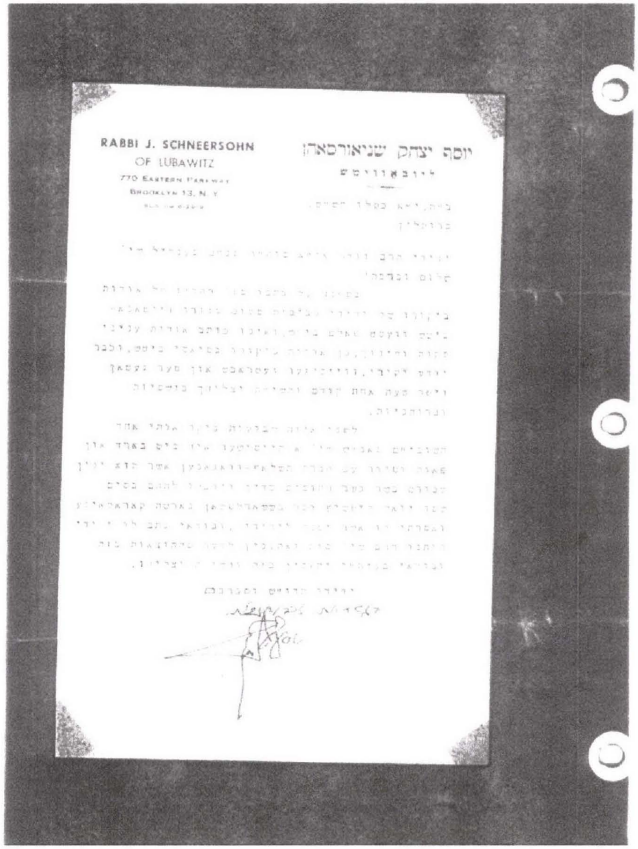


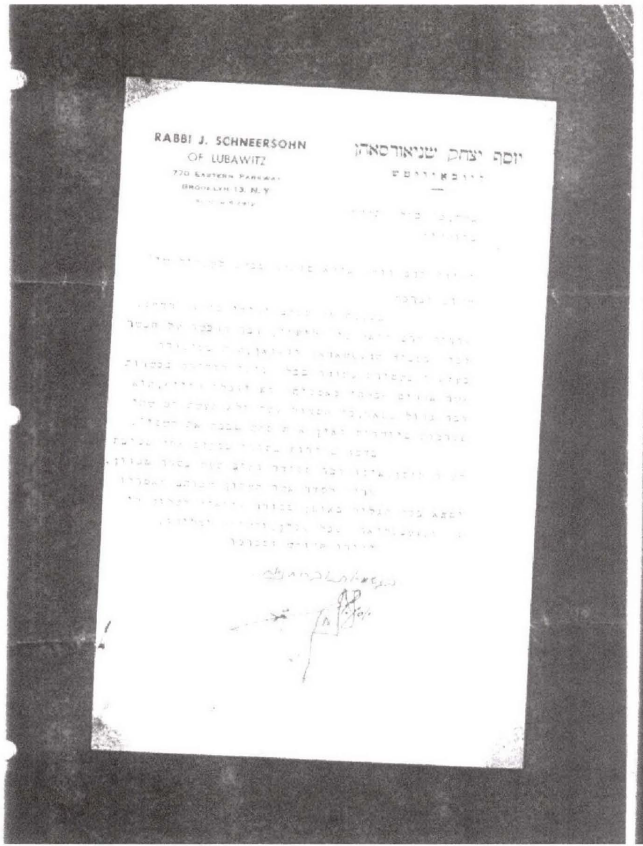
Dobra, Poland

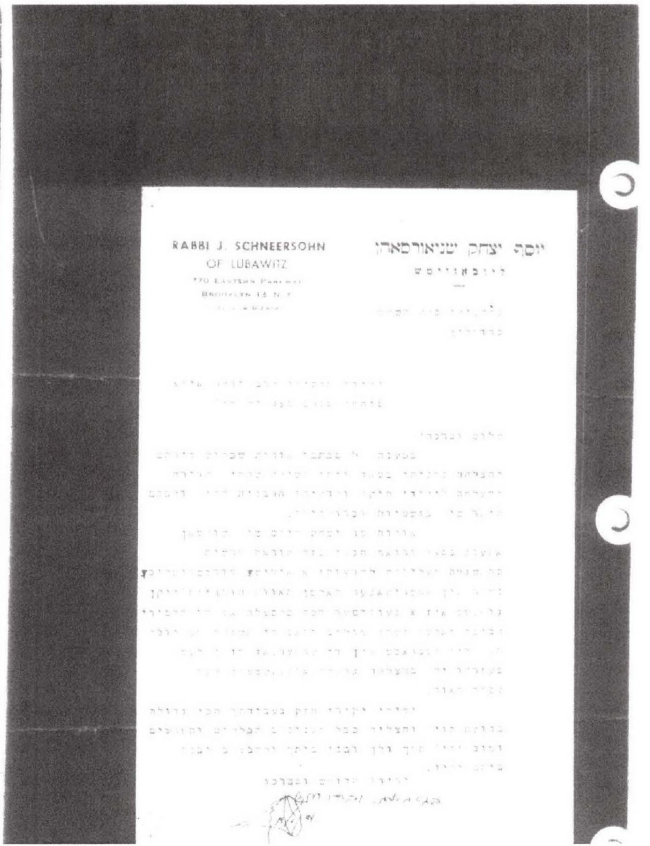
# APPENDIX III: Historical Letters from The Frierdike Rebbe

RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
770 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn 13, N. Y.

יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן
ליובאוויטש




RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן


RABBI J. SCHNEERSOHN
OF LUBAWITZ
יוסף יצחק שניאורסאהן

B"H

The following are a number of letters sent by the *Frierdike Rebbe* to Rabbi Mendel Feldman Sh', who was a Shliach in Jacksonville, Florida in those years.
These letters were gleaned from the *Igros* of the *Frierdike Rebbe* by Rabbi Heshy Spalter Sh', the Rebbe's Shliach in Costa Rica. The translations were done by Rabbi Srulie and Rebbetzin Laiky Spalter Sh', the Rebbe's Shluchim in Weston, Florida. Since these letters were written to Rabbi Feldman, we have capitalized wherever the *Frierdike Rebbe* mentions Zaidie *a"h*.

Letter #3,336
*Kislev* 11, *5709*

To Rabbi Mendel Feldman,

..... a few weeks ago, I received a visit from one of the *shoichtim* and *bodkim*, a member of *Anash Sh'*, a *heimisher Yid* with a beard and *peyos*, whose name is YOEL LIPSZYC, and who lives in Charleston, South Carolina. He arranged with an overnight train company to have kosher meat meals with a proper *hechsher*, which can be warmed in water on the trains. I advised him to contact you, and I am certain that your father-in-law *HoRav* (Eli Yeichel Simpson) *Sh'* corresponded with you regarding this. Certainly you will interest yourself in this, and with Hashem's help, you will succeed. I would appreciate if you can inform me of the outcome.

UNTRANSLATED LETTER #3346
20 *Kislev* 5709

Letter #3350
*Teves* 2, 5709

To Rabbi Mendel Feldman,

*Sholom Uvrocho*,

(This is) In response to your letter of 29 *Kislev* which I received today.

With regard to the *shoichet* and *bodek Reb* YOEL *Sh'* LIPSZYC and his suggestion, I am certain that you spoke with our friend (Reb Yoel?) about the details of his plan and you will certainly look into finding and meeting the right people who are influential regarding the overnight trains. An important element in this is to work diligently to bring this, with *Hashem's* help, from the potential to the actual, and to involve business people in this initiative and to establish it with very close and detailed supervision and may *Hashem* help them physically and spiritually.

I enjoyed hearing from you about the city (of) Charleston, and I am sure that your words there with the *ba'alei batim* had positive effects. I would be interested to know whether you can visit there from time to time and to report to me about the details of your visits there. I am certain that your *farbrenging* with the *shoichet* and *bodek*, *Reb* YOEL LIPSZYC *Sh'*, had an eternal effect on him, and certainlyl you will continue to bring him close and with Hashem's help, it will affect that he become close to the ways of *Chassidism* and *chassidim*.....

Letter #3385
*Shvat* 10, 5709

To Rabbi Mendel Feldman

*Sholom Uvrocho,*

In reponse to your letter of the 8th of this month, my dear student, your brother-in-law, *hatomim* Shimon Aaron (Simpson) is traveling today successfully to Charleston, and you my dear friend should travel there to establish him there, in the best possible way. And when you will be there, you will certainly *farbreng* with our friend the *shoichet* and *bodek*, *HoRav* YOEL *Sh'* LIPSZYC in a *chassidishe farbrengen*.....

Letter #3392
*Shvat* 16, 5709

To Rabbi Mendel Feldman,

..... about getting a person who knows about butchery, who will come to our friend *Reb* YOEL *Sh'* LIPSZYC for some time, or who will relocate to there, I have given over the matter to Rabbi Hodakow *Sh'* who involves himself in fulfilling these matters with *Hashem's* help, and when he finds the right person, he will inform you *I"YH*.....

# APPENDIX IV: "Memories of Gittel bas Shulem"

## compiled by Freidy Fishman

Too bad Babbie Lipszyc isn't around to help us "publish" these memories. This job would have been done the day the idea was conceived as Babbie was punctual and efficient. Babbie also had a way of getting people to do what had to be done. Babbie would also have been able to include a full and detailed family history and biography. We thought we would have Babbie forever because we wanted and needed her! We neglected to record all the ancestral data that Babbie used to rattle off with ease, speed and pride. Lastly, Babbie would have provided the most entertaining stories with that special Babbie Lipszyc humor and wit that would have had everyone holding their sides.

Yet, I decided to tackle this job despite my deficiencies in every area in order to leave my children (and yours) with just a taste of what they have to live up to. For what greater "zechus" could we provide *l'iluy nishmas* Babbie if not having her offspring walk in her footsteps, learn to tackle life's challenges with a positive attitude, practice chased and accept *yesurim b'ahava.*

We must ask Babbie Machala for not doing Babbie justice in minimizing Babbie's tzidkus and by not including the many, many other facts and stories we grew up with or heard from Babbie or our parents. I am sure that Babbie forgives us, knowing how difficult the writing was both physically and emotionally for all of us. Of course, my mother and Tanta Tobie were behind (make that – on top of) this project every step of the way. The first mailings, photocopying and more became their headache. Like Babbie, every 'job' was done cheerfully.

May Gittle Bas Shulem be a meilitz yosher for her children, grandchildren and all of Klal Yisroel

Freidy Fishman

Mirel Spalter

January/11/2000

Dear Freidy, *a"mu*sh

The one most memorable thing about Babbie Lipszyc was her gift of making people feel right at home under her roof.

My precious things that I remember are:

1. To learn to be patient.
2. To take time to be myself however kooky that might be.
3. To see life as a challenge and remember Hashem as a loving Father.
4. Remembering each of her loved ones and bringing home something (souvenirs) for each.

Babbie's lessons were to do good and live life to the fullest in a kosher manner.

The recipe for stuffed cabbage which I upgraded:
1 cabbage – freeze overnight and thaw so leaves can be separated easily
2 lbs. ground meat
3 eggs
garlic and paprika

3 Tbsp. sugar
mix well.
In pot cut cabbage (middle part) into slices and put in layers. One layer sliced cabbage and one layer stuffed cabbage (put a meatball in a leaf and close up like an envelope) till done. Finish with sliced cabbage. Pour in 2 4oz. cans of tomato sauce and cover with water. Add sugar and vinegar or lemon juice to taste with a bit of salt. Cook for 2-3 hours. Enjoy.

"A good name is ours to keep" and "Hashem bleibt nisht shildig" were famous sayings of Babbie. A famous story about Babbie: Babbie was feeding supper to us terrible eaters. Each of us had a meal geared to our taste buds. Her friend seeing this said to Babbie, "I can't believe you. You act as if you only had one child, not seven". Babbie answered, "I only have one Mendel, one Mirel...."

Some memories about us kids are Hersch's love for banana cake. Leible's love for spaghetti and meatballs as well as canned desserts, and Tobie's gift from Babbie in Yerushalayim of a trunk full of food sent with love.

Love, Tanta Mirel Spalter

Uncle Itchie Meyer HaKohein Lipszyc:

When Babbie found out her sister Tzirel A"H died after the Holocaust, she stated that the next baby girl born to her she would name for her. When Babbie was expecting me, she had a dream in which she saw her sister Tzirel leaning on her father's shoulder refusing to look at Babbie. Babbie ran to her, but she kept turning away. Her sister, hooking her arms around her father's neck, kicked out at Babbie's stomach. At that point Babbie woke up. Babbie realized from the dream that she was having a boy and shook Zaidie A"H awake to tell him.

The next story, I actually didn't know until after I was married and Tanta Leah heard it from Babbie. It clarified some confusing dim memories I had of me on a plane crying though I hadn't been on a plane.

When we lived in South Carolina, Zaidie came to New York about once a month. While there, Zaidie became sick and was hospitalized. Babbie sent the older children to Atlanta, Georgia to stay with a Yiddish family and I stayed in South Carolina with the black nanny who always took care of me, with instructions updated by mail with a check from Babbie. The Jewish establishment who was pro-segregation, (very strong in 1949) was very upset that the Rabbi's son was 'being raised' by the black nanny. Without consulting Babbie, they told the nanny that Babbie had contacted them requesting they take me. She didn't question the veracity because she knew them from their constant appearances at the house, through the years. She was, however, very upset that Babbie didn't trust her and at the insensitivity of it all, so she wrote Babbie telling her. As soon as Babbie received her letter, she immediately phoned Viola, the nanny, to find out what she was talking about. Who had her baby? Babbie explained that if she hadn't trusted her, she wouldn't be sending Viola check's with instructions. Meanwhile, unbeknownst to Babbie, the 'establishment' had given me to a childless couple who had started proceedings for adopting me. They had been told that the mother had too many problems with a sick husband and five other children and expecting another so she couldn't cope with the two year old, me. When Babbie found out, it took her lots of phone calls and begging the 'establishment' to put me on a plane. All to no avail until Babbie told them she was coming herself to get me and wouldn't forgive them the anguish and extra expense of her round fare ticket. At that point they agreed to send me. They told the childless couple that Babbie was anxious to see who would raise her baby so they should

take me to New York. When Babbie heard what they had intended she very strongly advised them that there was enough love in her heart for all of her children. They asked to be allowed to adopt the unborn child and Babbie was livid but overcame her rage. That's when her 'Ahavas Yisroel' kicked in. She felt their pain and desperation for a child. Babbie advised them to go to Israel where there were all the Holocaust orphans who desperately needed loving parents. Instead of throwing them out, she gave them good advice; an option to raise a child.

Babbie instilled in us everlasting 'Yiddishe' principles. A teacher and principal are never wrong in their actions and are always to be respected. Therefore, we avoided telling Babbie when we were punished in school. Babbie would say we weren't punished enough. Babbie never gave the impression of being our advocate in any incident which involved 'school authority' so imagine the shock when I overheard Babbie lecturing the principal on his unwarranted and unjustified punishment of Uncle Leibish. Behind the scenes Babbie was definitely a lioness protecting her cubs. She was just determined not to undermine the respect her children must have for their elders.

On the day of my wedding, Rabbi Simpson *a"h*, (my mesader kiddushin), told me that as secretary to the Frierdike Rebbe *zatza"l* he was told by the Rebbe following Babbie's yechidus for advice "dorten geit a bar daas!" Rabbi Simpson told me that in twenty two years as the Rebbe's secretary, the Rebbe never used that expression, not even about a man. Interestingly, years later almost the same expression was used to describe Babbie by Uncle Shmuel's uncle, the Suniker Dayan, Rav Mottel Spalter *a"h*.

I constantly seemed to be scolded by Babbie, never seeming to be able to do the right thing. Once I overheard someone praising my respectfulness and helpfulness to Babbie. Shortly thereafter I was being reprimanded by Babbie. Very hurt by it, I asked Babbie, "Why is it that you only find negative things about me and others tell you what "Derech Eretz" I have and how good I am?" Babbie answered, "I want to be the one to reprimand you while others praise you rather than have others see your negative traits while I praise you!"

Zaidie A"H told me that when he went to the "Frierdike Rebbe" for advice as to whether he should accept the job in South Carolina because he was worried about the children "Yiddishe chinuch", The Rebbe replied, *"Eier Rebbetzin vet zei gut mechanech zein. Ihr kent zich farlozen oif eier Rebbetzin."*

At the time of Elkie's wedding I needed money. I reassured Babbie that she shouldn't worry; the Aibershter will help. Babbie answered, "*Itchele, du veist ganz gut az bei mir hot der 'Aibershter' gut credit. Ober du darft men cash!!"* At that time I told Babbie that I would follow whatever advice she would give me. After thinking awhile Babbie said she couldn't advise anything so late and with so little time left. I calmed her again reiterating that the
'Aibershter' will help. Just have faith since that's all we can do now. Sure enough, I got a call two days later from lawyers that Tanta Leah's inheritance came through. It was the exact amount I needed. When I told Babbie, who was ever the practical, her answer was, "That takes care of Elkie's chasuna. What are you going to do for Basha Rochel's chasuna? Es macht zich nisht a *yerusha azoi gring!"*

I myself witnessed how Babbie was a shviger only to her own children, not to the Eingeharete. As a Kimpeturin Tanta Mirel was by Babbie. In the middle of the night, Moishe awoke screaming as babies do. Uncle Shmuel was walking up and down the long hallway to keep him quiet when Babbie came out wanting to take care of Moishe so that Uncle Shmuel could sleep. He refused to allow Babbie to stay up. The following morning after Uncle Shmuel had left for work, I heard Babbie giving Tanta Mirel a cheilek. "Hei Tochen! Your husband works so hard. He has to keep a

clear mind for his job. You keep him up all night taking care of the baby. How is he supposed to work the next day?" A few years later, Tanta Miriam was a kimpeturin at Babbie's, since her parents lived in Israel. 'Vayehi bachatzi halayla' and this Moishe also was crying with Tanta Miriam walking up and down the long hall to keep him quiet. Babbie offered to take care of him so that Tanta Miriam could get some sleep, but Tanta Miriam refused. The next morning I overheard Babbie lecturing Uncle Mendel, "All day your wife takes care of the baby, so at night you can't take care so that she should get some sleep?"

Babbie was truly a unique personality. She was able to see three sides to a story, to be able to feel *yenim's tz*aar; she was a fountain of wisdom and advice, and a confidant you could rely on. And let's not forget her '*hartzige tefillos'* that mostly got good responses.

My Babbie
By Libby (Spalter) Wolf

I was fortunate to have a grandmother who was an exceptional role model that left an everlasting impression on me.

A woman that is as loving, giving, wise and fun to be around as our Grandmother, Babbie Lipszyc, is hard to find. I cherished every moment of every visit of Babbie's. She was a hostess par excellence! Everyone was made to feel comfortable and at ease. Her home was our home and we spent countless hours, days and Yomim Tovim in her home. She kept the family close through all the parties she hosted. Who can forget the annual Purim seudah she prepared for the entire mishpacha!?! Everyone was sure to attend and enjoy.

When she lived on Fenimore Street, although within walking distance, it was quite a hike for us. It did not deter me from going, but I would schlep a friend or two along to accompany me on a Shabbos afternoon, which they never regretted. Her initial warm greeting was always followed by "Libbishy there is cheese cake in the refrigerator." There were marshmallows for Moshe, chocolates for Mindy…. She knew each of her e*iniklach's* favorite treats and made sure to stock up on them.

She was always forthcoming with her words of wisdom in all areas of daily life. As an expert shopper we always asked her advice as to where to go for quality and price. When we showed her our purchases she always made sure to reassure us that we couldn't have done better.

Babbie was the Queen of the family. To her brothers and sister, children and grandchildren, Babbie personified wit, wisdom and the perfect Yiddishe Mama.

The last Shabbos I spent with Babbie is strongly etched in my mind. It was the Shabbos of Chof Bais Shvat 5752, shortly before her debilitating stroke and all the Spalter women were in NY for Shabbos. Babbie spent that Shabbos with us at our parent's home. She looked so beautiful. When we were alone for a few moments I complimented her on how wonderful and young she looked. Her response was, "I feel my eighty years. My life hasn't been an easy one and it is catching up to me."

As we all know, her life was indeed full of difficulties, but it was the first time I had heard her express it. It was very painful for me to hear her describe some of her life's struggles. My response was, "You succeeded in raising generations of proud Yidden – *yireyim u'*shleymim, which is a testimony to Zaidie's and your Mesiras Nefesh.

Yitzchok Wolf's thoughts:

I never had the privilege to know neither my paternal nor maternal grandparents.

In 1977 I was engaged to Libby and in no time I was introduced to her Grandmother/Babbie. I came to respect and adore her from the very first moment we met. Her wit, sense of humor and tales kept me spellbound for hours.

She was a Yiddishe Mama in every sense of the word. It appeared that her concern for her married children even at the age of 50 was no less than when they were five. I enjoyed listening to her stories although she repeated them quite often. Most of all I was impressed by the special relationship she apparently had with her father, Reb Sholom Lerner ZT"L. She spoke about him with awe and respect.

Before Yom Kippur it was natural to call your family to bless and be blessed. Calling Babbie on Erev Yom Kippur was Libby's and my special moment to receive her lengthy heartfelt Brachos. She knew how to bentsch like only a Yiddishe Mama can. When bentsching other family members it was common for us to say that "*Babbie's b*rachos zolen mekuyem veren."

It was apparent that she took a special liking to me since I was her first eingeheirate grandchild. She made sure that I felt welcome and that I was up to date with all the mishpocha news.

Mindy (Spalter) Chazan:

During shiva, Uncle Izzy said something to me that summed up Babbie. "Your Babbie left a fortune. Not the kind of fortune we are all busy chasing; a fortune of diamonds, gold and silver, but the real thing – a farmegen fun mentschen!

Her yerusha to us was a strong sense of family values. What a great gift in this confused world. Her attitudes were passed to us in no ambiguous terms. She wouldn't entertain a suggested shidduch for a granddaughter when she heard the bochur was late for his brother's wedding so as not to miss seder. "How do you start a family with someone who has such little respect for family?" she wanted to know.

It was only after I was married and had my own family that I realized how lucky I was to have been able to take family values for granted.

We definitely felt like we were her treasures. One of her favorite expressions was, di shtileh lichtige kinder I don't know exactly when it was that I realized that this remark was said sarcastically following a story about a grandchild that would fit into a Dennis the menace comic. There was so much warmth expressed that we always felt like her shtileh lichtige kinder!

Her famous nosh cupboard was always bulging for us. She once noticed that rather than marshmallows and cream cakes, I chose swizzles. If I had been an only grandchild, I might have been able to think that this was normal. But I find it remarkable that she tuned into each of our particular tastes.

Babbie was always smiling, laughing and entertaining. When my daughter recently wrote about this wonderful unusual girl who spent part of her summer holiday visiting her elderly

grandmother, I could not relate to it. We never saw visiting Babbie as some wonderful chased to an elderly, lonely grandmother. This was "Saturday night entertainment"!

Babbie knew how to tell a story. She will always be remembered for her brachos that were flowing. Hers was the easiest phone call to make on erev Rosh Hashana. All you had a chance to say was, "Hello, Babbie, and she was bentsching you. You wished her gam atem and your phone call was full of wonderful brachos for you and your grandmother. To this day we wish each other all the brachos that Babbie wished us.

May she continue sending her brachos to her "farmegen fun mentschen" and to all of "klal Yisroel" until the coming of Moshiach when we will be able to hear then once again directly from her lips.

By Dassie (Spalter) New:

While growing up we were the only ones that referred to her as "Babbie". We didn't need to add Lipszyc to the title – she was the only Babbie we knew and she filled every inch of our hearts with the love, warmth and pride that grandmothers give to their grandchildren. Our eyes sparkled and our feet literally danced on the days she came to visit us. Babbie was more than an important figure in my life – she was such a constant part of my life that most of my childhood memories involve her, and they're vivid with all the details. Babbie loved her family and taught me to appreciate the gift of a large family. When she arrived home after a trip to Belgium, visiting with her siblings, she was bubbling over with excitement. She told stories of Uncle Izzy and Tanta Tobie, Uncle Shea and Uncle Motche and she never left out Marcel – who I didn't know, but we listened to every word and enjoyed the adult guffawing and laughter that came after each sentence. Her gray blue eyes were shining and her skin was radiant – it was very obvious to us that she immensely and intensely enjoyed her siblings company and adored each and every one of them! Then she would open the shopping bags of goodies she brought back for EVERYONE. They were endless and personal. She brought nooant and chocolate covered orange peels for my father and other Belgium chocolates. The famous yagide kuchen (blueberry) and cinnamon buns from Kleinblatt's bakery were mine and Libby's favorites.

I still remember the tailored European outfits she brought for my sisters and I. The pleated navy jumpers with gold buttons, or the periwinkle blue suit with silver buttons, and the red, white and blue sailor jumpers. She always bought 3 of each – for the 3 girls – and they were the kind of clothes that never died no matter how many times you wore it or washed it. So I, having been the youngest of the 3, wore these for 4 years straight. Every time Babbie saw me in it she shepped nachas and remarked how min kin nisht gefinen a zelche kleider in America.

Babbie made you feel like a million dollars when she complimented you – and interestingly, she was the only one in our entire family that knew how to accept a compliment. It was her way of being gracious to the person who gave the compliment. When Babbie lived on Fenimore Street, we would hike over each Friday afternoon with fish and zo-za that leaked everywhere, coleslaw and other Shabbos goodies my mother made. When we walked through that door, the welcome we received made the long walk seem easy. (She showed genuine appreciation and happiness for each visit – we left thinking "we made her day" and we knew she made ours!) Her house was a haven for kids.

We never saw Babbie eating chocolate pudding, but she always had perfectly fresh, lump-free pudding neatly wrapped in little white plates in her fridge, waiting for us. The ice-cream in all shapes and flavors stocked her freezer. And the jellyrolls, jelly rings, marshmallows and colored fish were bought by the case and put in bagfuls each Friday to take back to the kids who couldn't

come. Everything we ate there, from hearty soup, to meatballs tasted better than anything we ate at home. I once asked Babbie when I was older why her pudding always tasted better than my mothers and she gave me the secret recipe "Mommy uses 2 packages of chocolate and I use one chocolate and one vanilla mixed." For years I thought this was the secret, until one day I overheard my children sitting in my mother's kitchen eating chocolate pudding and saying "Babbie's pudding tastes so much better than mommy's!" So at 35 years old I realized that the love Babbie mixed, poured and served with the joy she got from watching us eat each spoonful is what made it taste so good – I suppose vanilla-chocolate or chocolate-chocolate had very little to do with it! Yomim Tovim bring back delightful memories. She would bring together the entire family for Purim Seudah at her house – Uncles, Aunts, Cousins – I just remember the house a 'hustle bustle' the whole way through. The doorbell ringing non-stop, people coming and going, fancy cakes and wines and baskets, one bigger than the next. Babies crawling through legs of chairs, kids and adults everywhere, and Babbie being the hostess with the mostess as usual.

Babbie brought STATURE and IMPORTANCE to every gathering and was the 'LIFE' of every party. We had family Chanukah get togethers (a holy tradition). The parties she came to were always well attended. Babbie was the 'draw card'. Every Chanukah we would wait for her to come to our house on a regular night - no party, so we could have her attention all to ourselves. She would sit us down for a serious game of dreidel. Miracle of miracles, her dreidel always landed on shin. When we finally figured out what was going on (3 years later) we would yell "NO! It's a gimmel" and she would shout back "you're too young for bad eyesight!" and she'd sweep up the dreidel to our eyes with a swift turn to shin. We giggled each time and every argument was challenged with more humor till we laughed our way through every game winning all her money… One year I entertained the idea of ordering her a special Chanukah gift – a dreidel with shin on all 4 sides!
I'll never forget her stories of Zaidie's kindness. How he gave his last drops of food, money and visas to the next person. She spoke of his self-sacrifice and his generosity and my eyes widened when I heard how boldly he threatened the captain of his boat not to turn back to Germany when America refused them. How he orchestrated that his ship head towards Cuba instead and saved all those family's with him. The devotion she had for Zaidie and the care she gave him all the years he was sick is etched in my mind forever.

At the end of every visit as a girl, Babbie's parting words were "be a good daughter!" One day those words changed to "Take good care of yourself so you can be a good wife and a good mother" (in Yiddish of course!) It was like my right to passage.

When I was around Babbie as a young married woman, with an infant in hand, if any of my aunts or cousins remarked how difficult my babies were ad how much they cried, she would always say "I would also cry if you laid me down on your hard bony shoulder! Give me the poor baby, watch how good he'll be on my extra soft padding!" In a matter of 3 minutes the baby was fast asleep. G-d forbid anyone should label her "ur einikel" as difficult.

As humorous as Babbie was, she commanded a great deal of respect from everyone. Men and women would come seek her advice and we loved boasting how the Frierdike Rebbe referred to our Babbie as a "bar daas" and a "pikchis". My husband's first remark about her was "Wow! This is a real matriarch of a family!"

In my home we think of Babbie constantly. I treasure my engagement gift from her. A blue and gold cobalt cake tray with a pink rose in the middle and 12 plates to match. I find myself using it more and more now… It defines her to the T. ROYAL, ARISTOCRATIC, AND FULL OF LIFE! On the table, "IT ADDS STATURE AND IMPORTANCE TO EVERY GATHERING…"

Mendel Lipszyc:
Memories about Mrs. G. Lipszyc:

Everyone was not only important but special ("My Favorite…").

Very much family oriented. Would do everything she could to bring people together. Not just her own family but even strangers. Even thought she had personal problems (a sick husband and seven little children to raise) that took all of her time, she nevertheless went out of her way to help in fostering sholom bayis between young couples.

In spite of all of her suffering, she was always smiling.

Moshe (Menachem's) Lipszyc:
A RIGHTOUS WOMAN

Looking back now I feel very bad. I always knew my grandmother was a tzadeikes but there was so much more I could have learned from her, and so much more I could have done for her. She has taught me so much. I am, who I am because of what she said to me. Babbie was always positive. Here is something I have hanging in my house which reminds me of Babbie.

If you think you are beaten, you are.
If you think you dare not, you don't.
If you'd like to win, but you think you can't
Then it's almost certain you won't!

If you think you'll lose, You're lost,
For over the years you'll find
Success begins with a person's will-
It's all in your state of mind.

Babbie always had a smile, no matter how bad things were, she always smiled. Babbie never had a bad word to say about anyone, if I would say anything bad about someone or anything negative, Babbie would always tell me she did not want to hear, she always told me to tell her good news.

There are lots of things I remember about Babbie. For example the nosh closet. Babbie always had nosh (and I'm talking about a lot of nosh) in the house. Whenever I came over and had a friend with me, Babbie always made sure I gave my friend first, and then I took for myself. There was also her "magic dreidel", Babbie always got a shin. And when Babbie lost one time, I felt bad that she lost all her money, and I wanted to give it back. So Babbie said to me, "at least it's staying in the family." And she would not take back the money.

There is so much I could say about Babbie, but when I think about it, it all comes down to what Babbie taught me… Be happy, always think positive (you could do anything you want to, but you really have to want to do it,) help another person and keep in touch with the family.

From a grandson who really misses her, and davens to Hashem hoping that his children has the same midos as his grandmother. And davens to Hashem that Moshiach comes right away, so we will be together with all the tzaddikim and tzedeikos.

Soroh Lipszyc:

From a Granddaughter-in-law's perspective:

Talk about first impressions, when we were engaged, we made the trip to Boro Park to meet 'the Grandparents'. Moshe sat with his Grandfather and I was invited into the bedroom to visit with Babbie, and that's when I first heard it EINGEHAIRTE, Yes Bobby told me, it's not everyone that gets to have the privilege to be a LIPSZYC/LERNER, you have to be worthy and special, and you should know it's an honor to marry into this family.

Well, to this day my husband still insists that I took being told that I was EINGEHAIRTE in the wrong way. He says that being told that I am EINGEHAIRTE is a compliment, it's a way of saying you're one of us now, we will treat you as true family with all the privileges and honor that comes with being born a LIPSZYC.

OK, so maybe my future husband had the right perspective. It's now 14 years later and I've got to say, it sure has been an honor and privilege to have known Babbie Lipszyc, and to be part of her great legacy.

In the not too distant future, I too will be inviting my future daughter/granddaughter's-in-law to visit with me, and will announce with great pleasure EINGEHAIRTE.

Written with much love (and humor)
Soroh Lipszyc

PS When I asked my husband what he was going to write about Babbie Lipszyc, he answered "I don't know, the only thing that comes to mind is the nosh closet". The fact that his dentist bills are so astronomical, I think he has carried on the tradition of a nosh closet a bit too far…

By: Ita Lipszyc Grade 6
The granddaughter of Menachem Yaakov HaKohein Lipszyc
BABBIE BORO PARK

I call my great-grandmother BABBIE BORO PARK, because I have two Babbie Lipszyc' and when we were little we got confused which Babbie Lipszyc we were talking about. So we called my great-grandmother BABBIE BORO PARK, because that's where she lived. Her real name is Gittle Lipszyc (and maiden name Lerner).

My great-grandmother was born in Poland, Erev Pesach 1914. When she got married she lived in Antwerp, Belgium and then moved to Paris, France. Then she moved back to Belgium. During the war in 1940 her husband was arrested along with 250 Jewish men. After many days, my great-grandmother found out where he was. She offered a large amount of money so her husband could go free, the soldier agreed. But when my great-grandfather was told he could go, he refused. He said "I will only go if everyone else could go free too. So my great-grandmother somehow put together enough money to let al 250 men go free. My great-grandparents were very poor. No one knows how she got this kind of monies but one thing for sure we do know, that she had the biggest zechus and received the biggest mitzvah of pidyon shevuyim.

During the war the family moved to many places. This was not easy, they had to pack and unpack several times. She also had some of her children born in these places. Lisbon, Portugal. Havana, Cuba. And after the war, Charleston, Carolina. The reason they moved to Charleston was because the community needed a "Shochet". So they asked my great-grandfather. So he went first to the Frierdike Rebbe to ask about the children's chinuch because there were not too many Jews living

there at the time. The Frierdike Rebbe answered, "Your oldest son (my grandfather) should go to school in Brooklyn, and the rest of the children -- your wife is capable and will give them a good chinuch and bring them up well.

The above story shows what a great person my great-grandmother was. While being surrounded by goyim and with no Jewish schools, she was able to teach and bring up her children with a good Yiddishe foundation. (all of her children, grandchildren & great-grandchildren are shomrei Shabbos).

The Frierdike Rebbe told Rabbi Simpson that my great-grandmother is a *"kluger froy"*, which means a smart lady. (The Frierdike Rebbe never said this about another person said Rabbi Simpson).
After a few years my great-grandparents and their children moved to the Bronx, NY and then to Brooklyn, NY and their final years were in Borough Park.

I chose my great-grandmother because I wanted to share her life story with you, and I feel it is important to remember her and her examples of how she lived so it will not be forgotten. What makes my great-grandmother so special is that even though she lived such a hard life, she went out of her way to help other people. What I learned from my great-grandmother was that she always had a smile on her face, and was always a happy person even when she was going through such a difficult life. The next time I find something difficult, or something that I don't want to do, I will think of my great-grandmother and how she managed through a difficult life with a smile on her face. And it will inspire me to aim high and complete my goals.

In 1999 grade 6 girls of Bais Chaya Mushka of Toronto had to choose a heroine and write an essay talking about why this person is special to them and what we can learn about this person. This project about GITTEL LIPSZYC received an A+.

Malkie Shaw:

Dear Freidy, shetichye

Thank you very much for undertaking this great project. I hope you have lots of luck with it!

When thinking of Babbie, one of my fondest memories is going back sixteen years ago when Yitzy Spalter and I worked at Windsor. Babbie used to make us lunch twice a week, on Tuesday and Thursday, for a whole year. On Tuesday we had whitefish sandwich with jell-o and on Thursday, tuna fish with chocolate pudding. But Babbie didn't only worry about us, when we would come to pick up the food, there would always be a second bag. In this bag there was plenty of nosh, potato sticks, jelly fish and chocolate covered marshmallows. That bag was to be distributed to all the employees at Windsor even though she didn't know them and they didn't know her. Babbie was known as "Babbie, the candy lady" to all of Windsor. I miss her very much and look forward to Moshiach coming speedily so we can enjoy Zaidie and Babbie's company again.

Tobie (Lipszyc) Vogel:

Dear Freidy, Shetichye

Your idea of asking all family members to participate in writing any fond memories or actual experiences together with Bobby is a wonderful idea and I'm glad you took the initial step in contacting family members.

We all have wonderful memories of Bobby. Many know interesting stories which Bobby repeated however I will mention just a few personal things which immediately come to mind.

When I had the opportunity to accompany Bobby during a one and a half week trip to Florida in January years ago, I really learned a lot from Bobby. Firstly, she always had a good word for everyone she met. Be it a lady rooming next door, a stranger sitting at the same table as us or even the waiter, she always had a pleasant word to express. Bobby made many new friends at the hotel, she always had a story or interesting *"vort"* to say. Everyone enjoyed being in Bobby's "*daled amos"*.

What struck me most interesting was that I had accompanied Bobby to help and "take care of her", and yet she was hovering over me making sure I enjoyed myself. She would send me out to the beach during the day, or to take a walk down Collins Avenue by myself just so that I had an enjoyable time (she did not want me to stay indoors when she needed to be indoors.) In fact, she went so far as to order every morning some maple syrup for my pancakes and hot cocoa milk, now keep in mind I was about 17 years old than (not 5!) because I was a growing teenager and she just enjoyed pampering me.

She always spoke about how to see only the positive in things and that even if something CH'V looked bad or negative, it was always for the best. We should always find the positive in any situation that occurs. Not to dwell on any negative or harsh things which might occur.

Another thing which sticks out in my mind is the family get-together every Motzai Shabbos in Bobby's house. It was a ritual which we looked forward to each week. Not only because Bobby always had marshmallows and chocolates stocked up in the cabinet, but rather to be with Bobby and the mishpocha. And hear all the interesting stories from long ago. Incidentally, when I was about 11 years old one Motzai Shabbos, I made a nasty comment to my brother Moishe. He threatened that I would not be able to go in the car with him unless I apologized. Being that I was stubborn I really did not want to say "I'm sorry", however, I was not prepared to lose the chance of being by Bobby that evening. So I reluctantly said I was sorry. (Moishe was the driver, whatever he said goes,) and happily joined the family that Motzai Shabbos.

About Babbie *a"h* it truly can be said, Kol *she'*ruach h*a"briyos* nocha heymenu, ruach *Ha'Makom* nocha heymenu.

We all love Babbie dearly, as she really means a lot to all of us.
We fervently hope that we will be united with all our dear ones when Moshiach comes speedily in our days amein, ken yehi ratzon.

Hersh Lipszyc:

Babbie *a"h* taught herself how to speak, read and write English by reading simple magazines. Therefore, her pronunciation was based, very often, on the way words were spelled rather than having heard them pronounced by an English-speaking person.

I remember when I was about eleven years old, Babbie *a"h* went to take her citizenship test. She was very nervous practicing basic questions about America, like who was the first president etc. When she got home after the swearing in, I asked her how she did. She told me that she was extremely nervous and when the clerk started asking her some questions, he noticed that she was very nervous. He asked her whether she was in fact nervous. Her response to the clerk was as follows:

"Your h-onor, I am so nervous that my k-neeze are k-nocking."

When I finished laughing, I told her that the clerk is not referred to as "your honor", but rather that title is given only to the judge. But even so, the "H" is silent. As to the rest of the sentence, the "K" is silent in both "knees" and "knocking".

Needless to say, Babbie *a"h* laughed harder than I did. When she finished laughing, I said that it wasn't that funny as I am sure that it is not the first time he heard the English language butchered. To which Babbie replied, "He is probably also a foreigner, because he made me a citizen anyway!" Babbie never made those same mistakes again.

I remember one summer when I had come home from camp and Babbie *a"h* took me along with her to visit Zaidie *a"h* in a hospital in Manhattan. We had to walk quite a distance from the subway until the hospital. On the way back home, as we were walking to the subway, it was an extremely hot day. I noticed that Babbie *a"h* was sweating profusely and I said to her as we passed a soda stand, "Mommy, why don't you get yourself a cup of seltzer since its only 2 cents for a cup." At that time I was probably even younger than in the previous story. Babbie *a"h* replied that she didn't have money to throw away on such narishkeiten. When we got home, just before we went upstairs, Babbie *a"h* stopped off at a fruit store and bought a couple of apples for the children. When I said, "I thought we couldn't afford it", she replied that Hashem always gives us money for something healthy.

Tobie (Lipszyc) Rosenfeld:

Freidy,

You asked me to write some memories of Babbie. Now after the fourth(?) phone call I decided to at least put pen to paper and see what happens.

I was seven years old. Tante Mirel and Uncle Shmuel were living by us as Tante Mirel was bedridden and expecting her first child any day. Besides Babbie's daughter and son-in-law, Babbie took in Uncle Shmuel's second cousin's son who needed a place to stay for a year. This was in addition to Babbie's nephew from Argentina and niece from Brazil who were staying by Babbie since they were learning in America. The day that Tante Mirel came home from the hospital, I ran home to see my new nephew that had just made me an aunt for the very first time. In my rush to get home I neglected to wait for Uncle Shmuel's second cousin's son. It was my responsibility to pick up the boy by the school bus stop. With everything going on in the house,

Babby still managed to notice as soon as I walked in that I didn't have a little boy with me. She immediately sent me back to pick him up.

Babby always complained about her memory. I experienced first hand probably one of her worst cases of memory failure. I was twelve years old and in Camp Emunah for the summer. At that time nobody called on the telephone. You communicated strictly through the mail. Babby being a Lerner, was never much of a letter writer, so I rarely if ever got any mail. Anyway, Uncle Leibish came on Tisha B'Av to camp and told me that I had to go home with him. When I asked him why, he said that he didn't know but that he was told to pick me up and bring me home. Obviously, being Babby's daughter my mind started to work overtime imagining all the worst case scenarios of why I was called home – especially on Tisha B'Av no less. When we got to the city, instead of going to Brownsville where we lived, Uncle Leibish drove to Crown Heights. I asked him why he was going to Crown Heights instead of Brownsville, where we lived, and he answered that we moved to Crown Heights two weeks ago. Now I was really starting to panic. I didn't believe Uncle Leibish. After all, how could Babby not tell me we were moving!?! Well, we had moved and Babby had forgotten to tell me about it. Supposedly, it was a spur of the moment decision. I always knew we were a spontaneous family – but this????

Like all teenagers, there were times that I was dead embarrassed when I was with Babby. Babby had to be the best negotiator living in her time. Babby firmly believed that it was a sin to pay the price originally quoted no matter which store she was in. Babby was in desperate need for a sofa bed. Having worked a year, I had managed to save $500. I told Babby I had $500 and that I wanted to but the sofa bed for her. Babby and I went to Macy's, We saw a sofa bed that we liked for $575. Babby tried negotiating with the salesman to reduce the price. When the salesman refused to budge from his position, Babby demanded to speak to the manager. Babby told the manager that her daughter, who worked so hard to save up $500, wanted to buy a sofa bed as a gift for her parents. She explained that Macy's should be compassionate and allow this young girl to purchase the generous gift. I kept wishing that I was anyplace else but Macy's. Babby got her sofa bed for $500 plus sales tax which even Babby's skills could not get waived. Today I sometimes wish I had Babby's skills of negotiating, or at least Babby at my side when I am shopping.

One of Babby's greatest skills had to be her ability to entertain a roomful of people and have each one think that Babby was totally focused on him/her alone.

Babby's sense of humor was unmatched although all the learner's had a reputation that came quite close. To hear Babby tell of our encounter at an event was to relive the episode in the most delightful way.

*Mommy A"MUSH,*

*Everybody who knows, all agree that you definitely have class. The attached definition of class describes you perfectly.*

*Love, Tobie*

CLASS NEVER RUNS SCARED. IT IS SUREFOOTED AND CONFIDENT. IT CAN HANDLE WHATEVER COMES ALONG.

CLASS HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR. IT KNOWS THAT A GOOD LAUGH IS THE BEST LUBRICANT FOR OILING THE MACHINERY OF HUMAN RELATIONS.

CLASS NEVER MAKES EXCUSES. IT TAKES ITS LUMPS AND LEARNS FROM PAST MISTAKES. CLASS KNOWS THAT GOOD MANNERS ARE NOTHING MORE THAN A SERIES OF PETTY SACRIFICES.

CLASS BESPEAKS AN ARISTOCRACY THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH MONEY. SOME EXTREMELY WEALTHY PEOPLE HAVE NO CLASS AT ALL, WHILE OTHERS WHO ARE STRUGGLING TO MAKE ENDS MEET, ARE LOADED WITH IT.

CLASS IS REAL. YOU CAN'T FAKE IT.

IF YOU HAVE CLASS YOU'VE GOT IT MADE. IF YOU DON'T HAVE CLASS, NO MATTER WHAT ELSE YOU HAVE, IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE.

Sarah (Lipszyc) Hochman:

There are so many things and ways that emphasized the uniqueness of my mother O"H in her life, in the lives of her beloved family, in her beloved acquaintances lives and in her 'Ahavas Yisroel'. Truly all were loved by her.

I remember Mommy telling me how in Cuba one of the refugee women was having a troublesome pregnancy and had to stay in bed. She had a one year old child that Mommy immediately added to her own family of five and to comfort this child who missed its own mother, Mommy slept with this child cuddled against her in Mommy's bed all night for weeks! Mommy would even joke about swimming in her sopping wet bed every night though she didn't know how to swim. That's loving!!

I also remember Mommy's anguish a few months before her stroke, when telling me something negative someone had done to her and Mommy slapped her hand to her mouth and cried, Ich veis nisht vos iz gevoren fun mir letstenz! Ich hob ongehoiben tsu reden Loshen Hora! I truly feel that Hashem heard her anguish and therefore took her speech ability to assure that Mommy wouldn't talk loshen hora again.

I also can't forget Mommy trying to get me to promise her that if she ever had a stroke that incapacitated her ability to take care of her needs, I would put her in a nursing home. When I refused, Mommy tried to justify it because she did not want to be a burden to her children. She was always trying to make life easier on others at her own expense. In fact, after Papi's *a"h* petira, when we were worried about Mommy sleeping alone in the apartment and arranged for the grandchildren to take turns each week, Mommy insisted on refusing on the grounds that she didn't want her grandchildren living out of suitcases. Mommy argued that it would be no life for them.

Whenever I offered to drive Mommy somewhere on a Tuesday, her response was, "You know, a car service will take me wherever I want to go and will even give me door-to-door service. You are not my chauffeur." Many times, the only way I could get Mommy to agree to let me do something, was when I complained that though she raised me to do Mitzvos, she did not let me do any for her. Then she would relent. But just for a short time.

I remember Mommy's doctor, the late Dr. Plotkin O"H, was enthralled and in awe of Mommy. He asked how she was feeling, and when Mommy answered with her typical "Boruch Hashem,

fine", Dr. Plotkin asked her, "Nothing hurts you? You have no pain?" Mommy's answer was, "Doctor, I am an old lady. I am supposed to have pain!" At that time Mommy was only 72.

Despite Mommy's constant pain, arthritic or her varicose vein, she not only didn't complain, but she set an example for us all. Amazingly she kept all of our pots sparkling like new. With my youthful, pain-free hands I couldn't clean them as well.

Mommy's lessons to us hit the target by her examples in living what she taught. I once mentioned to her that we know to turn the other cheek when someone hurts or insults you. But, we have only two cheeks. Mommy seemed to have dozens because she was always forgiving. Mommy than explained to me that the person wasn't feeling well that day, did not sleep well the night before, had a bad day, heard some bad news, etc.

Mommy's wisdom was outstanding. Somehow she always knew what to say to get a message across. For example, before our weddings Mommy told us, "Your mother-in-law might be the worst witch. But the fact that she spilled even one drop of blood to have your mate, and she lost even one night's sleep because of your mate, for that alone she deserves your respect!" Or, "Remember! If the tip of your mate's finger hurts, your whole body will hurt." Or, "I am your mother, not your friend. But, I'm the best friend you'll ever have." Or, "Something not said, never has to be apologized for."

I asked Mommy once, why, though others (including her own brother) praise their children, we never heard her praise us. Mommy explained, "My job as a mother is to constructively criticize and correct you so that others will praise you. Och in vey to those who need to praise their own children because others don't!"

Mommy's humor, according to her doctor, was what kept her going. It was truly her best medicine, and ours. However, Mommy's humor was always focused on herself and never on others. How we laughed <u>with</u> Mommy when recounting her experience on becoming an American citizen. (Read Uncle Hersh's detailed account.) Some of Mommy's other sayings and mispronunciations… "I felt it was my res-pon-sab-lity." "The K-nife wasn't sharp." "I need a plum-B-er." "The veg-a-tables are good for you." Some of them were educational. An example of how to think. When discussing finances, Mommy was known to say, Mir feilt nor nine un neintzig tzent tzu yeder dollar. On her strength in coping Mommy said, "Ich hob nisht getrinken Momma's milich, ich hob getrinken Leib's milich." On her pure faith Mommy said, Ven der Ribbonoy-shel-olam farmacht der tir, efent er oif der fenster. And, Der Ribbonoy shel olam patcht nisht mit beider hent, er glet mit einem. And, Di darfst helf, bet bei der Ribbonoy shel olam, ober macht nisht gringer. Bet ois ales, er ken ales geben. When asked why she married off her daughter so young Mommy answered, Zei zolen elter veren m*it zeir z'vigim, nisht bei mir.*

Mommy was always entertaining, even when talking to us about her family to acquaint us with them so we could get to know them. Since Mommy spoke seven languages, she would slip from one personality to another, unintentionally mimicking each in their accents and languages. Mommy was a natural mimic, and it was like watching a play. Even an insignificant occurrence, became an exciting adventure.

Scientists would have loved to know the secret of Mommy's left shoulder. Not only did babies burp quicker while cuddled there, but would also quiet down and go to sleep. Sometimes, they needed the singing of Mommy's own version of a popular Yiddishe folk song, Belch mein babelle, belch!

Actually, Mommy had a very nice singing voice which we were unaware of, so enthralled were we with what she sang. Either it was the funny song Der greener cousina, or the tear-jerkers like Der zelner felder, Papirosen, Rozenkes mit mandlen, Mein Yiddishe Mama and of course Ay li lu li lu and Yummalle yummalle zing mir a lidale vos dos meidele vill. Lest we forget, Mommy also had her Flemish ditties to sing to the children. Hup, Hup, Hup! Potcha en Galop! En Galopen Zol Ihr Renen, etc…

Mommy strived to be fair in everything. Even when doling out her bags of goodies for the children, she would actually count out each thing so that all got equal amounts.

While on the subject of food, most remembered is Mommy in her kitchen. Scrumptious latkes on Pesach, always with chremslech for those who preferred, ready at all times in case someone needed to nosh. Also, for those who preferred it, there was always a potato kugel ready to be enjoyed. Mommy's mouth-watering choloptches had a tantalizing scent which permeated the whole apartment. No one else's stuffed cabbage could compete. Mommy's galarita or *p'tcha* as some called it, was demanded by acquaintances, despite the garlic odor that could knock you over. The split pea soup was so kreftig with tiny chewy kneidlach that you could never get too much of was the work of a master chef -- "Mommy". Mommy's Spanish rice was such that no Spaniard could match in its tastiness. And her meatballs were the envy of any Italian. Any chicken would've willingly given its neck for Mommy to make megel in the chulent. Chulent that proved that all of Mommy's guests were worthy. People would gladly risk friendships to eat of Mommy's miltz so savory with the garlic overwhelming the senses. It was worth all the time and labor expended to make it, and has formed new friendships. Mommy's apple compote from raw grated apples and orange juice, was unlike any other apple compote. The Pesachdige fruit pop for babies was made because, "Nebach they have so little to eat." No one made "eyer mit zviebel" like Mommy's because no one cut the onion so tiny! The veal and farfel, fried salami with eggs – for a quick snack, cole-slaw and potato salad were all Mommy's specialties. All of Mommy's foods had her own special flavoring. The magic ingredient called love. Even when I made meatballs while on the phone with Mommy instructing me step by step, when I served it that night Avrum wanted to know, "Why can't you make meatballs like your mother's?" Her love spice was missing. Mommy's restaurant catering to everyone, served custom made foods.

I must touch on the uncanny, sometimes prophetic insight Mommy had, especially where her beloved family was concerned. Mommy always knew when I was in labor, though I did not tell her when I was due. There Mommy would be in the hospital looking for me and/or the doctor to question him. Mommy sensed when her sister Miriam was killed by a car and when her brother collapsed in the street from an aneurysm, even though they lived in Belgium. Mommy seemed to know that she would become physically incapacitated because in February she insisted that I take money to buy Rochelle a Bas Mitzvah present. Rochelle's birthday is 'Yud Nissan'. Mommy also had her daughters take the necklaces she bought in Belgium for our Purim gifts right away. Mommy had her stroke on Purim. Evidently, Mommy did know that she would not be able to give us these presents at the right time. I also want to point out, that since Mommy's particularly special Yom-Tov was Chanukah when her special giving nature was fulfilled, (with Mommy's list being checked carefully), You must note that Mommy's petira did not take this Yom Tov from us. Because it was an iber yahr we can celebrate Chanukah, though it will never be the same without Mommy.

We must all strive to keep her midos alive in us and in her family, to keep her lessons on life and how we must live it in the forefront. Mommy was truly the epitome of a Yiddishe tochter and a Yiddishe Mama. May Mommy be a meilitza yosher for her beloved Klal Yisroel and help bring Moshiach ben *Dovid bekorov b'*yameinu. Amein.

Mirel (Hochman) Sternberg:

My earliest recollections are of Zaidie and Babbie on Fenimore Street. We rode on busses to get there all decked out in our Yom-Tov finery because it was our bi-annual Chol HaMoed trip. We Hochman girls were "shtotty," with our black patent leather pocketbooks. We dodged ferocious looking dogs and came into the "scrumptious-smelling" house. If it was Chol HaMoed Sukkos, after kisses and refilling our pocketbooks with change and our stomachs with white turkey roll sandwiches, we got "chappies" – a whole boxful to share. We gorged ourselves with marshmallow chocolates, played with Tanta Tobie's make-up and watched "Li'l Rascals."

If it was Chol HaMoed Pesach, we gorged ourselves on hot potato Kugel. My mother immediately began making fresh borscht (to take home) under Babbie's watchful eye. Babbie was already serving borscht with potatoes, tzibel mit eier, and matzohs with szchmaltz, loads of Ostreicher cookies and macaroons. Can't you hear Babbie saying, "tochterel, geb der kinder goodies!"

If somebody started up with any of the little ones, Babbie was sure to say, "Pow, pow in the kisser" pretending to punch the teaser.

Babbie allowed kugelach to be played, although she admitted, "Es klapt in kop".

When Babbie moved to Boro Park, we got to know her better. She hated the way I cut a portion of cake. Babbie always said, "It is see-through!" Babbie's refrigerator was always full to the brim with cake, jelly rings and marshmallows. Babbie entertained us with stories of plumbers and when she was annoyed, Babbie had terrific Yiddishe sayings like, "Er zol vaksen vi a tziebel mit dem kup in der erd!"

Her cooking was superb. Only Babbie had the patience to make marble sized meatballs. In comparison, mine are like canon balls. Babbie's raw apple compote is still a favorite of mine and her potato salad is my Shea'la's favorite!

Babbie re-hemmed countless model coats and skirts for us. The fall before her stroke, Babbie hemmed all my Goldie's new Pre 1A winter outfits in my home. Babbie also knew how to fix holes or pulled threads in knits.

Babbie was the life of any family gathering. Surely, everybody remembers her magic dreidel. It only spun shins for Babbie and left us all richer in the process.

Babbie remembered all our 'Bas Mitzvah's" with a terrific traveling case! Babbie's gifts were always unique and I often was the envy of my friends. Who else got a "mink" change purse or "mink" cat-faced sweater clips?! I also got plenty of polyester material from Babbie's warehouse of material to sew for my sewing lesson! And those delicate tea-cups, I still have, and hosts of others I'm sure other family members will remember to jog my memory! We knew if we complimented Babbie on anything, it became ours. So we tried to stay neutral. When Babbie came to me in Monsey, I innocently said, "You smell so good." Babbie whipped out her Givenchy spray and "Here teirel it's for you!" We were all her 'sweeties',and "sheifeles" and we felt it.

I don't remember seeing Babbie lose her patience and yell. Babbie did not have much materialistically, but she had tons of patience, love and the talent of making each and every one of us shine and feel like a million. She was, after all, a Rothschild! – a Rothschild of love!

No baby had the chutzpah not to belch and fall promptly to sleep against Babbie's shoulder. Babbie said it was natural, as, "I'm well padded!"

Babbie was a loyal mother, never admitted to the trouble her children may have concocted when they were little.

My children say, "She was funny, told funny stories and joke, and always laughed at our jokes." Goldie remembers Babbie pushing her on our swings.
Babbie was very proud of being a "Lerner". Babbie used to regale us with stories of her "kibud av". The long megillas she had to preface a request to her father went something like this, "Teiere Tatte, anshuldig faren shteren zei mir mochel, ober ich muz…"

Her brothers took advantage of the fact that they were older and tried to get Babbie to run their errands… When she refused, they'd just have to say "Pa, Pa-a-a…" and when Babbie heard, "Eh?" she ran to do as told.

Babbie told of their failure as restaurateur's because of Zaidie's generosity to every schnorrer in town.

No matter how sick, how tired or how her feet hurt, Babbie always pulled herself together to go to a simcha or to go visit an Uncle in a nursing home – no matter the distance.

We all miss Babbie's brachos Erev Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. In fact all year but especially before Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur I still say, "Everything Babbie would have vintscht us with!"

We miss Babbie dearly for her sense of humor, understanding, common sense, patience, comfort, and wish the little *einiklach's* could have known her. There was so much to gain!

Freidy (Hochman) Fishman

Recently, at a levaya, I heard that the real hesped is what is said during the shiva in the home of the nifteres. What a hesped Babbie got! I glow when I think of how all the people coming to pay the shiva calls and speaking about Babbie really only knew Babbie from the outside looking in (a real treat to be sure). We? We were right in there with Babbie always. Always in her mind and always in her heart.

My earliest memories of Babbie are most probably the ones I have of Babbie in the Bronx. That is where, after Mirel, myself and some other of Babbie's "voiler and lichtige kinder" spend a good part of the Purim celebration making ourselves Purimdige using Tanta Tobie's make-up. Thanks to Babbie (and her protektzia), we are all around today to tell this tale, and many others that don't involve Tanta Tobie's property. We never dared to touch Tanta Tobie's things again!! Although that is about all I remember of that memorable Purim in the Bronx, I can only imagine that it was similar to every years Purim gathering that took place in Babbie's apartments, either on Fenimore Street (remember that walk-up apartment where I was sure that the owner's dog would decide to just walk in and visit too?), on 40th Street, or 52nd Street where we would be treated to an unlimited amount of turkey roll slices, goodies and love. Each Chol HaMoed, we

again met the cousins at Babbie's with the same offerings of turkey roll and love; with the variations of Babbie's famous borscht on Pesach, sometimes her apple compote made with grated raw apples, and her specialty for babies which four of my children (at least) were lucky to taste. When I tried, in later years to duplicate one of Babbie's recipes (I think it was her meatballs), I called Babbie to complain that she must have left out some ingredient. I smile even now as I remember how she told me I must have not included enough 'love'. That was Babbie's secret ingredient! Her love had no bounds (for that matter, neither did her humor! Babbie was always good for a good belly-laugh, even if she was the spotlight of the joke.) And she included everyone into her hugs, kisses, goody-giving, and even in just opening her home and heart to neighbors whose names she never knew. A favorite story of mine about Babbie is the time a came to her a bit earlier for my weekly Shabbos shalosh seudos visit. Babbie was still in bed, Babbie was still in bed, but there was this "strange" girl sitting in Babbie's kitchen (on 40th Street), playing kugelach. Babbie explained to me that this girl came each Shabbos afternoon after the meal to play by Babbie (need I clue you in as to who supplied the kugelach?) to "hok in kup arein," because her parents refused to let her make "lecher in their kup". I guess I shouldn't have been surprised. Because Babbie's sympathies always rested on yenem, and even extended to the shvartzer_cleaning help. I once came in to find Babbie slaving away on her feet, cleaning, and most probably, also preparing some of her famous matzah brei for her help. Where was this help? Watching the soap operas in the dining room! Babbie explained to me how upsetting it is to miss an episode! These were the famous help who also had discriminating taste in Babbie's Irish or Belgian linen, as Babbie used to tell me. I remember thinking that the Greensteins, the Weilguses, the Schaechters and Usher and Blima's children were my first cousins – just by seeing that they received all that we did. Another memory of mine is Babbie's affiliations with Mermelstein's take-out, and the way Babbie used to order soup for my mother because she knew that my mother enjoyed it. And who will ever forget the smell of our refrigerator before each bar mitzvah as Babbie prepared galarita that contained all the garlic Babbie was able to lay her hands on? And what about the Lowen's Bakery cream puffs and éclairs that Babbie would bring with her each visit? I once met Babbie on 14th Avenue and 45th Street as I was running back to school after lunch break. Babbie insisted on rushing her starved granddaughter (even after I explained that I had just eaten lunch. Babbie's take was that one was always hungry for 'nosh'!!) Into Lowens-Mandelbaum's Bakery to buy me a Danish. I ran the last block to school, trying to figure out how to explain this 'excuse' to my attendance teacher, so I wouldn't have to sit detention. Luckily, Frenchy Dembitzer was my attendance teacher, and she dismissed me on the grounds of knowing Babbie and understanding her need to provide solid junk-food all around, any time. Anytime included in camp with Babbie sending the packages of licorice with Uncle Hersh or those huge bags of pistachios. Let us not forget the cases of chappies gum. Babbie also knew our favorites. She had roulade, cheese cake and seven layers for us Hochmans each Shabbos, marshmallows and chocolate jelly rings – reminding us to take this week's fresh batch. Even after I was married Babbie would call if she had a fresh batch of mini cheese Danishes! In fact, when I was still young and had fewer eaters, I was making our favorite, Babbie's recipes of cole slaw and potato salad weekly. I would bring Babbie small containers each week. Babbie would pack me off back home with containers of Spanish rice, house specialty compote and sometimes even Babbie's split-pea soup and kneidlach soup. Large containers for two adult eaters. Binim and I still laugh about my freezer full of our leftovers each Erev Pesach! How about Babbie belching our babies? Babbie's letz gelt. And with our 'traveling Babbie,' a coined phrase to describe Babbie, off to Belgium, Florida or the likes… We would have made a mint. We tried concocting excuses, like the kind we used each Chanukah by Chanukah gelt time. "We got already!" Chanukah brings with it a host of memories, from partying to canasta to Babbie's 'shin dreidel.' When my mother was trying to get Babbie out a bit while Zaidie was sick, we concocted a plan for Babbie to come to me a few times a year to teach me how to make chaloptches. Although I only had one large farberware pot and anywhere from two to four children at that time. We sat and prepared about sixty stuffed cabbage out of, I think, four heads of cabbage and used my neighbors Farberware

pot too. That was Babbie's style. Do it and do it A LOT! My brother-in-law who lived under me would come home from work, get one whiff of the hall and schnorr his portion, as did my cousin! Babbie's pocketbooks, they all looked alike to me. Large leather bags, and I mean LARGE! Packed to the brim. If it was to pull out some pictures, because that is how I kept up with the next generation, via the pictures they sent Babbie or some money she owed me for something I picked up for Babbie on my way over (and what lies I had to concoct, or what begging went on until I convinced Babbie to let me do this big mitzvah, Another Babbie quote, as we left she would remind us zolt zein tzu mitzvah as if the entertainment, Babbie's company, my kids delight and stuffed stomachs weren't enough!) I always marveled at her bulging bag, neat as a pin. And how I would control myself from admiring anything in Babbie's house, lest she would insist it become mine! "Tochter, take it." I think that we all heard that a million times each visit. The Toni bags, Mrs. Wolf her schneideker, or Babbie's stories about her father, siblings or our parents. Each story came in our mothers version, where my mother always came out smelling like roses... My mother knew how to sweep (luckily Babbie's threats taught me too, and the proof is that Binim doesn't look like a monkey), my mother drank her milk, though every one of her siblings claimed that the only empty glass belonged to them, and my mother never fought with her siblings! My children would call Babbie each time they lost a tooth before it went under their pillows. Babbie would have them come over A.S.A.P. when she would inspect the tooth, exclaim over its unique qualities, examine the gaping hole and assess the value of the tooth (usually more than the average rate of a quarter – rich Babbie forced me to up my rate to hers, $1.00). Right after Babbie had her stroke, my Goldie lost a tooth. We had a hard time convincing her to put it under the pillow. The attention she gave them was as if they were her only "eir einiklach". My Yossi was born in the coldest part of winter and I didn't take him to Babbie until after the bris. When Babbie saw my Yossi for the first time, Babbie got angry at me. I had told Babbie that Yossi was born with a bunch of hair. I even called Babbie after the mohel left, to tell Babbie that he said that he would throw in the chalaka for free! Babbie was upset that I hadn't the Lerner gift of gab in describing something. Babbie wanted to know why I didn't just tell her that he was born with a sheitel! I was quick to tell Babbie that my Henny was born with a face that was as wide as most babies faces were long. That is the type of descriptions that Babbie gave when telling a story. Mrs. Zlate Helfand told me that she knew Babbie when she was a child. She would run to hear Babbie's stories, because Babbie loved telling stories. "But," she told me, "I never heard your grandmother speak loshon hora or say a negative word about anyone!" That is because Babbie never saw the negative. Babbie enjoyed life and filled her days (and ours) with cheer. Everyone wanted to be near Babbie and Babbie related to everyone at their level. My friend's daughter, Sara Miriam Kviat, once came along to Babbie with me. After being treated royally, she was invited back to Babbie "lipstick". A while later, when walking with her grandmother Ehrlich, they passed Babbie's apartment building. Sara Miriam told her Babbie Ehrlich that she wanted to go up to visit Babbie lipstick. Her arguments were falling on deaf ears as Sara Miriam explained how Babbie lipstick really told her to come again. Another case was Freidy Vorhand, who was convinced that she had to tag along with us just in case we stopped off at Babbie Lipstick, which we were wont to do. As a neighbor across the hall, I would hear her pumping Goldie each time we left the house, to hear which direction we were headed. I wish that I could remember all of Babbie's expressions. I am sure they included the ones my mother used on us and more. But Babbie had a special way of saying them. Sort of the way we remember Babbie saying "responablity" or "vega-table"... Babbie also had the most special way of "vintsching une". Babbie's brachos were lengthy, meaningful ones that covered us and all of our future generations *l'dor* doros. In fact, it has become standard procedure for us Hochmans to end off any good wishes Erev Rosh Hashana and Erev Yom Kippur with, "and everything that Babbie would vintscht you". No one could say it better than Babbie in the ruchnius either. It has been close to eight years since Babbie has spoken to me, but her voice still lives in me. I hear her telling me about my shtiller, lichtige kinder... which allows me to turn a deaf ear to their sometimes rowdy behavior or calling them a zeeskeit or sheinkeit, urging me to buy something for them, because

nothing is too good for Babbie's einikel. Babbie took real pride in my dressing them well, as I would bring them in matching outfits (in the real olden days when I matched my three older girls) or as I would bring her my sale *metziah's* to examine… This year, my mother went down to her hall closet and dug out a gray suit that Babbie bought me in Belgium about 28 years ago. My *'feinshmecker'* took a look at the outfit, examined the jumper pleats and jackets fine stitching, and wanted to know where I got this magnificent, stylish suit. Babbie would have kvelled to see my Hennie wearing the suit that fits her like a glove!! Everyone who has seen Hennie wearing "Babbie's suit" has commented, raved or called me. Style and class. Two words that also describe our Babbie.

So many people, here and in Europe, called Babbie "theirs". And Babbie treated everybody like "hers". But today, we know she was really all ours. And we are the ones who must try to pass Babbie's legacy of optimism, cheer and warmth to the next generation.

Shea Hochman:

When I think of BabbieLipszyc I remember her as:

- a person that was always giving.
Suppers, snacks, gifts, words of praise and encouragement

- always seeing the good in whoever came up in conversation

- a person that steered away from bemoaning her situation. She had.
lots to complain about, yet always directed the conversation towards the lighter moments

- a person that was always able to laugh. Even in the darkest times,
she would find humor in the situation.

I remember marveling that I even look forward to those things that I don't like when it is coming from someone that I do – like the chocolate pudding – it was bitter strong, yet I took it eagerly.

I remember waiting for the taxi that brought her to our house on Chanukah. Watching her lose dreidel as she insisted that it was always a shin.

It speaks volumes for itself that after so many years, these memories are so vivid and heartwarming.

I used to think that she was very rich because she was so giving. Then I became older and found out that she really was in a real sense – and so are we who were privileged to know and learn from her.

Devoiry (Hochman) Steuer:

My earliest memories of Babbie are of going on a city-bus to visit her when she still lived on Fenimore Street in Crown Heights. In fact, even after she moved to Borough-Park, we were still calling her "Crown Heights Babbie" as opposed to our other grandmother who was called "Boro Park Babbie".

The only things that I remember from those Crown Heights visits are of waiting to see out of the bus window a big billboard for Sunnydale milk – a cow – which was a sure indication that we were indeed on our way to Babbie's house. My other memory is of the large, scary dog that always barked as we approached Babbie's house.

After Babbie moved to Borough Park, she was our destination at least every Shabbos afternoon, and our Chol-HaMoed trips, where we happily sat and watched "The Flintstones", "I love Lucy", "The Brady Bunch" and other favorites.

I remember Babbie coming to our house before Shulie and Shea's Bar-Mitzvahs to make her specialty, galareta. This delicacy was a favorite with the Stitchiner mispallelim who looked forward to Hochman kiddeishim. For hours she stood on her feet preparing and cooking and grinding those bones so that it would turn out just right! Other specialties of Babbie's were her tiny little meatballs and kneidlach that called for a lot of patience standing and forming so many hundreds of little balls. These would be stocked in her freezer so that when anyone came to visit, she would open the freezer and start handing out containers of soup, meatballs, grated apple compote etc…

Babbie's coleslaw was the best I have ever tasted. Although she had no actual recipe, she told me how she made it.

Dissolve a small amount of sour salt into a little bit of boiled water. Add sugar and mayonnaise to taste. Pour over shredded cabbage and lots of carrots. The secret Babbie felt was in using loads of carrots. And she felt, that since carrots are more expensive than cabbage, caterers save money by skimping on the carrots. She also used to turn up her nose disdainfully at bought fruit soup saying that there was barely any fruit in it.

Another area of expertise in which Babbie was our maven was going to Sol's Quilts before we got married. Babbie would stand for hours as our quilts were being filled, to make certain that only the highest quality down and not feathers were being put into our covers.

And who could forget all the "goodies" as Babbie called it, that she made sure to stock her house with for her sveetie/oitzerel. Varieties of ice cream – Dixie's, pops for the long Shabbos afternoons when we would eat milchigs, and ices for the short winter ones when we were still fleishigs. Jelly rings, marshmallows, roulade (jelly roll cake), seven layer, and cases of Lieber's products from which she handed out whole packages of cookies, wafers, licorice, jellyfish, etc… Pesach time when we were small, Babbie used to dole out chocolate lolly cones, when we were older she gave us mini Torino chocolate bars of which she seemed to have an endless supply.

After we had a great time stuffing ourselves, and doing things we were never allowed to do at home, we would reluctantly take our leave of Babbie. When we would say good-bye she would always answer zol zein tzu mitzvah. As though we were doing her a great chesed instead of us coming because we loved too.

Last year at my Rochele's PTA her teacher, Mrs. Seltenreich asked me, "Is Mrs. Lipszyc your grandmother?" "Yes" I responded. "How did you know?" It turned out that Rochele had a family tree project and had included some family pictures amongst them a picture of Babbie. Mrs. Seltenreich had seen the pictures and although unlabeled had immediately recognized Babbie as Mrs. Lipszyc, the lady that the high school had included in their chesed program when she was a student. "Everybody wanted to visit Mrs. Lipszyc because it was so much fun and so interesting to talk to her. She gave us nosh too, and it wasn't like visiting the other old ladies which really wasn't enjoyable at all and felt like chesed," she recalled. I knew just what she meant.

Even when I was older, Babbie was hospitable to my friends. Once, after I was already married, two friends of mine came to watch a video at Babbie's house. Babbie kept coming in trying to tempt us with assorted "goodies".

Babbie was always so jolly that you would never know that she had any problems or that she was usually in pain. Everybody always marveled at Babbie's unfailingly good nature and her good sense of humor despite her difficult life. She always made us laugh with her funny expressions. For example, when she was annoyed at somebody, ehr zohl vaksen vi a tzibele mit zein kup in di erd!

When Yoeli was born and I had to go back to teach when he was five weeks old, Babbie offered to babysit him. I took her up on her offer, but was horrified when I realized that she meant to do it for free! I knew that Babbie could use the money, and finally got her to reluctantly agree to accept payment (albeit at a very cheap rate). Even so, although I discreetly put the money in an envelope, at the end of every week, Babbie would eye the envelope with disgust.

Yoeli couldn't have had a better babysitter. Babbie held him in her arms all afternoon as she lay bedridden. In fact, all babies loved Babbie and immediately quieted in her arms. Unless, of course, they had to burp, which they promptly did as soon as Babbie placed them over her shoulder and gently commanded, "Belch!" It was an amazing phenomenon! I still sing Babbie's Flemish "Hup, hup, hup" song as I bounce giggling babies on my knees although I am sure that I have the words all wrong.

When I was in 5th grade, Tanta Tobie was getting married and I slept over by Babbie because I was Tanta Tobie's shomer for the week. It was like a vacation! I was waited on hand and foot, my every whim was catered to and I didn't have to go to school because I had to be available to escort Tanta Tobie on her errands. One of those days I had a class trip and so other arrangements were made for Tanta Tobie for that day. However, when I arrived at school I was told that the trip had been postponed. I turned around and went back to Babbie's house even though I knew that I was not needed that day. I lounged around all day long having a great time and Babbie let me! (My mother never would have!)

I don't think you could easily find someone as generous as Babbie, although she had so little herself. Babbie once told me a story from when she and Zaidie had a restaurant in Paris. Word got around that anyone who couldn't afford to eat, ate for free, which was fine with Babbie. However, she resented it when one of the patrons routinely ordered wine to go with his free meal. To Babbie's dismay, Zaidie insisted on giving the man the wine too. It was then that Babbie learned that true tzedaka is giving someone what they think they need even though it may seem like a luxury.

My last memory of Babbie before her stroke was before Purim, when she was in the hospital after her first milder stroke. She was concerned about Megillah leining and Berel offered to lein for her. Days before, she kept asking for and checking to make sure that she had a clear print Megillah to follow along in. That Purim night I came along with Berel to the hospital to also hear Megillah. Babbie was pointing with her finger, turning the pages etc. when she suddenly fell asleep. Berel stopped leining unsure whether to continue or maybe to wake her up. Finally, when she didn't awaken he finished up and we left. Later we learned that she must have had her bad stroke then during the Megillah leining. I feel privileged that I had the opportunity to see firsthand Babbie's extreme meticulousness when observing what was to be her last conscious mitzvah.

Babbie's Spanish Rice:

2 cups rinsed rice
I onion sliced
1 Tbsp. oil
½ tsp. salt
8 oz. can tomato sauce
I cup water

Rochelle (Hochman) Braunfeld

My memories of Babbie are from a child's point of view since I was only 12 when she got sick. I remember coming to visit, and more often than not, Babbie looking up from her Tehillim, greeting me with a smile, and telling me to help myself to goodies (marshmallows, jelly rings and coke) while she just finished saying her daily Tehillim. When she finished, she would listen to me chatter, entertain me with her stories, and play with me. In fact, I enjoyed being sick every so often just so that I could spend the day with Babbie until my mother finished work. Babbie would pamper me and tempt my "poor appetite" with some "matzah brei" or toast and a cup of Nestle hot cocoa.

Most of my Shabbos afternoons were spent by Babbie. Even if I visited a friend, I would stop by Babbie afterwards. There were always others there, neighbors, friends and relatives. There were also a group of girls from Bobov High School who would come every Shabbos, supposedly to cheer up and entertain a homebound woman, but would leave having gained more than Babbie gained. Somehow, the group seemed to grow every week, and Babbie seemed to know a family member of each of these girls and would tell stories about them. They would apologize for taking Babbie's time from us, but Babbie made them feel so comfortable that not only did they stay, they came back week after week even though they knew that we would be there too.

When each of my teeth fell out I would save them to show to Babbie who would always ask to see the space, tell me how I was growing up, and would give me quarter.

Each Yom-Tov brings with it special memories of Babbie. Even in later years when walking was difficult for her, she would walk a block to shul on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. I used to accompany my mother during the breaks in davening to see how Babbie was doing. I was always so proud when she introduced me as her granddaughter.

One Sukkos stands out in my mind. Yossi and I had been begging Babbie to stay by us for a Yom-Tov and she finally agreed. (I was about seven or eight years old at the time.) I remember waiting at the window with great anticipation for the car to pull up. While we bathed and got dressed for Yom-Tov, Babbie said Tehillim. I remember her combing my hair gently and than playing Canasta with us until the zman. That night we sat in the succah long after the seudah was over as Babbie reminisced. Although I didn't understand most of the adult's conversation, I still enjoyed sitting there and listening. I shared my room with her and remember how she asked that the lamp stay on all night because she would be sleeping very little. Sure enough, when I woke up in middle of the night, she was wide awake.

Chanukah with its large family parties was always special. Aside from the dreidel and gelt that she would give each child, the excitement we felt playing dreidel with her is still vivid. She would pick up the dreidel while it was still spinning fast. Mysteriously, she never received a

gimmel. We would examine her dreidel and have her use ours but she would always pick up the dreidel and pretending to be disappointed say "Look at that, again a shin."

When we visited on Purim she would ooh and aah over our costumes and urge us to help ourselves to "goodies" from the overflowing dining room table.

When we visited her on Pesach we were always given Torino Minor Sticks and mini Schmerling chocolate bars. I still use the matzah holder (to prevent crumbs from getting on the table) which Babbie embroidered my name onto.

I remember Babbie making pekalech of "goodies" for Freidy's children and counting how many jelly beans and licorice bits she was putting in each so that the kids wouldn't be jealous of each other.

My last memory of Babbie is her giving my mother money to buy me an overnight size, luggage for my Bas-Mitzvah which was a month away. Perhaps she sensed that by the time my birthday came around she wouldn't be able to.

May we all be zoche to follow in Babbie's footsteps.

Elkie (Lipszyc) Finkelstein and Family:

Dear Freidy, *a"mu*sh,

Okay, you've convinced me. I know it took so long to get me to do this. It's just so hard to put it down on paper. So many memories. An accumulation of many little things that meant so much! Like the times that Babbie used to send Bashie and me on errands. I remember being sent to Windsor when Uncle Hersh, Yitzy and Malkie worked there. Babbie reminded us not to mix up the "orders". Everyone was to get their favorite… nibs, jelly beans or chocolate pudding…! We were given a similar reminder when we were sent to shop for my mother and told to be sure and get the chocolate with the truffles inside because Babbie knew it was our mother's favorite. Babbie would also remind us to be careful with the change, only to give us all the change to keep at the end of our shopping expedition. Those dollar bills of change were given to us with strict instructions… Babbie insisted we spend it on nosh!!

I also fondly remember those Motzai Shabbos Kodesh at Babbie's that were so much fun. That's when we would sit and eat the arbis Babbie had prepared in case someone would be making a Shalom Zachor.

Anyways, I must go now. Writing about this makes me miss Babbie more and more. We should all be zoche to see Zaidie and Babbie very soon with the coming of Moshiach bimheira *v'yomeinu, Ame*in!

Necha Goldie (Knobloch) Gordon:

My early years in Brownsville hold many fond memories for me. Because we moved when I was five years old, most of those memories tend to be blurry.

One of the vivid ones, however, is walking home with my mother from somewhere – shopping, the park or visiting. I distinctly remember pleading that we stop by "Die Lipszyc". This happened, not once but many times over. What was it that drew a small child to a household with older children and teenagers? It was the relaxed atmosphere that permeated the home. Smiling and laughing were the norm. There was always ice cream available to sweeten a child's day. Children have a fine sense of smell. The delight that my brothers and I had in Mrs. Lipszyc's home is a tribute to the joy she spread amongst her relatives and friends.

I would like to add a small fact that has not been forgotten though many years have passed. When one of Mrs. Lipszyc's children was getting married, my family received an invitation, and what a surprise! My name was specifically written on the envelope! Though it is common practice today, and children Boruch Hashem attend many more weddings, then it was most unusual. As if that weren't enough, at the next wedding, I received an invitation addressed only to me! Children love to be noticed. What a beautiful way to bring happiness to a child.

May she be a Meilitz Yosher for her family and all of Klal Yisroel.

Blima Lerner:

Tanta Gita would speak to me and would tell me that her bones feel the rain coming and how her head is splitting from the rheumatism. After speaking for a while Tanta Gita asked "How are you doing?" I answered that I have a slight headache. Tanta Gita said, "Send over the kids to me so you can get some rest." I said to Tanta Gita, "You just finished saying how you are aching all over!" " No, I'm fine now, I was talking about this morning – send over the kids."

That was Tanta Gita. Always ready to do whatever was in her power to make life easier for the other person.

Whoever had problems would run to Tanta Gita to talk. Tanta Gita obviously, couldn't solve everyone's problems. But whoever spoke to Tanta Gita walked away feeling as if a stone had been lifted from their shoulders.

Today, nine years after her debilitating stroke, whenever Tanta Gita is mentioned, everyone raves about what a special person she was.

Tanta Gita lived through more tzores throughout her life than anyone I know or have heard about. Yet speaking to Tanta Gita and being around her was always a pleasure and inspiration. She was always lively and laughing at life and at herself. She would take the darkest moments and turn it into nothing.

I miss her terribly as I have no doubt whoever knew her misses her.

From an interview with Hennie (Lerner) Gross:

Hennie referred to Babbie (Tanta Gita as she was fondly called by many) as "everybody's best friend"! Usher was Babbie's son in every way besides biologically. Each Yom-Tov or Shabbos seudah that Babbie ate there, the women's eyes would begin to glaze over as Usher began his dvar Torah which he simplified for their benefit. Babbie, not only attentively listened, but would also ask questions. No, Babbie was not a "typical woman"!

Blima would sit and discuss issues with Babbie for hours on end. Babbie would offer her helpful and clever advice in the most unpatronizing way making it seem as if each problem was just a kleinekeit with a simple solution.

It was Hennie's honor and privilege to walk Babbie home after each Shabbos meal. Hennie remembers just standing and talking to Babbie about anything and everything. That was Babbie's gift. She was able to relate to people of all types, personalities and ages. Shulem also found a listening ear in Babbie.

Babbie had a great sense of humor and was entertaining. Hennie's classmates loved going to Babbie as part of their "Homebound Visiting Program". Bobov had a strict rule that their students were not allowed to go to the pizza store during school hours. Some students believe that rules are meant to be broken and took advantage of not only running errands for Babbie, but using that time to buy themselves pizza. When the school tried investigating the girls guilt, they called Babbie inquiring if she had any knowledge as to why these girls were breaking the school rule to buy pizza. Babbie quickly used her wit to come to the defense of these hungry "lichtige kinder" and covered their guilt. She reassured the person in charge that she indeed loves pizza!

Hennie also remembers those yearly Chanukah parties. Babbie was the life of the party. Everybody walked in and made a beeline for Babbie. Babbie knew how to make everyone feel like a million! Of course Babbie wasn't called the "shin Tanta" for nothing. Not only was Babbie famous for her "shin" dreidel. Each Chanukah would have Babbie doling out her Chanukah gelt systematically. Babbie had all those lists/envelopes so that she was sure that no one was forgotten.

Blima's mother, Mrs. Elias, remembers how in Florida the ladies who had met Babbie there one year kept asking after Babbie. That was Babbie. Unforgettable and "everybody's best friend"!

The Wielgus Family:

I am finally sitting down to write a few words about my wonderful aunt. I always felt that Tanta Gita was a mother to the out-of-town cousins, me, Usher and Alexander. When Benny was born my parents were living in Brazil and my mother came later so Tanta Gita came to my house to take care of me and the baby.

One of the things which I heard from her and I always repeat is, when someone can't find something I always say "you can't find it? Do like Tanta Gita said, if you can't find something, just call it – don't look for it."

When Miriam got married we made Sheva Brachos in Lakewood and Rivkie had a baby a few months old who didn't want to stop crying, Tanta Gita said "give him to me, I have a special shoulder, I will put him on my shoulder and he will stop crying." And sure enough, Rivkie gave her the baby and for the first time in two months the baby stopped crying.

I used to take Sholom Menachem to Tanta Gita's house and she used to give him a small plastic bag and she showed him her beautiful jars of colorful candies and she told him how many he could have. Tanta Gita was a mother, an aunt and a grandmother to all of us.

I remember Sholom Menachem was with me when I met someone who told us that Tanta Gita had gotten sick and he was so upset and he said, "Will Tanta Gita be better by Purim?" Tanta Gita

was a wonderful, warm and very beloved person and she will always be remembered and missed by all of us.

Miriam (Wielgus) Gottlieb:
1317 East 31st St.
Brooklyn, NY 11210
252-0565

Dear Freidy, a"mush

Your Babbie Lipszyc to us was known as Tanta Gita. We all knew that my mother lived by her when she came to the United States.

The time that sticks out most in mind are the Chanukah parties. Every year my mother would make a big Chanukah party for all the cousins. Tanta Gita was always the first one to arrive. That is how we knew it was time to start the party. She always came with Chanukah gelt for all of us with her new dollar bills straight from the bank. After all the Chanukah gelt was given out, it was time to start her Canasta game. We all knew that the cards in the black box were not for the kids but for the big game. We also knew that if we wanted a new pack of kvitlach, to go straight to Tanta Gita because she always came prepared. After she got sick, the Chanukah parties just were not the same anymore.

I also remember being in the 7th or 8th grade and whenever I was not feeling well, my mother would pick me up from school and drop me at Tanta Gita's house to rest until she was finished work. She always took great care of me.

My siblings tell me that when I was young, Tanta Gita used to come to babysit for me when we lived in Remsen Village.

Yitzchok Ira Brandriss:
20 Shvat 5760

Dear Family,

In response to your request for memories, I cannot say that I knew your Babbie – my Aunt Gita – well, or have any particular anecdote to relate, except to say that I remember her as the grand matriarch of a great family, who had deep common sense and wisdom and was always direct about her opinions and feelings while being warm and caring at the same time.

I am under the impression that she and my Uncle Yoel, *z"l* – your grandfather – lived for a time after their marriage in Lillie, with my grandparents, Itche Meir and Toba Lipszyc. My mother tells me that Uncle Yoel had wanted to learn in Switzerland (or was it Eastern Europe?), but apparently never did. He and your Babbie married young. I do not know at what point they got out of Europe; at some point they were in Portugal before arriving in Cuba. But I imagine that you know the history better than I do. I would love to see it when you have it all compiled.

I only have dim memories from childhood of visiting your grandparents' home in a large apartment complex in Brooklyn. We as children were always somewhat afraid of being kissed by our Uncle Yoel because of his beard, which we were not accustomed to. We also remembered prominently his cigars. I remember coming up to New York for several of the weddings – I believe it was at Muriel's, and I remember Sarah's and Isaac's and Tobie's. My memories are of

what was then called Menorah Temple or some such wedding hall. Aunt Gita, *a'h* was always a presence.

Hirsch was the first of the cousins we got to know fairly well. Leon also, afterwards. I remember something about a couple of these cousins – was it Itche? – trying to get me to promise not to be involved on some matters that bordered on issur. I also still have and use a set of the world of prayer that someone in your family gave me for my Bar Mitzvah. And for years I used a set of Nach that was given to me, too – until it basically wore out. I don't remember which was given by your grandparents. But it went to very good purpose.

May you draw comfort from all the memories.

Chavie (Lipszyc) Katzman:

Freidy, a"mush

Sad to admit, I can't remember off-hand anything really tachlisdik, but I didn't want you to think I wasn't responding.

Quickly brainstorming with your question, here are a few tidbits, literally trivia, that come to mind.

Two things that Babbie gave me always stick in my mind. The beautiful silver candlesticks and the little maroon suitcase for my Bas Mitzvah that Babbie gave us all. I took it everywhere!

I always looked forward to eating Babbie's scrumptious farfel and meatballs. Babbie knew that I loved it and sometimes sent us a container. She also had on hand jelly rings, marshmallows… always prepared on the table for us.

What always amazed me was that no matter how large our family is k"ah so many einiklach, she always came to all the simchas regardless if it was overseas!

Chaim Mueller:

Gittle Lipszyc was a woman to talk about. You could tell many stories about her but no words could do her justice in her good ways; how moser nefesh she was.

Once, a close relations wife became sick. Gittle Lipszyc despite her own problems and poverty, took one of the children from this relative into her home. It was not just taking in the child, but her compassionate caring, her deep concern included in the child's fear and need for his mother went all beyond words can express. I can't forget it. Gittle Lipszyc was always so moser nefesh, even for strangers despite her many problems and lack of money, without limits. I also want to relate I know her husband was ill and she herself wasn't well but her actions to do good was without limit. We have to know that there are few such people like her with mesiras nefesh and it is not to be taken lightly. We must recognize this for its importance.

Thank You.
Chaim Mueller

Toni (Antoinette) Turner:

Dear Sarah, *a"mush,*

I received your letter and Howard and I hope that you and all your siblings and families are doing OK.

Your mother A"H was a wonderful warm and very resourceful person. She had a great personality and always smiled. She was a good daughter, sister, and a devoted wife, a great mother, grandmother and great grandmother.

When she used to work, she had such a feeling of accomplishment and it made her so happy. She tries to do everything for her children and family.

We always admired her devotion to your father A"H and the loving care she gave him in very difficult times. She never complained.

She was so wonderful to my parents. She loved them and always visited with them. My mother A"H was her favorite aunt. When anyone came from Antwerp, she made sure that they visited with my parents and she came along with them.

Dave was always so gracious to drive her and the rest of the family to Kew Gardens to visit my parents. I can never thank them enough for this as it gave my parents so much pleasure. It was never a burden for her to visit and I always tried to be there on those occasions. It was always a pleasure for me to see her.

When my mother A"H was gone, I used to pick up the phone and talk to Gita and discuss anything with her and she gave me wonderful advice.

Her long illness distressed us all.

Hope this helps a little. Be well. Love to all.

Toni (Antoinette) Turner

These are some of the faxes and letters that were sent to the aveilim during the shiva:

Yair, Esthy (Lerner) and Yaakov Ashkelon

Dearest Tobie, a"mush,

You have lost your mother, a real Queen.

We have lost a very warm and loving aunt, a real lady.

She could have taught Miriam Adahan and other psychologists that even though life didn't always smile at her, she could always smile back and find the positive side in everything and everyone.

We will all miss her very much and we will always remember her kindness and smartness.

May HaKadosh Boruch Hu help you through this rough time and only Hashem can soothe the pain.

Mordechai, Mirel, Ari and Lea Porush-Grunhut:

Dear Mendel, Mirel, Leible, Hersh Noach, Sarah, Isaac and Tobie, *a"mush,*

I really cannot express my feelings from sadness and grief about the petira of Tanta Gita A"H. I remember like yesterday the first time I saw her coming into our flat in Buenos Aires. I was waiting impatient to see her because I knew her well through my mother's speaking about her and I was really so impressed by her warmth, personality and kindness all along her life. We felt very close to her even from afar.

It was really a big simcha when we heard he's coming to visit us and most of all when I had the zechus to have her in my home. I have learned a lot of her wisdom in lebens klugshaft which helps me through my life.

Mordechai N"Y does repeat very often the great experience he had when he was with Ari in NY and he learned to know her through the long talks in the evenings; how he enjoyed it! He felt like an eigene not an eingeharete. She made us feel like her children and it was really mutual.

She was a very special and unique person for everybody who knew her.

We miss her deeply and we feel very sad for all of us and you all.

My mother and Uncle Isi do speak the whole time about all the zichronos they have.

Kranchie and Eli Lerner:

To our dear cousins,

It was with great pain and sorrow that we learned of the loss of such a wonderful woman, Tanta Gita. The void of such a wonderful person, who her whole life gave of herself for the sake of her family, will be greatly felt and missed. Her wonderful smile and friendliness will always be remembered. May we all follow in her footsteps and may she be remembered with great honor.

May we be zoche to only share simchos!

Shimmy and Machla Lerner:

To cousins Lipszyc, *a"mush*

After having tried numerous times to phone without getting through, this was the only other way for me to express my thoughts to you all. Having to communicate under these circumstances is always difficult.

The most prominent memories we all have of Tanta Gita *a"h* are filled with warmth, sensitivity, intelligence and almost always a touch of humor.

May she be a true meilitz yosher for us all.

Mordche, Renee and children:

Dear Mendel, Mirel, Leible, Hersh, Sara, Isaac, Tobie, *a"mush*

Words cannot express my feelings that I have and the sorrow I feel about your terrible loss. Tanta Gita *a"h* was like a second mother to me and I loved her so dearly. She was such a special woman, with such a terrific sense of humor and her incredible wisdom. We all miss her so much.

I am sitting here in my mother's lounge in Antwerp and Uncle Isi and my mother, are telling stories about your mother's *a"h* sense of humor at Uncle Leibish's *a"h* aufruf. Whoever met her, was left with a great impression. Mordche, who only met her a few times, already loved her.

You are all in our thoughts.

Mottel Dembitzer: remembers Babbie as one in a thousand with being courageous. Babbie was busy with small kids and had no means, but she was an Eishes Chayil.

Uncle Leibish: clearly remembers receiving Moishe Meyer's prognosis during his being in aveilus after Zaidie's petira. The powerful words that Babbie said in reaction to Uncle Leibish relaying the bad news to Babbie is a reflection of Babbie's pure and absolute emunah! "So now I understand that Papi had to go up and daven for Moishe Meir's recovery." And that is just what happened. May Babbie do the same for all of the family she left behind.