

THE BERGER FAMILY
A MLYNOV FAMILY STORY

mlynov

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From the desk of Howard I. Schwartz, PhD
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A note about the researcher/author:
Howard I. Schwartz, PhD, is descended from
the Demb and Gruber families in Mlynov.

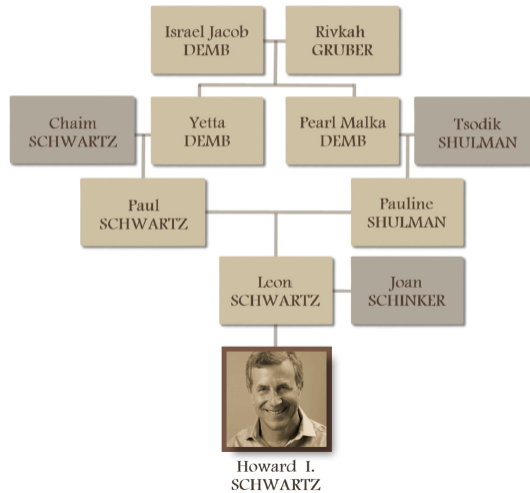
Howard's great-great grandparents were Israel Jacob Demb and Rivkah Gruber.

Two of their daughters were Yetta and Pearl Malka Demb. Sister Yetta married Chaim Schwartz and Sister Pearl Malka married Tsodik Shulman.

The son of Yetta and Chaim, Paul Schwartz, married his first cousin, the daughter of Pearl Malka and Tsodik Shulman, Pauline Shulman.

Paul and Pauline, both born in Mlynov, were Howard's paternal grandparents. They were the parents of Leon Schwartz, Howard's father.

**HOWARD SCHWARTZ'S
PATERNAL ANCESTRY**



After Howard's parents, Joan and Leon Schwartz, passed away, Howard began researching his family roots, an effort which almost naturally expanded into an interest in the story of his ancestors' hometown Mlynov. As was the case in his own family, he discovered that interfamilial marriages were common among many of the families in the small town of Mlynov.

Howard has been publishing the results of his research on a website about Mlynov. This website tells the story of what became of Mlynov and the families that once lived there.

<https://kchilalinks.jewishgen.org/Mlyniv/>

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Discovering the Berger Family

A large Berger family from Mlynov made their way to Chicago between 1910–1914. I originally stumbled on the Berger family name on the 1926 passenger manifest of one Mlynov boy named Isaac Wulaj (soon to be Isadore Wallace) who had passed through Buenos Aires on his way to the US. He gave his destination as Sol Berger, 440 North Oakley Blvd, Chicago. Was Sol Berger also from Mlynov and if so when and why did he land in Chicago? That question set me off on a search to discover what drew Mlynov immigrants to Chicago.

4	No	Self	55	YesNo	Friend, Sol Berger, 440 North Oakley Blvd, Chicago, Ill.	No	Perm
5							

Figure 1 The 1926 passenger manifest of Mlynov Isadore Wallace showing he was headed to Sol Berger in Chicago.

What I learned was more than I had originally hoped to discover. Not only were the immigrations of the Wallace and Berger families from Mlynov tied together, but one of my own family members, one I never knew about, had also traveled with the Bergers to Chicago and married one of them. Her name was Ruchel Steinberg and she would marry and become Rose Berger not long after her arrival.¹

In addition to that surprise, several other fascinating stories emerged that illustrated so many of the forces that shaped identity in the 20th century. In the next generation in Chicago were two Berger sons, one named Ben who was among the few men who made it to the top of Normandy in the invasion of WWII, and the other named Bernie who would become a powerful Chicago politician in the rough and tumble politics there under the first Mayor Daly. History folds in on itself in interesting and ironic ways. When Ben scaled the cliffs of Normandy, did he know that his family was from Mlynov and that he had relatives there who had been liquidated already by the time he climbed those cliffs?

As I peeled away the layers of the Berger family story, I would discover too that the family had been split between Chicago and Palestine, illustrating how the powerful yet different forces that drove immigration to America or to the still mythic Land of Israel could and would play out in a single family. In discovering and unfolding that story too, I uncovered a Mlynov love story that touched my heart and illuminated the lives of young people who had grown up but eventually left that small shtetl and I learned that my own image of my family's shtetl had been shaped by photos taken by an alienated member of the Berger family.

¹ Rachel Berger turned out to be a first cousin of mine, twice removed, meaning she was the daughter of my great-grandfather's sister.

I had set off to find out about the Bergers in Chicago. But I have learned much more.

What follows is story of the Berger family that I have been able to piece together and how I learned about them.

The Berger name rang a bell when I first bumped into it on Isadore Wallace's passenger manifest. I searched the Mlynov-Muravica Memorial book and I turned up several old photos of Bergers back in Mlynov and one couple who appeared to be American.² The caption under that photo read "Shimon and Sophie Berger." As it turned out, this was not the Sol Berger to whom the Wallace boy was headed. But the photo set me off on the right path searching for Bergers from Mlynov who had come to Chicago. A search turned up three separate manifests of Bergers from Mlynov who were traveling to the US.



*Figure 2 A photo in the Mlynov Memorial Book, 499
Caption reads: Shimon and Sophie Berger*

The Berger Migration to Chicago

The 1912 Arrival of Nuchim (Nathan) Berger

The first Berger to arrive in the US was Nuchim (later Nathan) Berger. He arrived on May 23, 1912 from Bremen to Baltimore on the SS Brandenburg. Nuchim was 24, born in 1889, and was traveling with a twenty-year-old single woman named "Heine Weiner." They were both from Mlynov. Her final destination was Baltimore while Nathan was just passing through and had plans to continue on to Chicago.

² The memorial book was published in Hebrew and Yiddish in 1970 in Israel as *Sefer Mlynov-Marvits*, Ed. by J. Sigelman. The memorial book includes essays and photos by former residents of Mlynov and Mervits (also called Muravica). Hereafter, I refer to this volume as the Mlynov Memorial book for short. A partial English translation is now available that was done by Eugene Schwartz and Irene Siegel and recently edited by David Sokolsky, under the title Mlynov-Muravica Memorial Book (English Translation).

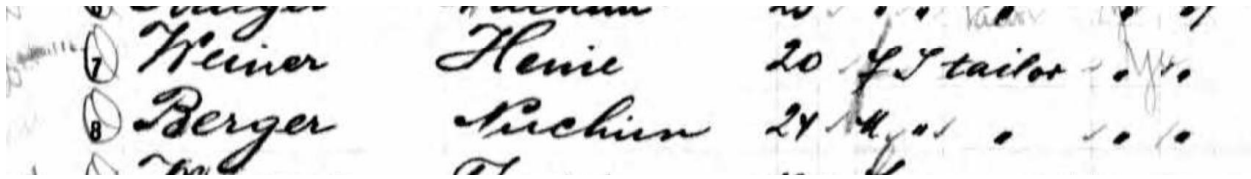


Figure 3 The 1912 passenger manifest of Nuchim (Nathan) Berger and fellow traveler Henie Weiner

By the time Nuchim and Henie arrived in Baltimore, there were already quite a few immigrants from Mlynov living there and it was only natural that Nathan would come directly to this port and help another young woman from Mlynov make the passage. It is possible they may even have been related to one another though that is not certain and it is a bit surprising that he is traveling with an unmarried woman. I have found instances where a young Mlynov man brought his sister-in-law across the ocean to join her husband. But I haven't previously found any examples of a young unmarried man traveling with a single woman.

Most likely Nathan stayed with another Mlynov immigrant in Baltimore before catching a ride on the BO railroad to Chicago. In fact, the Bremen to Baltimore route had become popular for many immigrants because a partnership had been established between the North German Lloyd Steamship company and the B&O railroad providing a single ticket from Bremen to Baltimore and continuing on to the Midwest by train.

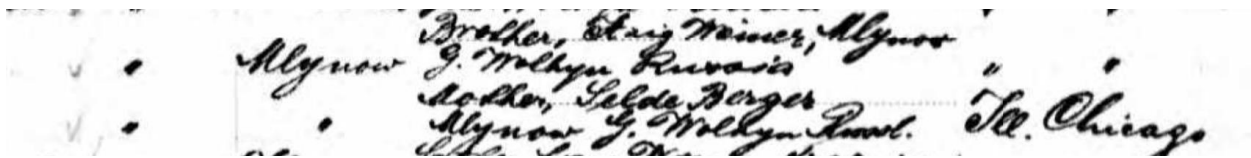


Figure 4 Nathan's passenger manifest shows his mother, Selda Berger, was back in Mlynov

Nathan indicated that his mother "Selda Berger" was still back in Mlynov, suggesting his father, whose name I later figured out was Ben Zion, had already passed away by this point. Nathan's mother and two of his sisters would follow him to Chicago and arrive in May 1913, as we shall see in a moment.

Nathan's passenger manifest indicates he was headed to his brother-in-law, Mr. P. Neistein in Chicago, at what appears to be 1348 Elbourn Ave and I assume may have been "Elburn Ave". We shall meet Paul Neistein in a moment. He had married Nathan's sister Chava (Eva /Ida) Berger and had arrived in Chicago in 1910.

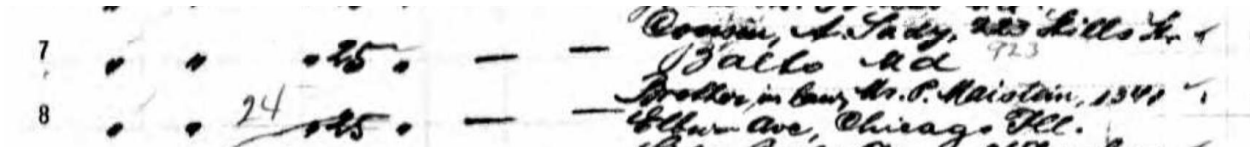


Figure 5 Nathan Berger's passenger manifest shows he is headed to his brother-in-law Mr. P Neustein in Chicago

Nathan's traveling companion, Henie Weiner, indicated her brother was her closest relative still back in Mlynov. His name is partly illegible and appears to be "Etaig" Weiner. Heine was headed to a cousin in Baltimore, whose name initially I couldn't decipher but I eventually guessed was perhaps "A Sody" living at 923 on an illegible street in Baltimore. After researching "Sodys" in Baltimore, I concluded that she was headed to Abraham Sody who had come with his family from Dubno where the family name had been Sadowsky.³ A 1910 census and 1912 Baltimore City Directory shows an "A. Sodi" in "dairy" living at 923 Stiles Street. At the time of this writing, I have not yet identified Heine Weiner's subsequent history.

Nathan Berger Follows Paul Neustein to Chicago

We do know, however, that Nathan Berger was following his brother-in-law, Paul Neustein, to Chicago. "Pinchas Neustein" had arrived in Baltimore two years before Nathan on January 26, 1910 traveling on the SS Cassel from Bremen. Paul, who was born in January 1881, was thirty years old at the time and gave his occupation as "tailor".



Figure 6 Passenger Manifest of Pinchas Neustein (Paul Neustein) from January 1910

On his manifest, Paul indicated his last residence has been "Lusk" [Lutsk] and that his closest relative back in Russia was his wife "Chane Neustein" who was living back in Mlynov.

Chane Neustein turned out to be none other than Nathan Berger's sister and came to be known in the US as Eva Berger. She had been born in 1884 in Mlynov. Paul Neustein and Eva Berger had married by 1907 when their oldest daughter Yetta was born. When Paul left for the States, Eva must have been pregnant with their second daughter Rose who was born in 1911. It seems likely the family had been living in Lutsk and that Eva had gone back home to Mlynov to live with and get help from her mother until she joined her husband in the States. Eva and the

³ Abraham Sody's Declaration of Intention indicates he and his wife Esther were born in Oleyka. His son, Harry's WWII registration which indicates he was born in Dubno.

children would arrive in the US in May 1913 with her mother, sisters and other travelers from Mlynov, as we shall see.

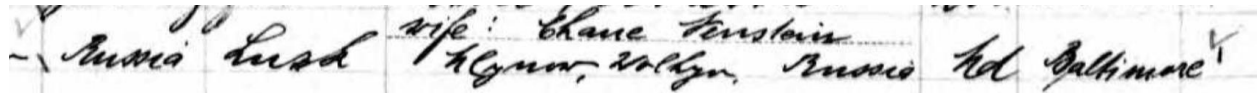


Figure 7 Paul Neistein's passenger manifest showing his wife Chane Neistein was still back in Mlynov

It is interesting that Paul's passenger manifest gives his destination in Baltimore as his cousin "M. Fischman" at 836 E. Pratt Street. We know from earlier research that 836 E Pratt Street was the address of Getzel and Ida Fax, the first pioneers from Mlynov to Baltimore and that several other Mlynov immigrants were living at that address with them by this time.

"M. Fishman" most probably refers to Meyer Fishman from Mlynov who arrived in New York in 1909 but was living at 836 E Pratt Street by 1911, as we know from other records.⁴ How Paul was related to Meyer Fishman is not yet known. But what is clear is that the address of other Mlynov immigrants in Baltimore was the landing place for Paul Neistein before he headed onto Chicago.

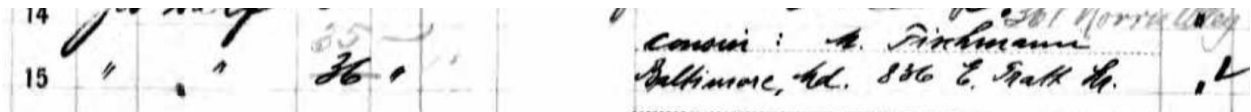


Figure 8 Paul Neistein lists his destination in Baltimore as M Fischman 836 E Pratt Str.

It is not entirely clear where Paul Neistein was born. As noted above, his passenger manifest says his last residence was Lusk, and that his wife was living in Mlynov at the time. His WWII draft card also lists "Ludsk" as his birthplace.

⁴ Meyer Fishman's address at 836 E Pratt Street is listed in the manifest of his wife Ida (Goldseker) Fishman who arrived in January 1912.

REGISTRATION CARD—(Men born on or after April 28, 1877 and on or before February 16, 1897)			
SERIAL NUMBER U 155	1. NAME (Print) PAUL (First)	NEISTEIN (Last)	ORDER NUMBER
2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (Print) 3950 W. VAN BUREN ST. CHICAGO COOK ILLINOIS (Number and street) (Town, township, village, or city) (County) (State)			
[THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE GIVEN ON THE LINE ABOVE WILL DETERMINE LOCAL BOARD JURISDICTION; LINE 2 OF REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE WILL BE IDENTICAL]			
3. MAILING ADDRESS SAME (Mailing address if other than place indicated on line 2. If same insert word same)			
4. TELEPHONE	5. AGE IN YEARS 59	6. PLACE OF BIRTH LUDSK (Town or county)	
KEDZIE 5107 (Exchange) (Number)	NOV 24 1887 (Mo.) (Day) (Yr.)	RUSSIA (State or country)	
7. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS NETTIE FISHMAN 2119 1/2 N. KEDZIE AV.			
8. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS OWN BUSINESS - GLADYS CLEANERS			
9. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS 350 S. PULASKI RD. CHICAGO COOK ILL (Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)			
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.			
D. S. S. FORM 1 (Revised 4-1-42)		10. <i>Paul Neistein</i> (Registrant's signature)	

Figure 9 Paul's WWII registration card lists "Ludsk" as his birthplace

But Paul's passenger manifest lists some other birthplace which is not entirely legible, as you can see. I suspect the writing may attempt to render "Mervits" (also known as Muravitz or Muravica), a town just a mile away from Mlynov. But I am not sure.



Figure 10 Paul Neistein's birthplace is not legible on his passenger manifest

Attempts to determine Paul's birthplace via relatives are also unclear. An Isaac Neistein in Chicago appears to be a brother of Paul according to online family trees, but their fathers' names are different on their tombstones, suggesting they may have been cousins or not relatives at all.⁵

⁵ Paul's tombstone says he is the son of Mordechai. Isaac Neistein, buried in the same cemetery, says his father's name was Moshe Judah. See <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/125548955/paul-neistein> and for Isaac <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/130815187/isaac-neistein>. Isaac's passenger manifest as "Aizyk Najstein" in 1921 provides no clarity. He is headed to a brother-in-law L Fine in Chicago and his birthplace is given as Sidleo, Poland.



Figure 11 Tombstone of Paul Neistein with father's name Mordechai



Figure 12 Tombstone of Isaac Neistein with father's name Moshe Yehuda

It appears that by 1910 Paul was living with a family by the name of Goldstein at 1419 West 14th Street. The head of household, Wolf Goldstein, had arrived in Chicago in about 1905. So far I have been unable to find any specific relationship between the Goldstein family and Paul Neistein and thus it remains unclear what brought Paul to Chicago.

13	140	Goldstein	Wolf	Heath	M	W	42	M	18
14		—	Mary	Wife	F	W	39	M	18
15		—	Eldad	Daughter	F	W	11	S	
16		—	Helen	Daughter	F	W	13	S	
17		Neistein	Paul	Boarder	M	W	26	M	

Figure 13 1910 Census of Paul Neistein showing him as a boarder with the Goldstein family in Chicago

Nathan's Mother and Sisters Arrive in 1913

As already discussed, Paul Neistein was followed to Chicago by his brother-in-law Nathan Berger in 1911. Then in 1913, six more Bergers from the same family arrived in Chicago traveling in a group of eight Mlynov immigrants. They arrived on May 30, 1913 in Philadelphia having traveled from Bremen on the SS Chemnitz. The group included Nathan's mother, **Zelda ("Selde Berger")**, age 48, and Nathan's two sisters, Chowe Neistein (soon to be **Eva Neistein**), age 28, listed as housewife, and **Sheindel (Sarah) Berger**, age 21, listed as tailoress. Chowe

(Eva) Neistein, had with her their two children, Chaike (later Yetta), age 5 and Reisel (later Rose), age 2.

Table 1 The Migration of Zelda (Girsch) Berger and Children to Chicago

Date of Arrival	Name	Relationship
January 26, 1910	Paul Neistein	Husband of Eva Berger
May 23, 1912	Nathan Berger	Son of Zelda and Ben Zion Berger. Soon marries Rachel Steinberg
May 30, 1913	Zelda (Girsch) Berger	Wife of Ben Zion Berger. Mother of Nathan, Eva (Chava), Sheindel (Sarah) and Symon (Samuel).
May 30, 1913	Eva (Chava Berger) Neistein, and two daughters, Yetta and Rose	Daughter of Zelda and Ben Zion. Wife of Paul Neistein
May 30, 1913	Sheindel (Sarah) Berger	Daughter of Zelda and Ben Zion
May 30, 1913	Yankel Wulach (Jacob Wallace)	Fellow Mlynov traveler, Uncle of Paul Neistein. Father of Isadore and Morris Wallace who arrive in the 1920s
May 30, 1913	Ruchel Steinberg	Fellow Mlynov traveler, Married Nathan Berger shortly after arrival
June 19, 1913	Symon (Samuel) Berger	Son of Zelda and Ben Zion Berger.

The name of Nathan's brother, Symon Berger, is scratched out on the manifest indicating he was supposed to be traveling with his mother and two sisters but didn't make the trip for some reason. He would follow one month later. Also traveling with the party from Mlynov was **Ruchel (later Rose) Steinberg**, age 22, listed as a dressmaker, and **Yankel Wulach** (soon to be Jacob Wallace), age 40, listed as a tailor, whom we shall discuss in more detail below.

As noted earlier, Rose Steinberg would soon marry Nathan Berger and by 1914 their son Hyman was born. Since Rose was traveling with Nathan's family, I suspect that they had already fallen in love back in Mlynov and were already pledged or engaged to one another before their immigration. Since Rose was headed up to Wisconsin to her brother after she first arrived, it

would have been hard to have a new courtship with Nathan who was back in Chicago. A grandson of Nathan and Rose, Sandy Levin, suspects that my conclusion is correct.

Passenger	Age	Gender	Notes	Closest Relative
Steinberg	22	f	Drummer	Russie
Berger	24	f	housewife	
Scheindel	21	f	tailor's account	
Wulach	40	m	tailor	Imania
Neidman	28	f	housewife	
Chowe	3	f	some no one	
Reisel	2	f	some no one	

Figure 14 The 1913 manifest of the large Berger group and Ruchel Steinberg and Jankel Wulach

The manifest lists “Mlinow” as the last residence of the travelers and the closest relatives still there (see below). Zeld lists her mother, Liebe Girsch (a variation on Hirsch), as still alive in Mlynov, thus indicating that Zeld was descended from the Hirsch family in Mlynov.⁶ The listing of Zeld’s mother indicates that both her father and her husband Ben Zion had already passed away by this time. The other Bergers also list Liebe Girsch as their closest relative in Mlynov (though she is mistakenly listed as the mother of Chowe (Eva) when she was in fact her grandmother).

Ruchel Steinberg lists her father, Abraham Steinberg, as her closest relative back in Mlynov and Yankel Wulach (Jacob Wallace) lists his wife, Sure Wulach, as his closest relative still back there.

⁶ While concluding this Berger story, I made contact with a descendant of the Mlynov Hirsch family and plan to document the story of Zeld’s siblings in a separate essay.

is ego	Russia	Hebrew	Russia	Mlinow	father: Abraham Steinberg, Mlinow, Russia
✓	✓	✓	,	,	mother: Lida Jirach,
✓	✓	✓	,	,	grand-mother: , , ,
,	,	,	,	,	,
is ego	Russia	Hebrew	Russia	Mlinow	wife: Sara Wulach, Mlinow, Russia
✓	✓	✓	,	,	mother: Lida Jirach,
✓	✓	✓	,	,	grand-mother: , , ,
,	,	,	,	,	,

Figure 15 The list of relatives back in "Mlinow" of the Mlynov group traveling in 1913

Zelda and her daughter, Sheindel, are headed to Chicago and give their destination as the address of their son / brother Nathan Berger at what looks like 810 Kermitage but probably is 810 Hermitage Ave, which is still present in Chicago and appears on old Chicago maps. Eva ("Chowe") Neistein is headed to her husband at the same address indicating Paul and Nathan must have been sharing living quarters by this point in time.

Jankel Wulach (Jacob Wallace) is also headed to the same address and identifies Paul Neistein as his nephew, suggesting a reason why Jankel has joined this Mlynov traveling party and that his sister may have been Paul's mother, though we cannot be sure.

Last but not least and somewhat surprisingly, **Ruchel Steinberg** lists her destination as her brother in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Her brother's first name is illegible (possibly Szlorise) Steinberg, whom I was later able to identify as Simon Steinberg, and whose name in handwritten family trees recorded in my family is "Shlermieh."

Rachel and Simon were the children of Abraham Steinberg and Sarah Hannah (Shulman), the sister of my own great-grandfather, Tsodik Shulman.⁷ Simon had headed to Milwaukee, Wisconsin following his cousin David Schulman who had been sent by a relief program to Two Rivers, Wisconsin in 1901.

⁷ I tell the story of figuring out my connection to Rose Berger and Simon Steinberg in an essay entitled "The Search for Simon Steinberg," published on www.Mlynov.org.

1	Wis	Wisconsin	yes	self	25	Jan	-	-	-	brother: Sylvia Steinberg, Milwaukee Wis 549 4th St
2	Ill	Chicago	"	"	30	Jan	1910	-	-	son: Nathan Berger Chicago, Ill
3	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	-	-	brother: 810 Remondage Ave
4	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	-	-	"
5	Ill	Chicago	yes	self	25	Jan	-	-	-	brother: Paul Neustein 810 Remondage Ave
6	"	"	"	"	25	Jan	-	-	-	brother: Paul Neustein Chicago, Ill
7	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	-	-	brother: 810 Remondage Ave
8	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	-	-	"

Figure 16 Page two of the manifest showing destination addresses of the traveling group.

It is not entirely clear when Rachel's brother, Simon, had arrived in the mid-west. According to the later naturalization papers of his future wife Estelle, he arrived in New York in March 1906, though his passenger manifest so far has not been located. His name appears for the first time in the Milwaukee city directory in 1909 living at the same address as his first cousin, David Schulman. Simon was thus far the first Mlynov born person we know about to arrive in the Midwest. Whether his letters home played any role in the decision of Paul Neustein and the Bergers to head to Chicago, we do not know.



Figure 17 A later photo of Nathan Berger and his wife Rachel (Steinberg).
Courtesy of Alan Berger.

The 1913 Arrival of Samuel "Szymon" Berger

As I indicated earlier, Nathan's brother, Szymon Berger, was supposed to have been traveling with his mother and sisters in the larger Berger party to the US in May 1913. However, his name had been scratched out on their manifest and we find him arriving less than a month later, obviously catching a passage not long after they left. He left Bremen on the SS Neckar and arrived in Baltimore on June 19, 1913. Perhaps he had been too ill to travel or had problems securing his immigration papers. He is listed as a tailor, age 19, and even though he was single at the time, he is listed as married.

on List.	E. S. Citizem.	Diplomat.	Tourist.	RESIDENT OF			Family Name.	Given Name.	Yrs. Mos.	Married or	Occupation.	Read.	Write.	cit
				Canada.	Cuba.	Mexico.								
1							Berger	Szymon	19	m	Sailor / yds yds			

Figure 18 Szymon Berger's manifest traveling on the SS Neckar from Bremen to Baltimore

Like the rest of his family, Szymon's last residence is "Mynow" and his birthplace "Mlinow". Like his mother and sisters who preceded him, Szymon is headed to his older brother Nathan's address at what is probably 810 Hermitage. Symon (Samuel) lists his closest relative back in Mlynov as his maternal grandmother "Liebe Girsch" (likely variation on Hirsch).

State.	City or Town.	Whether to such	paid by any other person, or by any corporation, society, municipality, or government.)	Whether \$50. or more?	Yes or No.	Year or period of years.	Where?
Ill	Chicago	yes	self	29	No		Brother: Nathan Berger Chicago 211 W. Hermitage Ave No

Figure 19 Szymon is headed to his brother's address in Chicago.

ling or nation.	Able to—		Nationality. (Country of which citizen or subject.)	Race or People	* Last Permanent Residence.		The name and complete address of nearest relative or friend in country whence alien came.
	Read.	Write.			Country.	City or Town.	
			Russian	Hebr	Russia	Mlynow	Grand-mother: Liebe Girsch Mlynow, Russia Father: Salomon

Figure 20 Symon Berger's closest relative in "Mlynow" was his grandmother Leibe Girsch

It is not surprising that Symon knew that his mother's maiden name was Girsch (or Hirsch) when he arrived in the US in 1913. But what is really intriguing and perhaps even surprising is that he subsequently seemed to have forgotten her maiden name by the time she passed away.

Symon's mother, Zelda Berger, passed away on April 9, 1938 from "chronic thrombosis." Her son Samuel (Symon) is listed as the informant for the death certificate. He still remembers the name of her birthplace as "Mlynoff, Ukrainia" and that her husband and his father was "Ben" (shortened for Ben Zion), but he no longer remembers her maiden name and instead writes "unknown." It had been, of course, twenty-five years since his passage to the US. But still I'm intrigued by how memory and amnesia work in families and how the American experience may have led him to forget his mother's maiden name, which he knew when he had arrived.

PLACE OF DEATH		CERTIFICATE OF DEATH		Local No. 190
STATE OF INDIANA		DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH		Registered No. 14560
BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS				
County <i>Lake</i>	Township of <i>North</i>	City <i>Hammond</i>		No. <i>St. Margaret's Hospital</i> St.
Length of residence in city or town where death occurred yrs. mos. da. <i>7 yrs. 1 mo. 7 da.</i>		How long in U. S. if of foreign birth? yrs. mos. da.		
FULL NAME <i>Zelda Berger</i>		Residence No. <i>7071</i>		City <i>Hammond</i> St. <i>Chicago, Ill.</i>
PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS				
SEX <i>Female</i>	COLOR OR RACE <i>White</i>	Single, Married, Widowed or Divorced (write the word) <i>Divorced</i>	MEDICAL CERTIFICATE OF DEATH	
NAME OF HUSBAND OR WIFE <i>Ben</i>		DATE OF DEATH <i>April 9, 1938</i>		
DATE OF BIRTH (of deceased) <i>March 1864</i>		I HEREBY CERTIFY That I attended deceased from <i>April 2, 1938</i> to <i>April 8, 1938</i>		
AGE <i>74</i> years, <i>6</i> months, <i>1</i> day or min.		and that death occurred, on the date stated above, at <i>9:15</i> M.		
TRADE, PROFESSION, OR PARTICULAR KIND OF WORK DONE, AS SPINNER, SAWYER, BOOKKEEPER, ETC. <i>Housewife</i>		The principal cause of death and related causes of importance were as follows:		
INDUSTRY OR BUSINESS IN WHICH WORK WAS DONE, AS SILK MILL, WAX MILL, BANK, ETC. <i>Self</i>		<i>Cerebral Thrombosis</i>		Duration <i>6 days</i>
DATE DECEASED LAST WORKED AT THIS OCCUPATION <i>April 2, 1938</i>		Other contributory causes of importance: <i>SD</i>		
BIRTHPLACE (State or country) <i>Mlynoff, Ukrainia</i>		Name of operation <i>Physical Exam</i>		Date of <i>no</i>
FATHER'S NAME <i>Unknown</i>		What test confirmed diagnosis? <i>Physical Exam</i>		an autopsy? <i>no</i>
FATHER'S BIRTHPLACE (State or country) <i>Mlynoff, Ukrainia</i>		If death was due to external causes (violence) fill in also the following:		
MOTHER'S NAME <i>Unknown</i>		Accident, suicide, or homicide? _____ Date of injury _____		
MOTHER'S BIRTHPLACE (State or country) <i>Mlynoff, Ukrainia</i>		Where did injury occur? _____ (Specify city or town, county and State)		
INFORMANT'S NAME <i>Samuel Berger</i>		Specify whether injury occurred in industry, in home, or in public place.		
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS <i>3236 Oakley</i>		Manner of Injury _____		
PLACE OF BURIAL OR REMOVAL <i>Chicago, Ill.</i>		Nature of Injury _____		
DATE <i>April 11, 1938</i>		Was disease or injury in any way related to occupation of deceased? <i>no</i>		
UNDERTAKER'S NAME <i>E. Burns</i>		Signed by <i>Paul Schlemmer</i>		
ADDRESS <i>Hammond</i>		Date <i>4/10, 1938</i> (Address) <i>Hammond</i>		
WAS THE BODY EMBALMED? <i>Yes</i>		Embalmer's License No. <i>1144</i>		
Date <i>April 10, 1938</i>		Health Officer or Deputy		

Figure 21 Zelda Berger's Certificate of Death in which her son, Samuel, indicated he no longer knew her maiden name.

The 1914 arrival of Israel "Sol" Berger

Symon (Samuel) was the last of Zelda and Ben Zion's children to arrive in the States. A year later, however, just before WWI broke out, a Berger cousin would arrive from Mlynov from

another Berger line. His name was Israel Berger but he became “Sol” Berger in America. Israel was using the name “Sol” already by the time he filled out his WWI draft registration in 1918. But he only officially changed his name on November 30, 1926 (see below).

At the time of his arrival, Israel (“Sol”) Berger indicates he was single and 17 years old, suggesting he had been born in Mlynov in 1897.

Israel (“Sol”) traveled from Bremen to Baltimore on the SS Konigin Luise arriving on July 8th, 1914. It was only weeks before WWI broke out and all immigration would be shut down until after the War. He likely stayed with one of the other Mlynov immigrants in Baltimore before heading to Chicago and he might have been there when WWI actually started.

Israel lists his father, Wolf Berger, as his closest relative back in Mlynov. He is headed to his cousin “Berger, Nush” who is the same Nathan Berger discussed earlier. Nathan’s address is given as 1743 W Polk St. suggesting Nathan’s family had apparently moved from their earlier location on Hermitage St.

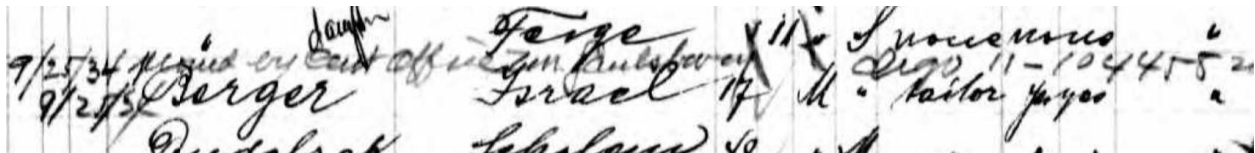


Figure 22 Israel Berger arrives on July 8th, 1914 traveling from Bremen to Baltimore

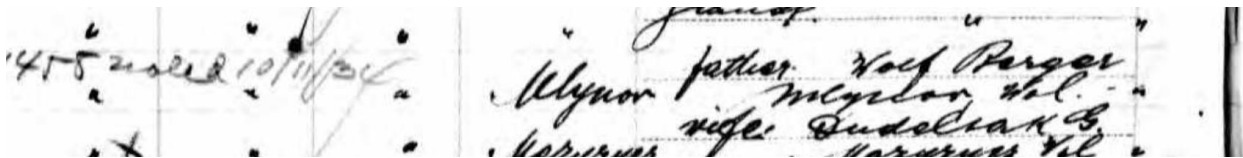


Figure 23 His father, Wolf Berger, was his closest relative back in Mlynov

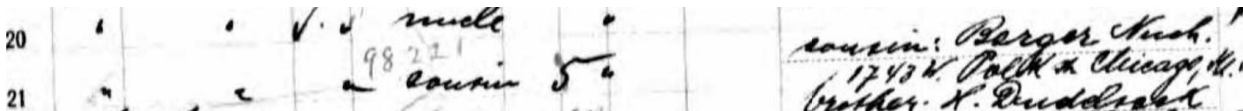


Figure 24 Israel was headed to his cousin Nathan “Nuch” Berger on Polk St.

It was not immediately clear how Sol was related to Nathan. I suspected that their fathers were brothers and that they were first cousins. Descendants of Sol’s siblings, as I would eventually learn, remember that they were cousins of the other Bergers in Chicago and there were visits

between their families. But no one could remember for sure how they were related. However, a printed family tree turned up confirmed Ben Zion and Wolf were in fact brothers.⁸

In the end, I would end up learning a great deal more about Sol's father, Wolf Berger, then I was able to learn about Nathan's father, Ben Zion, the traces of whom are only on the Nathan's tombstone and on Zelda's death certificate.



Figure 25 Tombstone of Nathan Berger shows he was son of Mr. Ben Zion [Berger]

When Was Sol Berger Born?

As previously noted, Sol's passenger manifest of July 1914 says he was 17 years old implying he had been born in the year 1897. This seems more likely to be his birth year than 1900 which appears on his WWI draft registration card in 1918. That date is probably intentionally misleading and represents an attempt to dodge the draft (by no means uncommon at the time) which was calling up boys who were 21 – 31 years of age. By saying his birth year was 1900, Sol was claiming that he was not yet 21 in 1918 when he probably already was. It could be this lie that got his first Petition for Naturalization rejected in 1926 and required him to reapply in 1934, which was successful.

Sol's other records point toward 1897 or 1898 as being his birth year. His first Petition for Naturalization which he signed as "Israel Berger" on November 30, 1926 gives his birthdate as April 22, 1897. Similarly, his 1940 census indicates he is "42," again placing his year of birth in the vicinity of 1897-1898.

⁸ A printed Hirsch family tree from a reunion in the 1990's sent to me by Elise Berger confirmed my suspicion that Ben Zion and Wolf Berger had been brothers.

Because Sol's original Petition for Naturalization was rejected as invalid (for reasons not specified) he had to reapply for naturalization a second time. In his second Petition, dated, September 26, 1934, Sol now gives his birthdate as September 18, 1898. Then on April 1, 1941, when his wife Dynka Berger petitions for her naturalization, she gives Sol's birthdate as June 10, 1898.

Of course, it was not uncommon for immigrants to be subsequently confused about their specific birth year, but it seems reasonable to conclude that Sol was born in 1897 or 1898 and had lied about his age on his draft card in 1918. In a story I tell below, I eventually tracked down one of Sol's nieces and the family remembers his birthdate as 1898.

REGISTRATION CARDA

885
SERIAL NUMBER **373** ORDER NUMBER **885**

1 *Sol Berger*

2 PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS: *4045 Ardenwood St. Chicago, Cook - Ill*

Age in Years **17** Date of Birth *April 23 - 1900*

RACE: White Negro Oriental Indian Citizen Naturalized

U. S. CITIZEN ALIEN

PRESENT OCCUPATION *Boysmaker* EMPLOYER'S NAME *Singer Paper Box Co.*

16 PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS: *815 N. Congress St., Cook - Ill*

NEAREST RELATIVE: *Mother Goldie Berger*
Mikhail - Russia

I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE

P. M. G. O. FORM No. 1 (Red)

REGISTRAR'S REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF REGISTRANT

HEIGHT		BUILD		COLOR OF EYES	COLOR OF HAIR
Tall	Short	Slender	Stout		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Blue</i>	<i>Black</i>

Phys. Int.

I certify that my answers are true; that the person registered has read or has had read to him his own answers; that I have witnessed his signature or mark, and that all of his answers of which I have knowledge are true, except as follows:

A. P. Collins
Date of Registration *Sept. 12 - 1918*

Local Board for Division No. 66
City of Chicago, State of Illinois
227 So. Cicero Ave., Chicago.
(SEAL OF LOCAL BOARD)

Figure 26 Sol Berger's WWI draft registration on Sept 12, 1918

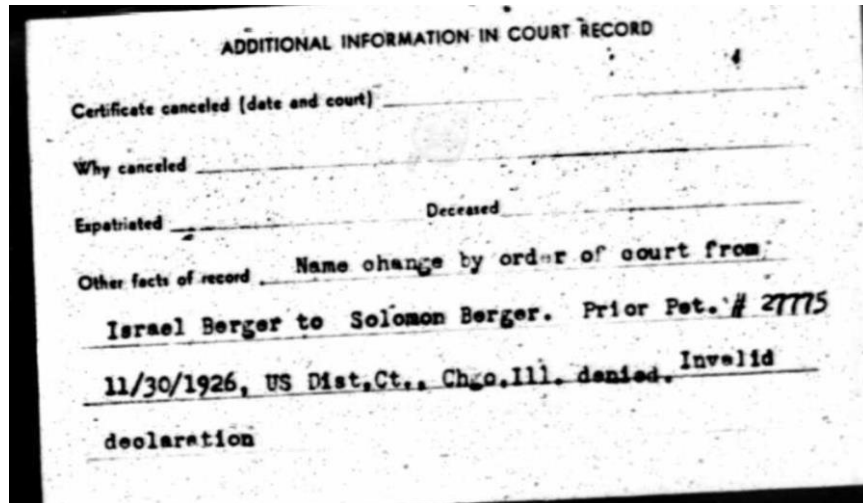


Figure 27 The official name change of Israel Berger to Solomon “Sol” Berger in 1926

When Sol arrived in Chicago in 1914, he was the first of his immediate family to land in Chicago. It would take me some time to learn what became of his five other siblings. We shall return to their story in due course.

The Berger Cousins Marry the Selkoff Sisters

For the longest time during my Berger research, I confused the cousins, Symon (Samuel) Berger and Sol (Israel) Berger, and thought the photo in the Mlynov Memorial book was of “Sol” when it was in fact of Samuel. Sam was the son of Zelda and Ben Zion. Sol was the son of Wolf and Golda. My confusion between Samuel (Symon) Berger and Sol (Israel) Berger was further compounded by the fact that these two Berger cousins married two sisters, Sophie and Dyna Selkoff.

Sam was the first to marry **Sophie Selkoff** before 1918 when their daughter Bertha was born. Sophie was the first of her immediate family to immigrate. She arrived in New York on June 24, 1913 on the SS Vaderland, traveling under the name of “**Sone Selikowitz**” and she was headed to her maternal uncle Hyman Shneider at 40 Madison Ave in New York. She was still living with his family in the 1915 census of New York. But not long afterwards, the Shneider family apparently moved to the Midwest and appear in 1920 in Hammond, Indiana just south of Chicago. Sophie must have come with them and met Sam Berger during this time. By the time the rest of her family had arrived, she and Sam had married and had their first daughter.

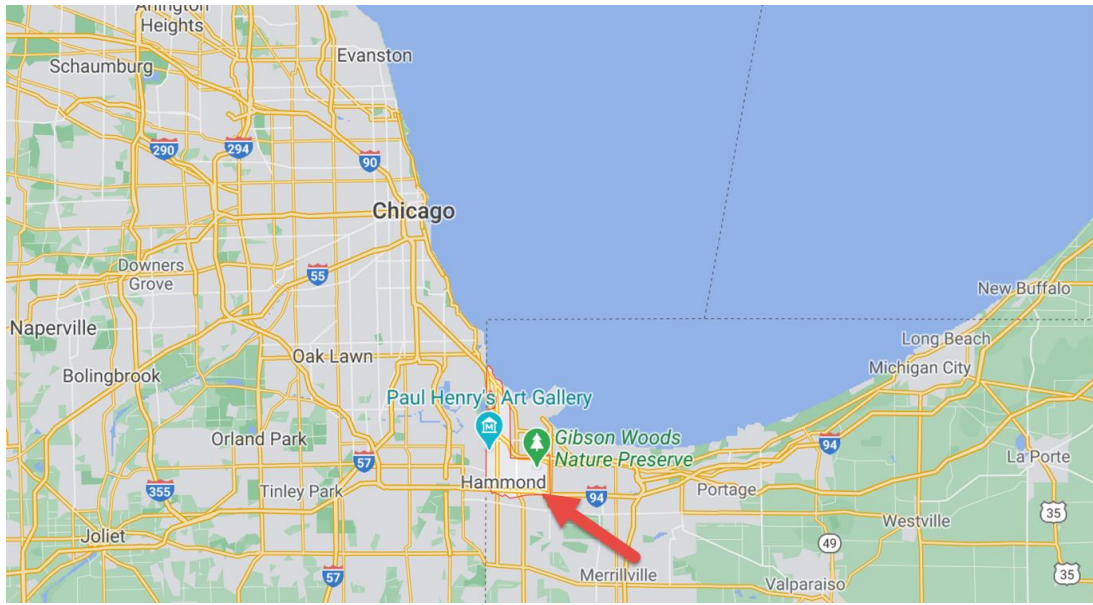


Figure 28 Sophie's relatives the Schneiders settle in Hammond, Indiana just south of Chicago. A number of Bergers will follow them to Indiana

The rest of the Selkoff family – Sophie’s parents, and six siblings – arrived after WWI had ended, traveling on the SS Haverford from Liverpool to Philadelphia where they landed on August 26, 1920. They were headed directly to Chicago to their son-in-law “Sam Berger” at “1418-20 W. Maden St,” which was apparently an attempted rendition of “Madison St.,” which is where Sam and Sophie were living according their 1920 census, and which appears to have been a tenement house with many other residents all at the same address.

68	1418 90	102	Berger Samuel	Head	R	91	61	25	91	1913	Pa
69	1420		" Sophie	Wife		7	W	25	91	1913	Pa
70			" Bertha	Daughter		7	W	2 1/2	91		

Figure 29 Sam and Sophie (Selkoff) Berger and daughter Bertha at 1418 and 1420 Madison

On the Selkoff family manifest, the family name is written “Selikerrier,” and in other US records sometimes appears as “Zelukowicz.” But it was rapidly shortened and Americanized to “Selkoff,” where it appears already by July 8, 1921 on the Declaration of Intention of Sophie’s father, David.

Sometime after the Selkoff family arrival, Sam’s cousin Sol, must have fallen quickly in love with Sophie’s sister, **Dyna Selkoff**. The marriage record from June 18, 1922 records that Israel Berger (=Sol) married “Dyna Zelukowicz”. Dyna’s name appears in many other variations in the records including Dinah, Dina, Dora and “Dynker,” which she used on her own Petition for Naturalization in 1941. On her passenger manifest, she was listed as “Lynker Selikerrier”. Sol and Dyna had their first child Bernard in 1925 and a second son Nathan “Zane” Berger in 1932.

Mlynov Immigrant Cousins	Sisters	Children
Sam (Symon) Berger, son of Ben Zion and Zelda Berger	Sophie Selkoff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bertha (1919–2010) • Zena (Berger) Glenn (1921–2014)
Israel “Sol” Berger son of Wolf and Golda Berger	Dyna Selkoff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bernard (“Ben”) Berger (1926-1998) • Nathan Zane Berger (1932-2013)

The Berger Family in Chicago 1913–1925

With Sol’s marriage to Dynka Selfkoff, the first phase of the Berger migration to the US was brought to a close. Sol was the only one of his immediate family who made it to Chicago before the War. His cousins – Nathan, Eva, and Sara had all settled down and started families of their own.

As already discussed, **Nathan**, who was the first of the Bergers to have arrived in Chicago, had married **Ruchel (Rachel) Steinberg** from Mlynov who had travelled to Chicago with his mother and two sisters. During this time, their son **Hyman B Berger** (1914–2009) and **Libby (Berger) Levin** (1915) were born. By 1920, Nathan and Rose are living on North Avenue in Chicago and Nathan is a proprietor of a grocery store. By 1930, the family had also moved to Hammond, Indiana which was just on the south side of Chicago still near Lake Michigan. Nathan was the proprietor of an enterprise called Pop Manufacturing Co.

Eva (Berger) Neistein, Nathan’s older sister, as already noted, had arrived in Chicago to join her husband Paul, with her two children Ida (Yetta Berger) and Rose (later Barton). They had two additional children after her arrival: **Nettie (Neistein) Fishman** (1915-2006) and **Bernard Neistein** (1916-2003). Creating complete confusion for the family tree, their oldest daughter, Ida, would by 1929 marry a man by the name of Sol Berger and thus reinstate her mother’s maiden name by becoming **Ida (Neistein) Berger** (see table below). Ida’s husband, Sol Berger, however, was a different Sol Berger than her cousin Israel “Sol” who had immigrated from Mlynov. Ida’s “Sol Berger” had been born in Illinois shortly after his family arrived in 1898 (according to his 1910 census). Ida and Sol’s first son **Sheldon** was born in 1929 and a daughter **Barbara (later Gillman)** in ~1937.

Sarah (Shaindel) Berger, Nathan’s other sister, who had also arrived with the larger Berger family group in 1913, also added confusion to the family tree by marrying a man named Jacob Berger, thus retaining her family name at birth. As far as I can tell they were unrelated. Jacob Berger was from Galicia and had also arrived in 1913 according to his 1930 census. Sarah Berger

and Jacob Berger married on August 10, 1919 and had their first son **Benjamin Berger** in 1919. Their daughter **Miriam (Berger) Carman** was born in 1925.

Table 2 Children and Grandchildren of Zelda (Girsch) and Ben Zion Berger

Children of Zelda and Ben Zion	Grandchildren of Zelda and Ben Zion
Eva (Chava) Berger (1884–1947) m. Paul Neistein (1881–1949)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ida (Yetta) Neistein (1907–2006) m. Sol Berger (not related) • Rose Neistein (1911–1966) m. Harry Barton • Nettie Neistein (1915–2006) m. Daniel Fishman • Bernard "Bernie" Neistein (1916–2003) m. Alice Bernstein
Sarah (Sheindel) Berger (1882–1972) m. Jacob Berger (1892–?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benjamin Berger (1920–2013) m. Florine Dorothy Perlman • Miriam Berger (1925–2000) m. Ben Carman
Nathan Berger (1889–1959) m. Rachel Steinberg (1889–1963)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyman B. Berger (1914–2009) m. Helen Doris Lem • Libby Berger (1915–2017) m. Samuel Levin
Samuel (Symon) Berger (1894–1986) m. Sophie Selkoff (1895–1985)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bertha Berger (1919–2010) m. Joseph Intrator and later Joseph Kogan. Both passed away. • Zena Berger (1921–2014) m. and d. Herman Horvitz then Julius Butow (killed in WWII in 1944) then Sam Glenn (who passed away in 1956) and then Charles Simon who she eventually divorced.

Storming Chicago and Normandy: Bernard Neistein and Benjamin Berger

It is worth pausing here a moment to ponder the fact that the Berger family gave birth in this first decade in Chicago to two boys, both first cousins, who each would become bigger than life as they became adults.

It is clear that the immigrant experience of their parents shaped at least one of them and one can speculate that it helped make the other who he was as well. One grew up to be a well-known political boss in the Democratic machine in the rough and tumble politics of Chicago under the first Mayor Daly. The other grew up to be a war hero, enlisting with the special forces that stormed the beaches of Normandy, and was one of the few who survived the assault and made it to the top. The future politician was **Bernard Neistein**, born in 1916 only three years after his mother Eva’s arrival. He would go on to become the powerful Chicago Democratic boss and later a state senator. His first cousin, **Benjamin Berger**, was born just three years later in 1919, to Sarah, the other Berger sister, who had traveled to Chicago in 1913.

It is clear that Bernard Neistein, or “Bernie” as he was called, was driven in part by his desire to redeem his immigrant parents’ faith in America. Reflecting on that experience later in life, and his choice to go into politics, Bernie recalled his father’s tailor shop: "Seven of us lived in a little flat behind the store and I'd work the counter after school," he said. "I knew I'd better make

something of my life."⁹ Later when his father Paul died, Bernie took his needle and thimble and had them gold plated. He wore them on his watch chain to remind him and other people that he came from a tailor shop

Neistein finished law school at the age 19. As a Jewish immigrant, he was unable to enter into Chicago's blue-blood establishment, so he plugged into the most visible power which was the Democrat Machine. He became a precinct captain, and his first assignment was a Republican precinct in the 29th Ward which he turned Democratic in a few years.

Acknowledging that he was no angel, Neistein recalls participating in the strong-arm tactics of machine politics that dominated Chicago in those days. In an interview years later, Neistein recalled that his brother-in-law was a druggist and set him up with some pills that they'd put in the coffee of republican voters.

"That would give them the runs, which was really nice when there wasn't a bathroom in the polling place. You wouldn't see those pests for the rest of the day." Looking back, he summarized the reward and punishment rules of politics and his role in those days. "Neistein giveth and Neistein taketh away." He was a boss during the heyday of Richard J. Daley and also elected to the Illinois House of Representatives from 1957 to 1959 and in the Illinois Senate from 1959 to 1973. His law license was suspended for 2 1/2 years in 1989 for a bribe to a sitting judge.

⁹ The background on Bernie Neistein comes from an article called the "Postcards from the Machine Age," *The Chicago Tribune*, Tuesday April 13, 1999, Section 5, pp. 1 and 7.

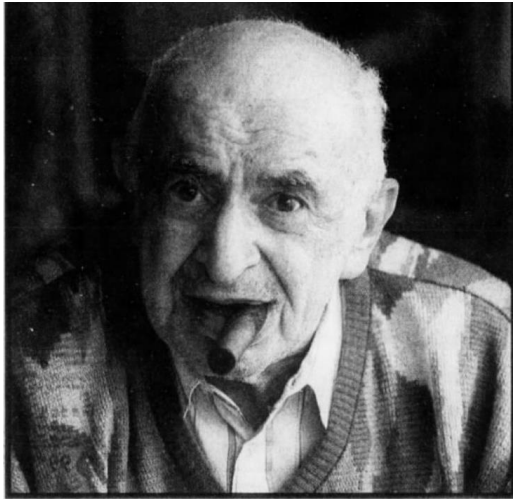


Figure 30 Bernie Neistein in 1999 article reflecting on the political machine of Chicago Politics



Figure 31 Ben Berger, war hero who stormed the beaches of Normandy

When first cousin **Ben Berger** filled in his WWII draft registration card, he put his cousin Bernie Neistein as the closest relative who would always know his address. I first learned of Ben Berger's heroism when I tracked down and spoke to his daughter Elise Canter who, it turns out lives not far from me. Elise told me that her father never spoke about his heroism when she was growing up. She had to go to the bookstore to read about his role in WWII. But a hero he was.

REGISTRATION CARD						
SERIAL NUMBER	1. NAME (FIRST)	(MIDDLE)	(LAST)	ORDER NUMBER		
S 10	BEN	(NONE)	BERGER	S-1938		
2. PLACE OF RESIDENCE (FPHS)						
1360 ESTES AVE		CHICAGO	COOK	ILL.		
3. MARITAL STATUS						
SAME						
4. TELEPHONE						
(NONE)						
5. AGE IN YEARS		6. PLACE OF BIRTH		7. OCCUPATION		
21		CHICAGO		STUDENT		
DATE OF BIRTH		TOWN OR COUNTY		STATE		
JUN. 20 1920		ILL.		(CLERK-EYE)		
8. NAME AND ADDRESS OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS						
BERNARD NEISTEN - 3950 VAN BUREN ST.						
9. EMPLOYER'S NAME AND ADDRESS						
GLENWOOD CLEANERS						
10. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OR BUSINESS						
7071 N. GLENWOOD AVE		CHICAGO	COOK	ILL.		
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.						
D. S. S. Form 1		19-2100		Ben Berger		

Figure 32 Ben Bergers WWII draft registration showing his first cousin Bernard Neistein as his closest relative who would always know where he was

Ben had joined the Navy after spotting a poster saying he would "see the world," a recruiting campaign he later called "propaganda." His tour started in North Africa where he was involved in the invasion of Italy and his unit's job was to move rubber boats and "soften" targets for the soldiers who were coming in behind him. After 18 months he was ready to go home. "I got to go see General (George) Patton," Berger said. "He told 17 of us we were going to England

instead. We asked why and he said, ‘None of your business.’” Ben was about to be assigned to the invasion of Normandy.

Benjamin had become part of a special forces called the Rangers and he was the only Naval Officer with the Rangers when they attacked the Normandy Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944. After floating over minefields in the water, their mission was to climb the mountains and hills above the Normandy beach. Berger landed with 280 American troops that day on Omaha Beach, but only 80 survived the attack. On Jan. 11, 1945, Benjamin received a silver medal, one of the highest honors, for his courage in the raid.

Perhaps it is a stretch, but I see something in common between Ben on the beach of Normandy and Bernie fighting in the political trenches in Chicago; very different fights but both part of that first generation of immigrants adopting the US as their home and participating in both its trends and tribulations. The two first cousins made it in America in their own ways.

When I first learned about Ben, I pondered the incredible irony that was bringing this Mlynov descendant to the shores of Normandy in the invasion that would ultimately end the War. I wondered whether Ben was even aware at the time that he had had Berger relatives back in Mlynov. If he did, he most likely didn’t know some of them had already been killed by the Nazis when the Mlynov ghetto was liquidated on October 8, 1942. I suspect that Mlynov was probably just the name of some old shtetl to him if his parents even talked about it at all. It is to the fate of the other Bergers in Mlynov that we now turn.

What Became of the Bergers Back in Mlynov?

Sol Berger’s arrival in July 1914 ended the Berger immigration from Mlynov to Chicago until after WWI. The Bergers who had arrived in Chicago between 1911–1914 had all settled down, married and started their families. I knew from the passenger manifests of those who had arrived in the US that there were still Bergers living back in Mlynov at the time, including members of Sol’s family. It took a bit of time to reconstruct their stories and what happened to them.

I had learned from Sol’s 1914 passenger manifest that his father, Wolf Berger, was still back in Mlynov when Sol arrived in America in 1914. I was able to learn a bit about Wolf Berger’s family back in Mlynov because the Mlynov-Muravica Memorial book has a photo of them (below). The caption reads: “Wolf (Zeev) Berger and his wife Golda and their daughter Hannah, may their memory be for a blessing, to be distinguished for a long life their daughter Raisel and son Aaron.”

Figure 33 Caption reads [martyrs:] “Wolf Berger and his wife Golda and their daughter Hannah, may their memory be for a blessing, to be distinguished for a long life their daughter Reisel and son Aaron,” Mlynov Memorial Book, p. 467.



The caption with the photo suggests that Sol Berger had two sisters, Hannah and Reisel, and a brother Aaron. The language also suggests that Sol’s parents, Wolf and Golda, and his sister Hannah died in the Shoah, but that Reisel and Aaron were still alive in 1970, when the book was published.

A list of the Mlynov martyrs from the Shoah confirmed this interpretation. It reads [Martyrs:] “Wolf (Zeev) son of Mr. (Rav) Neta-Ber, Golda his wife, and Hannah their daughter. Surviving, their son Aaron and daughter Shoshana in Israel; Israel, Kalman and Shaul in the United States and Russia).”¹⁰

By this point I knew that Israel Berger was Sol’s name before he changed it. Piecing the story together, the martyr list implied that Sol still had four siblings still living in 1970. His siblings Aaron and Shoshana were living in Israel and he had two brothers, Kalman and Shaul, at least one of whom was living in Russia.

Another photo of a young Berger woman standing on a bridge over the Ikva river confirmed that the Reisel in the family photo was known in 1970 as Shoshana. It made sense. Shoshana meant “rose” in Hebrew and I looked up Reisel and it meant “rose” in Yiddish. I now knew that Sol had a sister named Shoshana in Israel and a brother named Aaron. Was it possible I wondered to figure out what became of Sol’s siblings? The first sibling I was able to find was Kalman Berger.

¹⁰ Mlynov-Muravica Memorial Book, p. 431.



Figure 34 Caption reads: “Shoshana (Raisel) Berger on a bridge over the Ikva River.” Mlynov Memorial Book, p. 279.

Kalman Berger and the Mlynov Boys from Buenos Aires

At an earlier point in time, I had found a 1940 census in which a “Carl Berger” was living with Sol and his family. Carl must be Sol’s brother “Kalman,” I now realized, after seeing his Hebrew name in the Mlynov Book. When did Karl/Kalman arrive in the US?

1149	278	50	7a	Berger, Sol	Head	0	M	W	42	M	No	8	8	Poland	13
				, Berish	Wife	1	F	W	38	M	No	8	8	Poland	13
				, Bernice	Daughter	2	M	W	14	S	Yes	1	8	Illinois	61
				, Zane	Daughter	2	M	W	8	S	Yes	2	2	Illinois	61
				, Carl	Brother	5	M	W	34	S	No	8	8	Poland	13

Figure 35 Carl Berger born in Poland living with Sol’s family in 1940 at 1149 Sacramento Avenue

Expanding my search to “Karl” Berger, I eventually found his naturalization records and learned that he had entered the US under the assumed name of **Abraham Machlin**. I suspect he had to fess up to his assumed named because he had to demonstrate how he entered the country, which turns out to be an interesting story.

TRIPPLICATE
 (To be given to declarant when originally issued; to be made a part of the petition for naturalization when petition is filed; and to be retained as part of the petition in the records of the court)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DECLARATION OF INTENTION No. 200247
 (Invalid for all purposes seven years after the date hereof)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA In the **DISTRICT** Court
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS of **UNITED STATES** at **CHICAGO**

(1) My full, true, and correct name is **Abraham Machlin, known as KARL BERGER**
 (2) My present place of residence is **1149 North Sedgwick Avenue, Buyer Elec. Supplies**
 (3) I am **37** years old. (3) I was born on **October 17, 1906** in **Wlynow, Poland**
 (4) My personal description is as follows: Sex **male** color **white** complexion **fair** color of eyes **blue**
 color of hair **brown** height **5** feet **4** inches, weight **140** pounds, visible distinctive marks **none**
 race **White**, present nationality **Polish**
 (7) I **am not** married; the name of my wife or husband is _____ we were married on _____ at _____ he or she was born at _____ and entered the United States at _____ for permanent residence in the United States, and now resides at _____
 (8) I have **no** children; and the name, sex, date and place of birth, and present place of residence of each of said children who is living, are as follows: _____
 (9) My last place of foreign residence was **Windsor, Ont. Canada** (10) I emigrated to the United States from **Windsor, Ont. Canada** under the name of **Karl Berger (Abraham Machlin)** at **Detroit, Michigan** on **Sept. 9, 1943** via the **D & C Tunnel**
 (11) My lawful entry for permanent residence in the United States was on **Sept. 9, 1943** on the **D & C Tunnel**
 (12) Since my lawful entry for permanent residence I have **not** been absent from the United States, for a period or periods, of 6 months or longer, as follows:

DEPARTED FROM THE UNITED STATES			RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES		
PORT	DATE (Month, day, year)	VESSEL OR OTHER MEANS OF CONVEYANCE	PORT	DATE (Month, day, year)	VESSEL OR OTHER MEANS OF CONVEYANCE

(13) I have **not** heretofore made declaration of intention: No. _____ in the _____ Court.

(14) It is my intention in good faith to become a citizen of the United States and to reside permanently therein. (15) I will, before being admitted to citizenship, renounce absolutely and forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which at the time of admission to citizenship I may be a subject or citizen. (16) I am not an anarchist, nor a believer in the unlawful damage, injury, or destruction of property, or sabotage; nor a disseminator in or opposed to organized government; nor a member of or affiliated with any organization or body of persons teaching disbelief in or opposition to organized government. (17) I certify that the photograph affixed to the duplicate and triplicate hereof is a likeness of me and was signed by me. I do swear (affirm) that the statements I have made and the intentions I have expressed in this declaration of intention subscribed by me are true to the best of my knowledge and belief: **SO HELP ME GOD.**

Subscribed and sworn to (affirmed) before me in the form of oath shown above in the office of the Clerk of said Court, at **Chicago, Illinois** this **29th** day of **November**, anno Domini **1943**.
 Certification No. **361416** from the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization, showing the lawful entry for permanent residence of the declarant above named on the date stated in this declaration of intention, has been received by me, and that the photograph affixed to the duplicate and triplicate hereof is a likeness of the declarant.

ROY H. JOHNSON
 U. S. DISTRICT COURT
 Chicago, Illinois
 District Clerk

Form N-315
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
 IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE
 (Edition of 1-31-41)




Figure 36 Karl Berger's Declaration of Intention, dated Nov. 29, 1943, shows he used the name Abraham Machlin and that his last place of foreign residence was Windsor, Ont. Canada and that his lawful entry to the US at Detroit, Michigan on Sept 9, 1943 via the D&C Tunnel

0900-K-21449 -14-

ORIGINAL
(To be retained by Clerk of Court)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

No. **332389**

PETITION FOR NATURALIZATION

[Under General Provisions of the Nationality Act of 1940 (Public, No. 853, 76th Cong.)]

To the Honorable the DISTRICT Court of THE UNITED STATES of CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

This petition for naturalization, hereby made and filed, respectfully shews:

(1) My full, true, and correct name is KARL BERGER supplier

(2) My present place of residence is 1149 North Sacramento Blvd., Chicago, Ill. buyer electric

(3) I am 42 years old. (4) I was born on OCTOBER 17, 1906 in Mlynov, Poland

(5) My personal description is as follows: Sex male, hair white, eyes blue, complexion fair, color of eyes blue, color of hair brown, height 5 feet 4 inches, weight 140 pounds, visible distinctive marks none, present nationality Polish (7) I am never married; the name of my wife or husband is _____

we were married on _____ at _____ (City or town) (State or territory) (Country, district, province, or state) (Date)

he or she was born at _____ (City or town) (State or territory) (Country, district, province, or state) (Date)

and entered the United States at _____ (City or town) (State or territory) (Country, district, province, or state) (Date) for permanent residence in the United States and now resides at _____ (City or town) (State or territory) (Country, district, province, or state) and was naturalized on _____ (Date) (City or town) (State or territory) (Country, district, province, or state) (Date)

(8) I have no children; and the names, sex, date and place of birth, and present place of residence of each of said children who is living, are as follows: _____

(9) My last place of foreign residence was Buenos Aires, Argentina (10) I emigrated to the United States from Windsor, Ontario, Canada (11) My lawful entry for permanent residence in the United States was at Detroit, Michigan under the name of Karl Berger (Abraham Machlin) on September 9, 1943 as shown by the certificate of my arrival attached to this petition. (12) Since my lawful entry for permanent residence I have not been absent from the United States, for a period or periods of 6 months or longer, as follows: _____

DEPARTED FROM THE UNITED STATES			RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES		
PORT	DATE (Month, day, year)	VESSEL OR OTHER MEANS OF CONVEYANCE	PORT	DATE (Month, day, year)	VESSEL OR OTHER MEANS OF CONVEYANCE

(13) I declared my intention to become a citizen of the United States on November 29, 1943 in the District Court of United States at Chicago, Illinois (14) It is my intention in good faith to become a citizen of the United States and to renounce absolutely and forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, State, or sovereignty of whom or which at this time I am a subject or citizen, and it is my intention to reside permanently in the United States. (15) I am not, and have not been for the period of at least 10 years immediately preceding the date of this petition, an anarchist, nor a believer in the unlawfulness of property, or sabotage; nor a disbeliever in or opposed to organized government; nor a member of or affiliated with any organization or body of persons teaching disbelief in or opposition to organized government. (16) I am able to speak the English language (unless physically unable to do so). (17) I am, and have been during all of the periods required by law, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the United States. (18) I have resided continuously in the United States of America for the term of 5 years at least immediately preceding the date of this petition, to-wit, since September 9, 1943 and continuously in the State in which this petition is made for the term of 6 months at least immediately preceding the date of this petition, to-wit, since September 1943 (19) I have not heretofore made petition for naturalization: No. _____

(20) Attached hereto and made a part of this, my petition for naturalization, are my declaration of intention to become a citizen of the United States (if such declaration of intention be required by the naturalization law), a certificate of arrival from the Immigration and Naturalization Service of my said lawful entry into the United States for permanent residence (if such certificate of arrival be required by the naturalization law), and the affidavits of at least two verifying witnesses required by law.

(21) Wherefore, I, your petitioner for naturalization, pray that I may be admitted a citizen of the United States of America, and that my name be changed to _____

(22) I, aforesaid petitioner, do swear (affirm) that I know the contents of this petition for naturalization subscribed by me, that the same are true to the best of my own knowledge, except as to matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and that as to those matters I believe them to be true, and that this petition is signed by me with my full, true name: **SO HELP ME GOD.**

Karl Berger
(Full, true, and correct signature of petitioner, without abbreviation)

118-18130-1

Form N-405
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE
(Edition of 3-1-43)

Figure 37 Karl Berger's Petition for Naturalization, May 10, 1949, indicates his last place of residence was Buenos Aires

Karl's naturalization records confused me at first. On his Declaration of Intention, which is dated Nov. 29, 1943, he is still living with Sol's family at 1149 Sacramento Ave, in Chicago. In that declaration, he listed his last place of foreign residence as Windsor, Ont. Canada and his lawful entry to the US had been at Detroit Michigan on Sept. 9, 1943 via the D&C Tunnel (=the Detroit and Windsor Tunnel). Why was his lawful entry in 1943 if he had already been in the US by 1940 living with his brother Sol?

An answer emerged from Karl's Petition for Naturalization, which I found next. Much of the information on this document, stamped May 10, 1949, was exactly the same as his Declaration. But on this record, he listed his last foreign residence not as Canada but as *Buenos Aires*.

"Buenos Aires," – bells and whistles started to go off in my head. Had he been in Buenos Aires when the other Mlynov boys I knew about had been there? I had already figured out from

earlier research that in fact two of the boys in Buenos Aires in the 1920s were Wallace brothers, sons of the very same Jankel Wulach (Jacob Wallace) who had travelled with the Berger family to Chicago in 1913. The Berger and Wallace families obviously were connected. Could Karl Berger have been with the Wallace boys in Buenos Aires? It would make sense.

Karl Berger aka Abraham Machlin in Buenos Aires

With the assumed name of Abraham Machlin in hand, I began searching for passenger manifests and without a lot of work I found Karl's. He was traveling on the SS Voltaire from Buenos Aires to New York, leaving on December 6 and arriving on December 29, 1926.

"Abraham Machlin" listed himself as 20 years old, single, a clerk and Spanish speaking. To get around the US immigration policy, which was imposing quotas on Eastern European Jews, he listed his nationality as "Argentine" and his race as Jewish.

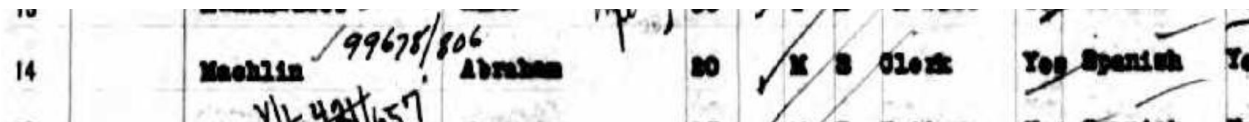


Figure 38 Karl Berger using the name Abraham Machlin on the manifest of the SS Voltaire

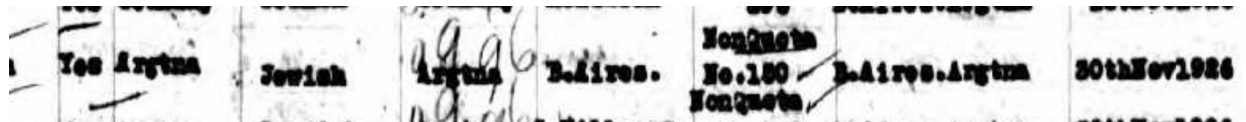


Figure 39 Karl lists his nationality as Argentina and his race as Jewish

Karl lists his destination as Chicago and indicates he is headed to his "friend" Nathan Berger at what looks like 1217 S. Garlev Ave, which I suspect is Oakley Blvd.¹¹ It is likely that Karl didn't want to identify Nathan as a cousin because Karl was using an assumed name and he was hiding his true identity. Karl lists his closest friend back in Buenos Aires as "M. Tidler on 2000 Cerrientes in Buenos Aires.

¹¹ Sol Berger's Declaration of Intention, signed on Nov. 30th, 1926 indicates he was living 1011 North Oakley Blvd. Also, we'll see that Isadore Wallace's manifest from March 23, 1916 indicates he was headed to Sol Berger at 440 N. Oakley Blvd.

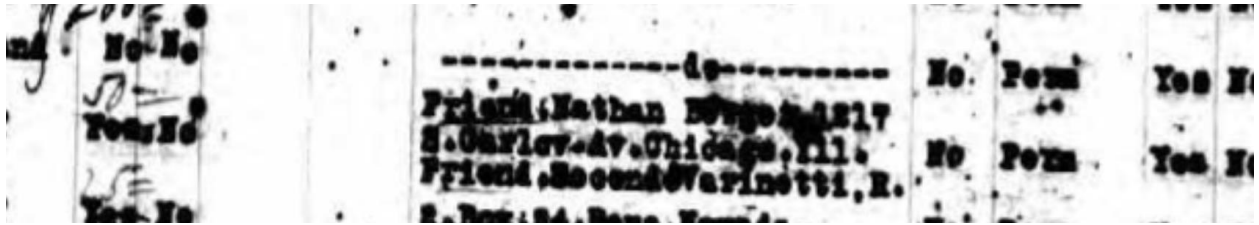


Figure 40 Karl's destination is his "friend" Nathan Berger in Chicago

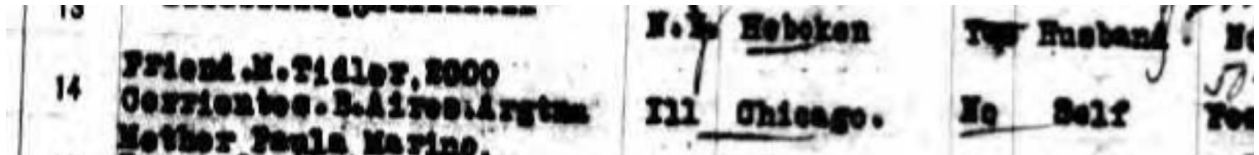


Figure 41 Karl's closest friend in Buenos Aires is M. Tidler at what appears to be 2000 Cerritos.

The discovery that Karl Berger had been in Buenos Aires before 1926 confirmed my hunch that he was there with the other Mlynov boys who were waiting to get into the US.

The Mlynov Boys in Buenos Aires

I had earlier learned somewhat serendipitously about the Mlynov boys in Buenos Aires. When I was first working on my own family tree, I had learned that one of my cousins Julius Deming (a first cousin 2x removed), had come to the US from Mlynov via Buenos Aires. No one in the family knew he was there with other Mlynov boys until I was introduced to Audrey Goldseker Polt who shared with me a photo she had gotten from her father, Sam Goldseker, which showed him in Buenos Aires with a group of his friends.



Argentina ~ 1924

Top Row, Lt to Rt: Dad (Samuel Goldseker), Woodluck, Unknown
 Bottom Row: Muttie Meizlish, Woodluck's brother, Etcool

It's a funny story about how I met Audrey and made this discovery. Audrey was living across the street from a third cousin of mine whom I had only recently tracked down and met in Baltimore. My cousin asked me if I might like to talk to Audrey whose father was also from Mlynov. "Sure," I said.

When I found out Audrey's father had been in Buenos Aires, I compared his passenger manifest with that of my cousin Julius Deming, and found out that they had left for the United States just one month apart and had both listed the same friend's name back in Buenos Aires. "They must have known each other," I told Audrey. At that point, Audrey pulled out the photo of her father with his friends and we realized that my cousin Julius Deming was the friend who her father referred to as "Etool."

There were other Mlynov boys in that photo that Audrey's father called "Woodluck" and "Woodluck's brother" that I eventually was able to identify. They turned out to be the Wallace brothers, the sons of Jankel Wulach (Jacob Wallace), the very same man who had traveled with the group of Bergers to Chicago in 1913. Of course, it made sense. "Woodluck" was Audrey's father's way of saying "Wulach," which had become Wallace in the US.



Figure 42 Photo of unnamed friend in 1924 photo of Sam Goldseker in Buenos Aires



Figure 43 November 29, 1943 photo of Karl Berger from his Declaration of Intention

The first Wallace son to leave Buenos Aires for Chicago was Morris. "Moshe Vulah" (Morris Aron Wallace) left Buenos Aires on March 17, 1924 and was headed to his father "J. Wallace 1115 South Throop St in Chicago." This was the very same Yankel Wulach who had traveled with the Bergers to Chicago in 1913. He was rejoining his father.

His younger brother, "Isaac Wulaj" (Isadore Wallace), left Buenos Aires on the SS Voltaire in March 23, 1926. He listed "Isreal Viener" as his friend back in Buenos Aires and he was headed

to his friend Sol Berger at 440 North Oakley Blvd in Chicago. It was this passenger manifest that had alerted me to the Bergers in Chicago in the first place.

3	Yes	Self	Yes	No	E. 57th St. N. YORK City.								
4	No	Self	Yes	No	Friend. Sol Berger. 440. North Oakley Blvd. Chicago. Ill.	No	Perm	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
5													

Figure 44 Isaac Wallace indicates his destination in Chicago was Sol Berger.

Was it possible that Kalman Berger was also in the photo of the Mlynov boys in Buenos Aires? The probability seemed high.

In both photos, the eyebrow on the right side (facing the photo) curves down and there is a distinctive protrusion on his right earlobe. On his left earlobe, there is also a distinctive mark in both photos. And the lips and nose also seemed identical. Jill Glenn, of the Berger descendants in the US, agrees with this identification.

Karl had snuck into the US like his other Mlynov friends to get around customs. This must be why his naturalization petitions said he legally had entered the country from Canada. He must have realized that in order to be naturalized he would have to leave the country again and reenter under his legal name. This he must have done by going to Canada and then returning to the US in Detroit.

Passenger Manifests of Mlynov Boys Leaving Buenos Aires for the US

New York Arrival Date	Details of the Manifest
<p>April 9, 1924</p>	<p>“Moische A Vulah ” (Morris Aron Wallace) left Beunos Aires* on March 17, 1924. He listed himself as 26 years old, and a laborer. He listed German as his language, Poland as his nationality, and Hebrew as his race/people. He listed his birthplace as “Nylinir” [Mlynov], Russia</p> <p>His last residence was La Plata.* His friend’s name there was I Aronovich, Calle 5 No 550 La Plata. He was headed to his father “J. Wallace 1115 South Throop St in Chicago.”</p> <p>*Note: La Plata is a port city about an hour drive today from Buenos Aires and is the capital city of Buenos Aires Province</p>
<p>March 23, 1926</p>	<p>Isaac Wulaj (Isaac Wallace) leaves Buenos Aires on March 3rd on the SS Voltaire and arrives in New York on March 23. He gives his age as 19 and indicates he is a clerk.</p> <p>He lists his language as Spanish, his Nationality as Argentina, and his people as Spanish. His last residence was Buenos Aires and his friend’s name there is “Israel Viener” on Calle Sarmiento 2269, Buenos Aires. He is headed to Chicago to his friend Sol Berger at 440 North Oakley Blvd. He listed Santa Fe, Argentina as his place of birth.</p>
<p>June, 22 1926</p>	<p>“Julio Deming” (Max and Freida’s son Julius Deming) left Buenos Aires on June 3rd on the SS Western World and arrived in New York on June 22.</p> <p>He listed himself as 18 years old and as a mechanic. He gave “Argentyne” as his language, but someone wrote “Spanish” by hand over it. He indicated his nationality was “Dutch” and his people as Dutch as well. Someone wrote “Hebrew” by hand over his race/people. He listed Buenos Aires, Argentina as his birthplace.</p> <p>His last residence was Buenos Aires and his friend there was Max Masel, OMBU 533, B. Aires He was headed to his sister’s husband Abraham B. Pem [Abraham Penn] 702 Newton St. Springfield, Mass.</p>

<p>August 25, 1926</p>	<p>“David Geldchecker” (Sonny Goldseker) traveled from Buenos Aires on August 2 on the SS Vauban arriving in New York on Aug 25, 1926. He lists his age as 18, of Argentine nationality Hebrew race and a speaker of Spanish. His birthplace is listed as Buenos Aires. His last residence was Buenos Aires and his friend there is Mr. Masel at Sarmiente 22, Buenos Aires. He was headed to [Carl Gamer [Gaynor] who was a cousin of his in New York on 276 East 121 St.</p>
<p>December 29, 1926</p>	<p>Abraham Machlin (aka Kalman Berger) left Buenos Aires on the SS Voltaire on December 6th, made a stop on the 7th across the water in Montevideo, Uruguay and arrived in New York Dec. 29.</p> <p>He listed his age as 20, and indicated he was a clerk. He gave Spanish as his language, his nationality as Argentine, and Jewish as his race/people. His last residence was Buenos Aires and his friend there was M. Tidler, 2002 Cerrientes. B. Aires. He was headed to his friend Nathan Berger. The address is difficult to read and looks like 1217 S. Garlev Ave in Chicago but I believe is Oakley Blvd for reasons given above.</p>

Finding Shoshana Berger and Aaron Harari

After locating Sol's brother Kalman (Karl) Berger, I turned my attention back to Sol's other siblings. Could I find out what happened to Aaron and Raisel, who were still alive in Israel in 1970? It was seeing Raisel listed as Shoshana Berger in the Mlynov Memorial Book which unraveled the next part of the Berger story and led me to Shoshana's daughter and to a surprising discovery about Aaron.



Figure 45 Caption reads: "Shoshana (Raisel) Berger on a bridge over the Ikva River." Mlynov Memorial Book, p. 279.

I located Shoshana Berger by leveraging an online genealogical research trick I had developed from my various efforts to document the history of Mlynov families. I already had a Berger family tree on Ancestry which helped me locate the records of the first Bergers I had found. Now, I decided to replicate a Berger tree on the site MyHeritage because it seems that more Israelis use that site since it is hosted by an Israeli company.

There is an interesting debate among genealogical researchers about which site is better, Ancestry or MyHeritage. I have found that each genealogical site serves its own purpose. Ancestry, I found, was much better at helping me to locate historical records. MyHeritage was much better for finding matches with people in Israel.

When you set up a family tree in either site, it shows you matches to the trees of other people who are researching the same family. This is the amazing consequence of the Internet, Big Data and social networking. Using family tree matching, you can discover new insights from other descendants doing work on the same families and even reach out to them to connect and share information.

Looking for matches on my Berger tree in MyHeritage turned up a match to another Berger tree with the parents, Wolf and Golda. This was the Berger family I was searching for. Raisel appeared in the family tree in the correct spot under the name Shoshana Tzizik and had passed

away in Kibbutz Bet-Alfa, Israel Aug 24, 1994. Voila! I now knew Shoshana's married name. She had married a man by the name of Tzizik (also spelled Chizik).

The same tree provided the surprising family name of Shoshana's brother Aaron. He had become Aaron *Harari*. I knew that name. Aaron Harari was one of the editors of the Mlynov Memorial book, had written several of the essays and published numerous photos from a trip back to Mlynov in the 1930s. I had known the brother of Sol Berger all along, I just hadn't realized it.

I soon discovered that Shoshana Tzizik had a daughter with the last name of Lipkin and after some additional Internet sleuthing, I eventually tracked down and connected to one of Shoshana Tzizik's daughters, Hagar Lipkin, whose name appeared as a consultant to an Israeli company. She responded with as much excitement as I felt in tracking her down.

Dear Howard,

It has been really exciting to get your letter and learn about the research you have been doing.

I will gladly tell you all I know about the Bergers from Mlynov, but I am also very interested to get more information about my father's family in Mlynov - the Tzizik (pronounced like Tchijick, a name of a small singing bird in Russia).

Since then Hagar has been generous in filling in her family's story and connecting me to other cousins. Hagar also explained to me why her uncle Aaron Berger had taken on the name "Harari." "Berg" in German means mountain and "Har" in Hebrew means mountain. Of course, it all made sense.

[Rosa \(Shoshana\) Berger and Aliyah to Palestine](#)

Hagar began sharing with me photos and stories from her mother's life which included her childhood in Mlynov, her aliyah to Palestine from Mlynov, and a moving love story of her mother and her Mlynov boyfriend, which captures many of the profound impulses of the period. The photos Hagar was now sending me were crisp and clear, not the faded ones that I had been looking at in the Memorial book.



Figure 46 Rosa (Reisel) Berger (right) bathing in Mlynov in the Ikva River pre-1933. Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.



Figure 47 Circa 1919. The Berger family: standing: Hannah and Saul (in Red Army uniforms), sitting from left: Wolf, Aaron, Rosa, Golda. Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.

The absence of Sol and Kalman in the photo may suggest it was the 1920s after Kalman left for Buenos Aires.

Ironically, I learned from Hagar that her mother was in fact called Rosa, and not Shoshana, in Israel, even though the name Shoshana had enabled me to track Hagar down. Hagar explained: Rosa / Raisel had been born on October 3, 1910 in Mlynov. She was the youngest child of Wolf and Golda Berger. Rosa and her younger brother Aaron basically grew up as the only two

children in the household. She was 3 years old when her brother, Sol, left for America, and she was a young teenager when her brother, Karl, left for Argentina.

Her oldest brother, Shaul /Saul, had also left home when Rosa was a child; first he went to another city to study and then he was recruited to the Red Army, got married and lived in Russia. Rosa's only sister, Hannah, was seven years older than Rosa. As a teenager Rosa used to earn money by embroidery, something that her daughters enjoyed later, when she used to add ornaments to their dresses.

I was not surprised when I learned that Rosa had gotten involved in the Zionist Youth movement called "Hashomer Hatzair" which was popular in Mlynov during the 1920s. I had already learned from earlier research on Mlynov in that period that Aaron Harari had played a key role in reviving that group in the mid-1920s and I now knew that Aaron Harari was Rosa's brother.¹² We shall return to Aaron's story below.



Figure 48 1927 Group HaTikva of Hashomer Hatzair. Rosa sitting on the floor. On the right – Rachel Shapovnik who went to kibbutz Ruhama. Her son was killed in the service. Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.¹³

¹² https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/Mlyniv/Zionist_Youth_in_Mlynov.html

¹³ Audrey Goldseker Polt believes that the boy sitting on the right is her father's brother, Chuna Goldseker, who eventually went to Buenos Aires, married and settled there.

Love Story of Rosa Berger and Boruch Meren

When I first met Rosa's daughter Hagar, she told me that her mother had been in love with a boy from Mlynov who had come to Palestine, but things had not worked out and he had gone to the States. When I heard this, I asked, "Was it, by chance, Boruch Meren?" I had already learned about a man named Boruch Meren from Mlynov who had gotten married in Palestine in 1939 and arrived in Baltimore. Had Boruch been the boyfriend of Rosa Berger? Hagar went back to her mother's papers and then emailed me. It had indeed been Boruch Meren.

I had earlier been in touch with Boruch's grandson and his family knew precious little about what had happened to his grandfather during the period when he was in Palestine or how he managed to get there. I was intrigued. Were those missing years about to be revealed? Hagar told me the story.

When Rosa Berger left Mlynov and made aliyah to Palestine in 1933, she left behind a young man who was her boyfriend. His name was Boruch Meren. Boruch was born in Mlynov in 1908. His father was Ben Zion Meren and his mother Miriam was the daughter of Hirsch and Ida Goldseker; his sister's name was Seril.



Figure 49 Family of Boruch Meren. Caption reads, "Reb [Mr.] Ben Zion Meren (teacher), his wife and daughter Seril, may their memory be for a blessing. Mlynov Memorial Book, 456.

Boruch used to send photos to Rosa in Palestine from Mlynov with notes on the back. The photos and the notes are wistful and open a window into the young, quaint love relationship of two Mlynov youth during the 1930s. Rosa kept these photos indicating that the relationship with Boruch was still important to her many years later.



Figure 50 Dated May 4, 1933 Boruch wrote in Hebrew
"Three who miss you" (שלושה נהשתגעו). Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.



Figure 51 Dated 1/16/1934 Boruch wrote "To
memory for Shoshana. Boruch (לזיכרון עבור שושנה)
(ברוך). The young man is unidentified. Courtesy of
Hagar Lipkin.



Figure 52 Dated 10/10/33 Boruch wrote, "This place is beyond the big bridge by the side of the road. In the distance you can see a field of trees... We are sitting on a seesaw, spending as much time as possible in this activity. Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.

המקום הוא אחרי הגשר הגדול מצד הכביש מרחוק את רואה שדות העצים... אנחנו יושבים נדנדה, בילוי כמה שיותר בספורט זה



Figure 53 Dated Feb. 14, 1935. Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.

Boruch wrote on the back of this photo:

And still the chain [i.e. connection] is not broken...Mlynov still stands in its place, and the mountain "Grinig," as our ancestor called it, stands upright

entirely covered in greens. During Shabbat, those members [of the youth group] who are still left, gather and sit upon it, reading, chatting, laughing, enjoying the beauty of nature that surrounds it. Boruch

ועוד לא נותקה השלשלת...מלינוב במקומו עומד, וההר "גריניג" שכינו אבותינו עומד זקוף
כולו מכוסה ירק. ובימי השבתות מתאספים שארית החברה, יושבים עליו, קוראים
משוחחים, צועקים, נהנים מיופי הטבע שמסביבו. ברוך

I had seen this photo of the Mlynov young men and women on the hill of "Grinig" before. It appears in the Mlynov Memorial Book on page 158 with the caption "a group of youth on a fieldtrip on 'Grinig.'" It is a faded photo in my Memorial book and has no context. The version sent to me by Hagar appears to be the original, crisp and sharp in focus. It has come back to life knowing that it was sent as a love note from Boruch to Rosa. I wonder now whether the photo got into the Memorial book because Rosa saved it and gave it to her brother Aaron, who was one of its editors. Whatever its path into the Memorial book, its preservation as a keepsake by Rosa from her boyfriend Boruch brings into vivid relief the life and longings of Mlynov youth.



קבוצת צעירים בטיול על ה"גריניק".
א גרופע יוגנטלעכע.

Figure 54 The faded version of the Grinig photo that appears in the Mlynov Memorial Book, p. 158

The story of what happened between Rosa and Boruch is told in a eulogy written by one of Rosa's closest friends after her passing, who, like Rosa, was also hoping to bring a boyfriend to Palestine. Looking back she wrote:

One of the Kibbutz founders, Smulik, hinted to us that he can secure two certificates "under the table," and to bring our boyfriends, mine and Rosa's, to Israel. One day the telephone rang telling us of arrivals. Rosa hurried to

the Haifa port with the details but returned depressed. Fischell had arrived but Boruch, Rosa's boyfriend, hadn't arrived. Shmulik continued his efforts because he could not stand to see Rosa in her sorrow.

After several months Boruch came. A young dashing man arrived, brilliant, a speaker of excellent Hebrew, a learned man, but not a working man. His hands were white and tender, working with heavy tools was not for him! Rosa, simply and decisively concluded, "he is not the same person, he is not for me," and she sent him to her brother Aaron to kibbutz Merhavia, to take care of him. Thus the affair was over.



Figure 55 1935-1936 Boruch and Rosa near Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan

Boruch arrived in Palestine in 1938.¹⁴ Had Rosa not helped him get his certificate, he would have died in the Shoah along with his sister and his parents. His love relationship had saved his life.

It is not surprising that Boruch no longer seemed to be the man for Rosa. Rosa had been in Palestine for five years by that point. She was not the same young woman who left Mlynov and thus Boruch did not seem like the same young man. That Palestine had changed Rosa's tastes is

¹⁴ Boruch mentions this date in an essay he wrote in the *Mlynov Memorial Book*, 220-225, Sokolsky, *Translation*, 49.

not so surprising. We shall see that her brother Aaron was also changed profoundly by his first several years in Palestine.

Rosa had arrived in Palestine in 1933 and joined her friends from a preparatory group called “Planty” (פלנטי) of Hashomer Hatzair back in Poland. She came a year before her brother Aaron because he had been asked to get involved in help with another training group. After Rosa’s arrival in Palestine, the group was staying in Rehovot, where she became a wall painter and earned the highest salary in the group, painting the first buildings in the Weizman Institute. After a year she moved with the group to Ramat-Yohanan, a kibbutz 16 km east of Haifa. There she reunited with Boruch for a while, and later married Moshe Chizik (also spelled Tzizik), whom she knew from childhood in Mlynov. Moshe Chizik’s family was from Lutsk but had moved to Mlynov by 1909 and Moshe had been born there. Moshe had also been involved in the Hashomer Hatzair in Mlynov and appears in a photo with Rosa’s brother Aaron which we shall come to.

Rosa and Moshe subsequently moved to kibbutz Beit-Alpha where she worked in the vineyards, grapefruit and olive groves and lived the rest of her life. Rosa and Moshe had three children. Hanan, born in 1940, who lives in Merhavia; Hagar, who has shared with me her family story, was born in 1944 and lives in Tel-Aviv, and Hannah (Gross), born in 1948 now lives in Delray Beach, Florida.



Figure 56 A photo in the kibbutz soon after Boruch (with the tie) arrived. Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.

Boruch Visits Moshe Fishman

We know something about what Boruch was doing in 1938, the year he arrived in Palestine from an essay he wrote in the memorial book in 1970. He had gone to track down Moshe Fishman in Moshav Balforia.

Boruch remembered Moishe from 1921, when Boruch was only thirteen years old. In that year, Moishe had announced in Mlynov that he would take his family to Palestine, the first Mlynov family to do so. The negative reaction created in the village at that time made a lasting impression on Boruch, which he wrote about in his essay. Apparently, Boruch's father was one of the ones who frowned on the emerging Zionism and forbade Boruch to take part in Hashomer Hatzair.¹⁵ Now seventeen years later, after Boruch made it to Palestine himself, he went to look for Moishe. Reflecting back on his time in Palestine in 1938, Boruch wrote with some apparent nostalgia:

When I came to Palestine in 1938, I decided to visit the Fishman family in Balfouria. It was not hard for me to find them. I took my place in the middle of the marketplace and looked at the nice, small houses with red roofs on both sides of the road. I saw the yards, the barns, and the chicken coops. I went to the most beautiful courtyard, and there stood Moishe in his working clothes. I recognized him immediately, although his hair was gray, and he looked much older. He was feeding the cows when I approached him and said, "Hello." His answer was "Shalom – who are you and what is your name?" When I told him who I was, he was very glad to see me and invited me into his house... We had a long conversation, and I reminded him how critical the people in Mlynov had been when he and the family left for Palestine. He became angry and said, "Such scoundrels! What are they waiting for, are they waiting until Hitler kills all of them? Maybe it is already too late," he added.

It was time to milk the cows. On the way to the stable, he pointed at the white chickens, explaining that they give many more eggs than the chickens in the Ukraine, and that the cows give much more milk than the cows in the Polish villages. The cows looked beautiful, and they even understood Hebrew."¹⁶

¹⁵ This was reported to me by Hagar Lipkin as she told the story of her mother Rosa and Boruch.

¹⁶ *Mlynov Memorial Book*, 220-225, Sokolsky, *Translation*, 49.

Boruch Meren and Amelia Shargel Get Together

After his relationship with Rosa ended, Boruch started a new relationship. Rosa preserved photos of Boruch with his new girlfriend whom she called “Milka.” Milka turned out to be Amelia Shargel, Boruch’s future wife.

It is not entirely clear how Boruch and Amelia renewed their connection. They had also known each other originally from Mlynov where Milka was born in 1910. After WWI was over and immigration rules tightened in the US, Amelia’s parents had immigrated to Baltimore to join their oldest children who were already there with the intention and hopes of bringing their younger children to join them. With her parents in Baltimore, Amelia had lodged at the home of Shimon Goldseker at the time and was close friends with his daughter Charna. She likely took the space of Charna’s sister, Eta Goldseker, who left in 1924 for Palestine to join her future husband, Moishe Fishman’s son, David “Dudek” Fishman on Moshav Balfouria. Amelia, for her part, joined her younger two brothers and headed to the US via Mexico. She entered the US from Mexico in 1929.

How Amelia knew that Boruch was in Palestine in 1938 or that his relationship with Rosa had ended, we do not know. We can guess that the news traveled to Amelia via Eta and David Fishman, who had by 1927 left Palestine for Baltimore and may have been keeping in touch with the news in Palestine. Perhaps David heard that Boruch had gone to see David’s father Moishe on Moshav Balfouria during this time. In any case, Amelia arrived in Palestine and she and Boruch got together. It all has the sense of an arranged marriage. It was probably also the only way that Boruch could have made it into the US during these years. He was the last to do so until after WWII.

Photos in Rosa’s collection show Amelia with Rosa and her husband Moshe, just before Amelia returned to the States. By then, Amelia and Boruch had already gotten married, according to the story told to me by Rosa’s daughter. I’m guessing Rosa felt relieved that Boruch had found someone else in his life. A photo from a few months later, of Boruch and Amelia in Hadera, Palestine, also appears in Rosa’s collection. It is dated after Amelia left for the US. Boruch’s Hebrew words are evocative. He wrote: “For Rosa, thus was destiny’s intention.”



Figure 57 A photo of Rosa Berger (center) with her husband Moshe Chizik and Amelia Shargel, dated 4/25/1939 on the eve of her departure to the US. Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.

Figure 58 Dated 6/29/1939 Milka and Boruch in Hadera (Palestine). Boruch wrote on the back "For Rosa, thus was destiny's intention." Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.



Amelia and Boruch Travel to the States

Amelia Shargel's passenger manifest shows one part of her journey back to the US. She left on May 3, 1939 from Cherbourg, France on the SS Queen Mary for New York and arrived on in New York on May 8. She was 29 years old. The date was just a couple months before WWII

started and only a year before the Nazis would invade France. Amelia is listed as married on the manifest.

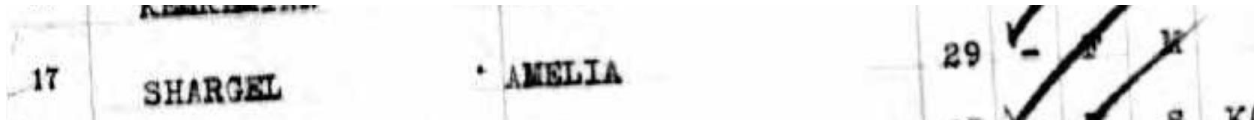


Figure 59 Amelia Shargel's manifest from May 3, 1939 traveling as a US citizen

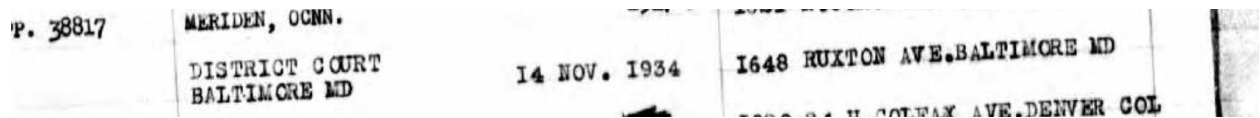


Figure 60 Amelia's manifest indicating her naturalization date and the destination address in Baltimore

Boruch followed Amelia to the States nearly a year later. In the meantime, Amelia was probably arranging for his papers. A passenger manifest from one leg of his journey shows he traveled from Naples, Italy to New York, arriving on April 11, 1940. The War had already begun and it was a few months before Germany invaded France and at a point in time that Italy and Germany already had an alliance. Baruch lists his last place of residence as Hadera, Palestine. It where the photo of him and Amelia had been taken which he had sent to Rosa several months before.

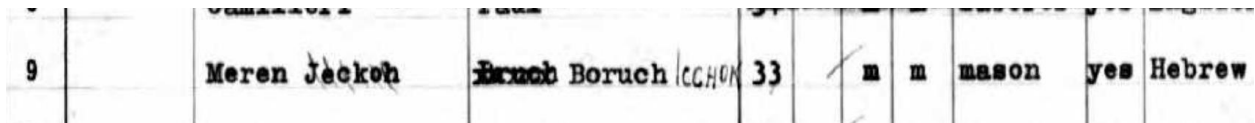


Figure 61 Boruch's manifest from Naples, Italy to New York

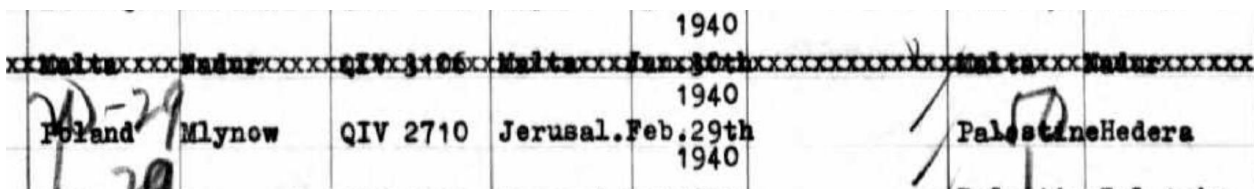


Figure 62 Boruch's manifest shows his birthplace as Mlynov, Poland and his last residence as Hadera, Palestine

NY	New York	yes	self	yes	no	no	no	no	brother in law: 23 East	29
	Md.	Baltimore	no	self	yes	no	no	no	wife: Shargel Emilia =	no
	N.Y.	Bronx	yes	self	yes	no	no	no	1648 Ruxton Ave. Baltimore Md.	
									brother: Louis - 2042 Babes	no

Figure 63 Boruch's destination was his wife "Emilia" Shargel in Baltimore

Rosa didn't see Boruch again until September 1960. Following the death of her beloved husband Moshe Chizik at the age of 49, from a snake bite, Rosa traveled to the US to visit her two brothers, Sol and Karl, in Chicago. On her way she made a stop in Baltimore and visited with Boruch and his family.



Figure 64 Figure 65 Rosa in sunglasses visiting her brothers in Chicago circa 1960. Sol, her brother is standing behind her. Courtesy of Hagar Lipkin.

Rosa told her daughter Hagar that she “received another letter from Boruch in the 1980s telling her that his wife had died. Boruch suggested in this letter that Rosa join him in the US.”

When I heard about this last letter I froze. Boruch had in fact predeceased his wife, Amelia, in 1996. Amelia had lived until 2005. When I asked Hagar about this, she said, “I only know what my mom told me because the letter was written in Yiddish, and she probably didn't keep it.”

As I ponder whether to publish or bury this last story, I reach out to Baruch's grandson to tell him what I found. I remember him telling me he knew nothing about period in his grandfather's life. Would he be happy I had filled in those the gaps? After sending him what I wrote, he calls me to tell me how great it was to read about the missing years in his grandfather's journey. About the last letter Boruch wrote to Rosa, his grandson recalls that towards the end of his life, Boruch was getting dementia. Was he perhaps reverting to his long-lost youth or was Rosa romanticizing a letter she had received from him?

Aaron (Berger) Harari

Rosa was not the only one who was changed by the new life in Palestine. Her brother Aaron had also been transformed between the time he made aliyah to Palestine in 1934 and 1937/38 when he went back to Mlynov for a visit.

When I first learned that Aaron Harari was Rosa's brother, and had been born as "Ahron Berger", I was stunned. I had seen the name "Aaron Harari" all over the Mlynov Memorial book and in fact I had already written quite a bit about his role in reviving the Zionist Youth Movement, Hashomer Hatzair, in Mlynov in the 1920s.¹⁷ I also had seen that "Ahron Harary" had been listed as one of the eight people on the Book Committee that worked on the Mlynov Memorial book. Perhaps most importantly Aaron Harari had taken many of the photos that appeared in the Mlynov Memorial book in a trip that he had taken back to Mlynov in 1938.

In profound ways, the Mlynov that I now envisioned in my mind was the one that Aaron captured as he snapped photos of Mlynov in that trip back there, only one year before WWII started. By 1942, almost all of those still living in Mlynov would be gone, including Aaron and Rosa's parents.

For all these reasons I had wondered many times who Aaron Harari was and why he had gone back to Mlynov. I had searched for him on many occasions but found nothing about his family. Now I knew that Aaron had been Rosa's brother, born on April 7, 1908 in Mlynov, just two years before Rosa.

As I started asking Hagar more questions about her uncle Aaron, Hagar introduced me via email to her first cousin, Zeev Harari, Aaron's son. I was now able to fill in more of the missing details about Aaron Harari. I asked Zeev why his father Aaron went to Palestine and not Chicago to follow his older brothers, Sol and Kalman. Zeev explained to me that Aaron did not want to follow his brothers to the US. "The shtetl life in the Diapora was not satisfying. As an active Hashomer Hatzair member, it was clear to him that he should make aliyah."

Zeev shared with me a narrative that his daughter (and Aaron's granddaughter) Gali had written about her grandfather after he had passed away in 1984 when she was only four years. Gali no longer remembers the source of this narrative but it was part of her own effort to

¹⁷ https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/Mlyniv/Zionist_Youth_in_Mlynov.html#Harari

understand the story of her grandfather. Zeev subsequently turned up audio recordings of Aaron sharing his memories. From those narratives, I learned that the Berger family was a lower middle-class family which made a living from renting wagons out on a franchise basis as a means of transportation. The family lived in a home of three rooms and a kitchen. In addition to his parents, Wolf (Zeev) and Golda, Aaron's five other siblings were living there when he was young as well as Golda's parents.

As a young boy, Aaron had an interest in art, and the large hallway in the home served as his art studio as well as a place for the Sukkah during the holidays. Aaron began painting at the age of 12, and when he was around 16 or 17, he exhibited his first paintings in Mlynov in the barber shop there. He later made a living by binding booklets and books and wrapping magazines. He also worked for a time in journalism.

When WWI broke out, Mlynov was filled with cavalry and infantry camps. As rumors circulated that the front was getting closer, authorities gave the order to leave the town.

The family packed all its belongings and began wanderings on a horse-drawn cart. The family stayed with uncles of theirs, in a rented room in a home which was occupied by a baker who made bread for the army. Aaron's parents tried to integrate the children into regular schools, but Aaron spent most of the time wandering around.

After a few months, the family decided to return to Mlynov since there were rumors that the front had moved to another place, though it turned out that the War was still ongoing. Their home was damaged, so they settled for a while in a basement. Life as refugees was difficult. They left town a second time and went to the town of Rovno (Rivne) about 50 km (31 miles) east of Mlynov. There, the family stayed near a hospital for soldiers.

In his own oral recordings, Aaron painfully recalls living close to a military hospital and seeing soldiers with crushed legs, injured bodies, and bloodstains. The sights reminded him of a Christian cemetery he had earlier seen during their first evacuation, with dead soldiers, deep open graves, and uniformed soldiers throwing amputated limbs into deep mass graves and covering them with soil.

After their second period of wandering, the family returned to their home in Mlynov. They now made a living from boarding soldiers and selling pastries to them.

Aaron also wrote about this period just after the War when they returned to Mlynov. His reflection includes a recollection of my own great-grandparents' home in Mlynov which had become a kind of cultural center after the War. I ponder how our family stories intersect there

in that time and place and explain in part why my family had ended up in America. Aaron wrote:

After the war, [the residents of Mlynov] returned and tried to establish themselves again. The Jewish community overall had to recover from the war. The house of the family named Shulman became the cultural center in town. They established a library and conducted rehearsals for plays. Because of the heavy Russian influence in town (even though it became Polish after the war) the Russian language was widely spoken in the Shulman house. Most of the books in the library were in Russian, with a few in Yiddish. At that time, there were no books written in Hebrew in the library. The people who frequented the Shulman house were far removed from the Zionist movement.¹⁸

I too had heard stories in my own family about the Shulman house being a place where young men and women from Mlynov and Mervits hung out together. Apparently, my own uncle Ben Fishman had gotten to know his future wife Clara Shulman by hanging out in that Shulman library. The Shulmans, however, left Mlynov in 1921 for America, and here I am.

Immigration to the US was becoming more difficult during this period and Zionism in the form of youth movements was beginning to take root in Mlynov. Aaron was to play an important role in that development.

During this period, the Berger family had a period of prosperity, when Aaron's father, Wolf, and his uncle engaged in agriculture, a topic Aaron later wrote about for the Mlynov Memorial Book. Reflecting back on that time, he wrote:

There were not many people who really engaged in farming in Mlynov. I knew only my uncle Faivel and my father, may his memory be for a blessing. The two of them loved agriculture and found it a lifelong interest to uphold the religious duty "to bring forth bread from the earth."¹⁹

Aaron's father and uncle leased a large area from a property owner in nearby Smordov and worked the land. They also had cows and had a business providing milk. Aaron recalls being involved in morning agricultural chores and links his own developing love for agriculture to the efforts of his father and uncle during this time. Unfortunately, once the land was made productive by the Berger men, the owner terminated the agreement so that he could benefit directly.

¹⁸ See Aaron Harari from Merhavia, "Culture, Education and Society in Town." *Mlynov Memorial Book*, 66–68; Sokolsky, *Translation*, 24. My great-grandparents were Pearl Demb and Tsodik Shulman whose home is mentioned in Aaron's account. Their daughter Pepe was my paternal grandmother.

¹⁹ Aaron Harari, *Jewish Farmers in Mlynov.* *Mlynov Memorial Book*, 75-76.

Eventually, a new school was opened in the town and Aaron studied there, and for the first time they talked about the Land of Israel. In the morning he went to a Polish public school, and in the evening, he studied in Hebrew school. At that time, Aaron joined the activities of Hashomer Hatzair and became secular, which caused a rift with his family.



Figure 66 1927 Aaron Harari, standing second from right, as a teacher and activist in the Tarbut school in Mlynov

By the time Aaron was 19 years old (1927), he was involved in the Tarbut School and Kindergarten. The Tarbut school system proved to be one of Zionism's biggest successes in interwar Poland.

Tarbut was a network of secular, Hebrew-language schools in parts of the former Jewish Pale of Settlement and operated primarily between the world wars. The first Polish national Tarbut conference was held in Warsaw, in December 1921. Eventually the Tarbut network, which was supported by Zionist groups, encompassed kindergartens, elementary schools, secondary schools, teachers' seminaries, adult education courses, lending libraries and a publishing house that produced pedagogical materials, textbooks and children's periodicals.

Harari and the Revival of Hashomer Hatzair

In the Mlynov Memorial book, Aaron tells the story of how he revived the activity of Hashomer Hatzair in Mlynov. It was the primary youth group of the time. Rereading what I had written earlier about this, a new understanding of one particular statement burst into view. Harari explained that he had revived the Zionist youth group in Mlynov after it had gone *defunct because most of the “guides” had immigrated to Argentina*. Now I knew that Aaron’s older brother Kalman / Karl was among the group of Mlynov boys who had left for Buenos Aires. He probably had been one of the ones involved in the Zionist Youth group before he had left.

Harari recalls that the Mlynov youth organization, Hashomer Hatzair, was founded in Mlynov in 1920 by a man from Rovno named Lemel Rosenfeld. Originally, two groups were established, one for children aged 15–16 years old, and the other for those 12–13 years old. Only boys were allowed to join at that time. Most of the activities consisted of military exercises such as marching drills. All the orders were given in Hebrew, and all conversations and discussions were held in Hebrew.

Harari tells how he helped revive the group in 1925. He wrote a letter to Hashomer Hatzair headquarters in Warsaw asking for assistance in re-establishing the youth movement in Mlynov. Headquarters responded favorably sending him a great deal of information and many brochures. Aaron did not know how to go about organizing the group on his own, so he publicized the idea in the synagogues, requesting all interested boys and girls in town to participate in the movement.



Figure 67 The leadership of Hashomer Hatzair in Mlynov in 1928. Aaron Berger (later Harari) is third from the left, Yehuda Mohel (second from the right) and Rosa Berger’s future husband, Moshe Chizik (also “Tzizik”) is third from the right. Courtesy of Zeev Harari and Dani Tracz.

This approach turned out to be quite successful, and within one week, tens of boys and girls applied for membership in the movement. Once again, two groups were established based on age. They met on Saturdays in one of the forests outside of town. This time, however, the activities were more diversified than in the past, and the groups would sing songs, play games and sports, and read brochures and books about events in Palestine at that time. A tremendous feeling of unity developed among the members.

Harari recalls that in the spring of 1926, he went to Rovno [Rivne] to attend a Hashomer Hatzair convention. Leaders of the various chapters in the area were in attendance. The convention offered many lectures on the educational difficulties and organizational challenges among the chapters. From this experience, Aaron learned how to become a more effective leader. When he returned to Mlynov, he appointed several members to be guides, and they resumed having meeting in homes.

The members of Hashomer Hatzair, like the scouting movement on which the organization was partially modelled, wore special clothing which bore the emblem of the organization. During the summer, they held their meetings outside, usually in the forests, and in the winter, they met indoors. Occasionally, members from the Warsaw headquarters and even from the Land of Israel visited the group to discuss the essence of the youth movement, the goals of the group, and how to make their ideas come to fruition.

Aaron was remembered as a leader in the group by another Mlynov boy, Yehuda Mohel, whose family came to Mlynov in the early 1920s. Yehuda recalls the important social function that the group played for Mlynov youth.

We started to plan the activities and set up groups and brigades. Our activities were successful, and we established a large and broad movement. About 90% of the youth in Mlynov belonged to Hashomer Hatzair, from the age of seven or nine to the age of 18–19 years old. There were groups of different ages, and all the activities were conducted in Hebrew – lectures, discussions. Everyone knew the language. We also established a small Hebrew library and we were associated with a nearby nest in the city of Dubno which was larger. There the nest was older and more developed and we learned a lot from them. They would come to visit us and help us with our work. The head of the nest in Dubno was Moshe Margalit who now lives at Kibbutz Shaar HaGolan.²⁰

²⁰ See Dani Tracz, *Riva and Yehuda Life Story: Tancman, Mohel, Tracz and Ben Eliezer Families*. https://openlibrary.org/books/OL26355878M/Riva_and_Yehuda



Figure 68 Aaron (standing right) boating on the Ikva River in Mlynov. Courtesy of Zeev Harari



Figure 69 Aaron Berger right, age 19, circa 1927. Courtesy of Zeev Harari.



Figure 70 1929 Aaron Berger (top left), Rosa, (front right), Yehuda Mohel (behind Rosa)
Courtesy of Zeev Harari.



Figure 71 1929 Aaron (front) on a fieldtrip with friends. Courtesy of Zeev Harari.



Figure 72 Aaron Berger (top left), Rosa Berger (front right), Mlynov Memorial Book, 9. Dated 1933. This version courtesy of Zeev Harari



Figure 73 From right to left: Rosa Berger, Aaron, and their sister Hannah, who did not survive. Courtesy of Zeev Harari.

Aliyah to Palestine in 1934

I think about the monumental changes after WWI that had reshaped Mlynov lives and led to this fundamental reorientation in aspirations and life choices of its youth, even among brothers in the same family. Aaron's older brother, Sol, had left Mlynov when it was part of Russia and gone to America. Now Aaron was living under Polish rule and immigration to the US had become increasingly difficult and his brother Kalman had to head to America via Buenos Aires.

Zionism and the Land of Israel were becoming increasingly important to the Jewish youth of the period who increasingly felt that opportunities in Poland were closed to them via acculturation or assimilation. Ironically, the Zionist youth movements of the time were also influenced by the Polish nationalism that had increased in the Poland that had been reborn after WWI.

By the time Aaron was 23 or 24 (1931), if not sooner, he had left Mlynov to prepare (hachsharah) for his aliyah to Palestine. He joined a group that called themselves "Planty" (פּלַנְטֵי) and lived on a training kibbutz in Slonim, Poland, now located in modern day Belarus. Slonim is 350 km due north of Mlynov. The group drew members in training from all over the area.

Aaron was with the group in a meeting in Warsaw in 1933 when the group discussed and overcame early hesitations about joining Kibbutz Merhavia. Aaron's son Zeev fills me in on the history:

The group that founded Kibbutz Merhavia was formed in 1926 in Palestine and settled in Merhavia in 1929. The original settlement of Merhavia was founded as early as 1910, as a cooperative and the first Hebrew settlement in the Jezreel Valley. Golda Meir was one of the settlers in the beginning of the 1920s.

Meir Ya'ari, who was one of the leaders of the Hashomer Hatzair movement, led the founding group of the kibbutz in Merhavia and was one of the members. Aaron admired him. However, the discussion that took place in Warsaw revolved around the dilemma of whether to settle in an existing settlement, or to establish a brand-new settlement. They connected with Merhavia via letters and read with enthusiasm the kibbutz bulletin, which was principally focused on farm business, which they were eager to learn.

Aaron was in Slonim in his early twenties (~1930–34). His role was to serve as one of the three secretaries of that training kibbutz. Apparently, he leveraged his artistic talents to sell his paintings to people who worked in the sawmills in that area.



Figure 74 Aaron (far left) with Planty pioneer training in Slonim, winter of 1931-32



Figure 75 Aaron Harari (right) with his nest in Slonim. Aaron's handwriting on the photo reads "secretariat Kibbutz Planty, summer 1930 on Hachsharah." Photo likely in period between 1930 and 1932. Courtesy of Zeev Harari.



Figure 76 February 1934, members of the Planty group on their way to Eretz Israel (Palestine). Aaron is standing third from the right. Courtesy of Zeev Harari.

Upon the completion of his training, Aaron received a certificate enabling him to make aliyah under the British Mandate government. Before doing so, he returned to Mlynov for a short time and then served as head of a “nest” (as the groups were called) outside the town, about 50 km east of Warsaw.

In February 1934, Aaron was among the first members of the Planty group to arrive in Palestine. They arrived only four years after Kibbutz Merhavia had started. Soon after his arrival, Aaron changed his name from Berger to Harari, signaling his new identity.

Initially Aaron worked numerous different jobs but wanted very much to be a sheep breeder which he became after a year. He loved it very much and became a national expert on the subject. He met his wife, Rivka Vilf-Dorlich, in the beginning of the 1940s. She had made aliyah in 1936 and had become a member of Kibbutz Ein HaMifratz. Aaron was invited by colleagues to visit her kibbutz ostensibly for “professional reasons,” but the real aim was to meet her. In the mid-1960s, Merhavia closed down its sheep breeding branch, so Aaron returned to his creative love of oil painting.



Figure 77 Aaron Harari sheering wool on the Kibbutz.



Figure 78 Aaron grazing sheep in the Jezreel Valley

Figure 79 Aaron with his wife Rivka and first-born daughter, Hagit, 1944



Figure 80 Samples of Aaron's paintings later in life





[Aaron's Return to Mlynov in 1938](#)

As I learned more about Aaron's life, I wondered about that trip he made back to Mlynov in 1938 in which he took many of the photos that ended up in the Mlynov Memorial book. What had brought Aaron back there so close to the end of Jewish community? I asked his son Zeev, and another amazing story emerged.

Aaron's kibbutz had sent him back to help a sister of a kibbutz member immigrate to Palestine. The purpose was to "marry her" and enable her to come to Palestine as Aaron's wife.

On his trip back, Aaron brought the woman to Mlynov from another town and tried to explain the purpose of the fictitious wedding to his parents who were surprised and could not comprehend the meaning of this strange act. Aaron's son, Zeev, recalls seeing their joint

Palestinian passport which was issued by the British authorities, with both their photos and their names as a married couple. Upon arrival in Palestine, the couple got divorced. Zeev remembers that the woman continued to visit her sister in the kibbutz when he was growing up.

It is clear from an essay that Aaron wrote years later for the Memorial book that he felt alienated during that trip back to Mlynov and that he had changed.

Aaron's sentiments have not been translated into English before, as if earlier translators didn't want to acknowledge his sense of emotional distance that had emerged in his four years away from Mlynov. I am moved to bring these words of his into English. He called the essay, "A Visit to Mlynov in 1938."²¹

Only four years passed since I made aliyah to the Land of Israel, and what a distance and abyss between myself and the people that I left behind in the town, and what a different feeling I had when I got off the bus and crossed the main street, in seeing the shopkeepers gazing at me with intense curiosity. Indeed, the very same Jews - but in my eyes they appeared different. When I met with acquaintances and dear friends, there was no longer a very fluent language, all of them were like strangers in my eyes, as if I was hurled into another world....in their ways, in the way they spoke, and their occupations, pity was evoked in me. I believe this feeling in me was not caused by excessive boasting, but rather it sprung from an internal revolution that occurred in my personality during the four years of my acclimation to the Land, due to the rich and intensive life in work, in the worker's movement in the kibbutz, in agriculture and in defense. All these made their impression forging my soul and my character to that extent that I was not able to find my place in the atmosphere of cultural and social strangulation that I found in the place.

I ponder Aaron's alienation upon his return to Mlynov. I was not surprised, of course, that after living in Palestine in Merhavia that Mlynov would seem so foreign to him. His feelings reminded me of his sister Rosa's reaction that same year to Boruch's arrival in Palestine. Both had become different people after only a few short years of life of kibbutz life.

I had never understood before the feelings that Aaron was having when he shot those photos I had looked at so many times in the Mlynov Memorial book. I had been seeing Mlynov through Aaron's eyes all this time and not really understanding who he was or what brought him back there. It is not that Aaron's sense of alienation is evident in the photos. But knowing he felt

²¹ Mlynov Memorial Book, p. 77.

estranged let me see his photos differently, understanding what had brought him back to Mlynov and why. It was the last time Aaron saw his parents and his sister Hannah alive.

Mlynov Through the Eyes of Aaron Harari

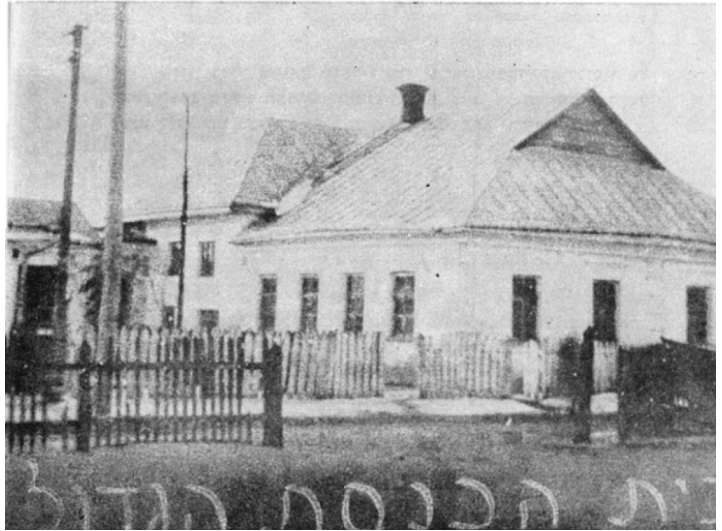


Figure 81 Caption reads: Herschel "Datino", the water drawer, against the backdrop of Jacob Holtzeker's home. Photograph of A. Harari, 1938." Mlynov Memorial Book, 79.



Figure 82 Caption reads: "Synagogue street. From the photography of A. Harari," Mlynov Memorial Book, 201. This version courtesy of Audrey Goldseker Polt.

*Figure 83 Caption reads: "The great
synagogue in Mlynov." Photograph
by A Harari, Winter 1937/38.
Mlynov Memorial Book, 12.*



*Figure 84 Caption reads: "Winter Scene in
Town." From the photography by A. Harari.
Mlynov Memorial Book, 89.*

The Berger Family from Mlynov-71



Figure 85 Caption reads: Children returning from school. From the photography of A. Harari." Mlynov Memorial Book, 21.



Figure 86 Caption reads: "Swamp on Denvinka St, the "Colochia". On the left side the Daulik Synagogue. From the photography of A. Harari, Mlynov Memorial Book, 25.



Figure 87 Caption reads: "Market Street. From the photography of A. Harari." Mlynov Memorial Book, 26.

Figure 88 Caption reads: "Alongside the shops of Kippergloss and Holtseker. From photography of A Harari." Mlynov Memorial Book, 151. This version courtesy of Zeev Harari.



Figure 89 Caption reads, "Avrahamke a character from Mlynov. From photography of A Harari." Mlynov Memorial Book, 258.

Figure 90 Fraidel, a typical character in Mlynov. From the photography of A. Harari. Mlynov Memorial Book, p 229.



What Became of Shaul Berger, the Oldest Child of Wolf and Golda?

I had now accounted for all of Sol's siblings except one. I had learned that his brother Karl, had come to Chicago via Buenos Aires, and his siblings Rosa and Aaron, had made aliyah. I also knew Sol's sister Hannah and his parents Wolf and Golda had died in the Shoah. What had become of his oldest brother, Shaul (Saul)?

The Mlynov Martyr list indicates that Shaul was living in Russia in 1970.²² Not much is known about what became of him. He appears in a Russian army uniform in the photo of the Berger family which Rosa's daughter, Hagar, provided me. Hagar is not sure if Shaul was conscripted or enlisted in the Red Army, but he apparently married, and ended up living in Russia.

The families could not stay in close touch because letters were not permitted to be sent between the Soviet Union and Israel. Hagar recalls that some Russian families knew of Shaul's family and would periodically bring news to her mother, Rosa. In the 1970s, Rosa apparently helped Saul's daughter get to the US. Hagar believes she moved to Florida, but is not sure what became of her after that. Perhaps, one day we will know.

²² The list of Mlynov and Mervits martyrs and some survivors appears on page 431 and following.

Faivel and Tuvia: Other Brothers of Wolf Berger:

From the photos in the Mlynov Memorial book, I knew that Wolf Berger had at least one other brother named Faivel. I also knew from the list of martyrs that Faivel was also called Shraga, and that he, his wife, Mateel, and his daughter, Batia, were killed in the Shoah.



Figure 91 Caption reads: "Faivel Berger (right) and Wolf Berger (left) and their families." Mlynov Memorial Book, 76. This version courtesy of Zeev Harari.

For the longest time I had made nothing of the fact that this photo of the two Berger brothers and their families had been placed in an article by Aaron Harari, entitled "Jewish Farmers in Mlynov."

But now that I knew that Aaron Harari had been born Aaron Berger, it made sense. Aaron must have taken the photo when he was back in Mlynov in 1938. That explains why Wolf and Golda have only one daughter in the photo. In his oral recordings, Aaron recalls that when the day of his own aliyah drew closer, his parents' mood was depressed. Out of six children, five left home and one only – Hannah, who had not married yet – stayed home. The photo does not say that it came from Aaron's photography. But a second photo on the previous page does have that attribution. It is a photo of Faivel's daughter Batia milking a cow. Aaron had taken a photo of his first cousin back in Mlynov. Now I understood why these photos were placed in this article. These were the last photos Aaron took of his family.



Figure 92 The caption reads: Batia, daughter of Faivel Berger, milking the cows. From the photography of A. Harari. This improved version courtesy of Zeev Harari.

In my mind, I ponder the photos of Aaron sheering sheep in Palestine and Batia milking a cow in Mlynov and see more commonality than perhaps Aaron did at the time. Still, it is clear that in 1970, as he was writing for the Mlynov book, that Aaron did see his own love for agriculture as linking him back to his father and his uncle, even as he saw the futility of their efforts in Mlynov.

Reflecting on their agricultural efforts in Poland as he looked back, he wrote, “It is a shame that Jews such as these did not make aliyah at that time to the Land of Israel, to dwell in some Moshav and to invest their strength here, and not in the preparation of land belonging to foreigners... In my visit to Mlynov in 1937, my uncle Faivel urged me that I would try to make his aliyah possible so that he could engage in agriculture here, which was his dream— but it did not come to pass.”²³

Wolf’s Other Brother, Tuvia

I don’t know whether Aaron also visited the family of Tuvia Berger, his father Wolf’s other brother, when he went back to Mlynov. There is no photo of Tuvia’s family in the Memorial book. Tuvia, his wife Miriam, and his daughter Raisel are listed among the martyrs of Mlynov.

But the martyr list also indicates that two of Tuvia’s children survived: Pinchas who was living in Israel in 1970 and Liza who was living in Brazil at the time.²⁴ Liza’s survival story is also told in a Yiddish essay she wrote in the Memorial book, which does not yet appear in the existing English translations.²⁵

I hadn’t realized Tuvia was Wolf’s brother until I was introduced to Tuvia’s grandson, Israel Berger, Hagar, the daughter of Rosa Berger, his second cousin. Israel, who was born in Israel, but has lived in New York since 1972, is the chairman of the board of an architectural firm

²³Aaron’s visit was in the winter of 1937/38 and straddled both years. Sometimes he refers to the visit as 1937 and sometimes as 1938.

²⁴ Mlynov Memorial Book, 431.

²⁵ Mlynov Memorial Book, 347-51. The translation is not included in the Sokolsky translation.

there, is a great storyteller in his own right. When I finally get his attention in email, he replied with the following:

Dear Howard,

Your email was a thunderbolt. Thanks for your efforts.

I will include my brother Tuvia on this exchange. He lives in Israel while I live in New York, since 1972. Kindly note that I mostly monitor my gmail emails. I'm partly retired, so please reply to my gmail only.

Yes, we are Mlynovers!

Our father Pinchas Berger passed away in 1972 in Israel. The only surviving family member after the war was his younger sister Liza, who migrated to Brazil and passed some 15 years ago.

Pinchas barely spoke to anyone about his past, and my knowledge of his travails, losses and survival are slim. I will read attentively your email to me and write to you thereafter. Should you wish to talk to me, please let me know. I'll be delighted to do so.

Every time I meet another descendant of Mlynov families I wonder what new, amazing story will emerge. I was not to be disappointed.

Israel tells me his brother who still lives in Israel is named Tuvia after their grandfather. And that Tuvia has 3 daughters and 8 grandchildren. Israel himself has two children and five grandchildren. As I receive photos of Israel and Tuvia's father, Pinchas, I can't help but notice the similarity in facial features to Aaron Harari. They share the same long narrow face.

Israel and Tuvia don't know much about their grandfather or life back in Mlynov because their father, Pinchas, did not speak much about the past. As the story emerged it became clear why.

Israel explains, "I always knew my father hailed from Mlynov, but knew little else. He was tight-lipped about his experiences. In hindsight, and being married to a clinical psychologist, I think he was deeply depressed, and clammed up. He had a great personality, was quite talented, good looking, but had a hard life. Most of it had to do with the trauma of losing family and the trauma of his life."



Figure 93 Pinchas and his wife Bronia in Poland late 1940s. Courtesy of Israel Berger.

As a result, Israel has only bits and pieces of the story. Apparently, Pinchas was recruited into the Russian army and was shipped to Siberia along with other Jews, who were expelled on the Western front, possibly because of an edict of Stalin in '40-41. Pinchas was in Siberia when the Mlynov ghetto was liquidated and his parents and sister Raisel were killed. Only his sister Liza survived.

Pinchas shared only a few anecdotes with his sons from this time in Siberia. It was "so cold by the time you spit and it reached the ground, it was ice." His father also told him things were so difficult that to smoke they would find some tobacco and roll it up with newspaper."

Israel sends me a torn photo and explains, "The torn picture is the one-and-only physical article which Pinchas possessed from the time before the war. In it is the only picture of his sister Raisel, which he enlarged and hung on the wall in our house." Pinchas had kept it with him when he was in Siberia.



Figure 94 Raisel Berger seated center. The only photo Pinchas Berger had of his family in Mlynov. Courtesy of Israel Berger.

I think about the fact that Israel and his brother have only this one photo of his family from before the War and how precious are photos that families often take for granted of their ancestors. I grew up with the photos of my great-grandparents on the walls of our house, but never paid them much attention, not really caring about my family past when I was younger. For his part, Israel never had the opportunity of even knowing what his grandparents looked like.

When Pinchas returned from Siberia after the War he married a spunky woman who had also survived the war, named Broynslawa or Bronia for short. She was raised in a small rural town called Frampol, east of Krakow and 240 km west of Mlynov.

The war began for her when German soldiers appeared out of nowhere and for inexplicable reasons, with the family watching from inside the house, killed her father with the butts of rifles. Bronia ran outside and screamed at them to stop. "Why are you doing this?" A soldier responded, "Because you killed Christ."

Anticipating the worst, Bronia hid between a haystack and the barn when a truck of German soldiers appeared in town and she watched as they round up the residents of this small town and trucked them off, likely to Auschwitz, which was twenty minutes away.

Bronia survived by assuming the persona of a Christian woman. "A Christian acquaintance from the village gave my mother a necklace with a cross. She had blond hair, blue eyes and light skin,

and Bronia survived the war as a Polish woman.” Israel imagines that because she had been brought up in the countryside, her Jewish accent did not give her away.

After the war, she returned to the area near her town to look for survivors and was introduced to Israel’s father, Pinchas. They got married, settled in Lignica, Poland and Pinchas opened a shoe store there. A photo of Pinchas making shoes there is one of the earliest photos Israel has of his father.



Figure 95 A photographer of this postman caught Pinchas Berger in the background sitting in the doorway to his shoe store in Lignica, Poland. Courtesy of Israel Berger.

Lignica is now a college town of magnificent medieval German architecture, which Israel had the opportunity to visit the year before I speak to him. He tells me, “I took this photo with me to Poland, and walked into the town hall where they had meticulous records of my family history, including notes of my brother’s birth at home, his birth certificate, and my parents’ marriage certificate.” This is the first time Israel saw the names of his maternal family.

Israel’s brother, Tuvia, was born in Lignica in 1947. When he was three, the family left for Israel. Bronia was pregnant at the time with Israel, her second son. The family traveled from Trieste, Italy, to Haifa and were placed in Binyamina, which was founded in 1922 and named after the Baron Abraham Edmond Benjamin James de Rothschild. In 1947, the town had a population of 2,000.



Figure 96 Pinchas and Brunia with sons, Israel (left) and Tuvia (right), in Bat Yam mid 1950s. Courtesy of Israel Berger.

Israel tells me his father Pinchas and mother Brunia were very different people. Pinchas was a serious, religious man, whereas his mother was more fun-loving and social.

My father prayed every morning with tefillin, and every Shabbat, always walking to shul wearing suit and tie. My mother tagged along but was not sufficiently devoted. Our home was kosher, and we took out new linens for Passover, but my mother was much more social, wanted to party, play cards, smoke cigarettes, etc. My father was ill my entire childhood, and indeed he died in his 50s in 1972, just a few weeks after I was discharged from the Israeli army and had come to the US.

The description of Israel's father reminds me of the story of another Mlynov man named, Yitzhak Upstein, who had also been in the Russian army in Siberia during the War. He too came back to Mlynov to learn that his entire family had been killed. The personas of Pinchas and Yitzhak were similar. Both were very religious; both were married to women who had survived the war but who were more social and full of life.

I am sure that the guilt was crushing for those young boys who were away from Mlynov while their families were killed by the Nazis. It must have been a form of PTSD that was not then understood and for which there were not yet psychological tools developed to help sufferers with their grief and guilt. I wonder what it is that enables one person to survive such trauma and still find joy in life while another finds such joys of life unbearable.



Figure 97 Pinchas Berger and Family in Israel

Liza Berger

Pinchas did have one sister who managed to survive the Shoah. Her name was Liza Berger. Liza wrote a piecemeal story about her survival experience for the Mlynov Memorial book.²⁶ When the Germans occupied the town in June 1941, she was among twenty other young Jewish women recruited by the Judenrat to work for the Germans. She recalls having to stand in the Ikva river from 8:00 am in the morning until 5:00 in the late afternoon washing German trucks. It was September and already the weather was getting cold. Each of them received three lashes at the end of the day as payment for their service.

Along with other young people, they decided to leave town and head to the forest. They hid in an empty barn. The young women went out looking for food. When they returned, they found all the boys had been killed. The girls wandered together for a time but eventually Liza was separated from them and went on alone. She wandered from place to place, stealing food when the opportunity arose and begging for food from Polish families, some of whom remembered her from before.

Liza's memories are fragmented, as the experience must have been for her. She recalls:

Once a Pole called me into his house, was very kind to me and gave me something to eat. Standing, I consumed the whole food. Suddenly a company of German soldiers came to this village to look for Jews. The Pole wanted to chase me out. I said to him that the Germans will surely shoot me to death. Would it not be better to keep me as one of the family at the table and everything will be fine. After a short conversation between the members of the family, they put me in bed, put a wet towel on my forehead—"the girl is

²⁶ Mlynov Memorial Book, 347-51.

sick." The Germans searched in the house, in the barn, in the stable and left, not finding any Jew.

Other families betrayed Liza after offering to help and eventually, Liza was caught. She ends her story this way:

I jumped into the nearby river. Hiding in the cold water I heard her shouting, "Liza, where are you? Come here. I brought you some food." I spent the whole night in the water; in the early morning I started running, not knowing where to go. I came to another village. It was daytime. I hid in a stable. I wanted to rest a while, but a wicked gentile saw me and chased me out. I ran again and again till I reached a forest. The snow was deep; it was cold. I did not know what to do. I went out of the forest and went to a village. It was Sunday. I was sure that the Germans were resting and that it would be safer to look for a shelter and bread. But I was mistaken. The Germans came to the village to get some Poles as workers in Germany. I was caught and, together with other people, they brought me to Dubno to the train station.

Liza does not tell the rest of her story and I am left wondering how she managed to escape and survive after she was picked up in Dubno. Perhaps Israel and Tuvia will know what happened. I'll have to ask them when we talk again.

In an earlier conversation, Israel tells me that Liza and Pinchas were reunited after the war when he came back west from Siberia to look for relatives. By then, Liza had become the common law wife of Grisha (Gershon) Gurwic (also Girec), a man who came from the same area of Poland as Israel's mother.

Liza and Grisha didn't have kids. And Grisha apparently was quite the character. "Grisha was a giant, all 5' 2" with burning blue eyes," Israel tells me. "He was a tough guy, who spoke only Polish and Yiddish." Israel recalls that he was illiterate, signed his name with an "x," but was extraordinarily smart— "a freak even" — and could do numbers in his head at lightning speed, such as converting from one currency to another in a split second. As the story goes, Grisha was involved in revenge taking and would hunt down SS men and put bullets in their head.

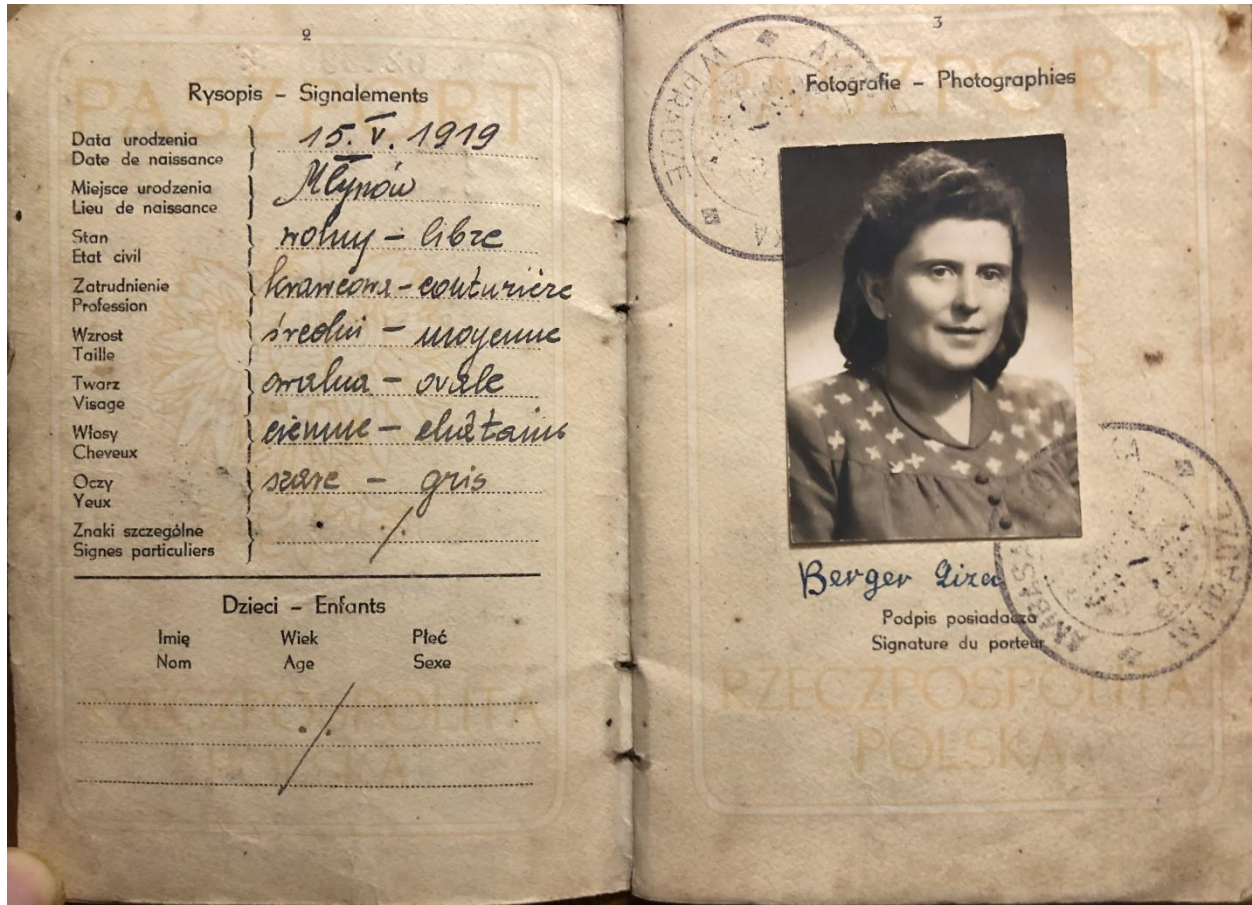


Figure 98 One of Liza’s visa book showing Mlynow as her birthplace and her birthdate of May 15, 1919. Every page is filled showing stops in multiple countries in 1947 and 1948 including Prague and France.

Grisha and Liza eventually left Europe – Israel’s mother implied they were running from the law, but Israel cautions me that his mother had a sharp tongue and whether this was true or not is unclear. At some point Liza and Grisha headed to Montevideo, Uruguay, probably in the late 40s or early 50s, and then eventually to San Pablo, Brazil, where they lived out the remainder of their lives. I think about the story of Grisha hunting Nazis and wonder if that was the reason they went to South America.

Israel recalls visiting Liza and Grisha in Brazil and they came and stayed with in New York with Israel many times. Israel emptied their apartment after they passed and has their documents and many pictures his father sent to his sister. They are sitting in a box someplace in his garage. Perhaps they will resolve some of these mysteries.

Appendix 1 The Berger Family Before Family Memory

The following is a summary of a translation of the 1850 and 1858 Russian revision lists (census) for Mlynov which I commissioned from a researcher. We know from the list of martyrs in the Mlynov Memorial book, p. 431, that Wolf Berger is listed as the son of a Nuta-Bir. Putting that information together with this census, it is plausible that the Nuta-Bir listed here is the very same man.

Family name	Name	Relationship	Father's Name	Estate	Implied Year of Brith	Age 1834 Census	Age 1850 Census	Age 1858 Census	Additional Notes from Revision List
Berger	los also los Wolfov	HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	Wolf ("VOL" in 1858)	Townsmen	1794	40	56	died in 1858	In 1858 called los Volev
Berger	Zlata	Wife of los Wolfov	Not Indicated	Townsmen	1812	Not Indicated	38	46	
Berger	Nuta-Bir	Son	los	Townsmen	1825	9	25	33	los Wolfov (los Voley) and Zlata
Berger	Lemel	Son	los	Townsmen	1832	2	18	26	los Wolfov and Zlata
Berger	Rezlya (also Reislya)	Daughter	los	Townsmen	1838	Not Indicated	12	20	los Wolfov and Zlata
Berger	Rukhlya	Wife of Nuta-Bir losev	Not Indicated	Townsmen	1826	Not Indicated	24	Not Indicated	Nuta-Bir losev
Berger	Sura-Khana	Daughter	Nuta-Bir	Townsmen	1846	Not Born	5	12	Nuta-Bir losev and Rukhlya (1858 census says daughter of Freidya)
Berger	Freidya	Wife 2 of Nuta Bir	Not Indicated	Townsmen	1833		Not Indicated	25	wife Nuta-Bir losev
Berger	Basia	Daughter	Nuta-Bir	Townsmen	1852		Not Born	6	daughter of Nuta-Bir losev and Freida

Nuta-Bir listed here was born in 1825, the son of los Wolfov (ie son of Wolf) and Zlata Berger. los was born in 1794, just after the second Partition of Poland, and it could be that the family was already in Mlynov at that time and the family lived through its transition to Russian rule. In any case, los was in Mlynov by 1834 and died in 1858. los's father's name was Wolf, for whom the later Wolf must be named for. los's wife, Zlata, was born in 1812 and was almost twenty years his junior.

los Wolfov and Zlata had two sons: Nuta-Bir and Lemel, and a daughter, Razlya. Rayzlya was likely the person after whom Raisel (Rosa) Berger was named.

By 1850, Nuta-Bir appears married to a woman named Rukhlya who was just a year younger than him and born in 1826. Their daughter, Sura-Khana is age 5, implying they had been married since 1845. It appears that Rukhlya may have died or Nuta-Bir divorced her by 1852, when a second wife of his appears named Freidya and a six-year-old daughter named Basia.

Not listed in this census, because they have not yet been born, are Wolf, Faivel, Tuvia, or Ben Zion, the parents of the Bergers discussed in the earlier parts of this essay. It seems plausible, though, that they could have been born to Nuta-Bir after the 1858 census. Nuta-Bir would have been 33 years old in 1858. He still had childbearing years ahead of him and he didn't at this point have any sons.

Consider the following plausible reconstruction. Let's say Nuta-Bir and his second wife had their son, Wolf Berger, in the 1868. Nuta-Bir would have been 43 years old. Wolf would have been 30 years old in 1898 when his oldest child Sol (Israel) Berger was born and he would have been 42 in 1910 when his youngest daughter Rosa was born.

Appendix 2: The Bergers in the List of Martyrs

Here is the list of Berers included in the list of martyr translated from the Mlynov Memorial book, p 431. While we have identified a number of these families and their descendants, there remain some whose stories we don't know. Perhaps their fate will come to light at some point.

Family Name	The list of Martyrs with notes
Berger	<p>[Martyrs:] Tovyah, Miriam his wife, Raisel (surviving both Pinchas, their son, in Israel and their daughter Liza is in Brazil)</p> <p>Note: We have told the story of Pinchas and Liza in this narrative and provided a photo of Raisel.</p>
Berger	<p>[Martyrs:] Tzvi, his wife Chaya; daughter Bilah, son Neta Bir, son Yosef</p> <p>Note: It appears that this entire family was killed. The name of the son Neta Bir suggests that Tzvi was descended from the same Neta-Bir ancestor as Wolf.</p>
Berger	<p>[Martyrs:] Sharga (Faivel), Matil his wife, Batia their daughter</p> <p>Note: Faivel is the brother of Wolf. Aaron Harari photographed them in 1938 and their photo appears in the Mlynov Memorial book.</p>
Berger	<p>[Martyrs:] Zeev (Wolf) son of Mr (R') Neta-Bir, Golda his wife, Hannah their daughter (their son Aaron and daughter Shoshana [=Rosa] survived and are in Israel. Israel ["Sol"] Kalman ["Karl"] and Shaul –are in the United States and in Russia).</p> <p>Note: This is the family that has been fully documented in this essay.</p>
Berger	<p>[Martyrs:] Chaim</p> <p>Note: A photo appears on p. 479 of "Shaika Berger, may her memory be for a blessing, (daughter of Chaim Berger)." Her photo appears below.</p>



Figure 99 Caption reads: "Shaika Berger, may her memory be for a blessing, (daughter of Chaim Berger)." Mlynov Memorial Book, 479.

Figure 100 A Devorah Berger (top left) is listed in this photo of "educated ones" (maskilim). The name of her parents are unknown. Mlynov Memorial Book, 66.



Appendix 3 Israel “Sol” Berger’s Essay on the Mlynov Shtetl

“Shtetele Mlynov”

By Yisroel “Sol” Berger, Chicago.
Mlynov Memorial Book, 63-64.

I thank you shtetele Mlynov, my dear shtetele in which I spent my childhood years, for giving me the opportunity to learn in your cheder, in your school, and in your study house. I left you on the eve of the first World War, when I fell into the huge melting pot of the United States of America. I have, however, sworn to never forget you.

I cannot forget: —

- The resounding, hearty outbursts during the Stolin Chassidic prayers in the Stolin prayer house...
- The rebbe’s visit. We celebrated with a meal in the prayer house, and Chassidim grabbed the remnants of the rebbe’s food.²⁷ As they repeated “L’chayim”²⁸ and started to dance, who could worry about the future?...
- The many thousands of petitions that were tearfully thrown into the holy box in the room at the cemetery²⁹. . .
- The many Chassidim who came from faraway places and from Palestine.³⁰
Chassidim with their white socks, in their shiny kapotes and fur hats, celebrating in the Stolin prayer house, having meals there, and visiting the grave every year on the anniversary of the rebbe’s death.

²⁷ It is an honor for Chassidim to take the rebbe’s leftover remnants.--HBF

²⁸ A toast: “To your health!”--HBF

²⁹ It is customary to write *qvitlkeh*, petitionary notes, and place them at a rebbe’s gravesite, so that he will intercede with heaven on the chassid’s behalf. The Karliner-Stolin Rebbe has his ohel [resting place] in Mlynov. - HBF

³⁰ Israel after 7 May 1948--HBF

- The weeping and cries when someone in the family passed on, and the sad sounds of, “charity saves from death.”³¹
- The meeting between bride and groom with their parents on the day of a wedding; the musicians, the entertainer, the wedding ceremony near the house of study.
- The school assistant with his broad shoulders carrying the children to cheder.
- Itse the water carrier with two huge pails of water, and the yoke over his worn shoulders.
- The Mlynov bathhouse. We used to ask Peysi the bath attendant for a small broom rubbed with fat; we would climb on the highest bench and scream out, “Padovi, another bucket!” We beat and rubbed and scraped our backs until they were red.³² Afterwards we would go up to cool off in the ritual bath.
- The deep mud in Mlynov.
- The freezing winters, when our fingers “fell in love with” the doorknob when opening the door.
- The Halperin brothers with their tasty, imported products. The count used to ride there with his two horses in tandem, one behind the other, and shop.

³¹ Chanted at funerals--HBF

³² The Russian bathhouse was like a sauna. The men would sweat and beat themselves with branches to improve circulation. Padovi was the name of the attendant who would pour heated water on the hot stones.--HBF

- The speaker with his sermons. The intellectuals swallowed every word. Once a Litvak came and gave a sermon using his “s” and his “oo”—who understood his language?³³
- Peysi the ritual slaughterer. When he took the shofar into his hands during Rosh Hashana, the windows really trembled. He did not blow a single incorrect note.
- Spreading out fresh-smelling hay the night before Yom Kippur, and then flagellating ourselves with the “holy whip.”³⁴
- The many backs that were warmed in the winter at the study house oven.
- Chanting *maftir*³⁵ and praying at the eastern wall.³⁶ How many respectable men did not receive these honors?
- The outdoor scenes, when Passover paraphernalia was made kosher.
- The pharmacist who prayed only during the high holy days.
- The small stores watching out for customers; their owners were running around somewhere creating interest-free loans.
- The Sons of Aharon with their horses-and-britzkas,³⁷ which drove Polish functionaries to their appointed places.

³³ Litvaks, Jews from Lithuania, confuse the “s” and “sh” sounds. They also say “oo” while Ukrainian Jews say “i.” This is a source of much humor. --HBF

³⁴ Some Chassidim would flagellate themselves 39 times on their backs the night before Yom Kippur for atonement; they would use a special whip. --HBF

³⁵ Reading of the haftorah in the synagogue (lessons from the prophets)--HBF

³⁶ Jews pray facing east, under the assumption that they are facing Jerusalem. The most prestigious seats in the shtetl synagogues were those at the eastern wall; they were reserved for important, highly learned, and wealthy men, who paid for the privilege.--HBF

³⁷ A britzka was an open carriage with a foldable top over half of it.--HBF

- The tones of the organ and bells from the Christian church in the middle of the market.

Translated from the Yiddish by Hannah Berliner Fischthal, PhD

The Descendants of Nuta-Bir and Rukyla Berger

Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	Great-great grandchildren
<p>Wolf (Zeev) Berger (~1860s)</p> <p>married</p> <p>Golda Kentor</p>	<p>Israel "Sol" Berger (1898-1977)</p> <p>m.</p> <p>Dynka Selkoff (1902-1961)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bernard Berger (1926-1998) m. Janice (last name unknown) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gloria Jean Berger (1950-) m. Philip Roth (1950-). children: Ted and Julie • Deborah Berger (1949-) m. Wayne Goodman. children: Judd and Jimmy
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nathan Zane Berger (1926-1998) m. Ruth Morris 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff Berger • Carla (Berger) Dozier • Alana (Berger) Morris
	<p>Shaul Berger (1901-?) m. unknown</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daughter, name unknown 	
	<p>Hannah Berger (1903-1942)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No children 	
	<p>Kalman (Karl) Berger (1906-1990) did not marry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No children 	
	<p>Aaron (Berger) Harari (1908-1984)</p> <p>m.</p> <p>Rivka Vilf-Dorlich (1912-1992)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hagit Harari (1944-2018) m. Avishay Grossman (1937-) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Einav Grossman (1970-) m. Yossef Ben Haim (1967-). children: Adi Aviv Ben Haim (2005-), Naor Ben Haim (2007-) • Tom Grossman m. Limor Malka (1971-). children: Yonatan (2002-) Ori (2007-), Maya (2010-) • Dagan Grossman (1980-) m. Hannie Grochovsky (1977-) children: Shay-li (2013-), Omri (2018-), Assaf (2018-)

The Berger Family from Mlynov-93

Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	Great-great grandchildren	
		Zeev (Vavi) Harari (1947-) m. Haya Efraim (1953-)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gali Harari (1980-) m. Eran Koren (1975-). children: Shira (2011-), Ela (2015-), Hadar (2015-) • Ram Harari (1983-) • Neta Harari (1988-) m. Sharon Shmuely (1988-). child: Lotem (2020-) 	
	Rosa (Raisel Berger) Chizik (1910-2004) m. Moshe Chizik (also Tzizik) (1909-1959)	Hanan Zori (Chizik) (1940 -)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alon m. + 2, • Dror (not married) • Harel (not married) • Geva (m. + 2 stepchildren + 1 child) • Yohai (not married yet) 	
		Hagar (Chizik) Lipkin (1944-)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orna Lipkin m. Noam Gal (1982) • Efrat Lipkin (1984-) not married yet 	
		Hannah (Chizik) Gross (1948-) m. Zeev Gross	Stepchildren: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oded Gross – married + kids • Liron Gross – married no kids 	
	Ben Zion Berger (1865-~1912) m. Zelda Girsch (1865-1938)	Eva Berger (1884-1947) m. Paul Neistein (1881-1949)	Ida Neistein (1907-2006) married Sol Berger (1902-1975) (not a Berger cousin)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheldon Berger (1928-2000) m. Cyrena Goldman (1928-2008) • Barbara Berger (1937-) m. Stan Gillman
			Rose Neistein (1911-1966) m. Harry Barton (1907-1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Barton (1941-1998) • Dennis Barton (1943-1965)
Nettie Neistein (1915-2006) m. Daniel Fishman (1913-?)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carole Fishman became Carole Lips (1940-2002). • Jay S. Fishman (?-2000) No children 	

Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	Great-great grandchildren
	<p>Nathan Berger (1889–1958) m.</p>	<p>Hyman B Berger (1914–2009) m. Helen Doris Lem (1914–2004)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toby Berger (1940–2008) m. Jack Sherman (1932-2015). children: Nina (Joseph) Blumberg, Marcie (Mike) Magier. • Alan Berger (1946–) m. d. 2003; then m. Leslie Armstrong. children: Sasha Lanka, Erin (Tom) O'Neill
	<p>Rose Steinberg (1889–1963)</p>	<p>Libby Berger (1915–2017) m. Samuel Levin (1915–2013)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stanford Levin (1946–) m. Sharon Birnbaum (1947-2017). children: Allison Rose and Elliot Henry • Paul Levin (1949–) m. Kathryn Roscoe. children: Kelly and Keith. • Ted Levin (1951–2014) m. Mary Polly Goetz. children: Nathan, Aaron, and Lauren.
	<p>Sarah Berger (1892–1972) m.</p> <p>Jacob Berger (1892–1975)</p>	<p>Benjamin Berger (1920–2013) m. Florine Perlman (1920–1998) subsequently married Rae Aronson (1926–) after their spouses died</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elise Berger (1948–) married Harvey Canter (1944–2020). children: Julie (Canter) m. Artur Turner. (their children Elana, Michaela, Joshua). Jay Canter m. Rebecca Rubin. • Stephen Berger (1945–) m. Natalie Solitrin (1946–). Children: Allan Berger; Jason Berger m. Carolyn (their children: Ethan, Nolan and Carson).
		<p>Miriam Berger (1925–2000) m. Bernard Carman (1921–1981)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edward Carman (1951–) • Sharon Carman (1952–)

The Berger Family from Mlynov–95

Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	Great-great grandchildren
	Samuel Berger (1894–1986) m. Sophie Selkoff (1895-1985)	Bertha Berger (1920–2010) m. Joseph Intrator in 1940 (– Nov. 1968) and then Joseph Kogan in 1973 (– Aug. 1976). Both passed away.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael (Donna) Intrator (–2020). child: Justin (1975–2009) • Roland (Wendy) Intrator (–2020). children: Xela and Micah.
		Zena Berger married m. and d. Herman Horvitz then Julius Butow (killed in WWII in 1944) then Sam Glenn (who passed away in 1956) and then Charles Simon who she eventually divorced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lee Butow Glenn m. children: Steve Glenn and Kala Parker (–2000) • Jill Glenn • Jeff Glenn. Child: Melissa Schmidt and two grandchildren: Hunter and Maia.
Faivel (Shraga) Berger (–1942) married Mateel (–1942)	Batia (–1942)	• NA	• NA
Tuvia (Tevel) Berger married Mariam	Raisel (–1942)	• NA	• NA
	Pinchas (1912–1972) married Broynslawa (Bronia) Aff (1917–1999)	Israel (1950–) m. Gail Levy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Phillip Berger (1979) m. Kristy Weatherford. children: Elias (2015) and Emrys (2018) • Judith Berger m. Jonathan Heimowitz. Children: Avery, Madeline, Piper
		Tuvia (1947–) m. Haya (1948)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurit • Hila • Shni

Children	Grandchildren	Great-grandchildren	Great-great grandchildren
	Liza Berger (1919-~1990s) married Gershon (Grisha) Gurwic (1906-~1990s)	• No children	