

The Merimsky Family

This information was submitted by Ornit Hadar

The Merimsky family is an Ashkenazi family that lived in Crimea for many generations. I will concentrate on the family of Efraim Merimsky and Hana-Beile (Pola) Billik as they are my great-grandparents. More specifically, I will concentrate here on the Merimsky side.

The first member of the Merimsky family that we know of was called Aaron Merimsky. I estimate that he was born around 1815¹. Aaron had one son that we know of, called Abram² Shmuel Merimsky.

Abram was born in [Karasubazar \(Bilohirsk\)](#) which is a small town less than 50 kilometers east of Simferopol. Abram Merimsky married Miriam Gurevitch. Miriam was born in Simferopol. She was a very religious person and was very rich. Miriam and Abram had four boys and one girl, all of whom were born in Karasubazar: Gregory, Aisik, Efraim, Wladimir and Bat Sheva³. Wladimir was called "General" or "The White General" but we do not have any more details. He died in Turkey, young and without kids.

Efraim and Miriam's firstborn was named Gregory – Grisha. He died around 1918 in Russia. Gregory had two sons who had immigrated to Israel / USA via Constantinople.



Figure 1: Gregory – Grisha Merimsky, the eldest son of Abram and Miriam Merimsky

The second son was called Isaac – Aizik Merimsky. He and his wife Sonya had five sons and a daughter. Isaac died in 1932. More on him later.



Figure 2: Issak – Aizek Merimsky, son of Abram and Miriam Merimsky

The third son was called Efraim (Haim, Ephim). He was born in the 1860's.

In 1893 he married Hanna-Beila (Pola), daughter of Yeheskel – Dov and Yehudit - Attle Billik.



Figure 3: Hanna-Beila (Pola) and Efraim Merimsky

Based on my grandfather Avram⁴ Merimsky's memoirs, Efraim's family had moved to Simferopol when Efraim was young. Efraim and his brother Aizek were wholesalers, trading in groceries.

Efraim's occupation at the time of his marriage was the lowly ranked middle-class town dweller or merchant: "Meschanin" (מעשצאנין) - as listed on his marriage registry⁵ in Figure 4.

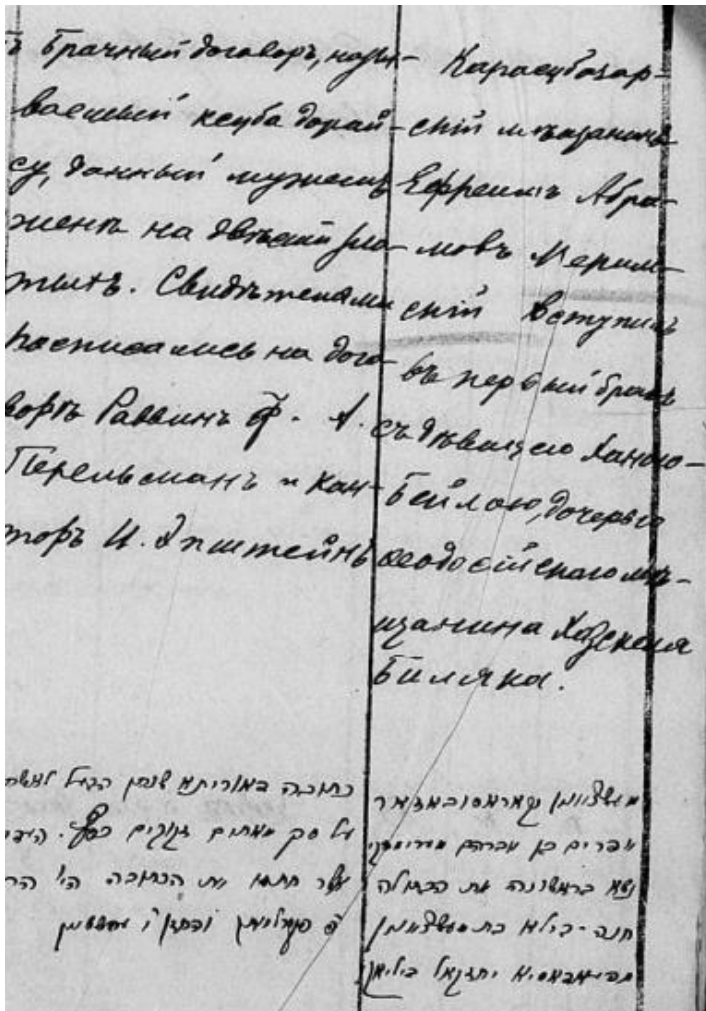


Figure 4: Efraim Merimsky and Hanna-Beila (Pola) Billik⁶ marriage registry

Efraim and Hana-Beile had four sons and one daughter: Leon, Benjamin, Tamara, Wladimir and Avram. All their children were born in Simferopol between 1893 and 1905. On the Cyrillic section of the birth registry of their youngest son Avram⁷ (Figure 5), Efraim’s class had changed to the much higher level “Koopets”. Note that on that birth registry he was called Haim. I was told that Efraim and Haim (and Efim and other variants) were considered the same name.

Later in life Efraim became a large-scale importer, a member of the Chamber of Commerce and had received the high-level honor rank of First-Class Trader. He was wealthy and I deduce also influential, judging by the crowds at his funeral in 1926 in Constantinople, see Figure 6.

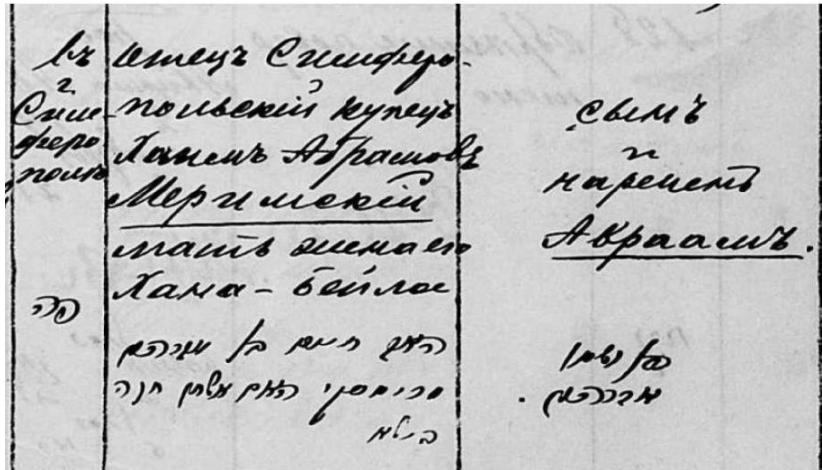


Figure 5: Avram Merimsky's birth registry, Simferopol 1905



Figure 6: First Class Trader Efraim Merimsky's funeral, 1926

Back to the early 1910's. Avram Merimsky talks about his mother's store. She jokingly took a large sum of money from her husband, bought a house in the center of Simferopol the size of two blocks, at the corner of Catherine and Graf Tolstoi streets and made it into a wholesale Deli. Avram recalls himself at the age of 5-8, sitting next to his mother at the Deli, manning the cash registry and returning accurate change.

Efraim and Hana-Beila's eldest son Leon was about to graduate when he and his brother Benjamin expressed the desire to continue to high education. Back then there was a "Numerus clausus" (Jewish quota) limiting the number of Jewish students to 3-5 per year. They realized they must convert into Christianity in order to study. Instead, the family decided on exile: move to Constantinople, around 1914. Once Benjamin had graduated, Hana-Beila had sent the two brothers for Liege, Belgium. A couple of months later, WWI started. Benjamin managed to escape, reached Constantinople with severe pneumonia, and died in 1915. Leon was a prisoner of the Germans and died of the Spanish Flu in 1918.

This is a different story but Avram, Hana-Beile, Tamara and Wladimir all immigrated to Palestine פלשטינה-א"י (Israel) between 1923 and 1935.

I have included below the family tree of the Merimsky branch.

Descendants of Aharon MERIMSKY

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I. Aharon MERIMSKY

sp: UNKNOWN

2. Abram Shmuel אברהם MERIMSKY (d.1906)

sp: Miryam Miriam GUREVICH

3. Gregory גרישא MERIMSKY (d.Ab. 1918)

sp: Tzipora ?

4. Ben-Zyon? Benjamin MERIMSKY (b.Ab. 1899)

sp: Luba

5. Grisha גרישא MERIMSKY

5. MERIMSKY

4. Wladimir וולדימיר MERIMSKY (b.Ab. 1899)

sp: Anna

3. Aisik Isaac אייזיק MERIMSKY (d.1932)

sp: Sonya סוניה

4. Mendel Misha MERIMSKY

sp: Lisa

4. Moshe משה, מוקי MERIMSKY (b.1895 d.1972)

sp: Ida אידה FUX (d.1943)

5. Zipora ציפורה MERIMSKY

sp: Georgey HORSHAVIN (m.(div))

4. ? MERIMSKY

4. Zalman זלמן - זיאמה MERIMSKY (d.1972)

sp: Ahova אהובה FRENKEL (d.1984)

5. Izi אייזיק MERIMSKY

sp: Nira נירה (m.(div))

5. Nadav נדב MEIRAV

sp: Hanna חנה (m.(div))

4. Yevva יווה MERIMSKY

sp: UNKNOWN

5. Mr.

5. Mr.

5. Alexandra - Sasha

4. Avraham אברהם MERIMSKY

sp: Rosa

5. Initchka - Inna MERIMSKY

5. Ala MERIMSKY

3. Efraim אפרים - יפים (חיים) MERIMSKY (b.1863 d.1926)

sp: Paula פולה - תנה-ביילה (בילא) - בבה BILLIK (b.Ab. 1875 m.1893 d.1963)

4. Leon ליון - ליאן (אריה לייב) MERIMSKY (b.1893 d.1918)

4. Benjamin בנימין - נויסה MERIMSKY (b.1895 d.1915)

4. Tamara תמרה (חור) MERIMSKY (b.1899 d.1968)

sp: Zvi צבי - הריש SHAPIRO (b.1893 m.1919 d.1982)

5. Levia לביאה SHAPIRO (b.1921 d.Bef 2020)

sp: Avraham אברהם - אביגל (KRAYZMAN) (b.1915 m.1942 d.1989)



This is mostly based on Avram Merimsky's memoires, transcribed by Ornit Hadar, Port Moody, BC, Canada, JewishGen researcher ID#43911

Many thanks to my friend Alla Sigal for her help in transcribing, translating, and explaining the Cyrillic entries.

1. Counting two generations before the birth of his grandson Efraim Merimsky around 1863
2. I am using the name Abram here, as this is the pronunciation by the Cyrillic name on his son's Efraim's marriage registry.
3. Not sure about her name.
4. I am using the name Avram here, as this is the pronunciation by the Cyrillic name on his birth registry, which is backed up by my memory of grandfather jokingly referring to himself as "Pover Avram".
5. See image 849 here <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS9F-GWS2-4?i=848>
6. By the Cyrillic transcription, Hanna-Beila's median name sounded like Bilyak or Billa'ak
7. Page 632 of <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CS9F-P944-2?i=631>