

. БЫЛ ТАКОЙ ГОРОД И ОДНА СЕМЬЯ
THERE USED TO BE A TOWN AND A FAMILY



Залман-Бейнесович Уздин
в армии
1918

As far I remember I have always been passionate by my paternal ancestors. This probably comes from the fact that my Grandfather told me stories about his life in his shtetl home Vishki in Latvia, telling that the Cossacks which smelt very strong the sheep while horse riding on the frozen lakes, took away the Jewish girls. I don't know if it is true but it impressed me a lot when was a child. I remember him preparing horseradish, eating goosenecks, Chicken Liver... I remember him telling that his father was a giant, but probably he was not as my Grandfather was short, telling that they skated on the lakes in the winter.



Vishku lake



I also remember, that he corresponded with his beloved brother Boris (Berka-Shmuila) who was in a gulag somewhere south of Leningrad.

He sent him parcels with medicaments.



Later on he told me secretly that he engaged into the army during WWI because he was in love with a cousin and the both parents didn't accept the marriage. The girl poisoned herself and he joined the army.

Zalman-Eliokim Usdin

He was my Grandfather, named after his paternal Grandfather Yankel (also Eliokim) Khaimovich. He was born in Vishki in 1889 to Beines Yankelevich (also Eliokimovich), born in 1862 in Vishki and Sora Kusevna Alterman, born in 1862 in Vishki. He was the fourth of a family of 9 children, his oldest brother being born in 1884, which supposes that Beines and Sora got married in 1883 at the age of 21. His youngest brother Khaim was born on April 17, 1902. I know a little about all the brothers and sisters except for Khana, born in 1885 and Khaim. I do not think that they die still young as my Grandfather mentioned them on his naturalization documents in 1930. See here So as I said before my Grandfather enlisted during WWI because of a grief of love (he was in love with a cousin and the both parents didn't accept the marriage. The girl poisoned herself and he joined the army.). He told that he saw czar Nikolay II in Riga.



*Prisoner-of-war camp in Germany
1918*

He has been taken prisoner at the first beginning of the war, in November 1914. My father said he was a prisoner in a farm in Germany, then in Stiring-Wendel, a town north of France near Merlebach, which was German then. He worked in the charcoal mines and was also a "Dolmetschen" (interpreter).



At the armistice he was sent to Dalhain (Moselle) with some other Russian soldiers to rebuilt the village, which had been partly destroyed during the war. He met my Grandmother Catherina Lambert who was an orphan and raised her three younger brothers. The other Russian soldiers returned to Russia.



*My paternal Grandmother
and her brother Alfred
1917*



My Grandfather stayed in France, first in Dalhain where my uncle was born in 1920, then in Paris, where my father Serge was born in 1923 and never saw his family again, except his brother David-Abraham. If he had returned to Russia he probably had perished in the holocaust as about 15 of his relatives.

My Grandparents had two sons. My uncle Robert, born in Dalhain in 1920 and my father, born in Paris in 1923.





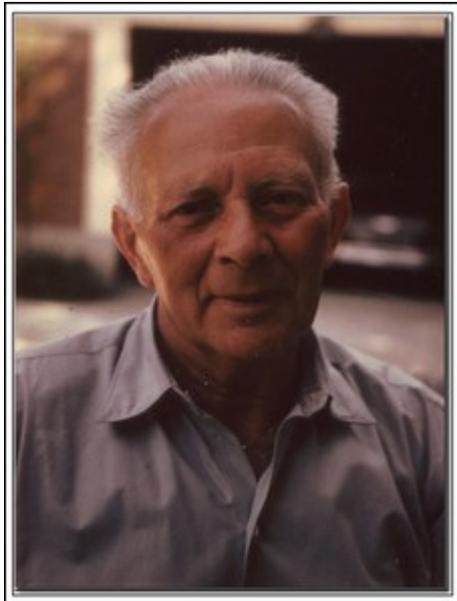
*My Grandfather and Grandmother
My uncle Robert and father Serge
1928*



*My uncle
Robert Usdin
born in 1920*

I am not sure, that my Grandfather has been ever happy in France.

He was a foreman at his first cousin Ruvim Nachmanovich's factory. Ruvim succeeded in France, was very rich and my Grandfather was not rich not poor. But he was a very good man, loved by everybody. He talked very little and has been complexed all his life by his accent and the fact he has had three fingers cut in a machine in the 1940ies. My uncle remembers having seen my Grandfather crying when he received a letter from his brother Vulf telling him that his father Beines died.. This was in about 1924. He died of cancer in 1971 at the age of 82. His last words were to me and in Russian. He is buried in Paris.



Beines Yankelevich Usdin

At the end of the XIXth century and beginning of the XXth century Vishki was a prosperous shtetl consisting mainly of artisans and small shopkeepers. In 1897 the population was 959, in which 668 Jews(70%), in 1914, 1200 inhabitants in which 850 Jews(68%) and in 1935, 750 inhabitants in which 423 Jews(68%).

My Great Grandfather was one of these artisans. He was a watch/clock maker. I don't know if he was rich but my Grandfather said, that he was much richer than his brother Nachman Yankelevich, whose occupation was trinket store merchant.

They, five men and four women, lived in a two-stored wooden house with a roof covered with shingles

They didn't own the house. It was the house of Danilevich on Peterburgskaya ulitsa, now called Aglona ulitsa and called Komsomolskaya ulitsa during USSR.

This street is the main street of Vishki. It starts on Kraslava street which goes to Kraslava on the left and to Spogi on the right and ends at the Jewish cemetery of Vishki situated at the end of the shtetl and on the banks of a beautiful lake.

There were shops on both sides of the street as the documents of shop owners in 1935 show. In these years 50 of the 58 shops were owned by Jews, including all the clothing stores, shoe stores,



iron merchandising, haberdashery, and
neighbourhood groceries, except for one.
78 of the 158 inns in the municipality were Jewishly owned.

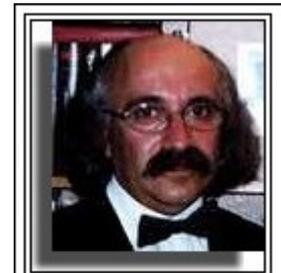
I don't know if my ancestors were very religious but no doubt that my Grandfather had his bar
mitzvah at the age
of 13 by Rabbi Moshe Platzinski, who was known as "the prodigy of Sovalk" and officiated there
for 40 years until his death in 1907.
The wooden synagogue was on Riga st (now called Bazarnaya st) and built in 1880.



Beines moved to Leningrad but after 1902 as at this date his last son was born in Vishki. After his first wife(my Great Grandmother)'s death he remarried to Sarah Levina and in 1919 a daughter was born. Mussia, also named Marina or Maria. She married to a Taitzer in about 1940 and had a son, Boris who lives in Boston. Marina emigrated to Boston in the 1970 ies. She died in 2003.



*Marina Beinessona
with son and daughter in law
Boston. 1990*



Boris Taitzer



*Marina Beinessona Udina
1919-2003*



Concerning my Great Grandmother **Sora Kusievna Alterman** I know very little. My Grandfather said, that she had polish origins, but her father Kusel

Gershenovich Alterman was born in Vishki in 1833 according to the Archivs of Riga. No photo, nothing except, according to my Grand aunt Mussia Beinessovna, she was sent to a workcamp in Solikamsk in Ural and died there between 1902 and 1918. When I asked Mussia »Why ?» she answered »Just because she was a Jew ». I write between 1902 and 1918 because her last son Khaim was born in Vishki on April 17, 1902 and Beines Yankelevich, her husband remarried in 1918.

I wrote to Solikamsk but could not have any info. Nobody could tell me if there were deportations of Jews in Latvia at this time.

My Grandfather beloved brother was Berka-Shmuila Beinessovich and as far I know among his brothers he was the only one he corresponded with.

Berka-Shmuil was generally named Vulf and I'll name him this way

He was born in Vishki on May, 18, 1893.

Such as my Grandfather and according to the photos he was an handsome man, but also a women lover! I don't know when he left Vishki to live in Leningrad.

He married to Mira (also Maria) Usdin, whose maiden name was

Maria Davidovna Perel born on Jan 19, 1911. Her father was David Perel (born in Odessa). He was a furrier; blond, very kind, with a great sense of humor, loved his wife and children. Her mother was Sonia Verbitzkaya, born in Warshava,



aristocratic origins, dark haired, very severe.

Vulf and Mira had children Sophia, born in 1930 and Boris, born in 1937, both in Leningrad. Sophia had daughter Raya, born in 1957. Boris had son, Boris, born in 1970. All live in America since the 1970ies.



*Boris, Sophia, Raya Usdin
Leningrad
1969*



*Boris and Sophia Usdin
Leningrad
1969*



In the 1950ies Vulf divorced and remarried to Liuba, who was much younger than him.

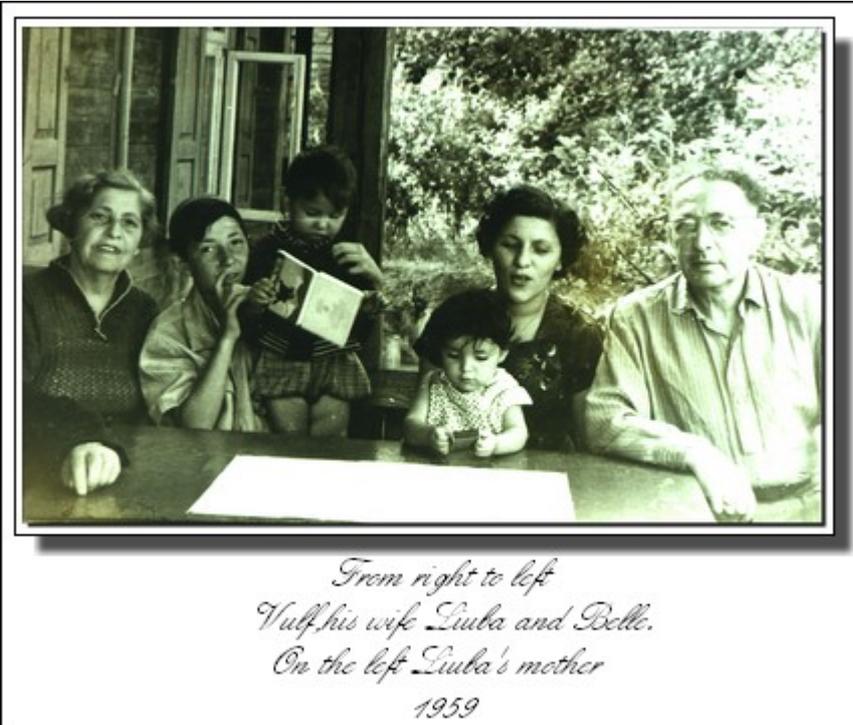
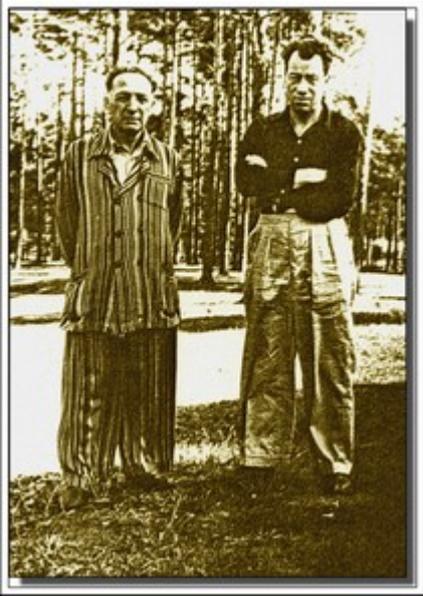


A girl was born to them in 1957. Bella, who lives in St Petersburg





Bella was still young when her father was sent to gulag after a denunciation for gold and currencies dealing and a sensational trial in Leningrad. He was sent somewhere south of Leningrad and died in the camp officialy of an heart attack on December23,1965 at the age of 68. He is still loved and admired by his children. His three children live either in Canada for Boris and Sophia,either in Russia for Bella.



*From right to left
Vulf, his wife Liuba and Belle.
On the left Liuba's mother
1959*



Dobe-Elka Beinessovna Usdina who was known as Dora was two years older than my Grandfather. She was born in vishki in 1887. She married to a Gellerman. Her son Semien and Grandson Lev Gellerman emigrated to the USA after 1965.





Rosa Beinessovna Usdina was born in Vishki in 1895.
She married to Bor Shub and lived in Poland in the 192ies.
Their son Semien was born april 22, 1920 and their daughter Bella was born April 22, 1932.
They lived in Poland until the beginning of WWII.
During the War they escaped on horses deep into the USSR.
From 1946 to 1972 they lived in Vilnius(Lithuania)

In 1972 when Rosa was 79 her whole family moved to Israel.
She died there November 23, 1982.
I used to correspond with Semien but now he has alzenheimer and is in an hospital in Tel Aviv.



The drama of the family is the following. David-Abraham Beinessovich was born in Vishki in 1896. After 1925 he emigrated to Palestine ("Between 1925 and 1935 over 6,000 Jews left Latvia the overwhelming majority of the Jews left for the land of Israel.") There he was supported by his lover but decided secretly to emigrate to Peru. On the way to Cherbourg (a French port on the Atlantic Ocean) he stopped in Paris to meet my grand parents and stayed there several days. This was in the 1930s. My father and uncle remember him and my dad said that he stayed long moments on his knees during his stay in France. He was a very handsome man, who wished to make a fortune in Peru. Why in Peru?

David-Abraham went on a ship to Peru, but his lover followed him and shot him. Of course an investigation has been made. Is he buried in Peru or his corpse thrown to the sea or repatriated to Latvia, only God knows and all my searches have led nowhere. I don't have anymore information as I couldn't find the name of the ship. This story was in the newspapers in France but I can't find any info.

.In the 1897 Census David Abraham was the last son. After him a son was born in 1902, Khaim.



На
наимъ старш
Секретарю
въ Стан
Дальга
Пис 29/1-20





Kusel Beinessovich was named after his maternal Grandfather Kusel Gershenovich and born in 1884. He was the eldest child of the family. He was married to Revekka Aronovna, born in 1890 and he died in 1965. During the war he was evacuated far deep in USSR, in Barnaul where he died in 1947.

His wife returned to Leningrad. They had one son David (Dodik) born in 1913 and who died at the age of 70. David's wife was Fana Moissevna Kopilova, born in 1913 and who died in 1997.

Ytzik Nachmanich was born in Vishki in 1882. He was married to Ida. They ran a leather and shoe shop on Aglonas st, 50.

Their phone number was 31 in Vishki.

Ytzik and Ida, their sister-in-law Genia Mordekhovna Usdin, born Notkina and her children Mira, born in 1924, Khaya-Bella born in 1925, Nachman, born in 1927 and Sara, born in 1933 were killed in July 1941.

They had three children: Sonia, born in 1910, Khaim (Fim) born on February 10, 1914 and Nachman, born in 1920.



*Ytzik Nachmanovich Usdin
born in 1882, killed in 1941*



*Ida Usdina
killed in 1941*



Haim Ytsikovich Usdin
1914-2000



Sonia Ytsikovna Usdina
1910-1978



Nachman Ytsikovich Usdin
1920-1999



*Diczka Nachmanovich Usdin
1888-1964*



*Diczka Nachmanovich
and
Nachman Ytzikovich*



*From left to right
David Gram
Dina Alcona
Vulf Beinessevich
Diczka Nachmanovich
Vishki, 1949*

Sonia married to Arham Mironovich Kukle. Their daughter was Edit, born in 1945, who emigrated to the USA and committed suicide. The photos below were taken in 1958.



Nachman Yankelevich and Sora-Piesha Moshevna's fourth son was Bierka Nachmanovich (named Boris). He is still known in Vishki for having been the richest man of the town. He was born in 1891. He married to Genia Mordekhavna Notkina, who was born in Vishki in 1894. They had four children: Mira, born in 1924, Khaya-Bella born in 1925, Nachman, born in 1927 and Sara, born in 1933. They lived on Aglona st 64 and ran a leather shop. They were the first ones in Vishki to have telephone. Phone Nbr. 1 (phone book of Vishki for year 1941) Boris was sent to gulag and when he came back his wife and children had been killed by the nazis. In 1946 he met a widow Dina Abovna Glezerova and they got married.

Dina had two sons Arkady and Samuel from a first marriage. I met with Samuel when I am in Daugavpils.

Nachman Yankelevich's third son was Ruvim Nachmanovich,
In 1946 he met a widow Dina Abovna Glezerova and they got married.

Dina had two sons Arkady and Samuel from a first marriage. I met with Samuel when I am in Daugavpils.

born in 1886. He emigrated to France before my grandfather and such as him lived in Paris all his life and never returned to Russia.

He was naturalized in 1928, married twice, had three children and died of cancer a little after my Grandfather in Paris in 1971.

He owned a factory and made a fortune in France.

During WWI he was in the foreign legion.



I don't know anything about Avsei, Nachamn and Sora-Piesha older son and Esther-Rivka, born on December 28, 1893. I know, that she emigrated to the United States before 1940.

Kusel Gershenovich Alterman was born in Vishki in 1833. He was my Great Great Grandfather on my Granfather's mother's side.

He had children

-Sarah, born in 1862 in Vishki

-Bierko, born in 1862/63

-Leib, born in 1867 in Vishki

-Riva (Rivka) born in 1876 in Vishki

I already wrote about my Great Grand mother Sarah Kusievna Usdin, born Alterman.

Rivka Kusievna Alterman, born in 1876, married to Vishki petty bourgeois Morduch, son of Oscher Gram, born in 1873, on August 4 of 1901.

They had children:

daughter Sora-Jocha Gram, born on July 12 (julian calendar) of 1903 in Vishki,

daughter Esphir Gram, born on July 28 of 1916 in Vishki.

son Kusiel Gram, born in March 8, 1905 in Vishki.

He lived at 8, Zvaigzhnu Street in Talsi and the 1935 census for Talsi record that

Kushiel Gram was a seller in the firm of J. Jeruchmanov & Sons in Talsi. His wife was Haja-Schiffre Kramer.

Rivka ran a Colonial products shops on Aglona st 38 and 147. Her daughter Esphir Morduchovna lived with her in a house, that they owned on Aglona st(N° not stated)in 1935. Rivka Gram was killed by the nazis at the age of 65.

Morduch and Rivka Gram's daughter **Sora-Jocha Morduchovna** married to Aron Pogil, born February 15 of 1896 in Vishki.

They had at least one son Schloma Pogil, born on November 11 of 1929 in Vishki.

According to the census for 1935 the family of Aron Pogil lived in Vishki at Rigas Street 112.

They ran a drapers shop on Aglona st 41 and owned a house on Riga st 112.

Aron and Sora-Jocha Pogil were killed by the nazis.

Morduch and Rivka Gram's daughter's Judasha married to Rezekne petty bourgeois Abram, son of Itzik Miransky, born in ca 1865 .

They had children:

-son Itzik Miransky, born on August 18 of 1895

-son David Miransky, born on February 17 of 1899 in Dvinsk,

-daughter Hasia-Feiga Miransky, born in 1900

-daughter Scheina Miransky, born in ca 1901

- twins – daughter Basschewa Miransky, born on November 8 of 1903 in Dvinsk,

- daughter Michla Miransky, born on November 8 of 1903 in Dvinsk.

I don't know anything about their fate.

Morduch and Rivka Gram's son **Leib Morduchovich** married to Sora-Iska, daughter of Salman, n e Seltzer, had children:

-son Gerschon-David Alterman, born on June 16 of 1890 in Dvinsk,

-daughter Dweira Alterman, born on May 14 of 1898 in Dvinsk.

Leib Usdin was my Great Great Grandfather Yankel Khaimovich's brother. He had a son, Shliomo born in 1849.

Shliomo had a son Israel-David born in 1881.

Israel-David married to Khaya-Merka Ytzikovna Golandski, born in 1887

They had children Shulamit, Liubov, Shliom and Leib, all killed in the holocaust

The image shows a snippet of a handwritten document on a grid background. The text is written in Cyrillic script. Key entries include:

- Израиль (Israel)
- 16. ноября (16 November)
- 1908
- Мест. Рижский уезд (Place: Riga Governorate)
- 20.4.45
- Февраль 1940.

Schulamit Israelovna-Davidovna was born on November 20 of 1910 in Vishki.

In 1937 she married to Leib-Wulf, son of Schender Dumesch, born on April 30 of 1899 in Vishki.

He was a teacher.

They had at least two daughters:

-Jeva Dumesch, born on February 10 of 1938 in Daugavpils,

-Nechamia Dumesch, born on April 18 of 1939 in Vishki.

Before the Second World War they lived in Riga at Jumaras Street 18, apt. 6.

They were struck off the house register on October 7 of 1941

as moved *Ludza Street 11*, apt. 10
(territory of Riga ghetto during Nazi occupation).
Leib-Wulf Dumesch was still alive on July 7 of 1942
when he was registered in the lists of Jews
which were forced to work at Missa Torfwerk,
his address in ghetto that time – Vilanu Street 16-2.
The whole family was killed.

Schliom Usdin, born on July 3 of 1912 in Vishki. On November 21 of 1937 in Riga.

He married to Sara Matjukov, born on August 26 of 1914 in Dvinsk.

They had one daughter Zhenny Usdin, born on May 29 of 1939 in Riga.

Before the Second World War they lived in Riga at Lacpleša Street 56, apt. 29.

There is a note in the houseregister

dated October 6 of 1941 that they moved to Katolu Street 7, apt. 64
(territory of Riga ghetto during Nazi occupation).

Schliom was registered in the lists of Jews which were forced
to work at Missa Torfwerk, at Aizpute Torfwerk in 1942–1943.

Schliom was still alive in October 18 of 1943. The whole family was killed.

**) Šlioma Izraila-Davida I.	6. Barni leidz 15 godim*) <i>neprec</i>
<i>Usdins.</i>	7. Atteicibas pret kara klausibu <i>/</i>
„13” novembris, 1926 godā.	8. Uz kaidim pamatim pase izduta <i>Jeva</i> <i>isf. no Vinnu pad. valdes 5/21 1920g.</i> <i>A/9/12. V. ind. no Laudavcils Rabi da</i> <i>un Vinnu miestka lozimeņu sara</i>
	9. Pizeimes 10. Pases eipasnika paroksts: <i>S. Usdins.</i> Pases nuduklis samoksts.

Leib Usdin was born on May 30 of 1914 in Vishki.

His wife Debora, daughter of Hirsch Lewinstein, born on
November 13 of 1915 in Libau (now Liepaja).

Before the Second World War he lived in Riga at Gogola Street 8/10, apt. 20.

Leib's occupation – shopkeeper.

Leib was struck off the house register on October 28 of 1941,

not stated where, obviously to ghetto. Leib together with his brother Schliom worked
at Aizpute Torfwerk and was still alive in October of 1943.

The book „Kniga spaseniya” of Leonid Koval (2. vol., page 64)
contain information that brothers Usdin

working at Aizpute Torfwerk escaped in 1943, they have hidden

but were arrested and killed. Debora was evacuated to Kazakhstan (Andijanskaya district) in 1941/1942. I guess she survived.

Liubov Usdin, born on July 2 of 1916 in Vishki to Israel-David, born in 1881 and Raya-Merka, born in 1896.

Since 1935 she lived in Riga at Gogola Street 8/10, apt. 20, since December of 1937 – at Lacplesa Street 56, apt. 28 together with the family of brother Schliom Usdin.

On January 18 of 1940 in Riga she married to David Gild, born on January 12 of 1909 in Dvinsk.

Their last known address – Riga, Gogola Street 8/10, apt. 20.

David was struck off the house register on April 25 of 1941 as moved to Liepaja.

Lubov was struck off the house register on October 27 of 1941, not stated where, obviously to ghetto.





Shlomo Isralevich-Davidovich Usdin
1912-1944



Deborah Gersheevna Usdina
born Lewinstein
in 1930



Liuba Isralevna-Davidovna Usdina
1916-1941

