Larissa Khusid's Mother Maria And Uncle Elgar (Iliozar) Ortenberg

My mother with her brother, Iliozar Ortenberg (Elgar), in Kiev in the 1970s. Iliozar was born after my mother. He was exceptionally talented in music. My mother took him to Pyotr Solomonovich Stoliarskiy, a wonderful violin teacher. This man was semi-literate and spoke poor Russian, because, being Jewish, his mother tongue was Yiddish, but he was a God-gifted teacher. He was the first teacher of the renowned violinists David Oistrach, Lisa Gilels, Misha Fichtengolts, and many, many others. Iliozar studied at the Odessa Conservatory, and worked at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow. He requested permission to continue his education in Berlin, and moved there for his post-graduate studies. His teacher in Berlin was Professor Gesse, who later became a member of the Nazi party. In Germany, Iliozar changed his name to Elgar. Before 1937, my uncle, Abram, corresponded with his brothers Grigoriy and Iliozar, who lived abroad. They could not continue their correspondence due to repression, arrests and the 'iron curtain.' We heard by chance that Iliozar was alive when, sometime between 1948 and 1950, one of Aunt Polia's neighbors brought her a

copy of a magazine in which Iliozar appeared in a photo with his Budapest Quartet. However, we only met in 1969 when my Uncle - he had changed his name to Edgar in America - visited the Soviet Union. I shall never forget his meeting with my mother in 1969. Uncle Iliozar liked me a lot. He didn't have children of his own. He visited Kiev many times after this trip, and I also went to visit him in America. After he stopped playing concerts, he became a Professor at a College of Music in Philadelphia and gave master-classes in Europe and the USA. Iliozar died in 1996 at the age of 96, being of sound mind. One year before his death, on his 95th birthday, the mayor of Philadelphia came to greet him. He declared Iliozar a Citizen of Honor of Philadelphia and said that he enriched this town and the United States with his music.