

Itschok Klug With His Wife Chiena And Elder Daughter Khava



This is my uncle Itschok Klug with his wife Chiena and elder daughter Khava. The picture was made in Ukrmerge in 1920s and given to my father before departure of uncle's family for South Africa.

My paternal grandfather Benjamin Klug, born in 1859, lived in some hamlet, where he tilled the land. He had a lot of land, where he and field hands were working. Benjamin was married thrice. I do not know anything about the first wife. He had two grown-up daughters from the first marriage. I saw them couple of times when I was little. My grandmother Sarah Polyak was his second wife. She died when giving a birth to the third baby- my dad. When the guys grew up, they needed to get a good education. Benjamin sold his land, house and a husbandry and bought a house in a small town Jelva, not far from Ukmerge [about 70 km from Vilnius]. My father spent his adolescence. I was born and raised there as well.

Our town was situated in a picturesque place on the river scroll. On one of the hills, at the place, where the river turned, there was a town and on another one there was a village, which was mostly Jewish families lived here. As a rule they were tradesmen and craftsmen. There were the stores in the downtown. Some of them sold manufactured goods, other groceries and pharmaceutical products. There were workshops here- tailors', cobblers', hatters', glaziers' and joiners'. It appeared that the representatives of all crafts lived in Jelva. They Jews and Lithuanians not merely got along, but they were friends and trusted each other. Often, Lithuanians and Poles could not pay for the products purchased in the store. Then the surname and the amount of debt were entered in the book and in the autumn after harvesting the debtors were supposed to come to store and pay back the debt. Nobody was dishonest or fraudulent with the owners of the store.

My grandfather Benjamin Klug was a merchant. He was a grain trader. He did not have his own warehouse. Usually he went from village to village and made agreement to buy the grain from

them in the fall. The grain purchased from the peasants, was taken by Benjamin to Ukrmerge in a cart. He sold it to grain traders there and had pretty good interest.

Grandpa Benjamin had 5 children - two daughters from the first marriage and three sons from Sarah Polya. Father's elder brother Itschok was born in 1892. He was a cobbler. In late 1920s he, his wife Chiena and daughter Khava left for South Africa. There Chiena gave birth to two more children- a girl Leya and a boy. She died young, without even reaching 40. Itschok died in 1950s. Khava, who had been very beautiful since childhood, had the title of South Africa beauty queen and married a millionaire. She helped her parents and her siblings lived in her place. Now Khava is still alive. She has a large family - many children and grandchildren. Leya is currently living in Israel.