

THE



PART ONE

BY ABE MAURER MORRIS' SON

RESEARCH BY RALPH MAURER (AKA ZEV MAILER

#### DEDICATION

Dedicated to my wife, Lila Barker Newman, who kept asking questions about the Maurer family history. Her experiences, so different from ours, include being born in Dodge City, Kansas, land of Gunsmoke, orphaned at six, living on grandparents parm until eleven, when she moved to San Luis Obispo to live with an uncle.

Her ethnic background includes German, English, Sioux Indian and Hispanic. Members of her family include a member of the President's Cabinet. Others crossed the Plains in a covered wagon, lived in sod houses, and on a Sioux Indian reservation. Lila's colorful family history should also be recorded.

#### INTRODUCTION

Originally this chronicle was intended for my two daughters, Judy and Lisa. As more knowledge was gathered the scope of information appeared to be of interest to all of the Maurer Clan.

Ma and Pa refer to Ethel and Morris Maurer (as originally recorded).

Over the years most of us saw much that should be recorded. It may be events that add to what I have already written or that seem to conflict or correct my work.

I will collect and distribute all you share with us. Anyone who wishes to become family historian and distributor is welcome to make a lasting contribution to all Maurers for generations to come.

ABE MALAER

FRIENDS AND GAMES

Bernie often talked to his wife about me. She felt that she knew me well. I hardky knew her.

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Consider Barnery Lieux Constant Constant Constant

Since I had a small tax preparation business Lila asked me to prepare her tax returns. This led to a friendship, marriage and now we are raising their daughter.

We talk on the phone regularly to Bernie's mother and brether. She always says Helle Abie."I am sure she still thinks of me as the little bey she with the blond curly hair she saw running around with her sen.

Cards, Checkers and chess.

A more original game was our version of War. We made L shaped wooden guns that used a rubber band to propel a one inch square of cardboard. We split up into 2 groups and battled with our weapons. Rarely was anyone ever hit,, but the janitors had a terrible mess to clean up.

Later Abie Jacobowitz, the sen of a butcher became my best friend.

I wish I could find him and talk with him.

Sel Newman was my best friend for a short time, but his brother

Bernie and I becamevery close. They moved to the east

Bronx and the following year(1933) we moved within the walking distance.

Our friendship remained close wintil I went into the army.

My family moved to L.A. during WW II and I joined them upon my discharge in 1945.

Bernie came to Inglewood to live and we wanted to pick up our close relationship. He had not told me that he had a fear of driving and would not wisitemain the San Fernando valley. My wife discouraged our friendship. The only time I saw him was when my wife was out of town.

On day his wife Lila, who I had only met twice, called to tell me that Bernie had terminal cancer. Shortly afterward he passed on.

# H. MATCHMAKING, SCHEINDLINGER FAMILY, NAMING ABIE

## 1. How did Ma and Pa Meet?

Following the customs of Jewish families in Austria in 1907 the matchmaker introduced Morris Maurer to Ethel Scheindlinger. Morris only five feet four inches looked down to see a little girl. Being at least a foot taller he wondered why a half grown girl of about fourteen was proposed as a match with him. Later he found out that this little girl was twenty-five and a half: a year and a half older than he. Soon my parents Morris and Ethel married. On their wedding night musicians played music outside their bedroom window until dawn.

## 2. Scheindlinger Family:

Mom's family the Scheindlingers and the Maurers lived in the vicinity of Lemberg, a city in Austria-Hungary. After WWI Poland became an independent nation. It acquired Lemberg, portions of Austria and other countries. The new nation changed the name of Lemberg to LVOV. At the end of WWII the Soviet Union assumed sovereignty over LVOV and all land seventy-five miles to the west creating a new border between Poland and the Soviet Union. Without moving an inch the land changed from Austria to Poland to the Soviet Union.

Ma had five brothers all younger than her. One brother was hydrocephalic. I've heard that one brother left for Palestine about 1920. Trying to recall from memory I am not sure that one brother was killed during WWI as a soldier in the Austrian Army.

Mom did not have a close relationship with her in-laws.

they crossed the ocean as second class passengers and Mom on the same ship came steerage

The in-laws called her "Little Ethel". She was not treated on a par with adults. It may be that her small size plus other factors may have caused her to be withdrawn.

In 1910 Mom left her parents and five younger brothers for all times.

Travel was not common except for a one time trip across the Atlantic.

Transatlantic telephones were not available to the public. Mom had trouble with her eyes and rarely wrote to her mother. The rare letters were her only contact with home. Mom was lonely.

### 3. Naming Abie

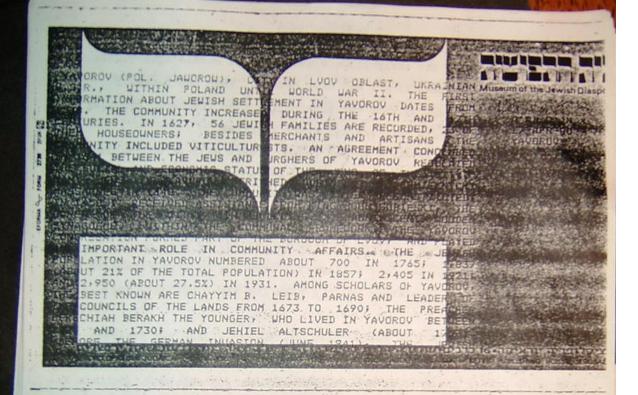
In 1919 after giving birth to five children Ma wrote home, "I am pregnant again and need a name for the child." Grandma Rose (both grandmothers were named Rose) wrote back, "If it's a boy AVROM ABBA would be an appropriate name, your father's name. She continued telling Mom that Grandpa was beaten in a synagogue while praying. He died the next morning the victim of a pogrom.

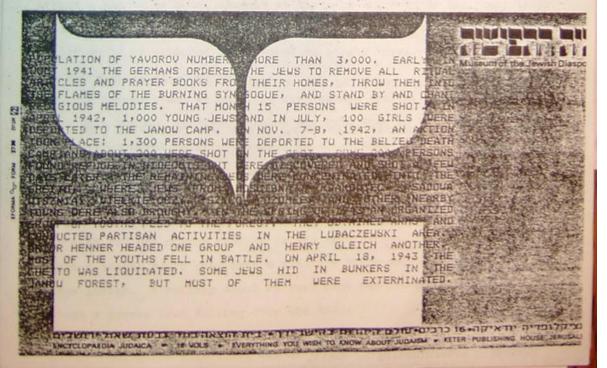
On Tuesday evening March 9, 1920 Sophie and Edith ran to the Third Avenue elevated station to meet Pa coming home from work. They excitedly told Pa a baby boy was born. Since Ma was very pregnant when he left for work in the morning and there already were five children, Pa's only comment was, "I know."

I was duly named Avrom Abba for my Hebrew or Jewish name. My Americanized English name was Abie.

In 1926 Mom got a letter informing her that her mother had passed on.

In 1953 my daughter Elyse was named after her grandmother Ethel.





# J. LETTERS AND OTHER CONTACT WITH THE SCHEINDLINGERS

One evening in the early 1930s a well dressed middle aged couple asked for the apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Maurer. They had recently returned from a voyage to what was then Polish Lvov (Lemberg) bringing information about Mom's brothers and their families.

During their brief visit to our tenement this well to do couple gave us news of how desperately poor Scheindlingers and everyone else in Lvov was. Mom was saddened upon hearing of the wretched conditions of her family

After the news had a chance to sink in, Ma and Pa were asked,
"Please sent money to the Scheindlingers. They are in desperate need."
Ma and Pa looked at each other holding back the tears thought, "We are
barely getting by."

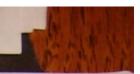
The strangers already having seen our torn, patched and ill'fitted clothing, our malnourished look, the condition of our furniture, the number of children must have known their mission was useless. After a while the woman said, "You can't imagine how hopeless conditions are for the Scheindlingers. You must send something even if it is only a dollar."

Gradually we were realizing that we had not yet learned what poor meant.

Finally the woman made a last try, "Please sent something even if it is only a dime."

I think my parents would have sold their shoes to get money to mail. But what would they wear as replacements?

Ma took the addresses of her brothers I doubt that any help was sent to our European relatives.



# L. FIRE ESCAPE 98 ST 1925

The humidity of New York City with its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean made temperatures of 80 degrees and higher almost unbearable.

Years later crude air conditioning was installed in movie houses. The running joke was, "Go to the movies and catch a scientific cold."

The humidity with New York's winter temperatures below freezing was not unusual. Mom tried to keep our apartment warm by burning wood or coal in the kitchen stove. Icicles hung outside. Sheets of ice covered parts of the windows.

Due to the flammable materials used to construct the tenements, the inadequate means of keeping the flats warm caused many fires.

The fire escapes required on every apartment house were frequently needed.

Outside each apartment one window had a fireproof metal stairway starting from the top floor down. A person could walk down one floor at a time. When the escapee reached the bottom of the stairway he went around a narrow walk and started at the next stairway to the floor below. This continued until reaching the first floor. At that floor a straight ladder could be unhooked and lowered to street level. These fire escapes are sometimes seen in movies.

Our tenement had an obsolete fire escape system. There was one ladder built from the top apartment window straight down to the first floor. We called it an acrobats fire escape. To climb down that ladder the escapee had to use both hands, both legs, be extra careful and completely calm as the building was burning.

One fire escape was placed between the two front apartnemts. Each apartment had one window nearest to the fire escape. On coming out the window a tenant would step onto a platform which was a few steps from the escape ladder. A railing about 2½ feet high ran around both platforms to protect a person from falling over the side.

Our building had a platform with an area for getting out the window and



## M. GASLIGHT ELECTRICITY

Standag wang tald at .... ..

Pa covered the space between with a board to give us a little playing area.

I remember on extremely hot nights sleeping with a sheet and pillow on the fire escape. It was fun to wake early to hear and see the milkmen going about their routes with their horses and wagons. The horses shoes would clop on the street as the milk bottles would rattle. A Department of Street Cleaning employee pushed his dolly carrying one or two barrels. He cleaned the curb with his push broom and dumped the trash into his barrel. I heard and saw the city wake up.

Stories were told about Abe Lincoln doing school work by the light of the burning logs in the fireplace. The Maurers did homework by gaslight if bill payments were current, and by kerosene lamp if payment was overdue.

A 1 inch gaspipe was suspended from the ceiling with a jet at the tip.

A match lit, held to the jet, the switch turned on, lo and behold a flame
flickered giving out the meager light for the room. The jet had to be
low enough to avoid overheating the ceiling to cause a fire.

Pa and Ma felt bad when they didn't meet another obligation to the family. The gas bill was not always paid on time. Taking care of seven children on a small income was overwhelming. Pa lit the two kerosene lamps with some difficulty. If additional light was needed candles were used. Soon the overdue gas bill was paid. Gaslight and cooking again became part of the normal day.

Using lamps was an exciting adventure for me.

Mom had choices when she cooked. A two burner gas range on a coal and wood burning stove and for cooking, baking and keeping the apartment warm during New York City's cold winters.

For a time each apartment's gas meter had a coin collection device.

A quarter, and only a quarter, no nickels or dimes, was dropped into the slot for a measured amount of gas to be made available. I remember slot for a measured amount of gas to be made available. The gas flow had stopped before dinner was completely prepared.

One evening after dark Hy and I were standing in fromt of our tenement on 98th Street by a pole. He pointed to the top and asked, "Do you see the light?"

I gazed at the lamp for awhile. Instead of flickering as at home this street light emanated steady illumination. Hy said, "That's electricity."

It was 1925 and our streets were getting modern electricity.

Shortly thereafter some workmen came into each apartment to replace the gaslight with electricity. An insulated wire was suspended from the ceiling replacing the gas pipe. A socket with a bulb hung at the end of

# N. STEAM HEAT - BRONX

New York City temperature was often below freezing in the winter time. The kitchen stove that burned coal or wood heated as much of the house a possible. I never seemed to be warm or comfortable in wintertime no matter how many sweaters and jackets I wore. My teeth were always chattering. My clothing was hand me downs; some ill fitting; some worn out; some patched, and some not yet patched.

On colder days icicles hung outside the windows. Sheets of ice formed on the glass panes.

The plan for installing steam heat seemed simple. The floor plan for each apartment was exactly the same as the one above or below. Except for the kitchen every room had a 6" pipe placed in one corner of the top floor going down to the street floor then into the basement. The pipe led to a steam boiler that burned coal creating the steam. Radiators were attached on each floor to spread the heat. A valve on each radiator adjusted the amount of heat generated into each room.

I carefully observed the workmen modernize our homes on 136th Street.

After I adjusted to the new facility I learned that the janitor lowered the fire in the boiler in the evening and turned off the steam completely at night.

Periodically a coal truck arrived and backed up to the building. A chute, much like a playground slide, was lowered through a basement transom like window. The entire load of coal went down the chute into a space near the boiler.

The landlord wanted the janitor to conserve on the use of coal.

The tenants wanted service over longer hours. The janitor was the man in the middle.

At times a disgruntled tenant expressed anger by banging on a pipe. The noise resounded throughout the building. At times more than one tenant joined in banging on the steam pipe.

# ELECTRICITY - BRONX 1926

Ma used two irons to press the household laundry. Each was made of heavy metal. She alternated the irons, one cooled a bit as it was used and the other heated on the stove. The temperature was never consistent. Sometimes the iron was too cool and sometimes the iron just off the stove burned the cloth.

An electric company representative sold Ma an electric iron. It was light in weight and had a constant supply of heat.

Wall switches and wall outlets were something for the future. Ma removed the bulb, screwed in an outlet plug that looked like a fuse, and inserted the wire plug to heat the iron. She was ready to work on her never ending pile of laundry.

The edison Company accepted twenty five cents a month until the iron wa paid for. Only people with \$100 for a checking account could use that convenience. We knew of noone that had that luxury. U.S. Postal Money Orders were used when cash payment was impossible.

One day I went with Ma on the long walk to pay the electric bill.

She said, "Abie, I hope that someday you could get a clerk's job in the electric company. You are not strong enough to work in a factory or dig ditches." Thirty years later when I wasn't teaching summer school I went back to my summer job at the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.

Mom used a wash board for all the laundry. Each of us did some laundering of our own clothing. Soon we had a wet wash man come around to pick up our dirty linens, shirts, etc., in a large sack. The price was 30¢ for 30 pounds on a hand held scale. No matter how much we sent it always came to 30 pounds. A few days later we watched the laundry man

the wire. A socked with a short chain attached could turn the bulb on and off. There was no support for the socket except for the electric wire. Insulation from the socket to the chain was not well developed causing frequent electric shocks. To keep us from playing with the new fangled gadget we were told it cost a penny each time we turned on and off the bulb.

phil got an electric shock he never forgot. It was on 136 Street in the Bronx. The apartment had electricity and a bathtub. Phil stood up in the tub full of water to light the bulb. Phil got a tremendous shock. The electricity held him so strongly he could not let go. Phil gave one tremendous effort, getting his hand loose.

Phil learned, "Experience teaches, if you survive."

Today electric bulbs are frosted. We rarely see the element inside burning to give off light. Bulbs now contain a slow burning gas to lengthen bulb life.

The bulbs of the 1920s had the element (much like the element in a toaster) burn inside a vacuum. Bulbs did not last very long. We collected burned out bulbs to throw into the air. As the glass broke air rushed to fill the vacuum. The popping sound was similar to a firecracker. With a bunch of bulbs breaking one after another we had the sounds of the Fourth of July.

Before the days of gas pilots wooden matches were used to ignite the gas cooking stove. Many problems developed. Sometimes the cook didn't strike the match until after the jet was opened and gas had spread. At times the cooking unit was partially clogged with food causing the gas to flow unevenly. For a number of reasons gas permeated the cooking area. People were burned. House fires started.

I remember Mrs. Zimmerman's funeral. In 1925 Mrs. Zimmerman's funeral hearse circled the block. She made the mistake of striking a match in a gas filled room. Edith developed a horror of lighting the gas jets. She would turn on the gas, drop a lighted match and run. If the would turn on the gas, drop a lighted match and runtil the procedure failed to light the stove, she would wait until the procedure failed. Then Edith would repeat the procedure to light

ty

## P. PA-1910-1920

Pa became a presser of newly manufactured ladies coats. Work consisted of two seasons, the winter season and the spring season. Depending on the demand by the consumer each season provided a few weeks to several months employment. Pa was always out looking for an extra few days work. By 1917 Pa had to provide for Mom and five children. He had no opportunity to explore new areas of employment or develop new skills. His brothers and sisters had no children to bind their maneuverability to develop other employment opportunities. All competed with millions of other immigrants.

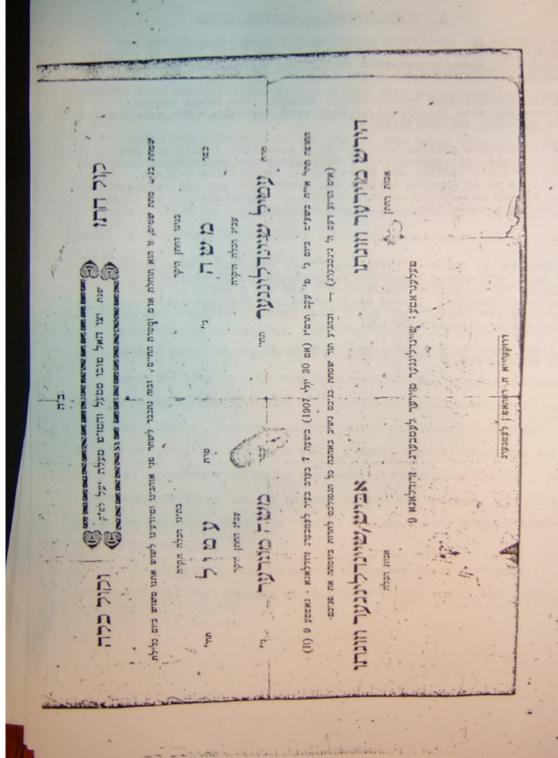
born to Aaron and Gussie; I was born in 1920. Also born in 1920 was Lillian to Charlie and Esther (Sunshine) and Edith to Jack and Esther Turer. Soon other children were born but none had so many children. Then Frieda was born in 1924 making seven children. Ma and Pa had an impossible task providing shelter, clothing and food. The nine of us lived in four room apartments counting the kitchen as a room. A lifetime pattern of health problems and maladjustment developed. The youngest children had fewer difficulties.

arrive with his horse and wagon. He delivered pressed shirts, pressed sheets, and pressed everything to a few neighbors who paid extra. The rest of us got our wet, clean wash returned in a large sack.

To dry each item it had to hang on a clothesline that ran from a pulley at a back window to a pulley on the clothes pole in the backyard. A few problems that arose were recovering clothing when the line broke and replacing the line. In cold weather the wet laundry froze stiff without drying.

UTILITY BILLING

when the post office raised first class postage from two cents to three cents. With twenty five apartments in a building and the buildings butted up against each other it seemed simple to sent a low paid middle aged man, with shirt and tie, up and down the stairs, door to door delivering the bills. At 75¢ an apartment building it looked like a good savings. The men hired were at the age that had no employment prospects. A minimum wage was unheard of. The delivery system soon was dissolved. I still wonder about raising postage rates from two cents to three cents. Was it worth the effort to change the entire delivery system?



# Q. BIRTH CONTROL - MEDIEVIL STYLE

Mom told me she absolutely wanted no children after Edith, her third. In desperation she attempted to abort the fetus by drinking certain old wives recommended chemicals. After that she used a more direct tool to destroy the fetus.

Mom caused permanent gynecological damage. She never wanted anymore children but abortions were more horrible. The results were Hy, Nat, Abe and Frieda.

The information written here and much more that I will not put down on paper guarantees that I will always be unalterably in favor of birth control and abortion. A few million dollars favor of birth control and abortion. A few million dollars available to my parents between the years 1908 and 1941 would available to my parents between the years 1908 and 1941 would have helped me develop another attitude. Unfortunately we lived below the poverty level. I am pro-abortion.

Raising two or three children would have made for a more stable and less bewildering household for my parents. I have strong feelings for a smaller family when I see the results of seven with poor finances. I have mild ambivalent feelings only with poor finances. No, I have strong feelings - two or because I was number six. No, I have strong feelings - two or three children would have been plenty

If I was never born these pages would be blank as I could never have written them.

Abe, the sixth born

## R. PA'S COUSINS

Pa. had cousins that I heard him mention at rare times. All must have been from his side of the family. Ma's relatives never left Europe. Grandma Rose had relatives in New Jersey with her maiden name Borkan. Aaron Borkan, her first cousin, married her daughter, Gussie.

Grandma had a brother Getzel Borkan, who I had seen at funerals. If he had sons they would be Borkans. If he had daughters their names would be unknown to me.

Could there have been other relatives on Grandpa's side-not on Grandma's side? A Dr. Faust, Pa's cousin, came a long way by subway for two house calls. Each time he was paid two dollars.

In the 1940's in California, Pa and I looked for a stone at a cemetery for a cousin's burial site. Pa found it easily. The name was Weis---. It was a two-syllable name.

There were other cousins. Maybe no one talked about them to the young ones. Could they have been related through Grandpa's sister?

About the time in 1933 when Grandma Rose died I heard mention of Grandpa Hersch's sister. This was the first time I heard about her.

About 1920-21 Grandpa's sister wanted to arrange a marriage between her daughter and Uncle Max. I don't know if there was any chance of acceptance but Uncle Max married Annie Haber in 1921. The relationship between Grandpa and his sister was severed. His sister wanted to reconcile about the time of Grandma Rose's death. Nothing came of the attempt.

No doubt Grandpa had one niece. Possibly there were more nieces and nephews. Mention of this part of the family was taboo.

# MORRIS MAURER 1883-1934

The period covered here is from 1907-1928+

Pa and Ma married 1907.

1908 their first born, Phil (AKA Pincus) arrived 1909 Pa, the eldest, comes to America some years after his brother,

1910 Ma, Phil, the rest of Pa's siblings and parents take a ship to the United States

1911 Uncle Nathan already has 3 children

1919 Pa has 5 children. His siblings, except for his brother Nathan have none.

1919-1920 Cousin Jack Borkan, I (Abe), Lillian (Charlie's daughter) and Edith Turer were born in quick succession. Soon many more children were born to the Maurer family. Pa became many more children were born to the matter lamily. Pa became a presser of newly manufactured ladies coats. Coats were made for the winter and spring seasons. Pa worked a few weeks or several months depending on consumer demand. He saw his brothers earning enough to support their small families. His wages did not

Sophie was withdrawn from school at age 14 to work as an operator sewing ladies dresses after completing one year of high school. The older children pro Sophie and Edith were working and looking after the needs of the youngest, Frimeda. I, Abe, also had some of the benefits of Sophie and Edith's attention. Phil earned some money. His income was not steady. Together their earnings helped. Pa was fighting a losing battle. Every morning Pa woke up coughing his guts out. The pressure was unbearable.

There was no way out of this dilemma, Or was there?

At 4 o'clock one morning in March 1928 Pa picked up his packed suitcases at his brother's house and departed without saying where he was going or leaving any money. The eight of us were on our own. We heard nothing from him for six months. Pa's family did nothing for us financially - or otherwise.

#### PA'S RETURN

An airmail letter arrived from Pa in Los Angeles in September 1928. His first contact in six months told us he was going to Seattle. We couldn't understand his pun. He was going to see Ethel. A few days later another airmail letter stated that he was coming home.

Bringing Ma and Pa together had to be done diplomatically. Ma desperately in need of financial support for her children. Pa had apparently saved some money during his six months away.

That evening Mim and some of the aunts took a walk with Nat, Hy and I tagging along. A few yards behind us Pa and some uncles followed. After a period of time, Ma and our group stopped. Pa's group approached until we all stood facing each other. Slowly and cautiously conversation was started by the two groups. Ma and Pa were easily maneuvered to face each other. Each was encouraged to acknowledge the other one's presence by a handshake. Tension broke. All walked to our apartment. Ma couldn't find the key. Uncle Aaron went home to get a batch of keys. As we stood outside the door talking the nervous strain slowly disapated. Soon Aaron found a key to open the door. Ma, Police of the strain of th

To this day Sophie has never forgiven my father. Edith was not far behind in her bitterness but not as vocal.

Regarding the logistics of Exs trip:
Pa contacted a relative of Uncle Nathan's wife in Los Angeles
to arrange living at their home. He traveled by train for 4½
days to reach the west coast. Surely the other Maurers knew
of PA's plans.

Ma applied for City Relief, a forerunner of today's welfare. She was given a month's rent. The Relief Agency told Ma they could help no more. They informed her to get financial help from her relatives.

We got advice from our relatives. It was easy and cheap. No relative ever came up with a penny. Grandma advised Sophie to spend some of her earnings to buy shoes for Little Frieda. Our contact with aunts and uncles and grandparents became rare if not completely severed.

The neighbors kept an eye out for us. One day there was a knock on the door. Another tenant, Mrs. Smith, stood there with three or more bags of groceries. Nat told me Ma sent him to a certain neighbor when we needed some food items.

The father of my friend Bernie Newman peddled fruit and vegetables from a horse and wagon. At the end of his day he put together some of his produce for us.

In the late 1960s and 70s Bernie told his wife Lila about his friend Abie. She knew about the desertion and the food his father supplied. Although I had seen his wife only three times before Bernie died of cancer she knew me very well.

Lila Newman became my wife a few years after Bernie died. She knew about our difficult times. She told me how Bernie's father helped with produce. I was only eight years old. I didn't know how we managed to have what little we did have.

Paying rent quickly became a difficulty. Landlords attracted new tenants by giving the first month's rent free. Ma used the \$30 relief money to get us two months in an apartment a block and a half away on 137 Street.

Sophie kept a few pennies to buy something special for Frieda and me to see that we had a little more to help our nourishment

Nat recalls going to school without lunch. When his teacher found out a special arrangement was made. At a quarter to twelve Nat went to an office to pick up a nickel. At lunch time he used the went to pay for a tuna sandwich. The other children who nickel to pay for a tuna sandwich their nickels from home didn't know of Nat's arrangement for charity.

our new local

I had to change to B.S. 29, and elementary school, because I was always late. Nat and Hy continued at P.S. 43. They were never tardy. We were in the P.S. 29 area. The distance between our tardy. We were in the P.S. 29 was slightly shorter than to P.S. 43.

The floor in the huge apartment kitchen sloped as did the street. The floor in the huge apartment kitchen sloped as did the street. Furniture placed in one area slipped to the other end of the room Furniture placed in one area slipped to the other end of the room was used as a bedroom with a folding cot.

1928 was an infamous turning point for every member of my family. The older ones were more deeply affected. Sophie, for good reason, at age 77 still includes some phase of this event in every conversation. Eddie Borkan calls her Hard Luck Sophie. Hewas there but much too young to understand.

In three adjoining apartment buildings in the Bronx lived Grandpa, Grandma, Aaron Borkan and family, the Turer family and the next apartment to us was Uncle Max and family.

Although Sophie loved school the law allowed her to withdraw at 14. Phil made piano strings at Mapes Piano String Co. Sophie had seasonal work operating a sewing machine manufacturing new dresses. The two were bringing in money trying to support the household of seven children and Ma.

After Pa's return, Sophie and Edith refused to recognize him as part of our household. After a while they spoke to Pa, but only when necessary.

Trying to see through my father's eyes I come up with several thoughts as to why he abandoned his family.

Pa tried to earn a living. He was a hard worker. No matter how he tried he was deeper and farther behind. No matter what he did his only success, the only result, was more dependents. Except for his brother Nathan, he had five children and a sixth one (me) in the incubator before any of his siblings had their one (me) in the incubator before any of his siblings had their one (me) in 1928 he had seven. Finances did not keep up with the first. In 1928 he had seven. Almost any clothing I had was hand me downs from Hy and Nat to me.

Phil did not always hve a job. Sophie was taken out of school to earn money. Edith was a year from high school graduation. It looked like the burden would be lessened soon.

Pa woke up every morning coughing his guts out. Apparently his worries and depression were largely the cause for the cough.

The harder Pa tried, the behinder he got. The threath of an eighth child lingered. The only solution to the situation was to leave Sophie and Phil as breadwinners. After he left for California, his problems eased and the coughing diminished. Pa did not send any support money during his absence.

Pa left the house every morning to go to work or to try to get a few days work If no work was possible he probably met with the other unemployed garment workers drinking coffee in a cafeteria and gabbed all day.

When Pa camehome he always carried a copy of the 2¢ Daily News. Most people left their papers on the elevated seats when they got off. After dinner Pa would often lie down to read the JewishDaily Forward. He placed the outdated newspapers under the bed. When Pa left us the newspapers were tossed in the trash. Although the occasion was not happy, everyone had a good laugh at how clean the apartment became. Yes, Pa was a pack rat. He collected everything he found became. Yes, Pa was a pack rat always complained about Ma not having and threw out nothing. Pa always complained about Ma not having a clean house. She managed to keep the apartment clean when he

Pa sometimes took me for the 4 block walk to Central Park. We walked and talked. He told me things he would like to do for the walked and talked. He told me things he would like to do for the frustration, though he never

Mom heard many stories about America. Some were true and some were not. She quickly found out the streets were not paved with

gold.

Mom spent all her time taking care of her household chores and Mom spent all her time taking care of her household chores and multitude of children. Of course there were no washing machines, multitude of children work saving devices. Since we had no redishwashers or other work saving devices. Since we had no refrigerator, frequent trips to the store from our third floor frigerator, frequent trips to the store from our third floor apartment were necessary to have fresh dairy products. Although we helped whenever we could it was never enough.

When Mom was in her early fifties, about 1936, her blood test showed diabetes. Diabetes in those days was often terminal in a large number of cases. The only treatments to slow the progress were diet and the most primitive type of insulin. There were no pills or slow acting insulin. There were no dietetic foods pills or slow acting insulin. There were no dietetic foods or substitutes for sugar except for saccharine. Mom did the best or substitutes for sugar except for saccharine. Mom did the best she could taking her needles three times a day. She also may have had hypoglycemia, a forerunner for many diabetics, that caused her exhaustion.

Ma bore her children at home. Her arms were so long she did not have to bend over to touch her toes. She spoke Yiddish to our English. She finally learned to speak English while in the Hospital. She also learned new methods of cooking there. She had always salted meat before using it (1 hour in latge salt had always salted other ways. She spelled phonetically. Baking occurred on the weekends.

## AN EARLY PHOTOGRAPH

Our homework assignment at Santa Monica Emeritus College was

One Sunday the entire family was at Central Park. We all played catch. Pa and Phil threw the ball left handed Pa told me, in Europe, at school, his left hand was tied to his seat. Thus he learned to write with his right hand. We played Hide and Seek in the Park. The weeds were higher than I was tall. When I stood stratight up no one could find me. I enjoyed my success at hiding without any no effort. When my siblings got panicky, I answered. I didn't mean to scare them but "Little Abie" felt powerful.

Couples had complete privacy amongst the weeds at night. One day city employees came with special weed cutting machines and removed the tall grass and uncovered many purses. Apparently when couples left, the ladies had no way of finding their purses in the overgrowth.

Pa was ahead of his time in many ways. He was very firm in his statements about smoking. Smoking kills the smoker he taught us in the 1920's. He complained about the gasoline fumes in the New York air being destructive to health. Although Pa's statements were not scientific, the government took generations to prove were not scientific, the government took generations to prove his claims that auto fumes and smoking were deadly. Years later we settled in California for clean air.

The projection of early movies in the 1920s was poorly done. Viewers sometimes came out of the movie houses with eye aches and headaches. Movie projection improved byt Dad's attitued was to stay away from the eye damaging movies.

One day when I was five out the window Pa observed Sophie, Edith, Hy and Nat going to the movie house one block away. Pa called them back. They realized their movie trip was ruined. Pa called to them, "Take Abie along." He gave me 10¢. I quickly ran downstairs to join the surprised group. I had no idea what a movie was. This was a new adventure to me.

On 136th St, I recall a particular Sunday morning while walking through the hallway of an apartment house, I heard yelling, screaming and arguing coming from many apartments. This was more noisy than usual, but family problems seemed to come to a head on Sundays. Fathers were not at work, children were not at school, everyone was compressed into the small living quarters.

We were nine people in a four room apartment. Mom had her problems. She had no firends. Her mother and brothers were in Europe. She rarely left the house except to go grocery shopping.

Pop was unhappy because he didi not get much work as a ladies coat presser. Our economic situation was not ideal. The older siblings sided with Mom whenever she and Pop had expressed unhappy feelings. There was no family counselling available at that time.

## AN EARLY PHOTOGRAPH

Our homework assignment at Santa Monica Emeritus College was to bring an early family photofraph with a brief story related to the picture. The class consisted of 12 people all from ages 60 and up.

The photo that immediately came to mind was not in my possession. I decided to write from memory about a picture taken in 1925.

#### MY STORY

It was the summer of 1925. My oldest brother Phil brought home a little black box he had purchased for \$2. He told us it was a Kodak Brownie camera that took pictures. I wasn't sure what it was all about but I got caught up in the excitement of the family members. I knew the occasion was important.

Soon we got organized, went up to the roof of the apartment house with a chair for Mom. She was to pose with six month old Baby Frieda in her lap. My three brothers and three sisters were anxious to have our pictures taken. As usual Pa was visiting with a sibling or his parents on the Eastside of New York.

As photographer, Sophie or Phil, omitted from each picture, called out, "Smile", we posed as best we could. Edith tilted her head to the right as she did in a lifetime of photos. We all faced the sun and squinted.

#### ADDITION

Nat brought me a copy of the photo a few days after I had completed the assignment.

If a photo is available you will see from left to right: Nat 7½, Hy 10, Sophie 14, Edith 12, seated Mom holding Baby Frieda, about 6 months, and Abe ag3 5. CHILDHOOD FRIENDS AND GAMES

the parties

Where in the world are they? Where are they now? The kids I played with in the South Bronx in the 1920s and 1930s!

Would they remember me? Could they possibly imagine that I am retired, on the other side of the continent married to the widow of one of their playmates and raising his 14 year old daughter. Certainly none of them is now in the South Bronx!

及火荒田州大学田田工工大田東田大主大田田市田田市田田市田大田大田山大田大田山大田田田田大大市田大田田市大 A few years ago, in Palm Springs I met semsons who had lived around the corner from me in New York. Although we did not know each other He was able to tell me about Natie Kiely whose father owned the candy store, Natie was a top executive in childrens garments. All I could think of was an obnoxious braggart.

Joey Sendichwas a part of our gang and especially close to my brother Hy. He was almost like a part of my immediatel family. He is a retired machinist, in poor health living in Sun City, Arizona. His twin is nationally known for his work as at Sloan Kettering Institute and for work on DNA.

But what happened to the rest of the gang? No doubt most served in the Military during World Markett, Were any among the dead or wounded? Over the years ill health er accidents may have taken their toll. I wonder where the remaining may be scattered and what they may be deing.

136th Street was loaded with kids. Each apparament house had about 25 apartments with about 12 buildings on one side of the block. If there were two children to a family( we were 7) there would be .50 children in each building. All I remember is a multitude of playmates. The Irish and Italians had their gang and the Jewish children stayed within their group. Our gong had about 30 kids with my brother Hy, the leader, almost 5 years elder than me to the youngest about 2 years younger. We were a fluid group with members changing with people moving in or out and friendships changing. As I think back we were in many ways like a family. We wa played together or broke up into groups or subgroups.

As younger children we played the usual games; Hide and Seek, 8è pottsy (Hop Scotch) then went on to Punch Ball and Ringaleveo. The school playground was not available while school personnel were around but as soon as the custodian left we broke in to play Chineme and American Hand-

## B. THE MAURER FAMILY'S PLACE IN HISTORY

The Twentieth Century with its millions of participants shaped its direction. We the Maurers participated in the great emigration from Europe, the settlement of millions in the New World, survival of the Great Depression, fighting the enemy during World War II, followed by marriages and the baby boom. Today the babies of the boom are parents. The new families are scattered throughout the United States from New York to Florida to California and to Oregon. There are Maurers in Omaha Nebraska, Texas and possibly other areas. Many will add new names such as McGuire or Lowry to our clan. Maybe you can predict our future pathways and our place in history.

First some brief information about Grandpa Hersch's (Harry) grandfather or Pa's great grandfather.

Pa's greatgrandfather emigrated from Roumania to Austria, apparently with some wealth. His holdings included a stable of horses. One disasterous day the stable caught fire dooming the horses. In an heroic effort to rescue the horses Pa's great grandfather lost his life.

#### THE GREAT EMIGRATION

Grandpa Hersch had done well financially in Austria. At one time he owned an inn and saloon. At another time he had a farm and probably was involved in other business ventures. Pa briefly had mentioned working on the farm.

One day in the early 1950's Pa and I stopped at Roger Jessup's dairy in Pacoima, CA to buy milk. The dairy kept milk cows as well as sold milk directly to the public. Pa was intrigued by the milking machines as well as other modern mechanisms used to carry out procedures. Soon Pa was telling me how he carried out chores on the farm in the old country.

That stop made me realize there was much to Pa"s life he could have tole me about. I'll write much of what I was told by Pa and Ma. I wish there was more I knew.

The Maurers were caught up in the emigration frenzy.

Uncle Nathan, two years younger than Dad, pioneered the move west. He married Anna Mahl in New York City. They had three children, Herman (1906), Max (1908, and Sophie (1910). Today Herman is the oldest Maurer. The only remaining Maurer of the older generation is Uncle Abie, 1908.

SHIMBRIDE PARTER

I believe this is a photocopy of information of the family of Hersch Maurer (my grandfather) relating to coming from Europe to America.

Not listed is my father Morris who crossed the ocean a year earlier (1909) and Uncle Nathan who came before my father.

My father was the oldest of the children (1893-1954). Then Nathan who died about 1939, the same year as Grandpa Hersch (Harry).

On the photocopy Grandpa Hersch, listed at the top. Then listed are Grandma Rosalie (Rose) Borkan. Then listed are Mechel (Max) 1894, Gegali (George) 1897, Cheskel (Charlie) 1899-1976), Abraham (Abe) 1908. David (1906) died at age two in Austria. After the males are listed the females, Esther (1893-1978), and Gussie (1890)

#### D. GRANDPA'S ESTATE

Death touched our family. Grandpa died at age 81 in 1940. Grandma passed on in 1933. and Uncle Nathan suffer with stomach cancer at the time of his death in 1940.

Grandpa's estate consisted of money and household possessions to be divided amongst the five remaining brothers and two sisters. After several meetings of heirs Gussie and Max each wanted the brass mortar and pestle. It was used to granulate lump sugar for the frequently consumed cups of tea.

Max living in the next building and Gussie living in the adjoining apartment to Grandpa may have developed angers, frustrations and rivalries to create family problems. I don't know who got the mortar and pestle but the relationship between brother and sister broke up for a period of years

The basic facts of the reconciliation are true. The exact quotations are as best I can reconstruct them.

One Friday night Aaron and Gussie Borkan decided the estrangement with Max and Annie should be terminated. Too many years had passed. They walked from the subway station to Max's apartment on Bryant Avenue. As they approached the door they heard activity in the apartment. They knocked. No answer. Suddenly all was silent inside. They knocked again. People had been moving about until they knocked. Suddenly silence!

"Did they see us coming?" Isn't it time to reconcile?"

"We are brother and sister, getting older."

With heavy heart Gussie and Aaron returned to the subway and home. Max and Annie returned home. They found their apartment in disarry. Burglars had gotten in while they were out that evening. How much the burglars took, if anything, I do not know but Gussie and Aaron interrupted their work.

Max and Annie told family members about the attempted robbery on a Friday night. Gussie and Aaron told family members about being rejected by Max and Annie on a Friday night. It took no time at all to realize what had happened. Soon they were hugging and kissing. The Maurers and Borkans were again one united family.

Millions of people left Europe for the New World. As best I can figure money was not a pressing need. Under Franz-Josef, Emperor of Austria-Hungary, religious persecution was reduced.

In the early 1900s the emigration fever caught fire. In the year 1907 alone 1,200,000 came to the United States. In 1909 Pa, the oldest son, left Ma and baby Phil to pioneer the New World for the entire Maurer Clan.

The next year (1910) Ma and Phil followed as steerage passengers. Aboard the same ship the remaining Maurer clan came second class. Pa's siblings crossing the ocean were from ages 12 to 20 plus his baby brother Abie was age one.

The Maurers settled in the lower Eastside of Manhattan in New York. Various ethnic groups clustered in different sections of New York City. The Maurers in the Jewish section continued to speak Yiddish only. Upon arrival Phil was one year old. When he started school at six, like many other children, he did not understand a word of English.

Soon the uncles and aunts were seeking employment and adjusting to the New World customs. Aunt Esther had many suitors but was not permitted to marry until her older sister, Gussie, was married. Gussie's marriage was finally arranged with Grandma Rose's first cousin, Aaron Borkan.

IIIIIIII	C. A CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS
Year Unknown	Uncle Nathan, Grandpa's second son, left Europe. Married in New York
1906	Herman, Nathan's son Grandpa's first grandson born.
1907	Morris and Ethel married (Pa and Ma)
1907	Tung 1/ 1908 in Austria.
1908	Uncle Abie born June 14, 1908 in Austria. Brother Phil born July 13, 1908 in Austria Cousin Max, second son of Uncle Nathan born 8/08 in N.Y.
1909	Pa crossed ocean to pioneer for remaining Maurers
	ola Dinguel followed. Granupa,
1910	Ma with baby Phil (aka Fineds) George and Charlie. Grandma with Pa's brothers Max, George and Charlie. Also Pa's sisters Gussie and Esther sailed on same ship as Max and Phil. All treaved second class except Ma and Phil who travel steerage. Nathan's daughter, Sophie, was born.

# E. GRANDMA ROSE (M)

Grandma Rose Maurer gave birth to 14 children. Eight survived childhood and came to the United States during the Great Emigration. Pawas the oldest.

Grandma Rose Scheindlinger gave birth to 14 children. Six survived childhood. None left Europe except for Mom who was the oldest.

Grandma Rose, a small thin woman was a first cousin to Aaron Borkan.

He married Grandma's daughter Gussie making Aaron my uncle,

Grandma Rose (nee Borkan) had a brother Getzel and was related to a prominent attorney Nathan Birken. In 1933 Grandma, age 70, developed a respiratory ailment and lapsed into a coma. At that time we did not have penicillin or any of a number of drugs that might have cured her easily. After about a month in a coma the family and doctors agreed that Grandma's condition would not improve and maintaining her suffering served no purpose. Grandma died during the Passover holidays and was buried in Brooklyn.

Grandpa apparently had planned his future. Within a few weeks after Grandma Rose died, he married by religious coremony Rifka, about 70 years. They arranged to keep their estates separate after death. Grandpa's children and Rifka's children were relieved to find out they were to retain their inheritances. After Rifka died Grandpa spent his last days in Gussie's house.

### FUNERALS

At that time the deceased was placed in a coffin in a hearse parked in front of the apartment house or place of residence. A service was held at the opened doors of the hearse. A crowd of neighbors, etc. were gathered for the service. After the brief service the hearse was slowly driven around the block as the persons in attendance walked behind.

After circling the block and returning to the fromt of the house members of the immediate family got into limosines; others broke into two groups. Only mourners going to the cemetery got into cars to follow

behind the hearse and limosines on the slow long trip to the cemetery in Brooklyn. A service was held at the gravesite. The coffin was lowered. The mourners departed for the long drive back to the Bronx.

Adjustments had to be made for Grandma Rose's funeral. It occurred at the time of a pouring rain on one of the holier days of Passover. A service was held in the home. Weather conditions cancelled any attempt to circle the street. Adults boarded the limosines and cars for the trip to the cemetery.

The younger of the group stayed behind keeping busy. Understanding the gravity of the day we did not play the usual games.

The next funeral I remember, years later, changed to the elimination of a service at home and the walk around the block. The new procedure was a ceremony held in a building on the cemetery grounds and a ritual at the gravesite.

## G. Grandpa

Grandpa (1859-1940) arrived at age 51 with enough wealth to support himself and Grandma from 1910 until his death in 1940. He never worked a day in the New World. I have heard that some children contributed to his support. I heard there was enough money to distribute upon his death. The facts I'll never know.

In 1926 our move from 98 Street at the edge of Harlem to the Bronx was a turning point in our lives. We moved into apartment 19 next door to Max, Annie and their 4 year old Abie. Soon Gussie and Aaron with 3 sons moved up from the Eastside of New York to the next apartment building. Grandpa and Grandma moved into the adjoining apartment. Shortly thereafter Esther and Jack Turer moved into the next apartment building

At building 524 E 136 St. we had an apartment next to Max and Annie. In building #528 Grandpa and Grandma had the apartment next to Aaron and Gussie. In building #532 Esther and Jack Turer moved in with three daughters.

At first Pa spent his evenings at apt. 20 with Max and Annie. When the others came to our street they congregated at Grandpa's.

When the women had time they joined the men at Grandpas. Jack Turer was hard of hearing and didn't socialize with the others. Ma never visited at Grandpas.

Dominoes was the center of attention. The men's voices boomed throughout the apartment building, each one louder than the other trying to be speaking Yiddish with a smattering of English. heard

No apartment dweller could ignore the booming voices.

Nat and Hy attended Hebrew school at the synagogue on the next street (135 Street) from where we lived. Class was for one hour a day

held after regular school time. There was also one hour class on Sunday morning. I asked Pa if I could register for class. Soon I was learning the Hebrew alphabet. It was difficult to learn by their method.

Grandpa came to the same synagogue to meet with the older men for daily prayers.

Grandpa had a gray beard. His posture was erect. He carried a cane with the air of an aristocrat.

Cousin Eddie Borkan, who lived in the apartment next door to Grandpa, would sometimes see Grandpa on the street and run up to talk to him. I ran up to Grandpa and was treated as a ragamuffin. He never talked to me even in his house. I remember one time at the synagogue he let me sniff his snuff box and sneeze.

A snuff box was carried so that people could sneeze at appropriate times. A sneeze meant "So be it" or whatever was said was true. It was like saying "Amen".

The time I talked with Grandpa was a brief conversation when I was 19 and he was 80, with only a short time to live. I see to live.

Finally he allowed me to speak to him after 29 years in America. It hurt being rejected by a grandfather who accepted others.

and Paris

The story of Pa deserting Ma and his seven children for six months in 1928 will be told in Part II.

We did not have a Passover Seder that year. The Maurers from our street in the Bronx had a Seder in Grandpa's apartment. We didn't know where Pa was.

Nat and Hy went to the Seder at Grandpa's. Grandpa looked up as they entered and said, "Who are these strangers? Throw them out!" With all the adults looking on Nat, age 10, and Hy, age 12, quickly left.

We all remember Grandpa!

#### FAMILY MEMBERS

# FAMILY OF HERSCH (HARRY) AND ROSALIA (ROSE)AMAURER: - AUSTRIA

Hersch Maurer (aka Harry) 1859-1940

Rosalia (nee Borkan) (aka Rose) 1863-1933

Their children: Morris (Dad) 1883-1954 Nathan 1885-1940 Gussie Borkan 1890-1955 Esther Turer 1893-1978 Max 1894 George 1897 Charles 1899-1976 Abie 1908

Ethel Scheindlinger Maurer 1882-1952

## FAMILY OF MORRIS AND ETHEL MAURER

Phil (Pincus)	July 13, 1908 - Sept. 17, 1970	Austria
Sophie Adesnik	August 23, 1911	New York Eastside
Edith Ross	March 15, 1913 - Jan 4, 1986	New York Eastside
Hyman Sam (Hy)	August 9, 1915 - August 2, 1953	218 E. 98 St. NYC
Nathan	November 10, 1917	218 E. 98 St. NYC
Abraham	March 9, 1920	215 E. 98 St. NYC
Frieda Rosner	December 10, 1924	215 E. 98 St. NYC

## PARENTS

Morris Between 8/25 and 9/25, 1883 - 8/25/54

Ethel Scheindlinger January 19, 1882 - May 1952

# 3. SPOUSES OF THE CHILDREN OF MORRIS AND ETHEL MAURER

Phil	Bella Komsky	Russia 1900:
	Max Adesnik	Europe 1901 - 1960
Sophie		So.Phila. 3/20/1919
Edith	Tom Ross	DO
Ну	Sylvia Schlesinger	N .Y. 1917-1940
		Buenos Aires, Argentina 1917-
Ну	Rose Merl	Want ak Conn 7/12/24
Nat	Annette Kurtzman	Norwich, Conn. 7/12/24
Abe	Diane Snyder	Chicago 7/17/23
Abe	Lila Barker Newman	Dodge City, Kansas 11/15/37
		Patterson, N.J. 5/16/20
Em da	Alex Rosner	Lactor cont M

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Thursday, November 01, 2001

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Dear Judy, Marlene, Jani and Adrienne,

Here is a copy of Abe's autobiography that I promised you back in May. I haven't re-read it recently. I know there is one error in that my mother died in 1987. Some stories I heard differently from her than the way Abe told it. For example, my mom told me that the rest of the Maurer's disliked Ethel and one of the reasons was because she and Phil had a passenger ticket to America and the rest rode steerage. I also heard that the rest of Morris' family had more money (and obviously less children!)

If you heard stories differently, please let me know -- let's share our heritage

Stay safe, happy holidays.

Your Cousin,

Samuel