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Devils Lake, N.D.

I was born in New York City September 10, 1882. My father Abraham Edelman was born near Kief Russia 1855, and emigrated to America 1880. After arriving in New York City he took on odd jobs until 1894 when he became interested in what the "Baron De Hersh Colonization Project" had to offer. Baron De Hersh was a millionaire Jew residing in New York City who wished to help the poor Jewish people. He conceived the idea that he could best do that by taking them to North Dakota where they each could get a free homestead of 160 acres good farming land and therefore he sent out his agents to look for a suitable location that had room for at least 50 families. The agents found two such locations, one was near Ashley, N.D. and the other about 25 miles northeast of the city of Devils Lake, and it was to the last named project my people came. Father started for North Dakota and filed on his homestead northeast of Devils Lake 1894 and so did fifty other Jewish family men from New York City. Each was give \$1000.00 to start farming with and in that way the members of this colony had a good start but only very few of these Jews were farmers or capable of being made farmers out of, and when the dry years of 1895-6-and 7. came it scared nearly all of them out of the country, most of them went east but just where I do not know. Only about 20 families stayed, and they did well on their farms.

The following are the names of some of those that stayed on the farms :

Philip Greenberg
 Bennie Greenberg
 Abraham Tochner
 Mendel Miel
 Joseph Miel
 Benjamin Schlemerson
 Sam Goldberg
 I "
 Joe "
 Alex Canter
 Abraham Callof
 Charles "
 Benjamin "
 Laice "
 Meir "
 Moses "
 Jakob Berkoeitt
 Abraham Edelman
 Isak "
 Joseph "
 Herman "
 B. Goodman.

Mr. B. Goodman's wife was burnt to death in a prairie fire 1887, and it brought great sorrow to the colony. It was customary to place a stone over the grave at time of burial, but in that part of the country there were no stones, and so they placed the claim check over the grave, but later an other fire came and burnt the claimcheck too, and that made things still worse

11.
 Educational facilities were not the best in the new colony but the religious doctrine and practices were kept up, and devotional exercises were carried on in the homes but after a while a school-house was built and then the devotion was carried on there. The Jews do not have baptism, but male children are circumcised while

female children have a prayer said over them by the Rabbi

The Jews keep the Sabbath on Saturday and work on Sunday. Rabbi M. Glicck served our community from 1886 to 1896, by that time so many Jews had left the farms that it became hard to support the church organization.

Being born in this country I know very little about labor conditions in the Old Country, but often heard father say that we should be glad that we were in America and not in Russia where it was hard to make a living either by work or in business unless you had a big business, however, the Jews always made it a practice to start in a business that they could handle even if it had to be at first only to buy rags, but they would continue to live within their means and lay aside a little at a time until they could take on a bigger business. In this way many of the great financiers that this country has had worked up from the very smallest beginning.

I know nothing about the recreational features over in the Old Country nor do I know about the songs, dances, or weddings.

The reason that father emigrated from Russia was purely economical. I do not believe that the Jews were oppressed in Russia at that time. He was just following the general stream of emigration to America that was taking place at that time and expected to greatly better his own and family's living conditions, as everything was meager in the Old Country.

I do not believe that my people had made any special preparation for the trip to America. I think they just

got their clothing together and went with the crowd. The trip was financed by Baron DeHersh in New York who tried to help a large number of Jewish people by setting them up on farms in North Dakota. I do not think that anyone of the group that came at the time my parents came had any property while in Russia, and so they had nothing to dispose of, and they had nothing outside of their wearing apparel to bring with them. About fifty families came at the same time from the Kief district in Russia and nearly all of them came to the Devils Lake district about the same time that my father did. That is the married men would start out first and later when they had established themselves then their families would join them. In that way I did not get to North Dakota until 1890 while father came 1884.

As stated before my parents started from Kef Russia for America 1880 and four years later father came to the Devils Lake territory and squatted on a homestead 24 miles northeast of Devils Lake, N.D. I have never heard how the ocean voyage was, only that they were severely crowded on the boat and that they were glad when they first saw land in America. After getting off the boat they were taken care of by Jews that lived in the city until they could provide quarters for themselves.

Since I was born in New York after my folks had resided there two years I know practically nothing about the conditions under which my parents first lived in

after their arrival in America. When 8 years old I joined my father on his farm NE of Devile Lake and worked with him on that farm for the next 15 years. We did quite well on the farm, father continued to farm until 1917 when because of age he had to retire. After leaving father's farm 1905 I engaged in the Hotel business at Hansboro, E.D., and later moved to Devils Lake where I took charge of the Cavella Hotel, and still later the ^SWester Hotel, after which I entered the Automobile business 1925, and in 1933 I started my present grocery business here at 701, 2nd.St.

III-a.

When I was farming we had no farm tractors or tractor impl^{me}nts, it was all horse drawn farm impl^{me}nts, and that is about the only difference in farming now and then with the exception of that we were not then restricted to farming a certain number of acres as under the AAA. Our worst drawbacks were the years of drought but otherwise we did well on the farm.

I did not farm during the depression. The depression did not effect my children's school.

I think the crop controle programs is and will continue to be of great bennefit to all the peop^{le}s in the agricultural districts. The allotment helps to give the farmers buying power during a time that they would not otherwise be able to buy except on time, and that is to risky under present conditions and to costly.

1.4.

- e. The Government dam building program is of great value in that it provides employment to many that need it and at the same time must be of permanent value in conserving water and moisture. Irrigation would not be practical in this district but undoubtedly several thousand acres can in that way be made profitable in other parts of the state.

#. I am strictly for the Farm Security Administration, and WPA programs. The WPA program is the most important. One can just try to imagine the dire conditions that would now prevail if we did not have the help of the WPA. I have received indirect benefits from both the FSA and the WPA in that many of my customers have been able to continue buying their needs for cash that without the WPA would have been starving together with us now in business but without WPA we would be without patrons and in that way would soon be unable to pay rents, taxes, and salaries.

In the spring of 1924 I married Esther Greenberg. We have two daughters: Francis 25 years old, Irine 23 years old both have received a highschool education under our liberal school system in America. We have always spoken English in the house. I have always taken the daily papers and the folks get magazines of various kinds from the news stand.

The form of recreation my family enjoy is games of sport like baseball, foot ball, etc., and the movies.

Isak Edelman, Cont.

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We have no household goods, furniture or other objects that sets the home out as a foreign place.

The only difference in food is that we do not eat anything with lard in it. We can eat the fat from geese or ducks or mineral oils etc., but no fat from pigs.

~~It.~~
I did not favor America going into the World War. I did not lose money in post war bank failures. My greatest period of prosperity was in the hotel business during the time of the World War, and now the last year, my greatest loss was 1927 to 1928.

~~His~~
I believe that the Germans will lick England and France in this war and that after that Europe will consist of three countries, Russia, Germany, and England. England has been the ruler of the seas now for over 150 years, after this war Germany will be the ruler.

Question: What do you think will become of the Jews if Germany conquer the Allies?

The Jews will be then as they always have been. They have always been persecuted and driven from one place to the other, often they have been burnt at the stake. We yet celebrate the Exodus (The departure of the Israelites from Egypt when the Jews traveled with Moses to the Promised Land.). PS. (It seems that this ought to be the journey out of Egypt in place of in to it. (Writer.)
The Jews then were under King Pharaoh. During this celebration we eat unleaven bread like the Jews did while in the desert or the wilderness. It is flour mixed with water and spread on the rocks which were so hot that the mixture baked. When they had no water they gathered dew by ~~sucking~~ sucking the dew on the grass into their shallow pans

Under Queen Elizabeth 1300 the Jews had to leave Spain because they were burning them at the stake because of their religious belief. In the 1800's they were persecuted by King Alexander in Russia and many of them went to Norway, Sweden and the United States.

In many places the Jews are sending relief money to the stricken Norwegians to show their appreciation of the Norwegian poets and writers, and especially the writings of H. Vergeland, and J.S. Welhaven. "Juleaften" (Christmas Eve) by H. Vergeland that speak of the great sympathy and compassion of the Jew, and carried such weight with the Norwegian people is especially to be noted.

"Juleaften by H. Veggeland was translated) and sent in in August 1939

In Spain after Queen Wilhelmina had died they discovered that by driving out the Jews they had also driven out much good business, some of the largest importers and exporters were Jews. After the Jews left Spain found herself with hardly any import and export business, and so they tried to get the Jews to come back, but that took many years.

When Germany conquer England and France then they will be in possession of Jerusalem and the Jews will most likely have to move out but they will do as before, they will scatter to the four corners of the earth and be absorbed into other nations. The Jews are not like other nationalities they have a country. The Norwegians have Norway the Swedes have Sweden, the Turks, Turkey, but the Jews have no fatherland to fight for, or to go to as a country of their ancestors or forefathers.

In looking back over my past life and if I had it to live over

again I would most likely do just about the same as I did. I believe that North Dakota offer as good and as many opportunities as any other place, and we have a healthy climate here, also good people around us. What more can we ask.

Of the original colony of Jews that came to the Barron DeHersk project north of Devils Lake in 1884 and later, still remain the following:

Luie Freedman,	Devils Lake, N.D.
Maxi Edelman	" (Joseph's wife)
Ruth "	" (a daughter of Joe's)
Annie "	" "
Joseph Miel	"
Isak Edelman	"
Luie Gutterman	"
A.B. Canter	"

The Jewish cemetery located about 24 miles NE of Devils Lake has many graves but the names on the stones have been wore off, and it is doubtful if any one now could locate any certain grave.

Luie Freedman kept a diary during many years since his arrival here but it seems that he has not been able to find it at this time. However, he is constantly looking for it and will undoubtedly find it some day, and then we may find the names of others that came with the colony that I now can not recall.