

## FORWORD

### THOUGHTS ON REACHING THE AGE OF 77

January 1972

It's amazing how I, who on entering high school and being examined by the physical director of the gym, then told that I wasn't allowed to play basketball because of a supposedly not so strong heart and being too frail, have survived so many years. How could this delicate machine survive so long. I have outlived all my brothers, and except one sister who lived till 81, and my parents. Surely not a God just a matter of luck shall I call it.

What I mostly want to tell you is my serenity. I know it perhaps morbid to tell you that I feel that I'm living on a bonus. When I was in the sixties I feared the thought that I'm approaching the end of my life. But not so now. What more can one expect. I only hope I go fast and not be a burden on my family and myself. After all its only the living that are hurt by death. The person who dies doesn't know what hit him.

Why am I writing this? I want to tell my wife and children how well life and they have treated me. Old age is the best time of life especially when you have health and the love of your family. And

this I feel I have, so do not mourn. I hope you all can acquire my age and serenity, and then 100 years from now we will all meet again and if we don't, lets leave our children with a memory of love and we will have lived in them.

One thing I must leave you with is the knowledge that I have a wonderful life partner. I feel sorry when I think I will have to hurt her when I go. And I hope you have the same feeling for your life partners but I haven't seen anybody that can hold a candle to her.

With the years that I have left I want you all to know about the Baskind family. Who they were, how they came to America, how their lives are intertwined with yours. It is your roots. Perhaps one of you will sit down in the future and continue the story on into the 21st century.

And so I'm going on and try and make it 78 and more.

With love to all of you.

Moe Baskind

Editors note-M.A. is now 83 and still going strong

1970

As I at last begin writing a history of our family, my greatest regret is that my sister Rose is not alive. She would have given me much information of an interesting nature that I only possess slightly.

Our family came from what is now either Poland or Lithuania. We are classed however as Litvoks. My fathers family lived in a village called Ilya. If you can find a large map of Russia or Poland you might spot it. I once saw it on a map but I don't recall what book. It is somewhat south of the larger city of Vilna.

My father, born about 1861 was the second oldest of a family of six boys and one girl. The oldest was Chai Mendel. although in my cousin Joseph Baskins' book he calls him Menachim Mendel. Next was my father Avrum Pesach, then David "Cooperstock," followed by Hirschl, Itche, Rivka (who became an Arian), and Shmuel. In Russia the eldest son was exempt from army duty so somehow David was made the eldest son of a Cooperstock family. They were the only family that never came over although some of the children came here and some landed in Israel.

How they all made a living before coming to America I can't tell you. Their parents names were Berel and Rashi. Their father died rather young and they were all out on their own when youngsters. Their mother died about 1904 or 1905 and I believe at that time only my Aunt Rivka was living in Europe.

How well I remember the peculiar custom prevailing then that when

a letter came from Europe announcing the death of a parent or close relative, the news was kept from the immediate family member. Sometimes for a year. It would seem that this would have an effect on saying Kaddish, and why a death was kept secret, I don't know.

Chai Mandel who landed and stayed in New York was a shammes and part reverend. He was the father of Joseph, a prominent member and General Secretary of the ARBEITER RING, a national Jewish labor organization. His other children were Louie, who has some children living in Miami Beach, Tillie Broide, who lived in Pittsburgh for awhile and then moved to New York and Fannie, who also lived in New York. The other son who stayed in New York was Uncle Schmuel. He was the father of Rose Somberg, now living in Cleveland.

I believe Uncle Hirschel, the father of Dinah Slavin, Minnie Baskind, Beckie Minster, Rose Kohl, and Manny was the first to arrive in the United States. His wife, Tante Sarita was distantly related to the Brudno family of Cleveland and perhaps that is why they came to Cleveland. The Brudno's already had a large stogie factory in Cleveland. I remember it on lower Broadway. It must have been 5 or 6 stories high. When Uncle Hirschel came to Cleveland he immediately went to work for the Brudno's. My Aunt Sarita was very proud of her ancestor, Menasseh of Ilya who is mentioned in the Encyclopædia Britannica as one of the five famous pupils of the Vilna Gaon. That is why there are so many Emanuel's in their family.

Tante Rivka married an Arian who was either a first or second

cousin to the Baskind's. They were the last of my fathers family to come over and consisted of Ida Newmayer, George, who lived in California, Rose, now with the Blonder Company and retired, Harry a druggist who passed away early in life, and Ben, the only one born in this country. Ben passed away in 1973. The reason they came later was due to the inability of my Uncle Isaac Arion to enter this country on his first attempt. How well I remember his efforts, only to be turned away at Ellis Island in New York because of weak eyes. I don't remember how many times he tried but finally he made it.

My Uncle Itche came over as a single man and then brought over his future wife, Sarah. I vaguely remember their wedding, although Minnie Baskind says she remembers it well. I think it was about 1901 or 2. They have 4 sons and 1 daughter. All the sons became the famous druggists of Cleveland. Harry, the oldest became the first Jewish Chairman of the State Pharmacy Board in Ohio. Perhaps the first Jew in that capacity of any state. Harry died in 1975. Next was Jack, now retired, who recently celebrated his 75th birthday. Then came Al and David who passed away early in life and last, the only girl, Florence. Of course all of these cousins of mine have numerous children. There were many other cousins from Uncle Shmuels' family as well.

Now some information of my mothers family. She was born about 1863. They were not as poor as my fathers. Her father and mother, Ber-Itche and Pia lived in Kablonka, a small village not too far from Ilya. My grandfather inherited the rights to the lease of a grain

mill plus some small acreage of land. I call it rights because they were not allowed to own any land. However their ancestors received that right from the Porets or Count who owned the land for many miles around.

My mother had an older sister Shana who married a Spector and had one son, Abe. None of Abe's children survive today. Other children of Shana are Dinah Kline, who had several children, Guts Friedland, who had Dorothy and other daughters and sons whom I don't remember.

A younger brother of my mother Moshe Hirschel Alpert had to leave a daughter in Europe because of illness. Another daughter was Freda Rubenstein who lived in Denver and passed away in 1976. Freda had a son and daughter. Her daughter lives in Denver and called Mrs. Mosco. Abe, a son of Moshe Hirschel was a druggist, now passed away. How many children Abe had I do not know.

I'm not sure how my parents met. But in the usual manner of those days my Grandfather Alpert could afford son in laws, and got them. How my father received an education as all young men did in those days is best described in Maurice Samuels "World of Sholem Aleichem." My father, poor as many young men of his generation, was able to continue his religious education and still eat by getting food from the villagers and in a different home everyday. Sometimes they slept with some villagers but most often slept in the synagogue on hard chairs. Uncle Itche tells the best story of those days. He

was sleeping in a villagers home in the same bed as their son. One night a big thunderstorm came on and the father came in the bedroom and took his son to his own bedroom. My Uncle said he never felt so much an orphan as he did then. Harry Blonder also an orphan had many stories to tell of his "Yeshive Bochers" days. I do not remember them but I do remember telling that many a day he only had a piece of herring and stale bread to eat all day. <sup>My Father</sup> ~~He~~ must have continued like that until he was almost 21. At that time around 1882, he married my mother and received 2 years of Kest or board. In other words 2 free years of living in my grandfathers house. All he had to do was study Talmud. I know that later he became a Hebrew Teacher or Melamed in Vilna and other towns. I also know that my mother had her children in various places, either Ilya or Kablonka. I was born in ~~K~~ablonka.

My father left for this country in 1895, 4 months after my birth. Until we emigrated we lived in both Ilya and Kablonka. Believe it or not I can remember both places even though I was just  $4\frac{1}{2}$  when we came to America. I remember Rose, my sister, not believing that I could, and was astonished when I described where we lived in Ilya. She thought I remembered by listening to family talk, but only my own memory could help me describe the area. It was a very small village, and we lived on top of a hill running off the main street. To this day I recall a parade or as I know now a religious procession going through the street below us. During those processions the Jews kept indoors. Our street ran into a lake or river, and my sister

Ann Blonder almost drowned in that body of water. It is indelibly on my mind how she was brought back into the house, on her feet and alive. She seemed to me then as a heroine. I can describe Kablonka as if I was there yesterday. Between our house and the mill was a little bridge over a small stream. I can recall getting caught going from the mill to the house bare footed, and the little bridge full of bugs. I also recall when a large cow was sitting in front of the house and I had to yell for someone to get me past this frightening animal. Both incidents are forever inscribed in my memory. There is also the story of the drunken horse. When I told me Uncle Moshe Herschl about it years later he said it was possible that the horse could have eaten some fermented vegetables that made it drunk. Since I can remember these stories from both Ilya and Kablonka we must have spent our time divided between these two villages.

My father tarried only a short while in New York, going on to Cleveland and to work at Brudnos as a cigar packer. He was making 6 to 8 dollars a week and was able to send for Abe. Abe was Bar-Mitsvahd in Cleveland before the rest of us came, so he must have been not quite 12 when he came over. After 2 years the rest of us came. In those days everybody had to travel on a false passport or steal over the border through graft. By this time we were affluent (in a way) and we came on a false passport. An additional problem was that if you had boys in the family eligible for army duty in the future, Russia wouldn't allow you to get out. But we did, my mother, Rose, Ann, Harry, and me.

I remember the trip over, going through the Kiel Canal, staying over in Liverpool, England several days, and then landing in



Canada. In leaving Russia, I remember being blessed by the Rabbi. I also remember Rose and Ann constantly reminding me that my name was Lazar, which appeared on the false passport. In case I was asked I had to forget my real name. I was then 4½ years old, Harry was about 6, Ann close to 9, and Rose around 11 or 12.

After starting to read "World of our Fathers" I thought I ought to give you more detail about our emigration and early years in Cleveland. My father and Abe stole over the border. Mother and the rest of us came as noted on a false passport. I know we went thru Germany and then to England. We stayed in England in Liverpool for more than a week. Why?--I can't tell you. We were in steerage, of course. I remember the bunks we slept in. Being so young I can't remember the stink it must have been. But I do remember a rumor that we would be vaccinated. I was scared and remember that I got on the bunk and covered myself so that they couldn't find me. That episode sticks in my mind and also the passengers constantly standing at the rail and a big wave would come overboard and everybody scattered. My father considered himself as wealthy and he avoided us going to Ellis Island and we came thru Canada. I think we went up the St. Lawrence River and entered the United States at Buffalo. It still strikes in my mind that on the train from Buffalo to Cleveland we ate our first banana.

Father was working at Brudnos', packing the cigars or stogies as they were called, and was making about \$8.00 a week. I believe Abe worked there also, but made less money. And between these two (by not going to Miami for the winter) saved enough to bring the

rest of us over. The first place we lived was on Perry Street, now 22nd Street, just west of Orange Avenue. We had a lady boarder to help with the expenses. We didn't live there very long and moved to a house on Orange Avenue about two blocks closer to town from Perry Street. I don't believe Rose or Abe went to school then, but I believe Ann did for one year. Rather than go to school they began working, but where it was I don't recall. Harry and I, the two youngest went to Harmon School, corner of Woodland at 18th or 19th. I wonder if it is still standing? I'm sure however the houses we lived in are no longer there.

One thing I still remember from that era was the assassination of President McKinley. The extras in the newspapers being shouted on the streets, the peddlers selling McKinley buttons with black ribbons. I believe he died on late Friday night or Saturday morning. I remember walking downtown on Saturday afternoon with the family and watching the newspapers being printed announcing the particulars of his death. Of course there was no radio or television, so whenever anything important happened the papers printed "extra" editions.

About 1902 or 1903 we moved to Henry Street, now 25th Street. The house was near Scovill across from the then Scovill Avenue Temple, now the Euclid Avenue Temple. The lot had a house in front and one in the rear. Also a barn, above which was a large room, that my father converted to a stogie or tobacco factory. This was his first venture in his own business.

The cuttings remaining from the stogies were converted into raw chewing tobacco and packed into bags. Although most chewing tobacco was flavored, this was not. The foreigners working in the mills used this raw tobacco for chewing and also smoked it in their pipes. So my father bought a horse and wagon and peddled his merchandise to saloons all over Cleveland. Later Abe took over that part of the business. All of the family, including my Mother worked in the tobacco factory. We even had a maid, a Jewish one at that, so that my mother could spend time on the job. During the summer months Harry and I worked there, and later on after school as well.

Since Rose and Ann were not going to school they had a student teacher who bicycled over in the evenings. He later became a famous Judge, Judge Levine. I believe he was a U.S. Circuit Court Judge before he passed away. That was still on Orange Street. When we moved to Henry Street, Harry and I attended Marion School, around 24th and Marion, from which we both graduated. Harry in 1908 and I in 1909.

At that time the Hirschel and Sarita Baskinds lived on Scovill between 25th and 26th. I believe the Itche Baskinds lived on 33rd Street. It was during this period that Uncle Isaac Arion finally brought his family over. Meanwhile my mothers brother, Moishe Hirschel came back from Europe on his second trip and brought with him my maternal grandmother whose husband had passed away. She was near 70 - very squat and heavy.

Here I must tell you how immigrants came from New York. They

were put on trains for immigrants only and we in the interior would get a wire from Ellis Island telling when they would arrive. As trains still do today they generally arrived late, schedule or not. I remember when Uncle Isaac came we must have gone to the train station 3 or 4 times by street car. The train finally arrived a day or two late!! However when Uncle Moishe Hirshel came with Grandma, this being his second trip he wasn't afforded the luxury of a welcoming crowd. I can still see him and Grandma now getting off the streetcar themselves, loaded down with heavy baggage.

There is an amusing story of my grandmother on her first morning in our house. She was busying herself when the mailman knocked on the door. She answered it and began speaking Polish to him. Upon being told that the mailman couldn't understand Polish she was surprised and said, "But he's a Goy, isn't he?" Where she came from all Gentiles spoke Polish.

My grandmother also had trouble getting accustomed to the wealth in America. Not only heavy of foot, but with poor eyesight, she constantly tripped over the carpets. Although we didn't have wall to wall then, neither did we have rugs in Europe.

I think the Spectors came shortly after we did. My Uncle Spector became a peddler of notions. He knocked on doors with his stock in a basket, consisting of collar buttons, safety pins, matches, etc. One day when he returned we asked him how business was and he said he didn't do too well since he didn't have the right merchandise. What was he missing we asked? He replied if he only had an item called "not today", he would have had a big day. A real wit.

It was in this period that the depression of 1907 occurred. I remember fairly well dressed men knocking on the door, and asking for a meal. There were no questions asked as to why. One knew and one gave.

It was at that time my father became ambitious and opened a cigar store on Ontario Street, somewhere between 6th and 9th streets. The factory was in the rear. One of the brands we sold was called Baskinola. My father ran the factory and Abe was out with the horse and wagon peddling direct to the saloons. After awhile, with the store doing poorly, further misfortune occurred when a fire burned the building down. To add to that, it was not fully covered by insurance. Back went the factory to the room above the barn on 26th Street. You'll recall I mentioned a second house on the lot on 26th Street. This house was occupied by the Friedland family and that is how Gite met one of the brothers and was married to him. How can I ever forget that wedding? It must have occurred about 1903 or 04 and in the manner of the time, a carriage was sent for our family. It took us to Tevtonia Hall which was on Scovill Avenue at 30th or 33rd Street. Some class, I thought.

In addition to attending public school, Harry and I received our Hebrew education as well. My father felt that there wasn't any Hebrew school good enough and so we were given private lessons by a Mr. Siegel. In the summer we would go to his Cheder with the rest of his pupils. One day Harry and I were playing ball on the

street and forgot to go to Cheder. But the teacher, the melamed was not going to allow us to miss a lesson that easily. He came to our house after Cheder to give us a catch-up lesson. I shall never forget that licking my father gave us. He used a rope and a belt in order to impress us not to miss a lesson. He impressed our back sides but not our minds. Both Harry and I had a negative reaction and when we got old enough we skipped the lessons altogether. My fathers idea of discipline in order to make good Orthodox Jews out of Harry and me was to say the least oppressive. We were never allowed to play on the street. He thought only bums did that. Whenever he went downtown on business we of course played on the street and we could watch the street cars on Seovill as we lived only 4 or 5 houses from the corner. If we saw a street car stop and he coming off it we would run back to the yard. How often we stayed in the yard when he was home, looking out on the street watching the other boys play ball. I don't think it worked too well. We went to services every Friday night and Saturday morning. I did enjoy Saturday mornings becaude at Torah reading time we went out with the other boys and discussed atheletics of all kinds. But we had to miss high school football games played often on Saturday mornings. As soon as we quit high school all that discipline and training went down the drain.

About this time we acquired our first telephone. Those days they were attached to the wall. Seventy five years later wall attached phones are considered new and up to date!! We were one

of the first, chiefly because we were in business. When we moved into the house it was lit with kerosene lamps. The toilet was in a little shack in the backyard called a privy. In due time they dug up the street in front and installed gas lines. Inside the house we used a gas jet and later when we got affluent, a gas mantle. Our heating was done by coal stoves and later with gas in stoves and the fireplace. Bathing was done in large wash tubs in the house or in the many public bath houses, usually before a Holy day or on Friday before the Sabbath.

Also our house on 57th street was the first one that had an inside toilet and bathtub. My father planted on the side yard on Henry street, sunflowers and corn. On 57th street we had a flock of chickens. My father never passed a yard with chickens that he didn't stop and watch them. Until we got to 57th street my mother shopped for fruits and vegetables at the farmers market which in those days was on Woodland Street, from 14th to 22nd street. We had a dog on Perry Street and I remember we gave him to one of the farmers at the market and that dog would come in town on market day, visit us and then go back to the farmer. My mother somehow got an old baby buggy and went to market every Thursday and came back loaded with fruits and vegetables. But of course the older folks always talked about how much better they tasted in the old country. It must have been so since they ate them just as they got them off the trees and out of the ground.

Contrary to what happened in a lot of Jewish families in the Shetlach my mother was not a breadwinner. My father was a dominant person and ruled the roost. He was very argumentative and did have a good knowledge of the talmud. He always lead the discussions on a blat (page) gemorrah in whatever synagogue he attended. He was always the shofar blower too. My most painful experience was one Rosh Hashonah when he was in his 60's. His breath was so shortened that the vice president had to take the shofar out of his hands and finish the job.

My mother was not the typical Jewish mother as portrayed in so many Jewish novels. She was very docile letting my father be boss. And she was a very good hearted woman, also very pessimistic. Her favorite expression as I remember was "Oy vey is mir." She constantly worried about everything and everybody. She stayed up nights worrying about her nieces getting married. She and her sister were the cleanest housekeepers you could find. One of our landlords said he might not renew our lease because my mother scrubbed the back stairs too often and was afraid she'd wear them down.

The story of Harry Blonder, whose life affected so many of ours, begins during the depression in 1907. He was working at that time in a rubber factory in Woonsocket, Rhode Island but due to the economic conditions of the time he was laid off. He was a first or second cousin to my father and had already met us all in New York. He decided therefore to follow us to Cleveland and try his luck there



with a supply of gas mantles he had shipped in from a friend in Woonsocket.

I will never forget that one evening when about 5 o'clock Harry Elonder came to our house. Brother Harry and I were studying our Hebrew lessons while waiting for the Rebbe to come. Cousin Harry, wanting to show my mother how much he knew, sat down with us for a little coaching. As any young students would react, we didn't exactly appreciate it. That was the first of many lessons he taught me, although those later in life were much more valuable, and appreciated.

Anyhow, after a few days of his arrival, the gas mantles came and we got Harry his first sale at the house next door. We all watched nervously through the window as Harry made the installation. It was a tricky operation as you generally first put a match to the mantle to burn off the coating. Then you lit it, sometimes putting the gas on before the coating was completely burnt off. We looked in amazement as three mantles went up in smoke. A disaster. Of course, Harry would have to take the loss and we all felt rather blue as there would be no profit on this sale. After the 3rd explosion Harry dejectedly came back to the house. We all sat down and tried to figure out what had happened. Finally we discovered upon reading the instructions that the mantles were made for artificial gas only while we in Cleveland had natural gas. Harry there upon returned his gas mantles and ventured into another industry. Repairing foot rubbers. He set up a table in our shop and went to work. Again, chaos. At a 25¢ charge per pair he soon exhausted his potential and

ran out of customers. Anyhow the summer months were approaching and the foot rubber season was rather short.

And so Harry got into another line of work and the 3rd time was a charm. Our Uncle Isaac was a paperhanger, a natural vocation for bookbinders, which he was in Europe. He already had taught his trade to one of his nephews, Louis Arian and since Harry was an unemployed gas mantle installer and foot rubber repairer, Uncle Isaac took him in as an apprentice. Harry was a natural and in no time he was a full fledged paperhanger working out of a downtown decorators office. This was the beginning of what eventually became the overwhelming success of the Blonder name in the wallpaper business in this country. The Blonder boys will have to fill out the details of the years in between.

About 1908 my father bought the house and barn on 57th between Quincy and Central. If I remember the address it was 2357, near Central. The big barn in back was remodeled as a two story factory. We had about 15 or 20 employes making stogies and Abe continued on that route with the horse and wagon selling tobacco. Harry and I continued in Marion School, Harry only needing a few months to graduate and I needed one year. We would graduate public school in those days after the 8th grade. One of the events I remember was about April or May 1909. Running back to school after lunch a tornado blew up. I remember stopping in a confectionary store at 46th and Central to wait out the storm. I watched a building cave in across the street. When the storm abated I continued to school which

was at 24th Street and when I got there my father was waiting for me. You see, he got on a street car and came to school. Our teacher then gave a lecture on how parents love and care for their children. My father was worried about how I got to school thru that storm.

Harry was by that time in Central High School on 55th Street between Central and Cedar. I entered in the fall of 1909.

After school and in the summer we worked in the factory. Harry, I think was making stogies as was Ann. Rose was a packer and I helped my father spread the tobacco to dry. Tobacco first came in bunches. Then we soaked it in water after which it was stripped, that is the stem was removed. Then it was dried on screens. Not too dry or it would be ruined. Just supple so that we could make bunches, and then it was rolled in a wrapper of tobacco. We thought we were rich but now I know it was almost impossible to make money because we were only contractors, not selling our merchandise direct but to wholesale distributors.

During this period Rose was being put on the "market" as all decent girls were. There were marriage brokers constantly bringing out prospects. That is the way all good girls got married. But Ann was a rebel especially since Harry Blonder started courting her. Of course it was a breach of custom to court the younger sister but those two were the first ones I know to press the generation gap. But fortunately for <sup>all</sup> ~~the~~ concerned Izzy Levenson was visiting his sister Mrs. Appelbaum. Harry and I attended services every Saturday with our father on 37th Street at the "Polish Shul" as it was known, and

now the Park Synagogue. And then one Saturday Izzy was with his brother in law, Mr. Appelbaum, who sat next to my father and one word led to another. Izzy and Rose were married about January 1910 in the Globe Hall on Woodland near 55th. Ann and Harry were married the following July in an outdoor wedding in our yard on 57th. The custom was preserved!!

Previous to the girls getting married or around the 1907 depression, Joseph Baskin (I don't know why but the New York Baskin's spelled theirs without the D) our cousin came on to Cleveland looking for a job. He left his wife in New York with whom he had just recently came over. He was an electrical engineer with a degree from a French University but that didn't do <sup>him</sup> much good. After working as one for a while he landed a job as a motorman on a street car thru the influence of one of the Brudno's who was an assistant city soliciter. Later he got a job at Westinghouse in Pittsburgh. It was at this time that his wife ran off with another man, and he came back to Cleveland to Ann and Harry's wedding. I remember my father admonishing him that he shouldn't care about his wife leaving him because he was a socialist and evidently believed in free love. Later he returned to New York, becoming the General Secretary of the "Arbeiter Ring" a Jewish Labor fraternal organization. He became so prominent that he was one of the Eulogizer's at Abe Cahan's funeral, the editor of the "Daily Forward."

It was shortly after, that the fortunes of my father deteriorated. The factory was given up and my father opened a series of grocery

stores. The first one was on 53rd at south of Woodland. I don't remember the exact sequence of events after that. Abe had gone to Chicago to seek work and there met Lena Shapiro who was visiting a sister and Abe then moved to Pittsburgh and married Lena. Harry quit high school and went to work in a cigar store. I stayed on by buying a newspaper route, later worked as a cash boy Saturday night at the Bailey Company. Department stores were open till 10 o'clock Saturday evening. I worked from six to ten p.m. for 50¢. A cash boys duty then was to take the sales slip from the salesman to the cashier and bring the change back to the salesman. Later I got a job with Keiths Hippodrome Theater as an usher. This was all done after school and affecting negatively my class work where I was one of the best students in my various rooms.

We owned our house on 57th Street but after giving up the factory we lived in various parts of Scovill Avenue. Abe, Rose, and Ann married while we lived there. It was on 57th Street that my maternal grandma became a victim of civilization. The whole family was invited to a latke party at Rose's house on the West Side. They had opened a jewelry store on West 25th near Clark. In those days you had to be real rich to buy an icebox and it being winter Rose kept the butter on a shelf going the cellar steps. Somehow my grandmother went after the butter and fell down the steps. She was brought home in an ambulance and never really recovered altho she lived several years after that. She also became sort of famous

in Cleveland having Dr. Crile remove a tumor from her stomach about the size of a melon and she being over 70 then. She died at the age of 74 or thereabout and is buried in a cemetery off Lansing Road, if I remember correctly. I was not in Cleveland at the time of her death. Where was I? I shall tell you as I go along. As noted, in order to stay in high school we had to do a lot of work after school hours. Harry finally quit going to work and then went back to finish high school and went on to dental school without any help from anyone. I don't remember whether he married Rose Sholnik while going to dental school. As I noted my grades deteriorated and I couldn't take the pressure so I left school and went to work. My first real job was as a timekeeper in the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Works but one day, disappointed because I couldn't graduate high school with my class and classmates I left home or rather ran away from home and went to Toledo. I didn't tell my family where I had gone until several weeks later when I got a job as a news butcher on the Ann Arbor Rail Road. You wouldn't believe how I lost my job there. At that time the famous picture "September Morn" was painted showing a nude girl in a stream but in such a way that most of her nudity was covered up. A man got on the train one day, came up to my trunk where my merchandise was displayed. He bought one of the "September Morn" postcards and immediately disclosed he was a Vice-President of the Rail Road and made me close up my shop. When we returned to Toledo I was ordered to stay away from that job.

So I became a waiter in the Union Depot restaurant of Toledo. Soon I returned to Cleveland. Thru one of my friends Sid Amster I got a job at the Coca Cola Company in the office. It was then in 1917 that I was drafted in the army. I left for the army the day after Rosh Hashanah being among the first to be drafted. My numbers at Jai Lai, or the horse races don't come up but it was one of the first for World War I.

My father at this time had a grocery on 53rd Street south of Woodland.

I stayed in the Army until February 1919. I luckily came home from France. I may get a chance to tell you more about it later. But during my service my father gave up his grocery due to illness. He smoked a lot and boy did he cough. You could hear him blocks away. The doctors diagnosed it as asthma and he was told to go to California. My mother when she returned from California told how dissapointed she was. Looking out of the window as the train was approaching Los Angeles in bright sunshine in winter she noticed a cemetery and commented to herself "my God they die here too."

It was at this time that Harry Blonder together with Nathan Milner bought out a wallpaper store. My brother Harry was their first bookkeeper. He was going to dental school then. Since Harry was a dental student he was exempt from army duty. I didn't like army life at all particulary that I was in the Infantry and drilled all day. It sure got monotonous. And one day I heard a rumor from boys just coming to Camp Sherman in Chillicothe where I was, that in the train depot they saw dental and medical students

from Western Reserve going to the Army. I was really worried for Harry and was beside myself. I was so upset to think that Harry would have to be in the army, but it was only a rumor. One of my most disturbing moments was when we were in high school and Harry went with his club to Canton for a debate. Sunday evening came and Harry wasn't home. The whole family slept but I couldn't fall asleep until Harry came home after midnight. That could only happen when we were young. In later life you are far apart.

My story now ends during the first World War. With all the Baskind brothers and sisters married with the exception of myself, the next decade brings the birth of many children and the formation of many families that begin with the Avrum Baskinds, and his wife. It is now up to you, dear readers, to continue with your own branches. I am merely one link of a family that began thousands of years before Christ was born, but whose specific written history begins in the middle of the 19th century. If you carry it on, who knows, some day we might be on television in the 21st century as another "Roots."

M.A. (MOE) BASKIND

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DIED 1990

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