

PAINTED WOODS

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to
Sandy Reborn*

THE FAMILY OF JOSEPH NUDELMAN



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*THIS WAS SENT TO FR W SHERMAN
BY MRS TOBA GELLER, FARGO*

PERHAPS THE ORIGINAL IS IN THE GELLER COLLECTION

THE HOUSE OF ROBERT AND LOUIS

THE ONLY CHILD IN HIS FAMILY.

BY THE AUTHOR

WITH 200 ILLUSTRATIONS

BY THE AUTHOR

T H E

F A M I L Y

O F

J O S E P H N U D E L M A N

A BIOGRAPHY AS RELATED BY HIS SONS HYMEN, ROBERT AND LOUIS

Our great grandfather Mordecai Nudelman was the only child in his family. During his life span he married twice. With his first wife he had nine children. The eldest was Joseph, our father, who was born in 1844 and brothers David, Phillip, Maurice, Israel, Samuel and sisters Kala, Rose and Sarah. With his second wife, Edie, there were three children, Robert, Hymen and Harry.

Joseph being the eldest felt the urge as a young man to forge out for himself and at an early age took a position as an apprentice carpenter for several years at a salary of eight rubles a month, (the equivalent of \$4.00 American at that time plus board, room and clothes. At that time the Nudelman family lived in the area of Odessa, Russia.

Much of the details of the life of Joseph during his early manhood have not been found in our search. More details become available for the years following his marriage to Anna Bertha, his first wife. They had four children, Samuel, Maurice, Sophie (Levitt) and Pearl (Palmer). It was not easy to earn a living for a family in Russia at that time, so he moved his family to Bucharest, Roumania, where he opened a "schenk" which was a wine establishment, dealing primarily with the farmers. He would sell them wine on credit and they would pay after harvest. He would also buy their grain, have it milled and sold in the area. It is not known how long this venture lasted. However, when they returned to Russia in the 1880's conditions were turning bad for the Jewish people.

There was a great movement of families to Spain and the Baron Hirsch Foundation was instrumental in aiding the Jews to leave Russia. Joseph had a great desire to form a colony in a foreign land and become a farmer. He went to see the directors of the Baron Hirsch Foundation and after much discussion and some delays he was told to gather his group together. The group consisted of about twenty-five families. All arrangements were made for their boat trip

to New York. They were directed to contact Mr. Jacob Schiff in New York.

In the year 1881, when the time came to leave Russia, Joseph's wife, Anna Bertha was very ill and he decided to stay on until she recovered. The rest of the group went on to New York as planned and on arrival were sent to Winnipeg, Canada, to establish a colony. Early in 1882, Joseph's wife had recovered sufficiently to travel and a second group was formed.

Among these was Joseph's brother Phillip, wife and three children, Nettie, Ray and Sam; Mr. Katz and his family; two Goldstein brothers with their families; Mr. Dellar with his wife and sons John and Joe; Mr. Shank with wife and sons, Labe and Joe; Mr. Cohn with a large family. Mr. Cohn was "Schöcket and Moile" for the group. Mr. Cohn was the father of the brothers who later formed Cohn Brothers Furniture in Portland, Ore. Our Uncle Lauterstein and wife, Kala, with children Laura, Annie, Jacob and Beckey; along with Uncle Moisha and Auntie Rose arrived a year later to join the group.

Upon arrival, Joseph immediately left for Winnepeg, Canada, leaving his family and other members of the group in New York. In Winnepeg he met his good friend, Mr. Finkelter, who had left Russia with the first group. Joseph spent a short time in Canada then returned to New York as conditions were not satisfactory for another colony in Canada at that time. He then called upon Jacob Schiff for further advice and the group was sent to Denver, Colorado. After a short time in that area the group decided not to stay there. While they were looking for what they felt was good land on which to settle and raise their crops, they took jobs with the Union Pacific Railroad that was then being built. Joseph worked in a silver mine in Leadville in late 1882.

The following year, 1883, the group decided to settle in North Dakota, and filed claims for homesteads that were located in McLean County, 35 miles from Bismark; Washburn being the County seat. They all built sod-houses and a year

later Joseph built a log house. The farm life was very rugged for people who had never tilled the soil and didn't know how to go about it. A government agent did give them some help and instructions and some of their crops were of fair size, but the majority of the group were unable to raise crops worthy of the effort. In the first year Joseph followed the instructions carefully and although he was a man of good understanding, his crop, while the best, was not up to a decent standard. They struggled in this new land and even though the times were very difficult, when more families came to the colony they were urged to take up homesteads and work hard to eke out a living.

Joseph's sister, Kaila, was married to Mr. Lauterstein; his brother Moisha remained single; his brother Israel and wife, and sister Rose came to the colony but did not stay long and left soon for St. Paul, where Rose married Maurice Barde, who founded Barde Steel Co. in Portland years later. There was also a Mr. Kasofsky, with two married sons, Tovia and Abraham and their families and two single daughters, Fanny and Lena. The years passed slowly and a number of the families moved to other areas of the country. In 1884, after several years of illness, Joseph's wife, Anna Bertha, passed away. (Research indicated that she was born in 1846 and was only 38 when she passed away.)

A few months later Joseph married Fanny Kasofsky. About three years later her father moved with his two sons, their families and daughter Lena, to Chicago. There Lena married Aaron Bernstein. In 1886, a son was born to Fanny, and given the name Hymen. In 1888 another son Robert was born and in 1890 a daughter, Dora. Also at that time, three more children were born to Uncle Phillip's family at the colony in North Dakota, daughters Laura and Florence and son Charlie. About the same time Uncle Lauterstein passed away leaving Aunt Kaila with one son Jacob, and three daughters, Laura, Annie and

Beckey. They all moved back to Bismark and Jacob went to work to help support the family and Aunt Kaila took in boarders.

About the same time, Mr. I. Bromberg and his son Harry came to Bismark. They were boarding at Aunt Kaila's house, he proposed to her, they were married and moved to Portland, the first of the group to go to Oregon.

Many stories have been told of the hardships of survival in the colony. In nine years there was only one really good crop. Joseph told many times of the severe winters in North Dakota. During most of the winters it snowed so hard that snow was banked up to the roof when the blizzard winds blew. The cattle barns were also covered and it was necessary to tunnel from the house to the barn in order to reach the cattle and feed them. The snow was melted for their household use and also to water the horses and cows. On one occasion Uncle Phillip came with other men and had to dig out the family. On another occasion, Joseph and Mr. Katz (who was Mel Blanc's grandfather) had to make a special trip to Bismark during the winter. They drove a sled drawn by oxen. They had to load the sled with hay for the oxen, and blankets for their own use to keep warm. On the way back to the colony, a great snow storm started. The wind and the snow was terrible and the only thing they could do was to cover themselves with the hay and blankets and let the oxen find their way home. All night long they could feel the sled moving. Thinking they were getting close to home, when the storm subsided, they uncovered and to their surprise found they were at the same spot they were when the storm started.

All the settlers eventually left the colony except the families of Joseph and Phillip, but after a few more years, Joseph, too, moved his family to Portland in 1892. Shortly after arrival, Joseph's son Sam, by his first wife, was married to Sophie Overback, and the happiness of this event was further extended, for in the same year, 1893, a son was born to Fanny and Joseph and named Louis. Son Hymen had just started in the Portland grade school.