
The Ochberg Orphans: Background And Life

The twentieth century has been one of the most eventful periods of Jewish history. Many of your parents or other members of your family have lived through and experienced these events. Write a researched essay on the life of ONE of your family members showing how that person's experiences relate to the overall history of the period. (note that this question does not only deal with world war II; you must deal with the life-span of your subject.)

Introduction

"The twentieth century was a disruptive and traumatic time in history, effecting all of humanity"
– author unknown

The twentieth century has been one of the most eventful periods of Jewish history. The twentieth century began on January 1, 1900 and ended on December 31, 1999. It saw a big shift in the way that many people lived, there were changes in politics, ideology, economics, society, culture, science, technology and medicine. The 20th century had seen more technology and scientific progress than all the other centuries combined since the dawn civilisation. Scientific findings, such as the theory of relativity and quantum physics, deeply changed the opening models of physical science, forcing scientists to realise that the universe was more compound than previously believed. Dashing the hopes or fears at the end of the 19th century that the last few details of scientific knowledge were about to be filled in. The century started with horses, simple vehicles and freighters but then ended up with high speed rail, cruise ships, global air travel and the space shuttle. The horses who were people transports for many years were then replaced with automobiles and buses within a few decades. Humans explored space for the first time, taking their first steps onto the moon.

Mass media, networks, and information technology made the worlds knowledge more widely available. Medical technology also progressed and improved the health of many people the global life expectancy increased from 35 years to 65 years. Rapid technological advancements, however, also allowed warfare to reached record levels of destruction. World War II killed over 60 million people while nuclear weapons gave humankind the means to defeat itself in a short time. Though, these same wars resulted in the destruction of the imperial system. The first time in human history, empires and their wars of development and colonization stopped to be a factor in international affairs, resulting in a far more globalized and cooperative world. The last time major powers clashed openly was in 1945, and since then, violence has seen a unique weakening.

The twentieth century had the first global scale total wars, between world powers across continents and oceans in world war I and world war II. Nationalism became a main political issue in the 20th century, acknowledged in international law along with the right of nation self-determination, official decolonization in the mid-century, and related regional conflicts.

One major event of the twentieth century was experienced in the 1920. During the war Isaac Ochberg went to the government in South Africa and told them he wanted to go to Poland and rescue 2000 children and bring them back to south Africa. The government would only let him

bring 200 Jewish children back to South Africa to start a new life where they would be safer. One of these Jews was my great grandmother Rose famish.

Background 1920s

The 1920s began on January 1, 1920, and ended on December 31. The financial wealth experienced by many countries during the 1920s (especially the United States) was similar in nature to that experienced in the 1950s and 1990s. Each period of wealth was the result of a paradigm shift in global affairs. These shifts in the 1920s, 1950s, and 1990s, occurred in part as the result of the conclusion of World War I and Spanish flu, World War II, and the Cold War, respectively. The 1920s saw foreign oil companies begin operations throughout South America. Venezuela became the world's second largest oil producing nation.

In some countries, the 1920s saw the rise of thorough political movements, especially in regions that were once part of empires. socialism spread as a consequence of the October Revolution and the Bolsheviks' victory in the Russian Civil War. Fear of the spread of Communism led to the emergence of far right political movements and fascism Europe. Economic problems contributed to the emergence of dictators in Eastern Europe.

The devastating Wall Street Crash in October 1929 is generally viewed as a harbinger of the end of 1920s prosperity in North America and Europe.

Prior to the 1920's there was war between communities in Russia. Lithuania and Poland were left in chaos especially after WWI. They were fighting against each other in order to gain more military control and land. Poland started most of the fights against soviet Russia in order to take territory back from Lithuania. However, Lithuania started peace negotiations with soviet Russia, in the hopes of becoming an independent country. Simultaneously there was fighting in the following countries, Poland, Galicia, Lithuania, Belarus and the Ukraine. Thousands of Jews were killed or separated due to WWI. 100,000 Jews fought for Germany, 12,000 were killed, 70,000 Jews fought in battle and 3000 Jews were officer ranks. During the 1920's famine (no food) broke out which left people depressed. Famine was killing people. in 1920-1921, 5 million Russians had already died because of no food. This lead to economic instability and the depression. Depression

Isaac Ochberg

Isaac Ochberg was in 1878 in Uman, Ukraine. He's the oldest son of sincere parents living in the central Ukraine town of Uman. Isaac father left Uman in 1893 for a greater opportunity in South Africa, where he had heard others before him were growing. Two years later, Ochberg joined his father and was apprenticed to a jeweller. Ochberg did not enjoy this job, so he set out on a series of business undertakings that eventually built him a future. Ochberg became a South African citizen in 1899, married a woman from Uman, and had five children. Despite his success, Epstein says they lived modestly. He was, however, incredibly generous.

Rose's Early Life

Rose FULL NAME WAS BORN..... My grandpa, Demand Linel Miller was born in Johannesburg south Africa. Des's mother Rose always said she was born in Russia but she was actually born

in Verba, which is the Ukraine now, but it was Poland on the Russian border. Des had a sibling that was 14 years older than him, her name was Carman. Her married name was Nathan but, her maiden name was Carman Miller. He also has a sister who is 7 years older than him, her name is Sheila Landone, as she is married. Rose was adopted in South Africa at the age of 12. Her adopted name was Shames. She became Rose Miller when she married my grandpa's dad. Rose had 12 siblings but, when the pogroms started in Russia, they had to run from shtetl to shtetl, over a long period of time the Cossacks had been chasing the Jews, murdering the Jews, raping them, and along the way in that period of time, Des's grandfather died. They are not sure how he died but, the word is that he was ill. Along the way Rose had to leave the children at 1 shtetl to go find a hospital for her husband, but then he died. Rose went back to the children and started running again, they saw terrible things along the way, they think some of the children were murdered and killed. Later on, Rose and Mani were both adopted by different families. Mani's surname changed to being Famish when he got adopted, the family lived in Bonomi and Rose was adopted by another family, she kept her surname as Shamish. She only stayed with that family until she was 15 because she didn't like them, we don't know why she didn't like the family that adopted her as she would never talk about it. So, she went back to the orphanage and lived there until she met her husband, she still went to work and finished her education in Johannesburg. Mani remained in his adopted family for many, many, many years until he was so an older man. Mani married a lady called Nora and Rose married Loui miller (everyone called him Lulu). The families remained close and in touch until their dying days. Rose's mom and Des's grandmother got out with one of her daughters called Bathsheba and went to live in Israel, 2 other children went to live in America. I don't know how they escaped, the ones who stayed alive from the pogroms remained in eastern Europe and Europe Poland were killed in the holocaust. Rose wanted nothing to do with her mother or her surviving siblings. (we think because she was a 10-year-old, she thought her mother abandoned her). I don't know if the siblings were close, Rose was close to her brother Mani who was younger than her, he was 8 and she was 10. Rose was not the oldest child, she was the ninth born child out of twelve. Many years later, Mani and Des's father did some research and found out that Rose's Mother was alive (we don't know how they found out because Des was too young). she lived in a kibbutz in Israel with one of her daughters and Des's mother and her uncle's sister. During the second world war Mani volunteered to go to the army in south Africa. They were sent to North Africa which is right by Israel, near Egypt to go fight against the Germans. He got injured was allowed to leave. He went to Israel and found his mother and sister living in a kibbutz. The meeting did not work out, he planned to stay long and left the next day, there was no connection between Mani and his mother and sister, so, he came back to south Africa and life carried.

Before Rose's real parents passed away the father was a mayor of the town. He was an aristocrat and Rose's mother used to look after the 12 children and cooked all the meals before the pogroms started, she also ran a shop, she was a very smart business women but she didn't speak about that. Des was about 4 or 5 when his father brought his grandmother out from Israel. Des's father somehow kept in touch with his grandmother. My grandpa Des doesn't know how his dad managed to keep in touch with his grandmother because Rose wouldn't talk about it. Des was young and didn't really understand a lot of it and he wouldn't ask questions because he was very young and didn't understand. He remembers his father bringing her back to South Africa and she stayed with them. He told me that he remembered a bad atmosphere in the house, he said she was like a total stranger. Many, many, many years later uncle Mani brought tilly (who was living in Israel with her mom) to South Africa. Rose wouldn't talk to tilly because she thought that her mother took Tilly because she preferred her. Rose looked after

Mani, Des's uncle throughout the whole trip to South Africa. Des said that all of Rose's memories were sad ones and she saw terrible things during the time when they hadn't been taken to the orphanage. Rose saw people being murdered, tortured and raped by the Cossacks and pogroms.

In Poland, Russia and places like Verba and the small towns and places there were a lot of Jews that lived around those areas. Shabbat was very important in their lives; Jewish tradition was important in their lives. Rose ate and cooked traditional foods and she and her whole family spoke Yiddish, Polish and Russian. A lot of the Jews that landed up in South Africa from the pogroms and from Russia and Lithuania. A lot of the Jews who lived in Poland by second world war got killed in the war. The orphanage Rose stayed in was very Jewish, they had Shabbat and went to shul. She cooked loads of Jewish foods and Des thinks she learnt a lot of it in the orphanage.

Rose Becoming an Ochberg Orphan

When Rose found out that she was going with Ochberg and was going to be an orphan, she was very unhappy, she didn't understand why she was going with ochberg and why her mother wasn't going with her. Her mother Faga chose who Isaac Ochberg would take, because she was too young to choose herself. We don't know how Rose's mother chose who Ochberg would take with him as, Rose would never talk about it and she didn't talk to her mother or read the book. We think that Faga made the decision as it was a safe place for Rose and her brother Mani to go. She went with her little brother Mani who was 8 years old at the time with Ochberg and she didn't know any of the other children Ochberg took as he could only take 200 children with him. When Rose was in the orphanage she helped take care of other smaller children. We don't know how he chose but he was only allowed two from each family. I don't know how Ochberg chose 200 children, he was only allowed to take two from each family. We think Faga was very firm when she approached him and we think maybe she begged him. My grandpa thinks that Faga Rose's mother approached Ochberg and was very firm with him in order to take as many of her children as he could. We don't know any other information about Rose becoming an Ochberg Orphan as Rose didn't like talking about it because it brought up bad memories.

Ochberg Orphan's and Rose

It was a time when civil war was powerful between the communist and white armies in Russia; Poland and Lithuania were chaotic, and Germany was in a shamble. Most of the South African Jews had come from the areas where the fighting was the worst – Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus and Galicia. They left behind their loved ones, sisters, brothers and friends. Thousands of Jews had died or been isolated in World War I as the battles raged on.

A South African man named Isaac Ochberg, who came from Cape Town got permission from the government to go get 200 children from Poland and save them. Rose's mother had to choose two of her children for Ochberg to take. Isaac ochberg took Rose and her brother Mani to safety in South Africa. Ochberg could only take a number of children and he wanted to try take different kids from other families. Unfortunately, he couldn't take all of Rose's siblings with him. We are not sure how Rose's mother chose who Ochberg would take. Rose and her brother would travel to South Africa with the 198 other orphans. Ochberg put a whole lot of

children in an orphanage in Cape Town and he saved 200 children, by putting them on a ship with just himself. He originally wanted to bring 1000 children back but wasn't allowed to by the government. They first went to London then to South Africa, half of the children got taken to Johannesburg and the other half went to Cape Town. He didn't separate Rose and her brother Mani, they both went to Johannesburg Arcadia orphanage.

The Jews in South Africa had no way of knowing the fate of their loved ones. Some received messages from Eastern Europe explaining the death and devastation, and of horrific stories of orphaned children abandoned, sick and dying. The American Joint Distribution estimated between 30,000 and 40,000 orphans were in the area. The community asked itself whether something could be done.

An amazing plan with a leader of the Cape Town Jewish community, Isaac Ochberg. Isaac Ochberg contacted the offices of the Federation of Ukrainian Jews in London, offering them help from South Africa. He also contacted the South African prime minister at the time, Jan Smuts, and appealed for permission to bring at least some children to the country, hopefully for adoption. Meanwhile, a pogrom orphan fund was set up. Many people throughout South Africa contributed to this fund including non-Jewish people, the government matched the money collected.

However, in order to take these children there were conditions, no sick children, no child was to be brought to South Africa if he or she had a mental or physical weakness. No child was to be taken if they were over the age of 16 or if they had a living parent. Additionally, under no circumstance could no family be broken up.

Journey to South Africa

It was a nice boat that supplied food and water and everything that they needed. There were medical supplies and it was self-sufficient. Des explains that they stayed in London for two or three days but they weren't allowed off the ship. From London, they sailed to Cape Town in South Africa, some children stayed in the orphanage in Cape Town and the others traveled to Johannesburg which took about two nights and three days. When Ochberg came to take Rose and Mani Des states "he doesn't know how Rose's mother chose which children for Ochberg could take and he doesn't know what happened when Ochberg came to take them."

They were only allowed to bring personal items with them, they didn't have much in the orphanage as they were always on the move. Ochberg brought all the kids to South Africa via a ship. He had rented this ship and paid for it to bring the children back to South Africa. This was at his own expense. Des emphasizes that he had a feeling that Ochberg took more children than he was allowed to, and left them in London, in order to save them.

Yes, they had one stop which was at London, but they weren't allowed off the ship it was just to put more fuel in the ship. The journey took a few weeks, it was very far away and in those days ships didn't move as quickly as they do now. Des isn't sure if Ochberg was the only adult, he may have taken some other people to help. The conditions on the boat were very nice spacious boat and in good condition. During this experience Des didn't know how Rose felt.

South African history

The earliest ancestors lived in what is now South Africa, millions of years ago. About 10,000 years ago the San and the Khoekhoe roamed the area as hunters and gatherers. Finally, the Khoekhoe started to grow crops and raise livestock. About 2,000 years ago peoples who spoke Bantu languages began migrating southwards and staying in the area. Most of the blacks living in South Africa today are sprung from these people.

The first Europeans to get to South Africa were Portuguese guides. Their ships cruised around the southernmost tip of Africa – known as the Cape of good hope – in the late 1400s. Later on, the British and the Dutch commenced to challenge the Portuguese for control of the Cape sea route. In 1652 the Dutch established a colony on the shores of Table Bay, the site of modern-day Cape Town. Gradually they extended their settlements inland, where they grew wheat, tended vineyards and raised sheep and cattle. These Dutch settlers became known as Boers, meaning farmers. (Later they became known as Afrikaners.) The San and the Khoekhoe people were killed, forced to work or chased from their homelands.

As the Boers headed eastwards, they came soon began to fight with Bantu cattle herders, and especially the Xhosa. In the 1780s the two groups began to fight over each other's land and cattle. The fighting lasted for 100 years, but eventually the Boers defeated the Xhosa. Soon after, the Boers added Xhosa lands to their colony. This series of action is known as the Cape Frontier Wars. Meanwhile, the British held control of the Cape of Good Hope in the early 1800s. Soon their influence spread through the region. The Boers hated British policies, especially the ban on slavery beginning in the 1830s. To escape British rule, many Boers migrated north of the Orange River during the 1830s and early 1840s. Along the way the Boers fought with a number of African peoples. The Boers managed to establish a republic named Natal (birth), but the British took it over in 1843. Then the Boers founded the South African Republic and the Orange Free State. The British tried to bring the Boer republics under their rule, the Boers resisted. From 1899 to 1902 the British and the Boers fought a conflict known as the South African War. The British won the war and made the Boer nations British colonies. After seven years of negotiations, the colonies of Cape, Natal, Transvaal and the Orange Free State were united in 1910. The new independent country was called the Union of South Africa. Apartheid From the start, the government of South Africa was now organized by whites despite the fact that they were in the minority. They made rules that kept different races apart from each other. The National Party, which came to power in 1948, extended this policy of racial segregation. They gave it the name apartheid, which means 'separateness' in the Afrikaans language. With this system, the whites now had almost all political power and owned most of the country's wealth. The blacks received the strictest treatment. South Africa's non-whites had begun organising themselves in opposition to the white government, soon after South Africa was formed. In 1912 South African blacks made a political party that then became known as the African National Congress(ANC). The ANC held non-violent protests against the government. In 1960 unarmed black protestors got shot by the police in the township of Sharpeville. Afterwards the ANC was outlawed. In response, the group turned to bombings and other acts of violence as a means of protest. Some ANC leaders were arrested and jailed. Among them was Nelson Mandela. The apartheid system was widely convicted outside South Africa as well as within the country. In response to local and international pressure, the South African government began to relax the apartheid laws in the 1980s. In 1990 a new South African president, F. W. de Klerk, announced that apartheid would end altogether. The ANC was again made legal, Mandela was released from prison and the apartheid laws were cancelled. The country's first all-race democratic elections were held in 1994. The ANC won and Mandela became president.

It was a whole new South Africa, Mandela's government had to deal with the long-term effects of apartheid. It was especially concerned with helping the people who had been mistreated under the old laws. Imports included improving education, housing, healthcare and wages among the non-white population. The government also created a body known as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The commission investigated human-rights abuses committed during the apartheid era by both the South African government and the resistance movement. The politician Thabo Mbeki of the ANC succeeded Mandela as president in 1999. South Africa faced a serious health crisis when the deadly disease AIDS began to spread rapidly during the 1990s. In the early 2000s South Africa had more people infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, than any other country in the world. Mbeki and later presidents faced other difficulties as well. These included high crime rates, tensions between ethnic groups and continuing efforts to improve the lives of large parts of the population.

Life in South Africa

Life for Rose was very difficult in South Africa. The kids who were in the orphanage went to a Jewish school. But when she was adopted by the family, they don't know if she went to a Jewish school, as she didn't talk about it, and they didn't ask questions about her experiences because it would make her upset.

Rose and Mannie lived in an Orphanage which was in Johannesburg in a suburb called Park town and they lived there for a couple of years until they were adopted. They were adopted very young into two different families as they weren't adopted to the same family, Rose was happy in the orphanage and moved back as she didn't like the family that adopted her.

Park town is a suburb of Johannesburg, South Africa, the first suburb north of the innermost city. It is one of the largest suburbs, next to Hillbrow, Braamfontein, and Milpark to the south. The suburb was originally founded by the Randlords in the 1890's. Park town is now home to many businesses, hospitals, schools, churches and restaurants, whilst still maintaining quiet housing areas. She lived in the orphanage for a few years and then got adopted by a family but she was unhappy living with them. Rose moved back into the orphanage until she met her husband who she then moved into a home with him.

She went to school whilst living in the orphanage then she came back after school and helped with the younger children, and did some jobs around the orphanage but Des thinks that the orphanage provided her with a lot. Later on, after school she worked and got a job, but still slept at the orphanage. Families can't pick which child they want but they tell the orphanage if they want a boy or girl and the age they'd prefer. Des explained that he didn't know what the selection process was like. They had to be Jewish in order to adopt the child.

the family that adopted Mani wanted a little boy and the family that adopted Rose wanted a little girl. The family didn't want two children, they could have already had children. They may have thought they can't cope with 2 children. They didn't find it hard to adapt to a new life or fit in as being away from eastern Europe in those days and being in South Africa, was a better life. there was peace and no fighting. Jews and children were safer, Rode was very young so was easier to adapt for her, and they were treated well. When she first moved to South Africa, she couldn't talk English, she was happy in the orphanage but missed her mother and siblings.

Rose had difficulties along the way. She was sad without her family and mother and it was really hard for her to be adopted to another family, as she would have thought about her mother all the time. The orphanage had support from the Jewish community, the orphanage was able to run because of the Jewish community as the community would give them money to be able to form. The orphanage provided everything, the Jewish people donate money all the time. It still exists until this day with the Jewish community's help.

Meeting her husband

Des doesn't know what year it was, that they met. Rose got married young, Des thinks she was 18 or 19. She was still at the orphanage when she met her husband and when she had her wedding, she invited everyone to it along with Isaac Ochberg. She didn't go to university, she went from going to school and when she was finished she went to work. She topped her class and used to send the prize money to Faga (Rose's Mother) and sent the prize money to the orphanage. When Rose left the orphanage to live with her husband, she had a very good life, she was an amazing mother. She was a good house wife and she enjoyed and loved to cook.

Conclusion

This Hans Kimmel has taught me so much about my family that I never knew. I really enjoyed talking to my grandpa and asking him multiple questions about Rose and all the horrible things that she had to experience. Hearing about the horrible story it has really made me appreciate the way I live right now and how I'm so lucky to have two parents and a family that all love and appreciate me.

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