

The Shrine Built By Pincus Geftman



Shrine, build by my grandfather Pincus Geftman on the Jewish cemetery in the city of Sevastopol.

The picture was made in 1940.

My young grandparents came to Sevastopol in 1850s. Grandfather was clever and entrepreneurial I know that they used to change apartments moving from poorer districts to the wealthier.

Their financial position improved and their family grew. Finally they settled in a very beautiful and prestigious district of Sevastopol by historic boulevard. I do not know if my grandfather was educated, but he was very gumptions and go-getting .I do not know what he was dealing with exactly.

All I know he had something to do with construction. He came into money due to his hard work. He was known in Sevastopol for constructing there first steam mill, for the sake of which grandfather became prosperous. Then he invested money into construction of income-yielding houses.

He built a lot in Sevastopol. Even now there is a house in the vicinity of the market, built at cost of my grandfather. He also built a good big house for his son Grisha after he got married. Grandfather built a country house in Balaklava [coastal town, outside Sevastopol] for his family.

He wanted to restore a prayer house on the cemetery in Sevastopol. The building remained under constructed. When my husband and I lived in Sevastopol after war, we saw its shambles. Grandfather started building a shrine for his family , but did not manage to finish it.

Grandfather thought that he and his kin would be buried in that shrine. He did not want to leave Russia, but things did not turn the way he expected since revolution as of 1917 was in grandfather's way.

A wealthy and entrepreneurial grandfather could see through that he would not be able to normally live and work during communist regime.

That is why he quitted everything and immigrated with his family. All Geftmans left, but my mother. My relatives did not approve of revolution. When they left they just took money, which momentarily turned into mere piece of paper.

First they went to Constantinople. Then they had a skimpy living wandering from one country to another. In the end they all happened to be in France. The entire family got together in Paris. They were not well-off, but could abide by their living. There were a lot of them and they helped each other.

Members of our family were buried in the shrine build by grandfather. Tragically perished uncle Alexander Geftman was buried the first. Then my paternal grandmother Dora Goldenberg was buried, then my father Jacob Goldenberg. All of them were reburied.

During the war time some people sheltered in the shrine. After war the shrine turned into a public toilet. Now it is closed down, and the place is marred.