

Early Family Members

The earliest recorded Bregshstein family members were Nisel(c.1769 - <1828)¹ and Beryl (Berko)(c.1779-c.1849).² Their relationship cannot currently be stated with certainty but it is possible that Beryl was the nephew of Nisel.³

I. Nisel's Branch

Nisel
Shlioma Chaim

By 1788, Nisel married Miski(c.1768-<1830).⁴ They had at least two sons, Shlioma(1789-1830)⁵ and Chaim(b.c.1790)⁶ who, by 1830, lived in the shtetl of Panemune.⁷

Nisel
Shlioma Chaim
Etka Rochel Moshe Nisan

Shlioma married Chaya(b.c.1789)⁸ sometime after 1807. They had several children: Etka(b.c.1822)⁹, Rochel (b.c.1824)¹⁰, Nisan (c.1825<1867)¹¹, and Moshe(b.c.1826).¹²

Nisel
Shlioma Chaim
Etka Rochel **Moshe** Nisan
Yehuda

Moshe¹³ married Mera(b.c.1826) by 1846. They had at least one son, Yehuda Liba(b.1846) who was born in Panemune.¹⁴ By 1874, Yehuda had immigrated to Sweden, where he was a peddler.¹⁵

		Nisel		
		Shlioma		Chaim
Etka	Rochel	Nisan	Moshe	
		Yudl Berman	Lippa	

Around 1844, Nisan¹⁶ married Sorah Mariapolsky (ca.1825-1890).¹⁷ They had three sons: Yudl (Shlomo Yehuda) (1845-1917)¹⁸; Berman(ca. 1846-1930)¹⁹ and Lippa (Chananel Lipman)(ca. 1850 -1911).²⁰

In Panemune in 1861/62²¹ Yudl married Raisa Tamara Savadi(?) Savadski(?) (1844-1925)²² who was from Augustow.²³ Around 1869, Yudl and Raisa left Lithuania and immigrated to Sweden.²⁴ By 1870, Yudl's brother, Berman Breckstein, was also living in Sweden²⁵ and his brother, Lippa, had immigrated to New York.²⁶

II. Beryl's Branch

			Beryl			
Chaim	Moshe	Nisaniel	Zelig	Avram	Rachel Leah	Chaya

Around 1805, Beryl married Sarah(c.1788-c.1848). They lived on a large farm outside of Panemune, in an area called Patemulshelis.²⁷ Beryl had seven children: Chaim(1806 <1864)²⁸, Moshe(c.1820-c.1880),²⁹ Nisaniel(c.1823-c.1895), Zelig(c.1825-c.1906), Avram(1826-1904)³⁰, Rachel Leah(c.1830-c.1880) and Chaya(1832-1914).³¹ On the farm were several wood buildings that housed members of the family, local peasants who worked on the farm (including a tailor and a shoe-maker), and soldiers

whom the family billeted for the army.³² One building contained a common dining hall. Other buildings included a tannery, bakery and blacksmith shop. Several dogs romped in the yard.³³

The farm supplied the family with all their provisions, including white cheese, made by squeezing the curds between two boards; meat, which they slaughtered; and brandy, which they distilled. During the winter, the food was kept fresh by ice cut from the river.³⁴ Most of their meals were simple, often consisting of potatoes, sour milk, pickles and bread. Lighting was provided by tallow candles and, by the early 1900s, by kerosene lamp.³⁵

The children, girls as well as boys, were educated by a melamed (teacher) who either came from Panemune or lived up on the farm. Zelig, one of the sons, was a Talmudic scholar and a Hebrew teacher. Chaim was a trustee of the Panemune synagogue.³⁶

According to family stories, Zelig, Shaane, Avram and Moshe were partners in all their business ventures, and though they often had only limited success, there was little friction or misunderstanding among them and their children.³⁷

According to family stories, the Bregsteins, though not rich, were looked upon by some in the town as well to do, especially since they had permission to use a troika (a carriage pulled by three horses). This privilege, usually reserved for nobles, had been granted them in return for their billeting the soldiers. Once a week, they would use their troika to bring surplus(!)provisions to Kovno, where they were distributed to the synagogue and the Greek Orthodox church.³⁸

Some townspeople, however, did not hold them in high regard, for the family, as

farmers, were apparently a rough lot. They had non-Jews living amongst them, they refused to use the shadchan (matchmaker) for their marriages, some of their women did not wear a sheitl (wig), and on Passover, their children were sent to live with the peasants, so they would not have to eat hard, dry matzo during the week.³⁹

According to family legends, Napoleon Bonaparte, who launched the attack on Russia in 1812 from Panemune, had given them duchies in Sweden and France in exchange for billeting his soldiers. Other legends say that there, he signed a treaty with Czar or had been given shelter by the family and hidden from the Russian soldiers. (He rewarded them by bestowing the Bregstein name upon them or by giving them their land.) Still other stories have him cutting through someone's backyard, using family members to help him build a bridge across the Niemon to attack Kovno, demanding grain and horses for his troops or fathering children by one or more of the Bregstein women.⁴⁰

Notes

¹ The 12/7/1830 death record for Shlioma Bregshstein, gives his father's name as Nisel. (Registry Book of Deaths, Panemune Jewish Community, "Shlioma Bregshstein" 1830. [Ponemun-Fergissa; Fond 1108, Lithuanian Archives, Vilnius, Series I, Vol.8, 1829, #35) Nisel's birth date is a conjecture. Based on the birth date of his son, Shlioma, in 1789, (1830 Death Record, Op. Cit.), the latest year of his birth would be 1771. His death date is also a conjecture, based on the approximate birth date of grandson, Nisan, between 1807-1828 (see below).

² 1829 Death Record of Hirsha Bregshstein, (11/1/1829, Ponemun-Fergissa; Fond 1108, Lithuanian Archives, Vilnius, Series I, Vol.8, 1829, #43) has as a witness, his grandfather, Berka Bregshstein, resident of Panemune, age 50 (b.1779). The birth of his grandson, Berko Bregstein, in 1850, suggests his death by then. (See 1867 Viliampole Death Records for death of Berko Bregstein, 1850-1867).

³ In this conjecture, Beryl was the first cousin of Shlioma, the son of Nisel and Miski. Not only were Beryl and Shlioma contemporaries, (Beryl b. 1779 and Shlioma born 1789) but they named their children after the same, deceased ancestors. Among Shlioma's 4 children were: Nisan, Moshe and Rochel. Among Beryl's 7 children were Nisan, Moshe and Rochel. Who was Beryl's father? His seven children name their children with 4 Chaims, 3 Jacobs, 2 Seligs and 1 Judah. An educated guess would be that his father's name was either Chaim or Jacob. The autosomal DNA of the author, a Nisel descendant, is a match with descendants of three of Beryl's children, demonstrating that the two branches are linked by a common ancestor.

⁴ The 12/7/1830 death record for Shlioma Bregshstein, gives his mother's name as Miski. Her birth and date deaths are conjectures, based on the approximate dates of her husband, Nisel. (See above).

⁵ 1830 Death Record (Op. Cit.)

⁶ Witness for death of his brother, Shlioma. (1830 Death Record, Op. Cit.). His age is an approximation, based on the age of his brother.

⁷ 1830 Death Record, (Op. Cit.).

⁸ 1830 Death Record, (Op. Cit.). lists Chaya, his wife and all the names of his children.

⁹ Named in the 1830 Registry Book of Deaths, Panemune Jewish Community (Op. Cit.).

¹⁰ Named in the 1830 Registry Book of Deaths, Panemune Jewish Community (Op. Cit.).

¹¹ Named in the 1830 Registry Book of Deaths, Panemune Jewish Community (Op. Cit.). The 1880 Stockholms Mosaiska Foersamlings Kyrkobok/Congregational Book of the Jewish Synagogue of Stockholm (p. 356, "Brukstein, Julius"), gives Julius' (Shlomo

Yehuda) father's name as Nisan. Julius Bregstein hagadah, inscribed in 1881 (in possession of Jeff Marx) gives his father's name as Nisan Bregshtain. Julius Bregstein 1917 gravestone, (Old Mt. Carmel cemetery, N.Y., Section 1, D, 30, 2) gives his father's name as Nisan. 1917 death certificate (4/25/1917, Bronx, NY, #3098, "Julius Bregstein") gives his father's name as Nathan. His birth date is a conjecture. The earliest date of his birth, based on the birth date of his father, Shlioma, in 1789, (see above), would be 1807. Given his mention in the 1830 death record of his father, Shlioma (see above) and given the birth date of his son, Shlomo Yehuda,, (see below) between 1840 and 1847, suggests a birth date for Nisan somewhere between 1807-1828. The birth of a grandson named for him (Nathan, the son of Lippa) in 1867, suggests his death by then. (1870 Hamburg Ship's Manifest, 3/19/1870, Prinz Albert, "Lippe Brockstein", stated that his son, Nissen, was 2).

¹² His approximate birth date is based upon the birth of his son, Judel Lejba in 1846. (See below).

¹³ While it is documented (see above) that Shlioma and Chaya had a son, Moshe, the identification of their son, Moshe, with this Moshe, while highly likely, is currently only by inference. The existence of two Moshe Bregshteins living in Panemune at the same time, while possible, is not likely.

¹⁴ See Application of Judel Lejba Bragstens for Vistas I Riket, Civildepartementets konseljakt (Cabinet Act of the Ministry of Public Administration), 12/12/1875, Riksarkivet (National Archives), Stockholm, Sweden. In his application, Judel submitted a 9/19/1875 statement from the rabbi of Panemune, stating that he was born 5/17/1846 and was the son of Moses and Mera Bregstein. The document was signed by members of his family: Wolf Levinsohn, Orel (Aaron) Bregstein and Moses Szapira.

¹⁵ He was peddling in the district of Gamleby, near Vastervik. (See Civildepartementets Konseljakt/Cabinet Act in the Ministry of Public Administration, 12/12/1875, "Vistas I Riket/Permission to Dwell", "Judel Lejba Bragsten", Riksarkivet, Stockholm.)

¹⁶ While it is documented (see above) that Shlioma and Chaya had a son, Nisan, the identification of their son, Nisel, with this Nisan, while highly likely, is currently only by inference. First, it should be noted that Nisel is a diminutive name for Nisan. Second, the existence of two Nisan Bregshteins living in Panemune at the same time, while possible, is not likely. Third, Nisan's son, Shlomo Yehuda, could very well have been named for his father, Shlioma.

¹⁷ It is not known where Nisan was born. The 1880 Stockholms Mosaiska Foersamlings Kyrkobok/Congregational Book of the Jewish Synagogue of Stockholm (p. 356, "Brukstein, Julius"), gives Julius' father's name as Nisan as does Julius Bregstein 1917 gravestone, (Old Mt. Carmel cemetery, N.Y., Section 1, D, 30, 2). 1917 death certificate (4/25/1917, Bronx, NY, #3098, "Julius Bregstein") gives his father's name as Nathan and mother's name as Sorah Mariapolsky. Sorah's last name indicates that her family came originally from Marijampole, a small town 60 miles southwest of Panemune.

Approximately 3,000 Jews lived there in the 1850's. (Encyclopedia Judaica, op. cit., "Mariampole").

¹⁸ 1880 Stockholms Mosaiska Foersamlings Kyrkobok (Op. Cit., "Brukstein, Julius"), gives Julius' Hebrew name as Judl (ben Nisan); 1917 Julius Bregstein gravestone, (Op. Cit.), gives his Hebrew name as Shlomo Yehuda (ben Nisan).

There are 5 different birth dates for Julius, ranging from 1840-1847. 1845 seems the most likely. 1870 Parish of Malmo Caroli, Husforhorslangd ("Julius Breckstein") gives his birth as 3/10/1845 in Poland. The 1875 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter/Personal Declaration of Household (Katarina norra, #2028, "Julius Brecksten") gives Yudl's birth date as 4/10/1844; 1876 Mantalsuppgifter (Katarina ostra och inre, #1701, "Julius Breckstein") states 3/17/1840; 1877 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter (Katarina ostra och inre, #1715, "Julius Brechstein") states 5/20/1846; 1878 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter (Maria norra, #2566, "Julius Brechstein") states 3/10/1845; 1879 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter (Maria norra, #4754, "Julius Brechstein") states 3/10/1845; 1880 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter (Katarina, "Julius Brechstein") states 3/10/1845. Stockholm birth records for Yudl's sons, Isak (1876), Abraham (1878), and Oskar (1879) gives Yudl's birth date as 1845 (See Birth Records of Jewish Community of Stockholm, National Archives, Stockholm); 1880 Stockholms Mosaiska Foersamlings Kyrkobok, (Op. Cit., p. 356), lists "Julius Brukstein, born in Panimon, 3/10/1845"; 1878-1880 Stockholm Rotemansarkiv/Stockholm District Records ("Julius Brechstein/Breckstein") states birth was 3/10/1845 in Paninon, Poland; 1880 ships' manifests for the Portia, (Hamburg Indirect Passenger List, 7/8/1880, Hamburg to London, "Julius Brechstein", line 8) and the Utopia (London to New York, 7/28/1880, line 227, "Julus Breckstein"), give his age as 35 (b.1844/45); 1900 U.S. census: b. 1847(NY, Manhattan, ED 388, sheet 15, line 86, "Julius Bregstein:); 1910 US Census (NY, Bronx, ED 1599, Sheet 7A, line 19, "Julius Bregstein") states age 69 (1840/41). 1917 NY death certificate (Op. Cit., "Julius Bregstein) gives his age as 72 years, 1 month (b. 1845); Julius Bregstein 1917 gravestone, (Op. Cit.), gives his date of birth as 1840.

¹⁹ 1870 Malmo Church records of St. Petri parish, (AI:86, Vaveriet II, P. 241), give Berman's birth as 4/20/1846 and his birthplace is listed as Pagirmunos, which is near Panemune. 1880 PA census gives age as 30 (b.1849/1850); 1910 US Census states age 62 (born 1847/48); 1920 census states born in 1852. NY death certificate #23695 give death date as 10/17/1930.

²⁰ 1870 Ship's Manifest (4/20/1870, Prince Albert, Hamburg to NY, Lippa Brockstein) gave his age as 24 and 8 months (b.1845); 1880 US census (Texas, PA, ED 13, page 8, line 37, "Lewis Brackstine") gives his birth as 1842; 1900 US census (Texas, PA, ED 130, Sheet 8, line 40, "Louis Bregstein") gives his birth date as 4/1850; 1910 US Census, (Texas, PA, ED 112, Sheet 12A, line 1, "Lewis Breikstein") gives his birth as 1845; 1911 gravestone (Dyberry Cemetery, Honesdale, PA, "Louis Bregstein") gives birth as 7/25/1846 and death as 7/2/1911.

²¹ 1876 Stockholm Birth Record (Op. Cit., "Isak Breckstein") states that his parents had been married for 13 years (1862/63); 1880 Stockholms Mosaiska Foersamlings Kyrkobok

(Op. Cit.) gives their marriage date as 1/17/1862 in Panimon; 1900 US Census (Op. Cit.): married 35 years (1864/65); 1910 US Census (Op. Cit.): married 49 years (1860/61).

²² 1870 Malmo Husforhorslangd gives her name as Rosalia; 1880 Stockholms Mosaiska Foersamlings Kyrkobok (Op. Cit.) gives her name as Rosalie Savadi and states that her Hebrew name was Roza bat Jacob. 1926 Rose Bregstein's gravestone (Op. Cit.) states: "Tamara Raizl bat Yakov" (Jacob). Herman's 1897 NY marriage certificate (9/12/1897, Brooklyn, #4553, "Hayman B. Bregstein") gives her name as Rose Zawatzky. Annie Bregstein's 1900 marriage license (8/29/1900, Brooklyn, "Annie Bregstein") gives her mother's maiden name as "Rosa Zawatsky"; Charles Bregstein's N.Y. 1901 marriage certificate states that his mother's maiden name was Zawada; Isaac Bregstein's 1923 N.Y. Marriage Certificate states "Bronsky" (which does not seem correct); Rosa's 1925 N.Y. Death Certificate (Op. Cit.) states, "Sevatsky." (Could it be Savitsky from Sawicze, Poland?) (Yehuda's brother's son, Nathan, married an Eva Savada, ca. 1896 in New York. Could there be a connection?) Rosa's mother's name, Freida Rosenbaum, found in Rosa's 1925 N.Y. Death Certificate (Op. Cit.).

There are eleven different dates for Raisa's birth, ranging from 1836-1848. 1844, seems to be the most likely. 1870 Malmo Husforhorslangd Malmo states 10/16/1846; 1875 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter: 1/2/1844; 1876 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter (Op. Cit.): 4/15/1840; 1876 Stockholm Birth Record (Op. Cit., "Isak Breckstein"): age 32 (b. 1843/44); 1877 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter (Op. Cit.): 3/24/1846; 1878-1880 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter (Op. Cit.): 4/10/1844; 1878-79 Stockholm Birth Records (Op. Cit., "Abraham Breckstein" and "Oskar Breckstein"): born in 1843/44; 1880 Stockholms Mosaiska Foersamlings Kyrkobok (Op. Cit.): born 4/10/1844 in Augustow; 1880 Stockholm Rotemansarkiv (Op. Cit.): 4/10/1844; 1881 Stockholm Mantalsuppgifter (Katarina, "Rosalie Breckstein"): born 4/10/1844. 1900 U.S. census: b. 2/1840 (NY, Manhattan, ED 388, sheet 15, line 86, "Julius Bregstein"); 1910 U.S. census ("Julius Bregstein", Op. Cit.): age 71 (1838/39; 1920 US census (NY, "Rose Brackstien", ED 1209, Sheet 15A, line 25 1925) states age 82 (b. 1837/38); 1925 Death Certificate (Bronx, NY, #6547, 10/10/1925, "Rose Bregstein"): age 87 (1837/38); 1925 Grave Stone (Old Mt. Carmel, NY): age 89 (1836); Circa 1965 Jessie Trattner's History of the Bregstein Family: born 2/1848.

²³ Her Augustow birthplace is recorded in the 1878-1880 Stockholm Rotemansarkivet (Op. Cit.); and in the 1880 Stockholms Mosaiska Foersamlings Kyrkobok (Op. Cit.) Augustow was to the south of Panemune, just west of the Russian border. There were 3,764 Jews living there in 1860. Many were involved in the local lumber industry, rafting logs to Danzig. (See Encyclopedia Judaica, op. cit., vol. 3, "Augustow", pg. 852.)

²⁴ Though Sweden was open to Jews in 1782, restrictions on immigration and settlement were imposed during the early decades of the 19th century. It was not until 1860, that Jews were allowed to settle freely within Sweden. (Thomas Selling, "Resources for Jewish Genealogy in Sweden", Avotaynu, vol. xi, number 2, summer 1995, p. 39.)

²⁵ He was living in Malmo, in the parish of St. Petri. (See 1870 S:T Petri AI:86, Vaveriet II, page 241; 1872 Malmo Mantalslangd (Op. Cit.) lists Berman Breckstein with one

child. (See Siegel Op. Cit.); Berman, together with his wife and children, left Sweden in 1875. (See Emigrantregistret 1875; Malmo Caroli Husforhorslangd; and see correspondence # 292/86-551 and 11/19/1986 coorespondence (#327/86-551) with Stadsarkivet i Malmo/State Archives of Malmo.

Other Bregstein family members also immigrated to Sweden around this time. By 1876, Beryl's daughter (see below), Klara (Chaya) Bregstein Frankel and her family were living in Gamleby. (See letter from Fredrick Frankel, 2/2/1996; Hersson-Ringskog, Paula, Oskarshamns Mosaiska Formsamling, [Oskarshamn's Jewish Community] 1888-1938, p. 5; 1880 Oskarshamn Husforhorslangd, "Klara Bregstein").

²⁶ The records of the Koenigsburg Relief Committee state that he left Hamburg for America in March, 1870 (See Szajkowski, Zosa, "The First Organized Emigration Emigration from Eastern Europe to the U.S.: 1869-1870", YIVO Bleter, YIVO, #40, 1956); 1870 Ship's Manifest (Prince Albert, Op. Cit.) lists Lippa Brockstein, his wife, Bertha, and son, Moses.

²⁷ Patemulselis is pronounced in Lithuanian as "pah/t/mool/sh/lee/eye" and in Yiddish as "pata/mool/shelis". Its' meaning is unknown, though its name may have been taken from the name of a small spring which ran nearby. Patemulselis, in all probability, was part of some original estate, bordering a forest. By 1897, a number of small farms existed alongside it or parts of the original farm had been sold to others. This small farming community was collectivized in 1946 and the neighboring farm of Vitiai was incorporated into it. It is located approximately 3 miles west of Panemune, and is not to be confused with Patamuselia (which lay another 3 miles S.W. of Patemulselis, and a short distance N.E. from Naujieji). Nor is it to be confused with farmland that Beryl's grandson, Herschl Zorach, owned, that was on the other side of the forest and was called Frentzel's Court, named after the last purchaser of Panemune. (Bernard Horwich, My First Eighty Years, Argus Books, Chicago, 1939, Wolf Bregstein 3/1987 letter; Wolf Bregstein Interview, 1996; Grace Mendelsohn 1/11/1987 interview.)

²⁸ 1829 Death Record of Hirsha Bregshtein (Op. Cit.) gives his age as 23 (b.1806). The marriage record of his son, Judah Reuben Bregstein, in 1864, lists him as deceased. (Suwalk Jewish Matrikal Records 1826-1879, Marriages, 10/25/1864).

²⁹ 1887 Kaunas Marriage Record for his son (11/5/1887, "Girsh Zorach Bregshtein and Tzerna Karpas") stated that Girsch was 45 (b. 1841/42) thus suggesting that his father, Moshe, was born around 1820. The 1909 Kaunas Draft List, however, stated that Girsch was born 5/23/1833, meaning that he would have sired his last child at 72, which, though possible, does not seem likely, and that his father, Moshe, would have been born around 1810, which does not seem likely, given that hMoshe's siblings were born in the 1820s and 1830s.

³⁰ Ship Manifest, 1902, (10/29/1902, Kaiser Wilhelm) stated that he was 62. New York City Death Index states that he died 4/16/1904. He was the only one of Beryl's children to come to the U.S.

³¹ Jewish Community Records of Oskarshamn, Sweden, ("Klara Frankel") lists her birth and death dates.

³² The farm was located a little over a mile from the Fourth Fort. The Augustow province was known for the large number of Jews who were farmers. Over 20% of the Jewish population in 1843 derived their livelihood from the soil and some Jews employed Christian workers on their farms. (See Jewish Community Book for Suwalk & Vicinity, Independent Suwalk & Vicinity Benevolent Association and Relief Committee (New York), Tel Aviv, 1989; Kagan, Berl, "Mariampole", Sefer Haprenumberantn, Shulsinger Bros., Inc., NY and Biuletyn Zydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego, {Jewish Historical Institute of Poland}, 1967, no. 64, Warsaw).

³³ (Interview, Grace Mendelsohn, 1/11/1987; Ruth Wetter, 4/6/1987; Elizabeth Maines, Breakstone Newsletter, Vol. I, No. II Nov., 1957; Wolf Bregstein letter, 3/1987.) Most of the recollections of life on the family farm are second-hand. It is likely that many activities did take place on the farm, albeit within the confines of a few buildings. Beryl may have been the "arenda", the lessee of the farm. It was quite common for the "pan", the noble landowner, to lease out his land (Agricultural Arenda) to Jewish tenants, who would pay him income, based on their dairying, distilling and milling. (See Salo Baron, "Arenda" in Economic History of the Jews, Schocken Books, NY, 1975; Simon Dubnow, History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1918, Vol. II, pp. 67,92,93,264,265.) On the other hand, the Augustow province (later to be Suwalki gubernia) had a number of Jews who were landowners. In 1865, there were 196 Jewish landowners in the area around Seini. Jews, at the end of the 19th century, owned modern estates in the Mariampol area, as well. (Independent Suwalk & Vicinity Benevolent Association and Relief Committee, Op. Cit.; Kagan, Beryl, "Mariampole", Op. Cit.). Thus, it is possible that Beryl may have actually owned the farm. In a number of towns in Suwalk province, "...the Jews specialized in various branches of agriculture, including market gardening...milk produce..." (Dov Levin, The Litvaks, p. 91).

³⁴ The ice from the river was often three feet thick. It would be cut into blocks and placed inside an ice house, which was a hut sitting on top of a deep hole cut into the ground. The ice would be covered with saw-dust and perishable foods would be placed on top of these blocks. The hut would keep its coolness well into the late spring. (Interview with Zalman Shaymes, 5/14/88; Wolf Bregstein Interview, 1996).

³⁵ Prune Tzimmes, that is, potatoes and prunes and Meru, potatoes with carrots, were common dishes. (See Horwich, Op. Cit., p. 45; Wolf Bregstein Interview, 1996).

³⁶ The 1852-54 Income and Expense Report of the Jewish Community of Poniemon-Frentzele (CWW 1835, AGAD, Warsaw, Poland) has the Polish and Yiddish name of Chaim Bregszteyn.

³⁷ At least one family member did have some success in business. Hershl Bregstein, a son of Moshe, owned a 500 acre farm and a brick making business. He sold bricks to the government until the onset of WWI. (Wolf Bregstein letter, 4/18/1987).

³⁸ (Interview with Grace Mendelsohn, 1/11/1987.) Grace's mother, Helen Fein, who told her these stories, lived in Panemune until she was sixteen. The carriage stories are based

on the fact that Hershl Zorach Bregstein, who owned a brick making factory and sold those bricks to the government, had been given permission to own a four horse coach, in addition to the horse and carriage (called a linejka) that he also owned. (Wolf Bregstein Interview, 1996).

³⁹ (Interview with Grace Mendelsohn, 1/11/1987.) Rabbi Earl Stone, (in a 7/30/1987 letter), stated that, growing up in Childs, PA. he was sent during Passover to eat bread and butter with the neighbors. His grandmother, Tzivia, the daughter of Rachel Leah, approved of this practice. Mort Reichek, whose paternal grandmother owned a dairy store in New York, stated that the Breakstone dairy store was several blocks away, and that the storekeeper, according to Mort's father, "did not observe the Sabbath. Moreover, he even smoked cigars in public on the Sabbath." (Mort Reichek, Belarus SIG, JEWISHGEN.org, 1999).

⁴⁰ (See, for example, International News Service story, quoted in 9/12/1929 New Castle News, PA, describing the North White Lake, NY Breakstone Family Reunion. Also see Breakstone Newsletter, Vol.I, No.II, Nov.,1957). Napoleon did sign a treaty on the Niemon river with the Czar (1907), but this was near Tilze (Tilsit). (See Vytautas J. Sliupas, "Napoleon's First and Last Steps...in Lithuania", Lithuanian Heritage, July/August, 2002, P. 14). Napoleon, however, was in Panemune on the night of June 23d, 1812, and camped out on the high hill there, which was called, in Russian, by the inhabitants of Panemune, "Napoleon Kaiegala" and is still called, today, in Lithuanian, "Napoleono Kalnas." Late that night and early the next morning, the French Grand Army marched to attack Kovno across three pontoon bridges that had been constructed by engineers. (See Napoleon's Russian Campaign, Translated by J. David Townsend, 1958, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, (Abridged version of De Segur, Philippe-Paul, La Campagne de Russie, Memoires d'un Aide de Camp de Napoleon, 2 vols., 1824, Nelson, Paris; Richard K. Riehn, 1812: Napoleon's Russian Campaign, McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., NY, 1990, pp.159-165; Wolf Bregstein Interview, 1996).

Some remnants of the Grand Army but not Napoleon, fled through Kovno after their Moscow defeat. Napoleon, himself, left his troops at Smurgonys, which is Southeast of Panemune, and turned his sled towards Paris, traveling through Vilna and Warsaw. (See Charles Joseph Minard's statistical map of the Russian Campaign, 11/20/1869; Riehn, Op. Cit., pp. 391-395.) The "Duchies in Sweden" legend was based on the migration to Sweden of several family members.

