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**Inventory of the Collection: The Legacy of the Halperson Family
([1920] 1939-1942 [2000])**

Coll. No S. 363

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See also ŻIH Archives Web Page at: http://www.jhi.pl/archiwum/zbiory_archiwum

Introduction

The history of the Halperson family¹

The Halperson family came from the village near Proskow. Dawid Halperson, born about 1870 was the son of the rural writer. His mother was an owner of the inn. He had a brother called Joachim and sisters: Cesia, Andzia and Fela. The brothers became salesmen and traveled throughout Russia in business. David Halperson finally settled in Warsaw. On March 31, 1905, married Luba Kaahan and lived in 31 Krochmalna Street, apt. 39.

Luba Kahan was born about 1880 in Brześć. She had three sisters: Sara, Rózia and Basia and the brother called Meir. Their mother died early. Luba was brought up by her distant relatives – thus she found herself in Warsaw, where she attended a Russian junior high school. She had worked as a bookkeeper before her marriage. Afterwards she looked after her household and looked after her two children: Michał and Janina.

Michał Halperson was born on February 09, 1920 in Warsaw. He accomplished his education in the Zgromadzenie Kupców (Council of Merchants) junior high school and the Trade College. He worked as a commercial representative of Marcel Guerlain. In 1930s, he started working in the branch office of the Factory of Needles and Metal Devices in Warsaw, in Daniłowiczowska Street. On October 29, 1933, he married Paulina Gurewicz born in 1906. They had a son Stefan born on January 23, 1940.

Michał, together with Paulina and Stefanek and his parents and in-laws found themselves in the Warsaw ghetto. They lived in 31 Dzielna Street. Dawid and Luba Halperson perished in the death camp in Treblinka sent there after the big action of liquidation in July 1942 r. Michał Halperson was shot to death in the street by the Jewish policeman, Jakub Lejkin, also during that action. Paulina and Stefanek hid for the moment on the Aryan side of Warsaw at the subtenant room of the former housekeeper of the Halpersons, Agnieszka Cieciorka. As the landlords didn't want to hide Jews, Paulina had to return to the ghetto with her child. There she poisoned herself and her son with the cyanide.

Janina Halperson was born on December 23, 1921. She passed her immatriculation exams at the Zofia Kalecka's Junior High School. She left for the language course in Stockholm in 1938. She spent the war in Sweden where she graduated from the faculty of chemistry at the Institute of Technology STI. She returned to Warsaw in 1945. She worked as a Swedish interpreter and translator during official interstate contacts. Then she became an officer at the Scandinavian Department of the ministry of Foreign Affairs. After that she set up a foreign department and a department of culture and education at the Związek Walki Młodych (Polish post-war youth organization of the communist character acting at the Polish Communist Party). During 1948-1953, she studied the science of theatrical matters at the State Institute of Scenic Arts in Moscow. Having returned to Warsaw she worked at the State Institute of Art; the Academy of Stage Arts; in the Department of Culture of the Central Committee of the Polish United Labor Party (KC PZPR), in the department of literature of the "Teatr Dramatyczny" ("Drama Theater" in Warsaw). She had a son, Tomasz Ludawski on March 17, 1957. In 196, she emigrated with her son, first to France, than t Sweden. During 1970-1988, she was a scholar at the Department of Theatrical Matters of the University of Stockholm. She

¹ Description on the basis of the account of Janina Ludawska (Halperson), see Col. No S.363/1.

published three books on this matter in Swedish: *Poetisk politisk Teater (Poetic politic theater)*, *Att vara äkta på scen (to be authentic)*, *Emellan oss (Among us)*. She also translated the books of that field into Polish. In 1987, she became a volunteer of the Foundation: The Noah's Arc – The Red Cross, which aimed the preventive action against HIV and AIDS.

Tomasz Ludawski, born on March 17, 1957 r. graduated from the junior high school in Sweden and studied in the USA, He worked in the Swedish Consulate in New York. He died after the grave disease in December 1986.

The sisters of Luba Halperson, Sara, Rózia and Basia, the Kahans, lived in Warsaw too, in 56 Nowolipki Street. Their brother, Meir Kahan married Rachela and had a son called Joachim (died as a baby) and daughters: Felka (born in 1920) and Ninka (born in 1920s). They lived in Warsaw in 18 or 20 Nowolipki Street. All of them died during the war.

Dawida Halperson's brother, Joachim married Zofia, maiden name Weinbaum. They had one son called Bronek who died in 1930. Joachim died before 1921. Zofia's sister, Malwina Wasserberg had three children. The oldest one, Gina, went to the USSR already before the war, got married there and edited a Polish periodical: "Kultura mas" under the stage name of Zofia Kamieniecka. She perished about 1937. Her younger brother, Ignacy was a lawyer. He died in late 1930s. The youngest sister, Lucyna, was a school-teacher and a tutor of disabled children. Zofia Halperson, Malwina Wasserberg and Lucyna Wasserberg died during the war.

Two sisters of Dawid Halperson, Andzia and Fela, lived together in Warsaw. Andzia died of TB in the 1930z. The older sister, Cesia, married Feliks Wundheiler. They had three sons: Bolesław, Aleksander and Rafał. Bolesław was a volunteer soldier during the Polish-Bolshevik War in 1920. He studied at the Polish University of Technology (Politechnika Warszawska). He immigrated, with his wife Berta, first to Germany, then to the USA in 1920s. After Berta's death he remarried and had two children: Charles and Susanne. Aleksander Wundheiler graduated from the Mathematics Faculty at the University of Warsaw and became an assistant there. In 1939, he left for the World Exhibition and the congress for mathematicians in New York and remained there till his death in 1957. Rafał Wundheiler was a lawyer. He married Irena and had a son, Stefan. Rafał committed suicide in the Warsaw ghetto. Irena escaped from the ghetto with a man, who became her husband then. Stefan survived hidden in a monastery. Irena, together with her second husband and Stefan left for America. Stefan lives in Argentina, got married and has two sons.

Characteristic of the Collection

The legacy of the Halperson family Halpersonów consists basically of letters written by Janina Halperson (later Ludawska) during 1939-1942. The Halperson family used to live in Warsaw; Janina left for Stockholm in August 1939 for a language course and stayed there till the end of the war. Her family were in the Warsaw ghetto then. Her parents, brother with his wife and distant relatives wrote post cards and letters to her and sent photos.

The collection comprises 164 letters of 1939-1942 as well as family photographs of various moments of their lives. Part of photographs Janina Halperson took with her in 1939; another part remained in the letters or she regained after the war. The first letter was written on 08.07.1939, the last on 07.19. 1942. Besides them, the memoirs were attached to the collection of Janina Ludawska about the further fate of the family members, written in 2000. Janina Ludawska sent that material to the Jewish Historical Institute in November 2000. Letters were divided by her according to the years of their sending and according to their

senders. She attached a short description to each sub-collection. She did the same with the photographs.

In the unit of Call No 1, the memoirs of Janina Ludawska were placed. In the unit No 2 there are family photographs in album. In the annex the description of the photographs was placed. Units 3-4 contain the chronologically arranged letters from Dawid and Luba parents), as well as from Michał and Paulina (his brother with wife) to Janina Halperson (Ludawska); her comments were attached. In unit 5 the letters from distant family members were placed; while the one of 6 letters was from the Janina's friends from Warsaw.

Both the letters and the photographs are in good condition. Letters were written by hand (one was typed), mainly in Polish; some of them are in German.

Abstracts of the correspondence of the Halperson family referring to the child of Michał and Paulina Halperson, Stefanek, were published in "The History of Jews Quarterly," 2001, No 1, under the title "Stefanek."

The Inventory of the Collection The Legacy of the Halperson Family ([1920] 1939-1942 [2000])

1. The legacy of the Halperson family. Family memoirs of Janina Ludawska (Halperson). 2000, typescript, Polish, loose pages, pp 20.
2. The legacy of the Halperson family.
Photographs of the Halperson and Wundheiler families along with the description of them².
1920-1960?, a photo, typescript, manuscript, Polish, loose pages, pp 40.
3. The legacy of the Halperson family.
Letters and postcards from Dawid, Luba, Michał and Paulina, the Halpersons from Warsaw to Janina's daughter living in Sweden. 1939-1940, manuscript, typescript, Polish, German, loose pages, pp 182.
4. The legacy of the Halperson family
Letters and postcards from Dawid, Luba, Michał and Paulina, the Halpersons from Warsaw to Janina's daughter living in Sweden
1941-1942, typescript, j. Polish, j. German., loose pages, s. 141.
5. The legacy of the Halperson family.
Letters and postcards from Rafał Wundheiler (2), Sara Kahan (12) and her entire family (1) from Warsaw to Janina Halperson staying in Sweden 1940-1942, manuscript, Polish, loose pages, pp 30
6. The legacy of the Halperson family.
Letters and postcards from Janina Halperson's schoolmates³ from Warsaw and other cities/towns in Poland to Janina staying in Sweden. A school photo.
[1931-1932] 1940-1942, manuscript, Polish, loose pages, pp 53.

² See Annex.

³ The authors were: Róża Jakubowicz („Zazula”), Lili Goldwag, Lucyna Bigielman and Marta Rozentel. Lucyna Bigielman was employed by the Janusz Korczak Orphanage at 33 Chłodna Street – two post cards come from there – they are very interesting.

ANNEX:

Description of photographs from the unit Call No S.363/2⁴

1. Luba Kahan, about 1897 r.
2. Michał Halperson, about 1926 r.
3. Luba and Dawid, the Halpersons, Zakopane, about 1934-1935
4. Luba and Dawid, the Halpersons, Świder, 1937
5. Luba and Michał, the Halpersons, Świder, 1937
6. Luba and Paulina, the Halpersons, Świder, 1937
7. Paulina and Stefanek, the Halpersons, Warsaw, January-February? 1940
8. Stefanek Halperson, Warsaw, April 1940
9. Paulina and Stefanek, the Halpersons, Warsaw, May 1940
10. Paulina and Stefanek, the Halpersons, Warsaw, May 1940
11. Michał and Stefanek, the Halpersons, Warsaw, June 1940
12. Michał and Stefanek, the Halpersons, Warsaw, June 1940
13. Luba, Dawid i Stefanek, the Halpersons, Warsaw, May 1940
14. Paulina and Stefanek, the Halpersons, Warsaw, July 1940
15. Paulina, Michał and Stefanek, the Halpersons, Warsaw, July 1940.
16. Stefanek Halperson with his friend Bobuś, the Warsaw ghetto, 1941
17. Stefanek Halperson, the Warsaw ghetto, August 1941
18. Cesia (maiden name: Halperson), Feliks, Rafał, Aleksander and Bolesław, the Wundheilners, Warsaw, no date (about 1900?)
19. Bolesław Wundheiler, Lwów, 01.03.1919
20. Bolesław Wundheiler with his friends from the army, 1919
21. Bolesław Wundheiler, the village of Bielaczyce near Połock, 1920
22. Bolesław Wundheiler, USA, no date.

⁴ There is one more photo in this collection bearing Call No S.363/6 – the photo of school-girls from the Zofia Kalecka's Junior High School for girls of 1931/1932.

23. Aleksander Wundheiler, no date
24. Aleksander Wundheiler, no date.
25. Aleksander Wundheiler, no date (before 1937)
26. Rafał Wundheiler, Warsaw, ghetto no date (1940-1942)
27. Stefanek Wundheiler, Warsaw, 1937
28. Stefanek Wundheiler, Warsaw ghetto, 1941
29. Stefanek Wundheiler, Warsaw, 1943
30. Stefanek Wundheiler, Poland, September 1945
31. Stefanek Wundheiler, 02.20.1946
32. Felicja Halperson, Warsaw, 06.16.1935
33. Felicja Halperson, Warsaw, 08.18.1937
34. Felicja Halperson, Warsaw, no date.
35. Invitation for the wedding of Polina (Paulina) Gurewiczówna with Michał Halperson, Warsaw, 10.29.1933.
36. Edek? [[unknown to Janina Ludawska]
37. Władek? [unknown to Janina Ludawska]
38. Zofia Kalecka's junior high school choir, together with the teacher, Lola Rotbaum, Warsaw, 06.27.1931
39. Summer camp of the Zofia Kalecka's junior high school, no date (before 1939)
40. Schoolboys from the "Spójnia" junior high school for boys, no date (before 1939)