

Legione #7

St. Johnsville N.Y. March ¹⁹~~12~~-19~~18~~9

~~My name is Michael Papay~~

I was born on November 11th 1891 in the Village of Mychnowca situated at the foot of Carpathian Mountains province of Galicia-Ukraine which at that time was part of Austrian Empire. that part of central Europe was thickly populated and industry was not developed this condition forced many small land owners to emigrate to other parts of the world to seek better living condition.

My Father who was one of those small land owners and had a good size of family to support has to look for work elsewhere to supplement ^{me} for our existence. He spend 7 years working in Pennsylvania steel mills, ~~but~~ in those days the wages were very small so after paying for his room and board also for his trip which was made by borrowing money he couldn't contribute much for a support of his family. there was one bright side high rate of money exchange' whenever he could save, and send us ten dollars we received 25 Austrian dollars ~~or 50 krons~~ which was a big help to us, My Mother and no children we worked land while he was away, when Father returned he often remarked that

.....

2) that a "young" fellow had a better chance
in America for he can learn a language "e

quicker and have a better paying job.

I was 18 then I decided to go to America
so: in the month of November 1909 I left
my native village, it was sad parting with
my parents brother and sisters my Mother
was crying something awfull she kissed
me and "Son something tells me I will not
see you again" her premonition was right
I never went back and both of my parents died
during first world war.

Winter started early there was a foot of snow
we traveled by sled about ten miles to
the railroad station, than 3 days on the
train to the port of Bremen, Germany. in
the "we stay 2 week in Emmygrant House
awaiting for our ship. every day we walked
the streets looking for the ocean - not knowing
that there still was about 40 minutes train
ride to the place of embarkation Bremenhar²
We boarded ^{a ship} which had a name Zieten wuten
on it, and we given a large room with many
people in it, I dont know whether that was
a steerage or third class. the food and sanita
condion were terrible it took us 14 days
to cross Atlantic. I was sea sick most of time
and thought I will never see the land again.

Our ship docked in New York harbor
Saturday nite and next day December 20th

we were ordered all on deck it was cold
frosty morning ~~and~~ we stood there a long time
I nearly froze; my shoes had holes from wear on
this long trip. next we were taken in the boats
to Ellis Island where we had to answer
many questions and examined by Doctor
the examining official surprised me for
he spoke my language he asked if I had
money I showed him bunch of ^{one} dollar bills
he didnt count it and I was glad of it
because I didnt have enough. then joking he
said "I suppose next thing you going get
married" I said No: I am worrying next to
be able to find a job: after that they rush
us to the train I didnt have time to say
good bye to my traveling companions.

before entering train we were given a bag
of food for one dollar-I was told that it was
compulsory to take it- in the ^{bag} was a loaf of Bread
piece of cheese dried sausage² oranges² apples which
I ate on train it tasted awfully good to me.

the train arrived in Herkimer during nite ~~and~~
I was met by my contrymen who I was living
there already one year and took to a place
where he was staying. so this ~~and~~ was the
end of long journey of which I did not enjoyed
and maybe this was the reason I never
went back to my native land

While walking from the Railroad Station to the house I was very much impressed with the ^{new} scenery, there wasn't much snow on ground the streets we lighted, the ^{people} factory made clothes, the houses were painted different colors all that fascinated me.

My friends found me a job in the mill at pay 75¢ a day working 10 hours.

As my clothes were pretty well worn out during my voyage I bought my first suit of clothes for \$1.00. Went first time to a movie admission was 10 cents I hardly understood anything that was printed on screen ~~only~~ only the name of actress Mary Pickford, that movie and the newspapers that boys sold on the streets 2¢ a copy aroused my curiosity and desire to learn English so I study at nite and Sundays went to different churches and listened attentively to sermons in order to learn how to pronounce words.

In the year 1913 we were married and also same year I quit my job in the mill, and started business of my own which is still going today. ^{eyes:} we were blessed with 8 children 6 of them are living. and

I wished ~~them~~ ^{that they} very much to learn my native language but as a teacher I failed, because I was not insistant and didn't want to interfere with their studies in school, beside working long hours in the store I couldn't devote much time to my family.

5) No! I would want to go back to old country to live because after living here over half century I would be a stranger there, beside I want live ^{here} with my children and Grandchildren.

But I would like to go a visit for I still have 2 Sisters living in Ukraine.

As for my children it would be up to them if they wanted to go for a visit and see how ~~the~~ people live there.

No! I never regretted for leaving the old country, for here I have had a opportunity to better my living condition and educate my children - this thing were impossible in old Country.

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