

Taylor-Tot News

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HAPPY NEW YEAR !!

Wow, is it 2010 already???

No, it's been 2010 for over a month now - where has the time gone?

I don't know about the rest of you, but here in Middle Tennessee it has been downright C-O-L-D this year. I don't want to get on my soapbox, but does it really make more sense to be concerned about 'global warming' or 'global freezing'? Personally, it seems that it would be much harder to be too cold than too warm. Don't more people live in the tropics than live in the Arctic?

This issue has a real treat, the second part of Emanuel's Story. I am indebted to Ms. Rachel for her allowing us to publish the story AND for her help in composing it. You'll find it on page 2 and 3.

In our next issue, you'll find more hints about how to determine the year of your stroller. Like most manufacturers, Taylor made some subtle changes from year to year...not EVERY year, mind you, just ever so often.

I hope you enjoy this issue. If you happened to miss one of the earlier issues, you can download a copy from the 3R1 Enterprises website.

Let me know what you think - what do you like, what do you not like?

As always, if I can be of service to anyone, please let me know.

- Tom

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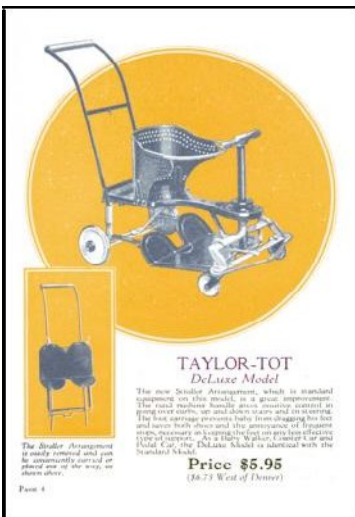
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**Rachel's dad-
Sender Mines: taken in
Neustadt, Germany**



Sender Mines' brother's restaurant in Birmingham, AL. (circa late 1930's)

Editor's note:

I wonder if it still exists?

Emanuel's Story – Part 2

My father, Sender Mines, never talked much about his life in Europe before WWII. I knew that before he immigrated to Canada in the early 1950s, met my mother, and started a new family, he had had a previous wife and two children in Lithuania. His children, my half-brother and sister, had been murdered in the Holocaust, together with the rest of the family, aside from one brother and some cousins who had emigrated to the US in the 1920s.

After my father's death in 1982, we found an unsigned, undated photo in his album of a toddler sitting on a ride-on toy. For years, we all wondered who the child was and why Dad had never shown us the picture. We assumed we would never find out.

A few years ago, I started seriously researching my family's history. I had assumed that all our records had been lost or destroyed during the Holocaust, but I was able to discover the name of my father's first wife and those of their two children, Miriam and Emanuel. When they died in 1944, Miriam had been 11, Emanuel 6.

Now I was more than ever intrigued by my father's mysterious photo. I wondered if there was anything I could do to find out the child's identity. Could he or she be one of my half-siblings? It occurred to me that the ride-on toy might be a clue. After checking around the Internet, I sent the photo to the experts at Tricycle Fetish, who identified the toy as a 1940s Taylor Tot. If they were right, the child in the picture couldn't be one of my European relatives, as by 1941 they were either dead or living under Nazi occupation.

However, I thought I'd try another opinion, and after finding Tom's site, I sent him the photo. Tom thought the ride-on toy was not a Taylor Tot, but a look-alike, possibly based on Taylor Tot's 1932 model. To both Tom and me, it made sense that a look-alike 1932 Taylor Tot could be a prop in a Lithuanian photo studio by the mid-to-late 1930s.

I will probably never know for sure who the child in the photo is. Certainly the photo couldn't have survived the war, and must have belonged to, or been sent to, a relative in the US before 1940. The child might be one of our American relatives. But if so, why did my father never show us the picture? My guess is that he found it too painful to talk about, and I think the child was my father's son – my half-brother – Emanuel.

If I am right, this is Emanuel's story:

Emanuel was born in Kaunas, Lithuania, in about 1938. His parents were Sender and Chaja Mines. Emanuel's sister, Miriam, was five when he was born. Sender was a shoemaker, and Chaja stayed at home and looked after her husband and children.

About a year after Emanuel's birth, his parents took him to have his picture taken. They didn't have much money, and studio photos were expensive, but Emanuel's father was proud of his first-born son, and wanted to show him off to his family in far-off America. He sent one photo to his brother Ben in Birmingham, Alabama.

Emanuel spent the first few years of his short life in peace. Then, on June 23, 1941, when he was three years old, German troops invaded Lithuania. Beatings and murders of Jewish citizens began immediately.

By July 10, the Jewish citizens of Kaunas, Emanuel and his family among them, were forced into the ghetto, a slum area of poor wooden houses without running water. Around this area a fence was built, and no one was allowed in or out without permission from the Nazi authorities, on pain of death. The ghetto was horribly overcrowded, food was scarce, and the first winter was one of the coldest on record, made even worse by a severe shortage of firewood. Emanuel and his sister Miriam were cold, hungry, and dirty. Even worse, that winter Sender and a group of others was deported for forced labour in Latvia. The children never saw their father again.

The children and their mother lived in the ghetto for almost three years. Despite the constant hunger, fear, and misery, the Jewish citizens of the Kaunas Ghetto managed to maintain a social and cultural life, including clandestine schools. In one of these schools, Emanuel may have learned his first letters. His mother, like the other adults, was pressed into forced labour, and Emanuel would have been cared for by Miriam and possibly his grandmother, Rode.

Then, in a two-day period, March 27-28 1944, while the adults were at their places of forced labour, the Gestapo entered the ghetto and rounded up everyone remaining – mostly children under 12 and adults too old to work. The people were dragged from their homes and hiding places, and taken to the nearby Ninth Fort in Kaunas, where they were shot. Emanuel, Miriam, and Rode were among them.

No one alive now remembers these three people. They have disappeared from history. The only trace remaining is – maybe – one studio portrait of one child, probably my brother Emanuel, taken in about 1939, in Kaunas, Lithuania. Emanuel is dressed in a fancy gown and sits on a Taylor Tot look-alike. The camera has captured him in one of the proudest and happiest moments he and his parents will ever know.

I hope you found Emanuel's Story as interesting and touching as I did.

Through life, I have found that everyone has a story. Some are profoundly touching, and some (like mine) are just an interesting testimony to a loving God.

If you'd be willing to share yours- send me an email

Till next time...

Want your Taylor-Tot story told?

All of the people receiving this issue have contacted us at 3R1 and some of you have told us really interesting stories or, if you have already told us your story and wouldn't mind it being read around the world, send us a note of permission and we'll probably get it in the next issue.

FEEDBACK WANTED:

We are sincerely interested in what YOU think about this effort.

Is it worth a read? Please let us know. Just send a reply-back or contact us at WWW.3r1enterprises.com or 3r1enterprises@bellsouth.net