



Families of Wise (Wasserman) and Toben.

My grandmother's name was Feige Hinda Wise. She was born in 1891. Her mother was named Sureh Rivka Toben. She is our known matriarch. By the time Feige was born her father was called Abraham Wise, but he was originally Abraham Wasserman. He changed his surname from Wasserman to Wise about the time of his second marriage (to Sureh Rivka). We have scant information about Abraham. Sureh and Abraham never came to the United States, but eventually all of their children did. Feige said that her country was under Russian control at the time she was born, but there were many Romanian influences, as well.

Sureh was considered very bright. Friends and family called her "Rebbitzen", although her husband was not a Rabbi. They called her that because she was wise and learned quickly. She was frequently sought out for her advice.



Sureh Rivke with three children

Kaushany, Bessarabia, beginning of 20 c

The family owned a dairy – confectioners' shop. Some items sold there were milk, cheese, and ice cream, baked goods and candies. The family had good teeth from all the calcium in the dairy products!

Sureh Rivka's father had a talent for carving wood. I own four of his carvings that have interesting designs on them. They've been handed down from daughter to daughter



since the time Sureh's father....my great-great-grandfather....made them. I was told that the blocks of wood were used to press patterns in cookie dough. Perhaps they were. There is even a little bit of dough in one of the grooves. However, my research has shown me that such carved-wood blocks were more often used to imprint designs into butter. I think that is likely, considering that butter would have been sold in the dairy shop.

At some point, Sureh Rivka fell down and broke her hip. It was an injury from which she never recovered. In modern times perhaps she could have been restored to health. One family member has estimated her time of death to be about 1909. She was not an old woman. No one in the family has ever seen her's or Abraham's graves.

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