

## TWO POSTCARDS FROM KAMENKA

(Kamenka was in Podolia Gubernia of the Russian Empire until 1917;  
today Kamenka is part of Republic of Moldova, Transnistria self-proclaimed territory)

by Ronald Killian 5.7.14

The two Kamenka, Russian Empire postcards shown here were written in the early 1900's to my grandparents MORRIS & ESTHER KILLIAN in Syracuse, NY. I include some family history to place the postcards and their partial translations in context.

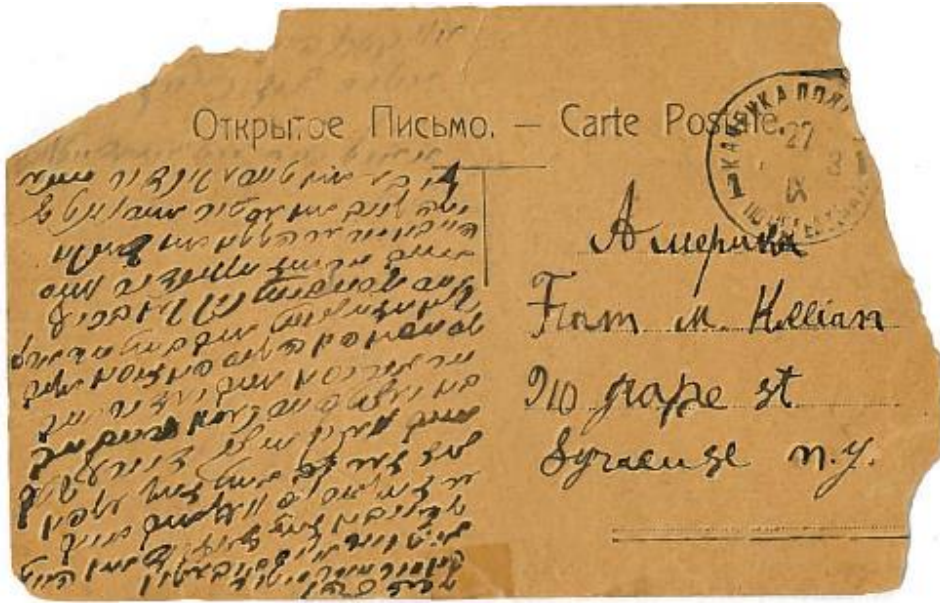
One postcard dated 1908 was written by Morris' mother SARAH KILLIAN COHEN nee AVERBUCK, my paternal great-grandmother. The other postcard dated 1913 was written by one of her daughters, RACHEL COHEN FINEMAN (later spelled FAINMAN).

Sarah married HERSH COHEN c.1885 after her first husband, SHIMON ZVI KILLIAN, died c.1883 in the Bendery area. Hersh and Sarah lived first on a farm of unknown location when they got married; he held the position of farm manager. Sometime later Hersh accepted a manager's position on another farm, this one in Kamenka.

Shimon and Sarah, his third wife, had two sons: MOSHE (aka MORRIS, my grandfather, born December 1883) and BERYL. When Sarah married Hersh, for unknown reasons she sent her two boys to live with two of her sisters, possibly back in Bendery. Morris was about 2-3 years old at that time. Morris finally joined his mother and step-father in Kamenka about 1898, at age 15. Meanwhile Hersh and Sarah had four children: ITZIK (supposedly killed in a WWII concentration camp), LIZA (lived in Bendery and married an Oxengarn), RACHEL, and ZINA. Morris immigrated in 1906 to the US (Syracuse, NY) from Kamenka via Montreal and Winnipeg, Canada and married ESTHER YELLIN in June 1909. SOPHIE was born May 1910, and my dad, SAMUEL THEODORE, was born May 1914. Sarah came to stay first with the Killians in Syracuse in March 1926, most likely after Hersh died, and then moved in 1927 to Montreal to live with her then-Canadian immigrant daughters, RACHEL COHEN FINEMAN (1892-1992) and ZINA COHEN LEVITT (d.1960).

The first postcard, date stamped 27 September 1908, displays a photo with the Russian caption "Kamenka New Park health resort [or spa], Podolsk Gubernia." In a partial translation of almost indecipherable Yiddish script, SARAH COHEN wrote: "*My dear and beloved children Moshe Leib and Esther...we received your...[postcard?]....you don't write any letters...[last two lines] from me your mother Sarah Cohen.*" Erev Rosh Hashana was observed the night of 25 September; Yom Kippur on 4 October.





Dated 27 September, 1908

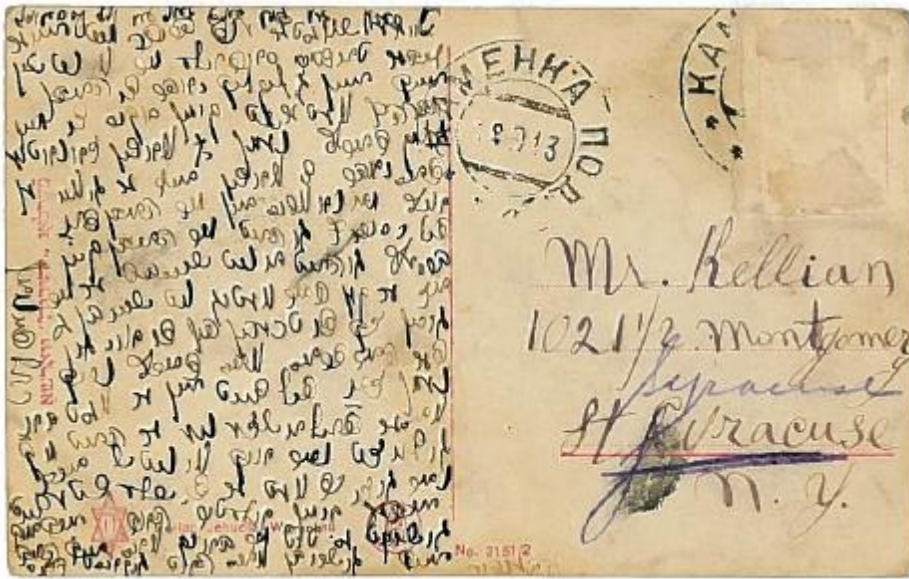
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The second postcard, postmarked September 1913, shows a photo of "shlogging kapores." Kapparat is a Jewish ritual practiced by some Jews on the eve of Yom Kippur. A person swings a live chicken or bundle of coins over one's head 3 times, symbolically transferring one's sins to the chicken or coins. The chicken then is slaughtered and donated to the poor for the pre-fast meal; the coins likewise are donated to the poor.



Two translations of the photo's Yiddish text are:  
*And a sweet New Year is coming  
 Then we "shlog kapores"  
 With all our sorrow and enemies[?]  
 With every plague and woe.*  
 OR  
*A New sweet Year comes  
 We beat the Kappores  
 With all our folks we inflict distress  
 With all evil and trouble.*

The September postmark (difficult to decipher the exact day) would be in keeping with the card presenting a Rosh Hashana/Yom Kippur greeting. In 1913 Erev Rosh Hashana was observed the night of 1 October; Yom Kippur on 11 October.



*“Dear sister and brother with your dear daughter Sofa’le. We wish you a happy year. Avraham [Avraham FINEMAN, Rachel’s husband] will come to my...it may take weeks or months...I didn’t have any letters ... to meet soon...I sent...it hurts me that...(signed on the side) RACHEL FINEMAN”*

RACHEL (or ROCHEL) was one of Hersh and Sarah’s four children. At the time of this 1913 postcard, Rachel had been married to Avraham for about a year and had visited Morris KILLIAN in Syracuse for two years around 1908 -1911, about when Morris married Esther (in June 1909). Rachel, her two children, and her sister Zina later immigrated to Montreal in 1925; Avraham had died of pneumonia in 1920. The 1913 postcard salutation makes sense, as Samuel’s sister Sophie was born in May 1910, and Samuel was not born until May 1914. “Dear sister and brother” must be partially a term of endearment; Morris was Rachel’s half-brother, Esther her new sister-in-law.