

Gins

Gins/Guins

Family History

ALEKSANDR GINS
MILITARY SERVICE
IN JAPAN
AND ROLL AS
RURAL SUPERVISOR

August 2012



GINS FAMILY VISITS
GEMBITSKIJ
COUSINS IN POLAND

*Dormition Cathedral,
Komsomolskaja Square
Khabarovsk, Russia*

Georgij Aleksandrovich
Gins survives shelling
in Khabarovsk





Gins

Gins/Guins FamilyHistory

In This Issue

Aleksandr Gins Military Career Takes Him to Japan and the Far East

The youngest son of Morits-Emil and Marija Gins makes his mark in the Russian military as a Staff Captain and Rural Superintendent in Nikolaevsk-on-the-Amur.



Marek Gembitskij, Eduard Gins, Elzbieta Gozdziwinska

Gins Family Visits Gembitskij Cousins

Fascinating news from Poland reaches us through our intrepid family researcher, Eduard Gins.

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On the cover: Dormition Cathedral, Khabarovsk,
Russia. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

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Breaking News

When we have a family story, no matter how much of a stretch it may seem, it pays to follow through and see if in fact the rumor, or at least some essential part of it, may be true. This was the case with research into the career path of Aleksandr Moritsovich-Emilievich Gins, youngest son of Morits-Emil and Marija Gins. And as we will see in this issue, what sounded like an exaggerated job description was completely understandable given new facts that have come to light.

Born in 1872 in Tulchyn, Ukraine, then part of the Russian Empire, Aleksandr was said to have been the governor of the province of Semipalatinsk, Russia, according to his son, Georgij, who immigrated to the U.S. in 1923. This information came to us from a newspaper article that appeared in a 1938 issue of the *Oregon News-Telegram*, which featured Georgij's unusual path to American citizenship (see October 2009 *Gins* newsletter for details). In addition, my grandmother, Vera Vladimirovna Gins, told me when I interviewed her in 1977 that one of her uncles was the governor of Nikolaevsk.

Both of these statements set me searching a few years ago for records or references to Aleksandr Gins as a governor in Russia before the Revolution and Civil War -- but nothing turned up. And his elegant photographic portrait taken in St. Petersburg, shown on page 2, makes Aleksandr appear to be a Civil Servant of some standing -- with decorations on his collar and a shiny badge of office worn proudly on the front of his coat. But elegant appearance aside, the handsome image of Aleksandr was just that -- a very smart looking man who posed for a photograph in 1911, by the date on the back of the photo card.



Aleksandr Moritsovich-Emilievich Gins, with son Georgij, and wife, Sophia Aleksandrovna (nee Kulchina), at Nikolaevsk-on-the-Amur River, 1914. COURTESY SERGEI GUINS COLLECTION.

However, thanks to research conducted by Eduard Gins, we've discovered some truth to the family legend. Aleksandr Gins' military service record shows that he was in a position of civil authority in 1912 as a rural Superintendent. Here is what Boris Dralyuk gleaned from Aleksandr's military record:

"The information in section 9 does indeed reveal that he was a Peasants' Superintendent (krest'ianskii nachal'nik) for the UdsK (now Nikolaevsk) uезд of the Primor'e oblast'. The same post was called Zemstvo Superintendent (zemskii nachal'nik) in European Russia; Peasants' Superintendent was used in Asian Russia. Aleksandr's duties would have included overseeing peasant activity, settling land disputes, etc. Here's how a note to one of Lenin's compositions puts it:

Rural superintendent (Zemsky Nachalnik) -- an administrative post instituted by the tsarist government in 1889 to strengthen the authority of the landlords over the peasants. The rural superintendents were appointed from among the local landed nobility and were granted extensive powers, not merely administrative but also judicial."

<http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1902/agrarian/viii.htm>

STAFF CAPTAIN ALEKSANDR GINS SERVES THE EMPIRE IN THE RUSSIAN FAR EAST

Much new information about family members who served their country in the armed forces can be gleaned from perusing their Russian military service records. Our review of the documents about Aleksandr Moritsovich-Emilievich Gins, collected by Eduard Gins, show how Aleksandr progressed from student trainee to Staff Captain, from single nobleman to married man with a young family, and finally, from army officer to rural administrator in the heart of the Russian Far East.

Aleksandr was brought up in Kiev, attended Real School (secondary school), and completed a course in Sciences at Chuguevsk Infantry Cadet school. After graduation he was made an ensign and reassigned from the 11th Infantry Regiment to the 7th Infantry Regiment. He soon became a second lieutenant and was transferred to serve in the 132nd Infantry Regiment in Bendery, in what was then Bessarabia. From there he traveled to the Kiev Fortress to work as a commandant's aide, and when he returned he was made a lieutenant as of 19 May 1901. Following this, Aleksandr was sent to join the Imperial Russian army in Manchuria, where he was appointed chief of the 'disposal of military communications' of the 1st Army.

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Aleksandr Gins in St. Petersburg, 1911. COURTESY SANDRA GLAZUNOV COLLECTION.



Map, left: Khabarovsk Krai showing the location of Harbin, Khabarovsk, and Nikolaevsk-on-Amur, where Aleksandr Gins worked as Rural Superintendent.. Khabarovsk is where son, Georgij Aleksandrovich Gins, enrolled in a Russian military academy. The academy was attacked by the Bolsheviks during the Civil War, but Georgij escaped.



Father Aleksandr Gins with sons, Vladimir (on the left), and Georgij (right). I mistakenly misidentified the sons in an earlier issue of the Gins newsletter, and now believe this to be correct. (based on Zina Glazunov's caption for this photo). COURTESY SANDRA GLAZUNOV COLLECTION.

By this time Aleksandr had married a young woman by the name of Sophia Aleksandrovna Kulchina, the daughter of a doctor. Their first son, Aleksandr, was born 16 December 1901. According to second son, Georgij, from a 1938 interview for an Oregon newspaper, the couple had four boys: Aleksandr, Georgij, and two younger brothers. Georgij, was born 8 April 1907 in Vladivostok, Russia. And we believe that one of the younger sons was Vladimir Aleksandrovich Gins, who may have been born in 1913 (but more on him on the next page). We do not yet know the age or identify of the youngest son.

When Aleksandr, the father, completed his four-month sick leave, presumably in 1906, he was transferred to the 9th Siberian Rifle Regiment. He appears to have traveled with a group of men from Zhimerynka, now in the Ukraine, to Nikolsk-Ussuri in the Far East, near to Nikolaevsk-on-the-Amur.

We do not have a detailed record of what transpired in the years between 1906 and 1912, but by June 1912, Aleksandr submitted a request to the Vladivostok Military Governor to transfer from the



Military order of St. Anne, 3rd class.

infantry to the militia in the Maritime Region, Uda District.. Aleksandr also adds that as of May 1912, he was ordered by the Governor-General of the Primor'e to become the Rural Superintendent in Nikolaevsk. The request for an assignment with the militia was approved. From this point, 1912, Aleksandr's military service record from this particular archive ends. We do have additional information from son Georgij, on the next page.

Aleksandr Gins Serves in the Far East *(continued)*

Once in Russian-occupied Manchuria, Aleksandr became the assistant commandant of a village, and served in the Office of the General in Chief. He was once again promoted, this time to his final rank of Staff Captain.

The Russo-Japanese war of 1904-1905, fought over Manchuria and Korea, gave Aleksandr the opportunity to earn two medals for his participation in 'campaigns against the enemy' from August 30, 1904 to December 2, 1905: the Order of St. Stanislaus, 3rd class, and the Order of St. Anne, 3rd class. Subsequent to the war with the Japanese, which ended with Russia's unfortunate defeat, Aleksandr took a four-month leave of absence with pay, and was able to travel to cities throughout the Empire.

Continued on page 3



View of Nikolaevsk-on-Amur from the west end of town, about 1900. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

Aleksandr Gins Serves in the Far East *(continued)*

We have discussed the 1938 Oregon newspaper article about the harrowing journey of Georgij Aleksandrovich Gins (son of Aleksandr and Sophia), who left Vladivostok during the Russian Civil War when he was just 16 and arrived in the U.S., by way of the Philippines in 1923, in a previous 2009 *Gins* family newsletter. But what was left out of our review of that article was the happy news about Georgij's parents, who he was separated from when he attended the Russian military academy in Khabarovsk, and the school was shelled by the revolutionists.

During the Civil War in 1923, while Georgij was in the academy, he said that, "My folks were in a white army stronghold in the Mongolian desert then -- my father had been governor of the province of Semipalatinsk -- and when I could not reach them, I joined the white army in Vladivostok."

"Now that I am a citizen," Georgij told the newspaper reporter in 1938, "I shall try to bring my parents here for a visit. Their lives were spared, I learned, and they are still in Russia with my two younger brothers. I have an older brother in Shanghai."

Sadly, it appears that fate was not so kind to one of Georgij's younger brothers, Vladimir. From records unearthed by Eduard Gins, we have learned that a Vladimir A. Gins, born 1913, was with a Red Army mortar unit and was listed among the missing junior officers and soldiers of the 1106th Infantry Regiment during the August 4 - August 28, 1942 battle with the Germans. Vladimir Gins address is recorded as Alma-Ata, Lesnaya, d. 108, and his next of kin was an aunt, Anna Pavlovna Tokmacheva, also at the same address. The burial place for soldiers lost during these battles is the forest zone in Kamenskaya region, Zubtsov area.

We do not have absolute confirmation that this Vladimir Gins was the son of Aleksandr and Sophia Gins, and brother to Georgij, but

the photograph of the father and two sons that we have from the collection of Sandra Glazunov, through her mother-in-law, Zina Glazunova, did have a caption of "Vladimir Aleksandrovich" on the back of the image. And Vladimir's last address in Alma-Ata (now called Almaty, in Kazakhstan), is near to Semipalatinsk (now known as Semey, in Kazakhstan), where Georgij indicated that he father held an administrative post. Both cities are now near the northeastern border of Kazakhstan and Siberia. And we may

yet be able to confirm our hypothesis that Vladimir is our Gins relative -- since Eduard has been in contact with someone online who is a cousin of the aunt who lived with Vladimir in Alma Ata in 1942. Maybe it will turn out that we have Gins relatives who are living in Kazakhstan, particularly if the fourth Gins brother managed to survive the Revolution, Civil War, and World War II. If our Gembitskij relatives could survive and thrive in Poland during this period, then why not a Gins man?

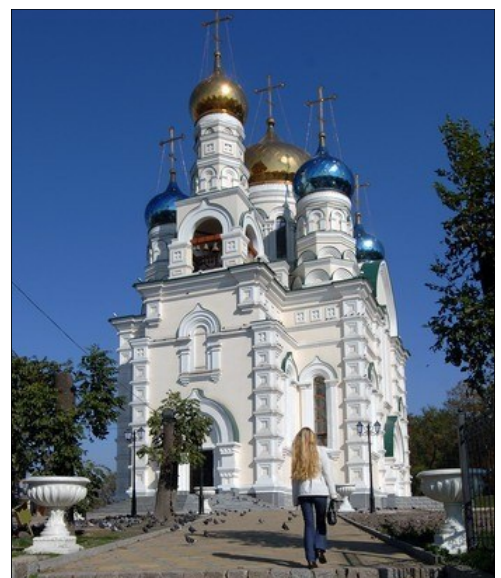
RGVIA, f. 409, op. 2, d. 12, k. 048

TSAMO, f. 1645, op. 2, d. 12, k. 3211

Oregon News Telegram. "Mr. and Mrs. George Guins: Wife Learns All About Husband in Newspaper." 1938.



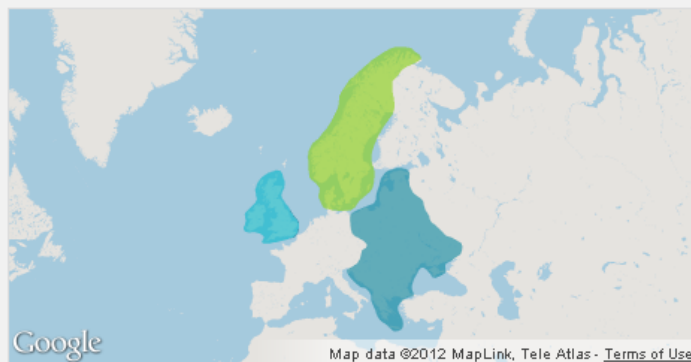
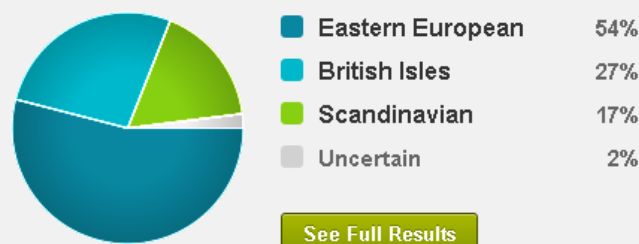
American troops in Vladivostok parading before the building occupied by the staff of the Czechoslovaks. Japanese marines are standing to attention as they march by. Siberia, August 1918. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.



Church of Our Lady's Protection, Vladivostok, 2008. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS.

AncestryDNA Results

Your genetic ethnicity reveals where your ancestors lived hundreds—perhaps even thousands—of years ago.



Ancestry.Com DNA Analysis Reveals Susan Morris' Genetic Ethnicity

Always looking for new ways to expand the search and explore my family background, I decided in June to take a new DNA test offered by Ancestry.com to see what their geneticists would find in terms of my genetic ethnicity. I was intrigued by the prospect of taking this test, since it explored the entire genome (autosomal DNA), not just the mDNA, or maternal mitochondrial DNA, that I had examined in the past through National Geographic's Genographic project. The claim of this new Ancestry.com DNA test was that it would analyze 700,000 locations on the entire genome -- all 23 pairs of chromosomes -- and would compare my results with those in a database of people from around the world. The test was simple (saliva sample), relatively inexpensive (a one-day job working at a polling place in June covered the cost), and the results came in after a month.

The analysis I received had elements that were anticipated and quite surprising. The largest percentage of my genetic heritage came as Eastern European (from my father, Harry Bekkar, son of Vera Vladimirovna Gins), while my mother's contribution showed up in ancestry from the British Isles, at 27%, and also from Scandinavia, at 17%! This was completely unexpected, since my mother's family background is primarily British, Welsh, Irish, and French (that I am aware of, to date). However, as I began to read the explanation of the Scandinavian ethnicity, I realized that the Vikings could easily have contributed their genes in many places where my ancestors lived: Russia, England, and France.

An additional feature of this test is a personal DNA web page with a display of other Ancestry.com members who are likely to be relatives (usually 4th - 6th cousins) because of commonalities in genetic makeup. I am going to contact some of these folks to see where we might be connected, back several generations or more. And I will certainly let all of you know if I find additional long-lost Gins cousins through this genetic-cousins search technique!

Following are descriptions from the Ancestry.com DNA site about

the genetic ethnic groups that many of us likely share:

About Eastern European Ethnicity

MODERN DAY LOCATION

Poland, Greece, Macedonia, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Belarus, Moldova, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Belarus, Kosovo.

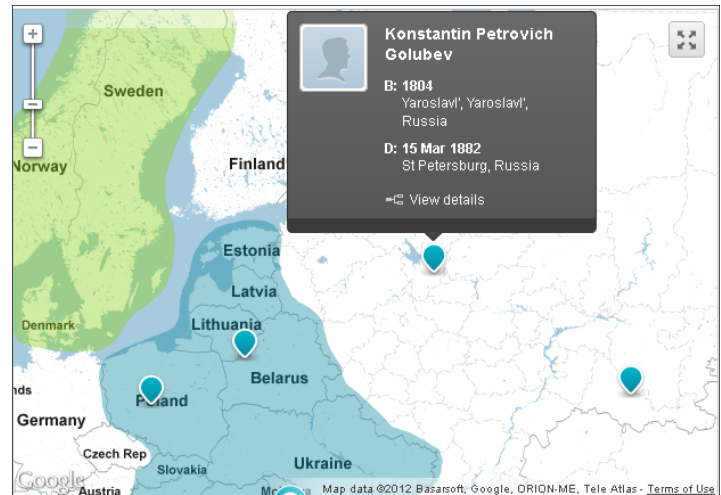
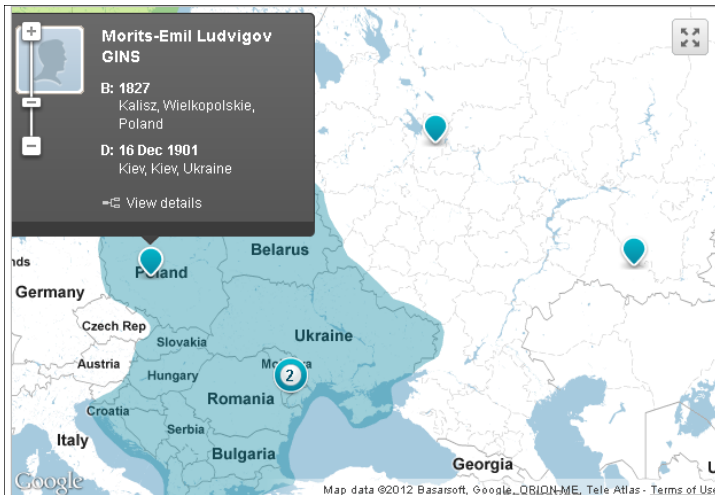
ABOUT YOUR REGION

Your ethnic profile points to Eastern Europe, which is a region stretching from the Baltic Sea in the north to the Mediterranean in the south. It consists primarily of former "Eastern Bloc" nations that were either aligned with or occupied by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The Baltic states—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—as well as Belarus and Ukraine were annexed directly into the USSR. While Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria were satellite states as members of the Warsaw Pact. Also part of the region are the nations of the former Yugoslavia—Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo, and Macedonia. Albania and Greece sit at the southern end of the region, bordering the Mediterranean.

The area is considered by many ethnologists to be the homeland of the Slavic people. Most of the nations in the region speak a Slavic language, which spread north and east into Russia and south toward the Balkans in the 5th and 6th centuries.

Perhaps the most famous resident of the area is Greece. From the ancient Mycenaeans and the Homeric epics of the Trojan War to the famous cities of Athens and Thebes, the fearsome Spartans to Alexander the Great—Greek culture and history laid the foundation for Roman, European, and, ultimately, western culture as a whole.

In the 1400s, the Ottoman Turks conquered the remnants of the Byzantine Empire and throughout the 1500s expanded deep into Eastern Europe, occupying the entire southern region up to Hungary, Romania, and parts of Ukraine. As a result, there are scattered



MIGRATIONS INTO THIS REGION

After the Last Glacial Period 15,000 years ago, populations expanded onto the eastern European plain from the Balkans and Black Sea as ice and tundra retreated. These Eastern Europeans were the first of the Neolithic farming culture that entered the Balkans about 9,000 years ago from the Middle East. In fact, individuals from southeastern Europe have inherited a higher proportion of Middle Eastern ancestry than other European individuals. About 2,000-3,000 years ago, the ancestors of Magyars migrated from the Ural Mountains in Russia toward present-day Hungary. Although they contribute their unique language to the region, their genetic impact may have been small.

MIGRATIONS FROM THIS REGION

About 2,300 years ago, the height of the Eastern European influence may have been the rise of the Greeks and their Hellenistic empire following the death of Alexander the Great. Their empire encompassed Italy, Turkey and even stretched all the way to northern India. Among the southeastern populations, Greeks in particular share elevated ancestry with the Middle East, potentially due to relatively recent migrations.

About Scandinavian Ethnicity

MODERN DAY LOCATION: NORWAY, SWEDEN, DENMARK

ABOUT YOUR REGION

Looks like you may have some Viking blood in you. Your genetic ethnicity ties you to Scandinavia, which includes the modern-day nations of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. While the Vikings were feared by the coastal towns of medieval Europe as seaborne raiders and violent pillagers, they were also well-travelled merchants and ambitious explorers. They raided the Mediterranean coast of Africa, settled areas as far south as the Black Sea, and traded with the Byzantine Empire. And it was a Norse sailor, Leif Ericson, who is credited with being the first European to travel to North America—500 years before Columbus.

And it wasn't just the Vikings who had an irrepressible urge for adventure. In the days of the mighty Roman Empire, the Goths, originally from Sweden, wandered south and settled in what is now eastern Germany. In the year 410, they invaded and sacked Rome, setting the stage for the decline and fall of the Western Roman Empire.

In the more recent past, the Scandinavian nations have embraced a new identity. Considering their neutrality during the World Wars, high quality of life, and relatively egalitarian societies, they are known more for their peaceful ways than their ancient Viking lineage might suggest.

MIGRATIONS INTO THIS REGION

As the glaciers retreated from Northern Europe, roaming groups of hunter-gatherers from Southern Europe followed reindeer herds inland and marine resources along the Scandinavian coast. Neolithic farmers eventually settled the region beginning about 6,000 years ago. However, the tradition of hunting and reindeer-herding remains among the Sami people of northern Scandinavia. The Sami formerly occupied much of northern Scandinavia and Russia, and likely had connections with the Volga-Ural region (where there are other languages similar to Finnish and Sami).

MIGRATIONS FROM THIS REGION

The rise of the Viking culture spread Scandinavian ancestry far throughout Europe. Their earliest coastal voyages took them to Scotland, northeastern England and established the settlement of Dublin, Ireland. As their power continued to grow, the Vikings spread farther afield, down the Volga River in Russia, to the coast of France and Spain. But perhaps their most famous accomplishments were the oceanic voyages across the Atlantic, establishing villages in Iceland and Greenland and exploring the northern coast of Canada. Few, if any of the early Scandinavian settlers, are thought to have survived in the Americas. However, Iceland remains a flourishing post of Scandinavian language and culture.



From left: Mariusz Gozdziwiska (husband of Elzbieta), Marek Gembitskij, Elzbieta Gozdziwiska, Lena Gina, Krzysztof Gembitskij, his wife, Victoria, and son, Peter.
ALL PHOTOS FROM VILNIUS AND POLAND: COURTESY EDUARD GINS.

RUSSIAN GINS FAMILY VISITS POLISH GEMBITSKIJ RELATIVES

We are extraordinarily pleased to welcome our Polish cousins, seen in these photographs, to our Gins family publication! Eduard and Lena Gins from Moscow met our new-found Gembitskij relatives in Poland earlier this month. We are connected to them through Anna Gembitskaja (nee Gins), daughter of Morits-Emil and Marija.



Home of Mikhail Gembitskij and family in Vilnius, Lithuania.



Residence of Vladimir Gins and family in Vilnius, Lithuania.



From left: Mariusz Gozdziwinski, Marek Gembitskij, Eduard Gins, and Elzbieta Gozdziwinski. PHOTOS ON THIS PAGE COURTESY OF EDUARD GINS.

Gembitskij and Gins Families Gather in Poland

With translation by Boris Dralyuk, Ph.D.

Our Polish relatives have continued to enrich our lives by sharing what they know of our Gins family history. This time, during Eduard and Lena's recent trip to Vilnius, Lithuania, and Warsaw, Lodz, and Kalisz, Poland, they were allowed to copy a fascinating photograph of the "Three Vladimirs" and a letter from Olga Vladimirovna Gins, daughter of Vladimir Gins and niece to Anna Gembitskaja. Eduard learned through this letter and through conversations with our Gembitskij cousins, that the family of Vladimir Gins was on very friendly terms with that of Mikhail and Anna Gembitskaja (who was Vladimir's sister). After the Gins family moved away from Vilnius where both families lived for a time, the family members maintained contact. Apparently Olga Gins, who married a gentleman by the name of Novikov, continued a correspondence up to 1960. She and husband and son, Vadim, lived in Moscow, and so did her mother, Varvara Vasilevna Gins (*nee Miroevskaja*), who died in 1951. And we have learned that Anna and Vladimir's youngest sister, Evgenija Gins, also lived in Moscow with her husband. She appears to have died in 1953 and he passed away in 1956. This is the first time that we have any information about Evgenija, other than her birth date, 1875, in Tulchyn, Ukraine, Russian Empire. We will explore more new findings in the next issue of the *Gins* magazine.



Above is a 1935 photograph that shows three generations of Vladimir family members from an album belonging to our Gembitskij relatives. According to Boris Dralyuk, the caption reads "Vladimir's maternal cousin with his first little son Vladimir". The title above the picture reads "Three Vladimirs". Right: Vladimir Gins in 1912. So then the photo above shows Vladimir Gins as a 71-year old, with his nephew, Vladimir Gembitskij, and Vladimir Gembitskij's infant son, Vladimir.



Correspondence

Nina Konstantinovna Gins Writes of Hardship and Hunger Following the Revolution

Transcribed by Irina Bass, translation by Vicky Mlyniec

This translation of a letter written by Nina Gins to her sister-in-law, Julija, gives us a glimpse of the very difficult times Nina experienced in the wake of the Revolution. She shares news about family, friends, and her living arrangements, and mourns the loss of her Uncle Volodya (Vladimir Gins, whose family believed that he died in a train wreck near Omsk). Nina asks Julija to kiss her cousin, Vera (my grandmother, Vera Vladimirovna Gins), and Vera's little son, for her, indicating that this letter was written after Vera and son, Igor (later known as Harry Bekkar), arrived to stay briefly with Georgij Gins and family in Harbin in 1920.

November 19 (presumably 1920)

My dear, a letter from you again and this time with news about Kolja, reviving the hope that he is not dead. We will wait with impatience for further information. Milja, my dear one, you still have not forgotten me and gladdened us with a long letter, so I learned something about all of you, although Zhorzik was awfully brief.

Your questions I've previously answered. The summer of 1918 I spent at home, and in August, as usual went to Petrograd. You know that I never relish a long sojourn in Kishinev, and I was sorry to leave all that behind on the 9th l(ine). The trip was difficult, but I managed to get quite comfortable on a Ukrainian train pulling stockpiles of reserves for the famine. Life was very hard, but I didn't feel it at first: over the summer I received a lot of money from the gymnasium and so bought all sorts of things for the apartment – carpets, flowers, Palm tree and Araucaria, very large – wash basin for tenants, dishes, tablecloths. In a word, started to acquire things to set up a real household. Rooms rented, leaving myself the dining room and neighboring room; I provided lunch to two ladies and ordered provisions from Okhta. Then things became more difficult, the cost of living rose prohibitively, Masha's upkeep took up about half the earnings. To dine at home was impossible, so we switched to dinners at society dining rooms, i.e. a diet of herring and dried fish with almost no bread. I began to swell with hunger, that is, from lack of fat. Imagine, after fish oil, which is considered a delicacy, we had to switch to castor oil, in which everything is fried – I really could not eat, and Masha finished the bottle. Instead of bread we were given oats, like horses. The only help was the gymnasium, which as a gift fed the children breakfast and for a small fee the teachers.

Frosts were terrible, but I stockpiled wood from the spring and kept the temperature at 8 degrees, and in the gymnasium we sat in fur coats. Trams often stopped running and several times I and a co-worker went on foot – a 2 ½ hour walk each way. Light was provided during day and certain hours; kerosene could be gotten with difficulty. Saccharine replaced sugar, but this has a bad effect on health. Many died from typhus and Spanish flu – m-m Martynova, Sophia Alex. – wife (Genya?)

But by some people this need is not noticed. I went to see Boris once or twice -- he manages Const. School, which they turned into a military school. They all have a wonderful lunch, heat, light, beautiful -- only Boris himself made a depressing impression, apparently suffering from having changed his convictions.

In Tver all was well. About the Vasitskijs, I know only that the old lady died. The Trisvjatskijs are fine; Marya Alex. often came to me and ----, Va___ has a good position. Often visited the Martynovs.

You wouldn't have recognized "the tomato," he has become a thin graceful youth.

He tried to leave, but became convinced that nowhere was any better and leaving the children at home with relatives in the South returned to Petrograd with his wife. Boldyr and Mokrsjanskij have long been in the Crimea. He lectured in Sevastopol, now probably has work. I've often met with Janovich – Zina died from childbirth. Tanya and Andrei are working and support their mother. Their spirits are heavy, M. Andr. was getting ready to go to Odessa to Natasha and was afraid to leave Andrei, who as a former officer was in danger.

To return to myself, when I saw that I absolutely did not have enough

to support the both of us, I had to give up a maid, more so because doing so put me into the first category with an increased ration. I invited her to live with me and to go out to work. I paid her 100 roubles because she cleaned the room, from the tenants she received another 50 roubles, she went to clean 14 and there had breakfast and money and so she lived. I immediately felt better, it was possible to buy oil, crackers and not eat "durand". It was already spring. On the 6th June, and I left Petrograd, assuming I would return in the winter. It's a pity to throw everything to the mercy of fate. Although Masha is there and remained and pledged that all will follow as in years gone by, she has changed quite a bit from the last time, and then with her too any kind of misfortune could befall her. I know that after my departure she rented even my room, I was told by those who left after me, so she provided material and maybe it will be saved up to ra___ all our return? – But better to hope for less. Leaving, I couldn't take anything valuable with me and even left my documents. I got to Tiraspol quickly and there I was stuck until October; impossible to travel in Russia, or in Bessarabia. I endured much while not reaching home. Now I'm working, not running around giving private lessons, but giving them at home; busy all day and although I am not bored, I also don't see any joy.

It's sad for us, mama works in the house, for half a year we've been without servants, it's impossible to find help; (now they are hired at 150 Lei a month). She cleaned for everyone, on her feet the whole day, lays down at 12 o'clock, gets up at 6:00, she's grown thin and aged terribly. Perhaps it will be easier now. Aunt Vera longs for independent life, tired of huddling in that room with the trunks, and her health has weakened. Aunt Lelya still spoils life for us. Aunt Shura is the same, only daily expends great effort and cleans her room; in the evenings, four sisters come to us and play 66. And Nadia is bankrupt. However Ljuba thrives in the society of the young, and sent Yuri to study in Grenoble. Uncle Sasha chose the ground (died?). -Zhenya married, Misha was married to Talochka Damir, Vasja has gone to work. Uncle Fedya has a daughter who is a little monster. Kisa is married and somewhere in Russia. Tanya works. I often meet with Olya Shim. who has an extremely sweet boy. Well, it seems I have written about everyone. I am very sorry about Uncle Volodja. Give Vera and her little son a kiss from me—how did she come to you? Now you have to get close to those families which we knew before only through hearsay. I am very sorry that I did not have to travel as you, but it's good for mama that I'm home. If only life would somehow change here, but that is impossible until we sell the House and divide the inheritance and they won't decide that without Uncle Leopold. If mama were more forceful it would all be possible, but she is afraid of quarrels and prefers to bear the brunt. It's bad to be a good man. I have visited the Prokhmitskijs – Sofya Iv. has been in bed for several months, and Marja Petrovna is quite well. She has written you about her affairs. I am very glad that Vsevochka and Seryozha are getting a good education, and will they learn music? I've been studying a bit of Romanian, English I know little because from the last time (I studied) I have hardly read, I don't have a dictionary here, but light novels I still understand. We have a rainy autumn and do not feel like going out anywhere, and student exercise books take up a lot of time.

Write, my dear ones. How I wish I could see you all. I kiss you firmly, dear ___ Julia.

Loving you.

Nina.



Nina Konstantinovna Gins,
with mother, Ekaterina, and
brothers Georgij, Dmitrij, and
Nikolaj in Kishinev; and in por-
traits from St. Petersburg. COURTESY
SERGEI GUINS COLLECTION

