

REFUGEE IN DULUTH TELLS OF WAR NURSERY

Father Sees Son for First Time When Wife and Boy Arrive Here.

Fortzugserlaubnis No. 096

Dem durch die nebenstehend aufgeklebte Photographie gekennzeichneten Einwohner

Familiennam: Lapinska
 Vorname: Gittel
 Wohnort: Wilna
 Alter: 25 Jahre
 Größe: 1 m 62 cm
 Haare: _____
 Gewerbe: _____
 Religion: mosaisch
 Familienstand: Mutter



(sowie seinen Familienangehörigen)

MRS. LAPINSKY AND CHILD.
 Portion of Passport Shown.

Recounting Poland's misery and penury after being stripped by invading Teutons, the intense suffering and persecution under unyielding military rule, Mrs. Gittel Lapinsky, age 23, who fled from Wilna, Russia, has brought to Duluth an uncensored account of war atrocities.

She tells of the killing of innocent children, the assaults by soldiers on impoverished girls, the horrors of aerial bombardment, the peace and prosperity of her country before the war and the perils of a journey with hundreds of women refugees across war ridden parts of Russia and Germany to Holland.

Her story is one of tears. She told of the wretched condition of Jews of Wilna and broke into sobs. Mrs. Lapinsky arrived in Duluth with her two-year-old son, Lyle, after a hazardous journey of seven weeks.

Mrs. Lapinsky was joined by her husband, Phillip Lapinsky, who for the last two years, has resided in St. Paul. It was a happy family reunion they enjoyed at the home of N. A. Friedman, 220 West Fourth street yesterday.

The father saw his son for the first time. He left Russia two years ago, expecting his wife to follow in a few months. The time for leaving was delayed until war interfered. The child was reared amid gun smoke, bursting shells and military rule.

Young girls were left behind when the Russians fled before the Germans. Thousands of them were forced to beg on the streets, according to Mrs. Lapinsky and, from dire poverty, became victims of the invading soldiers. Rather than support the aged inmates of charitable institutions, German officers suggested the killing of helpless people. Boys ranging from 12 to 20 years of age, who were too young or weak to bear arms, were dragged from their homes to work as long as 18 hours a day building trenches and roads for the Germans. Homes were invaded, innocent children blown to bits by bombs, stores ransacked and the country stripped of food. These are a few of the facts told by the refugee.

"God is Poland's only support," said Mrs. Lapinsky. "Men crazed by war, insane from horror, are stripped of all sense of shame and honor. Women are not safe on the streets of Wilna. The poverty, the hunger, and suffering cannot be told in bare words.

"Just before war was declared conditions in Russia were better than for years," said Mrs. Lapinsky, "the factories were busy and every one could secure profitable employment. A condition of prosperity prevailed for the

first time in a decade. Hard as the Russian rule has always been, and the lack of liberty in thought, we could save a ruble. The laboring class was happy. Everyone was prosperous.

"In the rural districts prosperity was the rule rather than the exception, as in previous years. The farmer had good crops and the grain brought good prices," said the woman wistfully.

"Then the war came. With the calling out of the first reserves to the Russian army, the mobilization orders were carried out with a happy spirit. But the mobilization order left in its wake nothing but desolation, wretchedness, pestilence and disease. The flower of our race left the community, our young and middle-aged men being mobilized to the last. Only the old men and children and women were left to guard the homes. All factories were closed. The farmer had no products to sell, prices rose and even bread was a luxury.

"Then came the terrible days when, to go out on the street, meant possible death. German aeroplanes and Zeppelins arrived, and brought with them those horrible, unspeakable conditions, when we all lived in constant fear of death. Bombs fell in the principal streets, tearing asunder buildings and bringing death to our very doors.

"A bomb from one aeroplane fell in a courtyard less than 100 feet from our home. Half a dozen innocent children were playing there and—not one of those children could be found after the explosion. They simply disappeared. I saw a bomb strike a hack. A hole large enough to hold a good-sized house was blown in the street and the horse, driver, occupant and hack were blown to pieces. The din and noise during the bombardment drove many people insane.

"Then the city was deserted by the Russians and the Germans took charge, and with them, came atrocities unknown before.

"My trip through Germany and Holland was eventful but not like the harrowing experience in Wilna. I finally succeeded in boarding a Dutch vessel at Rotterdam and proceeded to this country. Many times while in midocean our steamer was stopped and searched by British cruisers. Even papers of passengers were fully examined. There were no passengers except old men, women and children and we were deathly afraid of a German submarine.

"You Americans are wonderful. The poor here live better than the rich in Wilna. The happiest moment of my life was when I saw New York and knew that I was soon to join my husband."