



ENCOUNTERS OF

MR. MANCHESTER



AN INTERVIEW WITH
REB ZALMON JAFFE'S
ELDEST GRANDSON,
RABBI YOSSE LEW

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(TWINSBURG, OH)

לזכות
החתן הרה"ת ר' דוד אליהו
והכלה המהוללה מרת
שטערנא שרה איידעלמאן
לרגל נישואיהם ר"ח ניסן ה'תשפ"ה

נדפס ע"י זקניהם
ר' צבי אברהם וזוגתו מרת חנה שיחיו
מאראנץ

During my childhood visits to the Rebbe, I came with a special *yichus*. I was the grandson of Mr. Zalmon Jaffe, or, as the Rebbe would often call him, Mr. Manchester.

My Zaide received incredible *kiruvim* from the Rebbe. He would have hours-long *yechidusen*. He was invited to all of the Yom Tov meals in the Friediker Rebbe's apartment. He would ask the Rebbe to farbreng on regular Shabbosim during his visits, and the Rebbe acquiesced almost every time.

The Rebbe would actually interrupt *sichos* to speak to him—he was the official 'counter of the Rashi questions' during his visits, and the Rebbe would stop two or three times during the Rashi Sichos to ask him how many questions had been enumerated.

Everyone knew that when Mr. Jaffe arrived, he brought with him a special spirit. He was naturally a boisterous and lively person, and he made sure to bring that to 770 and the Rebbe. His greatest pleasure was to bring a smile to the Rebbe's holy face.

Perhaps his greatest claim to fame, at least for the younger generation of today, are his diaries. He recorded his experiences in 770 in vivid detail, with humor and candor. This is no dry *yoman*. He included everything—how he sometimes struggled with the crowds at his farbrengen place, how people criticized him for singing too much during davening, and all the other comedy that ensued as a British gentleman tried to acclimate to the very different atmosphere of 770.

Today, those diaries are an invaluable treasure. An entire generation of Lubavitchers has been raised on the republished diaries.

There are some changes. The renditions of *sichos* are corrected, the language is polished, and most importantly, a little bit more discretion was introduced. When my brother Pinny spoke to him about republishing his diaries shortly before his passing, he asked that we take out the edge. In his youth, he had been on a crusade. If someone offended him in 770, he didn't mind including the story and airing his criticisms in his diary, especially when it was not being widely distributed. When he heard that it was going to be published, he asked that we employ more discretion.

ABOUT THE PICTURE:
MR. JAFFE TAKES NOTES
DURING THE REBBE'S
ADDRESS AT A CHILDREN'S
RALLY, SIVAN 5742.

MY GRANDFATHER'S ORIGINS

My grandfather had the image of a *balebatishe* Yid, someone who was perhaps a *mekurav* to Chassidus, but he actually had deep roots in Lubavitch.

He was named after his maternal grandfather, Reb Shneur Zalmon Adelman, who was a Chabad Chossid from the town of Rakshik near Vilna, an important Chabad community in the old country. Reb Zalmon had personally traveled to the Rebbe Maharash and Rebbe Rashab in Lubavitch. When his children arrived in Manchester, they established “Kahal Chassidim,” a Nusach Ari shul where the *rav* was my grandfather’s uncle, Reb Shmuel Rein, himself a *Tomim* who had learned in Lubavitch.

However, Manchester was very far from the centers of Chassidim, and the family became attenuated to English norms. My grandfather grew up going to public school and attending cheder for a few hours in the afternoons. His father, Zev Jaffe, was a simple Manchester Jew (originally from Russia) who maintained a frum home and kept Torah and Mitzvos to the best of his abilities. Despite attending a Chabad shul, my grandfather (as a teenager) didn’t see himself as a Lubavitcher; he likely didn’t even understand what that meant. He knew there was a Rebbe far away in Poland and then in America, but it had very little relevance.

The extent of his ‘Lubavitch’ experience was that every week, over herring and pickles at the Shalosh Seudos, Reb Shmuel Rein would repeat a *maamar*. My grandfather would say that to him, as a teenager, it sounded like a long, mangled stream of gibberish. He didn’t understand a word, and it felt utterly irrelevant.

The youth didn’t feel engaged. On Yud-Tes Kislev, there



PINNY LEW

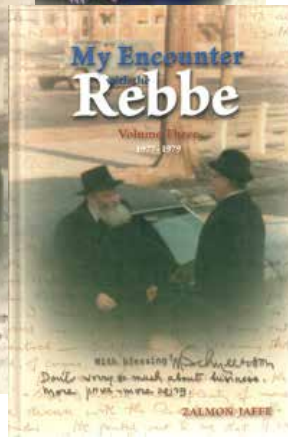
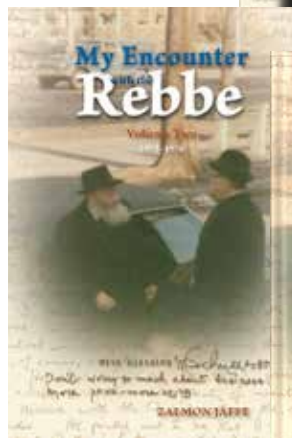
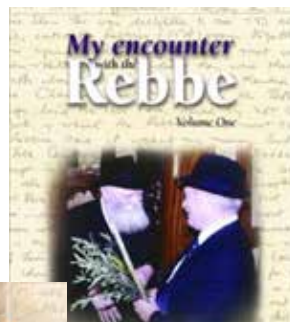
MR. JAFFE’S MATERNAL GRANDFATHER, REB SHNEUR ZALMON ADELMAN. CIRCA 5665.

would be a big *farbrengen* and the older folks would say a lot of *l’chaim*, and then Reb Shmuel Rein would again review a *maamar*. There would also be a *farbrengen* on Simchas Torah and on Purim. But otherwise, there wasn’t much excitement in that shul at all. It was mostly monotony. That’s how his entire childhood and early adulthood passed.

One day, Reb Bentche Shemtov arrived in Manchester. He found my grandfather and they immediately connected. They were kindred spirits. Reb Bentche was wild and loud and abrasive; he was exactly what England needed at the time; he was afraid of nothing, and he never took no for an answer. My grandfather immediately fell in love with him, and Reb Bentche became his mentor.

My grandmother, Roselyn Jaffe, was known for maintaining a kosher kitchen of the highest standards at a time when there were no kosher establishments in Manchester. Reb Bentche was very particular about where he would eat, so the Jaffe home became his base whenever he traveled to our part of the country. He used to say, “I don’t trust anyone in England except for Roselyn Jaffe.”

THE REPUBLISHED DIARIES OF MR. ZALMON JAFFE. THREE VOLUMES HAVE BEEN PRINTED TO DATE.



SCAN HERE FOR THE FULL ARCHIVE OF REB ZALMON'S ENCOUNTERS



REB BENTZION SHEMTOV WITH MR. JAFFE ON THEIR WAY TO THE REBBE IN THE SUMMER OF 5722.

Reb Bentche would always tell my grandfather to write to the Rebbe, but my grandfather never understood why. To him, the Rebbe was a fine and illustrious person living far away in America, and, while he did correspond on behalf of the shul, he didn't appreciate why Reb Bentche was urging him to write so often.

The turning point came on 13 Sivan 5718, when a terrible tragedy befell the family.

My grandfather's five-year-old *ben zekunim*, Gedalia, was killed in a car crash. This sweet boy had joined the family almost ten years after the birth of their second child, my mother, and he was the center of attention for the entire extended Jaffe family. When his life ended so tragically, everyone was terribly broken, and my grandparents were inconsolable.

Reb Bentche came to visit, and he told my grandparents unequivocally that they must travel to the Rebbe. Only the Rebbe will be able to console you, he told them. He was relentless, and finally, they agreed.

In Teves 5719, they traveled by ship to New York. They spent a week in New York, three weeks on vacation in Miami, and a week again in New York on their way back. During each visit, they had a three-hour *yechidus* with the Rebbe. At the first *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked them in great depth about every detail of their personal lives, and during the second *yechidus*, the Rebbe focused on the state of Yiddishkeit in Manchester, debriefing my grandfather about every detail in the city. They attended the Rebbe's

farbrengen, and they soaked in the atmosphere at 770.

That visit changed their lives forever. They were absolutely hooked. They became devoted Chassidim for the rest of their lives.

“ALL MY CHILDREN ARE CHASSIDIM”

Seeing the life and vibrancy of Yiddishkeit near the Rebbe in 770, my grandfather decided that his son, Avraham, needed to enroll in Tomchei Temimim in 770 after he graduated high school. That was easier said than done. A high school graduate from Manchester did not have the proper background in *Limudei Kodesh* to enroll in Tomchei Temimim, as the *hanhala* made clear to my grandfather in their rejection letter.

But my grandfather wasn't one to take no for an answer. He wrote to the Rebbe about the matter, and the next time the *hanhala* went into *yechidus*, the Rebbe asked them to accept my uncle nonetheless.

His time in 770 transformed him from a Manchester teenager into a fiery Chossid, and the Rebbe instructed that he learn *semicha* and become the *rav* of Kahal Chassidim. At first, he was dumbfounded; given his background, how was he supposed to obtain *semicha*? But the Rebbe directed him to *rabbanim* for *shimush* and guided him through the process.

The transformation was remarkable; in his first years, he needed constant tutoring, but by the time he left, he was a real *chassidisher yungerman*, *semicha* in hand, ready to go on the Rebbe's *shlichus*. My mother followed him to New York a short time later. Before you knew it, the entire family were the Rebbe's Chassidim.

In his old age, my grandfather would often say, “I've had a good life—all my children are Chassidim of the Rebbe. There's nothing more I can ask for.”

THE CHARTER

In 5721, Satmar Chassidim in London organized a charter flight to New York to visit the Satmar Rebbe. When my grandfather heard about it, he immediately thought, “We need to make a charter to the Rebbe.”

It was a very complex endeavor. The plane had 118 seats, and there weren't that many Lubavitchers in the entire country, so they advertised the trip to the entire Jewish community. Many travelers joined to see their relatives in America, whom they hadn't seen since their

days in Russia. There was an endless list of obstacles, but in the end, he was successful. An entire plane of Jews took off from London heading to New York.

This group was so unprecedented that the Rebbe held an official *kabbalas ponim* for the entire group when they arrived. They were scheduled to arrive in the evening, but with transatlantic air travel in its infancy, there was delay after delay during their stops in Ireland and in Newfoundland. They reached 770 at 3:30 in the morning—and the Rebbe came down!

It was a surreal sight. Behind the Rebbe, instead of Chassidim like Reb Shmuel Levitin, there was a British rabbi with a white hat and shaved beard. The women sat in the shul downstairs as well. There were two *sichos* and a *niggun*—a minor farbrengen in the wee hours of the morning.

This took place between Shiva Asar B'Tammuz and Tisha B'av 5721. When the airline told my grandfather that this was their only availability, he was inclined to refuse it, thinking that the mood in 770 wouldn't be right, but Reb Bentche Shemtov was standing next to him during the phone call and hissed into his ear, "*nem dos, nem dos*" (take it, take it). So, as my grandfather would always relate, "I took *dos*."

His fears were unfounded. That week was the famous

farbrengen of Matos-Masei, when the Rebbe instructed that all bottles of *mashke* be emptied of their contents. The farbrengen was, as they say, *oif tishen un oif benk* (very lively). My grandfather, whose mother's *yahrtzeit* is on 2 Av, was later told that he had davened Mincha at the *amud* after the farbrengen, but he himself did not remember a thing. It was an incredibly memorable visit, after all.

Before leaving New York, the grateful travelers bought a set of Shas as a gift for my grandfather. They pulled out the first volume from the box—it was a Bava Metzia—and wrote a beautiful *hakdasha*. When my grandfather received it, he asked that the passengers sign it—but, first, he decided to bring it into the Rebbe's office and ask for the Rebbe's signature!

At first, the Rebbe demurred, saying that he was not a fellow traveler, but my grandfather responded, "wherever



SOME PHOTOS FROM THE REBBE'S HISTORIC FARBRENGEN WITH THE GUESTS WHO HAD JUST ARRIVED FROM ENGLAND ON THE FIRST CHARTERED FLIGHT.

People were afraid to talk to him because he was always looking for content. All the little kids would run away from him because they didn't want their conversations published for the entire world.

Those who wanted to publicize their name knew it was very easy—just go over to Mr. Jaffe and give him a compliment: “Oh, Mr. Jaffe, I love the way your tie sang with your mouth today.” “Thank you,” my grandfather would immediately say, “and what’s your name?” turning to jot it down immediately.

As his grandson, it would often be mortifying. He would write all sorts of stories about us, sometimes with a healthy dose of imagination. He would even read them at the Kinus Torah. The Rebbe had asked him to speak at the Kinus Torah, and when he protested that he didn't have any Torah to share, the Rebbe told him to read from his diary! So he would read his “best selections” every year, to the eternal delight and entertainment of the *bochurim*.

LETTERS TO THE REBBE

As a youngster, I didn't always appreciate his relationship with the Rebbe. My grandfather always stood out. He would start a *niggun* whenever the Rebbe left the room, but people would shush him; singing like that wasn't common in 770 of those years.

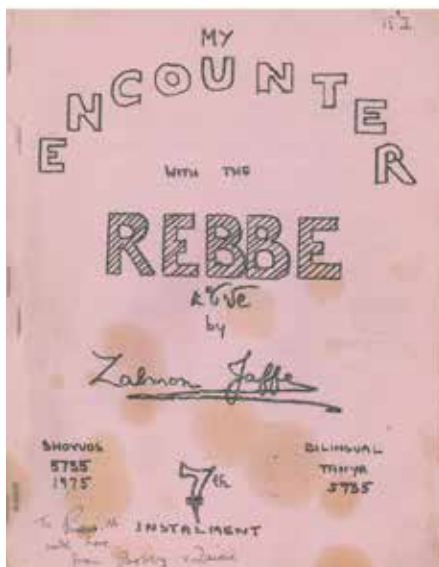
I remember telling him before Mincha one day that he should stop. “This doesn't happen when you are not

here. Why do you need to stand out?”

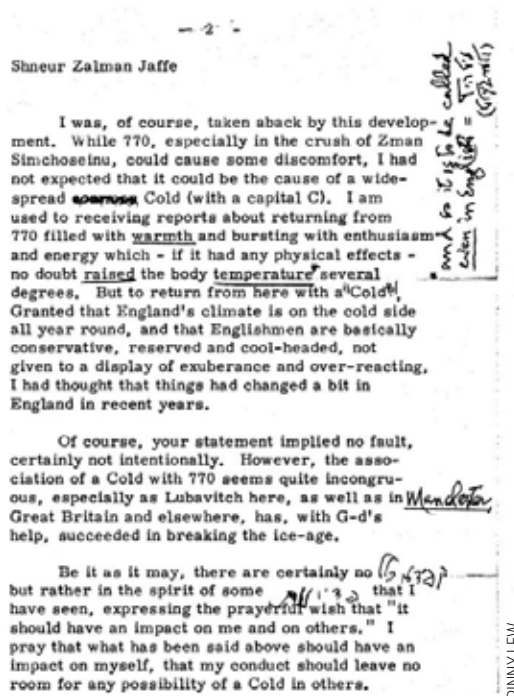
My grandfather was brooding over my complaint when Mincha ended, and he failed to notice that the Rebbe was looking at him, waiting for the *niggun*. After a moment, the Rebbe said, *nu* and made a wave with his hand... From then on, nobody complained.

I once walked into his apartment in New York when he was writing a letter to the Rebbe. When he was in New York, he would write to the Rebbe every single day, without fail. He showed me what he was writing that day, and I was shocked beyond belief. He was writing to the Rebbe that he had run out of the cottage cheese they had purchased on Kingston Ave. because the grandkids had come by and eaten it all up. Now they would have to go back to Kingston to purchase more.

I couldn't believe my grandfather was wasting the Rebbe's time with such nonsense, and I told him that. He said, “I see why you think so, and I also think so—but let me tell you what happened.” When he had arrived for that visit, he had told Rabbi Groner that he would no longer be writing every day; he had nothing meaningful to write, and he didn't want to waste the Rebbe's time.



ONE OF THE FIRST 'MY ENCOUNTER WITH THE REBBE' DIARIES TO BE PUBLISHED BY MR. ZALMON JAFFE.



THE REBBE'S UNIQUE RESPONSE (WITH HANDWRITTEN EDITS) TO A LETTER RECEIVED BY MR. JAFFE SAYING THAT HE HAD GOTTEN A 'COLD' DURING HIS VISIT TO 770.

Rabbi Groner stopped him immediately. “*Chas v’shalom*—you should write three times *a day*, as far as I’m concerned.” Rabbi Groner explained that whenever his letter arrived, the Rebbe would pick it up, lean back in his chair, and read it with a smile spreading across his face. That’s the kind of connection my grandfather had with the Rebbe.

In England, he would write to the Rebbe without fail every Friday, and his letter would arrive in New York on Tuesday or Wednesday. One week, he received a call from Rabbi Klein, saying that the Rebbe was waiting for his letter! Realizing how important it was to the Rebbe, he asked the Rebbetzin’s permission to send the letter to the house, thereby ensuring that the letters wouldn’t get lost in the overwhelming volume of letters arriving at 770.

THE SHAVUOS VISITS

In 5724, my mother was a newlywed living in New York, and she was expecting a baby—that was me—around Shavuos time. My grandfather felt that I was going to be the consolation for his lost child; he was convinced that the baby would be born on 13 Sivan, his son’s *yahrtzeit*, and the bris would therefore be on 20 Sivan. So he purchased a flight to arrive before Shavuos and to leave on 21 Sivan.

As it turned out, I was born on 14 Sivan, just a few hours after the *yahrtzeit*. He would often humorously tell me, “Yossi, it’s too late now...”

My grandfather asked the Rebbe in *yechidus* to be

THE BEARD

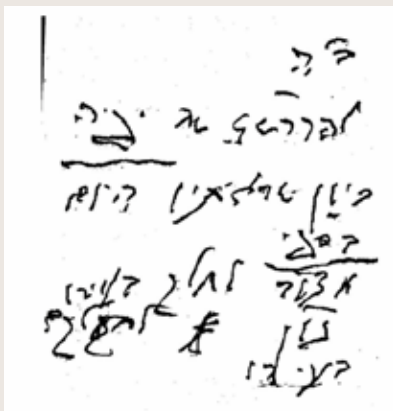
When I was nine or ten years old, I asked my grandfather, “Zaide, why don’t you grow a beard?” He responded, “Yossi, that is a rude question.”

A few years later, I asked him again. This time, he said, “The Rebbe knows me; I’m going to leave it to the Rebbe.” But because I provoked him with the question, he said, “From now on, I’ll leave my shaving equipment home when I travel to the Rebbe.”



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 32764

MR. JAFFE RECEIVES A DOLLAR FROM THE REBBE A FEW WEEKS AFTER HIS MEDICAL EMERGENCY, CHESHVAN 5750.



PINNY LEW

THE REBBE’S HANDWRITTEN NOTE ABOUT SEEING MR. JAFFE WITH A BEARD.

In 5750, he had a medical emergency on Simchas Torah, and he spent several weeks at the hospital. By the time he came to dollars at the end of Cheshvan, he had grown a bit of a beard. After dollars, the Rebbe sent a note—telling Rabbi Groner to give him the actual handwritten copy—where the Rebbe said, “ראיתו היום בספ”י [בסבר פנים יפות], I saw you today with a pleasant countenance,” a play on his last name, יפה. Along with the note, the Rebbe gave 50 dollars to distribute in Manchester. That was the end of his shaving.



LEVI KATZ/WA JEM 265246

MR. JAFFE DAVENS AT THE AMUD IN THE REBBE'S MINYAN ON THE NIGHT OF HIS SON'S YAHRZEIT, 13 SIVAN 5749.

THE REBBETZIN

My grandfather had the merit of visiting the Rebbetzin every year. In the 5730s, we actually began to notice that as my grandfather's *yechidusen* were getting shorter, his visits to the Rebbetzin were getting longer. It was almost as if the Rebbetzin was taking part of the Rebbe's workload.

The Rebbetzin would go around the table, talk to all the adults, and ask the children to say a *dvar Torah* or sing a *niggun*. When I was Bar Mitzvah, she asked me about my *pilpul*.

I was hesitant. My *pilpul* was about a remote area of halacha. It asked whether the rule of *kam lei b'dirabba minei* would apply to a *shor haniskal*. I didn't imagine that the Rebbetzin would know anything about it, so I began explaining that there is a concept in Parshas Mishpatim called *shor haniskal*. The Rebbetzin nodded and said that she understood; as it turned out, she knew exactly what I was talking about.

It also turned out that the Rebbetzin was the only person who ever listened to my *pilpul*; she was the only person who cared to ask. At my own Bar Mitzvah, the *pilpul* was cut off by singing, and nobody bothered to ask me about it at any other point. My only audience for my Bar Mitzvah *pilpul* was the Rebbetzin.

my *sandek*, but the Rebbe responded that he was still receiving complaints about the *Siddur Kiddushin* a year before. A year earlier, the Rebbe had agreed to be *mesader kiddushin* for my parents despite the fact that the Rebbe had officially ceased doing so. My grandfather countered that, as guests in New York, we didn't have any close relatives to honor with *sandaka'us*. The Rebbe still didn't agree, but said that he would send a representative. In the end, Rabbi Hodakov was my *sandek*.

Meanwhile, my grandfather fell in love with Shavuos by the Rebbe.

It's a very pleasant Yom Tov, just two days, with a guaranteed farbrengen of the Rebbe. There was guaranteed *yechidus*, guaranteed *kos shel bracha*, and guaranteed *seudos* in the Frierdiker Rebbe's apartment. There was warm weather, so he could spend leisure time outdoors. People were generally more relaxed than Yud Shevat, and the short Yom Tov left

time for shopping and vacations. It was the best of both worlds. For the next fifteen years, everyone knew—the Shavuos season begins when Reb Zalmon shows up.

In 5739, my grandmother had surgery before Shavuos, and they weren't able to come. To compensate, he came for Simchas Torah. In *yechidus* before he left, the Rebbe told him that the next year was a Shnas Hakhel and he needed to come for the entire Sukkos. Well, when he was in *yechidus* the next year, he told the Rebbe how amazing the experience had been, and the Rebbe replied that next year would be even better. That was already a *chazaka*, and he continued to come for Sukkos every year as well.

A NIGGUN IN 770?

The Rebbe mentioned to my grandfather several times that he was displeased that so many Chassidim were “*tza-ros chassidim*,” coming to the Rebbe only with troubles, without reporting the good news in their lives. The Rebbe wanted *freiliche Chassidim*—and my grandfather always did his best.

Even things like singing in 770 during davening began

through his interventions. It began in 5730, when he was attending the *seudos* in the Frieddiker Rebbe's apartment. (As a very young child, I remember him rushing into the apartment to quickly make *kiddush*, and then rushing back to 770. I wanted to join, but I was told that this event was not for young children.)

As you can imagine, the atmosphere at the table was very reverential; nobody said a word. Everyone just ate their meal quietly. But between the fish and soup, the Rebbe would say *l'chaim* to people and ask some special guests to say something or to sing a *niggun*.

When the Rebbe asked my grandfather to say



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 15120 (13 TISHREI 5748)



LEVI FREIDIN VIA JEM 219445 (18 TISHREI 5752)

SOME MOMENTS OF THE REBBE ENCOURAGING MR. JAFFE'S ENERGETIC SINGING BEFORE AND AFTER DAVENING.



something, he declared that davening in the Rebbe's shul was "depressing." That was a very shocking statement. When the Rebbe asked for an explanation, he explained that no *niggunim* were ever sung. At that time, the only *niggun* sung during davening was *Hu Elokeinu*—only if the Rebbe made a certain indication with his hand. Otherwise, they sang nothing at all. Singing was for *poilishers*, not Chabad.

The Rebbe told him, "Tomorrow, you are in charge." So the next morning, he started *niggunim*. The Rebbe encouraged the *niggunim*, and all was swell. For the first time, *niggunim* were sung in 770 during davening.

The next year, my grandfather wasn't sure if the Rebbe would again approve. He wrote to the Rebbe, and didn't

get an answer, so he decided to try again. This time, the Rebbe didn't encourage the singing with his hand and lots of people shushed him, but he held strong and continued singing.

When he later asked the Rebbe in *yechidus* about it, the Rebbe said that when a general gives a directive, it remains in effect until it is rescinded. In other words, the Rebbe was pleased with his singing, and he didn't need to wait for a signal from the Rebbe every time. From then on, he would always start *niggunim*.

He would constantly try to bring *simcha* to the Rebbe. One time, the Rebbe was looking down after a long and painful *sicha* about *Mihu Yehudi*. As the *niggun* went on, it seemed as if *Mihu Yehudi* was hanging over the



THE REBBE SHAKES
THE HAND OF
4-YEAR-OLD
YOSSI LEW.

entire crowd. My grandfather stood up, got the Rebbe's attention, and pointed at us young children, who were holding *l'chaim* up to the Rebbe. The Rebbe's eyes lit up, he said *l'chaim* to us with a beautiful smile, and then told my grandfather to learn from his grandchildren and say *l'chaim* as well.

"I DON'T DRINK VODKA"

Some people have the impression that my grandfather would joke around with the Rebbe. This couldn't be farther from the truth. He always spoke to the Rebbe with the utmost respect. However, there were some special moments.

During his visits to New York in later years, my grandfather would stay in the Itkin's basement, right near 770, where the Yeshiva offices are today. It wasn't five-star accommodations, and whenever it rained, the basement would flood with water.

My grandfather once humorously remarked to the Rebbe that he doesn't need a *mikvah*—he can just roll out of bed and into the *mikvah* on the floor of his room! The Rebbe leaned into the joke, so to speak, and asked my grandfather, "And who helps you up from the floor?" At the spur of the moment, my grandfather responded, "My wife and Mrs. Itkin!"

My grandfather later told me that his answer was so unexpected that the Rebbe fell back in his chair and burst

out laughing, the likes of which he had never seen before.

On another occasion, he brought five bottles of *mashke* as a gift for the Rebbe, simply because the duty-free limit at the time was five bottles (he would continue doing so every trip). The Rebbe asked him, "What should I do with five bottles?" He said to the Rebbe, "The Rebbe could take them home and every night, have a glass before going to bed!"

The Rebbe responded, "Mrs. Schneerson would be surprised to see me drinking vodka. I don't like it and I don't drink vodka."

THE FAMOUS HANDSHAKE

I had the opportunity to be with my grandfather in *yechidus* several times. It was when *yechidus klolis* began in the early 5740s. Our family was allowed to stay behind after everyone left and have a private *yechidus* with the Rebbe.

It was a very different experience; when I went into *yechidus* with my parents—and on one occasion, alone—we came in with an incredible sense of awe and reverence. It was an awe-inspiring event. But my grandfather, despite the fact that he always spoke with the utmost respect to the Rebbe, conversed with the Rebbe in a much more relaxed tone. The Rebbe would also talk about private matters and community matters, and at that point, the Rebbe would look in our direction, and we would leave



CHAIM BARUCH HALBERSTAM VIA JEM 75106 (13 SIVAN 5751)

In a diary entry covering Shavuot 5751 to Shavuot 5752, Mr. Jaffe tells the story behind this unique photo of himself with the Rebbe. An uncommon scene from the usual photographs of ‘dollars’:

“Over the course of many years, we had obtained some very beautiful photographs of Roselyn and me and also with our grandchildren and great grandchildren, but all showed only the profile of the Rebbe. On none of these scores of pictures was the Rebbe facing the camera.

“I had written to the Rebbe and explained that all of our family and every one of thousands of my readers wanted to see the face of the Rebbe—and not ours. I appealed to the Rebbe that when we arrived at his side on Sunday, we would be eternally grateful if the Rebbe would turn around for a second and face the camera.

“I had warned Chaim Boruch (Halberstam) that I had begged the Rebbe to do this for me and that he should be prepared to take this photograph.”

the room.

On one occasion, I missed the *yechidus*. The Rebbe noticed my absence and asked about me, and when my grandfather said I was stuck in traffic, the Rebbe said, “Send him my regards.” This was a special *kiruv* to my grandfather, more than to me; I was already a *bochur* then, and when I had my own personal *yechidusen*, I didn’t receive any preferential treatment.

One special moment was when I came to the Rebbe with my family in 5728, when I was four years old. After our final Mincha with the Rebbe, the Rebbe began speaking to my grandfather, and then waved to me and my brothers. I waved back, so the Rebbe came around the table to shake my hand. He proceeded to shake my brother’s hand, and then even my baby sister’s hand—she was one year old, sitting in her stroller in the foyer.

We have a very special, but very grainy

picture of the event. It wasn't from a regular camera; in those days, it wasn't common for pictures to be taken of the Rebbe all the time. Rabbi Chaim Boruch Halberstam had purchased a spy camera for the exorbitant price of two thousand dollars, allowing him to take surreptitious pictures of the Rebbe whenever the need arose.

When he realized that the Jaffes were leaving after Mincha, he thought that something interesting might occur and prepared his camera. He took a picture of the Rebbe talking to my grandfather, and then a picture of me shaking the Rebbe's hand. Then his film ran out, so the rest wasn't captured on film.

MY ZAIDE, THE CHOSSID

My grandfather was a major activist. He was incredibly capable, and he was the life behind all the Yiddishkeit in Manchester—the school, the shul, the *mikvah*, the *kashrus*, the Beis Din—he had a hand in it all. He was a true *bar poel* (man of action), and—what I think also contributed to his special connection with the Rebbe—had a strong sense of *kabbalas ol*. If the Rebbe told him something, he would do it no matter what.

One time, a young woman was *niskarev* to Lubavitch in England, and she told the Rebbe in *yechidus* that she was ready to get married. When my grandfather came into *yechidus* later that night, the Rebbe asked him to become her *shadchan*. At first, my grandfather protested that he had never made a *shidduch* before, but the Rebbe told him to simply go into the *zal*, find a *bochur*, and make a *shidduch*.

My grandfather didn't ask any more questions. He walked into the *zal*, and—lo and behold—he met an English *bochur* sitting and learning! He called him out for a chat and told him he had a *shidduch* for him. At first, the *bochur* wasn't willing to listen; he was learning by the Rebbe, and wasn't planning on getting married any time

soon. But my grandfather was relentless, and within the next few months, they were married.

The Rebbe had said that he would take responsibility for *shadchanus gelt*. When the *shidduch* happened, my grandfather wrote to the Rebbe saying that he would like to keep the *shadchanus gelt* on credit. A year later, when they arrived from England with the Bilingual Tanya, my grandfather asked for a signed copy of the Tanya for himself and all the members of the committee who had printed it. The Rebbe agreed and even held an entire *farbrengen* outdoors where he said a *sicha* and gave out Tanyas to all the visitors. That was his *shadchanus gelt*.

The story of the Tanya is itself typical of my grandfather. In the early years, the Rebbe had told him to learn Chitas, and from then on, he learned Chitas with absolute conviction, never missing a day. For Chumash-Rashi he used the blue Pentateuch, which translated Chumash and Rashi into English, but for Tanya, he didn't really have any good options. So, when the opportunity arose, he decided to make something happen, and he published the Bilingual Tanya, which brought the Rebbe incredible *nachas*.

In the early years, he asked the Rebbe, “What did I ever do to be *zoche* to receive so much of the Rebbe's time and attention?”



“It's not because of what you have done,” the Rebbe said, “but because of what you will do in the future.”

Many years later, when I was in *yechidus* with my grandfather, he brought up the topic again and basically repeated his question. Why was he *zoche*? The Rebbe responded, “That answer is still applicable today.”

To me, that message was also about his progeny. My grandfather's two children became the Rebbe's Chassidim and shluchim, with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren continuing in the Rebbe's path.

It's not about the past. It's about the future. **1**