

Yesai Torosian Timeline

1884

May 5 - Yesia B. Torosian was born in Kayseri.

Mother - Miriam B Jerahian.

Born in 1858, in Jerusalem.

Died in 1924, in Turlock CA, Buried in Fresno CA.

Father- Bernard (Haroutyun) Torosian.

Born in the Ottoman Empire.

Died - when Yesia was very young, as he did not remember him at all
Bernard, his father, was a mailman.

His real name is Hadji Yesia because that was his grandfather's name. He had that name because he went to Jerusalem where his mother was born.

Life in the old country

For three years (age 8-11) Yesia had been an altar boy in an Orthodox church in his home town. He knew the liturgy music well.

He left Fenese (south Kayseri, present-day Develi) when he was 13 to work as a shoemaker with an uncle in Constantinople. The trip took 5 days on horseback and he travelled with an aunt and a cousin. Zarouhie had a photograph of this uncle.

At some point he visited the American College in Tarsus (St Paul Institute) with 40-44 boys and men on their way to Smyrna.

Siblings: Roupen, Harry, Mariam, John, Arousyag

1886

Agnes (Azniv) Shakargian born in on December 15, 1886 in Erzincan/Yerzenga. She was conceived while her older sister was still nursing.

She had visited an ancient temple in Komer (?) when she was a little girl. Azniv/Agnes went to school and taught her mother how to read Armenian.

In the village of Ghelm (?), there was a hill. All the children liked to play on the top where they would fall and break their arms and legs. The wise men in the village solved the problem by building a hospital at the bottom of the hill.

Mother - Lucien Donegian

Born in 1849.

Stepan married Lucien in 1908(?) It took them a day's ride on horseback to reach the wedding site.

Died in 1927.

Father - Mourad Donegian - Azniv (Nazaly's grandmother) said she knew her maternal grandfather.

He lived in Kenagk (?). It had an ice house where the peasants and Kurds brought their cheese and meat. The mountains to the house were made of transparent large slabs of amethyst which sparkled like glass.

Mother - Lived to be 110 years old.

Father - Stepan Shakargian – he made candy and travelled out of the Ottoman Empire on business.

Born in 1851

Died in 1923

Father - Khatchadour Shakargian.

Mother - Helene Shamegian.

Siblings: Arshag (1884-1942), Eva (1885), and Leo (1909-1969).

1900

Yesia goes to America - with the help of his brother Harry.

He left Constantinople at the age of 17 due to Turkish fear of Armenian revolutionaries. The trip was facilitated by a go-between who helped get money from Harry for Yesia's trip. The boat left Constantinople in 1900. The cost to Marseilles was 3.50 or one napoleon. There were 100 French nuns and 4-5 Armenian refugees on the boat. The boat was full of lice. They spent one night in quarantine in Pera, Greece on the way to Marseilles. The go between took the refugees to a hotel in Marseilles where they stayed 15 days. Harry was sent a wire asking for money for the trip. Yesia never knew how much Harry sent. From Marseilles they went to Paris on a one night train. From Paris they went to Bologna on another one night train. They spent 17 days on a German ship (Hamberg American Line) going to NY. It contained about 30 Armenian refugees. On the boat, Yesia bartered earning enough (1.50) to wire Harry to wire a Mr. Iskenderian to meet him at Ellis Island. They landed in NY on Oct 19, 1900 spending the first night in Castle Garden. The cost of the trip from Marseilles to NY was 47.00. Mr. Iskenderian gave Yesia 5.00 dollars and bought him a ticket to Wooster. Harry picked him up in Wooster even though they did not recognize each other at first. Harry took him to Framingham hoping to catch the train for Milford. However they missed the train and did not arrive in Milford until Sunday morning.

Somewhere on the trip, a fellow refugee stole one gold piece from his person (tied around his neck) while he slept. It was worth about 750.00. His brother John had given it to him when he left Constantinople. Yesia never told John about this loss.

1900-1908

Yesia worked in a shoe factory in Farmington MA.

Yesia saw President Taft when he visited Hopedale Mills.

Yesia also saw Buffalo Bill in Milford MA.

Yesia could not join the military because he was not a citizen.

1902

July 4 - Agnes comes to America

Their home town was Erzincan/Yerznnga which had 25,000 people, 500 of whom were Protestants.

Stepan decided to leave the Ottoman Empire when a Turkish customer in his candy store took rather than bought the product.

The group which left together included Stepan, Lucien, Arshag, Nartouhi, Arsh, Agnes and Stepan's brother Setrak and his wife Mariam. They proceeded from Erzincan to the Black Sea (Trabzon) on horseback. They had eight people and nine horses. Once they got to the Black Sea they boarded a boat for France. Their first stop was in Marseille. They also took a short trip to Paris.

The whole family intended to go to Cairo but Stepan went to the US, while Setrak went to Cairo due to something related to quarantining.

Since it was July 4th, when Stepan and his family came into Ellis Island, there were fireworks.

One of the items the family brought was a runner. It was used to carpet the second bedroom at Turlock when Mom was born. The family still had it in 1968. They also brought a green chest.

???? Stepan had a ranch in Fowler, which he lost. At one point they may have lived on California Street in Fresno.

??? Grandma had a beau in Fresno named Tsagku Tatosian who sent records of Armenian music to Grandma in her old age.

1906-7

Yesia worked in Providence RI for the New England Butt Co. He lived in a boarding house on Pearl St.

1908

Yesia marries Agnes Shakargian in Milford MA on February 15, 1908.

Esther (Asdghig Stella) was born on November 5, 1908 in Woonsocket RI.

1908-09

Harry set Yesia up with a fruit stand business in Woonsocket RI. This only lasted one year. While in Providence RI, Yesia was a pioneer in the Dashnak party (Armenian Revolutionary Federation).

1910

Roxy (Araxy) was born on June 5, in Milford, MA?

1912

Yesia and Agnes, Esther and Roxy moved to Fresno.

1913

Yesia and Agnes move from Fresno to Turlock CA.

1917

Betty was born on October 20, in Turlock CA. Name on original birth certificate was Mary. This was corrected along with the names of her parents in 1976. Yesia was listed as a merchant and 33 years of age. Agnes was listed as a housewife and 28 years of age. Their color or race was listed as "dark."

1923

YB opens the Torosian Gift Shop on December 8, in Turlock CA. Eventually it became The Racket Store.

1929

Esther marries Fenner Fuller (1902 -1964) on October 26, in Reno Nevada.

Roxy marries Hal Griffin Davis also in Reno Nevada.

1938

Yesia's health made it impossible for him to continue working.

1941

Betty marries Roy James Maurice Nielsen (Oct 26, 1916 - Dec 11, 1991) on August 2.

1943

Roxy and Chester (Chester Lavera Stevens, born May 1, 1910 in Ottawa KS- Died 1992) married on July 1.

Nancy Jean was born to Betty and Roy on December 25, in Glendale CA.

1950

Yesia had a heart attack on May 31.

On July 13, Yesia had a blood clot in his lung which led to pneumonia and a 7 week stay in the hospital.

James Bennett was born to Betty and Roy on August 1, in Alameda Hospital.

1957

In early April Yesia had another heart attack.

1960

On October 8, Yesia died in Turlock CA at home.

Ararat Cemetery

1929 W. Belmont Ave

Fresno CA 93701

(Ararat Cemetery Improvement Association)

Latitude: 36.74870, Longitude: -119.83449

From Book titled The Seropians by Nectar Davidian

The cemetery was given to the Armenians in 1885

1974

On July 19, Agnes moves from Turlock to Oakland CA in one of Esther's apartments.

1980

On October 15, Esther died at Merritt.

1982

April 6, Agnes died in Oakland CA, buried in Fresno CA.

Ararat Cemetery

1929 W. Belmont Ave

Fresno CA 93701

Appendices

Roxy Torosian Stevens

Born on June 5 , 1910 in MA (?), died on March 23, 1995.

Betty Torosian Nielsen

Born on October 20, 1917 in Turlock CA, died on November 24, 2005.

Esther Torosian Fuller

1908

Born on November 5, 1908 in Woonsocket RI on Freeman Street.

Esther was names after Arsh's aunt. In 1955, she discovered that the name on her birth certificate was Arousiag.

Resources

TOROSIANS

- 1) Jonette - Based on a phone call on Jan 13, 2013 she is interested in collecting info on Torosians. There was some disagreement about plots in Fresno cemetery. When Roxy died Betty got them and they were sold back to the cemetery? Someone named Arlene is now next to Miriam; Marilyn and Kurt from Idaho are in another plot.
- 2) Marilyn lives in Fresno and attends a Bible study at the Armenian Presbyterian church there. Some may speak and read Armenian.
- 3) Cheryl Torosian- Arthur's daughter. cheryl@cheryltorosian.com

SHAKARGIANS

- 1) Carol Dokouzian
hdokouzian@aol.com
phone 650-375-1449
just turned 82 still going strong. she says hi and will be at the bazar on Friday around noon
- 2) Steve Muncherian steve@muncherian.com
- 3) Relative in Canada
- 4) Baronians
- 5) Kapigians

UNKNOWN

- 1) Janet Achoukian Andreopoulos She contacted us in Dec 2013 due to 23&me connection. There is some connection to Yesia and Agnes. She knew Rose Narlian. She wanted more information about Agnes' family as of May 2015.