

The Story of Elias Perry  
Ilya Pereplochik  
As told by him to Mauricio and Pupi on 25 August 1982

1. List of brothers and sisters

Name	Nickname
1. Sonia	Sorele
2. Isaac or Albert	Ische
3. Ilya or Elias	Elike
4. Mazel or Misia	Moshe
5. Jaim	
6. Tzivie	
7. Schloime	

2. Elias' father was Russian but he escaped to Galitzia to avoid being drafted.  
His mother was from Galitzia. They married there.

3. Elias' story

Elias left Slutsk when he was 20 years old, in 1921, to avoid being drafted during Russia's civil war. Smugglers took him to Poland in the quiet of the night during winter on a sleigh drawn by horses. His mother paid them with a golden pocket watch. He was very afraid.

In Poland they took him to the town of Baranovich, where all refugees went. He worked as a watchmaker and was given a salary, room and board. He worked there for six months. He moved to Warsaw, where he worked there as a jeweler. He lived in a room with four other people. He earned well. He got a US visa as an orphan while waiting for his brother Albert to send him a ticket to go to NY. The visa was easy to get.

When the ticket arrived, after six months of waiting, he went to Germany and from there to Le Havre (France) where he embarked with a large group. The ship was the *United States*. He traveled in 3<sup>rd</sup> class, in miserable conditions and he was very seasick. The trip took about 10 days.

Condition in NY were miserable and went with Albert to Long Island and then to Detroit on train.

In Detroit found a job easily because he was a good watchmaker. Nevertheless, he was not happy: Albert's family was kosher, there were too many women in the family and Albert and him had different points of view. He wanted more freedom. He wanted to go to New York and Albert would not allow him. The family weighted on him. He worked to reimburse his brother for the ticket. After repaying him, he started to save for a ticket to Argentina. He had heard about Argentina in Warsaw and he wanted his freedom. He spoke Russian and Yiddish.

When he arrived to Argentina, he spent five days at the *Hotel de Inmigrantes* with very little money and not knowing anybody. The breakfast he was given was

“mate cocido”. There were many bugs. He went to the Jewish Quarter; at Corrientes y Junín he stepped into a watch store where he heard people speaking Yiddish. Mr. Bernardo Tabacks employed him for \$5.00 a day. He rented a room from a cobbler, two blocks away from his job for \$25 per month. He did not like the place so he moved to a better one for \$40 per month. He continued to work there for three to four months.

While strolling by Corrientes 1600, he went in a jewelry store. There were around 15 workers and the supervisor was a Polish man. He gave him a very expensive pocket chime watch to repair. He did it right and was hired for \$6.00 per day.

After several months he got a raise to \$7.00. Later he got another job for \$8.00 a day and started to buy his own tools. He liked high quality tools.

He entered in a partnership with Tabacks and they set shop on Leandro N. Alem because there were many immigrants in that area. They had to close shop after six months. He went to work on his own by working door to door in the repair shops. He earned good money.

He set up another shop on Carlos Pellegrini and Charcas with Mr. Zlachewsky. He was there for two years until the building was torn down. He joined the *Diamant Club*. He became half merchant and half repairman.

He started a partnership with Alex Braun. He was the buyer and Braun was the salesman. Their office was on top of *El Trust Joyero Relojero* building. They rented the office at Cangallo 1251. Later Braun left the partnership.

Alberto Nagnensky (whom he knew from the diamond trade) came to him asking to be his partner. Nagnensky had three times as much capital as he had. The sold on credit but because of the peso devaluation, they lost money until they started to sell in dollars, with great difficulty.