

**Lasker Gad**

Nicknames: Chotzev, Chaim, Moshe  
 Born in 1913 in Poland, made Aliya in 1935  
 Joined the Palmach in 1941  
 Joined the Palyam in 1943

**This is the Way it Was**

I made Aliya in April 1935, illegally, not through any agency but through people who made their living by smuggling; that meant, that it cost a great deal of money. We traveled via Czechia, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Greece. Our only food was from a poorhouse that distributed food to the needy. When we reached the shores of Palestine no one was waiting for us. The Greek sailors were angry because we had nothing to give them, so they would not give us boats to get to shore with, but threw us into the water and we wandered about all night, not knowing where we were. Years later I wanted very much to bring Ma'apilim to Palestine because I remembered how I had arrived here.

In Yagur I worked at 'learning how to work hard' by working as a stevedore in the port of Haifa. I also worked in a quarry; I would drill holes in a hill 6 meters deep, put dynamite inside and blow them up. In May 1941 I joined the Palmach. I was sent to a camp in the forest of Beit Oren. This camp was in partnership with the British, and Captain Hammond taught us sabotage. He took a fuse that was 10 cm long and put it into a detonator and asked someone to light it. Most of the others were afraid but I knew the stuff and lit it calmly and stepped back. I also answered other questions or problems correctly. After the tragic accident of the "23 who went down at sea" the English were looking for saboteurs to be sent to Arab states. I was among the 30 who were selected for training on the Yarkon River. There, aside from rowing, swimming and diving we also studied Arabic (we were after all, supposed to be Arabs). 10 men were to be chosen from the 30.

It seemed that I would have been the first one to be thrown out as I did not look Arabic and I did not catch on to the language very well either. Surprises happen and Captain Hammond demanded that I be one of the 10 men chosen. That is how it came about that I was sent to Lebanon as a partner in the manufacture of Maccabi products. We returned to Palestine some time later and after attending a course for squad leaders I returned to "B" Company at Tel Yosef. When the Naval Company was set up, somebody remembered that I had been trained on the Yarkon River and I was added to that company.

In October of 1945 I left on the "Pietro A" for Italy and that started me off in my career of accompanying vessels. I spent time in Cyprus twice and at the end of 1948 I returned to Kibbutz Yagur. I would like to mention just two interesting experiences (among many):

- 1) In Magenta, Italy there was a group of girls of about 13 – 15 years old from Hungary. Once, one of the girls told me some stories about the

camp. I could not stop the flow of tears. Since then, every few days another girl told me her story. I understood that they had to get it out of their system and I was the only one there who understood their language. I listened patiently, but only God knows how much sorrow weighed upon me.

- 2) On the vessel, "Enzo Sereni", when I was busy receiving Ma'apilim and assigning them to their places, I heard one girl tell another: "In Shiradz we never saw a vessel like this one". (Shiradz was the town in which I was born). I gave a yell, "Who is here from Shiradz?" These were two sisters, who were neighbors of ours. They had recognized me, but I had been too busy to notice them. I heard from them the only news I had ever received about my family. My mother and my sister and their families had been wiped out in the Holocaust..

All the other things that happened during the period of the Ha'apalah are written in reports and in the history of the period.