

Simon Bernstein

A Brief History

*Born 1849 Krasnopoltz, Poland – died 1933 London, England
Father in law of Nathaniel (Nat) Norman Sassieni*

Simon Bernstein was born about 1849 in Krasnopoltz, Poland, in the Suwalki area. He was one of about six children. Immigrated to the UK in 1885. Upon arrival in England, Simon was already a trained builder and plumber - including a knowledge of woodwork and central heating installation that was a highly valued profession of those times.

Simon Bernstein found living accommodation in the East End of London, England, and started working as a general contractor, repairer and builder. Soon he had work as a master builder; building workshops and a couple of small factories. Having made little money and with limited resources, Simon used his skills & labour and built his own large house at Stepney Green, London E1, England. Meanwhile, the family was growing up and Miriam Weinkrantz, Simon's wife had more children. It is said that Miriam Weinkrantz idolized her husband, a little man, but of great stature, who had many friends. Both spoke, wrote and read English quite well; newspapers and books were always available. Both were religious and excellent at reading and speaking the Hebrew of their day. It should be noted that Miriam knew the daily prayer book by heart as well as Simon. All their children were brought up in an orthodox Jewish way of life.

The family progressed and later Simon Bernstein achieved the complete re-fitting of a large shop in the Mile End Road, London, England, as the first cinema in the East End (The Penny Flicks). The sizable New Road Synagogue in East London, England was a big project for Simon Bernstein who built it. He always insisted that marriages of his children take place there.

Life went on - Miriam Weinkrantz was a good cook and catered for the needs of a large family and could produce meals for all, including friends and acquaintances, who came to the house without pre-arrangement, there being no 'phones yet.

From around 1920 Simon Bernstein retired from the building trade, but was greatly interested in real estate (mainly houses and shops with living accommodation), in the Forest Gate/Ilford areas, Essex, England. He made a living - buying property, living in it, while renovating, then selling to make a profit until his death in 1933.

Article from the Bernstein family tree website by Leon Desbrow Jan 2002 File