

**Hos, Shmuel (Shmelke)** (of blessed memory)

Born 1914 in the town of Obertin, Poland

Made Aliya 1<sup>st</sup> September 1939

Joined the first marine course of the Hagana in 1940

Joined the Palyam in 1942

Died 20 June 1996

Written by: Gali Hos

### **This is the Way it Was**

Shmelke was brought up in a religious household by his parents, Breine and Eliyahu. When he was only 10 years old he joined the Hechalutz Hatzair movement, and when he was 17 he left his home and family and went to a farm for agricultural training. When he was 21 and on his way to Palestine he was inducted into the Polish Army and experienced the anti-Semitism and discrimination that was evidenced against Jewish soldiers. In 1939 he finally made it to Palestine.

He was at sea for five weeks and during this period he heard of the outbreak of the World War. The ship "Tiger Hill", on which he was sailing, was fired upon by the British and two of the Ma'apilim were killed. Shmelke jumped into the water and reached Palestine by swimming. Since then he has never left the country. He joined his friends at Ein Hayam and worked as a fisherman on the shore of Atlit. There he raised a family together with Lova Goldfinger, his wife.

Six months after he made Aliya, Shmelke was inducted into the course for marine sabotage, together with the group that later became known as the "23 men who were lost at sea". Toward the end of this course, he suffered a serious wound which prevented his leaving on that fateful voyage. Later he joined the Palmach, where he served six long and eventful years. He was in the first course of the Palyam, the Naval Company of the Palmach, which took place in Caesarea. The boats were of wood and the men of iron. On "Black Saturday" he was arrested together with many of his friends and spent some time in a prison camp at Rafiah.

When finally discharged from the Palmach, he served as a guard in an area near his home and participated in operations that took that region during the War of Independence. In 1950, his friend Yochai ben Nun (of blessed memory) called on him to help establish the naval commando unit.

Together with others from Ein Hayam and Ramat Rachel he helped establish Ein Carmel. In 1956 he was mobilized into the group formed by the Kibbutz Meuchad in Eilat that laid the foundation for the establishment of Kibbutz Eilot, and he participated in the Sinai Campaign. He was proud to have lit a candle on Independence Day at Mount Herzl during the "Year of Aliya". He received the decoration for those 'who fought against the Nazis' and the decoration for 'those

who fought for the State of Israel'. Shmelke plowed and sowed, harvested and gathered, planted trees and planted flowers. He worked the soil and longed for the sea. He was a diligent worker and very handy; there was nothing that he could not fix. He could clone a sapling or fix an engine; he could make a mask or create a sculpture in wood. He could mold clay or weave a basket. He could create things after a hard day's work. But above all, he was a fighter.

He feared nothing and was always the first into action. He was determined and stubborn and as straight and honest as could possibly be. He was devoted and loyal. He was a hard man. Even in his last days he fought his sickness and his pain. He fought his sickness but finally succumbed, and died on June 20, 1996. Rest in peace, you old lion, in the land you knew so well, which you loved so, and which repaid that love to you. Over the hills, as in the very beginning and in the longing – there was always, always the sea.

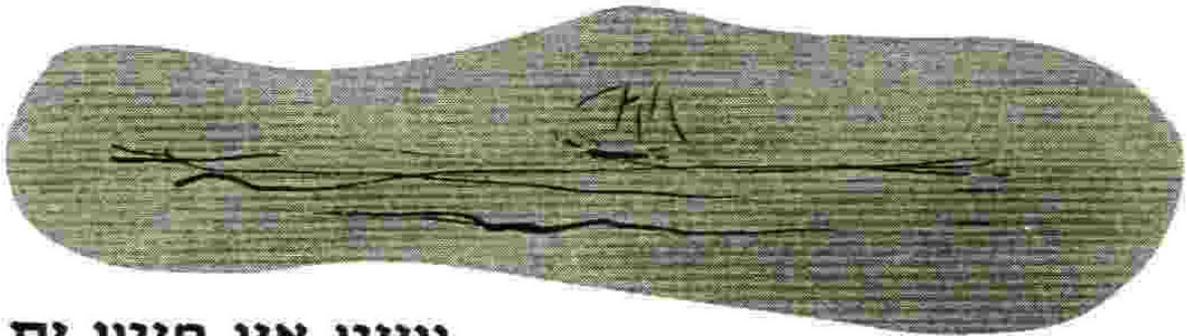
**From the book, “The Palmach Family”:**

On the sands of Caesarea, in the small hours of the morning, when all the songs of daring and heroism, and all the songs of the sea were sung, that is when Shmelke, our Shmuel Hos would break out in singing a Yiddish ballad, one that was filled with longing: “Vait in mitten yam” (far away in the middle of the sea) and all would join in the refrain. At that very same moment the waves washed against the shore, and the wind whipped the flaps of the tents, and the flames fanned the pots of the night's kumzits. When the first Israelis met the first Ma'apilim on those ragged little boats, the Ma'apilim had a Yiddish song that they too liked to sing -“Vait in mitten yam” :

**Far Away at Sea**

Eyes search the horizon  
     Far away at sea  
 Sails stand like white pyramids  
     Far away at sea  
 Shall we go or shall we stay  
     Far away at sea  
 Evil winds forever blowing  
     Far away at sea

The day has gone  
     Far away at sea  
 The sky is clear and light  
     Far away at sea  
 No one will come so late at night  
     Far away at sea  
 Silently, sail away my little boat  
     Far away at sea



וְיִיט אִינוּ מֵיטוּ יָם

Handwritten musical score with six staves. The lyrics are written below the notes and are oriented upside down relative to the page. The lyrics include:

וְיִיט אִינוּ מֵיטוּ יָם  
 וְיִיט אִינוּ מֵיטוּ יָם