

שרשרת הדורות

SHARSHERET HADOKOT

FAMILY ROOTS RESEARCH PERIODICAL

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The Society and its Publications

Editorial

Genealogical research is stimulated by a great variety of motivations, and the work patterns employed are generally different one from the other. This will be clear to you once more as you read though this issue of "Sharsheret Ha-Dorot". Indeed, we are happy that amongst our contributors are veteran and newer members, drawn from various parts of Israel and UK, and we hope that many new readers will also join the ranks of the contributors. May we suggest that you read carefully both the Hebrew and the English sections, since they are not identical in content.

At this time, we also welcome new members to our editorial board.

Joachim Eilon, Levana Dinerman, Lucien Harris, Ruth Rigbi, Esther Ramon

Editors request : All articles and other material for publication in "Sharsheret HaDorot" please submit on a diskette; typed in an IBM compatible word processor (Preferrably WORD-6) together with an identical printout.

Previous Publications

"Sharsheret Hadorot"		Regular Price	Members
Each booklet	Vol. 1-2	8.- NIS	5.- NIS
Each booklet	Vol. 3-7	15.- NIS	12.- NIS
Each booklet	Vol. 8-9	20.- NIS	15.- NIS
Key to volumes	1-7	18.- NIS	15.- NIS
Booklet "Annals and Deeds"		10.- NIS	5.- NIS
Booklet "Their fathers' house" 3-4		20.- NIS	18.- NIS
Booklet "Their fathers' house" 5-6		30.- NIS	28.- NIS

Apply to the librarian during library hours, or directly to Reuven Naftali Tel. 04-345468.

Annual membership 120.- Shekel. Members living abroad \$ 40.- .

Forthcoming Lectures

Tuesday 14.5.96 - 19:30 at Yad Ben-Zvi (See invitation) Meeting in honor of **Dr. Paul Jacobi**
Wednesday 19.6.96 - 19:30 - **Shlomo Brandwein**: My family in the world of the "Admors".
Wednesday 17.7.96 - 19:00 at 35 Mekor Haim Street, Jerusalem. **Meet the State Archives.**
Regular lectures begin at 19:30 and the library is open from 18:00 at "Mevakshei Derech",
22 Sderot Shai Agnon, San Simon, Jerusalem. Please note functions at other locations.

Important Notice and Invitation

On Tuesday, 14.5.1996 at 19:30, our Society will celebrate the 85th birthday of our esteemed friend and member, **Dr. Paul Jacobi**, at Yad Ben Zvi, 12 Rehov Abarbanel, Rehavia, Jerusalem.

The program :

Opening - **Mrs. Esther Ramon**.

Greeting - **Judge Moshe Landau**, former President of the Supreme Court.

Lecture - **Dr. Paul Jacobi** : "The secret of Jewish survival - and other secrets as well!"

All our members and their guests are cordially invited. For further invitations please contact us.

Further to Lectures we Have Heard

A Shoah Puzzle Solved

A Reconstruction of the last days of the Rosenthal and Wientraub Families.

Dr. Eliahu Rosenthal

When the Second World War broke out in 1939 there were branches of our family living in two countries - Poland and Romania. My father David had arrived in Bucharest from Poland in 1927 as a young textile engineer, sent from Lodz to work in Romania in a Polish-owned enterprise. During the first years of the 2nd World War, a more or less continuous and regular mail connection was kept up between us in Romania and our family in Poland. In October 1942 the letters from Poland ceased. As a child, I did not attach any tragic meaning to this, especially as we ourselves in our neighborhood were beginning to feel the impact of the war.

On January 19th 1945 my uncle - my father's brother - returned from the USSR to Lodz as a soldier in the army of the People's Republic of Poland. Lodz had been liberated from the Germans a few days earlier. My uncle searched for members of his family, and found out that most of them had disappeared; They had been exterminated. The bits of information he collected he shared only with my father. At that time one cousin of my father and my uncle reappeared too: **Lisa Taksin**. She had returned from forced labor camps in Germany, under a new name: **Elizbieta Rudnicki**, and would say nothing about what she had been thorough and what (if anything) she had heard about our families. Much later, when she came on a visit to Israel at the end of the 1950's, she would begin a story about those days - but stop after a sentence or two. I remember her telling my parents that she was saved thanks to a Polish family name Rudnicki of Sulejow, who gave her and the rest of the family "Aryan" Polish identity documents in the name of Rudnicki.

The fate of our families was not discussed in my parents' home - certainly not in my presence. There was an atmosphere of something being hushed up, as if they were ashamed of what had happened. Despite this I succeeded - decades later - in getting my mother to tell me some bits of information that remained in her memory.

She told me that some time after the conquest of Lodz by the Germans, the family - my grandmother, my uncle and my aunt left the city and joined my aunt **Maja Weintraub** in the town of Sulejow. Another detail known to my mother was that they all hid in a bunker in the forest, were discovered when they attempted to return a cow (?) that had bolted and were killed by the Germans there in the forest. My mother also said that it was known that Maja and her daughter gave themselves up to a Gestapo officer, who shot them in his office.

After my father's death in January 1977, I found in his desk a wrapped package containing 42 postcards and one letter written by members of our family from their home in Konecka road, Sulejow, to my parents and my grandfather in Bucharest. These letters cover the period 19.1.1940 to 3.10.1942. Some of them bear the sender's name "Rudnicki" - the same name that Lisa Taksin took and lived under till her dying day. At this point I realized that I would only learn the fate of our family in the Shoah if I followed the thread to the Rudnickis of Sulejow.

My efforts to locate the Rudnicki family in Poland began with the arrival in Israel of the first Polish ambassador, Prof. Jan Dowgiallo, a geologist with whom I had previously become friendly at international conferences. He thought that the region concerned and the family name suggested that the person I sought after was the writer Lucjan Rudnicki or his son, the astronomer Konrad Rudnicki. The ambassador, however, did not know where they lived, and my search made no progress. In 1994, while on sabbatical in the USA, I was doing field-work at Andros in the Bahamas, and was instructing a Polish student by the name of Mateusz Manecki. I told him about my Polish roots and about my attempts to locate the Rudnicki family. He volunteered to help me and recruited his mother to join the search. She was a judge in the Polish High Court of Appeals, and wrote to a number of local authorities in different parts of Poland. The response to her letter was amazing. Within a few weeks many answers reached me in the USA - among them one from the Krakow municipality. The director of the mayor's office wrote that they had managed to locate the man I sought and had transferred my inquiry to him. It was indeed **Prof. Konrad Rudnicki the astronomer**. Within a few days he and I were corresponding by letter. According to him, the person who did most to aid our family was his mother, **Maria Rudnicki, nee Skudiewicz**, wife of the famous Polish writer Lucjan Rudnicki.

I sent him 9 questions on the nature of the relations between the Weintraub, Rosenthal and Rudnicki families, on the help that the Rudnicki family extended to our dear ones, and on the final fate of the Rosenthals and the Weintraubs. Prof. Rudnicki's replies, the bits of information preserved in our family, 42 Sulejow letters and background material from the Yad Vashem archives together gave most of the answers.

Konrad Rudnicki wrote to me as follows about the dramatic summer of 1942:

"..Rumours spread in those days that the Jews of Sulejow were to be expelled to somewhere in the East - supposedly for "Resettlement". On the other hand, many people were aware of the possibility that the Jews might be sent to extermination camps. Our neighbors, the Rosenthal and Weintraub families, began to consider steps to protect themselves from these decrees. My mother, **Maria Rudnicki nee Skudiewicz**, who took an active part in the preparations, urged them to leave Sulejow before the worst happened. As a first step, our neighbors deposited in our hands books, documents and photographs. Also, the belongings of **Vera Rosenthal** (my father's mother-E.R.) were transferred secretly, little by little, to our house".

The most helpful act of the Rudnicki family was to give their Jewish neighbors original papers of Rudnicki family members who had died, and to prepare hiding-places for them in villages where German control was weaker. All this however was not enough. In order to obtain a recognized, valid German identity card, the applicant had to present not only an "Aryan" Polish

birth certificate but also three photographs taken by a photographer recognized by the German authorities. The photographer had to sign personally that the photographs were genuine. On this Rudnicki writes as follows:

"...We knew an official in the Sulejow municipality who was ready to issue "Aryan" identity cards on the basis of the birth certificates that had been given to the Weintraubs, Rosenthals and their guests but the problem of photographs remained unsolved because there was only one accredited photographer in Sulejow, and nobody could say how he would act..."

Preparations for escape continued, but were overtaken by the events. The order decreeing the expulsion of the Jews of Sulejow was published on the evening of the 13th or 14th of October 1942. In the words of Konrad Rudnicki:

"... Lisa Tulska (One of the relatives who had also reached Sulejow) decided to obey the expulsion order and to join those "to be resettled in the East". According to him, she said that there, in the new place, she would use the Rudnicki documents in her possession. As it is known that the Jews of Sulejow were sent directly to Treblinka she was probably killed there or on the way to the camp.

My uncle **Jacob Rosenthal** and my aunts **Eva and Anka** escaped to the village of **Konskie**, and were hidden there in the home of a mother and daughter, **Maria and Krystina Margasinski**. This hiding-place had been prepared in advance with the help of the Rudnicki family. My grandmother **Vera Rosenthal** was too weak to go far on foot. She was transferred by night to the Rudnicki home where she was concealed under her new identity as "Aunt **Joanna Szukiewicz**" who had been taken ill during a visit to her sister **Maria Rudnicki** and was laid up in bed at their home.. During her stay at the Rudnickis, they tried to arrange an "Aryan" identity card for her, and again faced the photograph problem. "After much hesitation, we decided to invite the photographer to our home. We told him that "Aunt **Joanna**" was on her way to Sulejow to visit us when she was taken ill and lost all her belongings and her papers. The photographer photographed her, gave them the prints but was not prepared to stamp them with the official authorization as he said this might endanger his life. It was clear to us that the photographer knew what was going on, but he did not give away the secret to the Germans. Mother tried to forge the authorized stamp, but that was a job she could not manage..." After some time **Krystina Margasinski** arrived in Sulejow from the village of **Konskie** (where **Jacob Rosenthal** and those who accompanied him were hiding). **Krystina** brought the message that the place in **Konskie** seemed safe and that the **Rosenthals** would like their mother **Vera** to join them. On the evening of **December 22nd 1942**, the Rudnicki family prepared **Vera** for her journey to **Konskie**. They dressed her in the typical costume of the local women ..."and put in her hand a Catholic prayerbook and a rosary. She refused to take the rosary, saying that she did not know how to use it and this would give her away to her neighbors in the railway carriage..." **Maria and Konrad Rudnicki** seated her on the train going to **Piotrkow and Konskie**. She arrived there safely and joined her son and daughters. **Krystina Margasinski** returned a number of times to Sulejow. Each time she took a few items belonging to the **Rosenthals** and **Vera** back to their hiding-place in **Konskie**.

Lisa Taksin (Elzbieta Rudnicki) did not join the **Rosenthal** and **Weintraub** families in their hiding-places. On the night of **October 14th 1942** she began to move in the direction of **Warsaw**. She hid there in the old city, in the most dangerous and precarious conditions, until the outbreak in 1944 of the Polish uprising against the Germans. She was caught and sent to Germany as a forced labourer (but under her assumed identity as **Elzbieta Rudnicki**). She managed to survive and returned to Poland after the war.

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On the fate of the Rosenthal family (my grandmother, uncle and aunts) Rudnicki wrote: .."Krystina Margasinski's journeys (from Konskie, where her family was hiding the Rosenthals) were cut off in April 1943.

After some months we learned that the hiding-place had been given away by an informer, and that German soldiers found it and shot everybody on the spot. The Margasinski family were sent to Auschwitz, from which only Krystina returned. She died some years ago in Konskie."

In one of Rudnicki's long letter he wrote: "...Actually, you will be able to get more information from my boyhood friend Motek Winter; he was born in Sulejow and now lives at your end, in Petach Tikva...." As soon as we returned from the US, I travelled to Petach Tikva, where a surprise awaited me. Motek Winter had been the boyhood friend not only of the Polish neighbors son Konrad (Dzidek) Rudnicki - but also of the Weintraubs - the family into which my aunt Maja had married. The three families, - Winter, Rudnicki and Weintraub - lived in adjoining houses on the same corner of Konecka Road in Sulejow, and for many years enjoyed close neighborly relations. At our meeting in Petach Tikva, Mr. Winter produced from his archive an undated article from an unnamed Polish newspaper, describing in detail the liquidation of the Weintraub family and their Polish hosts. (**The Olszewski family**) in their forest bunker in April 1943. The newspaper wrote that the contents of the article was based on the testimony of **Tadeusz Maliszewski** (of Lodz) before the Commission Investigating Nazi Crimes Against the Polish People. The events, according to this source, happened at a place called Skornice Kopalnia (Skornice Mine) near the village of Falkow.

After summing up all the information in my possession, we decided that the time was ripe to visit Poland and make a pilgrimage to all the places where our families had hidden until they were lost in the Shoah, and also to try to supply missing information on the spot.

On April 23rd 1995 my wife and I arrived by train in Krakow, to be met on the platform by the entire family of Konrad Rudnicki. A few days later we set out on our journey of discovery with Konrad. Our first stop was the township of Konskie, where we tried to trace the **Margasinski family** which had protected my grandmother, my uncle and my aunts according to what Konrad had previously told me. We applied to the local municipality and they did all they could to help us, looking through old registers card-indexes and files without success. No trace of the family was to be found. We then decided to proceed to our next destination, Falkow, from which we would try to reach the mines in Skornice Forest. Rudnicki went to a nearby taxi rank, gathered the drivers around him and posed the question: "Who knows the Falkow district and Skornice forest?" One of the drivers, a pleasant young fellow, spoke up and said that he was born in the area and knew "Everybody and every stone" in it. Indeed he did, and during the day proved his trustworthiness and the truth of his words. In the course of the journey we struck up a conversation with our young driver, who expressed his wonder that foreigners like us should come to an out-of-the-way place like Falkow. We told him the story of the bunker and his emotion grew from sentence to sentence. It turned out that the event of the killing of the Weintraub family and their Polish hosts was known throughout the district and he, the driver, had heard about it in his childhood from his parents and relatives. He volunteered to take us to the people who best knew about the tragic event and the place where it happened.

We arrived in Falkow - a sort of country center - and stopped outside the offices of the local council. Our driver led us straight to the office of the chairman of the council, who told us that the son of Mrs. Olszewski (the woman under whose house they dug the bunker and hid the Weintraubs) was alive and living in the neighboring village of bulianow.

We set off to meet Wladislaw Olszewski and soon reached his hut. Within we found a sick and wretched old couple, who were unable to tell us clearly about those days. Wladislaw (who appeared to be on the verge of senility) murmured half sentences interspersed with sighs and bursts to tears. We manage to understand that when the Germans came (tipped off by an anonymous informer) to liquidate the people in the bunker and their hosts, he was herding cows in the field at the edge of the forest. When he saw what was happening, he abandoned his herd, ran away, and so was saved.

They agreed at once when we asked them to take us to the forest, to the site of the bunker. We all squeezed into the taxi and drove into the forest through trees and bushes until we reached a place where we could discern among the bushes the bases of walls - remains of the two Olszewski houses burned down by the Germans.

Wladislaw moved around the area as if possessed, muttering words and sentences to himself and pointing hither and thither - until he grasped my hand and pulled me to a place where the earth was sunken, forming a pit covered with branches and plants. "...It's here, it's here, they're down there, inside..." muttered Olszewski with emotion. Here was the site of the bunker where the Weintraub family had hidden, at its entrance they had been shot and into it their bodies had been thrown, before the Germans destroyed the bunker walls and buried them under the wreckage.

We emerged from the forest and were beginning to take our leave of the Olszewski family when I asked Cecilia, Olszewski's wife, whether she knew anyone else who had been in the forest at the time and witnessed the terrible events. She ran into her home and returned with the same newspaper article that I had received from Motek Winter in Petach Tikva. It was GOLS PORANNY, 16.1.1992. She knew Tadeusz Maliszewski, but could only tell me that he live in Lodz in Ogrodowa Street.

Our faithful wonderful driver brought us to Sulejow, the birthplace of Rudnicki and refuge of our family. Rudnicki led us immediately to Konecka Road to the Weintraub family home, a large two-story house on the left side of which there once stood a sawmill, and on the right beyond the fence, the small house of the Rudnicki family. Opposite, on the other side of the road, still stood the Winter family home. It was hard to hear Rudnicki say - "There, in the room behind that window, we hid your grandmother Vera..."

The next day (April 29th, 1995) we arrived in Lodz, my father's birthplace. We located Tadeusz Malisewski immediately with the aid of a tattered old telephone directory, and within a few minutes we were sitting in his apartment. Maliszewski, a devoutly Catholic Pole, from Lodz, had come to Skornice as a youth of 17 to hide at his aunt's from the Germans who were kidnapping youths of his age on the streets of Lodz and sending them to forced labor in Germany. His aunt hid him in the same underground bunker where she was hiding the Weintraub family.

It was as if the man was speaking from a dream: He wept from time to time but immediately returned to recount events in order. It was impossible to slow him down or stop the torrent of speech. It was as if he had waited a very long time to discharge from his memory the events of April 1943.

I tried to write down what he said, but immediately realized that I could never keep up the pace. When it was time to leave, Maliszewski produced from his files the document that he had submitted to the Polish Government Commission Investigating Nazi Crimes. It was testimony written on about 20 pages describing in great detail the daily life in the bunker, the relations between the Olszewski family and their Jewish guests, exact drawings of the area and of the bunker with all its arrangements and furniture, and finally, testimony about the liquidation Aktion

which took place on April 16th 1943 at 3 PM and everything that happened after it... On that day the youth Maliszewski was sent by his aunt to the neighboring village to buy food for her family and for her guests in the bunker. On his way back, Maliszewski saw from afar that smoke was rising from the direction of the forest hut and Olszewski's bunker, and he heard shots and explosions.

A passing peasant with a cart yelled to the youth to take cover as the Germans were wiping out all the residents there. Maliszewski made a wide detour, hid among the bushes and saw everything that was happening close at hand.

The Germans searched the bodies of their murdered victims and found a note with the address in Konskie where my grandmother and uncle were hiding with the Margasinskis. The Germans went there, murdered the Jews on the spot and sent their Polish hosts to Auschwitz. At that time my aunt Maja Weintraub and her little daughter were forced to leave the hiding place they had found in the orphanage of the village of Jelen. They went to the bunker in Skornica and found it burnt out. From there they walked to Konskie where they learned that their family and hosts had been wiped out. Their last walk was to the local German headquarters, where Maja announced that she was not Maria Rudnicki (as stated in her papers) but Maja Rosenthal-Weintraub. The German officer shot her and her daughter on the spot.

Maria Skudiewicz-Rudnicki and her son Konrad have been recognized as Righteous Gentiles. Since 1991, Yad VaShem have not completed the process of recognition of the Margasinski and Olszewski families. Their files were lost and the people of Israel have not found a way to express their gratitude to those wonderful people.

Solving Family Enigma with Mormon Microfilms, Tombstone Inscriptions, and Internet

Prof. Daniel Wagner

It was during a recent professional visit to the United States in March 1995 that I contracted the genealogy bug. I was doing some joint research with a scientist colleague at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City. After a long day of work, he suggested that we go downtown to relax and visit the Mormon Family History Library. I had no idea about the implications...

I was stunned by the Library, with its endless microfilm reading machines and computer terminals, its most exotic databases, and coding systems unfamiliar to me (such as the soundex system where names are classified by the way they sound). The library opens at 7:30am and closes at 10pm, and yet it is hard to leave it, as I found out. John, my colleague, typed his last name in one of the terminals to initiate a search in one of the ancestor databases. Almost immediately some of his 18th century Scottish ancestors appeared!! I was amazed. Then I remembered a story my father often told us, when my brother and I were kids: Our name should in fact be Zilberkasten, not Wagner, because his grandfather Moishe Zilberkasten, a Yiddish theater actor, divorced his grandmother Malka a few years after they had a son David. After the divorce (this was in the 1910s, in Warsaw), Moishe went to America, never to be heard about again. He became a myth of sorts. Malka then married BenZion Wagner, a Yiddish writer in Warsaw. BenZion was a father to my grandfather David, who inherited his surname. David passed away in 1994, in Natanya.

“Why not try to see if Moishe really went to America?”, I thought. I typed in “Zilberkasten” and found nothing. I tried various databases, the five CD-ROM telephone discs for the entire US, the soundex-coded 1920 US censuses of New York, New Jersey, California and Michigan states, the (soundexed) passenger lists for boats coming into New York between 1879 and 1920. Nothing. Moishe remained a myth...

I was getting ready to leave the library after three frustrating hours of search (John had left long ago, of course) when on my way out I peeked again in the Social Security Death Index (SSDI) database, and tried different spellings. Suddenly, the name Sylvia SILBERKASTEN appeared on the monitor! I was literally hypnotized: She was born on Aug 4 1913, died in March 1979, lived in Brooklyn, NY, and I now had her social security number. Was she Moishe’s daughter? His second (albeit very young) wife?

At that point I decided to do two things: try later to get a birth certificate for Sylvia from New York, and, more immediately, redo a search in the library using the soundex code for Silberkasten (S416) instead of Zilberkasten (Z416). It was already quite late, 9pm or so, but I felt very excited. I rechecked all previous databases, but still unsuccessfully. Then, finally, I found him... After checking hundreds of meters of microfilms, the name Moishe Silberkasten appeared in the list of passengers who went through the immigration services in the port of NY. On the poor quality microfiche there was only his name and a code number, supposedly his naturalization number, from which I might be able to get more details about him by writing to the US Immigration and Naturalization Service in New York. Until this day, they have been unable to locate his file. I left the Library at 10pm, after five fascinating hours of research, with the wonderful, exhilarating feeling that I had unearthed information that had been lost forever. Consciously or not, Moishe seemed to have done everything possible to leave as few traces and leads as possible, and be forgotten.

A few weeks later, in April, I received a copy of the death certificate of Sylvia Silberkasten from the Department of Health (birth certificates, however, are not public). From that certificate, I have been able to reconstruct an entire Silberkasten family tree, including descendants in Florida with the shortened name Kasten, and ancestors in Warsaw back to the 1860’s. So far, however, I cannot reconcile that tree with Moishe’s! There *must* be a connection, because they all came from Warsaw, and because Silberkasten is such an uncommon name. But until this very day, that connection is still a mystery.

In early May, something important happened: I registered with Jewishgen, the Internet Jewish genealogy group, where one can post messages, answer queries, help others in many ways. The entire game changed radically: things started to accelerate. Someone in Brooklyn volunteered to take a picture of the tombstone of Sylvia Silberkasten, if and when I got a death certificate and the cemetery name and tombstone location. The same person called a few cemeteries in Brooklyn to check whether they had any Silberkasten: a Rachel [Sylvia’s mother] was buried at Mount Judah, and a Morris who died in 1939 in Detroit, Michigan, was buried in the Yiddish Theatrical Alliance Plot at Mt. Hebron. Bingo! Moishe must have had his name changed to Morris. Someone in Detroit offered to help, and within days faxed me the death certificate of Moishe. Another brick in the wall: Moishe’s residence in NYC was the Capitol Hotel. He died of thrombosis. He was divorced (thus, for the second time) and his wife's name was Gertrude Stein. My (new) friend in

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Brooklyn happened to go the next day to the NY Mormon center for her own research and volunteered again to look for Moishe's wedding certificate, if she could find it. The next day I received this simple note:

"I was at the Mormon center and found Morris' marriage certificate to Gertrude Stein. They were married April 4, 1927. It was a civil ceremony. His father was Solomon and his mother Leah Rosenthal."

And that is how my tree grew back one more generation in just a few days of work, thanks to my new Jewishgen friends on Internet. A week later, I received the wedding certificate, with Moishe's handwriting and signature. Strangely, I have come to feel closer to him.

In July, I went again on a business trip. It was Sunday, early in the morning, and at JFK airport in NY where I just arrived from Israel, I met with two of my Jewishgen friends. We went directly to the immense Mount Hebron cemetery. Armed with a map of the cemetery, we quickly discovered the grave of Morris. I felt overwhelmed.... I stood near Moishe's tomb! Moishe the Myth! No one probably had visited him for decades! The Yiddish Theater plot was very well taken care of. It was also rather fascinating, because many famous yiddish actors (such as Tomashefsky and others) are buried there.

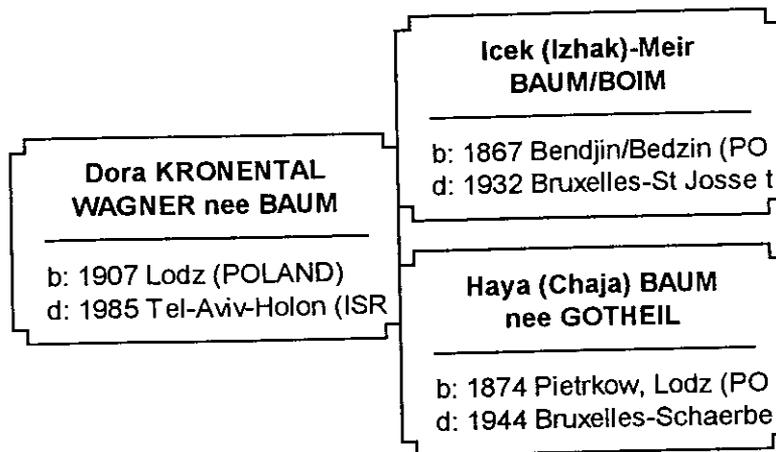
On my way back from Utah, I had a free afternoon in NYC and was on my way (with another very good Jewishgen friend of mine) to visit the Yiddish Theatrical Alliance. It is on the East side, and I wandered on 2nd Avenue, where Moishe lived sixty years ago, and where most of the Yiddish theatres were located... At the Alliance, I spoke with an elderly gentleman who *remembered* the actor Moishe SILBERKASTEN, as he himself was a child playing in the theatre at the time... He remembered that Moishe married Gertrude Stein, and let me look at the Lexikon fun Yiddishe Theater, where I discovered a full biography of Moishe.

The best was yet to come: After the Alliance, I still had some time that afternoon before my 11 pm flight back to Israel. I decided to visit the YIVO Institute on the West side, where I might possibly find some information regarding the Yiddish theater and its actors. There I asked about Moishe Silberkasten and after a while, the lady in charge brought a few files back. *I could not believe my eyes*: Moishe played in the troupe of Maurice Schwartz; there were journal clips, articles, pictures of the troupe with Charlie Chaplin and Albert Einstein. And portraits, and small size posters of Moishe, who had toured the US and the world, even acting in 1935 in Belgium where Malka and David, his first wife and his only child, resided!!... What a day...

I left NY that night, with the distinct feeling that I was bringing my great-grandfather Moishe back with me.

I now must tell what happened in Salt Lake City that week, in between those two days in New York. Needless to say, I spent every single evening of the week at the Mormon library. I wanted to explore that other family legend, that we had a famous rabbi ancestor in our BAUM branch. Until April 1995 or so, all I knew about that branch is contained in the following ancestor's tree, which includes my grandmother Dora (who had 10 brothers and sisters, not shown here), and her parents Izhak-Meir BAUM and Chaja GOTHEIL.

IX



The expansion of the BAUM branch started on a day of last April, as I looked at a picture of my grandmother standing near the tombstone of her father, in the orthodox cemetery of Putte (a small village at the border between Belgium and The Netherlands). I then realized that there was a long text in Hebrew on the stone, which I had never read. I produced several xerox magnifications of the picture, until I was able to read the text. There was a long poem, and the following words describing Izhak-Meir's lineage: "son of Aron Tubi BOIM z'l, grandson of Harav Hagadol Moshe z'l from Kinsk" (kuf yud nun tsadik kuf)!! That had to be our famous rabbi ancestor.

But where was Kinsk? I called Yad Vashem and spoke with Eli Dalin, who is in charge of the 'Kehilot'. He found that Kinsk is Konskie, located 95 km south-east of Lodz (west Galicia), with more than 5000 Jews at the beginning of this century, thus a fairly good-sized city.

By May of 1995, I was completely addicted to Jewishgen. It was at that point that a now very good Jewishgen friend suggested that I look at the microfilmed Polish archives on my trip to Salt Lake City in July. She became my mentor, telling me (all via computer, of course, she lives in Maryland and I had never seen her at that point) all she could about Polish birth, wedding, and death certificates, providing examples. Most importantly, she sent me the "frequently asked questions" document of Warren Blatt, a world expert on Polish Jewry (and a Jewishgenner, of course...). And here I was, practicing and trying to learn and decipher 19th century Polish templates and texts...

On July 26, 1995, I spent my first evening in the Mormon Family History Library. I arbitrarily selected the 1837 reel of Konskie and began scanning the index of births. Almost immediately I found the birth of Aron Tobias BOIM! His parents were Moszek and Ronia, who looked like the right people. Continuing my index scanning, I met Aron Tobias' brothers and sisters, the birth

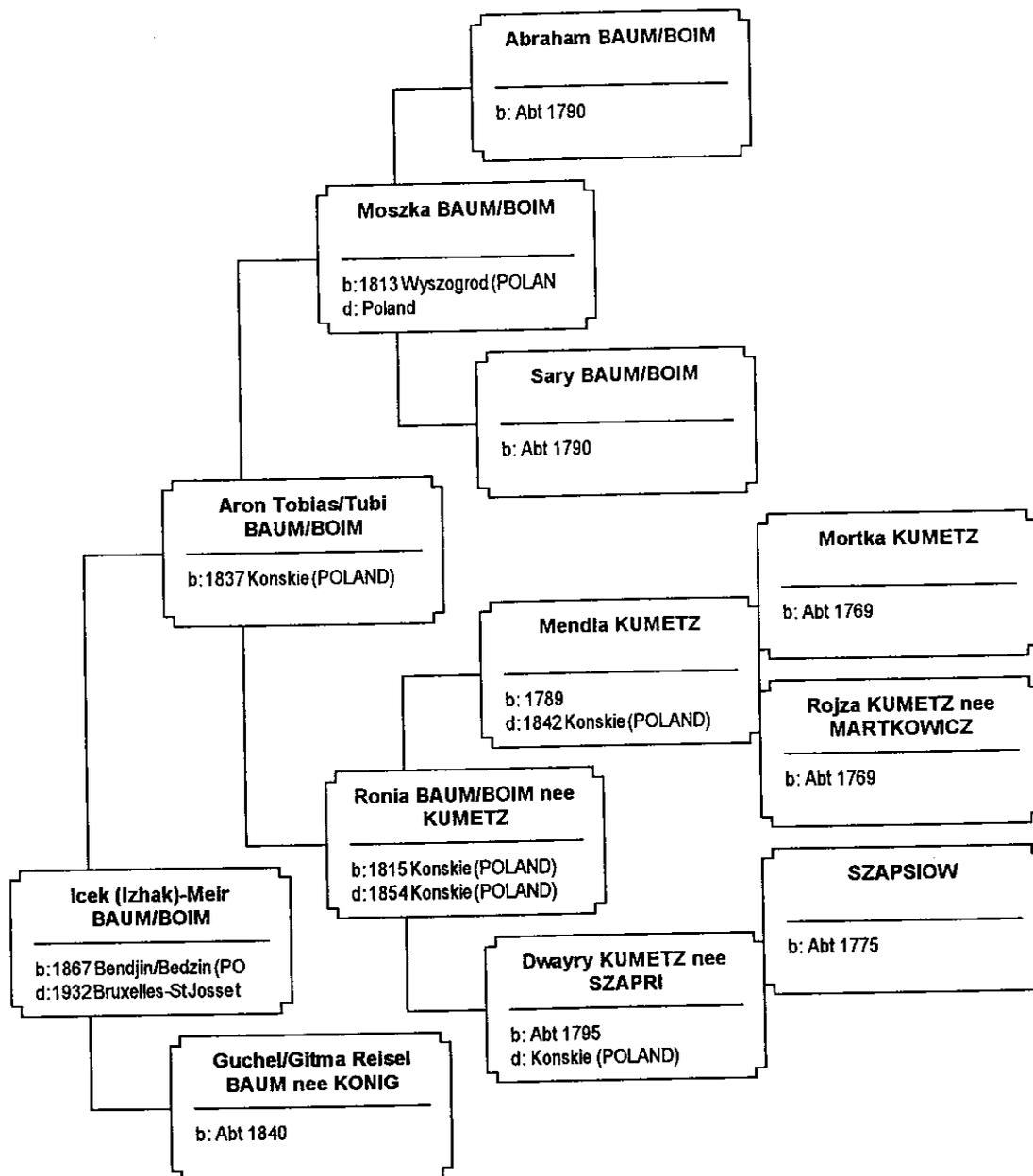
certificates of whom I found in sequence, every 3 years or so. Aron Tobias was the second of four children. Details began to emerge from the certificates, which I painfully translated: according to his age, Moszek, their father, was apparently born about 1813. It was impossible to check directly, as there are no Jewish records that early in Konskie. But I thought that maybe I could find a wedding certificate for Moszek and Ronia, a few years earlier. I was overwhelmed, and very restless.

The next evening, I found an 1832 wedding certificate for Moszek BAUM/BOIM/BOJM (the three spellings appear interchangeably in several documents) & Ronia KUMETZ. The certificate is beautifully handwritten (unlike many other certificates), and signed by my ancestors in Polish and in Hebrew or Yiddish. It is full of information which I translated with great difficulty. Moszek was not a Great Rabbi, according to the wedding certificate, and the birth certificates of his children; he was a 'szpekulant', which loosely translates as money lender. How this reconciles with the tombstone inscription of his grandson Izhak-Meir, I do not know. The wedding certificate also includes the names of Moszek's parents (Abraham and Sara, whom I calculate must have been born about 1790!), and of Ronia's parents (Mendel KUMETZ and Dwoyra SZAPSI, also born around 1790!). Later I also found the 1854 death certificate of Ronia, when she was only 39 or 40 yrs old. After that date, there is no more trace of the BOIMs in Konskie.

At night, in my hotel room, I continued the hard translation work and found that Moszek, and his parents Abraham and Sara, were not originally from Konskie: they came from a place called Wyszogrod. The next evening, looking at the book "Where Once We Walked" by G. Mokotoff and S. Amdur Sack, I found that this town is west of Warsaw and has a relatively large Jewish community. I selected some available reels for Wyszogrod, and all have a large number of BAUMs. Wyszogrod must be the original place of the BAUM branch... However, I was not able to make a direct connection with 'my' BAUMs. And there are no Jewish listings before 1826 [later I was told by Warren Blatt that the early Jewish listings are included in the Roman Catholic archives for the years 1808-1825, which I would have to look at in the future]. I made as many copies of certificates of BAUMs in Wyszogrod as I could, for future analysis.

Back in Rehovot, three months ago, in September, someone on Jewishgen contacted me to tell that, like me, he is researching Konskie. And that Ronia's father, Mendel KUMETZ, was the rabbi of Konskie from 1828!! I had been unable to see this because Mendel did *not* officiate as rabbi at his daughter's wedding (this was the only wedding certificate I had looked at) but he did officiate at most other weddings... My new Konskie contact offered to send all the certificates he can find about the KUMETZes in Konskie, which I gratefully accepted. I received the death certificates of Mendel and of Dwoyra. Another (Polish) Internet friend helped to translate these, and unveiled the names of Mendel's parents (Mortek and Rojza, born about 1770) and of Dwoyra's father (Szapsia, born about 1775)... another generation!

The following is a small part of my ancestor tree, in its current state (note that no brothers or sisters are included in ancestor trees):



In conclusion, was Mendel KUMETZ the legendary great rabbi in my BAUM branch? What is the origin of the tombstone inscription describing Moszek as a great rabbi? Did Moszek *become* a rabbi? All these are open questions, which for the time being remain unanswered.

I would like publicly to express my gratitude to the following people for their extensive help: Phyllis Blumenfeld, Lauren Davis, Al Yuhasz, David Sloan, Jim Yarin, Mirka El Fray, and my cousin in Brussels, Beatrice Brunengraber.

My Four Immediate Families: What their Annals tell us about German Jewish History Esther Ramon

On my father's side the families are Weil and Buchstein, and on my mother's side Homburger and Oppenheim. I have in my possession data on some 3000 descendants of the four founding couples, but in this article and in the family chart I shall dwell chiefly on my direct ancestors.

Places of Residence

The founding father of the **Weil** family lived in Westhofen, a small village in the environs of Strasbourg, Alsace, North-eastern France. After his marriage in 1750 he settled in Merzig, then a village ruled by the Archbishop of Trier in southwestern Germany. Most of his descendants remained in Merzig, which gradually developed into a medium-sized town in the Saar. My father was the first to leave the place: he moved after his marriage to the capital of the Saar, Saarbruecken. When the Nazis came to power our family moved to Sarreguemines in Lorraine, France; in 1936 we made Aliyah and settled in Haifa.

The founding father of the **Buchstein** family lived in the small village of Kunreuth in Bavaria, southern Germany. My grandmother and her siblings were the first ones who left the village and moves to towns.

The founding father of the **Homburger** family was born in the village of Homburg on the Rhine near Wuerzburg in Germany. In 1715 the Prince of Baden founded a new capital, named it Karlsruhe and invited new settlers to come to his capital (regardless of faith). The ancestor of the family settled in the new city in 1721. Most of his male descendants remained in Karlsruhe until my mother's generation. Some settled in other towns and cities but when the Nazis came to power most of them emigrated to the United States of America. My grandfather stayed in Karlsruhe; he was deported by the Germans in 1940 with all the Jews of Baden to the camp at Gurs in the Pyrenees, where he met his death.

The founding father of the **Oppenheim** family lived in the village of Witzenhausen in northern Hessen, Germany, and my grandmother's father moved to the town of Hanau and married there.

The four families have in common a village origin, long residence in the village, and move to town at the beginning of the modern era. In the opinion of Dr. Paul Jacobi, when the Jews were expelled from German towns and cities in the Middle Ages, some of them (mostly those without initiative or means) settled in villages, while other Jews made their way to Italy or Poland. With the coming of Emancipation and economic development, village Jews moved to towns.

The 'Privilege' or Right of Settlement

In the 18th century most of the Jews of Germany needed a 'privilege' or right of settlement from the ruler or lord of the place. In Merzig the **Weil** ancestor received this right, and all his descendants were entitled to remain in Merzig. In Kunreuth the **Buchstein** ancestor had the right of settlement, but only his eldest son, my great grandfather's grandfather, was entitled to remain in the village. His two brother settled elsewhere.

The **Homburger** ancestor apparently did not receive a right of settlement in Homburg and therefore made his way to Karlsruhe, where the 'privilege' or right of settlement was bestowed upon him and all his descendants.

I have no information on the **Oppenheim** family in this regard.

Surnames

The surname **Weil** is an old one, and the first known ancestor of the family bore this name at the end of the 17th century. It is a very common name in southern Germany and northern France, probably originating in one of the five places named Weil in this part of Germany. I do not know of any connection between my ancestors and the famous rabbinical family Weil, whose ancestor Yehuda (Judah) was born about 1360 in Weil der Stadt.

The origin of the name **Buchstein** is not known to me. Only the eldest son of Abraham Mordechai received this name, whereas his brothers, who left the village, were called **Kunreuther**, and the descendants of Salman Kunreuther who settled in Fuerth later chose the name **Klingensfeld**.

The origin of the surname **Homburger** is obvious, as the founding father came from Homburg to Karlsruhe. In the 'privilege' of 1722 that he received from the Prince he is called Homburger, and Homburger has remained his descendants' name from that day to this.

No data are so far available on the **Oppenheim** family.

Personal names

(This analysis includes also names that do not appear in the family chart).

Most of the men in the early generations had biblical Hebrew names: Moises Mosche, Abraham, Mordechai, Nathan etc, with a few closer to Yiddish, like Loew (Judah) and Schmulen (Samuel). Women were mostly given Yiddish names - Rechele, Telz, Scheilen, Gittle, etc. - but in their documents German names were already usually recorded: Theresa, Karoline etc. Only in the middle of the 19th century were boys given German names, but in Jewish documents their Hebrew names are also given. By that time most of the girls were given German names only.

On this subject there were no differences between my four families.

Attitude to religion

In the history of the four families I know of only one case of conversion to Christianity during all the time they lived in Germany. (In that case, a young man fell in love with a Protestant woman, was baptized, and married her).

However, among those of my parents' generation who emigrated to America, very many became Christians.

Sources of Livelihood

The **Weil** family traded in haberdashery, cloth and provisions. My grandfather was the first to open a wholesale provision business. The **Buchsteins** dealt in the same lines of trade. The founding father of the **Homburgers** was a butcher. There is an interesting note written by his name in the population register of Karlsruhe in 1740:

"He is a butcher and one of the most honest. He has never been charged with fraud, although that feature is hereditary among that people".

This note was copied into the Jewish community records - without the added comment on the Jewish people, needless to say. Many of Loew Homburger's sons, grandsons and great-

grandsons were butchers too. Max Homburger emigrated in 1873 to the USA and worked there as a butcher, handing on the butcher's craft to his son in America. My great-grandfather began as a butcher and later established a wholesale business in fodder and grain. The **Oppenheim** family were in trade too, but my great-grandfather was a banker.

In the four families in most cases sons continued in their father's line of business. However, the youngest sons sometimes chose a new profession.

The younger brother of Mordechai Buchstein was a rabbi, the younger brother of Moses Homburger had a regular commercial education, including bookkeeping learned at school. He started out in trade and his sons became bankers. His youngest grandson became the first doctor of medicine in the family. The younger brother of Jakob Homburger was a baker.

Marriage

I shall here consider the early generations up to the middle of the 19th century, during which period parents usually chose spouses for their children. I shall rely on data concerning all the members of the four families, not on my direct ancestors alone.

Girls very often left their parents' home village after marrying someone from another village. Boys generally stayed in their home village. Many marriages were arranged **within the family** - first and second cousins. Moreover, the children of daughters who had married away also married within the family. The probable reason is that they wanted the money to stay in the family.

The children who married away did **not go far from home**. The Weil children married in Saarland, the Buchsteins in Bavaria and the Homburgers in Baden.

Many of the marriages were based on **professional connections** - merchants' sons married merchants' daughters, and the same tendency prevailed among butchers, bankers, doctors and others.

Notable people

My direct ancestors in the four families were respected people who often held positions in the community, but there were no rabbis or other intellectual or spiritual leaders among them. However, among other branches of the families a **Weil** daughter from Merzig married a rabbi, Mordechai **Buchstein's** brother Zwi Hirsch Kunreuther was a rabbi and many of his descendants were rabbis, teachers and chazanim. Zerlina, youngest daughter of the first Loew Nathan Homburger, married in Kippenheim Sandal Weil, a member of the celebrated rabbinical Weil family referred to above, and among her descendants were two rabbis. A very famous member of that branch of the family was the composer Kurt Weill.

Research Sources

The starting point for my **Weil** family research were short notes by my late father on his direct ancestors in Merzig. It is interesting that he calculated the age reached by each ancestor, probably in order to assess his own prospects of longevity. I found important information in a book by the local historian of Merzig on the history of the Jews there, and also in a list of Merzig residents up to the 19th century, and in municipal documents. In the course of my research I discovered that Hannah Degani, a member of our genealogical society, is also a member of the family, and we were able together to complete the family tree.

For the **Buchstein** Family, I received from a distant relative an ancestor-list drawn up by my great-grandfather in 1915. I found a great deal of information in the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem, where many original community record books from

Bavaria are housed, and much other material. By correspondence I reached a member of the Kunreuther family in the USA, from whom I received information on very many members of that branch. He also enabled me to make an important contact with Charles Stanton in the USA, who researches the history of Bavarian Jewry.

Of the four families, my **Homburger** research is the most complete. Three family members who live today in Haifa, Zurich and Lancaster PA, USA possessed booklets containing about 45 "Family Pages" (Familien-Blaetter). On each page are handwritten biographical details of the father of the family, his wife, the parents and grandparents (in most cases) and their children. The first pages are identical and begin with the first Loew Homburger, but the last pages are mainly about the booklet owners own branch.

I found a similar collection in the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish people in Jerusalem, and was amazed and moved to see my late mother's handwriting. She prepared these pages in 1920 for my late grandfather, and none of our generation knew anything about it. The archives here in Jerusalem contained other valuable data, and I found additional material in Karlsruhe. I established contacts with many family descendants, and so was able to write a book on the family.

So far the **Oppenheim** family has yielded only a few lists. I have not yet contacted institutions in Hanau in order to obtain further information.

To sum up, although the four families lived in different places in Germany, they have many features in common - characteristics that can certainly be found in other German Jewish families.

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Remark: Family chart - see Hebrew section.

Our Members at Work

Some Eccentricities in Jewish Genealogy

Dr. P.A. Joseph, President of the Jewish Historical Society of England.

The growth of interest in roots, origins, background and antecedents is one of the notable phenomena of our generation. For those like myself, whose involvement has been for forty-five years or more standing, we have witnessed this explosion of genealogical enthusiasm with delight but also mild astonishment. However, one of the solid achievements of this situation has been the forging of links across the world between so many people sharing with each other their knowledge and expertise. The world Jewish Community recognized this concept when Sally Ann Sack and colleagues arranged the First International Seminar for Jewish Genealogy, in Jerusalem in 1984: a marvellous beginning, and the foundation for the success of several further

International Seminars, including a wonderful return to Jerusalem in May 1994. There is every indication that this genealogical interest is still expanding. Who can say when it will peak or even decline?

In our UK corner of activity, we handle predominantly, questions concerning Anglo-Jewish genealogy, and we rely for our sources on the blend of the British national secular records and those of the Jewish Communities that have survived. Our "case load" is recruited worldwide and has shown a steady and continual growth, year-by-year, as exemplified by the number of requests for advice and assistance that we receive by letter, telephone or fax (we are not on E-Mail and we have no plans to join it).

Many of these requests are straightforward and clear, but a distinct minority represent attitudes from the naive to the outrageous. They range from those non-Jews who, having found an ancestor with a forename such as Moses, Israel, Solomon or Levi, cannot believe that they are not "one of the lost tribes", there are also Jews who feel it's a mitzvah for us to trace their pedigrees for them free (including purchasing all documents), while abandoning any other activities in our lives. A lady wrote me last year insisting her family tradition must be Jewish because she "felt at home" if she walked past a synagogue! We received an earnest letter recently from a young man "currently researching my family history and trying to ascertain whether any of my ancestors were members of your church". Some years ago an Australian lady communicated to me that she had traced her English family back to the 17th century. An unusual forename of that period (Miriel) had been quoted in the Oxford Dictionary of English Christian Names as being popular with 12th + 13th century Jewesses. She had thus made the connection that her family could be easily jumped back four centuries to her "certain Jewish origins".

A popular source of belief and insistence that the family must be Jewish, is often derived from an examination of portraits: a rational explanation that the genetics of physiognomy transmission are too complex to allow such genealogical deductions, usually falls of deaf ears. There seem to be almost a need to sustain mythology in such cases. However, Jews may be equally guilty of bending historical accuracy to suit their emotional needs, I have had various difficulties with some co-religionists who insist on claiming kinship with "important" or "charismatic" Jewish families, despite the factual evidence for such connections being untraced (and probably untraceable). Broadly speaking, our inquirers can be divided into those who are simply tracing their families, and those who may have inheritance at stake or are adopted etc. and have an emotional need to know about their true origins. In some cases these people are desperately anxious to make contact with some of their living Jewish relatives. In general terms, I handle the former category (the safely dead as my wife and collaborator calls them), and she deals with the much more complex and sensitive issues raised by the latter category.

I hope that this brief outline concerning some of our genealogical activities may be of interest to Israeli readers. Of course, a significant volume of our correspondence comes from Israeli enthusiasts and we would be pleased to hear from any more of you who feel we may be able to assist, if there is an Anglo-Jewish background. We welcome warmly also the many friendships that we have formed, as a result of initially communicating concerning matters of Jewish genealogy.

Names

Bulgarian Jewish names in the Second World War Period

Mathilde Tagger

Like many other European states in the Second World War, Bulgaria legislated an anti-Jewish constitution which came into force on January 23rd 1941. According to this constitution, every Jew residing in Bulgaria was declared "an enemy of the Bulgarian nation". The aim of the constitution was "to defend the nation against the Jewish peril". The constitution included many sections whose aim was to undermine the lives of about fifty thousand Jews, most of whom had lived in Bulgaria since the Expulsion from Spain, about 450 years ago.

One of the sections laid Down that "Every person of Jewish origin must expunge from his family name the suffixes - OV, - OVA, -IV etc. These suffixes are characteristic of non-Jewish Bulgarian surnames.

In the 19th century when the Jews had to choose surnames for themselves they added the suffix OV/OVA to their father's name. For example, Abraham ben Nissim became Abraham Nissimov, Meir ben Joseph became Meir Josipov etc.

When the new law came into effect some odd names were created: Joseph Simantov (a Hebrew name) became Joseph "Simant", and Rachel Cordova (surnamed after the Spanish city) became Rachel "Cordo", for instance.

It was further stated in the constitution that "Every person of Jewish origin bearing a non-Jewish personal name must change it". This decree chiefly affected women, but also touched a considerable number of men. We should not forget that since the beginning of the present century many Jews had given their children foreign names, for example French men's names like Marcel or Henri, or Boris after the King of Bulgaria. These Jews, having no alternative, returned to the Hebrew names given them at their circumcision. The women generally chose original Spanish names similar in sound to their existing names, or chose the Hebrew name of one of their grandmothers. For example, Laura became Luna, Juliette became Lea, Lotte became Sara and so on.

In consequence of all this, the genealogist researching his family roots in Bulgaria must be on his guard when studying official documents from the Second World War period.

To fill in the historical background it should be added that Bulgarian Jewry suffered severe material restrictions. They were banished from the big cities to villages or townships on the border and many of the men were sent to labor camps within Bulgaria (the first prisoners were selected deliberately from the most respected members of the community). However, Bulgarian Jewry as a whole was saved from mass extermination in concentration camps.

Bibliography: Arditi B., *The Jews of Bulgaria in the years of the Nazi regime*, Holon, Israel, 1962, 436 pp. (Hebrew).

The Ruhm Family (Name and Fame)

Joseph Ruhm

In my attempts to discover the meaning of my family name, I tried various options and finally accepted one of them. My family originates from Galicia, which was under Polish rule between the two World Wars and before that, part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. There was also a region called Bukowina, which was partitioned after World War Two, between Rumania and Ukraine. In both the above regions, German was the dominant language.

Five brothers in our family moved at a certain date from Galicia to Bukowina and raised extensive families there. My father was born in Bukowina in 1915 and thus German became his mother-tongue.

When I started my research, I was in error because I followed the Hebrew transcription of my name. However, after interviewing family members and checking my German dictionary, it became apparent to me that the word Ruhm means "glory", rather similar to the Hebrew word (in the Bible) for "pride" and "haughtiness". I found no parallel for this meaning in Polish. This gave rise to the assumption that they added the letter "h" to the name Rum, so as to give it a spelling, sound and connotation in German which would make integration into German society in Galicia easier, as was the custom with many Jews in the region.

A second theory is that the name was derived from "Roman", as evidence that the family originated in an area once under Roman control. Perhaps also they added the letter "h" to make integration into German society easier and to hide the Jewish origin. This small addition kept the original sound and thus I had the privilege of bearing an ancient Hebrew name going back generations. The similarity between the German and the Hebrew meanings amazed me. On top of that, I found out that "Ruhm" in Arabic means: "a Roman" and that a Bedouin tribe named "Ruhm" (living at the Santa Katerina Monastery) originates from a region in Albania also once controlled by the Romans.

A third option is to interpret the name according to abbreviations, e.g. Rabbi and Moreh (teacher), or Regalim and Moadim (pilgrimages and feasts), as was the custom in Yemen. However, I discarded this option, since I have no knowledge of any Rabbis in my family. In order to establish whether the name is connected to hard liquor (rum), I would have to find out if rum was used extensively in Galicia in the 18th century.

To sum up, the first option described above seems to me to be the most reasonable one.

May I add another curiosity: a distant relative of mine who had been a Deputy Minister of Education in Rumania, spelled his name in Hebrew as Ruhm when he came on aliyah. He refused to waive the letter "h" and the "glory". Moreover, RUHM can be seen as an abbreviation for "Ruach Ha-Makom" (the spirit of the Lord).

I shall be happy to receive readers' comments at Post Office Box 184, Zichron Ya'akov 30900 (attention Joseph Ruhm).

Jewish Surnames in Prague (15th - 18th centuries)
By Alexander Beider, Avotaynu, Inc., Teaneck, NJ, USA (1995)
Reviewed by Prof. G.L. Esterson

This booklet by Alexander Beider is a useful educational and research tool for genealogists seeking the origins and meanings of Jewish surnames which existed in the city of Prague, and which spread from and into the rest of Europe. The booklet (46 pages long) is divided into twelve sections, for surnames derived from: Kohen/Levite origins, toponyms (place names), masculine given names, feminine given names, personal characteristics or nicknames, and house signs, and for surnames based on patronymics, metronymics, occupations, and acronymics, and for Sephardi names, and names of unclear origins.

Although before the 18th century, most Ashkenazic Jews did not have hereditary family names, there were some places in Europe where Jews regularly used surnames in the 16th to the 18th centuries, hundreds of years before Ashkenazic Jews were forced to adopt surnames at the beginning of the 19th century. Prague, the capital of Bohemia, was perhaps the most representative of these rare exceptions. When Emperor Joseph II in 1787 forced all Jews living within the borders of the Hapsburg Empire to adopt surnames, many Prague Jews simply kept the surnames they had been using up to then.

The surnames of Prague's Jewry represent one of the oldest layers of Ashkenazic surnames, and they are of particular interest. Beider presents data, divided as indicated above, which give the categorized names, their earliest dates and places of origin outside of Prague, and the original sources of most of the names. His data are derived from three source books, by Hock (tombstone inscriptions from the old Jewish cemetery of Prague, from the 15th to the 18th century), Freudenthal (Jewish visitors to the Leipzig Fair, 1675-1764), and Bondy-Dvorsky (Czech documents dating from the 15th century to 1620).

The book should be read not only by genealogists researching in Prague, but also by those working in Europe in general, because of the significant migrations which took place during that period to and from Prague, and because of Prague's prominence in Jewish life at that time.

Selection From Jewish Genealogical Journals

English JGS Journal Selections
Compiled by Harold Lewin

Please view this compilation merely as a convenient guide to some of the more important JGS literature in English. If you find something of interest, do make an effort to read the article. And please accept our compiler's apologies for all errors and missing credits.

BALTIC STATES

Lithuanian State Historical Archives: Laima Tatvaisaite (1)

The article is a summary of a talk given by the Director of the Lithuanian State Historical Archives describing the conditions and procedures for researching these archives. At the time of writing, no agreement had been reached with the Mormons to permit the Genealogical Society of Utah to film in the Lithuanian Archives.

Mariampol and Suwalki Lomza Special Interest Group: Ray Whitzman. (1)

A project has been formed for Mariampol on behalf of the Suwalki Lomza Special Interest Group, the purpose being to gather vital records from Lithuania and enter them into a database.

Description of a Visit to Latvia: Howard V. Epstein (5)

The article provides a vivid description of a visit to Riga and Dankere in Latvia, under the title **In Their Footsteps We Walked (Part 1)**.

Latvia SIG: Mike Getz (6)

Mike Getz is the president of the Special Interest Group set up to coordinate the researches of those having Latvian ancestors. This first issue of the Group publication contains a historical survey of Latvia and of Riga's Jewish community with a map showing the separate provinces of Latvia and including a glossary of city names. Another item is the Latvia Family Finder with a list of researched surnames and names of researchers.

Lithuanian Ghetto Lists Discovered: Howard Margol (8)

The article describes information received during a visit to the Jewish State Museum in Vilnius, concerning records of the Vilnius, Siauliai (Shavli) and Kaunas (Kovno) ghettos.

BELARUS

RAGAS Survey of Belarus Archives: Vladislav Sochnikov (1)

The article summarizes a talk given by the Moscow Chairman of RAGAS, the talk being an update of an article published in the Fall 1994 issue of Avotaynu. He describes Minsk town files from 1880 to 1918, files containing revision lists, residency applications, lists of traders, permits, property documents. Grodno archives are also described.

Grodno Special Interest Group: Jim Yarin (1)

This group is dedicated to genealogical research on ancestor residents of Grodno Gubernia, located in what is now NE Belarus and parts of NW Poland. A list of relevant localities is included.

Belarus Records in the Family History Library: unattributed (4)

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City is now assigning catalog numbers to new microfilms for Belarus. They cover the former Igumen Guberniya, south of Minsk, including Slutsk, Pinsk,

Minsk, Mozra and several other towns. The records include an 1817 census and an 1874 registry of male citizens.

FRANCE

The Jewish Community of Alsace: Dan Leeson (4)

The article contains useful information on censuses and on name choosing in various regions, following the Napoleonic decree of 20th July 1808 which mandated the adoption of family names.

GERMANY

German Jewish Research: Claus W.Hirsch (1)

An abridged transcript of a lecture by Claus W.Hirsch, JGS Executive Council member, is given. The lecture covered the changing map of Europe in the past 500 years, the population of Jews within Germany, adoption of family names, registration of births, marriages and deaths, address books, community memorial books, the pre-WWII census of nonAryans and Holocaust records.

GREAT BRITAIN

British Missing Person Hotline: Sheila Kieval (2)

The Missing Person Hotline, Roebuck House, 284 Upper Richmond Road West, London SW14 7JE, will assist in finding missing people in England. The fax address is 0181-878-7752.

Records of Poor Jews Temporary Shelter, London: M.Y.Mindel (2)

The shelter records, from May 1896 to August 1914, have been entered into a computerized database at the University of Leicester. Professor Aubry Newman will accept queries regarding people who might have stayed in the shelter.

Sources for Scottish Jewish Genealogy: Harvey L.Kaplan (7)

A concise and useful summary is provided of sources for Jewish genealogical research in Scotland.

HOLLAND

Amsterdam - A Sephardi Experience: Margot Salom (7)

The author describes her search for genealogical records in various Amsterdam archives.

POLAND

Polish State Archives and Jewish Historical Institute: Yale Reisner (1)

A summary of a talk given on the organization of Polish archival collections and on the activities of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland (JHI). Collections of genealogical interest include 1,250 folders of the Jewish archives of Breslau, Krakow Jewish archives for the period 1701-1942 and a computer indexed collection of 3,700 tombstone photographs from the Warsaw cemetery.

Russian Era Indexing of Poland Project: Steven Zedeck (5)

Steven describes a project which he formed to concentrate on transliterating primarily the post-1868 Cyrillic indices to Jewish vital records from Russian Poland. His address: 25 Cathedral Circle, Nashua, NH 03063 and he may also be reached via email.

A Genealogical Trip to Galicia: Sophie Caplan (7)

This is an informative article describing a visit to areas in Poland and Ukraine, formerly known as Galicia.

RUSSIA

Migration from the Russian Empire: Passengers Arriving at New York (1)

This is a comprehensive revue of the 2-volume lists in hardcover covering the period 1875-1886 and published by the Genealogical Publishing Co. of Baltimore and obtainable from Avotaynu.

UKRAINE

Research in the Ukrainian State Archives: Various Contributors (3)

Various readers comment on an article entitled "Tempest in a Samovar" by George Bolotenko (Shem Tov, September 1995). In the original article, the author comments on the attitude of Ukrainian archivists allegedly abused by certain Jewish family history researchers from the United States. George Bolotenko responds to the letters, defending his viewpoint, and suggests ways of avoiding a deteriorating relationship between researchers and archivists.

UNITED STATES

YIVO Institute for Jewish Research: Zachary Baker (2)

In November 1994, the YIVO Institute reopened its doors, after moving its offices and collections. The temporary quarters on West 57th St. will be used for a year until the permanent site on 15 West 16th St. is ready. The new building, to be known as the Center for Jewish History, will include the American Jewish Historical Society, the Leo Baeck Institute and the Yeshiva University Museum.

NYC Marriage Records Update: Estelle Guzik (2)

Marriage records created by the five City Clerk's Offices, 1930-1994, are now centralized at the Manhattan office. Researchers can order records more than 50 years old without authorization from the parties concerned. All pre-1938 marriage records issued by NYC Health Dept and by pre-1898 municipalities, can be obtained from the Municipal Archives in Chambers St.

COMPUTERS AND GENEALOGY

Roots IV Goes Multimedia (1)

Commsoft has announced the release of Visual Roots, a multi-media genealogy software program for Windows. Not an update of Roots IV but rather a streamlined version designed to emphasize simple data entry with such extra features as supporting the creation of a family slide show, listening to narratives, viewing photos or images and attaching them by scanning images into the program.

The Internet and Jewish Genealogy: Sheila Kieval (1)

Jewishgen is a "listserv" on the Internet through which information about Jewish genealogy can be exchanged. The procedure for subscribing to Jewishgen was described by Ted Gostin in the Spring 1995 issue of Dorot.

Genealogy Online: Book Review by Sheila Kieval (2)

The article is a review of **Genealogy Online: Researching Your Roots**, by Elizabeth Powell Crowe, 1995. It is recommended for those beginners who want to learn about the online resources that were available for Jewish genealogical research in 1994.

Computerisation of Genealogy Records: Fred Weil (8)

This article is a useful introduction to the use of a computer for storing genealogical records. It deals with such matters as logical data format and the importance of GEDCOM compatibility when choosing a program.

JEWISH GENEALOGY - GENERAL

Fathers of Jewish Genealogy: David Einsiedler (4)

This is Part 5 of a series of articles devoted to individuals who have contributed to the development of Jewish genealogy.

KEY TO JOURNAL REFERENCES

<u>Ref.No.</u>	<u>Journal</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Issue</u>	
1.	DOROT	New York)	Summer 1995	Vol.16, No.4.
2.	DOROT	(New York)	Fall 1995	Vol.17, No.1.
3.	SHEM TOV	(Toronto)	December 1995	Vol.XI, No.4.
4.	ROOTS-KEY	(Los Angeles)	Winter 1995-6	Vol.15, No.4.
5.	YICHUS Y'ALL	(Georgia)	Winter 1995	Vol. 3, No.4.
6.	LATVIA SIG	(Maryland)	January 1996	Vol. 1, No.1.
7.	KOSHER KOALA	(Australia)	December 1995	Vol. 2, No.4.
8.	SHEMOT	(Gt.Britain)	December 1995	Vol. 3, No.4.

הוראות כיצד להרשם ב - Family Finder לגניאלוגיה יהודית

PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS
PRIOR TO FILLING OUT YOUR APPLICATION

Towns and Countries

The most common error in submitting entries to JGFF is that the contemporary name of the town is not used. Many cities and towns, especially in Eastern Europe, have alternate names or spellings. **You must use the name as it is known today or your application may be returned.** In addition, it must be that name *which is used by the native country as written in the Roman alphabet* not the Anglicized version. **List only that name, not variants.** A good source for correct town names is *Where Once We Walked: A Guide to the Jewish Communities Destroyed in the Holocaust*. It can be found in many major libraries. Another good source is *The Times Atlas of the World*. When submitting information indicate which atlas was used next to each town on the application. Do not use as a source citizenship papers, family records or "grandma told me." They invariably are outdated names for these towns.

The country in which the town is located is that country as it exists on modern-day maps. This means that such locations as Prussia, Austro-Hungary and Galicia are *unacceptable*, as these political entities do not exist today.

Entries

An entry consists of **one** surname associated with **one** town within **one** country.

Examples: **INCORRECT** Cohn/Cohen Warszawa Pol **INCORRECT** Schwartz Grodno Pol/Russ
 CORRECT Cohn Warszawa Pol **CORRECT** Schwartz Grodno Byel
 Cohen Warszawa Pol

How It Works

The enclosed application **MUST** be sent in with a **SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED LEGAL-SIZED ENVELOPE (SASE)**. After the information is keyed into the computer, a printout will be mailed to you. If you find any errors, return your corrections as soon as possible for inclusion in the next update.

Costs

First-time submitters

If this is the first time you are submitting entries, there is no charge for the initial 16. If you submit in excess of this, there is a charge of \$2.50 for each additional set or partial set of 16 entries. If the proper fee is not enclosed, only the first 16 entries will be entered.

Updating records

If you have previously submitted names and are updating your entry, there is a charge of \$2.50 for each set or partial set of 16 entries. This includes changes, additions or deletions. Indicate this submission is an **update**. Updates should not list those entries previously submitted which are unchanged.

How to Use the Jewish Genealogical Family Finder

A printout of the Jewish Genealogical Family Finder is available at any Jewish Genealogical Society in the world. It is also available on Internet. For instructions on how to use it, send a message to <jgff-info@cgsg.com>. Leave the subject line and message component blank. A microfiche version for personal use can be purchased for \$11.50 from Avotaynu, P.O. Box 900, Teaneck, NJ 07666.

Send this Application to the New Address - בקשה זו יש לשלוח לכתובת החדשה

Jewish Genealogical Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 6398
New York, N.Y. 10128
U. S. A.

הרב דר' מנחם עמנואל הרטום ז"ל 1916-1992
ספר זיכרון. הוצ' סיני 1996, 477 עמ'
סקירה: אסתר רמון

A book in the memory of Rabbi Dr. Menahem Emanuel Artom 1916-1992
Tel Aviv, 1996, 477 pp. (In Hebrew)
Review: Esther Ramon

מדורי הספר: לדמותו, לזכרו, יהדות איטליה, תורת חיים, מפרי עטו, כתביו, תולדות חייו בתמונות ונוסח התפילה בבית האבל.

הספר הנאה מוקדש לאישיות דגולה, הרב דר' מנחם הרטום. החוקר הגניאלוג ימצא בו עניין רב ובעיקר במידע הרב על יהדות איטליה. מהמאמר של חברתנו לאה הרטום "משפחת הרטום באסטי שבאיטליה" עמ' 193-200 הוא יוכל ללמוד על המשפחה לדורותיה משנת 1587 ואילך ועל דרכי מחקר באיטליה. הספר נותר על ידי לאה הרטום לספרייתנו ועל כך ניתנת לה תודתנו.

יומן של מזכיר קיבוץ, שלמה הראל (באנגלית)
Diary of a Kibbutz Secretary, Shlomo Harel

Our member Shlomo Harel has published in English his "Diary of a Kibbutz Secretary", Keter Press. The diary was written during the years of Kibbutz Galed's Hityashvut. An epilogue was added rounding up the story of the Kibbutz to the problems of today.
Special Price, 25 NIS. Tel. Shlomo Harel 03-5553923

Miscellaneous

לקט ידיעות

טופס והסבר להרשמה ב - Family Finder לגניאלוגיה יהודית (דף במרכז)
Form and Instructions for Submitting Entries to JGFF (Center Page)

הסמינר השנתי ה - 15 בגניאלוגיה יהודית יתקיים בבוסטון ב - 14 עד 19 ביולי 1996.

יש בידינו פרטים על התוכנית של הסמינר וטופסי הרשמה. נשלח את החומר למעוניינים.

The 15th International Summer Seminar on Jewish Genealogy
"Boston: Beacon of Heritage"

Boston Park Plaza Hotel
July 14-19, 1996



Hosted by
The Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston, Inc.
P.O. Box 610366
Newton, MA 02161-0366
617-283-8003
<http://www.jewishgen.org/seminar.html>

כנס משפחתי עולמי של משפחת יפה

העמותה של משפחת יפה מודיעה על הכנס העולמי השני של בני המשפחה. הכנס יתקיים בימים 24-25 ביוני 1996, באודיסטוריום מוזיאון ארץ ישראל, רמת אביב, תל אביב.

