

שרשרת הדורות

SHARSHERET HADOROT

FAMILY ROOTS RESEARCH PERIODICAL

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EDITORIAL

In this issue of Sharsheret Hadorot we extend the geographical bounds of Jewish Genealogical research and range from India to the former Soviet Union. At the same time we go deep into our local roots, and publish two well-researched studies of families long established in Eretz Israel. New members, now part of the Society, present their fields of research. We shall be glad to give similar opportunities to other members and urge you all to become active in genealogy in Israel. Bring interested guests to our monthly meetings, and help to spread the word!

Esther Ramon, Joachim Eilon and Ruth Rigbi

An Important Announcement

Several months of recent talks led to Friday's agreement between the Mormon Church, the World Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council in Washington, A Living Memorial to the Holocaust Museum of Jewish Heritage in N.Y., the Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles and Yad Vashem.

The Mormon Church agreed to direct all of its officials and members to discontinue future baptism of deceased Jews, except those who are ancestors of living members or whose family gives permission. It also agreed to remove from the next issue of its International Index the names of all known posthumously baptized Jewish Holocaust victims who are not direct ancestors of living members.

from Jerusalem Post, April 30, 1995.

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Our other publications:

Three booklets:	Annals and Deeds	10 NIS	\$ 5
	Their Father's House 3-4	20 NIS	\$10
	Their Father's House 5-6	30 NIS	

Annual Membership for 1995 90 NIS or \$36 (please pay immediately)

FORTHCOMING LECTURES

25.4.95	Chaim Friedmann - Addenda to the lecture on the Vilna Mathilde Tagger - News from my research. Robin Naftali - Summary of questionnaires on computers. Annual General Meeting
31.5.95	Prof. Paul Alsberg - Personal Experience in Family Research.
28.6.95	Dr. Shalva Weil - Development of the family among the Bene Israel of India.
19.7.95	Avi Treitsman - Genealogical Research and Computers.

The lectures begin at 19.30 and the library is open from 18.00 at "Mevakshei Derech", 22 Sderot Shai Agnon, San Simon, Jerusalem.

RECENT LECTURES

THE SALOMON FAMILY

Dr. Simcha Mandelbaum

The Salomon family is celebrating 200 years in Israel. It is the oldest and largest Ashkenazi family in Eretz Israel.

The first member of the family in this country was Rabbi Shlomo of Toloschin, who arrived in Eretz Israel in 1794. He was the only disciple of Rabbi Eliyahu the Gaon of Vilna who was permitted to go to Eretz Israel while the Gaon was still alive. (The first official convoy of the Gaon's disciples left Vilna only in 1808.) When the Gaon was asked why he allowed Reb Shlomo to go, while refusing others permission to do the same, he answered: Reb Shlomo is a soul without a body - he is entitled to settle in the Holy City. This does not apply to us - mortals who possess the divine soul in our body. We cannot go as yet." Reb Shlomo settled in Hebron and was buried there.

The second member of the family was Rabbi Abraham Shlomo Zalman Zoref - known by his Hebrew initials as the RASHAZ - who came to Eretz Israel from Kedainiai in Lithuania with the fourth convoy of the Vilna Gaon's disciples and arrived in Jerusalem in 1812. At that time Jews were forbidden by the Ottoman Turkish government to enter the city. 100 years earlier, Rabbi Yehudah he-Hassid ('the Pious') had come to Jerusalem with a few hundred disciples. After living there for a while they were expelled from the city by Arabs, leaving some debts behind. Since then, no Ashkenazi Jew had been permitted to enter the city, as it was "presumed" that he was a descendant of Rabbi Yehudah he-Hassid's group and therefore required to pay the "Ashkenazi Debt" before being allowed to enter. The RASHAZ was wearing "Sephardic" garments and thus eluded the guards. Safely inside the city, he opened a jewelry store and made the acquaintance of Jerusalem government officials. Through personal connections, he was able to discover the existence of an unknown Ottoman law stating that every debt is wiped out after 100 years. He then petitioned the Court and obtained a decision stating that the "Ashkenazi Debt" was null and void. On the basis of this decision he applied to the Governor of Jerusalem and received an official permit for Ashkenazi Jews to enter Jerusalem. The RASHAZ then drafted a communique informing Jewish communities throughout the world of the permit he had received and calling them to "come home".

The communique had an immediate effect. Many families came to Jerusalem and provided the nucleus of the Jerusalem Ashkenazi community, which received special recognition by the Turkish government. The RASHAZ was instrumental in acquiring a very large tract of land in the center of the Old City of Jerusalem which had been left by Rabbi Yehudah he-Hassid's group. He travelled to Alexandria in Egypt to petition Sultan Abdul Hamid, and prevailed upon him to allow the Ashkenazi Jewish community to develop the land and build on it the "Hurvah" synagogue, schools and yeshivot, a rabbinical court, housing for communal leaders and the official residence of the Chief Rabbi Samuel Salant.

How did I start my research? It all began "accidentally". A relative of mine, Advocate Jacob Salomon, discovered among the papers of his father Chaim Salomon (a prominent communal

leader and deputy mayor of Jerusalem) a notebook written by the RASHAZ containing Biblical thoughts and interpretations. Jacob made photocopies of the notebook which he mailed to several relatives. With great difficulty I was able to read one page, and was very impressed by its contents. I decided to ask my son Alexander Mandelbaum, a Bible scholar, to transcribe the text and add his comments and interpretations. He made a "deal" with me. He would do as I asked if I would prepare a list of the RASHAZ's descendants. I speculated that the list would include several hundred names and would take a few days to compile. I soon realized how wrong I was. However, I was not discouraged and accepted the challenge to make a thorough search. The search took about 9 months and was conducted in several continents. The research as a whole resulted in three volumes which I myself have published. It turns out that the RASHAZ has more than 16,000 descendants. They are spread over many continents, but more than 95% of them live in Israel. These descendants are of many colors, occupations and views, but they all have one great thing in common: their unwavering love of Zion.

SOURCES FOR RESEARCH

Recent discoveries have disclosed new information concerning Jerusalem in the 18th and 19th centuries. Among them:

1. The archives of the "Organization of Clerks and Secretaries", the important charitable organization based in Holland which was very active in that period. The archives were found in a sealed case floating in one of the Amsterdam canals, apparently put there during the Holocaust years for fear of the Nazis. The archives contain copies of all incoming and outgoing letters that went through the office.
2. The Montefiore archives, transferred from the Montefiore estate in Ramsgate to the British Museum. The archives contain, inter alia, three censuses conducted in three different periods, with lists of all members of the [Jewish] community in several cities in Eretz Israel and personal data on each of them.
3. The archives of the Ashkenazi Burial Society (Chevra Kadisha) in Jerusalem, recently computerized, contain very precious information about many members of the family.

SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SEARCH

1. My first problem was to reconstruct the immediate family of the RASHAZ: number of children, order of birth, place of birth. A book written by Mordechai Salomon entitled "Three Generations in Jerusalem" states that the RASHAZ came to Jerusalem with three sons born in Kedainiai. The new information reveals that the children were born in Eretz Israel.
2. Mordechai Salomon writes that Miriam, daughter of the RASHAZ, was married to Abraham Isaac Trachtenberg, head of the Trachtenberg family. However, in another part of the book he prints a copy of a letter written to the RASHAZ by his eldest son from England, where he was studying weaving. In the letter he sends regards to his sister Miriam and her husband - Uri. Investigating Miriam's grave site, we find her buried near one Samuel Mordechai of Warsaw. At first glance one might conclude that she had been married to three husbands (not at the same time, of course). However, in searching for the grave of Abraham Isaac Trachtenberg we discovered that he is buried near his spouse Chaya Necha - daughter of Miriam. Now the

mystery was solved. Miriam was married twice, and her daughter was married to Trachtenberg.

3. Traveling one day on the New Jersey Turnpike, I decided to stop off at Elizabeth N.J. in order to participate in the afternoon service at the Elizabeth synagogue. There I found an old acquaintance of mine who asked what I was doing in the States. When I told him of my newfound preoccupation - genealogy - he introduced me to one of the people there, Dr. Neil Rothstein, who became my friend in two minutes. He took me to his home and handed me a letter containing a long list of names. He told me that he had received it from Australia from someone named Eli Rabinowitz and asked me to glance through it. I noticed many people there with the name Harrison and immediately realized that I had found a link to the Harrison family members who are all Salomons, many of them residing in South Africa. The list was essential in order to trace this part of the family, and saved me many hours of telephone calls. Neil also possessed a microfilm copy of the Montefiore censuses which enabled me to obtain valuable information.

4. I was told of one Brad Hill, in charge of the Jewish collection at the British Museum. When I spoke to him he asked what I was looking for. I answered that I was looking for traces of the Salomon family. He retorted "Salomon? That's me!" From then on I received full cooperation from Brad, who knew a great deal about the family and was well informed regarding the Montefiore archives.

The publication of my book "Ten Generations in Eretz Israel - Two Hundred years (1794-1994) caused a lot of excitement. News of the publication spread like wildfire and the book immediately sold like hot cakes. As reviews started to appear in the Israeli press I received many telephone calls, through which I discovered new branches of the family that I had missed. Many family members have since searched their archives, basements and attics and have uncovered manuscripts and documents written by family members, all of which shed light on both family history and the history of Israel. Poems and literature were found, as well as papers dealing with Biblical and Halachic teachings and interpretations. This caused me to publish two additional volumes: Ten Generations in Eretz Israel II and Torah from Zion.

In conclusion, I see my work on the family tree as the accomplishment of my life. I was taught by my dear mother to love and respect the members of my family. Now I have discovered who they are. Moreover, as my family tree is on public record, I can share my love with the rest of the family. May my work be useful to all my family, as well as to all lovers of Zion!

See bibliography (Hebrew) on p.5, and the book review by Shmuel Even-Or on pp. XIX-XX.

FAMILY ROOTS IN ERETZ YISRAEL

Dr. Ruth Marcus

The death of my beloved parents, first my father Itzhak Eliashberg on 19/11/1982 and then my mother Ahuva Eliashberg on 15/2/1987 left me with a feeling of emptiness. I suddenly realized that I did not know much about my father's family. I knew that my paternal great-great-grandfather Rabbi Mordechai Eliashberg, born in 1817 in Cekiske, Lithuania, had been one of the first Choveve Zion and a founder of religious Zionism, renowned as one of the first rabbis to

allow work in the Shemitta (Sabbatical) year. I also remembered a few family stories that my father had told about his family in my childhood. But about my mother's family I knew almost nothing. I knew that my mother was born in Jerusalem in 1912 and orphaned at about the age of four. Unlike my father, my mother refused to talk about her childhood - perhaps because life had been so hard for her as a child in the girls' orphanage in Jerusalem after the death of her parents. After my mother's death I became curious to find out more about my ancestors on her side: When did they come to Eretz Yisrael and how many generations had lived in this country up to the time of my birth? The information I have amassed from historical sources and from family members' reminiscences about the roots of my maternal family is presented in what follows.

FAMILY ROOTS OF MY MATERNAL GRANDFATHER

My maternal great-great-grandfather, R. Jeremiah son of R. Meir of Vilna, was the founding member of our family in Eretz Yisrael. R. Jeremiah was one of the disciples of the Vilna Gaon who came to the Holy Land and settled in Safad in the first decade of the 19th century. He apparently arrived in the country before 1808 - the year in which the large-scale aliyah of the Vilna Gaon's disciples began. R. Jeremiah of Vilna was an important member of the Perushim (opposed to the pietism of Hassidim) in Safad. His signature appears with those of eleven elders of the Perushim sect on "Iggeret Ha-Kollel" (Letter from the Kollel), signed in Safad in the month of 2nd Adar 1810. In this letter, the heads of the Perushim describe the grave situation of the community in Safad. They demand financial support for the Ashkenazim living there, and an increase in the aliyah of Jews to Eretz Yisrael. The letter was given to R. Israel of Shklov, who set out as an emissary to the countries of Eastern Europe.

In 1813-14 a great epidemic raged in Safad. Spreading from house to house, it killed all but about sixty of the roughly five hundred people in Safad. One theory holds that R. Jeremiah perished in the epidemic and was buried in a mass grave in Safad. His place of burial is unknown. It is noteworthy that the name of R. Jeremiah son of R. Meir of Vilna does not appear in any of the five censuses of the Jews of Palestine taken in the 19th century on the initiative of Moses Montefiore. Another theory holds that R. Jeremiah returned to Vilna and died there.

The son of R. Jeremiah son of R. Meir of Vilna was called Abraham Meir, and he was my maternal great-grandfather. I have built up his biography from information in historical sources and from family members' reminiscences. The historical sources include the five censuses sponsored by Moses Montefiore in 1839, 1849, 1855, 1866, 1875. I found information in them on the place and date of birth of Abraham Meir, but unfortunately the information was inconsistent. I therefore turned to the historian Dr. Morgenstern who helped me to reconcile the inconsistencies and to find R. Abraham Meir in other historical sources. I am grateful to him for his help.

THE LIFE AND PUBLIC WORK OF R. ABRAHAM MEIR IN THE OLD YISHUV

R. Abraham Meir, according to my reckoning, was born in Safad in 1808. (According to another theory, he was born in Vilna and came to Safad as a baby with his father R. Jeremiah of Vilna.) In the community he was nicknamed "Holy Seed", as he was one of the first Ashkenazi children born in Eretz Yisrael after the arrival of the Perushim. When the great epidemic broke out in Galilee in 1813, ten families of these first olim left Safad and settled in Jerusalem. Abraham Meir was about five years old when he and his family arrived in Jerusalem, along with

the families of R. Shlomo Fach - ancestor of the Rosenthal family; R. Abraham Shlomo Zalman Zoref - ancestor of the Salomon family (See: Shmuel Even-Or (Ornstein) (1995): The Salomon Family. Sharsheret Hadorot Vol. 9, no.1); R. Nathan Netta son of R. Menahem-Mendel of Shklov - ancestor of the Halevi family; Rohald and other families. These families renewed Ashkenazi settlement in Jerusalem, which had ceased since the aliyah of the disciples of R. Yehuda he-Hassid, 100 years earlier. The missionary Joseph Wolff, who lived in Jerusalem in the early nineteenth century, noted in his diary that in March 1822 he met the youth Abraham son of Jeremiah. The youth was born, he estimated, in 1806. Lunz, the researcher of Eretz Yisrael, knew Abraham Meir, and mentioned in one of his articles that for lack of a minyan in the Ashkenazi synagogue, the boy Abraham Meir would complete the minyan, holding a Torah scroll.

The main achievement of the group of Perushim who settled in Jerusalem in the second decade of the nineteenth century was to get back for the Ashkenazim the courtyard of Rabbi Yehuda He-Hassid, (known as the "Hurva") and to rebuild the courtyard. The "Hurva" courtyard had included at one time dwelling-houses, wells, mikvaot (pools or baths for ritual ablution), a beth midrash (study house) and a large synagogue. It symbolized the expulsion of the Ashkenazim from Jerusalem, and its rebuilding symbolized for them the renewal of Ashkenazi presence and their intention to establish themselves permanently in Jerusalem. After receiving a firman from the Ottoman authorities (cancelling the debts of the Ashkenazim to the Arabs), and receiving a license to build the "courtyard" and the synagogue in it, the leaders of the Perushim sent emissaries to the Diaspora to raise money. Abraham Meir son of R. Jeremiah was sent in 1837 "to the districts of the towns of Wolyhai and Montayen and Bogdanya as far as Vienna.. in order to raise money to build the great synagogue". The letter of appointment ends by praising R. Abraham Meir in fulsome Hebrew as "The Holy Seed, son of the revered R. Jeremiah of our Kollel, learned, pious and devoted to Jerusalem."

Abraham Meir spent several years on this mission. His original parchment letter of appointment used to be kept in a synagogue in the Mishkenot Yisrael quarter of Jerusalem: today it is kept by an Orthodox Jew in Jerusalem.

Abraham Meir was active in the religious and public life of the Old Yishuv. As one of the heads of the Perushim community, his signature appears on a number of documents, for example on a document from 1846 setting up a charity society in the Perushim kollel. He is also a signatory (with other leaders of the Perushim) to a letter appointing Moses Montefiore in England to the position of gabbai and clerk (pakid) of the Perushim kollel. He was among the founders of the "Etz Haim" Talmud Torah and yeshiva in 1855, and was one of the four supervisors of Etz Haim yeshiva. Various documents attesting his activities and involvement in the public life of the Old Yishuv from 1837-1855 appear in a booklet called "Holy Seed and his Seedlings" (Zera Kodesh ve-Navatav) written by R. Marcus and published in 1990.

In the three censuses carried out in 1839, 1849 and 1855 Abraham Meir appears under the name Abraham son of R. Jeremiah. In the censuses of 1866, 1875 he appears under the name Abraham Meir son of R. Jeremiah. Possibly the name Meir was added to his name after the death of his paternal grandfather R. Meir of Vilna. Abraham Meir's surname was Lifshes, meaning

"of Lifsha". Possibly his mother's name was Lifsha. On his tombstone is engraved Abraham Lifshes. The surname Lifshes was corrupted to Lifschitz. In the history of the Rivlin family written by Eliezer Rivlin he appears as Abraham Meir Lifschitz. He is mentioned there because one of his daughters named Simcha Taube married Abraham Benjamin Rivlin, founder and director of the first soup kitchen (beth tavshil) in the Old City of Jerusalem.

In the course of my research I have looked for siblings of R. Abraham Meir Lifshes son of R. Jeremiah of Vilna, but have found no definite information so far. However, in the lists of Warshawsky, head (mukhtar) of the Ashkenazi community, I found that Itzhak son of Zundel Salant, his wife Chaya daughter of R. Jeremiah, and their son Zundel came to Eretz Israel in the seventies of the last century. Apparently Isaac Salant was the eldest son of Rabbi Zundel Salant (1786-1865), father-in-law of Rabbi Shmuel Salant (1818-1909) son of R. Zvi of Keidan. There is a hypothesis that Chaya daughter of R. Jeremiah, who was born in the township of Salant in 1819 and died in Jerusalem in 1886, was a sister of R. Abraham Meir.

Abraham Meir son of R. Jeremiah of Vilna was about 14 years old when he married. His first wife, Sarah daughter of Nathan Netta, was a midwife. They had no children. She died in 1863. Abraham Meir married again at the age of about 55. His second wife was a young and beautiful woman named Hannah-Rachel daughter of R. Zvi of Hungarian origin - apparently from the township of Satoraljaujhely on the Czech border. The middle-aged R. Abraham Meir and his young wife Hannah Rachel, (nicknamed Hannah die Schoene) lived on Hebron Street in the Wad section of the Old City. Three sons (one of them my grandfather) and three daughters were born to them. At this stage of his life Abraham Meir seems to have given up public work for the Yishuv, being burdened with a family to support. I have found no documentary evidence of public involvement on his part after 1860. In the 1864 census Abraham Meir's occupation is given as money-changer. Subsequently he lost his money and was left penniless. The 1875 census says: "The old man R. Abraham Meir. His work and his craft: his Torah is his craft. Remarks: Poor, Infirm and Old." Abraham Meir died in 1881 and was buried in the rabbis' section of the Mount of Olives cemetery. His widow Hannah, left with children to support, found work selling in a grocery store in the Old City; she also rented courtyards from Arabs and sub-let them to tenants. Hannah died in 1904 and was buried on the Mount of Olives.

The eldest son of Abraham Meir and Hannah Rachel, Shimon by name, was my grandfather's brother. In the ledgers of the mukhtar of the Ashkenazi community, I found Shimon son of Abraham with the added description Wakker Shochet. Shimon seems to have been a waker-up of the local Jews for early-morning prayers, and a shochet (ritual slaughterer) too. During the First World War, Shimon and his wife Nechama daughter of Yehoshua Herschel left Eretz Yisrael (Ottoman Palestine) and joined the family of his mother Hannah Rachel in Hungary. There they settled and raised their own family. Shimon's family probably perished in the Holocaust: I have no information on his children and descendants. Some say that part of the family went to Australia. Others say that one of his sons came to Eretz Yisrael in the thirties and joined an Orthodox yeshiva in Jerusalem. I have tried various avenues of enquiry, without success.

The brother of Shimon, son of Abraham Meir, was my grandfather Shmuel Leib. My grandfather worked in a grocery store in the Old City. His surname was Wigisser. This is perhaps derived

from "Giesser" meaning pourer; he may originally have been called "Weingiesser", or wine-pourer, and the "n" dropped out, leaving the name Wigisser. Perhaps his mother Hannah, who also worked in a grocery store, was known as Wigisser in her time. My grandfather's descendants were and still are called Wigisser. My grandfather's sisters were: Simcha Taube who married Abraham Benjamin Rivlin; Malka who married Joseph Kirschenbaum (secretary of the United Council of Yeshiva Sages and Rabbis); and the youngest sister Sarah Beile, who married Abraham Itzhak Appelman, a bookbinder in Nachalat Shiv'a, outside the walls. The booklet "Holy Seed and his Seedlings" contains a list of 437 descendants of my grandfather and his three sisters. About two years ago we held a family gathering at Beth Hatefutzoth, the Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv, attended by about 200 "seedlings" sprung from the "Holy Seed", R. Abraham Meir.

FAMILY ROOTS OF MY MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER

My grandfather R. Shmuel Leib Wigisser married my grandmother Rivka Alte daughter of R. Moshe Yehoshua Salant. R. Moshe Yehoshua son of Jacob was born in the township of Salant about 1824 and came to Eretz Yisrael with his first wife from Tels in the Kovno district in the 1870's. [As mentioned above, R. Itzhak Salant, his wife Chaya and their son Zundel came to this country in the same year. But I have not found any family relationship between my maternal great-grandfather Moshe Yehoshua Salant and the family of Rabbi Zundel Salant and his son-in-law Rabbi Shmuel Salant son of R. Zvi of Keidan.] Moshe Yehoshua's first wife died, and in 1877 (according to my calculation) he married a young second wife, Hinda Cheina, my maternal great grandmother.

Hinda Cheina was the daughter of Mendel Leib Lager of Keidan in the Kovno district. She had come to Eretz Yisrael from Keidan with her uncle and aunt, Moshe Nathanson and his wife Rachel daughter of Zvi, by my reckoning in 1864, when she was a girl of about 13. The youngest son of Moshe and Rachel Nathanson of Keidan was born in Jerusalem in 1866 and was named Nachum Nathanson. Nachum Nathanson founded the School for the Blind in Jerusalem, and was the son-in-law of Ben Zion Silberstein (See: Yuval Elizur (1994) The Jerusalem Roots of my Father Reuven Silberstein, Sharsheret Hadorot, vol. 8, no.3.), pioneer of the paper trade. The connection between my family and the Nathanson family of Keidan led me to the hypothesis that Mendel Leib Lager, father of Hinda Cheina, and Moshe Nathanson, father of Nachum Nathanson, were brothers - both sons of Rabbi Nathan son of R. Moshe of Keidan.

My grandmother's parents - Moshe Yehoshua Salant and his wife Hinda Cheina - lived in Batei Machaseh quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem. Moshe Yehoshua was shamash and gabbai (beadle and warden) of the Beth Midrash there. Four daughters and one son were born to the couple in Batei Machaseh. The eldest daughter was my maternal grandmother, who was born in 1878 and was named Rivka Alte. R. Moshe Yehoshua Salant died in 1903 and his wife Hinda Cheina died in 1916. Their graves lie in the Mount of Olives cemetery. Their house in the Batei Machaseh quarter was destroyed in Israel's War of Independence, 1948-49. After the Six-Day War in 1967, Yigal Allon's house was built on the ruins.

There is in preparation a list of the descendants of Mendel Leib Lager of Keidan, my maternal great-great-grandfather. I may mention that four sons and a young daughter of Mendel Leib Lager left Keidan in the seventies and eighties of the last century and emigrated to the United

States of America, where they took the surname Mendelsohn (son of Mendel). Relatives in the USA are collecting information on descendants scattered around that country.

My grandmother Rivka Alte daughter of Moshe Yehoshua Salant and my grandfather Shmuel Leib Wigisser son of R. Abraham Meir Lifshes lived at first in the Old City. Then they moved out - to Jerusalem outside the walls - first to the Montefiore quarter (Yemin Moshe), and subsequently to the Beth Yisrael quarter. Both my grandparents died in the epidemic that raged in the country in the First World War. They left six orphans, one of whom was my mother Ahuva Wigisser. She was about four years old when her parents died.

A period of my research was devoted to collecting information on the girls' orphanage where my mother and her sister (my aunt) were placed as children at the time of the First World War. As I said above, my mother in her whole lifetime never showed me the places where she grew up. After her death I looked into the collection of papers she left and found that the name of the girls' orphanage where she lived as a child was "Maon le-Bnot Yisrael" (Jewish Girls' Home). From books on Jerusalem I learned that the Home was supported by the Ezra (Help) Society of German Jews, and that the address was Abyssinian Street (today Ethiopia Street). It was important for me to find the actual building where my mother spent her childhood. About four years ago, I wrote to a woman aged 90 or so living in Los Angeles, who had in her time been an inmate of Weingarten's General Israel Orphans' Home For Girls, and had afterwards moved to the Jewish Girls' Home, where she became an instructor. In her reply, the woman told me the story of the Jewish Girls' Home, which remained open until 1925. Most movingly, this old woman remembered my mother and my aunt and sent me two photographs taken about 1916. One picture shows the assembled girl orphans, among them the smallest, my mother aged about four. The second picture shows the house on Abyssinian Street where the Home was located.

My mother never saw those photographs. The very day I received them, I went to Ethiopia Street to find the place. I identified the house at No. 8 Ethiopia Street. I walked round and round the yard, up and down the outside staircase again and again. Only then did I feel that I had discovered the secret of my mother's childhood.

My mother attended the Laemel School for Girls. She later attended the Gymnasia Realit (commercial trend) in Jerusalem, formerly known as Beth Hasefer Le-Miskhar (Commercial School). I have my mother's diploma from the Gymnasia Realit dated 1928. In the Zionist Archives I found that in 1928 the Gymnasia Realit was located on Bezalel Street. I do not know whether the original building still exists.

What motivates my continuing search for family roots? Apart from the intrinsic historical interest of background and context, it keeps me in touch with my parents. As I work through documents and walk through old quarters of Jerusalem, it is as if they join me in the search for roots.

GUEST ARTICLE

DIGGING INTO ONES ROOTS IN INDIA

Isaac Saul Sankar

(translated by Yohanan ben David)

The idea to prepare a family tree began in the office of the Rabbinate in Tiberias in 1963 when I went there to register to get married. As at that time the Rabbis cast doubt on the purity of the Bene Israel Jews from India, the Rabbi asked me for the names of my father, grandfather, great-grandfather and so on. When I couldn't get beyond my great-grandfather, he asked me to bring two witnesses to prove that I was Jewish. Even when I did that, he still insisted that I lower my trousers to check if I was circumcised. This too while I was still in army uniform!

In 1966 when I was released from the army (I had joined late at the age of 22), I travelled all over Israel interviewing elders of the Sankar family. My elder brother, Yosef, who lives in Nehora in the Lachish area, helped me a great deal. By 1980 I was able to make my first family tree (see page 11). However, as can be seen on Plate 1, I could only trace my family back to my great grandfather who lived in India in the middle of the nineteenth century.

One day I chanced to see a copy of the book written by Haem Samuel Kehimkar entitled The History of the Bene Israel of India. The writer wrote the book in 1897 but it was only printed in Tel Aviv in 1937 through the good offices of the well-known Zionist emissary to India, Dr. Immanuel Olsvanger. As the book is now out of print, my friend Abraham Erulkar from Ashkelon lent me his copy. With his permission, I made a photostat - all 200 pages of the book! I then combed through it and found eight people with the name Sankar. These were prominent figures in the Bene Israel community. One was a Muccadam (secular leader of the community), another a teacher, a third an officer in the British Army, and two others were involved in building synagogues. The question then arose as to whether any of these were my direct ancestors. If I could prove they were, I would then be able to trace my family back another hundred years to about the middle of the eighteenth century. This would be no mean achievement for a Bene Israel when it is realised that the written evidence on this community dates back to just about the same time.

In Israel it is easy to recognise a Bene Israel: his surname ends with a "kar" like my name - Sankar. The "kar" means "from" and San is the name of a village in the Konkan, a region in the West of India near Bombay. This means that I am from the village of San (Sahan). It is a pity when Bene Israel families change their names and drop the "kar" ending. It makes the work of a genealogist that much more difficult.

Using the statistics that appear in H.G. Reissner's Indian-Jewish Statistics (1837-1941), Jewish Social Studies, Vol. XII, New York, 1950, and Benjamin J. Israel's The Bene Israel of India, (Orient Longman Ltd., 1984), I was able to calculate that in the village of Sahan there were approximately 12 heads of families in the Sankar clan in the middle of the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century the Sankars had dispersed and were found in other villages in the Kolaba district (now called Raigad) in the Konkan. Most of my father's family had moved to Revdanda; one has enough evidence of this in the local cemetery. By the end of the nineteenth century I reckoned the number of heads of families had risen to about 22.

From the point of view of logistics it is not difficult to research the roots of Bene Israel families. They have lived in the same area in India since at least 175 B.C.E. The Kolaba district is in length about the same distance as Beersheba is from Eilat (243 km.). Added to this, there weren't that many Bene Israel. In 1941 the total number of Jews in India was 22,480. This figure included the Jews of Cochin and those who came from Iraq. Out of these, 14,805 (65.86%) were Bene Israel. Moreover, as pointed out above, the "kar" ending helps the genealogist: since there are between 138 and 142 "kar"s, one's field of research narrows down to some 105 persons. Of course some "kar"s are bigger than others; Sankar is one of the larger ones. Even then I have found myself dealing with not more than about 160 persons in any one generation.

The personal names of the Bene Israel follow the traditional Jewish pattern: that is, the grandchild is named after the grandfather. For example, my son is Saul ben Isaac, and I am Isaac ben Saul - Isaac being my name and Saul the name of my father. Thus, working backwards from the known to the unknown, from names I know to names I don't know, I discovered that four of the eight names I found in Kehimkar's book could well be my direct ancestors. Three others could be their brothers or cousins. The one remaining I still haven't been able to place. An important conclusion of my research into my roots is that the Sankars who were prominent in Bene Israel history during the last 250 years, that is, the overwhelming majority of them, were closely related to each other.

Still there are loose ends to be tied up, in particular getting precise dates. I intend to visit India in the not too distant future to check out records of births, marriages and deaths in the villages where my family lived and the graves in the cemeteries where they are buried. Synagogue records can help, as one Sankar donated his house and grounds on which a synagogue was built. The villages I need to visit are Sahan, Revdanda, Cheul, Panvel Ambepore and Chorde. I also need to visit Bombay as a Sillimon (Solomon) Bapuji Sankar was murdered in the last century and the murderer was hanged in 1838. Needless to say, if I can find a record of the trial, it could prove a mine of information.

Today I would very much like to meet the honourable Rabbi from Tiberias and show him my family tree with even more generations than he requested. Let's hope he too has a family going back six generations.

Some reading material in English

Schifra Strizower: The Children of Israel: The Bene Israel of Bombay,
(Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1971)

Shellim Samuel: A Treatise on the Origin & Early History of Bene-Israel of Maharashtra St.
(Bombay, 1963)

Rebecca Reuben: The Bene Israel of Bombay (Cambridge Jewish Publications 4
Cambridge University Press, 1913).

Shirley B. Isenberg: India's Bene Israel (Judah L. Magnes Museum, Berkeley,
California, 1988 / Popular Prakashan Pvt. Ltd., Bombay)

Thomas A. Timberg (ed.): Jews in India (Advent Books, Inc., New York, 1986)

Joan G. Roland: Jews in British India: Identity In A Colonial Era (Published
for Brandeis University Press by University Press of New England, 1989)

Walter Fischel: Bombay In Jewish History (Proceedings of the American
Academy for Jewish Research, Vol. XXXVIII-XXXIX, 1970-1971)

In Dutch Selina Sassoon-Prins: De Bene Israel ("Joodsche Gids", vol. 1, 1920)

OUR MEMBERS AT WORK

IN SEARCH OF MY ROOTS

Part II, continued from Sharsheret Hadorot 9/1

Valeri Ladyzhenski

The German Army entered Kharkov on October 22, 1941, and very soon my family and all the other people of Jewish nationality (who were more than 30,000 in just that locality) fell victim to "The Final Solution". When Kharkov was liberated in 1943, an extraordinary state commission headed by Academician A.N. Tolstoy started its work. The official document signed by the commission on September 5, 1943 is entitled "Massive shootings of Jews by German murderers in Drobitsky ravine". It describes in great detail how Leib with other 400 Jews were brought into the Synagogue in Meshchanskaya Street to be murdered, while Zilla and her family found themselves in the temporary ghetto at the machine-building works where Jews were being shot. There was a so-called "living grave" there from which one could hear the moans of those buried alive..

I return to the history of my direct family -

While the men were at the front, my grandmother Eeta and her daughter Emma with a four-year-old son Victor Botstein sought safety in flight and they only stopped at a small station near Alma-Ata because my little cousin fell ill and died in his mother's arms. Emma said to Eeta, "No more running for us - here we stay..." Thus it was to Arys, Kazakhstan, that my father would send parcels and money from Moscow where he served during the war years as a soldier at the Red Army Headquarters. And it was in Arys that my cousin Larisa Botstein was born in 1942 after her father Abram, son of Alt-Avrum, had been on a furlough from the front.

In defiance of the death and devastation, there happened other things worth remembering, like the way my father and mother met at a dance in Moscow's Red Army Club in 1944. They would never have met if it had not been for the war.

Before the war my mother Olga lived with her aunt Olga Avaliani, the eldest daughter of an Odessa footwear merchant Israel Abramovich Mikhels and his wife Keila, daughter of Aaron Glazman whose nephew owned a toy factory. She married an actor of Leningrad Variety Theatre, Alexander Zheleztsov, and had a son, Yuri, who was born in February, 1941. When the war broke out and the well-known Blockade of Leningrad began, the death-toll exceeded 700,000 human lives, Jewish and Gentile alike. Aunt Olga and little Yuri were buried at St. Petersburg's famous Piskarevskoye Memorial Cemetery, and Olga Zheleztsov, a telephone operator, heard a piece of advice from an old Ukrainian woman, "Go away, you Zhidovka (Jewess), we have nothing to eat without you, too." She was so weak that she soon lost her job, and, as a result, went to Moscow in the spring of 1942, along the famous Road of Life. The story of how her train was bombed is indelibly imprinted in my memory since early childhood. Lying there in the tall grass, she prayed to God for the first time in her life.

In Moscow, Olga joined her mother Minna, the youngest of the Mikhels sisters, and her two aunts: Miriam Gusinski and Freida-Maris Mikhels who had a nine-year old daughter Natasha. When Olga stood on the threshold of the apartment, they could hardly recognise her, she was so haggard that she looked older than her 80-year-old grandmother Keila.

Ill and widowed, she had to work hard in order to survive, but after two years she married Isaac Ladyzhenski who moved in to live in the Mikhels' home. (Izzi and Olga have lived happily together for 51 years and in 1994 celebrated a golden wedding.) When my mother was with child in 1944, she said to herself, "This child will be happy, if it is born after the war." And happy I was, despite the fact that the family had the status of enemies of the people because of the arrest on the fifth of June, 1939, of my grandmother's brother Volf (Vladimir) Mikhels, Natasha's father, who had made a brilliant career as a Soviet diplomat: in the years 1937-1938 he had been Consul General of the Soviet Union in Danzig, then part of Germany, today's Polish Gdansk.

I was growing to the chimes of the Kremlin Tower Clock and in the vicinity of the NKVD Headquarters, where my mother's uncle worked in 1920-1922 and 1930-1931. He joined the Bolsheviks in 1918 and became famous as a journalist. Mikhels is mentioned in Volume 29 (third edition) of Lenin's Complete Works (page 405, letter 201 of September 15, 1919). As a journalist he flew to China in 1925 and wrote a book "From the Kremlin to the Great Wall of China". From 1934 he worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR.

For 50 odd years the family did not know the burial place of Mr. Mikhels: even in President Gorbachev's time, the letter of February 21, 1989 from the Secretariat of the USSR Supreme Court Military Board claimed that the burial places of the victims were not known.

But after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Donskoi Cemetery began publishing the lists of those shot dead and fully exonerated (*Rasstrelniye Spiski*, Moscow, 1993) and I now found my relative on the list. I was also given a Book of Memory, volume 2, where information was put according to the alphabetical order. Vladimir Mikhels' entry is No.875, his being a Jew from Odessa is also mentioned, as well as the fact that he was "from merchants".

It took me three trips to Moscow to settle all the formalities about the family graves, and together with aunt Natalia Vladimirovna Rozman (nee Mikhels), I obtained the documents that the family had been denied for half a century. The addresses that I applied to are: the Reception Office of the former KGB at 22, Kuznetsky Most in Moscow, the office of the information centre "Memorial", at 12, Maly Karetny Pereulok, and the Moscow City bureau "Ritual", at 4/5 Nikolskaya Street (all the places are near the Kremlin). I was also given permission to erect a monument to the Mikhels family on the grave of Vladimir's mother Keila Glazman-Mikhels (she is my great grandmother) and to have all the graves registered in my name.

I grew up with stories about Uman and Ignatovka near Kiev from Father and about Odessa from my Mother and Granny. My Ladyzhenski side meant "yiches" to Eeta's birth-place Ignatovka (Anatevka in Yiddish) where our relative Zaddik Mordekhai Twerski was buried in 1837, and from where Jews were banished in 1911; it is mentioned in Sholom Aleichem's "Tevye the Milkman" and immortalized by the song "Anatevka" in the musical "Fiddler on the Roof": "Anatevka, underfed, overworked,... a dirt-covered road, a few crammed houses, some shops,... dear little village, little town of mine."

The last rabbi of Ignatovka was Rabbi Aaron Elimelekh, Eeta's cousin. In the Hassidic Library of the "Yeshurun" Synagogue in Jerusalem's King George Street I found Book Nine of the Series "The Greatest Hassidim" by Rabbi Abraham Itzhak Bromberg (Jerusalem, 1955), devoted

to the Admors of the House of Zans, in which (on pages 70-71) I read with admiration about the House of Rabbi Yaakov Israel of Hornosteipol, later moving to Cherkassy, and his grandson Mordekhai Dov-Ber Twersky. Eeta's father was brought into that house in childhood as a companion and co-pupil for little Berele and later became part of the family and R. Mordekhai Dov's gabbai, whom my father knew only from his mother's stories.

When I was a guest-speaker of the Israel Bonds Organization in the USA in 1992 at the invitation of its President, Ambassador Meir Rosen, I found a relative in Brooklyn, a Professor at Brooklyn Law School, R. Aaron David Twerski, twin brother of Hornosteipol Rabbi Yehiel-Mikhel in Milwaukee, Wis. Prof. Twerski received me cordially and told me about a large contingent of the Twerski family in New York. I told him about my plan to go to the Ukraine and do research on the history of our Jewish families in the "old country", and the great grandson of the famous Zaddik blessed me before the long journey.

Since then I have visited the Ukraine several times, collecting family documents, old photos and reminiscences of numerous relatives in Kiev, Odessa, Kharkov, Belaya Tserkov, and corresponding with those of them who have since moved to more distant places, such as the USA. I visit numerous families in Israel and Russia whenever there is an opportunity: they are the Vakhnianski, Kitover, Sharnopolski families of Uman and many others. As many of Eeta's relatives were taken from Uman to Argentina by a very energetic Jew Levi Sharnopolski during the pogroms of the revolutionary time, among them her elder sisters, I hope that somebody will read these lines in Buenos Aires and write about them to me.

But here I turn to a more recent genealogical adventure that began in the reading-room of the library of Tel-Aviv University as I was preparing for the Seminar on Jewish Genealogy in Jerusalem last April.

After I had read the description of the grave-stone of Ahad Ha'am in the book "The Old Jewish Cemetery of Tel Aviv", I made up my mind to look for familiar surnames, and, indeed, there was a girl Ladyzhenski Israela, daughter of Daniel Savran, whose brother and sister I know (they never told me that they had lost a baby sister, but then, did she not pass away seventy years ago before they were born?).

And then my eyes fell on the name Glazman, my great grandmother Keila Aaronovna's maiden name. In disbelief I read, "Glazman Itzhak Arye (Leib), son of Daniel, born 1854, Odessa (Russia). He was the proprietor of a toy factory in Odessa and his products won diplomas of distinction. In 1922 he came to Eretz Israel. He passed away on Kislev 11, 5687 (1926). The inscription on the monument is: 'Our dear father, a Kasher Jew... peace to your ashes!'".

Next came: "Glazman Perl, daughter of Yaakov, born 1859, Odessa (Russia). She was the wife of Itzhak-Leib Glazman, in 1922 she came to Eretz Israel, she passed away on Adar 26, 5687 (28.2.1927). The inscription on the monument is: 'Our dear mother, the most modest of women... peace to your ashes!'".

... I read and re-read these lines. Odessa. Glazman. A toy factory.

At once I recalled the summer of 1955 and my ten-year-old self playing with tin soldiers, little dolls and a little sledge while my two grannies, Manya and Minna (whose diminutive names were Tutochka and Babichka) were discussing my infatuation with the new toys and connecting it to their uncle and his tin soldiers' factory in Odessa. And I also remembered my mother's recent hint as if she were divulging a state secret, *Ishchi Glazmanov v Palestine (Look for the Glazmans in Palestin)*". From the three women I had always known that Keila's family had emigrated in 1905... not to America... China was mentioned, but never once did they mention Tel-Aviv. That was a surprise.

What should a genealogist do in such a case?

This is what I did: I looked up the surname Glazman in Tel-Aviv's telephone directory. Oh, there are no less than 15 families. The first was Glazman Arye, so was the second.

I telephoned Arye that very night as I thought, "Aren't names given after grandparents and great grandparents?"

And, indeed, Arye Glazman said to me, "Yes, I belong to the Odessa family that came to Eretz Israel from Harbin, China." We made an appointment and met. Arye told me about his grandfather Daniel who had come to Eretz Israel in 1905 and suggested that I turn to his cousins Ami Glazman in Haifa and Gideon Padovich in Tel-Aviv because they knew the family history better. Soon I had in my possession copies of all the old documents from Odessa and Harbin, including their grandfather's business card:

"Manufacture of tin soldiers and other toys. Daniel Lvovich Glazman, Odessa, 22 Tiraspol'skaya Street; Office and warehouse: 4 Degtyarnaya St; Branch: Harbin, 7, Artilleriyskaya St."

I also received a copy of the Deed of Purchase of a plot of land that the family bought near Petach-Tikva at the beginning of the century. Soon I knew that the grandfather of Arye, Ami and Gideon: Daniel, 1874-1945, a son of Itzhak Arye-Leib Glazman and my grandmother's second cousin, was one of the founders of Ein-Gannim near Petach-Tikva (1908) where he lived with his wife Liba (Ahuva) and their four children Haim, Ilya, David and Bruria until 1914, when they were obliged to return to Odessa because of the Turkish repressive measures against Russian subjects. They fled from Odessa to Harbin, Manchuria, on a Trans-Siberian train. In Harbin, Daniel became Director of a Jewish theatre. In 1919, they set out on a long journey by sea from Japan to Tel-Aviv. Daniel had a letter from the Harbin Zionist faction of Zeirei-Zion with the words of blessing. " ... it's a day that you prayed for with all the strength of your warm heart, a day on which you leave Galut and return to our dear Zion."...

In Tel Aviv once more, Daniel became one of the founders of Neve-Shaanan where he built the first cinema in Tel Aviv called "Orania" (60 Hagdud Haivri Street). Two giant "Washingtonia" palm-trees that he planted near the cinema in 1920 still mark the place between Tel-Aviv's New Central Bus Station and H.N. Bialik High School.

I also learned about Daniel's brother Joseph (Osip) Glazman who made his aliya from Frankfurt in 1925. He founded a technical school at 7, Montefiore St., and was its Principal for many decades.

Last but not least, it was Ami who helped me find the grave of my grandmother's first cousin, Aaron Glazman, who had a farm in Nes Ziona and whose epitaph in the old cemetery of Rehovot reads: "Aaron Glazman, son of R. Israel, a man of the Second Aliya. The most honest of men. Enjoyed manual labour. Passed away on Av 30, 5728, in the 75th year of his life..."

With this new knowledge about my relatives in Eretz Israel, I flew to Moscow to do research on the Soviet branch of the family, Glazman-Mikhels, whose outstanding representative Vladimir Mikhels had written a courageous page in the history of the USSR and whose remains are buried in the Donskoi Cemetery of Moscow with other victims of the political crimes of Stalin and his henchmen. This is what is written on his monument:

"Here lie the remains of innocent tortured and shot victims of political repressions of 1930-1942. They will be in eternal memory!"

A "FAMILY MEETING" IN SHARSHERET HADOROT

Aviva Neeman

In Sharsheret Hadorot 9/1 two articles appeared in the section "Our Members at Work": my article - "What I gained from the International Seminar in Jerusalem", and Valery Ladezhensky's article - "In Search of My Roots."

The Seminar, I wrote, had opened a new line of research for me on the Neumann family (in Palestine called Ne'eman) as before the move to Hungary there seem to have been Neumann families in north west Lithuania, traceable to the township of Fikla. When the bulletin appeared, Valery Ladezhensky telephoned me and told me that his wife Larissa was a member of the Neumann family, and that her grandfather was born in Fikla.

In order to pursue this line of research further, I invited a number of people to a meeting at my home. Those present were Yitzhak (Izzy) and Tehiya Neumann, Izzy being the genealogist of the Neeman family and a descendant of Israel Neeman whose name I found mentioned in documents from Palestine of the 1840's; Israel's descendants were early settlers in Petach Tikvah and Tel Aviv; Valery and Larissa Ladezhensky; Amnon Gaber and myself. My great-grandfather came to Palestine with a group of Hungarian rabbis who settled in Jerusalem.

It was an enthusiastic meeting: each of us put his or her family tree on the table, and all of us tried to find points of contact. There was also the family tree of Jerry (Jerome) Becker of Washington, who had shown me at the Seminar that the original name of his family was Neumann, from Fikla in Lithuania.

Our excitement grew as we discovered points of similarity between the four trees: the earliest generation in the trees of Izzy and Larissa is represented by Shlomo Neumann, a name known in my family too. But Izzy's Shlomo and Larissa's Shlomo are not of the same generation. In Izzy's tree one of Shlomo Neumann's grandsons is named Nahum-Dov, with no other particulars. I know that name:- my great-great-grandfather was R. Nahum-Dov Neumann. Jerry Becker's tree shows in the first generation sons named Shlomo and Mordechai - names that fit Larissa's family tree. Moreover, Jerry's tree in the first generation shows sons name Barish and Chaim - names

that appear in the sons' generation on Izzy's tree. In fact, the names in the sons' generation on Izzy's tree are identical with those in the first generation on Jerry's. Izzy's tree contains no reference to Fikla, but mentions townships very close by, whereas tradition in my family, in Larissa's and in Jerry's holds that our families definitely came from Fikla.

In summing up our meeting we agreed that:

1. we had not proved (at this meeting) that we all belong to one family.
2. there are many signs, not absolute proof, that we are related: the geographical proximity of the families of Izzy, Jerry and Larissa; the name Nahum-Dov in my tree and Izzy's; the identical personal names in all the families: all these indicate the need for deeper research.
3. We decided to make the layout of our family trees uniform in order to simplify research, and to make a joint effort to explore the history of the Neumann families in N.W. Lithuania from the end of the 18th century to the middle of the 19th.

HOW I JOINED THE ISRAEL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Levana Dinerman

As an ethnomusicologist, I have always been inquisitive and eager to learn about traditions, roots, folktales, folksongs etc., and full of the wish to preserve for ourselves and future generations things that were once taken for granted and alas are no longer so. The people who know these things are dying out and as they go, I fear that much knowledge goes with them.

My first steps in personal genealogy were taken in a search for the origins of my maiden surname Albala, following my husband's successful discovery of the roots of his family surname (a subject on which I may write in future). Another impetus came from my children, who had to write essays at school on their family roots. The only information I had was limited and went back to the beginning of the present century. I knew this much about our origins: that we were descended from Jews expelled from Spain. Searching various encyclopedias, I found two important rabbis in 13th century Spain named Albalia: Rabbi Isaac ben Baruch Albalia - related to Rabbi Samuel ha-Nagid - and Rabbi Baruch ben Isaac Albalia, his son, a dayan (rabbinical court judge) and yeshiva head in Cordova, friend of R. Yehuda Halevi and Moses Ibn-Ezra. R. Baruch ben Isaac Albalia studied at the yeshiva of R. Isaac Alfasi.

The name also appeared of Albalag Isaac - a thirteenth century philosopher in northern Spain. Hence the prefix ALB has existed for generations.

Stimulated by this discovery, I decided to look for further information in places that I knew our family had come from: Istanbul, Izmir (Smyrna), Rhodes, Thessaloniki (Salonika).

In 1994 I had the opportunity to travel to Istanbul, and I used my visit there to look for clues. I came equipped with the name of the editor of "Shalom", the newspaper of the local Jewish community. He (to my great good fortune) referred me to Ms. Leyla Ipeker, head of the ROOTS organization, who had been appointed by the Haham Bashi, the Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Community of Istanbul. I learned from Ms. Ipeker that not everyone was permitted access to the communal ledgers. She also informed me that she was about to travel to Israel for the International Seminar on Jewish Genealogy in Jerusalem, and invited me to attend too.

Ms. Leyla Ipeker added to my knowledge concerning the name Politi (the name of my maternal grandmother) by telling me that the name originated among the Romaniot Jews living in Greece. I knew that my maternal grandfather (Gattegno) had Spanish citizenship, but I did not know why. Ms. Ipeker solved the mystery. She told me that Jews working in government service, chiefly as translators, were awarded citizenship of the country whose language they spoke.

Ms. Ipeker and I met at the Jerusalem Seminar, and the benefit was entirely mine. At the Seminar I became aware of the existence of the Israel Genealogical Society, and registered as a member. Furthermore, my participation in the Seminar gave me much interesting and relevant information and led to contacts with people in Israel and abroad.

In conclusion, I shall be glad to hear from anyone who can tell me more about the surname Albala. All information will be welcome.

Levana Dinerman, 1 Moshe Shor St., Jerusalem 97232, Tel: 02-867843.

BOOK REVIEW

Danny J. Cohen and Family: History of the Cohen Family Esther Ramon

Danny J. Cohen was born in Hamburg in 1921 and died in Jerusalem in 1989. He was the first to lecture on Jewish genealogy in the Archivists' Course at the Hebrew University School of Librarianship in Jerusalem, and in 1962 published a genealogy manual of instruction (which is in our library).

At the end of the Second World War he travelled to Europe many times and managed to bring back very important archival material on Jewish communities in Germany as a whole and on Hamburg in particular for deposit in the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem. He was Head of the Central Archives from 1957-1986. In all of the above he made a most valuable contribution to the development of Jewish genealogy in Israel.

Even before he came to this country in 1935, the young Danny Cohen collected genealogical information on his family, and throughout his subsequent life in Israel he continued to research the subject, aided by his university studies in history and his work in the Central Archives.

He wrote his book on the history of his family in 1943 in German, and wanted to translate it in a fuller and better version into Hebrew, for he saw family history as a symbol of the historic continuity of the Jewish people. He died before attaining this goal.

Danny Cohen's sister Ruth Dror has invested great effort and knowledge in the translation and editing of the copious material. Together with Danny Cohen's wife Beba she has worked with devotion and love to publish the book in Hebrew in a fittingly clear and beautiful form. The graphics and design were carried out in the studio of son-in-law Jacky Levy.

Although the book is intended for the family, in particular for the children and grandchildren, every genealogist will find it of great interest thanks to the scrupulous research, the attractive presentation, the family trees and the wealth of illustrations. Danny Cohen's wider researches, not included in this book, are to be found in the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People.

The families researched that appear in this book are: Cohen-Walsrode, Wagner, Oldenburg-Goldschmidt, Wallich in Worms and Hamburg-Altona, Cohen-Hanau and Norden and Melrich.

There are five interesting appendices to the book: Altona, "The Controversy over Charms", Dr. Eliezer Loeb, Hamburg, and Glueckl of Hameln (the family is related to her too). The Cohen family has donated the book to our library.

THREE PIPES OF GOLD:
Review of three Hebrew books written, edited and published by
Advocate Simcha Mandelbaum
Shmuel Even-Or Ornstein

1. "Descendants of R. Avraham Shlomo Zalman Zoref: Ten generations in Eretz Yisrael - two hundred years 1794-1993", Jerusalem 1994.
2. Ditto, vol. 2, 1995, 365 pp.
3. "Torat Zion" - new interpretations of the Torah, 1995. 373 pp.

A manuscript on Torah left behind by R. Avraham Shlomo Zalman Zoref, ancestor of the Salomon family, spurred his descendant Dr. Simcha Mandelbaum, our fellow member of the Israel Genealogical Society, to publish three weighty volumes, all remarkable for their combination of genealogical expertise and Biblical and Talmudic learning. They are also important for research, as they contain stories and poems that shed light on the history of the Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Yisrael from the beginning of the 19th century until the present day.

When Dr. Mandelbaum examined the manuscript with the aid of experts and found what good things it contained, he decided to publish it, with the addition of a biography of the author and biographies of his descendants. How he collected material on the descendants is described by Dr. Mandelbaum on pages II-IV.

The first volume does not include the manuscript, which he thought worthy to be published separately. It contains a list of descendants in their generations; a memorial to those fallen for our country and people; title pages, leaves and a poem, all connected with the family, the will of R. Yoel Moshe Salomon (grandson of R. Avraham Shlomo Zalman) and family pictures. The relatively short time devoted to the preparation of the book accounts for certain errors concerning some branches of the family. About others, no information was available.

The publication of the book stirred historically-minded members of the family to search their own ancestors' archives, with striking results. They discovered manuscripts on Torah and secular subjects, stories and poems that shed light on the lives of family members, and nuggets of precious new information on the history of Eretz Yisrael, especially on Jerusalem in recent generations. Much additional material was provided on branches of the family by members of those branches who got in touch with the author after the book appeared. Others provided additions, corrections and pictures.

Dr. Mandelbaum conceived the idea of publishing two more books simultaneously. One (Vol. 2) was to include corrections and additions.

Thus we find in it manuscripts of R. Mordechai Zoref and R. Yoel Moshe Salomon on the

founding of Nahalat Shiv'a and Petach Tikvah; reminiscences of R. Tuvia Salomon; the memoirs of Chaya Zvia Wilensky (the family historian); notes recorded by R. Isaiah Dov Karlin on events connected with the courtyard of "Hurvat Rabbi Yehuda heHassid", stories of R. Shlomo Zalman Salomon; and the fascinating stories of my uncle ArieH Weidman describing personalities in the Shaarei Hessed quarter of Jerusalem and the history of the quarter. The book also contains a number of articles on history and public affairs by my late father Rabbi Yitzhak A. Ornstein (who was killed in the War of Independence) and four articles by myself on Jerusalem. A special chapter is devoted to poems by early members of the family and by later generations. The poems of R. Yitzhak Elimelech Brilliant are suffused with anguish and tears on the fate of his family. The volume includes in addition the speeches of family representatives at the central gathering on the history of the family: Rabbi Oded Wilensky on R. Avraham Shlomo Zalman Zoref; Prof. Moshe Mandelbaum on the contribution of R. Avraham Shlomo Zalman's descendants to the economy of the country; Yoel Moshe Cheshin on his maternal great-grandfather, the Jerusalem public figure Chaim Salmon; Professor Raphael Ucko who is married to Yael of the sixth generation, daughter of Shlomo Zalman Salomon owner of the second printing press established in Jerusalem; and Shmuel Even-Or on his parents' house. An index of names and descendants concludes the volume.

The third volume "Torat Zion" is called after the first Torah periodical published in Jerusalem by R. Yoel Moshe Salomon and his friend ArieH Leib Hurwitz. It contains writings of the great Rabbi Shlomo of Toloschin, a family ancestor who was a disciple of the Vilna Gaon R. Eliahu ben Shlomo.

In this volume we find the manuscript of R. Avraham Shlomo Zalman Zoref, to which the title "Menachem Zion" is given by Dr. Mandelbaum. He chose this title because it was the name given by R. Avraham Shlomo Zalman to the first Beth Midrash that he built in the Old City in the courtyard of Rabbi Yehuda HeHassid in 1833.

The volume also contains writings by senior members of the family and members of the younger generation. There are two articles by my father Rabbi Yitzhak A. Ornstein on principles for the rebuilding of the ruins of Jerusalem and settlement of the city. Each chapter of the book is prefaced by an introduction giving important details of the history of the persons discussed.

ENGLISH JGS JOURNAL SELECTIONS

Compiled by Harold Lewin

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

BALTIC STATES

Research in Latvia

Dr Aleksandrs Feigmanis, professor of history and Jewish genealogist, offers his services in searching State Historical Archives in Riga as well as in libraries and museums. (1)

Note: readers may be interested to learn that a letter sent to the compiler of this summary, from Dr Feigmanis, states that his access to the Latvian State Archives is no longer permitted, and that his fees are now almost double those quoted in the current Avotaynu advertisement (\$110 for a complete report on a single family).

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Czech Research by Mail and Camera: Nancy J.Deutsch-Sinderbrand

The article summarizes a talk given by Robert Kraus, based on his 5 years of experience doing Czech Republic research and his recent trip to Bohemia. (3)

UKRAINE

Practicalities of Genealogical Research in Ukraine: Heorgij V.Papakin

The author is chief of the International Division of the Main Archival Administration in the Ukraine. He provides useful guidance for those seeking information in the Ukraine and observes that there is not one single Ukrainian village or town for which the archives possess complete 18th-20th c. Jewish metrical or notary records. (1)

Guide to Jewish Records in Rovno Oblast State Archives: Dimitry A.Panov

The article is based on a research trip in September 1994 to identify Ukrainian archival record holdings relating to Jews. It appears to be an excellent guide to records of specific communities, such as Derazhno, Klevan, Korets, Ludwipol, Kostopol, etc. (1)

First Belarus Jewish Records arrive at LDS Library: Thomas K.Edlund

Jewish vital records from the State Archive in Minsk recently catalogued at the LDS Family History Library, are listed by the Associate Librarian. Films of Jewish revision lists from Belarus have also been acquired but not yet catalogued. (1)

Report of Travel & Research in Ukraine, September 1994: Miriam Weiner

A. Friedlander describes a talk by Miriam Weiner on what prospective researchers may expect. Information is based on her recent experiences in doing archival research in Ukraine. (2)

GERMANY

The 1933 German Census

There was a population census of Germany in 1933 of which little is known. Although the Bundesarchiv (National Archives) has confirmed the existence of the census, the location of the material appears to be unknown or unpublicized. The Nazi authorities were angered by the small number (250,000) of individuals who identified themselves as Jews in 1933, and this led to the special census of 1938/39. (1)

GREECE

Greek Jewry: Sources for Genealogical Research: Yitzchak Kerem

This summary of the history of Greek Jewry and of research sources has been adapted from a talk given at the 4th International Seminar in Jerusalem, April-May 1994. The author stresses that for practical purposes, genealogical research is only possible from the middle of the 19th C., when the Paris-based Alliance Universelle Israelite started to establish schools in the area. Records of the Salonika Jewish community, confiscated by the Nazis during WWII, have been found in the Osobyi Archives in Moscow. (1)

ISRAEL

Institute for Hebrew Bibliography: Sonia Winter

This article, adapted from a presentation given at the Fourth International Seminar in Jerusalem, describes some of the techniques and sources at the Institute which may be exploited by the researcher in Jewish genealogy. (1)

Research Projects at the Diaspora Research Institute: 1992/93 Report

Some of the research projects at the Institute in Tel Aviv University are of interest to genealogists, including studies on the history of the Jews of Romania, Istanbul, western and central Balkans, Serbia, Slovenia and Bulgaria. (1)

Two Unusual Sources in Israel: Joseph L. Fibel, Jr.

The author explains where to find information on the illegal boats that entered Palestine during the Mandate, namely, the Clandestine Immigration and Naval Museum, Haifa. He also writes about Beit Lohamei Haghetaot, which possesses a large collection of yizkor books. (2)

POLAND

Symposium on Bibliographies of Polish Judaica

An international symposium on "Bibliographies of Polish Judaica" was held in English at Jagiellonian University in Krakow in 1988. A number of articles focused on Jewish periodicals and 18th C. church archives, and included an inventory of the Jewish press. (1)

New Sources of Polish Records: Michael Brenner

The author describes his search for Krakow vital records in the early 1800s and his discovery of many Jewish records of births within LDS microfilms of Roman Catholic churches. The catalogue of the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People in Jerusalem lists the census for Jews of Krakow 1790-95. The article includes descriptions of valuable information obtained from regional archives. (2)

U.S.A.

American Consulate, Jerusalem 1857-1924: Mike Getz, Sallyann Sack

The article describes some of the genealogical treasures originating in the American Consulate which form part of the National Archive's Record Group 84 "Foreign Posts Abroad." The records are not only of American citizens, but also include many Jews from Russia who, during the period 1870-1878, and from time to time later, were granted American protection. Details of various Consular records are included. (1)

U.S. District Court Naturalizations

Information on address, procedures and times of opening are given for the office holding post-1940 naturalization records of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. Petitions prior to 1941 and declarations prior to 1960 are held by the National Archives-Northeast Region. (2)

New York 1870 Census Index

The American Genealogical Lending Library (AGLL) has completed an index for New York, Kings, Queens, Richmond and Suffolk Counties for the 1870 census and is offering a telephone search service. (3)

COMPUTER-ASSISTED GENEALOGY

Why Use a Computer to do Genealogical Research? Pt II: Allen Shifrin

This article is an excellent introduction to the world of home computers and their application to genealogy, provides valuable guidelines for the person considering purchase of a computer. (2)

RABBINICAL GENEALOGY

Spira and Luria Families Revisited: Neil Rosenstein

The author uses information discovered in HaMagid issues of 1857/8 to construct what he considers a more accurate pedigree tree of the Luria family. (1)

KEY TO JOURNAL REFERENCES

<u>Ref.No.</u>	<u>Journal</u>			
1. AVOTAYNU	(International)	Winter	1994.	Vol. X, No.4.
2. DOROT	(New York)	Fall	1994.	Vol.16, No.1.
3. DOROT	(New York)	Winter	1994-5.	Vol.16, No.2.

The Israel Genealogical Society

החברה הגנאלוגית הישראלית

The Society was founded in 1983 and attracts members from all over Israel and abroad who are interested in genealogical research and in their family history.

There are monthly meetings in Jerusalem where they share information about sources and techniques.

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אולם מבקשי דרך
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The Third Olschwanger Journal

Members who attended the Fourth National Seminar in Jewish Genealogy in 1984 may remember Anna Olschwanger's workshop on publishing a family history magazine. Anna has just published the third Olschwanger Journal and donated a copy to our library. Interested individuals can purchase their own copy by sending a check for \$40 (which includes postage and handling) to Anna Olschwanger, 7117 Harps Mill Road, Raleigh, NC 27615-5323, U.S.A.

הופיע ספר חדש על וילנה

Vilna

by Israel Cohen, Introduction by Esther Hautzig

Vilna, the "Jerusalem of Lithuania," was the vibrant core of Eastern European life. It was the epicenter of rabbinical studies and religious debate, a base for the Haskalah, and prominent in the rise of the Mussar movement. Israel Cohen was writing **Vilna** in the late 1930s when war was looming. When he finished the epilogue in 1943, Vilna's entire Jewish community has been either massacred or sent to the death camps.

576 pages, 14 illustrations, Paperback, ISBN 0-8276-0416-5, \$24.95

Available in Israel through Sefer ve Sefel, 2 Yavetz Street, Jerusalem, Tel.(02) 248 237.

לקט מהעתונות
בגרמנית ובהולנדית
אסתר רמון

19951/ , מרץ 1995, Maajan-Schweiz SVJG שוייץ

מאמר מעניין על שמות - דומים בתוכנם וסינונימיים באזור הגרמני מאת ד"ר פטר שטיין.
An interesting article about names: Dr. Peter Stein - Gleichwertige, bedeutungsgleiche u. synonyme
Vornamen der Juden im alemannischen Raum.

8/2 הולנד - Misjpoge (Holland)

מאמר על מקורות של שמות משפחה יהודיים בהולנדית מאת Z. Bar. המחבר מתרכז בשמות הקשורים לבעלי חיים, אבל לעיתים תכופות המקור איננו קשור בחיות בכלל.

In this article Bar focuses on names derived from animals. It appears that more often than not these names do not originate from animals at all.