



שרשרת הדורות

SHARSHERET HADOKOT

FAMILY ROOTS RESEARCH PERIODICAL

Vol. 9, No. 3

The Israel Genealogical Society

Jerusalem, October 1995

Table of Contents

	page
<u>The Society and its Publications</u>	I
Words of the Chairman	I
Previous Publications	II
Forthcoming Lectures	II
Important Notices	II
Letters to the Editor	II
<u>Further to Lectures We Have Heard</u>	III
Researching my Lithuanian Roots - Rose Cohen	III
Children Without Identity - Leah Balint	V
<u>Names</u>	X
<u>Our Members at Work</u>	X
A Sprinkling of Serendipity Dust - Harold Lewin	X
"Malkei Rabbanan" - Mathilde Tagger	XI
<u>Sources of Information</u>	9
New Sources of Information - Reuven Naftali	9
New Microfiche - Esther Ramon	10
Eastern European Archival Access: - Garry Mokotoff	11
The G/1 Collection - Esther Ramon	13
<u>Miscellaneous</u>	16
Publications, Books, Magazines, Looking for Relatives	16
<u>New Books</u>	19
The Henrick Family Legend - Review by Esther Ramon	19
Where Once We Walked Companion - Review by Esther Ramon	19
Those Who Perish in the Land of Assyria - Review by Reuven Naftali	20
The Oreckovsky Family: From Russia to America - Review by Ruth Rigbi	20
<u>Selection From Genealogical Journals</u>	XII
English - Harold Lewin	21
French - Mathilde Tagger	XII

THE SOCIETY AND ITS PUBLICATIONS

Words of the Chairman :

New functions in our society.

I am glad to inform you that additional members have agreed to perform central functions in our Society:

Zemah Jacobson (P.O.B. 10053, Jerusalem 91100) acts as **treasurer** of the society, and Shalom Goldshmidt will continue preparing the **annual reports**.

Shalom Bronstein (Hiskiyahu Hameleh 47/4, Jerusalem 93224) supervises programming **monthly meetings**.

Shlomo Brandwein (Ha'hil 17, Jerusalem 97981), Reuven Naftali (Ya'arot 5, Haifa 34787) and Efraim Levy (Ezer Hayoledet 4, Jerusalem 95520), manage **the library**.

Mathilde Tagger (Alroy 5 III, Jerusalem 92108) acts as **secretary** and manages the **extensive correspondence**.

Joachim Eilon (P.O.B.4222, Jerusalem 91041) edits our **periodical "Sharsheret Hadorot"** with the assistance of Ruth Rigbi (Habaron Hirsh 18, Jerusalem 96148) and Harold Lewin (P.O.B.253, Jerusalem 91002).

We wish to thank Shmuel Even Or and Shmuel Shamir for their dedicated work for the Society for many years.

We also wish to thank Dr. Jacobi for his generous donation and for his help to our members in their research.

To all our members ! Every one of you helps establish the research of Jewish Genealogy and we ask you to share with all of us your research, your frustrations and your results on the pages of "Sharsheret Hadorot".

Our success will increase with **every new member** who joins our Society.

Esther Ramon (Chairman).

"Sharsheret Hadorot" is published three times a year by the Israel Genealogical Society, 50 Harav Uziel Str., Jerusalem 96424. Tel.02-424147

ISSN 0792-5751

Editor: Joachim Eilon Tel.02-713039; with Ruth Rigby and Harold Lewin.

Previous Publications for Sale

"Sharsheret Hadorot"		Regular Price		Members	
Each issue	1-2	8.-	NIS	5.-	NIS
Each issue	3-7	15.-	NIS	12.-	NIS
Each issue	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. Those paying before 31.12.1995 - 100.- Shekel. Members living abroad \$ 40.- .

Forthcoming Lectures

- Wednesday 25.10.95 - **Dr. Eliyahu Rosenthal.** The puzzle of the "Shoah", the hardship of reconstructing a family.
- Wednesday 22.11.95 - 19.00 at The Central Zionist Archives, lecture of the **Director Yoram Mayorek** & visit to places not usually open to the public.
- Wednesday 27.12.95 - **Mr. Dany Wagner.** An unconventional Family Research.
- The lectures begin at 19.30 and the library is open from 18.00 at "Mevakshei Derech", 22 Sderot Shai Agnon, San Simon, Jerusalem.

Important Notices

- A. All members who have leaflets, booklets or books from the library are requested to return them to the library at the next meeting.
- B. Any question to our society or request for genealogical information has to be accompanied by three stamps for local use (for Israelis) or three international coupons (requests from abroad).
- C. Any application from non-members to publish a request in "Sharsheret Hadorot" requires payment : From abroad \$ 5.-, from Israel 15.- NIS.

Letters to the editor

A letter from Sallyann Amdur Sack Ph. D. editor of "Avotaynu" to Esther Ramon Dated 15.7.1995 contains the following:

"... Every time I read your journal, I mourn again that I have never learned Hebrew beyond the prayerbook. I don't know how you do it, but you (and your group) manage(s), better than anyone else I know, to present individual research in such a way that it is like a fascinating detective story. This issue, though, was the very best. Maybe some of it comes from the fact that you are in Israel where we all should be. It's not just that you can all read the sources we cannot use, but there is something else. How else to explain "coincidences" like the one reported by Aviva Ne'eman and Valeri Ladyzhenski? The inspirational tone in all these articles is just wonderful. Keep up the great work..."

Further to Lectures we have heard

Researching my Lithuanian Roots

Rose Cohen

My interest in genealogy began about five years ago on my father's first Jahrzeit (anniversary of his death). Our family was standing around the gravestone on which part of the inscription read "Here lies Arieh Leib, son of Raize and Benjamin Lerer"... An additional line was added: "In memory of his parents, brothers and sisters who were killed in the Holocaust".

My father rarely spoke about his family and all I knew was that I am named after my grandmother Raize, my brother after my grandfather Benjamin. My father told us that he was born in the town of Uzventis in Northern Lithuania and that his sister still lived in the town. He also told us that he studied at the Telz Yeshiva for nine years. In 1929 he emigrated to South Africa to join his brother Abe (who passed away in South Africa in 1961). My father enlisted in 1940, and joined the South African Forces, and fought in the Western Desert against Rommel.

I began my search at Yad Vashem where I read everything I could about Uzventis. I found the address of the woman who gave testimony on the extermination of the Jews of Uzventis. She lives in Bnei Brak in Israel. I telephoned her and introduced myself. She said (in Hebrew) "Grandfather Benjamin and Grandmother Raize, of course I remember them. There were also Malka and Zillah, Hirschel and Paya. Abba and Leib emigrated to South Africa. Come and visit me and I will tell you more".

I then decided to look for students of the Telz Yeshiva who may have been there with my father. I remembered that my father mentioned the name Lopian. I found a Rabbi in Geulah, Jerusalem who also studied at Telz; he gladly put me in touch with Harav Chaim Shmuel Lopian (the ex-Rosh Yeshiva of Gateshead, now living in Jerusalem) who said "of course I remember Leib Lerer". I visited the Rabbi who told me all about my father the student. he also told me that they learned together as a team (chavruta). The Rabbi gave me the picture my father had given him as a parting memento when he left the Yeshiva for South Africa in 1929. The inscription on the back of the picture reads (in Hebrew) "A memento to my dear friend Reb Chaim Shmuel Lopian from me, Leib Lerer, Parshat Korach, 1929".

My next point of interest was to make contact with ex-army veterans - Desert Rats - who fought together with my father in the Western Desert and at El Alamein. I acquired his record of service and eventually made contact with the soldier who shared my father's armoured car. He wrote and told me all about my father the soldier. "He was a very valued friend and an extremely good soldier - a little withdrawn and introspective by nature but it was possible to get to know him very well and like him very much". In the book "South African Jews in World War II", there is a description of my father's bravery which led him to receive the Military Medal and to be mentioned in dispatches.

To get back to Benjamin, Rize, Zillah, Malka, Hirsch and Paya (Paulina). I visited the woman from Uzventis in Bnei Brak and she told me that my grandfather mended roofs, Zillah married a man from Uzventis called Yechiel Olswanger, and they had five children. Malka also married but she could not remember whom. Hirsch was a friend of her brother and Paya (Paulina) converted to Christianity long before the war. She also added that Paulina brought shame upon the family.

I decided to visit Paulina to hear more about my family, so three years ago I visited Lithuania for the first time. I met the last survivor of my father's family who told me stories I could hardly believe. I met distant cousins of my father who also live in Uzventis and have taken on the Christian faith. They could not tell me very much. I left Lithuania with the feeling that I need to return there.

Slowly over the years I have gathered more information about my family. I found more survivors from the town of Uzventis who have provided me with snippets of information. Paulina has meanwhile passed away.

I visited Lithuania again with a group of genealogists, following the 1994 Jerusalem international seminar (Saul Issroff, Bruce Kahn & Milton Blackstone), in the hope of finding information in the Vilna archives, but unfortunately all the records of the town of Uzventis have disappeared. I visited Uzventis again and spoke to different people and learned a bit more.

To sum up, Benjamin and Raize Lereris (my paternal grandparents) had six children. Abba (Abe) and Arieh Leib (Louis), my father, emigrated to South Africa in 1926 and 1929 respectively, Paulina converted to Christianity and survived the war in a convent. Zillah had five children, one called Abba and another called Benjamin. Hirsch was unmarried. He worked with his father. He was Chairman of the Young Communist Party of Uzventis and was wanted by the Lithuanian authorities because of his pro-Communist activities. Malka married a man from Radvilikis and they had one daughter. It is thought that Malka and her daughter were shipped to either Dachau or Ravensbrueck concentration camp and died there. (I know nothing of the fate of her husband).

According to the list of the ninety nine Jews who were murdered in Uzventis, Benjamin and Raize, my paternal grandparents, Hirsch my uncle and Zillah my aunt, her husband and five children - ten in all - were shot by Raimondas Koloska, a lawyer from the town and his local helpers, in two groups, one in July and another in December 1941, in the Pasielve forest 3 kilometers outside the town of Uzventis. Lithuania peasants pilfered the mass grave and in 1956 the bodies were moved to the Vilna cemetery and buried in a mass grave there.

During my last visit to Lithuania, I was shown the site of the mass grave in the Vilna cemetery at the cost of \$5.- and for an additional \$60.- the cemetery caretaker agreed to clean the grave. The caretaker also agreed to repair and maintain the grave for an additional \$300.- .

I paid upon request; who else is there to maintain my family's grave?

I now understand why my father was so reluctant to speak of his family. Paulina converted to Christianity in 1924 out of choice and thus brought shame upon the family. My father preferred to keep quiet rather than share this information with us and as a result, unfortunately today there is no one left who can help me build a family tree.

IV

”ישראלת הדורות”, אוקטובר 1995, כרך ט' מס' 3

Bibliography:

Yahadut Lita. Lithuanian Jewry, published by Yad Vashem: (There is a copy in our Society's library).

South African Jews in world war II, published by the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, 1950.

National Registry of Jewish Holocaust Survivors.

Family Finder.

Yad Vashem Archives.

Hitachdut Yotzei Lita, Tel Aviv (Landsmannschaft of Lithuanian Jews).

The Ministry of defense, Government Buildings, Stanmore, Middlesex, HA7 4PZ, England.

IV South African Armoured car Regimental Association. 61 Pope Street, Bellevue East 2198, Johannesburg, South Africa.

Contact in Lithuania

Jewish travel Guide

Chaim Bergman (Suwalki Gubernia, Lithuania)

Address: P. Luksio Street 37-22, Kaunas 3042. Tel 779948.

Marijampol - Official Guide

Tomas Vassman. Address: Gediminas Kuncaitis, Marijampol, Jaunimo St. 18, 4520 Lithuania. Tel. 73787 and 56897.

Kalvarija - Official Guide

Marija Zvinakeviciene. Address: Berzu Street 15b-47, Marijampol 4520, Lithuania.

Tel: 50767 (work), 74651 (home).

Lithuania State Historical Archives

Gerosios Vilties 10, Vilnius 2015, Lietuva (Lithuania).

(Initiating search: \$50 per family, about to be increased to \$60. If records are found, extracts are \$10, and photocopies of actual records are \$20 including translation. Do NOT send CASH

Should anyone wish to receive further information about visiting Lithuania, I would be happy to help, and may be contacted at 4/5 Ha-Rosmarin Street, Jerusalem 93578, Tel. 02-761010, or FAX: 02-373051.

"Children Without Identity"

Leah Balint

The "Children Without Identity" I speak of here are Jews born in Poland between 1936 and 1945 who do not remember their origin and their past. They were separated from their parents as babies or young children, hidden during the Second World War in the homes of Polish families or in convents, and at the end of the war were left orphans.

Unlike older children who survived on their own - wandering from place to place or hiding with Christians, struggling alone or escaping to join the partisans - the children in this age-group were

V

"שרשרת הדורות", אוקטובר 1995, כרך ט' מס' 3

completely dependent on the mercy of adults. They could not have survived without someone's help. Most of them were separated from their families when the systematic extermination of Polish Jewry began in the autumn of 1941.

The best way to save a Jewish child was to entrust him or her to Christian acquaintances with whom the Jewish family had been friendly before the war. The child's family in such cases was typically assimilated and educated, maintaining social or business relations with the Christian Poles and imbued with Polish culture. Another way was to find a Polish family willing to hide the child for payment, or in return for a promise that the Jewish family would recompense them at the end of the war with the property that remained.

Not all the Jewish parents who entrusted their children to Christians managed to leave identifying details about themselves, their property and their relatives in Palestine or America.

As the "Actions" increased and destruction bore down and death lurked at every corner, abandoned babies and children were to be seen in the streets, parks, schools, railway stations, cellars and bushes - abandoned until someone picked them up and took them home. Most of these children either did not remember or were unable to tell their rescuers anything but their first name and usually their mother's first name. They were taken into Polish homes or given to convents, Aryan identity cards were issued for them with Polish names and false identity, and most were baptized.

Some Jewish parents found it so hard to part with their children that they waited until the last minute, when they were already on their way to the death camps. Then they would throw the child from the moving train, or hand the child through the train window at a stop to childless Poles who waited at the station. The Poles knew about the trainloads of Jews. They knew that parent being sent to certain death would hand over their child. Sometimes the mother managed to communicate the child's family name, but Polish ears did not always hear it correctly. Most of the Poles who received Jewish children in this manner did not register the child's name for fear of Gestapo searches, and in the course of time they forgot the name or remembered it imperfectly. Most of them immediately changed the child's name, obtained "the right papers" and presented him or her as their own, or as a relative brought from another town.

Some Jewish children were found by Christians with a note attached, giving a real or false surname, or an address in America, or a request; sometimes a photograph would be attached, or a teaspoon engraved with the child's name and date of birth. Sometimes there would be a note reading: "The child has been baptized, please save him". There was no limit to the resourcefulness of the Jewish mother surrounded by killing. She hoped to see her baby again and left signs to enable her to redeem him.

Older children, who were four or five years of age when they were given to Christians, say they are able to recall the moment when they forgot their name. This was in most cases when they underwent a traumatic experience - seeing their parents murdered, separation from their parents, or a bombing attack. H. G. recounts in her testimony how her father stood her on the kitchen table before giving her to a man who took her out of the ghetto, and said to her: "Remember, you are not called *** any more (here he said their surname). You are called Kowalska, and from now

on, that is your name". H.G. recounts how the death of her mother, the frightening separation from her father and his commandment to forget her name, so worked on her that the very next day she could not remember her real name. To this day she cannot remember it.

Others testify that after parting from their parents they remembered their name at first, but when they went from one Christian family to another they were given a new name each time and in the end did not know what their real name was.

Since all this rescue work was the result of voluntary initiatives by individuals and convents, no record was kept of the children transferred to Christian families or convents. Essentially, the moment of parting from the parent was the first and decisive stage in the loss of identity.

We shall never know how many children were saved by Poles and what percentage of them were restored to the Jewish people.

It is thought that at the end of the war (before the return to Poland of Jews who had taken refuge in the Soviet Union), about 5000 Jewish children remained on Polish soil. This number included older children who had saved themselves by their own efforts.

Immediately after the end of the war, a wide-ranging operation was mounted to restore these children to the Jewish people and to their families. Three main bodies took part in the "Redemption of the Children":

1. C.K.Z.P. - The Central Council of Polish Jewry - a body soon dominated by Communist Jews. One of the first and best actions of the Council was to set up a network of Jewish children's homes all over Poland. To these children's homes the Council referred war orphans and children of survivors (where survivors were unable for mental or material reasons to take care of their children's education). The aim of the Council was to restore the children to the Jewish people, and to raise up a new cohort of future citizens in Communist Poland.
2. The second body, The Coordination (Coordinacie), was a coordinating committee whose members represented the Zionis element of youth movements and Jewish parties that had been active in Poland before the war. The Coordination was set up in 1945 and worked for about 4 years. Its aim was to redeem the children from their Polish rescuers, to educate them in Zionism and to take them to the Land of Israel.
3. The third body, The Congregation, (Congregacie) was a council of Jewish congregations that included the Mizrachi and other religious movements. This organization of religious congregations also included unofficial representatives of Agudath Yisrael, and various rabbis who acted on their own initiative or as representatives of religious movements working throughout Poland. Their main aim was to save the children from the embraces of another religion, to give them a Jewish religious education, and to get them out of Communist Poland.

The restoration of the Jewish children to their people at the war's end meant for the "Children without identity" a second break with their past. Although the work of redeeming the children was more organized, and although it was backed by organized institutions, much vagueness and inaccuracy surrounded the identity of the Jewish war orphans.

Between 1945 and 1947 the Central council of Polish Jewry compiled a register of all Jewish survivors on Polish soil who applied to the Council at any stage for two reasons:

1. Searching for family.
2. Financial help.

In parallel, a detailed register of children was compiled through card indices of referrals to the Council's children's homes. On each child's card they wrote all the known details about the child, including the history of persecution and the fate of the parents. The children's homes would report every few months to the Central Council. Each home would report the number of children living in the institution, and thus would be entitled to financial support and the provision of staff trained in education. From the card-indices in our possession today, we see that in 1945, many a child was unable to tell anything but his first name. Such children had been left on the doorstep of Jewish orphanages by their rescuers, sick and suffering from gross neglect, or had been found wandering after the war, unable to tell anything about themselves.

The information in the card index usually came from the child himself or from his rescuer. Occasionally distant relatives were found who were able to give details about the child, but were unable definitely to identify him as belonging to their family. Some of the children reached the Central Council of Polish Jewry with the first name and surname of their rescuers. The latter were unable to give the former name of the child - which was sometimes the name of his previous rescuer.

Usually the rescuers or the children themselves were able to tell something about themselves and to give more or less accurate details of their lives immediately after the war. These children did not know that their words were recorded in a card-index; for most of them the traumatic past was wiped from their memory when they were adopted by Jewish families or reached Israel or other countries. This is the largest group of "Children without identity". When we succeed in locating them, they are the ones who can benefit most from our search through the archives.

We have no exact statistics of how many children brought up in Communist Jewish orphanages remained in Poland, and how many reached Israel or other countries. Those who were brought to Israel found their way to kibbutzim, Youth Aliyah institutions or adoption by Israeli families in moshavim. Most of them testify that their past is completely wiped from their memory: they only remember the moment when they trod for the first time on the soil of the motherland. Some remember the name of the ship, or the man, that brought them to Israel.

The Coordination also prepared a card-index of children, but since the Coordination worked underground and no single body was responsible for the subject, the recording was haphazard and unsystematic. The card-indices are inaccurate, the children's names are written in Yiddish or Hebrew, and as a result the spelling is confounded. It is difficult to decipher Polish-sounding names or the names of the children's birthplaces or hiding-places. Two-thirds of the card-indices were lost on the way to Israel, because some of the Madrichim (Group leaders) were afraid to carry them on the illegal flight out of Poland.

In many of the existing card-indices of the coordination the word Unbewusst (Unknown) appears in Yiddish besides the name of the child. This means that the real name of the child is unknown, likewise his birthplace, the name of his parents, and the fate that befell them. Most of the cards, however, have a photograph of the child, and this is a reliable way to identify the person today.

Many of the Coordination children arrived from the USSR with Russian names. Children of parents who had fled to the USSR from the terrors of war in Poland, and had died there of hunger or disease, were put in Polish orphanages set up in the USSR. Some of the parents had changed their names to Russian names in order to get work and food rations. When the parents died, there was no one left to remind the child of his real name. On the contrary, the adventures that the children underwent after the war further confused their identity.

When the children crossed the Russian border into Poland during the repatriation of Polish orphanages, the Poles feared that children with Russian surnames would be arrested at the border. Thus for example a child whose pre-war surname in Poland had been Kagan, a child who had become Kaganowic in Russia, now at the border found himself changed into Kaganowski. The children, disciplined and long-suffering, wiped their former name from their memory and regarded their new name as their true name.

So far I have not come across any card-indices drawn up by the Congregation. i.e. the religious bodies, and it is not known whether they ever prepared or used any. The only lists we have from the religious trend are from the Mizrahi: lists of children who reached the Land of Israel within the framework of the Zionist movement. Many of the Jewish children redeemed by religious emissaries (mainly from Agudath Yisrael) were sent for adoption to Jewish communities all over the world: To South Africa, South America, USA, Australia and England. All connection with them was lost for ever and their identity will never be known.

In searching for the identity of children from Poland, a very helpful source of information is to be found in the above mentioned card-indices of the Coordination, which are stored in Beth Lohamei Ha-Gettaot (Ghetto Fighters House at Kibbutz Lohamei Hagettaot), the card indices of the Communists and the lists of children in children's homes in Poland. All this material will be centrally housed in the "Yad Le-Yeled" museum (section on Children without Identity), which we are in the process of setting up.

Within a year we shall computerize all the material in our possession and prepare for every child a card recording details of his or her life which we have collected from sources in various archives. Thus, after 50 years, we may be able to right some of the wrong done to hundreds of war orphans from Poland. Unremarked, they have kept their pain imprisoned within them in silence.

Every "Child without identity" born in Poland between 1936 and 1945 who would like to know his or her past is requested to apply to the Section on "Children without Identity", Yad Le-Yeled, Beth Lohamei Ha-gettaot, Israel 25220, Giving all the details known to him or her. We shall do our best to help by providing information from our sources in an organized manner within a year.

Editors Note : We wish to draw your attention to the request for help in Jerusalem for the "Children without Identity" project. (See Miscellaneous section, page 16).

Names

"Sharsheret Hadorot" is glad to renew the section of "Names" which last appeared in issue No. 8/1 in January 1994

This section will deal with various aspects of the Jewish Name. You are invited to publish here the results of your research, stories and any material relating to Jewish names, family names, personal (first) names, sephardic, ashkenazi oriental names men, women children and nicknames etc.

In this issue Mathilde Tagger reports on the second convention on Jewish names which was held at Bar Ilan University on 26-27 June 1995. (See Hebrew section).

Our Members at Work

A SPRINKLING OF SERENDIPITY DUST

Harold Lewin

Many of us family history researchers who still believe in the Tooth Fairy, harbour the hope that one day she'll sprinkle upon us a little of her fabulous serendipity dust!

Serendipity, a word that one hears nowadays quite frequently, was coined in Horace Walpole's "Three Princes of Serendip" written in 1754. This fortunate trio possessed the faculty of "serendipity" (which means making happy, accidental discoveries), a faculty much envied and sought after by family history researchers.

What constitutes a happy genealogical discovery? Of course, everyone has their own ideas about this. For me, personally, it happened a few years ago when a letter arrived from a friendly and hitherto unknown cousin in Cape Town who, having caught the genealogical bug, had, through her own research, discovered Jewish roots, and sought to learn more about her family history. She was given my address by a cousin in Durban, who I had discovered 15 years ago. These new relations are now busy with their own research and through them, my family knowledge has expanded enormously.

Or another serendipitous letter arriving out of the blue two years ago from an octogenarian cousin in Sheffield, whose ancestors comprise such colourful characters as: the Haham of Padua, Rabbi Abraham ben Yehudah Halevi Minz (1445-1530); the legendary Jewish king of Poland, Saul Wahl Katzenellenbogen (1545-1611); Jewish Lord Mayors of London (Sir Benjamin Phillips (1811-1889) and Sir George Faudel Phillips (1840-1922); a curator of the British Museum; Dayan Arye

X

"שרשרת הדורות", אוקטובר 1995, כרך ט' מס' 3

Leb Baier of the London Beth Din (1798-1878); an editor of the Jewish Chronicle, Mr L.T.Greenberg; plus a friend and advisor to Dame Margaret Thatcher and finally, a real live princess, married to a once famous car racing driver whose father was the King of Siam!

One of my recent serendipity dust sprinklings resulted in the discovery of another cousin, the daughter of my late father's sister. A rift between the two siblings had festered from the late 1800's and continued throughout their lives. Consequently, my aunt Amelia's name was never mentioned in my parents' home, and I know nothing of her daughter, an only child born when her mother was 47, and who, I finally discovered, resides with her husband near Brighton, England. Since our mutual discovery we regularly exchange letters and old family photographs.

Various articles have appeared in recent years dealing with the problem of finding a safe repository for one's family research (letters, documents, addresses, photographs, pedigree trees, etc.) after we cease to be mentally or physically capable of managing them. The uncertain future of the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora causes doubt as to the possibility of using the Jewish Genealogy Center as a repository for at least the computerized part of the material. This uncertainty raises serious questions for the family history researchers who don't wish all their efforts to go to waste after their demise, and in addition, presents an acute problem for those of us who have already deposited diskettes with the Center.

Alternative repositories that should, perhaps, be considered are:

The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem. The Archives will accept all family history material.

The Genealogical Society, London, also thought to be willing to accept all material, although the Society lacks a specifically Jewish connection.

The Family History Library of Utah is willing to accept material. Some of us may be reluctant to consider this option, for fairly obvious reasons.

The People Finder (computerized genealogical information only).

Regarding success in research, most of us family history enthusiasts know that it's better not to rely entirely on the Genealogical Tooth Fairy, but instead, to try to do some serious digging ourselves. However, although I've invested much time and effort in my research, I feel that I've also had a generous sprinkling of the Fairy's magic dust!

For me, serendipity is when, in another 25-30 years, a great grandchild, as yet unborn, will visit an archive, perhaps in Israel, perhaps elsewhere, and discover a fascinating personal family history.

Just think what a fantastic legacy that would be. Wherever we happen to be at that time, we should get immense vicarious pleasure from the event!

"Malkei Rabbanan" - Indices

Mathilde A. Tagger

"Malkei Rabbanan" is a biographical dictionary of Moroccan Rabbis published in Jerusalem in 1931 by Rabbi Joseph Ben-Naim. It is a work of fundamental importance for everything connected with the rabbis of Morocco and their writings in manuscript and print.

Nobody before Ben-Naim had ever tried to collect and collate this immense mass of data.

Since its appearance the book has proved a valuable source of information for scholars, but the ordinary reader has been put off by the difficulty of using it. The reason is that the dictionary is arranged alphabetically by the first names of the rabbis, in typical rabbinical style.

After the success of the indices I prepared for "Malkei Tarshish" - The biographical dictionary of the rabbis of Tunisia - the director of the Yad Ben-Zvi library asked me to prepare indices of "Malkei Rabbanan". Four indices were constructed:

1. Names of rabbis (family name and personal name).
2. Names of works (accompanied by author's name and a note wherever a work is still in manuscript).
3. Place-names mentioned.
4. Years mentioned (Hebrew year and Gregorian calendar year).

The result was a booklet double the size of the one for "Malkei Tarshish". Only a few copies were printed, as the booklet was termed an "experimental edition". This was because of the many problems that arose in the identification of the authors of the works. despite careful checking of the indices by various people, some question-marks remained.

The purpose of the "experimental edition" was to elicit readers' comments to the editors, after which a fuller version would be published.

Seeing the extraordinary range of genealogical information contained in "Malkei Rabbanan", I seized the opportunity to provide additional identifying details wherever possible by each name. Each rabbi's family name and personal name were given, and I tried to add wherever possible the name of the rabbi's father - sometimes even his grandfather - and the name of the town where he resided.

The booklet of indices to "Malkei rabbanan" is a tool without which it would be hard to discover the true riches concealed in this mine of information.

Selection From Genealogical Journals

פרסומים בעולם

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. Please accept the compiler's apologies for all errors and missing credits.

ALGERIA

From our Contributing Editors: Philip Abensur (1)

Algerian civil and other vital records are stored at Le Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer. Address: 29 chemin du Moulin de Testas, 13090 Aix-en-Provence.

AUSTRALIA

Your Australian Cousins: Sophie Caplan (1)

Jewish immigration to Australia from various countries is treated, as is the composition of the Jewish immigrant communities in several Australian cities. Sophie provides many sources for genealogical research.

BALTIC STATES

1897 Russian Census in Latvian State Archives: Aleksandra Feigmanis (1)

Documents from the 1897 All-Empire Russian Census held by the State Historical Archives of Latvia are described. After the first population census of 1719, there were nine others preceding that of 1897, which is considered one of the best sources for 19th c. Russian-Jewish genealogical research. A list of Latvian localities included in the 1897 fond is given.

Latvian Archives Bar Researchers from Vital Records: Sallyann A.Sack (1)

The Latvian State Historical Archives has barred individual researchers from access to any vital statistics records. Other sources of data such as census and police records are still accessible.

Lithuanian Archivist Will Speak at Washington Seminar: Rita Margolis (1)

The article describes highlights of the 14th Annual Summer Seminar on Jewish Genealogy held in Washington June 25-29, 1995. These include a review of the Lithuanian State Historical Archives in Vilnius, (to be) given by the Director. These Archives contain many 19th c. Jewish census and metrical records.

New Archival Finds from Lithuania: Yakov Shadevich (2)

This excellent article comprises a partial inventory of yet uncatalogued records quoted in an article from Avotaynu, Winter, 1990. Records found in various Lithuanian districts and towns are listed.

Sources on Jewish History in Baltic States & CIS: Anatoli Chaesh (1)

This book review describes "Documentary Sources on Jewish History in the Archives of the CIS and the Baltic States: A Preliminary List of Collections, 1994", compiled by Dmitri A. Elyashevich of the Historical Archival Institute, Russian State University for Humanities. The guidebook includes info. on 948 record groups (fonds) in 87 state and governmental archives, dispersed in 61 cities of the former USSR. Subject, name and geographic indexes are provided.

BELGIUM

From Our Contributing Editors: Marcel Apse (1)

Marcel quotes an article written by Bob Drilmsa which appeared several months ago, providing an update on Jewish genealogical research in Belgium. Post-1890 vital records may now be obtained from the Bevolkingsregister (Register of Civil Records) in Antwerp. Pre-1890 records have been microfilmed and transferred to the National Archives of Antwerp Province.

BRAZIL

From Our Contributing Editors: Frieda Wolff (2)

Frieda writes about the immigration of Jews to the Amazon region and northern Brazil. She describes some of the "part-Jewish" Bentes clan who have achieved senior positions in the Brazilian army.

CANADA

Canadian Jewish Immigrant Aid Society Records: Sallyann Amdur Sack (1)

A question and answer (questions formulated by Avotaynu) report on access to genealogically relevant data held by the Jewish Immigrant Aid Service (JIAS) in Toronto and Montreal. It follows the article, "JIAS Inventories at Canadian Jewish Congress", (Avotaynu, Vol.III No.2)

From Our Contributing Editors: Rolf Lederer (1)

Info. originating with Glen Eker on the history of Jewish settlement in Labrador/Newfoundland is summarized.

Canadian Censuses As Historical Source: Glen Eker & Deborah Pekills(3)

Although censuses were first conducted in the 17th c. the first comprehensive one conducted in Canada was that of 1861 in what are now the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. The 1861 census is divided into two parts, an agricultural schedule and a personal schedule. The 1871 census comprises nine separate schedules.

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDANT STATES (C.I.S) (1)

Sources on Jewish History in Baltic States & CIS: Anatoli Chaesh (1).

See Baltic States for summary.

Jewish Treasures in Former Soviet Archives: Boris Feldblyum (2)

Boris, being cognizant of the danger that access to Eastern European and CIS archives will eventually be cut off, proposes a Center for East European Jewish History and Genealogy. This Center would have the aim of storing on optical disks, all available Eastern European and Russian records in order to create a giant database enabling later retrieval of images for viewing and printing.

Genealogy Sources in Former Soviet Archives: Vladislav Soshnikov. (2)

An explanation is given of the particular features of the basic archival documents in (formerly Soviet) archives, of population censuses after 1858, and of sources for genealogical research.

Jewish Given Names from Analysis of Czarist Records: Harold Rhode(2)

This very informative article treats the problems facing the researcher when trying to pin down the correct name of an ancestor, and gives examples showing how one individual might possess many names.

Misleading Finding Indexes in Konigsberg Documents: Donald Levinsohn (2)

In a letter to Avotaynu, the writer complains about the inadequate or non-existent descriptions of the Konigsberg documents in the finding indexes of the Leo Baeck Institute in New York City and the LDS Family History Library.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

From Our Contributing Editors: Rolf Lederer (1)

Nora Freund describes her attempt to restore a neglected Jewish cemetery in Kolleschowitz-Dereisen.

GERMANY

Brilling Archives in Frankfurt Museum: Edward D.Luft & Peter Lande (1)

The article describes a private archive, discovered by Peter Lande, at present unknown and unusable. Donated by the widow of Rabbi Bernhard Brilling, it has the potential of becoming a major resource for German Jewish genealogists, especially those with roots in the former East

Germany, including Berlin. The collection is also strong in records from Pomerania, Posen, East/West Prussia, Silesia and Westphalia.

From Our Contributing Editors: Rene Loeb (1)

See under Switzerland for info on German archival records.

HOLLAND

From Our Contributing Editors: Lo Van Leeuwen (1)

An article in Misjopge, Vol.8, No.1, 1995, "Estate Tax Registers as Sources for Genealogical Research", explains the genealogical value of these documents.

Dutch JGS Offers Numerous Publications: (unattributed) (1)

This is an extensive list of publications available from the Vereniging Nederlandse Kring Voor Joodse Genealogie (Jewish Genealogy Society of the Netherlands).

HUNGARY

Given Names and Hungarian Jews: Richard Panchyk (2)

Surviving vital records from Hungarian Jewish communities number in the hundreds. Very many birth, marriage and death records exist, mostly covering the years 1851-1895. Surname changes to a Magyarized form, of names forced on Jews in the first place, occurred on a massive scale in Hungary during the late 18th c. Knowing the "original" German name is often a prerequisite to further research success.

Research Sources - Jewish Genealogy in Transylvania: Ladislau Gyemant (2)

Dr.Gyemant provides a brief historical overview of Transylvania and its Jewish life in order to assist those wishing to do genealogical research in that region.

How to Get the Most out of Budapest Vital Records: Debbi Korman (6)

This is a useful guide to using birth and marriage records of Buda, Obuda and Pest. The earlier records of the 1850's and 1860's are on German forms and contain less information than the later records where the forms are Hungarian.

POLAND

Lodz Ghetto and Cemetery Lists: Michael J. Meshenberg (1)

The Organization of Former Residents of Lodz in Israel (OFRLI) is an all-volunteer group which maintains two databases containing more than 200,000 names. They cover the period from late 1800s to the final liquidation of the ghetto in August 1944, and include cemetery records. The Lodz ghetto list is apparently the only ghetto list to have survived the war.

ROMANIA

Researching Jewish Romania On Site: Paul Pascal (1)

Paul describes at length his search for genealogical records in various cities and villages, including visits to cemeteries. He illustrates the difficulties in trying to access archival records.

Research Sources - Jewish Genealogy in Transylvania: Ladislau Gyemant (2)

See summary under Hungary.

SWEDEN

Resources for Jewish Genealogy in Sweden: Thomas Selling (2)

A brief historical description of Jewish immigration to Sweden is followed by an explanation of the main sources for genealogical research and the problems of access to Jewish records.

SWITZERLAND

From Our Contributing Editors: Rene Loeb (1)

The publication of Namensannahmen von 1808 (approx. 800pp) which deals with name changes in Alsace in 1808, is pending. There is also information on German archival addresses.

UKRAINE

Reports on Visit to Cherkassy Archives: Anton Waldin (2)

A letter to the Editor of Avotaynu describes the writer's work in the Cherkassy regional archives. He explains which documents are held and their relevant period.

UNITED KINGDOM

The Greater London Record Office: Richard Gilbert (3)

This Office (GLRO) is the custodian of some of Anglo-Jewry's communal records which are on permanent loan. Permission of the loaning organization is required prior to research. A table indicates the GLRO's reference number, which organization has deposited its records and from where permission to view may be obtained.

From Our Contributing Editors: Judith Joseph (1)

Contains information on a Hamburg institute for the history of German Jews, plus a summary of achievements in indexing birth and burial registers of the old Hambro Synagogue, London.

U.S.A.

National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections: Irene S. Goldstein (1)

The U.S. Library of Congress National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (NUCMC) is a little-known, valuable resource for Jewish genealogists. It was set up in 1959 on the initiative of scholars seeking a center for locating, recording and publicizing the holdings of manuscript collections available for research.

N.Y. Orphan Asylum - American Jewish Historical Soc.: Nancy Arbeiter (1).

This article provides a brief history of the New York City Jewish orphanages, details some of the useful records held at the American Jewish Historical Society and explains how to access the data.

U.S. Archives for Locating Pre-Immigration Residence: Sallyann A.Sack (2)

Sallyann uses an illustrative example of genealogical methodology while helping a son-in-law trace his roots. She stresses the need, when investigating ones roots, to firstly establish the family's former place of residence in the Old Country and its surname at that time.

Passengers from Russia Arriving at New York Port: Harry D.Boonin (2)

Harry provides a critique of: "Migration from the Russian Empire: Lists of Passengers Arriving at the Port of New York", edited by Ira A.Glazier, Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co. 1995.

The first two volumes published cover the years 1875-82 and 1882-86, together including data on 105,000 individuals of Russian nationality, more than 50% of whom were Jewish. Eventually the work will comprise 40 volumes and will extend to the year 1910.

Research in Washington, D.C.: Linda Cantor (7)

This article comprises a very useful summary of research sources at the National Archives, the Library of Congress and the Daughters of the American Revolution Library. Linda provides a list of ports with the period for which passenger lists are held in the National Archives.

GENERAL ADVICE AND RESEARCH BASICS

Research Basics for Genealogy Beginners: Claire Prechtel-Kluskins (1)

The author provides some guidance to the beginner on how to cope with the vast collection of records held in the National Archives and Records Administration, and suggests the use of *Microfilm Resources for Research: A comprehensive Catalog (1990)*.

Consanguinity Revisited: Alan Wachtel (1)

This article is a refutation of that of Asher Bar-Zev "Consanguinity or the Relationship of 'Removed' Cousins" (*Avotaynu* Vol.X, No.4, Winter 1994). In his argument, Wachtel performs a rather arcane mathematical analysis of the principles of genetic inheritance. Bar-Zev's reply to the Wachtel article is included as an accompaniment.

The Problems with Names: Harry D.Boonin (2)/23

A family illustration of the confusion created by alternative names of ancestors who immigrated from Russia. These include: the official Russian name, the pejorative name by which he was known by Russians, his street name, his full official name and his Yiddish name.

Age Overstatement Among European Jews: Yona Schellekens (2)

The author comments on the phenomenon known in certain areas, including the Caucasus, the Netherlands and Quebec, of overstating age. In Quebec, only 1 out of 178 putative centenarians in the 18th c. actually lived more than one hundred years. On average, the "false" centenarians were 12 years younger.

Development of the Jewish Intellectual Class: Chanan Rapaport (2)

The title of this article is misleading and would suggest lack of suitability for inclusion in a genealogical journal. However, the author describes the discovery, with the aid of Dr.Paul Jacobi, of an ancient genealogical register. The result has been the establishment of a "Center for Study of the Rapaport Family in Jerusalem". He states that Rapaport, a name existing from 1462, is derived from Raffa, a region in western Germany.

What a Genealogist can Learn from Hospital Records: Catherine C.Kahn (2)

The example quoted is the 143-year-old Touro Infirmary in New Orleans. Its archives are a storehouse of New Orleans Jewish history, containing admission books dating from 1855 to 1891, with death records continuing to 1916. The admission books contain such data as: name, age, conjugal relation, birthplace, occupation, last previous and present residence, diagnosis, discharge or death date and place of burial.

Genealogy in Its Historical Context: Edward D.Luft (2)

At the time of the partitions of Poland, Polish Posen had a distinct Polish majority. Efforts made to create Prussian hegemony in this population had a great effect on the Jews. Early in the 1840's the Prussian monarchy erected tariff barriers to encourage (mainly) Jewish traders to abandon natural trading partners to the east and to look west to trade with Berlin, Breslau, etc. Use of German in business became mandatory. When, through an 1833 decree, the Jews were naturalized as Prussian-Jewish subjects, they were free to choose any surnames, the majority opting for German names.

COMPUTER-ASSISTED GENEALOGY

Accessing the JewishGen Bulletin Board: Ted Gostin (4)

The article explains the various ways of accessing the computerized bulletin board known as JewishGen, moderated by Susan King of Houston. including the use of Internet.

Software Review, Roots IV: Howard Shidlowky (5)

This is a useful and concise summary of the new Roots software, and details some of its main features, both positive and negative.

SOUNDEX

The Soundex Problem of False Positives: Gary Mokotoff (1)

Gary explains the problem of "false positives" when using Soundex. A false positive is a result indicating the presence of something that we want but which really does not exist. Because we're so anxious to discover something, we're likely to accept a result that may, in fact, be a false positive. Gary provides some amusing examples of Soundex produced false positives, using such imaginary town names as: Ketubah, Mitzvah and Billclinton!

KEY TO JOURNAL REFERENCES

Ref. No. Journal

- | | | | | | |
|----|-----------|-----------------|--------|--------|---------------|
| 1. | AVOTAYNU | (International) | Spring | 1995 | Vol.XI, No.1. |
| 2. | AVOTAYNU | (International) | Summer | 1995 | Vol.XI, No.2. |
| 3. | SHEMOT | (Great Britain) | June | 1995 | Vol. 3, No.2 |
| 4. | ROOTS-KEY | (Los Angeles) | Winter | 1994-5 | Vol.14, No.4. |
| 5. | SHEM TOV | (Canada) | June | 1994 | Vol.10, No.2. |
| 6. | ROOTS-KEY | (Los Angeles) | Spring | 1995 | Vol.15, No.1. |
| 7. | LINEAGES | (Long Island) | Fall | 1994 | Vol. 6, No.3. |