



זכרון ZichronNote

The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area
Jewish Genealogical Society

Volume XVI, Number 2

May 1996

LOCAL GENEALOGICAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS Meetings of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

Please note: Unless otherwise indicated, meeting schedules are as follows:
San Francisco: Sunday, Doors open 12:30pm, program begins 1:00pm
Fort Mason Center, Marina Blvd. at Buchanan Street
Building C, Room 205 (or as indicated below)
Free to members, \$3.00 for non-members, applicable towards membership
Palo Alto: Monday, 7:30pm - 10:00pm (Please call if you need directions)
Congregation Kol Emeth, 4175 Manuela (Near Foothill Blvd. and Arastradero)

- Sun May 19** San Francisco: *Organizing your Genealogical Papers*. Strategies for filing, storing and coordinating all those notes, documents, maps and other papers.
- Mon Jun 17** Palo Alto: *Displaying Your Family Tree Data*. (Tentative Program)
- Sun Jul 28** San Francisco (*Note Date Change*): *Highlights of the 15th International Summer Seminar on Jewish Genealogy*. What's new, what's happening, and what are the latest developments in Jewish genealogy. Come hear the latest!
- Mon Aug 19** Palo Alto: Regular Meeting
- Sun Sep 8** San Francisco: Regular Meeting. (*Note Date Change*)
- Mon Oct 21** Palo Alto: Regular Meeting
- Sun Nov 17** San Francisco: Regular Meeting.
- Mon Dec 16** Palo Alto: Regular Meeting

Other Bay Area Genealogical Society Meetings

- May 8
10:00 AM East Bay GS: *Resources at the CGS Library*, Jocelyn Moss, CGS Librarian, Mormon Center, Oakland, Call EBGS at 510-655-9047
- May 11
11:00AM California GS: CGS Library, 300 Brannan Suite 409, S.F.
1:30 PM MELVYL, UC's on-line card catalog. CGS Computer Interest Group
A Closer Look at Sutro State Library, Bette Kot.
- May 28
7:00 PM JGS of Sacramento: *Problem Solving Workshop*, Albert Einstein Residence Ctr. Arts & Crafts Room, 1935 Wright St., Sacramento. Call 916-633-9557
- June 1
Noon-3:00 PM San Mateo County GS: *Photo Day*. Copy your genealogical photos for \$2.50/frame, \$25.00/roll. Call Cath at 415-366-5059 for appointment and information.

(Continued on page 4)

ZichronNote

Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

ZichronNote is published four times per year at the beginning of February, May, August, and November. Deadline for contributions is the 15th of the month preceding publication. The Editor reserves the right to edit all submittals. Contributions may be submitted on 3-1/2-inch floppy disks in either DOS or Macintosh format or e-mailed to RWeissJGS@aol.com

Reprinting of material in *ZichronNote* is permitted when there is no explicit limitation and source attribution is made.

Family Finder queries are free to Society members. Non-members may place queries for \$5.00 each limited to 25 words not including searcher's name, address and phone.

Correspondence relating to publication items or requests for back issues, should be addressed to the Editor.

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Advertising: Display advertising is accepted. The rate for a 2-column-inch (3-1/2 x 2 inch, business card sized) insertion will be \$10.00 per issue, quarter-page ad \$20.00, half-page ad \$35.00, full-page ad \$60.00. Ads must be camera-ready, relate to Jewish genealogy, and be in good taste.

Membership in the SFBA JGS is open to anyone interested in Jewish genealogy. Dues are \$20.00 per calendar year. The Society is "exempt" per section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Make check out to "SFBA JGS" and send to: Sherrill Laszlo, Treasurer, 34 Craig Ave., Piedmont, CA 94611.

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Meetings: Odd-numbered months— 3rd Sunday of each month, 1:00 PM at Fort Mason Center (Marina at Buchanan), San Francisco. **Even-numbered months**— 3rd Monday of each month, 7:30 PM at Congregation Kol Emeth, 4175 Manuela Avenue (near Arastradero & Foothill), Palo Alto.

SFBA-JGS Web Site: <http://www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs>

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

This issue of *ZichronNote* was produced with the assistance of the SFBA JGS Editorial Board that studied your survey responses and interpreted them in terms of content and format. Please contact us with your comments, both positive and negative to guide us in future issues.

Our feature article, although not strictly genealogy, should strike a responsive chord in the hearts of Jewish genealogists. It comprises abstracts from an address by Israeli President Ezer Weizman to the German Parliament and is rich with references to our German history and culture.

This issue also features a pair of articles by Dan Leeson resulting from a trip to Alsace that he and Rosanne recently completed. In one article Dan takes us on a tour of Alsatian cemeteries, and in the other he reviews a number of new sources for Alsatian research.

Not to neglect our East European readers, we recap a recent meeting talk by Ed Nute, of BLITZ Russian Baltic Information Center, and present a list of case files for Russian-Jewish immigrants entering the U. S. through San Francisco. The files were located in the National Archives Pacific Sierra Branch in San Bruno and are now being cataloged. And we reprint an InfoFile by Stanley Diamond on Polish metrical registers.

Local resources are discussed by Rosanne Leeson, the other half of that dynamic duo. Rosanne describes public library resources and the value of the *American Jewish Yearbook* to genealogists. Steve Sterns & Barry Klezmer tell us how to get age information from the Census Bureau.

Continuing our interest in Jewish genealogy on the Internet, we recap a recent demonstration of the kinds of material available by member Bill Firestone. Please share the address of your favorite Internet sites to DLKURTZ@ix.netcom.com for publication in *ZichronNote*, and on our Web site.

Robert Weiss

SOCIETY PAGES

President's Message

©1996 Dana L. Kurtz

Recently, you received our Surname/Place Index and Membership Roster. The Society has many new members, and it has been two years since our last listing was published. With over 1,000 surname entries, and many more town listings, take the time to give the Index a good look.

Read the surname listing with an open mind. Consider spelling variations and the obstacles inherent in translating from Polish, Yiddish, etc. into English. For example, the Russian "G" often translated as an English "H". Thus, "Gersh..." may have become "Hirsch...". Be flexible with suffixes which may reflect only regional differences: chuk/czyk, witz/wicz/witz, etc. Similarly, "Zimmer" may have been "Cymer".

As we get more involved with re-searching our ancestral towns, it is easy to neglect the nearby communities that made up the region. Often, our families were quite mobile for reasons of work, marriage, etc. Therefore, we cannot overlook the geography of the area: With consideration given to the density of the region, learn the names of shtetls within perhaps, a 30 mile radius of your town. Know the names of the sizable cities within the guberniya (province), and know the guberniya! Have a feel for your place on the map. With the help of *Where Once We Walked* and the *Where Once We Walked Companion*, this is a fairly easy task. Contrary to what many of us were told, most of our ancestral towns do exist, albeit without most likely, their Jewish populations. Check a present-day map. Be prepared to recognize neighboring towns when they are mentioned.

Next year we hope to be able to include a listing by town. If you have suggestions for a concise format, please let us know.

The Membership Roster is valuable too. Need a ride to a JGS meeting or want

company on a trip to the Archives? Invite your neighbor. Please double-check your entry in the roster, and let us know if we've made a mistake, or omitted information.

Many thanks to Sita Likuski and Sherrill Stern Laszlo for their efforts in coordinating this useful and great looking publication.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail, phone, or mail.

Welcome New Members

We welcome the following new members who joined our society since February. We hope to see you at our meetings and work-shops and that you will enjoy the many benefits of membership. Please feel free to communicate your feelings, comments, suggestions and needs to our officers, in person, by telephone, mail or e-mail.

Karen & Gerald Apell	Alameda
Holly Cartier	Fremont
Lois Clauson	Oakland
Erica Duddy	San Francisco
Jim Hannum	San Rafael
Vivian Kahn	Oakland
Ava Mack	San Rafael
Howard & Eleanor Miller	San Francisco
Teri Pettit	Menlo Park
Harold Raphael	Aptos
Rochelle Schwartz	San Mateo
Melanie Spiegelman	Foster City
Jayson Wechter	San Francisco
Charles Weinstein	San Mateo

E-Mail Address Updates

Dan Goodman: Dan_Goodman@HSN.com
David Lui: LUID4@aol.com

Book Donations Received

Two copies of an excellent book have recently been donated to our library. *Atlas of the Holocaust* by Martin Gilbert contains text and 316 annotated maps outlining the phases of W.W. II in Europe and its impact on many Eastern European shtetls.

Our thanks to **Walter Firestone** for the hardbound copy, and to new members **Karen Rae and Gerald Apell** for the soft-cover volume.

Donations Received for JGS Special Projects (Since February)

Larry Tesler	Supporting
Jim Hannum	Contributing
Rebekah Sachs	Contributing

Donations Made by the SFBA JGS

The SFBA JGS recently sent contributions totaling \$310 to several institutions which serve as important resources for our members' research. The Holocaust Center of Northern California received a donation to be used for the purchase of either the *Gedenkbuch* or the new edition of the *Gathering of Holocaust Survivors*. The National Archives, San Bruno, received a donation for the purchase of passenger arrival lists. Other organizations receiving contributions are the Western Jewish History Center of the Judah L. Magnes Museum, the Friends of the Jewish Community Library and JewishGen- the Internet site for Jewish Genealogy. SFBA JGS has received warm acknowledgments from the recipients.

Bay Area Meetings

(continued from page 1)

•**Sat June 1:** Genealogical and Historical Council of Sacramento Valley :**Tools to Build your Family History**, Sacramento City College Cafeteria, 3835 Freeport Blvd., Sacramento. All-day Session from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Call Iris Carter Jones at 916-428-2245 for information and reservations.

•**Wed Jun 12:** East Bay GS, **NEHGS and What those Letters Mean to You**, Jane Knowles Lindsey, Trustee of the New England HGS, 10:00 AM at the Mormon Center, Oakland, EBGS Tel 510-655-9047

•**Sat Jun 29:** The Old City Cemetery Committee of the Sacramento County HS presents **Family History Day**, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at the Cemetery, Broadway at 10th Street, Sacramento. Call 916-448-0811

•**Sun Jul 7:** California Special Interest Group of the CGS will meet at 1:30 PM at the CGS Library, 300 Brannan Street, Suite 409, San Francisco.

Conferences and Seminars

•**May 8-11:** National Genealogical Society, **1996 Conference in the States**, Nashville, TN with special attention to Tennessee and eight surrounding states. Write NGS Nashville '96 Conference, 4527 17th Street N., Arlington, VA 22027-2399, or call 703-525-0050.

•**Jun 9-12:** **International Convention on East and Central European Genealogy**, Federation of East European Genealogical Societies (FEEFHS), Thunderbird Hotel and Convention Center, Minneapolis, MN. For information send SASE to FEEFHS Conference, P. O. Box 624, South St. Paul, MN 55075-0624

•**July 14-19:** **Boston: Beacon of Heritage** 15th Annual International Summer Seminar on Jewish Genealogy, Park Plaza Hotel, Boston. This is the place to go, learn, and network. Details may be found in the February 1996 issue of *ZichronNote*. Registration for the Summer Seminar is \$115 if received before May 14, and \$150 thereafter. The Registration Form was printed in the Fall 1995 issue of "Avotaynu", and in other JGS publications. To receive a copy of the registration form, write to Carol Baker, 7 Wiswall Circle, Wellesley, MA 02181. Phone (617) 237-6369, FAX (617) 237-1039, or e-mail 73663.1637@compuserve.com

For more information, contact the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston, P.O. Box 610366, Newton Highlands, MA 02161, or call (617) 283-8003. For the most up-to-date info on the Summer Seminar, visit World Wide Web <http://www.jewishgen.org/seminar.html>

•**Aug 14-17:** **In Your Ancestors' Image** Federation of Genealogical Societies' 1996 National Conference in Rochester, NY. Write to FGS Conference, P. O. Box 830220, Richardson, TX 75083-0220, or call 214-907-9727.

Jewish Genealogical Tours

Oct 17-23: Jewish Genealogical Research Trip to Salt Lake City with Gary Mokotoff and Eileen Polakoff. Write SLC Genealogy Trip, 155 N. Washington Avenue, Bergenfield, NJ 07621 or call 201-387-3818 for information.

March 24, 1996 San Francisco Meeting
Ed Nute of the Russian Baltic Information Center-BLITZ
by Robert Weiss, Palo Alto, CA <RWeissJCS@aol.com>

The following notes were taken by Bob Weiss during the meeting, and supplement brochure information about BLITZ which was published as part of the meeting announcement on page 6 our February 1996 *ZichronNote*.

BLITZ field representatives operate primarily out of the Russian State Historic Archives in St. Petersburg, Russia. The Archive is the largest pre-revolutionary (pre-1917) repository of Russian Empire documents. It includes a computerized register with an annotated listing of the 7 million record groups. Records found generally span the period of the early 1880's to 1917. BLITZ publishes a series of lists of the contents of the Archive which are filed by branch of the Czarist administration.

BLITZ pretty much restricts its activities to the St. Petersburg Archive and generally has minimal contact with other archives (except Kirovohrad, where they have a contact).

BLITZ does not depend upon the Archives for doing its genealogical research, but hires archivists on a free-lance basis. These specialists on Polish, Russian and Jewish records produce copies of documents and do research and write reports for their clients. Within the last few years greater familiarity with Jewish sources and language enables researchers to perform research for Jewish clients.

Ed Nute discussed the types of records found to be useful in Jewish research. Jewish records are found that document Jewish communities, societies, trade unions, schools, Rabbinic commissions, cultural museums, literature, art, historical societies, synagogues and charitable societies. Other records concerning workers' movements, martyrs lists, and religious conversion support Jewish research.

In "palace towns" Jews had to register with the police, and police records are a valuable source of family information even when primary metrical records may not be available. Business registers are normally a good source of genealogical information, except that Jews often registered in a non-Jew's name to avoid cer-

tain stigmas associated with Jewish-owned businesses. Mr. Nute was not familiar with "revision lists".

Documentary materials concerning the Baltics and the towns of the Russian Empire shed light on the Jewish history of those areas. Maps and plot records of small towns identify the location and ownership of houses in the town. Newspapers document events in the lives of our ancestors that fill out the bare skeletons of our genealogical names and dates, eg: accounts of fires or brawls in a tavern that may have been owned by a Jew.

Military records are being published, starting with Russian Navy personnel listings and Army records obtained from Moscow. BLITZ can search these records for living relatives. An excellent handout was given summarizing Jewish genealogical research sources in Russia.

Negative reports listing sources consulted are provided in those cases where no information is found. The per-record cost is \$3.50 for St. Petersburg records.

The last part of Ed Nute's presentation concerned (with some help from John Movius) LDS filming of Russian and Ukrainian records. The FEEFHS Web page has an excellent paper by Kahlile Mehr of the LDS FHL on Russian records. References were made to the paper by Thomas Edlund on the status of LDS filming in Eastern Europe (Vol. 3, No. 3 FEEFHS Newsletter on the Web). Filming is currently being done in L'viv, Minsk and St. Petersburg, but not in Moscow.

BLITZ has a Web page on the FEEFHS server, and can be accessed at: <http://dcn.davis.ca.us/~FEEFHS/frgblitz.html>

To obtain further information, contact BLITZ at 907 Mission Avenue, San Rafael, CA 94901. E-mail enute@lgc.apc.org Tel: 415-453-3579. FAX: 415-453-0343.

April 15, 1996 Palo Alto Meeting

Jewish Genealogy on the Internet with Bill Firestone

by Dana L. Kurtz, San Francisco, CA <DLKURTZ@ix.netcom.com>

Member Bill Firestone, who has created and maintains the Web pages for SFBA JGS and AJGS presented a primer on Web usage for Jewish genealogists. The live demonstration illustrated the variety of sites and the kinds of information available.

A great list of Internet sites can be found at: www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs ⁽¹⁾ or genie/netguide.net/URLs.html with links to all of them. If you have difficulty accessing a site, it may be busy, have moved, be down for maintenance etc. Try again later. For an excellent "introductory course" about the Internet, try: www.brandonu.ca/~ennsnr/Resources/Roadmap/welcome.html

Definitions

URL: Universal Resource Locator—an Internet address.

Link: a word/phrase/icon, usually underlined and in a different color, that will jump you to that Internet address (URL).

Download: Copying a file/program from the Internet to your computer.

JewishGen

For the Jewish genealogist JewishGen www.jewishgen.org has unparalleled resources. But the genealogist utilizing the Internet should not overlook a wide variety of other available "tools".

Search Engines

A search engine creates an index for a large group of databases or Web pages. No two search engines "search" precisely the same databases. Therefore, use more than one for each search you do.

When using search engines *Yahoo*, *Alta Vista*, *Web Crawler*, etc., type in the key word you wish to search on, for example "Warsaw". When you click <Search>, you will get back thousands of citations where the word "Warsaw" was found. To narrow the search, try "Warsaw + Ghetto" to generate a more focused listing. Be creative. Have you tried entering the surnames and towns you are researching?

When I entered the town name "Tykocin", I found a web site with interior and exterior photographs of the syna-

¹ (Note: All Internet addresses given begin with: <http://> type carefully, sometimes upper and lower case does matter.)

agogue as it is today! In preparing for a trip to Lithuania, I found a narrative describing an interminable wait to cross the Polish border, a suggestion to drink Lithuanian beer rather than water, and a reference to the modern publication *Yerushalayim de Lita*.

Phonebooks/Directories/Reference

There are two general types of directories on-line today; e-mail addresses, and telephone numbers. The e-mail listings are a good way to find people with a common surname, or find out if someone you've lost track of has e-mail. These listings are largely incomplete: Most are missing corporate e-mail addresses, and AOL/Prodigy type listings among others.

The "phonebooks" include numerous international white and yellow pages, but often appear to be years out of date! But these are all great places to start!

Don't forget the many U.S. government web pages, such as the post office: You can easily find zip codes and more.

Software

Type "genealogy + software" into a search engine for a wide range of software available to be downloaded, often from the manufacturer's Web site. The makers of both Reunion and Family Tree Maker offer demo programs (modified versions of their retail product), while Brother's Keeper is a full-version shareware program.

What You Won't Find

Almost without exception, primary sources are not available on the Internet. This includes vital records, census and immigration records, etc.

Reminder: Use good virus detector utility, updated regularly. Downloaded files can potentially infect your computer. Numerous products are available for purchase, or you may go to www.mcafee.com to download a program.

LOCAL RESOURCES

A Hidden Goldmine— *American Jewish Yearbook*

by Rosanne Leeson

There is a not-too-well-known resource for those of us laboring in the fields of Jewish genealogy that I would like to call to your attention. I am referring to the *American Jewish Yearbook*, an annual publication which first saw the light of day in September 1899, under the auspices of the Jewish Publication Society of America.

As its name implies it is a review of the year's events relating to Jewish matters in America and other countries. Each volume contains important directory and statistical information, as well as special articles, biographies, necrologies and bibliographies. Here are a few examples of the kinds of information one can find:

- Jews in the U.S. Army and Navy (some World War I statistics)
- Biographical sketches of Rabbis and cantors officiating in the U.S. in 5664 (85pp.)
- A table of pogroms from 1903-6 (55pp.)
- Directories of national and local organizations
- Statistics of Jews (population, immigration to U.S. and Canada)

Articles are extensive and informative, and obviously earlier editions continue to have great reference value. Volume 40 includes a subject index to special articles in v.1-40, and volume 83 a similar index for v.51-82. Many synagogues, JCC, religious schools and Public Libraries contain volumes. Contact the one nearest to you!

While checking a library database recently, I became aware that there are a number of libraries, right here in the Bay Area, that have the complete runs of this invaluable resource. For your convenience I list them here:

Berkeley Public Library (Main)
North Bay Cooperative Library System (Solano)

Palo Alto Public Library (Main)
San Francisco Public Library (Main)
Stanford University Libraries
Stanford University Libraries
UC Davis (Main)

There is a treasure trove of information waiting for you in these volumes. Take a look!

Some Resources at the Santa Clara County Public Library by Rosanne Leeson

Here is a list of some useful genealogical tools that can be found in the Santa Clara County Library system. These items may be borrowed for three weeks. No renewals are allowed, but reserves may be placed.

•*Social Security Death Index, 1937-1993*; available on CD-ROM (Mac/PC) at the following libraries: Los Altos, Cupertino, Saratoga, Milpitas, Gilroy

•*Phone Search - USA*; currently on order for Milpitas, Gilroy

It is anticipated that a Wide-Area Network (WAN) will be established from the Headquarters in San Jose, and that a full four-disc phone list will then be available, as a Menu item, at every Public Access Catalog in the County Library! This is still in the planning stages however.

Also, there are three Satellite Offices of the County Recorder, at three of the County Libraries. When the Recorder is present in the office, one has access to the microfiche of *California Death and marriage Indexes, 1960*-These libraries, and the days and hours that the Recorder is at each, are as follows:

MILPITAS - Monday 12:00pm - 9:00pm
(Closed for lunch 3:30-4pm)

LOS ALTOS - Thursday, 12:00pm - 8:00pm (Closed for lunch 3:30-4pm)

CAMPBELL - Friday, 10:00am - 5:30pm (Closed for lunch 1:30 - 2pm)

In addition to the above three libraries, the Cupertino Library also has the *California Birth, Death and Marriage indexes, 1960*-. Ask at the Reference Desk.

These microfiche items are NOT available to be borrowed, but are only for reference use at the individual libraries.

Census Bureau Age Search Service

by Steven Sterns and Barry Klezmer <cd.sas@columco.com>

The authors describe an age look-up service offered on the Census Bureau Web site

The Census Bureau provides an "age search" service to the public. They will search confidential records from the Federal population censuses of 1910 to 1990 and issue an official transcript of the results (for a congressionally-mandated fee).

Individuals can use these transcripts, which may contain information on a person's age, sex, race, State or country of birth, and relationship to the householder, as evidence to qualify for social security and other retirement benefits, in making passport applications, to prove relationship in settling estates, in genealogy research, etc., or to satisfy other situations where a birth or other certificate may be needed but is not available. Information can be released to the named person, their heirs, or legal representatives.

Details and/or application furnished upon request. Contact Mary Lee Eldridge at mary.lee.eldridge@ccmail.census.gov.

Age Search Fact Sheet

- **FEE REQUIRED:** \$40 for a search of one census for one person only. Personal checks and money orders accepted. No credit cards.

- **YEARS SEARCHED:** 1910 through 1990.

- **ACCESS:** Census records with individual names are not on computer. They are on microfilm, arranged according to address at the time of the census.

- **REQUIRED:** A completed Form BC-600 "Application for Search of Census Records", signed by the person for whom the search is to be conducted. This person may authorize the results to be sent to another person or agency by also completing item 3 of the application.

Minor children - Information regarding a child who has not yet reached the legal age of 18 may be obtained by written request of either parent or guardian. A guardian must provide a copy of the court order naming them as such.

Mentally incompetent persons - Information regarding these persons may be obtained upon the written request of the legal representative, supported by a copy of the court order naming such legal representation.

Deceased persons - the application must be signed by (1) a blood relative in the immediate family (parent, child, brother, sister, grandparent), (2) the surviving wife or husband, (3) the administrator or executor of the estate, or (4) a beneficiary by will or insurance.

IN ALL CASES INVOLVING DECEASED PERSONS, a copy of the death certificate MUST be provided and the relationship to the deceased MUST be stated on the application. Legal representatives MUST also furnish a copy of the court order naming such legal representatives, and beneficiaries MUST furnish legal evidence of such beneficiary evidence.

- **RESULTS:** An official census transcript will list the person's name, relationship to household head, age at the time of the census, and state of birth. Citizenship will be provided if the person was foreign born. Single items of data such as occupation (for Black Lung cases) can be provided upon request. If a person is not found, a form will be sent with that information.

Additional data on the same person (Full Schedule) - The Full Schedule is the complete one line entry of personal data recorded for that individual ONLY. This will be furnished in addition to the regular transcript. There is an additional charge of \$10.00 for each Full Schedule. They are not available for 1970, 1980, and 1990.

- **TIME INVOLVED:** The normal processing time is 3 to 4 weeks. Cases are processed on a first in, first out basis. Passport and other priority cases can be processed in a week or less. To expedite, send by Next-Day Air and enclose a pre-paid Express return envelope. Applications can be faxed to you.

JEWISH HERITAGE

Excerpts from an address by Israeli President Ezer Weizman
to the Bundestag and Bundesarzt of the Federal Republic of Germany

Space did not permit printing President Weizman's inspiring January 10 speech in its entirety. But at the risk of destroying its finely-wrought continuity, we felt an obligation to bring relevant parts of it to our genealogical readers.

"It was fate that delivered me and my

contemporaries into this great era, when the

Jews returned to and reestablished their

homeland. I am no longer a wandering Jew

who migrates from country to country, from

exile to exile. But all Jews in every genera-

tion must regard themselves as if they had

been there, in previous generations, places,

and events. Therefore, I am still a wandering

Jew, but not along the far-flung paths of the

world. Now I migrate through the expanses

of time, from generation to generation,

down the paths of memory.

Memory shortens distances. Two

hundred generations have passed since my

people first came into being, and to me they

seem like a few days. Only two hundred gen-

erations have passed since a man named

Abraham rose up and left his country and

birthplace for the country that is today mine.

Only two hundred generations have elapsed

from the day Abraham purchased the Cave

of Makhpela in the city of Hebron to the

murderous conflicts that have taken place

there in my generation. Only one hundred

fifty generations have passed from the Pillar

of Fire of the Exodus from Egypt to the pil-

lars of smoke from the Holocaust. And I, a

descendant of Abraham, born in Abraham's

country, have witnessed them all.

I was a slave in Egypt. I received the

Torah at Mount Sinai. Together with Joshua

and Elijah, I crossed the Jordan River. I en-

tered Jerusalem with David, was exiled from

it with Zedekiah, and did not forget it by the

rivers of Babylon. When the Lord returned

the captives of Zion, I dreamed among the

builders of its ramparts. I fought the Romans

and was banished from Spain. I was bound

to the stake in Mainz. I studied Torah in Ye-

men and lost my family in Kishinev. I was

incinerated in Treblinka, rebelled in War-

saw, and emigrated to the Land of Israel, the

country whence I had been exiled and where

I had been born, from which I come and to

which I return.

I am a wandering Jew who follows in

the footsteps of his forebears, and just as es-

corted them there and then, so do my fore-

bears accompany me and stand here with me

today. The sharp-sighted among you may be

able to discern them: a retinue of prophets

and peasants, kings and rabbis, scientists and

soldiers, craftsmen and children. Some died

of advanced years in their beds. Others went

up in flames. Still others fell by the sword."

"Ours is the terrible century of death,

in which the Nazis and their assistants de-

stroyed a large portion of us in the Holo-

caust, but it is also the mind-boggling cen-

tury of revival, of independence, and -- re-

cently -- of a chance for peace."

"However, ladies and gentlemen, this is

not an easy visit. Only fifty years, a mere mo-

ment in the lengthy history of my people,

have passed since the end of that terrible

war. It was not easy for me to visit the Sach-

senhausen concentration camp today. It is

not easy for me to travel around this country

and hear the memories and voices crying

out to me from the ground. It is not easy for

me to stand here and speak with you, my

friends in this house. Jews have lived in

Germany for a thousand years or more. Ger-

man Jewry was the oldest Jewish community

in Europe until the Nazis destroyed it. From

the first traders who came here in the foot-

steps of the Romans to the scientists of the

twentieth century, from Kalonymos to Men-

delssohn, from the blood libel of Fulda to the

horrors of Kristallnacht; from the badge of shame to the yellow patch; from Martin Luther's anti-Semitic missives to the Nuremberg Laws, from the commentaries of Rashi to the poems of Heinrich Heine; Rabbeinu Gershom, the Light of the Exile; Walther Rathenau; Martin Buber; Franz Rosenzweig; Albert Einstein -- these are only some of the names that this country has known. Among the millions of my people's children whom the Nazis led to their deaths, there were other names that we might have uttered here today with the same degree of esteem and admiration. But we do not know their names. How many unwritten books died with them? How many uncomposed symphonies suffocated in their throats? How many scientific discoveries did not mature in their intellects? Every one of them was killed twice: once as a child led by the Nazis to the camps, and again as the adult he or she might have been. The Nazis stole them not only from their families and their people, but from the whole of humankind. I, as President of the State of Israel, can grieve for them and commemorate them, but I cannot forgive in their name. I can only demand that you, members of the Bundestag and Bundesrat, with full cognizance of the past, set your minds to the future. It is yours to discern any manifestation of racism, quash every expression of neo-Nazism, know how to identify these phenomena courageously, and expunge them from your midst, lest they grow and spread."

"Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen: for more than a century of Zionist endeavor, we have hoped for this peace and struggled to achieve it. We did not return to our borders in warships; we did not march home waving spears. We returned in convoys of dreamers and in boats of oppressed refugees. We returned, and, like our forefather King David who purchased the Temple Mount, and our patriarch Abraham who bought the Cave of Makhpela, we bought land, we sowed fields, we planted vineyards, we built houses, and even before we achieved statehood, we were already bearing weapons to

protect our lives."

"I speak not only of military prowess and material assets. In the last century, since we returned to our country, we have built more than villages and towns, factories and barns, shops and army bases. We have also installed democratic governance and built a massive cultural and educational system: schools, research institutes, libraries, museums, conservatories, and universities. But transcending all of these -- which exist in any civilized state -- we have wrought a unique cultural miracle: the revival of our language, the Hebrew language. It is the language in which I am speaking to you now, the language which, more than anything else, symbolizes and attests to our revival.

We and our language are alive. We who have arisen from the ashes, and the language that waited in the shrouds of Torah scrolls and between the pages of the prayer-books, are alive. The language that was whispered in prayer only, that was read only in synagogues, that was sung only in liturgy, that was shrieked in the gas chambers -- in the prayer "Shma Yisrael" -- has been revived. I know that German is richer than Hebrew in many ways, but I do not lack the words to express my feelings, nor have Jews ever lacked words to express their faith, love, dreams, yearnings, and hopes.

We have developed a suitable vocabulary for our special needs. We await, we yearn, we desire, we anticipate, we long for, we hope, we thirst, we crave, we imagine.... I stop here in order to apologize to the interpreters in case they find it hard to select the right words.

These two cadavers, revived after so many years -- the Jewish state and the Hebrew language -- are the very essence of our lives in this century. In this of all centuries, which observed us devastated and dead, we have risen again. And we now use this language, which in exile we used to speak to God only, to speak to each other.

We still pray in Hebrew, but now we also use it to speak, to write, to work and study, to argue, to court each other, and to sing.

And the miracle is all the greater because if Isaiah, Solomon, and Jesus were here today, they would understand what I am saying just as I and my daughter and grandchildren understand their words, spoken and written and preserved in the same language thousands of years ago.

Mr. President, Madam and Mr. Speaker, dignitaries: I thank you again for your hospitality to my wife and myself and to our staff. With your permission, I would like to end with a Biblical verse of hope and peace. My forebears described peace with a Hebrew expression that every farmer in the Middle East has experienced first-hand: "every man under his vine and under his fig tree." This is a handsome expression, but it is no longer sufficient to rest in the shade of one's vine or under the branches of one's fig tree. Peace has to be dynamic, not quiescent. It must propel us into the fifth millennium of our history, into the twenty-first century, where new cultural, educational, technological, scientific, and agricultural challenges await us.

Today's Israel, with its large influx of immigrants, its economic momentum, the peace accords, should and can reclaim its position as the predominant cultural center of the Jewish people.

We have invested too much time, resources, and physical and psychological effort in the battlefield. Now we have work to do in our schools, research institutes, workshops, and laboratories. Our true aspirations reside there, not in the battlefield. Our very essence is anchored in study and education. Jewish ethics has always preferred the pen to the sword, and as a former soldier, believe me, it is not easy for me to say such a thing.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are a people of memory and prayer. We are a people of words and hope. We have neither established empires nor built castles and palaces. We have only placed words on top of each other. We have fashioned ideas; we have built memorials. We have dreamed towers of yearnings -- of Jerusalem rebuilt, of Jerusalem united, of a peace that will be swiftly and speedily established in our days. Amen.

Malcolm H. Stern NARA Gift Fund

by Gary Mokotoff

Feb 17, 1996

There is a marvelous picture of the late Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern on the Web at <http://genealogy.org/paf/www/nara>. This is the Web site of the NARA Gift Fund. Last year, at my suggestion, the Genealogical Coordinating Committee renamed the GCC-NARA Gift Fund, the Malcolm H. Stern NARA Gift Fund. This fund, now managed by the Federation of Genealogical Societies, was created by Malcolm as a method for the genealogical community to make contributions to the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration for creating finding aids and microfilming of valuable research materials of interest to genealogists.

Some of the projects have included filming of the Canadian border crossings, Galveston arrival records and street indexes to the 1910 census. Equally important, because these projects are placed on microfilm, the LDS (Mormon) Family History Library gets copies and makes them available at their Family History Centers throughout the world.

YIVO Information

The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research is the preeminent repository of library and archival materials on the history and culture of Eastern European Jewry and their descendants in the United States. Due to the small size of our staff, we are not able to provide individual responses to the many genealogical inquiries that we receive. Instead, we would like to pass along a few pointers, to assist you in your research.

YIVO's new (interim) address: 555 West 57th St. (corner of 11th Ave.), 11th Floor, New York, NY 10019. Tel: 212-535-6700. Hours are Monday-Thursday, 9:30AM-5:30PM. Portions of the collections will not be readily accessible until YIVO moves into our new building at the end of 1996. Please call for an appointment. Closed Fridays, weekends, Jewish and civil holidays.

(YIVO handout, 2/1996)

Old San Francisco Immigration Case Files Discovered

by Bert Oppenheim<bertno@ix.netcom.com>

The following names were taken from a list containing the immigration case files of the Jewish immigrants listed below. For additional information contact the National Archives-Pacific Sierra Region, 1000 Commadore Dr., San Bruno, CA 94066. Phone No. (415) 876-9009

**Russian-born Jewish Immigrants to
San Francisco, 1915-1919**

<u>Last, First & Middle Name</u>	<u>Case #</u>	<u>Birth Date</u>		
Alanovivh, Jasif	14662/29-4		Maber, Haim	16363/32-2 1889
Allik, Johann	17148/27-21	1880	Markovich, Morduh	15153/39-8 1892
Allik, Johann	17148/27-22	1880	Mazarikavitz, Wilhelm	15354/23-13 1906
Aranberg, Frederick	16588/12-1	1880	Mazarikavitz, Wilhelm	15354/23-2 1906
Babrovski, Meyer Hirsch Yankel	15153/39-1	1894	Mazarikavitz, Wilhelm	15354/23-3 1906
Bayefsky, Feiga	16778/25-3	1901	Mazarikavitz, Wilhelm	15354/23-4 1906
Bayefsky, Feiga	16778/25-4	1901	Melarsky, Davis	15650/2-32 1875
Bayefsky Feiga	16778/25-5	1901	Meshell, Menagh	14776/21-10 1888
Baudoin, Yonkel	16842/25-18	1915	Miller, Davis	14650/2-23 1875
Beloff, Leonty	14708/17-3	1886	Mirsky, Josef	15307/5-28 1892
Bogdonas, Joseph	16949/8-1	1901	Mordin, Israel	17072/19-2 1902
Brussilufsky, David Gerch	15307/5-20	1894	Naber, Chaim	16363/32-2 1889
Chaikin, Abram	15153/39-18	1898	Naber, Kaim	16363/32-2 1889
Chorrim, Mendil	14835/4-26	1887	Paratky, Ellis	14782/5-22 1894
Divanovsky, Mary	17417/22-7	1868	Perry, E.	14782/5-22 1894
Elterman, Elia	16782/2-6	1863	Polikowsky, Nordoch	14835/4-14 1894
Eltman, Elia	16782/2-7	1863	Punchnik, Brucha	16723/39-18 1893
Eltman, Elia	16782/2-8	1863	Rather, Genesha	14776/21-12 1890
Essin, Yakao	15153/39-30	1894	Rausa, Joseph R.	16735/5-1 1876
Faingold, Isaak	14949/2-17	1897	Reiss, Ziska	16451/4-8 1910
Feldman, Joseph	17279/19-4	1861	Rose, Joseph R.	16735/5-1 1876
Filliurin Robert	14975/13-3	1912	Schneeveis, Lebe	14708/17-3 1886
Friedman, Noah	16723/39-19	1909	Selifonoff, Yefin	16921/1-1 1883
Friedman, Noich	16723/39-19	1909	Shefrin, Soza	16451/6-12 1902
Gamlyky, Ber	14676/21-2	1895	Shefrin, Soza	16451/6-13 1902
Gavrillin, Mickail	15460/2-9	1887	Shelfum, Jacob	14782/5-14 1894
Gertsen, Boris	14782/5-7	1896	Shineder, Zlota	16636/31-16 1894
Giller, Motel	14676/8-5	1892	Shten, Samuel	14776/21-4 1896
Gondis, Clara	16243/16-1	1871	Sinelnifoff, Simon Yankell	15153/40-1 1887
Granow, Heim	14835/4-12	1880	Srebnik, Elia	15153/39-9 1886
Graudin, Austra	16551/3-15	1899	Srebnik, Eller Srulalter	15153/39-9 1886
Greenfield, Banick	14650/7-12	1888	Srebuick, Elia	15153/39-9 1886
Greenstein, Klaim-Zrul Davidovick	15153/39-23	1889	Strenoffsky, Isak	14835/4-26 1887
Haitovich, Abram	15189/4-9	1891	Strupinsky, Sara	16269/7-17 1901
Heyde, Magaretha	15701/3-11	1905	Strupinsky, Sara	16269/7-18 1901
Hoslevsky, Izrail	14948/18-11	1894	Tokareff, Niakendra	15375/2/27 1902
Ivanoff, Andrew	17546/23-1	1908	Urbanowitch, Dominterlia	16735/4-17 1874
Ivanoff, Nicolas	17546/23-1	1908	Vodniak, Ionia	16472/18-3 1900
Kagan, Yankel Moses	15153/39-30	1894	Vodniak, Ionia	16472/18-4 1900
Kanei, Fgeny	14782/5-12	1897	Winkler, Christian	17267/5-26 1862
Kaplin, Samuel	14676/21-2	1895	Yampolsky, Mordehai	15710/11-1 1870
Kauk, Olga	15643/12-2	1910	Yampolsky, Mordehai	15710/11-3 1870
Knjajivsky, Asa	14725/32-22	1888	Yampolsky, Mordehai	15710/11-2 1870
Lekin, Pinhus	14776/17-4	1887	Yankel, Tandet	14948/18-3 1898
Leman, Alfred	16832/1-31	1879	Yogolevitch, Paul	16363/27-2 1902
Levitas, Leif	15307/5-20	1894	Yossiphovitch, Shermen	16842/28-30 1902
Levitta, Nathan	14782/2-30	1892	Yotkoff, Ludwig	16921/1-2 1885
Lieberman, Moses	14776/21/23	1893	Yuda, Kane	14725/32-24 1896
Lobatch, Natalia	15354/23-6	1894	Zalmon, Zaliman	14776/21-20 1891
Lumelski, Moruh	15153/39-8	1892	Zeidel, Moisher	16742/18-5 1901
Luntsu, Zaliman	14776/21-20	1891	Zelmanovich, Leonty	14776/17-3 1867
			Zepurner, Wassilie	16846/2-3 1906

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EUROPEAN RESEARCH

A Visit to Alsatian Cemeteries

by Dan Leeson, Los Altos, CA <leeson@admin.fhda.edu>

This is an abridged account of the recent visit by members Dan and Rosanne Leeson to Alsace. Dan's observations on Jewish cemeteries in Alsace can probably be extended to other European countries. See also his "New Resources for Alsatian Research" in the Book Reviews section.

During my trip to Alsace, I visited 6 cemeteries in France and 2 in Germany. The whole experience left me despondent. The analogy of the physical locations of the cemeteries and the social situation of the Jews is striking. As the Jewish communities were kept apart from their Christian neighbors, so were their cemeteries physically isolated. Invariably one must go to the edge or out of town to the Jewish cemeteries, while the Christian cemeteries in Alsatian (and German) villages of this area are literally in the center of town, invariably next to the church. They are well cared for, free of weeds, never desecrated, easily found, simply visited, and well-documented. The Jewish cemeteries are hard to find, difficult or impossible to enter without preparation as they may be walled, locked, poorly cared for (with exceptions), desecrated, and poorly or not documented.

On my first visit to the medium sized town of Selestat (Between Strasbourg and Colmar) 15 years ago, I simply could not find the large Jewish cemetery—it is off the main highway and quite invisible until one is close. Today, as the government has begun to post signs pointing to Jewish cemeteries, a road sign exists on N83 (the main north/south highway) pointing to the "Cimetiere Israelite". Still in use, since the late middle ages, it remains easy to miss. The caretaker lives in a house next door, and opens the cemetery daily except on *shabbat* and *yom tov*. Perhaps because I told him there would be many visitors in the next two weeks (due to a mini-reunion), the grass, in some places 2 feet high, was suddenly cut in many areas. Andre Haenel of Selestat has a graves registration book which begins in the mid-19th century, although there are

graves dating to the 1600s.

Strangely, the stones that toppled over (inscription side down) are the most fortunate as their memorial and genealogical information is often preserved. This is not dissimilar to Jewish tombstones taken by Nazis and used as paving stones for village streets and/or building material; i.e., when placed face down, or used in a building interior, their longevity (thus readability) is greatly extended. I don't suggest that such use of Jewish tombstones is meritorious, only that an accidental benefit is the preservation of some few, precious stones.

The next cemetery visited was the small, relatively new one in Obernai. This, among all the cemeteries visited, is not isolated. Being newer, the site was chosen many years after restriction on where Jews could bury their dead was in force. Entrance was restricted by a high wall and locked front gate. We obtained the key from a person in the village, although it is best to call the *Mairie* (or town hall) a few days before your visit, to determine who has the key and to make arrangements.

In Fegersheim, just outside of Strasbourg, the cemetery was in such awful shape that it was terrible to visit. There is desecration (including swastikas on the inside of a shed on cemetery property), and there has been considerable land erosion. Some tombs have had water course under the stone slabs covering the graves, and a large hole perhaps a foot or more deep, is often present. That is not very far from where the corpse (or what is left of it) remains. This cemetery is locked and walled. A sign on the gate directs one to inquire at the "Fondation Elisa" for the key. There was no address or telephone

number, but inquiries led us to a Jewish home for the aged about 1-2 miles north of the cemetery. There, (the "Foundation Elisa"), we got the key in the kitchen. Nice place, beautifully managed, kosher, and very orthodox. Paradoxically, burials continue in that cemetery while the older portions continue to erode, and while desecration levels many older stones.

The cemetery of Grussenheim, like most of the others, is isolated and located only by the signs that say "Stele" (monuments), which is confusing as there is also a French military cemetery in town. There is the standard problem of getting in, as it is walled and locked. At the city hall (Mairie of Grussenheim), we were told the key was in the possession of Mme. Schweinmacher (that's right-and don't blame me), on the Rue du Doub, opposite the site where the synagogue stood until destroyed by Nazis, and near the Rue des Juifs (Jew's Street). Her very strong Alsatian accent made the call difficult, but she was very helpful, gave us the key, and we completed the visit. The visit to two German cemeteries topped off our visit. The largest and oldest in the area, is just out-side the village of Schmieheim, which is cheek by jowl to Altdorf, about 15 miles north of Freiburg, just south of Kippenheim, which restored its synagogue in the last 10 years (where we had lunch at a Greek restaurant). The cemetery is the center of considerable activity because all of the stones have been photographed and a book, in German and Hebrew, is being prepared by Naftali bar-Giora Bamberger. It may also be due to a letter I wrote to the German government on my last visit 3 years ago to complain bitterly about the continual desecration, which has resulted in a good deal of work being done. We had previously obtained the key from the Rathaus of the village, although this day there was no one there. If you expect to go, it may take a little planning on your part.

Finally, in Nonnenweir, we visited the most isolated cemetery of all, in the middle of a cornfield, on the very outskirts of

town. It was locked, and the key was said to be in the Rathaus of Nonnenweir. It was while looking at this old Jewish cemetery in the middle of a cornfield that I became most depressed at the thought of what we once had, and what happened to it. While we did not visit the cemetery of the tiny town of Eichstetten this trip, we did communicate with the Jewish Community of Karlsruhe and were told that the long-lost graves registration document of the Jewish cemetery is in their possession. Happy days! My depression went away. For those planning a visit to cemeteries of this region, I strongly suggest a hat (there is no protection from the sun), shears to cut away brush, and a strong knowledge of how to photograph or take rubbings of old and badly faded tombstones. A final point on tombstone architecture. As one visits 6 or 8 cemeteries of a region, the various styles that were in use in a large geography emerge, and more important, one begins to understand why certain styles and architectures have been complete failures, at least in terms of memorializing the dead. The greatest failure is that which placed the memorial information on relatively thin 1" plaques (often black obsidian or white marble) and then affixed the plaques to "generic" tombstones. When new, they are quite beautiful, and the writing will remain clear for centuries. However, the plaques will not stay affixed for very long, perhaps a century, rarely longer, due to the weather. Water gets behind the plaques, freezes and causes an imperceptible bulging of the plaque. The next year, this cavity is filled with water which freezes, and the process accelerates. Within a short period of time, the plaque bursts and grave after grave can be seen with shards lying at its feet. Then the memorial information gets kicked around, buried under earth and eventually lost. All this while the generic tombstone stands in silent homage bearing no memorial information of any kind. One no longer knows who is buried there and the memory of that person can no longer be revived.

Metrical Registers for Seven Districts in Poland (1882-1943)

By Stanley Diamond

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A JewishGen InfoFile

In the early 1980's, the Civil Records Offices (Urząd Stanu Cywilnego - "USC") of Poland made an inventory of all metrical registers in their possession at that time. This included Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Protestant and Jewish registers. This inventory includes all records starting with the year 1882 and, for some towns includes Jewish records for as late as 1943.

However, in recent years, registers with records from 1882 to the early 1890's (over 100 years old) have generally been shifted to the District Branches of the Polish State Archives, responsible for the towns in their area.

Information on records for the following districts became available to me during research related to my Beta-Thalassemia genetic trait research project: Ostroleka; Lomza; Siedlce; Ciechanow; Białystok; Skierniewice; and Stoleczne Warszawa. This information is posted with the authorization of the Polish State Archives which provided the lists. My thanks to my wife Ruth for the database entry.

Is the list complete? -- It is possible that some additional registers have been located since the inventory was made. However, if a town of interest is in one of the above districts, but the town is not included in the lists below, it is likely there are no Jewish Metrical Registers available.

Many records over 100 years old have been microfilmed by the LDS (Mormons). For records older than 100 years, but not microfilmed by the LDS, enquiries should be directed to the Polish State Archives.

To obtain extracts of records less than 100 years old, enquiries should be directed to the Civil Records Offices (Urząd Stanu Cywilnego - USC).

In some cases, Jewish records less than 100 years old have been turned over

to the district archives. For example, the registers for Zambrow are in the Lomza District Archives.

[This file should be read in conjunction with the following JewishGen InfoFile VITAL RECORDS IN POLAND by Warren Blatt. To have a copy e-mailed to you, send blank email to:

<polandv@jewishgen.org>

or it can be viewed directly on the Web at:
<http://www.jewishgen.org/infofiles/polandv.txt>]

Gesher Galicia Special Interest Group

Gesher Galicia (bridge to Galicia), the special interest group (SIG) for Galicia, is now in its third year of operation. They publish a quarterly newsletter entitled *The Galitzianer* and a family finder of surnames and town names of interest to members searching the Galicia portion of the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1772 to World War I. It encompasses present day southeastern Poland and a large part of Western Ukraine.

Membership is \$20.00 from September 1 to August 31 for U.S. and Canadian residents. Send cash or a personal check in your own currency with a list of the surnames and towns you are searching to: Shelley K. Pollero, Membership Chair, 549 Cypress Lane, Severna Park, MD 21146.

Recent Genealogy in England

by Rhea Toole

General Computer Index - provides a computerized record search and a copy of a certificate for approximately £20. Service is within 5 days. General Computer Index, P. O. Box 169 Romney House, Twickenham TW1 3TG England. Tel: 0181-891-4651, FAX: 0181-891-4108.

Public Records Office- State of the art computerized center with knowledgeable and helpful staff. I found wonderfully detailed naturalization applications and records. Public Records Office, Ruskin Ave, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU, England (on the central line from London) Tel: 0181-876-3444.

St. Catherine's House in London still houses records for births, deaths, etc.

BOOK REVIEWS

New Resources for Alsatian Research

by Dan Leeson, Los Altos, CA
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1784 Census

There are two important, late 18th-early 19th century sources for the Jews of Alsace. First is a census of all Alsatian Jews taken in 1784. Published in book form in 1785 it is easily researched. An index is available on microfiche from Avotaynu, Inc. An article on the history of the census is found in *Avotaynu*, Vol. VIII, No.3, Fall, 1992.

1808 Name-Choosing List

Of equal or greater importance is a list of 1808 family name-choosings. A Napoleonic decree that year imposed the taking of family names on the Jews of France. (See "Jewish Names in the Light of Napoleon's Decree of July 20, 1808" by Edward David Luft and "Jewish Genealogical Research in Alsace" by Pierre Katz, *Avotaynu*, Vol. X, No.2, Summer 1994.)

In manuscript form, the list has no order to it. Consisting of about 40,000 acts, each may or may not have changed the name of the person involved. Research was required, in both Strasbourg and Colmar where the acts of Bas Rhin and Haut-Rhin were kept, to examine each often incomprehensible, handwritten act.

Now, thanks to Pierre Katz and the Cercle de Généalogie Juive of France, the material for Bas Rhin (roughly the northern region of Alsace centered around Strasbourg), is available in four well organized and thoughtfully prepared volumes. Although not without problems, it is a remarkable accomplishment, for which both Katz and the Cercle should be very proud.

The work is arranged by city/village: Volume 1 covers Balbronn-Haegen, Vol. 2, Haguenau-Mutzig, Vol. 3, Neuwillers-les-Saverne-Schirrhoffen, Vol. 4, Schwenheim-Zinwiller. Data are shown for 113 villages; information for 11 others may be permanently lost or someday rediscovered.

Of particular interest was the data organized to indicate the villages that were part of each Rabbinate. For example, the villages of Drachenbronn, Lembach, Niederseebach, and Riedseltz are all in the Rabbinate of Wissembourg. I had never seen this valuable information before.

The data for each city are sorted in three formats: 1) The name of the party prior to the name-taking followed by the new name. The name may be the same, have minor changes, or be radically different. In the village of Bischheim: Isaac Kuppenheim retains his name; Mindel Levy becomes Minette Levy; Madel Moses becomes Madeline Traub. 2) The name-changes are listed by sex, then by family name (though not necessarily by family). In Bouxwiller the (possibly) new family name of "Aaron" belongs to 9 males and 12 females, though there is no assurance that they are all related. 3) The name changes are listed by name and family groupings. The 21 Aarons in (2) are shown as 6 separate families.

Wives are listed with maiden names which, I am advised, they had a right to select during name-choosing formalities—an interesting choice given to early 18th century women. This is particularly valuable and enables the possible connection of matriarchal family lines.

Volume 1 includes an index by village then by particular family name. Thus, in a search for "Aaron", one is directed to Basenberg, Mommenheim, Ottrott, and 7 other villages. Problems with the volumes include: 1) Typographical errors and a lack of consistency in capitalization. 2) Arbitrary name re-spellings—a serious flaw. Faced with a family name spelled 4-5 different ways, Katz has in most cases, arbitrarily selected a single variant spelling. In my case, he grouped the names Heimerdinger, Hemmendinger, Heimertinger, etc. into the single form "Hemmerdinger" which complicates research and lumps genealogical lines together that should be kept separate.

The 4-volume set costs approximately \$70. Send check or International Money

Order to: Cercle de Généalogie Juive, BP 707, 75162 Paris Cedex 04. Request surface mail delivery as air mail is much more expensive. These are indispensable volumes if your genealogy takes you to Eastern France.

Katz is at work on a similar effort for the Haut-Rhin region. This, the Bas Rhin volumes and fiche of the 1784 census blow a hole in the wall separating genealogists from identification of their ancestral lines. Also in progress is an index of name-choosings for all Jews of 1808 France including territories no longer part of that country such as the Rhine Palatinate.

Jewish Marriage Contracts Listing

In preparation for at least 20 years, a book listing 7,000 Jewish Marriage Contracts of Bas Rhin deposited in the departmental archives of Strasbourg is ready for publication following the death of author Andre-Aaron Fraenckel. In my visit with his widow, Mme. Fraenckel indicated her intent to publish the list with each item showing names and dates for the people listed, and additional information about witnesses, gifts, dowries, etc. if available.

An example (in rough translation): "Feb.9, 1780, Adar II 5540 Made in Osthoffen Isaac "Eisik" son of Azriel (Isaac Seligman) of Bischheim with the widow Miryam (Marianne) Dreyfuss, daughter of Meyer resident of Odratzheim during his lifetime. Assisted by his step-father, Freyem Weil of Osthoffen, the bridegroom has committed himself to care for Leib, child of his wife, and to engage a teacher until the aforesaid Leib arrives at the level of study of the law. The bridegroom declares to have no claim on the property that his wife brings to the marriage. The dowry is 300 florins. The cost for the ketubah is 450 florins."

Not covered in the publication are other specifics of the contracts, which may offer far more than the traditional boiler plate of Hebrew marriage contracts. Along with considerable genealogical information, they allow a window into the

social circumstances of the couple at the time of marriage. My wife has a contract noting the bride "brings a silver chain to the marriage", while the groom was "presented with a suit of clothes suitable to his station in life and 1/3 the books of his father's library". Details include the division of property in the event of a spouse's death. This is more akin to a betrothal agreement than a marriage contract. The contracts themselves will not be part of Mrs. Fraenckel's publication. One must go to the Strasbourg archives to get them. (I do not know if they are available by mail.)

Many marriage contracts in the archives are partly or completely in the Ju-deo-Alsatian language. The contract for my wife's family was a puzzle for years; while it appeared to be in Hebrew, it used the Hebrew alphabet to write in this partly Hebrew, partly Alsatian language. The book will be printed when the publisher feels there are enough subscribers to assure this is not a money-losing effort. Please write to Micheline Guttman, President, Cercle de Généalogie Juive, BP 707, 75162 Paris Cedex 04, indicating your interest.

[The following 3 books are available from: Mme. R. Fraenckel, Libarale du Cedrat, 19 rue du Marechal Foch, 67000 Strasbourg, France. As Mme. Fraenckel does not speak English, I suggest your letter be in French. Costs are approximate, add \$5 per book (estimate) for surface shipping.]

Synagogues of Alsace

Alsace had 20,000-30,000 Jews at its apex, and 109 synagogues, although some were abandoned before others built. Many still exist, some in current use; others were destroyed by Nazis, abandoned, sold, or are used for storage, fire houses, or in one case, as a sauerkraut making facility. *Les Synagogues D'Alsace et leur Histoire* by Michel Rothe and Max Warschawski, is published by Chalom Bisamme, PO Box 7151, Jerusalem. Cost: \$85. No eye will remain dry after perusing the pages of this wonderful book. Several valuable intro-

ductory sections on Jewish life in Alsace are followed by photos of every still-standing building that is or was a synagogue in Bas Rhin or Haut-Rhin. If no building exists, an old photo or painting has been used. A brief history of each synagogue is given.

Cemetery Art Catalog

Artistic and Spiritual Riches of the Jewish Cemeteries of Alsace is a 56-page, French language, catalog of photographs by Roger Lehn, Frantisek Zvados, and Mariusz Hermanovick, showing examples of one of the only art forms permitted to Jews of the middle ages; cemetery art, including tombstone styles, decorations, ornamentation, and shape. Tombstones depicted are readable, and were chosen from the 14 largest and most important medieval Jewish cemeteries in Alsace.

An Ettendorf stone from 1597 reads: "Here lies a young man, son of a sage. The young man named Elyokum, son of the honorable Rabbi Mardochee, may G-d guard him, of the family Rothenburg, who died on 2 Shevat in the year 5357...". Mardochee Rothenburg was the younger brother of Todros Rothenburgs, a 12th generation descendant of Meir Rothenburg, Rabbi of Hannau. In Selestat is the tomb of Rose Sara Lwow (d. 1746), wife of Rabbi Eliezer Leibmann (son of Moses Leibmann, Prepose of Ribeauville in 1756), daughter of Rabbi Hoshea Heschel Lwow, and great-great aunt of Karl Marx!

There is much more, and if very lucky, one can 1) make a direct link to the middle ages, and 2) find an existing stone to visit and say kaddish. Cost: \$40.

Rosenwiller Cemetery

Patrimoine D'Alsace: Le cimetiere Juif de Rosenwiller by Robert Weyl, published in 1988 by Editions Salde (ISBN# 2-903850-03-8) describes one of the most important Jewish cemeteries to have survived the middle ages in Alsace. In the tiny village of Rosenwiller, 30 minutes from Strasbourg, section 3 of the cemetery is in use to today, while section 1 is old and largely inaccessible due to the unchecked growth of weeds. The cemetery is

cited in a 1349 charter of Emperor Charles IV; later, a tax was imposed for each Jew interred there. The book focuses on about 150 stones of important personages, with inscriptions in French, German and Hebrew. Among those whose tombs are shown are: Rabbi Isaac Sintzheim (d. Sept. 20, 1767), son of Abraham Sintzheim, and Cerf Berr de Medelsheim (d. Dec. 7, 1793), one of the few Jews permitted to reside in Strasbourg, who acted as leader and spokesperson for the entire Alsatian Jewish community.

Many biographies are included, as is an important bibliography, and a map of the cemetery showing the locations of the stones highlighted in the book.

Preservation of Jewish Monuments

Endangered Heritage:

Jewish Cemeteries and Synagogues in Central and Eastern Europe

The JGS of Rochester's April meeting featured Dr. Samuel Gruber, Director of the Jewish Heritage Council of the World Monuments Fund, in an illustrated lecture on the Council's work to survey and inventory the remaining synagogues and Jewish cemeteries in Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Ukraine.

Since 1988, the Jewish Heritage Council has been dedicated to documenting, protecting, and preserving historic Jewish sites worldwide. They have published a book on historic Jewish monuments in Poland, and another on the Czech Republic.

According to Dr. Gruber: "The collapse of Communism in eastern Europe produced many remarkable side effects. One has been the rediscovery of thousands of buildings, cemeteries, and other sites that are the last physical remains of centuries-old Jewish communities that were largely wiped out by Nazi Germany's Final Solution. It has become clear that the Nazis failed to obliterate all traces of Jewish civilization in these areas. Almost every major city and countless small towns and villages hold surviving vestiges of the Jewish past, albeit ruined and often

hard to find. Approximately 250 synagogues remain within the modern-day borders of Poland. Roughly 600 synagogue buildings exist in the former Czechoslovakia. Some 150 synagogues, many by prominent local architects, survive in Hungary.

For Jews, these sites open a dialogue with a collective past. For all humanity, they serve as concrete evidence of a heritage, and can break down the ghetto walls of cultural division. Recognizing and restoring these sites can offer an antidote to ethnic cleansing and cultural genocide. By recognizing and saving Jewish buildings, even in places where there are no longer any Jews, we can begin to demonstrate the diversity of the past. In doing so, perhaps we can also appreciate and cherish variety in our culture today."

(from JGSR meeting announcement)

Corrections to February 1996 Issue

•In the February 1996 issue of *ZichronNote*, the review of *Alsace Emigration Book* was written by Rosanne Leeson, not Dan Leeson.

•Acknowledgement should be given to Steve Byars for his assistance in writing the JewishGen explanation in the 1995/1996 Survey Summary.

•Many thanks to member Karen Zukor, of Zukor & Noenning Conservation for her insightful corrections and additions to the February 1996 article on photo and document preservation. Her comments appear here.

DEFINITIONS - A CONSERVATOR will undertake treatment to stabilize and preserve artifacts. This may improve the appearance of the item, or it may leave it unchanged visually if improvement in appearance puts the object at risk.

A **RESTORER** technically addresses primarily the cosmetic aspect of a damaged article's repair.

A **CURATOR** will tell you about the significance of the piece, or shed light on its origins. Most curators are not trained to execute treatment.

MAGNETIC PHOTO ALBUMS -

Although convenient, these albums can be very damaging to photos and documents. This is due not to the peroxide in the pages, but in the chemicals in the pressure-sensitive adhesive. These chemicals (particularly those known as plasticizers) cross-link with paper over time and form a brown stain in the paper they touch. This staining compound is often difficult to remove, may require the use of solvents that could damage the inks on the item, and may require chemical bleaching that can be very damaging to paper if not used correctly.

SHEET PROTECTORS - Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) free sheets (such as polyester or polyethylene) are highly recommended for protection of photos and documents. However, is it not PVC that is a damaging factor in other films. Some of the older plastic films have a problem called "off-gassing". Vinyl films and some acetate films give off an odor as they age - and this odor is a gas that deteriorates the paper artifacts adjacent to it. If the clear film has an odor or is yellowing, it may well be dangerous.

FRAMING - Ultraviolet light, such as sunlight, can quickly damage documents and photos. Both Plexiglas and glass filter a little of the ultraviolet light that is most damaging to paper. A special type of Plexiglas is available that helps screen out the most damaging light in the spectrum. It is called "ultra violet filtering Plexiglas". Another company provides a material called OP-3 that also filters ultra violet rays. Both will help to slow down fading and overall deterioration, but neither will completely solve the problem.

ASK LILLIAN

Managed by Lillian Wurzel

We would like to make the expertise of knowledgeable members available. Send your questions to Lillian Wurzel, 2930 Roma Court, Santa Clara CA 95051-6848, Tel 408-984-3718. Please leave your question on the answering machine if there is no answer. I will try to answer your questions or find someone who can. Answers will be published in *ZichronNote*.

ZichronNote

זכרון

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