Pape Avenue Cemetery:  
Some Preliminary Findings  
By Bill Gladstone.

The first recorded act of Toronto's Jewish community occurred in 1849, when two prominent Jewish businessmen, Judah G. Joseph and Abraham Nordheimer, purchased a plot of land in the city's east end, near the present intersection of Pape and Gerard Avenues, on behalf of "a Hebrew Congregation." When the Pape Avenue Cemetery was thereupon established, there were less than 80 Jews living in Toronto and vicinity.

The first burials in this pre-confederate Jewish burial ground, which was surrounded by farmers' fields and accessible only by a road from Queen Street, occurred in 1850. However, those who visit the historic Holy Blossom cemetery today will not find a marker that predates 1863, and only a few prior to the 1880's. One of the earliest still extant belongs to Lewis Samuel, the famed 19th-century industrialist who died in 1867, a central figure in Toronto's Jewish community and the father of the late philanthropist Sigmund Samuel. Another belongs to A. D. Benjamin, a well-known businessman and partner in the Samuel business, who died of heart failure in the first days of the 20th century, six weeks after a bicycling accident.

Mr. Douglas Brown, who has lived in the house adjoining the cemetery and who has been its caretaker for the last 28 years, has recollections of meeting many visitors, including federal politician Barney Danson and family, and the late Toronto mayor Nathan Phillips and his wife Esther, née Lyons, whose parents are buried there. Mr. Brown has raked 28 seasons' worth of leaves from the grounds, cleared away the empty beer bottles and other debris, and overseen visits by numerous groups of students.

A walk through the grounds with Mr. Brown is instructive, as he points out notable tombstones such as one belonging to a celebrated ballerina of the 1920's. Explaining why there are few tombstones standing in the front part of the cemetery near the street, Mr. Brown reports that most have toppled and are now lying beneath the sod. It is here, presumably, that most of those who died before 1880 were laid to rest.

Are the names of those whose tombstones have fallen irretrievable lost? Hardly. Beneath the soil, the letters etched in stone are afforded superior protection from the elements! However, until an archaeologist is permitted to make a study, one may determine the names of at least some of the burial through a search of literary and historic documents.

Certainly the most valuable documents for this purpose are the original Holy Blossom records available at the Holy Blossom Temple Library or in five microfilm reels at the Ontario Archives and the Canadian Jewish Congress Ontario Region Archives. The section of these records containing birth, marriage and burial information has recently been photocopied and will soon be separately available in a single volume as part of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada's collection at the North York Central Library.

As fascinating as these records are, they are evidently quite incomplete. For instance, three burials are recorded for 1858; one for 1859; the next one for 1863; the next two for 1864; the next one for 1868; then eight from 1870, 1871 and 1873. Thereafter the records skip ahead more than two decades, inexplicably resuming in 1895. By far the majority of these burials were of stillborn infants. Those familiar with the history of Toronto's Jewish community of more than a century ago will recognize the names of many of the parents.

Few of us can trace a Jewish ancestor back to Toronto before the first wave of Russian-Jewish emigrants reached here in the early 1880's. However, some of us may be enticed to imagine, from looking at the early Holy Blossom records, that our relatives were numbered among Toronto's first Jews.

My own great-great-grandparents, for example, Raphael and (I believe) Rhoda Glicenstein, raised a family in Konin, Poland. Some of their children immigrated to England, where the name was anglicized variously as Gleichenstein and Glitzstone, Gliizenstein, Glitzenstein, and finally as Glickstein, Gluckstein, Gladstein and Gladstone. Thus, I am more than a bit curious to discover the name Gluckstone among the earliest recorded Jewish births in Toronto, occurring some six years before Ontario began collecting civil registration records in 1869. Did an uncle or relative of my great-grandfather live in mid-19th-century Toronto?
Member of the Brantford Archives Committee, gave a presentation on the history of the once vibrant Jewish community of this Ontario town. Mrs. Stren related her experiences of twenty years ago when, as a newly arrived resident in Brantford, she began to systematically document the history of early Jewish settlers of this town, the majority of which came from the Ukrainian town of Uman. Because very little was known, virtually nothing seemed to have been preserved and the general apathy of people involved gave little reason to begin a project like this, - it presented her with a challenge. Sheer tenacity and the will to succeed enabled her to amass a vast amount of documentation on families and events of the Jewish life of this town of 75,000, evidence of which Mrs. Stren was able to display during her presentation.

We were able to glimpse at one person's research efforts, beginning with virtually no encouragement or material, yet succeeding eminently after two decades of methodical research, - a fine example for many in the audience to emulate.

November 28: The field trip to the Judaica section at Robarts Library, University of Toronto, was attended by twenty five members, - in evidence of the fact that this type of meeting is well in keeping with the research requirements of many members. Dr. Barry Walfish first lead the group to the Map Room where he explained the search methods for the wide variety of maps available. The on-line computer system, FELIX, is the preferred method of map locating at the library and, as many members were aware, one can also log on to FELIX by computer modem. An astonishing collection of maps can be found here, on paper or micro fiche, many in scales of 1:100,000 or even 1:75,000, showing remarkable detail. More acquisitions, particularly of the area now known as U.S.S.R. are to be added in the near future. (Map library - hours of opening: Monday - Thursday 9.00 a.m. - 9.00 p.m. Friday and Saturday 9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m.)

The magnet of the evening was however the stacks on the tenth floor, normally reserved for students or faculty members. This became a 'hands-on' event, a quasi continuation of Mr. Rosenstock’s presentation to our society in May this year, - a veritable genealogical feast for the beginner and seasoned researcher alike. Here are housed the world’s fourth largest collection of YIZKOR books and an extensive section of largely West European material on Jewish life, characteristically recognized by the call No's DS 135... The atmosphere of the evening was one of quiet excitement, though one felt totally at ease to finger any of the material at leisure, and the knowledge that this wonderful institution is always at one's doorsteps and available let many a member depart in good spirit.

December 19: The first part of the evening was taken up by the Annual General Meeting. It was decided that the format of meetings should be changed in such a way that members are given a better opportunity to discuss and plan their own research efforts. Regular executive meetings will in future be held at specified dates throughout the year to plan the society's activities and strategies which can then be presented to the membership at large.

Preliminary discussions then took place for a schedule of the 1993 Annual Jewish Genealogical Seminar, to be held in Toronto. The new executive will undertake a feasibility study over the next few months.

The following members were elected to the executive: President: Dr. Rolf Lederer Vice President: Bill Gladstone Correspondence Secretary: Selma Sacrob Recording Secretary: Sheryl Erenberg Membership Secretary: Peter Cullman Treasurer: Kaila Cramer Newsletter Editor: Peter Cullman Cemetery Project: Gert Rogers Programmes Secretary: Henry Wells.

Mr. Bill Gladstone began the evening’s programme with an account of his own research experiences over the past ten years. He concentrated on the subject of passenger lists: how to obtain them, how to read and evaluate them, cautioning that, although most fascinating and rewarding, not all material found in this area should always be taken as absolute truth - cross referencing being vital along this interesting research path.

Mr. Henry Wells recounted his recent trip to Israel, Hungary and Austria. In Tel Aviv he met with over two hundred other former inmates of the wartime detention camp in Mauritius. The occasion was the 50th anniversary of the expulsion of European Jewish refugees who had sought refuge in Palestine; the reunion also marked the 45th anniversary of their return to their respective countries of their choice at the end of the war. Today most of the participants of this meeting live in Austria, U.S.A., Canada or Israel; many brought their children and even grandchildren to this emotional event.

Dr. Rolf Lederer concluded the evening with a talk on his ongoing research into the U.S. side of his family, an area of which he knew very little at the outset of his genealogical quest. Through networking with various members of other JGS's and voluminous correspondence he was able to establish astonishing connections to a hitherto virtually unknown side of his ancestors.

Charitable status for our society

Dr. R.Lederer, president of our society, was pleased to announce at our November meeting that the society has finally received the federal charter of incorporation, - approval of an application to be registered as a charitable organization is pending. The outcome of this long awaited development will be of great benefit for our long term strategies as far as funding for special projects is concerned, such as the cemetery project and library acquisitions.

As of January 1991 the society's official name shall be: JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA, Toronto Branch.

As duly elected members of the National Genealogical Society, founded in 1903 and based in Virginia, as of January 1991, our society will receive two new additions to our own newsletter holdings: NGS Newsletter and NGS Quarterly, - an important affiliation in the wider field of Genealogy.
Field Trip to the Family History Library in Etobicoke, April 24.

The LDS (Mormon) Family History Library is the world’s largest repository of genealogical material. This resource centre is an absolute gold mine for researchers and an excellent place to begin your research if you are just starting out or are trying to obtain that final bit of information on your ancestors.

The Family History Library, headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, was founded in 1894 to gather genealogical records and help people trace their ancestry. Gathering and preserving records on microfilm began in 1938 — over 200 microfilm camera operators are now filming birth, marriage, death, probate, land, military and many other records in 39 countries.

More than 1500 “branch libraries” now operate in 49 countries; the libraries are open to the public and records are available at no charge, except for copying or microfilm rental.

This field trip on April 24 by the JGS of Canada is a must for any beginning researcher! Please mark your calendar!

The 1991 International Summer Seminar on Jewish Genealogy will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Salt Lake City, Utah, from July 7–11, one-and-a-half blocks from the LDS Library; promises to be a very successful venue — another very worthwhile date to remember.

Features of the Index are:

- Birth and death dates for 39.5 million people
- Information on place of last residence
- Search options for exact or similar surname spellings
- Option to copy data to diskette for use at home

Hungarian Support Group formed

A support group of those interested in Hungary is being considered by Lynn Pollak Golumbic, a member of the JGS of New York. She may be contacted through the Society at P.O. Box 6398, New York, N.Y. 10128.

Wanted for Yizkor book:

Galitzianers from PAMOREN

A worldwide search is on for former residents and their descendants from the Galician town of POMOREN (PAMORYANY). Sara Edell Schafler, president of the JGS of Greater Boston has just announced that, together with her collaborator, Dr. Henry Goldenberg of Toronto, she plans to publish a memorial book recalling the inhabitants of the town, recording the Jewish presence and history of PAMOREN over the centuries.

Can you sketch the layout of the town? Where was the Jewish cemetery? Where were the synagogues? Where was the train station and the river? Do you have memories, organizational or family photographs taken in Europe? Recall of experiences described by Pamorener landslyat and letters/documents are of special interest.

Two hundred family trees have already been assembled by the authors. Names will be shared with interested parties. Any person who emigrated from PAMOREN, who had family that lived there, or anyone who can identify survivors or victims of the Holocaust from PAMOREN is urged to contact: Sara Edell Schafler, 1501 Beacon Street, #501, Brookline, Mass. 02146, USA.

Czechoslovakian Research: Update

Further to the recent announcement in SHEM TOV, VOL.VI, NO.1, genealogical inquiries, formerly funneled through the Czechoslovak Embassy in Washington, should now be mailed directly to Czechoslovakia.

Inquiries about individuals who resided in Bohemia or Moravia should be sent to: Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, Archivni Sprava, Trida dr. Milady Horakove 133, 166 21 Prague 6, Czechoslovakia.

If the person being researched resided at the time in question in Slovakia, requests should be sent to: Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic, Department of Archives, Krizkova 7, 811 04 Bratislava, Czechoslovakia.

(For further details see: AVOTAYNU, Vol.VI, No.3, Fall 1990)

New JGS in Canada

The Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada Inc. has decided to establish a Jewish Genealogical Institute; as the Montreal JGS is no longer active, this will be the second society in Canada. In its recent press release it was stressed that the main focus of the new Society will be to bridge the generations, to trace our roots and to maintain our heritage. Dr. Rolf Lederer, current president of the JGS of Canada, Toronto Division, will be the guest speaker at a meeting in Winnipeg in early in 1991.

New Members:

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:
Dr. Stephen Bernstein and Mr. Glenn Rubinoff, both of Toronto.

Mazal Tov!

Congratulations to the editors of LINEAGE, the newsletter of Long Island, for winning first place in Class I (less than 300 members) in the 1989 National Genealogical Society Newsletter Competition.
A review of literature pertaining to the history of Toronto's Jews reveals more names of residents buried at Pape in the early years. According to the "Jewish Yearbook 1939" as well as Stephen Speisman's entry for Judas G. Joseph in "The Canadian Dictionary of Biography", the young son of Mr. Joseph, Eli Simeon or Simeon Alfred, was buried in the early 1850's. In 1857, his father was laid to rest.

According to a pamphlet published by the Canadian Jewish Congress in 1957, the 1850 grave of Catharine, the wife of Alfred Braham the clothier, "is the earliest Jewish grave in Toronto marked by a tombstone." After her death, possibly from cholera, her husband returned to England.

Various sources indicate that, like Judas G. Joseph, fate gave the other original purchaser of the Pape cemetery reason to mourn there within a few years of its establishment. The daughter of Abraham and Fanny Nordheimer died and was buried at Pape in 1855. Some years later, Abraham gave up his interest in the family music business and returned with his wife to Germany, where he died in 1862.

(Genealogists with an interest in Toronto's Jewish history may delight to discover, as I did, that two of the most prominent Jewish families of Toronto were united in marriage. The obituary for Abraham Nordheimer that appeared in the Globe in February 1862 revealed that his wife was the sister of Julius and Marcus Rossin, whose fabulous and famous hotel at the corner of King and York Streets was destroyed in a monumental conflagration the following year. Apparently Rossin was originally Rosenthal.)

Each tombstone tells a story, but sometimes obituary notices fill in the sad details. Near the south fence, a tombstone reveals that 21-year-old Morris Itsikzohn lost his life in August 1901 "by an elevator accident." An account in the Toronto Star indicated that he was "fatally injured while attempting to jump out of an elevator in the building at Spadina and King Streets... this morning at 10:30, his funeral was attended by his friends, who paid all expenses, and followed the carriage from Undertaker McCabe's to Pape Avenue cemetery, where Rabbi Jacobs conducted the service."

The Pape Avenue Cemetery was in continuous use through the late 1940's, but perhaps no funeral attracted more mourners than that of the above-mentioned Lewis Samuel, who died in Victoria, B.C. while returning from a visit to his married daughter (Florence Goodman) in San Francisco. Upon being returned to Toronto, his body rode in a carriage to the cemetery at the head of a funeral procession that was one and a half miles in length.

[This the first in a series of articles by Bill Gladstone on the history of the Jewish community of Toronto.]

The new babies...

The old uncle had insisted that he was going to be the one who should register our new-born twins at the registry office. "Uncle Moishe, did you remember to register them with the names we had chosen?" we asked on his return. "Noo, of course", said uncle in his 'old country' accent. "I told dem, de daughter is Denise and de son is de Nephew."

Computer Genealogy

The latest news in a series of innovative measures in genealogical computing was recently announced by Bernard I. Koucel, president of PRODIGY, a US $ 9.95-a-month computer service with many features such as mailbox and genealogy bulletin board.

The PRODIGY MAILBOX lets one send and receive messages from other members all over the country: messages arrive at their destination within minutes. A Jewish Genealogy bulletin is part of the service.

As this is an US operation it is hoped that Canada will eventually be linked to the service and more will hopefully be reported in SHEM TOV in the near future.

* * *

Ori6en – a new lineage linked genealogical research tool for use with IBM compatible personal computers has recently been introduced by a Canadian company in British Columbia.

In addition to the usual capabilities of other genealogical software packages, Ori6en features one capability to dynamically trace inherited traits (clinical or visual), another feature can inform the user if two people have a blood line relationships. This software programme will be GEDCOM compatible and sells for only $49.99! (A trial pack is available for $5.00.) TERRETT SYSTEMS, 1257 Nestor St., Coquitlam, B.C., V3E 1H4, Canada. Tel. (604) 464-7686

THE CLEVELAND KOL, Vol.4, No.4

Research in Hollan

In the CENTRAAL BUREAU VOOR GENEALOGIE, founded in 1945, most of the private and State owned collections have been brought together and made available to amateur and professional genealogists. These collections include:

The document section:

- the registration cards of all the municipal population registers for each person deceased in the Netherlands since 1939 (these cards give all the relevant data about the person concerned, his or her parents, marriages(s) and children;
- millions of newspaper cuttings, so-called family announcements about births, marriages and deaths (from ca. 1795 up to now);

The genealogical library:

- thousands of family histories, genealogical compilations, monographs, yearbooks and periodicals, both Dutch and foreign;

The records section:

- card indexes, microfilms and copies of thousands of registers of births or baptisms, marriages and deaths in the Netherlands, the former Dutch East and West Indies and German border areas;
- copies of 19th century lists of Dutch emigrants.

Inquiries regarding fees for research facilities by mail may be sent to: CENTRAAL BUREAU VOOR GENEALOGIE, P.O. Box 11755, 2502 at The Hague, Netherlands.

* * *

"The first part of our lives are ruined by our parents, the second half by our children..." - Clarence Darrow
The Origin of the Jews of South Africa

The first recorded European contact with Southern Africa was that of the 15th century Portuguese explorers. Bartholomeu Diaz was the first to circumnavigate the southernmost tip of Africa in 1487. A decade later, Vasco da Gama sailed around the Cape of Good Hope, passed what is now known as Natal (X-mas in Portuguese) on X-mas day in 1497 and reached India in May 1498. During the next century and a half many ships sailed this newly discovered sea route, obtaining fresh water at several places on the Cape coast and leaving mail, under what are now termed Post Office stones.

In 1652, the Dutch, under Jan van Riebeck, established the first victualling station on the sub-continent, at Cape Town. Essentially fresh vegetables were grown to counteract scurvy, to which many sailors succumbed on the long journey to the East. The settlement grew and expanded and before long several towns were established, within a short distance from Cape Town. By the end of the 18th century there was a fair sized Dutch community established at the south-western tip of Africa.

In 1795, British troops defeated the small Dutch garrison and laid claim to the entire region. British rule, with the exception of the years 1803 - 1806 (when the Dutch took over again briefly), became firmly established and continued until the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910. The 19th century consisted of great expansions into the north west of the hinterland. The original Dutch settlers were joined by a large number of French Huguenots, and they are the ancestors of today's predominantly 'Afrikaans' speaking Afrikaners. The British of course encouraged migration of Englishmen and a large influx occurred, starting in 1820. It was inevitable that clashes between the two cultures should occur, as a result of which large numbers of Dutch speaking settlers migrated inland in 1837 and established new towns. Clashes also occurred between these pioneers and the black tribes they encountered.

By the end of the 19th century four territories had been proclaimed, the Cape, Natal, Transvaal and the Orange Free State. After the Anglo-Boer War, these four territories became the Union of South Africa. The discovery of diamonds in 1860 and gold in the 1870's were primarily responsible for a large influx into the northern areas.

Israel Abrahams in "The Birth of a Community", (1) states, "Jewish astronomers, cartographers, navigators and travellers made an indispensable contribution to the voyages of explorations which led to the discovery of the Cape of Storms (Cape of Good Hope); Jewish ships and money helped to equip the expeditions; Jewish sailors, pilots and interpreters accompanied the great Portuguese voyagers, and were among the first to set foot on Africa's tip."

Dr. Siegfried Frankel was the first practising Jew to settle at the Cape of Good Hope, arriving in 1808. Among the 1820 settlers there was a handful of Jews. The first organized Jewish congregation was formed on September 26th, 1841, (the eve of Yom Kippur 5602) when 17 individuals gathered for services at the home of Benjamin Norden (an English "1820-settler"). The original worshippers were all of English, German or Dutch descent. They included Dr. Siegfried Frankel, Simeon Marcus, Samuel Rodolf (from the U.S.) David Canstatt, Morris Sioman, Abraham Horn, Nathan Moss, Adolph Gordon, Morris Hart and Lewis Marcus. Later luminaries included Nathan Birkenruth, Joseph Mosenthal (and his brothers Julius and Adolph), Gabriel Kilian, R.J. Joseph (who performed the first circumcision in the colony on his infant son), Aaron de Pass, S.L. Bensusan, and A. Wolff. The first spiritual leader was Rev. Isaac Pulver (1840 - 1851) who came from Cheltenham, England. He was succeeded by Rev. Joel Rabinowitz, who served from 1859 for 23 years. Rabinowitz was born in Lublin where he attended Yeshuvah before immigrating to England at the age of 24. After holding a post in Birmingham he came to Cape Town at the age of 31. Apart from Cape Town, congregations had also been established in Grahamstown (1843), Graaf Reinet (before 1858), Port Elizabeth (1857), and Aliwal North (1860). Rabinowitz was the only Jewish clergyman on the whole sub-continent until 1872.

The 1870s and 1880's witnessed the arrival of a large number of East European Jews, attracted by the discovery of diamonds and gold. A temporary congregation was established in 1871, called the Griqualand West Jewish Association - the forerunner of the Kimberley Hebrew Congregation. Rev. Joel Rabinowitz ministered to this fledgling community from the Cape Town pulpit, served as Minister in Kimberley for a number of years. He was also present in Johannesburg at the inception of the "Witwatersrand Goldfields Jewish Association" in 1887, subsequently transformed into the Witwatersrand Hebrew Congregation (in 1888) - the first synagogue in the Transvaal.

Rabinowitz was followed by the Rev. A. F. Ornstein, who was appointed in 1882 and who served until 1894. This period heralded the beginning of the arrival of large numbers of refugees from Eastern Europe (including the Old Russian Empire, Galicia and Romania). The influx continued until the outbreak of the First World War. The immigrants of the previous decade had been mostly 'fortune seekers" and were still mainly, with few exceptions, of British, German and Dutch origin. They were "Anglicized" in speech and outlook. The new immigrants (post 1880) were predominantly Yiddish speaking from Volhynia, Podolia, Kiev, Grodno, Vilna, Suwalki and Courland. Compared to the immigration to the rest of the world, only a tiny fraction came to South Africa. A relatively small number of refugees came from Romania and Galicia. The bulk of immigrants, however, were Lithuanian Jews from Vilna, Grodno and Kovno and smaller centres like Kurshan, Ponevezz, Fielovo, Yanishik, Shavli and Plungyan. The new settlers became pedlars (smous, tocher), petty traders and artisans. They ventured with their wares into the interior. Ultimately, they helped to establish new towns such as De Aar (the brothers Isaac and Wulf Friedlander), and Gries (Maurice Eilenberger). One of the most flourishing new towns was Oudshoorn, a centre for ostrich feathers, which attracted a large Jewish element - from Shavli and Kelm. Soon rival congregations were formed with very different religious philosophies, but the adherence to traditional Jewish values earned the community the title of 'Jerusalem of South Africa". (contin'd on page 6)
Eventually, the newcomers established their own participation of his congregants in every phase of civic and national life. He had to contend with continual immigrations, except for a small group from Frankfurt am Main, who immigrated, chiefly from Poland, and during the thirties from Germany (between 5,000 and 10,000). Most of these immigrants were absorbed into the existing communities except for a small group from Frankfurt am Main, who established, in Johannesburg, their own independent congregation, Adath Yeshurun.

After the Second World War, a dramatic reversal started. South African Jewry was always staunchly Zionist, so it was hardly surprising that after 1948 a few made Aliyah, followed by a fairly substantial number that emigrated to Israel over the next forty years. In the 60’s South African Jews also emigrated to the U.K. and the United States. Over the years the Jewish communities were also being established in the Transvaal (notably Johannesburg), in the Orange Free State and in Natal (Durban).

Following the First World War, there was further immigration, chiefly from Poland, and during the thirties from Germany (between 5,000 and 10,000). Most of these immigrants were absorbed into the existing communities except for a small group from Frankfurt am Main, who established, in Johannesburg, their own independent congregation, Adath Yeshurun. The fourth spiritual leader of the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation was the Reverend A. P. Bender who was appointed in 1895 and who served until 1937. He was the son of a former Minister of the Dublin Hebrew Congregation and obtained his M.A. from Cambridge University. His ministry was punctuated by rapid communal growth and participation of his congregants in every phase of civic and national life. He had to contend with continual immigrations, and especially during the Anglo-Boer War, to serve also those refugees from the mining towns. Virtually every new congregation that was established from 1895 - 1935 in the Cape Province, had him officiating at the opening.

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During the 1960’s and 1970’s the Jewish community was augmented by co-religionists migrating from Kenya, Zaire, Zimbabwe and Zambia. Following the Second World War, S.A. Jewry reached its peak, with a total population of 120,000. Today the population is estimated at between 100,000 and 110,000, approximately 25,000 Israelis have replaced those S.A. Jews who have migrated elsewhere.

(1.) "The Birth of a Community" (1955) Israel Abrahams. Published by the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation. The late Rabbi I. Abrahams was Rabbi of the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation, 11937 - 1968. He was also Chief Rabbi of the Cape Province and South West Africa and Professor of Hebrew, University of Cape Town.

I have relied heavily on this work, in compiling this article.

R. L.

* * *

Survey on South African Jewish Emigration

Toronto has been chosen as the Canadian centre for the five-country international survey on S.A. Jewish emigration and identity. The Toronto component of the study, currently underway, is headed by the husband and wife research team of Stuart and Joan Schoenfeld. The research is being conducted under the auspices of T.J.C., supported by the Secretary of State for Multiculturalism. Other centres participating in the comparative research are Jerusalem, Los Angeles, London and Sydney. The international project director is Prof. Sally Frankenthal, director of the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies at the University of Cape Town, 7700 Stellenbosch, Republic of South Africa.

The research project’s community liaison, Alan Sandler, was instrumental in getting the Canadian component of the research centre in Toronto. “The ultimate aim of the project is to bring together the rich and complex story of S.A. Jews from around the world. Joan Schoenfeld, the project’s coordinator and principal of the Downtown Jewish Community School of Toronto, has been building a Toronto area South African Jewish population list for the past year, now totalling 1,200 families from which a random sample of 350 will be interviewed. The project’s director, Stuart Schoenfeld, professor of sociology and Jewish studies at York University, emphasizes, “All interviews, lasting about an hour, will be totally confidential. Results will be deposited with Toronto Jewish Congress/Toronto Jewish Congress Ontario Region Archives, where names will remain confidential for a minimum of 30 years.”

The aims of the study are:

- To document the reasons for emigration of S.A. Jews.
- To examine the significance of, and chart any changes in, the migrants’ Jewish identity after emigration.
- To record the expectations of immigrants regarding their “new” country and to document the extent to which these have been fulfilled.
- To contribute to the study of patterns of Jewish adaptation and integration throughout the world.

Canadian Jewish News, Aug. 23, 1990

Schneidemühl

Did your ancestors come from SCHNEIDEMÜHL? (formerly in the province of Posen or Grenzmark Westpreussen, - since 1945 known as PILA, in Poznan province, Western Poland).

Networking – exchange of information and genealogical data on this region, once known as “Prussia’s most Jewish province”, would be most welcome.

As a result of his ongoing research into the eight generations of the Simonstein family, Peter Cullman has amassed a fair sized collection of documents, extracts of names of Jewish citizens from civil records 1874-1941, as well as a cemetery list of Schneidemühl, now indexed by name and date, spanning the period 1854-1933, rescued by a cousin before immigrating to Chile. Several photographs of the cemetery are part of the collection. The cemetery was totally destroyed by the Germans in 1939, the local now houses the city’s police headquarters...

Inquiries, with S.A.S.E. only, to: Peter Cullman, 99 Yorkville Ave., Toronto, Ont., M5R 3K5, Canada
Fascinating reading and essential to Jewish genealogy... 

This is another in a new series of columns, - retrieved, correlated and translated from this veritable mine of information: "Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft fur Judische Familienforschung". Though more than six decades have passed since a group of dedicated scholars in Berlin, headed by Dr. A. Czellitzer, began the study of genealogy in all earnest, - there is essentially nothing new in our quest - we still search for the origin and meaning of our names, the answers may only sometimes be forgotten...

Throughout the fourteen years of that quarterly publication, members were invited to submit questions and answers, and as we may see from time to time, - the published answers were enlightening, though occasionally confusing and not always totally satisfactory...


Where does the family name PICK originate and what is the meaning of the name?

S. R. Dr. Pick, Beuthen


The family name PICK already known in Prague 1600. In Berlin Wolf Pick, father-in-law of Jesaja Berlin (son Mochiach and grandson of Mordechai Mochiach), who called himself after his father-in-law Jesaja Pick, later as Rabbi of Breslau also known as Jesaja Breslau. Pick is in my opinion from Picard, abbreviated Pik, Pick or from the Piquardy, Pikardie, abbreviated Pick.

Dr. H. Flesh

Answer Nr. 2/Vol. VI, No. 2, 1930.

My presumption that PICK is a derivation of the Czech word BYK (= Ox) is born out by the name of the village Pickau, Czech: Bykov, near Jagerndorf.

Hans Hirsch, Vienna

Answer Nr. 3/Vol. VI, No. 3, 1930.

The Slavic word BYK (= Ox) must be derived from the Hebrew SCHOR (= Ox), especially if Polish origin is suspected... According to Deutron. 33,7 "bechor schor" becomes an epithet for the name Joseph, thus the medieval exeget Josef bechor schor; the family Efraim Salman Schor later carries the epithet, hence the family name Schor, translated into Polish BYK, BICK, but also Steer, Ox (as well as OCHS, OCHSER).

Heinrich Flesch, Dолнi Kounice

"Jerusalem of Lithuania"

...an agency for internal Jewish travel, opened a year ago in Vilnius. This new industry of tours to Jewish sites in Lithuania, thriving under the permission of perestroika, is helping Jews from cities across the U.S.S.R. discover their roots. Nearly 1000 Russian tourists have come to see the sites of some of Jewish history's most famous synagogues and yeshivot, including Telz and Volozhin. Their itinerary is one that agency director, Leonid Berger, has been informally showing acquaintances for the past 20 years, when repressive Soviet policies would not permit such tours. Mr. Berger, a former physics teacher now visiting Jerusalem and studying at the Shvut Ami Centre for Soviet Jews, explains that in the absence of guidebooks and historical publications on Jewish Lithuania, he compiled background material himself by interviewing old people in Vilnius.

In the U.S.S.R., Mr. Berger has also been instrumental in the re-establishing of the Russian branch of the international Maccabee Society, dormant since the revolution in 1917, - he is now the society's secretary.
SHEM TOV, the quarterly newsletter, published by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto, is free to members; single and back issues cost $4.00. Membership fees are $25.00 per calendar year. The Society was founded in 1985 and has currently over 60 members. Meetings are held September to June, usually on the last Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 470 Glencairn Avenue, Toronto; notices of meetings are also announced in the Canadian Jewish News (Miriam Herman Column). Guests are always welcome.

The goals of the Society are to promote an awareness among the Jewish community of the possibility of tracing their ancestors, to foster an ongoing interest in our heritage, to encourage the sharing of research techniques and to disseminate information on Jewish genealogical research to family historians and professional genealogists alike.

SHEM TOV is dedicated to publish articles of personal research experiences, inform its members of new and tried pertinent research sources and act as part of a growing international network for experienced family historians and beginning genealogists.

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