The city of Theresienstadt is located in northern Bohemia about 40 miles from Prague. It was built as a fortress by the Austrian Emperor Josef II in the late 18th century and named after his mother, the Empress Maria Theresia. The city is a star-shaped fortress with double layers of embankments, each several yards thick, surrounded by moats and divided by the channel of the former flooding system. The purpose of this fortress was to protect Northern Bohemia from the Prussians.

Around 1880 the fortress was decommissioned but Theresienstadt remained a garrison town. The city consists of about 220 houses and 14 large military barracks.

In 1918 the Austro-Hungarian Empire came to an end, and between the two world wars the Czechoslovak army maintained a garrison of about 3,000 soldiers in Theresienstadt, which then became known as Terezin. Together with the civilian population, including a small Jewish community, 7,000 people lived there. When the Germans occupied the Sudetenland in September 1938, the German border was just a few miles away. The end of the Czechoslovak state came in March 1939, when the Germans invaded Bohemia and Moravia and incorporated the two Czech provinces into the Greater German Reich as the so-called "Protectorate", while Slovakia was set up as a satellite state of Germany.

In the Protectorate there lived about 120,000 Jews, one quarter of them refugees from Germany and Austria. By the middle of 1939 most avenues of escape were closed and the few pipelines to freedom were already jammed by desperate German and Austrian Jews.

The Czech immigration quota, under U.S. laws then in existence, was only 2,700 persons per annum, and under the White Paper of May 1939 the British Government severely restricted the immigration of Jews to Palestine. Canada, as is well known, closed its doors completely, as did many other countries. It is estimated, however, that about 26,000 Jews managed to emigrate from the Protectorate between March 1939 and the fall of 1941, when all emigration from German-occupied territory came to an end and the wearing of the yellow Star of David became obligatory.

In October of 1939 several thousand Czech Jews were deported to the Lublin area of occupied Poland. The aim was to establish a Jewish "Reservation" in this area for resettlement of Central European Jews, but this project was soon abandoned and some of the surviving deportees were sent back. Others escaped across the nearby Soviet border.

Among the deportees was Jakob Edelstein, one of the leading Zionists and a senior official of the Jewish Community of Prague. His trip to Poland had convinced him that relocation of the Czech Jewish Community to Poland should be avoided at all costs. About this time the Jewish Community leaders in Prague were informed by the Germans that the Jews of the Protectorate would be segregated from the Gentile population. The community leaders agreed to search for a suitable location in the Protectorate; several suggestions were submitted but all were rejected by the German authorities, who eventually chose Theresienstadt.

In October of 1939 the Chief of Police of Prague issued orders for the deportation of 5,000 Czech Jews to the East. Under these circumstances it seemed to the Jewish leaders that Theresienstadt provided their only hope. Plans were drawn up and submitted to the SS, providing for an elaborate administrative apparatus. The Nazis appointed Jakob Edelstein as head of the Council of Elders with Otto Zucker, former President of the Brno Community and a brilliant engineer, as his deputy. The new camp commander was a 29-year old SS Captain from Vienna named Siegfried Seidl.
The first Jewish construction groups, totalling several thousand, arrived in Theresienstadt by the beginning of December 1941. By the end of December about 7,350 were living there.

During the first half of 1942 over 50,000 mostly Czech Jews arrived in Theresienstadt. In June of that year the remainder of the gentle Czech population was expelled from Theresienstadt and this allowed the Germans to open the way to new waves of deportations, this time from Germany and Austria. The first reports appeared in the German press in the summer of 1942. The Fuehrer had magnanimously "presented" a city to the Jews. It became apparent that only certain Jews would benefit from the Fuehrer's generosity. The German and Austrian elderly were encouraged to sign over their remaining assets to the SS, who pledged to take care of them for the rest of their lives.

In Germany many elderly Jews readily signed up. In Austria, however, the Nazis did not bother with such fine points, perhaps because of the more virulent anti-Semitism on the part of a large proportion of the local population.

Apart from the elderly, other categories included Jewish war veterans who had earned high decorations for bravery or who had suffered severe injuries in World War I. It is interesting to note that nearly 3,000 war veterans met these stringent requirements. There were also German, Austrian, and Czech half-Jews; special situations came up continuously and Theresienstadt provided a solution. And there were, of course, the "Prominenten": many famous personalities from the theatre and movies, musicians such as the conductor of the Royal Danish Symphony, the former concertmaster of Holland’s Concert Gebouw Orchestra, the former concertmaster of the Czech National Symphony, and many well-known violinists, pianists, singers, etc., from German-occupied Europe.

There were also numerous "Prominenten" from such fields as medicine, science and industry. There were relatives of famous...
personalities, among them the granddaughter of Franz Liszt, the sister of Franz Kafka, the divorced wife of Heinrich Mann (and the ex-sister in law of his brother Thomas). There were 20 rabbis led by Leo Baeck.

From Vienna came Robert Stricker, a co-founder of the World Jewish Congress; Trude Neumann, the daughter of Theodor Herzl; Adolfine Freud, one of the sisters of Sigmund Freud, and others. There were also persons who had held positions such as the Prime Minister of the German State of Saxony, Vice Governor of Indonesia, French Cabinet Minister, Mayor of Le Havre, President of the Dutch Red Cross, Surgeon General of the Dutch Army Vice-Fieldmarshal of the Imperial Austrian army, two generals of the same army, Minister of Justice in the Czechoslovak government, and others.

After the Vienna and Berlin Jewish communities had been liquidated, their employees arrived in Theresienstadt during 1942. In June 1943 200 employees of the Berlin Jewish Community, together with 300 patients from the Jewish Hospital, left Berlin for Theresienstadt.

By spring of 1942 various workshops such as locksmithing, machine repairs, carpentry, glassmaking, house painting, shoe making and leather working were in operation. Some workshops began turning out leather boots, uniforms, lampshades, and even toys for the Germans; others focused on producing goods for the community. Some people worked outside of town tilling fields and tending animals for the SS, which maintained a large farm. Several hundred women were employed splitting feldspar, a task which required a very delicate touch.

The Jewish administration set up a burial department, which served as a cover for the rabbinate; the head was Sigmund Unger, former Chief Rabbi of Brno, assisted by two other rabbis. This trio also held a Rabbinical court which performed 357 marriages in 1942 and 1943, granted divorces, and was in charge of Jewish religious activities. It is less known that there were also Jews who had converted to Christianity in Theresienstadt: 1,130 "Catholics" and 830 "Protestants." Both groups formed congregations.

The Catholic Jews found a Jewish monk from Vienna as their religious leader, and the Protestants organized their congregation under the former Hamburg Judge Arthur Goldschmidt. It is interesting to note that these two group got along very well together. It is said that the ecumenical movement which came to the fore after the war showed itself first in Theresienstadt, a Jewish ghetto.

The most powerful political force was organized by the Zionists, who occupied many of the leading positions in the administration. Their disguised list had about 6,000 members under a file entitled "Interested in Jewish Lectures." The young Zionists, together with the communists, established a secret 200-man self-defense force. They set up an illegal radio to regularly monitor BBC broadcasts. In this way they heard about the gas chambers in Poland, but most refused to believe these reports.

With the arrival of very large numbers of Jews from all over Central Europe, the overcrowding in an area a little over 700 yards long and 500 yards wide was extraordinary. Sanitary conditions were primitive and the food supply inadequate. The Jewish administration established an elaborate medical service staffed by over 600 physicians and many nurses from the now closed Jewish hospitals. With the arrival of so many elderly persons the number of sick people increased dramatically, so did the death rate; between June 1942 and May 1943, 24,106 people died. This tended to reduce the congestion somewhat. Another factor was the start of the deportations to the East. These started as early as January 9, 1942, with 1,000 Jews leaving for Riga.

In 1942 alone nearly 44,000 persons were sent to the East, mostly to the Polish ghettos, but about 12,000 went to Maly Trostinec (a death camp near Minsk) and about 8,000 ended up at Treblinka. The Jewish administration had to make these selections under the order of the SS. The Jews of Theresienstadt did not know of the fate that awaited them, and there were even volunteers who did not want their family to be split up. Elder persons with foreign citizenships and some of the "Prominenten" were excluded from the earlier transports, but starting in the fall of 1942 the elderly were sent off too; 3,500 persons over 61 years of age left along with 2,000 younger people, many of them voluntarily accompanying their aged parents or loved ones.

Between the middle of 1942 and September 1944 the population of the ghetto fluctuated between 28,000 and 53,000. Thousands came, left, and died. However, during this period cultural activities reached their high point. The Jewish administration with the consent of the Germans established a cultural department. It is beyond the scope of this article to go into details, but it is the musical field which is mostly remembered. There were several orchestras in Theresienstadt, some with a mixed choir. Several operas (the Bartered Bride, The Marriage of Figaro, The Magic Flute and others) were adapted for concert performance. However, not all music came from the outside; there is a list of 50 works known to have been composed in the ghetto.

E. Ledec, former concertmaster of the Czech Philharmonic, formed "The Doctors Quartet" and other ensembles followed, culminating in 1943 with the formation of a 40-member string orchestra. With the arrival of the Viennese, several cabaret groups came into existence. Theatrical activities started with poetry reading in Czech and German. Later German classical plays were performed such as Lessing's "Nathan the Wise" and Goethe's "Faust." The Czechs presented a number of plays, some of them written in Theresienstadt. One Czech group dramatized a series of Yiddish stories including Sholem Aleichem's "Tales of Tevya the Milkman" a forerunner of the musical "Fiddler on the Roof." Poetry readings and lectures were very popular. There were as many as 70 to 80 lectures a week, and the subjects ranged from the philosophy of Nietzsche to selections from "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey." Rabbi Leo Baeck, who became the most popular lecturer, referred to Theresienstadt as a small university.

With the landing of the Western allies in France and the approaching Red Army, the SS seemingly began to have second thoughts about the value of the model ghetto. Starting in September 1944 nearly 18,000 mostly younger men between 18 and 55 were sent to Auschwitz, where most of them perished. The population of the ghetto dropped from 29,000 to 11,000. As a result of the deportations, the remaining population consisted now mostly of elderly people, women, and children. With most:
The leadership gone, the Germans appointed the controversial Rabbi Murmelstein as chief elder.

With the advance of the Red army, many concentration camps in the East were overrun, Auschwitz among them. However, in the area still occupied by the Germans, the deportations to Theresienstadt continued to the very end. A transport of 45 persons from Western Germany reached Theresienstadt on March 13; 139 persons from Prague arrived on March 16. Bratislava was captured by the Russians on April 4, but the last transport from Slovakia reached Theresienstadt on April 7. The final transport, consisting of 77 persons, arrived from Vienna on April 15, two days after the fall of the city to the Russians. In February 1945 after negotiations between Swiss politicians and SS leader Himmler, 1,200 Jews were allowed to leave for Switzerland. On arrival at the border they were told that in the name of the Fuehrer they were to remove their yellow stars.

The Red Cross had for some time pressed the Germans to allow an inspection of the camp, and this finally occurred on April 6, 1945. The SS made careful preparations: walls were whitewashed, flower beds were planted, the offices of the Council of Elders were refurbished and some files of the Jewish administration were destroyed. The Red Cross officials were only allowed to meet with Murmelstein in the presence of the camp commander. They inquired about the deportations to the East and were told that only about 18,000 had been sent to Auschwitz to expand facilities there. On April 15, 1945, a convoy of white buses flying the Swedish flag arrived to pick up the 466 Danish Jews who had been sent to Theresienstadt in October of 1943. They had been exempted from deportation to the East and had received food parcels from the Danish government.

Between April 20 and May 6, 1945, about 15,000 Jews arrived in Theresienstadt; they were the survivors of various concentration and labour camps. The last of the SS left during the first days of May. On May 3, 1945, M. Dunant of the International Red Cross placed the ghetto under its protection. With the arrival of thousands of emaciated and sick former concentration-camp inmates, a typhus epidemic broke out.

On May 11 medical units of the Red Army entered Theresienstadt. Its 52 doctors with 72 nurses and 214 aides and auxiliaries worked hard to bring the epidemic under control. They deloused thousands, set up six hospitals and placed the entire ghetto under quarantine. These drastic measures soon showed their effect and new new typhus cases dropped; by June 13 the epidemic was ended. About 3,000 are known to have contracted the disease and 500 died, including 15 doctors, 15 nurses, and 13 employees of the delousing station. As soon as the quarantine restrictions were eased by the Russians, the exodus began.

The first to leave were the Czech Jews, but soon afterwards buses provided by the occupation authorities began returning German Jews to their former home towns. On August 10, 600 persons left by train for Berlin and some of the Austrians went back to Vienna. Some 700 German and Austrian Jews who refused to return to their former homes were sent to a camp at Deggendorf, near Munich. The Joint Distribution Committee received permission from the British government to fly 1,000 children to England, 428 persons left for France, and 500 Polish Jews were enabled to go to Palestine. The OSS (the forerunner of the CIA) had received in early May the order to rescue Leo Baecck, but he refused to leave until the end of June when the typhus epidemic was over and when only a few thousand Jews were left.

By mid-August only a handful of Jews remained in Theresienstadt, and the Czech authorities began preparations for the return of the civilian population. By the fall of 1945, Theresienstadt had reverted to its previous status as a small garrison town.

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BEIT THERESIENSTADT

Mr.Henry Wellisch
President of the Jewish Genealogical Society
POBox 446,Station A,North York,Ont.

Dear Mr.Wellisch,

thank you for your letter from Dec.25.1993.
We are glad to hear that you are going to publish an article on Theresienstadt and of course you can give Beit Terezin as a resource.
We have a nearly complete index of all persons who passed through or stayed in Theresienstadt at the end of the war. The cards vary according to place of origin, the most complete contain the name, date of birth, last address, transport numbers and date of death in Th.
We shall gladly supply information on persons who were in the ghetto. We ask to supply as many details as possible-the name of the person at the time, date of birth, last address, country of origin etc. as many names repeat themselves many times. We are sending a copy of the card and a page with the data and explanation. We are in the middle of a vast project to put all the index on computer and when we finish we shall be able to send a print of the information.
We shall have to ask for a contribution for the information as our only financial resource are the annual dues of our members.
Enclosed you shall find a leaflet in 3 languages with information about Terezin and Beit Terezin.
When the article appears we would like to get a copy.

Sincerely yours

Ailesh Schiller

Beth Theresienstadt at Kibbutz Givath Chaim Ichud was erected in memory of the Jews of the ghetto who perished.
At some stage in the family historian’s pursuit of genealogical data, there comes a time when the growing files, expanding computer disks and shoe boxes of photographs bring the collector to an important crossroad in the project.

For many of us, the process of discovery, collection of material and even global family reunions is enough. However, for a small, but growing number, there is a desire to publish the family history beginning with the earliest known roots in a town or village across the ocean in a place that is often difficult to pronounce and perhaps was once even difficult to locate on a map.

With the increasing ease of computer programs for self-publishing, more and more family historians are writing and publishing their family histories. While these memoirs are of specific interest to the family members, the family stories and local events described so eloquently are similar to those many of us have heard from our own ancestors.

My first introduction to such a saga was The Journeys of David Tochack as retold by his granddaughter, Carol Malkin, published in 1981 by Schoken Books. David Tochack was born in 1875, the same year as my grandmother, and I have visited many of the places shown on the map on page two of his book. As I read the book for the first time, many thoughts went through my mind -- foremost, the wish that someone in my family had documented our family history as thoroughly and personally.

The book’s jacket includes several testimonials, but the one which most mirror my views was written by Howard Fast, Author of The Immigrants, who states “An absorbing tale for all who love stories rich with unforgettable characters -- a true story that recreates the world that I. B. Singer describes in his novels.”

Many years ago in researching my own roots, I still remember my surprise in discovering that my grandmother had two brothers with many descendants -- all news to my branch of the family! In eventually meeting most of these newly discovered relatives, one cousin, Miriam Gannes, was to become particularly close to me. We are second cousins (my grandmother and her grandfather were sister and brother). Her husband, Abraham Gannes, was born in Winograd, a small shtetl in Ukraine. Since my first contact with Abe and Miriam, I have followed the progress of Abe’s interest in family history and his decision to put it in writing. With the publication of Childhood in a Shtetl, Gannes has fulfilled a promise to himself and provided an in-depth portrait into the historical events affecting the Jews of Eastern Europe during those terrible times of pogroms and persecution.

Gannes is an active participant in this history and along with the illustrations, photographs and hand-drawn maps, he recreates the world of the shtetl in a way that we all can understand and relate to. Through these childhood memories, we learn the importance of the extended family, the means by which people eked out a living, the education of the boys and the role of the girls and women. The author describes a close and cohesive community, who life revolved around the Sabbath and the festivals of the Jewish calendar. Although Childhood in a Shtetl describes specific events related to Winograd, it could have been any shtetl or the shtetl of all Jews. The book is available from Ganton Books, 10821 Northford Drive, Cupertino, California 95014.

Several years ago, I was contacted by Isidore Myers of Newport Beach, California, requesting guidance in documenting his roots in Wlodawa, Poland, a town quite close to the present Ukraine border. In 1992, after a two and one-half years of full-time commitment to the project, Myers sent me a copy of Remember: A Book to Honor the Family I Never Knew.

When Myers traveled to Wlodawa in mid-1989 for the first time, it resulted in a soul-searching experience and the commitment to memorialize the 282 members of this family who were killed there during the Holocaust. During a 1990 interview with a newly-discovered relative in Venezuela, a 1936 letter from a family member in Wlodawa was produced which discloses the economic plight of the Jews in Wlodawa and the continuing efforts to process the vital affidavits from relatives abroad necessary for immigration.

What makes Myers’ book different from other books about the Holocaust and different from other published family histories is that Myers traces his family’s roots in Wlodawa from the earliest documented beginnings to the tragic end at the Sobibor death camp, a mere seven kilometers from Wlodawa. The sheer enormity of six million murdered Jews is memorialized through the story of one extended family of 282 who were killed in Wlodawa.

Myers’ unique book is of equal importance to the Holocaust historian as well as the family historian. The 280-page leather-bound volume is available from Isidore C. Myers, 2 Upper Newport Plaza Drive, Newport Beach, CA 92660-2629.

If you are thinking of publishing your family history, Isidore Myers and Abraham Gannes have both produced excellent models and a standard to strive for.

Miriam Weiner is an author and lecturer in the field of Jewish genealogy and Holocaust research. For information on how to research your family history, send a self-addressed stamped envelope with the name of your ancestral town to Miriam Weiner, 136 Sandpiper Key, Secaucus, NJ 07094.

FIND YOUR JEWISH ROOTS
Visits to your shtetl in Poland, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus or Russia
Where do you come from? Stop wondering and start knowing. I will search Russian archives for birth, marriage and death records of your ancestors; interview Jews in the towns they came from; take photos and videos of synagogues, Jewish cemeteries and local sites. I also organize personalized genealogical tours to Eastern Europe.

For information write or call Miriam Weiner, certified genealogist and co-author of the Encyclopedia of Jewish Genealogy (Jason Aronson Publisher), at Routes to Roots, 136 Sandpiper Key, Secaucus, NJ 07094
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SHEM TOV June 1994 7
A Tale of Two Letters (and Several Cities)

Paul Pascal

Two letters, each written in 1951, have in the last two years quadrupled the size of my family on my father's side. One had traveled from Bridgeport, Connecticut to Winnipeg, Canada; the other from Roman, Romania, to New York City. Neither had been responded to when they had been written, and neither had been looked at in decades.

The First Letter

The Pascal family was a small one, or so I had been told. My grandfather, David Pascal, had immigrated to Winnipeg from Tirgu Ocna, Romania, in 1903, and sent for his wife and family a year later. Zeida David was well into her forties by the time my father was born seven years later, and died at seventy. During that short period, questions about the faraway past in a distant land did not really occur much to young Saul. He was very taken up with the new technologies of the modern age, with starting a life and family of his own, and with coping with the Great Depression. His father, too, was preoccupied with eking out a living, and, being already old (by the standards of the day) when my father was born, perhaps did not have the energy to tell many stories about the past.... Now, many years later, it seemed to Saul that his father had had a younger brother, Shloime, who had immigrated to...perhaps Philadelphia. And there was, Saul thought, perhaps another brother...Itzik, was it...in New York.

There were others left in Romania, he believed, but who, where and when, he wasn't sure or didn't know. It was murky, and, as I learned, not always correct. But the bottom line was: there had been little contact between David and his siblings in America or Romania. For all intents and purposes, they had died off. And that was that.

There had been little contact, but there must have been some contact. So it was that when Shloime (now known as Solomon) died--in Brooklyn, not in Philadelphia--in 1951, his daughter found in his effects an address for a relative in Canada, and sent them word of his death. By then, my grandparents had both died, and the letter came instead to my father. Knowing little to nothing about these people, he wrote back asking about them. He was now very interested in learning what he could about his larger family. The response came on a Dictaphone Co. letterhead from Bridgeport, Connecticut. Shloime's daughter, Patrice August, seemed eager to make the connection. But it was not to be. Health issues and other serious considerations conspired to have the letter from Bridgeport relegated to a pile that was not looked at for ten years.

In 1961, my father came across the letter. He was very upset, for he realized that he may have lost his one opportunity to find the rest of the Pascal family. He wrote to Patrice's address in Bridgeport immediately. No response. In desperation, he wrote to the Dictaphone Company. They had no record of her. Though deeply saddened, he had the foresight to file the letter, along with the related correspondence. But there was nothing else that could be done, so he let the matter rest.

Twenty years later, while vacationing in Florida, my father struck up a conversation with a man by the name of Fred Marino. When he learned that Marino was from Bridgeport, my father, ever the optimist, seized the moment and asked if Marino had ever heard of Patrice August. You have to appreciate the odds here. Bridgeport is not a hamlet, and Marino wasn't even Jewish.

The chances that he might know my father's cousin were miniscule. No, said Marino, he did not know Patrice. But...it so happened that Marino was very chummy in Jewish circles, that in fact he was in some way active in a local synagogue! - and that he just happened to know a couple of brothers by the name of August. He would ask them, when he got back to Bridgeport, and let my father know.

Marino was a faithful and thorough detective. He sent my father several letters, each one with a little bit more information. And each one, my father added to his growing file on Patrice August, the cousin he had never met. Even further, the information was not specific enough for the tools at my father's disposal. It was now 1981.

Ten years later, the youngest son of the youngest son of David Pascal took up an interest in his grandfather's life, and in his family history in general. Like every genealogist, I regret not having started earlier in life. Precious stories and information was now lost forever. Nevertheless, by starting when I did, I had incredible tools available for acquiring information which were simply not known about before, if they existed at all. Data bases, easier air travel, microfiches, and an international community of like-minded fanatics who were happy to swap methods and discoveries—all these have entered the public arena only relatively recently. And so, when my father handed me his burgeoning file on Patrice August, I had options.

I learned from the file that Marino's friends, the Augusts, were in fact brothers to Patrice's husband! However, her husband had died, and the brothers had lost contact with her. They believe she had remarried, but didn't know her married name. She had one daughter, June Salow, who was divorced and living on the west coast. Patrice also moved west, they believed, and may have been living in a retirement village, possibly in Camarillo, California. That was all they could tell Marino, and even that was iffy.

I was in a quandry. I had a possible city of residence for Patrice, but no last name; I had a last name for her daughter June, but no city. I decided to chance it and call telephone information in Camarillo, asking for a listing for Patrice August. I knew full well she probably had a new last name, if she was there at all—if indeed she was still alive. They came up with five Augusts in the area, none of them Patrice. I called them any way, hoping they might have heard of her. Nothing. I gave up...for the moment.

Five months later, in the summer of 1992, I was visiting California with my fiancee, and took the opportunity to resume the hunt. My first approach was to pursue the name Salow. At the Los Angeles Public Library, I went through close to two hundred telephone books for Southern California. I found plenty of Salows, all of which I dutifully recorded, but only one J. Salow. I was very excited. It had to be her. I telephoned and brazenly asked for June. The man who answered said there was no one there by that name. I was so stunned that I just said thank you, goodbye, and hung up. After two hundred telephone books, my only real lead had suddenly vanished.

I pulled up my socks and tried a different approach. From the L.A. Library phone books I had learned that one of the Augusts in Camarillo whom I had phoned (to no avail) five months earlier from Toronto, lived in Leisure village.

This had to be Patrice's retirement village, even if this wasn't the right August! I would go there in person. I would speak to this guy face to face—surely Patrice would have bumped into him sometime during her stay there. Surely she would have then said to him. Hey, that used to be my name! Maybe we're related! And surely he would remember all this when he faced me on his doorstep.

Wrong I never got past the front gate. First of all I learned, from the guffawing attendants, that there are 27,000 independent homeowners in Camarillo Leisure Village. In a world where neighbors across the hall in an apartment building don't know each other's names, my fantasy encounter between Patrice and this other August was hopelessly naive. Secondly, they never heard of Patrice August (I can't say I was surprised at that!) Thirdly, no, they wouldn't let me in.

What now? I considered scaling the walls of the Village. Then I considered not scaling the walls of the Village. I chose the latter. Instead, I phoned the local library, to see if old telephone books could help me. I learned that the Camarillo Branch of the Ventura County Library did not save its old telephone books—not in paper form, not on microfilm! They had to be kidding, right? No, there were not.

Next stop: the Hall of Records of Ventura County, in Ventura. As I set out down the road from Camarillo to Ventura, I was aware that the two towns, being in the same county, and being only an eighth of an inch apart on the map, had to be less than ten minutes apart in traveling time. Wrong again. An hour. As a hick brought up in the Canadian midwest, I took exception to that. By the time my research took me up and down that road four times, I really took exception to that. Be that as it may, I was delighted to learn that the Hall of Record held deed records for Camarillo and vicinity on computer and microfilm.

Since I now knew that Leisure Village residents owned their property, I was sure that Patrice had to have taken out a deed that would be recorded here, or, if she gave up her property, that transaction would have to be recorded too. But I had the same problem—no current last name!
Naturally, I found no Patrice under “August”. It occurred to me that there was a slim chance her daughter would have moved nearby. Perhaps she would want to live close to her mother. She would not live in Leisure Village, of course; it’s for retirees—but perhaps elsewhere in or around Camarillo. So out of desperation, I looked up Salow in the Ventura Hall of Records. And I found Salow in the Ventura Hall of Records! I found June A. Salow, selling in 1987 what seemed to be her property in Leisure Village. Surely she hadn’t lived there? Then I see that she co-owns the property. The other co-owner... Patrice S. Jackler! I hit the jackpot! To top it off, the signature of Patrice S. Jackler matched the handwriting in her letter of 1951.


So I drove the hour back to Ventura and its Hall of Records. I had to find out if Patrice was still alive. I was so tantalizingly close. Here she was, alive in 1987, and probably in her late seventies. Ventura showed no death record for her or her daughter. I was relieved, but not done. I drove the hour back to where I was staying, and later back into Los Angeles proper, to check Los Angeles County death records. Thank goodness, no such records for either of them. But I’d had enough driving for one day.

So what do I do now—go back to my two hundred telephone books? I was worn out from that, and besides, I only had half a day left in California. I thought I’d take a long shot. I had to prove to myself that the "J. Salow" lead I’d found among the mountain of phone books in the L.A. Library was indeed a dead end, before I’d really give up on it. I drove out to the San Gabriel Valley. I would make a cold call, knock on the door and see what happens. Who was I kidding? It was 8:30 in the morning and it was the Fourth of July. Who’s awake at this hour? My plane was leaving in four hours.

Suddenly, I noticed music coming from the house. I summoned up my courage and knocked on the door. A young man, probably in his late twenties answered the door. Too young to be a new husband or boyfriend, I surmised. Maybe a son? I was still in my Sherlock Holmes mode. Is this the Salow residence I asked. No, he said bluntly. Are you sure, I persisted, hoping that if I pressed him he would suddenly realize, oh yes, this is the Salow residence. Certainly not, he countered. Uh, do you happen to have a phone book I could look at for a minute? I was going to prove to him that he did indeed live at the Salow residence. He obliged, and brought me out a phone book. I looked up Salow and showed him his address and telephone number next to the name. He was puzzled, all right. Look, he said, my housemate will be back tomorrow. My housemate’s the one who had the phone installed. Maybe he can explain this. I thanked him and left, knowing that "tomorrow" I would be back in Canada, without having found Patrice or her daughter. And so it was.

The next day, I telephoned "the Salow residence", this time from Toronto. J. Salow was, as it turned out, a Judith Salow, the housemate’s former girlfriend, a woman in her twenties. So much for that. I phoned the people who had bought the Leisure Village property from Patrice and June. Yes, they remembered Patrice. Hadn’t seen her for years, though, and had no idea where she lived. So much for that.

I had run out of ideas, but thanks to a recent issued of Avotaynu magazine, I could put one more arrow in my empty quiver. Tracers Worldwide Services in Corpus Christi, Texas, used to be a service for private detectives. Of late, they had given assistance to genealogists for a very reasonable sum. Among other services, they will provide a list of up to a hundred living individuals with a given surname, along with their addresses, telephone numbers, and birth dates (!) for $15. [POB 6951, Zip 78446, Tel. (512) 854-1892]

By now I was too antsy to use the mails. It seemed so critical to be able to make a connection with Patrice or June, if they existed, before the JGS Summer Seminar in New York. It was starting in a week. So I used phone, fax, and credit card (apparently credit card by phone is no longer possible), and decided to hedge my bets by going after the relative who was more likely to be alive.

They found two June Salows! One was in Iowa, and was 29 years old. Scratch that one. The other was in Erie, Pennsylvania, and was about 60. Now that was possible. I imagined that she had gotten fed up with the smog and moved back to her old stomping grounds (I was still under the illusion that her grandfather Shloimo had settled in Philadelphia). One problem: the phone was unlisted.

Incredibly, I was actually prepared to drive down to Erie, and just knock on the door. But before doing that, I thought I should try asking Tracers Worldwide to find her mother, just in case. Now that was a good move. Withing 24 hours I was talking to Patrice Pascal August Jackler, age 82, of Los Angeles, California.
Software Review, Roots IV
by Howard Shidlowsky

The designers and writers of genealogy programs face a tough challenge. How can they add new features while still keeping the program relatively easy to use? Commsoft tackled this challenge by introducing a now-familiar Windows-like interface in Roots IV.

Like all genealogy programs, Roots IV offers the standard functions. You can add, delete and update individuals in your family tree, create links to show how individuals are related, print charts and reports, and import and export data. This rather basic list does not convey the power of this program. You can maintain a separate database for each family you research and move between them without leaving the program. Sources can be cited for virtually everything. Go to the sources screen and select the source you want. The list is extensive and includes such specifically Jewish items as Pages of Testimony.

You can print from an impressive list of charts. The usual family group sheet, ancestor, descendant and ahnentafel charts are here. So are pedigree charts, research logs, relationship lists and family calendars. You can generate registers in the formats used by the New England Historical Society and the National Genealogical Society. If you want to publish a book, the tools are here. You can print the title page, table of contents, the family history in English-language prose complete with footnotes and a bibliography.

Charts can also be indexed. If the ancestor chart you just printed goes on for 12 pages, an index of surnames is a real bonus. Better still, you can combine information from a number of charts and print a single index for all of them. Notes, photographs and documents that have scanned can also be indexed.

I liked the feel of Roots IV but still had complaints.

Widening a window doesn’t display more text. For example, the number of columns displayed in the Individual window is the same no matter how wide the window is. You must still scroll to see the other data columns.

When adding a new source, the program should generate the code. This is the sort of clerical task I bought my computer for. The same holds for linking. In a lineage-linked system such as this, users should only have to create two types of links - parent to child and marriage. Links to sources or other items should be generated by the system. As a user I don’t want to know how or even if this is done.

Including Print and Print Preview on the File menu are Windows standards. However, they make far more sense as options on the chart windows. After all, what else do most of us print if not charts and reports?

The ability to print reports to a file is handy. I tested this on four different printers. The reports look fine but are always preceded by five pages of junk.

An explanation on adding a spouse is missing. I had no trouble inserting my grandfather, father and aunts, yet adding my grandmother was hardly obvious. The method for doing is not clearly explained. Once I understood how to do it, the reasoning left me baffled.

As is now standard in better genealogy programs, Roots IV incorporates a facility to import data from GEDCOM files. But why can’t I create GEDCOM files?

The search capability is quite good even if it always insists that a search for a place is really a search by name. When I searched for Poland at city/town level to check for entries missing both the town and province data, I got a list that included Poland as a country. It was interesting but not what I was looking for.

On a more positive note, the User’s Guide should answer most questions. Try the on-line help first. It is often clearer than the manual. You can easily move to a related topic until you find the information you need.

RECOMMENDATION: Roots IV is a sophisticated package that should only be considered by those who are comfortable with computers and genealogy programs. Consider Roots IV if you are planning on upgrading your software. But remember that it takes time to be comfortable with a sophisticated program like this one. If you have Roots III, upgrade now. Roots IV is much easier to use and you

NEW MEMBERS
The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada would like to welcome these new members.

Stephen Albert
Morris Charendoff
Brian Ferstman
Pauline D. Haller
Agnes Heringer
Arnold Issenman
Michael Kohn
Douglas Limburg
Rickie Loomer
Joseph Naiman
Deborah Pekilis
Alice Waldman

Elisabeth Birnbaum
Karen Chisvin
Ronald Greene
P.R. Handelsman
Shelly Hilditch
W. John Koch
Claudia Kugelmass
Manuel Linden
David Meranda
Myra Palmer
Alan Tinianov

WHO’S WHAT TO WHOM?
Few discussions generate so much confusion as those dealing with family relationships. To help clear the air, here’s a chart showing how you are related to males on the paternal side of your family tree. You can complete the picture by substituting female equivalents of the terms used here.

Only blood relationships are shown; for relatives by marriage, tack “in-law” on the end. People on any horizontal line of the chart are approximately the same age unless previous members of the family had children unusually late or early.

From The Newsletter of The Illiana J.G.S. Fall 1993
DAVID PRIVER - CEMETERY PROJECT

In 1987, David Priver began translating and copying the Jewish tombstone from the cemeteries in Sullivan County, New York (aka the Catskills or the Borsht Belt.) He finished this project last summer and has over 4000 interments from 28 cemeteries. He is working on including maiden names of the females from the obits and other sources. If you have a person you would like him to search, please contact him at the address below. In order to help him expedite the search, send the following with your request: Name (first and last) with variants as you know them, along with approximate death date and name of parents. Please include two international reply coupons. After June 25, contact address will be: P.O. Box 1062, South Fallsburg, NY 12779-1062

Professional Researcher will search census records, passenger lists, assessment records, city directories, indexes, archives and libraries, and other available resources in Canada for your ancestors.

Glen Eker, 46 Brandy Lane
Guelph, Ontario, Canada N1L 1A5
(519) 836-4747

Advertising Rates

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publica tion. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by Sept. 1994 for the fall issue. Please indicate how many insertions you would like. As the chart indicates, our basic rate is discounted for advertisements placed in four consecutive issues (one year) instead of a single issue only. By placing an ad in SHEM TOV, you are reaching a growing number of readers in Toronto, across Canada and internationally, and helping to support a unique and vital journal.

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Search ADS are also available. Rates are $5 for the first 25 words and 25 cents per word thereafter, your name and address are free. Please write advertisement clearly with family surnames you are researching in UPPER CASE letters. Make cheque payable to Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada and mail to: JGS of Canada, P.O. Box 446, Station A, Willowdale, Ontario, Canada M2N 5T1.

HOLOCAUST RESEARCH

HOLOCAUST RESEARCH INSTITUTE
The new United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC houses the Holocaust Research Institute. While not particularly geared to genealogical research, the Institute does have many resources that are of interest to us.

The Institute's Library has 17,000 books and periodicals; the Archives contains millions of paper and microfilmed documents copies from European archives, including Germany and the former Soviet Union; the Photo Archives has 40,000 photos covering all aspects of the Holocaust; and the Oral History Archives contains 1800 video and audio taped oral interviews with survivors, liberators and other eyewitnesses. In addition, the files of the American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors are housed here.

Unfortunately for genealogists, this collection is not indexed by name. However, it might still be of use to many of us. For more information, contact the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Holocaust Research Institute, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW. Washington, DC 20024-2150 (Yichus Y'all, JGS of Georgia, Summer 1993 via Lineage, Summer-Fall 1993)

THE "LISTS" PROJECT

At present, the Library is not prepared to make public its works in progress of various published sources that include lists of names of Holocaust victims. The are working on this exhausting project and it is in a rough format. The most complete single resource listing names of Holocaust victims is still Yad Vashem in Israel (3 million names). If you know of any unusual resources that can be documented, the Library welcomes input. Please contact Sarah Ogilvie, 202-488-6118 (Steve Goldmintz, Lineage, Summer-Fall 1993)

NATIONAL REGISTRY OF SURVIVORS

The National Registry of Holocaust Survivors, a database of well over 80,000 names of survivors and their kin, has been transferred to the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. Data from survivors, refugees or their relatives, in the United States and abroad, is still being added. For information or registration forms contact Sara Ogilvie at the Museum, 202-488-6164. (From the Wisconsin Jewish Genealogical Society Family Finding, January 1994 via Branches, Vol. 6 No 3, March/April, 1994)
Jews from Cracow and Vicinity by Kazimer Pochwalski from "Die Osterreichisch-Ungarische Monarchie in Wort und Bild" -1897 (The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Word and Picture)