



שם טוב

# SHEM TOV

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA (TORONTO)

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## 10th ANNIVERSARY

An Address by Dr. Rolf Lederer to the J.G.S.C. - September 20, 1995

Today we jubilantly celebrate the 10th Anniversary of our Society. A 10-year span is not a lengthy one, it is not even a Bar Mitzvah(!) let alone a generation or a life-time. To genealogists, it is a mere flicker on the tapestry of our research, which often encompasses several centuries. So why commemorate a decade of our history? I feel it is useful to reflect on our accomplishments so far, to evaluate our present endeavours and to look into the future.

The first meeting of our Society was held on a cold and wet evening in March 1985 at Temple Sinai. Seven dedicated genealogists attended that historic event. They were: Sandi Enchin, Rolf Lederer, Rayzel Robinson, Lillian Rosenthal, Selma Sacrob, Toby Trumpeter and Goldie Wallonsky. At that point in time, there were less than 20 Genealogical Societies in existence (now there are close to 60). A Montreal Society had functioned for a few years, with less than 10 members and eventually discontinued. It was re-established about a year ago. During 1985 the 5th annual Jewish Genealogical Summer Seminar was held in New York City.

Our dedicated band took on various committee responsibilities under the expert leadership of Rayzel Robinson, who was elected co-ordinator (and later President). The other tasks were decided as follows: Selma Sacrob (Secretary), Toby Trumpeter (Programme), Sandi Enchin (*Canadian Jewish News* Liaison), Lillian Rosenthal (Resource), Goldie Wallonsky (Communications), and Rolf Lederer (Treasurer). By the second meeting the following were added: Michael Sternberg (Legal), Jules Samson (Computers) and Linda Weiss (Library). Over the years the membership has grown, and seems to be settled around the 150 mark. Our early meetings were held either at Temple Sinai or at the Bnai Brith House on Hove Street. Eventually

the Synagogue and Bnai Brith wanted to charge rent, so we approached Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, who accommodated us rent-free for several years. But all good things come to an end, and we now pay a nominal monthly rental, since we are no longer a fledgling organization. From the outset, our meetings have been publicized in the *Canadian Jewish News* in the Miriam Herman column. This is a community free service to publicize major newsworthy events. For a number of years I would phone Miriam Herman on the morning of the dead-line to be greeted by "Good Morning, Dr. Lederer, allow me to hang my coat and hat, before I take down the information." Today with the convenience of fax messages, such personal contact is a thing of the past!

Rayzel Robinson served as president until the September 1987 elections, when she was replaced by Rolf Lederer (until

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1990). Rolf Lederer was succeeded by Bill Gladstone, and then in 1993 by the present incumbent, Henry Wellisch.

We have striven over the years to provide a forum for the exchange of genealogical information. This has been accomplished by our monthly meetings, which are always well attended. We have been fortunate in having knowledgeable members speak on a wide variety of subjects. These talks have usually been most informative and educative. We have invited a number of community leaders, including Dr. Stephen Speisman (Canadian Jewish Archives), Gerry Diamond (Landsmanshaften), Michael Benjamin (Benjamin's Memorial Chapel), and Alex Baxter (noted author on genealogical topics). From out-of-town our guest speakers have included Lawrence Tapper (National Archives, Ottawa), Miriam Weiner (internationally acclaimed Jewish genealogist), Scott Meyer (then co-editor of "Search"), Bruce Kahn (Computers), and other distinguished visitors, including our informal gathering hosting Neil Rosenstein.

Goldie Wallonsky edited at least 2 newsletters in 1985, followed by at least 2 page sheets that I put together in 1987, before we saw the birth of our definitive newsletter, "Shem Tov," professionally edited by Peter Cullman. I think "Shem Tov" successfully placed us on the Jewish genealogical map, and it is to Peter Cullman's credit that he produced a

newsletter which is well recognized as one of the top 10 of the newsletters produced by societies.

The other noteworthy event which eventually placed our society squarely on the map was hosting the annual summer seminar in 1993. Considering the fact that Toronto does not have all the genealogical resources present in New York, Washington, Jerusalem and even Los Angeles, a sizeable number of participants were attracted, to hear various noteworthy speakers and to interact in discussion groups. It is to the everlasting credit of Gert Rogers, Howard Shidlowky and Henry Wellisch, who sacrificed much of their time and effort to produce what turned out to be a successful endeavour and a profitable one for the society.

We have had 3 very successful one-day workshops to inform members and other interested persons about genealogy. We are (since 1992) a non-profit organization, when we officially changed the name from JGS of Toronto to JGS of Canada. The prevailing thinking at that time was that other genealogical societies would be affiliated with the organization and we would be a constituent branch. This direction has not been followed so that in Canada today there are independent societies in Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg and Vancouver, in addition to our own.

I probably could go on but time is short so let me just mention our other accomplishments. First the Cemetery

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Contributions are invited. Submit material c/o The Editor, P.O. Box 446, Station A, North York, Ontario, Canada M2N 5T1.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada was founded in 1985 and currently has about 150 members. Membership costs \$30 per calendar year, \$20 for persons living beyond both Metro Toronto and its adjacent suburbs. Meetings are held September to June, usually on the last Wednesday of each month at 8:00 p.m. (doors open at 7:30) at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue, 470 Glencairn Avenue, Toronto (unless announced otherwise). Guests are always welcome. Details are usually printed in the *Canadian Jewish News*.

The goals of the Society are to provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge and information through meetings, outings, workshops and guest lecturers, and thereby to promote an awareness of genealogy within the Jewish community of Canada. The Society is affiliated with the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto and is registered as a non-profit charitable organization.

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Project. It became clear fairly early after our establishment that records of early burials (prior to 1930) in Toronto were scant or non-existent. We therefore started the Cemetery Project, which involved a listing of all Jewish burial places in Ontario, together with recording the information on each stone. It was a mammoth task, and I would like to emphasize the need for volunteers to continue and complete this work. I would ask every member of the society to volunteer for 4 weeks next summer (i.e. one month of 4 Sundays) to help in this important work.

I would also like to mention the publication by Peter Cullman and Henry Wellisch of "Yiskor Books in Canadian Libraries". Hopefully other members will undertake other useful projects.

What of the future? We have moved from an age of dusty libraries and archives to a dynamic world of computer technology. Information that previously was confined to bureaucratic organizations can now be accessed more freely and with more ease. Our Society needs to continue to disseminate information for the genealogist, our membership needs to grow and we should strive to complete the Cemetery Project. ☆

## WHO WAS RAOUL HENRI DREYFUS?

by Lorraine Auberbach Chevrier

Recently, I learned that we must trust our intuition when doing genealogical research and believe we shall be successful.

I had been told that there was a well known artist in my family by the name of RAOUL DREYFUS. However, no one seemed to know how he was related or when he died. This was a good beginning. My curiosity had been aroused. Although I enjoy visiting art galleries, I am no connoisseur.

My great grandmother PAULINE DREYFUS had married my great grandfather ZACHARIAH AUERBACH in England in 1864. I began with the premise that PAULINE and RAOUL must be related. However, I had to find the link.

I first approached the university libraries in both Montreal and Ottawa as well as the Montreal Museum. They could provide me with no information.

I then contacted the Pierrefonds Library (located in a suburb of Montreal). They told me there was mention of a RAOUL HENRI DREYFUS in "Le Dictionnaire des Peintres, Sculpteurs, Dessinateurs et Graveurs" (Dictionary of Painters, Sculptors, Sketchers and Carvers). It mentioned he was born on September 18, 1878, in London of French parents. He was a portrait painter and in 1904 he had his start at the "Salon des Artistes Français" in France. RAOUL studied under Gabriel Ferrier and M.M. Bouguereau. The librarian appeared impressed. "Ah, Bouguereau, that's interesting." It was at this time that I learned of this artist Bouguereau and that he was well known. I thought that if my family associated with a well known artist like Bouguereau, then RAOUL must be very important. Unfortunately, very little information was to be found. I became obsessed. I thought about him constantly and felt I would discover something.

I had made contacts in France and subsequently they sent me documentation regarding the DREYFUS family (my ancestors) originally from Wissembourg in Alsace. However, again there was no mention of RAOUL HENRI. I felt that if indeed he was born in England, he could not have disappeared without a trace. I started in a new direction. I wrote to the British Museum, to the Louvre in France, as well as to the "Salon des Artistes Français." I returned to the Montreal Museum where I discovered for myself that RAOUL HENRI had exhibited his paintings from 1909-1912 at the Walker Art Gallery located in Liverpool, England. I then wrote to the Walker Gallery and they furnished me with a list of names of

(Continued on page 4)

### ☞ UPCOMING EVENTS ☞

Wednesday, December 20, 1995

#### "Shtetl: My Ancestors Called It Home"

A presentation by **Jack Kuper**, film-maker, author, and a child survivor of the Warsaw ghetto, will include readings from his new book, "After the Smoke Cleared" and a showing of his recent video, "Shtetl."

Wednesday, January 24, 1996

Authors **Sheldon and Judith Godfrey** will speak about their new book entitled "**Search Out the Land: The Jews and the Growth of Equality in British Colonial America, 1740-1867**". It includes the little-known history of Jewish United Empire Loyalists, who found greater tolerance in the Christian British colony than in the new United States of America.

Wednesday, February 28, 1996

Video: **How To Trace Your Jewish Roots with A. Kurzweil**; followed by: "**Stump the Experts**". Questions by the audience are answered by a panel.

**at the Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue  
470 Glencairn Avenue - 7:30 p.m.**

Non-members are asked to contribute \$3

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the paintings and charcoals he had exhibited. As well, I also learned that in 1914 he won a bronze medal (prix d'excellence). I continued to correspond with my French contacts, keeping them abreast of my research. They were well aware that finding out about RAOUL was very important to me.

The Louvre never answered my letter. I had at least tried. The British Museum had nothing to offer me either. However, the "Salon des Artistes Français" shed some light. Raoul had exhibited at their Salon until 1963, and his last known address was 5 rue Talma in Paris 16. This was indeed proof that he was alive during the '60s; for a time, I thought he might have perished during the Second World War. I was slowly moving ahead. His last known address got me thinking. In one of my letters from France, there was mention of a FERNANDE EVE DREYFUS who resided at 5 rue Talma in 1962! Aha! I began to reread all my papers. The puzzle was finally coming together.

#### My Discovery

My great grandmother PAULINE DREYFUS had a brother JACQUES ALBERT "CONTENTIEUX" DREYFUS who had married JOSEPHINE KOSSMAN. According to my French contacts, JACQUES and JOSEPHINE only had four children, all born in France. I told myself "No, they must have had five children, one being born in England." While revising the list of their children, I realized that the first two were born in 1875 and 1876 while the last two were born in 1881 and 1883 respectively. There was a space between 1876 and 1881. RAOUL HENRI was born in 1878; this was the missing link. The address 5 rue Talma was another clue. FERNANDE EVE DREYFUS must therefore have been RAOUL's sister!

I once again wrote my French contacts describing my theory. One of my sources got to work. He wrote to England and got me the proof I needed, RAOUL HENRI's birth certificate. Lo and behold, I was right. JACQUES and JOSEPHINE were the biological parents. Several days after receiving the birth certificate, I received another letter stating that RAOUL HENRI DREYFUS had died at his home at 25 rue Montevideo, Paris 17 on February 25, 1966. He was 87 years of age.

#### Conclusion

RAOUL HENRI DREYFUS was my third cousin and the nephew of PAULINE DREYFUS AUERBACH, my great grandmother. So ends a chapter, or almost...

RAOUL HENRI as well as his brothers and sisters remained single. What happened to his paintings and charcoals once he died? Who was the man behind the brush?

#### Epilogue

Since writing this article in December 1994, I submitted it to the "Cercle de Généalogie Juive" in France. Micheline Gutman, now President of the Cercle, informed me where RAOUL HENRI DREYFUS was buried. As well, she provided me with information regarding his life, that he was a generous man and very religious. I also learned that his parents JACQUES and JOSEPHINE even had another daughter, Diane, thus bringing the count to six children, not five.

Diane, the only one to marry, tied the knot with a M. Tabak, but no children came of this union.

Regarding RAOUL's paintings: they were apparently distributed to family and friends prior to his death. I was recently told that there is a portrait of a woman that is hanging in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. No one seems to know who she is...

Although I've finally been able to piece the puzzle together, I still wonder who the man was behind the brush. ☆

*Special thanks go to my French collaborators without whom I could not have made this discovery:*

*Dr Henri Claude Mars, Issoire, France*

*M. Georges Dreyfus, Toulouse, France*

*Mme Micheline Gutmann, President of the*

*"Cercle de Généalogie Juive" (France) who finally brought it all together.*

#### **ADVERTISING RATES**

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by February 1996 for the Spring 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.

	One Issue	Four Issues (1 year)
Full Page	\$60	\$200
Half Page	\$30	\$100
Quarter Page	\$18	\$ 60
Eighth Page	\$10	\$ 32

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

# New Special Interest Groups (SIGS)

by Ruth Chernia

## Latvia SIG

During the JGS Summer Seminar in Washington, DC, a Latvia SIG was established.

Goals:

- ◆ Establish a Latvia Family Finder (LFF) with full names of families related to SIG members and towns.
- ◆ Organize a bibliography on Latvia: books, property records, maps (including city maps), articles and other publications known to members.
- ◆ Record SIG members' sources of information (archival and otherwise) on Latvian Jewry. These could include USA, Israel, Russia, Latvia, South Africa, etc.
- ◆ Build up files on Latvian towns, villages and neighbourhoods with Jewish links, their history and current status. Information could feature these communities with details of contacts, the location of cemeteries, etc.
- ◆ Publish a newsletter two or three times a year.

Membership is based on a calendar year. Dues for 1996 are US\$20.00. Mail cheques payable to: LATVIA SIG, Deborah Levine Herman, Treasurer, 22449 Douglas Road, Shaker Heights, OH USA 44122 Phone: (216) 831-2727.

Those interested in having their material included in the first newsletter are urged to contact Debby Herman at the above address. The SIG President/Coordinator is Mike Getz. He can be reached at: Phone: (301) 493-5179, Fax: (301) 493-9081 or E-mail: mgetz@capaccess.org.

## Litvak SIG

Group activities:

- ◆ Issue a newsletter. One issued so far.
- ◆ Cooperate with other SIGs, particularly over the same area. Some contact made with the Lomza/Suwalk SIG and the Grodno SIG.
- ◆ Transcribe and transliterate dated and located lists of Jewish names, primarily from the region of interest. Database of about 15,000 entries completed and increasing.
- ◆ Provide miscellaneous information and maps of the area; maps from the 19th century; town histories; lists of towns, some not in *Where Once We Walked*.
- ◆ Contacts in Lithuania. Names of contacts but not much progress here.
- ◆ Internal contacts. Town and family lists and addresses/phone/e-mail of members.

Membership and Organization

The problem of data communication and handling was substantially solved by making the medium for the group

material computer disks. The standard chosen was DOS 3.5" HD but others are available (Mac too).

Members have paid \$5, if in the US, or \$8 for the first year (1995). By the end of 1995 three disks will have been sent; two have already been issued. Membership may increase for 1996.

If you are interested in joining, send your name, address (including e-mail address), phone number, type of disk you can read and indicate interest in the Litvak SIG. We will send you an introductory disk, no obligation, that gives a good idea of the materials developed so far.

The President is Edmund U. Cohler. Write to him at: 85 Bloomfield Street, Lexington MA USA 02173. (617) 862-1219 or E-mail: ecohler@daisy.cspi.com.

## Grodno SIG

The Grodno Gubernia SIG is a group of people interested in the research of Jewish family histories relative to the area known under the Russian Czarist regime as Grodno Gubernia (province): the portion of Belarus west of and excluding Novogrudok and Pinsk, together with a small portion of eastern Poland (including nearly all of the Bialystok province, but not Tykocin), and just a tip of southern Lithuania (including Druskininkai).

Information is distributed to members in two ways: through a quarterly bulletin or by ordering documents inventoried on the bulletins.

Inventoried items are held by the facilitator Jim Yarin and sent to members upon request and with payment of cost. Inventory items might include: cemetery transcriptions, indexes to Memorial (Yiskor) books, indexes to Family History Library (Mormon) microfilms of vital records, abstracts of autobiographies, genealogies, town histories etc.

Annual dues are currently set at US\$6.00 for all members. This permits you to receive 4 *Bulletins* and the Grodno SIG map with index. To join, please send your cheque payable to "GRODNO SIG" and mail to Jim Yarin at PO Box 1555, Brookline MA USA 02146. The next bulletin is scheduled to go out approximately Jan. 01, 1996. As of now, the \$6.00 will be for those who receive the bulletin by e-mail or first-class "snail" mail. Inventory items are sent out upon receipt of the appropriate payment and are priced according to the number of pages in the item.

Grodno SIG Discussion Group: Through the courtesy of the JewishGen discussion group, Grodno SIG has its very own mailing list on the Internet. Anyone may join this discussion group. There are two key rules to successful Internet discussion:

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## CONSTRUCTING A FAMILY TREE USING CENSUS INDEXES AND RAW CENSUS DATA

by Glen Eker

Census indexes and census schedules containing raw census data are available research tools for the genealogist seeking to trace family members over an extended period of time. They are useful in constructing a family tree even if they are the only information available for study.

Census indexes can help to quickly identify a specific family in a specific place over a period of time. When indexes are not available, it is obviously easier and less time consuming to research families in small or medium localities than large ones. There are no government-produced indexes for Canadian censuses, as is the case with the soundex name index to the 1920 United States census; such an index records by sound every family surname within a household for each state. This index is, however, an exception; genealogists and historical researchers usually must depend upon genealogical societies and individual researchers to create indexes for censuses. These exist for many Canadian censuses.

The ability to construct a family tree from raw census data contained in census schedules depends upon a variety of factors. The farther back a family can be traced in available censuses, the more comprehensive a family tree can be constructed. A family that has a surname which is distinctive or uncommon to the area being researched is easier to trace than one with a common surname. Ethnic origin and religion are other factors that may help to distinguish a family and its various branches from other families in the area. Since census data rarely provide the maiden names of married females, male lines are generally easier to trace when no information other than a family surname and place are known. The more information contained in the census, the more beneficial it is for genealogical research and family-tree construction.

One common problem found in most censuses is the lack of accuracy with regard to the information that has been recorded. Those researching individuals or families through several censuses may find that the spellings of names, ages, ethnic origins, religions, and occupations will often not match precisely from one census to another. This can be the fault of both the informant and the enumerator. Informants, for one reason or another, may not give the correct information to the enumerator. Fear of revealing the facts about one's self or one's family may cause inaccurate information to be given. Informants and enumerators often have language difficulties or problems in understanding census questions, causing errors to occur. Sometimes, however, facts simply change from one census to another. The possibility of providing more than one

answer to a question may exist; this can also cause changes in census information over a period of time. Sometimes, though, this lack of precision in recording practices makes the information obtainable more interesting and adds to its genealogical value.

In order to illustrate the use of the census as a genealogical source, let us trace a family through five censuses encompassing a forty-year period and try to construct a genealogical family tree. The COCHENTHALER family of Montreal has been chosen because it was present in all five censuses. It provided enough members to construct a proper family tree and did not become too numerous to follow in a brief article such as this.

The ability to locate this family quickly in the census was made possible by indexes that I have compiled of all identifiable individuals of Jewish ancestry for the 1861 to 1901 censuses of Canada. This is the first time such a comprehensive record of Jews in Canada has been indexed, published, and made available for genealogical research. These indexes allow the researcher to quickly locate individuals or families in the actual census schedules containing the raw data.

Canadian censuses prior to 1861 named only the head of family or household, number of individuals in the family, the occupation of the head of the family, and at times a column indicating origin or place of birth. The religion of the family was generally not recorded. The 1861 censuses of Canada West, or Upper Canada, and Canada East, or Lower Canada, encompassed the provinces of Ontario and Quebec which were created at the time of Confederation in 1867. These were the first Canadian censuses to name every person. They show location, name, age, sex, birthplace, religion, and profession, occupation, or trade of every individual resident. The ethnic origin question does not appear until the first federal census of 1871.

In the 1861 census of Montreal, Quebec, we find: John Cochenthaler, 54 years old, born in Germany, Jewish under religion, a trader. His wife Fanny was aged 40, born in Germany, and Jewish under religion. The census indicates that they were married in 1835. They had seven children: Emanuel aged 17, born in the United States, a cigar maker; Simon aged 15, born in the United States; Joseph aged 11, born in the United States; Sarah aged 9, born in Montreal; Caroline aged 5, born in Montreal; Moses aged 3, born in Montreal; and Gershon aged 2, born in Montreal.

The family's pattern of residential movement can be viewed as being stable during the period of 1861 to 1881. In these three censuses the original nine members of the family found in the 1861 census, along with two additional children, Lazarus/Robert and Helina/Lena, can be found residing in the St. Lawrence Ward of Montreal. Thus the Cochenthaler family maintained a presence within the same geographical area for a period of over twenty years. The term geographers use to describe a family's geographical presence over a substantive period is its "persistence." This geographical persistence changes, however, in the 1891 census. This census shows only Emanuel, Joseph, and Moses Cochenthaler and his wife and child. All are residing in St. Antoine Ward in Montreal. Emanuel and Joseph live together in a residence in subdivision 10, while Moses and his wife and child live in a residence in subdivision 14. In the 1901 census Moses Cochenthaler and his wife and child live in St. Antoine Ward, Gershon Cochenthaler and his wife and child reside in St. Lawrence Ward, and Simon Cochenthaler and his wife and children reside in St. Louis Ward.

The following Cochenthaler family data from the 1861-1901 censuses of Montreal by relationship and age is shown in the following chart:

Name (Relationship to John)	Age 1861	Age 1871	Age 1881	Age 1891	Age 1901
a. John Cochenthaler	54	60	71	----	----
b. Fanny (wife)	40	50	61	----	----
c. Emanuel (son)	17	27	34	40	----
d. Simon/Sam (son)	15	23	31	----	54
e. Catherine (daughter-in-law)	----	----	----	----	35
f. Emanuel (grandson)	----	----	----	----	6
g. Rebecca (granddaughter)	----	----	----	----	4
h. Joseph (son)	11	21	30	34	----
i. Sarah (daughter)	9	18	25	----	----
j. Caroline (daughter)	5	15	23	----	----
k. Moses (son)	3	13	21	32	44
l. Hatthe/Harriet (daughter-in-law)	----	----	----	32	38
m. Arthur (grandson)	----	----	----	4	13
n. Gershon (son)	2	11	19	----	41
o. Lillian (daughter-in-law)	----	----	----	----	22
p. Louis (grandson)	----	----	----	----	4
q. Lazarus/Robert (son)	----	7	17	----	----
r. Helina/Lena (daughter)	----	5	14	----	----
s. Simon (unknown)	----	----	35	----	----
t. Arline (unknown) (wife of Simon)	----	----	26	----	----

The chart shows that for a, c, d, h, i, j, k, l, n, and r, there are age variances of as little as 4 years or as much as 12 years between censuses. These inconsistencies in reported age data are quite common in Canadian censuses. The explanation for this could be that people did not give their correct ages.

The ethnic origin of the family is recorded as being German in 1871 and 1881. The 1891 census shows that Moses Cochenthaler's wife, Hatthe, was born in the United States, while both her parents were born in Russia. Their son, Arthur, was born in Quebec. The 1901 census refers to Hatthe as Harriet and states that she immigrated to Canada in 1868 and that her ethnic origin is German. The 1901 census states that the ethnic origin of Gershon Cochenthaler is Jewish. The ethnic origin of his wife, Lillian, is given as Spaniard. Her religion is given as Atheist. The census states that she was born in the United States and that she immigrated to Canada in 1890. The ethnic origin of their son Louis is given as Jewish while his religion is given as Roman Catholic; he was born in Quebec. The 1901 census refers to Simon Cochenthaler as Sam and gives his ethnic origin as Hebrew. The ethnic origin of his wife, Catherine, is given as English Jew. The census states that she was born in the United States and immigrated to Canada in 1894. The ethnic origin of their children, Emanuel and Rebecca, is given as Hebrew, and the children were both born in Quebec. The religion of all Cochenthaler family members listed in the 1861 to 1901 censuses is recorded as Jewish except for Lillian and Louis Cochenthaler.

The 1861 census shows John Cochenthaler in Montreal with a wife, Fanny, and seven children between the ages of 17 and 2. The 1871 census shows John and Fanny Cochenthaler and nine children between the ages of 23 and 5. The two youngest children, Lazarus, aged 7, and Helina, aged 5, were born in the decade between the censuses of 1861 and 1871. The 1881 census also shows John and Fanny Cochenthaler and their nine children. The children are now between the ages of 34 and 14. Lazarus is now listed in the census as Robert. Helina is now listed in the census as Lena. All the children were still living at home and unmarried in 1881. There were, however, significant changes in the family between 1881 and 1891. The 1891 census shows only Emanuel, Joseph, and Moses Cochenthaler. Emanuel and Joseph are still unmarried and have no children, Moses is now married and has a son. The other family members do not appear in the census. There are more changes in the family between 1891 and 1901: Emanuel and Joseph Cochenthaler do not appear in the census; Moses Cochenthaler still appears in the census along with his wife and son; Gershon Cochenthaler now appears in the census

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## The Surprise Wedding Guest

by Sheryl Erenberg

In the June 1991 issue of SHEM TOV I wrote that I had just received a promising new lead about possible relatives in South America. This came after receiving a photo from my great-aunt Isabelle which had been inscribed to her father in 1931 as follows:

“Gitel Lapid sends regards to the Uncle and sends him a photograph Cordoba, Euro 9/1931”. (see below)

Upon receipt, I rushed to my Spanish guidebooks and sent letters to Cordoba Spain in the mistaken belief that “Euro” in the card meant Europe. I learned after eight months of Spanish lessons that this part of the inscription was actually the date - Enero (January in Spanish). After repeated inquiries (all unanswered), it was suggested to me by fellow J.G.S. member Peter Cullman (to whom I am eternally grateful) that I try the other Cordoba in Argentina, which boasted a much larger Jewish population.

I drafted two letters and asked my cousin Gabriel to translate them into Spanish for quicker response. I faxed the Argentinian Embassy in Ottawa asking for telephone directory listings in Cordoba for the surname Lapid and Cordoba synagogue addresses. I also wrote to the Canadian embassy in Argentina two months later for good measure. I received their responses in the same week, approximately five months later.

Next, I mailed my translated letter together with a colour photocopy of the photograph to the five telephone listings I had received, asking if they knew the identity of those pictured and whether or not we could be related. I also sent letters to

the local synagogues requesting their assistance in locating Lapid relatives.

To my astonishment (and sheer delight) all of the people I had written to were related to one another! They were all descendants of the people in the photo, cousins of my great-grandfather, Isaac Lappitt from Disna, Belarus. In their response, a short two weeks after my letter, they explained the reason for their delay. They had to convene a family get-together to share their excitement and to draft a group response. They had each received my letter and were contacted by their synagogue that their Canadian relatives were looking for them. Roberto Lapid became the family representative and we two began to correspond in earnest, sharing family history and photographs. All of this occurred in January of 1993.

A few months later, preparations began for my brother's wedding, slated for November 1993. In our correspondence we exchanged details about the arrangements being made, the customs, etc. As a courtesy we sent invitations to Roberto and his family. Five days before the wedding, we received their now-famous R.S.V.P. by fax:

“We have got the Canadian Visa. We are arriving in Toronto November 05th.”

First cousins Roberto Lapid and Eduardo Yurevich were the surprise wedding guests to the delight of the entire Lappitt clan. Two branches of the Lappitt family, separated in 1910 and whose contact was interrupted some 60 years ago, were reunited and have now to catch up. ☆



הגתל לאפיד / שולחנה  
תמונה / לזכר אבי / יצחק  
לאפיד / מדינת / ארגנטינה  
קורדובה / ינואר / 1931  
Cordoba, Enero 9/1931

Left: The photo received by the author.

Above: The inscription on the back of the photo.

**OUR READERS RESPOND TO "TEMPEST IN A SAMOVAR ...."  
SHEM TOV, SEPTEMBER 1995**

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To the Editor of SHEM TOV:

I, along with many of us who were present, was shocked and outraged to listen to comments from George Bolotenko who made insulting remarks about American Jews and attributed these views to the archivists in Russia and Ukraine. I heard other attendees express similar negative views about the inappropriateness of such statements in this forum.

I would doubt that the Ukrainian and Russian archivists gave permission to Bolotenko to quote any of their words publicly, if they actually said any of the comments attributed to them.

While it is probably true that foreign researchers from the West who are "first-time" visitors to Ukraine archives do not anticipate the time it takes to identify and retrieve material in the archives, it is hoped with time and experience that the researchers will learn more about the archival system and the archivists will also develop more efficient retrieval systems.

Bolotenko further states in his interview that perhaps the comments from the Ukraine archivists come from a "root anti-Semitism." In these progressive times, such comments are insulting, inflammatory, and damaging to Ukraine/American relations and specifically between Ukraine and the American Jewish community. Perhaps these are Bolotenko's personal views based upon his own speculation rather than anti-Semitic comments from archival staff.

We are now in a "window of opportunity" regarding the discovery of archival material and the ability to access it in the former U.S.S.R. Bolotenko's comments do nothing to further this progress.

For the good of all of us, this subject should be closed, period.

Michael Brenner  
Past President  
Jewish Genealogical Society of New York

☞ ☝

To the Editor of SHEM TOV:

It is most disturbing when the mutually beneficial relationship between archivists and genealogists is disrupted. George Bolotenko's presentation this past summer, and his further comments to Karen Fejer, in which he portrays an extremely negative perception that Ukrainian archivists have of American Jewish genealogists, was indeed disturbing. I wonder if he may have overstated the situation, and whether

such words when played and replayed might even exacerbate such relations.

I have in my hands documentation of my family from the L'viv and Zhitomer archives which demonstrate to me that the relationship between American Jewish genealogists and Ukrainian archivists is one that works. We have all heard such success stories by American Jewish genealogists who have had terrific experiences all over Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. I suspect that the situation is not at the crisis level one could surmise from Mr. Bolotenko's observations.

We have all run into overly demanding genealogists (not all of whom are American Jews), and bureaucratically driven archivists (not all of whom are Ukrainian). But, we have far more often run into respectful genealogists and helpful archivists. Let's hope that the few bad experiences will be far outweighed by the good ones. Let's also be careful about raising tensions which may poison relations when this is to no one's advantage. George Bolotenko's message about respect was an important one, which we should all take to heart. I wish it had been delivered in a more sensitive manner.

These thoughts are my own and should not be taken as reflecting any position of the JGS of Los Angeles or of the AJGS, on whose boards I serve.

Hal Bookbinder  
Agoura, California

☞ ☝

To the Editor of SHEM TOV:

During the summer of 1993, I spent three weeks travelling in Ukraine and Moldova with an American Jewish genealogist who has worked and continues to work extensively in archives in these countries. We visited and did research in three archives. At all times we were greeted and conducted our work in an atmosphere of mutual courtesy, respect, and professionalism.

I can only conclude from my personal experiences during my trip that Bolotenko's remarks represented his own personal bigotry. I cannot imagine any of the archives employees I met making such outrageous comments.

Debra Braverman  
New York

To the Editor of SHEM TOV:

I found the article in the September issue of Shem Tov in which Mr. Bolotenko expanded and rationalized his anti-Semitic remarks most inappropriate. We, as Jewish genealogists, do not need to give a forum to these anti-Semitic ideas.

Nancy F. Brant  
Cincinnati, Ohio

☞ ☞

#### GEORGE BOLOTENKO RESPONDS

My ideas as represented in *Tempest in a Samovar...* are a distillation of a telephone interview; hence, they are neither in their full context nor as systematic as I would have made them had I presented an argued piece put down on paper. Staying with the telephone interview and the original piece by Karen Fejer, she writes that I "conceded" the point that only a relatively small number of people have poisoned the atmosphere. She is wrong in her inauspicious choice of words; I did not "concede" this point over the telephone, but in fact "insisted" that it is a small number of American Jews who have left behind themselves a trail of incivility throughout Ukrainian archives. I did not write an interpretive article; I simply reported what I encountered at five archival institutions in Ukraine.

As I suggested during both my talk and interview, the number of American Jews who abused archivists in Ukraine is relatively few. But these few have done harm out of all proportion to the very many others who follow them. In short, how we treat Ukrainian archivists is both a measure of our civility and the cardinal factor in determining future relations and success in genealogical research.

That some might find "insult" and "anti-Semitism" in my frankness disturbs me not one whit. I have been called a "Muscovite" and Soviet spy by Ukrainian nationalists, a "fallen" Russian by chauvinist Russians, and a "traitor" by Ukrainians who took umbrage at my accompanying a Canadian Ministry of Justice investigating team which visited Russian and Ukrainian archives in 1991 in search of incriminating material regarding Ukrainians who allegedly collaborated with Nazis. It is not the first time I have had the "anti-Semitic" epithet thrown at me. The charge is sheer trash, and does nothing but deflect attention away from the real issue.

Some of my critics suggest that this present moment constitutes a special window of opportunity. What I said might close it, they fear. No! What I say is intended precisely to preclude such closure. I am warning against those few who, by their actions, not only might lead to a closing of this opportunity, but who hinder the fullest opening possible of this window in the present. I have disrupted nothing - I have only pointed to an incipient cancer which, if unchecked, will most

assuredly disrupt relations between western genealogists and Ukrainian archivists.

Whether or not there is in fact a problem seems to be the nub for some of my critics. Some report in some detail on how much time they have spent in Ukrainian archives, how many archivists they have come to know, and how wonderfully they have been treated - ergo, there is no problem, and thus Bolotenko is an "anti-Semite." To this vein of argument, allow me to respond as follows. There is a problem, and it will get worse, unless it is identified and addressed. And where and how did I acquire this information? Seven trips to Russian and Ukrainian archives over the past several years (with stays of up to several months), access to archivists at all levels (from highest to lowest), fluency in both Russian and Ukrainian, constant involvement with representatives of Ukrainian and Russian archives overseas, a constant, current and informed professional exchange between me and my confreres, etc. But what knowledge base is this, when compared to a visit of several weeks to an archives in Ukraine, speaking through an interpreter?!!!

One other point. One commentator expresses incredulity that I suggest a root anti-Semitism amongst Ukrainian archivists. By what mental inversions he arrived at this finding escapes me. Neither during my talk in Washington, nor in the body of the interview, is there even an association of anti-Semitism and Ukrainian archivists. On the contrary, I say that they are the least afflicted by this curse. The residual anti-Semitism to which I averred in the interview is the generalized anti-Semitism of some portions of the Ukrainian population over historical time. In the rush to judgment, did my critics actually read my words?

One could go on rebutting things, specific charges in the letters. I only wonder about the intent of several of the writers of these letters who [sent copies of] their missives to Dr. Wallot [Director of the National Archives of Canada]. It was I who attended the conference, and spoke my mind, on my own time, representing no one but myself. I did not speak for either Dr. Wallot or the institution that he heads.

In conclusion, I think it best that this matter cease here and now. I suggest that those who leap to criticize my words might first try to understand, perhaps even read, what I wrote. It may be that I write and speak too plainly for some. This may be in defiance of "political correctness." But it's the only way to address problems directly and head on, and, to the best of my abilities, I will always call things by their names. Killing the messenger is like sticking one's head in the sand. What does this solve, whose interest does it serve? The community might be better served were some of its representatives to honestly meet issues head on, and to direct their energies to useful projects, such as the GARF (State Archive of the Russian Federation) proposal which I outlined in Washington. That is what I intend to do, out of my commitment to the project itself, and out of friendship to Lawrence Tapper. ☆

## A RUSTY FLOWERPOT IN A BUDAPEST CEMETERY

by Karen Fejer

It was late in the afternoon when we reached Kozma Street Jewish Cemetery on the outskirts of Budapest. The gatekeeper raised the barricade allowing us to enter the parking lot. Except for a couple of cars parked at the far end, it was empty. A pair of guard dogs barked menacingly from behind a chain link fence.

My husband Tom and I and his cousin Ivan, a resident of Budapest, had come to the cemetery to look for the graves of Jenó and Klára Sandicz, my husband's maternal grandparents.

The previous day at the Jewish Community Center we had been able to obtain location coordinates for their graves in this vast cemetery, reputed to hold several hundred thousand grave sites.

The gatekeeper informed us that if we wished, we could wait for a guide to take us to the grave. Since we already had the section and row numbers, we felt confident in setting off on our own. It would turn out to be far more difficult than we anticipated.

Down the wide central walkway through the cemetery we went, past interminable rows upon rows of graves stretching off in every direction. Most of the graves were overgrown with shrubbery and weeds, giving the whole place a neglected, forlorn look.

After walking for 10 or 15 minutes we reached the section and row where the grave sites were supposed to be. We stumbled through the thick underbrush along the row, scanning the inscriptions on the tombstones as we went. Many stones were weathered and hard to decipher. Others were almost obscured by the tangled vegetation that covered them. We went back and forth, searching the area repeatedly, but without any luck. By this time it was clear we needed help so we walked back to the guardhouse to find a guide.

The young man we engaged wore a yarmulka and drove an ancient Skoda. It was a temperamental car he explained, because of the several hundred thousand kilometers it had been in service.

Cousin Ivan elected to stay at the guardhouse and wait for us. This late in the day, he said, it was not safe in the cemetery. If we were not back in 15 minutes, he intended to call the police on his cell phone, he assured us. This was alarming, but we were determined to keep looking.

To the accompaniment of Jewish songs on a tape deck, the aged Skoda lurched its way down the lane back to the section where the graves were supposed to be.

The young man strode purposefully along the row, lifting the branches and vines covering the headstones and tearing away the weeds and grasses that grew on top of the flat monuments on the ground.

Tom and I watched him eagerly, hoping that at any moment he would call out that he had found the grave. But

after scouring the area carefully, he too was unable to locate it.

It might be worthwhile, he said, to check the registry book to find the adjacent graves. That would help him pinpoint the spot, he thought.

We piled back into the old Skoda and made the bumpy ride back to the cemetery office where the registry books were stored. Our approach set off howls of protest from the dogs in another compound nearby.

The young man consulted the registry book and made a note of the names on the surrounding graves. Then we were off for the third time, back to the site, hoping that we were finally going to find the graves.

Our persistence was rewarded. Pulling off the tangled branches of an overgrown bush of ivy, the young man revealed the flat monument marking the grave of my husband's grandparents, Jenó and Klára Sandicz. It was in perfect condition, sheltered from the elements by the enveloping ivy.

Jenó and Klára Sandicz survived WWII in Budapest. They refused to comply with the order to assemble for deportation. Instead they locked themselves into a closet, emerging after everyone was gone. They tore the yellow star off their clothes and came out of hiding.

Jenó Sandicz died on April 14, 1952 at the age of 80. His wife Klára died on October 14, 1965 at the age of 83.

Poignantly, beneath the ivy on top of the gravestone we found a small red enamel pot. The bottom had rusted away indicating it had been there for many years. Possibly Klára Sandicz used it for cut flowers when she came to visit her husband's grave. Or else, someone left it there at the time of her funeral. We aren't aware of any family members still left in Hungary who might have visited the grave in the intervening years. Probably, it's something we will never know. ✧

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