How To Obtain Ontario Vital Statistics Records
By Glen Eker

There are a variety of vital statistics records from the province of Ontario available to the genealogical researcher as well as a variety of sources from which to obtain these records. The Government of Ontario is presently releasing to the public all birth, marriage, and death records up to and including 1935. At present, births up to 1900, marriages up to 1915, and deaths up to 1925 are available for research. Each fall a new year of records will be released and will be available for research. Civil registration did not start in Ontario until 1869, so most of these records begin at this date. It is worth noting, however, that civil registration was not strictly enforced in the 1800's and, in fact, well into the early 1900's, so there is a possibility that many events were not reported to the government. In these cases there would be no record of the event.

These records are all available on microfilm reels. They consist of two components. The first is the vital statistics name index. There are separate indexes for births, marriages, and deaths. Each index is sorted by surname initial, year of event, and alphabetic by personal name. The same basic data are in all name indexes. This includes name, date and place of event, registration year, and registration number. These indexes are computer generated and contain information transcribed from the original handwritten indexes. The information transcribed is how the information appears on the handwritten indexes. Therefore the researcher should be aware that errors in reading of handwriting may occur. Also available are microfilmed versions of some of the original handwritten indexes to the Statistics Registration books.

The second component is the actual documents themselves. The information contained in these documents consists of what information was reported to the government registrar at the time of the event. Birth documents contain year of birth, name, gender, father's name, mother's maiden name, father's occupation, signature and residence of informant, name of person who assisted with the birth. Marriage documents contain for each person: name, age, place of birth, marital status, occupation, father's name, mother's maiden name and religious denomination; these also contain the marriage location and date, witnesses' names and residences, name of clergy conducting the marriage, whether marriage was by issuance or publication of banns, and registration date. Death documents contain name, age, sex, religious affiliation, profession, birth place, cause of death, name and description of informant, registrar's name, date

In This Issue

registered, county or district of registration. After 1907 the place of burial and the names of parents were also requested.

There is also a catalogue of the microfilm reels available for the original indexes, the computer-generated indexes, and the documents. It provides the microfilm reel access codes for finding a particular type of index or the actual documents themselves. The researcher should initially check the computer-generated index for the surname and year the particular type of event occurred. If the event is found, a registration number will be given. The researcher should then check the appropriate microfilm reel of documents that will contain that registration number. If an event is not found in the computer-generated indexes, then the original index should be checked in case an error in transcribing from the original index to the computer-generated index took place.

There are also other types of vital statistics records available on microfilm or in hard copy. The first of these are the Marriage Returns for Upper Canada, Canada West and Ontario 1801-1948. These consist of the marriage returns that were issued by clergy and which were then registered with the District Clerks. These registrations are found on film labelled MS 248 and consist of 24 reels. In this collection are District, Roman Catholic, County Marriage Registers, and Registers by Clergy. Much of the information found in these registers may be duplicated in the Vital Statistics Indexes.

The material previously described is available from a variety of sources. The Archives of Ontario at 77 Grenville Street, Toronto, M7A 2R9 contains all the previously stated microfilms as well as many miscellaneous church registers, church, clergy, and Justice of the Peace returns. They also have many early Upper Canada Marriage Bonds and various civil registrations from locations throughout Ontario. North York Central Library at 5120 Yonge Street has (in the sixth floor Gladys Allison Canadiana Room) the indexes to the Ontario Vital Statistics Records. They do not, however, have the document reels. The Ontario Genealogical Society has published in hard copy format the District Marriage Registers for Upper Canada. These books are available at North York Central Library. They also have the microfilmed reels. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) has microfilmed the indexes and documents of the Ontario Vital Statistics

Records as well as the District Marriage Returns for Upper Canada. These are available through their Family History Centers. Many of the larger Family History Centers are keeping complete sets of these records in the centers themselves. Many religious institutions also have their own archives. These are also worth consulting when seeking information on an event.

In order to obtain birth, marriage, or death documents from the Ontario government for the years after those already released in the microfilmed Ontario Vial Records Indexes and Documents, there are two sources to consult. If you live near Toronto you can order them in person from the Deputy Registrar General, Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations, Room 2.25, MacDonald Block, 900 Bay Street, Queen's Park, Toronto, M7A 1Y5. Phone (416) 965-1687 for prices. This office only accepts orders in person. They do not accept mail orders. Some documents have been made available through the main office in Thunder Bay on computer and can be received immediately. For others you must wait to receive them in the mail from Thunder Bay. For mail orders write to Office of the Registrar General, P.O. Box 4600, 189 Red River Road, Thunder Bay, Ontario, P7B 6L8. The information line for residents outside Metropolitan Toronto is 1-800-461-2156 and for outside Ontario 1-807-343-7420.

The Archives of Ontario also hold some specialized forms of vital statistics records. They have Court of Probate Indexes and Wills 1793-1859, Surrogate Court indexes, estate files, and register books from 1793-1952. 1954 - present (1968 - present for York County estate files) are held by the local courthouse. The archives also have published Surrogate Court surname indexes 1859 - 1900 for many counties in Ontario. (These published indexes are available at North York Central Library.) The archives also have Application to Probate indexes and applications from 1859-1982. These list every application to a Surrogate Court to probate a will or to administer an estate.

The Archives of Ontario also have divorce indexes 1927-1960 and divorce files 1927-1972. Divorce indexes and files for other years must be obtained from the Ontario Court (General Division), Central Office, 145 Queen Street West, Room 104, Toronto, Ontario, M5H 2N9. They have the original indexes and microfilms of all divorce decrees from 1961-1973. The Ontario Court (General Division) Central Office has the indexes and divorce files after 1973. Copies of divorce decrees are available on microfilm from 1972-1985. The divorce files for 1974-1990 are in off-site storage facilities. The Archives of Ontario and the Ontario Court (General Division) both store much of their divorce material in off-site facilities and require four days notice in order to retrieve it.

The researcher should also examine the general genealogical collection in North York Central Library and the collections of the various genealogical societies and the general genealogical collection of Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library at 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, M4W 2G8. They, along with many local branch libraries in Metropolitan Toronto, may possess material of value to those searching Ontario Vital Records. ✡

This is another informative article by
our member Glen Eker.

We Welcome These New Members To Our Society

Dr. Albert Abugov	Sharon Billings (Hershenhorn)
Allan Freedman	Harriet Gelb
Smuel Kleinman	Perl Kazdan
Anna Slama Lerner	Rachel Levin
Louis Levine	Lynn Rae
Barbara Shoib Murray	Sidney Stegman
Lori Swartz	

After settling in America from Slovakia, regardless of their ethnic, social or cultural background, immigrants usually modified or changed their names; contemporary names are therefore usually different from those who stayed behind in Europe. Both names are different from those of the common ancestors, because there was no consistent system of surnames until very recently. Everyone was given a first name which could be used in various forms: for example, Georgius or Georg from Latin, Gyorgy in Hungarian; Juraj, Dord, Juro, Jurko, Duro, Dzuro, Durko, etc., in Slovak forms. This name then could be supplemented with different characteristics: father's, mother's, or family name, occupation, place of origin, nickname, etc. An example was that of a 17th century doctor, Wolfgang Rettaler, who was recorded as Wolfgangus Rettaler, chirurgus dominus Wolfgangus, Wolfgangus Balbir, Balbir Farkas, Wolfgangus Farkas, Wolfgangus Tonsor, Wolfgangus Chirurgus, as well as other ways not recorded.

This confusion lasted till the end of the 18th century, when under the reign of Emperor Josef II of Austria, surnames became hereditary by law. Even then, various forms of names continue until recently. The families of small tight-knit communities even today might seldom use "official" surnames. Slovakian surnames were influenced by contacts with surrounding ethnic groups (Czech, Moravian, Polish, Ruthenian, and Ukrainian) and by great migrations. Italians, Russians, French, Bulgarians, and recently, Vietnamese enriched the reserve of Slovak surnames.

The names of all these people were changed according to social, ethnic, historical-political conditions; some disappeared, others were changed or modified. There were, however, certain groups of names: nobility, city dwellers or country people can often be identified; many descendents of German families preserved their original names; names of Hungarians, Ruthenians, Croats and Serbs are often typical of their group. Names of Jews, Gypsies and Slovak immigrants are often peculiar to their groups. Special analysis could also disclose names typical to particular regions or localities, period or special circumstances.

There are several characteristics for basic classification of Slovakian surnames. In the case of original language, the territorial or ethnic background often stands out in many Slovak surnames. However, names often were translated or modified so the language of the name may reflect the ethnicity of the neighbours rather than that of the actual persons.

One group of surnames that frequently reflects the ethnic background of the family ancestor is that derived from ethnic names (Slovak, Toth, Nemec, Polak, Rusnak, Chorvat, Horvath, etc.). They tell us clearly that the bearer of such a name settled individually in a community of different ethnicity. According to the language, we can also guess the nationality of the neighbours; i.e., Toth could be a Slovak settled among Hungarians, as Toth is the Hungarian name for Slovak. Or Horwath, at present the most common surname in Bratislava, meaning Croat, very often appeared in the 16-17th century during mass immigration of Croats to Northern Hungary.

Another large group of names derives from male first names, and to some degree that of women. They are among the oldest surnames, and sometimes can aid in making family connections.

Surnames frequently derived from localities. The oldest were created among the nobility, referring to the ancient origin of the family or its ennoblement before the 15-16th century. Often the name of the original donation of property can be seen. Names of this kind also refer to the local or territorial origin of the ancestor as well as to his migration from the particular area. They were created during the migrations of the 17-18th century. In the 19th century they also appeared among the Jews, derived mainly from large European cities, such as Wiener, Hamburger. Sometimes they had the same name as well-known Hungarian noble families.

Another large group derived from occupations: Kovac, Mlynar, Minarik, Svec, Szabo, etc.; other groups of surnames reflected personal characteristics: disposition, mental, physical. Other than one's personal efforts, there

are sources to help with surname research such as the catalogue published by the Institute of Linguistics in Bratislava; bibliographies of studies of name origins are published regularly; interpretation of names can be done with etymological and various other dictionaries and gazeteers; surname dictionaries are available for many countries.

Given names could be of more use to genealogists, as they could tell such things as social status: poor people usually had one name, higher class might have two or three given names; higher classes also tend to give more exotic names. Certain names are unique to given ethnic groups: Attila or Arpad, for Hungarian; Hermannn for German, etc.

Notes on Jewish Names

Sometimes Jews derived their surnames from the noble families because they were their "patrons" who protected them, much in the same way as US slaves took the names of their owners. Jews also got their names in the same way through family characteristics; father's name, as in Davidowitz, Israelovitch, Sokolov, Aaronson, etc. Place of origin is especially common, as Jews moved around a lot.

Another major source of Jewish names was the whim of the official recording the names, which accounts for many of the strange and often negative names of Jewish families such as Ferkel (little pig), or Kanalgitterstandabteil (Canal gate fence post) being classic examples.

Special resources are available for Jewish surnames such as Alexander Beider's books, Dictionaries of Jewish surnames from the Kingdom of Poland, and from the Russian Empire. Name changes through the ages are reflected in the same way as in the general population, conforming to the society in which we lived. However, given names tended to remain fairly stable, reflecting the usual names within the family until recently; now Jews tend to give local first names, and second "Jewish" names.

My Experience with the LDS (Mormons) Trial Project and the REIPP Database

By Stan Zeidenberg

I am fairly new to genealogical research, especially with respect to use of LDS (Church Of Latter-Day Saints, Mormons) microfilm material. My geographical research focus is currently Ciechanow, Poland (a town about 95 km. northwest of Warsaw).

I would like to advise readers of another option with respect to requisitioning and viewing material from LDS.

I had been aware for some time of the availability of three LDS film reels for Ciechanow, and when I was about to requisition the films I came to know that, in a trial project, the LDS was now making its material available on inter-library loan through a select group of libraries in the U.S. and Canada as well as other parts of the world. In Canada these libraries include the Montreal Municipal Library and the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library.

I ordered microfilms through the Metro Toronto Reference Library at 789 Yonge St., north of Bloor, and found this to be a very attractive and convenient resource because of the extended library hours and the availability of good quality microfilm reading and printing equipment.

Copying was fairly economical - fifteen cents per page through use of a "copycard." The cost of bringing in the films through the public library appears to be the same as through one of the LDS family history centres, $4.50 for 30 days, $9.00 for 60 days.

Incidentally, I copied all of the Ciechanow index pages (about 220 pages in total) and I am working with another volunteer to index this material for the REIPP (Russian Era Indexing of Poland Project) database. REIPP data is available through an on-line search via Internet. The index pages list births, marriages and deaths together with their relevant document numbers - all of this material stored on the same microfilm reel. While more detailed information is available through a reading of the document itself, much can be garnered from the indexes.

With the translation of the Ciechanow data and its inclusion in the REIPP master database now in process, I plan to assist REIPP by arranging for index material of other Polish communities to be collected and translated.

I would be pleased to hear from anyone who might be interested in helping out. Assistance is required in the following areas: scanning LDS microfilms and making copies of index pages, and translating from the index pages and entering the data into a computer program.

For anyone who is interested, I can be reached at (416) 512-7308 evenings, (416) 512-9996 days, or via e-mail: capital@user.rose.com.

New JGS in South Africa

We are very excited to announce the long awaited establishment of the Jewish Family History Society of Cape Town. A group of dedicated and experienced genealogists and family historians have gotten together to assist interested parties in Cape Town, and indeed throughout the world, in locating information about their families. Although we do not yet have a facility to conduct research on an individual basis, we can send you in the right direction and recommend experienced researchers who will help you with your research. We will answer all of your requests and will help you ourselves if we are able to do so.

The ninety thousand or so Jews in South Africa are mainly of Litvak descent and thus anyone researching their Lithuanian and Latvian ancestry should not rule out the possibility of locating long-lost relatives in South Africa. Our Jewish Community, however, is made up of a mixture of Ashkenazim and Sephardim from all over the world.

Members of the Society, will receive a quarterly newsletter and advance notice and discounted prices on any publications which we produce. The first project that we have undertaken is assisting the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies, at the University of Cape Town, with the computerization and eventual inclusion on the Jewishgen search engine of "a record of Jewish Immigrants landing at the port of Cape Town, 1924-1929." Included are approximately 15,000 entries of people who entered the country from all over the world. Another project that we are working on is a guidebook of Genealogical Resources in the Cape Town area.

Our seven founder members are Paul Cheifitz, Lauren Fabian, Ben and Idafay Mirvis, Debby Myers, Richard Newman and Jeff Osrin.

We can be contacted at:
> The Jewish Family History Society of Cape Town,
> P.O. Box 541,
> Sea Point,
> 8060,
> SOUTH AFRICA.
> Phone: 21 451546.
> Fax: 21 4393768.
> email: jewfamct@global.co.za

We look forward to hearing from you all very soon.

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Birth Announcement

Doreen & Stefan Pinkus <i.c.a.pinkfox@inter.nl.net> are announcing the birth of the Dutch Jewish Genealogy Homepage at:
http://www.inter.nl.net/users/DJGH

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Trip to Ukraine

On a cruise ship from Kiev to Odessa with points in between. Genealogist on board. Jewish sites visited. May 1998. For further information contact Sarah Faerman, Tel. (416)781-0003.

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Archive of Australian Judaica

The Archive of Australian Judaica, located at the University of Sydney, has been gathering material on Australian Jewry for the past fifteen years. Marianne Dacy, the archivist, can be reached at: Rare Books and Special Collections Fisher Library
> University of Sydney
> NSW, Australia 2006
> Tel.: 61 2 9351 4162
> Fax.: 61 2 9351 2890
> email: mdacy@lib4.fisher.su.oz.au

website: http://www.zeta.org.au/~feraltek/jozgen.htm

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Physician's Records

Tom Gartman

The National Genealogical Society, 4527 17th Street North, Arlington Virginia 22207, has obtained records of deceased physicians from the American Medical Association. The NGS searched these records for my great-grandfather's brother, Leo Gartman. From these records we learn that Leo was born in Russia on June 25, 1864. He graduated from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia in 1896 and for many years was on the staff of Mount Sinai Hospital in Philadelphia. He died at age 65 on March 30, 1930. The cost of this search was $15.00.

HaMagid Records on CD-ROM

Mr. Patrick Gordis who is a friend of the JGS of Canada (Toronto) and a contributor to our newsletter SHEM TOV, has donated HaMagid Records on CD-ROM to our society.

HaMagid was the first ever weekly Hebrew newspaper, published from 1856 to 1903. It first appeared in Lyck, Prussia, later in Berlin, Cracow and Galicia.

Over 1,500 pages of the original Hebrew text of HaMagid's obituaries, wills, death notices, and other records appear on this CD-ROM. Its comprehensive index was compiled and produced by the Computer Center for Jewish Genealogy, Elizabeth, NJ. USA.

The Center's Director, Dr. Neil Rosenstein, is the author of the acclaimed genealogical work entitled "The Unbroken Chain" - Biographical Sketches and Genealogy of Illustrious Jewish Families from the 15th - 20th centuries (1990, two volumes, in our library). Dr. Rosenstein has spoken several times at meetings of our society.

This CD-ROM includes:

✿ A complete English index of all personalities featured in HaMagid's records for its entire run. Included are women, professionals, and centenarians whose obituaries are not found anywhere.

✿ A complete index of all towns which played a prominent role in the lives of those listed.

✿ A secondary index of all towns listed in all records.

✿ Over 1,500 graphic images of the original Hebrew pages of HaMagid's records.

✿ CD-ROM requires Microsoft Windows 3.1 or Windows 95 and a CD-ROM drive.

Members wishing to borrow the CD-ROM should contact Morris Roitman at (416) 633-2830.

Telephone Directories for Canada, USA and World Wide
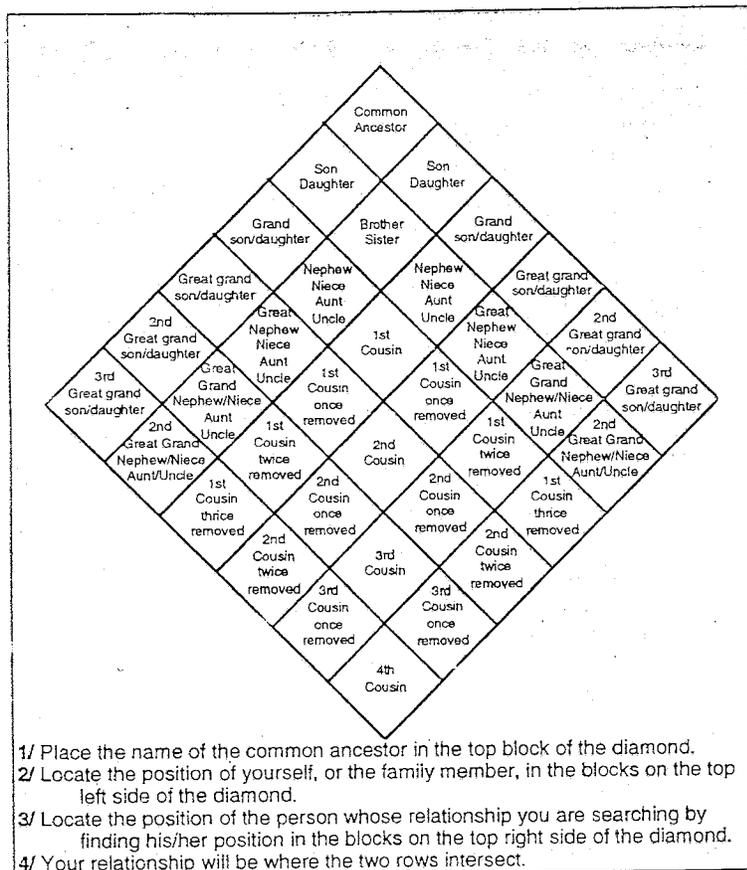
Supplied by our member Neil Richler

All Canadian telephone numbers except the Province of Alberta can be found at:
http://www.canada411.sympatico.ca

Starting Point has Canadian addresses & phone numbers: http://www.stpt.com/features/people/canada.html

American Directory Assistance:
http://www.abii.com/lookupusa/ada/ada.htm

Telephone directories on the web - many countries:
http://www.contractjobs.com/tel/

Two sites that link to many worldwide phonebooks:
http://www.infobel.be/infobel/infobelworld.html
http://www.whowhere.com/wwphone/world.html

1/ Place the name of the common ancestor in the top block of the diamond.
2/ Locate the position of yourself, or the family member, in the blocks on the top left side of the diamond.
3/ Locate the position of the person whose relationship you are searching by finding his/her position in the blocks on the top right side of the diamond.
4/ Your relationship will be where the two rows intersect.

Family Relation Chart

Our Monthly Meeting Held At The State Archives

By Hagit Matras

This is a report on the meeting of the Israel JGS as reported in Sharsheret Hadorot, October 1996.

The State Archives welcomed the members of the Israel Genealogical Society on Wednesday, June 17, 1996. Light refreshments were followed by brief greetings from our chairperson Esther Ramon, and Dr. Moshe Mosek, Director General of the Archives. We were then informed by the Chief Archivist, Prof. Evyatar Frizel, that the Supreme Archives Council had decided to co-opt the IGS and expressed the hope that there would be cordial co-operation between all concerned.

The Chief Archivist devoted most of his remarks to the current problem of archival material relating to individuals and deposited in the Archives when Israel was established. Since The Archives Law prescribes that 50 years must pass before material relating to individuals can be made available for scrutiny. This is likely to occur in the near future, but it is possible that various aspects of this action have not yet been properly weighed. These aspects include setting criteria for the examination of documents affecting the privacy of the individual but which are to be found in "general" files, and also providing technical arrangements for the classification of such documents before they are "opened." After a study of this problem and comparison with rules prevailing in other countries, it has been decided for the time being not to open "private" material until 120 years have passed, since the birth of the persons involved, unless a declaration has been received from the person concerned or his/her entire family, consenting to the "opening" of the documents at an earlier date.

Dr. Mosek described this problem as a "ticking time-bomb" since the 50-year limit, once thought of as being remote, was now almost upon us. He spoke of dynamic steps taken by the Archives under the Archives Law of 1955 and pointed out that they contain also a great deal of material from pre-state days, the Mandate period and the period of Ottoman Rule in Palestine.

The Law deals with material originating in Government Ministries and other governmental archives connected with them, including those of local authorities and various public bodies. These include historical-administrative archives of large institutions and organizations; e.g., the Central Zionist Archives, political party and Histadrut archives, kibbutz movements' archives, etc., as well as historical-documentary archives on special topics such as the Archives of the History of the Jewish people, Yad V'Shem Archives, "Genazim" (Archives of the Writers' Association), Film and Theater Archives, etc. They also transfer and destroy material, maintain regular contact with public bodies, engage in professional administration and are available to the public. Public archives do not generally enjoy government subsidies, although this is a matter which has already come up for discussion. Most archives existing in Israel are private and financed by institutions, foundations and gifts and are permitted to sell their collections.

Ms. A. Budovsky estimated that material worth keeping permanently in the State Archives from the research, historical and legal points of view, amounts to some 5% of all material originating in the Government Ministries. This includes material from the Ministry of the Interior, including Knesset voting registers and files of deceased persons, files of the Absorption Ministry containing registration of new immigrants who arrived in Israel after 1948, Ministry of Justice files of the trials of major criminals, Supreme Court files, Land Registry files, Rabbinical court files, Adoption files (not open to the public), and files of divorces, conversions, bequests and Trusteeships.

Deposited with the State Archives are the private files of well-known personalities in whom the public has a special interest. These have been extracted from a tremendous series of files consigned for destruction. These files are preserved for use by the ministries concerned and their availability for inspection by the public depends on the overall decision, mentioned above, regarding the "opening" of archival material.

Ms. S. Yonai reported on personal archives held at the State Archives, which generally supplement existing

material in a given institutional archive relating to the same person. This material is based on his administrative work, public activities and even personal correspondence. There are some 35 personal archives, including those of Prime Ministers of Israel, governors of the Bank of Israel, Rabbis, lawyers and others. This kind of material often reaches the State Archives quite accidentally. At the time of deposit, it is possible to lay down rules regarding the period that the material shall be stored and how it shall be classified. These files generally give a perspective on the periods in which these personalities were active, the members of their families and other activities in which these national leaders took part.

The final session of the evening was devoted to an absorbing lecture by Jonathan Pagis on District Registers maintained in the Ottoman Period. These censuses listing inhabitants were conducted by the Ottoman Empire and contain a great deal of information useful for genealogical research. The authorities at the time attached great significance to these censuses and registers since they were vital sources for them in levying taxes and for army conscription. These volumes were written in Ottoman Turkish and only a few of them (since 1875) concerned our region and came into our possession. Lately, these volumes have been computerized. We look forward to hearing the rest of Jonathan Pagis' lecture at one of our monthly meetings.

The lecturers were interrupted a number of times by some of our members who showered questions on them. We are most grateful to our hosts for their patience and detailed replies and to our audience for its constant attention.

The address of the State Archives is:
  25 Mekor Haim Street, Jerusalem
  Tel: 02-680680
Correspondence can be addressed to:
  The State Archives, Prime Minister's Office
  Kiryat Ben Gurion, Jerusalem 91919
  ISRAEL

UPCOMING EVENTS

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Wednesday, June 25, 1997 - 7:30 p.m.
At the Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue
470 Glencairn Avenue

Breakthroughs of the past Year

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We wish you a pleasant summer. Please watch the "What's New" column in the Canadian Jewish News for the date and program of our September meeting.

ADVERTISING RATES

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by August 1997 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.

	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.

Searching Family In Britain

Niall Foley - Dublin, Ireland

In the U.K. civil registration of births, marriages and deaths is compulsory. The records run from 1837 to the present and are centralized and public. To start, you will need to do the following searches in the English registry:

1. A search for a civil marriage certificate (unless he married in South Africa). This will give the names and particulars of the parties and the names of their respective fathers and details of where the ceremony took place and the names of the witnesses.

2. A search for Gershon's death certificate; this will give exact date of death. It will also give his marital status; i.e., married or widower, and may name a relative present at death.

3. If the death certificate indicates that his wife was still alive at his death, then search for her subsequent death certificate.

4. If it appears that he and his wife may have left property, then search for their Wills. You will need the exact dates and places of death to make this easy. If you find the Wills, these will name the beneficiaries.

5. Then search for civil birth records for their children. This should not be too difficult if the mother's maiden name is stated in the index.

6. Then search for marriage, death and Will records in respect of each of the children as appropriate and repeat the process for their children if necessary.

7. If you find any addresses, then check street directories to find out when the family left a particular address.

8. The British Embassy www site contains all the official addresses that you will need:
http://britain.nyc.ny.us/bis/fsheets/refleaf.htm

These basic searches may not locate a living relative but they will give you more information than you have at present, so opening up other lines of research.

A Website on Western Canada

New since January at my web site:

1. A new set of Jewish Genealogy Links for you to check out. My links are set up differently than most. I am sure you'll like them. You should find at least one site you have not yet visited:
http://www.concentric.net/~lkessler/jglinks.shtml

2. Links to websites of Computer Programs for Genealogy. I do not know of any other up-to-date set of links like these on the Internet.
http://www.concentric.net/~lkessler/gplinks.shtml

3. For those people researching family in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, check out my J GEMS document, the Jewish Genealogical Exploration Guide for Manitoba and Saskatchewan. I have made several updates, with more coming on a regular basis.
http://www.concentric.net/~lkessler/jgems.shtml

4. There is an updated list of things happening at the Genealogical Institute of the Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada.
http://www.concentric.net/~lkessler/geninst.shtml

5. The best set of Jewish Winnipeg links is now available.
http://www.concentric.net/~lkessler/jwlinks.shtml

6. Also, if you have not yet visited my family pages, please do, and see if we might be related.
http://www.concentric.net/~lkessler/myfamily.shtml

Louis Kessler
Program Director of the Genealogical Institute
of the Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Der Judenfriedhof Endingen-Lengnau (The Endingen-Lengnau Jewish Cemetery)

Published in 1993 in Baden, Switzerland by "Verein fur die Erhaltung der Synagogen und des Friedhofes Endingen-Lengnau" (Society for the Preservation of the Synagogues and the Cemetery of Endingen-Lengnau) Two Volumes (in German).

We recently received as a gift from the above-mentioned society the two-volume set of the survey and history of the cemetery of two small Jewish communities in Switzerland. Now we in North America don't know very much about the Jews of Switzerland, but this magnificent set of books is certainly bound to enlighten us all.

Endingen and Lengnau are two small villages in northern Switzerland, just a few miles south of the river Rhine, which in this area forms the border between Switzerland and Germany. From the 17th to the 19th century these two villages were the only places in Switzerland where Jews were permitted to live, and every sixteen years they had to purchase a protective letter from the local administrator to renew the permit. In 1750 the Jewish inhabitants of the two villages were allowed to purchase a plot of land for a cemetery. Prior to that they buried their dead on the "Judeninsel" (Jews Island) in the middle of the river Rhine, but the island was flooded from time to time. After the establishment of the cemetery in 1750 the gravestones were transferred from the island to the cemetery, and there are now twelve of these transferred stones in existence. The oldest existing stone is that of Mirjam, daughter of Josef, who died on December 20, 1674.

In the middle of the 18th century the two communities also built two synagogues and a mikva. The elders (parnassim) were very often members of the Guggenheim, Bolak and Dreifuss families. It is interesting to note that Jews in this area, even at the beginning of the 18th century, had family names which often point to their origin. Such names are: Oppenheim, Guggenheim, Schlesinger, Bolak (Pole) and others.

The first residing rabbi was Jehuda Lob ben Abraham who is listed in 1746. Around 1850 the two villages had about 1500 Jewish inhabitants, and in 1980 there were three Jewish families left. All this information and much more is contained in the first volume. There are articles on the rabbis and the various leaders of the community, reproductions of documents and many pictures of the stones themselves.

In 1770 there occurred a terrible disaster. A large boat with 150 persons and some cattle capsized on the Rhine and sank with large loss of life. Among the dead were 13 Jews, and some are buried in the cemetery. One of the Jewish victims was Jakob Leib Bolak, the Parnass of Endingen. It is reported that one Jew saved himself by hanging on to the tail of a cow.

The Society for the protection of the Cemetery of Endingen-Lengnau was founded in 1921. The cemetery and the present synagogues, which were built in 1846 and 1852, have been elevated by the Swiss district administration to monument status since 1963.
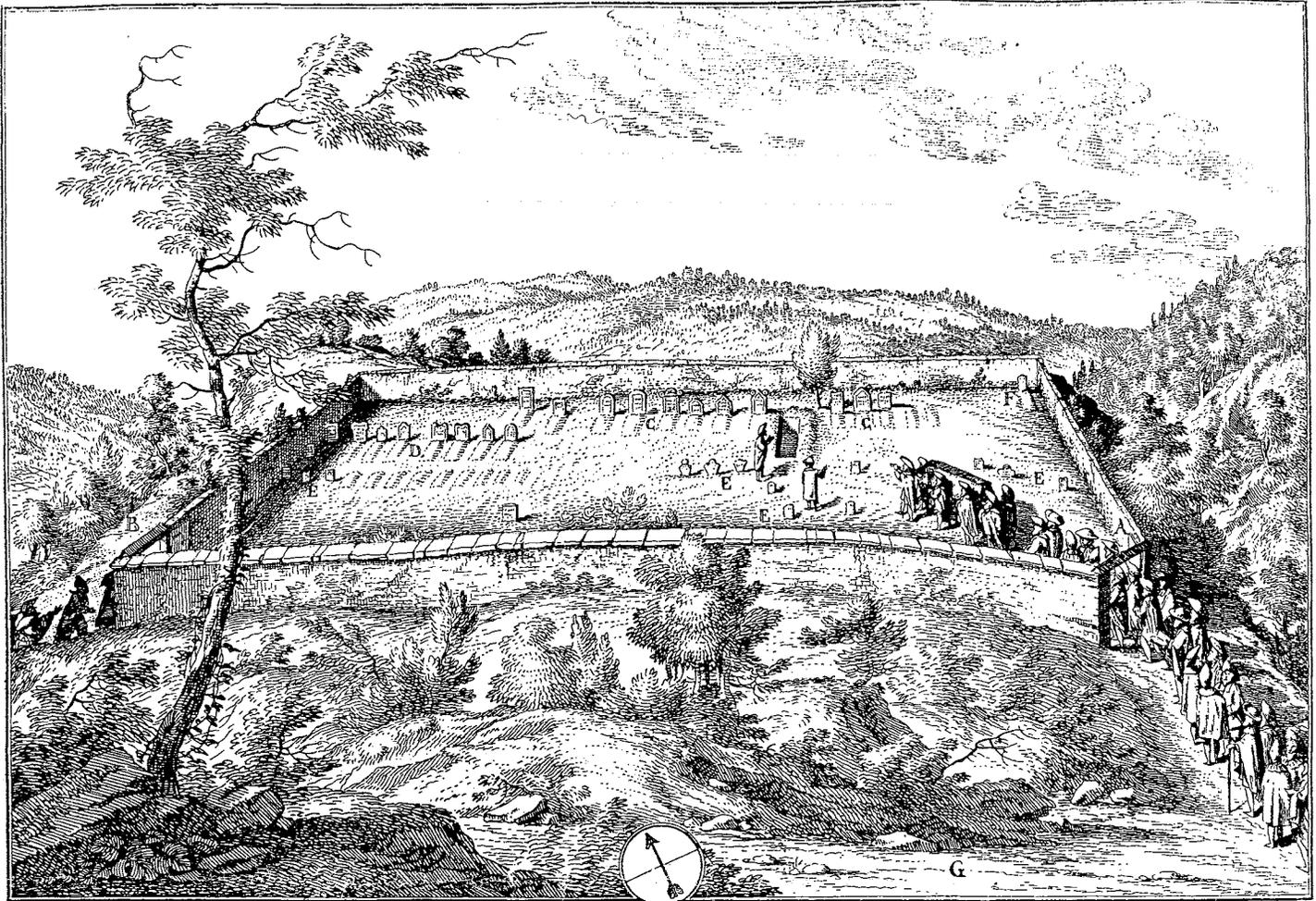
The late Dr. H.C. Florence Guggenheim did a large part of the historical and genealogical research, while Dr. Ralph Weingarten and Dr. Peter Stein were also important contributors. In 1993 Mrs. Ruth Dreifuss was elected to the Swiss Federal Council. Her ancestor tree, published in Volume I, shows seven generations of her family who are buried in this cemetery.

The second volume contains the list of over 2,700 burials which occurred between 1750 and 1992. In this volume is also included a large fold-out map of the cemetery, which shows a detailed layout of all the graves. Men and women were buried in separate rows, with a few double graves in one of the female rows. There are sections for women who died in childbirth and there is a special area for the graves of children.

The register of graves and burials in shown in three parts:

✿ A list of graves according to location. These are actually two complementary lists. One shows the entry in the death register and the other shows the inscription on the stone. Not surprisingly, there are many discrepancies.

✿ An alphabetical list

✿ A list based on the date starting with the first burial in 1751 and ending with the most recent one in 1992.

Although the book is in German, since by far the largest part consists of lists of various kinds, it is not too difficult to find your way through. All in all, this is a very well researched and beautifully presented work.
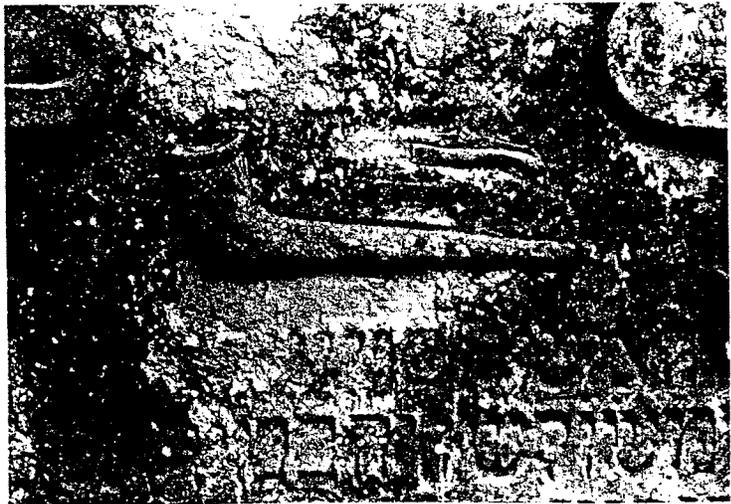
J. R. Holzhalb ad Nat. delin.

J. B. Bullinger. sculps.

Friedhoof oder Begräbniß Ohrt der Juden zwischen Langnau und Endingen.
A. Eingang auf seiten gegen Langnau. B. Eingang auf seiten gegen Endingen. C. Begräbniße der Männer. D. Begräbniße der Weiber. E. Begräbniße der Kinder. F. Abgesöndertes Begräbniß einer Kindbetherin. G. Landstraaße von Langnau nach Endingen.

The Jewish Cemetery Endingen-Lengnau,   J.C. Ulrich 1761.

A General View of the Cemetery as of Today

The Stone of Samuel J. Guggenheim Shofarblower and Mohel