

שם טוב

SHEM TOV

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA (TORONTO)

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Finding My Ancestors at the National Archives of Canada

by Sharon Cooper

Last summer I spent many hours in the quiet darkness of the microfilm reading room at the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa where I live. I had spent a long time procrastinating, but at last there I was. I was fairly sure I knew the name of the ship on which my maternal grandmother came to Canada. Her sister-in-law had come on the same ship, as well as two orphaned nieces. I also knew roughly the date and the probable port of arrival of the ship. As I sat in the dark between the rows of microfilm readers and other people silently working at their tasks, I felt my excitement rising.

I was looking at the ship's manifest (passenger list) for the *S.S. Sicilian*, which arrived in Quebec City on May 13, 1920. It had taken two weeks to cross the ocean, having left Glasgow on May 1. On the first page I had read the name of the ship's captain, the number of passengers, and other interesting details. For example, the ship's surgeon had to sign a declaration that he had examined all immigrants on board and had "seen no passenger...who I have reason to believe is, or is likely to become, insane, epileptic or consumptive, or who is idiotic, feeble-minded or afflicted with a contagious, infectious or loathsome disease; or who is deaf, dumb or blind or otherwise physically defective..." or who "...might be debarred from entering Canada under the 'Immigration Act'..." I had then scrolled past the "saloon" deck and the "intermediate" deck and now I was carefully looking at the passengers in "steerage," where I expected my relatives to be. All the names were in alphabetical order, and by the time I reached the end of the alphabet, I sighed in disappointment. They weren't there. The same ship had made other sailings that year, but I was going on a family story that my aunt Min had been born a year after my grandmother arrived, so this would have been the right time.

I pressed on and, sure enough, there were more names: Adelman, Bergman, Ditman, Goldstein... Jewish names. All the Jewish people had been registered together. And then finally, there they were, neatly typed - the names of my grandmother, Toby Pozner, age 29;

my great-aunt Nicha Pozner, age 34; and their young nieces, Sura Tajchenblatt, 16, and her sister, Bascha Tajchenblatt, 10. The names looked so small and fragile on the page, and it was very touching to see them there. It also made all the stories I had garnered from my family seem real for the first time (did I think they were making them up?).

"There's my buby Toby!" I wanted to shout to the others in the room, but thought better of it. Along with the names, there was other information: How much cash each person had (my grandmother had \$25), the age and marital status of each person, country of birth, race (Jewish), their intended occupation in Canada ("housework" for the women, "school" for the girls) and the address to which they were going (190 Dundas Street West, Toronto). I was able to photocopy the pages of the ship's manifest and give copies to members of my family in Toronto.

Back in 1920 my grandmother had been going to join my grandfather, Hymie Pozner, after seven years of separation that began shortly after their marriage in 1913 in Radom, Poland. My grandfather had left Poland to join his brothers Chaskel (Nicha's husband), and Mendel in Toronto. Another brother, Leybish, followed in 1914, arriving with his wife Hudis and four-year-old daughter Rose the day World War I broke out. They had travelled via New York on the *S.S. Vaderland*; and I was also able to find their ship's manifest in the archives, but only the first page had been kept.

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Upcoming Events

**20th International Conference
on Jewish Genealogy
Salt Lake City, Utah
July 9-14, 2000**

Home page: <http://iajgs.org/slcy2k>

programs organized by the
Jewish Genealogical Society
of Canada (Toronto)
at the Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue
470 Glencairn Avenue

Wednesday, May 31, 2000 at 8:00 pm

The Jews of Transnistria:

Shattered! 50 Years of Silence

The speaker, Dr. Felicia Carmelly,
is author of the above book.

Wednesday, June 28, 2000 at 8:00 pm

"Breakthroughs of the Past Year"

Reports by some of our members

Nominations and elections for a new executive

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.*

Message from Outgoing Editor

*It has been a privilege to be involved
with Shem Tov over the past two years
and I regret that other commitments do
not enable me to continue as editor.*

*I wish to express my appreciation
to all those who contributed valuable
information, and special thanks to
Henry Wellisch, the driving force
behind the publication.*

*Best wishes to you all in your
genealogical pursuits.*

Lily Poritz Miller



We Welcome These New Members to Our Society

David Broude
Sharon Cooper
Natie Maister
Miriam Shell



Volume XVI, No. 2

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The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada was founded in 1985 and currently has about 180 members. Membership costs \$30 per calendar year, \$20 for persons living outside the City of Toronto. 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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(Finding My Ancestors continued)

My grandfather had saved up and bought a ticket for my grandmother in 1914, but sadly she was turned away in Liverpool because of an eye infection. Back in Poland her eye disease was "treated" by pulling out her teeth. My grandmother, whose maiden name was Eisenberg, had stayed behind with her mother and brothers in Radom and waited out the war. It was not until 1920 that she was finally able to join her husband.

The list of Jewish names on that manifest suggested many similar fates since all of them were women and children. When the tickets were bought and my grandmother and her sister-in-law were ready to leave, it was discovered that their nieces were now orphans. Their parents had died in the Spanish Flu Epidemic after World War I. Their mother had been Ethel Pozner, my grandfather's sister, and three girls were named after her in Toronto, one of them my aunt. When the news reached Toronto that the girls were orphaned, their uncles sent more tickets, so the group of four was able to come together. After the long wait, my grandmother had a full and happy life in Toronto. She raised four children, ran a store with my grandfather called Aster Sweets (near the corner of Ossington and Dundas), and enjoyed seeing her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The orphaned girls lived for a time with their aunts and uncles, and eventually married. Their names changed to Sarah Kaufman and Bessie Sacks. Nicha Pozner also lived a long life. In 1937 Sarah Kaufman and her husband Isaac started Toronto Barber and Beauty Supply, which still remains in the family (on the corner of Dundas and Bay).

I had started investigating my family's history over two years before my visit to the archives. If you want to find your relatives' documents, such as a ship's manifest, you need some facts - for example, the name of the ship and date.

I had been close to my grandparents, but unfortunately had not asked them about their past. I turned to everyone I could think of in our large family and asked them questions, recording their stories on tape and taking notes. Bessie Sacks, who had arrived on the *Sicilian* as Bascha Tajchenblatt almost 80 years before, was now 88, and told me what little she remembered. Her older sister, Sarah Kaufman (formerly Sura Tajchenblatt) had passed away a few years before, but one of her daughters, Ethel, told me that her sister Cecile had been named after the *Cecilia*, the ship on which their mother came. At a genealogy lecture in Ottawa, I was fortunate to meet Harry Dodsworth, who solved the mystery of the ship's name. Being highly knowledgeable about

steamship history, he tried looking up the ship for me. The *Cecilia* was not listed, but he suggested it could be the *S.S. Sicilian*, and indeed that's what it turned out to be! My cousin Rose Fegelman, only 10 years old in 1920, remembered that my grandmother's ship had landed in Quebec. Another family member pointed out that my aunt Min Mandel, my grandmother's first child, had been born a year later, and that determined the date of the ship's arrival as the spring of 1920. So by putting these facts together, I was able to locate the ship's manifest quite easily.

Another way I could have discovered the details of the ship was through Form 30A, a Canadian immigration document that was in use from 1919-1924. These are recorded on microfilm, and are in alphabetical order by the person's last name, making it relatively easy to find the correct reel. In my case I was able to find three out of four of my relatives' forms. The information contained in these forms includes the name of the ship, date and port, the age of the person, birthplace, nationality, profession, languages spoken and written, the person who bought the ticket, address to which they are going in Canada, and address of closest relative in country of origin. Some of the more unusual questions are: "If you were in a mental institution, indicate where and when," and "Are you deformed?" In the bottom right corner is the immigrant's signature, and to my amazement my grandmother had actually signed her name. My buby, who everyone swore could neither read nor write, and who always signed her name with an "x" once she was safely on Canadian soil, had apparently learned to write this one word, Pozner. Perhaps the fear of being turned away again drove her to do this as a way to impress the immigration officials. But there it was, in careful childish letters. I remembered then how she had asked me to teach her to write, even as an old woman. This discovery was one of the most precious mementos that I came away with from the National Archives.

Sarah Kaufman's form showed that she could read and write Polish, "Russish" and Hebrew. On the second page, which gives height, hair, eye and skin colour, the officials had filled in her skin colour as "healthy," which caused me to giggle. The street address of her relatives in Radom was also given. Another interesting fact I discovered was that the questions on my relatives' forms were typed in Flemish and French, not surprising since the documents were completed in Antwerp, Belgium. The answers on the forms were handwritten in English or French. Luckily I know a number of languages. From what I could

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INSTRUCTIONS TO PURSERS

—Each passenger shot

	No. of Passengers	No. of S. S. Contract Tickets	Amount of Cash in \$	NAME IN FULL	AGE OF ADULTS		CHILDREN UNDER 14 YEARS		Married, Single or Widowed	Have You ever been in Canada before	Wh
					Male	Female	Male	Female			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	3	12	45.00	Ladowska	Rivka	✓	48			M	No.
2	"	"		"	Rosie	✓	17			S	"
3	"	"		"	Kiva	✓		11		S	"
4	"	"		"	Chava	✓			10	S	"
5	"	"		"	Yankel	✓				S	"
6	20		35.00	Malman	Bojla	✓	28			M	"
7	"	"		"	Sende	✓		7		S	"
8	13		60.00	Plaszawska	Rivka	✓	55			W	"
9	"	"		"	Ida	✓	18			S	"
10	1		75.00	Pozner	Tauby	✓	29			S	"
11	2			"	Nicha	✓	34			M	"
12	31			"	Szmula	✓	18			S	"
13	3		100.00	Tajchonblatt	Sura	✓	16			S	"
14	"	"		"	Bascha	✓			10	S	"
15	33		75.00	Tamborin	Ruchla	✓	47			W	"
16	"	"		"	Riazla	✓			11	S	"
17	"	"		"	SiJa	✓			9	S	"
18	"	"		"	Doba	✓			6	S	"
19	18			"	Taubc	✓	14			S	"
20											

Passenger list for S.S. Sicilian, May 1920

(Finding My Ancestors continued)

see on the reels I was looking at, usually Form 30A was in English. I was also able to obtain copies of Form 30A and give them to my relatives in Toronto.

Another exciting find I made at the National Archives of Canada was several pictures of my grandmother's ship, the *Sicilian*. Originally owned by the Allen Line, by 1917 it had been bought by Canadian Pacific Ocean Services Limited. The archives has an extensive photograph collection, with several shots of this boat, including one where it is pulling into the Quebec harbour. The photographs are accompanied by useful information about the ship and its history. I found additional information about the ship in a book called *Trans-Atlantic Passenger Ships Past and Present*, also at the National Archives. The *Sicilian* had one funnel and travelled at twelve and a half knots.

If you go in person to the National Archives, all the microfilms I have mentioned can be viewed there. Once you know the reel numbers you need (someone at the Genealogy Reference Desk will help you or you can use their computer), you can look at the microfilm readers up to 10 pm at night on weekdays, and 8 am to 6 pm on the weekend. The Genealogy Reference Desk (open from 8:30 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday) on the third floor will be able to offer you some guidance in your search and tell you what records are available. When I was there, I found that they had a book listing the names of the ships and the dates they sailed in chronological order. This book helped me pinpoint on which dates the *Sicilian* sailed to Quebec. This saved me a little time since the lists that are found on the Internet do not name the ships, but only port of arrival and date. When you go through the reel, the ships' manifests will be in chronological order.

At the National Archives of Canada, microfilm records of passenger lists are available for the following ports of entry:

Quebec City/Montreal, Que.: 1865-1935

(closed during winter months)

Halifax, N.S.: 1881-1935

Saint John, N.B.: 1900-1935

North Sydney, N.S.: 1906-1935

Vancouver, B.C.: 1905-1935

Victoria, B.C.: 1905-1935

(includes some small Pacific ports)

via New York: 1906-1931

via eastern U.S. ports: 1905-1928

The address is:

National Archives of Canada
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N3

To contact the Genealogy Reference Desk:

Phone: (613) 996-7458

Fax: (613) 995-6274

web site: <http://www.archives.ca>



My grandparents, Toby and Hymie Pozner, ca. 1913 in Poland

Although they will not conduct extensive genealogical research for you, the National Archives will respond to inquiries by mail, fax or email (see the web site). They will do limited searches and will also advise you as to what records exist for certain periods, and what is indexed. Before contacting them it's best to look at their web site to get an idea of what is available. The web site also gives advice on how to proceed with researching your ancestors.

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(Finding My Ancestors continued)

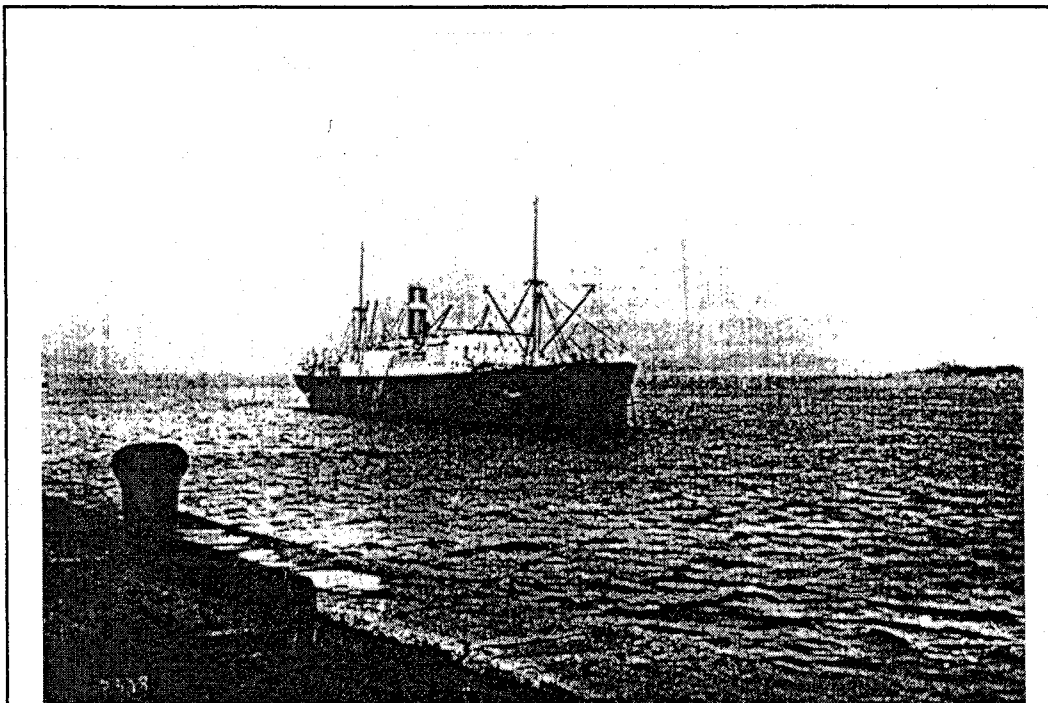
The first step of course is finding out everything you can by talking to people in your family, preferably older members. Try to find out if there are any photos (hopefully with names), or documents such as passports and naturalization papers.

I hope your search will be as successful as mine.

Anyone with questions or comments about this article is welcome to call me at (613) 230-9676 or

email at surahenna@yahoo.ca or snail-mail at 92 Gilmour Street, Ottawa, ON K2P 0N5. ✧

Sharon Cooper is an artist who grew up in Toronto and now lives in Ottawa. She is a member of the Jewish Genealogical Societies of Ottawa and Toronto, and the Kielce-Radom Special Interest Group. She also renders genealogical research services and does translations from Yiddish to English.



*S.S. Sicilian coming in, Quebec, P.Q. ca. 1911
National Archives of Canada, W. J. Topley Collection*

Passenger Lists at the National Archives of Canada

compiled by Henry Wellisch

Passenger Lists Prior to 1865

There are no comprehensive lists of immigrants arriving in Canada prior to 1865. Until that year shipping companies were not required by the government to retain their passenger manifests. Only a few lists have been located among various collections. The National Archives Miscellaneous Immigration Index is a nominal card index to some of these records and is available for consultation in the National Archives reference room. It relates mostly to immigrants from the British Isles to Quebec and Ontario between the years 1801 and 1849. A team of local researchers volunteered their time to input the information from the National Archives Miscellaneous Immigration Index into a database which can be consulted on the website: <http://www.ingeneas.com>

This site includes other immigration and passenger list databases, compiled from ongoing indexing of similar records by the inGeneas team.

Passenger Lists 1865 to 1935

The passenger lists of which copies are in the National Archives of Canada constitute the official record of immigration during this period. They contain information such as name, age, country of origin, occupation and intended destination of passengers.

Immigration Form 30A

Ocean arrivals 1919 to 1924

About the Records

From June 1, 1921 to December 31, 1924, the Department of Immigration and Colonization required that individual manifests (Form 30A) be completed and submitted to the immigration officers at the ports of arrival, instead of the large sheet passenger manifests previously in use. A form had to be submitted for each passenger, including children, except those in transit to the United States. The use of Form 30A was discontinued as of January 1, 1925. From that date, the use of large sheet manifests was reinstated.

Each Form 30A usually included the following details: name of ship, date of sailing, port and date of arrival, name, age, occupation, birthplace, race, citizenship, religion, previous residence in Canada, destination, nearest relative in the country from which the immigrant came. Note that in the earlier version of Form 30A used in 1919, the names of accompanying dependents were usually included with the head-of-household, not on separate forms.

The introduction of the use of Form 30A was inconsistent. Some immigration offices were using them as early as 1919, while some offices used the

sheet manifests as late as 1922. For the years 1919 to 1922, a passenger's name might appear in one or both series. If you cannot find a reference to your ancestor in the Form 30A series, then we recommend that you search the passenger lists for that period.

Quality of the microfilm

The Form 30A records were filmed in 1949 and were not produced to archival standards. As a result, many of the master microfilm reels are of poor quality, which affected the process of duplicating the reels. Unfortunately, the original records were not retained after they were filmed.

How the records are arranged on the reels

The Form 30A records were microfilmed in quasi-alphabetical order. For each letter of the alphabet, surnames are arranged in groupings based on the initial letters of each name. For example, surnames starting with Ada, Adc and Add are interfiled starting with given names beginning with A.

Post-1935 Immigration Records

These records remain in the custody of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Canadian citizens and legal residents of Canada can request details of these records under the Freedom of Information Act. The cost is CAN \$5.00 for each record. The cheque or money order should be made out to the Receiver General of Canada. The person whose records are requested has to be deceased for 20 years or born over 100 years ago.

Proof of death has to be supplied in the form of a death certificate, obituary or picture of a grave-stone. Supply the full name at date of entry and other pertinent information of the person whose records are being sought and send your request to:

Public Rights Administration
Citizenship and Immigration Canada
Narano Building, 360 Laurier Ave. West
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1

Entry Records into Canada across the Canada/US Border

These records are arranged by port and date of arrival from west to east across Canada. They contain general information about each immigrant, such as age, country of birth, occupation, last place of residence in the US and destination in Canada. Not all immigrants crossing the border were registered. Some crossed when posts were closed or where no posts existed. Many families were not registered because one or both parents had been born in Canada or

previously resided there and they were considered returning Canadians rather than immigrants.

Lists arranged by port and date of entry..... 1908-1918
Immigration Form 30A used 1919-1924
Use of border entry lists reinstated..... 1925-1935
For post-1935 border crossings, see previous page.

The records referred to above are available from the National Archives of Canada through the library interloan system. Many of these records are also available from the Family History Library (Mormons). Some libraries in Canada have copies of these micro-

films. In Toronto they are located at the Archives of Ontario (1865-1921 only) and at the Canadiana Room of the North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street (1865-1935). In Montreal passenger lists from 1865-1921 are located at the Montreal Municipal Library at 1210 Sherbrooke Street East.

Border Crossings from Canada into the US

These films, also known as the St. Albans records, were registered by the US Government and the films are in the custody of the US National Archives and Records Administration. They are also available from the Family History Library. ✱

Sirlian Port *Glenora*
Date *10* Class *130* Day *1* Year *1920*
VERKLARING VAN DEN PASSAGIER
Declaration du Passager
NAAM *Pozner Toby*
Leeftijd *29* Geslacht *Mannelijk* *Gekwint* *Widwe* *Wdow*
Aard *Vrouwelijk* *Ongekwint* *Widwe* *Wdow*
Feminiteit *Gebruikt* *Gebruikt* *Gebruikt* *Gebruikt*
Beroep in wilsicht *Menagerie*
Profession en tusschen *Volksman*
Ras *Poleman*
Geboorteplaats *London*
Lieu de naissance *London*
Nationaliteit *Engels*
Nationaliteits *Engels*
Religie *Juis*
Echtgenoot *Geen*
Doel waar toe naar Canada *rejoindre mon mari*
Objet du voyage au Canada
Ooit te voren in Canada geweest Ja Neen *adres*
Avez-vous déjà été au Canada Oui Non *adresse*
Toevige Landingplaats in Canada *—* *—*
Port de débarquement précédent au Canada *—* *—*
Haven van vertrek in Canada *—* *—*
Port de départ du Canada *—* *—*
Waarom zijt ge van Canada vertrokken *—*
Motif du départ du Canada
Hoeveel geld bezit ge *50*
Combien d'argent possédez-vous
Leve ge lezen *oui* en schrijven *oui*
Savet-vous lire *oui* et écrire?
In welke taal *Juis*
En quelle langue
Door wien is het passage betaald? *par mon mari*
Par qui votre passage a-t-il été payé?
Gedrekte ge in Canada te reizen? *oui*
Avez-vous l'intention de vous faire au Canada?
Indien bevestiging gevoerd om welke reden? *—*
Si l'indication au Canada vous a été refusée dites pourquoi?
Gedrekte ge: Vriend, familie, hier te zijn *Mari*
Amis, Parents, here *Toby Pozner Toronto*
Indiquez les personnes
Naam der Spoorreguleerder *C.P.R.*
Nom de la compagnie de Chemins de Fer
Pour laquelle le voyageur a un billet *via London*
Adress complete du plus proche parent a. pays *—*
Adresse complete du plus proche parent a. pays *—*
Indien ge in een of meer landen geweest hebt *—*
Si vous avez séjourné dans un ou plusieurs
indiquez en et quand *—*
Heeft ge een tabes, epilepsie of andere ziekte gehad *—*
Avez-vous été atteint de tabes, d'épilepsie ou d'autres
maladies? Indiquez les maladies et quand vous les avez
eues *—*
Si vos parents a. adultes ont eu des maladies, indiquez les
et quand *—*
Date *18/5/20* Handteekten van reiziger *Toby Pozner*
Signature du passager

Passenger Declaration Form 30A for Toby Pozner, May 1, 1920

YAD VASHEM

Tomer Brunner

from JEWISHGEN Hungarian SIG Newsgroup

Last week I visited the Yad Vashem archive and I would like to share my experience. The room where the researchers work has many computer workstations, wide desks and also shelves with books of general interest - for example, Yizkor books, atlases, books with lists (Nevek - names of Jewish victims of Hungarian labour battalions; Bergen-Belsen: list of inhabitants, and much more. From that room you reach another one where you give (and receive) your archive material orders and where the microfilm readers are located.

The Computer System

As you know, besides the museum, Yad Vashem has a library, archive and the Hall of Names, where the Pages of Testimony (PT) are kept. After months of work, the Pages of Testimony were computerized. If you want to view a specific PT you can do it in the Hall of Names or from the archive's computer which is connected by Internet to the Hall of Names' computer. From the same computer you can check what material is available in the archive and the library. You can also check their photo archive and view the actual photos on the screen! There are many family photos with no names and I think it is very important to try to identify those people before there's no longer anyone who can do it.

They also created a "List of Lists" from the archive. I suggest this not be used as the only source for lists but that one check all archival material since there are many lists which are part of testimonies, books and other material which are not included in the "List of Lists."

- Some of the archival material is not for public use. (I don't know whether this is a permanent or temporary situation.)
- There is more than one search engine (the newest for the PT and the photo archive and the old one for the archive and library) and the older version is not easy to use. So always ask for assistance. I found them to be very cooperative and helpful.

Pages of Testimony - Search Tips and Bugs

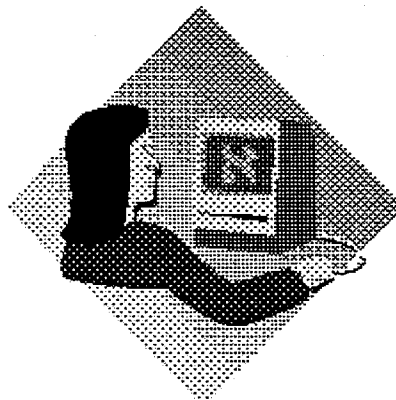
There are a number of approaches by which to search - ie., surname, first name, maiden name, town of birth, residence or death. You can also use an advanced search with name of submitter of the PT

and year of submission. The search can be done by exact spelling, phonetic, synonym or by other means. From my experience, the synonym is the best, but sometimes the phonetic approach will yield better results. Hebrew speakers should always try to search by Latin letters too!

Note: When you set it to whatever kind of search and click the "submit" button, you can view the results. When you click the search button again, in order to type another name, be sure to reset the search type because it might automatically change back to the "exact spelling" default setting. When you find a name of interest and view the PT, you get a scanning of the actual PT on the screen. If you are unable to read the handwriting, you can click on the "General Information" button at the top of the page and view the typed information from the PT. The information on that page was entered by volunteers who, regretfully, sometimes made mistakes. The search engines are based on this typed information (and not on the handwritten PT). When the handwriting is not clear, mistakes are inevitable. Problems also arise due to languages unfamiliar to the volunteers.

In order to avoid overlooking any detail, one should read both the actual page and the typed information. You can have the handwritten page printed for a fee. Photos can also be printed, rates for which are higher.

For reasons mentioned, it is important to search not only by town or victim's name but also by submitter's name. If you have luck, as I did, you should allow a whole day and a lot of paper for the visit. I found more than 80 relatives listed in only two days of work. ☆



Historical Archive in Vilnius
Update

According to Kahlile Mehr, Family History Library collections acquisitions specialist for the territory of the former Soviet Union, the library now has received and catalogued all of the Jewish vital records from opis 1 of fond 728 stored in the Historical Archive in Vilnius. They continue to receive films from this fond at a steady pace and Mehr anticipates that the entire fond (perhaps half of the total collection of Jewish vital records in the Vilnius historical archives) will be available to participants at the conference this coming July.

Mehr is producing a locality index for the collection that will be ready for the conference. Most of the items are listed in *Jewish Vital Records, Revision Lists and Other Jewish Holdings in the Lithuanian Archives (Avotaynu, 1996)* by Harold Rhode and Sallyann Amdur Sack, but Mehr notes that since publication of the book, the archive has found additional records that are not listed. The portion of the book that shows which records are represented by this collection is displayed at:

<http://www.avotaynu.com/lithuania.htm>

"Fond" and "opis" are archival designations of the record storage system that enable an archivist to retrieve records. A "fond" is a record group, and an "opis" is an inventory of a subset of records within a specific fond. Fond 728 consists of four opis and includes vital records from many parts of Lithuania. It even includes records for some places that are now in the northeastern part of Belarus.

If this isn't exciting news for all Litvaks then I do not know what is! I hope you agree and make it to Salt Lake City, Utah.

Howard Margol Fred Davis
President, IAJGS IAJGS Board/Conference Liaison

Regina Kopilevich

Regina Kopilevich, premier Jewish guide/interpreter in Lithuania, has an unfortunate problem. During her return to Vilnius from Jerusalem, her notebook containing all of her appointments was accidentally lost. If you had reserved or engaged Regina to be your guide in Lithuania during 2000 or 2001, please contact her and re-confirm. You can contact Regina via the following:

Email: regina@pub.osf.lt
Telephone: (370-2) 342 4888
Cellphone: (370) 990 5456

You can meet with Regina personally during the conference in Salt Lake City, Utah in July.



From the Joseph Shapiro Fund, Vilnius

Advertising Rates

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by August 2000 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 (one 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 cents per word thereafter; your name and address are free. Please write advertisement clearly, with family surnames you are researching in *uppercase* letters. Make your cheque payable to the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto) and mail to: JGS of Canada (Toronto), P.O. Box 446, Station A, North York, Ontario, Canada M2N 5T1.

NEWS ABOUT JEWISH GENEALOGY FROM AVOTAYNU

Release of Canadian Censuses in Doubt

Canada has allowed access to its census records 92 years after collection of the data. The 1901 census was released in 1993. Release of the 1911 census would be due in 2003; but release has hit a snag. In 1911, and in all subsequent censuses, the Canadian government of the time assured its citizens that the information they provided would be kept confidential. There was no time limit on the confidentiality and some have interpreted this to mean in perpetuity. Because such data is considered essential for historians, researchers and genealogists to shed light on personal and community histories of Canada, the Canadian government last November formed an Expert Panel to examine the issue. This panel is to report to the minister responsible for Statistics Canada by May 31, 2000. Options being considered are amending the "Statistics Act" to allow records, starting with the 2001 census, to be publicly available after 92 years. This would mean the census of 1911-1991 would be confidential forever. Another option is to retroactively change the provisions of the Act to make all censuses in the public domain eventually.

Information about this controversy can be found at <http://www.statcan.ca/english/census96/interm.htm>

(The foregoing from Vol. 1, No. 5 April 2, 2000)

Australian Censuses to Be In Public Domain

In the last issue of "Nu? What's New?," I reported the problem Canadian historians and genealogists were having trying to place national censuses, retroactive to the 1911 census, in the public domain after 92 years. A few days after publishing the information, *Avotaynu* received a fax from Nick Vine Hall of Australia explaining the policy for census data in his country. In the past, the Australian government had a simple policy. Census records were destroyed after they were of no use to the government.

Nick, along with a number of genealogists and historians, successfully lobbied to have enacted "Census Information Amendment Bill 2000" which passed on April 3. This bill provides for release of the 2001 census and all future censuses after 99 years. More than 96 federal politicians helped lobby the government for this policy change, led by Stephen Mutch, MP, a champion of genealogical causes in Parliament. In announcing the passing of the law, the Australian Minister of Financial Services and Planning stated, "We'd like to provide for future generations of Australia with a snapshot of Australia at the turn of the millennium and at the beginning of the new century. The census will give the very best information to historians and genealogists who would like to have some feel of how their grandparents and great-grandparents lived at the turn of the century."

Some census and population musters of regions of Australia that have survived can be found at <http://www.slnsw.gov.au/plb/libs/ryde/path6.htm>

This is further proof that genealogists and historians can help set government policy and law by making their voices heard. About 18 months ago, there were rumors in the United States that the Archivist of the United States, John

Carlin, was planning to reorganize and consolidate the regional archives system. Carlin travelled to various cities and listened to genealogists and historians talk about the value of the regional archives system. If there were any plans to change the system, Carlin changed his mind. Now funds will be used primarily to improve the existing facilities.

A Good Source for Yizkor Books

Yizkor books (Holocaust memorial books) are very rare and their prices reflect this fact. Prices are typically \$75-200 - if you can find one for your ancestral town. There is a source I have been using for a number of years that has reasonable prices for these books and other Holocaust-related books: Chaim Dzialowski of Jerusalem. This company's prices for yizkor books range from \$40-75. I compared their prices to those of a New York-based bookdealer. The Biala Podlaska yizkor book cost \$100 from the New York dealer; Dzialowski wanted \$40. Dombrowa Gornicza: New York \$135, Dzialowski, \$60.

They also sell copies of the Pinkas HaKehillot (Encyclopedia of Towns) series at very reasonable prices. Some years ago, I was fortunate to buy from them the extremely rare "Romania-Volume 1" of this series.

The company's address is POB 6413, 91063 Jerusalem, Israel. Their fax number is 972 2 538 2878. That's it. No Web site, no e-mail address. Oh yes, their catalogue is in Hebrew. Some years ago I convinced them to put the town names of yizkor books in the Roman alphabet.

(The foregoing from Vol. 1, No. 6 April 16, 2000)

Language Translation Sites on the Internet

Jewish genealogy is international in character. Most Jewish genealogists live in countries to which their ancestors immigrated less than 120 years ago; therefore, a knowledge of the languages of the Old Country is an important skill. When it comes to translating data on the Internet, there are a number of services that will do it for free.

Edward Rosenbaum of the Belarus SIG made me aware of a site, called Aport, that translates Russian into English. It is located at <http://www.aport-ru.com/en/defengtrn.asp>. What is fascinating about this site is that you do not give it text to translate. Instead, you point to a URL that has the Russian text. Not only will it translate the information at the URL, but as you link to other sites, it automatically translates them, too. As an example, if you want to determine the holdings of the National Archives of Belarus, go to <http://www.president.gov.by/gosarchives/index.htm> - but it is in Russian.

Go to the Aport site noted above and specify the address of the Belarus National Archives. You can browse the entire Belarus site and the software will translate every page to which you link. If it was not for the buttons and other graphics that remain in the Cyrillic alphabet, you would think the site was in English.

(continued on page 12)

NEWS ABOUT JEWISH GENEALOGY FROM AVOTAYNU

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The quality of the translation seems high. Here is the text on the Belarussian Archives Home Page. "In archives of Byelorussia you may find the information on a history, material and spiritual culture of Byelorussian people, rich data on genealogy. For storage of these documents in the country the network of the state archive establishments which heads the State committee on archives and office-work of Byelorussia is created. In the country 6 republican, 6 regional, 16 zone archives and 3 regional archives of public associations operate."

Another site, Alta Vista, has the ability to translate a number of languages to/from English including German, French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Located at <http://babel.altavista.com/>, it uses the Systran software package. The quality of translation is poor; it likely uses word for word translation, sometimes with humorous results. It took the surname Rosenberg and translated it to prose mountainp. They claim to be able to translate Russian to English. I had great difficulty getting the process to work and when it did, the results were a string of question marks! Apparently they do not have a compatible character set.

DNA and Genealogy

A good deal of publicity has been given recently to the Lemba tribe of South Africa whose members claim Jewish ancestry. It has been proven through DNA testing that they indeed have Jewish ancestry. Not only do they have "Jewish genes" but DNA tests proved the subset of their culture, who claim to be of the priestly class, do have the Cohanic Y-chromosome genes. Anthropological research has demonstrated they are likely descended from Yemenite Jews who plied the African east coast trade routes more than 1,000 years ago. Additional information about the Lemba tribe can be found at http://www.gsnonweb.com/gsnlib_a/gsn1999/99_05/990509/41013.html

Dr. Michael Hammer of the University of Arizona, who has been active in doing DNA testing of the Lemba people, is one of the speakers at the 20th International Seminar on Jewish Genealogy to be held in Salt Lake City this year. He has also written an article in the Spring issue of *Avotaynu* about his research project on Jewish genetic demography. He hopes the study will lead to an understanding of the distribution of Eastern European Jewish matrilineal and patrilineal genetic markers.

More on DNA and Genealogy

The brick wall for most African American genealogists is determining where their slave ancestors came from in Africa. DNA may help solve this puzzle. A group of scientists are taking DNA samples from people living on the west coast of Africa. They want to offer African Americans DNA testing that will match their DNA against those of the Africans in the hope that it will demonstrate from where the Americans' ancestors came.

Improving the Quality of Old Photographs

More and more genealogists are creating family history Web sites where the entire family can share the experience of the family's history. An important part of these sites are old family photos. Unfortunately many of them are cracked, discolored and/or faded. Graphics software often can correct these problems.

I use Paint Shop Pro (<http://www.jasc.com/psp6dl.html>), an inexpensive graphics editor, to perform the task. There are many others.

These editors allow you to remove cracks from pictures, as demonstrated at: <http://www.avotaynu.com/tartasky/beforeafter1.htm> which shows a picture of the brothers Abe and Manny Tartasky at Abe's wedding in 1926. They can also color correct old photos as shown in the 1930s picture of Freida Nasovich Tartasky at <http://www.avotaynu.com/tartasky/beforeafter2.htm>

You don't have to be an artist to use these editors. With a little bit of practice, you can acquire the skill. Their technique for correcting damaged portions of a photo is to allow you to copy good portions of the photo onto the damaged portions. One of my favorite experiments with using the graphics editor was when I removed the pearls from the neck of my daughter in her wedding picture: <http://www.avotaynu.com/wedding3.html>

What's Nu with the Annual Conference

Planning to bring family to Salt Lake City in July to the 20th International Seminar on Jewish Genealogy? There are a number of day tours available for family members who want to see the sites in Salt Lake City and environs. Information is available at <http://iajgs.org/slcy2k/tours.htm>

(The foregoing from Vol. 1, No. 7 April 30, 2000)

Selected entries from "Nu? What's New?", an e-mail news service published by Avotaynu for people tracing their Jewish family history. To subscribe to this free bi-weekly Internet newsletter, go to: <http://www.incor.com/avotaynu.htm>.

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**Joseph Shapiro Fund
Jewish Exlibris & Graphics Exposition
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