

שם טוב
SHEM TOV

JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA (TORONTO)

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EARLY JEWISH DOCTORS IN TORONTO

By Cyril Gryfe MD

The first Jewish medical graduate to practise in Toronto was Samuel Lavine (1875-1962), who graduated in 1899, from Trinity Medical School.¹ Convinced that there was no future for a Jewish practitioner in this city, he departed for the United States, but after only one year he returned and opened an office at John and Adelaide Streets, distinguishing himself at first by making his house calls on a bicycle. There were only 3,000 Jews in the city at the time.

Another Jewish physician to graduate from Trinity before it amalgamated with the University of Toronto in 1904 was Charles Isaac Levy, who also left Toronto, after qualifying in 1901.²

The first Jewish medical graduate (MB) from the University of Toronto was Solomon Singer (1887-1914), who in 1903 became the city's second Jewish physician. Singer spent an additional year here to obtain an MD degree, another year in New York, and commenced practice in 1905 at 280 Simcoe Street. His life and career ended prematurely and tragically at age 37,³ as a victim of typhoid fever, probably contracted from a patient.

Solomon Singer was one of 12 brothers and sisters who demonstrated extraordinary distinction. His elder brother in 1907 was the first Jewish graduate of the Ontario College of Pharmacy,⁴ and another brother, Fred, was the first Jew to be elected to the Ontario legislature.

Between 1903 and 1907, no more Jewish graduates emerged, while in the interval, acute awareness of its healthcare and social-welfare needs was developing in a rapidly expanding, immigrant-fed Jewish community of about 9,000. Initiatives to create benevolent societies were being taken by laymen, when Dr. S. Kaufman, an American Jewish physician, arrived in the city in 1906⁵ or 1907,⁶ and temporarily ran a dispensary to serve the burgeoning community. Kaufman had come from Cleveland, and although prohibited from practising himself without an Ontario licence, he apparently worked under the supervision of three non-Jewish physicians, who were also active participants in the free Jewish Dispensary that emerged shortly after. Although Kaufman's clinic was not free, he charged only half of the going rate at the time.⁷

"Between 1908 and 1912 there graduated five men, who may be regarded as the founders of the Jewish medical commu-

nity."⁸ The first of the group was Abraham Isaac Willinsky (1885-1976), or "A.I." as he was known, who after a variety of postgraduate study programs in Europe and the USA, alternating with periods of general practice at different city sites, established himself as Toronto's first Jewish specialist. Willinsky's long career included many distinctions, and he became a virtual legend long before his death in Baycrest Hospital in 1976 at age 91.

As the third Jewish University of Toronto medical graduate, Willinsky was also the first of many whose career aspirations were obstructed by the anti-semitic discrimination prevalent in both the community at large and within the medical community.

The year after Willinsky's graduation, Leon Judah Solway (1885-1945) earned his medical degree, starting him on a respected career that ended with his death at age 60.⁹ His first office was on Dundas Street near Beverly Street, among his co-religionists, who by this time were spreading westward as they established themselves in the city.

The trickle of Jewish graduates was sustained by Harry

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Programs organized by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto)

*Unless otherwise noted, programs take place at the
Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue - 470 Glencairn Avenue
Doors open at 7:30, program begins at 8 p.m.*

Non-member fee: \$5.00 per meeting (exception: spouses accompanying members)

**** NOTE: AUGUST MEETING ****

Wednesday, August 29, 2007

Speaker: Doreen Berger

Topic: The Jewish Victorian

Doreen Berger is the author of The Jewish Victorian, Genealogical Information from the Jewish Newspapers, 1871-80. The book includes a collection of all birth, marriage and death entries from the Jewish newspapers of Britain of the relevant period, as well as news reports, obituaries and gossip, and sheds light on both the general attitudes of the day and class differences within Jewish society. At this meeting we will have a wonderful opportunity to meet with the author, and to hear the fascinating story behind the writing of this invaluable reference work.

Doreen is a founding member of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain, and Chair of the Anglo-Jewish Special Interest Group. She writes regular articles on stories from the Jewish newspapers of the past, and is a contributor to the New

Dictionary of National Biography. She has given many talks on Anglo-Jewish genealogy, and has been featured on the Jewish radio station "Spectrum Radio." Her report on the Jewish Cemetery at Ball's Pond Road was instrumental in getting the cemetery designated as a heritage site.

Copies of The Jewish Victorian can be found in both our JGS library and Robarts library at the University of Toronto.

***We Welcome This New Member
to Our Society***

Abe Schwartz

vol. XXIII No. 2

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The Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada was founded in 1985 and currently has over 200 members. Membership costs \$36 per calendar year, \$18 for students. (Please note that the out of town reduction has been deleted). 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* and on our website at: www.jgstoronto.ca.

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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Alfred Turofsky (b. 1886) and Bessie Thelma Pullan (1888-1947) in 1910, the latter being the first-ever Canadian, Jewish, female medical graduate; Isaac Reuben Smith (d. 1964) and Maurice Aaron Pollock (1887-1981) in 1911;¹⁰ and in 1912, Morris Levy, Archibald Steinberg, and Louis Judah Breslin (1891-1952). The first two of the latter left Toronto, thus netting only six Jewish practitioners in the city, and by 1918, only ten.

To genealogists, it is of some interest that from the first seven male doctors to graduate and practise in Toronto, there were six sons who also became doctors.¹¹ In at least one case, the medical heritage has been perpetuated into the third generation.¹²

As increasing numbers of Jewish graduates emerged, they found it virtually impossible to obtain internships in Toronto hospitals. This was despite an impressive collective record of scholarship, which was conspicuous in a disproportionately large number of academic awards. Starting with silver medals to Louis Breslin in 1912, and to Abraham Brodey (b. 1890) the following year, Jewish graduates eventually won nine gold medals of the 32 awarded between 1927 and 1956, with two awards in each of 1942 and 1943.¹³

However, it was not until 1929 that the Toronto General Hospital began to accept even one Jewish intern annually,¹⁴ the first being Adolph Appell (1907-1995), followed the next year by Abraham (Al) Track¹⁵ (1905-1999).

If Jewish graduates chose to start into practice directly after graduation, they also met great difficulties, even though by the early 1920s they were members of a community of almost 35,000 people, whose language and customs were their own. Actually, they were shunned by their fellow Jews, who were aware not only of their lack of experience, but also of their lack of access to hospital beds. The well-assimilated Jews, especially, avoided them. The new doctors found that gentiles too would usually not consult them, and they often were refused rental space for their offices in parts of the city where few if any Jews lived.

Denial of access to hospital operating rooms confronted the first Jews who pursued surgical specialties. Following Willinsky came I. R. Smith, who after military service in World War I started working in ophthalmology and otolaryngology; and Benjamin Cohen, a gynecologist-obstetrician, beginning two years later. Notable, in passing, is the absence of psychiatrists in this early group, given the observation that immigrant Jews (in the USA at least) resorted more often than other immigrants to psychiatric and psychological treatment.¹⁶

Fierce competition for patients began around 1923, after four years in which 23 Jews started practices in Toronto, thus increasing their numbers more than threefold. They concentrated their offices in the area bounded on the east by McCaul Street, on the west by Bathurst Street, and closely flanking Dundas Street. By 1925 there may have been as many as 40¹⁷ Jewish doctors in the city, but during the next four years, eight (20%) left to seek greener fields in the USA. A considerable proportion of each subsequent graduating class followed, ini-

tially in quest of internships, but most never to return. Surprisingly, the major factor in this permanent exodus may not have been discrimination by hospitals and non-Jewish doctors, but abuse by the Jewish community itself!¹⁸

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, the only way for a Jewish doctor to gain a foothold as a general practitioner in the community seemed to be through a sick-benefit society or lodge. Sam Lavine, the first Jewish medical practitioner in Toronto, was also the city's first Jewish lodge doctor, starting with the Pride of Israel Lodge around 1906. Prior to this, and until enough Jewish doctors began graduating, non-Jews had been appointed as lodge doctors.

The process of becoming a lodge doctor began with joining the lodge as an ordinary member, which of course would mean that there usually were more than one physician-member in any lodge. Achieving the status of lodge doctor for a term of one year at a time required campaigning for election. For the winner this provided an immediate, relatively enormous clientele, but the election process was perceived by the candidates as demeaning, the subsequent demands overwhelming, and the rewards disproportionately meager.¹⁹

The society paid the doctor an annual lump sum, in return for which medical attendance was guaranteed to all members and their families. The physician's annual retainer fee per family was the same regardless of the size of the member's family, or the number of calls in a year: originally only one dollar! This covered the cost of all consultations between 6 a.m. and midnight. For calls after midnight, he could charge an additional fifty cents. The doctor was obliged to respond to every call, and if he was unable to do so, he had to meet the cost of whatever other doctor the patient consulted in his place.²⁰

The low rate of remuneration, and the associated "indignities which the doctors felt were unnecessarily associated with the position,"²¹ made the role of lodge doctor uninviting, to say the least. Nonetheless, with the exception of three or four specialists, all Jewish medical practitioners were lodge doctors for at least part of their careers.²²

After 1925, the annual retainer fee was increased, and in the late 1920s there was even fiercer competition for election. However, some doctors actually served more than one lodge simultaneously, one reputedly serving eight concurrently.²³

At the first meeting of the Toronto Jewish Medical Association in 1925, a major item of business was the issue of lodge-doctor practice, which, "it was felt, was not in a satisfactory state".²⁴ Its domination of the agendas of subsequent meetings led to the formation of a subcommittee, then a separate organization expressly to deal with lodge problems. It was not until 1938 that a solution of the lodge problem began, with the formation of the Central Medical Bureau under the leadership of Drs. John Soboloff²⁵ and Coleman Solursh.²⁶ Solursh left a lucid personal account of Jewish medical practice in Toronto over a 40-year period, and it is also notable that he was the son-in-law of Moses Singer, of the formidable Singer family mentioned above.

By the mid-1920s, a substantial number of Jews were being accepted as medical students in Toronto, although limited artifi-

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Early Jewish Doctors in Toronto Cont'd from page 3

cially by a quota system which existed across virtually all of North America.²⁷ On graduation they sought internships, but local opportunities were rare, so they looked to the USA or further afield. A similar climate of anti-semitism prevailed in the USA,²⁸ but the absolute number of internships, and the relatively easier access to state rather than private institutions in the USA, fulfilled the demands of the majority of Toronto graduates. Nonetheless, the challenge was formidable, and presented a dilemma to the new Jewish graduate: to try general practice in his home town and be mercilessly exploited by the lodge system; or to uproot and face the uncertainties of an American society that was also anti-semitic, but to a lesser extent, particularly in certain cities. The fact that a large proportion of the medical community left, especially during the 1926-1929 period, the height of the Roaring Twenties, appears to confirm the repulsiveness of the lodge system.

Gradually after World War II, and more obviously by the late 1950s, overt anti-semitism declined in Canada, thereby removing a major constraint on the Toronto Jewish medical community from displaying its true potential, academically, scientifically, and in practice. However, there is ample evidence that an equally inhibiting liability had been the shameful legacy of the lodges and its negative effects on professional self-respect. The image of an unhappy and exploited professional group is portrayed vividly and without the bias of a medical viewpoint by Stephen Speisman in his definitive history of Toronto's Jewish community.²⁹ However, the harsh exploitation by the Jewish lodge system of its doctors appears to have been a Toronto phenomenon. Mutual benefit societies were ubiquitous in North American Jewish communities, and virtually all had their "society doctors," but there is none of this severity in the descriptions of the medical profession by the historians of Jewish New York,³⁰ Baltimore,³¹ Milwaukee,³² or Cleveland.³³

Among the great number and variety of formal social organizations that offered medical services to Toronto Jewry, surely not all were guilty of insensitivity and exploitation. The pattern seems to have been set by one large fraternal society, and perhaps might be traced to a few key influential individuals, but to make this thesis more convincingly, a more rigorous examination of primary sources, if they exist, is needed.

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Coming Soon on Our Web Site:
A Family Finder Spreadsheet for our Society.

Jews in Canada's Armed Forces, Part I

by Henry Wellisch

The association of Jews with the British military in earlier days and later on with the Canadian armed forces goes back a long time. Commissary Officer Aaron Hart enlisted with General Amherst in New York in 1760, and accompanied him as a member of his staff when he entered Montreal after the capture of the city. Emanuel de Cordova, Hananiel Garcia and Isaac Miranda were also officers in the army of conquest. These and other Jewish officers served on the Loyalist side in the American revolutionary war. Samuel David served as Lt. Colonel in the militia during the war of 1812, as did Ezekiel and Benjamin Hart, sons of Aaron Hart, who served as Colonels.

During the Papineau rebellion of 1837-1838 a number of Jews fought on the Loyalist side. At the time of the Fenian Raids in 1870 several Jewish officers served in the militia, among them Captain David A. Hart, who commanded the First Prince of Wales Rifles, and Major R. Sullivan David. Jewish officers and soldiers of other ranks were in the Canadian Volunteer Contingent which served with the British army in South Africa during the Boer war.

Several thousand Jews were in the Canadian Expeditionary Force during the First World War, but reliable numbers are not available. At the time there were about 12,500 Jewish men in Canada over the age of 21, who were British subjects. Many others were citizens of Russia and other foreign countries, but these people were not eligible for enlistment. According to historian Louis Rosenberg, approximately 4700 Jews served in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. In addition to these soldiers it is estimated that 400 un-naturalized Jewish residents of Canada below the age of military service, and U.S. residents, served in the three battalions of the Royal Fusiliers, known as the Jewish Legion. Part of this force assembled in Camp Fort Edward, Nova Scotia. Among them was David Ben Gurion, first Prime Minister of Israel, and Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, second President of Israel.

When the Second World War broke out, the Canadian Jewish Congress under the leadership of Samuel Bronfman established the National War Efforts Committee and also the Bureau of War Records. According to their files dated May 21, 1944 there were at that time 14,864 Jews in the Canadian military - 431 seamen, 9289 soldiers and 5,144 airmen. The exact number of Jewish soldiers is not available, but it is estimated that there were 16,441 Jews in the Canadian military. This does not include the 163 Canadian Jews who served with other allied forces.

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Albert Garshowitz

WARRANT OFFICER (Class II) ALBERT GARSHOWITZ

WARRANT OFFICER (Class II) ALBERT GARSHOWITZ, H-84377, R.C.A.F., of Hamilton, was reported missing and presumed dead following air operations over enemy territory on August 17, 1943, according to an official report. He was buried in Westphalia, Germany.

Warrant Officer Garshowitz was one of the R.C.A.F. members especially chosen for the successful blasting of the Mohne Dam in Germany on May 17, 1943. The leader of the operation, Wing Commander Guy Gibson, R.A.F., was awarded the Victoria Cross. The aircraft in which Garshowitz served as wireless air gunner was reported shot down by anti-aircraft fire as it approached the target. The Hon. Vincent Massey, then Canadian High Commissioner in London, paid tribute to Warrant Officer Garshowitz's courage in a letter to his parents.

Warrant Officer Garshowitz enlisted in the air force in 1940. After training at Brandon and Montreal he received his wings at the No. 1 Bombing and Gunnery School, at Jarvis, Ont., on April, 1942, and proceeded overseas. He participated in raids over France, Italy and Germany (See P. 24).

Born on December 11, 1921, in Hamilton, he was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Garshowitz, 336 James Street N. Warrant Officer Garshowitz was educated at McIlwraith Public School, Hamilton Central Collegiate Institute and Hamilton Talmud Torah. He was confirmed in 1934 at the Beth Jacob Synagogue. He was an active member of the A.Z.A.



This is the uncle of our member Hartley Garshowitz. Published in "Canadian Jews in World War II" by the Canadian Jewish Congress.

What Price Memory: Letters of a Yizkor Book Debate

by Myrna Neuringer Levy

Shortly after the end of the Shoah, survivors began writing reminiscences of their lives in the Eastern European communities in which they lived. These published books are known as “Yizkor Books,” books of remembrance that today are recognized as prime sources of information on the history, life and social customs of those communities. One would assume, then, that all former members of the community greeted the publication of such books with enthusiasm and support.

This was not always the case, as an exchange of letters between two branches of a Landsmanschaft organization, one in New York and the other in Israel, illustrate. The letters also illuminate the differences in perspective between the two groups as well as illustrate the work the organization undertook prior to the outbreak of the war.

The Ershte Borchover Society, consisting of former residents of Borszczow, a shtetl in Galicia, was formed in New York City in 1898. Members of the Israeli branch of the organization, which was probably formed later, were the writers and editors of the Yizkor Book *Sefer Borchov*, written in Yiddish and Hebrew, which was published in Haifa in 1960.

Prior to its publication, letters written in Yiddish were exchanged between Moshe Blumenthal, living in Haifa, and Sol Neuringer in New York City.

Sol Neuringer was the chair of the Sunshine Fund, a special fund established by the organization at the end of World War II. Initially it arranged for packages of food, clothing and medicine to be sent to survivors of the Holocaust who were living in DP camps. This money was funneled through such agencies as CARE and the Red Cross. The organization also worked with HAIS to reunite families as well as assist survivors in getting visas to the U. S., Israel, Canada and other countries.

The principal subject of the letters was the financial support the Israeli branch of the organization expected to receive from the Americans. Also at issue was the number of books the Israelis wanted the Americans to commit to purchasing and the number of books the Americans expected to receive gratis.

In a letter dated October 27, 1960 Moshe Blumenthal writes, “We waited....for an order of at least 100 books with a down payment of \$1500. The price will be \$15 per book.”

Blumenthal goes on to acknowledge the receipt of \$500 sent the previous February, which he considers a contribution to the cost of the printing. He notes, however, that the money was used to pay for the cost of including four pictures that the American society wanted to have in the book:

“Besides this we printed a special report of your activities and mentioned you in a few places. With the \$500 you got yourself a great bargain.... Actually we hoped that because of the pictures and special article about the American Landsmanschaft you would consider the sum as covering the cost of including this.

“We put a lot of thought, energy and money into the book. We cannot distribute it or give it away without payment. Who-

ever is interested in it had to send in \$25 and he’ll get the book. If the poor landsleit paid \$15 per book, the price of \$15 for the rich American landsleit is a joke.”

Blumenthal then extends an incentive to Neuringer and the New York organization: “I have material for publishing a new book, a larger one and a lovelier one. Therein we will correct whatever is missing from the first book.... We will have money to publish the second book if all of the printed books will be sold....”

Finally, Blumenthal writes that “we are very fortunate that my brother, Nachman, took over the editing of the book without an honorarium. Other cities paid for the editor, a sum that cost us to print the book....”

As can be expected Moshe Blumenthal’s letter created a storm of protest and anger when it was received in New York and circulated among the members of the local executive.

Almost a month passed before Sol Neuringer wrote an answer on November 30, 1960. In words dripping with sarcasm, he begins by commenting, “For me now to write how your stormy expression affected me I would have to use too many words and possibly it would take up too much of your important time to read.” After acknowledging how much discussion in New York followed, Neuringer writes, “I hardly believe that your co-workers in Eretz would co-sign the feelings that you expressed in your letter.”

Neuringer continues with an impassioned description of the work the New York society did for the Borchovers living in the shtetl:

*“Since March, 1926, that is to say, nearly thirty-five years, a few - and I must point out, not wealthy people - Borchover landsleit, undertook to help the needy back home. For thirty-five years they worked and sweated and put in a lot of energy and effort - went around to collect for Talmud Torah, for clothes for Pesach for the poor folks - I say ‘went’ because at that time the Borchover did not yet own an automobile - they trod through snow, frost, and in great summer heat calling upon the landsleit. (They didn’t have telephones either because that was a great luxury) so they knocked at the doors to awaken the Jewish feeling in their hearts to give - half a dollar - a dollar - two dollars and five dollars was a large contribution. They did that not for **publicity** but because the Jewish heart cried for the fate of the suffering ones. Many years they were shamed - many people mocked them and some even insulted them....*

“In your letter you write, ‘The rich Americans can surely pay \$25 for a book.’ (Though in your letter to me of August 25 the price was only \$10 and printing costs were only 2000 Israeli pounds, not 6000.)

“I can inform you that we have no ‘rich Americans’ - they are rich in good heartedness.”

Neuringer concedes that there are those from Borchov living in New York, Canada, Germany and Israel “who earn comfortable, good incomes and a few of them are actually rich.”

“But,” he complains, “to get a few dollars from them to support others - God forbid....” He names some Borchovers

who were assisted by the Sunshine Fund when they arrived in North America after surviving the Holocaust and had done well materially since but refused to support those still in need.

Neuringer enclosed letters from other members of the New York executive who were as outraged as he was, and sent copies of those letters to other members of the executive in Israel.

He concludes, "To you, your coworkers, to friends of my youth I apologize for my sharp words. I am writing to you privately and not officially as a representative of the organization. I am writing from the heart."

The Yizkor Book, Sefer Borchoy, was published and distributed by the Peretz Publishing Company in Haifa. Today there are copies in Yizkor Book collections of libraries in Israel, the United States and Canada. Robarts Library at the University of Toronto has a copy, called Sefer Borshtshiv in the catalogue, edited by Nachman Blumenthal (call number DS135 R93 B64).

I do not know how many were ultimately sold. To my knowledge, a second edition, with all the additional material that Moshe Blumenthal alluded to in his letter, was never published.

IAJGS 2007 Conference—July 15-20, 2007 Hilton City Center, Salt Lake City, Utah

To **register online** for the conference and hotel, see the latest news on the conference agenda, explore Jewish Salt Lake City, and learn about the Family History Library, go to <http://slc2007.org>

If you have already registered and would like to **add SIG luncheons or other fee-based items**, go to the conference web site, click "Registration" and then "Registration Update," provide your family name and confirmation password, then click "Add Fee-Based Items."

Be sure to check that you do not inadvertently request a fee-based item already ordered or which might be in conflict with a previously-selected item. This is important as there are NO refunds or cancellations on fee-added items.

If you plan to **travel by train**, a conference discount has been arranged with Amtrak. It can be used for travel to Salt Lake City between July 12 and July 23, 2007. You must book by phone, and quote Convention Fare Code X03P-915, which has been arranged for conference attendees.

In addition to **day trips** during the conference, there is a **pre-conference tour** to Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks, and a **post-conference tour** to Yellowstone, Tetons and Jackson Hole. These may all be purchased from the web site, from the "Travel and Hotel" button.

Latest news: The Resource Room will offer the complete German and Austrian pre-World War I military map series, on loan from the Family History Library and the Library of Congress. Finding aids will be available, and you will have the ability to print (for a fee) oversize copies of each map.

@JGSToronto

The Year in Review

Our many volunteers are to be congratulated for another successful year of informative lectures, workshops and *Shem Tov* contributions. JGS Toronto projects in 2006-2007 included: submitting cemetery records to JOWBR for McCowan Road, Holy Blossom, most of Mount Sinai and Brantford, Ontario; supporting Yad Vashem's Pages of Testimony project; supporting the Nanaimo Passenger List indexing project; preparing a Family Finder for members; indexing the Rotenberg Ledger (Toronto passenger information from 1911 to 1917); and continuing to augment our JGS library holdings. Many thanks to all! We wish all our members and friends a healthy and happy summer.

Volunteers Needed!

The Cemetery Committee is pleased to report that 46,000 records have now been submitted to JOWBR.

Volunteers are still needed to assist with proofreading for Beth Tzedec. The committee is also planning to digitally photograph some of the older cemeteries, such as Jones and Roselawn. Many of the tombstones in these older sites are becoming quite worn; as well, thanks to our submissions to JOWBR, we are getting requests for more detailed information. Volunteers with digital cameras will work in teams at these sites.

If you are able to volunteer for proofreading, or to do some digital photography, the Committee would love to hear from you. Please contact <info@jgstoronto.ca>.

ADVERTISING RATES

SHEM TOV is now accepting display advertising for publication. Advertisers are requested to supply camera-ready art and payment by August 2007 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¢ 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 91006, 2901 Bayview Ave., Toronto, Ontario M2K 1H0.

A German Report from Poland During the First World War

Translated by Henry Wellisch

I recently came across a rare book by a German reporter named Wilhelm Conrad Gomoll, who was "embedded" with the Imperial German army that invaded and occupied Russian Poland during the First World War. The title of this German language book is Im Kampf gegen Russland und Serbien ("In the Fight Against Russia and Serbia"). While Gommol was in Poland, he came repeatedly in contact with local Jews. Here are some of his (edited) observations, translated from the German.

The Entry into Warsaw

After days of heavy fighting we eventually reached our destination. The heavy guns, which had done their duty, fell silent, and the infantry, cavalry and light artillery, including the heavy howitzers, entered the city. The western and southern forts were heavily damaged by our artillery fire, and the Russian army also carried out widespread demolitions.

Warsaw itself, this proud city, the pearl and heart of Poland, did not suffer that much from the bombardment, and the local population welcomed our troops with relief, enormous jubilation and joy. People were crowding the roads where the troops were marching through, singing, laughing and waving to the soldiers.

It was not as if an enemy army had come into possession of an important city, but as if the city had been liberated from a foreign rule. Poles and Jews, who do not always agree in their opinions and feelings, were in agreement that on this historic day, August 5, 1915, the German army would bring new hope for freedom to them.

In recent times the Russians were disliked a lot and this was openly expressed. In the quarter where the poorer Jews live, large crowds were in the streets. Captain H., who advanced alone into the southwestern suburbs, established that the Russians had departed. He told me that he was greeted with great joy by the Jews who thanked him for the "liberation," and he had difficulty extricating himself from the crowds.



Street Trade in the Jewish Quarter of Lodz

It is now 9:00 pm and the columns are still passing by, batteries of howitzers, and the gunners are singing about their sweethearts from home....

In Serock

I stayed for a while in Serock, which was covered with dirt, and the commanding officer, from an old Bavarian aristocratic family, was unable to dig up the pavement from under the mud. I found accommodation with a Jewish family, where they gave me an old iron bedstead with a straw mattress.

The first impression of Serock is typical of a Russian town. Rows of wretched low houses line the main road, adjacent to the narrow side streets. A large market place, partly paved, otherwise overgrown with knee-high weeds. Jewish children in rags play all over; scrawny goats are grazing and pigs are chasing each other. On the corner near the school building, a low wooden structure, stands the church with two steeples. Nearby is the Jewish quarter.

In the wooden huts, overgrown with moss, these people live in dreadful closeness - lots of half-naked children, with pale faces and dark eyes. When I looked at them they scurried away, sliding along the wooden houses and escaping through a hole in the wall into the darkness. It was all very strange, sinister; and it revealed the conditions under which these people, "the dear Jews" of the Czar, live in this despotic country.



Jewish Tradesman from Siemiatycze, whose store was plundered by the Cossacks

I wandered along these streets of Russian poverty when an old Jew in a long black coat approached me. "Sir, what are you looking for?" It was the rabbi, a one-eyed, 90 year old man with a long flowing Moses beard. He told me that since the Cossacks and the departing Russian hordes passed through no

Cont'd on Page 12

Review

By Elaine Cheskes

Nechama's List: New Jewish Genealogical Records Added to the Family History Library Catalogue, January 8, 2001 to November 8, 2006. Nancy Goldberg Hilton. CD-ROM. 2006. File Format PDF/Adobe Acrobat.

Nechama's List is an update of Nancy Goldberg Hilton's (formerly Nancy Goodstein, a convert to the Mormon faith) first database entitled *Jewish Records in the Family History Library Catalogue*. The *List* "is named in honor of great-grandmother Nechama and her family from Belarus." *Nechama's List* contains a detailed description of 638 titles of newly filmed and previously unknown Jewish records that were added to the Latter Day Saints *Family History Library Catalogue (FHLC)* in Salt Lake City, Utah, between January 8, 2001 and November 8, 2006. The *List* is in PDF format, and requires Adobe Acrobat to open the file. The full text of *Nechama's List* is also available online at www.nechamaslist.com.

Nechama's List includes extracts of selected books, microfilms and microfiche from the *FHLC* that are of significant value to Jewish genealogical research. The purpose of the *List* is to note new materials that are available for research and to maximize the usage of resources in the Family History Library system. For example, the FHLS has recently filmed a large collection of Metrical books, 1820-1939, that are Jewish records (births, marriages, deaths) of congregations in Galizien (Galicia), formerly a crown land of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy, but now shared between southern Poland and the districts of L'viv, Ternopil and Ivano-Frankiv'sk in the western Ukraine.

The layout of Goldberg Hilton's latest database is similar to that of her original database. Instructions for usage are clearly explained. The *List* includes a description of the record: title, summary in English, language in which the record is written, subjects that refer to the locality and/or subject headings as used in the *FHLC*, and the call numbers of books, microfilms and microfiche. The *List* does not include the actual contents of the record.

The *List* is not a surname index, and does not include information about individuals, although a few family history sources are provided. It is an extremely valuable tool for genealogists who are researching their Jewish ancestry, but is not intended as a replacement for the *Family History Library Catalogue*. It is important to note that *Nechama's List* does not contain all the records of the *FHLC* that are useful for Jewish genealogical research. Many valuable genealogical sources, such as local histories, newspapers, and hospital and passenger lists, include information about Jewish people. Therefore, it is essential to use the *FHLC* to find those records that do not appear in *Nechama's List*.

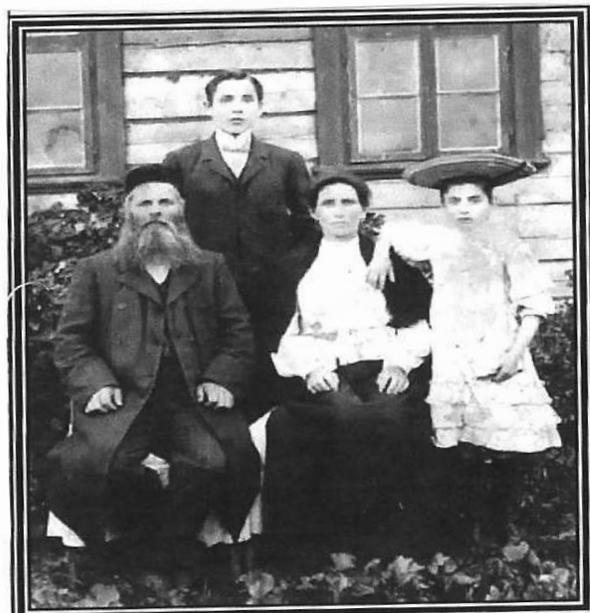
Several features of *Nechama's List* may prove to be problematic. For example, to search for a specific place name, the exact *FHLC* spelling and diacritical marks are required. A

"soundex" function would have facilitated this task. It is also frequently difficult to locate city names, since they are listed in random order under the Nation/State in which they are situated. However, the use of the search key will highlight the name of the locality within a record. In addition, many of the European documents are written in Russian, Polish, German, etc.; therefore, it is essential to have a means of translation or fluency in the language.

If the researcher is successful in locating a microfilm or microfiche of interest, this can be ordered from a local Family History Center for a nominal fee. The Centers are branch facilities of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, and are located throughout Canada and the United States. Books that are included in *Nechama's List* do not circulate and can be viewed only at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. However, local libraries may have reference or circulating copies in their collections. For example, *Jews Resident in Ontario According to the 1851-1901 Censuses of Canada* can be found in our JGS library (non-circulating) and in the Toronto Public Library system. Therefore, it is recommended to search various online catalogues.

The JGS library has recently acquired the CD-ROMs of both *Jewish Records in the Family History Library Catalogue* and *Nechama's List*. By extracting and compiling exclusively Jewish records, Goldberg Hilton has facilitated the researching of Jewish ancestry.

The "Nechama" of *Nechama's List*



This List is named in honor of great grandmother Nechama and her family from Belarus.

JEWISHGEN PLUS

News from JewishGen and Jewish Genealogy Newsletters,
Compiled and Annotated by Henry Wellisch

Nova Scotia Vital Statistics Online

More than one million records have recently been placed online at <https://www.novascotiagenealogy.com>. These include:

Births 1864-1877
Marriages 1864-1930
Deaths 1864-1877 and 1908-1955

Images of the actual documents can be viewed free of charge. A higher quality image or printed copies are available for a fee.

According to the web site, formalized registration of births, deaths and marriages in Nova Scotia began in 1864 and continued to 1877, at which time record-keeping lapsed for births and deaths, but continued for marriages. Since 1 October 1908, birth, death and marriage registrations have been maintained continuously.

Birth records from 1 October 1908, marriage records from 1931 and death records from 1956 are available only at Vital Statistics Service, Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

Films of Jewish Interest Online

The Connecticut JGS notes a web site with a short film on "Jewish Life in Lwow, Spring 1939." The URL is at <http://switch3.castup.net/cunet/gm.asp?ai=148&ar=CMID23229>

Bialystock and Krakow are also available:
Bialystock - CMID23227
Krakow - CMID23228

We are thinking of adding a link to these films on our own web site; we will keep you updated on progress.

Searching the USGenWeb

The USGenWeb Project announces that a project-wide search is being enabled on a state-by-state basis at <http://www.USGenWeb-Search.Us>. The free-access USGenWeb, along with many of the state and county sites and Special Projects, are hosted by RootsWeb.com.

1819/1820 U.S. Passenger List Now Online

GenealogyBank.com announces that it has put a copy of the complete 1819-1820 U.S. Passenger List online at www.genealogybank.com/free. This is an exact digital copy of the original document that was published by the Federal Government in 1821. It covers the arrivals in 35 ports in 14 states and the District of Columbia.

News from Ancestry

Ancestry.com has added United States-Canadian border crossings to its online collection. This database has more than 4 million names of individuals who crossed the U.S.-Canadian border between 1895 and 1956. This is the only such online collection. Names were culled from more than 100 land-ports of entry, from Washington to Maine. Among the busiest ports of entry were Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Detroit, Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto.

Ancestry.co.uk is putting online the service and pension records for more than two million soldiers who fought in the British army in World War I (these are known as the WO363 British Army Service records and the WO364 British Army Pension records). About 100,000 records are online now, including surnames beginning with A or B, with the rest following by the end of 2008. Searching the name index on the web site is free.

Remember, detailed access to Ancestry sites requires a subscription.

Virtual Museum of Family History

Dr. Steve Lasky of New York has received an IAJGS Salute for his virtual museum site, at www.museumoffamilyhistory.com. The site includes:

- Links to sites of interest for genealogy and holocaust research as well as Yiddish theater and culture.
- A Cemetery Project, based on photographs of more than 85,000 gravestones in the New York metro area. Dr. Lasky also offers to do lookups for researchers and provide photographs of gravestones if he has them. Also available are unique surname lists for cemetery society plots. Researchers can check surnames lists for specific towns and may contact Dr. Lasky for more information.
- An Education and Research Center, which provides examples and explains documents available to Jewish genealogists. Visitors should frequently check the Recent Updates page for a listing of new material and exhibitions.

Do You Need Photographs of Tombstones?

A site called "Find A Grave," at <http://www.findagrave.com>, allows you to make a request to receive photos of tombstones; if there is a volunteer in the relevant area, they will contact you to let you know that they will get the photos for you.

List of Books in the JGS of Canada (Toronto) Library Collection that Circulate through the Toronto Public Library System

by Elaine Cheskes

The JGS of Canada (Toronto) Library is composed of a collection of non-circulating “reading” and reference books. To determine the number of “reading” books in our collection that are also in the Toronto Public Library system, the JGS Library and the North York Public Library conducted a combined study. The following list, which represents the results of the study, indicates that 36 of our titles are already circulating in the Toronto Public Library system. Members will have access, either to browse the non-circulating books in the JGS library collection, or to borrow and order them through the Toronto Public Library system. These titles may be sent to any branch in the system near them. One does not have to go to the owning branch to pick them up.

These books, which represent a variety of subjects such as biographies of famous Jewish families, memoirs from the shtetl, and the early years of Canadian Jewry, are of great interest and value to all genealogists.

ABRAHAMS, Israel. *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*.
ARMSTRONG, Diane. *Mosaic, A Chronicle of Five Generations*.
BERMANT, Chaim. *Cousinhood; a Vivid Account of the English-Jewish Aristocracy: Cohens, Rothschilds, Montefiores, Samuels, Sassoons*.
BIANCO, Anthony. *Reichmanns: Family, Faith, Fortune, and the Empire of Olympia & York*.
BIRMINGHAM, Stephen. *Grandeas: America's Sephardic Elite*.
BIRMINGHAM, Stephen. *Our Crowd, the Great Jewish Families of N.Y.*
CORNWALL, Claudia. *Letter From Vienna*.
CULINER, Jill. *Finding Home: In the Footsteps of the Jewish Fusgeyers*.
DEUTSCHKRON, Inge. *Outcast: A Jewish Girl in Wartime Berlin*.
DONEGAN, Rosemary. *Spadina Avenue*
EDELSTEIN, Sam. *Tzadikim in Sodom, Memoir of a Survivor of World War II*.
ELIACH, Yaffa. *There Once Was a World*.
EPSTEIN, Helen. *Where She Came From*.
EVE, Nomi. *Family Orchard*.
FELSTINER, John. *Paul Celan: Poet, Survivor, Jew*.
GARRARD, John. *Bones of Berdichev: The Life and Fate of Vasily Grossman*.
GODFREY, Sheldon J. *Search Out the Land: The Jews and the Growth of Equality in British Colonial America 1740-1867*.
GUTKIN, Harry. *Journey into Our Heritage: The Story of the Jewish People in the Canadian West*.

HUNDERT, Gershon David. *Jews in a Polish Private Town: The Case of Opatow in the 18th Century*.
KAGE, Joseph. *With Faith and Thanksgiving: The Story of Two Hundred Years of Jewish Immigration and Immigrant Effort in Canada (1760-1960)*.
KLEIN, Ruth, ed. *From Immigration to Integration: the Canadian Jewish Experience: Millenium Edition*.
MEDRES, Israel. *Montreal of Yesterday*.
MILLER, Lily Poritz, ed. and comp. *Thousand Threads: A Story Told through Yiddish Letters*.
NAVES, Elaine Kalman. *Journey to Vaja, Reconstruction. The World of a Hungarian-Jewish Family*.
NEWMAN, Peter C. *Bronfman Dynasty: The Rothschilds of the New World*.
NIEZABITOWSKA, Malgorzata. *Remnants: The Last Jews of Poland*.
PARIS, Erna. *Jews. An Account of Their Experience in Canada*.
PAULSSON, Gunnar. *Secret City. The Hidden Jews of Warsaw 1940-1945*.
RICHMOND, Theo. *Konin: A Quest*.
ROSE, Emily C. Rose. *Portraits of Our Past, Jews of the German Countryside*.
ROZENBLIT, Marsha. *Jews of Vienna, 1867-1914: Assimilation and Identity*.
SCHOENFELD, Joachim. *Shtetl Memoirs (also appears in TPL as Jewish Life in Galicia)*.
SHARP, Rosalie. *Growing Up Jewish. Canadians Tell Their Own Stories*.
STILLE, Alexander. *Benevolence and Betrayal. Five Italian Jewish Families under Fascism*.
WEINFELD, Morton. *Like Everyone Else...But Different: The Paradoxical Success of Canadian Jews*.
ZBOROWSKI, Mark. *Life is With People. The Culture of the Shtetl*.

Contact Elaine at <library@jgstoronto.ca>. Remember, you can get a list of all the holdings in our JGS collection from our web site.

GET YOUR COPY OF SHEM TOV EARLY IN PDF FORMAT



Remember, Shem Tov is now available to members on-line. To subscribe to this format, simply send us your request with a valid e-mail address.

Spotlight on Members and Friends

Are you interested in volunteering on a genealogy project? Would you like to get some ideas for a project of your own? In this column we will profile some members and friends of our Society, who, in addition to researching their own family trees, are undertaking projects of interest to the general community.

Stanley Diamond is what we might call the epitome of the volunteering spirit - someone whose energy and dedication we all hope to emulate. This winner of the IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award (2002) is, among many other things, the inspiration behind and Executive Director of Jewish Records Indexing - Poland (a searchable database of indices to Jewish records of Poland); founder and president of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Montreal; and author of articles on genealogy and on research related to the Beta-Thalassemia genetic trait in Ashkenazic Jewish families.

Stanley was recently in Toronto to speak about the latest developments regarding JRI-Poland. The project continues to forge ahead despite some recent setbacks, particularly the unilateral cancellation by the Polish State Archives of JRI-Poland's indexing and order-processing agreements. We will have a detailed summary of Stanley's talk in the next issue of *Shem Tov*; in the meantime, please check the project web site at www.jri-poland.org.

To volunteer for this momentous work (as many Toronto JGS members have already done), please contact Haddassah Lipsius, Transliteration and Data Entry Coordinator, at <ShtetlCOOP@jri-poland.org>.

And remember, **Canadian tax receipts are available for contributions to JRI-Poland**. To take advantage of this, please do the following:

1. Make a cheque out to JGS of Canada (Toronto). The cheque should be in Canadian dollars, and must be for a minimum of \$25 to qualify for a tax receipt.
2. Indicate on the memo line of the cheque to whom the money should be designated:
JRI-Poland General Fund
JRI-Poland (Town Name) Indexing (for one of the PSA projects).
3. Download and complete the forms provided on the JewishGen and JRI-Poland web sites. You can access these forms directly from our web site, at <http://www.jgstoronto.ca/Donations.html>.
4. Mail the form and cheque to our Society at the address indicated on the form.
5. Tax receipts will be mailed out in January or February of the year following your donation.

If you have a volunteer experience you'd like to share, please contact shemtov@jgstoronto.ca.



Stanley Diamond and JGS President Shelley Stillman at our May meeting

A German Report from Poland Cont'd from page 8

stranger had visited the town. A crowd assembled, and when they saw the Rabbi speaking to a *goy*, there was a lot of talk about the "Russian period."

I followed the rabbi to his nearby house. It was dark behind the squeaking wooden door and the air inside was heavy. The one-eyed old man talked in the slow language of the old and his words were full of bitterness and accusation. The Russian rabble of soldiers did not have much time to show their hatred of the Jews, but they did find time to rape the women and extort money: five rubles for the Rabbi's house, which was thus saved from the torch. Later, when I was on my way home, some Jews told me that the rabbi became a poor man when he "purchased" the Jewish houses from the Cossacks. The Rabbi was sitting with his books when I said good bye to him. His last words were a question: "Are your soldiers going to stay with us?"