



זכרונות *ZichronNote*

The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

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Bus Ride of the Living

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President's Message
About as Good as
It's Ever Going to Get!

Jeremy Frankel, SFBAJGS President

I often wonder what people will do for hobbies fifty or a hundred years from now. For example, will people still be engaged in family history pursuits? Something tells me they won't, and for several reasons.

Let's take a look at the United States decennial census, the one that's taken every ten years and has been since 1790. Remember the excitement which built up around the release of the 1940 census just a year ago? Now that it's been fully name-indexed and around for a year, it's nearly passé: just another record series to plow through and find our relatives in. What has become apparent when reviewing it, however, is just how little value, genealogically speaking, there is to glean from it. Yup, the pickings are really slim!

For the vast majority of us, there was very little in it that was news. City directories had already told us where people were living. Sure, there might have been some children born after 1930, but many of us have relatives who are alive now and were back then who could "pencil in" some if not most of the details.

About the only item of value was the question "Where were you living in 1935?" Again, for most U.S.-born people older than say 18, we probably already knew the answer. However, if your ancestor was a European refugee who fled Europe just prior to the war, you might have acquired some new information.

If we look back over all the censuses, we can observe the shift over the years of governmental interest in the population of the United States. The first few censuses are barely worth looking at, as they don't even list people save the heads of household. Why? The government was primarily interested in agriculture and how the land was being used. From 1850-1870 we have names but no relationships. By 1880 we see relationships and, in many larger cities, actual street addresses.

The boom years are from 1880 to 1920, when the United States saw millions of the tired, hungry, yearning "to be free" immigrants come pouring in. (Alas, we still mourn the loss of the 1890 census.) The information to be gleaned from the census in this period is extremely informative. But after the peak immigration period we see a shift again, and it's far more prevalent in 1940. We can see the blank forms for the censuses for 1950 to date, and many of us have memories of filling in the forms for the past three

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SOCIETY NEWS

New Members

Adam Eisendrath aleisend@gmail.com
Harry Rabin eaharryr@gmail.com
Charlotte Steinzig adazig@yahoo.com

In order to continue to receive the SFBAJGS e-zine and *ZichronNote*, please send e-mail updates to newsletter@sfbajgs.org.

Member News

Steve Morse is working with Godfrey Library to improve the programming and interface of the online Godfrey Scholar.

Jeffrey Mark Paull's book *A Noble Heritage: The History and Legacy of the Polonsky and Paull Family in America* was published through Infinity Publishing.

Sheree Roth received a lifetime achievement award from Hillel of Silicon Valley for her efforts to combat anti-Israel information.

Volunteer Needed

Do you keep track of new links to online information? Would you like a byline in *ZichronNote*? I am looking for someone to take over the "Now Online" column since Marilyn Dornhelm has stepped down. If you are interested, contact Janice at newsletter@sfbajgs.org.

CSGA Newsletter Available

The California State Genealogical Alliance newsletter is available to SFBAJGS members. It is published bimonthly and contains information about research techniques and sources, libraries and repositories, meetings of interest, and legislation that could affect the availability of records. Currently issues from 2005–present are available. If you are interested in receiving the CSGA newsletter, send a message to Dana Kurtz at NewsletterExchange@sfbajgs.org.

Seeking Stories for *ZichronNote*

Have you had a breakthrough in your family research, solved a family mystery through painstaking research, discovered a better way to use resource materials, or walked where your ancestors walked as part of an interesting family history trip? Have you had success or made progress at the Genealogy Clinic with the Mavens?

We want to read about it in *ZichronNote*. Please submit materials to newsletter@sfbajgs.org.

SFBAJGS on Social Media

As part of our efforts to increase our online presence, SFBAJGS now has a YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/user/SFBAJGS>. This will give us an opportunity to share our activities, lectures, meetings, participation in events, Mavens, etc. If you have any videos of society events you would like to share online, contact membership director Avner Yonai at membership@sfbajgs.org.

SFBAJGS also has a Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/San-Francisco-Bay-Area-Jewish-Genealogical-Society/54214774804?ref=ts>. Friend us and visit often for updates between meetings.

Member Discount on Fold3.com

We have arranged a discount for society members on Fold3.com subscriptions. Fold3 has a significant online collection of original military and historical records, which can help with your research. For a limited time, you can receive a discount on an Annual All-Access Fold3 membership. If you already have a subscription, you can extend it for an additional year. Take advantage of this offer while it lasts! Go to http://go.fold3.com/San%20Francisco%20Bay%20Area%20Jewish%20Genealogical%20Society_society/?xid=791.

Meeting Times and Locations

Unless otherwise indicated, the SFBAJGS meeting schedule is as follows.

San Francisco: Sunday. Doors open 1:00 p.m. Program begins at 1:30 p.m.

Rhoda Goldman Plaza, 2180 Post Street.

Parking available in Rhoda Goldman Plaza garage with entrance on Sutter Street.

Oakland: Sunday. Doors open 12:30 p.m. Program begins at 1:00 p.m.

Oakland FamilySearch Center, 4766 Lincoln Avenue.

Los Altos Hills: Monday. Doors open at 7 p.m. Program begins at 7:30 p.m.

Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road Room 5/6.

See Back Cover for Calendar of Upcoming SFBAJGS Meetings

CALENDAR

Genealogy Events

Local and Regional

Tuesday, 11 June 2013. Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society. Janice M. Sellers, "Finding the Women in Your Family Tree." Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton. <http://www.l-ags.org/>

Thursday, 13 June 2013. Root Cellar Sacramento Genealogical Society. Jim Monteton, "No Forwarding Address: Finding Civil War Soldiers." Christ Community Church, 5025 Manzanita Avenue, Carmichael. <http://www.rootcellar.org/>

Tuesday, 18 June 2013. San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society. Lavinia Schwartz, "Roadblocks to Research Due to Assumptions." Danville Family History Center, 2949 Stone Valley Road, Alamo. <http://srvgensoc.org/>

Tuesday, 18 June 2013. Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society. Steve Morse, "Genealogy Beyond the Y Chromosome: Autosomes Exposed." Cedar Room, Santa Clara City Public Library, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara. <http://www.scchgs.org/main/>

Sunday, 21 July 2013. Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento. Gena Philibert-Ortega, "The WPA: Sources for Your Genealogy." Albert Einstein Residence Center, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento. <http://www.jewishgen.org/jgs-sacramento/>

Saturday, 20 October 2013. Digging for Your Roots. 20th annual Family History Seminar. LDS Church, 3700 Concord Boulevard, Concord. Jackie Hein, lejaki1957@aol.com.

State and National

Sunday, 9 June 2013. Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois, "Digging Deeper: Researching Our Ancestors With Technology." Warren Blatt, keynote speaker. Skokie, Illinois. <http://jgsi.org/Conference2013>

Tuesday–Friday, 30 July–2 August 2013. Conference on Family History and Genealogy. BYU Conference Center, Provo, Utah. <http://ce.byu.edu/cw/cwgen/>

Sunday–Friday, 4–9 August 2013. 33rd IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Boston, Massachusetts. <http://www.iajgs2013.org/>

Wednesday–Saturday, 21–24 August 2013. Federation of Genealogical Societies 2013 Conference, "Journey through Generations." Fort Wayne, Indiana. http://www.fgs.org/upload/files/FGS2013_Conference_Flyer.pdf

Saturday, 12 October 2013. 15th Annual Family History Day at the California State Archives. California State Archives, Sacramento. Free. <http://fhnewsline.blogspot.com/>

Sunday–Friday, 27 July–1 August 2014. 34th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy. Salt Lake City, Utah. <http://www.iajgs.org/future-seminars.html>

International

Saturday, 1 June 2013. East European Genealogical Society Seminar. Kahlile Mehr, speaker. LDS Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. <http://eegsociety.org/Seminar2013.aspx>

Friday–Sunday, 6–8 September 2013. Exodus: Movement of the People. Hinckley Island Hotel, Watling Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire, UK. <http://www.exodus2013.co.uk/>

5 October–4 November 2013. International Jewish Genealogy Month. <http://www.iajgs.org/jgmonth.html>



Brainstorming with the Mavens

The San Francisco Jewish Community Library will host a free genealogy clinic on **Sunday, June 2**, from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. Bring copies of family charts, documents, and other information and let experienced SFBAJGS Jewish genealogists help point you in the right direction in your research. 1835 Ellis Street, San Francisco. There is free, secure parking in the building. Call (415) 567-3327 x704 or write library@jewishlearningworks.org for more information. This will be the last clinic before the summer break for July and August. Meetings will start again in September.



Bus Ride of the Living Or What I Did on My Summer Vacation

Preeva Adler Tramiel

Preeva's father, Hershl Adler, was a survivor from Munkacs who was born in 1911 and died of cancer in 1975. The Holocaust was a tangible and mysterious presence in Preeva's life, even though it was discussed only in Hungarian, Czech, Yiddish, and Hebrew. This article was first published in *Judaism: A Journal of Jewish Life and Thought*, Issue No. 211/212, Volume 53, Numbers 3-4, Summer-Fall 2004, pages 260-266.

If we are not hopeful about the future, there is no point learning about the past. Getting out of bed in the morning implies hope for the future, so there IS value in learning about the past. Really, there is. Now you know how I talked myself onto the plane to Eastern Europe. From 22-30 August, I was part of a 22-member family group that went to Poland to learn about the past on several levels. We went as Jews, to see what place Jews had in the history of Poland; as Poles, to see what place Poland has in the history of Europe and how it is doing now as part of the EU; as descendants of residents of the town of Łódź (pronounced "woodzjh", like the first syllable of "wouldja" as spoken in Brooklyn), to see if anything famous came out of there besides tales of the Łódź ghetto (Jerzy Kozinski and Arthur Rubinstein); and as children and grandchildren of Bubba and Zaida, also known as my mother- and father-in-law, to see the apartment buildings, courtyards, and gardens that were the settings of familiar tales. Every one of my husband's first cousins and every one of my children's first cousins signed on for the trip, so there were people from New York, Toronto, and California. For eight days we drove around central Poland, through the cities of and countryside around Warsaw, Kazimeirz Dolny, Lublin, Łagów, Kraków, Auschwitz, Częstochowa, and Łódź, seeing where Jews used to live, marveling at how pretty the Polish countryside was, trying to pronounce the names of the towns, bearing witness to the unspeakable horror of the concentration camps, hoping that the Poles who had invited us for the opening of the memorial to the Łódź ghetto and were treating us so nicely really meant it, and fighting over who got the window seats.

My brother-in-law made wonderful arrangements, taking full advantage of the fact that his old rabbi from Japan is now the chief rabbi of Poland. We had a nice bus, with a lovely tour guide named Sebastian who did everything from discuss the economics of whatever town we were in to help us secure lip balm. In every city we had personal tours from specialists in the area's history. All our guides were very knowledgeable. We even seemed to have special privileges in the concentration camps—gates opened for our bus and we rode right up to the main attractions in air-conditioned comfort, which was

good, because one of my husband Leonard's aunts is in her late 70's.

Poland is no stranger to groups of Jews looking for their roots; the Polish Tourist Organization published (2003) an excellent map of Jewish Heritage in Poland which marks old synagogues, operating synagogues, cemeteries, concentration camps, death camps (yes, there is a difference), famous centers of Hasidism, and ghettos. The March of the Living, which brings thousands of students through concentration camps in force before taking them to Israel, has been coming through Poland since 1988. The first time our guide said *matzevah* ("memorial"), I did a double-take, but I got used to it. Many restaurants knew about kashrut and called attention to the vegetarian options on their menus. Matzoh was not unheard of—several times we found it on the table in the bread basket (in August!), whether we asked for it or not.

Poland is a country with a lot of pride and a lot of history, and much of that history had Jews in it. The basic "general charters" of Jews in Poland have their origin in the writ issued in 1264 by Prince Boleslav V the Pious, of Kalisz. Jews were accepted as a group whose main business was moneylending against pledges. King Casimir III the Great further solidified their position by broadening the statute of Kalisz in 1334, 1364, and 1367. Poland was a haven for Jews fleeing Germany, Moravia, Bohemia, Spain, and Italy. Despite medieval kingly protections, municipal governments and church authorities oppressed Jews, and during the various invasions of Poland (too numerous to mention), Jews suffered. But they increased nevertheless, and grew to a population of more than 3 million between the two world wars. Some towns were one quarter or one third Jewish, as were some villages.

In 1939, my husband's grandfather joined the Polish army as it marched in a futile attempt to resist the German invasion. Not only were the Poles hopelessly outnumbered, but technology was against them. The Poles sent cavalry on horseback charging against the tanks of the Third Reich. The Polish army brigade in which Leonard's grandfather served was imprisoned in the basement of a cathedral in Częstochowa, immersed in filthy water up to their necks for weeks.

We were there, saw the cathedral, and saw the plaque to memorialize the patriots' heroism and suffering.

The last four days of our trip were given over to exploring and experiencing Łódź. The city of Łódź was commemorating the 60th anniversary of the emptying of its ghetto, the last one to be liquidated of all the ghettos in Europe. One third of Łódź was Jewish before the war, a population of more than 220,000. When occupied by Germany in September 1939, Łódź was renamed Litzmannstadt.

The ghetto was established in 1940. For four years, with periodic deportations, it served as a center for warehousing and manufacturing wartime products and for assembling Jews from all over Europe. From the Łódź ghetto, these people were deported to the death camps at Chelmno, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Ravensbruck, Sachsenhausen-Orianburg, Gross Rosen, and Stutthof. In August 1944, 145,000 of its remaining inhabitants were deported to Auschwitz and the ghetto stood empty, except for an 860-person sanitary brigade which had been kept behind to do final clean-up. As part of their work, this brigade dug a series of mass graves for use after their work was done. Those pits are still in the ground around the perimeter of the Jewish cemetery today.

The Jewish cemetery in Łódź is extremely large and has been extensively restored. It was beautiful to begin with; my mother-in-law remembers going there to play among the allées of beech and oak, which are still there today.

Some Jews came back to Łódź after the war, and since the Soviet Union had taken over Poland after World War II, religion of all sorts was forbidden. Judaism was an open secret for some, however. Many more Jews left Poland or went underground in the Soviet purge of the Jews in 1968, but have since resurfaced. Now there is a small but growing Jewish population re-establishing itself, helped by the Joint Distribution Committee and various foreign grants.

Some Poles in the administration of the city of Łódź—in fact, some Poles all over Poland—are sorry for their complicity in the slaughter of Jews, and they want Jews—us—to come back. Today, the residents of Łódź stress “their” ghetto’s historic uniqueness during the years from 1939–1944 as a sort of urban work camp, and not merely a “death box”, as the other ghettos were. The Łódź ghetto was also used as a place to assemble the Jews from Central Europe and the Wartheland district, and about 5,000 Gypsies. This is why a monument was built at the train station, called the Radegast.

Although I went to Łódź with a bellyful of cynicism, thinking that the 60th anniversary commemoration was a transparent effort to create a tourist business

around the Łódź ghetto, a few days there changed my mind. To begin with, much of the Łódź ghetto and the buildings where Łódź Jews lived still stand. There is an untouched synagogue that was preserved during the war with the cooperation of non-Jewish businessmen who used it as a warehouse, while the only Jewish building I saw in Warsaw was the Jewish Studies Institute, and I heard of the Nozyk Synagogue, which was damaged. The rest of the Warsaw ghetto was bombed into oblivion and paved over. The Łódź cemetery is the largest, most beautiful Jewish cemetery I have ever seen. It has many lovely monuments, cool paths, stately trees, unbelievable size, and an open field where people who died in the ghetto are buried, interred so thickly that no trees can grow there despite numerous efforts to plant them. The populace of Łódź came out for the many ceremonies, which included concerts, photo exhibitions, a parade, and even workshops showcasing Jewish festivals and customs. There were groups of Polish teenagers—Boy Scouts and International Red Cross volunteers—alertly eager to help however they could. They helped elderly guests by pushing them around in wheelchairs, they were always on hand with bottled water, and they gave up their seats on buses and found us seats in crowded auditoriums.

The mayor of Łódź, Jerzy Kropiwinicki, wrote this beautiful statement, which explained why he and his City Council went through the trouble to build a monument and host extensive ceremonies, concerts, and exhibits commemorating the ghetto, and the Jews, of Łódź.

I Side with the Victim

On August 29, 2004 we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Litzmannstadt ghetto's final annihilation. This tragedy was especially painful for the city of Łódź—one of the largest Jewish centers in prewar Poland—as that was the end of the Jewish community which has been living in our city for generations and has been co-creating its history.

As the mayor of Łódź I have believed since the very beginning that the anniversary of the Łódź ghetto's liquidation should be at last appropriately commemorated. My friend Wladyslaw Bartoszewski drew my attention to its meaning for the Łódź ghetto survivors. He also stressed that so far no adequate attention has been devoted to the tragic fate of the Łódź Jewry that would do justice to the scale of tragedy that befell this community. On the day the German army entered the city, nearly 250,000 Jews had been living here, constituting a third of our city's inhabitants. When the Germans retreated from Łódź five years later, only a 860-person-strong sanitary brigade made of Jews remained in the ghetto. The



quick pace of the war had caused that only several thousand Łódź Jews managed to be saved from death in the camps and in the death marches—a mere five percent of the prewar number. Today the people who lived through that tragedy are over 70 years old and frequently older. They are living in Israel, Western Europe, and America. Many of them are planning to come to Łódź to the celebrations and for the majority of them, this may be the last great trip in their lives. But this is not the only reason why I have decided to extend special care over this year's commemoration of the ghetto's liquidation.

I have been thinking a lot about the situation of a crime witness. When people analyze the question of crime usually they think about two sides: the perpetrator and the victim. We rarely realize that there is also a third party—the witness. In Łódź the perpetrators were the Germans, the victims the Jews, and the witnesses were those who were not shut in a ghetto, i.e., the Poles. In every crime the roles of the perpetrator and the victim are fixed forever. The witness stands before an eternal moral challenge—he can either be silent together with the perpetrator or be with the victim. In my opinion silence is morally unacceptable. The witness of the crime must cry out.

These are the dimensions of the tragedy which we recollect today, a crime that has been perpetrated on innocent people, on the inhabitants of our city. And we must not be silent about it.

Our group toured around the city of Łódź for three days before 29 August, the official date of the

memorial, and it was illuminating watching the city get ready. The cemetery was given a thorough weed-whacking. Grafitti was removed from an existing monument to the ghetto, a statue of Moses that was put up sometime in the 1960's. Plaques were attached to buildings from the ghetto days. The plaques were made of plastic, and I had serious doubts how long they would last. Our guide, a Łódź native, assured us that the residents of these historic buildings had received letters telling them of the significance of their addresses. While we walked around, the residents kept their distance, watching from balconies and windowsills, openly staring. Sometimes a pair of children would come downstairs and say a quiet hello, in English.

We must have presented quite a picture, a herd of 22 Americans and Canadians, wider than we were tall, yakking away in English and Yiddish, pointing and joking and laughing, taking pictures, not staying in an orderly group, peering in windows, reminiscing about the past, critiquing the maintenance and remarking on 60 years of improvements, and generally acting like we owned the place. I was uncomfortable with our boldness, but I followed my father-in-law and his best friend, and my mother-in-law and her sister, who happily ran around, gaily showing us their old childhood stomping grounds and acting as if we were at a fair.

This was understandable, considering we had just been through Auschwitz. Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II were the largest concentration and death camps

in the German system. Birkenau (Auschwitz II), completed in 1944, was the last one finished and handled the most people of any single location. According to our guide, Auschwitz was a center of enormous profits for wartime industrialists and was as much a labor exchange as a killing factory. The two camps were surrounded by an extensive industrial zone, which ran on the slave labor that came out of the camps, and the ground is bumpy from train crossings.

Today, Auschwitz is Poland's largest tourist attraction, drawing half a million visitors a year. The two parts of Auschwitz are very different. Auschwitz I, which dates from World War I and looks like an old college campus, is relatively intact and contains many intimate displays of horrific artifacts. There's a huge roomful of shorn hair, photo exhibits of the transport of Hungarian Jews which had me searching for Adler features (I lost a stepmother, two half-siblings, two aunts, grandparents, and an uncle in Birkenau; other relatives survived their incarceration), a display case of baby clothing, piles of suitcases carefully labeled with their owner's names.

Birkenau paralyzes the soul with its scale. It is huge. It is forbidding, surrounded with concrete stanchions that used to hold electrified barbed wire, and that stretch out to the horizons like rows of old women bent over in grief. Even though it is mostly destroyed—the Germans blew up the crematoria before they abandoned the camp in the spring of 1945—you must admire the efficiency of the German design. Train tracks run right down the center of the camp, past endless rows of barracks, and end at a large platform right in front of a small hill. The gas chambers and crematoria were behind that hill, but you can't see them from the train platform. It was on that very platform that Mengele allowed my mother-in-law to stay with her mother, separated my father's sister Blanca from her husband and baby, and separated my father from his parents, in-laws, first wife, and children in 1944. When my own children, in 2004, started to run around the platform, I had to stop myself from pulling them away from the tracks. I was shaking.

And that's where we took the official group photo of the trip, on the train platform at Birkenau (shown on page 7). Surrounding the four family members who had come there in 1944 as slaves and were returning back 60 years later as honored guests were two generations of children, two tour guides for the day, too much luggage, an air-conditioned bus with special gate opening and path access privileges that assured the passengers they did not have to walk any more than they wanted to. After that picture was taken, the survivors, all in their 70's and 80's,

picked up the pace of our expedition and kept adding more stops to our itinerary while I and the rest of the 40-somethings begged for a rest. Taking that picture shifted the energy, and I puzzled over it for a long time. Weeks after we returned home, I understood why posing for that picture at Birkenau revitalized my in-laws so much. If living well is the best revenge, that photo was proof that my in-laws had theirs, and it was sweet.



President's Message, continued from page 2

or four censuses. Did they ask when you emigrated or if you were naturalized? No, they didn't.

We can apply this rationale across the board to other kinds of records. Take telephone books; remember them? Yes, they are still dumped on our doorstep every few months by Yellow Pages, but ask yourself when the last time was that you looked something up in a phone book. I bet you jumped on your computer and Googled it, or, more likely, you used your cell phone. Which brings me to another point: It's commonly touted that at least fifty percent of people living in California don't even have a landline anymore. I don't. Is anyone going to make a phone book of cell phone numbers? I very much doubt it.

I mentioned immigration; some of the most sought-after documents are ship's passenger records, especially those created after July 1906, when the double-page manifests could list next of kin in the old country and who the immigrant was going to in this country. Last I heard, I don't think that an airline manifest held such riveting information! And how long do airlines retain their "manifests?" Do other U.S. government agencies receive them? Does anyone still have a record of when I landed in Boston in 1988?

With so much information now going straight to digital, the rise in fear of identity theft, and the perceived invasion of privacy, I can only predict that it's going to be far more difficult for someone in the year 2100 to research his grandparents' emigration to the United States in 2010.

A combination of a lack of genealogically valuable information and identity and privacy issues may make research nigh impossible in years to come. The only lifeline I can throw is to implore everyone to make photocopies, scan, or at least take a photograph of any official document you may need to fill out, which can be passed on to a future budding genealogist in your family.



Finding David Blumenfeld: The Discovery of a Diary and the Search for His Hometown

Frederick Hertz

Frederick Hertz, one of David's many great-grandchildren, grew up in St. Paul, Minnesota and is a fifth-generation Minnesota Jew (with all eight great-grandparents living there by 1884). He has lived in the Oakland area since 1978 and is a lawyer, mediator, and author working on legal issues faced by unmarried couples, both gay and straight. See the SFBAJGS calendar at <http://www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs/calendar.html> for more information on his upcoming presentations.

My great-grandfather David Blumenfeld emigrated with his parents and siblings from Courland (now western Latvia) to the Midwest in 1884. David led an extraordinary life in so many ways: He owned several men's clothing stores, he became a civic leader in the small town of South St. Paul, Minnesota, and in his spare time he wrote (and self-published) several novels and books of poetry, all in a language he learned only at age 20. Shortly after his death in 1955, a box of his unpublished manuscripts went missing, but miraculously, they were recently found—in the basement laundry room of my Episcopalian second cousin in Seattle.

The best of these newly discovered volumes is titled *Diary*, a semifictionalized family story detailing life in Courland in the 1860's, the decision to leave for the "continent of glory", and the struggle for economic survival in Minnesota. From it we learned that David's parents homesteaded in Oregon and then lived in the Bay Area for more than a decade, before returning to Minnesota in 1912. Of particular interest to his descendants, the *Diary* also contains David's harsh criticisms of his wife and two of his children, providing us with the "back story" of the rift between those who stayed connected to their Jewish roots (my grandfather) and those who preferred to explore a different religious and cultural path (the descendants of the other criticized child, my great-aunt).

The discovery of the *Diary* brought together previously disconnected relatives and inspired several of us to explore our family history through interviews, historical research, and Internet searches, culminating in a visit to David's hometown of Tukums, Latvia. Along the way, we uncovered the fate of my great-great-grandmother's brother, who stayed behind in 1884, thriving for decades as a prosperous small-town merchant, only to be murdered during the first weeks of the Nazi occupation of Latvia. Through his daughter's Yad Vashem testimony, we now have reconnected with our Israeli cousins, a link that was broken nearly fifty years ago.

Our efforts to share the story of the *Diary* and its discovery are continuing. We are working with the Upper Midwest Jewish Historical Society to find a way to tell David's story to Minnesota Jewish audiences, and, inspired by our recent visit, we are exploring the creation of an exhibit on his journey to America at the historical museum in Tukums.

In 2012 I gave a presentation to SFBAJGS about my great-grandfather and his *Diary*. My talk has been illustrated with photos and film clips of our visit to Latvia and is available on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5Ng50zFD4c>). I will be giving my presentation again in Oakland on 9 June and in Los Altos Hills on 17 June. Please join me as I tell the tale of my fascinating Minnesota ancestor and our search for family roots in Courland.



***The Galitzianer* Request for Submissions**

The Galitzianer is the quarterly journal of Gesher Galicia. Submissions may be articles and/or graphics, both original and previously published, relevant to Jewish genealogical research in Galicia: articles about recent trips to Galicia, reports on your own research, research techniques, historical and recent pictures relevant to these matters, lists, book reviews, etc.

Electronic submissions are preferred, though not required. Submissions are accepted from both members and nonmembers of Gesher Galicia.

Though submissions are accepted year-round, the deadline for the September 2013 issue is **15 July 2013**. To send a submission or if you have any questions, contact Janice Sellers at janicemsj@gmail.com. For more information see <http://www.jewishgen.org/galicia/newsletter.html>.

How My Great-great-aunt and Her Daughter Were Lost, Found, and Lost Again

Beth Galleto

Beth Galleto has been working on her family history since a distant cousin made an unexpected visit in 1978 and sketched out a makeshift family tree on a napkin. When not working on genealogy, she is a freelance copywriter and editor. She was formerly the editor of *ZichronNote* and is currently the SFBAJGS Webmaster.

I didn't have much information about Sarah Bolker when I started my family history research more than three decades ago. Talking to my surviving great-aunt and great-uncle from the Bolker family I learned that four Bolker brothers and one sister came to the United States at the beginning of the 20th century, and that one brother stayed in Poland.

Only my great-grandfather Joseph, his descendants, and one of his nephews kept the Bolker name. The three brothers (my great-great-uncles) changed their names to Becker, Baker, and Bernstein, making it difficult to identify traces of them in the U.S. For my great-great-aunt there was even less information. I wasn't really sure I knew either her first or her last name.

I was told that her name was either Sarah or Dora, that she had a daughter named Dora or Sarah, and that she was a performer in burlesque or an actress, something shameful in those days (the early 1900's), so she was an outcast from the family. Her last name was Brown, they said, and her stage name was Brownie. My great-uncle Alex said that he saw her perform in Omaha when he was a boy, about 1910 or so. I was also told that her second marriage was to a grocer or candy store operator in Brooklyn by the name of Turteltaub. I was told that she died some time before my great-great-uncle Zelig Becker, who died in 1949 at nearly 100.

At one of the international conferences I met with the Theater SIG and told my story, but nobody had any information about Brownie. Later someone who had heard the story saw a photo signed "Brownie" on eBay, bought it, and gave it to me. It was also signed "Ida Mame." It might or might not be my Brownie.

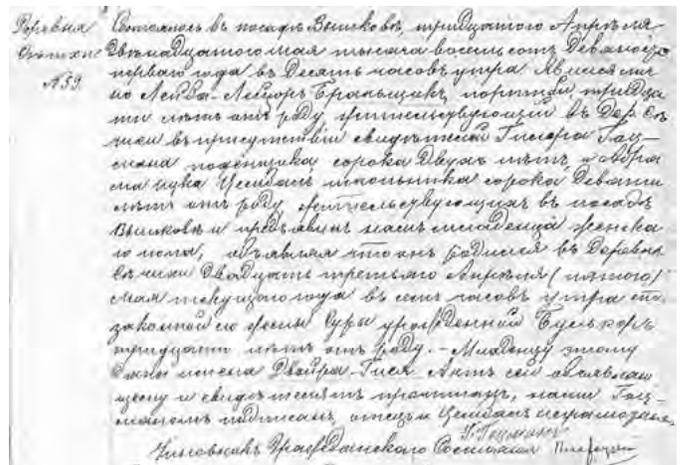
Through the ItalianGen Web site I looked for all New York City grooms with the name Turteltaub or variations of it and discovered their brides. None of the listings (eventually through 1937) seemed to fit the other "facts" I had. I looked for all the Turteltaubs in Brooklyn listed in the 1930 census, and none of these families seemed to fit, either.

As more information became available online I searched for Sarah or Dora Brown in the 1910, 1920, and 1930 censuses but couldn't find anyone I felt I could say was my relative. No woman was identified as an actress. I was at the proverbial brick wall.

Then through JRI-Poland I began finding records for Bolker ancestors filed in Wyszaków, Poland. Many of the records reported events that had occurred in the nearby town of Sieczychy. I found records for the four brothers, the sister, and three other siblings—children of Moshe Gerschkovich Bolker and his wife, Sima Zelkovna Pravda, of that town. Among them was a birth record for one daughter born in 1861, named Sura Rivka. Perhaps she was my Sarah.

I thought I had found all the available Bolker records, but then I had the idea of looking for Bulker, which I figured could also be a transliteration of Bolker as it is written in Russian. This led me to the marriage record of Lejzor Leib Branszczyk and Sura Roiza Bulker in 1879. When I had the record translated, it said that the bride was Sura Ryfka Bolker, 18, daughter of deceased Moshko and living Sima of the village of Sieczychy. The groom, 21, was the son of Wulf and Beyla Ita.

The name Branszczyk is difficult to spell and pronounce and could easily be transformed into Brown. I began to think that Sura Ryfka was my missing Sarah. I sent for a number of Branszczyk births, but for most of them the parents were Froim and Sura Rivka née Netka, probably a different Sura Rivka. Only one birth seemed to be the child of Lejsor Leib and Sura Rivka: Dvoira Gisy, born 1891. Dvoira is easily Anglicized to Dora. It was becoming apparent that Sarah was the mother and Dora was the daughter.



Dvoira Gisy Branszczyk's birth record (in Russian)

Now I needed to trace them to the U.S. On a Jewish genealogical research trip to Salt Lake City I put the facts as I had them before Gary Mokotoff and some other people who were with him at the “help” table. They came up with 1900 and 1910 censuses that seemed to fit. In 1900 Louis Brown (indexed on Ancestry.com as Louis Brom), a tailor, was listed with Sarah and daughter Dora in Manhattan. As a poignant detail, the form says that Sarah was the mother of six children of whom one survived. In 1910 Louis, a tailor, was listed with Sarah at 425 Flushing Avenue in Brooklyn. Both censuses said that the couple immigrated to the U.S. in 1891.

It seemed so easy that I wondered why I had not found them without help. I think that in fact I had found them but thought they were not for the right people because Sarah was not listed as an actress. What’s more, since none of my informants had mentioned her tailor husband, I had thought that she probably came without a husband, perhaps as a widow. The lesson from this is to keep an open mind and not to assume too much.

Then I found the three of them in the 1915 New York State census living on Flushing Avenue in Brooklyn. Louis, 56, was a finisher on cloth. Sarah, 55, was listed as doing housework; Dora, 25, was a capmaker.

After the discovery of those censuses I found additional evidence that this Louis and Sarah Brown were indeed my great-great-aunt and uncle. Searching JOWBR I found Louis and Sarah Brown buried in Mount Judah Cemetery, Ridgewood, Queens. She died in 1940 at age 79 and he died in 1943 at age 81. There was no photo of the gravestone, but I was happy to see that they were buried in the section of the cemetery called Chevra Thulim Anshe Wishkow, indicating a likely origin in Wyszaków. I sent a request to FindAGrave.com, and the next day I received photos. They showed that she was Sarah Rivka daughter of Moshe! Louis was Eliezer Aryeh son of Velvul. I asked on JewishGen whether Louis’ father Velvul could also be called Wulf, and received the answer that, indeed, Velvul was Wulf in Yiddish.

Seeing that Louis died in 1943, I then searched for him in the 1940 census. I was surprised to find both Sarah and Louis, living at 1309 Lincoln Place in Brooklyn. She had died in 1940 after the census was taken.

On another trip to Salt Lake City I found Sarah’s and Louis’ death certificates. Sarah’s death certificate, for which her husband Louis was the informant, confirms that her maiden name was Bolker. Louis’ certificate was signed by “daughter, Dorothy Turteltaub, address 89-06 61st Ave., Elmont, L. I.” This was my verification that I had found the entire family. But many questions remained.

8 BIRTHPLACE OF DECEDENT (State or country)	Russia	9 How long in U. S. (if of 50 yrs foreign birth)	
10 IF DECEDENT WAS VETERAN, NAME WAR			
11 NAME OF FATHER OF DECEDENT	Morris Bolker		
12 BIRTHPLACE OF FATHER (State or country)	Russia		
13 MAIDEN NAME OF MOTHER OF DECEDENT	Charlotte Simka		
14 BIRTHPLACE OF MOTHER (State or country)	Russia		
15 SIGNATURE OF INFORMANT	Louis Brown		
RELATIONSHIP TO DECEDENT	Husband		
ADDRESS	1309 Lincoln Place		

Sarah Bolker Brown's death certificate (cropped)

In spite of having her address from the death certificate, I had been unable to find a 1940 census for Dorothy or Dora Turteltaub. (There is one for Dora Turteltaub in West Orange, New Jersey, but she is too young and claims to have been born in New Jersey.) Nor had I been able to find:

- a passenger manifest for 1891 for Louis, Sarah, and Dora under the name Brown or some variant of Branszczyk
- naturalization papers
- 1920 census
- 1930 census
- 1925 New York census
- city directory listings
- any record for Dora Brown after 1915, except for her father’s death certificate

At this point I appealed to urban genealogy authority Steve Harris, a professional genealogist, member of SFBAJGS, and frequent attendee of Mavens sessions at the Jewish Community Library. He found an entry in the 1933 Brooklyn City Directory for Louis Brown, tailor, and his wife Sarah at 255 Schenectady Avenue, which he described as “just around the corner from Lincoln Place and very close to the 1940 address.”

This address on Schenectady Avenue could be found in ED 741 in the 1930 census. I looked for it page by page but was disappointed to find some people with a different surname living at that address. I didn’t find my Browns anywhere in the district, though I found one family named Brown and one named Browner.

Steve then told me that he had found Harry Turteltaub in the 1943 Queens phone book at the same address that Dora had provided on the death certificate. Harry had a stationery store. Now knowing

Harry Turteltaub's World War II draft registration card

that Mr. Turteltaub was named Harry, Steve was able to find him in the 1940 census at a different address as a widower. In 1940 Harry Turteltaub had children Benjamin, 25, Ruth, 21, and Minnie, 18, who would have become Dora's stepchildren.

There is a World War II draft registration card for Harry, who noted that his wife was Dorothy. He is listed as unemployed. His signature and birthdate, Jan. 10, 1883, match those on a World War I registration card that says his wife at that time was Ettie.

I sent to the New York City Clerk's office for the record of Harry Turteltaub and Dorothy's marriage in Brooklyn (which turned out to have taken place on 9 December 1941, just two days after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor). According to the license, it was the second marriage for both of them. At the beginning of my research, my informants had told me that Turteltaub was Dora's (or Sarah's) second

marriage. The license states that her first husband was Jacob S. Freedman, deceased. Harry's first wife, also deceased, was Yetta Wolkowitz.

I found a possible candidate for Dorothy Freedman in the 1940 census. She is listed as a widow and has a son named William living with her. ZichronNote editor Janice Sellers was able to help me find someone who is likely the same woman in the 1930 U.S. and 1925 New York censuses. In these she is also listed with an older child, a daughter named Marie. In 1925 her mother, Sarah Brown, is living with her. This looks as if it could be my Dora, but there are some questions. In 1930 she said she was first married at the age of 18, which would have been about 1909. But in the 1915 census she is living with her parents, and no husband is shown with her. So far she has not been found in 1920, and her first marriage has not turned up in the New York City marriage index.

Finally, I also found that FindAGrave.com has a Harry Turteltaub buried in Mt. Hebron Cemetery, Flushing, Queens. He died 30 April 1956. I called the cemetery, and the only information they had was that Harry Turteltaub died in 1956 at the age of 73. No wife was buried next to him, but Yetta Turteltaub, who died in 1936 at the age of 47, was buried on the same grounds.

But the cemetery has no burial for a Dora or Dorothy Turteltaub. I have lost her again. So where is she? Where is my distant cousin Dora?

I posted this question on JewishGen, with a hope in the back of my mind that someone would answer, "Oh, she is my grandmother . . ." That didn't happen, but I did get back some suggestions for further research. The search continues.



SFBAJGS Family Finder Update

The surnames and towns being researched by our newest members are listed below. This database is maintained for the benefit of our membership. If you have a correction or update, please write to SFBAJGS at P.O. Box 318214, San Francisco, CA 94131-8214.

Surname	Town, Country	Member
ABLOVITS	Smolensk, Russia; Ekaterinislav, Ukraine	Harry Rabin
BARANOWICZ		Charlotte Steinzig
EISENDRATH	Germany	Adam Eisendrath
HANSHER	Poland	Adam Eisendrath
LOOKATCH	Russia	Adam Eisendrath
STEINZEIG/STEINZIG	Schlisselberg, St. Petersburg, Russia	Charlotte Steinzig

Important Dates Regarding U.S. Naturalization

Shirley Hornbeck

Shirley Hornbeck's This and That Genealogy Tips page is <http://homepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~hornbeck/index.htm>. Her book is available at <http://www.genealogical.com/products/This%20and%20That%20Genealogy%20Tips/9377.html>. This article is reprinted from *Branches* (January–May 2012, page 2), newsletter of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Miami, with permission from the author.

1790 Citizenship required a two-year residency in the U.S. and one year in the state, to be of good character, and to be performed in a court of record.

1795 Additional requirements were added of a three-year residency to file a declaration of intention, a five-year residency requirement (with one year in the state of residence) to file final papers, and renunciation of titles of nobility and foreign allegiance. This act provided derivative citizenship for wives and minor children.

1798 Additional requirements stated that a copy of the return was to be sent to the Secretary of State, and the residency was increased to fourteen years. This was repealed in 1802.

1804 Widows and children of an alien who died before filing his final papers were granted citizenship.

1824 The residency time between filing a declaration and final papers was shortened to two years.

1855 An alien female who married a U.S. citizen was automatically naturalized. This was repealed in 1922.

1862 Aliens older than 21 who performed military service in the Army could become citizens after one year's residency.

1868 Black Americans became citizens by passage of the Fourteenth Amendment.

1872 Alien seamen serving three years on a U.S. merchant vessel could be naturalized without fulfilling a residency requirement.

1882 Chinese were excluded from becoming citizens. This was repealed in 1943. Before 1943, however, it was applied to other Asians, such as Indians.

1891 The Office of Immigration was established. Polygamists and those convicted of certain crimes or who carried certain diseases were excluded from citizenship.

1894 Aliens serving in the Navy or Marine Corps could be naturalized under the same conditions as the 1862 law.

1906 The Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization was established. Alien registration was required. Residency requirements were changed to two years to file intent and five years for final papers. Derivative citizenship was still practiced.

1907 A female U.S. citizen who married an alien lost her U.S. citizenship and took on the nationality of her husband. This was repealed in 1922, but citizenship was not restored until 1936.

1918 Aliens serving in U.S. Armed Forces during World War I could be naturalized without any residency requirement.

1921 The first Immigration Act to establish quotas of immigrants based on national origin was enacted.

1922 Women 21 years of age and older were entitled to citizenship. Derivative citizenship was discontinued. The residency requirement to file a declaration of intention was waived.

1924 The Citizen Act of June 2, 1924 provided that "all non-citizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States be, and they are hereby declared to be, citizens of the United States." This included Indians living on tribal reservations.

1940 The Alien Immigration Act required registration and fingerprinting at a local post office within 30 days of arrival.

1952 The Immigration Act Amendment abandoned the national origins system of setting quotas on ethnic groups.

Naturalization is voluntary. According to the Census Bureau, of the foreign-born persons listed on the 1890 through 1930 censuses, 25% had not become naturalized or filed their "first papers."



Now Online

Janice M. Sellers

In this column Marilyn Dornhelm has been sharing information on online indices, digitized archival material, and tools. She has stepped down and is now focusing on other things. We are grateful for the information she has collected and shared, and will miss her regular contributions. I have again put a small number of links together, but I am looking for someone to take over the column. If you are interested, contact me at newsletter@sfbajgs.org.

GENERAL

Genealogy Center

<http://www.genealogycenter.org/Databases/FreeDatabases.aspx>

Free online databases made available by the Allen County Public Library.

Historic Cities

http://historic-cities.huji.ac.il/historic_cities.html

Maps, literature, documents, books, and other material concerning the past, present, and future of historic cities.

Sephardic Horizons Magazine

<http://www.sephardichorizons.org/>

Free online magazine with articles focused on Sephardic research.

USA

NEW YORK

New York City Enrolled Voters

<http://books.google.com/books?id=WrbXAAAAYAAJ>
(Bronx, 1918)

<http://books.google.com/books?id=aa9XAAAAYAAJ>
(Brooklyn, 1919)

<http://books.google.com/books?id=grJXAAAAYAAJ>
(Queens, 1922)

These books contain alphabetical lists of voters which include the voters' home addresses and political parties. The books are organized by election districts. All three are downloadable PDF's.

New York City Jewish Communal Directory 1912

<http://archive.org/details/jewishcommunal00jewi>

Readable online or downloadable in multiple formats. Information on congregations, schools, social institutions, etc. and an extensive index. Includes many names and addresses.

New York City Potter's Field Database

<http://a073-hartisland-web.nyc.gov/hartisland/pages/search/search.jsf>

So far burials from 1977–present are included. Plans are to add more names in the future. A link to a FAQ is at the bottom of http://www.nyc.gov/html/doc/html/hart_island/hart_island.shtml.

EUROPE

GENERAL

Jewish Gem's Genealogy

<http://yourjewishgem.blogspot.com/>

Marilyn Robinson, who has been posting many links to Russian and other European sites with historical and genealogical information, now publishes her links on a blog.

Digitized European Library Offerings

<http://www.europeana.eu/>

European libraries site with links to documents digitized by various libraries in Europe. Search is through a common search engine.

BELARUS

Children of Dolhinov

http://www.gloria-center.org/pt_free_books/children-of-dolhinov-our-ancestors-and-ourselves/

Free online book about Jewish history of Dolhinov.

BOHEMIA

Destruction of Jewish Sites in North Bohemia

<http://znicenekostely.cz/vystava-zidovske-pamatky/>

Online version of exhibition that was staged in Prague. Site is in Czech and German.

PALESTINE

British Mandate Palestine Police Force

<http://www.sant.ox.ac.uk/mec/MECA-palestine-police/PalestinePoliceCBRL.pdf>

Details on the types of records available for the Palestine Police Force and examples of them, along with other information.

POLAND

General

1900 Polish-English Dictionary

http://openlibrary.org/books/OL13998215M/Burt%27s_Polish-English_dictionary

Readable online or downloadable in various formats.

Warsaw Gubernia

A Town without a Rabbi Cannot Exist

http://w.warszawa.ap.gov.pl/images/aktualne2012/PROJEKTRABINI03_09LEKKI.pdf

Created from an exhibit about rabbis and rabbinic candidates. Includes photos and details on 56 men.





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www.video.iajgs2013.org.

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The Journal of the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

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Calendar of Events

Sunday, 9 June, Oakland: *A Torn Family Reunited through Discovery of an Ancestor's Diary.* A Jewish man who immigrated to the United States in 1884 wrote a semifictional diary about his family's life in Latvia and their first 30 years here. One of his descendants will talk about the diary, his trip to Latvia and the better understanding he gained there of the opportunities and limits on genealogical research, and how the diary suggests many ideas for why Jews left Latvia/Russia.

Monday, 17 June, Los Altos Hills: *A Torn Family Reunited through Discovery of an Ancestor's Diary.* See 9 June for description.

Sunday, 21 July, San Francisco: *Utilizing the Jewish Community Library as a Genealogical Resource.* Judy Baston, former SFBAJGS librarian and volunteer staff at the Jewish Community Library, will discuss how the library's 30,000+ volume collection can aid in Jewish genealogy research.

Sunday, 18 August, Oakland: *Bring Your Own Brick Wall.* A panel of experienced SFBAJGS researchers will offer suggestions and research strategies to help you tear down your brick walls. Bring questions and copies of your documents.

Monday, 19 August, Los Altos Hills: *A-Files at the National Archives.* Marisa Louie, an archivist at the San Bruno branch of the National Archives, will discuss what's in the A-Files, who is documented in them, and how to find them at NARA.

Sunday, 8 September, San Francisco: *Napa Valley's Jewish Heritage.* Two Napa Valley residents will explore the history of Jews in the valley through photographs.

Monday, 20 October, Oakland: *Using City Directories to Further Your Research.* Learn what city, county, and rural directories contain and how they can be used to flesh out your family's lives.

Also see pages 3 and 4. For more program information visit <http://www.sfbajgs.org/>.
