

AR 5518 James Bennett Collection

I: Families, Miscellaneous Material On Families

Fldr. I 18a

Folder 11

James Bennett
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Haifa, Israel

March 15, 1988

Dick Israel
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Dear Dick:

I apologize for taking nearly a year to reply to your letter. It sometimes takes months or years until I find time to catch up on correspondence.

I've been continuing my research all along, but I still can't seem to positively link together the earliest known Israelski's. As you can see from my letter last year, my Israelski ancestors came from Zempelburg, while yours don't have a known town of origin. All we know is that your great-grandmother Minnie died in Schwetz, which is 40 miles from Zempelburg, and very definitely in the same general district. What we don't know is where her husband Meyer Israelski was born or who was his father. That is the key missing information which could link the families' origins.

We do know that Meyer's mother's maiden name was Esther Gabbe (your great-great grandmother) and she is believed to have come to America and to have died either in California or Colorado. I met ^{my} cousin of your father, Ruth Pinkus of Tel Aviv who told me that Esther Gabbe's estate required decades to settle and that finally, in the 1920's, she (Ruth), then a young girl living in Berlin, received her share of the inheritance which amounted to only a few marks. Does your father remember anything of this? Although she was married and her name was, of course, Israelsky, she apparently was known in the family by her maiden name Gabbe. Presumably your father also received an equal share.

What is intriguing about Esther Gabbe is that I, too, had a great-great⁶⁶⁵⁵ grandmother named Esther Israelsky, born in ~~Zempelburg~~ Zempelburg in 1803, married Abraham Israelsky, was widowed about 1864, and immigrated from Germany to San Francisco in 1869. She died at age 80 in San Francisco in 1883. Several of her ~~xx~~ grandsons born in San Francisco in the late 1860's were given the name Abraham or Albert, in memory of Esther's late husband. I notice that your grandfather Adolf was born in 1865. Adolf was a name often given to Jewish boys in Germany whose proper Hebrew name was Abraham. Adolf had two older brothers, Leo and Max, both born in 1864 or earlier. This leads me to the tenuous conclusion that my Esther Israelsky and your Esther Gabbe Israelsky were the same woman, which would mean we are cousins. Let's prove (or disprove) it.

If you are curious (like me) you can get involved. Start with the oldest living relatives, your father and any others. Question them about places, names. You mentioned that your father knew of a San Francisco Israelsky branch. Was their name Israelsky? I have checked SF city directories and phone books for a hundred year period and all the Israelsky's I found were related--there were none who weren't from my family. By the way, to answer one of your questions, virtually all of the SF Israelsky's have died out, except for one branch. There is an eighty year old widow named Selma I., living in the peninsula area, and she has sons named Jerrold and Gordon also living in the South Peninsula. I spoke to her on the phone about five years ago. Her late husband was a great-grandson of my ancestor Esther.

Back to the main line of inquiry: you must do some research among Denver sources, to determine where your grandfather and his brothers were born. Although Minnie Israelski died in Schwetz in 1907, perhaps the family lived elsewhere in the 1860's when Adolf and his siblings were born. Their death certificates might indicate where. Most important would be to locate anything about Esther Gabbe Israelsky--her gravestone, death certificate, obituary notice in a local newspaper and the probate records. If you send a letter to the ~~San Francisco~~ County Clerk of San Francisco, Denver, etc they will send you copies of the material, including the will, decrees of settlement of the estate, etc. If Esther's estate took until the 1920's to settle, there ought to be a very thick file somewhere, which might unravel many mysteries.

Letter from Jim Bennett to Dick Israel in 1988, written at a time when Jim assumed, but couldn't prove, that Esther Gabbe was our common matriarch. The proof came only in 1993 when Jim discovered Meyer Israelski's death registration in an obscure archive in Bydgoszcz, Poland.

I am enclosing two family trees. One (typed) I made several years ago. Note the name Salomonson. I am descended from Julius S. who married Pauline Israelsky. My Grandfather Julian altered his name to SOLMONSON. Does your father have any recollection of San Francisco relatives named Solmonson? By the way, Julius Salomonson and his bride Pauline Israelski did come to California in the midst of the Gold Rush. They arrived in 1853 and Julius established a general store in Mariposa. In 1855 he returned to settle in San Francisco (and Napa where he and the Zacharonsky relatives grew and marketed produce). This too jibes with your father's knowledge of a pioneer California Israelsky branch. Note that Heiman, Julius, Hanne, and Hattie arrived between 1865 and 1869 which is early enough. When did the first of your family get to Denver?

About myself: I'm 46, have been in Israel twenty years, have three sons (all born here). I'm an independent realtor with a large (by Israeli standards) practice here in Haifa. I hope to see you the next time you come here or I come to the U.S., which could be this Summer.

Oops--I almost forgot the second family tree, supplied by your relative Ruth Lichtenstein of Stockholm. Your family is very large and widespread--Sweden, Australia, Israel, Etc. Did you meet any of your Israeli relatives on your visit last year? I haven't met them myself, and until I know whether they're related, I don't want to start.

This has been a long letter. I hope I've made you curious ~~enough~~ enough to get involved in the research. I would love to speak to your father myself. Does he live in Denver or LA? I have a hunch that Esther is our common ancestor and that your father's answers to my many questions might confirm it. Without prompting him, just ask him where she lived and where she died and is buried.

I'll bet he'll say San Francisco, and that would be the clincher. I've checked all the Jewish cemeteries and all the Israelsky's are buried in the same one, and all or them, including Esther, are closely related, as you can see from the typed genealogy.

If you have anything particularly interesting to relate, why not phone me. My office number is 257038 and the Haifa code is "4". I routinely phone to the states. Sometimes a timely call can save a year of intending to write a letter--like this one.

Sincerely





Gravestone of Esther Gabbe Israelsky in the Hills of Eternity Cemetery, Colma, California (ten minutes drive south of San Francisco) She is buried in Plot B, Section 5, Lot 8, together with ten of her children and grandchildren. The Zacharonsky's, Getz's and Salomonsons are buried nearby.

<u>Translation</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>	<u>Hebrew Text</u>
Here Lies Buried	Poh Nitmana	הָיָה
The Esteemed Woman Esther,	Isha Chashuva Ester bat	אֵשֶׁת חַשׁוּבָה אֵסְתֵר בַּת
daughter of Yehuda, who has gone to her eternal life on the 27th day of the month of Tishrei in the year 5644 (Oct. 28, 1883)	Yehuda She'halcha Le'Olama Kaf-Zain Tishrei Taf-Resh-Mem-Daled	יְהוּדָה שֶׁהָלַח לְעוֹלָמָה כַּף-צַיִן תִּשְׁרֵי תַף-רֶשֶׁת מֶמֶד-דָּלֵד
May Her Soul be Bound in the Bond of Life	Tehi Nishmata Tzura B'Tzrur HaChaim	תְּהִי נִשְׁמַתָּה צְרוּרָה בְּצִרְרוּר הַחַיִּים

Esther's gravestone is exceptionable because of its Hebrew inscription. The cemetery belongs to the Shearith Israel Temple which was founded in 1850. None of the other memorials of the Israelsky and related families bear any Hebrew inscription, reflecting Reform Jewish burial practices both at the end of the last century and continuously until our times, the end of the Twentieth Century.

Names

During the nineteenth century the Jews of Germany underwent a process of modernization--and later assimilation--which included the "Germanification" of their names. Virtually all Jewish boys were given a Hebrew name at their circumcision eight days after birth, but as time went by, these names were replaced by German personal names in popular use by the Christians of the country. The following are the Hebrew and German equivalent names used by various branches of the Israelski -sky Families, not only those described in the accompanying charts.

<u>Hebrew/Jewish Name</u>	<u>German/European Names</u>
Aryeh (Lëb/Leib in Yiddish)	Leo, Leopold
Abraham	Adolf, Albert, Arnold, Arno
Gedalya	Georg, Gustav
Gershon	Gerson, Gerhard, Georg, Gustav
Haim	Heiman, Heinz, Hans, Heinrich, Herman, Hugo
Hirsch (Zvi in Hebrew)	Harry, Herman, Herbert, Hans, Horst, Heinz, Heinrich
Isaac	Isidor, Ismar, Julius
Israel	Julius
Meyer (Meir in Hebrew)	Martin, Max
Mordechai	Marcus, Max, Melvin
Moses	Moritz, Morris
Pinchas	Paul
Salomon	Sally, Selly, Zollie, Siegfried
Selig	Siegfried
Yehuda/Judah always combined with Lëb/Leib	Louis, Leo, Leopold, Ludwig
Ze'ev combined with Wolf	Werner, Wilhelm
Zvi combined with Hirsch	Heinz, Herman, Herbert, Hans, Horst, Heinrich
	Equivalents Not Known:
	Karl, Carl
	Konrad
	Kurt
	Caspar
<u>Women:</u>	
Aliza	Ilse
Dora	Doris, Dorothea, Thea
Esther	Ernestine, Erna
Gittel	Auguste, Gusta
Hanna/Hanne	Johanna, Anna, Hedwig, Hattie
Haya	Helene
Pessie	Pauline
Feigel -che	Pauline, Fanny
Sara/Zore	Selma, Senda, Senta