

Untangling Threads and Breaking Through Brick Walls: From the Americas to Ukraine Surnames, Towns of Origin, Occupations and Immigrant Journeys

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For the SFBAJGS

Focus: Towns of origin, pre-immigration names, family relationships, immigration paths

BEFORE USING RECORDS IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

Basics

- Interview family near and far
- Work backwards and gather as much info as possible: Records, newspapers, family photos and letters in USA, Canada, Scotland, Europe, Ukraine
- Research extended family and in-laws and reach out to their family historians
- Use every name variation you can think of when searching databases and browsing records (both first names and surnames)
- Get help with translations of records (and understand the purpose of the records)

Towns:

- Start where you are and work backwards
 - Naturalization papers
 - Immigration papers
 - Passenger lists
 - Vital records
 - WWI and WWII draft registration cards (and service records)
 - Widen the search to as many family members as possible, including in-laws
- Start where you are and work forwards
 - Contact relatives
 - Check family trees posted online for ideas
- Create a list/inventory of possible towns

Names:

- Use Alexander Beider's books on names to develop a list of possible variants for first and last names
- Explore records to find name variants and potential original name

Relationships:

- Chart out what you know or think (be clear on what's firm and confirmed and what's lore or a hypothesis)

GOING TO RECORDS FROM COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Russian Records for Ukraine

- Search the JewishGen database
 1. Donate at least \$100 to JewishGen
 2. Go to JewishGen
 3. Use the JewishGen Unified search <https://www.jewishgen.org/databases/all/> or the Ukraine Database search <https://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Ukraine/>
 4. Search on Surname "phonetically like" and "sounds like"
 5. Search on Town "phonetically like" and "sounds like"

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6. Can use wild cards
 7. EXPERIMENT!!!!
- Always look at the original document and get other information translated
 - Always get the title of the original document
 1. Note the Archive Reference (e.g., ДАКО/1/129/731)
 2. Go to the original records
https://uk.wikisource.org/wiki/Архів:Єврейське_містечко
 3. Translate the page
 4. Select the district (e.g., Kyiv province, Tarashchan district)
 5. Search on a part of the archive ID (e.g., 731)
 6. Find the file (e.g., [Відпуск грошей із залишків коробкового збору євреям містечка П'ятигори. 1893](#) // ДАКО. Ф. 1. Оп. 129. Спр. 731)
 7. Cut and paste the title and translate it in Google Translate (or similar tool). E.g., *Releasing money from the remains of the box tax to the Jews of the town of Pyatihora. 1893*

Immigration Journey

- Search family, in-laws, associates
 - Census records
 - Naturalization records
 - Passenger lists
 - Vital records (Marriage, birth, death)
 - Military records
 - Newspapers
- JewishGen Immigration Study Group—worth the cost!
- Interviews, emails, messages to other researchers on web sites
- Family documents: oral histories, photos, letters
- Books about immigration
- Newspapers articles about the ships
- Maps
- Travel guides