Inside this issue:

a word from your editor .................. 2
The Fuggeyer Story .................. 5
Researching Romania .................. 9
Two books that may help .......... 11
Romanian Yizkor books ........ 13
The truth behind mamaliga .......... 14
Heinrich Heine Lodge ........ 15
Family Finder ........ 17
Family Stories ........ 19
From our Readers ........ 20

About the cover...
Scenes from the Dorohoi area of Romania
– from the 2nd Dorohoi remembrance book

Volume 2, Number 4
Summer 1994
... but first, a word from your editor

This publication is a "contributory journal". What that means is that it stays in existence only through articles and information that are contributed by its subscribers. As long as those contributions keep coming, this journal will continue to be published. As editor, my job is to take these contributions and put them into a form that is inviting and interesting to our readers. Also as a subscriber I too make my contribution of material, most of which is in my search for people to do research in Romania.

And with that said, let me tell you about some of the things you will find in this issue: excellent contributions -- suggestions, experiences, documentation, etc., that may help some of us find exactly what we are looking for in our studies of the past.

Because of the growing number who are relating stories of their own research experiences, we are beginning a new department called "Researching Romania" with Col. Irving Shoenberg, Glenn Jacobs and Ruth Savitz telling us of their experiences. Read the column and you'll get a wide variety of circumstances that brought some of us into the intriguing field of Romanian Jewish genealogy.

From June Moskowitz we learn something about the landmanshaft of the past as she relates her interesting but exasperating experience in trying to track down information about one.

You may benefit from a Romanian yizkor book, either with a visit to Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, or from the Univ. of Florida's Price Judaica Library in Gainesville through your local public library. Gary Fitleberg submitted lists of those available from Yad Vashem.

Carol Rombro Rider tells us about two books that could be helpful to us, one for traveling to Romania, the other with photos from two towns in Romania.

We reprint the Fugseyer Story giving us so much insight into the circumstances and the means that led to many of our ancestors coming to America.

We have more information about "Grandma's Mamaliga" from a 70-year-old doctor from Dorohoi. Marcel Bratu, no those available from Yad Vashem.

Carol Rombro Rider tells us about two books that could be helpful to us, one for traveling to Romania, the other with photos for living in Connecticut, tell us the truth about this Romanian food of wonderment.

Of course there are the many corrections and additions to our Family Finder, more Family Stories and those always welcome letters "From Our Readers."

As you may recall I took over this position by default -- no one seemed inclined to do the work involved and I did not want this publication to end its short life by ceasing publication. So I volunteered to become editor on a temporary basis, until someone else could be found.

We are still looking.

I have many shortcomings for this position, principally that I have no Romanian heritage, know so very little about Romania.

We need help in order to continue publishing ROM-SIG NEWS, not just by way of contributions, as mentioned above, but in technical help, too, someone with a more first-hand knowledge of both Romania and the intricacies of Jewish genealogy, someone who can submit articles for publication from time-to-time, and to serve as a member of our editorial board.

We have Sam Elpern who handles the business end of the journal, Paul Pascal whose expertise in Romania and art adds a definitive plus, and myself. We now need an expert in Romanian genealogy to contribute to the thrust of this journal.

Won't someone please come forward and volunteer their services?

Gene Starn
Elderly Israeli woman seeking our help, wants to find her Romanian relatives in America

by GENE STARN

She had read about ROM-SIG NEWS in the newest book by the survivors of Dorohoi. (See RSN, Vol. 2, No. 3), so she took a chance that someone might be able to find her lost relatives.

In a letter to Paul Pascal early this year, Feiga Rozental, who lives in Ramat Gan, Israel, asked ROM-SIG to help locate her brother-in-law's family that emigrated to America 31 years ago.

The letter was written in Romanian and translated by Monica Talmor, who also left Romania about the same time.

Included with the letter was a photograph of Feiga on her travel permit, together with snapshots of her brother-in-law, Moshe, and his son, Sollo; another of Moshe and his wife, Matilde; also, the wedding photograph of Sollo and his wife, Miriam. Feiga also included a small picture of her late husband, Mendel.

We are reproducing all of this information, with the hope that at least one of our members will make an attempt to locate the Rozentals and get word back to Feiga.

Monica has already written a letter to Feiga in Romanian offering her hope that she again might make contact with her relatives.

Because of extenuating circumstances, Feiga's letter was delayed in getting to us, and this is the first opportunity since our last issue to answer her request.

Paul Pascal hopes to contact Feiga personally within a few weeks. He is on an extended trip to Romania, Belarus and Israel.

Monica says HIAS handled many of the arrangements for her family, but once in New York, the agency NYANA took care of them.

There are other means of trying to locate the Rozentals -- telephone search, family finders, naturalization and immigration, to mention just a few. Remember, the Americanized name would be "Rozenthal."

We are hoping that a number of our readers will make some attempts to locate the Rozentals. Please drop ROM-SIG a line that you are trying and keep us informed of your progress. If you find them, please notify us at once. We will try to make a personal contact with Feiga in Israel as quickly as possible.

For your information, Feiga's address in Israel is:

Feiga Rozental
Str. AEM #13
Ramat Gan, ISRAEL

The letter from Feiga ...

Dear Mr. Pascal,

My name is Feiga Rozental. I live in Israel, the city of Ramat Gan, AEM St #13 and I come to you with a heartfelt favor to ask:

In Romania, my husband had another brother, Moshe Rozental, who lived in Sibiu with his wife Matilda. They had a married son, Solomon Rozental, eye doctor, who was also known as Sollo or Shlomo, and his wife's name is Miriam, also known as Munti (pronounced Moontzi) who was a pharmacist.

In 1963 they left Sibiu for the U.S. On Dec. 25, 1963, we left Dorohoi for Israel.

Now, looking through the book "Generatii de Iudaism Si Sionism - Dorohoi si Imprejurimi" (the second book about the Dorohoi survivors now living in Israel), which binds us to the pleasant memories accumulated there, I found your address published and I thought of writing for you to help me in finding these relatives who I believe are still in America.

I have tried in the past to contact them at different opportunities, but their address was not found.

In the hope that you, through your means, will be able to help me now, on the doorstep of my advanced age, to contact the above-mentioned relatives, I close this letter with my thanks.

I wish you much health, strength and peace in the whole world (these are typical greetings, hard to translate into English equivalents).
A Page from the ROZENTAL family album

Nephew SOLLO (Shlomo) and Miriam in their wedding picture (1951 in Sibiu, Romania)

Brother-in-law MOSHE with his son, SOLLO (Shlomo) in Sibiu

FEIGA ROZENTAL from her travel permit (1966)

MENDEL ROZENTAL Feiga's late husband (1966)

Brother-in-law MOSHE with MATILDA, his wife (1939 in Sibiu)
In May 1899, the attention of people who had concerned themselves with Jewish sufferings in Russia suddenly turned to another country. In Rumania, a long history of Jewish disabilities had culminated in a riot in the Moldavian town of Jassy, where the Jewish community of nearly 40,000 made up over half the total population.

An offspring of the Dacia of Greek and Roman antiquity, the Rumanian nationality had recovered its identity in the Middle Ages in the form of two short-lived principalities: Wallachia to the south, founded around 1290, and Moldavia in the north, founded in the following century. The two principalities had fallen under Turkish suzerainty (sovereignty), but their population remained primarily Greek Orthodox and came to be regarded as a special concern of the Russian Empire when it expanded to world power in the eighteenth century.

In the Treaty of Kouchuk Kainarji in 1774, which ended Catherine the Great's first war against the Turks, Russia was given rights of intervention in Moldavia and Wallachia in behalf of their Christian population. From then on, Russian influence steadily grew: in the Treaty of Bucharest in 1812, the province of Bessarabia was detached from Moldavia and incorporated into the Russian Empire; from 1828 to 1834, the principalities were occupied by the Russians. An ensuing period of French cultural influence—Rumanian is, after all, a Romance language—culminated in a French proposal, at the end of the Crimean War, the two principalities be united. This arrangement was confirmed by international agreement; in 1862, the newly unified country took the name of Rumania, elected—though still under Turkish suzerainty—the Hohenzollern Prince Charles (Carol in Rumanian) as its ruler four years later. Hegemony in Rumania remaining basically an issue between Russia and Turkey, the war that broke out between them in 1877 was fought primarily over that end on Rumanian soil. It was officially ended at the Congress of Berlin in 1878, when Rumania was given her independence by the convening powers on condition, among other things, that she accord full civil rights to her Jewish population—a condition that was promptly ignored.

As in Russia, anti-Semitism on the official level seems almost to have been innate to Rumania's national existence. In 1579, Peter the Lame, Prince of Moldavia, had sought to banish the Jews from his principality on the grounds that their competition was ruining the Christian merchants. In 1640, the Church codes of
Moldavia and Wallachia tried to ban all relations between Christians and Jews. The Russian influence in the 19th century inspired attempts to banish Jewish merchants and distillers from the villages, to prevent Jews from leasing land and establishing industrial enterprises, and in general to keep them from obtaining full rights of citizenship. Jassy was a major center of anti-Jewish activity: it was there that Greek soldiers, passing through on their own war of independence against the Turks, slaughtered Jews by the hundreds in 1821, and it was the University of Jassy that later became the chief gathering place of Rumanian intellectual anti-Semitism.

In 1870, the U.S. government had demonstrated its alarm at the Jewish situation in Rumania by sending as its consul to Bucharest an American Sephardic Jew, Benjamin Franklin Peixotto, who, it was hoped, would exercise some "moral influence." Instead, severe anti-Jewish riots broke out in 1872 in the cities of Ismail and Cahut. Peixotto conveyed the reprimand of his government, but to no avail, and America sought recourse by appealing to St. Petersburg. The Russian government denied that anything wrong had occurred. "There is little conception in America," wrote the American Minister to Vienna, John A. Kasson, in 1878 regarding the Jews, "of the tenacity of the prejudice against that race in Rumania, and of the contempt and occasional violence and wrong to which this prejudice leads, as well as to the legal deprivation of the ordinary privileges of good citizenship." Kasson attended the Berlin Congress that year and hoped the problem had been resolved there.

As for the Jews of Rumania themselves, their history was twofold: partly Russo-Polish and partly Turkish. In no other country on the Continent was there so dramatic a meeting between the Sephardic and the Ashkenazic strains. Because the Ottoman Empire had been a major refuge for Jews expelled from Spain and Portugal at the end of the fifteenth century, the Sephardic component of Rumanian Jewry, which predominated in Wallachia, was the more ancient and established: some Sephardim had even served as diplomats at the court in Bucharest. It was Moldavia, in the north, that had become a full and contiguous part of Yiddish speaking Jewry, beginning in the sixteenth century with a trickle of merchants on the Russo-Turkish trade routes, and culminating in the seventeenth in a large influx of refugees from the Khmelnytsky slaughters. Even by the beginning of the nineteenth century, few Jews of Moldavia spoke Rumanian, while most of those of Wallachia did; and a sense of social and cultural superiority on the part of the Sephardim of the south was as much cherished by some Rumanian Christians as by the Sephardim themselves. A good deal of Rumanian anti-Semitic policy was dedicated to establishing an invidious distinction between "native" and "foreign" Jews.

Yet the Jewish life in the north seems to have had enough of a whiff of the air coming up from southern Rumania to have evolved, among Yiddish-speaking Eastern Europe, a distinct character of its own. The Yiddish theater was born there in 1876, and though it was largely the work of sojourners—of singers and cabaret-type entertainers from Galicia and Lithuania, and of a Russian maskil (exponent of the Haskalah), Abraham Goldfaden—the combination had found its proper milieu in the cafes and wine cellars of Jassy. There was something here of the gypsyland Rumania of folklore, about which the Yiddish minstrel was to sing:

Rumania, Rumania, Rumania--
Geven amol a land a sisse, a sheyne ...

("Once there was a land, sweet and lovely ...) praising its foods, its mamalige, its pastrami, its karnatzl, while raising a glass of wine and bursting into a dance. Characteristic Rumanians of these pioneering days of Yiddish theater were such uncharacteristic East European Jews as: Sigmund Mogulesco (born Selig Mogilevsky), actor, who had begun his career as a performer by singing both in the synagogue and in the churches of Bucharest; Moshe Horowitz, playwright, who had taught geography at the Univ. of Bucharest and probably made a temporary conversion to Christianity; and Rosa Friedman, actress, who had once worked as a dancer in a Constantinople café.

A completely different sort of personality, yet also a typifying Rumanian Jew of this generation, was Rabbi Moses Gaster. Born in Bucharest in 1856 of a Rumanian-Jewish mother and a diplomat father who was a Sephardic Jew from the Netherlands, Gaster was a true distillation of his native land: a Sephardi who spoke Yiddish as well as Rumanian, an ordained rabbi who taught Rumanian history and literature at Bucharest University, and a lifelong adherent of Zionism who remained an eminent scholar of Rumanian folklore even after being expelled from the country in 1885 on account of his prominence in agitating for Jewish rights. Settling in London, Gaster was eventually to become the Chief Sephardic Rabbi of Great Britain, as well as Theodor Herzl's most enthusiastic supporter there.

The strong nationalist streak in the Rumanian-Jewish character had already manifested itself in 1882, when a passion to colonize Palestine in the wake of the anti-Jewish riots in Russia erupted in Rumania even before it did in Russia itself. This streak emerged once again in the wake of the anti-Jewish riot at Jassy in 1899, and with characteristic Rumanian panache; only this time the principal target for emigration was the United States.

In the spring and summer of 1900, groups of young Jewish men and women, mostly artisans, had decided to emigrate in groups, and to dramatize their gesture by marching through the Rumanian countryside. They called themselves Fusgeyers (Yiddish for "Goers-on-foot"). "They wear long sandals," reported the Vienna Zionist weekly Die Welt, "carry packs on their backs and canteens of water on their shoulders. They go along with walking sticks in their hands, and some groups bring along tents and lanterns." Many of them wore distinctive uniforms and caps, in the manner of scout groups, and gave themselves such names as The Wandering Jews, The Rumanian Exodus, The Bucharest Foot-Wanderers, and One Heart, as well as the more prosaic Students, Workers, and Clerks of Galatz. One group entirely
made up of young women--of Fusgeyerkes--called itself Bas-Ami (Hebrew for "Daughter of my People").

Going by circuitous routes from one town to another before reaching the Austro-Hungarian border, the Fusgeyer bands were usually met by enthusiastic demonstrations in Jewish communities--and often among Christians as well--accompanied by donations of bread and produce. Some of the groups gave performances, in that way raising money as well as presenting their cause. One of their songs went:

"Mama, where has Papa gone?"--
"Off in search of bread and money!
Now sleep, my child, just sleep!"

"But it's dark and cold inside the house
And so long a wait till morning."

"Off to far America,
To other countries, too,
In search of work, of work..."

The child grows still and think his childish thought,
Then later asks again:
"He's gone away but he'll come back tomorrow?--
No, Mama? But why away so far?
Here, Moma, here in our own house
Is where we have no bread!"

The Fusgeyers also distributed brochures in Rumanian. "We were and are women workers," began one item in the Bas-Ami leaflet. "We have worked all our lives, from earliest childhood...Through drudgery and toil we earned our bit of bread. And now--a shudder goes through us at the thought of having to beg for your pity and money."

One of the first of these groups was called The Barlad Wayfarers, after the Moldavian town in which it was founded in April 1900. "At that time," remembered Jacob Finkelstein, who belonged to it, "there existed in Barlad, where I lived, a young Jewish amateur theatrical group. I belonged to it myself. We used to organize theatricals from time to time. From the proceeds we used to buy wood for the poor or help them out in other ways." But now they decided to serve their own needs. "Listen," their chairman said one day, "I have a plan for getting to America without money. We'll go on foot. We'll go from town to town giving performances until we come to a seaport. Even when we run low on money, there'll be rich Jewish communities willing to help us out."

And so the expedition was organized. Passports were obtained with backsheesh. Tents were purchased as well as a horse and wagon for carrying supplies and transporting the group's two women, who were to ride on ahead and arrange for accommodations at each town chosen for an overnight stay. A young man who had been a cometist in the Rumanian army was to be the group's field captain. And a route was decided upon: from Barlad in eastern Moldavia southwestward along the fertile foothills of the Carpathians into Wallachia, then northwestward at Ploesti (about 30 miles north of Bucharest) and straight across the border pass to the Hungarian town of Bracsov--an ambling route that totaled nearly two hundred miles.

On the appointed morning, there was a large gathering in town of onlookers and participants, friendly Christians as well as Jews, and merchants, grocers and bakers, who loaded up the young adventurists with free food and supplies. Speeches were made, with expressions of remorse that these young people had to resort to flight. Then, the speeches finished, our captain gave a signal on his cornet, and the march began. The order was thus: he went first, then after him two men with flags--one of them the Rumanian colors and the other the Jewish national blue and white. On we marched, simple soldiers, four abreast, and at the end of our columns the wagon with baggage.

The pomp lasted to the outskirts of town, where marchers were besieged by parents, sisters and brothers. "With heavy hearts were finally able to tear ourselves out of the arms of our dear ones, and we began the long march that was to stir all of Rumania."

That night they reached the outskirts of Tecuci, which had a large Jewish population, and camped in a field. They sent their two representatives in the morning.

It was not long before they came back informing us that were being awaited with great impatience, and that a committee headed by the president of the Jewish community had organized a great welcome ceremony for us. They had hired the Municipal Theatre for a performance, and the tickets were sold out.

Christians as well as Jews came out to see the Fusgeyers as they marched into town. "The nearer we got, the thicker became the crowd, and by the time we entered, the crush around us was so great we could barely get through." They were escorted to the Hebrew School where speeches were made and they were served lunch "by the richest women in town. After the meal, the town's rich men brought us to our quarters." Two evenings later, on Saturday, the scheduled performance was given at the Municipal Theater. "The audience could not stop marveling at how a group of nonprofessional artists could perform so well. We put on a play called Madly in Love, and earned almost 800 francs for it." On Sunday they took their leave, their wagon loaded with free food, learning with satisfaction that a new Fusgeyer group had been organized at Tecuci under their example.

Proceeding from one town to the next, they passed through a village where the local great landlord stopped them and asked why they were emigrating. "Our captain explained that we were good artisans and couldn't get work." The nobleman replied sadly:

"Listen my friends, if I'd had the chance I would have done what I could to dissuade you. My Rumanian brethren don't understand that they are driving the best elements out of the country. The best artisans--who also are loyal patriots--are leaving. This brings us no honor. But I have no right to reproach you. It is your right to live just the way I and other Rumanians do."
Eventually, the wayfarers arrived in Ploesti. It was already a large wealthy city, with a rich Jewish community. We sent our two representatives ahead to say we had arrived... and after a few hours they returned with some spokesman for the Jewish community, including a rabbi. That was something new for us. We were brought into a girls' school for lunch, which turned out to be strictly kosher, because the rabbi ate with us. We were brought to their quarters, where we stayed for a week, since it was Shavuoth (Pentecost).

The president of the Jewish community gave us special treatment, and we gave a theatrical presentation that brought us material success as well as esteem. We took in over 1,000 francs. Then we were given a splendid farewell ceremony; two representatives of the Jewish community gave speeches, as well as several prominent Christians. We sang heartily as we took our leave. The Jewish community president said we might have difficulties at the border, and urged us to contact him if we did, since he brother was the Chief Rabbi of Budapest and would be able to help.

Whatever problems existed at the border were partly due to the Israelitische Allianz of Vienna, which did not want to deal with this disorganized migration. In early July, the Allianz was even to ask the Budapest Jewish leadership to intercede with their government and request that it close the border to the Fusgeyers. The Budapest Jews replied on July 13.

"To the distinguished directors of the Israelitische Allianz, Vienna," their letter went, "In regard to your important letter of July 10, we have the honor to express our opinion that it is simply out of the question for us, as a Jewish institution, to advocate to our government that it take measures against our Rumanian brethren to limit their freedom of movement. That would indeed be an unfortunate move, upon which the enemies of the Jewish people would look with satisfaction. We beg of you to understand our position and be assured that we are taking upon ourselves every burden required to help our co-religionists on their journey. We have written in the same sense to the Jewish communities along the border."

The Barlad wayfarers were stopped at Predeal, the last railway station on the Rumanian side. "People ride through here," said the border official, "they don't go on foot." They immediately telephoned the Jewish-community president in Ploesti, then sold their horse and wagon to get money for food. After three or four days, a man came from Budapest and obtained permission for them to cross.

The young Rumanians were put on a train to Budapest, then took a boat from there up the Danube to Vienna. The Israelitische Allianz, receiving them in Vienna in spite of everything, moved them right on, providing fourth-class train tickets to Frankfurt. Going thus from committee to committee, the wanderers made their way to Rotterdam, and from there, by ship, to London—where they suddenly encountered new difficulties. Presenting themselves at the Poor Jews' Temporary Shelter, they were told that its services were only for residents of the country, not for emigrants passing through. To get help, they tried to contact the most eminent Rumanian Jew in London, Rabbi Moses Gaster, but he was away on holiday. Finally, Herman Landau, director of the shelter and one of the first Polish Jews to have risen to wealth and eminence in England, admitted them, but not without calling them a bunch of "vagabonds, Rumanian schnorrers" in good Yiddish. Eventually, Landau arranged for their passage from Liverpool to Quebec in what turned out to be a particularly vile-smelling steerage.

The group spent about three weeks in Canada, most of them working as laborers in the construction of a bridge over the Saint Lawrence. When they had earned enough not to appear as potential public charges—and with their "assisted immigration" behind them—they entered the United States as passengers on a train that took them to New London, Connecticut. From there they boarded a boat to New York. On the trip they sang Fusgeyer songs to the delight of the other passengers.

When they reached their destination, "we were allowed to disembark without any formalities," Finkelstein concludes his narrative. "We got off, we were in New York, and we were free."
Starting with a professional genealogist

by Colonel Irving B. Schoenberg

I asked Miriam Weiner, a well known genealogist, to do some research for me. She had made several trips to Moldova and was about to make another on behalf of the Bronfman family (of liquor-distributing fame and wealth). She traveled to Kishinev where the archives for Moldova are and to Telenesht. I had given her letter of introduction to the Mayor of Telenesht (Telenesht, I learned, is not only a town, but a region) from the CEO of DeKalb County where I live. If we had a mayor, it would have been a letter from him, but we have no such official here.

Miriam made her trip in January 1993. She did find some data in the archives relevant to my families, but more importantly she took some great video and still photos. The interview with the Mayor in his office was particularly interesting. He said that only two years before there were 500 Jewish families in Telenesht. At the time of the interview, he estimated there might have been only six remaining, all having gone to Israel, Canada or the U.S.

But what really got me were the videos of the Jewish cemetery there. Almost unbelievably, it had not been destroyed by the Nazis or the Romanians during or before the Holocaust. Miriam estimated that there were thousands of graves there and that the cemetery dated back about 150 years. I have since learned that there may be another cemetery there that goes back 250 years. The problem, however, is that nobody seems to have any records of either of the cemeteries. I have written to the U.S. Ambassador in Kishinev, but he was of no help (his letter was nevertheless interesting with respect to what to do and what to expect during a visit to Moldova).

My most current effort lies in having a distant relative who periodically visits Moldova on business to actually take photos of family graves.

I am also trying to get one or more of the Jews still living there to help me find someone who will maintain the cemetery and perhaps help in identifying family graves.

Finally, let me tell you that I have tried to establish a connection with the First Teleneshter Society (Landsmannshaften) in New York. I have not found anyone really interested in genealogy. I do know that my paternal grandparents and several other relatives are buried in the Baron Hirsch Cemetery on Staten Island. A portion on the cemetery is "reserved" for members of the Society.

I have also obtained a copy of the Yizkor book of Telenesht, written by a rabbi and his wife who now live in Israel. There are some great clues therein and I am following up on several of them. Friends in Israel are trying to help. I do know there is a "colony" of folks from Telenesht living in Pardes Chana, Israel, and they annually meet to mourn those from Telenesht who perished in the Holocaust. They have erected a large monument there in their memory.

A mother's rough family tree drawing

by Glenn A. Jacobs

When I was in my early teens (over 30 years ago) I was unable to understand the verbal descriptions as to how I was related to certain people. My mother drew a rough family tree of the AUERBACH branch of our family to illustrate. However, inasmuch as the people in question were my third cousins, there were many boxes on the chart. Some had names I had never heard and other boxes were blank. I decided then and there to fill in the blanks and find out who these people were. (That process led to other branches of my family, as well.)

Over the years the efforts were sporadic at best. I knew that the Auerbachs had come from a town called Lasi in Romania. An older cousin did share some information that proved later to be a key lead. Also there was a "distant" cousin, Isaac Auerbach, whom my mother knew. I had limited contact with him over the years, but we began to add small parts of the jigsaw puzzle together.

A few years ago, I renewed the research in earnest. With the use of the census data, I learned that two brothers, Shimon and Yussell, had come to the U.S. in the 1880s. Shimon had been born in 1837 and Yussell in 1842. They "Americanized" their names to Simon and Joseph. Their father's name was Isaac (presumably whom the current Isaac was named after).

Joseph's branch was mine, so I had some basic data. Having heard that some of the Auerbach family had originally settled in Camden, NJ, I decided to write to every Auerbach in southern New Jersey. That letter led me to a cousin who in turn led me to others.

Here it is worth digressing to share a fascinating turn of events. One of the branches we were (and still are) searching for was the offspring of Jennie Auerbach who had married a Max Finkelstein. Using the mail again, one of the Auerbach relatives wrote to every Finkelstein in southern New Jersey. That letter led me to a cousin who in turn led me to others.
The next weekend, his daughter and son-in-law came to visit. The son-in-law saw the letter on the kitchen table and realized that he (the son-in-law) was the link in another Auerbach branch we had as yet been unable to find!

Soon thereafter, Isaac Auerbach called to say that he had a lead on another relative and a meeting had been arranged. We met with Marvin Mazer, and it turned out that he had a gold mine of information.

There was indeed a major breakthrough. Within a few more months I had just about exhausted every realistic avenue and had found more than 150 living cousins! Seven generations from the original Isaac Auerbach.

We had a family reunion which was a tremendous success. Now I am working on a family health history, as well as gathering information about occupations and hobbies. My hope is that all of this will be of value to the next generation.

Now of course the search becomes more difficult. Surely Simon and Joseph were not the only offspring of Isaac—not in those days. Hopefully a new researcher will prove to be the source I need.

An Exhibit at the N.Y. Public Library
by Ruth M. Savits

Some eight years ago my husband and I were going to an exhibit at the 42nd St. New York Public Library. As we entered on the 42nd St. side we passed a sign saying "Jewish Division." My husband suggested we go look in the catalog for the name of my great-great-great grandfather, Rabbi Isaiah Schorr of Iasi, Romania. I had known all my life that I had an ancestor who was a famous rabbi in Iasi. I knew his name period. I boasted about him, but knew nothing of him.

In the catalog I found a listing of a book, Khalil Tifereth, by Rabbi Isaiah Schorr. About 15 minutes later I held in my hands a book written by my great-great-great grandfather and published in Zolkiew in 1868. Furthermore the book was edited and had an introduction by my great-grandfather, Menachem Mendel Landau. If I were the crying type, I would have broken down then and there. It has to have been one of the greatest thrills of my long and fairly interesting life.

Since I could not read Hebrew (or rather, I could read Hebrew but could not translate it), and a further difficulty presented itself in that this book was printed in Rashi script which I could not even read, I could do nothing but trotum the book to the librarian. In subsequent visits to the N.Y. Public Library I was not permitted to even hold the book because it was too old and fragile. I was able to track down a volume of Rabbi Schorr's writings printed in B'nai Brak in Israel in 1972 and purchased it.

This incident, among others, started me off on my genealogical search. I went to my county library in Hackensack and found two mentions of Rabbi Schorr in the Encyclopedia Judaica, one under Iasi when he was Chief Rabbi at the end of his life, and one under Khotin where he also officiated at one time. I also found another great-great-great grandfather, Rabbi Joseph Landau, mentioned under Iasi.

My search for my famous Chasidic ancestors took me to B'nai Brak in Israel where I met a Mr. Aaron Sorosky, who has written newspaper articles and part of a book on Rabbi Schorr, to Brooklyn, where the Skalener rebbe, Rabbi Portugal, told me his grandfather was a student at Rabbi Schorr's yeshiva in Iasi. His wife, the rebbitzen told me a story about her confinement with one of her sons. Apparently she was in very difficult labor and everyone was in despair. At that point Rabbi Portugal placed a book by Rabbi Schorr under the pillow and the child was born easily, and was named "Yeshaya" after Rabbi Schorr whose words in print had saved his birth.

I have been to book stores on the east side of Manhattan where I have been looked at in awe when I mentioned my yichas. I have heard other stories, no doubt apocryphal, about Rabbi Schorr. He was an authority on kashruth, and when a new bird called the "Gretzky" bird appeared on the tables of eastern Europe, he declared it traif and even wrote a book about it called "On the Wings of Eagles." It appears that a certain shochet slaughtered the bird and ate it in defiance of Rabbi Schorr's opinion and choked on it and died on the spot. This story is told by Aaron Sorosky in a newspaper article.

Another story told by Sorosky was about a woman whose husband was missing. She appealed to Rabbi Schorr who pitied her and penned an opinion declaring her husband dead. As he was writing this opinion, his pen fell out of his hand. He took this as a sign from heaven, ceased writing, and soon the husband turned up.

One of the big problems I have found in searching rabbinic ancestry is the dearth of information on the wives of rabbis. I can at this point tell you the names of my male ancestors six generations back, but I don't know the name of my grandmother's mother. Another problem, of course, is my inability to translate Hebrew. I have had several articles professionally translated, but I find it very expensive. It is painful to possess books by your ancestors that you are unable to read. At this point I have three books by Rabbi Schorr and one by Rabbi Landau which is the eulogy he gave at the funeral of the Sadagurer rebbe, I. Friedman, which I cannot read.

I don't know that any of this helps anyone researching ancestry in Romania. It's just a few of one person's experiences in trying to do so.

RESEARCHING ROMANIA

We all have experiences in our search for finding our Romanian roots. Each differs and is yet the same. But we can all benefit. You are urged to submit your stories, as simple or as complicated as they may be. Any illustrative art or photographs would also be appreciated.
Available from Yad Vashem, even your local library

Romanian Yizkor books could be big help in research
by Gary Fitteberg and Gene Starn

Yizkor books are memorials to cities, communities and countries where Jews once lived that faced destruction and devastation during the Nazi regime. The books are written by people who once lived in the places and they can sometimes be a genealogical goldmine.

One can find background information on their ancestral towns. Sometimes maps showing Jewish institutions are included. Perhaps one's family is mentioned. Often lists of organizations and members or officers can be found. Photographs of individuals and institutions can provide clues and often surprising discoveries. If you are lucky, an ancestor's story may be found.

Yad Vashem in Jerusalem holds perhaps the largest and most important collection of Yizkor books in the entire world. Research must be done in person. Mail inquiries will not be answered.

IN YAD VASHEM, JERUSALEM:

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IN THE PRICE JUDAICA LIBRARY, UNIV. OF FLORIDA
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However, many times you may obtain Yizkor books from other public collections. For instance, the Price Judaica Library at the University of Florida in Gainesville has a growing collection of Yizkor books, many of which are not listed as being in Yad Vashem.

You may borrow these books by going to your local public library and requesting that it be obtained via "Interlibrary Loan." Just tell them the name of the book and that it is available from the Price Judaica Library at the Univ. of Florida.

You should keep in mind that most Yizkor books are written in Yiddish, Hebrew or Romanian. A very few have English sections.

Following is a list of the books about Romanian areas that are listed by Yad Vashem, together with their call numbers, and also those at the Price Judaica Library at the Univ. of Florida:
The truth behind Grandma's MAMALIGA!

by Marcel Bratu, M.D.

My profession is not directly related to the Jewish or Romanian culinary art. However, I have much experience with it. Therefore, I consider myself an expert on the subject.

I was born in Dorohoi, Romania, in 1924 and I emigrated with my family to the United States in 1964 at the age of almost 40.

My Jewish "credentials" are strong. My great-great-grandfather was a famous rabbi who lived almost 200 years ago in Iasi, Rabbi Itzyak Moishe Rabinovic, Tsadik (miracle maker), founder of the Hasidic movement in Romania and the disciple of Rabbi Sneer Zalman from Lubavici. One of his sons, Rabbi Berl Rabinovic, known as the "Barloader Ruff," was the father of my grandmother Sheindle Rabinovic, married to Hersh Zalman from the shtetl Podu-Turcului near Barlad.

My Romanian "credentials" consist of 18 years of public schooling, 15 years of medical practice throughout Romania, and my first 40 years of life experience.

And now for some comments about Mamaliga:

1) Mamaliga is a Romanian national food in Moldova, Muntenia, Oltenia and Basarabia (now an independent republic from Russia). The people from the other provinces of Transylvania, Banat and Bucovina use it only as a food for pigs. The national food in the first set of provinces is used more by peasants and small farmers working in agriculture and living in small villages. They were "The Big Romanian Majority" when our grandparents were alive in Romania. Now there have been some social changes.

2) Mamaliga is like a hard porridge made of yellow corn meal, salt and water. It is the main food of the poor, in general a replacement for bread. And, believe me, it is very good.

3) Mamaliga is not a national food of Romanian Jews because only a few of them lived in small villages. They were not allowed to own land for agriculture. Therefore, they were not farmers. The majority of them lived in shtetls or cities with a lot of bakeries with delicious bread, the Jews often being the owners of these bakeries. Jewish food was heavier, very rich in fats and cholesterol. Like fatty chicken soup, mashed potatoes mixed with onions fried in chicken fat or good fat (tzimis cartoff), fatty roast beef, goose or chicken with bread soaked in the leftover fat from these dishes. Children's snacks consisted of fresh bread with butter and a hard boiled egg on top, or bread with a spread of chicken fat (shmalts) and some gravy on top (no medical comments necessary).

Certainly everybody had mamaliga once in a while, but in urban areas maybe only once or twice a week compared with rural areas where mamaliga was the main and daily food.

The recipes described in the last issue of ROM-SIG NEWS are dishes in which mamaliga is an ingredient. It is not mamaliga alone. You can imagine how fatty and delicious these dishes are. The first is known as urs ("bear" in Romanian) and the second is called malai or alivanca.

Mamaliga is like a hard porridge made of yellow corn meal, salt and water. It is the main food of the poor, in general a replacement for bread. And, believe me, it is very good.

Genealogically speaking, mamaliga is like the Italian polenta. However, I don't see any relations, because the Romans came to Romania from the present Italy 1400 years before corn came to America.

In 1964 as an intern at White Plains Hospital in New York, I was very surprised to eat mamaliga at the hospital's cafeteria. Maybe it was an homage for the 12 Romanian interns and their families, or maybe mamaliga is still used in the American culinary tradition like cornbread. It's not impossible that mamaliga was brought to America by Romanian immigrants at the beginning of the 20th century.

And now I am dying to eat some mamaliga. I am going to the kitchen to make some and to eat it with some sour cream (low fat), cottage cheese (2%), and bit of fresh onion.

Pofa Buna (Good appetite)!
Each summer I join the very few (two or three, used to be carloads) paying their yearly respect to departed family members interred in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, Cypress Hill St., Glendale, Queens, on the border of Brooklyn, in the section owned by the Heinrich Heine Literary Society, Inc., formerly called H.H. Lodge when it was a member of the Independent Order Brith Abraham (I.O.B.A.) Grand Lodge, subject to its rules.

Buried members of the Workmen's Circle and other lodges (Hungarian, I'm told) are also interred in Cypress Hills Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

I came across an old pamphlet and benefit card from the society. On the front of a member's dental and family physician card, issued to members of the H.H. Literary Society, was written "Heinrich Heine Literary Society, organized in 1896.

Excited by my 'find of the century', the 1896 dated, I wrote to the general manager of the cemetery, asking for membership lists, deeds and purchases of plots — anything relevant to the H.H. Literary Society for the year 1896. I asked to have copies made for which I would send a check.

Within a few weeks, Mr. Casazza answered, saying he had nothing I requested. He did however send the names and death dates of family members, like grandparents and parents.

So much for the 'find of the century'.

I then wrote to Mr. Henry Sherman, the present secretary of the society asking for the same information (1896 facts). He had nothing but noted that the society was organized in 1925. It was maddening! I gave up! I then sent him a sub-

scription of ROM-SIG NEWS thinking it would interest him as a fellow Romanian.

Wrong assumption!

Last week, June 1994, I revived my interest and wrote to Mr. Sherman, telling him I'd call him for a short telephone interview. This is what he said in essence:

He thinks the society was formed by a group of Germans, not Romanians. A group of Romanians from Brooklyn purchased plots from the society in one area, just as other groups did. A larger group of Romanians purchased plots in Mt. Hebron. Mr. Bader published a list of its occupants. (see RSN Vol. 2, No. 2, Winter 1993).

Mr. Sherman couldn't understand why I sent him ROM-SIG NEWS as neither he nor the very few remaining members of the society were Romanians. Unlike the early society, a social-benefits group, the present group is only interested in selling off the very few remaining cemetery plots. They then will shut down the organization, Heinrich Heine Literary Society, Inc., as there will be no reason to continue.

Heinrich Heine Literary Society, Inc.

Aug 21, 1993

Dear Mr. Casazza,

I sent you a request for some information and you sent me material. I understand your point.

I am sure that the society was organized before 1925 and that it was formed by a group of Germans, not Romanians. The society was later purchased by a group of Romanians.

Sincerely,

Henry Sherman
Secretary
The Heinrich Heine Lodge

(Continued from previous page)

I offered Mr. Sherman my pamphlets, Brith Abraham, 1925 Constitution of the society and the benefits card. He didn't want them.

He was most gracious. I kept him on the phone too long. He explained that he was not in the best of health.

Although this is not the most intriguing of subjects, I thought I'd make a rough topical summary of the 1925 pamphlet on members' rights and responsibility, as it got to me.

1. Proceedings in English but every brother has the right to use any language.

2. Widow members are not entitled to sick benefits; the sick benefit was created and is existing only for male members (later on there was an explanation that males were considered supporter of their families.)

3. The general fund shall be used for the sick and needy brothers, funeral expenses of members and their children.

4. For the promotion of humanitarian purposes in the interest of Judaism, no converts may be buried in this cemetery.

5. For the promotion of social enterprises for the benefit of this lodge (please note that the H.H. Literary Society is still called lodge).

6. Committees formed to visit the sick, attend a funeral when called upon by the secretary. If a brother neglects his duty he will be fined 50-cents up to $1.00.

7. Only members, their relatives or their children of Jewish faith shall be buried on the lodge's burial ground. If a member has become converted to another faith he shall forfeit every benefit and privilege of the lodge he is entitled to.

There were committees on law, finance, sick, shiva, investigation of candidates, relief, cemetery and funeral. Of the peace committee, it was written: "it shall be their duty to settle disputes that arise among their members."

If any readers would like copies of the pamphlets, please send your requests to ROM-SIG NEWS and I will be happy to forward them to you.

Leader of Romanian Jews, Rabbi Rosen, dies in Bucharest at age 81

Rabbi Moses Rosen, 81, Chief Rabbi of Romania, died May 8 in Bucharest of heart failure after suffering a stroke three weeks earlier.

He was elected by a congress of a 600 Romanian rabbis in 1948, after the Nazi Holocaust had already reduced the number of Romanian Jews from 850,000 to 400,000. He drew attention most recently for his condemnation of a wave of anti-Semitism that began after the communist government collapsed and the dictator Nicolai Ceausescu was executed in 1989.

He masterminded the exodus to Israel of 400,000 Jews during the years of Communist rule. Today only 14,000 remain in Romania, more than 60 percent over the age of 60.

He was born on July 9, 1912 in Moinesti, a village in the northeastern Moldavian region. He studied law in Bucharest.

Like many Romanian Jews, Rabbi Rosen’s family suffered from pogroms carried out by their own countrymen and as internees of labor and death camps run by the Nazis. His older brother, Elias, was a rabbi and led the Jewish population at the Auschwitz camp in Poland, but was later assassinated with his wife and two children at another camp in Poland.

Over the last four years, Rabbi Rosen has spoken out against a wave of anti-Semitic harassment and tributes to Nazi-era figures.

Surviving Rabbi Rosen is his wife of 45 years, Amalia.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Our thanks to the many who sent us notification through clippings from their local newspapers about Rabbi Rosen's death.
EDITOR'S NOTE: I asked for additions and corrections to the complete Romanian Family Finder as published in the last issue ... and I sure received many corrections, so many, in fact, that we will be republishing what we hope will be a corrected list in the very next issue. Again, we're only human; we do make mistakes. Please tell us when we go wrong.

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|               | 3 Douglas Place  
|               | Eastchester, NY 10709 |
| SCHOENBERG    | Telenesht (E of Kishinev), Bogoslav |
| /SHONBERG     | Telenesht |
| FISHMAN/Fichman | Telenesht |
| BRONSTEIN     | Telenesht |
| HOCHMAN       | Telenesht  
| /GOICHMAN     | Col. Irving B. Schoenberg  
|               | 1018 Winding Ridge Court  
|               | Dunwoody, GA 30338 |
| SOLTZER       | Bucharest |
| MOSCOVITZ     | Bucharest  
|               | (Mary) Tonya Young  
|               | 909 Tijeras N.W., #307  
|               | Albuquerque, NM 87102-2960 |
| LEIBOVICI     | Dranceni, Husi, Birlad, Bucharest |
| /LEIBowitz    | Dranceni, Husi, Birlad, Bucharest  
|               | Carol Rombro Rider  
|               | 2707 Moores Valley Drive  
|               | Baltimore, MD 21209 |
| HERSCHOVITZ   | Ruth H. Mayo  
|               | 1161 Phyllis Court  
|               | Mountain View, CA 94040 |
| ROTIMBERG     | Roman |
| ROSENFELD     | Roman |
| HERSCOVICI    | ? |
| SONNBLUMEN    | ?  
|               | David Roth  
|               | 16 Oman Avenue  
|               | London, England  
|               | NW2 6B6 |
| LICHTMAN      | Iasi  
|               | Roberta Wagner Berman  
|               | 1263 Pearl Street  
|               | La Jolla, CA 92037 |
| SCHOR, SCHORR,| Iasi (Jassy) |
| SHOR          | Iasi, Litin |
| LANDAU        | Bucharest |
| FRIEDMAN      | Bucharest  
| TAUBES        | Iasi  
|               | Ruth Sawits  
|               | 259 Ackerman Avenue  
|               | Emerson, NJ 07630 |
| FRIEDMAN      | Birlad, Iasi |
| ZALMAN        | Birlad  
|               | Toby Carliner Sanchez  
|               | 2410 Glenwood Rd.  
|               | Brooklyn, NY 11210 |
| ROSMAN        | Bagata de Sus, Reteng, Purcareti, Sasarm (Transylvania)  
|               | Stephen M. Rosman  
|               | 24901 Northwestern Hwy, #504  
|               | Southfield, MI 48075 |
| ROSEN         | Iasi |
| GOLDENBERG    | Botosoni, Bucharest |
| SOMMER        | Braila, Focsani, Galati (Galatz),  
| WIND          | Braila, Constanza |
| SUGAR         | Botosoni |
| ALBAHARI      | Constanza, Bucharest, Braila |
| FRIEDMAN      | Braila |
| HORNSTEIN     | Bucharest |
| MOSKOWITZ     | Bucharest |
| BERKOWITZ     | Bucharest |
| ALTURIO       | Philip J. Leonard, MD  
|               | 711 W. 35th St.  
|               | Austin, TX 78705-1197 |
**Family Finder**

**ADDITIONS and CORRECTIONS**

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Kolomyya  
LERNER  
Dorohoi  
LITWIN  
REGENSTREIF/REGENSTREICH  
Herta, Mihaileni  
ROSENBLATT  
SCHACTER  
SCHACTER   
Darbani, Dorohoi, Mihaileni  
SCHNECHTER  
Sveni  
TENENHAUSE  
Gary Fitleberg  
24106 Kittridge St.  
West Hills, CA 91307  

LICHTMAN  
Iasi  
Roberta Wagner Berman  
1265 Pearl St.  
La Jolla, CA 92037  

BLUMENFELD  
Kishinev  
Ginger, Ginger  
Iasi, Kishinev  
Basile Ginger  
c/o Cercle de Genalogie Juive  
B.P. 707  
75162 Paris cedex 04  
France  

LEIBDAMSIG  
Buceceau, Botosani  
Jane Moskowitz  
P.O. Box 9636, FDR Sta.  
New York, NY 10150-9636  

SUSSMAN  
Targu Ocna, Moinast  
GREENBERG  
Targu Ocna, Moinast  
Marilyn Newman  
216 Harrow Drive  
Pittsburgh, PA 15238  

---Scene from a Romanian town---  

-from the HOLOCAUST MUSEUM, Washington, D.C.
**Family Stories**

**GUTTMAN - ZAROVITZ**

My maternal grandmother Lizzie Guttman was born in Budesti, Romania, (1887-1962). She reported on some documents that her birthplace was Bogeiu. She was one of eight children born to Shimon Meyer Guttman (1860-1923) (birthplace unknown) and Chana Sara ?? Guttman (?). Shimon was the son of Zachariah Gershon Guttman, dates and birthplace unknown.

I am aware, as the result of finding manifest cards through the St. Albans Crossings, that other siblings were born in different villages.

Brother Solomon (1869-1932) was born in Galatz (Galati), sister Etta Rose (1876-1952), stated she was born in Bozian (Bozien). Yet another sister Freda (1877-1969), birthplace unknown. Two other brothers Jacob and Leon Guttman, birthplace unknown.

Lizzie Guttman emigrated to Montreal, Canada, and married Barnet Maiman in 1908. Father, Shimon Meyer Guttman, sister Etta Rose (married to Jacob Mayer Herschkovitz), Samuel, Pauline (married to Yehuda Ludwig) and Sophia (Eliescu, a.k.a. Eliesen) all resided in Montreal.

Brother Solomon took the surname of Zarovitz to avoid the conscription in Romania. Jacob and Leon Guttman settled in New York and used the sumamed, Goodman. I known nothing about them.

Lizzie (Guttman) and Barnet Maiman had six children. The four born in Montreal were Bessie, Gerson, Anne and Solomon. In 1917 they emigrated to Chicago where two more children, Eli and Ida, were born.

Solomon (Zarovitz) settled in St. Louis about 1904-05. He sent for his family from Romania: Tova Greenberg, wife and two children, Michael Hamilton and Rose.

Etta Rose (Guttman) Herschkovitz and family moved to Boston in 1923.

I am still searching for information.

Arlene B. Edwards  
1001 Highlight Drive  
West Covina, CA 91791

**ABELES (ABELESU)**

My grandfather Jakob Abeles (Abelesu) was a wholesale coffee merchant in Birlad. It is said that he was the first son of thirteen generations who was not a rabbinical scholar.

My grandmother's birth certificate was published in the last issue of ROM-SIG NEWS. That is all I know about my maternal grandmother and her family. The rest is all hearsay. I summarize below this information for you to use how you like and in the hope that a name may bring a response from someone.


Luise's parents were Jacob Abeles (as above) and Gertud, daughter of Mincha Juster (Justa). They had eight children:

--Maurice, a landowner
--Leon, a physician trained in Vienna, and reputedly physician to the Royal family. Married Eva ?. Five children born in Harlau. Later settled in Israel. I have some information on his family. The married names of the three daughters were Rosenfeld, Landau and Stern.
--Carl, an engineer, settled in Dortmund, Germany. Died in Tel Aviv.

--Luise, my grandmother, as above.
--Rebecca, went to Israel
--Mathilde
--Heinrich. There is a conflicting story that a daughter Rosica married Heinrich Lanfer and lived in Leeds.
--Rosa (Rosalie), married Jack Goldman and lived in Leeds. Two children, daughter's married name Cutler.

R.M.H. Smith  
2, Observatory Road,  
East Sheen  
London, SW14 7QD.  
United Kingdom

**Early Jewish Romanian history dates to 101 C.E. with Roman legions**

According to the Encyclopedia Judaica, the land that is today known as Romania, was once called Dacia in the times of antiquity.

The Jews may have come as merchants with Roman legions which were stationed there from the year 101 C.E. Some Jewish tombstones have been found dating from those early days.

But don't expect to find any records in the archives.

Another wave of Jewish immigrants came around 1367 after they had been expelled from Hungary. They came to the principality of Walachia. In the 16th century some refugees of the Spanish expulsion also came to Walachia from the Balkan peninsula.

Jewish merchants traveling through Moldavia, another Romanian principality in the northeast, settled there and were favorably received in several towns -- Jasey, Botosani, Suceava and Siret.

More intensive waves of Jewish immigrations results in the Chmielnicki massacres of 1648-49.

These were the first Jews to come to Romania. They were favorably accepted, and flourished until 1821 when the first stirrings of independence and unity began.
A QUESTION FOR OUR READERS

According to my family's passed on stories, my great-grandfather Jakob Abeles (Abelscu) was a wholesale merchant (coffee, etc.) in Biriad. It is said that he was the first son for 13 generations who was not a rabbinical scholar.

If this is so, then I expect that there are good records of his family. To whom should I write for this sort of information?

R.M.H. Smith
2, Observatory Road,
East Sheen,
London, SW14 7QD
United Kingdom

MORE INFO ON BESARABIA SOURCE

Here is more information about Anton Valdim (a dependable source for information in Besarabia. See pp 22-23, Vol. 2, No. 3): his main sources are censuses, university and police files, city directories.

His (new) fax number is 7-095-491-78-26. Fax is the most dependable way of communicating with Russia, but I don't know the prices for you (in America).

Basile Ginger
4 Cercle de Genealogie Juive
B.P. 707
75162 Paris cedex 04
France

TOLD RECORDS NOT IN LOCAL ARCHIVES

Several months ago I attended a lecture given by a Jewish professor who moved to the U.S. from Romania. I don't remember what his subject was, but it wasn't anything genealogical. I went because I thought he might say something that would somehow be of genealogical use and because being Jewish, he might know something that would help. I even taped the talk just to be sure that a useful bit of information didn't slip by.

Since this was in someone's home, I had the opportunity to speak to him afterward. I told him about my genealogical research and asked him if he knew where one could find vital records. At that point he asked me if the tape recorder was off. When I assured him it was, he whispered to me that the records were no longer in local archives, but in Bucharest.

I also asked if he knew anyone in Romania who would have access to the records and would be willing to do research. The reply was negative.

Roberta Wagner Berman
1265 Pearl Street
La Jolla, CA 92037

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David Shlomo, President
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(Also include any additions or corrections for your Family Finder on a separate sheet of paper)
AGAIN! Don't forget to send your stories in! Deadline: Aug. 25th

ROM-SIG NEWS is a cooperative venture by genealogists researching Jewish ancestors in Romania, past and present. It can only succeed if you share your experiences with us and provide us with material you think would be helpful to others.

Tell us what you have done, both your successes and your failures, so that others may learn from your experiences.

Send us clear copies of your photographs, documents, narratives or any of your own intimacies that provide us with some picture of life as it was for our ancestors.

Also, please let us know what you like or dislike about ROM-SIG NEWS. We can't please everyone, but we can try. Give us your suggestions on how to make this journal better. ROM-SIG NEWS is not a sophisticated, rigid publication, but one that tries to cater to the desires of its readers. So tell us what you want. Help us. We're good listeners.

There are a few guidelines we'd like you to follow:
1. Write plainly, or better yet, type or print your queries, stories, etc.
2. Always include your name, address and phone number in case we must contact you.
3. If you don't want your name used, or your address or phone number, tell us.
4. If you want your material returned, please let us know and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

We may add some other guidelines as we go, but that's all for now.

Remember, the address for ROM-SIG NEWS, for all correspondence, materials, and membership dues is:
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If you have any questions, you can contact me at home, day or night (9 a.m. to about 11:30 p.m.) . Phone is (407) 788-3898. Fax is (407) 831-0507. Internet is starn@cornucopia.oau.org.

Thanks and happy researching!

Gene Starn, Editor, and the
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