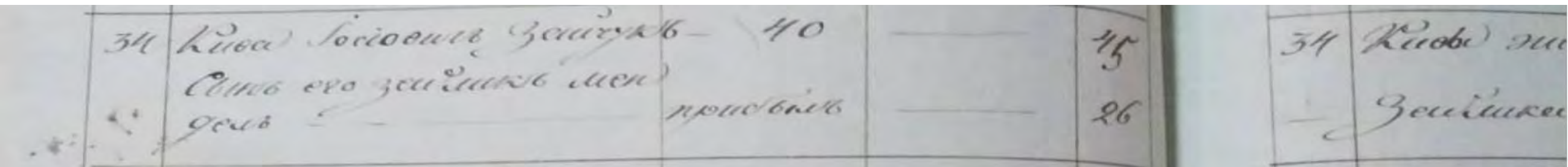


Where Did They Run To?



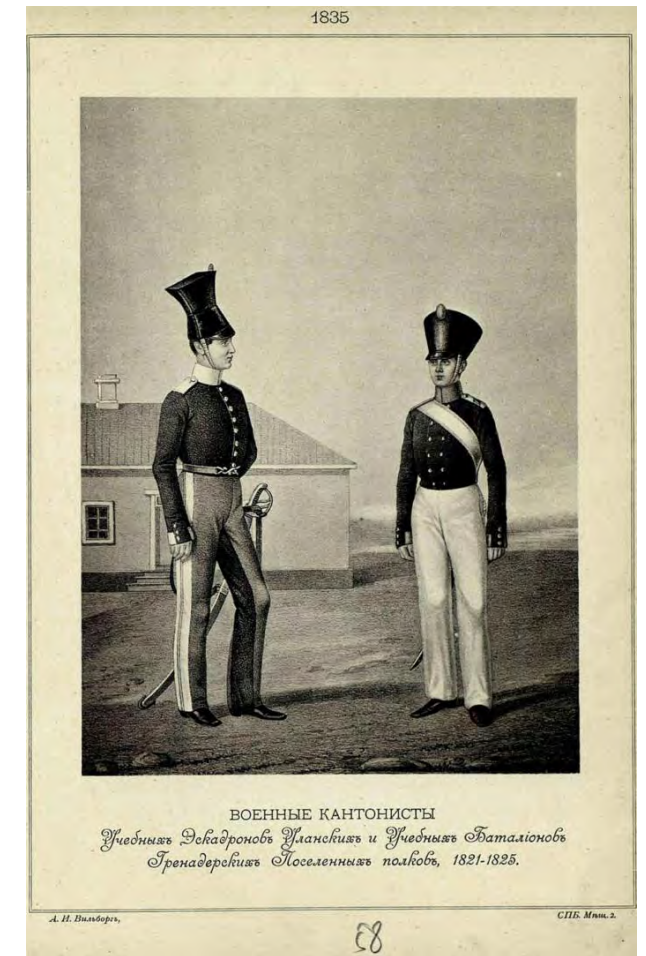
Tracing Ancestors Who Fled Conscription in the Russian Empire

David R. Brill



The Cantonist Period 1827-1859

- Before 1827, Jews in the Russian Empire followed the medieval tradition of paying a large communal tax in lieu of performing actual army service.
- In 1827, Tsar Nicholas issued a *ukase* (edict) forcing Jewish communities to provide a fixed quota of recruits.
 - Length of service was 25 years (later reduced to 15 years).
 - Boys as young as 12 were eligible for recruitment. In practice, boys were taken as young as 9.
 - Underage boys were sent to “Cantonist” schools until they turned 18 (at which point the 25-year term started).
- The cantonist system was officially abolished in 1856 after the death of Nicholas, but in reality it took several more years to wind down.





Parameters of Jewish Recruitment in the Reign of Nicholas I (1827 -1855)*

- Ukase of August 26, 1827.
 - The Jewish population must provide 10 recruits out of 1,000 men every year. The Christian population must provide 7 recruits out of 1,000 men every two years. (That is, the conscription rates for Jews are three times higher than the conscription rates for Christians.)
 - Jewish boys subject to conscription are sent to military Cantonist schools from the age of 12.
 - Unbaptized Jews can serve only as privates, and can only be promoted to non-commissioned officers by personal order of the Tsar (since 1850).
- Resolution of the Senate of 1830.
 - For each additional conscription of an adult recruit from the Jewish community, arrears amounting to 1,000 rubles are written off, and for a child recruit, 500 rubles. The number of Jewish soldiers increases sharply (to the chagrin of Tsar Nicholas, who soon reversed the decree).
- Ukase of February 10, 1844.
 - It is forbidden to send Jewish soldiers to NON-combat units. Jews serving in the guards is prohibited.
- Ukase of December 27, 1850.
 - For each missing Jewish recruit, three other recruits are taken. For every 2000 rubles in arrears – one additional recruit is taken.
- Crimean War of 1853-1856.
 - Two additional recruiting sets are carried out to replenish the army.
 - The Christian population supplies 19 people per thousand, the Jewish population - 30 people per thousand.
 - More than 500 Jewish soldiers died during the defense of Sevastopol.
- The reign of Alexander II (1855-1881), the era of liberal reforms. Recruitment of minor Jews is abolished. The Coronation Manifesto of 1856 abolishes Cantonist schools and battalions.

* Adapted from: <https://www.forum.j-roots.info> See topic: *Jews in the Russian Army* (user Рыжик)



Response of the Jewish Community

*“Local authorities provided Jews with a conscription quota and then assigned to them the responsibility of deciding whom to draft ... By default, the kahal elders resolved to maintain community financial stability and to provide the army with those Jews whom they deemed least useful: the unmarried, unskilled, illiterate, **unprotected, poor and minors.**” [my emphasis]*

Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, *Jews in the Russian Army, 1827-1917*

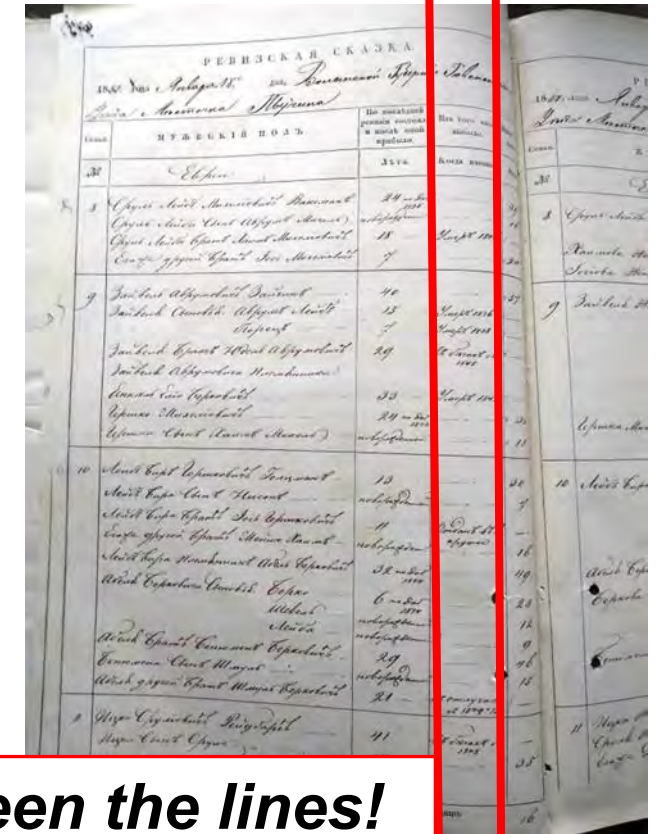
Among Jews, the typical responses to the 1827 *ukase* were:

- ❑ Fear and panic
- ❑ Infighting, denunciations, desperate petitions to authorities
- ❑ Hiding or attempting to hide boys; disfigurement and other schemes
- ❑ Flight



Conscription in the Background of Revision Lists (*Revizskie Skazki*)

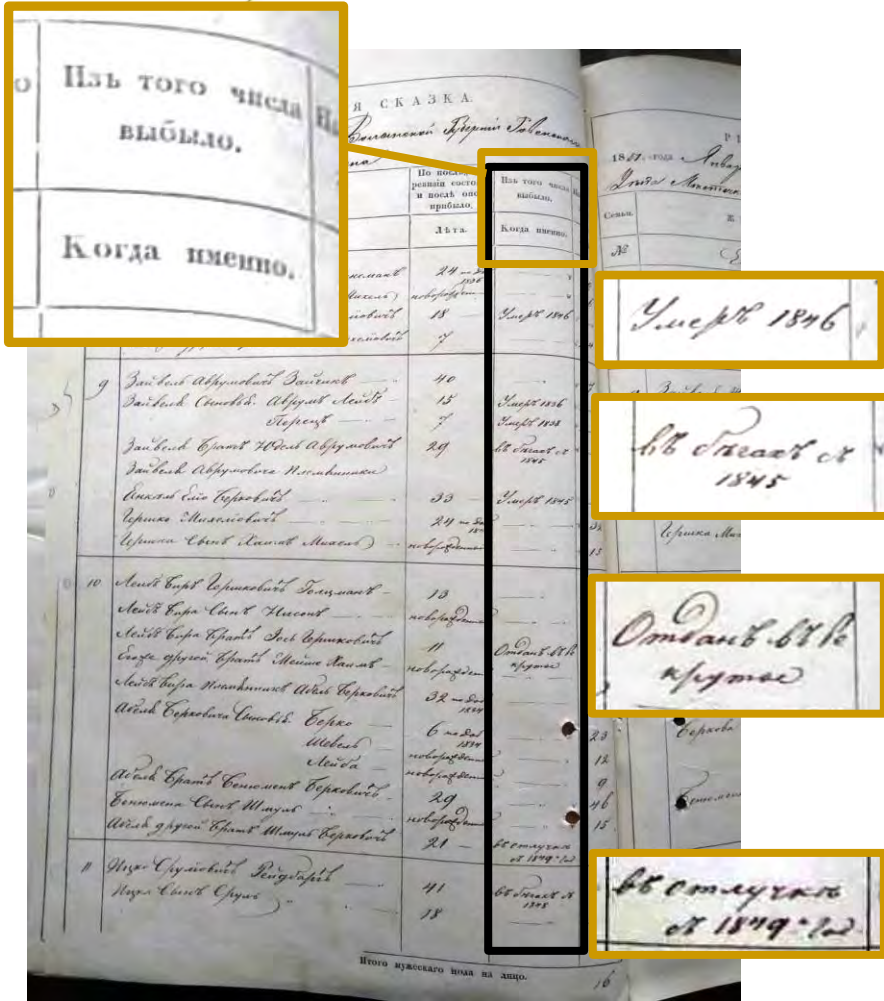
- Revision lists – originally only for taxation purposes – quickly became a tool to identify potential military recruits.
- Read “between the lines.”
 - The threat of conscription (especially of children) is a constant presence in the revision lists of the mid-19th century (1835 and later).
 - This is a major reason why the lists are incomplete or inaccurate.



Read between the lines!



Common Revision List Notations



- Column Heading: “Of the number who left – when exactly?”
- “Left” means – for whatever reason – this person is no longer counted in the current revision list.
- May have died, run away, moved to a different social class, converted, been taken to a cantonist battalion, etc.
- *Umer* – “died”
- *v begakh c ...* – “in hiding since ...”
- *Otdan v rekruty* – “recruited”
- *v otluchke c 1849 goda* – “absent since 1849”

Other often seen notations:

бѣгал (<i>begal</i>) = “ran”	воротился из беговъ (<i>vorotilsya iz begov</i>) = “came back from running”
в неизвѣстной (<i>v neizvestnoy</i>) = “unknown”	не явился (<i>ne yavilsya</i>) = “did not appear”
пропал без вести (<i>propal bez vesti</i>) = “missing, disappeared without a trace”	



Example from a Revision List

- Part of the 1858 (10th) Revision List for Tuchin, Rovno District, Volin Guberniya.
- Aron BREN was 6 years old when added to the revision list in 1851. **Extra Credit: How old was Aron when the authorities conscripted him in 1854?**
- Orphans were vulnerable. His brothers probably tried to hide him, but to no avail.
- Assuming he survived, and resisted the pressure to convert, Aron could have benefitted from the abolition of the cantonist system in 1856 by the “liberal” Czar Alexander II. Perhaps he eventually returned to his family. The revision lists don’t tell us.

РЕВИЗСКАЯ СПИСОК

18. года для

Age in 1851

Семья.		Мужеский полъ.	По послѣдней ревизии состо- ла и послѣ ней прибаво.	Изъ того числа вы- было.	Выздѣ- ли.
до реви- зии.	до реви- зии.		Лѣтъ.	Когда имен- но.	Лѣтъ.
98	23	Вольфъ Гершковичъ Бренъ	24	Въ 1851	
		Его братья: 1 ^й Давидъ	22	Въ 1851	
		2 ^й Аронъ	6	Въ 1851 по указу 1851	1854

Vol'f Gershovich BREN	24	Moved to "the workshop"
His brothers 1 st Duvid	22	
2 nd Aron	6 by addition 1851	Recruited 1854



Capt. Gertsel' (Hertzl) Tsam

Only Jewish Combat Officer in the Russian Empire



1850 Revision List for Olyka,
Dubno district, Volhynia Gubernia

РЕВИЗСКАЯ СКАЗКА.

1850 года Января 20 дня, Волынской губернии Ровненского уезда Олыкского волостного казначейства.

Семья	МУЖЕСКИЙ ПОЛЪ	По последней ревизии состояли и по сей день в работѣ.	Наз. того числа дворовъ.	Шестъ са дровъ.
№	Имя	Лѣтъ.	Когда вступо.	Лѣтъ.
303	Янкулъ Юделъ Шайовича Шайовъ.	29	Чужаки въ 1850 году.	
	Михель сынъ Янкулъ.	4		20.
	2-й Дувидъ Волфъ.			16.
	3-й Гертселъ.			14.
	4-й Михель.			6.
304	Андрей Моисей Шайовича Шайовъ.	28		44.
	Андрей сынъ Моисей Шайовъ.			15.
305	Андрей Яковъ Шайовича Шайовъ.	30.	Чужаки въ 1850 году.	



	Age in 1834	Age in 1850	
Yankel' Yudel' Shayovich TSAM	29	Died 1850	
Yankel's sons: 1. Shaya	4	-	20
2. Duvid Vol'f	not born	-	16
3. Gertsel'		-	14
4. Mikhel'		-	6

- Family in Olyka in the 1850 revision list.
- Sometime after his father died in 1850, they moved to Goryngrad (Horyn'hrad) in the adjacent Rovno uezd. Not far enough.
- In 1852, agents (*khapers*) sent from the Olyka *kahal* captured Gertsel' in Goryngrad. Sent to a Cantonist battalion in Tomsk, Siberia.
- We know his story from his own testimony later in life.





What Does This Mean for Genealogists?

- Historical situation presents unique challenges.
- Your ancestor may have fled (internally emigrated) from a distant part of the Pale of Settlement.
 - There may be no obvious connection between the place of origin and the destination. (For many escapees, it was the farther away the better.)
 - Your ancestor may (or may not) have acquired a new name along the way.
 - Because the intention was to escape from authorities, documentation may be nonexistent or falsified.
- Family lore may be lost or garbled. Passed-down accounts of events 150-200 years ago should be used only as a starting point.



The Pale of Settlement



The Southern Guberniyas
(Territory not acquired by Russia in the three partitions of Poland, 1772-1795)

Chernigov & Poltava (Little Russia). Ceded to Russia in 1667, added to the Pale 1791.

Ekaterinoslav, Kherson & Taurida (New Russia). Acquired from the Ottoman Empire in the 18th century, added to the Pale 1791.

Bessarabia. Territory acquired from the Ottoman Empire, added to the Pale 1835.

- Internal migrations generally were from northwest to southeast.
- From older, more established Jewish communities in former Polish-Lithuanian lands to newer, more sparsely populated communities in “Little Russia” (*Malorossiya*) and “New Russia” (*Novorossiya*).
- Generally followed the course of the Dnieper River southward.



The Genealogical Problem

- Often comes down to a problem of identity.
- Can we prove that a particular child mentioned in records is the same person as an ancestor known to have lived elsewhere at a later time?
- Should meet the accepted criteria for genealogical proof:
 - Explore all known/available sources
 - Plausible sequence of events
 - No contradictory evidence (or satisfactorily resolved)



=



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Case 1: Gorodok to Kremenchuk

Gelya née CHERNITSKY



In Philadelphia,
about 1915



"Kremenchug"

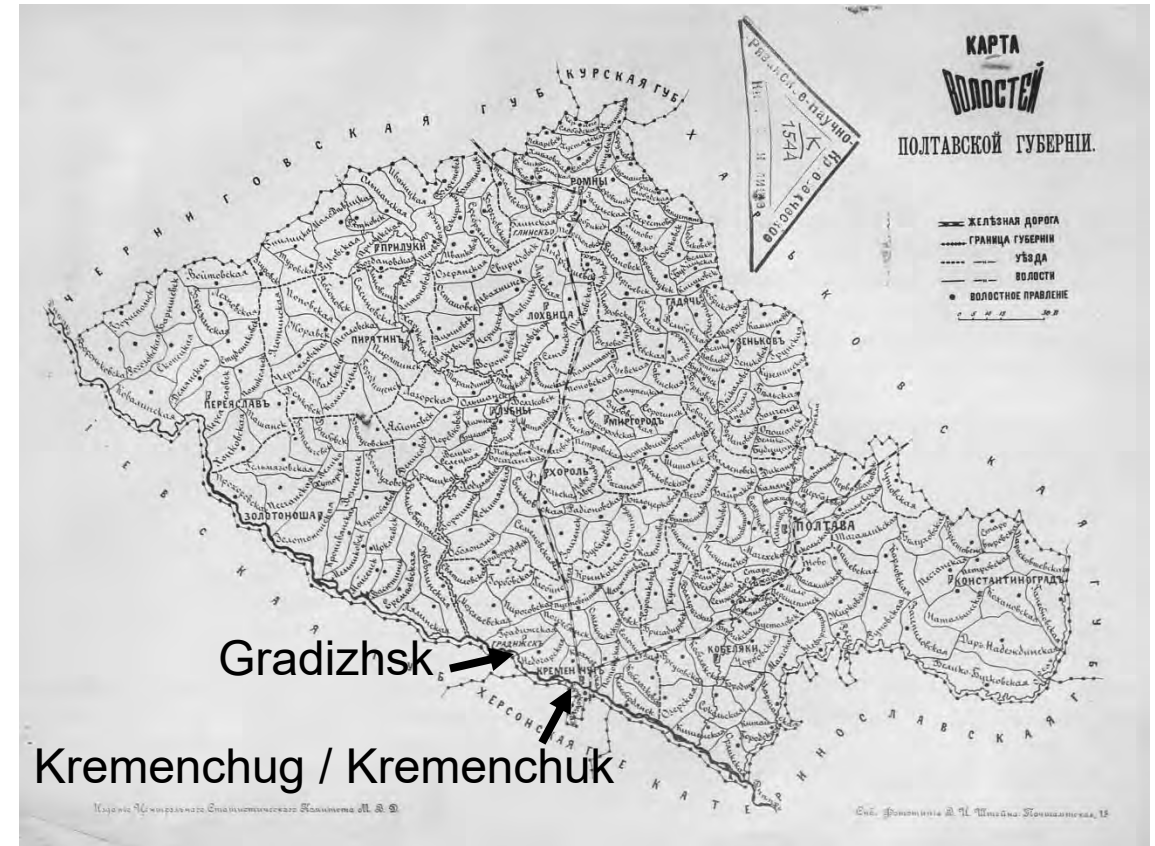
- Gelya was my maternal great-grandmother.
- The known facts:
 - Gelya was born in Gradizhsk (Градизжск), Kremenchuk district, Poltava Guberniya, Ukraine, about 1877 (from secondary sources).
 - Her parents were Sender Tsvi and Mikhla CHERNITSKY.
 - Gelya married Samuel (Zus') WILENSKY and emigrated to Philadelphia in 1905.
 - Sender Tsvi had a brother Joseph (Iosif Yerakhim), who emigrated to Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. Joseph's 1932 Canadian death record establishes that their father (my 3xggf) was Simon (Shimon) CHERNITSKY.



Shimon Chernitsky – A Brick Wall?

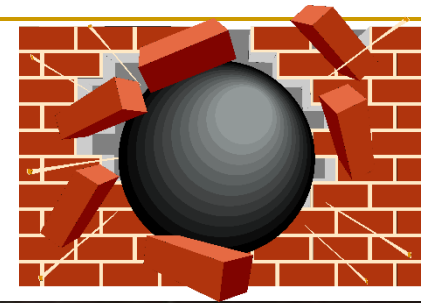
- Many districts have extensive Jewish family records from the 19th century. Unfortunately, Kremenchuk isn't one of them.
 - Very few records for Kremenchug uezd are known to exist in Ukrainian archives.
 - Not surprisingly, the few surviving lists (pre-1840) do not include Chernitsky.
 - Cannot document Shimon in Kremenchuk town or its suburb Gradizhsk / Hradyz'k in the period in question.
- Most likely Shimon Chernitsky migrated to Kremenchuk from elsewhere in the Russian Pale – but where?

Poltava Guberniya





Brick Wall Breakthrough!



- Genealogy is a community enterprise. (*It takes a shtetl.*)
- In 2020 I was contacted by Dmitry Pruss, building a “mega-tree” of Chernitskys from Gorodok (Vitebsk area).
- Hypothesis: Shimon Shenderovich Chernitsky who disappeared from Gorodok records after 1826 is the same person as Shimon Chernitsky in the Kremenchuk area. Can we prove it?

No.	Name	Age	Notes
1.	Александръ Шендеровъ Шендеръ	56	
1.	Анна Еро Лева Шендерова	48.	
2.	Анна Еро Шендеръ	24.	
2.	Анна Еро Анна Шендерова	23.	
3.	Дора Шендеръ	5.	
4.	Дора Анна Шендерова	11.	
24.	Шендеръ Шендеровъ Шендеръ	30	
7.	Анна Еро Шендерова	36	
3.	Шендеръ Шендеръ	19.	
3.	Шендеръ Шендеръ	14.	
24.	Шендеръ Шендеровъ Шендеръ	28.	
3.	Анна Еро Анна Шендерова	24.	
24.	Анна Еро Анна Шендерова	22.	
6.	Дора Шендеръ	8.	
9.	Дора Шендеръ	6.	
7.	Шендеръ Шендеръ	16.	
6.	Анна Еро Анна Шендерова	14.	
7.	Дора Шендеръ Анна	18.	
8.	Шендеръ Шендеровъ Шендеръ	25.	
9.	Шендеръ Шендеръ	5.	
10.	Шендеръ Шендеровъ Шендеръ	23.	
11.	Анна Еро Анна Шендерова	23.	
12.	Дора Шендеръ	6.	

1826 List of Jews in Gorodok (NIAB 1416/5/496). Shimon, age 14 (b. 1812) is the 2nd son of Shender Khaimovich Chernitsky.



A Plausible Scenario

- We tentatively identified my 3xggf Shimon Chernitsky with the boy from Gorodok.
 - Dates and ages are all consistent.
 - We know Shimon's presumed close relatives followed a similar path down the Dnieper River to nearby locations.
- A set of relatively uncommon first names connects the two families.
 - Shimon, Sender/Shender, Meylakh are repeated down to current generation.
 - Not proof, but very suggestive.

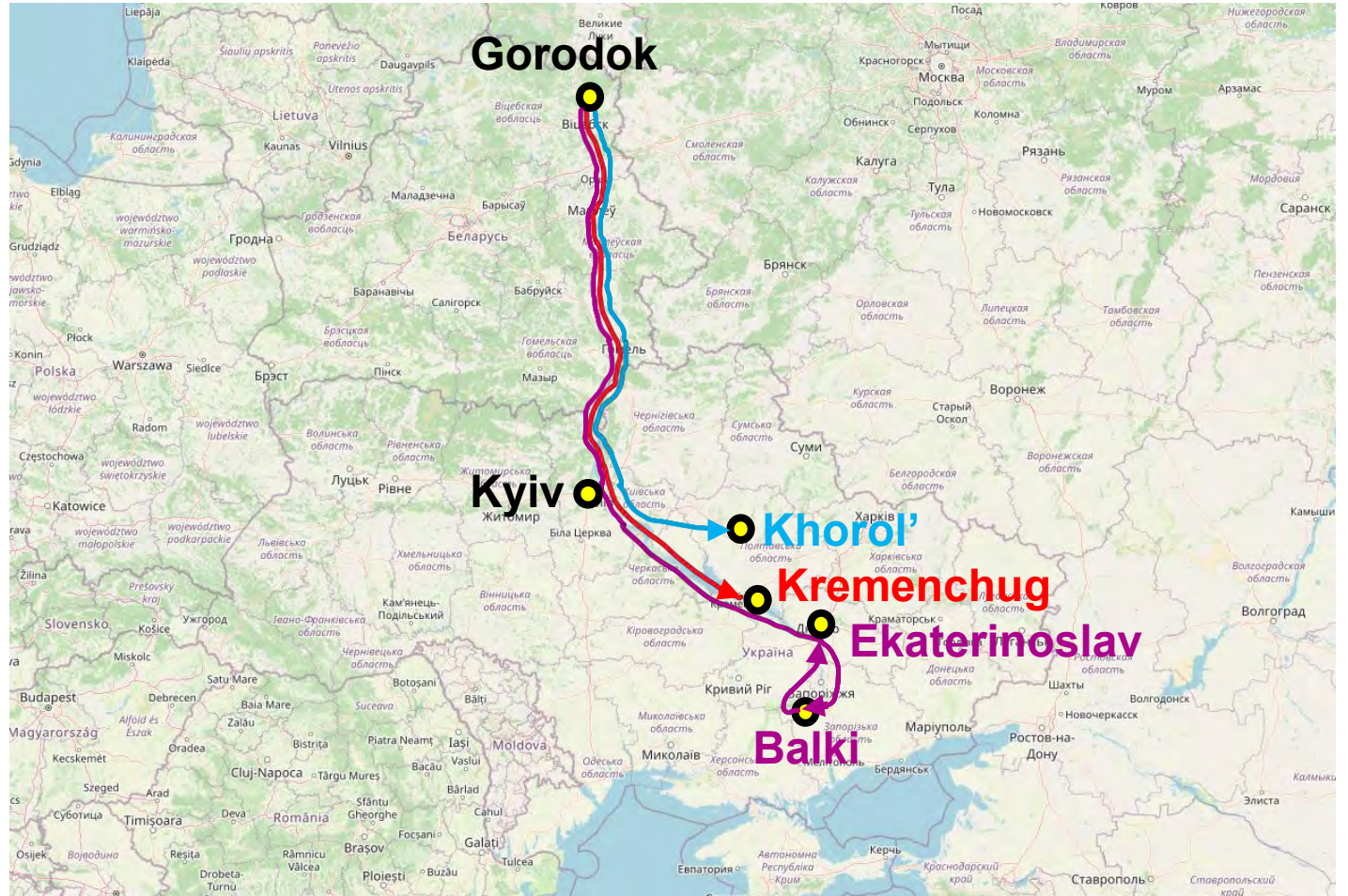
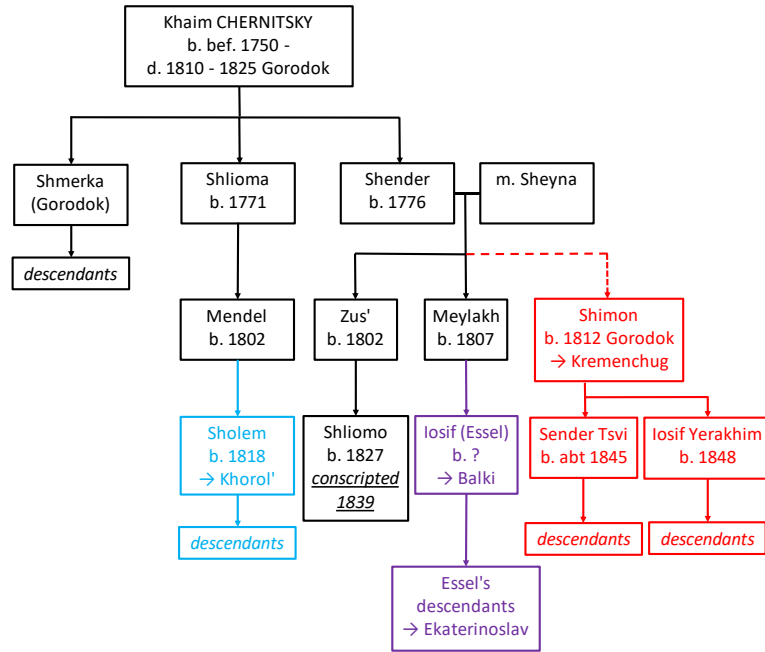
Ekaterinoslav BMD Records, DADnO/193/3/134

№	Женскаго.	Мужскаго.	кто совершаетъ обрядъ обрученія и бракосочетанія.	Христіанскій.	Ерейскій.	записки и обязательство между вступающими въ бракъ и свидѣтели о нихъ.	вступаетъ въ бракъ, также имена и состояніе родителей.
202.	20	27	Шохоръ	29	9	Поксуды нах. 75.руб. сер.	280 молодость ввѣнчанной вдовы иль мѣщанинъ Витѣбской губерніи города Городка Іосифъ Іосифовичъ Черницкій иль вдовица дочь мѣщанина Витѣбской губерніи города Городка Абрама Черницкаго Лей

1890 Ekaterinoslav marriage record of uncle-and-niece Khaim Iosifovich CHERNITSKY (great-great-grandson of the original Khaim) and Leya Abramovna CHERNITSKAYA show them both still registered to Gorodok, Vitebsk Guberniya. No similar documents exist for Shimon's branch that would prove the Gorodok connection.



Chernitsky Migrations 1830-1850



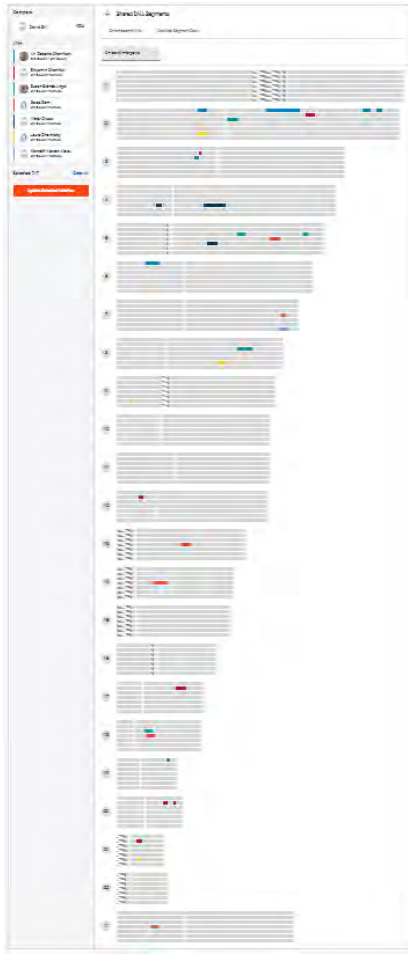


What About DNA?

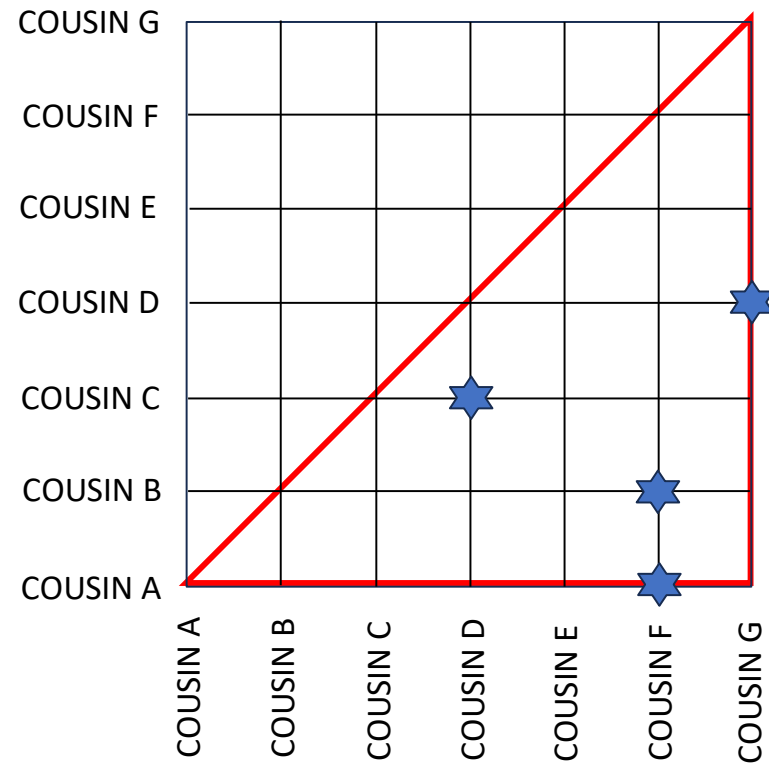
- Another tool in the genealogist's toolbox.
- Y-DNA – This would be the best way to prove direct male-line descent.
 - Descendants of Khaim CHERNITSKY are known to belong to the G-L201 Y-DNA haplogroup.
 - My own descent is maternal-line. Unfortunately, there is only one known candidate direct male-line descendant in Shimon's line (in Canada) and so far he has not responded to requests for testing. ☹️
- Autosomal DNA – still strong evidence.
 - Can estimate the degree of relationship within a range (but known issues with Jewish populations).
 - Family Tree DNA - At least 7 matches to my DNA (> 10 cM) are known descendants of Khaim (including Dmitry Pruss' father). At least 3 more on Ancestry are also matches.
 - Triangulation – provides strong evidence of common Chernitsky ancestry.
 - Success depends on people contributing to the site. Presumably, more DNA matches are out there.
 - Not absolute proof because – at 6 or more generations back – we have to consider the possibility that we are related through other paths (i.e., my father's family was also from the Vitebsk area).



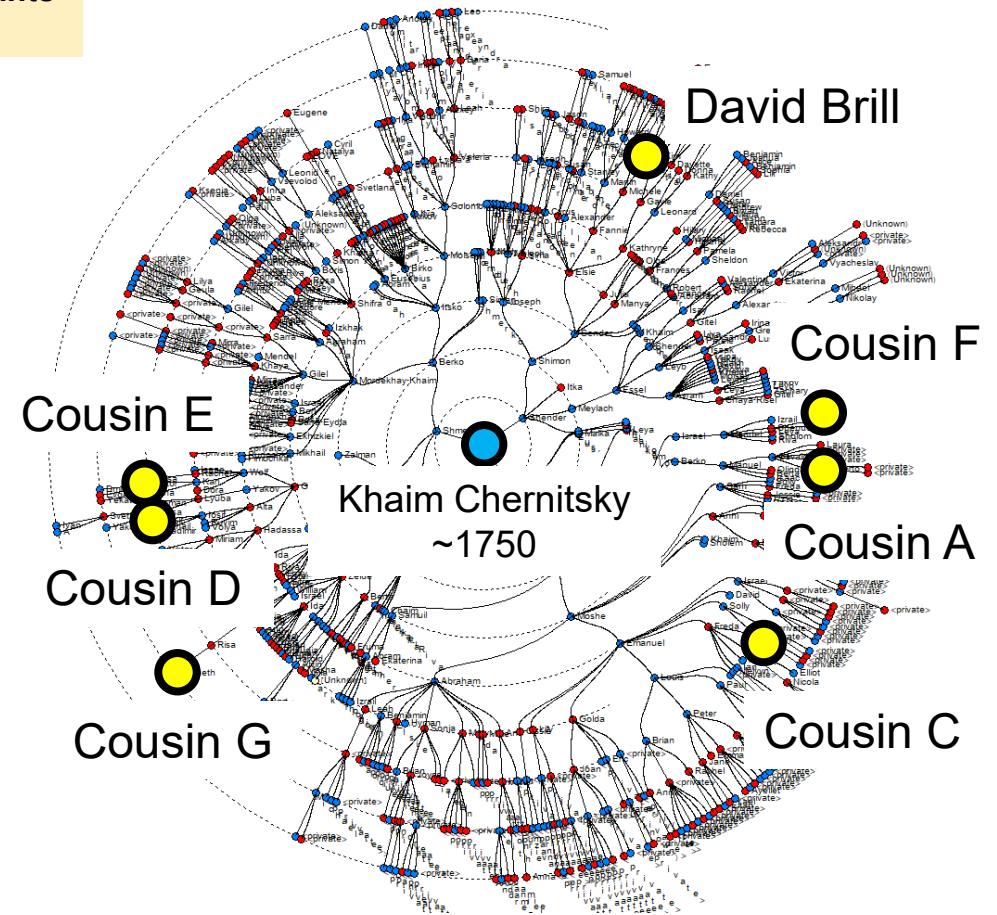
Triangulation Matrix



Stars indicate pairs of known CHERNITSKY descendants whose DNA “triangulates” with the presenter’s.



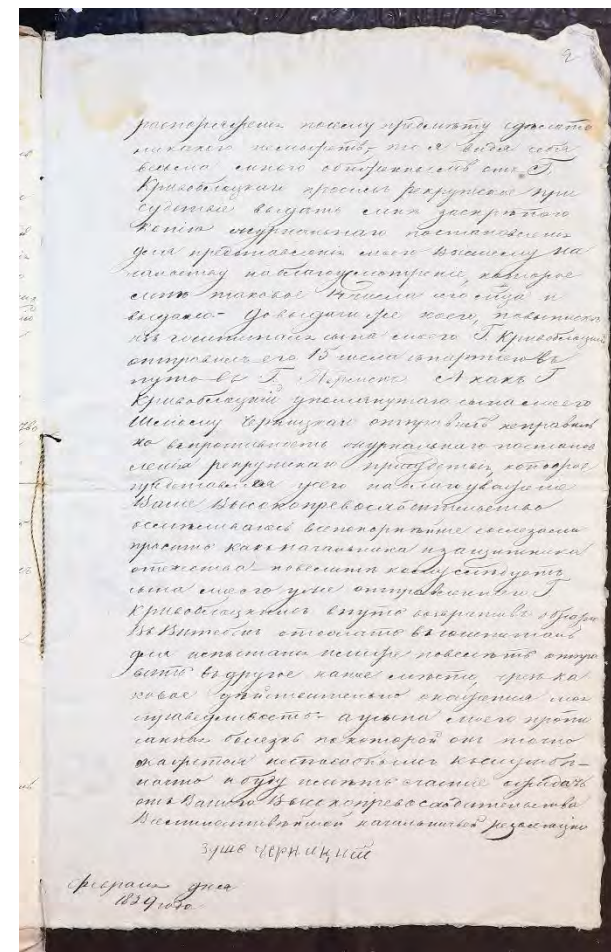
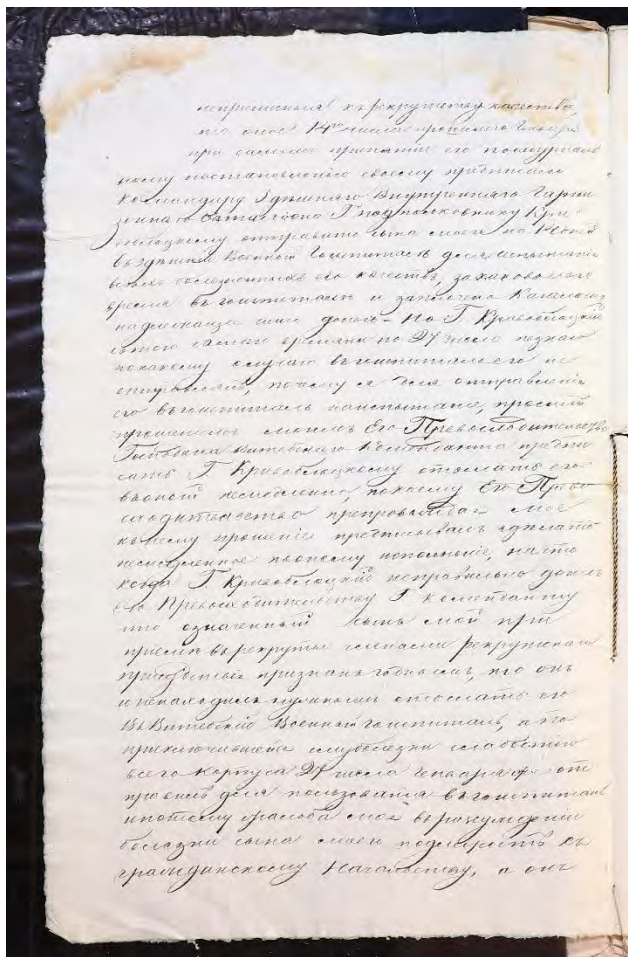
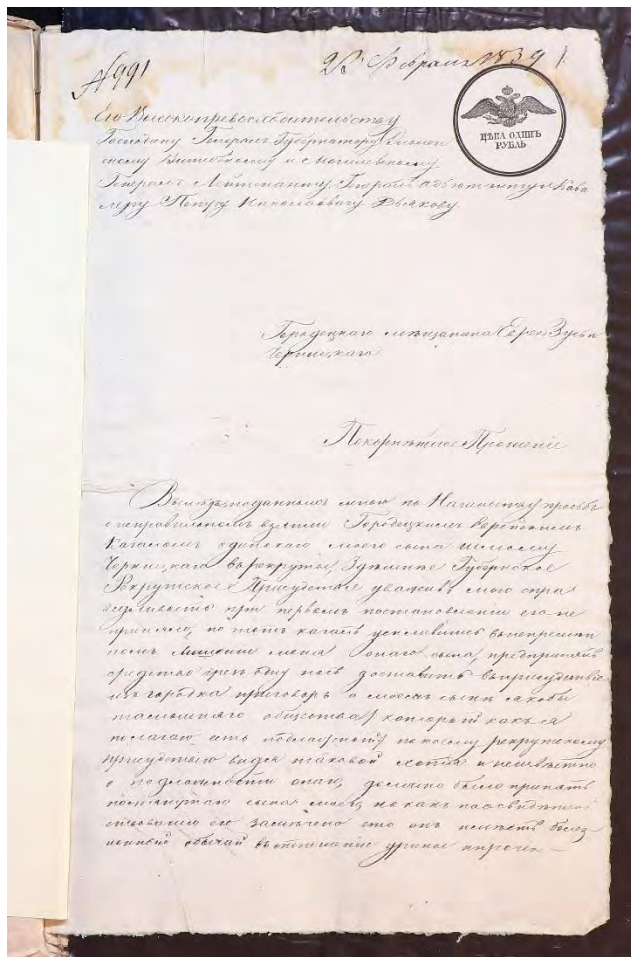
Distribution of DNA Matches





Back to the Story ...

Petition of Gorodok townsman Zusya Chernitsky to the Governor-General concerning the conscription of his 12-year old son Shlioma, 1839. NIAB F 1297 / O 1 / D 11386 *



*Fond 1297: Records of the Office of the Governor-General of Vitebsk, Mogilev and Smolensk



A Most Humble Petition

February 23, 1839

To His Excellency -
The Governor-General of Smolensk, Vitebsk, and Mogilev
Lieutenant-General, Adjutant-General and Cavalier
Petr Nikolayevich Dyakov

From the Gorodok townsman, the Jew Zusya Chernitsky

A Most Humble Petition



Following the requests I submitted to the authorities about the improper taking of my only son Shlioma Chernitsky as a recruit by the Gorodok Jewish Kahal, the local Provincial Recruitment Court, in fairness to me at the first resolution, did not accept him. **But the said Kahal, having intensified in its determination to deprive me of my son, took measures to deliver to the Court from the town, overnight, a verdict about my son, purportedly from the local community (which I believe to be a forgery), by which the recruiting authority, seeing such a verdict, although uncertain of its authenticity, had to accept my said son.** Somehow, after examining him, it was noticed that he has **a morbid condition in relation to urination*** and other qualities unsuitable for recruitment. On the 14th of last January, when it was adopted, the judicial resolution ordered the Commander of the local internal battalion garrison, Mr. Lieutenant Colonel Krivoblatsky, to send my son to the local military hospital for 14 days to test some of his painful symptoms. For his time in the hospital the Kahal paid the appropriate amount of money - according to Mr. Krivoblatsky - from that very time, until the 27th of February. For some reason

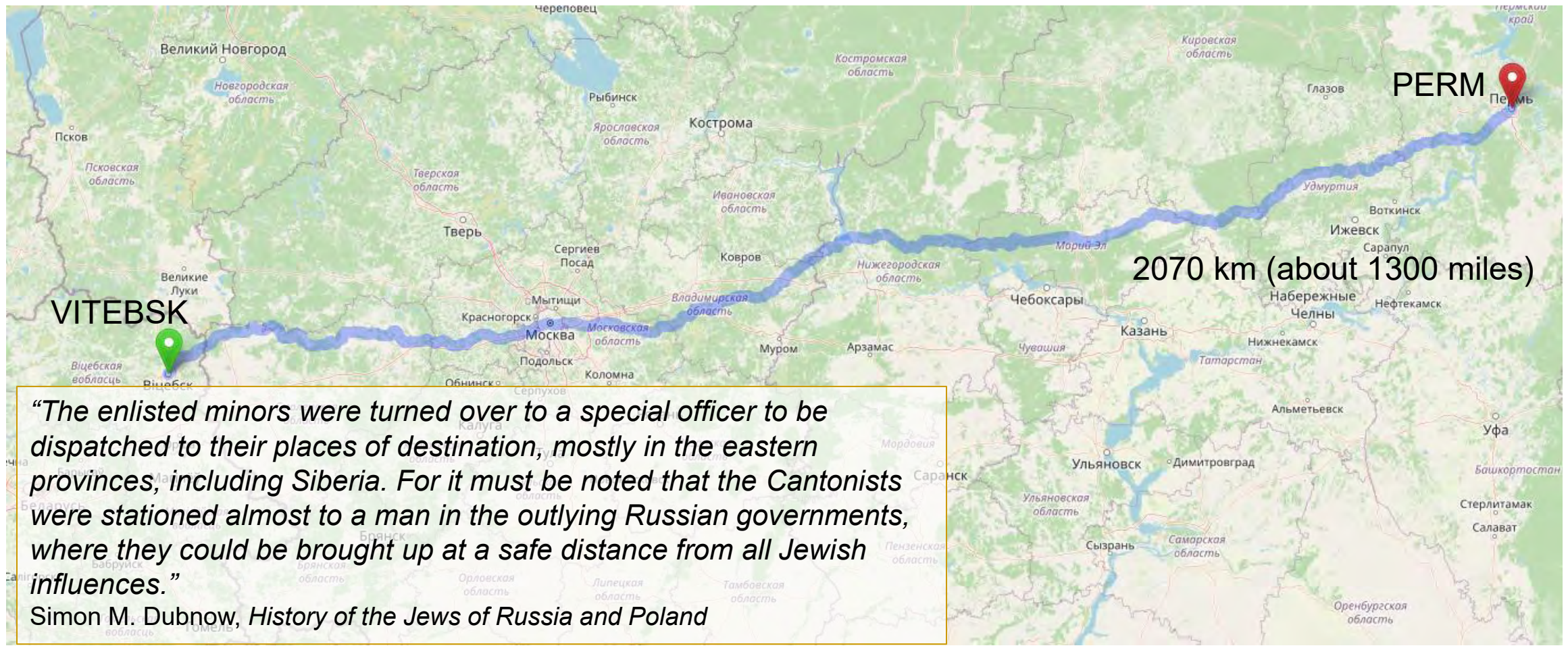
he was not sent to the hospital, for which reason I requested His Excellency, the Lord Governor of Vitebsk, through my petition, to order Mr. Krivoblatsky to send him there immediately, according to which His Excellency, forwarding my petition to him, ordered immediate full execution. Mr. Krivoblatsky incorrectly informed His Excellency, the Governor, that my aforementioned son, when accepted into the recruits, showed signs of being fit according to the recruiting court. Then he found it necessary to send him to the Vitebsk Military Hospital. **And due to the illness that occurred as a result of the weakness of the entire corps on the 27th of January,** I was given the right to use the hospital and therefore my claim regarding the illness of my son is subject to the civil authorities, and he couldn't give any orders for the matter. Then I, seeing myself very much put off by Mr. Krivoblatsky, asked the recruiting authority to give me a sealed journal resolution for submitting it to the higher authorities for their discretion, which was issued to me on the 14th of this month. - After the issuance of which, **Mr. Krivoblatsky, after my son was released from the hospital, sent him on the 15th day of the same month on his way to the city of Perm.** And Mr. Krivoblatsky wrongly sent my aforementioned son Shlioma Chernitsky contrary to the terms of the official decision of the recruiting authority. Presenting all this to your honor, Your Excellency, I dare to ask with tears of obedience, as the chief and defender of the homeland, to order whoever should do so, to return my son, who has already been sent by Mr. Krivoblatsky, back to Vitebsk, to send him to the hospital for examination, or to order him to be sent to another suitable place, through which my justice will be truly realized - and my son has a diagnosed illness for which he will definitely be unable to serve - then I will have the happiness of waiting for the decision of Your Excellency, the most esteemed ruler.

Zush Chernitsky
February 23, 1839

*probably refers to wetting the bed



Cantonist's Journey from Vitebsk to Perm



“The enlisted minors were turned over to a special officer to be dispatched to their places of destination, mostly in the eastern provinces, including Siberia. For it must be noted that the Cantonists were stationed almost to a man in the outlying Russian governments, where they could be brought up at a safe distance from all Jewish influences.”

Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews of Russia and Poland*



Extracts from the Case File of Zusya Chernitsky (NIAB F. 1297. Op. 1. D. 11386)

- From the journal of the Vitebsk provincial recruiting office, January 13, 1839:
 - *“At the same time, a note was examined from the Gorodok district townsman Zusya Senderev Chernitsky ...in which he asks for the release of his son Shlema from enlistment in the army due to the fact that he is the only son of his father and that the petitioner's family is on the regular list under No. 129. ... It is evident that Shlema Zusyev Chernitsky ... is sentenced to be recruited because he is an idle wanderer, since his father, due to his immorality, left his wife without food, and was in distant cities without a passport, and the wife, seeing these immoral actions of her husband, having also left her son without care, herself is in Vitebsk in service. The immorality of the said Zusya Chernitsky is also proven by the fact that he is engaged in tavern-keeping and for this is under criminal trial and at his present residence does not pay and is unreliable in the future to pay state taxes. He is listed in the revision list among 3 males, but since he has two more brothers, his family consists of five souls, in which there are no capable ones, except for the aforementioned Shlema. His placement among 3 souls was by mistake or due to the ill-intention of the deceased scribe.”*
 - *“Shlema Chernitsky, although also recognized as fit for military service as a cantonist, but his father declared that he could not hold his urine. ...The other recruits were: Abram Shchodrinsky, who had scabies, Shlema Karpovsky, below the legal limit, and Mordkhey Movshov Tsoadakov, for a badge [?] after a wound on his left leg that prevented him from walking.”*
- From the final determination of the Chancellery of the Governor-General, August 14, 1840:
 - *“The son of Chernitsky, Shlema, aged 12, was presented to the recruitment office by the verdict of the Gorodok Jewish Society, for idle wandering and the unreliability of his father in paying taxes.... but upon being brought to Lieutenant Colonel Krivoblotsky to be sent for testing to the hospital, he tearfully asked not to send him to the hospital, for he was completely healthy and had no illness, but declared one on the slander of his father Zusya Chernitsky.”*
 - *“And that when the said recruit was sent on his way, he was testified to by the doctor who was acting as the Vitebsk district doctor and was not found to be in a sick condition, from which it must be concluded that the son of the petitioner Zusya Chernitsky was not afflicted with the illness declared in the recruitment office, which was subsequently not found in him.”*



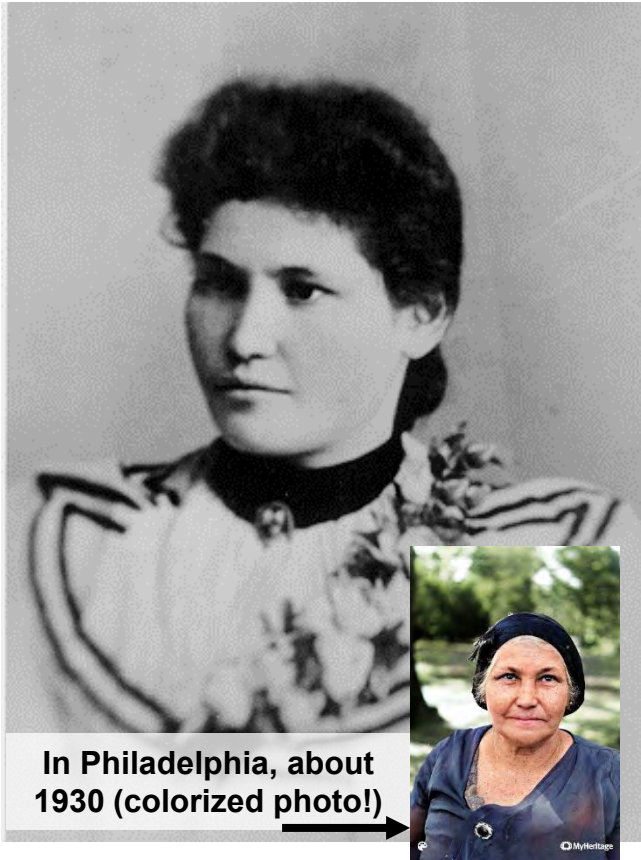
Unpacking the Case File

- Zusya's file contains a wealth of details that help us put his case in context.
- Clearly, Zusya was engaged in a bitter feud with the Gorodok kahal. The kahal members denounced Zusya to the recruitment court, accusing him of a long list of "crimes":
 - Being a vagrant and being the father of a vagrant
 - Abandoning his wife and son to "travel to remote towns" without a passport
 - Being involved in an illicit occupation (i.e., operating a tavern)
- Zusya in turn accused the kahal members of faking a signed judgment against him and rushing it to the recruitment court "overnight."
- He also begs for relief because Shlioma is his only son. (This argument gets him nowhere.)
- 12-year old Shlioma was a substitute conscript, presumably for someone older.
 - The recruiting office report states: *Although he is listed among 3 males [i.e., in the 1834 revision list], since he has two brothers [i.e., Meylekh and Shimon], his family consists of five souls, with no one capable of serving except for the mentioned Shlioma.*
 - Likely scenario: The 2 adult brothers already fled Gorodok by 1839, leaving Shlioma "holding the bag."



Case 2: Orlya to Shklov

Rivka née ALEINIKOV
(1873-1944)



In Philadelphia, about
1930 (colorized photo!)

Rivka's brother Peysakh
LENSKY (1857-1939)



- Rivka (Rebecca) ALEINIKOFF (ALEINIKOV) was my other maternal great-grandmother.
- The known facts:
 - Rivka was born in Shklov (Шклов), Mogilev Guberniya (Belarus), about 1873.
 - Parents were Khaim and Leya Shchera KATS.
 - Rivka emigrated to the US about 1890, but I've never found her immigration record.
 - 2 of her 3 brothers immigrated in 1888 and 1892 respectively.
 - Rebecca's oldest brother Peysakh LENSKY remained in Europe (in Warsaw).
 - After WW2, the surviving members of Peysakh's family (LENSKY) made aliyah to Israel.
 - Nobody knew why they had different surnames.



Genealogical Mystery

- Only found one record showing Khaim Aleinikov in Shklov.
 - Listed in Leya's death record from Mogilev (1876).
 - Confirmed family story that she died in or shortly after childbirth.
- No evidence of connections to any other ALEINIKOV or LENSKIY families in the Mogilev area.
- Absence of evidence not evidence of absence.

Печ. в. Мог. Губ. Уезд.

24608 ЧАСТЬ 4--0 УМЕРШИХЪ.

Женского.	Мужского.	Гдѣ умеръ и погребенъ.	Число и мѣсяцъ		Лѣтъ.	Болезнь, или отъ чего умеръ.	Кто умеръ.
			Христианскій.	Еврейскій.			
	152	Смолевичи	22	16	3/4		Манд. Сиренко Мандуфа Саволкевич
162	"	"	23	17	2 нед.		Днд. Шидловскій Умунинъ Рабковскій
163		Городица	"	"	42		Мир-Уф. Спронск. Коуш. Шена Шен. Шеневскій

1876 22 16 3/4

1876 23 17 2 нед.

1876 " " 42

Died age 42 (b. ~1834)

Hebrew Side

Leah Schera,
daughter of
Aharon Kats, wife
of Khaim Aleinikov
from Shklov



Surprise!

- My relatives had always assumed our family's "deep roots" were in Shklov. Not quite true.
 - Research located the family origins elsewhere – in Orlya (Orlova, Орля), Vilna Guberniya, a previously unknown (to me) town over 600 km (375 miles) west of Shklov.
 - No obvious connection between these places, which are on opposite sides of modern Belarus.
 - Nevertheless, a search on the Belarus and All Lithuania databases turns up dozens of records for the LENSKIY (Ленский) family in Orlya from 1818 through the early 20th century. There is no doubt they refer to my ancestral family who lived there.
- How and why did my ancestors move from Orlya in western Belarus to Shklov in eastern Belarus, and how did they acquire a different name?

מרדכי לנסקי (1890—1964)

מרדכי לנסקי, בנו של פסח וחייה (בת הר"ג ר' יוסף חבר), נולד בכ"ג כסלו תרנ"א (23.11.1890) בורשה. שם התחנך באוירה מסורתית וסיים את לימודיו התיכוניים.



The All Lithuania Revision List Database

Searching for Surname (phonetically like) : LENSKI AND
 Givenname (DM soundex) : PEYSAKH
 4 matching records found.
 Run on Mon, 03 Jan 2022 17:03:48 -0700

Town	Name	Father	Relationship	Sex	YearLeft	Comments	Day	Page	Publication Type
				Age Last Revision			Month	Registration #	
Gubernia				Age This Revision	Reason		Year	Former Registration#	Microfilm
Orlya	LENSKI, Khaim	Orel	Head of household	M					Additional Revision List
Lida	LENSKI, Peisakh	Khaim	Son	M		Missing	8	623	
Vilnius	LENSKI, Ester Khasia	Volf	Daughter-in-law	F	29	Wife of Peisakh	1880	16 in 1858; 21 in 1850	LVIA/515/25/101
Orlya	LENSKII, Peisakh	Khaim	head of household	M	29				
Orlya	LENSKII, Mordukh	Peisakh	son	M	53	Born 23-Nov-1890.			
Lida	LENSKII, Ester Khasia		1st wife	F	4	Divorced.	1904	136	Family list
Vilna	LENSKII, Meriam	Peisakh	daughter	F	52			0108	NHABGrodno/1641/1/1
Vilna	LENSKII, Khaia	Iosel	2nd wife	F	23				
Vilna	LENSKII, Khaia	Iosel	2nd wife	F	37				



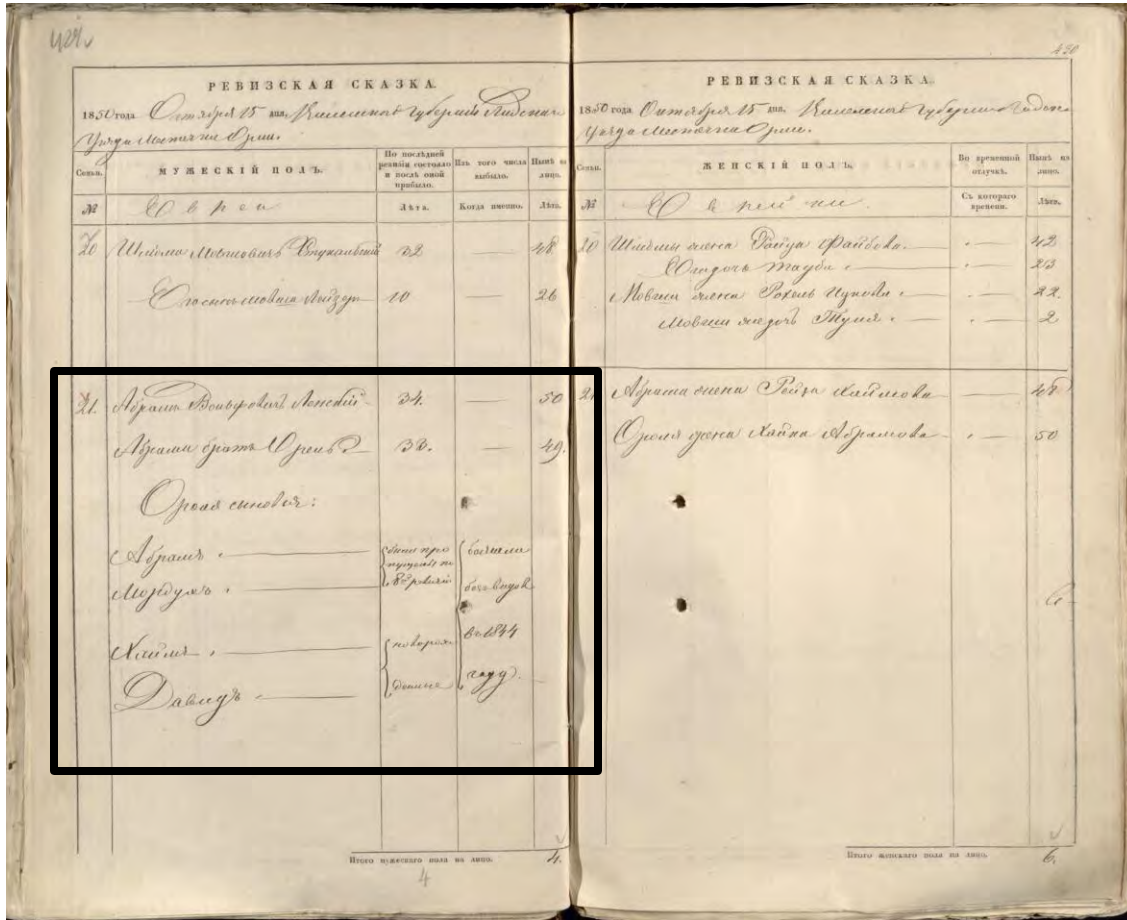
Northern Pale of Settlement





1850 Revision List (Scan from Original)

(LVIA Fond 515 Opis 15 Delo 953)



		Age at last revision (1834)	When left	Age now (1850)
21	Abram Vol'fovich Lenskiy	34	-	50
	Abram's brother Orel'	33	-	49
	Orel's sons:			
	Abram	Was missed in the 8 th revision	On the run since 1844	
	Mordukh			
	Khaim			
	David	newly born		

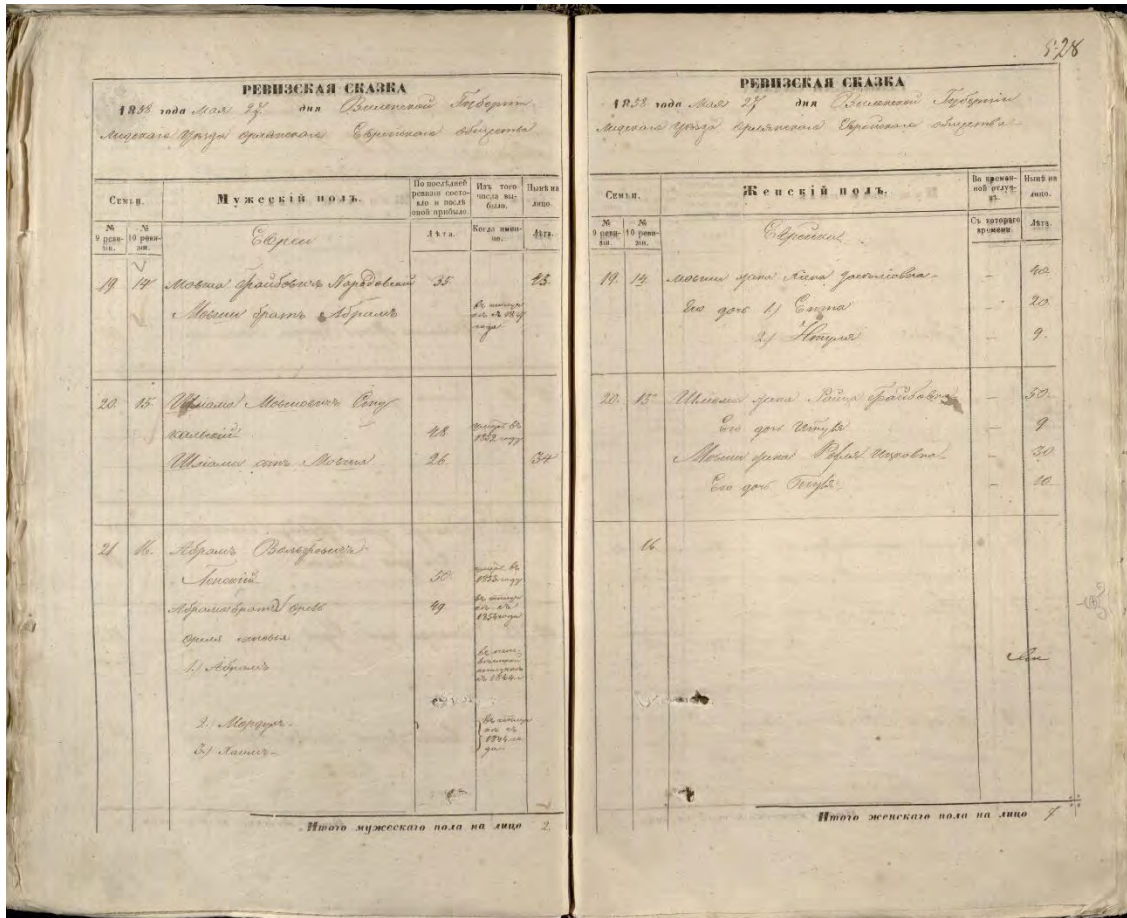
Read between the lines!



1858 Revision List (Scan & Transcript)

(LVIA Fond 515 Opus 25 Delo 89)

Sent as a recruit due to lack of a passport; in 9th revision list, under no. 21, listed as "outlaw" (v begakh); added 24 January 1851, no. 3.



Revision List	Date	Name	Relationship	Age	Age		Status	Notes	
					528	1853			
LVIA/515/25/89 This record is from the LitvakSIG All Lithuania Database (about LitvakSIG)	27 - May - 1858 Oriya Lida Vilnius	LENSKI, Abram	Volf	Head of Household	50	16	21	1853 Died	
		LENSKI, Abram	Orel	Nephew		16	21	1844 Unknown absence	
		LENSKI, David	Orel	Nephew	14	529 16	21	1855 Conscripted	Sent as a recruit due to lack of passport; in 9th revision list, under no. 21, listed as 'outlaw' (v begakh); added 24 January 1851, no. 3.
		LENSKI, Khaim	Orel	Nephew		528 16	21	1844 Absent	
		LENSKI, Mordukh	Orel	Nephew		528 16	21	1844 Absent	
		LENSKI, Orel	Volf	Brother	49	528 16	21	1854 Absent	

Still absent (v otluchk) since 1844



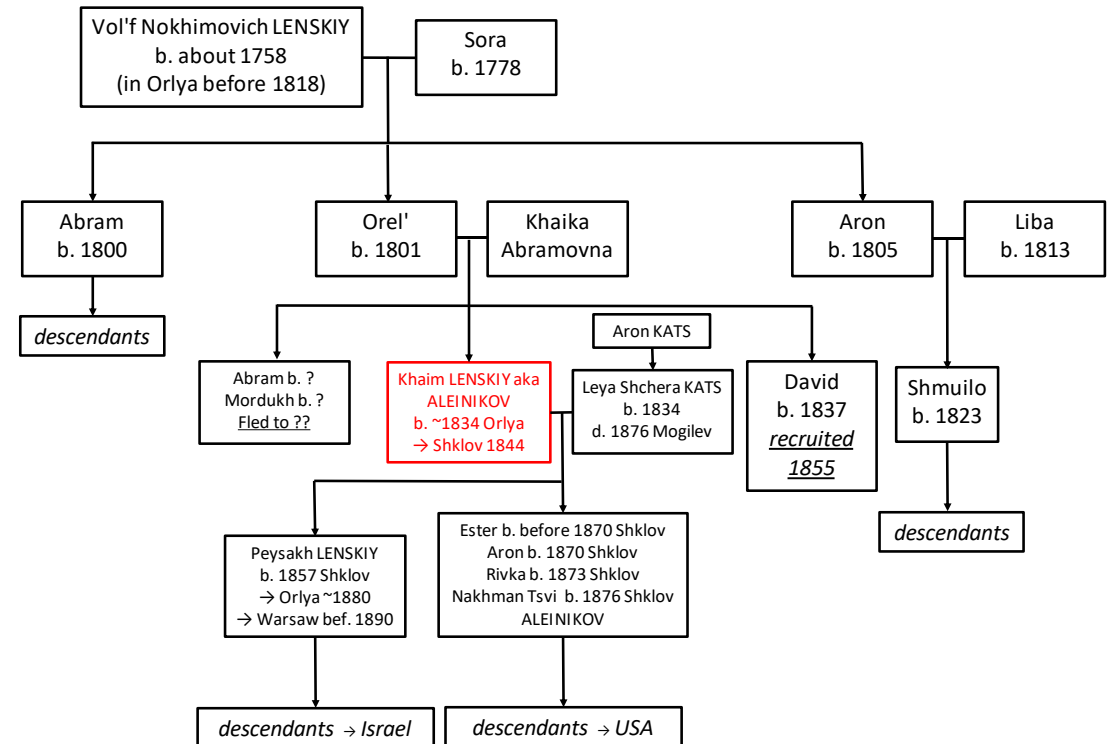
What Do We Learn From The Revision Lists?

- Orel's 4 sons all went on the run in 1844. Why?
 - Ran away to avoid forced recruitment. (Read between the lines.)
 - They belonged to the poorer class of Jews in Orlya.
 - Families with four sons and no money for bribes had good reason to fear.
- Khaim Orel'ovich LENSKIY was not born yet (*novorozhdenniy*) at the time of the 1834 revision. Therefore he was born no earlier than 1834.
- Assuming he was born in 1834, Khaim was about 10 when he left home.
- His brother David (b. 1837) was captured and added to the list in 1851.
 - David was forced into the recruits in 1855 for not having an internal passport.
 - As an adult recruit (18) he would have gone to the regular army, not a cantonist battalion.



A Plausible Scenario

- Family indeed came from Orlya – the original name was LENSKIY.
- Khaim Orel'ovich LENSKEY, b. ~1834 in Orlya, is the same as Khaim ALEINIKOV in Shklov.
- Of Orel's 4 sons who fled in 1844:
 - David was later found and recruited in 1855.
 - Khaim, age 10, fled to Mogilev gubernia (Shklov) and began using the name ALEINIKOV. He could have been taken in by a family of that name.
 - Abram and Mordukh – fate TBD (???)
- Khaim's son Peysakh (born in Shklov) reverse migrated to Orlya about 1880 to get married.
 - He resumed using the original LENSKIY name.
 - His first wife was likely his cousin.
 - Peysakh's younger siblings remained in Shklov where they continued as ALEINIKOV (after the supposed adoptive family).





The “Adoption” Ruse – Real?

- Many of us have heard stories where a childless family (or with only girls) adopts a Jewish boy to hide him from recruiters.
 - Truth or Jewish “urban legend”?
 - Some controversy about this topic. Was it even possible? If so, would it leave a trace in the records? Hard to prove because of the semi-legal nature of it.
 - The scheme assumes that “only sons” were exempt – not always true (before 1874), as we saw in Shlioma’s case.
- Do I have a real life example?

Discussion of “the topic of adoption for the purpose of draft evasion” on <https://forum.j-roots.info/> (2020)

mihail
Posts: 7500
Joined: 01.07.2012
Thanked: 1202 times
Thanked: 3202 times
Contact:

by **mihail** » 03 Jul 2020, 09:45 Thanks

ayrinwrote: 03 Jul 2020, 08:49

The topic of adoption for the purpose of draft evasion is currently being discussed on the DG forum.

Well, let's try to reason about it. Well, let's say, in relation to the era of recruitment. So, you are the head of a family, living in a Jewish shtetl and having a son, who, according to the next book, is about to fall under the next recruitment. The next book is compiled once every three years and is the object of the closest attention of all members of the community (you are not the only one in the shtetl who has sons). And so you agree with a relative (or other person) in another community about their adoption of your son. Great. But the following factors immediately come into play:

- in your community you need to give some explanations about where your son went. Well, let's say the adoption was legal (the law did not prohibit it), then:
- in the community of the adopter - give an explanation about where another child came from in his house and legalize this child (whom the new community will immediately and happily include - maybe not right away, but within the next 2-3 years - in the same next book).
- since your son has disappeared from your community (even if he left legally), his duties to fulfill the recruitment duty pass, if not to your other son, then certainly to the next family on the list. And even if they silently swallowed (yeah, right now ...) your scheme, then by law you will be obliged to pay them an amount, the amount of which will be approved by society (extremely interested in no one else allowing themselves such tricks with "adoption"). If

you manage to neutralize these factors - consider it a success, but a temporary success (let's not forget about the next book in the new community). I am more than sure that someone conceived such options, and even - pulled off. But it's all a bit difficult.

Last edited by **mihail** on 03 Jul 2020, 09:52, edited 1 time in total.

These users thanked the author ayrin, iralex, leska12



Is This Case “Proven”? No!

- Strong case, but there are still too many loose ends to declare “case closed.”
 - Identify the mystery ALEINIKOV family.
 - Why Shklov in particular as a destination?
 - How did a 10-year old boy travel from Orlya to Shklov in 1844? Perhaps accompanied by his brother(s).
 - What happened to the brothers Abram & Mordukh?
 - Khaim died before 1894. Did he return to Orlya or remain in Shklov?
- Many sources remain to explore.
 - Look for possible files about David’s recruitment case in 1854. (Guberniya-level fonds in LVIA.) →
 - Look for candidate “adoptive” families in Mogilev guberniya.
 - Far from exhausting all possible resources.

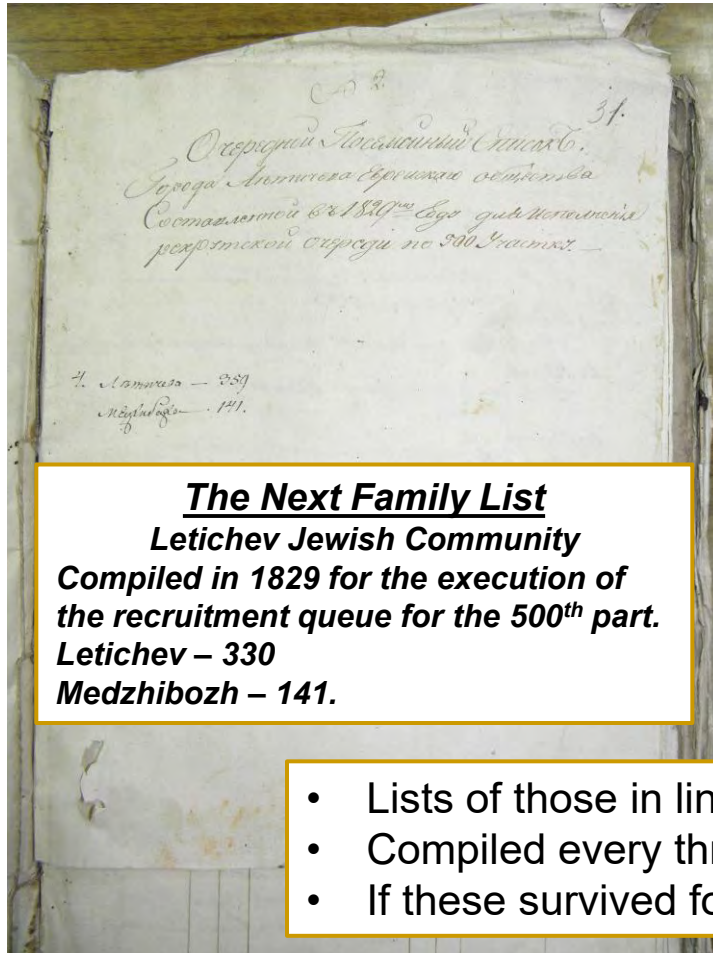
The screenshot shows the European Jewish Archives Portal interface. At the top, there are logos for the Rothschild Foundation Hanadiiv Europe and YERUSHA. The main header includes the text "European Jewish Archives Portal" and a search bar. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Home, Search, Holding institutions, and The Yerusha Network. The main content area displays a collection record for the "Chancellery of the Governor-General of Vilnius". The record includes fields for Country, Holding institution, Holding institution (official language), Postal address, Phone number, Web address, and Email. A "Collection" section provides detailed metadata such as Reference number, Title, Title (official language), Creator/accumulator, Date(s), Language, Extent, Type of material, Physical condition, and Scope and content. On the right side, there is a "Formats" section with buttons for METS, MARC XML, and Dublin Core. A small note indicates that there are various formats and links to external systems.

Field	Value
Country:	Lithuania
Holding institution:	Lithuanian State Historical Archives
Holding institution (official language):	Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvas
Postal address:	Gerosios Vilties g. 10, 03134 Vilnius
Phone number:	(8 5) 213 74 82
Web address:	http://www.archyvai.lt/lt/lvia_naujienos.html
Email:	istorijos.archyvas@lvia.lt
Reference number:	f. 378
Title:	Chancellery of the Governor-General of Vilnius
Title (official language):	Vilniaus generalgubernatoriaus kanceliarija
Creator/accumulator:	Chancellery of the Governor-General of Vilnius
Date(s):	1783/1912
Language:	Russian
Extent:	151,272 files
Type of material:	Textual material
Physical condition:	good
Scope and content:	The collection contains the records of the Chancellery of the Governor General of Vilnius, the chief Russian military and civilian administrator in the approximate area of modern Lithuania and northern Belarus. The collection covers the years from 1783

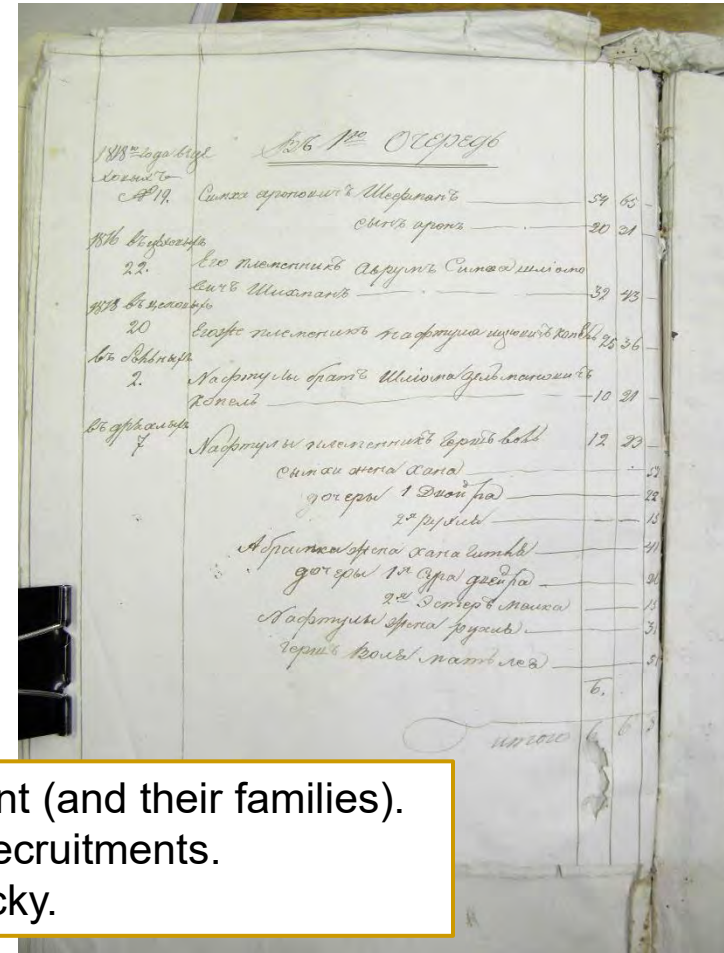


Recruitment Lists

Очередной Книжки – “Next” Books



The Next Family List
Letichev Jewish Community
Compiled in 1829 for the execution of
the recruitment queue for the 500th part.
Letichev – 330
Medzhibozh – 141.



- Lists of those in line for the next recruitment (and their families).
- Compiled every three years in the era of recruitments.
- If these survived for your town, you are lucky.

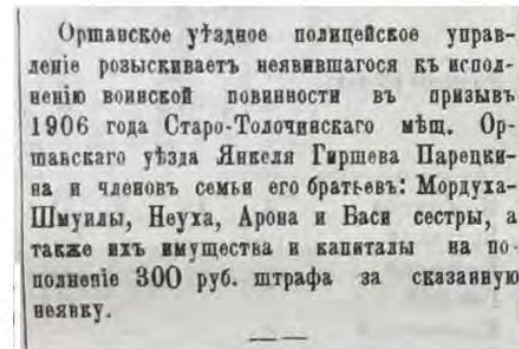


Provincial Gazettes (Губернскія Ведомости)

https://nlr.ru/res/inv/ukazat55/record_full.php?record_ID=131458



- These were official newspapers published (usually weekly) throughout the Russian Empire. Can be a valuable resource.
- Often contain information on individuals, including Jews, e.g., lists of voters, contributor lists, property sales, etc.
- May contain “wanted”-style notices concerning draft evaders, many of whom were Jewish. However, these are more likely to be found in later issues (late 19th – early 20th century).
- Some issues are browsable online (National Library of Russia).
- Some gazettes have indexes to Jewish names by issue (In Russian; check on j-roots forum.)



From the Mogilev Provincial Gazette, 1909

The Orsha district police department is searching for Yankel' Girshev Paretskin, a townsman from Staro-Tolochinsk in the Orsha district who failed to appear for military service in 1906, and members of his brothers' families: Mordukh-Shmuila, Neukha, Aron and Basya his sister, as well as their property and capital to replenish the 300 ruble fine for the said failure to appear.

**Kyiv PROVINCIAL GAZETTE. - 1838, January 7. - [?].
– Kyiv, 1846-1847, 1851-1853, 1855-1858, 1861.**

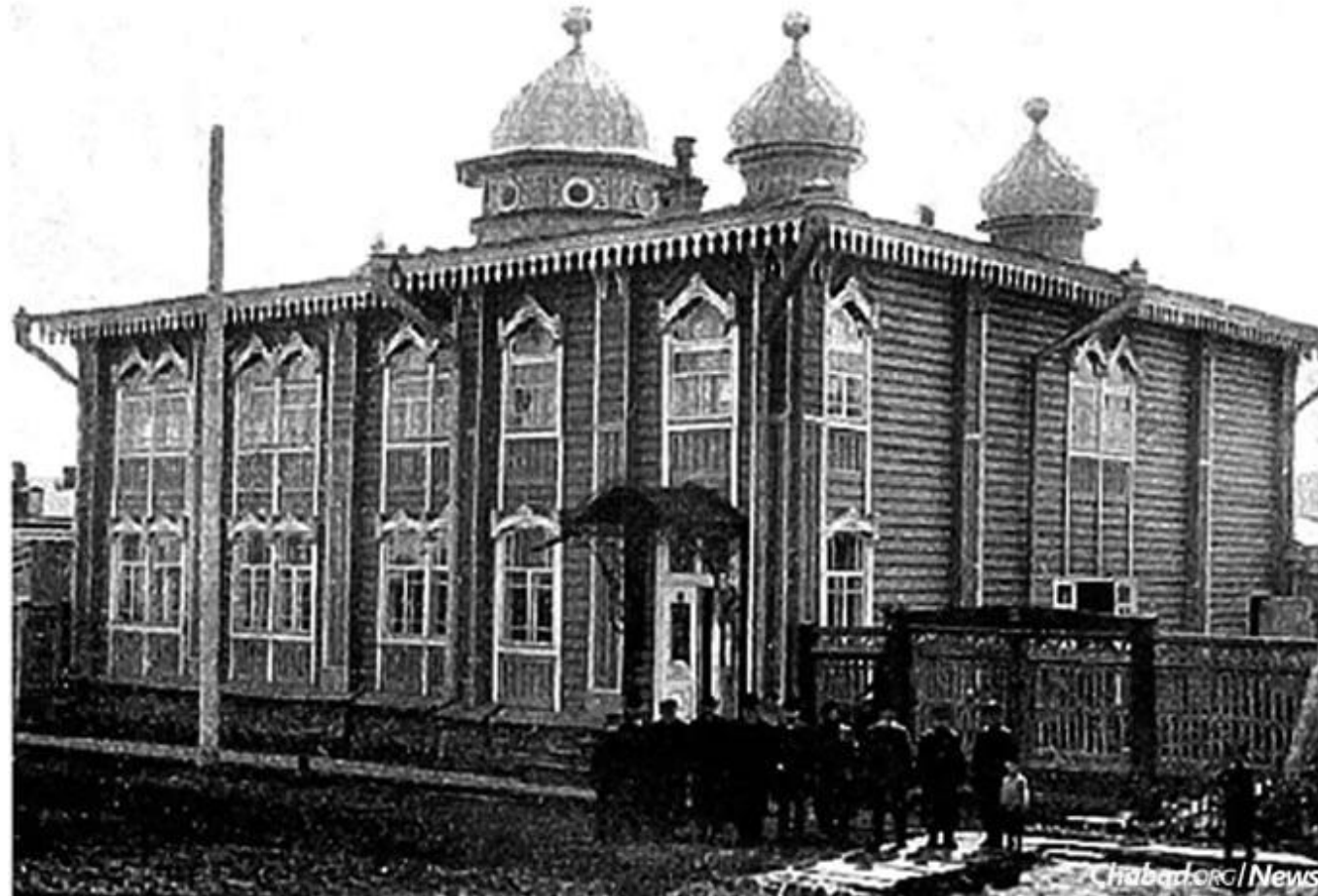


Takeaways for Your Research

- It was common for Jews to internally migrate within the Pale.
 - The 1827 ukase gave local *kahals* the power to choose whom to recruit.
 - Economic incentive to retain breadwinners and send children to the army.
 - Many Jews had a strong motive to flee the community, especially those without “connections.”
- Migration was generally from northwest (former Polish-Lithuanian territories) to southeast (“New Russia”). But there were exceptions.
 - No railroads in 1830’s Russia; highways were poor, slow and dangerous. By far, the fastest way to travel long distances was by water.
 - The Dnieper River was a pipeline for Jewish migration.
- Investigate alternative sources.
 - Ordinary Jews can and did petition authorities, and such petitions were handled seriously.
 - DNA can support or refute hypothesized relationships, but it has limitations for Jewish populations at a distance of so many generations.
 - You may never get to absolute proof; therefore, you need to decide what is reasonable proof.



Спасибо! (Thanks!)



*Cantonists' Synagogue,
Tomsk, 1930*