

# Possible relatives noted in Lithuanian records

We are actively researching for ancestors of **Mordecai** and **Miriam Schattil**. We know that Miriam's parents were **Isaac Cohn** and **Henne Leah Kaplan**. Isaac was born in Plungyan (now Plunge), Lithuania in 1822 and died in Memel in 1897. Henne was born in 1824 in Memel (now Klaipeda) and died there in 1903.

We haven't found ancestors for Mordecai yet. We have found people in the Lithuanian records that have similar names but we have yet to connect them to us.

**Bentzion** and **Ezra Shatil** from Panevezys, Lithuania, are recorded in 1871 for donating to the Persian Famine Relief Fund to help Jews living there. Ezra was on the 1860 Voter's List with a father named Israel.

An **Israel Satil**, his father, **Yankel**; brother, **Ruben**, and son, **Movsha Shachna**, are recorded in the 1831 census. They are all from Panevezys. Israel's grandfather was **Azriel**.

The following **Shaitles** were killed in Lithuania in 1941 in the Holocaust: **Bliuma**, 19, and **Chaim**,

## *Living conditions in Lithuania may have encouraged family to leave*

While we don't know where our Schattil ancestors came from before they ended up in Lithuania, we can make a good guess as to why many of them left Lithuania.

Conditions in Lithuania at the end of the 19th Century were deplorable. Lithuania was an agriculture based economy, run under an oppressive feudal system of constantly warring dukes.

Beginning in the early 1800s, Russian czars ruled Lithuania, where state-tolerated, if not sponsored, anti-Semitism lead to pogroms and discriminatory regulations. For example, Jews were prohibited from living in cities. Their proportion of high school enrollment was limited to 10%. Jewish boys were required to serve in the Russian military for 25 years. Special taxes applied only to Jews.

In 1855, Czar Alexander II ascended to rule and introduced relatively liberal reforms. Forced military service was reduced to only 16 years. Jews were permitted to move anywhere within the empire, schools for girls were established, serfdom was abolished by law, rural communities were granted the right to self rule, and trial by jury replaced secret tribunals. Despite the reforms, Jews still experienced severe unemployment, low wages, hunger and cramped living conditions. Nearly 40% of Jewish families in the Russian empire were supported by contributions from foreign Jewish communities.

In 1881, Czar Alexander II was assassinated and the flash of enlightenment ended. Restrictions against censorship lifted in 1882 lead to the publication of attacks on Jews in newspapers and pamphlets. Pogroms and false accusations against Jews resumed.

Jews were prohibited from doing business on Sun-



22, with their mother, **Sara Mala**, 55. This family has relatives living in Kaunas, Lithuania. Also killed were **Frida**, 13, with her parents, **Jeizel**, 50, and **Leja**, 45. Jeizel's father was **Itzik**. According to the Holocaust records, this last family had relatives in London and the United States.

days and Christian holidays and prohibited from owning farmland or managing agricultural assets. Educational institutions were closed. About 650 laws specifically targeted Jews in the Russian empire. Jews were expelled from the areas within 35 miles of the Austrian and German borders.

All this turmoil may explain the frequent dislocation of the Schattils, as evidenced by the various villages the children of Miriam and Mordecai Schattil were born in.

Upon the ascension of Czar Nicholas II in 1894, the pogroms and systematic anti-Semitic practices broke out anew. Ritual murder trials of Jews were held in Vilna and Luknik Lithuania. Jews were evicted from villages to rural areas. The severity of Russian rule against all inhabitants, not just the Jews, fueled anti-czarist sentiments, which would build until the 1917 revolution.

Given these dreadful conditions in Lithuania, even the hardships and dangers of pioneering in South Africa could look attractive by comparison. It is no wonder that Lithuanian Jews by the tens of thousands emigrated to new lands of opportunity; South Africa and America. Our ancestors were among them.

*The data for this report were gathered from "The Jews of Lithuania" by Masha Greenbaum. If you know more about conditions in Lithuania affecting our family, we would be interested to learn about it.*

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## FAMILY NEWSLETTER

March, 2000

# Family Reunion Set for October 20-22 in San Francisco

Reserve October 20-22, 2000 for the first gathering of the descendants of Miriam and Mordecai Schattil in over 100 years.

Clan members from four continents are invited to meet, compare family traits, exchange historic photos and stories, and to enjoy each other's company. The Schattil descendants are a remarkably distinguished, talented and intelligent group, with physicians and artists represented out of all proportion to the general population.

The reunion will be held in and around sunny San Francisco, California, USA. Renowned as one of the most beautiful cities in the United States, the San Francisco area boasts a Mediterranean climate, sophisticated cultural amenities, a progressive political outlook and it is one of the centers of the computer entrepreneurial phenomenon.

No wonder so many Schattil descendants have independently chosen to settle there. At least nine blood relatives now live in the San Francisco area, and 14 live in California. As the new center of the Schattil clan, the San Francisco cousins extend their hospitality to all their Schattil kin, their spouses and friends.

Cousins visiting from out of state or out of the U.S. may consider extending their stay to experience some of the many tourism opportunities California offers. October is an ideal time to see the sights; the weather is mild, local schools are in session so attractions and accommodations are uncrowded.

Check out spectacular Yosemite National Park, Lake Tahoe, Big Sur or Death Valley. Visit theme parks like Disneyland and Universal Studios. For updates on the reunion and more information on California tourism, see our new Schattil Reunion web site at [www.shattil.com](http://www.shattil.com).

Events at the reunion will include a presentation of the Schattil family history, a recounting of significant events in the lives of our kin, a poll of genetic, demographic and character trait data, a family portrait, and a light-hearted performance of the Schattil family theme song.

A reunion naturally focuses on the past and present where we came from and who we are now. But we may also consider the future and how can we have a positive effect on our descendants.

Given the scope of energy and wisdom that the Schattil clan possess, we might consider what worthy goals can be accomplished by our combined efforts. For example, we could establish a trust to support the edu-

cation of Schattil kin or to fund research or grants for favorite causes.

What if Mordecai and Miriam had established a trust, investing 1000 Litas (US\$250) when each of their 13 children was born? At 5% interest averaged over the last 120 years, that fund would now be worth over US\$1,000,000.

We could organize a group tour of those towns in Lithuania and South Africa that shaped our ancestors' lives. Also, we could make a trip to Brazil to search for descendants of another of Mordecai's and Miriam's sons, Israel Schattil.

What ideas do you have?



[www.shattil.com](http://www.shattil.com)

## Family Reunion Web Site Launches

The Schattil clan surfs the DotCom wave with the launch of its Family Reunion web site at [www.shattil.com](http://www.shattil.com).

Click over to it to find photos of ancestors and cousins, the latest version of the family tree, lists of cousins you can contact, past issues of this newsletter, an online chat forum for family members, links to Schattil clan web sites, and updates on reunion plans. The Reunion web site allows immediate posting of your corrections and additions to the family tree and provides worldwide access to our growing library of family photos.

The home page of the new Reunion web site was tweaked, massaged and polished by our Internet guru cousin, Gary Schwartz, who's own web site ([www.thinkwire.net/mycity/CV/htm](http://www.thinkwire.net/mycity/CV/htm)) has links to his award-winning web projects.

With our newly acquired Internet presence, the cyber-savvy Schattil clan is poised for its I.P.O. What would Mordecai and Miriam have thought?