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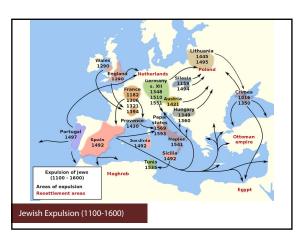
## **Jewish Research**

- To effectively research your Jewish ancestry, it is important to understand:
  - The overall history of Jews
  - Why and when they came to the U.S.
  - The many different names used:
    - Hebrew name
    - Yiddish name or nickname
    - European civil name
    - Americanized name

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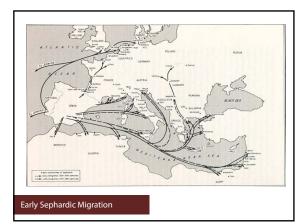
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# **Sephardic Jewish Migration**

- The earliest Jewish arrivals came from Brazil, arriving in New Amsterdam in 1654
- These 23 immigrants were part of the diaspora that dated back to the 1492 expulsion of Jews from Spain
- Many who immigrated to Portugal became *crypto- Jews*, those who practice Judaism in secret

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## **New Amsterdam**

- Earliest arrivals in three phases:
  - August 1654: Ashkenazic merchants Jacob Barsimson, Solomon Pietersen, and Asser Levy came from Holland
  - September 1654: The St. Catherine brough the 23 Sephardic-Brazilian refugees
  - Late 1654, Early 1655: Several additional Sephardic merchants arrived from the Netherlands
- Petrus Stuyvesant, local Director-General wanted to impose the Dutch Reformed religion on them
- Jews in Holland convinced the West India Company to accept some Jews in New Amsterdam

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#### **Elsewhere**

- Amore De Torres (Yosuf Ben Levy)
  - Settled in Surry County, Virginia
  - Identified as a Spanish Jew and a farmer
- Late 1600s, group of Jews settled in Newport, R.I. as a result of the religious tolerance
- Some early Pennsylvania colonists were German lews

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# Pre-American Revolution • Both Sephardic and Ashkenzic merchants began to establish homes in colonial ports: - Newport, R.I. - New Amsterdam - Philadelphia, Penn. - Charleston, S.C. - Savannah, Ga.

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## **Pre-American Revolution**

- By 1730 the Asheknazi Jews outnumbered the Sephardic
- The nature of the American Jewish community was Sephardic
- Through the American Revolution colonial synagogues adhered to Sephardic ritual and controlled all aspect of Jewish religious life.

#### 1820-1880

- Jews emigrated predominantly from Central Europe
- Many settled in New York City, Philadelphia, and Baltimore
- German-speaking Jewish groups settled in Albany, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Louisville, Minneapolis, New Orleans, St. Louis, and San Francisco

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#### 1820-1880

- Most the Jewish immigrants in this period came from:
  - Bavaria
  - Baden
  - Württemberg
  - Posen
- They left Germany to get away from repressive legislation and disruptions to the agricultural peasant economy

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### 1820-1880

- German Jews came from small hamlets and market towns
- They were tradesmen and cattle dealers
- Suffered:
  - From taxes
  - Limitations on right to marry
  - Difficulties finding employment
  - Trouble finding places to live

## 1881-1924

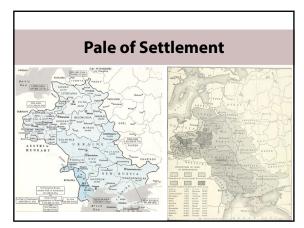
- 1880 1/6th of the 250,000 American Jews were Eastern European immigrants
- By 1920 those immigrants and their children made up almost 5/6ths of the 4 million Jews in America



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#### 1881-1924

- From 1800 to 1900, Jewish population in Eastern Europe went from 1.5 million to 6.8 million
- They were confined to the Pale of Settlement
- 75% of the immigrants came from the Pale of Settlement
- 18% came from Galicia, Bukovina, or Hungary
- 4% came from Romania

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# **Reasons for Emigrating**

- The large increase of the population
- Industrialization and modern agriculture
- The Pogroms of mob violence that ushered in three decades of anti-Jewish actions
- May Laws of 1882 and other economic policies of pauperization
- Banishments from Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kharkov
- The 1905 Revolution

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### 1880-1924



## **Migration Patterns**

- Jews from southern Russia crossed into Austro-Hungary then on to Vienna or Berlin
- Jews from western Russia crossed into Germany to Berlin
- Most Jews then headed to transatlantic ports:
  - Hamburg
  - Bremen
  - Rotterdam
  - Amsterdam
  - Antwerp

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## **U.S. Immigration Concerns**

- There were many concerns over the Jewish immigrants
- So many were poor, many feared they would require public aid
- Immigration laws were getting tighter, identifying an ever-growing list of "unacceptable immigrants"

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### Post-1924

- Quota restrictions began to limit the numbers of Jews who could receive visas to enter the U.S.
- In Nazi-occupied areas, Jews were not allowed passports, which meant they couldn't get a Visa
- Some managed affidavits
- Quota restrictions were not adjusted to assist Jews from escaping Nazi Germany





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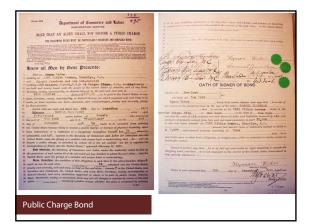
## What did immigrant aid societies do?

- Sat in on Board of Special Inquiry Hearings
- Served as interpreters
- Helped locate family and friends
- Found housing and work for recent immigrants
- Held naturalization classes
- Arranged marriages for couples
- $\bullet \quad \text{Accompanied immigrants to residences in major cities or railroad stations} \\$
- Held religious services at immigration stations like Ellis Island
- Put up bonds for any immigrants deemed an LPC (likely public charge)

## **Public Charge Bonds**

- Immigrant aid societies may post a bond on behalf on an immigrant
- These bonds are a payment to the U.S. government
- The person(s) named on the bond are responsible for any debts incurred by the immigrant

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## **Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society**

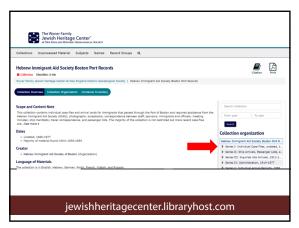
- 1881 Founded in response to Jews fleeing the pogroms in Russia and Eastern Europe
- 1904 Established a bureau on Ellis Island
- 1911 Kosher kitchen installed on Ellis Island

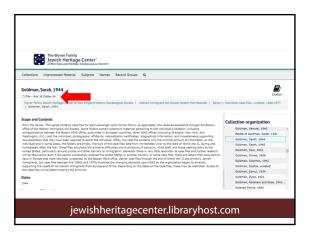






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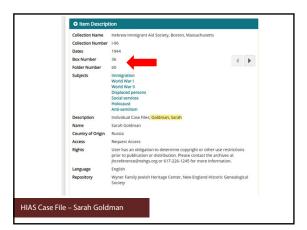




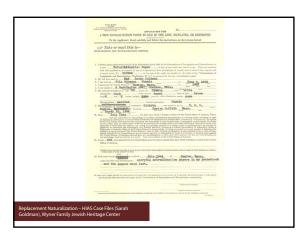
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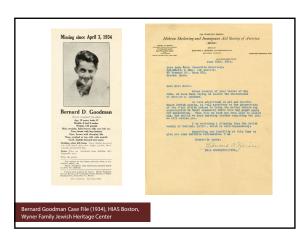
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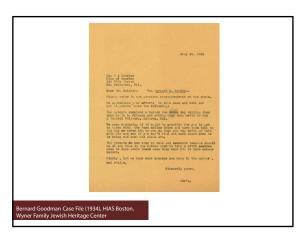


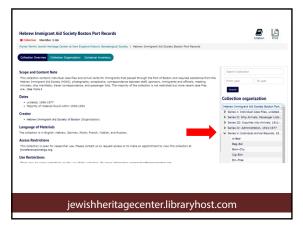




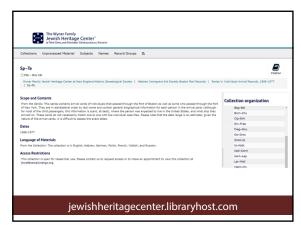
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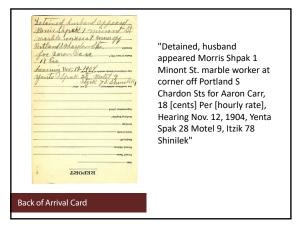




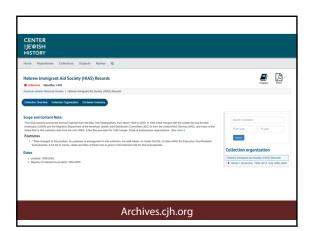
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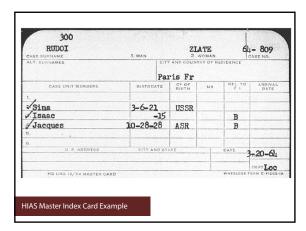
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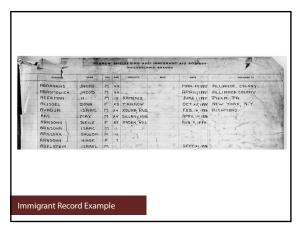


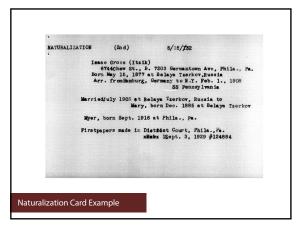




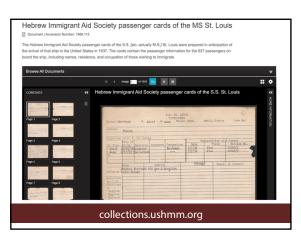
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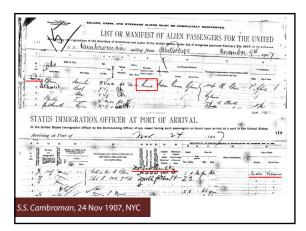


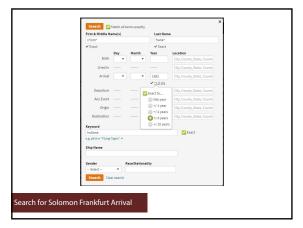


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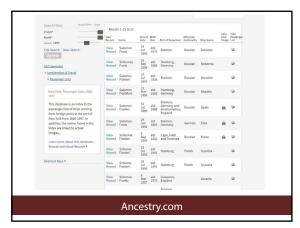
# **Passenger Lists**

- Many Jewish immigrants arrive under their Yiddish name or Yiddish nickname
- This makes identifying your ancestor all the harder
- Mis-indexing and typos compound the problem
- Traditional "Soundex" searching seldom useful for Eastern European surnames

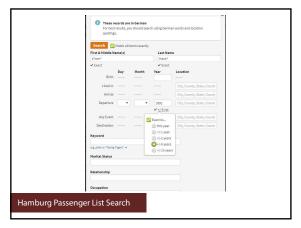




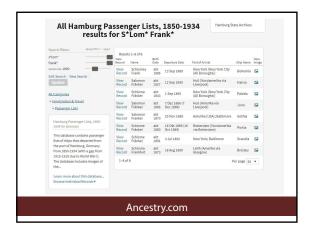
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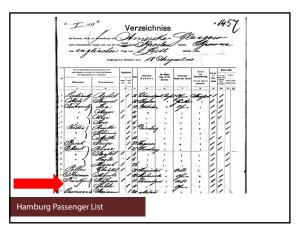




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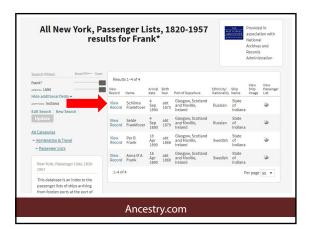


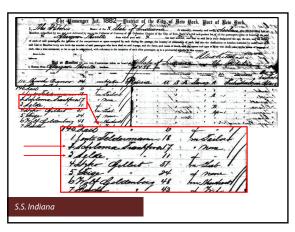




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## **Ultimately...**

- Many factors affected your Jewish ancestor's decision to immigrate
- Many Jewish immigrants arriving after 1880 trace back to the Russian Pale of Settlement
- Aid from HIAS may mean records exist that can aid your research
- The many names your ancestor had directly affects your ability to find them in passenger lists

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