



Genealogical Data in the Archives of South Bukovina

In memory of Dorin Fraenkel (1945 – 2011)

By: Yossi Yagur

Introduction

In her article "Family Research in the area known as Bukovina"¹, Dr. Lea Haber Gedalia reviews the available information sources relating to Bukovina (now divided between the North of Romania and the South of Ukraine) in its historic boundaries. The present article focuses on information which can be found in South-Bukovina archives regarding civil registers. One may assume high similarity to the data available all over the Austro-Hungarian Empire of the 19th and 20th centuries. The article is based on hundreds of archive pages located by the late Dorin Fraenkel, resident of Radautz, in whose memory this article was written.

Over a three year period, Dorin found over 350 birth / marriage / death registrations pertaining to the Jurgrau and Hass (Hass / Haas / Haass) families in the Radauti (Radautz) and Suceava archives, in the Bukovina district in Northern Romania. The range of dates on these registrations is 1855 - 1940. Dorin photographed each of the items at a high resolution. Each item was decoded from the Suetterlin handwriting and translated into English.

The data which can be extracted from these registration items: names, dates, occupations, family relations and so forth, have enabled me to get more information and ascertain some data regarding the Hass family², but the greatest contribution pertained to the Jurgrau family. Thanks to this contribution I have the vastest database known to researchers regarding this family³.

The article is based on the findings of Edgar Hauster⁴ and Prof. Bruce Reisch⁵, to whom the whole Bukovina researchers'-community is thankful. In addition, the "Jewish Bukovina: Sources for Genealogical and Family History Research"⁶

Archive Sources of Information

According to our present knowledge, formal South-Bukovina archives are located in Radautz and Suceava. In addition, attention has to be paid to the archive in Chernivtsi (Czernowitz), Bukovina's former capital city - part of today's Ukraine. In search of additional archival material, one has to

1) See articles; Gedalia-Haber Bukovina.

2) See books; Rand, a book describing life in rural Bukovina, providing a good deal of information about the Hass, Rand, Eisenthal and Feuerstein families and other families from that area.

3) Details of the Jurgrau family research, open questions and more will be presented in a separate article.

4) See On-line materials; Edgar Hauster's blog.

5) See On-line materials; Kehila links.

6) See On-line materials; Jewish Bukovina sources.

consider the fact that part of the archives were damaged during the two world wars, as this area was occupied by the fighting parties several times.

The survival of civil register books of the Jewish community of Radautz is worth special notice; On October 14th 1941, (Simchat Torah, 5702), all of the Radautz Jews were deported to Transnistria⁷. The secretary of the Jewish community managed to persuade the general registrar of the municipality to take possession of the "Jewish" books as well, and so the books were rescued⁸.

According to our present knowledge, no South-Bukovina-related civil registers are available on the web. The Czernowitz archive was microfilmed by the LDS*, but the data hasn't yet been indexed. The Archives' postal addresses are detailed at the end of the article, as well as the web site of the Suceava archive. The latter holds initial data regarding archive content and public reception hours, as well as other general information.

The maintenance of the civil register books is satisfactory, though not by western European standards. The staff handles registry retrieval requests according to name and date, but is not prepared to carry out systematic research. Any visitor may request any book, search it, and take pictures using his/her own camera- after paying some low daily fee. New regulations were set recently (April 2011) but it seems that nothing has changed in principle.

The archives contain registrations of births, marriages and deaths⁹. Registration started after the Austro-Hungarian Empire had annexed the area. Registration was done in a uniform format all over the empire, in German, using Suetterlin script. Later on, after World War I, when Bukovina was annexed to Romania, registration was carried out in Romanian, but the structure and format of registration remained intact. Each type of registration (birth, for instance) was assigned its own book, with the relevant columns. The books are relatively big and thick, and contain hundreds of pages (See Figure 1). Each page has a general title stating the type of registration (uniform in each volume), and a number of columns and typed titles, as well as the registration items. The registrars in each community added in their handwriting a number to each page and row, and the content of the registration. Sometimes we can find numeric summing lines on a monthly / annual level. It is important to note that the books were managed separately for Jews and gentiles, while using a uniform format and providing the relevant meanings for each religion. For instance, date of Christening for Christians and dates of circumcision for Jewish boys were recorded in the same column¹⁰.

In each community, the books were numbered consecutively in Roman digits (for instance, Radautz Births I, Radautz Births II and so on). Civil registers of the Jewish population in the archives is dated from 1843 to the present. However, in this respect, one must make the distinction between provincial towns such as Radautz, and county capitals such as Suceava. The records are kept in the towns for about 100 years, and then they are transferred to the appropriate county capitals. Autonomous Jewish-population registration began in Radautz only in 1857, and before that the Jewish community

7) During those months, the Romanian army deported all the Jews in the districts that had formerly been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire before World War I to Transnistria. See Books; Postilnik, p. 144.

8) See Books; Postilnik, p. 144.

***** LDS (Latter Day Saints) is the Church of the Mormons. Its center is in Salt Lake City, U.S.A. The church's Family History Library is the world's largest library with a large documentation dedicated to Genealogical research. (editor's note).

9) Registration subjects received a document of proof identical in form and content to registration in the community records.

10) English translation of column titles in a number of registration book versions can be found in the Examples entry of the On-line Material section.

relied on the Siret¹¹ Community. Initial search of the Siret records has yielded no relevant Radautz registration items, and the search has to be expanded in order to find them. As for Suceava, we have no explanation for the fact that the records start in 1843, and there are no previous records.

An important tool for researchers is the index. In some of the places, archive personnel prepared indices of the records. The index was managed separately for each type of record, alphabetized according to family names and in chronological order. The index includes: names, dates, number of book, number of page and row number of the detailed record. Nevertheless, the information regarding marriages is partial since the marriage index was managed based on grooms' names only.



Figure 1: Dorin Frankel (left) in a typical position in the archive.
Courtsey of Ruth Ellen Gruber (See online sources: Gruber).

Information Available in the Records

In terms of the content of the registration items, we notice a clear evolution over the years. At first, each item was spread over a single page, and later, items were spread over two pages (the left and right pages of the open book), while new information columns were added. Furthermore, if at first each item was spread over one line, it later took place on the page according to need and the registrars' customs.

The following are the main details of information¹² appearing in later entries¹³ according to registration types:

Birth Registration: Date of birth, place of birth address, circumcision date (for males), newborn's first name, gender, newborn's definition as legal / illegal, father's first name and surname, father's place of residence, father's occupation, mother's first name, mother's parents' names and occupations, witnesses' names, witnesses' place of residence and occupations, Mohel's name, midwife's name and comments.

Death Registrations - Date and time of death, address of place of death, name of doctor / certifying official, name of deceased, gender of deceased, age of deceased, cause of death, marital status of the deceased, occupation of deceased and comments. Sometimes the names of the parents and spouses

11) See Books; Pustilnik, p. 31.

12) Additional information often appears in the records unsystematically.

13) Early time entries include sub-groups of these entries.

are mentioned.

Marriage Registrations - Groom's first name and surname, groom's place of residence and occupation, groom's parents' names, groom's parents' residence and occupation, groom's age and marital status, bride's first name and surname, bride's place of residence and occupation, bride's parents' names, bride's parents' residence and occupation, bride's age, bride's marital status, date of marriage, place of marriage, name of certifying Rabbi and his place of residence, names of witnesses and their places of residence and comments. (See Figure 2 and figure 3 as an example of marriage registration).

| 1 Fortlaufende Postzahl | 2 Des Bräutigams | | | | 3 Der Braut | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|-------|-------|-------|----------------|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Vor- und Zuname, Geburtsort, Beschäftigung, Wohnung und Haus-Nr., ferner Name, Beschäftigung und Wohnort seiner Eltern | Alter | | Stand | | Vor- u. Zuname u. Geburtsort, ferner Name, Beschäftigung, Wohnort und Haus-Nr. ihrer Eltern | Alter | | Stand | |
| | | Jahr | Monat | ledig | Witwer | | Jahr | Monat | ledig | Witwe |
| 150 | Jakob Josef Jurgrau aus Radauk Quirlor in Arbora Sohn des Mechel Jungfrau u. D. Gittel Weinstein Radauk | | | | | Reisel Haafs aus Arbora, Tochter J. Simon Haafs u. Margom Judenfreund Arbora | | | | |

Figure 2: Marriage Registration: Jakob Josef Jurgrau and Reisel Hass in 1902 (left page)

| 4 Der Trauung | | | | 5 Eigenhändige Unterschrift | | 7 Anmerkung |
|------------------|------|--------|--|------------------------------------|---------------|---|
| Monat | Jahr | Ort | des die Trauung verrichtenden Rabbiners (Religionsweisers) | der Zeugen und deren Beschäftigung | | |
| | | | | unter Angabe des Wohnortes | | |
| November | 1900 | Radauk | Simon Schapira delegiert vom Rabbiner J. Kunstadt | Hersch Rosenstran | Eisig Brecher | Jef Melkora misf als Mecher mainab war mürner Marfai worfung mit R. Haafs wzgrünster Kindeb n. wtkann wabfalbareb afalif Jakob Josef Jurgrau |

Figure 3: Marriage Registration: Jacob Josef Jurgrau and Reisel Hass in 1902 (right page)

Typical patterns of Information

Dates - The Gregorian calendar is the only one used in the Bukovina District in the discussed period. Dates are registered in a variety of modes, in numbers, in words and in number and word combinations - according to the whim of the moment. The registered marriage dates are of minor significance - as detailed in the "special Marriage Registration Issues" below. The date of the main event pertaining to the registration (birth / marriage / death) - always appears in full. Other dates often appear in partial formats (month and year only / year only). An example of such dates is a date of birth on a marriage registration entry and so forth.

Age - Age registration has to be taken cautiously, since our Jewish brethren did not pay any significance to accurate age, and therefore declared an approximate age. In addition, we can find cases with contradicting statements of a person's age. The experience of some researchers reveals that there may be up to ten years' deviations in any direction.

Surnames - Appear only in the German transliteration until World War I, and in a mixture of German and Romanian transliterations later on. The names are freely spelled in some of the cases (for instance, Hass / Haas / Haass). Sometimes there are two family names - see the section on "Special Issues Pertaining to Marriage Registrations" below.

First Names - In some of the cases, Jews tended to give Christian names or nicknames rather than their Jewish names. For instance, when my grandfather, Eliyahu Hass was born in 1883, he was registered under the name Elias. Often names were registered inconsistently. For instance, when my grandfather, Jakob-Josef Jurgrau was born in 1875, he was registered as Jossel, when he got married he was registered in his full Jewish name: Jakob-Josef, and when his children were born he went back to his nickname - Jossel.

Occupations - Occupation data in the list have some significance, but they had better not be taken at face value. One can identify exaggerations in the definitions of the occupations, to inflate the reporter's status. For instance: a business-man (Geschaeftsmann) may appear to be a peddler. In case someone's occupation is indicated, one may assume that this person was alive at the registration date. The opposite assumption that someone had already passed away if its occupation is not mentioned appears to be risky.

Addresses - The address registration method has evolved over the years. First it was defined as a pair of items: the name of the settlement and the house number in it. According to that method, there were no street names. The numbering of houses started with the Municipality building or the main church, and then progressed in ascending order throughout the place, mostly according to the order in which buildings were erected. For instance: Radautz, No. 118. There is no connection whatsoever between this method and the method of numbering land plots in Cadastral Maps. Later on, the custom evolved of using three address items: Settlement, name of street and house number on the street. Detailed addresses are recorded in birth and death entries, and often as the addresses of the bride and groom in marriage registration entries. Addresses may help in identifying certain people as part of a certain family - both when some of the information is lacking, and when there are several persons with the same first and family name (usually cousins named after the same grandfather).

It is important to pay attention to a common phenomenon, whereby pregnant women would return to their mothers' homes towards giving birth so as to get help, and then the grandmother's address was

registered as the place of birth.

Place of Residence - the place of residence was registered by name at the time of registration. This fact poses a challenge to the researcher, as the names of many places have been changed over the years. One can identify two types of changes in the names of places: a change in name to adjust to the governing language (Radautz → Radauti) and overall name changes (Stanislaw → Ivano Frankivsk). Sometimes there were two name changes, one after each World War. Tools for the search of names of places can be found on the JewishGen website. These tools provide each place's names over the years, as well as the country it belonged to. It is quite obvious that online map services only mention current names. The significance of the follow-up on the place of residence in genealogical research is as great as that of following up on an address.

Marital status - the note regarding the marital status of the bride and groom is an integral part of the marriage registration. The possible entries are: single, divorced, widower / widow. In the case of divorced people and widows, there will also be some reference as to the status - mostly in the comments section, with the addition of the previous spouse's name. In death registration entries, marital status is noted only in case of married / widowed persons, accompanied by their spouse's names.

Special Issues Pertaining to Marriage Registrations

The proximity of registrations to the actual dates of events changes according to the type of registration. It is quite obvious that birth and death registrations were performed close to the events, and registration books were managed chronologically. In addition, in some cases I cross-referenced information between the registered date of death and the date written on the tombstone, and the dates matched. The situation is different with marriages; in many cases, Jews did not bother to register¹⁴ their marriage at the registry office, or they did it many years after their Jewish wedding.

This phenomenon has some implications, both on marriage registrations themselves and on the other registrations:

- Legally, the spouses are not considered married until their "formal" wedding registration.
- Non-formally-married women were recorded using their maiden names.
- In later periods, a comment was added to non-formally married people, such as "Informally married to ..."
- Children born before the formal marriage are considered illegal, and this status is recorded in any registration item, including the registration of their children.
- In early periods, birth registrations did not include the father's name if the parents were not formally married. Later, the father's name was noted with a comment that the mother married him informally.
- The family name of newborns of parents who were not formally married was defined as the mother's maiden name. Sometimes, the father's name was registered in addition, such as "Fisher also known as Hornick". Note: if the mother's parents were not formally married, the newborn would be registered in the grandmother's maiden name...
- Over the years, some of the couples were married formally. In such cases, the marriage registration

14) Did they have to pay some tax?.

entry included the father's declaration whereby he acknowledged his children previously born to his wife as legitimate. In some of the cases, the declaration included the name and date of birth of each such child. All these were added to the "comments" column.

As an example, my grandfather, Jakob-Josef Jurgrau and my grandmother, Reisel Hass, residents of Arbore, were formally married in Radautz (See Figure 2 and Figure 3) on November 19th, 1902, that is some five months after the birth of their eldest son Berl mentioned above. Nevertheless, my grandmother's parents, Shimon Hass and Miriam Judenfreund, aged 45, formally married on the same day, as well as my grandmothers' uncle and aunt, Elias Erlich and Miriam Hass (sister of Shimon Hass), aged 43. The registration entries of these three marriages appear in the archive line after line, while using the same witnesses.

Two-Purpose Registrations and Cross Related Registrations

In some cases, entries served two purposes. In most cases these were birth registrations of babies who died at infancy - where the registration indicated the birth as well as the death, indicating the date of death. Sometimes such a registration entry appears in addition to the registration of the relevant death registration (cross-reference registration), or instead of it. The opposite case can also be found (a death registration indicating birth as well, without a separate birth registration), but is quite rare. In other cases, registrars added information to the entries at later dates. For instance: upon parents' formal marriage, and following father's declaration, the children became legitimate, and this fact was recorded by the registrars in the children's birth entries with reference to the parents' marriage.

Conclusion

Civil register records are available regarding the areas ruled by the former Austro-Hungarian Empire in general and Bukovina district in particular. These records include birth, marriage and death registration, and provide a wealth of genealogical information. The information has existed since the beginning of registration during the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but some of the records were lost. As for the available records - at this point in time they cannot be accessed through the Internet. Hence, archive research of the roots of a family from Bukovina faces a great deal of difficulties and requires the help of local researchers, for finding the information and interpreting it correctly. This article has shown the great wealth of information available in the archives, and Dorin Fraenkel's unique contribution to researchers who used his services.

In Memory of the Late Dorin Fraenkel

The late Dorin Fraenkel (Dori) was born as an only child to his parents in 1945, upon their return from deportation to Transnistria. He was an electronics engineer, who got his education in the University of Jasi, but retired early due to a traumatic injury in a road accident. His main hobby was music; he was a pianist, a music teacher and a composer. Some of his musical work can be found in the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/user/dorifrankel>

Dorin was a modest and honest person who got a good deal of satisfaction from helping others in a variety of domains. This quality of his was greatly emphasized in the last years of his life, when he helped a great number of researchers find materials in the archives in his area. There were some cases where he agreed to get some symbolic remuneration for his work, but in most cases he refused to be paid, and only asked to get the scores of musical pieces which were hard to get in Romania. The cliché about shoemakers going barefoot was appropriate for Dorin: while he was collecting

archive materials for other researchers, and also set up family websites for some of them, he never researched his own family.

Over the last three years, Dorin found some 350 registration entries pertaining to my family for me; some were found while getting the information from the archives' indices, and other items were found by systematically going through the records. A major factor in getting these results was Dorin's ability to make informal contacts with the archives' directors and workers. The accumulating effect of analyzing these records of my family research is tremendous, and there was no way of getting this effect by any other way, or through any other person.

Our relationship was unusual; we never met, never spoke on the phone or on Skype; we only communicated by e-mail on a regular basis. Naturally, most of the correspondence was about issues of genealogy, and only a small part of it was dedicated to general issues, and still, we felt close to each other. Dorin's motivation to research my family history sometimes outweighed my own motivation, so much so, that I felt compelled to ask him not to do things which seemed difficult or dangerous to me, such as going to Czernowitz in Ukraine and conduct similar research in their archives. Make no mistake - I was not his "only son" - his personal involvement in all other research cases was similar. Dorin died of a sudden heart attack at the age of 66 on the morn of May 25th, 2011, a few days after Edgar Hauster had visited him (See Figure 4), and left behind first and second cousins living in Israel and in other countries. The shock to his relatives, acquaintances and friends has been enormous, which is also true for all those who were helped by him in their genealogical research, and they all know he is irreplaceable.



Figure 4: Dorin Frankel (left) and Edgar Hauster in the doorway to the Jewish Community Building in Radautz, May 2011 (Curtsey of Edgar Hauster).

References

Archives and their addresses:

- The Radautz Municipal Archive - Municipality Building:
Primaria Municipiului Radauti, Piata unirii nr. 2, Radauti, Romania
- The District Archive in Suceava:
Arhivele Nationale ale Romaniei, Filiala Arhivelor Statului, Str. Stefan cel Mare 33, Suceava, Romania; <http://www.arhivelenationale.ro/index.php?lan=0&jud=111>
- The Czernowitz District Archive:
Oblast Archive, Str. Stasiuc 20 A , Chernivtsi, Ukraine

Articles

- Dr. Lea Gedalia-Haber "Family Research in the Area Known as Bukovina", Sharsheret Hadorot, Vol. 25, No. 1.
- Bondi Shtanzler and Yossi Yagur, "The Radautz Jewish Cemetery Documentation", Sharsheret Hadorot, Vol. 22, No. 1.

Books

- Israel Margalit (Pustilnk), Radautz- a Jewish community in Growth and in Fall, A copy of the book appears on the Radautz Bukovina Jews Organization website: <http://www.bukowina.org.il/152512/%D7%A1%D7%A4%D7%A8-%D7%A8%D7%93%D7%90%D7%95%D7%A5>.
- Prof. Jacob Pinchas Rand, Shorashim Chayim - Memoirs (Living Roots), Published by the author, (2005).

Online Materials:

- Examples of a few formats of registrations of births / marriages / deaths and translations of their titles into English as gathered by the Galicia JewishGen Group:
http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/galicia/GalicianVitalRecords_Titles_Nov2002.pdf
- Edgar Hauster's Blog: an abundance of original Bukovina information:
<http://hauster.blogspot.com/>
- Ruth Ellen Gruber's Blog:
<http://www.ruthellengruber.com>
- JewishGen Kehila links relating to Bukovina, managed by Prof. Bruce Reisch:
<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Romania.html>
<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Ukraine.html>
- Jewish Bukovina: Sources for Genealogical and Family History Research:
<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/sadgura/ReischToronto.html>

Yossi Yagur was born in Israel in 1950, holds B.Sc in Electronics Engineering and M.Sc. in Systems Engineering. For over 18 years now, Yossi has been documenting the family trees of his parents from the Jurgrau and Hass families from the Bukovina District in North Romania. He is married to Miriam Gruenberg, also a daughter of Bukovina Jews, and has two sons and one daughter.

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