
The Journal of the Jewish Genealogical Society

DOROT דורות

Volume 41, Number 2

Winter 2020

FAMILY TREES OF GALICIA

by Nina Talbot

Methods of Research in My Hunt for Traces of My Grandmother in her Small Galician Town

In my painting series and book, *Faces of Dynów*, I wrote about my “informants” – relatives I found at the beginning of my family research. In this article I will describe how I found these relatives.

My grandmother, Bella Neger, came to the United States in 1921 from Dynów, in Galicia. My close relationship with Bella was what motivated me to take my first trip to Dynów in 2013; she died in 1978. But when I was little, Bella told me about Dynów, her town filled with lilac shrubs, her activities picking blueberries, jumping rope and playing jacks in this Galician shtetl.

I was not told about the large Neger family in Dynów that she left behind. Nor did my mother or my aunt tell me about them. I thought I was from a small American-born family; one aunt, two sisters, three first cousins – no one else. Boy, was I mistaken!

A Defining Moment

When I arrived in Dynów on that first trip in September 2013, I stumbled into The Polish Jewry Heritage Center in the town. The center was built by a young Hassidic rabbi from Jerusalem who was captivated by the exalted standing and spiritual power of this town, for its role in the development of Galitzianer Hassidism, by virtue of the Dinover Rebbe, Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Shapira (1783 to 1841), one of a handful of Hassidic giants in its formative period. I entered the synagogue in the Center and there on the wall of the synagogue was a large placard memorializing – in Hebrew lettering – the Jews from this town who were murdered during the Nazi invasion on Rosh Hashanah of September 1939, a mere two weeks after the start of World War II, before the full meaning of Hitler’s oath to clear Europe of Jews was even spoken of.

In this issue	
Family Trees of Galicia By Nina Talbot.....	1
President's Postings By Steve Stein.....	3
Using Genealogy for More Than Data: Medical Pedigree and Physical Traits By Sarina Roffé.....	4
Upcoming and Current Events	15
JGS Program Reports	17
Notes from All Over	21
New, Recent & Noteworthy Publications	29
A New Giving Opportunity: Tribute Gifts	30
JGS Tribute listings	31
Questioning the Experts: Interview with Phillip Sutton	32
We Invite You to Join Us!	37
JGS Welcomes New Members	38
JGS Friends	39

Here I was searching for traces of my grandmother's life before she emigrated to the United States and my first discovery was that whatever family was left behind was impacted by the invading Nazis. Imagine my shock when my husband, who reads Hebrew, called to me, "Nina! There are a whole bunch of Negers on this list!"

This was a defining moment for me; I had known that Bella's father was murdered during the invasion, but I had no idea as to the extent of decimation of this branch of the family, and only then got my first glimmer of it. To get the full story, I needed to follow up on my discovery by studying genealogy.

Since that 2013 trip I discovered that 37 members of my Grandmother Bella Neger's family were murdered, among the 400 Jews of Dynów killed on that Rosh Hashanah.

Dynów was and is small (population approx. 2,700 at the start of WW II – almost half Jewish), but for Jews, especially Hassidim, it's a mecca because of the Dinover Rebbe, Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech Shapira. He is one of the pillars of Galitzianer Hassidim, from whom many other Hassidic rebbes and their followers to this day claim their pedigree and *yichus* (Hebrew-based Yiddish word for family tree).

A 100-year-old article in the Yiddish Daily Forward: A Pogrom and Cholera Change My Grandmother's Life Course

My grandmother Bella was pushed to emigrate by events that were triggered by a pogrom in Dynów in 1914. Bella recounted to me seeing a Cossack beheading the town baker and seeing the head rolling down the street. Bella and her mother, Taube Spinrad, and family fled the town. Her mother died in a cholera epidemic on their way back to Dynów after the pogrom. Bella's father Abraham remarried a few years after his first wife's death. The trauma for Bella of her mother's death and witnessing the pogrom motivated Bella to leave Dynów. Bella's grandmother, Chaya Spinrad, the family matriarch in Dynów, arranged for Bella's passage to New York.

On my first trip to Dynów I met Marta, a researcher from Berlin. She told me that Betzalel Wertenteil, a native of Dynów living in Flushing, NY, was nine years old when the Nazis arrived in Dynów, September 13, 1939, two weeks after the start of the war. When I returned to New York, I contacted Betzalel and we became friends. This bond between a Holocaust survivor in his 80s and a born-and-raised New York baby boomer, strangely was engendered by our shared love for Dynów. His love stemmed from his wonderful childhood before the war. My love for the town was an extension of my love for my grandmother, for anything she did, said or touched.

Betzalel showed me a clipping from the Yiddish *Forverts* dated December 19, 2014, in the "Looking Back" section of the paper. It read as follows: "1914 – 100 Years Ago, Cossacks Idea of Gratitude," which referenced an eyewitness account by Betzalel's aunt in Dynów, in which she explained that "houses were burned down, residents were robbed, the elderly shot, and women raped." I am guessing that the pogrom reported in this article was the one that Bella's family fled.

Sister and Brother a Generation Apart: A Retrospective Interview About the Life of a Dynówer

The retrospective interview of family members and survivors from Dynów served as a significant tool for gathering information about genealogy.

My grandmother Bella was the eldest of eight children of Abraham Neger and his first wife Taube. Abraham's second wife, Rivka, had five children, and their son Sam Nager (some members of the Neger family changed the spelling to 'Nager' in the U.S.), was their youngest. He was grandmother Bella's younger paternal half-brother and was 26 years her junior.

continued on page 7

FAMILY TREES OF GALICIA

continued from page 2

Sam was nine years old when the Nazis invaded Dynów. He was hidden by a neighbor for a year and a half, and then was taken by the Nazis to Buchenwald and survived. After the war, Sam was liberated from Buchenwald and eventually arrived in New York, as Bella sponsored him. He died in 2006 after building a life and family, survived by his wife, three daughters, a son and many grandchildren. I learned more about Sam, about Dynów and about my lost uncles, aunts and cousins from an audio interview of Sam, done in 1998 by a professional interviewer hired by one of Sam's daughters. That audio triggered my "fall" into genealogy. I'm sure that many *DOROT* readers might relate to the word "fall" as something from which one does not easily emerge!

A Greenhorn in Green Bay

Sam, after a short stay in New York City, staying with my grandmother Bella, was offered work in Green Bay, Wisconsin, as a furniture salesman, started a family and remained there for the rest of his life. Sam had a charismatic personality and even ran for mayor of Green Bay in the 1970s. He wasn't elected, but almost everyone in Green Bay knew Sam for his outgoing personality.

I only encountered Sam twice: the first time was in 1999 at my cousin's wedding in the Bronx; the second encounter was in the home of his daughter Ronda, near Albany, New York, Thanksgiving weekend, 2001. But he was a changed man by then. He had been the life of the party and quite the Galitzianer dancer at the wedding in 1999, but by 2001 he had fallen into a deep depression triggered by post-traumatic stress.

Despite having grown up being told that our family was small – my mother has one sister with three children, and my father was an only child – I realized after the Dynów trip that I must have many relatives.

FALLING INTO GENEALOGY

Scrutiny of Passenger Manifests

Upon hearing about various relatives mentioned in Sam's interviews, I took out a subscription to Ancestry.com, and searched for Negers and Spinrads from Dynów. That led me to Doris Sandrowitz, née Neger, who became my "first informant." Doris was a "long-lost" cousin of Sam. I found Doris listed on a passenger manifest as a nine-year-old with her family arriving in New York returning from a trip to Dynów in 1937.

Online Telephone Directories

I calculated that if Doris were still alive, she would be in her early 90s and might possibly have remained in the New York City area. An online telephone directory listed Doris Sandrowitz, née Neger living in New Brunswick, New Jersey, with one of her possible relatives listed as Irving Neger, Doris' father.

I called Doris, explained who I was and how we were related. She immediately went into a description of my grandmother Bella's beautiful jet-black, wavy hair that shone blue in certain lights. She told me how nicely Bella – in the 1930s – dressed her daughters, Toby, my mother and my aunt Roz, in frilly ankle socks. Doris mentioned what a gentle couple Bella and my grandfather Joseph were, which is how I remember them.



Doris Sandrowitz, née Neger, July 2015
with photo of Mendel Neger family in
Dynów, circa 1918

Doris was born and raised in the United States and was the granddaughter of Mendel Neger from Dynów, one of the five Neger brothers from this shtetl. Later I learned from Doris that the reason for her trip to Dynów in 1937 was because her father Irving wanted his parents to meet his American-born children.

Doris was seven years old when she and her family sailed to Dynów. She got to know many members of that family who remained in Dynów and were slaughtered by the Nazis just two years later. Doris remembered many details about some of those people. She said that her grandfather Mendel Neger gave her a pet goat to play with.

Doris told me about our family members who immigrated to New York before the start of the war on September 1, 1939, and about the few Holocaust survivors who emigrated from Poland after the war, and their descendants.

Public Records: Manifests, Census, Vital Records, Trips to Cemeteries

I interviewed Doris by phone several times and twice in person. Based on her information I was able to follow up by searching ship manifests, censuses and vital records. Visits to New York and New Jersey cemeteries where the Dynów Society had burial sites yielded important information about marriages, children, names and dates. I found gravestones of Negers and Spinrads with Hebrew inscriptions indicating the fathers of the deceased.

Cousins Galore! Just pick up the phone!

From these sources I found many cousins and spoke to them by phone, contacted them by email, and in a few cases met with them in person.

These calls and interviews led to collections of old photographs that these individuals stashed away, sometimes not seeing them for decades. For example, I located Kramer – the original with one name only, long before Seinfeld's Kramer was ever conceived. Kramer was my second informant. He is a music producer living in Florida. I found Kramer after Doris told me about her father Irving's siblings, one of whom was Miriam, Kramer's grandmother. I visited Kramer in Florida in 2015, and he provided me with photographs and colorful stories about the Neger aunts, uncles and cousins he and his family visited who lived in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn.

New finds – Deepening relationships

Another cousin I found was Sandy Neger, my third informant. Sandy was living in New Jersey. Sandy is the daughter of Chaim Neger, my great uncle Sam's older brother. They were both children in Dynów when the Nazis invaded their town in 1939. The two brothers, each on his own, survived terrible hardships, but made it to the United States after the war. Chaim Neger was a teenager in the Polish Home Army when the Nazis invaded Dynów. Sam and Chaim are sons of my great-grandfather Avraham Neger by his second wife Rywka, who was Bella's stepmother. I learned that even the most horrible war does not distract a person from the guts of life, like the friction between a child who lost her mother, and a stepmother, the new wife of her widowed father. Painful as it all was for my grandmother, it is reassuring to know that life is filled with human feeling, even in the darkest circumstances.

Sandy described her father Chaim's survival in Siberia, after fleeing Dynów. She told me about his ultimate success in the New Jersey meat industry.

The JewishGen/Gesher Galicia Special Interest Group: A Little Help from Like-Minded Friends

Through the JewishGen/Gesher Galicia Special Interest Group, I located and met my cousin Michael Marcus, son of Dora Neger, also a Holocaust survivor. Ironically, a deranged intruder in her suburban home murdered Dora on Long Island in 1964.

From the Gesher Galicia message board I found my Israeli cousins, Menahem and Menashe Neger, sons of Moishe

Neger. Moishe Neger was from Dynów, the son of Mendel Neger. I traveled to Israel to meet Menahem and Menashe, two larger-than-life brothers, each a heroic IDF veteran of many wars in Israel.

On this trip to Israel I also met Sima Shamir, daughter of Frymt Neger. Sima was a second cousin to Menashe and Menahem; they had known each other as children when their parents first immigrated to Haifa after the war, but had not seen each other for more than 30 years until I brought them together during that trip. Menashe is a gourmet cook, among other talents, and the meal of lamb shish kebob, Israeli salads and couscous he prepared for all of us bridged the years we were not in touch. Sima, Menahem and Menashe were additional informants in my explorations.

Obsession as a Driving Resource in the Search for Family: Finding a Distant Branch

I tracked down a large distant branch of Negers by finding a marriage document of Harry Nager, listing his parents related to Chaim Aron Neger of Dynów (c. 1830- c. 1910), the patriarch and father of the five Neger brothers – Gerschon, Mendel, Israel, Menashe and Abraham (Sam’s father).

There was a lot of activity and enthusiasm with this group, many members of which I met in person and others with whom I communicated by phone or email.

In my conversations with Doris Sandrowitz, she mentioned a man referred to as “Uncle Max,” whom she and her father visited at a butcher shop where he worked in the Bronx, not far from Doris’ family home. Most of the Negers worked as butchers, both in Poland and in New York. The only other thing Doris remembered about Uncle Max was that he was an elderly man (Doris was a little girl at the time, so it’s hard to know exactly how old he really was) with grey hair, and that she remembered seeing him bending over a car.

The Annual Dynower Society Journal as a Resource in Clarifying Interview Material

As much as I persisted in asking Doris questions about who this man could be, she didn’t remember anything else. There were other known Maxes in the Neger family, but this man was not one of them. I found two other Neger brothers, Morris (originally Moses) and Harry (originally Hirsch), also from Dynów, who were both officers in the Dynówer Society in New York in the 1920s-1930s.

My initial search for Max Nager led to two more years of research, including a visit to The Center for Jewish History to look for old copies of the journals of the Dinover Society, the landsmanshaft of Dinovers in New York City. Both Morris and Harry appeared in photographs in those journals and were listed as vice president and secretary of the Society, respectively. I pursued this family branch with the help of my husband, who is familiar with traditional Jewish naming patterns, and with the help of professional genealogists I found through the Geshher Galicia list serve. These individuals generously searched other obscure sources. My cousin Menahem Neger also helped, and I came up with a presumed relationship of this “Max” Nager branch.



1939 Dynówer Society Journal Photo with Morris and Harry Nager

Menahem informed me that his father, Moishe Neger, told him that Moishe’s grandfather Chaim Aron Neger had two brothers, Gerschon Shaya and Moishe Pinchas. I believe that this Nager branch stems from Moishe Pinchas based on naming patterns and documents indicating second cousin, uncle, aunt, etc.

Discarding Preconceived Notions About Taboos as a Resource; Cousins Marrying Cousins —Oy Vey, a Genealogical Nightmare!

Some of my findings challenged me to examine and discard pre-conceived ideas that I had about taboos; specifically taboos about marrying a relative. In my post-Mendelian Upper West Side upbringing, the idea of marrying even a distant relative was enough to make me feel squeamish. But in my research about my family in Dynów, some of the puzzles that emerged could only be solved if I opened my mind to the idea that my cousins married each other. Yucch!

One's mind-set in approaching genealogical material can serve to expand the possibilities in interpreting what you find. If you study your discovered documentation with an open mind, you can find things that you would not see if you came with your own pre-formed fixed ideas. I learned that mindset can serve as a core resource in genealogical research, or as an impediment if the researcher is not ready to consider that Galician cultural norms were different from ours.

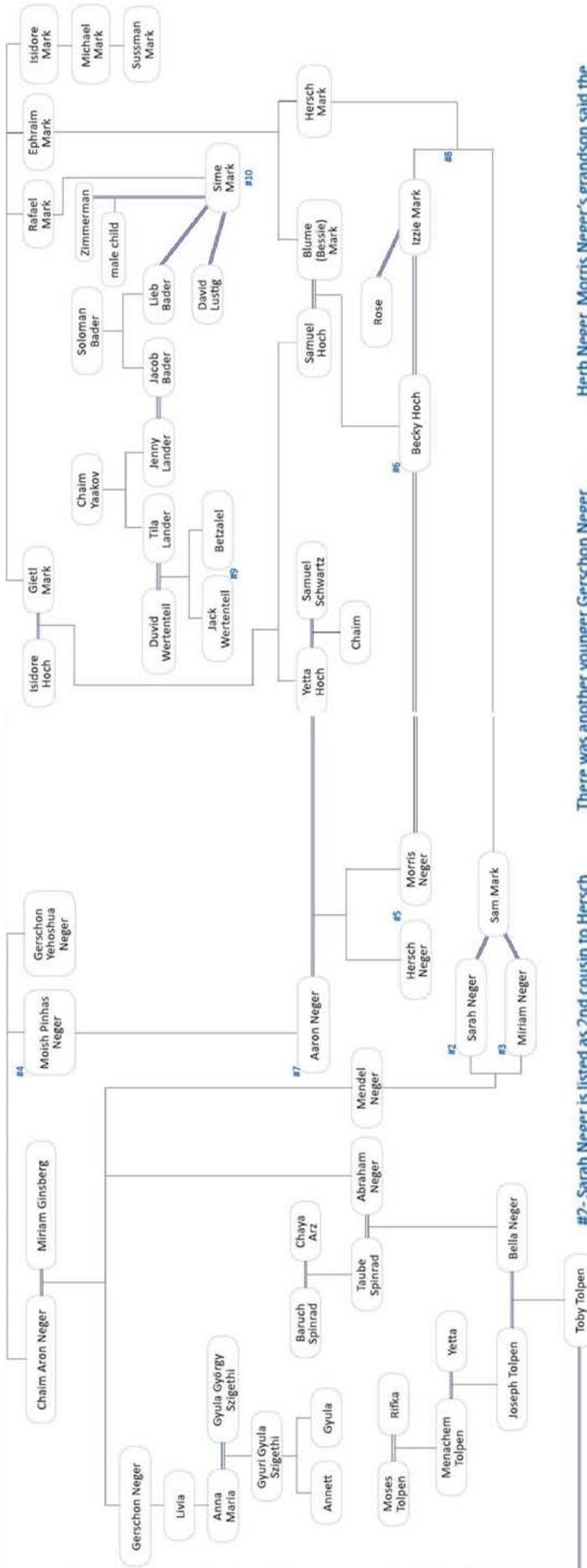
The different norms about marrying cousins were related to practical limitations in shtetl life. For example, in Dynów, as in other Eastern European shtetls, in which the Jewish community was a minority, there were limited numbers of marriageable-age people. People in Jewish shtetls didn't usually marry outside of their community, unless they went outside of their towns, which was difficult in those days.

The idea was not entirely foreign. As a result, "...it was common practice that cousins often married cousins. In the Jewish community of Dynów almost everybody was related in some way," according to the short biography of family member Moses Arm, which has been distributed among the relatives.

In the "New World" of the U.S. in which I grew up, I heard of instances in which a widow or widower married a cousin or in-law after the death of their spouse. In fact, my grandmother Bella told me that after her husband Joseph passed away, her cousin Irving (Doris' father) proposed to her; she declined. Irving's proposal sounded like some kind of "Levirate marriage" found in the *Torah (yibum)*, and in cultures where marrying someone outside the clan was prohibited.

I got in touch by phone, email and in person with descendants of Morris and Harry Nager. In this branch of the family tree relating to Nager/Mark/Hoch, one can see the complicated, interwoven family relationships. I learned about members of my Spinrad family, the other maternal branch (Bella's mother's family), by tracking down Jeanette Levin in Florida, again through online white pages. This led me to a large extended family of Spinrads living in New York, California and Atlanta, Georgia.

Family tree page NAGER/MARK/HOCH



#2- Sarah Neger is listed as 2nd cousin to Hersch Neger on the NYC 1920 census. If Sarah's father Mendel and Hersch Neger were 1st cousins (Hersch's brother Morris lists his parents as Aaron and Yetta Hoch on his marriage certificate), then their grandparents, Chaim Aaron and Moish Pinhas were brothers, and Hersch and Sarah have a common great-grandparent.

#3 - After Sarah Neger died, her husband Sam Mark married her sister Miriam Neger. (Interviews with Mel Brooks, November 2016, Sarah and Sam's son-in-law & Doris Sandrowitz, née Neger, Sarah Neger's niece July 2015).

#4 - According to Menahem Neger (in conversation in Haifa, April 2016), Mendel Neger's Grandson Chaim Aron Neger had 2 brothers - Moish Pinhas and Gerschon Yehoshua. It is presumed that Morris and Hersch Neger were the grandsons of Moish Pinhas due to repetition of names. Morris was originally 'Moses.'

There was another younger Gerschon Neger, Chaim Aron Neger's eldest son, who was named after his Uncle Gerschon Yehoshua. According to Jewish tradition, a child is named after a deceased grandparent or parent in order to keep the name alive. Usually a child is not named after a living relative. In the case of the Gerschons however, according to Menahem, Gerschon the nephew was named after his living Uncle Gerschon, who was sick, to bring good luck, in hopes that the young Gerschon would bring good health to his uncle.

#5 - Brothers Morris and Hersch Neger list Uncle Samuel Hoch as go-to person on their passenger manifest from Poland (then Austria under Austro-Hungarian Empire) to New York City. Chaim Schwartz lists go-to person half-brother H. Neger relative in country where he left.

#6 - Becky Hoch married her cousin Izzy Mark after her husband Morris Neger died. Izzy's wife Rose had passed away previously. Izzie's go-to person on his passenger manifest lists Uncle Sam Hoch, which presumably means that his father Hersch Mark and Bessie Mark were siblings.

Herb Neger, Morris Neger's grandson said the couple lived in Williamsberg-Beckie moved to Izzy's house. 1940 NYC census lists Izzy living at 400 Warwick Street indicating owning a luncheonette business. Doris Sandrowitz and Tillie Mark, Sarah Neger's daughter (as reported by Tillie's daughter Francine Brooks) said the luncheonette was opposite Macy's.

#7 - Hersch Neger is listed as 2nd cousin to Susman Mark on 1910 Scranton, Pa. census. Hersch's wife Chana Altman listed Susman's same address as 1910 census on her 1910 passenger manifest. Hersch and Susman's Grandparents Gietl Mark and Hersch Mark presumably were siblings, thus Hersch and Susman shared a common great-grandparent.

#8 - Izzy and Sam are siblings and their father is Hersch Mark.

#9 - See stories #6 & 7, Part I of this book.

#10 - According to a deportation hearing at Ellis Island, Sime reported that she had a son with Zimmerman. The couple was not legally married. Department of Commerce and Labor Immigration Service, Port of NY, March 15, 1910.

I met a descendant of Chaya Spinrad's husband, Baruch, a namesake – Rabbi Baruch Spinrad, in Brooklyn, where I live, just a few blocks away from me. Rabbi Baruch told me that he had a photograph of his namesake, my great-great grandfather, hanging on his wall. It was not an easy task to get a copy of this photo. The rabbi's wife didn't believe that I was actually related to her husband. After all, her family was ultra-Orthodox and not inclined to connecting with a non-orthodox relative like me, much less having me in her home, sans hair covering. I needed the intervention of my sister-in-law, who has a lot of connections in that Orthodox community.



An Archive in a Trailer in Jerusalem: My Hungarian Cousin

Then there is the story of finding my Hungarian cousin, György Szigethy, a lawyer, who lives with his family in Budapest.

My determination (some would call it an insane addiction) to finding my family was also a core resource in my research. That included my hiring a researcher in Budapest who was ready to search documents as well as graveyards to help me follow up on leads. One of these leads came from the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP), a fancy title for an international archive of tremendous significance to researchers! But it was located in two junked house-trailers in the backwoods area of the Givat Ram campus of Hebrew University in Jerusalem. I was in Israel in April 2015 for the *bat mitzvah* of my stepson's daughter and visited this archive during my trip.

Baruch Spinrad,
Circa 1925, Dynów

One of the books I used for source material, *Where Once We Walked, A Guide to the Jewish Communities Destroyed in the Holocaust* by Gary Mokotoff and Sallyann Amdur Sack, includes important information about international archives. In that book I found information on Dynów. This book referenced the CAJHP.

Among my finds in the CAHJP was a document identifying a fifth brother of the Neger branch, Gerschon (Gusztáv in Hungarian) Neger. This was a major discovery; in my four years researching this branch, and according to my Grandmother Bella's stories, I only knew of four Neger brothers, the youngest being Avraham, Bella's father, who was my great-grandfather. I had this CAHJP document translated from Polish, learned of this fifth Neger brother Gerschon and proceeded to look for descendants of Gerschon Neger.

The document confirmed Gerschon's parents were Chaim Aron and Miriam Neger, and indicated that Gerschon, born in 1871 in Dynów, emigrated to Budapest in 1891 at the age of 19. In Budapest, he worked as a men's tailor. He married a Hungarian woman, Czilli Weisz, and the couple had four children. I could not discover how Gerschon (who lived until 1948) and his family evaded the Nazis when they invaded Budapest, March 1944. That was when the Nazis ordered the deportation and mass killing of Jews in Budapest and all of Hungary.

I was very excited with the discovery of this fifth Neger brother, but I was only able to get limited information online. Again, I reached out to the Gesher Galicia list serve and received the response of Beth Long, a professional genealogist in Salt Lake City. Beth provided me with information on where Gerschon and his wife Czilli were buried in the Budapest Kozma Jewish Cemetery, along with birth records of their four children, and marriage records of two of their children. The couple's two married daughters, Livia and Sarolta, both converted to Catholicism before WWII and married Christian men. Their youngest daughter, Elżbieta, died of pneumonia at age 16. Gerschon and Czilli's son Janos was a colorful character who had an escapade with an Estonian dancer in Berlin.

Here is a translation of an article published in *The Pesti Napló* newspaper, 19th Sept 1930.

“Love marriage In The Detention House”

János Neger, assistant tailor, met Linda Timma in Berlin. Timma was a dancer from Estonia. They fell in love, spent some time together enjoying life, and then ran out of money. The couple managed to trick several thousand dollars from a bank, and then fled to Budapest. The police in Budapest, based on the radio search info by the Berlin police, captured them both, and they were sent to the detention house in Marko Street. They were about to extradite the woman, but János asked the judge to let him marry Linda Timma at the detention house. The judge gave his permission, so János married her on Thursday so that Linda would not be handed over to Germany as a Hungarian citizen.



Love and Marriage in the Detention House

At that point Beth recommended Andras Koltai, a professional researcher in Budapest, to take the search for descendants to the next level. From Andras I learned that of Gerschon's four children, only one, Livia Neger, (who happened to be a painter – I, as a painter, was proud to discover that a painter preceded me in my family heritage) had one child – Anna Maria, and Anna Maria had only one child, György Szigethy, my newly found third cousin.

Icing on the Cake: Loving Relationships with a Newly Found Family

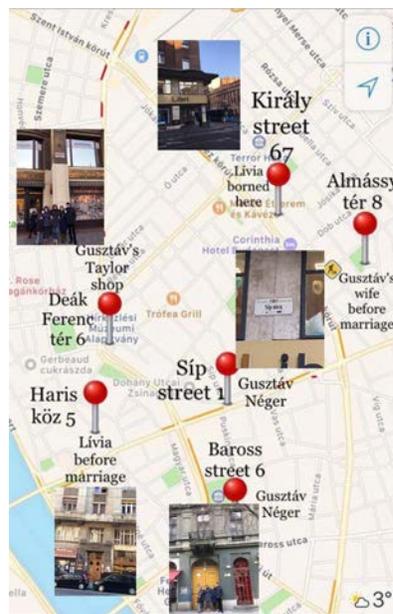
Andras found György's address and phone number in the Budapest telephone book and called him. György's teenage daughter Anett answered the phone. But she hung up on Andras. Andras suggested that I write a letter to György, which I did, and I received a very enthusiastic email response from him a week later. György did not know anything about his great-grandfather Gerschon and had no knowledge of his Jewish heritage on his mother's side. His grandmother Livia died a year before György was born, and his mother Anna Maria said nothing to him about his Jewish heritage (Anna Maria might not have known herself).

In December 2016, I had a showing of my painting series, *Faces of Dynów*, in the old synagogue in Zamosc, Poland. My husband and I traveled there for the installation and reception. Afterward, we flew to Budapest, met my cousin György and his family, and spent the weekend together.

The Szigethys had boxes of photographs and documents that I spent hours poring through. The family wanted to show us tourist sites, but all I wanted to do was to sit in their living room and go through the boxes. Anett, their teenage daughter, collaborated with me and made a map of the locations where Gerschon's family had lived, based on the records Andras had found. We all took a self-guided tour around town. I photographed the buildings and incorporated that map into my portrait of Gerschon.

The Szigethy family – Gyuri, his wife Agnes, daughter Anett and son Gyula – along with my husband and I went to visit the grave of Gerschon and Czilli Neger at the Kozma Street Jewish Cemetery. We found the grave and *matzeiva* of Gerschon. The cemetery is largely overgrown, and we needed the assistance of a grounds caretaker to find the graves. György gave him some money to clear the weeds.

György was in shock at the cemetery. On the drive back to his home, György said, "Nina comes out of the sky, and now I don't know who I am anymore." That was at a time of increased anti-Semitism in Budapest. We had been concerned how discovering their Jewish roots would impact the Szigethy children. We were gratified to find the family embracing their newfound Jewish relatives.



Gerschon Neger Map Photos; locations on Budapest Map where Gerschon Neger's family lived.



Nina and György at Gerschon and Czilli Neger gravestone at The Kozma Street Jewish Cemetery in Budapest, December 2016.

György and Anett travelled to Dynów in the summer of 2017 to meet me for my exhibit there. Afterward, György drove all of us to their cottage on Lake Bolaton, a resort area outside Budapest. It was a dreamlike weekend, spending time with my newfound third cousin and his family. We took walks, swam, ate and drank, and sat in the front yard talking. The couple gave me and my husband their bedroom to sleep in. On the wall there was a photo collage of György's Grandmother Livia, his mother Anna Maria and relatives from his father's side. I remember thinking what a miracle it was to be sleeping in my newfound Hungarian cousin's family home with photos of family members I had recently found in an Israeli archive in a junked trailer in Jerusalem!

Anett did a study and report on our family – now her family – for a school project that she began in the winter of 2017 and finished in the spring of 2018. She sent me the paper, complete with photographs of our time in Dynów, images of some of the records Andras Koltai found, and reproductions of the family from the Szigethy family albums. These are the words that Anett wrote me accompanying her paper: "Thank you for helping me write the family history, thank you for finding us at this little country. Your work is amazing, love you to eternity!"

Nina Talbot is a painter whose works are historical, visual narratives that weave the depiction of individuals and their stories into vibrant portraits. Her series include portraits of American war veterans, immigrant shopkeepers living in Talbot's Brooklyn community, a supermarket where people from the world over work and shop and Faces of Dynów; paintings documenting the lives of Talbot's relatives, historic rabbis and current townspeople from her maternal ancestral town of Dynów in Galicia.

She is currently at work on Places in Galicia, a series of oil paintings referring to places in historical Galicia, a province of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, which today is part of Western Ukraine and Poland, associated with Talbot's paternal family branch.
