

**URZĄD STANU CYWILNEGO
WARSZAW ŚRÓDMIEŚCIE
(With Jewish Documents from Galicia)**

by **Kazimierz Kotlarski, Director**

**URZĄD STANU CYWILNEGO
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BACKGROUND

The archives were formed in 1949 as part of the USC Warsaw Śródmieście (district) when an agreement between Poland and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (then part of the Soviet Union) was signed. It was agreed that the metrical books from voivodships that belonged to Poland prior to 1939 would be transferred to Poland. These voivodships included Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Lwów, Wołyń and parts of Polesie.

The books were transferred in stages beginning with the larger towns of Lwów, Stanisławów and Tarnopol voivodships, which were the main economic, social and cultural centers in the region before World War II.

The prewar registration system of civil records was based to a large extent upon religious registrations. The records for the Christians (Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, Russian Orthodox, Protestants) were prepared by priests or ministers. The documents for non-Christians (including Jews) were prepared by clerks of the public administration assigned to this specific task.

The records were written and stored in Jewish vital registration offices, which had their seats in the local town administration building. The first postwar regulations about civil records from 1946 state that one universal (secular) method of civil vital record registration would be introduced, which is why the records that were previously “scattered around” were transferred to this specially created archive.

JEWISH METRICAL BOOKS

This archive is the repository for Jewish metrical books from the area of the former Lwów, Stanisławów and Tarnopol voivodships (now Lviv, Ivano Frankivsk and Ternopil oblasts in Ukraine). The record books are held in a collection known as the Zabużańskie (“East of Bug River”) archives. The contents of these records are generally written in Polish. In the areas formerly known as Galicia (included in the Austro-Hungarian Empire), the Polish language was accorded equal status with the German language, e.g., vital statistic registrations. However, some books between October 1939 and mid-1941 are written in German or Ukrainian.

The composition of a metrical book is very clear and easy to understand, with a few records per page. There are separate books for births, marriages and deaths.

Generally, the books are in fairly good physical condition, which facilitates their use. It should be noted that the books brought to Poland after the war had traces of neglect and poor storage conditions (some were stored in dirty, wet cellars or attics). However, due to extensive and expensive preservation efforts, many books were saved from destruction.

The typical birth record consists of:

- Sequential order number
- Day, month, year and place (street, house number) of circumcision or naming of the child
- Name of child
- Sex
- Status (legitimate or not) (ritual/religious marriage not recognized)
- Name, profession and place of residence of father
- Name, profession and place of residence of mother, mother’s parents’ names
- Signature, profession, place of residence of:
 - a. witnesses
 - b. person who performed circumcision
 - c. midwife



Archivist Grzegorz Mucha shows Gloria Resin examples of Jewish metrical books

- If the child was stillborn:
 - a. note about death
 - b. date and place of child's parents' civil marriage
 - c. note if child was identified as legitimate
 - d. note that father recognized child as his

RESEARCH POLICIES AND ACCESS TO ZABUŹAŃSKIE ARCHIVES

The metrical books in these archives generally date from 1896. Older books are transferred to Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych (AGAD) in Warsaw at ul. Długa 7 (see Chapter 3).

This USC office is not open to the public for research. Requests for specific documents can be submitted in person at the counter or by correspondence sent through the Polish Consulate or Embassy in the requestor's country.

According to the law concerning civil records in USC offices, certified copies (typed on a form) may be issued, but xerox copies are not generally permitted because of the fragile condition of the books and the need to safeguard the documents for future generations. This same regulation prohibits genealogical searches.

There is a card catalog for birth and marriage records that facilitates the search for these documents, but the index cards do not include all the data from the actual document.

For marriage records, the index card lists only the groom's name. If the last name of the male is unknown, a search cannot be performed through the index cards, as regulations prohibit general genealogical searches in the books without specific data.

Written requests should include the following information:

- Name of person requesting the search and his/her relationship to individual(s) whose documents are requested
- First and last names (also include maiden names)
- Date/place where the event occurred. If exact date is unknown, provide a two-to three-year span.
- Parents' first and last names (also include maiden names)

Author's Note: Jewish metrical books for the former Polish voivodships of Lwów, Stanisławów and Tarnopol (now in Ukraine) can be found in at least four separate archives. The earliest records are housed in the Lviv Historical Archives in Ukraine; the next group of records are in the AGAD Archives (Polish State Archives) in Warsaw (p. 364); twentieth century records are in the USC Warsaw Śródmieście (p. 384) and some twentieth century metrical books are kept in the local archives (ZAGS Offices) of the above three cities.

1 Datum und Zahl der christlich-weltlichen Todesbescheinigung mit Name des Totenbestatters.		2 Des Aelterbened. Smiarei		3 Der Beerdigung Pogrzebu		4 Des Verstorbenen Zmarłego		5 Geschlecht	6 Alter	7 Stand		8 Krankheit und Todesart	9 Anmerkung
Data i liczba karty oświadczeń powiatowych potwierdzających śmierć, obywatel i nazwisko ogłaszającego zwłoki.		Dziękuję		Miejsc.		Vor mit Zunahme, Stand, Beschäftigung und Wohnort der Aelteren. Ins: i nazwisko, stan zatrudnienia i rodzinny, wyznanie i zamieszkanie rodziców.		wieloletnia	Jahre	widow.	solter	inval.	UWAGA
18th Maj 1901. Zfl. 7. Nasyl Chramul Bakowce	Birbaum	1901	1901	1901	1901	Gittel Rozman amf. l. frau Dr. Moses Rozman Schagure in Bakowce	Bakowce	weiblich	37	verheiratet	keine	keine	Agchawica
26th Maj 1901. Zfl. 33. Baumwin	Baumwin	1901	1901	1901	1901	Amigubawran Rud. Dr. Ryfke Sreier & Miss Schreiber Tochter in Luchelska naw.	Bakowce	weiblich	27	verheiratet	keine	keine	Bonwuleya
9th Juni 1901. Zfl. 34. Baumwin	Baumwin	1901	1901	1901	1901	Mifen Schmier Anfänger in Luchelska naw.	Bakowce	weiblich	27	verheiratet	keine	keine	Rudas z. l. g. Koway

Death record for Gittel Rozman, died in 1901, wife of Moses Rozman, living in Bakowce, house #1

CONCLUSION

It is not an exaggeration to describe the Zabużańskie Archives as one of the most well-known archives in Poland because of its unique holdings, as evidenced by the 2,000 to 3,000 requests per year both from within Poland and abroad.

Recently, it has become popular to look for “roots,” particularly in the United States, which has resulted in increasing visits by those who wish to explore their ancestry. Many ethnic groups, including Jews, trace their roots to Eastern Europe, especially to Poland in its pre-1939 borders.

The workers in our archives derive great satisfaction when they locate records for a person who visits the USC office. Often, the person’s reaction is spontaneously accompanied by memories from the town of their childhood. The people who visit us often had a very difficult and complicated life

in Poland, where they, in many cases, lost their entire families during the tragic years of the war.

Also, the USC office and the Zabużańskie Archives have unique metrical books for parishes in the central part of Warsaw (called Śródmieście), including those for the Jewish religion, where the books (until 1939) were kept by officers of the State Police.

The vast damage to Warsaw during World War II devastated and destroyed a major part of our archival material, including many Jewish metrical books. The liquidation of the Warsaw ghetto resulted in the worst destruction. The remnants that survived are missing large fragments, and often there are gaps between the years.

We have recently begun computerizing the metrical books (current registrations), which will ultimately make it easier and quicker to find records.

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Księga urodzin izraelickiego okręgu metrykalnego **Lwów** za rok 1896.
Geburtsbuch des israelitischen Matrikenbezirkes **Lemberg** Jahrgang 1896.

Liczba porządkowa. Fortlaufende Zahl	2					3					4				5	6
	Urodzenia Der Geburt					Obrzezania lub nadania imienia Der Beschneidung oder Namens-Beilegung					Dziecięcia Des Kindes				Imię i nazwisko ojca	
	Dzień Tag	Miesiąc Monat	Rok Jahr	Miejsce Ort	Nr. domu Haus-Nr.	Dzień Tag	Miesiąc Monat	Rok Jahr	Miejsce Ort	Nr. domu Haus-Nr.	Imię Name	płeć Geschlecht		urodzenie ślubne, rzekomo ślubne lub nieślubne eheliche, angeblich eheliche oder uneheliche Geburt	jako też jego stan, zatrudnienie i miejsce zamieszkania Vor- und Zuname des Vaters, sowie Stand, Beschäftigung	
580.	28. kwietnia	1896.	Lwów n. 54. ul. Gładka		5. maj	1896.	Lwów n. 54. ul. Gładka			Leon		męska	~			ślubne
581.	29. kwietnia	1896	Lwów n. 102. ul. Mociągowa		6. maj	1896	Lwów n. 102 ul. Mociągowa			Zygmunt	męska	~	nieślubne			

Birth record of Zygmunt Nadel (son of Efraim Nadel) and Freide Streisand (daughter of Hersch and Jútty Streisand), born 1896 in Lwów (first page of document)

NARZECZONEGO		NARZECZONEJ			Zasubin			Własnoręczny podpis		UWAGA
Imię i nazwisko, miejsce urodzenia, zatrudnienie, miejsce zamieszkania i Nr. domu, zatrudnienie i miejsce zamieszkania jego rodziców	Wiek	Stan	Imię i nazwisko, miejsce urodzenia, miejsce zamieszkania i Nr. domu jej rodziców	Wiek	Stan	Imię	Wzrost	Barwa włosów	Imię i nazwisko i ich zatrudnienie	
Leib Blank, urodz. w Czortkowie, syn Sary Blank i Pepli Antler	16	1	Pepi Antler, urodz. w Monasterzyskiej, córka Salomona Antler i Chaya Chana Blech	16	1	16	1938	16	Lipsa Meisels, syn i Chaya Antler	~

Marriage record (1938) of Leib Blank, born 1906 in Czortków (son of Sara Blank) and Pepi Antler, born 1909 in Monasterzyska (daughter of Salomon Antler and Chaya Chana Blech) 15

Księga urodzin izraelickiego okręgu metrykalnego Lwów na rok 1896. 136
 Geburtsbuch des israelitischen Matrikenbezirkes Lemberg Jahrgang 1896.

7	8	9	10	11	12
Imię i nazwisko matki, jej stan i zamieszkanie, jako też imię i nazwisko, zatrudnienie i miejsce zamieszkania jej rodziców <i>Vor- und Zuname der Mutter, ihr Stand und Wohnort, dann Vor- und Zuname, Beschäftigung und Wohnort ihrer Eltern</i>	Własnoręczny podpis z wyiniemieniem zatrudnienia i miejsca zamieszkania <i>Eigenhändige Unterschrift mit Angabe der Beschäftigung und des Wohnortes</i>			Dzieci nieżywo urodzone <i>Totgeborene Kinder</i>	UWAGA <i>Anmerkung</i>
	kumów lub świadków <i>Sandeka lub Szamesa</i> der Pather oder Zeugen, des Sandek oder Schames	obrzezującego lub obrzezujących <i>des oder der Beschneider</i>	akuszerki lub akuszera <i>der Hebamme oder des Geburtshelfers</i>		
Chaja Lemel, zamieszkała w Lwowie, córka młynarza Jedy Hala, poim i Dworki Halpern w Lwowie.	Chaim Juda Halpern, młynarzem, dworki w Lwowie, sandek, podpisani na karcie mł. dukowej			~	~
Freide Kreisand (Kreisand) iochna, w Lwowie, córka Efraim Nadel, właścicielka, córka krawcowych matczonków ekspedytora w Przemyslu Hirscha Kreisand (Kreisand) i b. p. Jaitty.	David Reich, młynarzem, realności w Lwowie, sandek, podpisani na karcie mł. dukowej			~	~

(second page of document, see left) 16