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The following is the handout the was provided by Harry to those in attendance.

JEWISH NEWSPAPER RESEARCH IN PHILADELPHIA

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INTRODUCTION

This synopsis will address the history of five Jewish newspapers in Philadelphia, and the genealogical/historical type news in each. In the main, it will address the five most important Jewish newspapers for genealogists: *The Jewish Record*, *The Jewish Exponent of Philadelphia*, *The Philadelphia Jewish Times*, the Philadelphia Edition of the *Jewish Daily Forward* and *Di Yiddishe Velt* (The Jewish World). The first three are in English (the *Record* had pages printed in German); the last two in Yiddish. Some of the papers are better for birth, marriage and death records. Some are better for certain periods. I will try and point out which is most helpful in which areas, will identify the present location for each paper, and identify whether it is on microfilm or in hard copy. I am not aware of any on-line source for Philadelphia newspapers on the internet—Jewish or otherwise.

Other Jewish newspapers were published but are not covered in this synopsis. For some, only scattered issues have survived; others are of little help. One example is the *Jewish American*, published in Philadelphia by David Tierkel from 1908 to 1910; it has survived on microfilm, but does not contain a significant amount of news or genealogical data. Other Jewish papers of great value were published in Philadelphia, but most had short runs or they have not been preserved. There are scattered issues of some of these newspapers at the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library and at the American Jewish Periodical Center (AJPC), which is located at Hebrew Union College, Klau Library, 3101 Clifton Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio (513) 231-0810.

THE JEWISH RECORD

The *Jewish Record*, published in English and German, was started as a weekly on April 16, 1875; it suspended publication on June 25, 1886. Mostly, it covered news and genealogical type information in German-Jewish Philadelphia. However, for those of you searching for east European ancestors, it does have some limited historical coverage, especially of the events leading up to the founding of the Association for the Protection of Jewish Immigrants of Philadelphia, later known as HIAS. Some of the historical events in the fall of 1884 do mention individual names of immigrants. Basically, the newspaper

is of limited value for the researcher of east European ancestry, but since we have so few sources to go to, at least it is somewhere to start when a brick wall is encountered. The Association for the Protection of Jewish Immigrants ship arrival records, which are located at PJAC, begin a few months after the Association was founded. (These records, of course, are different than the government's records held by NARA). Microfilm copies of the newspaper (not complete) are located in the Newspaper Reading Room on the 2nd floor at the Free Library of Philadelphia on Logan Square. Another source for microfilm copies is interlibrary loan. The *Jewish Record* on microfilm is located at the AJPC. Bound volumes (or hard copies) of the newspaper are located in Philadelphia at the Center for Advance Judaic Studies (CAJS), 420 Walnut Street, Philadelphia (not complete). However, to do research at this facility, you must make an appointment in advance; at times during the year, the library at CAJS is not open to the public. (The advantage of using microfilm is that copies can be readily made from microfilm. The advantage to reading the hard copy is that you get a much better feeling of the times). Due to the age of the paper, the CAJS cannot make copies.

THE JEWISH EXPONENT OF PHILADELPHIA

First issued on April 15, 1887, the *Jewish Exponent* is still published weekly. The first editors were Melvin G. Winstock, who left after one year, Henry S. Morais, the first two years, and Charles I. Hoffman, editor until 1898 (and, in name only, until 1907). Morais and Hoffman (who both became congregational rabbis) did extensive writing during the first ten years of the newspaper's existence. During this period, Hoffman was the Secretary of the Association for the Protection of Jewish Immigrants of Philadelphia and, in that capacity, he came into contact with newly arriving immigrants from Eastern Europe. Many in the east European Jewish colonies of Philadelphia wrote for the paper. During this time, many immigrants who took an active leadership role in the immigrant community wrote of their experiences in the *Exponent*. For the years 1887 to 1897, the *Exponent* acted as the secretarial arm of the immigrant Jewish community, and many names of ordinary immigrants found their way into stories printed in the paper. But this does not mean that there is birth, marriage and death information for the average east European Jewish immigrant. There is not, except in an unusual case (But with respect to the German-Jewish community at this time, 1887-1897, there was detailed coverage of birth, marriage and death information; for one wedding I looked up, I found the names of all the invitees to the wedding, admittedly an unusual finding). In 1898, Morais left Philadelphia; Hoffman left the following year, and the day-to-day activities at the paper were turned over to others who had no special interest in the east European Jewish immigrant community of Philadelphia; no one really picked up coverage of the immigrants. Death notices from the *Exponent* are currently being abstracted by the JGSGP. Marriage and birth information is not being abstracted. Early issues of the paper do contain birth, marriage and death information, but mostly from the German Jewish colonies of the city and on a selected basis.

After 1897, the *Exponent* never again carried the type of news from the east European sections of the city that it did during its first ten years. But it did carry a little. Between 1900 and 1910, I was able to locate three marriages at Congregation Keshet Israel, an immigrant downtown *shul*, in which the rabbi who performed the service was identified. As there must have been hundreds of marriages during that time in synagogues (most were in halls), the coverage was spotty at best. There are exceptions, one of which was the death notice of Philip Werner, a man who died in 1906. Werner was the president of the Talmud Torah (before the Talmud Torah's was consolidated in 1911 on Catharine Street). The long obituary for Werner took almost a

column in the paper and is one of the few such obituaries I found. During World War I, little news of immigrant Jewish Philadelphia found its way into the paper. However, beginning in 1917, there are many lists involving individual names. Lists of soldiers, men killed, enlistees, draftees, medal winners, heroes, etc. can be found from 1917 and 1919. By 1926, the paper was so oriented toward the German Jewish community that a new paper was founded, the *Philadelphia Jewish Times*, to address the concerns and needs of east European Jews who could read English and, of course, their children.

In more recent times, and especially since World War II, the differences between the Russian and German communities have all but disappeared, and extensive coverage was given to both the German and Russian communities by the *Times* and the *Exponent* until the *Times* stopped publishing. The more recent *Exponent* obituaries—as we all have seen—are very comprehensive and at times contain life stories.

Bound volumes of the *Exponent* are at the *Exponent*. Contact the *Exponent* to see what issues you can see and which are not available for public inspection (older issues). The oldest, of course, are the most fragile. Hard copies are also at CAJS. The Free Library on Logan Square has a fairly complete run on microfilm, but several early years are missing. The PJAC has bound volumes of the *Exponent* from 1945 to the present. AJPC, of course, has the microfilm.

THE PHILADELPHIA JEWISH TIMES

The best historian of 20th century Jewish Philadelphia, Esther M. Klein, writes about the founding of the *Philadelphia Jewish Times*: “Joseph Herbach served as secretary of Pannonia [Beneficial Association] for more than 3 decades and also executive secretary of B’nai Brith Council, which maintained offices there. He was the founder and publisher of the *Philadelphia Jewish Times* in 1925 and many of the Pannonia members were charter subscribers.” For Klein’s comprehensive book on Jewish Philadelphia in the 1960s see, *A Guidebook to Jewish Philadelphia*, Esther M. Klein (Philadelphia Jewish Times Institute, 1965). The most noteworthy period of the newspaper was during the terrible years of the 1930s. To get a good understanding of what Jewish Philadelphia knew and did not know in the years leading up to the Holocaust, a reading of issues of the paper during these years is a must. Many issues exceeded 100 pages. Many issues contained long stories about various tragedies over much of the European continent. Weekly, calamities befell the Jewish people in eastern and western Europe and much of it was reported in the *Times*. Because of the enormity of the Holocaust, many of these pre-Holocaust tragedies are almost forgotten today. The newspaper contains birth, marriage and death information. It is oriented toward the east European Jews of Philadelphia. It is an excellent source of information. The paper can be easily viewed on microfilm at the Free Library, but they do not have all the issues. Missing issues, especially for the early years from 1926 through 1932, may have to be ordered on Interlibrary Loan. I am not aware of the holdings of the Historical Society.

THE PHILADELPHIA EDITION OF THE JEWISH DAILY FORWARD

The *Jewish Daily Forward*, still published in Yiddish, began as a Yiddish publication on the Lower East Side of New York in 1897. Its long-time editor was Abraham Cahan. In 1901, a Philadelphia edition was started. Offices of the paper were located in the Jewish quarter of Philadelphia until the 1920s when the paper moved to

131 S. 5th Street, just opposite Independence Hall. At its height, it had over 40 writers in Philadelphia. A microfilm copy of issues from 1901 to 1951 is located at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. It is in Yiddish. I have not done much research in this paper because I find it difficult to get to the New York Public Library and because the paper has not always been readily available to be viewed on microfilm in Philadelphia. Of course, there is the obvious difficulty that it is printed in Yiddish—although many advertisements are printed in English.

DI YIDISHE VELT (THE JEWISH WORLD)

The most popular Yiddish newspaper ever printed in Philadelphia was *Di Yidishe Velt*. In *The Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia*, a short history of the newspaper is provided, pp. 128-130. It did not list death notices, but did contain long obituaries of well known Philadelphia immigrants from Russia. If you have reason to believe that an immigrant ancestor you are researching was well known in Yiddish speaking Philadelphia between 1914 and 1942, the years that the newspaper was published, you may want to look for a story or obituary for a few days after the date of death. This newspaper has been preserved at the AJPC in whole (on 99 reels of microfilm) and in part (1932-1942) in the Logan Square Library. The daily paper was eight pages and in the later years, the 8th or last page was in English. However, the English page usually contained little of interest to a Jewish genealogist, but much of interest to a Jewish historian of immigrant Philadelphia. I was able to learn through this newspaper that the famous Powel House, 244 S. 3rd Street, the house where George Washington spent time, was known as the "First White House." Whether it was or it was not the first White House I do not know, but it is interesting to know that the immigrants of Jewish Philadelphia believed it was.

GUIDES TO PHILADELPHIA NEWSPAPER COLLECTIONS

A. GUIDE TO NEWSPAPERS IN ENGLISH

A Checklist of Pennsylvania newspapers, Volume I, Philadelphia County, prepared by The Pennsylvania Historical Survey, Division of Community Service Programs, Works Project Administration (Harrisburg, 1944). The Guide covers Jewish newspapers but mainly covers newspapers published in English for the entire city, such as the *Inquirer*, the *Evening Bulletin*, *The Press*, the *Times-Philadelphia*, *The Record*, the *Public Ledger*, the *Evening Telegraph*, the *Philadelphia Item*, etc. Begun in 1932, the Guide describes the various newspapers published in Philadelphia in various languages, mostly English, from 1719 to the 1940s. The Guide is in English and is located in the newspaper reading room on the 2nd floor of the Free Library on Logan Square. It shows, as of 1944, where each newspaper was located, the names of the newspaper, mergers (and there were many over the years) and the names of the editors and publishers. It is a good place to start if you would like to find out something about a Philadelphia newspaper.

B. GUIDE TO NEWSPAPERS IN YIDDISH

Guide to Jewish Newspapers and Periodicals on Microfilm, augmented edition, (Cincinnati, Ohio: Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, 1984). A copy of the Guide, which is printed in English, is 158 pages; it is located at the Gratz Library in the JGSGP section. The newspapers are identified in Yiddish, English, Hebrew and

transliterated English. The newspapers referenced in the Guide can all be borrowed on inter-library loan. The newspapers are from towns and cities across the United States. Although most of the newspapers are from New York, there are newspapers from many other places, including Philadelphia.

NOTE CONCERNING THE YEARS 1886 TO 1889

If you are interested in Philadelphia from 1886 to 1889, the New York Yiddish newspaper *Di New Yorker Yudishe Volkszeitung*, from June 25, 1886 to June 14, 1889, is most helpful. Since no Yiddish newspaper was printed in Philadelphia until 1891, and since Philadelphia immigrants did advertise in *Di New Yorker Yudishe Volkszeitung*, it is another long-shot source to look at when you have run into a brick wall. It also covers the gap of the summer of 1886 to the spring of 1887 when the *Jewish Record* ceased publication and before the *Exponent* was started. But even in this paper there is a paucity of news and advertisements about Philadelphia.

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