



THE SER-CHARLAP FAMILY NEWSLETTER

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TRAVELING THE MARITIMES

On a recent trip to Michigan, we had the good fortune to meet with several relatives for the first time. Jay (7708, Pl. A-14aa) and Elaine (7712) Iskow of West Bloomfield graciously hosted a family reunion on May 29th, Memorial Day. Barbara Charlip (7623) and her cousin Eliot Charlip (7615) were instrumental in arranging the gathering which included family members ranging from college students to seniors approaching ninety. Julius Greenberg, an 85 year-old medical doctor still in practice, remembered that his family's name was not Greenberg, but Budovitch. Budovitch was derived from Budowla and the Budowlas, in turn, were descended from the branch of the Charlap family that settled in the Slonim/Lechowicz area. Julius' father emigrated from Russia/Poland to St. John, New Brunswick because Budovitch relatives were already established there. From St. John, the Budovitch clan spread across Canada and became successful merchants, operating a string of large emporiums known as the Budd Department Stores in such cities as Kitchener, Ontario. Others stayed in the New Brunswick/Nova Scotia region. Here was a whole new branch of the family to investigate! But it was not the only one.

Eliot, and others at the reunion, recalled that Ben Sharlip (9439) was a leading violinist with the renowned Philadelphia Orchestra. Whenever the symphony would play in the Detroit area, Ben would visit with the family. He was the son of Israel Sharlip (Charlap) (9437), a *klezmer* musician who arrived in Philadelphia from the Slonim region. Subsequent to this recent reunion, Eliot did some detective work and discovered Leon Sharlip (9488), a retired Philadelphia history teacher. We have been in contact with Leon and now have several hundred new Charlap family members who stem from the branch that settled in Philadelphia. They spell the name in a variety of ways; Scharlop, Tscharlop, Sharlip, Charlip, etc. We are gathering details about the history of this branch. Leon, by the way, has engaged in his own Jewish historical research. On July 4, 1993, he published a monograph entitled *Jewish Patriots of the American Revolution*.

On to the Maritimes! A June visit to St. John, New Brunswick yielded still more information about the family. There is a Jewish Museum in St. John associated with *Shaarei Tzedek* Synagogue. Upon hearing our story, the director opened the museum's archives to us. There was a veritable gold mine about the Budovitch family. Between research in these records and at the Jewish cemetery we were beginning to put together the history of this hardy family to the north. Sadly, the St. John Jewish community is facing attrition and there are no Budovitch relatives left there. The movement of Jews is due to poor economic conditions. St. John, once a major port of eastern North America, has fallen on hard times since the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Young Jews, mostly university graduates, are seeking professional careers in such growth centers as Vancouver and Toronto. We did learn that a large group of our family moved to Fredericton, the capital of New Brunswick.

In Fredericton we met Arnold (9751) and Mitchell (9750) Budovitch and their families. They are the sons of Frank (9710), born in St. John in 1920. Frank was away from town, but Arnold and Mitch were able to provide a great deal of missing information. They also introduced us to Rabbi David Spiro of *Sgoolai Yisrael* Synagogue, who knew even more about the history of the Budovitch presence in the Canadian Maritimes. The investigation continues.

NORTH CAROLINA HOLOCAUST STUDIES

Sandy Silverburg (301,Pl.3b) is a Professor of History and Political Science at Catawba College in Salisbury, North Carolina. The son of Harry Silverburg (271) and grandson of Shlomo Silverburg (6) and Sarah Ser (5), Sandy is well aware of the devastation visited upon our family during World War II. Perhaps that consciousness propelled him to institute a course on the Holocaust in this southern, predominantly Protestant, college.

Sandy asks the students to look at the Holocaust both from the perspective of the Jews and the perspective of the Germans. And the students wrestle with the ethical questions, the moral issues, with their own personal values. Sandy observes, "Many of the students are approaching the topics with a great deal of amazement - and it's having tremendous emotional impact. They find it difficult to understand and appreciate how a bureaucrat can behave coolly, calmly, and collectively when discussing mass extermination." The class tries to understand what was peculiar to the German experience that allowed the Holocaust to happen there. What was unique about the German reaction to modernization and industrialization?

"Since *Schindler's List* and the opening of the Holocaust Museum in Washington, this has become an important topic in main-stream America." Sandy goes on, "I wanted to do it for myself and for my heritage. I wanted to see if we could, in an academic setting, expand self-examination and test our personal beliefs against an academic study of such a human tragedy."

One Christian student stated, "I never understood why it happened. The documentaries just went into the horrors of the camps. I thought of Hitler as a monster who just wanted to kill people, but now I understand the reasons behind his actions." Another student, who has visited Dachau and Auschwitz, said, "I wanted to know what Hitler was thinking. When I was at Auschwitz, I thought, 'How could this have happened? How could the Jewish Councils decide which Jews to deport? Why did

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it take so long for Allied Forces to figure out what was going on?' Now I look at it from a psychological viewpoint. What were they thinking? What influences did the group have on the individual?" Historians have studied how Hitler created almost a frenzy of nationalism that prompted many ordinarily moral people to condone or commit immoral acts.

Some of the students are taking the class to better understand their Jewish ancestry. "I'm half-Jewish," says Natalie Gilbert. "When my grandfather came to America he changed his name from Goldberg to Gilbert in order to avoid any more trouble. He wasn't in the Holocaust but anywhere you went during that time, it was not good for the Jew." Another says, "My father was Jewish, a pilot in World War II who flew over Germany. I've always wanted to know more about the Holocaust." The class has raised questions for Ms. Gilbert. "As much as we all love flowers and things like that, I tend to wonder if maybe we like death more - death of things that don't agree with us." She was surprised to learn that anti-semitism has existed for centuries. "I always thought it was a result of the Holocaust. I didn't realize it was one of the reasons for the Holocaust. My time-line has been adjusted."

Sandy has asked his students to keep a journal in the class so they can record their reactions to the material. One said that the journal helped her work through disturbing material. "I had a hard time watching a documentary on the Wannsee Conference. They talk about killing people like you would talk about playing a round of golf. You come away from it speechless. The journal helps in dealing with those things."

One student observed, "The hardest part was watching the film on the *Lodz Ghetto*. The children were taken from their parents. The horror on their faces was just the worst feeling. I think I respect people more after this class. I value youth and children. Hitler aimed at the children to wipe out a whole people. I value life more."

ON ANTI-SEMITISM

I remember when I used to come home from cheder, bleeding and crying from the wounds inflicted on me by the Christian boys, my father would say, "My child, we are in exile and we must submit to G_d's will." And he made me understand that this is only a passing stage in history, as we Jews belong to Eternity, when G_d will comfort His people. Thus the pain was only physical; but my real suffering began later in life, when I emigrated from Roumania to so-called civilized countries, and found there what I might call the "higher anti-semitism," which burns the soul though it leaves the body unhurt.

- Solomon Schechter, 1903

THE MARCH OF FOLLY - THE WOODEN HORSE

by Rabbi Zevulun Charlop (3742,Pl.A-4a)

Zevulun Charlop is Dean of the Rabbi Itzhak Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University. He is world-renowned for his scholarship and humanity. His father, Yechiel Michal Charlop (3736) emigrated to America from Eretz Yisrael and spent much of his time as Rabbi at the Bronx Jewish Center. Zevulun's grandfather was the revered rabbi and scholar, Yaacov Moshe Charlap (3730) of Jerusalem. Zevulun and his wife Judith (3743) have eight children and fourteen grandchildren. Zevulun wrote this article over a year ago but feels it's message is important to today's conditions.

It's no secret that I am a frequent visitor to Israel. Yet, this last trip of mine was ominously different. I was met up with a kind of gloomy bewilderment the like of which I never experienced before - even after the frighteningly close call of the Yom Kippur War and its painful cost in lives. This time there was despair in the air, at least in the circles I travel, and no less among the taxi drivers who have always served for me as an accurate and cross-section barometer of Israel's body politic.

The so-called "Peace Process" has emboldened Arab militancy and its terrible harvest of violence and murder. If there was at first widespread euphoria unleashed by the initial announcement of Arab-Jewish rapprochement and the incredible Alice In Wonderland gesture of handshakes and words that celebrated it, it has quickly given way to the dark and awful uncertainties that can already be more than dimly glimpsed. The municipal elections, and particularly the mayoral race in Jerusalem, which Prime Minister Rabin emphatically proclaimed to be a referendum on his opening to the P.L.O., left little room to doubt where the Israeli populace stands now in relation to his rapid and mindless give-away of Jewish positions and claims. The once popular Mayor Kolleck was swept out of office by 25 percentage points - a landslide of mammoth proportion because he was identified, and quite properly so, with the frivolous process of concession and compromise to an unreconstructed and not entirely defined Arab entity. But this hasn't deterred Rabin, Peres, and company from continuing their headlong plunge into irreversible negotiation paying no heed to the voice of their own people.

This last visit was not without its dramatic moments - some irremediably bitter and others sweet with the promise of what can be. The first Friday I was in Jerusalem I was picked up by one of the most influential leaders of the settlers' communities of Judea and *Shomron* who, I believe, constitute today the finest efflorescence of Jewish commitment and sacrifice anywhere. Incredibly, they are being systematically and unconscionably demonized by their own government which instead finds virtue and common language with the likes of Arafat and his gang of terrorists. He took me on a tour of so-called "East" Jerusalem at the very moment huge tracts of that sacred city were being purchased by anonymous Jews in different parts of the world to assure Jewish hegemony over this most hallowed possession of our people. As we were driving, he was talking to cities around the world from his car phone coordinating these excruciatingly sensitive negotiations. It was in the midst of these phone calls that the first word of the kidnapping of a resident of Beth El, the city in Judea-Samaria where my friend lives and where he served as Head of its Town Council, was received. Two hours later, his wife frantically reported that they located blood stains which tragically presaged the horrible murder of Chaim Mizrachi at the hands of the supposedly reformed and cleansed *Al Fatah*. He left me off at the Hyatt Hotel in "East" Jerusalem and rushed home for *Shabbos* and for the terrible vigil which culminated with the discovery of the hacked body of the innocent Jewish chicken and egg dealer. Unfortunately, it takes these gruesome reminders of the true face of our would-be partners in peace to jolt Israel's citizenry back to cold realization even if their leaders bullheadedly remain unmoved.

Perhaps the highlight of my visit, its moment of greatest revelation, was when my friend, a librarian at Bar Ilan University came to visit and asked, "Rabbi, I just came upon an unbelievable book that, as I see it, bears uncannily on this time of 'peace initiative' when we seem to be throwing all caution to the wind: Barbara Tuchman's *The March of Folly*. Did you ever read the book?" I remembered it only vaguely though it deserved much better. For it is the distilled historical insight of America's most important and sweeping political historian in this century who gave the world several historical-literary masterpieces which have become instant classics of their genre - *The Guns of August*, *The Proud Tower*, *Stilwell*, and *A Distant Mirror*. Through a lifetime of incomparably brilliant writing and research, Tuchman was hit by the awful recognition that at key moments of great civilizations, sometimes at the peak of their power and creativity, leaders, primarily because of reasons of hubris and arrogance, ignore what is self-evidently in the best interests of the nations and peoples whose fate has been entrusted to their care and pursue, instead, policies which are blatantly contrary to their self interest. She writes: "A phenomenon noticeable throughout history, regardless of place or period, is the

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THE MARCH OF FOLLY

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pursuit of governments of policies contrary to their own interests . . . why do holders of high office so often act contrary to the way reason points and enlightened self-interest suggests?"

Tuchman then puts the light of her historical ken over the span of human experience from the earliest times through the present. She begins with Rechavam, the son of Solomon, who succeeded him and immediately confronted the threat of rebellion on the part of the ten Northern tribes of Israel who chafed and bristled under the severe regime of his father and asked for relaxation from the heavy taxation and forced labor which nearly crushed them. The old men of his father's council advised him to accede to the people's request and told him that if he would act graciously and "speak good words to them, they would be thy servants forever." (*Kings*, 12) He ignored the obvious and made no concession. Instead, he foolishly told them, "Whereas my father laid upon you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke." (*Ibid.*) For this he earned the designation "ample in folly." Very quickly, he lost the great majority of his people and they were sundered forever into the two warring kingdoms of Israel and Judea.

In our own time we encountered another glaring instance of man's infinite capacity for folly. Hitler, m.h.b.r., held absolute sway from the Atlantic to the borders of Russia. England was ready for the plucking. But instead he determined upon war with Russia first. His entire general staff, taking vigorous exception with their Fuhrer's maniacal decision tried to intimate, as prudence would allow, the sheer madness of his course. How much surer assault against Russia would be after England is out of the way. However, he would not be deflected. He would do what Charles the XII of Sweden and Napoleon failed to do. He would fly in the face of all the experience of history - defiantly deaf to the importunings of his generals. That "march of folly" fortunately saved civilization even as it serves as another object example of the nearly irresistible inclinations of ego driven leaders who must prove experience and reason wrong in trying to achieve the impossible.

Probably the most telling illustration of folly which bears chilling resemblance to our own situation is the story of the Wooden Horse, the most famous epic of the Western World. Failing to penetrate the city of Troy after nearly ten years of savage and valorous siege, the Greek leader Odysseus proposes to take Troy by stratagem. Where arms failed cunning may succeed. They would build a wooden horse large enough to hold 50 armed men concealed inside. The horse being a

sacred animal to the Trojans, they would be moved to bring the "gift" within the walls of the city. Meanwhile, the Greek army feigned to sail for home, but in fact hid behind an island out of sight of the Trojans. They would wait for the moment when the wooden horse would be conducted into the city and the concealed men would emerge with the element of surprise as their weapon and open the gates of the city to their Greek fellows who were nearby. Many of the elders of Troy counselled vigorously against allowing the wooden horse in. "How can we suddenly trust the Greeks who have been our mortal enemies all these years? We would be well advised either to burn the pretended gift or break it open with brazen axes to see what the belly contains!" In the words of Virgil's *Aeneid*:

*Either the Greeks are hiding in this monster, or
it's some trick of war, a spy or engine
To come down upon the city. Tricky business is
hiding in it. Do not trust it Trojans;
Do not believe this horse, whatever it may be; I
fear the Greeks even when bringing gifts.*

But this warning, though lined with the coherence of reason and experience is rejected. Unnamed forces still try to warn Troy. Four times at the gates' threshold, the horse comes to a halt and four times the clang of arms sounds from the interior. Yet, though the halts are an omen, the Trojans press on, "heedless and blind with frenzy." Against all logic and argument they let the horse in, for fate drives fear from their minds "so they might meet their doom and be destroyed."

Is history repeating itself as we race with frenzy towards an elusive goal, opening with abandon the gates of our land to our enemies? Are we, as the Trojans of yore, drunk in the heady deception of peace which goes against the grain of human nature and of history!



TO ALL OUR DEAR
RELATIVES & FRIENDS

לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה תִּכְתְּבוּ

MAY OUR ENTIRE FAMILY
AND ALL ISRAEL
FIND HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND PEACE
IN THE YEAR 5756

Arthur and Nancy Menton

THE LISTENER'S REVENGE

by Seymour Menton (55,Pl.3c)

Seymour Menton, recently retired Professor of Foreign Languages at the University of California, Irvine, now has the time to record some of his seminal experiences. He is well aware of his rich genetic endowment of musical talent. The Charlaps have a 3000 year history of composing and reproducing beautiful melodies.

Raised in the six-gabled home of Grandpa Max and Grandma Elsie [Yitzhak (7) and Esther Abramowitz (8) Sahr (Ser)] with a still in one of the basement coal bins and surrounded by affectionate parents and uncles and aunts, I spent the first nine years of my life in a state of total bliss. Starting with the first grade in Public School 92 on Crotona Avenue in The Bronx, I discovered that without any special effort, I could receive an inordinate number of gold stars. Years later Ma used to enjoy repeating how Miss Ellen Thomas, the pretty *shiksah* who was my first teacher, had declared on the first Open School Night how anxious she was to meet the parents of such a bright and well-behaved child.

The state of perfection and innocence ended abruptly in the third grade of the same school thanks to Miss Berger, undoubtedly of German descent. Bear in mind that by 1936 all the Jewish families in The Bronx were well aware of the anti-semitic policies of the Nazis, policies approved by Charles Lindbergh, Henry Ford, and perhaps the majority of the Italians, Irish, and Germans who lived in other sections of The Bronx. Well, on May 7, 1936, while the sparrows were singing in the two trees that framed the main entrance to the school, all 472 students were gathered in the auditorium for the weekly assembly where sometimes pretentious but always dull programs were staged to celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas, Lincoln's and Washington's Birthdays, Easter, and Flag Day, but only after we sang the national anthem. We would stand up and, accompanied by Miss Berger on the piano, we would strain as hard as we could to reproduce the impossible notes of "The Star Spangled Banner." On that unforgettable May 7, just as we got to "for Richard Stands" (it was only in the fifth grade that I realized the words were "for which it stands"), Miss Berger suddenly stopped playing the piano, stood up, and with a ferocious look, thundered that somebody was singing off key. The rest of the episode is totally predictable. She ordered us to begin again, this time *a capella*, as she strode deliberately up one aisle and down the other. Sure enough, when she came within earshot of angelical Seymour, she menacingly extended her arm with the long arthritic forefinger and sentenced me to the group of listeners, proclaiming that I was unworthy of singing the national anthem. Since that was the first time in my entire life that I had been criticized, I felt totally confused, I mean, really marginalized. Stared at by 941 gloating eyes (one of my classmates had lost an eye in an accident), I had to abandon my centrally located seat and stumble my way to the rear corner of the auditorium where I joined the other 17 ostracized mutes.

To this day, I have unpredictably gotten even with Miss Berger by singing into a microphone whenever the opportunity presents itself. The first time occurred in the middle of my beloved Atlantic Ocean in December 1974, while I was teaching on the SS Universe in Chapman College's World Campus Afloat Program. After docking at ports all over South America and the Mediterranean, the faculty and staff organized a talent show for the six hundred students and Taiwanese Captain Louie and his officers. Unable to resist the temptation, I offered to sing "I Can't Get Started With You," a song recorded in the mid-1930s by the great trumpet player and vocalist Bunny Berrigan. The only problem was that our student musicians were too young to know the song and no matter how hard I tried to locate the notes, they couldn't quite grasp them. Undaunted, I sought the assistance of my wife Cathy, a former clarinetist and a real singer. I implored her (she's a little timid) to communicate the melody to pianist Irv Kern. She did it with the greatest of ease and Irv communicated it to our ethnomusicologist, trumpet player Dan Sheehy. We rehearsed only once, in the middle of a storm, but nonetheless, the students reacted with amazement and glee when they heard their most serious professor singing on stage and enjoying every moment of it. At the same time, Cathy, seated in the last row, asked herself if there was any limit to her husband's daring.

Unable to forget the delirious applause and, by now totally addicted to the microphone, thirteen years later the next occasion presented itself in the small town of Tzintzuntzan, Mexico, on the shores of Lake Patzcuaro. I was attending a scholarly conference on the Spanish American short story held in Morelia in conjunction with one of the countless celebrations honoring my long-time friend Luis Leal. The conference ended with a social gathering in Tzintzuntzan with the local band playing its repertoire of marches and waltzes. When I asked the band director if he was familiar with the music of the American Big Band Swing Era, he proudly replied that they would be happy to play a Glenn Miller potpourri with "In the Mood," "Moonlight Serenade," and "Chattanooga Choo-Choo." Upon hearing the initial strains of the latter, I raced to the microphone and, despite the band's somewhat slow rhythm, I was able to surprise and impress Don Luis

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BIRTHS

Joshua (Asher Yehoshua) Bock (9809,Pl.2a), the second child of Joel (1596) and Esther (539), was born on June 29. Joshua is the ninth grandchild of Julius (526) and Harriet (520) Koren and the thirteenth great-grandchild of Anna Sier Wietschner (472).

Yechiel Michal Charlop (9844,Pl.A-4a), born on June 5, is the second child of Alexander (3745) and Becky (9838). Yechiel Michal is the fourteenth grandchild of Rabbi Zevulon (3742) and Judith (3743) Charlop, and is the newest member of this family branch which has produced so many religious scholars and leaders.

(cont. next column)

THE LISTENER'S REVENGE (cont.)

so much that he stopped drinking his Carta Blanca beer in order to applaud and laugh enthusiastically.

Twenty years after my debut on board the SS Universe, I was calmly chatting with my ninety-year old Uncle Bernie Mintz (my father's youngest brother) and with eighty-five year old Aunt Charlotte Sahr (48) (my mother's youngest sister) at my niece Deborah's (71) wedding in the elegant Roslyn, Long Island Swan Club. Suddenly, believe it or not, the band began to play "I Can't Get Started With You." The shiny microphone beckoned me and I asked the bandleader if I could vocalize even though I had left my union card at home. Eying me with suspicion, he reluctantly gave his consent and, for the first time ever, my aged aunt and uncle along with several cousins realized that a scholarly university professor was capable of having a good time. When Aunt Charlotte later asked where I got the *chutzpah* to perform like that, I explained to her that in order to sing you needed three ingredients: lyrics, rhythm, and melody (notes). Since I was blessed from birth with a good memory and flawless rhythm, why did I need the right notes? If I had two of the necessary three ingredients, in baseball terminology, I was batting .667 and to be considered a good batter all I needed was an average of .300. Furthermore, with my facility to learn foreign languages, I suppose I also have a facility to reproduce or at least approximate certain sounds. Since my hard disk is full of memories of the era of the Big Bands (it was in that era that I learned to dance on the same Rockaway Beach boardwalk featured in Woody Allen's *Radio Days*), I pretend to identify with the particular singers in order to search for those unattainable notes that have eluded me since I was born, or at least since Miss Berger expelled me from Paradise.

Jonathan Michael Hyman (9829,Pl.8a) was born Oct. 18, 1994 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He is the second child of David (1333) and Tobie (1355) and second grandchild for Dorothy Sir Kaset (1310). Jonathan descends from that branch of the family which originated in Nur and Zareby Koscielnie, Poland and settled in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Demi Shea Levitch (9379,Pl.26d) was born on Jan. 30, the first child of Rob (7124) and Lenna (7126). Happy grandparents are Marcus (7123) and Lois Cohen (5032) Levitch. Lois' grandmother was Dora Lewin (5010) who left Ciechanowiec, Poland in 1903 at the age of 26 to settle in Kansas City.

Rivki Reinitz (9864,Pl.4bc) was born on April 6. She is the second child for Yonason (8127) and Chaya Faiga (780). Chaya Faiga is the daughter of Rabbi Nissan (778) and Devora (775) Zaetz of Pittsburgh, Pa. She is named for her great-grandmother, Chaya Faiga Stein (546,Pl.4). The original Chaya Faiga was the daughter of Baruch Pasternak (504) and Kayla Kur (503).

David Aaron Strick (9526,Pl.3f) was born in Florida during June of this year. Parents Kenneth (6798) and Cheryl (222) rejoice in their second child, as do grandparents Sheldon (216) and Lenore (210) Rodman. David's great-grandparents are Sid (198) and Mimi (204) Family who recently left the Schenectady, New York area for the warmth of south Florida.

MARRIAGES

Naomi Brown (9627,Pl.A-14db), daughter of Melvin (9610) and Sandy (9616) Brown, was wed to **Mark Mason** (9637) on July 3. Mel's parents are Saul Brown (9602) and the late Lena Budovitch Brown (9595) of Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Volodia Crettol (4332,Pl.A-6a) married **Laura Jane Souther** (9788) in Knoxville, Tennessee on July 15. The groom is the son of Susan Levitt (4327) of Greenwich, Connecticut and the grandson of Corinne Brout (4323) and the late E. Paul Charlap (3781).

Lorraine Jablowsky (4429,Pl.A-9aa) was united with **Joseph Feldman** (9787) at Temple Israel, Lawrence on July 2. The proud parents of the bride are Albert (4408) and Deanne (4417) Jablowsky. Al's mother was the noted Yiddish poet and composer Esther Charloff (4392). Her father was Yitzhak Yaacov Charlap (4383), rabbi, cantor, and composer in Tykocin, Poland.

(cont. on page 8)

MORE ON KING DAVID

The article entitled "The Royal House of Judah and Israel" that appeared in the previous issue of the Newsletter (vol. 6, no. 2) engendered a considerable number of letters. Most referred to the tradition of Davidic descent within our family and mentioned the existence of old family trees which resemble that in the subject article. One letter took issue with the origin of our name. Herb Charlop (4194, Pl. A-2ab) wrote:

The story about Charlap originating from an acronym is really testing one's intellect. Look at page 8, point 92 [Eliezer Ibn Yahya who became Eliezer Charlap upon entering Poland]:

1. How could it possibly be authenticated that some individual actually said to himself (and his family): "Aha, let's live here! And we'll call ourselves Chet-Raish-Lamed-Pey, which stands for Chief Sage - that's me - of the Exile in Poland!" From where? Spain? Portugal?

2. And even less credible, if in fact Charlap can be traced back to 1100 (page 7, point 76) and yet a different prior acronym, what is this "exile in Portugal"? From where? And even if that prior acronym truly was the basis for the Charlap name, why would any Charlap in his right mind feel compelled to invent a second acronym 500 years later? To re-establish that his 500 year old family name is Charlap?? Do we Charlaps, Charlops, Charlips, etc. have an inborn inherited compulsion to resort periodically to acronyms to assure ourselves that we exist and are important - or what?

Herb's letter expresses the incredulity often encountered when presenting ancient lineages. After all, how can we be sure that these are factual derivations? as of this writing, we have accumulated fifteen totally independent trees tracing the Charlap family to King David. All go through King Solomon and the kings of Judah. Two chapters in the forthcoming book about the history of the family are devoted to this issue. It is clearly demonstrated therein that the Charlaps derive from David and that the name was originated at the time of Chiya al-Daudi in Portugal (circa 1100 C.E.). Space in this newsletter precludes the thorough documentation which appears in the book but we must address a few of Herb's points.

It has been a common practice among Jews to accord honorary titles in the form of acronyms to prominent rabbis, scholars, and leaders. Hence we have Rambam (Moshe ben Maimon, Maimonides), Rabach (Avraham HaNassi), Ramban (Moshe ben Nachman, Nachmanides) in Spain; Rashi (Shlomo Yitzhaki),

Rashbam (Shmuel ben Meir) in France; Maharam (Meir of Rothenberg) in Germany; Maharam (Meir Katzenellenbogen of Padua), Maharik (Yosef Colon) in Italy; and Maharal (Judah Lowe of Prague) in what is now the Czech Republic. Chiya al-Daudi was a giant among the Jewish leaders of Iberia. It is consistent with Jewish tradition and history for him to be granted the title CHARLAP. And, given the *yichus* of the family, and the continued prominence as rabbis, scholars, and leaders, it would seem appropriate that Eliezer Ibn Yahya upon assuming an important rabbinic post in Poland would re-establish the family honorary title.

As to Herb's questioning of "exile", Jews have always believed that living anywhere but in *Eretz Yisrael* constituted an exile. They may have been heads of academies in Pumbedita or advisors to the Kings of Portugal but they knew they were in exile. It is only since the *Haskalah* (Enlightenment) that some Jews began to feel at home in the countries of residence. This attitude was most prominent in pre-World War II Germany and now in the United States.

Herb Charlop has consistently shown an interest in our family research - and he has been helpful in keeping us apprised of new clues about our relatives. A few years ago he provided a family tree in Hebrew which had been transmitted from his grandfather William (Wolf) Charlop (3226) to his son Moshe (4183), Moshe being Herb's father. Moshe received the document on March 26, 1911 and transmitted it to his sons Herbert, Joseph (4195), and Winton (4193) on January 14, 1934. The following was inscribed on the reverse of this tree:

William Charlop wrote the reverse side of this paper during the week of his marriage which took place seventeen days in Tavis [Tevet] in the year 1867. The reverse is a statement in Hebrew and a copy of the original statement now in possession of a cousin to the above, known as Fraim [Ephraim] Hersch Charlap, whose present residence is at Sarnack of Siedletz government [Siedlce Guberniya], Poland/Russia. This Hebrew statement gives the names of each successive father beginning with William Charlop's grandfather, known as Leyzor Hersch Charlop, and going back to King David, there being 128 fathers from King David to William's grandfather, William being the 130th father, the last named.

The Ephraim Hersch Charlap tree, not only traces the patrilineal descent from King David, it also discusses the origin of the Charlap name. Subsequent research has clarified some of the inconsistencies in this tree; nevertheless, it is a remarkable document that contains answers to the questions raised by Herb.

YESHIVAS NISHMAS CHAYIM

Rabbi David Charlop (4350,Pl.A-8) has been appointed Associate Dean of *Yeshivas Nishmas Chayim, The Center for Torah Learning and Jewish Spirituality* in Jerusalem. This is a new program for men who are prepared to take a serious look into their Judaism. David states that it offers the beginner and newly committed in Jewish practice the opportunity to explore the depths of the Jewish soul as expressed in thought, deed, and action. *Torah* study and prayer, seen as a profound spiritual path, will offer significant answers in the search for meaning and purpose in life. The aim is to provide a warm non-pressured environment where each student can seek out and discover the essence and vitality of his own soul.

David was raised in Great Neck, New York, the son of Bernard (4343) and Simone (4346). David was 22 when he first went to Israel. He was taken with the Jewish state and opted to stay and study. Ultimately he committed himself to a more traditional style of life. He was a member of *Ohr Somayach Yeshiva*, both in Israel and the U.S. from the days of its inception. He has a wide range of teaching experience that includes directing the beginners' program at *Kol Yaacov* in Monsey, New York. He currently works with post-high school students in Jerusalem.

SHAVIN TEXTILES

The vivacious "Yuppie" Sir (Ser) (1311,Pl.8a) of Chattanooga, Tennessee married Harold Shavin (1320) in 1952 when he was serving with the U.S. Armed Forces based in England. Yuppie is the daughter of Shlomo (1299) and Anna (1303) Ser, who were born in Nur and Ostrowo Mazowieckie, Poland. Today Harold is partner/consultant in Shavin Textiles, the company he founded about eight years ago. "We're a family operation, not a nameless corporation. My son Alan (1335) runs the Tempe, Arizona division and my daughter Rita's (1336) husband Bob Brook (1509) is in charge of Chattanooga operations. We specialize in distributing wholesale clothing. Our strength is in men's and ladies' sportswear, as well as a basic children's line."

The company's Chattanooga division sells irregulars, seconds, and closeouts. They also cater to the imprinted sportswear industry. Shavin West in Tempe also handles first quality merchandise. "When a customer calls our company, an owner might answer the phone and take his order," says Bob Brook. "We believe in doing whatever it takes to get the job done, whether its loading the truck or packing inventory. A successful

business needs to take everything personally in the sense that you treat people like you would like to be treated." Alan expands on this commitment, "As a wholesaler you have to help people, then you'll do well. We hold many traditional values and we're fair with our customers."

Both Bob and Alan credit Harold with their own success, as well as the growth experienced by Shavin Textiles. "Dad came up the hard way," says Alan. "He's very much a role model for me. He told me 'It's hard to build a good name and easy to tear it down.' Even with advanced technology, the old values still apply."

Harold Shavin has been in closeouts since the 1960s. "Eight years ago an opportunity came up to buy a business in Chattanooga. I conferred with Alan and Bob and we all decided to make the entry. We bought

(cont. next page)

MARRIAGES (cont. from p. 6)

Suzanna Moyses (359,Pl.3bd) was wed to Gregory Adler (9378) on May 28 in California and then left for a honeymoon in Israel. Suzanna's parents are Harvey (350) and Marion Levine (344) Moyses. Marion's grandfather was Mattis Levine (274) who married Rivka Silverburg (32), daughter of Sarah Ser (5). So Suzanna is descended from Levines and Sers, two lines of our family.

Neil Newman (5057,Pl.26a) was married to Cathy Shopmaker (9316) on October 16, 1994. Neil is the son of Peter (5048) and Beverly (5042) Newman and the grandson of Rose (5030) and the late Jacob (5022) Levine. [See "I Always called Him Yankel," vol. 6, no. 2, p. 8]. Neil is a CPA and Cathy is in education. They are living in Overland Park, Kansas.

Joshua Zvi Wietschner (533,Pl.2a) married Rebecca Fire (9808) on June 29. Joshua is the son of Samuel (519) and Tova (525) and the grandson of Anna Sier (472) and the late Louis (476) Wietschner of Brooklyn, New York.

Sorah Rivka Zaetz (781,Pl.4bc) was wed to Levi Cunin (9806) on June 7, the ninth of Sivan. The *chuppah* was raised at the Lubavitch Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Sorah's parents are Nissan (778) and Devora (775) Zaetz and her maternal grandparents are Jack (570) and Ann Jeanette (567) Cohen. The bride is descended from the Charlaps through her great-great-grandparents Baruch Pasternak (504) and Kayla Kur (503). Both fathers of the bride and groom are rabbis.

MAZEL TOV TO ALL ON THEIR SIMCHAS

PASTERNAKS ARE STILL BAKERS

The Pasternak line of our family had a tradition of being excellent bakers in Poland. When they emigrated to the United States some continued in that trade. In Kansas City, Sam Pasternak (4852,Pl.25) built up the Cake Box, a major culinary institution. Today, Sam's daughter Gail Lozoff (4868) has made her own mark in the baking field. A few years ago she founded Bagels & Bagels in her home town. That operation has grown to eight stores with 250 employees.

This past spring, the fast growing Bagel & Bagel announced an agreement to join with restaurant giant Boston Chicken and two other bagel companies to form a new company Progressive Bagel Concepts. The new operation's funding comes from a \$20 million private placement of common stock and a \$20 million senior secured loan from Boston Chicken. The new corporation will serve as the parent company of Bagel & Bagel, Brackman Brothers of Salt Lake City, Utah and Offerdahl's Bagel Gourmet of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The venture hopes to become a leader in the industry with 100 stores opened by the end of 1995. Gail pointed out that the new organization will have the operational and financial resources to quickly expand in a very competitive market. "Joining forces with other regionally successful bagel operations expands our knowledge base threefold and creates a very exciting synergy for us."

Gail is married to physician Richard Lozoff. Her father Sam is the son of Bertche Pasternak (4840) and Chaya Yehudis Winer (4846), both born in Nur, Poland where Bertche was a baker. The connection of the Winer family to the Ser-Charlaps is being investigated. Bertche was descended from a long line of bakers in the Nur/Ciechanowiec region of Lomza Guberniya, particularly in the hamlet of Slepwrorny Nagorne. The genealogy goes back thusly: Bertche ben Pinchas (4826) ben Shia (3022,Pl.E-1) ben Shmuel (2874) ben Beryl (4003). Beryl or Ber was born circa 1750 and died before the Pasternak name was assumed.

SHAVIN TEXTILES (cont. from p. 8)

the company, made major changes, gave it a new identity, and utilized the talents of each of us to make it work."

All three agree that the secret of success is to treat the one-dozen customer like the 1,000-dozen customer. Every day brings a new challenge. Bob points out, "You have to be ready for that challenge. Someone's distressed merchandise is someone else's treasure." Alan added, "If I were giving advice to anyone wanting to go into business today, it would be to

listen to people who have come up the hard way. I'm afraid I'm part of a dying breed. It seems that not so many sons and daughters of company owners are going into the family business."

Harold attributes much of his accomplishment to Yuppie. "She is the biggest part of my success. She helped me when we first started and still does. I keep busy, I love people. My philosophy is that not only is every day a new day, every year is certainly a gift."

Shavin Textiles can be reached at (800)251-6409.

WAS FRANKENSTEIN JEWISH?

Boris Karloff, the gifted British actor, was noted for his roles in horror films, most notably *Frankenstein*. Following a clue which suggested that he was a Charlap led to a dead end. His official biography states that he was born as William Henry Pratt in London on November 23, 1887, the son of Edward and Eliza Sara (Millard) Pratt. His father is described as a civil servant and minister. The younger Pratt took to the stage and was married to Dorothy Stine (Stein) in 1929, who was most probably Jewish. Why then, was he called Boris Karloff, hardly a typical stage name.

New information sheds some light on the subject. We understand that when Rabbi Yichiel Michel Charlop (3736,Pl.A-4) left *Eretz Yisrael* for America his father, the venerable Rabbi Yaacov Moshe gave him a list of relatives in England and America. The actor's family was apparently on that list. It seems that Karloff's father or grandfather was a minister - in England, rabbis and cantors are referred to as ministers and he was a *chazan*. Our supposition is that Boris' grandfather was a Charlap, that pressures of assimilation generated the name change, and that when the actor was seeking a stage name he took a variation of the Charlap title. It is interesting that another Boris Charloff, Avram Beryl (Dov Ber) ben Yitzhak Yaacov, was born about the same time in Tykocin, Poland. The latter became a noted *chazan* and was a colleague of the famed Yossele Rosenblatt. Boris Charloff emigrated to Toronto, Canada where he received acclaim for his cantorial work.

Boris Karloff's acclaim came from his film work. In addition to several sequels to the original *Frankenstein* (1931), he appeared in *The Miracle Man* (1932), *Scarface* (1932), *House of Rothschild* (1934), *The Man Who Changed His Mind* (1935), *The Walking Dead* (1936), *Juggernaut* (1937), *Tower of London* (1939), *Isle of the Dead* (1944), *The Body Snatcher* (1945), *Unconquered* (1947), and *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (1947). Boris Karloff has not yet been added to the family tree as it is not positive that he was a Charlap but evidence is pointing in that direction.

NEARING COMPLETION!

OVER A DECADE IN PREPARATION, *THE BOOK OF DESTINY* IS ALMOST COMPLETE. THIS IS THE STORY OF THE SER-CHARLAP FAMILY, BUT IT IS REALLY THE STORY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE. THIS IS NOT A DRY GENEALOGY - RATHER IT IS A NARRATIVE SAGA TOLD THROUGH THE WORDS OF THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED THE CLIMACTIC EVENTS OF JEWISH HISTORY: THE CIVIL WARS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JUDAH, THE REVOLTS AGAINST ANCIENT TYRANNIES, THE EXILE IN BABYLONIA, THE PERSIAN ERA, THE RISE AND FALL OF POWER IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL, TRAVELS THROUGH THE MEDITERRANEAN, THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND NORTHERN EUROPE, 350 YEARS IN POLAND AND RUSSIA, MASSIVE EMIGRATIONS, THE HOLOCAUST, THE REBIRTH OF ISRAEL - IT'S ALL HERE. THIS IS A STORY OF OUR PAST, OUR PRESENT, AND OUR FUTURE - TOLD BY THOSE WHO REFUSE TO DENY OUR HERITAGE. LISTEN TO SOME ADVANCE COMMENTS:

"The BOOK OF DESTINY is the product of years of painstaking research. It is a well written, monumental work suffused with warmth and Jewish sensitivity. The story of the Ibn Yahya/Charlap family is the story of all Jews and we are all grateful for its impending publication."

- Jacob Cohen, Derek Institute

"Here is a work which combines the rigorous research of Neil Rosenstein's THE UNBROKEN CHAIN with the humanity of Chaim Potok or Isaac Bashevis Singer . . . An impressive book to be returned to time and time again."

- Abraham Gelbard, Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton

"In reviewing Marek Halter's novel, THE BOOK OF ABRAHAM, Irving Stone talked of 'The life story of one family over a period of 2,000 years - so vivid that we, the readers, see, feel, touch the ramparts and the earth of Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome.' Make that 3,000 years and change the designation from novel to history and we have THE BOOK OF DESTINY . . . a monumental achievement."

- Prof. Robert A. Marose, Hofstra University

THE BOOK OF DESTINY: TOLEDOT CHARLAP

by

Arthur F. Menton

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