

JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern Alberta

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Smolensky Wedding Register Records Jewish History

Perhaps the most significant document acquisition by the JHSSA in recent years is the original marriage registry of Rabbi Simon Smolensky, who served the House of Jacob in Calgary from 1917 to 1935.

As the only Rabbi of the city's only synagogue, Rabbi Smolensky performed virtually every local Jewish wedding during his tenure.

The document, the "Province of Alberta Register of Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths, and Funerals, House of Jacob Congregation," was donated to the Society by the Rabbi's grand-daughter, Minnie Gordon Segal.

Because of its scope and relevance to so many Canadian Jews, we are pleased to reprint the major details of all those weddings in the register. (Spellings in the register are as written by the Rabbi. Names of witnesses have been deleted.)

Regrettably, there is a major lapse in the register; no weddings were recorded between July, 1923, and March, 1927, and the 1927 data may be incomplete. There were certainly Jewish weddings in this interim, and we can only assume they were recorded in a separate place. Hopefully, this material can be recovered.

The first two weddings in the register were conducted by Rabbi J. Klegman. Rabbi Smolensky's first Calgary wedding was the Joseph Joffe - Ruth Malkin nuptials on August 2, 1917.

Most wedding ceremonies were held in the House of Jacob synagogue, where the chupah was placed on the reader's

bimah in the centre of the sanctuary. Receptions generally followed in a private home.

Many weddings also took place in local homes, which were generally quite small by modern standards. There were no kosher catering facilities; families prepared and served wedding banquets themselves.

Several ceremonies after 1929 were conducted by Rabbi Smolensky in his



own home, at 409 - First Street S.E. Larger weddings required larger premises. The first "big" wedding was at Hickman's Hall, above 334 - 8th Avenue West, late in 1917. It involved the families of Eva Smith and Abraham Busheikin.

A special event was the Hyman Cohen - Mary Goldenberg wedding of 1923, which took place on the stage of the Isis Palace theatre, on First St. West, near 12th Avenue.

Later wedding sites included the Elks Hall, 7th Avenue and First St. S.E., and, after 1929, the I.L. Peretz school's new building at Centre St. and 13th Avenue South

The first recorded ceremony at the then-incomplete House of Israel Building (18th Avenue & Centre Street S.) was the Dinah Singer - Jack Aceman wedding of August 19, 1934.

The first Jewish hotel wedding in the register was located at the Palliser Hotel, where, on January 6, 1929, Fanny Malkin and Herman Nagler were married.

Our archives contain many wedding photos from the Rabbi Smolensky era. Many show elaborate wedding gowns, tuxedos, and floral arrangements, which seem to contradict the actual financial status of the newlyweds.

In fact, the flowers were often artificial, and were supplied by the photographer. Bridal and attendant gowns were often passed from sister to sister, from friend to friend, from cousin to cousin. Every Jewish home had dress-making skills, and a wedding gown could easily be altered to fit a new bride.

Rabbi Smolensky's register also provides many clues to Calgary's Jewish geography, since it gave the wedding locations as well as the addresses of many of the witnesses.

Early Jews were concentrated in "east Calgary," an area north and east of City Hall, and centred by the synagogue, at 323 - 5th Avenue S.E. Some Jews lived south of the CPR tracks, in Victoria Park; a few lived west of downtown, and others moved north of the river into Riverside and Crescent Heights.

By the 1930's Jews were able to move into the prestigious Scarborough, Elbow Park, and Mount Royal areas. Sarah Jaffe and Robert James Shapiro were married in 1934 at 3614 - 7-A Street S.W., in Elbow Park.

Banff was a popular honeymoon site among those newlyweds who could afford such a luxury. Couples travelled west by train until the late 20's, when a

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Jewish History Scholars to Meet in Calgary

The Canadian Jewish Historical Society is sharing its annual general conference with the Calgary Jewish community.

Part of the annual Learned Societies Conference, held this year at the University of Calgary, the CJHS meeting will bring together Jewish history scholars from across Canada on June 12 and 13.

Highlight of the conference for Calgarians will be a community program, featuring Gerald Tulchinsky, the author of *Taking Root: Origins of the Canadian Jewish Community*.

Dr. Tulchinsky, Professor of History at Queen's University, will speak on "A Midrash on Modern Canadian Jewish History."

Taking Root has been hailed by one reviewer as "without question, the definitive history of Canadian Jewry."

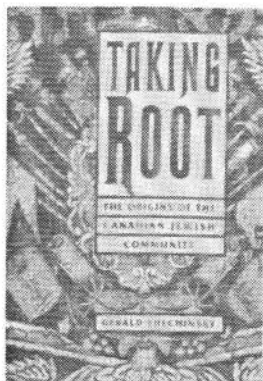
An idea of the book's scope may be derived from part of a review by Harold Troper in a recent issue of *Canadian Jewish Studies*, the *Journal of the CJHS*.

"Grounded in painstaking research and reflecting an obvious command of the historian's craft, Tulchinsky explores the formative stages of Canadian Jewish experience, organizational life and expression of community identity from earliest beginnings into the post-World War I era.

"Tulchinsky's key argument is straightforward. He asserts that the Canadian Jewish community is unique and that uniqueness stems from the historical encounter Jews have had with the Canadian land, the Canadian civic culture and the Canadian polity."

The community program will be held at 7:30 PM on Sunday, June 12, 1994, at the Calgary Jewish Community Centre. A display of material from the JHSSA archives will be part of the program, which will be attended by many of the conference participants.

Members of the Jewish community are invited to attend the CJCC program, which is also co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Council. The public is also invited to attend the academic sessions at the University.



Marriage Registry cont'd

paved highway was completed. Rabbi Smolensky left the House of Jacob in 1935. He was succeeded by Rabbi David Barenholtz. Only one wedding after 1934 is recorded in our register.

Those who were married by Rabbi Simon Smolensky recall the great dignity he added to the occasion, with his black beard and formal top hat. In an era when the wedding ceremony and the attendant celebrations were the Jewish community's major social events, Rabbi Smolensky provided spiritual continuity and a gracious link with the traditions of the old country.

--by Jack Switzer

Canadian Jewish Historical Society - University of Calgary, June 12 - 13, 1994
All University sessions in Science Theatre, Room 61

June 12, 10 am - noon: Canadian Jewish Literature, Western Perspectives. Tamara Palmer Seiler, U of C, "Fictionalizing the Immigrant Journey; Jewish-Canadian Writers on the Prairies." Norm Ravvin, "Eli Mandel's Family Architecture: Building a House of Words on the Prairies." Miriam Waddington, "Memories of Adele Wiseman."

1:30 - 2:45 pm, **Canadian Jewry and Constitutional Reform,**

Bruce Elman, U of A, David Taras, U of C.

3:00 - 4:30 pm, **Judaism in Canada.** Ira Robinson, Concordia, "The Diary of a Montreal Rabbi, 1909." Richard Menkis, UBC, "The Rabbinate in Interwar Canada: a Preliminary Social Profile."

7:30 pm - at Calgary Jewish Community Centre. Gerald Tulchinsky, Queen's, "A Midrash on Modern Canadian Jewish History." JHSSA - Voices From the Past: Reminiscences of Jewish Life in Alberta.

June 13, 9:00 am - 10:45 am - Material Culture and the Canadian Jewish Experience. David Goa, Provincial Museum of Alberta; Marcia Koven, Saint John N.B. Jewish Historical Museum; Sandra Morton Weizman, Glenbow Museum.

11:00 am - 12:15 pm - **Paternity,** Sara Diamond, Banff Centre - a documentary video presentation.

1:15 pm - 2:45 pm: Workshop - **Forging a New Agenda: the CJHS and Regional Jewish Historical Societies.** Marcia Koven, St. John, N.B.

DISCOVERY

Editors Jack Switzer, Jay Joffe

The Editors welcome submissions for publication relating to areas of Calgary and Southern Alberta Jewish History. All articles should be typed, documented and sent for consideration.

Statements of fact or opinion appearing in *Discovery* are made on the responsibility of the authors alone, and do not imply the endorsement of the editors or the J.H.S.S.A.

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Rabbi Smolensky's Marriage Registry

Name of Bridegroom	Name of Bride	Date of Marriage	Place of Marriage	Officiating Clergyman
Selig Geffin	Annette Romanoff	March 26/1917	House of Jacob	J. Klegman
Max Milstone	Annie Rose	April 1/1917	218 - 5 Avenue E	J. Klegman
Joseph Joffe	Ruth Malkin	August 2/1917	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Abraham Busheikin	Eva Smith	September 2/1917	Hickman's Hall	S. Smolensky
Moses Liberman	Emily Sereth	January 1/1918	H.N. Sereth	S. Smolensky
Wolf Busheikin	Belkin	?	?	S. Smolensky
Jacob Bercowich	Fannie Tocker	June 2/1918	- 3rd Avenue E	S. Smolensky
Peretz Hirshbane	Ethel Shumiatcher	December 15/1918	222 4 Ave. E	S. Smolensky
Herman Sirlin	Annie E. Harrison	February 2/1919	508 - 13 Ave. E	S. Smolensky
Solomon Vandt	Freda L. Hoffman	February 2/1919	508 - 13 Ave. E	S. Smolensky
Israel Cheterener	Rosie Karsh	June 16/1919	?	S. Smolensky
Meyer Speevak	Rosie Nacmovitch	September 7/1919	?	S. Smolensky
David Geffin	Frida Tucker	February 9/1919	?	S. Smolensky
Morris Kleimer	Pauline Weinfield	October 7/1919	?	S. Smolensky
Sam Kline	Molly Potter	November 9/1919	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Joseph Levine	Sarah R. Freeman	July 6/1919	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Leo Paperny	Annie Smith	August 17/1919	222 - 4 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Sam Elman	Mary Tucker	November 24/1919	?	S. Smolensky
Israel Deitch	Nettie Block	October 19/1919	Hickman's Hall	S. Smolensky
Samuel Davis	Lecilia Levant	September 14/1919	230 - 3 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Abe John Mendell	Rose Shuster	April 8/1919	Synagogue	S. Smolensky
Peter Block	Rebecca Diamond	January 11/1919	Hickman's Hall	S. Smolensky
Benjamin Heshman	Bella Pearl	January 4/1920	Synagogue	S. Smolensky
Morris Eisenstadt	Ida Levitt	May 30/1920	?	S. Smolensky
Abe Strinsky	Violet Rose	May 9/1920	?	S. Smolensky
Solomon Nagler	Molly Shankman	May 30/1920	?	S. Smolensky
Samuel Cohen	Jennie Nissenberg	May 5/1920	?	S. Smolensky
John H. Florence	Jennie Cohen	August 15/1920	?	S. Smolensky
Albert Avel Walkoff	Alma Shapiro	December 20/1920	130 - 2 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky
Max Kredentser	Eva Shapiro	?	Synagogue	S. Smolensky
Samuel J. Lipetz	Cecelia Davidson	March 21/1921	?	S. Smolensky
Abraham Groberman	Lillian Ziselman	December 20/1921	Hickman's Hall	S. Smolensky
Edward Cohen	Mary Dorothy Karsh	March 21/1921	?	S. Smolensky
Israel Florence	Sarah Kopel	August 21/1921	?	S. Smolensky
Barnet Groberman	Rose Bercov	February 21/1921	?	S. Smolensky
Harry Cohen	Sarah Kohn	January 21/1921	?	S. Smolensky
Hyman Berson	Fanny Davis	January 22/1921	222 - 4 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Peter Bercovice	Esther Shlafmitz	March 22/1921	?	S. Smolensky
Harry Louis Karsh	Fannie Rollinger	January 1/1921	?	S. Smolensky
Abbie M. Shinbane	Rose Rein	February 22/1921	?	S. Smolensky
Abraham Brody	Rose Ragosin	April 22/1921	Synagogue	S. Smolensky
Samuel J. Helman	Frances Goldstein	January 22/1921	?	S. Smolensky
Filip Davids	Hanah Zingler, née Rosentwaik	November 2/1922	530 - 14 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Benjamin Siegel	Hilda Leibovitch	?	?	S. Smolensky
Noah Gordon	Esther Smolensky	February 25/1923	304 - 4 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Harry Estrin	Annie Cohen	March	611 - 6 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Abraham Lavin	Sophie Rodnunsky	?	611 - 6 Ave. E.	?
Morris Segal	Rachel Aisenstat	March 23/1923	Hickman's Hall	?
Nate Horodezky	Lily Switzer	May 27/1923	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Abraham Frank	Rosie Asknaz	May 27/23	117 - 3 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Noah Kaplan	Sophie Groppa-Pasternack	June 18/1923	210 - 4 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Samuel John Lee	Mildred Levy	June 17/1923	607 - 4 St. E	S. Smolensky
Hyman Cohen	Mary Goldenberg	June 24/1923	Isis Palace	S. Smolensky
Philip Diamond	Sarah Rollinger Weinberg	November 21/1927	617 - 5 Ave. W	S. Smolensky
Louis Conn	Rose B. Bercovich	December 4/1927	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Cecil Sheinin	Ellen Chaizan	December 25/1927	315 - 21 Ave. W	S. Smolensky
Louis Diamond	Edith Kramer	January 1/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Max Belzberg	Lena Spier	February 26/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
David Austin	Mary Freeman	March 11/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Teddy Schwartz	Sylvia Goichman	March 20/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Sam Shakman	Pepi Markuz	March 21/1928	M. Switzer	S. Smolensky
Hyman Sheinin	Ida Ashkinaz	April 1/1928	H. Isenstein	S. Smolensky
Mike Pronin	Annie Singer	June 27/1928	810 - 6 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky
Harry Davidman	Anna Bleviss	August 5/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Max Switzer	Rivka Aizenman	August 12/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Abraham Hackman	Sarah Silman (Hain)	August 19/1928	629 - 2 Ave. N.E.	S. Smolensky
Benjamin Karasick	Ethel Belostotzky	August 22/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Joseph Dubisky	Minnie Bulshin	August 29/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Henry Ziskin	Fannie Shumiatcher	September 26/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Simon Jashunsky	Ida Kleinmintz	October 11/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Haskel Stravitz	Sarah Shlafmitz	March/1927	410 - 7 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Sam Tenbaum	Cecilia Rootman	October 28/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Max Shlafmitz	Rosie Shafner	November 4/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
David Switzer	Ruby Hanson	December 9/1928	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Herman Nagler	Fanny Malkin	January 6/1929	Palliser Hotel	S. Smolensky
Hyman Levitt	Beckie C. Weinborn	February 6/1929	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Harry Mecklenburg	Betty Goldsmith	April 14/1929	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Morris Epstein	Rebecca Gralnick	April 14/1929	919 - 8 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky

Rabbi Smolensky's Marriage Registry

Name of Bridegroom	Name of Bride	Date of Marriage	Place of Marriage	Officiating Clergyman
David Baber	Molly Sheftel	April 14/1929	Elks Hall	S. Smolensky
Rueben Aretzky	Ethel Ampol	April 14/1929	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Alex Katzin	Leah Dvorkin	June 16/1929	Elks Hall	S. Smolensky
Henry Goldman	Bertha Krendle	June 23/1929	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Harry Gediger	Yeti Chaufer	June 23/1929	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Louis Albert Miller	Ray Abrams	July 16/1929	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Samuel Feldman	Bella Zaidman	July 21/1929	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Jack Kanchikoff	Lottie Frant	July 21/1929	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Essie Lyon	Ruth Heftler	August 20/1929	414 - 7 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Jay R. Diamond	Leonore Glatt	September 15/1929	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Ralph Busheikin	Sarah Horsdesky	September 29/1929	J.L. Peretz Hall	S. Smolensky
Eily Engle	Lillian Belkin	November 26/1929	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Aaron Tarchinsky	Eeda Lvødzner	November 26/1929	409 - 1 E.	S. Smolensky
Jack Laibowitz	Ray Kay	December 1/1929	409 - 1 E.	S. Smolensky
Samuel Belkin	Rose Greenberg	December 26/1929	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Jacob Cristall	Marjorie Nagler	January 5/1930	327 - 24 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky
Harvey Jack Gelfond	Rachel Shector	January 12/1930	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Benjamin Goosman	Celia Raskin	January 14/1929	130 - 2 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky
Benjamin Friedman	Hazel Zemans	February 20/1930	Palliser Hotel	S. Smolensky
John J. Berezovsky	Gertrude Raskin	April 6/1930	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Harry Goldberg	Ruth Wener	May 16/1930	Palliser Hotel	S. Smolensky
Issi Dozoretz	Annie Grossman	May 16/1930	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Harry Sheftel	Fannie Zeidman	June 8/1930	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Zysie Zysblat	Rosie Switzer	June 8/1930	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Robert E. Berdoch	Catherine Lederer	June 11/1930	Peretz Institute	S. Smolensky
Sam Freidman	Rae Shapiro	June 22/1930	Peretz Institute	S. Smolensky
Aaron Goodman	Rosaline Wise	June 25/1930	Palliser Hotel	S. Smolensky
Harry Goresht	Rachel Rosenthal	July 6/1930	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Peretz Fishman	Sophie Rosenthal	July 9/1930	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Louis Manly Fradkin	Sabine Nagler	July 9/1930	327 - 24 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky
William James Wooll	Evelyn Shlain	July 11/1930	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Phillip Switzer	Helen Joskoviczt	August 5/1930	705 - 4 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Cyril Groberman	Rose Rogers	September 9/1930	Hotel Palliser	S. Smolensky
Louis Pearlman	Edythe Anne Rosen	September 11/1930	632 - 8 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Morris Azienman	Annie Fissman	October 6/1930	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Theodore Cristall	Hazel Cohen	November 9/1930	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Abraham Green	Leila Rapaport	November 12/1930	3402 - 7 St. W.	S. Smolensky
Theodore Levitt	Estella Ruth Cohen	November 17/1930	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Morris Austin	Clara Edith Chetner	May 24/1931	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Benjamin Sokolowsky	Sophie Zilbert	May 24/1931	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Sam Cooper	Lola Monhite	May 31/1930	Devenish Apts.	S. Smolensky
Robert Hurov	Mary Zeidel	August 2/1931	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Max Corenblum	Edith Sidorowsky	August 23/1931	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Solomon Dvorkin	Tilly Friedman	October 25/1931	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Nathan Prepes	Rose Cristall	November 8/1931	319 - 21 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky
Leon Harry Lieberman	Clara Maerov	November 15/1931	1020 - 5 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky
Morris Mendelmen	Rebecca Switzer	November 22/1931	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Abraham B. Greenberg	Naomi Goldman	December 27/1931	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Louis Goldstein	Mary Asper	February 14/1932	640 - 17 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky
Max Jacobson	Rose Aizenman	February 28/1932	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Jack Fishman	Lily Switzer	March 6/1932	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Aaron Winogradsky	Anne Rosenthal	March 30/1932	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Abraham Switzer	Sadie Morris	April 3/1932	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Morris Huberman	Frances Switzer	June 8/1932	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Jacob Charles Klinger	Pearl Singer Davids	June 12/1932	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Morris Roden	Ida Geiman	June 19/1932	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Dave Berg	Daina Raider	February 1/1933	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Jack Allan	Lillian Goldenberg	February 2/1933	Palliser Hotel	S. Smolensky
Robert Smolkin	Pauline Katchen	February 15/1933	Al Azhar	S. Smolensky
Robert Radis	Goldie Rosenberg	February 27/1933	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Max Catz	Lily Fishman	March 26/1933	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Maurice Greenberg	Fannie Sanderson	April 2/1933	540 - 12 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Sam Katchen	Dorothy Hanson	June 7/1933	J.L. Peretz Inst.	S. Smolensky
Harry Perler	Anne Slutker	June 25/1933	Edmonton	S. Smolensky
Angus Feldman	Bessie Friedman	August 6/1933	421 - 12 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Solomon Malkin	Rose Applebaum	October 15/1933	3904 Elbow Drive S.W.	S. Smolensky
Aaron Pevsner	Mary Wyseman	October 29/1933	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
John Morris	Annie Simon	October 29/1933	824 - 6 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Samuel Shtabsky	Sonia Kozekavicht	December 23/1933	422 - 17 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Jack Smolensky	Ruby Lena Sigler	December 24/1933	Edmonton Alberta	S. Smolensky
Samuel Litchinsky	Annie Austin	December 31/1933	327 - 2 Ave. N.E.	S. Smolensky
Robert James Shapiro	Sara Jaffe	February 25/1934	3614 - 7A St. W.	S. Smolensky
Alter Bloomenthal	Zena Katz	March 4/1934	House of Jacob	S. Smolensky
Edward Herman	Esther Gertrude Filler	March 7/1934	1012 - 18 Ave. E.	S. Smolensky
Samuel Himelfarb	Vera Shapiro	March 18/1934	1725 - 9A St. W.	S. Smolensky
Joseph Garfin	Ida Aisenstat	May 27/1934	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Bernie Eddie Shugarman	Molly Ida Madorsky	June 17/1934	1120 - 6 Ave. W.	S. Smolensky
Sam Moorman	Esther Chmelnitzky	June 1/1934	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Jack Aceman	Diane Singer	August 19/1934	House of Israel	S. Smolensky
Robert Kahn	Annarita Uretsky	August 24/1934	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky
Abe Segal	H. Levitt	April 19/1940	409 - 1 St. E.	S. Smolensky

Simon Smolensky -from Our Archives

Some glimpses of the life of Rabbi Simon Smolensky can be gleaned by looking through his file in the JHSSA archives.

From an English translation of a Russian document:

"June 5, 1902 - By the order of the Czar on February 3, 1876, this Jew, Shimon Yankelev Shaev Smelyansky, from Smelyansk Community, Cherkass district, who lives in Srednik Village.

According to family list in 1902 this Jew, Smelyansky, was nineteen years of age. According to a personal statement this Jew, Smelyansky, is twenty one years of age.

By law Smelyansky has to be drafted by the year 1914."

From a Russian document - Certificate - Conscription into the Army (Everlasting) - Smelyansky, Shimon Yankelev-Shaev, Smelyansk Community, April 15, 1903.

"After reporting to the conscription office in the year 1902, where he drew the number 425, with this number he is required to serve in the army, but for certain reasons he can absolutely not serve in the army. For this reason he is released forever from serving in the army..."

From his passport, issued February 20, 1904, for the purpose of emigration:

"Shimon, son of Jankiel Smielanski, is free to travel to all cities and villages of the Russian Empire until the twentieth of February, 1905."

Our archives has his application for American naturalization, dated July 25, 1911, in Tyler, Texas.

"I emigrated to the United States of America from Hamberg, Germany on the vessel Molthe. I arrived at the port of New York on May 28, 1904."

Excerpts from a Calgary Hebrew School tribute program:

"As a young boy Rabbi Smolensky recalls the hardships he incurred to receive his education. He had to leave his home at the age of 10 to receive his

basic knowledge in Talmud and in Jewish law.

When he wanted to go to the highest Yeshiva in Slobotka, Lithuania, he had to become a teacher in a small town in order to earn enough money, because his parents were unable to support him financially.

He taught Hebrew in this small town until he earned enough to go to the higher Yeshiva, where he received his diploma and Rabbinical degree.

In 1904 the Rabbi was offered a high position in Sartoff, Russia, but as a result of the war between Russia and Japan he decided to go to the United States, where he occupied the position of Rabbi in Mobile, Alabama; Shreveport, Louisiana; and Tyler, Texas.

He then came to Calgary in 1917, where he and his family have resided ever since."

On May 26, 1917, the Daily Herald reported, "Rev. S. Smolensky will lecture in the English language for the first time in this city at the House of Jacob on Sunday evening at 7:30. He will also speak at the morning service."

From the Rabbi's 1922 contract with Congregation House of Jacob:

"The said Smolensky shall endeavor to keep peace in and with the entire Hebrew Community in the City of Calgary, and to assist the Talmud Torah whenever requested so to do by the President of the Congregation.

...the Congregation covenants and agrees to pay to the said Smolensky the sum of Twenty-one Hundred (\$2100.00) per annum.

From a meeting notice of B'Nai Brith Calgary Lodge No. 816, October 2, 1931:

"...the executive of the lodge has arranged an intellectual treat, which will undoubtedly appeal to all of the members. 'Selections from the Talmudic Agadah' is the title of the subject and it will be delivered to us in English by Rabbi Smolensky."

From notes of a conversation between this writer and a local historian:

"Rabbi Smolensky left the shul in 1935 so he could devote full time to his family and his business interests. He and the



Rabbi Simon Smolensky

boys ran Riverside Hardware and Alberta Furniture. He was a man of property.

He filled in doing weddings, funerals, and brisses whenever he was needed. Sometimes he went out of town to do weddings. He may not have been that happy with the old shul. I think he and some friends tried to start their own synagogue."

The Archives material on Rabbi Smolensky also contains an Alberta Certificate of Incorporation for "Shaarei Zedek of Calgary", dated December 12, 1939. No members are named on the document.

The JHSSA has a photo of the Smolensky family, dated 1939 that shows the Rabbi and Jennie Smolensky surrounded by five grown children, four sons and daughters-in-law, and ten grandchildren.

Their sons and daughters were Lena Hanen, Ben Smolensky, Jack Smolensky, David Smolensky, and Esther Gordon. All Rabbi Smolensky's children were married by their father.

Jennie Smolensky passed away in 1957, at 74. Simon Smolensky died in Calgary on September 5, 1964, at 82 years of age.

-by Jack Switzer

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Malkin-Nagler Wedding Makes News

The newspaper description of Calgary first Jewish wedding to be held in a major hotel was full of flowery prose and gross exaggerations. The attention was also a source of some embarrassment to the bride and groom.

Fanny Malkin and Herman Nagler were married at the Palliser Hotel on Sunday, January 6, 1929. A reporter for the "Albertan" was present and wrote a long article about the ceremony.

This was the first time a Jewish wedding had been given "high society" status in a major Calgary newspaper. The writer, Eva Reid, was not Jewish. Part of her account follows.

The headline: Old Hebrew Ceremonies Used at Jewish Wedding

Nagler-Malkin Marriage; Held in Hotel Palliser, Is Brilliant Affair; Ceremony is Reminiscent of Days of Solomon and David

"A ceremony which in its entirety dates back to the third century and in portions is reminiscent of the times of Solomon and David, was performed Sunday evening in the ball room of the Palliser Hotel, when Fanny Malkin, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. Malkin, was united in marriage to Herman Nagler, son of Mr. and Mrs. M. Nagler, in the quaint and time-honored custom of the Jewish people.

Rev. S. Smolensky, the venerable Rabbi, performed the ceremony, which in its brilliance and local interest has not had its equal before among the Jews of Calgary."

The bride is described: "Very pretty and charming, Miss Malkin has been a popular member of the Jewish younger set here all during her Public and Normal school days. She has been a teacher on the staff of the Sunalta cottage school for some time."

The major exaggeration dealt with the number of guests present.

"Approximately 500 guests, many of whom were from out of town, crowded the ball room long before the ceremonies began." The couple later confirmed the number as closer to 300.



The Bride: Fanny Malkin

Liberties were also taken with the spelling of Jewish surnames. "Dressed as a small page, Joey Bushaikin carried the ring, while Emily Liberman of Edmonton was a sweet little flower girl as she scattered rose petals in the wake of the bride."

The reporter's interpretation of the glass-breaking by the groom to conclude the ceremony is extremely interesting.

"The drinking of the wine was followed by the breaking of the glass by the bridegroom. This part of the ceremony has been used since the destruction of the temple, and served to remind those being married of the destruction of their independence in the wedding ceremony."

"Mr. and Mrs. Herman Nagler left later for New York. Upon their return they will reside in Calgary." The couple's son, Melvin Nagler, says his parents honeymooned in Banff, and registered under an assumed name.

The newlyweds were embarrassed by the many inaccuracies of the article, as well as the general tenor that the affair was an exotic but snobbish high-society event. In addition, the bride refused to accept the wedding photographs, claiming they were not well done.

The affair was completely kosher, as Mrs. Malkin was allowed to prepare and bring turkeys for the wedding feast. Both families were Calgary pioneers and prominent merchants. Nagler's Department Store was a major retail supplier, and the Malkins ran one of the city's busiest grocery stores. They sold the site, on 8th Avenue near 2nd Street East to make way for Calgary's first Safeway store, in 1929.

-by Jack Switzer

Shamas S.Z. Shector -Witness to History

Shlomo Zalman Shector is listed as an official witness at nearly half the weddings in the Rabbi Smolensky marriage registry.

Few Calgary Jews, however, knew him by his given names. As a synagogue official, he was always addressed as Mister Shector.

Shlomo Shector was the Shamas - Sexton - for the House of Jacob Congregation from 1923 until well into the 1950's. As Shamas, he assisted the Rabbi with many ritual tasks, acted as caretaker for the building, and served as day-to-day administrator of the shul.

He auctioned Aliyas - Torah honors - before services, hushed the noise of children playing outside, laid out the Shabbos morning kiddush table of pumpernickel, pickled herring, and whiskey, and collected dues, walking up and down Eighth Avenue East, personally greeting his congregants and their clients.

Mister Shector was born in Rezena, Russia, in 1880. He came to Canada with his parents as a young man in 1901, homesteading with them at the Jewish farm colony of Hirsch, Saskatchewan. There, in 1906, he married Sarah Kligman.

The couple moved to Calgary, where Shector opened a Kosher butcher shop. In 1923, he became Shamas of the city's synagogue. He assisted Rabbi Smolensky, and stayed on to serve with Rabbi David Barenholtz.

Sarah and Shlomo Shector raised seven children in Calgary, first at 410 - 5th Avenue East, a stone's throw from the shul, and later at 624 - 8th Avenue East. Shlomo Shector died in 1961.

One daughter, Goldie Moskovich, still lives in Calgary. She fondly recalls her home, crowded but clean and glatt-kosher, her busy life in an observant community, and most notably her father, Mister Shector, in his suit and hat, the Shamas, going out every morning to look after the business of keeping Calgary Jewish.

-by Jack Switzer