

Finding Our Newman Relatives

By Bobby Furst & Joan Adler

We grew up knowing only six relatives, total, from both sides of the family, combined. So we had a long road ahead when we started on our quest to find our family.

We knew Grandma Ida, our father's mother, who told us she came to the USA from Russia when she was six years old. She died long before we ever thought to ask her where she was born, or what her parent's names were. Our father also died before we got "the genealogy bug."

We knew that Grandma Ida had two sisters and two brothers. We found out that she really had four sisters and two brothers. Collecting all birth, marriage, and death certificates told us that Ida's mother was Baila Maschtalier, (who changed her name to Brautman once she got to the US, but that's another long story) born about 1863, from the Ukraine, and her father was Joseph Newman born about 1863, from Austria or Germany, take your pick depending on the document. Joseph died in 1910 in Brooklyn. His occupation is listed very clearly on his death certificate as "cruvaner." We don't even know what language this may be let alone what occupation it is, only that it wasn't a lucrative one. We have one photograph that includes Joseph Newman. We think it was taken in 1908 or 1909. He looks like no one else in our family. We have many photos of Baila since she lived until 1939.

The next mystery was, "Where in Austria or Germany could Joseph Newman be from that he had the opportunity to meet, marry, and have a child with a woman in the Ukraine?" Did he have any siblings? Who were his parents?

Through our research we met Beatrice, a first cousin to our father. She told us that Joseph Newman came to the USA alone and saved money for six years to send for his wife and child. She said that he came to Philadelphia because he had relatives there. We found the 1892 Baltimore ship arrival of Baila and six-year old Chaia (Grandma Ida) Neuman from Austria going to Joseph Neuman in Philadelphia.

We found many, many ship arrivals for Joseph / Josef / Yossel / Neuman in 1885/86 but didn't have enough information about our Joseph to know if any of them were "our" Joseph Newman.

Beatrice also said that Ida's first three sisters were born in Philadelphia but that the Philadelphia relatives were snooty Germans who looked down their noses on Joseph's Russian wife thus precipitating a move to Brooklyn where Baila's siblings had immigrated. The next three children were born in Brooklyn giving us a move date of 1898. Baila, not feeling very kindly toward the snooty Philadelphia relatives, didn't maintain contact with them after the death of Joseph. And, I suppose, Joseph's children were tainted with "Russian" blood and not worth the headache to the Philadelphia relatives of dealing with their mother.

So, we had a probable arrival date in Philadelphia of Joseph in 1885/6, an 1892 arrival in Philadelphia of Baila and Ida, and a remove to NY date of 1898.

Looking for the birth certificates for three sisters born in Philadelphia was no small task. The Philadelphia Municipal Archive, in its incomprehensible wisdom, files its births by the name of attending mid-wife or doctor. But, after going through all the records for all the possible years, we found the births of two of the daughters. That gave us two addresses and two occupations for Joseph Neuman / Newman. Occupation one was the all too common “laborer,” but occupation two was, as you shall see, the very helpful “umbrella maker.”

Fast forward past many dead ends looking for a redheaded “Louis” Newman in a Navy uniform, supposedly the son of our great grandfather Joseph’s brother. Another cousin, Marcie, also found through our research, said Louis visited her family from Philadelphia when she was a child in the 1920s. We later learned that Marcie is confused about lots of details in her life and that this is one story we should not have taken too literally.

We’d been looking for the Philadelphia Newmans for six years. But with so little to go on, nothing was working. We’d tried just about every avenue imaginable – except one.

There we were, on a Saturday afternoon in October, after having been in Salt Lake City for a week and about to go home, wondering how to spend the last few hours, when Joan said, “I’m going to find the Philadelphia Newmans.” She got the microfilms for the Philadelphia city directories for the years 1885 through 1898, the years we “knew” Joseph Newman lived in Philadelphia. We started scrolling though them hoping something was going to pop out. After all, we had two addresses and two occupations for him. Running out of time, we decided to make photocopies of all the pages with people named Newman for all the spellings of Newman (n) / Neuman (n) / Neiman (n) for all the years from 1885-1898.

When we got home we entered every person with the surname Newman of any spelling into a table along with the year, first name, home address, occupation. We wound up with a 63 page, 10,000-entry document. We’re glad they weren’t named Smith.

We sorted by year and address to find out who was living with whom, when. We sorted by name and year to find out successive addresses for each person. And we looked for our two known year / address / occupation combinations.

And the results, all neatly tabulated as if it happened by magic, were:

1875	Newman	Adolph	Peddler	1030 St John	
1882	Newman	Rose	Nurse	955 St John	
1883	Newman	Rosa	Widow	404 Lynd	
1884	Newmann	Adolph	Salesman	321 N 5 th	
1884	Newman	Rose	Accoucheuse	613 Hermitage	
1885	Newman	Rosa	Accoucheuse	611 Hermitage	

1886	Newman	Adolph	Salesman	536 N 2 nd	
1886	Newman	Rosa	Accoucheuse	618 Hermitage	
1887	Neuman	Adolph	Salesman	914 N 2 nd	
1887	Newman	David	Laborer	613 Hermitage	
1887	Newman	Joseph	Laborer	613 Hermitage	
1887	Newman	Rosa	Accoucheuse	613 Hermitage	
1888	Newman	Adolph	Umbrellas	806 N 2 nd	
1888	Newman	Joseph	Cutter	806 N 2nd	
1889	Newman	Adolph	Trimming	806 N 2 nd	
1889	Newman	Joseph	Buttonhole Maker	806 N 2nd	
1889	Newman	Rose	Accoucheuse	806 N 2 nd	
1890	Newman	Adolph	Umbrellas	806 N 2 nd	
1890	Newman	Rosa	Accoucheuse	806 N 2 nd	
1891	Newman	Adolph	Umbrella maker	464 N 4 th	
1891	Newman	Rosa	Accoucheuse	464 N 4 th	
1892	Newman	Adolph	Installments	464 N 4 th	
1892	Friedman	Marcus	Slippers	464 N 4 th	
1892	Newman	Rose	Midwife	464 N 4 th	

Year Joseph's wife and child arrived and they moved to their own dwelling.

1892	Newman	Joseph	Umbrellas	411 S 6th	known occupation
1893	Newman	Adolph	Drygoods	487 N 4 th	
1893	Friedman	Marcus	Shoes	487 N 4 th	
1894	Newman	Adolph	Installments	487 N 4 th	
1894	Friedman	Marcus	Shoes	487 N 4 th	
1894	Newman	Rosa	Widow Philip	487 N 4 th	
1895	Newman	Adolph	Installments	487 N 4 th	
1896	Newman	Adolph	General Mer	487 N 4 th	
1896	Newman	Rose	Widow Philip	487 N 4 th	
1897	Newman	Adolph	A Newman & Co	487 N 4 th	
1896	Neuman	Joseph	Peddler	328 Queen	Known address
1897	Neuman	Joseph	Umbrella Maker	315 Lombard	Known occupation
1897	Friedman	Lena	A Newman & Co	487 N 4 th	
1897	Friedman	Marcus	Shoes	487 N 4 th	
1898	Newman	Adolph	A Newman & Co	487 N 4 th	
1898	Friedman	Lena	A Newman & Co	487 N 4 th	

After working on our Russian family lines for six years and finding people with names Anglicized to Sam, Benny, Fanny, Abe, it never occurred to us to look for people with names like Adolph, Lena, and Marcus. What a shock it was to contemplate having a relative named Adolph.

The next step was to find out how these people were related to each other and, if they really were related to us. The 1900 census told us that Rosa, the midwife (accoucheuse),

was the mother of Lena, David, and Adolph. Lena was married to Marcus Friedman and had five children. David was married to another Rose and had seven children. We later discovered that Rosa delivered all her own grandchildren by David and by Lena.

(Remember that the Philadelphia archive files the births by midwife 😊). It was equally as interesting that she delivered none of the children of Baila Newman.

A listing of all the Newman / Neumans buried in all cemeteries in Philadelphia, acquired years ago from the first attempt at a burial project, showed that there was a Rosa who died in 1917, David who died in 1931 and Adolph Newman who died in 1913 in Montefiore Cemetery. A phone call confirmed that they, along with several others, were buried in a family plot that was still being maintained. Yet another confirmation that they were at least related to each other. While the cemetery office would not give out the name of the contact, they thought the story very interesting and did agree to forward a letter if we promised to tell them the outcome.

Joan wrote a letter to the contact explaining that we were looking for our long lost Newman relatives. She suggested that we thought we were related to them. She asked if the person would contact her to explore the possibility. The next thing we knew Bobby, who lives in California, was on an airplane headed east. Joan picked her up at JFK and drove to Atlantic City where our possible new relative insisted we stay at her mother's vacant apartment since her mother was now living with her.

The next two days were spent meeting all the Philadelphia area Newmans who were descendants of David Newman's seven children. They immediately accepted us as cousins with no real proof. They had never heard of our Joseph Newman, although one of David's sons was also named Joseph. They held family gatherings in their homes on both Saturday and Sunday. They brought family photos that they lent to us to copy and return. We were sure we were related to them, maybe wishful thinking because they were so nice, but we didn't know how. Was Joseph a brother or a cousin to Adolph, David, and Lena? We also went to the cemetery and took photos of all the headstones, confirming the city directory listing that the widow Rosa's husband had been Philip (Pincus), and that Adolph had never married.

When we mentioned that our mother lived in Florida, the Philadelphia relatives told us that we had to meet their cousins, two sisters who live in Florida. So, on the next trip to visit our mother, we called the Florida sisters who said, "Come over immediately." They brought out a family album of photos taken in the 1890's. It was full of photos of unidentified people. As we sat turning the pages we gasped in unison as the page turned to side-by-side photos of Baila and Joseph Newman. We still get goose bumps even as we write this. Remember, we had only one photograph of Joseph. And these people, our new cousins, had another.

The Florida sisters allowed us to copy all of their photographs too. Once we began looking at the many photographs from all of the various cousins, we were able to identify all but four of the several hundred images we had.

So now we knew for sure that we are related. But we still had no idea how. The next search was to see if Rosa or Adolph left a will. Sure enough, we found a 1913 will for Adolph. In it he left all his property to his mother Rosa Newman of Philadelphia, his brother David Newman and sister Lena Friedman both of Philadelphia, and his BROTHER Joseph Newman of Brooklyn, NY. Apparently the rift in the family was so great that Adolph didn't know Joseph had pre-deceased him in 1910.

The next part was easy. Where did they come from? The Philadelphia Newmans knew that their relatives were German speaking and from Hungary. Another search of the city directories told us that Adolph had been in Philadelphia from at least 1871. A ship's departure record for an Adolph Neuman in 1870 from Hamburg said that he was from Kashau, Hungary. A search of the Kosice / Kassa / Kashau (Slovakian / Hungarian / German names for the same town) Jewish birth, marriage, death records turned up the 1867 birth of David Neuman to Pincus and Rosa, the 1869 birth and death record for a Marcus Neuman born to Rosa Gutman and Filiup Pincus Neuman and the 1870 birth of Lena to the same parents. In January 1877 Rosa started showing up as the midwife on the births of other children in Kosice. This ended in 1882 when Rosa, David, and Lena joined Adolph in Philadelphia. We subsequently found at <http://www.cemetery.sk/english/>? a death notice listing for Pincus Neuman from the German language newspaper of Kosice: Neumann, Pinkas, age 53, date of funeral-cremation: 03.01.1877, place of burial: Kosice, source: Kaschauer Zeitung – 1877. This explains why Rosa suddenly showed up as a “working woman” in the birth records.

From the time we started the city directory search until the time that we found the Kosice metrical records was less than a year. We'd been searching for this family for six years with no result. But once we got our first leads from the city directory tables we'd made, the rest just seemed to fall into place.

So, how did Joseph Newman from Kosice, Slovakia find a wife in the Ukraine? Maybe the family story about Joseph being a traveling salesman, and winding up at the inn run by Baila's mother, Bessie Maschtalier in Kuzmin, Podolia Gubernia, Ukraine is true. We'll let you know when we find out.

P.S.

The redheaded Louis Newman in a Navy uniform turned out to be the brown haired (source: WWI Draft Registration) Nelson Friedman, son of Joseph's sister (not brother) Lena, who was in the Navy Reserve at the time. Close enough for a family story.

Resources Used:

Naturalizations

- Naturalization Records LDS film 1,462,521 --- Newman (N550) all spellings
- NARA - Naturalization Records Southern Dist 1824-1941 M1676 US Dist Ct.
- Card Index to Nat'l Petitions 1876-1924 NY Supreme Ct. - Alpha Index, LDS Films 1,552,566 Neuman, 1,522,508 Newman
- Bklyn Clerk's Office - Naturalization Index, Index 13 - 1892-1896, Index 14 - 1896-1898, Index 15 - 1899-1901, Index 16 - 1901-1905, Index 17 - 1/12/1906- 8/8/1906
- Petitions for Naturalization in Federal, State & Local Courts in NY, Kings, Queens & Richmond Co 1792-1906
- Petition for Naturalization - US District Court - Eastern District NY 1865-1957
- Petition for Naturalization - Federal, State & Local Courts in NY - NY, Kings, Queens, Richmond Counties 1792-1906
- NY County Supreme Court Naturalization 1907-1924
- Philadelphia Naturalization Records, Filby, -- NY Public Library, Genealogy Room
- Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas Petitions for Naturalizations, 1892 = Film 979962, 1893 = Film 981003, 1894/5 = Film 981005, 1896 = Film 981006, 1897 = Film 981008, 1898-1906 = Film 981009
- Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas Petitions for Naturalizations, - Indexes M-N = Film 1752887
- Pennsylvania Court of Quarter Sessions Petitions for naturalization, 1890 = film 976750, 1892/95 = film 976753, 1896/7 = film 976754
- Index to Naturalizations Petitions for Eastern Pennsylvania, M1248 1883-1895,
- Roll 6
- PA Petitions for Naturalization 1898-1899 Films 1516212, 1516211

Immigration

- Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at New York, New York, 1820-1897
- Portland ME Passenger Arrivals Index 1893-1954
- Hamburg Direct Indices Band 8 – 1868/69, Band 9 1869/71, Band 14 - 7/1878- thru Band 47 -11/93
- Hamburg Indirect Indices, Bands 5-20
- Baltimore Arrivals 1820-1897
- HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) - Philadelphia 1884-1952
- HIAS - Blitzen Ticket Purchase Books and Rosenbaum Ticket Purchase Books – Books 1-3, 1890-1894 (1550639), Records N-R 1884-1952 (1550653)
- HAIA – Philadelphia Passage Order Books, Box 14-15 1894-97 Film = 1026301
- HAIS Pennsylvania – Ship Passenger Lists, Box 1-5 1884-1893
- Boston 1848-1891 Index
- S. Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Key West Arrivals etc. T517 1890-1924
- Philadelphia Alphabetical Arrival Index 1800-1906 M369
- Philadelphia Soundex Arrival Index 1883 - 6/1948 T526

- Russian Consular Records
- Germans to America, Vol 54, 1/87-6/87 thru Vol 60, 12/90-5/91
- Migration from the Russian Empire” Vol 2, 10/82-4/86, Vol 3, 5/86-12/87
- Wuerttemberg Index
- Jewish Emergency Passports, LDS films
- Index to Emergency Passports Issued Abroad, LDS films
- Passport Applications, LDS films

Military

Looking for the redheaded Newman in a navy suit.

- War Records of American Jews – World War I) American Jewish Historical Society
Box 1-8, 10, 13, 15, 17-19
- US Navy Memorial Foundation - Washington DC
- Rendezvous Reports Film T1101, 3 rolls, NARA – Washington DC
- Index to Pension Files NY Public Library, T228, Roll 348
- World War I Military Files – Index, NY State Archives
- 1920 Military & Naval Census

Newman/Friedman Military Records

- National Personnel Records Center – St Louis MO – Nelson Friedman Naval Records

Census

- 1880 PA Census
- 1900 NY Census
- 1905 NY Census
- 1910 PA Census (This is really Philadelphia County only)
- 1910 Brooklyn Census
- 1915 Brooklyn Census
- 1920 NY Census
- 1920 PA Census

City Directories

- New York City 1900 - 1912
- Philadelphia City Directory 1880 – 1885
- Gopsill’s Philadelphia City Directory 1886-1895
- Boyd’s Philadelphia Commercial Directory 1886-1892
- Philadelphia City directory 1896-1900
- Boyd’s Philadelphia City Directory 1908 - 1911

Court Records

- NY County Supreme Court Case Files 1910 – 1940

- NY County Supreme Court Law Judgements 1799-1910
- NY County Supreme Court, Special Term – Part 1
- Philadelphia Probate - Orphans Court Index 1878-1938 Film 1290586 (Adolph Newman's will)

Death Records

- Philadelphia Death Index
- New York Death Index – All Boros 1910 – 1948
- Philadelphia Burials - List of Newman / Neumans buried in all Philadelphia cemeteries from the initial IAGJS burial project.

Birth Records

- NYC Birth Index - Manhattan, Brooklyn - 1898-1909
- Philadelphia Births 1892-1898 index
- Philadelphia Birth register Reel 1289333 April 1893- Feb 1894, Reel 1289335 Jun 1895, Jan-Jun 96, Jan-Mar 97, Reel 1289336 Mar –Dec 1897
- Philadelphia Dispensary Obstetrical Record, Reel 1312829 1884-96, Reel 1312830 1896-1902
- Philadelphia Birth Correction Cards, Reel 1380501 1872 1896 Ends Feb 25 1896, Reel 1380502 begins July 25 1897-1900
- Philadelphia Maternity Case Book 1894-1898 (Alms House) Reel 976941
- Philadelphia City Hospital Records 1840-1896, Reel 976944
- Philadelphia Midwife and Doctor's Return – Philadelphia Municipal Archives – 1892-1898

Marriage Records

- Brooklyn Brides Index 1903 -1940
- Brooklyn Grooms Index 1903 -1940
- Brooklyn Marriage License Index 1909-1940
- Philadelphia Marriage Index 1885-1916

Draft Registrations

- NYC Draft Registration - 1918 – NARA, M1509 –Brooklyn Draft Boards 36-45
- World War II Draft Registration – 1942, NARA – Brooklyn Boxes 12,17,27,31, 33,39,67,73,74,96,143145,178,229,237,247,250,262,264,272,274,275,276,278,289,303,305,307,309
- Philadelphia Draft Registration – 1918 – Philadelphia Draft Boards 25, 26, 29,

Slovakian Records

- Kosice, Slovakia - Kassa, Abauj-Torna, Hungary Births Marriages, Deaths 1851-1879, LDS Film 1920775 Item 5, Film 1920776. Item 1 & 2, Film 1920777 Item 1-4 (Neuman)
- Jewish Congregational Records, BMD, Secovce 1785-1886, Births, BMD 1876-1895, BMD 1853-1877 Items 3-4 LDS film 1924884 (Friedman)
- Master Roll from the Galszes Military District of Hungary – now Secovce – 1873-1884, Births 1853-1864, 1878-1883, 1856-1863 -- LDS Film 629837, Film 629838 (Friedman)
- Kosice Military BMD - LDS Film 1454461
- Virtual Slovakian Cemeteries, <http://www.cemetery.sk/english/>

Maps

- Mapquest – Maps of all streets where Newman family members lived for all years.
<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/>
- Jewishgen Shtetl Seeker – Maps of Hungarian/Slovakian towns
<http://www.jewishgen.org/ShtetlSeeker/>

Newspaper Articles

- ProQuest – New York Times Historical – 1851-1999
- Brooklyn Eagle on-line – 1841-1902, <http://eagle.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/>

Oral History Interviews