

The Jewish History of Sławatycze



Places



Sławatycze 1917, seen from the Bug River.



The sawmill in Sławatycze



3371 Sägewerk in Sławatycze

The sawmill in Sławatycze



3389 Sägewerk in Sławatycze

The sawmill in Sławatycze



The mikveh in Sławatycze



The synagogue in Włodawa
Source: Muzeum Zespołu Synagogalnego we Włodawie

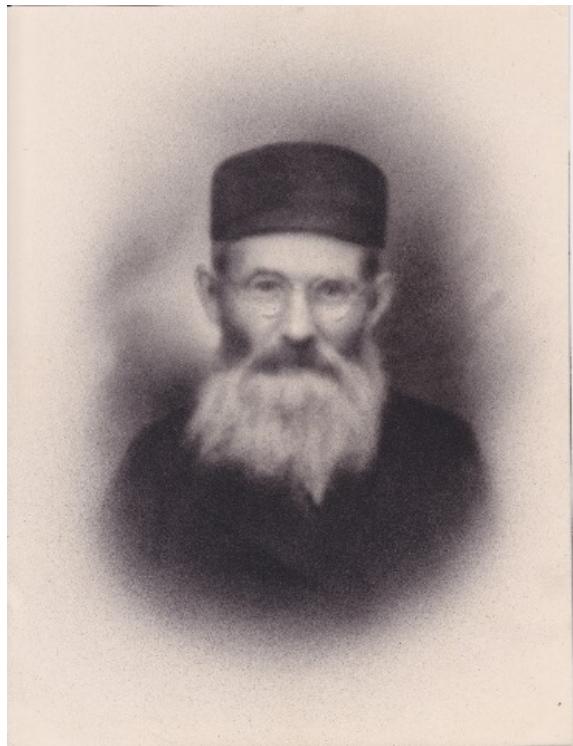


The main gate of the Jewish cemetery in Sławatycze (2008).

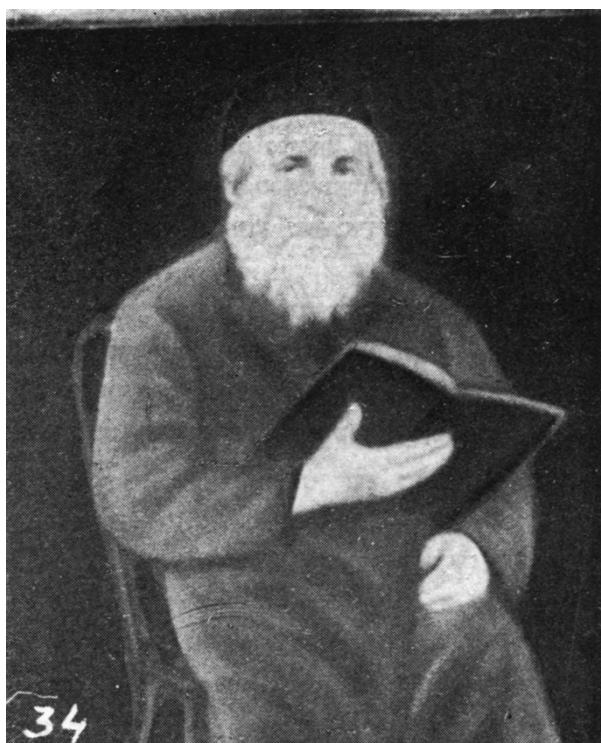


The new fence of the Jewish cemetery in Sławatycze (2018).

People



Abraham Itzchok Gittelman



Abraham Trochanowski from Sławatycze (the rabbi in Włodawa) and his wife Nechama
Source: Muzeum Zespołu Synagogalnego we Włodawie



Luba Waserman



Breindl Gitelman / Bronia Lerer



Isak Lerer



Szmuel Hersz Grynblat / Sam Greene



Michał Grynberg



David Edelstein



Abraham Ribkovsky



Rachel and Abraham Ribkovsky on their farm
near Montreal, Canada



Herszel Epelbaum [Applebaum], Artillery, 1928



Szaja Rapkowski.



Wedding photo of Chaka and Herzl Gitelman, Henry Gitelman's parents.
Source: Henry Gitelman



Alan Metnick's grandfather - David Kliger.
Source: Alan Metnick



David Kliger in Chicago with his five daughters:
Mary (born in Slawatycze), Rose, Bessie, Emily, Helen (Alan Metnick's mother).



Anna Długie Kliger, Alan Metnick's Grandmother.
Source: Alan Metnick



Alan Metnick's grandgrandmother, Dora Dlugie.
 Źródło : Alan Metnick



Unidentified

Photos from “Oh! Slawaytcze, my home...”



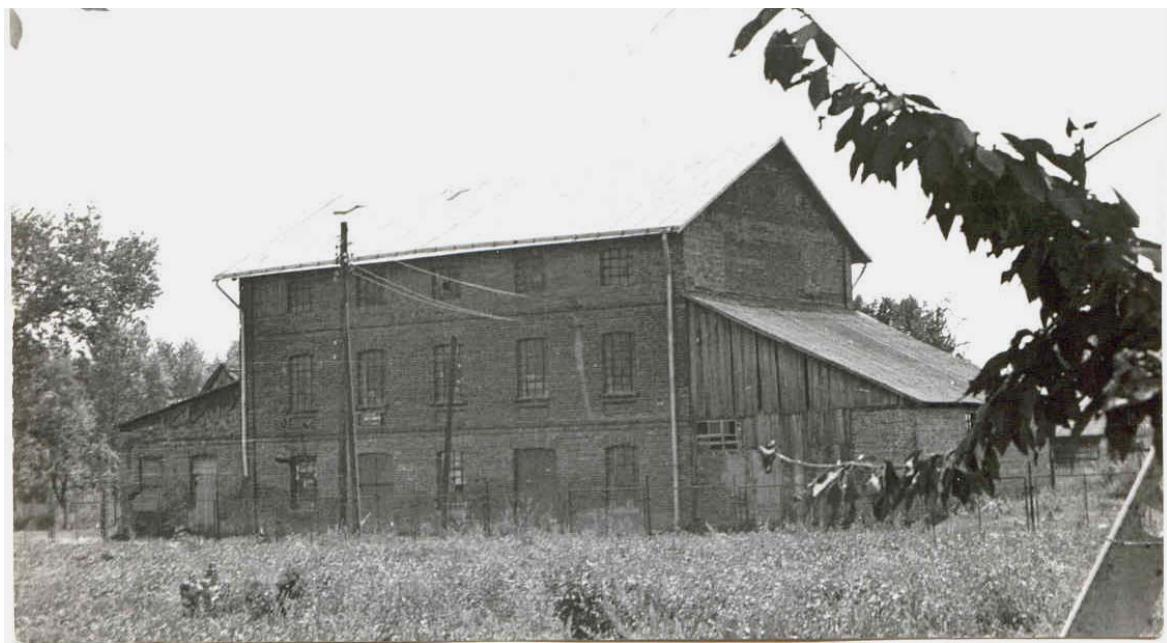
The Sławatycze Rynek [Market Square], circa 1900.
Note the *blote* [mud] and the two Churches in the background.



The Sławatycze *Mikvah* [ritual bath]. The Bug River can be seen in the background.
Photo taken by Michał Grynberg, August 1972.



The old Sławatycze *studnia*, *die brineh* [the well] located opposite the old smithy on the way to the Bug River.
This photo was taken by Henry Gitelman in October of 1998. We were told at the Sławatycze library and
museum that this *studnia* is over 200 years old and that it is now a Protected National Monument.



This is the old Sławatycze flour and grits mill which is also a Protected National Monument. In pre-war Sławatycze this was the only building that had its own generated electricity and one of the only two telephones in the *sztetl*, the other telephone was at the *posterunek* [the police station].



The two Sławatycze churches. On the left is the *Prawoslawny Cerkiew* [Russian Orthodox Church] and on the right is the Polish Catholic *Kościół* [church]. The 5 photos on this page were taken by Henry Gitelman in October, 1998.



A typical old Sławatycze house made of squared logs, except that it is now provided with electricity.
The “bathroom” is still in the outhouse.



A house on the outskirts of Sławatycze that still has a thatched [straw] roof.
This house is now a “protected national monument”.



The Bug River, seen in the background, as viewed from the Sławatycze shore. In the forefront are the famous *sadzawki*, the shallow water pools left behind by the Bug during flood time and where we children would splash around and learned to swim and where the women washed their laundry, usually on Thursdays.



The Lerer family of Sławatycze in about 1904. L-R Chawele [b.1900] is standing next to her Bube [the fishmonger] and Zayde Lerer. Standing are: Lybe Frydman / Lerer and her husband Joshua Lerer. Their son Berl [b.1902] is on “horseback”. Lybe’s and Joszua’s other children are: Isak [b.1906], Esther [b.1909], Chaim-Szulem [b.1913] and Fryma [b.1917].



On the right is Me’er Świątłoś of Hanna. On the left is probably his older brother Zalman. This photo was taken in the early 1900’s before Me’er [later Myer Sweet] emigrated to Canada. Note the suave attire, the dress-up suits, the walking canes and the gold chains.



Symcha Edelsztein served five years in the Czarist Army. In June of 1924, Symcha *der Kowal* [Symcha the Smith], then only 36 years old, was accidentally killed in the Sławatycze *rynek* [the marketplace] by a stray bullet fired by the town policeman attempting to stop a brawl by a group of drunken peasants. Symcha left a widow.



Joe Cohen [formerly Yosef ben Yosef Szuchmacher] was born in Sławatycze in 1895 and emigrated to England in the early 1900s to join his Sławatycze uncle and cousins who preceded him to Leeds, England. During WWI, Joe was inducted into the British Army and served with the Jewish Legion in Palestine under General Allenby. He was wounded in battle and His Majesty’s Government awarded Joe Cohen the British War Medal and the Victory Medal, each inscribed with his name.



Sławatycze 2nd grade class, 1926 (?). Gitl Edelsztejn [Tova Kaufman] is in the 2nd row, third from right.



The entire school of the village of Hanna [8 km from Sławatycze] in 1928 or 1929. Chaia Paluch [Haja Rapkowski] in the page-boy haircut, is 3rd from left in 2nd row from the top.



A group of young Sławatycze labor activists. Photo taken in 1927

1st row L-R: Chaim Zajdefter [survived the war in France], Chana Rotenberg and Josef Erlich.

2nd row: Ester ?, Chana Ginsburg, Aron-Josef Hochbaum, Lea Izak [survived the war in France] and Gitl Ginsburg.

3rd row L-R: Awrum Repkowski, Ester Waserman and Michal Grynberg.



A group of Sławatycze young men belonging to the Betar Zionist Organization, mid 1930s
Mojsze Repkowski is on the right, front row.



Mara-Ruchl Blusztejn / Epelbaum, the widow of Icko-Mejer Epelbaum and her sister Chana-Pesia Blusztejn / Repkowska, the widow of Szepsel Repkowski. Standing in the center is Chana-Pesia's granddaughter Suraleh, [her daughter Tema's daughter].

In 1930 Mara-Ruchl, together with her sons Lejzer and Herszel, emigrated to Winnipeg, Canada, there to join her daughter Chaja-Blima [Clara] Bakalinski and Chaja's family. Her older son Mordechai and her two orphaned granddaughters; Pesl Sztejnwercel [Bessie Medved] and Bejla Sztejnwercel [Bella Medved] also emigrated to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Mara-Ruchl Blusztejn /Applebaum died in Winnipeg on November 24, 1941. Her sister, Chana-Pesia Blusztejn / Repkowska, perished in the Shoah.



A group of young Sławatycze women in the late 1920's

1st row: On the right is Dobe [Dora] Repkowska

2nd row: On the left is Breindl Gitelman, next to her is Pesl Sztejnwercel

3rd row: On the right is Henia [known as *der Mazik*] Waserman.

The others are unidentified.

Dobe and her cousin Pesl emigrated to Canada in 1929.

In 1932 Breindl went to Biro-Bidzhan to marry her beau, Isak [*der kempfer*]

Lerer Henia made Aliyah to Eretz Israel in the mid 1930s



A group of young Sławatycze women and men on a countryside outing in the early 1920's

Front row: Third from left is Breindl Gitelman

Back row: On the right is Szaja Repkowski wearing a *kapelusz*. The others are unidentified.



Berta Pachter



Szewa Pachter



Chaim Pacter





Three Sławatycze young men in a *Purim Szpiel* [a Purim play] in the late 1920's. On the left is Lejzer Epelbaum dressed as a kolbojnik [a cowboy] and his younger brother Herszel is on the right in the sailor's outfit. The man in the center dressed as a Cossack is unidentified.



A group of young men of the Sławatycze soccer team in the 1920's. They are obviously dressed in their *Shabbes best* for this photograph. Nute Repkowski is in the top row, second from the left. Aron-Josef Hochbaum is on the right in the top row. Szmuel-Hersz Grynblat [Sam Greene] is in the front row, second from the left. The others are unidentified.



A group of Sławatycze young men and women, 1929.

1st row: Szaja Repkowski, Henia Waserman [known as *der Mazik*] and Herszel Epelbaum [Applebaum]

2nd row seated: Unidentified

3rd row standing: Breindl Gitelman [Bronia Lerer], Lejzer Epelbaum [Applebaum] and Pesl

Sztejnwercel [Medved]



Another group of Sławatycze young men and women. This photograph was possibly taken in the summer of 1926. On the back is Gdal Sztyrmer's dedication to Dobe Rybkowski in Polish and in Yiddish dated, *Slawatycze*, 8/II/27. As yet, none of the people are identified.



A group of Sławatycze young men and women during an outing in the countryside, late 1920s. Breindl Gitelman is 3rd from the left, back row. Note the thatched roof in the background.



A group of Sławatycze social activist youth celebrating the 1st of May. The sign says “Long Live the 1st of May”. Szmuł-Hersz Grynblat [Sam Greene] is sitting on the right in the front row. Ester Waserman is in the center, 2nd row. Nute Repkowski is 2nd from the right, 3rd row. Kiwa Gitelman is 6th from the left, top row. Many of the other are familiar but unidentified. The picture on the wall is of Karl Marx. On the back of the photo is the signature of Ester Waserman and Sławatycze, 1930.



A group of young Sławatyczers, late 1920s.

1st row: Unidentified

2nd row: Mordche Epelbaum [Applebaum][d.1990, Winnipeg, Canada]
Breindl Gitelman / Lerer [d.1984, Warsaw, Poland]

Ansel Rotenberg [d.1996, Montreal, Canada]

3rd row, center: Pesl [Bessie] Sztejnwercel / Medved, niece of Mordche Epelbaum
[d. 1995, Winnipeg, Canada]



Abram Repkowski & his sister Dobe. Photo was taken in Sławatycze before Dobe's departure for Canada in January of 1929. Abram followed his sister Dobe to Canada in 1938 and changed his name to Abe Reback.



Wedding picture of Dora Reback [Dobe Repkowska] and her Sławatyczer *landsman*, Joe Waterman [Josl Waserman]. Dora and Joe were married in Montreal, Canada, May 1939. Joe's parents with their 6 children emigrated to Montreal in 1913.



A group of Sławatyczers and their friends in Warsaw, 1934.

Front row: In the center is Abram Repkowski [Abe Reback, d. December 1985, Montreal, Canada]
Back row, left: Nute Repkowski [Nathan Rapkowski, d. September 1982, Montreal, Canada]
Back row, right: Michał Grynberg [d. January 2000, Warsaw, Poland]
Back row, 2nd from right is Michał Fleising from Radzin, Poland, presently residing in Montreal, Canada.
Others are unidentified.



The Bakalinski family in Slawatycze, February 22, 1927, before their emigration to Winnipeg, Canada, in March of 1927. Chaja-Bluma Epelbaum met her future husband, Herszel [Harry] Bakalinski, in Belilovka, Ukraine, where her family took refuge during WWI. In Herszel's lap is Chana [Anne] and standing between them is their son Mordechai [Dr. Max Back]. Daughters Sivia and Peggy were born in Winnipeg, Manitoba.



The Paluch family of the village of Hanna, 1929. In the front are: Mendel and Surale on each side of mother Bina-Fejge Lerner / Paluch.

Standing: are Yachad, Mindel and Chaia-Bejla [b. July 8, 1920] [Neighbors are peeking through the windows]

Father Mordechai had emigrated to Argentina in 1928. He returned to Hanna in 1930 and then went back to Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1938.

In 1939 Mordechai tried to bring his family to Argentina but a lack of proper documentation prevented the Paluch family from obtaining exit documents from Poland. before the outbreak of WWII on September 1st, 1939.

With the exception of Mordechai and Chaia, the rest of the Paluch family stayed behind in Poland and perished in the Shoah.

Mordechai (Mordko) Paluch died in Buenos Aires on April 10, 1985.

In 1943, by sheer chance of faith, in Dzhambul, Kazakhstan, Chaia Paluch found her cousins; the Gitelman family and the three Repkowski brothers, Nuta, Riwen and Mojsze. Chaia Paluch married her second cousin, Riwen Repkowski [Rubin Rapkowski].

In 1948 Chaia, Riwen [Rubin] and their daughter Sura-Tauba [Shelley] and son Jankiel-Me'er [Jack] emigrated to Montreal, Canada, there to join Riwen's three brothers, two sisters and their two uncles; Me'er and Aron Sweet [Światłość] and their families.

Chaia Paluch-Rapkowski lives in Montreal, Canada



Abraham Ribkovsky is seen carrying on his father's trade in Eretz Israel. He made Aliyah in 1922 or 1923. On the back of this photo sent to his mother Chana-Pesia in Sławatycze he inscribed: [Palestine] 1928-7-27.

Abraham Ribkovsky died in 1985 in Montreal, Canada.



Kiwa Gitelman [born in Sławatycze in 1904] is shown with his fiancée Pesza Ratnowska of Pinsk. This photo was taken in the resort town of Domaczewo, across the Bug River from Sławatycze. On the back of the photo Pescha inscribed in Yiddish; "Domaczewo -1936 - 13/VIII For you, Kiwa, as an expression of our friendship. [Signed] Peszka".

Kiwa & Pesza resided in Warsaw. After the outbreak of the war, both managed to escape across the Bug River to Pinsk, now under Soviet occupation. Pescha [Pesza], Kiwa and their baby daughter Paja are listed as living at Tüpferstr 37/18. The Ghetto was liquidated in December of 1942. Pesza, Kiwa and their baby daughter Paja perished in the Shoah.



Dawid-Hersz [Herszel] Gitelman
1st Pilsudski Cavalry Div. 1926



Herszel Epelbaum [Applebaum]
Artillery, 1928



Hershel Applebaum at age 98-1/2
Winnipeg, Canada, August, 2004.



Szaja Repkowski, 1930



Akiwa Gitelman, 1930



Nute Repkowski [Rapkowski]



Michał Grynberg served in the Soviet Army during WWII



Abe Reback {Abram Repkowski}
Canadian Army 1944 (?)





A young Jewish man from Sławatycze in the uniform of a Polish soldier. Name unknown. Photo from Michał Grynbarg's files.



Mojsze Repkowski [Morris Reback].
Served in the Polish Army, 1944-46.



Jankiel Wasserman emigrated to Eretz Israel in 1935.
Now Ya'akov Wasserman, [shown above in 1948]
served in the Israeli Army.



Isak Lerer in Biro-Bidzhan, Soviet Russia



Gete
Uge eyle velt'oye, l'oyde
o'lej, o'lej, o'lej, o'lej
1928 Dobe Repkowska

Before his departure to Argentina in 1928, Isak Lerer wrote on the back of this photograph a dedication, in Yiddish, to Dobe Repkowska:

Before my departure to Argentina I bestow this photograph as an expression of our friendship as I think of us when we part on both sides of the ocean. As a remembrance for my friend Dobe Ribkowske from her friend Itshe Lerer.



The Repkowski brothers with three unidentified friends in a Soviet Gulag, 1940.
L-R: [1st] Nute, [3rd] Riwen and [6th] Mojsze



Warsaw, October 4, 1932 Bronia Gitelman's departure from Warsaw by train to join her beau Isak Lerer in Biro-Bidzhan, Soviet Russia. Bronia is in the center, holding her purse. To her right is her father Awram-Icko Gitelman (in beard). Bronia's brother Herszel (in the *kapelusz*), is to her left. On the steps of the wagon stand her brother Kiwa (in *kapelusz*) and her sister Chana-Mariam, top right.



A group of mainly Polish Jews, all ex-prisoners of the Soviet *Gulags*, now members of the newly formed "Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee" set up by the Soviet government during WW II. Szmul Grynblat [Sam Greene of Charleston, SC, USA] is sitting upfront, 5th from the left. Photo was taken in Uzbekistan in 1942 or 1943.

Remnants

The Last Jews of Poland



by Małgorzata Niezabitowska • Photographed by Tomasz Tomaszewski

On the front cover of the pictorial book: "Remnants, Last Jews of Poland" are shown Sara [Sura] Frydman-Adar and her husband Rafael Adar in Włodawa. Sara was born in the small village of Hanna, 7 km from Sławatycze.

With the publication of this pictorial book in English in October of 1986, Sara and Rafael became famous throughout the world. Rafael Adar died a few weeks later. The then Prime Minister of Poland, Hanna Suchocka, came to Włodawa in her chauffeur driven limousine, took Sura to Warsaw and placed her in a Jewish home for the aged. Sara Frydman-Adar died in Warsaw on October 6, 1992. They had no children.



Michał Grynberg and Chaim-Szulem Lerer [Isak's brother] at the Domaczewo-Sławatycze Memorial in Hulon, Israel, 1985.



Henry L. (Chaim-Lejb) Gitelman at the Jewish Cemetery in Sławatycze, October 23, 2001

All the *matzevot*, with the exceptions of a couple of broken stones, had been removed and used as building blocks. Weeds and large trees are growing over the graves of our ancestors.



Chaja-Blima Repkowska/Gitelman with sons Chaim-Lejb [in her lap] and eldest son, Szepsel, standing beside her. Sławatycze, 1934.



Anszel Rotenberg with his wife Ester Shajnfeld / Rotenberg, together with his brother Aron [on the right] with friends in a resort, possibly Domaczewo, 1934 or 1935.



Three Jewish girls from Sławatycze.

This picture was taken after the Nazi ordinance of October 1939 that Jews must wear white armbands inscribed with a blue Star of David. On the left and on the right are the two Fogel sisters. In the middle is the daughter of Szmuel Guze [Sznajderman]. The fate of these three girls is unknown. This picture was given to me by a friend of my hosts, the Sawoniuk family, during my visit to Sławatycze in June of 1945. [M. Grynberg.]