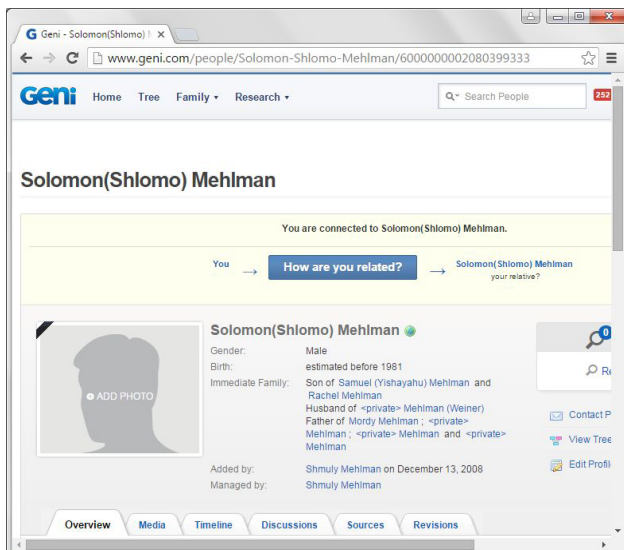


Rub the Lamp, But Don't Let the GENI Out of the Bottle

The family trees on GENI.com has its positive and negative aspects. The chief complaint voiced by many seasoned genealogists is that some people combine trees erroneously or record detail that is obviously impossible. Whatever your position, GENI can still be a wonderful tool for research. This is especially true when you first start research or when you hit a brick wall.

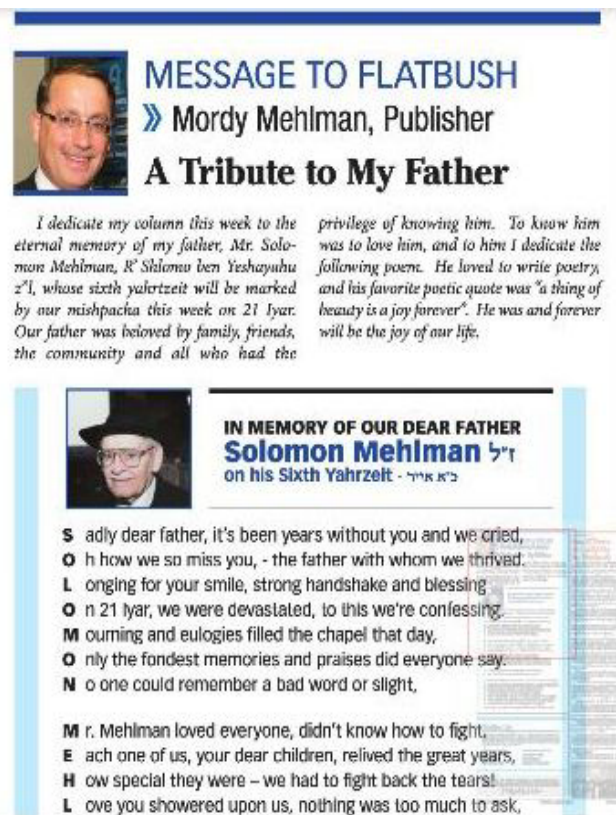
The Jewish Genealogical Society of Brooklyn is in the process of creating research methodology case studies. It should enable researchers to properly research and document their ancestry. To illustrate how the research process is performed utilizing GENI, but not relying on it, the Mehlman family was chosen as a case study. In this instance, no family members were consulted. To demonstrate what is available, only information in the public space was utilized.

GENI is an excellent starting point when nothing is known. Not because it is a real source



(it is filled with inaccuracies, conjecture and mismatched trees) but because you have something to check-out.

Using GOOGLE for "father of Mordy Mehlman" (with quotes) yields a GENI page for Solomon Mehlman¹ as father of Mordy Mehlman. To check if this is the correct Mehlman Family, Google for *yahrzeit* Solomon Mehlman (without quotes). This returns page 4



of the April 28, 2010 FJJ² – a tribute to Mordy's father. It shows a picture of Solomon and states his yahrtzeit as Iyar 21. The article mentions that it was his 6th yahrtzeit, yielding a calculated petirah (passing) of 2004.

Referencing the previous GENI page, it shows Mordy, the son of Solomon (Shlomo) Mehlman

and Mrs. Weiner. This is probably the right family and the yahrtzeit can prove it. GOOGLE for Solomon Mehlman to view a FamilySearch 1930 US census record³. This page has Solomon as age 19 in 1930 (son of Samuel and Rachel). Solomon's calculated year of birth is 1911. Interestingly, Samuel's brother, Jacob

PLACE OF ABODE				NAME of each person whose place of abode on April 1, 1930, was in this family Enter surname first, then the given name and middle initial, if any Include every person living on April 1, 1930. Omit children born since April 1, 1930	RELATION Relationship of this person to the head of the family	MARRIAGE Date of marriage
Street, avenue, road, etc.	House number (in cities or towns)	Number of dwelling house in order of visitation	Number of family in order of visitation			
	251	5	9	Mehlman, Jacob	Head	
				Celia	Wife	
				Mildred	Daughter	
				Samuel	Son	
				Levy	Son	
				Charlotta	Daughter	
	249	6	10	Mehlman, Samuel	Head	
				Rachel	Wife	
				David	Son	
				Charles	Son	
				Solomon	Son	
				Adner	Son	

Mehlman, is listed as living next door to him on that census.

Going back to the GENI page, there is a 1911 birth year for Solomon. His parents recorded as Samuel (Yishayahu)⁴ & Rachel Mehlman (Shechter)⁵.

Going back to GOOGLE for "Solomon Mehlman" (in quotes) SSDI (note: SSDI is the Social Security Death Index)⁶ shows a birthdate of 1911-02-24 and deathdate of 2004-05-12 for Solomon. Checking that against the yahrtzeit, 5/12/2004 was Iyar 21 (as stated in the FJJ article). This proves the GENI tree in question is in fact Mordy's family and so far GENI is accurate.

JewishGen's Online Worldwide Burial Registry (JOWBR)⁷ lists both a Samuel and Rachel Mehlman in the same cemetery; perhaps they are the parents of Solomon as listed in GENI.

To verify this, view the online Mt. Zion cemetery interment list⁸. It lists both a Rachel (date of passing: 11/5/1945) and a Samuel (date of passing: 12/13/1962) as being together at

SOLOMON MEHLMAN 19112004	
Social Security Death Index Free SSDI Search	
Solomon	First Name
Mehlman	Last Name
1911-02-24	Birth Date
2004-05-12	Death Date
11229 (Brooklyn, Kings County, New York)	Last Residence ZIP

location 32R-Road-248A in the Bohemian Burial Society, implying they are husband and wife.

MOUNT ZION CEMETERY

Home Hours/Directions Interment Search Today's Interments Unveilings

Interment Search
Interment search allows for a comprehensive search of individuals buried at our cemetery.

While searching
If you are unsure of the name or spelling, it is best to enter as little information as possible to find the interment you see the results, you can sharpen your search by entering more information. Remember, the more information you have in your search, the more limited your search will be.

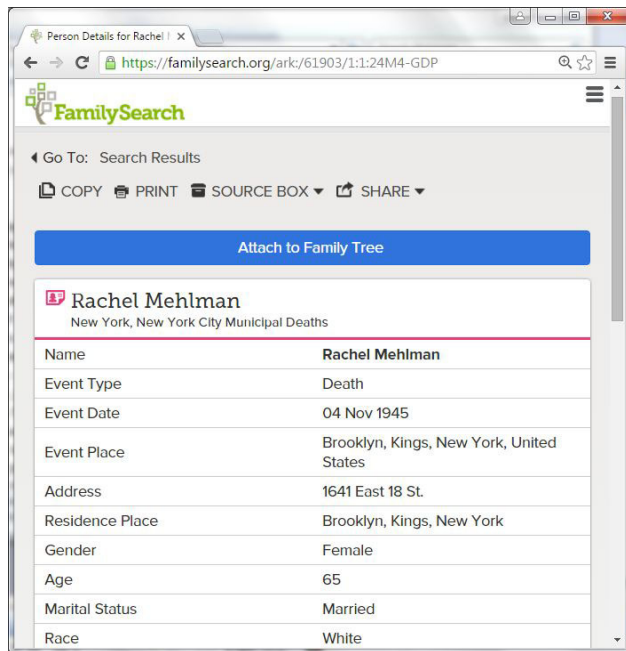
First Name:
Last Name:
Date of Burial (Month / Year):
Map/Path:
Block:
Society:
Search:

Search Results - Showing all 5 matches.

Last Name, First Name	Location	Society	Date of Burial
MEHLMAN, CHARLES	32R-ROAD-7-248A	BOHEMIAN	2/2/1986
MEHLMAN, DAVID	32R-ROAD-10-248A	BOHEMIAN	2/8/1966
MEHLMAN, RACHEL	32R-ROAD-248A	BOHEMIAN	11/5/1945
MEHLMAN, SAMUEL	32R-ROAD-248A	BOHEMIAN	12/13/1962
MEHLMAN, SOLOMON	32R-ROAD-4-248A	BOHEMIAN	5/12/2004

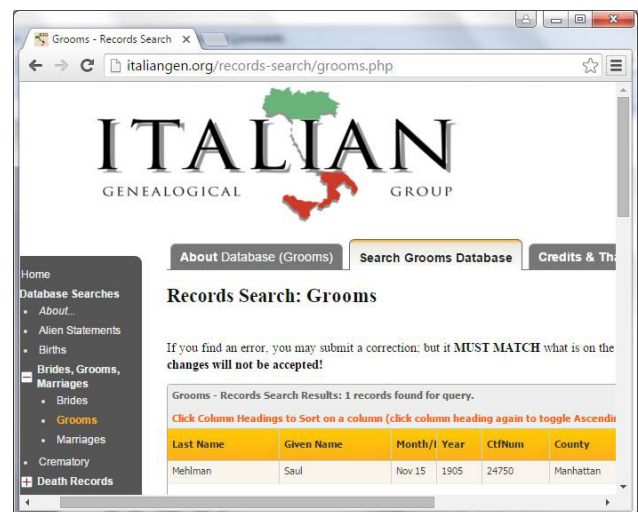
Going back to FamilySearch⁹ for Rachel Mehlman, 1945 displays a death record, listing her home address, spouse, dates of birth & passing and both her parents (Marcus Schechter and Sena Fleischman). The website also lists a

1910 census¹⁰ which shows when they immigrated; Solomon in 1890 and Rachel in 1891. Given their young age at the time of immigration implies a marriage here in the USA.



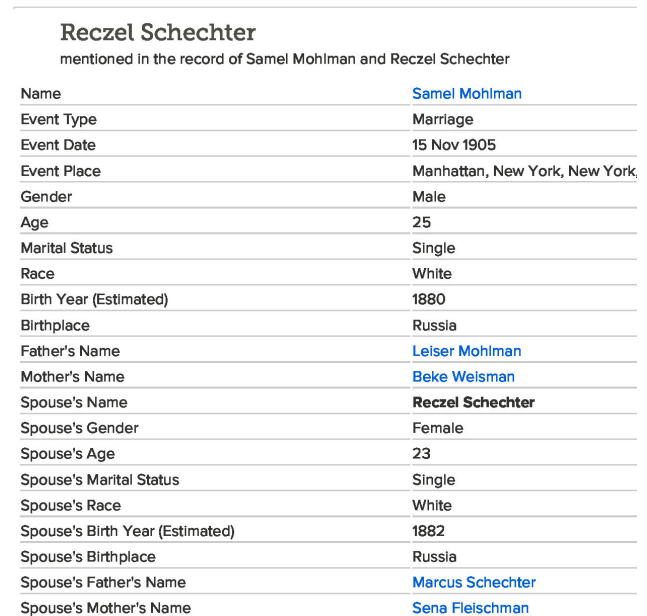
Searching via the online ItalianGen Bride index¹¹ for Shechter and Rachel and the "sounds like" option yields no marriage to a Mehlman. Using the GROOMS index¹² instead, with Solomon Mehlman and the "sounds like" option also yields nothing. Google-ing for SSDI Solomon Mehlman 1962 also yields no results. FamilySearch for Solomon Mehlman, birth between 1875 and 1887, shows no obvious results either.

It was time to review and take stock of why nothing else was showing up. Reviewing the 1910 census again, two children are recorded for Samuel & Rachel. David was born about 1907 and Charles about 1910. In the ItalianGen birth index there is a Charles but no David Mehlman. Changing the query to use the "sounds like" option does show David (as Millemann). Using this option for the Groom index with just Mehlman (no first name) and the "sounds like" option, does yield many results. Sorting the resulting list by first name (by clicking on the



heading title) and scrolling to "S" does show the marriage of Mehlman, Saul on Nov 15, 1905 with cert# 24750 in Manhattan, to Schecten, Reczel.

Using this detail as REC* and SCH* (wild-card searches) and marriage 1905 on FamilySearch does produce their marriage record extract,



listing their parents names (Leiser Mohlman & Beke Weissman and Marcus Schechter & Sena Fleischman).

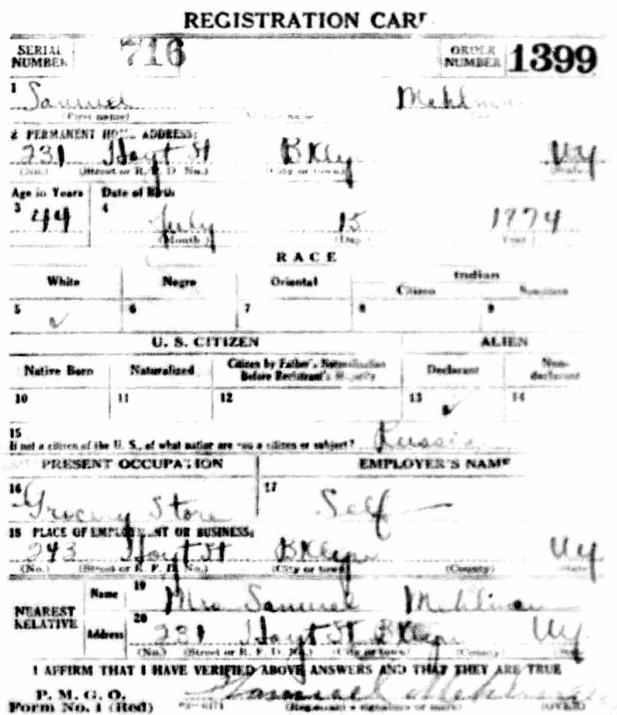
Turning to FTJP, the JewishGen Family Tree of the Jewish People¹³ for further research shows additional detail on Solomon's wife's family.

Using Ancestry.com (the first fee-for-use



website in all the research performed so far) to review the family trees posted there yields a variety of researchers with additional detail.

Searching Ancestry.com further produces a WWI Draft card for a Samuel Mehlman, from 1917-18, living at Hoyt Street. Cross-referencing this with the 1920 census shows a



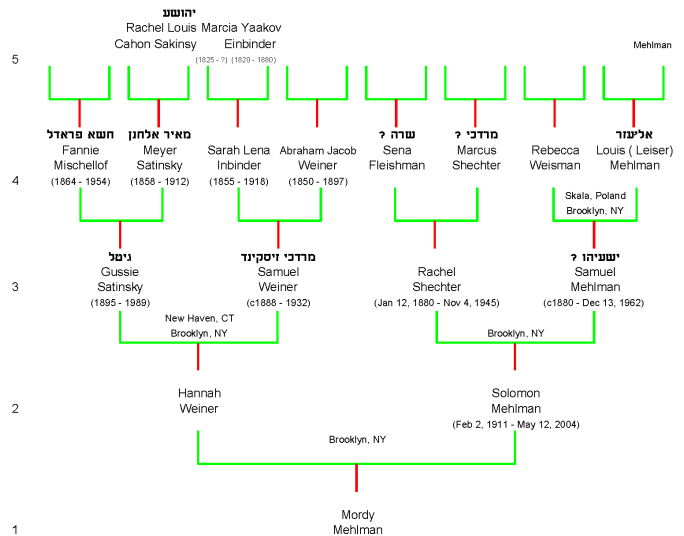
Samuel Mehlman living with parents Louis & Rebecca at the same Hoyt Street address. However, Samuel's wife and children are not present in the census list. So although the names

match, this appears to be a false positive. Upon further research, Samuel's status in the census is listed as married; perhaps this is him. But where is his wife Rachel and their children? Sometimes a family might not appear if they traveled back to Europe. Perhaps they were not in the USA at the time of the census.

Solomon's wife on GENI¹⁴ is listed as the daughter of Mordechai Ziskind & Gittel Weiner. Again, using FTJP and Ancestry.com trees, a much larger picture appears, supported by various vital records.

A useful tip to review and summarize research is to create a visual tree of the family. Most genealogical software can produce a wide array of formats. In this case, using EXCEL's drawing feature, a quick and easy to read tree can be rendered.

In summary, with proper methodology, patience, ingenuity and a little mazal, you can research and document your family history. Next steps in such a project would be to find immigration paperwork, such as ship manifests, naturalization records and passport applications, to determine the city of origin and birth prior to arrival in the USA. This will enable research in European records



1

www.geni.com/people/Solomon-Mehlman/600000002080399333

2

http://www.myvirtualpaper.com/doc/flatbush-jewish-news/april_28/2010042801/4.html#4

3

<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:X7XD-ZWQ>

4

<http://www.geni.com/people/Samuel-Yishayahu-Mehlman/6000000002080928301?through=600000002080399333>

5

<http://www.geni.com/people/Rachel-Mehlman/6000000002080858403?through=600000002080928301>

6

<http://www.mocavo.com/Solomon-Mehlman-1911-2004-Social-Security-Death-Index/07418303190365852792>

7

<http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/jgform.php>

8

<http://www.mountzioncemetery.com/search.asp>

9

<https://familysearch.org/search/record/results?count=20>

10

<https://familysearch.org/>

<ark:/61903/1:1:M5MZ-389>

11

<http://italiengen.org/records-search/brides.php>

12

<http://italiengen.org/records-search/grooms.php>

13

http://www.jewishgen.org/webtrees/individual.php?pid=I0441&ged=13315_u.ged

14

<http://www.geni.com/people/private/6000000002080329516?through=6000000002016474271>