

## Letter – An unexpected genealogy finding

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Yesterday I read the last issue of the *Kielce-Radom SIG Journal* that had just arrived home, and made a surprising discovery in the Chęciny marriages extracted by Dolores Lee Ring. Here is the story. My BAUM family branch is “originally” from Wyszogród (near Płock), and in about five years of research I was able to construct a BAUM family tree back to 1730, the longest I have so far, ten generations back from my children. The BAUMs then moved to Końskie, then Będzin, Łódź and finally Brussels in the 1920s. So you see, Chęciny is not in the list and I never had any reason to look at the Jewish vital data there. Usually, as soon as I receive the *K-R SIG Journal*, out of simple (compulsive-obsessive?) curiosity, I scan *all* names and extracts, for all towns. So far I never found anyone really important (such as a direct ancestor). But yesterday I was utterly shocked to discover the 1856 marriage in Chęciny of the grandparents of my grandparents, Aron Tobiasz BAUM and Gitel Rajzel HENIG. I never knew that Aron Tobiasz went to Chęciny upon leaving Końskie, to eventually arrive in Będzin then Łódź. Now I know that he stopped there to marry a local girl. In these Chęciny extracts I also found the names of Gitel Rajzel’s brother and sisters, her parents etc., all new family members to me!

Further on, this gave me an idea as follows. My great-grandfather Itzhak Meir BAUM was the son of Aron Tobiasz, and was supposedly born in Będzin in 1867 (as indicated on his death certificate in Brussels). But I could never find his birth certificate. Three years ago I went on a visit to the archives of Katowice (where the Będzin vital data are deposited) and looked at the original B/M/D books: Itzhak Meir’s birth is not registered there (and none of his brothers or sisters is either). Since I now know that his parents married in Chęciny, it is in fact possible that Itzhak Meir (and his brothers/sisters whom I do not know) was born in Chęciny right before moving to Będzin...

So I turned to Dolores Ring and via e-mail asked if she happened to have the microfilms of Chęciny handy, and to have a look at the years following the marriage of Aron Tobiasz BAUM and Gitel Rajzel, to see if they continued to live in Chęciny and had had children there? It was Warren Blatt who quickly replied, by looking at the yet-unpublished extracts of Chęciny records, that yes indeed, there were two additional BAUM entries (one misspelled) in the Chęciny registers: the 1857 birth of Mendel “BROM” (sic) son of Tobiasz & Rajzla HENIG, and the 1862 birth of Dwojra Sura and Roszia BAUM, twin daughters of Tobiasz & Gitla Rajzla HENIGÓW. There were no more BAUM registrations in the Chęciny extracts after 1862. Warren also found the 1837 birth of their mother Gitla Rayzla HENIG, daughter of Abella & Faygla ZAJAC.

I now had the new names of three of my greatgrandfather’s siblings. However, Warren’s information seemed to shed a new light on another old and so far apparently unfounded rumor in the BAUM family. I replied: “Warren, the twins you have found, they are another myth/rumor in the family, you probably just solved it. The legend has it that Itzhak-Meir BAUM had had two kids who were twins. Thus we are now talking about twins who supposedly were brothers of my grandmother. I have found all of Itzhak Meir’s children in the Łódź archives (they were 12, including the very first one who died at age 5 whom nobody knew about). But there were no twins among them so I thought then that there were no twins, just the older previously unknown brother who died young and somehow this was twisted into a twins story... You just discovered there were twins, who were not Itzhak Meir’s children, rather they were his sisters!”

### Conclusions and the moral of the story:

“Always check the registers of all surrounding towns, because you never know where your relatives will show up! We’ve seen this time and time again, and it is the primary reason for the SIG’s being. It was the principle upon which the SIG was founded.”, says Warren. Indeed, the (yes, obsessive) scanning of extracts in the *K-R SIG Journal* have led me to two new family branches (HENIG and ZAJAC) in an apparently unrelated town, Chęciny, which I can now explore back several more generations.

As of yet, the mystery of Itzhak Meir’s birth registration is unsolved. Possibly there was an additional stop between Chęciny and Będzin.

The legend regarding the twins in the BAUM branch also claims that they died young. From the death listings in Chęciny it should be possible to verify this...

To use a physicist’s language, “quantum leap” moments of discovery like these are a true delight! Yet another old puzzle in my research is now partly solved.

Finally, I want to congratulate Dolores Lee Ring, Warren Blatt, and the *Kielce-Radom SIG Journal*, and deeply thank them for the incredible work they do. I sincerely appreciate it.

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