

January 13, 2001

Dear Jerry, Irwin and David,

Per my telephone conversations with Jerry and Irwin, enclosed are copies of the naturalization records I found at the Archives this week. The data base I worked from is records of persons naturalized (granted US citizenship) in Illinois. I am not sure what time frame it covers, but it runs from at least 1900 to 1950. I photographed every card I found (on microfilm reels) that spelled the name exactly as we do, and ignored the many Smollers, Smollers, Smolars, Smolareks, Smolerwicz, etc., etc., who lived in Chicago and became citizens in that era.

The first page is my grandfather, Maurice. The second page, although difficult to read, has "Gertrude (Gitel)" – presumably Goldie – and Boris. Harry is on the third page, and his wife Molly is on the fourth page. Jerry and Irwin do not recognize Louis, Solomon, Fred or Szelick. On the last page there is a choice of four Rose Nathansons for you to pick from, although it is not clear whether any of them is my grandmother.

The one for Maurice is most interesting in several respects. First of all, there is the parenthetical reference to his name being "Joseph Burnstein." After extensive discussion on the phone, Jerry, Irwin and I generally agree that Maurice, as a fugitive from Tsarist justice in Chodorkov following the pogrom and the shooting incident, probably used someone else's identity papers to assist his escape across and out of Europe, and may well have entered the US in the name of Joseph Burnstein. This might (or might not) be relevant to why he waited until 1920 to be naturalized, and why on Irwin's tape recording he discusses at length the events in Russia that led to his hasty departure, and then discusses at even greater length how he got into business once he reached America, but says nothing at all about how he got across Europe and into the US.

Secondly, Maurice's birth date on the naturalization form is shown as January (possibly June, but I think it is January) 3, 1879. Irwin advises that the January 3 is absolutely correct but that the 1879 is wrong – Maurice was born in 1886, as correctly shown on David's genealogical chart. I would

hypothesize that Joseph Burnstein's identity papers showed either his age or his year of birth, so that Maurice had to use that age/year when he entered the US, and then had to be consistent when he showed up in the Cook County Superior Court to be naturalized in 1920, but was able to use his actual birth month and day; but this is, of course, my speculation without much evidence.

(Irwin questioned whether the record I found is for the Maurice who is my grandfather, and all three of us find it very strange that my grandfather would select Boris to be one of his two witnesses, given the year and the commercial controversy in which they had become embroiled. Nevertheless, most of the data fits quite well, none of it seems to fit any of the other Maurices on David's chart, and Jerry remembers living at the Clifton Park Avenue address shown on the naturalization form.)

The date of entry into the US is shown on the naturalization card as March 30, 1906. March 30 would be very consistent with Maurice's narrative on Irwin's tape – he says he arrived in the US in the spring. But he says he arrived in 1905, not 1906, and that the pogroms in Chodorkov were around Christmas 1904. It could be that his memory was off by one year – he narrated the tape about 50 years after he left Russia. My own recollection of Russian history is that the most serious pogroms were in 1905, in response to the reform efforts that intensified that year, which would be completely consistent with an entry date of March 1906.

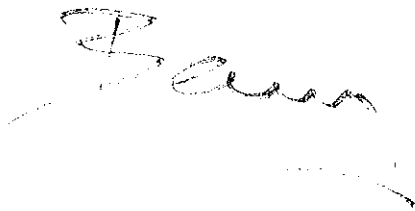
In an effort to shed more light on these mysteries, I then researched the steamship passenger manifests for both March 30, 1905 and March 30, 1906. Maurice does not say on the tape what port he left from or arrived at. The four busiest ports of embarkation in that era were Bremen and Hamburg in Germany, and Naples and Liverpool. Naples and Liverpool, of course, were the principal points of embarkation, respectively, for Italian and Irish immigrants. Most of the immigrants from Bremen and Hamburg in that era were not Germans but Eastern Europeans, and most of those were Jews. Thus, Bremen and Hamburg are the most likely ports of embarkation that Maurice would have left from.

New York was by far the busiest point of entry into the US at that time. Arriving ships were required to submit manifests of their passengers, and many of these manifests have been preserved on microfilm reels. The microfilm reels for 1905 and 1906 contain, for Boston, Philadelphia and

Baltimore, three months worth of passenger manifests, while the microfilm reels for New York fill up volume of microfilm space in only two days – March 30 and 31. Ten years ago I searched the indices for these manifests under the name Smoler, and all I could find was a record of High Smoler returning from a trip to Europe in 1948. This time I went through the actually passenger manifests for March 30, 1905 and 1906, for all ships arriving in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, looking for the name “Joseph Burnstein.” Irwin advises that Maurice told him that he came in through Boston. No passenger steamships arrived in Boston, Philadelphia or Baltimore on March 30, 1905 or 1906, and no ships from Germany arrived in Boston during the month of March 1906. Although neither Anne nor I could find any references to a Joseph Burnstein in the passenger manifests, two ships arrived in New York from Germany on March 29 and 30, 1906: the SS Rhein, which sailed from Bremen on March 17, and the Hamburg Amerika Line’s SS Pisa, which sailed from Hamburg on March 16.

In summary, I was unable to find any references to Joseph Burnstein, and therefore was unable to ascertain what his birthday might have been. I have taken this research as far as I can given the present technology and availability of data. Is there any further light that any of you can shed on this? If not, we will have to leave it a mystery, for future generations to pursue if they care to.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sam", with a horizontal line underneath it.

S-546

Family name

Smoler (Burnstein)

Given name of names
Joseph (Joseph)

Address

1638 S. Clifton St. N.W.

22

Birthplace (for foreign born)

P-37523

Place and location of court

Superior Court, Cook Co., Ill.

Government to which allied

Hungary

When born (to age)

June 5, 1879

Date and place of arrival in U.S.

Mar. 30, 1906

Place of arrival in U.S.

Feb. 20, 1920

Names and addresses of witnesses

Abraham Nathanson

1205 So. Lardine

Boris Smoler

1147 S. Kedzie

U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Form No. 1-IP.

Smoler (Smoller)		
Address 3963 W. 19th St.		
Certificate no. (or vol. and page) P-37818	Title and location of court Circuit Court, Cook County, Ill.	
Country of birth or allegiance Russia	When born (or age) Mar. 15, 1897	
Date and port of arrival in U. S. Aug 6, 1906 x	Date of naturalization May 5, 1921	
Names and addresses of witnesses Maurice Smoler, 1636 S. Clifton Pl., Ave Nathan Abraham Styrt, 9 Broadway, Belmont		
U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalization Service		

5-546		
Family name Smoler	Given name or names Boris	
Address 1127 S. Kedzie		
Certificate no. (or vol. and page) Pg. 35404	Title and location of court Superior Court, Cook Co., Ill.	
Country of birth or allegiance Russia	When born (or age) 12/14/1872	
Date and port of arrival in U. S. 5/20/1912 x	Date of naturalization 11/14/1919	
Names and addresses of witnesses A. Nathanson J. Besser 1225 S. Harding Ave. 3341 Douglas Blvd		
U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalization Service Form No. 11P		

S 546

Family name Smoler	Given name or names Harry
Address 815 S. California Ave.	Title and location of court Superior Court, Cook County, Ill.
Certificate no. (or vol. and page) P-54571-	When born (or age) Oct. 3, 1882.
Country of birth or allegiance Russia-	Date of naturalization June 15, 1923.
Date and port of arrival in U. S. July 15, 1905. x	
Names and addresses of witnesses Boris Smoler 438 S. Central Park Ave. Maurice Smoler 3638 Douglas Blvd.	

U. S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalization Service. Form No. 1-IP.

S 546

Family name Smoler	Given name or names Louis
Address 616 S. Lawndale Ave. Chgo.	Title and location of court U. S. Dist. Chgo.
Certificate no. (or vol. and page) p. 66862-en. 3018521	When born (or age) July 20, 1903
Country of birth or allegiance Russia	Date of naturalization Feb. 28, 1929
Date and port of arrival in U. S. Dec. 15, 1909-Phila, Pa.	
Names and addresses of witnesses Abraham A. Reebman-2502 W. Division St. Chgo. Joseph C. Patis-3131 Carlisle Pl. Chgo.	

U. S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalization Service. Form No. 1-IP.

1253 Independence Blvd.

Certificate no. (or vol. and page) P-9199	Title and location of court Circuit Court, Cook Co., Ill.
Country of birth or allegiance Russia	When born (or age) Sept. 1881
Date and part of arrival in U.S. Apr. 14, 1904 - Philadelphia, Pa.	Date of naturalization Oct. 30, 1913
Names and addresses of witnesses Morris Berger, 1351 N. Claremont Ave. Sam Steiner, 623 S. Marshfield Ave.	

U.S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Form No. 101

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11-343680

Family name Snoler	Given name of names Molly
Address 816 S. Halsted St., Chicago, Ill.	Title and location of court Dist. Court, Chicago, Ill.
Certificate no. (or vol. and page) P. 27245	When born (or age) Jan. 15, 1886
Country of birth or allegiance Russia	Date of naturalization
Date and part of arrival in U.S. Apr. 13, 1910 - St. Louis, Mo.	
Names and addresses of witnesses Rosa Gurelnick, 2224 Millmore St., Chicago, Ill. Anna Gurelnick, 2224 Millmore St., Chicago, Ill.	

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, Immigration and Naturalization Service, Form No. 25 (REV. 11-1-1909)

S 546

Family name Smoler	Given name or names Fred
Address 1904 S. Humlin Ave. Chgo.	
Certificate no. (or vol. and page) F-65641 CN-3010113	Title and location of court U.S. Dist. Ct. Chgo.
Country of birth or allegiance Russia	When born (or age) July, 15, 1906
Date and port of arrival in U.S. Dec. 15, 1909, Phila. Pa.	Date of naturalization Mar. 13, 1929
Names and addresses of witnesses Eugene Silverman 1904 S. Humlin Ave. Chgo. Aaron L. Herman 1305 West. Louis Ave. Chgo.	
U. S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalization Service. Form No. I-1.P.	

S - 5 4 6

Family name Smoler - (Samuels) Smoler)	Given name or names Stelick (Saelich) (Isidor)
Address 1122 S. Albany Ave. P 35353 CN 2505737	Chgo. Title and location of court U.S. Dist. Chgo.
Country of birth or allegiance Lithuania	When born (or age) Mar. 15, 1894.
Date and port of arrival in U.S. Feb. 1, 1912 N.Y.	Date of naturalization Oct. 14, 1927.
Names and addresses of witnesses Issao Malkin 1108 S. Central Ave. Chgo. Phillip Malekow 1121 S. Troy St. Chgo.	
U. S. Department of Labor, Immigration and Naturalization Service. Form No. I-1.P.	

