

## Report on the Segalovich and Botvinik Families of Rakov, Belarus

Two families in our database came from the same small city of Rakov, Belarus. This report was prepared by Dave Howard as a report to Peter Mayland.

I have some exciting family history news based on the information you have given me about your family. Your grandmother Mary Botvinik and my grandmother Rose Segal(ovich) came from the same little city. You and I might be much more closely related than we could ever imagine. Time will tell.

Here is what I have found. According to your records your mother's mother, Mary Botvinik was born in Rokov, Russia in September of 1892 (sic).

I have found your mother's birth record on the Internet at the highly regarded Jewishgen.org site. It is fortunate that the Botvinik name is not very common. However, in the city of Rakov, Belarus your family was prominent.



Rokov is a small city about 35 miles West of Minsk, the capital of what today is the country of Belarus.

What makes this exciting for me is that my grandmother, Rose Segal, was also from

Rakov, Belarus and was born about the same time.

Your grandmother was listed as Masia-Beila Botvinik born 8 Sep 1897 in the town of Kakovno, registered in the city of Rakov, Gubierna of Minsk.

Masia is a Russian form for the Hebrew name Miryem which is often translated into English as Mary. This is per *A Dictionary of Askenazic Given Names, Their Origins, Structure, Pronunciation, and Migrations* by Alexander Beider, p. 545.

From the same book I found that Beila is the Russian form for Bella (beautiful). It also is found in Yiddish as Bile or in Hebrew as Beyle. The name is found in the Bible in Genesis 29:29, Bilhah was the servant of Rachel and the mother of Dan and Naphtali by Jacob. In Italian it would be Bella.

Her father was Itsko Botvinik and his father was Srol' Botvinik.

Itsko is a form of the name Itskhok in the Bible at Genesis 21:3. In English we call him Isaac.

Srol is a variation of the name Hebrew name Isroel from the Bible, Genesis 32:28, Israel in English.

Her mother was the same name, Beila, and Beila's father was Movsha-Berko. It may be that Berko was the name of his father. I do not know the family name.

Movsha is a variation of the Hebrew name Moyshe from the Bible Exodus 2:10, Moses in English.

Berko is derived from the German Ber meaning bear. Among the Jews several animals were popular male names: Leyb (Lion), Hirsh (deer), Volf (kangaroo), and Ber (bear). Ber was also used among the Jews as a nickname for Isaac. So Movsha-Berko is the same as Moses-Bear.

I also found Itsko Srolevich (meaning son of Srol) Botvinik on the Minsk Home Owners List as living on Aleksandrovkaya Street #43, Minsk in 1911.

The problem with your grandmother's the birth record is that it is 5 years off from the year of birth you had. However, I have found that being 5 years off is pretty typical. What is more interesting is that it is a birth record for Mary Botvinik for a September birth in registered in the city of Rakov. I cannot believe that this is not your grandmother.

I was looking through other historical documents from the town of Rakov and I found a marriage record for one of my Segal relatives (really Sagalovich) and a witness to the marriage was a Botvinik.

One of your relatives has a web site with lots of information about your Botvinik family. I have cut and pasted some of that information into this letter. You can check it out for yourself by going to <http://www.eilatgordinlevitan.com/index.html>.

#### Russian wedding photographs of Faga and Nathan Botwinik



This was a pretty small town. I am sure my relatives knew your relatives pretty well. In fact, I will have my researcher check this out. It is possible that a few more generations back that the Sagalovich family and Botvinik family were related. Who knows, Bell and her father Moses-Bear might have been Sagalovichs

## Appendix A

### List of Rakov Jewish Martyrs from the Yizkor book:

<http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/rakow/rak187.html>

**(Only Members of Botvinik and Segalovich Families Listed Here)**

Murdered by the Nazi Germans & local bandits "Memory to Volozhin Region"  
published by the Volozhin Region Authorities, 1996 in Belaruss language page: 270  
Rewritten in English letters by M. Porat

#### Botvinik Family Members

Botvinik Aba with family  
Botvinik Avrom with family  
Botvinik Dair with family  
Botvinik Elka with family  
Botvinik Hendel with family  
Botvinik Isaak with family  
Botvinik Khayim with family  
Botvinik Leybe with family  
Botvinik Samuyil with family  
Botvinik Shmakla with family  
Botvinik Tsema with family  
Botvinik Yakov with family  
Botvinik Yidel with family

#### Segalovich Family Members

Sagalovitsh Fayva with family  
Sagalovitsh Hirsh with family

Sagalovitsh Khayim with family  
Sagalovitsh Shaya with family

## **Appendix B**

### **An Account of the Destruction of Rakov Jews**

The destruction of Rakov Jews Report written in August 1945 Translated From "MEMORY" Volozhin Region's Book in Belarussian language The committee head: Svitko I.T. - Committee members: Yatskaviets I.D., Kirzov P.M., Nissinov M.F., Garshkov, Lavrishkov, Batalin submitted this report about the crimes done by the Fascist occupants in the Radushkovits Region. Witnesses: Rutkovska Leonida B., Gerasimovitsh, Grinholtz Vosip, Isakovitzh, Grinholtz Aron, Davidovitsh.

The witnesses reported that on June 14 th , 1942, the Germans had assembled forty-five Jews in Rakov, as if to work. They were led to Baruzints two kilometers from Rakov. The Germans gave them shovels and ordered to dig pits. After the pits were ready, the Germans placed the forty-five captives facing the pits and shot them with machine guns.

The same year on August 29 th the Germans assembled all the Rakov-Ghetto Jews, forced them to dig pits, afterwards they counted hundred and five persons and ordered them to lie in those pits. All of them were shot at the gendarme Drobels command.

The Jews who survived were led to Rakov. On the way they were ordered to sing and to dance. Satisfied by the concert, the murderers forced all the captives to lie down with their faces to the soil. At the gendarme Ferverg's command they were shot, each according to the killers' choice. One of the bandits cut the physician's head off with his axe because he was not satisfied with the

victim's song. Also in this Action, one hundred and five persons were killed.

On, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1942, the Politsay commander Mikhal Ziankevitsh ordered all the Jews to assemble on the synagogue courtyard with their belongings for departure to Minsk. When the Jews assembled they were ordered to put all the valuables aside and to enter the synagogue. Some of them tried to go back, but they were beaten to death with rifle shafts. Crying children were pierced by rifle bayonets and thrown over the crowded heads. The synagogue doors and windows were blocked with nailed planks. The murderers spilled gasoline on the walls and set the building on fire. Nine hundred twenty eight Jews were burnt to death on that winter day in the Rakov synagogue.

## Appendix C

### NATIVES OF RAKOV IN THE ELIIS ISLAND DATA

Name Residence Arrived Age

### Botvinik Family Members

10. Ba...vinik, Zeile Rakov, Russia 1907 25 (Botvinik)
11. Barwinik, Basche Rakowo, Gub Minsk, Russia 1906 2
12. Batrmik, Schleime Rakow 1906 17
13. Batwinik, Liebe Rakowo, Gub Minsk, Russia 1906 32
14. Batwinik, Schimen Rakowo, Gub Minsk, Russia 1906 4
15. Batwinik, Sore Rakowo, Gub Minsk, Russia 1906 8
16. Beinschowitz, Chawe Rakow, Russia 1912 18
17. Belitzky, Chaie Rakow, Russia 1912 25
18. Bergmann, Mordche Rakow, Russia 1913 33
19. Berkowitz, Salman Rakowo, Russia 1910 17
20. Besser, Itzig Rakow, Russia 1907 18
21. Buienrowity, Riwke Rekew 1904 30
22. Braffman, Reisel Rachow, Russia 1913 18
23. Blacher, Minna Rakow 1904 4
24. Blacher, Rochel Rakow 1904 30



- 28 Botvinik, Abram Rakofi,  
Russia 1907 18
- 29 Botvinik, Bo...e Rakov,  
Russia 1907 21
- 30 Botwinick, Arsick Rakow  
1902 18
- 31 Botwinick, Benjamin Rakor,



Russia 1909 11  
32 Botwinick,Tamare Rakow 1902 23  
33 Botwinik,Abram Rakow, Poland 1922 12  
34 Botwinik,Bal Rakow 1905 18  
35 Botwinik,Chaja Rakow, Poland 1922 37  
36 Botwinik,Dawid Rakow, Poland 1922 8  
37 Botwinik,Elle Rakow 1906 22  
38 Botwinik,Jacob Rakow 1906 57  
39 Botwinik,Mila Rakow, Poland 1922 9  
40 Botwinik,Roche Rakow 1906 57  
41 Botwinik,Selde Rakow, Russia 1910 17  
    42 Botwinink,Itzchok Rakoff 1906 15  
43 Botwink,Girsch Rakowa, Russia 1909 10  
44 Botwink,Riwke Rakowa, Russia 1909 47  
45 Botwink,Uarsey Rakowa, Russia 1909 11  
46 Botwinnik,Zjsa Rakow, Russia 1913 18  
47 Budwinck,Roche Rakof 1905 21

Eveniya Samuilovna Botwinnik with family. (Zelda, daughter of Shmuil Botwinnik born in 1920 in Rakov)

48 Budwinik,Masche Rakow 1905 14  
49 Bortwinik,Rafael Rokow, Russia 1912 35  
50 Botivinek,Porech Rokaw, Russia 1910 46  
51 Botiviniak,Abram Rakofi, Russia 1907 18  
52 Botwienk,Sehanie Chane Rokaw, Russia 1909 18  
53 Botwinik,Leibe Rahew 1906 34  
54 Botwinik,Reioke Rahow 1903 18

### **Segalovich Family Members**

517 Sagalowetz,Abram Mistez..., Racoff, Russia 1911 46

518 Sagalowetz,Nochem Mistez..., Racoff, Russia 1911 9  
519 Sagalowicz,Chaim - Jankel Rakow, Russia 1914 26  
520 Sagalowitz,Beile Rakow, Russia 1912 4  
521 Sagalowitz,Chaim Rakow, Russia 1912 10  
522 Sagalowitz,Hirschel Rakow, Russia 1912 6  
523 Sagalowitz,Malke Rakow, Russia 1912 30  
524 Sagalowitz,Scheine Rakow, Russia 1912 14  
525 Sagalowitz,Sore Rakow, Russia 1912 19  
526 Sagalowitz,Ya...el Rakow, Russia 1912 30  
527 Sagalowitz,Zissel Rakow, Russia 1912 2  
528 Sagalowitz,Dweine Rakow, Russia 1912 11

## Appendix D

### Rakov before 1917

- IX century ❖ a settlement (sizes [m]: 660 x 300) was founded on the place of Rakov.
- XIV century ❖ Rakov was a possession of the Great Lithuanian Prince.
- 1465 ❖ Polish King and Great Lithuanian Prince Kazimir gave Rakov to Kizgaylo magnate family.
- 1550 ❖ Rakov became a possession of Zavisha noble family.
- 1568 - 1791 ❖ Rakov was a shtetle in Minsk Province of the Great Lithuanian Princedom.
- 2nd half of XVI century ❖ a Calvin church was founded in Rakov.
- 1st half of XVII century ❖ Rakov became a possession of Sangushcha magnate family and the center of Rakov County. Jewish population appeared.
- XVI century ❖ the Orthodox Church of Transfiguration was founded in Rakov.
- 1686 ❖ small Dominican Cloister of St. Spirit was founded by Konstantsia Sapega-Sangushcha in Rakov.
- 1701 ❖ King of Rech Pospolitaya August II awarded Rakov with a privilege to hold two annual fairs.
- 1702 ❖ Kazimir Sangushcha founded a Baselian monastery by the Church of Transfiguration.
- 1742 ❖ the Cloister of St. Spirit was destroyed by fire, but was rebuilt anew.

- 1791 - ❖ Rakov was a shtetle in Minsk Province of Polish Kingdom.  
1793
- Since ❖ in Russian Empire.  
1793
- 1794 ❖ Rakov was confiscated by Russian Empress Catherine the Great from Sangushcha magnate family and was given to Count Saltykov.
- Since ❖ Rakov was a shtetle in Minsk District of Minsk Province.  
1801
- 1804 ❖ Count Saltykov sold Rakov to Zdzikhovsky noble family.
- 1824 ❖ wooden Roman Catholic church and chapel were built by local Roman Catholic Brotherhood.
- 1835 ❖ the old Cloister of St. Spirit was closed, the church became a parochial one.
- 1839 ❖ the Baselian monastery was closed in Rakov, the church became a parochial one.

### **Vital Statistics**

Date	Number of Jews	Number of Non-Jews	Comments	Specific gravity in total population number
XVI century			Jewish population appeared	

176	785	No info	Male adults	No
5			only	info
185	1501		Total	No
9			population	info
188	About 3000		Total	over
6			population	50%
189	2168	1473	Both sexes	59,5 %
7				

190	4960	Total	No
5		population	info

## **Appendix E**

### **Jewish Life**

By 1900 in Rakov there were:

- a synagogue;
- 4 praying houses.

### **Economical Review.**

Since early time Isloch river was the main road and trade way for local habitants, who were busy with agriculture, pottery and livestock farming.

Since 1550, after Sangushcha magnate family had become Rakov possessor, the shtetle started to developed rapidly. Resident Jewish population appeared. Traditional activities of local Jewish population were growing of vegetables and trade with them, trade with grain and vodka.

Since XVIII century big market took place in Rakov every Monday.

During Russian principality, vodka trade was under state hard control and became less popular among Jewish businessmen. But Russian authorities did a lot to develop the region because of military and fiscal reasons mostly. First of all, old communications were reconstructed there:

- ❖ trade road Minsk - Pershay - Volozhin - Oshmyany;
- ❖ trade road Rakov - Vileyka.
- ❖

In XIX, because of development of the AllRussian Market, new types of communications appeared in the region.

Since 1873 the closest railway and telegraph stations were in Zaslavl (17 km).

ents provoked new rapid increase of Rakov. Soon after 1873 the dirt road  
ladoshkovichi was constructed.

e XIX - early XX century in Rakov and the Subdistrict there were:

ory;

machines building industry (seeding, mowing, threshing machines,  
s, etc.) (since 1843).

achines were popular not only in the locality, but in Pskov and St.  
vinces.

e XIX century Rakov became famous for horse thieving. The horses were  
vilno Province.

he table of development of Rakov in the 2nd half of XIX - early XX

<b>Date of record</b>	<b>Number of houses</b>
1859	140
1886	>200
1905	740

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**Here is the list of major business and enterprises of Rakov and the Subdistrict for 1902.**

Name of owner	Type of business	Nationality
<b>Abramov</b> Sholom son of ysel	Pharmacy	Jewish
<b>Galinker</b> Rasha son of sko	Fabric store	Jewish
<b>Ghinzburg</b> Yudel son of fendel	Iron store	Jewish
<b>Goldin</b> Pantiel son of vsey	Fabric store	Jewish
<b>Kats</b> Abram son of hatskel	Fabric store	Jewish

**General cultural information.**

- ❖ Before **1839** in the Cloister there were:
  - a rich library;
  - an archive;
  - a boarding house of St. Anna;
  - a hospital.
- ❖ After 1839 all those were taken by the Provincial Treasury and, probably, destroyed.
- ❖ In **beg. XX century** in Rakov there were:
  - the Roman Catholic Church of St. Spirit;
  - a Roman Catholic chapel;
  - the stone Orthodox church of Transfiguration;
  - an Orthodox chapel on the cemetery;
  - a Roman Catholic public primary school (since 1870s);
  - a post office and telegraph station (since 1887);



- a public primary school;
- a pharmacy.
- ❖ The closest doctor was in Zaslavl (17 km).
- ❖ Copyright 1997-1998 Oleg Perzashkevich

## Appendix F

### Rakov Commerce in 1929

- ❖ Rakow had populace of 3, 329 in 1929;
- ❖ Mayor; Pawel Lukaszewicz
- ❖ head of police?; Stan Okuniewicz
- ❖ Doctor; Noniewicz J.
- ❖ Dentist; Botwinik B.
- ❖ [I only extracted lists with either Peter's & Dave's relatives on it]
- ❖ Clothing; Ejdelman Z.- Gryngolc L and D.- Gurewicz E.- Kozlowski b and Gryngolc P.-
- ❖ Drinks; Gurewitz A.
- ❖ Hairdressers; Olaszkiwicz Sz.- Segalowicz H.- Sznitman Ch.
- ❖ Dry goods/notions/fancy goods- xAberzonska Ch.- xBotwinik G. — xFajn Ch.- Gurnicz B.- xGurwicz L. — Kagan J.- Liwszyc F. — Narkiewicz A. — Szapiro Z. — xSzaternik A. — Szajnowa S. — Tondor A. — xTrocka I.
- ❖ Blacksmith: Drukiar Sz — Finkel M. — Kisiel B. — Lipszyc S. — Naruszewicz M. — Segalowicz Z.
- ❖ Fabrics/Fabric merchants: Golynkier Ch. — xGotlibowicz G. — xLoterejczyk Z. — xManuisiowicz G. — Ruberman/Ruderman I. — Sagalowicz Sz. — xSzneider Ch.
- ❖ Butchers: Chaid A and Finkel J. — Finkiel E. — Ganelesy B. — Pogulanski M. — Sagalowicz S. — Strzalko A.
- ❖ Foodstuffs/food products: xArluk M. — Botwinnik M. — xCukierman A. — Fajn M. — Milsztejn D. — Rudenska Ch.
- ❖ Grains/cereals: Alperowicz Ch. — Botwinnik F. — Kagan M. — Kanterowicz M. — Kopelowicz G.
- ❖ Clocks/Watchmakers: xGurewicz A. — xGurewicz J.
- ❖ Grocers (of staple items, excluding bakery and dairy); XAlperovitz Ch.- XAlperovitz L.- Berkman I. - xBotwinik E.- xBotwinik J.
- ❖ xBrudner Ch.- Bulynko Kosowicz K.- xCybulski S.- xDanilowicz D. - Eidelman Ch.

- and Brawman K.- Engelzon M. - xFajn G.- Feldman A.- Gryngolc M. - xGurewicz Ch.- xIckowicz I.- xKacow g.- xKagan m.- xKagan W. - Kantorowicz B.- Kaplan M.- Kosowicz k. - xkozłowski D. - Krzywicki S. - xKukus R.- xLiwszyc R.- xLiwszyc S. - Lolerejczyk Ch.- Melcer H.- Milikowska M.- xpenczanska f.- Perelman F.- xProkopowicz M. - xPupkin M.- Pupko I.- xRabinowicz R.- xRothkowski A. - xRothkowski P.- Sagalowicz C.- Szepszejewicz N.- Szneider D.- Teif E.- Trocki L.-
- ❖ Kowale; Drukier Sz.- Finkiel M.- Kisiel B.- Lipszyc S.- Naroszewicz M.- Sagalowicz Z.
  - ❖ [The following is part of a larger list of businesses from the surrounding towns]

Exploitations forestieres: Dubin S., Kopelowicz A. & Norman B. (Per.) — Frajdrach J. (Borok) — Galperynow A., M., J., & Rapaport I. (Kuczi Per.) — Gurwicz Ch. (Kucz.) — Kagan W. (Krzyw)