

Guide to EIDB records from towns in the Kremenets District

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For the past year or so, the Kremenets District Research Group has been extracting and processing records from the Ellis Island Database that mention towns of the Kremenets District. We now have extracted all records for the towns of Shumskoye and Vishnevets and we have indexed two sets of unindexed fields: Person at Destination, and Nearest Relative at Origin.

The data are in an Excel 2007 spreadsheet, "EIDB Master.xlsx", which now is available for download on the Kremenets Shtetlinks website, <http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Kremenets/>. In the left-side menu, click on "Research: Projects, Documents and Databases", scroll down and click on Item 18, "Ellis Island Database Extractions". The spreadsheet has 1,041 records... 356 for immigrants from Shumsk, 684 from Vishnevets, and 1 (so far) from Vyshgorodok. These records have produced 2,929 entries in the Concordance. Records for other towns will be added as processing and proofreading are completed. We soon will add almost 1,500 records from Kremenets.

As you peruse the spreadsheet, you will notice that (1) a large number of entries are grossly misspelled in the EIDB transcription and therefore are very difficult to locate by standard methods, and (2) a large number of name entries were indexed incorrectly by the Ellis Island folks and lead to the wrong manifest. As described below, our project has corrected both of these problems.

To extract records from the EIDB using town names, we had to recognize the many ways in which town names could be spelled. There is almost no consistency in town name spelling in the manifests, and transcription errors when the EIDB was created compounded the problem. We used a variety of approaches to create a glossary of town name spelling variations and used this glossary to extract town-based records from the EIDB. As a result, we found 81 variations in spelling for Shumsk and 205 variations for Vishnevets. These are shown in the EIDB Master spreadsheet, in a worksheet named "Variant spelling of town names".

Data from the spreadsheet also are in the One-Step searchable "Indexed Concordance of Personal Names and Town Names", on our Shtetlinks website. Be sure to read our "Introduction and Guides ..." document. It tells you how to use the cryptic entries that are in the "Location in Source" column of the Concordance. Basically, we have used the Passenger ID (PID), a unique value for each passenger, as the index key in the Concordance. The Passenger ID (PID) can be used in Steve Morse's One Step Search Engine (<http://www.stevemorse.org/ellis/pid.html>) to locate the manifest image. However, about 5.2% of the Ellis Island database entries that we have examined have PIDs that lead to the wrong manifest. In these cases we have determined the URL that will take you to the correct manifest. However, since most of these URLs are extremely long, we have used Google's URL shortening algorithm to provide you with "shortened" URLs. These shortened URLs are in the PID column of the spreadsheet and are used in the "Location in Source" column of the Concordance.

In addition, 10.8% of the given name entries and 8.4% of the surname entries in the Ellis Island Database are mistranscribed. Many of these errors are so serious that a Soundex search will not locate the correct name. We have corrected these mistranscriptions. The corrections as well as the original EIDB spelling are shown in the spreadsheet.

When you examine the spreadsheet, try re-sorting it on the destination address columns, and also on the origin columns. You may find some family associations that previously were not known. Those two sets of fields currently are not indexed in the original Ellis Island data set. By comparing names of passengers, person left behind in the old country, and person/relationship at destination, you also will be able to spot family names that changed after immigration. Susan gave a presentation about all this at the 2010 Kremenets-Shumsk *Askara* in Israel. Her PowerPoint presentations (one for Shumsk and one for Vishnevets) are available for download on our Shtetlinks website.

Many thanks to Susan Sobel and Mark Baich for their work on this project. Please let me know if you find any errors or items that need correction in the spreadsheet.

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