

The Vital Records of Kremenets

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Introduction

Over the past several years, Jewish genealogists have benefited greatly from Mormon microfilming activity in Eastern Europe. The Mormon effort, along with new indices created by Jewish Records Indexing - Poland (JRI-Poland) have made it possible for us to locate Eastern European records of our ancestors without the high costs of hiring professional researchers. This is something many of us never expected to experience. In addition, projects like JewishGen and JRI-Poland have shown how beneficial cooperative volunteer activity can be in making these long sought after records freely accessible to all. But there is another aspect of this availability that we should be investigating. In aggregate, these records offer an historical glimpse into the lives of our ancestors. By analyzing how birth, marriage and death patterns varied over a period of time for a given locality, and by comparing one locality to another, we may be able to gain some greater insight into the lives of our ancestors.

This article presents the first part of such an analysis based on the vital records for Kremenets, Ukraine for the years 1870-1872. I suggest that a coordinated effort should be made to do similar analyses of records that are available for other areas. Coordination is important, because by comparing the results for one town to those for another in the same region, and to results for towns across regions, we can search for patterns in the data. Such patterns, and exceptions to them, can help us better understand how social, political, economic, and health events affected the Jewish populations of Eastern Europe.

Background

In 1999, the Genealogical Society of Utah announced that they had microfilmed the vital records of Kremenets, Ukraine, and had made them available through the LDS Family History Library. I ordered copies of the microfilms through my local Family History Center (FHC). When they arrived, I eagerly trekked to the FHC in anticipation of finding records for my paternal grandparents. The fact that the records were in Russian and Hebrew/Yiddish didn't daunt me as I thought I would be able to recognize the Cyrillic and Hebrew characters on my surname list. As I scrolled through those films my disappointment mounted. I had not anticipated that the records would be handwritten and that it would be so difficult to transliterate a 19th century scrawl.

My next encounter with those records was at the LDS Family History Library during the 20th International IAJGS Conference in Salt Lake City in July 2000. Thanks to the Library staff and to volunteer IAJGS mavens at the Library, I was able to get enough help to identify the birth records for my paternal grandparents, as well as their marriage record.

Still, like many others who have traveled this route, I found it rather tedious to sit in a darkened room, without easy access to all my reference materials, while scrolling through reel upon reel of microfilms, trying to translate handwritten scribbles of 19th century Russian and Yiddish/Hebrew.

At the Conference, I met other Kremenets researchers who were having similar problems. Sheree Roth, one of those researchers, and I discussed these problems, trying to think of a better way to locate our ancestors' records. I remembered some of Stanley Diamond's presentations about the volunteer efforts that were producing English language vital records indexes on the web site of JRI-Poland. Because Kremenets was part of Poland between World Wars I and II, Stanley was receptive to our proposal to create a Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP under the auspices of JRI-Poland.

He suggested that we begin by creating an inventory of the Kremenets records. Sheree scrolled through all seven reels and recorded the number of records of each type, for each year. I entered Sheree's data into a series of Excel spreadsheets and did some analysis of the holdings. This article describes the inventory we created, and illustrates the kind of analysis that availability of the records allows.

A Brief History

Kremenets (50°6'N, 25°43'E) is the accepted modern spelling of the Ukrainian town's name, but when under Polish rule, the name was spelled Krzemieniec. Variations in spelling include: Kremenits, Kremenetz, and Kremenitz. There also are similarly named towns in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Germany, the Slovak Republic, Macedonia, Russia, and Serbia (JewishGen ShtetlSeeker).

Kremenets is one of the oldest cities of Ukraine. It was first mentioned in the Hypatian Chronicle for the year 1226 (Freenet.Kiev). The first mention of Jews in Kremenets is for the year 1438, when the Grand Duke of Lithuania gave them a charter, although the Center for Jewish Art notes that Jews were present in Kremenets as early as the 14th century (Center for Jewish Art, 1998). The city served as a royal residence after Poland and Lithuania united in 1569. It remained part of Poland until the second partition in 1793, when it came under Russian rule. The Versailles Treaty, ending World War I, returned Kremenets to the restored nation of Poland in 1919, where it remained until the Germans and Russians divided Poland, restoring Russian rule in 1939. (The Columbia Encyclopedia; Malvi)

Under Russian and Polish rule, Kremenets was a Uyezd in the Guberniya of Volhynia. With the rearrangement of political entities that took place after World War II, Kremenets became one of 16 Raions in the Oblast of Ternopil', Ukraine. Uyezds and Raions are similar to U.S. counties or regions. Guberniyas and Oblasts are similar to

U.S. states and Canadian provinces. Currently, there are 25 Oblasts in Ukraine.

The current population of Kremenets is about 25,000. Today there are no Jews resident in the town. The Nazis destroyed the Jewish community of Kremenets. Except for those who left Kremenets before the war and 14 Holocaust survivors, all 15,000 Jews who lived in Kremenets in 1941 were murdered.

The LDS Kremenets Microfilms

Since 19th century Kremenets was a district center (a *Uyezd*), many of the records for people from nearby towns were created there. Although we don't yet know how many towns are represented in the Kremenets vital records, JewishGen's ShtetlSeeker reports that there are 377 towns within 30 miles of Kremenets.

Table 1A - Column headings for births register

Part I. Information about New Born							
Number		Circumcision Performed By	Day and Month of Birth/Circumcision		Birth place	Social Status of father and name of father and mother.	Who was born and what name given to him or her.
Female	Male		Christian (Date)	Jewish (Date)			

Table 1B - Column headings for marriage register

Part I. Information about Couple.						
Number		Who Performed the Marriage Ceremony	Day and Month of Death		Main vows and responsibilities between those to be married and the names of those who witnessed the vows.	Names of who got married and the names and status of their parents
Female	Male		Christian (Date)	Jewish (Date)		

Table 1C - Column heading for death register

Part I. Information about Deceased.							
Number		Place of Death and burial place	Day and Month of Death		Age	Illness, or other cause of death...	Who died.
Female	Male		Christian (Date)	Jewish (Date)			

The Kremenets Jewish vital records are on seven rolls of microfilms (LDS Catalog No. 2086060 through 2086066) containing about 15,000 records on about 10,000 pages. Half the pages are in Russian handwriting. The other half is a mirror image in handwritten Yiddish and Hebrew, but sometimes with different or additional information. The films cover Jewish birth, marriage, divorce, and death records for the period 1870 to 1907. There is no index to them. Still, the records are an incredibly rich source of genealogical information. Typically, the birth records include not only the given names of the child, but also the mother's given name, and the father's given name, surname and sometimes his patronymic. Some records include the father's social class. Some show the town or shtetl in which

the father is registered. This often is different from Kremenets, but usually is nearby. The patronymic of the newborn's father sometimes is given; this extends the family's names back another generation. Records for male births give the name of the Mohel. Death records state the cause of death and the decedent's age. Marriage records give the mother's maiden name and sometimes her father's registration town. Table 1a through Table 1c show English translations of the column headings that appear on the vital record registers. (Bronstein).

Table 2 -Summary of Jewish vital records of Kremenets on LDS microfilm, 1870-1907

Record Type	Quantity of each type of record			Estimated No. of Pages
	Female	Male	Total	
Birth	4,011	4,758	8,769	2,961
Marriage	na	na	315	158
Divorce	na	na	8	4
Death	2,760	3,012	5,772	1,812
TOTAL	6,771	7,770	14,864	4,935

Table 2 summarizes the contents of the LDS Jewish vital records holdings for Kremenets. In the detailed year-by-year inventory (Table 3), a blank cell, or a zero entry, indicates that no microfilmed records exist for that type, in that year. Both tables, as well as translations of the records, are posted in the Kremenets section of the JRI-Poland website, <<http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/>>. Select either "Contents of the Databases" or "Shtetl CO-OPs ..." and scroll down to the Kremenets listing. All this information also is on the Kremenets Shtetlinks web site, <<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Kremenets/>>. These sites also contain an alphabetically indexed Surname List derived from translations of vital records, Yizkor Books and other sources. The CO-OP posts additions to the List as well as translations of the full records as they become available.

Although the microfilmed records cover the period 1870 through 1907, birth and death records for several years are missing:

- There are no LDS microfilmed Jewish birth records for 1887, nor for years prior to 1870, and from 1907 onward.
- There are no LDS microfilmed Jewish marriage records for 1903, nor for years prior to 1899, and from 1905 onward.
- LDS microfilmed Jewish divorce records exist only for 1904.
- There are no LDS microfilmed Jewish death records for 1879, 1898, 1899, and 1903, nor for years prior to 1870, and from 1908 onward.

Table 3 - Inventory of Jewish vital records of Kremenets

Year	LDS film #, Item #	No. of Births			LDS film #, Item #	No. of Deaths			LDS film #, Item #	No. of Marriages
		Female	Male	Total		Female	Male	Total		
1870	2086060, 2	114	149	263	2086060, 3	119	121	240		
1871	2086060, 4	127	148	275	2086060, 3	105	101	206		
1872	2086060, 5	93	142	235	2086060, 3	146	118	264		
1873	2086060, 6	116	143	259	2086060, 7	94	79	173		
1874	2086060, 8	129	119	248	2086060, 9	100	112	212		
1875	2086060, 10	116	130	246	2086060, 9	74	70	144		
1876	2086060, 11	125	119	244	2086060, 12	64	77	141		
1877	2086060, 13	119	141	260	2086060, 14	94	88	182		
1878	2086060, 15	122	114	236	2086060, 16	105	98	203		
1879	2086060, 17; 2086061, 1	172	210	382						
1880	2086061, 2	73	88	161	2086061, 3	90	104	194		
1881	2086061, 4	102	118	220	2086061, 5	82	115	197		
1882	2086061, 6	91	125	216	2086061, 7	79	98	177		
1883	2086061, 8	84	139	223	2086061, 9	69	75	144		
1884	2086061, 10	95	123	218	2086061, 11	42	68	110		
1885	2086061, 12	109	111	220	2086061, 11	77	78	155		
1886	2086061, 13	95	136	231	2086061, 14	58	57	115		
1887					2086062, 1	69	71	140		
1888	2086062, 3	47	53	100	2086062, 2	76	84	160		
1889	2086062, 3	104	133	237	2086062, 4	163	156	319		
1890	2086062, 5	92	96	188	2086062, 6	66	73	139		
1891	2086062, 7	102	126	228	2086062, 6	73	70	143		
1892	2086062, 8	104	123	227	2086062, 9	64	93	157		
1893	2086063, 1	81	129	210	2086062, 9	60	86	146		
1894	2086063, 2	139	124	263	2086063, 3	119	133	252		
1895	2086063, 3	99	117	216	2086063, 5	71	73	144		
1896	2086061, 11; 2086063, 6	171	243	414	2086063, 5	72	76	148		
1897	2086063, 7	108	128	236	2086064, 1	65	95	160		
1898	2086064, 2	132	128	260						
1899	2086064, 3	135	150	285					2086064, 2	54
1900	2086064, 5	109	136	245	2086064, 7	80	97	177	2086064, 6	63
1901	2086064, 8	128	140	268	2086064, 7	72	68	140	2086064, 9	60
1902	2086065, 1	107	144	251	2086065, 3	64	85	149	2086065, 2	70
1903	2086065, 4	128	139	267						
1904	2086065, 5	136	157	293	2086064, 11; 2086065, 10	48	51	99	2086065, 6; 2086065, 7	68
1905	2086065, 9	111	105	216	2086065, 10	82	98	180		
1906	2086065, 11; 2086066, 1	96	132	228	2086066, 2	69	85	154		
1907					2086066, 2	49	59	108		
Totals		4011	4758	8769		2760	3012	5772		315

Russian Orthodox records follow the Jewish death records on film #2086066. Item 3 on this film is an index covering 1838-1907. Item 4 covers 1880-1882 & 1889. Item 5 covers 1890-1896. Item 6 covers 1897-1905. Item 7 covers 1862 and contains no Hebrew. We do not yet know if any Jewish vital records are included in the Russian Orthodox records.

Birth and Death Rate Analysis

Figure 1 shows line graphs of male, female, and total births each year from 1870 to 1907. The Jewish population of Kremenets was 3,791 in 1847 and 6,539 in 1897 (Encyclopedia Judaica). Assuming linear growth over this period (giving a population of 5,078 in 1870), the 1870 birth rate was about 52 per 1,000 population, decreasing to 36 per thousand in 1897. As expected, even the low end of this range is considerably higher than Ukraine's 9 births per thousand in the year 2000. In comparison, the year 2000 birthrate for the U.S. was 14 per thousand (CIA World Factbook).

Fig. 1 - Kremenets births, 1870-1907

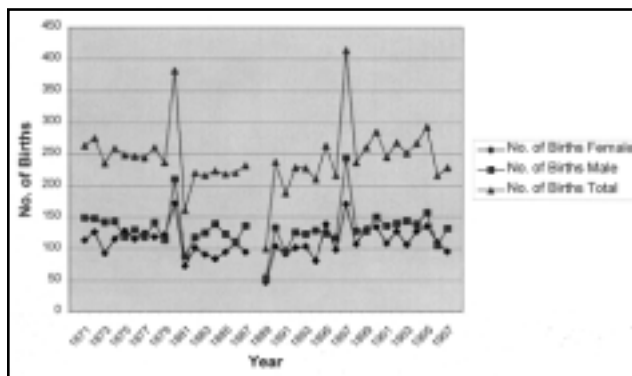


Fig. 2 - Kremenets death records, 1870-1907

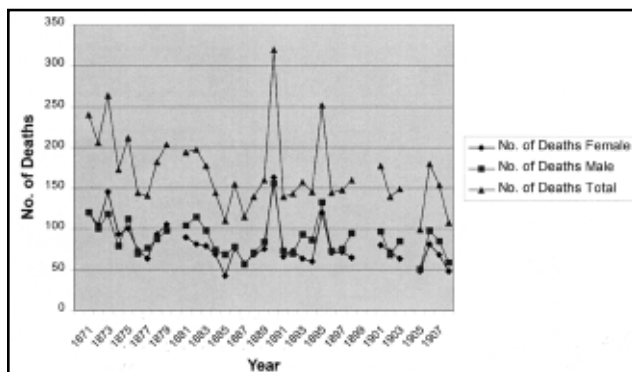
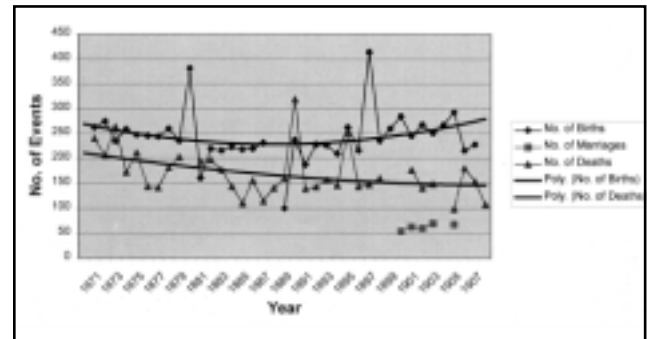


Figure 2 shows male, female and total deaths each year from 1870 to 1907. The Jewish death rate was about 48 per 1,000 population in 1870, decreasing to 24 per thousand in 1897. For comparison, Ukraine's death rate in the year 2000 death was 16 per thousand; and for the U.S. it was 8.7 per thousand (CIA World Factbook).

Figure 3 shows total births, marriages and deaths for the period. Although conventional wisdom tells us that recorded male births should be lower than female births because of the desire to hide Jewish males from the Tsar's military, the data for Kremenets do not confirm this. In fact, in all but 6 years of this 38-year period, recorded male births exceed female births; and for the period as a whole, male births exceed female births by 19%. In the same period, male deaths exceeded female deaths by only 9%.

Fig. 3 - Kremenets births, marriages, deaths 1870-1907



The graphed data (Figure 3) for the 38-year period show several anomalies that are difficult to explain.

- The total number of births was fairly steady over the entire 38 year period, gradually declining until about 1888, then rising slowly through the rest of the period. This is indicated most clearly by the 2nd order curve fit to the data in Figure 3.
- There are two very large upside spikes in births in 1879 and 1896. The 1879 spike is followed by a significant downward spike in 1880. This implies that births in 1880 may have been mis-recorded, after the fact, for 1879. However, the figures show two other downward spikes, in 1888 and 1905. The spikes appear in both male and female data, but are more pronounced for males. We do not have an

Table 4 - Kremenets births and deaths by month

Month	1870 No. of Births	1870 No. of Deaths	1871 No. of Deaths	1872 No. of Deaths	No. of Deaths 1870-1872
Jan	34	37	26	9	37
Feb	16	17	24	14	17
Mar	20	28	22	13	28
Apr	29	14	14	18	14
May	15	10	9	14	10
Jun	30	14	15	25	14
Jul	26	25	8	32	25
Aug	23	27	24	54	27
Sep	23	26	21	55	26
Oct	10	5	13	16	5
Nov	13	21	8	5	21
Dec	23	17	19	9	17

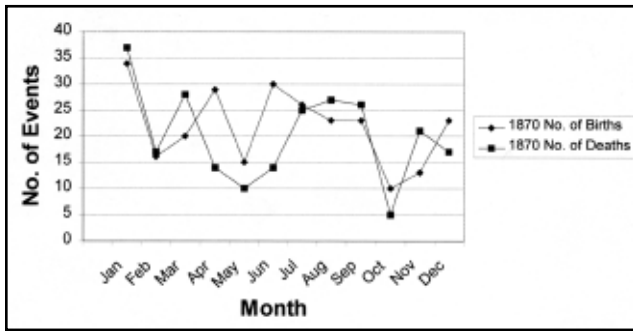


Fig. 4 - Kremenets monthly births and deaths, 1870

explanation for these downward spikes, nor for the 1896 upward spike.

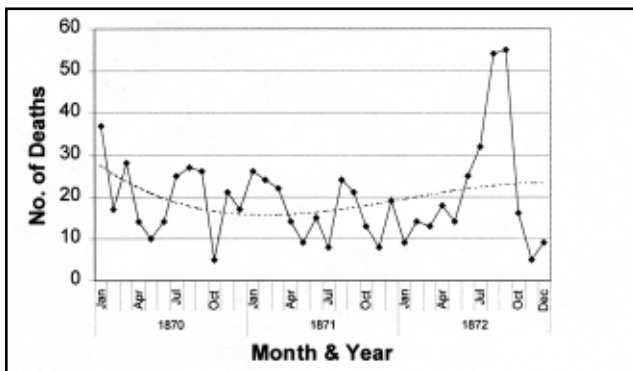
There was a steady, but irregular decline in both male and female deaths from 1870 through 1907. Two very large upside spikes, in 1889 and 1894, for both males and females have no explanation. However, as we translate additional records and examine causes of death in these years, we may be able to explain the sudden increase in deaths.

Examining data for individual years provides some additional insight into the conditions our ancestors faced. Table 4 shows monthly numbers of births for 1870 and deaths for 1870 through 1872. (As we translate additional years, we will expand this table.) Figure 4 is a graph of the data for 1870. It shows that births and deaths follow similar seasonal trends, although seasonal variation is more pronounced for the death data. Figure 5 indicates that the death rate tends to peak in mid-winter (December through February) and late summer (July through August). The dotted line in Figure 5 is a second order curve fit to the data to help illustrate the trend in death rate. To explain the very high peak in deaths in summer 1872 we have to dig deeper into the vital records.

Causes of Death and Age at Death

The seven leading causes of death for the three-year period from 1870 through 1872 were convulsions, cholera, measles, old age, consumption, typhoid fever, and scarlet fever (Table 5). They account for three-fourths of all deaths

Fig. 5 - Kremenets monthly deaths, 1870-1872



Causes of Death	1870 No. of Deaths	1871 No. of Deaths	1872 No. of Deaths	No. of Deaths 1870-1872	Percent of Total	Cumulative Percent
Convulsions	41	38	40	119	16.7%	16.7%
Cholera	0	12	101	113	15.9%	32.6%
Measles	32	40	17	89	12.5%	45.1%
Old age	28	30	28	86	12.1%	57.2%
Consumption	29	21	16	66	9.3%	66.5%
Typhoid fever	9	12	16	37	5.2%	71.7%
Scarlet fever	0	1	32	33	4.6%	76.4%
Typhus	12	19	1	32	4.5%	80.9%
Diarrhea	17	4	4	25	3.5%	84.4%
Fever	16	5	2	23	3.2%	87.6%
Pox	17	4	1	22	3.1%	90.7%
Encephalitis	7	5	0	12	1.7%	92.4%
Pneumonia	8	3	0	11	1.5%	94.0%
Other	25	12	6	43	6.0%	100.0%
Total	241	206	264	711		

Table 5 - Kremenets, causes of death, 1870-1872

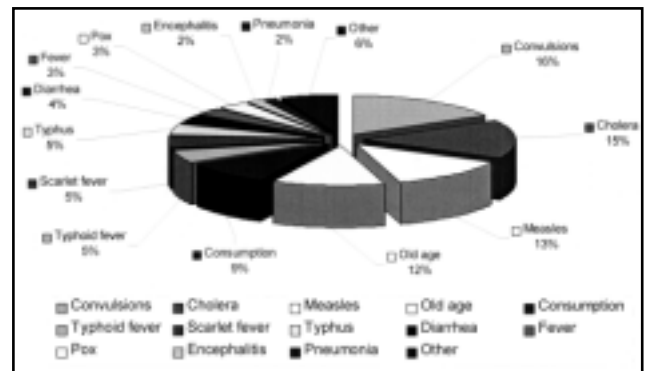
in that period. Epidemics ravaged the community periodically. Illnesses such as typhus, diarrhea, ‘fever’, pox, encephalitis, and pneumonia also caused significant numbers of deaths. “Other” causes in Table 5 include tumors, cough, croup, jaundice, swelling, birth, drowning, inflammation of intestines, ‘water’, weakness, whooping cough, and rheumatic fever. Each was less than 1% of the total.

The periodic outbreak of epidemics must have struck terror in the community. There were no deaths from cholera or scarlet fever in Kremenets in 1870. But in August and September 1871, cholera struck, and 12 people died. In July 1872, cholera struck again. This time the onset of cholera was even worse, as it came on the heels of a scarlet fever epidemic that claimed 33 lives in June and July, almost all of them children under the age of 8. The cholera epidemic continued unabated through September. Together, cholera and scarlet fever were responsible for 50.3% of the 264 deaths in Kremenets in 1872.

Several conclusions about causes of death stand out when we examine the aggregate data for the entire three-year period (Figure 6).

“Convulsions”, the leading cause of death, occurred relatively evenly throughout the year. Almost all of its victims were very young children, under the age of 4.

Fig. 6 - Kremenets, causes of death, 1870-1872



- Typhoid and typhus were periodically epidemic, striking primarily in the cold weather months. Note the buildup of deaths from typhoid fever from 1870 (9 deaths) through 1872 (16 deaths).
- Measles was a perennial killer. It's victims inevitably were very young children, almost all under the age of 4.
- Heart disease and cancer are notably absent from the list of killers. But "old age" very likely is a synonym for these diseases.
- The records include 1 death by hanging and one drowning, but there is no other indication of suicide, and death by murder is not listed at all.

The vital records allow us to take a closer look at the toll that disease took on different age groups (Table 6 and Figure 7). A handful of people were age 75 or greater when they died (6 in 1870, 12 in 1871, 10 in 1872). But, childhood was a very dangerous time in Kremenets. Young children were particularly vulnerable to death from convulsions, cholera, scarlet fever, and measles (Table 7 and Figure 8).

- Almost two-thirds of deaths each year were among children, age 12 and younger.
- One of every four to five infants (aged one and younger) died each year.
- All 40 deaths from measles in 1871 were among children age 4 or younger.
- 38 out of 40 deaths from convulsions in 1872 were children aged 4 or younger.
- Children less than 12 years of age comprised 68% of the 101 deaths from cholera between July and October 1872.
- All 32 deaths from scarlet fever in 1872 were children 8 years of age or younger.

The numbers, of course, tell only part of the story. I can only imagine the anxiety and anguish that mothers and fathers, our ancestors, experienced as their children died from scarlet fever and cholera in the epidemics of 1872, the year my paternal grandmother Reizl Vurer was born in Kremenets.

Table 6 - Number of deaths by age group. 1870-1872

Age Range	1870 No. of Deaths	1871 No. of Deaths	1872 No. of Deaths	No. of Deaths 1870-1872
<1 mo.	9	17	10	36
1 to 6 mos.	20	17	16	53
6 mos. to 1 yr.	31	18	23	72
1 to 6 yrs	93	69	91	253
6 to 12 yrs	9	2	26	37
12 to 18 yrs	2	7	6	15
18 to 50 yrs	29	26	38	93
50 to 75 yrs	39	38	41	118
> 75 yrs	6	12	10	28
not given	3	0	3	6
All Ages	241	206	264	711

Other Kremenets Records

Miriam Weiner's book, "Jewish Roots in Ukraine and Moldova" (Weiner, 1999) identifies the following Kremenets records in Ukrainian state archives:

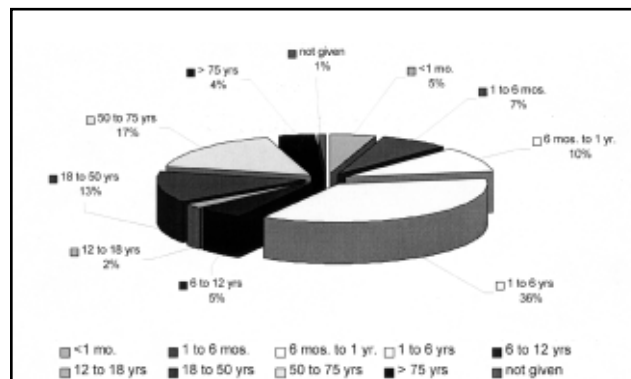
- Marriage records for 1907 (in State Archives in Ternopil'), 1914-1915, 1917-1919, 1921-1922, 1924-1926, 1930, 1933, and 1935-1939 (in ZAGS Archive in Ternopil');
- Birth records for 1908-1915, 1917, 1921-1925, 1929-1930, 1932, 1935, and 1938 (in ZAGS Archive in Ternopil');
- Death records for 1898, 1904, 1909-1911, 1913-1915, 1917-1918, 1921, 1924-1926, 1928-1931, and 1936-1937 (in ZAGS Archive in Ternopil');
- Census records for the town of Kremenets for the years 1834, 1858, 1874, 1886, 1926;
- Census records for Kremenets Uezd exist for the years 1811, 1814, 1869, and 1925;
- School records for years 1914-1928;
- Notary records for 1920-1939.

The LDS has not yet microfilmed any of these records.

In addition, two Yizkor Books exist (one edited by A.S. Stein was published in New York and Israel, the other, edited by P. Lerner, was published in Buenos Aires, Argentina). Lerner's Yizkor Book for Kremenets includes the nearby shtetls of Vishgorodek and Pochayev. Also, from 1967 through 1982, the Organization of Kremenets Emigrants published a series of at least 18 booklets. The booklets were published in Tel Aviv and distributed to Kremenetsers worldwide through representatives in New York, Buenos Aires, and Winnipeg. Beginning with Booklet 16 in 1979, the title and content were changed to include emigrants from Shumsk (Szumsk, Shumskoye; 50 07 N / 26 07 E, 17.8 miles E. of Kremenets) as well as Kremenets. The books are in Yiddish and Hebrew. The Stein book has scattered Russian, Polish, and Latin text. CO-OP volunteers have translated sections of each book. The translations are posted on the Kremenets section of JewishGen's Yizkor Book Project website, <http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/>.

- Stein, Abraham Samuel. (ed.) (1954). Pinkas Kremenits (Pinkas Kremeniec: A Memorial, Sefer Zikharon). Tel Aviv,

Fig. 7 - Number of deaths by age group, 1870-1872



Causes of Death	Age Ranges								
	<1 mo.	1 to 6 mos.	6 mos. to 1 yr.	1 to 6 yrs	6 to 12 yrs	12 to 18 yrs	18 to 50 yrs	50 to 75 yrs	> 75 yrs
Convulsions	10	9	9	7	0	1	0	0	0
Cholera	1	4	5	50	12	3	17	13	1
Measles	0	0	1	14	1	0	1	0	0
Consumption	0	1	1	1	0	2	8	0	0
Typhoid fever	0	0	0	2	0	1	9	4	0
Scarlet fever	2	4	4	15	6	0	0	1	0

Table 7 - Causes of death and age at death, 1872

Israel: Former residents of Kremenits in Israel. One volume, 453 pp., Hebrew & Yiddish.

· Lerner, P. (ed) (1965). Kremenits, Vishgorodek un Pitshayev; yisker-bukh (Memorial Book of Krzemieniec). Buenos Aires: Former residents of Kremenits and vicinity in Argentina. 468 pages. Yiddish.

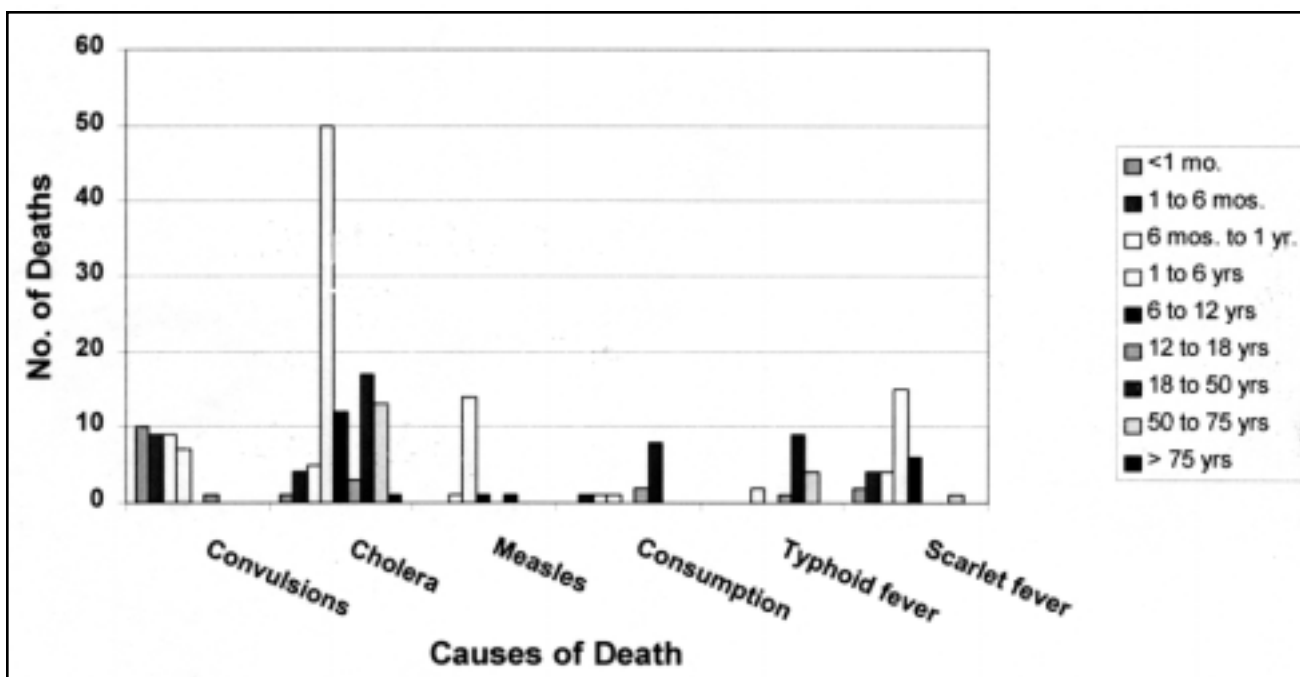
· Goldenberg, M.; Y. Rokhel, A. Argman, M. Ot-iker, Yehoshua Golberg (eds.). Kol yotzei Kremenits baYisrael v'batfutsot (Voices of those who departed Kremenets, in Israel and the Diaspora), Hebrew-Yiddish. Title on back cover is "Kremenitzer Landslayt Shtime, in Yisrael un Oysland." Published by Organization of Kremenets Emigrants, 67 La Guardia St., Tel Aviv, Israel 67221. Booklet 11, 58 pp., May 1974.

Another rich source of information recently became available. An August 1997 research expedition by the Center

for Jewish Art of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to Kremenets documented 50 tombstones from the 16th century and 70 from the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as numerous 19th and 20th century tombstones. Although the old section of the cemetery is deteriorating and 25% of the old tombstones are crumbling, engravings on the remaining stones are legible. (Center for Jewish Art, 1998) The CO-OP is mounting an effort to translate these monuments.

The Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP is a volunteer organization operating under the auspices of the Jewish Records Indexing - Poland Project (JRI-Poland). More than 75 descendants of Kremenetsers are on the CO-OP's e-mail distribution list. Of these volunteers, 33 have offered to contribute to the CO-OP's translation projects. The CO-OP maintains a website on JewishGen's Shtetlinks (<<http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Kremenets>>). A history of Kremenets from 1438 to the present is available on the Shtetlinks website. An "Introduction to the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP" is available on JRI-Poland's Shtetl CO-OP web

Fig. 8 - Kremenets, cause of death and age at death, 1872



page; Go to <http://www.jewishgen.org/jri-pl/kremenets.htm>. The site also has information about the CO-OP's various translation activities as well as Surname Lists derived from the vital records and the Kremenets Yizkor Books. Yizkor Book translations are available on JewishGen's Yizkor Book Project website, <http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor>. For more information about the CO-OP, contact Ron Doctor (rondoctor@qwest.net) or Sheree Roth (ssroth@pacbell.net).

Next Steps

As Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP volunteers translate additional records, our database will grow and new analyses will become possible. Hopefully, others will examine their own shtetl data and do similar analyses. However, as I suggested in the Introduction to this article, it is desirable to create a cooperative effort to analyze the vital records of other towns and to compare analyses across towns and regions. It seems to me that the logical home for such an effort is JewishGen. Perhaps we could form a JewishGen Special Interest Group (SIG) dedicated to analysis of the vital records of Eastern Europe. This would require cooperation from groups like JRI-Poland and SIGS that have accumulated databases of translated vital records. If any readers of this article have any other suggestions, or want to participate in such an expanded analytical effort, please contact me at rondoctor@qwest.net <<mailto:rondoctor@qwest.net>>. I will be happy to help coordinate an initial effort until someone more skilled than I can lead it.

In many ways the Kremenets Shtetl CO-OP, and other groups like it, are the modern incarnations of yesterday's landsmanshaftn, but with many more resources available. Through the CO-OP, the third and fourth generation descendants of Kremenetsers are preserving the memory of their ancestors and of their ancestral home. Nazi Germany may have succeeded in murdering all but 14 of the 15,000 Jewish residents of Kremenets in the Holocaust, but our ancestors' memories live on through our activities. We now have the means to expand those activities. We should not squander this opportunity.

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Sacramento FHC seminars in the spring and fall, IGS Burbank, SGGEE Convention (Tacoma) and at the FEEFHS convention (Milwaukee). They are also planned for the FEEFHS Regina convention next July, where I will have an Internet connection and will try to solve your problems. These lectures are also available for any organization.

FEEFHS WebSite Additions in 2001

So much has been added to the web, in terms of updates, new finding aids and other new stuff, that I could fill all the pages of this FEEFHS Journal with a list of all the URL's and still not explain their importance. Just because the front page is not updated does not mean there is no activity. New stuff is added virtually every day I am at my Salt Lake City office. The SWISH search engine adds it to the WebSite Index every morning at 12.01 a.m. We continue to get contacts from over 110 countries on 6 continents and every so often one from Antarctica appears. So we know we are helping many genealogists this way.

Remember, its an easy 3 step process to always find anything on our 300+ meg WebSite: 1) open <<http://feefhs.org>> 2) go to / click on the WebSite index and 3) type in your ancestral surname, locality, organization name, microfilm number (or any keyword) and click on search. Active researchers should check their names and localities every 3 to 6 months at a minimum.