Finding Hillel

Carol Flesher 2019
The Cast of Characters

Yom Tov Chaslavsky

Joseph Handlin

Ida Yanowitz Handlin (Henne’s sister)

Henne Yanowitz Chaslavsky

Joseph Handlin

Ida Yanowitz Handlin (Henne’s sister)

Henne Yanowitz Chaslavsky
Hillel, “Sasha’s father, and Sasha
“My father had a cousin who lost his first family in the Holocaust and then immigrated to Israel. His name was Sasha Chaslafski, but he changed his name to Gendlin, which was derived from his mother's maiden name. Sasha had a brother named Leib, I believe, whom the family brought to the United States for a visit in the late 1970s. He told my parents that the son of one of the Chaslafskis was a mechanical engineer who served in Cuba--on the Russian side of course--during the missile crisis!” —2nd Cousin Jerry.
Ah ha! He is talking about Sasha.
Sasha changed his name to Gendlin—mother’s maiden name.
Wait...The article says that Sasha and Leib are the sons of Hillel and Dvora Chaslavsky. So...Hillel on Dad’s tree IS Sasha’s father!!!
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Chaslavsky</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Name*</td>
<td>Khaslavski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Name</td>
<td>Hily</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Name*</td>
<td>Hilel</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Date of Birth</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Place of Birth</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Spouse's First Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spouse's Maiden Name</td>
<td>Gendlin</td>
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Hmmm...Dvora Gendlin’s father has a really unusual name.
“Gendlin, Sasha son of Ilya and Vera was born 24.12.1919. He came to Israel 15.4.1947 and lived in Haifa. He passed away 08.09.1991.” — Israeli researcher Batya
OK...this is the correct Sasha in the article, and his parents are... Ilya and Vera? Ahhhh! Ilya and Vera are Hillel and Dvora in Russian!!!
And the article contained this clue all along. I just wasn’t paying attention!

At the same time, his brother, Lev Ilyich Chaslavsky, who was living in Moscow with his wife and children, thought that Sasha was dead. Chaslavsky knew that Gendlin had been wounded several times while fighting with the Russian Army and suspected that he had not survived.

For more than 20 years, the brothers lived with those beliefs. Then American cousins searching for “lost” family members discovered that Sasha Gendlin of Haifa was Sasha Chaslavsky, son of Dyura and Hillal Chaslavsky. And, like his brother, born in the small Soviet town of Sosnitza. To help insure his survival, Sasha had adopted his mother’s surname to create a new identity.
Chaslavsky, Ilya Leibov
1879-1945
Ilya/Hillel’s father was
Yehuda Leib!
Sasha bar Dvorah Gendlin—buried in Haifa just as the Israeli researcher said.
Mystery solved, right?

Nothing is ever finished in genealogy!
Tree from Second Cousin once removed Liz, niece of Oscar Handlin. Her grand-mother and my great-grandmother were sisters.
“Dora” Hendlin married “Haslavsky”. Hmmmmm...

My great grandmother’s sister Ida who married Joseph Handlin

What kind of name is Pontiel?
Where have I seen the names Sara and something like “Pontiel” before?

In the Yad Vashem records (spelled “Paltiel)!

And “Gendlin and Hendlin/Handlin are the same name!!
Dora Hendlin = Dvora Gendlin...
...and “Haslavsky” is (drum roll)
Hillel !!
My great grandfather Chaslavsky

Ida Yanowitz Handlin (Henne's sister)

Joseph Handlin

Hillel, his brother

Dvora Gendlin, Joseph's sister!

My great grandfather Chaslavsky

Ida Yanowitz Handlin (Henne's sister)

Joseph Handlin

My great-grandmother Henne Chaslavsky
One more thing....
1923 ship manifest

But Hillel stayed in Russia and died there in 1945
Huh?
Stole Hillel’s name when he was “on the lam” from the Bolsheviks

Paid for sleezy name stealer’s passage

Hillel and Dvora—Sasha and Leib’s parents

My great grandmother’s sister

Stole Hillel’s name when he was “on the lam” from the Bolsheviks
Never throw anything out!

Pay attention to random bits of information. Read and take notes; pay attention!. Think outside the box.

Keep in touch with family—no matter how distant!

Take advantage of resources:
- Conferences
- Hired researchers
- JGSCV, IAJGS, commercial sites, DNA
Don’t discount peripheral information. Don’t ignore coincidences—you never know.

Keep returning to documents, online databases, trees, email, and family. New things always pop up.

There are often explanations, no matter how strange.

Don’t give up!