

CHAPTER SEVEN: LITHUANIA TO NEW YORK

Part one: The Kovna Rollnicks of New York

I doubt that any of our Wynberg Rollnicks ever knew of the existence of the New York Rollnicks. There is certainly no evidence that my uncle, Abe Rollnick the “showman”, who lived in New York from 1915 to 1919 and who was eager to make connections, ever thought to contact any of them¹. It is only through these genealogical researches that, once again, we can try to trace our origins back, perhaps, to a common heritage in Lithuania.

Max, Isaac, and Morris Rollnick were three sons of Leib Mordecai Rolnik of the Kovno province in Lithuania². In 1886 or 1888 Max and Morris arrived in New York, while Isaac arrived in 1891. All became tailors as did so many of their fellow immigrants at that time. Morris was just 20, or maybe even less, when he got to New York (as Moses Rolnik).

New York at the time was a challenging environment, fearfully overcrowded, with everyone struggling to make a living in a strange New World. But the New York Rollnicks responded to the challenge. Morris was clearly a dynamic young man. By the 1910's he owned a tailoring establishment at 785 Fifth Avenue, already very much a stylish section of New York, and his brothers were working for him. Isaac lists himself as a tailor, Max as a Coats Examiner. In the 1917 WW1 draft records, Isaac's son Leonard, was also working for Morris, Leonard as a Sales Manager.

Max was not just “Coats Examiner” in Morris's tailoring establishment. From the early 1900's, he and his growing family had

¹ “Uncle Abe” has his own section later in the book, when we go on to consider the Wynberg Rollnicks.

² How did I link the brothers together and link them to Kovno? First Kovno: Isaac's shipping manifests, 1891, proudly cite Kovno as his place of birth. Isaac's 1904 naturalisation application gives his birthplace as Raseniai. Morris's 1923 passport application gives his father's place of residence as this also. To link Max and Morris: Max was the proposer on Morris's 1902 immigration record and both gave 2 E57 St as their address for their West Indies cruises (see later). Finally, linking Isaac and Morris further: Both Isaac and his son Leonard in their 1917 WWI draft records give Morris as their employer.



Of Timely Interest to Men by "Boulevardier"

Being a gossipy symposium of interesting things noticed by "Boulevardier" in the better shops purveying to men—and here described for the information and convenience of gentlemen inured to customs and fashions sans reproche.

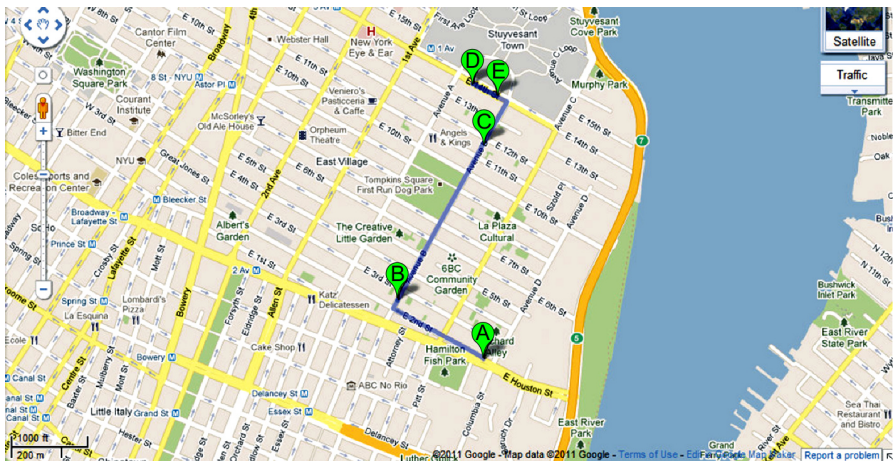
Editor's Note: "Boulevardier" will gladly answer any questions regarding correct dress for men.

MEN are constantly paying more heed to the correctness of their attire, it seems, particularly in the evening. They are appearing oftener in full dress and dinner jackets, at the theatre and restaurants, as well as private affairs. This is an observation borne out by the fact that one of the leading custom tailors, Rollnick, of 785 Fifth Avenue, is experiencing an unusually heavy demand for evening clothes. Rollnick enjoys a reputation for tailoring formal attire that is irrefragable in fit and correctness. He is also the inventor of a dress waistcoat that will not bulge or gape in front.

IF there is one time when good tailoring is essential to a man's poise and appearance, it is after six, when he changes to full dress or dinner suit. There is an air of utmost luxury in the evening clothes tailored by Rollnick, 785 Fifth Avenue—and an unmistakable character that denotes true custom skill. The best of imported fabrics, the richest of silks in facings and linings, and exacting handiwork are all three manifest in the formal attire that attracts so many men to Rollnick.

IT has been a mild winter thus far, true enough, but the prophets all agree that plenty of frigid weather is ahead of us. One of the leading custom tailors, Rollnick, of 785 Fifth Avenue, has experienced within the last week or two a large increase in the number of men having overcoats tailored. This would seem to be another harbinger of colder times coming. Rollnick, by the way, is featuring his famous two-piece model overcoats. The fabrics are cut in only two pieces and tailored in a way that eliminates sleeve seams at the shoulders. The sleeves are inseparably a part of the garment, not sewn on afterwards.

From mens' fashion columnist of the NY Evening Post Nov. 1922, & Dec. 1923.



been living on the Lower East Side (in 1900 on 2nd St (A), and in 1910 and 1930 on the legendary Avenue B³ (B, and then C, see map)), buying and selling property in the neighborhood. He had bought, for

³ In Alphabet City:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alphabet_City,_Manhattan#The_20th_century

investment, two four-story brick tenement houses nearby at 328 and 330 14 St, (D and E on the map). The old-established Tifereth Israel Synagogue was at number 334.

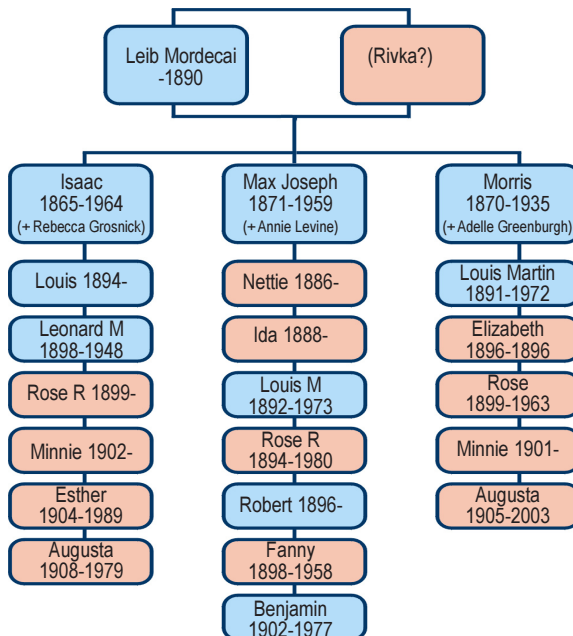
Max must have done well in property, chartering a realty business together with Morris's son-in-law, Emil Spivak.

Two of the brothers were already married before they left Lithuania for the USA, but Morris only after he immigrated⁴. All three had numerous children and each had a son named Louis, born between 1891 and 1894. We can assume that the grandfather of these Louis, Leib Mordecai, had died around 1890. Not only were the Louis named with their grandfather's first name, but two of them were Louis M Rollnick. There were three Roses (I suggest named after a grandmother Rivka), two Minnies, and two Augusta's.



Tifereth Israel Synagogue

The Kovna Rollnicks, descendants of Leib Mordecai



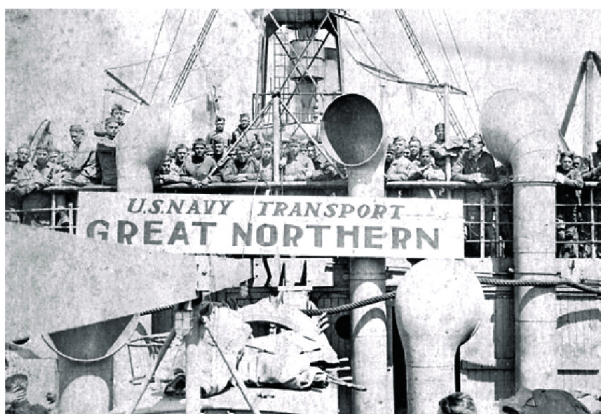
⁴ On June 2nd 1895 to Adelle Greenburgh

Morris Rollnick (or was it Max?) was the M. Rollnick who took his vacation in the Catskills in 1902⁵. Max Rollnick (or was it Morris?) was the M. Rollnick who gave money to support the victims of the Odessa Pogrom in 1905⁶. The families prospered. Most of the sons and daughters were married off, and one of Morris's sons-in-law entered the family realty business. First Max and his wife, and the next year Morris, took winter cruises to the West Indies. Morris died relatively early, at 65, very much mourned by his son Louis⁷:

ROLLNICK—Morris. From one who misses you more than ever, though five years have passed away. Your memory, daddy, dear, will live forever, more than this I cannot say. **YOUR SON, LOUIS..**

Morris's brothers both lived to be nearly 100. It is with two of Isaac's male children that our story continues.

Isaac's Louis was drafted in WW1 and served in France. Like many others, he married there, and Lucie-Marie Rollnick came to the USA in 1919 on the SS Great Northern with hundreds of other war-time brides. The Great Northern had been a troop-ship all through America's war and her very last voyage before being decommissioned was to bring home these brides.



*Homeward bound on the Great Northern
1919.*

*Lucie-Marie Rollnick in
1919*

Louis and Lucie had a son, Rudolph, born in August 1922, but that is the last we learn about Lucie-Marie. In the 1930 census Rudolph is living in New York with his aunt Esther Purcaro, her three young children and her French-born niece, Sarah Ceroux. The same census year had Louis staying at the Millburn Hotel at W 76th St in Manhattan

⁵ New York Times, August 23rd 1902 mentioning "M.Rollnick"

⁶ New York Times, November 19th 1905, again as "M. Rollnick"

⁷ New York Times, January 28th 1940

with his newly-wed wife Edna. But this second marriage also did not last. Louis and Edna divorced in 1942. In his WW2 draft record of 1942, Lucie-Marie's son Rudolph describes his occupation as a cook, and he was now living with his father, Louis in Newark. Did Lucie-Marie return to France?

Life was not easy for some of these war-time brides. I have followed the histories of a few of these women who travelled to the USA on the boat with Lucie-Marie. Jeanne, for instance, married the keeper of a light house in Monterey, California and the couple raised an American family. Blanche, who had married a mill wright in a saw mill factory, lived in Oregon with her family. But Louise, who had married a French-Canadian so they at least had a language in common seemed, like Lucie-Marie, unhappy and went back and forth between France and the USA. Maybe it was best to marry a down-to-earth fellow rather than a New York Jew.

Isaac's younger son, Leonard, proved to be the most famous or, perhaps more accurately, notorious of the New York Rollnicks. At age 2 he was still Lazarus Rollnick, but Leonard by the time of the 1910 census. In the 1915 NY Census, he is living in the Bronx with his two sisters, Esther and Augusta (Gussie), listed with Jacob and Mary Rollnick and their children. [Jacob is listed as the father of these three young Rollnick children and, of course, this cannot be. They can only be his nephew and nieces. I have found no other documentary evidence to link them. Jacob's son, Ben (later Burton), on his WW1 and WW2 draft notices gives his place of birth as Kiev, not Kovno. Perhaps he had merely sailed from Kiev as had Morris Rollnick, according to Morris's 1923 passport application. Rolnik is a rare name in the Ukraine, only 1 record of 1.4 million, Rolnik a grocer, in Kiev in 1895. Only seven of some 200 Ellis Island Rolniks are from the Ukraine, 3 names in the Yad Vashem holocaust records, with one who had lived in Kiev. Perhaps we should include Jacob and his family among the Lithuanian Rolnicks?] Leonard's mother, Rebecca, was at the time in the Manhattan State Hospital, where she died a short time later. We saw that in his WW1 draft record he is listed as Salesman in his uncle's tailoring establishment on Fifth Avenue, still living at home on W 113 St. The florid signature on this draft card and his ability as a salesman remained with him as he grew older. In the 1920 census he lists himself as a margin clerk in a broker's office, living at home with his father, his new step-mother Fanny, and his two sisters. He clearly did very well in the broker's office. In 1924 he married the attractive Dorothy Lieberman from Philadelphia.

The spring of the year 1929 saw him and his wife Dorothy in Paris

on a European trip, together with Dorothy's son⁸ by her first marriage, Henry D Bogatin, and his wife Gertrude. Gertrude's parents, the Charles M Rosenthals, were also in the party⁹. When Leonard and Dorothy arrived back from France on the SS Leviathan, in April 1929, they could give their address as the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, New York. This was April 1929 in October the Stock Market crashed. Leonard was, however, still living at the Ritz-Carlton in April 1930 when the 1930 census was taken, styling himself as a trader in investments. He had already embarked on the first of a series of stock



Dorothy Lieberman, fashionable in a large hat

market transactions that at first only bordered on the criminal but that, later, indeed led to his imprisonment. The first, February 8th 1930, injunction was to restrain Leonard and his colleagues, Abner Werblin and William Jarvis from any further dealing in stocks. The allegation was that they had "conducted a pool in the stock of the Advance-Rumely Company, in which it was said a \$6,000,000 profit was reaped". They had been, according to the report¹⁰, selling stock

⁸ Dorothy was born Dorothy Lieberman in Philadelphia in April 1887, although on the SS Leviathan's shipping manifest she was listed as having been born in 1894. Her son, Henry Donald Bogatin, was born when Dorothy was about 18 and he is listed, in the 1910 census, as living in Philadelphia with his grandfather, Philip Lieberman. Henry's father, Harry, was 21 when Henry was born and Harry later married again.

⁹ Chicago Tribune March 28 1929. Leonard and Dorothy were moving in exalted company. Charles Rosenthal was from an old-established New York German-Jewish family, a successful real estate developer, living in a house in Nassau County with three Irish servants. His son, also Charles M. Rosenthal, was victim in a sensational kidnapping in New York in 1930. The young Charles had been lured, by a woman "whose complexion gives no clue to her race" as the report put it, to an uptown address where they were met by four men who made Rosenthal a prisoner and kept him shut up in a flat at 68 W 144th St. Charles was freed when his parents paid the ransom of \$50,000 that was left in a bag at the Hotel Vendig, owned by one of the kidnappers. The bills were marked. An astute bank teller recognized the marking, which led to the arrest of one of the kidnappers and then to all four of them, and to their conviction. New York Times, 16 October 1931.

¹⁰ The New York Times, February 9, 1930

to the public at prices quoted in tipster sheets, while rumors had been circulating that the Company was going to declare back dividends. The three had bought huge numbers of Advance-Rumely shares at \$50, and then circulated in a range of tipster publications that the shares were going to rise, paying the publishers to pass off the “tips”. They off-loaded their shares at prices rising to \$110 and more. Soon after they sold their shares, the price began to drop sharply, falling as low as \$15, and many too-gullible investors lost out. Poor Advance-Rumely! This was a company that had had a good reputation as a supplier of farm equipment¹¹.



The Advance-Rumely OilPull Type H tractor



The Advance Tractor Company's steam thresher engine

I have not found reports of any criminal proceedings against Leonard concerning the dealings in Advance-Rumely stock, but it would appear that the idea of making money in this way held its appeal for him. Two separate charges detail the later actions that Leonard was concerned with, again in association with numerous other brokers, tipsters, and various “front men”.

One of these charges centered round the stock-broking firm Paul A. Leschuck and Company of Chicago. The allegations against Rollnick and his collaborators state that clients responded to newspaper advertisements in which the Leschuck Company would give advice on stocks to buy, the clients sending either money or stocks in exchange for those that Leschuck and Company recommended. The criminal charge¹² was “using the mails to defraud”. In the discussion around an appeal, the court wrote that¹³, “the government’s theory was that Leschuck & Co. (at the instance of the defendants) manipulated the market on certain stocks sold to customers, thus

¹¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advance-Rumely>

¹² The New York Times 17 May 1933.

¹³ Reuben v. United States Circuit Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit, October 23, 1936

requiring deposit of further funds to an extent that could not or would not be met, with a deliberate intent of freezing purchasers out and excusing delivery." In other words, the clients were induced to put in more and more funds into stocks that then lost value so that all the original investments were lost. "Neither the said Paul A. Leschuck & Co nor the said defendants ...intended to deliver to the said persons intended to be defrauded any stocks whatever.... all of which the said defendants, and each of them, well knew and intended". In the event, Rollnick and his co-conspirators were sentenced to a fine and jail, Leonard to 3½ years.

The second charge was a scheme that needed more careful preparation by Rollnick¹⁴. In February 1932, living at the time in New York at salubrious 1100 Park Ave, he set up a financial newspaper called the National Investment Transcript with Clement Congdon, an elderly man of previous experience in financial writing, as editor. The National Investment Transcript initially devoted its attention to the building up of a circulation of about 15,000 subscribers at \$10 per year and to attempting to gain their good will and that of the public. Rollnick read the proofs of the paper before publication and kept in touch with what Congdon did in its management. Meantime, Rollnick had become heavily involved in the setting up and direction of a holding company, Rayon Industries Corporation, which had bought into a number of smaller companies involved in the manufacture and distribution of the exciting new artificial fibers. A brokerage firm, Marshall Ward & Co. advertised a public offering of Rayon Corporation's stock in about thirty newspapers, the issue being listed on the New York Produce Exchange.

After Rayon Corporation had been touted by Congdon in the National Investment Transcript, a "boiler room" was set up in the Transcript's office at 23 Broadway, Camden, N. J., where high-pressure salesmen were employed and began selling the stock over the telephone. Some of the salesmen, who went on trial with Rollnick, well knew (it was alleged) that they were engaged in fraudulent stock selling. Telephone conversations with prospective customers were all carried on in the name of Congdon, the salesmen succeeding in making their victims believe they were talking with Congdon himself. Many

¹⁴ This section is largely taken from UNITED STATES v. ROLLNICK 91 F.2d 911 (1937) Circuit Court of Appeals, Second Circuit. August 16, 1937. http://174.123.24.242/leagle/xmlResult.aspx?page=5&xmlDoc=1937100291F2d911_1772.xml&docbase=CSLWAR1-1950-1985&SizeDisp=7

false and misleading representations were made in the sale of the stock. One of them, palpably false, was that Rayon Industries Corporation was making profits. Other claims, also knowingly false and useful in persuading victims to buy, were that Marshall Ward was not connected with Congdon, that Congdon was adding to his personal holdings, that the Celanese Corporation would merge with Rayon Industries Corporation, and that the latter would declare a dividend of \$2.50 per share.

Rollnick had Rayon Industries Corporation declare a dividend on September 26, 1933, despite actual substantial net losses from its organization up to December 31, 1933. Another dividend was declared on January 13, 1934, notwithstanding continued losses.

The activities of these men in selling the stock as they did were investigated by the New York Attorney General in June, 1933, and also investigated by the Attorney General of New Jersey. In January, 1934, a temporary injunction was issued against the Transcript newssheet. But, notwithstanding these deterrents, the scheme was carried on, the price of the stock steadily rising on the market until on September 15, 1934, it was struck from the Produce Exchange... and the price of the stock dropped to almost nothing.

Rollnick, as the major conspirator, received the largest sentence, seven years (to run consecutively with the three and half years he had received in the Chicago mail fraud) and a fine of \$5,000¹⁵. The case dragged on. From jail in the Leavenworth (Kansas) Penitentiary, where he had been since September 8th 1937, he appealed against his parole not being allowed, and argued that his two sentences should have been applied concurrently not consecutively, but the appeal was disallowed¹⁶. He was still in jail, now in Kelly Township, Pennsylvania, at the time of the 1940 US Census.

It is not clear when he did, in fact, leave jail or whether he was at the funeral of his wife, Dorothy "beloved wife of Leonard J. Rollnick"¹⁷, who died in March 1942. But soon after he returned to society, he entered into a wholly new life.

Probably sometime in 1944, he married Virginia Rundle, an English-born chorus girl with stage name Pamela Devorne. Pamela was the daughter of a London policeman and had come to the USA in 1939 with the company that was to set up the Folies Bergere, as part of the San Francisco World's Fair.

¹⁵ The New York Times, December 30th, 1936.

¹⁶ United States v. Rollnick et al. No.2100, District Court, M.D. Pennsylvania. July 1, 1940.

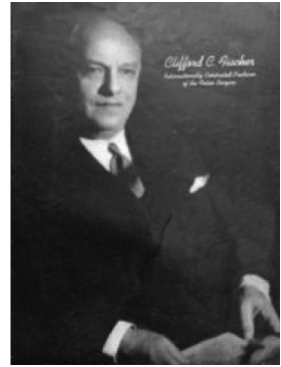
¹⁷ The New York Times, March 4th 1942.



Pamela Devorne



Folies Bergere in San Francisco



*Clifford C Fischer
Producer*

Clifford C. Fischer¹⁸ was the show’s producer. He had earlier created a series of floor shows in the “French Casinos” in Chicago, New York and Miami Beach. They were opulent cabaret-restaurant shows in which acrobats, clowns, dancing duos, novelty acts, mannequins and chorus girls were sprinkled among spectacular production numbers. “Are some of the costumes naughty? Uh-huh. Are the chorus girls pretty thoroughly undressed? Yes, sir. Are two or three of them almost___”¹⁹ For San Francisco’s 1939 World’s Fair, he staged the Folies Bergere in a similar style on the Golden Gate Exposition site on Treasure Island, San Francisco Bay²⁰. In the boat that brought Pamela over from England were close to fifty dancers, mannequins, artists, musicians, and choreographers, from all over Europe. The production’s director and a dancer himself was Istvan Gyergyai, later to be known as the film star Steven Geray²¹. It must have been a wonderful trip, with all these young and vibrant entertainers. They arrived on the 21 July 1939²². The Folies opened a short while later that year²³, but now with the World War having begun, the trans-Atlantic members of the cast were stranded in the USA. Pamela never returned to England.

¹⁸ <http://www.jazzageclub.com/theatre/clifford-fischer/#ixzz1T3wduBx4>

¹⁹ New York Times December 25 1939.

²⁰ This had been created by filling in a shoal off Yerba Buena.

²¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Geray

²² This was actually her second visit to the USA. Her first, in 1936, was with a smaller cast of dancers and artists.

²³ Clifford C. Fischer’s famed “Folies Bergere” quickly caught on with the customers, and carried through to a successful nine-weeks run. The human form divine, feminine version that is, was duly glorified. There was graceful dancing, lilting music, and comedy both broad and subtle. The costumes and settings were gorgeous and the prices most reasonable. (Taken from footnote 19).

In the years before she met up with Leonard, Pamela continued to be active in the theatrical world. The San Francisco show had a triumphant season and the show went on to Broadway with two performances every evening, and then to New Haven and Boston. February 1940 saw Pamela in an escapade at Harvard. Peter Saltonstall, son of the then Governor of Massachusetts, accompanied the then Miss Paris, Andree Lorain, and 100 members of the Folies Bergere on a parade from South Station Boston with 300 Harvard students, all the way into the town. The women were led by Karel Savory, "captain of the girls", whose task was to ensure that the girls in the troupe didn't get involved with the wrong men. In this she was "assisted by her friend, exquisite Pamela Devorne"²⁴. The Folies was, of course, a great success in Boston, although John Spencer, the city censor, had to go backstage on the opening night to order chorus girls and principals to put on more clothes²⁵. The Folies continued on an extensive tour throughout the USA. They had reached Binghamton, NY, by June 1941 when a journalist of the local newspaper²⁶ reported "Pamela Devorne, a London showgirl in the bouquet of them over at the Riviera, just got a letter from her mother who lives in Croydon: *We've removed the air-raid shelter. The flowers are coming up beautifully, and the shelter made the garden look so terribly untidy....* Evidence of how the British morale is standing up." Evidence, too, of how separated Pamela was from her family by the submarine war in the Atlantic. Her mother died in 1949 and I have no record of Pamela ever getting back to England to see her family.

Did Leonard meet Pamela while she was still with the Folies Bergere? In any event, on October 13, 1944 he started on a series of almost weekly trips between New York (where he and Pamela were living at 145 W 58 St) and Toronto, where he was at first sales manager and later general manager of a firm styled the Lenba Corporation. I have found records of 70 such trips, the last being in July 1947. In those days, flying was an unusual form of travel and the airlines still maintained the shipping line traditions of recording a full "shipping manifest" for each passenger with name, address, destination, marital status and such information, invaluable for the historian. So we know how indefatigable Leonard was in his endeavor to support Pamela and then also their child in a good financial state. The only time that he was away from Pamela for more than a short period was in the period around the time their child was born. On one occasion Pamela

²⁴ Daily Boston Globe, 26 February 1940.

²⁵ New York Times 28 February 1940

²⁶ Binghamton Press June 13 1941

joined him in Toronto, during one of Leonard's longer stints away from New York.

One can only speculate as to why he had his business interests in Canada. Perhaps his criminal record had made it difficult for him to be in business in the States. Leonard died young in June 1948. Was the strain of his frequent business trips too much for him? His obituary describes him as: "Beloved husband of Pamela (nee Rundle) and dear brother of Louis, Augusta and Esther Rollnick"²⁷. Pamela took out US citizenship in 1954, still living in New York, but when she died in 1961, at only 50, she had been living in Los Angeles.

One hopes that Leonard's later years were happy, in spite of being so strenuous, and that he could feel that he had paid, with his period in jail, his debt to society.



Leavenworth (Kansas) Penitentiary where Leonard was incarcerated.

²⁷ New York Times, June 6th 1948.

Part two: The Vilna Rolniks of New York.

Aaron Rolnik was the father of one of the Rolnick families of New York, although unusually for our Rolnicks, he and many of his descendants kept the spelling of their name as Rolnik. Aaron and his two eldest sons give their birth town as Vilna. This is also unusual for our Lithuanian Rolniks; there are only six Rolniks in the Jewish Genealogy Lithuania database recorded as coming from Vilna before WW1²⁸. Two had recently come to Vilna from Belarus, so they are not our Lithuanian Rolniks. Four are death records (on the next page), of which three are of little Rolnik children, fathered by Mordukh (Mordecai) Rolnik and dying within a short time of each other in 1890 and 1891. We note that Aaron's father was Max, which is the USA equivalent of Mordecai. Were these little children his siblings?

According to Aaron's 1903 naturalisation papers, he was at that time a peddler, but already by the 1910 Census he is listed as "sexton in a synagogue", and by the 1920 Census, "rabbi of a congregation". Living in Vilna, perhaps Aaron was already studying to be a rabbi in the big city. Aaron had married Minnie who joined him in the USA in 1902, with their two sons, Max and Abraham, aged two and one years. During the next decade, they welcomed four daughters, Fanny (also known as Francis), Katie, Lillian, and Helen²⁹.



Lithuania Deaths

Searching for Surname Rolnik (D-M code 986500) and Given Name mordukh (D-M code 693500)					
Name	Father	Residence	Date of Death DD/MM/YY Hebrew Date	Town	Place Recorded
	Mother	Comments	Age	Uzezd	Year Recorded
	Spouse			Guberniya	Record #
ROLNIK, Gena	Mordukh		25/8/1890	Vilnius	Vilnius
		Family from Vilna	1 1/2	Vilnius	1890
				Vilnius	F346
ROLNIK, Rubin	Mordukh		6/9/1890	Vilnius	Vilnius
		Family from Vilna	2 wk	Vilnius	1890
				Vilnius	M428
ROLNIK, Sara	Mordukh		1/11/1891	Vilnius	Vilnius
		Family from Vilna	4 mo	Vilnius	1891
				Vilnius	F704

²⁹ Katie had married David Cohn by the 1920 census. Lillian married Samuel Epstein in 1924. Fanny married Joseph Ginsburg before 1940; Helen did not marry.

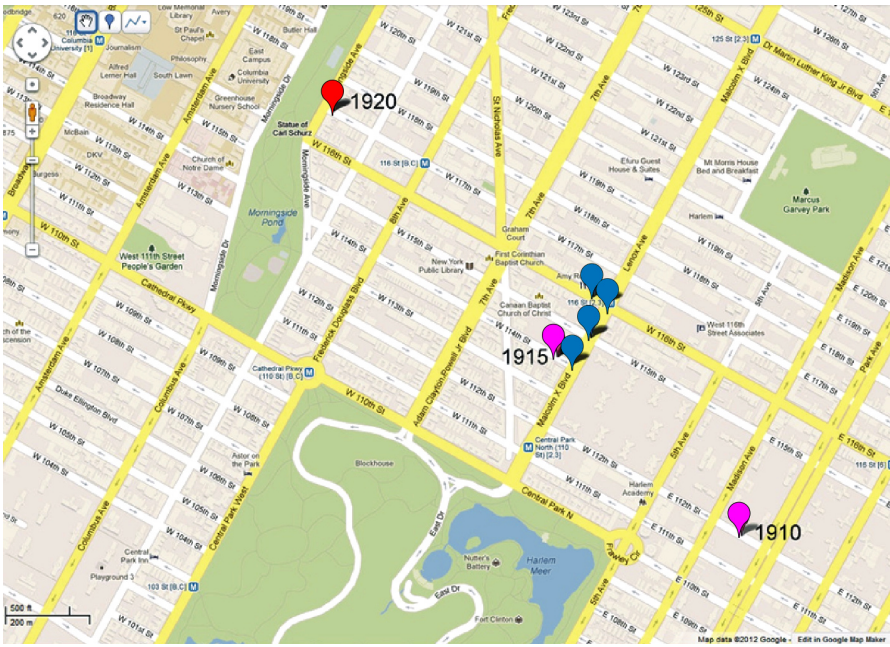
When they arrived in the USA, the Rolniks lived downtown, at 66 Canal St³⁰:



They soon moved uptown to Harlem, then in the process of becoming a very Jewish section of the City³¹. In the map on the next page, the pink marker at bottom right shows their home on East 122 St in 1910, the one in the middle in 1915. By 1920 they had moved West to West 117th St. (the red marker, upper left), on the attractive

³⁰ This wonderful picture, from the 1900's, is taken from the West side of Mulberry St. Canal St is the first cross street with the Rolnik apartment two blocks to the right. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Five_Points,_Manhattan

³¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harlem#1866-1920:_Reconstruction: [In the early 1890's, a construction glut and a delay in the building of the [7th Avenue] subway led to a fall in real estate prices which attracted immigrant Eastern Europe Jews and Italians to Harlem in accelerating numbers. There had been a Jewish community of 12 in Harlem in 1869.. that grew to a peak of almost 200,000 in about 1915... Presaging their resistance to the arrival of blacks, existing landowners tried to stop Jews from moving into the neighborhood. At least one rental sign declared "Keine Juden und Keine Hunde" (No Jews and no dogs)... Italians began to arrive in Harlem only a few years after the Jews did. By 1900 there were 150,000 Italians in Harlem... Both groups moved particularly into East Harlem. The Jewish population of Harlem embraced the City College of New York, which moved to Harlem in 1907. In the years after the move, 90% of the school's students were Jewish.... The Jewish presence in Harlem was ephemeral, and by 1930, only 5,000 Jews remained. As they left, their apartments in East Harlem were increasingly filled by Puerto Ricans, who were arriving in large numbers by 1913.]



Morningside Ave. The four blue markers show where four shuls with Lithuanian congregations were situated. One, Adath Yacov Anshei Slabodke of Harlem, was just across the street from where the Rolniks lived in 1915. It is not sure that it was at one of these that Aaron was first Sexton and then Rabbi, but I have evidence for similar progressions.

The Rolnik children must have grown up in a scholarly family. At age 16, Max won a Silver Badge for a poem that he had submitted to “St. Nicholas: An Illustrated Magazine For Young Folks.” (Vol 34, 1907)³². The poem, “Heading for November” is in six stanzas. I will quote here only the first two:

*And we watched the birds fly to and fro, And the clouds sailed on, now high, now low,
To a realm no mortal e'er should know. To the Land of the Sunset Sky.
Those were glorious times, those days of old.
When we played: my chum and I.*

³² http://www.archive.org/stream/stnicholasv34part1dodgrich/stnicholasv34part1dodgrich_djvu.txt —“In making the awards, contributors’ ages are considered.” (An article in the Brooklyn Eagle of December 24th 1924 shows that Max and Lillian were among the successful solvers of The Junior Eagle “Double Word Square” puzzle of the previous week. Delightful that a high-profile accountant, as he already was in 1924, would work with his sister in this way.)

*And the future shone brighter than burnished gold. And the pleasures it held could ne'er be told,
They gathered around us fold on fold. Richer than Tyrian dye.
But the days have past and the years have flown
Since we played : my chum and I.*

It would appear that Max's "chum" had recently died, and Max was mourning him. Max's literary talent stayed with him and he wrote numerous scholarly papers and books in his long professional life.

But the children had to work to help with the family expenses. Here is Francis in 1910 looking for a post as stenographer and typist, promising accurate neat work at \$6 a week:

es; edu- b).	STENOGRAPHER and typist, experienced, capable, neat, accurate; willing start moderate salary. Conscientious, box 114 Herald Downtown.	BA re
charge . 3,516	STENOGRAPHER and typewriter, \$6; accurate, neat. F. Rolnik, 115 East 112th st.	BA A
ition as to the	STENOGRAPHER, typist, office assistant, experienced, neat, ambitious; \$8. N., 2,101 8th av.	BO in
	STENOGRAPHER typewriter experienced	desi

In the 1910 Census, Max Rolnik was a stenographer³³ in the Customs House, and in 1911, Clerk to the local (New York) board of the Steamboat Inspection Service³⁴. He must also have been studying in the evenings, because in 1912 he graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce Studies from New York University. He used his professional qualification as Public Accountant for the City of New York by 1917, and later as Deputy Collector of Internal Revenue for

³³ One finds the following: DEMAND FOR MALE STENOGRAPHERS Not long ago the Vocational-Employment Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. made this remark: "I frequently have positions for male stenographers available in my office, but have difficulty in finding properly qualified young men to fill them." It has been our experience, also, that young men trained along secretarial or stenographic lines usually have little difficulty in securing a desirable position. Fairly often we have seen the demand for young men stenographers exceed the supply. Our advice to young men is to qualify as soon as possible for these desirable opportunities. They offer a stepping stone, through advancement, to higher positions paying attractive salaries, and we know of no better way for an ambitious young man to lay the foundations for a successful business career than by equipping himself with a first-class business college education. http://archives.ubalt.edu/ymca/pdf/YMCA_Business%20College.pdf

³⁴ <http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/united-states-steamboat-inspection-service/general-rules-and-regulations-prescribed-by-the-board-of-supervising-goo/1-general-rules-and-regulations-prescribed-by-the-board-of-supervising-goo.shtml>

the State of New York³⁵ and he taught bookkeeping in New York's evening high schools.

In a case of "poacher turned gamekeeper"³⁶ (or was it the reverse?), he became a member of a firm of accountants³⁷ and for the next forty years worked on legal ways whereby a firm could lower its tax burden³⁸. For instance, should a business organise itself as a corporation or a partnership? Rolnik argued that the tax burden would be considerably less if the incorporation route was taken, supporting a trend which was becoming increasingly dominant³⁹. The role of post-war monetary inflation and its impact on depreciation caught his attention. He was reported as saying⁴⁰, very reasonably, that "allowance of depreciation on the basis of replacement cost [rather than cost at the time of purchase] would do a great deal toward restating profits on a sounder basis". His 1921 book "How to Compute the Excess Profits Tax" was much used. A guide to his appreciation of the finer points of professional writing can be seen in a 1949 article in *Taxes-Tax Magazine*, where he wrote "Rarely have I read [a] a tax article from which I have obtained as much knowledge and pleasure. Professor Holzman is more than a scholar; he is a philosopher". Max lectured at City College New York and at New York University and was Vice-President of the New York State Society of CPA's. The great Jacob K. Lasser whose *Tax Guide* went into scores of editions included Max Rolnik in the list of those "whose perspiration and intelligence in contributions to our tax literature have added so much to our professional standing." Max and his wife Rose⁴¹ were great travellers, and made numerous trips to Europe and to the West Indies, taking their two young sons with them to Bermuda and Guatemala. They lived in style at 1503 East 22nd St., Manhattan, with a Polish live-in maid.

³⁵ <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9F06E4D91F30E433A25752C1A9669D946395D6CF>

³⁶ <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/poacher>—2

³⁷ First Leslie, Banks and Company, later Lybrand, Ross Brothers and Montgomery (becoming a senior partner).

³⁸ In an article in „The Norwalk Hour”, March 7 1925, he is quoted as saying that “payers of Federal income tax..will over-pay the government this year by more than \$100,000,000” and Max made his career helping people to remedy that situation.

³⁹ New York Times October 11th 1922.

⁴⁰ Toledo Blade November 25th 1927

⁴¹ They had married in April 1921. “Mrs. Max Rolnik” was written up in the Brooklyn Eagle of January 9th 1943 as being active in the League of Women Voters.



David and Robert as University seniors

Their son David followed his father and trained in accountancy at the University of Maryland. A Beta Alpha Psi⁴² student, he had to interrupt his studies to join the US Army, returning to complete his degree in 1947, and only then became a professional accountant. He had three children. Max and Rose's second son Robert studied journalism at the University of North Carolina. He had inherited his parents' love of travel and became, for a while, a ship's purser. He never married.

Abraham Rolnik (Aaron and Minnie Rolnik's second son) was a jeweller. Aged 19, in the 1910 Census, he lists himself as a salesman in "Jewellery Manufacturing". He and Jesse⁴³ had married by 1915, moved to Brooklyn and added the 'c' to their name. In his WW1 draft notice, Abraham is working for himself in a jewellery business, and the sole support of his wife "about to become a mother". Selma duly arrived in 1918, to be followed by Dorothy, Alvin and Florence. In the 1940 Census, when Abraham is listed as a "Salesman in Wholesale Jewellery", Selma is listed as a stenographer of "Religious Articles" (perhaps inspired by her grandfather Aaron, the rabbi), while Dorothy is, intriguingly, a performer in theatre. Unfortunately, I have found no record of her theatrical career. Abraham's business was then located in Maiden Lane, downtown New York, which was at one time the centre of the jewellery business. Most of the shops in the picture on the next page (taken in 1885-1887)⁴⁴, the corner of Broadway and Maiden Lane (Bowden, Sauter, Jeanne, Dunnings) are selling jewellery:

Abraham and his family were living in Bedford Ave. in Brooklyn in one of the two-family houses that are so often found there. By 1944, Abraham had bought both of the side-by-side houses. One is now a Law Office. Nothing that I know of Abraham's background and home

⁴² Beta Alpha Psi is a national honors business organization for accounting, finance and information systems students and professionals.

⁴³ Jesse is always listed as being born in England, having arrived in the USA aged three, but I have not been able to find more about her.

⁴⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maiden_Lane_%28Manhattan%29

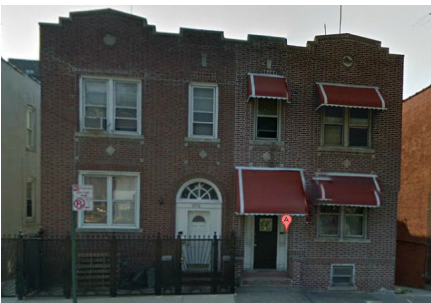


life suggests why he chose jewellery as his life's work. But he must have been good at it. Jarrett's Jade Vintage Jewellery catalogue⁴⁵ lists :

PARADISE *JEWELRY TRADEMARK USED BY ABRAHAM ROLNICK, NEW YORK SINCE 1924 FOR PEARL JEWELRY

a sign that Abraham's work was well-known to the trade. Growing up on the Lower East Side, in that bustling commercial activity we saw pictured a few pages back, moved him towards selling things rather than, like his brother Max, looking after other people's money. In 1930 and still in 1940, the two brothers were living less than a dozen blocks away from each other in Brooklyn, New York.

In the 1940 Census, with Aaron gone, Minnie is listed as Head of the House, living in the Bronx with Helen and her two married daughters, Francis (Fannie) and Lillian, Lillian's son Robert being there to cheer up everyone. Their house looks a little sad:



Fannie, a stenographer for a "U.S. Attorney" and Lillian, a secretary for a "Charitable Organisation" were both working, but Helen was not.

Fannie's Joseph was a dealer in U.S. stamps, while Lillian's Samuel ran a radio store. There in the Bronx they were far away from the brothers in Brooklyn. I wonder if they were nostalgic for their days in Harlem, with Aaron the Rabbi of a Congregation and Max writing poems for that children's magazine.

⁴⁵ <http://jarrett.fabpage.com/>