

The First
One Hundred
Years

THE FIRST ONE HUNDRED YEARS

circa 1823 **Reuben Alperowitz** born
circa 1843 **Reuben** marries **Soshe Esther**
1844 birth of **Nathan** in **Sosenka**
1845 birth of **Merke** in **Sosenka**
circa 1853 birth of **Yankev** in **Sosenka**
circa 1857 birth of **Chivia** in **Sosenka**
circa 1859 birth of **Sarah** in **Sosenka**
1863 birth of **Simcha** in **Sosenka**
1867 birth of **Leah** in **Sosenka**

circa 1864 **Nathan** marries **Rosa Kramer**
1865 birth of **Sarah** in **Sosenka**
1867 birth of **Max** in **Sosenka**
1869 birth of **Simon** in **Dolhinow**
1873 birth of **Jacob** in **Dolhinow**
1878 birth of **Ann** in **Sosenka**
1882 **Nathan** emigrates to **Bangor, Maine**;
adopts the name **Cohen**.
1883 birth of **Samuel N.** in **Sosenka**
1886 birth of **Louis** in **Bangor**

circa 1864 **Merke** marries **Maishe Alperowitz**
1865 birth of **Shprintze** in **Sosenka**
1869 birth of **Max** in **Sosenka**
1868-1875 birth of three daughters in **Sosenka**
1876 birth of **Simon** in **Sosenka**
1881 birth of **Leah** in **Sosenka**
1884 birth of **Israel** in **Sosenka**
1886 birth of **Isidor** in **Sosenka**

circa 1872 **Yankev** marries **Itka**
1873 birth of **Samuel H.** in **Dunilowicze**
1875 birth of **Sophie** in **Dunilowicze**
circa 1877 birth of **Eliohu** in **Dunilowicze**
1880 birth of **Alice** in **Dunilowicze**
1885 birth of **Annie** in **Dunilowicze**
1886 birth of **Julia** in **Dunilowicze**
1889 **Samuel H.** emigrates to **Maine**;
adopts the name **Cohen**.
1891 birth of **Robert** in **Dunilowicze**
circa 1893 birth of twin sons

circa 1878 **Chivia** marries **Yankev Kappellowitz**
circa 1879 birth of **Nathan** in **Sosenka**
circa 1881 birth of **Shifra** in **Sosenka**

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- circa 1883 birth of Rifka in Sosenka
- 1888 birth of Anna in Sosenka
- 1889 birth of Sophie in Sosenka

- circa 1879 **Sarah** marries Aaron Alperowitz
- 1880 birth of Rifka in Sosenka
- 1883 birth of Samuel in Sosenka
- 1884 birth of Edward in Sosenka
- 1885 birth of a son in Sosenka

- 1890 **Simcha** marries Dora Koppelowitz
- 1892 birth of Reuben in the Vilna gubernia
- 1892 Simcha emigrates to Bangor, adopts the name Samuel M. Cohen.
- 1896 Dora emigrates to Bangor
- 1898 birth of Frances in Bangor
- 1899 birth of Ida in Bangor
- 1901 birth of Nathan in Bangor
- 1902 birth of David in Bangor
- 1906 birth of Allan in Bangor
- 1909 birth of Sadye in Bangor

- circa 1895 **Leah** marries Barnet Anselowitz
- 1897 birth of Reuben in Sosenka
- 1902 birth of Sadie in Sosenka
- circa 1904 family emigrates; adopts the name Rubin.
- 1907 birth of Esther in Brooklyn
- 1908 birth of David in Brooklyn

- 1890 death of Reuben Alperowitz
- 1890 death of Maishe Alperowitz
- 1893 death of Itka Alperowitz
- 1901 death of Nathan Cohen
- 1903 death of Soshe Esther Alperowitz
- 1904 Isidor Alpert emigrates to New York
- circa 1904 Anna Kappellowitz emigrates to New York
- 1905 Edward Alpert emigrates to New York
- 1915 death of Merke Alperowitz
- 1925 death of Aaron Alperowitz
- 1928 death of Samuel M. Cohen
- circa 1929 death of Chivia Kappellowitz
- circa 1930 death of Yankev Alperowitz

Guide to Names, Cities and Terms

ALPEROWITZ (al-por-uh-vich). The family name of the Alperets and Cohens in Russia as assigned by a tsarist official in the early 19th century. The *witz* suffix, which means "son of," was transliterated by the immigrants using a Polish spelling.

COHEN. The name adopted by three branches of the Reuben Alperowitz family upon immigration to America. About 2-3 percent of the Jewish population has the name Cohen or some variation of it; some 118,000 Americans use the spelling Cohen, and another 25,000 use Cohn or Kohn.

DOKSCYZE (dock-shets; *Doksizy*, Rus.). A town in the Vilna gubernia, one hundred miles northeast of Vilna, near Dunilowicze and Dolhinow; forty miles north of Sosenka. Chartered as a township in the Minsk province of Poland in 1609, Dokszyce was annexed by Russia in 1793 and returned to Polish government from 1921-1945. Population 5,400 in 1878. Birthplace of Chivia Alperowitz's husband, Yankev Kappellowitz; and of Hyman Epstein, husband of Sarah Cohen.

DOLHINOW (dahl-hee-nef; *Dolginovo*, Rus.). A town in the Vilna gubernia, twenty-five miles east-northeast of Vileika; ten miles north of Sosenka. Population 3,551 in 1897, two-thirds of which was Jewish. The birthplace of Simon and Jacob Cohen; possibly the home town of Rosa Kramer Cohen. Merke Alperowitz's eldest son, Max Alpert, and Yankev Alperowitz's youngest son, Robert Cohen, attended a yeshivah in Dolhinow.

DUNILOWICZE (duh-nil-o-vich; *Dunilovichi*, Rus.). A town in the Vilna gubernia located eighty miles northeast of Vilna and one hundred miles north of Minsk; population in 1931 was 2,250. The birthplace of the children of Yankev and Itka Alperowitz.

GUBERNIA (gu-bear-ny-a). A major administrative division and seat of government in Russia comparable to a province or state. Gubernias were first established in the 18th century under Peter the Great but have been replaced in the Soviet system by the *oblast*.

ILYA (eel-ya; *Ilja*, Pol.). A small town in the Vilna gubernia; population 1,429 in 1897. Its location five miles south of Sosenka made it the closest city with a population exceeding 1,000 people. Ilya was the home of one of the most enlightened rabbinical scholars of 19th century Russia, Manasseh ben David. Dora Koppelowitz, wife of Samuel M. Cohen came from Ilya.

KURENETS (core-nits; *Kurzeniec*, Pol.). A small lumber town in the Vilna gubernia located about five miles north of Vileika, ten miles northwest of Sosenka. Alperowitz was the most common name among its Jewish inhabitants possibly accounting for the assignment of this name to the family. Kurenets was the birthplace of several Alperowitz mates.

SMORGON (smorg-own; *Smorgonie*, Pol.). City forty-five miles southeast of Vilna, fifteen miles west of Vileika; population 8,872 in 1897, 76 percent of whom were Jews. Annexed by Russia in 1793, reverted to Poland in 1921 and re-annexed by the USSR in 1945. From the 16th century until the second half of the 19th century the town was the private property of the princes of Radziwill. Birthplace of the daughters of Shprintze Alperowitz Maskind. Merke Alperowitz died there circa 1915.

SOSENKA (suss-in-ka; *Sosenki*, alt. Pol.). A townlet in the Vilna gubernia situated eighty miles east of Vilna and fifty miles north of Minsk, its geographic coordinates being 54° 31'N x 27°14'E. Population 85 in 1865 and 226 in 1890. Located within a region governed by the Poles and then the Russians during the 18th and 19th centuries, but historically and ethnically Lithuanian. Sosenka was the home of the Reuben Alperowitz family.

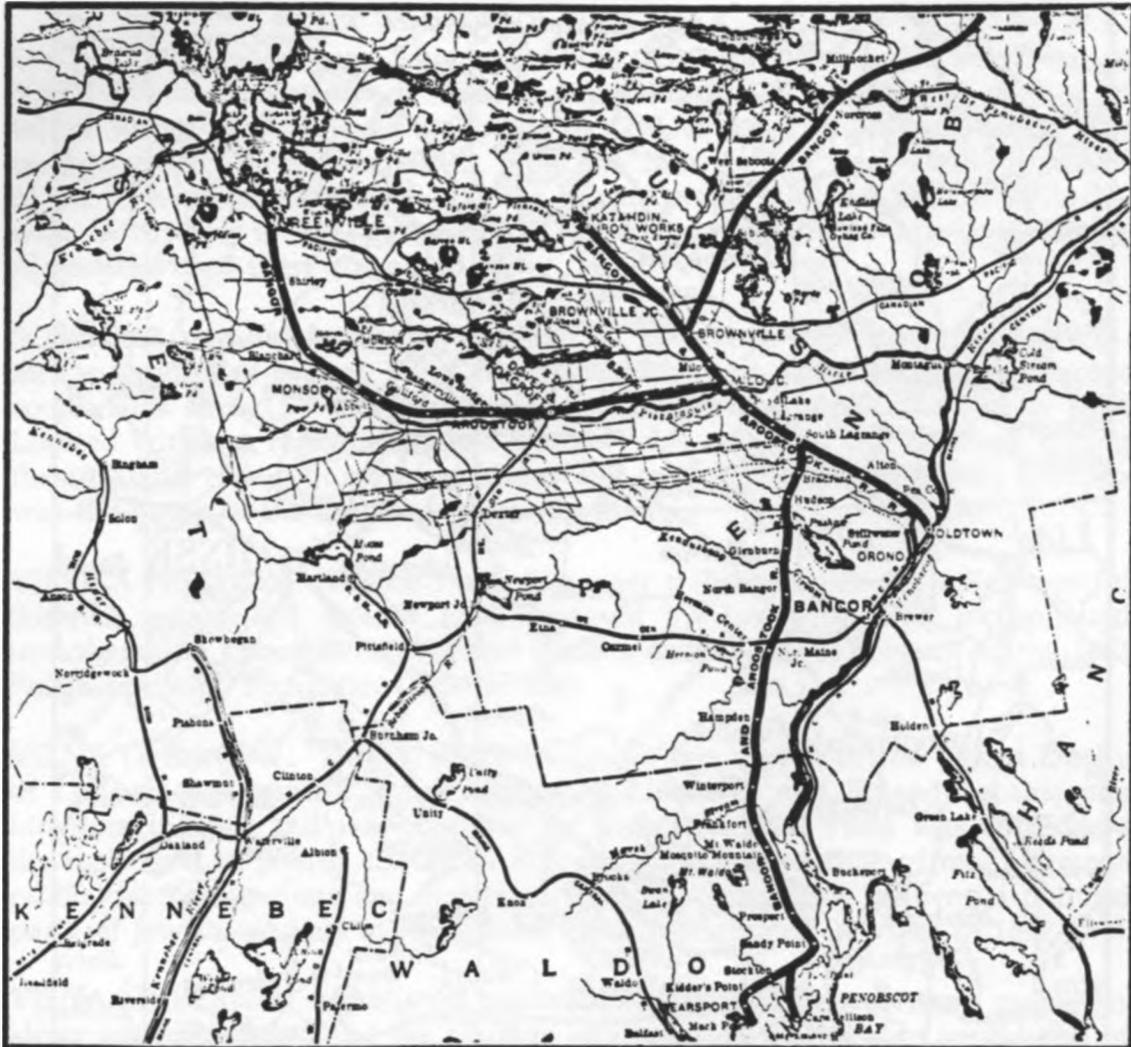
VILEIKA (vil-lay-ka; *Wilejka*, Pol.). A lumber trading center ten miles west of Sosenka, established around 1766. Annexed by Russia in 1793, incorporated into the Vilna gubernia in 1842 and made a district seat as a result of the 1863 Polish uprising. Population 1,250 in 1885.

VILNA (*Wilno*, Pol.; *Vilnius*, Rus.). Originally the capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; became a Polish city when Lithuania and Poland became one kingdom in 1569 and was absorbed by Russia in 1795. Vilna was considered the main seat of Jewish culture in Europe and was the home of many famous rabbis, scholars, writers and historians. The Bund, the most influential political party of Jewish workers in Russia and Poland, originated in Vilna in 1897.

VILNA GUBERNIA. Established between 1793-1797 as one of three gubernias along with Belorussia and the Ukraine as a result of the Russian annexation of Poland. Originally called the Lithuania Gubernia because it incorporated much of the territory of the original Grand Duchy, the area came to be referred to as the Vilna Gubernia after Tsar Nicholas I prohibited the use of the name Lithuania in the early 19th century. In 1863 a number of regional boundary lines were redrawn and this gubernia was redefined as a more specific administrative district. Most of the Alpert-Cohen ancestors were born in towns located within the Vilna gubernia as it existed before and after the 1863 redivision.



Map of the Lithuanian and Belorussian border region incorporating the southern portion of the old Vilna gubernia. Sosenka, Ilya, Vileika (circled), Dunilowicz, Dolhinow, Smorgon, Kurenets and Dokscyze all appear with variant spellings. In 1916 the tsar established his war headquarters in Baranovichi, the southernmost city on the map. It was chosen for its location at the point where the railway line from Moscow to Brest-Litovsk intersected with the north-south line from Vilna to Rovno.



Map of central Maine incorporating Penobscot and adjoining counties. Sangerville, Brownville and Brownville Junction, where Simon, Max and S.H. Cohen established themselves prior to returning to Bangor, were served by the Bangor and Aroostook Railroad - which perhaps explains, in part, their reasons for settling there.

Key to Abbreviations

KAG: An outline of the Alpert and Fine families compiled by Katya Alpert Gilden during the 1940's from information supplied by her mother, Mary Fine Alpert. Mary's mother was Chivia Alperowitz; her husband was Isidor Alpert, a grandson of Reuben Alperowitz.

SAD: A history of the Israel and Bessie Fine Alpert families written by Sylvia Alpert Duze. Bessie and Mary Fine were sisters who married brothers Isidor and Israel Alpert.