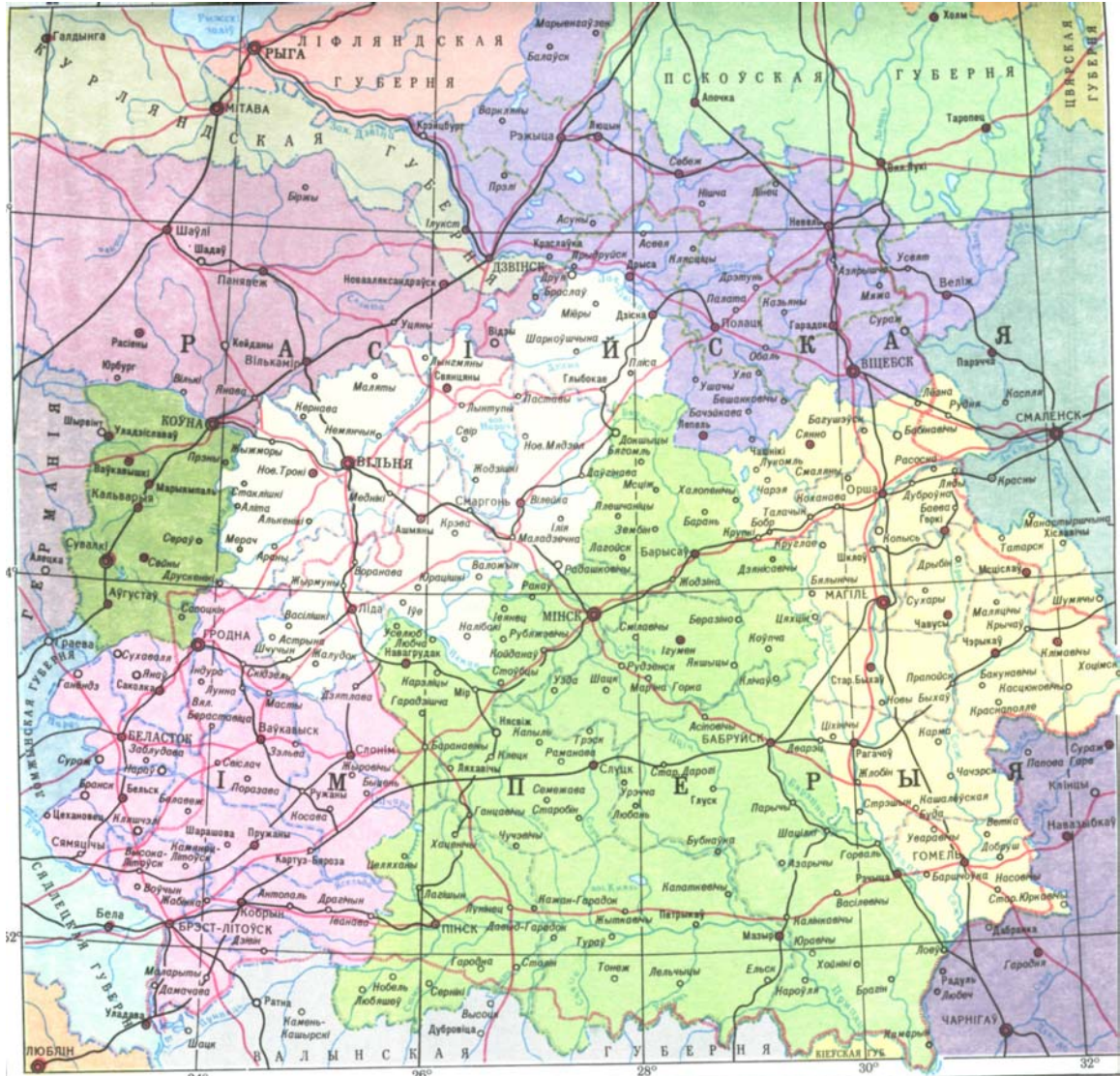


Archival Holdings in Belarus
Regional and District holdings according to chronological period
by Dr. Oleg Perzashkevich
DC2003 International Jewish Genealogy Conference



Belarus in 1796-1917

The Archives of the Republic of Belarus contain extensive information on the historical, genealogical, spiritual and material life of the Belarusian peoples. The archival network, which was created to preserve the records, is headed by the Committee for Archives and Records Management under the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus (Belcomarchiv). The Belarusian archival network of Belcomarchiv includes six central archives, six regional archives, and sixteen local archives. These archives hold documents that are currently available to be used in genealogical studies. In addition, there are other repositories of major importance.

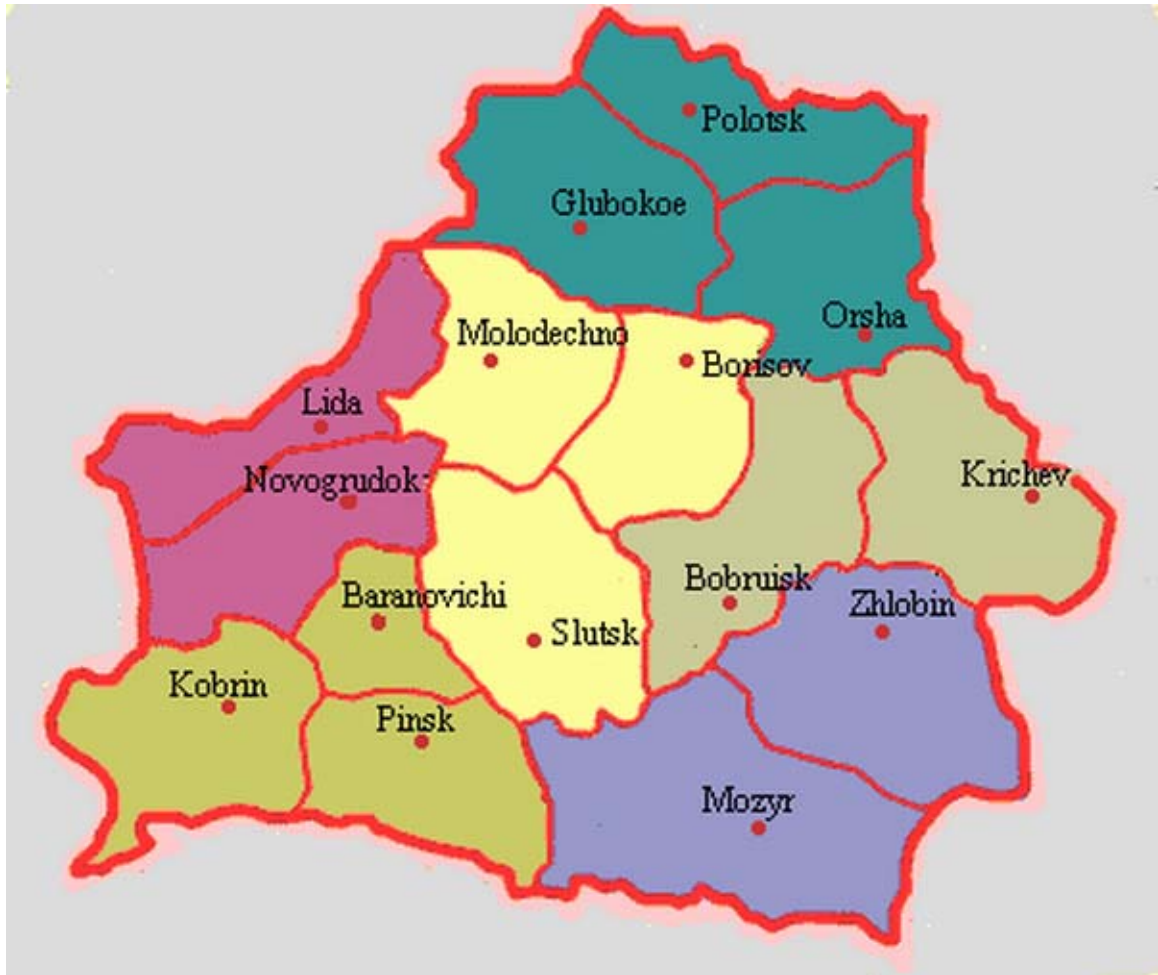
Primary sources (most of the principle genealogical records) are to be found in the National Historical Archives of Belarus in Minsk (formerly the Minsk, Mogilev and Vitebsk provinces and a part of the Grodno province of the

Russian Empire) and the National Historical Archives of Belarus in Grodno (the former Grodno and Vilno provinces). Additional materials containing historical data (of genealogical interest) can be found at the state archives of register offices (ZAGS).



Central Archives

All the other archives, not listed above, can be considered as secondary sources for personal genealogy. All the records before 1917 were grouped according to the district principle.



Local Archives

The destruction of the primary source records does not mean that the researches will yield only “zero” results. I suggest using other secondary source records. What are they?

Secondary source records include a very wide spectrum of records on legal (and illegal) actions, business, property, migration and other activities the family to be researched may have participated in. Although, you can hardly reconstruct the family tree with them, in some cases it is possible to fill in the blanks.

As most Jewish researchers are interested mostly in the period of 1790s-1917, let us confine ourselves now to identifying that period’s documents. To make it easier to understand what is what among those sources, let us divide them into groups.

Voter’s Lists

№ п/п	Фамілія, Імя, Отчѣство	цензь	вероисповедание
1	Рыклин Герц	недвижимое имущество	иудейское
2	Уфлянд Г.	квартирный налогъ	иудейское
3	Гуревич Двид Лейзеров	недвижимое имущество	иудейское
4	Лешин Геся Мовшова	торгово-промышленное предприятие	иудейское
5	Лобацевич Альберт Антонов	недвижимое имущество	христианское
6	Загальский Абрам Иоселев	торгово-промышленное предприятие	иудейское

№	Фамилія, Імя, Отчество кандидата	Баллы		Какую осѣдлость или особый капиталъ имѣютъ
		избир.	неиз- бир.	
	<i>на кагалныхъ</i>			
1	<i>Ицко Туршовичъ Щерешевскій</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Домъ и кожевенная фабрика, имѣетъ дохода 1000 руб. асс.</i>
2	<i>Иосель Хононовичъ</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>Доходъ изъ дома 200 руб. асс</i>
3	<i>Лейзеръ Лейбовичъ Фуксманъ</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>Доходъ изъ дома 400 руб. асс</i>
4	<i>Иосель Нохимовичъ Вакинъ</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Доходъ изъ дома 400 руб. асс</i>
5	<i>Мовша Абрамовичъ Эштѣйнъ</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>Доходъ изъ дома 300 руб. асс</i>
6	<i>Мовша Ошѣровичъ Альгеръ</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>Доходъ изъ дома 200 руб. асс</i>
7	<i>Довидъ Мендѣловичъ Бѣрезницкій</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>Доходъ изъ дома 100 руб. асс</i>
8	<i>Енохъ Шліомовичъ Тонюшкинъ</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>Доходъ изъ дома 100 руб. асс</i>

The most known group of records are voter lists which show the family name in correlation with the place of residence. A voter list is also an index for real estate and business records of the settlement. In addition, if you know the qualification¹ for a specific person (as shown on the voter list), you know where you should look for him: i.e., in business registers or in real estate descriptions of apartment renters. However, these records do not give ages or other personal information. The voter lists for elections to State Duma (Parliament) in Minsk Province for 1907 is in the National Historical Archive in Minsk; the same is true for Grodno Province for 1912, which is stored in the State Historical Archive in Grodno. The corresponding business and real estate records for that period are also in the corresponding archives.

Свѣденія о валовомъ доходе.

№	№	Фамилія наймагѣля	Назначеніе помѣщенія	На какомъ этаже	Сколько комнатъ	С отопле- ніемъ или безъ	Плата за 1910 годъ или наѣмная годовая цѣна
I	1	<i>Шарфъ</i>	<i>лавка</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1 к.</i>	<i>безъ</i>	<i>250</i>
	2	<i>Домовладѣльцы</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1 к.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>400</i>
	3	<i>- // -</i>	<i>пекарня</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3 к.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>350</i>
	4	<i>- // -</i>	<i>кварт.</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>6 к. кур., перед., ван., ванитер.</i>	<i>безъ</i>	<i>600</i>
	5	<i>Соволь</i>	<i>фрукт. погребокъ</i>	<i>подв.</i>	<i>1 к.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>100</i>
II	6	<i>Домовладѣльцы</i>	<i>амбаръ</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1 к.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>50</i>
	7	<i>Стбергъ</i>	<i>кварт.</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3 к., кур.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>150</i>
	8	<i>Шарфъ</i>	<i>кварт.</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3 к.</i>	<i>безъ</i>	<i>180</i>
	9	<i>Шафранскій</i>	<i>кварт.</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3 к., кур.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>190</i>
III	10	<i>Баранъ</i>	<i>кварт.</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3 к., кур.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>180</i>
	11		<i>кварт.</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3 к., кур.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>180</i>
	12	<i>i</i>	<i>кварт.</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3 к., кур.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>150</i>
	13	<i>i</i>	<i>кварт.</i>	<i>мезонинъ</i>	<i>1 к., кур.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>100</i>
	14		<i>кварт.</i>	<i>мезонинъ</i>	<i>1 к., кур.</i>	<i>- // -</i>	<i>120</i>

The second group are records for elections of local officials, including Jewish community officials, like teacher, community board and treasurers. They show names of the candidates, often their ages and property. Sometimes, there are lists of voters (i.e. real estate or big business possessors) of the settlement. Rarely, there are also voters' addresses and ages. Such documents are available for 1820s-1910s, mostly for Grodno Province, but a few for other provinces as well.

Passport Registers

A third group, personal passports, appeared in the Russian Empire in the 1870s, but Jews started to ask for them mostly in the late 19th - early 20th century, due mostly to American and European emigration and business interests. Actually, it might be noted that this type of document is very close to a primary source, according to the information available on each passport. However, as the passport showed separate families from different places (the passports were issued by Province Administration), often even parts of the family or just one person, we can not consider them as primary sources. The records are both in the Minsk and Grodno historical archives, but there are no indexes. The main problem with this kind of record is that the chance of finding a particular family name without checking thousands and thousands of pages is rare. However, Minsk archive has started the work on systematization of those fonds, but the work is far from being complete.

ФДО полуматѣля	Где живётъ	Возрастъ	Зѣмечанія	Составъ семьи
Ирзеѣнъ Аѣзеѣнъ Иосеѣевъ	Минскъ	39 летъ		жена Гѣйда Мовисевна, 31 годъ
Кацинѣсонъ Гирѣа Аѣвѣиковъ	Любанѣи	26 летъ		жена Ента Шмудѣлова, 24 года
Аѣвѣковъ Мовѣа-Иѣка Гирѣиковъ	Минскъ	42 года	купецъ	жена Сѣра-Хана Ошѣровна, 43 года; дети: Иосеѣфъ, р. 1904 г.; Шилонъ, 18 летъ; Ошѣрѣ, 15 летъ; Сѣлиха, 13 летъ; Аѣйда, 11 летъ; Бѣрисъ, 7 летъ; Гитѣло, 16 летъ; Цѣвѣя, 10 летъ; Аѣда, 4 года
Манѣсѣвичъ Ура Аронъ	Новѣорѣдокъ	67 летъ		
Раѣриѣовичъ Рѣкѣа Гѣдѣевѣа	Слуцкъ	24 года		дети: Морѣухъ, р. 1900 г.; Гирѣинъ, 1901 г.; Шѣрѣло, 1903 г.; мужъ Кѣва-Аѣйда
Рѣчѣко Дѣвѣа Исѣрова	Слуцкъ			дети: Иѣсонъ, 12 летъ; Гѣнатъ-Бѣрѣ, 8 летъ; Сѣня, 10 летъ, Рѣхѣилъ- Аѣя, 6 летъ
Хѣйфеѣнъ Эѣа Еѣсѣевѣа	Иѣля (Вѣлѣаскѣий у.) (Минскъ)	31 годъ		дѣвѣ Иѣха, р. 1904 г.; мужъ Шѣрѣка Иѣковъ
Шѣлѣѣѣѣѣнъ Сѣуѣилъ Аѣковѣевъ	Минскъ		почетный гражданинъ	жена Аѣлиѣа Хѣйловѣна, 44 года; дети: Елѣзѣвѣта, 13 летъ; Сѣоѣиѣа, 7 летъ
Дѣо Менѣѣло Гѣрѣевъ	Иѣѣдрѣинъ	27 летъ	земледѣлецъ	жена Цѣка Гѣрѣевѣа, 21 годъ

Real Estate Possessors Type III

The fourth group are real estate possessors' lists which are of two types. They contain the following information:

Inventory 1: Family name, address or the house location, valuation of property and its type, amount of taxes.

Inventory II: description contains information above but shows additional details, such as number and types of premises, number of floors, size of land attached, names of renters (if any).

№ п/п	ФІО плательщика	адресь	окладъ налога
1	Глуховский Шмуцла Алейдовъ	Мозырская ул., с. д.	1
2	Батлинъ Мордухъ Шмуцаловъ	2-я Бобрыйская ул., с. д.	1,5
3	Махтинъ Мордухъ	2-я Мозырская ул., с. д.	1
4	Альтицуль Хая Валманова	Мозырская ул., д. М. М. Альтицуля	3
5	Ганезеръ Евсей Алейдовъ	Мозырская ул., с. д.	1
6	Шуць Хана Алейдова	1-я Бобрыйская ул., с. д.	3,5
7	Шуць Мовша Аипмановъ	1-я Бобрыйская ул., с. д.	1
8	Аевинъ Алейзеръ Хаймовъ	Толевая ул., с. д.	1

Real Estate Possessors Type I

ИНВЕНТАРНАЯ ОПИСЬ

Наименование посыления: *м. Столино, Церковная ул.*

Фамилия, имя, отчество владельца, звание, родъ занятій: *Пилочинъ*

Шахна Аннолевичъ, мещанинъ

№	Название строения	Из какого материала	Назначение (жилое, хозяйственное, др.)	Сколько этажей	Состояние имущества	Валовой доход (руб.)	Сумма, подлежащая отчислению	Облагаемый доход (руб.)	Оценка имущества городовъ (руб.)
1	<i>Домъ</i>	<i>дерев.</i>	<i>жил.</i>	<i>1 эт.</i>	<i>сред.</i>				<i>380</i>
2	<i>Служба</i>								
3	<i>Огородъ</i>								

Real Estate Possessors Type II

2. Шапилович Нохимъ Шевхлевичъ,
ул. Варшавская

деревянный 1-этажный домъ, крытъ гонтами

огорода 106,5 м x 95,85 м

Годовой доходъ 6 руб.

Стоимость имущества 54 руб.

These real estate records appeared in the late 19th - early 20th century only (one known exception is the real estate description for Pruzhany for 1853). Sometimes, there are indexes to these files. If you use the entire document, you can identify such things as social position and neighbors, how far the family lived from important places like synagogues, churches, town hall, doctor, etc. Fifty percent of these types of records have survived. For instance, they exist for almost all the big towns of Minsk and Grodno provinces, and for some of the other pre-1917 Belarusian provinces.

Business Registers

The fifth group is formed with business registers. These files show family name, personal name, patronymic, business type, income, and tax amount. There are many of these records in Grodno and some are in Minsk.

#	ВИДЪ ПРЕДПРИЯТИЯ	ФАМИЛИЯ, ИМЯ, ОТЧѢСТВО ВЛАДЕЛЬЦА	КОЛ-ВО ПОКоеВЪ	АРЕНДНАЯ ПЛАТА	ГОДОВОЙ ОБОРОТЪ
145	галантерея и обои	Римляндъ Абрам-Иосель Гавриловъ	1	60 руб.	2000
178	обувь	Римляндъ Фимель Мехровичъ	1	60 руб.	1000
366	шляпочная лавка	Римляндъ Бейла Гершковна	1	годомв.	600
367	пекарня	Римляндъ Фроимъ Цииковъ	1	годомв.	800

All the records of the Russian Imperial period are in Russian. Special Jewish documents (birth, death, and marriage, and community elections records) sometimes have Yiddish equivalents. The only exclusion is Grodno and partly Minsk Provincial register books for 1795 which are for the most part in Polish.

The Regional and District principles

I. NATIONAL HISTORICAL ARCHIVES OF BELARUS

Address: 55, Kropotkina St., Minsk, 220002, Republic of Belarus

Tel: (+375-17) 268-65-22, 268-65-23

Fax: 268-65-20

Director: Alla K. Golubovich

Amount of holdings: 3,091 fonds, 19 collections of microfilms, 1,014,931 items

Chronological period: the 14th century — the beginning of the 20th century

Territory: the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the former Vitebsk, Minsk and Mogilev gubernias (provinces of the Russian Empire)

a) Register books for Minsk Province

District	1795	1811	1816	1834	1850	1858	District	1874	Other
Bobruysk	+	+	+	+	+	+	Bobruysk	+	+
Borisov	+	+	+	+	+	+	Borisov	+	—
Ihumen	+	+	+	+	+	+	Ihumen	+	—
Minsk	+	+	+	+	+	+	Minsk	+	—
Mozyr	—	+	+	—	+	+	Mozyr	1864	+
Novogrudok	—	+	+	+	+	+	Novogrudok	1864	+
Pinsk	—	+	+	+	+	—	Pinsk	1864	—
Rechitsa	—	+	+	+	+	+	Rechitsa	1864	+
Slutsk	+	+	+	+	+	+	Slutsk	1864	+

b) Register books for Mogilev Province.

District	1795	1811	1816	1834	1850	1858	District	1874	Other
Bykhov	—	—	—	—	—	—	Bykhov	—	1861
Gomel	—	—	—	—	—	—	Gomel	—	+-
Gorky	—	—	—	—	—	+	Gorky	+	—
Klimovichi	—	—	+-	—	—	—	Klimovichi	—	—
Mogilev	—	—	—	—	—	+-	Mogilev	+	+
Mstislavl	—	—	—	—	+-	+	Mstislavl	+	—
Orsha	—	—	—	—	—	—	Orsha	—	+-
Rogachev	—	—	—	+-	—	+	Rogachev	—	—
Sennitsa	—	—	—	—	—	+-	Sennitsa	—	—
Chausy	—	—	—	—	—	—	Chausy	—	—
Cherikov	—	—	+	—	—	—	Cherikov	+-	+-

c) Vitebsk Province

No Register Books

Family history can be researched partly with birth, death, marriage records, partly with townhall records. Almost no military records and no Register books at all.

NATIONAL HISTORICAL ARCHIVES OF BELARUS IN GRODNO

Address: 2, Tizengauza Sq., Grodno, 230023, Republic of Belarus

Tel./Fax: (+375-152) 44-94-66

Director: Karina P. Batrakova

Amount of holdings: over 1,200 fonds; over 408,000 items; over 11,000 books and brochures; about 5,000 periodicals

Territory: the former Grodno province and the former Vileika, Disna, Lida, Oshmyany uyezds (small administrative units) of the Vilno province, the Russian Empire

Chronological period: the 16th — early 20th centuries

d) Register books for Grodno Province

District	1795	1806	1811	1816	1834	1850	1858	District	1874	Other
Belostok	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	Belostok	+	—
Belsk	—	—	—	+	—	—	—	Belsk	—	—
Brest	+	+	—	—	—	+	—	Brest	+-	—
Volkovysk	+	—	+	—	+-	+-	+	Volkovysk	+-	1864
Grodno	+	+	—	—	+-	—	+	Grodno	+	—
Kobrin	+	+	+	—	—	+	—	Kobrin	—	—
Pruzhany	—	+	+	—	—	—	+	Pruzhany	—	—
Slonim	+	+	—	—	—	+	+	Slonim	—	—
Sokolka	—	—	—	—	—	+	—	Sokolka	—	—

Belarus is divided in regions and within those regions are districts. Archival holdings for both regions and districts must be studied for their area of coverage and the surviving records. The purpose of record creation, whether for state, region, district or more local reasons determine where they might be stored. However, due to many changes in governmental regulations, records may have been moved, restored or destroyed. Below you will find charts that give a general idea about the holdings and the surviving records now known in each of the districts. It is important to

keep in mind, some records have no indexes, some are still not generally known about, and some are in very bad condition and not generally open to research.

For the researcher who wants to get the information about his ancestors' family from Belarus, one must know: record holdings in each of the archives (both regional and district) and the chronological coverage of those holdings. In Minsk Province, family history can be researched using register books only. Birth, death, marriage records are very few and fragmented and only for the town of Minsk. The main problem is tracing family history between 1860s and 1900s. In Mogilev Province, family history can be researched partly through birth, death, and marriage records for the towns of Mogilev, Gomel; some town hall records, and few military registers. Register books are very few and fragmented. The main problem is tracing family history in the 1st half of 19th c. In Vitebsk Province, family history can be researched partly with birth, death, and marriage records; partly with town hall records and there are almost no military records. There are no register books at all. The main problem for Vitebsk Province is the lack of records. In Grodno Province, family history is best researched by using principal sources such as register books. In the chart for the Grodno Province, these birth, death, and marriage records are very few and fragmented for most districts and exist more fully only for Grodno and Kobrin Districts. (For Archival holdings by District, see back cover.)

So, as you can see, with careful study of primary and secondary sources, taking into consideration the records that have survived in the various Belarusian archives, it is possible to reconstruct details of your ancestral family life. This should give you some hope to get good news from your search of the records of the past.