

# **Edward Gelles**

## **My Family Background**

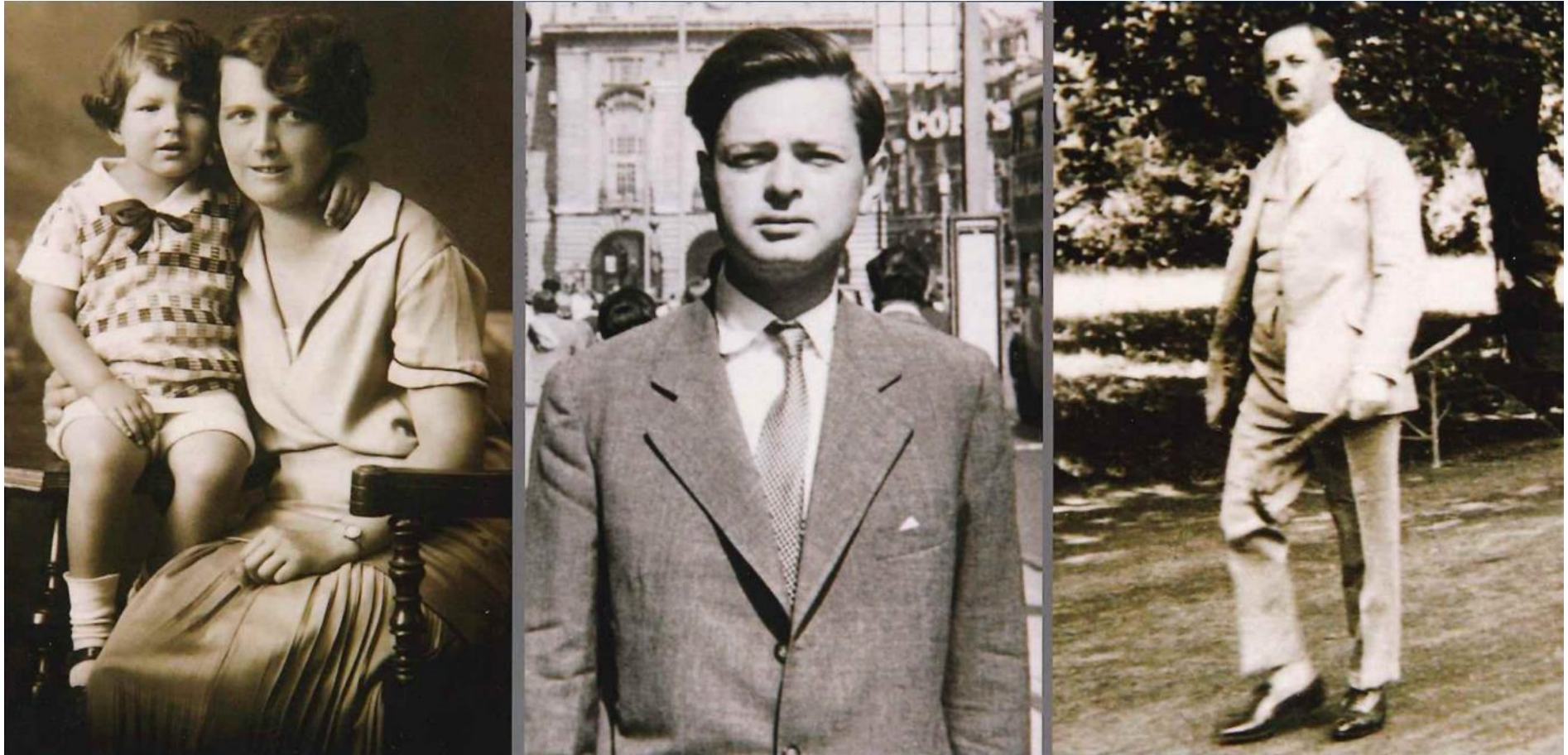
---

**Edward Gelles, born in Vienna, Austria in 1927**

**Son of Dr David Itzig Gelles (1883-1964)**

**and**

**Regina Griffel (1900-1954)**

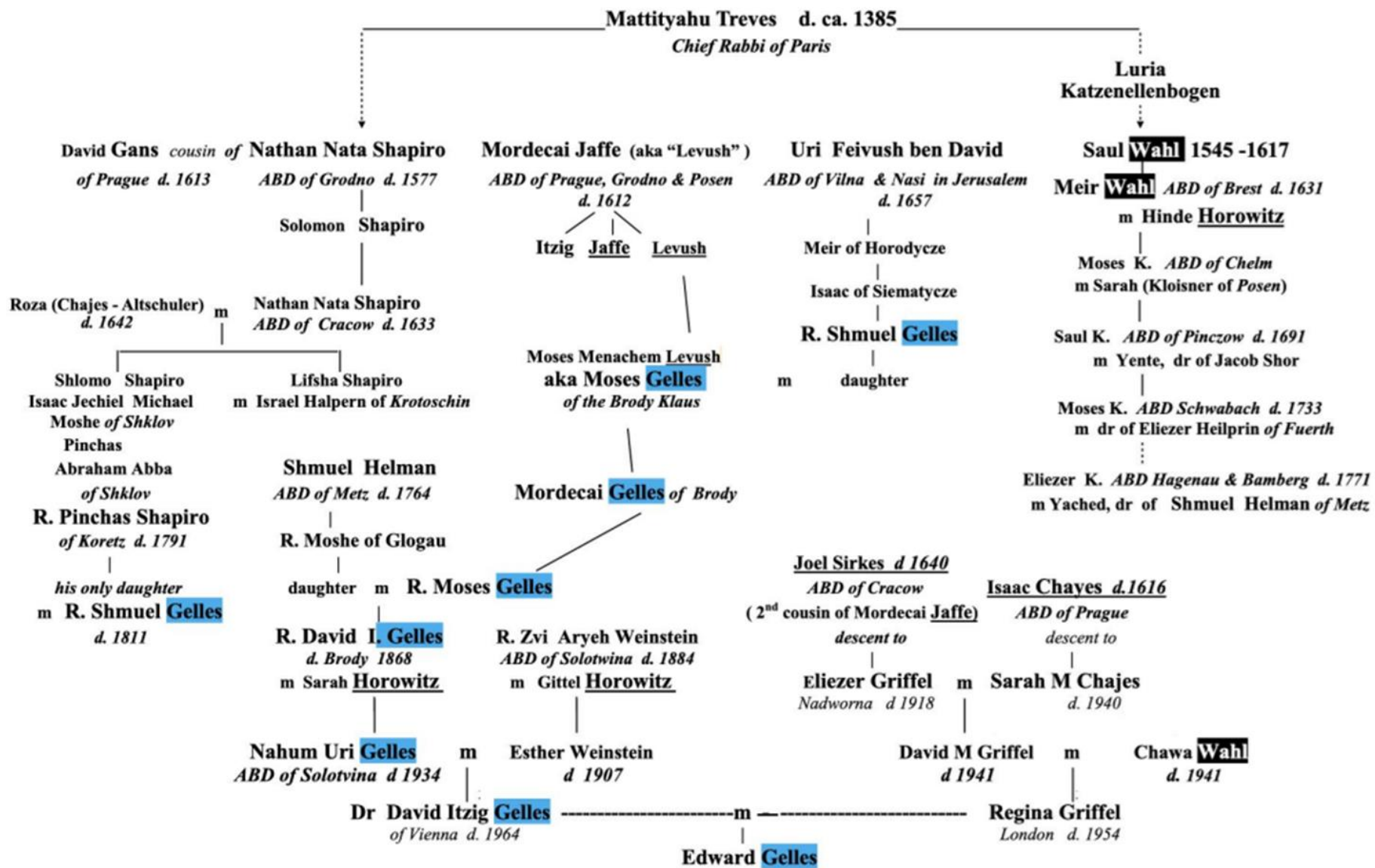


Edward Gelles with his father Dr. David Itzig Gelles and his mother Regina Gelles nee Griffel with her elder son Ludwig

**Edward Gelles is the second son of Dr David Itzig Gelles and Regina Griffel. My paternal ancestry includes rabbis of Weinstein, Horowitz, Helman, Halpern and Shapiro families. My maternal line goes back from my grandparents David Mendel Griffel and Chawa Wahl to Chajes, Katzenellenboegn, Luria families amongst others.**

**The two sides of my family were involved in a number of inter-marriages. Important ancestors included Mordecai Jaffe, the 16<sup>th</sup> century Chief Rabbi of Prague, Grodno, and Posen. He was known as the Levush after the title of his magnum opus, and a branch of this family carried down the name of Levush while another branch who adopted Itzig as their family name became Court Jews in Berlin.**

**The lines of ascendancy of Gelles and Griffel went back to common ancestors in the Treves rabbinic family of 14th century France. Matityahu Treves was Rabbi of Paris and subsequently became Chief Rabbi of France. The Treve rabbis were descended from the biblical scholar Rabbi Salomon ben Isaac, known as “Rashi”, who lived at Troyes in the 11th Century and his lineage went back to the Kalonymos of Narbonne.**







Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles with (left to right) Lotte, Max, David, and Bertha

**My grandfather Nahum Uri Gelles (1852-1934) was Chief Rabbi of Solotwina in Galicia, an outlying province of the Austrian Empire from 1772 to 1918. My grandfather married Esther, the daughter of Rabbi Zvi Aryeh Weinstein and Gittel Horowitz.**

**The photo shows four of my grandparent's six children, including my father David Itzig Gelles who was born in 1883 (standing to the right in the photo). He held the degree of Dr Juris of Vienna University and practised as an advocate in that city. He was a leading member of the Viennese Jewish community and of the Austrian Zionist movement.**

**My father's younger siblings Lotte and Max (born 1895 and 1897) followed him in obtaining their degrees of Dr. Juris in Vienna. Max was a practising advocate, wrote a standard commentary on Austrian Company Law, and was an outstanding amateur chess player. He left his daughter Elsa who lived in New York, and who is followed by her son, the medical specialist Dr. Peter Schmaus and his issue.**

**Lotte married twice, to the lawyer Dr. L. Ostrer of Vienna and secondly to the physician Dr Kurt Kalmann in Tel Aviv.**

**Bertha was born in 1881 and emigrated to America shortly before the First World War. She married Nathan Resnik in January 1914. Two children followed in 1915 and 1916 and a third in 1921. Her daughter Edythe had two sons, Dr Stuart Rothenberg, is an authority on Ayurvedic medicine and Dr Robert Rothenberg is a family physician. Stuart's daughter, the journalist Jennie Rothenberg Gritz, sent me this photo which appears to be a valedictory record taken prior to Bertha's departure for America.**



**Dr Stuart Rothenberg is the Chief Medical Officer of David Lynch Foundation and National Director of TM Health Professionals Association**

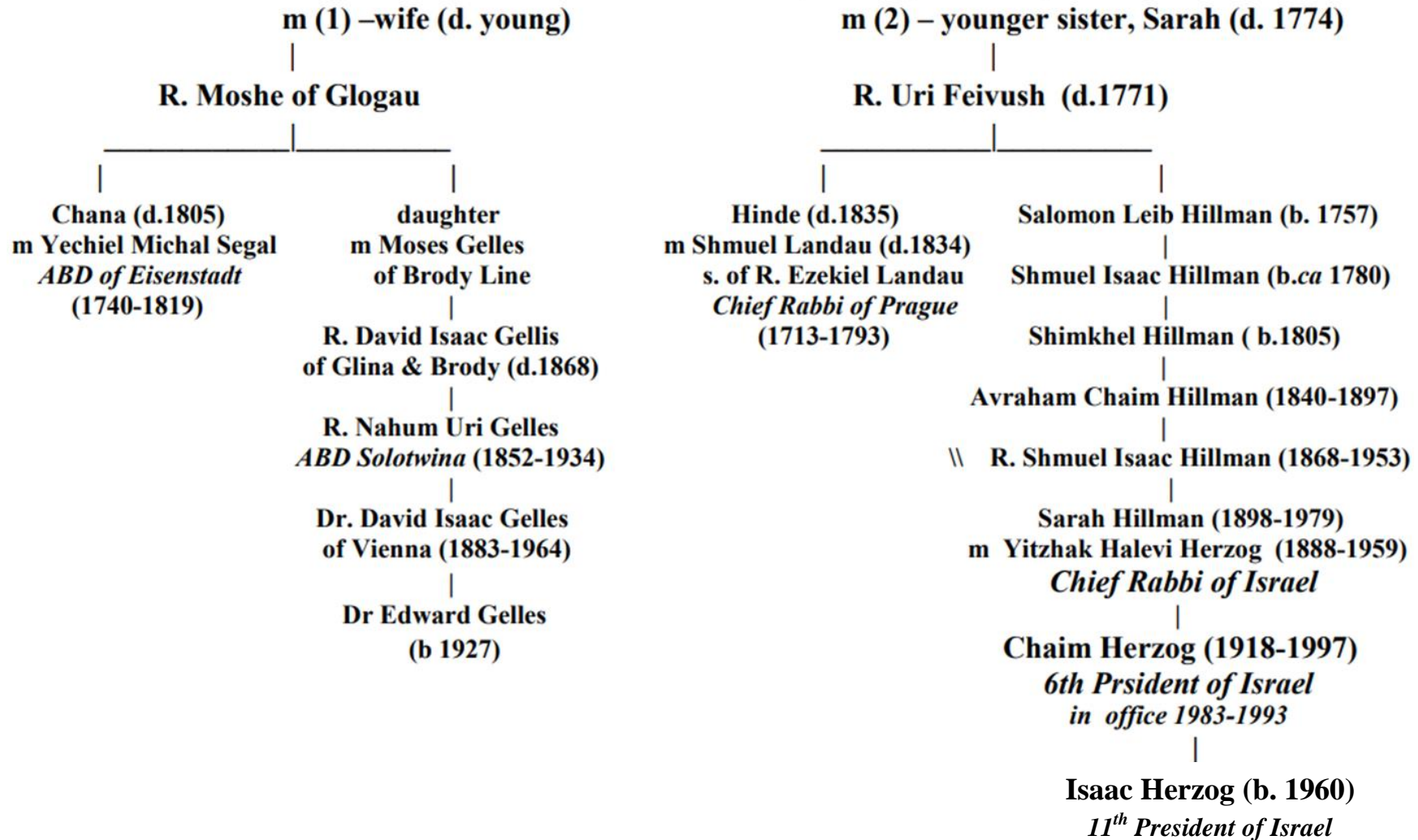
**He is the grandson of Bertha Gelles Resnick**

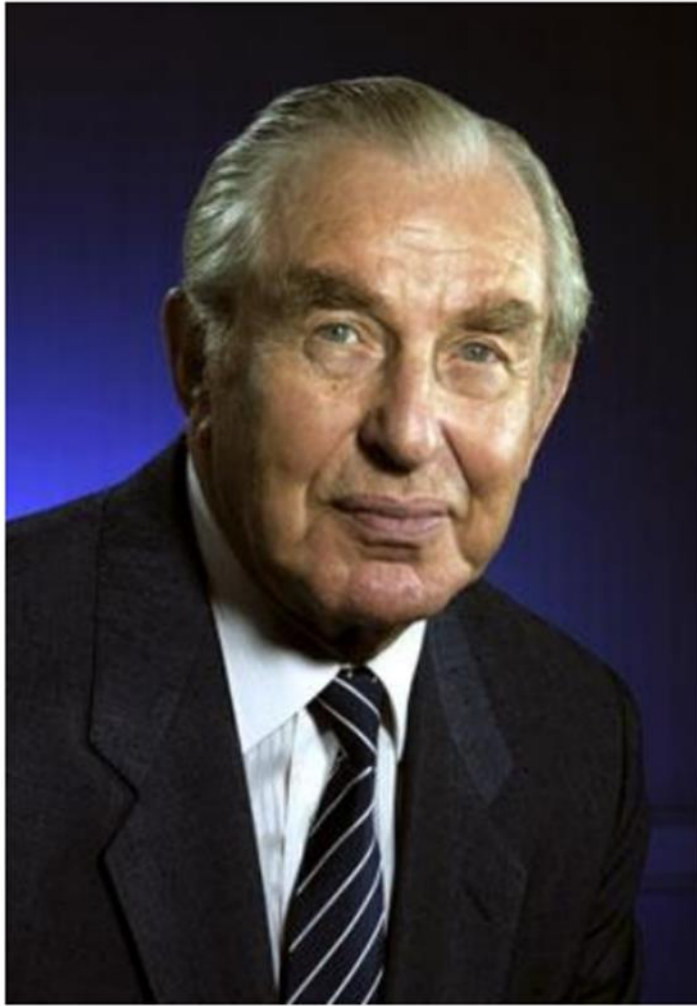


Stuart Rothenberg Bar Mitzvah Reception 1961 - Stuart seated third from right  
Stuart's mother Edythe and father Murray (standing 2nd and 3rd from right), Edythe's mother, Bertha Gelles Resnick (standing 4th from right), Stuart's aunt Elsa (Gellis) Schmaus and her husband Walter (seated centre). Bertha is the aunt of Edward Gelles and Edythe and Elsa are his 1st cousins.



**Chief Rabbi Shmuel Helman (Hillman) of Metz (d. 1764)**



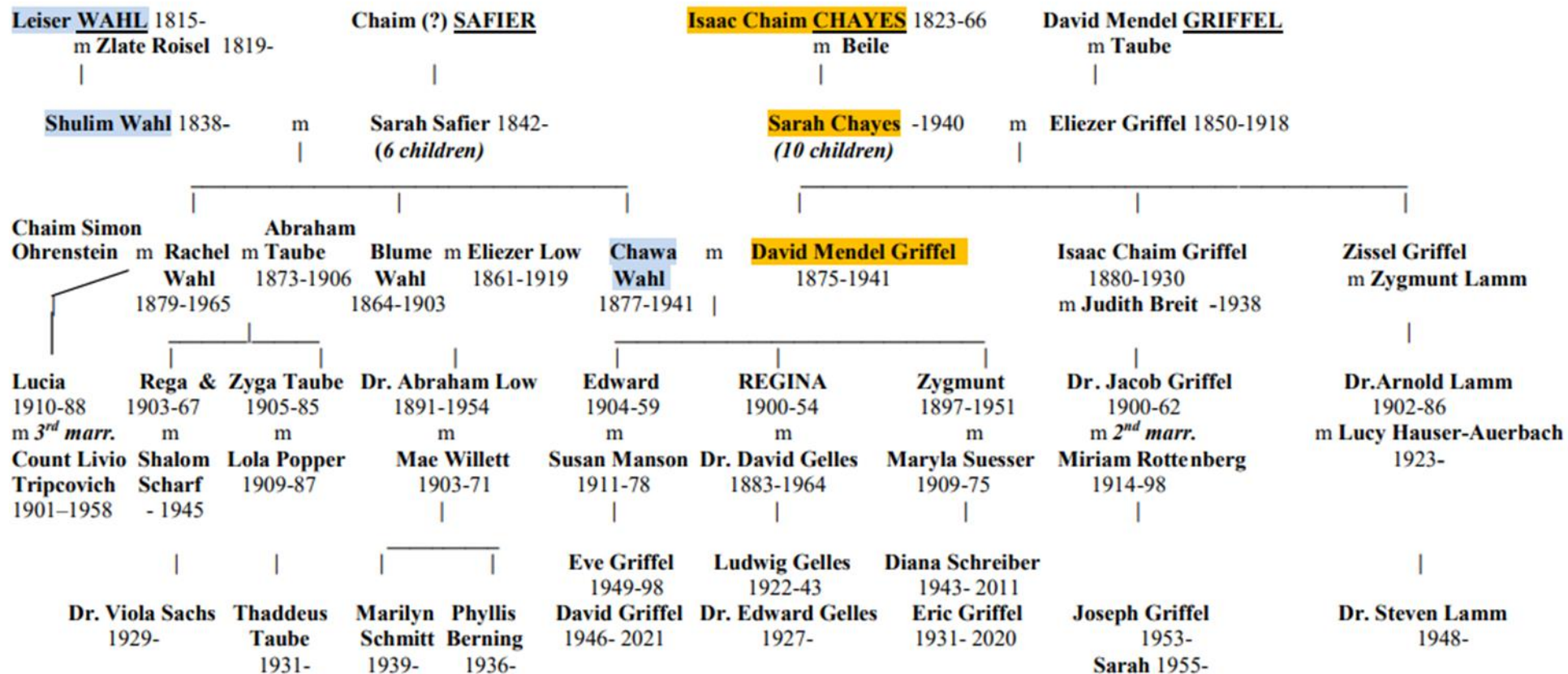


**Chaim Herzog (1918 – 1997)**  
**6<sup>th</sup> President of Israel 1983 – 1993**



**Isaac Herzog (1960 - )**  
**1<sup>th</sup> President of Israel 2021 -**

## Maternal Family Connections of Edward Gelles







Edward Griffel (1904 – 1959)

father of David Griffel (1946–2021) and uncle of Edward Gelles (b.1927)

**Edward Gelles and David Griffel are first cousins as shown on the following chart.**



# Edward Gelles and David Griffel

Chasidic dynasty founder  
 Israel Friedman of Ruzhin, d. .1850  
 m Sarah Efrari, d. 1847

|  
 Gittel Tova Toyba Friedman  
 m R Ysef Manson

|  
 R. Chaim David Manson , d. 1932  
 m Udel Gottesman

|  
 R. Israel Manson, d. 1961  
 m Yente D Horodetzky, d 1955

|  
 Susan Manson  
 1911 -1978

m  
 David Griffel  
 1946 – 2021

David M Griffel  
 m Taube Zeisler

|  
 Eliezer Griffel d.1918  
 m Sarah Chayes,d.1940

|  
 David M Griffel, d. 1941  
 m Chawa Wahl, d. 1941

|  
 Edward Griffel  
 1904 – 1959

|  
 Regina Griffel  
 1900 – 1954

Friedman - Gelles connections  
 see charts in preceding essay

R Moses Gelles (Gelles of Brody)  
 m descendant of Helman & Shapiro

|  
 R. David Isaac Gelles, d.1868  
 m Sarah Horowitz

|  
 R. Nahum Uri Gelles ,d. 1934  
 m Esther Weinstein, d. 1907

|  
 Dr David Gelles  
 1883 - 1964

m  
 Edward Gelles  
 1927 -



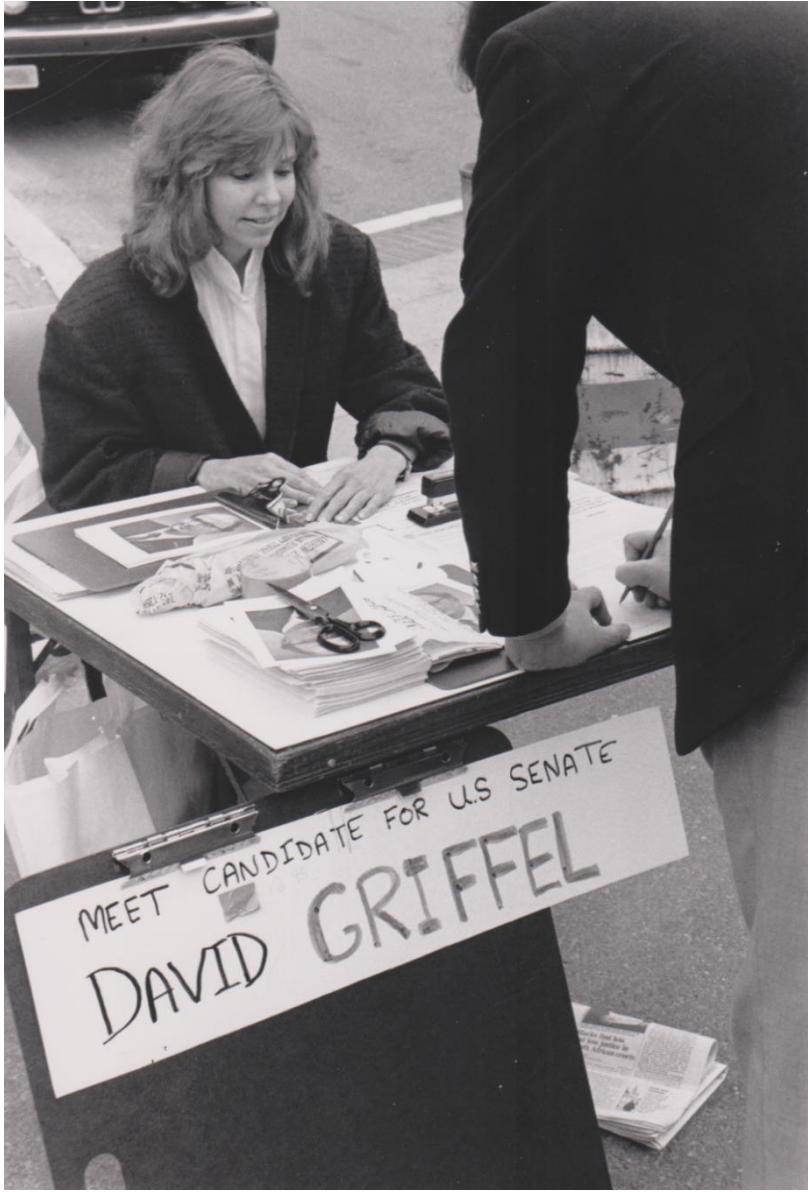
## David M. Griffel and some family connections

### Edward Gelles

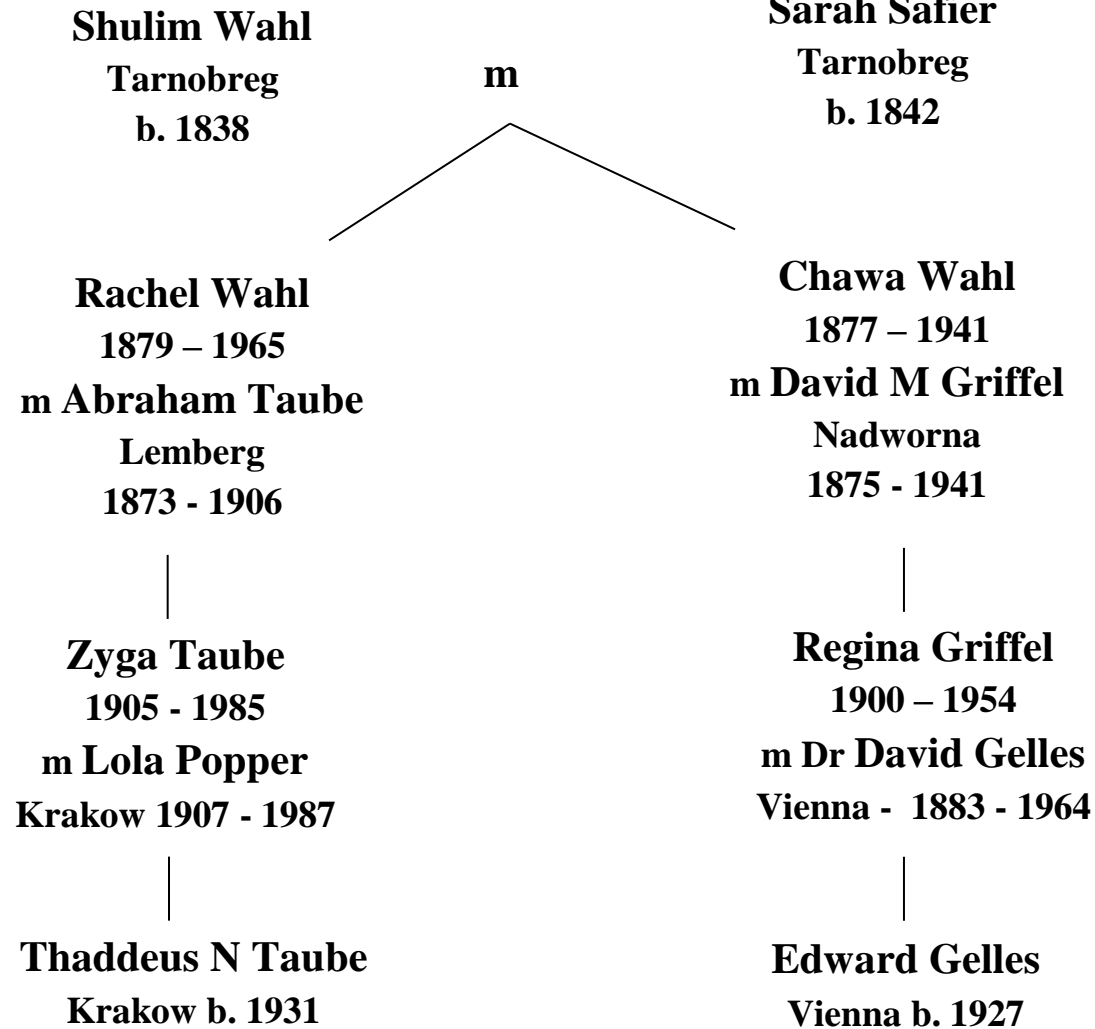
David Griffel who died a year ago, on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021, was the last remaining 1<sup>st</sup> cousin of our Griffel family. David's father Edward Griffel and my mother Regina Griffel were siblings whose father was David M. Griffel, after whom my cousin was called. The siblings' grandfather Eliezer Griffel, was head of the Jewish community of Nadworna in Galicia.

An outline of my cousin David's life can be gathered from appended photographs which were retrieved from his house in Weston, Massachusetts.

David Griffel was born in New York in 1946. His father Edward Griffel ( 1904 – 1959 ) married Susan Manson (1911 - 1978) . David's sister Eve ( 1949 - 1998 ) is shown beside her brother in the photograph which was taken in 1952 /1953.



**Griffel – Wahl - Taube**







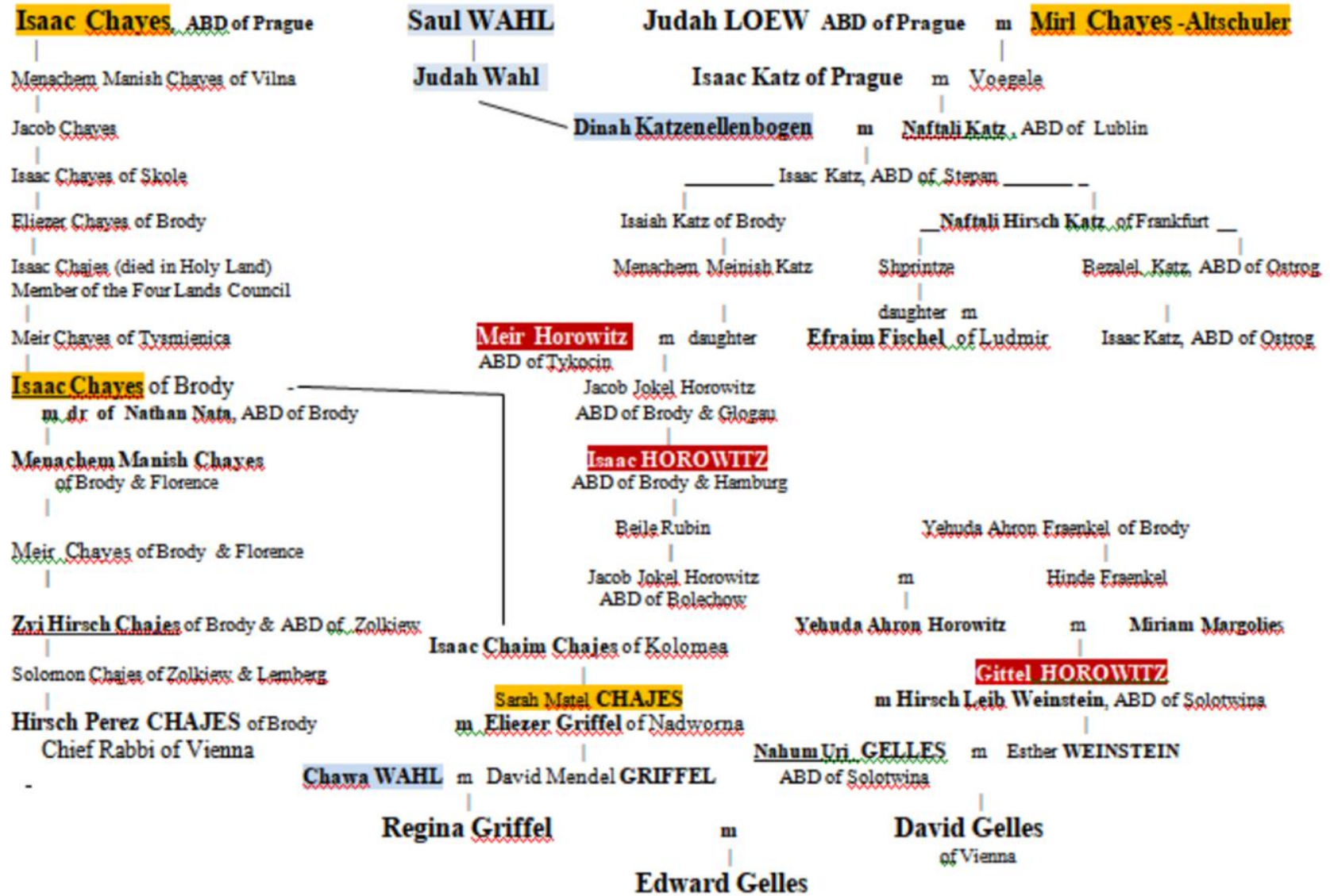
**Thaddeus N Taube with his wife Dianne and Edward Gelles at dinner in London (2002)**

**Tad Taube and Edward Gelles are second cousins whose grandmothers are Rachel Wahl and Chawa Wahl.**



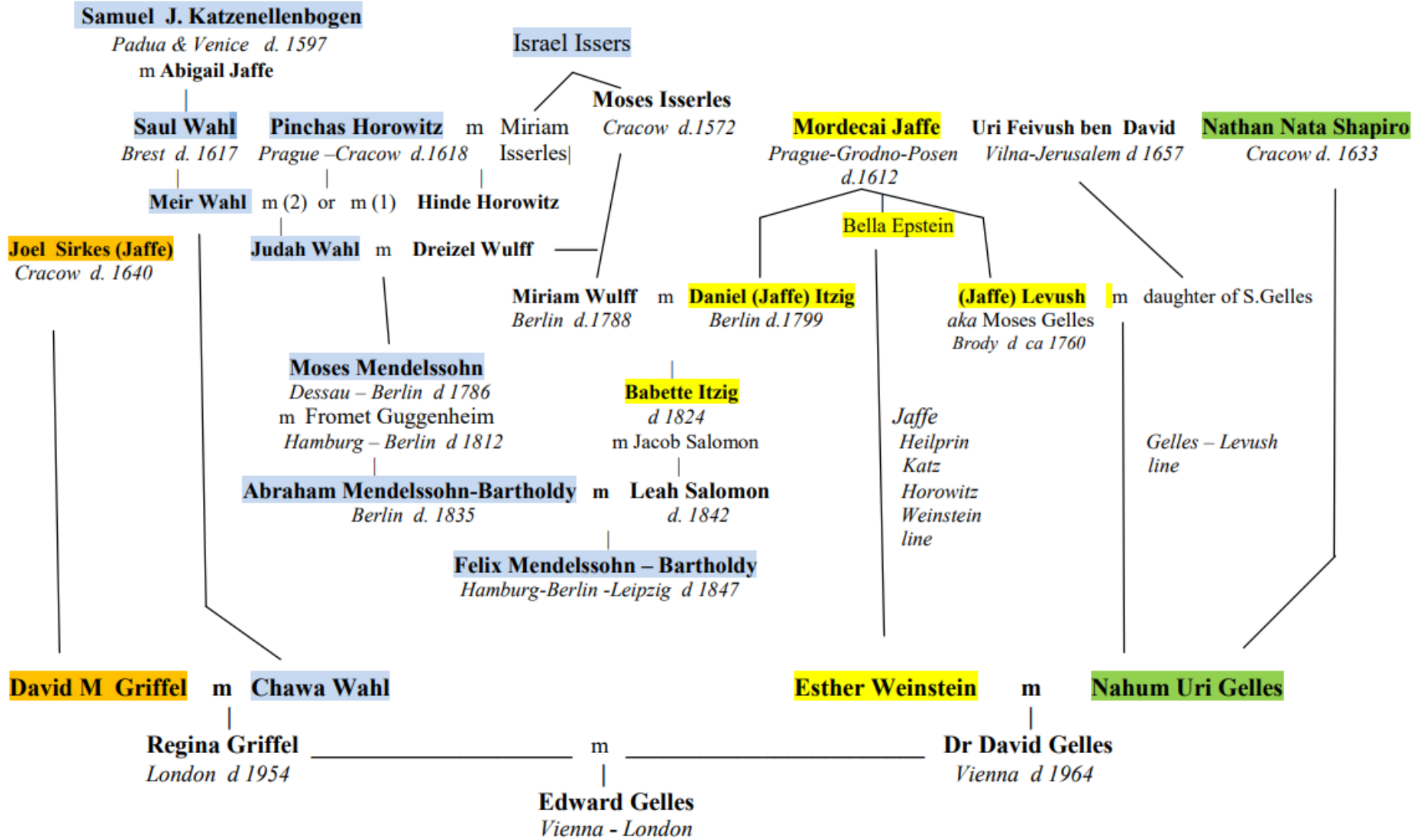
Zvi Hirsch Perez Chajes (1876-1927)  
Chief Rabbi of Vienna  
(see following family chart)

## Descent of Edward Gelles from Rabbis Judah Loew and Isaac Chayes of Prague



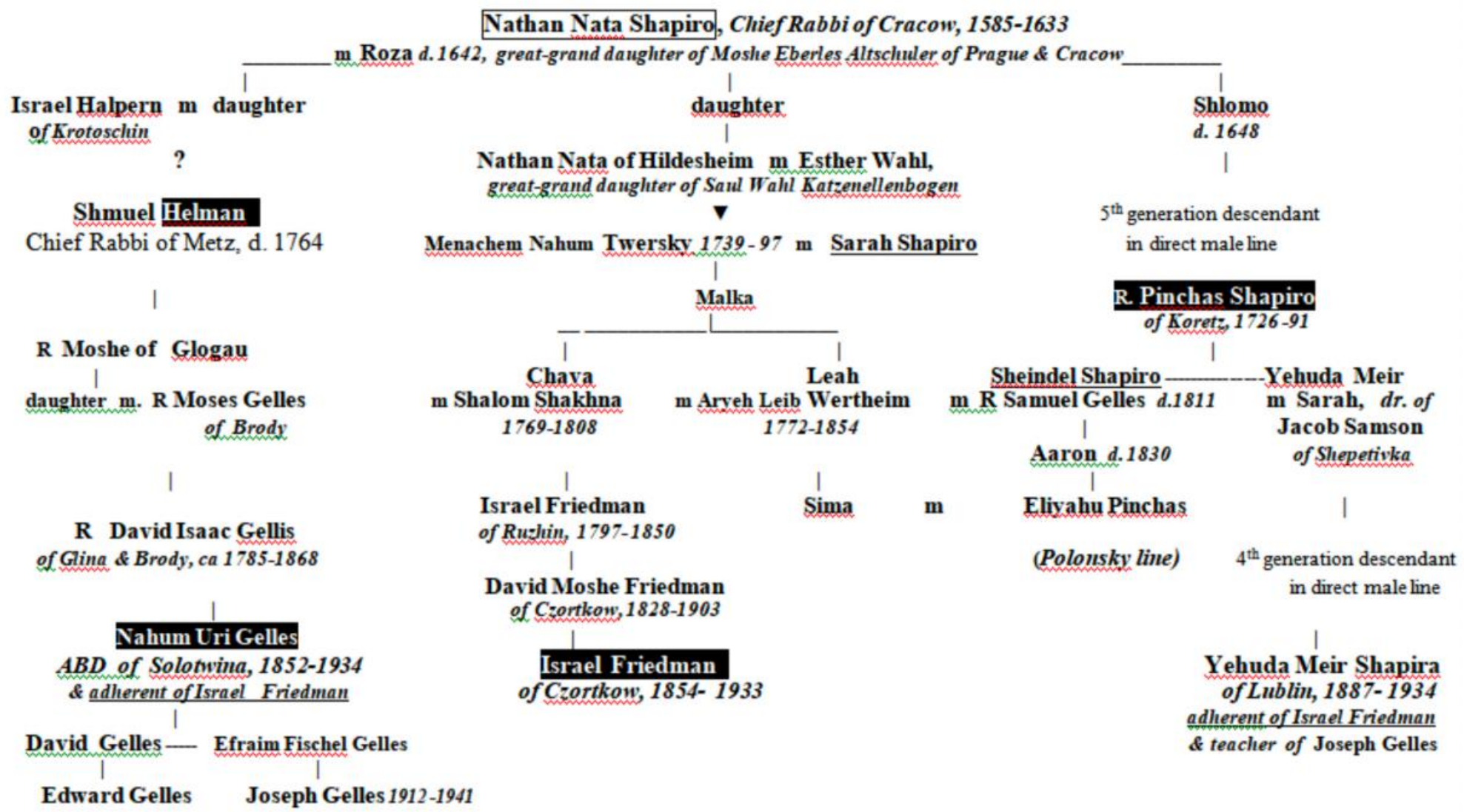


## Ancestral Links of Edward Gelles and the Mendelssohns





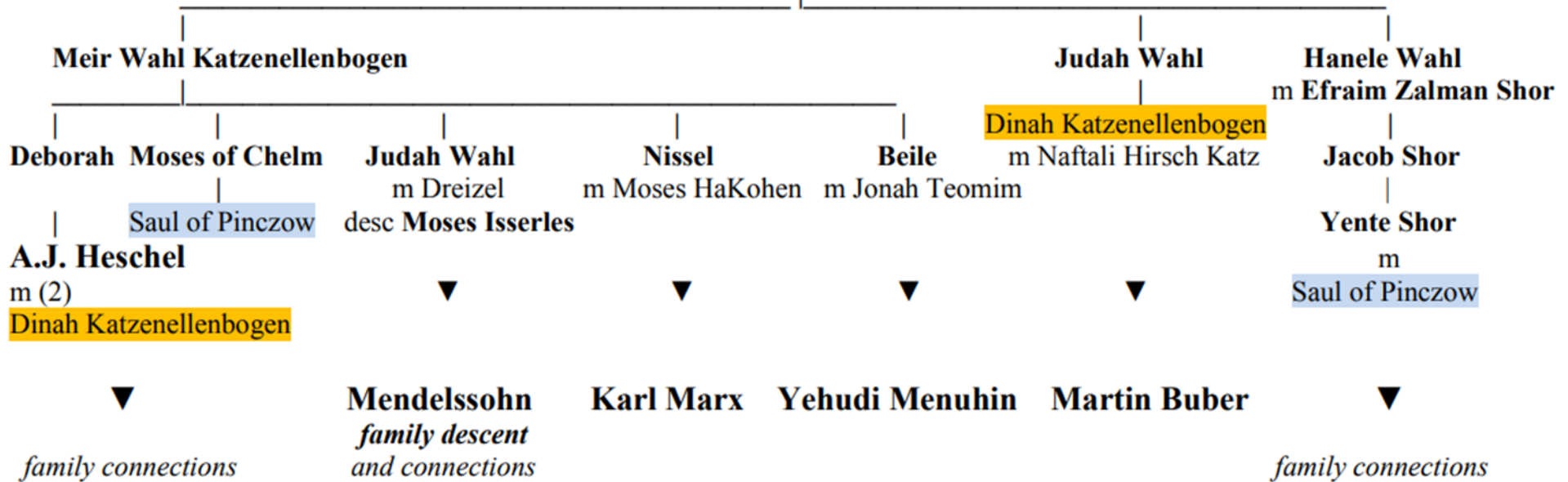
The Shapiro Connection of Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles and the Chasidic Grand Rabbi Israel Friedman of Czortkow



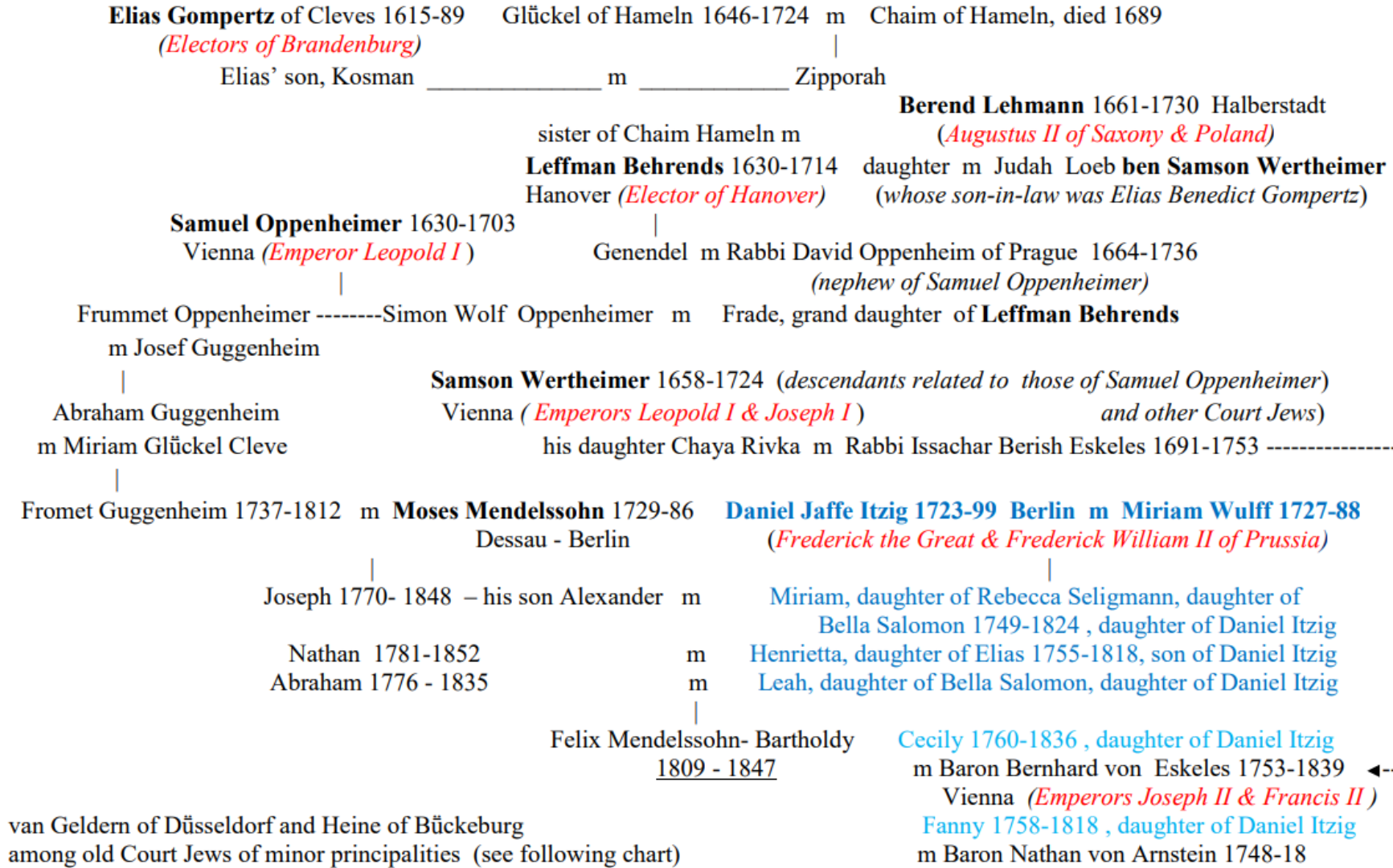
## Some lines of descent from Saul Wahl

**Rabbi Samuel Judah Katzenellenbogen of Padua and Venice  
m. Abigail Jaffe**

**Saul Wahl (Katzenellenbogen)**



## Mendelssohn and some Ashkenazi Court Jews





## Migration of rabbinic families in central and eastern Europe over the past few centuries.

Connections between Galicia (Brody), Lithuania (Vilna, Grodno) , Posen ( Graetz, Lissa, Krotoschin), Silesia (Glogau), Austria (Eisenstadt)

<b>Isaac Horowitz</b> Chief Rabbi of Brody, Glogau, and Hamburg, d. 1767	<b>Nathan Nata Shapiro</b> Chief Rabbi of Cracow 1585-1633	<b>Mordecai Jaffe (aka Levush)</b> Chief Rabbi of Prague, Grodno & Posen d. 1612	<b>Samson Wertheimer</b> Court Jew of Habsburg Vienna, Rabbi of <b>Eisenstadt</b> , Chief Rabbi of Hungary & Moravia died 1724	<b>Uri Feivush</b> Chief Rabbi of Vilna & Nasi in Jerusalem d. 1657	
<i>line connected with Rabbi D.I. Gelles of Brody and his descendants</i>		Jaffe of Graetz (near Posen)	<i>Wertheimer descendants connected with Oppenheim, Mendelssohn, Itzig, Eskeles, Gelles, Loewenstein</i>	Meir of Horodycze	
	Lifsha Shapiro m. Israel Halpern of Krotoschin		Isaac of Siemiatycze	Gershon Vilner of Shklov	Uri Feivush of Vilna
Uri Feivuch of <b>Glogau</b>	?	Daniel Jaffe Itzig in Berlin d. 1799	Shmuel Gelles Rabbi of Siemiatycze	daughter married Nathan Nata of Grodno Chief Rabbi of <b>Brody</b> <b>d. 1764</b>	
(1) daughter ? (2) Sarah d. 1774 married →	Shmuel Helman (Hillman) Chief Rabbi of Kremsier Mannheim & Metz d.1764	Moshe Mendel Levush →	daughter married Moshe M. Levush aka Moses Gelles of Brody d. ca 1760	daughter m Isaac Chayes of <b>Brody</b> d 1807	
Rabbi Uri Feivush of Lissa and other towns d. 1771	Rabbi Moshe of Glogau		Mordecai Gelles of Brody father or uncle of	her brother David Tebele Rabbi of <b>Lissa</b> <b>d. 1792</b>	
	daughter married Moses Gelles	----- →	Rabbi Moses Gelles of Glina and Brody		
	another daughter, Chana, married son of Asher Lemel, Chief Rabbi of Glogau and <b>Eisenstadt</b> , d. 1789	Descendant of Rabbi Isaac Horowitz   →	Rabbi David Isaac Gelles Brody, d. 1868 married Sarah Horowitz		<i>a distant Gelles line in Posen coming from Lithuania</i>
	Ahron Ber Gelles 19 <sup>th</sup> century community leader in <b>Eisenstadt</b>		Nahum Uri Gelles Chief Rabbi of Sopotwina 1852-1934		Rabbi Siegfried Gelles b. <b>Krotoschin</b> 1884
			Dr David I Gelles of Vienna 1883-1964		Rabbi Benjamin Gelles b. <b>Lissa</b> , 1916 1 <sup>st</sup> cousin of
			 <b>Edward Gelles</b>		Judge Bernard Gillis. 1905 - 96



# References

## Papers of Edward Gelles

on **Balliol College, Oxford website** – ‘Archives and Modern Manuscripts’

The study of my family background in so far as it is covered in the record of my researches on the web pages of my College involves an inter-disciplinary application of history, genealogy, genetics and other sources as exemplified here under

Edward Gelles - Autosomal DNA matches with close cousins (Family Tree DNA)

Reviews and comments on my books 2006 – 2016

VIDEO - - Voices from Oxford: Sir Drummond Bone talking to Edward Gelles, March 2016

## **Published books by Edward Gelles**

‘An Ancient Lineage: European Roots of a Jewish Family: Gelles-Griffel-Wahl-Chajes-Safier-Loew-Taube. London: Valentine Mitchell, 2006.’

‘Family Connections. Gelles – Horowitz - Chayes. Maastricht: Shaker, 2008.’

‘Family Connections. Gelles - Shapiro - Friedman. Maastricht: Shaker, 2009.’

‘Ephemeral and Eternal: Josef Gelles A Brief Life. Maastricht: Shaker, 2010.’

‘Meeting My Ancestors: Genealogy, Genes, and Heritage. Maastricht: Shaker, 2011.’

‘The Jewish Journey: A Passage through European History. London: IB Tauris, 2016.’

‘Edward Gelles: Photographs relating to my family and ancestral background. London – (Cewe), 2020’



**Portrait of Edward Gelles by Carel Weight**





**Edward Gelles**