

A Postcard from my grandfather

Rabbi Nahum Uri Gelles and the Friedman connection

My grandfather Nahum Uri Gelles and his father David Isaac Gelles were rabbis in Austrian Galicia and associated with the Friedman chasidic dynasty founded by Israel Friedman of Ruzhin, whose descendants became leaders of important branches of the movement. My grandfather was a close adherent of Rabbi Israel Friedman of Czortkow who died in Vienna in 1933. This rare postcard was written by my grandfather shortly thereafter. The card was intended to remind the family to let him have some mementos of his friend and also expresses some concern about the position of the late rabbi's grave in the Zentral-Friedhof (Vienna's principal cemetery).

My grandfather died less than a year later and is buried next to Rabbi Israel Friedman and his wife (a 1st cousin) Ruchama Sheva Friedman, and their son Rabbi Dov Ber Friedman.

A picture of the card can be seen below – it is included with a full English translation in my archive.

Our family tradition was that the Gelles and Friedman lines were related and my studies bearing on this subject include references in my books, in Chapter 4 of “Family Connections: Gelles-Shapiro-Friedman” (published 2009) and Chapter 6 of “Meeting my Ancestors” (published 2011). It was not until I drew on the results of DNA tests that pointers to our genealogical connections through common Horowitz and other forebears have become clearer (see Edward Gelles web page, and specifically the 1st, 3rd, and 4th charts under the sub-heading “DNA Tests”).



Handwritten text in Hebrew, likely a letter or a collection of notes, written on aged paper. The text is dense and covers most of the page.