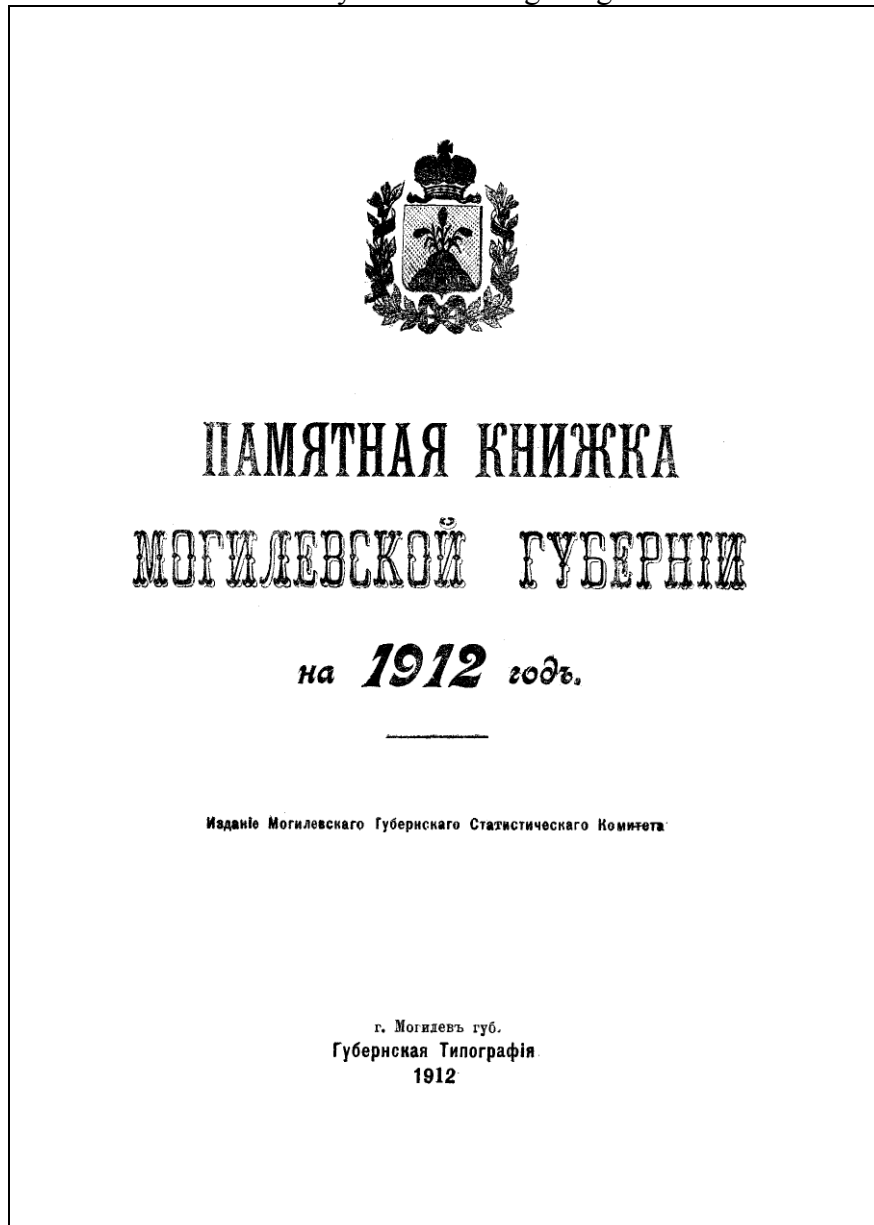


Gubernia Memory Books In Russian Empire

Gubernia Memory Books ("pamyatnye khizhki") were published in various provinces (*gubernias*) of Russian Empire from the middle of the 19th century to the year of 1917. They contain valuable information which is interesting both from historical and genealogical point of view. Besides the general public and specifically Christian issues, they also bring light to Jewish life of that period. We will put attention to those chapters where Jewish names or/and information about Jews emerge. Let us look at few Memory books of Mogilev gubernia for 1865-1914.



The title of 1912' Mogilev gubernia Memory Book

Mogilev Gubernia Memory books in various issues contained the following chapters interesting to a Jewish researcher:

1. Calendar of Jewish holidays and fasts
2. Authorities (Trustee Committee) of Charity Establishments

3. Jewish charity establishments
 4. Mogilev Council of Civil Medical establishments
 5. Gubernia's Trustee Committee on prisons
 6. The Physicians Association
 7. The Midwives' Committee
 8. The City Council (*Duma*)
 9. The City's Tax Commission
 10. The City's Magistrate
 11. The Orphan Court
 12. Jewish schools
 13. Jewish religion leaders
 14. Statistics on Jewish synagogues and prayer houses
 15. Statistics on Jewish population
 16. Pharmacies
 17. Bookstores and libraries
 18. Printing houses and lithographers
 19. Photographers
 20. Insurance and industry agents
 21. Freelancing physicians
 22. Dentists
 23. Freelancing Veterinary doctors
 24. Freelancing midwives
 25. Lawyers
 26. State Bank's branch
 27. Attorney's assistants
 28. Men's gymnasia
 29. Real school
 30. City executives
 31. Religious (Russian Orthodox) school
 32. Officer for Jewish Issues at Governor's Office
 33. Mutual Credit Society (credit cooperative)
 34. Board of Credit Cooperative
 35. Mutual Insurance Society
 36. Bank of Commerce's Minsk branch
 37. Voluntary Firemen Society
 38. Vilna Region Educational Board
 39. Trade tax office
 40. Orphanage
 41. Jewish agricultural farm
 42. Petty Bourgeoisie Councils and Executives
 43. Jewish professional schools
 44. Poor Jews Aid Society
- and more.**

It should be noted that more Jewish information can be found in later issues of Memory books. It is connected to the political and economical changes in Russia for the passed decades reflected either in wider Jewish representation in various civil organizations and more space in the Books dedicated to Jewish communal life. But do not try to find Jews in various governmental bodies: for few exceptions, there are none of them! Another important thing is that starting from

1906, the books published information not only on each uyezd, but also on separate towns. Thus, I was happy to find the name of my great grandfather Itche-Bere Dragilev on the list of Chislavichi Voluntary Firemen Society Board in 1913 Memory Book:

Правленія добровольныхъ пожарныхъ обществъ:

Хиславичское. Предсѣдатель — губ секр. Яковъ Ив **Яновскій**, прав., дом. обр.; члены: кр. Мих. Яковл. **Ольшановъ**, прав., дом. образ.; свящ. Евстафій **Барцевичъ**, дух. сем; докторъ Левъ Шахнов. **Рабиновичъ**, воен. мед. акад; мѣщ. Абрамъ Хаим **Рискинъ**, дом. обр.; куп. сынъ Шепшель Лейб, **Славинъ**, іуд., дом. обр.; куп. сынъ Абрамъ Шмерк. **Левитинъ**, іуд., дом. образ.; мѣщ. Борухъ Довид. **Шапиро**, іуд., дом. образ.; мѣщ Мееръ Вульф. **Чернякъ**, іуд., дом. образ.; мѣщ. Ицка Шмерк. **Драгилевъ**, іуд., дом. обр.

From the point of view of their volume, the Books also indicated steady growth with passed years:

Mogilev Gubernia Memory Books													
Year	1865	1867	1869	1890	1898	1903	1906	1907	1909	1911	1912	1913	1914
# of pages	283	345	351	459	223	405	531	467	634	358	384	532	558

In conclusion, we must say that together with other published sources of genealogical research, gubernia memory books are important tool for searching after one's Jewish roots.