

Ester⁴ (Ester) Khazanovich (Yehuda³, Moshe², Yudi¹) was probably born about 1867 in Nemunaitis, Russia (now Lithuania), and died January 23, 1961 in Portland, ME. She married **Louis (Lewis) Lelansky** between 1882 - 1883 in Russia. He was born in 1863 in Alytus, Russia (now Lithuania), and died April 9, 1934 in ME.



Ester would have been born in the town of Nemunaitis (in Yiddish, Nemoneitz) in what was then Vilnius Province, in the Russian Pale of Settlement. The town is now in southern Lithuania. The Khazanovich family had been living in Nemunaitis since before 1845, and Ester's father Yehuda was born there. Russian records from the town place Yehuda's family in Nemunaitis in subsequent records from 1874 and 1883.

In 1874 both Yehuda and his brother Genokh and their families lived with their father Moshe. Yehuda, Genokh, and Yehuda's sons Meyer and Avrom appeared on the 1874 List of Males. Yehuda's sister Sheyne and her children, including 4 sons, lived in the same town. So we can guess that Ester grew up with extended family.

Unfortunately, there are no Revision Lists (census records) for this time period, so the snapshot from 1874 doesn't include the girls in the families. And the prior Revision List was from 1858, before Yehuda was married.

Only a few birth records appeared for the family in Nemunaitis, one being for Ester's younger brother Yankl (Jacob) born in 1883 in Nemunaitis. It had been thought that Ester was born in Miroslavas, because that was known as the family's later home, but it now appears the family didn't move to Miroslavas until at least 1886. Miroslavas (Miroslaw in Polish) was in Russian Poland, about 6 miles from Nemunaitis. It's possible that Ester had already married by this time, so she may not have ever lived in Miroslavas.

Great granddaughter Sharon Alpert found a note that Ester Lelansky was named after a grandmother named Esther Sarah. (This would have been Moshe's wife, Ester Sore Cohen.) Therefore her birth name was probably Ester Sore Khazanovich. She is listed on her death certificate as Esther Schussie Lelansky. (Shussie or Sosye was a diminutive of Sara.)

Ester's birth year (as with most of the immigrants) is not certain, listed as 1865 (1900 census), 1864 (1910 census), 1862 (1930 census), 1859 (1955 newspaper interview) and 1858 (death certificate). Immigrants often did not know their exact ages and sometimes understated their age when young, and then overstated it when older. The best guess is probably 1867, as indicated on the first record found for Ester, a ship manifest.

Ester's brother Max told his daughter Rebecca that Ester was a very pretty girl, with dark curly hair and dimples.

Allen Lelansky remembered two stories told to him by his grandmother Ester: "First, she said that her grandmother told her about a war between the French and Russians in 1812, and that the French troops had silk clothes and were freezing, and they had given the locals bags of gold for clothing!" (This is consistent with historical fact, when Napoleon's army invaded Russia across the nearby Nemunas River, and later retreated with a small force that had survived the winter campaign.)

An interesting detail of this story is that the grandmother referenced would not have been her paternal grandmother and namesake, because it is assumed that she had died by the time of Ester's birth. (Children were typically named for a relative who had died, and who had some characteristics that were desirable for the children to have.) That suggests that Ester heard the

story from her maternal grandmother, Khane Sore Purpliansky. The Purplianskys were from the town of Merkine, and this communications suggests that they were in touch. According to records (see the section on Golde Purpliansky), Khane Sore was born in about 1815, which was too late to personally remember Napoleon's invasion. But it could easily have been a family story.

Allen continues, "Second, she remembered somebody coming through her village telling everyone that the President of the United States had been killed." This could have been President Lincoln (in 1865) or President Garfield (in 1881), depending on Ester's actual birth and emigration dates. It now appears that the latter is more likely, as she was born in about 1867 and immigrated in 1889.

Ester married Khaym Leyb Leliansky, who was from the town of Alytus (at the time, Olita). Alytus was only about 7 miles from Nemunaitis and about 10 miles from Miroslavas, the village to which Ester's family moved in the mid to late 1880s. According to Eva Gediman's Family Tree, Ester and Khaym married in Russia and emigrated in the 1880s.

Rebecca Singer Robinson, Ester's niece, wrote in 2001, "Aunt Ester Lelansky was married before they came to this country. My father said Ester was a very pretty girl and when they married her husband was extremely jealous!"

According to granddaughter Sharon, Ester and Louis had several children in Russia who died of illness.

Rebecca confirmed that children had been lost. Census data also confirms that Ester lost several children. However, it's not clear that this occurred in Russia.

According to later census records, Ester gave birth to 13 children, of whom only 5 survived. She lost 4 children before 1900, and then 4 more between 1900 and 1910. Her last surviving child was born in 1901.

As is typical, US information about Louis' and Ester's immigration is contradictory. Louis' petition for citizenship (in 1891) shows that he arrived in America in 1879 at age 15. The 1900 Federal Census shows that Louis arrived in 1883 at the age of 21, and had been married at about the same time. This census shows that Ester arrived later, in 1889. According to the 1955 newspaper article about Ester, Louis had arrived in the United States in 1878 (at age 16), and Ester joined him in 1882.

However, passenger manifest records were found, and provide clarification. Louis and his brother Morris arrived in Philadelphia in November 1885, after traveling from Hamburg to Liverpool to Philadelphia.

Ester later made the journey with Morris' wife Gitel. They sailed from Hamburg, leaving November 4, 1889. Ester's destination was Boston. She is shown 3rd from the bottom on this page, age 22 from Olita (Alytus, where her husband Louis' family lived). Also shown on the same manifest page is Gitel, also 22, with a boy Sawel (a version of the name Schmucl/Samuel) age 1 year. A later record (below) indicates the baby wasn't necessarily Gitel's, as he appears once with Gitel and once with Ester.

Nr 1658
Nr 1678

Verzeichniss

 der Personen, welche zur Auswanderung nach *Amerika* via *Liverpool*

 durch Unterzeichneten engagirt sind, und mit dem Dampf-Schiffe *Nordkenden* Captain *Miller*

 unter *englischer* Flagge nach *Grimsby* befördert werden.

 Abgang des Schiffes den *4 November 1889*

Nr	Die zu einer Familie gehörenden Personen sind untereinander zu notiren und durch eine Klammer als zusammengehörig zu bezeichnen.		Geschlecht		Alter	Bisheriger Wohnort	In Staat resp. in der Provinz	Bisheriger Stand oder Beruf	Ziel der Auswanderung (Ort und Land ist anzugeben)	Zahl der Personen	Davon sind:			Jahr
	Zunahme	Vornamen	männlich	weiblich							Erwachsene und Kinder über 10 Jahre	unter 10 Jahre	unter 1 Jahr	
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	2.	
1	Kozolow	Julia	1	25	Kawon	Profil	Offiz	Polen	1					
2		Medilaw	1	6										
3	Maniel	Gulmaan	1	21	Städt		Caution							
4	Goldstein	Rose	1	19	Städt		Polen							
5		Reine	1	11										
6		Elise	1	11										
7	Katz	Moses	1	42	Städt		Profil	Gründl.						
8		Isaak	1	18										
9	Litawitz	Gitel	1	22	Städt		Offiz							
10		Sawel	1	1										
11	Meller	Lijne	1	19	Städt		Galz							
12	Hehman	Shoyer	1	20	Städt		Profil	Gründl.						
13		Sauke	1	45										
14		Ekinne	1	18										
15	Wepman	Abraham	1	27	Städt		Gründl.							
16	Wepman	Misch	1	15	Städt									
17	Shew	Leil	1	30	Städt									
18	Wappoill	Martin	1	30	Städt		Offiz							
19	Litawitz	Esther	1	25	Städt		Offiz							
20	Pikler	Leib	1	17	Städt		Gründl.							
21	Sokolatz	Elkone	1	42	Städt									
22			13	8						21	19	2		

In the time of their emigration from Russia, before 1892, it was illegal to cross the border out of Russia. Emigrants had to be smuggled across the border to connect with trains going to Hamburg or Bremen.

A second manifest was found among Boston passenger lists, showing the ship Kansas, which arrived about Nov. 21, 1889. It is divided into Single Women, Single Men and Married People. However, there are women on the "Single Women" page listed as housewives, so the term "single" doesn't seem to mean "unmarried." Both Ester and Gitel appear on the manifest, as "spinsters," the same age as above. Gitel's destination is shown as Lewiston, ME. Sawel is shown with Ester under "Single Women," aged 9 months and now is checked off as a female. (Bottom lines below.) Ester and Sawel are shown with the destination of Boston. It may be that Ester provided her port destination, and Gitel provided her ultimate destination, in which case it doesn't help determine to whom Sawel belonged. According to Louis' later Petition for Naturalization, he did live in Boston before moving to Maine.

LIST CONTINUED. *Single Passes (continued)*

No.	NAMES	AGE		SEX	CALLING	*The Country of which they are Citizens	†Native Country	‡Intended Destination or Location	§No. of pieces of baggage	Location of embarkment or place accepted, (specify whether forward, stowage, or aft.)	¶ Date and Cause of Death
		Years	Mths.								
34	Catherine Brady	22		F	Spinster		England	Lowell, Mass.			
35	Mary Bamfathu	9		F	Child		d	d	2		
36	Caroline Mason	44		F	Housewife		d	d			
37	Edith	16		F	Spinster		d	d			
38	John	9		M	Child		d	Fall River, Mass.			
39	Allice	6		F	d		d	d	6		
40	Robert	4		M	d		d	d			
41	Joseph	9		M	d		d	d			
42	Eva Goldberg	33		F	Spinster		Russia	New York	1		
43	Anna Wickham	48		F	d		England	Fall River			
44	Sarah A.	14		F	d		d	Mass.	3		
45	Mary F. Lyon	13		F	Child		d	Rocky Mt.	1		
46	Kate Pike	26		F	Housewife		d	Providence			
47	Robert	5		M	Infant		d	R. I.	3		
48	Esther Lelansky	22		F	Spinster		Russia	Boston			
49	Louis Lelansky	9		M	Infant		d	Mass.	1		
50		d	d			

Storage

Sawel

The later census record for Gitel (who became Gertie) shows that she immigrated in 1889, which matches to this record. However, there seems to be no further record of Sawel. Ester and Louis did have a son Samuel, but he is shown as born in the US in 1892.

The 1900 census shows that Gertie's son George was born in 1886 in Russia and immigrated in 1889 (the name and age don't match to Sawel). He is the only child of either Gitel or Ester who is shown as born in Russia. Gertie's daughter Rena is listed as born in July 1889 in Maine (the name and birth location don't match to Sawel), though no Maine birth record was found. A birth record shows Gertie's second son Samuel Harry as born in 1890 in Maine. In short, the various errors on records make it difficult to determine what child was shown on the passenger manifest.

Ester and Louis in America

In America, Ester Khazanovich Leliansky and Khaym Leyb Leliansky became Ester Singer Lelansky and Louis Lelansky (or Lewis Lelansky).



Louis' petition for naturalization in 1891 indicates that he lived in Philadelphia from about 1879-1882, then in New Jersey from 1882-1883, New York from 1883-1884, Boston from 1884-1886, and Maine from that point onward. Allen Lelansky said that Louis initially settled in Vineland, New Jersey, and then moved to Maine.

According to Lou's petition for naturalization, filed in 1891, the Lelanskys lived in Lewiston at that time (though they don't appear in the city directory that year). Their son Samuel was born in Lewiston, in 1892. An 1892 phone directory index shows Louis as a fruit dealer and he and Ester living in Biddeford, Maine at 131 East Avenue. The family had moved to Auburn by 1894, when daughter Sarah was born. Louis' occupation was listed on Sarah's birth certificate as "laborer." The family then moved to Brunswick where they lived in 1899 when daughter Eva was born. Louis' occupation was then "peddler."

Note that in the shtetl it was considered normal for everyone in the family to work to help the family make a living. The ideal family was one in which the male spent his time studying, protected as much as possible from manual labor or worldly concerns. (See the section *Notes on Life in the Shtetl, Roles of Men and Women.*) Granddaughter Frances Wise Bigman said that, indeed, Louis studied a great deal, reading Hebrew books.

The family first appears in Lewiston directories of the period in 1912, still living at 150 Middle in Lewiston. Louis was listed as a peddler, and his son Samuel is listed as a shoemaker, living at home. The family moved to the farm, at 244 Webster, in about 1916, and lived there until some time between 1925 and 1932.

A sampling of directory listings shows:

1912-13 Lelansky, Louis, peddler, h 150 Middle
 Samuel, shoemaker, bds 150 Middle

1914-15 Lelansky, Louis, peddler, h 150 Middle
 Samuel, shoemaker, bds 150 Middle

1916-17 Lelansky, Louis, peddler, h 244 Webster
 Sarah Miss, clerk, 58 Lisbon, bds at Aub
 Samuel, shoemaker, bds 244 Webster

1918-18 Lelansky, Eva, Miss bookkeeper, bds 244 Webster
 Louis, peddler, h 244 Webster
 Nathan, h 244 Webster
 Sarah Miss, clerk, bds 244 Webster
 Samuel, shoemaker, bds 244 Webster

1920-21 Lelansky, Eva, Miss bkpr, bds 244 Webster
 Louis, peddler, h 244 Webster
 Nathan, h 244 Webster
 Sarah Miss, clerk, bds 244 Webster
 Samuel, shoemaker, bds 244 Webster

1922-23 Lelansky, Eva, Miss bkpr, bds 244 Webster
 Joseph, clerk, bds 250 Webster
 Louis (Esther), peddler, h 244 Webster
 Nathan, h 244 Webster
 Samuel, shoemaker, bds 244 Webster

1924-25 Lelansky, Eva Miss bkpr bds 244 Webster
 Joseph clerk bds 250 Webster
 Louis (Esther) peddler h 244 Webster
 Nathan junk peddler h 244 Webster
 Samuel shoemaker bds 244 Webster

1926 Lelansky Joseph clerk res 244 Webster
 Louis (Esther) peddler h 244 Webster
 Nathan junk peddler h 244 Webster
 Samuel shoemaker res 244 Webster

Granddaughter Frances remembered Ester and Louis' farm in Lewiston - with cows, chickens, fruit trees, grape orchards -- "a wonderful farm." Louis and his sons delivered milk and eggs from the farm. Frances remembered riding with her grandfather Louis in his horse-drawn wagon. She remembered him as being a wonderful person, who was the "first to be there to help" when their children were born. Nettie said the farm was located on Webster Street, and was about a city block long.

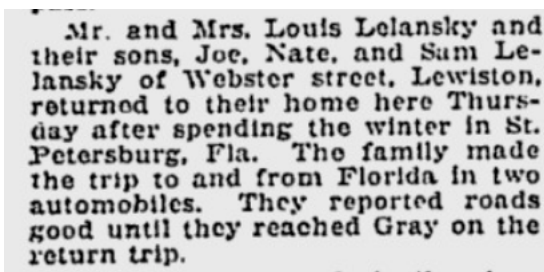
Sharon Alpert wrote in 2002, "According to a family that had previously owned the Wise cottage, the Bell family, Mrs. Bell, who knew her grandmother, once told Nettie that Ester Lelansky made money from the farm that she lived on by selling fruits (apples mainly), milk and cottage cheese from a cow on the farm, and by baking and selling her baked goods."

The 1920 Federal Census shows Louis as “Hiram,” a peddler, and both Sam and Sarah as working in a shoe factory, living at home.

Relationship	Name	Head	Sex	Age	Mar	Prof	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value
Lelansky	Louis	Head	M	38	1													
—	Ester	Wife	F	35	1													
—	Samuel	Son	M	12	0													
—	Sarah	Daughter	F	10	0													
—	Nathan	Son	M	10	0													
—	Sara	Daughter	F	8	0													
—	Leah	Son	M	7	0													

Nettie said that Ester and Louis never really owned the farm, but that at some point their daughter Sarah bought it from the owners. Their cousin Rebecca recalled that Ester and Louis' children helped them buy the farm, and that the farm was sold, they each received a share of the money. The 1920 census shows Louis as the owner of the property.

Considering that they seemed not to be well off, this article from the newspaper, from the March, 1926 newspaper, was a bit of a surprise:



Nettie said that the farm was sold when she was 4 or 5 years old (in about 1929), and Ester and Louis moved into a flat across the street from Gwen Bramson. Their children worked to help them, and Ester tried to make money -- e.g. Nettie heard later that she made and sold cottage cheese for the High Holidays.

The 1930 Census shows that the family had left the farm and lived on East Avenue address. This was a two family house, owned by a family whose head was an Inspector for the police department. Nathan and Joseph still lived at home, at ages 31 and 28, and both are shown as fruit merchants.

Relationship	Name	Head	Sex	Age	Mar	Prof	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value
Lelansky	Louis	Head	M	48	1													
—	Ester	Wife	F	45	1													
—	Nathan	Son	M	31	1													
—	Joseph	Son	M	28	1													

Louis died in April, 1934.

The Lewiston directories continue the story, reflecting Louis' death.

- 1932 Lelansky Louis (Esther), fruit dealer, h 131 East av
- 1933 Lelansky Louis (Esther), fruit dealer, h 7 Webster
Nathan, fruit dealer, r 7 Webster
- 1935 Lelansky Esther, wid Louis, h 205 Ash
Nathan, fruit dealer, r 205 Ash
- 1936 Lelansky Esther, wid Louis, sten B Peck Co h 205 Ash
Nathan, fruit peddler, r 205 Ash
- 1937 Lelansky Esther wid Louis h 205 Ash
Nathan fruit peddler r 205 Ash
- 1939 Lelansky Esther wid Louis h 205 Ash
Nathan fruit peddler r 205 Ash
- 1940 Lelansky Esther wid Louis h 205 Ash
Nathan fruit peddler r 205 Ash

At age 4 or 5 years old grandson Allen Lelansky remembered his father Sam driving up to visit Ester and Nathan, and recalled they had a cold-water flat in Lewiston. Sam was concerned about Ester and moved her to her own place in Portland, ME. Later he moved her to the apartment below his, in a two-family house. Allen said that she always took care of herself and did her own cooking.

Granddaughter Frances said that Ester kept a kosher house, and read the Jewish bible, and that Louis studied a great deal, reading Hebrew books. However Frances didn't recall them as being very religious, in terms of attending temple.

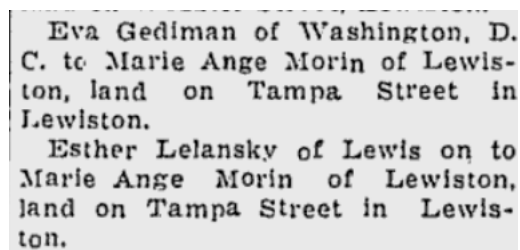
Rebecca Robinson wrote in January 2002, "When we visited my Aunt Ester (who was now a widow and living in Portland) I would bring her a sponge cake. She had a kind daughter-in-law (they lived in a duplex that her son Sam owned) and she asked me for my recipe for the cake because Aunt Ester enjoyed them. My cousin Golda was very thoughtful and baked all kinds of goodies for Aunt Ester, muffins, soft cookies, etc. Golda and Phil owned a grocery store and brought her many kinds of cans. Golda, who was a wonderful cook, sometimes brought her homemade chicken soup and fish chowder."

In 2013 Paula Lelansky gathered more family memories about Ester:

According to grandsons Herbert Lelansky and Joseph Lelansky Jr.:

- Son Joseph and his family went to Grammy Ester's home every other Sunday for dinner in Portland, Maine.
- Grammy Ester didn't speak much English. She and son Joe would speak Yiddish. She was a great cook and did all the cooking for the Jewish holidays.
- Once, when Dorothy (son Joe's wife) was at Ester's, she "messed with" soup that Ester was making (by stirring it!) Ester was not pleased and told Dorothy not to mess with her kitchen. Paula Lelansky, Herbert's daughter, thinks that's too bad because Dorothy was also a wonderful cook – they had that in common but Paula guesses more than 1 cook in the kitchen is too many!!!
- Ester used a wooden chair as a walker.

Apparently Eva and Ester owned property that was transferred in 1943, and listed in the newspaper:



Eva Gediman of Washington, D. C. to Marie Ange Morin of Lewiston, land on Tampa Street in Lewiston.
Esther Lelansky of Lewis on to Marie Ange Morin of Lewiston, land on Tampa Street in Lewiston.

Tampa Street is the street behind Webster, in the area where the Lelansky farm was. It might have marked a border of the farm. When they sold the farm, they may have retained this part of the property.

A feature article from the Tuesday, March 22, 1955 Portland Evening Express:



The younger generation has a champion in Mrs. Esther Singer Lelansky, 38 Highland St., who observed her 96th birthday over the weekend.

"There is nothing wrong with the young people of today," she said, pausing in her preparations to cut a pretty birthday cake. "They are smart and alert, and far ahead of what youngsters were many years ago when I was young."

Mrs. Lelansky, who has a hearty appetite and does not believe in "new-fangled diets," cut the cake vigorously and enjoyed a good-sized piece herself.

Her recipe for a long and happy life is not to worry. "Have faith and look to the future," she said, "Don't worry. Everything will come out all right."

Mrs. Lelansky was born in Russia in 1859. She was married there in 1878 to Louis Lelansky who came to this country and settled in Lewiston. After four years he was able to send for his wife to join him in "the golden land."

They were the parents of 13 children, four of whom are now living, Samuel, with whom she makes her home: Nathan, Augusta; Mrs. Sara Weiss, Lewiston; and Mrs. Eva Gediman, Washington. There are 10 grand and 13 great-grandchildren.

Mrs. Lelansky lives in her own apartment, does her own cooking, laundry and daily housework. She has both radio and television and is interested in what's going on at home and abroad. She has never had to wear glasses.

[Some of this information may be incorrect. Several variations for age and immigration dates have been found for the family, and they are inconsistent.]

In about 1956 Ester's daughter Sarah died. Rebecca wrote, "Aunt Ester began to notice that Sarah was not visiting her and she realized that she was either sick or had died. They never informed her about Sarah's death of a brain tumor."

One day Ester took a fall, and Sam was unable to lift her. Subsequently she moved into a nursing home. Judith Kamin remembered visiting Ester with her grandfather Max in the Jewish Old Age Home in Portland, ME. According to granddaughter Frances, Ester was the "most popular" person there.

Granddaughter Frances wrote that Ester was a fantastic lady who was a very loving and wonderful person... a person who "couldn't do enough for you." Grandson Allen described her similarly.

According to her death certificate, Ester died January 23, 1961 in the Jewish Home for the Aged. She had lived in Portland, and possibly in the Home for the Aged, for 12 years. She died of arteriosclerotic heart disease, which she'd been diagnosed with 2 years prior. She was buried at Mount Sanai cemetery in Portland, ME. Allen remembered her funeral was held on a very cold day, when the temperature was 25 degrees.

Children of Ester Khazanovich and Louis Lelansky are:

- + i. Sam⁵ Lelansky, born April 20, 1892 in Lewiston, ME; died September 26, 1971 in Florida.
- + ii. Sarah Lelansky, born October 08, 1894 in Auburn, ME; died in about 1956.
- + iii. Nathan Lelansky, born December 1896 in Maine²⁶; died May 25, 1956²⁷.
- + iv. Eva Lelansky, born June 14, 1899 in Brunswick, ME^{29,30}; died November 29, 1998. She married Herbert Gediman 1923; born 1900 in MA³¹; died September 1973³².
- + v. Jacob Lelansky, born April 18, 1901 in Brunswick, ME³³; died September 8, 1901.
- + vi. Joseph Lelansky, born April 18, 1901 in Brunswick, ME; died May 19, 1944.

Last updated March 30, 2016

- vii. Morris Lelansky, born Feb, 1903; died Dec. 5, 1904 in Brunswick, ME.
- viii. Charlie Lelansky, born July 30, 1906 in Brunswick, ME. Died November 14, 1906.

Khaym Leybe Leliansky (H. Louis Lelansky):

Louis' name often appears among family members as "Lewis." However, it appears as "Louis" on historical records. It isn't clear what spelling he used, or if there is a correct spelling. He signed an "x" on his Naturalization Petition, so apparently wasn't able to write his name at that time, though since he studied in Hebrew, he was clearly literate. The 1900 census indicates that Louis could read, write and speak English.



One document (a census) shows his name as Hiram, which provides the link back to his probable Hebrew name of Khaym Leyb. That Hebrew name appeared, in confirmation, on the family tree developed by Sylvia Liberman Harris.

According to Sharon Alpert, she found notes that the name Lelansky comes from the town "Lelans," which was where Louis was from. This is probably now the town of Lelionis in Lithuania. An alternate name for the town was Lelyantsy. The name probably indicates that when surnames were introduced in about

1810-1820, the family was living elsewhere and were identified by locals as the family from Lelyantsy.

A record for Khaym Leyb Leliansky was located on the 1874 List of Males in the town of Alytus, which is only about 3 miles from Lelyantsy. The listing was as follows (spelling is that used by the records translator):

Lelyansky, Khatskel, Head of Household, son of Abram
 Lelyansky, Shlioma, son of Khatskel
 Lelyansky, Movsha, son of Khatskel
Lelyansky, Khaim Leyba, son of Khatskel
 Lelyansky, Iosel, son of Khatskel
 Lelyansky, Shimshel, Head of Household, son of Abram
 Lelyansky, Itsko, son of Shimshel

Because of the rarity of the surname, this seems an almost certain match to Louis. In fact, Louis' tombstone does list his Hebrew name as Khayim Layb b. Y'khezqel.

However, a Russian death record was found for a Khaym Leyb Leliansky, son of Khatskel, showing that he had died in Alytus 1882, at age 20, of a brain tumor.

This is a mystery, but it was not unheard of for death records to be found for family members who emigrated. The situation could have been that this was, indeed, Louis Lelansky, and that the death record was fabricated to explain his illegal departure and failure to report for military conscription. Military conscription, at the time, was mandatory. It is quite possible that the family bribed an official to create the death record.

Another complexity is that there was considerable duplication of given names in the Lelansky family, making it difficult to determine which family members are siblings, and which are cousins.

Knowing the name of Khaym's father, we can then go back to the 1858 census for Alytus. It shows the following (spelling as provided by the records translator).

Leliantsky, Hatskel, Head of Household, son of Abram, age 35 (b. 1823)
 Leliantsky, losel, brother of Hatskel, son of Abram, age 28
 Leliantsky, Shender, brother of Hatskel, son of Abram, -- left town in 1856, location unknown
 Leliantsky, Freyda, mother of Hatskel - died in 1856
 Leliantsky, Rivka, sister of Hatskel - married and left since the prior census in 1851.
 Leliantsky, Sora, sister of Hatskel - died in 1856
 Leliantsky, Sora, wife of Hatskel, age 30
 Leliantsky, Ryvka, daughter of Hatskel, age 6
 Leliantsky, Peska, wife of Hatskels' brother losel, age 28

Daughter Sarah may have been named for Louis' mother.

Returning to later records from the 1874-75 Family List for Alytus, it shows:

Lelianski, Katskel, Head of Household, son of Abram, age 51 (b. 1823), laborer
 Lelianski, Sara, wife of Katskel, age 50 (b. 1824)
 Lelianski, Yosel, son of Katskel, age 18 (b. 1856)
 Lelianski, Khaim Leyba, son of Katskel, age 11 (b. 1863)
 Lelianski, Movsha, son of Katskel, age 9 (b. 1865)
 Lelianski, Shlemka, son of Katskel, age 5 (b. 1868)

[Note that this last son listed is probably Shlomo, and a birth record was found showing he was actually born in 1865, not 1868. Ages were often inaccurate on records, but reporting an 8 year old as being 5 makes one wonder if the alteration was purposeful, to appear as far as possible from draft age. In any case, all of the ages shown could be inaccurate.]

Also shown in the same Family List for Alytus was:

Lelianski, Shimshel, Head of Household, son of Abram, age 64 (b. 1810), laborer
 Lelianski, Leia, wife of Shimshel, age 60 (b. 1814)
 Lelianski, Gitka, daughter of Shimshel, age 19 (b. 1855)
 Lelianski, Freidka, daughter of Shimshel, age 13 (b. 1861)
 Lelianska, Itsko, son of Shimshel, age 14 (b. 1860)

The Louis Lelansky was known to be related to another Lelansky family in Maine, which included another Joseph Lelansky, and Louis was believed to have brothers in Maine. One Lelansky family was headed by Morris/Moses Lelansky, matching to Khaym's brother Moshe (Movsha).

Combining this information with additional earlier census data from Alytus for the Leliantsky family, the Lelansky Family Tree appears to be as follows (assuming that the Khaym Leyb Leliantsky listed was Louis, and not someone of the same name and age who died in Alytus):

Nokim

- Avrom (b. 1790) Lived in Alytus by 1818.
- +Freyde (b. 1794, d. 1856)
 - Shimson (Shimshon?) (b. 1810) Lived in Alytus by 1818
 - + Lea (b. 1814-1818)
 - Leybe (b. 1837)
 - +Rivka (b. 1838)
 - Gavriel
 - Nokim
 - Eliash
 - Sore (b. 1840)
 - Ester (b. 1849)
 - Badane (b. 1853)
 - Gitka (b. 1856)
 - Itsko (b. 1860)
 - Friedka (b. 1861)
 - Khatskl (b. 1823) Born in Alytus.

- +Sore (b. 1824-1828)
 - Rivka (b. 1852)
 - Iosl (b. 1856)
 - **Khaym Leyb (Louis) (b. ~1862) Emigrated to Maine**
 - +**Ester (Ester) Khazanovich (b. 1859-?)**
 - **Samuel, Sarah, Nathan, Eva, Jacob, Joseph**
 - **Movsha (Morris) (b. ~1864) Emigrated to Maine**
 - + **Gute(?) (Gittel/Gertrude) (b. 1867-9)**
 - **George, Rena, Samuel, Joseph, Sarah, Ida**
 - Shlomo (b. 1865)
 - Iosl (b. 1824-1830) Probably born in Alytus
 - +Peshe (b. 1830)
 - Itsko
 - Shender (age not shown) Whereabouts was unknown as of 1856.
 - Sore (age not shown, died in 1856)

Louis' petition for naturalization in 1891 indicates that he was born in Russia in 1863 (Alytus was part of Russia at that time) and came to America in 1879 at the age of 15. (This doesn't match census information, and seems unlikely if, as stated in Ester's later interview, he was married at the time he immigrated, though there were marriages when people were quite young. It doesn't match with the story of her having lost children in Russia. There are also no US records, such as the 1880 census, that suggest he arrived this early.)

The petition says that Louis arrived "in Philadelphia where he remained some years; then moved to Trenton, N. J. where he lived one year, then went to New York and lived there one year, then came to Boston and lived there two years, and then came to Maine lived one year, and 5 years also came to Maine." This would suggest that he lived in Philadelphia from about 1879-1882 (there are no listings in the Philadelphia directories for this period), then in New Jersey from 1882-1883, New York from 1883-1884, Boston from 1884-1886, and Maine from that point onward.

475
2-11-25

State of Maine.

Androscoggin, ss.

To the Honorable Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court, now held at Auburn, within and for the County of Androscoggin, on the third Tuesday of April A. D. 1897.

Respectfully represents, Lewis Leland, of Lewiston
In said County, that he was born

in Russia made

In the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and Eighty-three, under allegiance to the Czar of Great Britain and Ireland, Russia

that he came from Russia

In the year A. D. 1879, and the same year arrived at

Philadelphia where he remained some years; then moved to Trenton N. J. where he lived one year, then went to New York and lived there one year, then came to Boston and lived there two years and then came to Maine lived one year and five years ago came to Lewiston

where he has ever since continued to reside, with intention of making the same his settled place of residence; and he here declares, that it is his bona fide intention to become a citizen of the United States, and renounce forever all allegiance to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty whatever, and particularly all allegiance and fidelity to the Czar of Russia of Great Britain and Ireland,

whose natural born subject he is, and to become a citizen of the United States, and that he is well disposed towards the government and laws of the United States; that

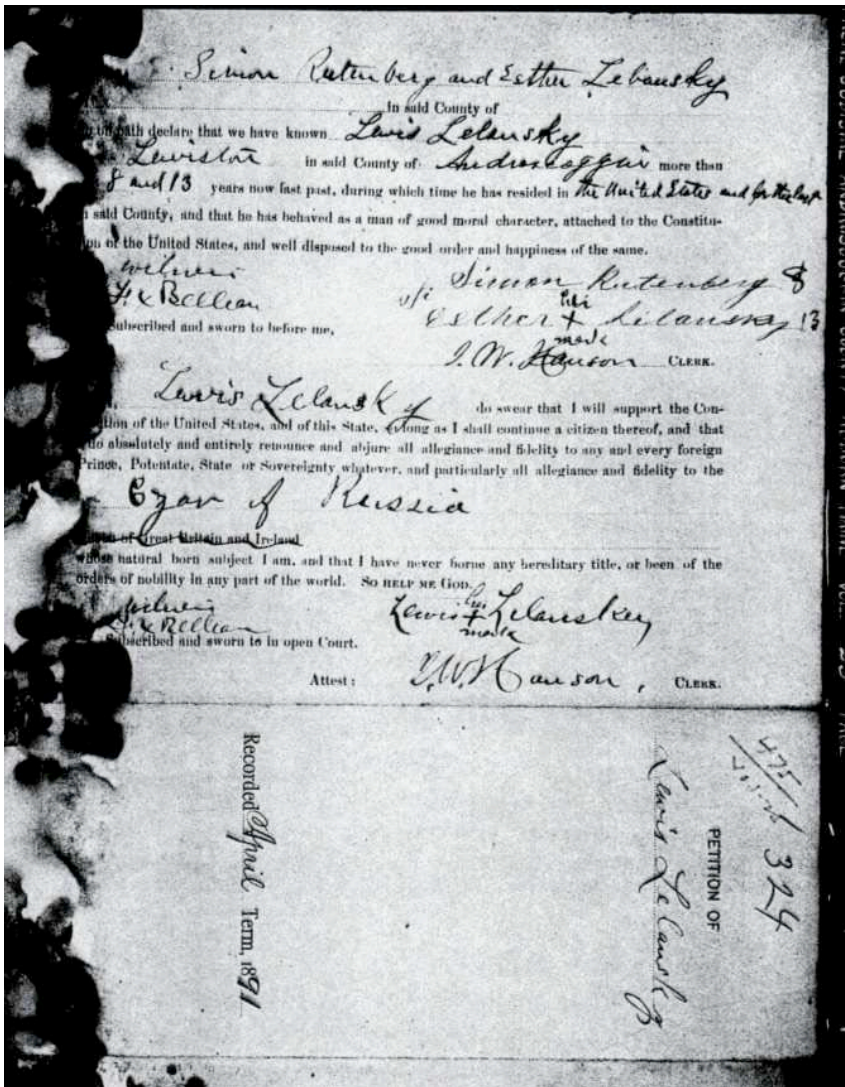
when he came to this County, he was a minor of the age of 15 years

held at Auburn

within and for the County of Androscoggin on the third Tuesday of April A. D. 1897, he filed in open court a declaration of his intention to become a citizen of the United States, and has in all respects complied with the requirements of the law. Whereupon your applicant prays that he may be admitted a citizen of said States, and the constitution and laws of the same.

Witness my hand and seal this 11th day of April 1897.
Lewis Leland
mark

SUPREME JUDICIAL ANDROSCOGGIN COUNTY AUBURN MAINE VILL. 85 PAGE



Although the information on the Petition is not all correct, it provided a clue that led to Louis' Passenger Manifests.

This manifest from Hamburg, shows Louis (listed as Chaim) with his brother Moses, departing from Hamburg to Liverpool on the ship British Queen, Oct. 31, 1885. Theirs are the last two entries below:

Verzeichniss 1283

der Personen, welche zur Auswanderung nach *New York* via *Liverpool*
 durch Unterzeichnete engagirt sind und mit dem Dampfschiffe, *St. Nicholas Queen*
 Capitain *J. Cooper* unter *engl.* Flagge zunächst nach *Philadelphia* befördert werden.
 Abgang des Schiffes, d. *30/1 Okt. 1885*

N ^o	Die zu einer Familie gehörenden Personen sind unter einander zu notiren und durch eine Klammer als zusammengehörig zu bezeichnen.		Geschlecht		Alter	Bisheriger Wohnort.	Im Staate oder in der Provinz.	Bisheriger Stand oder Beral.	Ziel der Auswanderung, Ort und Land ist anzugeben.	Zahl der Personen	Davon sind		
	Zuname.	Vorname.	unmännlich	weiblich							Erwachsene und Kinder über 10 Jahre	unter 10 Jahre	unter 1 Jahr
	1.	2.	3.	4.		5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.
1	<i>Diala</i>	<i>Isracl</i>	/		16	<i>Odessa</i>	<i>Russland</i>	<i>Handelsmann</i>	<i>New York</i>	1	1		
2	<i>Freiwirth</i>	<i>Chaim</i>	/		21	<i>Odessa</i>	<i>Russland</i>			1			
3	<i>Burach</i>	<i>Spraim</i>	/		1					1			
4	<i>Burach</i>	<i>Mofes</i>	/		11	<i>Wilno</i>				1			
5	<i>Litansky</i>	<i>Chaim</i>	/		23	<i>Alite</i>				1			
6		<i>Mofes</i>	/		21					1			

They are listed as ages 23 and 21, from Alite (Alytus/Olita), from Russland, both with the occupation of "handelsmann" or tradesman. Both are going to New York via Liverpool.

Once in Liverpool they instead sailed to Philadelphia and arrive November 17, 1885 on the ship Lord Gough. That manifest shows:

<i>Lamb</i>	<i>Samuel</i>	28	F	<i>England</i>	<i>England</i>	<i>Wife</i>	Yes	No		<i>Shraga</i>
	<i>Ridit</i>	1		"	"	<i>Infant</i>	"	"		
<i>Lamp</i>	<i>Mary</i>	31		"	"	<i>Wife</i>	No	"		
<i>Larsen</i>	<i>Arild</i>	54	M	<i>Sweden</i>	<i>Sweden</i>	<i>Laborer</i>	"	"		
	<i>Gudry</i>	31		"	"	"	"	"		
	<i>Yosh</i>	15		"	"	"	"	"		
<i>Latham</i>	<i>George</i>	25		<i>England</i>	<i>England</i>	"	"	"		
<i>Litansky</i>	<i>C</i>	30		<i>Poland</i>	<i>Poland</i>	"	"	"		
	<i>Moses</i>	21		"	"	"	"	"		

Their names were apparently transcribed from the Hamburg manifest, and misspelled due to mistaking the Lilansky for "Litansky." They are now both shown as being from Poland (place of birth and last place of settlement). Alytus was on the border between Russia and Russian Poland (which was formerly part of Poland), therefore people from the area sometimes referred to being from Russia and sometimes from Poland.

Louis' birth year, as is usually the case with those born outside the country before 1900, is not clear. It could have been in 1863 (Naturalization Petition of 1891), 1862 (1900 Census), 1861 (1910 census), 1860 (1920 Census), or even as early as 1856 (1930 Census) or 1857 (tombstone). However, the passenger manifest is the earliest record, and therefore most likely to be correct. It indicates he was born in 1861 or 1862.

Grandson Allen had thought that Louis originally settled in Vineland, NJ, where he grew tomatoes. (Vineland was known as a tomato growing area.) Allen said that Louis found it too hot in the summer and a cousin or friend in Maine suggested that he move there, where the weather was more similar to that in Lithuania. Grandson Joe Lelansky Jr. said that Lewis had a chicken farm in NJ, and confirmed that the family disliked the climate there. This information does match to Louis' naturalization petition which said he had lived in New Jersey.

Note that both Louis and Ester signed the Naturalization Petition with an X, indicating that they didn't write in English.

In regard to his having a chicken farm in New Jersey, the following is an excerpt from the site www.americanheritage.com in an article by Brad Boroff, regarding the fact that the German Jews who had settled earlier were bothered by the later influx of poor Jews from Eastern Europe:

*"Many comfortably settled German Jews saw dispersion as the answer to the problem. Efforts were made to divert immigrants to small towns in other parts of the country, but these were largely ineffective. There were also some gallant adventures with farming in such remote places as South Dakota, Oregon, and Louisiana. Though the Jewish pioneers were brave and idealistic, drought, disease, and ineptitude conspired against them. (In Oregon, for example, they tried to raise corn in cattle country, while in Louisiana they found themselves in malarial terrain.) **Only chicken farming in New Jersey proved to be successful to any great degree.**"*

Allen remembered Louis as a "chunky man, with blond hair."

Joe Jr. remembered that Louis gave him silver dollars, and his mother joked that if Lewis had lived longer, Joe Jr. would have been a rich man.

Louis is buried in Mt. Sinai Cemetery in Portland, ME. He is listed as "Our dear and beloved father" Lewis Lelansky, Khayim Layb b. Y'khezqel, born in 1857.

Potential Lelansky Relatives

Sharon Alpert shared these notes from her mother Nettie: "I spoke to my mother this weekend about the Lelansky family. She felt her grandfather, Louis Lelansky, had brothers in Auburn. She remembers that these brothers tried to open a bar/restaurant in Auburn and her father, Sam Wise, tried to help them out one summer when they were having troubles with the business, but that the business did not work out." One brother must have been Morris, who lived in Auburn. It is not clear who the other brother would have been, as there are no other Lelansky records in Maine to provide the name.

Rebecca Singer Robinson also shared a story that Ester's younger sister Sara met her husband Bennett Burger after Bennett wrote a letter to a "Mr. Lelansky" in Portland, but no record has been found for this potential relative.

Morris Lelansky appears first in US records 1892 in Lewiston, in naturalization records. He appears in the city directory in Lewiston in 1893 living at 17 Pulsifer Street, a junk dealer, and then in Auburn, ME, in 1896:

Lelansky, Morris, junk dealer, house 18 Pulsifer

The 1900 census lists Morris as born in Russia in 1863, married in 1883-4, immigrated 1885. His wife Gertie is shown as born in 1867 and immigrated in 1889. (Note this matches to the Passenger Manifest in which "Gittel" is shown, above.) Their children are George, b. 1886-1889 in Russia, Rena, also b. 1889 in Maine, Sam b. 1891, Joseph b. 1893, Sarah b. 1894, Ida b. 1896. Regarding the manifest for Gittel, above, there is no child her that matches the age of "Fawel" shown with her; and George is not shown on the manifest with Gittel, even though he shows the same immigration year here.

Lelansky Morris	Alshel	W	on	1887	187	16	Mami	Russia	Russia	Russia	1887	187	Ma	Jinich/Alshel
Gertie	Wife	W	on	1887	187	16	Russia	Russia	Russia	1887	11			
Sam	son	W	on	1887	187	16	Russia	Russia	Russia	1887	11			Lelansky in Stone
Sam	son	W	on	1891	189	18	Mami	Russia	Russia					
Jessie	son	W	on	1893	189	18	Mami	Russia	Russia					
Sarah	son	W	on	1894	189	18	Mami	Russia	Russia					
Ida	son	W	on	1896	189	18	Mami	Russia	Russia					
Ring	son	W	on	1897	189	18	Mami	Russia	Russia					

Morris appears with his children in several Auburn city directories.

1910:

Lelansky Joseph P., shoemaker, bds 58 Fourth
 Moses, junk peddler, h 58 Fourth
 Samuel H., shoemaker, bds 58 Fourth

1912:

Lelansky Joseph P., shoemaker, bds 58 Fourth
 Moses, junk peddler, h 58 Fourth
 Sarah Miss, shoemaker, bds 58 Fourth
 Samuel H., shoemaker, h 60 Second

1916:

Lelansky Joseph P., shoemaker, bds 46 Fourth
 Moses, junk peddler, h 46 Fourth
 S., junk peddler, h 38 Fifth
 Sam, shoemaker, bds 38 Fifth
 Sarah Miss, shoemaker, bds 46 Fourth

1918:

Lelansky Joseph P., U. S. A., bds 46 Fourth
 Moses, junk dealer, h 46 Fourth
 Sam, shoemaker, bds 7 Pulsifer

In 1920 he is listed as Maurice Lelansky, b. 1865, immigrated 1886. Gertie is shown as born in 1868-69.

Lelansky Maurice	Head	W	55	M	1865	186	1886	Russia	Jewish	Russia	Jewish	Russia	Jewish	U.S.	1886
Gertie	Wife	F	51	M	1868	186	1869	Russia	Jewish	Russia	Jewish	Russia	Jewish	U.S.	1868

Morris' son Sam named a son Charles, possibly after Morris' father Khatski.

Morris died in 1927, after Louis, and lists one brother, Simon Ruttenberg, as a survivor. This is an error and probably should have read "brother-in-law." The marriage record for Simon in 1899 in Boston shows that he married a **Silla (Celia) Lelansky**. If Morris' obituary meant to identify Simon as a brother-in-law, that would mean that Celia was the sister of Morris Lelansky. The matching surnames make sense.

However, on Celia's marriage certificate her parents are not Khatski and Sara, but rather Harry (usually Hirsch) and Jennie (usually Sheyne). It's still conceivable that she came up with these different translations of the original names, but not certain.

Simon Ruttenberg (or Rutenberg) definitely had a connection to the family, as he signed as a witness on both Morris' and Louis' Petitions for Naturalization. He was born between 1862 and 1870, and was naturalized himself in 1889. He signed Louis' Petition in 1891, so probably knew Louis and Morris before he met Celia.

MARRIAGES REGISTERED in the City of Boston for the Year eighteen hundred and ninety-nine.											
AGE	DATE OF RECORD.	ALL NAMES TO BE GIVEN IN FULL. NAMES AND SURNAMES OF GROOM AND BRIDE. (If the bride is a widow or divorcee, give maiden name also.)	RESIDENCE OF EACH AT TIME OF MARRIAGE.	AGE of each in years.	OCCUPATION OF EACH.	PLACE OF BIRTH OF EACH.	TOA since the 1st of July 1891.	NAMES OF PARENTS. (Give maiden name of mother.)	What Marriage? 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th. And if widowed or divorced.	NAME, RESIDENCE, AND OFFICIAL STATION OF PERSON BY WHOM MADE.	
21	Oct 10	David W. Stickey Delia Keffernan	Spring, No 76 5 Stanley pl	22 25	Farmer Sable girl	Waverhill Ireland	Eugene S. Stickey Daniel Keffernan	Georgiana M. Mather Mary E. McGrath	First First	W. J. Millerick, Priest 27 Winthrop St. Boston	
8	11	Pietro Guarnesi Brafina Guiffri	24 Battery st 5 Battery st	31 22	Bricklayer Domestic	Italy Switzerland	Peter Guarnesi Giuseppe Guiffri	Giuseppina Caruso Angela Carasposo	First First	James Sambor, Priest 228 North St. Boston	
8	11	Carlo Somaruga Mary Monighetti	12 Stanford st 82 Warren st	21 24	Cook Domestic	Italy Switzerland	Carlo Somaruga Carlo Monighetti	Barolina Svanzani Mary Monighetti	First First	James Sambor, Priest 228 North St. Boston	
8	11	Beniamino Albanese Marianna Antonangeli	58 Prince st 58 Prince st	27 20	Laborer Domestic	Italy "	Berardino Albanese Giordani Antonangeli	Felicia Asce Anna Diemore	First First	James Sambor, Priest 228 North St. Boston	
12	Oct 10	Simon Autenberg Billa Lilansky	57 Salem st 104 Prince st	33 28	Junk dealer Domestic	Russia "	Isaac Autenberg Harry Lilansky	Barah Lidsky Jenny Lipsky	First First	D. Rosenthal, Rabbi 122 Franklin St. Boston	

Another Lelansky from Olita who immigrated to the US was **Frume Lilansky**, age 28, who arrived March 16, 1887 in New York. With her were Gittel, age 5 and Schmul, age 4.

And **Sore Lilansky**, also from Alita, arrived November 17, 1903 with Children Mine, 8, and Cajee, 4. Her destination was Boston, where she was to join her husband **Josel (Joseph) Lilansky**, listed as living at 72 Salem Street. No further records were found for this family.

Researched and compiled by Laurel Singer