

Get your Akt together

A quick guide to searching for Jewish vital records in the online Polish State Archives

Step 1: Locate your record in the JRI-Poland database

Once you have found your record in the JRI-Poland database, note the Year, Type (birth, marriage or death) and Akt number of the record you are looking for.

Searching for Surname WAKSMAN
(D-M code 754660)
and Town IRENA
(D-M code 096000)
in Lublin Gubernia
in ALL data

Irena Births, Marriages, Deaths 1869-77													
Lublin Gubernia / Warszawa Province													
Located at 51°34' 21°52'													
Last updated December 2011													
Surname	Given Name	Year	Type	Akta	Age	Father	Father Age	Mother	Mother Surname	Mother Age	Town	Microfilm	Comments
WAKSMAN	Izrael Josef	1869	B	42		Szmul	23	Gitla Laia	GLUZMAN	22		1,496,623	
WAKSMAN	Mendel	1876	B	38		Szmul	30	Sura	GLASMAN	19		1,496,623	
WAKSMAN	Gitla Laja	1872	D	15	22	Pinkus		Chawa				1,496,623	husband: Szmul, 26, 2 sons: Herszek Ber, 3, Izrael Joel, 2
SZLIMER	Ester Zelda	1875	D	10	21	Lejzor		Sura	WAKSMAN		Bobrowniki	1,496,623	husband: Moszek, Sura's married name: SZULMAN
WAKSMAN	Szmul	1872	M	14	24	Izrael		Gitla			Gniewaszow	1,496,623	
GLASMAN	Sura	1872	M	14	18	Pinkus		Gejba	GRINBERG			1,496,623	
SZULMAN	Ester Zelda	1874	M	16	20	Lejzor Jankel		Sura	WAKSMAN		Bobrowniki	1,496,623	
SZLIMER	Moszek	1874	M	16	29	Kelman		Dwojra			Bobrowniki	1,496,623	
SZWED	Perla	1876	M	18	19	Izrael		Frajdl	LEWIN			1,496,623	
SZLINGERD	Moszek	1876	M	18	19	Wolf Ber		Blima	WAKSMAN			1,496,623	

<http://www.jri-poland.org/jriplweb.htm>

In this case, I am looking for the death record of my great-great-grandmother, Gitla Laja Waksman. She died in 1872, in the town of Irena, in Lublin Gubernia; in this period, across much of Poland, the vital records were written in the Russian language. Note that this record gives me her age at death, so I can work out an approximate year of birth, as well as the given names of her parents. In the Comments section I have a bonus, as it names her husband, Szmul, and her two sons, Herszek Ber and Izrael Joel, together with their ages. At the top of this listing you can see the birth record for Izrael Josef, which gives Gitla Laja's maiden name.

These are significant records for me, as according to other documentation, Hersz Ber, my g-grandfather, was probably born in 1868, and the records for that year do not seem to be available. If I can obtain a copy of his mother's death record, I will, at least indirectly, have a birth record for him too.

Step 2: Search for the town in the PSA database

Click on the UK flag at the top of the screen to get some (but not all) basic elements of the site in English. Use the modern Polish spelling for the town. If this uses some of the diacritical letters (accented letters) used in Polish, you can Copy the town name from the JRI-Poland listing, and Paste it into the PSA Search box.

Or, if you know how to access Polish characters on your computer keyboard, you can put in the correct Polish spelling directly.

NB: I will post separately guidance for Mac OS X users on how to obtain Polish and Russian characters; can someone do the same for Windows users?

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<http://szukajwarchiwach.pl>

Step 3: Refine the Search

On the results page, tick Vital records, then Refine.

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Jednostka aktowa: 35/151/0/-/380		Digital copies: 0
Sel. Irena gm. Zaklików		
1865-1914		
Translated title	Wieś Irena, gmina Zaklików	
Index of places	Irena gm. Zaklików	
Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie		

Step 4: See all Units

By Dates, click See all units from this period.

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[Advanced search >](#)

35 Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie
Collection: 35/1615/0 Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie

Irena

Akta stanu cywilnego (Pradziad)

[Back to the list of results](#)
[Next result >>](#)

Foreign language title of the collection: - brak danych -	Former title of the collection: Forsztadt
Province: lubelskie	Province (from 1990 r.): lubelskie
Community: Dęblin	Parish/community: Bobrowniki
Denomination/religion: mojżeszowe	Church name/supplement: - brak danych -
Type of record: urodzenia	Access conditions: całkowicie
Dates: 1869-1909 See all units from this period	
Microfilms: - brak danych -	
Storing place: Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie	
Collection: 35/1615/0 Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie	
Additional information: obecnie w granicach miasta Dęblin	

Step 5: Select Series

In the navigation bar, which currently highlights the Collection tab, select Series.

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[Advanced search >](#)

Collection: 35/1615/0 Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie

Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie

[Archive](#)
[Collection](#)
[Series \[3\]](#)
[Units \[0/41\]](#)

Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie Former title of the collection: - brak danych - Foreign language title of the collection: - brak danych - Name of the creator: - brak danych - Category: urzędy stanu cywilnego i akta metrykalne - urzędy stanu cywilnego	Dates: 1869-1909 Dates: 1869 - 1909 Access conditions: częściowo Languages: rosyjski polski
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Amount of archival material

Total (archival units): 41

Processed (archival units): 41

Without inventory (archival units): 0

Total (linear meters): 0.66

Processed (linear meters): 0.66

Without inventory (archival units): 0.00

Amount of non-archival material

Step 6: Select Units

Now click on the number in the Scans column for the records you want to look at.

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Search this collection [Advanced search >](#)

Collection: 35/1615/0 Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie

Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie

Archive Collection **Series [3]** Units [0/41]

No.	Name	Units	Dates	Numbers of scans
	Units without series	0		0
1	AKTA CYWILNE	0		0
2	KSIĘGI PIERWOPISOWE (unikaty)	1	1872-1893	0
3	KSIĘGI WTÓROPISOWE (duplikaty)	40	1869-1909	994

Step 7: Select the Year

Select the year you are searching for.

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Search this collection [Advanced search >](#)

Collection: 35/1615/0 Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie

Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie

Archive Collection Series [3] **Units [40/41]**

Show all units in the collection:

*

*

Units in series: 3 KSIĘGI WTÓROPISOWE (duplikaty) Number of units per page 15

Reference code	Title	Dates	Numbers of scans
35/1615/0/3/1	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1869	145
35/1615/0/3/2	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1870	160
35/1615/0/3/3	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1871	141
35/1615/0/3/4	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1872-1873	208
35/1615/0/3/5	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1874	79
35/1615/0/3/6	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1875	89
35/1615/0/3/7	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1876	96
35/1615/0/3/8	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1877	76
35/1615/0/3/9	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1878	0
35/1615/0/3/10	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1879	0
35/1615/0/3/11	Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów	1880	0

Step 8: Go digital

Select the Digital Copies tab.

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w tym zespole **Search** Advanced search >

Collection: 35/1615/0 Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie » Series:: 3 KSIĘGI WTÓROPISOWE (duplikaty) »
File/unit:: 4

Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów

Archive Collection Series [3] Units [40] **35/1615/0/3/4** **Digital copies [208]** Indexes [0] Items [0]

Step 9: Check the Year

At the beginning of the thumbnail images there should be a Header Page, showing the place and year - click on the thumbnail to get a larger image, and check you are in the right place.

Collection: 35/1615/0 Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie » Series:: 3 KSIĘGI WTÓROPISOWE (duplikaty) »
File/unit:: 4

Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów

Archive Collection Series [3] Units [40] 35/1615/0/3/4 **Digital copies [208]** Indexes [0] Items [0]

Number of scans per page

File: 15.jpg

1 2 3 4 ... 5 6 7 8 9 ... 11 12 13 14

Step 10: Find the section

The registration books usually list Birth records first, then Marriages, then Deaths. Each are listed in chronological order of registration, and at the end of each section there is an alphabetical Index of all persons registered in that section.


The records themselves are written out in continuous prose, often with no paragraphing; the Indices are set out in columns. This difference in layout will help you spot where each new section starts. Use the screen page numbers below the images, to the right, to help you navigate through the book - they are all active links to the screen page concerned.

Collection: [35/1615/0 Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie](#) » Series: [3 KSIĘGI WTÓROPISOWE \(duplikaty\)](#) » File/unit: [4](#)

Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów

Archive Collection Series [3] Units [41] 35/1615/0/3/4 Digital copies [208] Indexes [0] Items [0]

Number of scans per page 15



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 ... 11 12 13 14

Step 11: Locate your Akt

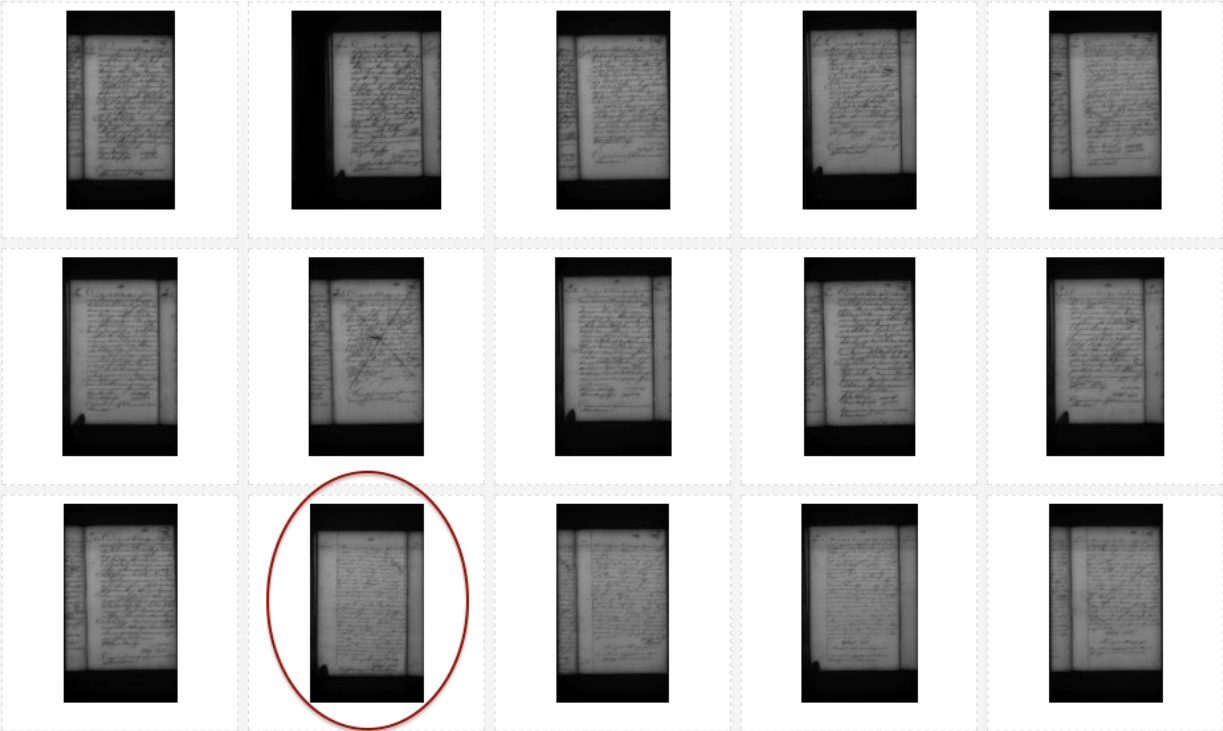
Once you have found the appropriate section, navigate through to the Akt you are looking for. The image thumbnails do not show the Akt numbers, unfortunately, so you have to judge how far along it will be - the default setting is for 15 images per page (you can alter this if you like), so Akt 15 will be one page on from the start of the section, for example.

Collection: 35/1615/0 Akta stanu cywilnego Okręgu Bożniczego w Bobrownikach i Irenie » Series: 3 KSIĘGI WTÓROPISOWE (duplikaty) » File/unit: 4

Księga urodzeń, małżeństw i zgonów

Archive Collection Series [3] Units [40] 35/1615/0/3/4 Digital copies [208] Indexes [0] Items [0]

Number of scans per page 15

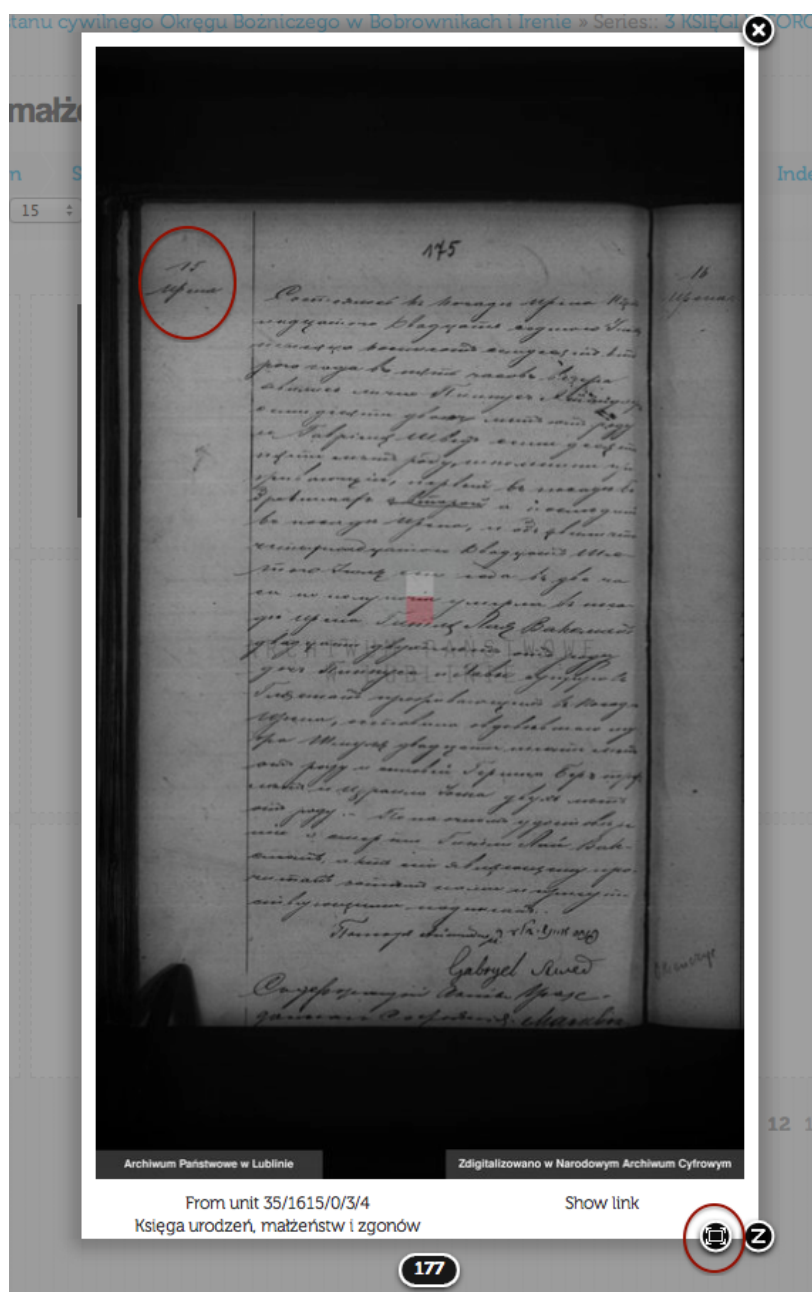


1 2 3 4 ... 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

Step 12: Check the Akt number

Click on an image you think is likely to be near to the one you are looking for, and check the Akt number, which is usually handwritten towards the top left of the page. Note this will not correspond to the Page number, which is usually written at the top centre or right - the pages count all the way through the book, the Akt number refers to the chronological order of registrations in that particular Section.

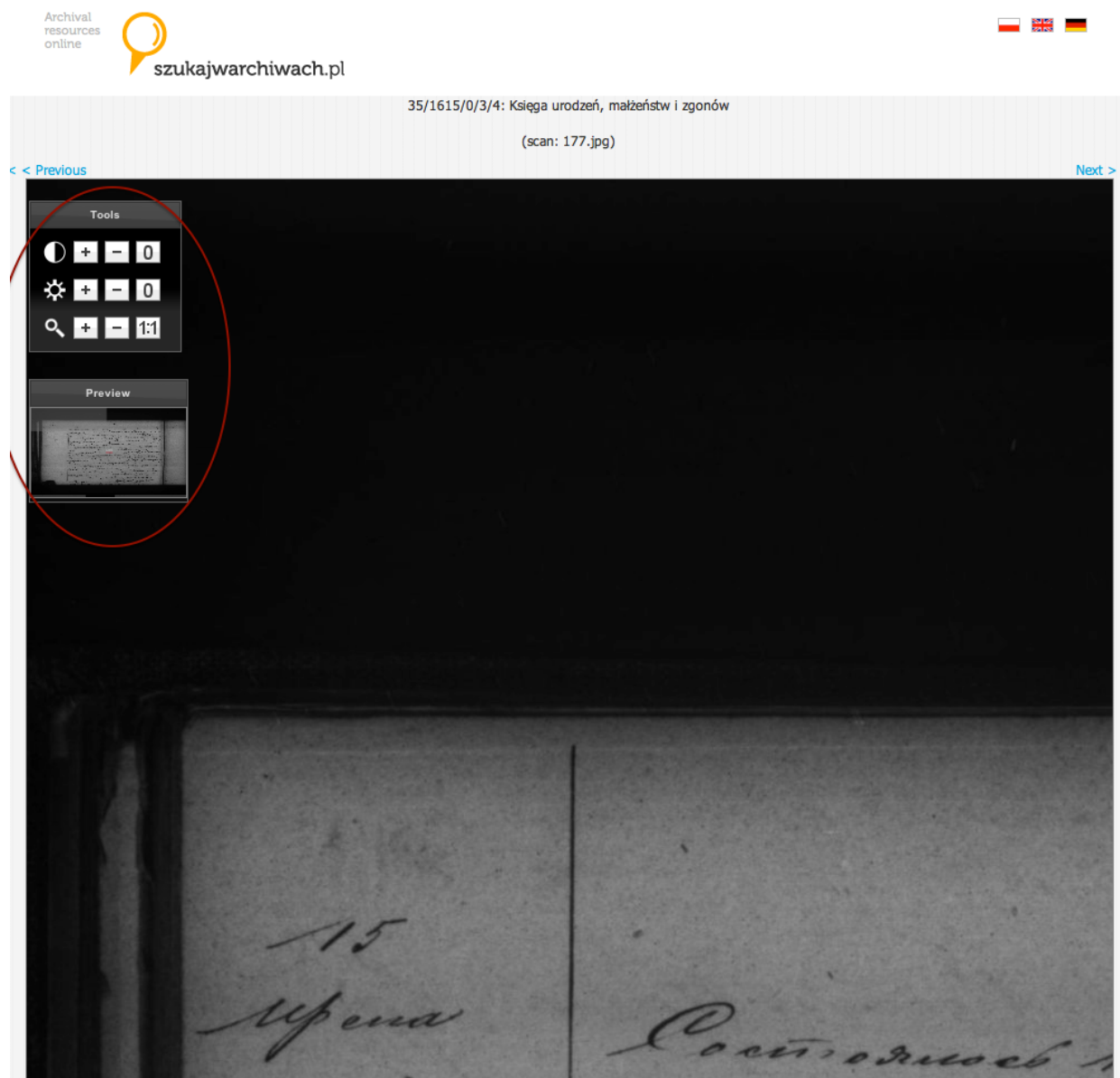
If necessary, move backwards or forwards through the images by clicking the arrows that appear when you hover centre left or right.



When you think you have found the right Akt, or if you can't see the number clearly enough to check it, click on the Expand icon at bottom right of the image. The resulting image is very large, and may take a few seconds to appear.

Step 13: Verify the Akt

You can zoom in or out, and lighten or darken the image. Use the Preview pane to navigate around the image.

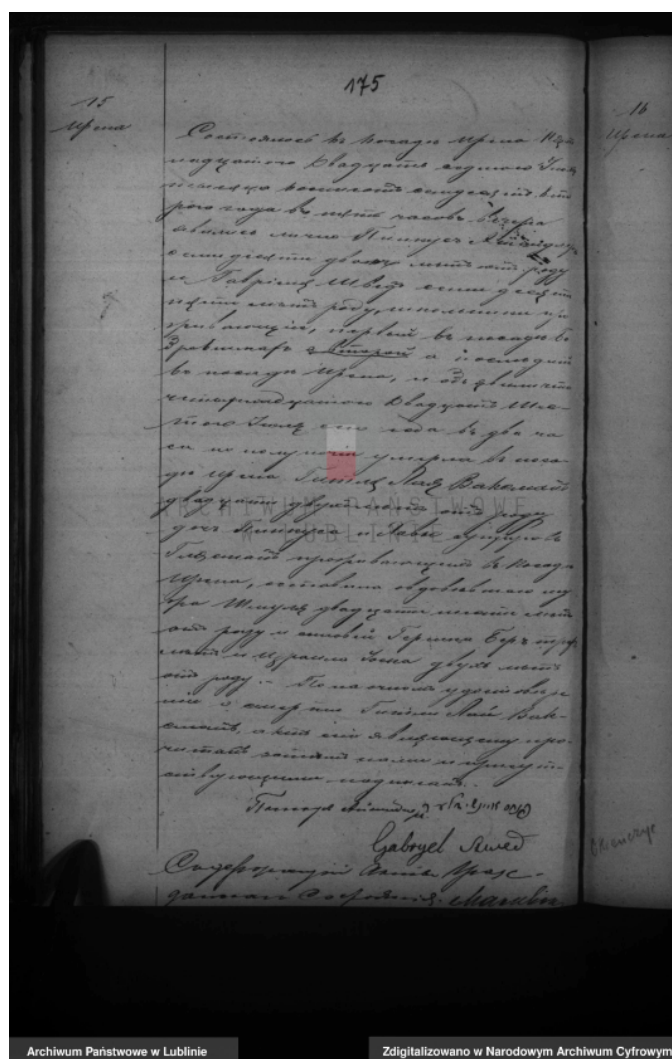
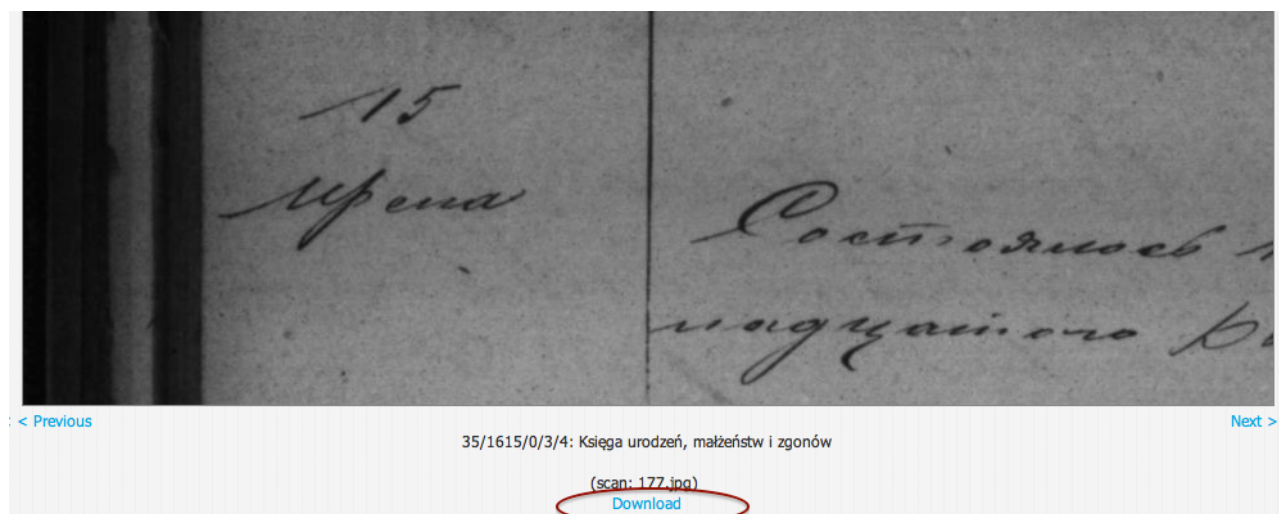


Check the text to verify that this is indeed the Akt you are searching for. The key things to look for of course are the names. Often these are buried in the body of the text; however sometimes they may be underlined, or written in bigger letters, or be more spaced. Occasionally you may strike lucky and have a Registrar who writes the key name(s) in the margin. Sometimes in records written in Russian, the key name(s) may be repeated in Latin characters.

If it's not the Akt you want, there are Previous and Next links below the image, however it may be quicker to Close the expanded image and return to the smaller version, which will load more quickly, and navigate forward or back from there.

Step 14: Download your Akt

Once you have located the correct Akt, you can Download it via the link underneath the expanded version of the image.



Irena 1872, Deaths, Akt 15

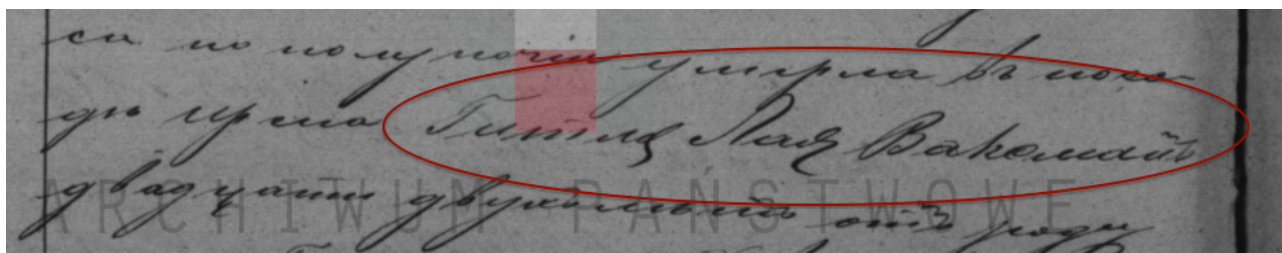
Step 15: Decipher the Akt

If you have image manipulation software, you can lighten or darken the document to make it more legible; the software will probably have a 'Return to original' option, so you can play around with the controls in the software until you achieve the best image. You may wish to Print the image, and write in the details as you decipher the text.

Unfortunately, although the records are written by at least semi-professional scribes, the handwriting is sometimes virtually illegible. In addition, some of the most significant information will refer to dates and ages, which in these records are almost always written uniquely in words.

If you are not able to decipher the content yourself, you can post the image onto the ViewMate section of the JewishGen website, and request an interpretation.

<http://www.jewishgen.org/ViewMate/>



"Gitla Laia Waksman died in the town of Irena, aged 22 years"