Postscript research for Our Fallen Warriors Remembered has continued since the summer of 2016.

In August, at the Hamburg Library, Ancestry.com was queried regarding Phillip Finkelstein (1941). At that time a document, found on line, was a record kept by the National Jewish Welfare Board.

And then, in October 2016, at the Hamburg Library, Ancestry.com was queried regarding Charles Becker (1933). At that time a document, found on line, were two records kept by the National Jewish Welfare Board.
Charles P. Becker

Address: 405 Cumberland Ave., City: Buffalo, State: N.Y.

Source of Information: War Dept. Rel. 3/1/44, pg. 968

Inquiry Date: 4/28/44

Worker Consulted: Mrs. Ann Goldstein

Date Appeared in Honor Roll: 11/26/45

Charles P. Becker

Address: 405 Cumberland Ave., City: Buffalo, State: N.Y.

Source of Information: War Dept. Rel. 3/31/44, pg. 802

Inquiry Date: 5/26/44

Worker Consulted: Mrs. Ann Goldstein

Date Appeared in Honor Roll: 11/26/45
A review of the individual Warrior folders prepared during the research for this project did not locate any additional records from the National Jewish Welfare Board.

In December 2016, internet research located a website for the American Jewish History Society (AJHS), Center for Jewish History. The AJHS site\(^1\) relates that it is a non-profit institution that houses archival records relating to the general history of Jewish people in the United States.

From there, e-mail was sent to AJHS requesting assistance regarding the records for Finkelstein (1941) and Becker (1933) and specifically if there was any additional information on either of them.

The following day, a response from AJHS Reference section provided a description on information available there and a link\(^2\) to the Records of the National Jewish Welfare Board - Bureau of War, collection number I-52. The response also related that “usually there isn’t much more information about individual soldiers in the collection unless they were chaplains or won awards.”

In additional e-mail exchange with AJHS, an offer was provided to check for additional information pertaining to Finkelstein and Becker, if I provided which Folders and Boxes to be reviewed there. The data to be searched was:

Series IV: Individuals - Service records for casualties and awards, 1942-1947  
Subseries A: Individuals - Record series I (A-Z), 1942-1947  
Box 122, Folder 4 – Becker  
Box 148, Folder 1 – Finkelstein

Subseries B: Individuals - Record series II (A-Z), 1943-1947  
Box 248, Folder 5 – Basichis-Bentley  
Box 250, Folder 4 – Figa-Fishman

Series VI: Card files - Bureau of War Records, master index cards, 1943-1947  
Subseries A: Alphabetical master cards, 1943-1947  
Box 277, Title: Bauerfield-Belzer  
Box 294, Title: Finkelstein-Flynn

\(^1\) [http://www.ajhs.org/about](http://www.ajhs.org/about)  
\(^2\) [http://findingaids.cjh.org/?pID=360439](http://findingaids.cjh.org/?pID=360439)
On December 30, 2016 in generous support to OFWR-Postscript, the researcher, Boni J. Koelliker, AJHS Reference, Photo and Reference Archivist, related, “I checked the boxes and there is no other information about either soldier in the collection except for the Mastercards you emailed me. Neither of these soldiers were Jewish.

On each master card, you will see in the upper left corner a box. In the case of service members who had been determined to be Jewish or wounded or received awards according to the NJWB, you usually see the word “authenticated” stamped in that box. If the “authenticated” is absent on this card, does not definitively say whether the soldier was or was not Jewish, won an award, etc., but rather that no official at the NJWB had received confirmation on the information stated on the card. A large hole in the left hand corner indicates that a soldier was not Jewish and the authenticated in the box means it was authenticated by someone who worked for the NJWB.

In the Scope and Content Note for Series VI of this collection you will see a description of the various markings and symbols used on the cards to specify whether a service member was Jewish, had been wounded, killed in battle, etc.

Best,

Boni

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On February 27, 2017 the discovery of an additional BWR card was located\(^3\) for Sidney S. Martin (1935) and on March 10, 2017 a BWR card was located\(^4\) for Robert Freedenberg (1942)

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As suggested, The Scope and Content Note\(^5\) was reviewed and the pertinent information included, infra:

Series VI: Card files – Bureau of War Records, master index cards, 1943-1947
Box 273-Box 461.

\(^3\) www.ancestry.com via Hamburg NY Public Library
\(^4\) ibid
\(^5\) ibid
**DEATH**

NATIONAL JEWISH WELFARE BOARD

BUREAU OF WAR RECORDS

ALPHABETICAL CARD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name (Caps)</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Serial #</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MARTIN</td>
<td>Sidney</td>
<td>Selim</td>
<td>Av R. T. 1/c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next of Kin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Ellen Martin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>31 Wildwood Ave</th>
<th>Buffalo</th>
<th>N.Y.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Source of Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Navy Dept Rel 12/13/45 pg 7554</th>
<th>same</th>
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Branch of Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Navy</th>
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</table>

Worker Consulted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr. Milton Goldman*</th>
<th>Follow-Up Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/26/45#</td>
<td>2/6/46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**MISSING**

NATIONAL JEWISH WELFARE BOARD

BUREAU OF WAR RECORDS

MASTER CARD SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHENTICATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FREEDENBERG</td>
<td>SEAMAN 1/c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST</th>
<th>MIDDLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>John</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next of Kin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr. Philip Freedenberg</th>
<th>Father</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Address

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>178 Downing St.</th>
<th>Buffalo</th>
<th>N.Y.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Source of Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War Dept Release 2/3/44 M pg. 987</th>
<th>7/13/44**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Inquiry Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2/23/44*</th>
<th>3/27/44*</th>
<th>4/26/44**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5/19/44**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Worker Consulted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mr. H. Saperatone</th>
<th>Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Goldstein**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date Appeared in Honor Roll

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11/26/45</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

br
Arrangement:
Two subseries.

Scope and Content:
Series VI consists of printed master index card forms that provide space for listing a soldier’s name, age, rank, serial number, service branch, and theater of military action. Fields are also available for listing the name and address of the next of kin, the source of information, and the date that a soldier's name appeared on a military service Honor Roll. The BWR printed two different versions of the master card forms; both of these versions are color coded and indicate several different categories of information about Jewish service personnel. One set of the master cards is printed in white with a band of color running along the far right side of the card. The color bands are white for death, green for missing in action, red for wounded, or orange for an award bestowed. Another set is printed in solid colors: blue for prisoner, pink for wounded, peach for missing in action, yellow for award, and white for death.

The master cards were originally printed in triplicate, but they have been filed in duplicate in two subseries: Alphabetical Master Cards and Geographical Master Cards. The alphabetical subseries is the master index for the individual war record files compiled for Jewish service personnel by the BWR; the alphabetical cards are surrogate records for the individual files arranged alphabetically in Series IV, Subseries A and B. The geographical subseries is a duplicate copy of the alphabetical subseries; all changes made to an alphabetical master card have been copied by BWR staff to the corresponding geographical master card.

The BWR transcribed information on the master card forms using several encoding schema. In one encoding scheme, labeled the Master Card Symbols, the BWR cut the left corner of a card to indicate that a soldier is one of several members of the same family who died during the war; punched a hole in the card to indicated that a soldier is not Jewish; stamped the word "authenticated" in a box if the information is verified; stamped XX if the case is in abeyance; or left the box blank if the case is pending (see Box 273, card 1). Another encoding scheme uses acronyms and abbreviations copied from I.B.M. punch card fields used to denote branch of military service and rank, awards, combat action, and theater of operation (copies of the I.B.M. encoding schema are in Box 89, folder 1). These acronyms and abbreviations frequently appear on the front and back sides of the master cards. In addition, many of the cards are stamped on the back side with a grid patterned after Hollerith punch cards created by I.B.M. for the BWR. BWR clerical staff used the grid to note changes made to the soldiers' files; these notes were forwarded to I.B.M. employees who compiled lists of soldiers and sailors for the BWR. BWR staff also marked some of the master cards with a large dark blue, star-shaped stamp. The star indicates that BWR staff compiled information about service personnel from War Department, Navy Department, or Office of War Information releases, but had not made further inquiries. Finally, as a means to track changes made to the files, BWR clerical staff generally typed their initials and the date in the footer section of the cards.
Additional information was also retrieved from the AHJS website\textsuperscript{6}.


These files contain supporting documentation culled from newspapers, telephone conversations, and correspondence exchanged among BWR staff and volunteers, service personnel and their families, and representatives of the United States Armed Forces.

**Historical Note**

The National Jewish Welfare Board and its affiliated member organizations established the Bureau of War Records for the purpose of collecting and compiling information about Jewish Americans who served in the United States Armed Forces during World War II.

The origins of the Bureau of War Records can be traced back to the experience of the Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) in providing religious and social services to American Jewish soldiers and sailors during and after World War I (see Guide to the Records of the National Jewish Welfare Board, I-337), and to the American Jewish Committee, whose Office of War Records documented the contributions of Jewish servicemen to the United States military during World War I (see American Jewish Committee, Office of War Records, I-9). During the interwar years, the JWB - Army-Navy Division worked with federated Jewish philanthropic and cultural centers to deliver services to Jewish soldiers located at military bases throughout the United States and abroad.

As the United States mobilized for defensive military actions during the emergency period of 1939-1941, the JWB created new bureaus and committees to deal with particular aspects of social services for American Jewish servicemen and women. One such service involved the collection, authentication, and distribution of unofficial military service records for Jewish soldiers and sailors then being drafted into the United States Armed Forces. Under the leadership of Rabbi Edward Israel, the JWB's Committee on Statistics convened several conferences with its national affiliates to consider the problem of collecting data on Jewish military service. On October 9, 1941, twenty-one national organizations affiliated with the National Jewish Welfare Board (NJWB) met and resolved that the Army and Navy Service Division of the NJWB would assume responsibility for overseeing a Bureau of War Records (BWR). Representatives of the NJWB and its affiliates constituted an Advisory Committee of the BWR. By the end of the war, the number of affiliates would total thirty-eight. During the same meeting, a Technical Committee on War Records was added to advise the BWR staff about the use of statistical methods for compiling and analyzing Jewish war records. Among those who served on the Technical Committee were Chairman and Vice-President of the Metropolitan Life

\textsuperscript{6} ibid
Insurance Company, Louis I. Dublin, Elisha M. Friedman, Dr. Maurice B. Hexter, Daniel Katz, Samuel Leff, Harry L. Lurie, Herbert Marks, Joshua Marcus, Dr. Maurice Taylor, and Dr. Joseph Zubin.

The principal duties of the national office of the BWR were to assist local Jewish communities in establishing war records committees; to authenticate all war records submitted to the NJWB on behalf of Jewish servicemen and women; to calculate the proportion and number of Jews in the armed forces; to publish information of use to families of Jewish service personnel, the NJWB and its affiliated members; and to publicize stories of Jewish soldiers' contributions to the war effort. The initial budget for the BWR was $14,800, which covered the cost of hiring a director, two stenographers, and two file clerks.

In the summer of 1942, Samuel C. Kohs, a noted sociologist and professor, was hired by the JWB to conduct a sample population survey of a large city containing a significant proportion of Jewish residents, and to test the results of statistical evidence, procedures, and techniques for documenting the approximate number and percentage of Jews living in the United States. Kohs selected Trenton, New Jersey for his sample population due to its proximity to New York City and the large number of Jews living in the Metropolitan Trenton area. Kohs' experience during the Trenton study was formative in the planning of other local population studies, the setting up of local war record committees, and the organization of statewide war records collection programs. As the last national census of Jewish Americans was conducted in the mid-1930s, Kohs' work served as a vital starting point for a comprehensive statistical analysis of the proportion of Jews who served in the United States armed forces during World War II.

On January 1, 1943, the Advisory Committee appointed Samuel Kohs director of the BWR. Kohs managed the central office of the BWR and acted as liaison to the Department of Public Information and other departments of the NJWB. Under Kohs, the BWR established several subdivisions. Arthur Weyne headed Authentications. David Turtletaub and Edward Burnstein served as liaisons to local war committees and state historical societies. Jerome Seidman and Harry Dobkin led the Community Studies subdivision; Joshua Marcus oversaw all special studies; and Selma Schnaper managed the Clerical subdivision. By 1944, the Bureau employed some twenty non-professional staff members across thee units: secretarial, clerical, and inquiry.

At the outset, the BWR collected information about Jewish service personnel onsite at military bases by means of registration cards enclosed in bibles and prayer books distributed by the JWB; through furlough papers submitted during the high holy seasons; and from service records secured from the Adjunct General's office in Washington, D.C. Staff members working at the national office of the BWR authenticated all Jewish casualties and awards after consulting government publications, local press releases, and publications of organizations with significant Jewish membership. However, as the scale of the United States military commitment to Europe and Asia increased dramatically during the years 1941-1945, and as Jewish service personnel mobilized for war on many fronts, it became necessary for the BWR to further decentralize and standardize the
process of collecting and authenticating data. To encourage community participation in
the task of war record collection, the BWR sent representatives to every city containing a
Jewish population greater than 2,500. Bureau staff corresponded with representatives of
local Army-Navy committees, Jewish welfare and community councils, as well as leaders
of community centers and synagogues serving Jewish communities smaller than 1,000
people. Between 1943 and 1946 the number of local war record committees in the United
States increased from approximately 400 to 1,200.

In order to stimulate the collection of data about Jewish service personnel, the BWR
printed various standardized forms which it distributed from its central offices in New York
City to representatives serving on war records committees or to individuals active in
affiliated member organizations. Information collected on printed forms included a
soldier’s name, address, age, civilian occupation, next of kin, military rank, service branch,
promotions, medals, awards, and casualty status. On January 1, 1944, the BWR
implemented a system of correspondence with local war records committees in which the
BWR supplied standard monthly report forms that were filled out and submitted to the
national office by local representatives. The forms provided space for reporting the names
of service personnel and the number of men and women from a community serving in the
armed forces, as well as the number of casualties, awards, and commissioned officers.
By September 1944, local war records committees assumed responsibility for
authenticating information about Jewish service personnel whose names were submitted
to them by the national office of the BWR.

From the beginning of the war records project, the BWR central office collected and
organized information submitted by local war records committees regarding awards and
casualties. BWR staff created individual files for soldiers and sailors who were of likely
Jewish descent. The soldiers’ files contained printed forms, newspaper clippings,
correspondence, and photographs which provided information used to authenticate
Jewish ancestry. The Authentications Division of the BWR verified information about all
known Jewish service personnel who suffered casualties or received awards for
distinguished service during the war. By July 1946, the BWR had received nearly 150,000
items related to military service. From among these records, the BWR staff authenticated
cases for over 10,000 deaths, 20,000 wounded, 3,000 missing, 4,000 prisoners, and
nearly 50,000 distinguished service awards garnered by approximately 26,000 Jewish
soldiers and sailors. Collating records of Jewish servicemen and women across several
different categories was a difficult task. In this task the BWR was aided by the
International Business Machines Corporation (IBM). IBM employees worked with BWR
staff to develop a punch card system that Bureau staff members used to input
standardized data for such information as military rank, service branch, and awards.
Based on queries submitted by the BWR, IBM regularly compiled data from punch cards
into printed reports. Information from the IBM reports underpinned much of the statistical
analysis featured in BWR printed materials and publications.

The BWR also initiated numerous enumerative studies of Jewish Americans. The BWR
compiled lists of Jewish nurses, dentists, refugees, commissioned officers, and families
having three or more members who died in uniform. BWR staff, local war records
committees, and affiliated members conducted statewide surveys of the number of Jewish medical practitioners who enlisted in the armed forces. The Bureau also gathered unofficial census information about Jews in the United States using house-by-house canvasses and statistical sampling techniques. The BWR published books to aid local communities in conducting population studies such as the Self-Survey Manual: Procedures to be Followed in Your Own Community to Determine the Ratio of Jews in the Armed Forces and the Handbook of Instructions for Survey Consultants. Working with thousands of volunteers, BWR staff conducted Jewish population surveys in 25 cities while also conducting statistical sample surveys in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago. The BWR estimated the Jewish population of the United States and updated official census figures compiled in 1936. Based on these population figures, the Bureau was able to calculate the total number of Jewish Americans eligible for selective service and the number of Jews active in the armed forces. They then compared the percentage of active Jewish servicemen and women as a ratio of the whole Jewish population to that of the United States population as a whole.

In addition to the hundreds of pamphlets, forms, guides, and lists printed by the BWR for use by local war records committees, the Bureau published several reports and studies about its work. In October 1943, Louis Dublin published "Keeping the Record of Jewish War Service" in the Contemporary Jewish Record (see Box 3, folder 2). That same month, the BWR distributed the first issue of its newsletter entitled "Compiling the Record." Bureau staff members wrote "Featured Releases" about honored or notable soldiers and sailors which the BWR distributed through the JWB Department of Public Information. The BWR periodically published its statistical analyses in a pamphlet entitled "These Are the Facts." The Public Information Department, which included representatives from the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the American Jewish Congress, the Jewish Labor Committee, and the Jewish War Veterans, also regularly distributed an "Honor Roll" pamphlet listing brief descriptions of Jewish servicemen and women. An honor roll was also printed regularly in the American Jewish Yearbook published by the Jewish Publication Society of America.

The BWR sought other means of publicizing Jewish contributions to the United States war effort. In May 1945, the Bureau prepared an exhibit showcasing the BWR program and highlighting various statistics compiled during the war. The exhibit was displayed in Washington, D.C. during the 29th annual meeting of the NJWB. It was hoped that the exhibit would stimulate interest in a permanent museum devoted to Jewish American war service to be housed in building owned by the NJWB. While the museum did not take root in Washington, the BWR exhibit was displayed that same summer at the Jewish Conference of Social Work in Atlantic City.

With the German surrender on May 7-8, 1945, the BWR began planning for its eventual dissolution. Bureau staff recognized that the number of war casualties and awards would decrease significantly after May, but at the same time, the contributions of volunteer workers throughout the United States would also likely decline. The BWR thus accelerated its war records collection program with the announcement of War Records Month to be held in January 1946. At the same time, the Bureau devoted considerable
attention to the problem of grave registration. The NJWB and the BWR worked with the Quartermaster General's Office in Washington, D.C. to establish a list of all Jewish personnel buried overseas. The list served as a guide to help verify the type of burial services provided to Jewish servicemen and women and to facilitate the repatriation of soldiers' remains interred overseas.

By July 1946, the BWR ceased processing new cases in order to concentrate on completing all pending files. The Bureau expected to compile final tallies of awards and casualties as well as useful statistical information from the special studies. The honor roll and special studies completed up to July 1946 were published the following year in a comprehensive two-volume survey entitled *American Jews in World War II: the Story of 550,000 Fighters for Freedom*.

The BWR scaled back its staff to a handful of employees in 1947; the remaining personnel oversaw the transfer of Bureau records to the central files of the NJWB. The NJWB briefly revived the Bureau during the Korean War, though no comprehensive plan was established for collecting and preserving the records of Jews who served in this conflict.

**Preferred Citation**

Published citations should take the following form:

Identification of item, date (if known); National Jewish Welfare Board, Bureau of War Records, 1940-1969; I-52; box number; folder number; American Jewish Historical Society, New York, NY, and Boston, MA.

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Thanks again for the excellent support to Boni J. Koelliker, AJHS Reference, Photo and Reference Archivist, American Jewish History Society, Center for Jewish History.