Birth Records in Paragraph Format

Russia "How to" Guide, Intermediate Level: Instruction

December 2015

GOAL

This guide will teach you how to extract the genealogical information from a Russian paragraph form birth record by identifying key words and phrases.

INTRODUCTION

The majority of the paragraph form Russian birth records follow a particular format, though they may vary by religion (i.e., Jewish records) or location (for example, Russian Poland or Lithuania).

You may want to consult the following "How to" Guides before continuing:

- Russia-Cyrillic Alphabet
- Russia-Cyrillic Script

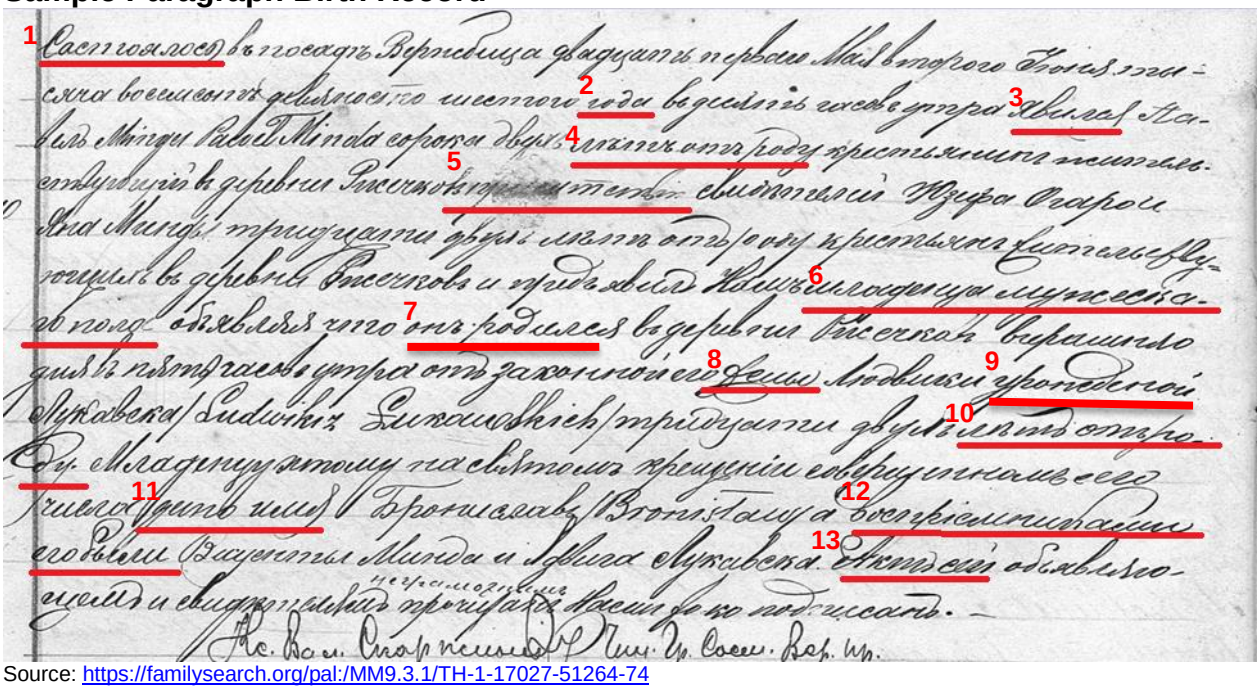
HOW TO

Before you begin extracting genealogical information from documents written in Russian, it is important to understand some grammatical concepts.

Patronymics and Surnames

For ethnic Russians, patronymics play an important cultural role. A child's second name is traditionally the patronymic form of his or her father's name. Surnames traditionally have had a masculine and feminine form, and you may encounter these in birth documents. For a fuller explanation of patronymics and surnames and their feminine forms, click on the following link and read the short descriptions: http://www.funrussian.com/2011/06/05/russian-names/

Sample Paragraph Birth Record



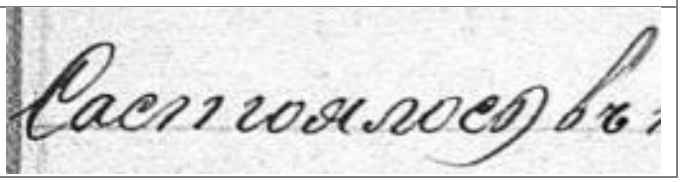
Source: https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.3.1/TH-1-17027-51264-74

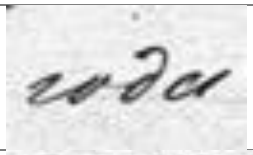
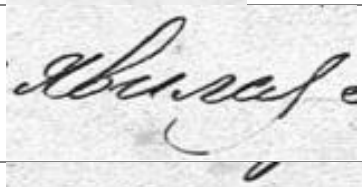
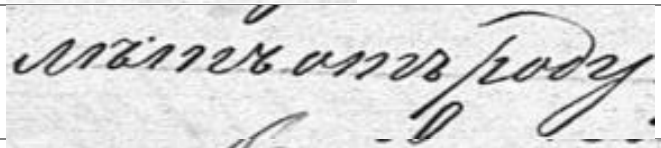
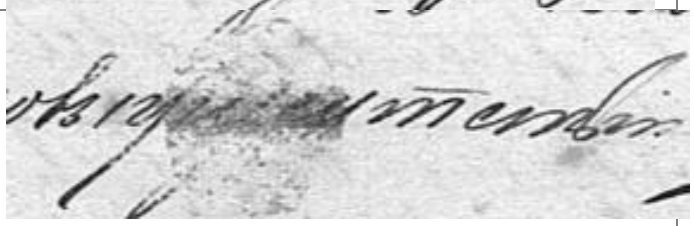
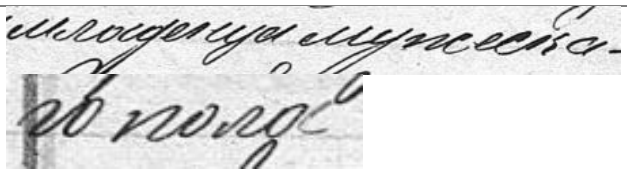
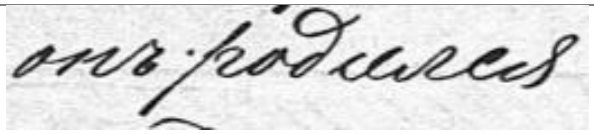
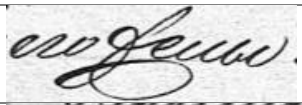
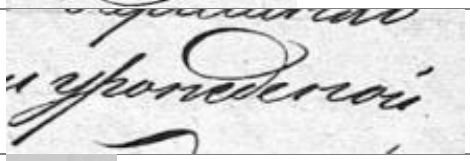
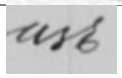
Paragraph Birth Record Outline in English

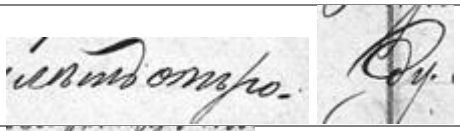
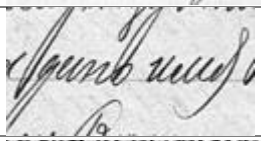
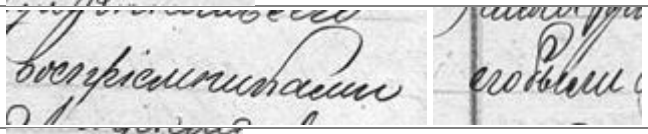
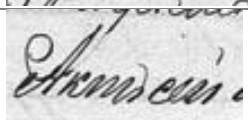
It happened in[1] village or town (location), (full date written out) year[2], at (time). Appeared before us[3] (Name, usually father or midwife), (status/occupation) (age) years old[4] in the place (place name) resident, in the presence of [5] (witnesses, occupation, age, residence) and showed us a baby (boy or girl) [6] and announced that he/she was born[7] in (location, date, time). His legal wife[8] (first name) born as[9] (maiden name, age) years from birth[10]. The baby was baptized that day by (priest name, parish name) and was given the name[11] (baby's name). The witnesses or godparents were[12] (names of witnesses). This act[13] was read and signed….

Key Words

The following key words will indicate the essential genealogical information. Depending on the context, the information may come before, after, or between the key words. Note that the Russian words and phrases are written in standardized Russian. In some cases, the examples provided may differ in spelling, diacritics, or conjugation of the word. Keep in mind that phrases and even words may be split between two lines.

English	Russian	Information given	Example
1. It happened in…	состоялась в	followed by the word "village" or "town" and then the place name	

2.…year	…года	before this word will be the date written out	
3. appeared before us…	явился	followed by the father's name	
4.…years old	…лѣтъ от роду	before this will be his age	
5. in the presence of…	в присутствии ….. и …..	followed by the witnesses' names, ages, residence, and sometimes occupation. The second witness will be listed following the word "и"	
6. baby boy or baby girl	младенца мужескаго пола or младенца женского пола	Look for this phrase to determine male or female. This entry is male.	
7. he was born or she was born…	он родился or она родилась в	followed by when and where the child was born. This entry is male.	
8. his wife…	его жены	followed by her first name	
9. born as… (maiden name)	урожденной	followed by her maiden name	
born as…	изъ	followed by the maiden name of the wife	
born as…	съ	followed by the maiden name of the wife	

10.….years from birth	…лѣтъ от роду	<u>before</u> this will be her age	
11. given the name…	дано имя…	<u>followed</u> by the baby's name	
12. the godparents were…	восюриемниками его были….	<u>followed</u> by the names of the godparents	
13. This act…	Акт сей	<u>followed</u> by the formulaic end of the document; it indicates the end of all genealogical information	

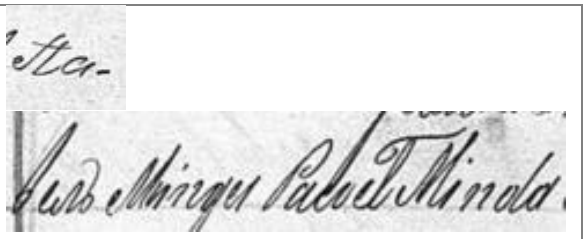
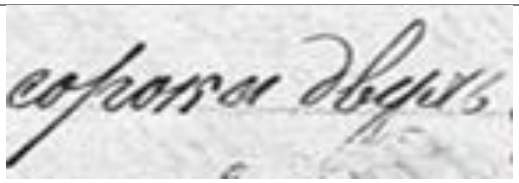
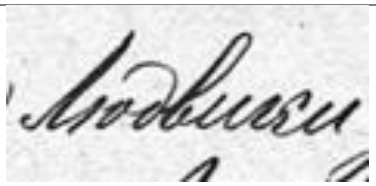
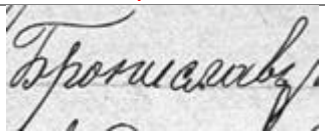
Other Helpful Vocabulary Words

Before the name of a specific place is mentioned, you will see a word describing the type of location (i.e. "village" or "city"). When recording when the child was born, the record may say "today" or "yesterday" instead of rewriting the date. At times, a person's status may be recorded before or after his or her name, "peasant," "farmer," and "petty bourgeois" being the most common.

village	деревня
village with a church	село (sometimes appearing as селѣ)
city	город
settlement	посадѣ
yesterday	вчерашнего дня
today	сегодняшнего дня
peasant	крестьянин
petty bourgeois	мещанинъ
farmer	земледелец
the same year	текущаго года
of the same month	сего месяца

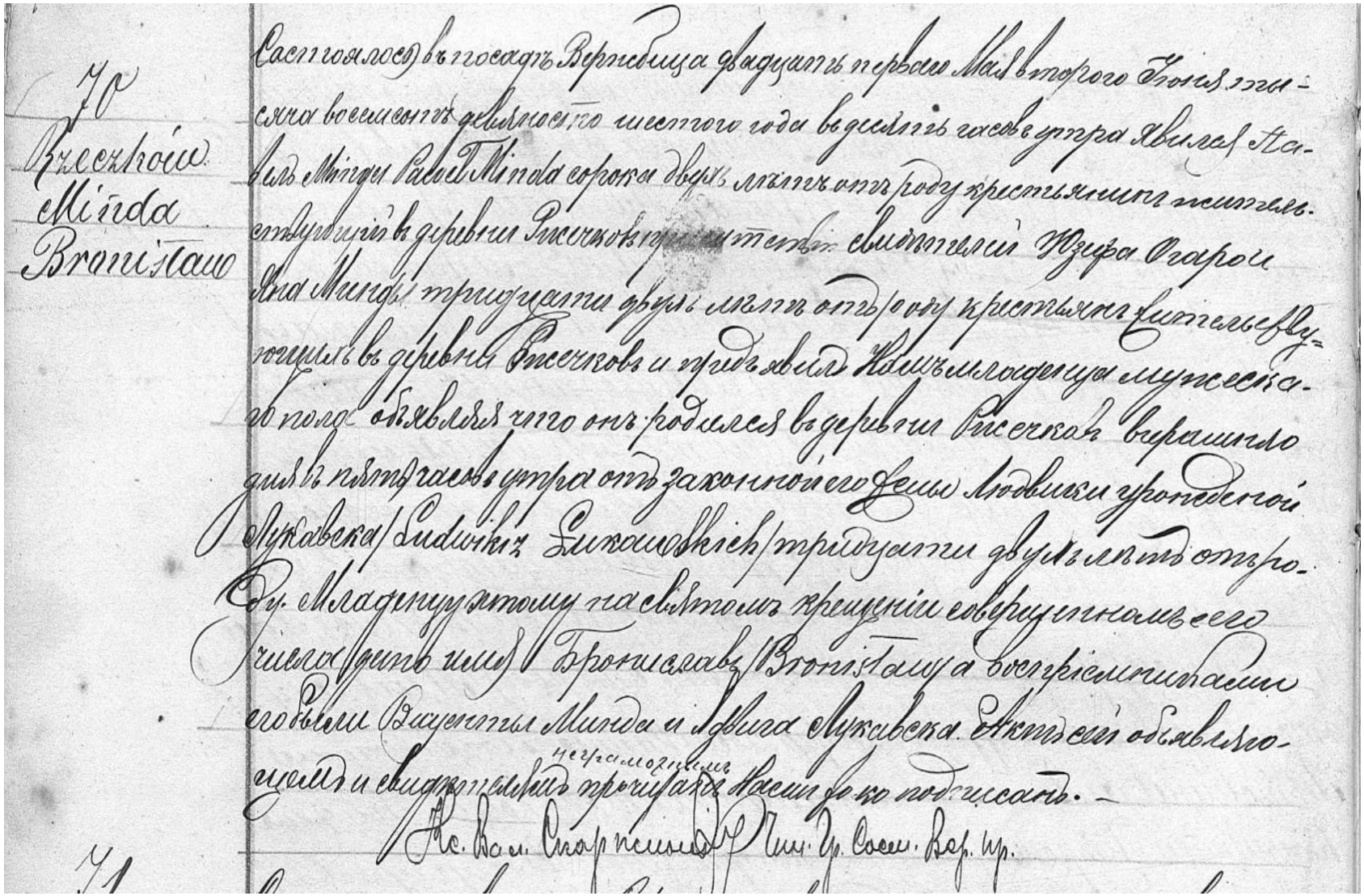
PRACTICE

The last page of this guide contains an image of a birth record. You can also view the image on FamilySearch by clicking here. For any unfamiliar words, use the FamilySearch word list, found at: https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Russian_Genealogical_Word_List

What is the father's name?	The first words after "явился" are the father's name in Russian. Because this is a Polish baptism, the two words following the Russian version is his name in Polish.	 Pavel Minda (in Polish: Paweł Minda)
How old is he?	You will find this directly after the father's name and directly before the phrase, "лет от роду". Use the word list on family search to determine the age.	 сорока двухь Forty-two
What is the mother's name? First and maiden?	The first name will be found directly after the phrase "его жены", and the maiden name will be found directly after the word "урожденной".	 Ludwiki Lukavska (in Polish: Ludwika Lukawska)
What is the baby's name?	This will be found directly after the phrase "дано имя".	 Bronislav (in Polish: Bronisław)

ACTIVITY

Now, test your skills you have learned in this "How to" Guide. The Activity is a way to check your knowledge and let you know you've mastered the Guide! Click here to try out the Activity.



Source: https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939V-4Q3T-MN : accessed 26 January 2016.