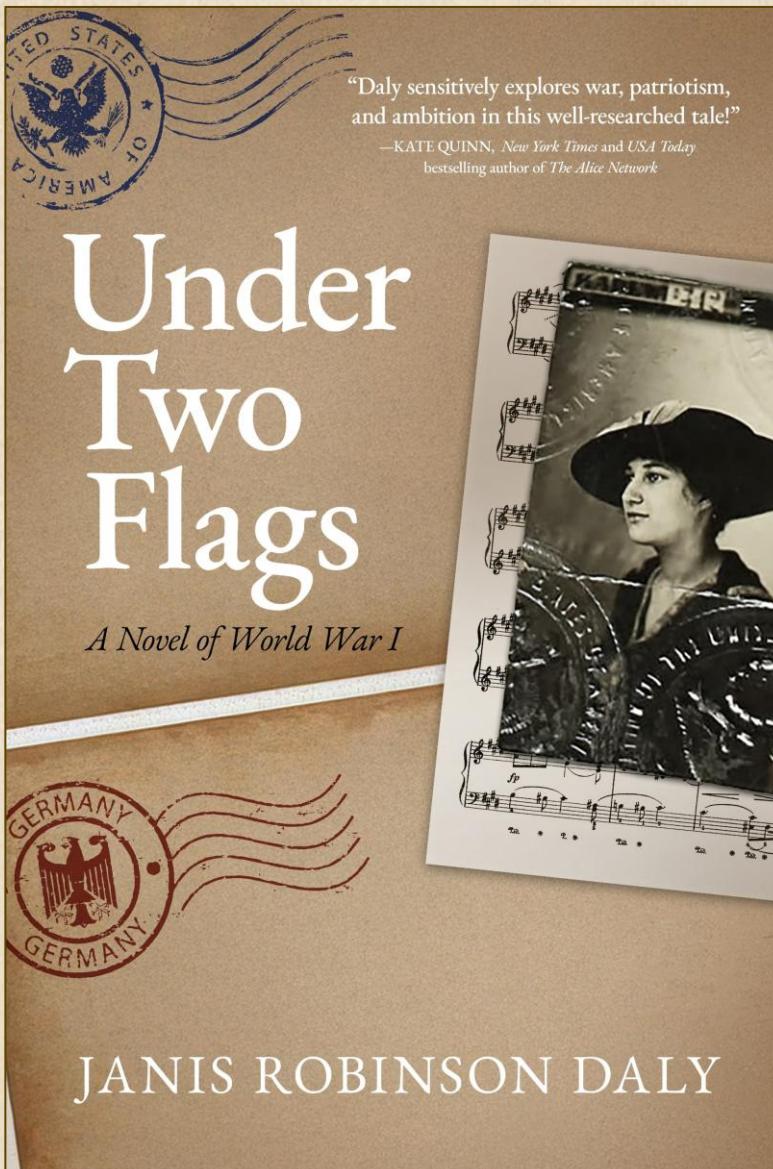




Book Club Kit



Janis Robinson Daly
March 2026





Thank You!



Thank you for choosing UNDER TWO FLAGS for your book club. I hope you have a great meeting. To help you prepare, this kit includes:

- Questions. Kick-start and guide your discussion. Or come up with your own, too (and share with me so I can add to the list).
- Recipes. A few treats mentioned in the book.
- Playlist. Operatic selections mentioned in the book.
- Companion Books. Titles mentioned in the book.
- Character Profile. Who was Josephine Therese Marzynski? A few research tidbits I found about her and her story.

I love to hear from clubs about their meetings. Post on my Facebook page or email me photos or comments you'd like to share:

Email: janis@janisrdaly.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/JanisRobinsonDaly

Author Website: www.janisrdaly.com

Happy Reading!
Janis Robinson Daly





Reader Discussion Questions for Under Two Flags



1. Over the past 10 to 15 years, much has been written in historical fiction about World War II. *Under Two Flags* occurs during World War I. How much did you know about the war that was known as the Great War? Had you ever heard about the origins of the association between poppies and WWI, the Lusitania's sinking, the explosion in Halifax, or Black Tom Island among other historical events referenced in the book? Why do you think there have been more WWII novels released compared to WWI?
2. The author credits her grandfather for an interest in novel writing and a creative writing "gene." In the book, she presents Josephine's passion for opera singing as influenced by her mother, Ricka Meyers Marzynski. Do you think that presentation is plausible? Do you have a passion or interest that you think was "passed down" from an ancestor?
3. *Under Two Flags* is a retelling of the memoir, *With Old Glory in Berlin*. Other recent popular novels have also used this strategy.
 - *The Frozen River / A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary*
 - *James / The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
 - *Demon Copperhead / David Copperfield*
 - *Hello Beautiful / Little Women*

What responsibilities should an author take with the original story when they rewrite or retell it?





Reader Discussion Questions for *Under Two Flags*



4. In the original book, Josephine Marzynski never mentions she is Jewish. Why do you think she omitted any reference to Judaism? Do you think its inclusion in the retelling enhanced Josephine's character?
5. Have you ever attended an opera performance? What is your favorite opera or aria?
6. Did you trust Josephine as a narrator, or did you consider her unreliable at any point?
7. If you had seen only the two titles presented as book options, which one would have enticed you to pick up the book? *With Old Glory in Berlin* or *Under Two Flags*? Which one better reflects the book's content?
8. After reading the Author's Notes, are you curious to learn more about Josephine's life after she returns home? Would you read a sequel, even if it was highly fictionalized?
9. What do you think happens or would want to happen to other characters—Herr and Frau Müller, Cousin Jack, Gustav von Lüben, or any of Josephine's friends—after the story ends?





Recipes



Potato Knishes

A Family Gathering in Boston

After downing loud gulps of the frothy ale and over a plate of steaming potato knishes, Jack laid out Mr. Müller's proposal.

Dough Ingredients

- 2 ½ + cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 large egg, beaten
- ½ cup neutral oil
- ½ cup butter
- ½ cup lukewarm water
- 1 tsp white vinegar
- 2 tsp kosher salt

Filling Ingredients

- 2 large yellow onions
- 4 tbsp butter
- 3 lb. potatoes (Yukon Gold recommended)
- 1 egg, beaten
- Kosher salt

You will also need:

- 1 egg, beaten
- Sesame seeds (optional, for the roll)

Instructions

Make the dough: Whisk flour and baking powder together. Create a well in the center and add the rest of the ingredients. Mix with a spoon until the dough becomes thick and sticky. Switch to your hands and knead until a ball forms. You may need to add more flour in small increments. Cover the dough and set aside for an hour.

Make the filling: Dice the onions and saute until soft and golden. Peel and boil the potatoes until soft. Drain and mash while still warm. Add the fried onions, mash until smooth, and salt generously. Mix through the beaten egg (this makes the filling smoother and creamier). Set the potato mixture aside to cool to room temperature.

To assemble: Divide dough in half. Keep one half covered, and roll out the other half into a large rectangle on parchment paper. Place about half of the potato filling along the long edge of the dough, about 2-3 inches from the edge. Gently roll it up and cut off any extra dough at the ends. Using something thin and rounded—like a chopstick or your finger—press down at intervals to create 8 sections. Separate and shape each one into a round knish. The open sides will be the top and bottom. Gently press down the top and pull the edges of the dough together. Transfer to a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and brush generously with beaten egg. Bake at 375°F (190°C) for 30-40 minutes, until golden. Repeat with the remaining dough and filling.

Serve with: Spicy mustard and sauerkraut for an authentic, traditional side dish.

Credit: How to Make Authentic Potato Knishes - Kosher Recipe, Chabad.org





Recipes



Flammkuchen

When Josephine arrives at the Müllers, Anna serves slices of a Flammkuchen, a crispy flatbread topped with cheese and onions. Diced ham or bacon is often added. Josephine wonders if the lack of ham is because of rationing or if the Müllers keep kosher, avoiding pork-based meats.

For an easy take and bake option, Trader Joe's has a great frozen flatbread with ham and onions. Whole Foods also has a cheese flatbread available in its prepared food section; you can easily add your own toppings.

If you want to make one from scratch:

For the base

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp oil (olive oil/vegetable oil as you prefer)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water or a little more as needed

For the topping

- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz smoked bacon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ onion medium
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon butter
- 3 tablespoon crème fraîche
- 1 pinch each: nutmeg, salt, pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Gruyere cheese (optional)

Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 450F/230C. Line a large baking sheet/tray (half sheet) with parchment.
- Mix together flour, oil, salt and water. It will be a relatively dry dough. Knead for a minute and then set aside while you prepare the toppings.
- Cut the bacon into thin strips and cook in a small skillet over medium heat until they start to brown. Remove from pan and set aside.
- Add the onions to the pan, along with the butter, and cook a few minutes until the onions have softened but are only just browning.
- Add the nutmeg, salt and pepper to the crème fraîche and mix well.
- Roll the dough out on a lightly floured surface into a thin (1/8")circle/oval.
- Transfer the dough to the lined baking sheet. Spread the crème fraîche over the top, leaving a space around the edge without any topping.
- Spread the sauteed onions on top, then the bacon. Top with the gruyere, if using, then bake for around 10 minutes until the edges are light brown and crisp and the toppings are start to color.

Credit: [Flammkuchen - Caroline's Cooking](#)





Recipes



Chicken Dinner for Friday Night Shabbos

Traditional Jewish Sabbath dinners (or Shabbos as it would have been called in 1916 by the Marzynskis who were more likely to speak Yiddish than Hebrew) include a chicken dish as the main course. Here are a couple I've tested: Honey roasted with dried fruit. One-pan, herbes de Provence style. Orange glazed and seasoned with fennel, coriander and lemon.

Or, try a traditional chicken soup—it's good for the soul, too.

Ingredients

- 1 whole, plump Kosher chicken
- 1 onion
- 2-3 carrots
- 1 small leek
- 2 stalks of celery
- 1 turnip
- 2-3 parsnips
- 1 bunch of parsley
- 1 bunch of dill (cleaned, cut off bottom)
- Salt and pepper (just a few shakes)
- Enough water to cover the chicken and veggies

Instructions

1. Place the chicken in a mesh bag before putting it in the pot. It's easier to take it out of the soup once done. Or, use a soup pot equipped with a metal colander.
2. Add all the other ingredients and bring to a boil. Simmer for 2 hours, covered.
3. Let the soup cool. Then lift the chicken in the bag or colander, letting the liquid drain into the soup pot. Place over a large bowl to let the remaining liquid drain. Add the residual liquid back to the soup pot.
4. Place the chicken on a plate. With a slotted spoon, remove the vegetables and herbs from the soup pot. Save the carrots and parsnips on a plate.
5. Skim off the fat developing on top of the cooling soup (I use a slotted spoon but you can buy a fat skimmer).
6. Cool the soup in the refrigerator overnight. The fat will rise to the top and solidify to make it easy to remove the rest before re-heating.
7. Cut up or shred the chicken, cut up the carrots and parsnips, add all to the pot when reheating. Add a package of egg noodles. Reheat and serve.

Credit: Author Linda Rosen, advisor for UNDER TWO FLAGS. Check out Linda's fun activity for book clubs: A spirited conversation about the heirloom jewelry in her novels and bring your own piece to share. Together, you'll craft a fascinating story.

Contact Linda: www.linda-rosen.com





Recipes



Carrot Kugel

A side dish to accompany the chicken dinner. Rationing did not affect root vegetables as much as other food stuffs.

Frau Bachmann even comments she fears her granddaughter will look like a "Celtic pumpkinhead" (jack-o-lantern) from all the carrots they eat.

Ingredients

- 1 cup matzah cake meal
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups grated carrots
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup melted butter or canola oil

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F and set a rack in the center of the oven.
2. Butter and flour an 8-inch square baking pan.
3. Combine the dry ingredients in a large bowl.
4. In a smaller bowl, combine eggs, oil, lemon juice and carrots.
5. Mix the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, and stir until combined and no lumps of flour remain. Transfer the batter into the prepared baking pan, and smooth the top with a spatula.
6. Bake for 45 minutes; when done, the kugel should spring back when touched.
7. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Credit: [Passover Carrot Kugel Recipe | The Noshery](#), My Jewish Learning





Recipes



Pflaumenkuchen

A side dish to accompany the chicken dinner. Rationing did not affect root vegetables as much as other food stuffs.

Frau Bachmann even comments she fears her granddaughter will look like a "Celtic pumpkinhead" (jack-o-lantern) from all the carrots she eats.

Ingredients

- 3 lbs Italian plums (prune or Empress plums)
- 2 cups flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 pinch salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 2 – 3 ounces milk (rough estimate)
- 1 tablespoon sugar, for sprinkling (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Quarter each plum so that all four quarters remain clinging together by their skin.
3. Mix the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt, and butter together by cutting the butter in with a fork.
4. In a measuring cup, combine the beaten egg and almond extract, then add enough milk to make 3/8 of a cup (aka 3 oz) total.
5. Add to the dry ingredients, mix together with your hands, forming a dough. If the dough is too sticky, add a touch more flour.
6. Spread the dough thinly over a 13" x 9" jelly roll pan and cover it with overlapping rows of plums. Use the heel of your hand to gently spread the dough out evenly to each corner of the pan; the crust is supposed to be on the thinner side.
7. Bake for 1 hour and let it cool slightly before sprinkling with sugar for extra sweetness.
8. The plums will change color from green to a deep magenta as they bake, and will ooze lots of sticky purple juice that stains the crust beneath. Be careful not to over-bake, this crust should be on the softer side.

Credit: [Pflaumenkuchen \(German Plum Cake\) Recipe - Food.com](https://www.food.com/recipe/pflaumenkuchen-german-plum-cake-11110)





Recipes



Glühwein

I could use a mug of Frau Bachmann's famous winter drink. Just like she did with their coal, I suspected she'd stockpiled the wine and brandy. The spiced blend of spirits, cinnamon, and cloves might warm me, but it wouldn't thaw the icy images from Anna's brother's trenches.

Ingredients

- 1 bottle (25 fl oz or 750 ml) red wine
A light-red wine works well. The following wines work well: Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel, Rioja, Grenache.
- ½ cup water
- 3 – 4 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 8 – 10 whole cloves
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 2 cardamom pods (optional)
- 1 orange, sliced (optional)

Instructions

1. Put everything into a large saucepan and bring almost to a simmer over low heat, stirring to make sure that the sugar dissolves. DO NOT BOIL.
2. Lower heat to very low. Cover and let it steep for at least 1 hour. DO NOT SIMMER OR BOIL.
3. Strain out the spices and serve.

Using a Slow Cooker:

1. Heat the wine, water, and sugar in a saucepan until almost a simmer. Stir to dissolve the sugar.
2. Pour into a slow cooker and add the remaining ingredients. Set slow cooker to low.
3. The *glühwein* is ready after one hour, but will keep hot until needed if kept on low. It will improve in flavor the longer it steeps.

Credit: [Traditional German Mulled Wine Recipe – Oma's Glühwein Rezept](#)





Other Recipes & Treats



Blueberry Pie

Josephine daydreams of eating blueberry pie washed down with tart, freshly squeezed lemonade from a sweat-covered glass to celebrate the Fourth of July back home with her family in Boston.

Asparagus Soup

The countryside of Bad Ulster has escaped many of the rationing restrictions. Josephine and Hannah enjoy a bowl of asparagus soup, with the rare luxury of milk and crusty bread slices, followed by tender rounds of roast with potatoes swimming in butter, and a delicate tart filled with jellied berries to complete their feast.

Raggmunk

Once Josephine escapes from Germany into the Scandinavian countries for her final trek back to America, she relishes the more-abundant menu offerings, like the crispy fried potato pancakes with tart lingonberry sauce.

Butter Spritz Cookies

After we washed the crumbs of decadent butter spritz cookies down with the last drop of Glühwein, Hauptmann von Lüben asked for permission to escort me home. Forgetting Jack's advice and driven by an irresistible impulse, I told him, "No, thank you, unless you would please remove that ridiculous bracelet from your wrist and silly monocle from your eye."





Play List



Before writing *UNDER TWO FLAGS*, I had only been to two opera performances in my life: *Phantom of the Opera* and a Disney production of *Aida*.

I relied on a used copy of *100 Great Operas and Their Stories: Act-By-Act Synopses* by Henry W. Simon for my research into finding the best opera to reference in order to deepen a scene with relevant meaning, feeling, and libretto. I then turned to YouTube to find a performance of the piece to hear it, keeping in mind copyright laws. Song lyrics that are 100 years old or more are within the public domain, and would be in Josephine's repertoire. Here are a few:

Scene: Josephine singing for the German consulate representative before leaving New York

Song: "O Patria mia" (*Oh Fatherland*)

Opera: *Aida* by Giuseppe Verdi, 1871

Listen: Leontyne Price at the Met

www.youtube.com/watch?v=laV6sqFUTQ4

Scene: Josephine's audition meeting at the *Klindworth-Scharwenka Konservatorium der Musik*

Song: Pamina's aria

Opera: *Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute)* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, 1791

Listen: Regula Mühlemann at the Salzburg Music Festival

www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNGu0RkTvyc&t=2s

Scene: Josephine sings one of her favorite arias at the going-away party Frau Trebicz hosts

Song: "Je suis heureuse" (*I am happy*)

Opera: *Mignon* by Ambroise Thomas, 1866

Listen: Marilyn Horne with the Philharmonic

www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFkcKr9b-Uc&t=20s





Door Prizes & Take-Home Goodies



Strawberry Creams



Mrs. Weil lifted the lid from a half-pound Cadbury's Milk Tray. Neat rows of chocolates nestled in ribbed paper cups. For half an hour we studied their shapes, guessing at the fillings without taking a bite. At last, I chose one. "Hurrah!" My tongue met smooth milk chocolate, then strawberry cream over vanilla. I'd found the coveted Strawberry Temptation. <https://amzn.to/4qTjSoe>

U.S. Flag



Josephine kept a small American flag with her during all her travels and time in Germany. It was a small hand-held one that would have come on a wooden dowel. 12-pack available: <https://amzn.to/3ZjjUtL>

Ricka Meyer's homemade face cream



Mix up a batch of one part beeswax, four parts almond oil, and three parts rosewater, place into decorative small jars. <https://amzn.to/4k0kB57>

Or, simply grab a 1.75 oz jar of Pond's cold cream for each member. <https://amzn.to/4sHtVyy>





Companion Books



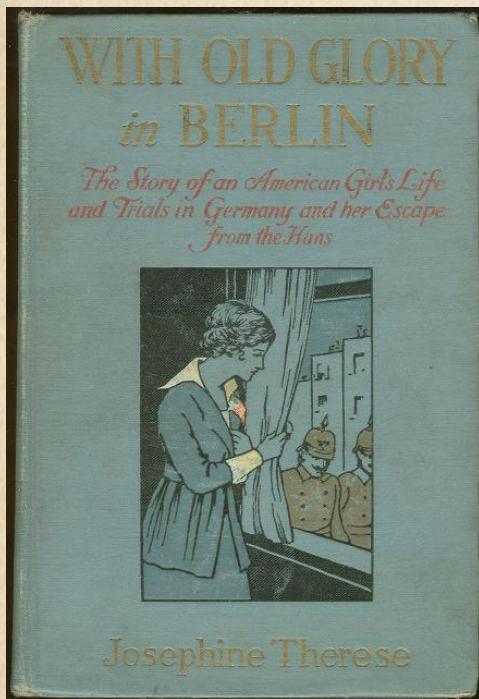
**Titles mentioned in the book.
Can you find them and their relevance?**

1. *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* by Jules Verne
2. *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
3. *The Arabian Nights* (author unknown)
4. *Mein Herz* by Else Lasker-Schüler
5. *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
6. *Faust* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
7. *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare
8. *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson

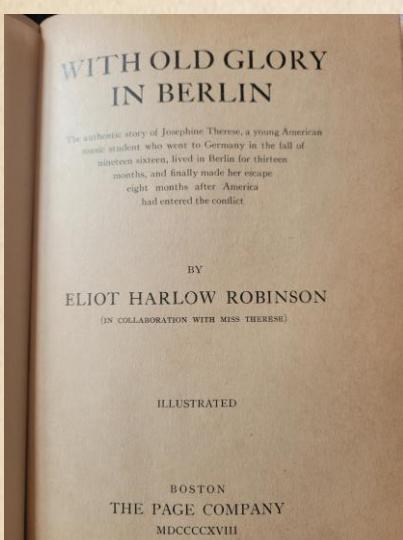




Research Tidbits



Josephine Therese Marzynski's memoir, *With Old Glory in Berlin*, released in 1918 under her name, Josephine Therese. The editor, Eliot Harlow Robinson, noted Josephine did not want to reveal her last name out of fear there could be repercussions from her sharing information about life in Germany while the war continued to be fought. Enough German nationalists lived in America to warrant her concern.



In a leather-bound set of his books, Eliot Harlow Robinson, added his name to *With Old Glory in Berlin*, as "in collaboration with Miss Therese" to further validate the assumption he ghost-wrote her memoirs.





Research Tidbits

Without Josephine's last name on the book, I turned to sleuthing with the assistance of a reference librarian at the Boston Public Library to find this article in *The Boston Globe*, January 3, 1918, just a week after her return from Germany, *A Report by Miss Marzynski, Roxbury (MA) Singer*:



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Research Tidbits

In 2 months

EMERGENCY PASSPORT ISSUED

NOTE.—This form is to be filled out in duplicates, one copy to be kept by the office by which the emergency passport is issued and the other forwarded to the Department of State.

To: The American Legation
Form No. 170a—CONTRAL
(Corrected May 22, 1916.)

Fee for Passport. \$1.00
Fee for administering oath and preparing passport application. 1.00

NO DESPATCH

EMERGENCY PASSPORT APPLICATION.

NATIVE.

No. 477. Issued, December 7, 1917

I, Josephine Marzynski, a NATIVE AND LOYAL CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES, hereby apply to the American Legation, at Christiania, Norway, for an emergency passport for myself, accompanied by my wife, Leopold Marzynski, and minor children, as follows: Leopold Marzynski, born at Poland, on the 10th day of December, 1897; and Leopold Marzynski, born at Poland, on the 10th day of December, 1917, and Leopold Marzynski, born at Poland, on the 10th day of December, 1917.

I solemnly swear that I was born at Boston, in the State of Massachusetts, on or about the 30th day of December, 1897; that my (father) Leopold Marzynski, was born in Poland; that he emigrated to the United States from the port of Germany on or about June, 1886; that he resided 27 years, or more, in the United States, from 1886 to 1915, at Boston; that he is now deceased; that he was naturalized as a citizen of the United States before the U. S. Circuit Court of Massachusetts, at Boston, on February 24, 1893, as shown by the accompanying Certificate of Naturalization; that I am domiciled in the United States, my permanent residence being at Boston, in the State of Massachusetts, where I follow the occupation of singer; that I last left the United States on the 7th day of October, 1916, and am now temporarily sojourning at Christiania; that I am the bearer of Passport No. A00719, issued by Spanish Embassy, Berlin, on the 10th day of November, 1917; that I intend to return to the United States within 1 week (months) with the purpose of residing and performing the duties of citizenship therein; that I have not applied elsewhere for a United States passport or for consular registration and been refused.

I desire a passport for use in visiting the countries hereinafter named for the following purpose:

United States (Name of country.) Resume Residence (Object of visit.)

(Name of country.) (Object of visit.)

(Name of country.) (Object of visit.)

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Further, I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion: So help me God.

Josephine Marzynski
(Signature of applicant.)

American Legation at Christiania, Norway

Sworn to before me this 7th day of December, 1917
H. F. Arthur Schwan Jr.
(Name.)

[SEAL.] Secretary of Legation.
(Title.)

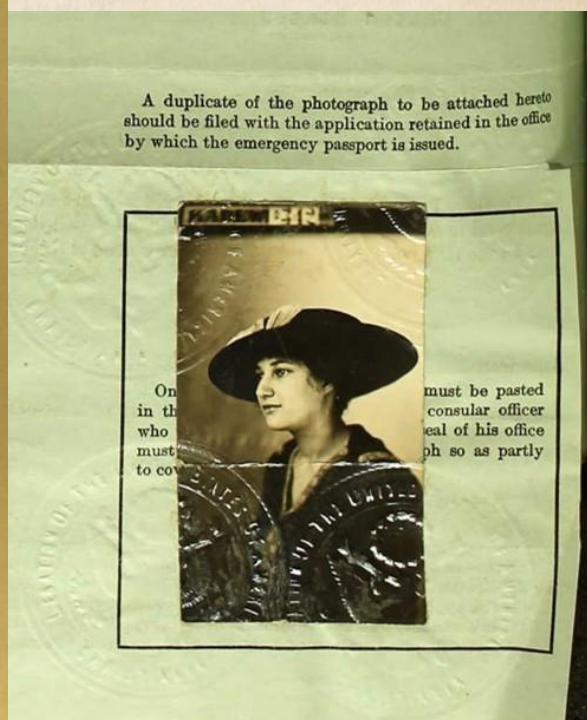
*A person born in the United States in a place where births are recorded should submit a birth certificate with his application, if possible.
If the applicant's father was born in this country, lines should be drawn through the blanks in brackets.
It is desirable, but not absolutely necessary, that the certificate of naturalization of the father be submitted.
See circular instruction of July 26, 1910, entitled "Protection of Native Americans Residing Abroad."—1-1

Best Available Image



Josephine's emergency passport application secured in Christiania, Norway, her final document to allow her admittance back into the United States, December 7, 1917.

Source: Ancestry.com



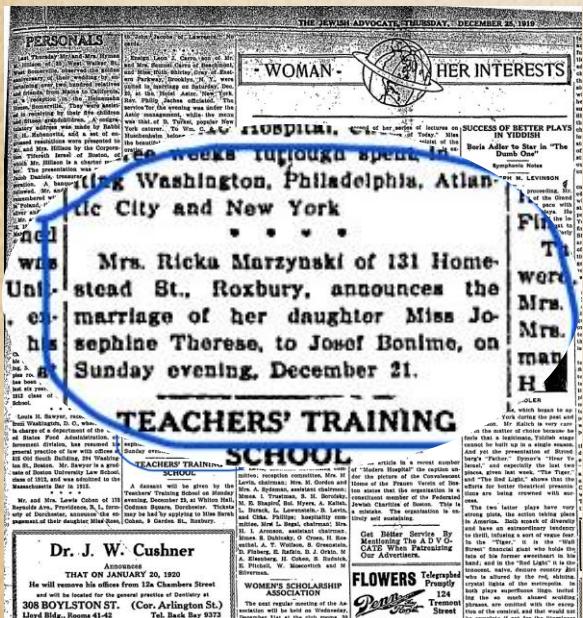
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Research Tidbits

Validating Josephine's Jewish heritage.



Wedding announcement of Miss Josephine Therese Marzynski to Josef Bonime in *The Jewish Times* (Boston, December 1919).



Leopold and Ricka Marzynski's grave at Temple Mishkan Tefila Memorial Park, in West Roxbury, MA. Mishkan Tefila is the oldest Conservative synagogue in New England.

Source: FindAGrave.com/ Ancestry.com



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A Final Note...

Please ask all members of your group to post a review.

Amazon: <https://amzn.to/4sYEXQj>

Goodreads:

www.goodreads.com/book/show/245714004-under-two-flags

Those reviews mean so much to authors. Even if you got the book directly from me, from a local indie bookstore or your library, you can post to Amazon.

If you enjoyed UNDER TWO FLAGS, I hope you'll recommend it to any family and friends who may also be in a book club.

Make sure your members subscribe to my newsletter for more book club recommendations and tips. Happy Reading!

www.janisrdaly.com/newsletter/

Thank You!



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