

# BERNARD COAT OF ARMS



This *Coat-of-Arms*<sup>(1)</sup> was designed specifically for the family and dependents of Chaim and Rebecca Bernard. Chaim and Rebecca are from Romania. They immigrated to America in the early 1900's.

Each figure, symbol and color in the Coat-of-Arms has a specific meaning to the Bernard family.

The flag on the top left is that of Romania, where Chaim and Rebecca were born and raised. To the right is the American flag where they sought freedom and opportunity.

The writing below the flag is in Hebrew and reads from right to left. It says "Shalom Aleichem" that translates into "may peace be with you".

On each side of the Hebrew characters is a Star-of-David representing the Jewish religion of Chaim and Rebecca.

The bears facing the sides of the shield have a significant meaning in the origin of the Bernard name. About 1,000 to 2,000 years ago, our *traceable Bernard male ancestors*<sup>(2)</sup> began migrating into Europe settling in the Ashkenazi region of Germany (along the Rhine River between Mainz and Heidelberg). They became known as Ashkenazi Jews. Their language was Yiddish (a mixture of Hebrew and German). Chaim and Rebecca were Ashkenazi Jews.

On July 1787 each Jew in Germany was required to adopt a German surname in exchange for Jewish Emancipation. Bar or bern in some German dialects means bear. The name Bernard means "strong as a bear".

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1. This Bernard Coat-of-Arms was designed by Burton and Raquel Bernard. The graphics are by Burton Bernard.

2. Burton and Elaine Bernard had their DNA analyzed by the Genographic Project to trace their distant Bernard family lineage back as far as 50,00 years. Contact Burt at [burtb32@aol.com](mailto:burtb32@aol.com) for a copy of that report.



In the upper left corner of the shield is the Coat of Arms of the Falticena, the city, where Chaim and Rebecca lived when in Romania.

The green color behind the Coat of Arms signifies abundance, joy, hope and loyalty in in love.



The Statue of Liberty in the center of the shield is an icon of freedom and a welcoming sight to immigrants arriving from abroad. Chaim and Rebecca may have seen the Statute when they arrived in America. Chaim arrived in America in 1901 and Rebecca arrived in 1904.

The ship in the upper right corner of the shield is typical of the 2-stack steamers that brought immigrants from Europe to America in the early 1900's.



In the left center is a photograph of Rebecca and Chaim about 1945.

The right center shows the skyline of Chicago as seen from Lake Michigan. Chicago is



where Chaim and Rebecca lived in America.



The bottom left photograph is typical of frequent family gatherings. In the picture are (l to r) Harry, Elaine, Sarah, Esther-Lee, Burt, Dave (Kaplan), Ruth, Chaim, Jean, Myrna and Frank. The photo was taken in 1942 at the home of Ruth Bernard Kaplan and Dave Kaplan.

## Tradition



You will notice the word **Tradition** over a blue background. Although not orthodox Jews, Chaim and Rebecca were very traditional. Each Friday night the family would gather at Chaim and Rebecca's home to celebrate the Sabbath. Rebecca would spend the day preparing a chicken (pulling feathers, etc.) and making chicken soup, matza balls, gefilte

fish and challah (bread like). Mogan David wine was always served. Just before sundown, Rebecca would light two candles and recite a blessing.

The blue background, behind the word **Tradition** signifies: loyalty, chastity, truth, strength and faith.



In Romania, Chaim worked as a Mason (positioning and securing rocks, concrete, bricks, etc.) On the lower right side of the shield is a painter. Chaim's first job in America was that of a whitewasher (painter). He never painted anything before. Chaim was an entrepreneur. He went on to establish his own successful painting business and invested in real estate buying an apartment building. Many of Chaim's descendants carry that same entrepreneurial trait.

Chiam was very active in the Jewish community. He was involved in the formation of the First Roumanian Congregation of Chicago in 1916. Rebecca also helped as a hostess at the Congregation meetings. Chaim also helped fund the building of the First Roumanian Synagogue of Chicago in 1926 and remained active there throughout his life..

The Orange color behind the painter in the shield signifies ambition.