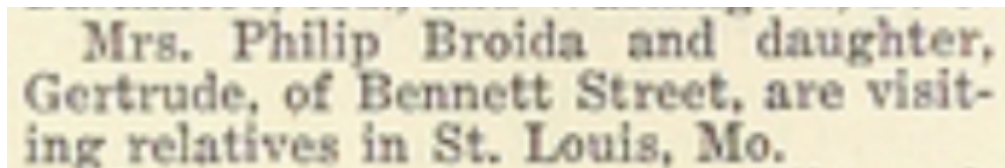


Travel Tuesday: Gertrude Broida and Mother Visiting St. Louis in 1919



Mrs. Philip Broida and daughter, Gertrude, of Bennett Street, are visiting relatives in St. Louis, Mo.

Gertrude Broida (later Cooper) visiting St. Louis, Missouri with her mother, Bess Dorothy (Green) Broida, 25 July 1919. From the *Pittsburgh Jewish Criterion* of that date, with kind permission to publish.

[Broida Family](#) (Click for Family Tree)

Gertrude Belle Broida was not quite eight years old when her mother, Bess Dorothy (Green) Broida, took her to St. Louis, Missouri, on a visit from their home in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. They most likely took the train to St. Louis, and arrived at beautiful Union Station. We can imagine that Gertrude and her mother would have stepped down from the train and walked from the dozens of tracks inside the station toward the Grand Hall. Family may have met them at the train- back then, one could actually go all the way to the train even if not a passenger- or waited patiently in the Grand Hall for them to arrive. All were probably dressed beautifully- back then, one dressed up to travel, and since both families worked mostly in the clothing industry, their clothes were likely the latest fashion and impeccably tailored.

Bess and Gertrude might have been met by their Broida family. Bess' husband and Gertrude's father, Phillip E. Broida, had quite a few family members in St. Louis. His father, John "Zelig" Broida was 62 in 1919, but had been listed in the St. Louis City Directory in 1917. We don't know if he was still in

St. Louis or had already immigrated to Israel, but perhaps Bessie and Gertrude visited to see him before he left. There were quite a few Broida cousins in St. Louis, too.

Bessie's Green family may have met them at the station as well. Bessie's father, Abraham Green, and her mother, Rose (Brave) Green, made St. Louis their home. Additionally, Bessie's sisters lived in St. Louis, and two of the three had families of their own, as did her brother Herman Green.

We can only imagine the joy Bessie would have felt as she hugged her sisters, Estelle (Green) Ledwidge, Ann (Green) Stampfer (or had she married Charles White by that date?), and Mary Green. They all would have commented how big each of the children had grown since their last visit.

Gertrude would have been thrilled to see her older cousin (Sarah) Jane Ledwidge, who would have been 12 in 1909. Jane's little sister Helen D. Ledwidge, lovingly known as "Sis" her whole life, was only about three months older than Gertrude. Esther S. Stampfer would have been 11. The four cousins would probably have linked arms and marched down the walkway to the Grand Hall, probably giggling and skipping all the way. The family was always very close.

Union Station was, at one time, the busiest and largest train station in the *world*, and once they all reached the Grand Hall, it would have been quite impressive to a little girl. (It was impressive even into the 1960s and 1970s.)



1909 Postcard of the Grand Hall of Union Station in St. Louis, Missouri.

As the group exited the station, they would have waited for a streetcar if one of the St. Louis families did not have their own car. Looking back, Union Station was as beautiful from the outside as the inside:



Postcard of exterior of Union Station in St. Louis, Missouri.

Herman L. Green was the lone brother in the family, and he had a son, Preston M. Green, who would have been just 4 that year.

(His son Harold Green would be born in 1921.) Abraham and Rose Green, Bessie's parents, would most probably thoroughly enjoyed having all their children and grandchildren around them. The families likely had a wonderful visit. Parting when Bessie and Gertrude were scheduled to return to Pittsburgh must have been painful for all.

Of course, we do not know if all the details described above are totally true. But this little snippet in the Society section of the *Pittsburgh Jewish Criterion* allows us to imagine what life was like for Bess (Green) Broida and Gertrude Broida as they travelled to St. Louis for a treasured visit.

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. *Jewish Criterion*, 25 July 1919, Society Section, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, Vol. 51, No. 22, Page 16. The Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project, posted with kind permission. http://doi.library.cmu.edu/10.1184/pmc/CRI/CRI_1919_051_022_07251919.

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Friday's Faces from the Past: John and Fannie (Rubenstein? Cohen?) Broida, 1929



John "Zelig" Broida and his second wife, Fannie (Rubenstein? Cohen?) Broida, 5 July 1929.

[Broida Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

This photo may have been taken in Palestine, as John and

Fannie had immigrated there from the US sometime in the 1920s.

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. See "[Mystery Monday: Who was Ethel Broida Pincus?](http://heritageramblings.net/2015/05/18/mystery-monday-who-was-ethel-broida-pincus/)" for information concerning Fannie's maiden name.
<http://heritageramblings.net/2015/05/18/mystery-monday-who-was-ethel-broida-pincus/>
2. We have posted extensively on this family- click on "Broida Family" in the "Categories" section of the sidebar to see all the related posts.
3. Photo from family treasure chest.

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Wordless Wednesday: John and Fannie (Rubenstein? Cohen?) Broida, 1924



John "Zelig" Broida and his second wife, Fannie (Rubenstein? Cohen?) Broida, 2 November 1924.

[Broida Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

(We are unsure of Fannie's maiden name. It may have been Rubenstein, and she possibly married Jack Cohen. Or Rubenstein may have been the name of a second husband. See "[Mystery Monday: Who was Ethel Broida Pincus?](#)")

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. Family treasure chest of photos.
2. "Mystery Monday: Who was Ethel Broida Pincus?"
<http://heritageramblings.net/2015/05/18/mystery-monday-who-was-ethel-broida-pincus/>

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**Sentimental Sunday: Max
Broida**



Max Broida as Buster Brodie- "The Hairless Man," c1924. In possession of author.

[Broida Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

Sometimes, one falls in love with an ancestor.

Probably, only die-hard family historians truly understand this statement.

But it happens.

For me, Max Broida is one of those ancestors.

It started out as one of those quiet relationships. A casual acquaintance, when as a newly married-in, I asked about the family history.

The picture of "The Seven Brothers" was brought out, and there sat John Broida, the patriarch, surrounded by his dashing

seven adult sons. They all looked so handsome in their suits, all of them tailored to a "T" since so many of them were in the men's fine clothing business. They were serious looking-Max too. But his professional demeanor totally belied what I would learn many years later.

Gertrude (Broida) Cooper, the daughter of one of those dashing sons (Philip Edwin Broida), could name all her uncles, and tell about their family life: wives, children, grandchildren, where they lived, and even businesses. She had an astonishing memory, and attention to detail. She too always looked 'dashing'- if that word can be used for a woman- as she also was in the clothing business, but fine women's clothes. She always dressed up and put on her makeup and her heels; she colored her hair a bright red until her very later years, when she softened the color but she would always be a beloved carrothead to me.

Gertrude did not know much about her Uncle Max. She told us that he had worked in movies in Hollywood using the name Buster Brodie, and that he was completely hairless- did not even have eyebrows. She didn't know the names of any films he was in. He was very short, but so were the majority of the family, being Eastern European. He did not marry. That was about all to the story.

Other family members did not know much about Max either- some even thought that their 'movie star' relative was a figment of their father's imagination! (You doubting children know who you are.)

As a good family historian, of course it is important to document collateral relatives, plus sometimes you can find more information about your direct line. So I delved into the history of each of the seven brothers and their families. And when I got to Max, it happened.

Not much came up in the Google search years ago, but that made

him more intriguing, a bit mysterious. Of course, that also made him a challenge- you know, hard to get. Others might have backed down, but not me- Max became more attractive, and it became hard to stop running after him. (Yes, my husband does know...)

It was probably about 2 or 3am one research session when I realized what had happened. I was putting together a filmography for Max, and began watching clips or even whole movies where he might have had just a bit part. He was little and cute. He was enthusiastic. He played silly roles with a completely straight face. He had a funny little voice. Sometimes he seemed an underdog. But he was mesmerizing to me. I couldn't stop watching. It seemed like he wanted his audience to laugh and be happy, and that was happening to me.

I was addicted. I had to know more about him. The passion ramped up.

So I wrote posts, and the blog became cousin bait. Well, actually we didn't find cousins, but people who had pictures of Max, knowledge of Max, and interest in Max found us. (Putting a portrait on Max's Find A Grave memorial helped too.) These folks so kindly shared! I felt like we were breathing life back into Max.

I did more research, and wrote more, and was so pleased to hear back from cousins that they were excited to learn that Max was *REAL*! They were amazed to learn that he had run away to be in the circus as a young boy or man, and did vaudeville after he tried working in business with family. Apparently a settled family business life just didn't work for him, so he headed west, to Hollywood. The movie studios were becoming a big business in the 1920s, and talkies appeared; Max wanted to be a part of it all. With a bald head, he probably was happy to get to sunny SoCal and leave the miserable Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania winters behind.

Max never had big parts, usually not even big movies. The two most memorable are in the Wizard of Oz, where he was a Flying Monkey, so we can't even tell which one he was. He also was in what is *still* a cult movie, Paramount's 1932 film, "Island of the Lost Souls." He had an amazing makeup job in that film: as "The Pig Man," Max as Broida would be unrecognizable. Part of the reason the film is still popular is because it was the first to use sophisticated 'monster' makeup. It is also macabre, and even friends who like scary movies say it was creepy and scary. I could never get through it. In fact, the above portrait found on eBay had another offered by the same seller showing "The Pig Man" in makeup but in a regular shirt. That picture sold as well (but not to me), as did a number of other stills from the movie.

Buster Brodie
1020 N. Pico St.
apt. 204 L. A. Calif.
Phone
atlantic 0160 Leave Message Westmore 3688.
Height - 4 ft. 10 in.
Weight - 107 pounds
Eyes - Brown
Hair - None Perfectly Bald
1886 - 1948
Variety 4/14/48

Reverse of Max Broida, as Buster Brodie. Probably a publicity photo, c. 1924. Owned by author.

I was really excited to see this delightful portrait show up in my automatic eBay searches, since we really don't have any decent images of Max as an adult other than the "Seven Brothers" picture. The seller had a ridiculous price on it,

but all week Max let me know I needed to procure this for the family. I was just compelled... and I won it.

I was so thrilled to get the picture, and turn it over. The eBay listing had not included an image of the back, nor even mentioned that there was anything on the reverse. (I hadn't wanted to ask questions and risk others deciding to bid.) I felt like I had won the lottery! I had Max in my house, and with all the info on the back, I knew a whole lot more about him.

This was likely a publicity photo that Max shopped around, trying to get even bit parts. The handsome man in the picture with the slight smile completely hides the zaniness he could exhibit in some of his acting roles, such as in, "Groovy Movie." To think of him as Buster Brown (advertising shoes), or a circus clown... well, I just can't call him 'Buster' even though that is how he reported himself to census takers. And I don't want to think of him as "Pigman" at all.

So thanks, Max, for being a crazy family historian's passion for a while now, and for surprising me with a treasure every now and then. Happy Valentine's Day to you, wherever you are.
xoxoxo

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. Thanks to Steve Cox, who wrote, *The Munchkins Remember*, EP Dutton, 1988, and documented that Max was a Flying Monkey in "The Wizard of Oz." Steve also shared what he knew about Max and 'the little people.'
2. Thanks also to Frank Reighter and his compadres at the Three Stooges Fan Club, who provided some obits and Max's death certificate.

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Friday's Faces from the Past: The Morris and Rose Broida Family



Morris and Rose Broida at Expo Park, Pennsylvania. Likely taken about 19 Aug 1915.

[Broida Family](#) *(Click for Family Tree)*

Morris Broida was born 13 Jul 1896 in Pennsylvania, likely Pittsburgh, as the seventh son of John Zelig Broida and Sarah 'Gitel' Frank Broida. When his mother became ill with tuberculosis, the family's young children were sent to live with family while John and Gitel went to Colorado with their youngest and oldest sons. Sadly, Gitel did not survive despite the clean mountain air and Denver 'sanitariums' for tuberculosis patients, and passed away on 14 April 1901 in Denver; Morris was not yet 5 years old.



Morris Broida, cropped from family portrait that included his mother, Gitel Frank Broida, circa 1894.

We believe that Morris and his brother Harold had been sent to live with his father's cousin Jacob Broida in St. Louis, though we cannot find him/them in a 1900 census. They are listed in the 1910 enumeration with the census noting the relationship of the boys as 'nephew.' Their older brother Philip Broida may have lived there as well, but was not enumerated on that census- nor any others that we can find anywhere.

The boys stayed in St. Louis after their mother's death, we believe- it would have been very difficult for John Broida to raise seven sons alone while trying to earn a living. John did remarry, about 1904, to Fannie Rubenstein.

The tintype picture below is from a portrait about 1908 that included Philip, Morris, and Harold with their father, and may suggest that three of the boys went to St. Louis, since only the three sons are included. (Alternatively, Philip may have accompanied his father to visit them.)



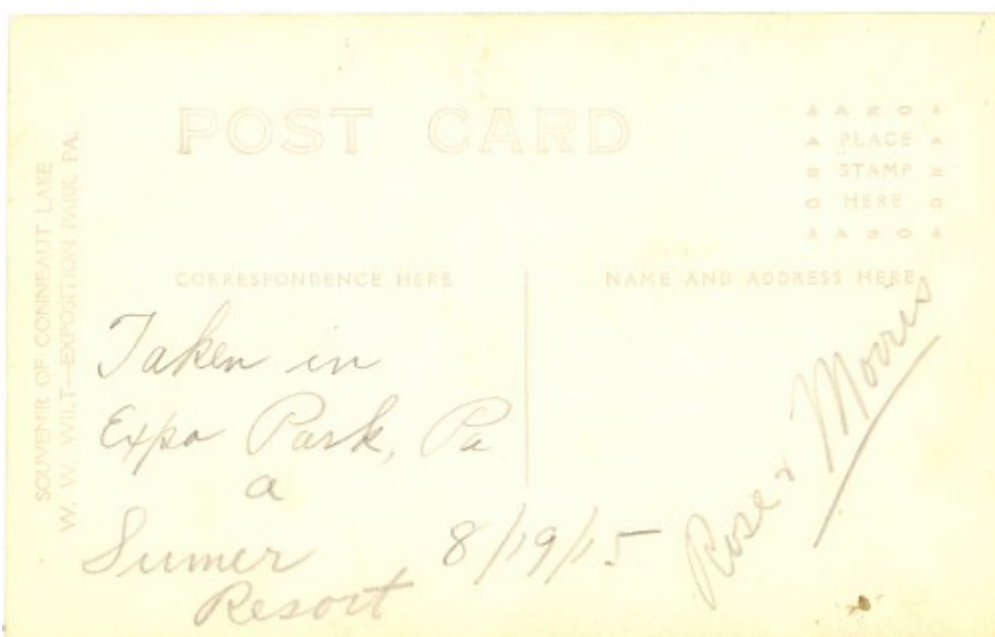
Circa 1908, Morris Broida, cropped from a tintype of his father, John Broida, and sons Philip and Harold. Likely taken in St. Louis, Missouri.

By the 1910 census, Morris and Harold were enumerated in St. Louis with their "Uncle" Jacob, but the other sons were listed in Pittsburgh, living with their father, step-mother, and their 'sister' Ethel, who we believe was Fannie's daughter by a previous marriage. (See previous posts listed below for a discussion of this time period for the Broidas.)

Morris married about 1915, thus the first photo and these following may have been of a honeymoon with his new wife Rose L. ___.



Rose and Morris Broida at Conneaut Lake, Exposition Park, Pennsylvania, a summer resort. Taken 19 Aug 1915.



Reverse of Rose and Morris Broida at Conneaut Lake, Exposition Park, Pennsylvania, a summer resort. Taken 19 Aug 1915.

Rose's parents were also born in Lithuania, as were Morris.' Rose may have been born 13 Dec 1897, and records vary as to whether she was born in Pennsylvania or Russia.

Their daughter Sylvia was born about 1917:



Sylvia Broida, about 1917?



Sylvia Broida, about 1917?



Rose ___ Broida and daughter Sylvia Broida, about 1917-1918.

The family was living in Pittsburgh, Allegheny, Pennsylvania during the 1920 census enumeration, and Morris was working on his own account as a retail grocer. "Rosie" was listed with her family from Lithuania as well as Morris' and they spoke "Jewish" at home. Their son Saul was born about 1921, and son Daniel about 1926.



Morris Broida, cropped from family portrait of John Broida and his seven sons taken 25 July 1930 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

In the 1930 US Federal Census, the Morris Broidas were living in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and owned their home that was worth \$6,500; they had a radio, too. Morris was listed as a buyer for ladies underwear, and the family spoke Yiddish at home.

The family moved to Coral Gables, Dade, Florida sometime between 1935, when they were still in Philadelphia, and the April, 1940 census. Sylvia was likely married by then? and not enumerated with the family. Morris was working as a buyer in a department store, and had worked 52 weeks of the previous year, making \$2500, or about \$48 per week, and stated he was working 50 hours per week. He did report income from other sources as well. Son Saul was 19 and after completing 4 years of high school, was working as a stock boy at a department

store- possibly the same store as Morris? Saul had worked 26 weeks and made \$800 (about \$30/week) for his 44 hour weeks. Daniel was 13 and still attending school, in 8th grade. The census notes that both Morris and Rose had completed 7th grade- they definitely provided for their children so that their lives could be even better.

Morris passed away at the young age of 66, in April of 1963 in Dade County, Florida. Rosie survived him by four years, passing away on 8 Feb 1967, also in Dade, FL.

Notes, Sources, and References:

1. Images are from the Family Treasure Chest of Photos. They may be used freely by family members, but may not be published by others on any commercial website.
2. Death dates are from Florida and Social Security death indexes, and need to be confirmed that these are the correct people.
3. Links to pertinent posts- note name of post within link:

<http://heritageramblings.net/2015/05/18/mystery-monday-who-was-ethel-broida-pincus/><http://heritageramblings.net/2015/02/02/matrilineal-monday-where-were-the-children-of-sarah-gitel-broida-in-1900/><http://heritageramblings.net/2015/01/27/tuesdays-tip-broida-family-research-in-denver-colorado-repositories/><http://heritageramblings.net/2015/01/29/those-places-thursday-denver-colorado-and-the-broida-family/>Use our 'Search' function to find other Broida posts.

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