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INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS OF PROFESSIONAL SHATNEZ LABORATORIES  
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## News & Information – May '14

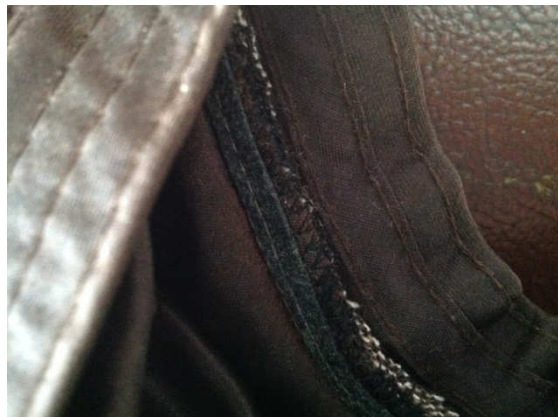
### A] .....From the Bnai Berak Shatnez Laboratory

Below are two pictures of a ladies 67% wool jacket [France]. The beige edging of the black decorative strips on the collar and pockets is linen. R' Dovid Carmen [Bnai Berak Shatnez Laboratory].



### B] .....From the San Jose California Shatnez Laboratory

The San Jose Shatnez Laboratory tested a men's Peter Grimm cap. It was made in China. Its content label listed 50% Wool and 50% Viscose. The band that goes around the rim of the cap, was reinforced with a linen canvas. See pictures. [ Mrs Rynderman – San Jose, California].



**C] .....From the Flatbush Shatnez Laboratory**

An **Ann Taylor Loft [China]** linen blend lady's sweater was brought to the Flatbush Shatnez Laboratory. It was found to contain wool slubs along its seams. [ See pictures below].



**D] .....From the Edgeware Shatnez Laboratory [R' Yitzchok Godlefsky]**

**An Erev Pesach Miracle**

It was late evening, after a long day, I was ready to retire for the night when an urgent ring of my doorbell brought me running. Who could be ringing with such urgency at this late hour?

To my surprise, my neighbor Dayan Posen (zt"l) was on the doorstep, with a young stranger at his side. "You must see this, Mr. Stern," he panted excitedly. "It's unbelievable!"

Well, the first unbelievable part was my neighbor himself. A proud talmid chochom of true German descent, I always knew Dayan Posen to be very gentlemanly, calm, and composed -- indeed very proper. And here he was, without a hat, flustered and excited, without having introduced his companion. Very extraordinary.

I ushered the two of them into my study, curious to hear the issue at hand.

Barely able to contain his excitement, Dayan Posen introduced me to his guest, a postgraduate university student and now a baal teshuvoh.

"My friend and I were learning about shatnez," began the Dayan, "and since he is an expert on fabrics and textiles, the subject caught his interest. Today he brought his microscope to show me the difference between various fabrics and we also looked randomly at my suit. Mr. Stern, my suit has shatnez, without my being aware of it all this time!" blurted out the Dayan with agitation.

He stopped for breath, as the meaning of his words sunk in and we both instinctively knew that a new era in the world of the mitzvah of shatnez had dawned.

This was in the early post-World War II years, when little was known about shatnez at all. When a suit was bought (on rare occasions) the purchaser checked the garment label to see if it said "Made of Wool" and it did not also mention linen. Supposedly, then it was free of the forbidden mixture.

Our university graduate friend had just revealed a new phenomenon. By looking through a strong microscope and armed with the correct background knowledge, one could inspect and detect all fabrics used in the manufacture of the garment, and not just the major fabric from which it was made. Thus the threads, interfacing, waistband and lining could all be checked.

"I was sure that with your practical nature and keen mind you would grasp the idea," concluded the Dayan. "So I brought it over to show you how it works. Unbelievable," he reiterated.

The above incident related to us by my father forms the background to the 'Erev Pesach Miracle' promised in the title.

Indeed, a new era had dawned. My father quickly picked up the idea, got hold of the microscope necessary and began the first "shatnez checking service," within the family. Word spread throughout the community in London and, one day Rabbi M.B. was at the door holding his Shabbos and Yom Tov suit. A yirei Shomayim who had been the baal tefillah in our shul on the Yomim Noraim wearing this suit, it occurred to him to ask my father to check it. Skeptically, of course, for how could his suit that he'd been

wearing several Rosh Hashanahs and Yom Kippurs contain shatnez? However, just as a precaution . . .

To his immense surprise, after studying the suit intensely for a few minutes my father came to the startling conclusion that it indeed contained shatnez.

"Impossible," insisted Reb M.B. Whose word against whose? They decided to send the suit to a laboratory in Leeds for professional testing -- an expensive procedure -- and agreed that if the suit had shatnez, then the owner would pay the expense. If not, my father would pay.

It was Reb M. B. who paid the laboratory and Mr. Stern was now the shatnez expert.

On a visit to Eretz Yisroel, my father showed his cousins, Rabbis Moshe Ehrentahl and Akiva Schisha, the new discovery.

His excitement was contagious and they too learned the skill. At the time, the only professional microscope available in Yerushalayim was the one in Shaarei Tzedek Hospital. Special permission was given to them by the renowned Dr. Wallach for "these two gentlemen to use the microscope whenever they need it."

Thus began the first shatnez laboratory in Eretz Yisroel, operating till today in its tiny workshop in Meah Shearim.

My father continues the sequel to his story.

Half a year later, Erev Pesach was hectic as usual. I was frantically rushing to finish at home so I could go to the matzoh bakery to bake the matzos mitzvah, as was my minhag.

I had prearranged with my usual chaburah, including the lift with my cousins. Every year we went together, with one of my cousins driving and the other three of us joining him in his car.

Just as I was about to leave the house, there was a ring at the door. I opened it to see a Yid holding a suit in his hand.

Apologizing for the inconvenient timing, the man explained that he had just managed to earn enough money to buy a suit for Yom Tov and now needed it checked for shatnez.

I tried to tell him that he had only caught me because I was already late leaving the house, and further delay would mean missing my lift to the bakery and being unable to join my chaburah.

But the man pleaded, "Please just check it quickly. I have nothing else to wear on yom tov."

Those were difficult postwar years, before the times when everyone had three weekday suits and two

for Shabbos. A quick glance at the shabby clothes the man was wearing attested to the truth of his words.

I gave in and began to painstakingly inspect the new suit, "on condition that if it does have shatnez, I have no time to remove it." Boruch Hashem, it was free of linen and had no questionable fibers mixed in.

With the grateful Yid's thank you's ringing in my ears, I rushed off to the matzoh bakery.

As I had foreseen, I had missed my lift and my chaburah was finishing their round.

Time was running out as I joined the later group and, by the time I walked out with my box of matzos mitzvah, it was almost yom tov.

Black and sweating from the heat and smoke of the oven (my job is sheeber, placing in and taking out the matzos), I barely had enough time to wash my hands and face, race to the mikveh and then straight to shul.

Upon arriving in shul, I was surprised to notice that my cousins were not in their usual places. A lot of grave whispering and shushing was going on.

"What's up?" I signaled worriedly to my neighbor.

"You don't know? Where were you? Hey, weren't you also in the car?"

The car I had missed had been involved in a bad accident on the way home from the matzoh bakery and my cousins were badly injured. The car itself was a write-off and everyone was praying for the recovery of its passengers, who were in critical condition. In fact, someone had overheard one of the ambulance attendants on the scene commenting with a sad shake of his head, "The big fellow will survive, but this little one's for the morgue."

Boruch Hashem, in time they all recovered, but my Hallel tefilloh on that Pesach night had an added dimension of praise to Hashem for saving me, in the zchus of the mitzvah of shatnez!

**E] .....From the Flatbush Shatnez Laboratory**

A Martino [China] man's jacket was brought to the Flatbush Shatnez Laboratory. It contained a linen taper reinforcement. [See pictures below].

