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## **Primary Sources: The Peopling of America**

**This sample includes the following:**

**Teacher's Guide Cover** (1 page)

**Teacher's Guide Table of Contents** (1 page)

**How to Use This Product** (2 pages)

**Lesson Plan** (10 pages)

**Photograph Card** (2 pages)

**Primary Source Document** (2 pages)

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P. S. No. 65, 'Sudai'

Name	Parent's Name	Register Number	Days Present	Effort	Proficiency	Days Absent	Times Late	Report Card
<i>Lera R. Burck</i>	<i>Teacher</i>							
<i>Coyne, Joseph</i>			18	C	2	0	0	K
<i>Parent's Name</i>			21	C	1 1/2	0	0	K
<i>Register Number</i>			21	B+	B+	1	0	K
<i>Name</i>			21	B+	B+	0	0	K
<i>Born</i>			21	B+	B+	0	0	K
<i>Residence</i>			21	B+	B+	0	0	K
<i>Parent's Name</i>			21	B+	B+	0	0	K
<i>Register Number</i>			21	B+	B+	0	0	K
<i>Name</i>			17	B+	B+	1	0	K
<i>Born</i>			19 1/2	B+	B+	2 1/2	0	K
<i>Residence</i>			15 1/2	B+	B+	1 1/2	0	K
<i>Parent's Name</i>			21	B+	B+	0	0	K
<i>Register Number</i>			21	B+	B+	1	0	K
<i>Name</i>			18	B	B	0	0	K
<i>Born</i>			22	B+	B+	0	0	K
<i>Residence</i>			18	B	B	0	0	K

— PRIMARY SOURCES —

# The Peopling of America

## Immigration Stories



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# How to Use This Product

With its authentically re-created primary source documents, captivating photographs of immigrants from around the world, and easy-to-follow, concise lessons, *The Peopling of America: Immigration Stories* allows the teacher and young students to expand their study of immigration and ancestry beyond the textbook and classroom. The resources included in this kit assist the busy teacher in presenting innovative primary source lessons that meet both McREL standards and the recently revised standards for the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS 2010).

The contents of the kit provide teachers with all they need to accomplish the lessons without additional research or planning. Teachers have the photographs and documents at their fingertips and do not need to rush to find such references. Activities are varied, interesting, challenging, and engaging.

By participating in the lessons provided in this kit, students will:

- analyze what they see.
- improve their vocabularies.
- be prompted by visual clues.
- compare their assumptions against others.
- expand their appreciation for other time periods.

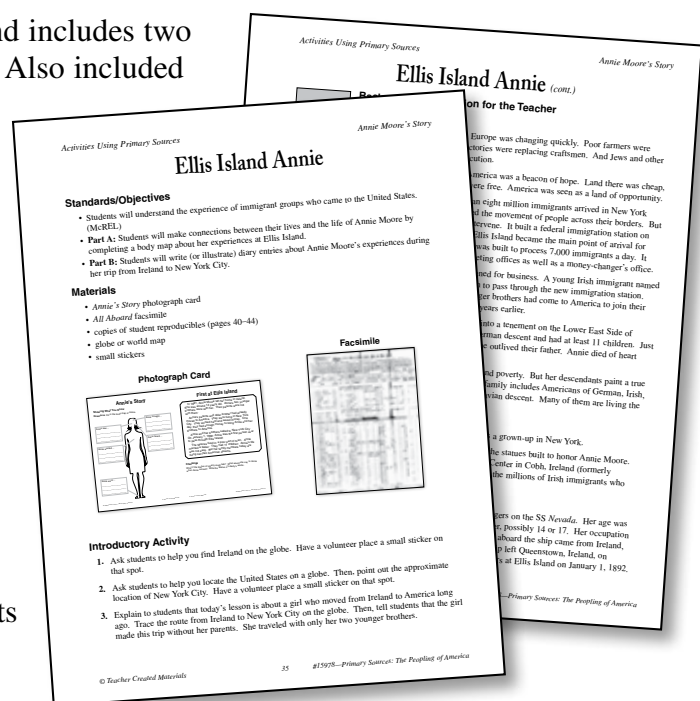
By presenting the lessons in this book, teachers will:

- improve students' test scores and test-taking skills.
- meet curriculum standards.
- create a learning environment that extends beyond the classroom.
- encourage students to take an active role in learning.
- develop critical-thinking skills in students.

## Teacher's Guide

Each lesson focuses on one immigrant's story and includes two photographs and one primary source document. Also included are eight document-based assessments. Each lesson plan includes:

- standards and objectives
- materials lists
- discussion questions
- Kindergarten lesson suggestions
- background information for teachers
- activity sheets
- content-area connections
- read-aloud title suggestions
- school-home connection letters
- leveled background information for students

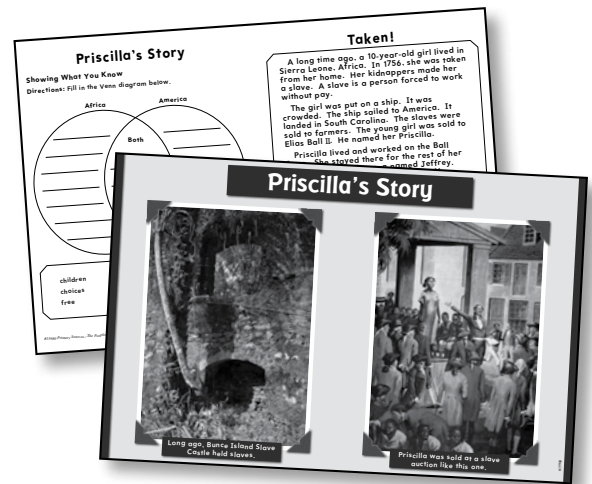


# How to Use This Product *(cont.)*

## Photograph Cards

Each photograph card provides two captivating images along with captions. The backs of the cards include a graphic organizer, leveled background information for students, and a challenge activity. Each photograph card includes:

- two primary source images
- graphic organizer (**Note:** copies of the graphic organizers are included in the Teacher's Guide.)
- leveled background information for students
- challenge activities with fun extension ideas for students



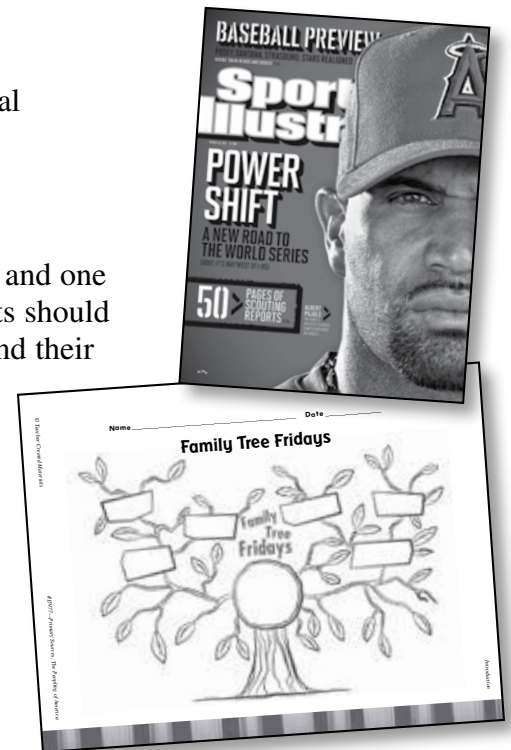
## Primary Source Documents

Facsimiles of primary source documents are provided in both an authentic-looking format as well as in digital format on the Digital Resource CD. The documents come in varying sizes.

## Family Tree Fridays

Each Friday, have one or more students bring in their family tree and one primary source from their family to share with the class. Students should tell a little bit about their family members, their family history, and their primary source. Have students use the *Family Tree Fridays* template located on the Digital Resource CD (*tree.pdf*) to create their family trees. After students present their family trees, add the tree to an *Our Family* wall or poster in the classroom. Also, have students draw pictures of their primary sources and add these to the wall or poster. As part of the *Culminating Activity* (pages 113–114), locate on a globe or map all of the countries represented in students' family trees.

**Note:** Handle students in special family situations with care. Allow these families to determine what is appropriate for them.



## Digital Resource CD

See pages 119–120 for more information about the files included on the Digital CD.

- digital copies (both in PDF and JPEG formats) of all photographs and primary sources
- additional photographs and primary sources to support and enrich the lessons
- all student reproducibles
- detailed listing of original location of photographs and primary sources

# America's Wunderkind

## Standards/Objectives

- Students will understand the experience of immigrant groups who came to the United States. (McREL)
- **Part A:** Students will learn how immigrants can make a difference by indentifying the main events in the immigration story of Seymour Rechtzeit.
- **Part B:** Students will take advantage of the opportunities they have as Americans to help others by organizing a community-service project.

## Materials

- *Seymour's Story* photograph card
- *A Famous Singer* facsimile
- copies of student reproducibles (pages 70–74)
- globe or world map
- small stickers
- index cards
- copies of the *Student Glossary* (page 116) *optional*

### Photograph Card

**Seymour's Story**

Showing What You Know  
Directions: Fill in the boxes below.

Kickoff Event

↓  
Event

↓  
Event

↓  
Event

↓  
Outcome

**The Wonder Child**

Seymour was born to sing. People called him *wunderkind*. This means "wonder child." By the time he was four years old, Seymour was a star. People across Poland went to his concerts.

Seymour's parents thought he could be an even bigger star in America. In 1920, Seymour and his father sailed to America. Seymour was eight years old. During the trip, Seymour caught a cold.

At Ellis Island, every person had to pass a medical exam. Sick people were not allowed into America. Seymour had to stay at Ellis Island. He did not know if he would get to stay in America.

Finally, Seymour got well. He was able to start his new life in New York City. He went right to work as a singer. He soon became America's wonder child.

**Challenge**  
Listen to a song by Seymour. You may not understand the words. But music speaks to everyone. Write a song about Seymour's life. Set your song to the tune of your favorite song.

### Facsimile



## Introductory Activity

1. Ask students to help you locate the United States on a globe. Then, point out the approximate location of New York City, New York. Have a volunteer place a small sticker on that spot.
2. Ask students to help you find Poland on the globe. Point out the approximate location of the city of Lodz in central Poland. Have a volunteer place a small sticker on that spot.
3. Explain to students that today's lesson is about a young boy who left his home in Poland and moved to America to be a singer. Trace the route from Poland to New York on the globe. Choose one of Seymour's songs to play for the class through YouTube or another Internet source.

# America's Wunderkind *(cont.)*

## Part A: The Photograph Card

### Discussion Questions

**Top Photograph:** Show students the advertisement for one of Seymour's performances. Ask them the following questions:

- What can you tell about the person in this picture?
- What do you think the words at the top of the picture mean?
- Why do you think this picture was made?

**Bottom Photograph:** Show students the photograph of immigrants being examined by Ellis Island doctors. Ask them the following questions:

- What is happening in the photograph?
- What differences do you see between the men and the women and children?
- How do you think the young boy in the photograph feels?

### Using the Primary Source

1. Tell students that the top image is a poster advertising a concert by Seymour Rechtzeit. At the age of four, he was already a famous singer in Poland. When he immigrated to America at the age of eight, he continued his singing career. Ask students if they are ready to hear Seymour's story.
2. Read the background information from the back of the photograph card aloud as students look at the photographs on the front of the card.
3. Distribute copies of *The Wonder Child* student reproducible (page 70). Have them reread the text with partners.
4. Show students the graphic organizer on the back of the photograph card. Sketch it on the board. Show students how to complete the chart with facts about Seymour's move to America.
5. Distribute copies of the *Seymour's Story* graphic organizer (page 71) to students. Have students complete the graphic organizer with partners. If necessary, include these events in a word bank on the board: *Seymour is a good singer. Seymour sails to America. Seymour gets a cold. Seymour stays on Ellis Island. Seymour is a star in America.*



**Kindergarten:** Write the five main events from the text on index cards—*Seymour is a good singer. Seymour sails to America. Seymour gets a cold. Seymour stays on Ellis Island. Seymour is a star in America.* Distribute the cards to five volunteers. Have the whole class work together to line up the volunteers so that the index cards are in order and create a human time line.

# America's Wunderkind *(cont.)*

## Part B: The Facsimile

### Discussion Questions

Show students both sides of Seymour Rechtzeit's record cover. Read the words on the front aloud to the class. Tell students this is a record cover. Ask if students know what a record is. Then, ask students the following discussion questions:

- What kind of music do you think Seymour sang?
- Why do you think his last name is misspelled?
- Do you think Seymour was proud of his culture? Why or why not?

### Using the Primary Source

1. Distribute copies of the *A Famous Singer* student reproducible (page 72). Read the text aloud as students follow along. Explain that Seymour never forgot his roots. After becoming a famous singer in America, he shared his culture with America through his music. Use the record cover to make this point.
2. Explain that in America, people of different backgrounds, religions, and ages all have opportunities to make a difference. That is part of what makes America special. Seymour was only 12, but because of his talent and hard work, he was invited to sing for the U.S. president. Seymour's contact with the president helped reunite his family in America.
3. Distribute copies of the *Read All About It!* activity sheet (page 73) to students. Read the directions to the class. Tell students to imagine they are newspaper reporters. Ask them to think about all the exciting things that happened to young Seymour. Have students write a newspaper story about Seymour. If time permits, have student volunteers share their newspaper stories with the class.
4. Help students understand that even though they are young, they can make a difference, just like Seymour. As a class, brainstorm a list of service projects to help people in the community. Some ideas could be a coat drive for homeless people, a book drive for a low-income school or day-care center, a food drive for a local food pantry, a dog-food drive for an animal shelter, or a coin drive for a local charity.
5. After the class has chosen a service project, give each student an important role in the project. Students may need to make posters, write letters, collect donations, inventory items, etc. (See the School-Home Connection section on page 74.)



**Kindergarten:** Kindergartners are not too young to make a difference. Help them choose and organize a simple service project, such as drawing pictures for servicemen and servicewomen overseas.



# America's Wunderkind *(cont.)*

## Part C: Connecting to Primary Sources

### School-Home Connection

Give students copies of the *Seymour Rechtzeit's Story School-Home Connection Letter* (page 74). Explain the service project to students, and answer any questions. Have students fill in their parents' names and the two dates on the letter. In addition, help them fill in their specific task on the letter. Then, ask them to sign the letter. Follow up by asking students to help you complete the service project.

### Family Tree Fridays

Invite one or more students to share their family trees and primary sources with the class for Family Tree Fridays. Attach each family tree and a student drawing of the primary source to the *Our Family* poster or wall. See page 21 for more information. The *Family Tree Fridays* template is located on the Digital Resource CD (tree.pdf).

### Content-Area Connections

- **Mathematics**—Help students research the general prices of goods and services (bread, milk, cars, houses, etc.) in 1924. If possible, have them find out what people earned. Then, ask them to write math story problems based on those numbers.
- **Science**—Have students look up the letter codes used by Ellis Island doctors. Then, have them find out more about some of the common illnesses.
- **Language Arts**—Seymour's brother wrote the song "Bring Me My Mother from the Other Side" for Seymour to perform for the president. It was a persuasive song. Have students write a song that persuades someone to do something good.
- **Art**—Have students listen to some songs sung by Seymour on the Internet. As they listen, have them paint the feelings and images the music inspires.

### Read-Aloud Books

- *Children of Ellis Island* by Barry Moreno
- *All the Way to America: The Story of a Big Italian Family and a Little Shovel* by Dan Yaccarino
- *At Ellis Island: A History in Many Voices* by Louise Peacock
- *If Your Name was Changed at Ellis Island* by Ellen Levine
- *Immigrant Kids* by Russell Freedman

# America's Wunderkind *(cont.)*

## Background Information for the Teacher

### *The Story*

Seymour Rechtzeit was born in Lodz, Poland, in 1912. He began singing at a very young age. His voice soon made him a star. By the age of four, Seymour was giving concerts across Poland. People called him *wunderkind*, or wonder child.

Even though Seymour was a wunderkind, his opportunities were limited. World War I had torn Europe apart. After the war ended in 1918, Europeans struggled to put their lives back together. The Rechtzeit family decided that Seymour would have more opportunities to shine in America.

In 1920, eight-year-old Seymour and his father boarded a ship bound for America. They were steerage passengers in the crowded cargo hold. Young Seymour wanted to move and play, so he spent much of his time on deck. The weather was rainy, and Seymour was often wet. By the time he reached Ellis Island, he had a cold.

At Ellis Island, immigrants had to pass medical examinations. Sick or injured people were not allowed to enter the country. American authorities admitted only those people who would be able to work and earn a living.

The Ellis Island doctor examined Seymour and found that he was sick. The boy was detained at Ellis Island for several days. Finally, his father and uncle were allowed to take him to New York City to begin his new life. Seymour went right to work. He started singing and earning money to bring his mother, brother, and sisters to America.

By 1924, Seymour had earned enough money to bring his family to America. But they could not get permission to come. In 1921, the U.S. government had started placing quotas, or limits, on the number of immigrants allowed into the country.

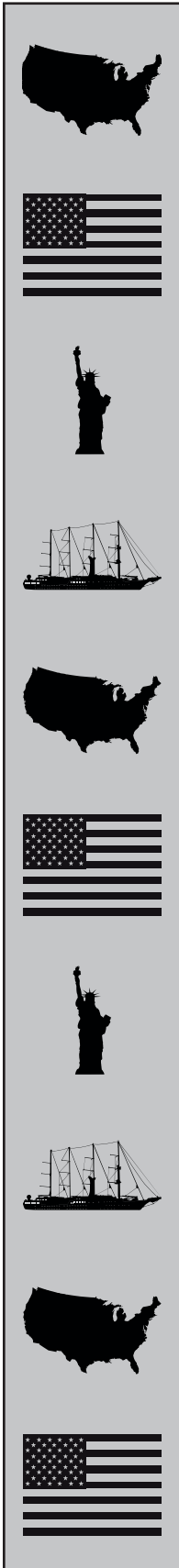
### *The Photographs*

The top image is an advertisement for one of Seymour's performances. The Polish text says, "The four-year-old Wonder Child Rechtzeit." In America, Seymour became a star on vaudeville and in Yiddish theater. Later, he and his wife, who was also a Yiddish singer, recorded the popular music of the day in Yiddish. They broadcast the music on their popular radio program.

The bottom photograph shows medical exams at Ellis Island. Doctors checked immigrants for obvious signs of illness or disability. These checks became known as *six-second physicals*.

### *The Facsimile*

This is the cover of one of Seymour's many records. He continued to be a famous American singer when he grew up. The title of this album, *Seymour Rexite Sings Popular Jewish Melodies*, shows that he shared his culture with America through his music. Sometimes, people spelled his last name *R-E-X-I-T-E* because it was easier for some Americans to spell and pronounce.



# The Wonder Child

**By age four, Seymour was a singing star in Poland.**



Source: Milken Archive of Jewish Music



Source: The Granger Collection, New York

**These doctors are examining immigrants at Ellis Island.**

Seymour was born to sing. People called him *wunderkind*. This means “wonder child.” By the time he was four years old, Seymour was a star. People across Poland went to his concerts.

Seymour’s parents thought he could be an even bigger star in America. In 1920, Seymour and his father sailed to America. Seymour was eight years old. During the trip, Seymour caught a cold.

At Ellis Island, every person had to pass a medical exam. Sick people were not allowed into America. Seymour had to stay at Ellis Island. He did not know if he would get to stay in America.

Finally, Seymour got well. He was able to start his new life in New York City. He went right to work as a singer. He soon became America’s wonder child.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Seymour's Story

## Showing What You Know

Directions: Fill in the boxes below.

**Kickoff Event**



**Event**



**Event**



**Event**



**Outcome**

# A Famous Singer



Source: Judaica Sound Archives at Florida Atlantic University Libraries

**This is the cover of one of Seymour's records.**

In America, Seymour was a star. But his mother, brother, and sisters were still in Poland.

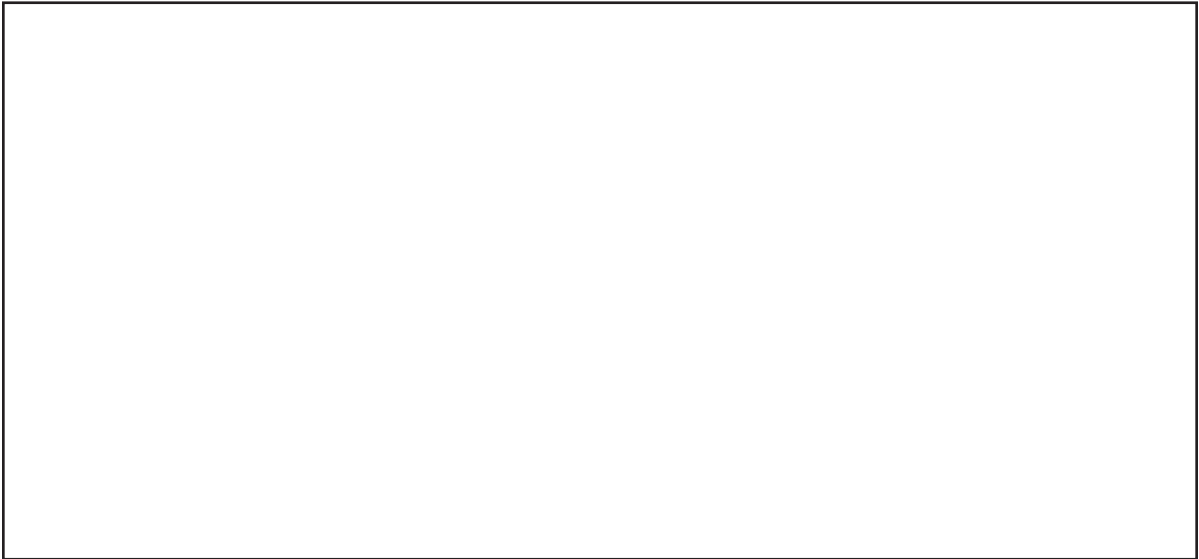
In 1921, the United States put quotas on immigration. Quotas are limits. This meant only a small number of people could come to America. The quota for Polish people was met. So Seymour's family could not come.

In 1924, Seymour met President Calvin Coolidge. He sang a song for the president. The song was called "Bring Me My Mother from the Other Side." After the show, the president said he would bring Seymour's family to America. And he did!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Read All About It!

**Directions:** Write a newspaper story about Seymour. Be sure to draw a picture to go with your story.



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# Seymour Rechtzeit's Story

## School-Home Connection Letter



\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)



Dear \_\_\_\_\_,



We are learning about a boy who came to America from Poland in 1920. Seymour Rechtzeit became a famous singer. He wanted his mother, brother, and sisters to move to America. But they were not allowed to come. There was a quota, or limit, on immigrants from Poland, and the quota had already been met.



Seymour was a talented singer and a hard worker. He got invited to sing at the White House. He boldly asked the president for help. The president agreed, and the Rechtzeit family was reunited!



Our class is organizing a \_\_\_\_\_ to help the community. Even though we are young, we can help others, just as Seymour did. For this project, please help me.



The deadline for this project is



\_\_\_\_\_.



Thank you for helping me and many others in our community!



Love,



\_\_\_\_\_

# Seymour's Story

Das 4 jährige WUNDERKIND RECHTSCHHEID



By age four, Seymour was a singing star in Poland.



These doctors are examining immigrants at Ellis Island.



# Seymour's Story

## Showing What You Know

Directions: Fill in the boxes below.

Kickoff Event

↓  
Event

↓  
Event

↓  
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↓  
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# The Wonder Child

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At Ellis Island, every person had to pass a medical exam. Sick people were not allowed into America. Seymour had to stay at Ellis Island. He did not know if he would get to stay in America.

Finally, Seymour got well. He was able to start his new life in New York City. He went right to work as a singer. He soon became America's wonder child.

## Challenge

Listen to a song by Seymour. You may not understand the words. But music speaks to everyone. Write a song about Seymour's life. Set your song to the tune of your favorite song.

# SEYMOUR REXITE SINGS

FAMOUS  
RECORDS  
INC.

FAM-1002



Cyla London

# POPULAR JEWISH MELODIES

# SEYMOUR REXITE SINGS

**Seymour Rexite** sang his first concert as a child, and was acclaimed for his ability, by critic and audience alike. Being steeped in Yiddish liturgical music since early childhood, he was invited to accompany the renowned Cantors Yosselle Rosenblatt and Mordecai Hershman, on an extensive concert tour throughout the United States.

Mr. Rexite made his debut in the Yiddish theatre appearing in Joseph Romshinsky's operetta "The Rebbe's Melodies". After his debut, he signed with Keith's Circuit to appear in vaudeville and concert stage.

Mr. Rexite signed to appear in the French Revue, at the Casino de Paris. This made Seymour a favorite in the general field as well as the Yiddish theatre. When radio came into its own, Seymour Rexite was one of the first Yiddish radio singers. Today, he is considered one of the foremost Yiddish radio stars in the world. As television came into being, Mr. Rexite, together with his wife, Miriam Kressyn, was among the first to appear for prominent sponsors. During his career, he had made several films and recorded hundreds of songs such as Miserlu, Belz, Calla Calla and Nier Sher, which are included in this recording.

His repertoire of folk songs, theater song, Russian, Italian, French and English songs (translated for him by his wife Miriam) is the richest.

## POPULAR JEWISH MELODIES

### Program

#### SIDE I

1. **MIRAGE** - (F. Mendelson - M. Kressyn 3:00)
2. **TZIGEINER VEISEN** - (M. Kressyn 3:04)
3. **"SHIKER-TICKER"** - (L. Anderson - J. Morse 2:36)
4. **BELZ** - (A. Olshanetzky - J. Jacobs 2:46)
5. **CALLA, CALLA** - (M. Kressyn 2:40)
6. **HEBREW MELODY** - (Achron - M. Kressyn 3:13)

#### SIDE II

1. **CHUPE TANZ** - (A. Ellstein - J. Jacobs 2:44)
2. **LOVE IS A CHEAT** - (I. Cezar - L. Markowitz 3:05)
3. **NEIER SCHERR** - (A. Ellstein - J. Jacobs 3:00)
4. **FARLIEBTER NAR** - (A. Olshanetzky - M. Kressyn 3:20)
5. **INTERMEZZO** - (M. Kressyn 3:10)
6. **SHTARKER FUN LIEBE** - (A. Ellstein - I. Eillian 3:15)

**NOTE:** This is a compatible recording. The wide range and fine technical features incorporated on this record can be fully realized on any 33 1/3 RPM record playing instrument. This recording will not become obsolete.