



**RHODE ISLAND  
JEWISH HISTORICAL NOTES**

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FRONT COVER

Chazan Abraham Jacobs and Mrs. Jacobs  
Chazan of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel, 1862-1869

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# RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL NOTES

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 4

MAY, 1962



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RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

209 ANGELL STREET, PROVIDENCE 6, RHODE ISLAND

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONGREGATION OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL AND DAVID (TEMPLE BETH EL), THE EARLY YEARS . . . . .	195
LIFE AND TIMES OF JUDAH TOURO . . . . .	262
SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING . . . . .	292
NECROLOGY . . . . .	293

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CONGREGATION OF THE SONS OF ISRAEL AND DAVID  
(TEMPLE BETH EL), THE EARLY YEARS

BY DAVID C. ADELMAN, ESQ.

(In the preceding issue of these *Notes*,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Adelman described the origins of the Congregation. In the present instalment he traces its history from the period of the outbreak of the Civil War to the dedication of the Friendship Street Synagogue in 1890, a span of some thirty years).

Solomon Pareira, the first Jewish settler in Providence, and the first President of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel, was born in Amsterdam, Holland about 1809. He was the grandson of Jacob Rodrigues Pareira (b. 1745) and the son of Abraham Haim Van Jacob Pareira (b. 1785) and Mintje Levie. Thus far it has not been possible to establish any relationship to Abraham and Isaac Pareira, wealthy stockholders of the Dutch West India Company of Amsterdam. He married Mietje (Miriam) Halberstad, the daughter of Isaac, in Amsterdam on March 23, 1838 and brought his bride to Providence, where their first child was born. Shortly after his retirement from the Presidency of the Synagogue, the Pareiras left Providence. Solomon Pareira died in 1895, and was buried in Cincinnati.

Records of the Congregation<sup>2</sup> disclose that in 1917 the Board of Trustees extended an invitation to Mrs. Jacob R. Hershorn of St. Louis, to attend services during the holidays while she was visiting in Providence. Mrs. Hershorn was in fact Mary Pareira, the daughter of Solomon Pareira. Still living in 1952 was a Mrs. Belle Pareira Wise of San Francisco, the last survivor of twelve children of Solomon and Miriam Pareira; and two daughters of Jacob R. and Mary Pareira Hershorn, Gertrude (Mrs. Julius Rothschild of Gary, Indiana) and Sadie (Mrs. Max Weil of Chicago), a lady then in her ninetieth year.

Following Pareira's departure from Providence, he was succeeded in the Presidency by Joseph Stern.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, the Jewish community of Providence was half as large as it had been in 1855. The congregation numbered eighteen males who were struggling to get a firm financial foot-

<sup>1</sup> The Minyan: *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*, III, 152. See also Reservoir Avenue Cemetery: *Ibid.*, I, 244.

<sup>2</sup> *Bulletin of Temple Beth El*, Vol. 25, No. 5, April 22, 1952.

hold. Competition was keen and the War came upon the heels of the panic of 1857. The chazan was Lazarus Kantrowitz, and the officers were President Joseph Stern, Vice-President Elias Meyer, Secretary Abraham Stern, and the Trustees, Solomon, Green and Fish. There was no religious school. The mortality rate was favorable with three births and no deaths.

Nevertheless the congregation co-operated with the Board of Delegates, which Isaac Leeser had organized to unite the congregations in the United States for action upon Jewish problems. The Board solicited funds in 1862 to maintain a Jewish chaplain in the Army. Only four congregations in the United States responded with contributions, and one of these was "Bnai Jeshurun" (Sons of Israel) of Providence.

Henry Green subsequently was elected President and except for six months served until 1878, a year after the Congregation became Moderate Reform. He was a leader of the congregation and of the Jewish Community until the day of his death November 22, 1892 at the age of sixty-two. He came to Providence from Gnesen, Prussia in 1856 at twenty-six years of age and became one of the leading merchants of the city as well as one of its most respected citizens. At first he opened a tailor shop in a store under the Joseph Russell House at 118 North Main Street and lived on Arsenal Lane. In 1860 he moved his residence to the Joseph Russell House over his shop. Seventeen years later he was doing business and living at 281 North Main Street. Later he moved his shop to 11 Market Square and his residence to 441 North Main Street. At the time of his death, he conducted a clothing business at 38 Dorrance Street near the City Hall and one of his business advertisements read "men's \$15 black kersey overcoats for \$8.62, good \$12 union beaver overcoats for \$6.55, good \$12 chinchilla overcoats for \$8.,— clothing bought from us will be renovated free of charge for one year, — we keep all goods bought from us in repair — pantaloons pressed once a week without charge, open evenings by the bright light of electricity." His daughter Sarah married Louis Frank, a member of the Congregation.

Green was not only a leader in the congregation but also an organizer of the three leading Jewish Fraternal Societies, Haggai Lodge, B'Nai B'rith; Providence Lodge, Free Sons of Israel; Isaac Leeser Lodge, Free Sons of Benjamin; and a member and first Senior Warden



HENRY GREEN, PRESIDENT OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE  
SONS OF ISRAEL AND DAVID, 1858-1878.

# Constitution

## "Preamble"

Whereas The preservation of the sublime principles of Judaism is the profound aspiration and duty of every true Israelite and the inculcation and practice of those principles indispensable to the welfare and happiness of the community of the Education of our children, and the moral, social, and intellectual progress of the people.

And Where as, in standing on a common platform every individual Israelite feels his strength and religious convictions secured and abetted.

Therefore We The undersigned Israelites of the City of Providence hereby covenant and agree, each with the other and unitedly together, to form a more perfect religious "union" a Cong. to be called "Sons of Israel and David" and all Jews love the God of Israel who reverence and would perpetuate his Holy Law may enter and be at peace.

And We do hereby Agree, That said Congregation shall be established, on the following basis and with the following aims, & objects

First To secure a greater observance of our Holy Religion by conforming to the duties and obligations enjoined on us.

PREAMBLE OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE  
SONS OF ISRAEL AND DAVID (1877).

by our laws and the Constitution which shall hereafter be adopted, to establish a Religious School for our children where in addition to our Religion, the Hebrew Language shall be taught.

Second. The ritual of the Congregation shall be that of Moderate Reform and the Prayer Book to be used shall be that of the Sons of Israel, Jacobson.

Third. And it shall be our early purpose to secure a plot of ground and to erect a suitable Building to be dedicated as a place of worship to the Almighty God of Israel

Meeting Adjourned  
M. W. Vook  
Secy

of Redwood Lodge, the first Jewish Masonic Lodge in the City. He was one of the largest annual contributors to the congregation, in addition to his regular dues.

Traditionally, the performance of the offices for the dead, the preparation of the body for interment, the watching and the accompanying of the body to its resting place is one of the greatest of Mitzvoths. Green, together with leading members of the congregation whom he chose, undertook this responsibility throughout his life. The men who performed this office were called Baal Mussaskim. The panic of 1873 was very severe and lasted until 1877. On February 14, 1871, a second Hebrew congregation, the Congregation Sons of David, had been granted a charter by the Rhode Island General Assembly. The incorporators were Abraham Jacob, Jacob Dimond, Casper Cohen, A. Jacob, Louis Green, Louis H. Rosenfield, Bernard Holmes, Morris Jacob, Isaac Strumpf, Louis Friend, and Jacob Simon. The Congregations Sons of David merged with the Congregation Sons of Israel in May 1874, principally through the efforts of Green, who was re-elected President of the consolidated congregation, under the name Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David.

The synagogue was the center of Jewish communal activities until just after the turn of the century. In 1870 David Frank, Henry Green, Leopold Hartman, Henry C. Spear, Benno Wolf, Julius Nathan, Julius Shuman, Charles Jacobs, Oscar Levy, David Levy, Henry Solomon, Alexander Strauss, Solomon Levy, Joseph Swartz, Casper Cohen, Lewis Frank, Lewis Cohen, Newman Pincus, Ludwig Waiskopf, Morris Baker, and Lewis Rosenfield had been granted a charter as Haggai Lodge No. 132 of the Independent Order of "Benna Bereth" (Bnai Brith) in the City of Providence. Seven years later the Montefiore Lodge Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association and the Ladies Auxiliary Society were organized by Rabbi Voorsanger, and the year following Chazan Myer Noot conceived the idea of and organized the Jewish Brethren into a Masonic Association under the name "Redwood Lodge No. 35 A.F. and A.M."

The Congregation records for the period from 1876 to 1880 contain the records of both the Congregation and the Board of Trustees. The record of the trustees' meeting in November of 1876 recite that David Frank was fined \$5 for disorderly conduct, which was remitted by the end of the meeting. At the January meeting of 1877 a motion to sus-

pend the engagement of a Chazan for the next six months was carried. A motion was then passed to make the dues \$1.25 per month. The vote was doubted and the ayes and nays were again taken, and the motion was lost. A motion was then made that the dues be made \$1.00 a month, which was amended that they be 50 cents per month. The amendment was lost and the original motion for dues for \$1.00 per month was carried. A committee of five was then appointed to promote the prosperity of the Congregation, and Mr. David Frank was one of the five members appointed to this committee. A motion was then carried to assist former Chazan Coleman who was "in bad circumstances." The report of the committee on a Ball for the benefit of the Congregation showed a "surplus of \$13.74."

At the next meeting of the Trustees in February, the Committee on Renting a Hall reported that a hall was available for \$200 per annum. At the meeting held on April 1, 1877, the Committee on Prosperity of the Congregation asked to be discharged. The motion to discharge was lost, and a motion that the initiation fee for new members be \$2 was passed. The Trustees then considered a letter from Mr. Myer Noot, requesting the use of the room "attached to the hall" for the purpose of teaching. His request was granted "under such condition only that he has to read the Sefer Torah every Saturday." At the next meeting, a committee including David Frank was appointed to draw up rules for the cemetery. At a meeting in June, President Isaac Hahn was absent and Vice-President Jacob Dimond declined to preside. Isaac Hymes then took the chair. The letter of resignation of President Hahn was considered, and it was moved to accept the same on the condition that he pay a fine of \$10 as prescribed by the By-Laws, but the same was laid over to the next meeting. The secretary was instructed to notify Myer Noot to have "the faucet of our water fixed at his expense, as the school children have demolished same, and keep the schoolroom, as well as everything attached to it, in good order." At the next meeting of the Trustees held on July 1st, the cost of surveying the burial ground was reported to be \$50, and a motion was passed to lay the matter on the table "until we are able to pay for it." The resignation of President Hahn was accepted. Isaac Hymes and Harry Happ were fined \$1 for not attending the funeral services at the home of David Frank after being notified. Myer Noot was elected a member of the Congregation. Henry

Green was elected President to fill the unexpired term of Isaac Hahn. "For the good and welfare of this Congregation were several speeches made, *and at last*, they came to a conclusion that Myer Noot shall be added to the committee, which is out since last January and that the committee go to work at once." The Secretary tendered his resignation which was accepted. Myer Noot was elected Secretary to fill the unexpired term. Seven members were absent from this meeting and fined fifty cents each for this offense.

The Committee to promote the prosperity of the Congregation consisting of Leo Hartman, David Frank, Henry Green, Simon Elias and Isaac Hahn, which had been appointed January 7, 1877 and had done nothing and sought to be discharged on April first, became very active with the addition of Myer Noot on July first. It met the following morning to make plans for a "Convention of Israelites of this city and to make it an object for all to attend." Secretary Noot was empowered to write to the President of the "American Union of the United Congregations in session in Philadelphia asking to have a gentleman come on and address our convention." The proceedings of the Fourth Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations read, "a letter read from congregation 'Sons of Israel' of Providence, R. I., requesting that the Council delegate someone for the purpose of visiting that city for the purpose of addressing the Israelites there in the interest of Judaism. On motion Dr. Sonneschein and Messrs. Loth and Peixiotto were appointed a committee for that purpose."

The Committee on Prosperity of the Congregation met again the following Sunday and made plans to give the invited guests a suitable reception; a sub-committee was appointed to raise funds to defray incidental expenses for carrying out the reception in a creditable manner with power to raise money from any source whatsoever, "non-Israelites being understood accepted." The Committee took a five-minute recess to give Secretary Noot an opportunity to compose the following circular:

July 15, 1877

Dear Sir:—

A convention of our Jewish Brethren will be held on Sunday, July the 22nd, at the Synagogue Building, 37 South Main Street at 2 P.M. for the purpose of having all unite and

join us in carrying out a noble cause, that of gathering together all who have as yet not joined a congregation, the cause is praiseworthy and trust you will co-operate with us in upholding that faith, which challenges all others. The assemblage on this occasion will be addressed by the Hon. B. F. Peixotto (late consul to Romania) and Dr. Sonneschein, Rabbi of St. Louis, gentlemen known for their integrity and promoters of Judaism. You are earnestly requested to attend.

Yours Respectfully,

M. Noot, *Secretary*.

The Secretary was empowered to have 350 circulars printed, a number which corresponded to the number of Jews in the community at the time. Letters requesting co-operation were sent to Haggai Lodge, Bnai Brith and Isaac Leaser Lodge, Free Sons of Benjamin. The following program was unanimously agreed upon. The invited guests were to be received at the depot upon their arrival by Committeemen Green, Frank and Noot who were to conduct them in a horse and carriage to the City Hotel (146-8 Broad Street) where they would be joined by the rest of the Committee at nine-thirty in the morning. Proceedings would be at the discretion of the guests up to two-thirty in the afternoon when Frank and Hartman were to escort the invited guests to the Convention. Chairman Green was to state the object of the Convention and call for election of a chairman.

#### MODERATE REFORM

In 1877 there were four groups in Jewish life in the United States, the orthodox or traditional led by Isaac Leaser, the Conservatives or middle roaders led by Drs. Jastrow and Szold, the Radical Reformers by Rabbi Einhorn, and the Moderate Reform group of which Rabbi Isaac M. Wise was the foremost leader. Wise founded the Union Hebrew College at Cincinnati and the Union of Hebrew Congregations. It was to the Moderate Reform group which was meeting at Philadelphia on July 10, 1877, that the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David turned for advice and assistance.

The Honorable Benjamin F. Peixotto, who was one of the delegates appointed to visit Providence, had been United States Consul to Roumania. His appointment by President Ulysses S. Grant was deliberately made in the face of that country's mistreatment of Jews. Peixotto

worked valiantly without pay to overcome extreme prejudice against Jews and became known throughout the Jewish world as its champion. Dr. Sonneschein was a noted Rabbi in St. Louis. Their report to President Loth of the Union recites that they met with a committee and agreed upon a plan of action for reorganizing the congregation, they were surprised to find "that the congregation had fallen to the low state of eighteen members, there was little or no interest for our holy religion, general apathy and indifference prevailed, no provision had been made for religious education and that no synagogue had been erected for the worship of the God of Israel."

No progress had been made since the Civil War, a period of seventeen years. The Committee was happy to report that as a result of their labors, an agreement had been signed for the organization of a new congregation "embracing all, the old and the young" upon a basis in conformity with the principles of the Union to be known by the name of Shaari Shalom (Gates of Peace), and that they had received the pledge that the new congregation would at an early date secure a plot of land and erect a house of worship with provision for a school. "But", cautioned Sonneschein and Peixotto, "inasmuch as the community is small in numbers and limited in means, we would earnestly recommend that all the moral and material aid the Union is capable of granting, shall here be extended."

At the public meeting held on Sunday afternoon at two o'clock at the Synagogue building, thirty-seven South Main Street, the following platform was adopted:

"WHEREAS, The preservation of the sublime principle of Judaism is the profound aspiration and duty of every true Israelite, and the inculcation and practise of those principles indispensable to the welfare and happiness of the community, of the Education of our children, and the moral, social, and intellectual progress of the people.

AND Whereas on standing on a common platform, every individual Israelite feels his strength and religious convictions secured and evaluated.

THEREFORE We, The undersigned Israelite, of the City of Providence hereby covenant and agree, each with the other, and unitedly together, to form a more perfect religious 'union' a Cong. to be called 'Sons of Israel and David' that all who love the God of Israel who reverence and would perpetuate his Holy Law may enter and be at peace.

AND WE DO HEREBY AGREE, That said Congregation shall be established on the following basis and with the following aims, and objects FIRST to secure a stricter observance of our Holy Religion by conforming to the duties and obligations enjoined on us by our laws and the Constitution which shall hereafter adopt, to establish a Religious School for our children where in addition to our religion, the Hebrew Language shall be taught.

SECOND, The ritual of the Congregation shall be that of Moderate Reform and the Prayer Book to be used shall be that of the Revs. Drs. Zsold, & Jastrow.

THIRD, And it shall be our early purpose to secure a plot of ground and to erect a suitable Building to be dedicated as a place of worship to the Almighty God of Israel."

The following seventy-three men subscribed to the platform for the new congregation, twenty-four of whom had been members of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David in the past and forty-nine of whom were new members, most of them young men in their twenties:

Moses M. Stern	Samuel Crown	Morris Z. Jackson
Alexander Strauss	Fritz Hartman	Herman Schneider
Michael Hellman	Nathan Wald	Adolph R. Frank
Solomon Krohne	Edward Myers	Isaac Hymes
Moses Rosenthal	Abram Krohn	Leopold Dimond
Abraham Pakas	Alf. Belasco	Adolph J. Cohen
Louis Rosenfeld	Bernard Holmes	I. Biutekant
M. Green	Jacob Simon	Louis Fisher
Charles Rotstein	Henry Cohen	Julius Shuman
Morris Hirsch	Charles Jacobs	Jacob Jackson
Morris Jacobs	Simeon Elias	Julius Goldberg
Max Feder	David Frank	Herman Krohne
Jacob Richman	Edward Harris	Jacob Knapf
Myer Noot	Gustav Rodenberg	Lazarus Reinstein
Henry Green	Benjamin Levy	Louis Green
Leopold Hartman	F. Williams	Jacob Harris
Morris Happ	Max Lissner	L. Blumenthal
Isaac Phillips	Jacob Cohn	Louis Hirsh
Joseph Cohn	Hermann Rosenberg	Josef Cohn
Morris Lissner	Adolf Greenwood	Albert Tint
Mandle Friedman	Harty Lamb	Sol Levy
Isaac Hahn	Samuel Krohne	Marcus Cohen
John H. Spitz	Lewis H. Kahn	Hyman Happ
Henry Solomon	Joseph Schwarz	Abraham Gomperts
Louis Frank		

Following the public meeting of July twenty-second, the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David met on Sunday afternoon, August fifth, and the committee consisting of Green, Frank, Hartman, and

Noot offered the following resolution, which, upon roll-call, was adopted by a vote of seventeen to three as follows:

*Whereas*, The committee to promote the welfare of the Congregation of Sons of Israel and David reported and met with success of getting members to our Congregation.

*Therefore, Be It Resolved*, That all the names of those that are subscribed on list shall be and are hereby members of this Congregation Sons of Israel and David with all the rights and benefits of members from this hour and date.

*Resolved*, That we adopt the platform and resolutions of the one signed by them as the platform of this Congregation, *with the exception of name*, and it shall take effect from date and we further agree to abide by all the By-Laws and Constitutions which shall be enacted hereafter.

*Resolved*, That all laws and resolutions conflicting with their resolution shall be repealed and *null and void*.

Ayes—17

B. Levy  
G. Rodenberg  
L. Hartman  
A. Tint  
I. Hymes  
H. Happ  
A. Fink  
J. Jackson  
E. Harris  
Jacob Cohen  
J. Richman  
D. Frank  
L. Green  
M. Cohen  
M. Noot  
H. Green  
Jacob Dimond

Nays—3

Louis Cohen  
A. Jacobs  
I. Simon

The names of Halberstad and A. Jacobs do not appear as subscribers to the new congregation and Jacobs was one of three voting against the reorganization along Moderate Reform lines even with the retention of the old name "Sons of Israel and David". Subscribers Holmes, Marcus Cohn, and Morris Hirsch three years later joined with Hal-

berstad and others to form a new congregation, for which they received a charter from the General Assembly.

On Sunday evening, August fifth, an adjourned meeting of the Congregation Shaari Shalom was held at seven-thirty o'clock, with Moses M. Stern acting as President and Noot as Secretary. The Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David offered a resolution to retain the name "Sons of Israel and David" but otherwise to carry out the Platform "to the tenor of the letter". Upon roll-call, the resolution was adopted unanimously.

Upon motion of L. Hartman, the officers of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David resigned their offices, and dissolved into a committee of the whole, with Spitz as chairman and Noot as Secretary.

There was no election for President on the first ballot, Green receiving 20 votes, Spitz 21 and David Frank 6. Frank withdrew upon the second ballot, and Green was elected by a vote of twenty-seven to twenty-one. Strauss was elected Vice President over H. Happ by a vote of thirty-one to twelve. Noot, twenty-seven years of age, was elected Secretary unanimously, a testimonial to his popularity and an appreciation of his services in bringing the reorganization about. Stern was elected Treasurer over J. Richman by a vote of thirty to seventeen. The following seven members were elected Trustees without opposition, Frank, Holmes, Lamb, Dimond, Hymes, Schwartz, and Rosenfeld. The four officers were divided equally between the old and the new members while five of the seven trustees elected were old members. Frank was appointed chairman of a committee of five to draw up a Constitution and By-Laws. The meeting adjourned to meet the following Sunday afternoon, quite a number of members having left the meeting. The forty-seven votes cast at the election indicate that 26 subscribers were absent.

At the next meeting, the new Constitution and By-Laws were adopted, with the amendment that "the Board of Trustees shall receive their power from the Congregation and shall not make any contract nor expend any money without receiving such power at a regular or special meeting of the Congregation," and that the Platform adopted at the Convention held July twenty-second, shall be the Preamble to the Constitution and By-Laws. The Constitution also provided that

"He (the President) shall have the power to keep order during Divine Service, and if any person disturbs the Congregation or Worship, he shall call the Sexton, request him to tell the person to come to order, and he shall have the power to fine, or order such Person out of Synagogue and in no case shall he use a Mallet, a Book, a Hand during Divine Service to call to order, or permit any one to do so."

Upon motion of Spitz, it was voted to take immediate steps to join the "Union of United Hebrew Congregations." The Board was empowered to rent the Pine Street German Church as a synagogue for the congregation at a rental not to exceed three hundred dollars a year and to engage a chazan (cantor) for the Holidays, as well as make preparations for the dedication and opening of the synagogue. A committee of five was appointed to make the building tenantable for the Congregation at an expense not to exceed four hundred dollars, and an assessment of two dollars levied on each member to defray expense of alterations. The meeting adjourned to meet August 19th at two-thirty in the afternoon, at the German Church Building, corner Pine and Page Streets.

The year 1877 was a milestone in the history of the United States as well as that of the congregation. It marked the end of the Panic of 1873 and the beginning of the Imperial Age of business which came to an end in 1929, a period when Americans were said to have worshipped in the Temple of Mammon. The year before Anti-Semitism was first brought to public notice in the United States by the Hilton-Seligman affair.

The members of the Jewish community were pioneers living in fear of the unexpected while struggling to obtain economic security. They referred to themselves as Hebrews or Israelites, but not as Jews. They were conservatives and not reactionaries. The Conservative follows a basic faith which he will not yield merely because of new proposals, but, once convinced of their desirability, will retain what is sound and useful and add that which is new, while the Reactionary obstinately clings to the old, merely because it is old.

When the congregation adopted the Moderate Reform program, it retained the laws of Kashruth and the practice of wearing a head covering during worship. The changes made were in the hour of worship from twilight to seven-thirty in the evening, the introduction of

music and a choir into the service, the use of the English language, the admission of women to the floor on an equal footing with men, and the adoption of the Conservative prayer book of Drs. Zsold and Jastrow.

Members were divided into three classes, paying dues of \$24, \$18 and \$12 a year respectively. Annually, just before the High Holy Days, a special meeting was called and seats were auctioned for a premium. The \$24 class bid first, the highest bidder getting first choice and so on. When all in the \$24 class had made their choice, the auction was held for the \$18 class, followed by the \$12 class. Green, who paid dues of \$24 a year, won first choice of the seats with a bid of \$65, J. Schwarz, second choice with a bid of \$35, and I. Hymes, third choice with a bid of \$27. Additional bids in the \$24 class ran all the way down from \$25 to \$1. In the \$18 class bids ran from \$7 by A. Bellasco to \$1 by A. Greenwood.

At a special meeting held on September 7, Rabbi Voorsanger was elected "minister" for one year by a vote of forty-nine to one, at a salary of \$1000. He was a native of Amsterdam, Holland, a graduate of the Hebrew Union College, and the first Rabbi in Providence who was ordained in the United States. He organized the Montifiore Lodge Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association and the Ladies Auxiliary.

At the annual meeting the Building Committee, consisting of Frank, Spitz, Happ, Green, and Strauss, made a lengthy report explaining and justifying an expense of two hundred dollars in excess of their authority for alterations to the German Church Building. The bills were paid by discounting a note for \$300 at a bank.

Myer Noot was elected Secretary, Assistant Teacher, and Collector at a salary of \$300 for the ensuing year. Out of eighty-four members, forty-five participated in the annual election. There was a contest for Treasurer, and eleven candidates competed for seven seats on the Board of Trustees, seven competed for five positions on the Education Committee.

Quarterly and special meetings of the congregation were held at which all minutes of the Board of Trustees were read and, if not approved, corrected by the congregation.

At the Sunday meeting of January 6, 1878, it was voted to purchase an organ for \$172, payable in monthly installments of \$28 each. Upon

motion of Spitz, a collection was undertaken to pay off the debt of the congregation, and seventeen members contributed \$96. At a special meeting the following Sunday seventeen members contributed \$53, including Green and Happ who made additional contributions.

At a special meeting held in March, to which a special committee reported its inability to procure a loan, upon motion of Spitz, it was voted that the congregation issue notes aggregating \$500 and bearing interest at five per cent to be purchased by the members. These notes were to be paid in dividends of fifty dollars of any and all receipts, except dues, and were purchased by thirty-two members, seven of whom bought one-half of the total. One month later a dividend of seventy-eight per cent was declared, leaving only seventy-seven dollars in notes unpaid. The congregation voted to join the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and pay \$1 per member.

In a small congregation, men of wealth often possessed power out of all proportion to their merit. There is a tradition that Rabbi Voorsanger disciplined the daughter of one of the richest members of the congregation for some delinquency in the Sabbath School. The Rabbi thereby incurred the displeasure of her father who presented the congregation with the ultimatum that either the Rabbi must go or he would resign. The congregation could ill afford to lose any member, particularly one who was rich, and so in July Rabbi Voorsanger accepted a call from the South.

Myer Noot had his hands full and was not overpaid at \$300 per annum. The report which he read shows that he was a very sensitive man which did not make the difficulties of his position any easier to bear. His report showed a balance on hand of \$2.68 and a deficit of \$165.32, and went on:

"If the members of the Congregation will manifest the same zeal and energy that they have shown last year, our Congregation can come out all right and I desire to state here, if I am to be dispensed with as a paid officer of the Congregation on account of the inability to pay, I shall still do all in my power to help them out, both in the Synagogue and by outside sources, I merely state this as it has come to my knowledge that I would not take the same interest if I was not a paid officer. I would also state that some recognition is due the choir of the Congregation, they certainly have devoted considerable of their time towards making the mu-

sical part of the services a success, show them in some way that their services are appreciated. At the last performance given, all the ladies who participated in it never so much as received a vote of thanks. I don't speak for my part, I desire none and I certainly think the whole matter has been overlooked. In this performance one non-Israelite took part. No doubt he expected a letter of thanks. In conclusion I desire to ask one favor of my members. I have still two hot months before me to make collections. I ask of my members to consider that it is not expected of me to call five or six times to collect dues. I am willing to go twice but where I devote three weeks out of four it is entirely inconsistent trusting that the Congregation will be Prosperous and that Peace and Harmony may always prevail."

A committee of seven was appointed to bring in a plan to meet the budget, the Secretary was instructed to write a letter of thanks to the choir, and a committee was appointed to see by whose authority and for what period of time the yard of the congregation has been in use for buggies, etc.

Although Myer Noot conducted a crockery business and was Secretary, assistant Teacher, and collector of the Congregation, he was a born organizer and originated the idea of uniting the Israelites of Providence more closely by forming a Lodge of Masons, of which he became the first Master, Henry Green the first Senior Warden, and Leopold Hartman the first Junior Warden. The petitioners for the new lodge which they proposed should be designated by the name "Redwood Lodge" were Noot, Green, Hartman, Abraham Gomperts, Adolph Cohen, Joseph Schwarz, Charles Jacobs, Hyman Happ, Lorenzo Traver, William Richardson, Morris L. Happ, and Adolph Greenwood. With the exception of Traver and Richardson, all were members of the Congregation. The petition came to the Grand Master of Masons on January 2, 1878, and Dispensation in accordance with the wishes of the petitioners was granted February 22, 1878. The first meeting was held on February 25 at 41 Weybosset Street, the hall of Haggai Lodge, Bnai Brith and the Lodge was duly constituted on June 10th when the following were elected officers, Hyman Happ, Treasurer; Abraham Gomperts, Senior Deacon; Charles Jacobs, Junior Deacon; Adolph Cohen, Senior Steward; Joseph Schwarz, Marshall; and Morris L. Happ, Sentinel. Myer Noot served as Master for two years, at the end of which time the Lodge had thirty-one members.

During 1882 and 1883 "some differences of opinion prevailed among members and no additions were made."

Two weeks later the congregation met again to consider the matter of unpaid rent amounting to seventy-five dollars up to June 1, and it was voted to collect by law moneys due from members. It was also voted to advertise in the *Jewish Messenger* "for a minister for our congregation at a liberal salary."

The following advertisement appeared in the *Jewish Messenger* in four weekly issues in July of 1879, but commencing with the issue of August 22 the salary offered was raised to \$900 and appeared in seven issues.

WANTED—for the Congregation Sons of Israel and David, Providence, R. I., a minister capable of officiating according to Szold's prayer book, preach in the English language, teach a Hebrew School, lead and conduct a choir—salary \$700 per annum. No traveling expenses paid. Apply as below.

Henry Green, Pres.  
271 North Main Street  
Providence, R. I.

#### GROWING PAINS

At a meeting held the following week, Rabbi Voorsanger "asked that in consequence of the present condition of his wife, the congregation release him two weeks earlier." His request was granted with pay to September 1. At this meeting also, a bill amounting to \$5 for the carriage for the invited guests Sonneschein and Peixotto the year before was voted to be paid. Sixty-four members subscribed for one year. Seats were then auctioned, but the amount raised was insufficient to meet the budget, and so a special meeting was called for August 4 for the classification of members and the sale of seats. At that meeting a resolution was passed that "a committee of ten members be appointed for the purpose of assessing each and every member of this congregation to meet the Budget for the coming year, the said assessed member to be notified and if objectionable the committee will be in session to hear the objections and the decision of the committee to be final." The assessors were Hartman, Strauss, Green, Rosenberg, Spitz, Hirsch, Holmes, Falkenberg, Richman, and Fink.

At the next meeting held August 18 the report of the assessors was accepted and the committee discharged with thanks. A committee interviewed one applicant for the pulpit and replied to Rev. Marx Moses inviting him "to be here on trial by Saturday next, if possible, and the trustees are empowered to correspond with several parties as to his moral character, etc."

The following week, August 25, the congregation held another meeting at which the drawing of seats was held to the entire satisfaction of all the members present according to a plan proposed by Rosenberg.

Representatives of Israelites from Worcester presented themselves at this meeting and asked the loan of a Sefer during the coming holidays. Their request was granted subject to conditions to be imposed by the trustees.

Leopold Hartman withdrew the name of Henry Bloch as a candidate for the pulpit, and it was voted to discontinue reading letters of application. Rosenberg, Schwartz, and Solomon Krohne were appointed a committee to wait upon Rev. Marx Moses relative to salary expected and credentials. The committee retired, returned and reported favorably on the candidate and that he was willing to accept a salary of \$1000 "with the understanding that if at any time it shall come to the knowledge of the congregation of anything derogatory to his character that may have transpired at a previous time, the congregation could discharge him forthwith." By a vote of eleven to five, the Rev. Moses was engaged subject to the conditions embodied in the report of the committee. The trustees were authorized to ask Noot to assist the "Rev. gentleman" (Marx Moses) during the coming holidays, especially Yom Kippur.

A special meeting was held on Sunday, August 28, to consider the request made by the Rev. Moses to the board of trustees for the loan of three hundred dollars, being the amount required to meet his desire to bring his family to Providence. Ways and means of raising this amount were discussed, and upon motion it was unanimously (28) voted that the board of trustees be empowered to issue a congregation note for \$400 at 7 per cent, of which \$300 be loaned and \$50 be allowed for his traveling expenses and bill for board at the City Hotel. By a vote of twenty to six the erection of a platform for the choir was authorized, and the choir committee was empowered

to engage a soprano and tenor for an amount not exceeding \$20 which Noot volunteered to collect from the members.

The quarterly and annual meeting held on October 13, 1878, devoted considerable time to the question of accepting Charles Jacobs, brother-in-law of Shuman, as a member at thirty dollars per annum, and the question was finally referred to the board of trustees for their decision.

The congregation voted that a letter of condolence be sent to Rev. Moses "for the loss sustained in losing most of his family in New Orleans and the same be published in (the) Jewish Messenger and American Israelite, providing it would be of no cost to the congregation." The records do not disclose why, or how many, of the family of Rev. Moses were lost, but from other sources, we can piece together the sad catastrophe. New Orleans was annually visited by epidemics of cholera and yellow fever. The annual loss of life was appalling and carried off ninety out of every hundred victims in the bloom of life. The following items which appeared in the Jewish Messenger tell the tragic story:

"September 20, 1878  
New Orleans, La.

The condition of affairs in this city is about as bad as ever, and there are no prospects at present of a cessation of the plague. Among our coreligionists, however, the fever does not ravage so dreadfully as among members of different faiths. The Hebrew Benevolent Society and the Touro Infirmary are busy day and night in attending to the many cases of sickness, death, and misery brought to their notice. No one can imagine the horrors of the scene. Miss Matilda Moses, aged twenty years, eldest daughter of Rev. Marx Moses, now of Providence, R. I., died on the 12th inst.

"September 27, 1878  
Providence, R. I.

At the Jewish synagogue, on Friday evening last, the officiating minister, Rev. Marx Moses, offered a prayer, in which he referred, in touching words, to the terrible affliction which has befallen him. Mr. Moses' family, which resides in New Orleans, has been stricken by the dread disease, and, out of a family of five, but two children are left. Following the death of his wife, came that of his oldest son, Samuel, his daughter, Matilda, and his son, Isaac. The Mayor of Provi-

dence has kindly offered to send to New Orleans for the two remaining children; but the local authorities there deem it best not to send them North, for fear the seeds of death may thereby become scattered broadcast. The many friends of Rev. Mr. Moses offer their sincere condolence in his time of affliction."

At this meeting it was also voted to accept poor Jewish children whose parents could not afford to pay tuition "provided, however, that the parents of such children did not belong to a congregation." Hartman, Spitz, and Falkenberg were appointed a committee to draw up a set of resolutions to be engrossed and framed at a cost not exceeding fifty dollars to be presented to Noot in appreciation of his services. The committee was also empowered to show the appreciation of the congregation to the ladies of the choir who volunteered their services and also to the ladies of the congregation who worked to make the *Dramatic Performance* a success. The committee was also instructed to draw an engrossed set of resolutions to be presented to Henry Green who had served as President for nineteen years. Happ and Rosenberg were appointed a committee to solicit subscriptions for the resolutions. Green was unanimously re-elected President. There were six candidates for the five places on the School Committee and upon ballot vote Richman, Spitz, Noot, Hartman, and Rosenthal were elected. Isaac Buitekan was elected sexton and collector at \$200 per annum, and Adolph Fink went surety on his bond for \$300.

A special meeting was held on December 2 for the purpose of considering the debts of the congregation and to devise ways and means of meeting them. After listening to a lengthy report by a committee consisting of Frank, Rosenberg, Kahn and Noot, it was voted that the congregation borrow three hundred and seventy-five dollars on notes to be issued to such members as are willing to take them, two hundred and seventy-five dollars in cash being required, because the remaining one hundred dollars was a note held by Treasurer Stern, who was willing to accept a renewal. One member subscribed \$75, one \$50, three \$25, three \$10, and nine \$5 each. The notes were to be a first charge upon all monies received outside of dues.

At the meeting held January 5, 1879, a letter from Rev. Moses was read offering to lecture alternately in English and German. It was

voted to adhere to the practice prevailing heretofore. A bill for \$7.50 for coal and wood was referred to the trustees.

At the following quarterly meeting in April it was voted to repeal the initiation fee and the Secretary reported many unpaid bills on hand with no possibility of collecting the money. Treasurer Stern and Benno Wolf were appointed a special committee to call on those in arrears. The Independent Order Free Sons of Israel requested that the charge of thirty dollars for burial plots for their members be reduced, and the matter was referred to a special meeting of the congregation held on May 20, which voted to maintain that price.

At the quarterly meeting held July 6, Rev. Moses asked for a vacation of three weeks which was granted and announced that he would not be a candidate for re-election. A committee consisting of Richman, Happ, and Warshauer were appointed to call on him and ascertain if he would be willing to serve again for a salary of seven hundred dollars, the committee to report back to the President who would call a special meeting to consider the report.

At a special meeting held on August 3, the trustees reported their inability to raise the budget of \$1600 fixed by the congregation and that the best they could do was assess the members for \$1200. A committee consisting of Hartman, P. Spitz, Elias, A. Cohen, and L. Diamond were appointed to consider the matter and they reported to the meeting a budget as follows:

organist	150.
rent	225.
sexton	100.
burial ground	200.
teacher and minister	300.
incidentals	100.
fuel	100.
	<hr/>
Total	\$1175.

together with the necessary assessments.

Noot was elected teacher and minister, his term to commence September first and the trustees to draw up the necessary agreement.

A special meeting was held the following week when Noot resigned as teacher and minister and the budget adopted August 3 was re-considered.

At a special meeting held on Sunday, September 6, 1879, it was voted that each member pay dues of \$30 per annum, payable monthly, the first two months in advance, with seatholders to pay fifteen dollars per annum on the same terms. It was also voted that a note for five dollars which was held by M. Friedman be accepted as his advance payment, that seatholders should not have any other privileges than that of occupying seats in the synagogue, but that those who were single men should have the right of burial "on our grounds," and that tickets for admission on the High Holidays would be sold to non-residents at five dollars.

Dues of a fixed sum for all members represented a departure from custom and practice which had prevailed up to this date. Thirty-two members subscribed and on the following evening twenty-two members were present at an auction when seats were sold at a premium from \$1.50 to \$11 each.

Another special meeting was held on September 21 to consider the application of Rev. M. Rotenberg as minister, and the perennial question of finances was discussed. The proposed budget as adopted follows:

minister	780.
rent	225.
organist	150.
sexton	50.
gas, coal and insurance	100.
	<hr/>
Total	\$1305.

Revenue:

34 members at \$30 per annum	\$1020.
5 seatholders at \$15	75.
Premium on seats	100.
	<hr/>
Total	\$1195.

The deficit of \$110 was increased to \$150 by increasing the sexton's fee \$25 and allowing \$15 for incidentals. Fifteen members then voluntarily subscribed \$65.60 in addition to their dues and the premiums for their seats.

The credentials of Rev. M. Rotenberg as to moral character and proficiency as a teacher were read and proved highly satisfactory. Upon motion, by a roll call vote of 17 to 2, he was elected as Minis-

ter, Lecturer, and Teacher for one year, commencing September 1, at a salary of \$780 per annum, payable in weekly installments of \$15 each, subject to a written agreement to be drawn up by the Board of Trustees. Messrs. Strauss, Stern, and Happ were appointed a committee to obtain subscriptions from those who were not present to make up the deficiency.

The annual meeting was held on September 28 with 27 out of 34 members in attendance. Messrs. Strauss, Hartman, and Frank were appointed a committee to draft a set of by-laws and the following officers were unanimously elected:

President .....	Strauss
Vice-President .....	David Frank
Treasurer .....	Moses M. Stern
Secretary .....	Myer Noot
Trustees,	
	Happ, Shuman, A. Cohen, Jacobs, Pakas,
	Hartman

Green, L. Hartman, Richman, Lamb, and Rosenberg were elected to the School Committee. Rosenberg, L. Frank, and Hyman Krohne were elected to the Finance Committee. Jacob Jackson was elected sexton at \$75 per annum. In consideration of past services, dues of sexton Buitekant were remitted, and he was granted a seat in the synagogue with the right of burial.

It was voted to hold a Simcath Torah reunion to give Minister Rev. M. Rotenberg opportunity to meet the children of the school. A vote of thanks was also given to the Baal Missaskim and a rising vote of thanks to retiring President Green who was completing twenty years of service. Green was also authorized to select Baal Missaskim among the members to act with himself.

Myer Noot was made chairman of the Entertainment Committee and given a rising vote of thanks for his services during Rosh Hashanna and Yom Kippur.

At the quarterly meeting held on January 11, 1880, the reading of the minutes of the Board of Trustees showed that the question was raised of the eligibility of Julius Shuman and Charles Jacobs (they being brothers-in-law) to serve as trustees. Although the trustees took no action, Shuman rendered his resignation which was accepted and Leopold Dimond was elected in his stead. New by-laws were

adopted, and Sol Levy was elected "Janitor." A letter of thanks was ordered to be sent to the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association for their contribution of a ton of coal, and Jacob Jackson was paid \$6 for services as a watcher for a child of one of the members.

Upon motion of Green it was voted that watchers be furnished upon death occurring in the family of any member, and that the same be paid for by an equal assessment upon each member of the congregation, and that the watchers remain until the body is removed from the home of the members.

On March 10, a special meeting was held to consider the financial report. It was unanimously voted "to pay a dividend of 50 per cent on the notes outstanding." "There being no further business the meeting adjourned and great satisfaction prevailed among the members".

At the quarterly meeting in April, the death of I. Buitekant was announced.

At the January Session of the General Assembly of Rhode Island, 1880, seventeen persons including Lehnard (Leonard) Halberstadt (a charter member of our congregation and brother-in-law of the first President, Solomon Pareira), Moses Einstein (son-in-law of Chazan Abraham Jacobs), Bernard Holmes, Markus (Marcus) Cohen, Moritz Hirsch and Elias Hirsch, all former members of the congregation, petitioned

"that they and their associates form and constitute the congregation Sons of Abraham worshipping God in Hebrew form and manner in the City of Providence"

and praying for a corporate charter

"for the purpose of taking upon said corporation the care and assistance of the sick, needy and helpless of their own congregation and such other persons as they may deem proper under the name Sons of Abraham of Providence, R. I."

This schism accounts in part for the drop in membership from eighty-four to thirty-six. At the annual meeting held in 1880, J. Richman was given a vote of thanks for officiating on Yom Kippur, and Messrs. Strauss, Dimond, Jackson, Fink, Jacobs, and H. Levy volunteered as Baal Massaskim to assist Henry Green. The financial re-

port disclosed that Rev. Rotenberg was paid in installments of five to twenty dollars in the months of July and August, that the membership was fifty-seven, an increase of twenty-one over the year 1879, and that rent of two hundred and ten dollars was overdue.

In January 1881 the Union of American Hebrew Congregations was in no position to aid the Hebrew Union College, and at a special meeting in February it was voted to withdraw one hundred ten dollars from the burying ground fund and to pay the same on account of rent, while at the same time the organist and choir were notified that their services were no longer required, but a motion to dispense with a minister was laid on the table. At another special meeting in February, L. Hartman and Dimond were appointed a committee to confer with Rev. Rotenberg as to the terms upon which he would relieve the congregation. The committee reported forthwith

“they have seen Rev. M. Rotenberg and he wants his salary up to March 1st, \$83.33 and then for the balance of the year up to September 1st, \$375.”

A motion that the services of Rev. M. Rotenberg will no longer be required after the first of March was lost.

At a meeting held in July it was voted

“to continue the Sunday School as we can get a teacher gratis and if trustees exert themselves that they can easily get two ladies' assistant teachers as it is necessary if we cannot support a minister to keep up a Sunday School so that our children should not be neglected in the teachings of Judaism”.

Three weeks vacation was granted to Rev. M. Rotenberg from July 18, and it was voted to receive Rabbi Jacob Voorsanger, who was expected to visit the city, and that the use of the synagogue for Saturday, July 20, be extended to him. Shuman and H. Lamb were elected trustees in the place of Pakas and Happ, who had removed from the city. The following budget was recommended to the trustees:

Income:

40 members at \$18.00.....	720.
15 members at \$12.00.....	180.
	900.

Expenses:

Rent .....	300.
Taking care of property.....	25.
Sundries .....	50.
For services over holidays.....	200.
	<hr/>
	575.
Balance .....	325.
	<hr/>

900.

Special meetings were held in August and September

“to make final arrangements to continue the congregation for the ensuing year and make preparations for the coming holidays.”

Thirty-seven members subscribed. Noot was asked to officiate for the holidays and refused. It was then voted to hire a minister for the holidays, at an expense not to exceed \$100 and a choir, at an expense not to exceed \$50.

The reason that Noot refused to officiate does not appear in the record, but, from reading Noot's reports as Secretary, it seems to be clear that he was not satisfied with the cooperation of the members. President Strauss apparently used his diplomacy and at the annual meeting which followed on October 2, Noot subscribed the largest amount toward a fund of \$100 for the burial ground. His subscription was \$10 together with a note which he held against the congregation, and he was also appointed a member of a committee to solicit absent members. At this meeting a motion was made that Noot be presented with some suitable testimonial for the efficient manner in which he conducted the services during the holidays. Speaking on the motion, Noot said that he had already received his testimonial through the verbal appreciation expressed by the members and therefore declined to receive any further recompense for his services. A rising vote of thanks was then accorded him and he was unanimously re-elected Vice-President.

No meeting was held after the annual meeting in October of 1881 until March which was followed by a meeting in August and the annual meeting in October. The fact that there were only three

meetings held in 1882 is indicative of the financial difficulties of the congregation. Nevertheless, Myer Noot maintained the Sunday School and conducted services. At a special meeting held in August it was voted that two members and their families should occupy a bench and the officers have first choice of seats before the members draw lots for pews. It was also voted to present Secretary Lewis H. Kahn with a "nice set of resolutions". At the annual meeting held on October 1, it was voted to send a letter of thanks to Kahn for the handsome paroches (curtains for the ark) which he presented to the congregation. There was an intermission during which a collation was served by Kahn in appreciation of the testimonials which he received. A letter of thanks was also voted to Noot for the able manner in which he conducted the services over the holidays and through the year generally. Letters were also ordered for Henry Green for his assistance in the services and Pauline Shuman in the choir. A bill for rent for the period from July 21 to September 5 amounting to \$191.93 was presented by an attorney.

Upon motion of Leopold Hartman, \$100 was placed in a sinking fund for the building of a synagogue and subscriptions of \$100 were made by Freedman, Green, Dimond, and Noot. Green submitted a bill for \$5 for expenses in traveling by horse car to oversee the repair of the burying ground.

At the next meeting held on March 25, 1883, the committee appointed to negotiate the settlement of the claim for rent reported that they had settled for the sum of \$50, and the committee on building reported that they had done nothing since the last quarterly meeting and were discharged. After much discussion a new committee of five was elected. Noot positively refused to serve on the committee and gave notice that services would be held on Pesach and also Shevuos. He was empowered to engage a choir if he wished. At a meeting held in May a motion was passed to call a convention of all Israelites in Providence and vicinity, and a committee consisting of Noot, Green, and Lederer was empowered to engage a prominent Rabbi to address the convention. At the same meeting it was announced that the body of a poor girl from Fall River was brought to Providence and interred in our burying ground.

At the next meeting held in August, Noot offered the following resolution, and stated that if this resolution were adopted, he again would volunteer his services to the congregation free of charge for the next two years. The resolution follows:

"We, the undersigned bind ourselves to pay the amount assessed by the Board of Trustees less a discount of 20% but with the following conditions, that the amount realized (less the expenses of the present congregation) be put in a separate fund to be known as the Building Fund for the purpose of building a synagogue, same to be paid quarterly in advance."

The resolution was adopted. Noot wrote the preamble to the constitution of 1877 and took seriously the promise "and it shall be our early purpose to secure a plot of ground and to erect a suitable building to be dedicated as a place of worship to the Almighty God of Israel."

The year 1883 was one of financial stress in the United States and there are no congregational records from August 1883 until October 4, 1884. At that meeting, the financial report was read with great satisfaction, and an organist was hired for Fridays and Saturdays for four dollars. Strauss, B. B. Lederer, Stern, and Noot were re-elected officers. A motion was made and passed that the trustees make provisions for young men and girls of the congregation to be able to obtain instruction in the Jewish religion and that they arrange for a Bible Class. It was also voted that the congregation take an active part in the proper celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Sir Moses Montefiore and that they pay their proportion of the expense in cooperation with other societies. It was also voted "to return the body of the father of Leopold Dimond and place it in the proper burying ground of this congregation (Moshassuck) at the expense of the congregation and that the same be attended to *at once*, by the Baal Missaskim." Noot was appointed a committee on by-laws and constitution and a letter of thanks was ordered to be sent to the Ladies Auxiliary Society (Sisterhood) for the aid thus far given the congregation.

Only three meetings were held in 1885. One on February 8 authorized the trustees to procure a stove for the school room and made arrangements for a Purim Ball. The annual meeting was held in September and was attended by the officers and thirty members. Noot

paid a tribute to President Strauss and was elected teacher, at a salary of \$400 per annum. It was voted to contribute \$20 to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and to renew membership for the ensuing year. A letter of thanks was ordered sent to Benedict B. Lederer for a contribution of \$100 from Plume & Atwood of Boston towards the erection of a synagogue. Letters of thanks were also ordered to be sent to Noot, Green, and Stern as well as Pauline Shuman and the Misses Gertrude Shuman, Flora Dimond, Mildred Frank, Fannie Frank, and Eva Hartman who participated in the choir. A request for the relief of a Jewish family which had been deserted by the father was answered by a contribution of ten dollars.

The following resolution was entered upon the records of this meeting setting forth that it had been unanimously passed at a regular meeting held Sunday July 5:

“Resolved That

Whereas Our estimable Friend Mr. A. Strauss has served this Congn. as its Pres. during the past seven years and has devoted his time towards the furtherance of its highest Interests And Whereas the success of this Congn. has been in a measure due to his unceasing labors in their behalf. And Whereas during the Exercises of his Office he has at all times evinced for each and every member of the Congn. a spirit of general satisfaction unbiased in any of his actions extending towards the Peace and prosperity of all interested.

Be it therefore

Resolved That in acknowledgment of all these noble sentiments and hearty actions that have been manifest in all the years of his Presidency

Resolved that an Engrossed Set of Resolutions be presented to our Pres. Mr. Alex Strauss and a copy of the same be spread upon the Records of the Cong.

L. HARTMAN	} Committee
MYER NOOT	
J. SHARTENBERG	

After remarks by Green, Richman, Dimond, Frank, A. Cohen, Falkenberg, Hahn, Jackson, Stern, Fink, and Moral, a recess was called for refreshments. Secretary Noot submitted his report as follows:

SECY'S REPORT FROM SEP. 30 5645 TO SEP. 20 5646

1884	1885
------	------

Providence, R. I., Sept. 20 5646

1885

To the Pres. Officers & Members of the  
Congn. Sons of Israel

Gentm.

I have the honor of presenting my report as Scy Commencing Sep. 1884 to Sep. 1885. At the same time it affords me unusual pleasure to chronicle the Financial Condition of the Congn. in the shape it is. I know of no year during the Existence of the Congn where so handsome an Amount has been in the Treas at the beginning of a new year. Another pleasant feature of the year is That there is not a delinquent on our Books every a/c having been closed up leaving a clean Record unsurpassed in the history of this Congn.

with your Kind Attention I submit the amounts of monies that have passed thru my hands and amounts drawn upon the Treas.

Receipts	\$1896.34
Disbursements	1425.70
Balance on Hand	\$ 470.64

I need not speak of the success the past year of the Congn. the amount on hand speaks for itself.

The Roll of membership numbers at present 44. We have gained the past year 6 new members and lost thru removal from the city 5. Thanks be to God Our Ranks have not been diminished by Death for which we feel especially pleased and thankful. Everything seems to be running smoothly and there is even indication that at some future day the Congn. may reach a much larger membership than it has under the present administration. Of the officers of the Congn. nothing can be said but words of praise. They have all worked zealously for the best interests of the Congn. Too much cannot be said however for our Pres. Mr. Alex Strauss for his untiring efforts manifested during the past year. The trustees in their deliberations at the Various Meetings have endeavored to watch the interest of anything touching the good & welfare of the Congregation. The project proposed by the Trustees that a Teacher be engaged at a stated salary to instruct the children of members will no doubt meet with the approval of the whole Congregation.

It is with pleasure I chronicle the pleasant feature of Divine Services. It is now over a year since the project was started & there is every

evidence of the same being continued. Too much praise cannot be accorded to the Ladies of the Choir who have given their time and attention the year around. Without this our services would not be in harmony with the Ritual we have adopted.

The success in the future for our Cong. is assured. Everyone seems to be pleased with the internal workings and all act in harmony together.

Trusting that the Year just ushered in may be one of Prosperity, and that God's blessing may follow us in all our deliberations.

I remain Your Obdt. Servant

MYER NOOT  
Sec'y.

And an "obedient servant" (of the Congregation), he was.

#### MYER NOOT

Although Noot acted as teacher-collector and Minister from 1877, he was not elected Rabbi until 1886. He appeared before the Rhode Island Veteran Citizens Historical Association on December 7, 1885<sup>1</sup>, "a meeting devoted to the *Hebrews* of Providence" was introduced as "Mr. Myer Noot, Acting Reformed Rabbi in Providence and Acting Rabbi of the Israelites in Providence".

It is interesting to note the confusion that existed at that time as to just who and what Jews were. President Hammond in introducing Noot said: "You are to-day to hear somewhat of the *Hebrews* in this state, and witness an illustration of a portion of their religious services as conducted in their synagogues. These people 'outwardly are the descendants of Jacob and professors of the Jewish religion, but *inwardly* they are believers in, and the servants of God.' "

This confusion was not confined to non-Jews, who are referred to as "non-Israelites" by Noot in his talk. Due to persecution in Europe the term "Jew" had become one of opprobrium and the circumlocutions used to avoid it seem humorous to us to-day. The differences between Reform and Orthodox practices at the time were slight, consisting merely in the introduction of English and music and change in hour of service. Noot referred to these changes as the correction of "great evils". Since he upheld the practice of covering the head and the dietary laws (Kashruth) it is difficult for us to understand

<sup>1</sup>The *Narragansett Historical Register*, vol. 4, No. 4, April 1886.

his exaltation. The non-Jewish audience did not experience that difficulty because the Jews in the community were a small isolated group who were supposed to hold their services in private because of the fear of "non Israelites" being present at their synagogue. Only the year before Isaac Hahn was elected to the House of Representatives. He was one of twelve representatives elected by the citizens of the City of Providence and the first Jew in the State to be elected to public office. The Jewish community was emerging from its chrysalis. Noot spoke as follows:

'Ladies and Gentlemen.—It having pleased your society to set apart this day devoted to the Israelites of this State, and being cognizant of the appreciation of the same, I have prepared a short essay to speak upon this subject, although I feel that this task might have been placed in better and more competent hands in order to do justice to the occasion.

'When I look around and see in this assemblage men of intelligence, men of character and prominence, I feel that my People in Judaism should feel themselves highly flattered that this society should have so far given us an opportunity of showing what the Israelites have done towards furthering the social and commercial interests of little Rhode Island. As far as the social interests are concerned we as Israelites claim we are contributing our share in this respect. We are law abiding people, ever willing and ready to stand by any and all laws which have been promulgated from time to time for the good government of all classes. And while we do not aspire to seeking for public offices we contribute our mite in giving evidence of our willingness to co-operate with our Christian brethren in matters relating to the interest of our city and State.

'Commercially speaking we have been engaged in various pursuits and have endeavored to become with our sister merchants men who are toiling in various branches of industry striving hard to gain a livelihood.

'The question though of to-day's gathering, my friends, does not give me full scope to speak at great length on the purpose that has brought us here, and if I deviate from that particular point in order to speak on a subject which will vie with the other, I hope I may not be considered out of order, for it is done with a view of showing what progress we have made, how much is Judaism understood both by Jew and Gentile, and to what extent we Israelites have worked towards commanding the respect as a religious sect from those who do not believe as we do. I have only to go back ten years to rehearse before you how things were in

this city as far as the mode of worship was concerned. A mere handful of people composed the congregation at that time; the service was entirely in the Hebrew language, and to have introduced English in the synagogue at that time would have been considered an innovation, so to speak. It was a rare thing to see children or young men attend the synagogue. If a non-Israelite happened to enter the synagogue it was so much Greek to him, to comprehend what was going on. Then the additional days which were observed, which were however contrary to the Mosaic command, neither to add or diminish from the tenor of the law.

'How we as Israelites have been benefited by this great turn in the affairs of our religion words cannot express. Our doors are open now to any one who is desirous of hearing our service. The young and old of people congregate there to hear the Word of God expounded in language suited to the present time; they can readily follow the reader or minister and understand what they are saying.

'Our Christian brethren have access to our place of worship, can understand what we are doing and may perchance become interested in what might be termed a Jewish worship. While reform in the mode of worship is no thing of a recent date, still we as Israelites of this city have only come to our senses within the last eight years, and have realized the dire necessity of establishing for ourselves such recompense in this respect, so that the younger element may have the benefit therefrom, and that they may find in the synagogue a place where they may supplicate to their Father in Heaven in a language best suited to their present condition and the land that gives them the right to worship as they may best see fit.

'In this direction, my friends, we have done much to diffuse among our people and the community at large a certain amount of respect which must ultimately give rise to a better feeling for the Israelites of this city

'I fear in my remarks I may have merged too much on religious matters, but the opportunity has presented itself and our people have not been understood during the past twenty-five years, that a few words touching upon this subject will not be out of place.

'There are in this city over one hundred and fifty Jewish families numbering probably five hundred people, employed in various kinds of mercantile pursuits. We have also two synagogues, one strictly Orthodox and the other Moderate Reform. The former are composed chiefly of Russian Jews, and the latter principally Germans, and a few who claim this country as their birthplace. The Orthodox Jews in this city adhere strictly to all forms and

ceremonies as practised years ago. The Reformers, however, have always believed that a change in the mode of worship was necessary (for reasons stated before) and the result has been that from a congregation of eighteen we number to-day sixty members of the male sex.

'While we do not believe as they do as regards the old forms and ceremonies in the synagogue we respect them as Israelites, and are at all times willing and ready to affiliate with them on all occasions. When God said to Moses we shall be a peculiar people, and that peculiarity has been manifest in all these years. We admit being a distinct people, and therefore hold together as such as far as our religious identity is concerned.

'There are in this city three Jewish Orders, the various Grand Lodges of which are in New York. The aims and objects are alike in all and are strictly Jewish so far as not to admit any but Israelites, as the name would denote—Sons of Covenant. The inconsistency of admitting non-Israelites is self-evident to any fair minded person. There is also a Jewish Benevolent Association composed of females only. They administer to the wants of those who need aid and consequently there is no need of going out of our precincts in that direction. In fact, my friends, we Israelites of this city and State are alike all our other cities, ever willing and ready to dispense charity and benevolence to our own people and to others who do not believe as we do.

'We cannot boast of having a synagogue of our own, but a fund has been established for that purpose, and it is to be hoped the time is not far distant when this worthy project will have been made a success.

'When I look back but a short time and see how we Israelites have been blessed in this country with the right of Religious Liberty; when in this very State our people have been honored at least by one Israelite who has held the position of Representative in the General Assembly, a distinction that would have been laughed at years ago, I feel, my friends, that we must have done something, or at least our people who have lived here years ago, to merit such an act.

'And to what can we attribute the kindly feeling that is slowly being made manifest towards our people? The Israelites lived in this city in oblivion, our Christian brethren could not find out anything about them. If in years gone by the question was asked, Where is your synagogue or house of worship? they would shrink from telling you, and under some pretense or other would evade the question. But how different are things now. Ask our people that you would like to hear our services, they will only be too

glad to take you to our synagogue. Is this not, my friends, an improvement? Should we not feel proud to think that time has wrought for us a miracle in this enlightened age of progress, and that we can be good Israelites if we do not believe as our Orthodox brethren do.

'Another change which has worked wonders in our mode of worship was the introduction of music in the synagogue, something which the Orthodox Jews do not tolerate. And right here I desire to place myself on a right footing in regard to this question. I hope, however, it will not be taken amiss if I am expressing myself in the terms Orthodox too much. My sole aim is, and will be in this discussion, to show to what extent Judaism has fared much better than in the days of Orthodoxy especially in this city, and when I mention this city I mean the State of Rhode Island.

'Before, however, I quote my authority on the question of music in the synagogue, I feel as though the time has arrived that our Christian brethren should know something more of my people than they do. We have for the past fifteen years been in darkness, and our people have only of late years endeavored to come to the front and show their willingness to co-operate with other cities as to what was actually necessary in this city to give them prominence as a religious denomination. We as Israelites of Providence and vicinity have felt that in order to command the respect of our fellow man, we must give evidence of something tangible as to our distinctive religious identity. Everybody is aware that there are Israelites living here, have lived here for many years, but how have they lived? In obscurity, so to speak.

'What has time wrought for our people, however, during the past ten years? Wonders, if I may use the term. Miracles. You may ask in what manner; in what particular? I will answer this wise.

'The Israelites of Rhode Island to-day as a religious class are respected. We have proved that there is material in our midst that can be utilized, and if given the opportunity in the right direction have the intelligence to hold positions of honor, provided they are aspirants for the same.

'There is a bright future in this city for our people. Although few in numbers compared with other cities, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we command the respect due from one to the other notwithstanding what his belief may be.

'Judaism to-day stands on a solid foundation. Judaism is the same as it always was, and like the unchangeableness of God, was,

is, and ever will be a beacon light to all who may walk the path thereof, illumined by the rays of Divine light, spreading in all directions.

While we have at all times believed in a reform as to the service in the synagogue we have never deviated from the spirit of the Mosaic Law. This is our stronghold, our banner, which has been carried through thousands of years. We cannot be assailed although fanatics, so to speak, have tried to tamper with the same, but the results will not have benefited them to any great extent. The very most important question which the so-called conference of radical Rabbis in Pittsburgh endeavored to embody in their platform the question of the regulation of diet. This important matter is sufficient to show their unfitness in attacking a question of the sanitary laws of the Jews,—a question which is conceded by men of all creeds to be a matter which cannot be excelled.

We Israelites of the 19th century, and especially in this city, have known for some years the need of a proper service. Our people have fallen into error on this question, and we have endeavored to rectify this evil as far as it relates to our religious worship. That we have considered it a duty we owe ourselves and to our brethren at large, to declare that it is not our desire for innovation, not a want of respect for those institutions which our more immediate ancestors obeyed, but an obligation, a deep sense of right, which nothing can weaken; a conviction resulting from long, cool, and serious reflection, that impelled us to those measures which in our hearts we considered the only means of arousing our people in this city from that state of indifference and erroneous thoughts into which they were sinking, and to save our religion from criticism and self-respect from other denominations.

When we consider how things have changed among our own people it is hardly possible to recognize it ourselves.

The time in years gone by that it was necessary to hold divine services on the Sabbath was such to keep them from attending the synagogue. Imagine a multiplicity of prayers entirely in the Hebrew, and an occasional Chaldaic poem, which I question was not understood by any of the congregation. Again the observance of double festivals, a practice which originated before the astronomical calculations of the calendar was introduced, has nevertheless been rigorously upheld in days when we were enabled to determine the months, even to the fraction of a minute.

It was, my friends, to remedy these great evils that we Israelites of this city brought about a reform in our service, and which

up to the present time has proved a blessing to our people. The time appointed now for divine service is such as to enable the entire congregation, men, women and children to assemble prior to the commencement of prayer.

"The prayers are said by the minister aloud. Appropriate psalms and hymns are chanted by the choir, and responses made by the congregation.

"And now, my friends, to go back as to the question of organ music in our synagogue. A fondness for music and melody is clearly traceable amongst the Israelites as early as the times of Samuel, (x.5) and no one can attentively read the biblical records of that age without noting the idea then taking root that music tends to kindle the imagination, to warm the heart, and to awaken the liveliest sentiments of piety. Abundant evidences exist to establish the fact that music was employed during the administration of Samuel in connection with some of the most important offices of religion.

"We find in Is. vi.; Chron. XXV., 5th and 6th verses, after the recovery of the possessions which the Philistines and other enemies had wrested from the Hebrews, and when Israel found itself in the enjoyment of peace and prosperity, David, the reigning sovereign, brought the public worship into unison with the improved social condition of the people, and introduced into the sanctuary instrumental music on a most extensive scale. He instituted twenty-four classes of musicians and singers, and placed them under the direction of two hundred and eighty-eight leaders, the most renowned of whom are Asaph, Heman and Jeduthum. And they did not consist of males only, since the three daughters of Heman are mentioned in the list of performers.

"I have merely brought this matter before your notice to show that the reform in this respect was based upon a usage which had its origin thousands of years ago. Hence the introduction of organ or instrumental music into the synagogue at the present day is not an innovation, so called, as pronounced by our Orthodox brethren. Anything that would in a measure tend to improve the services, have been adopted in this country in all the synagogues of the Moderate Reform Platform.

"Thus, my friends, have I as time would permit, endeavored to explain the motives that have brought me before your honorable society, and have given evidence to what extent we, as Israelites of this city, have progressed in our religious workings. If I have not spoken at length on the question of commerce and manufacturing interests among our brethren, and If I have not adhered closely to the subject for which this meeting was called

together, it is because my Brother Denison has exhausted the subject and has been better informed on this question than I have been, and has left no room for me to dwell upon. I have considered the true objects of this meeting and the sentiments of both the Israelites and my Christian brethren. I have long examined into the question of how little Judaism and our people in this city have been understood as a religious creed, and have therefore endeavored to place them on a proper footing.

'That henceforth this exposition will fully exonerate us from the imputation of entertaining the wild speculations which have attributed to us that of having our services held in private, and we feared non-Israelites being present at our synagogue, I trust will be removed from the minds of those who have the intelligence to know better.

'Every effort we have made for the improvement in our devotion to Almighty God we have striven to confine strictly to the spirit of the immutable law of God, and before closing my remarks I desire to give this assemblage a little information which no doubt will interest you all, on the question that has so often been asked, Why the Israelites do not uncover our heads when attending divine worship, or when engaged in prayer? It appears, my friends, to be nothing more than an original custom, for in Asia this day, it is a mark of respect toward a superior to keep his head covered in his presence, whereas in western countries our customs are just the reverse of all this, since the recognized mark of social intercourse and to superiors, is to keep the head uncovered, and there can be no doubt but that the deepest marks of reverence and respect that any human being can pray are due to God.

'But the fact be that this keeping our heads covered is not because of any custom in any part of the world, but because of a positive commandment which renders it a duty incumbent upon us of the House of Israel. According to the thirteen articles of the creeds, we Israelites believe that the Creator is one, and that he alone is God, who was, who is, and who will be, everlastingly. While the third art. declares that God is not corporeal, or material, and not subject to accidents of bodies or matter, He consequently is altogether independent of time, place or custom; and as God's law and precepts are the spiritual food or sustenance of the soul, it follows that they must also be immutable and that our intercourse with God is, or should be, the embodiment and practical carrying out of this law, and therefore unaltered whether it be in the East or in the West. Now the command of God, through Moses, His servant, in Leviticus 16th chapter, 3rd

and 4th verses, directs: Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place, a holy linen coat shall he put on, and with a linen mytre (called in Hebrew Mitznefes,) turban or head covering, he shall be attired. Thus God commanded the Priest to perform divine service with his head covered. So long as the Temple of Jerusalem and the Levitical ritual remained in their glory this precept was always observed; but now that we have no altar, and the Priest can offer no sacrifices, sacred Scripture instructs us to compensate for the offering of bullocks, "with our lips." Or, in other words, that prayer is to replace sacrifice, (Hosea XIV. 2). Accordingly, every Israelite during divine worship officiates as a Priest, offering in lieu of sacrifice, his prayers in his place of worship, which Scripture declares to be Mikdosh, Holy Place of minor holiness, but still Holy, and which replaces the altar in the Temple. And as each Israelite thus performs the function and service of the Priest, and as he must in all things and to the utmost of his power conform to the law of God, he is bound to keep his head covered during divine worship even as the Priest was commanded to do when engaged in the sacred service appertaining to his office.

"This, then, concludes my remarks to-day. If what I have said has in any way interested you I am pleased to think that in my humble capacity as a private individual, that I have added something that may reflect with credit upon the Israelites of Providence and vicinity. Our people will ever remember this day as something never to be forgotten in the history of this State, that we should have been allowed this privilege and honor of having a special day set apart whereon to give them prominence as a religious sect. God grant that such feelings of brotherly love may at all times be evinced towards us, and that we may merit at all times what has been advanced here this day. The Israelites of this city will have the satisfaction of knowing one thing, that they have entered upon a new era of usefulness, and the ultimate results thereof must be beneficial to them and the community at large. With my best wishes for the future prosperity of this venerable and honorable institution, accept my thanks and those of the Israelites of this city for the honor conferred."

"Noot then proceeded, with the aid of members of the synagogue, to explain and exemplify portions of both Orthodox and Reformed Hebrew service. The Rabbi wore his cap, and the voices were supported by an organ. The recitations and chantings by the Rabbi, and the psalms and songs of the responding choir, were rendered with admirable pathos and purity, holding the assembly in rapt attention, and awakening a truly catholic religious spirit, alike among Gentiles and Jews. Altogether, the day was emphatically historic in our State, giving prominence to

a peculiar and valuable portion of R. I. records, and cultivating in an unusual manner that charity and brotherhood, which should be felt by the children of the Great All-Father."

Although Myer Noot is listed in the 90th Anniversary Souvenir Program of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David as having served the congregation as Rabbi from 1881 to 1886, he was introduced at the above meeting as Mr. Myer Noot, Acting Reformed Rabbi in Providence and Acting Rabbi of the Israelites in Providence. In the history of Freemasonry in Rhode Island, published in 1891, he is credited with the idea of forming a Masonic Lodge for Israelitish Masons and is referred to merely as Myer Noot, without the title of Rabbi.

The institution of Redwood Lodge of Masons in 1878 is intimately connected with the congregation because in addition to Rabbi Noot, its first Master, the charter members were members of the congregation namely, Henry Green, Leopold Hartman, Abraham Gomperts, Adolph Cohen, Joseph Schwarz, Charles Jacobs, Hyman Happ, Lorenzo Traver, William Richardson, Morris L. Happ, and Adolph Greenwood. The first meeting was held in Haggia Hall, 41 Weybosset Street, Providence, and we read in the history of the lodge that "From 1882 to 1884 some differences of opinion prevailed among members and no additions were made." At the meeting held June 13, 1887, Rabbi Noot gave an instructive address on the duty of Masons and shortly thereafter left the state. In 1891 Redwood Lodge, which was founded in the interest of Israelitish Masons had a membership of 48 and 13 officers of whom only 4 were Jews and one of these was Joseph J. Hahn.

Myer Noot was never ordained as a rabbi. At the time he started to serve as a rabbi, ordained rabbis were comparatively scarce, and congregations frequently took as their rabbis men who had received sufficient Jewish education to be able to serve. Noot, after leaving Providence, is known to have been in Troy, New York from 1896 to 1906, to have served as rabbi in Roanoke, Virginia from 1907 to 1909, and to have been in Hazleton, Pennsylvania after 1909.

At a meeting held in December of 1885, the matter of purchasing additional cemetery land in Elmwood was laid over for a future date. Leopold Hartman was elected collector, in consideration of which his dues were remitted. Noot gave notice that he could not continue acting as minister beyond two weeks longer. This notice was in ac-

cordance with his offer in August of 1883 to serve for two years free of charge in consideration of the establishment of a building fund for the purpose of building a synagogue. It was voted that the Board of Trustees bring in a plan and present it to the congregation at a special meeting for the continuance of services in the congregation. The plan brought in two weeks later provided for an increase of dues of twenty per cent and the Board of Trustees was empowered to advertise for a minister in their discretion.

The next meeting was held in March, 1886 at which Vice-President B. B. Lederer presided in the absence of President Strauss. A motion to request the trustees to bring in a plan for raising money for the hiring of a Minister was indefinitely postponed on motion of David Frank, and upon motion of Isaac Hahn it was voted that the trustees engage Myer Noot as Rabbi, with the proper provisions, for the ensuing five months at an expense of \$168 which sum should be borrowed from the Building Fund, if necessary.

At the regular quarterly meeting held in June 1886, 26 members were present. President Strauss read the budget and assessments for the ensuing year providing for a salary of a minister of \$800. Although there were remonstrances against the assessments which were read, the budget was adopted and the trustees were empowered to receive applications for the position of minister.

In August a special meeting was held and President Strauss stated that the object of the meeting was the election of a minister and teacher. Upon motion the budget was reconsidered as to the salary of the minister, and the sum of eight hundred dollars was raised to one thousand dollars. Noot was nominated and elected Rabbi at a salary of one thousand dollars for the ensuing year and the trustees were empowered to make suitable arrangements with him and to re-engage the organist.

At the annual meeting held in October, the secretary was absent on account of illness and Treasurer Stern had passed on. Strauss, B. B. Lederer, Dimond, and Pakas were elected officers and Hartman, Green, Frank, Hahn, Elias, M. Hirsh, and Jackson were elected trustees. There was considerable discussion regarding the building fund for which Adolph Cohn was elected trustee. A note of thanks was ordered to be addressed to Montefiore Lodge Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society for the gift of a carpet, and it was voted that a

committee of five be appointed to arrange for a Simchas Torah Ball in honor of the choir. Fifteen dollars was withdrawn from the Memorial Fund as a donation to the Rhode Island Hospital.

At the following meeting in January of 1887, Secretary Pakas resigned on account of his removal from the city, and Solomon Krohne was elected secretary in his stead at a salary of five dollars for the balance of the term.

At a special meeting on June 19, President Strauss informed the congregation of the purchase of an estate on Friendship Street, corner Foster Street, by the Board of Trustees for the building of a synagogue at some future time. Treasurer Dimond gave the details and purchase price of sixty-two hundred dollars, and the action was unanimously ratified by the twenty-two members present. The President also announced that the Building Fund totalled \$1720. Additional subscriptions were then and there made totalling \$655, and a committee was appointed to solicit to the members not present at this meeting.

At a meeting held in July, the action of the Board of Trustees regarding the raising of a loan of \$4500 was ratified and the trustees were empowered to receive applications for the position of Rabbi for the next year. Four days later a special meeting was called which ratified a resolution offered by Isaac Hahn to empower the President and Treasurer of the congregation to borrow \$4500 from the Citizens Savings Bank with interest at 6 per cent per annum and give a mortgage on the estate situated at the corner of Friendship and Foster Streets.

At the annual meeting held in October, the officers were re-elected and Hartman, Green, Hahn, Elias, Moral, Rosenthal, and Jackson were elected trustees. D. Isaacson, Solomon Crown, and Joseph Cohn were elected members of the school committee and Hyman Krohne was elected trustee of the estate. Letters of thanks were ordered to be sent to Mrs. J. Shuman and the members of the choir and to Green and Hartman, the latter "for the procuring of such an able man to perform divine services".

At a special meeting held in November for the purpose of electing a Rabbi, Morris Sessler of Wheeling, West Virginia, was elected by a vote of 25 to 3 on such terms as the Board of Trustees should deem best for the congregation.



RABBI JACOB VOORSANGER, RABBI OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE  
SONS OF ISRAEL AND DAVID, 1877-1878.



RABBI MORRIS SESSLER, RABBI OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE  
SONS OF ISRAEL AND DAVID FROM 1887 TO 1892.

## JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE WITH MASONIC CEREMONIAL<sup>1</sup>  
*Historical Address by President Strauss of the Congregation*

ORATION BY THE RABBI, REV. DR. M. SESSLER  
 AND OTHER EXERCISES

The Congregation, Sons of Israel, by dint of unremitting zeal and enterprise with the substantial co-operation of friends of other religious denominations, made the 35th year of their organization a memorable event in their history yesterday by the consecration of the corner stone of their new Jewish Synagogue, corner of Friendship and Foster Streets, with interesting and impressive exercises, in which the M. W. Grand Lodge of Masons, President Strauss of the congregation and the respected Rabbi, Rev. Dr. M. Sessler, participated. From a mere handful of devoted and progressive members, the congregation has steadily maintained its organization and enlarged its sphere of influence in the community, and its officers and clergy, aided by the Women's Auxiliary Society and those identified with the Secret and Beneficial Societies which have been formed from time to time, have directed themselves vigorously to the work of securing funds for the purchase of a site and the erection of a permanent temple of worship.

The Jewish people of the city are recognized as among its most industrious, law-abiding and respectable inhabitants, and their active and self-sacrificing efforts for the promotion of their spiritual welfare have been crowned with remarkable results, for within a comparatively brief period, they have raised by subscription and other means the sum of \$6500 for the purchase of the lot which is located in a most eligible spot within a quarter of a mile of the heart of the city. Emboldened by this happy consummation of their hopes, they have accepted plans for the erection of a cosy and convenient house of worship of picturesque and symbolical design, and are devising ways and means to secure funds for its construction and furnishing at a cost of \$14,000. In this worthy effort they have been stimulated and encouraged by the devoted and energetic service of the Rabbi, Rev. Dr. Sessler, who assumed charge of the congregation about 18 months ago. No sooner had he commenced his ministrations than he set about devising means to secure the erection of a permanent place of wor-

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from the *Providence Daily Journal*, Tuesday, September 24, 1889.

ship for his congregation. With this end in view, he started a subscription list and solicited the co-operation of all friends regardless of their creed, and it was the list subdivided and framed in some dozen neat frames containing from 60 to 70 names each that the doctor proudly, and with every feeling of gratitude, exhibited to the reporter. The list is headed by Rev. Dr. Greer, formerly rector of Grace Church of this city, who is a great friend and admirer of the Rabbi. Following are the names of the two ex-Governors of the State, Taft and Lippitt, and ex-Lieut. Gov. Cutler, also that of Mayor Barker, Joseph Banigan, F. C. Sayles and W. F. Sayles of Pawtucket, Charles Fletcher, Callender, McAuslan & Troup, and hundreds of other prominent persons in the city and throughout the State. The names preserved in the frames will be hung about the walls of the synagogue when completed, and will be preserved among the most cherished archives, as evidence of the friendly spirit and encouragement manifested by their Christian brethren. When he left Wheeling, the congregation possessed a handsome temple of worship as the fruit of his labors and it is his determination to duplicate his action in this city. He has a happy way of enlisting the sympathies of those with whom he comes in contact being a man of genial presence, and courteous and agreeable in manner. The congregation has responded loyally to his support and the outlook is very promising for the consummation of their cherished ambitions.

#### THE MASONIC PROCESSION

Acting Grand Marshal Cyrus M. Van Slyck formed the Masonic procession in Freemasons Hall at 2 o'clock, and it marched to the site of the synagogue through Dorrance, Broad, Beacon and Friendship Streets in the following order:

Grand Marshal and Aids—Brothers E. C. Danforth, Wm. N. Otis, James E. Tillinghast National Band, Redwood Lodge, No. 35, A.F. and A.M. The M.W. Grand Lodge formed as follows: (a detailed listing of the components of the procession then followed).

On the arrival of the procession at the site, the Masonic Lodge was formed upon the platform in proximity to the spot where the corner stone was to be laid and consecrated, and seated in a reserved section was a large gathering of people in the immediate vicinity of the site, who paid respectful attention during the consecrating services. The

exercises began with a voluntary by the National Band "Die Irrfuhrts ums Glueck", Suppe, followed by the Introit "Joy in the Sanctuary" by the choir. The Grand Marshall then made the ritualistic proclamation and President Alex Strauss of the Congregation delivered an historical address as follows:

Historical address by President Strauss:

The first Jewish congregation in this city was incorporated in the May session, 1885 [sic], under the name of Sons of Israel, by the request of Joseph Stern, Solomon Pareira, Abraham H. Goodman, David de Young, M. Marks, Henry Solomon and Isaac Fish. They, with a few more of their associates, held their services in their own residences and afterwards in different halls in the city of Providence. While struggling for years under the Orthodox ritual, they were not able to strengthen or to infuse new life into their congregation. They in August 1877, called a convention of all the Israelites in Providence, who were addressed by Rev. Dr. Sonnenshein and the Hon. Benjamin F. Peixotto, members of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in Cincinnati, for the purpose of uniting the Israelites under a reformed ritual, which was, under their good counsel, adopted, and from that time on the congregation was more progressing. They at once leased the little chapel, corner Page and Pine Streets, remodelled the same at a great expense, which was retained as a place of worship until 1882, when they were obliged to look for another place of worship on account of the ownership of the property and since that time we have used our present hall, 98 Weybosset Street. While the congregation have always strived and exerted themselves to their utmost to have a synagogue of their own, yet the event of the day could not have been accomplished without the untiring exertion of our present esteemed Rabbi, Dr. M. Sessler, and the assistance of our Christian friends. The congregation Sons of Israel at present consists of 45 members, has a Sabbath School of 65 children, a Bible Class of 45 members and as its auxiliaries a Ladies and a Young Sons of Israel Society.

The officers of the Congregation at present are: President A. Strauss, Vice President B. Lederer, Secretary S. Krohne, Treasurer L. Dimond, Trustees: H. Green, L. Hartman, I. Hahn, J. Jackson, S. Elias, M. Rosenthal, S. Lederer, Sexton L. Green, School committee: J. Moral, Jos. Cohen, Isaac D. Escalco.

Most worshipful Grand Master of Masons of the State of Rhode Island, the Congregation Sons of Israel are about to have this structure erected for the purpose of worshipping God the Almighty, and perpetuating our faith and in their behalf, I most respectfully request you to lay the cornerstone, according to the ancient rites and usages of Free Masons.

#### THE MASONIC SERVICE

The Grand Master taking his seat, the Grand Marshal proclaimed silence, saying: "By authority of the most worshipful the Grand Master of Masons in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, and in obedience to his order, I do now command and require all persons here assembled to preserve silence and to observe order and decorum during these ceremonies. This proclamation I make once, twice, thrice; in the South, in the West, and in the East".

The Grand Secretary read the paper wherein the Grand Master is requested to lay the corner stone.

Then the Grand Master said: "Right worshipful Senior Grand Warden: From time immemorial it has been the custom among the craft of Free and Accepted Masons to lay the corner stone of Churches, public buildings and monuments when requested to do so by those in authority. We have therefore, here convened the brethren for that purpose; and it is now our will and pleasure that they give us their attention and assistance in this work. This, our will and pleasure you will communicate to the right worshipful Junior Grand Warden, and he to the brethren, that they, having due notice, this corner stone may be laid in ample form."

The Senior Grand Warden said: "Right worshipful Junior Grand Warden: It is the will and pleasure of the most worshipful the Grand Master of Masons that the brethren here assembled do now assist him in laying this corner stone. This you will communicate to the brethren that they, having due notice, may govern themselves accordingly."

The Junior Grand Warden said: "Brethren: You have heard the order of the most worshipful the Grand Master of Masons as communicated to me by the right worshipful the Senior Grand Warden, of this you will take notice, and let it be accordingly so done."

Then was sung:

“Except Jehovah build the house, their labor is but vain that  
build it;  
Except Jehovah keep the city, the watchman watcheth but in  
vain”.

The Grand Chaplain at the altar then began the office saying: “Our help is in the name of the Lord.”—Response: “He hath made the Heaven and Earth”.

Grand Chaplain—“The Lord’s name be praised.” Response: “Henceforth world without end.”

Grand Chaplain—“The Lord be with you.” Response: “And with thy spirit.”

Grand Chaplain—“Let us pray”, then the Grand Chaplain and the people united in the Lord’s prayer.

Then said the Grand Chaplain: “Most Gracious God, we humbly beseech Thee to defend and bless Thy servant, the Grand Master of Masons, and all the Lodges committed to his care.” Response: “Amen, so mote it be”.

“Almighty God, the Father of all mercies, we humbly pray that Thou wilt grant unto all men, peace, concord and the knowledge of Thy truth; and in the world to come life everlasting.” Response: “Amen, so mote it be”.

#### ORATION BY RABBI SESSLER

Rabbi Sessler then delivered the oration and read a portion of the 28th chapter of Genesis. He said that the chapter gives proof that Jacob, who was later called Israel, was the corner stone of every synagogue, temple and church in existence today. If one reads the dedicatory prayers of Solomon, it gives additional evidence that it was the first dedicatory invocation used the world over. He directed attention to the founders of Judaism, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the inheritance of perseverance, ambition and pride from these founders of the faith. He said that it required great sacrifice and persistent effort to establish a place of worship of the living God, and alluded to the devotion and energy of the founder of the temple at Jerusalem on the spot where it existed so many thousand years. Dr. Sessler said it was the happiest day of his life and that his feelings

prevented him from doing justice to such an important occasion. The lesson which Jacob impressed upon his people was that of perseverance, ambition and pride in the achievement of his noble mission, in spite of almost insurmountable obstacles. He accomplished his work by enlisting his heart and soul incessantly and he was actuated by a laudable ambition to build the temple by independent effort rather than reliance upon others. Even in his time, the temple was open to every denomination for the worship of God, and Judaism has been successful in later generations by their noble examples. Judaism in America today is grateful for existence in such a noble and liberal country, wherein it has the privilege of exemplifying its perseverance, ambition and pride. In this country it enjoys equal rights and privileges and is respected by a liberal and enlightened people, thanks be to God. While it is remembered that our forefathers suffered captivity, privation and loss of fortune, still it is the aim of the church today to be worthy of its inheritance from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The revelation on Mount Sinai has given recognition to Judaism, as was prophesied by its founder.

Dr. Sessler then congratulated the President and Officers of the congregation upon their noble undertaking and invoked God's assistance in their work, hoping that health and strength and prosperity would be vouchsafed to them until they had seen the completion of this Bethel. He then eulogized President Strauss of the congregation than whom there was no nobler representative of Judaism in this State. For 12 years he had proved himself a worthy and devoted officer, and sacrificed time, strength, money and labor in furtherance of the interests of the congregation. He had stood side by side with the Rabbi, day and night, and he thanked God that it had at its head such a man in every respect and in the broadest sense of the word a true Jewish representative. Such a noble and virtuous example would be a worthy inheritance to his children and his children's children. Turning to the Grand Master, he thanked the order for its noble interest in assisting the congregation in the consecration of the corner stone. In conclusion, he urged the congregation to remember that this was only the commencement of the work involving hard and incessant labor in which the Women's Auxiliary and other agencies must engage. In the consummation of their ambition would come a plentiful reward. The congregation Sons of Israel will take great pride in the knowledge that they have erected the first temple in the city

of Providence and every American will cordially give credit to the little handful of people living in their midst in having established a house of worship where they will be able to invite their friends of whatever faith. Judaism does not live in seclusion nor does it prohibit anyone from entering the doors of its temple and listening to its teachings from the pulpit and the Sunday School. It teaches love, peace, charity and seeks to live in concord with the world and all mankind.

The hymn, "The God of Abraham Praise", arranged by W. H. C. Macdougall expressly for the occasion, was then sung by the brethren of Orphans Lodge with the band accompaniment, and was a notable feature of the service.

The anthem "Who Is Among the Mighty?" was sung by the choir.

(The laying of the corner-stone according to the Masonic ritual was then described in detail and at length).

The Grand Master then proclaimed: "By order of the most worshipful Grand Master of Masons, I now proclaim that this corner-stone is laid in ample and ancient form, according to the customs and usages of Free and Accepted Masons. The proclamation I make once, twice, thrice, in the South, in the West and in the East".

The following verse to the tune of the Doxology was then sung:

"Be Thou, O God, exalted high,  
And as Thy glory fills the sky,  
So let it be on Earth displayed,  
Till Thou art here as there obeyed."

Then the Grand Chaplain gave the benediction, as follows: "The Lord bless you and keep you, The Lord be gracious unto you, The Lord mercifully with this favor look upon you, and bring you into life everlasting." Response: "Amen, so mote it be."

The exercises were concluded with the benediction by the Rabbi, with responses by the choir.

#### CONTENTS OF THE BOX

The contents of the box placed under the corner-stone were as follows:

Masonic documents: Proceedings of the Grand Lodge for the year 1888; constitution of the Grand Lodge 1889; circular order covering

Grand Lodge this day; organization of the Grand Lodge for 1889; Grand Marshal's order of procession for the day; copy of the services used in laying the corner-stone this day; by-laws of Redwood Lodge, No. 35, A.F. and A.M.; list of Masonic bodies and meetings in Rhode Island for 1889; medallion of Post Grand Master Thomas Arthur Doyle.

Church documents: The Congregation Sons of Israel, its Rabbi, President and Officers; Montefiore Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society and its officers; Bible Class, its officers; Young Sons of Israel, its Officers and Members; Young Men's Hebrew Association, its Officers and Members; pictures of Rev. Dr. David H. Greer, former rector of Grace Church, Rev. Dr. J. M. Wise, Father of the Hebrew Union College; building committee, Dr. M. Sessler, Fritz Hartman, Leopold Dimond, B. Lederer; architect, W. L. Colwell; mason, John W. Briggs; carpenter, John Sprague; copies of the Providence Journal and Evening Telegram; pictures of Haggai Lodge, No. 132, I.O.B.B., the first Hebrew Benevolent Society in this city, which is partly instrumental of the existence of the present Congregation, instituted July 25, 1869; its charter members and present officers, also its by-laws; the officers and by-laws of the T.O.F.S. of Israel, Providence Lodge, No. 78; Juda Thora Lodge, No. 59, I.O.S.B. Association, names of officers and by-laws; Abraham Lodge, No. 62, its names, officers and by-laws; the Governor and state officers; names of the Mayor and city officers; names of the President and Vice President of the United States; copies of Rhode Island Democrat, Evening Call, American Israelite, Hebrew Standard, American Hebrew Jewish Tidings, Jewish Messenger, Jewish Exponent, Debohra, Jewish Almanac for the year 5650; coins of gold and silver, by Masters Abraham Strauss, B. T. Shuman, David Sessler, by four boys of B. Lederer, by four daughters of S. Lederer, by the Cohen boys of Pawtucket, R. I., by Mattie Hartman; city fire alarm list.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE SYNAGOGUE

The lot corner of Friendship and Foster Streets was purchased some months ago at a cost of \$6500, the money being largely raised through the efforts of Dr. Sessler and the Women's Auxiliary Society. The congregation has been in existence some 35 years, and aside from the modest and unpretentious place of worship on Pine Street, which before and since its occupancy by the congregation has been devoted

to various uses, services have been held in halls, lodge rooms and such other places as the officers were able to secure. But the energy, enterprise and ambition of the congregation have proved superior to many obstacles, and with the purchase of the land, the erection of a temple of worship received a fresh impetus and the building committee consulted with architect Wilmarth H. Colwell, who has designed a structure which has met with their approval, and will doubtless that of the congregation and its friends.

(Since the description of the building is repeated almost verbatim in the account of the dedication which follows, it is omitted here.)

The cost of the building will approximate \$14,000, and the congregation hopes to be able to meet that sum by a variety of enterprises including a grand fair to be given in the Music Hall next month.

**Congregation Sons of Israel, \***

OF PROVIDENCE, R. I.

April 4, 1888.

Dear Sirs:

Having purchased, after years of hard struggling, a suitable piece of land and proposing to build a place of worship on the same, and having exhausted our means in the purchase of the grounds we are now compelled to ask the kind assistance of our friends, to enable us to erect a Synagogue, and we hope that this appeal to you for this worthy object will receive your earnest consideration, and that you will aid us with a liberal subscription.

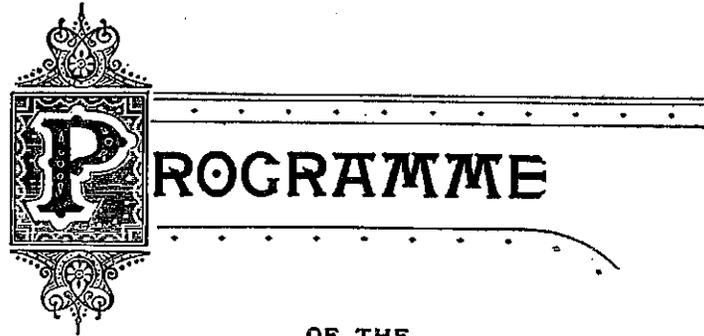
D. Bernkopf,  
Secretary.

Alex. Strauss  
Pres.



Isaac Hahn  
Pres.

\* This name and seal are incorrect. The name was changed in 1874 to "Congregation Sons of Israel and David".



OF THE

DEDICATION SERVICES

AT THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE

CONGREGATION

Sons of Israel and David,

*PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND,*

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1890, 2.30 O'CLOCK P. M.

BLOCH PRINTING CO.  
CINCINNATI.

JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

*Dedication Ceremonies at the Temple on Friendship Street<sup>2</sup>*

ORATION AND SERMON BY REV. DRS. WISE AND LASKER

*Impressive Musical Service and Celebration Supper*

The Synagogue of the Congregation Sons of Israel and David, corner Friendship and Foster Streets, was formally dedicated yesterday afternoon with the impressive ceremonial of the Hebrew Church which included the consecration of the Ark of the Covenant, the lighting of the Perpetual Lamp, the deposit of the Sefer Thoras in the Ark, an elaborate musical service, an oration by the distinguished Rabbi, Rev. Dr. Wise of Cincinnati, and Consecration Sermon by Rev. Dr. Lasker of Boston. The arrangements were entrusted to a special committee, of which Rabbi Sessler was Chairman, and the auditorium was filled to its utmost capacity with members of the congregation and distinguished guests including ex-Governors Ladd and Taft, Hon. George M. Carpenter of the United States District Court, Associate Justice Hon. P. E. Tillinghast of the Supreme Court, Post-Master C. H. George, Rev. Dr. Vose of the Beneficent Church and Citizens prominent in business and professional circles.

The consecration of the cornerstone of the Sacred Edifice September, 1889, marked the initial step in the establishment of a permanent home, and signalized the 35th year of the organization of the Congregation.

The first Jewish Congregation in this city was incorporated in the May session, 1885 [sic], under the name of Sons of Israel, by the request of Joseph Stern, Solomon Pareira, Abraham H. Goodman, David de Young, M. Marks, Henry Solomon and Isaac Fish. They, with a few more of their associates, held their services in their own residences and afterwards in different halls in the city of Providence. While struggling for years under the Orthodox ritual, they were not able to strengthen or infuse new life into their congregation. They, in August, 1877, called a convention of all Israelites in Providence, who were addressed by Rev. Dr. Sonnenshein and the Hon. Benjamin F. Peixotto, members of the union of American Hebrew Congregation in Cincinnati, for the purpose of uniting the Israelites under a

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<sup>2</sup>Reprinted from the *Providence Daily Journal*, Monday, December 8, 1890.

reformed ritual, which was under their good counsel, adopted and, from that time on, the congregation was more progressive. They at once, leased the little chapel, corner Page and Pine Streets, remodelled the same at a great expense, which was retained as a place of worship until 1882, when they were obliged to look for another place of worship on account of the ownership of the property.

Since that time the Congregation worshipped in the hall at 98 Weybosset Street. From a mere handful of devoted and progressive members, the Congregation has steadily maintained its organization and enlarged its sphere of influence and usefulness in the community and its officers and clergy, aided by the Women's Auxiliary Society and those identified with the secret and beneficent Societies which have been formed from time to time, have devoted themselves vigorously to the work of securing funds for the purchase of a site and the erection of a permanent temple of worship. Jewish people of the city are recognized as among its most industrious, law-abiding and respectable inhabitants and their active and self-sacrificing efforts for the promotion of their spiritual welfare have been crowned with remarkable results, for within a comparatively brief period they raised by subscription and other means the sum of \$6500 for the purchase of the lot, which is located in a most eligible spot within a quarter of a mile of the heart of the city. Emboldened by this happy consummation of their hopes, they accepted plans for the erection of a cozy and convenient house of worship of picturesque and symbolical design and devised ways and means to secure funds for its construction and furnishing at a cost of \$14,000.

In this worthy effort, they have been stimulated and encouraged by the devoted and energetic service of the Rabbi, Rev. Dr. Sessler, who assumed charge of the congregation nearly two years ago. No sooner had he commenced his ministrations than he set about devising the means to secure the erection of a permanent place of worship for his congregation. With this end in view, he started a subscription list and solicited the cooperation of all friends regardless of their creed, and a list was sub-divided and framed in some dozen neat frames containing from 60 to 70 names each. The list was headed by Rev. Dr. Greer, formerly rector of Grace Church of this city, who was a great friend and admirer of the Rabbi. There are the names of two ex-Governors of the State, Taft and Lippitt, and ex-Lieut. Gov.

Cutler, also that of Mayor Barker, Joseph Banigan, F. C. Sayles and W. F. Sayles of Pawtucket, Charles Fletcher, Callender, McAusland and Troup, and hundreds of other prominent persons in the city and throughout the State. The names preserved in the frames are hung about the walls of the Synagogue when completed and are preserved among the most cherished archives as evidence of the friendly spirit and encouragement manifested by their Christian brethren.

The lot is about 40 x 96 feet, costing about \$6500, and is centrally located, fronting on one of the pleasantest streets of the city. The Synagogue follows the Romanesque style of architecture and is constructed of Springfield brick, with new quarry brown-stone trimmings. The height of the building from its base to the gable is 48 feet and to the pinnacle of the tower 78 feet. It is lighted with cathedral tint windows, the large window in the front being surrounded with Hebrew tablets in Scriptural design. The chancel and pulpit form an extension from the auditorium 18 x 46 feet, the arch rising to a height of 30 feet and the roof being covered with green-colored slate. The main entrances to the church are on Friendship Street, either through the base of the tower or near the west end of the building. The vestibule is 35 x 55 feet, with a seating capacity of 410, while the gallery running along the Friendship Street side seats 85 persons. The interior is finished throughout in white wood and the roof is trussed in panels. The walls and ceiling are decorated in neutral tints to conform to the general plan of interior ornamentation. The chancel is 10 x 20 feet, and the platform is surmounted with a reading desk and tasteful furniture for the congregation and other occupants of the Sanctuary. In the rear of the pulpit is placed the Ark of the Covenant and other symbols of the church, including the tablets and the urn of sacred oil. Entrance to the chancel is gained by Foster Street, and also to the vestries below. In the rear of the pulpit are the Rabbi's study and waiting rooms. A stairway leads from the entrance at the base of the tower to the gallery and choir loft, the space to be devoted to the organ being 15 x 35 feet, and the choir section 14 feet square. Descending to the vestries by stairways near both main entrances, a room 56 x 35 feet easily divided into two apartments of equal size by adjustable doors, is found, which can be devoted to various uses. At the northerly end is a platform, on either side of which are rooms which can be utilized in many ways. A stair-

way leads to the vestry from the Foster Street entrance, all of the exits being conveniently arranged. There are also two cozy rooms at the southerly end of the vestry, which can be used as toilet and coat apartments. The building is heated by steam and supplied with all the modern conveniences to insure comfort and durability. The cost of the building approximates \$14,000, and the proceeds from a grand fair in Music Hall, and individual contributions have materially reduced the indebtedness.

The consecration ceremonies incidental to the laying of the cornerstone were performed by the Grand Lodge of Masons, assisted by the National Band, and President Alex Strauss of the congregation gave the historical address, and Rabbi Sessler gave the oration. Among the special guests of the day were United States, State and City dignitaries, clergymen from the various denominations and the exercises were remarkably interesting and impressive, reflecting much credit upon the congregation and its officers and other auxiliaries which had been instrumental in the growth and welfare of the organization.

#### THE DEDICATORY SERVICE

At 2:30 o'clock the services commenced with the presentation of the key by architect Wilmarth to the building committee, consisting of Rabbi M. Sessler, B. Lederer, L. Dimond, Fred Hartman and D. Bernkoph, Sr., after which the choir, consisting of Misses Gertie Schuman, Florine Dimond, Eva Hartman, Mrs. Julius Schuman, Mr. Fred S. Gardner and William A. Potter, sang the anthem, "How Beautiful Are Thy Tents, O, Jacob"; Rabbi Sessler then opened the scroll of Sefer Thora and read selections interspersed with singing by the choir, and a joint procession moved down the aisles, the first led by Rabbi Sessler, followed by Rev. Dr. Wise, bearing the scrolls, and the Board of Trustees, Henry Green, J. Schuman, A. Cohen, D. C. Fink, Julius Moral, H. Boas, and J. Shartenberg, and the other led by Dr. Lasker, the children assigned to the presentation ceremony, and the building committee, B. Lederer, L. Dimond, Fred Hartman and D. Bernkoph, Sr. After they had taken their several stations, the responsive service by the Rabbi and choir proceeded, and then came the impressive service of lighting the Perpetual Lamp by President Strauss, which was stationed above the Ark, and was a handsome pendant of polished brass and ornamental brilliants. Simultaneously, the massive

crystal chandelier and altar candelabra flooded the auditorium with light, the organ meanwhile accompanying the illuminative ceremony with subdued and melodious music. The altar and sanctuary were beautifully decorated with flowers and tropical plants and the rich brocaded draperies of satin with silvered linings, which were gracefully parted on either side of the Ark, as also that which screened the sacred symbols within, gave a brilliant and picturesque effect which was heightened by the artistic dressing of the scrolls.

Dr. R. Lasker, having congratulated the people upon the success that had attended their indefatigable efforts to raise the sanctuary, said: "What more inspiring words can I bring you today than those of our prophet Isaiah 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of joy, that published salvation, that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth'. I come to you today a humble servant of the High God, and I bring you good tidings. I bring you the best wishes and congratulations of my congregation and also the best wishes and congratulations of the congregations in these New England States, as you enter your new house of worship.

"The first message I bring you is tidings of peace. Peace is, indeed, a blessing of immeasurable value in all connections of life. And where can you find a better opportunity for beginning this grand blessing of peace than in the House of God, where all are of one purpose, and all earthly distinctions are not recognized, where all hearts are sympathy. Peace to you, peace to your households and peace to all that belong to them.

"The second message that I bring to you today, my friends, is tidings of happiness. Happiness is the wish and aim of every human being. Where is it to be found? Can we find it in wealth that imposes a weight of care upon us and exposes us to many temptations? Can we find it in honor? Of all human passions, perhaps none is more uneasy than that which leads us to desire distinction among our fellow men, and there is none that leads us further away from the path of peace. Can we find it in pleasure that palls our appetites and blunts our senses? Happiness is a heavenly plant and can only thrive in a heart of heavenly mold. Where God is not, there can be no true happiness. Stronger than love, wiser than philosophy, sweeter than earthly fame, it is religion that alone can bring true hap-

piness to man, that sincere desire to come nearer to the Heavenly Father.

“Regard therefore, this sanctuary, friends, as the point of connection between temporal and spiritual happiness, between earth and heaven, and remember that substantial happiness can only come by doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly before the Lord your God.

“Another message I have to announce to you today. God reigns. From the time that God gave unto our father Abraham and his seed the glorious privilege of proclaiming His truth to the ends of the earth, Israel has never faltered in its mission. How has the high and noble endeavor been appreciated by the nations? Who is able to take into consideration the trials and tribulations that Israel has undergone for this spiritual privilege? Yet throughout all those elements of annihilation, despotic potentates and laws, it has never ceased to proclaim ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.’

“Here the faithful shepherd is to lead his flocks in the path of righteousness. Within these sacred precincts will be heard the voice of religion most powerfully and majestically. In this temple will the affectionate mother come to invoke a blessing for her tender offspring. Here will the bride and bridegroom come and sanctify life into life by the true vows which will make them one in heart and one in blessing, and here also will the widow come when she must find support and protection. The penitent will approach this altar to find pardon and mercy. It will be a house of refuge to those who are weary in mind and heart where they may pour out their souls in supplication and prayer before the throne of mercy. Then shall we appreciate the words of the prophet: ‘How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings.’”

Miss Mattie Hartman then presented the key to President Strauss in a neat and graceful address, and President Strauss accepted the offering from the children in the following words:

“My dear Children: I am more than proud of my official honor to receive from you in behalf of the building committee the key of this structure. The part you are taking in today’s ceremony, I know you will remember as long as God will spare your lives, and in the same way I will ever remember your kind words and will try to carry

out your request to the best of my ability. Brethren of the building committee, you are known to us as honorable and faithful members, enjoying the implicit confidence of every member of the congregation and this day you have proven yourselves worthy of the trust. How zealously you have carried out the wishes of the congregation is best testified to by this beautiful structure which speaks better than any words from me. Ladies, gentlemen and honored guests: It is with a feeling of more than ordinary pleasure and satisfaction that I extend to you a hearty welcome on the occasion of one of the most important and interesting events in the history of the Jews of Providence. As early as 1877, after the reorganization of this congregation, it was our ardent desire to have a place of worship of our own, and a building fund was started in 1883, but the progress was so slow that even the most hopeful began to doubt of ever being able to carry out their purpose. Such was our condition three years ago, when our beloved Rabbi, Dr. M. Sessler, came among us. He saw the absolute necessity for this congregation to have a place of worship of their own, and he earnestly advocated that we should commence at once to obtain one. Now, without making invidious comparisons, and without intending any disparagement to anyone who has contributed the least mite towards the furtherance and accomplishment of this object, since in the last week's issue of the Hebrew Standard, and the Jewish Chronicle, an article appeared, ascribing the honor of having this building for dedication today to one to whom it does not belong, I feel it incumbent upon me to insist with the greatest emphasis that the honor be bestowed upon whomsoever honor is due. All honor and praise be to our beloved Rabbi for his individual efforts, by which he accomplished more than any other individual; aye! more than all combined, special thanks are due, and in the name of the congregation I render them to our Christian friends for their cheerful and liberal donations toward the erection of this building.

"It is also pleasant to know that our Jewish organizations have taken such deep interest in furnishing this building, and in behalf of the congregation, I extend our hearty thanks to Haggai Lodge, No. 132, I.O.B.B., for this beautiful chandelier; to Providence Lodge, No. 78, F.S. of I., for the elegant furniture on this pulpit; to the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society for the beautiful lights in the pulpit; to our Young Sons of Israel for their donation and the fixture

of the perpetual light; to the Bible Class for their donation and to our Ladies Auxiliary Society for their beautiful handwork in decorating the ark, pulpit and Sefer Thoras. And right here, my dear ladies, let me beg you to keep up your organization and continue your noble work, so very essential for the progress of this congregation. May our going out and our coming in make us better men and women, and may the teachings given here to our children serve to promote their happiness, and be of benefit to the community at large."

Miss Flora Dimond then sang a soprano solo with cultivated taste and sympathetic feeling and the ceremony of placing the Sefer Thoras in the Ark was performed by the committee, the choir rendering appropriate music. Rabbi Sessler offered the dedicatory prayer, and Miss Gertie Schuman sang the solo, "Hear us, O Father", with violin obligato, by Mr. Henri Faucher. Miss Schuman is a pupil of Mr. Jordan, and has a voice of remarkable purity, flexibility and sweetness, which interpreted the stirring composition with artistic grace and intensity of expression.

#### DR. WISE'S ORATION

Dr. Isaac M. Wise said: "This is generally considered a nationalistic age and among other things people do not believe in miracles. And this, notwithstanding the fact that there are a thousand miracles in the physical world, as well as in the mental and moral. Although it is a miracle that I speak and you hear, that I convey moral ideas which have no kind of bodily existence into your hearts and your brains. Yes, people may not believe in miracles, yet I know of three facts that are evidences that miracles do exist.

"The first miracle is the existence of the human race, the fulfillment of the first prophecy and the first blessing announced in sacred scriptures: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it, and have dominion'. When we take into consideration the thousand disadvantages under which man labors in comparison with the stronger animals existing around us, and those which may have existed before we came on the earth, when we come to consider his war of defence against the elements and stronger animals than himself, and yet we are 1400 millions of people in the world today, while the stronger animals belonging to the past have some of them disappeared and those that remain have disappeared, you must admit

that it is miraculous. It is not merely wonderful. It demonstrates the special influence of Providence which was announced at the very threshold of man's existence.

"Again it is a miracle that the seed of Abraham has outlived and outlasted all the revolutions of centuries, and the ruins of the past. History speaks to us of nations that have passed away, of great empires having risen and become submerged, of great nations and empires which once played important parts in history of man that are now no more. It tells us of how the tyranny of potentates and priests and the fury of mobs have been spent in vain. God said to Abraham, I will make thy seed as the stars of heaven for number, and to-day we are in all inhabitable places of the globe. I regard this as a miracle, a piece of history that demonstrates the influence of a benign Providence.

"Here lies before you this book. Here you have carried the Sefer Thoras in triumph to sanctify this place, for wherever the Sefer Thoras are placed there is a sanctuary. They were in the Ark of the tabernacle in the wilderness, they were in the temple on Mount Moriah and you have carried the same sacred rolls in triumph, and have sanctified this place with the same divine peace. Here also is the Shekinah, for the Divine Spirit is within, for the Divine Spirit is in those Divine Words. Here also the blessing of the Lord will be announced as Moses and Aaron announced in the tabernacle in the wilderness. And this is the third and greatest miracle. Here in the very language in which it was spoken we have the truth of God as it was written by the inspired men. There is nothing in the history of the world; there is nothing in literature to compare with the sacred books that you have just carried in triumph. We further know that these very doctrines against which there has been strenuous warfare, which have been denied and reviled have become the basis of the religion of the civilized world. Nay, more than that, they have become the moral and ethical foundation of civilization itself. There is nothing else in this world that will compare with the powerful originality of the prophets, there is nothing to compare with the music of the ancient singers of Israel, and yet, they are all founded upon the books of Moses, which all the wickedness of man could not wipe out of existence.

"Can you deny any of these three miracles? I have asked profes-

sors of universities and they could not. I have asked the world and no one has answered me. If you cannot believe in miracles please explain this phenomena [sic] in history to some natural means. If you cannot explain, and it is my humble opinion that you cannot, please admit that they are miracles."

The speaker then entered exhaustively into a history of the changing forms of religions belief. He said:

"Every changing form of religion has said 'you are wrong, but we are right'. My brothers, history is a rock upon which you cannot build your charges. History is behind us, it has always been said to the coming of religion 'you are wrong, and Israel is right'. And if you today ask a Roman Catholic, Protestant or Mohamedan, who is right, they will each claim that they are right, but if you ask them, who next to them is right, they will tell you that the Jew is right. Yes, it is so always 'we are right first, and next the Jew.'

"Here is another miracle, this second Jewish sanctuary in this State; the first was built in Newport. It is a miracle for which I express the thanks of the congregation of Israel. It is the last link in the great chain of altars, that commenced with Abraham at Bethel."

After the oration, Mr. Potter gave a baritone solo with a response by Miss Schuman in simulation of an echo, which was rendered with pleasing effect. The choir sang "Joy in the Sanctuary" and the service closed with the benediction by Dr. Sessler. The congregation remained quiet during the exercises which occupied nearly three hours, and at the close Rabbi Sessler and the officers were congratulated upon the success of the remarkable event in the history of the inception and consummation of their energetic and self-sacrificing efforts in the establishment of a permanent church home. Mr. Isaac Hahn officiated as marshal of the day, assisted by Messrs. Abe Dimond, M. Lorentz and Sam Hartman.

#### THE CELEBRATORY SUPPER

At 8 o'clock in the evening, the congregation and its guests assembled in the vestry where an elaborate supper was served by caterer Harris of Boston. Rev. Drs. Wise and Lasker, Dr. Sessler, President Strauss, the Board of Trustees and others participated. Mr. J. Shartenberg presided as toastmaster, and the list of sentiments and respondents was as follows:

Our congregation—"May our watchword continue to be onward."

Response by President Alex. Strauss, American Judaism—"Its progress is felt the world over."

Response by Rev. Dr. Wise, Our Country—"May its liberal Government be the guiding star for all nations."

Response by Mr. Isaac Hahn, The Day We Celebrate, Response by Dr. Sessler, Our Christian Friends—"Those who so nobly responded to our cause."

Response by Mr. B. Lederer, Our Rabbis—"May their labors in the field of religion be productive of good results."

Response by Dr. Lasker, Haggai Lodge. Response by Mr. L. Hartman, Our past Presidents—"The leaders of early Judaism in Providence whom we honor for their past services."

Response by Mr. Henry Green, Our ladies—"Those who have always aided us on all good and noble deeds."

Response by Mr. L. Dimond.

A particularly interesting feature was the presentation to President Strauss by the congregation of a costly parlor set of furniture of the Wilton rug pattern, with plush trimmings, with center table, in recognition of his faithful and well directed services during his presidency of 14 years, and which was fittingly referred to by toastmaster Shartenberg. The recipient was taken by surprise, but recovered his equilibrium sufficiently to make a grateful and affecting response. The festivities came to a delightful termination at a seasonable hour. Incidentally Mrs. Schuman, Mrs. B. Lederer, and Mrs. Fink who dressed the scrolls, Mrs. S. Lederer who draped the altar and the ladies of Pawtucket who designed and embroidered the draperies of the Ark, were highly complimented for their valuable service.

LIFE AND TIMES OF JUDAH TOURO<sup>1</sup>

BY DAVID C. ADELMAN, ESQ.

*(This excellent sketch of Judah Touro, prepared more than a quarter of a century ago, at the time of the Rhode Island State Tercentenary, although published privately, has never received general circulation. Because of its great merit and historical accuracy, it is the judgment of the editors that it deserves a permanent place in historical archives.)*

When President Temkin asked me to present a paper on Judah Touro in keeping with the spirit of the Civic Tercentenary program, I readily accepted his gracious invitation because of my devotion to the Association and my admiration for the character of Judah Touro. Little did I realize at that time the proportions which the task would assume, because it did not occur to me that the available material would be so fragmentary as it proved to be. Although Judah Touro has been dead over eighty years, no biography has been written in keeping with his place in American Jewish history. In 1905 Max J. Kohler, Esq., made the first Jewish contribution in a paper read before the American Jewish Historical Association. Up to that time the best authorities were two non-Jewish contemporaries of Judah Touro in New Orleans, Judge Alexander Walker whose paper is found in Vol. 2 of "Lives of American Merchants by Freeman Hunt" and Rev. Theodore Clapp whose contribution is found in "Autobiographical Sketches and Recollections during a thirty-five years' residence in New Orleans." These sketches are still the most detailed and authoritative.

It is the function of biography "to produce a living record of men who were themselves once living." It must be accurate and it must be alive, otherwise the reproduction will not be that of a man but of a mummy.<sup>2</sup> To a pot of paste and a pair of scissors, a pen is indispensable. I leave the wielding of the pen to those more gifted than myself and offer you my best efforts at painstaking research.

In delving into the past, it is a great emotional temptation to in-

<sup>1</sup>Tercentenary (R.I.) Address, delivered before the officers and members of the Touro Fraternal Association, May 13, 1936. Privately printed by the Touro Fraternal Association, 1936.

<sup>2</sup>Gladstone and Palmerston, Philip Guedalla.

dulge in romance either to glorify or flatter a group or to enlarge the stature of a person into heroic proportions, or to indulge in fancy to explain what by the lapse of time and lack of authentic information must necessarily remain inexplicable. In 1869 there appeared in *Harper's Magazine* an essay entitled "The Graves at Newport" in which the author says "After the terrible earthquake at Lisbon, a company of Jews embarked thence for America; their precise destination was not settled and the captain of the vessel on board on which they were passengers intended to land them on the Virginia coast. *Adverse and violent winds* led him to seek refuge in Narragansett Bay. Allured by the tolerant laws and spirit of Newport, the Israelite emigrants determined to remain there."<sup>1</sup> How does the author of this statement know of this? Obviously, he was not aboard. Obviously, no one on that ship told him. Did anyone aboard that ship leave any writing to that effect? Again the answer is "no". The facts are that these Jews from Portugal were in close touch with their relatives in Holland, some of whom had already emigrated to the New Amsterdam, now New York, and most of whom had heard of Roger Williams in Providence, and of the religious freedom which prevailed in Newport, for already the Spanish Jewish emigrants had been settled there for one hundred years. More than that, they were traders and followed the pursuits of commerce, and Newport was a seaport. Virginia on the other hand was an agricultural community and was committed to a state religion, and even to this day, has in its constitution an endorsement of christianity.

The facts show that the emigration of the Jews from Lisbon to Newport about 1755 was a deliberate act, but it is more romantic to say that these Jews were wanderers upon an unknown sea, whose fate was determined by "adverse and violent winds" sent by a divine Providence to guide the wayfarers to a haven of religious tolerance.

Rabbi Isaac Touro and the small band of Jews that left Lisbon, Portugal, about 1755 had heard of the outcast settlement of Rhode Island, where men of all creeds and no creeds, the exiles and the banished under the guidance of Roger Williams, the indomitable champion of liberty were demonstrating that religious liberties were entirely compatible with civil order. Though news was slow to travel in those days, one hundred years had elapsed since Roger Williams

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<sup>1</sup>The graves at Newport, H. T. Tuckerman, Vol. 39, p. 372.

had written his famous ship letter, in which he wrote "There goes many a ship to sea with many a soul whose weal and woe is common and is a true picture of a commonwealth or a human combination or society . . . I affirm that all the liberty of conscience that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges, that none of the papists, protestants, Jews or Turks be forced to come to the ship's prayer or worship, or compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practice any." In one hundred years they had ample opportunity to become acquainted with Roger Williams' argument in favor of the re-admission of the Jews to England, in which he said "By the merciful assistance of the Most High, I have desired to labor in England, in America, with English, with Barbarians, yea, and also I have longed after some trading with Jews themselves, for whose hard measure, I feel the nations and England hath yet a score to pay. I desire not that liberty to myself which I would not freely and impartially weigh out to all the consciences of the world besides."<sup>1</sup>

The accident "of adverse and violent winds," the caprice of fate, and the whim of fortune, played no part in Rabbi Touro's coming to Newport. The Puritan Cotton Mather forgetting English religious persecutions resented the tolerance extended the Jews of Newport, and referred to Newport as "the common receptacle of the convicts of Jerusalem and the outcasts of the land." But then we must remember that Dr. Samuel Johnson, who said "patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel" had called Americans "a race of convicts," and convicted men in England offered the choice of hanging or being shipped to America, had given the answer, "Hang me."

"In 1816 there were about eight million people in the United States, many of whom came from the Old World of their own volition as a result of quarrels over religious questions. Included in the eight million also were about fifty thousand thieves and murderers sent from British prisons and courts over their protests."<sup>2</sup>

In 1826 a wealthy Englishman, named Robert Owen established the first Communistic community in America at New Harmony, Indiana, where "Everyone would share and share alike, each for all and all for each." Less than one thousand miles distant Mr. Judah Touro, constituted the Jewish community of New Orleans. Not far

<sup>1</sup>Roger Williams, by Oscar Straus, p. 110-111.

<sup>2</sup>Abraham Lincoln, *The Prairie Years*, by Carl Sandburg, Vol. I, p. 35.

from New Harmony, at Gentryville, Indiana, a nineteen year old boy, Abraham Lincoln by name, under hire by James Gentry, built a flat boat of oak and in 1828 went down the Mississippi River bound for New Orleans to sell and trade provisions. He travelled at the rate of four to six miles an hour on the watch for pirates who infested the river, sold and traded his boat and cargo at New Orleans where he stayed a few days, during which he saw slaves sold on the block for the first time and heard of the first railroad in the world to be built, and returned by steamboat. He had been gone three months, and received six or eight dollars a month. Here we take leave of Abraham Lincoln, as there is no evidence that he traded with Mr. Judah Touro.

"We respect the name of Judah Touro as that of one who was typical of what is best in the Jewish character, and because he, more than any other Jew, inspired respect and admiration among Jew and Gentile alike for the Jewish name in America, and because his unprecedented and diversified philanthropies laid the foundations throughout the country for those Jewish charities which have ever since been the pride and boast of American Jewry."<sup>1</sup>

He was born at Newport, Rhode Island, on June 16, 1775, on the eve of the Revolutionary War. His father was Rabbi Isaac Touro who came to Newport about 1758 after an earthquake in Lisbon, Portugal. Rabbi Touro founded at Newport the Congregation "Yeshuat Israel" which built the beautiful synagogue still standing at Newport which was dedicated Hanukah 1763, the Machphelah or cemetery being one hundred years older. Rabbi Touro married Reyna Hayes, the sister of Moses Michael Hayes in 1773. Three children were born of this union,<sup>2</sup> Abraham, Judah and Rebecca. During the Revolution, the British occupied Newport so that trade, commerce and industry were disrupted to such an extent that the exodus of the Jews began. Rabbi Touro took his wife and children to Kingston, Jamaica, where he died on December 8, 1783, at 46 years of age and where his remains are still buried.

The widow and children of Rabbi Touro were left destitute and were sent for by Mrs. Touro's brother Moses Michael Hayes, who

<sup>1</sup>Amer. Jewish Hist. Soc. Pub., Max J. Kohler, Esq., vol. 6, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>There were four children born, one of whom, Nathan, was born in New York and died in infancy.

had moved to Hanover Street, Boston, and was the only Jew living there at the time, and a leading merchant and Mason. There Mrs. Touro died in 1787.

In the home of their uncle, Moses Michael Hayes, Abraham and Judah Touro acquired the principles of rectitude and business acumen which characterized them in later life. There, too, they moved in the best of society, and were brought into close contact with eminent non-Jews and acquired tolerance and breadth of view. There they met on terms of personal intimacy United States Senator Harrison Gray Otis, Thomas H. Perkins, a distinguished philanthropist and promoter of the first American railroad and Samuel J. May, the abolitionist leader. While in their uncle's counting room, they learned the practical side of commerce.

Abraham died, unmarried, in Boston, October 18, 1882, at the age of 48, as the result of an accident to the carriage in which he was driving. At his own request he was buried at Newport, though no Jew remained there, because those who had returned after the Revolution were again dispersed by the war of 1812. Because of the overshadowing fame of his brother Judah, Abraham's philanthropies have been slighted, and one in particular, the Touro Synagogue Fund administered by the State of Rhode Island, is popularly though erroneously attributed to Judah. Abraham acquired a fortune in trade with the Mediterranean ports. In 1820 while on a visit to Newport he had a brick wall built around the cemetery which had fallen into disrepair and decay. By his will he left \$10,000.00 to the Legislature of Rhode Island for the purpose of supporting the Jewish Synagogue and cemetery at Newport, which fund has grown to \$92,000.00 and comprises the Touro Fund administered under Chapter 110 of the General Laws of Rhode Island; \$10,000.00 to the Massachusetts General Hospital; \$5000.00 to the Boston Female Orphan Asylum; \$5000.00 to the Asylum for Indigent Boys; \$5000.00 to the Humane Society; \$5000.00 to the City of Newport for repairing and preserving the street leading to the Jewish Cemetery, now known as Touro Street; \$10,000.00 to the Synagogue at New York and a number of other bequests from \$500.00 to \$5000.00 each.

Judah Touro sailed from Boston for New Orleans, October 1801 upon the advice of friends. The voyage was long and stormy, taking four months, and made such a disagreeable impression upon him

that from that time until his death in 1854 he never left the city limits, except during the war of 1812, nor even did he condescend to board one of the many vessels which he came to own in later years, but would content himself with what he could see from his walk on the wharves. The ship which brought him to New Orleans was loaded with merchandise belonging to various shippers, and consigned to Judah Touro. He opened a small store, dealing in soap, candles, codfish and the like. His reputation for industry, integrity and good judgment resulted in increasingly larger consignments of merchandise, while ships were placed at his disposal, as agent for cargoes and freight. He was so methodical that you could judge the time of the day by his movements. He opened his store himself at sunrise, and closed it at sunset. He rarely employed more than one clerk, never speculated, and adhered strictly to the cash system. In a frontier community noted for its litigants, though his business interests were large, he was never engaged in a law suit. He was a modest man and praise seemed to give him pain rather than pleasure. He prospered and invested his surplus funds judiciously in real estate and ships.

Shortly after he came to New Orleans he made the acquaintance of a young man, Rezin D. Shepherd, a merchant from Virginia, with whom he struck up an intimacy and friendship which grew with the years and which lasted until they were parted by death. In the War of 1812 Judah Touro left the cares of business to enlist in the ranks in defense of New Orleans under Andrew Jackson, and on January 1, 1815, volunteered to aid in carrying shot and shell from the magazine to the battery and while thus engaged was struck in the thigh with a twelve pound shot and almost given up for dead. Word reached his friend, Shepherd, who obtained a cot and brought Mr. Touro to his house in the city, where he was placed in charge of nurses. Ever afterwards Shepherd and Touro were inseparable. Both became millionaires, but maintained the esteem and regard of the community of which they were outstanding leaders.

New Orleans was a great trading center, but made slow progress in the direction of a permanent population owing to the scourge of epidemics of cholera and yellow fever with which the city was visited almost annually. There were twenty such epidemics during Judah Touro's lifetime. In the epidemic of 1832, 5000 persons died in ten

days. Bodies were thrown in the river, while others were piled up in the cemetery, like cordwood, without coffins. In 1837 there were 10,000 cases and 5000 deaths. In 1853 it is estimated that there were 40,000 cases of whom 10,300 died. Words cannot convey an adequate idea of the horrors and desolation that accompanied these pestilences; ninety out of every hundred victims were in the bloom of life from thirty to forty years of age who died away from their homes, unwept, unhonored and unsung. In some cases all the clerks and help belonging to a business were carried off; stores were closed; whole families perished, others lost a quarter, a half or three-quarters of their members and their business, hopes and happiness were blasted for life.<sup>1</sup> The social consequences of such catastrophes were manifest in the temporary character of the population, most of whom were merely birds of passage and adventurers waiting like Mr. Micawber for something to turn up. Like Turkey in Europe, New Orleans was a mart of trade, rather than a permanent community. Before the credit system, many fortunes were laid upon the foundation of the Bankruptcy Laws, but to Judah Touro mercantile honor was as delicate and fragile as that of a woman; it could not bear the slightest stain.

In such surroundings, Judah Touro was one of a small group, who escaped all trials and perils, who moving among strangers, were regarded as belonging to antiquity and quite naturally as they reach three-score and ten slipped from the scenes of their activities unnoticed but Judah Touro pursued such a straight-forward, honorable path of legitimate trade resisting the temptation to profit by the misfortunes of his fellow-men, and established such a high reputation that he obtained great wealth while he retained the good-will and kind regard of the community, so that his death at 79 years of age created a profound sensation and universal mourning, not only in New Orleans, but in every corner of the country. He died a bachelor, the last of his name.

Judge Alexander Walker, of New Orleans, a non-Jew and contemporary said of him:

"It was the death of a man who had won a renown nobler, higher, and more enduring than that which the most successful merchant,

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<sup>1</sup>Autobiographical Sketches and Recollections during a thirty-five years' residence in New Orleans by Rev. Theodore Clapp.

the most daring warrior, or the most gifted author ever earned. Who that saw him in life, would have anticipated such fervent demonstrations of popular affection and grief at his death? How little of the hero or great man was there, in the simple, humble aspect of that timid, shrinking old man, who was wont to glide so silently and diffidently through the streets, with his hands behind him, his eyes fixed on the pavements, and his homely old face, wrinkled with age, but replete with the expression of genial kindness and benevolence. He was, too, a man of no great deeds, or public services, or brilliant qualities. And yet, when the tidings of his decease go forth, a whole people, a reckless, frivolous, and cynical people, turn aside from their various pursuits of pleasure or ambition, to bewail with heartfelt sorrow his departure. And he died a millionaire. The people do not usually sorrow over the death of the rich man. There is divine authority for this popular repugnance to those who have heaped up the treasures of this world. It is rare, indeed, that the man who does his duty by his fellow-men in life, accumulates large wealth.

“Not many months before the death which has suggested these remarks, there had departed this life another millionaire, a contemporary of the lamented subject of this sketch. He was a man of enormous possessions, all of which, it was known, he had bequeathed to public charities. And yet he was not mourned. The people, indeed, reckoned his death a timely event, and hardly respected the immunity from uncharitable comment which death claims for his victim. He has been a brilliant and successful merchant, a man of prominent characteristics, of high intelligence and resolute courage, and a fearless and remorseless litigant. His gains were the result of masterly combinations and heroic tenacity. And yet he was attended to the grave only by a small number of his dependents and employees. So dreary were his last hours, that it was rumored that his death was hastened by the want of proper attendance in sickness. And this was a man whose life had been one of unceasing devotion to Mammon,—to the entire exclusion of all kindly and charitable acts and feelings—whose career had been along a hard, stony, sterile path, where not a flower bloomed, or blade of verdure relieved the dreary prospect.

“How different had been the life of the subject of this sketch! Wealth seemed to flow into his coffers, as the reward of a boundless

and incessant benevolence and beneficence—an ever-active philanthropy. His career was a splendid illustration of the Divine injunction and promise, 'Cast thy bread on the waters, and after many days it shall return to thee.' Avarice, the love of money for its own sake, were as foreign to his nature as dishonesty and falsehood. He deprived himself of all other luxuries in order to enjoy and gratify with keener relish and greater intensity his single passion and appetite—to do good to his fellow-men. He was a miser only in the exercise of his charity and benevolence, from which he jealously excluded others. His only art and stealth were displayed in the concealment of his benefactions, and his chief vexation and trouble were to avoid the ostentation and display which are too often the main incentives to liberal and benevolent deeds."<sup>1</sup>

Those who feel that every confirmed bachelor was confirmed by a woman, will be interested to know that there are two anecdotes concerning Judah Touro's love life, the first is that in his early days in Boston he was in love but that the young people were thwarted—by poverty, the other is that he was in love with his cousin Catherine Hayes, but that they did not marry on account of their close blood relationship. It is interesting to note that Catherine died in Richmond, Virginia, eleven days before Judah Touro. He remembered her in his will, in ignorance of her death, and she likewise remembered him in her will.

Whether he had ever been crossed in love, we cannot say authoritatively, but upon the word of Mrs. MacRea, wife of Major MacRea of the United States Army, who occupied one of his houses while in New Orleans, we can say that he certainly avoided the society of ladies and was never willing to exchange a word with them. The MacRea house was out of repair. Mrs. MacRea wrote Mr. Touro repeatedly but was ignored. At last, knowing his weakness, she sent word that if he did not make the repairs, she would call on him. The next morning there was a great noise in front of the MacRea house, where carpenters, painters, masons, plasterers, tinsmiths—men of almost every trade—had congregated each with an order from Mr. Touro to make such repairs as Mrs. MacRea desired.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lives of American Merchants by Freeman Hunt. Vol. 2. Judah Touro by Alexander Walker, Esq.

<sup>2</sup>Reminiscences of Newport by George C. Mason.

Judah Touro's whole life was a protest against the oft repeated but baseless charge that the Jews cannot be loyal citizens. While some men give spasmodically and ostentatiously in their life time or only by last will, his whole life was devoted to personal charitable service without regard to age, creed or race, so that in spite of his modesty and retiring disposition, his reputation as a philanthropist was already established when he died.

In 1822 the only Unitarian Church in Louisiana was in debt in the sum of \$45,000.00. The church was to be sold by the sheriff. The Reverend Theodore Clapp and the trustees obtained permission from the legislature for a lottery which was granted, and the sum of \$25,000.00 raised. The property was in a valuable business section and it was feared that the congregation would be left without a place of worship. There was much sympathy for the popular preacher, but the value of the property put it out of the power of his friends to save the church. Judah Touro appeared at the sale, in his quiet modest manner, and without disclosing his intention to anyone, bid in the church for the sum of \$20,000.00. Rev. Clapp in 1863 wrote "the sale of the church was looked upon as merely nominal, although it was purchased without any conditions, expressed or implied, or any pledges as to the final disposition which should be made of it. All had confidence in the general character of Mr. Touro, and were very glad to have the church put into his hands. It was a time of great business depression in New Orleans, when Mr. Touro became the proprietor of the church edifice and grounds. Many of the society fell in the preceding epidemic. Some who were most prominent had just settled with their creditors. The friends of the institution were few, feeble, impoverished, bankrupt, and pushed to the very brink of ruin. A noble Israelite snatched them from the jaws of destruction. From that day down to its destruction by fire, he held it for their use, and incurred an additional expense of several thousand dollars for keeping it in repair. For myself he professed the strongest personal regard and showed it by giving almost the entire income of the church—the pew rents, for about 28 years, besides, he gave me in small sums, from time to time \$20,000.00. He might have torn the building down at the beginning, and reared on its site a block of stores, whose revenue by this time would have amounted to half a million dollars at least. He was urged to do so on several occasions,

and once replied to a gentleman who made a very liberal offer for the property, that 'there was not enough money in the world to buy it, and that if he could have his way, there should be a church on the spot to the end of time.' This man was a Jew. Is there a Christian society in New Orleans that has ever offered the Unitarians the slightest assistance, or even courtesy? The Unitarians have aided materially towards the erection of all the orthodox Protestant churches in the Crescent City. But when they were burned out, and asked for one of the orthodox churches to hold meetings in occasionally, the favor was denied on the alleged ground that by showing such a kindness they might indirectly encourage the dreadful heresies which we were laboring to promulgate. But in this emergency the aforesaid Hebrew came to our relief. He purchased a small Baptist chapel for us to worship in, free of charge, till he could put up a larger building for the use of the Congregation."

In 1833 Mrs. Joshua Lopez, sister of Judah Touro, died in New York leaving him her estate valued at \$80,000.00. He refused to take the smallest fraction of it and requested his friends in New York to distribute it for charitable purposes, in the manner which they thought she would have done were she living. Out of his own funds he erected the monument over her grave in the cemetery at Newport.

In Judah Touro's time large gifts to charitable and public uses were not as common as they are now. Mr. Amos Lawrence, of Boston, was interested in the erection of the Bunker Hill monument and although the cornerstone had been laid in 1825 and although Mr. Lawrence made repeatedly for fifteen years liberal offers of a donation contingent upon the raising of the remainder of the required amount which was fifty thousand dollars, and was assisted by eloquent pleas by the Hon. Edward Everett and the Hon. Daniel Webster, the project was almost given up in despair in 1839. Judah Touro read in some newspaper that Mr. Lawrence of Boston had pledged \$10,000.00 to complete the monument, if any other person would give a like sum. Mr. Touro immediately sent his check. The dedication of the monument took place in Faneuil Hall, Boston, in 1843 in the presence of John Tyler, President of the United States, and Hon. Daniel Webster as speaker of the evening.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Joseph T. Buckingham, the

<sup>1</sup>History of the Bunker Hill Monument Association by George W. Warren.

presiding officer, commemorated the generosity of Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Touro in these lines:

Amos and Judah—venerated names!  
Patriarch and prophet press their equal claims,  
Like generous coursers, running neck and neck,  
Each aids the work by giving it a check.  
Christian and Jew, they carry out a plan—  
For though of different faith, each is in heart a man.

Mr. Touro was so incensed on account of his name being published contrary to his wishes, that he said he would have revoked the gift, had it not been for the fear that his real motives would have been misunderstood and misrepresented. This gift brought Judah Touro to the notice of the world. Because of his retiring disposition his private benefactions are comparatively unknown, although we can gather their nature from two examples.

Some poor wandering missionaries applied in vain to a number of rich men in New Orleans for funds for the relief of persecuted Christians in Jerusalem. A gentleman who thought it a good joke referred the missionaries to the strict Jew, Touro. They acted upon the suggestion and soon returned to thank the gentleman for sending them to so liberal a Christian. Mr. Touro gave them \$200.00.

On another occasion a poor widow called on him and poured out her griefs. Before she finished her story, Mr. Touro had written out a check and urged her to cash it at once. The teller in the bank examined the check and then looked her over and seeing how poorly dressed she was and noting her woebegone expression told her the check could not be paid. In shame and indignation she returned to Mr. Touro's store and handing him the check, remarked that it was most unbecoming for a rich man to make sport of a poor woman. "My dear madam," exclaimed the old man, "it is all I can give you today." "But the bank refuses to give me anything for it," the widow answered. "Oh yes, I see it all—he requires proof of your identity." "Here," turning to his clerk, "go down to the bank and tell them to pay that check." Who can blame the teller? Fifteen hundred dollars is a lot of money even in these days.

In 1842 Judah Touro removed the brick fence placed around the cemetery at Newport by his brother Abraham in 1820 and put up

the present beautiful fence of granite and iron at a cost of \$12,000.00, erecting at the same time a new monument in memory of his father and mother. In 1844 he donated \$2,000.00 to repair the portico of the Redwood Library and to lay a walk from the library to the Jewish Cemetery at Newport.

The Touro Infirmary in New Orleans was established in Judah Touro's lifetime. While he was practically the only Jewish resident for many years, as the Jewish population increased, he joined them in his devotions to God and in 1850 erected a synagogue building, which he donated at a cost of approximately \$40,000.00.

Although he died in January in New Orleans, his remains were brought to Newport where he was buried on June 6, 1854. By public resolution all business in Newport was suspended for the day, all church bells tolled, delegations from all over the United States attended and participated in expressions of grief and respect.

Before I read you his will dictated a few days before his death, I wish to call to your attention

First; the detailed knowledge and interest which it displays in the Jewish communities of this country and in Palestine.

Second; the clear and specific terms, free from conditions, restrictions or limitations.

Third; His gracious remembrance of his friends directly and through their women folks, particularly Rezin D. Shepherd.

Finally; That he gave more to non-Jews than to Jews. Rev. Theodore Clapp wrote "I have never heard of but one religionist in the United States, who can be compared with Mr. Touro, as regards the liberality of his benefactions to his own church; and he bestowed nothing on other denominations. But Mr. Touro gave more to strangers than to his brethren. With a generous profusion, he scattered his favors broadcast over the wide field of humanity. He knew well that many of the recipients of his bounty hated the Hebrews, and would, if possible, sweep them into annihilation."

His friend Rezin D. Shepherd, although rich and advanced in years proved worthy of his confidence and generosity. Mr. Shepherd devoted himself to the execution of the trusts confided to him, with such ardor and zealous industry, that in that frontier community

where litigation was second nature, the estate was settled up in the shortest time the law allowed, all legacies paid and property put in condition to be used for the purposes for which it was left. Mr. Shepherd, being a man of ample means, unostentatiously distributed his share of the residuary estate as though it were part of the estate.

To sum up, in the words of his contemporary, Judge Walker, "he was one of that smallest of all the classes—into which mankind can be divided—men who accumulate wealth without ever doing a wrong, taking an advantage or making an enemy; who become rich, without being avaricious; who deny themselves the comforts and enjoyments of life, that they may acquire the means of promoting the comfort and elevating the conditions of their fellow-men."

WILL OF JUDAH TOURO<sup>1</sup>  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
STATE OF LOUISIANA,  
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS  
United States of America,  
State of Louisiana, City of New Orleans

Be it known that on this sixth day of January, in the year of our Lord eighteen hundred and fifty-four, and of the independence of the United States of America the seventy-eighth, at a quarter before 10 o'clock a. m.,

Before me, Thomas Layton, a Notary Public, in and for the city of New Orleans aforesaid, duly commissioned and sworn, and in presence of Messrs. Jonathan Montgomery, Henry Shepherd, Jr., and George Washington Lee, competent witnesses, residing in said city, and hereto expressly required—

Personally appeared Mr. Judah Touro, of this city, merchant, whom I, the said Notary, and said witnesses, found sitting in a room, at his residence, No. 128 Canal Street, sick of body, but sound in mind, memory, and judgment, as did appear to me, the said Notary, and to said witnesses. And the said Mr. Judah Touro requested me, the

<sup>1</sup>Amer. Jew. Hist. Soc. Pub. Vol. 6.

Notary, to receive his last will or testament, which he dictated to me, Notary, as follows, to wit, and in presence of said witnesses:

1. I declare that I have no forced heirs.

2. I desire that my mortal remains be buried in the Jewish Cemetery in Newport, Rhode Island, as soon as practicable after my decease.

3. I nominate and appoint my trusty and esteemed friends Rezin Davis Shepherd of Virginia, Aaron Keppell Josephs of New Orleans, Gershom Kursheedt of New Orleans, and Pierre Andre Destrac Cazenave of New Orleans, my testamentary executors, and the detainers of my estate, making, however, the following distinction between my said executors, to wit: To the said Aaron Keppell Josephs, Gershom Kursheedt, and Pierre Andre Destrac Cazenave, I give and bequeath to each one separately, the sum of ten thousand dollars, which legacies I intend respectively, not only as tokens of remembrance of those esteemed friends, but also as in consideration of all services they may have hitherto, rendered me, and in lieu of the commissions to which they would be entitled hereafter in the capacity of Testamentary Executors as aforesaid. And as regards my other designated executor, say my dear, old and devoted friend, Rezin Davis Shepherd, to whom, under Divine Providence, I was greatly indebted for the preservation of my life when I was wounded on the 1st of January, 1815, I hereby appoint and institute him, the said Rezin Davis Shepherd, after the payment of my particular legacies and the debts of my succession, the universal legatee of the rest and residue of my estate, movable and immovable.

In case of the death, absence or inability to act of one or more of my said Executors, I hereby empower the remaining Executor or Executors to act in carrying out the provisions of this my last will; and in the event of the death or default, of any one or more of my said Executors before my own demise; then in that case, it is my intention that the heirs or legal representatives of those who may depart this life before my own death, shall inherit in their stead the legacies herein above respectfully made to them.

4. I desire that all leases of my property and which may be in force at the time of my demise, shall be faithfully executed until the same shall have expired.

5. I desire that all the estate, real, personal and mixed, of which I may die possessed, shall be disposed of in the manner directed by this my last will or testament.

6. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation the "Dispersed of Judah" of the City of New Orleans, all that certain property situated in Bourbon Street, immediately adjoining their Synagogue, being the present schoolhouse, and the residence of the said Mr. Gershom Kursheedt, the same purchased by me from the bank of Louisiana; and also to the said Hebrew Congregation, the two adjoining brick houses purchased from the heirs of David Urquhart, the revenue of said property to be applied to the founding and support of the Hebrew school connected with said Congregation, as well as to the defraying of the salary of their Reader or Minister, said property to be conveyed accordingly by my said executors to said Congregation with all necessary restrictions.

7. I give and bequeath to found the Hebrew Hospital of New Orleans the entire property purchased for me, at the succession sale of the late C. Paulding, upon which property the building now known as the "Touro Infirmary" is situated; the said contemplated Hospital to be organized according to law, as a charitable institution for the relief of the indigent sick, by my executors and such other persons as they may associate with them conformably with the laws of Louisiana.

8. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Benevolent Association of New Orleans five thousand dollars.

9. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Shangarai Chassed" of New Orleans five thousand dollars.

10. I give and bequeath to the Ladies' Benevolent Society of New Orleans, the sum of five thousand dollars.

11. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Foreign Mission Society of New Orleans, five thousand dollars.

12. I give and bequeath to the Orphans' Home Asylum of New Orleans, the sum of five thousand dollars.

13. I give and bequeath to the Society for the relief of Destitute Orphan Boys in the Fourth District, five thousand dollars.

14. I give and bequeath to the St. Armas Asylum for the relief of destitute females and children, the sum of five thousand dollars.

15. I give and bequeath to the New Orleans Female Orphan Asylum, at the corner of Camp and Prytania streets, five thousand dollars.

16. I give and bequeath to the St. Mary's Catholic Boys' Asylum, of which my old and esteemed friend Mr. Anthony Rasch is chairman of its Executive Committee, the sum of five thousand dollars.

17. I give and bequeath to the Milne Asylum of New Orleans, five thousand dollars.

18. I give and bequeath to the "Firemen's Charitable Association" of New Orleans, five thousand dollars.

19. I give and bequeath to the "Seamen's Home," in the First District of New Orleans, five thousand dollars.

20. I give and bequeath, for the purpose of establishing an "Alms House" in the City of New Orleans, and with a view of contributing, as far as possible, to the prevention of mendicity in said city, the sum of eighty thousand dollars, (say \$80,000) and I desire that the "Alms House" thus contemplated shall be organized according to law; and further, it is my desire that after my executors shall have legally organized and established said contemplated Alms House, and appointed proper persons to administer and control the direction of its affairs, then such persons legally so appointed and their successors, in office, conjointly with the Mayor of the City of New Orleans, and his successors in office, shall have the perpetual direction and control thereof.

21. I give and bequeath to the City of Newport, in the State of Rhode Island, the sum of ten thousand dollars, on condition that the said sum be expended in the purchase and improvement of the property in said city, known as the "Old Stone Mill," to be kept as a public park or promenade ground.

22. I give and bequeath to the "Redwood Library" of Newport aforesaid, for books and repairs, three thousand dollars.

23. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Ohabay Shalome" of Boston, Massachusetts, five thousand dollars.

24. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation of Hartford, Connecticut, five thousand dollars.

25. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation of New Haven, Connecticut, five thousand dollars.

26. I give and bequeath to the North American Relief Society, for the Indigent Jews of Jerusalem, Palestine, of the City and State of New York (Sir Moses Montefiore of London, their agent), ten thousand dollars.

27. It being my earnest wish to co-operate with the said Sir Moses Montefiore of London, Great Britain, in endeavoring to ameliorate the condition of our unfortunate Jewish Brethren, in the Holy Land, and to secure to them the inestimable privilege of worshipping the Almighty according to our religion, without molestation, I therefore give and bequeath the sum of fifty thousand dollars, to be paid by my Executors for said object, through the said Sir Moses Montefiore, in such manner as he may advise, as best calculated to promote the aforesaid objects; and in case of any legal or other difficulty or impediment in the way of carrying said bequest into effect, according to my intentions, then and in that case, I desire that the said sum of fifty thousand dollars be invested by my Executors in the foundation of a Society in the City of New Orleans, similar in its objects to the "North American Relief Society for the Indigent Jews of Jerusalem, Palestine, of the City of New York," to which I have before referred in this my last will.

28. It is my wish and desire that the Institutions to which I have already alluded in making this will, as well as those to which in the further course of making this will, I shall refer, shall not be disqualified from inheriting my legacies to them respectively made, for reason of not being incorporated, and thereby not qualified to inherit by law; but on the contrary, I desire that the parties interested in such institutions and my executors shall facilitate their organization as soon after my decease as possible, and thus render them duly qualified by law to inherit in the premises according to my wishes.

29. I give and bequeath to the Jews' Hospital Society of the City and State of New York twenty thousand dollars.

30. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Benevolent Society "Meshibat Nafesh" of New York, five thousand dollars.

31. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Benevolent Society "Gemilut Chasad" of New York, five thousand dollars.

32. I give and bequeath to the "Talmud Torah" School Fund attached to the Hebrew Congregation "Shearith Israel," of the City of New York, and to said Congregation, thirteen thousand dollars.

33. I give and bequeath to the Educational Institute of the Hebrew Congregation "B'nai Jeshurun" of the City of New York, the sum of three thousand dollars.

34. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Shangarai Tefla," of New York, three thousand dollars.

35. I give and bequeath to the Ladies' Benevolent Society of the City of New York, the same of which Mrs. Richey Levy was a directress at the time of her death, and of which Mrs. I. B. Kursheedt was first directress in 1850, three thousand dollars.

36. I give and bequeath to the Female Hebrew Benevolent Society of Philadelphia (Miss Gratz, Secretary), three thousand dollars.

37. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Education Society of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, twenty thousand dollars.

38. I give to the United Hebrew Benevolent Society of Philadelphia, aforesaid, three thousand dollars.

39. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Ahabat Israel," of Fell's Point, Baltimore, three thousand dollars.

40. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Beth Shalom," of Richmond, Virginia, five thousand dollars.

41. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Shearith Israel," of Charleston, South Carolina, the sum of five thousand dollars.

42. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Shamgarai Shamoyim," of Mobile, Alabama, two thousand dollars.

43. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Mikve Israel," of Savannah, Georgia, five thousand dollars.

44. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation of Montgomery, Alabama, two thousand dollars.

45. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation of Memphis, Tennessee, two thousand dollars.

46. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Adas Israel," of Louisville, Kentucky, three thousand dollars.

47. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation "Bnai Israel," of Cincinnati, Ohio, three thousand dollars.

48. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew School, "Talmud Yelodim," of Cincinnati, Ohio, five thousand dollars.

49. I give and bequeath to the Jews' Hospital, of Cincinnati, Ohio, five thousand dollars.

50. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation, "Tifereth Israel," of Cleveland, Ohio, three thousand dollars.

51. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation, "Bnai El," of St. Louis, Missouri, three thousand dollars.

52. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation, "Beth El," of Buffalo, New York, three thousand dollars.

53. I give and bequeath to the Hebrew Congregation of "Beth El," of Albany, New York, three thousand dollars.

54. I give and bequeath to the three following Institutions, named in the will of my greatly beloved brother, the late Abraham Touro, of Boston, the following sums:

First, to the Asylum of Orphan Boys, in Boston, Massachusetts, five thousand dollars.

Second, to the Female Orphan Asylum of Boston aforesaid, five thousand dollars.

Third, and to the Massachusetts Female Hospital, ten thousand dollars.

55. I give and bequeath ten thousand dollars for the purpose of paying the salary of a Reader or Minister to officiate in the Jewish Synagogue of Newport, Rhode Island, and to endow the Ministry of the same, as well as to keep in repair and embellish the Jewish Cemetery in Newport aforesaid; the said amount to be appropriated and paid, or invested for that purpose in such manner as my executors may determine concurrently with the corporation of Newport aforesaid, if necessary. And it is my wish and desire, that David Gould and Nathan H. Gould, sons of my esteemed friend the late Isaac Gould, Esq., of Newport aforesaid, should continue to oversee the improvements in said Cemetery and direct the same; and as a testimony of my regard and in consideration of services rendered by their said father, I give and bequeath the sum of two thousand dollars to be equally divided between them, the said David and said Nathan H. Gould.<sup>1</sup>

56. I give and bequeath five thousand dollars to Miss Catherine

<sup>1</sup>Chapter III, General Laws, State of Rhode Island.

Hays, now of Richmond, Virginia, as an expression of the kind remembrance in which that esteemed friend is held by me.

57. I give and bequeath to the Misses Catharine, Harriet and Julia Myers, the three daughters of Mr. Moses M. Myers, of Richmond Virginia, the sum of seven thousand dollars, to be equally divided between them.

58. I give and bequeath the sum of seven thousand dollars to the surviving children of the late Samuel Myers, of Richmond, Virginia, to be equally divided between them, in token of my remembrance.

59. I give and bequeath to my friend Mr. Supply Clapp Twing, of Boston, Mass., the sum of five thousand dollars, as a token of my esteem and kind remembrance.

60. I give and bequeath the sum of three thousand dollars to my respected friend the Rev. Isaac Leaser, of Philadelphia, as a token of my regard.

61. I give and bequeath the sum of three thousand dollars to my friends the Rev. Moses N. Nathan, now of London, and his wife, to be equally divided between them.

62. I give and bequeath the sum of three thousand dollars to my friend the Rev. Theodore Clapp, of New Orleans, in token of my remembrance.

63. To Mistress Ellen Brooks, wife of Gorham Brooks, Esquire, of Boston, Massachusetts, and daughter of my friend and executor Rezin Davis Shepherd, I give the sum of five thousand dollars, the same to be employed by my executors, in the purchase of a suitable memorial to her as an earnest of my very kind regard.

64. I give and bequeath the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars, to be employed by my executors in the purchase of a suitable memorial of my esteem, to be presented to Mrs. M. D. Josephs, wife of my friend, Aaron K. Josephs, Esq., of this city.

65. I give and bequeath the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars to be employed by my executors in the purchase of a suitable memorial to my esteem for Mistress Rebecca Kursheedt, wife of Mr. Benjamin Florance, of New Orleans.

66. I revoke all other wills or testaments, which I may have made previously to these presents.

Thus, it was, that this testament or last will was dictated to me, the notary, by the said testator, in presence of the witnesses herein above named, and undersigned, and I have written the same, such as it was dictated to me, by the testator, in my own proper hand, in presence of said witnesses; and having read this testament in a loud and audible voice to the said testator, in presence of said witnesses, he, the said testator, declared in the same presence, that he well understood the same and persisted therein.

All of which was done at one time without interruption or turning aside to other acts.

Thus done and passed at the said City of New Orleans, at the said residence of the said Mr. Judah Touro, the day, month and year first before written in the presence of Messrs. Jonathan Montgomery, Henry Shepherd, Jr., and George Washington Lee, all three being the witnesses as aforesaid, who, with the said testator, and me, the said notary, have hereunto signed their names.

(Signed.)

J. TOURO,  
J. MONTGOMERY,  
H. SHEPHERD, JR.,  
GEO. W. LEE,  
THOS. LAYTON, *Notary Public.*

#### THE TOURO INFIRMARY<sup>1</sup>

The South had too few hospitals of any kind, fewer still for slaves, and none at all for both white and slave until New Orleans' Touro Infirmary opened its doors to all.

New Orleans was the most pestilential city in the country, visited regularly by Asiatic cholera, pernicious malaria, and yellow fever.

It was in 1852, during a terrible yellow fever epidemic, that the idea for the infirmary was born in the mind of an old man shuffling along the streets, wearing a top hat that hid a wrinkled but kindly face. Tar pots were burning on street corners, for it was believed

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted in part from *Pfizer Spectrum*, vol. 9, November-December 1961, published by Charles Pfizer & Co., Inc.

that their acrid smoke would drive the pestilence from the air. In the distance, cannon being fired for the same reason tolled a dirge for the procession of wagons carting away the scores of dead.

When he decided to establish an infirmary, Touro purchased an estate and remodeled its buildings to serve as a hospital with 50 beds. He died before the hospital was opened. In his will, he directed the organization of "a charitable Institution for the relief of the indigent sick".

The hospital was incorporated the year Touro died. It advertised rates "from \$1 to \$5 per day; slaves \$1 per day. Important surgical operations charged for extra."

A few cities had special hospitals for slaves, and the larger plantations had sick bays where slaves were attended by slave nurses or a physician (frequently the master's own). But there was nothing comparable to the Touro Infirmary.

The Civil War had no effect on the hospital's operation until June 1862, when it was converted into a home for the aged to bar Federal troops from using its facilities. The hospital reopened in March, 1865, in its original location, a neighborhood of foundries and cotton presses. The first "Admission Book of the Touro Infirmary" has been carefully preserved. It covers the first five years and is an interesting reflection of the patterns of disease, and the occupations and life of the times.

The record of admissions contains long lists of slaves shown only by first names. Such lists are typical; sometimes slaves were the only entries for weeks at a time. Among the picturesque names in the register are Choice, America, Morning, Primus, January, Limbo, Moany, Erin, Joe Diggs, Lafayette, Sam Absalom. Two slaves belonging to one owner and admitted on the same day were distinguished as John (Black) and John (Yellow).

Toward the end of the book, as the Civil War approaches, it is interesting to find some slave owners apparently growing reluctant to use the term "slave". Instead, the slaves' particular occupations are given, such as house servant, laborer, levee hand, "plantation". The charges, however, remained the same.

The most common occupations listed in the book are seamen, sailor, mate, steward, stewardess, ship master and captain. Among the other

occupations are drayman, cabman, coachmaker, charcoaler, "pedlar," tailor, apothecary. There was a lawyer named Worthy Partridge and a ship master named Captain Coffin.

That dysentery and diarrhea were so common is not surprising. The Mississippi, natural trade route to the outside world, with New Orleans as the port of exit, carried the refuse of a continent, and was the chief source of drinking water.

#### THE TOURO INSTITUTE

News item in the *Manufacturers and Farmers Journal* of Providence, R. I., for Thursday, February 22, 1855:

The Touro Institute is the name of an Association of Hebrew Young Men in New York for mutual improvement.

#### THE REVEREND ISAAC TOURO

and

#### THANKSGIVING DAY<sup>1</sup>

Just as our sole record of the October Thanksgiving Day in 1759 consists of a printed sermon by the Rev. John Burt, which he preached at Bristol, so are we aware of 1765's Thanksgiving Day only through a news item in the *Newport Mercury* of Dec. 2, 1765, which prints the prayer offered by the Rev. Isaac Touro at the Jewish Synagogue in Newport on Thursday, Nov. 28, the day which the governor had proclaimed for a public thanksgiving. It was translated from the Hebrew for printing in the newspaper, and, except for the references to King George III and the British government, which are, of course, no longer applicable, it still stands as a fine Thanksgiving Day prayer:

Universal Lord! and Lord of Lords, Great God, powerful and tremendous, exalted above all Exaltation! We are this Day assembled in thy Presence, to sing Praises and to give Thanks for all thy Mercies and Goodness, which thou has bountifully bestowed on us, in that the Land hath yielded her Increase, and the Trees of the Field their Fruits. Wherefore, Lord our god, and God of our Fathers, extend thy compassion and thy Mercy unto us, and unto all who depend upon us. Suffer not thy People

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<sup>1</sup>Bradford S. Swan in the Providence Sunday Journal for November 19, 1961.

to stand in need of Sustenance. Grant, we beseech thee, that we, may enjoy internal Peace in this Land; and that Peace may subsist between all States and Potentates; that thy holy Word, spoken by thy Prophet, may be fulfilled: "And I will give Peace in the Land." Be graciously pleased to grant, that we may hear glad Tidings of our Neighbors who inhabit round about us. Save and prosper our most gracious Sovereign, King GEORGE the Third, and all the Royal Family: Point out to all the King's Councillors, and to the High Court of Parliament, the Secrets of Wisdom; and direct their Consultations to the Safety and Welfare of the whole British Empire. Lord, preserve them; and grant that we may in our Days behold "How beautiful upon the Mountains are the Feet of Him that bringeth good Tidings; that publisheth Peace; that bringeth good Tidings of Good; that publisheth Salvation; that sayeth unto Zion, thy God reineth." Lord, let this by thy Will. Amen.

The news report also states that the 21st, 33rd, 47th, 61st, 67th, 72nd, 75th, 100th and 111th Psalms were chanted that day in the synagogue.

EXTRACTS FROM  
TWO EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY ACCOUNTS OF THE  
JEWS OF NEWPORT

I. ACCOUNT OF THE REVEREND ARTHUR A. ROSS—1838<sup>1</sup>

Among the former inhabitants of Newport were found about three hundred of the dispersed house of Israel, who contributed much to the wealth and commercial prosperity of the town. Some of them were among the most respectable and enterprising merchants of the place. The war, however, scattered them, and at the return of peace, very few of this class of her citizens were to be found in Newport; and of these few families, not a solitary individual now remains. And for several years before their final exit, all that were left of these descendants of Abraham, were two bachelor brothers of the Lopez family, one of whom died about ten years ago; soon after which, the survivor removed to New York.

<sup>1</sup>A Discourse Embracing the Civil and Religious History of Rhode Island; Delivered April 4, A.D. 1838, at The Close of the Second Century from the First Settlement of the Island. By Arthur A. Ross, Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Newport, R. I. H. H. Brown, Providence, 1838. Pages 29 and 30, 136 and 137.

The synagogue, built about the year 1762, which was once thronged with worshippers, is now never used, except occasionally for the solemnities of the funeral service of some of their descendants, who may have directed that their remains be brought to this town for interment, in the burial place of their fathers.

The burial place, the synagogue, and the street on which they front, are now kept in repair by the interest of a bequest to the Legislature of the State and the municipal authority of Newport, by the late Abraham Touro, a native of this town, but who had mostly resided in Boston. He was the son of Isaac Touro, late priest of the Jewish congregation in this place. After the street was repaired from this fund, the freemen changed its name from Griffin to Touro Street.

Quoted by Ross from an unknown source:

"Abraham Touro, the founder of this fund, was a native of Newport, and son of the Rev. Isaac Touro, the Minister of the Hebrew congregation in this place. He settled in Boston, in the occupation of an insurance broker, and by his industry and integrity, acquired a large property. The Hebrew Society in Newport, for which Mr. Touro felt a deep interest, having become by deaths and removals, extinct, in 1820, he visited Newport, and caused to be erected, a permanent brick wall, to enclose the Jewish burial ground. At the time of his death, he had it in contemplation to remove to Newport, with a view to the superintendence and preservation of the Synagogue and burial ground.

"His death was occasioned by an accident, while viewing a military parade at Boston, on the 3rd of October, 1822, in a chaise. His horse being frightened by the firing of the artillery, became unmanageable, and Mr. T., in leaping from the carriage, fractured his leg so severely, that notwithstanding the best surgical aid, a mortification ensued, which terminated his mortal existence, on Friday the 18th of October, at the age of 48 years. His remains, pursuant to his last request, were brought to Newport and respectfully interred in the Jewish cemetery."

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Of the first settlement of the Jews in this town, we are able to furnish only a brief and imperfect history. It is to be regretted that materials for transmitting to posterity the history of that ancient and honorable race of men, who once formed so large and respectable a

portion of the population of Newport, have not been preserved. There is now, in the Town Clerk's office, the copy of a deed (certified by William Coddington, Town Clerk, October 19th, 1677, Book No. 3, page 11, of land evidences) of a certain lot of land, thirty feet square, sold by Nathaniel Dickens, to Mordecai Campannall and Moses Packeckoe, for a burial-place for the Jews. This deed is dated Feb. 28th, 1677, which shows that some of the descendants of Abraham found an asylum of rest from oppression and persecution, on this Island of the sea, at an early period of the settlement. How long prior to the purchase of the burial lot, we have no means of ascertaining. The first Jews who settled in Newport were of Dutch extract, from Curraso, and were not possessed of the wealth, intelligence, or enterprise, which so eminently distinguished those who subsequently settled in this town; which, with the smallness of their number, accounts for the lapse of time from the first Jewish settlement in Newport, to the erection of the Synagogue. It is not probable, however, that during all this time, they maintained no regular form of public worship; and there is a tradition amongst the most ancient people of Newport, now living, that from their earliest settlement here, public religious worship was regularly maintained in private houses.

Between the years of 1750-60, many families of wealth and distinction came to this country from Spain and Portugal, and settled in Newport, which contributed largely to the intelligence and commercial prosperity of the town. Many of them engaged in the mercantile profession, and Mr. Aaron Lopez owned more shipping, and was more extensively engaged in merchandise, than any other man in Newport. The present Synagogue was erected in 1762, and dedicated to the God of Abraham, with great pomp and magnificence, according to Jewish custom, December 2d, 1763.

The Synagogue was thronged with worshippers from its erection until the war commenced, and the scriptures were publicly read, and the God of Abraham worshipped in the Hebrew language in Newport, by more than three hundred of the dispersed house of Israel, up to that time.

About this time, 1763, and long after, flourished the distinguished families of Lopez, Rivera, Pollock, Levi, Hart, and their late respected priest, Isaac Touro. Abraham Touro, son of the priest, died

in Boston, in the year 1822, leaving a fund of 10,000 dollars for the support of the Synagogue and burial place, both of which are kept in good order. He also left 5,000 dollars for the purpose of keeping the street in repair, on which they front.

The revolutionary war, so disastrous to the commercial interest and prosperity of Newport, induced the greater part of them to leave the town; and after the conclusion of the war, the remnant that was left gradually declined, until not an individual now remains. Moses Lopez, nephew of the celebrated Aaron Lopez, was the last resident Jew in Newport. A few years previous to his death, he removed to New-York. His remains were brought to Newport, and interred by the side of his brother Jacob, in the burial-place of their fathers. Moses Lopez was a man of no common abilities—an honorable merchant, deep in the mathematics, and of uncommon mechanical skill. He was pleasant and interesting in conversation, and an ingenious defender of his religious belief.

There is one incident in the history of the late and respectable Jacob R. Rivera, which ought to be recorded as highly honorable to himself, and the society of Jews to which he belonged. At one period of his life, he failed in business, in which he was extensively engaged as a merchant; but after a few years of successful enterprise, he recovered his fortune, and made a dinner party, to which he invited all his creditors, who, when they sat down at the table, each one found the exact sum of money due him, with the interest calculated to the day. The society of Jews generally, who settled in this town, have left a reputation for integrity and uprightness, which should perpetuate their memory from generation to generation.

## II. ACCOUNT OF THE REVEREND EDWARD PETERSON —1853<sup>1</sup>

### THE DESCENDANTS OF ABRAHAM

1763. This year the Jewish Synagogue, in Newport, which was erected the year before, was dedicated to the God of Abraham, with great pomp and magnificence, according to the custom of the Hebrews. At this time the town of Newport contained upwards of

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<sup>1</sup>History of Rhode Island. By Edward Peterson. John S. Taylor, New York, 1853. Pages 179-182.

sixty families of Jews; among them were many merchants of wealth and enterprise. Mr. Aaron Lopez was a man of eminent probity and benevolence, his bounties were widely diffused, and not confined to creed and sect, and the people of Newport, notwithstanding the lapse of time, still consecrate his memory. Mr. Lopez was afterwards drowned in his carriage in Scott's Pond, a few miles north of Providence.

Rev. Mr. Touro, married, in Newport, a sister of the late Moses Hays, of Boston, and left two sons and one daughter. Mr. Hays removed from Newport soon after the peace, taking with him his family. One of the sons was the late Abraham Touro, who died in Boston in 1822, leaving a large estate; by his will a fund of \$10,000 was left for the support of the synagogue and burial-place in Newport, and \$5,000 for keeping Touro-street in repair, on which they front. This fund is under the direction of the Town Council of Newport, and the interest is judiciously applied for the purposes above-mentioned.

The other son is Judah Touro, Esq., of New-Orleans, a gentleman distinguished for his many acts of munificence. He went to New-Orleans previous to the cession of Louisiana, where in mercantile pursuits, he has acquired a princely estate, and is universally esteemed by the inhabitants of the city of New-Orleans. Such is the attachment of the Jews for Newport, and the sepulchre of their fathers, that their remains are brought here for interment.

A gentleman who settled in Newport, about twenty years since, and erected a tasteful mansion in Bellevue-street, near the Jewish burial ground, in a conversation had with a personal friend of Mr. Judah Touro, suggested that it would be a commendable act on the part of Mr. Touro, were he to enclose the burial ground with a noble wall of granite, as the then present brick wall was in a decayed state, having been slightly built. He gave an assurance that he would address him on the subject, which he accordingly did; and Mr. Touro, with a liberality which has uniformly distinguished him, authorized his friend to apply to some eminent architect for a suitable plan. The work was commenced, and completed in 1842, and a more chaste and beautiful enclosure, with the ornamental gateway, is not to be found in the country. The whole cost was \$11,000. The architect was Isaiah Rogers, Esq., of Boston.

A few years since, he gave \$1000 to repair Redwood Library. His adopted city has experienced his noble benefactions, irrespective of denominational distinctions, in which he has set an example worthy to be imitated by Gentiles. Such an individual is a blessing to society, and throws into the shade many, whose niggardly spirit renders them a burden to themselves and to the world at large.

Abraham Rod Riviera, a highly respected Jew, was an importer of dry goods, in connection with other business. In early life Abraham was called "the honest man," which title he merited as long as he lived. He was extensively engaged in commerce, and met with many losses; and at the date there were no Insurance Companies, consequently, the risks in navigation were very great. Although a man of wealth, frequent losses at sea, forced him to assign his property, which, when divided, cancelled but a part of his liabilities. As soon as the failure was known in England, the merchants with whom he had traded, offered him any amount of dry goods; and, that he might avail himself of their generous offer; took the benefit of the Insolvent Act, clearing himself from old claims, and opening a way to the renewal of business. He was prosperous, and at the end of a few years, gave his old creditors a dinner, placing under the plate of each guest a check, for the amount due him, with interest. He died worth \$120,000. Such was the honesty of the past.

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About 1763, and long after, flourished the distinguished families of Lopez, Rivera, Pollock, Levi, Hart, Seixas, and their late respected priest, Isaac Touro. The north side of what is now the Mall, was once covered with Jewish residences, which were destroyed by fire. The Revolutionary war, so disastrous to the commercial interest and prosperity of Newport, induced the greater part of them to leave the town; and after the conclusion of the war, the remnant that was left gradually declined, until not an individual now remains.

\* \* \*

After the long interval of sixty years, in which the synagogue had been closed, in the year 1850 it was thrown open again, and services were performed on Saturday (the Jewish sabbath,) by an eminent Rabbi from New-York. It was an important era, and calculated to revive in the mind the great and important events, which had taken place in the history of this distinguished people.

## SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING

The Seventh Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association was held at the John Brown House at 52 Power Street, Providence, Rhode Island at eight-fifteen o'clock P.M. on Sunday, February 19, 1961.

At a short business meeting the officers for the ensuing year were elected. The nominating committee presented a slate as follows: President, David C. Adelman; Vice-President, Beryl Segal; Secretary, Jerome B. Spunt; Treasurer, Mrs. Louis I. Sweet. With the Vice-President in the chair, the officers were unanimously elected and installed.

Lloyd P. Gartner, Instructor in History at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, author of *The Jewish Immigrant in England*, then addressed the Association on *The Immigrant in Modern Jewish History*.

The guest speaker was introduced by Rabbi William G. Braude of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David. Mr. Gartner was elected to Honorary Membership in the Association.

Following the conclusion of the meeting a collation was served. Mesdames Louis I. Sweet and Seebert J. Goldowsky were hostesses.

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**NECROLOGY**

FEINER, PHILIP A., born in Providence, February 3, 1894, the son of Aaron and Amelia (Zweibel) Feiner. A grauate of Hope High School, 1912, and Brown University (Ph.B. 1916). Consultant on cost procedures, accounting, and financing. A leading figure in civic as well as business affairs. President, Treasurer, and Director of North and Pfeiffer Mfg. Co., Secretary and Director of American Roll Gold Co., Director of P. A. Feiner & Associates; Director of the Perfector Mfg. Co., Public Member of the Governor's New England Textile Committee; member from 1941 to his death of the Providence Employees' Retirement Board; a director of the Rhode Island Civil Service Association; member of Redwood Lodge, F. & A. M.; member of Temple Emanu-El. Died, January 12, 1961.

FINKELSTEIN, JOSEPH, born in Russia, September 16, 1882, the son of Moshe and Hanna Finkelstein. Founder and President of Atlantic Knitting Corp.; member of Board of Directors of General Jewish Committe of Providence; member of Roosevelt Lodge, F. & A. M.; Jewish Home for the Aged; Zionist Organization of America; Providence Hebrew Day School Association; and of Temple Beth-El. Died, August 28, 1961.

GOLEMBA, FRANK W., born in Providence, July 29, 1904, the son of Morris and Fanny (Gorden) Golembo. A graduate of Technical High School, Providence, New York University, and New York University School of Law. Member of the Rhode Island Bar and a practicing lawyer from 1929 to the time of his death. City Solicitor of the City of Cranston from September, 1957, to October, 1960, and recognized as one of the leaders of the Republican city administration of Cranston during that period. Died, October 8, 1961.

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NECROLOGY—*Continued*

JACQUES, JEAN, born in Bucharest, Roumania, September 13, 1882, son of Barney and Muriel Jacques. Attended law school at Laval University, Montreal. A partner in the furrier firm of Harris and Jacques in Providence and Pawtucket from 1910 to 1920, and engaged in his own fur business from 1920 until his retirement in 1930. A member of Temple Beth-El, Brown University Philosophical Society, and the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Died, December 29, 1960.

JOSLIN, PHILIP C., born March 8, 1886, in New York City, the son of Joseph and Jennie Joslin. Attended Hope High School in Providence and received his LL.B. degree from Georgetown University Law School in 1908. Served on the Providence School Committee from 1911 to 1914; active for many years in Republican party affairs; State Representative from 1915 to 1926; Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives from 1922 to 1926; and Justice of the Superior Court from 1932 to 1958, where he served with distinction. One of the founders of Temple Emanu-El; president of the Temple from 1924 to 1948; honorary President of the Temple for life; a Vice-President of the Rhode Island Jewish Home for the Aged; a Trustee of the Miriam Hospital; a Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Touro Fraternal Association; a Vice-President of the Jewish Orphanage of Rhode Island; President of the Hebrew Educational Institute, which became the Jewish Community Center. Died, Bal Harbour Island, Florida, June 19, 1961.

SEIGAL, MAX, born in Austria, December 11, 1884, the son of Baruch and Rose (Smira) Siegal. Founder and President of the City Hall Store, formerly the City Hall Hardware Store; Director of the Retail Trade Board of the Providence Chamber of Commerce. For many years one of Providence's leading merchants; a treasurer of Temple Beth-El; member of the Board of Trustees of The Miriam Hospital; member of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Home for the Aged; member of the Roosevelt Lodge, F. & A. M. Died, April 10, 1961.

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## INDEX TO VOLUME III

(Cumulative Index to Volumes I and II appears in Volume II, No. 4)

By Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky

- |       |                |             |
|-------|----------------|-------------|
| No. 1 | November, 1958 | pp. 1-76    |
| No. 2 | October, 1959  | pp. 77-136  |
| No. 3 | December, 1960 | pp. 137-192 |
| No. 4 | May, 1962      | pp. 193-294 |
- 
- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Abramowitz, Abraham, display wagon of back cover No. 3</p> <p>Abrams, Saul 181, 182, 183</p> <p>Accounts, repairs on Touro Synagogue (1827-29) 125-131</p> <p>Adelman, David C. 160, 195, 262, 292</p> <p>Adelson, Samuel, M.D. 3</p> <p>Administrative Council, General Conference 169</p> <p>American Israelite 214</p> <p>American Jewish Relief Committee of Rhode Island 163</p> <p>Annual Meeting, Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association (1961) 292</p> <p>Associate Hebrew Charities of Providence 161</p><br><p>Baal Mussaskim 200, 218, 219, 223</p> <p>Ball, Annual Thanksgiving 94</p> <p>Ball, Edith 132</p> <p>Bark, The, Judah Touro back cover No. 2</p> <p>Benefactions, Judah Touro 277-282</p> <p>Benevolent Association, Hebrew 172</p> <p>Berkelhammer, Jacob 76</p> <p>Beth El, Temple 195-262</p> <p>Blaustein, Rabbi David 160-161, 187</p> <p>Bliven's Opera House 141</p> <p>B'nai B'rith 164-165, 196, 200, 203</p> <p>Bnai Israel, Congregation (Sons of Israel) 150, 151, 152, 153, 156, 157-159, 196, 200, 240-249</p> <p>Bnai Jeshurun 196</p> <p>Board of Delegates 196</p> <p>Board of Patronesses 94</p> <p>Bohnen, Rabbi Eli A. 83</p> <p>Bolotow, Ida 93, 95</p> <p>Bolotow, Louis 164</p> <p>Boyman, Alter 166-170, 178, 179, 180, 183, 185</p> <p>Braude Rabbi William G. 79, 80, 292</p> <p>Brier, Benjamin 99</p> <p>Brier, Charles 186</p> <p>Brooks, Ellen 282</p> <p>Brown University and the Jews (Addenda) 87</p> | <p>Building Fund, Congregation Sons of Israel and David 223, 236-237, 240, 249, 251</p> <p>Buitekant, Isaac 215, 218, 219</p> <p>Bunker Hill monument 272-273</p> <p>Burials, Jewish, lists of (1877-1951) 58-70</p><br><p>Campannall, Mordecai 288</p> <p>Campa-Subados, Captain 3</p> <p>Camp Jori 99, 101, 102</p> <p>Cantors, Congregation Sons of Israel 150, 156, 158-159</p> <p>Cazenave, Pierre A. D. 276</p> <p>Cemeteries, Jewish 55-74</p> <p>Cemeteries, Jewish, Notes 74</p> <p>Cemetery at Newport 265, 266, 272, 273-274, 276, 281, 287, 288, 289, 290</p> <p>Cemetery, Moshassuck 56-58</p> <p>Cemetery, Reservoir Avenue 55-56, 155</p> <p>Center, Jewish Community 172, 174</p> <p>Chapel, Page and Pine Streets 208, 209, 242, 247, 251</p> <p>Charities, Providence 160-191</p> <p>Charleston, South Carolina 87, 280</p> <p>Chartered Organizations 4</p> <p>Chazan Abraham Jacobs and Mrs. Jacobs front cover No. 4</p> <p>Chazonim, Congregation Sons of Israel 150, 156, 158-159</p> <p>Christian Sabbatarians 139, 144-147</p> <p>Civil War, The 284</p> <p>Clapp, Rev. Theodore 262, 271, 274, 282</p> <p>Cohn, Adolph 236</p> <p>Coleman, Chazan 201</p> <p>Colwell, Wilmarth H. 248, 254</p> <p>Committee of Nine 172, 177-180</p> <p>Committee on Prosperity of the Congregation 201-202</p> <p>Community Center, Jewish 172, 174</p> <p>Community Council of Providence, Jewish 182-191</p> <p>Community Fund, Providence 99, 101, 172-182</p> <p>Conference, All-Jewish 165-172</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

- Conference of Jewish Organizations 185-186  
 Congregation Bnai Israel (Sons of Israel) 150-154, 156-159, 196, 200, 240-249, 251  
 Congregation Machzeka Hadas 88, 89  
 Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David 55, 160, 170-171, 195-262  
 Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David (Temple Beth El), The Early Years 195-262  
 Congregation Shaari Sholom 204, 207  
 Congregation Shareh Zedeck 141  
 Congregation Shearith Israel 107, 108, 109, 149, 152, 159, 279  
 Congregation Sons of Abraham 219  
 Congregation Sons of David 200  
 Congregation Sons of Israel 150-154, 156-159, 196, 200, 240-249, 251  
 Congregation Sons of Israel and David 240-261  
 Congregation Yeshuat Israel 265  
 Conservatives, early 203  
 Constitution and By-Laws, General Conference 170  
 Constitution, Preamble of the, of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David (1877) 198-199  
 Constitution, The Jewish Children's Home of Rhode Island 100, 101  
 Contents, Cornerstone Box, Friendship Street Synagogue 246-247  
 Contributors, Christian, Friendship Street Synagogue Building Fund 241, 252-253  
 Cook, Solomon 55, 153, 155, 157  
 Cornerstone Box, Friendship Street Synagogue 246-247  
 Cornerstone laying, Friendship Street Synagogue 240-248  
 Cornerstone, Laying of the, with Masonic Ritual 240-248  
 Cummings, Matthew J. 161  
 Curraso 288  
 Cutler, Harry 162-163, 172, 187
- David, Sons of, Congregation 200  
 deBougars, Count Gustav 154-155  
 Dedication Ceremonies, Friendship Street Synagogue 250-261  
 DeMeier, Melanie Leonie Weinberg 74  
 Descendants, Pareira 195  
 DeVries, Henrietta 88, 89, 91  
 DeYoung (DeYoung), David 149, 152, 157, 242, 251  
 Dickens, Nathaniel 288  
 Dimond, Flora 258  
 Dimond, Jacob 56, 200, 201  
 Drachman, Rabbi B. 144  
 Drescher, Henry 58
- Early Years, The, Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David (Temple Beth El) 195-262  
 Earthquake, Lisbon, Portugal 263, 265  
 Einstein, Estelle R. 159, 161  
 Epidemics, New Orleans 267-268, 271, 283-284  
 Estate, Friendship and Foster Streets 237  
 Executive Board, General Conference 169
- Fain, Barnet 70, 72  
 Federation for Social Service, Jewish 172-181  
 Feiner, Philip A. 293  
 Financial Report, Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association (1957) 75, (1958) 135  
 Finkelstein, Joseph 293  
 Fish, Isaac 155, 157, 242, 251  
 Florance, Rebecca Kursheedt 282  
 Formal, Mrs. Jack 156  
 Formal, Ruth 156  
 Foundation, Jewish Children's 101, 102  
 Foundation, Jewish Children's Home and of Rhode Island 101, 102, 104  
 Founders, Congregation Shareh Zedeck (Westerly, Rhode Island) 141  
 Founders, Haggai Lodge No. 132 I.O.B.B. (Bnai Brith) 200  
 Founders, Jewish orphanages 88, 90, 91  
 Fox, C. Joseph 91, 93, 174-176  
 Frank, David front cover No. 3, 150, 154, 156, 200-201, 202, 203, 205, 207, 215, 218, 224, 236  
 Frank, David, The shop of front cover No. 3  
 Frank, Raphael 150, 155, 156, 157  
 Freemasonry, Jewish, in Rhode Island 200, 211, 235  
 Free Sons of Benjamin, Isaac Leeser Lodge 196, 203  
 Free Sons of Israel, Providence Lodge 196, 257  
 Friendship Street Synagogue front cover No. 1, 158, 253-254  
 Friendship Street Synagogue, architectural description of 253-254  
 Friendship Street Synagogue, Cornerstone laying of 240-248  
 Friendship Street Synagogue, Dedication of 250-261  
 Fund, the Touro Jewish Synagogue 107-110, 125-131
- Galkin, Joseph 187  
 Garitz (Garrett), Leonard 156, 157

- Garrett (Garitz), Leonard 156, 157  
 Gartner, Lloyd P. 292  
 Gemilath Chesed 162  
 General Conference 169-170  
 General Jewish Committee, First Three Presidents of the 184  
 General Jewish Committee of Providence, Inc. 184, 186-187, 191  
 German Church Building 208, 209, 242, 247, 251  
 Goldowsky, Bernard M. 94, 175, 176  
 Goldowsky, Seebert J., M.D. 87  
 Colemba, Frank W. 293  
 Goodhart, Jacob 157  
 Goodman, Abraham H. 155, 157, 242, 251  
 Gould, David 281  
 Gould, Nathan H. 281, back cover No. 4  
 Gould, Stephen 107, 108, 109  
 Grand Master (Masonic) 243-244, 245, 246, 254  
 Grant, Max L. 166, 173, 174-182  
 "Graves at Newport, The" 263  
 Green, Henry 157, 196-197, 200, 201-207, 209-212, 215, 218-219, 222, 224, 237, 242, 261  
 Greer, Rev. Dr. 240, 252  
 Gup, Rabbi Samuel M. 163-166, 171
- Haggai Lodge No. 132 I.O.B.B. 164-165, 196, 200, 203, 257, 261  
 Hahn, Isaac 201-202, 205, 224, 227, 236-237, 242, 249, 260, 261  
 Hahn, Joseph J. 235  
 Halberstad, Mietje (Miriam) 195  
 Halbersted, Leonard 152, 155-156, 157-158  
 Harrison, Peter 118, 124  
 Hart family 288, 291  
 Hartman, Fred 254  
 Hartman, Leopold 200, 202, 203, 205, 207, 211, 213, 215, 216, 218, 219-220, 222, 224, 235, 236-237, 242, 261  
 Hartman, Mattie 256  
 Hassenfeld, Henry J. 175, 184, 192  
 Haswill, Frank 149, 153, 156  
 Hayes (Hays), Catherine 270, 281-282  
 Hayes (Hays), Moses Michael 265-266, 290  
 Hayes, Reyna 265-266, 290  
 Hebrew Aid Society, Young Ladies 160  
 Hebrew Benevolent Association 172  
 Hebrew Charities of Providence, Associate 161  
 Hebrew Charities, United 160-162  
 Hebrew Educational Institute 164  
 Hebrew Free Loan Association, Providence 162  
 Hebrew Institute, Providence 162-163  
 Hebrew School, Providence 164
- Hebrew Society in Newport 287  
 Hebrew Union Aid Association, Ladies 160, 161-162  
 Hebrew Union College 220  
 Hershorn, Gertrude (Mrs. Julius Rothschild) 195  
 Hershorn (Hirschorn), Jacob R. 150, 154-155, 156, 157, 195  
 Hershorn, Mrs. Jacob 195  
 Hershorn, Sadie (Mrs. Max Weil) 195  
 Hirschorn (Hershorn), Jacob R. 150, 154-155, 156, 157, 195  
 Home for the Aged, Jewish 172, 175  
 Home, Jewish Children's, and Foundation of Rhode Island 101, 102, 104  
 Howland, Benjamin B. 118, 123, 124, 128, 129
- Incorporators, Congregation Sons of David 200  
 Infirmary, The Touro 274, 277, 283-285  
 Isaac Leeser Lodge, Free Sons of Benjamin 196, 203  
 Israel and David, Congregation of the Sons of 55, 160, 170-171, 195-262  
 Israel and David, Congregation Sons of 240-261  
 Israel, Congregation Sons of 150-154, 156-159, 196, 200, 240-249, 251
- Jacobs, Chazan Abraham 56, 158-159, 161, front cover No. 4  
 Jacques, Jean 294  
 Jamaica 265  
 Jeshuat Israel Synagogue 109, 111, 265, 266  
 Jewish Children's Foundation 101, 102  
 Jewish Children's Home and Foundation of Rhode Island 101, 102, 104  
 Jewish Children's Home of Rhode Island, The 100, 101, 102  
 Jewish Communities Unite, The Providence 160-191  
 Jewish Community Center 172, 174  
 Jewish Community Council of Providence 182-191  
 Jewish Community, Early Days of the Providence 148-159  
 Jewish Family and Children's Service, Inc., The 101, 102, 187  
 Jewish Family Names 3-4, 5-43, 132-134, 142-143  
 Newport  
     (1856-57, 1867, 1872) 132  
     (1876, 1881-82, 1887) 133-134  
     (1892) 134  
     (1902) 3-4  
 Providence (1900) 5-43  
 Westerly (1875-1910) 142-143

- Jewish Family Welfare Association 173  
 Jewish Family Welfare Society 101, 102, 172, 174, 175  
 Jewish Federation for Social Service 172-181  
 Jewish Home for the Aged 172, 175  
 Jewish Liaison Committee 172, 177-180  
 Jewish Messenger, the 212, 214  
 Jewish Organizations, Conference of 185-186  
 Jewish Orphanage of Providence 91, 105  
 Jewish Orphanage of Rhode Island, Band of 97  
 Jewish Orphanage of Rhode Island, Ladies' Auxiliary of the 94, 95, 97, 98  
 Jewish Orphanage of Rhode Island, The 88-105, 174  
 Jewish Population of the Town of Westerly, Rhode Island 139-147  
 Jewish Relief Committee of Rhode Island, American 163  
 Jewish settlers of Providence 44-54, 148-159, 187-191, 195  
 Jewish Synagogue 240-261  
 Jewish Synagogue at Newport 106, 107, 109, 111, 265, 266, 281, 285, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291  
 Jewish Synagogue Fund, The 107-110, 125-131  
 Jews, Brown University and the 87  
 Jews of Newport 3, 106, 263-265, 286-291  
 "Jewtown" 189, 190  
 Jori, Camp 99, 101, 102  
 Joseph, Israel 87  
 Josephs, Aaron Keppell 276  
 Josephs, Mrs. M.D. 282  
 Joslin, Judge Philip C. 294  
 Judah Touro 1775-1854 back cover No. 4  
 Judah Touro, The Bark back cover No. 2
- Kahn, Lewis H. 222  
 Kane, Sidney 182  
 Kapstein, Israel J. 81  
 Karpeles, Maurice J. 91, 92, 93, 102  
 Kastor 157  
 Koftoff, Reuben 96  
 Kohler, Max J. 262  
 Kursheedt, Gershom 276, 277
- Ladies Aid Association, South Providence 161-162, 172  
 Ladies Aid Society, South Providence 173-174  
 Ladies' Aid, South Providence 89, 90  
 Ladies' Auxiliary of the Jewish Orphanage of Rhode Island 94, 95, 97, 98
- Ladies' Auxiliary Society 94, 200, 209, 223, 240, 245, 247, 251, 258  
 Ladies Charitable Society, Providence 161  
 Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association 160, 161-162  
 Lasker, Rabbi R. 251, 254, 255-256, 260, 261  
 Lawrence, Amos 272-273  
 Layton, Thomas 275  
 Lazarus, Michael 87  
 Leader, early, Radical Reformers 203  
 Leaders, early, Conservatives 203  
 Lederer, Benedict B. 222, 223, 224, 236, 242, 254, 261  
 Leeser, Rev. Isaac 150, 151, 153, 159, 196, 203, 282  
 Letter, Building Fund Appeal, Congregation Sons of Israel and David (1888) 249  
 Levi family 291  
 Levy, Arthur J. 173-182  
 Lewison, Charles 157  
 Lewison, Lewis 157  
 Liaison Committee, Jewish 172, 177-180  
 Liberties, religious 263-264  
 Library, Redwood 274, 278, 291  
 Limerock 70  
 Lincoln, Abraham 265  
 Lincoln Park 72  
 Lindo, Moses 87  
 Lisbon 263, 265  
 Lopez, Aaron 87, 288, 289, 290  
 Lopez family 286, 288, 291  
 Lopez, Jacob 289  
 Lopez, Moses 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 289  
 Lopez, Mrs. Joshua 272  
 Loth 202, 204  
 Low, Isador S. 76  
 Ludwig-Stern Company, Employees of, Circa 1900 back cover No. 1
- Machphelah (cemetery) 265  
 Machzeka Hadas 88, 89  
 Machzeka Hadas Home for Jewish Orphans 89, 91  
 MacRea 270  
 Magid, Samuel M. 175, 176, 177  
 Marks, Morris 155, 157, 242, 251  
 Mason, George C. 270  
 Masonic Ritual, consecration of cornerstone, Friendship Street Synagogue 241-244  
 Masonry, Jewish, in Providence 200, 211, 235  
 Masons, M. W. Grand Lodge of 240  
 Mather, Cotton 264

- Medical Staff, original, Jewish Orphanage of Providence 94  
 Medicine, Jews in, in Rhode Island 3  
 Members, Charter, Redwood Lodge 235  
 Members, early, Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David 205  
 Members, Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association 54  
 Mercury, the Newport 285  
 Merger, Congregation Sons of David and Congregation Sons of Israel 200  
 Messenger, the Jewish 212, 214  
 Midrash on Psalms, The 79, 81-86  
 Minyan, The 148-159  
 Miriam Hospital 102, 103, 104, 172, 173, 175  
 Misch, Marion L. 156, 166-167  
 Montefiore Lodge Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Association 90, 160, 161-162, 166, 172-173, 200, 209, 219, 236, 257  
 Montefiore, Sir Moses 223, 279  
 Morganstern, Lewis S. 96  
 Morrison Hugh 117  
 Moses Rev. Marx 213-216  
 Moshassuck Cemetery 56-58, 223  
 Myers, Samuel, children of 282  
 Myers sisters 282
- Names, Jewish Family 3-4, 5-43, 132-134, 142-143  
   Newport  
     (1856-57, 1867, 1872) 132  
     (1876, 1881-82, 1887) 133-134  
     (1892) 134  
     (1902) 3-4  
     (1900) 5-43  
   Providence (1875-1910) 142-143  
   Westerly (1875-1910) 142-143  
 Nathan, Benjamin 157  
 Nathan, Charles 157  
 Nathan, John 148, 153, 157  
 Nathan, Julius 157  
 Nathan, Rev. Moses N. 282  
 National Conference of Jewish Social Service 95  
 Naturalizations, Tables of 46-47  
 Necrology 76, 136, 192, 293-294  
   Berkelhammer, Jacob 1887-1958 76  
   Brier, Charles 1899-1959 136  
   Feiner, Philip A. 1894-1961 293  
   Finkelstein, Joseph 1882-1961 293  
   Golemba, Frank W. 1904-1961 293  
   Hassenfeld, Henry J. 1889-1960 192  
   Jacques, Jean 1882-1960 294  
   Joslin, Philip C. 1886-1961 294  
   Low, Isador S. 1900-1958 76  
   Seigal, Max 1884-1961 294  
   Semonoff, Judah C. 1888-1960 192  
   Symonds, Louis J. I. 1896-1958 76
- New Harmony, Indiana 264-265  
 New Orleans 264-265, 266-268, 270-285, 290  
 Newport 3-4, 87, 106-131, 132-134, 263-265, 266, 276, 278, 281, 285, 286-291  
 Newport, Jewish Family Names  
   (1856-57, 1867, 1872) 132  
   (1876, 1881-82, 1887) 133-134  
   (1892) 134  
   (1902) 3-4  
 Newport Mercury, the 285  
 Newport, settlement of, by Jews 3, 106, 263-265, 286-291  
 "Newport, The Graves at" 263  
 Newport Town Council 108, 109, 110, 122-124, 125  
 Ninety-eight Weybosset Street 242, 251  
 Noct. Myer 199, 200, 201-207, 209-211, 213-216, 218, 221-236  
 North End Dispensary 172, 174, 178-179  
 Notary Public, Will of Judah Touro 275, 283
- Occupations, Tables of 48-51, 142-143  
   Providence 48-51  
   Westerly 142-143
- Officers, Congregation Sons of Israel (1889) 242  
 Officers, General Jewish Committee of Providence, Inc. (1945) 187  
 Officers, Jewish Federation of Social Service 173, 174, 177, 181  
 Officers, Jewish Orphanage of Providence (1910) 103
- Organizations, Chartered 4  
 Orphanage, Jewish, of Providence 91, 105  
 Orphanage, The Jewish, of Rhode Island 88-105, 174  
 Orphans, Machzeda Hadas Home for Jewish 89, 91  
 Orphans, Rhode Island Home for Jewish, and Day Nursery 90, 91  
 Owen, Robert 264
- Packekoe, Moses 288  
 Panic, the, of 1857 152, 153  
 Panic, the, of 1873 200, 208  
 Pareira, Abraham 195  
 Pareira, Belle, Wise 195  
 Pareira descendants 195  
 Pareira, Isaac 152, 195  
 Pareira, Mary 155, 156, 195  
 Pareira, Miriam 195  
 Pareira, Solomon 55, 148, 149, 152, 153-154, 155, 156, 157-158, 195, 242, 251

- Paster, Herman 88, 89  
 Peixiotto, Benjamin F. 202-204, 212, 242, 251  
 Persecutions, religious 264  
 Peterson, Rev. Edward 289  
 Petitioners, Redwood Lodge 211  
 Philanthropy, Providence 160-191  
 Pincus, Newman 158  
 Pine Street German Church 208, 209  
 Pitterman, Marvin, Ph.D. 44  
 Pollock family 288, 291  
 Population, Jewish, of Westerly, Rhode Island 139-147  
 Portugal 263, 265  
 Potter, William A. 254, 260  
 Prayer, Thanksgiving Day (1765) 285-286  
 Presidents, first, General Jewish Committee 184  
 Procession, Dedication Services, Congregation Sons of Israel and David 254  
 Programme, Dedication Services, Congregation Sons of Israel and David 250  
 Providence Community Chest 172-173  
 Providence Community Fund, Inc. 99, 101, 172-182  
 Providence Hebrew Free Loan Association 162  
 Providence Hebrew Institute 162-163  
 Providence Jewish Communities Unite, the 160-191  
 Providence Jewish Community, Early Days of the 148-159  
 Providence, Jewish families (1900) 5-43  
 Providence, Jewish settlers of 148-159, 187-191  
 Providence Ladies Charitable Society 161  
 Providence Lodge, Free Sons of Israel 196, 257  
 Psalms, The Midrash on 79, 81-86
- Rascover, Herman 157  
 Rascover, Simon 157  
 Redwood Library 274, 278, 291  
 Redwood Lodge 196, 200, 211, 235  
 Redwood Lodge No. 35 A.F. and A.M. 200  
 Reform, Moderate 196, 203-226, 232  
 Reformers, Radical, early 203  
 Refugees, R. I. Co-ordinating Committee for 180-181  
 Religious liberties 263-264  
 Religious persecutions 264  
 Repairs, Touro Synagogue (1827-1829) 106-131  
 Report, Sub-Committee on Objects, Organization and Representation, All-Jewish Conference 167
- Reservoir Avenue Cemetery 55-56, 155  
 Restoration, Touro Synagogue (1827-1829) 106-131  
 Revolution, the American 107, 121, 122, 265, 266, 286, 289, 291  
 Rhode Island Home for Jewish Orphans 89  
 Rhode Island Home for Jewish Orphans and Day Nursery 90, 91  
 Rhode Island Hospital 237  
 Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association 54, 75, 135, 292  
   annual meeting (1961) 292  
   financial report (1957) 75  
   (1958) 135  
   members of 54  
 Rhode Island State Tercentenary 262  
 Rhode Island, The Jewish Children's Home of 100, 101, 102  
 Rhode Island, The Jewish Orphanage of 88-105, 174  
 Rhode Island Veteran Citizens Historical Association, meeting of 226  
 Riches of the Psalms, The 81-83  
 R. I. Co-ordinating Committee for Refugees 180-181  
 Rivera, Abraham Rod 291  
 Rivera family 288, 291  
 Rivera, Jacob Rod 87, 289  
 Rogers, Isaiah 290  
 Rosenfeld, Anna Jacobs 159  
 Rosenfeld, John Jacob 159  
 Ross, Arthur A. 236  
 Rotenberg, Rev. M. 217-218, 219-220
- Sabbatarians, Christian 139, 144-147  
 Sapinsley, Milton 172, 177-187  
 Schuman, Gertie 258, 260  
 Schwartz, Esther I. 106  
 Segal, Beryl 292  
 Seigal, Max 294  
 Seixas family 291  
 Semonoff, Judah C. 192  
 Sessler, Rabbi Morris 237, 239, 240-241, 242, 244-246, 247, 251, 252, 254, 257, 258, 260  
 Settlers, Jewish, of Providence 44-54, 148-159, 187-191, 195  
 Shaari Sholom, Congregation 204, 207  
 Shareh Zedeck, Congregation 141  
 Shartenberg, J. 224, 260-261  
 Shearith Israel Congregation 107, 108, 109, 149, 152, 159  
 Shepherd, Rezin D. 267, 274-275, 276  
 Shop, The, of David Frank front cover No. 3  
 Shuman, Abraham 157

- Shuman, Benjamin 151, 153, 155, 157  
 Silverman, Archibald 94, 97, 98, 166, 173, 174, 176, 183-187  
 Silverman, Ida 94, 165, 183, 185  
 Sinai, Temple 4  
 Slocum, Kate 156  
 Social Service, Jewish Federation for 172-181  
 Solomon brothers 157  
 Solomon, Henry 150, 154, 156, 157, 200, 205, 242, 251  
 Soloveitzik, Ella 139  
 Soloveitzik family 144-147  
 Sonnenschein (Sonnenshein), Rabbi 202-204, 212, 242, 251  
 Sons of Abraham, congregation 219  
 Sons of David, Congregation 200  
 Sons of Israel and David, Congregation 240-261  
 Sons of Israel and David, Congregation of the 55, 160, 170-171, 195-262  
 Sons of Israel, Congregation 150-154, 156-159, 196, 200, 240-249, 251  
 Sons of Israel, Young 257  
 Sopkin, Alvin 184, 187  
 South Providence Ladies' Aid 89, 90  
 South Providence Ladies Aid Association 161-162, 172  
 South Providence Ladies Aid Society 173-174  
 Spiro, Joseph Raphael 150, 156, 158-159  
 Spitz 205, 207-208, 209-210, 212, 215, 216  
 Spunt, Jerome B. 292  
 Steinberg, Leopold 150, 156, 157  
 Steinberg, Morris 156  
 Steinberg, Samuel 157  
 Stern, J. 141  
 Stern, Joseph 152, 154, 155, 156, 157, 195, 196, 242, 251  
 Stern, Moses M. 205, 207, 218, 223  
 Stiles, Ezra 106, 111, 114, 115, 116, 121, 122  
 Stollerman, Maurice 96, 101  
 Stollerman, Mrs. Maurice 101  
 Strauss, Alex 200, 205, 207, 212, 218, 219, 221, 223-224, 225, 236-237, 240-243, 245, 249, 254, 256-258, 260, 261  
 Subados, Captain Campa—3  
 Sundiun, Walter I. 175, 176, 177  
 Sweet, Mrs. Louis I. 292  
 Symonds, Louis J. I. 76  
 Synagogue building, New Orleans 274, 277  
 Synagogue, Friendship Street front cover No. 1  
 Synagogue, Jeshuat Israel 109, 111  
 Synagogue, Jewish 240-261  
 Synagogue, Jewish, at Newport 106, 107, 109, 111, 265, 266, 281, 285, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291  
 Synagogues front cover No. 1, front cover No. 2  
 Synagogue, Touro front cover No. 2, 106-131  
 Synagogue, Yeshuat Israel 109, 111  
 Temkin, Jacob 173-180, 186-187  
 Temple Beth El 195-262  
 Temple Sinai 4  
 Tercentenary, Rhode Island State 262  
 Thanksgiving Day prayer (1765) 235-236  
 Touro, Abraham 107, 109, 265, 266, 273, 281, 287, 288, 290  
 Touro Fund 266, 289, 290  
 Touro Institute, The 285  
 Touro, Isaac, children of 265, 266, 290  
 Touro Jewish Synagogue Fund 107-110, 125-131  
 Touro, Judah 151, 159, 262-285, 290-291, back cover No. 4  
 Touro, Judah, Life and Times of 262-275  
 Touro, Judah, the Will of 274, 275-283  
 Touro, Mrs. Isaac 265-266, 290  
 Touro, Rabbi Isaac 263, 264, 265, 285, 287, 288, 290, 291  
 Touro, Rebecca 108  
 Touro Street 287, 289, 290  
 Touro Synagogue front cover No. 2, 106-131  
 Touro Synagogue Fund 266, 289, 290  
 Touro Synagogue, Restoration of the 106-131  
 Touro, The Bark Judah back cover No. 2  
 Touro Infirmary, The 274, 277, 283-285  
 Town Council of Newport 108, 109, 110, 122-124, 125, 149  
 Twing, Supply Clapp 282  
 Union Hebrew College 203  
 Union of American Hebrew Congregations 203, 204, 208, 210, 220, 224  
 Unitarian Church, New Orleans 271-272  
 United Hebrew Charities 160-162  
 United Jewish Appeal 181, 183-186  
 VanSlyck, Cyrus M. 241  
 Voorsanger, Rabbi 150, 200, 209, 210, 212, 220, 238  
 Walker, Judge Alexander 262, 268, 275  
 War of 1812 266, 267  
 Welfare Association, Jewish Family 173  
 Welfare Society, Jewish Family 101, 102, 172, 174, 175

- Westerly 139-147  
Westerly, Jewish Family names (1875-1910) 142-143  
Westerly, Occupations (1875-1910) 142-143  
Weybosset Street, (98 Weybosset Street) 242, 251  
Williams, Roger 263-264  
Will of Judah Touro, the 274, 275-283  
Winthrop, Col. John back cover No. 4  
Wise, Belle Pereira 195  
Wise, Rabbi Isaac M. 203, 251, 254, 258-260, 261  
Witnesses, the Will of Judah Touro 275, 283  
Wolfenson, Dr. L. B. 96  
Wolf, Henry 92, 95, 96  
Workman, Samuel H. 180  
Wormser, Abraham 151, 153, 155, 157  
Yale Judaica Series (Vol. 13) 79  
Yeshuat Israel, Congregation 265  
Yeshuat Israel Synagogue 109, 111, 265, 266  
Young Ladies Hebrew Aid Society 160  
Young Sons of Israel 257

Sketch of daguerreotype in possession of the American Jewish Historical Society. A copy of the original had been sent by Nathan H. Gould to Colonel John Winthrop, a close friend of Touro, with a request for his opinion of it. Colonel Winthrop wrote in reply: "It is a strong likeness of him in every way—perhaps too strong to retain the amiability which so softened and pervaded his countenance and which the artist has not been able to transfer." (Rf. *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, No 27, pp. 216, 422).

(SEE ILLUSTRATION ON BACK COVER)



JUDAH TOURO. 1775-1854