

THE MYSTERIOUS MR. BROWN

By SEEBERT J. GOLDOWSKY, M.D.

As related elsewhere in this issue (page 95), Bernard M. Goldowsky had been engaged clandestinely in intelligence work during World War I. Prior to the United States entry into the war this activity had been under the aegis of John R. Rathom, editor of the *Providence Journal-Bulletin* papers. The work was carried out in close cooperation with an underground organization of Czech-American patriots headed by a brilliant young counter-intelligence operator named Emmanuel V. Voska (later, after our entry into the war, a captain in Army Intelligence). The two episodes quoted at length here were contained in a series of articles by Voska and the late Will Irwin, American journalist, which appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1940.

Irwin wrote later that the sensational exposés of the German plots in *The Providence Journal* and much of the work of our Federal police in convicting plotters could be credited to the work of the counter-espionage network organized by Voska among the American Czechs and Slovaks.

Bernard M. Goldowsky had himself revealed that his intelligence alias was "Mr. Brown", the exploits of whom are here described.

WE TRAIL THE DYNAMITERS

"Once we had decided [wrote Voska] we could effectively attack Germany and Austria-Hungary through an organization of counter-espionage in this country, we moved in very swiftly. By the middle of October, 1914, we had begun to perfect the setup which we carried through until February, 1917.

"Our entire organization really functioned as a triangle. Capt. Guy Gaunt, who was a naval attaché of the British Embassy at Washington, was in one corner. The group of Czech and Slovak revolutionists was in another. And John R. Rathom, a noted American editor, was in the third.

"Rathom was an extraordinary man. I first came to know him, and to work with him, through Gaunt. They were both Australians by birth. . . .

"Intelligence work is mostly drudgery. It consists largely in taking one fact, unimportant in itself, and fitting it into another fact, and then another, until they make a pattern—like a picture puzzle.

"I can illustrate this best, I think, by the case of Werner Horn, the dynamiter—the first of our operations which broke into print.

"Long before the Germans began planting dynamite, we knew their intentions. How? From gossip and vague hints picked up [by our operatives]

"Comparison of sentences from intercepted letters showed that . . . [Werner] Horn, a German officer, had orders to pull a dynamiting job. He was living in New York under an assumed name. A letter addressed to him under that name, but plainly revealing his identity, fell into our hands. That gave us his location. Our men tailed him while he bought dynamite and an old cheap outfit of workmen's clothes at a second hand store. Then we intercepted a letter to him, enclosing a ticket and a reservation for a lower berth to Vanceboro, Maine, on the Canadian border. To guard against identification by station agents, the German always followed that plan when they sent a man on a big job. The reservation, of course, carried the date of the journey. At Vanceboro, a long railroad bridge runs over the St. Croix River into Canada. When other intercepted letters referred to a Canadian operation', we had the whole picture. They were sending Horn to dynamite the international bridge on the Canadian side. If he wrecked the bridge on the American side and our foreknowledge of the affair came out, we might stand guilty under American law as accessories before the fact. But Rathom knew the German dynamiters were not yet endangering human life, and he felt—as probably did Gaunt—that such an exposure as we planned was worth a little damaged property to the British.

"At this point Rathom took over. He had an agent named Brown, an American of the old stock [sic!]. I don't remember whether this man was a reporter, or a detective by regular occupation, but he did good work then and thereafter. He picked up the trail of Horn, and our men dropped out. The dynamiter boarded the train disguised as a workman in reduced circumstances and carrying the dynamite, fuse and caps in an old carpet bag. Brown got the upper berth in the same section. Another of Rathom's agents traveled in the same train. It was winter, and the car was overheated, as usual. All night Brown lay panting and perspiring and worrying for fear a hot pipe would set off the stuff beneath him.

"Horn, with Brown still trailing him, put up next morning at a

small hotel in Vanceboro. That evening he went to the station, made an inquiry about trains crossing the bridge, and checked the bag containing his excess dynamite. Then, interrupted twice by passing trains, he walked out on the bridge, crossed the international line and hooked his charge to the guard rail. He had instructions to avoid wrecking a train, so he put his ear to the rails and assured himself that nothing was coming before he lit the fuse from his cigar and ran back toward the United States.

“The explosion did not really wreck the bridge. The piers remained intact, and it was easily repaired. Brown, who had kept a discreet distance, picked him up on the American side and continued to tail him while Rathom’s other agent laid information with the local police. They caught him in his room, rubbing his hands with snow from the window still to prevent frostbite, for it was a bitterly cold night and he and Brown had nearly frozen. Rathom saw that all this got a big play in the newspapers. He arranged it so that Brown figured either as a reporter for the *Journal*, a Federal agent or some kind of policeman. And no one, not even the Germans, suspected that our people had a hand in the affair.

“I remember this job especially because of two episodes that threw light on the psychology with which we were dealing. When Horn made a first lying confession, designed to guard the men behind the act, the police asked him why, wearing that soiled and tattered disguise, he rode to the scene of action in a luxury train. He answered proudly: ‘I am a German officer. We always travel first class.’ The police typed out his statement. He swore to it in the name of God and had started to sign it, when Brown snatched the pen out of his hand and wrote at the foot of the document:

“‘I affirm on the sacred honor of a German officer that the above statement is true.’ Horn read the addition and refused to sign.”

Before Brown and the rest were through with him, however, he had made a true confession of the facts; and the Department of Justice secured a conviction.

Voska later wrote: “In his ‘beat’ on this story . . . [Rathom, in accordance with his policy of pardonable deception] attributed the job to the Secret Service and ‘other agencies.’ In private conversation he gave the credit to his own force and even introduced me to a ‘Mr. Brown’ who, he said, deserved the first prize.”

WE LIFT DR. ALBERT'S PORTFOLIO

Dr. Heinrich Albert, a mild-mannered and cautious German, was the chief commercial attaché of the German embassy in the United States. He maintained two offices in downtown New York operating under the names Central Purchasing Company and American Import and Export Company, whose primary mission was to beat the British blockade by exporting vital raw materials to neutral countries from which were transshipped to Germany.

Will Irwin wrote: "According to a story often published [an] agent Burke of the United States Secret Service, lifted Doctor Albert's portfolio on the New York elevated railway on July 24, 1915. The operation . . . [described here by] Voska occurred on July 31, 1915. What the Secret Service got, no outsider knows to this day. What Rathom's men got were the documents published in the *New York World* beginning on August fifteenth of that year."

Voska and his group had gotten word that a Help Wanted advertisement was to appear in the *Fatherland*, George Sylvester Viereck's German propaganda organ, reading about like this:

WANTED: Woman stenographer, One of German or Austrian descent preferred. Apply at American Import and Export Co., 1 Broadway.

Forewarned, Voska had his bright daughter, Villa, then seventeen, apply for the job. "Villa was a good stenographer", wrote Voska. She appeared at the office promptly at nine o'clock. She claimed that her parents were Austrian and that she had studied German in high school. "It was easy", Villa later related, "The copy of *Fatherland* in my hand made a beautiful impression." Villa made herself indispensable about the office and gained the confidence and affection of her employers. She studied Albert's habits, rummaged in his files, and picked up tips from office gossip. On leaving the office for the evening, she would carry the mail for posting. She brought it straight home, unstamped, where it was steamed open and photostated before mailing.

Voska continues the story: "I asked Villa to study his [Doctor Albert's] habits Villa learned that when he entered or left the office, he always carried an old leather brief case fastened with a clasp and straps. When he was in the office, he kept it beside him on his desk.

"We put shadows on Albert. His routine never varied. He left

the office carrying the brief case, took the Sixth Avenue elevated, walked home from the station. In the morning he reversed the route and never for an instant did he remove his hand from the case. . . .”

Rathom then took over the case: “Rathom’s men studied the portfolio until they knew its pattern and make. Buying one like it, they aged it artificially and padded it with newspapers to match. Day after day, one or another of Rathom’s men followed Doctor Albert, hoping for a moment when he would take his hands off from his portfolio, giving them a chance to make a fast substitution. The moment never came. He hung on to it as to his life. As it grew fatter and fatter with accumulated papers, so did the one which the agent carried. Finally, they both bulged until they seemed ready to burst.

“One day Doctor Albert varied his routine. Instead of going straight to the office, he left the elevated at the 23rd Street station—this time without his portfolio. His shadow followed him to a fashionable leather store. Doctor Albert asked for a large portfolio. He ordered his initials engraved on the brass plate which covered the lock.

“‘I want them in the form of a monogram’, he said. ‘Like this’, and he took a piece of paper and drew a combined H and A. He paid a deposit. The clerk put Albert’s design for a monogram inside the portfolio.

“All that time Rathom’s man had been standing by, idly looking over the goods in the showcase.

“When Albert left, he said to the clerk: ‘I like the looks of the portfolio that gentleman just ordered. I think perhaps I’ll get one of them myself. May I see it?’

“The clerk, eager to make a sale, handed it over. The agent opened it. On a pretense of examining the inside, he got Albert’s drawing of the monogram into the eye of his mind.

“‘I’ll take one just like it’, he said. He paid cash and carried his purchase straight to an engraver, who put Doctor Albert’s monogram on the lock plate.

“Three or four days later, Rathom’s men brought off the big job. The cars on the New York elevated lines have the same interior plan. In the middle and on either side of the aisle are two seats, accommodating two passengers each and facing each other. From

their backs, long seats—virtually benches—run parallel with the walls of the car. A man seated on one of these benches and at a point where it meets a cross seat, can very handily pick up anything lying on its cushion. We had observed a useful fact about Albert's habits. He left his office rather early, so as to avoid the 5:15 rush. If he could, he always occupied the same place on one of those cross seats—next to the window and facing forward. By way of concealment, he would stand up the portfolio between his body and the wall, and ride with his hand on it.

“On the afternoon of July 31, 1915, Brown, the same agent who trapped Horn, the dynamiter, followed Albert into a Sixth Avenue train at the South Ferry. Albert took his pet seat. Brown, carrying the duplicate of the new portfolio, slipped into that spot on the lengthwise seat where it joins the cross seat.

Another of Rathom's agents—his name escapes me [possibly my father's superintendent, George P. Dixon]—entered the car at the same time. He was a husky fellow with a talent for impersonating a plug-ugly. He stationed himself at the front entrance. A guard, who opened the doors at the stations and kept order when necessary, always stood at this point.

“So they rode for two or three stations, until the car filled up. Then the agent at the front door lit a cigarette.

“‘Hey! Don't you know you can't smoke here?’ said the guard.

“‘Who's going to stop me?’ roared the tough-looking agent.

“‘I'll stop you!’ said the guard.

“Whereupon the agent, roaring like a bull, laid hands on the guard. They tussled down the aisle. People began to get out of the way. Everyone sprang to his feet, either in fear or in curiosity. Albert, too, rose. For the first time, his hand left the portfolio. It took only a second for Brown to grab it and slip his own into its place. Suddenly Albert glanced downward. The portfolio was still there, apparently. He sat down and put his hand on it.

“Our plug-ugly had been squabbling with one eye on Albert. When he saw his man sit down, his own attitude changed. His simulated rage turned to amiability. He apologized to the passengers. He was very sorry—he'd had one too many.

“At the next station, Brown left the train with the portfolio and hurried to Rathom's office. Agent No. 2 remained in place for two

or three more stations, watching to see if Albert suspected anything. Quite evidently, he didn't.

"Doctor Albert did much of his work at home; but this time it was two days before he opened his portfolio and found only a bunch of old newspapers. He called the police. The idea of substitution seems never to have occurred to them. Albert was too positive that this was his own portfolio. He suspected a burglary. The police wanted a description of the missing papers. That, of course, Albert wouldn't give. They decided it was an inside job, followed the theory for a while, then lost interest.

"As usual, Rathom gave the reporters the story of Doctor Albert's loss in somewhat garbled versions. . . . When, nearly two years later, Albert went back to Germany, he was still puzzled. In 1931 . . . Albert [related that he] was still puzzled. One of the newspapers had said that it happened when he fell asleep on the elevated. . . .

"Within an hour after Brown had lifted the portfolio, Rathom and Capt. Guy Gaunt, of the British Naval Intelligence, were going through the papers. . . ."

The voluminous and meticulously detailed contents of Doctor Albert's portfolio proved beyond a doubt that his extensive operations had pertained to shipping essential goods to Germany through the Allied blockade and also to lavish expenditures for pro-German propaganda in the American press.

Voska wrote elsewhere: "If Albert had been our own agent, he couldn't have done better by us. A most systematic man, he had [with typical German thoroughness] clipped together the papers in each transaction—vouchers, sometimes canceled checks, telegrams, autographed letters, copies of his own replies, even memoranda." These disclosures of vast German activities spread a blight over all German propaganda in the United States thereafter, and British Intelligence had a field day. While Doctor Albert never learned what really happened to his portfolio, an obscure "Mr. Brown" of Providence, R. I. could have given him the answer.

SOURCES

¹Voska, E.V., and Irwin, W.: We Trail the Dynamiters. Saturday Evening Post, May 11, 1940, page 21 et seq.

²Voska, E.V., and Irwin, W.: We Lift Dr. Albert's Portfolio. Saturday Evening Post, May 25, 1940, page 24 et seq.

³Spy and Counterspy. Emmanuel Victor Voska and Will Irwin. Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc. New York 1940.

APPENDIX I

Bernard M. Goldowsky frequently wrote letters to friends and acquaintances in a style characteristically blended of sly humor and sentiment. He also wrote a number of broadsides for the various charities to which he devoted his energies. The following broadside, written for the United Jewish Appeal of 1928, is typical of his vigorous, if somewhat baroque public style of composition:

GLARING FACTS!

BY BERNARD M. GOLDOWSKY

It has been suggested that I shall issue an entreaty to the Jews of Rhode Island for their wholehearted support for the 1928 United Palestine Appeal.

I gladly accepted this privilege. But why it should be at all necessary for one Jew to remind another of a duty that is clearly and unmistakably his is beyond my comprehension.

Then again arises the perplexing question. "What form of an appeal will meet with the entire approval of all the Jews in our State?" For Rhode Island also is blessed with a heterogeneous Jewish population. We find here Chassidim, Misnagdim, Ashkenazim, Sephardim, Conservatives and Liberals. Each sect is practicing the right religious ceremonies and all the rest are absolutely wrong as a matter of course. For instance. Both the Chassidim and Misnagdim are mutually agreed that the so-called "Reform" Jew is some puzzling specie of Goy. Yet we find among the latter earnest workers and generous contributors for Eretz Israel. While, on the other hand, those who were rocked in the cradle of orthodoxy to the tune of a Yerusholayim lullaby—or Rozshinkes mit Mandlen—and who are still saturated with the ancient religious customs and ceremonies, remain passive and indifferent to the urgent need of rebuilding Palestine. To me, this Jew is an enigma. I am frank to confess that he has me completely baffled. Try as I might, I am unable to discover the obstacle that is obstructing his view of the Moggen Dovid that is majestically perched on Mount Scopus. It is incomprehensible to me why he should persist in perpetuating a prayer for the possession of something that is already within his keeping. Consequently, one must be blessed with a master mind in order to frame an appeal that will be suitable to all. But I am only an ordinary mortal.

I shall, therefore, pursue the line of least resistance. That is, have a heart-to-heart discourse with him who honestly and conscientiously—although erroneously—believes that the rebuilding of Eretz Israel as a Homeland for wandering Israel is an impracticable undertaking, but whose unprejudiced mind is open to conviction, nevertheless. In other words, he whose heart and mind function harmoniously for every deserving cause and whose reason will not be swayed by a form of prayer or title of prayerbook.

To you, fellow human being, I shall declare at the outset that I render this service without the slightest thought of self-glorification. Every argument advanced by me in favor of this cause carries the full weight of "Sincerity of purpose" behind it. So much so that I feel I am entitled to the privilege of exclaiming with the Prophet:

"For Zion's sake shall I not hold my peace,
And for Jerusalem's sake will I not rest,
Until her triumph go forth as brightness,
And her salvation as the torch that burneth."

I ask nothing more of you, my fairminded brother, than that you weigh carefully the facts that have been chronicled with human blood on the pages of the "History of the Jews" for hundreds of centuries.

The Jew has suffered the tortures of the thumbscrew and the rack. He has been bled, maimed and massacred. During all these centuries he turned his tearful eyes and bleeding face toward Mizrach praying, hoping and waiting for relief from oppression, persecution and assassination. At one time he saw a spark of hope. He got a faint glimpse of a distant dawn. There appeared in his midst a Prophet with a wonderful perspective. He was known as Theodore Herzl. Herzl's vision of rebuilding Eretz Yisroel was regarded by many Jews and non-Jews in both hemispheres as the product of a defective mentality. Many of those who had faith in Herzl's prophecy perished in the attempt of converting it into a reality. But the spirit of Herzl and those Pioneer Chalutzim lived on. It lived through many pogroms or massacres. Finally, Glory Hallelujah! Doctor Chaim Weizmann appeared from some blessed region on the Jewish horizon. That intellectual giant whose wonderful vision, magnetic personality, remarkable statesmanship, self-sacrifice and untiring efforts have won for the World Jewry that documentary prize known as the Balfour Declaration. Now, after an elapse of nearly eleven years,

with accomplishments challenging imagination and winning the admiration of the enlightened non-Jewish world, some of our own faith are still skeptical in regard to the feasibility of rebuilding Palestine as a Homeland for the hounded Jews from the lands of the assassins.

I shall not discuss here the merits or demerits of Jewish colonization in countries filled with delusion and trickery. Where the Jew has for centuries lived in dread and terror. Where his children were denied an education. Where every day brought forth a foreboding of some unforeseen catastrophe. I say I shall not discuss it because it is not my intention to prejudice the mind of any man against relief of any kind or nature. But it must be admitted that the Jew in Palestine is free from pogroms or Alilos Dom. He is allowed to live there in peace under the protectorate of the mighty Lion. No Zionist is incarcerated and no Synagogue is converted into a clubroom in Palestine. It is only a question of time and opportunity when the persecuted Jew from other lands will find in the Land of his Fathers happiness, contentment and dignity. War is a terrible calamity. A World War is a world cataclysm. But to the East European Jew it is a perplexing question besides. In the last World War he was conspicuous by his presence on every side of the conflict. His blood was shed on every battlefield. Finally, thank God, the struggle to make the world safe for democracy was gloriously and decisively won. Armistice Day illumined the horizon like the dazzling sun after a total eclipse. The Jew in Eastern Europe also saw a vision of freedom. He also saw an end of intolerance, persecution or pogroms. Then what? In Russia, the land of atrocious programs, Anti-Semitism increased. In Germany, Austria, Hungary and Roumania he was again confronted with bigotry and gross cruelty. How shall he escape those wild beasts in human form? The door of this glorious country of ours is locked against him with an intricate 3-K combination lock.

Now, my fellow being, I ask you to decide in all fairness, whether this statement is true, apocryphal, or is it simply a fantastic illusion on my part? I am really eager to be favored with your unbiased decision. But allow me to add at least one other important fact. If there is any doubt in your mind in regard to the soundness of the project of rebuilding Palestine as a Jewish Homeland, let me call your attention to the loan of \$22,500,000. made by Great Britain to the Government of Palestine. Do you believe for one moment that

Great Britain would countenance such a loan if Palestine had no promising future? Or do you suppose the Bank of England would underwrite this loan—to say nothing of its being oversubscribed ten times in less than two hours—if that world famed banking institution had the slightest doubt in regard to the safeness of the investment?

There remains now the everlasting question, “When will United Palestine Appeal campaigns cease?” The Lord only knows. Because the answer is safely and snugly lodged in the heart of every Jew in America. In other words, the sooner we realize that it is our duty to contribute funds in accordance with our means, the speedier an end of such campaigns will appear on the horizon. One of the tragic spectacles of today is the Jew whose heart has undergone a mysterious process of contraction since his purse has developed to a stage of enormous expansion. This Jew is generous to a fault in so far as criticism is concerned. I am unable to fathom the motive that is egging him on to bemoan the little progress that has made in Palestine since the Balfour Declaration went into effect when he hasn’t lifted a finger nor contributed a dollar to help making better progress possible. Granted that he is entitled to his opinion. But surely, justice demands that as long as he is strangling his bank-roll with one hand he should keep the other hand off the “knocker.” An alien has no vote. Whose motive will stand the acid test? That of the Jew who gives of himself, his worldly possessions, or of both for rebuilding Eretz Yisroel, or that of the one who gives nothing but arguments unsupported by facts or reason?

“Oh, would some power the giver give us
To see ourselves as others see us.”

Brother:—Eretz Yisroel is no longer the proverbial “Good place to die in.” The Jew may now seek there Olom Ha Zeh as well as Olom Habah. But he also has the privilege of remaining in Providence, Oshkosh or Ipswich. He must bear in mind, however, that helping the rebuilding of the Land of his Fathers will not deteriorate his Americanism one iota. Only the so-called one hundred per cent American who has to hide his face in shame under a pillow case will question a man’s patriotism for the country of his birth or adoption because he is doing everything possible to lighten the burden of misery of his less fortunate brother. A true American does not proclaim his patriotism from housetops. The salvation of this country does not depend on a few masked bigots. The abandon-

ment of a masquerade costume or the changing of name of some pernicious organization will not remove the "Klannishness" of its members. A wolf in sheep's clothing remains by nature a wolf, regardless of any disguise he may assume. A real American has the greatest respect and admiration for the man who has the courage of his conviction by showing his true colors. But he has utter contempt for the PRETENDER. A true Christian is he who firmly believes in the Brotherhood of Man. He who is causing strife among the inhabitants of any land, is a traitor to his country and a dangerous menace to the human family in general. If you are a good Jew you are also a good American. That being the case, there need be no hesitation on your part to help the rebuilding of the Land of your Fathers.

SHOW YOUR COLORS!

You need not be ashamed of your *JEWISHNESS* or of the history of your race.

DR. CHAIM WEIZMANN, President of the World Zionist Organization, will be the Guest of Honor and will deliver the main address at the dinner given in his honor on **MONDAY, MAY 14, 6:30 P. M.**, at the **NARRAGANSETT HOTEL, PROVIDENCE.**

Don't Miss this Grand Opportunity!
GOD BLESS YOU!



APPENDIX II

The following news item appeared in *The Providence Daily Journal* of Saturday, March 7, 1896:

JEWISH POLICEMAN

THE FIRST OFFICER OF THAT NATIONALITY ON DUTY

Hyman Goldsmith became the first Jewish police officer in the city Friday morning, when the oath was administered to him by the Mayor. He was appointed at the meeting of the Aldermen Thursday and was assigned to the 4th station, reporting there for duty at roll call last evening.

When the Mayor swore in the new officer he told him he was expected to do his full duty. The news of the appointment was made known in the North End Thursday, and there was a celebration, the members of the Hebrew colony there being greatly pleased. Additional satisfaction was found in the appointment from the fact that John Nelson, who deals in influence as well as in gold clippings, was opposed to the granting of any favors which did not come through him, and had volunteered the information that there would be no such appointment until his friends were returned to office.

It is believed in police circles that the new man will be quite an acquisition to the force, as the necessity of having an officer who can understand the language of the newly arrived Russians has been frequently felt. Some years ago it became necessary to appoint Italian officers.

Hyman Goodman Goldsmith, the son of Samuel and Mollie Goldsmith, was born in Russia in 1871. He came to Providence as a boy and attended the public schools of Providence. Appointed to the Providence police force in his twenty-sixth year, he retired after serving about eleven years. He was last listed as a policeman in the Providence Directory in 1907. At the time of his appointment he lived at 17 Ashburton Street near the Second Precinct police station in the North End of Providence. He later moved to 219 Chalkstone Avenue, and from 1906 until his death lived at 456 Chalkstone Avenue. He served first at Station 4 on Knight Street, later at Station 2 located at the corner of Chalkstone Avenue and Ashburton Street, and during his last year on the force at Station 5, corner of Plain and Borden Streets. After leaving the force he worked for a time as a bottler. For most of his later years, however, he was employed at the Biltmore Textile Company, Inc., shoe-lace manufacturers located on Randall Street in Providence. In 1935 he was listed as "shoe-lace manufacturer" and at the time of his death was treasurer of the corporation. He died on March 31, 1941 in his seventy-first year. He was survived by his wife Lena, a son Milton J., and three grandchildren.

His progression from immigrant boy to policeman to manufacturer provides an interesting commentary on the upward mobility of the Jew in America.



COLONEL HARRY CUTLER

MEMORIAL ADDRESS ON HARRY CUTLER
(1875-1920)

BY LOUIS MARSHALL, ESQ.

Louis Marshall (1856-1929) lawyer, publicist, and civic and Jewish communal leader, was a founder of the Jewish Welfare Board and President of Temple Emmanu-El of New York. He was a man of stature in both legal and Jewish affairs. This address, read at the Annual Meeting of the Jewish Welfare Board on October 24, 1920, was published in the *Final Report of War Emergency Activities of the Jewish Welfare Board* (New York 1920). The letter from General John J. Pershing to Harry Cutler, which follows the address, appeared in the same report.

We have met on this momentous day in the life of the Jewish Welfare Board with hearts attuned to grief. Our beloved leader, Harry Cutler, who with a singular devotion dedicated himself to the cause for the furtherance of which this organization was formed, is not here to greet us with his cheerful smile and his commanding presence. "The silver cord is snapped asunder, the golden bowl is shattered and the pitcher is broken at the fountain." It is fitting, therefore, that we pause before turning to our regular proceedings to commemorate the friend whom we esteemed and honored and loved for the manhood that was in him, for the virtues that he exemplified, for his achievements for the betterment of humanity, for his loyalty to his faith and the unselfish spirit that compelled him to serve his brethren and his country, even to the extent of dying for them before he had reached the meridian of his years and the zenith of his powers.

His was a remarkable career overflowing with inspiration, miraculous as a commentary upon the innate qualities of the man and of the wonders that may be wrought in those whose souls are responsive to the genius of America. Driven from inhospitable Russia in tender childhood, a refugee from the brutality stimulated by autocracy, in poverty, but not helpless or abject he came to these shores a boy of eight with stout heart and will unconquerable. Without friends, without influence, without the opportunity of education, asking naught of charity, he eliminated childhood from his calendar and struggled with his revered mother to maintain the family.

No service was so menial, but that he was prepared to render it, so long as it was honorable. His daily tasks as a newsboy, a bootblack, a worker in a cannery, a mill-hand, heroically performed, qualified him for the Distinguished Service Medal later bestowed by his grateful

country and the Medal of Honor that came to him from beyond the seas that he had first crossed in the steerage.

He was ambitious and diligent in his business. Deprived of the advantages of scholastic training, he taught himself with such thoroughness that one marvelled at his mastery of the English language and his complete absorption of the finest elements of New England idealism. He prospered as a manufacturer, in spite of the keenest competition, and the men of his craft soon learned to value his ability by placing him at the head of their organizations, so that he might be their spokesman whenever it became necessary to defend their rights and to promote their welfare.

Wealth, however, did not lure him or narrow his outlook or blunt his sense of brotherhood. Though within his reach had he been willing to pursue it, scarce beyond the dawn of manhood, he deliberately chose to answer the call that came to him from his country, his people and oppressed and suffering humanity. He was chosen to sit in the Legislature of Rhode Island, where he fought the battle of social justice against the opposition of the most powerful. He closed his ears to the siren song of temptation, to all promise of high office, but true to himself and his trust, nothing could swerve him from the rugged path that he had chosen.

This product of a Russian ghetto, an outcast from the land of his birth, became so impressed by the sense of obligation he owed to the land that had welcomed him, that he enlisted in the State Militia and by sheer merit, became the Colonel of his regiment. No occasion involving the welfare of the state and city of his adoption passed that did not find him in the front rank of the workers and among the selected leaders. He enjoyed the esteem and confidence of all of his townsmen, neighbors and associates, Jews and non-Jews alike, than which higher or worthier tribute is inconceivable.

As a Jew he felt in his heart and soul the throb of pride for all that his people had contributed to civilization and morality, to ethics and religion, and to the noblest conception of human brotherhood. His soul was agonized by the misery, the persecution, the oppression which those of his faith had suffered and were suffering at the hands of their brutish and barbarous foes. Where others were moved by what they heard and read, he knew what it all meant because the iron of unreasoning hatred had pierced his very vitals and he hoped and prayed for the time to come when he might help in the emancipation of those

who walked in the gloom and darkness of the prison house of Eastern Europe. That time came.

As a member of the American Jewish Committee, he co-operated in bringing to success the movement for the abrogation of the Russian treaty. It was a sacred moment when he lifted his voice in the halls of Congress in protest against the insult that Czarism had inflicted upon American citizenship. It was given to him to labor in Paris on behalf of the Minority treaties which are to guarantee full civic, religious and political rights to the racial, linguistic and religious minorities in Eastern and Central Europe. He joined in every effort to keep open for immigration the doors of opportunity through which he had been permitted to enter.

He was loyal to the faith of his fathers, active in the Synagogue, the Religious School, and in the wider movements that tended to perpetuate Judaism and to inculcate its precepts. It was, therefore, inevitable that when at the outbreak of the war it was found necessary for the Jews of America to establish an organization to minister to the needs of our boys in the Army and Navy, all eyes turned to him for leadership and with unanimity that was significant, he was chosen for the onerous and exacting post of Chairman of the Jewish Welfare Board, which, by his labors, was evolved into the powerful instrumentality that it became. To its objects he applied himself under the most forbidding conditions, regardless of his personal business, his peace of mind and his health until he was stricken at the helm at the very moment when glorious fruition had crowned his devoted efforts.

Nothing that he did was perfunctory. He gave unremitting attention to the slightest details. Nothing was so unimportant as to escape his notice. He traveled at night, so that he might be at his desk during the day. On both sides of the Atlantic he was equally energetic and efficient. His task was never for a moment out of his thoughts. He was tactful, diplomatic and at the same time forceful. His interest in the well-being of the boys in the camps and at the front was that of an elder brother. It was genuine and spontaneous, free from all pretense. He succeeded in building up what in the end became an excellent working staff, and of establishing among his co-workers an *esprit de corps* that earned the most sincere of praise, the appreciation of those whom they were called upon to serve.

Colonel Cutler never for an instant, even under the most trying circumstances, lost his zeal and enthusiasm, nor did he ever relax in

the ardor of his desire to embody in his organization that Jewishness which gave it distinction and without which it would have been devoid of all character. It may be said in all sincerity that a complete history of the war could not be written without giving due credit to the several welfare agencies that co-operated with the Government, and that a history of the Jewish Welfare Board would be imperfect if there were lacking upon its every page, the impress of that lovable and noble personality, that fine, red-blooded exponent of Judaism and Americanism whom we shall never cease to hold in honor and affection—Harry Cutler.

Letter from General John J. Pershing to Harry Cutler
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

France, April 18, 1919.

Colonel Harry Cutler,
Chairman, Jewish Welfare Board,
41 Boulevard Haussman, Paris.

My dear Colonel Cutler:

I wish to express to you my appreciation, and that of the officers and men of my command, for the splendid services rendered to the American Expeditionary Forces by the Jewish Welfare Board.

The activities of your organization in France commenced in the summer of 1918, with the opening of a club room in Paris to which American soldiers, irrespective of creed, were welcomed. Handicapped by lack of personnel and facilities, your representatives, during the remaining months of hostilities, did valuable work among the soldiers of the Jewish faith and others, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by the larger welfare agencies to keep our soldiers in touch with their religion and their homes.

Since the signing of the armistice you have grasped the opportunity for increased recreational facilities, and have increased your personnel, opened additional club rooms at important centers, and shown a commendable eagerness to co-operate with the Army and the other welfare

societies and to bear your full share of the responsibility for keeping up this important work until all troops can be returned to America.

Will you please accept this letter as an expression of my appreciation to you personally, and to all those at home and abroad who have cooperated with and supported you so splendidly.

Very sincerely yours,

[Signed] JOHN J. PERSHING

GEMILATH CHESED FOOTNOTE

BY BENTON H. ROSEN

In perusing the translation from the Yiddish of the 1906 Report of the Gemilath Chesed Association, published in a prior issue of the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*¹, the writer became interested in a section titled "Brith² Ceremonies and Entertainments." Under this heading are listed names of members who had arranged for collections in behalf of the Gemilath Chesed from guests attending the circumcision ceremonies of their sons. A search of the *Index of Births, Marriages and Deaths of the City of Providence* was made in order to identify the male offspring of these members.

The following is the list as it appeared in the Report, accompanied by names of sons, all but one of whom has been identified:

*Pidyon Haben*³ — Leon Gordon, son of Samuel H. Gordon,
born December 21, 1905

Brith — J. Jaffe, no information could be found
Julius Moskol, son Milton, born June 10, 1906
Sidney Copeland (correct spelling Kapland),
son Mitchell A., July 9
Joseph Joskovitch (name changed to Joslin),
son Harold, August 6
Charles Goldstein, son Sydney, August 27
Israel Jampolsky, son David, December 4
Abraham Abrich, son John, December 14
Solomon Lipschitz, son Jacob, December 12

¹*R.I.J.H. Notes* 5:414-427 (No. 4) Nov. 1970. See page 424.

²Hebrew for "circumcision."

³"Ritual ransom" of the first-born son.

⁴See illustration on facing page.

Mr. & Mrs. Chas. Goldstein

request the honor of your presence at the



of their new born son

Thursday, September 6th, 1906, at 12 noon
at their residence, 117 Orms Street,
Providence, R. I.

POST CARD INVITATION SENT OUT BY THE PARENTS OF SYDNEY
GOLDSTEIN. THE HEBREW READS "RITUAL CIRCUMCISION".

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

By SEEBERT J. GOLDOWSKY, M.D.

1. *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 60:235-241, March 1971. *Ezra Stiles—The Education of An Hebrician*, by Arthur A. Chiel. Rabbi Chiel describes how the Reverend Stiles through his own efforts became a Hebrew scholar of considerable stature. See front cover.
2. *The Clapboard*, a Preservation Newsletter published by the Oldport Association, Inc., Newport, Rhode Island, vol. 3, no. 1, Feb. 1971. *Peter Harrison, The Touro Synagogue and The Wren City Church*, by Nancy Halverson Schless. Abstract of paper read before the 24th annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians. Traces architectural style of Touro Synagogue to the Bevis Marks Synagogue of London and thence to the Wren City Church. Mrs. Schless states in a personal communication that this material will appear in the forthcoming 1972 Winterthur *Portfolio*, which will be devoted to "Religion in American Art and Architecture."

ERRATUM

RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL NOTES
VOLUME 5, NUMBER 4 NOVEMBER, 1970

In Index to Volume V, page 466:

Wolf, Mr. and Mrs. Henry 92 should read *Woolf*, etc.

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Seventeenth Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association was held at the John Brown House, Headquarters of the Rhode Island Historical Society, 52 Power Street, Providence, on Sunday afternoon, May 23, 1971, and was called to order by the President, Jerome B. Spunt, Esquire, at 2:40 P.M. After the reading of the Annual Report by the Secretary, Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky, and the report of the Treasurer, Mrs. Louis I. Sweet, the budget for the ensuing year was presented by the Finance Chairman, Mr. Louis I. Sweet. He stated that a deficit of \$840.00 is projected.

Mr. Spunt announced the appointment of Mr. Benton H. Rosen as Associate Editor of the *Notes*. Dr. Seebert J. Goldowsky, Editor, in his remarks noted that the Association in its projects has been fulfilling its purposes as stated in the charter of the Association.

Mr. Melvin L. Zurier, Esquire, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of officers for re-election, and they were elected unanimously as follows: Jerome B. Spunt, president; Erwin Strasmich, vice-president; Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky, secretary; and Mrs. Louis I. Sweet, treasurer.

President Spunt introduced the first David Charak Adelman Lecturer, Rabbi Arthur A. Chiel, spiritual leader of Congregation B'nai Jacob of Woodbridge, Connecticut, whose subject was "Ezra Stiles and the Rabbis." His paper dealt with the relations Ezra Stiles, the Hebrician, had with the itinerant rabbis of Newport in the eighteenth century. Stiles, a minister, was later to become president of Yale University.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M., after which a collation was served, with Mesdames Goldowsky, Bernard Segal, and Sweet serving as hostesses.

NECROLOGY

MELVIN T. BERRY, born in Boston, January 6, 1919, the son of Max and Ida (Gordon) Berry. He attended Hope High School in Providence, and graduated from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He enlisted in the Navy during World War II, served in the Pacific, and attained officer rank.

After the war he returned to Rhode Island, where he continued with his first business venture, a military uniform store in downtown Providence, which was expanded into the Gob Shops chain before he sold it. In 1949 he purchased the former Walsh-Kaiser shipyard at Fields Point, and constructed there a marina-movie-restaurant-commercial complex. In 1966, with a group of partners, he built the Colony Motor Hotel in Cranston, and, the next year, purchased the Crescent Park amusement park.

He was a member of Big Brothers of Rhode Island and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

He moved to Florida in partial retirement in 1968.

Died in Miami, Florida, June 14, 1971.

DOROTHY JOSLIN, born in Worcester, Massachusetts, February 10, 1894, the daughter of Samuel and Rebecca Aisenberg. She married Philip C. Joslin in 1913, and, with him, was a founder of Temple Emanu-El in Providence. She was also a member of the temple's Board of Trustees for over 40 years, and an honorary president of its Sisterhood.

Mrs. Joslin was a vice-president of Hadassah, a member of the Board of Trustees of The Miriam Hospital, a director of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf, and, during World War II, was active in the American Red Cross.

Her relation to the Rhode Island judiciary is of note, in that her late husband was a justice of the Superior Court, and at the time of her death one of her children, Alfred H. Joslin, was a justice of the state Supreme Court.

Died in Providence, July 26, 1971.

CHARLES POTTER, born in Providence, November 13, 1908, the son of Max and Bessie Potter.

He graduated from Brown University in 1931, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He received his medical degree from Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1935.

His specialty was obstetrics and gynecology, and he was affiliated with the Lying-In and Rhode Island Hospitals in Providence during all of his 30-year medical career. He was extremely active in Planned Parenthood of Rhode Island, and received the group's highest award, the Margaret Sanger Medal. He was a Senior Fellow of the Boston Obstetrical Society and a member of the American Association of Planned Parenthood Physicians and of a number of medical, obstetrical and gynecological societies.

His non-medical interests were wide-ranging, including photography, art collecting, and foreign travel.

He died in Providence, December 10, 1970. His death was a homicide, apparently caused by a person or persons seeking a get-away car. His personal qualities had earned him the affection and esteem of unusually large numbers in the area, and this contributed to the tragedy of his violent death, which received extensive coverage in the local news media.

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This advertisement for the National Detective Agency, which appeared in the Providence City Directory for 1910, is typical of a long series which followed.