

HARRY WOLFSON AS MENTOR

by RABBI WILLIAM G. BRAUDE

On his way back from New Orleans where in the spring of 1929 he acquired the Ephraim Deinard Collection of Hebraica for Harvard, Harry Wolfson stopped for a day or so at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. During his brief visit he asked the President, Doctor Julian Morgenstern, for permission to meet a number of students. In later years, Professor Wolfson used to say that, of those he met at that time, he remembered three: Joshua Loth Liebman, who was to become one of America's foremost preachers, whose *Peace of Mind* was a sensational best-seller, and whose career came to an untimely end by his sudden death; Jacob K. Shankman, who was to become the beloved Rabbi of Temple Israel, New Rochelle, and President of the World Union for Progressive Judaism; and the writer of these lines.¹

After coming to Providence in 1932 and registering at the Graduate School of Brown University, I decided to prepare a dissertation on the attitude of Jews during the first five centuries of the Common Era toward proselyting, a subject which required use of Talmudic sources. No one at Brown was knowledgeable in the area, and so Professor Millar Burrows, head of the Department of Biblical Literature and the History of Religions, asked Professor Wolfson to monitor my thesis, which he did and presumably approved, since in 1937 Brown awarded me a doctorate in philosophy. Subsequently I received from time to time indirect messages from Professor Wolfson asking that I visit him. I did not — in part because in those years I was not fascinated by Jewish scholarship, and, besides, I was not too pleased with my dissertation, feeling as I did that it was a superficial piece of work.

In the fall of 1937 while serving as lecturer at Brown University I had Knute Ansgar Nelson as one of my pupils in a Hebrew course. Nelson, a native of Copenhagen, Denmark, came to the United States as a young man and converted to Catholicism. At the time we met, he, as a member of the English Society of Benedictines, served on the faculty of the Portsmouth Priory in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Nelson was gifted, diligent, and devout. (Later he was to become Bishop of Sweden, and but for the onset of illness might have received a Cardinal's cap). Within one year he learned so much Hebrew that

¹The three, as it happens, were close friends who, with the bravura of youth dubbed themselves "the Triumvirate."

he was able to go through and memorize the Pirke Abot;² and the following year we began reading the Psalms in Hebrew, using the commentaries of Rashi and Augustine. In the course of our intense study, I became aware that ninety per cent of Rashi's commentary on Psalms is drawn from the Midrash on Psalms — a detail I mention here because it played a role in my subsequent relations with Professor Wolfson and consequent effect on the course of my rabbinate and indeed of my life.

It was while teaching at Brown that I came to realize the tenuous catch-as-catch-can status of Jewish studies at American universities, and so around 1939 or 1940 I decided that chairs for Jewish studies should be established in American universities throughout the land. At the time the only two such chairs were the Nathan Littauer at Harvard held by Harry Wolfson, and the Linda Miller at Columbia held by Salo Baron.

Wolfson, I felt, was the man to talk to, and so I went to see him. He did not spend much time on chairs for Jewish studies, except to say that the idea was good. He was, to my surprise, rather complimentary about the dissertation on Proselytes, rejecting my belittlement of it, and then went on to say that he had been wanting to talk to me about an important matter. A great university — he did not mention the name — was about to sponsor a series of translations of classic Jewish texts. Would I consider doing one? I suggested immediately the Midrash on Psalms. He approved, and within a short time I went to work on the text which proved so difficult that most of it I felt yielded no sense. It was Professor Wolfson who patiently showed me how obscure passages did make sense — brilliant sense, and could be set forth in felicitous English.

In those days my understanding of Midrash was meagre. On one occasion I came to Professor Wolfson with what I thought was a "discovery." I found, so I said, in the midrash on Psalms an allusion to Paul obliquely referred to as "the heretic of Syria."³ When Professor Wolfson heard of my "discovery," he all but hit the roof. "That's the trouble with you Rabbis," he shouted, "you do not know how to read texts. No wonder we had our doubts about inviting Rabbis to do this kind of work. Your performance shows that the

²*Sayings of the Fathers*—a Mishnaic tractate concerned with moral conduct.

³The phrase *kamen bene suryata* (Midrash on Psalms 9:5 [Yale Judaica Series 13, 1, 125]) which describes the Inclination to evil as "lurking among the bushes" —that is lying in ambush for the unwary—I read *kemin bene Suryata*, "like the heretic [namely, Paul] among the inhabitants of Syria"—a reading which betrayed all but total failure to understand the structure of Midrashic discourse.

doubters were right.” He then dragged me down into the lower recesses of Widener Library to demonstrate how wrong I was. By this time I was so bemused and frightened that I could not follow what he was trying to say to me, except to sputter weakly that I did not quite mean what I said. Thereupon he blew up again. “I spent a lifetime trying to figure out what people mean when they say something, and you are now telling me that you did not mean what you said.”

Presently the dust settled, and I learned my lesson which I suppose was what he intended to teach.

Sunday afternoons Professor Wolfson set aside for me at his apartment, 20 Prescott Street in Cambridge, where I called on him with my problems in deciphering unintelligible passages in the Midrash on Psalms. In my eyes he was a magician. Using few “tools” — books of reference — he deftly made his way through obscure words and lines, and rendered them in lucid English, often reproducing in English the ambiguities of the original Hebrew and Aramaic.

In those years I did not realize that the time Professor Wolfson was giving me was the equivalent of a bank like Chase Manhattan extending unlimited credit to a man just starting in business. I was so green I comprehended but vaguely the intensity of a true scholar's quest. There was for example, the word *pahat*, which Jastrow's *Talmudic Dictionary* translates, “cavity, pit”; “broken vessel, fragment”; or, “diminution, depreciation.” But none of the aforementioned meanings fit in a fable told in Psalm 7:11 (*Yale Judaica*, 13, 1, 110-11). And so Professor Wolfson reported that during a visit to New York he had discussed the meaning and etymology of *pahat* with the late Louis Ginzberg,⁴ and the two finally decided that in the context *pahat* meant “vexation.” Though duly respectful, even feigning polite interest, inwardly I wondered what the fuss was about. Only years later I came to understand something of the passion for truth, for accuracy which set men like Harry Wolfson on fire.

Wolfson's temperament was on the somber side. So during the years of World War II, he anticipated the worst — the Nazis' victory and the destruction of Jewry. One day, as he was talking thus, pacing round and round in his room, I said: “But Dr. Wolfson don't you believe in *Hashgahah* (God's providence)?” “Oh,” he responded, “if you bring in *Hashgahah*, then you are talking of something completely

⁴Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

different." And the sense of doom on his countenance was dispelled at once.

At the Harvard Faculty Club, where Professor Wolfson took most of his meals, he had a special table, identified as his very own. It was there that for the first time I heard the word cybernetics, a word coined and a discipline developed by the late Norbert Wiener, professor of mathematics at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The diner who reported the new word and discipline was glowing in his expectations of its incalculable possibilities, all but saying that the new machines which were about to be manufactured would be capable of surpassing and displacing the human mind. Wolfson perked up, differing with the grandiose statements just made, and in support quoted Aristotle on the limitations of a machine, even of the most sophisticated kind.

The other day I happened to tell the incident to two M.I.T. graduate students. Their response was glowing, taken as they were by Wolfson's acute analysis of the limitations of the science of cybernetics, limitations which after the event these two students were fully aware of.

From time to time Professor Wolfson shared with me his "triumphs," one of which involved Professor Samuel Eliot Morison. In the early 1930s Harvard University commissioned Morison to write its history for the forthcoming tercentenary, which was to be observed in 1936. In the course of preparing this history, while examining Harvard's archives, Professor Morison came upon an essay on the porosity of matter. The essay, prepared in the latter part of the 17th century, presented to Doctor Morison a particularly baffling problem. Was the discussion on the porosity of matter a contribution to the science of the day? And if so, was Harvard already at that time an important center for scientific research? To these questions Morison sought answers but obtained none, until some one suggested that he go to the basement of Widener Library and there consult Wolfson, a professor at Harvard he had not heard of before. Wolfson, he was told, might provide the answers. Morison went, and Wolfson's response was almost instant. Porosity of matter had been an important issue fifty years or so earlier, sometime during the first half of the 17th century. By the middle of that century, the issue was no longer alive. And more: the essay which Morison discovered — such was Wolfson's surmise — looked as though it had been cribbed. In fact, Wolfson said, if Morison would look further in the archives, he might find

the original from which the essay had been copied. Morison went back to the archives where he did in fact find the original.

Morison thus obtained the answer he was after: at that time Harvard was not yet a center for scientific research, a find of great importance for him in the preparation of the history of Harvard's first 300 years. Presently, when Morison's daughter registered at Radcliffe, he told her that no matter what her academic interests were she should not fail to take at least one course with Harvard's greatest scholar — Harry Wolfson.

For my part I would turn to him for counsel. When the Hebrew Day School started in Providence, Pen [Mrs. Braude] and I were thinking of sending there our eldest son, Joel Isaac. But we were timid about doing it. How dare a Reform Rabbi send his children to an Orthodox day school? I consulted Professor Wolfson. "Send them, send them," was his instant response. "Ham they can learn to eat on their own, which is not likely to be the case with Hebrew." We followed his advice and sent our children to the day school, a practice which in subsequent years has come to be followed by many Reform Rabbis throughout the land, even as the very principle of Day Schools has come to be accepted by Conservative as well as Reform Jews.

During the years that Professor Wolfson guided me through the many "bafflements" of the Midrash on Psalms, he visited Temple Beth-El on a number of occasions. In 1954 he was present at the dedication of the structures on Orchard Avenue — indeed his name heads the list of Beth-El's distinguished visitors guest book. When he heard of the dance group which Pen started and directed at the Temple, he was delighted and began calling my wife "the dancing rebbetzin." Thereupon I suggested that the emergence of modern Jewish life may be summarized in the words "From *Ivri teitch*⁵ to dancing tights."

He came to the Congregation's observance on 15 November 1957 of the 25th anniversary of my rabbinate at Beth-El. He also attended the celebration of the 25th anniversary of our wedding in 1963 at which the Congregation presented to the Temple a Scroll with Pen's and my names inscribed on the Scroll's wooden disk. This occurred during the presidency of Doctor Samuel Pritzker. Rabbi Jerome Gurland, then Associate Rabbi at Beth-El, prepared a festive Sabbath meal at which Wolfson, Pen, and I were the guests of honor.

⁵*Ivri teitch* means the "deutching" or rendering Hebrew Scriptures or prayers into Yiddish for the benefit of women many of whom could not follow the original.



Rabbi Braude's 25th Anniversary Service on November 15, 1957. Left to right: Prof. Harry Wolfson, Rabbi Maurice V. Eisendrath, President UAHE, Rabbi Jacob K. Shankeman, Rabbi Braude, Joy Pitterman.

At the time my service at Beth-El was approaching twenty-five years, Professor Wolfson invited the late Irving Jay Fain to come to see him. During the visit Wolfson suggested that I be given life tenure, a suggestion which Irving Fain saw to it the Board and Congregation acted on favorably.

To return to the subject of chairs for Jewish studies, a pursuit which led to my first visit with Harry Wolfson: Upon my brother Michael's return from the navy I encouraged him to see what he could do to set up such a chair at the University of Chicago. He enlisted the help of several people of means, among whom Maxwell Abbell was the key person. A date for lunch was set during which the money for the chair was to have been provided. Regrettably, a few days before the gathering of these men was to take place, Abbell died, and so the project was carried no further.

At Brown I kept doing what I could, trying to enlist the help of people of means to establish such a chair. In the meantime we raised money — the Leo Grossman family were among the contributors — for visiting scholars: Gershom Scholem, Raphael Loewe, Zvi Werblowsky, Salo Baron, and the late Leon Roth.

During these years I kept working on the Midrash on Psalms. When its two volumes published by the Yale University Press appeared in 1959, Henni Wenkart Epstein⁶ told me that one day Professor Wolfson called her into his study and showed her these two volumes with the kind of pride and joy that is an author's. Indeed, though ever generous in his praise of me, Wolfson in a manner of speaking, did "author" the two volumes — was responsible for their making.

In 1973 and 1974 our eldest son, Joel Isaac,⁷ came to be very close to Professor Wolfson, whose sight and strength were failing. Twice every day, morning and evening, rain or shine, Joel would walk or drive Professor Wolfson to his study at Widener, even as he attended to and anticipated Wolfson's every need. In a letter dated 11 June 1975 Lewis Weinstein, lifelong friend of Professor Wolfson, wrote that Harry Wolfson had been "lavish in his expression of gratitude to Joel", and Weinstein himself noted "the tenderness, sensitivity, and solicitude of amazing quality in Joel's attachment."

⁶A confirmand of Beth-El who now lives in Cambridge with her husband and three children, and besides, wrote books for children and got her doctorate from Harvard.

⁷When Joel was about seven I took him to Professor Wolfson's study where Joel asked: "What do you do all day?" Wolfson snapped: "I ride a bicycle." "But," asked Joel, "do not signs in the yard say, 'No bicycles allowed?'" The Professor had no reply.

No wonder that Professor Wolfson was greatly moved by the news of Rita's (Joel's wife's) pregnancy. He predicted that she would give birth to a boy and as much as said that through this boy his name would be carried on.

As Professor Wolfson's life was drawing to a close, the last letter he wrote (dated 16 September 1974), he dictated to our son Joel. The subject dealt in part with Plato's definition of eternity as being both ungenerated and indestructible.

On the following day Professor Wolfson signed "A Living Will," which his friend George Williams, Professor of Church History at Harvard, prepared. The text follows:

To my relations, friends, colleagues, and my lawyer,
To my several friendly and caring physicians, who have ministered to me faithfully,
To all also who may in the future have responsibility for me in my frailty,
I NOW, of sound mind, still thinking through aspects of my academic tasks, preparing for the second volume of my collected works, and awaiting the publication of the *Kalam*,
HOLDING that death is a part of life and wishing to maintain its dignity to the end,
DO HEREBY, with witnesses testifying thereto,
DECLARE it to be my desire
THAT the vitalities of my mind and body be allowed to run their natural course
WITHOUT the interposition of any extraordinary means that would interrupt the ebb.
AND IF toward the end, when there is absolutely no possibility of medically reversing the natural processes set in motion by aging or disease,
AND if the pain should ever become manifestly unbearable,
I SOLEMNLY REQUEST THAT those in attendance consider it my well deliberated wish
THAT they administer such medicine as will best relieve me in that time of suffering,
EVEN if that same medicine might also have the indirect consequence of shortening the process of my departure from you.
ALL OF YOU who have loved and admired me and thought well of my life's work,
ALL OF YOU who, as doctors or nurses, dedicated your lives to the healing skills

WILL, I trust, be the most resolute in carrying out my final wishes,

TO the formulation of which I hereby affix my signature:

Harry A. Wolfson

Witness:

George H. Williams

Witness:

Joel Isaac Braude

Three days later on 20 September 1974, Harry Wolfson died.

Professor Wolfson's feeling that Rita would give birth to a boy proved right. Our grandson was born on 27 September 1974, the day following Yom Kippur. He was named Yosef after his paternal great grandfather Joseph Manasseh Finkelstein, and Zvi after Harry Wolfson.

Our grandson carries on the name of Harry Wolfson, even as Wolfson's numerous works are stamped with the scope and originality of his intellect. In the fall of 1975 Harvard announced a program with a goal of fifteen million dollars to establish a Center for Jewish Studies. In the announcement, Harvard speaks of the Center as a memorial and "fitting recognition of Harry Wolfson's unequalled scholarly achievements."

SAMUEL BELKIN AT BROWN — A POSTSCRIPT

by RABBI WILLIAM G. BRAUDE

In *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*, November, 1974 p. 611 I wrote that "a Mr. Botchkass . . . went to New York, to Yeshiva College, where he called upon Doctor Bernard Revel, then president, to provide . . . a young man, a *yeshiva bochur** whose patron would be Mr. Botchkass."

The statement just cited requires correction and amplification. To begin with "Botchkass" spelled his name "Botchkad," and his first name was Harry.

For a while, Botchkad did become Samuel Belkin's patron, but, as I shall set forth, it happened in a somewhat different way.

Samuel Belkin left his native Shishlovitz, Poland in 1928, just before his 18th birthday and his being drafted into the Polish army. He embarked from the Baltic port of Gdynia for a month's voyage fourth class, and arrived in New York 2 January 1929, where HIAS** served him a bowl of rice and milk soup, and tagged him for delivery to Windsor, Ontario in Canada.

From Windsor he continued to nearby Ford City to join his sister, Rose Mechanic, and her family. After three months with them Belkin decided that his future lay elsewhere. Rabbi Nahum Shulman of Windsor was instrumental at that time in securing for Belkin a student visa to the United States. In this effort Rabbi Shulman was aided by Samuel Belkin's family in New York, who urged Doctor Bernard Revel, President of Yeshiva College in New York, to issue post-haste the papers which the American immigration officials required.

Upon his arrival at Yeshiva, Belkin renewed his acquaintance with Rabbi Shimon Shkop, one of the all-time great Talmudic scholars, who was then senior professor of Talmud at Yeshiva. It was Rabbi Shkop who had ordained Belkin as a rabbi.

That year Rabbi Shkop had decided to return to Grodno, Poland, where he regularly headed a Talmudic law academy. When Belkin saw the Rabbi off to Europe, the Rabbi's parting words were: "Shishlovitzer, † you must remain in the U. S., where you have much to ac-

*A student at a college for Talmudic study.

**Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.

†In the yeshiva world, each student was identified by the town he came from, in Belkin's case, Shishlovitz. Hence Belkin was known as "The Shishlovitzer."

comply. You, I am certain, will help build a new Torah generation in America.”

Before Rabbi Shkop's departure and prior to the arrival of his successor, Rabbi Moshe Soloveitchik, Rabbi Shkop, queried by the late Doctor Revel about an interim lecturer for *shiurim* (lectures) to the senior class, replied: “The Shishlovitzer.”

Belkin accepted the post for a brief period. However, at that time, Rabbi Yehudah Heshel Levenberg, chief Rabbi of New Haven and founder of a yeshiva for senior students, decided to move his school to Cleveland and take Belkin with him.* Belkin remained in Cleveland for five months. Subsequently, Rabbi Levenberg's yeshiva moved to Baltimore and is now known as Yeshiva Neir Israel.

In Cleveland Belkin decided to pursue his general academic studies. Thereupon Levenberg arranged for him to meet the late Charles Torrey, professor of Biblical and Oriental Studies at Yale University. Torrey was willing to accept Belkin at Yale's Graduate School, but then advised him to choose a smaller institution, such as Brown, and arranged to have Belkin meet Henry Thatcher Fowler of Brown's faculty. Fowler warmly received the young student-teacher, and so in the fall of 1931, just before Rosh Hashanah, Belkin came to settle in Providence.

As is the custom of newcomers to a city, Belkin set out to call on the local rabbis to discuss Talmudic law. Since he was particularly impressed by Rabbi Asher Werner, he prayed on his first Sabbath in Providence at Rabbi Werner's Bnai Zion Synagogue. The rabbi invited Belkin to visit him that Saturday night, and it was then that Belkin met Mr. and Mrs. Harry Botchkad, a childless couple who resided on a large estate in Conimicut, Rhode Island. Botchkad told Rabbi Werner that it was difficult for the Jews in Conimicut to get a tenth man for their minyan and, besides, they required someone for the High Holidays to read the Torah and preach sermons.

So Rabbi Werner said: “I have here a youthful genius in Talmud. Perhaps I can persuade him to stay with you for the Holidays to preach and read the Torah.” Belkin was persuaded. Subsequently the Botchkads proposed that Belkin live with them, and even provided a chauffeur to drive Belkin to Brown each day.

Belkin stayed with the Botchkads for approximately six months. Then, with the worsening of the Depression, the Botchkads lost everything, and Belkin was left without any financial support. Fortunately,

Belkin's aunt and her daughter, Mrs. Ira Sobel, offered a stipend of \$60 a month, to carry him through the next three-and-a-half years during which he was to study at Brown, Harvard, and Yale.

In 1931 tuition at Brown was \$300 a year. When Belkin was asked for the first payment, he had only \$5, and so the bursar referred him to Roland G. Richardson, dean of the Graduate School.

After listening to Belkin's story, the dean said: "In your folder it says that before you came to the United States you were ordained a rabbi at the age of seventeen. Brown University has a special scholarship for ministers ordained in the Baptist denomination. I'll make an exception and give you that scholarship." And then with a smile: "Now, you're a Baptist Rabbi!"

A few years later Belkin's student visa was about to expire, and he would have been forced to leave the United States. Thereupon Dean Richardson had Belkin elected an honorary fellow of Brown, and thus made it possible for him to apply for American citizenship.

In 1934 Belkin decided to spend a year at Harvard under the guidance of the late Professor Harry A. Wolfson, who, vouching for Belkin, told the dean that some day Samuel Belkin would reflect credit on Harvard, a prediction that was to be fulfilled.

*During the summer of 1930 at a reception given to Rabbi Moshe Soloveichik and to the Lubavicher Rebbe Joseph Isaac Schneersohn upon their arrival in New York, Rabbi Eliezer Silver, President of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada, welcomed the two distinguished guests even as he announced the youthful Belkin's appointment in Cleveland.

THE YEARS OF THE JEWISH WOMAN

by ELEANOR F. HORVITZ

This is our heritage, we who are born female and Jewish — to “practice charity and benevolence”.¹ Nineteen-seventy-five has been designated “The Year of the Woman”. However, in the documentation of the charitable acts of Rhode Island Jewish women, who have always given of themselves to those in need, every year has been “the year of the woman”.

MANY LADIES ORGANIZE

The Montefiore Lodge Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association was “the first Jewish charitable association in Providence,” having been organized in 1877 and chartered in 1880.² There is a description of the organization in a 1926 issue of the *Providence Magazine*, published by the Providence chamber of commerce:

The Montefiore Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Association, the first Jewish Charitable Society in Providence, was organized in October, 1877, its object being to relieve distress among the needy Jewish families of the city. The method adopted has always savored of the friendly visit, and the work is carried on entirely by volunteers, who respond in all weather to calls for assistance.

Coal, clothing, food, eyeglasses and medical appliances have cheerfully and unostentatiously been given. The need for these has naturally grown during the past few years, owing to the greatly increased Jewish population and the industrial depressions, so that now from \$100 to \$150 a month is usually dispensed.

It is worthy of note that the sum of \$60 a year is the total expense of the association in conducting all the work of the charity committee.

Mrs. Moses Einstein, who has been chairman for many years, is well known throughout the circle of organized charities, and her valuable experience, her untiring effort and sympathetic handling of the perplexing problems incident to her work are a valuable asset to this useful organization.

The present officers are: President, Mrs. David Bernkopf; Vice President, Mrs. Harry Cutler; Treasurer, Mrs. S. K. Grover; Financial Secretary, Mrs. Edwin Slocum; and Recording Secretary, Mrs. Joseph A. Wolf.

At that time it cared for 40 beneficiaries per month. Its purposes, of “visiting and granting weekly benefits to sick members and to assist the poor and needy” were admirable. But its apparent snob appeal cannot be ignored. Active membership was confined to women of

“irreproachable character and in good mental and physical health”. As David C. Adelman stated in his account of the Montefiore Lodge Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association, “Membership was a symbol of social prestige and applicants were rigidly screened by an investigating committee.”²

Even prior to incorporation in 1880 of the first chartered women's charitable organization, the role women played as they performed their daily “mitzvahs”^{*} has always been part of each family's lore. The Jewish immigrant to the United States could always count on bed and board until a job was found and the money accumulated to bring his own family to this country. When a family was visited by illness, bad fortune, or death, the women were there when needed.

In quick succession after the chartering of the Montefiore Lodge Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association many other groups of women banded together to bestow charity and for various other purposes. Among these were the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association in 1890; the Young Ladies Hebrew Aid Society of Providence, Rhode Island in 1894; the Ladies Friendship Lodge in 1897; The Young Women's Hebrew Association in 1900; Miriam Society, Number One in 1903; The Providence Ladies Charitable Society in 1904; The Miriam Hospital Association of Providence, Rhode Island in 1907; South Providence Ladies Aid Association in 1908; and the list goes on.¹

It is interesting to speculate about how the founding mothers of the organizations of the late 19th century and early years of this century would view the Jewish Home for the Aged and The Miriam Hospital of today, for which they were partially or totally responsible. One must wonder how these dedicated ladies, our ancestors, would look on the “big business” tactics of today's organized charity. Even the all-volunteer organizations of today solicit by streamlined methods, using the telephone and attractive mailings. The woman volunteer of that generation climbed the stairs of many an old tenement house collecting a dime (or more if it could be spared) in an outstretched handkerchief. She walked for hours selling 50¢ party tickets to raise money. She thought in terms of pennies rather than dollars when soliciting donations. Instead of the luncheon caterers of today, volunteer cooks spent many hours in home kitchens preparing for parties.

The good deeds and efforts of all of these organizations are countless. The history of just one of them, the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association, will serve as an example.

^{*}*Mitzvah*, literally “commandment”, it has come to mean a meritorious act, or a “good work”. (Hebrew)

THE LADIES HEBREW UNION AID ASSOCIATION

Fortunately several documents are available which convey the feelings of past presidents about the history of this organization. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association at a luncheon held on January 5, 1937 in the Narragansett Hotel ballroom in Providence, Mrs. Ephraim Rosen spoke as follows:

This organization is a ladies' organization. Its members are women: women are mothers, and the whole world knows what the word MOTHER means. Throughout the 50 years this organization has primarily been a motherly one. It has rendered motherly care; motherly assistance; and been a symbol of maternal benevolence to the needy, the poor and the distressed.

We mothers can't conduct an organization of our kind in a strictly business manner. We mothers do not consider our accomplishments in the light of Profit or Loss. We cannot render charity and assistance by set rules and regulations. We are just mothers. The first thought of a mother is to help her child; to do all she can to relieve distress and pain to the child, and that is just what we have done for 50 years and will continue to do as long as God will spare us.

Now let us review some of the pleasant memories of the past. When this organization was 25 years old, we reached the stage of life in which we had a woman's natural desire, the desire to create — to give birth to a child. And so the Jewish Home for the Aged was conceived and born. In giving life, our lives were renewed. Only a mother understands the hopes and fears that were ours. Would it be blessed with a fair start in life? Would it thrive mentally and physically? Would we be able to sustain and nourish it into manhood? Or, would it slip beyond our control? We mothers looked at it through eyes of love; thought it beautiful. But others viewed it skeptically and feared its future.

Yes, it was rough sailing. There were times when we were fraught with doubt and anxiety. Many obstacles were in our way, but mothers never complain, never give up. Mothers do not neglect their children or let them die just because they require constant care and love.

In that child, so worthy of our devotion, we instilled courage, wisdom and the desire to always be of service to others. We watched with pride and exultation its progress, and our hearts voiced a prayer that we would be able to guide it into manhood. Now we can sit in the background and see our dreams perpetuated, our prayer granted.

The Jewish Home for the Aged has outgrown us and stands firmly and courageously with any other institution of its kind. We feel the greatest joy and satisfaction that the care of this institution was entrusted to us in the early years to mold and

direct, and it has borne fruit. It now takes its place with esteem among men, a credit to this community.

The men, who 25 years ago scorned our endeavor, now look with pride and possession at our child, claiming it for their own. We are not grieved, because we know that a child must be shared with the world, but in our hearts we claim him forever ours, our very own creation.

In the program for the affair⁴ a short history of the organization contained the following information: "Fifty years ago, in January 1887, ten individuals banded together to form the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association, whose purpose it was to assist all needy Jewish families, supplying them with Food, Coal, Passover Supplies, Rent, Medicine, and to make loans whenever necessary."

The charter members of the organization were listed as: Mr. Moses Finkelstein, Mr. Herman Max, Mr. Meyer Bromson, Mrs. Augusta Cohen, Mrs. Bessie Finkelstein, Mrs. Eva Rosenfield, Mrs. Rosa Weissman, Mrs. Bessie Davis, Mrs. Fannie Davis, and Mrs. Lea Jersky.

The following were listed as having served as president up to 1937: Mrs. M. Feldman, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Clara Feinstein Lepis, Fall River, Mass.; Mrs. B. Yarous, Providence, R. I.; Mrs. Louis Feiner, Providence, R. I.; Mrs. Isaac Woolf, Providence, R. I.; and Mrs. Ephraim Rosen.

To update the list, the following have also held the office of president: Mrs. Charles Adelberg, Mrs. Albert Cohen, and Mrs. Samuel Sheffres.

Funds for the organization, according to the history, were raised through membership dues, an annual coal fund drive, and the annual Moes Chitim* drive, as well as from other voluntary contributions. The history enumerated the various services performed by its members. They periodically visited patients at the State Institutions at Howard, Rhode Island and Charles V. Chapin Hospital in Providence, where they distributed "goodies" and cigarettes to all Jewish patients. On Hanukkah and Purim** each patient received a gift of stockings

*Also transliterated as *Moes Hittim* and *Maot Hittim*, literally "Money for wheat." Money given to the poor at Passover for the purchase of matzoh, unleavened bread. (Hebrew)

***Hanukka*, The Feast of Lights.

Purim, The Feast of Lots, commemorating the rescue of the Jews of Persia from the villainous Haman.

Shevuoth, The Festival of Weeks, or Pentecost.

Succoth, The Festival of Tabernacles.

Rosh Hashanah, The New Year.

Yom Kippur, The Day of Atonement.

and handkerchiefs. On Passover matzoh and fruit were sent to the Jewish inmates at Howard and at Wallum Lake, the tuberculosis sanatorium. Shevuoth, Succoth, Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur* were also celebrated in the traditional manner.

The role that the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association played in organizing the Jewish Home for the Aged in April 1912, with Mrs. Isaac Woolf serving as first president of that organization, is also cited.

Incorporated in the history were also the names of other worthwhile organizations to which this group contributed, such as the Deborah Sanatorium in Los Angeles, the Denver Sanatorium, the Hospital for Insane in Palestine, the Providence Community Chest, the Institute for the Blind, and the United Palestine Appeal.

Ten years later, in 1947, Mrs. Samuel Sheffres delivered an address on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Association. Among her reminiscences about the work of the women were the following:

As we go back to the very humble beginning of the Ladies Union Aid Association we can only marvel at the accomplishments of the handful of women — who despite the fact that they had little time — yes, and little worldly goods, managed to find time to help others. In those days, most women raised large families, did their own sewing and baking — and then in a spirit of thankfulness for their own bounty, turned to the needs of those less fortunate than themselves. There are no written records of the work done in the early years of the organization, but the people who were helped are living testimonials of its accomplishments. The dues — ten cents every two weeks — was collected by the members. Their ready response to every appeal has drawn criticism from many sources. The Ladies Union Aid has been accused of helping undeserving people — of letting their hearts rule — instead of their heads. Perhaps if I tell you a story I heard recently, it may explain this policy to you. A long time ago a poor man appealed for help — no, not to the Ladies Union Aid — but to another agency. He was told his case would be investigated, and they would let him know what they could do for him. Several days went by, and he had no word from them. Alone, friendless and helpless, he went down to the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad yard, laid down on the tracks and let the trains ride over him. When his case investigation was complete, the only help they could give him, was to pay his funeral expenses. . . . Believing that no one will ask for aid unless it is urgent, every appeal is answered immediately — and then investigated — to see if further aid is needed. Maybe that is not the best business method, but it is the way of the Jewish Heart.

*See footnote previous page.

Mrs. Sheffres also cited the remarkable accomplishment of the women of her organization in 1911 in starting the Jewish Home for the Aged in a rented cottage at 161 Orms Street.⁵ As Mrs. Sheffres concluded, "It is very easy to stand here and give you a short resume of the work done through these many years. The story flows along very smoothly and evenly — but only the women who worked know what difficulties they met and how they labored to overcome them."

Mrs. Sheffres was installed as president of the organization at an annual luncheon celebrating its 60th anniversary. She was to serve as its last president.

An undated newspaper clipping containing portions of the above address contained the information that "The group has had the same treasurer for thirty-eight years, Mrs. Ignatz Weiss". Mrs. Weiss had joined the Association forty-four years previously when the membership stood at 150. In 1912, when the Jewish Home for the Aged was founded, there were 1200 members. "Today (1947) there are between four and five hundred. . . . The dues, which began at ten cents every two weeks, were increased to \$5.00 a year. Half of this is now given to the Association treasury and the other half to the Jewish Home for the Aged."

THEY CREATED THE JEWISH HOME FOR THE AGED

The importance of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association in the origins of Jewish Home for the Aged is well known. There are many examples of tribute paid to these women for this role. A letter from Jacob I. Felder, president of the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, dated December 29, 1950, to Mrs. Samuel Sheffres, president of the Ladies Union Aid Association, stated:

On behalf of the officers of the Jewish Home for the Aged, the members of its Board of Trustees, and our residents, I wish to give public expression of our gratitude to the Ladies Union Aid Association on its sixty-fifth anniversary.

The Home is grateful to the Ladies Union Aid, not only for its very founding in 1912, but also for the leadership during the first twenty years of the Home's existence. Our present Home is actually the successor to what your society has created and nurtured.

It is therefore fitting and proper that we should recognize your faithful labors for the creation and advancement of our Home through your association. If your organization had done nothing else than to found the Jewish Home for the Aged in this community, it would deserve the lasting gratitude of this community



Sixty-fifth anniversary of The Ladies' Hebrew Union Aid Association in December 1950. Left to right: Mrs. Sarah Weiss (Charter Member of the Jewish Home for the Aged), Mrs. E. A. (Rose) Silberman, Mrs. Sophie Chorney, unidentified, Mrs. Morris Snow, unidentified, Mrs. Samuel (Ida) Resnick, Mrs. Samuel (Rose) Sheffres, and Mrs. Dianah Silk (at the microphone).



On January 6, 1953 the Ladies' Hebrew Union Aid Association presented funds to the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island to establish a pavilion in its name. Left to right: Mrs. Samuel Sheffres, Max Winograd, and Jacob I. Felder.

for this accomplishment. If you add to this your many other endeavors in behalf of the underprivileged and needy of this community, your record is one of accomplishment of which you can be justly proud. May you and your organization continue to grow and perform its benevolent work on behalf of the needy of our community.

The establishment of a home for the aged provided, not only a much needed physical facility for the older members of the community, but more significant, a Jewish facility. In the *Board of Trade Journal* cited earlier², there is a reference under a section elaborately titled, "A Little Guide to Providence. An alphabetical presentation of the Institutions and Attractions; facts and figures of the Metropolitan District of Providence". Among the institutions described was the Home for Aged Men and Aged Couples located at 807 Broad Street, and founded in 1874. Eligible for residence were "respectable persons of American parentage who have reverses". Sectarian institutions seem to have been the custom.

The Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association retained title to the old Home on Orms Street until 1953. In that year they deeded the property to the Jewish Home for the Aged on Hillside Avenue. It was promptly sold, the proceeds going to the general funds of the Home. In return the Association would now hold all its meetings in the new pavilion of the Home.⁵ This pavilion was designated the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Pavilion. The text of that transaction follows:

AGREEMENT made this 6 day of January 1953 between the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Rhode Island, and the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, a corporation created under the laws of the State of Rhode Island.

In consideration of the transfer of real estate by the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association, to the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, expressly including that commonly described and referred to as 191 Orms Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

WHEREIN IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

That the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island shall receive and install on a permanent basis as a permanent memorial of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association and its members, the plaques and memorials presently in the building at 191 Orms Street, Providence, Rhode Island, in the present sun porch or other suitable room or space in the building of the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island at 99 Hillside Avenue, Providence, Rhode Island, and that said sun porch or other suitable room in the building of the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island

shall be available as a place to hold Board and Membership meetings of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association.

Signed: JACOB I. FELDER, PRESIDENT
JEWISH HOME FOR THE AGED:

Signing for the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association were:

Mrs. Samuel Sheffres	Mrs. Esther Resnick
Mrs. Samuel Resnik	Mrs. Benjamin Glantz
Mrs. Joseph Chorney	Mrs. Morris Snow
Mrs. Jack A. Cerel	Mrs. Ignatz Weiss
Mrs. Samuel Rosen	Mrs. Lena Young
Mrs. Charles Rouslin	Mrs. E. A. Silberman
Mrs. Samuel Kabalkin	Mrs. Rose Kahnefsky
Mrs. Jacob Bilsky	Mrs. Rose Gottlieb
Mrs. Charles L. Adelberg	Mrs. Rebecca Lindman
Adaline Schoenberg	Mildred Gray
Boris B. Fish	
Rose H. Lappin	

In view of their charitable tradition, it is not surprising that the women who made up the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association comprised one of the three instigating organizations which created the Festival Committee for State Institutions of Rhode Island. Actually as early as 1910 there is documentation that various members of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association visited the State Institutions, or Howard, as they were then familiarly called. At a meeting held in the home of Mrs. Samuel Sheffres representatives of three organizations — the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association, the Montefiore Lodge Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association, and the South Providence Ladies Aid Association — it was decided to form the Festival Committee for State Institutions of Rhode Island. The need for representatives for the Jewish residents was poignantly recounted in an interview with Mrs. Sheffres. The Catholics had visits from members of a Catholic guild. The Protestants were represented by members of their various churches. It was a function of these religious groups to visit their members to determine their needs and to hold religious services. Their important holidays, such as Christmas and Easter, were celebrated at the institutions. Mrs. Sheffres's interpretation was that these inmates had "status" in the eyes of the guards because there was someone who cared about them. However, the Jew, who often had no living relative, or perhaps more unfortunate, no living relative who cared about him, was often the victim of a sadistic attendant. There was no one to listen to the abused patient. Mrs. Sheffres recalled her visit to the office of Doctor William O. Rice who was Medical Superintendent of the State Infirmary. She said to him, "Dr.

Rice, this is a terrible thing", and described a woman patient who had been beaten up. Doctor Rice answered, "You have no temple they can go into. The guards, hired at random, often pick on the Jews." But with the Festival Committee, she explained, we had an organization that assured regular visits to the residents by its members. "If anyone was abused, it was reported right away. Then it (the beatings) stopped". "We erected a chapel, a Rabbi holds services weekly, and visits all the patients."

Mrs. David Schwartz described a party held on October 15, 1953 at Harrington Hall at Howard in this way:

A PARTY AT SUKKOS

There was the beautiful Sukkah, on the stage of the Auditorium, put up for the Holiday of Sukkos,* so that our residents may know this was their holiday. As the Rabbi explained the Sukkah to this group, who stood silently and reverently listening, one would feel that here was a Mitzvah well done.

The Rabbi started with a Kiddush and then went on to relate the story behind the Sukkah, saying "that even tho we live in tents, God will protect you" and so God will hear your prayers, too, and some day you will be well again and go home to your families.

I'm sure with bringing some religion into their lives and knowing they are not forgotten by the outside world, they must find some hope and cheer within themselves.

I left the auditorium with a great feeling of mixed emotions and much gratitude to the Ladies of the Festival Committee for this great gesture of kindness and praying inwardly that they may be granted strength and courage to carry on in this worthy cause, bringing a bit of light into a world of darkness.

Mrs. Schwartz, who worked for many years both as an officer of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association and as a member of the Festival Committee, was satisfied that the ladies who volunteered were amply rewarded by the look of gratitude from these residents.

A PURIM PARTY

The minutes of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association as well as the minutes of the Festival Committee for State Institutions of Rhode Island for the year 1955 recorded by the secretary, Mrs. David Schwartz, were available for study. These dedicated women provided a great variety of services for the State Institutions. A Purim Party was held on Friday

*Also transliterated as *Succoth* (see footnote p. 155). The *Sukkah* is a booth, roofed with branches and decorated inside with flowers and fruit. *Succoth* is a holiday of Thanksgiving. *Kiddush* is the prayer and ceremony that sanctifies the Sabbath and Jewish holy days.



Succoth festival for patients at the State Institutions at Howard, R. I. Rabbi Morris Schussheim (right) officiated at the ceremony, assisted by Mrs. Samuel Sheffres (left). The boy (center) is not identified. (*Providence Journal* photo, October 10, 1952)



A picnic for patients in the Fall of 1961, at the Rhode Island State Institutions was prepared by Mrs. Barney (Ida) Buckler, Mrs. Moe (Dorothy) Cohen, a Mrs. Field and her sister, Mrs. Herbert Fellman, Mrs. Max Harriett, Mrs. Rose Karnofsky, Mrs. Samuel (Ida) Resnick, and Mrs. E. A. Silberman (in alphabetical order).

afternoon, March 11, 1955, for the residents at Howard. "Rabbi Morris Schussheim officiated at the services, and as always, we served all kinds of refreshments, including homantochen,* which signified the holiday of Purim. It was a beautiful party and appreciated by all." The affair was described in a letter of March 21 sent to the president of the Montefiore Lodge Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association, and also to all organizations interested in the Festival Committee to keep them informed and to thank them for their contributions to "this worthy humane cause." Similar letters were also sent to other organizations such as the women's division of the Cranston Jewish Community Center. These organizations were asked for contributions so that the Festival Committee might afford more parties. The contributions were needed to augment the money raised at the annual bridges. It was also noted in the minutes of the organization that many persons contributed goods and services such as cookies, apples, wine for a Seder,** or transportation for those who served on the Committee. These individuals and businesses were sympathetic to the idealistic women who made up the Festival Committee. Other letters of solicitation to the various organizations were termed "Requests for Moes Chitim Charity for Passover."

A report on the activities of the Festival Committee for State Institutions of Rhode Island also included a description of a Passover Seder:

Held on Monday evening, April 11, 1955, in the Adolph Myer Building, Howard. Rabbi Schussheim officiated at the Pesach Seder: Sixty residents taking part, one resident made the Kiddush, while three women residents lighted the holiday candles. A cooked meal, shopped and prepared for by the Committee, consisted of gefiltah (stuffed) fish, soup, chicken, matzos dessert, wines.

For Exeter† School, the Passover was held on Tuesday afternoon, at 1:30 P.M., April 12, 1955. One hundred children were taken care of. Servings of apples and cookies (were served) to the outside children.

There was also reference to a bridge party scheduled to be held in the fall. The purpose of the annual bridge was to raise funds needed to support the year's holiday parties given at the State Institutions. The women anticipated disposing of 1,000 raffle tickets and 500 bridge tickets. In the minutes of a November 2, 1955 board meeting of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association, there was reference to

*Also rendered *hamantashen*, a symbolic food of Purim, a three-cornered sweet pastry filled with prunes or poppy seeds.

**Combination of banquet and religious service which initiates the Passover holiday.

†Now the Ladd School for the mentally retarded. See Note 9.



This photograph appeared in *The Rhode Island Jewish Herald* of September 12, 1963 with the following caption: "PREPARE FOR ANNUAL BRIDGE—The Festival Committee for the State Institutions at Howard and Exeter met at the home of Mrs. Samuel Sheffres, to plan for their Annual Bridge which will be held on Tuesday (September 16) at 1 P.M. in the auditorium of the Jewish Home for the Aged. Shown in the above picture is the award presented to the Committee by Augustine Riccio, state director of Public Welfare, in honor of the 15 years of service by the women to the hospital. Members of the committee are, seated left to right, Mesdames Leo Greenberg, chairman, Samuel Sheffres, president, and Moe Cohen, state institutions. Standing left to right are Mesdames Herbert Fellman, Charles Lappin, Samuel Resnick, Leo Rappaporte and Barney Buckler."

this bridge, which was held on October 4, 1955. This was the third annual bridge party sponsored by the Festival Committee. They realized the sum of \$1,127.50, which represented a tremendous amount of volunteer work on the part of devoted women. These bridges, an annual money raising event for many years, were phased out under the funding system to be described below.

In the first half of 1975 there was a Medical Center state employees' strike. Publicity about the strike prompted publication of an article about Mrs. Moe (Dorothy) Cohn⁶ in *The Cranston Herald*. Mrs. Cohn, the sister of Mrs. David Schwartz, has served at the State Institutions as a Red Cross Gray Lady since 1940. Because of her membership on the Festival Committee, and her role as a Gray Lady, she has served for many years as a sort of liaison person for the Festival Committee. Since she has had continuous contact with the patients, Mrs. Cohn has been able to determine their needs and report them to the Festival Committee. For example, one person might need new shoes, another a new robe or nightgown. On a visit to the Medical Center on June 27, 1975 with Mrs. Cohn and Mrs. Sheffres, their rapport with the residents was quite apparent to this writer. The residents would turn to these two women with their requests. Since the annual summer outing arranged by the Festival Committee was soon to be scheduled, the interest and excitement among those who were with us were very evident as they inquired about its date. Outings, holiday parties, Friday night suppers, little gifts of candy or items from the canteen break up what would otherwise be a monotonous existence. In these dedicated women the residents have someone to whom they can turn, who will listen to them and fulfill any requests within their abilities.

Mrs. Cohn, in addition to her chores as a Red Cross Gray Lady, established a memorial fund for her husband and with donations from relatives and friends bought furniture and appliances for the hospitals. She also has been successful in "getting businesses to donate their products to patients. . . ." She "first became interested in the Medical Center in 1939 when a friend who was a volunteer there invited her down for a day. 'It was like the snake pit', recalled Mrs. Cohn".

An earlier newspaper account⁷ carried a picture of Mrs. Cohn displaying gifts for the children at Exeter School. She was called an "emissary of the Ladies' Union Aid, Montefiore and the Providence Ladies' Auxiliary groups of women who have united in a 'festival committee' to help others."

DR. SIDNEY GOLDSTEIN AND THE JEWISH CHAPEL

The Jewish chapel earlier referred to — a most important facility for the residents — was dedicated on October 11, 1964. Almost eleven years later, on the day of my June visit, I attended a Friday noon service in the chapel with Rabbi Jacob Handler of Temple Beth Israel officiating. The small area allotted to the chapel in the Hazard Building is now to be replaced by a new chapel which will house three halls to accommodate the Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant worshippers.

An earlier issue of the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*⁸ carried a description of the origins of the Jewish Chapel and its dedication as a memorial to Doctor Sidney Goldstein, who died on February 9, 1963. He had been Superintendent of the State Hospital for Mental Diseases⁹ from 1960 until his untimely death in 1963. Doctor Goldstein, beloved by patients and staff, was also the first president of the Rhode Island Chapter of the Academy of Religion and Mental Health. Among the committee members who were involved in the planning of this chapel was Mrs. Dorothy Cohn.

An account of the dedication appeared in the *Providence Journal* of October 10, 1964:

What began as small contributions from nurses and social workers who had been associated with Dr. Sidney S. Goldstein at the Rhode Island Medical Center has ended up as a newly-reconstructed Jewish chapel which will be dedicated tomorrow as a memorial to the doctor.

. . . Speakers will include Governor (John II.) Chafee, Rep. John E. Fogarty and Augustine W. Riccio, state director of social welfare.

A room that had been used for Jewish services has been re-decorated and refurnished. It now has a Holy Ark in which the Torah, or Law of Moses, will be placed after tomorrow's dedication. It also has an Eternal Light.

As described by Herman L. Goldberg, executive director of the Jewish Family and Children's Service and chairman for the dedication services, the chapel will be made available for use as a community cultural and recreational center as well as a religious center.

A folding door will close off a portion of the facility for use as a kitchen and for recreation.

The chapel also can be used as a meeting room for discussions of medical and professional services.

The Sons of Zion Congregation in Providence donated the Torah for the chapel, Mr. Goldberg said.

The Festival Committee of women which arranges for the observance of Jewish holidays by patients at the medical center donated the Eternal Light, he said. The committee of about 55 women represents three organizations, the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Society, the Montefiore Society and the South Providence Ladies Aid Association.

Mr. Goldberg credited the festival committee, which he said "is very active during the year with Jewish patients", as the stimulant behind the new chapel.

The chapel work cost about \$4000, which has been raised by a memorial committee formed a year ago under the chairmanship of Harry A. Schwartz.

Now that a Torah and an Eternal Light are available, full Jewish services can be held daily and on holidays under the direction of Rabbi Charles M. Rubel, the chaplain.

Henry W. Markoff, Providence engineer, was the architect for the renovation. Ralph H. Fishbein, Pawtucket cabinet maker, did the transformation.

Other members of the memorial committee, in addition to Mr. Goldberg and Mr. Schwartz, are Rabbi Eli A. Bohnen, Rabbi Rubel, Mrs. Dorothy Cohn, Dr. Max Fershtman, Edward P. Henry and John L. Newman. Dr. Fershtman is secretary. Mr. Newman is treasurer.

As of this writing three rabbis share duties at the various State Institutions: Rabbi Jacob Handler at the Institute of Mental Health; Rabbi Saul Leeman at the Dr. Joseph H. Ladd School in Exeter, Rhode Island; and Rabbi Jerome S. Gurland at the Adult Correctional Institutions.

The services, which the residents consider a high spot of their week, have a unique informality. Presented in a simple teacher-pupil dialogue format, the services are more meaningful to those who can comprehend them than a more complex service would be. A *Kiddush* following each service, eagerly awaited by the residents, is provided each Friday through Festival Committee funds.

A large amount of work was involved in providing for the needs of the Jewish patients by the workers of the Festival Committee. Mrs. Sheffres spoke of how she would search among the items on sale at the Thrift Shop of the Council of Jewish Women to find a needed dress or man's jacket. Or how she would buy Hanukkah gifts from the Outlet Company department store, which would give the Festival

Committee a discount. Mrs. Sheffres also recalled the many people over the years who had given of their time and money. Jake Kaplan, automobile dealer, provided buses for the outings. Fred Spigel, dealer in kosher meat and delicatessen, generously provided at cost the food used on Friday nights and for the holidays. Spigel's and the kitchen staff of the state institutions now prepare the kosher food originally prepared by the women in the kitchen of Sarah and Louis Fishbein.

THE LADD SCHOOL AT EXETER

In a telephone interview with Mrs. Albert Cohen, former president of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association, information was obtained about her present role at the Dr. Joseph H. Ladd School. She has assumed the sole responsibility for the observance of the holidays at this school. At present only the two holidays of Passover and Hanukkah are celebrated with the residents. She has succeeded in maintaining this service even though her "committee" has consisted of only a few friends who have helped her with the physical work involved. There are fifty children (called children, not necessarily because of their age in terms of years, but from a mental standpoint) and in addition the attendants at the Ladd school. All are served a complete Passover *Seder* meal. At *Hanukkah* gifts and party food for both the residents and attendants are brought to the school. Based on over fifty years of experience in this type of volunteering activity, Mrs. Cohen was convinced that in no other way could one feel as much gratification as from the delight shown by the children for the attention they received. To supplement the dwindling group of Festival Committee women, Mrs. Cohen stated, an occasional parent or relative of a resident at one of the state institutions would visit and help out in serving the other Jewish patients.

The Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association is no longer in existence. The members decided to disband, since most of its functions are now provided by the professional services of the Jewish Family and Children's Service. There is, however, still a Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Foundation, to which some loyal members still send in voluntary dues. The balance of the money, left after the \$3,000 contribution to the Jewish Home for the Aged patio, was in the vicinity of \$2500. The interest realized from the money in the foundation is used for the special needs of the residents of the Home. The funds originally raised by the women through bridge parties, dues, and various other activities is now provided by the Jewish Family and Children's Service as well as from a yearly stipend of \$800 from the United Moes Chitim Fund, distributed under the aegis of the Festival Committee.

The United Moes Chitim Fund has been contributing funds to the Festival Committee for their Passover expenses since 1957. An article in the *Rhode Island Herald* of March 11, 1966 described this joint effort. "Between 150 and 175 persons at the Rhode Island Medical Center and the Ladd School will be given food for the holiday, through the ninth annual appeal of the United Moes Chitim Fund. . . . Food for the Seder at the State Institutions is prepared and served by the Ladies Festival Committee, and food for the eight days is taken there and to the Ladd School." At the time this article was written there was but one Jewish prisoner and he was to be given Passover food, although he was not allowed to attend the Seder.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the type of service provided by these dedicated women no longer attracts volunteers. Most now appear to prefer to work in other ways. However, volunteers are still desperately needed to render the same services which the Festival Committee has always provided. At the present time the census of Jewish residents at Ladd School and at the Medical Center is high. In addition, there are many Jewish residents in the Geriatric Division of the state institutions, many of whom are living there because the Jewish Home for the Aged has been filled to capacity. The needs of these people have not diminished over the years. Of the original large number of volunteers only a handful of the faithful remain. They have provided for the needs of the patients and have assured that the Jewish holidays could be observed. They have brought to the Rabbis' attention patients who may have been ill, or in cases of death they have arranged for Jewish burials. These few women have kept the unfortunate from being the "forgotten people."

In a pencilled, hand-written draft of the Constitution, By-laws, and Rules of Order of the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association of the City of Providence, State of Rhode Island are stated the following objectives:

We, the undersigned, do declare ourselves, an Association for mutual improvement in charitable affairs and for enlarging our fund, in the pursuit for which we desire to exhibit a due consideration for the opinions and feelings of others, to maintain and to seek truth in all our exercise. . . .

The many founders, the hard-working officers, and the members, too numerous to list here, were truly Jewish Women of the Years in which they gave so completely of themselves. They never felt the necessity to agitate for their rights as women. They attained the highest possible station in the scale of humanity through the un-

assuming dedicated manner in which they helped their fellow-man. They were and are our unsung heroines!

NOTES

¹"Chartered Organizations." *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* 2:23-35, (no. 1) June 1956, page 23.

²"Montefiore Lodge Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association" by David C. Adelman. *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* 4:47-78, (no. 1) May 1963.

³"Montefiore Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Association." *Providence Magazine*, pub. by The Providence Chamber of Commerce. 58:585, (no. 9) Sept. 1916.

⁴Souvenir Program 50th Anniversary Luncheon 1887-1937. Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association. January 5, 1937.

⁵"The Jewish Home for the Aged," by Seebert J. Goldowsky, M.D. *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* 2:241-253, (no. 4) April 1958.

⁶*The Cranston Herald*, March 6, 1975.

⁷*Providence Journal*, December 23, 1954.

⁸"Sidney S. Goldstein, M.D.," by Terry Goldstein and Beryl Segal. *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* 6:465-474, (no. 3) Nov. 1973.

⁹The names of the state institutions and their organizational structure have varied over the years. In 1916 the following institutions were located in Cranston, R. I.: the State Hospital for the Insane, the State Alms House, the Work House and House of Correction, the State Prison, the Providence County Jail—all at Howard R. I.—the Sockanosset School for Boys, and the Oaklawn School for Girls. The Rhode Island School for Feeble-minded was located at Exeter, R. I. In the 1940s two major hospitals were identified at Howard: the State Hospital for Mental Diseases (Charles P. Fitzpatrick, M.D., Medical Superintendent) and the State Infirmary (William O. Rice, M.D., Medical Superintendent).

At this writing the latter facilities are united as the Rhode Island Medical Center, comprised of the General Hospital and the Institute of Mental Health, the latter including the Geriatric Division. The facility at Exeter is now the Dr. Joseph H. Ladd School. The former State Sanatorium at Wallum Lake (formerly a tuberculosis sanatorium almost exclusively) is now the Dr. Ubaldo E. Zambarano Memorial Hospital.

INTERVIEWS

Telephone interview with Mrs. Albert Cohen on August 19, 1975.

Interview with Mrs. Moe Cohen on June 27, 1975.

Interviews with Mrs. Samuel Sheffres on May 30, 1975; June 27, 1975; and August 8, 1975.

RHODE ISLAND MATERIALS IN THE AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTIONS*

by BERNARD WAX

This occasion provides a unique opportunity to examine the resources of the American Jewish Historical Society in a new light—the determination of the amount and nature of the material available in our collections on an individual state. In essence, it provides an opportunity to measure our capabilities and usefulness to both our staff and patrons.

To provide a background for discussing the materials relating to Rhode Island located in the Historical Society, something must also be noted about its founding and history, for the initial basis of our collections rests upon the philosophies and views of our founders, early leadership, as well as later and current personnel and orientation to the field of American Jewish history.

Important to note is the founding year of the Society, 1892, the four-hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America. Of equal influence was the early leadership—Oscar Straus, Cyrus Adler, Adolphus S. Solomons, and Henrietta Szold, all of whom were deeply interested in the early period of America and American Jewish history. Subsequent leaders, both professional and lay, were equally interested in the Colonial and Revolutionary period—A.S.W. Rosenbach, Captain N. Taylor Phillips, Max James Kohler, George Kohut, Jacques J. Lyons, Edward Coleman, and Isidore S. Meyer. There were also close ties with the oldest congregation in America, Shearith Israel, the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation.

As a result of these influences and orientation, there came to be a determined effort to emphasize the collection of material from the Colonial and early National periods.

The approach was not at all unusual, for it appeared to be the same type of orientation for many other local, state, regional, and national historical organizations. In addition, many of those associated with the founding of the Society were direct descendants of the early Jews in America, and their gifts of portraits, manuscripts, relics, and the like mirrored those associations and interests. A rigorous examination of our collections for these items would demonstrate that much came from families residing in America for several generations.

*Fourth Annual David Charak Adelman Lecture read at the twentieth annual meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association on May 19, 1974. Mr. Wax is Director of the American Jewish Historical Society.

With this background in mind, let us note how Rhode Island history is reflected in our holdings. For one thing, these interests are quite varied ranging from water colors and photographs to Yiddish theater posters and priceless manuscripts. The time span covered is from the earliest period of American Jewish history to the present day, where we attempt to chronicle events relating to the American Jewish response to current Israeli crises. As a result, our collecting activities are never-ending whether it be for Providence, Newport, or the other communities in which the Jewish population of Rhode Island resides.

Some strange, or at least unusual, titles and associations turned up. Little had I realized that one of the Society's founders and the past president, Oscar Solomon Straus wrote *Roger Williams, The Pioneer of Religious Liberty* in 1894. In 1930 another edition was published "with an interpretation by R.E.E. Harkness, Ph.D. and an address by Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes." The half-title reads "this tercentenary edition is published by the Oscar S. Straus memorial association by special arrangement with the American Baptist Historical Society in connection with that organization's celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the founding of Rhode Island by Roger Williams."

For those interested in current fads as well as the activities of the Jewish Defense League and the Karate/Kung Fu physical defense academies, it may be of interest to know that among our Society's collections is a publication titled *Convention of Jewish Societies for Promoting Physical Culture Among the Jewish Masses* called by the Touro Cadets and arranged by the Montefiore-Touro Association dated Av 12, 5661 — July 28, 1901.

An unusual view of Jewish life is given in a Christian lady's reminiscences, Sarah S. Cahoon's *A Visit to Gran-papa or A Look at Newport* published in 1840. Apparently, the book was successful since it was issued in a second edition two years later with a less homespun title, *Sketches of Newport and Its Vicinity*. An even earlier published volume, Andrew Burnby's *Travels Through North America* referred to the Jewish community, a rather unique circumstance in a volume published in its third edition in 1798.*

The statistically minded and sociologically oriented would, of course, be interested in examining Sidney Goldstein's population survey sponsored by the General Jewish Committee of Providence as well as his subsequent 1968 study with Calvin Goldscheider, *Jewish Americans, Three Generations in a Jewish Community*. Both of these works have

*See page 33 of this issue of the *Notes*.

passed into the realm of history and should prove to be valuable resource documents in later years.

Also statistically oriented, but for a much earlier period, is the Massachusetts Historical Society 1914 publication, *Commerce of Rhode Island, 1726-1800* in which a number of Jews are included.

The subject of commerce constitutes a major portion of several manuscript collections. The subjects of these collections were, for the most part, prominent Colonial merchants or individuals interested in studying and researching this group. The major name which comes immediately to mind is Aaron Lopez, (1731-1782) about whom the Society has collected 6869 manuscripts arranged chronologically for the years 1752-1794. The great majority of the collection consists of account records, bills of sale, orders, shipping agreements, lists of sailors on various ships, repair records, and cargo invoices. Of particular interest are several documents that reveal Lopez as a supplier of kosher meat and religious articles to people in various American Colonies, Surinam, and Jamaica. Also included are copies of sailing lists, documents pertaining to Lopez's naturalization, which shed light upon the status of a few applying for citizenship in Massachusetts, and a check to Lopez from the United States Government for a loan made during the Revolutionary War (1779).

The Jacques Judah Lyons Collection was compiled during Lyons' lifetime (1813-1877), and some of the material goes back as far as 1728. The collection provides the opportunity to examine the relationships between Shearith Israel and Touro Synagogue (Jeshuat Israel, the Newport cemetery, and the Jewish community).

For those interested in the medical aspects of religious observance, the Moses Mendes Seixas Papers from 1755-1809 provide a letter describing the method of ritual circumcision dated in 1772 as well as a list of those circumcized by Seixas in Newport in 1775. Seixas was the first Masonic Master of St. John's Lodge in 1808, and the Society is in possession of his Masonic manual. In addition to his religious medical duties as a *mohel* (ritual circumciser), Seixas had to support himself by shipping and importing. The Society holds his business documents from 1799-1809.

Other associated items are to be found in the Gratz Family Papers, material relating to Isaac Hart of Newport, and the Max James Kohler Collection.

But the concern of the American Jewish Historical Society is not only with the far distant past. The Phillips Family Papers include items

from 1672-1954. Numerous items exist in our newspaper collection for the nineteenth century as well. Newport is included in stories dealing with the Synagogue and burial ground as well as with local news items in the 1850s and 1860s. References are readily to be found in the periodical index available for the *Asmonean*, *American Israelite*, *Jewish Messenger*, and *The Occident*. Providence assumes an importance in the last half of the 19th century with articles on the formation of B'nai Israel* and its subsequent history in the community. News items are found scattered through 1888, 1889, and 1899.

The twentieth century is represented by portions of the Phillips and Kohler Collections which are related to current events. The American Jewish Committee Office of War Records from 1919-1921 contain numerous references to Rhode Island boys in uniform.

The American Jewish Tercentenary Celebration (1951-1956) Collection and the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds Records (1935-present) both serve as examples of Rhode Island activities in different areas.

Finally, mention must be made of the excellent resource, the publication of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*. This publication is an invaluable resource for both professionals and amateurs. The quality of its papers and capable editing make for an additional substantial source of information and data, and it should be recognized as such by those attempting to understand the experiences of one state-wide Jewish community.

*Later Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David (Temple Beth-El).

THE TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The Twenty-first Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, held on Sunday, May 18, 1975 in the Jewish Community Center, Newport, Rhode Island, was called to order by the President, Erwin E. Strasmich at 3:50 P.M. Preceding the call to order, a day-long series of events in Newport was sponsored jointly with the League of Rhode Island Historical Societies and the Friends of Touro Synagogue National Historic Shrine, Inc., with the assistance of the Newport Historical Society. The program was planned and coordinated by Norman T. Bolles, President of the League, Samuel Friedman, President of the Friends, and Seebert J. Goldowsky, M.D., Editor of the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* and Vice President of both the League and the Friends. Each presided at various sessions throughout the day. The morning session and luncheon at the Treadway Inn, Thames Street, was attended by two hundred people from all the participating organizations. Additional persons joined the walking tours which followed and the exercises in the Synagogue.

The day's activities culminated in the Fifth Annual David Charak Adelman Lecture given by Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern, Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists and author of the definitive *Americans of Jewish Descent*, a compendium of family trees of every known Jewish family settled in America before 1840, soon to be published in a new edition. Rabbi Stern serves as genealogist of the American Jewish Archives and is chairman of the Executive Council of the American Jewish Historical Society. His topic was "The Jews of Colonial Newport".

The program with complete details of the day follows these minutes.

It was voted at the annual meeting to omit the reading of the secretary's Annual Report. Mr. Strasmich thanked those involved in planning the event-filled day. He introduced Mr. Bernard Wax, Executive Director of the American Jewish Historical Society, who extended greetings and once again praised the work of the Association.

Mrs. Louis I. Sweet, Treasurer, reported a balance in the treasury of \$1,613.36 and a total of 332 members. Finance Chairman, Louis I. Sweet, projected a balanced budget for the ensuing year of \$5,150.00, and a surplus.

Mr. Melvin L. Zurier, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, presented for re-election the following slate of officers: Erwin E. Strasmich,

President; Benton H. Rosen, Vice President; Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky, Secretary; and Mrs. Louis I. Sweet, Treasurer. Since there were no counter-nominations from the floor, Mr. Zurier made the motion that the secretary cast one ballot for the entire slate, and it was so voted.

Mr. Zurier announced that the dedication of the new building of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, in which the Association has its headquarters, would take place on Sunday evening, June 1, and invited all to attend. He suggested that a letter of appreciation to the Federation would be appropriate. Dr. Stephen Kaplan suggested that the next issue of the *Notes* be dedicated to the Federation as a mark of appreciation.

Mr. Samuel Friedman, encouraged by the success of the day, recommended that the Association and the Society of Friends of Touro Synagogue plan a joint venture in celebration of the Bicentennial. Agreeing that this was an excellent idea, Dr. Goldowsky stated that the Association will be publishing a special Bicentennial issue of the *Notes* in any case.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 P.M. and was followed by a collation served on the lower floor of the building. The hostesses were Mrs. Bernard C. Friedman and Mrs. Samuel Gillson, members of the Board of the Society of Friends. This hospitable reception capped this historic and historical day.

THE LEAGUE OF RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

SPRING MEETING

jointly sponsored by the

LEAGUE OF RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

and the

FRIENDS OF TOURO SYNAGOGUE

NATIONAL HISTORIC SHRINE, INC.

with the assistance of the

NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUNDAY, MAY 18, 1975

at

Newport, Rhode Island

P R O G R A M

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM

Registration—Treadway Inn, Thames Street

Lectures—Treadway Inn

1. RESTORATION OF THE TOURO SYNAGOGUE
AND HISTORIC CEMETERY FENCES

F. Cliff Pearce, Architect, National Park Service, United
States Department of the Interior

2. WHERE THE COLONIAL JEWS LIVED

Francine Gail Helfner

12:00 noon - 1:00 PM

Buffet Luncheon—Treadway Inn

Annual Meeting of the League of Rhode Island Historical Societies

Presentation of the John Nicholas Brown Award of the League to

Mrs. George Warren, founder of the Newport Preservation Society

1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

Walking Tours

A. Historic Jewish Cemetery, Bellevue Avenue and Touro Street

B. Newport Historical Society, Touro Street

C. Touro Synagogue Museum, Touro Street

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM

Lectures—Touro Synagogue

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF TOURO SYNAGOGUE

Rabbi Theodore Lewis of Touro Synagogue

2. THE JEWS OF COLONIAL NEWPORT

Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern, Genealogist of the American Jewish
Archives; Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists

3:30 PM

Annual Business Meeting, Rhode Island Jewish Historical
Association

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

by SEEBERT J. GOLDOWSKY, M.D.

Recent acquisitions in the library of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association containing items of Rhode Island interest and a listing of these items:

1. *Monumental Inscriptions in the Burial Ground of the Jewish Synagogue at Bridgetown, Barbados*. Transcribed with an introduction by E. M. Shilstone. American Edition published by the American Jewish Historical Society, 1956. 205 pages.
In the foreword on page x and on pages 100 and 101 are notes concerning Rabbi Raphael Haim Isaac Carigal, the learned peripatetic preacher, who spent several months in Newport, Rhode Island in 1773. He died in Barbados on May 19, 1777 (old style) at the age of 48, and was buried in the cemetery there.
On pages 117 and 118 are notations regarding Samuel Hart, merchant, who died in Bridgetown on October 15, 1773 of Putrid Fever at the age of 53. The inscription in Portuguese reads: "Here lies Mr. Samuel Hart of the City of New York, merchant, who has newly arrived from New Port in the Colony of Rhode Island in New England, North America . . . on October 15, 1773. . . ."
2. *American Airlines Tourist's Guide to Jewish History in the Caribbean*. By Rabbi Malcolm H. Stern and Bernard Postol, co-authors. Pub. by American Airlines, 1975. 96 pages.
Page 19. Mention of Barbadian Jews Mordecai Campanell and Moses Pacheco establishing a Jewish community in Rhode Island in 1673.
Pages 50-51. Isaac Touro finds refuge in Jamaica in 1780.
Page 88. Jews from Rhode Island among those forming the community in St. Eustatius.
Page 90. Jacob Pollock and Isaac Hart of Newport attempted to reach refuge in St. Eustatius in 1780.
3. *Honoring 1776 and Famous Jews in American History*. A Joseph Jacobs Publication, 1975. 19 pages.
Pages 5-6. Aaron Lopez, a brief sketch.
Pages 6-7. The Touro family.
Contains several errors.
4. *The Jews of the United States*. Ed. by Priscilla Fishman. The New York Times Library of Jewish Knowledge. Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., 1973. 302 pages.
Newport or Rhode Island are briefly mentioned on pages 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, and 179.
5. *Temple Emmanu-El, The First Fifty Years 5684-5734*. Ed. by David Horvitz. Pub. by the congregation, Providence, R. I., 1975. Hard covers. Illustrated with many photos, a number of them in color. Contains a history of the "The First Half Century" by Louis Baruch Rubinstein. 176 pages.
6. *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 65, No. 1. September 1975. Book review on pp. 93-94 of *An Index to Scientific Articles on American Jewish History*, ed. by Jacob R. Marcus, pub. by American Jewish Archives, 1971. Among thirteen periodicals included in listings is the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*.
7. *Beginnings: Early American Judaica*. A Collection of Ten Publications, in Facsimile, Illustrations of the Religious, Communal, Cultural & Political Life of American Jewry 1761-1845. Introduced by Abraham J. Karp. The Jewish Publication Society of America. Philadelphia 1975.

Contains 10 facsimiles and a monograph by Karp describing the 10 items and giving a Selected Bibliography. All in soft covers in slipcase.

One of the items is "A Sermon Preached at the Synagogue, in Newport, Rhode Island, called 'The Salvation of Israel': On the Day of Pentecost, on the Feast of Weeks, the 6th day of the month *Sivan*, the year of the Creation, 5533: On May 28, 1773, Being the Anniversary of Giving the Law at *Mount Sinai*: By the venerable HOCHAM, the Learned RABBI HAIM ISAAC KARIGAL, of the City of Hebron, near Jerusalem In the HOLY LAND. Newport, Rhode Island: Printed and sold by S. SOUTHWICK, in Queen-Street, 1773." Probably the first Jewish Sermon in America to be published. Translated by Aaron Lopez.

The monograph carries the major title listed above and consists of 68 pages. Chapter 2 (pp. 11-17), titled "Emissary from Hebron," describes the Carigal item and its background. Portrait of Carigal and photograph of the interior of Touro Synagogue.

Chapter 10 of the monograph ("From Ararat to Zion") describes Mordecai Manuel Noah's plan to set up a homeland for the Jews in Palestine. On p. 60 he mentions Noah's proposal in 1821 to establish a Jewish settlement in Newport, Rhode Island.

8. "Boston's Jewish Heritage: Bicentennial Supplement," *The Jewish Advocate*, November 13, 1975. Boston, Mass. p. 2 *et seq.* "Highlighting the History of Boston Jewry by Isaac M. Fein, containing an account of Moses Michael Hays (1739-1805), an active supporter of the Revolution, who fled from Newport to Boston in 1776, where he became one of Boston's leading citizens.

Page 5, An account of the Touro brothers, Abraham and Judah, and their Boston philanthropies.

Page 12, *et seq.* "Newport, R. I. Welcomes American Jewry: Home of Famed Touro Synagogue," by American Jewish Historical Society. Contains synopsis of the Jewish period in Colonial Newport and an account of Touro Synagogue and the Washington Letter.

ERRATUM

RIJHN 4:505, (vol. 6) Nov. 1974: Caption under photograph of telephone call in 1915 incorrectly identifies Mayor Joseph H. Gainer as standing between Leon and Joseph Samuels. Mayor Gainer is seated at the telephone. Mayor Gainer's Executive Secretary stands between the Samuels brothers.

NECROLOGY

NATHAN A. BOLOTOW, M.D., born in Providence, Rhode Island, April 23, 1894, the son of the late Louis and Fannie (Greenberg) Bolotow.

A graduate of Tufts University Medical School, class of 1917, Doctor Bolotow also received a Master of Science degree from the University of Pennsylvania. He served overseas as an army medical officer in World War I. He was a former Chief of the Department of Ear, Nose, and Throat at The Miriam Hospital, where he had served as President of the Medical Staff for several terms. He had been an instructor at the Schools of Nursing of the Rhode Island and Pawtucket Memorial Hospitals. He taught also at the American Academy of Plastic Surgery in New York City and at the American Academy of Otolaryngology.

A Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, the International College of Surgeons, and the American Academy of Facial, Plastic, and Reconstructive Surgery, he was a Diplomate of the American Board of Otolaryngology. He was a member of the American and Providence Medical Associations and the Rhode Island Medical Society, in addition to the New England Otolaryngologic Society, the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology, and the American Laryngology, Rhinology, and Otology Society. After retiring from active hospital service, he became consultant at most of the hospitals in the metropolitan area.

Doctor Bolotow's civic and philanthropic activities included the presidency of the Jewish Family and Children's Service from 1955 to 1960, the vice presidency of the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, and service on the board of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island. He worked in the field of emotionally disturbed children. Numerous papers in his specialty including plastic surgery were published in national medical journals.

Died in Boston, Massachusetts, October 31, 1975.

BEATRICE SYLVIA HANZEL, wife of Doctor Harold Hanzel, daughter of the late Louis and Gertrude (Epstein) Goldstein, was born in Providence, Rhode Island, March 23, 1917.

A resident of Providence until she moved to Warwick fifteen years ago, she was a member of Temple Beth Israel and its Sister-

hood, the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, and the Providence Section of the National Council of Jewish Women; she was also a life member of the Fall River Jewish Home for the Aged. She served as a volunteer at the John E. Fogarty Center for Retarded Children and with the Golden Agers of the Jewish Community Center of Rhode Island.

Died in Providence, Rhode Island, November 17, 1975.

LEONARD I. SALMANSON, born in Providence, Rhode Island on June 21, 1910, the son of Barnet and Elizabeth (Salk) Salmanson. He founded the Adams Drug Company in 1932 and as president and chief executive officer had control of 386 stores in 14 states, as well as a number of other holdings in other industries that the Salmanson family had been acquiring since 1958, among them Colt's Plastics Company of North Grosvenordale, Connecticut, and Gong Bell Manufacturing Company, a toymaking firm in East Hampton, Connecticut. Among the drug store acquisitions were the Whelan Drug Store Chain, Nescott stores, Eckerd stores, and the Veazy Drug chain of Oklahoma City. In 1960 a merger with Lee's Drug Stores, Inc. of Buffalo, New York, formed what the companies said at the time comprised one of the nation's largest independent drug store chains.

He attended public schools in Providence. He was a board member of Temple Emanu-El, the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, the Jewish Family and Children's Service; treasurer of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island; and a member of the Hebrew Free Loan Associations of Providence and South Providence.

He made several major contributions to Brown University and Bryant College over the years, including a grant a few years ago that was said to be one of the largest Bryant ever received. The Bryant dining hall was named after him in 1973. The following year he was named to the Bryant College Board of Trustees. The school awarded him an honorary degree of doctor of science in business administration in 1972. He was a founder of the Brown University Medical School where the physiology and biophysics laboratories were named in his honor in 1974.

Died in Providence, May 15, 1975.

Back Cover

The words appearing on the back cover were contained in a letter addressed to the Hebrew Congregation at Newport by George Washington in 1790. This letter was, in fact, a reply to Moses Seixas, the Warden of the Synagogue, inquiring of Washington about the disposition of the government in the matter of religious freedom. The phrases actually appeared in Seixas's letter of inquiry and were borrowed by Washington for use in his reply.

* * *

Rhode Island chose its Bicentennial symbol from a state-wide competition. The initials R and I join the numerals 76 in commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence July 4, 1776.

IN THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUE IN NEWPORT

Here, where the noises of the busy town,
The ocean's plunge and roar can enter not,
We stand and gaze around with tearful awe,
And muse upon the consecrated spot.

No signs of life are here: the very prayers
Inscribed around are in a language dead;
The light of the "perpetual lamp" is spent
That an undying radiance was to shed.

What prayers were in this temple offered up,
Wrung from sad hearts, that knew no joy on earth,
By these lone exiles of a thousand years,
From the fair sunrise land that gave them birth!

Now as we gaze, in this new world of light
Upon this relic of the days of old,
The present vanishes, and tropic bloom
And eastern towns and temples we behold.

Again we see the patriarch with his flocks,
The purple seas, the hot blue sky o'erhead,
The slaves of Egypt, — omens, mysteries, —
Dark fleeing hosts by flaming angels led.

A wondrous light upon a sky-kissed mount,
A man who reads the great God's written law,
'Midst blinding glory and effulgence rare
Unto a people prone with reverent awe.

The pride of luxury's barbaric pomp,
In the rich court of royal Solomon —
Alas! we wake: one scene alone remains, —
The exiles by the streams of Babylon.

Our softened voices send us back again
But mournful echoes through the empty hall;
Our footsteps have a strange unnatural sound,
And with unwonted gentleness they fall.

The weary ones, the sad, the suffering,
All found their comfort in the holy place,
And children's gladness and men's gratitude
Took voice and mingled in the chant of praise.

The funeral and the marriage, now alas!
We know not which is sadder to recall;
For youth and happiness have followed age,
And green grass lieth gently over all.

Nathless the sacred shrine is holy yet,
With its lone floors where reverent feet once trod
Take off your shoes, as by the burning bush,
Before the mystery of death and God.



To bigotry no sanction, to
persecution no assistance

Wm. Lloyd Garrison



r176