

Thirty-first Anniversary Issue
**RHODE ISLAND
JEWISH HISTORICAL NOTES**

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NUMBER 3

Front Cover

Cartoon from Brown University's *Brown Jug*, 1928-30, depicting a Jew trying to board the fraternity streetcar.

RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL NOTES

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RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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ERRATUM

Through a publishing error in the second issue of Volume 8, the pages have not been numbered consecutively after the page numbers of No. 1 of Volume 8. Provision for this error will be made in the Cumulative Index of Volume 8.

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130 SESSIONS STREET, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

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MY COUSIN, MARK TWAIN

by MELVIN L. ZURIER

Not too long ago, my cousin Sophie (Mrs. Robert M. Cohen of Providence) casually mentioned in conversation that she was related to Mark Twain.

"Sophie," I said. "I know you come from a very fine family. It must be since you and I are related, but Mark Twain...really! What kind of 'Yiches' is that?"

She then told me this story, since verified. Sophie's father was the late Reverend Abraham Gabrilowitz. In the early 1900's he came to this country, settling in New London, Connecticut, where his sister lived. Soon he had saved enough to send for his wife Rachel, his son Philip and a bevy of young daughters, of whom Sophie was one. Philip, now deceased, left two sons — Irving and Bill Gabrilowitz (who today are principals of Acme Motors in Warwick, Rhode Island). Abraham's daughters brought him more than a dozen other grandchildren and many more great grandchildren and great, great grandchildren.

Abraham left New London after several years to try his fortune in Providence where the Jewish community was substantially larger.

Abraham became well known in Providence as a learned man. For many years he owned a store on North Main Street where he sold religious books and articles. The Providence City Directory shows his residence in 1911 at 376 North Main Street. From 1916 until 1932 he lived at 22 Benefit Street.

Abraham's respect for learning stemmed from Imperial Russia where, after being orphaned at an early age, he had the good fortune to be taken in or sponsored by a family interested in study. Soon he became a Melamed or teacher, tutoring young boys for Bar Mitzvah. He studied Torah conscientiously at a Yeshiva or academy in Kovno, Lithuania, and qualified to become a "Sofer" or scribe, skilled in preparing and mending Torah scrolls. Being a Sofer for Abraham combined the callings of scholar and artisan. He later traveled throughout the United States and Canada, both as a Sofer and a Cantor. His services were in substantial demand by many congregations. He and Rachel eventually moved to Detroit in the early '30's. He died there in 1950.

But back to Mark Twain. Abraham and his family came from a town called Navardok in what is now the Byelorussian Republic in the

northwest corner of the Soviet Union. The borders of this area have changed frequently. In the late 1800's, and early 1900's, Navardok was part of Imperial Russia — later Poland.

In Abraham Gabrilowitz's day, Navardok was a seat of Jewish learning, the site of another well-known Yeshiva. Abraham's father, Reb Yisroel Yanekl Gabrilowitsch was a Rabbi who instilled his own reverence for the written Hebrew word, at least vicariously, in his young son, Abraham.

Yisroel Yankel had a brother Solomon (Shlome), also learned but caught up in the secularism that briefly overcame many Russian Jews in the period following the accession of Tsar Alexander. Solomon became a lawyer and moved to the Russian capital, St. Petersburg. This was a rare feat for a Jew — to be permitted to live outside the Pale of Settlement.

Solomon Gabrilowitsch married Rosa. They raised four children — George, Polya, Arthur and Ossip. All of the boys were musical.

Solomon prospered in St. Petersburg as a "well-known jurist". The family traveled a great deal and spent summers in Finland living in a home opposite the home of the famed Russian author, Maxim Gorky, who was a frequent visitor in the Gabrilowitsch home.

But how does Mark Twain become involved? Let us now focus on Ossip, the youngest of Solomon's children. Ossip was born in 1878 in St. Petersburg. At age 5 he began taking piano lessons from his eldest brother, George, 11 years his senior. (George later became a newspaper editor and fled St. Petersburg during the 1917 revolution. So, too, did his younger brother, Arthur — a St. Petersburg lawyer.)

At age 10, Ossip met the great Russian pianist-composer, Anton Rubinstein, who was sufficiently impressed by Ossip's musical talent to admit him to the St. Petersburg Conservatory. At age 10, Ossip accompanied the famous violinist Leopold Auer, head of the violin department at the conservatory and teacher of the likes of Heifetz, Elman, Zimbalist, Seidl, Piastro and others. Ossip soon became a "pianistic wonder". His interests soon extended to opera. He played for Rimsky-Korsakoff and Tolstoi. Finally, through a Madame Esipoff, a well-known Russian pianist who took a deep interest in Ossip's career, he came to study with her estranged husband, the renowned Theodor

Leschetizky. In 1894, Ossip's mother accompanied him to Vienna where Leschetizky taught. The following year, Ossip returned to Vienna alone to continue his studies with Leschetizky.

By 1896, Ossip was ready for his debut. He gave his first public recital in Berlin and was instantly acclaimed. His great musical career was launched. He performed as a soloist with the great orchestras and conductors of the time -- Arthur Nikisch in Leipzig (whose student in conducting he later became), Hans Richter in Vienna, the London Philharmonic, etc. He toured the United States in 1900, 1901, 1906, 1908 and 1914. He directed the Konzertverein Orchestra in Munich in 1910.

Ossip finally settled in the United States in 1914 and became a United States citizen in 1921. In 1918 he became the first conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, helping to raise a million dollars for the founding of Severance Hall in Detroit. He remained music director of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra until his death in 1936.

In 1928 Ossip also was joint conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra with Leopold Stokowski. He continued to perform as an elegant pianist and as a great conductor all over the world. His recording of the Arensky Waltz with Harold Bauer in the mid 1920's, according to the New York Times Music Critic Harold C. Schonberg, "has set the standard for all time: two elegant pianists and wonderful technicians disporting themselves with extraordinary grace and style."

In reviewing a recent concert by pianists Emanuel Ax and Charles Wadsworth, Schonberg noted that:

"(They) are inevitably going to be judged by the Bauer-Gabrilowitsch disk -- at least by those who have grown up on it and consider it the greatest romantic two-piano record ever made and one of the greatest all-time piano disks in any category."

But yes, how about Mark Twain? Well, first a few more words about Ossip. While a student under Leschetizky in Vienna, he met and became enamored of a young American soprano named Clara, also a Leschetizky pupil. Their romance flowered briefly but ardently. They became engaged, but time, distance and the demands of their respective careers kept them apart though they corresponded often.

In 1909, Clara, then living with her widowed father in Redding, Connecticut, near Hartford, learned that Ossip was seriously ill in a New York hospital. Clara and her younger sister sped to his bedside. Within several weeks, miraculously, Ossip recovered sufficiently to accept Clara's invitation to join her father and sister at their Connecticut home to convalesce. There he regained his health. Ossip and Clara became engaged that summer. They were married in October, 1909, at her father's home. In honor of the occasion, Clara noted that her father dressed in a red and blue cap and gown that he wore when he had received an honorary degree from Oxford.

Yes, Clara Gabrilowitsch's maiden name was Clara Clemens. Her father was Samuel Clemens — Mark Twain. His son-in-law was Ossip Gabrilowitsch. Twain and Gabrilowitsch — an unlikely combination — were devoted to each other. During Twain's final hours (he died in the spring of 1910) the last words spoken by Twain were to his son-in-law. He asked Ossip to give him a drink "Cause you're the only one who can understand me."

And so my cousin Sophie Cohen was indeed correct. Her grandfather, Yisroel Yankel Gabrilowitsch, was the brother of Solomon Gabrilowitsch, Ossip's father. Sophie's father Abraham and Ossip were first cousins. Sophie was Ossip's first cousin once removed. So maybe that does make her a cousin to Mark Twain. And since Sophie is also my cousin, well, maybe Mark Twain is my cousin too. Why not?

And how did Twain react to having a Jewish son-in-law? Twain's definitive biographer, Paine, in his four volume biography entitled "Mark Twain, A Biography" (New York 1912) at page 1524 noted that the wedding between Clara and Gabrilowitsch was kept from the newspaper until the eve of the wedding. Clemens gave to the Associated Press reporter a copy of an alleged interview between the reporter and Clemens and, replying to the question (put to himself) "Are you pleased with the marriage?" He answered:

"Yes, fully as much as any marriage could please me or any other father. There are two or three solemn things in life and a happy marriage is one of them, for the terrors of life are all to come. I am glad of this marriage and Mrs. Clemens would be glad for she always had a warm affection for Gabrilowitsch." (Twain's wife, Olivia Clemens had died

several years earlier.)

Another biographer of Twain recounts:

“(The) attitude of Mark Twain, as recorded by Susy (his daughter) is important inasmuch as he sustained it later when put to the test. This was his attitude toward Jews and he met the test when Clara wished to marry Ossip Gabrilowitsch, the noted musician of Jewish origin.

“Papa said that a Mr. Wood, an acquaintance of his, knew a rich Jew who read Papa’s books a great deal. One day this Jew said that Papa was the only great humorist who had ever written without poking some fun against a Jew, and that as the Jews were such a good subject for fun and funny ridicule, he had often wondered why in all his stories not one sentence had anything in it against the Jews. And he asked Mr. Wood the next time he saw Papa to ask him how this happened.

“Mr. Wood soon did see Papa and spoke to him upon this subject. Papa at first did not know himself why it was that he had never spoken unkindly of the Jews in any of his books, but after thinking a while, he decided that the Jews had always seemed to him a race much to be respected; also they had suffered much, and had been gravely persecuted, so to ridicule and make fun of them seemed to be like attacking a man that was already down. And, of course, that fact took away whatever was funny in the ridicule of the Jew.

“He said it seemed to him the Jews ought to be respected very much for two things particularly. One was that they never begged. One never saw a Jew begging; another was that they always took care of their poor...”

And how did Ossip’s family react to the marriage?

Well, Abraham Gabrilowitsch’s comment when he learned of the marriage was recently recalled to me by two of his nephews — Philip Shafner of Putnam, Connecticut, and Raphael Shafner of New London, Connecticut. Their late mother, Rose, was a sister of Abraham — and like Abraham, a first cousin of Ossip Gabrilowitsch. They can

still recall their Uncle Abraham's comment. In Yiddish it sounded something like:

“Ossip hut gehaiRET a Shikse. UbbE zEE iz foon a hoychen fenster!”

Imperfectly translated this means:

“Ossip has married a Gentile girl. But at least she's from a good family!”

LIST OF SOURCES

(1) Interviews with the following:

(a) *Children of Abraham Gabrilowitz*

Sophie Cohen — Providence, RI
Lillian Gleckman — Warwick, RI
Fay Goodman — Dayton, OH

(b) *Grandchildren of Abraham Gabrilowitz*

Sydney Cohen — Cranston, RI
William Gabrilowitz — Warwick, RI
Irma Silverman — Cranston, RI

(c) *Children of Rose (Gabrilowitz) Shafner*

Philip Shafner — Putnam, CT
Raphael Shafner — New London, CT

(2) *Bibliography*

Clara Clemens, *My Husband Gabrilowitsch*, New York, 1938.
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New York Times, February 25, 1979, Section D, p. 21.
Paine, *Mark Twain, A Biography*, New York, 1912.
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Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, New York.



Ossip Gabrilowitsch (Twenty-one years old)



The Gabrilowitsch Family — From left to right: George, Rosa (the mother), Solomon (the father), Ossip, Polya, Artur



Ossip Gabrilowitsch (from the portrait bust by Brenda Putnam)



Ossip and Fix at Redding in 1910



Nina Gabilowitsch



Olivia Langdon Clemens



Mark Twain (Samuel L. Clemens)



Ossip Gabrilowitsch



Ossip, Clara, and Hollywood Bowl puppies in 1934



Four generations of Gabrilowitzes in 1949 (Clockwise from upper left: Sophie Cohen (daughter), Irma Silverman (granddaughter), Peter Silverman (great grandson), Rev. Abraham Gabrilowitz (father), Steven Silverman (great grandson).

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the dedication and devotion of an individual to a worthy cause demands recognition from those who have benefited therefrom, and since almost from its inception the RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION has been the grateful recipient of those sincere and extensive labors of love, performed with grace, and exceptional care, and

BONNIE GOLDOWSKY

who has brought to her work on behalf of the Association a solid background formed from her lifelong interest in history, and her educational experience at Radcliffe College; and since by reason of her efforts, begun almost two and a half decades ago, first, as the compiler of a most invaluable cumulative index of the historical NOTES published by the Association, which has aided scholars, researchers and casual readers to understand and appreciate the heritage and tradition of our people in this state, and thereafter, having undertaken for more than fifteen years those added duties and responsibilities of the position of Secretary of the Association, in which she incisively and meticulously recorded the various transactions of the Board, the membership and annual meetings, so that future historians could gain not only mundane information, but insight into the development, resources and goals of the Association, and, since, her activities in behalf of the Association, not merely by direction, but out of an abundance of concern for the goals of preserving and disseminating historical knowledge

BONNIE GOLDOWSKY

aided countless inquirers and researchers, NOW, Therefore, the RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, on behalf of its officers, executive committee, members, and the total Rhode Island Community, does hereby RESOLVE

to express its deep gratitude to

BONNIE GOLDOWSKY

as she sets aside the responsibilities which she has in the past so exceptionally and devotedly accomplished, with the knowledge that she will not separate herself from the Association which she, as well as

her husband, have so lovingly nurtured for the benefit of this community, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the members of the Association wish for BONNIE GOLDOWSKY health, happiness and satisfaction which arises from a job well-done, with the further hope that for many, many more years, she and Seebert can view the expansion of the Association, as parents who have contributed greatly to a child's growth.

Be It Further Known that this Resolution was unanimously adopted, on motion duly made and seconded, at the Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association held at Providence in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations this third day of May, 1981, corresponding to the twenty-ninth day of Nisan, 5741.

Mrs. Clinton Zacks
Secretary

Marvin Pitterman, Ph.D.
President

THE JEWISH FRATERNITY AND BROWN UNIVERSITY

by ELEANOR F. HORVITZ

and

BENTON H. ROSEN

It all started with the Menorah Society, the predecessor of the Jewish fraternity on the Brown University campus. Founded in 1906 at Harvard University, there followed the formation of similar societies on many college campuses. Brown's chapter was chartered in the fall of 1914. The *Menorah Journal*, first published in January 1915, was a magazine of Jewish learning, literature and art.¹ "For conceived as it is and nurtured as it must continue to be in the spirit that gave birth to the Menorah idea, the *Menorah Journal* is under compulsion to be absolutely non-partisan, an expression of all that is best in Judaism..."² One of the society's earliest members expressed his view. "In its day it was a fantastic deal. Men who became famous writers came down to lecture."³

While the Menorah societies flourished on college campuses, the climate for the Jewish fraternity was far from favorable. "Just before the First World War as more and more Jews were being accepted into American colleges, they faced opening doors scholastically, while doors to college social life remained closed to them. Campus life was dominated by the Greek letter fraternity system: a social system that mirrored an American society divided along religious and ethnic lines, with blacks almost totally excluded."⁴ Exceptions did exist on campuses such as those in New York City. For example, "Recognizing the immediate social value and future economic implications of fraternity membership, Jews built their own parallel Greek-letter societies. In 1898 Jewish men at City College of New York founded Zeta Beta Tau, a Jewish history study group, which later became the largest Jewish collegiate social fraternity in the United States. Although several other Jewish fraternities, including Alpha Epsilon Pi and Tau Epsilon Phi, refused to exclude potential members on the basis of religion or race, ZBT's membership remained almost exclusively Jewish."⁵

Alpha Sigma Omicron and Phi Epsilon Pi

Brown University was not the City College of New York and the young men, several of whom belonged to the Menorah Society, had to face many obstacles in their effort to establish a legal and recognized fraternity. A small group had started, a purely social group, the

B.G.S., with four men. Leo Rosen related how he, George Bickwit, Leon Goldberg and Louie Smith were active in this group while at Brown University during the years 1918-1922. They held dances, but eventually they evolved into a larger body of men, a fraternity structure. They called themselves Alpha Sigma Omicron.

"In 1916 fifteen of us Jewish students formed a non-secretarian chapter of the fraternity, Phi Epsilon Pi." Walter Adler, class of 1918 at Brown University, remembered some of the students who, together with himself, were instrumental in bringing this fraternity to the Brown campus — Maurice Adelman, Maurice Bazar, Charles Bolotow, Herman Davis and Herman Feinstein. The fraternity Phi Epsilon Pi had originated at Harvard University. Tufts had a large chapter and Dartmouth a smaller one. The Dean of the College allowed the formation of this fraternity at Brown, but then he questioned the all Jewish membership, even though it had purported to be non-sectarian. However, it was allowed to exist, remained small, had no fraternity house and disbanded in 1919, according to Mr. Adler.⁶

"Following World War I there was a substantial increase in the number of Jewish students at Brown. They found themselves among the 'non-fraternity men', and in due time social consciousness brought about a realization that there were certain benefits in fraternity life that they were being deprived of. I would say that probably none of these men were interested in being admitted to the existing fraternities inasmuch as they recognized the social realities. However, they felt that they should have the same opportunity for fraternization as a group, together with the social amenities that would follow.

Some time in 1918-19 a group of students, among whom were Samuel Temkin, Leon Goldberg, Leon Rosen and Sidney Fox, formed a fraternity which they named Alpha Sigma Omicron. The late Samuel Temkin became a prominent attorney in Providence and later a Trustee of Brown, the first Jew to serve in that capacity. Leon Goldberg became an investment banker in New York, then Treasurer of R.K.O. and later Treasurer of United Artists Corp. Leon Rosen became a textile distributor in Providence. Dr. Sidney Fox became an internationally famed ophthalmologist.

One of the prime ingredients of a fraternity was secrecy; ASO truly had that. It had rules, rituals, initiations, pins and all the paraphenalia, but it was sub-rosa. It had its headquarters in the rooms of some of the students and it held regular weekly meetings, developing fraternization among the members. It held dances. In short, it was a fraternity except that it had no recognition by the university, and it existed without the university's knowledge. Each year new members were admitted.

It was the practice each year that a delegation of seniors would visit President Faunce, point out the fact that Jewish students were deprived of certain social life by virtue of having no fraternities, and requesting permission to organize and secure a chapter from some national fraternity. Invariably the request secured no approval."⁷

President Faunce expressed his opinion in the following letter:

"I was pleased to meet you and your two friends when you called upon me to speak about fraternity matters.

The whole subject is one so large that it can hardly be discussed on paper. I wish you would talk it over with Dean Randall. I have told him what you said. He sees, as I see, certain great difficulties. We have only one fraternity at Brown that was formed with a racial or religious basis and that is now asking for a change in its constitution. We dislike very much to see our students divided along sectarian or racial lines. We feel that such division would increase class consciousness and foment rather than allay any antagonism. Certainly you would not wish to see an organization here unless it were on a par with other organizations and playing its part in the Interfraternity Board."

The recipient of the letter felt that it contained the answer, together with the thinking on the subject. He interpreted it as showing obvious concern by the college as well as a lack of understanding of the realities. He emphasized that he was not accusing the university of anti-semitism. He elaborated further with the following statements.

"It is to be borne in mind that the letter expresses the true concern and reflects community standards on social matters.

It is to be borne in mind that Brown had never shown any discrimination in any academic sense nor in Jews participating in other college activities such as athletics, publications, drama, orchestra, debating, etc. Fraternities represented a social aspect of college life and the prejudice or discrimination shown to Jews in this respect reflected the standards of the community of Providence.”⁸

Jewish Fraternities — Conspicuously Absent

Why had no Jewish fraternities existed on the Brown campus previous to the small chapter of Phi Epsilon Pi or the sub rosa Alpha Sigma Omicron? Certainly Greek letter fraternities were part of the Brown student life for many years. In the late teens of this century there were 21 fraternities on campus, the oldest having been instituted as early as 1836. They were essentially social institutions where boys of like interests joined together. “There probably were no Jewish student members of any fraternities at Brown. I say probably because possibly certain Jewish students may have been admitted but their Jewishness was always a secret.”⁹

“In the early 20th Century the average Jew who went to college was a carpet bagger (the term for someone who lived at home). He was a myopic person who was a bookworm. He was seedy, unimpressive, and not in tune with the day. He was accepted in college because of his brilliance as a student and was promptly abandoned thereafter. He wasn’t any part of the social, athletic life of the community, nor was he appointed or elected to any organizations except possibly Phi Beta Kappa or Sigma Xi (honorary fraternities).¹⁰

“You must remember in that period we were all practically sons of immigrants — Jewish boys who went through the University for one purpose — to study.”¹¹

Articles have been written on the Jewish college student and the fraternities, the unwritten policy which excluded the Jewish student from membership in the all-Gentile fraternity and the fact that he did not expect to be part of this fraternity world.

“There is something silly, no doubt, about a college fraternity; the secrecy, the solemnity, the snobbishness. After

all, however, it represents the prevailing opinion, among the students, of what is desirable. It represents undergraduate public opinion. Also, it stands for sociability, and is likely to have leadership in many things that represent college life, such as class offices. Even in athletics it has been known to count, although the desire for efficiency has reduced that influence to almost nothing. If we are trying, therefore, to see whether there is a prejudice in a college against a certain group, the fraternity test will be unavoidable."¹²

Mr. Hapgood in the same article, part of which is quoted in the paragraph above, himself quotes from the *Hartford Times* on the Jewish student:

"The Jew, as a whole, stands exceptionally well as studentAs to the American college fraternities — some of the older of these, formed during a period of anti-Semite feeling stronger than anything known in recent years, passed rules distinctly excluding all Hebrews. Others instituted religious tests, so a Hebrew could not conscientiously take their vows and go through their ritual."

The editorial did point out the exceptions — the Jewish captain of a Princeton football team who made his upper class club; the captain of a varsity team at Yale who was made a member of the exclusive senior society at Yale. The latter was also designated, "a gentleman who measured up to its stamp."

Norman Hapgood gives other statistics at Yale University. "Since 1900 there have been over 2,000 men in the junior societies at Yale. Out of this entire number there have been 9 Jews." However, he did take cognizance of the fact that "a number of Jews and Gentiles have written that they thought the prejudice was less in the west."

Another series of articles on the subject of Jews and college life was also written by Mr. Hapgood. This series was entitled, *Schools, Colleges and Jews*, and was concerned with the Jewish immigrant and his aspirations for his children's education. He quotes from the writings of a son of a Jewish immigrant relating his experience at a large preparatory school in New England.

"In the three years of my life in this institution, ten per-

cent of the 600 boys were of Semitic faith — all American born. They were as representative a body of American Jews as could be collected at any school in the country. They were studious, and, taken proportionately, undoubtedly led their classmates in scholarship marks. In spite of this fact, not one of these was admitted in the three years to the social life — the fraternity system. They were, in short, socially debarred. The prevailing rumor was that one had to be a 'good fellow' to be eligible for admittance. Can it be that not one of these was good enough for membership? The fraternities were powerful in school affairs. They ran almost all elections, and, in fact, had an active part in every important school discussion. It can, therefore, be understood that one had to be a fraternity member to be active. These societies were under the supervision of the faculty, which issued charters to them, and which had members to censor all doings. The blame for the prevailing state of affairs can well be placed on the very faculty, which, in public, boasted of the 'democratic spirit' of the academy, and, in private did nothing to alleviate the outstanding difference between the Jew and Gentile. They, in fact, seemed to make matters worse; for, in my senior year, they allowed a new fraternity to spring up without one Jew in its enrollment. Here was offered and declined a splendid opportunity for establishing a worthy precedent."

Through another example, this from a Dartmouth graduate, Norman Hapgood elaborated on the Jewish prejudice question.

"We have never had many Jews here (Dartmouth), at most four or five per cent...They have always mixed freely with the other students...They used to be elected to the various fraternities, in the good old days, when a majority of our students were country boys, and either didn't know a Jew when they saw him or had no prejudice against his race. It is different now that most of our boys come from the city. They bring with them a race prejudice and with a tendency to exclude from the fraternities all Jews whom they can recognize as such...Some fraternities have an 'Aryan' clause to keep out Jews and negroes..."

Norman Hapgood wrote his articles in the year 1916. It is interesting to note that the picture had not changed to any appreciable degree during the recent past decade. Eli Evans, author, writes his personal experience as a pledgee. He had erroneously received a pledge to a non-Jewish fraternity. Once inside he was maneuvered skillfully to a corner of the living room for a short face-off with another brother. "You, Evans?" queried a crew-cut stud, his beer belly hanging over an alligator belt... 'You'll probably want to go to TEP, or ZBT or Pi Lam (all Jewish fraternities) you being Jewish and all.' Evans described his dismissal. "He took my arm and guided me toward the front door and he said, 'We've cooperated with them (the Jewish fraternities) through the years by promising not to go after their best guys. So please forgive the mistake.' By then we were on the front porch." Evans contrasted that reception with the one at the Jewish fraternity where he was eventually pledged. "The TEP house greeted me enthusiastically."¹³

Phi Chapter of Pi Lambda Phi

The year was 1928. Several men who were involved in the formation of Pi Lambda Phi have given their versions of the events and the resulting notoriety for the fraternity.

The response to the requests for a Jewish fraternity has been cited, particularly in the letter from President Faunce. One charter member gives his version. He was a member of the secret group Alpha Sigma Omicron. He said it was not a fraternity in the sense that was recognized on campus.

"You must remember that character and worth were predicted on how you pressed your clothes and how you handled your liquor. President Faunce's aim was to graduate 'gentlemen', not scholars, and when you talk about fraternities you are talking about very empty characteristics. So ASO was rather moribund. I think we had a dance or two. Then in my Junior year around Christmas, we were all told that we would be in a position to join Pi Lambda Phi. Pi Lambda Phi and Pi Epsilon were the only two Jewish fraternities which had non-sectarian charters. In the fall of 1928 President Faunce issued a statement that the fraternity system was extremely healthy and that there was room

for additional fraternities, which we figured would include us. A Jew as a Jew was not admitted to any other fraternity, and the fraternities pretty well controlled the campus life. Not completely, for it was beginning to break down. By that time in athletics we had Jewish captains. Al Cornsweet by this time was a Rhodes scholar.

(A news story which appeared in the *Providence Journal* of December 2, 1927 related the following about "Al" Cornsweet.

"Al Cornsweet Named Captain of Brown Eleven. Full-back Outstanding Player of this year's team. Given Honor by Letter Men. — Cleveland Boy has notable Record in 3 Sports.

Albert C. Cornsweet of Cleveland, one of the three-letter men in Brown, was named Varsity Captain of football at a meeting of the 27 letter men today. Cornsweet is a fullback and has been a regular on the team for two years. He was a member of the 'Iron Team' that was undefeated in 1926 and was the outstanding man in this year's team.

The election was unanimous. Cornsweet belongs to no fraternity on the hill and his election is the first in many years where the captaincy has not been given to a member of one of the fraternities. His election was solely in recognition of his individual ability not alone in football but in lacrosse and wrestling. His selection sets at rest the comments that have followed some college elections.") David Alper's comments now continue.

We went to New York on Christmas vacation, and we were inducted into Pi Lambda Phi. I think there were nine of us: Nathaniel Goldstein (now Gates, an attorney in New York City, a Junior Phi Beta Kappa); Dan Polsby (on the Lacrosse team. He died a number of years ago); Henry Cutler (also on the Lacrosse team); Jay Chrust (a football player); Lou Farber (who came from Pawtucket, and was an Iron man on Brown's famous football team); Al Cornsweet (also an Iron man); possibly Leon Bakst, and myself. I have probably missed a couple of names. We did not inform Brown that we were going to New York. Somehow or other it

leaked out, and Dean Otis Randall called us to his office and said to us he had heard we had formed a Jewish fraternity, and if we didn't sign an agreement to disband the fraternity, and not promulgate it again during the time we were in college, he would take drastic action against us. And as we were leaving, I turned to Dean Randall, and I asked, 'Can't we discuss this further?' And his remark is burned in my memory. He said, 'That is just like a Jew trying to bargain with me.' That night we had a meeting and we all called home, and said we were being threatened and kicked out of school. We called the national fraternity and that week they arranged for Rutgers to graduate us — to accept and graduate us without loss of credit. We had a group average of 89. We had a Rhodes scholar, a captain of the football team, captain of the wrestling team, an editor-in-chief — we were really well accepted on campus. During the spring of 1929, the week before the New England intercollegiate wrestling — I remember having breakfast at the Biltmore Hotel and at the meeting there was Arthur Garfield Hayes, who was one of the founding members of Pi Lambda Phi. There was a convocation at Brown that day, and the speaker was John Hanes Holmes, President of the national Y.M.C.A., and who knew Hayes. Nat Goldstein and, I think, Eddie Goldberger, met at President Faunce's home that Thursday afternoon through John Holmes. At the meeting was also Arthur Hayes and John Holmes. President Faunce was almost frostbitten in character and 120 days to go before his retirement... Hayes told Faunce when he left the meeting that he would release details of the situation to Ochs of the *New York Times*, Pulitzer of the *World* and to the Associated Press. Faunce was quivering. Holmes begged Hayes not to be too precipitous. He decided to hold everything in abeyance until they interviewed trustees, etc. Things quieted down and we had many conferences with Sam Arnold. They told us if we agreed to keep it quiet, in the fall we would have a new president — Clarence Barbour — and he agreed to recognize us in the fall.

Meanwhile, there was the Tower Club — a Jewish group — considered a precursor of a fraternity. Randall promptly

recognized them. This was to show he was not prejudiced. I remember how Nat Goldstein and I worked all night with the Tower Club members, telling them they were being used as pawns, and getting them to disband, in spite of the fact that our miserable bunch of brothers would not take one of them in as members. That was quite a feat — but they did resign and disband.

Meanwhile, a reporter for the *Providence Journal* got wind of the story. He called Randall and said he understood that there was a Jewish fraternity at Brown and they were going to be suppressed and thrown out of college...That spring of 1929 the *Globe* of Boston had a headline, "Jewish fraternity at Brown suppressed", and they ran a picture of Al Cornsweet. We had almost unanimous support of the student body because of the quality of leadership which our organization had. Al Cornsweet was the first Jewish member of the Cammarian Club (the student governing body). We were accepted that fall and we had a house."¹⁴

Another man who participated in the origins of the Jewish fraternity tells his story.

"I believe I was in my sophomore year when I was inducted into Alpha Sigma Omicron, the Jewish fraternity with no recognition by anyone. We were approached by Pi Lambda Phi to become a chapter. We were very concerned because we felt that to become affiliated with a national fraternity which would not be recognized by Brown would create a certain amount of problems for those of us who were seniors and those of us who hoped to graduate. We had a very fine chapter of ASO. Some of Brown's outstanding football players — the Cornsweets, Lou Farber, and some other rather well-known men on campus were members. It is quite possible that Pi Lam knew this and wanted us and probably felt that the University would accept the chapter. I might say that prior to this there was no such thing as a Jewish fraternity at Brown. It is possible, although not proven, that during the middle 20's Brown may have had a quota system. After a whole series of discussions Brown became a chapter of Pi Lam at the New York University

chapter house in New York City over the Christmas recess in 1928. We were given assurances by the officials of Pi Lambda Phi that no attempt would be made to publicize the chapter and that they would wait until we were graduated. I was a Rex (president of the chapter) at the time and was in a peculiar position. I had married in October 1928 and at that time no one was allowed to be married and be a student at Brown unless the University had given their approval prior to such an event. I had not sought University approval and my wife, who was a Pembroke, and myself were suspended for the balance of the first semester of senior year from Thanksgiving until the rest of that semester. I was allowed then to return for the last semester and took make-up exams and did graduate with my class in June 1929. It was because of this that events that were to follow required that I remain completely on the sidelines. My wife and I took an apartment off campus at 100 Charles Field Street and it was there that a great many of the meetings were held concerning the chapter. After we were a fully authorized chapter of Pi Lambda Phi, the Supreme Council (I believe that is what it was called) of Pi Lambda Phi, without receiving permission from us, took it upon themselves to advise the University that there was a chapter at Brown University of Pi Lambda Phi and that they wanted recognition. This created quite a furor. William Herbert Perry Faunce, a Baptist minister, was president of the University, and Otis Randall was the dean. There was quite a newspaper to-do. Several speakers who were scheduled to talk at various Brown functions and meetings, who were somewhat more liberal, cancelled...Our cause was championed by another liberal, Arthur Garfield Hayes. Although liberal, he was also a publicity seeker, and really went to town. As you can imagine, this entire incident did not speak well for Brown University. The chapter was finally accepted by the University, but I do not recall whether Pi Lam became a member of the Interfraternity Governing Board until a number of years later."¹⁵

A third account of the formation of Pi Lambda Phi at Brown University follows:

“In the fall of 1928 or spring of 1929 through the initiative of other alumni members of ASO, Pi Lambda Phi installed a chapter by inducting the members of ASO, both undergraduate and alumni, as members, Pi Lambda Phi was a non-sectarian fraternity. What percentage of members were non-Jews I don't know, but it was largely if not mostly, composed of Jews.

The President of Pi Lambda Phi, Dr. Jerome Alexander, distinguished chemist from New York, visited with either President Faunce or Dean Randall to advise of the fact, and met with rather an unfavorable reception. The action of Pi Lambda Phi was considered improper and characterized as ‘entering the University through the back door’. The Dean followed this up with an ultimatum that all student members of Pi Lambda Phi sign a statement that they had resigned ‘of my own free will’ and be set certain deadlines as an alternative to expulsion.

Then followed a very tense period. Understandably, the students were very much disturbed. The parents of many had made sacrifices for them to attend: they had been admitted to the University of distinction: they faced expulsion. To the credit of the students, they unanimously refused to accept the threat.

Arthur Garfield Hayes, a member of Pi Lambda Phi and a distinguished civil rights advocate, entered the picture. Fortuitously, he had been invited to attend some function of the University at which he sat next to President Faunce. The occasion was one where brotherhood was stressed and good will to all was preached. Hayes turned to Dr. Faunce and stated that he was surprised to learn that the opposite of what had been preached at the meeting seemed to be taking place at the University. Dr. Faunce professed surprise at Hayes' comments and stated that he would investigate, and assured Hayes that the University stood only for proper principles.”¹⁶

Included in this information was the fact that Hayes had brought along an excerpt from the official records of Brown University which excerpt was documented in an *Early History of Brown University* by

Reuben A. Guild (1867).

“April — May 1770, the sum of 20 pounds of South Carolina currency (about 3 English pounds) having been reported as a subscription from Mr. Moses Lindo of Charleston, South Carolina, a Jewish merchant, it was thereupon VOTED that the children of Jews may be admitted into this Institution, and entirely enjoy the freedom of their own religion without any constraint or imposition whatever. And that the Chancellor and President do write to Mr. Moses Lindo, of Charlestown, South Carolina, and give him information of this resolution.”

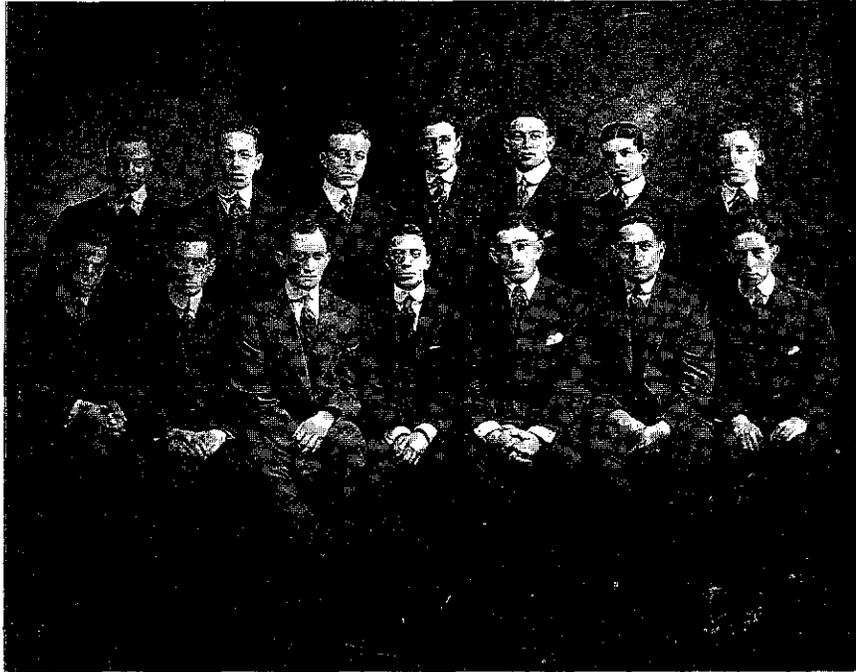
Seebert J. Goldowsky, M.D. recorded the above information in the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*, Vol. 3, No. 2, but added that further correspondence ensued concerning a larger gift from the same source. Lindo implied that he would be interested in giving more substantial support to the College if he could be assured of its liberal intentions respecting the enrollment of Jewish students. No additional offering, however, materialized. In addition to Moses Lindo's donation there were subscriptions of 3 pounds by Israel Joseph and 1 pound 10 shillings by Michael Lazarus, each in South Carolina currency. In Vol. 1, No. 2 of the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* David C. Adelman included in his article, “Strangers: Civil Rights of Jews in the Colony of Rhode Island” the information that Jacob Rod Rivera of Newport, and his son-in-law, Aaron Lopez, donated 10,000 board feet of lumber toward building of University Hall.

To continue the account of Hayes' meeting with President Faunce, it is noted that Hayes was prepared to take legal action, if necessary. The Dean's threat was withdrawn, but the University took no action to recognize the fraternity. There were negotiations between Samuel Temkin and Charles Sisson, one of the alumni Trustees of Brown University and the Attorney General of the State. About a year later when Dr. Barbour succeeded President Faunce, Pi Lambda Phi was recognized.¹⁷

A letter from one of the men who went to New York for the Christmas vacation meeting with the national Pi Lambda Phi wrote, “We were in continuous trepidation for considerable time.” He recalled that Sherwood Eddy (speaker at a convocation in early '29) was probably influenced by Sam Temkin to speak to President Faunce and

did so along the following lines. "No doubt you can expel these nine for not abiding by Brown's rules. My advice is not to do so, and here's why. The following actual or honorary members of Pi Lam will take the following action. Arthur Garfield Hayes (Civil Liberties) and Samuel Untermeyer will represent these men at no cost in court. Adolf Ochs has promised to use the *New York Times* to publicize Brown's refusal to recognize Pi Lam, using AP (Associated Press) also. While it is possible Brown might win in court, do you want to risk the unfavorable publicity? In fact, don't fight! In due time, Pi Lam was recognized, no action taken against the nine."¹⁸

Leo Rosen added the information that the members of Alpha Sigma Omicron had originally applied for membership in Zeta Beta Tau. The man in charge was Alvin T. Sapinsley. They obtained a charter but Dean Randall said he would suspend every man who joined the fraternity without the college's permission. Then Pi Lambda Phi said they would accept the members of Alpha Sigma Omicron and there would be no conditions. Leo Rosen's version of the Arthur Garfield Hayes versus President Faunce and Dean Otis Randall affair was similar to those already related. His comments on the situation: "President Barbour did not see what was the big deal — Jewish boys want to have a fraternity, why not? It was one of the conditions that we did not go to court. It was like a stand for liberty or freedom, so that was really an accomplishment. That is how Pi Lambda Phi developed at Brown University. It had its good years, and it had its bad years."



Brown Menorah Society in 1916 — Front Row, Left to Right; Daniel Robinson, '19, died; Abraham J. Burt, '16, died; Issac Yale Olch, '17, Physician in Los Angeles (I believe he is still living); Herman M. Feinstein, '16, living; Jacob Rosenberg, '16 (of Fall River, died); Maurice Adelman, '16, physician, retired; Herman M. Davis, '16, lives in Boston area — formerly of Providence.

Rear Row, Left to Right: Maurice Bazar, '19, lives in Palm Beach; Arthur J. Levy, '19, died; Samuel J. Silverman, '18, died; Charles Bolotow, '19, in a nursing home or hospital; George Lubinsky, '19, died (lived in Fall River); Walter Alder, '18, living; Joseph I. Cohen, '19, died in 1980.



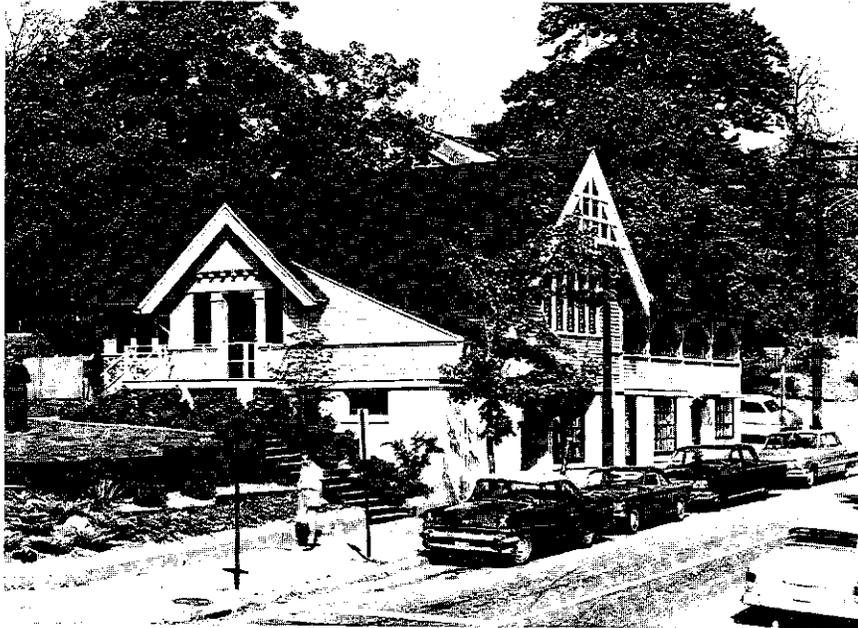
1) 20th anniversary of institution of R.I. chapter, Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity, Brown University. Ledge-mont Country Club 10/12/49.



2) Initiation Banquet Phi Chap, Pi
Lam Phi Fraternity, Biltmore
Hotel, 5/16/31.



3) 1949 — Plaque dedication at Faunce House of those men of Pi Lambda Phi who served in W.W. II.



4) Hillel House — formerly Froebel
Hall



Pi Lambda Phi House on Water-
man Street

A man who was only a freshman when the nine met in New York recalls the events surrounding the origins of Pi Lambda Phi's chapter at Brown.

"in the spring of 1929 Mel Dichter and I became the first two pledges of Pi Lambda Phi through the efforts of Sam Temkin. We were never suspended for we were pledgees but had never been initiated. Our names never got into the record at all." He recalled the controversy.

"Attorney representing the University was Tanner; for Pi Lambda Phi there was Arthur Garfield Hayes. President Faunce was in the background, getting ready to retire. Randall really ran the University. It was never said that Brown did not want a Jewish fraternity. They didn't want a fraternity coming in through the back door. The constitution was nonsectarian. An amicable arrangement was finally worked out through Charlie Sisson, a Quaker who was prominent in politics. He was attorney general and a man of very high character. Sam Temkin was a friend of Charlie Sisson, and he asked him to mediate with Tanner, who was a friend of his. By my junior year Pi Lambda Phi was accepted fully. Everything had been worked out almost on a personal basis. They were accepted in the Intrafraternity Council."¹⁹

It should be mentioned that Sam Temkin, who was one of the founders of Alpha Sigma Omicron took a very active interest in the Brown University Jewish students as well as the progress of Pi Lambda Phi throughout his lifetime.

The Media and the Pi Lambda Phi Controversy

The events leading up to the formation of the local chapter, Phi, of Pi Lambda Phi have been told by several of those men "who were there". The attitude of President Faunce and Dean Randall toward the creation of this chapter was a hostile one with consequent unpleasant interchange on both sides. It was inevitable that the newspapers would publicize the controversy. The following are excerpts from the *Providence Journal*, the *Brown Daily Herald* and the *American Hebrew Magazine* about the incident.

"Jewish fraternity is disbanded when all of its members

resign." This was the headline in the *Brown Daily Herald*. The sub-heading was as follows: "Dean forbids organization of purely sectarian or racial groups." Withdrawal of undergraduates is voluntary; No threats of expulsion made." The account of the events follows: "Members of Pi Lambda Phi national Jewish fraternity, resigned from the chapter of that fraternity, which was organized a short while ago at the University, when Dean Randall informed them that they could not be members of that organization and members of Brown University at the same time. This is in keeping with the stand taken some time ago by the officials of the University that no fraternities organized on strictly sectarian or racial lines could be tolerated.

When this chapter was organized in defiance of the Dean's orders, it met with the immediate disapproval of the administration and a conference was held between Dean Randall and the officials of the fraternity. Sherwood Eddy, who was at the University at the time, sat in the conference as arbiter. Officials at the fraternity threatened prosecution if any Jewish students were expelled from the University. Dean Randall, although he denied any threats of expulsion, insisted that he was empowered to punish disobedience of his orders.

Although all the details of the matter were not made public, Dean Randall has announced that social groups which included Jewish students would be tolerated and encouraged and that eventually these would be permitted to affiliate with some national fraternity, but that under no circumstances would this be allowed to be a purely Jewish organization. Other social groups of this sort are being tolerated at the present time, including the Menorah Society and the Tower Club. These may be permitted when they have shown their aims and purposes are in accord with those of the University to affiliate with some non-sectarian fraternity.

President Faunce in his statement on the matter declared that he fully agreed with Dean Randall in his stand against any society that would serve to emphasize social or racial

differences. According to the statement of the Dean, the resignation of the undergraduates from the fraternity make the matter a closed affair, so far as the administration was concerned.

Included among the national officials of the Fraternity, with whom Dean Randall and President Faunce have carried on correspondence, are Adolph S. Ochs, publisher of the *New York Times* and Samuel Untermeyer and Arthur Garfield Hayes of New York City."²⁰

On the same day an editorial appeared in the *Brown Daily Herald* deploring the situation. They used the heading, "Loyalty". "The name and reputation of Brown University are endangered and prejudiced by the unfortunate affair of the Jewish fraternity. We have seen the members resign at the Dean's command, and we have seen Jewish leaders attack the University authorities. Such a state of affairs is deplorable, indeed, when college loyalty is submerged under sectarian hatred.

.....There is much to say on both sides.....The way for each to accomplish its ends is not by noisy publicity and loud-toned manifestos. There will be nothing gained by the tactics which each is now pursuing.....Their clash does not get rid of the bad blood, but merely accentuates it. We grow prejudiced and rabid, and while wrangling over this subject the University, which really is the only important association, suffers.

Brown University will gain nothing by the publicity arising from a prejudiced debate. If either faction cares more for the University than for its own selfish impulses, it will stop its sectarian prejudices, or if it still has these prejudiced opinions, it will not air them in such a fashion that the University is involved in a scandal, both detrimental and degrading to its reputation."²¹

The *Providence Journal* considered the story important enough to run it on the first page of their newspaper with headlines: "Jewish Fraternity at Brown Disbands"; "Group Retains Membership in National Pi Lambda Phi"; "Forced

to act to stay in University"; "Dean Randall denies stand against organization constituted threat of expulsion — Al Cornsweet one of students involved."

"Members of Pi Lambda Phi at Brown University have disbanded their local chapter in order to remain students at that institution, but they still retain their membership in the national fraternity, which is a non-sectarian organization though the membership is predominantly Jewish.....Dean Otis E. Randall yesterday afternoon had asserted that the Brown Group constituting the local chapter of Pi Lambda Phi had 'voluntarily' resigned from the forbidden fraternity and explained his stand in this matter was that a man could not be a student at Brown and a member of Pi Lambda Phi at the same time.

Harold B. Tanner, counsel for the University, issued a formal statement in which it was disclosed that the students have not resigned their membership in the national order, but simply in the local chapter they had formed. They surrendered the charter of the local chapter when requested to do so.....because the chapter had been chartered 'without the concept or knowledge of the University authorities'.....The Pi Lambda Phi chapter at Brown was the outgrowth of an unchartered organization known as Alpha Sigma Omicron which for 14 years had been functioning as a secret Jewish fraternity without official recognition from the college authorities. Alpha Sigma Omicron is said to boast a large alumni list.

Dean Randall denied yesterday that his expressed stand that a man could be a member of Pi Lambda Phi but not a student at Brown at the same time constituted a threat of expulsion. He did say, however, that he had the power to expel for disobedience.

The question of whether a Jewish fraternity can be formed at Brown remains unsettled and is one to be determined by the corporation of the University and not by an administrative officer."

The report in the newspaper was a repetition of the New York

meeting, and the controversy mainly between Dean Randall and the students. A short history of the founding of the fraternity followed:

“Pi Lambda Phi was organized at Yale University. Among its founders were: Albert Ottinger, Republican candidate for the Governorship of New York in the last election; Louis Sumter Levy, New York corporation lawyer; Mr. Hayes; Jerome Alexander, chemist; Rev. Henry Mark Fisher of Atlantic City, Christian; Louis Anspacher, dramatist; Alfred B. Nathan, Attorney; P. Woodruff, Edward M. Simpson and Herbert Kane, the last three named, Christians. It includes among its members Adolph S. Ochs, publisher of the *New York Times* and Samuel Untermyer, notable attorney. Captain Al Cornsweet, football and wrestling star and Rhodes Scholar is one of the Brown group affected by the disbanding of the local chapter.

The statement issued last night by Mr. Tanner on behalf of the University was approved by Samuel Temkin, Providence attorney who, with Mr. Tanner, negotiated the adjustments, it explains. Mr. Temkin stressed the declaration, however, that in approving the statement he was acting as an individual member of Pi Lambda Phi and not as its legal representative.” The statement followed.

“A group of graduates in Brown University organized, without the approval or knowledge of the University authorities, a local chapter of Pi Lambda Phi. Subsequently, representatives of the national organization brought the fact to the attention of the University authorities. The position taken by these authorities was that no group of any nature could be organized in the University without first securing permission of the proper authorities and the group was for this reason requested to disband.”

“The undergraduate group in the response to the request did in fact disband and surrender that charter as a chapter of Pi Lambda Phi — but they were not as individuals requested to resign membership in Pi Lambda Phi and no

one in the group has so resigned or surrendered his fraternity pin or otherwise relinquished his personal membership in the national organization.

In other words the only question that has been settled is that a group organized within the University without the consent of the proper authorities must as requirement be disbanded as an organization. The question of whether there may be in Brown University a chapter of Pi Lambda Phi or even a chapter of a sectarian fraternity under proper circumstances of application has not been settled. This matter remains to be settled by the corporation of the University and is not in the hands of any administrative officer.

The explanation of the fact and motive which accompanied the negotiation of the existing adjustment were such as to result in mutual respect and good will which it is sincerely hoped will not be destroyed by the unfortunate publicity of today.

It is not the fact that the Menorah or the Tower Club as existing Jewish cultural or social groups have been assured preference in the matter of sanction of affiliation with a national fraternity over any other similar group which may hereafter be organized...Dean Randall yesterday said it will be the policy of the University to allow development of Jewish social groups at Brown with the idea of allowing one of the groups ultimately to apply for a charter as a Brown chapter of the national fraternity. However, such a fraternity must not be limited to Jews...He cited the records of Jewish students at Brown to prove that handicaps never had been placed upon members of that race, declaring that there has been at least one case of a Jew becoming president of the Cammarian Club, the highest honor which can be bestowed upon a student by his fellows. There must be a 'clean wiping of the slate' in the controversy, said Dean Randall. No group, Jewish or otherwise, will be allowed to exist at Brown without the sanction and knowledge of the authorities. 'There will be no objection to the social groups', he said, 'and when such a group has proved that its aims and accomplishments are in tune with the University in gen-

eral, it may be allowed to apply through the regular channels for national fraternity membership.'

President Faunce was quoted as saying he was not familiar with the details of the controversy and left the situation in the hands of Dean Randall whom he supported. The *Providence Journal* brought out the following facts.

"Louis Marshall, President of the American Jewish Committee last November charged the Brown president with objecting to a Jewish fraternity because 'it would inject an unwanted fraternity into a community where all is now peaceful and kind feeling prevails.' President Faunce replied that he objected to sectarian fraternities at Brown and hoped that the present 'narrowness' evidenced by several fraternities who exclude all but white Protestants would soon be outgrown.

There is at Brown two distinct cultural and social groups of Jews, the Menorah and the Tower Club. Dean Randall referred specifically to those two when he spoke of the possible development of a Jewish group which might at a later time become a local chapter of a non-sectarian fraternity to which Jews would be admitted."

Archie Smith, President of the Menorah Society, took exception to Dean Randall's statement. Mr. Smith also took exception to the fact that Dean Randall had not mentioned the Lambda Psi Club of which Mr. Smith is Chancellor, with the Tower Club as constituting such a group.

"The Menorah Society", Mr. Smith declared, "is the local branch of an inter-collegiate organization devoted to the study and open-minded discussion of Jewish problems and the cultivation of a healthy life among Jewish students. It stands for literary and scholastic attainments, manhood, character and physical vigor. The Menorah Society never was a fraternity, never will be, never intended to be and won't become one, even if they force it on us.' "

Mr. Smith also asserted that the Lambda Psi group antedated the Tower Club. They had applied to Dean Randall for a charter on March 1st, but the status of Pi Lambda Phi was uncertain at that time and

Dean Randall said he could not consider their petition until the Pi Lambda Phi matter was straightened out.

It is interesting to note that Dean Randall said that he had no objection to Lambda Psi functioning as an unofficial club in the interim. About a week later Pi Lambda Phi was proscribed and a charter was immediately granted to the Tower Club. With this action Lambda Psi again petitioned Dean Randall who referred them to the Dean of Freshman, Kenneth C. Mason, who in turn referred them to Dean Samuel T. Arnold, supervisor of non-athletic activities. The constitution of Lambda Psi was non-sectarian and forbade the exclusion of members on the basis of creed or color. The Tower Club, according to Mr. Smith, had been granted its charter without having submitted any copy of its constitution. Dean Arnold felt that Lambda Psi's constitution was too much like a fraternity and that he could not himself sanction it, but would refer it to the full committee on non-athletic activities. The statement was never issued and Lambda Psi continued to exist in accordance with Dean Randall's original sanction as an unofficial club.

Mr. Smith made the following statement:

"The present discrimination against Jews is apparent from the fact that Jews constituted about 20% of the student body at Brown, and yet it is almost the only college of its size without a fraternity with membership in which Jews are eligible. Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Columbia, the University of Pennsylvania, Syracuse and Cornell are among colleges which have such fraternities."

Mr. Smith quoted from a letter received by him from Louis Marshall following an exchange of correspondence between Mr. Marshall and President Faunce last November when the exclusion of Jews from fraternities at Brown had again flared into public attention. This letter, Mr. Smith said, expressed his attitude and that of his fellow Jews who are students at Brown.

Mr. Marshall wrote:

"I would not lift a finger in aid of a movement to compel the admission of Jews into fraternities which do not admit them. A proper sense of dignity would rebel at such an attempt. But to have it declared from high places that the

Jewish students shall not have the same right to form their fraternities that has been accorded to non-Jewish students is a doctrine which cannot be accepted by any self-respecting man."

Mr. Smith concluded his remarks with the fact that Lambda Psi had been offered charters by several national Jewish fraternities, but had refused them all because it was thought that acceptance would be contrary to the wishes of University authorities.²²

Archie Smith, the President of the Menorah Society in 1929, became a prominent attorney. He was the Public Utilities Administrator for the State of Rhode Island. Mr. Smith died on January 11, 1977.

As was the custom there was a short paragraph next to the graduate's picture in the *Liber Brunensis* (Brown University's yearbook). About Archie Smith, class of 1929, was written the following:

"Four years ago Archie came from Hope Street High to become a B.M.O.C. (big man on campus) at Brown...Both scholastically and in extra-curricular activities he has established an enviable record. He has made a deep study of economics; he was instrumental in resuscitating the Menorah Society, and recently he attacked the Jewish Fraternity Problem on the Hill..."

The following day, May 1, 1929, the *Brown Daily Herald* contained a news item headlined: "Dean Randall attacks Inaccuracies in Stories. Local newspapers devote much space to discussion of Pi Lambda Phi." This article provided the information that the Dean had made no threats, that no ultimatum had been given the students that they resign or leave school unless they resigned from the fraternity. "There was perfect understanding between the officials of the University and the undergraduates who were concerned. Various newspapers in Boston, New York and other Eastern cities have run garbled and inaccurate stories of the affair, and it has received a great deal of attention from the Providence papers." The article concluded that since Dean Randall had refused to make any statements, all of the information published had come from other sources than the administrative officials of the University.

As a sequel to the events of that day, there is tangible evidence that Dean Randall was not popular with the students, and certainly not

with the *Brown Daily Herald*, which published this editorial in their May 2, 1929 issue.

Headlined, "Veni, Vidi, Vici", the editorial in part was as follows:

"The announcement of the — well, to be nice about it — the enforced retirement of Dean Randall by action of the Interfraternity Goobling Board is another indication of the spiritual advancement of the University, its new liberal tendency and the post-war effect of sociological research..."

Although written tongue in cheek as the editorialist also suggested that deans be abolished, or if necessary, be chosen from the young; the antagonism felt toward Dean Randall is apparent.

A rather surprising reaction to the Jewish fraternity question is expressed in a news item in the *American Hebrew Magazine*.²³

"The dispute concerning the establishment of a Jewish fraternity chapter at Brown University has finally been clarified — and with no credit to the Jews concerned. The corporation of Brown University prohibits sectarian or racial fraternity organization in the institution and demands that no chapter of any fraternity may be formed or a charter granted without the knowledge and approval of the administrative officers of the University. Notwithstanding these rulings, a group of Jewish students organized a chapter of Pi Lambda Phi and obtained a charter without permission from the University administration; only *after* the chapter organization had been perfected and the charter from the national body granted were the University authorities informed. That's what our grandfathers called chutzpah — unmitigated and shameless brass. How the national officers of Pi Lambda Phi could have lent themselves to so unworthy a proceeding is beyond our comprehension! The answer from the dean's office was direct and unequivocal; the chapter was formed and the charter was granted without the knowledge of the University; under the circumstances a man cannot be a member of the chapter and a student of Brown at the same time; the chapter must be disbanded or its members must resign from Brown. It is evident that there was no 'Jewish question' involved in this incident at

Brown — unless the question is whether, should it be proved that the Jewish students involved deliberately organized their fraternity chapter despite their knowledge of the University corporation's ruling in these matters, these young men were sufficiently punished for their insubordination and lack of University loyalty. And should it be determined that national headquarters of Pi Lambda Phi aided and abetted these young men, then the action of those officers must, under the circumstances, be stamped as unspeakable."

What Happened to Pi Lambda Phi?

After the furor created by Brown University and those who wished to establish the fraternity, the atmosphere became rather calm, according to those men of Pi Lambda Phi who were questioned.

Dr. Irving Beck: "An amicable arrangement was finally made, and Pi Lambda Phi was accepted fully. The details had been worked out almost on a personal basis by the principals involved. Pi Lambda Phi was accepted into the Intrafraternity Council."

"In due time, Pi Lam was recognized, no action was taken against the nine."²⁴

"Since I graduated from Brown in 1929 and did not keep up with Pi Lam's activities on the campus, I believe that at the end of the semester Dr. Faunce resigned and Dean Randall likewise resigned. I think it would be a mistake to say that they resigned because of the fact that they would not accept the chapter. I think it is more coincidental."²⁵

"Our group was accepted and within a very short period of time we became the scholarship example for fraternities — as you would expect."²⁵

A master list from the National Organization of Pi Lambda Phi shows the involvement of men who had graduated from Brown University in 1921-1928 who were charter members. They also list the 328 men who joined the Brown chapter from 1929 until it left National in 1963.

On October 21, 1949 there was a 12th anniversary reunion of the

Brown Chapter, Phi, of Pi Lambda Phi. It was held at the Ledgemont Country Club and a program of the reunion listed the original roster as follows:

Supreme Officers: Hon. Lawrence A. Stenhardt, Rex and Arthur G. Hayes

Initiates of 1929: David E. Alper '29; Albert Cornsweet '29; Jay F. Churst, '31; Henry Cutler, '30; Lou Farber, '29; Nathaniel H. Gates, '30; Daniel Polsby II '30 (deceased); Herbert Semel, '29; Edward Sulzberger '29;

Undergraduate Pledges: Irving A. Beck '32 and Melvin Dechter '32.

Alumni Initiates: Louis Bolatow, '20; George S. Bickwit '21; Edward Goldberger '27; Leon Goldberg '22; Abraham R. Goldman '26; William Laurans '25; Philip A. Lukin '24; Howard Presel '28; Leo H. Rosen '22; Martin M. Silverstein, '28; Jacob S. Temkin '26; Sam Temkin '19; Esek Windsberg, '23.

Honorary Members: Dr. Issac S. Gerber, Judge Philip C. Joslin, Max L. Grant and Abraham Percelay.

The first picture of Phi Chapter of Pi Lambda Phi which appeared in the Intrafraternity section of *Liber Bruensis* was in 1930. Reproduced were the members of the four classes. Seniors: D.E. Alper, H.I. Brown, L.M. Brown, H. Cutler, D. Freedman, N.H. Goldstein, N. Levitt, D. Polsky, 2nd and J.G. Schreiber. Juniors: L.H. Bakst, J. Chrust, W. Endlar, A.L. Ratzkoff, and M. Rubinger. Sophomores: I.A. Beck, G.L. Bronstein, M.M. Dichter, H. Dubrow and H.L. Wolfson. Freshmen: M.M. Alper, M. Hoberman, H.M. Goldman, A.E. Levitt, R.E. Mayer, F.R. Meadow, M. Paltern and H. Schwartz.

Dissatisfaction with their affiliation with the National organization resulted in the local chapter, Phi, at Brown University severing its connection. The year was 1963. The *New York Times* carried this story:

“New York Times, May 8, 1963. The Brown University chapter of Pi Lambda Phi Fraternity voted unanimously last night to sever connections with its national organization because the concept of such affiliation ‘has become outmoded’. Lawrence A. Gross, Chapter president, added that members have questioned whether the National body

was pursuing its ideals of non-sectarianism and civil rights, particularly its opposition to racial segregation 'actively and effectively'. He said that Harvey Burstein, National president in New York, was notified by telegram of the action."

The *Brown Daily Herald* of May 7, 1963 referred to the break with the national affiliation in their headline, "House 'goes local' in unanimous vote culminating several years 'discontent'. The reason for the discontent was given.

"The brothers of Phi Chapter felt they were getting nothing in return for the contributions of time and money which they made to the national. Gross (Lawrence A. Gross, president of the chapter) said, since the organization 'did not actively and effectively support the ideals which we feel basic to our fraternity'. He called the move 'a positive step forward'.

Although Gross emphasized that the national organization does support the ideals expressed in the preamble of the Pi Lambda Phi constitution, such as non-sectarianism and basic respect for civil rights, he said the Phi Chapter did not feel these ideals were being supported 'as actively and effectively as possible' by the national. Although representatives of the national organization had told the chapter they were carrying out many programs in support of these ideals, Gross said they failed to produce any 'specific evidence of any weight' to support this. He said the national president, as well as a past president and Alumni Advisor had visited the chapter last week, and that the members had taken their remarks into consideration in making the decision."

"Gross further said, 'We feel that our action was directly in line with the tradition established by the founders of the fraternity and by members of the Phi Chapter during the following years. The brothers have decided that a local fraternity more closely represents the condition of the Brown University environment. The circumstances under which fraternities exist as a part of college life have changed. In our case, the entire concept of national affiliation has become outmoded. This chapter believes in devoting its total energy and in giving its complete loyalty to our

own local organization...! The chapter intends to set up committees to undertake programs now able to be initiated, such as obtaining speakers and improving the physical plant...This new local chapter has tentatively chosen to name itself Alpha Pi Lambda. However, the 'legality' of the use of this name remains to be investigated."

Gross also explained that they intended to write to the alumni of the break with national, emphasizing that it is maintaining rather than breaking fraternity tradition. He concluded his remarks with the chapter's feelings about fraternities in general.

"Fraternities offer very definite benefits to their members and to the university community. The entire basis of fraternalism is of great value in forming one's character and personality. We have found that a national organization does not add to these benefits and in some cases detracts from them...We believe a local chapter is better able to realize the beneficial values inherent in a fraternity system. In the future we will continue to support and believe in the value of non-sectarianism which was the founding principle of Pi Lambda Phi in 1895."

The End of Alpha Pi Lambda

There is a picture of 35 young men in the 1969 *Liber Bruensis* who made up the chapter of Alpha Pi Lambda (the name chosen after the break with national). The high ideals expressed in the reason for the 1963 break with the national organization are nowhere in evidence. The pose of these students is casual and cynical. The text is even more offhand in its satirical slant.

"There are those who claim that Pi Lamb is dying. However, this opinion is based on the presupposition that lack of spirit, a billion dollar debt, and no pledge class are lethal problems, which is patently false. Proceeding with the conviction that no problem is insuperable if systematically approached, steps already have been taken to remedy the situation. To generate spirit, two resolutions have been adopted: the first concerns coed housing, the second states that if a brother misses one meeting he will be tracked down

and castrated. As for money, we began by selling the piano, then a few chairs, then the bathroom fixtures, the windows, floor, roof and so forth. However, we have been careful to preserve most of our famous natural pine wood walls. Finally, concerning the pledge class, we cannot be responsible for the University's failure to admit a sufficient number of quick-tongued geniuses. In any event, we are confident the Pi Lamb will be back on its feet in no time at all."

There is no evidence at this time that the fraternity was revived on the Brown campus.

A history of Pi Lambda Phi would not be complete if mention were not made of a memorial plaque which was erected in March, 1946 to those men who served in World War II.

"A memorial plaque to the men of the Brown University Chapter of Pi Lambda Phi who served in World War II will be dedicated at 3:00 P.M. Sunday in the Faunce House Art Gallery. Sam Temkin '19 on behalf of the alumni of the fraternity will present the plaque to the undergraduate members. The plaque is being given in memory of those who died in battle and in honor of those who served...President Henry M. Wriston and Harrison Susman '48, Rex of Pi Lambda Phi will speak at the ceremony. The Reverend Arthur L. Washburn, University Chaplain, will deliver the invocation and the benediction will be given by Rabbi Nathan Rosen. Samuel T. Arnold, dean of the University and other college officials will be present. A reception at the Pi Lambda Phi House will follow the ceremony."²⁷

*Alternatives for the Jewish Student
The Menorah Society*

For the Jewish student who desired to be a member of a Jewish oriented club there were alternatives. The oldest was the Menorah Society (Hebrew for "Let there be light"). On record in the archives of Brown University is an invitation sent out by the Brown Menorah Society cordially inviting the Jewish student to attend the dedicatory meeting on Wednesday evening, January 6, 1915 in the auditorium of

the Brown Union.

The 1916 *Liber Bruensis* listed the officers of the Menorah Society: Abraham Jacob Burt, '16, President; Herman Feinstein '16, Vice-President; Walter Adler '18, Secretary and Abraham Shoul '16, Treasurer.

A souvenir from the Maccabaeen dinner of the Menorah Quinquennial held at Columbia University, New York City on December 20, 1917 was donated to the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association by Mr. Walter Adler, one of the founders of the society at Brown University. This souvenir was a booklet entitled, "Three Years of the Menorah Journal" and contained the character and ideals of the society and its well-known journal. Sixty-two branches of the Intercollegiate Menorah Association were in existence. The policy and spirit of *The Journal* are quoted in part:

"Inasmuch as the furtherance of Menorah ideals means the advancement of American Jewry and the spread of Hebraic culture, *The Journal* should appeal to every one in America who sympathizes with these purposes...fearless in telling the truth; promoting constructive thought rather than aimless controversy...recording and appreciating Jewish achievement..."

The Journal was to be more than a news medium. It was to supply important material for study and discussion, and to stimulate thinking.

The Menorah Society, with its high cultural standards, probably existed at Brown University for not more than 13 years. The last time the Society was listed in Brown's yearbook was in 1929.

The Tower Club

The Tower Club, a social organization founded by the Jewish students had a definitely 'off' and 'on' again existence at Brown University. The earliest reference to a Tower Club in this research was in a statement by Leo Rosen, Brown '22, "Tower Club was almost like a competing group. They came and went. Unless you have strong people (leading) they tend to die out." From Irving Beck, Brown '32 there was another reference to the Tower Club. "Pi Lambda Phi was struggling for existence when Tower Club was on campus. But Tower Club had

not done anything illegal for they had not affiliated themselves with any fraternity." In March of 1937 the Tower Club started anew.²⁸ Their first clubroom was in a basement room at 135 Thayer Street. Robert E. Starr, Brown '40, recalls that first meetings of the group were held at his home, 206 Waterman Street. He stated that they had formed their group without any prior knowledge of an earlier Tower Club. The Tower Club also was an option or other choice for Jewish membership for those students who did not want to join Pi Lambda Phi. In 1940 they had their own house. "In 1937 25 students gathered in Faunce House to form a new fraternal organization on the Hill. The name of the club was quickly decided upon when the bell in Carrie Tower clanged 8:00 o'clock suggesting to the group the name of Tower Club."²⁹

The aims to which the club were dedicated are stated in the preamble to their constitution.

"To promote personal perfection and deep-seated friendship; to inaugurate healthy spirit of cooperation and helpfulness, to create a better understanding among our fellow men, to encourage vigorous participation in general and social affairs and activities to the mutual advantage of all concerned and to increase loyalty to Brown."

Further comment in this article written for the *Liber Bruensis* of 1949 referred to the many obstacles which they had to overcome — loss of their house, depletion of membership during the war. On the plus side were their many cultural programs, the number of members who were in athletics and the high scholastic standing among its membership.

The 1967 *Liber Bruensis* included the Tower Club among its student activities. The status of the Club was documented.

"Bridging the gap between fraternal and independent life, Tower Club continues some features of both with those derived from its off-campus location. Located at 286 Thayer Street just a few staggers away from Pembroke, the recently refurbished clubrooms served as the center of social life for the 60 key-carrying members. As the club facilities are available to the members 24 hours a day, they provide an excellent place to go with a mid-week date, a

group of friends or alone to watch television or merely to relax with some liquid refreshment...Primarily a social organization, Tower Club sponsors weekly parties for members and their guests which run the gamut from dances with live bands to outings and mixers...Despite the social orientation, the Club has not neglected the intellectual sphere. Among the biggest successes of the year were two Tower Club Forums which brought together prominent members of the Providence and Brown communities to discuss the social, medical and legal problems of narcotics and abortion."

Thus the role of the Tower Club, which was in existence on and off until its dissolution in 1969,³⁰ did offer the Jewish student an on campus social club.

Hillel

Early in 1947 the Hillel Foundation at Brown University was established. Rabbi Nathan N. Rosen, who had recently returned from service in the Asiatic Pacific where he served as chaplain, became the first director of the Hillel Foundation.³¹ The blessings of the University were bestowed upon this organization. President Henry W. Wriston said, "Organizations such as Hillel have but one main purpose—the enrichment of the lives of the young men and women they serve. In its comparatively brief history at Brown, Hillel has contributed much to the religious and cultural experience of many Brown and Pembroke students..."³²

Rabbi Rosen wrote in this same publication. "The common denominator in all the activities is service. The friendships formed while working with others on a Hillel project, the joy of personal achievement that comes from a successful Hillel activity, are by-products of the main purpose: education for service, preparation for good community life. As a child of B'nai B'rith, the largest Jewish service organization in the world, Hillel seeks to prepare its members for meaningful and effective participation in the American Jewish community."

James Winoker, president of Hillel, summarized the student role in his article. "The circumstances which prompt students to take part in

Hillel activities are many and varied. It may be a desire for social contact, Judaic cultural and educational environment, or an outlet for religious expression...We do not, nor do we ever wish to have our members segregate themselves from the larger Brown community. Our activities do not replace those of the University. What we try to do is to provide a program which will supplement that of Brown." He compared Hillel to a 'Home away from home'. He continued: "We attempt to give students a basis for making value judgments about the philosophy of life and to provide incentives which will help them reach their own conclusions...We want to make sure that he has not lost contact with Judaism so that he might be aware of the rich tradition and culture it has to offer..."

"From the cookie jar to the study group, the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation has provided spiritual guidance, intellectual stimulation, and social opportunity for the Jewish students of the Brown community. The activities which the Hillel members engaged in were enumerated. "At Brown, as it has done now for twenty years, Hillel has provided Israeli dance groups, study groups in Jewish culture and religion, study-break sherry hours, sukkot-raising parties, mixers and Hillel backbone, the Sunday brunch."³³ Also included was the list of prestigious speakers who addressed the Sunday brunches.

Today Hillel, under the guidance of Rabbi Richard Marker, plays a large and varied role in the life of the Brown Student who joins its membership.

Aftermath

In this fifty plus years of examining the Jewish student at Brown University the change in his role on campus and his involvement with the campus life seems to parallel the general community attitude toward Jewish participation. In the 'teens and decade of the 1920's the Jewish student did not expect to be part of the Christian fraternities and clubs. That he was considered the intruder, the "carpet bagger", the outsider, is well illustrated in the cartoon from the October, 1929 issue of the *Brown Jug*, (a monthly magazine published by the Brown students). Here is portrayed in a loud checked suit attempting to board the street car full of students, clean-cut in their Greek fraternity lettered sweaters.

Comments reflecting the feelings of the Jewish student at that time, including reflections on anti-semitism, were made by the following men who attended Brown during this period.

“He was bitter about having been denied his bachelor’s degree and carried away from Brown another bitterness besides. He had felt himself to be an outsider, or, more precisely, had been made to feel an outsider because he had not been asked to join a fraternity. Greek letter fraternities had long been established at Brown and pretty well controlled undergraduate life. Sid (Perelman) had a number of friends in the fraternities and was everything they would have welcomed in a ‘brother’: he was white and bright and sociable. But he was not a Christian. Since his time there’s come about a better practice of Christianity at Brown.”³⁴

“I can still remember President Faunce saying when a Jewish speaker came to speak at the Menorah Society that we are a clannish group. I remember going to school with six or eight guys and then in college the “Hi” became more and more distant...Anti-semitic feeling about Jewish boys or Pi Lam? No, it was just another fraternity. As a rule about 25% of the Gentiles were friendly with the Jewish boys. There was not too strong a feeling of friendship as today. Perhaps we were too strongly Jewish and did not want to become associated. That’s why we had the Tower Club, the A.S.O. — we wanted to have our own associations.”³⁵

“The Jewish student just didn’t have the social standing at Brown as the others did, but that was not common to just Brown.”³⁶

“During the period between the recognition of the chapter of Pi Lambda Phi by the University and its withdrawal from the national fraternity, there were great changes in student life and student organization and de-emphasis on fraternity life, and greater emphasis on the individual than theretofore. I believe that as the years went by, the influence of fraternities seemed to play an important role in the minds of members and non-members...I have said that

Brown was not anti-Semitic. Brown never had a quota for Jewish students and Jewish students achieved high academic honors. They were admitted purely on merit. I would point out that Jews had never sought admission to existing fraternities at Brown. There was a recognition of the social factors and the community reflected the social discrimination of the era. These were community standards."

He commented on the cartoon. "One sees the famous donkey car which assisted trolleys up and down College Hill. It is filled with innocent and surprised faces of boys labeled with Greek letters. There is obviously an interloper with a hooked nose climbing on to the back of the car, carrying a carpet bag. The carpet bag designated the student as a local student. The faces reflect their shock at an outsider seeking to enter their private domain. But in all probability they were innocent of any discrimination and merely following old patterns. I believe Pi Lambda Phi was immediately accepted as an equal in all respects...I say that the history of the local fraternity at Brown has brought a badge of honor to Brown. Probably no other major university in this country has a more enlightened and fairer policy with respect to students of all races, colors and creeds."³⁷

"This was 50 years ago. Things were very different at that time than they are today. There is one thing that nobody can say. Certainly could not say it as far as I am concerned. That there was ever any prejudice or that there is any prejudice there here today. Whether Pi Lam did anything to eliminate anti-Semitism, it is a hard thing to say. It was a trend that was going on all over at that period of time..."³⁸

The fraternity has been phased out on many college campuses. Brown several years ago eliminated off campus fraternity houses and incorporated them into the dormitory quadrangles. At the present time there is a noticeable decline in the number of fraternities on the Brown campus.

"The social change and turbulence of the 1960's almost brought the demise of the entire fraternity system. With the passage of Federal civil rights legislation fraternities were

forbidden by college administrators to select members on the basis of religion, and race, signalling the end of the Jewish Greek. Anti-establishment attitude further contributed to the unattractiveness of fraternal organizations and severely damaged the entire Greek system."⁸⁹

The Jewish fraternity question and the controversy it caused on the Brown campus was indicative of the period in which it occurred. Today the Jewish student at Brown University concerns himself with other interests, causes and associations.

NOTES

1. - *The Standard Jewish Encyclopedia*, New, Revised Edition, Dr. Cecil Roth, editor-in-chief, 1962, Doubleday & Co., Inc. p. 1303, "Menorah Movement".
2. - *The Menorah Journal* (Souvenir of the Menorah Quinquennial Dinner) December 29, 1917, p. 1 (reprinted from Vol., No. 1, January 1915).
3. - Interview with Leo Rosen on July 16, 1981
4. - "Whatever Happened to the Jewish Frats?" from *The Jewish Almanac*, compiled and edited by Richard Siegel and Carl Rheins. A Bantam Book, October 1980. P. 484.
5. - Ibid
6. - Telephone interview with Walter Adler on July 23, 1981
7. - A reliable source — October 3, 1979
8. - Ibid
9. - See Note #7
10. - Interview with David Alper on August 20, 1979
11. - See Note #3
12. - "Jews and College Life" by Norman Hapgood from *Harper's Weekly*, January 10, 1916, p. 53

13. - "Memories of a Big Wheel on Campus" from *The Jewish Almanac*, compiled and edited by Richard Siegel and Carl Rheins, a Bantam Book, October 1980, p. 486.
14. - See Note #10
15. - Taped Reminiscences from Edward Sulzberger, October 1979
16. - See Note #7
17. - Ibid
18. - Letter written by Lou Farber on July 8, 1979
19. - Interview with Irving Beck, M.D. on May 27, 1981
20. - *Brown Daily Herald*, April 30, 1929, p. 1
21. - Ibid
22. - *Providence Journal*, April 30, 1929, p. 1
23. - *The American Hebrew*, Vol. 124 - May 10, 1929
24. - See Note #18
25. - See Note #15
26. - See Note #10

27. - *Brown Daily Herald*, March 8, 1946
28. - Telephone Conversation with Herbert Rosen on July 25, 1981
29. - *Liber Bruensis*,
30. - Telephone Conversation with Bill Surprenant, Director, Student Activities, Brown University, on August 26, 1981
31. - *The Hillel Scroll*. Brown University, 1952-1953, p. 6
32. - Ibid. p. 3
33. - *Liber Bruensis*, 1967
34. - " 'Sid' (1904-1979) by I.J. Kapstein, '26" from *Brown Alumni Monthly*, December 1979, p. 33
35. - See Note #3
36. - See Note #19
37. - See Note #7
38. - See Note #15
39. - See Note #4

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David Alper, Brown '29, who gave a taped interview to Benton Rosen on August 20, 1979. We regretfully report that Mr. Alper died on December 26, 1979.

Walter Adler, Brown '18 — telephone interview with Eleanor Horvitz on July 23, 1981. Mr. Adler provided valuable information on the Menorah Society through his donation to the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association of a souvenir *Menorah Journal*.

Irving Beck, M.D., Brown '32 — taped interview with Eleanor Horvitz on May 27, 1981, and also for his patience in identifying pictures and in supplying information on several occasions.

Lou Farber, Brown '29 — letter to Benton Rosen dated July 8, 1979.

Herbert Rosen, Brown '39 — telephone interview with Eleanor Horvitz on July 25, 1981

Leo H. Rosen, Brown '22, who gave a taped interview to Eleanor Horvitz on July 16, 1981 and graciously lent pictures and yearbook pertinent to the subject.

Edward Sulzberger, Brown '29 who sent his reminiscences on tape to Benton Rosen on October 2, 1979.

The Brown University archives at the John Hay Library provided valuable information through the yearbooks, the *Liber Bruensis* as well as copies of the *Brown Daily Herald*. Martha Mitchell, Librarian, was particularly helpful in furnishing material from the files on fraternities and clubs researched in this article.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A SEPTUAGENARIAN*

By RABBI WILLIAM G. BRAUDE

I was born in 1907 in Telz, Lithuania, whose Yeshiva enjoyed considerable fame. Two uncles, Ben-Zion Felman (1873-1917) and Yitzhak Aisik Friedman, attended it. My grandfather, Meir Halperin (1836-1934), was one of the *baale-batim*** active in it — indeed members of the family criticized him for not exerting himself to have his son-in-law Ben-Zion Felman succeed R. Eliezer Gordon (1840-1910) as Rosh-yeshiva.*** My mother, Chiene Rachel (1885-1970), a native of Telz, was a woman of extraordinary intelligence, considerable learning, and strong character. My father, Yitzhak Aisik Braude (1885-1932), native of Siadi, studied in the Yeshiva of Maltz, had a good head, but did not give himself intensely to “learning.” He was, however, an effective preacher, and a great pastor. In later years, as Rabbi in Denver, Colorado, he was called the Jewish Father Duffy.**** In 1913 my father became rabbi of Girtegole, a small town not far from Rossein. Getting a rabbinic post, however small, was in itself a tribute to his person — candidates were many and posts few.

I probably learned to read on my own, and was deemed by Friedman, Telz’s best teacher, a precocious child. After I was in his class for a while, he wanted to know who my parents were. The earliest reading I remember was the מארבע פינות העולם ***** column in a Yiddish daily. The particular items that I recall in the column dealt with the Mendel Beilis (1874-1934) trial.***** To this day I remember such names as Zarudny and Grusenberg (1866-1940), attorneys for the defense in the case.

The floor in Girtegole’s manse our family occupied was, as I recall it, earthen. The salary was meager, profits from the incumbent rebbetzin’s sale of leaven for Sabbath Hallah***** were reckoned in with the salary. But mother being extremely independent declined to dispense the leaven. She was, I gather, leader of Girtegole’s intellectual set.

One day while the community was gathered in the cemetery to bury

*The essay benefited greatly from Dr. Seebert J. Goldowsky’s editorial skill and finesse.

**Patricians, or notables

***Head or principal of a Talmudic academy

****During World War I Father Duffy was the all but legendary chaplain of the Rainbow Division.

*****From the four corners of the World

*****In 1913 he was tried in Kiev on a blood libel charge.

*****White bread baked specially for the Sabbath.

Shemos,* we heard the distant sound of artillery. The sound was “The Guns of August” blasting World War One’s start in 1914.

Soon after that, following the defeat of Generals Renenkampf and Samsonov in the Masurian swamps, we — most Jews of Lithuania — were ordered out, evacuated by the Russian High Command, which charged us with spying for the Germans.

At the time the order was issued, my father was away visiting, I believe, Ben Zion Felman in Zhagor. So Mother had to take charge of our departure. The little gold and silver she had she buried in the yard of Pashkevitch, a Polish nobleman in the area, who learned to respect Mother. It was he, I believe, who also provided us — Mother, my brother Miche (1910-), and Moshe, a sickly *Yeshiva bochur*,** who stayed at our home — with a wagon. Enroute I recall Russian soldiers taunting us, saying that all Jews were spies and should be strung up. One or two Jews of Girtegole were in fact “strung up.”

When we got to Remigole, the town had been set on fire by German artillery. During our brief stay there, I disappeared and presently was found in the town library “devouring” books.

At Smargon, the town’s Jewish population set up on its outskirts tables with food for the steady stream of refugees. Mother refused to take any, saying she had money, and — she went on — hoped she would never live to see the day when she was to depend on others.

In Smargon, I believe, we were told that all of Zhagor’s Jews — including, we assumed, my father — had been evacuated to Riga toward which we then headed, and there we found him as well as the Felmans.

In Riga, I recall I saw for the first time a flush toilet, a device which I deemed to be one of the world’s seven wonders.

From Riga we headed, for some reason, for Vietka where we stayed till December. There my darling sister Dubby (1916-) was born. She was named after my father’s mother. My brother Michel was named after Dr. Michael Bernstein, the husband of Broche Zisse, sister of my grandmother Feige Reitze Halperin (1838-1922). I was named after a man known as וועלד פון בוד, “Velvel of the store”. He must have had, I like to think, merits other than storekeeping to have gotten Mother to name her first-born after him.

*The name given to torn prayerbooks and Bibles for which Jewish tradition prescribes burial.

**Student in a Talmudic academy

I don't know what work my father had in Vietka; my uncle Ben Zion Felman headed, I believe, a Yeshiva in the town. For some reason Mother traveled to Vilna where she visited Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky (1863-1940) to whom she mentioned that her brother-in-law Ben Zion Felman was in Vietka. Upon her saying it, a short man with a wide beard, spoke up,"

" בעצול ? זאגט אים ער זאל פארן קיין מאריופאל".
 " ווי קען ער פארן קיין מאריופאל? ער האט דאך א שטעלע אין ווייעטקע?
 און וואס וועט ער טאן אין מאריופאל? "
 " נישט קשה, נישט קשה, ער וועט פארן. זאגט אים אז מיר לערנען
 זבחים."

* She relayed the message to my uncle who without much delay picked himself up and made the long long trek on the Dniepr River to Maryupol. Later, much later, I learned that the short man in Rabbi Grodzinsky's office was Reb Itzele (Yitzhak Yaakov) Ponevezher —Rabbinovich (1853-1919) — and that Maryupol became a center for distinguished Rabbis from Lithuania, including men such as Rabbi Samuel Sheraga Bialoblocki (1888-1960) whom Samuel Yosef Agnon (1888-1970) held in such high regard.

Well, my uncle Bentzel — Ben Zion Felman — went on to Maryupol, and presently we followed. I still recall the long journey down the Dniepr, and Kiev's beauty in the night during which our steamboat docked at its waterfront.

We lived in Maryupol for at least a year, probably a year and a half.

I had no regular Jewish schooling, picking up matters Hebraic from members of the family. General schooling I had not at all. Thus no arithmetic, until years later when I arrived in the United States. I picked up Russian from street and store signs. To this day I remember words such as Torgovaya, the street we lived on, or words such as Galantereinaya, Bakaleinaya, or Konditorskaya.* Presently, on my own, I began reading Russian books, all but devouring in translation the works of Rider Haggard, Jerome K. Jerome, Jules Verne, Mark Twain, and Louisa Alcott.

Even at that early age I showed signs of wishing to adapt myself to the environment, as indicated by the fact that I began calling myself Volodya the Russian equivalent of Velvel.

In later years after arriving in the USA, I promptly dropped both the Yiddish Velvel and the Hebrew Zev, and began calling myself William. In 1925 when I got to Stivers High School in Dayton, Ohio,

*"Bentzel? Tell him he should go to Maryupol." "How can he go to Maryupol? In Vietka he has a position. What will he do in Maryupol?" "Never mind, never mind. He'll go. Tell him we are studying Zebahim." Zebahim is a tractate in the Talmud which deals with sacrifices in the Temple.

*Jewelry, grocery, confectionery

my middle name Gershon was transformed without a by-your-leave into Gordon. Much, much later in the official copy of my derivative papers of naturalization, I added to "William Gordon" the phrase "also known as Gershon Zev Braude."

To go back to the Maryupol days, my father, who had been in the United States before — around 1913 — and was in danger of being conscripted into the Russian army, decided to go to the United States across the Pacific through Japan, Korea, and on to Seattle, where he landed in 1915. In later years he told us that the bearded gentlemen in Seoul looked to him like Rabbis. It had been his hope that we would soon follow him. But Mother was reluctant to go to the United States — she preferred Palestine. By the time she made up her mind to go, America entered the war, the Pacific was mined, and we were unable to leave Maryupol.

As has already been said, there was no regular Jewish schooling available — only makeshift. I do not even recall regular religious services. Still I must have attended what group worship there was, because in those years I came to know by heart many of the services including the lengthy prayer for retiring at night, which to this day I recite frequently.

My father left us money to get along on, money which we kept spending without adding any. The year of revolution, 1917, was preceded by unrest and anarchy. Robberies became more and more frequent. Fearful that robbers might come into the one room which the four of us — Mother, Miche, Dubby and I — occupied, Mother used to leave the remains of our meager purse on the windowsill and opened the window to enable robbers to help themselves to what we had without resorting to threats of violence.

When the revolution of 1917 did come, everyone, even my mother, even a youngster like myself was swept into a sea of hope and enthusiasm. To this day, words like *manifestatzya* and *demonstratzya** convey special meaning for me. All such hopes and enthusiasms were soon to vanish in the Bolshevik abyss.

For a reason which I do not remember, we, the Ben Zion Felmans and the four of us moved to Smilovitch, a smallish town not far from Minsk.

*Public demonstrations or displays of power and purpose.

Mother was not with us then for the following reason: In 1914 when we were driven out of Lithuania, Rashke and Michal (1909-1979), the two daughters of Yitzhak Aisik and Chanah Gitte (sister of my mother) Friedman has been visiting Zhagor. Since they had no means of joining their family, they went along with us. In Maryupol Michal lived with a paternal great aunt of hers, and Rashke lived with us. During the time of unrest preceding the revolution, epidemics such as typhus had begun to rage; during one of these Rashke took sick and died. Thereupon my mother and Sheine Ete Felman (1873-195?), Mother's sister, felt they could no longer risk retaining Michal, the only daughter left of the five born. And so Mother undertook the extremely hazardous journey of crossing frontiers, army lines, and, through intrepidity and intelligence, succeeded in bringing Michal back to her parents in Lithuania. Ultimately Mother joined us in Smilovitch, walking during the winter the distance between Minsk and Smilovitch. She had two companions for her hike — two women who, she thought, were prostitutes.

In Smilovitch, now under Bolshevik rule, there was famine and typhus. We took to cooking soap which we tried to barter with peasants for grain. The recipe for the soap was provided by our great aunt, Broche Zisse Bernstein, wife of Dr. Michael Bernstein after whom, as already stated, my brother Michel was named.

During this period my aunt Sheine Ete Felman was stricken with typhus and taken to a quarantine area. My uncle Bentzel, (Ben-Zion Felman), who accompanied her, took me along. His intention had been to find living quarters in some town in the vicinity of the quarantined area. Such quarters would have been given gladly. But when he told the possible hosts that his wife was in a quarantine area, they said they could not put him up. So we spent the night in the synagogue: I was in the women's section, and my uncle was downstairs studying Talmud through the night by the light of a flickering candle. The example of such devotion to study had a powerful impact on me.

Perhaps I ought to add the following incident about my uncle, one that took place in 1914 at the time of the expulsion from Zhagor. He had in his possession a substantial sum given to him in trust by Wisotzky, the tea and coffee man of Russia. He spent the entire sum for hiring horses and wagons to take old people, women and children out of Zhagor. He himself walked out on foot with a loaf of bread under one

arm, a volume of Talmud under the other, and 14 kopecks* in his pocket.

During one of the waves of typhus my uncle died. Lice which carried typhus bacilli were everywhere. I remember having been in one place where I saw bedding that seemed to be moving — the bedding was covered by thousands upon thousands of lice.

To provide some means of living, Mother with me as companion, set out to Moscow where she was bringing eggs to exchange for cloth. Moscow had no food. Smilovitch had no clothing. Barter was the sensible, indeed the only way to survive. But such barter the Bolsheviks designated as “speculation”, punishable by death. On Moscow’s Red Square, if I remember correctly, Mother was picked up by an officer of the Cheka*, and only her courageous assertion as a mother of three children who were starving saved her from imprisonment and worse.

Her courage served her well on another occasion — in Gomel. To travel anywhere one had to have a *propusk*, a *laissez aller*. The line in front of the *propusk* office was long. By the time she was getting close to the window, the shutter was put down, the office closed, and the possibility loomed that she might remain separated from us who were then in Smilovitch. Red Army men, standing by jeered at the evident despair of the poor people in the line, whom they designated as “speculators.” Mother turned upon the soldiers: “How dare you mock these people?” They looked at her, and saying, “You are different”, took her to the rear of the building where they gave her the document which enabled her to join us.

To go back to our trip to Moscow. We traded the eggs for cloth, which I wrapped around my body. In the freight car we traveled in on our way back to Smilovitch, fellow passengers stuck needles into my clothing to find out whether I was indeed a “speculator.” If I did not feel the needles, it indicated that my body had much cloth wrapped around it, and hence I was a “speculator.”

Famine was so severe in Smilovitch that one Passover, *latkes* made of potato peels were served as a special delicacy. Whenever Mother was away, I took care of the food supplies, doling out to Miche and

*The equivalent of seven cents

*The early name for the Soviet Secret Police

Dubby what little food was left.

Presently, Mother decided to return to Lithuania. Since we were natives of Lithuania, the Bolsheviks permitted our repatriation.

Enroute, came Shavuot, the two days of which, forbidden to travel, we spent sitting and sleeping on the floor of the railroad station in Vilna. The rumor was that all rail traffic was about to stop. On a Sabbath afternoon a train did arrive. Several young men, *zeidene yungemanchiklech**, decided to take the train and violate the Sabbath. The only question was whether they should *daven Sabbath minche*** before getting on the train or after getting on it. Mother decided to remain on the floor of the railroad station. Fortunately, the next day a train did arrive, and took us west toward Lithuania. At the time the Vilna area was occupied by Poland, which had no diplomatic relations with Lithuania. Mother appeared before a Polish officer, pleading with him to give her a pass to cross over to Lithuania. He refused. When she finally asked him what she was to do, he said: "Povesetsya, Madam", "Hang yourself, Madam."

So we had to hire a peasant, who smuggled us across the border. When after a night of crawling through the bushes we saw the guard booth of a Lithuanian sentry in Maryampol, we were thrilled.

It did not take long for us to get to Kurshani, where my uncle Yitzhak Aisik Friedman was Rabbi. Confusion reigned in Lithuania. Demobilized German troops, Belmontsi, roved through the countryside. Heating supplies were apparently inadequate. I remember getting up mornings in Kurshani and seeing water in a cup frozen solid.

One night, Kurshani itself was the scene of a battle. All night long we lay on the floor listening to what to me sounded like firecrackers. My grandfather, Meir Halperin, blamed it all on the English. Even though the Belmontsi were Germans, so strong was pro-German sentiment among Jews that insofar as my grandfather was concerned the English were to blame.

What sounded like firecrackers during the night, took the life of a man who ventured out of his house into our courtyard.

The next morning the Belmontsi upon evacuating Kurshani took my

*Well-brought up young men of good families.

**Sabbath afternoon prayer

uncle with them as a hostage. When the Lithuanians marched into Kurshani, a Lithuanian officer called on my aunt and told her not to worry. They had Belmontsi hostages. Should anything happen to my uncle, the Lithuanians would shoot the Belmontsi. My aunt fainted then and there.

The Lithuanians established their government, and we moved to Telz, where we reestablished contact with Dad. He sent us money to come to the United States of America.

In Telz I discovered that *Zeidie's* (grandfather's) *moyer*, brick house, which I used to think was a castle, had shrunk in size, the living quarters being uncomfortable and the light meager. Mother took a room not far from the Yeshiva where I attended the *Mechina*, a kind of prep school to get into the Yeshiva. I did not work hard at the study of Talmud. My one dream was the U.S.A. While waiting, I spent much time playing chess.

Our departure for the U.S.A. was delayed by many months, since our aunt Chanah Gitte took sick, and, with our consent, Mother took the \$1000 Dad sent and used it to provide the means for Chanah Gitte's stay in a hospital in Koenigsberg. When a second \$1000 arrived, money enough to buy second class tickets, Mother consulted us on another proposition: Would we consent to give the difference between steerage and second class to Sheine Ete, another aunt, as part of Sarah's (Sheine Ete's daughter) dowry? Getting Sarah married was a continuing cause for concern in the family. When she did marry, she married without dowry. Her husband, Abba Shmuel Averbuch, was a Hebrew teacher. After their marriage they went to Herzlich, Palestine, where he worked on the land, ultimately becoming head of the city works — a kind of municipal engineer.

We set out from Libau in steerage, in what must have been a freighter. We sat in the dark, below deck, munching away at pounds and pounds of *suchari*, dried biscuits specially baked for the trip as provender. Other than hot water and fruit we ate nothing.

We arrived in Copenhagen at midnight. Being without money, we were sent to a lodging, where we were received kindly. But the presence of many Christian symbols in the place made Mother believe that we were in a missionary establishment. The alarm she raised led the people in the place to get in touch with the late Professor David Jacob

Simonsen (1853-1932) who came in the early hours of the morning and reassured Mother.

Soon we were on our way to England. When we passed through a railway station, we bought bananas from a vendor. Never having seen a banana before I tried to eat it unpeeled.

We embarked on the Celtic, a Cunarder, for New York. Our supply of *suchari* held out, and I began studying how to count in English—"ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen," and so on.

Upon arrival in the harbor of New York, Monday, 13 December 1920 ((זאח תנוכה, חרפ"א)) , we were met by a small boat which Uncle Elyeh Chayim Halperin, my Mother's brother, (1889-1977) had chartered, and in which he stood like a commodore of the navy bidding us welcome.

Dad, who apparently was delayed in coming in from Denver, we saw briefly as we walked through one of the galleries of Ellis Island.

When Mother was asked: "Can you write?" she replied, "No." Thereupon an interpreter, realizing she was just being willful, said to her in Yiddish: " זאגט אז איר קענט. אויב ניט וועט מען איך ניט אריינלאזן. "

She replied:* " זאלן זיי מיר ניט פרעגן נארישע פראגעס " "

What did delay us however were Mike's (Miche's) eyes, which had some kind of inflammation. So for two days we were kept in quarantine, during which period, when served corn flakes, I tried to eat them without milk.

Though uncle Elyeh Chayim's and aunt Menucha's (1891-1981) apartment was very small, they took us in, and we stayed there for a week or so until Dad found quarters for us on Lewis Street in the lower East Side. For some reason Dad did not at first decide to return to Denver.

Dad liked me very much and, hoping to display my knowledge in Talmud to his Rabbinic friends, had me examined by them. To my father's great embarrassment I did very poorly. The truth was that at the time, not caring at all for the world of Rabbinic lore, I reached out

*"Say that you know how. If you don't, they won't let you in." She replied: "They shouldn't ask silly questions."

for all that America represented, and as a first step tried desperately to learn English. I still remember one text where there was a story beginning "Once upon a time," which I read "Vontse upon a time." The rest I do not remember. Accordingly, when Dad enrolled me in a class at Yeshivat Reb Yitzhak Elchanan presided over by a Mr. Levin, I found means soon enough to get out of it.

The Lewis Street quarters had only cold water. The toilet, shared with others, was in the hall. If there was a reason for choosing such a place I do not know what it was. Nevertheless I was ecstatic about being in America. I remember dancing around a New York policeman — my way of saying that for a Jewish boy, such a policeman, unlike his Polish or Lithuanian counterpart, was a friend.

Within a month or two after our arrival in New York, Dad and Mother decided to go back to Denver after all. If I remember correctly, Max Potashnik, one of the leaders of Dad's congregation, came specially from Denver to persuade Dad to return. Indeed Max Potashnik accompanied us part of the way on the long journey — three days and nights, I believe — to Denver.

On the way we stopped to visit Nathan and Freyde Katzin, whose daughter Lillian was later to marry my brother Mike. The Katzins then lived on Independence Blvd. in Chicago's old West Side. They received us warmly. We probably stayed there overnight. For breakfast they served us grapefruit, something we had never tasted before.

Upon arrival in Denver I was enrolled at once in the third grade of the Cheltenham Public School, where most of the students were Jews. I must have done very well, since within one year I was promoted through all the grades up to the eighth. But I do not recall pursuing any Jewish studies. Mike went to a Talmud Torah run by a Mr. Holland. Dorothy (Dubby) was too young. But I, perhaps because I was more advanced than the students in Mr. Holland's highest class, pursued no such studies, and Dad did not teach me. I did not care, obsessed as I was with learning English, with becoming an American.

I did so well at Cheltenham that the principal, Mr. Cluxton, became a close friend.

In 1922, shortly after my enrolling in the North Side High School, Dad left Denver to go to Dayton, Ohio, where he was Rabbi of two congregations.

During this period Mother continued to be obsessed with helping her sister Sheine Ete with money to wed off her daughter Sarah. So, since she drew what money Dad could part with to send overseas, we had to skimp. Besides Mother's relatives, some of Dad's kin got out of the Ukraine into Lithuania. They were Moshe, Esther, Blume, and one other girl, children of Abba Heschel Schein, the Rabbi of Latzkove, who married my father's sister, Itte. Her husband, Abba Heschel together with eight of their twelve children died during an epidemic in Fastov. Itte was asphyxiated while a patient in the hospital, which burned down. Dad provided dowries for the three surviving daughters, and schooling for Moshe, the surviving son. In the days of the Nazis, Moshe and Esther were to be killed. The other two, Dora and Blume, survived.

Mother was not a happy woman. Among other things she was not happy about being in the United States. Had she had her way we would, as I mentioned earlier, have gone to Palestine where before long her sister Sheine Ete and her children, Sarah and Mule, went, as did her sister Chana Gitte, her husband Yitzhak Aisik, and daughter Michal. So strong was Mother's obsession with family that on our way to the United States she asked us, as already mentioned, whether we wanted to go second class, or send the difference to her relatives and go third class. As one might have expected, we voted to send the money to the relatives. It now occurs to me that Dad's unawareness of the change in the class of travel may have accounted for his initial absence. Had we gone second class, all arrangements would have been made to have us travel comfortably to Denver. Our arrival was further complicated because HIAS* misplaced our papers.

Anyway we moved from Federal Street, our last home in Denver, to Quitman Street in Dayton, not far from Stivers High School, where I enrolled, even as Mike and Dub enrolled in a nearby public school.

The principal of the Hebrew school was Lamdan. He was succeeded by Shalom B. Maximon (1881-1933), a distinguished Hebraist, who was to become registrar at the Hebrew Union College. But at the time my interests were not Hebraic. Mencken and his *American Mercury* became my guides. Though my knowledge of English at that time must have been quite limited, words like "booboisie" and "the Bible Belt", fresh out of Mencken's word factory were my daily fare.

*Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society

My High School principal, Cory LeFevre (?-1925), who became my close friend, taught me English and also provided me with Mencken and similar reading material.

The Princeton Club of Dayton sponsored an annual scholarship for a worthy student of Stivers. Cory LeFevre encouraged me to apply. I dreamt of becoming a lawyer, an international lawyer. When I was turned down — because, according to Cory LeFevre, I was a Jew — I felt very badly. Anyway, at the time I had almost no interest in matters Hebraic.

A neighbor and classmate, Abe Shusterman (1906-), may have been responsible for turning my thoughts to the Rabbinate. Abe had decided to become a Rabbi and conceivably affected my decision as well. In my junior year in high school I had definitely decided on the Rabbinate — but did little to prepare. My time was spent largely on chess, in which I became rather good,* even neglecting my studies. My Latin teacher, a Miss Jackson, was quite pretty, and for one reason or another let me get away with shoddy work. When Cory LeFevre found out how low my grade was, he was disgusted — rightly.

In the chess club where I was a regular, I came to know a Mr. Cohen. Shortly before I was to graduate from high school, Mr. Cohen said to me: "I hear you are going to college." I replied: "Yes." "If you do," said Mr. Cohen, "give up chess. It ruined my life, and it will ruin yours."

I heeded Mr. Cohen's advice. When I got to Cincinnati and a request came to me in the name of Mrs. Walter Freiburg, one of the Jewish community's granddames, to teach chess to her grandson, I declined.

In my latter years in Dayton I got to know the local Reform Rabbi, Samuel Meyerberg, (?-1964) with whom I became quite friendly. He gave me a Brown, Driver, and Briggs Dictionary, the first dictionary of its kind I had ever seen. The arrangement in it of verbs and nouns I found quite baffling.**

In the fall of 1925 I arrived in Cincinnati; I no longer remember what questions the examiners put to me. But Rabbi David Philipson (1862-1949), who was one of the examiners, apparently took to me. If I remember correctly, I overheard one of them say, "This young man looks like Silver*** did in his younger years." I am not sure that I knew

*I became correspondence chess champion of Ohio.

**Its mechanical and arbitrary system of classifying and arranging Hebrew vocabulary is no longer in vogue.

***Abba Hillel Silver (1893-1963)

who Silver was. (In 1925 he had not as yet achieved national fame.) But I took the observation to be a compliment.

My Hebraic training such as it was got me third year standing in the Prep Department, the requirements being so low. I did not overwork at the Hebrew Union College, concentrating primarily on my studies at the University of Cincinnati, where a Professor Hedger in history made so deep an impression on me that in one of his courses I could rattle off the Louis and Charles of France in the exact order of their reigns. In retrospect, what a waste of time! I would have been much better off had I memorized Scripture. But the plain fact is that at that time I did not care for Scripture, or for all it connoted in our tradition. I recall a class with Samuel Cohon (1888-1959), who asked the students to read through the Twelve Minor Prophets in English. In the quiz that followed he asked us to identify the word "gourd" (Jonah 4:6). Since most of us had not read the assignment, we could not identify the word from the Book of Jonah, and incredibly enough were indignant about the question, saying it was "unfair."

At the time, I was among the extreme reformers. On one occasion I shocked Pete (Phineas) Smoller (?-1952) by ordering bacon and eggs.

My conception of the Rabbinate was pulpit oratory and dealing with social issues.

I was an avid reader but not in Jewish classics. Saturday nights, when there was a dance in the bumming room on the first floor of the dormitory, I used to pull a rug toward the crack at the bottom of the door to keep out the noise and would read Ibsen's plays, thus plowing through most of them.

I did not go to the dances. Not merely because I preferred to read, but also because I was very shy, a shyness aggravated by a humiliating experience during a dance in my junior or senior year in high school. Carrie Fonarow was a girl who took my fancy. So I walked over to her and asked her to dance with me. Whatever her answer was going to be I still do not know, because I slipped and slithered across the floor. That incident I felt ended my social career. No girls, no dances for me, who was awkward, ungainly, and one to whom girls were to give no heed.

The teachers at the Hebrew Union College made little impact on me.

Some of them, Jacob Mann (1888-1940) and Jacob Z. Lauterbach (1873-1942), were great scholars. But I was not interested in their disciplines — Jewish history and Talmud. Bernard Zeiger (?-1980), a student, I thought was a great man, and he was a humanist. In his chapel sermon he characterized Hebrew as the language of our Bedouin ancestors. Never, I suppose, did I go that far, but I too was an out and out humanist.

Samuel Cohon (1888-1959), who was not in Mann's or Lauterbach's category, reached out to me, but I did not respond. Abraham Z. Idelsohn (1882-1938), a great liturgist and musicologist, worked in areas which were of no concern to me. Shalom B. Maximon's (1881-1933) passion for modern Hebrew literature I did not share. Julian Morgenstern's (1881-1976) fine-spun theorizing about the Bible put me to sleep.

Only Moses Bottenwieser (1862-1939) excited me. An exam on Amos involved me so deeply that I patterned my answer after *The Prisoner of Zenda*, a derring-do movie about the French Foreign Legion, a movie popular at the time. I no longer remember how the connection was achieved.

In my days in high school I seemed to make no friends who were to mean much to me — except Si Burick who was in fact Mike's friend. At HUC I had many friends: Jake Shankman (1904-), Joshua Liebman (1907-1948), Saul Appelbaum (1907-1964), Allan Tarshish (1907-), Elmer Berger (1908-), Levi Olan (1903-), Jacob Weinstein (?-1974), Edgar Siskin (1907-), and others.

Among the friends I made, Jake Shankman was in many ways the most remarkable. I felt myself fortunate in that he included me in his circle, which was much wider than mine. And no wonder. He ran an unpaid tutorial service, helping "lame ducks" like Jack Levy (1904-1971), Dave Zielonka (?-1977), and many others make the grade. He had wonderful wit, and great aptitude, having been a boy prodigy who entered Harvard at the age of 14.

At the end of the first year I officiated during the High Holidays as student Rabbi in Marion, Indiana, the following year in Wabash, Indiana, then in Trinidad, Colorado. The summers that I did not go to summer school I spent at home in Bridgeport where in 1926 my father moved and later in Denver where he returned, in 1928.

Whatever little I learned at the Hebrew Union College, learning which I thought reflected final truth, I passed on to my father in a kind of taunting way. The old I rejected, and whatever was new I really did not master. What sort of Rabbi, * *לילך אלהים*, was I going to be?

In the summer of 1926, I registered for summer school in Columbus, Ohio, at Ohio State University, where I took a course in sociology. The required readings, long and utterly meaningless, planted in me my first skepticism concerning "ologies" and the "science," ** *על*, in the name of which they paraded and delivered secular encyclicals. Another summer I attended Columbia University: a course with William Pepperell Montague in philosophy that was thrilling. That summer I read through Spinoza's *Ethics* which I deemed to hold the truth. Joshua Liebman visited with us in Bridgeport during those months. Already his oratory was remarkable. I remember walking in one day as he was reciting Hamlet's "To be or not to be" to Dorothy and to her friends, who were then nine or ten years old. They did not know what he was saying, but he held them spellbound. He could have done the same thing with the multiplication table. Living with us meant for him perhaps the first and only exposure to authentic Jewish life, having had none in his home. His parents were separated. His father, whom I met only once, was a strangely gross man; his mother in a mental institution. He spent much time visiting psychiatrists. No wonder that, when I would say to him, "Josh, you are crazy," he would wince. I, of course, had no means of knowing the depth of his pain or sensitivity.

Josh, Jake, and I used to call ourselves "The Triumvirate", and though Josh was both able and industrious he was strangely jealous of us. When one of us would tell him that during the summer we read through all of Graetz' *History of the Jews* — a preposterous story — he would be greatly disturbed. "What, what" he would say and attempt to emulate the feat which in fact neither Jake nor I performed.

When Josh gave a sermon and was told, "Josh, you were good," he was not satisfied. Every utterance of his had to be the greatest, or else he was unhappy.

*God save us!

**"Knowledge, understanding," Anglo-Saxon equivalents for the somewhat arrogant Latin word "Science" which conveys the impression that until its arrival no tested knowledge existed.

I mention these matters because of Josh Liebman's extraordinary career in later years. Had he remained alive, he would have become a kind of Jewish and more intellectual Billy Graham.

During his years in Boston in the 1940s when Friday after Friday he drew tremendous crowds and I was getting my several dozen at Beth-El in Providence, I asked him for reading matter on psychology. It was the era when people believed the Messiah could be brought by Gestalt, Depth, or what have you, psychology. Josh was able to make use of his extraordinary experiences in the field while still a child. Besides, there was his great talent as a speaker, whereas I had neither.

Then came his book *Peace of Mind*, which for years and years was to be a best seller.

Regrettably Josh's great career was brought to an untimely end by a stroke.

Even at the height of his success he was not satisfied. Though thousands of people used to come to hear him, he kept count of the number who came and was greatly distressed when by ever so little there was a drop in attendance.

His field was philosophy. He took his doctorate with Zevi Diesendruck (1890-1940) at HUC. The thesis, according to Harry Wolfson (1887-1974), who quoted Diesendruck, was not very good. Still, he expected to be appointed professor of philosophy at Harvard.

To retrace steps, Josh graduated from HUC in 1930, getting all kinds of prizes. Rich in triumphs he came to my dormitory room where I said to him: "Josh, of what use are all your prizes? You can barely read a line of unpointed text."

Stung by the reproach, he went home and kept his wife up all night. During that night they decided to go to Palestine, where he spent a year studying with private teachers. As a result he learned to read modern Hebrew poetry, which he made use of in the course of his speeches.

At the inauguration of Nelson Glueck (1900-1971) as president of HUC (an event I attended only because Jake Shankman urged me to come), Josh the principal speaker made superb use of the phrase * סכל אדני . I no longer remember what Josh had to say, but it was a

**"God's porter" as an epithet for the people of Israel

truly great speech. The audience was electrified.

To go back to my summer school experiences in 1926. In Columbus, where I served as summer chaplain at the Ohio State Penitentiary, I still remember with horror the sight of the electric chair. I remember also the time one of the inmates reading not "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" but "Thou shalt love thy neighbor *and* thyself", a precept which I dare say many of us follow in practice.

All the prisoners I talked to spoke of themselves as innocent. Don't we all, or most of us, even when we have done something wrong?

During the summer at Columbia (1927), Sacco and Vanzetti were executed. Mike and I, who used to hitchhike from Bridgeport to New York, read of the execution in the *New York Times*. To this day I recall our sense of shock.

My father was an Orthodox Rabbi. Yet he did not seem to mind my having gone to the HUC. My mother did, but she loved me dearly and did not believe that I had strayed so far from her ways, or she felt that in time I would return. In a way she was sustained in her belief by a remark made by Rabbi Gershon Hurvitz of Jerusalem, a summer visitor in Denver. Rabbi Hurvitz was an extraordinary man. The first night in our home Mother was about to bring a ewer of water into his room to obviate the need of his walking in the morning more than four cubits with hands unwashed.

he said, "ניין, ניין רעבעצין, פרום זיין אויף פרעמדע פלייצעס, וויל איך ניט."

("No, no Rebbetzin, I do not wish to practice piety on another's shoulders.")

I took Rabbi Hurvitz to museums in Denver and pointed to fossils said to have been hundreds of thousands or millions of years old—descriptions which in a way might have been shocking to a man of the old school. But not to him, who treated them humorously, saying: "Now Velvele, let me guess! This fossil is probably a million years old, or two million years old!" It is hard to know how he reconciled such matters with his own beliefs. There is no doubt he did reconcile them. It was my first experience with the subtlety of tradition on high levels.

Anyway, it was Rabbi Hurvitz who used to say during his several weeks in our home: "נישט קשה, נישט קשה, וועלדוועלע וועט נאך פרום ווערן." ("Never mind, never mind; Velvele will become pious again.")

What Rabbi Hurvitz said no doubt comforted Mother, who was extremely devout. As for my father, he felt that in the United States Orthodoxy had no future, and he looked forward to what he believed to be my certain success. Success mattered much to him. He did not expect Mike to be successful and treated him accordingly.

As things were to turn out, I was to be only moderately successful in the Rabbinate, while Mike was to be greatly successful in business and in writing.

To go back to my undergraduate days at the University of Cincinnati. Even though I was intensely involved in the secular studies at the University, I was, I like to think, more than a grind. Thus, when Miss Stanley in English gave some sort of meaningless assignment, I did the work without setting down in meticulous detail the rather boring matter. Miss Stanley gave me a D. A year or so later at some gathering I met Miss Stanley, who asked me why I handed in such a poor paper. I told her. Thereupon she did a unique thing. She went to the registrar and had my grade changed from a D to an A. She never told me that she had done it. But had she not done it, I would not have qualified for Junior Phi Beta Kappa.

Apparently I achieved some kind of reputation as shown by the following incident: I took a course in educational psychology in which we used a book by a man named Dresser. Because the book was so bad, I still remember the author's name. The experience, I might say, disenchanted me with another "ology".

The course — a required one — was given in a huge lecture hall, and quizzes were generally not written on the board, but dictated. Well, one day a young assistant came in, and among the questions he dictated was one which sounded like "Discuss the relation between passion and custom?" The question appeared to be silly, but no sillier than many another incident or matter in the course. Then, too, the class goat had just asked a question, bringing down upon himself the ridicule of the entire class, and I was reluctant to step into the breach. So manfully I set out to answer the question, while my neighbor copied the answer which I wrote out.

At the end of the class I asked the meaning of the strange question, "the relation between passion and custom." "What did you say," I was asked, "passion and custom? You got it wrong. The question was 'the

relation between fashion and custom'." Nevertheless when the blue books came back, my neighbor got a C while I got an A. I can account for the disparity only by assuming that the person who marked my papers heard that I was a good student.

In any event one day after a walk through Burnet Woods I was told that my name was first on the list of the Junior Phi Beta Kappas.

At HUC I became chairman of the student Forum whose business it was to get visitors to Cincinnati to come and speak to the students. So when the Marx brothers arrived, I went backstage and in most solemn manner asked whether one or all would come to HUC. Thereupon they put on an act of drollery and acrobatics with the refrain, "He said he wants us to give a speech." I got no answer, but was rewarded with an act of pure comedy.

After graduating from the University I was elected editor of the HUC students' magazine. Professors Samuel Cohon and A.Z. Idelsohn pressed me to introduce a Hebrew page in the magazine. Even though I did not belong to the "Jews," — as they were called derisively at HUC — nevertheless, I acceded, and one of the board of editors, who later was to become a strong protagonist of Hebrew learning, resigned in protest.

It was the practice for university graduates to serve as bi-weekly student Rabbis. Beth-El in Rockford, Illinois, where the incumbent was Jacob Weinstein, was considered the plum; and upon his recommendation the congregation invited me to come in the fall of 1929.

In my first year I did so poorly that the congregation was on the verge of firing me. The reason: I fell in love with Virginia Randall, a Gentile girl. Had we married I knew I would give up the Rabbinate, ask her to be converted, and go to Palestine.

During this period my bi-weekly work as well as my studies suffered greatly. Moses Bottenwieser sensed the turmoil within me and invited me for a walk in Burnet Woods. When I told him the reason, he could say little, he being married to a Gentile woman.

Anyway, the people in Rockford, dominated by the Shanhouses, whom I liked very much, gave me another chance; and the second year I did so well that upon graduation in 1931 from HUC I was elected Rockford's first resident Rabbi.

In my Junior year at the HUC I was still a humanist. My chapel sermon was based on the brass mirrors which Moses transformed into the laver for the Sanctuary (Exodus 38:8).

The mirrors, I pointed out, the mirrors which serving women brought to Moses were mirrors of lust. Nevertheless, Moses used them to make a laver of brass. So must we use the gifts of faith in God our people bring, not because *we* believe in God, but because we love our people. With whatever gifts their hearts make them willing to bring, we should build our sanctuaries. *Mitzvot* I had the gall to define as “ethnic integrators.”

In commenting on the sermon, Israel Bettan (1889-1957) said: “Braude does not expound. He pounds.”

Bettan taught Midrash at HUC. And this discipline, which in later years was to mean so much to me, also counted for little in those days.

The students liked my talk, but the faculty, as was to be expected, did not.

In those days, in the 1920s, the faculty endeavoring to teach ancient truths were not in an enviable position.

In the world of politics, Lenin and Stalin had the answers; in psychology, Freud and/or behaviorists such as Pavlov and Watson; in philosophy a humanist such as M.C. Otto, who taught philosophy at the University of Wisconsin and wrote a few flimsy essays, was regarded as one who replaced the giants of the past. So what room was there for Talmud, Midrash, medieval Jewish philosophy or even the Bible except for the Prophets — excerpted from the text of Scripture — the Prophets who taught “social justice?” Every fledgling Rabbi would stand up in the pulpit, denounce so-called malefactors and deem himself a second Isaiah.

For my thesis subject I chose Maimonides’ Letter to Yemen (1172). My adviser was Samuel Cohon, who accepted my rather wooden translation of the text, but felt rightly that I made little use of the rich source material available. The Lord knows I tried hard enough. But I had very little academic discipline, particularly in the Jewish field.

Still, at graduation (1931) I copped all the prizes — the best sermon prize (a rather staid talk on Jacob’s attempt to make his bed on the stones of Beth-El), the best grades prize, the prize for an essay on

“Immortality in the Writings of Maimonides,” and one other prize.

Because my father was ill, no member of my family could be present, so I felt sad. My friends construed my sadness as modesty. Had I been complacent about the rain of awards, they would have been very angry at me.

Shortly after ordination I sailed on the Bremen for Europe. My companion, Frank Katzin (brother of my sister-in-law Lil), who had the use of a roll-top Chevrolet which waited for him at the port of Bremen, and I drove to Braunschweig, where we spent our first night in Germany. While walking in the city, we came to a bierhalle, into which a fire corps of Nazi youth was marching. We followed them, and listened to a line such as *Wenn das Judenblut vom Messer spritzt dann geht's nochmal so gut* (“When Jewish blood spurts from the knife, things will go twice as well”) — we listened without trepidation, actually with incredulous amusement. Later in Berlin young people I met said that they would not have dared enter a bierhalle filled with Nazis. They added: “But then you are American.”

In Berlin I attended lectures at the Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums, which Ismar Elbogen (1874-1943) gave. My German was too rudimentary to follow him well. But, armed with a letter of introduction from Julian Morgenstern (1881-1976), President of the Hebrew Union College, I met the Elbogen family, in fact took Dr. Elbogen's daughter to see the musical “Die Schoene Helena”, and still remember a conversation during which she said that both she and her friends were getting ready to leave. They loved the German language and German letters, but they knew that for Jews in Germany it was all over, even though, to be sure, her parents and the parents of her friends did not agree. How confident many well-placed Jews felt about Hitler's not doing to Jews what he said he would I was to realize during a dinner party at the home of Moritz Sobernheim, a distinguished Jewish banker. Never before or since have I seen comparable napery or lifted heavier silverware. And I, the boy from Lithuania, found myself at the left of the tall and beautiful hostess, while at her right there sat a young *Blut und Boden** poet of the ultra-nationalist Stefan George (1868-1933) school, which served as a breeding ground for Nazi ideology. Insofar as the hostess was concerned, I, the one at her left, did not exist. She gave all her attention to the Blubo (Blut and

*Blood and Soil

Boden) poet, whose friends before long were to go about incinerating Jews.

Nor were Jews the only ones living at the time in a fool's paradise. There was Carl Becker, minister of education in Prussia, distinguished Orientalist and superb botanist. As Dr. Becker took me through Berlin's Botanical Garden not far from his palatial home, he all but trumpeted the Latin, Greek, German and English names of the various shrubs and flowers. Finally I gathered enough courage to ask a question: "But Herr Minister, what about Hitler?" "Ach," he replied, "Hitler is a flash, a flash," and I finished the sentence for him, "a flash in the pan." "Exactly," he chimed in, and I was rewarded by an august ministerial smile.

With Dr. Morgenstern's letter of introduction I was able to call on Leo Baeck (1873-1956), whose granite face — intensely human withal — I still remember. Not knowing what to do with me, Dr. Baeck entertained me by studying faces of prominent men and women in a picture magazine. He covered up the captions which described them and solicited my counsel as he sought to figure out their occupations and characteristics. Physiognomy was a hobby of his.

In Frankfurt am Main I went to the Bamberger and Wahrmann Book Store where, in a book-buying frenzy, I spent most of my cash. Later — it was on a Sunday evening — at the home of my host, the distinguished bibliographer Aron Freimann (1871-1948), I asked whether I paid too much for the books purchased. "Mr. Braude," Professor Freimann replied, and I still remember how in his quiet way he devastated me, "No one ever overpays for a book."

From Frankfurt am Main I went to Amsterdam, where Dr. Morgenstern's letter opened for me the home of Sigmund Seeligmann (1873-1940). I still recall the narrow staircase leading up to his library, one of the two most impressive private collections I had ever seen. The other is Gershom Scholem's in Jerusalem.

His library was particularly strong in Sabbatiana.* Dr. Seeligmann showed me a collection of Shabbetai Zevi's penitential prayers. The title page reading, "In the first year of the Messiah," displayed a picture of Solomon's throne, which, according to many believers, Shabbetai Zevi was soon to occupy.

*"Sabbatiana" refers to writings by or about Shabbetai Zevi, psuedo-Messiah and Cabbalist, 1626-1676.

Dr. Seeligmann acted as my guide in Amsterdam, taking me among other places to the Rijksmuseum, whose riches of gold artifacts still dazzle my eyes.

As he showed me through its galleries of Medieval art, he told a story of public school children who were shown a madonna and child. One of the Jewish children in the group asked the teacher why the child was naked. "Because they had no money," was the answer. "Well, why didn't they borrow from the neighbors?" "Because the neighbors also had no money." Thereupon the Jewish child mused:

"אט דאס זיינען גוים. זיי האבן קיין געלט פאר זיך. די שכנים

האבן קיין געלט, און מע לאזט זיך פאטאגראפירן."

"That's the way with gentiles — they have no money of their own, nor do their neighbors have money. Yet they have themselves photographed."

Dr. Seeligmann's story intended no disrespect for Christianity; it was rather meant to illustrate the divergence between Jews and Christians in their respective assessment of religious paintings, and incidentally to explain why so many Jews are not excited by Christian art of the Renaissance.

In the latter 1930s as the Nazis were about to take over Holland, I wrote to Dr. Seeligmann offering to bring him and his family to the US and support them. I did so, even though my pay was only \$4500 and I had to help my mother and sister. No reply came. But years later Aryeh Seeligmann (1907-), Dr. Seeligmann's son, Professor of Bible at the Hebrew University, told me that my letter did reach his father, who at the time was gravely ill. When the letter was read to him, he asked to be propped up in his bed — a thing he had not asked for some time — and to have the letter read to him once again. As he listened to it he wept in gratitude.

God was good to this wonderful man. He died before the family was taken to Theresienstadt, a Nazi concentration camp in Czechoslovakia.

From Amsterdam I went to Youodkrante (Schwartzort), a sea resort in Lithuania where my uncle Rabbi Yitzhak Aisik Friedman and his family were spending the summer.

As mentioned earlier, I had just been ordained and the Rabbinic thesis I submitted dealt with Maimonides' Letter to the Jews of Yemen (1172); and so during one conversation I referred to a certain item in that letter. Whereupon Rabbi Friedman proceeded to dilate on that particular item in such a way as to make me feel that he had just been

perusing Maimonides' Letter, whereas, for all practical purposes, I had not even looked at it. Had I not been so full of my importance as a newly annointed "prophet of the Lord", I would have drawn the pertinent implication, namely that I knew very little of and understood even less Maimonides' ideas and the world in which he lived. But, cocksure youngster that I was, my uncle's twinkle-in-the-eye reprimand was water off my back.

When I visited my native Telz, I regarded it as one of the worst centers of Jewish reaction, felt that its Jews were either backward or anti-religious, and that Lithuania was ripe for religious reform. Little did I suspect that what Lithuania's Jewry was in fact ripe for was death — sudden death.*

I arrived in Rockford, Illinois, in the fall of 1931. As I look back, two experiences remain in my memory: a sermon, "Do We Want More Rosenwalds?" given at the time of Rosenwald's death. In it I spoke of Julius Rosenwald (1862-1932) with great admiration. Nevertheless, the very phrasing of the title together with the question which followed "Do we want any more men of great wealth?" betokened a critical attitude toward the kind of free enterprise which marked America, betokened also mild identification with the revolutionary stance which at the time characterized so-called intellectuals.

People in Rockford were shocked. But regarding myself as a prophet redivivus I persisted, and the people were too kind to do other than utter gentle words of dissent. In later years I came to realize how little my outburst achieved other than to make the Jews of Rockford uncomfortable and have them apologize to their non-Jewish neighbors for Rockford's young and foolish Rabbi.

The other memorable experience was attending the University of Chicago. Even though my salary was only \$2500 a year, the University of Chicago's low tuition rates, a free pass on the Illinois Central, and use of Frank Katzin's apartment on the South Side made such trips possible. I took courses with H.M.P. Smith, Robert Moss Lovett, and Albert Ten Eyck Olmstead. For the last I was to write a paper examining Jacob's blessing of the Tribe Fathers as a source for the theory that the Tribe Fathers represented amphictyonies. I could get nowhere

*But my father in a letter written a year earlier believed that the end had come for the Jews of Europe. He sensed that Esau, meaning the Nazis, was determined to slay the Jews, and, quoting Rebekah's counsel to her son Jacob "Flee at once" (Gen. 27:43), felt that only flight could save the Jews of Europe.

with my investigation. Its results were so meager that I became sceptical, more sceptical than ever, about Biblical criticism — its methods and conclusions.

In any event I did not hand in the term paper. Sometime later, during a reception, Professor Olmstead asked why I had not handed in the paper. When I told him I could get nowhere with it, he commented, "Negative conclusions are also important." Olmstead's statement is the only thing I remember of the year's studies.

As 1932 was moving on, the depression kept growing worse. Shortly after Shavuot, my father, who had been ill for several years, died. Since his savings were tied up in a building and loan association which closed its doors, the obligation of providing for my mother and sister, Dorothy, fell on me.

Then, within a few months after my father's death, the most decisive turn in my life occurred — my appointment as Rabbi of Temple Beth-El in Providence, which came about in a way altogether unplanned: Beset as I was by grief and worry, and not knowing what to do, I decided to go to Cincinnati to take a summer course at the Hebrew Union College. The summer was very hot and the College's Bernheim Library even hotter the day I sat there reading *Deep Mire*,* a book recounting Jewish travails in the days of Chmielnicki (1563?-1657). The book, I felt, expressed my own helplessness, my sense of despair. Just then, as I was trying to make out a very difficult passage, Professor Israel Bettan (1889-1957) walked in. I showed him the passage which he examined briefly, but then he looked at me, and said: "Braude, you should go to Providence."** (At the time I had no inkling that the post in Providence was vacant.) I replied: "I am in such low spirits that I don't know whether I can go anywhere." He said: "Never mind; I'll talk to Henry." "Henry" was Henry Englander (1877-1950) who had been my teacher and whom I liked very much. He had served at Temple Beth-El from 1905 to 1910.* Even after an interval of twenty-two years, he continued to have influential friends** at Beth-El who held him in such high regard that his recommendation for the

* מַיִם רַבִּים וְיָבֵשׁ The phrase is in Ps. 69:3. The book's author, Nathan Note Hanover, died in 1663. I was reading the book as part of an assignment in a course given by Jacob R. Marcus (1896-).

**Samuel Gup (1894-1955), after serving at Beth-El in Providence for 13 years, had just left to go to Columbus, Ohio.

*He left Providence to become professor of Aramaic and Bible exegesis at the Hebrew Union College.

**J. Jerome Hahn (1868-1938), and C. Joseph Fox (1873-1936).

post of Rabbi was tantamount to election. I, of course, was unaware of the importance which the Rabbinical search committee at Beth-El gave to Henry Englander's word.

Within hours after my encounter with Israel Bettan, Henry Englander saw me and asked a few almost casual questions. He apparently liked what I had to say because ten or twelve days later, I received an invitation to come to Providence for a week-end early in September, during which I was to be interviewed, and preach from the pulpit at Beth-El. Upon my arrival in Providence, the chairman of the committee told me that out of the ninety-two men who had been considered for the post, I was one of three finalists, and he gave me the names of the other two, one of whom was Solomon Bazell (1897-1963). I said that, in my opinion, Beth-El should take Bazell as its Rabbi. The chairman of the committee also mentioned that no choice would be made for six months or more. For reasons I no longer remember, I promptly responded that if my candidacy were to be considered, the committee had to come to a decision before the High Holidays which were then about three weeks away.

Apparently, Henry Englander's recommendation carried such weight that even the blend of extraordinary naivete' and *chutzpah* I displayed, did not defeat my candidacy. Within a week or ten days after the visit to Providence, I received a phone call that I was elected Rabbi of Beth-El.

The congregation invited Henry Englander to install me, and he readily accepted the invitation.

At his first meeting with the officers and board of the congregation, he stipulated that I be allowed to register at Brown University for graduate work. (Apparently he felt that I had a capacity for scholarship, a capacity which I had not been aware of). So, to make certain that I would pursue such work, he himself took me to the Registrar. Shortly thereafter, in Millar Burrows'* office, I met Samuel Belkin, who was to become President of Yeshiva University. He and I became lifelong friends: I was best man at his wedding, and he was to be one of the Rabbis at mine.

The brief talk I gave 18 October 1932, at the time I was installed,

*Millar Burrows (1889-) was then head of the Department of Biblical Literature and the History of Religions.

contained *in nuce* the stances which in subsequent years I was to advocate:

A Rabbi of the Talmud once asked: "What is God's daily prayer?" His audience gasped at the audacity and seeming blasphemy of the question. Then the Rabbi proceeded to give the prayer which he believed God uttered daily. That prayer was: "May the quality of My mercy exceed the quality of My justice." Sometimes I think that Henry Englander need never utter these words. In him, more than in any human I know, do the scales of mercy outweigh the scales of justice. Rightly is he blessed with abundance of love — thrice beloved is he as man, as Rabbi, and as teacher.

Twenty-two years have gone since you left this community, and tonight it is not only I, its newly elected Rabbi, but this congregation who look to you for spiritual guidance and inspiration. You, my beloved master, with all your modesty and simplicity, have ascended the mountain of the Lord, your hands are clean, your heart is pure. There is no man alive at whose hands and from whose lips I would, with greater humility and greater eagerness, accept the charge of consecration.

Upon the threshold of this, my new ministry, I believe it fitting to state the intellectual as well as purely affirmative basis of my future work.

Standing in your presence, my beloved master, and in the presence of this congregation, I do pledge my love to the people of Israel, wherever they may be, whether in the lands of the East or those of the West; whatever they be, whether adorned with patriarchal beards or clean of visage, whether arrayed in flowing oriental robes or fitted out in severe European cloth, whether speaking strange tongues or uttering the familiar syllables of our childhood. All of them are our flesh, our blood, our life. We cannot escape them; they cannot escape us. We are held together by the invisible and enduring bonds that make Israel a people eternal.

Standing in your presence, my beloved master, and in the presence of this congregation, I do pledge my loyalty to the

immemorial traditions of the people of Israel, to the sacred language — that vehicle of man's noblest aspirations now revitalized for ever greater achievement. I do pledge my loyalty to the customs and practices that have ever been our ethnic and ethical integrators, to the ideals of lore and learning that have ever been luminous in the darkest of centuries, to the conceptions of justice and righteousness that have ever been the foes of oppression and misdoing.

Finally, I do pledge my allegiance to this Congregation Sons of Israel and David, which well nigh a century ago brought the torch of Judaism into this community, kindled its flame in the hearts of succeeding generations and, with the aid of God, will make it a Ner Tamid — a lamp everlasting.

Yet I know full well that all these high sounding pledges are destined to remain words, naught but words, unless the Rabbi, by his own way of life, can gain the admiration, love, and affection of this congregation, unless his utterances are bodied from his every act and every deed.

May God grant that I be endowed with humility, wisdom, and understanding, with knowledge, sympathy, and strength that I may prove worthy of the mantle of Henry Englander which has fallen upon my shoulders, that I may live up to the highest reaches of Jewish leadership, so that all of us in this assembly, both men and women, both young and old, both laymen and Rabbis, may work hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, and soul to soul, and make of this community of Providence, a Mother City in American Israel. Amen.

My recollections of what happened to me in the period 1932-83 will be set forth in the next installment.

RHODE ISLAND LOST A GREAT CITIZEN
IRVING JAY FAIN

by JOAN NATHAN GERSON

Three children play together each day at University Heights in Providence. One is black, a second white and a third Oriental. They love their apartment complex with its large freshly mowed lawns because it is their home. "Irving Fain? Who's he? Never heard of him," was their recent reply. They do not know that their living friendship was the dream of this man whom they did not know.

On August 21, 1970, Irving Jay Fain died of Hodgkins Disease. He had lived to see the groundbreaking of University Heights and the completion of the first buildings in this American landmark admixture of races and economic backgrounds. He never lived to see the final result.

Some people called Irving Fain a saint; others opposed to fair housing, said he was misguided. His friends described him as a man of compassion, empathy, gentleness, directness and intelligence. During his lifetime he received honorary doctorates from Brown University and Tougaloo College, was the President of the Rhode Island Urban League, Rhode Island Conference of Christians and Jews and Temple Beth El. He was instrumental in starting Rhode Island's Fair Housing Law and was the first chairman of Citizens United for Fair Housing as well as the national chairman of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations' Social Action Committee. Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy sent him on trade missions and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations bestowed on him their ultimate honor. He was chosen as a "lamed vovnik" — one of that handful of people in every generation who spend themselves making the world brighter and better for everybody.

Irving Fain once wrote, "Doing is the end toward which believing, praying, learning, teaching and ceremonializing are but the means." Now eleven years after his death the full dimensions of his deed become apparent to all.

Born in Providence in 1906, Irving Fain was the son of Russian immigrants. He grew up near Lippitt Hill, now University Heights, and attended Classical High. He went on to Harvard College, class of 1927.

"In college he was already involved in civil rights," recalls his younger brother Norman. His support of Sacco and Vanzetti almost

expelled him and his backing of the populist candidate for president, Robert La Follette, nearly cost him the Louis Pasteur for debating which Harvard withheld for one year.

During the Depression Irving Fain went into the family textile business. On Sundays he taught at Temple Beth El. At the end of each year, he quietly turned over his check to be used for religious purposes. No one, except Rabbi William G. Braude, knew of his act. Through the years that followed, quiet giving — at times so quiet that the receiver did not know the source of the gift became Irving Fain's way.

As a lieutenant in the United States army for three years during World War II he was bothered by discrimination against blacks. Perhaps these memories stimulated his amazing fight to win a fair housing bill in Rhode Island.

Later, as the family business including Thompson Chemical, Tower Iron Works, Apex Inc., Apex Tire and Rubber and Dighton Industries grew, Irving Fain became involved in international sales which took him all around the world on trade missions for the United States government. In his last years when the family businesses had grown tremendously and he himself had become a wealthy man he devoted his time and energies to philanthropy. "As he realized that time was shorter in his own life, Irving desired to do more. He did not channel his money into one area but spread it in a more humane manner through people and their problems," commented his brother Norman as he leafed through an enormous folder filled with the ongoing charities. "Many people give up their time or their money but seldom is there someone who gives up both. You won't find any memorial to Irving. Unlike some people who will give money for a monument in their name, he gave to people — ordinary people. He was not interested in organized charities but in plotting new grounds."

"Take this for example. Hurley Moze was a black farmer in Ville Platte, Louisiana. Somehow he heard about my brother's generosity and wrote a letter requesting \$6,000 to avoid foreclosure on his home. No questions asked, Irving sent the money and Hurley Moze still sends a \$100 check every once in awhile to repay the loan."

Once Irving Fain hired Roger Blunt to water his lawn, a chore the Fains could well have done themselves. Irving became so attached to the Blunt family that he helped send Roger Junior to West Point



Irving Jay Fain with his wife Macie Fain



Irving Fain with Phyllis Brown and Bob Hope

where he was one of the first black cadets. At first no one would speak with Roger. But by the time he graduated he had become a battalion leader, setting a precedent for other blacks and went on to achieve honors in the United States army, married Ralph Bunche's daughter, studied nuclear physics at M.I.T. and is now a leader in the construction industry in Virginia. There were scores of other young deserving people Irving Fain helped send through college, often through direct financial assistance or through guarantee of loans of the Higher Education Act.

Besides helping individuals Irving Fain gave assistance on a larger scale, the Mississippi Bail Fund, for example. A series of civil rights demonstrations commenced in Jackson, Mississippi on June 14, 1965 sponsored by the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. By June 24th there were over 1,000 (800 blacks and 200 white civil rights workers) in the county jail with the great bulk in stockyards, the special facility on the Mississippi State Fairgrounds ordinarily used for the housing of cattle and from time to time used for the detention of people arrested in civil rights-related activities. When Irving Fain heard of this he offered a loan of \$50,000 to release the victims of which he received back only \$10,000.

"Once in 1965," recalled Albert Vorspan of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, "some college students needed a car to work on voter registration in Mississippi. The only one I knew who would take a risk with these idealistic kids was Irving. Within a week they had received a car and were on their way to join the movement."

In Georgia and Appalachia women are now sewing in a collective with machines Irving Fain donated. In Freedom Village, Mississippi, eleven black families have their own collective farm. With the \$71,000 he donated they were able to take over the land and provide money for farming eighty acres. Soul City, North Carolina, a black city started by Floyd McKissick, owes its inception to Irving Fain's seed money.

Besides programs that came to public attention the late Mr. Fain was involved financially in scores of projects that have gone nearly unnoticed. "There were seldom letters of approbation," recalled his son Lyle. "Threatening letters and anonymous phone calls from opponents of his civil rights activities were, however, regular."

He did earn recognition in one program he initiated in 1965, an exchange between Brown University and Tougaloo College in Jackson, Mississippi. By contributing the seed money for supplies and student

and faculty exchanges between this deep South all black college and Brown he paved the way for a relationship which is very much in operation today. "With the change in the civil rights movement between the sixties and the seventies the nature of this relationship has changed," commented Rev. Charles Baldwin of Brown. "Today, our program consists predominantly in assisting Tougaloo with institutional development and fund-raising. We help them bolster Congressional support, something unthinkable during Irving's time." Significantly Mr. Fain's honorary doctorate from Brown University in 1968 received wide coverage but not a word was written in the Mississippi papers about his doctorate from all black Tougaloo.

His greatest contribution, however, was in the fight he waged for the establishment of a fair housing law in Rhode Island, a war which went on for many years until its final passage in 1965. "This fair housing struggle in which Irving believed so strongly in many ways broke his heart," commented Rev. Larry Durgin, former Minister of the Central Congregational Church. As the first chairman and chief lobbyist of Citizens United for Fair Housing it was then Mr. Fain's task to enforce the law. His personal actions always following the dictates of his moral persuasion, he bought up 195 units of housing in two and three family houses in the Roger Williams, Washington Park, Elmhurst and East Side areas of Providence. These Hepzibah houses, according to coordinator Grace Smith, were then integrated to comply with the Fair Housing act. The program was carried on successfully until Mr. Fain's death. Eventually the houses were sold to individual owners, many of them the original tenants. Of these units only 47 remain as rentals. Ms. Smith as well as a great many others believe that Hepzibah housing was responsible for the implementation of housing integration as an accepted practice in Rhode Island.

Besides fair housing in Rhode Island Irving Fain's activities spread elsewhere. In 1968, for example, he helped establish and fund the original Opportunities Industrial Center in Providence which trains unemployed and underemployed workers and develops both vocational and motivational skills to ready them for the work force. Over 2,000 are trained per year. As deep as was this man's commitment to civil rights so too was his commitment to Judaism. His favorite biblical quotation was from Micah. "It hath been told thee, O man, what is good and what the Lord doth require of thee — only to do justice, and to love

mercy and to walk humbly with thy God." Justice and righteousness, the watchwords of Judaism, became his credo and social action their application.

Immediately after World War II he became involved in the gunrunning which helped establish the state of Israel. "The one activity Irving never told me about was the secret assistance he gave to Israel," recalled his wife Macie. Shortly after the state was formed in 1948 he spearheaded the formulation of Rhode Island chapters of Bonds for Israel and the Technion, Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa. On a trade mission to the Philippines he saw some discarded desalinization equipment. He promptly made sure it would be sent to Israel for use at the Dead Sea. In the 1960's he testified before the House subcommittee on International Trade in opposition to the Arab boycott of firms doing business with Israel and became a strong advocate of the establishment of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee to combat Arab propaganda.

Irving Fain's verve, sincerity, and directness, and unselfish contribution of time and money to worthwhile projects helped gain recognition for other Rhode Islanders of the Jewish faith. According to Reverend Durgin, it was hard for an Irving Fain to be accepted in Providence society. By the time Mr. Fain died there was a Jewish governor. Today members of his faith told high office throughout the state.

But Irving Fain was not only a man concerned with his Jewish identity and committed to civil rights. He was also a great Rhode Island chauvinist. As the owner of a house on Morris Avenue on the East Side he noticed a nearby lot containing a tumbled down garage infested with rats. He proceeded to buy the lot and create a playground with wooden benches for the old and concrete forms for the young. This vest pocket park became initially the subject of much calumny and even a contested lawsuit. Today the park is well used by the entire neighborhood.

Close to death Irving Fain's last concern was the problem of school lunch nutrition. Unable to see he listened to the radio and learned how improved nutrition could help the youth of America. Inspired, he helped form the Rhode Island Nutrition Council.

In April, 1970, Mr. Fain must have realized that death was imminent. He insisted that the whole family assemble for the Passover

seder including nieces, nephews, brothers and sisters and of course his wife Macie and son Lyle and daughter Betty. He telephoned each individually to make sure they would come. Too weak to sit up, he conducted the entire seder lying down.

In interviewing countless people in Providence and throughout the country the fact I found most striking was that no single individual knew the full measure of Irving Fain's involvement in humane causes. Rabbi William Braude of Temple Beth El was touched by his greatness and loyalty, James Williams, former director of the Urban League by his gentleness and friendship. Great and small saw him as a tall unassuming, human being uninvolved in himself.

Msgr. Arthur Geoghegan summed up his friend for us all in the following manner: "The prophets haunted his consciousness. One always had the impression that he was echoing Isaiah and Hosea in the way he spoke and acted. He was one of the few great human beings I ever met, a human being in the noblest dimension. There was no self aggrandizement in anything he ever did. Some people are great thinkers but they can't put their thoughts into practical experience. It's a pity he died so young and so hard," continued Msgr. Geoghegan. "I believe the city of Providence...no the state of Rhode Island lost its best citizen."

Editor's Note:

During his lifetime Irving Fain was involved in many causes although, as his wife, Macie has pointed out, he is generally remembered as the champion of Fair Housing.

In addition to his concern with those causes noted by Joan Nathan, there were many others. For example, he was one of the founders, together with Irving Kane, of APAC (American Political Action Committee). He was one of the initiates and founders of the American Friends of Technion. (Israel's technology college).

He felt that a person should not be categorized by his address, that is whether he lived in subsidized or non-subsidized housing. That is why University Heights which he built had a mixture of both types of tenants.

And his wife concluded. "He was one-sided in that his interests were all in human relations and their provision of equal opportunities."

THE RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
proposes
AN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
based on
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY JEWISH EXPERIENCE IN R.I.
by FLORENCE MARKOFF

INTRODUCTION

Our country has been enriched by any number of ethnic and religious groups who came to these shores with unique talents and gifts. They brought new ideas to America and in turn, they were deeply affected by their new surroundings.

The story of the American Jew in this country and in this state is a most important strand in the tapestry of American life that deserves study. We propose to catch the 20th century R.I. American Jewish experience through the medium of oral history, through the recollections of those men and women who have a meaningful story to tell.

The purpose of the Jewish Oral History Project is to explore in depth the various dimensions of the American Jewish experience from an historical and sociological perspective. The project will capture the experiences of men and women who have lived through an era of migration from the Old World to the new; who have been witness to an unprecedented period of social upheaval and wars; who have played an important role in an era of dramatic changes in the worlds of the arts, politics, education, the professions and technology.

This oral history project will tell of their hopes and dreams, their achievements and successes, their disappointments and heartbreak. Their stories are human, personal histories and this project preserves these histories as a memory bank on tape and in typescript, indexed and organized in order to make yesterday and today available to the student of tomorrow.

PROPOSAL

How do we hope to accomplish this? We propose to interview a group of Jewish men and women in this community so that their stories can be made a permanent record and act as a source of pride to the Jewish community of R.I.

The smallest State in the union boasts of many Jewish "Firsts." We can point to the first Jewish Governor, Attorney General, Adjutant

General, Police Commissioner, Mayor, Provost of Brown University; the first Jewish woman Vice President of a College, the first Jewish woman State Senator, and member of the House; in addition, we have many men and women who have played an important role in the development of the community not only as Jews but as Americans.

Oral history is a recognition that written history as we have known it for many years is no longer enough. More than generalities, we must understand and get to know the people who made and make history.

We must learn about those who have achieved and overcome obstacles; who were part of a non-Jewish world and never lost their Jewish identity.

PROCEDURE

Basic to the Oral History Project is careful advance planning. The names of likely interviewees are drawn from different areas. Emphasis is on a streamlined, clear cut agenda.

Interviewers must do their homework and be knowledgeable about their subject. They must be sympathetic and confidence-evoking. People do not talk to tape recorders. They talk to people with tape recorders. The interviewer is part of the process, and the process must be developed. The recording instrument remains in sight, not obtrusive, but within easy reach to turn off during telephone calls or "off the record" conversation.

Special questions are provided each interviewer; questions that explore the memorist's philosophies and ideas; questions that examine attitudes towards his or her own Jewish feelings and the special dimensions being Jewish has added to their life experiences. Special Jewish identity questions are incorporated, i.e. "Looking back over your life and reflecting on your experiences, what difference has it made that you are Jewish?"

Beyond this there is no limit to what is discussed. The memoirs run the gamut of emotions. Anecdotes are told that were never before heard and facts are set down never before revealed. They document historic moments, the events of daily life, private defeats and triumphs, political backroom maneuvers, personal observations, criticisms, comments and interpretations...every aspect of humanity.

These choice pieces of information obtained today, will be treasured

by the historian of tomorrow. The broad canvas of this century is reflected in the collections which include oral histories in such areas as Jews in politics, sports, broadcasting, the professions, the arts, music, etc.

These will be the voices of men and women whose recollections and thoughts will fill many recording tapes. Transcribed on paper, the memoirs will make up a memory bank of the Jewish American experience that will reflect not only R.I. but the entire country. It will be today's record for tomorrow's generations.

When the interview has been completed, it is transcribed verbatim and the transcribed copy is checked by the interviewer. Final editing is done by the interviewee who then returns the memoir with a release form noting any restrictions on its use.

The library then catalogues and indexes the memoirs along with the original cassette.

CONCLUSION

Why oral history? It is a fact that men and women will *say* to another person what they may feel reluctant or unable to write. It undertakes nothing less than the challenge to preserve the experiences of those who have gone before, on which our own experiences are built. We can all be proud of our heritage if we can touch it, hear it, read it and recall it. The tapestry of the Jewish American experience is incredibly rich. Yet generalities swallow up specifics, colors fade and outlines blur. We forget the daily lives, sorrows and triumphs in our tendency to accommodate preceding years to our own years. In oral history, specific live, individual nuances remain vivid, the tapestry can be examined in its threads. Through oral history we have a living book as fresh as the day it was spoken.

Oral history is a collective memory bank that will serve as a repository of material unavailable elsewhere.

PARTIAL SUGGESTED LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Governor Frank Licht
Adj. General Leonard Holland
Former Att'y General, Richard Israel

May Alofsin, Newport
Dean Maurice Glicksman; Brown Univ. Provost
Sen. Lila Sapinsley
Vicki Lederberg
Gertrude Hochberg
Activist, Lillian Potter Goldstein
Mr. Barenbaum, Yiddish actor, Holocaust survivor
Max Alperin, philanthropist
Joseph Galkin, first Executive Director of Federation
Rabbi Eli Bohnen — Rabbi William Braude
Prof. Sidney Goldstein, Jewish survey, Sociologist
Supreme Court Justice Alfred Joslin
Dr. Eric Denhoff, founder of Meeting St. School

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

The Twenty-seventh Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association was held on Sunday afternoon, May 3, 1981 in the auditorium of the Jewish Community Center, 401 Elmgrove Avenue, Providence and was called to order by the president, Dr. Marvin Pitterman at 2:40 P.M. The gathering rose for a moment of silence in memory of David C. Adelman and Beryl Segal. The reading of the minutes of the last Annual Meeting was waived.

Mrs. Samuel Kasper, Treasurer, reported a total income for the calendar year 1980 of \$12,467.31. With expenses totalling \$6,755.06, there was a balance of \$5,712.25 in the checking account as of December 31, 1980. On February 1, 1981 Mrs. Kasper was given the authority to invest \$5,250.00 in the Fidelity Cash Reserves taken from various endowment funds as well as from the NOW account in the Industrial National Bank.

Mrs. Abraham Horvitz, Librarian, stated that she still receives genealogy requests. She noted that the Association's materials were used in the exhibit that the Jewish Subcommittee of the Rhode Island Heritage Commission mounted on the State House lawn for Heritage Day on September 21, 1980. Family pictures and records continue to be given to the Association by individuals. Synagogue Beth David turned over material to the Association when it merged with Temple Beth Am, and Temple Beth Israel will donate pictures and plaques in its merger with Temple Beth Torah.

Dr. Albert Salzberg, Editor of the *Notes*, was pleased to announce that the new issue was now ready after a considerable delay due partly to illness; Thompson and Thompson, Inc., the Association's new printers, is a small business. Dr. Salzberg noted that Volume 8, Number 3 will include papers by Mrs. Horvitz, Rabbi William G. Braude, and Benton H. Rosen.

Dr. Pitterman read congratulatory letters received from Mr. Joseph Levine, Executive Secretary of The Indiana Jewish Historical Society, and Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, dean of American Jewish historians.

Finance Chairman, Louis I. Sweet, anticipates that the Association will attain its 500th member next year and a \$10,000 income. Based on a budget of \$8,500, there will be a small surplus.

Dr. Salzberg read a resolution composed by Louis Baruch Rubinstein honoring Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky, and Jerome B. Spunt presented her with an inscribed gold charm as a parting gift from the Association. She accepted with grateful thanks.

Melvin L. Zurier, Nominating Committee Chairman, read the slate of officers for the coming year as follows: Dr. Marvin Pitterman, President; Mrs. Warren Foster, Vice President; Mrs. Clinton Zacks, Secretary; and Mrs. Samuel L. Kasper, Treasurer. With no counter-nominations from the floor, the secretary was instructed to cast one ballot for the slate. Mr. Zurier closed his remarks with the observation that the late Beryl Segal personified Heart, Dr. Seebert J. Goldowsky, Mind, and Mrs. Goldowsky, Force (as depicted in the film, "Star Wars")!

Dr. Pitterman in his report outlined briefly the history of the Association and wished Dr. and Mrs. Goldowsky well on their retirement from the Executive Committee. He introduced the Eleventh Annual David Charak Adelman lecturer, Jeffrey S. Gurock, Ph.D. Associate Professor of American Jewish History at the Revel Graduate School of Yeshiva University. Dr. Gurock addressed the problems encountered in his research. In "Uncovering A Forgotten Jewish Community, Harlem 1870-1930", he pointed out that the number of Jews living in the area from 96th Street to the Bronx in New York dropped from a high of 178,00 in 1920 to 3,000 in 1930. There were very few primary sources for his research; he noted that he could have used a Jewish Historical Society of Harlem! His sources consisted of memoirs, institutional and synagogue records, periodicals such as the Yiddish press, government records (Jews can be studied as an urban element in society), census material, and oral history.

After a question period, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 P.M. and a collation followed. Hospitality was arranged by Mrs. Marvin Pitterman.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky
Secretary

NECROLOGY

BLACHER, HARRY, born in Russia, a son of the late David and Lena Blacher, he came to Providence in the early 1900's. He was founder of Blacher Brothers, Inc. in 1907, and chairman of the board of the jewelry manufacturing firm until retiring in 1978.

Mr. Blacher was a past board member and honorary life trustee of Temple Emanu-El, and a member of the Men's Club, the Jewish Home for the Aged, the B'nai B'rith and the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island. He was an honorary trustee of Miriam Hospital and a founder and charter member of the Ledgemont Country Club.

Died in Providence, Rhode Island February 27, 1981.

CHASAN, LOUIS A., born in Russia, he came to Providence more than 50 years ago. Mr. Chasan was the former owner and operator of Louis A. Chasan Co., wholesale jewelers, on Washington Street until he retired four years ago. He was a member of the Providence Hebrew Free Loan Association, Providence Hebrew Day School, and Jewish Home for the Aged.

Died on August 18, 1980 at the age of 98.

DANIELS, HELEN, born in New York City, a daughter of the late William and Bessie (Summer) Horowitz, she spent her childhood in Providence and moved to Woonsocket after her marriage.

A prominent Jewish community worker, Mrs. Daniels was a member of Congregation B'nai Israel, Woonsocket, its Sisterhood and the Hadassah. She also was a member of the Rhode Island Jewish Home for the Aged, the Miriam Hospital and Woonsocket Hospital Aid groups and the Kirkbrae Country Club.

Died on January 9, 1981 in Lincoln, Rhode Island, at the age of 62.

Necrology

GALKIN, CELIA, born in Russia, a daughter of the late David and Rebecca (Krasnow) Charles, she lived in Providence for many years before settling in Cranston 23 years ago.

Mrs. Galkin was a member of Temple Beth Israel and its Sisterhood, the Touro Fraternal Association, the Jewish Home for the Aged Women's Association and the Providence Rotary Club Women's Association.

She died on January 7, 1981 in Providence, Rhode Island at the age of 80.

JOSLIN, ROBERTA, born in Providence, the daughter of the late Max Grant and Miriam (Gardner) Grant Sapinsley.

She was a former trustee of Bradley Hospital, Miriam Hospital and Family Service. She was a past president of the Miriam Hospital Women's Association, the Providence Volunteer Bureau and the Lincoln School Foundation.

She returned to Pembroke College in the late 1960's where her flair for creative art was encouraged and developed. After her 1970 graduation she opened a studio in her home and joined ANYART, the nonprofit contemporary arts organization then in Warren. Her work was exhibited in the Lenore Gray Gallery, Providence Art Club, and Ladies of the Faculty art shows at Brown in Providence as well as the Village Gallery, Barrington, the Bristol Art Museum, and Hera, the Women's Cooperative Art Gallery, Wakefield.

Died May 6, 1981 at the Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston at the age of 60. Mrs. Joslin, sculptress and artist, made her home in Bristol, Rhode Island.

Necrology

KASPER, SAMUEL L., born in Russia, the son of the late Jacob and Ida (Kadosovitz) Kasper. He lived in Providence for than 70 years. He was a self-employed public accountant for more than 50 years until retiring last year.

He was a member of Temple Emanu-El and its men's club, Rhodees Masonic Lodge, the Palestine Temple of Shriners, and was a 32nd Degree Mason. He was a member of the Rhode Island Association and the National Association of Public Accountants, the S.C.O.R.E. and the A.C.E. programs of the Small Business Administration; the Providence Chapter of Kiwanis and the Olneyville Hebrew Club. He was past president of the New England Association of Multiple Sclerosis. Died in Providence, Rhode Island, May 3, 1981.

HALPERT, MURRY M., born in Central Falls, he was a son of the late Samuel and Jeenie (Sugerman) Halpert, and lived in Providence for more than 50 years before moving to East Providence three years ago. He was a retired vice president of Insurance Underwriters, Inc., Angell Street, Providence.

Mr. Halpert was a past president of Temple Beth-El and an honorary life member of the Board of Trustees of the Temple; a member of the Executive Board of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island; managing director and a member of the board and finance committee of Shalom Housing, Inc., of Warwick; a past President of the Jewish Community Center, Providence and a past member of the Board of the Jewish Family and Children's Service. He was affiliated with the United Fund in various capacities for many years.

Died in Providence, Rhode Island on September 15, 1981, at the age of 69.

Necrology

ROSENTHAL, DR. ELLIS A., born in Troy, New York, he was the son of the late Jacob C. and Jennie (Dorenbaum) Rosenthal. He had lived in Cranston since 1933. An Osteopathic physician in Cranston for 47 years, he retired a year ago. He was president of the Osteopathic Society.

Dr. Rosenthal was a member of Temple Beth Torah and its men's club, Hope Lodge of B'nai B'rith and a charter member of the Cranston Rotary Club. In 1972 he was recipient of the City of Cranston Brotherhood Award. He was also former team physician for the Cranston High School Football team and a member of the Providence Water Color Club.

Died on Harbour Island, Narragansett, November 17, 1980 at the age of 74.

SILVERSTEIN, MARTIN, born in Providence, a son of the late Max and Sadie (Bernstein) Silverstein. He was Chairman of the Board of Max Silverstein & Son, distributors of newspapers and magazines. He was graduated from Brown University in 1928 and from Harvard Law School. He was a member of the Rhode Island Bar Association and practiced law until the death of his father in 1939, when he became president of the business.

Mr. Silverstein served as president for four years and was on the Board of Directors of the Atlantic Coast Independent Distributors Association. He was chairman of the Legal committee of the Council for the Periodical Distributors Association, a member of the Board of Directors of Miriam Hospital and of the Jewish Home for the Aged. He was a member of Temple Beth El, the Ledgemont

Necrology

Country Club, Seekonk, the Palm Beach Country Club of Palm Beach, Florida and Roosevelt Lodge, F & AM.

Died at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, on November 3, 1981.

WEINER, BENJAMIN, born in Providence, was a son of the late Harrie and Annie (Bachman) Weiner, and was a lifelong city resident. He was associated with the former Howe, Prout & Eckmund Architects of Providence for 20 years before being appointed the city architect of Providence in 1968 by former Mayor Joseph A. Doorley and held that position until he retired in 1975.

He was a graduate of the University of Rhode Island; a member of Temple Beth-El; past master of Roosevelt Lodge 42 A.F. & A.M.; a member of the Board of Directors of the Hebrew Free Loan Association and was a member of the Rhode Island Jewish Federation.

Died in Providence, Rhode Island July 6, 1981 at the age of 76.

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Errata, November 1980

Pp. 91 to 107, title should read Hebrew Free Loan Association

LIFE MEMBERS OF THE RHODE ISLAND
JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Mr. and Mrs. Newton Cohen
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Dwares
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Engle
Arnold T. Galkin
Mrs. Samuel Nathans
Dr. and Mrs. Marvin Pitterman
Mr. and Mrs. William Robin
Mr. and Mrs. Benton Rosen
Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Rosen
Mrs. Bernard Segal
Mr. and Mrs. Erwin Strasmich

For information on becoming a Life Member, write the Association
at 130 Sessions Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02906.



Rabbi Abraham Gabrilowitz, Russia, c. 1900