



**RHODE ISLAND
JEWISH HISTORICAL NOTES**

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MAX B. GOMBERG, M.D., 1875-1934

Poet and editor of *The Organ*. Founder and first
president of the JACOBI MEDICAL CLUB.

RHODE ISLAND
JEWISH HISTORICAL
NOTES

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 3

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RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Headquarters at The Rhode Island Historical Society

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RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
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JEWES IN MEDICINE IN RHODE ISLAND

by SEEBERT J. GOLDOWSKY, M.D.

Read in part at the Annual Meeting of the Association, April 25, 1957

MR. PRESIDENT, MEMBERS and GUESTS:

I should like to take this opportunity to pay my personal respects to Mr. Adelman. I think it's only fair to acknowledge that without his firm persuasion this investigation would most probably not have been undertaken. I should like further to express my appreciation for his assistance in making available a considerable amount of source material and in providing technical advice, without which my problems would undoubtedly have been far more burdensome.

In presenting the subject tonight it will be necessary, because of the limitations of time, to omit much of the background and biographical material which has been prepared.

* * *

ALTHOUGH no Jew is known to have practiced medicine in Rhode Island before 1875, Jewish physicians had appeared in the Western Hemisphere in very early times. A Jewish physician named Juan Alvarez, a Marrano, was burned at the stake in Lima, Peru in 1580. Another, Alvaro Nunez, suffered a similar fate at La Plata in 1582. One Francisco Maldonado de Silva, also a Marrano physician of Lima, Peru, denounced by a member of his own family for professing Judaism, was imprisoned for thirteen years and was finally burned at the stake on January 23, 1639.

The first in present day America of whom I have found mention was Jacob Lumbrozo. He was born in Lisbon of Portuguese-Jewish parentage. After a sojourn in Holland, he emigrated to Maryland in 1656. He began at once the practice of medicine, being not only one of the first Jews to settle in that locality, but also the first physician to practice there. In 1658 he had a brush with the law over a charge of blasphemy, but through a stroke of good fortune he was released in a general amnesty. He was allowed in time to engage in planting and in commerce, and gained some prominence in these pursuits. He was known to have done business with London and to have been commissioned as an Indian trader. He disappeared from the scene sometime subsequent to 1665.

As time went on Jewish physicians located in the various colonies in increasing numbers. A Dr. Nunez (Samuel Nunez Ribiero) who had been court physician at Lisbon began practice in Savannah, Georgia in 1773. About this time a Dr. Siccary, a Portuguese Jew, appeared in Virginia. He is credited by Thacher¹ with having introduced the tomato in the colonies. Dr. Isaac Woolin arrived in New York in 1740 and advertised that he had served in "his Imperial Majesties' Army as chirurgeon four years."² There were Jewish doctors in New York from this time forward.

In the year 1747 a Dr. Isaac Cohen announced his arrival in Lancaster in Pennsylvania as follows: "Dr. Isaac Cohen from Hamburg in Germany, who studied seven years in the City of Copenhagen, informs the public that he has lately arrived in Lancaster, where he intends to practice physic and the art of healing, at the house of John Hatz, inn-keeper . . . N.B. Poor persons cured gratis if they can show a certificate from a clergyman that they are really poor. He expects letters addressed to him to be postpaid and those who live at a distance and desire his aid will please send a horse for him."³

A Dr. Nathan Levy practiced in Charleston, South Carolina as early as 1772. An interesting character of this period was Dr. Isaac Levy of Cahokia on the Mississippi. He had lived so long among the French that he had become one of them and took a French wife. In addition to the practice of medicine he was a merchant, Indian trader, banker, and a purveyor to the Virginia troops in the Illinois country. He was known to have been active during the period 1779-1786. Col. Solomon Bush of Continental Army fame, a native of Philadelphia, is known to have practiced medicine in London for some years after the war, but there is no record of his having done so in Philadelphia. Dr. David de Isaac Cohen Nassy was the first Jewish physician to practice in Philadelphia arriving in 1792. A trained and respected man of science, he was elected to the American Philosophical Society shortly after his arrival. He took a very active part in the catastrophic yellow fever epidemic of 1793. His *Medical Observations on the Yellow Fever* (Philadelphia 1793) was the first Jewish medical publication in America. Ahead of his time, he was opposed to the harsh treatment of that disease by bleeding and purging with calomel and jalap as recommended by Dr. Benjamin Rush. In 1825 two Jewish physicians, Isaac Hays and Manuel Phillips, were known to be practicing in Philadelphia.

It is of interest that a number of these early practitioners were educated in this country. There were two methods of obtaining a medical

education, through apprenticeship, or by formal education. It was not uncommon to combine the two methods. A letter quoted by Marcus⁴ in "Early American Jewry" throws a little oblique illumination on the subject. Aaron Hart of Three Rivers in Canada made inquiries of Eleazar Levy in New York regarding the education of his son for a career in medicine. The latter wrote (on June 4, 1794): "I am favor'd with yours of 29th April regarding your son Benj. If you intend him for a doctor, he should have the Latin language in some degree of perfection. Therefore not a day should be lost to put him to a Latin school and that can be done under your own eye at Montreal or Quebec Seminary, tho' I believe his cousin, Barnard Judah, is to be a doctor without Latin. He is with Doctor Bard [a prominent New York physician and first professor of the theory and practice of physic at Columbia and later at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, and also family physician for George Washington] where he is fully employ'd in carry'g out medecines, and he has an uncle who, if you will believe what some of his good family say, he was eminent in his proffession in England. Inclosed is one of his advertisem'ts. All over this continent a practitioner, of what is called a D'r, is included an apothecary, a surgeon, and physician. This can be learn'd in N. York, Philadelphia, etc., and can be learned equally as well in Quebec or Montreal where there are equal as good practitioners as here. You will be at less expense, and he be under the superintendence of his parents and family, and that he stands much in need of" Although Benjamin did not pursue the study of medicine, Aaron Hart's wish for a doctor in the family was fulfilled when his daughter Catherine married Cousin Barnard (Bernard Samuel Judah) in 1897. I have been unable to find any reference to the later professional career of Dr. Judah, although he resided in New York as late as 1827. In that year he traveled to Indiana to visit his son Samuel, a prominent attorney in that state.⁵

The quality of the education of some of the earlier Jewish physicians is rather surprising. Excluding those who claimed to have acquired training in the Continental universities, the following are of interest. Dr. Isaac Abrahams, a noted New York physician of the latter part of the 18th century, graduated from Columbia with an A.B. in 1774. Although the nature of his medical training could not be ascertained, it is known that he was the first Jewish graduate of Columbia and certainly one of the earliest of any American college.⁶

Dr. Moses Sheftall of Savannah, Georgia, son of the Revolutionary patriot Mordicai Sheftall, was born in that city in 1769. A student of

the eminent Dr. Benjamin Rush in Philadelphia during the academic years 1790-91 and 1791-92, he was the first Jew to receive a formal medical education in America. Although Dr. Rush was at that time Professor of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, there is no record of Sheftall's ever having matriculated there. I have, in fact, been unable to verify that he possessed the degree of Doctor of Medicine. He served as a member of the Georgia legislature and was an incorporator of the Georgia Medical Society in 1804.

Dr. Jacob de la Motta, born in Savannah, Georgia in 1789, graduated from the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania prior to 1810. Son of a Revolutionary officer, Capt. Emanuel de la Motta, he served as an army surgeon in the War of 1812, became secretary of the South Carolina Medical Society in 1824, and a corresponding member of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Paris in 1836.

Dr. Jonas Horwitz, a medical graduate at the University of Pennsylvania in 1815, served as a surgeon to the Maryland Militia in the Mexican War. He gained a considerable reputation as a linguist and orientalist, and resided in Baltimore until his death in 1852.

Dr. Isaac Hays, born in 1796, received an A.B. from the University of Pennsylvania in 1816 and an M.D. in 1820. A distinguished member of his profession in Philadelphia, he was one of the earliest practitioners to specialize in diseases of the eye. He was a founder of the Franklin Institute and of the American Medical Association.

Dr. Daniel Peixotto of New York was born in Holland in 1800. After receiving his early education in Curaçao, he graduated with an A.B. from Columbia at the age of 16, and received his M.D. from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York in 1819. He received an A.M. from Columbia in 1823. He practiced in New York until his death in 1843. For several years he was professor of the theory and practice of medicine at Willoughby University on Lake Erie. This later became the Medical Department of Ohio State University. He served as president of the New York County Medical Society.

Dr. Joshua Cohen, born in Richmond, Virginia in 1801, moved to Baltimore in 1808. He received his M.D. from the University of Maryland in 1823 and later studied in the office of Dr. Nathaniel Potter. A pioneer specialist in diseases of the ear, he served as both treasurer and president of the Medical and Surgical Faculty of the University of Maryland. He also became professor of minerology at his Alma Mater. He died in 1870.

Dr. David de Leon, born in South Carolina in 1813, received his

medical education at the University of Pennsylvania where he graduated in 1836. Two years after graduation he entered military service and served as assistant surgeon in the Mexican War. On two occasions he led cavalry charges after the commanding officer had been wounded. He later organized the Medical Department of the Confederate forces and became the first Surgeon General of the Confederacy.

Dr. Phillip De Young, born in 1809 in New Hanover, Pennsylvania, received his M.D., with highest honors, from the University of Pennsylvania in 1838. He attained distinction in his profession before his death in 1890.

Dr. Joel Hart of New York, although not a graduate of an American school, is of interest. Born in Philadelphia in 1784, he studied medicine at the Royal College of Surgery in London where he graduated prior to 1806. He was an incorporator and trustee of the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons and a founder of the medical society of the County of New York. He was appointed by President Madison as United States consul to Leith, Scotland from 1807 to 1832. He died in 1842.

Manly Emanuel, a native of England, born in the year 1795, was a graduate of St. George's Hospital in London. He began practice in Philadelphia about 1816. He served as president of the Pennsylvania Medical Society for 16 years. He passed from the scene in 1880. The first graduate of a Canadian medical school was Philip Hart of Montreal, who received his M.D. at McGill in 1835.

The above roster, although certainly not complete, is a fairly representative list of the more distinguished of the American Jewish physicians of the period. These men, well-educated as they were, contributed freely to the medical literature, participated in commercial and public affairs and were a credit to the profession and to their people.

The participation of Jewish physicians as medical officers in the various wars is an interesting story. The following brief summary will suffice. Dr. Moses Bloomfield served as a surgeon with the Revolutionary armies. Drs. Jacob de la Motta, Abraham de Leon, Manuel Phillips and Moses Sheftall participated in the War of 1812. Isaac M. Lyons and Moses Albert Levy were surgeons-general in the forces of General Green and General Sam Houston respectively in the Texas-Mexican War. Drs. David de Leon, Jonas Horwitz, and Israel Moses served in the Mexican War. In the Civil War the participants are too numerous to mention. A check of the writings of Kagan and Simon Wolf indicates that there were some forty Jewish physicians serving as military surgeons

with the various forces. Dr. David de Leon, previously mentioned, became Surgeon-General of the Confederate Forces and his assistant was Dr. I. Baruch. Dr. Morris J. Asch served as Surgeon on the staff of Major General Phil Sheridan. Dr. Israel Moses, a veteran of the Mexican War, as previously noted, and later to be an attending surgeon at the new Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, was appointed surgeon of the United States Volunteers and was placed in charge of camp hospitals in the Army of the Potomac.

Worthy of mention, not only in his own right, but also because he was the father of Bernard Baruch, was Dr. Simon Baruch. Born in Prussia in 1840, he studied at the Medical College of South Carolina and at Virginia Medical College, from which he received his degree in 1862. He volunteered as an assistant surgeon with South Carolina troops, eventually attaining the rank of surgeon. Under Lee with the Army of Northern Virginia, he was captured twice, at South Mountain and at Gettysburg. In the latter phases of the conflict, he was in command of a general hospital at Thomasville, North Carolina. After the War he became prominent in South Carolina medicine, serving as president of the state medical society and as chairman of the state board of health. Later in the century he transferred his activities to New York City; here he became an eminent and influential member of the profession. Among his numerous contributions to the medical literature the most important was his pioneer work in the clinical diagnosis of appendicitis.

Dr. Marx E. Cohen, age 21, served as a captain of South Carolina infantry and was killed in action under heroic circumstances. The only New Englander recorded, however, was Dr. Nathan Meyer of Connecticut, who served as surgeon in the Fourth Connecticut Regiment.

One other subject, the matter of Jewish sponsored hospitals, will be touched upon before going on to our main theme. The first Jewish hospital in the United States was the Mount Sinai Hospital of New York. It was incorporated in 1852 as Jews' Hospital and received its first patient in 1855. The only Jew on the original attending staff was Israel Moses, mentioned above. An expert surgeon, well educated and well trained for his time, he was a graduate of Columbia College, A.B., 1841. He received his M.A. from the same school in 1844 and his M.D. from the College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1845. He served an internship at the New York Hospital. Dr. Mark Blumenthal was appointed "attending and resident Physician." The hospital adopted its more familiar name in 1856. In rapid succession Jewish hospitals ap-

peared in New Orleans (Touro Infirmary), Cincinnati, Baltimore, Chicago and Philadelphia.

The matters discussed above have been well documented in excellent monographs. Some of the publications, however, are not readily accessible. It has been deemed worthwhile to review this material because of its inherent interest, and also to place in better perspective the facts which we shall record.

* * *

The reasons for the late advent of Jewish professional men to New England is not a matter which we need explore. It would seem to be related in part, however, to the small size of the Jewish communities in the area. In the Golden Age of Newport the Jewish population of that town was probably less than two hundred.⁷ I have found no mention of any Jewish physician practicing in New England before the Civil War. Dr. Morris Kinstler,⁸ a graduate of the University of Warsaw, probably the first Jewish physician to practice in Boston, maintained an office there in 1867.

It was not until eight years after that date that Dr. Bernard Cohen, pioneer Jewish physician of Providence, opened his office. According to his death certificate he was born in Poland in 1833 of "German parentage." A medical graduate of the University of Warsaw in 1859, he was listed as practicing "regular," i.e. allopathic medicine. He resided in Providence from 1875 to 1891, practicing variously at 303, 347, and 402 North Main Street. In *The Providence Journal* for Thursday, January 15, 1891 appeared the following item: "*Sudden Death.* Dr. B. Cohen, a practising Jewish physician, died suddenly at his home, on Star Street, Tuesday night, from the effects of an apoplectic stroke. He was out attending a patient about 9 o'clock in the evening when stricken, and was taken to his home, where he expired shortly after." His death is recorded as of January 14, 1891. He was buried in the old Moshassuck Cemetery in Lonsdale, Rhode Island, where his grave can still be seen.

In the Providence directory for 1890, a Mrs. Rosalie Friedman of 363 North Main Street was listed as a physician. I suspect she was a midwife. In 1892 she was listed at 27 Mill Street as both physician and upholsterer, but no listing appeared in 1893. According to her death certificate, she was born in 1857, place not stated, and died on May 10, 1920 at 305 North Main Street as a result of accidental burning. No further information on Mrs. Friedman is at hand.

Dr. Saul Lewanda was a practitioner in Providence from 1891 to 1917. It would appear from information available in various medical directories, that he was not a graduate of a medical school. His listing in the *American Medical Association Directory for 1912* contained the following notation: "Licensed by virtue of a certain number of years of practice. In practice before passage of present law. Information received does not show graduation." Examination and licensing of physicians by the State of Rhode Island was initiated in 1895. According to naturalization records, he came to the United States from Russia in 1882 and received his citizenship in 1893. In this listing his name was spelled Lewando. His first office was at 398 North Main Street, following which he practiced at various locations in the North End of Providence.⁹ His name appeared initially as Dr. Samuel Lewanda, but was changed to Saul some time about 1894. For a brief period in 1905, he appears to have maintained an office in Warren. Between 1913 and 1915, during which period he was located at 111 State Street and later at 119 State Street, he was also listed as a druggist at 182 Charles Street. His wife, Feba Lewanda, is listed in 1906 and 1907 as a "Doctress." I am uninformed as to the exact significance of the term, although it is defined in *The Oxford Universal Dictionary* simply as a "female doctor." At any rate she is known to have functioned as a midwife. As recently as 1902 she had been conducting a millinery business at 256 Charles Street. She was among the early proponents of a Jewish hospital. Dr. Lewanda himself, having had no formal training in medicine, was one of a small group of practitioners from Europe who had acquired in various and sundry ways sufficient knowledge to get by. He removed to Pittsburgh in 1917, after which his activities are not a matter of record locally.

Dr. Leo Lauer, a graduate of the University of Vienna in 1893, had an office at 403 Pine Street in 1895. During the years 1901 through 1904 he is known to have practiced at 65½ John Street and 242 North Main Street. Before the close of 1905 he had removed to Austria. No further information is available, but he is presumed to have been Jewish.

A family physician still remembered by many was Dr. Aaron Markoff. Born in Russia in 1856, he received his medical education at the University of Tomsk in Siberia from which he graduated in 1880. He came to America some time in 1889 and by 1896 had established a practice at 786 Potters Avenue. He became a naturalized citizen in 1898. Some time prior to 1904 he had relocated at 618 North Main Street and practiced there until his retirement in 1921. He died at

Miami, Florida on April 8, 1921 at the age of sixty-five.

Dr. Max B. (for Ben Zev Issumar) Gomberg was a colorful personality of this period. He was born in Elisavetgrad, Russia on April 2, 1875. He came to America with his family at the age of eight years, and made his home in Providence. He attended the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine from which he graduated in 1895. Shortly after graduation he opened an office at 214 Benefit Street. Except for a brief sojourn at 32 Hammond Street, he practiced at various addresses on Benefit Street and elsewhere in the North End.¹⁰ Finally about 1925 he moved to 94 Homer Street where he resided until his death, although he continued to maintain a separate office. He was a member of the Rhode Island Medical Society, to which he was elected in 1896, the Providence Medical Association, the James Tyson Medical Society and a founder of the Jacobi Medical Club. At one time he was a visiting physician at the old Providence Dispensary and was on the original staff of Miriam Hospital, where he served as visiting physician in the Department of Medicine. At the age of thirty-seven he married Bertha Caroline Wayss, eighteen, the daughter of Christian and Bertha Wayss. The ceremony was performed by the Rev. Myron E. Genter of Methodist-Episcopal Church. He adhered in later years, it is said, to Unitarian principles, but reverted to the Orthodox Jewish faith before he died. Dr. Gomberg contributed at least one paper to the medical literature. On September 3, 1903 he read before the Newport Meeting of the Rhode Island Medical Society a paper titled, "An Exclusive Milk Diet in the Treatment of Disease." This appeared subsequently in the *Providence Medical Journal*.¹¹ A skillful chess player and reputed to be of championship calibre at the local level, he was a member of the Providence Chess Club and of the Rhode Island Chess Players Association. Among his other activities he was an early and active participant in Boy Scout affairs and was also a pioneer and ardent Zionist. On January 15, 1897 an interesting letter with a strangely modern theme appeared in *The Organ*,¹² a biweekly publication of the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David:

214 BENEFIT STREET
PROVIDENCE, R. I.
January 7, 1897

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ORGAN

DEAR SIR: — The Talmud says, "Man is born with his hands clenched; he dies with his hands wide open. Entering life he desires

to grasp everything; leaving the world, all that he possessed has passed away.”

It is strange indeed that men endowed with reason should pursue, with the utmost diligence, wealth, temporal power, or social preferences, and should endeavor to acquire that form of happiness which one turn of fortune's wheel might destroy forever. Stranger still it is that men should neglect the cultivation of mind and morals upon which their usefulness and happiness chiefly depend.

The principles of Judaism are not hereditary. They must be acquired to be appreciated. Our religion, moreover, is not a mirage of sparkling streams in the parched desert, beautiful to the eye, inviting to the thirsty soul, but inaccessible. It is rather a well, deep, pure and inexhaustible, out of which, whoever cares, may draw the element to quench his thirst for truth and inspiration.

So many diverse religious influences are nowadays brought to bear upon the minds and hearts of the growing generation, that, in self-defense and justification, the principles of Judaism should be inculcated during the ages of childhood and early youth, before ambition, competition and the stern realities of life incline the untrained mind exclusively toward temporal affairs and personal interests. True experience and observation teach that even the best of men acquire a very chaotic notion of moral and religious duties, where they are obliged to choose in the confusion and hurry of civil, political and religious strife. A sound foundation of religious faith is absolutely essential to the future welfare and success of every boy and girl.

These thoughts suggested themselves to my mind one Sunday as I sat in Rabbi Blaustein's class-room and observed the interest the teacher and scholar alike manifested in the history and laws of Israel.

I trust that the parents appreciate the privileges, which are accorded the children, of discussing the ennobling sentiments of the Bible and Talmud under the tuition of so eminent a scholar of Hebrew literature and talmudic law.

Yours faithfully,
M. B. GOMBERG, M.D.

Dr. Gomberg subsequently on November 12, 1897 became editor of that publication, and remained so until it was discontinued on July 8, 1898. It appears to have been a project of Rabbi David Blaustein, who left shortly thereafter to undertake new responsibilities in New York City. Dr. Gomberg was a man of learning and culture and his gentle and graceful hand can be discerned in its pages. He was a dabbler in poetry and at least three of his poems were published locally, probably privately, by Ye Franklin Printery. The titles of these poems were "Progress—A Wail of Pessimism," "The Lady of the Nightingale—A Song of Optimism," and "A Fool's Advice." A copy of the last named, copyrighted in September, 1911, can be found in the Harris Collection

of the John Hay Library at Brown University.¹³ A number of his poems appeared in *The Organ*, some under the pseudonym, Ben Zev Issumar, which was his Hebrew name. It is fitting to give a brief sample of his poetic style:

FAME

All vain ambitions end in sighs
When too forgetful of the chime
Tolling the fleeting hour of Time,
Man in his pride and passion dies.
Each throb of life is but the knell
That bids to life its last farewell.
The blushing flower hides from sight
Its sting the treacherous prickly thorn;
And follows fast the glow of morn
Dark, gloomy shadows of the night.
The pomp of fame unmixed with woe
Seek not, O mortal, here below!

BEN-ZEV-ISSUMAR¹⁴

Dr. Gomberg passed away on December 12, 1934 at Rhode Island Hospital, a victim of coronary occlusion and bronchopneumonia. He was buried from the Sugarman Funeral Home and his body lies in Swan Point Cemetery. His widow and two sons still survive.

Dr. Mark H. Plainfield, the son of Samuel and Rebecca (Flaxman) Yahrashvsky, was born in Russia on August 7, 1874. He was brought to this country at an early age. The following interesting item appears in the December, 1955 issue of the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*:¹⁵

"The late Dr. Mark H. Plainfield changed his name from Yahrashvsky because, as a young man, in the heat of mid-summer, he went from one drug store to another in search of employment from early morning until late afternoon, before he met with success. His experience convinced him that his name was a commercial liability. On leaving the store, he looked up at the street sign which read 'Plainfield,' which he there and then adopted for his name."

Dr. Plainfield attended Tufts College Medical School for three years, but there is no record of graduation. He obtained his Rhode Island license by examination in 1900. His first office was on Randall Street, but later he moved to Prairie Avenue where he practiced until his retirement in 1925. He is known to have been an avid collector of



RETENTION
OF
POISONS ELABORATED
IN THE
SYSTEM.

READ BY
MAX B. GOMBERG
BEFORE THE
James Tyson Medical Society,
Philadelphia.
JANUARY 16, 1895.



This interesting and still valid contribution to medical literature was probably the first medical paper published by a Rhode Island Jewish physician.

antiques. He died at Miriam Hospital on August 30, 1953 of cerebral thrombosis and arteriosclerotic heart disease. Dr. Plainfield never married.

Dr. Hyman Chester, remembered as a family doctor by many still living, was born in Russia in 1873, the son of Eli M. and Rose Chester. He attended the Maryland Medical College in Baltimore, graduating in 1900 and received his medical license in 1901. In 1906 he was listed as a member of the Providence Medical Association, although at the time of his death he appears not to have been a member of the American Medical Association. He was medical examiner for the Independent Order Brith Abraham, Independent Order Sons of Jacob and the Young Men's Hebrew Association. His first recorded office was at 515 North Main Street, but later he practiced at 20 and 27 Benefit Street. He died on April 5, 1921, aged forty-eight.

Dr. Abraham Pincus Fishman, son of Pincus and Goldie Fishman, was born in Russia in 1881 or 1882. He attended Jefferson Medical College, graduating in 1904 and was licensed to practice in Rhode Island in the same year. Locating first at 22 Douglas Avenue, he later practiced at various addresses in the North End, the last being 145 Camp Street. Dr. Fishman was on the staff of Miriam Hospital and a member of the Providence Medical Association and of the Rhode Island Medical Society to which he was elected in 1907. He died at Miriam Hospital on June 24, 1934 of septicemia resulting from a puncture wound of the hand sustained while treating a patient with an abscess.

Dr. Harry Broadman, son of Henry and Rose Broadman, was born in Kiev, Russia in 1883. Attending Temple University, he graduated from Jefferson Medical College in 1910, and was licensed to practice medicine in Rhode Island the same year. Starting in general practice, he eventually limited his activities to gynecology and obstetrics. A member of the original staff of Miriam Hospital, he eventually attained the rank of visiting surgeon in gynecology and obstetrics. He was a member of the Providence Medical Association, the Rhode Island Medical Society, to which he was elected in 1916, the American Medical Association, and the New England Obstetrical and Gynecological Society. In his latter years he resided at 82 Eaton Street, but his office was located at 203 Thayer Street. He died on March 5, 1945 of arteriosclerotic heart disease in his sixty-second year.

Although it is not our purpose to dwell upon those who are still living or who have strayed from these plantations, a number of practitioners

arriving during the immediately ensuing years will be mentioned, some but briefly, in order to preserve the continuity of the story and for the sake of completeness. Dr. Max Bakst, born in 1886, graduated from Long Island College Hospital in 1911 and was licensed to practice here in the same year. His office was located at 171 Broad Street, while his residence was at 171 Dudley Street. By 1914 he was no longer in Providence, having removed to Brooklyn, New York.

Dr. Harold Libby, our cultured and kindly colleague, born in 1885, was graduated from the Harvard Medical School in 1910. He also was licensed in Rhode Island in 1911. His office was first located at 630 Broad Street, and at a later date at 177 Prairie Avenue. Dr. Libby now limits his practice to obstetrics and gynecology. He is on the staffs of Miriam, Providence Lying-In and Rhode Island hospitals, and is a member of the Providence Medical Association, Rhode Island Medical Society, American Medical Association and the New England Obstetrical and Gynecological Society.

Dr. Anna Topaz, daughter of Harris and Bertha Topaz, was born in Kevne, Russia on March 23, 1872. After attending preparatory school in Kevne, she studied medicine at the University of Warsaw from which she graduated in 1894. After practicing medicine in her home town for a while, she came to America in 1900. Finding that her medical diploma was not acceptable to the Massachusetts State Board of Health, she entered Tufts College Medical School from which she graduated in 1903. After practicing in Boston for a time she went abroad in the year 1908 to study obstetrics and pediatrics at the Medical School of the University of Paris. She resumed her practice in Boston, but in 1912 removed to Providence. She was licensed in Rhode Island the same year and was elected to the Providence Medical Association in 1916. Her practice in Providence was largely devoted to obstetrics and gynecology. She was a member of the original staff of Miriam Hospital. For a number of years, particularly during the difficult period of World War II, she assumed the burdensome responsibility of the routine conduct of the ward obstetrical service. Although sometimes presenting a gruff exterior, Dr. Topaz was known to her patients and colleagues as a warm and sympathetic person. On the morning of June 19, 1945, in her seventy-fourth year, while on her way from her home to attend her daily duties at Miriam Hospital, she was involved in a streetcar accident, dying almost instantaneously of her injuries. Dr. Topaz never married.

Dr. Hattie Greenblatt (Wolfe) was born in Providence on June 15,

1892, the daughter of Berman and Lena Shagrin Greenblatt. After attending the public schools of Providence, she studied medicine at Tufts College Medical School where she was graduated in 1912. Upon completion of her internship in Boston, she practiced at 155 Benefit Street. Following her marriage to Samuel Wolfe she felt obliged to forego her medical career. She was not listed among the active members of the profession subsequent to 1921. She devoted the ensuing years to raising an excellent family. Following the death of Mr. Wolfe in 1943, she returned to her earlier vocation of medicine. She is presently on the staff of the Rhode Island State Hospital for Mental Diseases at Howard, Rhode Island.

Dr. Samuel Starr, son of David and Rebecca Stein Starr, was born in Boston, Massachusetts, December 31, 1884, receiving his preliminary education in the schools of that city. He studied at Harvard College where he received his B.S. Degree in 1907. He graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1910 and was licensed to practice in Rhode Island in 1912. He established his office at 522 Broad Street after interning at St. Joseph's Hospital in Providence. Dr. Starr eventually moved to 206 Waterman Street, where for many years he lived and had his office. In later years he limited his practice largely to psychiatry. He was a member of the Providence Medical Association and of the original staff of Miriam Hospital, where he eventually attained the rank of visiting psychiatrist. Dr. Starr died on New Year's Day in 1950 after a long illness. His widow survives.

Dr. Louis James Pobirs was one of that small number of practitioners who moved to greener pastures after a brief sojourn in Providence. Born in 1883, he graduated from Tufts College Medical School in 1910. He was licensed to practice in Rhode Island the same year. After interning at St. Joseph's Hospital in Providence, he opened an office at 730 Broad Street, later moving to 167 Prairie Avenue. He became a member of the Rhode Island Medical Society in 1912, but resigned in 1916, and resettled in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Still a resident of that community he has specialized in obstetrics and gynecology.

Dr. Simon Geilech Lenzner, born in 1889, graduated from the University of Maryland School of Medicine and College of Physicians and Surgeons in 1912. Following his internship, he opened an office at 58 Cranston Street, later moving to 578 Broad Street, where he lived and practiced for many years. He was licensed in Rhode Island in 1914. His practice was interrupted by the first World War in which he served with the American Expeditionary Forces in France. Dr. Lenz-

ner, still much a part of the local scene and long since limiting his practice to general surgery, was a member of the original staff of Miriam Hospital. An expert tennis player in his prime, he is still a golfer to be reckoned with.

In the annual report of Rhode Island Hospital for 1916 appeared the following interesting notation:

"In October 1916, since the end of the fiscal year a new department was created to be known as the Department of the X-ray. Dr. Isaac Gerber has been appointed as director of this department. . . . An X-ray Department, as separate from the Pathological Department, was established in consequence of the increasing importance of the X-ray in diagnosis and in therapeutics, and also because of the high degree of specialization required to get the full benefit of this agent. The development of X-ray methods has been so rapid that the best equipment of ten years ago is entirely antiquated today. A new and up-to-date equipment will be installed."

Dr. Isaac Gerber, son of Jacob and Ida Gerber, was born in Boston, Massachusetts on May 11, 1885. After attending the elementary schools and English High School in that city, he studied at Harvard College from which he was graduated in 1907. He received his medical degree *cum laude* at Harvard University Medical School in 1910. After interning at the Boston City Hospital for a year, he did postgraduate work at the University of Tuebingen, at Stuttgart and later at Berlin and Vienna. Dr. Gerber settled in Providence in 1914 and was licensed to practice here the same year. He was the first practitioner in Rhode Island to limit his practice to roentgenology.

He conducted the affairs of the X-ray Department until 1920 when he was elevated to the position of Consultant in the Department of the X ray. The annual report for that year contained the following statement:

"A reorganization of the X-ray Department and the installation of a new apparatus has been made necessary by the continued development of the applications of the X-Ray both to medicine and surgery. Originally the X-Ray work was under the direction of the pathologist and was regarded as a natural adjunct to the laboratory. It subsequently developed into a science by itself quite distinct from pathology both in purpose and technique. In 1916 the hospital was fortunate in securing the services of Dr. Isaac Gerber, who has rendered most valuable service in selecting and installing new apparatus, in directing the work of the department, and in personally diagnosing cases sent in from other departments of the hospital. Of late, however, the demands upon the department have so changed in character and increased in amount that they have become greater than a visiting man

can cope with, and indeed require practically the full time of a resident medical man specially trained as a Roentgenologist. Dr. James F. Boyd has been appointed to this position. . . . It would be very desirable to have a sufficient supply of radium in our institution to give proper treatment to the various forms of malignancy, especially in conjunction with X-Ray therapy. . . . That some cases were so treated is due to the kindness of the men in the Memorial Hospital in New York, the Huntington Hospital in Boston, and of Dr. Gerber of our own staff."

In the latter connection it is significant that he brought the first radium to Rhode Island for clinical use on patients.

Dr. Gerber was the first Jewish physician on the staff of Rhode Island Hospital.¹⁶ He developed a large private practice and was highly respected by his colleagues for his keen diagnostic acumen and his sound judgment as a consultant. His numerous contributions to the medical literature had earned for him an international reputation. He was best known locally for his work in connection with the treatment by X ray of acute septic infections.

Afflicted in his early forties by a spinal cord disease which resulted in a progressive paralysis of his legs, he was forced at first to use a cane, then crutches, and finally a wheelchair. From this point on "Isaac Gerber's struggle against infirmity [so stated a colleague]¹⁷ was on an epic scale. With the devoted support of his wife, Rose Albert Gerber, [whom he married on November 30, 1911] a scholar in her own right and a woman of charm and courage, he continued all his activities. For many years the short, sturdy man in the wheelchair remained a familiar sight at conferences and at nearly all regional meetings. To watch him at work, upright on his helpless legs, holding on to the fluoroscope with one hand and competently operating a spot film device with the other was an experience not easily forgotten."

The severe blow he suffered in 1943 upon the untimely death of his son at the age of twenty-five did not result immediately in any curtailment of his activities. Not only his indomitable courage, but his keen mind, pithy comments and intellectual stimulation were a constant source of inspiration to those who knew and worked with him. After an X-ray conference characterized by an unusual lack of difference of opinion, he exclaimed, "There is altogether too much agreement in this office today!"¹⁷

Besides being a consultant on the staff of every hospital in Rhode Island, he was a member of the Providence Medical Association, the Rhode Island Medical Society (of which he was vice-president in



ISAAC GERBER, M.D., 1885-1952

1947-48) and the American Medical Association. He was a diplomate of the American Board of Radiology and a Fellow of the American College of Physicians (a unique honor for a radiologist) and of the American College of Radiology. A past president (1932-33) of the New England Roentgen Ray Society, he was a member of the American Roentgen Ray Society, the American Radium Society and the Radiological Society of North America. Swedish and British Radiological Societies honored him with nonresident membership.

Dr. Gerber retired from office practice in 1944, but his interest in his vocation did not flag. He renewed his active affiliation with Rhode Island Hospital, where his services were welcomed during the manpower shortage of the World War. Traveling daily to the hospital, he spent his mornings, sitting in a wheelchair, reading X-ray films and giving freely of his wise counsel. He carried on with these duties until 1948, when he finally withdrew from active practice. Following his retirement he continued to appear at medical meetings and conferences and was often called upon to contribute from his great experience and prodigious reading. His innate modesty rarely permitted him to make a display of his comprehensive grasp of medicine or his encyclopedic knowledge of radiology, but these were known to all.

In 1948 for the purpose of recognizing their distinguished colleague, the members of the Miriam Hospital Staff Association established an annual lectureship in his honor, to be called the Dr. Isaac Gerber Oration. The speaker would be an outstanding member of the medical profession. It is said that Dr. Gerber was the only Rhode Island physician, and one of the few in the United States, to be recognized during his lifetime by the establishment under his name of a permanent lectureship dedicated to the propagation of medical science. At first he attempted to dissuade his colleagues from embarrassing him with this unusual accolade. He relented eventually, however, and remarked: "If you want to give me the flowers while I'm still alive, they won't smell any less sweet."

On the occasion of the first lecture, at which he was present, he remarked: "It felt like reading your own obituary, assuming anybody could really know what that would feel like."¹⁸ It was held on March 10, 1948 in the library of the Rhode Island Medical Society on Francis Street, and was delivered by Dr. Merrill Sosman of Boston. The proceedings incident to this exercise have been recorded in the *Rhode Island Medical Journal* for May 1948. The eloquence and charm of Dr. Sosman's preliminary remarks and of the accompanying editorial

comment merit their repetition here:

“On March 10, 1948 the Miriam Hospital staff inaugurated an annual oration to be known as the Dr. Isaac Gerber Oration. We who have known Doctor Gerber these many years might comment at length on his accomplishments, but it is doubtful that we could pay a more eloquent tribute than that of Dr. Merrill C. Sosman, director of the department of radiology at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Boston, which we quote below. To this tribute we add the sincere appreciation of the Rhode Island Medical Society to the staff of Miriam Hospital for its thoughtful action in honoring a Fellow of our Society for whom we all have the greatest admiration.

—The Editors”

The following is Dr. Sosman’s tribute:

“It is a pleasure and a privilege to be with you tonight, and a great honor to be invited to give the first Isaac Gerber lecture. We, in Boston, have known Dr. Gerber for many years and have admired him not only for his ability and his learning, but also for his indomitable courage. He rarely misses any of the important medical meetings in Boston, even during the height of our beautiful winter season, and it is always a stimulus to see him in the audience. His desire to learn, his thirst to acquire knowledge have characterized him ever since I have known him.

“Dr. Gerber is essentially a Bostonian, transplanted to the salubrious soil and climate of suburban Providence. He was born in Boston, educated in the Boston English High School, Harvard College and Harvard Medical School, where my researches reveal that he was graduated cum laude. He was an intern at the Boston City Hospital and it was there that his future career was determined, but without his realizing it until several years later. At the City Hospital he came into contact with, and fell under the spell of, Francis H. Williams who first interested him in the strange new x-rays, particularly their use in examining the heart and lungs of the patients on his wards. Those of you who knew Dr. Williams will remember what an enthusiast he was, — quiet, scholarly and thorough, but a missionary in thought and deed in those benighted days when physicians thought they could diagnose with the stethoscope!

“Having been inoculated with the virus of Roentgenology, Dr. Gerber exposed himself to still further infection by studying with Levy-Dorn in Berlin, Haudek and Holzknicht in Vienna, and was a friend and co-worker with Arthur Schueller at the Allgemeine Krankenhaus where his interest in cranial roentgenology was aroused. That was in 1912, the year that Christian and Cushing and their associates toured Europe with the purpose of obtaining ideas and perhaps men for the new Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, about to be opened in Boston the following year. But for a missed appointment with Cushing, Dr. Gerber might have been the new Roentgenologist at my hospital,

and then I would not have been here on this happy occasion.

"It is unnecessary to remind you, I am sure, that Dr. Gerber gently metastasized to Providence in 1914 (the first physician in this state to limit his practice to Roentgenology), and of how much he has done for medicine and Roentgenology in the 34 years since he has been one of you. For several years he maintained a base of operation in Boston, but finally recognizing the superior virtues of Providence severed official connection with his native town and has since concentrated his effort in your city. He was active in establishing the department of radiation therapy at the Boston City Hospital in 1924, and a similar one at Pondville Hospital in 1927. He is or has been on the staffs of most of the hospitals in Rhode Island, belongs to all of our national radiological societies, is a life member of the British Institute of Radiology and is currently, I understand, a Vice-President of the Rhode Island Medical Society. His contributions to the medical literature have been numerous and varied, and I know of no one in our X-ray Societies who has as thorough a knowledge of radiological literature as Dr. Gerber.

"Dr. Gerber has always been an Index Medicus and a peripatetic library for our radiological meetings and clinics not only in New England but all over the country. . . ."

Dr. Gerber's graceful and modest response follows:

"There is very little that one can say in response to such eulogies as have been heaped on me tonight. You all realize of course that this is an extremely unusual occasion, at least from my point of view.

"Named lectures generally have been inaugurated in honor of individuals who have already passed on. In the present instance my colleagues and friends of the Miriam Hospital staff have chosen figuratively to send me flowers while I am still around and able to enjoy their fragrance and beauty. It is certainly not for me to decry their choice.

"The idea of the annual lectureship in itself is indeed a most admirable one. It is a fitting way of having the hospital, now well along in its third decade of service, shows its appreciation of being a real part of the medical community of Rhode Island.

"As for myself, I can only state that I am indeed extremely appreciative of the high honor that has been given to me by attaching my name to this projected series of lectures. I am also greatly touched personally by this overwhelming indication of friendliness and esteem on the part of my colleagues in the Miriam Hospital.

"I know that you have not gathered here tonight to listen to me. I do not feel that I should encroach further on the speaker's time, and wish once more to express my deepest thanks for this tremendous honor."

Until his death Dr. Gerber attended the lectures. As of this writing nine orations have been delivered by a distinguished roster of nation-

ally known physicians, the last on October 17, 1956. In recent years it has been the custom to hold this exercise on the third Wednesday of October in the auditorium of Miriam Hospital.

Dr. Gerber died on February 17, 1952 of coronary thrombosis following a long and painful siege of sciatic pain associated with his illness. His progressive paralysis, which had continually baffled neurologists and which had been ascribed to radiation injury of his spinal cord, was found after his death to have been caused by a benign cord tumor. It is an irony of fate that this brilliant diagnostician succumbed to an ailment which could have been cured had the correct diagnosis been made.

Long a member of The Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David (Temple Beth-El), he is buried in the Reservoir Avenue Cemetery. He is survived by Mrs. Gerber and a married daughter. Obituaries have appeared in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the *Rhode Island Medical Journal*, the *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *Radiology*, the *American Journal of Roentgenology* and the *British Journal of Roentgenology*.¹⁹

In the years immediately following the arrival of Dr. Gerber, Drs. Boris Joseph Sohn (1915), Leo Cohen (1916), Myer Arthur Persky (1916), Benjamin Harry Abraham (1919), established practices in Providence. According to the annual reports of Rhode Island Hospital, a number of Jewish physicians were added to the out-patient ("externe") staff of that hospital: Abe Arthur Brown (Ear, Nose and Throat 1920), Samuel I. Kennison (Pediatrics 1921), Nathan A. Bolotow (Ear, Nose and Throat 1922), Louis I. Kramer (Skin 1923), Maurice Adelman (Pediatrics 1923), Henry L. C. Weyler (Medicine 1924), Harold Libby (Medicine 1925), Benjamin S. Sharp (Ear, Nose and Throat 1925), Banice Feinberg (Pediatrics 1925), and Herman A. Winkler (Ear, Nose and Throat 1926). Dr. Adelman was the first of this group to be promoted to the in-patient house service (Assistant Visiting Physician in Pediatrics 1926). A number of these men eventually became senior members of the visiting staff of that hospital. Dr. Banice Feinberg is now Chief of Pediatrics. Dr. Kennison later became established in psychiatry, Dr. Kramer in Internal Medicine and Dr. Libby in Obstetrics and Gynecology.²⁰

Late in the year 1923 the Jewish doctors of Rhode Island, in order to satisfy a need for a fuller academic life and to foster closer social ties, formed the Jacobi Medical Club.²¹ They were also anticipating the opening (late in 1925) of the new Miriam Hospital and were organ-

ized to assist in the planning and staffing of that institution. The early records of the club have been lost. The name first appears, however, in the minutes of The Miriam Hospital Association for Dec. 1, 1923, probably soon after establishment of the club. Its first president was Dr. Max B. Gomberg and its first secretary-treasurer was Dr. Joseph B. Webber. The club was invited to send a committee to a Gentlemen's Night sponsored by The Miriam Hospital Association to be held on December 16, 1923 to acquaint the male members of the community with the plans for a new hospital. On January 9, 1924 the Second Annual Ball of The Miriam Hospital Association was held in the Arcadia Ballroom. The souvenir program for that occasion contained a full page advertisement purchased by the club. It met at regular intervals for a number of years, sometimes combining the scientific business with a good dinner. On the whole the meetings were of excellent quality, and speakers of reputation were invited not only from Providence, but from medical centers in Boston and elsewhere. Early in World War II (probably late in 1940) its activities were suspended because many of its members were joining the Armed Forces and because its academic functions were being replaced by the developing Miriam Hospital. Although it had been assumed that its activities would someday be resumed, this did not come to pass.

The need for a Jewish hospital in the community had been felt for a number of years. Many of the early residents were recent immigrants, troubled by strange customs, the language barrier, different culinary habits, and the restrictions of the Kosher diet. Consequently, they were often uncomfortable in institutions not of their choice. It would be many years, however, before such a facility could be provided.

In the meantime, provision had to be made for these patients in existing institutions. The chief burden of this responsibility fell upon Rhode Island Hospital. Beginning in 1891 there appeared in the annual reports of that hospital²² a contribution of seventy dollars from the "Jewish Societies of Providence." After sustaining this level for several years, it fell off to sixty dollars in 1895, and after some fluctuation (reaching a maximum of \$71.50) disappeared entirely after 1898. During the same period and for several years thereafter, other societies contributed smaller amounts, of the order of ten or fifteen dollars, the last recorded being that of the Montefiore Lodge Ladies' Hebrew Association which was discontinued after 1917. Rabbi Blaustein of The Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David, during his brief sojourn in Providence between 1892 and 1898, had taken an active interest in

trying to rally the support of the Jewish community to the Rhode Island Hospital and other charities. In the pages of *The Organ*²³ there are some eleven appeals and news items concerning the continued struggle to make up the annual seventy dollar contribution. On several occasions the following appeared:

"In Behalf of Rhode Island Hospital

"The Congregation as well as the other Jewish organizations paying an annual contribution to the Rhode Island Hospital are hereby reminded that the payment thereof is now due. To make the Jewish donation more presentable, the various societies are respectfully requested to send their contributions to Rabbi Blaustein who will in the name of the Jewish societies of Providence forward the whole sum to the treasurer of the hospital.

"Rabbi Blaustein will gladly receive donations for said purpose also from charitably inclined individuals. Small amounts will be welcome as well as large ones."

On one occasion the following comment was appended to the above: "We hope this appeal will not be a voice calling in the wilderness." On another it was stated: "It pains us to repeat the statement that Providence Jewery [sic] cannot boast of public spirited individuals. The appeal in behalf of the Rhode Island Hospital was not responded by anyone of our well-to-do co-religionists. Leaving out the annual contributions from the few fraternal lodges²⁴ and our Congregation, the only extra donation that was sent to the Rabbi for said purpose was one of twenty-five cents from a family that cannot afford to spare even that small amount. . . ." On January 17, 1898 Rabbi Blaustein appeared before the Board of Trustees of his congregation to plea for support of the hospital and other non-sectarian institutions in the city, but apparently nothing much came of the matter.²⁵ He left Providence a few months later and with his departure the project died.

In 1896, after several months of debate, the Rhode Island Hebrew Medical Aid Association²⁶ which had been incorporated in 1890 "to secure medical and surgical attendance for the members and their families and for other charitable purposes" called a mass meeting with the objective of initiating a movement for a "Hebrew hospital." The meeting was held on November 1, 1896. It was decided, apparently unanimously, that the Jews of Providence were not strong enough to maintain a hospital of their own and the project was dropped. The feasibility of organizing a Jewish dispensary in lieu of the more ambitious project was then seriously considered. Rabbi Blaustein com-

mented: "Let our people more liberally contribute to the Rhode Island Hospital and avail themselves of the dispensary connected with that institution."²⁷

It was not until early in 1908 that such a dispensary was to be realized.²⁸ A Dr. J. Edmund Brown, in December 1907, had suggested to Mrs. Caesar Misch the advisability of opening a free dispensary in South Providence. She brought the matter to the attention of the Providence Section of the Council of Jewish Women. After an investigation, it was deemed a suitable project and an annual subscription for support of the dispensary was recommended. An initial fund of \$348 was accumulated. While non-sectarian, the dispensary would be located in a section of the city convenient for Jewish families. It was reported that the congested Jewish quarter in the North End seemed more in need of such a facility than South Providence, which was in close proximity to both St. Joseph's and Rhode Island Hospital. Rooms were engaged in the North End Working Girls Home at 49 Orms Street for twenty-five dollars per month. The Dispensary Committee included Mesdames Misch, Chairman; Brooks, Ottenberg, Loeb, Jessel and (Adolph) Cohen. The original staff consisted of Doctors J. Edmund Brown, A. Arlington Fisher, Abraham P. Fishman, J. P. Cooney, W. H. Peters and J. P. O'Connell. Dr. Fisher was elected chairman of the staff. On March 31, 1908 Miss Katherine Pollock was engaged as a full-time registrar and council members were to be in daily attendance as volunteer workers. A state charter was not obtained, however, until September 29, 1911 at which time the Dispensary had already been in operation for some three years. The organization was chartered "to provide medical aid and surgical treatment for the poor and needy sick of all denominations." Many Jewish physicians of the period subsequently served on its staff. The Dispensary functioned daily for thirty years, finally going out of business in 1938, having outlived its usefulness.

An important factor in its passing was the advent of a Jewish hospital. The early history of the movement, culminating eventually in the dedication of Miriam Hospital on November 15, 1925, is elusive and difficult to document. No official minutes or treasurers' reports prior to 1921 have been uncovered. In some respects tradition does not fully accord with certain factual data which have been brought to light.²⁹

Miriam Lodge, Number 13, Order of Brith Abraham was in all probability the precursor of later Miriam organizations and was the source of the name of the hospital now so designated. Order of Brith Abraham (O.B.A.), not to be confused with the Independent Order

of Brith Abraham (I.O.B.A.) which seceded from the parent organization in 1887, was founded in 1859 and was the third oldest Jewish fraternal order in America.³⁰ It consisted of both men's and ladies' lodges. That Miriam Lodge, No. 13, O.B.A., was a ladies' lodge is evidenced by a listing in a contemporary publication.³¹ Although its meetings were attended by men (generally husbands of the members, and usually members of a men's lodge of the same Order) its identity as a ladies' lodge is confirmed by Mrs. Annie D. Tatz, who was a member during the last two years of its existence, and who is still living and active.²⁹ Failure to obtain a state charter has denied us the advantage of an official listing. Women's organizations of the period were likely to have male secretaries, and at times male presidents as well, as the educational attributes necessary to keep adequate records were often not possessed by the female Jewish immigrants of the era. Harris Basilinsky of 10 Olney Street was the last secretary of Miriam Lodge, according to listings in the American Jewish Year Book of this period.³¹ Members resided in both the North End and in South Providence.³²

Miriam Lodge, No. 13, which was in existence prior to 1895,³³ can be traced until 1901. In that year at the biennial national convention of O.B.A. held in Chicago on March 3 to 6, it was directed that all subordinate lodges admit both men and women on an equal basis in respect both to duties and to privileges.³⁴ This action was taken in order to conform to certain state laws. The local ladies, according to Samuel L. Tatz,³⁵ anxious to retain the identity of their group, resolved to continue on an unaffiliated basis.

As a result of this action, the group reorganized and on February 26, 1902 was granted a charter³⁶ by the Secretary of State of the State of Rhode Island under the name of Miriam Society, Number One, "for the purpose of social and beneficial benefits among the members." The names listed on the charter [spellings corrected] were Mary D. Grant, Lena Zisman, Jennie Etta [Ethel] Cutler, Amelia Dolberg, Annie Adelman, Mary Kominsky, and Clara Smira. Although the total number of members was not large, this roster was most certainly not a complete one. Tatz, in a memorandum previously referred to,³⁵ added the names of Feba Lewanda, "Mrs." H. Epstein, Sarah Rotke, Rose B. Adelman, and Theresa Feldman. I shall add that of Mrs. Annie D. Tatz.²⁹

The precise point at which the women decided to extend their activities beyond mutual assistance is not clear, although evidence would indicate that the time interval was not a long one.³⁷ They soon became interested in the care of the sick poor, both in their homes and in the

various hospitals, bringing them Kosher food daily and acting as interpreters.

Some eighteen months after the formation of Miriam Society,³⁵ Feba Lewanda (previously discussed) having learned that it was possible to subscribe to an annual free bed in Rhode Island Hospital, suggested that the Society undertake such a project for the benefit of the Jewish community. At a special meeting held at the home of Mrs. Cutler the suggestion was adopted. The fruits of this endeavor were soon apparent for in the annual report of the Rhode Island Hospital for 1903 appears a contribution for \$187.50 "in part payment" for an annual free bed credited to "Miriam Society of the Jewish Community of Providence, R. I." As the cost of an annual free bed at the time was \$250., it can be presumed that the amount recorded represented payment for the last three quarters of the fiscal year. Thereafter, and yearly through 1926, a contribution of \$250. for one free bed is duly noted.³⁸ In 1908 and thereafter, this contribution is in the name of Miriam Hospital Association, successor to Miriam Society. The ladies had indeed succeeded where Rabbi Blaustein tried and failed. According to Tatz,³⁵ members of the society canvassed house to house every three months to collect money for the payment to Rhode Island Hospital, which it deposited at the hospital at quarterly intervals.

Another activity of the group is interesting. The following statement appears in a small brochure³⁹ prepared by Mrs. Charles C. Brown, daughter of Louis M. and Mary D. Grant and several times President of Miriam Hospital Women's Association: "Before the establishment of Wallum Lake [Rhode Island State Sanatorium for tuberculosis founded in 1905], the Saint Joseph's Hospital allocated to our group, land at Hillsgrove for the creation and maintenance of tents for Jewish tubercular patients." A contribution of fifty dollars by Miriam Society to St. Joseph's Hospital, noted in the hospital's annual report for the year 1904,⁴⁰ evidently underwrote this service.

There is some indication in Tatz's memorandum that the ladies gave thought very early to the promotion of a Jewish hospital. The following item⁴¹ appears to confirm this view. On April 13, 1904 a request was placed before the quarterly meeting of the Montefiore Lodge Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Association by the "Miriam Society of South Providence" for "assistance . . . in their efforts to establish a Hospital by a donation towards the building fund and also a yearly donation towards its maintenance. After considerable discussion . . ." it was voted "that \$25 be donated towards the building fund and the



Donation Book
Merqam Association
for
Hospital Fund

yearly donation to be acted upon when the Hospital is established." I am not aware that this intention was pursued when at long last hope became reality some twenty years later.

Finally on January 9, 1907 the Secretary of State issued upon application a charter to The Miriam Hospital Association of Providence, Rhode Island "for the purpose of building, maintaining, and operating a Hebrew Hospital in the state of Rhode Island." The names listed on the charter are now familiar: Amelia Dolberg, Mary D. Grant, Sarah Rotke, Lena Zisman, Theresa Feldman and Rose B. Adelman. Renewed activity followed this event. On Sunday evening, March 24, 1907, a public meeting was held in the Empire Theatre to acquaint the community with the activities and aims of the newly incorporated association. Harry Cutler presided and a number of distinguished members of the community addressed the gathering. The treasury of Miriam Society was deposited, according to Tatz, with The Miriam Hospital Association at the time the former was dissolved. This was probably the source of an endowment of \$800, which the Association possessed in the period from 1909 to 1911.⁴²

There exists in the collections of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association an interesting leather bound cash book⁴³ kept by Rose B. Adelman in the period of March and April 1907. It represents her single-handed but rather poignant effort to launch a building campaign. There are florid endorsements from Rabbis Hausman, Bachrach, Stern and Fleischer (of Boston), Mrs. Marion L. Misch and Mayors Patrick McCarthy and Joseph Gainer of Providence. Bishop McVickar lent his name and contributed. Despite rather pretentious endorsements, the total contributions amounted to fifty-five dollars.

Although it has been stated that beds were "maintained" during this period at St. Joseph's and Lying-In hospitals, this is not confirmed by the evidence. Irregular contributions to St. Joseph's Hospital are credited in its annual reports to The Miriam Hospital Association for 1908 through 1919, increasing from ten to fifty dollars. There is further indication in the minutes of The Miriam Hospital Association that these payments extended through 1924. Contributions to Lying-In Hospital, extending from 1912 to 1925, were somewhat irregular and of comparable size. Full payment for a free bed at these hospitals would have required an annual donation of \$300 and \$250 respectively.

Among their many concerns, the women undertook to provide hospitalization, medical care at home, convalescent care, surgical and dental appliances, wheelchairs, eyeglasses, special diets, and transportation by

taxicab to and from clinics. The minutes of the Association for the years subsequent to 1920 provide eloquent testimony to the variety of their interests and are replete with examples of the foregoing. It should not pass without mention, incidentally, that the Montefiore Lodge Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Association was a regular if modest contributor to all three hospitals during most of the period covered by this report.⁴⁰

During the ensuing years, the women worked with great diligence to raise sufficient funds to support their manifold activities and at the same time to set aside a reserve for a new hospital, their constant ultimate goal. The Association in 1914 hired a Mr. Kaplan to distribute tin boxes to Jewish homes and to collect at monthly intervals the coin accumulated therein. These funds, consisting mostly of nickels and



Collection Box (c. 1914) "Help the poor sick."

dimes, were then conveyed to the treasurer, who at that time was Betty Woolf. In 1919, following Kaplan's retirement because of illness, Tatz was retained as paid solicitor.³⁹ The annual dues were then increased from one to three dollars (still three dollars in 1957 despite the current inflation) and the membership which had been 146 at that time, was increased to 1800 through his efforts. Numerous functions including an annual ball and whist parties helped in the continuous effort to raise funds.

The main objective of building a hospital of their own was never lost sight of. While searching for a suitable property during the period shortly after World War I, the women learned of the availability of a quadruplex brick building on Parade Street, embracing three rooming houses and the old Parade Street Hospital. On November 12, 1921 they were able to place a deposit of one thousand dollars toward the purchase of this structure, which would cost \$27,000.⁴⁴ The tenants were permitted to remain until actual renovation was undertaken, the income, amounting eventually to \$3100, being applied toward purchase and building expenses. Although some thought was apparently given to limiting the project to a maternity hospital, their ambition to operate a full-fledged general hospital prevailed.⁴⁵

The assistance of the men of the community was then actively solicited. At a meeting of the Board of Directors of The Miriam Hospital held on December 1, 1923, plans were formulated to have a "Gentlemen's Night" for the purpose of acquainting the male members of the community with the undertaking. Charles C. Brown, son-in-law of Mary D. Grant, was asked to invite representatives of the newly formed Jacobi Medical Club in order to secure their advice and cooperation. This meeting, at which Mr. Walter I. Sundlun presided, took place on December 16, 1923. Finally on October 26, 1924 Mr. Max L. Grant agreed to head a campaign for funds to convert the old building on Parade Street to a first-rate hospital. A state-wide conference under the chairmanship of Mr. Grant was held on the evening of October 29 at Narragansett Hotel. Delegates from some sixty organizations attended. It was agreed to organize forthwith a campaign for funds for the establishment of a Jewish sponsored non-sectarian hospital. The public solicitation with a goal of \$75,000 was conducted during the period of November 30 to December 7, 1924. The response was gratifying, the fund having been oversubscribed to the amount of \$5,000. The equipment and furnishings of the Parade Street Hospital, which had been purchased by Mary D. Grant for \$500, were donated by her to the



MIRIAM HOSPITAL — Parade Street (before alterations — 1921)



MIRIAM HOSPITAL — Parade Street (after alterations)

new institution. After extensive renovations to the interior, the hospital, which had a rated capacity of sixty-three beds and fourteen bassinets, was finally dedicated at a banquet on November 15, 1925.⁴⁶ Mr. Max L. Grant was elected its first president. The Miriam Hospital was chartered by an act of the Rhode Island Legislature on March 25, 1926 "to maintain a hospital and in connection therewith a training school for nurses for the sick, disabled, and injured in the City of Providence, State of Rhode Island." It was, however, already in operation, having received its first patient on November 16, 1925.

* * *

It is of interest that The Miriam Hospital Association, the women's organization generally recognized as having been responsible for the founding of the hospital, did not lose its identity until long after the events here recorded. On November 13, 1953, after more than fifty years of existence, it finally changed its title to Miriam Hospital Women's Association, thus terminating officially its independent status.

The new Miriam Hospital, a dignified edifice located on Summit Avenue and dedicated on December 14, 1952, opened its doors to patients on January 5, 1953. With a rated capacity of 149 beds at the time of its opening, it has, in the short space of four years, outgrown its present capacity, and has developed at a rate far beyond the expectations of its sponsors. At the time of this writing (1957) plans are already being formulated for a very substantial expansion. The story of the Jewish medical community after the founding of Miriam Hospital late in 1925, and of the growth of Miriam Hospital to its present robust state shall be the task of a later historian.

* * *

Because of the limitations of space it is not feasible to reproduce in full the contents of the appendices. Anyone wishing access to this material may consult the original manuscript in the Collections of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Society.

Appendix A. Data on additional Jewish physicians licensed prior to January 1, 1927, who are still residing in Rhode Island (listed by date of license): Leo Cohen 1916, Samuel D. Kennison 1919, Nathan Abraham Bolotow 1920, Joseph Webber 1920, Louis Irving Kramer 1921, Maurice Adelman 1922, Benjamin Samuel Sharp 1922, Henry Leon Cohen Weyler 1922, William Benjamin Cohen 1923, Banice Feinberg 1923, Harry Triedman 1923, Samuel Morein 1925, Perry

Bernstein 1926 (deceased February 23, 1957), Joseph Smith 1926, Herman Aaron Winkler 1926.

Appendix B. Data on additional Jewish physicians licensed prior to January 1, 1927, who have left Rhode Island (listed by date of license): Boris Joseph Sohn 1915, Harry Saul Bernstein (Bernton) 1915, Benjamin Harry Abraham 1919, Abe Arthur Brown 1918, Harry Soforenko 1922, Joseph Rosenblatt (on staff at Wallum Lake 1925-1931, license not stated).

Appendix C. Data on additional Jewish physicians deceased prior to January 1, 1957 (listed alphabetically): Herbert Spencer Abel (1903-1934), Simon Albert (1896-1953), Irving Blazar (1910-1943), David Brodsky (1903-1937), Herman Paul Grossman (1900-1952), Frank Jacobson (1901-1955), Milton Korb (1910-1945), Myer Arthur Persky (1892-1928).

Appendix D. Medical staff, officers and board of trustees of Miriam Hospital as of January 1, 1927, and officers of The Miriam Hospital Association; as recorded in the First Annual Report of the Hospital (1927).

Appendix E. Contributions by Jewish Organizations to Hospitals, abstracted from the annual reports of Rhode Island, St. Joseph's and Lying-In hospitals: Rhode Island Hospital 1887-1926; St. Joseph's Hospital 1905-1920; Lying-In Hospital 1904-1927.

Appendix F. Source material on Miriam Lodge, No. 13, Miriam Society, Number One and The Miriam Hospital Association.

1. Listings of Miriam Lodge, No. 13, O.B.A. in References 48 and 49.
2. Charter of Miriam Society, Number One. February 26, 1902.
3. Charter of The Miriam Hospital Association of Providence, Rhode Island, January 9, 1907.
4. Listing of The Miriam Hospital Association in Reference 51.
5. Listing of The Miriam Hospital Association in Reference 66.
6. Listing of The Miriam Hospital Association in Reference 67.
7. Listing of The Miriam Hospital Association in Reference 52.
8. Contents of circular distributed to Jewish residents of Providence during March 1907. Reprinted in Reference 71. An original copy of the item is in the possession of Mrs. C. C. Brown.
9. News items relating to mass meeting held by The Miriam Hospital Association on March 24, 1907, reprinted from The Providence Journals of March 17, 1907 and March 25, 1907.

10. Copy of receipt for original down payment on buildings on Parade Street. The original receipt is in the possession of Mrs. C. C. Brown.
11. Copy of a release from payment of commission on the sale of the property on Parade Street. The original is in the possession of Mrs. C. C. Brown.

Appendix G. Recollections of Mrs. Annie D. Tatz concerning meetings of Miriam Lodge, No. 13, which she attended in downtown Providence.

Appendix H. Excerpts from the Minutes of The Miriam Hospital Association during the period 1921 to 1927 (Reference 72). These minutes contain much important information relating to the purchase of the property on Parade Street, the renovation of the buildings and the legal transfer of the title to Miriam Hospital.

Appendix I. A listing of some of the variations in proper names encountered in this study. In one instance, that of Feba Lewanda, the first and last names were encountered in no less than six and five versions respectively.

* * *

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NOTES

¹Reference 22.

²Reference 9.

³Reference 11, p. 134.

⁴Reference 13, Vol. 1, p. 282.

⁵*Indiana Magazine of History*, 1921.

⁶Judge Moses Levy of Philadelphia graduated from the Academy of Philadelphia, later the University of Pennsylvania, in 1772. Huehner (Reference 10) indicates that there were possibly others earlier.

⁷Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes, 1:231, 1955.

⁸According to Kagan (Reference 7). He is not listed as a Past Fellow of the Massachusetts Medical Society.

⁹The following information is interesting as it gives insight into the activities and whereabouts of the doctor and his wife during his whole career in Providence.

1891 398 North Main St. Listed as Samuel Lewanda.

1892 39 Black St.

1894 61 Chalkstone Ave. Name first listed as Saul Lewanda.

1896 Mrs. Feba Lewanda at 208 Charles St.

1898 96 Chalkstone Ave. for both.

1899 208 Charles St. for both.

1902 Also listed as conducting millinery business at 256 Charles St.

1905 Also had an office in Warren, R. I.

1907 117 Orms St. Listed as physician and Doctress.

1909 Maintained offices at both 52 Kossuth St. and 117 Orms St.

1910 Both at 26 Orms St., where both also had offices.

1913 Both listed at 111 State St. Saul also listed as druggist at 182 Charles St.

1915 Residence and office at 119 State St. Charles still listed as druggist at 182 Charles St.

1916 96 Orms St.

1917 Moved to Pittsburgh.

¹⁰Dr. Gomberg also moved about quite a bit.

1896 214 Benefit St.

1898 32 Hammond St.

1908 61 Benefit St.

1912 344 Butler Exchange Building.

1914 157 Orms St.

1918 46 Doyle Ave.

1925 94 Homer St.

1926 Home: 94 Homer St.

Office: 64 North Main St.

1932 Home: 94 Homer St.

Office: 304 Smith St.

¹¹Prov. Med. J. 4:199, 1903.

¹²Reference 58. Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 2, Jan. 15, 1897.

¹³Reference 70.

¹⁴Reference 58. Vol. 3, No. 6, p. 1, July 8, 1898.

¹⁵Reference 55.

¹⁶The first Jewish member of the House Staff at Rhode Island Hospital was Harry L. Abramson, who served as pathology intern in 1912. Born in 1886, and a resident of New York City, he graduated from Yale Medical School in 1911. Following completion of his internship, he removed to St. John, New Brunswick. He was not further traced.

¹⁷Reference 43 d.

¹⁸The Evening Bulletin, Providence, R. I., April 14, 1950.

¹⁹Reference 43.

²⁰See Appendices A, B and C.

²¹Named after Dr. Abraham Jacobi (1830-1919). A graduate of Bonn, Germany (1851), he was famed as a pioneer specialist in pediatrics, serving as Professor of Pediatrics at Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons, and as Attending Pediatrician at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City.

²²See Appendix E.

²³Reference 58.

²⁴Reference 58. Vol. 1, No. 6, p. 4, March 13, 1896. Also see Appendix E.

²⁵Reference 59.

²⁶Reference 53.

²⁷Reference 58. Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 3, Nov. 13, 1896. Although the editorial comment was not signed, it has been attributed to Rabbi Blaustein as he was editor of *The Organ* at the time.

²⁸Reference 56.

²⁹The writer has been helped greatly in the interpretation of certain documentary evidence by recollections of Mrs. Samuel L. (Annie D.) Tatz, who is (at the time of this writing in 1957) in her eighty-seventh year, the possessor of a remarkable memory and possibly the only female survivor of the events here recorded. See Appendix G.

³⁰Order of Brith Abraham was dissolved in 1927. Independent Order of Brith Abraham subsequently became Brith Abraham, which is still in existence. Reference 47, Vol. 2, p. 522.

³¹Reference 48, p. 83. Reference 49, p. 156.

³²According to Mrs. Charles C. Brown there was, a number of years ago, in the possession of her father, Mr. Louis M. Grant, a charter for Miriam Lodge, No. 13, O.B.A., dated 1897. From it she copied the following names: Mesdames Adelman, Lewando, Rodkin, Ginsberg, Teran, Drankoff, Feirstein, Grant, Goldstein, Cohen, Neusbaum, Reiness, Smira, Ringgold, Burnside, Cutler, Borod, Zissman, Canter, Brown, Gobinsky and Shine. The original document cannot now be located.

³³It was listed in the very first issue of *The Organ* (Reference 58) on Dec. 12, 1895.

³⁴Reference 50.

³⁵According to a memorandum (Reference 61) written in 1952, shortly before his death, by the late Samuel L. Tatz, for many years secretary or paid solicitor of various Miriam organizations.

³⁶See Appendix F.

³⁷Most of the documentary evidence points to 1901 or early 1902. A news item in *The Providence Journal* for November 23, 1924 described the hospital as the culmination of twenty-three years of endeavor. The Miriam Hospital Association celebrated its thirtieth anniversary on January 11, 1931 (*The Providence Journal*, January 12, 1931). The writer has been unable to find documentation in support of the year 1897 which appears on a plaque in the lobby of the new hospital, commemorating the work of The Miriam Hospital Women's Association.

³⁸See Appendix E.

³⁹Reference 62.

⁴⁰See Appendix E.

⁴¹Reference 60.

⁴²See Appendix F.

⁴³Reference 63.

⁴⁴The deed recorded at Providence City Hall showed a prior mortgage of \$15,000. The U. S. Revenue stamp for \$12 showed a cash transaction of about \$11,000 (at \$1.10 per \$1000), indicating a total purchase price in excess of \$25,000. The previous owners were: Benjamin N. Kane, Harry Wine and Dr. Samuel Starr.

⁴⁵See Appendix H.

⁴⁶See Appendix H and Reference 69. These and other documents, such as newspaper clippings, notices of meetings, canceled checks, and miscellaneous items in the Collections of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Society, are the basis of this account.

The White House
Washington

November 22, 1918.

My dear Colonel Cutler:

The annual meeting of the Jewish Welfare Board affords me an opportunity to express my personal appreciation of the admirable work which this organization has been carrying on with the troops at home and abroad. It has provided generously for soldiers and sailors of all faiths, and Secretary Baker and Mr. Fossdick have both spoken of the value of its work in maintaining the morale of our fighting forces.

May I not, therefore, express in this brief note my wish for its continued success?

Cordially and sincerely yours,



A GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY



In April of this year, the American Jewish Committee completed its 50th anniversary. Harry Cutler of Providence was, at the time of its organization, a prominent member of the B'nai Brith, which required its members to withdraw from the Committee for fear that they would lose their identity. Cutler disregarded the instructions and "down to his death in 1920 was a most useful and active member of the Executive Committee."¹

He took a leading part in the hearings before the United States House and Senate Foreign Relations Committees in Washington in 1911 on resolutions leading to the abrogation of the Commercial Treaty of 1832 with Russia on account of her discrimination against American citizens of Jewish faith who were denied passports to visit Russia. In 1912, he joined with Louis Marshall and Julius Rosenwald in a long statement against the literacy test for immigrants.

He was the first Chairman of the National Jewish Welfare Board, in the First World War, while still a member of the Executive Committee of the American Jewish Committee. After the war, he was one of nine delegates elected by the American Jewish Congress to speak for the rights of European minorities at the Peace Conference in Versailles.

He was the most outstanding Rhode Island Jew in national eminence, influence and prestige. It was on the basis of the efforts of such men as he that the American Jewish Committee "was able to accomplish the amazing results that it eventually did."²

¹Charles Reznikoff, *Louis Marshall, Champion of Liberty, Selected Papers and Addresses*, 24.

²Nathan Schachner, *The Price of Liberty*, a history of the American Jewish Committee, 30, New York, 1948.



At the Annual Meeting
of the
Jewish Welfare Board

held in New York City
on Sunday, October twenty-
fourth, one thousand nine
hundred and twenty, the
following

Memorial Address

was read by
Louis Marshall, Esq.

Upon motion duly second-
ed, this address was unani-
mously adopted by a rising
vote as a Minute expressing
the sentiments of the member-
ship of the Board.

We have met upon this momentous day in the life of the Jewish Welfare Board with hearts attuned to grief. Our beloved leader,

Harry Cutler,

who with singular devotion dedicated himself to the cause for the furtherance of which this organization was formed, is not here to greet us with his cheerful smile and his commanding presence. "The silver cord is snapped asunder, the golden bowl is shattered and the pitcher is broken at the fountain." It is fitting, therefore, that we pause before turning to our regular proceedings to com-

memorate the friend whom we esteemed and honored and loved for the manhood that was in him, for the virtues that he exemplified, for his achievements for the betterment of humanity, for his loyalty to his faith, and the unselfish spirit that compelled him to serve his brethren and his Country even to the extent of dying for them before he had reached the meridian of his years and the zenith of his powers. His was a remarkable career, overflowing with inspiration, miraculous as a commentary upon the innate qualities of the man and of the wonders that may be wrought in those whose souls are responsive to

the genius of America. Driven from inhospitable Russia, in tender childhood, a refugee from the brutality stimulated by autocracy, in poverty, but not helpless or abject, he came to these shores a boy of eight with stout heart and will unconquerable. Without friends, without influence, without the opportunities of education, asking naught of charity, he eliminated childhood from his calendar and struggled with his revered mother to maintain the family. No service was so menial but that he was prepared to render it so long as it was honorable. His daily tasks as a newsboy, a boot-black, a worker in a cannery, a mill-hand, heroic

ally performed, qualified, him for the Distinguished Service Medal later bestowed by his grateful country and the Medal of Honor that came to him from beyond the seas that he had first crossed in the steerage. He was ambitious and diligent in his business. Deprived of the advantages of scholastic training, he taught himself with such thoroughness that one marvelled at his mastery of the English language and his complete absorption of the finest elements of New England idealism. He prospered as a manufacturer, in spite of the keenest competition, and the men of his craft soon learned to

value his ability by placing him at the head of their organization so that he might be their spokesman whenever it became necessary to defend their rights and to promote their welfare. Wealth, however, did not lure him or narrow his outlook or blunt his sense of brotherhood. Though within his reach had he been willing to pursue it, scarce beyond the dawn of manhood he deliberately chose to answer the call that came to him from his country, his people and oppressed and suffering humanity. He was chosen to sit in the Legislature of Rhode Island where he fought the battle of social justice against the

opposition of the most powerful. He closed his ears to the siren song of temptation to all promise of high office, but true to himself and to his trust nothing could swerve him from the rugged path that he had chosen. This product of a Russian Ghetto, an outcast from the land of his birth, became so impressed by the sense of obligation owed to the land that had welcomed him that he enlisted in the state militia and by sheer merit became the Colonel of his regiment. No occasion involving the welfare of the state and city of his adoption passed that did not find him in the front rank of the workers and among

the selected leaders. He enjoyed the esteem and confidence of all his townsmen, neighbors and associates, Jews and non-Jews alike. than which higher or worthier tribute is inconceivable. As a Jew he felt in his heart and soul the throb of pride for all that his people had contributed to civilization and morality, to ethics and religion, and to the noblest conception of human brotherhood. His soul was agonized by the misery, the persecution, the oppression which those of his faith had suffered, and were suffering at the hands of their brutish and barbarous foes. Where others were moved by what they

heard and read, he knew what it all meant because the iron of unreasoning hatred had pierced his very vitals and he hoped and prayed for the time to come when he might help in the emancipation of those who walked in the gloom and darkness of the prison house of Eastern Europe. That time came. As a member of the American-Jewish Committee he co-operated in bringing to success the movement for the abrogation of the Russian Treaty. It was a sacred moment when he lifted his voice in the halls of Congress in protest against the insult that Czarism had inflicted upon American citizenship.

lives. Only 17 persons, including the captain, on the *Larchmont* survived.

Among the missing were Samuel Paul, his wife Rose and their daughters Pauline (19) and Matilda (15) of Pawtucket, who were on their way to Brooklyn, New York to attend the wedding of their son and brother, Philip.² The wedding had been postponed a month before on account of a death in the family of the prospective bride. It took place on the 12th of February in the absence of the groom's parents and sisters. Another passenger who lost his life was Benjamin Stein who was on his way to Austria to bring over his wife and three children for whose passage money he had worked long and diligently.

¹The *Larchmont* was a ship of the Joy Line under ownership of the New York, New Haven and Hartford R.R.

²For photograph of Matilda Paul, see the back cover of *R.I.J. Historical Notes*, June 1956.

NECROLOGY

Graham, Marguerite Karpeles, born in Providence June 12, 1903, daughter of Maurice J. Karpeles, founder of LaTausca pearls and Past President of the Jewish Orphanage of Rhode Island, and granddaughter of Leonard Karpeles, veteran of the Civil War and recipient of Congressional Medal of Honor. Survived by son, Lyman John Williams, grandson of John Williams, an early settler of the Jewish community of Providence. Died accidentally May 6, 1956.

Goldberg, Al, born in Boston, Massachusetts January 18, 1909. Founder of the Red Fox Ginger Ale Company, Past President and Director of the Touro Fraternal Association, Member and soloist of Roosevelt Lodge and Trowel Club, A.F. & A.M., Roger Williams Lodge, B'nai Brith, Congregation Sons of Jacob and Temple Emanu-El. Died June 4, 1957.

Friedman, Lee Max — August 7, 1957, born Memphis, Tenn., December 29, 1871. When Lee M. Friedman, Harvard (A.B. 1893) (LL. B. 1895) Author, Lawyer, Historian and President of the American Jewish Historical Society, consented to attend the first formal meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association on February 12, 1953, we felt highly honored. But when the day arrived, a snow-storm dampened our enthusiasm and momentarily we expected a telephone call from Boston regretfully canceling the engagement. However, much to our surprise and great relief, at ten minutes to eight o'clock, a chauffer-driven limousine drove up to the entrance

of the John Brown House, Headquarters of The Rhode Island Historical Society, and there emerged, tall and erect, our guest and speaker of the evening accompanied by his sister, Miss Sophie M. Friedman and Rabbi Isadore Meyer, Secretary of the American Jewish Historical Society. At eighty-two years of age, this southern-born gentleman and gentle-man demonstrated his fine sense of responsibility as a "Proper Bostonian."

We first came to respect him when we read his books which give a new dimension to American Jewish history and are notable for their breadth and accuracy. Admiration followed respect when we met him as a member of the American Jewish Historical Society of which he was an organizer (1895). He encouraged the founding of our Association, of which he has been made an honorary member, and was always accessible and responsive, whether by mail or in person, for needed advice. We enjoyed the gracious hospitality of his home and shared in the joy which he took in his library of rare Judaica.

"The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

DAVID C. ADELMAN

ERRATA

Vol. 2, No. 1, June, 1956

Page 36 — The year of incorporation of "Miriam Society, Number one" should read "1902" instead of "1903."

Vol. 2, No. 2, April, 1957

Page 101, in the third line of the second paragraph the word "incorporated" should read "incorporating."

Page 109, in the second paragraph on line 5, "Rabbi Cohn" should read "Rabbi Cohen."

Page 131, the name "Halm" in the third line from the bottom of the page should read "Hahn."

Pages 132, 137 and 144, the names "Ibbotson," "Kase," "Strass" and "Yarkaus" should be deleted.

On the Inside Back Cover, the second name in the "Rear Row" should read "Max" instead of "Harry" Rosen. Harry was a nephew of Max.

NEW MEMBERS

GUARANTOR

Herbert Pansy

SUSTAINING

Maurice Fox

Arthur S. Galkin

Milton C. Kay

ACTIVE

Joseph E. Adelson

Dr. Marshall K. Bornstein

Hyman Brickle

Congregation Share Zedeck Samuel M. Gerstein

Bernard S. Goldberg

Jeffrey A. Goodman

Louis R. Greene

Alfred A. Harris

Howard R. Lewis

Leonard I. Salmonson

Rabbi Selig Salkowitz

Dr. Joseph Smith

Jerome B. Spunt

Coleman B. Zimmerman



JEWISH ORPHANAGE of Rhode Island



MIRIAM HOSPITAL after reconstruction and addition
to Jewish Orphanage, 1953 (see above)