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RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
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I REMEMBER . . .

A MEMOIR OF SERVICE TO MY COUNTRY*

BY FRANK A. SILBERMAN

I will jot down some of the things I can remember. They will not be one thing after another as they happened, but as I can recollect. I may jot down something that happened when I was five years old, or tell what happened 66 years ago.¹

CHILDHOOD IN KISHINEV

I remember when I was about five years old climbing a big hill in Kishenoff,² where I was born. I had been climbing for some time; my brother Jake was with me. When we got to the top of the hill I looked around, and it seemed to me that I saw the whole world. I asked Jake, "Is this the whole world?" He answered, "De velt is tzen mool azoy groyz."³ I should have liked to see a picture of myself as I took in the answer. Little did I dream that a dozen years later I was really to see the world.

Today, as I write, it is October 15, 1964; yet I can well remember when my mother and my three sisters started for America. You see, my brother Jake had left a couple of years ahead of us. He traveled with my Uncle Shyah and my Aunt Ida. I don't remember Frima, Ida's sister. She must have left before I did. I can remember when we got ready to start for America, the goldina medina,⁴ as America

*While the author considered himself to be a veteran of the Spanish-American War, he did not, in fact, enlist in the United States Army until some four months after the termination of that conflict. His active combat duty was, more properly, in the Philippine Insurrection campaign (1899-1902).

His ability to recall from memory events and details of persons and travels after 60 and 65 years is remarkable. Checking has revealed most statements to be remarkably accurate. Deviations from fact are for the most part trivial.

Certain of the anecdotes have been transposed to place them in better chronological order. The manuscript as published, however, still is not in strict chronological sequence, a result of the author's random recollections. Ed.

¹The editor has rearranged the manuscript to place events in chronological order as far as possible.

²Kishinev, Russia, site of a slaughter in 1903, which began "the four pogrom years." During these years 410,000 Jews fled from Russia to the United States.

³"The world is ten times as big." (Yiddish)

⁴The golden country. (Yiddish)

was called. I was sent away to a city by the name of Beltz.⁵ I traveled by wagon all night and came to Beltz to a relative of my mother's who lived there. He was a harness maker. I came to Beltz early in the morning. I don't know how long I stayed there. Soon my mother, Lena, and my two other sisters, Katie and Shirley, came, and off we went on a train.

I do distinctly remember that when we got aboard a train I was pushed under the seat when the conductor came to look at the tickets. Mother would hand me some food, and there was I contented with my lot. I remember also when we passed a station and heard my mother say, "Dus is Barlen."⁶ I remember arriving at Liverpool; I believe it was Liverpool; but I'm not sure that was the name. I know we stayed there a couple of days. I remember walking around the city during the day. Also I remember watching sheep being slaughtered.

Finally we were aboard the ship. There I was in my glory, running all over the ship. I know we stayed somewhere in the lower deck, not being sick, always looking for something to eat. Mother took along salami about a yard long. Climbing all over the ship I lost my hat, and that's the way we landed in Castle Garden.

YOUTH IN NEW YORK

My Uncle Shyah came with a wagon, picked us all up, and took us to No. 1 Forsyth Street on the sixth floor in New York.

My first day in school—not a word did I understand. My mother told me to say "school" no matter what the teacher said to me. I learned to count, but one number came hard to me. I would start 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5, but I could not say 6, because to me 6 must be zacks. It took me some time, but I finally got it. Multiplication came easy to me.

I soon learned to read, and *Oliver Twist* was the first book I read. The book that made the greatest impression on me was the *Life of George Washington*. I read to mother and explained the whole story to her in yiddish.

⁵Possibly Belsy, a Russian town near Kishinev.

⁶"This is Berlin."

I was just about ten years old. The first thing my brother Jake did was to get a box with a strap attached to it and fill it with odds and ends. He sent me to Hester Street to see what I could sell. I made no sale that day and quit.

Then I was introduced to selling newspapers, which I did after school. I used to yell my head off and earned about 15 cents after school. I carried on for several years. When about thirteen, my father took me to a notary and swore that I was 14½, so that I could get a job. School was out of the question. I could read and write; what more need I learn? I liked school, but had to go to work. At this time I read a tremendous amount—hundreds of books. My whole life was rapt in reading. I was a dreamer, and to tell the truth I still am.

As the years went by my mind yearned for knowledge. The only people I envied were those who had a library. I already had a vision of the world in general, and when I reached 15 I knew that as soon as I was old enough I would join the Army.

ARMY ENLISTMENT

I was 16 when the war with Spain broke out. Without saying anything to my folks I hiked to New London, Connecticut, about 14 miles from Norwich, where my folks were now living. Early the next morning I walked to Fort Trumbull, Connecticut and tried to enlist. The sergeant looked at me and told me to go home. That was that.

I read all about military service and desired above everything else to serve. However, I went on to New York, where I lived for about a year, while my parents remained in Norwich. During that year I paid back forty dollars my father had loaned to my aunt. I also paid board for my sister Lena, who was also living in New York, as well as my own board to my Aunt Ida. My brother Jake wasn't doing very much. I was earning \$9.80 a week working nights. At the end of a year I saw that I was getting nowhere, so I again decided to try to enlist in the Army. When asked when and where I was born, I hesitated to make up a story. The recruiting officer told me to get my first papers. I didn't want to write to my folks, knowing they would not let me enlist because I was too young. What could I do? I took out first citizenship papers and lied like a gentleman. I told them I was born in 1878, and so my discharge reads. Later on when



I put in for a pension, I told the truth about my age. I finally enlisted on March 21, 1899.

I did not cry when I first left home knowing that I would be gone 3 years. I respected my folks. My mother never spoke a harsh word to any of us. My father was shrewd and quickminded, had a tongue like a razor, but was honest in his dealings with others, and did his work with pride. He was proud of his trade.

Before leaving I decided to send home matzo for Passover which was to be the following week. So I bought the stuff and hired a pushcart to take it to the boat to ship home. I had my brother Jake with me and offered to push the cart half way if he would finish the other half. He agreed, and when I did my part I said, "You take over"; and as I walked away I told him that it would be some time before he would see me again. Then I went to an Army recruiting office and enlisted for three years. I had just one dollar to my name. We were each given \$1.50 and the same day left for Columbus, Ohio. We arrived there the next day. Drilling started the following day, and we waited for assignment which came in about two weeks.

We were given the choice of two destinations, Cuba or the Philippines. I chose the latter because it was the farthest. I remember reading that it was 10,000 miles from New York. We went to San Francisco and camped at the Presidio a couple of miles outside of San Francisco. There we were put in a tent, ten of us in each tent. It had a wooden floor and a stove in the center. We slept on a mattress, ten small mattresses with feet toward the stove. Here we were trained in the use of firearms and practiced on the target range. Also for the first time in my life I went to a funeral. One of our men had stuck his head in the firing range and had his head blown off. I felt sad marching behind the band which played a funeral dirge. Coming back from the funeral the band played a lively march, and one immediately forgot to be sad. I saw then how clever the army officers were. I understood why.

I lived the life of Riley there. I learned how to get a double allowance at meal time. I would be in the line first, gobble my meal down, and fall in line again before they finished serving. If I wanted a nosh,⁷ I would buy a glass of milk and a half pie for ten cents.

⁷Snack. (Yiddish)

Then came the first pay day. My name being in the S's I had to wait for hours. I had then been in the Army about 6 weeks. My first pay was a twenty dollar gold piece, and one dime and one cent. Everyone was shooting craps, and so I joined the game. I started to win and was doing well when the mailman came. I had a letter from home, and in it was a plea for money. My folks knew that I was earning only \$13 a month and that I had been gone about six or seven weeks. I went down to the post office and sent a money order for \$20. I didn't have much left, so that night I filled up on beer. But before I took a drink, I bought a small valise. I got back to camp all right where we stayed a few weeks longer, drilling every day and having target practice. I took to the Army as a duck takes to water. I fell in love with the army, liked every minute of it. In my mind I already planned to stay all my life. I would try the three branches of service—infantry, cavalry, and artillery. I would see which I liked best, remain in it for 30 years, and then retire.

We left for Manila in June, reaching the Hawaiian Islands on July 4, 1899.⁸ There was no liberty, so I swam ashore, stayed a few minutes, and then swam back. For that I got two days in the brig in double irons! My reason for swimming ashore was that I thought I would never see the place. July 4 happened to be the Queen Mother's birthday.

ARRIVAL IN THE PHILIPPINES

A few days later we left for Manila. It was quite a trip. We had cavalry aboard, and the horses had a better berth than we had. You see, they were below deck and we were still lower. We finally arrived in Manila, where we went ashore for 24 hours leave. We soon sailed for Panay; Ilo Ilo is its capital. We landed there and were assigned to our companies. I was assigned to Co. E of the 18th Regiment. When my name was called I yelled "Here" so loudly that they should have heard me at home, although I was 10,000 miles away. I then heard the sergeant say, "He will make a good soldier," which I surely did.

We then marched to a town about a mile away. The name of the town was Jaro Jaro. We barracked in an abandoned convent, several

⁸The Spanish-American War had started on April 24, 1898. It ended on December 10, 1898.

buildings about a hundred yards each way and a big yard inside, a porch all around about 15 feet wide. There were lots of rooms in the convent. Here we started our real service, for on many a morning we found a guard cut up. For the first time I became somewhat aware that we were not on a picnic. This was no make-believe. When I went on guard duty the following night, I was tense as I stood in a lonely place in the woods. The slightest noise sounded as if a whole regiment were marching. A cocoanut falling from a tree and I was sure someone was creeping up. So there I was all eyes and ears. I stood with my back to a tree, on the alert and as awake as I ever was in my whole life. Believe me, when I heard my relief coming I felt a mighty relief in me. All of a sudden I felt strong and real good. Boy! when I went to sleep right afterwards I slept like a log, until I was awakened again to take guard. When morning would come, my heart was light and gay. Life was a pleasure, and it was good to be alive. I liked to drill. I liked everything about the service. Sometimes the enemy would fire some shots during the day, but we paid no attention. I felt like a veteran already. Then guard duty became more dangerous. From time to time we would find another guard cut up terribly. Then a plan had to be found. For a while I talked and talked about having two guards at a time, and so it came about that we stood back to back on guard. That made it much easier and safer. We were regular soldiers. Soon we were joined by a volunteer regiment. They were the 26th Volunteers and were "Mr. McKinley's own." We would look at them with scorn. What did they know? From our viewpoint nothing. It was November 1899, in the early part of the month, when the first expedition was started by the 26th Volunteers. They went out at dawn, came back the same day — result: one wounded.

We regulars paid no attention, because we knew that we were soon to start on a campaign that would last some time. In the meantime something happened that caused a little change in our plans. The insurrectos as we called them had been firing at us for several days. There is a river in the town of Jaro Jaro that we had to cross to take over some of the heavy artillery. So we started to build a bridge out of bamboo. We would cut a quantity of bamboo stalks and tie them together. We made quite a number of bundles and tied them with cables; then we tied one end straight across to the other side. We

were doing pretty well, but at times they opened fire. We would duck under the water and rise again and continue our work. We would laugh and joke about them missing so much; but it was no joke to some, as one of our newly elected officers was hit while crossing and died. We crossed over and camped there overnight. Since we couldn't find any enemy, we came back. Apparently they had cleared out. About a week later we really started out. We were given two days' rations and pulled out at dawn. The enemy was well aware of all our movements, because we couldn't tell one native from another. We had a couple of squads a quarter of a mile in advance. Everybody felt well; myself, I was in high spirits. I was feeling fine and raring to go.

I must go back a little about standing guard. We had a guard post that was only a few hundred yards from the enemy post. To get there we had to creep slowly a couple of hundred feet to get as near as we dared. When we got there we whispered our signal. I didn't like it much, but there was no help for it; so I took part the last few nights before we left. The worst strain of all was lying still and listening with all your might.

I might also tell about target practice. The longest distance we fired was 700 yards. I made only 2 hits, but it wasn't so bad; that was 2 hits out of 5 shots. Unfortunate accidents happened on the rifle range. We would shift around. First I would go out to the target range behind a pile of sandbags and mark whatever hits they made, always cautioned to remain behind the sandbags. When my turn to shoot came, someone else would stay behind the sandbags and mark the score. On one such occasion when it was my turn to shoot, I was not the only one shooting. Suddenly a flag began to wave frantically. So we stopped shooting and went up to see what the trouble was. What had happened was that one of the markers had stuck his head out while one of us fired, and he was hit plumb in the head. I don't have to tell you how I felt when we looked at his brains oozing out. We took him back to the barracks. After that they were careful when not to expose themselves.

LIFE ON PANAY

We stayed for a few months in Jaro Jaro, which is a small town not far from Ilo Ilo, the capital of the Island Panay. Jaro Jaro is

pronounced Haro Haro. I stayed on that island for over two years. Our barracks was a large square building. Inside was a court with wide verandas all around. In the center there was a cistern to collect the rain from the roof.

It was a pleasant place with the usual big church in the center of the town. The priests did not like us because we did not salute them. They complained to our general, so he told the priests that he himself had trouble getting salutes from us. Also in the center of the town there was a place where a man could be locked in stocks; that is, he would sit down and his hands and feet were locked in. What it was for I did not know. I suppose for stealing or other offenses.

Also, in the cemetery there were bones of people who had been buried. When the relatives could not pay the rent, the bodies were taken out and thrown in the corner. You see, they were interred in the wall, not in the ground. That was the only cemetery where I saw the bodies in the corner. It must have been a very old cemetery. In fact, where the wall was broken you could see parts of the bodies.

We had no men's room. So a board was spread near a little stream. But there were times when men had to run when firing started, even if not quite through. We had quite a joke about this which I can't very well jot down.

Except for that, life was pleasant in the little town. But we soon came upon serious business. In the latter part of November, 1899 we set out on the main trip. Many of us did not sleep much the night before. I was on edge, because I knew that this was it. I knew that many of us would be killed and many wounded. There was an advance guard ahead of us, and we were also flanked on either side. The enemy was well prepared for us, and we knew it. We hadn't gone more than a few miles when the firing opened up. We soon caught up with our own advance guard; they were all killed by the volley from the Filipinos.

Picture me walking by them lying on the ground with their eyes staring wide open. We then got the command to fire at will. That order means take what shelter you can, and you are on your own. We deployed. We were all shouting because, when we charged, we were supposed to make all the noise we could. Instead of seeking shelter I stayed upright and began firing. We could see the enemy

scattering hell-bent to get away. All of a sudden Sergeant Watson shouted at me to get behind a tree and not to be a fool. Leaping across a trench we moved on. We lost about forty of our men killed and wounded, but they lost hundreds. I saw the bodies huddled in all kinds of positions; one had his head blown off completely. But the enemy fled; they burned a main bridge, which stalled us.

In the meantime another trouble started. We had hired Chinese to carry the wounded and dead to the rear. But they were scared and dropped the bodies and fled, so we had to do the work ourselves. I got more courage from Colonel Rice; I think that was his name, but am not sure. He was calmly sitting on a horse directing the moves. Also I got courage watching the doctor moving from soldier to soldier, dressing their wounds and acting as if nothing was wrong. We camped that night and the next day we marched on. But the enemy had disappeared. You see there are many mountains, and walking meant climbing up and down and crossing streams.

We came back to Ilo Ilo to rest after our first battle. Army life was a cinch compared to what we had been through. One thing we learned, to travel light. We carried only a canteen, a hammock and two days' rations—no more knapsack. We did carry a bag on our left side for provisions, a poncho in case of rain; and if we had to camp overnight on the field we would make a dog-house out of two ponchos. They were so made that we could put them together so that they would become a tent which we called a dog-house. Soon we got ready for the great expedition which was under Captain Gordon, who later became famous in Mexico in 1916 as General Gordon.

EXPEDITION

The expedition was under Captain Gordon. We started at about 2 A.M. and traveled with a guide. I can tell you that to me it was thrilling. I could walk day and night without rest. At dawn we stopped to make breakfast. We started a small fire to make coffee. As the water began to boil we were attacked, and one of the bullets went through the coffee pot. It was a big pot, so we cursed. We had no coffee that morning and a cold breakfast. We then continued on our way. It was mountain after mountain. There was no end to them. When we passed barrios or villages we burned them down and

destroyed the rice, for if we didn't the insurrectors would take them. I didn't like the idea at all, so I hit upon a plan. When I came to a house and explained to them what we were going to do, I told them in broken Spanish to hide most of the bags of rice. I forget now the few words I knew then, but anyway they thanked me. Remember I was only eighteen then and I had not yet become hardened as I did later on.

That first night as we got ready to camp, they opened fire again. Luckily we passed an old church with cement walls, and in we tumbled. It was getting dark, and we knew it was useless to chase them then. So we lay on the floor and said let them shoot all they want to. They did fire for a while, and then tired of it.

In the morning we started on again, still climbing hill after hill. The only one who rode was the captain. The scenery was wonderful. We would see natives carrying two baskets on a stick across their shoulders. I tried to carry one, and the natives laughed. I couldn't do it because you have to balance perfectly. Either shoulder must carry the same weight, and you must know how to walk just right, so that you won't feel the weight. I learned after a while.

We passed through a valley where tradition has it that a whole regiment of Spanish soldiers was wiped out. I could readily see how it could be done. There was also another tradition that there was gold to be found there, and, believe it or not, some of our men tried to mine in the old way. That is, by a pail or rather a pan. They would fill it with water and slowly rock it back and forth to see if there was any gold dust. I don't remember if they found any. Climbing, always climbing. Finally we reached the top, and immediately started down the other side. That was a relief. We made good headway. Then trouble started. There was nothing in sight, but all the while we were hiking we kept our eyes glued to the top of the mountain. About noon, as we crossed a flat piece of land the enemy opened up on us. I was a couple of hundreds of yards ahead of the rest of the company walking with Sergeant Watson. I liked him. Immediately I dropped to the ground, but the Sergeant stood up. Turning to me he said that I had better join the company, while he walked on. I must have beaten the world's record for speed. I raced back to join them, while the sergeant sedately walked ahead. Then we all went up to the top;

nothing but empty shells. We got used to that after a while and continued on our expedition.

All this time we were walking in a narrow line alongside the mountain just a couple abreast. Then it happened again. There was a lone sharpshooter up a tree, and his shot took effect. One of our men was hit, and the shot was fatal. We could not see anyone. We immediately made a makeshift litter to carry the body and took turns carrying him. Meanwhile Sergeant Watson, I hope I have his name right, stopped and looked carefully around and spied the one who fired. It was long-range shooting, but he was a marksman. He got him on the first shot.

We finally reached the village at the bottom of the mountain. The village was on the waterfront, and the wall of the mountain reached up I don't know how many thousands of feet. We quickly found a village carpenter, who made a coffin, but when we put the soldier in the coffin it was too low, and his body protruded. The carpenter had to raise the walls until it was high enough, and we buried the soldier then and there.

At one time while hiking we were as usual attacked from a height. So we spread out on the road and fired only when we saw who to fire at. It didn't last long. That was the only time I was hit, but it was a spent bullet. We were lying down near what shelter we could find. The bullet hit my shoulder. It felt like a heavy blow. I picked up the bullet, and I remember taking it home. I showed it to my parents after I was discharged. The six-week expedition was one of the best trips I ever made. The town where we buried our comrade I can never forget. The mountain that rose straight up for thousands of feet was a sight to see. From there to the ocean was only about two hundred yards. One can imagine the grandeur of the place.

LIFE IN THE FIELD

We did not stay long at that place but continued on. I had been in the service about a year and a half and felt fine. Only eighteen more months to go. Each morning we would sing out how much more time we had to serve. We had a man in our company who had only a few more months before retiring with thirty years service. We all looked up to him. I had a midnight watch that night, and as I

stood looking around I thought to myself what a peaceful night. How peaceful; I had no fear—I felt secure in myself. I knew my work; I took pride in it; I was content. About that time, when we got back to Ilo Ilo, I had never been so fit, so lean and hard, and with so good an appetite. What more does a person want? I kept away from sex, because I knew the danger of disease. I saw too much sickness around us. One fellow in particular had contracted leprosy. His face and hands were unmarked, but his body was covered. I don't know what happened to him. He was sent away. Even then I had read a medical book which is to this day authoritative.

I liked to hike and volunteered all the time. Once while I was walking No. 1 post, we heard the news that President McKinley had been shot. We put the flag at half mast.⁹

Many towns that we passed were guarded; that is, the whole town was surrounded with sticks of bamboo, and mighty sharp they were too. I recall once when a squad of us, that means eight, were searching for *insurrectos*. We stopped in a little *bario*. There was the usual little church, but no priest as no town could afford one. Well, that week we lived the life of Riley—chicken every day. We caught them and kept them in the confession booth. At the end of the week the one who was in charge of the place came and pleaded that we should pay. I asked *quanto valle* (how much)? He said *uno pesato*, that is about 15 cents for each chicken. That was easy. We paid him, and all was roses. That was the general price, we were told. Market day was a sight to see. The farmers came from all directions, and you could buy most anything very cheap. Mostly when we traveled now it was just a squad. They always asked for volunteers, and I was the first one to volunteer. It meant no guard duties, no drilling, no fatigue duties, and no kitchen police, so what more did I want? This was the life, and this was my life.

We had a 2nd lieutenant with us one day as we rowed across a river. "Just think," said the lieutenant, "what a chance to be cut down by the *insurrectos*!" Not by a long shot, I said, we could easily swim across. We might get a little bit wet. I felt cocky, the world looked good to me. I had no fear, but I was not reckless.

⁹President William McKinley was shot in Buffalo, New York on September 6, 1901. He died on September 14.

On the way back, this time we were staying in a town called 'Sarah', or so it seemed to me. I remember that day walking No. 1 post when we were attacked. No. 1 post is just in front of the post. As I gave the alarm, the troops started out to meet the insurrectos. For a moment I almost left my post and started to follow, but I remembered that I was on duty. Boy, I would have been shot for leaving my post without being properly relieved! I envied the gang going out, and here was I walking my post.

I recollect one night on duty walking around the square. It was raining and I had my poncho half on. I couldn't see much, when I almost ran plumb into an hombre. I hollered "alto." He stopped. I had my gun, and I almost shot him. I found out that he lived nearby. I told him to vamoose. There was a big square in the center of the town. All towns had a big square, the richer ones living there. I would like to describe how the women dressed. The dress was not sewed, but wrapped around their waists, barefooted all of them. The waist was simple. The shacks were very simply made. No nails, bamboo poles. Four were stuck in the ground, and the shacks were built about eight feet from the ground on bamboo poles, and the roof covered with leaves, while the caribou (carabao), that is an ox-like creature, stayed underneath in the mud. They had rings through their noses, tied with a rope. They did the plowing and everything else. Most of the land was controlled by those who had haciendas, I mean plantations, and the people worked there. The standard pay when I was there was about ten cents a day. When we got there the government paid out a dollar a day. That was fine, but then trouble started. Why should they work every day when they could make enough in one day to last a week? The best of it was that not everyone worked for the government. Food was very cheap. I would go down to the market and listen to them bargaining for some rice. I once watched an old couple arguing for a small dish of rice. I liked that old couple, so I walked over and picked up a peck, which was six times as much as they were trying to buy. I paid for it and gave it to them. How they thanked me for it. The one who ran the store looked at me, trying to make out what kind of fool I was.

Once I was sent out to destroy a hut when we were looking for insurrectos. This was so that they would have no place to stay or

food to eat. I would tell them to hide the rice; I couldn't see them go without food. You must remember I was still a kid. I hadn't even started to shave.

INSURRECTOS

The main body of *insurrectos* were scattered all over the islands. Our job was to bring them in, and when we got a rumor of some more in such and such a place, off we would go looking for them. In the woods we would find signs nailed on trees offering us a hundred dollars a month to desert and go over to them as officers. There were rumors that some did go, I'm not sure. Remember, a hundred a month in gold at that time was a lot of money, as we were getting \$15 war service. At times a squad would go out looking for *ladrones*, meaning thieves, robbers, and so on. We generally got them, but not alive. I remember several such raids. There was one particular group who were really tough. They would come into a *barrio* and clean the place up like they used to do in olden times in the West. As always, I volunteered. We didn't worry for food, we could always manage. Finally, we caught up to them. They were on top of a hill as usual. We divided our eight men, for that is all we had. Two flanked on each side and four straight up, and we started up the hill. I was on the right flank. As we were half way up, the four started shooting. I shouted to them that they were firing toward us when all at once I spied the *ladrones* on top of the hill. They were running. I believe that we all caught sight of them at the same time. Our first volley got them, and we charged up the hill. They were scattered close by. The leader in particular was a powerfully built man. He looked dangerous even dead. Half of his head was blown away. I'm sure several of us must have got him at the same time. I made a rush for his hat. It was like, or something like, the Germans used to wear in the cavalry. Before I reached him one of the squad, a French fellow named Santère, picked me up by the scruff of the neck and with his other hand picked up the hat. I was helpless in his grip, so I picked up his shoulder strap. I have since lost it. I liked Santère; he was a good-natured giant. One sad thing—among the *ladrones* there was a woman, and she too was dead. We were highly elated when we got back and reported what had happened.

As I write my mind goes back to the expedition and what took place. So many things happened that I have to stop and think. As the expedition progressed, things happened. It began to wear on the involved. A full company represented 128 men. We started with a full company. Slowly some of our men were worn out, and we had to ship them back by boat. You can imagine that when we hiked over 30 miles in one day many dropped out. By the time we had finished only 32 of us completed the expedition. As usual, I never felt better in my life. We all looked like tramps marching into the barracks. I had a picture taken when we got back, but I have not found it. That expedition made me a soldier. I knew my work and gloried in it. All the time while in the service I read everything I could get hold of. One day while sitting and thinking I recalled the things I thought when I was ten years old, and that was all I wanted was to sit among people who studied all the time. Nothing else mattered. Even at age 12 or 13 I saw the greediness in the world. I couldn't understand why people would sell whiskey, for I would see many a drunkard staggering around on the Bowery. We lived only a few blocks away.

Later I began to tackle the classics. Before I was 15 I had read *Ivanhoe*, and there I began to dream of castles and knights in golden armor. But when I read *Sartor Resartus* by Carlyle I began to think differently. That book is about a king dressed in ordinary clothes. What a difference! So I remembered having read somewhere in the Talmud the phrase *mulbish arzeeman*, which means something about honor in clothes. I remember exactly.

PHILIPPINE HISTORY

A little history of the Philippines. In 1500 Magellan sailed around the world. It took three years. When he landed in the Philippines, he was killed on the Island of Nigro (Negros), I believe that's the name. The Islands have been ruled by the Spaniards for the last three hundred years. When we got there, the conditions were deplorable. Most of them worked on plantations, or haciendas as they were called. The main dish was rice. They certainly knew how to cook rice. They would dig a hole about a foot deep, then build a fire. When the wood became red hot, they would put the iron pot in,

filled with rice. Then they would cover it with leaves; and when the rice was finished, the whole family would sit in a circle, dip their hands in, and take out a handful of rice and eat. They would keep the thumb underneath for the purpose of pushing the rice in their mouths. The rice tasted very good. I tried it. In their homes, they had a little fireplace for cooking the rice. In fact, it wasn't cooked, it was steamed. The rice was in the natural state, not like the kind we buy.

Many soldiers died of a sickness called beri beri. Many died from fever. Many got sick from diseases from the women who did not know how to take care of themselves. I do not have to mention the different diseases they caught. The hospitals were full of them, but not I. You see, before we left San Francisco for the Orient, a government doctor gave a lecture on the danger of disease and told the men to be careful. In fact, certain stuff was put in our coffee for the purpose of lessening one's desire for the opposite sex. I have forgotten the name of that stuff.¹⁰ But it was not of much help for the majority. The nature of soldiers in foreign countries is the same. One has but to read history. Whenever troops landed in any country and stayed some time, many births would occur sired by the foreign army. In order to make their skin light, the native women would put flour on their faces. Some of them were a sight. Oh, there were pretty women among them. The prettiest were the mestizas; they were a mixture of Spanish and native. In their youth they blossomed with their melting dark eyes, their brown complexions, and soft skin. Their bodies were short and plump, but soon they would become fat and out of shape. At age 30 they would lose their charm and become a lump, no grace, or anything else.

Now back to hiking and hunting for guns. Perhaps I'd better tell how it all came about. You see, when we landed in the Philippines our government handed out thousands of guns to the Filipinos to help us lick the Spaniards. When that was accomplished and we asked for the return of our guns, the natives turned around and fought us. They then had the means to fight, so it was our job to recapture them. How long did it take? The Philippine insurrec-

¹⁰Salt peter (potassium nitrate). It has no value as an anaphrodisiac, and probably never in fact was used. This is a perennial barrack room folk tale.

tion and the Spanish War lasted from 1898 to 1902. It was guerrilla warfare, and that is the hardest kind of fighting. It meant chasing them all the time, and we got the guns back piecemeal. Near the end they came in by the hundreds, because we offered them \$15 for each gun they brought in. At one time after a few hundred surrendered, we shipped the men to another island. I happened to be one of the guards on the boat. The natives are great gamblers, and we liked to gamble too. We played monte carlo. I won \$70, picture that! Our pay was \$15.60 a month wartime service, and there I was rich. One part of it was heartrending and that was separating the men from their women. But I consoled myself with the thought that they would find means of joining one another.

CAMPAIGNING

Varied indeed, was my experience. Once on a hike, traveling as a squad, we were hunting and searching for natives who had guns. We would hear a rumor and off we would go, going through the forest. We spied a native campfire. They were making breakfast. We gave them one volley, and that was that. We had become good shots and did not miss. We had really become hardened to all kinds of sights. So we sat down and finished the mud (coffee). We left the bodies there. We had to be hard. The reason was this. We would be walking along, a shot was fired, and one of our men was killed. We would look around, and all we could see was a lone native plowing, no one else around. For a long time we were puzzled. Finally we got wise after losing some more of our men. The natives would shorten the barrels of the guns and carry them under their shirts. They would fire, slip the guns under shirts, and keep plowing. After that when we saw a native plowing, we would shoot first and then look. One other thing. They had a marvelous way of hiding their guns. We would hunt all over the house and not find a gun. Where the devil did they hide it. We began to get suspicious. We knew the gun was there, but where? Then a thought came to me. You see, they pound their own rice. They have a log about five feet long, hollowed, like a shissel¹¹ in the center. They would put in some rice, and pound it with a club about 4 feet long. The center of the

¹¹Yiddish for pot.

club was thinned down, so that they could grasp it in their hands and beat the rice, shifting from one hand to the other. Underneath the log they hollowed out the ground enough to hide a gun. So now we knew where to look, and many a gun we found.

Back to the expedition again. On the way back to the barracks, we brought a prisoner who made no bones about what he was. We could not get any information from him. We tried the water cure. It didn't work. You may have read about the water cure. It is not pleasant. The method is simple. We would take 2 bullets and force them between his teeth so that he couldn't close his mouth. Then we would pour water down his throat. That did no good; he would not tell us anything. He stayed in prison for quite a while, and to tell the truth we began to like and admire him. I have seen perfectly built men, many of them, but the prisoner was outstanding. When it was my turn to guard him, I would think that I wouldn't want to meet him alone, without a gun. He was a fierce looking hombre, meaning man. Finally he turned sick, so we released him. As he walked out, he had a quiet smile on his face. I have never forgotten him, and it is now over 65 years.

Another time we were taking some prisoners across a lake. They were rowing, I was sitting at the stern, and faced them with my gun across my knees. The water was choppy. If they only knew how seasick I was, they could have knocked me over with a feather! I just sat there hoping that I wouldn't throw up. I managed to hold on until we crossed over, and I brought them in. I would like to describe how these boats are built. The way they are made they cannot sink—a long boat with two extensions reaching out on either side (i.e. outriggers). The extensions are made of bamboo. No matter how they rock they cannot turn over. The one I was in was just a long boat with no extensions.

LOCAL CUSTOMS

What do they raise in that country? Hemp, rice, sugar, tobacco, and cattle—not much in horses. Their houses are small and airy. In their markets they have all kinds of fruit. Bananas are called "sog-ging." The fruit I liked best was the mango, a yellow fruit, the size and shape of a flat potato, delicious to the tongue. I used to eat them

by the dozen. The stone inside is large and flat. There is also a fruit called breadfruit. It was like a watermelon and not bad to the taste. But other things they sold in the markets would make you sick to see and sicker to see them swallow them. There were small baskets full of black bugs. That was a delicious morsel! I watched them swallow them. They ate them with great delight. I didn't watch for long, because I couldn't stand it. But after all you must remember that they were a primitive people.

In spite of their religion they were cruel in their method of killing their chickens. They would strike them on the head and start pulling off the feathers before they were dead. I watched them. They were absolutely indifferent to the suffering of the poor chickens. I watched them once they were trying to kill a cow. They kept slashing away with their bolos. They had the poor cow tied up. I got angry and went over and shot the animal. They immediately stuck a knife in the mouth so that the animal would bleed to death quicker. On one forage we commandeered a herd of cattle and had some natives drive them in for us. That must have saved the government something on food.

The natives could not always wait for marriage. In small barrios couples would live together and children were born. When the priest would travel by, he would marry them and that was that.

While searching in one place, the floor slats gave way. Down I went through the floor and landed in a puddle, but remained standing. I don't remember whether I swore or not, but perhaps I did. The weather always being hot, I soon felt comfortable again. One reason for this was because I wore socks in my shoes. That kept my feet from getting irritated.

We were moved to another barracks on one occasion. It was a nice place, and for a couple of weeks we enjoyed staying there; but all of a sudden we were told to get out in 15 minutes and we did. The reason was that some of our boys got sick all of a sudden with malarial fever. Too many were getting sick. The reason was the place where we stayed was near a hospital ward and a fever ward at that. I was lucky as usual, but I did feel lazy while we were there. Felt a lot better when we moved from there.

TREASURE HUNT

Whenever we moved into a town we always quartered in a church if we were to stay a while. The names of the places I have long since forgotten. We were about 40 miles from Ilo Ilo. My nature being sentimental and having read a lot, I conceived the idea of hunting for treasure. I broached the subject to a couple of friends and then came questions — where to look? The answer was simple — right here. In front of the altar we began to remove the bricks. They were red bricks. While some of us worked, the rest watched us, making all kinds of remarks. I believe that most of the boys were Protestants. One was a Catholic, and he protested that it wasn't right. We paid no attention and continued to remove one stone after another. I was sure we would find something of value. After a couple of stones we came upon a coffin. The excitement grew, and we removed the cover. Nothing but bones. It must have been a good many years since the burial. What was left was the skeleton, and even that fell apart. Nothing there of any value. All this work for *imzist*¹²—that's for nothing. We put everything back in place.

We had been here about a month and had run out of tobacco. We collected some money and four of us set out in a cart for Ilo Ilo. When we got there, the first thing we did was to go to a restaurant and have a real meal. Then we procured supplies and went back. Life was soft for a while, but it did not last too long. We embarked for another town soon. I volunteered for the trip for scout duty. That was my delight, walking all day. But this time we ran into a snag. We had filled our canteens as usual. But we now needed water. There was no stream, no house, nobody at all. So finally we rested at the bottom of a hill and discussed what to do next. The fact was that the boys were ready to drop from sheer exhaustion. But, believe it or not, I was still full of pep, so I told them I would walk up the hill. It was more like a little mountain. When I reached the top, I looked around, I had taken a half dozen canteens with me just in case. I saw water, so I called down and told them to wait, that I would fill the canteens and bring them down, which I did. We then marched on and came to an abandoned house. In fact it was an abandoned barrio. We found a place to stay for the night. But

¹²Yiddish: wasted effort; all for nothing.

the mosquitos knew better. We soon found out why the place was abandoned. It seemed to us that this was hell. All of our lives we had never seen a place like it. How we got through that night I really don't know. And so we named that place Mosquito Town. Oh, there are plenty of mosquitos in the Philippines, but not like that. We all used nets when we slept. We would put them over our hammocks and sleep as soundly as logs.

MANILA

I often think of the great thrill I felt when we sailed from Honolulu to Manila. It was surely a long trip of thousands and thousands of miles. We had nothing to do but watch the waves rolling along. The waves seemed gentle and soft. They would rise to a tremendous height and so would the ship roll along, rising and settling. As you walked toward the bow of the ship, as the bow was lifting, you would seem to be pushed back, forcing you to slow up. On the other hand, when the bow dropped, you would be running as down a hill. I often would lie flat on my stomach at the bow of the ship and enjoy myself very much. Once sailing from Manila to Panay Island, we all expressed wonder at the calm sea—it was like glass, so smooth, so calm, and serene. Years later I understood why Manila was called The Pearl of the Orient. It surely was.

I would not know Manila if I went there now. But all I can remember is the main street along the waterfront, ships tied to the docks, and natives loading and unloading. But I did notice how they kept tab of the sacks being loaded. Every time a sack was loaded or unloaded the native would get some kind of a tag which he put in his pocket. They were pretty fast, so it must have been piece work. Life there in general went on peacefully. People did not hurry except as I have described. It was fascinating to watch a boat full of fishermen paddling in unison; their strokes were even and regular and at times you could hear them singing as they were paddling their oars.

Their main tool was the bolo. With it they could clear a forest, chop down bamboo trees, build their houses, crack open coconuts. How they could climb the coconut trees! They chopped notches as they climbed, and up they would go like a monkey. The native

drink is called tuba,¹³ the sap from a tree. Believe me! one who drank too much tuba would become three sheets in the wind. They also made a kind of drink from rice. Tuba did not taste bad, but one could get fooled by it.

Strange part of it is that in a climate like that of Manila or the rest of the Islands with time on their hands men will naturally have a desire for a drink. Where does one go to when ashore? To the nearest bar-room. If three or four went together, one would set up the drinks, the next one would follow, and the next, and so on. By the time they were ready to order dinner, all were in a good mood and real pals.

INCIDENTS

I am reminded of an incident that occurred on Panay. We were hiking home from a trip, a successful one at that. We had a corporal with us who was silent most of the time. He did his duty well. There had been quite a lot of fighting, and we were coming back in a jubilant mood. As we got to the barracks something went wrong with him. He became berserk, and grabbed his gun and began shooting in all directions. We jumped him, tied him up, and took him away. What happened to him, I don't remember.

I distinctly recall an event that occurred when I was in Jaro Jaro. We were stationed there on and off, when we were not chasing the *insurrectos* or *ladrones*. While walking on the main street I saw an enlisted man (a sergeant I believe) talking to an officer. Suddenly the officer raised his hand and slapped the sergeant. Then the officer leaned back and put his hand on his gun. The officers always carried revolvers. I stood there and watched the two facing each other. I knew, of course, that had the soldier put his hand to his gun the officer would have killed him then and there. I do not know what they said to each other. But I did know that the sergeant was a better man than the officer. The lieutenant was just a shavetail, and we did not have much use for them, even if they had graduated from West Point. I waited for what was to follow. Standing erect, the sergeant raised his hand, saluted, and quietly said, "Thank you, sir."

¹³Fermented juice of the cocoanut palm. Stored in a tube cut from a section of bamboo.

What happened later I can't recall; I can still visualize the two of them facing each other with the officer's hand on his revolver. It could well be that later on the tables were turned. It was well known that some of the officers had been killed while engaged in battles, and it was not always from the enemy guns.

I am writing about stories that one heard at the front. I can't vouch for them, but I do believe such things happened, especially in the case of a certain general on Luzon Island. On the other hand, we had an officer in our company who marched with us, hour after hour, carrying a rifle on his shoulder, as if he was on parade ground. We tired and carried our rifles anyway we felt like, but not our officer. Straight as a die he marched with us for miles on end. I believe we named him the "Dynamite Cruiser." He was good, and we liked him very much, he was a soldier from head to foot. I can't recall his name. He was not afraid and did not ask us to do what he would not do himself.

One never knows whom one might meet. We had been hiking for some time. There were only two of us. I thought I would like to buy some eggs. As we passed a little house, I spied an old man sitting quietly and smoking. So I approached him and in broken Spanish asked him if he had some eggs to sell. He looked at me for a moment, and then said in English, "Im sorry, son, I haven't any." He spoke perfect English. Then he told us about his life—he had spent 40 years traveling all over the world and finally settled down. He was a little dried up fellow but clean and friendly. We had quite a talk. I had then been in the islands almost 2 years.

There were rumors and rumors about going to China, and we hoped we would be sent there. For Russia was having a revolution, and soon several countries would be attacking China. Every day we heard rumors to that effect, but we did not go. Of course China lost; there were too many countries against her. China had to pay a big indemnity. The name of that war was called The Boxer Rebellion.¹⁴ I saw the arms they fought with. The blade was four feet long and the handle equally as long. I saw them in a museum. I wouldn't want to face one of them. The Boxers, as they were called, were al-

¹⁴Boxer Rebellion lasted from June to August 1900.

most giants in stature. They lived in the northern part of China. From that time the Empress lost what she had. She had ruled with an iron hand. The capital was Peking.

CAPIZ

One of our most important trips was to Capiz on Panay, a large city alongside of a river. It flowed full stream, for if you dived in and started to swim across, you would land about fifty feet downstream. I soon found that out. Being a strong swimmer, I enjoyed fighting the tide; but in spite of my efforts, I landed some distance below.

Before we arrived at Capiz we stayed in a small town about two miles distant. I can't recall its name. It was also near a river where we went swimming every day. One day there was fight among the natives, and one of them disappeared. I knew the man, a young boy pleasant and easy-going. Rumor had it that he was a spy for the insurgents. The people in town knew it. The result was that while I was swimming I spied a body floating. I had never seen a drowned man floating before. His face was blown up round like a rubber ball, no shape of nose or anything. It was as if someone pumped it full of air under pressure. Not a pleasant sight I assure you. I had seen many dead ones and was used to that, but not a drowned body. To tell the truth, I didn't care to see any more of that kind.

Capiz was a nice city. I went horseback riding and enjoyed riding around the town. It was a busy city with lots of things going on.

Everybody smoked, male and female, young and old; and all are gamblers. On Sundays they would watch cock fights. They would fasten a three-inch blade to the leg of each rooster and make them fight until one was killed. The natives bet on the game. I didn't care for that, so I just watched it once.

The best rope comes from Manila. That is why, when one speaks of rope, it is always Manila rope. Manila rope was well known all over the world. All sailing ships from all parts of the world used it. I believe our Navy used it too. There were many redwood trees on the island. Germany had a foothold there too. I saw lots of merchandise marked from Germany. Many Chinese had businesses there, and I even met some Greeks who had small businesses. Of course

the Japanese were there in great numbers. They were doing lots of fishing; but in the main, they were taking soundings; that is, finding out how deep the water was around the coast. Later on this was verified during World War II. I learned more of this later when I joined the Navy.

To check the length of time of Capt. Gordon's expedition I looked up my discharge papers. It reads that the main part of it lasted from May 6, 1900 to May 15, 1900, but after that we continued on to other places. In all it took six weeks. The main trip, that is, Captain Gordon's expedition, lasted only nine days. That trip was through Antique Province.

I recall one trip we took at night in the town where we were stationed. I believe that there were three of us. As usual a rumor came to us about one fellow we were looking for. We knew the house in which he lived. It was a starry night, the weather as usual was fine. I remember crossing some rice paddies, leaping from one to another. We came to the house, knocked and entered. The lady of the house was sitting and knitting, saying nothing. We began our search and hunted all over without success. Finally we sat down and waited. Two sat on chairs, while I sat on the floor with my head resting on a sack of rice right beneath the table. We talked and tried to find out when he would be back, but the lady did not know. So we got up and left. The next day we found out that he was there all the time; where did he hide? In back of the rice sacks. If I were alone, I never would have been able to come back, for he could have easily cut my head off.

I just had about finished two years of service when a letter came from home. I very seldom would hear from my folks. They had moved from Norwich, Connecticut to Colchester, Connecticut on a farm at that. What did they want? *Gelt*.¹⁵ They wanted to buy a horse and wagon. How much I sent them I really can't remember, but it was enough to buy a horse and wagon. I then began to dream of coming home to a farm, for I had always liked farming. But alas! it wasn't to be that way. For when I did come home they were living in Providence, Rhode Island.

¹⁵Money. (Yiddish)

GUARDING THE PAY CHEST

One night two of us were assigned the duty of sitting in a room with guns on our knees, meditating about what to do with so much money, if it were ours. In my mind I had bought out the whole town. I had a very interesting novel with me, so I started to read. Before I knew it, it was time for me to be relieved; but I was very much interested in the story. So I woke up my relief and told him to go back to sleep. I said I wanted to finish the story. I did double duty, but I finished the story.

GOING HOME

There was now rumor after rumor about going home. At that time I had two years service, but it was another four months before we actually left for home. Some remained behind, the reason being that foreign service counted double time for retirement. That meant that if one stayed there 15 years, it would mean 30 and eligibility to retire. Had I stayed there I would have been only 33 years old and able to retire.

We left for the U.S.A. after 2 years and 4 months of service. When we arrived at San Francisco, we stayed only a short time and then left for Cheyenne, Wyoming. We went to Fort D. A. Russell. I remained there until I was discharged on March 20, 1902. One is discharged a day earlier; that is the rule. I had a wonderful time there. Life was a cinch. We were well fed. Only guard duty, fatigue duty, kitchen police. Drill as usual. Winter was coming on, and we were given winter clothes. For guard duty at night we wore a fur coat made from bear skin. Believe me, it was heavy. I used to put the butt of the gun in my pocket, and as I wore heavy mittens I was really comfortable. Every half hour we used to call out the hour, and it went something like this: "Half past two and all is well!" Around the officers' homes we would shout at the top of our voices. I used to shout something like: "Half past two and cold as hell!" The cavalry which had been riding about the post for 2 hours found it difficult to dismount as it was so cold. It was at times 40 below zero. But the air was so dry that you didn't mind it much. I would walk out without a hat, but I was cautioned not to as I might freeze my ears off. I truly believe that this was real life. We would go to shows whenever they came, riding into town with horse and wagon. We had our

own pond where we would cut our own ice, saw it in blocks, and stow it away for the summer. A 2nd Lieutenant would receive the great sum of \$116 a month. A private now receives almost \$100. The time grew short for me, and I began to pack my goods. Believe it or not, when I began to shake the hands of my comrades, bidding them goodbye, there were tears in my eyes. It had been my home for 3 years. We had all been through many a hardship, as well as good times. I was happy every day I was in the service. I had no regrets. I had no enemies.

The time came. I received my discharge from the Army, my health record was excellent. Not one day of sickness; not many could say as much. On my way home I stopped at Washington, D.C., and there I visited many places, including George Washington's home. Everything in Washington looked good to me. I stopped at the White House and waited for the President. He came in on horse-back; I saluted him, and he saluted me. That was good enough for me.

Shortly after my arrival home my sister Lena was married. Who do you suppose helped? That was expected, and I didn't mind.

I JOIN THE NAVY

On November 4, 1902 I joined the Navy. Why did I make up my mind to join? When I came home from the Army flush and full of spirits, I wanted to go to work. My father suggested that I see the Governor. He thought that with my being a soldier and home from the War I was sure of getting a job. I told him it wouldn't work, but he insisted. We both went and saw the Governor of Rhode Island where my family now lived. The Governor received us kindly, and I told him why we came to see him. He smiled and said, son. I have college graduates waiting for an opening. I knew then that with my schooling I who had never seen a college or even a high school and who had only had 3 years schooling from age ten to thirteen-and-a-half did not have a chance. Father couldn't see it, but finally I made him understand.

Then the thought came to me to be a letter carrier. I filed an application at the post office and then started to study. I bought a geography and knew where to find all the states, the main rivers, the capitals, and so on. In the meantime I was working, doing all kinds



of jobs. I helped father and got \$3 a week. I tried to get a job in a mill and was offered \$6 a week. Then I became a fireman in a shop on Allens Ave. in Providence and made \$9 a week. The time for examination came. I took the test and waited and waited, but lost patience and decided to join the Navy. I wanted to go into the hospital corps, but there were no vacancies. So I joined the engineering group which meant starting in the fire room. What did I care. I was on a ship. I was sent to Boston Navy Yard to an old ship where all the recruits went. It was the old WABASH which was in the service during the Civil War, and now it was tied to the dock. It was roomy, and as long as it was a ship, a navy ship, I liked it. We all slept in hammocks. The food was good, beans on Wednesday and Sunday—Boston baked beans and Boston was famous for them.

There I met one whose friendship lasted for many a decade, his name C. L. Smith. He was 6 foot 4½ inches tall, almost a foot taller than I. He came directly from a farm, born in North Brookfield, Massachusetts. We would go on leave together and understood each other mighty well. He was a Greek scholar and also knew Latin. He was really a fine chap. I was 2 years older than he, but I don't know whether he is alive now.

In December we were sent to Kittery, Maine. our ship the U.S.S. Raleigh, a cruiser which made a name for herself. Of that more later. Staying in Kittery Navy Yard for a while was good for us. We used to get liberty and go across on a ferry boat to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, which was just across the river. It was pleasant there, and it was winter time. Had I known about the Bahai Faith then I surely would have taken a trip to Green Acre,¹⁶ which was only 4 miles from where we were. The food was good, our appetites were better, so why complain. Inside of a month we were sent to Brooklyn Navy Yard, and there we got ready for the trip to the Orient.

We loaded the ship with extra coal. After the bunkers were full, we loaded coal on deck in bags. On both sides of the decks we packed thousands of bags of coal. Then we covered them with canvas and tied them. Every day we would shoot down bags of coal as fast as we burned them up. It wasn't long before the deck was clean and

¹⁶A Bahai summer school is conducted at Eliot, Maine, some four or five miles from Kittery.

scrubbed snow white. I had nothing to do with that. I belonged to the black gang, which was in the fire room. It didn't take me long to be a fireman. I enjoyed working hard. It did me a lot of good, and kept me in trim, or should I say in the pink. Off duty I would walk the deck while 99 percent of the boys stayed below deck. It was pleasant to drink in the fresh air. It sure was exhilarating. My friend Smith stayed below decks, so I got me a pal by the name of Sullivan. He was a quiet Irishman, very little to say. He was about 15 years older than I, but we got along just fine. My friend Smith loved to discuss books, and so did I. He knew many things for a farmer's son. T'was winter time when we left Brooklyn, N. Y. The Atlantic Ocean was choppy, and the air was brisk and rather cold.

FIRST CRUISE

What a difference; before I always hiked, and now I sailed the briny deep. The wind blowing, the ship rolling, it took me some time to train my legs and to learn to balance. I soon got used to it and did not mind it at all when it really got rough.

It wasn't long before we passed by Gibraltar. It was some rock to behold! We did not stop there then.

MARSEILLE

We stopped in Marseille, which is pronounced "Marsay." There I went ashore and strolled on the main boulevard. It is a street that runs for miles, trees on both sides and seats to rest. If you go into a rest room you have to pay a small fee; but the trouble is there are no doors and the family sits within sight. Of course it wasn't the best neighborhood.

The street is alongside of the docks. For hours the two of us walked the main street. As we stopped only for 24 hours we couldn't take in too much. However we were both young, and so we walked hour after hour. When we got hungry and were looking around for a restaurant, a fine-looking gentleman stopped us and asked if he could help us. We told him what we wanted. By the way, he spoke perfect English. At that time, 1902, men wore moustaches and goatees. He was dressed in fine clothes. He directed us to a fine restaurant, and there we went and ordered a real meal. The food was excellent, and

the music worth listening to. Incidentally, the band were all women, and they were Austrians. I had never seen anything like them. They were dressed just right. They all had classic features and looked very intelligent. They played music that appealed to me very much. Then and there I made a vow that I was going to learn to play some instrument.

After we finished the meal, we went back to the docks. They had stone steps; they were all very much worn. I inquired about the steps and was told that the Children's Crusade had walked there. No wonder they were so worn. My mind went back to the stories I had read. You see I already had read about the Crusades. I was in luck again this time. The one I went ashore with could speak French, which made it easy for me. The city is an old city, and its history is long. But what can one do in twenty-four hours? By the way we met a young man who spoke five languages. We talked quite a while. I asked what his ambition was. You could have knocked me over with a feather when he told us his ambition was to be a gentleman's gentleman. His father was one. I looked at him, neat as a pin, well dressed, and what an ambition!

We also met a young French soldier. He looked no more than 20. My friend spoke to him and learned that he was in the Army. He was married, had two children, and was perfectly contented, as the government took care of everything. While I on the other hand was dreaming of many things.

Late that night my shipmate and I decided to walk in the most dangerous part of the city. I had read many stories of that city long before I ever thought of being there. So we both walked, hoping some one would try to hold us up. What funny looking places we walked! To tell the truth, we did not see a living soul.

VILLEFRANCHE AND MONTE CARLO

We put in at Villefranche near Monte Carlo. It was a beautiful place with good roads. One could go down to the waterfront. There were many yachts there, anchored and slightly rolling, or rather gently bobbing. Must be lots of millionaires around. They were the least concern to me. I never lost any sleep thinking of them. It was a pleasure riding around in a car. I would pay my fare and get a lot

of change, but ask me what it was? I looked at it, but it was all Greek to me. We rode a great deal on cars and busses. We would go to Monte Carlo from there and watch the people go it. It was a dream of mine to go in and make a bet, but no enlisted men were allowed. Had we stayed long enough there I would have bought a civilian suit and got in, but we had no time for that. One could see dozens of yachts anchored around there. Thoughts would come to my mind of riches and being able to do what I would like to. But after all, one can dream.

Monte Carlo was a beautiful sight and the greatest gambling place in the world. The Prince of Monaco makes his living from that place. I walked down to it, but they wouldn't let me in, being in uniform. Gol ding it! I only wanted to make one bet.

THE SUEZ CANAL

Soon we were on our way to the Suez Canal. The weather began to get warmer and then hot. The Suez Canal itself is 98 miles long, that is, the part they dug. After that you run over a sea. It is flat all the way. So it was like digging a plain ditch. The first part of the Canal runs from the Mediterranean Sea. From it you soon enter the Red Sea. Africa is on the right—it is really Egypt. The ditch allowed just room enough for a ship to go through. Each side was continually being repaired. We went swimming in the open water; we jumped in overalls and all. The water was really warm! As we traversed the Canal, we could see families walking along the shore, a whole string of children, the head of the family walking in the lead, wife next, and the children trailing behind.

ADEN

Then we went on to Aden, Arabia, which was then controlled by the British. Aden is a city well worth seeing. There my friend Smith and I went sightseeing and sights we surely saw. First we had a dinner, and what a dinner! It was hot, and we sat in a large dining room, a large fan overhead. A native lay on the floor, a string tied to his big toe, and there he was pulling the string back and forth lying as unconcerned as any one could possibly be; and the fan moving as his toe moved, keeping us quite comfortable. The fan was about

8 feet wide. Price of the dinner, a real meal with everything imaginable, was just 75¢ apiece. So for \$1.50 both of us dined like kings.

After dinner we took in the town. We hired a carriage driven by two horses and off we went. The heat was terrific, but we were comfortable. Our inner selves were full, and we felt at peace with the world.

Exposing the bust—No one paid much attention to the women's lack of clothing above the waist. The women walked along with easy stride. One in particular had a child strapped to her back and was nursing him. How? You can imagine. This was a powerful young woman and was able to extend her breast over her shoulders, and the infant nursed contentedly. A common sight.

It is said that in Aden rain falls once every 11 years. The rocks were dark from the heat. Yet Aden was a busy city. We came by a well, the only one we saw. The name of the well was Solomon's Well. Around the well was grass. I tried to imagine: Did Solomon really build that well?

The people were really dark. I saw one person wearing a yarmulka.¹⁷ His face was that of a white man; his features were small and delicate. I think he was Jewish. We did not stay there over night, therefore had no chance to explore further.

COLUMBIA, CEYLON

We are now in the Indian Ocean heading for Colombia, Ceylon. I believe it is an island. It is controlled by the British, and that is evident wherever we walked; it is a world-famous city. It is kept very clean and practically spotless. It is famous for its banyan trees. What kind of a tree is it? The banyan tree does not grow too tall, but the branches grow sideways and down into the ground again, and from them another tree takes root, and so on. I've seen acre after acre of banyan trees. I don't know what the wood is used for. After all, we only stayed there 24 hours.

So we kept hopping around. I visited the museum. Ceylon is noted for its tea. What caught my eye in the museum were the little

¹⁷Yarmulka, skull cap worn by Hebrew males in accordance with Orthodox Jewish custom.

baskets of tea and the prices marked on each basket. They ran as high as five pounds British money for a pound of tea. I don't remember clearly what a pound was worth in dollars at that time. I think it was \$5 which would make the tea \$25 a pound. The name of the man who owned all that tea was Sir Thomas Lipton, whose tea is famous all over the world. In fact, I brought some home.

The fact is, I was more interested in their religion. They were Hindus of a different kind. When one died, they would leave the body naked in the temple; and the vultures which hovered around all the time would swoop down and leave nothing but the bones. I went around visiting different temples. How much can one see and take in in one day? I saw a place called the Temple of the Tooth; I think that is what they called it. The structure looked like teeth, or at least the shape of the stone. I watched as the natives would pass by and put some flowers in front, pray, and walk away.

Coming back to the museum what interested me was an apple on a plate inside the glass case and what do you suppose was written there. Well, it is supposed to be part of the apple that Adam and Eve took a bite of. Why they put that there I suppose was to impress the natives about the story of Adam and Eve.

The people there drive around in rickshaws, so I took a few rides. Just as there were beautiful sights, so also there were the opposite. The people were hard working and quiet. I also visited the missionaries and those who worked for them. They could speak English, were dressed better, and looked complacent. I spoke to one stenographer; the girl was pleasant and talked easily. The time soon came to go back to the ship

We pulled out and headed for Singapore, the capital of Malay. What a bustling place. It was a large city; I believe it had a population of several million people of many nationalities. The docks were full of ships, loading and unloading continually. Broad streets, and everywhere we went there was something new to see. There was one trouble, however. Pay day was not until the next day, and we were walking around without a dime. There were five of us together; and as we walked by barroom after barroom with no money to buy a drink, we would look into each saloon as we walked by. I had a

purpose in so doing, you see. In the East all bars are attended by women. As we walked by one I all at once noticed one who looked Jewish. So I said "Let's go in here, but don't say anything, just listen." We walked in and I addressed her in plain *mamaloshen*.¹⁸ She was very surprised, but wasn't sure that I was Jewish. So I kept on talking for quite a while. I told her that I wanted to borrow \$10 and that I would give it back the next day with interest. Her husband was away, and she was afraid to take a chance. But I finally persuaded her, and she opened the drawer and handed me \$10. I told her we would be back later. So here we were with \$10, and off we went living the life of Riley. My pals looked at me and thought I could speak any language.

Hours later we came back broke. We were riding in rickshaws and had no money to pay them. I borrowed some more. But now the gang was really hopped and could barely stand on their feet. The poor woman was scared to death, so I told her to lock the four in one room and that there would be no trouble at all. In fact, I locked the door myself. The next morning I told her to send her boy on board the ship as we were getting paid that day. He came with an uncle of his. I got the gang together and collected twice the amount of the bill. I wrote in Yiddish thanking her for everything. I could write a little Yiddish at that time. I'm willing to wager that she would never forget us!

During that day as we walked around to see the sights we took in all we could, and there was plenty to see. One thing I can never forget was a funeral parade. Hundreds of natives walking and dressed in the most fantastic outfits; some with big heads made out of paper and faces not pleasant to view. The purpose was to scare the devil, chanting as they walked. I suppose they were the official mourners. They surely did a good job, waving and beating and making enough noise to wake the dead.

The population there was not afraid of the white folks, as they were a thousand to one. What makes me think so is that in some windows I saw pictures of a giant Chinese with a big knife cutting off a white man's head with blood dripping from the severed head.

¹⁸Momma Lushen. Yiddish for "mother tongue", i.e., Yiddish.

INCHON, KOREA

Again after only one day's visit off we sailed again and this time to Manila or it could have been to Chemulpo (i.e., Inchon) Corea, or Korea—it's spelled differently now. I really don't remember which one we came to first. In Chemulpo we went ashore. The Koreans wore high hats, the natives, or peasants, were hard workers. They carried tremendous loads on their backs. Very seldom did one see any with a sign of a beard or mustache. They appeared to me as if no hair grew on their faces. Japan ruled them with an iron hand. There was a rumor about that a missionary's daughter had married one of the elite, or royalty. Superstition was rife among them.

Chemulpo is on the waterfront. Also it was the end of the great Chinese wall that was built many hundreds of years ago, perhaps a thousand or more years ago. I decided to visit the great wall of China. I hired a horse, a small hardy horse. Now picture a sailor riding horseback. The streets there are very narrow, so that you can almost reach across from one side to the other. The sidewalks were about 2 feet wide, and the street was like a lane. So here was I riding and not feeling too well, jogging along. But I did reach the wall. Many stones have loosened and were lying all over. The wall was about 30 feet high where I was and as many feet wide. In reading about it I found that the wall was 1500 miles long. So I did see the end of the great wall of China, which ended in Chemulpo, Korea.

In 1894 Russia had ordered two battle cruisers to be built. They were built in Philadelphia. The names were the Koritz and the Varriay.¹⁹ During the war between Russia and Japan (1904-05) one of the cruisers, the Koritz, was chased by the Japanese. They couldn't escape, so the Russians sank their own ship offshore. We could see it when the tide was low, just the mast and a little more.

On our way to Manila we spied a Russian battleship headed for Manila. We gave chase, but could not catch up to her. She stayed out ahead of us during a two day chase. She landed in Manila and remained until the war was over. They had lots of wounded aboard, so our government took care of them.

¹⁹Listed in *Jane's Fighting Ships* for 1905 as the *Variag* and the *Korietz*. The events referred to constituted the Battle of Chemulpo (now Inchon, Korea), which took place on February 9, 1904. The *Variag* was grounded with 13 killed (of whom 11 were drowned) and 62 wounded. The *Korietz* sustained 1 wounded.

Strange stories were told, and one of them was that the Russians had won the sea battle but did not know it, that the Japanese were out of ammunition. Who will ever know the true story of the Japanese that captured Valliwoodstock (i.e., Vladivostok). It was supposed to be impregnable. More about it later.

SHANGHAI

When I was in Shanghai the city was full of Russian soldiers, and they were loaded with money. Question: Where did they get it? It is well known that Russian soldiers or Russian naval men never had much money. Their pay infinitely small, a few cents a day. The story as we got it was that the Japanese could never have taken that fortification—it was impregnable. The Russian ammunition was tampered with out of spite. I heard, but I can't prove, that the Japanese paid six million rubles in bribes, and that is how it was taken.

The proof is that we could not buy a drink, the Russians paid for it. I made friends with some of them. Where? In the barrooms, of course. I had learned to play chopsticks, as I called it, on the piano and they danced around. They would not let me stop and so I thumped away. But now for the payoff. I met a stranger in the barroom. He looked hungry and forlorn; he was cold and miserable. I asked him if he was hungry. I saw that he was Jewish, and that he was a refugee from Russia, or rather that part in Siberia that belonged to Russia. I ordered drinks, and he warmed up a little. Then he sat down at the piano. How he could play! I asked him to sit down and ordered the best meal in the house for him. I was thankful that I could pay the host after he had finished and was warmed up. Then he sat down and really began to play. Smith and I sat there, and how we enjoyed listening to him! The Russians sat spellbound and quiet. They had never heard such music. I made a vow that should I marry and have a family I would make certain that they would know how to play an instrument, but only one of my children has followed through in music.

Another surprise awaited us that night. The owner of the place was also Jewish. When he heard the man play, he went upstairs and came down with a violin. A cripple, he limped to the piano, and spoke some words to the man. He put the violin to his chin—what

music! They were both masters. The thought came to me that I must learn to play. I told Smith, and to my surprise he told me that he would teach me to read music if I bought a music book.

A new world opened up for me. In Shanghai, somehow, I acquired a mandolin—where, I can't recall. I would go down below deck, find a niche and practice. It was wonderful to know how to read and really get a sound. I bought several different pieces and was in heaven.

Later on I became acquainted with another fellow who also learned to read music and knew time. He helped a great deal. But I must have made a terrible noise, as one day my mandolin received a sea burial. That did not stop me. I bought another one and kept it locked, and continued my practice.

YOKOHAMA

Later we sailed for Yokohama, Japan through the inland sea. I had never seen such beautiful scenery. For four days we sailed through it. What makes it so beautiful is the hundreds of little islands, some no bigger than a few acres, people living on most all of them. The sea was perfectly calm. Finally, we arrived in Yokohama. What a city! There was a breakwater before we got in, a wall of rocks extending for quite a distance. It was said that we the sailors helped to pay for it. How? All the fines we paid went towards it. We stayed there on and off for over a year.

The city of Yokohama is well worth seeing. It is a large city, with many worthwhile things to see—the strange customs, the dress. The men-folk wore clothes which designated their trade, for example the butchers.

There were many temples. The outstanding religion was Shinto, and there were also many Buddhists. In their temples were many Gods, each representing a different kind of weather, some not so pleasant to look at. Priests were walking about, and by their appearance you could tell where they belonged.

The people are the greatest imitators in the world. They could imitate anything made in any country anywhere. For instance, in the World's Fair of that time the United States made a tiny needle, believing it was the smallest in the world. The Japanese made a smaller one and put five needles in it! In the short period since our

first American ships landed under Commodore Matthew C. Perry in 1853 and they had sent their representatives to the United States to study in our schools, they picked up knowledge so fast that it was amazing. Our government taught them everything we knew in science, invention, and machinery—also the ways of the military in tactics and in construction of guns and materiel. The Japanese were quick to learn modern warfare. All of this they gathered from us. Similarly they sent their students all over the world and gathered all the knowledge possible. This all ended in World War II and disaster. What they did not understand was something special in the American character.

I was making good progress on the mandolin. We had an older man who could play the violin very well, so we assembled a half dozen musicians. They could all really play, but not I. I could merely play songs. We had a colored seaman who played the mandolin like nobody I'd ever heard. He was left handed, so that the strings were reversed. After practising for weeks, we played in the theatre and made seven hundred dollars. We donated it to the school. For that we were invited to a party, a tea party at that.

There, I met a grand old lady with whom I became great friends. When I went ashore I would visit her. I liked her very much, and besides she was a good cook. In our talk one day she told me that her grandmother was Jewish. That made her friendlier than ever. She was in her seventies and had grandsons who were officers in the British Navy. One day I met her grandsons and me belonging to the black gang. You know of course that the English are not as a rule loquacious, and here I was sitting at the table with them. They were real gentlemen and polite in every way. While I was thinking of how to start a conversation and to get them talking, a thought came to me of a book I had read and had studied a great deal. The author's name I can't remember, but it was about phrenology, the study of the bumps on your head. I used to practice that on the boys aboard the ship.

So when I mentioned the subject, their eyes lit up, for they were very much interested in it. So there I was, right at home with that subject. Besides, I was studying Palmistry. But I kept that in the background. A good time was had by all, and thereafter I was more than welcome.

A minister came aboard to deliver a lecture, and said we were welcome to visit. I did, but only once. When I got there and rang the bell, a Japanese servant opened the door, looked at me, and said, "your aim please?" I was well prepared, and took out my card and gave it to him. In a moment he came back and ushered me in. The minister was polite, spoke carefully, glanced at his watch. I smiled slightly, and in a moment I was up, told him I enjoyed the visit, and went "Never again", I said to myself.

TOKYO

I told my friend about the visit. Smith and I decided to go to Tokyo. So we hired bicycles and started for Tokyo. We made a pact between us. Should one get stuck and be unable to go, the other was to go alone; and that is just what happened. Smith's bike got stuck, and so I continued on alone.

On the way I had passed a town called Karo, (i.e., Kamakura), it was an ancient capital of Japan and there stood the ancient statue named Daibutsu. Inside of it is a temple; it is forty-seven feet high. The eyes are five by eight inches, and they are made of pure gold. The hand is covered with what seemed like flowers, but not quite. It is supposed to resemble the fruition of life. The expression of the eyes I will always remember; it is impossible for me to forget. Why? Because when you look at them there is a look of serenity beyond belief. I have seen statues of generals, kings, and great men, but they all are put in the shade alongside of this one.

I stood there for hours and gazed at him. It seemed to me that the statue and what it represented was that he had conquered life and death, and was far beyond physical existence—for the look represented eternity.

There were signs written in many languages not to touch anything or to destroy. Then I headed for Tokyo. As soon as I arrived there, I visited the palace of the Emperor. I got as far as the gate; the place was surrounded by a moat. I crossed the bridge, but that is as far as I was permitted to go. That was in 1903.

What a city, a bustling city teeming with life. I can just imagine what it must be like now. I walked for miles seeing the hustling that was going on. I would like to tell you how the women dress their

hair. It is a ritual and takes hours and hours to do. But when it is finished, it will keep for days on end. Even when they sleep it does not move the hair out of place. The reason is that they sleep with their neck on a saddle rest which keeps the hair off of the pillow. Their dress is rather fascinating and colorful, their small hands sticking out of their sleeves.

In the restaurants, they are well trained to serve, and it was nice to see how they went about their work, quietly and proficiently. When the men served, it was with politeness and quick silent movements. I did not take to them very easily, except that when I stopped in country places they were different. Whenever I walked into a home in the countryside, one would be received with kindness. You felt it. Of course we had to remove our shoes upon entering.

We happened to be there on the Fourth of July; their display of fireworks beat ours to a frazzle. It was on the waterfront. Large frames were erected, and you can't imagine the different kinds of fireworks. I have not ever seen anything like it at home. But the natives acted differently after the war with Russia (i.e. after 1905). They showed their pride and at times their dislike of us. The reason is that they had grown too fast, and after having beaten a country like Russia, they had big ideas.

The people were humble and prudent; they had pride in their Emperor who was supposed to be born not like an ordinary human being. They would readily give their lives without complaint for the Emperor. The proof of what I say, was proven in World War II.

EAST INDIES

While in the East we made many trips, among them to Borneo, where we stopped for a while. One half of Borneo belonged to England and the other half to the Dutch. We also stopped at Sumatra, and in Java. In one of these places, we buried one of our men and I was one of the pall-bearers. We had to carry the body quite a distance. At one time we buried one of our men at sea.

We spent lots of time in Shanghai. One place where Smith and I went, we found a restaurant; the food was very good. It was run by a grandmother, her daughter, and granddaughter. One day while we were eating, I heard the grandmother talking to her daughter in plain

mamaloshen. I said to Smith that we had it made. I broke in; you can imagine how surprised they were. I told the gang aboard the ship, and soon the place was crowded all the time.

I Put My Foot In. The story is that we had a drill one morning different from all the others. The Admiral of our fleet, whose name was Evans, an officer who had been in the Civil War and was wounded in that war. He was wounded in the leg and limped when he walked. We named him Gimpy Evans. He came aboard our ship to watch us drill. Our Captain's name was Nazro, that is how I remember it.

Now this drill was a special drill. The deck division leaves the ship and while they are gone, the Engineer's Division, known as the black gang, goes on deck to man the big guns. I was assigned to a five inch gun. The Admiral was walking around the deck; he stopped where I was standing, looked at me, then turned to our Captain and said, "Evidently this man knows nothing about this gun." Before our Captain Nazro could answer, I turned to the Admiral and said, "Sir, how could you expect us to know anything about these guns, when we never have been trained to use them?" Then our captain quickly spoke to the Admiral, saying that I belonged to the Engineer's Division. The Admiral answered, "I can readily see that." Well, the pay-off was that the next day an order came through that we were to drill and learn something about the big guns; so—we had more work on our hands. That's what I got for trying to be so smart. But, when I got thinking about it, I didn't see how I could have answered any other way.

When I first joined the Navy, my father decided to try to get me out of the Navy, so what did he do? He went to Washington to see the President, but he only saw the Vice President. How he got in, I'll never know, but he did. Father told him that I was losing weight; what else he said I don't know. The pay-off was that I was suddenly called to the Captain's office, and there was our ship's doctor, who gave me a thorough examination. Why, I did not know until later. What was the report? I had gained weight since I enlisted and was in perfect condition. Of course, I was not discharged, and besides I did not want a discharge. But that wasn't all. Later I received a letter from my Dad that I owed him money for the trip. What could I do, but pay it? That was how parents were at that time.

MONSOON

I would like to describe a trip during which we hit a monsoon. It was in the Indian Ocean. It comes in periodical seasons. Smith and I stood at the rail hanging on and we decided that it wasn't rough enough. When the waves hit the deck, they bent the stanchions below; stanchions are steel posts holding the decks. The seas washed some life boats away and broke the bridge where the steering wheel was. It was really rough. Yet Smith and I hung on to the railing; we didn't think that it was rough enough.

The pay-off was that for two days we had to steer by engines, first by the starboard and then by the portside, meaning first the engine on the right and then the one on the left. Besides, the steering inside was also used. We had to keep head on, otherwise, if we got sideways, we would be wallowing and rolling, which would not be good at all. For two days we traveled that way, and when it calmed down everything was roses.

Next, we got ready for a long trip, 4,200 miles, and that was to Honolulu. It was a trial trip to test how much coal we would be using per mile. I was glad of that trip, besides I thought I would never see Honolulu. The coal we used was horrible. We loaded in either Java or Sumatra, I don't remember which. The coal wasn't old enough, and had not yet stayed in the ground long enough, I heard, as it was only thirty thousand years old. So the coal was like glass, and it would only simmer. We sweated gum drops to keep it going.

But in Honolulu we loaded with the best, Pocahontas coal. The climate in Honolulu is like God's country, just what the doctor ordered. The natives are fine looking people and must surely be an old race. There was no discrimination whatsoever; here you meet all races, all colors.

When I was there the first time, I heard the story of a rich Chinese merchant, who had quite a few daughters, well educated of course. He would ride around the city in a big carriage with all his daughters. He gave a dowry of \$50,000 and married them to American Naval officers—whether all or a few, I don't remember.

BACK TO SHANGHAI

We stayed a few days and started back for Shanghai. On the Bund in Shanghai there are an American section, an English section, and several other sections, with each country represented. It is near the waterfront. There is also old Shanghai a few miles back with about four million people. Truck horses I did not see, for manpower is really cheap. The biggest load is pulled by manpower. A long rope and the laborers pulling is a sight to see. There are rickshaws everywhere, and that is a cheap way to get a ride. A wheel attached to two handles, with a little running board alongside. If only one rides, and he is heavy at that, the poor fellow must strain to keep level while he pushes along. It is a laborious way of making a few cents. Coming off a train, one is surrounded by a mob of rickshaws crowding for a passenger, and can they run! Their legs are wonderfully developed.

I remember one Friday night walking along with my friend Smith in Shanghai wondering where we should stop for supper. Passing one house I noticed a candle light. Think I, "A good place to get a free meal." Saying to my pal, "Here is where we eat for nothing." Smith looked at me as if I were out of my mind. "Come with me and you will see." I knocked at the door, and we were invited in. Turning to the head of the house, I asked "If I can make Kiddush, do we get a meal?" The man looked at me, wondering; I did not look Jewish. I had not spoken in Yiddish yet. Sure he said if you can make Kiddush,²⁰ you are welcome, so I filled a small glass and started. I didn't get half way through and he said, "Dekenst (you know). So we sat down and both had a real Friday night supper. Then we *benched mezinem*.²¹

I would like to tell you about Hong Kong. The city is on a hill, a very high hill. and on top is a statue of Queen Victoria. The minute we anchored there, a bum boat pulled alongside. A bum boat is a boat that carries and sells everything one needs. The one who owned this boat was given the right to all the American ships that came to this port. I mean all the government ships. The reason for that was that when the battleship sailed for Manila and stopped at Hong Kong for coal, it was the owner of the bum boats that procured the

²⁰The Kiddush is the sanctification of the wine.

²¹After meal grace directed to the Messiah.

coal for them. For that our government gave him the option to do business with us, and they surely did!

The city is well worth seeing. For instance, the waterfront roads are lined with stores with all kinds of goods. One has but to have money. Marvelous carvings in solid ivory. A billiard ball of solid ivory, with a castle carved around the ball perfectly matched and balanced for size. Had I the money I surely would have bought it. The price was sixty American dollars, and that was in 1902.

They have many marvelous carvings of many things. The work was so delicate, the work of artists. There were also stores with all kinds of exchange. All they did was change any bill, and the charge was nominal. They were doing a thriving business. Bars aplenty, and where does a sailor stop first? It was the first time in my life that I filled up on gin-fizz, and before the evening was over I was reciting something. I believe I was standing on a table when I was reciting. That was the first time and the last time. Coming back to the ship, not feeling so well, I changed to my dungarees and went down to the fire room. It was not my turn, but I wanted to sweat things out. I said to the boys, "Who doesn't want to work?" and was given a boiler to tend. I knew that the best way was to sweat it out of me. While the others snored it out, I worked it out, and felt better the next morning, hungry and fit.

HONG KONG

That was my first liberty in Hong Kong. My next visits were of a different kind. I began to look around. For a while I stood at the dock and looked at ships which came from all over the world. What a city! From the interior of China, hundreds of the old-fashioned Chinese boats. Their sails were different from ours. Families lived on their boats all their lives—born on them, grew up on them, married and raised their families on them. They were poor but healthy. When European ships threw out the kitchen slop, they would catch it in their nets. I watched them doing it.

On the other hand there were hundreds of people in business and making a living; and further on there were the élite, the very rich, and how rich! Their clothes were far more comfortable than ours—believe it or not. How would the real wealthy ride through the city?

In a beautiful carriage, drawn by two horses, one coachman sitting in the rear and one in front doing the driving.

I liked the Chinese better than the Japanese. The Japanese were more polite and clean, but they would not trust you. Cash on the line if you ordered something made. Not so the Chinese. I ordered some clothes, signed my name, and they made it for me. When I came back from a cruise, I paid them, although I had received the clothes before I left. Of course, some of the boys did not do so. I looked at some of the names they signed, and it was from George Washington down. All I can say is that they trusted me and I found them honest.

While the Japanese would do the same work, they made sure they were paid ahead of time. And maybe they had good reason for doing so, who knows?

I took many a trip in Hong Kong. I had never ridden in a sedan chair, so one time I did. I was carried by two men up to the Queen's statue. They stopped just before they reached the top, so I pushed by shank's mare.

Only a bridge separated Hong Kong from the mainland.²² As of today China can take Hong Kong any time she wants to. The British couldn't stop her. But the Chinese on the mainland are smart. Why should they? They are doing a mighty fine business there.

THE CHINESE

I have read that in 1850, the British forced the Chinese to use opium, and now they try by every means to destroy that habit. All the world has a struggle on its hands to destroy the habit started over a hundred years ago. I am not an authority on it, so all I know is what I have read and have seen in China. There, it is country-wide with the exception of the Northern part of China. There they have a tough struggle to make a living. Just enough to get food to keep them alive.

²²Hong Kong is an island $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the mainland at the nearest point. There is no bridge over the harbor. The New Territories and Kowloon are on the mainland, separated from mainland China by a small bridge.

No people in the world are as industrious as those people; they are busy, busy all the time to make both ends meet. They make use of almost everything, nothing is thrown away. In the winter they make vests or shirts out of paper, which they wear under their coats to keep themselves warm. They honor their dead; they will leave food on their graves. The burial ground is held sacred. When a railroad was to be built and had to pass over a grave-yard, there was many a suicide committed. Some of them deliberately lay across the tracks; that was near Shanghai; that is what I heard tell. Remember what I'm writing was over sixty years ago. Today I don't know what is going on. One thing I know. Years ago we would say, when we talked about someone doing something, and we did not know whether he would succeed or not, or someone would ask about something and we couldn't see it as possible, we would say, "You don't have a Chinaman's chance." How different now. No more can we say that. They have all the chances in the world and more. And it is only the beginning. The dragon is stirring and lifting his head, and can by sheer numbers surprise the whole world. The only thing that can mitigate the danger, is to take them in the United Nations. In fact we must accept them, that is the only way to ease the tension. It is a different situation now.

During the Boxer Rebellion, a half dozen nations pounced on China and forced it to surrender; and then China had to pay a large indemnity.

My memory works when least expected. Mother mentioned hearing on the television about a sailor who was married to a Japanese girl. Instantly I recalled that when I was in the East we visited one of our American battleships which was anchored near, and had been there for many years. How that ship crossed the ocean is a puzzle to me. You see, it was a monitor and they are used *only* for protection near the shore. It is built close to the water and rises only about four feet above the sea. The engines are in a horizontal position. They seemed odd to me, lying on their side. I don't think the ship ever went back home; it remained there permanently. We spent one evening there. One of the old timers (who had about twenty years service) was married to a native girl. I remember that he was white haired. I watched a boxing match there.

MISSIONARIES

In 1904 the French Government expelled many nuns from France, and so many nuns were sent all over the Orient. When we were stationed there, we had visitors every pay day. The nuns would come in pairs and see every one of us for a collection. They would even come down all the way to the fire room. We generally gave them fifty cents apiece; and in return got the usual blessing 'May God bless You.' Years later the pressure from the French Government eased up and many returned, for I did not meet any on later visits.

It must have been puzzling to the natives. Both Protestant and Catholics preaching salvation, both churches, Protestant and Catholic strong for a foothold. Those I met were Protestants, for as soon as a ship landed they came aboard to greet us. Some missionaries worked in the interior and dressed accordingly. I saw some with pigtailed attached to the back of their heads. Whether it was their own or pinned on I did not know.

The missionaries in the cities dressed in European clothes. One day, walking with one of the missionaries, a native dashed by and grabbed the Bible and ran away with it. I was about to start after him, when the one I walked with said that it was a common occurrence. This happened in Shanghai. I used to go there to the mission; lots of us used to stop there. I liked to discuss religion with them, being always at loggerheads with them, but always in good nature. You see, at that time I was reading Darwin's *Descent of Man* and *The Origin of Species*, and to me it sounded reasonable as far as the physical body went; and Darwin's writing was reasonable to me, especially the survival of the fittest.

But there was one flaw in Darwin's claim: Science could not find the missing link, search as they might. This I knew then, that we were living on this planet for countless ages, maybe millions of years. Also our progress was slow, mighty slow. The reason was simple, that is what I gathered from what I've read. I knew that progress was going on and that life was in a state of evolution. In observing the Chinese they looked old to me, in fact they looked ancient, very ancient. The children were doll-like and without any drive. The older ones looked twice the age they really were.

The Japanese on the other hand puzzled one in that they too were very ancient, but as if formed from one mold. Yet how different they were from the Chinese!

I recall a missionary, a stout, happy looking man and his slender little wife, and a young girl about ten. What brings them to mind I guess must be the expression on the face of the missionary's wife, as I gazed on the three of them as they landed from the ship. That was in Shanghai. I stood at the pier and watched them coming ashore. My thoughts traveled along the years ahead for them; and I said to myself, How will they look ten years from now? The man will become stouter and maybe bald-headed, but the twinkle in his eyes will be there just the same. Life looked good to him. But how about his wife? I took a good look at her as the three of them stood at the pier. The expression on her face was as simple as could be and I saw a resignation on it. That was the impression I had, and I haven't forgotten it. The husband looked unperturbed, did not seem to notice anything in particular. That was over sixty years ago. I wonder who is left. Maybe one, who knows? The man couldn't be because he was about thirty years old then.

TARGET PRACTICE

The following episode occurred when we were in Shanghai. For the first time everyone was having target practice. As I was in the black gang, I was surprised that we were to have practice also. I thought that I was the only Army man in the black gang, and when it came to practice I was going to run away with the prizes. But lo and behold! In our gang there was a fellow from Tennessee, could he shoot! He was a hunter and a real marksman. So I had a task cut out for me. I was determined to win first prize. So out we went to target practice. There were quite a number of us from the black gang. I was younger, in fact the youngest of the crowd. My eyes were good, my nerves steady, and I felt cocky. The two of us were nip and tuck. Although my friend Smith used to hunt squirrels, I knew I could beat him. The result was a split decision. Two of us got first prize, so we divided the first prize money. That fellow from Tennessee was very good! We went ashore together and spent our prize money.

IN DRY DOCK

My first hitch in the Navy was nearing a close. Our time was about up. For a long time I did not see my friend Smith. He went to a hospital, but later on came back aboard the Raleigh. Before we went home, we went in dry dock in Shanghai for an overhauling and to scrape the ship's bottom, for the bottom was full of barnacles which would slow up the speed of the ship. After scraping the bottom, they would paint it. We used to say that if anyone could discover a method of keeping the barnacles off the bottom he would make a fortune. So far I have not heard of anyone finding a way.

It was in December of 1906 that we were in dry dock, because it was then we heard of the earthquake in San Francisco. One day Smith and I were sitting on deck discussing how or where we could raise some money so that we could go ashore. We were broke, pay day not in sight, and so we talked and talked. Finally I hit on a plan; the plan was simple, too simple, but would it work? So we talked some more and decided to give it a try. We had nothing to lose but our time, and of that we had plenty. But my friend would not go around to see over one hundred people. To make the plan work, it would be necessary to do that. So I said that I would see them. What was the plan? It was simple. All we had to do was to cut one hundred slips of paper and mark them from one cent to one hundred cents. You paid whatever number you drew, from one cent to one hundred cents. What was the prize? There were three prizes to be given out, first prize was fifteen dollars, second prize ten dollars, and third prize five dollars—all told thirty dollars in prizes. What did we make out of it if we sold the hundred slips? We would pay out thirty dollars in prizes. Well, I sold the hundred slips; and after we paid out the prizes, we had little over twenty dollars left. That gave us ten dollars apiece, and then we went ashore to celebrate. The hardest part of it was the selling. But I didn't mind, I was used to talking, and this time it came in handy. While down in the fire room selling, one Irishman said to me, "Where will you get all the money to pay out the prizes?" I looked at him and wondered: Does he really not know where I will get the money for the prizes? He looked suspicious, so I told him that when I sold all the chances I would have the money. He looked at me for a while and finally saw the light.

While I was standing near the dock one day, I saw a crowd of natives looking at someone struggling in the water. As I got closer I saw that it was a woman, or girl, I don't remember which. The men just looked, making no effort to help. I didn't understand why until later, so I just got busy and pulled the lady out of the water. I looked around and nobody seemed to care. Then it came to me. I remembered hearing a story to the effect that if you saved anyone's life, that life belonged to you. When that thought came to me, I didn't wait a moment, but walked away. I distinctly remember the woman or girl looking at me in an odd way. I didn't talk to her, but just ran off as fast as I could. In fact, I felt relieved when I got away. You see, life is cheap in China. You just can't imagine how cheap. Making a living is also hard. One thing I can say is, I never saw anyone of them loafing.

Something about railroad traveling in Shanghai. There are different classes, different rates, different seats, different prices. As in the Western states or in Europe, so it is in China. There are different kinds of people the world over, even as we had them aboard the U.S.S. Raleigh. Most of the boys spent their money freely. Some were careful, some were very careful, but some were real misers. So when it came to traveling, the misers looked for the cheapest ticket. We had one known for his stinginess that beat them all. When he bought a ticket, he asked for a dog ticket. You see, dogs were permitted on the platform, and the owner of the dog had to pay for the dog to ride on the platform. Can you beat that?

ADVENTURE

One day I went bicycle riding in Yokohama. There was an American hospital on a hill, and so I took a ride there on my hired bike. On my way back down the hill, my foot slipped from the peddle and away I went down. At the foot of the hill was a river with just a little rail about three feet high. The hill was very steep, and here I was riding pell mell. Before the end of the road I saw a little lane. I turned into the lane which was short, too short to suit me, but I had no alternative. At the end of the lane was a stone wall. I can see it now, with me heading toward it, no brakes. I was in for a shock, and that I got when I hit the wall lying over the handle bars. I got a little banged up, cut up some, but not badly hurt. The bicycle was

twisted. My worry was what it would cost me for repairs. I carried it back to the store. The owner looked it over and charged me a little over two dollars for damages. I was glad to hear that. I paid the bill and then went to a barroom and cleaned myself up. The next time I walked up that hill, but that was some time later.

We would go ashore often. One time feeling unusually fine and being by myself, the world looked especially good to me. In fact I felt so fine, that I began to wonder, How come no gripe? Coming to the big hill that I had gone down in a hurry, I saw a Japanese pushing a cart up the incline. I joined him, and together we pushed the cart up the hill. When we reached the top, the poor fellow thanked me for helping him up. I just waved and kept walking. To myself I said, "One good deed", and thought I would like to help and keep on helping. It made me feel good, and the world looked brighter to me. That kind of feeling is hard to explain. Then I remembered about Cain and Abel. I know that the answer he gave was all wrong. No one is self-sufficient, although many may think they are. I had much time to think, and even then at the age of twenty-two I saw the world from a different viewpoint. Thoughts are concrete. No one can do anything unless the idea comes first: first the idea, then the plan, then to make what the plan outlines, then you have something material. It is all in the mind first, but what really comes first is desire.

Every ship had a library. During the four years I was aboard, I read every book worthwhile. I wasn't satisfied, I looked for something real good and found it. Two brothers were interested in mysticism and fortune telling. I bought a book from them and paid five dollars for it. I still have that book; it's on palmistry. There are twelve hundred and forty illustrations. I found a mine of information and did not have to wear glasses.

PALMISTRY

Soon I became absorbed in palmistry. I had a whole shipload to practice on and always had a customer waiting in line. The ones who sold the book to me were masters in the art of hypnotism; they were really good. They used to give entertainments on board the ship. I kept to myself, quietly studying. I don't remember their

names, but in age they were in their thirties. They had a book on the Zoar; it is a book on the Kabala, supposed to be a very ancient book. Years later I read some of the teaching, but at the present time I was interested in palmistry, which took in Phrenology and other studies.

There was enough there to keep me going for many years. The result was that hands fascinated me, and even today I still judge by the hand. I believe that in the Bible, or perhaps in the Talmud, there is something about hands. Also numbers count a great deal; that is numerology. I also encountered the word Physiognomy and studied that. A new world began to open to me, everything had some meaning. It would take several lifetimes to understand it all. Anyway I had plenty to keep me busy.

BOAT RACE

During this period we started training for a boat race. The black gang to which I belonged, which means the engineering force, was to race the deck force. Now the deck force were well trained in rowing, for they practiced it often, while we were below the deck shoveling coal. What a combination we were, the deck force quick and active, while we were slow and deliberate. Their stroke was quicker than ours, but we were stronger, and when we made a stroke we put plenty of force behind it. The betting started. The Marines, who are the soldiers on a ship and do guard duty on deck, are the first to go ashore if a landing party is needed. I was the only Jew with the racing crew from the black gang. So the Marines figured out that with our having a Jew in the race that we must win. I had bet my whole pay that we would win, and besides that I borrowed a months pay. I being the lightest one in the race took the bow oar. The bow oar is the one nearest to the bow. The oars were long, and it took considerable pressure with our forearms to press down to make up for the weight projecting outside the boat. We went into training for some time. At the beginning I thought my wrists would break. It was real hard work, but I stuck to it. You see I weighed at least thirty to fifty pounds less than the rest of the crew, a bunch of Irish, some as thick as they were heavy. After a while I got stronger and felt fine. The talk went on that a Jew can't lose. I was told how to

sit, how to pull, and to turn my wrists just so. I followed orders, how to lean forward, and how to pull back. A friend explained that I should have something in my mouth, I think it was a button, so that my mouth would not get dry. After much practice I felt that if we all pulled with all our might, as I had made up my mind to do, we would surely win.

All bets were made, and we started the race. I don't remember the length of the race, but I believe it was three miles. Our gang pulled slowly and steadily. The deck force pulled faster, but we put more power in our stroke. Halfway in the race we were about even. Then slowly we began to force ahead, but as far as I was concerned I neither looked to the right or left. I kept my face straight ahead. The reason I did so was that I was told to conserve all my strength. I must not look either way, but straight ahead. In front of me was a two hundred pound Irishman who kept on saying that I pulled in his water. What a thick headed mutt. He was a good fellow, with a strong back, as strong as an ox. I was glad of that. I kept quiet and worked steadily.

Then we got our first setback. One of the men caught a crab and could not control the oar. So we told him, all of us, to drop the oar. Our work became harder, and we had to make up. So we bent our backs, and pulled hard and in unison. We were a boat length ahead, and in spite of the loss of an oar we kept gaining. The result was we finished seven boat lengths ahead!!

Going up the gangway my knees almost gave way. Then I knew that I had really worked, and so did the rest of the crew. We celebrated our victory by going ashore. The boys had a lot of respect for me, for I proved myself. I could match them at any game. In the fire room I worked with the best of them, and strangely enough I enjoyed the work. In college races, the handles of the oars are stuffed with lead and the oars are balanced perfectly, so they have no weight and no strain on their wrists. I believe it was a whale boat we had the race in. It was a large and heavy boat, the length of the whale boat I've forgotten. Belonging to the engineers' force I did not keep in mind or bother with the size of the boat.

BOXING

For the first time in my life I put on boxing gloves. A fellow by the name of Himelback, that name I can't forget, asked me to put on the gloves with him. We were having dinner at that time. I told him I didn't know anything about boxing. So he said to me, "Tell me when I hit you too hard." So there I stood like a *laminer golem*,²³ when all of a sudden he landed a punch that caused a paralyzing feeling on one leg. I hopped back on one foot. That feeling passed in a couple of seconds. But my mind was wide awake, so I swung at him and hit the air. Try as I might, I could not land a punch. He would just move his head a little, and my fist passed by the side of his head.

In the meantime I got a lacing. He landed at will while I just swung and missed. Then I changed my tactics. My mind told me that he hit me as hard as he could, so therefore I was not afraid of him. But my stomach was being pounded. I knew that he could not hurt, but I decided to knock him out. I lowered my head and went after him like a bull, but he straightened me up with counter punches. My body was sore and ached, and I could not hit him. These were not three minute rounds with one minute rest. Somehow I got through and I felt my fist sink in his stomach. Down he went. I felt fresh and strong, but if I knew anything about boxing I should have hit him again as he was going down. Instead, I stepped back and waited. He got up and said, "Let's call it a day." "All right," I said; what did I care? Later on I found out that he was the champion of the Asiatic Station for his weight. Do you know, he never spoke to me after that? He continued to win every fight he was engaged in. We would just look at each other as we met on deck, without a word. I then knew that I could beat him if we ever got together. That was that, I was not interested in boxing. I would rather read a good book.

FOOTBALL

The following year I became interested in football. I had a good reason for that, because that meant excuse from my regular duties. We had a separate table and the best of food, and we got a good rub down every day. Smith and I worked together. Although he was six

²³Yiddish: poor fool; "sad sack."

feet, four-and-a-half inches tall, I could outrun him. This was real fun for me. I played only one season.

At Thanksgiving time, alas, we lost the game, but we had lots of fun. There was a chief machinist's mate in the game. He was one of our opponents. He was a pure bred Indian from Arizona Territory, educated by the United States Government. He was a good fellow, and we all liked him. He weighed around two hundred pounds, but was plenty fast. I remember running straight at him. He stood waiting. Just as I was going to dive at him, he caught me by one arm and held me like a vise. I couldn't move. Later on I got my revenge. When running toward him I had my elbow out and got away from him. But our team lost and that was that. My friend Smith got hurt, a bad knee sprain; but he recovered after a rest and returned to help finish the game.

RETURN TRIP

Whenever I went ashore, and that was as often as I could get liberty, I would wander around taking in the sights. Everything interested me. My four years in the Navy were coming to a close and I knew that we would soon be sent home. All of a sudden some of us whose time was short were transferred to another ship, and soon we were on the way home. Back through the Indian Ocean on the way we stopped in some port, where I bought two pounds of real tea. It did not take long to get to Aden and from there to the Red Sea where we went swimming. The water was warm, and then through the Suez Canal. We stopped at Port Said. I could not get ashore there, but the officers did. We were only about sixty miles from Palestine.

GIBRALTAR

After leaving Port Said, we went through the Mediterranean Sea, and then stopped at Gibraltar. Smith and I went ashore. There is quite a history about Gibraltar. You see, there are monkeys on the rock. How did they get there? There is a legend that Gibraltar was once connected with the mainland, which is, of course, Africa. So therefore the monkey had free access to both sides. But when the mainland separated, Gibraltar was left. I don't know how many miles separate the two, but it is quite a distance, perhaps twenty miles. It

is almost like a little city with many shops. I bought many things to take home.

There for the first time in my life I saw the Moors. They are big, over six feet and built in proportion. Standing near them, I felt like a midget. They walk proudly, disdaining those around them. These people are proud, and they have a right to be. What a history they have! One has but to read about them and how civilized and cultured they were. They had universities when Christianity lived in darkness. Granada was a place of prosperity before the Spanish took over. They had wonderful mansions, and many were scholars of great learning. Had I more time I would have liked to ramble around. The Spaniards looked small compared to them. The Moors had been far advanced, and hundreds of years ago people from all over the world traded with them. In fact, the Jewish people had more freedom among them. They all believed in Allah and still do. There is a saying that, if one broke bread with them, one was safe. It is well known that Mohammedans brought about the Renaissance, awakening a new dawn of civilization. It was practically a rebirth. One has but to read about Baghdad and about Omar Khayyam the famous poet, and that is well worth reading. Looking around while walking about, these thoughts came racing to my mind and my imagination. My thoughts went centuries back, and I could imagine myself five hundred years back. For once I wished I was psychic and that I could really see myself back all those years, seeing what was going on. Thus was I day-dreaming, when my friend brought me back to reality. There was something else more important that helped to bring me back. I was hungry.

Outside the rock there is an open space. It runs for about a quarter of a mile and is a No Man's Land. It belongs neither to England or Spain, so we were told. So we walked to it, and there was a gate. It opened at six in the morning and closed at night. There is the Spanish town where most of the people are Spanish. There we looked around for a restaurant. But before we went there, we wanted to see how far we could walk up the rock. We began to climb and climb. The road was mighty steep, cut into solid rock, and we went up winding and winding. We walked about three-quarters of a mile before we were stopped. There stood an old fashioned cannon of tremendous

size. It probably had not been used for many years. We were not allowed to go any further, so we just stayed there a while and then went back to Spanish town. There we found a place to eat. Most of the people in Spanish town work for the English government. The people there are poor. I saw no manufacturing, not much of anything. The Spanish people seemed listless to me; no one was in a hurry. When we sat down to eat, it seemed in only a few minutes, a band appeared and stood outside of the restaurant playing. So we had music with our meal. Picture to yourself Smith and I having a meal and being entertained at the same time. Smith grinned, and I followed suit. When we were through and had tipped the waitress and paid for the music, we started to see the town. Our inner-man was *zut*.²⁴ We hadn't walked a block, when up came a carriage. We both entered it and took in everything worth seeing. I was the interpreter, not a very good one, but I managed to make ourselves understood. Since it was getting late, we set out for a room. Finding one was easy, and we retired for the night. Next morning we had breakfast and off to the ship. We had to be back at a certain time and we made it. Just before we went aboard ship, I stopped at a fruit stand. We had just enough money to buy a couple of pounds of grapes. The day before we were flush, and now we were broke.

One of the things I bought was a silk shawl. I bargained for over an hour and paid one-third the price asked, but I still believe that I was taken.

ATLANTIC CROSSING

The next day we set out for home after being away for four years. The weather became cold, as it was winter time. We found that out after being a day out. But we all felt well; our health was fine and more than that one doesn't want. We landed in Brooklyn Navy Yard. We were all paid off, and the next day in New York we stopped at my sister's house.

HOME AT LAST

Four years of traveling in the Asiatic seas, before that three years in the Army; seven years' service so far. On my first home-coming from the Army I found my parents in Providence, Rhode Island.

²⁴Yiddish: satisfied; sated.

Three years before when I had left home my folks lived in Norwich, Connecticut. Now they were still in Providence. What now? I was twenty-five years old. My parents would have liked to see me settled, and tried to make it so. But the cards were stacked wrong. 'Twas not to be.

I spent a week in my friend Smith's home, which was in North Brookfield, Massachusetts. His folks lived on a farm and they were real nice to me.

The thought came to me to study bookkeeping. I enrolled and began to study. One day I inquired how much a bookkeeper could earn. When I found out how little it was, I quit studying and got a job at Congdon & Carpenter.²⁵ It was hard work, but I enjoyed doing it. But there was no future in that.

Meantime I practiced the violin, I liked it, but what a racket. It was fifty cents a lesson for one hour. For a while I studied, but I knew the kind of work I was doing did not help my hands and was not good for my practicing. So I quit.

I took a trip to my Uncle's farm in Turnerville, Connecticut and stayed there a couple of months. It was winter time. I went there because I needed to make up my mind about what I really was going to do. I knew that what I was doing was leading nowhere. My parents wanted me to settle down, but I couldn't see it that way. On the farm I took long walks every day, about six miles a day. Before I left home I bought a barrel of flour, enough sugar to last three months, and all other provisions that would keep my folks for the winter. For the only one working was Father, and he did not make much. My oldest sister and brother were married. That left six at home for Father to care for. My mind felt at ease; there was food in the house. I liked it on the farm and the peace it brought me.

NAVY REENLISTMENT

I decided to reenlist in the Navy. I did so on May 4, 1908. I was sworn in in Boston, and they sent me to Charlestown Navy Yard. The old U.S.S. Wabash was still there, but this time it was a lot different from when I went in the first time. I was experienced and enlisted

²⁵Iron and steel merchants, still doing business in Providence.

as a first class fireman. I did not stay on the Wabash long. I was sent aboard a tugboat. Only a few of us went on. We had a Japanese cook, and he was a fine cook. We had excellent meals. I stayed on the tugboat for awhile. We made runs to Newport, Rhode Island once in awhile. It was quite a nice run.

DISASTER STALKS

On one night run to Newport it was my turn in the fire room. The tugboat had an old Scotch boiler. The one on the Raleigh was a water tube boiler, and much safer than the Scotch boiler. One must have a certain level of water at all times, as the fire outside heats the water, which produces steam. The water in the tubes is heated by the terrific fire. There must be a supply of water pumped in all the time when making steam. I was on duty from eight till midnight. At nine o'clock the engineer opened the slide and looked in the fire-room. I looked up at him. He said, "Do you know there is a lot of steam; you must have a good fire?" I grinned as I looked at him, and said, "Isn't that what you want?" I then looked up at the water gauge, and my heart sunk. I couldn't see any water in the glass. I turned around and looked at the pump. The thought came to my mind that the pump was not functioning and that the heat may have forced a vacuum. I was stunned. I knew I had to do something quickly. The steam gauge was rising up and up. I knew there was one way to lower the steam, and that was by opening the door and pulling the fire. But that is a drastic way. Why should this happen to me when I had already had years of experience as a fire man and had never done that before? Suddenly I remembered that we had an emergency pump to be used in case something went wrong with the regular pump. The emergency pump is called a jack, if I remember correctly. I immediately started the emergency pump. Slowly and carefully I pulled the lever. During all this time I kept my eyes glued to the gauge. I thought that the jack was working, but could not see any sign of a bubble at the bottom of the glass. My thoughts during the next three hours were frightening. When will the end come? I hoped to see some welcome sign that the water in the glass was beginning to start up. No sign yet, but my mind kept saying that water was being pumped in the boiler. The regular pump was not working; the jack pump I knew was working. I did not dare

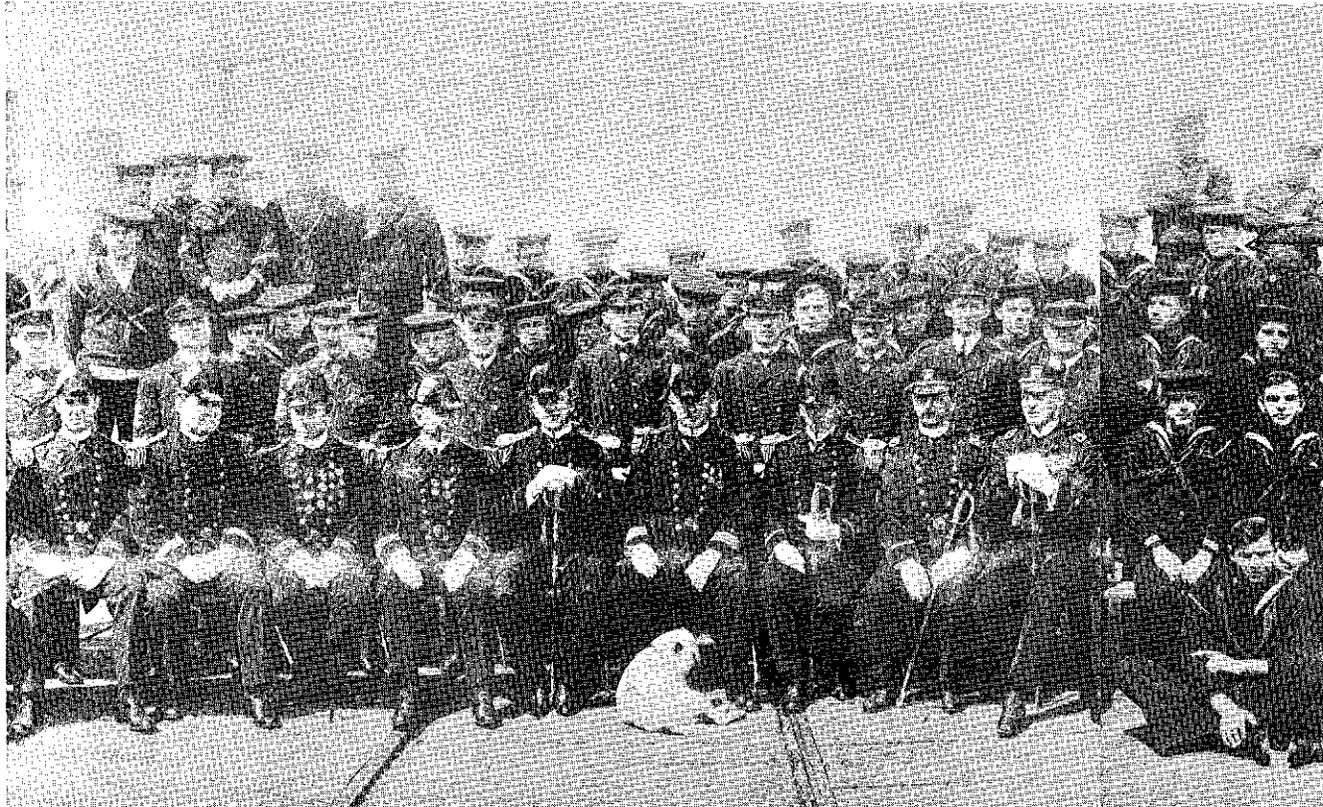
to speed up the jack too fast. I thought something would go wrong if I did. The steam in the gauge kept going up, and once again the engineer opened the little window and said I had a good head of steam. It didn't tell him what was wrong, for if I did he might panic. It was as if a doctor were counting the pulse of a patient, looking at his watch, waiting and counting. I walked up and down glancing at the water gauge and trying to see a sign of water. I kept wondering when it would start. As time went on I lived many lives. At half past eleven I saw a sign of water appearing in the glass. My heart jumped, and a great relief came over me. I knew that I was catching up; the water was just where it should be. What I just had gone through I don't believe I will ever forget. My heart felt good, and all was well with the world.

ABOARD THE U.S.S. SALEM

Some two years after we put the U.S.S. Salem in commission (it was a scout cruiser), I heard that the tugboat I had been on vanished completely, nothing, no trace, except a couple of planks that were found later. I knew what had happened, of course. I had reported the trouble when we got back, but what was done about it I never heard.

After we put the ship in commission we left Portsmouth, New Hampshire and stopped in Kittery, Maine for a while as I had four years before on the U.S.S. Raleigh. In Kittery I noticed something that looked like a big cigar. It was about fifteen feet long and about four feet in height. It was a submarine and handled by manpower. Then I remembered having read about it some years ago. The man who built it tried it in the Harlem River, and now it was in the junk yard in Kittery, Maine.

After we left Kittery we went to Eastport, Maine. It is the most northern part of Maine. From there you can look across and see Canada. Maine was known as a dry state, but we did not find it so. All you had to do was to walk into a tobacco store. The man behind the counter would open a door in back and there was the bar. Eastport, Maine is well known for sardines. I visited one of the sardine boats. One doesn't have to look around to know what kind of boat he is on.



U.S.S. SALEM

Frank A. Silberman, second from right
in first row standing.

Eastport is a small city, not too much to see, to be honest. I did not look around much, so in truth I can't say much about it. The weather got rough so we had to drop anchor to keep from drifting. Our stay was short, and soon we started out.

From there we went back to Charlestown Navy Yard for some additional work. We were invited to Salem, Massachusetts for a home celebration, as our ship was named after that city. The mayor of Salem and all of the city officials were there to greet us. What a time we all had! We had the key to the city; every house was open to us and we enjoyed every bit of it. I met many people whom I later on visited, and I made some real friends. The surprise visit was from President Taft's son. He was fifteen years old then. He later on ran for president against General Eisenhower. When he lost it must have broken his heart, for later on he became sick. It must have been an incurable sickness.

I remembered reading about the Salem witches and the House of Seven Gables. I visited that house and remembered the story. I had just begun to learn to dance, and here I was twenty-five years old. So I made up for lost time. There were dances every night to which I went. One night we all went to a show given to us by the city. Had a show like we saw been given three hundred years ago, there would have been wholesale burning at the stake. Even in 1908 it was pretty raw, but the boys enjoyed it immensely. The city was lit up all night, and one could see the Mayor of Salem walking around at all hours wearing a topper.

As for myself, I was busy seeing the town and making friends. For a couple of years I kept up correspondence with one of them, a young lady who became a missionary. I did hear from her for a year through a Jewish family who were great friends of hers. Strange isn't it, that after so many years one remembers the people one met? They were good people, honest and sincere. I felt very much at home with them. There were some who came aboard the ship to visit, and for years afterwards I would receive cards occasionally; I would answer them. While I was in the service, I kept it up till I was discharged. And now as I think of those days some of my friends come to my mind. It was a happy week for me in Salem, old home week. It is fifty-seven years since I was there.

I'm thinking of how Salem must have looked three centuries ago and how the people dressed then and what their thoughts were. The English must have been somewhat different. With thees and thous. No electric lights, no gas lights, no street cars, nor any of the conveniences we have now.

We were back at Charlestown Navy Yard for some minor repairs; there was always work to be done. I didn't mind, as it meant going ashore often. About this time I was introduced to the Boston Public Library, and I went there often. I started to read the history of the Jews; a five volume history, and they were no small books. The author's name was Professor Heinrich Graetz, a German Jewish historian, champion of Reform Judaism. Later in Galveston, Texas I recommended the book to a friend who invited me to a seder service. It took me a long time to read the history. All I can say is that it's most complete.

PORTO RICO

Soon we were off, and this time to San Juan, Porto Rico. The island is worth seeing. The natives don't change their habits. As it was years ago, so it was when I went the first time. In the center of the town there is a square park with a sidewalk all around the square. In the evening young couples parade around. There are stores on each side where one can buy most anything. It is a pleasant sight to see the young folks strolling. No one seems to hurry. The weather is what one would desire, cool and refreshing. Lots of places to quench one's thirst. Music all around. Walking down a side street I saw couples dancing in the street. I stood there and watched one young lady dancing with a bandana; that was worth watching. No one looked hungry; they seemed complacent. I wandered about. Everything was very cheap; I bought a half dozen oranges, large and juicy. I ate two and my stomach was full. As usual we only stayed in Porto Rico twenty-four hours, but in that time I tried to take in everything. We made several trips there, so I was able to see more of it.

One time there I visited an old Cathedral, supposed to be really old. I was always interested in old churches. There was a petrified body there. The story is that he was shot for some reason that I can't remember. I believe that he was a soldier. Many years later the body was dug up, and it was found that he was petrified. That meant to

them that a miracle had happened. He was dressed in silk. All you see is his face. His eyes were black and staring; they looked too brilliant to me, and I suspected that they were agates. I asked the sexton to lift up the shirt as I wanted to see the bullet hole. He smilingly refused. So in my mind I was sure it was a joke. I suppose the public believed it was really true. I know that bodies have been found petrified, for I've read about such cases. So have forests been found hardened almost like stone. But to me it seems that it must be from some substance in the ground.

I must have gone to bed late that night, for when I woke up, it was late, very late. I jumped into my clothes and ran as fast as I could to the dock. There was my ship pulling out. Someone threw me a line; I caught it and hauled myself up the side. When I got aboard I dashed for the engine room and just made it. You see, I was on duty that hour. What a sigh of relief. Had I missed it, I would have gotten into plenty of trouble.

Soon we went back to Boston, but did not stay long. We were soon ready to make a long trip to New Orleans. What a trip that was! On the way to the Caribbean Sea we stopped at Norfolk, Virginia and stayed there awhile. That gave me a chance to look around. It is quite a city. I visited many places, even went to some shows, and what do you think the orchestra played? Way Down In Dixie.

NORFOLK

There are famous statues of famous people, mostly generals on horse-back. Also statues of famous statesmen. It is an old city of old houses. There is a pleasing quaintness about some neighborhoods. One's mind turns to leisure, no hurry, tomorrow is another day. No one is in a hurry. In my mind I tried to relate the place to what I had read about the South, the famous porches, the appearance of the fronts of the houses. The place is very restful. But I was never restful, always on the go. Norfolk, Virginia was one place I did not make any acquaintances. I don't seem to recollect meeting anyone in particular. Perhaps I was not looking for anyone in particular. Besides it was in the winter when I was there.

We soon made ready to leave, and this time we headed for Charleston, South Carolina. Going ashore there, I spied an old colored lady

sitting at the dock, smoking an old clay pipe. She was oblivious to her surroundings. She didn't seem to care what was going on around her. Sitting there stoicly, calmly smoking. I said to myself, this is a mighty interesting place. As usual walked around quite a great deal. There were colored letter carriers on bicycles. In the outskirts there were many trees. There was an important battle there during the Civil War, a surprise attack. The folks were polite, but one felt some restraint when talking to them. After all, one should not expect the carpet to be rolled out for the Blue Jackets.

GALVESTON

Later on we sailed for Galveston, Texas, where we stayed for quite a while. There I found hospitality in abundance. One of the main sights is the breakwater which was built after the disaster which flooded the city. It was built between 1900 and 1905. We stayed there a few weeks and were ashore almost daily.

I became acquainted with the leading reform Rabbi by the name of Rabbi Cohen. He became very well known in Texas as one of their greatest scholars. He made a trip to Washington to see President Taft about a person who had landed illegally in Texas and had lived there for many years. This man had begged him to intercede, as the authorities of Galveston planned to send him back to Europe. This man was a simple, kind-hearted fellow, who did not understand rules, let alone laws pertaining to immigration. He was there, and that was that.

Rabbi Cohen would ride everywhere on a bicycle, and people would wave to him. I don't remember whether the Rabbi peddled all the way to Washington, but he started out that way. President Taft knew him well and when he walked in greeted him with a smile. When Rabbi Cohen told him why he came, President Taft said to him, "You Jews certainly stand by one another." The Rabbi replied: "You see, Mr. President, he is not a Jew, he is not Jewish at all, he is a Pole." The President was truly surprised. Then he immediately placed a call to the Chief Justice and asked him whether there was any rule by which this man could remain in the United States. A little later the Chief Justice called the President and informed him that they could get around it. And so it was.

Rabbi Cohen was a considerable traveler in his younger days. As a lad, I believe, he was a sort of errand boy to Prime Minister Disraeli. I was told he traveled in Africa; and with another man he had performed on stage a sort of mind-reading act.

I met the Rabbi many times while I was in Galveston. I went to his service and called on him at his home. We had quiet talks and as usual I asked him questions. One of the questions was "Why wear a yarmulka?" The usual answer to that was, "You shall not uncover before God." I knew that he could not very well say that, because in his Temple they sat without hats. So he said "Perhaps for climate reasons." I let it go at that.

At Passover all of the Jewish boys were invited to the Seder. We enjoyed a splendid supper, waited on by the élite. The tables were well set. The women were pleasant and smiling when they waited on us. To the second Seder,²⁶ the Orthodox families invited just a couple to a family, and there we had to work for our meals by reading through the whole service.

Walking around town one night, I passed a place where I heard music. A dance was going on, so I went in. Folks were swinging around the floor. I saw an elderly woman holding a baby on her lap and watching the dancing. I sat down next to her and began talking about things in general. Soon her daughter and her husband came, and we all started talking. I asked permission for a dance, and so I found a place to stay.

I was invited to stay in their home whenever I came ashore, as there were plenty of rooms in the house. I first slept there that very night after the dance. I was told to help myself to breakfast. There was plenty of food on the table. So I made coffee for myself, took bread and butter, and filled up. Many times after that I would stop over for the night and often brought a shipmate along. After a while I thought I should like to do something to repay them for their kindness. So my friend and I talked it over. We hired a band and made a real party. It didn't cost us very much, and everyone had a good time.

²⁶The Seder is the ritual celebrating the Exodus from Egypt, preceding the evening meal on the first eve of Passover. Orthodox Jews usually repeat the ritual on the second night of Passover.

On one occasion the captain of our ship sent for me and asked what kind of food he ought to serve to Rabbi Cohen. I explained that he was a Reform Jew and did not follow the Hebrew dietary laws strictly. The captain thanked me. The Rabbi was most popular in Galveston. He was a marvelous orator. I listened to him many a time. What a flow of words! He could speak rapidly, but his diction was something worth listening to. He was clear and concise, and never at loss for words.

I remember the first time I visited him. I sat in the library for a few minutes waiting for him to come in. During that time I had a chance to look at thousands of books on the shelves. I enjoyed that, for it is what I have always liked best.

There was a skating rink near the waterfront, and I went there many a time. The time I spent in Galveston was fine for me. Every day there was something new to see. Before coming back aboard one morning, I stopped at the market and bought a bunch of bananas that I could hardly lift. There must have been about one hundred. I paid the big sum of twenty-five cents. That was in 1909.

NEW ORLEANS

We left for New Orleans and arrived in time to see the Mardi Gras. The wonderful parades are surely worth seeing, as is New Orleans itself. We were there a few days and as usual went sight-seeing. The quaint houses with those iron balconies all over the city.

The main street is called Canal Street; and the parades were held there. The sidewalks were packed with people in varied costumes, marching and marching. I felt privileged to be able to see them. I was with a friend from the ship, also Jewish; we enjoyed ourselves immensely.

No visitors were allowed aboard the ship, and we never knew the reason. We went into a restaurant for a meal, and a good dinner it was. I found out that it was the best restaurant in the city. Nothing but the best. There were cards that marked the number of the tables, and I brought the card home. They played a piece called *The Glow Worm*. Later I bought the music. The payoff came later. I made a wager with the fellow that I was with that, if I could bring the

lady who played the piano to our table, he would pay for the dinner. He took me up on it; so I wrote a note and in it praised her playing and asked if she would please come to our table. She did. We talked awhile, and I told her that if she would like to visit the ship and bring a friend we would be glad to show her around.

Try to picture the day they came aboard and with us there to receive them. Even the officers had no visitors that day, so we both showed the girls all around the ship. The boys looked with envy on us, while we spent a couple of hours walking around. They couldn't figure it out—two Jewish boys showing two French girls around. We never saw them again, for right after that we went up the Mississippi. I have not forgotten New Orleans, and maybe some day I will see it again.

Often I used to dream of sailing up the Mississippi, and now it became a reality as we left New Orleans. For many miles on either side there was a strange kind of breakwater. The tide there rises often and flows over the embankments. For miles and miles there were thousands and thousands of bamboo stalks stacked like bundles on each side of the shore. They would give with the tide, sway back and forth, but hold fast. They kept the soil from being washed away. Millions of tons of soil were held in place by a simple, inexpensive method.

I had one experience in the engine room that had me guessing for awhile. There are lots of leaves floating in the river, and at times they clog the pumps. Being on duty at that time, I was kept on edge for a while. Once it appeared that the pump would stop. So I took a chance and put it on full force. I was lucky, the pump kept going. What would happen if it did not work? Soon the bell would start ringing in the engine room, asking what is wrong? I did not want that to happen to me, for I was experienced and must know what to do in any emergency. All I can say is that the angels were dancing with me.

NEW YORK

After that came the celebration in New York for Henry Hudson; it was the three hundredth I believe. That topped them all. From all the nations of world they sent ships, each one a Navy ship at

that. At night, lights from the battleships were seen for many a mile, each ship trying to outdo the next. The lights were brilliant. What an impression it must have made on the New Yorkers! People came to see these wonders, and wonders they were. As for myself, it made me feel great. It was like a League of Nations with people in all kinds of uniforms, and one would rub elbows with them on the cars and subways.

Some of the Italian officers looked haughty and carried themselves aloof. I would look at them and grin to myself saying, this is the U.S.A. and nobody kowtows to anyone,

We all were given passes to the Hippodrome, then the largest theatre in New York. The stage was large enough to hold a three ring circus. In one part of the show which showed a circus ring full of water, the stage would slowly sink with the water covering all the actors. It looked as if an island sank with all aboard. In fact they sang as they sank, and even when it was up to their necks the singing continued until you couldn't see them. That was New York in 1909. Just fifty-six years ago.

After that we went back to the Charlestown Navy Yard and put in dry dock. That meant scraping the bottom, for which we stayed a couple of weeks.

Time was not heavy on our hands. I knew that we must be getting ready for a long trip, maybe to the Azores. But I wasn't sure. All we could do was speculate, and the only information we got was through the scuttlebutt. What is a scuttlebutt? That is the place where we would get a drink of water; there is one on each deck. Standing around there we would hear whatever news there was. It wasn't long before we started on a real long cruise to the Azores Island. The weather was unusually good, and we felt fine. We all looked forward to this trip, because there were many of us aboard who had never been there. I had read about the place and knew it belonged to the Portuguese and that it was about five hundred miles from Portugal. But for us it was a good deal farther.

My work for some time had been in the engine room, no more fire room. I was not sorry. The work was much easier, except when we had to scrape the bearings. That was hard work. To scrape a

bearing, one had to unscrew it. You see, one-half of the bearing weighed about two hundred and fifty pounds. We would have to hoist it up and then scrape the babbitt, mark it with red lead, tighten the bearings again, and then separate the two halves to see if there were any high spots. We could then see how much more to scrape, until it was even. The job was tedious, but it had to be done.

At sea you could see flying fish. They would shoot out of the ocean and seem to fly for a distance and then drop back into the ocean. We were fascinated watching them perform. How long the trip took I don't remember, but we finally arrived at our destination.

THE AZORES

The island sloped up to a high hill. The houses were square and white. There for the first time I saw wagons without wheels. There were long bamboo poles underneath, cut at the edge to a sharp point. That is how the horse pulled them. Also for the first time I saw solid wheels with just a hole in the center. The wood is about five inches thick. That's how the first wheels were made hundreds or perhaps thousands of years ago. The wagons looked odd with those heavy wheels turning so clumsily.

As I watched, I said to myself, "Here I go back in history." The other wagons were hitched to two poles sharpened at the ends, making a rasping noise as the horse pulled them. One of the main reasons for such an outfit was that the roads were stony, the whole mountain was stony.

Near the shore there were a couple of old cannons, so old and rusty looking that they appeared as if they had not been fired for ages and ages. The town itself was interesting. There were five of us together ashore, and we stopped in a bar and ordered drinks. They served wine, for which the place was noted. I treated; I gave the man a dollar and received a hat full of change. How much, I don't remember. Then, after awhile we split up, and two of us walked alone.

We headed for the top of the mountain where I was told there was a famous old church. Of course, ninety per cent of the population, or maybe more, were Catholics. There were very few Protes-

tants. We reached the old church. My friend Murphy who was with me said many prayers, as there were statues of many saints. As I looked around and watched Murphy saying his prayers I was impressed. I could then see how strong was the faith of my friend. On the other hand, I sometimes heard him swear, and could he swear! and not in a saintly tongue.

I watched a carpenter drilling a hole in a piece of wood. The drill was not the kind we are used to, but entirely different. It was shaped like a triangle on top with the drill attached. A rope is attached to the triangle, one turns or winds it like a top. Upon letting go, it spins, and the drill goes to work. When it expends itself, of course, one just winds it again and again until the hole is bored. I don't know how it would work in the case of larger holes.

I didn't see any manufacturing. Their industry was mostly growing grapes, but wine was very cheap. We did not stay long and soon were on our way again.

GUANTANAMO

Guantanamo Bay is something to see, located just before you get into Havana. There is quite a history relating to Guantanamo Bay. It was during the Spanish-American War that the place became famous, when the harbor was blocked by Captain Hobson.

The bay is large enough for a whole fleet, roomy, and good to look at. I should know, for I went swimming every day while we were stationed there. The weather was delightful and just what the doctor ordered. All this was over fifty years ago, and one can just imagine the improvement since then. The Spanish government certainly had the best of it there. They practically made slaves of the people, and that went on for centuries. Some day soon a change will come, if the people have enough will.

The beach was not too good as far as walking on it was concerned. It was very hot and we were all thirsty. Someone from town came along with some cases of soda. They were cold and did not last long. We would have preferred beer, but did not see any. This was over fifty years ago. No doubt things are different now.

We did not stay long in Guantanamo, but soon pulled out. This time we took a trip to Honduras, but it was just a trip. No one went

ashore; you can be sure we were not happy about it. But what could we do but grin and bear it? About that time we had to coal up. The coal ship had a curious name, one cannot forget it. The ship was named the Cyclops. Which means one-eyed, named after the legendary one-eyed man.

It was rather an odd name. The ship was huge and looked clumsy. The reason that I'm writing about it is because its history is a sad one. Not long after it coaled us up, we heard that it had disappeared and it must have sunk. It was a long time before it took root in my mind, that the ship had really sunk. I can still see that huge ship. Strange how thoughts come seeping through one's mind. There it was, gently bobbing as a little wave hit it; and no matter how big the ship was it moved. And now somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean it is lying on the bottom with all those who were aboard.

REMINISCENCES

Now my thoughts are in Japan. You see, the word coal brought to my mind when we were coaling ships in Japan. I was put on watch as they were coaling, to check the baskets as they were being loaded, to count them. That was my job, and that job I did. Then dinner time came and I was not yet relieved, so I kept on checking. Soon I was approached to go and get some food. I refused to leave. The next day I was not sent on the job to check. Why? One can guess the reason without much thought.

While walking on the deck nights while the ship was steaming along, quiet and silent, many thoughts would come to me, about what I would do after my time was up. The main dream of a sailor when his time is up is to live on a farm raising chickens, a quiet life away from the storm of life. It was but natural that I too had the dream. Come to think of it next month I shall be eighty-four years old, and the hope is still strong with me to live peacefully on a farm.

I have always liked to walk alone on deck and that I did on my last hitch in the Navy. Ashore I would do the same thing, walk and see what there was to see.

I remember one night in Galveston I met a young man who had just landed from the "old country." I bought him a few drinks, as we talked about what his ambition was. This fellow in particular was

a master of many languages, and what do you suppose his dream was? It was to own a barroom, to be the owner of a barroom. Here I was envious of his ability to speak many languages, and what does he want to do? Run a barroom.

There was a barroom in Galveston that was run by a German, a big man of over two hundred pounds. All the student doctors who were finishing their last year before they received their degrees would gather there and discuss their plans for the future over a glass of beer, just what they would do when they got their degrees, or piece of paper giving them permission to practice on us poor mortals. They were a pleasant crowd and about my age. The place also served food. Who do you suppose waited on the table? His wife, of course.

She was a tall gaunt Frau, quiet and submissive. The food was good, the beer was good, and so I spent many an evening there surrounded by a young intelligent group.

MORE ON CHINA

One night in Shanghai I was walking alone on Bubbling Well Road. It is the main road in Shanghai. I was thinking of where, if I had money, I would take a long vacation. At that time one could hire a boat and crew for about ten dollars a day. So I pictured myself sailing up the Yangtze River and living the life of Riley. At age twenty-two one has dreams, and to be sure I had my share. After all these years I can still picture them vividly.

At that time the European nations were taking advantage of the Chinese, and I used to wonder what would happen if they ever woke up. I distinctly remember having read a book stating that a nation is like a human being who is just about to die. All of a sudden, he sits up and seems to come to life. But a nation is different. It doesn't all die. There is a revival, a new spirit, and the whole nation takes on new life. Even then I used to wonder what revenge they would take on us.

The experiences I had in Shanghai are still with me. In retrospect I'm back in Shanghai walking through the Bund, a sort of a park near the waterfront. View the scene: people hurrying along, each to his own destination. The U.S.S. Salem was equipped with Diesel engines. They were the first of their kind in the Navy. So we

set out to test them at full speed. Everything else was neglected except for speed and duration. Excitement was rampant. Being an oiler, I stayed in the engine room. My job was to keep the engines from overheating, which means the bearings. It was exciting while it lasted. We were the first ship to be equipped with Marconi radio. It was exciting to watch the electric sparks as messages were being relayed. The man in charge was a slightly built man, a civilian working for the government.

ASHORE IN MASSACHUSETTS

We stopped at Plymouth, Massachusetts many times. What impressed me most was the quaintness of the place. Of the famous rock, of course, not much has been left, too many souvenirs having been chipped off. Walking about the place, one has a feeling of belonging, even though it is the first visit. How to account for that feeling? I tried as I walked about the city. What was it? Why should I feel so? I knew that I had never been there before, and yet this is what I felt. Could it be because of what I had read? That is possible. A couple of years ago I visited the same place and did not have the feeling I did sixty years ago.

I took a trip to Gloucester, a famous city old with history. Having read about it, I thought it was about time to see it for myself. It was famous for fisheries and fishermen. As usual I strolled all over the place. Everything was interesting to me.

I've been told that there were more widows in Gloucester than one would usually find in inland cities. The reason was simple. Most of the men were fishermen, and many lost their lives in their work. They would be caught in storms. Their work was certainly not the safest in the world.

In Boston harbor ships would come in with ice all over the decks and superstructure. It would have to be chopped off, not pleasant work. But that was part of their life.

I made a couple of trips to Gloucester. One outstanding thing took place there. I believe that President Taft was visiting there. The schools got together and sang for him. There was quite a celebration going on at that time, but what it was about I don't remember.

ST. THOMAS, VIRGIN ISLANDS

Soon after that we made ready to make a trip. I remember when we sailed to St. Thomas, Danish West Indies.

I remember how hot it was. In fact I remember the first night we anchored. We all slept in our hammocks without clothes, and then it was miserable at that. I don't believe any one of us got much sleep the first night. But the next day I forgot all about the heat. I set out by myself to go sightseeing.

I always tried first to get acquainted. This I did with my usual luck. I stopped near a house, looked in and saw a grand old man. He looked as if he were a hundred years old. His snow white beard reached to his waist, a benevolent look on his face. What have I got to lose? and in I walked. Knocking at the door, I heard someone say, "Enter", and there I was.

The man was sitting in a big chair looking serene and peaceful-like. Taking a good look at him I saw that he was Jewish. I being in uniform felt that I could go anywhere and be welcomed; and so it was. I greeted him in the ancient language, and he responded in same. Soon we were at home. I knew that I was. We talked for some time; and, shortly after, his wife came in, a grand old lady she was, too. I was then asked to come in the evening and meet the entire family.

There were over thirty people in the main room. All were his descendants. What happened was that he and his wife were the only white ones. I mean, he and his wife and his children were the only white ones. His children married natives, and their children also married natives. So there was a combination of white and half white and quarter white.

The grand old man owned perhaps the largest department store in St. Thomas. I walked through it and was impressed. He had lived on that island for over sixty years. The old couple looked happy and contented. Once a year one of the sons would go to New York and stock up.

I did not see or meet any other Jewish people there; there might have been some, but I did not see any. The next day I looked around; I met some Germans, but their children were half-and-half.

This half German and half native family were very wealthy. Their children were educated in Germany. No matter where I went, I was treated well.

I met some Danish people there, quite a contrast between the blonds and the natives! Every day I took in the scenery and there was plenty to see. Once I climbed a high mountain where a sort of round stone building stood. It looked like and perhaps really was a castle. There are many stories connected with that castle.

One is that many wives were killed in it; some called it Blue-beard's castle. I don't really know whether these stories were true. When I arrived there, there were hundreds of names of visitors carved on the doors, and so I carved mine too. It was a shame, because my name infringed partly over someone else's, and since then there must have been thousands of other names added.

Life was easy and pleasant. I did not see anyone hustling especially the white folks. It was pleasant and cool inside the white people's houses, because the houses were made of stones. We stayed in St. Thomas Island only a few days. I visited the main store, that is, the department store and watched people coming in and buying. The grandsons of that remarkable family were busy waiting on the counters. I looked at them while they were selling and said to myself, "How polite they are, speaking in their soft light tone." Not like their Grandfather, who spoke in a deep tone. Grandmother talked very softly and smiled very nicely.

I can still see them all sitting around the big room. It seemed to light up the whole house. For a while, while I was there, I thought that it wouldn't be a bad place to live for awhile. The thought lasted only while I was there, and soon I forgot all about St. Thomas. We pulled out one fine morning.

LIFE IN THE ENGINE ROOM

It felt very good when I was in the engine room walking around the grating, making sure that the oil was functioning, listening to the throb of the engine, watching the gauges to see that the pressure was right. Each one in the engine room was doing his work quietly and efficiently. In my first hitch I was four years in the fire room. It was tough work then, and now I had it easy. What a re-

lief! Making more money and doing less work. But here there was responsibility. One had to keep his eyes wide open.

One of the first things to do when one went on watch was to check the exhaust valve. If there were anything wrong, really wrong, one would open the main exhaust valve and release the pressure and lessen the danger of explosion. This was true especially if there was too much steam. The main point was to know where the exhaust valve was so that one could get to it quickly.

BAR HARBOR AND NEWPORT

We went to Bar Harbor. At night we turned on the searchlight and the beach was lit up as if the sun itself was shining. We could see the people walking along the beach just as clearly as if watching a stage performance. To myself I said, "Some day I would like to be there myself," and so it came to be.

The crew living aboard a ship so many hundreds of feet long and so many feet wide comprises a whole community, a little world by itself, from commander down to the enlisted men. One big difference between officers and men is that the officers are educated in a school for the purpose of devoting their whole careers to service aboard ships. The enlisted man can come or go after he has finished his term of enlistment. The officers are dedicated for life, but the enlisted man can take his choice. That is, part or whole.

We were back in the Navy Yard again, just for a little while, and soon we sailed to Newport. That gave us a chance for shore leave. Now I am walking the streets of Newport, Rhode Island. There are many things worth seeing there. But unfortunately it was wintertime. So I took in a few shows, and a trip home to my folks in Providence.

CALLED TO THE QUARTERDECK

We made ready to sail. As it was my turn in the engine room, I saw to what I had to do. Then something went wrong the result of which could get me into real trouble.

I knew that I was in for it. My mind was working overtime. For I had to face the captain and all the officers listening to the captain as he gave out justice. It could mean a fine, it could mean demotion. or it could be more drastic. There was also the danger that

many could be hurt. The charge against me was that I had almost wrecked the vacuum pump.

All that evening I kept thinking of what to say when I went to face the captain. The gang knew all about it, and what I had to face. They would come to me and say, "You will get out of it. You always do. You must be a Mason. You have 'pull'." Before that I had faced the captain several times on minor things and as usual talked my way out. But this time I knew that the case was serious.

The next morning came. I had not yet decided what excuse to give. The time came for me to go aft. That is where the officers are. It is the biggest part of the boat. It is wider and deeper, and their cabins are below deck. I believe my heart must have been beating quite fast as I stood there facing the commander and the rest of the officers. The charge was read against me. The captain looked at me and asked me what I had to say. All of a sudden the answer came to me. "Sir," I said, "I have been doing this work for over two years. I can do the work with my eyes shut. I am as guilty as one could possibly be. I have no excuse whatsoever. There is only one thing I can say." The captain looked at me and said, "What is it?" I answered, "I know that it will never happen again." The captain looked at me for a moment and said, "Go forward." I knew then that I was excused and that it was all over. During all this time the crew stood there and listened. All they heard was the captain's "Go forward" and that I was out of trouble.

The gang was sure that I was a Mason and that I must have given him the high sign, while what I really did was to tell the truth.

ADMIRAL ABOARD

For some time things became difficult on our ship, and complaints were being heard from many quarters. Some of the men wrote to Washington about it. One day an admiral came aboard. We all lined up and were told that if we had anything to say to come forward and say it and not be afraid. For a while nobody moved. Then one stepped forward, and that started it and a few more came forward. What was being said we never heard. But what had started it was that some of the deck crew painted a sign over the side of the ship and the word was "Madhouse." Ships passing saw the sign,

and it was immediately reported to the Navy Department. Action was taken right away. Soon after that some officers were transferred, and some of those who came forward were promoted as a result of the complaint. Which reminds me of something I did.

I had something that I wanted to say. So I wrote a letter to Washington. Just what it was, I can't remember, although probably not important. A couple of weeks later I was called to the captain's cabin, and my letter was there on the table. I was told that in the future if I had anything to write, I should see him first. I saluted and said "Yes Sir", and went back.

Life went on as usual on the U.S.S. Scout Cruiser, Salem. Every-pay day I would buy many months' supply of tobacco. I got into the habit of smoking a pipe, a T.D. pipe made of clay. I think the price was just one cent for the pipe. When it was broken in, you couldn't get a better smoke or a sweeter smoke, the taste was just right.

TURTLE SOUP

One of the boys of the deck force took a large chunk of meat, tied it to a heavy line, and threw it over the side. He tied a small piece of wood to the line as a float. Soon he had a bite. It was hard work hauling the turtle aboard, for it weighed over 200 pounds.

We all stood around watching the cook trying to manipulate the turtle. Its neck was as tough as leather. The cook worked and sweated, sawing away with a big kitchen knife. Finally he succeeded in cutting it up. That night we had turtle soup for supper; and that could not be bought in any store.

We used to fish a great deal. I remember one day getting a bite as soon as we threw the line over. There surely must have been a whole school of fish, as we could not pull them up fast enough. That day we had a fisherman's holiday. That afternoon as we started on a trip and were just a little while out, the porpoises followed us for quite a long time. They would swim around the ship with ease and looked as if they were playing tag with each other. We would throw down some food, and they would gobble it up in no

time. They seemed to make no effort and yet traveled very fast, for we were traveling quite rapidly ourselves, while they seemed to be standing still. I don't believe there is a prettier sight than to watch porpoises sporting around the ship while we were standing at the rail. They would follow us for miles on end.

Thinking of it later that night, as I sat on deck while off duty, I wondered where life came from. All points lead to the sea, long before man appeared on earth. I tried to visualize what kind of life first appeared. Somehow man must be connected with the ocean. I am told that man has signs or remnants in his body that belong to the sea. If man could go back in evolution and see himself as an unborn baby in his mother's womb, from conception to birth, what an experience that would be!

There is no better place to think or meditate than when walking the deck alone. This I did often in the evening.

NAVY LIFE

There was a time limit between when one awakened in the morning and stowed his hammock away. We were allowed just 7 minutes. When one gets used to it, it is easy. The hammock is roped. One makes 7 loops, and it is ready for stowing away.

While out to sea on one of our trips, an order came that the whole ship was to be painted when we docked. We all got busy just as soon as we landed. "Why the sudden rush?" I asked myself. We soon learned why in the scuttlebutt, over the grapevine. The Secretary of the Navy was to visit our ship. The paint was brought out. Every Tom, Dick and Harry became a painter. Since I was from the engine room, that was where my job was. So we painted from the top of the mast to the keel. All of the clothes in our bags were scrubbed, taken on deck, and laid out for inspection while we stood to attention. The Secretary of the Navy and the officers of the ship walked by. The show didn't take an hour, although we worked several days to make ready. The ship smelled of paint, so you could smell it a mile away. The Secretary of the Navy barely glanced around as he walked by.

ROMANCE

My time in the service was nearing an end. I had only about one more year to go. It is strange how things work out. About that time while on leave in Boston, I met the girl who was destined to become my wife. How did it come about? Nine years before when I first enlisted in the Navy, I met a fellow aboard the U.S.S. Raleigh who had also been in the Army when I was, although in a different unit. We became good friends. This lasted for many years after we both left the service. His name was Henry Mercier. His parents lived in Braintree, Massachusetts. A friend of his worked in a shop in Quincy which employed many people. One of them was a girl whose brother was aboard the same ship that I was on. Somehow he obtained my name, and sought me out. His name was David Shane.

We met and got to know each other better. I remember distinctly what a hard worker he was. He would scrub hammocks for a dollar a piece while I was satisfied just to scrub my own. About this time we were given ten days leave. I was invited to his home in Quincy. His girl friend lived in Boston, and he invited me to go with him to meet her. His girl friend's cousin was about to be married. Somehow I was also invited to the wedding. Before that I had met his girl friend's sister, who later became my wife. I was not a youngster; I was thirty years old. I had met many girls, some of whom I liked, and had considered the possibility of marriage. But fate ruled otherwise until I met her.

REMEMBER THE MAINE

Only the other day on February 15, 1965 we celebrated Maine Day which commemorates the sinking of the U.S.S. Maine on February 15, 1898. In Rhode Island, where I live, there are only forty-two known Spanish War Veterans left. There may be other Spanish War Veterans living in Rhode Island, but they do not belong to any of the Camps. Only three of us out of the forty-two participated in the exercises. The rest were unable to do so, because some are in the Soldiers Home in Bristol, Rhode Island, some are in nursing homes, and the rest were unable to attend. Some of the members still affiliated with the Rhode Island Camp are scattered from Maine to California. Small indeed have we become in numbers.

END OF THE STORY

Some time ago my elder daughter Ruth (Mrs. Orland D'Atri) suggested that I write down what I could remember of my years in the service. I have just reached my eighty-fourth birthday, but to my Spanish War veteran comrades I am just a boy; they are all older. I had never thought that some day I would set myself this task. But as I started to put down what I remembered, many things came back to me. Writing my memoirs brought back pleasant and wonderful memories, and living them over again brought gladness to my heart. My wife, who read the script as I went along, gave me great encouragement. My younger daughter Jeannette (Mrs. Walter Roth), who read the first thirty pages, also encouraged me to go on. Here I was, surrounded by my family at every step. The work became a pleasure, and so I kept on working. And now it is finished.



67th Annual Encampment of the United Spanish War Veterans — Rhode Island
Department — 1967

FRANK ABRAHAM SILBERMAN 1881 - 1969

By BEATRICE GOLDOWSKY

Frank Abraham Silberman was born March 21, 1881 in Kishnev, Russia. He came to the United States in 1890 and settled in New York City, where he lived until 1896. He then moved with his family to Greenville, Connecticut. At the age of 17 he tried to enlist in the army, but was not accepted. On March 2, 1899 he was more successful and joined the Regular Army enlisting in New York City, although at that time he was living in Norwich, Connecticut. He gave his age as 21 because he did not have the consent of his family.

He trained in Columbus, Ohio and served three full years in the Philippine Islands, including two years and four months in actual combat campaigns. He was stationed on Panay Island at Ilo-Ilo and did his first actual fighting there on November 11, 1899. On its second mission, Company E, 18th Infantry, of which he was a member, lost 42 men. Even so, Silberman declared that he had enjoyed every day he spent in the field of combat.

On his way to duty in the Philippine Islands his transport proceeded by way of Honolulu. As he could not obtain permission to go ashore there to visit his friend's mother's birthplace, he went overboard without leave one day in July, 1899 to do so on his own. As a result he spent 24 hours in the brig in double irons on his return to the ship.

In 1902 he enlisted in the navy and traveled all over the world during the succeeding four years. In 1908 he re-enlisted for four more years, part of which time he served on the Scout Cruiser Salem. Although Silberman found Jews among the crew of one of his ships, he was the only Jew in the company in which he served in the army.

A past commander of the Rhode Island Department of United Spanish War Veterans, he was one of the last surviving Jewish Spanish-American War Veterans. Silberman had been in the insurance business for many years, retiring in 1946.

In 1968 Frank Silberman and his wife, Rose (Wenetsky), celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary.

At the time of his death on January 14, 1969 he had resided in Providence for 50 years. Besides his wife he was survived by two sons, Sumner Silberman of Providence and Joseph Silberman of Warwick; two daughters, Mrs. Orland D'Atri of Warwick and Mrs. Walter Roth of North Providence; two sisters, Miss Catherine Silberman of Providence and Mrs. Flora Einhorn of Daytona Beach, Florida, and six grandchildren.

THE GEMILOTH CHASODIM OF RHODE ISLAND:
THE HEBREW FREE LOAN ASSOCIATIONS

BY BENTON H. ROSEN

In dealing with the subject of Philanthropy the Universal Jewish Encyclopedia states in part: "Although philanthropy, meaning love of humanity, is commonly looked upon as being a modern word, replacing the archaic and more patronizing words, such as charity or alms giving, it comes closer to the Jewish concept of rendering aid to one's fellow men in distress than either of the other terms. The Jewish attitude, as expressed both in the prophetic and legal portions of the Bible and in the exegetic and codifying literature that followed, was based on the responsibility of man toward his fellow men. The assumption was not that the rich had a special duty to perform, but that each man was a borrower from the wealth that was God's; rich and poor alike, therefore, were responsible for each other's welfare. Two words are used in Hebrew to denote philanthropic acts: *Tzedakah* and *Gemilath Hasadim*. The former means righteousness and the latter works of love, or deeds of loving kindness. In the terminology itself is expressed the ethical attitude, the 'ethical fervor'¹ of the Jews in relation to the sharing of worldly goods."

It is small wonder, then, that a group of Providence Jewish men of substance, more or less, banded together early in the 20th century to help their needy bretheren in a dignified and kindly manner. The Gemilath Hesed, or Hebrew Free Loan Association of Providence, was formed in accordance with the Biblical admonition: "If thou loan money to my people, to the poor by thee, thou shalt not lay upon him interest."² On February 4, 1903 the initial meeting of the association took place. The minutes of this session read:

"The first meeting of the organizers of the Gemilath Chesed was called to order at 7:30 P.M. at 317 North Main Street, Providence, Rhode Island by Samuel Luber who acted as Temporary Chairman.

"Nominations for Chairman were called for, and Samuel Priest was nominated and elected Chairman for the evening.

"The gentlemen present voted to loan³ money to make up a fund for use by the organization, and the following contributed to that

fund: Joseph Joslin \$100.00, Isaac Wolf \$100.00, Benjamin Flink \$75.00, Jacob Feinstein \$50.00, William Rabinowitz \$50.00, Abraham Golden \$50.00, Miss Lena Lewando \$50.00,⁴ Harry Lyon \$25.00, Joseph Kroll \$25.00, Hyman Katz \$25.00, Harry Rosenhirsch \$25.00, Abe Abrich \$25.00, Benjamin Goldstein \$25.00; Dr. Saul Lewando \$25.00, Charles Goldstein \$15.00, Myer Brown \$15.00, Kalman Abisch \$10.00, and Samuel Luber \$10.00.

Upon motion duly made and seconded it was voted that a committee of one be appointed to obtain a charter for the organization. Joseph Kroll was appointed, and it was voted that the name of the organization be 'Gemilath Chesed Association of Providence'.

Nominations for officers were then in order, and the following were nominated and elected: Secretary, Charles Goldstein; Treasurer, Joseph Joslin, for the ensuing term of one year. The Chairman then appointed the following committee of three (3) to select a Board of Directors for the year 1903: William Baxt, Adolph I. Linder, and Herman Epstein.

The following were selected as members of the Board of Directors: Isaac Wolf, Benjamin Flink, Jacob Feinstein, William Rabinowitz, Abraham Goldberg, Harry Lyon, Dr. Saul Lewando, Hyman Katz, Barnett Fain, Abe Abrich, Samuel Luber, and Joseph Kroll.

It was also voted that a checking account be opened in the name of the organization, in the Fifth National Bank, and the checks be signed by the secretary and treasurer.

It was also voted that money be loaned sums from \$5.00 to \$25.00 upon notes satisfactorily endorsed, applicants to be passed upon weekly.

Rabbi David H. Bachrach, Herman Epstein, William Baxt, Charles Goldstein, and Joseph Kroll were appointed a Committee on By-Laws.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Charles Goldstein, Secretary

During the first year of operation income less expenses, a net amount of \$437.08, enabled 197 applications for loans to be granted a total of \$4,298.00

TABLE A
PROVIDENCE HEBREW FREE LOAN ASSOCIATION
FINANCIAL REPORT FROM 1903 - 1967

<i>Year</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Applications</i>	<i>Amount of Loans</i>
1903	\$560.48	\$123.40	197	\$4,298.00
1904	609.50	219.67	236	4,795.00
1905	921.58	188.20	324	6,577.00
1906	1,065.52	268.30	295	7,045.00
1907	1,075.44	332.39	481	10,722.00
1908	1,173.42	359.32	399	11,300.00
1909	1,315.02	333.16	379	11,085.00
1910	1,414.27	412.86	416	16,394.00
1911	1,864.62	636.41	481	20,823.00
1912	2,150.24	819.67	528	20,450.00
1913	2,256.36	1,010.27	592	21,910.00
1914	2,316.00	1,045.26	504	22,665.00
1915	2,532.85	1,049.99	489	19,847.00
1916	2,763.05	1,345.86	411	25,946.00
1917	3,356.46	1,479.95	396	27,858.00
1918	3,250.93	1,618.25	389	22,583.00
1919	4,081.06	1,749.04	372	42,570.00
1920	4,056.52	2,003.03	389	47,700.00
1921	4,223.31	1,900.03	465	49,045.00
1922	6,403.08	3,747.04	433	42,185.00
1923	5,235.99	2,374.06	438	53,950.00
1924	5,763.18	2,534.35	477	63,495.00
1925	5,131.90	2,462.48	462	60,495.00
1926	5,167.43	2,560.32	462	63,600.00
1927	6,374.72	2,535.19	491	64,745.00
1928	7,697.25	2,543.33	513	65,715.00
1929	4,920.19	2,979.18	426	69,630.00
1930	5,132.76	3,072.48	423	62,717.00
1931	4,952.89	2,912.61	425	56,725.00
1932	4,700.09	3,062.35	420	54,410.00
1933	3,318.67	2,351.59	361	51,013.00
1934	3,858.15	2,915.54	411	63,199.00
1935	4,064.32	3,308.40	426	70,049.50
1936	4,842.13	3,327.48	464	77,143.00
1937	4,650.95	3,730.51	406	69,925.00
1938	4,753.26	3,646.90	447	78,299.00
1939	4,727.95	3,058.35	415	79,044.00
1940	5,137.75	3,259.97	420	83,745.80
1941	4,500.64	3,126.21	375	82,852.00
1942	5,688.11	3,342.67	241	57,084.00
1943	5,993.20	3,615.36	165	41,850.00
1944	6,489.79	3,960.36	112	28,741.00
1945	6,644.27	3,687.05	89	24,960.00
1946	9,331.34	3,918.39	106	34,180.00
1947	7,651.03	4,022.22	117	43,475.00
1948	7,239.53	4,539.39	138	53,650.00
1949	7,222.36	3,122.02	163	61,737.00
1950	7,550.02	3,140.78	171	65,502.00
1951	7,060.85	3,657.01	181	71,645.00

TABLE A
PROVIDENCE HEBREW FREE LOAN ASSOCIATION
FINANCIAL REPORT FROM 1903 - 1967

<i>Year</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expenses</i>	<i>Applications</i>	<i>Amount of Loans</i>
1952	7,547.47	3,889.14	171	70,131.00
1953	8,234.26	3,741.34	235	95,025.00
1954	7,586.70	4,286.04	227	97,300.00
1955	7,156.86	4,291.68	216	90,925.00
1956	7,072.96	3,982.59	220	95,030.00
1957	7,223.72	4,175.30	227	95,385.00
1958	8,226.02	4,399.47	221	100,790.00
1959	7,571.84	4,642.11	223	108,503.00
1960	7,407.76	4,963.01	223	110,690.00
1961	8,028.30	5,629.85	207	105,815.00
1962	7,172.59	5,252.08	196	103,797.00
1963	7,999.64	5,345.67	185	99,615.00
1964	7,770.12	5,309.06	193	101,655.00
1965	7,384.20	5,685.15	150	84,350.00
1966	8,807.73	5,748.57	140	81,110.00
1967	10,495.83	5,889.35	133	78,865.00

Income over the years has been derived from very nominal membership dues, life memberships, and a gamut of benefit devices such as: raffles, year book advertisements, appeals for additional contributions, and bequests. In the latter category is a total amount of \$11,643.82 bestowed by:

Joseph Kroll	\$2,795.98
Joseph Finberg	2,189.42
Phillip Kelman	513.00
Rabbi Maurice Mazur ^a	500.00
Morris Hyman	1,189.42
Bernard Goodman	1,149.05
Barnet Pickar	1,157.90
Morris Ratush	1,000.00
Sol and Nettie Wald	1,149.05

Applications for loans were always handled on a confidential basis. When need was established and two endorsers were secured, non-interest loans were granted for a variety of reasons. Because of the delicately discreet manner in which the transactions were handled, there are no statistics covering the reasons for borrowings. From members of long standing it was learned that the loans were given for

medical expenses, the establishment of a small business enterprise, repayment of crushing interest-bearing loans elsewhere, education expenses, funeral costs, household emergencies, legal expenses, and in recent years the payment of certain taxes. Repayment terms have always been generous, and the amount of defaulted agreements over the years has been negligible.

During World War II United States War Bonds were purchased with reserve funds, and from the time of the issuance of bonds by the State of Israel the association bought these securities in generous amounts. Whenever the Israel bonds matured the funds derived therefrom were immediately reinvested. In effect, Israel was treated as a "free" borrower.

Within two years the Jewish community of South Providence, that area of which Willard Avenue was the focal point of activity, decided to emulate the good work of its North End brethren and in a separate organization. Most of the early records of the South Providence Hebrew Free Loan Association have disappeared. However, the minutes of the first meeting on March 5, 1905, as shown in the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Program in 1930, are quoted here in their entirety:

"The meeting was called to order by temporary chairman, Mr. Simon Wolk at 3:30 P.M. at Bazar's Hall, Willard Avenue. Mr. Charles Sigal, speaking in the name of a number of people expressed the opinion that the time has come whereby South Providence Jews should organize into their own Free Loan Association instead of contributing yearly towards the Free Loan Association of Providence. After a long discussion, it was decided that the Jews of South Providence organize their own Gemilath Chesed Association. A committee of five was then appointed by the presiding officer, Mr. Wolk, to bring back to the same meeting a slate of officers and board of directors who shall serve the coming year. The following were then nominated and elected.

- Mr. Louis M. Grant.....Chairman
- Mr. Abraham Zeller MayerVice-Chairman
- Mr. Sigmund RosenTreasurer
- Mr. Barney BanderRecording Secretary
- Mr. Milton ElmanFinancial Secretary

Board of Directors

Mr. Hyman Shindler	Mr. Louis Goldenberg
Mr. Simon Wolk	Mr. Nathan Shapiro
Mr. Charles Sigal	Mr. Simon Greenblatt
Mr. I. Urban	Mr. L. Morgan Roth
Mr. Nathan Wiesel	Mr. Max Rose
Mr. Aaron Weitman	Mr. Harry Sussman

"After the election of officers a motion was adopted that a fund be created to start the Loan Association, and an appeal was made where Eight Hundred and Twenty-Five Dollars (\$825.) was loaned⁶ by the following:

Mr. Aaron Weitman	\$100.00	Mr. A. Bazar	\$50.00
Mr. Sam Silverman	50.00	Mr. Harry Sussman	40.00
Mr. Abraham Zeller-		Mr. Louis Goldenberg	25.00
mayer	50.00	Mr. Nathan Horowitz	50.00
Mr. Nathan Wiesel	50.00	Mr. Aaron Kaufman	25.00
Mr. Sigmund Rosen	75.00	Mr. Charles Silverman	50.00
Mr. Barney Bander	25.00	Mr. J. Kaufman	25.00
Mr. Louis M. Grant.....	50.00	Mr. Charles Sigal	50.00
Mr. Nathan Shapiro	25.00		
Mr. I. Weinbaum	50.00		
Mrs. Sarah Zolluck ⁷	25.00		
			\$825.00

"The meeting was then adjourned.

B. Bander, Secretary"

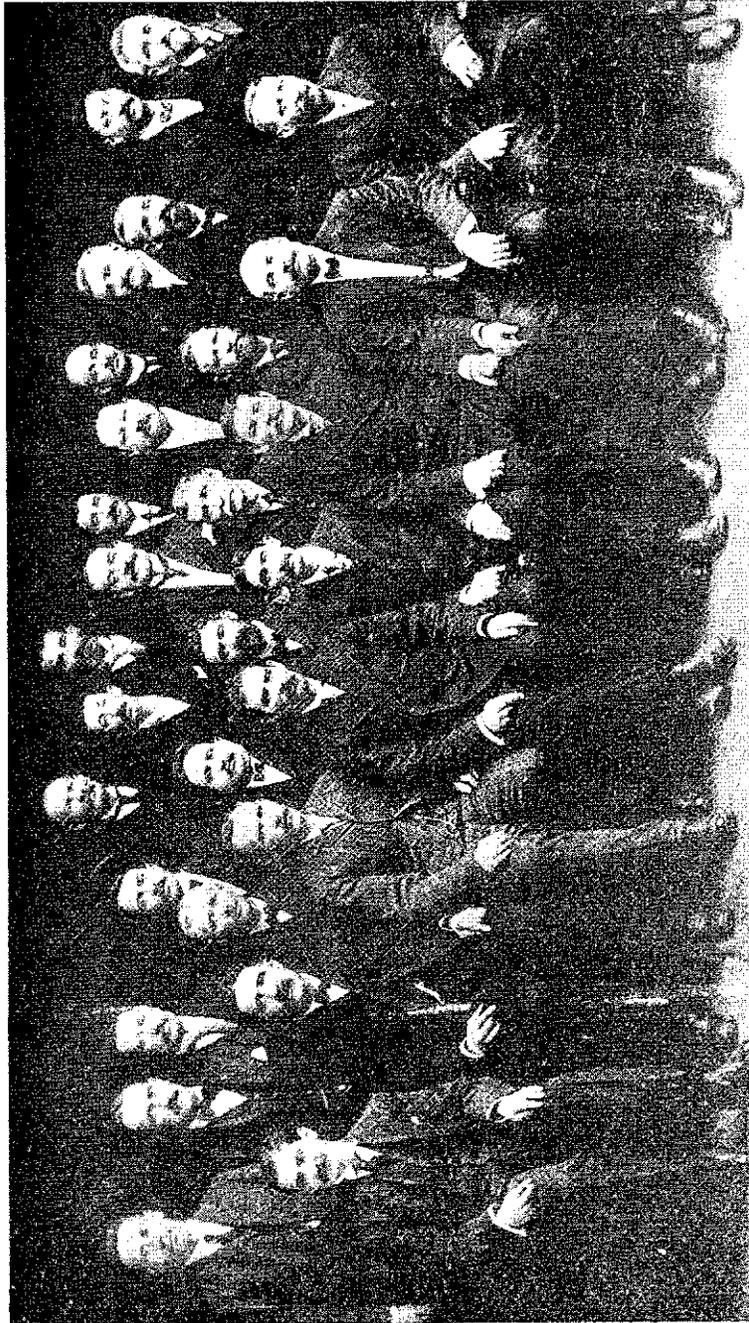
The same souvenir program also records the minutes of the second meeting: "On Monday evening, March 6, 1905, the new officers and board of directors met at the South Providence Hebrew Congregation and made loans to outsiders⁸ aggregating four hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$425.) It was also decided at the same meeting that two of the board of directors should constitute a committee for the purpose of making yearly members to the organization and the following two members of the board were appointed to go out⁹ the following Sunday: (Chosen were) Mr. Charles Sigel and Mr. Nathan Shapiro.

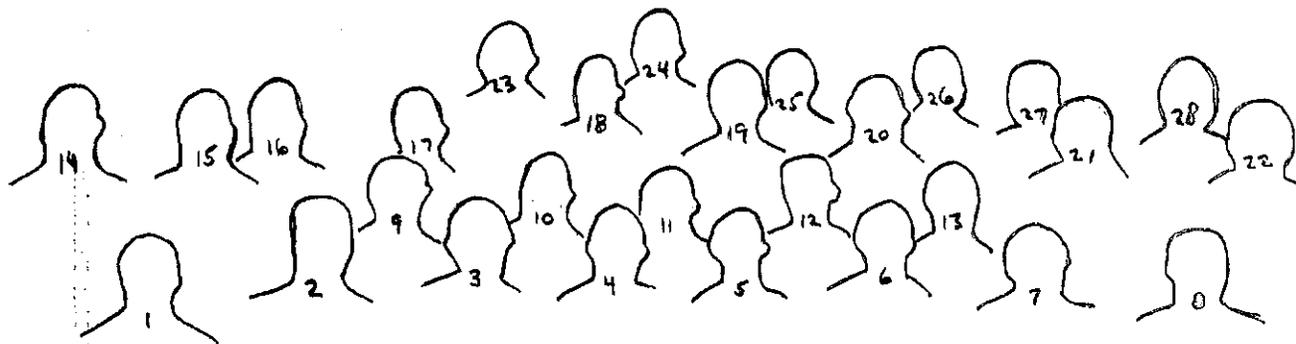
"A motion was also adopted at the same time that these officers and board of directors serving the first year should have the right to be present at every meeting of this institution as long as it exists. The meeting was then adjourned.

E. Bander, Secretary"



Sarah Saluck?





ORGANIZERS AND FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Hebrew Free Loan Association of Providence

(1) William Rabinowitz, (2) Joseph Joslin, (3) Isaac Wolf, (4) Joseph Kroll, (5) Charles Goldstein, (6) Harry Lyon, (7) Harry Rosenhirsch, (8) Jacob Feinstein, (9) Louis Bolotow, (10) Aaron Feiner, (11) Abraham Abrich, (12) Herman Epstein, (13) Kalman Abis, (14) Hyman Katz, (15) Unidentified, (16) William Adelman, (17) Adolph Linder, (18) Benjamin Goldstein, (19) Sydney Kapland, (20) Samuel Priest, (21) Unidentified, (22) Zalman Rosen, (23) Dr. Saul Lewando, (24) Benjamin Flink, (25) Abraham Golden, (26) Unidentified, (27) Joseph Levy, and (28) Philip Kelman.

The report of the first year's activity showed that \$324 were collected in dues, and expenses were \$62. Loans were granted in a range of five to twenty-five dollars. Total loans in 1905 were \$1,855.

Table B, revealing statistical data for the years from 1930 through 1967, gives a comprehensive picture. Modest dues have been collected from hundreds of members. It is interesting to note how the net worth has grown consistently.

TABLE B
SOUTH PROVIDENCE HEBREW FREE LOAN ASSOCIATION

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of Loans</i>	<i>Maximum Loan</i>	<i>Total Loans</i>	<i>Net Worth</i>
1930	409	\$100	\$ 30,065	\$10,756.26
1931	402	100	29,750	13,436.76
1934	388	100	25,725	14,575.22
1935	429	125	29,891	15,356.14
1936	437	125	34,616	17,667.14
1939	493	125	42,690	21,688.55
1941	544	125	48,825	24,339.36
1949	265	300	66,395	40,325.94
1950	263	300	66,850	45,068.32
1952	255	500	68,850	50,192.92
1954	293	500	81,450	55,201.34
1956	264	500	82,970	61,291.26
1957	289	500	95,050	62,791.67
1958	292	500	99,725	64,881.67
1959	258	500	93,150	66,894.35
1960	283	500	104,075	69,130.58
1961	253	500	95,325	72,551.93
1967	189	750	80,350	91,273.65

The South Providence group has operated in a pattern similar to that of the North End organization. Year after year it made loans in a kindly and worthy manner, and its financial strength improved constantly. The noble work being done did not escape the attention of the non-Jewish community. In a letter to the then association president, dated April 3, 1930, Governor Norman S. Case stated: "The service you are performing must be satisfying both to your association and to those served. I believe your method of co-operation, while preserving self-respect, ties us as individuals into closer relationship, one with another, and gives a brighter outlook upon life. The individual is made stronger by your plan of assistance and the State is a gainer through the recognition of responsibility."

PAWTUCKET-CENTRAL FALLS HEBREW FREE LOAN
ASSOCIATION

FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS OF MARCH 3, 1968

NET WORTH — MARCH 24, 1968..... \$41,382.08

All —

Dues	\$592.00
Interest—Israel Bonds	790.00
Interest—Ctf of Deposit	400.00
Interest—Savings Account	35.82
Interest—U. S. Bonds	361.32

2,179.14

\$43,561.22

(in '68) 9 LOANS

Less—

General Expenses	187.25
------------------------	--------

NET WORTH — MARCH 3, 1969..... \$43,373.97

Cash—

PROOF

Checking Account	\$4,228.53
Savings Account	2,565.44

6,793.97

Loans Receivable	8,580.00
------------------------	----------

Israel Bonds	20,000.00
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U. S. Treasury Notes	8,000.00
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\$43,373.97

CASH RECONCILIATION

Cash—March 24, 1968 \$ 922.08

Add —

Receipts A/C Loans	\$10,130.00
Interest	1,587.14
Dues	592.00

12,309.14

\$13,231.22

Less —

Loans	\$ 6,250.00
General Expenses	187.25

6,437.25

Cash—March 3, 1969 \$ 6,793.97

STATE OF ISRAEL BONDS

March 1, 1976	4%	Coupon	\$ 1,000.00
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March 1, 1977	4%	Coupon	3,000.00
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March 1, 1978	4%	Coupon	2,000.00
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March 1, 1980	4%	Coupon	1,000.00
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March 1, 1981	4%	Coupon	2,000.00
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August 1, 1983	4%	Coupon	11,000.00
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\$20,000.00

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TREASURY NOTES

August 15, 1969	6%	\$ 8,000.00
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In 1910 the Gemilath Chesed Association of Pawtucket and Central Falls was established to serve the needs of the Jewish community of the Blackstone Valley area. Essential records of this group have been rather loosely maintained. However, an examination of their financial statement (Table C), dated March 3, 1968, provides an adequate description of present-day activity of free-loan association activity in the Rhode Island area. Generally, a modest portion of assets is loaned out. Most of the capital is invested in Israel Bonds, United States Government obligations, and cash reserve accounts. Yet dues are collected annually, and growth is noted perennially and inevitably.

According to the records on corporations at the office of the Rhode Island Secretary of State, the Woonsocket Gemiles Chesed Association was granted a charter on July 28, 1909. This document was issued to: M. Greenberg, J. Shein, S. Russian, Eli Sherman, Hyman Kramer, and Nathan Falk. The purposes indicated were: "to promote the mutual welfare of the members and to aid them in every material way when in want."¹⁰

The Woonsocket Hebrew Free Loan Association has had a limited membership, but sufficient in size and scope to deal with free loan requirements of the small Jewish community of that city. Presently there are 38 members, practically all of whom are descendants of the founders of the group.

According to the officers of the Woonsocket organization no formal statements of operation ever have been issued.

Jacob Sonderling, spiritual leader of Temple Beth Israel, 1929-31, was asked to comment on Gemilath Hesed. His closing remark was: "Your organization, which is a peculiarly Jewish institution, means a strengthening of Jewishness in our community—may you be blessed to go from strength to strength."¹¹

NOTES

¹Encyclopedia Britannica: "Charity and Charities of the Jews."

²Exodus XXII, 24.

³Records fail to show whether the initial capital was contributed or loaned. It would seem that these monies were incorporated into the financial structure of the organization permanently.

⁴Miss Lewando was the sister of Dr. Saul Lewando, a physician. No doubt she was not present at the meeting.

⁵Rabbi Mazure was spiritual leader of Temple Beth Israel in 1931-33.

⁶As with the Providence group, it cannot be determined if these were gifts, or loans repaid at a later date.

⁷Sarah Saluck (Correct Spelling) was the first woman to give support to the South Providence group. She was mentioned in Vol. V, No. 1 issue of RIJHN "Providence Conservative Synagogue—Temple Beth Israel" as a donor of a Torah to the Robinson Street Synagogue. Mrs. Saluck was among the original incorporators of The Miriam Hospital. On the charter her name was incorrectly spelled as "Sallusck".

⁸Non-members who had made application for loans.

⁹To canvas the neighborhood for memberships.

¹⁰Because a small annual fee had not been paid according to the legal requirements of the time, the charter was forfeited involuntarily. On January 8, 1914 a new charter was granted for "charitable, benevolent, literary and social purposes."

¹¹Twenty-fifth Anniversary Program of the South Providence Hebrew Free Loan Association.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN PRE-CIVIL
WAR AMERICA BASED ON PREVIOUSLY UNPUBLISHED
PRIMARY SOURCES*

By NATHAN M. KAGANOFF

The most outstanding figure in American Jewish historiography is the Rev. Jacques J. Lyons, the Hazzan of Congregation Shearith Israel in New York City. Mr. Lyons was born in Surinam, Dutch Guiana in 1813 to parents who had emigrated from Philadelphia. In 1837, Lyons came to the United States where he became the Hazzan of Congregation Beth Shalome in Richmond, Va. Two years later, following the death of Isaac Mendes Seixas, he was elected Minister of the New York congregation, where he served for 38 years until his death in 1877.¹

Lyons apparently intended to publish a history of the Jews in the United States and during his ministry at Shearith Israel, he gathered together what is still considered the most important collection of original source material bearing on Jewish life in America. Unfortunately, the history was never written and the collection remained in the possession of the family, which would not permit its use or disposal in any manner for what were termed "sentimental reasons."

More than thirty years after Lyons' death, the family presented this body of material to the American Jewish Historical Society, with the understanding that its contents would be published.² Obviously the collection could not appear in its entirety, and after several years of editing, a major portion appeared as volumes 21 and 27 of the *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, published in 1913 and 1920 respectively.

What Lyons had accumulated during a lifetime of activity consists essentially of three groups of material: 1) original manuscripts, documents and record books, 2) notebooks in which Lyons transcribed from other sources, material for which he could no longer

*Read at the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association on June 8, 1969. The author is Librarian-Editor of the American Jewish Historical Society.

obtain the original documentation, and 3) three scrapbooks filled primarily with newspaper clippings and other ephemera.

These scrapbooks contain well over one thousand items. When the collection was edited for publication, however, although extensive excerpts of the manuscripts and notebooks were published, the scrapbooks were largely ignored. Of the more than 750 printed pages in the two volumes, only 18 contain selections from the scrapbooks. This may be due in part to the fact that the scrapbooks contain material primarily contemporaneous to Lyons' lifetime and the editors were concerned with items of a more historic interest. For our purposes, however, the scrapbooks present a very vivid portrayal of American Jewish life in pre-civil War America.

Before going into more specific details, we can make the following general observation. Essentially, and perhaps surprisingly, Jewish life and the problems faced by the American Jewish community were really no different in the 1840's than they are in the 1960's. As we leaf through the scrapbooks we may feel that some of the incidents reported reflect a certain lack of sophistication in American Jewry; but who knows if scholars or historians writing 125 years from now will not accuse us of the same shortcoming?

Basically, the scrapbooks contain descriptions of incidents that took place. We have grouped these vignettes into three subject areas, selecting items that are most relevant and most interesting and for the most part have never been publicized before. While some may seem trivial in nature, they will help us obtain a feeling of what Jewish life was actually like in ante-bellum America.

The three areas are: 1) Jewish relations with the general or Christian community, 2) American Jewish contacts with Jewry overseas, and 3) the internal life of the American Jewish community.

How did the general or Christian community relate to the Jew? Basically with a certain ambivalence that is probably true of America today as well. On the one hand we find the following account of Jewish involvement in the Mexican War. A newspaper report dated July 3, 1846 from Baltimore relates that, following Congressional authorization to call up 50,000 volunteers, numerous new army units had sprung into existence. After first listing the "Roxbury Artillery",

the article goes on: "The next in order is the Hebrew Volunteers, who although composed principally of foreigners, have none the less evinced a love and devotion for the institutions of their adopted country . . . although professing a religion opposite to the gentleman they have chosen as commander, they have still more strongly evinced a love for the honor, glory and perpetuity of the independence of this country." The report goes on to say that the commander Captain Thomas Carroll freely resigned his other post "when called to the command of this patriotic band of volunteers."³

In a similar vein an account found in the *Dry Goods Reporter and Merchants Gazette* of September 15, 1845, noting the recent participation of Jews in the dry goods trade, states that within a few years the Jews have come to comprise fully 25 per cent of the buyers. The report continues that many importers arrange that no sales take place on Jewish holidays, and that in fact the poor attendance occasioned by a Jewish holiday that week has caused a drop in the price of shawls. To quote: "Many heavy shawl buyers were absent, it being a Jewish holiday; prices somewhat lower than last sale."⁴

Relations between the Jewish and Christian communities appear at times to be quite intimate. The following advertisement in the *New York Morning Star* offers for sale by Rev. Simon C. Noot 32 barrels of wine, made in Jerusalem, available for "families, congregations and heads of churches." Apparently Rev. Noot was unsuccessful in his business venture, but the wine was finally sold at auction by a professional firm which included the rabbinic *hechsher* or certificate in the auction catalog and listed the product as "pure juice for the use of churches."⁵

A news announcement in *The Home Journal* of February 2, 1850 discloses the fact that the four leading persons in the Astor House Opera Company are Jews, and an official notice of the New York City Hack Inspector instructs all hack drivers as follows: "At the Consecration of Wooster St. Synagogue on Friday, 25th June [1847] Hack drivers are requested to set their company down with horses' heads towards Prince Street, and take up in reverse order."⁶

Even on a strictly religious level, relations seem extremely harmonious. A Philadelphia newspaper reports in 1843 most glowingly: "We have thought more highly of Jews in this the last two years than

we ever did before." It goes on to describe that the firm of Carey and Hart, one of the largest book dealers in the city, is now closed every Saturday, the best business day in the week. Now that the non-Jewish partner Carey has died, Mr. Abraham Hart has made such arrangements with the son of the deceased.⁷

A public expression of appreciation was published in Charleston by the Methodist Protestant Church which was in part "materially relieved from its pecuniary embarrassments" by a substantial contribution by Congregation Beth Elohim, and a newspaper account of a Special Day of Thanksgiving and Prayer proclaimed by the State of Virginia, notes that Congregation Beth Shalome in Richmond took up a special collection for the poor and it urges this custom to be followed by all churches.⁸

Yet all was not as congenial as the above incidents would seem to indicate. During the pre-Civil War period there was widespread agitation by the Jewish community to remove Sunday trading law restrictions—some are still in existence in our own day. And while the State of Ohio overruled a decision of the City Council of Cincinnati prohibiting trade on Sunday, in South Carolina the exact opposite was the result. The *New York Sunday Times* in reporting the latter incident, takes the Jews strongly to task for challenging the law in the first place with the following observation: "The question ought not to have been raised. Respect to the laws of the land we live in is the first duty of good citizens of all denominations."⁹

The Jewish reaction to the general community reflects the same ambivalence. We find, for example, a public notice of appreciation in the *New York Journal of Commerce* from Congregation Gates of Prayer in 1848 thanking the New York City Fire Department for their efforts which saved the synagogue from destruction by fire. There are also several newspaper accounts of a special meeting convened by the Jews in New York to raise funds for Irish Relief in 1841, and a similar report in Charleston.¹⁰

But there is another side to the coin as well, and one which to our knowledge has never previously been noted and assumes greater pertinence in our own day. It is often pointed out that although individual instances of anti-semitism and discrimination have occurred in the United States, American Jewry has never been exposed

to the danger of mass persecution, such as has taken place elsewhere, until well into the 20th century. Consider then this strange clipping from the *New York Tribune* in the Lyons scrapbook, which notes that a colored man Peter Williams is missing, and that he had been living with a Jewish family in the capacity of waiter. To this clipping Lyons has appended the following comments. He is not aware of such a man or such a Jewish family. Lyons, a native American, concludes with the following words: "The motive is palpably that of calumny. Fortunately it is not now the Passover, or the blood question might. . . ." The remainder of the statement is missing.¹¹

Concerning the contacts of American Jewry with its brothers overseas there are relatively few references. There is one instance of a public meeting in New York to provide support for the family of an imprisoned German Jew. The *Blut-bilbul* in Damascus elicited public protests throughout the country. Perhaps the most interesting response is recorded in Savannah, Georgia, where the proclamation calling for the meeting of protest was issued by the Mayor of the City.¹²

The most common bond of contact across the ocean was the continuous solicitation for help from poor Jewish communities. In 1848 Rabbi Nissim ben Shelomoh Mizrahi arrived from Shushan (the community of the Purim story). Rabbi Nissim encountered a rather amusing experience in Baltimore, where he felt that the local Jewish community did not supply him with sufficient help. He consequently departed to the wharf and began to beg for money from passersby. His unusual dress of colorful Oriental garb attracted a large group of rowdy boys, and it was finally necessary for the Baltimore police to save him from his tormentors.¹³

Continuous contact was maintained with the Palestinian community. Much has already been published about the several societies established to aid the Jews in the Holy Land. The scrapbook contains an account of the concerted effort made by New York Jewry to help erect a new synagogue in Jerusalem. Most confusing were the efforts to meet demands of the poor Jews in Palestine. These consisted of local elements, as well as immigrants from the various countries of Europe who had no doubt gone to Palestine to "end their days on earth", but who in the meantime were in dire economic straits. All attempts to assist these unfortunates resulted in great

confusion as well as duplication of effort. Perhaps foreshadowing the problems faced by the Joint Distribution Committee in the period between the two World Wars and the UJA after World War II, the following formula was finally agreed upon by all the synagogues in New York in 1850—all before the age of the computer:

Of every hundred dollars raised, 48 per cent was to be sent to Jerusalem. Of this 18 per cent was to go to the Portuguese Jews, 16 per cent to the Polish and Russian, and 14 per cent to the Dutch and German. Twenty-two per cent of all funds raised were to be sent to Safed, of which 9 per cent was to be for the Portuguese and 13 per cent for the Polish and Russians; 16 per cent of the money was to go to Hebron, of which 6 per cent was for the Portuguese and 10 per cent for the Polish and Russians; and 14 per cent was to go to Tiberias, of which 5 per cent went to the Portuguese and 9 per cent to the Polish and Russian Jews. Fortunately, there were no German or Dutch Jews in Safed, Hebron or Tiberias. How this arrangement worked out, we are not told.¹⁴

Probably of greatest interest to us is the scrapbook material that portrays the internal aspects of Jewish life. Possibly because Lyons was a clergyman, the greater portion describes the religious activities of American Jewry. Perhaps the Jewish community before the Civil War was more religiously committed.

The first fact that emerges from the material we have at hand is that Jewish religious life was much more developed than is popularly believed. We often hear that the kosher food market and the availability of Jewish products is a recent phenomenon in the United States. In 1848, D. Behrman's New Store at 172 Bowery printed a small leaflet advising the public of the availability of no less than 31 items for Passover, including such exotic items as Holland cheese and Santa Croix rum, the latter sold only by the gallon.¹⁵ You are aware that some very pious Jews even today will use only hand-baked matzah on Passover. In 1849 the *New York Sun* carried an advertisement that Passover cakes made according to strict rabbinical law (without machinery) were available. The previously noted close relation between the Jewish and Christian community is also attested to by an earlier announcement in the *Sun* in 1847 that 600 live turkeys, wild and tame, were being offered for sale on the Canal Boat with kosher slaughtering available for those who desire it.¹⁶

Turning from the gastronomical to the more truly spiritual, one Jewish book store in 1847 offered an unusual assortment of religious items including some rather rare rabbinical works.¹⁷

It is known that Jews have always concerned themselves with charitable endeavors, but surprising is the extent to which such endeavors were developed in the relatively small Jewish community. Several studies have already been published listing the numerous benevolent societies that appeared at a time when government assistance was not available for such purposes. Perhaps what is most striking is the amount of assistance provided. In 1852 the Hebrew Benevolent Society reported that in the previous year it had provided help for more than a thousand applicants. In 1848 the German Hebrew Benevolent Society had assisted over 500. This is all the more remarkable, considering that the most reliable estimate gives the total Jewish population of New York in 1850 as only 16,000.¹⁸

Other proposals to help the poor and the immigrant were also not wanting. In 1855 a plan was drawn up to establish a House of Industry for Hebrews which would provide employment during difficult economic times.¹⁹ Surprisingly, there were even plans to settle Jews as farmers in this period. The earliest effort was in 1837 with the establishment of the Association *צעירי הצאן*. It is interesting to read some of the original plan. "(We) have organized ourselves into an association for the purpose of removing West, and settling on some part of the Public Lands suitable for agricultural purposes. . . . No person shall become a member of this Association who does not acknowledge himself a Jew, who is married to a *גוייה*, is in the habit of violating the Sabbath, and does not sustain a good moral character. . . . It shall be the duty of the Board of Managers . . . on their arrival at the settlement, to see to the erection of a *שולל & מקוה* and a temporary dwelling for each member of the association and procure a *ספר תורה* and *שפר*."²⁰

A second and apparently equally unsuccessful attempt was made in 1855 with the proposal to establish the American Hebrew Agricultural and Horticultural Association, which hoped to purchase land near New York to raise vegetables, flowers, cattle and poultry, and to cultivate wool and silk.²¹

Obviously these numerous philanthropic activities demanded a great expenditure of funds, and if we think that present-day American Jewish life is surfeited with fund-raising dinners, the period before the Civil War compares more than favorably with our times. The only major difference is that most of the earlier functions were Balls or Dances. Jewish sponsored affairs are continually parodied in our own time both in literature and other media with the great stress on the quantity and also the variety of the delicacies being served. We don't know much about things in Providence, but probably you have all attended weddings or Bar Mitzvahs in New York, and the standard jokes about the Borsht Belt are of course legion. Perhaps as a comparison, let us quote the menu of a typical dinner sponsored by the Hebrew Benevolent Society in 1841. (See next page.)

One of the obvious differences between pre-Civil War and contemporary America was the importance and centrality of the synagogue. This was no doubt due in part to the fact that almost all Jewish social and fraternal institutions were offshoots of the synagogue and purely secular Jewish organizations were still in their embryonic stages or not yet in existence. This fact can be very vividly shown by the price of seat rentals in the synagogue. Typical is the amount charged by Congregation Shaaray Tefilla in 1847 which ranged from \$25 to \$15 for men's seats and \$10 to \$6 for women's, exclusive of membership dues. We can judge the burden imposed on the members for synagogue maintenance when we consider that the annual tuition charged in private schools offering complete religious and secular programs ranged at that time from \$25 to \$60 per year.²³

As to whether the high cost of seat rental affected synagogue attendance, we have no information, but apparently these provisions were rigidly enforced. A letter in fact appeared in the *New York Herald* complaining that two Jews from the South who happened to spend Yom Kippur in New York were forcibly ejected from attending High Holy Day services because they had made no prior provision for procuring seats in the synagogue.²⁴

One of the great problems facing American Jewry in the mid-nineteenth century was providing an adequate educational program for its youth. We have still not solved this problem in our own day. The situation was further aggravated because the public schools

Bill of Fare ²²

OF THE DINNER FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE
HEBREW BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

Boned turkey and jelly,
Ducks and madeira sauce,
Stewed geese and olive sauce,
Alamode beef and carrot sauce,
Boiled chicken, parsley sauce,
Stewed beef tongues, raisin sauce,
Mutton chops, en papie,
Stuffed shoulder of mutton,
Macaroni.

ROAST.

Turkey,	Geese,
Chickens,	Ducks,
Surloin of beef.	

COLD DISHES.

Chicken salad,
Smoked beef,
Pickled beef,
Smoked beef tongues,
Pickled beef tongues.

JELLIES.

Cinnamon,	Madeira,
Lemon,	Maraschini.

DESSERT.

Plum Pudding, Madeira sauce,
Apple Pie,
Lemon Pie,
Plum Pie,
Cranberry Pie.

FRUITS.

Apple Fruit,	Almonds,
Raisins,	Oranges,
Madeira Nuts,	Filberts,
Apples.	

WINES, &c.

Champagne,	Madeira,
Hock,	Port,
Sherry,	Brandy,
Gin.	

Washington Hotel, New-York, December 15th, 1841.

in the period under discussion were still suffering from the stigma of pauperism, and any self-respecting parent avoided enrolling his child in such a school if at all possible. A large number of schools were established at this time, some sponsored by synagogues, others private, all of which offered comprehensive religious and secular programs. There were also boarding schools for boys and girls, and trade schools offering religious programs. If any of you have children who complain about the heavy program they must carry in the school they are attending, we can quote as typical the curriculum of A. Loewe's Hebrew, Classical and English Institute: "The English Department comprises Reading, Writing, Orthography, Arithmetic, Geography, Grammar, Composition, Elocution, History Ancient and Modern, Book-keeping, the Various Branches of Mathematics, Natural History, Philosophy, Mythology, Chemistry and Astronomy, Latin and Greek Languages. The Hebrew course comprises Spelling, Reading, Writing, Hebrew-German, and pure Biblical, Grammar, Translation of the Prayers and Bible, Catechism, Biblical History and the History of the Jews." There was also provision for teaching modern languages, music, drawing, painting, and dancing.²⁵

The cost, which might interest parents, was \$60 per year for boys and \$48 for girls. While discussing Jewish education, we might perhaps point out that the question of state aid to religiously sponsored schools which is agitating many communities in our day is not as recent a problem as many of us might believe. Already in 1841, in the official report of the Committee of the Society for the Education of Poor Children, in the plans for setting up a school, the following statement is found: "Your Committee beg leave to direct your attention to the exertions of the Catholics to obtain a separate grant of a portion of the School Fund of this State for the promotion of their own schools . . . and recommend that their progress be duly marked by the Board and that they take measures for presenting the claims of the Israelites, and for securing a share of the fund . . ."²⁶

We should like to conclude with one minor curiosum and a general observation. As you probably have surmised by now, if you did not know before, the Jews in America are basically no different than other groups in many ways. We have also had our share of crackpots and "characters." Perhaps the most amusing item in the Lyons scrap-

book is Dr. Tobias' Venetian Liniment which was offered for twenty-five and fifty cents per bottle as a sure and speedy remedy for rheumatism, cuts, burns, scalds, cramp, headache, toothache, swellings, old sores, bruises, colic, croup, sore throat, vomiting, coughs, mumps, warts, nervous affections, chilblains, hemorrhage, palpitation of the heart, cold feet, lumbago, mosquito bites, chapped hands, weakness and pains in the joints and limbs, sea sickness, and deafness. If this is not enough, it could also cure colic or cramp in horses.³⁷ The directions for the latter include mixing the liniment with half a pint of whiskey. A famous Rabbi named Tobiah ha-Rofe, or Tobias Cohen, who lived in the 17th century, was very well-known in Jewish history as a medical man. His namesake of two hundred years later certainly had nothing on him.

What we have attempted to do is to give a brief portrayal of American Jewish life of over a century ago and to point out how similar it was to our own day. Since human nature never really changes, the more we study any period in history, the more we realize how human events all contain a strong similarity. But on the other hand history does not really repeat itself either. And although there are many features that are similar, every generation is unique in its own way. We shall conclude with a quotation from an editorial in *The Journal of Commerce* published in 1860. We are all aware of the prominence of Jews in American cultural, literary, and scientific life. Some are even concerned about our "overexposure" and why more of this energy is not directed inwardly toward Jewish values. So that you will not have the fear that all historical research eventually leads to the same conclusion—namely that basically nothing ever changes, we quote:

"In this city and generally throughout this country, where their rights are never invaded, they [the Jews] live so quietly that unless one goes into their quarters, he seldom meets with them. . . . In this city their number, at present, is about 40,000, of whom the majority are rather indigent, and either because they begin the battle of life while very young, or are disinclined to social intercourse with others, having no distinct literary institutions of their own, or both, they remain uneducated. Their national studies even if generally pursued, could not give that knowledge of the sciences without which it is

impossible to keep pace with the rapid strides of civilization in our day. The minds of such students may be cultivated, but they are not enlightened."²⁸

NOTES

¹*Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, Vol. XXI (1913), pp. xxiii-xxiv.

²*Ibid.*, pp. ix-x.

³Lyons Collection in Library of American Jewish Historical Society. Scrapbook II, 29.

⁴Scrapbook II, 15.

⁵Scrapbook I, 32.

⁶Scrapbook I, 101d; II, 34a.

⁷Scrapbook I, 10.

⁸Scrapbook II, 2; III, 72.

⁹Scrapbook I, 6a; II, 20.

¹⁰Scrapbook I, 27; II, 30.

¹¹Scrapbook I, 7.

¹²Scrapbook I, 24b; III, 17, 18, 19, 22.

¹³Scrapbook I, 11-12.

¹⁴Scrapbook I, 8d.

¹⁵Scrapbook I, 2e.

¹⁶Scrapbook I, 101d; I, 8.

¹⁷Scrapbook II, 8.

¹⁸Scrapbook I, 180; Grinstein, *The Rise of the Jewish Community of New York 1654-1860* (Philadelphia, 1945), p. 469.

¹⁹Scrapbook I, 115c.

²⁰Scrapbook I, 130.

²¹Scrapbook I, 192.

²²Scrapbook III, 114.

²³Scrapbook I, 2d, 89c, 186; II, 36.

²⁴Scrapbook I, 114.

²⁵Scrapbook I, 121c.

²⁶Scrapbook II, 25.

²⁷Scrapbook I, 35.

²⁸Scrapbook I, 76.

JOHN NATHAN AND SEVASTOPOL

By BERYL SEGAL

During the early 1840's John Nathan established a tailoring and cleaning shop at No. 12 South Main Street in downtown Providence, Rhode Island. In the manner of his day he praised his workmanship and the quality of his service in advertisements inserted in the daily newspapers and in the city directory.¹ Most advertisements in those days were in the form of "Business Cards" and were monotonous in their sameness. Usually of two or three lines, they described briefly the wares of the merchants and shopkeepers or the services of teachers and professional men.

John Nathan in his advertisements told more about himself and his establishment than was usually the custom. Upon the occasion of moving his store to Orange Street, across the Providence River from its previous site, he placed the following advertisement in the *Providence Daily Journal* of August 18, 1843:

ECONOMY AND BEAUTY COMBINED.

EXTRAORDINARY INVENTION.

J. NATHAN, from London, Tailor, Dyer, and Coat Cleaner, begs leave to inform the public in general, that he has removed his office from No 12 South Main st to No 1 Orange st, a few doors west from the Arcade, Providence, R. I. From his long practice in Europe, he is enabled to work on a plan different from any ever yet tried. Those who may encourage him will meet with satisfaction. Gentlemen's Clothes that are tattered, when done, will entirely baffle observation. Clothes that are faded brought to their original color, suppleness and beauty. Paint, tar, ink and stains of every description extracted from dark or light clothing. Ladies' dresses and table covers cleaned. Terms moderate—one trial will prove the fact. Gentlemen's cast off Clothing taken in exchange. Gentlemen can be waited on at their own residence. The utmost value given for cast off Clothes. a17

This advertisement ran in the paper for many weeks. While his advertisements appear to have lapsed for a number of years, his competitors Louis Lewisson and Henry Solomon continued to advertise:²

**PRICES REDUCED.
A FACT.**

ONE trial will prove that the BEST CLOTHING
is sold at

**LOUIS LEWISSON'S
FAMOUS CLOTHING BAZAAR,
NOS. 21 and 23 SOUTH MAIN STREET.**

1000 SUMMER VESTS, at 75 cents each.
1000 SUMMER COATS, at 75 cents each.
1000 SUMMER PANTS, at 75 cents each.

Providence, July 16, 1855.

FALL AND WINTER, 1855, 1856.

**LOUIS LEWISSON'S
FAMOUS CLOTHING BAZAAR,**

IS the BEST PLACE, where you can SAVE 25 to
30 per cent this Fall and Winter. I have the
newest and best selected Stock of WINTER
CUSTOM CLOTHING, PIECE GOODS and
FURNISHING GOODS, amounting to

\$30,000 WORTH.

To which I invite the attention of all in want of
*CUSTOM OVER COATS, DRESS FROCK
COATS, BUSINESS COATS, PANTS,
VESTS AND INDIA RUBBER
CLOTHING,*

DEFYING COMPETITION, and assuring the
public to give them GOOD BARGAINS. Call on

LOUIS LEWISSON,
At his famous Clothing Bazaar,
NOS. 21 AND 23 SOUTH MAIN STREET.

Providence, Sept. 15, 1855.

REMOVAL.

HIGHLY IMPORTANT.

SAVE YOUR DOLLARS.

HENRY SOLOMON, from London, Tailor and Clothes Cleaner, would respectfully invite the attention of his patrons and the public generally, to his very superior mode of

CLOTHES CLEANING AND DRESSING,

By Solomon's celebrated patent process, practiced only by himself, at his establishment,

No. 47 Broad Street,

Where the subscriber feels confident of convincing beyond a doubt, any one who will examine by specimens of his work and by undoubted testimonials, that he is enabled to

DRESS AND CLEANSE CLOTHING,

In a very superior manner.

Garments that have lost their color, can be restored to their original beauty. Paint, Oil, Tar, Ink and Acids of every description extracted.

This is a broad, sweeping assertion, and the subscriber feels confident that he can convince any one who will examine specimens of his work, that his system

STANDS UNRIVALLED BEFORE THE WORLD.

Repairs Neatly Executed.

ECONOMY IS THE LIFE OF TRADE.

The subscriber also wishes to inform the public, that he has on hand a very large assortment of

New and Second Hand Clothing,

which he will sell 50 per cent, cheaper than any other store in the city.

N. B.—The highest cash price paid for cast off Clothing.
H. SOLOMON, Original Clothes Cleaner.

In the late summer of 1855 John Nathan reappears in the *Providence Daily Journal*, and we learn that he has recently been in New York.³ He opens a new store in a new location, the Howard Block, the most stylish building of the day. He no longer sells only second hand clothes, but also a complete line of ready-made garments, expressly tailored for his trade by a New York manufacturer. His announcement is as novel as any modern advertising agency could turn out. The time was hardly more than a year after the formation

of the first minyan in Providence. (A minyan is a quorum of ten men required by Jewish law for group worship.) Although Nathan had been in Providence for a decade and a half at that time, he was not listed among the original ten incorporators (The Minyan) of the Providence congregation (Congregation of the Sons of Israel). His advertisement, appearing on August 28, 1855 and for several weeks thereafter, read:

Sevastapol not taken, but Howard Block is

JOHN NATHAN

HAS returned from New York, and has leased that spacious store,
135 WESTMINSTER ST., HOWARD BLOCK,
 Where you will find a large and well selected stock of
Ready Made Clothing,
 Manufactured in New York expressly for this market,
 AND AT PRICES 25 PER CENT LESS THAN
 OTHER STORES IN THE CITY.

OVER COATS,
FROCK and DRESS COATS,
SACK and BUSINESS COATS,
BLACK and FANCY PANTS,
WORKING PANTS,
BLACK and FANCY VESTS,
VELVET and SATIN VESTS,
 Shirts, Collars, Bosoms, Stocks, Napoleon and Albert
 Cravats, &c. Already on hand, a large assortment of

Piece Goods,
 For custom work. Satisfaction guaranteed.
 Remember, 25 per cent cheaper than other houses in
 the city. Howard Block, 135 Westminster st. j25

At this point a few words of explanation are in order. The Crimean War between Russia on the one hand and the combined armies of France, England, Turkey, and Sardinia on the other lasted from 1853 to 1856. Sevastopol, a city on the strategic island of Crimea, was then on everyone's mind, as an important battle for its possession was being fought by the opposing forces. News of the battle trickled into Providence by way of London and New York. Thousands of Russian soldiers fell at Sevastopol, among them Jewish youth who

were seized from their homes during childhood to be trained as good soldiers and True Believers in the Christian faith of the Russian Orthodox Church. This was a factor in the heightened interest among the recent immigrants in America.

Although Sevastopol fell to the allied armies on September 11, 1855, the important news was not carried in the *Providence Daily Journal* until September 28, the elapsed time interval representing the time it took for the news to travel by ship and overland. The "Sevastopol not taken" advertisement appeared as late as October 5. Then a startling change occurred. The following display appeared on the very next day, October 6:

SEVASTAPOL IS TAKEN!

THE excitement at Sevastopol is not so great as is caused by the bargains offered in

**Ready Made Clothing,
AT THE MODEL CLOTHING STORE,
HOWARD'S BLOCK.**

FOR FALL AND WINTER.

Over Coats of all grades, rich Talma Cloaks, Dress and Frock Coats, Business Coats of every style, black and fancy Pants, rich silk velvet Vests, fine Valencia Vests, Shirt Bosoms, Collars, Ties, etc. etc.,

will be sold 25 per cent cheaper than at any other store in the city. This is the place to buy the best of Ready Made Clothing at the lowest prices. Call and be satisfied.

THE LARGEST STOCK IN THE CITY.

In our Custom Department I have the best lot of Goods bought for city trade, which I will make up to order at extremely low prices.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.

Now is the time to buy your Winter Clothing cheap. 25 per cent cheaper, remember, than at any other store in the city. Take a look before purchasing, as you will find the largest and best selected stock of Ready Made Clothing, and at prices which you have to pay for poor clothing at other stores. Look out for the RUSH-ONS!

JOHN NATHAN'S

MODEL CLOTHING STORE,

135 WESTMINSTER ST., HOWARD BLOCK.

Thus Sevastopol was taken, the Russians lost the war, and at John Nathan's Model Clothing Store the bargains were at their most exciting. John Nathan, a man ahead of his time in the art of promotion, kept his advertising topical indeed.

NOTES

¹R.I.J.H.N. 1:10, 119, 124, 125 (1954-1955); 2:148 (1956-1958). 3:148 (1958-1962); and 4:287 (1963-1966)

²These advertisements appeared in the *Providence Daily Journal* during the fall of 1855.

³John Nathan was listed continuously in the Providence Directory from 1847 to 1858:

- 1847 Clothing, 125 Westminster Street
Home, 8 Elbow Street
- 1850 Clothing Store, 157 Westminster Street
Home, 30 Elbow Street
- 1852 Same addresses
- 1854 Business not listed
Home, 30 Elbow Street
- 1855 Clothing Store, 135 Westminster Street
Home, Exchange Hotel, Washington Street
- 1856 Business, same address
Home, 81 Pine Street
- 1857 Business, same address
Home, 50 Fountain Street
- 1858 Clothing, 146 Westminster Street
Home, 50 Fountain Street

He was not listed after 1858.

FIFTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

The Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association was held in the John Brown House, headquarters of the Rhode Island Historical Society, 52 Power Street, Providence on Sunday afternoon, June 8, 1969. It was called to order by the President, Bernard Segal, at 2:27 P.M. He called attention to the fact that although this was the fifteenth annual meeting, it was actually the eighteenth year of the Association, its "Chai Anniversary", so to speak. Mr. Segal introduced Mr. Bernard Wax, Executive Director of the American Jewish Historical Society, who brought greetings from that organization.

The Secretary, Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky, read her annual report and made a plea for members to pay their dues. Mrs. Louis I. Sweet, gave the Treasurer's report for the calendar year. The balance in the savings account as of January 1, 1969 was \$2,747.84 and in the checking account \$378.95. Mr. Sweet, Finance Chairman, announced a deficit of \$650.00 in the budget for the year 1969.

Dr. Seebert J. Goldowsky, Editor of the *Notes*, gave a detailed background of the Association and likened it to a kind of tripod comprised of collecting, research, and publication. He urged the members to give any material they might have to the Association's library, and to write. At the same time that he made a plea for new and vigorous people to participate in the Association's work, Dr. Goldowsky stated that it now has a firm structure, assuring its continuity in the future. The 1969 issue of the *Notes* will contain a paper by Erwin Strasmich on the Jews in the textile industry in Rhode Island, a history by Benton Rosen of the Hebrew Free Loan Association, and the "Memoir" of the late Frank Silberman.

Miss Harriet Winnerman suggested a life membership category of \$100.00. Mr. Sweet replied that he thought this idea had merit and said that the Executive Committee will consider it. Mr. Segal thought that Dr. Aaron Soviv might do the history of Jewish education in Rhode Island, Aaron Klein the history of Zionism in the area, and Jerome Spunt a story on Jewish lawyers and judges.

Mr. Melvin L. Zurier, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, made a motion that the recommendation by the Executive Committee that Article VII, Section 1 of the Constitution be amended to read "ten" instead of "eight", so that the amended article would read "There shall be an Executive Committee which shall consist of the Officers of the Association, and ten members-at-large, to be appointed by the Executive Committee", be accepted. The motion was seconded and passed. Mr. Zurier then presented the following for election: President, Jerome B. Spunt, Esquire; Vice President, Erwin Strasmich; Secretary, Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky; and Treasurer, Mrs. Louis I. Sweet. The motion was made, seconded, and carried that the Secretary cast one ballot for the slate as read.

Rabbi Eli A. Bohnen, installing these officers, expressed the opinion that the community should be made more history-conscious. He concurs with Mr. Segal that doing a history of Jewish education is very important, as would a history of the Jewish cemeteries. He stated that Mr. Spunt was honored as president of an organization concerned with preserving the Jewish history of the state. The Rabbi called on Dr. Goldowsky who in turn introduced the speaker, Dr. Nathan M. Kaganoff, Librarian of the American Jewish Historical Society and President of the Research Division of the Association of Jewish Libraries. His subject was "An Overview of Jewish Life in Pre-Civil War America as Reflected from Previously Unpublished Material Found in the Lyons Collection." A collation followed for which the hostesses were the Mesdames Louis I. Sweet, Bernard Segal, and Seebert J. Goldowsky.

NECROLOGY

JENNIE GANZER, born in Providence, the daughter of Abraham and Fannie (Simons) Goldberg, February 4, 1892, and a resident of Providence all her life.

She was the widow of Samuel Ganzer, who died in 1947. She attended the Candace Street grammar school and was a graduate of English High School.

One of the early directors of Camp Jori, she was also a director of the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island. She was a charter member of the Providence Chapter of the Brandeis University National Women's Committee. In addition to her membership in the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, she was a member of Hadassah, The Miriam Hospital Women's Association, Temple Emanu-El and Temple Beth David, Narragansett.

Died at Narragansett, Rhode Island, June 22, 1969.

ERRATA

RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL NOTES

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Footnote missing from page 133:

‡Read at the Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, May 26, 1968.

Footnote page 145: *Ep* should read *Ed*.

Bottom page 184: should read *Louise Z. Adelman*.

Last line page 186: *or* should read *of*.



Organizers and First Board of Directors of Providence Hebrew Free Loan Association