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Blima Ruchel Cohen, C-1926, later Betty C. Fink (see BLIMA page 259).

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A FURTHER ASSESSMENT OF THE USE OF YIDDISH IN RHODE ISLAND HOUSEHOLDS

BY SIDNEY GOLDSTEIN*

INTRODUCTION

Although the United States Census has never included a question on religion and therefore has not provided any direct basis for ascertaining the size of the Jewish population of the United States, it has been a useful source of information for analyzing the historical trend in the use of Yiddish as a spoken language among the Jewish population of the United States (e.g., Rosenwaike, 1974; 1977; Kobrin, 1983). Indirectly, through assessment of this information, it has thereby provided some clues to the changing size of the Jewish population. An earlier report in the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1977) analyzed the census data on mother tongue for 1910 through 1970. As that article indicated, great caution must be exercised in using the census data for comparative purposes because the questions and tabulations on mother tongue changed markedly in the course of the 60 years. For example, the censuses of 1910 and 1920 determined the "language of customary speech in homes of the emigrants prior to immigration" for all white persons who were foreign born or who had both parents foreign born (U.S. Census, 1922:967-969). The 1930 and 1960 censuses asked a similar question, but only of the foreign born themselves (U.S. Census, 1932:341; 1961:xxi-xxii). In 1950, no question on mother tongue was asked at all. In 1940 and 1970, the question was changed to refer to the language spoken in the home in the earliest childhood (U.S. Census, 1943:1-6; 1972:App. B). As a result, it was asked of all persons, regardless of generation status. Thus, the available information for the 60-year period, depending on the census year, referred to different segments of the population. The only data that were comparable for all six censuses were those referring to the foreign born, since language spoken in earliest childhood for the foreign born would be similar to language spoken prior to emigration.

*From the Population Studies and Training Center. Brown University

Analysis of those statistics showed that Rhode Island had experienced a steady decline in the number of foreign-born persons whose mother tongue was Yiddish. From a high of 7,548 in 1910, their members declined to only 1,443 in 1970. In large measure, this change reflected the decreasing number of foreign-born Jews in the Rhode Island population. The data also suggested that the decline in the number of Yiddish speaking foreign-born persons in Rhode Island was more rapid than the decline in the state's total foreign-born population during this same period; whereas in 1910, Yiddish-speaking foreign-born persons constituted 4.2 percent of the total foreign-born population in the state, by 1970 they represented only 2.0 percent. Clearly, as a result of the significant reduction in immigration to the United States (and to Rhode Island) from Europe, especially from Eastern Europe, coupled with the continuous aging and subsequent death of members of the earlier emigrant groups, Rhode Island's Yiddish speaking population declined substantially both in absolute numbers and as a percentage of the total foreign-born population of the State. Thus, whereas in 1910 Yiddish was the third most frequent language reported by the foreign-born (excluding English) and preceded only by Italian and French, by 1970 it held seventh place; Italian, French, Portuguese, German, Polish, and Spanish were spoken by larger numbers of foreign-born persons in the state than was Yiddish.

Understandably, although the number of Yiddish-speaking foreign born had dropped precipitously during the 60-year period, the number of native-born persons of foreign or mixed parentage who reported Yiddish as spoken in their homes remained relatively constant, reflecting the changing generation status of the Jewish population. In 1910, 4,466 second-generation persons in Rhode Island reported Yiddish as spoken in their homes when they were growing up; in 1970, 4,588 did so, as did an additional 743 native-born persons with native-born parents. Thus, whereas in 1910 the Yiddish component of Rhode Island's population consisted of almost twice as many first-generation as second-generation Jews, by 1970 the pattern had been dramatically reversed; almost three times as many second-generation as first-generation persons reported Yiddish spoken in their homes when they were growing up.

It must be stressed that neither the indication that Yiddish was spoken in the overseas homes of parents (1910, 1920), nor that Yiddish was spoken in the United States homes during earliest childhood (1940, 1970) necessarily meant that the individual respondent used Yiddish personally. All that it indicates is a certain amount of exposure to and, presumably, familiarity with the language. Moreover, it is also important to stress that persons reporting Yiddish as their mother tongue do not constitute the total Jewish population, even among the foreign born. Not only did immigrants arrive from countries where Yiddish was not spoken, but a substantial number who did come from Eastern Europe reported "Russian" in answer to the mother tongue question.

Given these limitations, data on actual use of Yiddish as a language would be highly preferable. To date, the only information available on this for Rhode Island was from the 1963 Population Survey of the Greater Providence Jewish Community (Goldstein, 1964), undertaken under sponsorship of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island (General Jewish Committee of Greater Providence). In that survey, a question was asked about languages spoken in the home other than English. The responses indicated that out of the 5,978 households surveyed, Yiddish was spoken in 38.7 percent, encompassing 6,650 individuals. The proportion of Yiddish-speaking households sharply declined, however, as distance from the immigrant generation increased. Whereas two-thirds of the first generation lived in households where Yiddish was spoken, this was true of only 36 percent of the second generation, and only 22 percent among the third generation. The declining use of Yiddish therefore reflected not only the linguistic assimilation of Rhode Island Jewry, but also the decline in the number of immigrants from the countries of Eastern and Central Europe who had settled in the State.

Reflecting the continuing and perhaps growing interest in the ethnic identification and composition of the American population, the 1980 Census, continuing the practice initiated in 1910, also included a question on language spoken at home, but it took a different form from any asked in previous censuses. Whereas earlier censuses asked about language spoken either before immigration or when the respondent was growing up as a child, the 1980 question asked specifically about every member of the household, "Does this person speak a language other than English at home?" If so, two additional questions were asked: "What is this language?" and "How well does this person speak English?" For persons speaking two or more non-English languages at home, respondents were instructed to report the language spoken most often. When this could not be ascertained, the respondent was asked to indicate the first language learned. Since the questions refer specifically to languages other than English spoken at home, the resulting statistics cannot be interpreted as indicating the exact number of persons who are able to speak the specified language; some may use a language other than English at work but not at home. For some languages, this situation may result in an underenumeration in the census of the users of the language, but for Yiddish speakers the discrepancy is probably minor. As already noted, these data on *current* language are not comparable to questions asked in 1960 and 1970 on mother tongue which refer to the language spoken in the person's home during childhood. In the tabulations of the 1980 data, responses for persons under age five were not tabulated. The focus on current language rather than mother tongue is a significant departure from previous censuses. It does, however, allow comparisons with data from the 1963 survey, when a similar question was asked. The question on ability to speak English was asked for the first time in the 1980 Census.

CHANGING NUMBERS

By 1970, for the United States as a whole, the census showed only 0.4 million foreign-born persons reporting Yiddish as their "mother tongue" in contrast to a peak of about 1.2 million in 1930; 60 percent of the 1970 group were 65 years old or over. In 1970, an additional 1.2 million native-born Jews, of whom 70 percent were age 45 and over, reported Yiddish as the language spoken in their home in earliest childhood (Rosenwaik, 1977). It must be stressed that the 1970 data did not refer to current use. The 1980 enumeration of persons actually speaking some Yiddish at home found only 315,953 individuals in the entire United States, foreign-born and natives, who were Yiddish speakers; 55 percent of these were 65 years old and over, and an additional one-quarter were between ages 45 and 64. Seventy percent of all Yiddish speakers reported speaking English "very well" and another 24 percent reported speaking English "well," leaving only 6 percent who spoke English either "not well" or who spoke no English at all. Overall, therefore, these data point to 1) a small number of Yiddish speakers in the United States in 1980, equivalent to only about 5 percent of the total Jewish population; 2) a majority of these being aged and most of the others middle aged; and 3) a solid command of English among the vast majority of Yiddish speakers. These statistics point to a continuing decline of Yiddish as a spoken language in the United States. What do the 1980 data show for Rhode Island?

Of the 890,643 persons age 5 and over living in Rhode Island in 1980, the vast majority (83.5 percent) spoke only English at home. This percentage declined steadily from a high of 90 percent of those between the ages of 5-17, to a low of 78 percent of those aged 45-64 and 72 percent of those 65 and over. Of the 146,914 Rhode Islanders reported as speaking a language other than English at home, the largest single group used French (40,563), but these were followed closely by the Portuguese-speaking residents of the State (38,459). In third place were the Italian-speaking, who accounted for 28,174 persons, and in fourth place the Spanish-speaking residents (12,045). Polish-speakers numbered 5,932 persons. No other language group exceeded 3,000 persons. Armenian, German, and Greek were spoken by 2-3,000 persons. Yiddish speakers in Rhode Island numbered only 1,140, making them the tenth largest language group in the State, ranking just below the Chinese-speaking population and just above the Arabic-speaking group.

Although these data are not exactly comparable to those from the 1970 Census, the fact that Yiddish had declined in ten years from being the seventh most common foreign language to being the tenth is indicative of the decline in the use of Yiddish. This is further attested to by the fact that the 1980 Census identified only 492 families in Rhode Island in which Yiddish was spoken, in contrast to the 2,314 Yiddish-speaking families identified by the comparable question in the 1963 Survey of the Greater Providence Jewish Population.

The 492 families in Rhode Island that the 1980 Census identified as including Yiddish speakers encompassed 1,265 family members. Of these individuals, only 58.8 percent spoke Yiddish, however; 41.2 percent spoke only English. Only 157 families (31.9 percent), encompassing 326 persons, were units in which all members were reported as speaking Yiddish. In addition to family members, the census reports that 248 unrelated household members and persons living in group quarters also spoke Yiddish.

THE AGE AND SEX OF YIDDISH SPEAKERS

In 1980, the 1,140 Yiddish-speaking residents of Rhode Island constituted only a very small percentage both of the State's total population (0.1 percent) and of its foreign-language speaking population (0.8 percent). More important than their total number in relation to the State's population, therefore, are the characteristics of these Yiddish speakers. Only limited insights can be gained from the published statistics: their age and sex composition and how well they speak English. The data in Table I show the distribution by age of the Rhode Island population, categorized on the basis of language spoken at home. The age distribution of the total population age five and over is also presented as a basis of comparison. Since such a large proportion of the population speaks only English at home, it is not surprising to find that the age distribution of this group closely resembles that of the total population. Just over one-fifth of those who speak only English are in the youngest age group, and 12 percent are in the 65 and over group. Among those who speak other than English at home, the age distribution is substantially different. Through age 44, the percentages of non-English speakers is less than that in the general population and the English-only population. Thus, whereas over 20 percent of the English-speaking population is under age 18, only 12.6 percent of the non-English speakers are concentrated in this young group. From age 45 on, however, there is a much heavier concentration of individuals who speak other than English at home compared to those who speak English only. Whereas only 21 percent of the latter is in the 45-64 age category, almost one-third of those who speak other than English are this old. The differential is accentuated in the oldest group, which contains comparatively twice as high a percentage of those who speak other than English, 24.6 percent, than those who speak only English at home (12.2 percent). Clearly, then, speaking English only or some other language in addition to or in lieu of English is very much affected by age.

The pattern identified for the group that speaks other than English characterizes, in even more exaggerated form, the Yiddish-speaking group. In part, this may reflect the older age composition of the Jewish population generally (Goldstein, 1981:44-45), but this cannot be tested fully since exact data are not available on the age composition of the Rhode Island Jewish population in 1980. There is little question, however, that the age differentials that exist among the Yiddish-speaking group compared to

other groups in the Rhode Island population are largely explained by the differential generational composition of the various age groups. Thus, whereas 44.7 percent of the general population who speak other than English in their homes are concentrated in the age groups under 45 and two-thirds of those who speak only English are in this group, this is true of only 9.6 percent of the Yiddish speakers. This perspective clearly indicates the "dying" nature of Yiddish as a daily language. The 45-64 age group shows little difference between the Yiddish-speaking population and those in the larger Rhode Island population who speak other than English at home. However, a very sharp differential characterizes the 65 and over group. Over 60 percent of the Yiddish speakers are concentrated in this age group, compared to only 25 percent of those who speak other than English at home, and still fewer, only 12 percent, of those who speak only English. If further evidence is needed that the Yiddish-speaking population is likely to experience still further sharp declines in the future, these data by age clearly point in that direction.

Because women have longer survival rates than men, all four categories of population presented in Table 1 show a higher proportion of women in the older groups than men. For the total population, the percentage of women 65 and over is almost 17 percent, compared to 11 percent for the men. A disproportional number of women are also found in the older group of Yiddish speakers. Compared to just over half of all the men who are 65 or over, two-thirds of the Yiddish-speaking women are in this oldest group. The sex differential is even greater if expressed in terms of the ratios of men to women by age. For each population category as a whole, women outnumber men, but the difference is most pronounced among the Yiddish speaking. This group as a whole contained only 52 men for every 100 women, compared to 90 men per 100 women in the general population, 92 percent in the English-only population, and 81 per 100 in the foreign-language group.

These overall patterns differ by age. Among Yiddish speakers, the number of males exceeds the number of females for the small numbers of persons under age 45 who speak Yiddish. In the age group 45 and over, however, the number of females far exceeds the number of males and does so to a much greater extent than is true in the general population and the other language groups. For example, the age 45-64 Yiddish speakers had a sex ratio of 58, but among the general population who spoke English only, the sex ratio was above 90, and among those that spoke other than English at home, the ratio was greater than 80. A similar differential extends to the 65 and over group, although all groups had much lower sex ratios than at younger ages. The sex ratio for Yiddish speakers was only 42; in each of the other segments of the population, the sex ratio was just over 60. The disproportional number of women who are Yiddish speakers above age 25 suggests strongly that the persistence of Yiddish as a language of communication is sex selective and likely associated with the different roles assumed by men and women. Women in the past were much more likely to lead lives closely circumscribed

Table 1
YIDDISH SPEAKERS AMONG THE 1980 RHODE ISLAND POPULATION, AND BY SEX AND AGE

Age Group	Total	Speak Only English at Home		Speak Other Than English at Home*		Speak Yiddish at Home						
		Number										
5-17	186,659	168,074		18,585		15						
18-24	128,741	115,518		13,223		45						
25-44	245,477	211,556		33,921		49						
45-64	202,854	157,725		45,129		320						
65 and over	126,912	90,856		36,056		711						
Total	890,643	743,729		146,914		1,140						
		Percent of Total Population				% of Foreign Speakers						
5-17	100.0	90.0		10.0		0.01		0.08				
18-24	100.0	89.7		10.3		0.03		0.68				
25-44	100.0	86.2		13.8		0.02		0.14				
45-64	100.0	77.8		22.2		0.16		0.71				
65 and over	100.0	71.6		28.4		0.56		1.97				
Totals	100.0	83.5		16.5		0.13		0.78				
		Percent Distribution by Age and Sex										
	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females
5-17	21.0	22.5	19.6	22.6	23.9	21.3	12.6	14.3	11.3	1.3	2.0	0.9
18-24	14.5	15.0	13.9	15.5	16.0	15.1	9.0	9.9	8.3	4.0	8.7	1.5
25-44	27.6	28.6	26.7	28.5	29.4	27.6	23.1	24.4	22.1	4.3	4.6	4.1
45-64	22.8	22.5	23.0	21.2	21.0	21.4	30.7	30.8	30.6	28.1	30.3	26.9
65 and over	14.1	11.4	16.8	12.2	9.7	14.6	24.6	20.6	27.7	62.3	54.3	66.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
		Sex Ratio (Males per 100 Females)										
5-17	103.5	103.8		101.4		114.3						
18-24	97.8	97.9		96.8		309.0						
25-44	96.8	98.1		89.0		58.1						
45-64	88.5	90.6		81.3		58.4						
65 and over	61.2	61.6		60.2		42.2						
Total	90.3	92.4		80.7		51.8						

Source: 1980 Census of Population, Detailed Population Characteristics, PC80-1-D41. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1984, Table 197.

*Includes Yiddish speakers.

by their home, their family, and their ethnic community. They were much less likely than men to be exposed to the larger society or to interact as extensively with that society. Moreover, within Judaism, women have to a large extent been defined as the guardians of tradition within the home, which would include maintenance of the traditional language. Finally, American-born girls may have been expected more than boys to continue old traditions. All of these factors, to varying degrees, help to explain the greater prevalence of Yiddish speakers among women compared to men.

QUALITY OF ENGLISH

In addition to asking whether any household members spoke a language other than English and, if so, what that language was, the census also ascertained how well English was spoken by those who reported speaking another language at home. Responses to this question were classified into four categories: 1) speaking English very well, interpreted to mean having no difficulty speaking English; 2) speaking English well, meaning only minor problems with English which do not seriously limit their ability to speak the language; 3) speaking English not well, that is, seriously limited in the ability to use English; 4) speaking English not at all.

A majority of Rhode Islanders who reported speaking a language other than English at home also reported speaking English very well (Table 2). Compared to the total Rhode Island population who spoke other than English at home, a higher percentage of Yiddish speakers were concentrated in the "very well" group, 71 percent compared to 59 percent of the total. If those who reported speaking English well are added to the "very well" group, 83 percent of the total foreign-speaking group and 98 percent of the Yiddish-speaking group indicated this high level command of the English language. Of the total foreign-language speaking group in Rhode Island, 5 percent reported no command of English, but none of the 1,140 Yiddish speakers in the population did so. Even if those who do not speak English well are combined with those who do not speak English at all, a very sharp differential characterizes the Yiddish-speaking group from the total group speaking a language other than English at home; only 2 percent of the Yiddish speakers fell in this category compared to 17 percent of the total foreign-language group. Clearly, for the Yiddish-speaking population, the use of Yiddish has not seriously interfered with the adoption of English as a working language. Furthermore, virtually all of the Yiddish speakers 18 years old and over, 1,119 out of 1,125, reported themselves as citizens in contrast to 80 percent of the total foreign-language group, lending further support to the greater degree of adaptation of the Yiddish-speaking population.

The information on quality of command of English shows minimal differences between men and women in the total foreign-language group (Table 2). Quite similar proportions reported speaking English very well or well, 83 percent for men and women, and similar proportions reported no

Table 2
QUALITY OF ENGLISH SPOKEN BY THOSE SPEAKING OTHER THAN ENGLISH
AND SPEAKING YIDDISH, RHODE ISLAND, 1980

Quality of English	Total		Males		Females	
	Speak other than English at Home	Speak Yiddish at Home	Speak other than English at Home	Speak Yiddish at Home	Speak other than English at Home	Speak Yiddish at Home
	Number					
Very well	86,688	806	38,092	301	48,596	505
Well	35,380	308	16,562	81	18,818	227
Not well	18,098	26	8,213	7	9,885	19
Not at all	6,748	—	2,759	—	3,989	—
Total	146,914	1,140	65,626	389	81,288	751
	Percent Distribution					
Very well	59.0	70.7	58.1	77.4	59.8	67.3
Well	24.1	27.0	25.2	20.8	23.1	30.2
Not well	12.3	2.3	12.5	1.8	12.2	2.5
Not at all	4.6	—	4.2	—	4.9	—
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 1980 Census of Population, Detailed Population Characteristics, PC80-1-D41. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1984, Table 197.

command of English at all, 4.2 and 4.9 percent. Sharper differences, however, characterize the male and female Yiddish-speaking groups. For males, 77 percent reported speaking English very well in contrast to only 67 percent of the Yiddish-speaking women. Conversely, a higher percentage of women than men reported speaking English well and not well. These differentials are consistent with the earlier evaluation of the sex ratios of the Yiddish-speaking population. Together, these data suggest that not only are more Yiddish-speaking persons women, but that among the Yiddish speakers women had a somewhat poorer command of English than did men. Such a finding is in line with the interpretation offered earlier that the higher percentage of Yiddish speakers among women is undoubtedly a function of the lesser contact that women had with the larger community.

CONCLUSIONS

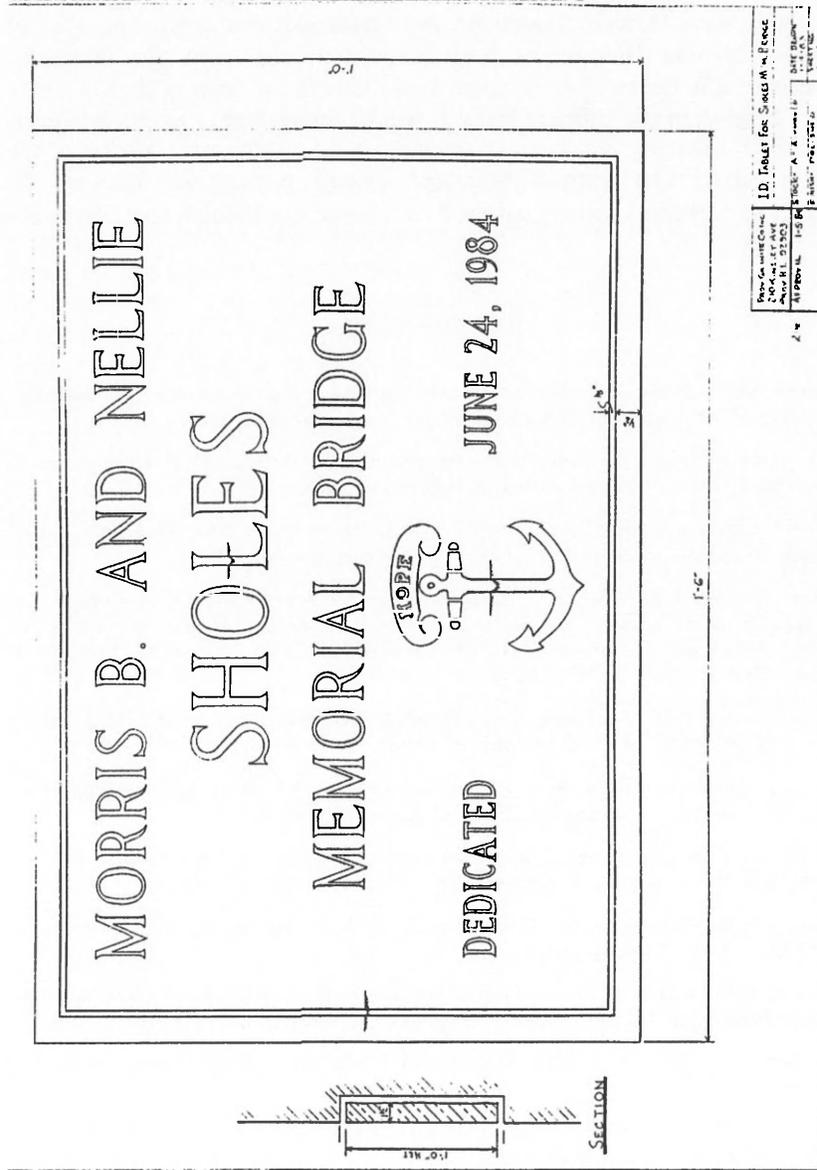
Perhaps no other people in world history has functioned in so many languages as have the Jews. In their two thousand years of frequent resettlement, Jews have not only learned to speak the language of the people among whom they lived, but also adapted it and transformed it for their own needs. Such was the history of the development of Yiddish as the "mamaloshen" (mother tongue) of a considerable segment of world Jewry, especially those living in Eastern Europe. The substantial waves of immigrant Jews arriving in the United States between 1880 and the 1920s transplanted Yiddish to the New World. Here, the language flourished for a number of decades, partly through reinforcement from the flow of immigrants and partly as a result of the segregated ghetto-like settlements within which so many Jews lived in American cities. Use of Yiddish slowed the assimilation process, but concurrently facilitated adjustment to life in America.

With time, as this analysis of the 1980 census data has indicated, significant declines have occurred in the use of Yiddish as a spoken language. Several factors account for this: the significant reduction in immigration and the resulting reduction in the number of foreign-born and even the number of children of foreign-born parents, the movements away from areas of first and second settlement and greater residential dispersal, and the increasing Americanization of the population. Except among the aged, it no longer serves as an important means of communication, and even most of the aged are bilingual. Whereas in earlier generations "being Jewish" and speaking Yiddish were often seen as synonymous, this is now true of only a very limited segment of the population; for most Jews, linguistic assimilation as part of the Americanization process now seems virtually complete. The Yiddishisms which have gained a certain popularity in recent times in the mass media and in "Jewish" novels do not reflect a return to speaking Yiddish, but rather are in part a reiteration of Jewish identity among younger generations through what has come to be referred to as "symbolic Judaism," and in part an indication of the acceptance of Jews or things Jewish on the larger American scene.

In the meantime, a new linguistic phenomenon has appeared: a small increase in the use of spoken Hebrew. Although only a small proportion of American Jews speak Hebrew, the combination of the use of Hebrew in Jewish religious schools, the increased number of Israelis living in the United States, and the greater amount of pride in the State of Israel and visits and stays there by American Jews have led to a greater number of persons learning Hebrew as both a written and a spoken language. Nonetheless, in no way has it served or is likely to function in the same way as did Yiddish in the United States. It will be interesting to assess, however, as Yiddish-speaking comes to characterize ever smaller proportions of the Rhode Island and general American Jewish population, whether the number of Hebrew speakers will, in fact, exceed the Yiddish speakers in the community.

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Blueprint for the Plaque on the Sholes Memorial Bridge.

THE MORRIS B. AND NELLIE SHOLES MEMORIAL BRIDGE

BY ELEANOR F. HORVITZ

In the January 1981 session of the General Assembly a joint resolution was introduced requesting the director of transportation to name the airport connector bridge passing over Post Road in Warwick, Rhode Island (Bridge 733) the Morris B. and Nellie Sholes Memorial Bridge. This was signed into law on May 15, 1981.

Who were Morris B. and Nellie Sholes? Morris, an immigrant to the United States, was only 16 years old when he arrived in Boston, Massachusetts from Latvia. After living in Boston for four to five years, he eloped with Nellie Levingston and settled in Attleboro, Massachusetts. Nellie had emigrated at age 13 from Vilna, Russia. They raised a family of seven children: Bessie, Esther, Bertha, Evelyn, Alice, Sampson, and Leonard. The Sholes took active part in the Jewish community affairs.¹ About 1915 they moved to Pawtucket, Rhode Island and became involved in the synagogue of that city.² They bought a building on Dexter Street in Pawtucket. There they ran a skating rink upstairs and a pool parlor downstairs.³

In the 1930s the Sholes family moved to Warwick. They owned and operated a large rink in the Oakland Beach section of the City of Warwick. This rink, the American, was built over the water and was destroyed in the 1938 hurricane. Their daughter, Bessie, remembers her parents' feeling of devastation as they watched their livelihood being swept away by the huge waves. They helped rescue several of the residents in the area in spite of their personal grief. Bessie also recalls their courage as they returned to the area after the hurricane to resurrect from the sands the skates which had been left behind. Eventually the Sholes donated that Oakland Beach property to the City of Warwick. Undaunted, they started anew with the purchase of another site for a roller skating rink. Located on Post Road in Warwick, it had been a popular nightclub of the era, the Hillsgrove Country Club. They renovated and enlarged this building, and the roller rink became a very popular place in Warwick.⁴

During the years between 1940 and the 1960s the Sholes not only operated



Portraits of Morris B. and Nellie Sholes.

a skating rink but, always civic-minded, they ran successful recreational programs for the city's youth. Since the roller skating rink was the largest hall in Kent County at that time, they donated use of it for local policemen's and firemen's balls as well as for other community functions. "Literally thousands upon thousands of Warwick and Rhode Island residents skated, mingled, made lasting friendships, met their spouses, and brought their children and grandchildren to learn to roller skate. Generations of Rhode Islanders grew up having fond and happy memories of roller skating at Sholes Hillsgrove Country Club."⁵

On Sunday, June 24, 1984, the dedication of the Airport Connector Bridge over Post Road, Warwick, Rhode Island in memory of Morris B. and Nellie Sholes, was held in the parking lot of Sholes Hillsgrove Country Club. Master of Ceremonies was their grandson, David H. Sholes. Invocation was given by Rabbi Jacob Handler, who said about the Sholes: "In almost every avenue of communal endeavor—religious, social and philanthropic—they have made illustrious and lasting contributions. Through their sincere dedication to the welfare of our people, and by their noble achievements in behalf of just and righteous causes, they have earned the love and esteem of all."

Following the pledge of allegiance led by the great-grandchildren of Morris and Nellie Sholes, their granddaughter, Janet Friedman sang, "God

Bless America". The special guest speaker was the Honorable Joseph W. Walsh, Mayor of the City of Warwick, In his tribute to the Sholes, the Mayor said: "Morris and Nellie Sholes never wanted public recognition or praise for their generosity—they helped because there were people who needed their help...these are people who set standards for others to live up to...this bridge stands on land you both paid for in many ways. It will stand as a lasting reminder of your lives and the courageous style in which you lived."

A proclamation signed by Governor J. Joseph Garrahy naming June 24, 1984 as Morris B. and Nellie Sholes Day was read. Other proclamations and resolutions were also read. The family spokesman at the dedication ceremony was their son, Leonard. His comments about his parents included the words: "They gave of themselves to others. They may have said little but they did big things. With a cheery face, they set a shining example of courage, conviction, learning, goodwill and service to their fellow man for all of us to follow."

The State of Rhode Island, in constructing Interstate Route 95 and the airport connector, condemned a portion of their land to construct an overpass on Post Road and swing the connector into the airport terminal. The bridge and connector were built in the side yard next to their house. And it was on the porch of this house that the group involved in the dedication exercises stood. This was the house that the Sholes had occupied for twenty years between 1938 and 1958. Their home was always open to their many friends at any time for a warm and sympathetic reception.

The official dedication took place with the unveiling of the plaques.

The Reverend Carl W. Bloomquist gave the benediction at the end of the ceremonies.

Thus the naming of the bridge is a fitting memorial to Morris B. and Nellie Sholes. Morris B. Sholes died on July 20, 1964 and Nellie Sholes on September 23, 1966. They had been married 65 years.

NOTES

¹Letter written to the grandchildren of Morris B. and Nellie Sholes by the oldest son and sixth child of Nellie and Morris. It was dated November 1964 and was a brief history of his parents.

²Ref: Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, Volume 9, No. 2, Page 172.

³Interview with Bessie Sholes Lipson on April 29, 1985.

⁴Telephone interview with Bessie Sholes Lipson on August 26, 1985.

⁵Press release prepared by David H. Sholes (grandson), June 20, 1984 entitled Dedication of bridge over Post Road.



Jewish Cemetery C. 1854

From *Newport Illustrated*, in a series of Pen and Pencil sketches by the Editor of the Newport Mercury. Engravings by Whitney, Jocelyn & Annin, N.Y. New York, B. Appleton & Co., Publishers, 1854. The granite gate and fences were erected in 1843.

THE ENIGMA OF THE COLONIAL JEWISH CEMETERY
IN NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND
MYTHS, REALITIES AND RESTORATION

BY BERNARD KUSINITZ, M.A.

At the corner of Bellevue Avenue and Kay Street in Newport, Rhode Island, there is located a cemetery, charming, small, and varied in its monument design. It was owned by the minuscule Jewish Community of Newport from the beginning and was taken over by Congregation Jeshuat Israel later in the colonial period.

There is a tendency to think of the colonial Jewish community of Newport as if it were the product of a steady continuous growth after it was founded in 1658. However, this was not the case, for the community was the result of intermittent waves, or more accurately, trickles of immigration. Loosely speaking, they were three in number; the first, originating out of Barbados, in 1658; the second from Curaçao in 1693; and the third, beginning in the 1740s, from Spain, Portugal, and other nations in Europe and from various American communities such as New York and Connecticut.

There is no evidence that the latter group, which became the famous colonial mercantile community, was built upon an existing community. Instead, we are confronted with two historical mysteries both of which are relevant to the new cemetery restoration project of the Society of Friends of Touro Synagogue.

TWO MYSTERIES

The first mystery is that very little is known of the first two waves who came to Newport despite the fact that Newport's Jewish community is the second oldest in North America, dating from just four years after the founding of the first in New York in 1654.

It is known that by the beginning of the eighteenth century, or shortly thereafter, no Jews were left in Newport. Rather than being forced to leave involuntarily for religious reasons, they left voluntarily for economic reasons. The colony was just beginning to develop, and the new Jewish

arrivals were not prepared to cope with such a situation, a contrast with the European experience of hatred, persecution, expulsion, and murder.

It is a fact of the new community that two of its numbers, Mordecai Campanall and Moses Pachaekoe, "Jews and their Nation, Society and Friends",¹ purchased the cemetery grounds in question in 1677. This apparently mundane and routine transaction contrasts with the depressing fact that there were times and places when Jews were not allowed to establish cemeteries. The fact that from the beginning in Newport the Jews wanted to establish one and were allowed to do so augured well for both the developing American way of life in general and for the fledgling Jewish community. It indicated that they were in Newport to stay. The inexorable trend in America towards religious liberty and mutual respect received great impetus in Newport, when the right to die as one chose was linked to the right to live as one chose.

Although the cemetery was purchased in 1677, the first visible monument, which is located to the right of the entrance gate bordering on Bellevue Avenue, bears the date 1761, almost one hundred years later. This was the first of the many interments of what became the famous Jewish community of colonial Newport. They bear the proud family names of Touro, Lopez, Rivera, Seixas, Hayes, Levy, and Benjamin, among others. All are on the right side of the grounds. What makes this fact worthy of note is that there are no visible monuments on the Kay Street side of the cemetery, which is to the left of the gate on the Bellevue Avenue side.

The second mystery is who, if anyone, is interred on the left side. If indeed they are there at all, were they from the first two waves? Were there interments there before the rest left or did they leave before anyone died? If so, who then is interred there? Being the only Jewish cemetery in all of colonial New England, are there non-Newporters interred there also? Could some of the later Jews also be there? Tradition and the terrain itself suggest that there are interments where no visible monuments dare to be seen and that those monuments, or fragments, were buried in the 1840s under the two mounds that can be seen at either end of the Kay Street side.²

The open spaces on the Kay Street side hinted that what had originally been visible had now been invisible for close to one hundred-fifty years. The occupied spaces on the right hand side speak just as eloquently in the form of monuments. Unfortunately, these reminders of mortality have become diminished by the ravages of time, the elements, nature, and structural limitations.

Against this background what is invisible and what is visible seem to make sense. What needed restoring became obvious; what needed archaeological investigation became equally apparent. We have been led to believe that the original cemetery grounds with hidden grave sites and buried monuments had to be that on the Kay Street side rather than the area to the right which contained the later visible monuments. Logic indicated

that there were really two distinct projects involved. One was archaeological study; the other was restoration.

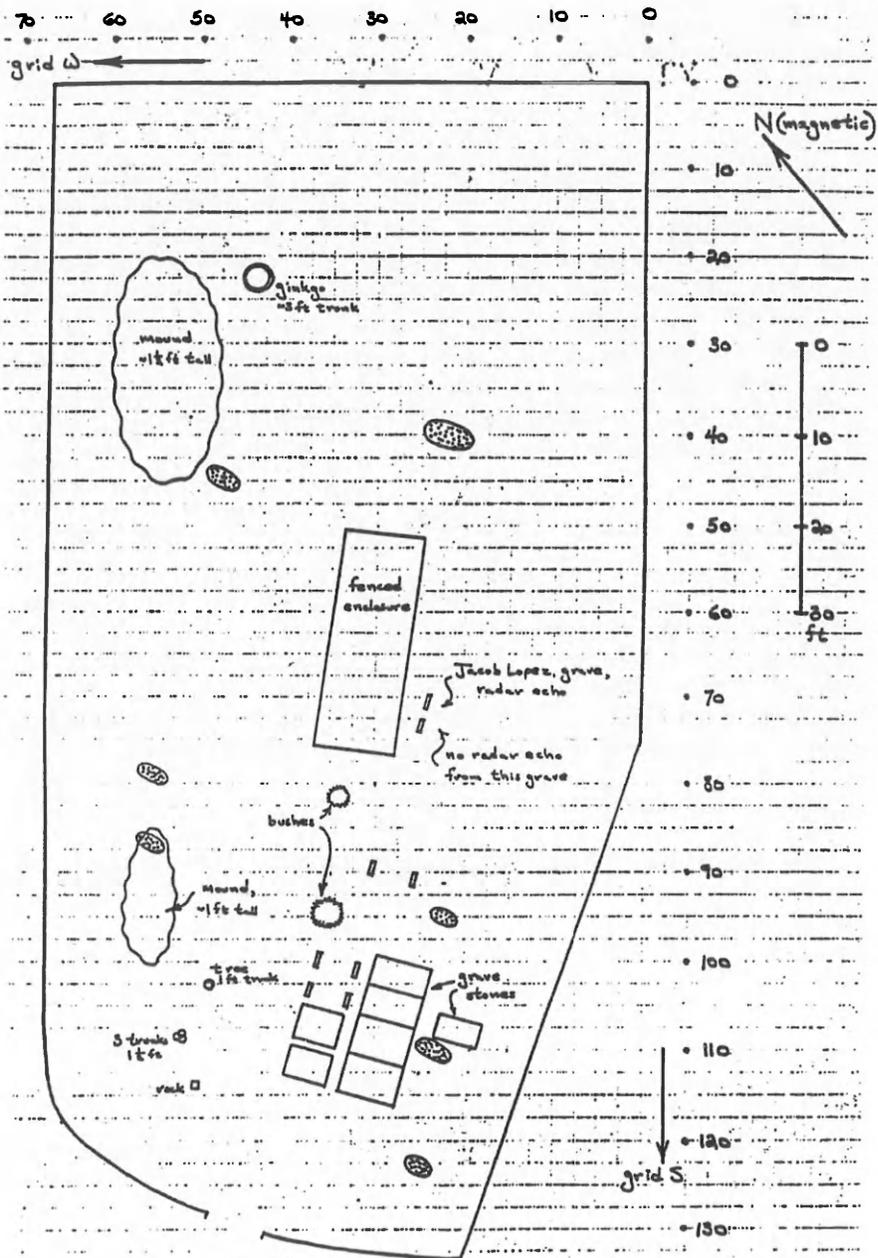
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RADAR SURVEY

The plan for the former was to attempt to ascertain not only who was interred on the Kay Street side, but also in the process to shed some light on the disappearance of the community of the 1700 period. This portion of the project would provide clues to the solution of our two mysteries. To this end, Miss Joan Gallagher of the Public Archaeology Laboratory, Inc., of Providence, Rhode Island was engaged to provide us with the archaeological approach to the problem. That group called in Dr. Bruce Bevan of Geosight located in Pitman, New Jersey to perform a ground-penetrating radar survey of the entire cemetery grounds. Fraught with uncertainty as it was, the project was begun with high expectations. Alas, although not without some success, the overall results were disappointing.

Nevertheless, as a result of the carefully executed radar survey, we have managed to reach three conclusions—two tentative and one positive. On the positive side, it is now definitely known that the original cemetery site in *not* on the Kay Street side as history and the appearance of the cemetery itself had led us to believe. Tentatively the evidence, or lack of it, indicated that the cemetery probably does not contain clues relative to the fate of the first two waves of immigration to Newport. It would further appear that the two mounds at either end of the Kay Street side probably do not contain monuments or fragments which, it was hoped, would supply some of the answers.

The radar study and its inconclusive results may be the result of the fact that the echoes from burials could be lost in the complex natural soil strata present in the entire cemetery grounds. These strata consist of sand or gravel. If the soil is like that around the famous Old Stone Mill, which is located nearby, there is also hardpan, or clay. Lateral change, according to Dr. Bevan, is unusual and unexplained. The resulting confusion can be illustrated by the following example. A known grave site when tested had a distinctive radar echo indicating that it is indeed the site of a grave. But it is also possible that other contrasts in the earth could cause the same radar echoes. Moreover, another known grave site right next to that referred to had no distinctive echo as if it were not a grave site at all.³ The complexity of the soil could very well mask the presence of unknown grave sites all over the cemetery grounds.

Notwithstanding the general ambiguity of the survey, it did indicate several things worthy of note, such as the *possible* existence of seven unmarked graves scattered throughout the cemetery (Figure 1). This possibility is bolstered by the fact that several deaths were known to have occurred in the Jewish community in the colonial period in Newport.



Surface Features and Geophysical Summary
 Touro Cemetery (possibly unmarked grave)

Figure 1

Yet there are no known details of the funeral arrangements; nor are there visible monuments to indicate a specific site in the cemetery, if in fact this cemetery was the place of interment. Ironically, the only burial in the original cemetery thus far verified was of a person not from Newport, but from Boston, Massachusetts.⁴ The source of this information is the diary of a well-known colonial clergyman, Samuel Sewall dated 1703/4 in which he records the following:⁵

Joseph Frazon, the Jew, dyes at Mr. Major's, Mr. Joyliff's old house; Febr. 5th Satterday, is carried in Simson's coach to Boston; from thence by Water to Newport, where there is a Jew-burying place.

Of this date, the burying place, and the point of origin there is no question. But where is the specific grave site? And who in Newport authorized the interment at a time when no Jews were living in town?

The survey does indicate the presence of paths at two slightly different depths buried beneath the grass. These run from the gate to the front of the Touro enclosure and can be detected on the surface. These obviously had to be laid down after the purchase, probably at the time the Touro enclosure was laid out (Figure 2).

Finally, in the mounds near the huge gingko tree on the Kay Street side objects beneath the surface give no indication of a dense concentration of stone. It is hard to conceive of the presence of monuments or even fragments without such a concentration. Some initial probing by the author produced the same inconclusive results.

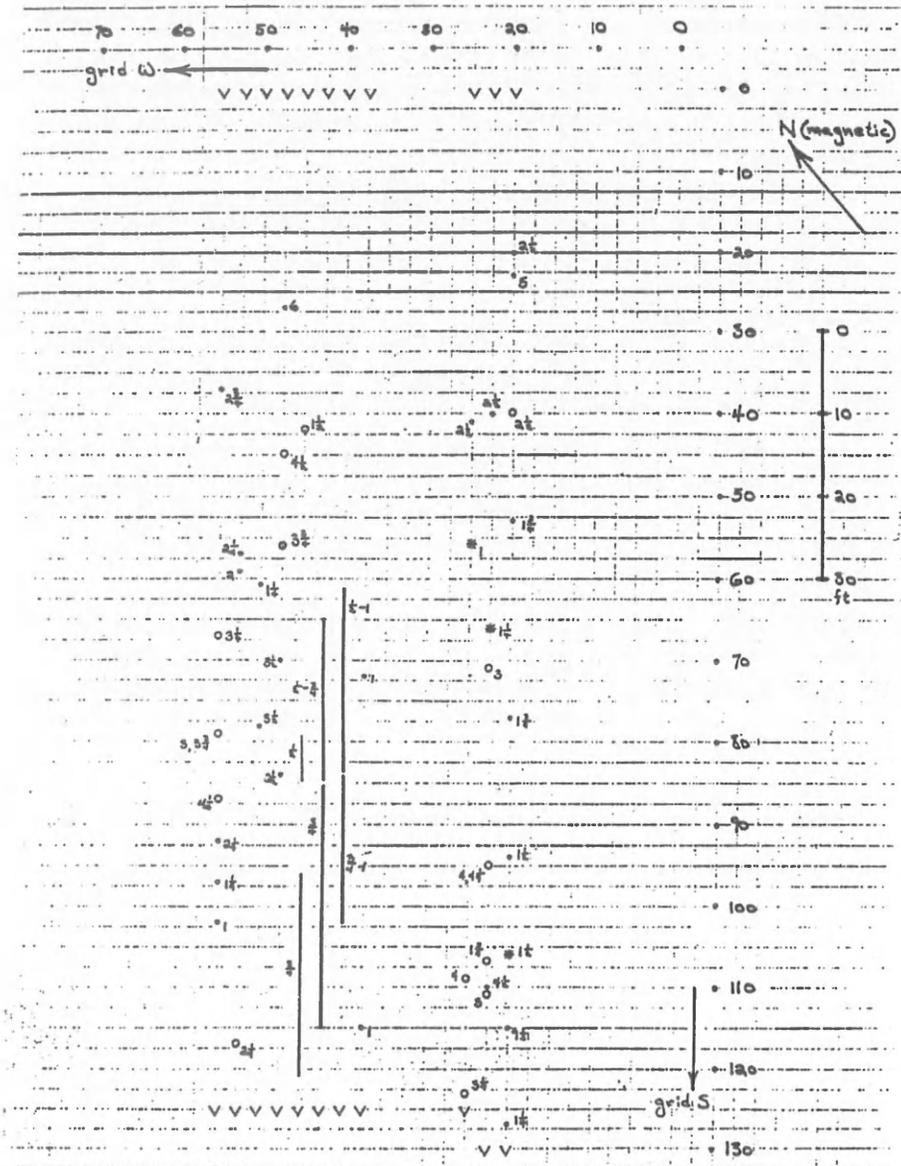
In sum, the disappointing failure to find an orderly system of grave sites on the Kay Street side of the cemetery grounds, the absence of monuments, and the inconclusiveness of the radar survey made it obvious that different approaches were necessary.

DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH

In the new effort the author was assisted by Mrs. Peter Bolhouse, Curator of Manuscripts of the Newport Historical Society, and Joseph Blaine, an outstanding Newport historian, specializing in colonial deeds, the Old Stone Mill, and many other aspects of Newport history. Blaine also assisted in work in the cemetery grounds.

The first task on hand was an on-the-site investigation to determine if the area of the original purchase of 1677 could be located and its boundaries delineated. This was a *sine qua non*, in light of the fact that the radar survey pointed away, if inconclusively, from the Kay Street side.

The second task was to discover when the original cemetery was expanded to its present size. This could be accomplished by using the best available research techniques combined with some detective work.



Radar Echoes, Touro Cemetery

Survey 25 May 1945 with GIK system - ground-penetrating radar
 model 8102 (815 MHz) antenna
 Numbers indicate depth, in feet,
 assuming $V = 0.27 \frac{ft}{ns}$
 > end of traverse

○ strong, distinct echo
 ● weak echo
 * reverberating echo, probably metal
 — planar echo

Figure 2

The plans were to be implemented by means of an intensified search of the colonial land evidence records plus other contemporary records found primarily in the Newport Historical Society. This was a continuation of a process pursued by the author for some time. This course was decided upon despite the fact that previous searches had yielded nothing relative to the cemetery other than the 1677 deed which was found not in the Historical Society, but in the City Hall of Newport. During the course of the new search, Blaine discovered previously unindexed record books of colonial deeds in the Society vaults. Fortunately, these contained some of the information we were seeking. It was also hoped that evidence could be elicited that would determine once and for all the legal ownership of the entire cemetery grounds.

The first phase of the restoration project had employed a specialized archaeological testing program in the form of the ground-penetrating radar. This had the highest likelihood of determining the presence of unmarked graves, buried vaults, and relocated grave sites. The second approach utilized on-the-site surface study of the cemetery grounds and documentary research. This approach did indeed produce positive results even if not as originally envisioned.

Thus, the location of the original cemetery site of 1677 has been established. This is less than one quarter of the size of the grounds as they appear now. It is trapezoid in shape and lies in the front and to the right on the Bellevue Avenue side, definitely away from the Kay Street perimeter (Figure 3).

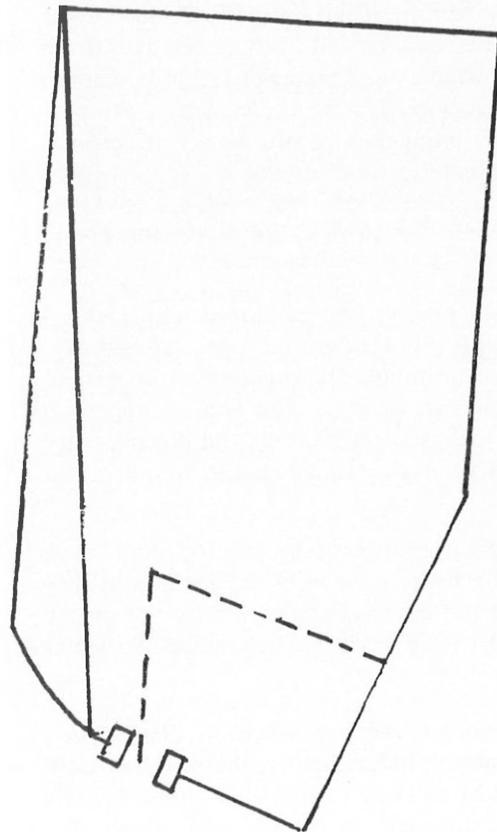
This was achieved by utilizing the one reliable document that had always been available but apparently was never studied before, that is the original deed. This discovery was supported by still other colonial documents, early eighteenth century surveys which delineated the neighboring properties.

The discovery of the original plot confirmed what casual observers were unaware of through the years. What has been on public view for so long was the result of two purchases, not one. The discovery gave impetus to the next step—the confirmation of the elusive second purchase.

SECOND PURCHASE

The first clue was elicited by land evidence research. The original deed was recorded not only in October of 1678, but was re-recorded in October of 1767, during the height of Newport's Golden Age of commercial prosperity. Both dates, plus another not relevant to the question, appear at the bottom of the deed. Someone for some reason was interested enough in the property to check it and re-record it. No one else bothered to check further until now.

The second clue was to be found in the meticulous records of Aaron Lopez, the famous merchant prince of Newport, whose collapsed monument is among those scheduled for restoration. In addition to



Dimensions of Cemetery Ground
 SW (front) 35.9 ft To gates
 Curve 30.9 ft
 SE (right) 76 ft To bend; 59.7 ft
 To front
 NE (back) Approx. 70 ft
 NW (Key St.) 108.8 ft To obelisk

Present Area of Colonial Cemetery - approximate shape
 Scale - approx. 20 feet per inch
 Dotted line within cemetery - 1677 purchase
 Triangle to left within cemetery - possible gore

Figure 3

recording all his commercial transactions in his "Store Blotters" and Day Books, he entered pertinent synagogue business that he was involved in. In one of those records is the following entered against the account of his son-in-law, Abraham Pereira Mendes:

To Cash pd for his acct on a Superscription by the
Congregation towards purchasing a piece of land for burying
ground- 25.

The entry was dated April 5, 1768. This indicates that a formal drive for funds was undertaken by the congregation for that purpose. The entry was made just a few months after the property was checked out in the latter part of 1767. It should be emphasized that the drive was conducted *by the congregation*, not by individuals acting in their own behalf. This is very significant because the question of legal ownership was of great concern before restoration could be started. Mrs. Bolhouse, working with the author and carrying on the research alone when he was indisposed, was the first to bring this entry to light. The success of the research project was now within grasp. Another colonial incident, although apparently remote, has a direct bearing on the story. When the British left Newport for New York during the American Revolution after occupying the city for three years, they took with them the official city records. The ship carrying the records was sunk in New York harbor, and the records were not retrieved for three days. Unfortunately, the state of science at that time did not permit preservation of the wet documents intact. Discolored fragments of assorted sizes and shapes were at a much later date collected into land evidence books. During the Roosevelt Administration these books were indexed into a master file by W.P.A. workers. These files were thoroughly searched by the author not once, but twice for the pertinent information.

Through previous research the author had eliminated both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as possible purchase dates. Blaine, our authority on colonial deeds, now undertook to take yet another look at the land evidence records. Surprisingly, he found that there were three books that had never been indexed! These included that for the year 1768. And there, dated April 13, 1768, just eight days after the Lopez entry of April 5, was part (but unfortunately just a part) of the missing deed.⁷ This records the purchase of the additional land which, together with the 1677 purchase, makes up the colonial Jewish Cemetery at the corner of Bellevue Avenue and Kay Street.

However, the first page of the deed which contains the dimensions of the purchase has not been found and there are discrepancies in the various surveyors' maps made since the second purchase. Further, the terrain immediately bordering the Kay Street side is different from that of the rest of the cemetery.

For a discrepancy in the 1835 survey, two explanations can be offered. The first is that the surveyor made a mistake when he showed the Bellevue side of the cemetery to be 41.3 feet, which is approximately 25 feet less than it

measures today if one includes the curve into Kay Street. The second explanation is that, if the 1835 map is correct, an adjustment was made resulting from a leftover gore, or triangular piece of land.⁸ Such a piece of land could have been left over when the city laid out Kay Street, the land lying between the sidewalk and street and the cemetery. The city used it to round off the corner, while the remainder was absorbed into the cemetery with the same rounded shape. All this took place before the map was drawn and also a few years before the granite wall was put into place. Once the wall or fence was installed no further adjustments were possible. What is now seen is the combination of the two purchases plus the commanding granite fence constructed in 1842.

The land in question was purchased from John Bennett and his wife Susanna by the same three men who had acted for Congregation Jeshuat Israel in the purchase of the synagogue site nine years earlier. They were Moses Levy, Jacob Rodrigues Rivera, and Isaac Hart. Although the word "congregation" does not appear in the synagogue purchase, it does appear in the 1768 cemetery purchase. Moreover, in the bond consummating the purchase, which was recorded immediately, the three men are referred to as having been "appointed and chosen by ye Congregation".

OWNERSHIP CONFIRMED

The physical evidence on the site supports the documentary evidence in that all the visible monuments within the boundaries of the original cemetery, excepting one which obviously had been reserved, date from *before* 1768. All after 1768 are in the enlarged grounds purchased in 1768. This constitutes proof of both purchase and ownership. Further proof of ownership is indicated by the facts that Congregation Jeshuat Israel maintained the cemetery grounds during the colonial days out of its "sedaka" fund (charity fund), that the Abraham and Judah Touro funds paid for them during the nineteenth century when there was no Jewish community in Newport, and that the reconsecrated Congregation Jeshuat Israel has maintained them ever since. This continuity of maintenance constitutes inherent proof of ownership. It can also be inferred that the Congregation constitutes the "heirs and assigns forever" of the three men appointed by the Congregation of Jews that shall "inhabit & dwell within ye colony of Rhode Island aforesaid forever".

Finally, the committee through its chairman has compiled a dossier of pertinent supportive documents dating from 1677 to 1872. Included are the many pertinent deeds and surveyors' maps dated 1716, 1721, 1835, and 1872. It is concluded that the dossier when combined with the physical evidence does indeed constitute whatever proof of ownership is needed for whatever purpose. The realities override the myths that persisted prior to the archaeological survey.

One loose end warrants mention. This is the matter of where the first

settlers in Newport are buried. Because most of the original area is taken up by the graves of the Jews of the later colonial period and by the paths laid down later, only the areas to the extreme left and right could have been used by the earlier community. Yet the area to the right appears to have been used by the later community. This leaves a very small plot to the left with more room for speculation than for actual grave sites. All in all, for the historian there are more questions still remaining than there are answers.

Project I had involved the archaeological quest for answers to historical mysteries primarily involving imponderables on the Kay Street side of the cemetery grounds. Project II can be considered the focal point of the entire Restoration Project. It is concerned with the area to the right of the gate on the Bellevue Avenue side, containing the monuments of the third wave of newcomers, the noted colonial Jews of Newport.

RESTORATION BEGUN

When the Restoration Project was first considered, one fact was tantamount. The monuments, despite their historic importance, were suffering from well over two hundred years of neglect, dirt, grime, moss, mold, sap, maintenance abuse, and a late nineteenth century attempt at restoration of questionable value. One "table style" monument appears to have collapsed of its own accord. Ironically that stone marks the resting place of Aaron Lopez, the most important merchant of Newport and of colonial America. It was the deplorable appearance of the monuments that induced the author to initiate the restoration project.

The Cemetery Restoration committee of the Society of Friends of Touro Synagogue was established with the author, who was also Historian of Touro Synagogue, as chairman. The Committee consists of the following: Edwin Connelly, Cemeteries Director of the State of Rhode Island; Donald Bonner, of the Bonner Monument Company of Westerly, Rhode Island; Dr. Daniel Snyder, Executive Director of the Newport Historical Society; Capt. Howard Kay, former Commander of the Naval Education and Training Center in Newport; Alan Booth, arborist and authority on grounds maintenance; and Representative Jeffrey Teitz, member of the Rhode Island General Assembly, from Newport.

Even before the archaeological survey was begun, the following restoration program was instituted:

1. The monuments have been washed and cleaned by the Bonner Monument Company. As a result, they are now closer to their original state in appearance than ever before, and some of the inscriptions are now somewhat easier to read. The cost was \$900.00.

2. Tree surgery has been performed. Two trees which had posed an immediate threat to the central group of monuments and the rear wall have been removed. Unsightly tree stumps have also been removed, and the remaining trees have been pruned in a discreet manner. As a result of the



Gravestones in the Touro Cemetery showing various states of deterioration. (by Ed Connelly)

tree removal for the first time within memory the monuments in the rear are now visible from the street. This has added a new dimension to the overall beauty of the cemetery. This work was performed by Stephen F. Casey of Professional Tree Care, Inc., of Newport in consultation with Alan Booth of the Restoration Committee. The cost was also \$900.00.

3. Prior to creating a complete set of cemetery documentation and the first authentic map, photographs will be taken of each monument and its inscription together with its exact grid location.

4. Bonner and his assistant, Richard J. Commelli, together with Connelly and myself have collaborated on a stone by stone analysis to determine the actual restoration work to be done to preserve each monument.

At the annual meeting of the Society of Friends of Touro Synagogue held August 25, 1985, \$27,000 was appropriated for this purpose. At the meeting Judge Alexander Teitz, co-counsel of the Society, reported that he concurred in the committee's conclusions regarding ownership of the cemetery.

Restoration work is scheduled for the following monuments—Aaron Lopez, Catherine Hays, Moses Seixas, Moses Michael Hayes, Abraham Touro, Rebecca Lopez, Rachel Lopez, Isaac Jacob Pollock and the seven ledger stones of Abigail Lopez, Rachel Rodrigues de Rivera, Isaac Pollock, Moses Lopez, Abraham Rodrigues Rivera, Moses Alvarez, and one stone with the identification gone.

The work will include rebuilding, resurfacing, relettering, installing new foundations, and lifting and separating of the monuments. All materials will be compatible with the existing monuments, and the integrity of the cemetery will be protected. When the restoration procedures of Project II have been completed, the Jewish mercantile community will again be memorialized in a fitting manner.

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NOTES

¹Quoted from the original deed of 1677. Names as spelled in the deed.

²According to tradition, the workers who constructed the Touro Enclosure collected broken monuments and buried them beneath the soil.

³The electric system employed sent weak radar pulses into the earth which can reflect from a variety of objects in the earth such as metals, soil changes, rocks, and air pockets. As a radar antenna is pulled along a line, the pattern of radar echoes gives an approximate profile of the earth. Since the known graves are oriented roughly perpendicular to the profile lines, it was anticipated that graves would have similar echoes in parallel lines. Unfortunately, this situation was seldom found.

⁴Carl A. Grollman, "Dictionary of American Jewish Biography in the Seventeenth Century", *American Jewish Archives*, Vol. III (June 1950) pp 3-10.

⁵*Diary of Samuel Sewall* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973) p. 497.

⁶Aaron Lopez Store Blotter #465, April 5, 1768, Newport Historical Society.

⁷"Ancient" Land Evidence, Vol. 18, 1763-1776, pp 210-212, Newport Historical Society.

⁸See Figure 3.

**BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF MY FATHER
RABBI YIZHAK AISIK BRAUDE (1885-1932)**

BY RABBI WILLIAM G. BRAUDE*

Yizhak Aisik Braude was born August 1885 (or 1884) in Shad (Siedai), the province of Kovno, Lithuania. His father Yehiel was a miller, who spent all his spare time studying Torah, specifically Talmud. Yizhak Aisik's mother was named Dubbe.

He studied at the Yeshivahs (Hebrew academies) in Maltz and Telz. In 1910 (?) he went to the United States where he traveled in behalf of Yeshivah R. Issac Elhanan. He wanted to remain in the United States, but his wife Chiene Rachel (née Halperin) resisted. She would not leave Lithuania for "heathen" America. So he returned to Lithuania, and, despite a glut of unemployed Rabbis, was appointed in 1913 Rabbi in Girtegole (Girkaln), a very small town in the vicinity of Yurburg. The "manse" was so primitive that only one or two of its rooms had wooden floors. The floors in the other rooms were earthen.

In 1914, shortly after Russia's defeat at the Battle of Tannenberg, most Jews — deemed by the Russian high command as actively pro-German — were expelled from Russia's western provinces. So Yizhak Aisik's wife, and his sons Velvel and Miche, made for Riga, where they met up with Yizhak Aisik who at the time of the "evacuation" happened to be in Zhagor.

From Riga the Braude family made their way to Vietka, where Dubbe was born in 1916. Then to Maryupol on the Asoff Sea. There, fearing to be called into military service, Yizhak Aisik decided to go to the United States, via Harbin and Seoul, Korea. In Seoul, the many men with long beards, Dad used to say, reminded him of bearded Rabbis in Lithuania. Everywhere he found someone who knew Yiddish and helped him find his way. In Inchon, Korea, I believe, he boarded a ship which took him across the Pacific to Seattle, Washington. As soon as he became Rabbi of an Orthodox congregation on West Colfax Street, Denver, Colorado, he wrote to his wife asking her to join him. She, still reluctant to the very idea of going to "heathen" America, kept postponing her departure until the Pacific was mined in 1918, and crossing it became impossible. Finally, Yizhak Aisik's

*Submitted 31 December 1984, 7 Tevet 5744.

family joined him during Hanukkah 1920 when he came specially from Denver to Ellis Island to meet them.

During his years in Denver (from 1916 to 1922) he at first served *Zera Abraham*, the Litvische *shul* (synagogue), whose synagogue he built; and later served also a smaller congregation, *Yad achas* on Hooker Street, the Rumanische *shul*. After he passed away, the two synagogues separated: the first took Rabbi Louis Ginsberg, and the second took Rabbi Solomon Shapiro.

Besides being a superb pastor, my father was a great preacher. From all parts of Denver people would flock to hear him. On Yom Kippur he used to tell the parable of a prince who ran away from the royal palace and took to evil ways. Details of the prince's profligacy reached the father who went looking for his son in the hope of persuading him to come back. If the son, besotted by evil, did not even recognize his father, then all hope of restoring him to princely estate was gone. But if, upon seeing the father, the son fell to weeping and to crying out, "*Tate, Tate,*" (Papa, Papa) then the father in his mercy would take the son and restore him to his former state.

We too, Dad would conclude, must learn to cry out, "*Tate, Tate,*" and God will take us back, forgive us.

Thereupon Dad would open the ark, recite in a broken voice the failings all of us are given to, and cry out "*Tate, tate,* have mercy, forgive us."

Men, women, and children were moved to tears.

My father reached out to patients at the Jewish Consumptives Relief Society in Spivak, Colorado, and to inmates in prisons. As early as 1922 I used to accompany him on visits to hospitals where in fractured English he ministered to Jewish and non-Jewish patients alike. In time he became a kind of Jewish Father Duffy in the area.

Dad's sense of humor was, I dare say, in part responsible for his being dubbed a Father Duffy.

I remember walking with him one day to the hospital to have my tonsils removed. In those days removal of tonsils was for a Jewish boy almost as obligatory as removal of the foreskin.

On the way I said: "Dad, I don't think I'll come back alive." Dad: "Don't be an idiot." I: "I know I am not coming back." Dad: "Well, then, since you are an *epikoros* (unbeliever), you are sure to go to hell." I: "Dad, do you really believe there is a hell-fire and brimstone?" Dad: "Of course I do. I know the contractor who supplies brimstone to hell, and he is a multi-millionaire."

Whenever we came forth with "heresies" aimed at elements of the tradition, Dad has a standard riposte: עִיגִיץ אֵינְעֵר ,
 און עלעקטריסיטי , ארשטייסטו ? "You scamp, what about electricity, do you understand that?"

His lively humor never left him. In June 1932, when I arrived at his bedside on the day he was to die, he turned to my mother and said: **מיינ זון'ס הייליקייט האט מיר גענעזענט** "My son's holiness healed me."

Another time, the entire family, Dad, mother, my brother Mike, my sister Dub, and I ventured on a ride to nearby Golden, Colorado, in a newly bought second-hand flivver (Model T. Ford). I was at the wheel. Somehow I lost control of the car, and we found ourselves "eased" (fortunately I was going slow) into a ditch. We were not hurt, but during the time we were trapped inside the car Dad kept saying, in a sing-song **אז מען קען ניט אונטער נעמט מען זיך ניט אונטער** "If you don't know how, you shouldn't presume."

Dad dared convert non-Jewish persons and officiate at their weddings to Jews. Even now many Orthodox Rabbis, when asked to officiate at a conversion refer the applicant to a Conservative or Reform Rabbi. In those days it took great courage for an Orthodox Rabbi to "open the door", so to speak, to a convert and to officiate at his or her marriage to a Jew.

At the time Denver's mountain air was deemed salubrious for people suffering from tuberculosis. Its victims we used to call *katutnikes*, "coughers." When they were in the synagogue, they could discharge phlegm with uncanny accuracy — even from a distance — into a spittoon. The *shammash* (synagogue sexton) used to call them sharp-spitters.

The *shammash* was something of a politician regularly promising the votes of *Zera Abraham's* congregants to both parties, so that he was always on the winning side. Upon his retirement from the synagogue, the party in power gave him a sinecure, the post of gatekeeper at the City Hospital. One day as I was passing by, he stopped me: "Come over, Velvele (Bill), I hear you are now going to college. Tell me the latest about Morris." "Morris," I asked. "What Morris?" "O, you know," he said, "the star that's supposed to be turning round and round." Catching on that he was speaking of the planet Mars, I explained to the best of my limited ability, the revolution of the earth and the planets around the sun, and the revolution of the moon around the earth. "Ah Velvinke, Velvinke," he said: **ניט די זון דרייט זיך ארום זיך ארום דער ערד, און ניט די ערד דרייט זיך ארום זיך ארום דער ערד, דער זון, נור די קאפ דרייט זיך** "The earth does not turn about the sun, nor the sun about the earth, but the head turns — people have crazy ideas."

At the other end of the social scale, there was Mazer, one of the synagogue's principal *machers* (doers). When he visited us almost every Sabbath afternoon, he would sit down on the front porch, and start a monologue without stop, not allowing even our father to utter a word. Finally, as he got ready to leave, he would say, "Visiting the Rabbi is wonderful. One always learns something."

Besides pastoral work and preaching, Dad was an assiduous teacher,

organizing sessions in Talmud, and in Chumash (The Pentateuch) and commentaries.

In 1922 he moved to Dayton, Ohio where he served as Rabbi of Beth Abraham, the Litvische (Lithuanian) *shul*, on Wayne Avenue,* and a smaller congregation, the Russian *shul*, on Wyoming Avenue.

In his concern to upgrade the community's Talmud Torah (Hebrew school), he brought Shalom B. Maximon (1881-1933)** to act as its principal.

Si Burick (1909-) of Dayton, Ohio recalls my father's using a parable in which the climactic line was "דו ביסט א יתום" You are an orphan." All, says Si, including himself were weeping when Dad reached the words "דו ביסט א יתום".

Being a gifted preacher requires occasionally resorting to tact, particularly in the giving of eulogies, as when my father gave the eulogy for Bilenkin, who during Prohibition had been head of a band of bootleggers and hijackers in the Dayton area. Physically Bilenkin was a giant, and his four sons inherited their father's physique. I still recall the sons marching into our house after their father's death and saying bluntly, "We want a good funeral for our father, the best." The request had an unmistakable threat, "Or else."

At the funeral Dad began by chanting "קראו בשמו הודיעו בעמים עלילותיו" "Call upon His name and make known His doings among the nations" (Ps. 105:1; 1 Chron. 16:8).

Then in Yiddish: "When you go among Jews, all you need do is utter God's name, and they know at once who God is, and what He does. But among the nations of the earth one must describe in detail God's doings before they are ready to acknowledge Him. Had Bilenkin died in Chicago," Dad went on, "I would have had to tell at great length who Bilenkin was, what Bilenkin did, what reputation he had. But Bilenkin died in Dayton, and so all I need do is say, 'Bilenkin is *geshtorben* (dead), Bilenkin is no more.' "

The Bilenkin sons loved my father's eulogy.

My father's view of Orthodoxy's future in the United States was so gloomy that he predicted, inaccurately as it turned out, that in fifty years there would be no Orthodox synagogues left in the United States. He therefore rejoiced when I enrolled in 1925 at the Hebrew Union College, and but for his grave illness would have attended my ordination in 1931. In 1926 he moved to Bridgeport, Connecticut where he served two congregations, returning to Denver in 1928. He died in Denver in June 1932.

In the late 1920s he saw the small cloud of Hitler as destined to spread and

*In later years the congregation moved to Dayton View and turned Conservative.

**In later years he served as Registrar at the Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati.

spread, portending the doom of European Jewry which he felt should flee at once to Palestine or to the United States.

In the margins of some of his Hebrew volumes he left comments and novellae that some day I, or my literary executor, Benjamin Meir Braude, hope to publish.

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THE JEWS OF PAWTUCKET AND CENTRAL FALLS PART II

BY ELEANOR F. HORVITZ

Part I of a history of the Jews who settled in Pawtucket and Central Falls was published in the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*, Volume 9, No. 3. Through interviews with several people who grew up in this area a picture evolved of what life was like for these families in the early years of this century, why they settled in this region, how they made a living, where they shopped, and how they enjoyed their leisure time. The problem of anti-semitism was discussed. An account of the history of the Orthodox synagogue, Ohave Shalom, with its importance in the life of these Jews, was included. Although the synagogue was the center of the Pawtucket and Central Falls Jewish community, the organizations which arose to meet the needs of these people were also cited.

Part II of the history is concerned primarily with the occupations of the Jews who settled in the Pawtucket and Central Falls area.

Jewish-owned businesses, from a one man operation to the largest department store and to factories employing hundreds of workers, figure prominently in the history of Jews of Pawtucket and Central Falls.

OCCUPATIONS

Predominant in the 1875-1900 Pawtucket and Central Falls City Directories were the following occupations pursued by the newly-arrived Jew: dealers in clothing - 12; dealers in dry goods - 10; boot and shoe repairers, and dealers in boots and shoes - 12; tailors - 7; peddlers - 7; with a small number of variety and grocery store operators. The figures do not indicate that a man would be in that occupation each year of listing, but these were average occupational figures as listed over that period. By 1910 the variety of occupations had increased to include furniture dealers, more grocery store owners, junk and iron dealers. In 1910 alone, 19 were listed as in the shoes and boots business; 5 in dry goods. It is interesting to note that by 1910 several occupations listed no Jewish names, such as plumbers, printers, real estate dealers, dentists, doctors, public notaries, builders, and billiard and pool room operators.

In the 1923 Pawtucket and Central Falls City Directory not much change was noted in the occupations of the Jewish residents. Of 53 tailors, 16 were Jewish; 10 of the 48 meat market owners were Jewish; and 8 out of 11 Jews were listed as junk dealers. Another high percentage of Jews were found among the clothing dealers, 17 of 32. The shoe business still attracted many Jews, with 11 of 26 shoe dealers and 22 of 72, shoe repairers. In 1923, of 207 corporations, only 6 Jewish owned businesses had incorporated, with the earliest that of the American Curled Hair Company in 1880, founded by the Lewisohns of New York.

The above are just statistics from city directories, but what was life really like for the small businessman? A few excerpts from interviews may give some insight:

Father first worked in a market in Hartford as a meatcutter. Since my parents wanted to go where there was family, they moved to Central Falls and father opened his own Kosher butcher store on Central Street. There were other Jewish owned stores in the area.

Nathan Bogin, at 40 Central Street, was the other Kosher butcher; August Bakery was at 24 Central Street, David Vengerow was at 60 Central Street, and Max Perl had a pharmacy at 63 Central Street. My father's first store was where the railroad track was, but then he bought a cinder block building at 34 Central Street, and we lived upstairs. He always delivered his orders, first starting with a horse and wagon and graduating to a truck. My mother learned to cut meat (left-handed), and I used to make out the bills, for most of our customers called in their orders which were delivered.¹

RETAIL BUSINESSES

Central Street was the busiest shopping area. In addition to the stores mentioned in the above interview other businesses in existence at that time were: Louis Morgan's grocery store at 62 Central Street, Charles J. Sentler's soft drinks business at No. 17, Samuel Levin's grocery at No. 19, Solomon Raskin's grocery at No. 31. The block of 93 - 99 Central Street was called Brennan's block, and among its stores was Samuel Halpert's dry good store. On the other side of Central Street was Barry Mogilevkin's grocery at No. 48. Included on this long street were many Polish businesses and residences, the Young Men's Polish Club, the Polish German Speaking Society, and the Sons of Poland. At No. 205 was the Central Falls Public Library. It appears that Irish families lived in the higher numbered houses in this neighborhood. Peney Feital had his business at 403 Central Street.

Two cousins whose fathers were originally in the junk business were interviewed. To the question of what kind of junk her father collected, one answered, "Anything he could make a dime at — rags, metal,

paper. First he started with a pushcart, shouting, “rags, bottles” house to house. Then he got a horse and wagon which was easier for him. But that was only for a short time when he went into a shop. Then he was a dealer and people would bring him their stuff.”²

Her cousin, Jack Cokin, related: “My father wasn’t in the junk business very long. As a result of the junk business somehow he got involved in buying out people’s furnishings when they were breaking up their homes. This evolved into his being in the used furniture business, and then the furniture business.” The Cokin family was a large family in the Pawtucket and Central Falls area. The 1923 Pawtucket-Central Falls city directory listed Abraham Cokin still in the junk business at 478 Mill Street, Central Falls as was Harry Cokin, junk peddler residing at 45 Darrow Street. However, Isaac and Sam Cokin owned the American Furniture Company, and Leon and Sam were in the furniture business called the Broad Street Furniture Company.

Jacob Goodman described his father’s Tailoring business:

My father learned his trade in Europe. He came from a family of high-grade tailors. Even though they lived in a small town, the quality of their work was such that it was done for nobility. When he first started to work in Pawtucket, he took a job at Shartenberg’s Department Store in the alteration department. That department also made women’s clothes. Later he went into business for himself in the Boston Store building, which was across the street from Shartenberg’s. He made suits and clothes for the upper class women of Pawtucket. He was a tailor for many years, and then took in button making, hemstitching, and other side lines. Even in those days he ran into a problem getting proper help. When he could not get competent help, he eventually got out of the tailoring business and stayed in the button business.³

Peney Feital was first listed in the Pawtucket and Central Falls City Directory as being in the shoe and boot repair business. His shop and home were listed at 112 and 114 Main Street respectively. His daughter spoke about his business: “My father had a shoe repairing place, but he also made soles and did the finishing of shoes made by the large shoe companies. Originally shoes had all been made by hand, then gradually the machine came in. His machinery was leased from the companies. In Europe he said he had learned tailoring. He could sew beautifully.”⁴

An exception to the modest small businesses and services were those enterprises large enough to be listed in the 1906 “Pawtucket Times Special Anniversary and Industrial Edition”. Since this kind of detailed information about very early Jewish merchants is rarely documented, it is of value to reprint the graphic and often flowery descriptions (see Appendix). Among the businesses described were those of A. Feder & Son; the New England Tailoring Company; J. M. Levy; Isaac Nathanson; Thomas Rosenfield;

Samuel Needle, The Boston Tailoring Company; F. Leichter, The National Clothing Company; Issac Rose, The Rose Clothing Company; Samuel Zucker and Co.; The New England Wine and Liquor Company; and Shartenberg & Robinson.

Thomas Rosenfield was cited in Part I of this paper for opening his home to recently arrived immigrants. Isaac Rose, who had come to Providence in 1863, died on July 28, 1940. He had retired from the real estate business in 1939. He was an owner of the Strand Theatre in Providence and the National Realty Building. He had remained a member of the Ahavath Sholam Synagogue. As for the Zucker business one observer noted: "I remember that business on Main Street in Pawtucket right opposite the fire station. I recall as a kid my father would go there to buy liquor and I would go with him. There was both a retail store and next to it a barroom.⁵ Jacob Shartenberg was one of the early German-Jewish merchants in Pawtucket.

The Berick family had a boot and shoe business called Berick & Son (Abram and Louis). Their first business at 105 Broad Street was in boot and shoe repairing and evolved into the shoe business. Abram and his son built up the concern on Broad Street which was housed in the Berick Building (130-132 Broad Street).

JUNK AND MANUFACTURING

The 1900 Pawtucket and Central Falls City Directory lists the occupation of Junk and Iron Dealers for the first time. Three Jewish names appear in this category: Samuel Horvitz, 23 Cross Street, Central Falls; Morris Karlin, 416 Mill Street, Central Falls; and John Marks at 561 Mill Street, Central Falls. In addition there was Max Percelay, who also started a junk business early in the century. From these humble origins evolved some very prosperous businesses. The S. Horvitz & Son concern dealt in cotton and woolen rags and eventually became the manufacturers of upholstery and pillow padding and stuffing under the name of Firmtex. John Marks progressed from the junk business in the late 1920s to a dealer and converter of cotton and synthetic yarn, a business still managed by his son and grandsons. Morris Karlin dealt in cotton waste. The Percelay business became involved with textiles. Creating a tufted type rug, Abraham Percelay (son of Max) conducted his business with Joseph Percelay under the name of Grand Mars Rug Company. Later he operated Associated Textiles with plants in Central Falls and Woonsocket. Joseph Percelay founded Troy Yarn and Textiles in Pawtucket with his sons, Morris and Merrill, and also established the Fairlawn Spinning Company, which engaged in the spinning of woolen and worsted yarns.⁶

A review of the manufacturing companies located in the Pawtucket area reveals several successful businesses, primarily in some form of textile manufacturing, run by Jewish owners. Erwin Strasmich in his article, "Jews and the Textile Industry, Rhode Island, and Fall River, Massachusetts",

Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes, Volume 6, No. 2, November 1972, writes about the following enterprising merchants and their businesses — Milton C. Sapinsley, Isaac Miller, Sanford H. Cohen, Martin Lifland, H. B. Feldman, Hyman and Jacob Werner, Harry Schwartz, Harry Fine, Leo Grossman, David Dwares, Neil Pansy, Ralph R. Leveye, among others. In most cases their businesses were located in Pawtucket, but the managers and presidents were commonly residents of Providence and other communities.

What about the professions of the early Jews of Pawtucket and Central Falls, the doctors, dentists, and lawyers?

PROFESSIONS

The first Jewish physician in this area appears to have been Dr. Lionel L. Albert. In 1915 he lived and had his office at 518 Mill Street in Central Falls. In 1917 he moved to 50 Pacific Street, keeping his office at the Mill Street address, and by 1920 he had both his home and office at 50 Pacific Street. Again in 1923 he separated his home and office and had his residence at 62 Pacific Street. The story about how Dr. Lionel Albert happened to settle in Central Falls, is told by a patient: "He had come from the Boston area. He knew a Mrs. Hite from Malden, who had moved to Central Falls. When Dr. Albert finished medical school he went to the Central Falls area because of her. She introduced him up and down the street to all the Jewish and Polish people (she spoke Polish fluently), and he worked up a large practice."⁷

Another patient recalled Albert in this way: "He was the only Jewish doctor. People treated him like a God. I remember a story in which a man appearing for his citizenship papers answered the question of who was president of the United States with the answer, 'Dr. Lionel Albert'.⁸ Lionel Albert died September 6, 1942.

The only other Jewish physician listed in the early directories was Dr. Joseph Marks, who opened his office in 1921 at 368 Central Street, Central Falls. He lived in Warren, Rhode Island. His first office was in the John Marks house, and his sister, Rose Brown, and her family had a dry goods store on Dexter Street. Having family who lived in Central Falls probably influenced Marks to practice there. He died on August 19, 1981.

The only Jewish dentist was Dr. Archie Albert, who went to live with his brother, Lionel. He opened his office in a building at 84 Broad Street and was listed as living with his brother at 62 Pacific Street in Central Falls. Many kind remarks were made about him. "No Jew ever went to anybody else." "He went to Brown University, dental school, and became a marvelous dentist." "He was God with all the Jewish families." Archie Albert died on September 6, 1960.

In 1900 Frank Bellin was listed as a lawyer at 528 Broad Street in Central Falls, while boarding at 45 Fales Street. Lester Millman practiced law at 104

Masonic Building in Pawtucket in 1908. There were no other Jewish lawyers in this area for many years. In the 1923 Pawtucket and Central Falls Directory, Millman and Bellin were still listed among the lawyers. In that year Samson Nathanson of Central Falls is listed as Clerk in the 11th Judicial District Court. It was not until 1928 that another Jewish lawyer, Morris Berick, opened his office.

Jewish residents were concerned with other occupations and businesses than those described. Among those who took other directions are the following:

Sigmund Rand had a barroom on Cross Street in Central Falls.

In 1890 Harry Rosenhirsh was a brush maker and boarded at 322 Broad Street, Central Falls. Also listed in that directory was Moses Feinberg, who was a news dealer at the railroad depot.

By 1900 Louis H. Bellin had opened a photography studio at 219 Main Street in Pawtucket.

There were several Jewish families of Austrian birth who tended to fraternize among themselves. Celia Farber mentions that her family was friendly with the Jacob Berkelhammers, who owned the General Wine Company; the Goldenberg family, who were in the pickle packaging business; Jacob Schinagel in the soft drink business; and Samuel Rigelhaupt, who owned the Winsor Bar and Grill and the Pawtucket Wine Co.

Well known in Pawtucket was Morris Espo, who founded the Pawtucket News dealership which bore his name. Espo was active in religious, civic, fraternal, and philanthropic groups. He was founder and first president of both the Blackstone Valley Jewish Community Council and the Henry Friedman Lodge, B'nai B'rith of Pawtucket, a member of the board of directors of the Salvation Army in Pawtucket, and a director of the Pawtucket Boys' Club. Espo died on January 23, 1965.

Many Jews migrated to and settled in the Pawtucket and Central Falls area where their children were born. Many chose to live out their lives in the same location.

ORGANIZATIONS

Within the Central Falls limits in the northwesterly corner of the city between Lonsdale Avenue and the Lincoln town line a cemetery was opened in 1868, called the Moshassuck Cemetery. This private corporation, owned the original seven acres.⁹ A plot of land was purchased by the Congregation Sons of David of Providence on December 31, 1870 in this interdenominational cemetery. Sons of David merged with Sons of Israel in 1874 and became the Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David, which had its own cemetery on Reservoir Avenue in Providence.

Thereafter, they used this cemetery plot for the burial of non-members, relatives of members, and charitable cases. During the years 1870-1897 other congregations and organizations purchased plots in the northwest section of Moshassuck Cemetery — Congregation Sons of Zion, Congregation Sons of Abraham, Russian Congregation of Israel, Baron Hirsch Lodge O.B.A., Roumanian Agudath Zedeck, Rhode Island Hebrew Medical Association, and Maimonides Lodge No. 112, O.B.A. However, in the two sections reserved for Jewish burials only two Pawtucket-Central Falls Jews are listed: Pauline, wife of Adolph Feder, and Emma, wife of Max Feder, both dated 1894.

The Jews of Pawtucket and Central Falls were for the most part buried in the Jewish Lincoln Park Cemetery, which is located in Warwick, Rhode Island. There are four areas designated in this cemetery for Congregation Ohawe Sholam of Pawtucket. This land was purchased at various times.

SUMMARY

The Jews who settled in the Central Falls and Pawtucket area were like Jews who migrated to urban areas all over the United States, particularly in the latter part of the 19th century and the first two decades of the 20th century. There were some who were Reform Jews, but for the most part they were Orthodox, some more observant than others. Congregation Ohawe Sholam played an important role in the life of many families. Some belonged to a Socialist-type group, who considered themselves of the intelligentsia and not concerned with the synagogue. They would often meet in discussion groups and listen to speakers on political and social issues.

Like most Jews of this period they were family oriented, and their recreational life centered about family, relatives, and close friends, their "landsleit".* They were interested in their children's education, both secular and religious. For the most part they were proprietors of businesses, small and large. They certainly had a significant impact on the growth of the economy of Pawtucket and Central Falls. They were dedicated to their beneficial societies and were conscientious in helping out their less fortunate fellow Jew, especially through organizations such as the Pawtucket-Central Falls Hebrew Free Loan Association (Gemilath Chesed). On a personal level they helped in times of sickness and distress, and on more joyous occasions they celebrated together. As recalled by old-time residents:

Our social life revolved around family, relatives, friends. In those days there was a great deal of visiting back and forth. My aunt lived on Jenks Street in Central Falls and she was not well. My mother would walk there practically every day, a distance of about two to three miles, taking us two boys with her.¹¹

*Fellow townsmen from the "old country".

We had a wonderful Jewish community. We were a very close community, a close-knit community. There were so many people who were true human beings. When it came to charity, any kind of charity, there never was a problem. We were always raising money for some cause.¹²

While the warm spirit of closeness and mutual concern that prevailed in the small immigrant Jewish community of Pawtucket and Central Falls could not of necessity survive amid the pressures of contemporary American life, yet many recall with affection and admiration those early pioneers who were their parents, relatives, and neighbors.

APPENDIX

LARGE JEWISH BUSINESSES AND ENTERPRISES PAWTUCKET-CENTRAL FALLS

A. FEDER & SON

If you would be a well groomed man, you might wear clothing which fits perfectly and expresses all that is smart in fashion. Next to knowing that the clothing you have made is in the correct style, you want absolute assurance that the quality of the material and the workmanship is completely good. Of all this you may be assured by patronizing A. Feder & Son, custom tailors whose establishment is located at No. 18 North Main Street. This store was established in 1883, and has held the public patronage all these years. It occupies a floor space of 25 x 60 feet, and a fine line of suitings is carried of the newest and most up-to-date fabrics and patterns and a perfect fit is guaranteed to customers, as Mr. Feder does all of his cutting personally, and none but skilled workmen are employed. Mr. M. Feder, the present proprietor, was born in Germany, is a young man and has lived here 24 years, being widely and favorably known.

NEW ENGLAND TAILORING COMPANY

Many of the well-dressed business men, if asked concerning their stylish appearance, would say they had their garments made at the New England Tailoring Company's establishment at 143 Broad Street. This company established their business here two years ago and have already acquired a high reputation for reliability and fine work. They carry a large stock of the best woolen goods from which to make a selection, and make suits to order in the latest styles and at the lowest prices, turning out garments that are perfect in fit, finish and workmanship. They also make ladies' suits to order, and do dyeing, cleaning, repairing and pressing. Five skilled and expert workmen are employed and first class work is guaranteed. The manager and proprietor of this business is Mr. David Levenson. He is a young man who came from Germany ten years ago. He came to this city from Worcester, Mass., where he was successfully employed.

J. M. LEVY

Anyone who has had the responsibility of arranging for fairs, balls and other public affairs can appreciate the advantage of placing the decorations in the hands of experienced, competent people whose taste and ability insure artistic design and attractive color schemes. Pawtucket is especially favored in being able to command the services of Mr. Julius M. Levy, decorator, who is prepared to furnish estimates and designs for balls, fairs, festivals and celebrations of any kind, and who, with a corps of six or more expert

*These graphic and often flowery descriptions, typical of the boosteristic spirit of the times, are reprinted here because such detailed information about early Jewish merchants is seldom documented. *Pawtucket Times Special Anniversary and Industrial Edition*, March 31, 1906.

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assistants will take entire charge of all arrangements pertaining to the decoration of the building, exterior or interior. Mr. Levy is a young man, born in Cincinnati, Ohio, lived for some time in New York City and came here in October 1900. One year ago he established his present business at 23 Harrison Street and has been very successful. He is also engaged in the manufacture of flags, banners, awnings, tents, canvas goods of all kinds in which line he has an extensive trade. Mr. Levy is enterprising and progressive and is very highly esteemed, and carries a stock of the newest and most up-to-date assortment of flags and decorative material to rent or for sale.

ISAAC NATHANSON

A well-conducted general store in this city which because of its diversified stock is a favorite gathering place is that owned and managed by Isaac Nathanson. This store is located at 617 Broad Street where it occupies a floor space of 25 x 45 feet where it carries a large and varied stock including dry goods, shoes, gent's furnishings, cookery, and all kinds of remnants. The stock is well chosen and sold at extremely reasonable prices. Mr. Nathanson was born in Russia, is a man of middle age, and has been in this country 25 years. During his residency in this city he has become widely respected for his business ability and progressiveness and is one of our successful merchants. Mr. Nathanson differs from the average merchant in that from the first he believes strongly in the honest respectability never making a great 'hullabaloo' over special sales yet always giving the people of Central Falls who know his worth the benefit of his own buying at wholesale and the result is that Nathanson's is well known as 'the honest store of bargains.' Such is the reputation of the owner of the steadily growing busy store at 617 Broad Street, Central Falls.

THOMAS ROSENFELD

At the corner of High and Cross Streets the observer will find a busy retail enterprise. This store is owned and run by Mr. Thomas Rosenfield who handles a line of German and Armenian groceries, vegetables, baked goods, candy, cigars, etc. This business was established in 1892. The store occupies a floor space of 30 X 80 feet, is well stocked and the proprietor takes all precaution to see that the lines are kept unbroken by a frequent replenishing of the goods sold. One wagon is kept busy distributing the goods ordered and to any part of the city.

Mr. Rosenfield is a native of Russia and came to America in 1886 and has been a resident of this city for seven years. He is a gentleman of about 40. He owns real estate and is diligent in his efforts to still further build up his mercantile establishment.

SAMUEL NEEDLE -- BOSTON TAILORING COMPANY

One of the best and up-to-date tailoring establishments in the city is that

conducted by the Boston Tailoring Company at 498 Main Street, corner of Pine Street. This has been established nine years and during that time has built up a large and exclusive patronage. They have a well-equipped shop, 30 x 40 feet in dimensions and employ three skilled assistants. The stock carried is very large, including all the newest and latest fabrics, weaves and colorings and the garments sent out from here are perfect in fit, finish and workmanship. They are of the latest and best design and retain their shape and style. Mr. S. Needle, the proprietor, was born in Russia about 35 years ago and has lived here nine years. He is an expert at his trade and has a high reputation. This company also does cleaning, pressing and repairing at reasonable rates.

F. LEICHTER — NATIONAL CLOTHING COMPANY

Two years ago the National Clothing Company opened their store at 530 Dexter Street, since which there has been a steady increase of customers and consequent satisfaction among traders. This store is 20 X 40 feet in 'floor' area, is well kept and conveniently arranged, being modern and up-to-date in every particular. The stock consists of ready made clothing for men, hats, gent's furnishings, shoes, millinery, ladies' and children's garments. This stock is well chosen, is of the latest and the best on the market, and prices are as low as is consistent with good quality. One clerk is employed and customers are shown every courtesy and attention. The proprietor, Mr. F. Leichter, was born in Austria 41 years ago. He came to this country in 1888 and for the past two years has made his home in Central Falls. He is favorably known, and has a well merited patronage.

ISAAC ROSE — THE ROSE CLOTHING COMPANY

A neat and attractive stock of ladies' and gentlemen's furnishings of every description is to be found at the Rose Clothing Company's store, 192 Main Street, where everything is first-class and up-to-date in style and fashion and of the best quality. Mr. Isaac Rose, the proprietor, is a native of Russia and is a well and favorably known merchant. He resides in Providence where he conducts a similar store. The Pawtucket store is under the capable management of Morris Dolberg. The store is 26 X 75 feet in dimensions and carries an extensive and up-to-date stock. It is patronized by the best people who know that many fine bargains are constantly being featured here. The line of ladies' garments is very complete. They do a good business in this department. Ten clerks are employed. Mr. Rose also conducts the Union Clothing Store in Central Falls.*

*Rose, who had come to Providence in 1863, died on July 28, 1940. He had retired from the real estate business in 1939. He was an owner of the Strand Theatre and the National Realty Building. He had remained a member of the Ohawe Sholam Synagogue.

NEW ENGLAND WINE AND LIQUOR COMPANY
Samuel Zucker and Co.

New England Wine and Liquor Company located at 21-23 Railroad Avenue has a well-known reputation as being one of the best and most reliable places for the purchase of pure family wine and liquor. It is the policy of this house to treat their customers fairly and liberally and to sell first class goods at reasonable prices. Mr. Samuel H. Zucker for the past eight years was engaged in this same business in Providence where he conducted three similar stores, coming here three years ago to take charge of this store, which has developed a large trade. Last year this was incorporated as Samuel H. Zucker & Company, his partner being Mr. Jack Goldberg, a native of Newark, New Jersey, and a bright, honorable young man. This firm has many patrons, to whom they wish to express their thanks. A fine stock is carried and the store is run on a strictly union basis. Mr. Zucker is a member of the Eagles, and Mr. Goldberg belongs to the Masons and the Pawtucket Eagles. Both are widely esteemed and are to be congratulated upon the success they have achieved.

SHARTENBERG & ROBINSON

A feature in the business history of the city has been the splendid showing made by the dry goods stores of Pawtucket during recent years. They, in common with other places of trade have felt the prosperity permeate all branches, and with the growth of the city have shown a corresponding development of trade. Pawtucket can boast of as handsome retail goods establishments and department stores as any city in the state. Some of the finest buildings in the city are devoted to this important branch of industry and a trip through these various stores will convince anyone that in this respect the wants of shoppers are fully met. The well known and enterprising firm of Shartenberg & Robinson, who conduct the 'New Idea' Store on Main Street, are proprietors of the largest and most up-to-date department store in the city dealing in an extensive combination of dry goods, furniture, carpets, notions, furnishings, clothing, shoes and a miscellany of things too numerous to classify in detail.

This business was established 24 years ago by Mr. J. Shartenberg and was formed under the present firm name 18 years ago. This store is the largest in the city and one of the largest in the New England States. It occupies a six story building with basement, covering a ground area of 10,000 square feet, and employing over 200 people. They also have a New York office. This firm is comprised of Mr. Jacob Shartenberg, a native of Germany, a man in the prime of life, and a prominent citizen; also Mr. H. Robinson, a young man, born in Russia. Both are residents of Pawtucket, energetic, progressive and among the most prominent businessmen of the city.

This store compares favorably with the numerous immense emporiums of the metropolitan cities, having a branch post office station, savings bank,

photograph gallery, optical, and hair dressing departments. The entire store is lighted from its own electric plant.

NOTES

¹ Interview with Tillie Vine Vascovitz on July 12, 1984.

² Interview with Gertrude Goldberg Hak by Geraldine Foster, 1983.

³ Interview with Jacob Goodman on July 10, 1984.

⁴ Interview with Diana Feital Goldstein on July 15, 1984.

⁵ See note (3).

⁶ *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes*, Vol. 6, No. 2, P. 255.

⁷ See Note (4).

⁸ Telephone interview with Madeline Bogin Sanek, July 5, 1984.

⁹ *History of Pawtucket, Central Falls, Lincoln and Cumberland, R.I.* by John William Haley, P. 86.

¹⁰ Interview with Jack Cokin by Geraldine Foster, 1983.

¹¹ See note (3).

¹² Interview with Sam Shlevin on July 11, 1984.

SPECIAL FEATURE

LIMA*

BY MICHAEL FINK

FOREWORD

The Jewish people keeps its historical notes: Judaism seeks meaning in memory. The Ashkenazic custom of naming a baby after a relative who has died expresses the wish to hand down a living tradition both personal and social.

The generation that settled in Rhode Island in the early decades of the 20th century moved from a world of Yiddish into a world of English, from community and extended family toward a more particularized world. Perhaps we try to decipher in the adventures and dilemmas of their lives a hidden message, as we tell their stories to the children to whom we give their names.

The western world has translated religion into art, to some extent. Just so, the following memoir suggests how design and craft sustain spiritual ritual. We hope our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren may re-enact and transmit the lives of the "pioneers" who carried Jewish "lares and penates" from Eastern Europe into Providence, Rhode Island. Here, another Jewish world has been created. Certainly, it has been influenced by the tragedy of the destruction of European Jewry, and by the foundation of the state of Israel. But the local Jewish community has been primarily based upon the energies of one particular generation. American Jewish literature grew from its tragicomedy. Often, in this literature, the figure of the mother was mocked. BLIMA suggests the poignancy, vitality, individuality, and nobility of a generation of women born in the Europe of pre-World War I and brought to an America of hope and optimism.

It is written as a story read to my daughter, but it is set forth here as a historical, as well as singular narrative.

*The gothic B comes from a monogram signet used to stamp letters sealed with colored wax.



Blima, Montreal, 1926.



Moe and Betty C. Fink, Providence, 1926.



Michael, Betty C. and Charles B. Fink, Camp Arundel, Raymond, Maine, 1942.



Emily Blima and Michael Fink, Providence, 1982.

THE STORY

Dear Emily Blima: In the Rumania of small farms and Gypsy music, my mother's name was Blima — meaning Blossom. In America she was Betty. Blima spent her early girlhood with her older sisters on land which their father managed. Fruit trees bore delicious plums, apples and cherries. Cows and horses munched grasses. It was like country childhood everywhere before the First War. Of her house in those years, she remembered, a gilded mirror. They passed through Paris on their way west to another Paris. Montreal, in Quebec, in Canada, up in the New World.

There snow lay thick and deep through long, dark winters. Father kept a horse and sleigh in their stable. He would take the little horse and sleigh out over the snow to deliver coal to houses. People needed coal for their stoves to keep cozy in those dim days before towns could stay bright all night. We have no photos of these scenes. Only words to go on.

Blima-Ruchel could write, draw, and dress up. But her sisters teased her and called her "Bok." That meant "Dummy." They all had nicknames. They knew how to fight with words. She didn't hit back with words. She didn't mind being teased. She just read or drew. So they thought she was silly. But she got a scholarship to go to high school. In those days girls didn't usually go on to school. Often, even boys didn't go.

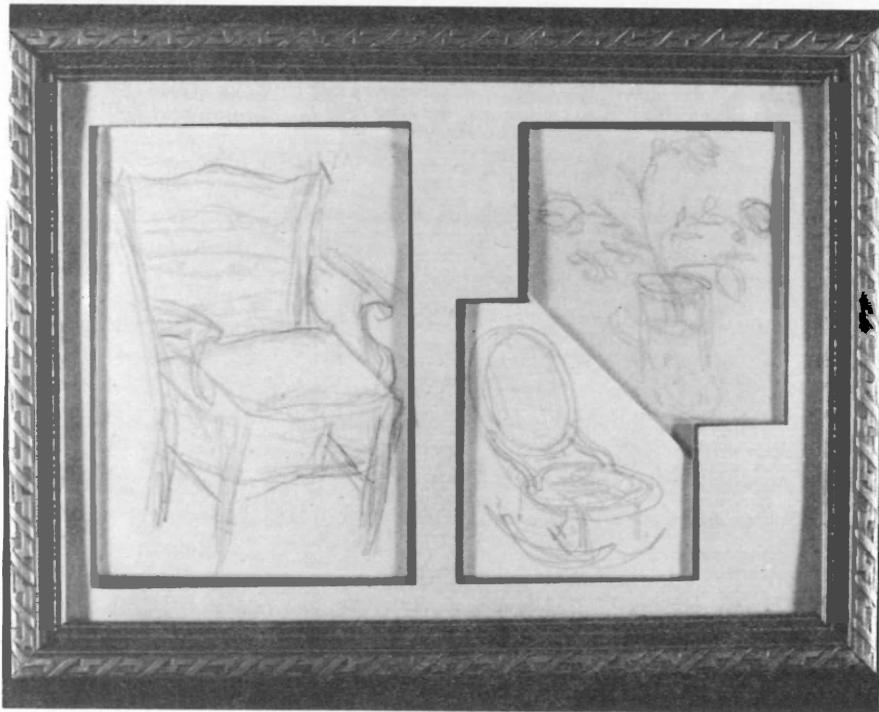
She got a job as a hat model in a good shop. And became buyer for the store too. It was called "Darwin's." That's also the name of the scientist who wrote about Evolution — nature's design for the human face. That's what they called her at Darwin's — the Face.

They had a widowed Auntie, a fine, formal lady. She married a widower in Providence, Rhode Island, in the States. He was an expert upholsterer with a growing studio. When Blima went to her Aunt's wedding, she met her new Uncle's son, now her cousin. This serious-looking young man with glasses — who had no mother of his own — fell in love with her kindly beauty, eager smile, her hope and strength. She chose him to marry. This is how my family began.

They built a little house on a hillside. It looked like an English country cottage with tapestry-brick gables. They had three sons. She liked to dress up. She told me once, a Gypsy in Rumania had foretold this house and family. She dressed up the windows of the front room in long maroon drapes with soft gold-braid tie-backs. They flowed along the floor and carpet in pools of light and shade. Around the tapestry-brick fireplace, with a wood or coal fire always lit at twilight, bookshelves held the Harvard Classics in red and gold bindings. The book she always took down to read to us was the Fairytale. The stories seemed to be about her childhood. Magic trees and royal houses did not seem far away.



Miniature furniture models of furnishings at 12 Creston Way, c. 1940.



Drawings of furniture and objects at Creston Way, 1965.

With a jackknife and some wood cigar boxes, she copied the furniture of the house in doll size. With little colored pencils, she drew pictures of the birds that came to our yard that blended into an empty lot, once a farm. They were softer and more charming than the pictures in real books. When we went to the movies, the stars, lovely as they were, were not more wonderful than the face of our own mother. It was the Depression. Time had stopped. Whatever fears or tears I later knew, that early childhood time was enchantment, under the spell of a human flower.

Yet she was down to earth. She answered questions with reason. When I asked her why we die, she talked about how we live. She quoted proverbs from all the languages of her past. She kept the Sabbath, with bread she baked, and linens she ironed. Her cakes were famous. Light and delicate as her features. The bowls and wood spoons were cracked and smoothed down.

War came. She worked. We listened to radio, saw headlines. War closed. Years moved along. Grey hairs came to the part in her chestnut hair. Her hands were worn, because she used them. Sometimes, to watch t.v., she would wear her old, broken, owl-shaped spectacles. But her eyes were ever friendly and lively. Glimmers of green and gold shone in calm brown. Even without rouge, her cheeks stayed rosy as a girl's. As she walked, briskly and a little heavily in her shoes, wearing business suits and small hats, people would greet her with special smiles. Everybody was proud of her, because she was filled with love of life, love of work.

I was sure she would live forever like an oak. Yet I worried about her too. Life is very long for some people. They go on almost forever. They become great grandmas and great grandpas. Others leave us too soon. We remember them like figures in myth, in museums. That was to be her story.

She liked her work in the family furniture store. The studio had closed. One afternoon she came home early. I was living at home. For the first time she asked me to fix supper. She was tired. Next day, for the first time, she went to visit a doctor. He told us she would not live. Only once, then, I cried. When I knew she was lost. She took me around the house and showed me how to do some of her chores. How my Dad liked his supper. Even, how to sweep up and polish the hearth after a fire. I was busy setting her things in order.

At first, in her illness, she looked as ever. Even profile lifted up to the sun. Fine nostrils, neat mouth, curved forehead, good bearing.

She wrote thank you notes to nurses, to friends, even to Dad. She drew — flowers, chairs. Then, she became too sick. She lay down. She died.

Blima-Ruchel, daughter of Meyer Cohen, had left. We placed her not only in the good earth, but within the wise traditions of her people and mine. We covered the mirrors. We lit the candle. We followed all the ancient



customs. To me they seemed straight and true. The rabbi commented, "I've never seen a family care so much."

People came to see us in her house. They brought us their stories about her. People said, "She loved us." Her sisters, my aunts, told me about her youth. How they would give her their pennies to pay for her ticket to a new movie in town. She could make the story of the matinee so lively. It was more fun to hear her than to see the film for themselves. How, when they had boyfriends, they would hide her in the cellar. That was so the boys wouldn't like her best, for her face, her grace.

Our neighbor next door, Miss Church, had always been a New Englander. Her family had come over on the Mayflower. A retired schoolteacher, alone and crippled by arthritis, she came across our cobbled driveway to visit us during this memorial week. So bowlegged from the arthritis that she could scarcely walk, she half crept to us, as we watched in awe from our windows. She crawled up our brick steps. She entered the parlor to tell us her version. She had watched Blima hang out the shirts and sheets, shovel snow, tend the roses and peonies, go off to work with my father. "A pioneer woman of the 18th century," she declared. Her words stunned us all.

I said the prayers with my father and brothers. I hoped she might know of our thanks. I hoped her soul might find some form to stay with us. In the words. In the candlelight. I gave away her fanciful costume jewelry. But I wanted to save something. I framed the sketches she had done in the last days.

Sometimes a house falls away as we part paths. I kept house for my father. For my mother, for the house, for myself. I could make my father laugh. Or cry. Sometimes we said nothing. The Kaddish prayer each dawn and dusk, summer fall winter spring, pulled us into the community. Others also had lost. Yet people started marriages. Babies began. Their names were said around the Torah. People danced with palm branches and etrogs in the autumn. The shape of the Jewish year carried us from grief back to life.

I will never accept her illness. I am still haunted by images of her radiant life. This is how it must be. But I know that Blima left a message within me. She wrote the message in my lunch box in grammar school. I saved it. "From your mother who adores and admires you." I knew that I would love with the love she gave me. This is the Jewish way. I am sad she is gone. I am glad she was here.

I wanted to love. I wanted to have a daughter. I met a girl with a quiet face and bright eyes. We had a wedding in my father's house, my mother's house, my house. The house sparkled as at the start. We broke a fine pink champagne glass brought from Rumania. We had our baby girl.

The baby was you, Emily Blima. You are not that Blima. But you have part of her name. Her story is part of me. Her story is part of you. Her story is the story of our family, of our people. People came here from far away.

They brought with them their jokes and their skills, their love and a few trinkets. They gave them to us, here. I am sad that her story is done, melted into nature and memory. I am glad you are here. You are the Blossom on a flowering tree. The tree of life of our family and our people.

POSTSCRIPT

Betty C. Fink of 12 Creston Way, Providence, was born in Podul Iloiae, near Jassy, Rumania in 1905 on August 2. She emigrated with her family to Montreal, Quebec in 1913. Her name was Blima-Ruchel Cohen. In 1926 she married Moe Fink and moved to Providence. They lived first on Sumter Street, then on Verndale Avenue, and moved to Creston Way in 1936. She worked at their business, Wayside Furniture Co., of East Providence, until her death on August 2, 1965. Moe Fink, born in London in 1904, died in 1977.

RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL MEETING

April 28, 1985

The Thirty-first Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association was held at the Rhode Island Jewish Community Center on Sunday, April 28, 1985. Dr. Seebert J. Goldowsky, president, called the meeting to order at 2:40 P.M. In deference to the main speaker, Dr. Goldowsky allowed him to speak before the business meeting because of a schedule conflict. Dr. Stephen J. Whitfield, Associate Professor of American Studies at Brandeis University, was the guest speaker. His topic was "Prophecies of Jewish Destiny."

He listed six prophecies which can be identified by historians that have envisioned the end of the Jewish people. The first was medieval, the viewpoint of Christian triumphalism to be finalized in the Second Coming. The second was the perspective of the Enlightenment, destroying corporate Jewish existence in the Diaspora. The third was the Marxist anticipation of a classless society devoid of other distinctions as well. The fourth was Nazism. The fifth, never associated with policy or political action, represented the difficulty that metahistorians have encountered with the peculiarity of the Jews. The sixth is American and Jewish, fearing the effects of assimilation, eroding the will of the Jewish minority to thrive and even endure. So far all such prophecies have failed, allowing some measure of optimism for Jewish survival.

A brief question and answer period followed his address. Dr. Goldowsky then proceeded to conduct the business of the annual meeting. He stated that in the interest of expediency he would forgo an annual message, since it was published in the Newsletter, Vol. II, No. 4 dated January 1985. He thanked the officers and membership for their cooperation during his three year stewardship.

The membership granted the President's request to waive the reading of the minutes of the last Annual Meeting.

Mrs. Bertha Kasper, Treasurer, reported a total income of \$19,780.02 for

the year. Total expenses were \$15,895.21 leaving a balance of \$3,884.81 as of December 31, 1984. This balance, added to all the other reserve funds, makes the total net worth of the Association for the year ending December 31, 1984 \$25,771.99.

Louis I. Sweet, Budget Chairman, reported that the financial records of the Association were in good order. The 1985 budget, adopted at the Mid-winter Meeting, projected expenditures of \$12,800.00.

Melvin L. Zurier, Membership Chairman, reported 503 annual dues-paying members, 20 Life Members, and 20 subscribers to the *Notes*.

Eleanor Horvitz, Librarian and Archivist, highlighted her report by citing how the Jewish community, both locally and nationally, called upon the resources of the Association.

Dr. Goldowsky informed the membership that the Association had participated in the Rhode Island History Day observance by awarding a prize of \$25.00 to high school student Peter L. Lewiss of Westerly for his essay titled "Columbus and the Jews".

Jerome B. Spunt, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, presented the following slate of officers and Executive Committee members in accordance with the amendments to the Constitution of March 3, 1983: Geraldine S. Foster, President; Jeremiah J. Gorin, Vice President; Ruth Page, Secretary; and Bernard E. Bell, Treasurer. Members of the Executive Committee to serve until 1987 are Stanley B. Abrams, Ruth Fixler, and Sidney D. Long. Those who have been on the Executive Committee who will serve an additional term to 1987 are Sidney Goldstein, Ph.D., Louis I. Sweet, and Melvin L. Zurier. Executive Committee members who have one more year to serve until 1986 are Bonnie N. Goldowsky, Zelda F. Gourse, Eleanor F. Horvitz, Sanford Kroll, Bernard Kusnitz, and Barbara Long. Rabbis Eli A. Bohnen and William G. Braude are honorary members of the Executive Committee, as are the Past Presidents Seebert J. Goldowsky, M.D., Marvin Pitterman, Ph.D., Benton H. Rosen, Jerome B. Spunt, and Erwin E. Strasmich.

There being no counter-nominations, the slate was elected unanimously. Geraldine Foster accepted the gavel from Dr. Goldowsky and spoke of her family's long association with the Association. She asked for community participation and expressed the hope that families and businesses would donate their papers to the Association so that it might become the major archive of the local Jewish community.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M. A collation followed.

Respectfully submitted,

Sidney D. Long
Recording Secretary

NECROLOGY

BRAUNSTEIN JEANNETTE, born in Rutherford, New Jersey, a daughter of the late J. Samuel and Hattie (Schulman) Dressler. For many years she was associated with her husband in Harold's Inc., a women's retail chain. Previous to that association she was a buyer for Macy's and Hecht's department stores in New York City. She had also taught elementary school for three years after graduating from Newark (New Jersey) State College.

She was a member of the Temple Beth-El, Hadassah, ORT, and the National Council of Jewish Women. She was a past secretary of the Jewish Community Center of Rhode Island, and a past vice-president of its Parents' and Women's Association.

Died on May 5, 1985.

GOLDMAN, MILDRED G., widow of Rabbi Israel M. Goldman, who had been Rabbi of Congregation Chizuk Amuno in Baltimore, Maryland for many years following the many years he was the Rabbi of Temple Emanuel of Providence, Rhode Island.

Died in Baltimore on April 20, 1985.

GOLDMAN, SIDNEY, born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a son of the late Myer and Anna (Yogel) Goldman. A real estate developer and broker, he served as chairman of the Providence Tax Assessment Board of Review under Mayors Joseph A. Doorley, Jr., and Vincent A. Cianci, Jr.

He was a member of the Rhode Island Board of Realtors, Temple Beth-El, the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, the Jewish Home for the Aged, and the Ledgemont Country Club.

Died on January 23, 1985, at the age of 66.

KLITZNER, WILLIAM S., born in Providence, Rhode Island, a son of the late Harry and Frances (Pockar) Klitzner. He was the former president of Roberts Motors in Taunton, Massachusetts and chairman of the board of directors of Klitzner Industries in Providence from 1956 to 1969 when he retired.

He was a 32nd degree Mason and a member of Jenckes Lodge 24 AF & AM, the Tall Cedars of Lebanon, the Grotto, and the

Palestine Temple of Shriners. He was also a member of the Kirkbrae Country Club and the Adventure Country Club of North Miami, Florida. He was associated with the Manufacturing Jewelers & Silversmiths of America, Inc.

Died on July 20, 1985 at the age of 63.

LEVINE, PHILIP B., born in New York, a son of the late Morris and Bessie Levine. Owner of Morris Metal Co., he retired two years ago. He was a member of Temple Emanuel. He also was a member of Friedman Lodge, B'nai B'rith, Jewish Home for the Aged, Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, the Roosevelt Masonic Lodge, and the Wickford Yacht Club. He was a member of the United States Navy Reserve, and served in the Navy in World War II.

Died on July 8, 1985 at the age of 73.

MILLMAN, MAX I., born in Providence, Rhode Island, a son of the late Samuel and Etta (Pollock) Millman. He was a teacher in the Providence School System for many years and a principal of Mount Pleasant High School until retiring in 1977. He had been principal of the Oliver Hazard Perry Junior High School and the Nathan Bishop Junior High School. A 1932 Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Brown University, he also received his Master's degree at the college. He was a member of Temple Beth-El and was a religious teacher at the temple for 40 years. He was a member of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, the Jewish Home for the Aged, the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, the Bureau of Jewish Education, the Israel Bonds Committee, the Rhode Island Association of School Principals, and the Brown University Alumni Association.

Died on May 23, 1985 at the age of 74.

SAVAL, MEYER, born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, a son of the late Joseph and Eva Saval. He was executive vice-president of the American Universal Insurance Company for 30 years, retiring four years ago. He attended Harvard University and Boston University. He was a member of the board of directors of Temple Emanuel and a member of its Men's Club. He was also a member

of the board of trustees of the Jewish Home for the Aged, and a member of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Died on September 13, 1985 at the age of 79.

SCHAFFER, DR. ISADORE GEORGE, born in Brooklyn, New York, a son of the late Bessie and Harry Schaffer. He received his bachelor of arts degree from Providence College in 1931 and his doctor of dental surgery degree from Columbia University's School of Dentistry in 1935.

Active in a variety of charitable and civic organizations, he was past president of the Newport Council of the Navy League, and a past national director of the Navy League of the United States. In 1966 he received the Navy's highest civilian award, the Distinguished Public Service Award.

Dr. Schaffer was a past president of Touro Synagogue and B'nai B'rith, and also a past president of the Henderson Home for Men in Newport, longtime trustee of Salve Regina College in Newport, a member of the Newport County Dental Society, and a 22nd degree member of St. Paul's Lodge of Masons.

Died on October 21, 1985 at the age of 76.

SCHIFF, DR. BENDEL I., born in Lithuania, a son of the late Ber and Esther (Kwait) Schiff. He was a practicing dermatologist in Pawtucket for 53 years, and served as chief of dermatology at the United States Veterans Administration Regional Medical Center in Providence for 30 years. He was a graduate of the University of Montpellier Medical School in France, clinical professor of dermatology emeritus at the Brown University Medical School, and associate clinical professor of dermatology at Boston University Medical School. A Fellow of the American College of Physicians and a member of the American Academy of Dermatology, he was a past president of the New England and Rhode Island Dermatological Societies, and a member of the American Medical Association. He was a member of Temple Beth-El and the Roosevelt Lodge of Masons.

Died on November 15, 1985 at the age of 76.

SOLOMON, ELIOT M., born in Providence, a son of the late John A. and Eva (Robbins) Solomon. Owner with his wife, Anita, of Lloyd's Restaurant for the past 25 years, he was an Army veteran of the Korean War. He was a member of Temple Beth-El and its Brotherhood, Plantations Lodge, B'nai B'rith, Roosevelt Lodge, F & AM, and the Touro Fraternal Association.

Died on May 26, 1985 at the age of 56.

ERRATA

RIJHN Volume 9, Number 2

November 1985

Page 124. Under Executive Committee, "Zelda Gourse" should read "Zelda F. Gourse."

Pages 125 and 180. the author of "Masonry and the Colonial Jews of Newport," "Bernard Kusinitz, M.D." should read "Bernard Kusinitz, M.A."

Page 135. Caption of illustration: "drafted" should read "volunteered." Louis's sister, Ruby Winnerman, states that his mother had to sign for him to enter service since he was underage.

Page 142. End of second paragraph. "Elmwood Avenue" should read "Broad Street."

Page 193. First paragraph, third line. "130 Sessions Street" should read "401 Elmgrove Avenue."

Inside back cover. In life membership listing "Mr. and Mrs. Donald Salmonson" should read "Mr. Donald Salmanson."

Inside back cover, caption for back cover. "Jacob," not "Joseph" was professor of mathematics at Rutgers University. Joseph Goodman died December 9, 1968. The law firm, named as "Semonoff, Gorin," should read "Levy Goodman Semonoff & Gorin." Jacob later became an attorney and practices with the firm.

FUNDS AND BEQUESTS OF THE RHODE ISLAND
JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

FUNDS

SEEBERT J. AND GERTRUDE N. GOLDOWSKY

Research Scholarship Fund

BENTON H. AND BEVERLY ROSEN

Book Fund

ERWIN E. AND PAULINE E. STRASMICH

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BEQUESTS

JEANNETTE S. NATHANS

LIFE MEMBERSHIP OF THE RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

MR. AND MRS. BENJAMIN BRIER
DR. AND MRS. EARLE F. COHEN
MR. AND MRS. NEWTON B. COHN
MR. AND MRS. DONALD H. DWARES
MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH ENGLE
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For information on becoming a Life Member or establishing a Fund, write to the Association at 130 Sessions Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02906.

BACK COVER

Jews came to Rhode Island from Europe both before and after World War II. The earlier group formed the Self-Help Association, which put up a commemorative plaque in 1953 at 99 Hillside Avenue and meets there each November to recall *Krystallnacht*.

Currently, Self-Help has joined with Holocaust Survivors of Rhode Island, which was originally a sub-committee of the Rhode Island Governor's Heritage Commission. Together these Jews, whose reason for becoming Rhode Islanders — Americans — was to escape Nazi persecution, have been seeking to create a memorial and educational archive to record their losses and experiences as a generation. The *Notes* will follow the

process of this historic task in future issues

לזכרון עולם



TO THE EVERLASTING MEMORY OF OUR
LOVED ONES WHO LOST THEIR LIVES
DURING THE PERSECUTION OF THE
JEWISH PEOPLE IN EUROPE 1933-1945

DEDICATED BY
MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF
RHODE ISLAND SELFHHELP
NOVEMBER 1955