Israel Medoff, 87; retired industrialist

WOONSOCKET — Israel Medoff, 87, of 91 Oakley Rd., a retired industrialist, died Friday at Woonsocket Hospital. He was the husband of May (Beckenstein) Silverstein-Medoff. He was husband of the late Dorothy (Diamond) Medoff.

Born in Russia, he was a son of the late Abraham and Rose (Guzner) Medoff, and had lived in Woonsocket since 1901.

Mr. Medoff was one of the elders of the city's Jewish community and a well-known philanthropist, president and board chairman of the I. Medoff Co. He served overseas during World War I in the Army; held a membership in the Andrew F. Young Post, American Legion. He was a member of Congregation B'nai Israel, and received the Jewish Theological Seminary of America Award in 1972. He had been cited for efforts on behalf of Woonsocket and Miriam Hospitals, the Leukemia Society, the Industrial Development Foundation of Greater Woonsocket and the Greater Woonsocket Chamber of Commerce.

Besides his wife he leaves a daughter, Mrs. Lorraine Kelman of Providence; two brothers, Samuel J. Medoff and Dr. Edward B. Medoff, both of Woonsocket; three sisters, Mrs. Eve Goldberg of Pawtucket, Mrs. Nancy Robbins and Mrs. Brenda Smira, both of Providence; seven grandchildren and three great- grandchildren.

A funeral service will be held today at 2 p.m. at Congregation B'nai Israel, Prospect Street. Burial will be in the congregation cemetery, Mendon Road.

MEDOFF, ISRAEL

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Israel

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Israel Medoff, 87, Dies; Noted Civic, Religious Leader

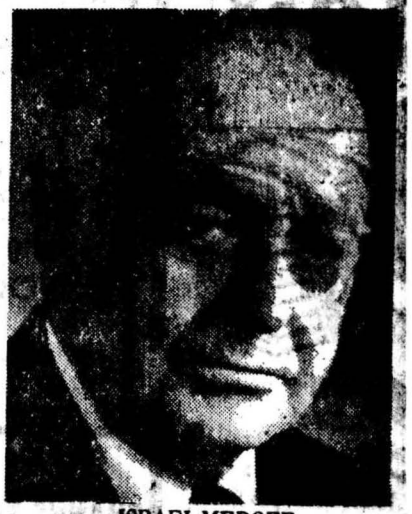
Former industrialist Israel Medoff, 87, of 91 Oakley Road, one of the elders of the city's Jewish community and a great philanthropist, died yesterday in The Woonsocket Hospital after a brief illness.

He was the husband of May (Beckenstein) Silverstein-Medoff and the late Dorothy (Diamond) Medoff.

He is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Fred (Lorraine "Libby") Kelman of Providence. Another daughter, Mrs. Gloria (Medoff) Goodman, died in 1962.

He also is survived by two brothers, Samuel J. Medoff and Dr. Edward B. Medoff, both of Woonsocket; three sisters, Mrs. Alfred J. (Eve) Goldberg of Pawtucket, Mrs. Robert S. (Nancy) Robbins and Mrs. M. William (Brenda) Smira, both of Providence.

Also surviving are seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



ISRAEL MEDOFF

Born Aug. 10, 1896, in Russia, a son of the late Abraham and Rose (Guzner) Medoff, he came to the United States in 1901 in third class aboard an old steamer.

He was the principal in a rare religious ceremony on Aug. 17, 1979, when at age 83 he was involved in his second "Bar Mitzvah." What was unusual about the ceremony is Bar Mitzvah rites ordinarily are held when a person of Jewish faith reaches the age of 13. Medoff had gone 13 years beyond the Bibical "three score and 10" cited in Verse 9 of Psalm 90.

He was president and board chairman of I. Medoff Co., a nationally known textile firm in which his brother, Samuel, also was involved. At one time it was a million dollar enterprise at Railroad and Arnold streets which converted and sold millions of yards of cloth each year. The business was dissolved early in the 1980s upon the retirement of the brothers.

He was a door-to-door salesman before entering the Army and serving overseas during World War I. He held memberships and leadership roles in Andrew F. Young Post, American Legion, and in Woonsocket Barracks of World War I Veterans.

Honors were many for Israel Medoff over the years. He was involved in literally scores of humanitarian endeavors during more than a half century. In addition to being active in Congregation B'nai Israel, he worked for many Jewish philanthrophies and received the Jewish Theological Seminary of America award in 1972.

He did not confine his extracurricular activities to non-secular affairs, having been cited for his efforts in behalf of The Woonsocket Hospital and Miriam Hospital, Providence; the Leukemia Society; Woonsocket Operations Jobs; the Industrial Development Foundation of Greater Woonsocket; and the Greater Woonsocket Chamber of Commerce.

On his 70th birthday in 1966, he was honored at a dinner-dance in B'nai Israel Synagogue. During the affair, he was praised by Joseph Shorr, congregation president, for his devotion to his religion, for his benefactions and for his service as chairman of the building fund for the synagogue on Prospect Street.

A bronze plaque marking the event was unveiled in the synagogue lobby by Mrs. Kelman, his daughter. In response, he announced he was donating $15,000 in observance of his 70th birthday to various funds.

The funeral will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday in Congregation B'nai Israel, 224 Prospect St. Burial will be in the congregation's cemetery, Mendon Road.

Memorial week (Shiva) will be observed at his late residence from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m.

He was a charter member of the Chevra Kaddisha. The Kaddisha and the Holt Funeral Home, 510 South Main St., are in charge of arrangements.

MEDOFF
Israel