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FRONT COVER

Left to right: Leah Leven, Fannie Levenson, and Emma Raskin in 1908. Leah Leven married William Goldstein, lived in Hartford and had two children, Max and Enid. Leah introduced Fannie Levenson to her brother, Samuel. They were married and had three children, Irving and Stanley Leven and Ruth Greenberg. Emma Raskin became Mrs. Joseph Levine. See “An Engagement, A Wedding, and Friendships,” p. 115.
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A TRIBUTE
RABBI WILLIAM G. BRAUDE 1907-1988

BY GERALDINE S. FOSTER
PRESIDENT, RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

William G. Braude, Rabbi and Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation Sons of Israel and David, Temple Beth-El, Providence, died in 1988 at the age of 80. (See Necrology, p. 197.) He is survived by his wife, Pearl (Finklestein) Braude; and three sons, Joel, Benjamin, and Daniel; a sister, Dorothy Braude Fuerst, and three grand-children.

Rabbi Braude came to this country in 1920. His father, maternal grandfather, and several uncles were all Talmudic scholars and rabbis.

Rabbi Braude was internationally recognized for his scholarship. The author of more than 86 works, he was invited to teach at Yale University, Hebrew University, Reform Rabbinical Seminary (London), Leo Baeck College, and Providence College. From 1937 to 1942, he was a member of the faculty of Brown University.

Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association officers and members especially mourn Rabbi Braude. He was one of the founders of the Association, was an honorary member of the Executive Committee, and was deeply involved with the Association’s activities. He had a profound sense of history which, as writer and teacher, he sought to impart to others. A frequent contributor to the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes, he wrote on a variety of topics to which he added a spiritual dimension.

Rabbi Braude was the speaker for the Twelfth Annual David C. Adelman Lecture at the Twenty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association on April 25, 1982. He spoke on “An Old Translator’s New Adventure,” discussing the continuation of his work of 45 years translating Midrashic texts in an effort to make them intelligible to readers.

At this meeting the Association passed a resolution, written by Louis B. Rubinstein, honoring Rabbi Braude. It stated, in part, “The Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association ... recognizes that the vigor and strength by means of which you have shared the depth and quality of your wisdom

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with the entire scholarly world, is superbly displayed in your profound and illuminating writings and publications, with their influence causing the entire Jewish community of Rhode Island to bask in the reflected glory emanating from your worldwide fame, particularly where scholarship, knowledge, and the ability to make ancient and obscure writings come alive with vibrancy, poetry and meaning, are the true measure of a man's influence and basic worth."

The Preface to Volume 1, Number 1, of the Notes, written by Rabbi Braude, opened with this query: "In what way does the story of the Jew in America differ from the story of the Jew in other lands?" It was typical of Rabbi Braude to pose questions, questions that required thought and analysis, that drove to the heart of the matter, that eschewed generalizations. By his opening sentence, he set a tone and spirit of inquiry for those who document the history of the Jews in Rhode Island. His questioning is part of his rich and varied legacy to the Association.
A Quarter Century of Change: Rhode Island Jewry, 1963-1987

By Sidney Goldstein, Ph.D., Calvin Goldscheider, Ph.D., and Alice Goldstein

Over the last quarter century, the demographic, social, economic, and cultural structure of the American Jewish community has undergone extensive changes. So, too, has that of Rhode Island. Indeed, the history of Rhode Island’s Jewish community is in many ways a microcosm of that of American Jewry. Settlement was stimulated by economic opportunity for each wave of immigrants — from Dutch to German to East European to, most recently, Russian refugees — augmented by chain migration as early arrivals sent for family and friends. Jews concentrated initially in the large commercial centers, Newport, then Providence. They moved to smaller communities as a flourishing textile industry brought economic prosperity and jobs to mill towns throughout the central and northern areas of the State. Reconcentration accompanied the demise of Rhode Island’s textile manufacture, only to be followed by new waves of dispersion, as the suburbanization that characterized the general American population also caught up with Rhode Island Jewry. Ever greater deconcentration followed as changing opportunities in the peripheral areas of the State, ease of commuting, and changing life styles made sparsely settled areas attractive to Jews.

Throughout their history in the State, Jews have organized for religious observance, for mutual aid, and for cultural, social, and civic participation. Their institutional structure serviced their everyday needs and provided the means for preserving the traditions and values which constituted the core of Judaism and around which individual Jews could build and maintain their identity with the community and with Judaism. Over time, the types and character of the associations and institutions changed to reflect how Jews saw themselves as relating to the larger community. The curbs on immigration in the 1920s not only signaled the end of rapid growth, but also removed a major source of reinforcement of traditional values. As

Dr. Sidney Goldstein is George Hazard Crooker University Professor, and Director of the Population Studies and Training Center, Brown University. Dr. Calvin Goldscheider is Professor of Sociology and Professor of Judaic Studies at Brown University. Alice Goldstein is a Senior Researcher, Population Studies and Training Center, Brown University.

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a result, ensuing decades saw increasing proportions of the Jewish population being American-born and further removed from their European origins.

The definition of the community itself changed as the central fund-raising agencies merged first as the General Jewish Committee of Greater Providence, with separate agencies in Newport and Woonsocket, and then into the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, covering the entire State. Contacts with the larger non-Jewish population increased in the schools, on the job, and in general social situations. Partly as a result of this greater interaction of Jew and non-Jew and partly as a result of larger trends developing on the American scene, overt anti-Semitism declined, thereby weakening the outside pressure which had been a major factor in creating a sense of Jewish belonging. Thus, in Rhode Island, as in all of the United States, a major concern of the Jewish community and of many individual Jews has become how to achieve an integrated yet unassimilated status within the general American community.

These concerns have led to a growing recognition that planning for a more effective community and especially for the future of the community requires accurate and up-to-date information. Increasingly, self-assessment has come to be regarded as a necessary basis for identifying needs and making decisions about facilities, services, and community relations as well as religious, social, and cultural activities. The Rhode Island Jewish Federation has, in fact, been in the forefront among American Jewish communities in undertaking studies to evaluate where the community has been, where it is, and where it is heading. The results of these assessments strongly indicate that the size, spatial distribution, and composition of the Jewish population, its growth and migration patterns, as well as its family resources, are all closely linked to the social, cultural, and religious profiles of Rhode Island Jewry in shaping the character of the community.

The first comprehensive assessment of the Rhode Island Jewish community was completed in 1963 (Goldstein, 1964). That survey encompassed the Greater Providence area and provided the basis for a wide range of planning and development activities. Recognizing the inadequacy of 1963 data for planning for the 1990s, the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island undertook a second general survey of the State's Jewish population in 1987 (Goldscheider and Goldstein, 1988). The second survey provides the basis of this paper for evaluating changes in the social and demographic structure of the community and the forces accounting for change in the quarter century between 1963 and 1987. In doing so, this report will give particular attention to the findings from the 1987 survey and their implications as Rhode Island Jewry moves toward the 21st century.

**STUDY DESIGN**

The 1987 study of Rhode Island Jewry is based on a sample survey of the entire State of Rhode Island. In this respect, it differs from earlier
studies: The 1963 survey encompassed only the Greater Providence area — that is, Providence, Pawtucket, East Providence, Barrington, Cranston, and Warwick, with additional inclusion of parts of northern and western Rhode Island. The sample was drawn from up-dated lists of Jewish households maintained by the General Jewish Committee of Greater Providence. A 1970 assessment (Goldstein, 1971) was based only on the household listings of known Jewish households maintained by JFRI; it was intended only to provide an estimate of the number of Jews and Jewish households in the State and did not involve interviewing.

In 1987, the survey design combined two sampling procedures. Approximately three-quarters of the households were selected through a random sample chosen from the lists of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, which, after updating, contained approximately 6,600 households. The balance came from a sample, generated by random digit dialing (RDD), of all households with telephones in Rhode Island. Since fewer than 2 percent of the household units in Rhode Island were estimated to be Jewish, 18,000 households had to be contacted to identify the several hundred households containing Jewish members to supplement the sample from the Federation list. The RDD sample served to ensure coverage of Jewish households not on the Federation roster.

In each household, usually one person age 21 or older (age 18-20 if no one age 21 or over lived in the household) was selected to be the respondent. Each respondent was asked questions about all members of the household and other questions, including attitudinal ones, that related only to the respondent himself/herself. A total of 1,455 households were contacted for interviews. From among these, interviews were obtained from 1,129, for a response rate of 78 percent.

**Numbers and Distribution**

The 1987 data on the number of Jews and their geographic distribution point to important changes in the Jewish community in the last several decades. The 1963 study enumerated 5,978 Jewish households containing 19,457 persons. For the comparable Greater Providence area, the 1987 data show an increase to 6,441 households but a decrease in the number of persons to 15,110. Insights into statewide changes can be obtained by comparing the results of the full 1987 survey with estimates made in 1970. In 1970, the JFRI lists included 6,235 Jewish households in the State, compared to the 7,224 enumerated in 1987. Since the 1970 estimates are quite likely an underenumeration (see Goldstein, 1971 for detailed explanation), these data suggest that the number of Jewish households in Rhode Island has remained quite stable over the last twenty years. By contrast, the number of individuals has declined — from an estimated statewide total of approximately 19,000 persons to only 17,025 in 1987.
These data point to the considerably smaller size of Jewish households in the 1980s.

More dramatic than the changes in numbers has been the changing distribution of Jews in Rhode Island. The 1963 survey documented that within the city of Providence Jews were concentrated on the East Side, with declining numbers in South Providence and the North End, as urban redevelopment made these two areas of early settlement less attractive to Jews. At the same time, like Americans generally, Jews participated in suburbanization, so that communities in Cranston, Warwick, and Barrington flourished. The next 25 years saw a continuation of this dispersion away from the central core, but increasingly it involved the more outlying parts of the State.

In 1987, one-third of the State's Jewish population lived in the city of Providence. If only the Greater Providence area is considered, Providence itself contained 37 percent of Rhode Island Jewry in 1987, compared to 57 percent in 1963. Consistent with patterns characterizing the total American population, central cities and older suburban areas, like Cranston, lost population, while newer, more outlying areas gained. High rates of growth characterized Western Rhode Island and South County. By 1987, the latter two areas contained 13 percent of the State's Jewish population. The East Side continued as the area of highest Jewish concentration in the State, but even there, relatively fewer Jews were found in 1987 than earlier. With only 41 percent of the State's Jewish population living in Providence-Pawtucket, Rhode Island Jewry has become substantially dispersed throughout the State.

AGE AND SEX

Like the population of the United States as a whole, Rhode Island Jewry has been aging, but at a faster pace. In 1987, the average (median) age of the Jewish population was 44.7, well above the 36.2 of Greater Providence in 1963, and far above the estimated 33.4 median for the 1987 population of the State. In 1987, 23 percent of the Jewish population was age 65 and over, compared to only 10 percent in 1963; moreover, 10 percent were in the very old group, 75 and over, compared to only 3 percent in 1963. The aging of the population reflects the out-migration of a disproportionate number of younger Jews and low levels of Jewish fertility. In 1987, only 14 percent of the Jews were under age 15, compared to 19 percent in the total population of the State in 1987 and to 25 percent of the Jewish population in 1963.

Considerable variation in age composition characterized Jews living in the different areas of Rhode Island. Median ages ranged from lows of 35.9 and 36.5 in Western Rhode Island and South County to a high of 62.1 years in Other Providence (those parts of the city outside the East
Side). The East Side, Cranston, Warwick, and East Bay — older settled areas — had intermediate age compositions. Only 10 percent of the population in Other Providence was under age 10 but almost half were 65 and over. By contrast, in Western Rhode Island, 16 percent were in the youngest group and only 6 percent were aged. The age variations reflect differences in family life cycles of those living in these areas and suggest the different types of services needed in these places.

Reflecting the aging of the population and the greater longevity of women, the balance between men and women changed between 1963 and 1987. For the State as a whole, there were only 92 men for every 100 women, a decline from the sex ratio of 98 men per 100 women in 1963. Consistent with national patterns, the sex ratios of Rhode Island Jews decline with age; that is, in the younger age groups men outnumber women, but the reverse is true at older ages.

**Immigrant Origins**

In the absence of large new inflows of immigrants since the massive influx from Eastern Europe that characterized the 1880-1920 decades, the proportion of foreign born in Rhode Island's Jewish population has understandably aged and declined. By the 1960s, most Rhode Island Jews were native, U.S. born and increasingly the children of native-born parents. Only 9 percent were foreign born, compared to 18 percent in 1963. Even more dramatic changes characterized the older age groups, among whom the percent foreign born declined from 75 percent in 1963 to only 17 percent in 1987. Clearly, the Rhode Island Jewish community has become increasingly American.

Of the population age 16 and older, 11 percent were first generation (foreign born), and 46 percent were American-born children of one or two foreign-born parents. This contrasts with 24 percent foreign born and 58 percent second generation in 1963. Most significant is the rise in the proportion of third and higher generations, from only 16 percent in 1963 to 43 percent in 1987. Among those younger than 45, more than seven out of every ten were third generation and as many as 12 percent were at least fourth generation.

Not surprisingly, about half of the foreign born came from Eastern Europe and 14 percent from Germany/Austria. About 10 percent were born in Middle Eastern countries, including Israel. Half of the total came to the United States before 1950, reflecting the greater concentration of foreign born among the aged. Yet, 30 percent of all foreign born arrived since 1970, including recent refugee movements from the Soviet Union and Iran and the immigration of Israelis.

The ethnic ancestry of the total population closely parallels the country of origin distribution of the foreign born. Over half of all Jews in the
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State trace their family origins to Russia and another 20 percent to Poland and Lithuania. In all, over eight out of every ten Rhode Island Jews have an Eastern European background, and one in ten is Austro-German. The remaining identify their ethnicity with a variety of other European, Middle Eastern, and Western Hemisphere countries.

Variations in the generational composition of the areas of the State point to the extent of residential segregation within the Jewish community, and provide clues to explain some of the areal differences in patterns of Jewish identity, behavior, and practice. In 1963, a disproportional number of persons living in Providence (21 percent) was foreign born; among the suburbs the proportion was half as high, with East Bay having only 6 percent. The opposite pattern characterized the third generation: All of the suburbs contained considerably higher proportions of such persons than Providence; East Bay, the newest suburb in 1963, was more heavily third generation than any other part of Greater Providence, and within Providence itself, the East Side was the most heavily third generation.

Although at different levels, basically the same pattern of area differences persists in 1987. Other Providence contains the highest percentage of foreign born, one out of every five persons, reflecting the older age composition of this area. The East Side, Pawtucket, East Bay, and Northern Rhode Island all had between 12 and 14 percent foreign born in their populations. Cranston and Warwick contained still lower proportions foreign born, but the lowest percentage characterized the outlying areas of western Rhode Island and South County, where only 3 percent were foreign born. Conversely, in the outlying areas of the State well over half the population were at least third generation, and on the East Side, Pawtucket, East Bay, and Newport, between 40 and 50 percent were at least third generation. In Cranston, Warwick, and Northern Rhode Island, a minimum of 30 percent were third generation. As expected, the proportion of third generation was lowest in Other Providence, again reflecting its older age composition.

Family Processes

Historically, the Jewish community has been family centered and has renewed itself demographically through raising the next generation. The most elementary form of generational continuity relates to marriage and fertility, i.e., whether and when individuals form new families and the number of children they have. How have these family patterns changed over the last quarter of a century among Rhode Island Jews?

The overall importance of marriage is indicated by the high proportion of Jews 18 years of age and older in Rhode Island in 1987 who were married: 73 percent of the men and 65 percent of the women. A pattern of late age at marriage is clearly evident and is one of the major changes in the last 25 years. In 1963, 42 percent of the men and 72 percent of the women
were married before age 30; the comparable figures for 1987 are 34 percent for men and 54 percent for women. The rate of remaining single among those in their thirties is about three times higher currently than in 1963. So a larger proportion of young adults are delaying marriage in the 1980s than in the 1960s.

The rate of family dissolution through divorce has also changed. Levels of divorce have increased since the 1960s, although they remain well below the levels for the general population. In 1987, 4 percent of Jewish adults indicated they were divorced at the time of the survey; this is a considerable increase from the one-half of one percent who were divorced in 1963. Similarly, a somewhat lower rate of being in a first marriage characterizes the 1987 data when compared with those in 1963. In 1963, 93 percent of men and women who had married were married only once, compared to 90 percent in 1987. Together these data show that rates of marriage for the Jewish population in Rhode Island are high, but that a sharp increase in the level of divorce has come to characterize the Rhode Island Jewish community.

Another aspect of families relates to their size. Jewish family size in the United States has been small for a number of decades. All ever-married women respondents in the Rhode Island Jewish community had borne an average of 2.1 children by 1987, the same average as characterized all ever-married women in 1963. However, in 1987 those women currently in the reproductive ages, 18-44, had averaged only 1.7 children. This is 20 percent below the 2.1 average reported by women age 20-44 in the 1963 survey. This points to considerably lower fertility levels among the more recent cohort of younger women, probably reflecting the effects of later marriage and smaller family size norms compared to those having children in the years immediately preceding 1963, when the results of the baby boom were still affecting fertility levels. If, however, the fertility expectations of women age 18-44 in 1987, both those married and those still not married, are taken into account, the completed fertility will be about 1.9 children, still below the replacement level of 2.1 children per couple, but closer to the level characterizing the 1963 group.

A major change over the last several decades appears to have been in the timing of childbearing, which has been delayed along with the delay in age at marriage. Changes in the timing of when women have children are more characteristic of educated women and those who work outside the home. These new family formations and childbearing patterns fit the high educational level of Jewish women in Rhode Island and their high level of labor force participation.

**Households and Living Arrangements**

The average size of Jewish households in Rhode Island in 1987 was
2.4 persons. This marks a decline of almost one person since 1963, when the average was 3.3 persons. The decrease in Jewish household size parallels processes that characterize the general American population. It reflects a trend for more young persons to leave their parents' home to establish their own households before marriage and a concurrent trend for the number of primary units among older persons to increase. The latter trend reflects the increasing number of older persons, especially women, who outlive their spouse and spend more of their later years outside the extended family or in an institutional setting. Also contributing to smaller average household size is lower current fertility, as a result of which families have fewer children in their household.

Since age composition significantly affects household size, substantial differences characterize the average size of Jewish households in the various areas of Rhode Island. In 1987, Other Providence had the lowest average household size, 1.7 persons, reflecting the particularly large percentage of older persons living in those sections of Providence outside the East Side. The areas with the largest average household size are South County (2.7) and Western Rhode Island (2.9); these are the areas with a high proportion of young families with children. Pawtucket and the East Side of Providence, together with the older suburbs of Cranston, Warwick, and East Bay, represent a middle group, with 2.3 to 2.5 persons per household. Newport and Northern Rhode Island have lower average household sizes of 2.1 persons.

Even in the areas with the largest average households, the size is about one person smaller per household than the 3.7 average characterizing Barrington in 1963, the area with the highest average in the earlier survey. Similarly, the low of 1.7 persons characterizing Other Providence is about one person lower than the 2.6 low which characterized the North End in 1963.

Examination of the distribution of households by size provides further insights into these changes. These data indicate that the small average size of Jewish households reflects the high percentage of single person households; in 1987 just over one-fourth of all households contained only one person and over one-third contained two persons. By contrast, fewer than 5 percent of all households had as many as five persons. Sharp changes have occurred in household size since the 1963 survey. At that time only 8 percent of all households contained only one person and 17 percent contained five or more persons. Whereas almost two-thirds of all households in 1987 had only one or two persons, this was true of only 39 percent of the 1963 households. Clearly, there has been a substantial shift away from medium and large households to one and two person units.

The overall composition of households also documents changes that have occurred in the past quarter century. The patterns in 1987 differ markedly...
from those in 1963. As already noted, a sharp rise occurred in the percentage of one person units. Units consisting only of a married couple also increased, from one-fourth in 1963 to just over one-third in 1987. Most striking is the low percentage of "traditional" nuclear family units. Reflecting the combined effects of a decline in current fertility, the later age at which couples have children, and the greater tendency of young adults to leave the parental home to create their own household, households consisting of a couple and their children declined substantially, from 54 percent in 1963, to only 29 percent in 1987. The proportion of single parent households remained relatively constant between 1963 and 1987. Few households include other relatives or non-relatives, indicating the small number of Jewish households that encompass three generations or that are extended.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Rhode Island Jews have attained very high levels of education. About 75 percent of the Jewish population in 1987 had at least some college education, 57 percent had at least completed four years of college, and about one-third had some graduate level education. The proportion having a graduate level education has increased from 18 percent among those age 65 and over to 45 percent among those age 25-44. In general, men have attained higher levels of education than women; but the gap between men and women has narrowed considerably among the young. Graduation from college characterized 80 percent of the young adult men and 70 percent of young adult women. These levels are much higher than those of a quarter century ago. In 1963, only 34 percent of the Jewish men age 25 and over and 18 percent of the Jewish women had at least completed college. This compares to 60 percent of adult men and over 50 percent of adult women in 1987.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND OCCUPATION

Labor force participation rates of men and women are significantly linked to age, with those in their teens and early twenties more likely to be still in school and those above the age of 65 more likely to be retired. In 1987 about nine out of ten males in the prime working ages (age 25-64) were working, and most (over 80 percent) were working full time. Among males age 65 and over, 22 percent were still working full time and 14 percent worked part time.

Although the level of labor force participation among women is lower than among men, it has increased dramatically, especially among younger women. In 1987 three-fourths of the women age 25-44 and 62 percent of those age 45-64 were in the labor force, and most worked full time. Two out of ten women age 65 and over worked. In 1963 only about 25 percent of the Jewish women age 25-44 and 35 percent of those 45-64 years of age worked for pay. Thus, during the past quarter century, the rate of
labor force participation of Jewish women has tripled among those age 25-44.

Since their settlement in the State, the Jews of Rhode Island have been heavily concentrated in white-collar occupations, especially in business and the professions. This pattern was still true in 1987 when over one-third of the men and women were in professional occupations; 17 percent of the men and 12 percent of the women were managers, business executives, and administrators; 26 percent of the men and 19 percent of the women worked in sales; and 8 percent of the men and 24 percent of the women were clerical workers. The proportion of managers and professionals among those age 25-44 had increased compared to those aged 45-64, and a decline was apparent among male sales workers and among women clerical workers. Very few Jewish men or women were in skilled labor or in blue collar occupations. Comparisons with the 1963 survey of the Greater Providence Jewish community show sharp increases in the proportion of professionals among men and women and declines in managers and executives among men and in clerical jobs among women.

Paralleling a decrease in the percentage of managers and executives between 1963 and 1987 was a shift away from self-employment to working for others, particularly among men. Six out of ten men age 25-44 worked for others in 1987, and about one-third worked for themselves; an additional 7 percent worked in a family business. In 1963, just over half of the men were self-employed, and 45 percent worked for others. Women generally had similar patterns in 1963 and 1987. In 1987, about seven out of ten of the women age 25-64 worked for others, about 20 percent worked for themselves, and 10 percent worked in a family business.

**Mobility of the Population**

The increasing importance of population movement for the structure and vitality of the Rhode Island Jewish community is indicated by the high mobility rates characterizing the adult population. Only one-third have lived in Rhode Island all their lives compared to about half of those surveyed in 1963. About 30 percent of all adults arrived after 1970. The highest migration rate characterized younger adults; seven out of every ten persons under age 45 were in-migrants to Rhode Island. The greater attraction of the State in recent decades is suggested by the rising percent of migrants in each successive decade since the 1940s, although the increase may be partly due to the out-migration of many earlier migrants and to deaths among persons who had moved into the State earlier.

Of the American-born Jews living in Rhode Island in 1987, 45 percent were born in other states; just over half were native Rhode Islanders. This percentage is substantially higher than in 1963, when only one-quarter of Rhode Island's American-born Jews were migrants to Rhode Island. Most
of those who moved to Rhode Island came from nearby states; 17 percent came from other states in New England and 19 percent from New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. American-born Rhode Island Jews in 1987 were more likely to have come from states outside New England than were those resident in the state in 1963: 28 percent compared to only 14 percent. More dispersed origins were especially characteristic of the younger population.

High levels of mobility also occurred within the State. Only 13 percent of adults were living in the city in which they had been born. Levels of mobility varied considerably by area within Rhode Island. The East Side, Other Providence, and Northern Rhode Island had the highest stability rates; Western Rhode Island, South County, and East Bay had the lowest. The net results of the cumulative redistribution of population within the State (based on last move) were losses for Providence, reflecting largely the exodus from Other Providence; substantial additions to Cranston and especially to Warwick; some gains by Pawtucket, East Bay, and South County; and significant movement into Western Rhode Island. Newport and to a greater extent Northern Rhode Island both experienced some loss. For some areas, the small net gains or losses in the exchange with other parts of the State may have been augmented or offset by gains from outside the State.

Concurrently, the redistribution patterns are also affected by movement of Jews away from Rhode Island. Information on the children living away from their parental home indicates that about six out of ten were living outside the State, although the great majority of these had at one time lived in Rhode Island. Similarly, considerable out-migration seems to have occurred among older persons. The number of older persons enumerated in 1987 was substantially below the number projected for 1987 on the basis of the 1963 data (taking estimated mortality into account). A large number of persons who would now be age 65 and over have therefore left the State.

The substantially higher percentage of Rhode Island Jews who are migrants to the State, the out-migration of others, and the continuous population redistribution within the State, which in many respects is an extension of patterns already identified in 1963, has serious implications for planning purposes. It affects people's access to institutions, use of services, and loyalty to various organizations. That one in four respondents reported they were likely to move within three years and that almost one-third of the likely movers expected to leave the State, suggests that population turnover and redistribution are likely to continue in the future.

**Aspects of Jewish Identification**

The foregoing discussion of Rhode Island Jewry in 1987 and changes
in its composition over a quarter century has focussed on its demographics. The population was shown to have a considerably older profile in 1987 than in 1963, to be more residentially dispersed, largely native born, highly educated, and concentrated in white-collar occupations working for others. Age at marriage has increased considerably while expected completed fertility is just at replacement level. Many of these characteristics are an accentuation of trends identified a quarter century earlier, at which time they were linked to increasing integration into the larger community and a diminution of involvement in the organized Jewish community. Information obtained in 1987 on membership in synagogues/temples, on ritual practices, and on Jewish education allow evaluation of the impact of these trends on Jewish identification and commitment.

Current Jewish Identification: Based on the information obtained on current religion of household members, 93 percent were reported as currently Jewish. This compares with 98 percent in 1963. Some of the difference is attributable to the methodological differences in choosing the samples. The 1963 study surveyed only known Jewish households; in 1987 the sample was based both on lists of identified Jewish households and on households identified through random digit dialing. Moreover, the changes that have occurred since 1963 and the known higher rates of intermarriage which have come to characterize virtually every Jewish community in the United States make it reasonable to expect a decline in the percentage of Jews in the surveyed households. In 1987, among the total of 17,000 individuals identified as members of Jewish households in Rhode Island, about 1,200 persons are not currently Jewish. Of this number, many more define themselves as Catholic and as having no religion than as Protestant.

When Jewish identification is measured by religion at birth rather than current identification, the picture is modified somewhat. Using birth as the criterion, 91 percent of the household members are identified as Jewish compared to 93 percent when current identification is used. The small difference between the percent of individuals reported as born Jewish and the percent reported as currently Jewish suggests a small net gain to the Jewish community as a result of changes which have occurred in the religious identity of the currently resident population between the time of birth and the time of the survey. This apparent net gain may be due to a number of factors, including the conversion of non-Jewish-born spouses or the out-migration of some of the intermarried and assimilated Jews.

Substantial variation characterizes the areas of Rhode Island in the percent of currently Jewish individuals in the households encompassed in the survey. The percentage varies from a high of 96 percent in the cities (Providence and Pawtucket) to 87 percent in the outlying areas (Northern and Western Rhode Island, South County, and Newport). The suburbs (94 percent) more closely resemble the city population than they do the outlying areas. Clearly,
as one moves out from the central, older areas of residence to the more distant, newer locations, the percent of household members who are Jewish declines. In this respect, the 1987 pattern differs from that in 1963, when only Warwick and Pawtucket among the areas of Greater Providence had slightly lower proportions of born Jews.

Religious Denominational Identification: A major way in which Jews identify individually and institutionally is through the religious denominations of Judaism. Comparing patterns in the 1987 survey of Rhode Island with those of the 1963 survey reveals important changes. In 1963, 95 percent of the Jews of Greater Providence identified with one of the three religious denominations, considerably higher than the 85 percent in 1987. A quarter of a century ago, 20 percent identified themselves as Orthodox, 54 percent as Conservative, and 21 percent as Reform. The respective proportions in 1987 were 7 percent, 47 percent, and 32 percent. These data and the details by age point to a sharp decline in Orthodox identification, a small decline in identification with Conservative Judaism, and an increase in identification with Reform Judaism.

Synagogue and Temple Membership and Attendance: Another aspect of Jewish identification is formal membership in synagogues or temples and the particular religious denominations that these memberships indicate. As in 1963, a very high proportion of the Jewish households in Rhode Island (70 percent in 1987) claim current membership in a synagogue or temple. Membership varies with age, being lower for those below age 45 than for older respondents.

The denominational pattern of these memberships is clear: 55 percent are associated with Conservative Judaism, 12 percent with Orthodox Judaism, and 31 percent with Reform Judaism. This pattern covers 98 percent of the denominational affiliations of members. The distribution of synagogue or temple membership in the 1963 study was 51 percent Conservative, 23 percent Orthodox, and 26 percent Reform. These comparisons suggest that a sharp shift has occurred away from Orthodox membership to Conservative and Reform synagogues or temples.

Issues of religiosity and religious expression may not only depend on membership but also on regular attendance at religious services. In Judaism and for the American Jewish community one need not be a formal member of a synagogue or temple to attend religious services regularly. Thus, the two surveys included questions about the frequency of synagogue attendance.

Most respondents in 1987 reported that they attended religious services at a synagogue or temple sometime during the year but not very often. At the extremes, only 11-12 percent either never attended or attended as often as at least once a week. The majority (57 percent) attended a few times a year, on special occasions or the high holidays, and 19 percent
attended regularly but less than once a week. These patterns have not changed much over the last quarter century. The 1963 survey indicated that about 12 percent never attended, 62 percent attended a few times a year or on special occasions, 13 percent attended regularly but less than once a week, and 12 percent attended once a week or more. The similarities of these two patterns almost twenty-five years apart are striking, despite a shift, as measured by denominational identification and membership, away from orthodoxy.

Jewish Ritual Practices: Judaism in America not only involves personal identification with a particular religious denomination and personal expressions of religiosity; it is also oriented to ritual, particularly family practices. Thus, questions were included in both surveys about the frequency of observance of ritual candle lighting on Friday night, having a (Passover) Seder in the home or elsewhere, Kasrut (buying Kosher meat for home use, using separate dishes for meat and dairy), and lighting Hanukkah candles. Like the data on religious service attendance and denominational affiliation, these data on ritual practice point to a diminution of the more stringent practices requiring daily or weekly attention but strong participation in those rituals that impose less regular practice.

One out of four Jewish households in Rhode Island in 1987 always lighted the Sabbath candles on Friday night, four out of ten never did so, and about one out of three sometimes or usually lighted candles on Friday night. The extent of candle lighting on Friday evening has declined over the last generation. In 1963, 42 percent of the Jewish households always lighted candles on Friday, and only 24 percent of the households never did so. As for other indicators of Jewishness, the overall pattern in 1987 resembles most closely the observances of the third generation in 1963. It is important to note that while in the 1963 survey, sharp age-generational differences in this ritual characterized the Jewish community, revealing significant declines, the overall patterns in 1987 are at a lower level, but similar for all ages.

The other ritual practice requiring regular attention about which the surveys asked is Kasrut (dietary regulation). Two indicators of Kasrut were included in the survey: the purchase of Kosher meat for home use and maintaining separate meat and dairy dishes. In 1987, 57 percent of Rhode Island Jewish households reported that they never buy Kosher meat for home use and only 22 percent always buy Kosher meat. Even fewer keep separate dishes for meat and dairy; three-fourths of Rhode Island Jews never separate their dishes for meat and dairy, and only 21 percent always use separate dishes. By 1987, therefore, a general pattern of non-observance of Kasrut characterized Rhode Island Jewry, except for a small minority of households. These patterns reveal a significant downward trend in Kasrut observances since 1963, when 40 percent of the Jewish households
always bought Kosher meat and 32 percent always used separate dishes. Only 28 percent never bought Kosher meat and 62 percent never kept separate dishes at this earlier date.

Much more widely observed are the family-centered, annual rituals connected to the observance of Passover and Hanukah, although some decline since 1963 is apparent. Observing Passover through having a Seder at home or elsewhere remained a widely observed ritual tied to family and community. In 1987, 58 percent reported always having a Seder either at home or somewhere else. In 1963, 79 percent always had or attended a Passover Seder. In 1963, 7 percent never had or attended a Seder; in 1987, 6 percent never participated in a Seder. The 1963 and the 1987 comparison shows, therefore, some decline in the regularity of the observance of this celebration, but no increase in the proportion who never have a Seder. A generally high level of attendance at a Passover Seder continues to characterize the population.

One of the most popular rituals in the American Jewish community today is the lighting of Hanukah candles. It is particularly associated with families and the presence of children in the home. Consistent with patterns observed for 1963, lighting Hanukah candles continued to characterize major segments of the Rhode Island Jewish community in 1987. Fully 69 percent of the respondents reported that they always light Hanukah candles, and only 17 percent never do so. Almost eight out of ten of those below age 45 always light Hanukah candles compared to 53 percent of the older population. These high levels of Hanukah candle lighting have not changed much since 1963. In the earlier survey, 15 percent of the Jewish community never lighted Hanukah candles, similar to the current level. The proportion always lighting Hanukah candles was only slightly higher in 1963 (about 75 percent).

Overall, the data on religious identification and ritual practice suggest a decline in strength of identification with the more traditional, broadly encompassing aspects of Judaism. But generally no parallel increase is noted in secularism as indicated by no participation in formal Jewish worship or never practicing certain rituals. Observance of Kashrut is an exception. The data for 1987, as in 1963, do, however, show considerable variation by both denominational affiliation and place of residence. Reform Judaism and residence in the more outlying areas of the State are associated with lower levels of religious observance as measured by the survey.

**Jewish Education**

A very impressive proportion of the adult respondents in 1987 reported that they received some Jewish education. Overall, 82 percent of the adults received some Jewish education, increasing from 78 percent of those 65
years of age and over to 86 percent of those age 15-24 in the household. A higher proportion of Jewish men than women reported having received Jewish education. The 81 percent of men who received some Jewish education according to the 1987 survey is somewhat lower than that characterizing men age 15 and over in 1963, among whom 94 percent had received some Jewish education. The proportion of women who had received some Jewish education was about the same in both surveys, about three-fourths.

Comparisons of the data for 1963 and 1987 show that gender differences in the number of years exposed to Jewish education were greater in the past, and that there have been sharper increases in the number of years exposed to Jewish education among women than among men. Thus, for example, in 1963 men had more years exposed to Jewish education than women, while in 1987 this pattern was reversed.

What type of Jewish education do these men and women have? In 1987, 27 percent of the adults reported that they had some combination of Sunday and afternoon Hebrew school, 22 percent had a Sunday school only education, and 17 percent had an afternoon Hebrew school only education. About 7 percent reported that they had a Jewish day school (or yeshiva) education; 22 percent were about equally divided between a Heder education and a private tutor.

The proportion of younger persons attending the combined Sunday and afternoon Hebrew school has increased significantly, from 22 percent among those over age 45 to 36 percent among those below age 45. An even sharper increase among younger persons characterizes Jewish day school education; 5 percent among those age 65 and over to 10 percent among those below age 45. A major decline has characterized Sunday school only, which dropped from 21 percent among those age 65 and over to 16 percent among those in the under 45 age group. Private tutors and Heder experiences have dropped even more sharply: from 27 percent among those age 65 and over to 16 percent among the under 45 age group. Among those age 15-24 in the household, 22 percent attended Sunday school only, 13 percent attended afternoon Hebrew school only, and 30 percent attended combined Sunday and afternoon Hebrew school. A significantly higher proportion of these young adults attended a Jewish day school (15 percent) than those age 25-44 (8 percent).

These patterns of change by age group are consistent with the comparison of the 1963 and 1987 surveys. The proportions of men and women having a combination of Sunday and afternoon Hebrew school education have increased over time, as have the proportions with a Jewish day school education. In 1963, for example, 4 percent of the men and 2 percent of the women had a Jewish day school education; in 1987, the figure is 7 percent for both men and women. The gender similarity in the type of
Jewish education received among those age 15-24 in the household in 1987 contrasts sharply with the wide differences in the type of Jewish education received by men and women, boys and girls, surveyed in 1963.

Within the limitations of the geographic areas covered and the differing methodologies, comparisons in current enrollment rates in Jewish education can be made between the 1963 and 1987 surveys. Among boys, the percentage enrolled in Jewish education in 1987 is higher than in 1963 for ages 5-7, lower at ages 8-14, but higher again at the upper ages. Thus, it appears that the rate of enrollment begins earlier for boys now than 25 years ago, is somewhat less around Bar Mitzvah, but is higher in the 15-17 age range. For girls, except in the earliest ages (ages 5 and 6), rates of current enrollment are lower in 1987 than in the past.

Although Jewish education clearly does not end with the teen years, only 18 percent of the respondents in 1987 reported that they participated in adult Jewish education during the previous year, with no major differences between men and women. Participation was lowest among those age 45-64, and about the same among the younger and older age cohorts. This age pattern characterizes both men and women. In 1963, only about 4 percent reported that they had been enrolled in some adult Jewish education program. The substantial increase in reported adult Jewish education undoubtedly reflects not only greater interest on the part of adult Jews but also the very substantial growth and greater accessibility of adult Jewish education programs in Rhode Island.

**Interruption and Conversion**

Interruption between Jews and members of the majority has become a crucial concern for the social and demographic future of the Jewish group. If interruption and marital assimilation take place at a high rate, the Jewish group may face demographic losses through both the assimilation of the Jewish partner and loss of children born to such a marriage. Even if the Jewish partner does not assimilate, a number of the children may still be lost to Judaism if the non-Jewish spouse does not convert. On the other hand, demographic losses from interruption may not be as serious as earlier assumed, since even if only half of all children born to interruption couples are raised as Jews, they would constitute replacement for the Jewish partner if fertility averages at least two children. Moreover, if more than one child per couple on the average is raised as a Jew, or if conversions result in a net gain to the Jewish population, interruption could make a positive contribution to the size of the Jewish population.

Virtually every Jewish community study in recent decades has found rising levels of interruption among young, native-born American Jews. Rhode Island is no exception. The 1987 interruption rate for all married couples was 14 percent, compared to only 4.5 percent in 1963. Moreover, the rate rose sharply among the more recently married.
Among couples who married before 1960, the rate of intermarriage was below 3 percent. A sharp change is noted for those who married in the 1960s, among whom 14 percent of the couples intermarried. The level rose sharply again in the 1970s, to 27 percent of all couples, and once again in the 1980s. Among the couples married between 1980 and 1987, 38 percent intermarried. These data do not suggest, as some other studies have, that the rate of intermarriage has plateaued. Rather, there have been sharp successive increases for every decade since 1960.

Other changes in intermarriage patterns have occurred as well. In 1963, the vast majority of all intermarriages involved a Jewish male and a woman not born Jewish. Among all the intermarried couples in the 1987 survey, about equal proportions of Jewish men and women were married to non-Jews.

A third change relates to conversion. The 1963 data indicated that almost four out of ten of the non-Jewish-born spouses had converted to Judaism. Moreover, the rate of conversion was highest among the youngest age groups. In 1987, a slightly higher percent (43 percent) of the non-Jewish-born spouses had coverted to Judaism. However, this level of conversion was highest among the middle-aged; it was lowest among the youngest group, suggesting that, unlike among earlier marriage cohorts, young couples are less likely to create homogeneous marriages through conversion.

As in 1963, the 1987 survey probed further into the extent of intermarriage by collecting information on the marriage patterns of the Jewish-born children of the respondents and their spouses. The earlier survey had indicated only slightly elevated levels of intermarriage among children, especially for sons. The differences between respondents and their children were much sharper in 1987. Thirty-six percent of all children (32 percent of all daughters and 40 percent of all sons) had married a non-Jewish-born spouse; this percentage rose from 17 percent of those children aged 45-64 to 46 percent of those children under age 35. Of the intermarried couples, 42 percent involved a marriage in which the non-Jewish spouse had converted to Judaism, and 53 percent remained mixed marriages.

The analysis of intermarriage patterns among the residents of Rhode Island and among their children living both in the State and elsewhere shows a sharp increase in the extent of intermarriage over the past quarter century. The low intermarriage rates in 1963 were explained in terms of the long-established nature of the Jewish community with its strong traditional roots, strong organizational structure, and relatively stable population. The results of the 1987 survey suggest that several of these features have changed: the population is now heavily third and fourth generation and characterized by a high degree of mobility. These factors contributed to higher levels of intermarriage in 1987. The noted change, like the finding of declining rates of conversion and greater religious
heterogeneity within marriage, is consistent with reports for Jewish communities throughout America. Nevertheless, from a demographic perspective, these data suggest a gain from intermarriage, both through the non-Jewish spouses who have converted to Judaism and through the children of intermarriages who are identified as Jews. Further study is needed to ascertain the depth or quality of the Jewish identification of the mixed marriages and those in which conversion has occurred.

**Organization Membership and Volunteer Activity**

An important channel through which individuals express their Jewish identification and participate in community life is organization membership. This takes varied forms. For some, it is only a nominal listing as a member and payment of dues. Others may participate in the organization's meetings and other sponsored activities. For still others, the involvement may be more intense, including active leadership roles. Beyond official membership in an organization, individuals may also share in a community's organizational life by volunteering their time to various welfare activities.

Viewed in reverse, the data show that over 40 percent of all women and over half of all males did not belong to any Jewish organization. A high proportion of the community therefore does not express its Jewishness through such affiliations. Particularly relevant, the percentage of membership seems to be well below that characterizing Greater Providence in 1963, when about three-fourths of all adults (age 20 and over) reported belonging to at least one Jewish organization; only about one-fourth had no memberships. In the quarter decade interval, therefore, the levels of non-membership about doubled. Such a drop-off in organizational membership was particularly pronounced among younger adults.

As increasing proportions of the Jewish population become third and fourth generation Americans, and as their households come to include more individuals who were not born Jewish, and who may not currently identify as Jews, one can expect an increasing rate of participation by Jews in non-Jewish organizations. Comparison of the 1987 levels of participation with those of 1963 confirms this expectation by revealing an increasing level of participation in the non-Jewish organized life of the larger community, especially among women. In contrast to the 40 percent of women who belonged to one or more non-Jewish groups in Rhode Island in 1987, only about one-fourth of all women did so in 1963. The proportion of men who participated in non-Jewish organizations also increased, but the change was small, going from 48 percent in 1963 to 51 percent in 1987. More dramatic are the changes for both men and women in the number of organization memberships. In 1987, a quarter of the women and about one-third of the men participated in two or more non-Jewish groups. In 1963, the comparable percentages for men and women were only about 6 and 14 percent, respectively.
The extent of membership in Jewish organizations varies significantly among the respondents living in the different areas of the State. As in 1963, highest rates characterize the older core areas of the Jewish community on the East Side, Pawtucket, and, to some extent, Newport. Lowest levels are found in western Rhode Island and South County. The Jewish community, therefore, continues to face the challenge of enlisting the formal participation of the population, especially in the more newly established Jewish residential areas of the State.

The 1987 survey also asked respondents about their volunteer activities with Jewish and non-Jewish groups. A high level of volunteer activity characterized Jewish adults; over 40 percent indicated they had engaged in volunteer activity in the previous year. More such volunteer activity involved Jewish than non-Jewish groups, although over half of the women had volunteered in both Jewish and non Jewish groups. Among men who volunteered, four out of ten gave at least 10 hours per month to Jewish activities and one-third devoted as much time to non-Jewish volunteer work. Women were even more active in Jewish activities; half of the volunteer women spent at least 10 hours per month in such work, and 40 percent spent as much time in non-Jewish volunteer work. Such involvement in non-Jewish as well as Jewish activities suggests a fairly high degree of integration into the larger community, even among those who retain their commitments to the Jewish community.

Summary

This comparative assessment of Rhode Island’s Jewish community over the quarter century between 1963 and 1987 has highlighted some sharp changes and identified important sources of continuity.

In 1987, Jews were much more dispersed throughout the State than was true in 1963. They were also fewer in number, although the number of households had increased. This development reflects lower fertility and consequent small family size, compounded by both the aging of the population and the tendency of older people to live in their own households rather than with adult children, and by the preference among young adults to live away from their parental home. Rhode Island Jews are increasingly native born and third or fourth generation American. Many more were born outside the State, and recent in-migrants have been drawn from relatively greater distances than those who came two or three decades ago.

The Jewish population is increasingly well educated and concentrated in professional and other high white-collar occupations. Fewer, however, are self-employed. Since 1963, women have increasingly entered the labor force, reflecting developments on the general American scene.

As in 1963, a very high percentage of Jews in 1987 are or have been married, but later age at marriage characterizes the younger segments of
the population. Divorce rates, while still low compared to the general population, have risen considerably. Intermarriage rates are also substantially higher, especially among the most recently married Jews, and fewer of the recently intermarried marriages involve conversion to Judaism by the non-Jewish partner.

Most Rhode Island Jews identify with one of the three major denominations of Judaism, but there has been a decline in the percentage affiliated with Orthodox Judaism and a rise in the proportion of Reform. Despite this shifting affiliation, membership in synagogues/temples and attendance at services is not very different in 1987 from what it was in 1963. Levels of Jewish education have also remained quite constant, with some increase in the intensity of such schooling and a narrowing of the gap between men and women. Particularly noteworthy has been the rise in the proportion of children attending combined Sunday/afternoon Hebrew schools and day schools. There has been a decline, however, in observance of religious rituals, especially maintenance of Kashrut and Sabbath candle lighting; attendance at a Passover Seder and Hanukah candle lighting are more nearly universal. Also showing a decline is membership in Jewish organizations, with a concomitant rise in non-Jewish membership.

The patterns of change between 1963 and 1987 in the demographic, economic, social, and religious characteristics of the Jewish population in many ways are an extension of patterns identified in 1963 for the young, third generation segment. The emerging patterns portray a community of rich complexity and diversity undergoing important change, altering in significant ways what was, and shaping what will be in the future. There are indications of strengths and weaknesses, of growth and decline, of pride as well as concern. Continuing personal identification with Judaism concurrent with an attenuation in formal memberships and ritual practices associated in 1963 with third generation Jews has become the general norm for Rhode Island Jewry in 1987. At the same time, considerable variations continue to exist, and geographic differentials persist. As in 1963, the older, core areas of Jewish residence are characterized by more intensive levels of Jewish identification and practice. The newer, most outlying areas of Jewish settlement contain Jews who are least involved in the formal institutional structure, most likely to intermarry, and have lowest levels of observance. In part, these areal differences reflect variations in age and generational composition, in part selectivity in terms of where those who are more committed to close identity with the community choose to live.

Nonetheless, the conclusions reached on the basis of the survey undertaken a quarter century ago still hold: The overall impression conveyed by the 1987 study is of a relatively strong core of identified Jewish population, with a relatively high degree of commitment to and involvement in the Rhode Island Jewish community. That considerable integration with the
larger community has occurred is also quite clear. The challenge for the future will thus be to maintain high levels of identification and commitment in the face of such general integration. The task is made difficult by the dispersion of the population throughout the State and the maintenance of local loyalties and communal differences. The community will have to consider strengthening Jewish communal life in different locations around the State as well as generating a sense of statewide unity, building on the strong roots that many Rhode Island Jews have in the State, and integrating those who are more marginal to the community. The persistent strength of Rhode Island Jewry over the past twenty-five years augurs well for its prospects in the future.

REFERENCES


AN ENGAGEMENT, A WEDDING, AND FRIENDSHIPS

BY EVA LEVINE SCHAFFER

Although marriages may be made in heaven, the customs and mores of marriage ceremonies and engagements are made on earth and change according to the times. My parents saved newspaper clippings about their engagement and wedding in 1916 that reveal interesting customs and also include names of well-known Rhode Island families that have continued into the 1980s.

Jacob Raskin and his wife, Esther (Chorosh), and daughter, Emma, immigrated to the United States from Russia, somewhere near the Black Sea, and arrived in the United States in about 1904.

The Raskin family first lived in New York, and I have a translation from the Russian of part of a diary kept by Emma. She wrote:

I, like all young people in Russia, wanted to devote my life to better the lot of the hungry proletariat, who is to be educated and encouraged. Life in America has put me in different circumstances. The illusion of sacrifice for others evaporated, and in its place just a naked, dark truth. Instead of the intelligent girl — that I considered myself while in Russia — I am just a girl ignorant about life in general. Instead of the illusion that I can teach others appeared a desire to educate myself, to get to know.

So today is the first of May. This is the second May first I am here in America. On the day of the workmen's revolution the slaves remain slaves; those around me don't realize it's the holiday of protesting.

It appears that Emma worked in a factory. The diary says, "It's hot, I feel dizzy; I want to rest for a while. The boss sent for me. It's nearly a year that I work here, but somehow I can't adjust myself."

After a while, I don't know how long, the Raskins moved from New York to Central Falls, Rhode Island, where they owned a grocery store on High Street. Many of their customers were Polish. Emma, now no longer a factory worker, worked in the store with them.
Joseph and Emma Levine
Joseph Levine, the son of Jacob and Anna Smieliansky Levine, was born in Rassawa, Russia, and immigrated to New York. The family name was originally Levitski. Joseph's brother, Mischa Levitski, became a famous concert pianist. His concerts in Providence and Worcester were important events for the Jewish community of Rhode Island.

My father's brother Max was educated as an engineer but became Mischa's manager and then a noted musical impresario, acting as agent for many opera stars. Another brother, Dr. Lewis Lorwin, was a famous economist, serving at the Bookings Institution and also as professor at Wellesley College. He was an adviser to the U. S. delegation to the first General Assembly of the United Nations in 1946. Their sister, Sandra (Bertha) Levine Jones, was also a pianist.

Joseph Levine made a trip to Rhode Island to visit a friend and met Elizabeth Temkin Beck here. She introduced him to Emma Raskin, and they became engaged.

The Raskins gave an engagement party at their home at 428 High Street, Central Falls. Entertainment at the party was provided by a mock wedding ceremony. Morris Espo played the part of the clergyman, Jack Goldenberg acted as the bride, Sophia Surdut was the bridegroom, Max Tarnapol the best man, and Mrs. Jack Goldenberg the maid of honor.*

The newspaper article on the party also reports that luncheon was served by the hostess and that Miss Raskin received many gifts.¹

Friends also gave parties to honor the prospective bride. One such party was "a social" held at the home of Miss Sophia Zarchen. "A large number of friends of Miss Raskin were present, and during the evening games were played, a musical programme was rendered and refreshments were served. Vocal solos were rendered."²

And, of course, after the engagement parties came the wedding, on January 19, 1916. A newspaper clipping tells us that the couple was married by Rabbi Rubinstein** of the Congregation Sons of Zion of Providence.

*Editor's Note: We can find no printed reference to similar mock marriages, but they were a frequent source of entertainment in Catskills resorts. "... the man would dress up as a woman, the woman dress up as a man . . . it was a hilarious thing. Thoughout the mountains the mock marriage became the most popular do-it-yourself entertainment. It was a farcical version of the traditional wedding ceremony . . . performed so regularly that it became a ritual." From "The Rise and Fall of the Borscht Belt", Video film, produced and directed by Peter Davis, a Villon Films Production, Arthur Cantor Films.

**Picture of Rabbi Israel S. Rubinstein appears on the back cover of this issue of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes. The Congregation Ohawe Sholam of Pawtucket had been incorporated in 1905, but the group was renting temporary quarters and had no rabbi at that time.
"The bridegroom was attended by Dr. Louis Levine* as best man, and the maid of honor was Miss Lillian Milner** of Philadelphia. Bridesmaids were the Misses Gertrude Tarnapol, Sophia Zarchen, Freda Halpert, and Sarah Levenson."

The description of the bride's outfit does not sound too different from one of today, though the newspaper article calls the dress a costume. It was made of white crepe de chine, and she wore a veil fastened with orange blossoms and carried a bouquet of "Bride's roses." The reception, attended by about 100 couples, was held in Eagles Hall, Earl Street, Central Falls.

After the wedding the newlyweds honeymooned in Norfolk, Virginia, and lived at first with the bride's parents on High Street in Central Falls. Later they bought a home at 520 West Avenue, Pawtucket. For much of his life, Joseph Levine worked as an insurance agent for Metropolitan Life, though for some years he and my mother ran a variety store, called a spa, at the corner of Broad and Sackett Streets in Providence.

The Rhode Islanders listed in the newspaper stories of my parents' engagement and wedding continued to be friendly with the Levines.

Lewis Tanner recalls visiting my house on West Avenue with his father, Max Tarnapol, when he was about five years old. Max Tarnapol, best man at the mock wedding held at the Levine engagement party, was married later in 1916 to Freda Halpert, bridesmaid at the Levine wedding. In 1925 Tarnapol became the first Jew to work for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in Pawtucket. He was an assistant manager, supervising seven to ten men. He gave jobs to several other Jews, trained them, and worked with them; one of these men was Joseph Levine. Tarnapol "was a big shot: every day he got up at 6 a.m. and came home around midnight. If anyone sold a policy for $50, that was a big deal. The agents collected weekly payments from their customers 10 cents, 20 cents. If a customer paid 50 cents a week, that was a big deal, too."

On July 16, 1930, Tarnapol received a silver medal from the Metropolitan, with a citation stating: "... as Assistant Manager, you are privileged to extend counsel and advice to younger members of the Field force, who come under your direct supervision, thus enabling them to become better and stronger insurance representatives." Tarnapol died at the age of 49 in 1942.

Freda Halpert Tarnapol was a member of the School Board of Temple Emanu-El, and the Temple Emanu-El Sisterhood Board, and President of the Pawtucket Section, National Council of Jewish Women. She died in 1971 at the age of 76.

*My father's brother, who later changed his name to Lewis Lorwin.
**My father's cousin.
The Tarnapols' children were Lewis Tanner of Providence and Ruth Glasberg of Delray Beach, Florida.

Gertrude Tarnapol had a distinguished career in Jewish communal service. She worked for many years at the Jewish Community Center on Benefit Street, where she was assistant to the director, J. I. Cohen, and handled the bookkeeping and all the details. She then became office manager of the General Jewish Committee of Providence (later the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island), assisting Joseph Galkin, Executive Director, and worked there from 1947 until she retired in 1969. Governor Frank Licht was one of the speakers at a luncheon held at the Biltmore Hotel to mark her retirement. She was cited by the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island at that time in recognition of her "43 years of dedication and devotion to the Jewish community." Gertrude Tarnapol died in 1984 at the age of 88.

Rose and Jack Goldenberg, also mock wedding participants, owned a hardware store on Broad Street in Central Falls. The store was founded by Mrs. Goldenberg's father, Samuel Leven, in 1904. He thought of it as a bazaar, but mistakenly spelled the name Bazar. The Goldenbergs' son, Eldon Goldenberg of Pawtucket, still owns the store, now named Bazar Paint and Wallpaper and located in Cumberland.

Sophia Surdut, who acted the part of the bridegroom at the mock wedding, married Louis Wolosow and moved to Yonkers, New York. They had one child, Bertha A. Wolosow, who lives in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Sophia Zarchen, bridesmaid at my parents' wedding, later married William Weinstein. Their son, Irwin Sidney Weinstein, who died in 1986, and my brother, Irving, published a newspaper, The Scoop, when they were children and sold it for two cents a copy. The Weinsteins' daughter, Isabelle, (Mrs. Sidney Weinstein of Providence), remembers visiting my family. She says, "We went to the Levine house on West Avenue every Saturday, my parents, my Bobi, and the children. I learned to play bridge there when I was 11 years old. The two Bobis (Mrs. Raskin and Mrs. Zarchen), sipped tea from glasses. Eva's mother was the dearest woman I ever knew. Irving looks exactly like her."

Sarah Levenson, another bridesmaid at the wedding, married Israel Winoker. They had two children, James R. Winoker of Narragansett, Rhode Island, and Myron Winoker of Warwick, Rhode Island. Sarah Winoker died in 1966 at the age of 72.

Another member of the wedding party, though not listed in the newspaper clippings, was Irving Beck, son of Elizabeth Temkin Beck, who had introduced my parents to each other. He was the ring-bearer. Dr. Beck remembers hearing that my brother was named Irving because my mother liked the sound of his name. Dr. Beck's father was Harry S. Beck. "Like
President Truman, the S. in his name stood for nothing. My mother was usually called Lizzie."

"Fully 1000 persons gathered in the Jewish Synagogue on Howell Street . . . to witness the wedding of Harry Beck and Miss Elizabeth Temkin, a well-known young couple of the city, both members of prominent Jewish families . . . . The bridesmaids were Miss Eva A. Izenberg of this city, Miss Bella Ettenberg of New York, Miss Emma Riskin (sic) of Central Falls and Miss Sophia Surdutow (sic) of this city."

Dr. Beck recalls that one summer, when he was six or seven years old, his family shared a cottage with my family, at Crescent Heights, a summer resort near what is now Crescent Park. "I remember Mischa Levitski, the famous pianist, visiting his brother, Joe, and the rest of the Levine family that summer."

Elizabeth Beck died in 1961 at 75, and Harry Beck died in 1968 at 83. Two other children survive Harry and Lizzie Beck: Dr. Maurice Beck, who became executive vice-president of the Michigan Human Welfare League, of East Lansing, Michigan, and Dr. Aaron T. Beck, noted as the father of cognitive therapy, Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, and author of books on depression and anxiety.

My grandmother Esther Raskin was a devoutly religious woman and was greatly interested in the building of the Ohawe Sholam Synagogue on High Street in Pawtucket in 1918.* Mrs. Morris Sholes, in a letter written to Mrs. Abraham Mai, president of the Ladies' Aid and Sisterhood, in 1964, wrote: "During my term as president of Ladies' Aid, a committee composed of Mrs. Samuel Finn, Mrs. Morris Carlin and myself selected and purchased the large sterling silver and crystal chandelier now hanging in the sanctuary. This chandelier contains 152 bulbs, each bulb representing one member of the Ladies' Aid at the time the chandelier was purchased. Mrs. Tessler and Mrs. Raskin each presented a small matching chandelier in memory of their respective husbands. So, it was through the efforts of the Ladies' Aid that the beauty of the sanctuary was enhanced . . . "

Emma Levine died at the age of 57 on December 11, 1947, during Hanukah. Like so many Jews of her generation, she did not know her exact birth date, but it was always celebrated at Hanukah time. My father, Joseph Levine, died on October 19, 1976 at the age of 90.

My parents had three children. Miriam Rose died after a long illness at the age of 18 in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, while she was a freshman at Pembroke College. My brother, Irving R. Levine, gained fame as the NBC TV economics correspondent and served in Moscow and Rome.

*The Ohawe Sholom building was sold in 1979 and became the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, and a new synagogue building was built on East Avenue, Pawtucket.
holds honorary degrees from Brown University and the University of Rhode Island, among others, and has written a number of books. He is married to the former Nancy Jones; they have three children, Jeffrey, Daniel, and Jennifer.

I was a social worker for many years, first with the American Red Cross during World War II at military bases in Massachusetts and New York. I worked for several Rhode Island social agencies, including Jewish Family and Children’s Service, and, after I retired, became chairman of the March of Dimes of Rhode Island.

Until his retirement, my husband, Joseph Schaffer, was president of the American Tool Company, first located on Montgomery Street in Pawtucket and then in Lincoln, Rhode Island. We have two children, David Emmet (named after my husband’s father and my mother) and Miriam Schaffer Idelson, (Mrs. Jeffrey Idelson), and have one grandchild, Laiah Jo Idelson.

NOTES

1Unnamed and undated newspaper clipping
2Unnamed newspaper, January 20, 1916
3Telephone Interview with Lewis Tanner, July 18, 1988
4Providence Journal, January 28, 1984
5Telephone interview with Mrs. Sidney Weinstein, August 2, 1988.
6Telephone interview with Dr. Irving Beck, October 18, 1988
7Unnamed newspaper, May 10, 1909
8Rhode Island Herald, April 5, 1968
"WHY NOT A JEWISH GIRL?"
THE JEWISH EXPERIENCE AT PEMBROKE COLLEGE IN BROWN UNIVERSITY

BY KAREN M. LAMOREE

The February 21, 1896, issue of The Organ of Congregation Sons of Israel and David reported in the women's column that Brown University's newly-established Women's College was raising money for its endowment and urged the women of the congregation to contribute to the cause of educating the women of Rhode Island. The first Jewish woman to graduate from Brown was probably Clara Gomberg, class of 1897, who listed her address as 214 Benefit Street, Providence. The number of Jewish women increased slowly, but steadily over the years. By 1942, however, the dean of the college, by then known as Pembroke College in Brown University, noted an admissions policy, "...We accept all [Jewish women] who come to us from Providence, and enough others to make a proper proportion in each dormitory. We reject each year now 100 to 150 Jewish applicants, nearly all of whom are fully prepared." Clearly, between 1891 and 1942 attitudes and policies became less hospitable to the admission of Jewish women.¹

These changes reflect not only the issue of anti-Semitism, but issues of class, race, ethnicity and gender, common to many institutions of higher education. The admission of women to Brown was engendered by nearly twenty years of community agitation by educator Sarah E. Doyle, the Rhode Island Women's Club, the Providence Journal, and parents of prospective students. Brown was established in 1764 by Baptists and although the president was required to be a Baptist minister until 1926, its charter stated that "into this liberal and catholic institution shall never be admitted any religious tests." The people of Rhode Island viewed the school, which had educated so many of their sons, with proprietary interest. The admission of women was promoted successfully, therefore, by appeals to state pride and Progressive sensibilities of justice.

Brown began admitting women in 1891 under its coordinate system with a mandate to provide a collegiate education for the women of Rhode Island, particularly those who were unable to afford to attend school away from

Karen M. Lamoree is the Christine Dunlap Farnham Archivist of Brown University.

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home. Southeastern New England women responded immediately to this long-awaited opportunity, and the enrollment went from seven in the first year to approximately 200 by 1900. The coordinate system was designed to provide women with the advantages of both a university faculty and curriculum and those of a small women's college. The women were admitted and graduated under the same requirements, but lower level classes were usually segregated by gender. The women's classes took place in storefront buildings on Benefit Street until Pembroke Hall was built in 1897 by the women of the Rhode Island Society for the Collegiate Education of Women.

This early period, under President E. Benjamin Andrews, a passionate and charismatic advocate of women's education, was one in which all students academically prepared to begin collegiate study were admitted. Under the coordinate system the college maintained a separate admissions office. The only information required of applicants was name, address, parents' name, and high school grades. While many of the applicants were known to Andrews or the college's dean, Louis Snow, interviews were not required.

The vast majority of students came from the lower-middle and middle socio-economic classes and were local residents, living with family or friends. No dormitory accommodations were available until 1900 and non-commuting students lived in approved boarding houses. Many women were special students who arranged their classes around work schedules and were past the standard age for college enrollment. Efforts to regulate student behavior were stymied by these conditions and Dean Snow's dislike of reprimanding women. The only college-wide organization for the women was the Christian Association, then an auxiliary of the national, evangelical Young Women's Christian Association. The Christian Association, as at other colleges, sponsored the freshman reception.

The atmosphere of the first nine years of women's admissions at Brown was not one likely to inspire widespread discrimination in admissions or in college life. The Women's College operated under a mandate to educate all qualified Rhode Island women and numerical growth was encouraged. The women were similar in socio-economic background, in desire for intellectual challenge, motivations for social mobility and/or career advancement. In addition, because of their gender, these women among themselves did not challenge ideas about the purpose of education at elite colleges — preparation for leadership roles in society at large. The women were aware of the need to prove their capability to doubters. The general atmosphere encouraged the women to band together and to excel, to the extent that the women invariably outperformed the men scholastically. Women were equated with that group of people who, in the college man's eye, did not approach college from the "proper" perspective. Typically, the college man, interested in sports and fraternity life above all else, viewed
scholastic achievers as belonging to either immigrant groups, the lower classes, or the religious. The men vilified the women as “greasy grinds.” although acceptance of individual women was the norm. Jewish women, therefore, if they conformed to the stereotype of the Jewish student — studious, serious of purpose, not wealthy, urban — would have conformed to the norm for almost all of the women at Brown University in the 1890s.

The woman who was probably the first Jewish woman to graduate from Brown entered a self-selected community of overachievers, one conscious of group identity and the need for solidarity. Clara Angela Gomberg was a Russian immigrant, born in 1873 in Novogiorgevsk in southern Russia.

She attended Classical High School in Providence and entered Brown in September 1893. Gomberg was a popular member of her class, although not a member of either of the two sororities. She was a member of the important Musical Clubs Board, which included the Glee Club and the Banjo and Guitar Club. Photographs of the quartet of musicians show a close-knit group of which Clara was clearly an integral part. The class notes indicate that she gave a toast at an 1896 class supper, and apparently her efforts were remembered favorably because she was asked to be
toastmistress at the class' 20th reunion. Her reminiscences reveal her closeness to President Andrews, who seems to have set an overall tone of civility and acceptance for the Brown community.

To some extent the atmosphere of studiousness, casual social life and haphazard discipline would change when Andrews' successor, William H.P. Faunce, fired Snow because he felt it improper for a man to be dean of a women's college. Faunce hired Dr. Anne Emery, who was not only a classical scholar and creator of a separate "life together" for the women at the University of Wisconsin, but also was most definitely a gracious "lady." Faunce hired her, in part, to help him enforce middle class mores and codes of behavior. Lady-like behavior was prescribed and taught, particularly by Emery in her role as housemother of the new dormitory on Benefit Street and by the Student Government Association established under her aegis. The women were encouraged to form their own separate clubs, and sororities boomed. Unsurprisingly, the flourishing of exclusiveness resulted in bigotry. By 1903 the Catholic women, most of whom were Irish, had formed a separate sorority, Beta Delta Phi — undoubtedly a result of discrimination and not desire for their own club. The membership of Jewish women in sororities, however, varied, with some in Alpha Beta (the most prestigious) or Zeta Zeta Zeta, while others were not members of any Greek letter society.

Emery and Faunce were successful in their design of the separate "life together" for the women at a time when coeducation was coming under attack, particularly by private universities. Emery resigned in 1905 and was replaced by Lida Shaw King, who was the daughter of a Brown trustee. Not only to our late twentieth-century eyes but to those of some of her students, King was inordinately concerned with propriety and, perhaps, issues of class. Under King, the first known overt discrimination occurred. Oral histories of Jewish alumnae who matriculated under Dean King do not mention any problems with her, but the same cannot be said for Black students.

It is important to compare the experiences of minority groups because their treatment is often related, particularly in relation to dormitory residence. Four daughters of the Minkins family, Blacks from Pawtucket, graduated from Brown, but not without incident. King forbade two of the sisters from attending their proms, but rescinded the prohibition after the news was reported in the papers. King's prejudices were made clear a year earlier when she had given failing marks to both Rosa and another student of poor circumstances for passing work. It seems that in Dean King's mind being of a lower socio-economic class was as undesirable as being of a non-White race.

The Minkins, however, participated fully in the life of the college. They were commuting students and did not suffer from King's de facto policy
of forbidding Black students in the dormitories. A light-skinned Black woman from Washington, D.C., “passed” and lived in Miller Hall. When her race was discovered in 1916-17 she was expelled from the dormitory. In June 1917 the Executive Committee of the college reported that:

It was the opinion of the committee that the admission of young women of the colored race to classes was not objectionable; that for the present their admission to college dormitories was undesirable, also that colored young women from a distance should not be encouraged to enter the college. This policy statement was a compromise between desires to limit Black enrollment and the college’s mandate to educate Rhode Island women. King, nonetheless, continued to allow a steady increase in Jewish enrollment during her tenure, and in 1922 the Christian Association reported to Rabbi Samuel Gup of Providence that there were twenty Jewish women at Brown, making an average of five per class or approximately 5% of the total. In contrast only 2.9% of Brown men were Jewish.

Faunce replaced King in 1922 with Dr. Margaret Shove Morriss. Morriss is an enigmatic figure, and her personal feelings on race, class and ethnicity are unclear. Although she befriended individual Jewish women, the architecture for the Jewish quota system was created during her tenure. Morriss was dean of the college from 1922 to 1950. Under her guidance Pembroke went from a regional school to one of national reputation. As the college became increasingly popular among applicants, it could be more selective in its students. Under Morriss’ tenure it became more difficult for women to obtain admission to Pembroke than it was for men to be admitted to Brown. Morriss accomplished Pembroke’s transformation during a period when the existence of women’s higher education was under attack.

The 1920s were a period in which issues of race, ethnicity, class, and gender intensified and became ever more interrelated. The presence of women on campus again became an issue of class. The specter of coeducation, according to some men, harmed Brown’s prestige by making the university similar to state universities which were for the poor. The 1920s, a period of rising bigotry and prejudice against the new immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, particularly Jews, culminated in restrictive immigration quotas. Jews became associated with the immigrant urban poor at many colleges, paralleling societal trends, and quotas reflective of academic nativism were enacted at Harvard and Yale, for example. In this context of class, racial, and sexual prejudice, it became increasingly important for women at Pembroke to adhere to White, middle class, Protestant codes of behavior. The equation of Jews with immigrant behavior resulted in discrimination at other institutions of higher learning, and it is possible that it also affected Pembroke.
Another factor in the Jewish “problem” was that the combination of Jewish cultural emphasis on education, desires for social mobility, and increased economic power created an influx of Jewish applicants to colleges at the same time that student body composition and attitudes were changing while Pembroke was becoming more selective in general. In a circular argument, as a college became more competitive it could be more selective, but one way to become more competitive was by being more selective. Increasing numbers of upper middle and upper class women were attending college, and decreasing emphasis on scholastic achievement on campuses nationwide rendered the motivation and intensity of Jewish students aberrant at some colleges. This was not necessarily true at Pembroke, however, where the women continued to outperform the men scholastically throughout the years.

Although admissions standards were tightened during the early to mid 1920s, Pembroke continued to admit the academically qualified without making distinctions for class, race, and religion with the exception of Black resident students. While most other colleges seem to have enacted Jewish quotas in the 1920s, evidence of concentrated efforts to homogenize the racial and ethnic background of the student body do not appear in Pembroke application forms until the mid 1930s. Eva A. Mooar, a Radcliffe graduate, was hired as a dean of admissions in 1927 and it was under her administration that the admissions process changed, although we do not know at whose instigation. The application form, the first screening device of all admissions offices, was not amended until 1936. In that year the form began to ask prospects for the first time to self-report their race, and, significantly for Blacks and Jews, proposed living arrangements. Because the cards completed by the deans for each matriculated student seem to have been completed after a student was accepted, their usefulness lay in creating statistics on the class after composition. The cards asked the student for her citizenship and religion; for parents' birthplace, citizenship, occupation, education, and religion. In 1928 the cards were amended to include language spoken at home, and race. The information yielded by these cards was probably used in limitation decisions, but not for individual admissions. Interestingly, students had a great deal of trouble completing the questions about race and nationality, regardless of their background. For example a student who entered in 1944 reported her race as “Syrian,” but the admissions office amended it to read “White.”

The students’ difficulty was exceeded only by Mooar’s own confusion in establishing characteristics. Was Jewishness a race or a religion? The religion section’s note varied between “Hebrew” and “Jewish,” while the race section was most often completed as “White,” although infrequently it could be “Hebrew” or “Jewish.” It seems that Mooar did not consider Jewish women a separate race, as other deans did, such as Virginia
Gildersleeve of Barnard, although Dean Morriss would refer to “that race” in her 1942 description of the admission of Jewish women.

An interview summary sheet in each student’s file included sections for interviewer’s evaluation of the applicant’s “personal appearance, family background, mental equipment, traits, financial, activities, interests, goal.” The acquisition of this subjective descriptive information occurred prior to student self-reporting or preparatory school correspondence in the admission process. The cards and interview sheet commentary usually related to appearance, family, and personality. This selection reflects racial, ethnic, and, most importantly, class biases, which could be directed at any applicant, but most often at those not conforming to White, Anglo-Saxon standards. Through the 1930s and early 1940s Mooar and/or her assistants commented most often on the characteristics of women she thought might be Jewish. Examples of Mooar’s attempts at characterizing students appear below and illustrate the admissions office’s concerns about the composition of the student body. (Note that these comments were made by Mooar from 1929-1945).

Student A ’33: “Can’t tell whether Jewish or not.”

Student B ’36: “Father has wavy hair, few front teeth and a marked accent. Says they speak German at home. Germans or Jews? Are blonde, so probably the former.”

Student C ’36: “Snobbish.”

Student D ’37: “Pretty girl with a southern accent.”

Student E ’43: “Likes people, inclined to race prejudice.”

Student F ’44: “Not especially Jewish features.”

Student G ’44: “Tall, dark, rather attractive recognizable Jewish features.”

Student H ’45: “Small, refined features. Color just off-white. 32 years old. Mother, white — deceased. Father black. Sister married a white man.”

Student I ’48: “Looks Italian.”

Student J ’48: “Miss G. told her dorm situation not too good for large numbers (crowded) and told her we have quota.”

Student K ’48: “Splendid all-around type, Exactly what we want.”

Student L ’49: “Nice, ‘money’ people.”
"Why Not a Jewish Girl": The Jewish Experience at Pembroke College in Brown University

Clearly, the Admissions Office was preoccupied with determination of race, class, and ethnicity.

It is not surprising that we begin to see reports about the admissions of Jewish women at Pembroke only after the form was amended in 1936. The class of 1940 was the first for which the deanery was able to establish characteristics of applicants with relative accuracy. It is in 1942 that the first discussion of the Jewish quota appears in the records of Pembroke's Advisory Committee. Dean Morriss reported to the alumnae, faculty, and trustees assembled:

We have accepted every student we can get, regardless of whether we can house or not, provided she is adequately prepared. We always take as many Jewish students as we can. The theory is that we accept all who come to us from Providence, and enough others to make a proper proportion in each dormitory. We reject each year now about 100 to 150 Jewish applicants, nearly all of whom are fully prepared. Pembroke College is popular with that race because we have such nice Jewish girls in our highly selective group, and because they are well received here among other students.20

Dean Morriss was a national leader in championing the war effort and the causes for which the United States was fighting, which makes her quota policies all the more ironic.

Also revealing is a 1943 report from Eva Mooar which groups Jewish women with financial aid applicants and public school students, i.e., with a "lower" class of students.21 This categorization would appear again in the late 1960s over discussions about increasing the admissions of Black students to Pembroke and Brown.

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s the Executive Committee heard complaints about dormitory room shortage, and in 1940 the deanery reported that applications for admissions had doubled since 1930.22 The 1943 report from the deanery alluded to increasing applications from Jews. In 1945 Mooar commented on startling increases in applications from all groups:

It should be remembered, however, that they [the statistics] are probably more padded this year than ever. (More applicants have applied to two or three colleges.) *This is not only true of the Jewish girls.* Word has gone around that the women's colleges are crowded and applicants are taking no chances. [emphasis added]23

It seems clear from these reports that Jewish women were applying to colleges in numbers admissions offices considered higher than in previous years. Goldstein and Goldscheider's 1967 study of Providence Jews revealed
that Jewish women over the age of twenty-five were more than three times as likely to have attended college as non-Jewish Providence women. They also reported little significant difference between the median years of schooling for Jewish women from 25-44 and 45-64 years of age, except for those who were third generation Americans (which were not part of the Pembroke cohort, in general). We can assume, therefore, that the women entering Brown in the period under discussion, largely the 45-64 age group in 1967, were more likely to attend college than their non-Jewish contemporaries and were also more likely to enter college than those 65 and over. Like the Asians in the 1980s, Jews may have seemed to be flooding colleges because cultural emphases on education and an emerging cusp of economic stability made them more likely to desire higher education. This perception was heightened, it seems, by Jewish women's "padding" — applying to several colleges, or "safety schools" — a practice common today, but not 40-50 years ago. Colleges, then and now, were concerned with maintaining "proper proportions" for many reasons, but unlike other schools Pembroke seems to have treated its Jewish students equally once an applicant passed through the admissions gauntlet.

The experience of Jewish women after matriculation as reported in oral history interviews was a positive one. Most do not mention any awareness of quotas or remember any subtle or overt discrimination. Although Judith Weiss Cohen '44 recalls "knowing" that she would not be eligible for a certain scholarship as another Jewish woman had recently been its recipient, she recalled that "They did give me a partial scholarship and raised it every year . . . There was never the slightest feeling of discrimination from the faculty, students, the administration . . . [Dean Morriss] was very good to me, she encouraged me a lot in my career goals . . . We had a wonderful relationship." Zelda Fisher Gourse '36 recalled that her heritage was an issue in an election, but that she won the election. All of the alumnae underestimated the number of Jewish women per class, perhaps a result of feelings of isolation. A typical comment was that of Celia Ernstof Adler '25, "I was the only Jewish girl in my class but I never felt anything anti-Semitic." Much of the cohort were Russian immigrants, or as time went on, the children of Russian immigrants, while others were of Polish or German extraction. This distribution was typical of Providence's Jewish population, of which three-quarters of its naturalized citizens in 1906 were of Russian or Polish nationality.

Sarah Mazick Saklad '28 typifies in some ways the Jewish student at Pembroke of the period prior to 1945. She was the daughter of Russian immigrants and attended Providence's Classical High School. She recalled in an oral history interview that "Going to school . . . getting education

*Editor's Note: For an example of a Jewish member of an early class fitting into college life, see Appendix, p. 141, "Musical Memories" by Rose Presel.
was the [number] one priority." She entered Brown and wanted to graduate in three years and go on to medical school. Dean Morriss counseled her that haste could harm her grades but arranged for Sarah to enroll in a course for which the professor felt she was unprepared. Morriss encouraged Sarah to apply to Johns Hopkins Medical School and arranged for the monies to pay for the schooling. Dr. Saklad's interview made no mention of Jewishness, although she did comment on the widespread unpopularity of daily chapel, a dislike unrelated to students' religious background.

The Mazick Saklad story is important for several reasons: as an example of Morriss' behavior, the fact that it was known by many of the students, and an interesting comment by a member of the class of 1931 in her interview that she had felt Morriss was "sort of anti-Semitic" because of her "superior attitude and [in] some of the girls she befriended." But, she continued, her perception must have been faulty given Morriss' championing of the Jewish Mazick Saklad.31

The interview of Zelda Fisher Gourse '3632 portrays another Jewish experience and one of structural assimilation — the acceptance of a minority group as a full part of the institution. Like Sarah Mazick Saklad, Zelda's parents were Russian immigrants, and her mother in particular, "always hungered for education and said her children were going to be college graduates." While Zelda's education itself was clearly of great importance, the highlight of her four years was her election to the position of Student Government Association president. She was the first Jewish woman to attain that position, and her background was a factor in the election. The 1934-1935 election, Zelda recalls, was different from previous elections. "It had been a closed circuit, but that year ... it was open to the whole student body and you could campaign. I remember a Jewish girl in my class who came from Boise, Idaho, who went to my best friend and said I'd never make it. My best friend, who's not Jewish, didn't think I'd make it either." While the votes were counted, Zelda said, "I got into my car and drove to the Seekonk River and said to myself, 'Dear God, Why not a Jewish girl?' The girl running against me was not Jewish . . . that night my mother said I had a phone call, I'd been elected!" Only one incident related to her heritage marred her year in office and that prejudice came from outside the university.

Zelda, as Student Government president, read all of the Association's incoming mail. She opened the mailbox to find anti-Semitic mail from Communist organizations which read, "The Jews will take over the world. You as student government president should do all you can to thwart what they will do." The letters seemed to have been written by an uneducated person with not only a poor grasp of written English, but also a lack of imagination in assuming that the president could not be Jewish. Dean Morriss advised Zelda to ignore the mailings as the work of cranks, and
although Zelda felt they were serious, she realized there was little she could do about them.

Zelda also played a leading role in her class Sophomore Masque and was senior speaker on Ivy Day, the culminating ritual of four years at Pembroke. In an ironic twist, the first Jewish president of student government was also a member of the Christian Association board. Zelda characterized the Christian Association, however, as "not necessarily Christian, [but rather] it was a religious organization to further understanding." Although it would not be until the 1940s that the students would debate changing the name of Christian Association to one more all-encompassing, and a list of places of worship in the student handbook in the 1930s did not include synagogues, as early as 1933 the Freshmen Council advised its successors to change the traditional date of the freshman reception as it fell on a Jewish holiday. If a woman whose Jewishness was an integral part of her character could be on the "Christian" Association board, it seems clear that the acceptance of which Morriss spoke did indeed exist on the women's campus. This level of tolerance and freedom from racism on the part of students was not true for the men if one only glances through some of their publications.

The period of discrimination against the admission of resident Jewish women followed early efforts to ban Black women from the dormitories and occurred during a time in the 1930s when the world was becoming aware of German actions against the Jews. Clearly the Pembroke administration failed to see any connection between their policies and anti-Semitism. No reasons were ever given for these policies, but factors included anti-Semitism, issues of class, and the creation of a "proper" residential atmosphere which precluded Black women entirely and limited Jewish residency. These problems do not seem to have intruded, however, on the Jewish women's experiences after admission.

One of Morriss' accomplishments was changing Pembroke from a commuter school to a residential college. The student body, some colleges felt, should be a microcosm of the larger society, and Jews, Catholics, and Blacks should not be "overrepresented," i.e., colleges should maintain the homogeneous student bodies of the past. One way of ensuring adherence to the mandate to educate Rhode Island women and yet maintain "proper proportions" in residential life was to continue to admit commuting Jews and establish a quota in the dormitories, which would ensure "proper proportions." Because admission for resident Jews was more selective than for resident non-Jews, it was the marginal student who suffered. This selectivity was particularly problematic prior to the 1947 erection of the large dormitory Andrews Hall. Morriss had been stymied in her efforts to create a residential college by the lack of modern dormitory facilities, and many students were housed in haphazard fashion. The influx of students...
"Why Not a Jewish Girl": The Jewish Experience at Pembroke College in Brown University during World War II under Morriss' accelerated curriculum exacerbated the housing problem, particularly since the Pembroke dormitories were used for Navy personnel. After 1947, however, adequate housing became available.

Concurrently with the erection of new dormitory facilities came a national trend against discrimination, particularly discrimination toward Jews in higher education. In Mooar's 1940-1949 Admissions "Policy" file are two items that demonstrate that she was aware of this trend and its possible consequences and one letter from an alumna with a different perspective.

The alumna, class of 1900, reported in 1944 to Mooar that an acquaintance had told her that a Pembroke student left the college because there were too many Jews there. The alumna went on, "I'm wondering if this statement is correct because as I read the news from Pembroke there doesn't seem to be a large number of Jewish women. I'm asking for information not because of any personal feelings on the matter, but simply to refute any misstatements about my Alma Mater which may be floating around." Mooar's reply carefully straddled the fence:

The number of Jewish girls at Pembroke College is not large. Generally we are very proud of our Jewish students for they are unusually fine girls, and their contribution to the life of the College is good. Occasionally, of course, we have a student who is disappointing, but that is true of the Christian girls also. The girl to whom you referred in your letter transferred to Pembroke College because she was dissatisfied with the college from which she came; she has now transferred from Pembroke because she was dissatisfied here. I think, perhaps, she is the kind of person who is going to find something wrong everywhere she goes.35

Mooar, like Barnard's Gildersleeve.36 complimented the Jewish women while maintaining limitations on their numbers.

Discrimination would become less acceptable as World War II went on. In 1944, then Army Private Bernard Kusinitz '41 wrote from Fort Church in Rhode Island to his alma mater:

Gentlemen:

I am writing this letter in the spirit of the highest indignation and regret. I was about to send a donation to the Alumni Fund amounting to a substantial increase over previous donations. However, I was just informed that a very dear friend of mine was refused admission to Pembroke because of religious reasons. I need say very little more.
At a time like this when my comrades, and perhaps myself at any time, are being called upon to sacrifice their lives for democracy and freedom of religion, I feel very little desire to associate myself or contribute to any group connected in any way with any form of religious discrimination. It was especially shocking to hear that my beloved Alma Mater was such a group.

W. Chesley Worthington of Alumni Relations sent a letter meant to be soothing to Pvt. Kusinitz asserting that no discrimination could exist at Brown, given its charter. Worthington sent copies of both letters to Mooar. Moor's file also contains a series of clippings describing events in New York City in 1946. The clippings report on the findings by the Mayor's Committee on Unity, chaired by Brown trustee Charles Evans Hughes, Jr., class of 1909, of alleged discrimination against Jews, Blacks, and Catholics in New York's private non-sectarian institutions of higher learning. The mayor's office was reported as planning to use the tax code which forbade discrimination by tax-exempt schools to force compliance with non-discriminatory laws.

The Pembroke deanery, from the evidence in these files, was made aware of possible financial repercussions from their quota system. These considerations, combined, perhaps, with available housing, probably engendered a more sensitive approach to Jewish admissions. The admission of and assignment of dormitory space to Blacks would await the 1950s-60s for amelioration.

The history of Jewish admissions to Pembroke College in Brown University, then, can be broken down into at least three distinct periods. The early period, 1891-1927, was characterized by open admissions to the academically qualified. The students were highly motivated, and the women's community was one in which scholastic achievement and seriousness of purpose were considered the goal and the norm, respectively. The Women's College was largely a commuter school of urban lower-middle and middle class students. Attempts were made to inculcate lady-like behavior in the students, especially in the backlash against the supposed connection between coeducation and lower-class colleges. Black women were forbidden from residing in the dormitories, although local women continued to be admitted.

Dean Morris' entrance in 1922 marks the beginning of Pembroke's emergence as a college attracting a national student body. This coincided with increasing national emphasis on non-scholastic endeavors and behaviors, increasing admissions of women from upper classes, an influx of Jews into colleges and universities, and a trend toward prejudice. Into this context came reports of quotas at other Ivy League institutions, and it should not be surprising, therefore, to see Pembroke following the lead of its Ivy League peers as it attempted to become ever more competitive.
on a national basis. It should be noted, however, that the quotas were only for residential students. Pembroke still operated under a mandate to educate the women of Rhode Island. Commuting Jewish women were accepted on the same basis as their non-Jewish peers. The best residential Jewish students were also judged on the same basis as the other applicants. It was the marginal residential Jewish woman who was less likely to be accepted than a marginal non-Jewish woman. After matriculation, Jewish women seem to have been fully accepted by the students and faculty, according to our oral histories. Jewish women were aware of other members of their cohort, but underestimated their number and may have felt isolated.

The era following World War II seems to show some evidence of a growing economic and social sensitivity to the potential problems of quotas. Further research will no doubt show that the quota system was dropped shortly thereafter. Morriss retired in 1950 and Mooar followed shortly thereafter.

Like the Asians of the 1980s, Jewish women of the 1920s — 1940s were a victim at many private colleges and universities of an influx of applications of the qualified. This increase challenged administrators' imperatives for the proper student body composition as defined by their assumptions about race, class, and ethnicity.

NOTES

1The Organ of the Congregations Sons of Israel and David, v1(5), February 21, 1896, p.1.
2Pembroke College Dean Margaret Shove Morriss in the Pembroke College Advisory Committee minutes, August 5, 1942, p.1.
4Pembroke College – Admissions Record Book.
6Clara Gomberg received her A.M. from the University of Nebraska in 1905 and became a teacher of modern languages, Latin, civics, and American history at Wheaton College and a variety of preparatory schools. She continued her interest in music, giving recitals of Russian songs to benefit World War I relief efforts. She died in Havana, Cuba, in 1940, and the Pembroke Alumnae Association noted (in what seems to be meant as a compliment) in her obituary, “She was born in Russia, of Russian parentage, but she was so vital and alive in her manner that she seemed typically American.” Ironically, in later life, the woman who was probably the first Jewish woman to graduate from Brown turned to

I would like to thank Judith Weiss Colten and Iona Harris for their help in research for this article.
Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes


Oral history interview with Beatrice Carter Minkins and Rosa Jessup Minkins, March 10, 1982, with Katherine Hinds.

Pembroke College -- Executive Committee -- Meeting Minutes, June 15, 1917.

Lucille Rogers, general secretary, Christian Association, Women's College in Brown University, December 7, 1922, to Rabbi Samuel M. Gup of Providence in Topic file Pembroke College -- Students, Jewish. The figure given in 1922 should not be used as an indication for subsequent years as an unscientific survey of the class composition seems to indicate growth. Increases in this period would have been tied to the Rhode Island Jewish population, as the college remained largely local through the end of the 1920s.


See, for example: Lamoree, Miller, the *Brown Daily Herald* -- Managing Board's Scrapbook from 1928, various articles in the *Brown Daily Herald* and the *Brown Jug* through the 1920s.


*The information following in the text was retrieved from the Pembroke deanery's individual student files. Concerns for privacy do not allow us to identify the individual file from which a quotation is drawn.

*Radcliffe seems to have instituted a limitations program around 1936 also. The percentage of Jewish freshmen there increased from 17.7% in 1934-35 to a high of 24.8% in 1936-37 to a new low of 16.5% in 1937-38. In Barbara Miller Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1985), p.144. It seems probable that the number of Jewish women would have continued to increase if a limitations program was not at work.

Gordon, p. 518.

No identification of identity is possible for reasons of privacy, but the quotations come from the Pembroke deanery's individual student files.
"Why Not a Jewish Girl": The Jewish Experience at Pembroke College in Brown University

20Morris in the Pembroke College Advisory Committee meeting minutes, August 4, 1942, p.1.
21Ibid., April 6, 1943, p.1.
22Pembroke College – Executive Committee meeting minutes, October 29, 1940.
23Morris in Pembroke College Advisory Committee meeting minutes, April 3, 1945, p.2.
25"Geographic Diversity" was a byword for discriminatory admissions at colleges. Gildersleeve at Barnard, for example, admitted to quotas which limited the number of local women, especially Jews, but reminded her audience of the need for maintaining geographic diversity. In Gordon, p.516. This policy of discrimination against local students can be considered an abrogation, in part, of some of the reasoning for the college's establishment.
27Bessie Bloom Wessel 'II reported that this isolation at Connecticut colleges was a result, in part, of the Jewish community's failure to welcome students to temples in the same way the Christian churches did. In Bessie Bloom Wessel, "The Jewish Girl at College," The Jewish Woman, v4(2), April 1924, p.4. Wessel's son, Dr. Morris A. Wessel, in a letter to Mildred Sidney Marks (Pembroke '38), Dec. 13, 1988, wrote about his mother "One of the interesting memories I have of her Pembroke experience was how much she looked forward to going to reunions. She would fall into the arms of her classmates... I always thought this to be a rather remarkable event, since as she told it she was one of the first Jewish girls to go to Pembroke, certainly one of the first poor Jewish girls who walked from Lippitt Street, and arrived cold and frozen, but evidently accepted with great warmth by her classmates."
29Information on the students' backgrounds comes from the oral history interviews and the Pembroke deanery's individual student files. Information on Providence's Jewish community is available from, for example, Goldstein and Goldscheider, p. 26, and Geraldine S. Foster, The Jews in Rhode Island: A Brief History, (Rhode Island Ethnic Heritage Commission and Rhode Island Publications Society, 1985).
30Mazick Saklad interview.
31Miller Roitman interview.
32Fisher Gourse interview.
33Pembroke College – Student handbooks, 1933, 1935 and Pembroke College – Freshman Council notebook, 1933.
34See, for example, the Brown Jug.
35Margaret N. Goodwin, August 15, 1944, to Pembroke College Registrar. Eva A. Mooar, associate dean and director of admission at Pembroke College to Margaret N. Goodwin, August 21, 1944, in Pembroke College – Admissions Office – Policies, 1940-1949 file. Note that Mooar does not mention scholastic achievements, but rather the Jewish students'
"contribution to the life of the college." This is an example of the confusion over the purpose of women's education and the increasing importance of being an "all-around girl, rather than an intellectual or "grind." (See, for example: Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, Alma Mater, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), pp.279f. and Solomon, pp.157f). Significantly, Jewish women should have excelled given the selectivity with which they were chosen. The deanery missed opportunities to enhance the college's reputation through the number of its alumnae pursuing graduate study, as Jewish women seem to be more likely to do so (Goldstein and Goldscheider, p.65).

Gildersleeve, who administered a system to limit local women, e.g., Jewish women in the name of geographic diversity, commented on the Jewish women at Barnard, "The Jews were of course an important element in the make-up of our student body...the various religions got along well together...and the Jews generally mingled with the others in the student body on friendly terms and were active in student affairs." In Virginia Crocheron Gildersleeve, Many a Good Crusade, (New York: Macmillan, 1954), p.73. Significantly, Barnard's limitations were supported by Barnard founder Annie Nathan Meyer, a Sephardic Jew from New York, partly for reasons of class. In Gordon, pp. 516, 517.


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APPENDIX I

LIST OF JEWISH STUDENTS AT PEMBROKE COLLEGE
IN BROWN UNIVERSITY

Classes of 1897 to 1926

This incomplete list was compiled from a 1922 list of the Christian Association, from the Historical Catalogue of Brown University, 1764-1934, and from interviews by Judith Weiss Cohen. It may inadvertently include non-Jews and exclude some Jews.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97</td>
<td>Clara Gomberg</td>
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<td>Rose B. Bachrach Pollock '06</td>
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My first musical memory goes back to my first piano lesson when I was six years old. My parents, Joseph and Esther Presel, were very fond of music and planned to have their four children, Samuel, Rose, Charlotte and Howard, play musical instruments. My first piano teacher, with a diploma from the Leipzig (Germany) Conservatory, was Percy F. Middleton, who was considered the best teacher in Rhode Island. My sister and I took three lessons a week and never missed a day of practicing the piano. What a thrill it was to receive the first copy of sheet music with a picture on the cover and title, after using exercise books for the first year!

As we progressed, we began to play Mozart and Beethoven sonatas and compositions of other famous composers such as Schubert and Schumann. We then began to play works that were composed for two pianos, and we devoted our later concert career to performing entire programs of two-piano music. We owned possibly the largest collection of music for two pianos, including transcriptions of great works made by my sister, Charlotte.

Our first public recital was performed when I was ten years old and my sister was eight. It was held at the Froebel Hall* in Providence. Each of us played solo groups, and we played one group of two-piano music. I played the first piano concerto of Mendelssohn with my teacher at the second piano. The Providence Journal reported: "An audience numbering about 200 was present in Froebel Hall, corner of Brown and Angell Streets, last night to enjoy the presentation of Rose and Sadie** Presel...in a programme which would be considered difficult by many artists...Miss Rose responded to long applause by rendering a waltz from Moszkowski and Miss Sadie's encore was an Etude by Wollenhoupt."

We began to become well-known and were invited to play for local music clubs and private affairs. As teenagers we were asked to join the Chopin

*Now the Samuel and Rieka Rapaporte Hillel House.

**My sister's name was Sadie Lotte, but when we began performing professionally, our manager suggested she use the name Charlotte.
Club, and we performed for the Club very often during the following years. I became President of the Club in 1979, the year of celebration of the 100th anniversary of its founding.

We often played for organizations which planned to raise funds for charitable purposes. Before Alumnae Hall was built on the Pembroke College campus, we were asked to perform a two-piano concert to raise funds for the building. The concert took place on Saturday evening, May 6, 1922, in Pembroke Hall on the top floor, now the College Chapel, now the Library.

The teacher who prepared us for our later concert career was Felix Fox, concert pianist, graduate of the Paris Conservatory and Director of the Fox-Buonamici School of Music in Boston. He frequently performed as soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. For many years, under his direction, we performed solo recitals and two-piano concerts at Steinert Hall, the main concert hall in Boston at that time.

Charlotte and I made our New York debut in a concert of works for two pianos in Aeolian Hall and received excellent reviews from New York music critics. Many of our musical friends from Rhode Island attended the concert. After the program a member of the audience came to the Green Room to congratulate us. He was an elderly, white-haired man who told us that the last time he had heard the Liszt Concerto Pathetique, which we played, was in Weimar, Germany, when Liszt and his pupil performed it. This man was the composer John Orth, who was one of Liszt's last pupils.

It is interesting to note that Paul Whiteman and his orchestra gave a concert at Aeolian Hall on the same day on which we performed. Our concert was in the afternoon and Whiteman's in the evening.

We procured the services of a manager, who arranged bookings for us in New York, Boston and other New England cities. Brochures advertising our recitals quoted Philip Hale, music critic of the Boston Herald, "Playing without notes there was complete understanding between the two pianistes (sic) with a resulting excellence in unity and precision," and James Gibbons Huneker of The New York Times, "The Misses Presselle* are pretty, unaffected, and play effectively...their accuracy, speed, synchronization, and technical fluency are admirable." Among the clippings I have saved is one from the Jewish Review "An American Paper for American Jews" saying "The harmony and perfect synchronization and blending...have won for them the praise of the music critics."4

We frequently performed in New York for the American Music Optimists, whose president was Mana Zucca, the composer. This organization

*The sisters were known as Presselle for their professional appearances.
Musical Memories

sponsored the performances of American music. While we performed for them, we had the opportunity of meeting many musical artists such as Metropolitan Opera singers and members of New York orchestras and ballet groups.

The newspaper *New York Mail* sponsored free concerts for the public, and we were engaged several times to play in the auditoriums of the city's large high schools. We often played radio concerts sponsored by the *Providence Journal* to celebrate American Music Week, and we gave the Chopin Club's President's Day Concert twice.

During the Depression our manager reported to us that concert performances were not being paid the usual fee but performers could be offered payment for expenses only. This fact did not trouble us because we were not fond of traveling and found often that it was impossible to obtain two good pianos for performances. Therefore, we then decided to give up our concert tours and to confine our performances to places nearer home.

As a student at Pembroke College, I continued my musical activities with my sister, and I wrote the music for several songs for my class. Charlotte

![PHENOMENAL TWO-PIANO GENIUS](image)

Charlotte and Rose Presel

Although they played two pianos, the photograph was altered for the publicity brochure to look as if they were at one large piano.
composed the music for a Greek classical Sophomore Masque and the music for an operetta called “The Black Diamond,” which was performed at Brown University. I received Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees from Brown University in modern foreign languages.

After graduation from college, I was asked to replace temporarily the teacher of French and German at Hope High School, who had resigned. Although I had never planned to enter the teaching profession, I found that I liked teaching young people, and I remained at Hope for many, many years, becoming head of the Foreign Language Department for twenty years until my retirement.

People often asked how I could travel extensively to give concerts while I was a high school teacher. I remember taking the 3 p.m. train to New York, changing my teaching clothes for an evening gown, playing a concert, taking the midnight train back to Providence, and getting up early the next morning to go to my classes at Hope.

During my teaching career I was active in many organizations such as the Alliance Francaise, the Germanic Society, the Rhode Island Modern Language Association and the New England Modern Language Association, of which I am a past president. One of the programs sponsored by the
Department of Foreign Languages at Brown and the Modern Language Association was a concert for two pianos in which my sister and I performed a program of compositions by composers of different countries to illustrate national styles of music in relation to their languages. This event was broadcast over Station WPRO, where my sister was a member of the staff. For many years she broadcast programs, among them “Cousin Charlotte’s Music Club,” which drew over a hundred members. Under the name of June Abbott, she conducted a popular women’s radio program, and as a concert pianist she performed programs of classical music daily.

During my years of teaching I introduced my students to the culture, especially music and literature, of the countries whose languages they were studying. I had a large collection of records which I used frequently in my classes. Even today when I meet former students at concerts or at Temple Beth-El, they will remember a favorite song or recite a famous poem or a few lines of a play which they had read in class. I look back fondly at the many years I spent teaching young people, and I hope I have had a small part in the development of their later lives.

NOTES

1 Providence Journal, March 11, 1911
3 Brochure, “Presselle Sisters Score Great Success.” Music League of America, Inc., One West Thirty-fourth Street, New York
4 Jewish Review “An American Paper for American Jews”, October 12, 1923
JEWS IN RHODE ISLAND LABOR: AN INTRODUCTORY INVESTIGATION

BY PAUL M. BUEHL, PH.D.

I call this an introductory investigation because the study of Rhode Island labor is not even as advanced as the study of Rhode Island Jewry, and we must therefore attempt to put in place some elementary building blocks before we can begin to structure our analysis of this important but overlooked subject.

Jewish immigrants to the United States and their children, from the 1890s to the 1940s, did immense tasks in Jewish life of the US, Europe and Middle East, not forgetting South America, and with very few resources, created a coherent culture out of fragments available to them. Within that culture they created a literature, a theatre, and a folks arts movement second to none in any language, in only two generations. They created several of the most democratic unions in the United States, and those unions, especially but not only the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, had an impact upon all working Americans, lifting standards of living, standards of production, and quality of life. They provided decisive support for not only their own movement, Zionism, but also for the anarchist movement, the socialist movement, the communist movement, the anti-fascist movement, the civil rights movement, and more to the center of the spectrum, the New Deal.

In every case, their commitment was disproportionate to their numbers, a fact which does not mean that all Jews were idealists. Of course they were not. But they were, in larger percentages than Americans of any other kind, touched by the hope for a renewal of the society and of the world. They also recognized, correctly, that the fate of world Jewry demanded worldwide renewal — economic and social cooperation instead of competition, people's needs before profits — and not just Jewish renewal. Anything less imperiled Jewish survival.

Therefore, I address Jewish labor history in Rhode Island not as a study...
of a finite number of workers in a finite series of institutions, but rather as a part of a larger Jewish tendency, one material side to a Jewish mood which might have been stronger elsewhere — and was — but which existed here, too.

Rhode Island always lacked the critical number of Jewish industrial workers whose presence set the tone for progressive labor in Greater New York and had a strong influence in Philadelphia, Chicago, Rochester, Boston, and even New Haven.

Therefore, lower and middle class Jews of Rhode Island, like those of many other places, intersected primarily as supporters of Jewish movements elsewhere — readers, members, financial contributors — and of labor and social movements not predominantly Jewish in character, both within and outside Rhode Island.

This does not mean that Rhode Island Jews were merely spectators of other movements. Smallish branches counted in Jewish movements, especially in times of need or disorientation. Readers counted, financial contributors counted a great deal. To give an example of national importance, the Poale Zionist Alter Boyman initiated in Providence the Third Seder, a major method of the Poale Zionists nationally to fund the colonization of Palestine. No city the size of Providence had so large and active a Poale Zionist movement generally. To give another kind of example: Rhode Island’s Lawrence Spitz became the dynamo of textile and later steel workers, and of the major social reform movements in health, welfare and housing desegregation movements of the 1950s. And the story does not end here.

In the last ten years, outstanding trade union leaders in more traditional and white-collar sectors have been Jews. By no accident: they are, I would almost say, seeing labor through a difficult time with their perseverance and dedication. This is an old story for Jewish idealism. Also, unionism has finally come to professions and occupations where Jews have existed in considerable numbers for a long time — not only to teaching but social service work, state employees and health care.

To try to understand all this, I shall be working in two directions simultaneously: by deductive reasoning, from the general national and international movements to their local affiliates; and by inductive reasoning, from what I’ve been able to glean from interviews and from materials in the Rhode Island Historical Society and the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association.

Let me begin with the first notice that Rhode Island officially makes of its Jews, an article in The Providence Journal of August, 1888, called “The Jew Quarter” and subtitled, “Filth and Squalor Dangerous to Health.” Five years later the Journal described a Jewish settlement on Charles Street
as "a scene . . . that is rarely seen by civilized eyes," and three years still later, under the title, "A Tour of the Shawmut Street Colony — Filthy Surroundings Threaten the Health of the City."

What do these images tell us about Rhode Island Jewry? Less, probably, than they tell us about the way Jews were looked upon by the Yankee population which owned the Journal and shared its view of the world. They were not blatant anti-Semites, although generations would pass before Jews would win entry into many avenues of Rhode Island life, from jobs to certain public beaches and exclusive clubs. Rather, they placed Jews in the general framework of new immigrants, which is to say, poor and dirty, brought to do the jobs that Americans did not want to do. Jews were useful, as they quickly proved themselves. But they were not entirely to be trusted. The 1896 Journal article suggests that other groups kept their diseases to themselves, but that Jewish peddlers working around the city would be likely to infect the general population.

That is a wonderful, terrible metaphor, just exactly what Jews have always been accused of doing, and what idealists — from the famous traveling shoemakers in the French Revolution to the roving pickets of the 1930s American labor movement — have always done. They move around. They spread not diseases but cures.

The Journal noted, elsewhere in these same years, that the Jews were a very respectable population in general. They had already in the North End of the 1890s begun that historic population-dance with Rhode Island Blacks, sharing territory, moving to Constitution Hill while Blacks moved out, as Blacks among others would later replace Jews in the South End, and as Blacks and Jews continue to exchange places off North Main today. In the Journal's constant effort to discover and analyze superiorities among the ethnic and racial groups — implying always their own ultimate superiority — the Jews came out relatively high. But not without a taint.

The idea of a taint increased, somewhat, with the first descriptions of Jewish unionism and of union meetings at the old Liederkranz Hall on North Main Street. Not only did Jewish tailors organize a union; they entered, during the worst depression in the nation's history up to that point, into an audacious seven-week strike against the merchant tailors. And the police charged that three of them punched scabbing non-strikers. Only a few months or years in the country, the Journal seemed to imply, and Jews had already begun to act like the Irish, or worse, like the socialists, never very numerous in Rhode Island but always feared.

About the same time, Providence Jews became active as socialists, supporting the desperate strikes of Olneyville textile workers against starvation wage-reductions in the early 1890s and helping in the attempt to form a new national industrial union of textile workers, headquartered
in Providence, in 1896. These struggles also failed. But along with German-American brewery workers, the Karl Marx circle of Italian artisans, the Irish-American following of textile union leader James P. Reid and a scattering of Yankee radicals, Jewish tailors and other Jews became the solid center of the Rhode Island Socialist Party. As socialists, they would play an important role in Rhode Island labor for two generations.3

The Journal took no apparent notice — none that I could find — of the organization of the Workmen’s Circle around the turn of the century. Edwin Brown’s essay* provides many more details. As Brown emphasizes, the Workmen’s Circle would be, for many Jews, the key mechanism by which they would gain an education in labor ideas and through which they would support the labor movement.

From the experience of the early Landsmanschaften, the organizations of immigrants from various areas, and from the German-American socialist Sterbe and Krankenvereine, death and sickness benefit societies, the Workmen’s Circle drew its methods and goals during the 1890s. To workers, but through them also to the community at large, the Arbeiter Ring or Workmen’s Circle offered insurance protection generations before Social Security existed. It was not much protection, but it was enough to keep a workman who was sick a short time from becoming destitute or to keep a widow from losing everything she had because of funeral expenses.

But even more than that. The Workmen’s Circle from its earliest organizing was also a social and educational center, and sometimes an entertainment center too, for the whole Jewish community. It kept a library in Yiddish and English, it brought in Yiddish lecturers from New York or Boston when possible, it held weekly discussion meetings on world topics, and it generally encouraged self-education and social enlightenment.

I do not yet have the necessary evidence to make a crucial case for Providence’s importance in this regard. But we know that the Workmen’s Circle failed in New York City in its initial period of the 1890s because of the terrible depression but also because it competed with so many other organizations and clubs. It succeeded and re-established itself, on a permanent basis, outside New York, in cities like Providence, where the competition was much less severe and the Workmen’s Circle became the unquestioned center of Jewish working class life.4

But note that this is not to discount the role of other types of immigrant Jewish mutual benefit organizations in Providence working class life. The hevrahs (groups of men who came together to pray and study Torah in the old country) had a major role also, but not the same as the Workmen’s Circle. Soon I will come to the Poale or Labor Zionists and the Verband, which operated on a path somewhere between Jewish self-interest and the

*“Workmen’s Circles and Jewish Labor Unions,” p. 157.
broader ideals of the socialist movement. Their importance grows as the role of progressive Jewish nationalism becomes clearer in the wake of the First World War.

One particular contribution of the Workmen’s Circle became very important in the next opportunity and crisis facing Rhode Island labor. In most of Rhode Island by 1905 or thereabouts, hardly any unionism had been securely established, except a narrow craft unionism in a few scattered trades, such as the building trades. The recession beginning in 1907 destroyed most of the unions which remained, as employers drove down wages and workers could not afford to pay dues. But beginning in 1909, and accelerating in 1911-12, a new series of strikes by new immigrants, unskilled workers, shook the country, including Rhode Island.

The famous strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1912, set off great excitement in textile mills across our state shortly after. A parade of Providence socialists marched from Smith Hill to Federal Hill in support of the Lawrence strike leaders, who had been arrested on trumped up charges. They were joined by a contingent from Olneyville, where an Irish-American Socialist had been elected in 1911 to the state legislature. From textiles, the center shifted to the garment industries. The International Ladies Garment Workers Union had just won a great strike for recognition in New York, and Boston tailors had struck in sympathy with local garment workers. In Providence, an organizing drive led by the Industrial Workers of the World sought a comprehensive contract with the department stores and finishing shops, employing more than a thousand. Mass meetings were held in Yiddish, English, and Italian.

At this moment, Rhode Island Jews might have played an important national role in what was widely considered one of the most oppressive American sites of industrial labor. A breakthrough would have brought the kind of social improvement delayed until the 1930s and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. But police, employers and conservative union leaders joined hands to ban demonstrations and forbid use of public halls. The local labor newspaper noted, “Never before in the history of the labor movement in this city has any organization of working men and women been more bitterly assailed.” The tailors were defeated.

There is a sequel to this defeat. During World War I, the labor shortage once again made great strikes possible, not only in textiles but also in the most oppressive and dangerous of industrial trades, jewelry. Here, the mostly Jewish-Italian union, the International Jewelry Workers Union, came into a virtually open-shop environment and began to bring decent conditions into shops where $1.50 per day was an average wage, and child labor, unsanitary and extremely dangerous working conditions prevailed.

Here, perhaps for the first time, Jews operated in the Rhode Island labor
movement as a minority of a workforce made up largely of new Italian immigrants, but represented a majority of the leadership — and also, it has to be said, a certain number of the employers who came to Providence to escape unionization in New York.

In a short time, 3 to 4,000 workers joined the union in Providence and the Attleboros; the most important jewelry workers' strike in New England history began at Ostby & Barton’s. Again, history might have been made, all the more so because Providence would become the costume jewelry capital of America. But again, and for the last time in Rhode Island jewelry until the 1940s, jewelry workers had gone all out without improvement of conditions or pay. Employers successfully responded to the threat with firings, policy attacks and blacklisting of union members. In some cases, health standards would remain dangerously low until the passage of the Occupational Health and Safety Act of the 1970s. It was a Jewish defeat, without question, and a source of continuing shame for Rhode Islanders with a conscience.7

By the 1920s, conditions had improved somewhat for Jews in Rhode Island. Many were successful by this time in establishing small-scale businesses of their own; others got along in retail shops or managed in the tailoring trade. But America of the 1920s, including Rhode Island, was a time of fierce political reaction, of Klu Klux Klan parades at Roger Williams Park with echoes of anti-Semitism. In short, Jews had moved up, especially relative to other new immigrant groups, but American life had not become any more democratic, especially not in an ethnic or racial sense. Finally, all through this period of hopes and disappointments, unionism, war, and revolution, Jews remained in touch with their European families, whose condition and very existence grew more and more endangered.

For these reasons, Jewish communal life, emphasizing values of the labor movement even when not part of it in an industrial sense, flourished as never before in Rhode Island, from the 1920s to the 1940s. The Workmen's Circle, numbering a hundred or so active members and a periphery of perhaps 500 in all, stepped up its activities. It opened a Yiddish shul on the East Side in 1924 and soon another one in South Providence. The teacher, Beryl Segal (a recent immigrant from Russia, by way of the West) also led the Friday discussion group. It was a lively circle of people who, as his daughter Geraldine S. Foster says, should be described as working people in the most literal sense; they were Jews who worked with their hands whether they were one-man businesses, or carpenters, painters, or tailors. They represented Jewish progressive, communal activity at its highest point in Rhode Island history.

Segal had come to Providence because a cousin of his wife’s, Alter Boyman, had already become a major figure of the Poale Zion, the labor
Zionists, not only locally in Providence but nationally as well. A founder of Labor Zionism and a mentor of David Ben Gurion's, Pincus Caruso, who was 97 when interviewed in Miami, said that Providence was a beehive of Poale Zionist activity. Under Boyman's dynamic leadership, the Poale Zion had a local membership of at least a hundred, with its own educational meetings and cultural affairs. The members and their children also participated in Workmen's Circle affairs.8

Alter's wife, Sara, and Chaya (Irene) Segal, meanwhile, soon led what would become the largest of any of the progressive Jewish organizations, the Pioneer Women*, with at least 300 members. The depth of feeling for the communal spirit may be measured in how it spread through the entire family — father, mother and child.9

It is worth emphasizing that the Poale Zion was a labor, socialist movement, despite the fact that its membership was considerably more middle class than that of the Workmen's Circle. This is not a contradiction in terms. Its enthusiasts, like Alter Boyman himself, moved up somewhat in business or the professions, but without losing the ideals of a different and better way of life, not only for Jews but for all people. (Poale Zion was militantly opposed to the Zionist "Revisionism" of the Likud Party's predecessors. For Labor Zionists, Israel had to become a land of cooperative labor and of justice for all its citizens. As Pincus Caruso told me, they remained committed to those goals to the very end.)10

There was one dark spot in this development: the split between the Left, the "Linkies" as they were called, and the Workmen's Circle. In many other cities, where a new influx of Jewish immigrants came into industrial work in the 1910s and 1920s, the Yiddish-speaking supporters of the Soviet Union were the younger and more vigorous activists who became the leaders of new communal institutions, such as Yiddish choirs, theatre, and such unions as the furriers and others. They also led the popular movement against Fascism, and later for a short period played a major role in supporting young Israel, strange as that now may seem.

In Rhode Island, where industrial conditions brought few new Jewish proletarians, this Jewish Left never had much strength. But its leaders played a major role in the unemployed movement, which used to fill what is now Kennedy Plaza with mass rallies in the early 1930s. Former Workmen's Circle members, along with newer recruits, were members of a lively International Workers Order (later Jewish People's Fraternal Order) branch in South Providence.11 Years after the 1920s split of the Workmen's Circle branch ("down the middle," according to Beryl Segal) the two sides, as nationally, achieved a modus vivendi of sorts in anti-Fascist causes and support of new industrial unions (including a few, such as the furriers,

*Now called Na'Amat.
which had Jewish members locally). The strength was far less than it had been before the division.

The greater loss was to the power American culture held over the younger generation of Jews; to move up almost demanded assimilation in some form, at least the casting off of obvious Jewish accents. Public schools, the radio, sports, the whole spectrum of youthful experiences tended to draw young Jews away from communalism of the immigrants.

By the 1930s, losses could already be felt somewhat. On the one hand, as Judith Smith's book, *Family Connections*, points out, many older Jewish tailors lost their trade in fine clothes, so that the main area of Jewish participation in traditional unionism practically vanished. The Workmen's Circle and Poale Zion energetically supported Norman Thomas or followed other Rhode Islanders in supporting Franklin D. Roosevelt. Although the Providence Poale Zion maintained the vision of socialism into their members' old age of the 1940s-50s, the dream of great changes in the world passed increasingly to the singular vision of Palestine, not so much for themselves directly (very few Rhode Islanders would make *aliyah*¹) as for a world community of Jews.¹²

The 1940s made these tendencies tragically absolute. The Holocaust made Israel a priority, even for many who had always opposed Zionism and continued to be unenthusiastic about Zionism as an ideology. World War II, for American Jews of younger generations, brought a new dimension of Americanization, social life in the Army and the GI Bill afterward, with the prospect of suburbs and the baby boom just around the corner.

In some larger Jewish districts, like the Bronx, the Holocaust touched off a new urgency for Yiddish teaching; in Rhode Island, the distances students now had to travel and the cost of gasoline to get there proved too much — the Workmen's Circle shuls closed in 1946. On the other hand, the outburst of prosperity at the end of the 1940s plunged Americans, remembering the Depression, into a new world of consumerism and mass entertainments. The 1930s vision of a pluralistic America, with communities of different kinds and even different languages adding something decisive to democracy, was pretty much washed away. Every kind of ethnic life suffered culturally, and Jewish life, too. Yiddish lost its Eastern European center, and with Ben Gurion's decision for a mono-lingual Hebrew culture, its hopes for the foreseeable future in Israel, too.

But there were important gains along with these losses. Here we speak about Jews as individuals, rather than as representatives of Jewish groups in Rhode Island labor and social movements. These individuals grew out of, and represented, the finest traditions of the Jewish social movements in a wider arena.

¹Immigration to Israel.
The first I will discuss briefly is Larry Spitz, without a doubt the most dynamic labor leader of the industrial union movement in Rhode Island. From a Providence South side background in the Depression, he found his way to New York where he observed the International Ladies Garment Workers Local 22, which had at the time the most extensive social and cultural program of any union in the United States. Relocating himself in Woonsocket, which he had quite accidentally toured in a union theatre company for the labor play, *Waiting for Lefty*, he discovered the Independent Textile Union, a mostly French-Canadian organization that had led dramatic strikes in that city but had not yet stabilized itself.

In a short time, Spitz became the Secretary General, the thinker, the speaker and the leader of the first successful industrial union of textile workers in Rhode Island, and one of the most successful in any city in the nation. Through his leadership, the ITU developed a model program of comprehensive unionization, improvement of working conditions and wages, and also extensive cultural and educational programs, health care, and even cooperative housing. After service in World War II, Spitz returned to Providence, where he became sub-director of the steelworkers union.

Here again, but in a wider arena, he made the steelworkers a center for progressive unionism and social programs. Through his leadership, social-minded labor leaders joined with the Diocese and Jewish leaders such as Irving Fain to push through programs such as open housing and to launch Rhode Island Group Health Association as a health plan for workers and the poor. Spitz also led the fight against corruption in unions and the corrupt use of business influence to distort the state's economic development. In these ways, Larry Spitz blazed the way for other Jewish leaders of Rhode Island trade unions from the 1950s to the 1970s, including Nat Kushner of the Retail Workers, Milton Bronstein of the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Morton Miller of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers, among others.¹³

From the 1930s to the 1960s, it almost seemed as if Jewish influence on Rhode Island labor was limited to leadership, but not because of the absence of Jewish employees. It was just that unionization had to catch up with the white-collar and professional worker, son or daughter of the tailor, the retail clerk and small businessman. The best single example is the high-school teacher, historically undervalued and underpaid until unionization in the 1960s and 1970s began to add dignity and better pay, upgrading the profession. William Bernstein, president of the Coventry Teachers Union, stated that out of approximately 10,000 high-school teachers in the state, at least 1,500 are Jews. This should not surprise us, but it is an extraordinary figure nonetheless. Along with the social service worker, the office worker and others of similar types, they are the hope of the labor movement in the coming era. We can also be sure that Jews
will not only be present but in important roles, leading and educating. I can point first of all to Charles Schwartz, Director of the Institute for Labor Studies and Research, the think-tank of Rhode Island labor’s future. It is a characteristically Jewish position.

There is still another important sense, a sense still broader, of Jews and Rhode Island labor. Those Workmen’s Circle and Poale Zion branches did not see the society they dreamed of creating in America actually come into being. But they saw, and supported, the rise of a New Deal coalition which brought the most democracy Rhode Island had seen in all its history. That coalition, supporting Governor Green, was an ethnic and working people’s coalition foremost; it survived for almost two generations.

Julius Michaelson, whose political career was foreshortened by the disintegration of that old alliance and by the emergence of a more conservative era in Rhode Island politics, may be seen as the last of that school, the last of the children of Jewish immigrants whose parents belonged to workingmen’s benefit associations. But the story, as I have indicated, is not finished. We have another era before us — after Reagan — and the political questions of justice, peace, education and all the others remain unanswered. What role will labor play in them, and what role will the newer generations of Jews play in them in Rhode Island? We do not know. But we do know, as the advocates of woman suffrage used to say sixty or a hundred years ago, that a river does not rise above its source.

The sources of Jewish participation in labor and labor-related social movements and causes are, as demonstrated briefly, of great importance. If I have taken you, and myself in my research and interviews for this essay, just a few steps in understanding the history, I will have succeeded in my modest efforts.

I wish to dedicate this essay to the memory of Beryl Segal, leader of the Providence Workmen’s Circle, who personified the link between the Jewish tradition of social causes and the labor movement. I had the great good fortune of interviewing him in 1977, and I am only sorry that I did not then have the knowledge to ask more detailed questions. I wish also to thank Geraldine Foster for her information, encouragement and assistance in my historical efforts.
NOTES

1 Providence Journal, August 1, 1888; August 1, 1893; and November 29, 1896

2 Providence Journal, June 13, 1896

3 The best discussion of this strike period is in Paul Buhle, “Italian-American Radicals and the Labor Movement, 1905-1930,” Radical History Review, #17 (Spring, 1977).

4 The standard source remains Sh. Sacks, Di Geshikhte fun Arbeiter Ring (New York: Arbeiter Ring, 1925), two volumes. There are, however, few direct mentions of Providence. Other citations of Providence Jewish labor (i.e., socialist) activity can be found scattered in Yiddish radical newspapers such as Di Arbeiter Tseitung and Di Yiddish Kempfer.

“Italian-American Radicals,” op. cit. Unfortunately, it must be reported that the ILGWU, in bitter hostility to the Industrial Workers of the World, joined employers and the Providence Journal in appealing to Jewish tailors to abandon the strike and return to work.

6 “The Garment Workers Strike,” Labor Advocate (Providence), April 6, 1913.


8 Beryl Segal Interview, 1977 (by Paul Buhle), Oral History of the American Left, Tamiment Library, New York University; duplicate in Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association library.

9 Chaya (Irene) Segal Interview, 1987 (by Paul Buhle), Oral History of the American Left, Tamiment Library, duplicate in Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association library.

10 See Paul Buhle, “Jews and American Communism: the Cultural Question,” Radical History Review, #23 (Spring, 1980). His volume, Marxism in the US (London: Verso, 1987), also has an extended re-interpretation of Jewish radical history in the U.S., based upon Yiddish sources and several hundred interviews with veterans of various causes.

11 David Kolodoff Interview (by Paul Buhle), Rhode Island Labor Oral History project, Rhode Island Historical Society. Kolodoff, secretary of the Jewish People’s Fraternal Order, has been most gracious and helpful.


13 The Lawrence Spitz Papers, Rhode Island Historical Society, are the best source for this story. See also Buhle’s oral history of Rhode Island working people, Working Lives: An Oral History of Rhode Island Labor (Providence: Rhode Island Historical Society, 1987), especially Chapter Four, “Entering the Postindustrial Age, 1941-1960.”

WORKMEN'S CIRCLES AND JEWISH LABOR UNIONS

BY EDWIN C. BROWN

It is said that beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. If that be true, to the newly arrived immigrant and downtrodden laborer the workmen's circles were things of beauty. They were succored and comforted, enlightened and enriched by the humanitarian compassion of the circles.

To others who did not understand, or appreciate the mission of the circles, the members were considered a band of radicals who were void of principle. In the words of Confucius, "Everything has its beauty but not everyone sees it."

Regardless of point of view, the workmen's circles were dedicated groups of men and women who, among other things, played an important role in the Americanization of many immigrants who had fled their home-lands to escape persecution and poverty. The circles also played an important role in easing the burden of the common laborer.

During the latter years of the 1800's when Eugene Debs and Morris Hillquit were expounding their views on a more democratic society, the workmen's circles were created. The national organization was established in 1892 by 25 cloak makers in New York who foresaw the need of such an agency. It was chartered as an insurance society, and in addition it advocated formation of co-operatives which provided funeral expenses, purchased burial plots, paid medical costs, and provided sick and health benefits. It also promoted brotherhood among members by publishing newspapers, books, and pamphlets, and conducting forums, debates and lectures, so that members would be better informed. The circles also operated summer camps for the health and recreation of family members. The national organization was responsible for establishing affiliated circles in various localities.

In Rhode Island the Workmen's Circle was chartered on December 11, 1909, by William Baxt, Peter Marcus, Hyman Haimsonn, Morris Miller, Albert Cobrain, Louis Kortick and Isaac Weinbaum. The stated purpose was, "to promote the social welfare of its members, and for fraternal benefits and mutual assistance." Several local chapters were established to serve

Edwin C. Brown was Secretary-Treasurer of the Rhode Island A.F.L.-C.I.O. from 1953 to 1985.

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the members in Rhode Island. Among them were circles #14-#71-#110-#251-#499 and one in Pawtucket, plus another in Woonsocket. At one time circles #14 and #251 were headquartered at 128 North Main Street in Providence.

Members of these mutual benefit societies brought to the New World much of their complex religious, cultural and secular experiences they had inherited from the societies in their homelands. They were also students of history and were aware of what caused the demise of the old guilds that had functioned in Europe during the eleventh and eighteenth centuries. With those experiences as background the circle members supported co-operatives and the rights of labor unions. They were opposed to war, and the active and concerned Jews placed war and crime on the same level as crimes against humanity. They also opposed the abuse of child labor and the payment of the prevailing pitiful low wages.

Many members of the circles had migrated from the Vilna and Minsk areas of the Pale where they were stocking makers, ladies tailors, printers, carpenters, locksmiths and cigarette makers. After their arrival in Rhode Island many were employed as bakers, peddlers, hat and cap makers, carpenters and in the needle trades.

Another segment of the Jewish community earned their livelihood by operating tailoring establishments, pawn shops, second-hand stores, boarding houses, boot and shoe repair shops, restaurant and bakeries.

Around the turn of the century a majority of the Jewish population resided in the North End and South Providence sections of Providence, and about one third of those in the Providence-Pawtucket area were members of one of the Workmen's Circles. These local circles existed, not only for humanitarian and educational purposes, but they entertained and advanced the welfare of their members while assisting and comforting those who had migrated to Rhode Island in search of a better life style.

To carry out their mission, the circles conducted two schools in Providence, one at the Workmen's Circle Lyceum on Benefit Street, which was opened in 1924, and the other at the Circle's Library on Willard Avenue, next to Bazar's Bank in South Providence.

The local circles conducted weekly lectures, forums and debates to help keep the members informed about the issues of the day and assist the newly arrived immigrants to become familiar with their new environment.

There were also frequent discussions about the rights of laboring people, and at the library members read and discussed a variety of social, economic and political subjects. The circles were considered the gathering place where every young man with progressive ideas belonged. Because of the
controversial nature of some of the discussions, the circles were considered the center for active Jews, including the radicals and socialists of the day.

In addition to the programs and acts of charity conducted by the circles, the organization purchased plots of land at cemeteries for burial of deceased members and their families.

The Hebrew Bakers Union, Local #122, was a child of the Rhode Island Workmen's Circles. The Local was an affiliate of the Bakery and Confectionary Workers International Union of the American Federation of Labor and was established on April 23, 1907. On February 2, 1952, the Sick Benefit Corporation of Local #122 was chartered by the State of Rhode Island. Charter members of the Corporation were Albert Brody, Abraham Rubin, Frank A. Moskol, Joe Landry, George Fedetski, Louis Schwartz and Dave Gluksman. The stated purpose of the corporation was “To provide sick and disabled benefits to members of Hebrew Bakers Union Local #122 and the doing of everything connected therewith and incidental thereto.”

The Workmen's Circles, as advocates of the co-operative movement, at one time operated bakeries at 391 1/2 and 593 Chalkstone Avenue in Providence.

When members of the Textile Workers Union were on strike in Olneyville, Jake Pavlow, President of a local Circle, with other Circle Associates, visited the Textile Workers Union Headquarters to determine what assistance their circle could provide. After reviewing the situation, they decided that the Textile Workers were driven to strike by the mill owners. They concluded that, “When the water had reached the necks of the workers and they felt that in a little while they would drown, they went on strike. It was the only weapon in the hands of the laborers.”

Pavlow and his associates agreed to arrange with the members of the Hewbrew Bakers Union to bake bread every day for the striking textile workers. It was through such acts of brotherhood that the circles were considered the Red Cross of the Labor Movement.

On April 23, 1932, Hebrew Bakers' Local #122 observed its 25th Anniversary with a dinner at Zinn's Banquet Hall on Mathewson Street in Providence. The members of the Banquet Arrangement Committee were Joseph Fish, J. Kessler, B. H. Brody, Alfred Davis, Hyman Abrams, J. Landy, Chairman, and Al Brody.

The officers of Local #122 at the time they observed their 25th Jubilee were Joseph Fish, President; Benny Braida, Treasurer; Abe Braida, Financial Secretary; and Joseph Hamer, Recording Secretary.

During and after World War I active interest in the local Workmen's
Circles declined. In 1923 efforts were made to stimulate activity among the 500 members in the existing circles in the State. On Sunday, April 29, 1923, a membership drive meeting was held at Elks Auditorium in Providence in an attempt to attract to the fold English-speaking Jews, women and youths.

Mr. B. Dubinsky, Chairman of the local Circle, introduced Joseph Baskin of New York, the principal speaker. Following the meeting in the Elks Auditorium, a dinner was held at the Dreyfus Hotel, also on Washington Street, in Providence. Unfortunately these efforts did not meet with a high degree of success.

Another meeting was held, also in Elks Auditorium, on Sunday, December 31, 1923, for the purpose of electing officers. The following were chosen: David Sack, Chairman; John Fisher, Treasurer; Henry Brill, Financial Secretary; Nathan Ginsberg, Recording Secretary; and Abraham Koppelman, Sick Committee.

During the course of the meeting Isaac Rotenberg, Jacob Pavlow, Harry Sherman and David Sack of Providence addressed the gathering in Yiddish.

The economic downturn of business during the 1930's caused havoc for the local circles. They lost their home on Benefit Street and combined activities between their South Providence headquarters and an office on Snow Street. However, interest continued to decline, and the local circles passed from the Rhode Island scene during the years of World War II.

The Rhode Island Workmen's Circles were not the first, nor only, workingmen's organizations in the State established to perform humanitarian deeds on behalf of the working men and women of the Jewish community. Among other local Jewish labor organizations chartered to serve their community better were: The Rhode Island Shoemakers Aid Association chartered on April 18, 1894, by Getze Cohen, Harris Cohen, Hyman Wienberg, Joseph Sandler, Abraham Cohen, Zelz Wopert and Jacob Miller, for Mutual Aid to Shoemakers in case of sickness and distress.

The Cooperative Union of Cigarmakers chartered on November 14, 1896, by Abe Cohen, Max Newfield, Louis Shatkin, Ike Rosenberg and Harry Cohen, for the purpose of social, mental and practical advancement of its members and the mutual assistance and improvement of Cigarmakers in respect to their trade.

The Providence Tailoring Progressive Association chartered on January 21, 1901, by Abraham Gold, Benjamin Cohen, Frank Matersky, Herman Weiss, Louis Sacknowitz, Alberth Engel, Bernard Greenstein and Morris Finkler, for beneficial and social purposes.

The Peddler's Protective Union chartered on June 21, 1906, by Barney
Bennett, Simon Mushnick, Samuel Jacobson, Sam Levy, Abe Silverman and Morris Bezen, for mutual assistance and protection.


The Providence Protective Ladies’ Tailors Association, chartered on March 20, 1912, by Harry J. Leon, Max S. Lazarus and others for the mutual benefit and protection of its members.


The Hebrew Butchers Association of Providence chartered on August 2, 1916, by David Orliansky, Charles Halpern, Philip Keller, Wolf Malatt and Max Primack, for the mutual assistance in cases of need or distress.

The Independent Rhode Island Junk Peddlers’ Union chartered on August 26, 1916, by Abraham Melomet, Jacob Kotlen, Mendel Orenstein, Max Howitz and Frank Shatz, to conserve the interests of the junk peddlers of the State; to assist them in securing better conditions for earning a livelihood and to aid in the material and sociological progress of its members.

The Jewish National Workers’ Alliance of America, Branch 41 of Providence, 1944. The name was changed on October 30, 1950, to the Farband-Labor Zionist Order, Branch 41, with 110 members. The charter members were Max Berman, Solomon Lightman, Joseph Biller, Samuel Sprecker and Harry Chaset, to provide for the payment of funeral and burial benefits and promote Jewish national spirit, and social, economic and educational betterment of the Jewish population of Rhode Island.

From the souvenir booklet of the 25-year jubilee celebration of the Baker’s Union Local 122 — April 23, 1922.

Brothers! Saturday the 23rd of April, we will celebrate our 25 years of existence. This will be the loveliest chapter in our history, since we organized to defend economic (material) conditions. Today we shall review an account of our work.

Twenty-five years ago, a very small number of us, who slaved long, dark nights to bake bread for others, ourselves did not have enough to eat. The conditions under which we worked
were extremely hard. After that, it was understood that there must be an end to such a condition. At that time then, the bakers gathered and made it clear to themselves; this can go no further! Talk about a union began, which will defend the interests of the bakers; and Local 122 was founded.

Many struggles did we endure during that time. The boss many times set his pointed spears against us, to destroy (annihilate) us. We stood up to them with unified strength, and destroyed their spears. True, we have not attained everything, we have a great deal to struggle for. And to this end, and only then will we and we alone enjoy the full fruits from our work.

Meanwhile today, in the day of our 25 year Jubilee, may we be greeted with the work that we did until now, let us take a fresh enthusiasm for our continuing striving until the end, until no longer there be oppressors and oppressed.

We wish to extend heartfelt thanks to all organizations and the Jewish public for their true sympathy for the entire time to our Baker’s Union.

We thank you, all our previous officials of the local, a special thanks to the current officials: Brother Joseph Fish, President; Brother Benny Braida, Treasurer; Brother Abe Braida, Financial Secretary; and Brother Joseph Hamer, Recording Secretary.

We greet all our friends — all who rejoice together with us.*

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*Translated from the Yiddish by Geraldine S. Foster.

I wish to thank Eleanor F. Horvitz, Librarian-Archivist, Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, and Lillian N. Schwartz, Librarian, Temple Emanu-El, for their help in the research for this article.
ASHKENAZIM VS. SEPHARDIM
IN THE COLONIAL ERA
BY MALCOLM H. STERN, D.H.L., D.D.

Let me take you on a journey through the familiar terrain of Colonial Jewry, pointing out how they observed their religion. In the process I will draw your attention to some aspects that may alter some of the time-held views of the era.

The major tension among Colonial Jewry arose between the Sephardim, Jews whose families originated in Spain and Portugal, and the Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazim from Germany and Poland. My studies have convinced me that this tension affected every aspect of their lives from the first settlement in 1654 until the establishment of Ashkenazic congregations early in the nineteenth century.

Scholars have long recognized that referring to the colonial Jews as Sephardim is totally inaccurate. The New Amsterdam Jewish immigrants included at least two Ashkenazim: Asser Levy, who arrived with twenty-two other refugees from Brazil on the French man-of-war, the Ste. Catherine, in September of 1654, and Jacob Barsimson, who met the boat, having arrived two weeks earlier from Amsterdam. With whom did Asser Levy join in challenging Stuyvesant’s demand that the Jews pay head taxes rather than stand guard duty on the town wall? Not with his fellow-travelers from Brazil, who were Sephardim, but with Barsimson, the only other Ashkenazi in town.¹

The strong division between Sephardim and Ashkenazim in North America reflected the scene in Europe. Last summer, when my wife and I visited Amsterdam’s handsome new Jewish museum, constructed in four former Ashkenazic synagogues, I learned that the oldest of them was erected in 1671, four years before the sadly deteriorating but better known Portuguese Synagogue across the street.² London, also, had two seventeenth century congregations, the Sephardim opening a synagogue in 1656, the

¹This paper was presented as the Harry Elson Memorial Lecture at the National Conference and Annual Meeting of the American Jewish Historical Society, Providence, Rhode Island, May 1, 1988. Dr. Malcolm H. Stern, a rabbi, is well known as historian and genealogist and has contributed a number of articles to the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes.

²Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes, Vol. 10, No. 2, November, 1988
Ashkenazim creating a separate house of worship by 1690. Nor were the differences merely matters of ritual, as we learn from Savannah, where a boatload of forty-two Jews arrived from London in July of 1733. The majority of these were Sephardic. The families of Minis, Sheftall, and Jacob Yowel were Ashkenazic. Benjamin Sheftall became supplier and friend to the Salzburgers, Protestant refugees from Catholic Salzburg, who arrived in the colony a year after the Jews. Rev. Johann Martin Bolzius sent this report to his church’s headquarters in Germany:

Some Jews in Savannah complained to me the other day that the Spanish and Portuguese Jews persecute the German Jews in a way no Christian would persecute another Christian.... They want to build a Synagogue, but the Spanish and German Jews cannot come to terms.... The Spanish and Portuguese Jews are not so strict insofar as eating is concerned as the others are. They eat, for instance, the beef that comes from the warehouse or that is sold anywhere else. The German Jews, on the other hand, would rather starve than eat meat they do not slaughter themselves.

Thus we see that the Sephardim were strongly assimilated, and as a result looked down their noses at the ghettoized Ashkenazim, who found the Sephardim too lax in their practice of Judaism.

The first act of a Jewish community, even before it established a congregation, was to purchase a plot of ground for a cemetery. In 1655, the Jews of New York petitioned Stuyvesant for such a plot, indicating that no one had yet died but they were planning for the contingency. The petition was not granted until a year later, presumably after a death, when they were given what the Dutch records refer to as “a little hook of land.” That has long since disappeared. The oldest surviving cemetery — on Chatham Square near New York’s Chinatown — was deeded in 1681/82. The slant in that date is significant. In 1582, the Gregorian calendar attempted to move New Year’s Day from March 25, the Feast of Jesus’ Ascension, to January 1, the Feast of Jesus’ Circumcision. The Protestant British held out against the change until 1752. Therefore, all dates in the first three months of the years between 1600 and 1752 were indicated by the slant.

Why did New York’s Jews need a new cemetery by 1681/82? The late Rabbi David de Sola Pool assumed that it was because the first cemetery had filled up. My own studies show that this was unlikely, because the Jewish community had too small a population. In 1664, when the British took over the colony, only Ashkenazic Asser Levy remained to sign the oath of allegiance to the British crown. The earlier Sephardim had fled Stuyvesant’s intolerance and New York’s cold winters to join relatives in
Amsterdam, in the far larger Caribbean Jewish communities, or in the rapidly growing one in London. Asser Levy prospered, not only as a butcher in the abattoir he and a Christian partner built outside the town wall, but also through buying mortgages in the former Dutch villages of Breukelen (Brooklyn) and Vlackebos (Flatbush), trading with the Indians for furs up the Hudson at Fort Orange (Albany), and serving as banker for Amsterdam interests. Inevitably, word of his prosperity reached family in Amsterdam. In 1680, his brother-in-law, known in the Dutch records as Valentijn van der Wilden (Valentine from Vilna) arrived, giving New York its first Litvak! With him came his son, Simon Valentijn, and son-in-law, Asher Michaels de Paul (possibly “from Poland”). On February 1, 1681/82, Asser Levy died suddenly and was undoubtedly laid to rest in the original Jewish cemetery with his relatives performing appropriate Ashkenazic rites. This would explain why Joseph Bueno de Mesquita, a West Indian Sephardi, bought a new plot for a cemetery in which his relative, presumably his father, Benjamin Bueno de Mesquita, was the first and oldest surviving interment in 1683. Joseph was not going to bury his family next to Ashkenazim! Socially and in business dealings we find references to this same factionalism: In 1740, Abigail Franks, daughter of Ashkenazic Moses Levy and wife of Ashkenazic Jacob Franks, writes to her son about the prospective marriage of Abigail’s half-sister, Rachel, to Sephardic Isaac Mendes Seixas:

The Portugeuze here are in a great ferment about it And think very ill of him

Savannah merchants, importing from New York, also divided their dealings along Ashkenazic-Sephardic lines: Abram Minis dealt with Jacob Franks; Isaac Nunes Henriques purchased from Rodrigo Pacheco.

The oldest surviving minute book of an American congregation was discovered in England. It had been carried off by Nathan Simson, an Ashkenazi and an early New York merchant, who moved back to England in 1722. He had served as parnas (president) for the prior year, 1720-21, and he refers to the congregation as “Shearith Yaacob.” Does this mean that the Ashkenazim were separate from the Sephardic “Shearith Israel”? Simson’s careful record points out that they were renting the Jan Harpendingh house on Mill Street as a synagogue. The expenses for rent and for the hazan (cantor or minister), the bodek (Kashrut supervisor), who probably also served as shochet (butcher), and the shamash (seaton) necessitated a pooling of resources. According to Simson, the congregation numbered fifteen Sephardim and twenty-two Ashkenazim. Six years later, the New Yorkers began raising funds for their synagogue. Thirty-seven families could not assemble the necessary resources. There was no point in appealing to the impoverished ghettos of Germany and Poland; appeals went to the established Sephardic communities in Amsterdam, London,
and the Caribbean. The most generous gift to the building fund came from Curacao with the stipulation that, since the donors were aware of the larger number of Ashkenazim in New York, the latter must sign an agreement to allow Sephardic ways to predominate. The result was that America's first synagogue opened with the Sephardic ritual. Another factor in this decision may have been gentile curiosity about Jewish worship. The Jews lived side by side with non-Jews, and the Sephardic service, conducted by a *hazan*, was more decorous than the Ashkenazic, in which each worshipper *davened* (prayed) at his own pace, creating a noisy, unintelligible babble.

Even so, the Philadelphia congregation, which considered erecting a synagogue and met for formal worship in 1761, must have used the Ashkenazic rite. A Sepher Torah was borrowed from New York by a group of German, Polish and Bohemian Ashkenazim, leading Jacob Henry of New York to write his cousin Barnard Gratz, asking whether the Philadelphia *shul* is to follow the ritual used in London's Ashkenazic Hambro synagogue, or that of Prague or Poland. It was not until 1782, during the Revolution, when Jews from other colonies then occupied by the British gathered in Philadelphia, under the leadership of Charleston's *hazan* Isaac da Costa, that a synagogue was built and Mikveh Israel became a Sephardic-rite congregation.

Da Costa, back in 1762, had purchased a plot of ground in Charleston for a private cemetery, but two years later deeded it to Congregation Beth Elohim for the use of the community. When he and his family returned from Philadelphia, they found that the congregation was worshipping in a former brick cotton gin factory that they had converted to a synagogue. Da Costa died on November 23, 1783, and was interred in a new plot of ground in suburban Hampstead. There was a split in the congregation, the Sephardim creating Congregation Beth Elohim Unveh Shallom (House of God and Mansion of Peace) as indicated in a number of sources of the period. A codicil in the will of Joseph Salvador, written a week before Da Costa's death, makes bequests to:

the Portuguese Congregation of Charleston "Beth Elohim Unvey Shalom" and to the German Congregation "Beth Elohim"

The Ashkenazim had undoubtedly taken over the synagogue, and the Sephardim had not only formed a congregation, but purchased a new cemetery, for which they held a cornerstone-laying ceremony in 1786. Apparently the congregations became sufficiently reunited to begin erecting their so-called "new" synagogue in 1792, but the cornerstone-laying was done totally by Ashkenazim, who were obviously in control. Further evidence of this occurred shortly after the new synagogue's dedication, when Emanuel de la Motta sought to bury his father next to relatives in the Hampstead Sephardic cemetery, defying the demands of the congregation's
leadership that only the larger cemetery be used. He was accused of reviving "the distinction of Portuguese & Todeska (Sephardi term for Germans)" and was threatened with severe penalties and a fine.17

These distinctions were aggravated by the absence of rabbis. Except for occasional rabbinic visitors, who came to raise funds for the Holy Land, no rabbi appeared in North America until 1840. The European rabbi was primarily a scholar, supported by the community or by a wealthy father-in-law, who spent his years studying the classics of rabbinic literature, writing books, and training a new generation of rabbis. For his community he was the authority on ritual procedures who answered questions, more lawyer and judge than preacher and pastor. Caribbean communities like Barbados, Curacao, and Jamaica, each had far more Jews in colonial times than all of North America, and they could afford ordained rabbis in the eighteenth century. But the struggling pioneer communities here found rabbis a luxury they could not afford.18

North America’s first permanent ordained rabbi was Abraham Rice, who arrived in New York from Bavaria in the summer of 1840. Evidently he was aware that America’s oldest surviving synagogue was in Newport, Rhode Island, so he traveled there to serve the summer visitors and tried to persuade them to establish a permanent congregation, but his effort failed. On his return to New York, he met a landsman (fellow countryman) who was president of Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, and Rice became the first ordained rabbi to serve that important congregation, although his intransigent orthodoxy contributed to the birth in 1843 of Har Sinai, the first of the German-founded Reform congregations.19

The adoption of the Sephardic ritual by all the colonial congregations led to a demand for a hazzan who knew it. The congregations were often hard put to find one. Charleston, which rivalled New York in Jewish population before the Revolution, began formal worship in 1749. Moses Cohen from London was elected hacham [i.e. rabbi] but the title must have been honorific as there is no record of his ordination in London. Isaac da Costa, a successful merchant, became far more influential as Charleston’s first hazzan.20

As with all the colonial communities, the rise and fall of Jewish population brought periods when there was no congregation. Savannah’s records show that the congregation, formally established in 1735, disintegrated when the Sepharim fled in 1740-41, reorganized to meet in Mordecai Sheftall’s home in 1774, to be disbanded by British occupation in 1778. Under the date of July 7th, 1786, Levi Sheftall’s diary records: “We meet and reestablished our congregation of Mikva Israel.”21

The Jewish community of Newport claims to have been settled as early as 1658. A portion of the present Touro Cemetery, thirty-four by thirty
feet, was purchased in 1677 by Mordechay Campanall and Moses Pacheco, two Sephardic settlers who had arrived from Barbados. Undoubtedly a minyan was established soon after with the appearance of a member of the important Pardo rabbinic family from the Netherlands. Saul, who never completed rabbinical training, translated his Spanish Pardo into English Brown, and became the first American Jew of record to change his name.

Dispersed by economic factors, this early Newport community sent a number of its members to New York by the early 1700's. In the 1740's the development of the whaling industry attracted new Jewish settlers to Newport. Among them were the Sephardic Lopez and Rivera families and the Ashkenazic Hart, Polock, and Isaacs families. By the late 1750's the Jewish community was prospering enough to propose building what is now America's oldest surviving synagogue, begun in 1759 and completed in 1763. The Sephardic rite was established with the arrival of Rev. Isaac Touro.22

Saul Brown, who moved from Newport to New York at the end of the seventeenth century, became the first known hazan of Shearith Israel in New York. He functioned as a part-timer, earning most of his livelihood as a merchant, just as he had in Newport. For a while the New York congregation found among its membership individuals competent to conduct Sephardic-rite worship, but the quality varied, and circumstances led the "ministers," as they were called, to come and go. The contemplation of building the first synagogue in 1728 coincided with the arrival from Curacao of Moses Lopez da Fonseca, the son of Curacao's rabbi, whom the congregation happily engaged as hazan. We can assume that this tie may have enlarged the gift by the Curacao Jews to the New York building fund. Moses married a New York girl, Miriam, daughter of Isaac Naftali, who bore him four children and died in 1733. Three years later, the lonesome widower returned to Curacao with his motherless brood, lured by a match arranged by his brothers.

By the 1750's the New York congregation was desperate for a hazan and appealed to the London congregation for a likely candidate. They sent Joseph Jessurun Pinto, a young man engaged to be married. He decided to check out the post, and when his position was secure, his fiancé was married to him by proxy in the London synagogue — since there was no other functionary in New York — and then the bride was sent over. They stayed about eight years, became homesick and returned to England. After another bad experience, the congregation in 1768 accepted the application of one of its own, Gershom Mendes Seixas. His father, Isaac Mendes Seixas, divided his life between New York and Newport. Gershom was born in New York in 1745; his next brother, Benjamin, arrived two years later in Newport. No record has survived to tell us whether Gershom learned the Sephardic ritual in Newport from Rev. Isaac Touro, who came to that community while the synagogue was under construction and served
the congregation from 1760 to 1780. Or Gershom may have been reared in New York under Rev. Jessurun Pinto, whose ministry lasted from 1758 to 1766.

At the outbreak of the Revolution, when George Washington lost the battles of Long Island and Brooklyn Heights, Seixas secured permission from the congregation’s leaders to cart off the Torahs and other sacred objects, and like most of New York’s patriots, headed for Connecticut, along with his very pregnant wife. They reached Stamford, where their daughter was born, and eventually joined his parents who had fled from British-occupied Newport to Stratford, Connecticut. When the British evacuated Philadelphia in 1780, patriots from all the eastern seaboard Jewish communities converged there, and a Seixas was summoned by refugee New York leaders to function for Philadelphia’s Mikveh Israel until the war was over. As we have already mentioned, by 1782 Philadelphia had erected a synagogue. A year later the war ended, and the refugees returned to New York, Charleston, and Savannah, leaving the Philadelphians to pay the mortgage.

In the meantime, those Jews who had remained in New York under British control had secured a hazan of their own. He was Jacob Raphael Cohen, who had been serving Montreal’s Shearith Israel, founded in 1768 by a group that included ex-New Yorkers. After three years of inflation in Canada, Hazan Cohen left the congregation to return to England with his family. The British boat stopped in New York harbor to pick up British soldiers going on furlough, and so many came aboard that the Cohen family were put ashore, where the New York Jews employed him until the old guard leaders returned from Philadelphia and decided that they preferred Seixas, and offered Cohen to Philadelphia. The switch took place and both men lived out their lives in their respective pulpits. Their duties and remuneration, as defined in the oldest minute book of the New York congregation, included:

- to attend at the Sinagog at the customary hours every week day, and three times on the Sabath & feasts to perform prayers & what more belongs to his function as is customary in othere Congregation & that he Also (in case the Bodeck [kosher inspector] be indispos’d shall assist in his Room [place] for which he shall have his Selary of fifty Pounds and Six Cords of Wallnut Wood pr annum, also Passover Cakes [matzot] for his family, all which shall be Payd him out of the Tsedaca [communal treasury].

So much for the Sephardic hazan. For the other ritual posts, Ashkenazim were preferred, since as we have indicated, they were better versed in orthodox tradition.
In New York the aging Benjamin Elias was apparently continued as Bodeck, and Samuel Myers-Cohen functioned as Shochet (kosher butcher) until replaced by Solomon Myers.

The important duty of Shammash (sexton) could be handled by either a Sephardi or an Ashkenazi, and the first of a long line was Valentine Campanall. His responsibilities included summoning worshippers, reminding participants of their assignments, and preparing the synagogue.

Outside the synagogue, the most important functionary was the mohel, the ritual circumciser. In the colonial period this was, of necessity, a part-time post since the birth of male offspring was sporadic. Only three of these functionaries have left records for the period: the aforementioned Jacob Raphael Cohen, whose register includes Montreal and Philadelphia, but not New York, since that office was already being filled by Abraham I. Abrahams, popularly known as “the Brisker” from the Yiddish name of his native town, Brest-Litovsk, Poland. Abrahams’ record covers from June 1756 through January 1781 with a total of eight-one circumcisions. He functioned for Newport as well, but his business enterprises or weather occasionally interfered. Thus in 1756 he was summoned to Newport to circumcise a son of Aaron Lopez, but he did not arrive until seven months later, by which time Aaron’s half-brother, Moses Lopez, had a son, so they had a double brit milah (circumcision). In May of 1762 “the Brisker” did another brit for Isaac son of Moses Lopez; and the following January he was called for Abraham, son of Jacob Rodrigues Rivera. In December of 1766, he noted with pride his arriving on the traditional eighth day for Isaac, son of Myer Polock. But his major triumph came on October 27, 1767. The Lopezes had rescued from the Portuguese Inquisition their brother Michael and his grown sons, Duarte, Jose and Juan. “The Brisker” came from New York to Tiverton, Rhode Island (which seems to have been a resort for the wealthier Newport Jews), to circumcise the father, age 56, and the three sons, 28, 24, and 17, and bestowed on them their Jewish names: Abraham, Moses, Samuel, and Jacob Lopez. In 1772, Newport acquired a mohel in the person of Abraham Seixas, brother of Gershom. He took a correspondence course from “the Brisker.” You can see the document and the accompanying silver implements created for Seixas by New York’s famous silversmith, Myer Myers. They are treasured possessions of the American Jewish Historical Society.

The only other known colonial mohel was called variously Barnet, Barnard, or Ber Jacobs, and he covered eastern Pennsylvania, living first in Heidelberg (now Schaefferstown), then in Lancaster, and ultimately in Philadelphia and Baltimore. His record book lists thirty-three circumcisions he performed. He seems to have been more punctilious about the traditional eighth day, as indicated by a comparison with birth records for some of these babies.
Intermarriage was a serious concern. Most of the Jews who married out could find no one to perform the ceremony, but in this they were no different from most Catholic-Protestant couples. As a consequence most mixed married couples lived in common-law relationship unless the partner converted. In one notable case, we have the record of an intermarriage performed by a Jewish functionary, Mordecai Moses Mordecai, who had been an unsuccessful candidate for the coveted post of shammash as Philadelphia was building its synagogue in 1782. In May of that year he was summoned to Easton by his wife’s sister, the wife of Myer Hart, founding Jew of Easton, Pennsylvania. The Harts’ daughter had eloped with a neighbor, Presbyterian James Pettigrew, a lieutenant in Washington’s army, and her father had disowned her. The distraught mother prevailed on Mordecai to perform a secret marriage for the couple in which it was agreed that male offspring would follow their father’s faith, and female their mother’s. The couple had three boys and four girls. The boys were reared as Christians, one of them, Samuel Pettigrew, becoming a mayor of Pittsburgh. The girls were reared as Jews; the three who married all found Jewish husbands. As witness to the ketubah (marriage agreement), Baer Levy, another brother-in-law, was brought from Philadelphia, and he leaked the tale in Philadelphia. Two years later, an elderly blind Jew died. He had been living with his common-law Christian wife, who asked to have him buried in Mikveh Israel’s cemetery. Lacking a rabbi, the congregation created a bet din (rabbinic court) composed of three of their leaders considered most knowledgeable. They decided to designate a fringe plot, as was customary for those not fully Jewish, but to deny him traditional washing and shrouding. Mordecai defied the authorities by performing both rites. This act precipitated a letter from the Philadelphia leaders to the Ashkenazic chief rabbi of Amsterdam, which in essence asked: How do you keep Jews Jewish in a pioneer land that lacks rabbinic authority? No response was ever received from Amsterdam.28

American Jewish history and my own genealogical studies provide the answer: Our colonial forebears without rabbis created the patterns and the institutions for Judaism to survive in America. It has been falsely claimed that the colonial Jews all intermarried and left no descendants who are Jews. There are more members of Providence’s Temple Beth-El than there were Jews in colonial America at the time of the Revolution, but out of that comparatively small population, there is a goodly proportion of descendants who are active in synagogues throughout the land. Five of them are in this audience: 1) Abigail Kursheedt Hoffman of Fort Lee, New Jersey, descended from Rev. Gershom Mendes Seixas; 2) Jack Coleman of Savannah, Georgia, descended from Rev. Mordecai Moses Mordecai; 3) Justin Oppenheim of Roslyn Heights, Long Island, whose ancestor, Abraham Isaacks, came from Emden, Germany, to New York in 1698 and became a leading figure in the first synagogue built in North America by
Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes

Congregation Shearith Israel of New York; 4) Dr. Aaron Raisin of Charleston, South Carolina, whose forebear, Marks Lazarus, served for two years in the Revolution; and 5) Sally Solis-Cohen, about to give birth to the next descendant of several Revolutionary ancestors, including Benjamin Mendes Seixas.29

The rest of us, who are spiritual descendants of these early Jews, owe them a debt of gratitude for laying the cornerstones of the largest, most affluent, and most influential Jewry in today's world.

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SPECIAL STUDIES


United States of America, 100th Congress, 2nd Session

Joint Resolution

Designating the week of September 25, 1988, as “Religious Freedom Week”

Whereas, the principle of religious liberty was an essential part of the founding of our Nation, and must be safeguarded with eternal vigilance by all men and women of good will;

Whereas, religious liberty has been endangered throughout history by bigotry and intolerance;

Whereas, the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States guarantees the inalienable rights of individuals to worship freely or not be religious, as they choose, without interference from governmental or other agencies;

Whereas, the Constitution of the United States ensures religious freedom to all of the people of the United States;

Whereas, the bicentennial of the ratification of the Constitution occurs in 1988;

Whereas, at Touro Synagogue in 1790, President George Washington issued his famous letter declaring “to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance”;

Whereas, the Touro Synagogue letter advocating the doctrine of mutual respect and understanding was issued more than a year before the adoption of the Bill of Rights; national symbols of the commitment of the United States to religious freedom;

Whereas, throughout our Nation’s history, religion has contributed to the welfare of believers and of society generally, and has been a force for maintaining high standards for morality, ethics and justice;

Whereas, religious liberty can be protected only through the efforts of all persons of good will in a united commitment;

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

That the week of September 25, 1988, is hereby declared to be “Religious Freedom Week”, wherein members of all faiths or of none, may join together in support of religious tolerance and religious liberty for all.
The Olneyville Hebrew Club—Order of Hebraic Comradeship

THE OLNEYVILLE HEBREW CLUB
ORDER OF HEBRAIC COMRADESHIP

By ELEANOR F. HORVITZ

The Olneyville Hebrew Club (O.H.C) was established on September 22, 1920, at 10:15 a.m., according to the first book of minutes of the organization. Mrs. Davis* acted as chairman, and officers were elected for three months, with Earl Davis elected as the first president. An initiation fee of twenty-five cents was set, and dues were to be fifty cents per month. A motion was made and seconded that officers could purchase necessary stationery up to fifty cents before by-laws were enacted.

The O.H.C. had many precedents of organizations made up of young men with the primary goal of comradeship. In 1891 the Young Men’s Moses Montefiore Society was chartered “for social and literary purposes,” while the Hebrew Dramatic Club of Providence was organized in 1895 “for social and mutual benefit.” The Young Men’s Hebrew Association, a well-known men’s organization for many years, had its start in 1898 for “social, beneficial and literary work and endeavor.” The Oxford Club, chartered in 1901, had no loftier goals than “to promote fraternity and social enjoyment among its members.”

Who were the nine young men, ages about 16 to 18, who met at the home of Earl Davis in Olneyville to form a club among friends with the stated purpose “to promote Jewish culture and to further comradeship?” The minutes list Isadore Saxe, Earl Davis, Abraham Kouflman (in other minutes spelled Kaufman), Maurice Albert, Samuel Kisper, Morris Waldman, Joseph Waldman, Daniel Kouflman (or Kaufman), and Charles Davis. This nucleus group rapidly expanded.

Only the first year of club minutes seem to have survived, with a hiatus of documentation normally recorded in club minutes until the organization became the Order of Hebraic Comradeship in 1927. Because of the lack of minutes, additional information about the club was obtained from newspaper accounts.

Eleanor F. Horvitz is Librarian-Archivist of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association.

*Earl Davis’ mother.

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The first constitution and by-laws of the Olneyville Hebrew Club were drawn up and passed by the club members on October 10, 1921. The objective of the Club was “the Study and Promotion of Judaism, the mutual Improvement of its members, and the Betterment of the Jewish people.” Any male over the age of sixteen of the Jewish faith was eligible to membership with the approval of the majority of the members. Meetings were to be held on the first and third Sundays of each month, with “Club Nights” every Thursday evening. Dues were fifty cents per month payable either in advance or twenty-five cents at each meeting.

Order of Hebraic Comradeship

Left to right:

The minutes of the first year of the club’s existence recorded that a Mr. Dubinsky of the Jewish-American weekly newspaper, the Jewish Review, spoke to the group on the subject of how to govern a club. Many interesting motions reflective of the period were made:

“The Club should hold a raffle to buy a talking machine and records with the proceeds”. “Prohibit gambling and swearing and other disorderly conduct at the meetings.” Because of the blatant anti-Semitism of Henry Ford, a resolution was drawn up to abolish Ford’s newspaper, The Dearborn Independent, from the files of the Providence Public Library.
A motion was made and passed that “the club pay 10c a week for janitor service to whichever of the Hebrew School children perform it.” This refers to the early days of the club when it met in one of the rooms of the synagogue Anshe Olneyville. It was also voted that “the Membership Committee be given $1.00 for postage stamps, but must return whatever they did not use.”

Six months after the original reference to the “talking machine” the members were still investigating the matter of whether to buy a “graphaphone” or similar musical instrument. The discussion spawned a committee, “to look into the matter of securing a safe place to keep the talking machine.” The matter was resolved by a Mr. Wiseman’s donation of his own phonograph. He was given a rising vote of thanks and unanimously made an honorary member. The committee to obtain a phonograph was discharged with a vote of thanks.

There were several humorous notes in the first book of minutes, such as “Minutes of the meetings of October 9 and October 16, 1921 were unfortunately lost on the hike.” Another set of minutes was written in Yiddish. On October 20, 1921, “A motion was made and passed that the remainder of the meeting be transversed in Jewish . . . The Club returned to talking English.”

How did the members spend their time together? The minutes include topics that were subjects for debates: “All immigration be abolished for a period of two years in the United States,” “Resolved that Jews of the United States should emigrate to Palestine.” There were other activities such as a mock trial against Henry Ford, a lie-telling contest, a checker tournament and a smokeless smoker.

“The Olneyville Hebrew Club had a dance at the Fruit Hill Bungalow and it was considered a genuine success. Music was furnished by the accomplished musicians of Eddy’s Novelty Orchestra. A beautiful box of chocolates was given for the prize fox trot.”

“Local Hebrew Club installs new officers.” At this meeting, July 16, 1922, Earl Davis was elected president for the third time. In addition to the five main officers, chairmen were elected for the following committees: Athletic, Membership, House, Social and Judea.

“Local Young People on Hazardous Trip” — this headline referred to a boat cruise held on September 3, 1922, which threatened to be very disastrous. The three-hour sail to Conanicut Island was serene for the 45 people aboard. The picnic, the baseball, the foot races, the swimming and diving were all enjoyed by the O.H.C. members and their guests. At 6:30 P.M. they left for Prudence Island. Coming too close to the dock, the skipper crashed off the wharf, breaking the boat’s exhaust pipe, stalling the engine and causing the boat to drift. The girls and some of the boys
were transported to shore. While the young girls and boys toured the island and visited various ice cream parlors, the boat was repaired and the group returned safely to Providence, docking at 11:30 P.M.  

Articles about the organization's activities appeared frequently in the newspaper during the period of 1921-1927, because of the diligence of the publicity chairman. Elections are published; dances and motor boat parties are described in detail. One hike was graphically described: "The 14th Successful Hike." "After an eventful hike of about six miles in Lincoln Woods, the members witnessed the first snowfall of the season. But, regardless of the snow, which turned to rain, the members continued their hike. They were so exhilarated by the air that they could hardly wait to get to the center of the woods in order to eat their lunches. This was followed by a football game, and a 'hare and hound' chase which led over hills and rocks through 'brooks and marshes'."

ORDER OF HEBRAIC COMRADESHIP

The minutes of July 29, 1927, record the following motion: "Motion made this date that the name be changed permanently to Order of Hebraic Comradeship." It was decided to make this motion an amendment and to draw up a charter for the club. The charter would include all those who had been in the club for four years, and all officers were to have their names on the charter. The name may have been changed because the organization had expanded to include boys from areas other than Olneyville.

Articles of Association of the Order of Hebraic Comradeship filed in the Office of the Secretary of State on February 23, 1928, stated that the organization was "constituted for the purpose of promoting the welfare of all its members socially, athletically and intellectually. It shall have the further purpose of fostering interest in Hebrew and Jewish affairs, letters and traditions." Signers were Samuel L. Kasper, Abraham H. Kouffman, Joseph Waldman, Morris S. Waldman, Daniel H. Kouffman, and Isadore Saxe. Probably because the original members were now six years older, the Articles now stated that "Any male of the Jewish faith of the age of 21 years or over, of good moral character shall be eligible for membership."

Dues were set at twenty-five cents per week or twelve dollars annually, payable quarterly in advance.

From a review of the minutes of the O.H.C. it is apparent that the rules put forth in the by-laws, especially in regard to absenteeism, non-payment of dues, expulsion and suspension, were strictly observed. One of the members though, suggested facetiously that "absenteeism on Thursday evenings could be decreased if the wives of (and here he mentions four of the culprits), would get together for bridge or something else so that their husbands could attend the O.H.C. meetings occasionally."
The Olneyville Hebrew Club—Order of Hebraic Comradeship

HOUSEKEEPING AND DECORUM

Throughout the years of existence of this group of men one of the issues that recurs is the problem of keeping the club rooms clean. A motion was made at a meeting on February 12, 1928, to “have a janitor clean rooms every two weeks at expenditure of not more than $1.00.” This was followed by an amendment, “To clean the rooms every month.” This amendment was passed. But another motion was made, “House Committee be allowed to spend not more than $2.50.” One member appealed the decision of the chair that this motion was out of order. This appeal of motion out of order was carried. In spite of these rather complicated motions, the issue was not settled, for later in those same minutes another motion was made: “to appropriate to the House Committee not more than $3.00 for cleaning of rooms.” By April 11, 1928, there was another motion: “Expend $1.00 per week for cleaning of rooms.” This was passed. The members were asked to be more careful with cigarette butts and ashes and to help keep the rooms clean.

In June of 1934 the club members moved from rooms at 116 Dorrance Street to new headquarters at 37 Weybosset Street. The House Committee was now concerned with decorating the rooms, replacing the pool table and purchasing furniture.

As tenants they often had to cope with the negligence of their landlord in regard to necessary repairs. They often threatened to stop payment of the rent. This occurred in the case of a ceiling that was falling or a door lock that was broken. Members complained to the House Committee about chairs that were in need of repair or about the pool-table cover that was ripped, as well as about other similar problems.

The men did not hesitate to criticize one another. “We should get away from the silly talk that goes on during the meetings and try to build up a good organization and get more new members interested in this organization.” It was emphasized that members be properly dressed during club meetings. Some members were disturbed at the way meetings were “whisked through” to allow more time for bowling. Others complained that the club rooms should not be used for gambling purposes, but a more moderate group suggested that there should be no poker playing over two cents ante.

OTHER TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP

During 1935 the groundwork was laid to start a Junior Organization of the Order of Hebraic Comradeship. On October 31, 1935, it was reported that the first meeting of the Junior Organization committee was held. The first formal meeting took place on November 13, 1935. Dr. Nathaniel Malinou, a member of the O.H.C., offered his services to examine the
members of the Junior Organization to ascertain whether they were physically fit to indulge in sports. At the next meeting on November 20, the 25 boys present drew up a constitution. A few months later there were complaints about the junior group, which was accused of dirtying up the rooms. A suggestion was made that more ash trays be distributed around the room.

The Junior Organization was a short-lived group. By November 5, 1936, a motion was made and passed unanimously to drop the Junior Organization of the Order of Hebraic Comradeship. The termination was noted in the minutes of January 21, 1937, “The Junior Group is dissolved.” There had been the thought that if the club member admittance age was reduced to 19 years, suitable members might be obtained from the junior group. Evidently this did not occur.

On several occasions the subject of admitting associate members (those who had resigned in good standing) was introduced. The motion was always defeated.

A category occasionally suggested was a woman's auxiliary. Some members favored holding more activities with couples rather than having an auxiliary. Others suggested that women be able to use the club rooms, while some thought the solution would be to recruit new men members actively rather than bother with an auxiliary. Whatever the differing points of view, there never was a woman's auxiliary, although a review of the activities of the organization revealed that many of these activities included couple participation.

O.H.C. Bowling League on a trip to Braves Field, Boston, May 24, 1931.
CLUB ACTIVITIES

There were many facets to membership in the Order of Hebraic Comradeship. In addition to the weekly meetings, much planning was entailed in the annual ball, the annual dinner dance, the automobile, motorboat and sailboat excursions, and a great variety of social functions. Sports activities such as bowling, baseball and basketball were pursued, either in conjunction with excursions or as separate events. Under the heading of cultural activities were debates and lectures given by guests or by the members themselves. Peculiar to the period were the scheduling of smokers and musicales.

"THE BIG DANCE"

"It is quite obvious that those of you who are reserving the Last night of Passover for the Order of Hebraic Comradeship 'Big Dance' will be in for an evening of entertainment that cannot be duplicated elsewhere for the price. And, too, aside from the fact that it is to be held in a magnificent ballroom, classed as New England's finest (the Arcadia), coupled with an orchestra that knows how to produce scintillating music for your dancing feet, you are going to mingle with your kind of people — Jewish young folks from all over Southern New England." The Editor of the April 1932 issue of the publication "Comrade" wrote these enthusiastic words about the forthcoming "Big Dance."

The annual End of Passover Dance, which was held for the first time in 1921, soon became THE social event of the young Jewish people not only of Rhode Island but also from nearby Massachusetts. A newspaper account of the "Big Dance" recorded: "Over 1,500 young folks from all parts of the state and nearby Massachusetts danced to the tunes of the Arcadia Orchestra at the tenth annual dance given by the Order of Hebraic Comradeship. The gathering was noted for the spirit of geniality and friendliness that pervaded the whole atmosphere. Hundreds remained after midnight, greeting old friends loathe to break away."

THE FORMAL BANQUET-DANCE

Newspaper articles and references in the club minutes testify to the fact that the annual formal banquet-dance was another highlight of the O.H.C. "The popularity of this affair is shown by the fact that almost 100% of the membership have signified their intention to attend." This reference was to the plans for the formal banquet-dance to celebrate the club's tenth anniversary.

At the formal affair held on October 19, 1930, the cabaret setting at the Lantern of the White Duck Inn was described as "elegant and colorful as 50 couples attended and danced until midnight amidst streamers, balloons"
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and all sorts of other novelties. The ladies were said to be delightfully surprised by the souvenir gifts which consisted of small genuine cedar chests filled with monogrammed stationery."

Another formal banquet-dance in observance of the 14th anniversary was described in the Banquet issue, November 11, 1934, of the "Comrade."

"With the observance of our 14th annual banquet the Order of Hebraic Comradeship once again culminates a highly satisfactory epoch in its history. This annual banquet has long ceased to be looked upon as just another social event. To all loyal O.H.C. members it marks a new milestone in our ever progressive advancement. Today's event is particularly gratifying to those members of our organization who were present at the inception of the club. To them it is the attainment of a feat which goes beyond their fondest expectations."

"THE SMOKER"

According to one of five definitions of the noun Smoker in Webster's Dictionary, it is: "A social gathering for men only; so called because at one time etiquette forbade smoking in mixed gatherings."

In the context in which it was used by the members of the O.H.C. a Smoker was an all-male gathering (as contrasted with the "couples" dances, dinners, excursions, etc.). The type of entertainment chosen for the Smoker was probably thought to have predominantly male appeal. "At the first smoker of the season held by the O.H.C. about 70 members and friends enjoyed the well-balanced program of songs, stories and athletic events. . . . A wrestling match furnished plenty of thrills . . . . The boxing bout between Joe Waldman and Marquis Markowitz was too much for the referee, Israel, who had to seek shelter several times behind the boxers." At other smokers vocal quintets shared the billing with boxing bouts.

"THE MUSICALE"

What type of an affair was called a "musicale?" From newspaper accounts and the organization's publication, "Comrade," it was defined as a combination of guest artists who entertained musically or dramatically. There was also participation by the audience in a "sing-along." An April 1929 article in the Jewish Herald referred to an "Unusual group of fine artists which found much applause with the audience. Encores were in demand several times. Charlotte Shearer, the little 'Song and Dance Girl' of Pawtucket, was the hit of the evening. Sigmund Block rendered five baritone solos, accompanied by Miss Rose Millman at the piano. Miss Bertha Feinstein's selections at the piano were very well received as were also Charlie Wagner's operatic songs in Jewish and Italian. The Schwartz sisters of Pawtucket rendered a short dancing specialty. Dave Hoffman's impersonation and song was so contagious that most of the audience joined
him. Paul Goldstein recited the ‘Kid’s Last Fight’. Popular songs of the day were sung by the audience and all joined in the singing of the O.H.C. anthem.”

At the Musicale held the following year the entertainers who rendered vocal and instrumental selections included Miss Mary Orliansky, Miss Florence Shapiro, Miss Rose Millman, Miss Esther Greenberg, Mr. Jack Leichter, Mr. Samuel Berditch, Mr. Norman Block and Mr. Sol Goldsmith. Mr. Berditch promised a surprise entertainer, whose identity was kept a secret.16

Clubs invited to the Musicale included the Junior Congregation of Temple Beth Israel, the Ko-Ketts, Phi Lambda Sigma Sorority, Sigma Pi Fellowship, A.Z.A. of Pawtucket, Jecomen Club, the Intermediate Miriam Hospital Associates and the Junior League of Workmen’s Circle. At this 1930 musicale the social director invited the guests to “make yourself at home and join us in having a good time” for “you are among friends,” he said. Printed copies of words to the songs to be sung together included popular songs of the day such as, “River Stay ‘Way from My Door,” “Love Letters in the Sand,” and “Good Night Sweetheart,” and, of course, the O.H.C. Anthem.

EXCURSIONS BY AUTOMOBILE, BUS, MOTORBOAT AND SAILBOAT

Unlike present times when the two or three-car family is taken for granted, the automobile in the 1920s and 1930s was a vehicle for special trips and parties. “Club Plans Auto Party” for Sunday, July 29, 1928. “Automobiles are to assemble before 11:00 outside the club rooms, and the party is to start for Horseneck Beach at 11:00 A.M. sharp. The return trip is to be made thru Sandy Beach, Fall River, where the members will make merry for a few hours. The committee assures every one a good time; therefore no one should miss the opportunity.”

The destination of another motor trip was Olovo’s Point Judith Beach. Special arrangements and reservations were made with the management of the beach to accommodate the expected large crowd. An array of sports events was scheduled. Automobile conveyance was furnished all who had none of their own. A miniature parade was produced by all the cars, which lined up to “take to the road.”

A bus trip on August 17, 1929, was made to Point Judith where the members and their friends went swimming and held field events. After lunching on the beach, the party motored to Warner’s Rustic Inn where the evening was spent dancing.

Other excursions were held, such as Sailing Parties, Fishing Parties, Beach Parties and Tobaggoning Parties. However, the most popular excursion
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seemed to be the Motorboat Party. The trip to Prudence and Conanicut Islands, an annual event, was combined with a sports program.

A description of one of the Motorboat Parties is given in the *Jewish Herald* of August 29, 1931. "Despite threatening weather 30 couples of the Order of Hebraic Comradeship spent an enjoyable day in Narragansett Bay and at Conanicut Island. Although the water was a bit rough and the boat tossed from side to side at times, the party seemed to enjoy it all the more. At Conanicut Island the party had lunch, which was followed by field events. The pie eating contest was the outstanding event of the series." Field events were listed as Fat Man's Race, Shoe Matching Contest, Peanut Race, Soda Race, 50 Yard Dash and 100 Yard Dash. Evidently the inclement weather persisted, for the heavy sea necessitated a change in schedule. Instead of stopping at Prudence Island as planned, the group made a short stop at Crescent Park.

One memorable Motorboat Party made such an impression that it was reported in *The Providence Journal*. Invitations to this boat party were in such demand that two boats had to be used to accommodate all those who were seeking reservations. That was the year in which 55 couples were stranded at Prudence Island until 4:00 a.m. because of a fog so thick the visibility was zero and the skippers of the boats would not dare to venture out into the bay for the two-hour trip back to Providence.

No one who was on that excursion would forget the long black night on Prudence Island where there were no telephones, telegraphs or short-wave radio. The parents must have been very anxious, as indicated by the reception that welcomed the two boats at the dock on Point Street in Providence at 6:00 a.m. The parents were joined by the police, the Harbor Master, the Coast Guard and a *Journal* reporter. 

**BOWLING, BASEBALL, BASKETBALL, TENNIS**

One of the most popular sports in which the O.H.C. members participated was bowling. "The O.H.C. Bowling League, which met at Al Seltzer's Alleys on Mathewson Street every week for nine months of the year, with their post-season challenges to other Jewish Bowling teams, paved the way to the present Rhode Island Jewish Bowling Congress." 

Bowling League news was a regular feature of the column "O.H.C. News," which appeared regularly in the *Jewish Herald*. In one column the League was described as consisting of six teams of four men each with the team line-ups promising very keen competition for high honors as the boys were "rarin to go."

The Jewish Bowling League of 1930 consisted of the O.H.C., Jewish War Veterans, and clubs named Sigma Pi, A.Z.A., North Enders, and Jecomen. Reported in the "O.H.C. News" in the December 5, 1930, issue
of the *Jewish Herald* was the information that the O.H.C. had won five out of six games.

Other sports that the members engaged in were tennis tournaments, handball and ping pong. A basketball game win was described: "For the second time this season the O.H.C. boys defeated the Sigma Pi by the score of 22 to 10. The boys are coming along at a fast clip as shown by their game with the leading A.Z.A. team. So far the O.H.C. boys have lost to one team only, and since they are beginners at the game, they are to be commended."

Trips to Boston to watch the Boston Braves games were included in O.H.C. activities.

**LECTURERS — GUEST AND MEMBER**

According to the By-Laws, an educational director was to be in charge of all literary and intellectual matters and was charged with arranging all lectures, debates and other educational affairs of the club. A review of the minutes of the O.H.C. indicates that these activities were rather spasmodic and appeared to be of much less importance than the social and sports activities.

During the year of 1935 there appeared to be a concerted effort to feature lectures by the members at the meetings. The talks were on a variety of subjects and seemed to reflect the interest of the speaker. Examples of topics are: "Making of Wagon Wheels," "Four Years Experiences in New York," "City Government," "Camping in New Hampshire." Each record in the minutes was prefaced with "an interesting description" or "interesting talk." Two of the club members presented talks based on their professional expertise. On March 8, 1934, Dr. Myron Keller, a podiatrist, spoke on "The Skin Diseases of the Feet." A news article in the February 13, 1931, issue of the *Jewish Herald* reported: "A short address was given by Dr. Harry Dimond (a dentist) on diseases of the body due to negligence and improper care of the teeth. The members were very much interested and asked a surprising number of questions at the close of address. Dr. Dimond promised us another similar talk at some future date. The subject will be, 'The Proper Care of Teeth'."

Guest speakers also spoke on a variety of subjects based on their jobs or interests. For example, Walter F. Fitzpatrick, Treasurer of the City of Providence, spoke on the subject of city finances.

During 1930 several Rabbis were asked to speak to the club. Rabbi Sonderling of Temple Beth Israel chose as his topic, "Personality is Stressed to Youth."

"At a gathering of young Jewish organizations at the Order of Hebraic
Comradeship rooms, Sunday evening, Rabbi Sonderling, the guest speaker of the evening, emphasized the fact that the Jewish youth of today is losing his personality; that he is becoming one of ten thousand others, rather than being different from those others. With his compelling and thoroughly convincing manner, he showed that the problem of the modern Jewish youth is to keep intact the individual personality of the Jew in all his activities, whether they be commercial, social or religious. I am not better than my neighbor. I am simply different and I pray to keep on being so.\textsuperscript{20}

In October of 1930 Rabbi Joshua Werner addressed the same group. His talk was concerned with the foundation and origin of the Jewish faith. He tried to bring out facts to prove that Moses could not have given the Jewish law without divine inspiration.\textsuperscript{21}

Other Rabbis who were speakers included Rabbi Samuel Werner and Rabbi Abraham I. Schechter.

\textbf{"O.H.C. Comrade"}

In addition to the lecturers, another educational medium was a publication which was first approved in August 1931. Volume 1, Edition 1, was first named "Thee Oh Htch Cee Organ." The purpose and goal of this publication appeared in this first issue:

"In endeavor to present material of both educational value and interest, the Executive Board has chosen this medium. While the organ is more or less a means of distributing information, we hope it will further help to bring about a still closer friendship among our members, which has been a main factor in the existence of our organization for so many years.

Each publication was a means of promoting future social events and also of keeping the membership informed about the club's various activities. The intention was to publish each month. The first issue contained a short story, schedule of social events with a description of each planned party, and miscellaneous other items.

By September 1931, the "Holiday Issue," the name was changed to the "O.H.C. Comrade." An explanation of how and why the High Holidays were observed was the lead article. Poems were featured together with columns on athletics and on membership. Little "in" jokes that only the members appreciated and an editorial completed the contents of this issue.

The October 1931 issue added two new features — brain teasers and "Spicegrams."

If an issue coincided with a holiday, Jewish or secular, an explanation of that holiday was the featured article on the front page. Thus, the November 1931 issue was concerned with Thanksgiving. The December 1931 Chanukah number contained a philosophical editorial:
“The world is now passing through a very trying period of economic adjustment. The problem is serious, but only one of the many man has had to contend with in his attempt to survive and live in a measure of comfort and happiness. The problem, like all previous ones, must and will be solved by men by knowledge through experience and thought and systematic good. Old-fashioned hard work, weeding out the weak from the strong; is the answer.” This solution was likened to their organization in that its success, as in the past, would be measured by the character of its men and the cooperative application of its methods.

The December issue also urged regular attendance at meetings, an unselfish interest in the club’s welfare. It urged expansion of membership (their total membership was 55). Book reviews appeared for the first time.

Undoubtedly because of problems in staffing the “Comrade,” the publication did not adhere to a regular schedule. It is difficult to ascertain the frequency with which the issues appeared because of the lack of systematic volume and issue numbering. Also, there may be issues which were not included in the O.H.C. holdings acquired by the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association. The last issue on file in the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association Archives is dated November 1939 and contains this message: “Published every now and then for the membership of the Order of Hebraic Comradeship.”

WORLD WAR II INTERVENES

“When the world was in the throes of World War II meeting attendance and membership naturally diminished somewhat… It was deemed advisable that the membership level be maintained as of that period in the late 1940’s.”

Minutes of the 1940 decade reflect the effect of the war. A motion was made on August 20, 1942, to give up the headquarters, and the suggestion was made to meet in a hotel once a month. This motion was not passed, but by January of 1944 with the then officers and board frozen until January 1, 1945, it was agreed to give up the rented quarters in 1945 and meet every three months at a place designated by the officers. Members would continue paying yearly dues. On May 7, 1944, a motion was passed to give money to the Hebrew Sheltering Society and reserve some for their members in service.

It must have been difficult to agree to disband, for a motion to that effect was defeated at dinner meetings on January 24, 1946, and March 28, 1946. Finally it was decided to retain the current officers indefinitely. Members planned to hold at least two affairs per year, one in the summer and one in the winter.

Nineteen members were present at a dinner held in the Narragansett
Hotel on February 11, 1947, while twenty-one members and twenty-six guests attended the March 3, 1949, annual dinner meeting.

Flyers reflect the reunions that were held. The 1952 reunion was held at the Narragansett Hotel. In 1953 a dinner took place at the Lyons Den. The 1954, 1955, 1956 and 1957 annual dinner dances were held at the Narragansett Hotel. On October 18, 1969, a 50th reunion was held at the Pleasant Valley Country Club and featured dinner, dancing and entertainment. The 60th anniversary party was held at Sam Kagan's home on October 19, 1980.

During the decade of the 1970s and part of the 1980s, Sam Kagan generously offered his summer home in Narragansett Pier for the annual outing of the O.H.C. He also hosted breakfast meetings at his home on Orms Street. Photographs of those outings reveal the gala mood of those present.

IN RETROSPECT

There were many young men who banded together and formed clubs only to break up when interest waned. But why did the O.H.C.'s original nine young men form a nucleus which became a viable social club for so many decades? Perhaps answers may be found in the members' own words.

Dr. Daniel H. Kouffman:

For several years, even with the kindly assistance of the Anshe Olneyville Congregation, the club progressed but very slowly. A common goal of good fellowship and common Jewish problems, however, acted as a basic medium in making a firm foundation for this organization. . . . Gradually our membership ceased to confine itself primarily to Olneyville. With the influx of members from all parts of the city, and in some instances from other parts of the state, the location of the club had to change to accommodate this increase.

The ideals and aims of our club had by this time found a ready response in the minds of the younger Jewish male element of the community. Each year our advance has been a consistent one. Our status in the community has likewise reached a gratifying level. Today our particular type of organization ranks second to none in the entire state. The O.H.C. is highly respected and looked up to as an integral part of the life of our Jewish community. 23

Samuel C. Kagan:

Our club came into existence as a local unit, destined to bring together and help the Jewish youth of Olneyville. Its purpose and
ideals soon spread throughout the city and the wheels of its progress were soon set into motion.

Within the first few years of its existence, the O.H.C. had more than doubled its membership, and applications to join were being received from all sections of the city.

In 1926 the O.H.C. clubrooms were moved to a central location. This move proved a wise one. Our membership continued to grow rapidly. With this growth several changes were made in the location of our club and our quarters became increasingly better.

Today our club ranks exceptionally high among the individual Jewish organizations of Rhode Island. Our present location and club quarters are gratifying proof of the calibre of our club, its members, and the interest and respect with which we are held in the community.

Thus, the fifteenth year of our existence should duly impress upon us the ideals and principles of our club. Today we no longer stand at the crossroads of indecision as to our place in the community; we are recognized and respected because of our actions and record.

This has been forcefully brought to everyone’s attention by our action in bringing about the formation of a Jewish Inter-Club Bowling League, which proved a great medium in getting together the younger Jewish youth of Rhode Island and Southern Massachusetts. Other plans of a similar nature are also in progress. Many of our members are successful professional and businessmen of Providence. Factors of this nature help make possible the present O.H.C.

Our steady and safe path must not be veered from. Then, and only then, will we continue to maintain and be accorded the respect that has made the O.H.C. one of the outstanding Jewish organizations of Rhode Island.24

By 1938 the editorials in the “O.H.C. Comrade” were not as optimistic as the earlier ones quoted. Doubts were raised about the viability of the organization and even about its actual continuation.

Dr. Kouffman:

Activities and club spirit have recently been permitted to lag. Interest in the club and its activities have reached a fairly low level. Economic conditions have been instrumental in causing a good deal of this state of affairs. Most of the older members have
been unable to actively devote much time to the club. Their interest in the activities, however, remain constant.

Fundamentally, the O.H.C. is founded on a foundation which cannot be severely shaken. Periodical lack of interest on the part of members is only transitory. Time has proven the need and desire for our type of contents and interest. The Jewish life of our community necessitates an organization such as ours.

... Our club is what you make it. Our facilities are comparatively better than any organization of its size in the state. Lack of spirit and activities in recent times will soon be considered just another period of dormancy which will soon be forgotten."

Another editorial in this same issue of the "O.H.C. Comrade" is more pessimistic than the preceding editorial.

Edmund Wexler:

Almost 20 years have elapsed since a group of Jewish young men of an average age of 16 years, started this organization. At that time and in that locality especially the club served a useful purpose. Because there was a real demand for what the Club offered in the way of friendship and social activities, the membership grew and young men from all over the city were attracted to it. At no time, however, did the Club become a real big organization and therefore at no time did we become a real factor in the life of our Community but we have always remained a small social club.

What is our present day status? We are still a small group but we are much older and very inactive compared to our younger days. New interests, marriage, families have all contributed their bit in causing us to lose ground both in membership and activity. Can we honestly call ourselves a social Club when our social activities are so limited in their scope and so few in number? . . . The only real activity which the Club offers its members today is the Bowling League.

Has the Club outlived its usefulness? The answer to this question will determine our future. There is no question that we do not serve a useful purpose as far as the Community is concerned. Can we serve our membership more adequately so that we may find within our group a reason for continuing our existence? Unless we serve our members better we shall gradually waste away and go the way of many organizations: oblivion.38

One dominating characteristic of the O.H.C. is that they were a concerned and caring group of men. There are several references in the minutes in which they voted to allocate money for the ill. They visited the sick and
those who had lost a member of the family. Plants were sent to those
in the hospital, fruit to the homes of the bereaved. Gifts were always given
to members of the club who married. Many of the club's years of active
existence were during the Depression, and there are several references in
the minutes for the members to "be on the lookout for a job for our members
who have been out of employment for some time." Members were also
urged to help Jewish candidates for political office regardless of party
affiliation.

Lasting friendships were made, as demonstrated by the large attendance
at reunions. "They were closer than brothers," remarked the daughter of
one of the members.28

As one member who could not attend a meeting because of another
commitment, wrote, "Missing an O.H.C. affair becomes a greater loss with
each passing year . . . Looking back over my some 50 year association
with O.H.C. I recall many instances where members contributed their time
and talent toward the establishment and maintenance of the true fellowship
that predominates in the O.H.C. But for dedicated service over that long
span of years there are few than can equal the outstanding record of you
two."29

This 1977 letter was written by Peter Yosinoff to the two men honored
at that reunion, Samuel Shindler and George Labush. They were but two
of the many men who were responsible for the many years of the club's
productive existence. Other names which appear frequently in the news;
articles and minutes were: Samuel Kagan, Peter Yosinoff, Dr. Daniel H.
Koffman, Dr. Myron Keller; but they were just a representative few of
the many dedicated members.

The reunions came to an end with the death of two of the men who
were responsible for their continuation. Samuel Kagan died on July 8,
1984, and Samuel Shindler died on February 17, 1987. The Order of Hebraic
Comradeship is now an important chapter in the social history of Rhode
Island Jewish clubs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to Florence Nachbar, daughter of Samuel Shindler, for turning over all
the documents and photos of the Olneyville Hebrew Club and the Order of Hebraic
Comradeship to the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association. It is fortunate
that the records of this organization were preserved by Mr. Shindler, who recognized their
importance for preservation and future research.

We appreciate the interview Mr. George Labush gave the Rhode Island Jewish Historical
Association on October 29, 1987. He was a very devoted and active member of the Order
of Hebraic Comradeship for many years.
Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes

NOTES

1Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes, Volume 2, Number 1, June, 1956, p. 25
2Ibid. p. 30
3Ibid. p. 33
4Rhode Island Jewish Review, April 77, 1922
5Ibid, undated, "No. 30"
6Ibid, undated
7Ibid, undated
8O.H.C. Minutes, October 23, 1927
9Ibid, March 24, 1932
10"O.H.C. Comrade," April 1932
11O.H.C. Minutes, July 28, 1932
12Rhode Island Herald, May 10, 1931
13Ibid, October 3, 1930
14Ibid, October 23, 1930
15Ibid, March 4, 1932
16Ibid, December 5, 1930
17Ibid, October 17, 1969, Letter to Editor from Samuel Shindler
18Ibid
19Rhode Island Herald, January 30, 1931
20Ibid, April 4, 1930
21Ibid, October 17, 1930
22See No. 17
23"O.H.C. Comrade," November 11, 1934, by Dr. Daniel H. Kouffman
25Ibid, April 1938, by Dr. Daniel H. Kouffman
26Ibid, April 1938, by Edmund Wexler
27O.H.C. Minutes, December 30, 1937
28Telephone conversation with Florence Nachbar (daughter of Samuel Shindler) on September
4, 1987
29Letter from Peter Yosinoff, August 6, 1977
The Thirty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association was held at the Jewish Community Center on Wednesday, August 24, 1988. Rosalind Gorin, Chairman of the Annual Meeting, convened the meeting at 7:40 p.m. Following her introductory remarks of welcome, Mrs. Gorin introduced Geraldine S. Foster, President of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association. Mrs. Foster spoke of the highlights which occurred during the past year. The scholar chosen for updating the bibliography of the history of Jews of Rhode Island is Carol Frost, who is working for her doctorate in the American Civilization Department at Brown University. The Association presented a prize to the winning essayist on a Jewish subject for History Day. A television program entitled "North-End Revisited" was made in conjunction with Dimension Cable and Temple Beth-El Brotherhood under the aegis of the Association. Exhibits for the Jewish Community Center Book Fair and the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island were arranged by the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association. The most important activity of the Association was the hosting of the American Jewish Historical Society Conference April 29-May 2, 1988. According to the American Jewish Historical Society, it had the largest attendance of any previous conference and offered the "best" in programming and hospitality.

A motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the last annual meeting was passed.

The Treasurer's report covering the period January 1 to December 31, 1987, was read by Stanley Abrams in the absence of Bernard E. Bell, Treasurer. There was a balance of $10,096.19 in the Fleet checking account. Balance in the investment accounts totaled $26,945.70. Expenses for the year were $14,870.06.

The Librarian's report, presented by Eleanor Horvitz, Librarian-Archivist, questioned what other sources might be available to answer the many requests which are made during the year, as well as the fate of the many acquisitions if the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association did not exist.

Mrs. Foster introduced the new Editor of the Notes, Judith Cohen. Mrs. Cohen spoke about the interesting contents of the next issue and the hopes for a January publication date. She also discussed possible subjects for future articles.

The Nominating Committee report was presented by Ruth Page in the
absence of Bernard E. Bell, Chairman. The 1988-89 slate is as follows: President, Geraldine Foster; Vice-President, Robert Kotlen; Secretary, Frances Sadler; Treasurer, Bernard E. Bell. The other members of the Executive Committee are listed in the report attached to the secretary's report. Bonnie N. Goldowsky and Louis I. Sweet were designated Honorary Board members in recognition of their years of dedicated service to the Association. The President asked the Secretary to cast one ballot in favor of the slate. It was so moved and voted.

Rosalind Gorin introduced the speaker for the 18th David Charak Adelman lecture, Dr. Daniel Snydacker, Director of the Newport Historical Society. His topic was “Traders in Exile: Newport’s Colonial Quakers and Jews.” A question and answer period followed.

Rosalind Gorin, in her closing remarks, thanked Eleanor Horvitz and Toby Rossner for the creative display “The Jewish Life Cycle.” She also thanked the other committee members for their help in making the Annual Meeting a success. Mrs. Gorin brought to the attention of all present the sale of the Notes, Geraldine Foster’s book, Jews in Rhode Island, and the Association’s informal note paper. Membership sign-up forms and brochures were also available.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

A social hour followed the meeting.

Respectfully submitted

ELEANOR HORVITZ
Secretary pro tem.
NECROLOGY — 1988

BRAUDE, WILLIAM G., born in Lithuania, a son of the late Rabbi Yitzhak Isaac and Chiene Rachel (Halpern) Braude.

Rabbi Braude served as Rabbi of Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David, Temple Beth-El, from 1932 until 1974, when he was elected Rabbi Emeritus.

In 1927 he graduated from Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati with a degree of Bachelor of Hebrew Literature. Two years later, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree, summa cum laude, from the University of Cincinnati, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa in his junior year. He received his rabbinical ordination from Hebrew Union College in 1931 and served a congregation in Rockland, Illinois, for a year before coming to Providence. He earned a Master of Arts degree from Brown University in 1934 and a doctorate in 1937.

Rabbi Braude was a founding commissioner of the Providence Human Rights Commission and a founder of the Providence Urban League, which he served as vice-president. He was also a president of the Rhode Island World Affairs Council. He was a member of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Rabbinical Assembly of America, the Rhode Island Board of Rabbis, and the Board of Governors of Hebrew Union College. He was a founder of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association. (See "A Tribute," p. 91).

Died in Providence, February 25, 1988, at the age of 80.

CURRAN, DR. ROBERT L., born in Providence, a son of the late Matthew and Frances (Flink) Curran.

A specialist in cardiology and internal medicine in Rhode Island for 30 years, he was on the medical staffs of The Miriam Hospital and Rhode Island Hospital and was a consultant at Women and Infants Hospital of Rhode Island.

Dr. Curran was a graduate of Harvard University in 1953 and Tufts Medical School in 1937. He was a past president of the Rhode Island Society of Internal Medicine and held membership in the Providence
Medical Association, the Rhode Island Medical Society and the American Medical Association, and was a fellow of the American College of Cardiology and the American College of Physicians. He was a member of Temple Emanu-El.

Died in Providence on July 24, 1988, at the age of 57.

DICK, CHARLOTTE S., born in Providence, a daughter of the late Albert and Esther (Rice) Weiner.

A thirty-year volunteer at The Miriam Hospital and a member of The Miriam Hospital People, Mrs. Dick was also a Gray Lady with the American Red Cross. She was a member of Temple Emanu-El and its Sisterhood, the Providence Chapter of Hadassah, the Jewish Home for the Aged and B’nai B’rith.

Died in Providence on June 1, 1988, at the age of 69.

FEINSTEIN, HERMAN M., born in Providence, a son of the late Jacob and Ida (Serge) Feinstein.

He was a real estate broker in the Greater Providence area for 44 years before retiring in 1980.

A 1916 graduate of Brown University, Mr. Feinstein was four times marshal of the Brown University Commencement Procession. He was a member of the Brown University Sports Foundation, the Football Association, the Hockey Association and the Brown Club.

He was active in several organizations: the Roosevelt Lodge 42, AF&AM, the Pawtucket Lions Club, the Jewish Home for the Aged, The Miriam Hospital, the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, B’nai B’rith and the Jewish Community Center. Mr. Feinstein was a member of the Board of Trustees of Temple Beth-El. He was the founder
of the Scorpio Club, Providence, and an honorary member of the New England Innkeepers Association.

Died in Providence on September 18, 1988, at the age of 93.

FINKELMAN, DOROTHY, born in Providence, a daughter of Lester and Natalie (Fain) Emers.

She was executive vice president of Gerald C. Finkelman Insurance, which she founded with her husband in 1975. Mrs. Finkelman attended Syracuse University and Emerson College. She was a member of Temple Beth-El and its Sisterhood as well as the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, The Miriam Hospital, ORT and the Brandeis University Women’s Committee.


HOFFMAN, BRUNO, born in Linz, Austria, a son of the late Martin and Sabina (Offenstadt) Hoffman.

He worked for the Boston Mutual Insurance Company for 25 years and for 20 years was an independent insurance agent. He was a 1921 graduate of the Academy for International Trade, Vienna, Austria. Mr. Hoffman was a member of Temple Emanu-El and its Men’s Club, the Roger Williams Lodge of B’nai B’rith, the Jewish Community Center, and the Jewish Home for Aged, and was a past president of Rhode Island Self-Help. He received a certificate of recognition for outstanding service to senior citizens of the state from the Rhode Island Bar Association in cooperation with the Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs.

Died in Providence on July 20, 1988, at the age of 88.
HORVITZ, MILTON, born in Cranston, a son of the late Abraham and Celia (Lubusky) Horvitz.

He was president of Servomatic Company for many years. Mr. Horvitz was a member of Temple Emanu-El and the Crestwood Country Club. He was a 1940 graduate of Suffolk University, Boston.

Died on December 2, 1987.

KAPLAN, JAMES, born in Providence, a son of the late Samuel and Rose (Glasten) Kaplan.

He was founder and president of James Kaplan, Jewelers, in Cranston for 34 years. Mr. Kaplan was a member of Redwood Masonic Lodge, AF & AM, and the Palestine Shrine. He was a founder of Temple Torat Yisrael and a member of its Men's Club. He was also a member of the Crestwood Country Club, the Rotary Club and B'nai B'rith.

Died in Providence on August 20, 1988, at the age of 74.

NELSON, DR. EUGENE M., born in Providence, the son of the late Boris and Minnie (Rachevsky) Nelson.

A graduate of the former Rhode Island State College, now the University of Rhode Island, in 1943, he received his dental degrees from the University of Maryland and Tufts University Dental School. He was a past president of the Rhode Island Dental Association and a leader in forming the first clinic team at Rhode Island Hospital for the treatment of patients with cleft palates.

He was for many years chairman of the Board of Governors of Gordon School and headed the building committee that planned and directed the school's move from Providence to East Providence in 1963. A tennis enthusiast, he was credited with pioneering indoor tennis in Rhode Island.
Dr. Nelson was a former chairman of the religious school board of Temple Beth-El, a board member of the Jewish Community Center, and a president of the University of Maryland Alumni Association.

He served on the staffs of Rhode Island and The Miriam Hospitals and on the faculty of Tafts School of Dental Medicine, the Boston University School of Medicine, the URI School of Dental Hygiene and the Harvard University School of Medicine.

Died in Saunderstown on September 7, 1988. He was 66 years old.

RABINOWITZ, SIDNEY L, born in Providence, a son of the late William and Annie (Bichwit) Rabinowitz.

A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania in 1928 and Harvard University Law School in 1931, Mr. Rabinowitz was a lawyer in Rhode Island for 55 years. He was also in charge of law revision in the Secretary of State's office during the administration of Gov. John G. Pastore.

Active in many organizations, he was secretary and director of the Jewish Elder Stor of Rhode Island and past president of the Providence Hebrew Free Loan Association, which his father helped to found.

Mr. Rabinowitz was voted B'nai B'rith Man of the Year in 1964 and was a past president of its R. S. Williams Lodge. He was also a director of the Anti-Defamation League and the Hillel Foundation at Brown University and the University of Rhode Island. He held membership in the Turks Head Club and the Scorpion Club.

Died on November 7, 1988, in Providence at the age of 80.

RUBINSTEIN, LOUIS B., born in Providence, a son of the late Rabbi Israel Rubinstein and Fanny Rubinstein. (See back cover).

A lawyer in Rhode Island for 50 years, Mr. Rubinstein practiced in
the Federal District Court and the U.S. Supreme Court. He was the former head of the division of temporary disability in the Rhode Island Department of Employment Security and its chief legal counsel before retiring six years ago.

He was honored in 1981 and in 1985 by the Rhode Island Bar Association and received its Award of Merit. He contributed numerous articles to various law reviews, law journals and national periodicals. He had been editor-in-chief of the Rhode Island Bar Journal.

Active in many organizations, Mr. Rubinstein was secretary of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island. In 1976 he was honored by Temple Emanu-El Men's Club for many years of service to the Temple and community. He was a past master of Redwood Masonic Lodge, AF and AM, and vice-president of the Bureau of Jewish Education.

A 1931 graduate of Yale University, he graduated from its law school in 1934. He was also a past president of the Rhode Island Division of the Zionist Organization in America.

Died in Boca Raton, Florida, on October 18, 1988.

SAKLAD, LILLIAN, born in Providence, a daughter of the late Samuel and Clara (Salluck) Greenberg.

She was a member of Temple Beth-El and its Sisterhood.

Died in Providence on July 27, 1988, at the age of 81.

WEISS, NATHAN, born in Bayonne, New Jersey, a son of the late Hyman and Rachel (Lazarus) Weiss.

Mr. Weiss and his brother, Samuel Weiss, founded the Weiss Office Products Stationery and Supply business 1919, and later acquired the
A. Arnold Co., the Bene Co., the Pulner Paper Co. and State Office Supply Co., all in Rhode Island, and Duplicating and O'Brien Office Products, both in Massachusetts.

He was a member of Temple Beth-El and its Men's Club, the Touro Fraternal Association, the United Commercial Travelers, B'nai B'rith and the Jewish Home for the Aged.

Mr. Weiss was also a member of the Providence Hebrew Free Loan Association and The Miriam Hospital and was associated with national office furniture groups. He also was a member of the Pawtucket Chamber of Commerce and the Seekonk Club.

Died on March 22, 1988, in Providence at the age of 85.

WINER, DOROTHY L., born in Providence, daughter of the late Walter P. and Ruth C. (Greene) Misch.

She was active in several organizations in Nashua, New Hampshire, where she had lived for many years.

Died on March 10, 1988, in Nashua at the age of 66.

ZARAKOV, ISADORE, born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the son of the late Simon and Sarah (Sheik) Zarakov.

Mr. Zarakov was a camp director and educational advisor at Camp Zakelo for boys in Harrison, Maine, for more than 40 years, retiring 15 years ago.

A 1927 Harvard graduate, he was a member of the Hasty Pudding Club, the Harvard Club of Sarasota, Florida, and Zeta Beta Tau Fraternity. He was inducted into the Harvard Sports Hall of Fame and the Rhode Island Jewish Sports Hall of Fame. Mr. Zarakov was also a Mason.

Died in Providence on July 18, 1988, at the age of 84.
Errata

ERRATA AND ADDENDA
VOLUME 10, NUMBER 1

Table of Contents, first article, should read: "Studying Jewish History: How Does it Help in Understanding Contemporary Jews and their Communities?" Running titles at tops of pages of this article should also be corrected.

"Philip Paige and the Jewish Legion"
Page 22. Picture caption, should read: "Jewish Legion — Philip Paige (middle row, 2nd from left) 1917-1918."

Page 17, Line 14, should read: Philip (Petrofsky) Paige was born in Rogachev, Byelorussia."

"The Thirty-third Annual Meeting of the Association"
Page 75, Lines 10 and 11, should read: "Speaker o' th' Annual Meeting was Rabbi Arnold E. Resnicoff, Lt. Commander, Chaplain Corps, U.S. Navy, faculty of Naval War College, Newport ..."
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