

RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL NOTES

VOLUME 8

NOVEMBER, 1979

NUMBER 1

FRONT COVER

Interior of the Synagogue Congregation Sons of Jacob, circa 1946.

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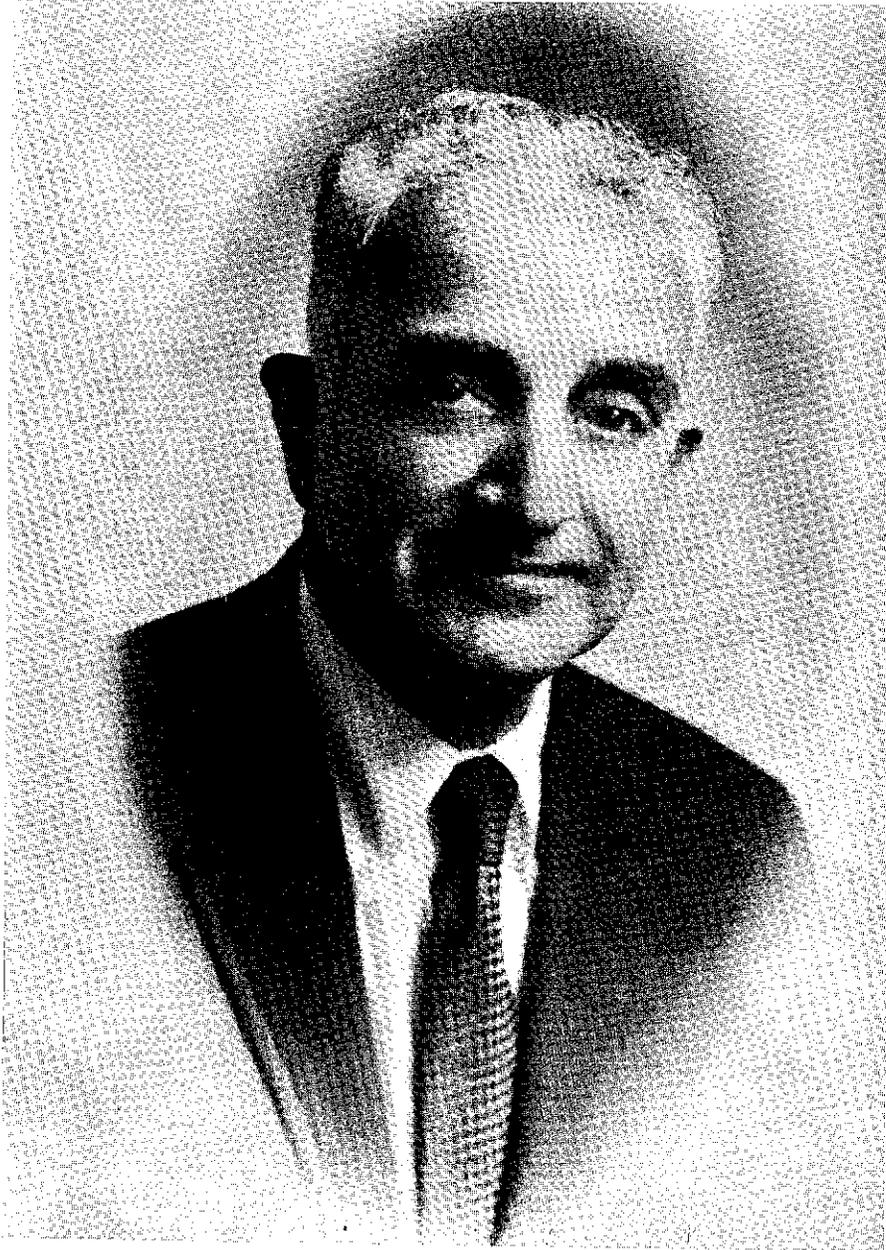
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RHODE ISLAND JEWISH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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SEEBERT J. GOLDOWSKY, M.D.

DR. SEEBERT J. GOLDOWSKY, AN APPRECIATION

by BERYL SEGAL

For many years now a small group of us gather every Sabbath for an hour of study with Rabbi William G. Braude at Temple Beth-El. It has been my good fortune from the very first Saturday until now to use the large volume of the *Mikraoth Gedoloth*, the Five Books of Moses with thirty-two commentaries, a gift to the Library. The *Mikraoth Gedoloth* once belonged to Reb Shmuel Goldowsky. In his own hand writing he tells us that these volumes are his property, that his name in Shmuel ben Aaron Goldowsky, that he lived in the village of Alexa which is close to the metropolis of Kovno (Kaunas) in Lithuania, Russia. As was customary with immigrants of an older generation, the *Mikraoth Gedoloth* were brought to the New World with the other valuables and heirlooms in the family.

After the death of Reb Shmuel the books were inherited by his son Bernard M. Goldowsky who brought them to Providence. The books were given to the Temple Beth El Library by his heirs. Bernard Manuel Goldowsky was a familiar figure in Providence until his death. He and his wife Antoinette were lovingly memorialized in an extensive paper which appeared in these pages by Seebert J. Goldowsky (*Notes*, Volume 6, number 1, 1971).

All this is by way of introducing the editor of the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* from 1962 to 1978. Dr. Goldowsky took over the reins of the *Notes* after the retirement of David C. Adelman (June 2, 1892-December 22, 1967). He was the logical candidate since he so successfully edited, and still does, *The Rhode Island Medical Journal*. A physician by profession, Dr. Goldowsky's approach to the *Notes* was that of a scientist. In his acceptance remarks he told us that all of us are amateur historians. We must not let our own prejudices and pre-conceived ideas interfere with our investigations. We must record facts as they appear in records and we cannot alter these facts to suit our theses. Journalists can afford to write their own feelings into their report. We must discipline ourselves to keep to the facts. One note in a minutes book is worth more than opinions and hearsay accounts. Above all we must beware of sentimentalizing; sentiment and history do not mix. These ideas he repeated again and again.

As a result all the issues of the *Notes* which he edited are as accurate as it is humanly possible to make them. From personal experience I know how Dr. Goldowsky checked and verified every detail in articles submitted to him for publication. The *Notes* under Dr. Goldowsky dealt more and more with organizations and institutions or individuals who gave color and leadership to the communities in which they lived, rather than with genealogy. While the first two volumes of the *Notes* were primarily concerned with genealogy, a legitimate phase of history, it is not itself a record of events. We must preserve the records of organizations that are now extinct, and we must delineate the formation of new institutions which sprang up in their place. The community developed in an orderly fashion and it is our task to unravel the skein and to point out the relationship of the old and the new, the past and the present.

We cannot talk about Dr. Goldowsky without mentioning the work of his wife Bonnie for the Association in general and the *Notes* in particular. We owe her our gratitude for the excellent indexing of the volumes, a tremendous job, and for her meticulous recording of the minutes of Association meetings. We all owe to the Goldowskys a debt which we can never repay.

**חלק ראשון
ספר בראשית**

**מקראות גדולות
עם
ל"ב פירושים**

אלה הם: הרבם אונקלוס, הרבם ורש"מי, הרבם לסגלות, הרבם שני לאחרי עם באר, פירשי שלם עם הרבאח מקימור, אבן עזרא, רמב"ן, בעל הטורים גולו, שפרשי, הרבם זוגתן לנ"ך, מסורה גדולה, מסורה קטנה, מערכת המסורה, וריק, ולב"ג, פירוש רמב"ן ספרות גאון, פי' רמב"ן ישעיה, כלו יקר, הירושני מורשיא, ארזות אלוהו, מצודת דוד, מצודת ציון, וסוף לקח, אגרות שמואל, להם רמב"ן, ספרות לשרוש וקבלת, מנחת שי, חולדות אהרן, חולדות יעקב, באור לנבילין ובגין חבת, באור על יהושע ישעיה ויהי מהגאון מוילנא וציקל, וסדר הפטרות עם ביאור המלות, ועוד הרבה מעלות וכלל המסורה והדקדוק

מונה ומדריך במלא וחצר דגש ורפי

בהשגחת והוצאת הרבנים מה"ר יואל לעבענזאון כ"ו
וה"ר"ר משה מענדלזאון מ"ט כ"ו

ווארשא

וחזי ראשית מלאכות

בגנת תורה נביאים כתובים מקראי קודש יהודי נש"ק

תורה נביאים כתובים

בדשם של החוקק מה"ר יואל לעבענזאון כ"ו

МИКРАЕЪ ГЕДАЛЕЪ
в. с. Св. Писаніе съ Комментаріями Частъ I.
ВАРШАВА въ Типографіи И. Либенсона
1860. 57-

אחרון משה

גריקים יבאו בו זה הישער לך לל"ב

PUSHCARTS, SURREYS WITH FRINGE ON TOP,
THE STORY OF THE JEWS OF THE NORTH END.

by ELEANOR F. HORVITZ

Who were they? Where did they come from? Why did they come to Providence? When did they arrive? There are many questions about the early Jewish settlers in Providence.

Answers to some of these questions come from such sources as naturalization lists in the United States Court from the District of Rhode Island and the Supreme Court of the State of Rhode Island as well as the street directories of the late 1800's and the early 1900's.

As early as 1850 Solomon Pareira was conducting two clothing stores: one at 195 Westminster Street and one at 18 Orange Street. His home was located at 54 Pine Street. Other pioneers were Abraham Wormser who in 1857 owned a hosiery and fancy goods business at 112 and 153 Westminster Street. He lived in the City Hotel. Henry Solomon was a clothing dealer at 18 North Main Street in 1852. As recorded in the *NOTES* of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association there were several of these Jewish shopkeepers who found a ready market for their skills as tailors and dealers in ready made clothing. The area of their livelihood and residence was confined to the river front which ran along Pine and Dyer Streets and around Exchange Place. Examples of streets which made up this "waterfront area" were North Main, South Main, Wickenden, Benefit, Washington, Elbow and Orange.

These Jewish merchants were settled in what we term the "downtown" section of Providence came from Poland, Bavaria, Hungary, Holland and Germany. In 1854 these men organized the Congregation Bnai Israel (Sons of Israel) with Solomon Pareira as their president. This congregation together with Congregation Sons of David merged in 1874 under the name Congregation of the Sons of Israel and David (later known as Temple Beth El.)

It is apparent from the Providence Street Directories of the last two decades of the 19th Century that Jews were living and working in the "North End" and "East Side" of Providence. These Jews were from countries such as Russia, Austria and Poland.

In the area which will be explored there are the following statistics for the distribution of Jews. These are taken from the 1895 Providence House Directory. Ashburton — 18, Bernon — 0, Black — 8, Chalkstone — 40 (they lived between Nos. 52 to 158, whereas the house numbers ranged from 6 to 1737), Goddard — 0, Hawes — 17, Lydia — 0, North Davis — 0, Orms — 0, Quaid — 2.

158 Jews were listed as living on North Main Street, 36 on Charles Street and 19 on Mill Street. On adjacent streets such as Douglas Avenue, Lippitt, Pratt, Randall, Benefit, Doyle and Olney Streets the 1895 Street Directory showed no Jews. They were to come into this residential and business area a few years after. This area was researched in lesser depth.

THIS IS THEIR STORY.

20 individuals were interviewed. Reminiscences were as varied as the individuals interviewed. In some cases the person who was questioned had come to Providence from Europe with his family, in others he was a first generation American. In contrast to the story about the Jews who settled in South Providence (*Rhode Island Jewish Historical NOTES*, Volume 7, No. 2) the Jewish families living in the North End and East Side of Providence during the early part of this century appeared more heterogeneous. Their economic status ranged from moderately wealthy to very poor. Their attitude toward Judaism ranged from orthodoxy to atheism. Involvement with non-Jews included those who had no contact with anyone but Jews to others who had little contact with his fellow-Jew. Occupations varied. There were the usual occupations associated with Jews — grocer, peddler, tailor, baker, butcher, shoemaker, junk dealer, etc. But there were less familiar occupations — printer, real estate dealer, Notary Public, politician (also called canvasser), physician, veterinarian, doctress (midwife), insurance agent, and vocal teacher.

MY PARENTS CHOOSE PROVIDENCE

My parents drove in their horse and buggy with all their worldly possessions, plus a baby, from New York to Providence. My father came to work for his brother and went to live where all the Jewish people were — Chalkstone Avenue and Shawmut Street.²

I was 10 months old when my parents came to this country — on the ship, President Lincoln. We landed on Ellis Island in

1906. My two uncles were already butchers here and that is why my father came. My two uncles had served in the Russian Army and came to America at the start of the second Russo-Japanese War. Both had escaped from the Army. One of the brothers stayed for two years in New York, but did not like it and settled here. Their father had a slaughter-house in Russia.³

My mother's father lived at 43 Shawmut Street. He came to this country from Europe in the late 80's. My father's father, who also came from Europe, also lived on Shawmut Street. When my parents married they lived on Davis Street, but then my father built a home on the corner of Orms and Shawmut Streets.⁴

When my father first came to Providence around 1875 or 1876 he was a boarder on North Main Street. He returned to Europe, married and had six children, born in between his trips back and forth to America. My mother did quite well in Europe for she had gone into business while her husband worked here. She did not want to come to the United States but when she lost four daughters in illness, she felt perhaps God was punishing her and she had better join her husband. She came reluctantly with two sons. My father had by that time purchased three houses and a big barn on Orms Street.⁵

My father came with his parents from a town in Southern Russia, 90 miles from Odessa, in 1895. He first peddled in the Olneyville Square area with a pack on his back. He was to get married in 1898 and told the story of a great blizzard the day before the wedding. A strong cop carried him on his shoulders half way from Olneyville Square to get him back home in time for the wedding.⁶

My grandparents came to this country in the late 1880's. They first settled in Bristol, R. I., but moved to Delhi Street in Providence, near Chalkstone Avenue and the railroad tracks.⁷

My father came to Providence in 1904. He had a friend in Jefferson Medical School who had relatives in Providence. He accompanied his friend when he visited these relatives and was impressed with the city. His friend went back to Philadelphia to practice. My father went to Newark, New Jersey, married his betrothed and came to Providence to live and practice medicine.⁸



B. F. Rosen's Providence Remnants Store, *circa* 1904-06

My grandfather's uncle lived in Newport. He brought over my grandparents and their family. My grandfather peddled on Block Island, but he wanted to be among Jewish people and so moved to Providence. My father married in New York and brought his bride of 16 to Providence.⁹

The Linders (my maternal grandparents) came to Providence first, probably before 1890 and my paternal grandparents arrived in 1899. Both families came from Austria.¹⁰

In 1904 my father was called to a congregation in New York City. He was born in 1874 in Piesk, Russia, the son of Rabbi Aryeh Labe and Etta Leah Rubinstein. He married Fannie R. Rubin of Ostrin, Russia. He was not in New York a year when he was called here by the Congregation Sons of Zion. He wanted to get out of New York and accepted the Providence offer.¹¹

A NEIGHBORHOOD CALLED "THE NORTH END"

The hub of the bustling, thriving business and residential area of the early Jewish settlers was Chalkstone Avenue and Shawmut Street. It is difficult now to envision the number of different small businesses and services which were concentrated in this area. On a Thursday night the shoppers intermingled with the pushcarts and the horse and wagons while their owners hawked their wares. In an attempt to recreate the extent of activity in this area, recollections of those interviewed who lived, shopped and worked during the first fifteen years of this century are noted.

The Abram Diamond family lived at 15 Shawmut Street in 1909. Harry Dimond (he did not know why his father inserted an "a" in the name for a few years, and then went back to the spelling which he used when he arrived in the United States), described his neighborhood. There was S. Klein Co., rags, at 108 Chalkstone Avenue, not far from the Russische Shul. The police station — 2nd Precinct — was at 12 Ashburton, corner of Chalkstone Avenue. Michael Stein, the harness maker at 175 Chalkstone, was conveniently located near Philip Kelman, the blacksmith at 156 Chalkstone.

Morris Winerman was a barber at 180 Chalkstone. Next to the Russische Shul was Benny Make who had a variety store. For those interested in taking Turkish baths they were located at 285

Chalkstone, operated by Isaak Krause. There was an IOOF Hall at 36 Chalkstone.¹²

Orms Street and Chalkstone Avenue, which were parallel, were divided by railroad tracks which ran along Black Street. The area around these tracks figures prominently in stories relating to boyhood activities of those interviewed.

From the House Directory of 1909 are the following interesting facts which illustrate how congested the Jewish occupied area was. On North Davis Street from Nos. 7 — 31 there could be found a cigar-maker, a variety store owner, a blacksmith, a capmaker, a man in the woolen waste business and one in the remnant business. In addition 4 junk dealers, 4 jewelers, 17 peddlers, 2 tailors, 2 bottlers, and 2 grocers conducted their business on this street. On Shawmut Street from Nos. 8 — 46 there could be found 9 peddlers, 2 bakeries, 2 milkdealers, 1 butcher, 3 shoemakers, 3 grocers, 1 fish market owner, 1 variety store. Chalkstone Avenue, numbers 38 to 313 had a preponderance of peddlers with 46 listed. Also on this street there must have been enough business to warrant 16 grocery stores, 2 variety stores, 2 liquor stores, 3 bakeries, 2 blacksmith shops, 5 tailoring shops, 7 shoemaker shops, 7 junk businesses, 2 dry goods stores. Also listed were 5 tinsmiths, a harnessmaker, a capmaker, a furniture dealer and a person in the hay and grain business. The individual listed as a quiltmaker is a one-of-a kind occupation.

My father, who first had a pushcart, and then his own fish store, used to buy a barrel of fish for \$10.00. It was caught off Newport. He bought it from Rhode Island Fish Company on South Water Street. This was salt water fish. The fresh water fish came out of New York and was caught around the Great Lakes. It came packed in ice and was shipped by boat and then Railway Express.¹²

Every Thursday night we used to go down to the corner of Shawmut Street and Chalkstone Avenue. My mother would take us girls. There was a fish market and a chicken market, and Mr. Mittleman was our butcher. We made the rounds. My mother would do her shopping for the week. She was an expert on meats and taught us all she knew. She wanted her meat from New York or Boston, not from South County which was supposed to be chewy and tough. She had been brought up on a cattle ranch in Russia.⁹

So much activity going on on Chalkstone Avenue and Shawmut Street, starting on a Thursday or before a Jewish holiday — pushcarts, people buying chickens right off the wagon, and taking them in to the shochet. For 3 cents he would slaughter the chicken, and for another nickel would “flick” the chicken. And, of course, there were the baker shops. There was Kessler’s Bakery Shop and the people would knead their own challah and Kessler and the Lorbers who also had a bakery shop, would allow the Jewish women to come in with their challah and bake it so they would have it for the Shabbos. At the corner of Shawmut Street and Chalkstone Avenue there was Willy Sugarman, who was a brother of Max Sugarman, the funeral director. He had a sort of delicatessen store. They also had a side window, and I remember as a youngster, my mother would send me with a pitcher, and you would either buy for two cents plain or he would put some syrup in for a nickel and fill up the pitcher — so-called soda. People would sell all sorts of things, and even fish, out of pushcarts. There was absolutely no sanitation in those days. On a Thursday all day until night the pushcarts would be lined up, one behind the other. The women would shop. They would buy their vegetables that way. At Green’s you could buy thimbles, thread needles, anything pertaining to sewing.⁴

I remember my mother taking me shopping on Chalkstone Avenue. We would go to Perelman’s Dry Goods Store on Chalkstone Avenue. He was the father of the author S. J. Perelman. At his store we bought our underwear and socks.⁷

There were not only the stores for food shopping, but peddlers would come around. At the beginning some would push carts themselves, but the more affluent had horse and wagon. A man named Hornstein had fruit and produce. The fish man would come around. Mr. Goldberg had tea and coffee.¹¹

MY FATHER EARNED HIS LIVING BY —

How the male parent of the family supported his family was a question asked of those who were interviewed. The impression was that no matter how large the family, there was always plenty of food for the family and for those who visited and were asked to share the meals. Although housing was often crowded, a closeness in the family made

all the inconveniences seem insignificant. The occupations of the father were varied but the long hours and hard work were common to all.

My father was in the fruit and produce business. There were always so many mouths to feed. Remember, there were six of us children and my father's oldest brother's six children. His wife had died and often they all sat down at the table with us. We had a tremendous ice box right outside the kitchen door and it was always full.²

There were a number of Kosher butchers in the area. My father and his two brothers all had butcher shops on Chalkstone Avenue. All the butchers were able to make a living for the Jewish population was there and they all used Kosher meat. Deliveries were all done by foot at the beginning but then my father got a wagon. Meat was kept cold by the ice which was brought in every day or every other day. The meat came in daily, except Saturday or Sunday and most of it was local beef. A small portion was not local for our "fancy customers". Women had to really cook the quality of beef sold in those days. When it came to a holiday, say, over a three day period, the women would bring their cooked meats to the store to storage it there. Originally no Waad Hakashres existed. Each one took care of koshering himself. Slaughter houses had Kosher and non-Kosher types of meat. A non-Kosher beef was identified by a cut into the liver and tongue. In poultry a couple of toes were cut off to indicate non-Kosher. Sanitation standards were up to the individual butcher. It cost my father \$40. to set up his store, the butcher block was a trunk of a tree.³

My father was in the Express business, and he owned a lot of horses. He had wagons and people working for him. He had an office on North Main Street, but the barn in back of our house was where he kept the horses. He was a very civic-minded man. Whenever the Jewish immigrants came they would be brought to his office where he collected money and would dole it out to them. Unfortunately, he died at 34 and his sons were not old enough to take over the business.⁴

My father was a shochet. In the early days I guess like everybody else, they had him down as a peddler. Now actually none of them were peddlers — they were all learned men. They had to look for their own business where they did not have to go to work

on Shabbos. If you went to work for someone, you had to work their hours.⁶

In the City Directory my father was listed as a bookkeeper but he also held the position as general manager of the Roger Williams Bottling Company.⁷

My father was a general practitioner. We always lived in the house with his office. He left us a meticulously kept record of the babies which he delivered from 1905 on. There were over 1100 home deliveries. Often he got called to see a woman who was in labor and this would be the first time he ever saw her. He had many interesting experiences. For example, there is the story of how he put a premature baby in an oven, using it as a type of incubator. The baby lived. He had a patient who had hurt her hand and had problems moving her hand. His advice was that she should take up the harp, as sort of physical therapy. He used to tell the women that if they had another baby within the year, delivery was free. There was no such thing as office hours. My father was always "on call".⁸

In the next recollection, the person interviewed had reminiscences about his grandfather as well as his father.

My grandfather's occupation was listed as sign painter. Actually he did script work. He wrote the Torah by hand. He used Kosher ink and made his own pens. He had a brilliant mind and knew the Bible by heart. He drew the print which was used in the engraving of the headstones in Lincoln Cemetery. My father was a peddler, and he had a horse and wagon. He went as far as Albion and Manville with yardgoods. He opened a yards good store on Chalkstone Avenue. They also had a store on Wickenden Street and North Main Street.⁹

My father peddled. What? Anything that was available — rain-coats, writing paper, etc. My mother opened up a little store in the house. Eventually he went into the real estate and building business. My father's father had a delicatessen-grocery store. In back of his store was a barn where ice cream was made.¹⁰

RABBI ISRAEL S. RUBINSTEIN

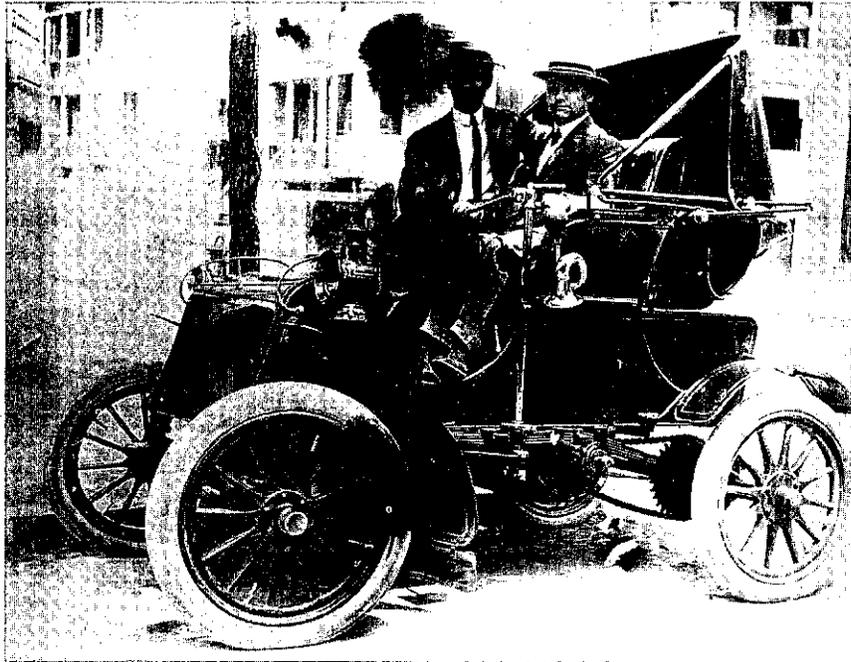
The most well known father of those interviewed was Rabbi Israel S. Rubinstein, known as the "Chief Rabbi of Rhode Island". He served

as religious guide to three congregations in the city of Providence; one in South Providence and two in the North End. He traveled all over the state to perform religious functions and to answer questions on religious matters. He thus took care of small congregations in Newport, Woonsocket, Pawtucket, Westerly and Bristol. He was in great demand as a speaker in various public gatherings in Rhode Island and elsewhere.¹⁴

Rabbi Rubinstein was one of the founders and treasurer of the American Jewish Relief Movement of Rhode Island which was very active during and after the first World War. Rabbi Rubinstein was elected delegate to the first American Jewish Congress. For many years he was on the Executive Committee of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States and Canada. Rabbi Rubinstein was very civic minded and was interested in every movement that contributed to the welfare of the community. He was one of the founders of the Hebrew Educational Institute of Providence (now the Jewish Community Center). He helped to build the Sons of Zion Talmud Torah, the South Providence Hebrew School and the Hebrew Institute . . . His scholarly achievements resulted in his contribution of 40 treatises to the ten volumes of the *Ozar Yisroel* which is the *Hebrew Encyclopedia*, published 1905-1913, on the following subjects: Homiletics, Sacrifices, Ethics, Analogy, Hyperbole, Hebrew Poetry, the Marriage Contract, Protest, Law, etc.¹⁵

Before Sons of Jacob had their own rabbi my dad used to go over there, where he would visit several times a year. The Russian Shul on Chalkstone Avenue was also called Beth David. I remember going there to visit and also to Sons of Jacob. My father also went to South Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket, Westerly, Newport and Bristol for these places had no actual rabbi so rabbinical functions were performed by my father. I imagine that from 1904 to 1926 he performed 98% of all the marriages, whether they were reformed, conservative or orthodox. He was friendly with all the rabbis.¹⁶

There were many distinguished spiritual leaders of the largest congregation in the North End, Bnai Zion. Rabbi Louis Rubinstein was considered by many to be the most outstanding of all the Rabbis of this congregation. A tribute to him: "His untiring efforts for the welfare of the community, his great devotion to the



DR. FISHMAN AND FRIEND

Jewish people, his desire and willingness to help those who needed help and spiritual comfort, made him beloved by all."¹⁰

From those who were interviewed came spontaneous words of praise about this Rabbi as they recalled life in the North End. Rabbi Rubinstein figured prominently in so many ways, not only as a spiritual leader, but as a leader in educational and intellectual endeavors. He was a friend and consul to many.

Although my father did not go to synagogue, he was great friends with Rabbi Rubinstein, who called him a very religious man because he lived his religion every single day.¹¹

Rabbi Rubinstein was our rabbi, and he was, without exception, one of the finest gentlemen who ever lived. He was a perfect example of a Jewish Rabbi. Today, even with his orthodoxy, he could still be the Rabbi par excellence. All of us would say he was our man.¹²

Dr. Fishman and Rabbi Rubinstein were good friends. It was Dr. Fishman who delivered Mrs. Rubinstein when her son Louis was born in the house at 83 Orms Street. A young boy about six years old ran into the synagogue that Saturday morning where Rabbi Rubinstein was conducting services and interrupted with the statement, "Rabbi, Rabbi, your mother had a boy!"

WE LIVED IN A FEW ROOMS; WE LIVED IN A HOUSE

As the financial status of a family improved, the living quarters became more spacious. The location of the home changed with the family's improved income. Some sections in the North End and East Side were considered more prestigious than others.

The Shores lived on the corner of Douglas and Goddard Streets. When my father moved to Providence he talked them into moving to the second floor of their two family house so that he could take the first floor for his office and living quarters. In 1909 we lived at 191 Orms Street and occupied the entire house for living quarters and my father's office. The house was sold to the Jewish Home for the Aged.¹³

We were crowded together in a few rooms, and we had a boarder. It was not unusual for families to have boarders in those days. For \$2.00 a week he got his food, lodging and my mother did his laundry. We didn't have electricity or gas in that area in the very early days. Then we got gas light. The mantle was

made of canvas. Light it and when it got snow white, you turned on the gas. But if someone walked upstairs too hard, that was the end of your light. Sanitation was out of this world in those days. You would have one toilet — in the yard — for six families. What a joy when they moved that toilet into the bottom hallway! No bathtubs. We went to the public bath Friday afternoon on Quaid Street.²⁴

We first lived in a tenement house on Shawmut Street. When my father opened his store on 66 Chalkstone Avenue, it was on the bottom floor and we lived upstairs. He then moved to 72 Chalkstone, and all of us lived in three rooms in the back of that store. The door was opened from the apartment so that heat could get into the store. From these beginnings my father bought the house at 72 and the two houses around that one, renting tenements and eventually improving them with steam heat and hardwood floors.³

83 Orms was a two-decker. I was born on the first floor. They should put up a plaque. In fact, they have. It says, "Yield". The house was owned by Henry Rosenblatt. He was a very pious man. Mr. Rosenblatt was so religious that he made his roof in such a manner so that it could be used for a succah. It was made to slide across and could be covered with foliage as if it were an indoor succah. The synagogue did not provide housing in those days. In fact, my father in purchasing his home, took out a mortgage which was held by Mr. Rosenhirsch.²⁴

We lived in a two family house. My father owned three houses and a barn. He had 11 horses. There was a cottage, and a two family house, and there was the front house. We lived in the front house. If you had cold water and flush toilets, it was a big deal. We had four big rooms, toilet and pantry.⁵

WE PLAYED "PEGGY"; WE WENT ON PICNICS

Although the work week was long and "time off" only a minimal part of it, the activities associated with this "time off" were recalled with pleasure and fondness. Childhood sports and primarily unorganized activities were prevalent although many had after school jobs and Hebrew lessons.

We would take the street car down to the end of the line on Broad Street — a little bit beyond Rhodes — for a nickel and

then we would walk to Palace Gardens. That was Gaspee Plateau. We would play ball and maybe steal apples and cherries, and for another nickel we would come back. We were also permitted to go to the St. John's Gym on North Main Street. The Jewish boys would play basketball. We also had the YMHA Juniors.⁹

We played baseball, football, "kick the wicket" and a few other things like that. Then we would hitch on to the ice wagon.⁷

We used to hang around watching them light the street lights, and then play "kick the wicket". In the moonlight we played at trying to find the arrows the other team had made.⁸

As kids we played baseball on Mistofsky's lot. The lot was near the railroad tracks and a few who were a little wilder would throw rocks at the trains. We also tried to catch pigeons. Occasionally we would be rounded up by police on horseback and marched off to the police station on Chalkstone Avenue. We were kept there until our parents came for us.⁴

I had a baseball glove when I was six. We played in a playground at Quaid and Black Streets. We also used the fields at Davis Park. We played all kinds of games on the street like "peggy" (cut a broom handle, sharpen both ends, hit it with a septer to see how far it could go). There was also a game called "butter, cheese and eggs" that was played with stones.¹¹

We played tag, which for some reason was called "blacksmith". We also played "peggy" (we whittled off a clothespin with a knife to get a point. Then we used a club to hit the pointed wood in the air).¹⁰

Three of those men interviewed were involved in what would be considered organized sports under the aegis of groups such as the YMHA Juniors and the Boy Scouts.

I was president of the YMHA Juniors. We had our headquarters at 128 North Main Street. We were 14 or 15 and we used to pay \$5.00 per month. We had a baseball team. We played in Palace Gardens. I was captain of it. The older boys would belong to a group like the YMHA Seniors, the Philomathians, the Endeavors, Criterions — four different Jewish clubs. Scouting started in 1910. Dr. Gomberg started that Scout troop. The YMHA Juniors broke up after two years.¹⁰

The leisure time activities of the parents included the children. The simple pleasures described involved little cost and represented to adults and children alike a great deal of enjoyment.

There was a Warwick boat that went from Providence to Newport for 50¢. We boarded it at a little wharf off Dyer Street. When we got off at Newport, we would take a trolley and go down to the beach. My mother also used to take us to Roger Williams Park. We would go by street car on a Sunday afternoon. Then there was the Jewish theatre on Westminster Street. I can remember everyone talking before the show would go on. We saw some masterpieces like "The Dybbuk" — laughter and tears at the same time. It was very inexpensive. Our parents always took us children. I remember the posters announcing a theatre production — masterpieces of the day.⁹

They used to take us kids to Kirwin's Bathing Beach for swimming. It was located off Allens Avenue near New York Avenue. We also went to Roger Williams Park for band concerts. Once a year we went to Lobofsky's Farm. The Touro Fraternal used to have an outing. They would have barrels of beer. It was located near Palace Gardens. We saw fireworks at Davis Park. We also went to Kingsley Park, and were limited only by the street car route. You would sit on your doorstep at night. The Jews were pretty friendly, and there were no automobiles.⁹

In several cases the answer to the question about the social life of the family was that it revolved around the synagogue where lectures and meetings were held. It also revolved around family gatherings. There was a closeness among relatives and visiting was often the only form of recreation for the hard-working weary parents.

A wedding was a social life. Saturday afternoons we'd visit my uncle. That was the social life.⁹

Weekends my father drove a horse and wagon but Sundays he would exchange the wagon for a surrey with a fringe on the top. We went to Twin Rivers for an outing (in North Providence) or to Hopkins Park which is where Routes 146 and 95 now meet. For entertainment there were the Jewish shows or well-known cantors came to the city. There was a Palace Casino located where the Moshassuck Medical Building is now, and they also played in the What Cheer Hall.¹⁰

For a nickel you had a long ride. Take the trolley at Camp Street and get off at Auburn or Eden Park. We also went to Roger Williams Park for the concerts in the bandstand which was on the Elmwood Avenue side. The park was packed. We went at night in the open air trolley for a nickel. A longer ride was the one we took out to Seekonk or Hunts Mills. They also had concerts and a reservoir and park, but it was only about one tenth the size of Roger Williams Park.¹⁰

JEWES AND GENTILES — A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP?

An individual's experience with anti-semitism depended on many factors — his neighborhood, his financial position, his schooling — and many other variables. Often the person interviewed responded with a definite, "No, I remember no anti-semitism", but when asked about specific situations where it might have occurred, he changed his initial response to qualify with examples of minor harassment.

We Jews were almost a self-contained unit. Most of the Jewish boys in my neighborhood were newsboys and they were strong. The Catholics were afraid of us. We lived in a kind of ghetto, purely from desire to live that way. I do not believe you could call it anti-semitism as such for we were all poor people.⁹

Before my uncle William was to bring his bride from New York to Providence he went with my father to look at an apartment. My father had a rather long beard, but it was a nice-sized beard. They went to look at empty apartments. At that time, if anyone had an empty apartment, there was a sign in the window, "For Rent". They went to Orms Street just above Douglas Avenue, right near Jefferson Street. There were two nice houses, and my uncle rang the doorbell. The woman who answered, gave one look at them, spat, and said, "Jews" and slammed the door in their face. So you see, the Jews did not live in that area, for no one would rent them a place. That was about the year 1892.⁸

We felt some (anti-semitism) and had some run-ins with the children from St. Patrick's School, but I think that was normal for Jewish boys at that time.⁷

Two men who were interviewed simultaneously had grown up in the same neighborhood in the North End. In answer to the question, "Do you think the Gentiles resented the Jews coming into their neigh-

borhood?", there were two opposite answers. One replied. "There was a lot of anti-semitism. Every day when the kids got out of Candace Street School at the corner lot near Folcofsky's the goyish boys would throw rocks at the Jews. They would have awful battles there."⁴ The other answer: "They mostly threw snowballs. It wasn't really anti-semitism, it was just that they were different. We went to Candace Street School. They went to St. Patrick's Parochial School on Davis Street."⁴

I personally never encountered any particular anti-semitism, even though in public school I was only one of two Jews in the class. You would never pay attention when the kids might say "Dirty Jew" or something like that. One problem I did have, I took off every single Jewish holiday including holidays like Succoth. In my class there was a Jewish girl who did not even take off Yom Kippur. Some took off just one day at Rosh Hoshanah, so we got into an argument why I took off so many days. I answered that Jews had different variations — Catholics and Protestants observed differently.

With my father I know that many a day when he came from Shul, someone pulled his beard or threw stones, or said "there's a Jew" but he never complained.⁵

The Irish settled further up on Chalkstone Avenue and on Douglas Avenue. What they called Smith Hill. Their church was St. Patrick's Church, almost across the street from the State House. Their children went to St. Patrick's School which was right next to the church. The ones from Douglas Avenue had to walk through Davis Street (a Jewish neighborhood). There used to be a lot of friction between the Jewish kids and the Catholic kids.

I did not personally encounter any anti-semitism. Just at times you'd get that "Dirty Jew" feeling. We didn't go looking for it. As for physical violence, no. Each kept to himself — felt a borderline. The Jews did not have to go out of their neighborhood for they had everything on Chalkstone Avenue. The Jewish people kept to themselves. They really didn't go looking for any trouble.⁶

No, no anti-semitism, no reason to be. They were all Jews. (He re-considered). I remember an incident as a youngster we heard of the pogroms in Poland so a group of boys beat up the Polish

boys in the neighborhood. I also heard that there was a gang of kids who came from Charles Street, to beat up the Jewish boys but the Jews in that neighborhood were so tough, they beat up the Charles Street gang so badly they never came back again.⁸

It wasn't safe for a peddler with a beard to walk in the neighborhood. The Catholic kids would pull on their beards, beat them up. My father on his wagon on more than one occasion had to go into the St. Patrick's School and complain to the priests. He couldn't drive in their neighborhood without being stoned. Although he had trouble in the Charles Street area with the Poles and Lithuanians, he did not have as much trouble with the Irish Catholics.¹²

I went to Smith Street School where there were no other Jewish children. There were two girls who followed me to school, called me names and stole my lunch. I finally was transferred out of that school.⁹

No, not in my neighborhood. My father (the Rabbi) was very friendly with Father Redding. On a childish level there might have been problems between Parochial School Children and Jewish children. In our own neighborhood there was a mixture of families of English, Irish and French extraction. Also, some Lithuanians and Russians. No Italians or Armenians at that time. Beyond us, on Bernon, Goddard, Lydia, were mainly Jews with a little mixture of Irish and Polish.¹¹

I can't say I ever experienced any anti-semitism even with my teachers. There was always the feeling that they are Gentiles and we are Jews. There were not many Jews on Douglas Avenue when I lived on it. Next door there was a Gentile family. One of them would come in on Saturday and light the lights for us. When we had no Gentiles around, the lights would burn all night and all the next day.¹³

Not a bit. When I was growing up almost all of my friends were non-Jews, and I even had a black friend. Half the trade in our store was non-Jew.¹⁰

In the March 29, 1909 edition of the *Providence Journal* was a news story with the following headline, "Jewish Girl Abjures Faith; Weds Catholic. Disowned by Parents and Forsaken by Friends. Crowd Witnesses Baptism." "Miss Dora Simmelman, daughter of provision dealer

principal figure in impressive ceremony in Church of Holy Ghost — adopts Catholicism and weds an Italian Jeweler.” . . . “Yesterday’s ceremony, the first of the kind in New England was the culmination of a romance that began two years ago when the young Jewess and the son of sunny Italy met for the first time. It was a case of love at first sight, but in their case the path of love proved to be far from smooth. First, there was the difference in racial characteristics and customs, then the yawning chasm between the ancient Jewish faith of the girl and the Catholic beliefs of the young man . . . The parents of Miss Simmelman, fearing the result of the courtship, gave their ultimatum and forbade their daughter ever to see her lover again . . . She left her parental home and severed all the ties that bound her to her people and to her religion.”

The narrative continued with the information that she was adopted by an Italian family and for five months studied with a priest. The priest finally felt she was ready for baptism. The christening and bridal ceremonies attracted such attention that, “The church was filled with a large congregation and many were compelled to remain outside.” The baptism was recorded in detail with Miss Simmelman taking the name, Dora Marie, as she made the following declaration: “I now, with sorrow and contrition for my past errors, confess that I believe the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church to be the one and only church, etc.”

It was noted that none of the relatives of Mrs. Marinari (Dora Simmelman) were at the church or reception. According to the marriage license, Dora was 21 years old and born in Russia. She was the daughter of Morris Simmelman and Bessie Friderman Simmelman of 241 Chalkstone Avenue. The profession of Mr. Simmelman was given as market proprietor.

This news story exemplifies the strong feeling against intermarriage at that time.

Another news story contained in the July 11, 1898 edition of the *Providence Journal* points to Jewish-Gentile relationships. In this case the subject was conversion.

“A Converted Jew. His Unpopularity Caused Him Hard Usage in the North End.” The altercation was between an Isaac Byrnes, who was seen going to church with a missionary to the Jews, and his land-

lord, one Jacob Cohen of 224 Chalkstone Avenue, who demanded his rent, although Byrnes was out of work and claimed he could not pay. Intervening was his friend, Hugo Ridal, a converted Jew. Ridal met with "fists and feet, stones and sticks" as the crowd called him a "Mshumed" (Hebrew term for a converted Jew). With a mass of black and blue spots and a bleeding face, Ridal went to the 2nd Precinct Police Station to tell his story. Cohen, the landlord, accused Ridal of punching everyone. Diplomatically the captain of the precinct decided the matter was not in his jurisdiction. The conclusion drawn by the author of this story was: "Ridal is limping about. The missionary is still seeking to convert the Jews. Byrnes is without a home. And the rent is not yet paid."

The prejudice against the Jews by William Kirk, author of a book entitled, *A Modern City, Providence*, is reflected in most of the references to the Jewish population in the North End of Providence in 1909.

Most of the Russian and Polish Jews are massed in the North End, where the first, second and third wards join. The majority of them are of the orthodox faith, and speak the Yiddish of the province from which they come. A large part of the population along North Main Street, and in the cross streets between North Main and Camp, is Jewish, and they have lately acquired a firm foothold among the fine old residences of the north end of Benefit Street. There is undoubtedly a strong social prejudice against them, their advent in a neighborhood almost invariably depreciates the value of real estate, and is followed by the withdrawal of the non-Jewish population.

Industrially, the Jews exhibit a limited range of occupations. Most of the small tailoring establishments . . . are carried on by Jews as are pawnshops and second-hand shops . . . The reluctance of insurance companies to write policies on the stock of Jewish merchants is an interesting commentary on the esteem in which the race is held.

The above segment written by William MacDonald in the book edited by William Kirk was concerned with a population study. He qualified his statements: "The Russian and Polish Jews of the North End so far as the mass of them are concerned, represent a lower element . . . The upperclass Jews, often native born, are largely represented

in the business life of the city." He referred to those in the jewelry trade and "the largest department store", which was undoubtedly the Outlet Department Store owned by the Samuels Brothers.

More derogatory statements were made in reference to the Jew choosing to live, "in the busy, active, crowded quarters of the city, where he can be near his kind . . . The average Jewish market, grocery or bakery in the North End is filthy and offensive in the extreme and a standing menace in health; the houses are tumble-down, dirty and unsanitary . . ."

The answer to the question, "Jews and Gentiles — a harmonious relationship?", would appear to be "no" if the words of the press and this particular book were to be taken as representing the attitude of the period.

THIS IS WHERE WE WENT TO SHUL

The role of the synagogue in the life of most of the Jews who settled in this area was a very important one. The social, communal as well as the religious aspect of many families centered around their place of worship.

CONGREGATION SONS OF ZION

The members of Congregation Sons of Zion at 45 Orms Street, the oldest orthodox congregation in Providence, were warmly welcomed when they brought their Torahs and other holy objects to Congregation Sons of Jacob at 22 Douglas Avenue on Sunday morning. . . . The old synagogue, in existence since 1892 will be demolished to make way for the Randall Square renewed project.¹⁸

The 1970 description of the end of this illustrious synagogue is in contrast to its origin:

The Congregation Sons of Zion was founded in 1875. The founders were 17 immigrants — 9 married men and 8 celibates. These organizers at first assembled for prayers at 98 Charles Street and in 1882 rented another meeting house on Canal Street.¹⁹

In 1888 Chevra Bnai Zion decided to procure a parcel of land on which to build a synagogue. A suitable location was found on Orms Street for which \$3,000. was paid. It was completed in 1892 at a cost of \$23,500.²⁰

An account of the opening and dedication in the *Providence Journal* of July 31, 1892 is quoted here in part:

. . . the entire Hebrew population in the northern section of the city turned out to witness the dedication of the new edifice, when the building was consecrated to the service of God, with appropriate exercises in accordance with the Hebrew faith.

The weather was delightful, though a trifle warm, but the heat had no effect on the enthusiastic Hebrews who came out in thousands to see the parade and participate in the exercises of the day.²⁹

In this same article the colorful services were described. Another story in the *Providence Journal*, this one dated October 6, 1897, relates that every seat was taken with nearly a thousand men, women and children of the North End of Providence. This was for the High Holy Day services.

CONGREGATION SONS OF JACOB

In the 1909 City Directory the Congregation Sons of Jacob is listed at 10 Douglas Avenue. It is interesting to note that very few Jewish families lived on this street in that year.

In the year 1896 enthusiastic and religious minded immigrants from Russia, Poland and Austria have begun to dream of building a home, in addition to the other existing synagogues of the city, to nurture the spirit of Jewish brotherhood. To foster the growth of religious life, to transplant it into American soil and to become true devotees of American democracy was the thought foremost in the minds of that group of visionary idealists who have since given life to the Congregation, Sons of Jacob . . . Plans were outlined in 1896 when this small group of men moved into an upper floor of Shawmut Street and Chalkstone Avenue, where Hochman's Bakery is now located and where a densely populated Jewish community was to be found. Shortly after that, the cornerstone for the Sons of Jacob congregation was laid.

When the so-called synagogue was no more than a small room, poorly lit by the flickering candlelight, our members came there with the feeling of coming home. After a day's hard labor, the Jew found his spiritual nourishment and relaxation in the synagogue. There he read his Yiddish paper, there he heard the news from the old country.

After 10 years of worshipping on the corner of Shawmut Street and Chalkstone Avenue, land was bought on Douglas Avenue and plans were made to build first the lower floor with the ultimate goal to raise it later to a large edifice. The membership grew with the influx of new immigrants and finally in the year 1906 the basement was erected where the synagogue is located today.²¹

My family was connected with the Sons of Jacob. Originally my father had belonged to the Russische Shul. But my two uncles belonged to the Sons of Jacob. One year my father did not like the cantor whom they hired at the Russische Shul so he went where his brothers were and ended up by being a member of both shuls.³

There were a number of small shuls, but the two largest were the Sons of Zion on Orms Street, called the Littische Shul, and the Sons of David, called the Russische Shul. It seems as if in those days, and even today, when a few Jews got together, everybody wanted to be president. I think that was how the little Russian Shul started on Chalkstone Avenue.⁷

AHAVATH SHOLOM OR THE HOWELL STREET SYNAGOGUE

A copy of the mortgage note, dated July 1, 1909, in the amount of \$10,000.00 contains the following information:

Two years after date, for value received, the Congregation of Ahavath Sholom of Providence, Rhode Island, a corporation legally created and located in the city of Providence in the state of Rhode Island, hereby promises to pay to the Trustees of the Fourth Baptist Church in Providence, a corporation legally created and located in said city of Providence, on order five hundred (\$500.00) dollars, and on the first day of July in each succeeding year, thereafter, the like sum of Five Hundred (\$500.00) Dollars until the full principal sum of Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) shall have been paid.

Interest was charged at the rate of 5% per annum. The note was signed by Samuel Priest, president, and 25 organizers of the synagogue, who declared themselves responsible for any unpaid principal and interest on the note.

Evidently Ahavath Sholom was organized by a group of men, many of whom had been members of Bnai Zion.

Louis Bolotow, who was intimately involved with the Howell Street Synagogue from its inception, wrote the following letter to the members, dated August 4, 1915:

As a member of the Jewish Community of this city, we hope that you are convinced that, while visiting our Synagogue, whether in time of worship or other occasions, you have peaceably enjoyed, among your friends and co-religionists, a happy hour in this House of God.

That you have approved of the fact that our Congregation fully deserves to be titled with the name of Ahavath Sholom, this we can see on our records by the many financial contributions which are credited to your name.

Mr. Bolotow's letter concluded with a plea for the monies pledged on Yom Kippur night for the extensive renovations of the Synagogue.

In an article contained in the September 18, 1927 issue of the *Providence Journal* Rabbi David A. Bachrach of Ahavath Sholom reminisced about the past history of the various congregations: "There were only 4 or 5 Jewish congregations in Providence." He was the oldest Rabbi in the city having come here in 1898. In 1895 there was only one synagogue, Sons of Zion, its Rabbi being Rabbi Bachrach who served for a number of years. The other congregations met in various halls and places of business, or even in private homes. Sons of Jacob met then on Goddard Street, the Russian Congregation (Sons of David) was on Chalkstone Avenue and the other two were in South Providence.

SMALLER SYNAGOGUES

In addition to the congregations mentioned in the above newspaper article, there was the Congregation Tiferes Israel on Shawmut Street near Chalkstone Avenue, and Ahavath Achim on Shawmut Street near Chalkstone Avenue. It was said that Congregation Beth David (the Russische Shul) was patterned after the Touro Synagogue in Newport.

The Bima was in the center. It was a beautiful little synagogue. My uncle was president of it, and when he died his son was president until they tore it down.²

The Anshe Kovna was on the corner of Orms Street and Shawmut Street. It was a nice little white building.⁵

People who came from a certain location in Russia gravitated together as landsmen. The Litvacs settled the Orms Street Shul whereas the Anshe Kovna group came from Lithuania.⁶

Among those interviewed were a few whose parents did not attend any of the synagogues in the neighborhood. Some of these families still kept "Kosher" at home, however.

CEMETERIES.

The cemetery in Lincoln Park was bought by the Chevrah Bnai Zion in the year 1895.²²

My grandfather (Sender Silverstein) was active in the shul, and was one of the organizers of the Jewish cemetery. He was a peddler and knew of this land, which was for sale at Lincoln Park. My father died at age 34 and was one of the first to be buried there.⁴

My father was very active in the Shul and was treasurer of Bnai Zion. He ran the cemetery for many years, that is the Bnai Zion portion of Lincoln Cemetery, which comprises the biggest part of the cemetery. The land was purchased originally by my father-in-law, Barnett Fain, and he was reimbursed by the Synagogue. My father would get a call — night or day — when someone died, and would go out to the cemetery to make the arrangements. I did the same thing for 20 years when my father died.⁹

In 1905, the year that Congregation Sons of Jacob was erected, a cemetery was bought.²¹

The plots of land purchased by these synagogues followed the usual custom of congregants being buried in designated portions of the cemetery in land purchased by their synagogue.

WE LEARN — AMERICAN AND HEBREW STYLE

From information compiled those interviewed attended the following public schools in the North End and East Side area. They went to State Street School, on to Candace Street School and then to Hope High School.

We took the short cut from Orms by crossing Randall Square through the area of the American Screw Company. There is a canal on Charles Street and between the buildings of the American Screw Company which is called Hungry Hill.⁴

State Street School contained only four rooms and was located opposite the old Lying-in-Hospital. One year was spent at Charles Street School before I entered Candace Street.²¹

All of us kids went to the Chalkstone Avenue School, and then we went on to Howell Street or Candace Street School.⁶

For those living in the vicinity of the area called "East Side", Benefit Street and Doyle Avenue were the schools they attended. For a very few "Normal School" or later as it was to be known "Henry Barnard" was the choice of their parents for their children. This teacher-school was the first to adopt the Montessori Method. One person interviewed said he learned to read and write before the kindergarten level.

An important study on the life of the Jew in Providence during the year of her research, 1910, was written by Bessie Bloom Wessel.²² She based part of her statistics on the size and nature of the immigration to the North End and East Side by the evening school attendance at Doyle Avenue School. From 1907 on a few Jewish teachers were hired to instruct English in the evening school. They were aided by voluntary instructors, several of whom were Jewish students at Brown University. She also pointed out the difference between the American student and the Russian immigrant, who appeared more mature and serious. Some showed idealistic Socialist tendencies, and others were enthusiastic supporters of Zionism. The conclusion drawn by Bessie Bloom Wessel was that those in this neighborhood were most fortunate in the broad-minded and liberal way they were treated in the schools. They were not only taught the language, but all that Americanization represented.

Most of the children also received religious training concurrent with their public school training. In 1892 the first Talmud Torah (Hebrew School) was opened.

While sponsored by Bnai Zion, the Talmud Torah was by no means a school for the children of members only, but was virtually a community school where the Hebrew language and Jewish studies were taught to all who wished to attend . . . It was a six day a week school and for the particularly receptive pupils the teachers provided special instruction on Saturdays as well.²³

Also in this article about Bnai Zion there is reference to an adult program in which there was detailed study of the Torah. They called

this the Hevrah Shas (Talmud Society). Beryl Segal in an article on Hyman B. Lasker,²³ "praises Reb Haim Dov Lasker who was director of the Talmud Torah . . . a professional teacher, not a teacher plus something else . . . teaching was his only occupation and to it devoted all his life . . ." He worked at Bnai Zion Talmud Torah.

Before they built the school next door, (to the Bnai Zion Synagogue), the classes used to be held in the vestry, in special rooms which were located just behind the chapel. Meyer Gereboff and Rev Lasker were the full time teachers while others taught there. When the building was erected there were many of us who taught part time — Joshua Bell, Paul Chernov, Lotte Lasker, myself (Louis Rubinstein), among others.²⁴

There was also a Talmud Torah at the Congregation, Sons of Jacob. Some who were interviewed had private tutors in the instruction of Hebrew.

READING AND SPEAKING YIDDISH

The Jewish paper was read in a number of homes.

I know of one man who alone distributes over 900 daily papers . . . about 600 Jewish "Tageblatt" (Jewish Daily News) come into this city every day. In addition to this there is the "Forward" and the "Wahrheit", two more liberal newspapers.²⁵

My father used to get his Yiddish paper direct. It was called the Wahrheit. Some used to buy their paper down on Shawmut Street where you might get a 2¢ plain.²⁶

My family read *Der Tag*. My father did not like the *Tageblatt* or the *Forwards*. The *Forwards* he considered a Socialistic paper. He and his family enjoyed the Friday-Saturday issue as it would interpret the portion of the Torah for that week as well as contain stories. No English paper came into my house.²⁷

My father and brothers used to deliver the Jewish papers. They had a store on Chalkstone Avenue.²⁸

In most of the homes Yiddish was spoken and in some cases the parents also spoke the tongue of the country in Europe from which they emigrated.

POLITICS, WAS IT OF MUCH INTEREST?

To the question, "Was your family involved with politics?", the answer was generally negative, but the comment, "There was Jake Eaton" was then made. Politics and Jake Eaton in this section of Providence was synonymous.

Everyone worked for Jack Eaton. He represented all the Jewish people. He would take care of his people — get them jobs, etc. Later we worked the same way for Phil Joslin.⁹

Jacob Eaton — he was wonderful if the Jewish people needed any help at all. My father was very, very friendly with him. My father was a Socialite, who believed and lived by it. If he had a dollar in his pocket and a man was out of work (and in those days it was not very easy for a Jewish man to get a job) he would give it to the man . . . People used to say to him, "You're friendly with Jack Eaton, why not run for 'overseer of the poor?'"

The politician of the day was Jacob Eaton. He was a founder of Touro. He was an alderman. Isaac Moses and George Helford were other politicians. That district was strongly Democratic, but Eaton and Helford were Republicans.¹⁰

My father (Rabbi Rubinstein) was very friendly with Jake Eaton and Harry Cutler, and the latter was at all our seders. Before Cutler went to the Versailles Conference, he spent days in discussion with my father.¹¹

In that area we had the most prominent Jewish politician, Jacob Eaton. There was a small lodge called the Star of Rhode Island Lodge, and he incorporated it in his works at the State House, into an insurance agency, and called it The Touro Fraternal Organization. It is still in existence. He was our first Jewish congressman, always a bachelor. He had certain houses where he would eat on certain nights. It was difficult even in those days to get by on a Congressman's salary. When he left the legislature, he took a paid job as secretary for the Touro Fraternal Association. Eaton helped the Jews. They were Republicans so as to vote for him, he and his henchmen showed the new citizens where to mark their cross on the ballots.⁷

Jacob Eaton was always at our house. He was the homliest man you ever saw. A large eater, it was nothing for him to sit down and

eat a pound of butter. When he died — what a funeral! They had a procession along the State House and his body lay in state. Quite something — a Jewish politician!¹⁸

There is an interesting article on this man, Jacob A. Eaton, in Volume 4, No. 3 of the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical NOTES*, written by Melvin I. Zurier in which he corroborated the reminiscences of those interviewed. "Eaton throughout his lifetime was closely identified with Jewish groups and activities." . . . "To the North End Jewish immigrant, Eaton was the embodiment of America. He was an idol, a friend, a counsellor." A description of his funeral contains this comment from the *Providence Journal* of March 23, 1921.: The man who for the past eleven years represented the Seventh Providence District in the House died penniless. But a multimillionaire could not have had such a funeral as he.

Another politician mentioned by those who were interviewed was the name of Isaac Moses, who ran a business at 153 Orms Street, a business which carried a motley selection of merchandise — toys, fans, balloons, souvenirs, etc. He is best remembered as a political figure who ran unsuccessfully so many times.¹⁹

Bessie Bloom Wessel (ref. No. 27) referring to the politics of that day — 1910 — wrote: "The Jews seldom form a unit in politics and this perhaps stands more in their favor as American citizens than anything else which can be said of them . . . According to Mr. Jacob A. Eaton, there are about 900-1000 Republican voters and from 200-300 Democratic voters . . . From other sources I understand that there are about 60 Jewish members in the socialist party of Rhode Island, although there are many more sympathizers.

And then there were those who answered the question about politics with the answer, "My father never got involved with politics."

AND IF YOU WERE SICK?

Dr. Seebert J. Goldowsky has written about the Jewish doctors who practiced in the North End Section (see "Jews in Medicine," Volume 2, No. 3 of the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical NOTES*). He referred to a Dr. Bernard Cohen who practiced from 1875-1891 at various addresses on North Main Street, to a Dr. Saul Lewanda and his wife Reba who might have been a midwife and also to a Dr. Leo

Lauer, and Dr. Aaron Markoff. However, it was Dr. Max B. Gomberg, Dr. Mark, Dr. Plainfield, Dr. Broadman, Dr. Hyman Chester, Dr. Persky, and Dr. Abraham P. Fishman whom those interviewed remembered.

The Jews were always doctor-conscious. I remember Dr. Broadman and Dr. Gomberg, whose practice was taken by Dr. Perry Bernstein. The office was across the street from the drug store of Fleishman and Torgan, directly below the Sons of Jacob Synagogue at the corner of Orms and Douglas Streets. Even though the Old Lying-In Hospital was right across on State Street, the majority of deliveries were home births.¹¹

There were three doctors in the area, practically all on one street — Drs. Fishman, Gomberg and Persky. Dr. Persky was on the lower end of Orms Street, across from Sons of Zion. Gomberg was two doors from Torgan's Drug Store and Dr. Fishman was on Douglas Avenue across the street from Sons of Jacob. There was an insurance plan. The family paid ten to twelve dollars a year. This was for medical care. All three doctors were on it and since they were general practitioners, you could call on them any time. No organization was in back of this; the doctor sponsored the plan himself. They did have lodges in the area where a person could get medical benefits, if ill, — something like \$10.00 a week. There were two dentists in the area, Dr. Woiler and Dr. Lebow who was diagonally across the street from him. Markensohn was the first druggist, and he later sold his store to Bill Torgan.¹²

Dr. Gomberg was our doctor, and later Dr. Leo Cohen. Dr. Cohen, even though he was on Prairie Avenue, took care of us on our side of the city because he was our lodge doctor. My mother was delivered by Mrs. Lewanda, the midwife. For tonsilectomies we went to a little hospital on Greene Street. It might have been the Homeopathic Hospital.¹³

Dr. Gomberg used to make house calls. He had his office on Orms Street. He would come by with his car and all of us kids would pile in the back. He would give us a ride all down Goddard Street to Orms Street, and then all of us kids would jump out and walk home.¹⁴

Dr. Fishman was our doctor, and he was disgusted with the fact that a Jewish doctor had no hospital connections. If he had a case which needed hospitalization, he had to turn it over to a



DR. FISHMAN

Gentile doctor. The pre-Miriam Hospital doctors I remember were Drs. Gomberg, Leo Cohen, Persky, Libby, Plainfield, Broadman, Fishman and a lady doctor named Wolf. Drs. Monroe and Bennett were often called in when any of these Jewish doctors needed to hospitalize a patient. The Jewish dentists I remember were Drs. Rubinstein, Woiler and Lebow.⁷

Dr. Leroy Fishman described his father: "He charged his patients perhaps \$2.00 to \$3.00 for a house call, a minimum amount for an office visit, and yet when he died, he had so much money outstanding. Collection of that money was not productive. He was an easy going guy who got paid off in peanuts."

Established in this area in 1908 by the Providence Section, Council of Jewish Women was the North End Dispensary. It was chartered in 1911. Their purpose was, "To provide medical aid and surgical treatment for the poor and needy sick of all denominations. Incorporators were: Sarah E. Bernkopf, Marion L. Misch, Ida B. Cutler, Ella G. Ottenberg and Catherine Brooks. Twenty-eight rooms were engaged in the North End Working Girls' Home at 49 Orms Street for \$25.00 per month. The original staff consisted of Doctors J. Edmund Brown, A. Arlington Fisher, Abraham P. Fishman, J. P. Cooney, W. H. Peters and J. P. O'Connell. The Dispensary functioned for 30 years. Although established by Jews, it was open on a non-sectarian basis. Minor surgery was performed here.⁸

An updated newspaper clipping regarding the Providence North End Dispensary noted that Dr. Max B. Gomberg reported from the 2nd District 134 patients, 28 being foreigners; 186 house visits and 132 office consultations.

If hospitalization were needed, facilities of the Rhode Island Hospital were used, even for contagious diseases until the City Hospital (or as it was later named, the Charles V. Chapin Hospital) was built.

IF YOU WERE IN NEED

In the North End of Providence there were the houses, the many and varied shops, the synagogues, the schools, the doctors' and dentists' offices, but there were also buildings and offices devoted to the needs of the orphan, the poor and the aged.

Next to the churches, perhaps the Associations of different nationalities working among their own people give the largest

amount of relief. The Jewish charities are generally the best known of these . . . Applications by Jews for help from outside sources are rare, and few find their way into institutions.²⁷

The Jewish Orphanage of Providence in quarters which were obtained in 1910 at 1213 North Main Street was the concern of all Jews. For example, an invitation was sent to members of the Howell Street Synagogue by the officers and directors (signed by its president, Louis Bolotow), inviting them to the Bar Mitzvah of four orphan boys from the Jewish Orphanage. On the invitation was the statement: "These boys are our Community's children, and we should, by our presence, make the event a joyful and memorable one for them as we would for our sons. One hour given in such a cause will be appreciated as a deed worthy of every noble minded Jew."

The Y.M.H.A. (Young Men's Hebrew Association) of Providence obtained a charter. Their purpose was social, beneficial and literary work and endeavor. That charter was dated January 1, 1898. The Y.W.H.A. (Young Women's Hebrew Association) received its charter on March 13, 1900 to work for and bestow the proceeds of such work among poor and needy persons and to do other charitable work.

Evidently these earlier clubs of the Y.M.H.A. were short-lived for it was not until March 19, 1912 that the organization was solidified. The North End branch was a particularly active group. For example, a newspaper clipping points to an outing held for children. "The party caused some excitement as they drove through the North End, as a spectacle of a picnic of the Jewish children was somewhat unusual in the city."

According to a Souvenir program of the Y.M.H.A., dated October 12, 1913, there was also a very active educational department. They held lectures by prominent men. Debates were held among the members. Literary nights were devoted to the review of the works of famous authors. Public speaking classes were offered. Jewish history classes were held for the adults and Bible classes for children. In addition, a Hebrew inter-club baseball league was formed.

Contained in Volume 2, No. 1 of the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical NOTES* is a list of chartered organizations. There are several examples of these small charitable and literary groups organized in the North End. For example:

Touro Guards of American Zionists September 17, 1903 — for promoting sociability and literary studies between its members. Jacob A. Robinson, Louis Schoenberg, Samuel Robinson, David E. Bander, Harry I. Sack.

The North End Traders Mutual Aid Association, April 30, 1909 — encouraging its members in benevolence and to expand among them actions of mutual aid. Louis Leber, Simon Shiner, Abraham Goldstein, M. Glantz, Abraham Loeber, James Bergel, William Solomon, David Davis, Henry Zilman, David J. Paisner and Max Woodman.

Providence Hebrew Butchers Association, June 30, 1909 — To assist and aid its members in a fraternal and benevolent manner. Charles Halpern, Max Mittleman, B. Mushlin, Jacob Premach, Max Cohen, Harry Mittleman, William Solomon, Jake Cohen, Jacob Rosenfield, J. Fineman, A. Abramson, Morris Siselman, Jacob Berger and N. B. Greenstein.

It was in the middle of the Jewish area of the North End that the first modest home (161 Orms Street) for the Jewish aged was rented by the Ladies Hebrew Union Aid Association.

A group of the more active participants gathered together a purse of \$165.00 at the same time collecting tables, rugs, furniture and other household articles. . . . Within nine months of opening its doors the population of the infant institution had grown to nine. (There was originally one resident).

Dr. Goldowsky, who wrote the history of the "Home", relates the purchase next of Dr. Abraham Fishman's home at 191 Orms Street. They had soon outgrown the original small dwelling. They were to occupy their next residence from 1912 to 1932.

It was learned from documents left by Louis Bolotow that organizations for charitable purposes were also formed by members of a synagogue. For example, he solicited the purchase of shares in the Ahavath Shalom Circle organized by members of the Ahavath Sholom Synagogue. The following information showed the purpose of this organization:

It (the Ahavath Sholom Circle) was organized in the year of 1911, being incorporated under the Laws of the State of Rhode Island and conducted under the supervision of a staff of most prominent and reliable business men of this city . . . it is the only



ABRAHAM GOLDSTEIN

one of the so-called Money societies which governs itself strictly according to a constitution and by-laws adopted expressly for the welfare of its shareholders, also making their financial interests safe and secured. Shareholders are supplied with copies of same, printed in Yiddish and English, thus giving them full information . . . As part of the charitable activities . . . it was through the efforts and financial assistance of the Ahavath Sholom Circle that the beautiful estate at 65 Benefit Street was purchased and secured as a Community Center for the Providence Jewry . . .

The Gemilath Chesed or Providence Hebrew Free Loan Association, which had its first meeting on February 4, 1903 at 317 North Main Street, was an organization of invaluable aid to the early Jewish settlers. Money was lent without interest and paid back in small installments. To the immigrant, without opportunity to amass capital, this organization was his only hope to start a little business or obtain merchandise for peddling.

IN CONCLUSION

Like a jigsaw puzzle, the pieces come together.

This was the North End where all the Jews lived —the Shores, the Lichts, the Samdperils, Stella Cohen who married her childhood sweetheart, Israel Kapstein. Our family was like all families, some of them were fine, others went astray . . . You got up in the world when you moved to Goddard Street from Chalkstone Avenue or North Davis Street. It was like moving up to Fifth Avenue . . . My mother would go out to collect. The 10¢, the 15¢, the quarter. Collect for matzos, and for shoes and clothing for the poor . . . My mother, like most women in those days, concentrated on being a wife and a mother, her children were so important to her.¹⁸

It was on Bernon Street that the Matzner family lived — always in the plumbing business. And the Gemileth Chesed which started in the North End, the one truly philanthropic organization. Others too like the Yelitsvograd which tried to help out their clan, and the Workmen's Circle where my father was secretary as he was the only one who could write English . . .¹⁷

I went to Cheder on Chalkstone Avenue right near the railroad tracks. Every time a train would go by the building would shake,

and finally they had to give up teaching in that location . . . The big deal was during the Jewish holidays. You'd see people you hadn't seen in a long time . . . the people were hard-working, well-respected, the Goldbergs, the Lorbers, the Sydneys, the Rubins, the Keslers, the Blisses. I remember Abe Klein who was originally in the waste business at the corner of Ashburton and Nichols Street . . . My uncle, Max Silverstein, who started as a newsboy, was approached by a New York firm to distribute their papers and he built a big business. He came here in the 1880's, and sold the *New York Journal* in 1895. He was one of the first independent magazine distributors . . .⁴

It was around 1911 and I remember after they lit the lights we played kick the wicket. I can still see the guy coming around on bicycle to light the gas street lights . . . I can still see Leo Winograd with his buggy with the fringe on top. The horse was the one he used to pull a truck, not a race horse type, but a big truck horse. It was quite a sight — a big brewery type horse leading a surrey. On our street were the Fishs and the Rosenhirschs, who were extremely wealthy. Old man Rosenhirsch used to go to China to bring back bristles for his import brush business. There were the Orlecks. He was in the raincoat business. A man named Freedman was our first Jewish cop. Goldsmith was another cop. He had the beat at Chalkstone Avenue School . . . A lot of people used to go to the Turkish baths, run by Abelson. Every Friday we used to get a towel and a piece of soap and go to the baths. Right next to the Orms Street shul there used to be a building and that was Quaid Street where the baths were. The mikvah was on Shawmut Street and Mrs. Mincoff used to run that . . .⁵

Father belonged to one or two small lodges like B'nai B'rith. I remember collecting dollars in our store for Gemileth Chesed. We gave out receipts. I also remember Max Sugarman coming in with the death certificates for those buried in the cemetery that month. Ages of the deceased were like 48, as young as 35 or 40, with many deaths due to heart disease, some cancer.⁶

There was a strong feeling for education of one's children. Some used the Gemileth Chesed to borrow for tuition . . . I remember also about the Gemileth Chesed. One might borrow 100 to 200 dollars, and pay it off during the year. The men of

the organization met Sunday mornings in several places — like a Credit Union. Their method of charity. For example, persons were making \$4.00 a week. Money was needed by those poor families. My father and another man (two always together) would go out and they had a handkerchief and they would go collecting for a needy family. In this handkerchief would go the nickles and dimees. It was never known who the money was for. They always went out collecting on Sunday mornings. They would collect around the corner of Chalkstone Avenue and Shawmut Street or at the junction of Orms Street and Douglas Avenue. This was the beehive of activity . . . The nearest fire station was on Orms Street and Smith Street. The fire engines were horse drawn.²²

I remember when the Talmud Torah was built and they had 1,000 children attending it. When it was dedicated Col. Jacob Kahn spoke. My uncle, William Wolf Sydney, was the original president of the Orms Street Talmud Torah . . . We lived down Orms Street next to the Shul, and the Rubinsteins (the Rabbi's family) lived about a half a block from us — just over the bridge. So, the girls were either at my house, or I was at theirs. I couldn't play with everybody, because everybody else was a "shabbos goy". Our family was very religious, and when I wanted to play with someone, I got questions like, "Who's the father?" "What does he do?" Of course you couldn't go anywhere, because you couldn't eat anywhere . . . You had to associate with people who observed the Shabbos . . . In the early years of the Orms Street Shul they did not have facilities for cooking so they came to our house with the pots and pans and we kids had to move out. They took over the kitchen. They cooked for parties at night. Then they carried the food into the Shul. We also had a Sunday School in the Shul. They could not afford a piano, so they would come over to our house to use the piano and practice. Our life was pretty involved with the Shul . . . I remember how elegant some of the families looked at Shul. They were not necessarily from the neighborhood like the Franks, the Solomons or Isaac Wolfe family. The men came on the high holidays wearing tall hats and Prince Albert coats. My father did also, and on Saturdays he wore special garments . . . There was the North Main Street group — the Bermans, the Browns, the

Rosens, the Finkelsteins. When single men came from Europe, they would board in the big houses, such as those owned by Barney Pulver or Mrs. Sidcofsky (later changed to Cedar) at the corner of Constitution Hill and Charles Street. (The 1895 *House Directory* listed this as 372 North Main Street and in that house also lived: Pincus Adler, Louis Bolotow, Moses Bander, and Joseph and Louis Sedirsky). My mother would take me to this big house with all its tenements . . .⁵

There is still evidence of the Sydney family's active involvement in the North End area. There is a plaque to the memory of Abraham William Sydney who died following World War I. The corner of Douglas Avenue and Orms Street is called the Abraham William Sydney Square.

My mother was a brilliant mathematician, and a chess player. Although she never played outside the house, there were always two or three chess boards with games going on in my house. She played with Dr. Gomberg. The only one she did not beat was my father, and I think that may have been by choice. After my father (the Rabbi) died, my mother went on being consulted by people — almost in the same capacity — My father lived with the Deutch family until my mother joined him . . . We never took in any boarders, but our house was almost an extension of a public area, because there were always a stream of visitors coming in from out of town to see my father. He often acted in matters of dispute — settling them. He acted as rabbis did in small towns in the capacity of a judge. But my father also was a national figure, and his advice and vision were respected all over.¹¹

My father had a variety store on Mill Street. Across the street men would meet to daven, and my father would close the store during that time. North Main Street when I was growing up was a very busy street. Only Jewish people lived there. We moved to Olney Street when there were only three Jewish families. We lived near the corner of North Main Street and Olney Street . . . I remember the Touro Cadets. During the Spanish War . . . Robinson was captain of the Touro Cadets and they were ready to fight in the Spanish War. Dan Robinson, another brother, participated in the purchase of the Howell Street Synagogue . . . The Kaplan family lived across the corner from us . . . Kaplan was president of the Shul. He was in the yeast business . . . I

remember Harry Beck, the printer, at 128 North Main Street. (His son, Dr. Irving Beck, related that his father, Harry, came to the United States in 1903 and took a job as a compositor in a printing shop on North Main Street. He was a member of the typographical union for 60 years. His shop was located where the present Roger Williams Spring is) . . .¹⁰

The jigsaw pieces are made up of many reminiscences, of history as it was documented in the *Rhode Island Jewish Historical NOTES*, in Souvenir Journals of Synagogues and charitable organizations, and in the newspapers of the first fifteen years of this century. All these sources produce a composite picture of the busy and thriving area in which the Jewish immigrant to the North End and East Side of Providence lived.

For all the cooperation which I received in the writing of this history, a grateful "thank you". Time and space of necessity have limited this article to only a sampling of Jewish families who lived in the North End. They are, however, representative of the early Jewish settlers — those hard working, productive citizens who made an important contribution to the community. They left to their descendents a heritage of which they are justly proud.

NOTES

¹*RIJHN*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 149-154.

²Interview with Beatrice Kortick Goldstein on July 10, 1979.

³Interview with Irving Mittleman on September 27, 1978.

⁴Interview with Sidney Goldstein on April 2, 1978.

⁵Interview with Mary Sydney Ostrow on March 13, 1978.

⁶Interview with Robert Hochberg on November 6, 1978.

⁷Interview with Esther and William Torgan on April 28, 1978.

⁸Interview with Gladys Fishman Bass and Dr. Leroy Fishman on July 10, 1979.

⁹Interview with Leo Rosen on July 16, 1979.

¹⁰Interview with Walter Adler on July 24, 1979.

¹¹Interview with Louis B. Rubinstein on July 6, 1979.

¹²Interview with Harry Dimond on May 2, 1978.

¹³Interview with Natalie Fisher Percelay on May 24, 1979.

¹⁴*RIJHN*, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 257, Nov. 1965.

¹⁵Congregation Sons of Zion 70th Anniversary Souvenir Book, dated March 18, 1945.

¹⁶Interview with Harold Moskol on November 6, 1978.

¹⁷*A Modern City*. Providence. Rhode Island and Its Activities, ed. William Kirk, article by William Macdonald (also *RIJHN*, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 403) Nov. 1970.

¹⁸*Rhode Island Herald*, November 27, 1970.

¹⁹*RIJHN*, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 245, Nov. 1965.

²⁰Congregation Sons of Zion 70th Anniversary Souvenir Book, dated March 18, 1945, article by Rabbi David Werner quoting the Hebrew Encyclopedia, *Ozar Yisroel*, which contains articles by Rabbi I. S. Rubinstein.

²¹Congregation Sons of Jacob 50th Anniversary Souvenir Book, dated November 3, 1946.

- ²²RIJHN, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 275, Nov. 1965
²³RIJHN, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp.395-396, Nov. 1970.
²⁴RIJHN, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 248, Nov. 1965.
²⁵RIJHN, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 101, Nov. 1967.
²⁶RIJHN, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 114, Nov. 1964.
²⁷RIJHN, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 405, Nov. 1970.
²⁸RIJHN, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 58, June 1956.
²⁹RIJHN, Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 175, April 1957.
³⁰RIJHN, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 244, 245, April 1958.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Goldstein, Sidney, interview April 2, 1978.
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Hochberg, Robert, interview November 6, 1978.
Mittleman, Irving, interview September 27, 1978.
Moskol, Harold, interview November 6, 1978.
Ostrow, Mary (nee Sydney), interview March 3, 1978.
Percelay, Natalie (nee Fisher), interview May 24, 1979.
Rosen, Leo, interview July 16, 1979.
Rubinstein, Louis B., interview July 6, 1979.
Torgan, Esther, interview April 28, 1978.
Torgan, William, interview April 28, 1978.
Winnerman, Ruby (for assistance on several occasions throughout 1978 and 1979).

A FEW REMINISCENCES ABOUT MORRIS SCHUSSHEIM
(1895-1970) *

by RABBI WILLIAM G. BRAUDE

One day, the late Dr. Arthur Howe Bradford, minister (1918-1948) of the Central Congregational Church, Angell Street, Providence called on Morris Schussheim with an unusual mission. One of Dr. Bradford's congregants had a very old copy of Scripture which she wanted to give to a spiritual person. Looking through the newspaper one day, the photo of Morris Schussheim impressed her so greatly that she talked about it to Dr. Bradford, and the two decided that Rabbi Schussheim was indeed the kind of man who deserved to own the precious volume in her possession.

The judgment of the minister and his congregant was of course right. Rabbi Schussheim was a spiritual person — sensitive and prayerful. People still remember his rendition of the *Neilah*.

Yet as is often true of a spiritual person, dry humor was part of his makeup.

During the depression of the early 1930's, Rabbi Schussheim served in Brooklyn a congregation whose mortgage was about to be foreclosed. The president of the congregation called on the Rabbi: "What direction can you, a man of God, give us?" "Go to the president of the bank," Rabbi Schussheim replied, "and ask him to foreclose immediately. Tell him, too, he will be hit with the real estate tax, water tax, heat bills, insurance, and maintenance."

The bank did not foreclose.

Irving Brodsky who told this story added another from his own experience as a former president of Temple Beth Israel. When Rabbi Schussheim's contract was to be renewed, he decided to discuss salary with the Rabbi, and the Rabbi said: "In all my ministry, God guides me. But when it comes to salary he leaves the decision to me."

Still, when the truth had to be spoken, Morris Schussheim did not

*Except for the years 1929-1933, Rabbi Schussheim served as Rabbi of Temple Beth Israel from 1923 until his retirement in 1961. See Benton Rosen "Temple Beth Israel Finds a Spiritual Leader" *R. I. Jewish Historical Notes* 5 (1970), 4, pp. 428-39; and the obituary, p. 458.

RABBI MORRIS SCHUSSHEIM
45 VIA BELARDO #7
GREENBRAE, S. R., CALIFORNIA

May 17, 1965

My dear Beryl, A good friend sent me a clipping of your item on Judge Frank Licht. It was a great joy to learn of his receiving the great honor of the Herbert Lehman award. I share with you not only in your esteem and evaluation of the judge's life, but also in the moral you point of his splendid blending of all the aspects of rich and varied life.

Thank you very much for noting in your article my name in connection with Frank's. After many years in Providence, and some years away, it feels good to know that one's contribution was of value. This knowledge as exemplified in Frank's career, and in a number of other happy situations, is my comfort and happy reward for a lifetime of service to God and man.

May you have many more happy and proud events to report.

Shalom
Morris Schussheim

THE LETTER FROM RABBI SCHUSSHEIM TO BERYL SEGAL
MAY 17, 1965

My dear Beryl:

A good friend sent me a clipping of your item on Judge Frank Licht. It was a great joy to learn of his receiving the great honor of the Herbert Lehman Award. I share with you not only in your esteem and evaluation of the judge's life, but also in the moral you point of his splendid blending of all the aspects of a rich and varied life.

Thank you very much for noting in your article my name in connection with Frank's. After many years in Providence, and some years away, it feels good to know that one's contribution was of value. This knowledge as exemplified in Frank's career, and in a number of other happy situations, is my comfort and happy reward for a lifetime of service to God and man.

May you have many more happy and proud events to report.

Shalom

Morris Schusheim

hesitate to speak it loud and clear. After the fire at Temple Beth Israel, 26 March 1968, as the congregation was planning reconstruction, one of its wealthiest members volunteered to provide bricks from his own brick factory for the facing of the new structure. All applauded the man's apparent generosity. But Irving Brodsky, then a youngish man, proceeded to investigate the matter, and to his dismay discovered that the wealthy man's bricks were cement bricks, which, in the words of an expert, were to be used for the lining of sewers, whereas the facing of a synagogue required baked bricks.

Since, as already stated, the would-be-donor was a man of considerable means, no one dared reject his "generous" offer. So the matter was put up to the Rabbi who did dare reject it loud and clear. Thereupon the man walked out of the meeting saying he would resign. But, as so often happens with such threats, the man did not resign, and thanks to Rabbi Schussheim, Beth Israel was rebuilt not with cement but with baked bricks.

At the dedication of a new Temple whose Rabbi was a scholarly person, Rabbi Schussheim spoke about "the miracle of the attic." He mused on the growth of the congregation, the variety of its activities, the beauty of the new structure; and he wondered how all this growth came about in view of the fact that its Rabbi was not a "doer," but one who spent much time in his study in the attic of his home. Hence, "the miracle of the attic."

Morris Schussheim's choosing on that particular occasion to discourse on "the miracle of the attic" instances his persistent reaching out for the elements of spirit in human life.

THE THIRD SEDER AND THE PASSOVER JOURNALS

by BERYL SEGAL

"The Halutz and His Tools" appeared on the front cover of the Passover Journal. This is symbolic of the new Jew coming to a new-old land to rebuild it and himself. It also represents the ideal of the Zionist Labor Group that Zion must be rebuilt by Jewish sweat only.

The early part of the present century was auspicious for the Zionist labor movement. In 1923 the United Hebrew Trades, or in Yiddish the Gewerkschaften Unions, prodded by the Secretary Max Pine, decided to join their brethren in Israel in their efforts to raise the economic and political status of the Jewish workers in Israel, known under the name Histadruth. The first campaign for funds took place in 1924. The campaign was endorsed by Professor Albert Einstein, Louis D. Brandeis, William Green (then president of the American Federation of Labor), Eugene Victor Debs, Norman Thomas and Abraham Cahan, the last three of whom were the high priests of American radicalism at the time.

The Poale Zion, the Labor Zionists, had their roots in Eastern Europe where they formed the middle of the road between the General Zionist Party favored by the well-to-do Jews, and the Bund, or the Jewish Socialist Party in Russia and Poland. The Jewish National Workers Alliance and the Pioneer Women of America were both the creations of the Poale Zion. This trio considered itself as the partners of Histadruth. Now with the aid of the Gewerkschaften Campaigns they came to life again and were the backbone of the annual drives for Histadruth. It opened doors for them to the Labor Unions.

In Providence the bond between the Gewerkschaften Campaign and the local Labor Zionist group took the form of the Third Seder at which the aims and programs of the Histadruth were expounded annually and during which the campaign was begun.

The originators of the Third Seder were Alter Boyman, Henry Burt, an energetic, talented business man, and Morris Beeber, a quiet man who in the midst of his financial activities never forgot the underdog of the time.

Providence Passover Journal

Issued in the interest of the Jewish Workers' Organizations in Palestine

Vol. V.

35

Providence, R. I.—1931.

PRICE 10 CENTS



SUNDAY EVENING, APRIL 5, 1931

The ANNUAL CELEBRATION of the THIRD SEDER

AND THE BEGINNING OF THE

Campaign for the Jewish Workers' Organizations in Palestine



THIRD SEDER HELD IN NARRAGANSETT BANQUET HALL, CIRCA 1950

Standing left to right: Mr. Hyman Grossman; Mr. and Mrs. Izeman; Mr. and Mrs. Brombeig; Mr. and Mrs. Finkelstein; Mr. and Mrs. Korman; Mr. and Mrs. Chact.

Sitting: Beryl and Chaya Segal; Mr. and Mrs. Max Berman; Mr. and Mrs. Alter Boyman; Israeli Consul; Mr. and Mrs. Archibald Silverman; Dr. and Mrs. Berber; Rabbi and Mrs. Eli A. Bohnen.

Seated at round table: Mr. and Mrs. Harry Waxman; Mr. Solomon Lightman (showing back) and unidentified.

At first the Third Seder was held at Zinn's restaurant on North Main Street. In time the celebration was moved to the ballroom of the Narragansett Hotel.

The rationale for a third seder was as follows: The first and second seder people celebrated in the family circle, but the third seder was a community wide gathering where a new Jewish song or story was heard from artists of the New York stage, where the work and successes of Histadruth were told, and where the guests would listen to an array of speakers that sounded like a Who's Who in Israel and in American Zionism.

The *Passover Journal* would be distributed at the Third Seder. Articles on the work of Histadruth were featured in the *Journal*. Typical articles dealt with the founding of agricultural farms; cooperatives for the distribution of agricultural products; trade schools for young people; loan associations for mutual help; contracting activities for the government; and cultural activities for the workers. All this while the guests sipped wine, ate Passover delicacies, and sang old favorites.

Why did people come again and again to the Third Seder? We read of one reason given by Harry Chaet, a devoted worker for the Paole Zion-Gewerkschaften campaigns:

When the Holidays came we felt out of place among the synagogue going majority. We would not be hypocrites and pretend to go to worship when we did not believe in it. We would not parade our agnosticism like the radicals did and eat ham sandwiches in front of the synagogue on Yom Kippur or Pesach. So we gathered in the homes of friends and talked.

The Third Seder was just the kind of entertainment people were waiting for. It was a cultural as well as friendly gathering with people of similar ideas. Zionists came because everything they heard about Histadruth was like hearing good news from distant relatives. People in general came because the stories told about Jews working on farms, Jews building the land, children speaking Hebrew in the streets, at play, and in the home sounded like a miracle. And so they came and filled the great hall to capacity year after year.

Speakers who came for the evening complimented Providence for the wonderful idea of arranging a Third Seder, and that gave the affair an added meaning. Many men and women from Providence

carried the community far and wide by their activities, but never in the history of Providence did they establish a tradition that was to be emulated in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia and in many other cities. They were reminded of this fact every year by the speakers, by newspaper articles, and by inquiries about the Third Seder that came in from other cities.

After the death of the originators of the Third Seder the idea, on a smaller scale to be sure, was carried on by Harry Finkelstein and his family, and with the help of a committee, in Temple Emanuel meeting hall. The Gewerkschaften was gone long ago. Instead the Third Seder was an annual Histadruth Day. The Rhode Island Jewish Federation contributed to the campaign of the labor Zionist group, a certain amount of the general drive. There was no longer any need for separate drives. True, singers and artists still appeared, but an added ceremony, the lighting of candles for the Six Million came about and the story of the Holocaust was read.

The *Passover Journal* appeared during Alter Boyman's life. Year in, year out, he was busy preparing the *Journal*, filling a good portion of the magazine himself. It was Boyman's *Journal*. Through the years the readers expected to see "A Letter to a Friend" signed by Alter Boyman, or A.B., or B.A.; Ben Meir, or Jacob Stern. He had many other pseudonyms. In these letters to a friend he answered inquiries from a fictional person about the goings on in Providence Jewish life.

The letters usually begin with the shulen and temples. He tells his friend that the orthodox Jews were too busy choosing and deposing presidents and found no time for doing anything else. He tells his friend about an exhibition of Jewish art from Israel, morally a success, but not a financial one. He tells a curious tale about a prosperous man who bought a painting of Isaiah, but his wife objected to the beard, so he did not take the painting home . . . Otherwise, the letter states, the exhibition at Temple Emanuel was a delight.

At Temple Beth El the Rabbi invited the Bishop of Providence to speak at Friday night services, and there were more Galitzianer than German Jews present. Boyman advises Temple Beth Israel to enroll Russian Jews to replenish their membership. The Jewish Community Center comes in for a ribbing. He ridicules the Queen Esther Purim nights because people are tired of looking at so many queens. After

the Purim dance the "queens" disappear . . . The year was 1930 and Purim Queens were almost an epidemic.

But for all that A.B. reviews the institutions of the city and finds them GOOD. Every year the Gemilas Hessed in the North End and in South Providence were highly praised. The Moses Montefiore Benevolent Association, the Ladies Union Aid, and the South Providence Union Aid all were devoted to helping the poor and the underprivileged, and their work in the city was praised to the skies. The Bakers Union, surprising as that may sound, always came in for its share of kudos. The Miriam Hospital, the Old Age Home, the Sheltering Society and the Orphanage all received high marks for their work.

It is remarkable how many people, mostly local, were writing for the *Passover Journal*. Rabbi Eli A. Bohnen, Rabbi William G. Braude, Rabbi Morris Schussheim, Rabbi Meir Lasker (son-in-law of the Boymans), Dr. Harry Broadman, Selig Greenberg, Morris Shoam, Nathan Resnick, Harry Beck, Dr. Harry Elkin, Gerry Segal-Foster, and Beryl Segal, all contributed articles, short stories, and comments to the *Journal*. There was no lack of poets either. Besides Nahum Yud, a poet of note who came to the Third Seder regularly, Solomon Lightman, Samuel Sherman, Bas Tuvya (Janet Shoham-Resnick), and Dr. Phillip M. Philips adorned the *Journal* with their poems.

Arthur Einstein, the choir master of Emanuel, not only accompanied the singers but also contributed articles. There were also articles, sent by the national officers of the organization, or reprinted from other sources, about the Gewerkschaften, Poale Zion and Farband. Special articles on the life of Shalom Ash, H. N. Bialick, Natham Sokolow, Yitzhak Ben Zvi and Yehudah Halévi also appeared. In later years another feature was added to the *Passover Journal*. With the opening of the Hebrew Day School a Hebrew section was added to the Yiddish and English. The Principal, Akiva Egosi, wrote poetry, and Dr. and Mrs. Aaron Klein contributed articles in Hebrew.

Now that the originators of the Third Seder are gone and the contributors to the *Providence Passover Journal* are scattered, we marvel at the perseverance of these dedicated people. The *Journal* is a source of information, and the interested reader can find in it nuggets aplenty. Copies of the *Journal* are now hard to get. They were destroyed along with the ephemera that people discard after reading. Through the

far-sightedness of Max Berman the *Journal* from 1926 to 1942 was bound and presented to Alter Boyman. This unique copy is to be found in the William G. Braude Library at Temple Beth El. The librarian, Mrs. Estes, has obtained from various sources the issues from that date to the end, 1964.

MOBILITY OF NATIVES AND JEWS IN PROVIDENCE, 1900-1920

by ALICE GOLDSTEIN

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Mobility has been of central importance in the growth and development of America, from its very inception in the seventeenth century up to the present redistribution of population within the 50 states. The importance of international migration has long been recognized as has the movement of peoples across the continent and the redistribution of population from rural to urban to suburban places. Mobility has generally been seen as a positive force leading to the development of a truly "national population" and to a more homogeneous culture. Yet, when viewed in conjunction with immigration, geographic mobility also resulted in the spatial segregation of ethnic, religious, and racial groups. And ethnic neighborhoods are often viewed as static — and stagnant — enclaves within an otherwise fluid society.

Despite the strong and persistent assumption about geographic mobility in the United States, surprisingly few attempts were made to study this phenomenon systematically and statistically for individual communities until the 1950s. Once such studies were undertaken (e.g., Goldstein, 1958; Warner, 1968; Thernstrom, 1964 and 1973; Chudacoff, 1972), the amount of turnover identified was surprisingly high. Estimates for Boston in 1880-1890, for example, indicate that a net migration gain of about 20,000 families resulted from the movement of 296,000 families (Chudacoff, 1975:101).

The overall high turnover rates and high rates of residential mobility affected all occupational groups, suggesting that migration was generally used as a mechanism for occupational advancement. At the same time, evidence indicates that manual workers were somewhat more likely to out-migrate than white collar workers (Chudacoff, 1972:92, Goldstein, 1958:207-209; Thernstrom, 1973:33). This differential may well have been related to property ownership. The effect of nativity status and ethnicity on permanency is somewhat less clear and has not been researched extensively. The one group that has been characterized as more stable are the Jews, although direct evidence is slight. Thernstrom (1973:164-165) found that Jews, compared to Protestants

and Catholics, had the highest persistency rates in Boston in 1880-1890 and in 1930-1940, but rates similar to the other two groups in 1910-1920. Golab (1977), in her study of immigrant settlement in Philadelphia around the turn of the twentieth century, suggests that Jews were more sedentary than other groups. "While economically more mobile than other immigrant peoples, the Jews were not as geographically mobile." (Golab, 1977:174) She attributes this pattern to several factors: Many Jews left Europe as refugees from Czarist persecutions and therefore came with their families. They often took the first and cheapest cargo ship available, regardless of destination, as the fastest way to leave Europe. Once they landed at the port of destination — very often New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore — they perforce remained, constrained by lack of financial resources and the presence of dependent family members. At the same time, their skills in selected crafts and as traders enabled them to take advantage of economic opportunities available in these urban centers. Jews have thus been characterized as relatively stable, compared to others in America, especially during the half century before World War II (cf., Goldstein, 1971:45-57).

The most thorough analysis of Jewish mobility to date has been undertaken by Hertzberg (1977), who also found that the Jews of nineteenth century Atlanta were more stable than either native-born whites or other immigrants. Hertzberg attributes the greater persistence of Jews in Atlanta to several factors: Most of the Jews who came to Atlanta did so voluntarily and with full awareness of the risks they were taking. Since Atlanta was a considerable distance from other Jewish communities, Jews were unlikely to move from the city casually or easily to settle in another Jewish community. Finally, and most importantly, those Jews who did migrate to Atlanta became economically successful to a high degree.

Hertzberg's analysis does not indicate whether high persistence rates in Atlanta were accompanied by residential stability within the city as well. Quite likely, residential mobility may have served as much as migration as a vehicle for upward mobility, and perhaps substituted for migration in the adjustment process. Perceptions of the stability of ethnic groups, including Jews, is in large part an artifact of ethnic clustering within cities. Chinatown, Jewtown, and Little Italy may remain for long periods as seemingly stable areas. Yet, although the physical institutions — churches, synagogues, fraternal organizations — and the ethnic services — cheese and pasta shops, kosher butchers,

Chinese groceries, Irish pubs — remain constant, the people they serve are very mobile (e.g., Chudacoff, 1972:82-83). Ethnic visibility has thus been an important factor in the perpetuation of ideas about population stability. Statistical evidence remains sparse.

In an attempt to gain some insight into this issue, this paper analyzes the mobility patterns of two distinct ethnic groups in Providence, Rhode Island, during the first two decades of the twentieth century. A group of persons born in Rhode Island of native-born parents was chosen to represent what was likely to be the most stable element in the Providence population. Since the sample consisted entirely of adult males, these natives had already had a history of residence in the State and, presumably, some time in which to develop attachments to the area and to accumulate property, their permanency rates in the city might therefore be higher than those identified for cities as a whole. Nonetheless, it is important to remember that they may not have lived in the city itself for any length of time, which may affect their levels of stability. By contrast, the Jews were overwhelmingly newcomers not only in the city but in the United States as well. Only 8 percent of the sample were born in America, and of these few, just over half were Rhode Island born. The vast majority therefore had had little time to establish themselves either financially or socially in Providence. Their stability would be expected to reflect this situation, unless factors such as family obligations and economic success counteracted mobility. Before turning to the mobility analysis, it is important to gain some understanding of the ethnic ecology of Providence as a whole in 1900-1920 and of the Jewish community in particular.

THE PROVIDENCE COMMUNITY

In 1900 Providence was the prosperous urban hub of a generally prosperous state. Industrialization in America had its inception in Rhode Island, and the State, and with it, its capital city, experienced continuous economic growth throughout the nineteenth century (Mayer, 1953). By the end of the century, despite the recession in 1893, Rhode Island had hit a new peak of employees in manufacturing. Such employment rose even more in the next two decades as textile factories for woolens and worsteds, cotton weaving, dyeing and finishing, and hosiery and knit wear all increased their employment. In addition, the jewelry industry flourished, providing jobs for 12,000 wage earners in 1900. Rhode Island was also in a favorable position vis a

vis other states in terms of per capita income. For example, in 1900 the United States average was \$203, but in Rhode Island it was \$293 — a figure above that for Connecticut and just below the average for Massachusetts (Mayer and Goldstein, 1958: 40).

Small wonder, then, that Rhode Island acted as a magnet for migrants, both from other areas of the United States (especially other New England states and New York) and from overseas. The State thus reflected in its ethnic composition the successive waves of immigrants who came to America; and Providence, as the major city and center for much manufacturing activity, received a goodly share. In 1880, the foreign-born constituted 26.8 percent of the State's population; by 1910 they comprised 34.0 percent. For the period 1900-1910, when immigration reached its peak, immigrants accounted for 65.3 percent of the State's population increase (Mayer, 1953: 52). Thereafter, as the earlier arrivals aged and died and as immigration was slowed by World War I and restrictive legislation, both the percentage of foreign-born in the State and the immigrants' contribution to population growth declined. But by 1920, the ethnic diversity of the State was well established with a mixture in which Irish, Italians, Jews, Canadians, and Portuguese predominated.*

Yet these various groups were not distributed equally throughout the city. Patterns of ethnic clustering identified in cities throughout the country characterized Providence as well. Residents of the city were well aware of the Italian community on Federal Hill, the Jewish section in the North End, the Irish area near the central business district, and the Portuguese colony at Fox Point. Unfortunately, no data are available in the published censuses for such small areas, but even the much grosser statistics by ward provide some clues on areal differences.

During the period 1900-1920 Providence was divided into ten wards, which, although they were large enough to be quite heterogeneous, also had some distinctive features (Map 1). Ward I, which contained Brown University, was generally considered a highly desirable residential area. Its northern and eastern areas sported a large number of stately homes. Although a third of its population in 1910 was foreign-born, they were concentrated in the southern and western

*The data in the discussion which follows of the population of Providence were derived from the published U.S. Censuses of 1900, 1910, and 1920 and the published volume of the Rhode Island State Census of 1905.

fringes — Fox Point and along South Main Street — where the “quarters . . . not only tend to become less attractive year by year, but are also increasingly crowded and repressed by the encroachment of business along the waterfront.” (MacDonald, 1909: 36) Fox Point was the locus of Providence’s Portuguese community, but interspersed among them were a large number of Irish and the city’s third largest Jewish neighborhood.

Directly to the north lay Ward 2; and to the west was the third ward. Both had large undeveloped areas. Ward 2 contained two large cemeteries, Butler Hospital, and Cole Farm; Ward 3 was bisected by the West River with its series of ponds. Yet both wards were very densely populated along their main arteries — Admiral Street, Smith Street, Charles Street, and North Main Street. The North End, Providence’s largest Jewish enclave, and Federal Hill, a close-knit Italian neighborhood, were both located in the third ward. In fact, the third ward had the second highest percentage of foreign-born of any ward in Providence — 44 percent.

In the heart of the city, the fourth ward contained the central business district. Its housing was relatively old and included a large number of boarding houses. The densely settled area was largely confined to the southern half of the ward, since the state capitol dominated its northern part. The fifth ward, South Providence, had a large waterfront along which could be found the city’s “most difficult social elements.” (MacDonald, 1909: 39) Elsewhere in the ward, Irish and Jewish neighborhoods vied for space — the fifth ward encompassed the second largest Jewish community in the city. To its south and west lay the relatively undeveloped sixth and seventh wards and the city’s largest recreational area, Roger Williams Park. These two wards had the highest proportions of native-born/native parentage persons in the city, 44.9 and 38.7 percent, respectively, in 1910. The pleasant, single family homes there acted as magnets for people in the more crowded fourth and fifth wards who had accumulated enough savings to enable them to purchase a home.

On the western edge of the city lay the eighth ward. Many of the mills of Providence were concentrated there, so that the ward supported a largely working class population. English and Canadian mill workers especially, lived in the Olneyville section. Adjacent to the eighth ward, and closer to the center of the city, the ninth ward

was one of Providence's smallest wards but also its most populated. Moreover, it contained an exceptionally high proportion of foreign-born, especially Italians. Of its 2,841 residents in 1910, 46.9 percent were foreign-born; and of these, 71 percent were Italian. Of all of Providence's Italian immigrants, 55 percent lived in this area of the city — the highest concentration among any ethnic group. Finally, Ward 10, in the northwest corner of Providence, like Wards 6 and 7 included a large number of modest, single family homes, occupied by a mix of native-born, Irish, English, and Canadians — the earlier immigrants to the city. In later years, its pleasant residential neighborhoods, particularly in the Mount Pleasant area, became the goal of many upwardly mobile Italians.

As the discussion has indicated, Providence's foreign-born were scattered throughout the city, but different nativity groups tended to cluster in specific areas. Unfortunately, census data are available only for 1905 and 1910 to document such spatial segregation (Table 1); and even these data are only for wards. With the distribution of the native-born/native parentage population as the standard, indices of dissimilarity were calculated for selected nativity groups.* They generally show minimal change during the five years and document the greater spatial integration of the English speaking, earlier arrivals to the city, the English, Irish, and Canadians. For these three groups, the index varied between 20 and 30. For the new arrivals, the Italians, Russians, and Austrians (the latter two groups include most of the Jews), the index was over twice as high. The Italians were the most segregated, as indicated by an index of 64-65; Austrians somewhat less so. Russians (Jews) showed the greatest change during the five years: Their index fell from 59.4 to 49.5, suggested that, as the Jewish population in the city grew, it also dispersed somewhat. Yet Jews continued to be highly concentrated in only a few areas of the city.

*The Index of Dissimilarity indicates what percentage of a group would have to be redistributed to make its distribution resemble that of the population used as a standard.

Table 1: INDEX OF RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION FOR
SELECTED NATIVITY GROUPS: PROVIDENCE,
1905 and 1910

Place of Birth	1905	1910
Canada	21.6	22.0
England	26.4	30.1
Ireland	20.9	19.0
Italy	64.5	64.9
Russia	59.4	49.5
Austria	46.8	46.8

The index of dissimilarity was calculated on the basis of the distribution, by ward, of the native-born population of native parentage.

Source: Rhode Island Census of 1905; U.S. Census of 1910.

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

When the first wave of immigrants from Eastern Europe arrived in Providence in the 1880s, they naturally gravitated to the area known as the North End — along Chalkstone Avenue, Orms Street, Shawmut Avenue, and North Main Street — where the nucleus of the Providence Jewish community was already established. The North End remained the preeminent area of Jewish settlement until the 1930s, and prided itself on having the finest synagogues and best leadership. Most of the community's important institutions were located there; and most of the organizing impetus came from residents of the North End.

A second important area of Jewish settlement developed at the beginning of the 1890s in South Providence, on Willard Avenue, Gay Street, and Prairie Avenue. Although it never attained the population size of the North End, it developed a very strong sense of community among its residents (Horvitz, 1976: 189-250). Like in the North End, housing in the area consisted primarily of two and three story wooden frame houses that contained three tenements per floor. The first floor was generally occupied by a shop or small industry. Most houses were without baths; the residents patronized the city-run bathhouse on Gay Street. The streets were unpaved, the tenements crowded; but no one considered South Providence a slum area. Communal activities were frequent, and included dances on weekends, picnics in the summer, lectures and literary debates, and, of course, participation in a whole range of synagogues and voluntary organizations. Since the

area also contained within it shops to supply most of its residents' daily needs, the Jews of South Providence looked upon their neighborhood as quite a self-contained community.

A third, smaller area of Jewish settlement formed in Fox Point. It was composed primarily of families with shops along South Main Street and never attained the importance of either the North End or South Providence in the life of Providence Jewry. Other Jews were scattered throughout the city, but in general these were people who had only marginal contacts with the organized life of the community and who lived wherever it was most convenient for their business.

The Providence Jewish population grew throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, although it is difficult to obtain precise statistics from officially published sources. The R. I. State Census of 1905, which asked respondent's religion, counted 7,974 Jews in Providence, of whom 71 percent had been born in Russia; only 1.4 percent were native-born. Since 94 percent of all Russian-born persons in Providence in 1905 were Jews, persons listing Russia (or Poland) as their country of origin in the United States Censuses (which are not permitted to ask a question on religion) were used as a proxy for the Jews. Using this definition, the 1900 U. S. Census counted 1,996 Jews in Providence, or about 1 percent of the total population; in 1910 there were 7,440 Russian-born, constituting 3.3 percent of the total. The 1920 Census indicated a drop of 7,163 Russian-born, probably due to the fact that a number of persons who would have indicated their country of birth as Russia before World War I, by 1920 identified themselves as Polish or Lithuanian.

The growth of Jewish voluntary organizations in Providence kept pace with and reflected changes in the nature of the city's Jewish population. Although there had been only five chartered voluntary Jewish organizations before 1880, their numbers grew rapidly thereafter. Between 1880 and 1899, 38 more were chartered; 67 in 1900-1909; and 95 between 1910 and 1920. They cared for religious, health, social, and educational needs. The sequence in which they were organized provides a general insight into the growth of Providence Jewry as a whole and of its concerns. The earliest organizations were orthodox synagogues and benevolent associations to serve the broad segments of the community. But in 1888-1889, synagogues were established to serve specifically Roumanian and Polish Jews. As other immigrants arrived

from still other places of origin, religious and benevolent societies were formed to serve their needs as well — Austrians in 1900; Ukrainians in 1902; those from Lublin in 1906. By the early 1890s, several purely "social and literary" societies had emerged; and the Wendell Phillips Educational Club was chartered to "educate the members in the English language." (Chartered Organizations, 1956: 24) The growth of the Jewish working class was reflected in the incorporation of a number of workmen's associations during the first decade of the twentieth century, including the Peddler's Protective Association, the North End Traders Mutual Aid Association, and the Providence Hebrew Butchers Association, as well as more general labor groups. Among the most important organizations in the community was the Gemilath Chesed Association of Providence which provided interest free, small loans. This organization was instrumental in helping newcomers, as well as more long-time residents, to establish themselves in Providence.

Such growth in absolute numbers obviously required expansion of residential area as well. Expansion involved a widening of the first areas of settlement into adjacent blocks; but more important, it also meant a higher concentration of Jews within a given area. Residential succession meant that Jews moved into what had been, for example, a mixed Irish-Jewish block until almost all residences were occupied by Jews. These areas also became more built-up and more densely settled — rear-tenements were built and vacant lots were developed — so that the same block could eventually house a larger population. The situation on Willard Avenue in South Providence provides a good example.

By 1900, Jews had already moved to Willard Avenue in sizable numbers, living interspersed with Irish and Swedish neighbors. They clearly did not live east of Staniford Street toward the docks, and all but a few lived along five blocks of Willard. Jews comprised about half the residents of this section of the street. Willard Avenue in 1900, from Staniford to Broad Street, included about 87 separate buildings, most of which were multiple dwelling units. By 1911, a few families had crossed east of Staniford Street and occupied two houses not far from the corner. A few Jewish families also lived west of Taylor Street; but as in 1900, the majority of Jews on Willard Avenue lived along its five central blocks. In the eleven years, however, these five blocks had been built up so that they included 148 separate buildings,

and all but a few were occupied by Jews. Ten years later, in 1920, the number of houses had increased only slightly in these blocks, to 166, but Jews lived along the whole length of Willard Avenue, except for the block immediately adjacent to the docks. Nonetheless, the fringe blocks were still not as homogeneously Jewish as some of the more central ones. In fact, even the central five blocks showed some indications of out-movement by Jews. The residents of Willard Avenue were very much aware of their "restriction" along the length of the street and considered Plain Street (one block east of Taylor) to be the outer limits beyond which they were "out of bounds." Jewish children venturing beyond Plain Street knew they had to be prepared to fight their Irish counterparts. The Jewish children, in turn, were prepared to defend their territory. Of course, streets running parallel and perpendicular to Willard were also densely settled by the Jews of South Providence during this period.

Over time, as some Jews became economically established and as the North End and South Providence became overcrowded with new immigrants and the children of earlier settlers, expansion was inevitable. Movement out of the North End began very early in the twentieth century, as some persons moved across North Main Street into the blocks going up the hill — onto Pleasant, Howell, Lippitt, and Carrington Streets. The area became known as the East Side, and movement to it was considered as a real move up the social ladder; the Jews who remained behind in the North End thought of it as the "hoity-toity" section! Not everyone in Providence regarded the move as beneficial, however. Dr. MacDonald (Kirk, 1909: 58-59) records a more negative reaction:

A large part of the population along North Main Street and in the cross streets between North Main and Camp is Jewish, and they have lately acquired a firm foothold among the fine old residences at the north end of Benefit Street. There is undoubtedly a strong social prejudice against them: their advent in a neighborhood almost invariably depreciates the value of the real estate, and is followed by the withdrawal of the non-Jewish population.

From South Providence, Jews were more likely to move into the blocks between Broad Street and Elmwood Avenue. The cleavage between the North End and South Providence was thereby maintained, even as Jews left their first areas of settlement. Community ties remained

too strong to be broken easily. One long-time resident of Providence remembered her family's moves:

When my family had accumulated enough savings to buy a home, they decided to move out of South Providence. They thought they'd like to live on the East Side and rented a house on Creighton Street to try it out. But my mother missed her family and friends from South Providence, and after a year decided to move back. They finally built a lovely home on Galatin Street (between Elmwood and Broad). (Private communication)

The development of the Jewish community of Providence thus indicates high levels of in-migration and considerable movement within the city as well. To gain some further insights into the role of mobility, the experiences of the samples of natives and Jews were analyzed, using census and city directories as sources of data.

THE DATA SOURCES

This study of mobility in Providence between 1900 and 1920 uses a combination of 1) 1900 U.S. Census data to identify the sample populations and their characteristics and 2) city directories for Providence to trace their residential and occupational histories for twenty years. The 1900 U.S. Census, which is available in its manuscript form, provides information on age, relation to household head, marital status, occupation, place of birth (and year of arrival in the United States if foreign-born), and homeownership. The city directories, which were published annually during the period, provide exact address in the city and occupation.

Because of limitations of time and resources, a sample size goal was set of 100 men who were born in Rhode Island of native-born parents (referred to as the natives) and 100 Jewish males. The samples were further restricted to males aged 21 to 50. The sex and age restrictions were dictated by the limitations of the city directories. During the period under consideration, the city directories listed primarily males aged 21 and over; males under age 21 were not included; and females were listed only if they were heads of their own households or, occasionally, if they were proprietors or otherwise self-employed. The upper age limit was chosen so that, in the 20-year tracing process through the directories, attrition due to death might be kept at a minimum.

The natives were identified from a listing of an approximately 2 percent sample tape of the 1900 U.S. Census for Providence. This process resulted in the identification of 88 men within the appropriate age range. Since this number was below the goal chosen, the sample was augmented by additional names chosen from the manuscript copy of the 1900 Census. A degree of randomness was maintained by identifying in the manuscript census the 88 males from the sample tape and then also selecting any qualified males who appeared on the same page. This procedure resulted in the addition of 20 cases, bringing the total sample of natives to 108.

Selection of the Jewish sample was somewhat more complicated because too few Jews lived in Providence in 1900 for the sample tape to yield enough qualified men. A 10 percent random sample (142 names) was therefore picked from a compilation of Jews listed in the 1900 Providence city directory (Adelman, 1958).^{*} Since the basis for picking the sample was to be the 1900 Census, each name was then traced in the manuscript census. A total of 99 Jewish males from the directory sample were found in the census; but of these, 11 were over 50 years old and therefore not eligible for inclusion in the study. Again, the number fell short of the goal; and the sample was supplemented by adding the names listed in the sample tape (also based on the 1900 Census) of men born in Russia. A total sample of 105 Jews resulted.

In the process of tracing Jews from the city directory to the 1900 Census 43 names were lost. Some of these persons undoubtedly changed residence between the time of the city directory canvass and the census so that they could not be found at their directory address; but such a large loss also suggests that the 1900 Census fell short in its coverage of the Providence population, especially since 25 of the names were found in both the 1900 and 1902 directories. This possibility is reinforced by observations made in the course of working with the census materials: Very short streets were sometimes overlooked entirely; and census takers occasionally canvassed one side of a street but failed to do the other side. Although there is no way of testing the assumption, some individual households in multiple-unit dwellings may also have been omitted.

Once the samples were picked and information on selected charac-

^{*}Dr. Adelman identified the Jews by using a wide range of information, including membership lists of Jewish organizations, naturalization lists, and personal inquiry.

teristics was abstracted from the census, each name was traced in the Providence city directories for every other year, from 1900 through 1920. Any changes in address or occupation were noted. An individual was considered to be the same person from one directory to the next if either the name, address, or occupation was the same. If several persons had the same or similar names, and the address and occupation both changed from one directory to the next, other information was used — such as other family members listed at the same address — to identify the man being traced. Attempts were made to take account of spelling changes if names could not be found. For example, Maurice Finkler in the census became Morris Winkler in the directory.

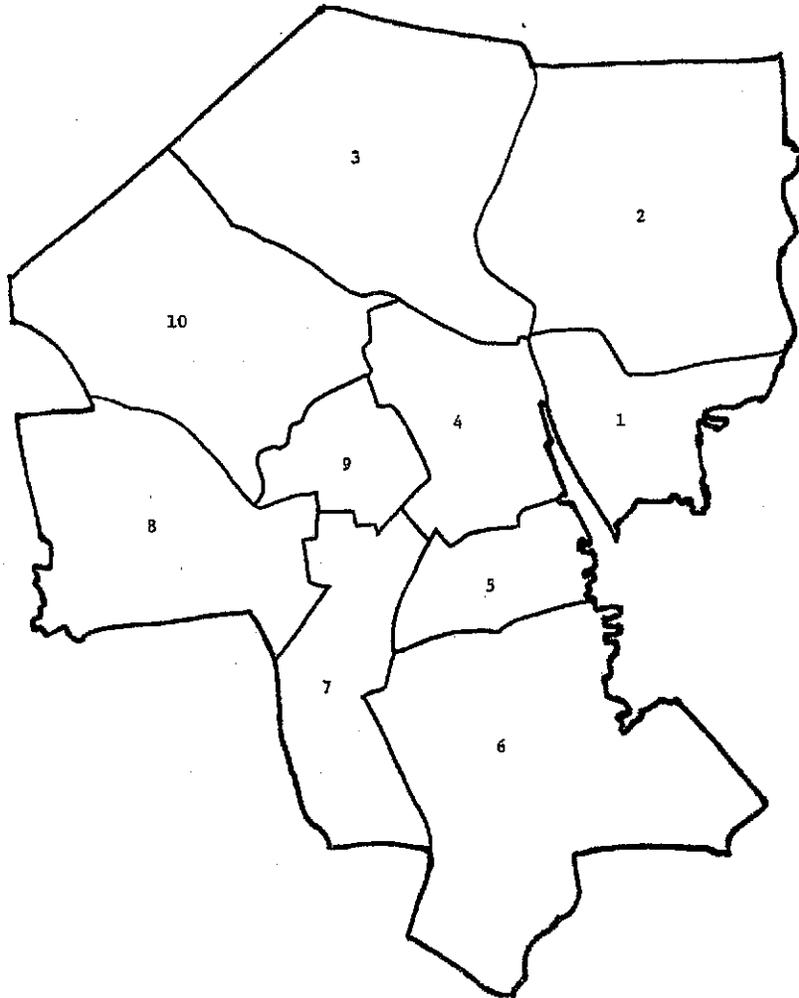
A name could disappear from a directory because of either death or out-migration. Widows of deceased household heads were often listed in the directory and specifically identified. Whenever possible, the directory also indicated the date of death opposite the deceased's name. For persons who moved out of the city, the destination was occasionally noted in the directory, so that they could be clearly identified as out-migrants. In the absence of any information indicating death or out-migration, a name was traced in three directories following the one in which it last appeared. A few persons did "come and go and come again" in the listings, either because the directory had erred in its listings or, more likely, because that person was actually away at the time of the directory canvass (cf. Goldstein, 1958). For purposes of this study, sporadic entries were considered as continuous residents of Providence; all others whose names could not be traced were treated as out-migrants. Such a procedure inflates the out-migration levels of the samples since some losses were probably due to death. This limitation should be kept in mind during the analysis which follows.

A number of persons identified in the census and included in the sample were not found in the city directories of either 1900, 1901, or 1902. Among the natives, 14 persons could not be traced at all. Of these, only 2 were married and heads of their own households. The largest number (9) were young men living with their parents; others were distant relatives or boarders. All were between 21 and 28 years of age. They may have been missed by the directory because in previous years they were too young to be included, and the respondents then failed to indicate that they had passed their twenty-first birthday.

Some may actually have lived in Providence for only a few months and thereby missed inclusion in a directory. Because the Jewish sample was based on a directory listing initially, the problem of tracing Jews from the census to the directories is not as serious. Nonetheless, 7 Jewish men identified in the census could not be traced in the directories after 1900. Each of these was married and the head of his own household. The reason for their omission in a city directory is not clear. They may, in fact, have been very short-term residents of the city; or they may have lived in temporary quarters when the directory listings were compiled and were therefore missed. All of these cases — natives and Jews — were treated as out-migrants by 1902.

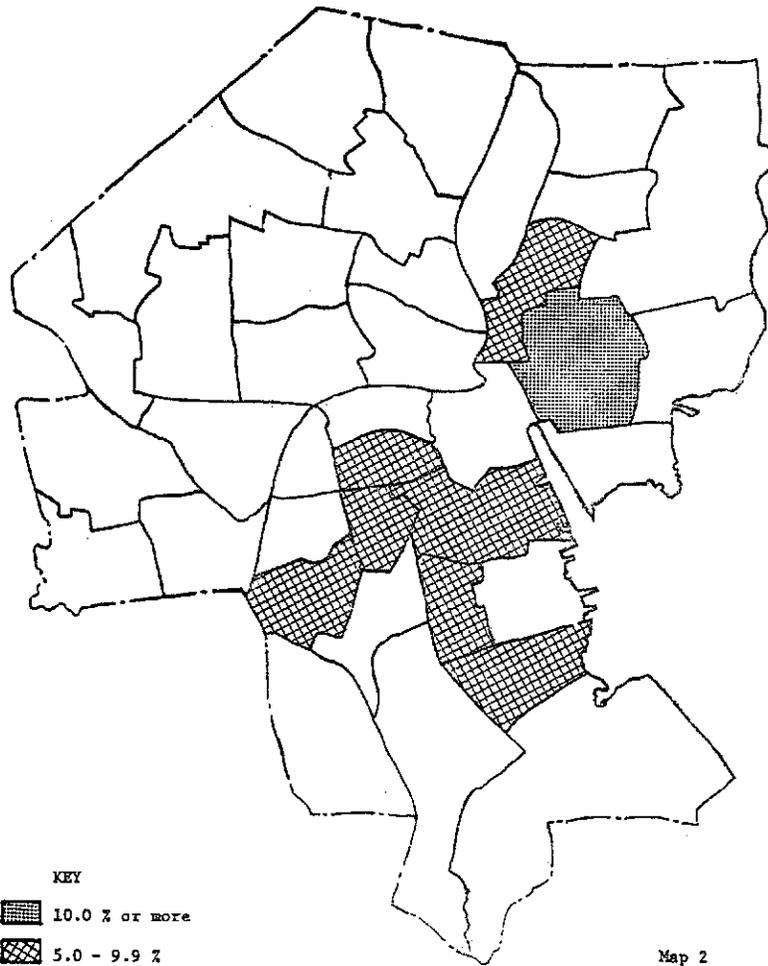
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLES

The samples of natives and Jews had quite different characteristics and residential distributions in 1900. On the basis of the census data on ethnic distribution within Providence, Jews, in particular, were expected to show quite different patterns of dispersion from those of the natives. The data for the samples support such an assumption: Natives were generally spread throughout the city, although they tended to concentrate in Wards 1, 2, 6, and 7. Jews were found predominantly in Wards 2 and 3 (which encompass the North End) and to a much lesser extent, Wards 6 and 7 (South Providence) (Table 2). Since ethnic residential clustering generally consisted of small neighborhoods within the larger wards, the sample data were also coded by census tracts to provide more insights into these patterns. The location of neighborhoods thereby became much clearer (Maps 2 and 3). The two major areas of Jewish settlement are especially apparent; and even though natives are located in every ward, they, too, are found primarily in a limited number of census tracts which tend to cluster in the northeastern part of the city (the East Side) and the southcentral section.

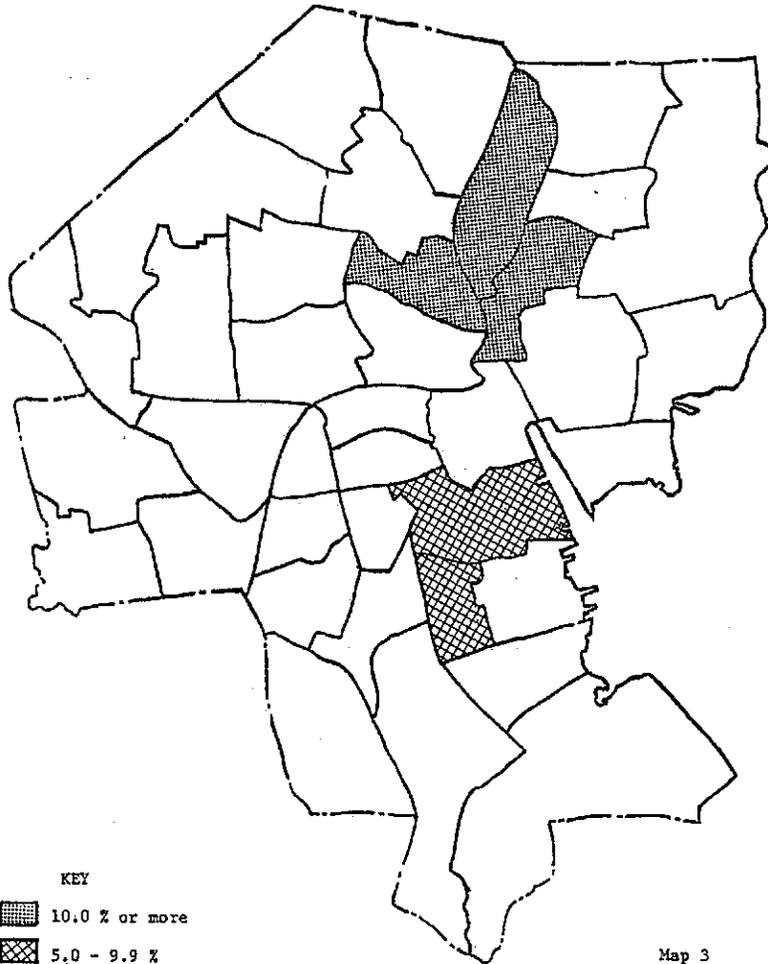


Map 1

The Wards of Providence
1900-1920



Map 2
PROVIDENCE
Distribution of Natives by
Census Tract, 1900



KEY
■ 10.0 % or more
▣ 5.0 - 9.9 %
□ Under 5.0 %

Map 3

PROVIDENCE

Distribution of Jews by
Census Tract, 1900

Table 2: DISTRIBUTION OF NATIVES AND JEWS BY WARD, PROVIDENCE, 1900

Ward	Natives	Jews
1	10.2	8.7
2	21.3	21.4
3	1.8	48.5
4	3.7	1.9
5	8.3	6.8
6	22.2	6.8
7	14.8	4.9
8	9.3	1.0
9	6.5	—
10	1.8	—
Total percent	100.0	100.0
Total number	108	105
Index of dissimilarity*	30.2	49.2

*Based on distribution of total population.

The age distributions of the two samples show that somewhat more Jews than natives were aged 20-29; and more natives were in the oldest group (Table 3). These differences reflect the age selectivity of migration among Jews. Reflecting the fact that Jews also tended to emigrate as families and the high value they place on marriages, a much higher percentage of Jews than natives were married. Among natives, 39 percent were single, and 3 percent were widowers or divorced; only 18 percent of the Jews were single, and all the rest were married. Both relation to head of household and household type reflect the differences in marital status. Over three-fourths of the Jews were household heads, compared to 57 percent of the natives. Twice as many natives as Jews were sons living in parental homes; and more natives were unrelated household members, primarily boarders.

The low incidence of boarding among Jews was somewhat surprising. The explanation may, in part, be a matter of definition. Jews often took in newcomers to the city as "temporary guests" until they found a home of their own: or the newcomers found

relatives with whom to stay. Although other relatives living in households were rare among both natives and Jews, the proportion was twice as high among the latter. Benjamin Brier described the situation: "There were at least 4 to a bedroom, 10 in our house. In addition, there were always one or two strangers in the house who had just come to the country, and you had to take them in." (Horvitz, 1976: 200) Moreover, boarding was more common in the North End than in South Providence, because the North End, with its Jewish institutions (including the Hebrew Sheltering Society), was the more usual destination of newcomers to the city. When the Faber Line steamers from England docked in Providence, they were often met by two residents of the North End — Archie Silverman and Alter Boyman. These gentlemen took Jewish arrivals under their wings, hustled them through immigration, and saw that they were temporarily settled — usually with helping families in the North End.

In general, Jewish boarders, if they remained in Providence, were boarders for only a short time. Sam Shretter, a shoemaker, for example, boarded for six years at a variety of addresses, but in 1906 he became head of his own household and residentially stable. Native boarders were less likely to change their household status; a typical example is Harry Waterman, who taught at Classical High School throughout the 18 years that he was traced and remained a boarder during the entire period.

Table 3: DISTRIBUTION OF NATIVES AND JEWS BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, PROVIDENCE, 1900

Characteristics	Natives	Jews
<i>Age</i>		
20-29	38.0	41.9
30-39	23.1	25.7
40-50	38.9	32.4
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Single	38.9	18.1
Married	58.3	81.9
Other	2.8	—
<i>Relation to Head</i>		
Head	57.4	78.1
Son	25.0	12.4
Other relative	1.9	3.8
Non-relative	15.7	5.7
<i>Household Type*</i>		
Nuclear	44.4	68.6
Nuclear-augmented	25.0	15.2
Extended	25.0	15.2
Extended-augmented	5.6	1.0
Number in sample	108	105

*Nuclear households consist of head, spouse, and their children; nuclear-augmented includes non-relatives; extended households contain relatives of the head or spouse other than their children; extended-augmented households contain non-relatives as well as relatives of the head or spouse other than their children.

Occupational differences also obtained between the two samples, and neither group had the same occupational distribution as the Providence population in 1900 as a whole (Table 4). The occupations of the men in the samples were coded, according to the classifications used by Thernstrom (1973: 289-292), into six categories: 1) high white collar; 2) low white collar; 3) skilled workers; 4) semi-skilled and service workers; 5) unskilled workers; and 6) not working. These categories are somewhat different from the census classifications, but comparisons on a general level are still possible. According to the U.S. Census, just half of Providence's male labor force was engaged in manufacturing and 16 percent were in service occupations, suggesting that about two-thirds of all employed males were in manual occupations. Only 4 percent were professionals and 28 percent in trade.

Among the natives in the sample, 16 percent were classified as high white collar — the equivalent of professional — and 31 percent low white collar — persons generally involved in trade. Only 47 percent were manual workers of any kind; and fully half of these were in the skilled category. These data suggest that the native-born in Providence were heavily skewed toward the upper end of the occupational hierarchy. Since in 1900 the community's financial and professional leaders were generally drawn from the long-time residents of the city, such a pattern is not surprising. Kirk (1909: 99-100), for example, in his description of the labor force of Providence in 1909 found that 88 percent of all the city's civil engineers, 62 percent of its teachers, 66 percent of its manufacturers and officials, but only 12 percent of its woolen mill operatives were native-born persons of native-born parents.

Table 4: DISTRIBUTION OF NATIVES AND JEWS BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY*, PROVIDENCE, 1900.

Occupational Category	Natives	Jews	Occupational Distribution of Providence Male Labor Force, U.S. Census of 1900**	
High white collar	15.7	3.8		
Low white collar	30.6	52.4	Agriculture	1.0
Skilled workers	23.1	32.4	Professional	4.3
Semi-skilled and service workers	19.5	7.6	Service	15.9
Unskilled workers	4.6	2.8	Trade	28.4
Not working	6.5	1.0	Manufacturing	50.4
Total percent	100.0	100.0	Total percent	100.0

*Based on categories used by Thernstrom, 1973.

**These census categories are not equivalent to those used for the samples, since "manufacturing" includes some white collar workers and "trade" may include manual workers.

The Jews also had a distinctive occupational profile, with almost all of the sample classified as either low white collar or skilled workers. Only 4 percent were professionals in 1900 and only 10 percent were in the lower manual occupations. This distribution may be somewhat misleading if the occupational ranking is considered strictly in economic terms, since the low white collar group included peddlers and small shopkeepers — persons who were generally economically no better off than many manual laborers. Yet, a peddler often became a shopkeeper, and a small retail business could develop into a more sub-

stantial enterprise. Such occupations also allowed Jews much better control over their working lives, an important consideration both for permitting religious observances and for avoiding the anti-semitism that was still encountered in many places.

The unique occupational distribution of Jews is confirmed by data from the 1905 State Census, which cross-tabulated country of birth by very specific occupations. For the Jews (Russian-born), the data showed that 21 percent of all employed Jewish males were peddlers and a further 22 percent were retail dealers or salesmen. Among skilled workers, Jews tended to be concentrated in a few trades, especially tailors, jewelry workers, and shoemakers. Of the 18 percent in unskilled work, only 75 Jewish men were listed as employed in the textile industry, out of a total male employment in textiles of 6,749.

These differing characteristics of the two groups might be expected to have different implications for migration patterns — effects that might well counteract each other. On the one hand, the larger percentage of single men among natives would make mobility easier; but their greater concentration in high white collar occupations might be conducive to greater stability, if the economic situation in Providence were favorable and provided opportunities for such employment. By contrast, the very high proportion of Jews who were heads of families might retard movement since it is more difficult to be mobile if several persons and a household must be moved. Yet, their occupations as peddlers, tailors, or small shopkeepers would have been easily plied in any city and would have meant little investment in a particular place. The patterns of mobility will be examined next with a view to determining whether they differed depending on these various characteristics.

PATTERNS OF OUT-MIGRATION

Mobility may involve both out-migration from the city and intraurban movement. The analysis undertaken here of mobility during 1900-1920 will turn first to differences between Jewish and native migration out of Providence. Of the initial sample of 108 natives, 14 were known to have died by 1920; of the 105 Jews, 7 had died during the twenty years. The analysis of out-migration will therefore be restricted to the survivors, some of whom may also have died but could not be identified as such.

The greatest amount of out-migration among the natives occurred between 1900 and 1902 (Table 5), due in part to the discrepancies between the census and directory listings. Thereafter, a fairly steady rate of out-migration characterized the natives. By 1910, only about half of the original sample were still resident in Providence; by 1920, only 43 percent remained. The Jewish group showed a remarkably similar pattern. A somewhat smaller proportion of the 98 Jews were not traceable from 1900 to 1902 than was true of the natives. Nonetheless, by 1910 only 61 percent of the sample was still in Providence; and by 1920, almost two-thirds had left.

Numerous studies have shown that highest migration rates characterize persons in their twenties. This pattern also holds for the Providence

Table 5: PERSISTENCE LEVELS OF NATIVES AND JEWS,
PROVIDENCE, 1900-1920
(excludes deaths)

Present Through	Natives	Jews
1900	100.0	100.0
1902	68.1	81.6
1904	63.8	75.5
1906	60.6	70.4
1908	56.4	64.3
1910	52.1	61.2
1912	48.6	58.2
1914	40.4	57.1
1916	39.4	50.0
1918	36.1	43.9
1920	34.0	38.8
Total number	94	98

data (Table 6). Both natives and Jews aged 20-29 years in 1900 were more likely to have left the city by 1910 than older persons; and, conversely, more of those in the 40-50 year age group in 1900, especially natives, stayed for twenty years. More surprising is the relatively large percentage of natives and Jews aged 40-50 in 1900 who left Providence during the ensuing ten years, 44 and 29 percent, respectively.

Marital status also clearly affected mobility, although it must be remembered that it refers only to status in 1900; since there is no way of determining changes in marital status from the city directory listings, status at the time of out-migration is unknown. Among natives, half of the single men had left Providence by 1910, and only 29 percent remained through the entire twenty years. By contrast, 40 percent of those natives who had been married in 1900 were still resident in 1920. Very similar patterns characterized the Jews.

Both relation to household head and household type in 1900 were factors in determining mobility. Not surprisingly, persons unrelated to the head of the household (predominantly boarders) were most likely to have out-migrated between 1900 and 1920. Among natives, only 25 percent of the non-relatives remained in Providence beyond 1908, compared to 56-58 percent of the heads and sons. Too few Jewish non-relatives were included in the sample to allow comparison. Persons living in nuclear-augmented families among natives had higher out-migration rates in the first decade than persons living in either nuclear or extended households, reflecting the high out-migration rates of boarders. By 1920, however, fewer persons initially living in nuclear families remained in Providence. Among Jews, persons living in nuclear families were generally more apt to move out of Providence. Although about 15 percent of these individuals were sons and therefore quite likely moving without their families, and another 15 percent were just husband/wife families in 1900, two-thirds of these migrants between 1900 and 1910 had one, and often many more children. Of all the Jewish males living in nuclear families in 1900, only 28 percent remained in the city for the full twenty years under study. By contrast, almost two-thirds of those in nuclear-augmented and extended families remained. This finding suggests that for Jews the presence of a boarder or relative, such as a parent or sibling of the head, may have enabled a family to obtain just enough extra income or other economic aid to enable them to remain in the city and establish themselves. Such help, especially in the form of unpaid family workers, would have been particularly useful to the many Jewish small shopkeepers who could certainly use the extra pair of hands provided by a brother or a mother-in-law. The presence of a family member who could tend the shop would also allow the family head to expand his business by "going on the road."

Table 6: PERSISTENCE LEVELS OF NATIVES AND JEWS BY
SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS, PROVIDENCE,
1900-1920 (excludes deaths)

Characteristic	Natives				Jews			
	Present in 1900	Left Before 1910	Left Between 1900 and 1920	Present in 1920	Present in 1900	Left Before 1910	Left Between 1900 and 1920	Present in 1920
<i>Age</i>								
20 - 29	100.0	57.9	10.5	31.6	100.0	46.3	22.0	31.7
30 - 39	100.0	37.5	37.5	25.0	100.0	39.3	10.7	50.0
40 - 50	100.0	43.8	12.5	43.8	100.0	28.6	32.1	39.3
<i>Marital Status</i>								
Single	100.0	50.0	21.0	29.0	100.0	47.4	21.0	31.6
Married	100.0	43.4	17.0	39.6	100.0	37.2	21.8	41.0
<i>Relation to Head</i>								
Head	100.0	41.5	20.8	37.7	100.0	37.3	24.0	38.7
Son	100.0	44.0	20.0	36.0	100.0	38.5	23.0	38.5
Non-relative	100.0	75.0	8.3	16.7	*	*	*	*
<i>Household Type**</i>								
Nuclear	100.0	46.4	26.8	26.8	100.0	45.6	26.5	27.9
Nuclear-augmented	100.0	58.3	4.2	37.5	100.0	18.8	18.8	62.5
Extended	100.0	29.2	20.8	50.0	100.0	28.6	7.1	64.3

*Fewer than 10 non-relatives among the Jewish sample.

**Nuclear households consist of head, spouse, and their children; nuclear-augmented includes non-relatives; extended households contain relatives of the head or spouse other than their children.

Geographic mobility has often been associated with occupational change because migration is so often economically motivated. Despite changes in the textile industry and the interruption created by World War I, Providence between 1900 and 1920 enjoyed general economic prosperity (Mayer, 1953). Thus, because of a thriving manufacturing sector and an increasing demand for service created by an expanding population, no one sector of the labor force would be expected to find Providence particularly inhospitable. In fact, during this period Providence was still attracting workers and may also have offered opportunities for occupational mobility for its residents. The data from the two samples provide mixed support for these assumptions, in part because of the small sample size and in part because the occupational distributions of these two ethnic groups were particularly distinctive and different from that of the majority of the city's residents.

If the occupational distributions of the natives in 1900 are compared with those still in Providence in 1910 and with those remaining for

the full twenty years, the data indicate an attrition among men at the lower levels of the occupational hierarchy (Table 7). Whereas 25

Table 7: OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION IN 1900 AND OF THOSE REMAINING IN PROVIDENCE IN 1910 AND 1920, NATIVES AND JEWS

Occupational Category	Natives			Jews		
	1900	1910	1920	1900	1910	1920
High white collar	15.7	25.0	34.4	3.8	4.7	2.6
Low white collar	30.6	30.3	34.4	52.4	53.1	57.9
Skilled workers	23.1	16.1	15.6	32.4	31.3	26.3
Semi skilled and service workers	19.5	16.1	6.2	7.6	6.2	2.6
Unskilled workers	4.6	3.6	—	2.8	1.6	2.6
Not employed	6.5	8.9	9.4	1.0	3.1	7.9
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number	108	56	32	105	64	38

percent of the natives in 1900 were semi-skilled, service, or unskilled workers, only 6 percent were in these categories in 1920. Conversely, the proportion of high white collar workers rose from 16 percent in 1900 to 34 percent in 1920. The greatest changes occurred between 1910 and 1920 rather than earlier, suggesting that World War I may have affected occupational opportunities for Providence's natives. Some of the changes may have resulted from differential death rates in the various categories and from occupational mobility over the period. However, as the data in Table 8 indicate, relatively little occupational change occurred for individuals and deaths did not vary greatly by occupational category. Selective out-migration therefore seems to account for the major changes in the occupational distribution of the natives. Persons in the less skilled jobs were likely to leave the city.

Among Jews the pattern is quite different. The occupational distribution changed very little over the twenty years despite a 65 percent loss of individuals through out-migration. Again, very little upward or downward mobility and no selective mortality occurred among this group; and out-migration seems to have equally affected each occupational category. Only a few men, like Frank Hyman, experienced a real change in status. Mr. Hyman, who arrived in the United States in 1890 from Russia, was listed in 1900 as a saloon-keeper. Four years later he opened a liquor store; and within another 6 years he had become the treasurer of the Mt. Hope Distilling Company. Most men

showed quite stable occupational careers during their residence in Providence. A few changed jobs although they remained in the same occupational category. Meyer Cohen, for example, gave his occupation as fruit peddler in the 1900 Census; but by 1906 he had acquired a small produce store. On the whole, however, occupational mobility was not a major factor in the lives of Providence's foreign-born Jews; nor does out-migration seem to have been associated with any particular occupational group; high levels characterized all categories.

Table 8: MOBILITY AND OCCUPATIONAL CHANGE OF NATIVES AND JEWS, PROVIDENCE, 1900-1920

Occupational Category in 1900*	Left by 1910	Died	In Providence in 1910			Total	
			Same Occupational Category	Upward Mobility	Downward Mobility	Percent	Number
<i>Natives</i>							
High white collar	29.4	5.9	64.7	—	—	100.0	17
Low white collar	42.4	9.1	39.4	6.1	3.0	100.0	33
Skilled workers	41.6	4.2	37.5	4.2	12.5	100.0	24
Semi-skilled and service workers	42.9	9.5	33.3	14.3	—	100.0	21
All categories**	43.5	5.6	40.7	6.5	3.7	100.0	108
<i>Jews</i>							
Low white collar	34.5	3.6	50.9	1.8	9.1	100.0	55
Skilled workers	38.2	—	52.9	8.8	9.1	100.0	55
All categories**	36.2	2.8	49.5	6.7	4.8	100.0	105
Occupational Category in 1910*	Left by 1920	Died by 1920	In Providence in 1920			Total	
			Same Occupational Category	Upward Mobility	Downward Mobility	Percent	Number
<i>Natives</i>							
High white collar	7.1	14.3	78.6	—	—	100.0	14
Low white collar	17.6	17.6	53.0	—	11.8	100.0	17
All categories**	30.3	12.5	48.2	3.6	5.4	100.0	56
<i>Jews</i>							
Low white collar	35.3	—	58.8	—	5.9	100.0	34
Skilled workers	30.0	15.0	45.0	—	10.0	100.0	20
All categories**	34.4	6.2	51.6	—	7.8	100.0	64

*Limited to those categories in which there were at least 10 cases.

**Includes all occupational categories.

PATTERNS OF RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY

If out-migration levels are combined with intraurban mobility, even greater residential instability characterized the natives and Jews (Table

9).^{*} For example, although 61 percent of the natives resident in Providence in 1900 were still in the city in 1906 (Table 5), only 34 percent lived at the same address at both dates. Only 12 percent of the natives lived in the same home for the entire twenty years, although 34 percent remained in the city. The mobility of Jews was even greater. In 1906, 72 percent of the 1900 sample were still in Providence, but only 22 percent were in the same house. By 1920 the comparable percentages were 36 and 3 percent, respectively. While high levels of residential mobility were characteristic of natives and Jews in general, they were inversely related to occupational status. Within the limited data available, the higher occupational groups tended to be somewhat more stable residentially than the lower categories. Harry Reynolds, a civil engineer working for the city, lived on Swan Street the entire twenty years; but Frank Brewster, a laborer, moved five times before he left Providence in 1917. This relation reflects the greater amount of home ownership among high white collar workers in particular, and the generally better living quarters that were available to persons with higher income.

The greater residential instability of Jews is also clear from data restricted to persons who remained in Providence through 1920 (Table 10). Among the natives, 34 percent made no moves at all; but such stability was true of only 8 percent of the Jews. At the other extreme, whereas only 6 percent of the natives made 4 or more moves, 24 percent of the Jews did so. As a result, the median number of moves among the Jewish residents of Providence was 2.85, but among natives only 0.91.

Table 9: PERCENTAGE OF NATIVES AND JEWS LIVING AT THEIR 1900 ADDRESS, 1902-1920 (excludes deaths)

	1902	1904	1906	1908	1910	1912	1914	1916	1918	1920	Total Number in 1900
Natives	52.1	41.5	34.0	28.7	24.5	16.0	13.8	12.8	11.7	11.7	94
Jews	59.2	30.6	22.4	15.3	13.3	7.1	5.1	4.1	3.1	3.1	98

^{*}Since the samples were traced only in every other city directory, the intraurban mobility levels presented here are minimum figures. It is possible that moves were made in the intervening years as well.

Table 10: DISTRIBUTION OF NATIVES AND JEWS IN PROVIDENCE 1900-1920* BY NUMBER OF MOVES

	None	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total		Median Number of Moves
								Percent	Number	
Natives	34.4	25.0	18.8	15.6	—	—	6.2	100.0	32	0.91
Jews	7.9	18.4	21.0	18.4	15.8	13.2	5.3	100.0	38	2.85

*Restricted to persons living in Providence during the entire 20 years under investigation.

This striking difference is related not only to home ownership patterns but also to differences in housing conditions. As earlier discussion has indicated, the natives were spread throughout the city but lived especially in Wards 1, 2, 6, and 7, where desirable housing was available. Jews lived primarily in the North End and South Providence, in crowded tenements with a minimum of facilities. Moving for them therefore often meant less crowding or improved amenities. As Jacob Leichter (Horvitz, 1976: 200) remembered it, "We lived in a 5-room flat — 2 bedrooms, one bath, little furnishings — six children, parents . . . Later we moved to Dudley Street, where we had gas mantles for lighting, and the house had a coal stove." Residential mobility was also used to show a change in economic status; moving from Robinson Street to Reynolds Avenue in South Providence, or from Shawmut Avenue to Lippitt Avenue on the North End was clearly indicative of social betterment. Yet, all this residential movement resulted in very little redistribution within the city for either the Jews or natives in the sample. Most moves were not only within the same ward, but also within the same census tract. Louis Adams, for example, made at least 6 moves before he left Providence in 1913, but in 1912 his home on Wendell Street was only two blocks from where he had lived on Ford Street in 1900. Similarly, Max Perlow moved a minimum of 6 times between 1900 and 1920, but all of his residences were within a few blocks of each other. Geographic mobility within such a restricted geographic area is quite different from the experiences of either natives or foreign-born in Omaha (Chudacoff, 1972). The residential dispersion and outward growth of the city was apparently effected by persons other than natives and Jews who lived in Providence in 1900; and much of it occurred after the 1920s and especially after World War II.

THE ROLE OF OUT-MIGRATION AND RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY

In Providence, like in other medium-sized cities in America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a complex combination of ethnic segregation, high rates of out-migration, and high levels of residential mobility helped the population adjust to the local economic and social situation. The study undertaken here has attempted to gain some insights into the dynamics of this process by focusing on two very different groups, native Rhode Islanders and Jews. Because of the small size of the sample, however, the findings can be regarded as only suggestive. Although both groups were hypothesized as being relatively stable — the natives because of their long-standing ties to the State and the Jews because of their unique combination of socio-demographic characteristics — this supposition proved unfounded. Both groups exhibited instability to about the same extent as that found for the general populations of cities like Norristown and Boston: about half the natives had out-migrated by the end of a decade, as had 40 percent of the Jews. By the end of twenty years, only about one-third of the original residents of either group were still in Providence.

When the data on out-migration were combined with data on occupations, they suggested that the natives who remained in the city were most likely to have higher occupational status; those who left were apt to be manual workers. In a city like Providence, with its high proportion of foreign-born ready to fill unskilled and semi-skilled positions, it may well have been difficult for native workers to improve their economic situation; certainly the lack of upward occupational mobility shown by the data suggests the validity of such an hypothesis. These men may have believed that better economic opportunities existed elsewhere; and the disruptions brought about by World War I seem to have accelerated their mobility.

Although natives were likely to cluster in certain areas of the city, there are no strong indications in the available literature on Providence for the turn of the century or in the data analyzed here, that neighborhood communities of natives existed or that natives had strong neighborhood ties. The one exception may have been that part of Ward I which contained the large old homes of Providence's upper class. More important than neighborhood ties seems to have been homeownership. Very few natives in the sample (only 15) reported owning their homes in the 1900 Census, but of these, 73 percent were still in Providence

in 1920; of the 37 heads of households in 1900 who rented, only 27 percent remained in the city for the full twenty years. The directory data also hint at the beginnings of a suburbanization trend: a few out-migrants were listed as having moved to communities around Providence, such as Barrington or Cranston. But the evidence up to 1920 is too slight to provide more than a straw in the wind of trends to come.

During this same time, native levels of residential mobility within Providence were relatively low. Less than 10 percent of the natives made more than 3 moves; moreover, all but a few moved within the same census tract or to a contiguous one. As a result, the data on this sample of native Rhode Islanders show no evidence of redistribution within the city. Natives who were dissatisfied with either their housing or their economic situation appear to have reacted by leaving the city altogether rather than trying to adjust within Providence. Again, it must be stressed that these conclusions are drawn on the basis of a small sample; a larger sample may modify the findings.

The experience of the Jews provides a strong contrast to the native pattern. Jewish out-migration levels were quite similar, but they were much less occupationally selective, in part because such a large percentage of Jews were concentrated in only two occupational categories initially. It is also likely that the particular low white collar and skilled manual occupations in which Jews were engaged were similar to each other in terms of financial returns and in terms of how they related to the broader economic situation in the community, so that there was little reason for differential out-migration. Rather, out-migration from Providence seems to have been a kind of shake-down or winnowing process for Jews, dependent more on the strength of kinship and neighborhood ties and on the potential for developing such ties elsewhere.

Support provided by the ethnic community therefore took on great significance for Jews in the first decades of the twentieth century. The importance of the neighborhood is clearly evident, both from the development of the North End and South Providence communities and from the patterns of mobility of Jews within the city. Homeownership had little impact on Jewish residential patterns since almost all Jews rented the tenements in which they lived. This does not mean that Jews did not own property; rather, real estate was purchased for speculative/income-augmenting purposes and not for personal living quarters.

Frequent moves from one tenement to another was the Jewish family's way of improving both its housing and its status within the community during this stage of the Jewish community's development in Providence. That most moves occurred within the ethnic neighborhoods indicates the strength of community ties, as well as the prejudices that kept ethnic groups, including the Jews, within well-defined areas. These patterns of mobility thus suggest that Jews, as relative newcomers to Providence, made adjustments not only through migration between cities, but also by moving about within the city to a much greater extent than did the natives. Residential change thereby served an important function for this immigrant community and, with time, enabled it to establish firm roots in the city.

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THE DAY THE ANARCHIST CAME TO TOWN

by CAROL K. INGALL

It was January, 1905. Providence newspapers reflected the concerns of the era. House fires, the doings of fraternal organizations, reports of missing children, and advertisements for catarrh remedies vied for space. The headlines were devoted to a particularly lurid murder trial or the polygamous activities of the Mormons, then under investigation by a Senate committee. On January 10, the story of "Bloody Sunday" broke. Hundreds of unarmed Russians, chanting hymns and carrying portraits of the Tsar, gathered before the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. Led by an Orthodox priest, the marchers, many of whom were unemployed workers, hoped to lay their grievances before the Little Father, Nicholas II. The police fired into the procession, killing or wounding hundreds. Gone was the myth of the loving Tsar, responsive to the needs of his children, but shielded from them by evil subordinates. Not only did the massacre take place under his very eyes, but Nicholas did nothing to protect the innocent or punish the guilty. Revolution broke out in Mother Russia.

Fear of anarchism and the red flag of revolution were rampant in Europe and America. Five heads of state had been assassinated within recent memory: President Carnot of France (1894), Premier Canova of Spain (1897), Empress Elizabeth of Austria (1898), King Umberto of Italy (1900), and President McKinley (1901). In the American imagination, the anarchist was generally thought of as poor, foreign, and godless. His slogan, "Neither God nor master", struck fear in the propertied and law-abiding. Theodore Roosevelt himself had said, "Anarchism is a crime against the whole human race, and all mankind should band against the anarchist." (Tuchman, p. 125.) Congress followed suit and promptly passed the Immigration Act, aimed at keeping suspected anarchists from American shores.

In the wake of Bloody Sunday, crippling strikes broke out in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Warsaw, Vilna and other major cities. The Providence press noted a perceptible decline on the United States stock exchanges. The spectre of Russian workers armed with bombs cast its shadow on Rhode Island journalism. *The Evening Bulletin* reported a mass meeting in New York's Lower East Side. Jews met

in sympathy with the Russian revolutionaries. A spokesman for the group was quick to point out that, "Naturally they hate the Emperor and his government, but memory of Kishinef prevents them from any *excessive* sympathy for the mob." (*The Evening Bulletin*, January 23, 1905. Italics mine.) Another column included an account of a meeting of two hundred socialists in a North Side Chicago hall. "Many Russians and Russian Jews were in the crowd." (*Ibid.*) The reporter noted that after a resolution was passed in sympathy with the Russian people, wild cheering erupted.

It was no surprise that a Yiddish lecture on Religion and Socialism would not be greeted warmly by the Providence police. The lecturer was Benjamin Feigenbaum, propagandist and publicist, former general secretary of the Workmen's Circle, and editor of the socialist literary journal, *Zukunft* (*The Future*). Feigenbaum, like a new cantor, could always draw a crowd. His listeners loved his folksy style, his barbs against Orthodoxy, and his *maskil*-like use of Biblical and Talmudic allusions. Born in Warsaw to Hasidic parents, Feigenbaum rejected religious tradition. He became a militant atheist and agitator for socialism. According to I. J. Singer, Feigenbaum's "conversion" was prompted by the discovery of his teacher, the Gerer rebbe, that Feigenbaum was not wearing *tsitsit*. His beating at the hands of the infuriated Hasidim spawned the anti-religious diatribes that subsequently became a fixture in the Yiddish press. (Howe, p. 243) Like so many American Jewish socialists, Feigenbaum cut his radical teeth in London, hanging out in anarchist clubs and writing vitriolic anti-religious parodies.

In actuality, by the time of the proposed Providence lecture, Feigenbaum had mellowed. His radicalism had evaporated to a rear guard action, writing "agnostic compositions" and sniping at Jewish nationalism. After Kishinev, few Jewish socialists took potshots at religion. A fellow writer on *Zukunft* slapped Feigenbaum's wrists: "Nowadays any schoolboy knows . . . that religion was always and everywhere an important factor in human progress." (*Zukunft*, 1904, p. 534. as cited in Bloom, p. 60.)

American Jewish socialism had mellowed as well. No mass Jewish movement could be built on anti-Judaism. The anarchist wing of the movement had been swallowed up in bread and butter issues. Political activism and trade unionism replaced the romance of bomb-throwing and inciting "spontaneous" uprisings. Providence Jewish socialism

followed the national norm. Gone were the Yom Kippur balls and Kol Nidre "sermons" on the evolution of religion. (*Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, Sept. 19, 1890; October 16, 1891, as cited in Tcherikower, pp 264-5; p. 257.) Gone were the Radical Jewish conventions to which Providence sent a vocal delegation. (Epstein, p. 204.) Instead there were leaflets, urging the election of Socialist candidates, membership in workingmen's beneficial societies, and the invariable lectures.

The police at the Chalkstone Avenue Station were unaware of the subtleties of the American Jewish socialist movement. When they received a tip that a crowd of anarchists were going to "wave the red flag" in What Cheer Hall. Lieut. Hartnett and his men quickly surrounded the station. Claiming that no license had been taken out, Hartnett *et al* emptied the hall. They turned off the gas supply for the gas lamps for good measure.

Feigenbaum's sponsors, the Workmen's Circle, were undaunted. Quickly taking out a license, they hired a hall at 128 North Main Street and rescheduled the lecture. The police sent a contingent of plainclothesmen, led by Patrolman Hyman Goldsmith, to infiltrate the meeting. "Patrolman Goldsmith, whose parents are Jews and who understands Yiddish, was posted at the door looking into the hall where the speaking was going on. He was instructed to keep tabs on the line of talk and if anything bordering on bomb throwing or Emma Goldmanism developed, to tip the other cops off." (*The Daily Journal*, January 24, 1905.)

The police were prepared to form a flying wedge, clean out the agitators, and clear the hall. Nothing of the sort took place. Feigenbaum took as his text for the evening the motto incised on the State House: "To hold forth a lively experiment that the most flourishing State may stand and best be maintained, with full liberty in religious concerns." What followed was hardly red flag waving. Feigenbaum stressed the consistency of religion and socialism. "He . . . alluded to the fact that the Church makes no objection to members affiliating with the Republican, Democratic or other parties, yet when a man becomes a socialist, the party of the people (sic), he is set down as a crank or fanatic." (*Ibid.*) He praised the social revolution in Russia, noting the prominence of a priest in its beginnings. "All that the people of Russia want . . . is freedom of speech, education and worship. They want the same conditions to prevail in Russia as obtain in America." (*Ibid.*) The

plainclothesmen listened from 8:15 P.M. to 10:45 P.M., when the speech finally ended. Periodically, they listened to mini-lectures on the oppression of workers and police brutality, delivered by members of the Workmen's Circle who recognized them.

The fearful Red Menace had turned out to be a pink mouse. Even for a mellowed Feigenbaum, this was pretty pallid stuff. To him, socialism was as American as apple pie. Religion was not the obstacle to human enlightenment he had always depicted, but a positive boon to the workingman. What happened? One possibility is that Feigenbaum "cleaned up his act." He referred to the police harassment at the beginning of his speech. No doubt he was informed of the presence of the plainclothesmen in the hall, and he may have acted accordingly. Then there was Patrolman Goldsmith. All newspaper accounts comment on his rapt attention during the lengthy lecture. Perhaps his translation of the goings-on was gussied up for the benefit of the attendant police and reporters.

The Daily Journal, *The Evening Bulletin*, and *The Providence Telegram* all report the story with the same details and with the same bemused tone. The fox has outwitted the hounds; bravo for the fox! Other stories involving Jews printed during the month showed little sympathy for the Jewish participants. The January 12, 1905 edition of the *Journal*, bears a headline, "Undesirable Immigration." It suggests a world-wide conspiracy managed by HIAS and the De Hirsch Fund to flood the United States with Jewish immigrants. In another account, reviewing immigration statistics for the first ten days of January, 1905, the reporter concludes: "Deportations for the same period are also record-breaking. For the first ten days of the new year, 478 persons have been deported from Ellis Island, against 70 for the same period of time in 1904. Of the arrivals during the ten-day period, 9195 were Hebrews. Of the deportations, 65% were Hebrews." (*The Daily Journal*, January 12, 1905.) Jewish customs such as religious divorce and wearing beards, were portrayed as bizarre and outlandish. (*The Daily Journal* January 21, January 26, 1905.)

Prejudice against Jews, against foreigners, and anarchists was a fact of life in 1905. But somehow, the spectacle of the police with egg on their face was irresistible to the members of the Fourth Estate. Played against the backdrop of a turbulent era, the Feigenbaum episode has much to teach us about the impact of the revolution of 1905 and

the struggles of the Jewish Socialist movement. It also serves to teach us that for sheer news value, fear of revolution, even fear of strangers, are no match for the antic bumbling of the Keystone Cops.

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SICILIAN JEWRY

by MARVIN PITTERMAN

In January of 1975 my wife and I arrived in Palermo, Sicily as part of a team completing a study on "Talent Sicily" sponsored by the University of Palermo.

We were intrigued by the small island which had been settled and ruled by Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Normans, French, Spanish, and finally under Garibaldi culminating in the modern unification of Italy. After we installed ourselves in a small apartment we started to seek information on any Jews in Sicily. There were none. Occasionally Jews were visitors or had been sent by European firms for a year or two to manage their branches. We wondered why.

Sicily, we knew, is a land of natural beauty and culture. Natives of Palermo pride themselves on their magnificent Norman castle, and on the world renowned mosaics in the Cathedrals in Montreale and Cefalu. Almost immediately upon arrival everyone we met told us about the great Norman heritage, the ancient Arab markets, and the Grecian and Roman ruins. Our Sicilian host was not only a Professor of psychology, but a practicing neurologist, who set me to wonder about this mid-Mediterranean island with its huge polyglot of national influences. How did the Jews fare in its long history?

Historically Jews in Italy are of profound antiquity. The Jewish connection — except from ancient Palestine and the surrounding regions — has been unbroken from remote times down to the present day. Italian Jewry is older than Italy's most venerable corporations, and the synagogues are more ancient than the Papacy.

Sicily knew of Jews during the days of the early Roman Empire under Octavius Caesar. It is known that the Jewish historian and rhetorician, Caecilius, was a notable literary figure who worked in Rome under Augustus. He originally came from Calacte, a small city in Sicily where perhaps he was taken from Palestine as a slave.¹ By the time of the downfall of the Roman Empire Jews resided in the main cities of Syracuse, Palermo, Catania, Messina, and Girgenti.² For

¹Prepared for presentation at the inaugural meeting of the Academic Advisory Council of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association.

several generations Sicily remained a major outpost of Byzantine, Roman, Imperial, and Greek culture.³

Generally the popes believed in maintaining the long established Jewish status since Jews "are allowed to live in accordance with the Roman laws."⁴ "It is but just that they should manage their own affairs as they think best, and let no man hinder them," stated Pope Gregory.⁵ Gregory the Great (580-604) was the founder of the modern tradition of the Papacy and formulator of its Jewish policy in its favorable and its adverse aspects.

In sermons Gregory complained bitterly of the obduracy of Jews and their stony hearts. He took care that the canonical restrictions against them were enforced in all their vigor. In the early days of Christianity many of them still practiced aspects of Judaism. There were strong objections against observances or any ceremonies which savored of Judaism or tended to obscure the boundaries between Church and Synagogue. On the other hand, Gregory insisted that Jews be treated with humanity and secured them those rights which were theirs by law.

Of 800 extant letters of Gregory, 24 dealt with Jews; several of the pope's letters began with statements based on information received from Roman Jews. Gregory was the first pope known to throw his weight and his authority to prevent abuse and violence against Jewish places of worship. This violence arose and manifested itself in the observance by some non-Jews of the day of rest on Saturday instead of Sunday and the adoption of synagogal vestments by a few clergymen.⁶

Gregory opposed ejection of Jews from their houses of worship and permitted them to worship without molestation. "We forbid the aforesaid Hebrews to be oppressed and vexed unreasonably," Gregory wrote that "as in accordance with Justice they are permitted to live under the protection of the Roman law, they are to be allowed to keep their observances as they have learned them, without hindrance."⁷

Gregory in October of the year 594 advised the papal administrator of ecclesiastical property in Sicily to promise prospective Jewish converts a reduction in rent by one-third "or in proportion as your affection may think, so that the burden of the persons converted may be lightened without the interest of the Church suffering too heavy a loss."⁸

In Palermo, the principal city of Sicily, in 598, without the slightest pretext, Bishop Victor seized all the Jewish places of worship

and their contents, together with the adjacent guest chambers and hospital. The term synagogue then implied what we term a community center. The sufferers applied for assistance to their fellow Jews in Rome who petitioned the pope. Gregory ordered Bishop Victor to justify his actions before impartial arbitration or, if they failed to agree, before Gregory himself. The over-zealous bishop had speedily consecrated them into church property to prevent the restitution of the buildings. Gregory ordered the bishop to pay full compensation and to restore to the Jewish community the booty that had been carried off.⁹ Legal church law did not allow Jews to erect new synagogues, but permitted them to enjoy the old ones undisturbed.

A Sicilian Jew, Nasas, built a synagogue bearing the name of the Prophet Elijah (as many did at this time) which was visited by many Christians. Also Nasas, in contravention of the existing law, had Christian slaves in his service. For these offenses Gregory requested the prefect of Sicily to see that Nasas received severe corporal punishment. In addition Gregory informed the archbishops that slaves belonging to Jews who took refuge in a church were under no circumstances to be returned to their owners.¹⁰

Thus Gregory disapproved of the employment of threats or violence in order to make unbelievers change their faith, but he was not adverse to reinforcement of spiritual argument by material temptation. The administrators of papal estates in order to win converts were instructed to reduce by one-third the rents payable to Jewish landlords by those who were baptized. Perhaps Gregory questioned the sincerity of a person won over by such means, but the aim was to have their children become convinced Christians.

Aspects of Jewish influence are seen in the case of Grimoaldo, Duke of Benevento, who in 793 was allowed to divorce his sterile wife "more hebraico", ie in accordance with Jewish law, which allows such divorces after ten years of childless marriage.¹¹

Sicily was under Muslim rule from 827 to 1061. The Emir of Kairouan began the systematic conquest of Sicily in 827. The Roman Christian governor of Syracuse in that year revolted against the rule of Byzantium. Defeated by a Byzantine imperial army, he appealed for help to the emir and a Moslem force landed at Marsala. Palermo was captured in 831 and Syracuse in 978. During this period Jews were brought in chains to Palermo by the Muslims to be ransomed by their correli-

ists.²² Serious fighting ended 75 years after the first landing with the fall of Taormina in 902. Thereafter, the Saracens ruled Sicily undisputed until 1061. Their influence was predominant for a little more than two centuries from the 9th to the 11th centuries, from certain viewpoints the most brilliant in its history.²³

Once Moslem rule was established Sicily was in the same position as other Islamic states in the Mediterranean littoral. Jews were tolerated — sometimes grudgingly, sometimes generously. On occasions they were subjected to degrading regulations. Always in common with other unbelievers, they had to pay a special tax.

There were interludes of benevolent treatment received at Moslem hands; the treatment seldom compared unfavorably with that to which they were subjected in lands under Christian rule. Jewish population increased, thus becoming an important factor in the island. Jews quickly adopted the dominant culture in external matters, and strongly reinforced by immigration from other Moslem areas became Arabic very rapidly in dress, in language, and in nomenclature. Jewish life as in non-Jewish Sicily no longer belonged to Europe. It was culturally and politically a part of Africa. Communities looked for guidance and comradeship southwards especially to Egypt rather than to the Italian mainland. Arab influences remained long after Moslem invaders were ejected continuing in some details as long as Sicilian Jewish history was to last.²⁴

The Arabic language was spoken among them long after the Saracen domination passed. Late in the 13th century a wandering Spanish scholar, not unaccustomed to a polyglot atmosphere, wrote, "But, indeed, most remarkable is what happened to the Jews in all Sicily, who do not speak only Italian or Greek, being the languages of those together with whom they dwell, but have preserved the Arabic tongue, which they learned in former times when the Ishmaelites dwelt there."²⁵ This linguistic tradition decayed during the course of the following century.

Benjamin of Tudela, famous Spanish Jewish traveler, on his way back from the Levant passed through Sicily between 1170 and 1173. He landed at Messina a century after the Normans conquered Sicily and found a community of 200 living in the midst of such plenty and luxury as to amaze the seasoned travelers. The Jews enjoyed the same rights as their neighbors under the charter of 1129. This was

even surpassed in Palermo, where he estimated no fewer than 1500 Jews lived. Some 20 years earlier Roger II brought a number of Jews back as prisoners from his expedition of 1147 against Byzantium. During the following century there was an influx of immigrants from Morocco, and newcomers were allowed to erect their own synagogues. Jews resided in all major Sicilian cities. There is every reason to believe that the Kingdom of Sicily during the 13th century contained the most numerous, most populous, and most industrious Jewish communities in all Italy.³⁶

Jews enjoyed all civil rights, including owning land, and were authorized to have their own synagogues though not to enlarge them or to make proselytes. Also they could not bear arms and were excluded from the armed forces. The Jewish badge of shame, which afterwards became universal in the western world, was first introduced into Europe as a measure of discrimination against Christians as well as Jews by the Sicilian ruler Ibrahim in 887-888. The Christians had to wear and display on the doors of their houses a piece of white material designed like a swine and the Jews a piece in the shape of a monkey. Later the Jews had to wear a yellow girdle and a special turban. Also the Jews in Sicily had to pay a graduated poll tax which was levied by Moslems on all unbelievers as a price for the free exercise of their religion. In addition they had to pay a special land tax, calculated in accordance with the productivity of the holding.³⁷

On the whole the juridical condition of Jews and Christians was one of semi-liberty. However intolerant in theory, in practice it did not leave much cause for complaint.

During the two centuries of Muslim rule, Jews enjoyed conducting their own religious and secular status under the full protection of public law within the dynamic and intellectual life of the Islamic world. Palermo was the capital city containing Arabic characteristics with its typical oriental architecture and speech dominating many streets. The Arabic influence is evident to this date in the Arab quarters and markets. Greek speech was widespread with Latin underground until revived later by immigrants from the Italian peninsula. In this time period Jews practiced their own forms of life with Hebrew dominant among the more influential, and literary and business media. The city custom of Palermo expressly provided the full legal validity of Hebrew in addition to Greek or Arabic. Deeds could be issued in the

three languages by Jewish, Saracen, or Greek notaries.¹⁸ The principal community was, as always, Palermo which not only spoke on behalf of the Jewish community of Sicily generally, but even arrogated that name to itself in official communication.¹⁹

In 1060 the Norman invaders expelled first the Byzantines from the mainland and then the Saracens from Sicily.²⁰ Between 1060 and 1090 the Norman adventurers Robert and Roger Guiscard conquered Sicily and most of the mainland of Italy.

In this period the Jews continued to exhibit the Moslem domination. Synagogues retained the name "moschea" or "moscheta" (mosque) and the community was known, as in Spain, by the Arabic name "aljama" or assembly. Both these terms were at times copied on the adjacent mainland. Many Jews had Arabic names, and for a long period they continued to wear the Moorish costumes and follow Moorish customs such as using professional mourners during funerals, and band music with torchlight processions for marriages. These practices were observed down to the 15th century.

In Rome in the first half of the 11th century lived a Jew named Baruch, who, after amassing a great fortune, embraced Christianity under the name Benedict. He married a daughter of a Roman nobleman and called their son Leo in honor of the ruling pope. Leo, the heir to wealth on one side and rank on the other, became, in the disorderly time that followed, one of the most powerful grandees in the city, building a stronghold in the Trastevere district beyond the Tiber. His son was called Piero (Peter), and the family was thereafter known by a combination of the two names as Pierleoni. Piero extended his fortified area into a veritable domain and played a great part in civic life. His son, Piero Pierleoni, entered the Church backed by vast family fortune, made rapid advances, and was created a Cardinal. On the death of Pope Honorius II in 1130, Piero favored by one of the two factions then dominant in Rome, was elevated to the Papacy taking the name of Anacletus II.

His Jewish antecedents, vastly exaggerated by his enemies, who accused him of practicing Judaism in secret, antagonized many potential adherents. His rival was Innocent II, whom the majority of Europe supported. Nevertheless, the devotion of the Roman populace and nobility enabled Anacletus II to remain in authority in the center of the Christian world until his death in 1138.²¹

Anacletus II crowned Roger II as the first "King" of Sicily.²³ Thus Roger II received from the "Jewish" Pope resounding sovereignty over "the Kingdom of Sicily, Calabria, and Apulia, and the Principe of Capua, with the homage of Naples and the support of the men of Benevento."²³ After a raid on Corfu, Corinth, and Thebes (Byzantine Thebes was the center of the silk industry in the Balkans)²⁴ in 1147 Roger II's commander George of Antioch, himself a renegade Greek, brought "all Jews of that land" to Sicily, including a large number of dyers and silk weavers, thus strengthening the previous foundation of an important Jewish industry.²⁵

From Muslim times the Norman administration inherited the system of special Jewish taxation. Originally the tax was imposed on all dhimmin (unbelievers), but the poll tax remained a permanent source of revenue from the Jews.²⁶ In time the tax lost its personal features and was converted into a regular burden upon the Jewish community.

Roger II granted the city of Messina in 1129 special privileges in recognition of its signal services in the campaign against the Saracens. In the text Jews were specifically mentioned as enjoying the same rights, privileges, and immunities as the Christian burghers.²⁷

Under the Norman regime the number of Jews hardly amounted to 3 per cent of the population, although many cities exceeded that ratio.²⁸ The Norman rulers found it convenient to entrust the management of some of their industries to Jews.²⁹ From the 11th century Sicily treated its religious minorities in basically the same manner as the Christian majority.³⁰

Jewish economic existence was varied. Merchants, in the medieval sense of persons engaged in production, importation and, distribution of such commodities as could not be provided locally, were prominent. Overseas trade prospered ever since Roman times. Operations were on a relatively small scale. Jews engaged in every branch of long shore activity, from ship owning downwards to stevedore. Various commodities were distributed throughout the region which had been brought from overseas. Agents in the distributive process were generally fellow co-religionists.

Some Jews were employed in the capacity of tax agents and also as managers of the public slaughter houses, which were a state source of profit. The healing art was well represented by a sprinkling of Jewish physicians.

Agriculture claimed its share of Jewish participants. Intensive cultivation of fruits, even within the confines of the largest cities, still exists to this day in Sicily. Palm groves and the raising of henna and indigo were common in Palermo.³¹ The latter plants were used as the base for blue and red dyes.

Jewish artisans in the textile trade were prominent. The famous silk robe interlaced with gold, manufactured in 933 for Roger II and subsequently used in the coronation of the Hapsburg emperors, was made by Jewish artisans working for the royal factory in Palermo.³² An advanced dyeing method was carried out by Jewish workers through a complicated chemical process. Baron states that this was an ancient Jewish industrial art.

In 1231 Emperor Frederick created a state monopoly of crude silk and dye works the administration of which he entrusted exclusively to Jewish agents. A maximum rate was fixed for the raw material to be henceforth sold for the benefit of the treasury at a minimum profit of one-third on the purchase price, anything received in excess of that amount being the agents' share.³³ The term "Jew" became quasi-synonymous with "dyer" and "weaver".³⁴

During the 13th century the Jews of Sicily under Roger II fared well. Sicily and neighboring parts of the mainland maintained an affluent and intellectually advanced community. Jewish intellectual life flourished under a series of successive rulers alive to the intellectual ferment of the time. In southern Italy and Sicily Latin, Italian, Byzantine, Muslim, and Jewish influences intermingled. This area of Italy transmitted to adjacent Europe both the language of antiquity and the great contemporary Islamic culture. Jews played an important part in this reawakening because their wide linguistic knowledge enabled them to translate from one language to another, usually from the Arabic via Hebrew into the Latin.³⁵

Under the brilliant Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, King of Sicily and Apulia as well as the Holy Roman Emperor, the intellectual process reached its fullest development, partly as a result of his personal interest manifest through employment of various Jewish translators and through personal correspondence or personal communication with Jewish savants on matters of common interest.³⁶ His followers continued in his steps. Jewish participation was vital in the revival of learning or

Latin renaissance and is one of their abiding contributions to the development of European culture.⁸⁷

Under the Hohenstaufen rulers after 1187 the Sicilian Jews were drawn into the net of far-flung imperial policies which gradually crystallized the concept that Jews were the "serfs" of the Imperial Chamber.⁸⁸ It was proclaimed as a universal "truce" in Rhenish Franconia in 1179 that "Jews who belong to the Emperor's Chamber . . . should enjoy peace on every day".⁸⁹ Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, King of Sicily and Apulia 1197-1250 and of the Holy Roman Empire 1220-1250 was a man of exceptional culture and wide breadth of outlook. A decree issued by Frederick I in 1157 and broadened in scope by Frederick II in 1236 served to govern the position of all German Jewry as a model for many later privileges affecting the legal status of Jews in most central and eastern European Jewish communities virtually until the 18th century.⁹⁰

Among the important provisions were privileges related to the security of Jewish persons and property, the owners' freedom to dispose of their possessions as they saw fit, and freedom to travel the length and breadth of the Empire. Jews were to be protected against unlawful exactions, the conversion of their children, or being made slaves against their wills. Even adults had to wait three days before they were to be baptized, and no interference was allowed with the sale of their pagan slaves. For the first time bona fide Jewish purchasers of stolen goods were enjoined to restore them to former owners only after receiving full indemnity for their investment. There were provisions among others that the murder of a Jew or instigation thereto and conversion of Jewish children without their parents' consent were to be punished by the high fine of twelve gold pounds. Jews were free to employ Christian servants, maids, and nurses. "Let neither bishop nor any clerk controvert that."⁹¹

Frederick II was at loggerheads with the Church, since he simultaneously controlled Germany and Southern Italy, which threatened the pope's temporal possessions on either side. To vindicate his orthodoxy in 1222 Frederick II ordered all Jews to wear a distinguished badge of bluish color in the shape of the Greek letter T (tau) and in addition to grow beards to be even more easily separated from non-Jews.⁹² It was generations before anything of this sort was generally enforced.

In 1235 the first "blood accusation" against Jews appeared in Germany. Frederick created the first royal commission which made a full-fledged investigation of this accusation. According to the Commission's unanimous findings, Frederick II denied any truth in the libel. His declaration against the accusation was followed by a similar statement by Pope Innocent IV in 1246.⁴⁵

After the series of persecutions at the close of the 13th century Sicilian Jewish communities, under a different rule than those of southern Italy, had been unaffected. Sicily continued to hold the greatest population of Italian Jewry; settlements in the large cities were hardly exceeded numerically by that of Rome.⁴⁶

Sicilian Jewry continued on its own path reflecting the long period under Saracen rule and influence. Being near to Africa and the Moslem world aided Sicilian Jewry to possess many characteristics of the Moresque community. Also from the close of the 13th century Sicily was ruled by the kings of the House of Aragon, causing Sicily to have in certain respects closer affinities with Spain than with Italy.

Early in the 13th century Frederick had legalized money lending for Jews in his Italian dominions; but the Sicilian Jews did not engage in this trade. In 1398 they successfully petitioned the government to prohibit usury between Jews and Christians in the same manner as prohibited between Jew and Jew. Though usury was legalized retroactively in 1451 the money-lender remained a rare figure in Sicily. The Jews included a sprinkling of merchants, supply-brokers, and physicians. Vast majority were artisans — weavers, dyers, cobblers, silver-smiths, blacksmiths, spinners, saddlers, on down to porters, stevedores, and dockers. Itinerant peddlers and linen-drapers were met throughout the island. Poor women helped to support their families by weaving.⁴⁶ Palermo had a guild of Jewish master carpenters. No doubt some master craftsmen were of outstanding ability.

The entire Jewish population in the 15th century was approximately 20,000, Palermo being the largest and most influential community. It claimed authority to speak on behalf of the Jews of the entire realm — being organized in a universita parallel to and in its limited sphere equal in authority to the Christian municipality. Some 5,000 individuals resided in this center or fully one-third of the total population.

Upwards of 60 Jewish communities existed. Trapani was next in importance, followed by Sciacca and Messina whose Jews increased

from 200 in 1170 to 180 families or 900 souls in 1453.⁴⁶ Catania had two Jewish quarters, upper and lower, each with its own synagogue. However, the majority of the communities were small, as San Marco with 200, Castronuovo with 120, and Salemi with 6 families.

All communities were well organized and closely knit. They enjoyed local autonomy, held occasional representative assemblies to deliberate on matters of common interest, levied their own taxation, and enforced decisions, whether in financial or administrative matters. These decisions were enforced by the ban of excommunication, which was recognized, approved, and even implemented by the State.⁴⁷

The executive officers at the head of each community, known as "syndics" (*sindachi*) were chosen in rotation for three months or longer periods among the members of the deliberative council of *proti* (Greek): the corresponding Hebrew term was apparently *zaken* (elder), generally twelve in number.⁴⁸

This body appointed the *percettori* who levied taxation, the *limosnieri* who administered charity, and the *auditori di conti* who reviewed the accounts and prevented financial irregularities.

In 1397 the system of election to the council was reorganized by the crown to ensure that the three conventionally recognized classes in the community — the rich, the well-to-do, and the self-dependent poor — were all represented in it in identical numbers; the proportions were clearly unequal, but this made for something more nearly approximating a democratic system.

In the first quarter of the 15th century an attempt was made to convert the governing body from elective to a nominative one, the number holding office henceforth at the king's pleasure or for life. In 1484 the council lost its last democratic vestige and became self-perpetuating, the outgoing representatives henceforth designating their successors.

Dissent was out of the question, since already in 1398 the communities had petitioned and the crown agreed that no meeting should be permitted among the Jews without the consent of superior authority "for this is the beginning of unrest and dispute."⁴⁹

Occasionally, the constitutional forms might be suspended, the King cancelling the elections and nominating a Christian official as

"governor" of the Jewish community, like a city manager. However, much as an individual might disapprove of the manner in which public affairs were conducted, it was impossible for him to disassociate himself, attendance at meetings of the community being enforced by law. These meetings would be held in some public building in town, for example, the hospital — if there was no room in the synagogue.⁵⁰

The island officials included:

- a) the Rabbi known as *giudice spirituale* or spiritual judge, his most important function being settlement of disputes in accordance with Talmudic law.
- b) number of minor functionaries:
 1. the notary or scribe to draw up legal documents
 2. the *manigliore* or sacristan
 3. the *scannatore* or *shohet* (ritual slaughterer)

In addition next to the synagogue in a community of any size, were religious and secular institutions such as the public baths, hospital, school, and even wine shops of which three were in disturbing proximity to the synagogue in Palermo.⁵¹

The successive French, German, and Spanish rulers forced Sicilian Jews into a status of political inferiority unknown in northern Italy, that of "serfs of the Royal Chamber". This resulted in close governmental control.

Sicilian Jews were taxed as an entity, not being included in the general financial scheme. The amount levied in each town was understood normally to bear an approximate relationship to their proportion in population.

Poll tax was the principal impost. Levies on animals slaughtered in the Jewish fashion, on wine and cheese prepared for Jewish use, on cloth of Jewish manufacture, and a "beam tax" on sale of houses were common.⁵²

Frequently communities made a freewill offering to the crown in recognition of some concession made to them or the abolition of a galling restriction. From time to time the Jews paid heavily for a "general pardon" whether misdeeds in question were real or hypothetical.⁵³

Jews of Syracuse had contributed a golden "ounce" (the standard unit of currency in Sicily, worth \$60) for the expenses of a royal table when the king visited the city.

Palermo had a special tax known as *jocularia* or *jugalia* on every marriage, the amount varying in proportion to the number of cornet players in attendance, in accordance with Saracenic practice, and a tax on every birth with a lower rate for a girl than a boy.⁵⁴

During times of war or emergencies obligations increased. In 1397, Jews of Girgenti had equipped a force of 200 foot soldiers for one of the king's military expeditions. Palermo was expected to provide civic officers with beds and other furniture for their lodgings.

The wine tax was sometimes converted into a congregational one. Abstention became an anti-social act, the Palermo community on one occasion raising a loan from the Jewish tavern-keepers and wine merchants to defray its share of a gift to the king, while at another time compelling wealthy Jews to advance a certain amount of money equally for the next four years.⁵⁵

Jurisdiction over the Jews and consequent profit passed during the Norman period to bishops and archbishops, but had been reclaimed for the crown under Emperor Frederick II. After his death the vicars again asserted the ancient ecclesiastical claims. For example, the Jews of Mazzara were obliged to present the bishop $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 pounds of pepper, then an extremely valuable commodity every year. At Messina until 1482 the archbishop claimed a death duty of 25 per cent on all legacies.

Due to the strong Byzantine tradition and perhaps because Sicilian Jewry were poor they were compelled to perform many burdensome and unpleasant labor services. As serfs of the Royal Chamber, Jews were expected, aside from a few privileged persons, to clean and sweep royal castles and palaces, to dig ditches, and to haul the king's ships to the beach. They had to act as executioners for capital sentences carried out in their burial ground as an additional odium. This did not enhance their popularity. At Messina Jews had to mount guard on the walls of the city near their quarter but their coreligionists in Sciacca patrolled the entire fortifications. Until expelled, the Palermo Jewish community had not only to clean out the castle each Friday, but also to toll the bells, scrape the fountains, clean mud from the streets, sweep courtyards of public buildings, and carry the benches of city officers from one place to

another.⁸⁷ In some places, as in Girgenti, the Jews were supposed to be exempt from all personal service except on the occasion of a royal visit.

Many towns maintained the ancient abuse common in southern Europe of stoning houses of the Jewish quarter on Good Friday; this practice might degenerate into a riot. At Marsala all Jews had to attend church services on Christmas and St. Stephen's day, subsequently to be escorted home with stones by a vengeful mob. Even after the barbarous custom was abolished, Jews were expected to be present at mass on the latter occasion.

On Christian feast days Jews had to keep within their houses, with doors and windows closed, forbidden to do any work that could be seen from the street. These were onerous especially due to the large number of minor church celebrations.⁸⁸

Religious institutions were kept under royal control in this highly authoritarian society. As early as the 13th century the king exercised the prerogative of nominating the Rabbi of Palermo. Even the sacristans, readers, and ritual slaughterers sometimes owed appointment to the Crown; occasionally bishops claimed the right. Royal control over the intimate affairs of Sicilian Jewry reached its climax in the 14th century. In 1396 King Martin appointed his physician, the Catanian Joseph Abenafia, as Chief Judge (in Hebrew, Dienchelele, or Dayyab Kelafi) over all Jewish communities in his domain, with full authority in civil and criminal matters. His functions, mainly secular, included questions of taxation as well as being the mouthpiece of the Jewish community when they wished to approach the king.⁸⁹ A profession widely followed in Sicily as throughout the Jewish world was medicine, notwithstanding the stringent canonical prohibition. Legally a Jewish physician attending a Christian was liable to imprisonment on bread and water for a whole year and the forfeiture of his fee; and the patient being imprisoned, if he recovered, for as long as three months.⁹⁰ The restriction was not an unqualified misfortune, for it did not give an opening to accusations of plotting the death of Christian patients, such as brought about the execution at Palermo in 1430 of the Majorcan Moses Rimos who left behind an exquisite ethical testament, which is one of the gems of medieval Jewish literature.⁹¹

Over 140 Jews practiced medicine in Sicily between 1363 and 1492. Some practiced in the royal court; several cities employed Jews as official physicians. Women also followed the medical profession, as for

example, Virdimura, the wife of the physician Pasquale of Catania, who in 1376 was empowered to practice medicine throughout the realm.⁶²

The Norman rulers recognized, in reconquering Sicily for Christianity, the need to conciliate and combine all the heterogeneous element in the population — Moslems, Italians, Byzantine, French, as well as Jews. Hence Jews were allowed to continue in possession of their former privileges. Jewish savants worked in the brilliant courts of Palermo and Naples. In 1071 Hebrew legal instruments were officially recognized as having the same validity as those drawn up in Latin, Arabic, or Greek.⁶³ Roger II in 1129 granted a general privilege to the city of Messina, specifying that its provisions should be extended no less to Jewish than to Christian inhabitants.⁶⁴

Frederick II followed the same policy when he became king of Sicily. Although he fixed the communal fine payable when a Jew was found killed at only half the rate as in the case of a Christian, he forbade open discrimination against them and in his regulations of 1231 for administrative justice Frederick insisted that Jewish rights should be respected. On the other hand, he found it desirable to vindicate his highly questionable Christian orthodoxy by obeying canon law meticulously in matters which did not closely concern his interests. Thus, in 1221 he ordered Jews to wear a distinguishing mark in obedience with the canons of the recent Lateran Council.⁶⁵

After 1282 the House of Aragon under King Pedro, who was welcomed by a deputation of Jews in Messina bearing a Torah scroll, introduced a new spirit to the island.⁶⁶ In some ways Sicily was the freest country in Europe, yet from Frederick II's rule (1296-1337) the intolerance beginning to infest Spain made itself felt in Sicily. In 1310 a series of "constitutions" by the king renewed the canonical restrictions against Jews and Saracens; they could not own Christian slaves, or hold any sort of judicial office, or give evidence against Christians in courts of law, or practice medicine except among their coreligionists, or live on familiar terms with Christians.⁶⁷

Jews were ordered to isolate themselves in special areas, generally outside the city walls — the earliest instance in Europe of such segregation enforced by law.⁶⁸ In 1347 several Jews were put to death at Messina on charge of ritual murder, commemorated by an inscription part of which may still be seen outside the cathedral.⁶⁹ An offensive

in 1373 was begun by the Holy Office against synagogues newly constructed in defiance of canonical regulations.

The wearing of the Jewish badge, enjoined by Frederick II in 1310, was never allowed to fall into disuse. By 1366 the badge had taken the form of a scarlet circle or O, not smaller than the largest royal seal, to be worn on the right side of the outer garment over the breast, a palm's-breadth below the chin. Any irregularity was punished by a fortnight's imprisonment. Not only did Jews have to be distinguished, but also their butcher shops, lest a Christian commit a grave sin by eating Jewish meat!¹⁹

On June 6, 1391 a wave of massacres broke out in Seville, Spain spreading throughout the entire Iberian peninsula, shattering the pride of Spanish Jewry. This episode showed — as does all history — that an example of violence is infectious. Massacres spread from Castile to Aragon and all possessions overseas. On the following Easter, the classical season for religious epidemics, conditions were so menacing that special measures had to be taken to safeguard the Jewish quarters of Palermo. But they were insufficient, and disorders swept the entire country.

In June, 1392, at Monte S. Giuliano, the entire community was compelled at sword point to receive baptism; those who refused being brutally murdered. The king issued stern orders forbidding such attacks, but to little avail. Before long attacks occurred in Palermo, Catania, Trapani, Syracuse, and elsewhere. Each Sunday, when Christians left church, the Jews trembled for fear of another massacre. King Martin's incessant efforts, in letters of warning to each city, restricted outbreaks to a relatively modest scale.²¹

From this time onward the conditions of Sicilian Jews deteriorated. During Lent 1403 Jews were attacked in Marsala; in 1413 on the night of Good Friday massacres occurred at Polizzi; and in 1415 the Queen expelled the Jews from her own town of Vizini. In the next year the Jews of Mineo were thrown into prison for venturing to go about the royal business and attend services in their "moscheta" at Easter, when they should have been cooped up in their houses. By 1428 Jews and Saracens were ordered to attend conversionist sermons to be given by fiery priests who received official appointments to the *new office of Lettore degli Ebrei* or "Reader to the Jews". Soon the Inquisition came to Sicily.²²

New edicts were issued. In 1447 Jews were forbidden to hold real estate.⁷⁵ Shortly before Easter week in 1453 the community of Marsala was taken under Royal protection but too late to prevent a bloody assault. At Palizzi the Easter riots became an annual affair. The Dominicans of the beautiful hill town of Taormina in 1456 complained to the pope that the Jewish synagogue and cemetery was inconveniently near their conventual church, so orders were issued for the synagogue's transference to a more convenient site. This proved unsatisfactory, and before the end of the year the new synagogue had to be abandoned. That same year on St. Stephen's day when the Jews of Marsala had been driven to church to hear sermons, fire was set to their homes, and that night robber bands attacked them.⁴

The Trapani community suffered from a venomous official slaughter in 1473 for the offense of receiving into Judaism the daughter of a Jewish mother and a Christian father, the leaders of the community being thrown into prison and a general pardon being obtained only at a tremendous cost.⁷⁶

By 1474 the attack became general. The immediate cause was the charge against the Jews of Palermo of perpetuating blasphemies against the Christian faith in word and deed. Individuals were arrested, some tortured to make confession and then burned at the stake.⁷⁸ To free others a great sum of 5,000 florins were raised. The onslaught spread. At Termini the royal commission was sent to search for anti-church writing. Popular passion keyed up everywhere to fever pitch. At Modica in August the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin was celebrated by mob attacks on the Jewish quarters. Soon followed the most appalling massacre in the whole of Sicilian and perhaps of Italian Jewish history.⁷⁷ Officially figures listed 360 victims including men, women and children, some tortured to death by local officials on the demand of rioters. The viceroy went in person to restore order and had the ringleaders hanged; but the example spread like wildfire to Noto, Monte S. Giuliano, and Sciacca. Protection needed in Palermo, Naro, Castrogiovanni, and Messina was purchased at a heavy price.

Outrages occurred in many cities in 1476, and again in 1480, 1483, 1486-87 and 1490. These outbreaks were for the most part connected with religious anniversaries of the Christian year. In the case of poverty-stricken Sicilian Jews economic motives were barely present.⁷⁸

Palermo, in November 30, 1469, staged elaborate festivities in honor

of the marriage of the Infant Ferdinand, son and future successor of the King of Sicily and Aragon, to Isabella, heiress to the thrones of Castile and Leon. Among the notable spectacles 400 young Jews performed dances in the streets for the diversion of the spectators. Little could they imagine that celebrating this wedding was destined to spell the destruction of Sicilian Jewry after over 1500 years of continuous history.⁷⁹

Fifteen years later, in 1484, the bride ascended the throne of Castile, and five years later her husband became King of Aragon, thus uniting the greater part of the Iberian peninsula under joint rule.

Among the problems besetting the religious rulers were the Marranos or crypto-Jews, who were left by successive waves of persecution that had devastated Spanish communities from the end of the 14th century onward. These Marranos were Christians in name, for that was the only way to save their lives, but Jews at heart, though in many cases less so than they were generally reputed to be.

The dilemma facing the Crown was that to allow the Marranos to revert to Judaism openly was unthinkable; to permit them to continue to live double lives seemed a sacrilege. Therefore, to deal with the problem in 1479 the Spanish Inquisition was established. To prove effective, it was impossible to suppress Judaism while Jews remained undisturbed and illogical to burn a person baptized by force for the sin of performing in secret a single item of the elaborate Jewish code, when his unbaptized coreligionist was performing all of the code openly and with complete impunity.

Isabella's genuine piety and Ferdinand's greed, plus the mounting tide of militant religious nationalism, all pointed in the same direction. With the capture of Moorish Granada, for which both Sicilian and Spanish Jews were compelled to contribute lavishly, the crisis reached its climax. On March 31, 1492 the Spanish rulers signed the edict by which all Jews were to leave Spain within four months; the reason given was that they had encouraged former coreligionists to be unfaithful to the sacrament of baptism.⁸⁰

On May 31, 1492 Jews were placed under the royal protection and all licenses to bear arms were cancelled. This royal order was secretly communicated by the viceroy to all Sicilian local authorities. Ten days later Jews were ominously warned not to attempt to emigrate or conceal their property or sell any possessions without a license. Thus, after all

preparations were complete the edict of banishment was solemnly proclaimed on June 18, 1492 to the blare of trumpets in every town where in Jews dwelt.⁸¹

Only three months were allowed for preparation to leave and for the settlement of all debts. By September 18, 1492, four days before Rosh Hashanah, all Jews were to be gone. Those remaining after that date would incur the death penalty.

By petition and intervention by members of the Privy Council including justices of the High Court, principal financial authorities and other officials were urged to reconsider expulsion in return for a bribe of 5000 florins, the time limit was extended for two months then for 40 days; then owing to the difficulty of collecting the appallingly heavy levies and finally due to bad weather the final date was January 12, 1493.⁸²

The poor were allowed to have the clothes they were wearing, not their best finery, a blanket of wool or serge, a second hand mattress of scant value, a used pair of sheets, some provisions, and the magnificent sum of three tari for the expenses of the voyage.⁸³

Wealthier Jews were allowed twice this amount, but still only a single modest dress. A petition was made requesting two shirts for each person, two cloths for each household, the privilege of carrying with them the holy Torah, and tools to enable their craftsmen to earn a living again. In addition they requested that those baptized be compelled to grant a divorce to their wives if they remained faithful Jews so they could remarry legally again if they wished. Synagogue trappings to be disposed for the financial benefit of the Crown were requested to be sold to Jewish communities overseas.

Permission for Jews to take along their tallith was refused.⁸⁴

Destitute, desperate, still trusting to the eternal mercy of the God of Israel, the Sicilian Jews left their native land. That January day in 1493 Sicilian Jewish history ended for all times.

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- See also The Catholic Encyclopedia and the Jewish Encyclopedia.

NOTES

- ¹Cecil Roth, *The History of the Jews of Italy*, p. 8.
²*Ibid.*, p. 22.
³Salo W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Vol. III, p. 24.
⁴*Ibid.*, p. 28.
⁵*Ibid.*, p. 29.
⁶Roth, *opus. cit.*, p. 44.
⁷*Ibid.*, p. 45.
⁸Baron, *opus. cit.*, p. 28.
⁹*Ibid.*, p. 30.
¹⁰Roth, *opus. cit.*, p. 46.
¹¹Baron, *opus. cit.*, IV, p. 20.
¹²Roth, *opus. cit.*, p. 55.
¹³Baron, *opus. cit.*, III, p. 109.
¹⁴Roth, *opus. cit.*, p. 56.
¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 82.
¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 83.
¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 57.
¹⁸Baron, *opus. cit.*, IV, p. 21.
¹⁹Roth, *opus. cit.*, p. 57.
²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 66.
²¹Baron, *opus. cit.*, IV, p. 10. See also for a popular version, M. Hirsh Goldberg, *The Jewish Connection*. Bantam, p. 116-119.
²²*Ibid.*, p. 11.
²³*Ibid.*, p. 21.
²⁴*Ibid.*, p. 168.
²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 21.
²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 23.
²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 23.
²⁸*Ibid.*, p. 24.
²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 113.
³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 115.
³¹*Ibid.*, p. 160.
³²*Ibid.*, p. 168.
³³Roth, *opus. cit.*, p. 87.
³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 88.
³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 93.
³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 93.
³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 96.
³⁸Baron, *opus. cit.*, IV, p. 22.
³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 71.
⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 68.
⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 69.
⁴²Roth, *opus. cit.*, p. 98.
⁴³Baron, *opus. cit.*, IV, p. 206.
⁴⁴Roth, *opus. cit.*, p. 228.
⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 229.
⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 230.
⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 230.
⁴⁸*Ibid.*, p. 231.
⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 231.
⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 231.
⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 232.
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⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 235.

- ⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p. 235.
- ⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 236.
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- ⁹²*Ibid.*, p. 257.
- ⁹³*Ibid.*, p. 258.
- ⁹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 259.

SENATOR PAUL TSONGAS

ADDRESS TO THE Touro SYNAGOGUE
NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND
AUGUST 26, 1979

To address you today in this holy place is a rare opportunity and a deep honor for me. This synagogue has great significance both architecturally and historically. It is a beautiful monument to an ageless faith, a landmark in the state that stands for religious toleration.

Religious freedom is a basic human right. Governments try to deny it, but ultimately they are unsuccessful. Tyrants can control conversations, but they can't pry into people's hearts. There are still countries where Jewish people are denied the right to live free of discrimination, where they are still denied their basic human rights.

This is a time of great danger to Israel. I have always supported your cause in Congress. So I am here today as a long-time friend and supporter. We must recommit ourselves to fights for the basic rights of all persecuted individuals and groups.

But defending basic rights everywhere is not a mere matter of practicality. It is to recognize the nature of human rights; they are universal; they are indivisible. You who are here today have a strong sense of what suffering is about, but it's an abstraction for many Americans. The arithmetic of atrocity, persecution and oppression is hard to grasp:

- thousands of Ugandans
- millions of Southeast Asians
- 6 million Jews

The numbers can be numbing to people who have not suffered extremely — whether from anti-Semitism or another brand of hatred.

Today I want to talk to you about gross violations of basic human rights taking place in various parts of the world. Perhaps the most recent example of such violations is found in Southeast Asia where oppressive regimes are compelling hundreds of thousands to flee their homes. Their desperate search for refuge has led the so-called "Boat People" to the high seas much like the Jews of Europe fled from Hitler's tyranny

in any way they could. And, as we are painfully aware, victims of persecution are found throughout the world. Of particular concern to me are events also taking place in Africa, Cyprus and the Soviet Union.

The Central African Empire has become a chamber of horrors under Emperor Bokassa, who staged a \$25 million coronation in 1977. The Emperor's killer instincts are clothed in a new constitution, which pretends to safeguard individuals' rights. For example, it prohibits arbitrary detainment, and guarantees the right to a fair trial. These are but empty guarantees.

The most recent, appalling evidence of such hypocrisy in the Central African Empire is the slaughter of school children there. Earlier this year, students between the ages of 8 and 16 protested rules requiring them to buy and wear official uniforms. On April 18, the authorities rounded up more than 100 students. They were put in prison under such crowded conditions that a number of them died from suffocation. Some children were stoned by members of the Imperial Guard as punishment for throwing stones at the Emperor's car. Others were bayoneted or beaten to death. Amnesty International cites reliable reports that between 50 and 100 of the children were killed in prison. And a source of my own inside the country indicates that several hundred protesting children and mothers were killed.

South Africa is an other example of arbitrary detention and routine torture. The life expectancy of people imprisoned under the Terrorism Act and other repressive measures is poor. Official explanations of wrongful deaths while in custody are imaginative. The death of Black leader Steve Biko in 1977 — and the coverup that followed — gave impetus to outrage within South Africa and throughout the world.

In South Africa, the denial of fundamental rights is inherent in the racist system of government. Time is running out for any chance of a peaceful transition to majority rule. That is why I recently proposed a new plan by which universities would sell their stock in companies doing business in South Africa. Under "phased-conditional divestiture," universities would join in a 5-year process of selling their tainted holdings. Each year they would sell 20% of the stock unless South Africa makes progress in ending apartheid. Divestiture is an essential part of what Americans must do about the world's worst example of racial oppression.

Human suffering in *Ethiopia* is a particular concern of mine. I was a teacher there with the Peace Corps in the early 1960s. I visited Ethiopia again in December 1977 as a Member of Congress, and found the capital city battered by random violence. The military rulers who overthrew Haile Selassie in 1974 still face violence all round. They fought fire with fire, terror with terror.

An unusual group in this mix of violence and death may have come to your attention. They are the *Falashas*, a tribe of black Jews in north-west Ethiopia. In 1975 the Government of Israel accepted the Falashas as citizens under the law of return. They are under relentless attack by neighboring tribes because of their loyalty to the central government.

In January an Israeli official announced that 2,000 Falashas had been killed or wounded by rebels. Thousands of others have been driven from their homes, and reportedly are near starvation. Those few Falashas who already are in Israel warn that their tribe is threatened with a "black holocaust" unless fast action is taken to protect them. Their threatened elimination must not be condoned by silence in Congress, in the Knesset, or wherever concerned citizens can raise their voices in protest.

Another dangerous situation in which I have sincere interest is *Cyprus*, where there are now 200,000 refugees. US policy since the Turkish invasion and partial occupation in 1974 has been inconsistent and ineffective.

We should apply strong pressure on Turkey to allow refugees to return to their homes in Cyprus. Instead, the Senate agreed in May to another decrease in American pressure on Turkey. We changed \$50 million in loan money into a \$50 million military aid grant. I doubt Turkey's incentive to negotiate seriously on the future of Cyprus and its refugees. The stories of Turkey's economic distress didn't persuade me, considering the cost of maintaining an occupation army on Cyprus. I argued against the giveaway, but lost. The refugees are still homeless.

My heritage, as you know, is Greek — and the Cyprus deadlock is the heaviest weight in the world on the shoulders of Greek people. The Jewish people are subject to discrimination and suffering all over the world. But it is the Kremlin that threatens to become the world's citadel of anti-Semitism.

As the son of an immigrant, I know the right to emigrate as a basic

human right. And for Jews living in nations where the effects of anti-Semitism are most severe, it is perhaps the most basic. It is critical for oppressed minorities, dissidents and divided families. Thousands of Jews who have applied for exit visas from the Soviet Union have lost their jobs and their basic rights. We must continue to speak out, and to write letters and telegrams to Mr. Brezhnev. We will not be content with a handful of prisoner releases, or with other cosmetic changes.

A crass irony of Soviet prisons is that citizens are thrown into them for monitoring compliance with the Helsinki accords — an international agreement to ensure human rights. American leaders and all citizens should do what they can to communicate and support the cause of those who leave Russia for Israel.

I must mention in particular the case of Anatoly Shcharansky, who had spent over a year in prison even before his pro forma trial and prefabricated conviction last summer. I spoke with Mrs. Shcharansky in Washington earlier this year, and I am eager to help channel pressure for his release from prison and from the Soviet Union.

Shcharansky's mother and brother visited him in prison on August 6. They have reported that his health continues to be extremely poor. He has lost a great amount of weight. He suffers severe headaches that affect his vision, and he has difficulty speaking. He is deprived of adequate medical care.

This year's increase in the number of emigrants from Russia cannot make us forget the harsh, inhuman treatment of Russian citizens who are still refused permission to leave. There is speculation that Mr. Shcharansky may be given his freedom, when the Kremlin makes a cold-hearted calculation that the ongoing cost in world opinion is too high. If it happens, there are hundreds of others to take his place in our hearts, in our prayers, and in our petitions.

There is never a shortage of human rights abuses, and yet recent developments are not entirely negative. In Uganda and Equatorial Guinea reigns of terror have been overthrown.

Perhaps you will find a hopeful sign if you examine the Senate. Your people and mine came to America, and tried to endure and defeat discrimination. Without wanting to make too much of mere numbers. I am proud to note that there are now 2 Greek-Americans and 7 Americans of the Jewish faith in the US Senate.

Finally, it is appropriate that there are Greek and Jewish inflections here tonight as we discuss human rights. It was in Ancient Greece that the civil and political rights of the individual took root. And it was in Ancient Israel that much of our sense of justice was shaped. For us to lead the way in seeking basic human rights for all people, we must merely pool our principles and follow them.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association was held in the auditorium of the Jewish Community Center, 401 Elmgrove Avenue, Providence, on Sunday afternoon, May 6, 1979 and was called to order by the President, Benton H. Rosen at a quarter of three.

The Annual Report was read by the secretary, Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky.

Mrs. Louis I. Sweet, Treasurer, reported a balance on hand as of January 1, 1979 of \$3,333.28 with \$184.81 of this in the checking account and \$3,148.47 in the savings account. The three special endowment funds, the Benton H. and Beverly Rosen Book Fund, the Seebert J. and Gertrude N. Goldowsky Research Scholarship Fund, and the Erwin E. and Pauline E. Strasmich General Fund contain respectively as of this date \$1,437.67, \$925.84, and \$348.64.

There will be a balanced budget with a possible surplus for the ensuing year, reported Mr. Louis I. Sweet, Finance Chairman. He projects a budget of \$7,200.00 and an income of \$9000.00.

Dr. Seebert J. Goldowsky, in his valedictory as Editor of the *Notes*, gave a brief history of the publication. His retirement was accepted with applause. His successor, Dr. Albert C. Salzberg, spoke briefly about his background and reported that he already has received promises of papers from Rabbis Bohnen and Braude, Mrs. Alice Goldstein, Bartholomew Schiavo, Bernard Segal, and Melvin L. Zurier.

Librarian, Mrs. Abraham Horvitz, reported on the ever-increasing activities of the Library.

Ms. Sonya Michel, recipient of the Association's research scholarship, expressed her gratitude to the Association for enabling her to study the Jewish community and its institutions. She noted that we are interested today in social history, rather than just intellectual and economic history. She thanked the Rhode Island Jewish community for its cooperation and for helping to make living and studying here such a pleasure.

In his President's Report, Mr. Rosen read Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus's letter laudatory of the Association's work. He appealed for pictures

and reported that Mrs. Florence Markoff has promised to do oral history. He then presented a handsome recognition plaque to Dr. Goldowsky honoring him for his work as editor for the past eighteen years, for which the latter expressed gratitude.

As a parting gift to Mrs. Sweet, who was retiring today after twenty-odd years of faithful service as treasurer, Mr. Rosen gave her an engraved gold charm. She responded with thanks.

Melvin L. Zurier, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, presented the following slate of officers for election: Dr. Marvin Pitterman, President; Dr. Bartholomew P. Schiavo, Vice President; Mrs. Seebert J. Goldowsky, Secretary; and Mrs. Samuel L. Kasper, Treasurer. Jerome Spunt made the motion that the secretary cast one ballot for the entire slate; it was seconded and passed. Mr. Zurier thanked Mr. Rosen for his three years of devoted leadership.

The Ninth Annual David Charak Adelman Lecture was given by Dr. Robert G. Weisbord, Professor of History at the University of Rhode Island. Titled "Looking Backwards — the Shtetl: The Source of Eastern European Immigration", Dr. Weisbord's talk was based on rare films taken by his father in 1932 on a return visit to the shtetl in Poland where he was born. This Jewish community, now called Kurov, was established in the 15th century when land was given to the Jews by a nobleman. At the start of World War I there were institutions such as Zionism, socialism and communism, and the Jews were in commerce and trade. During the period of Mr. Weisbord's visit, sixty-six percent of the shtetl's population of 4000 was Jewish, and there was an uneasy relationship with the forty-four percent who were Christian. With Polish anti-semitism going back far in Polish history, there were occasional pogroms during this period, and in the 1930's the position of the Jews deteriorated badly.

The meeting was adjourned at four-thirty P.M., after which a collation was served. Mrs. Marvin Pitterman chaired the Hospitality Committee, assisted by the Mesdames Benton H. Rosen, Ellis A. Rosenthal, Albert C. Salzberg, Bernard Segal, Erwin E. Strasmich, and Louis I. Sweet.

Respectfully submitted,
MRS. SEEBERT J. GOLDOWSKY
Secretary

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

by SEEBERT J. GOLDOWSKY, M.D.

Recent acquisitions in the library of the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association containing items of Rhode Island interest and a listing of the items:

1. *Morton Allan Directory of European Passenger Steamship Arrivals*. For the years 1890 to 1930 at the port of New York and for the years 1904 to 1926 at the ports of New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Baltimore. Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., Baltimore, 1979. 268 pages.

This is primarily a source book, listing by year, by steamship line, by steamer, by date of arrival, by point of arrival, and by point of departure all arrivals during the period specified.

While having no entries directly mentioning Rhode Island, the usefulness of this compendium for research is apparent.

2. *New World Immigrants. A Consolidation of Ship Passenger Lists and Associated Data from Periodical Literature*. Ed. by Michael Tepper. Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., Baltimore, 1979. Two volumes, each volume containing an index of names and an index of ships. Vol. I, 568 pages. Vol. II, 602 pages.

Volume II contains reprints of two papers originally appearing in *The Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, relating to naturalization of Jews in the American colonies. Both contain names relevant to Newport Jews. The paper of Hühner (see below) relates the well-known story of Aaron Lopez and Isaac Elizer of Newport relative to their naturalizations outside Rhode Island.

Volume II, pages 143-157. "The Naturalization of Jews in the American Colonies under the Act of 1740". By Dr. J.H. Hollander.

Volume II, pages 158-163. "Naturalization of Jews in New York under the Act of 1740". By Leon Hühner. The story of Lopez and Elizer appears on page 162.

3. *The Jewish Contribution to Civilization*. By Cecil Roth. Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York and London, 1949. Third printing. 410 pages.

Page 261. Manufacture of castile soap by James Lucena of Newport. Introduction of spermaceti candle making by Jacob Rodrigues Rivera of Newport.

Page 350, footnote. Aaron Lopez of Newport contributed timber to Brown University for the construction of its new building in Providence.

4. *American Jews: Their Story*. By Oscar Handlin. Pub. by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, One Nation Library pamphlet series, undated. 48 pages, paperback.

Pages 10-11. Mentions the merchants of colonial Newport and Touro Synagogue.

5. *Elmwood, Providence*. Statewide Historical Preservation Report P-P-3, Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, June 1979. 60 pages, paperback.

Page 10. Samuel Bomes builds three-decker houses on Gallatin Street and Bellevue Avenue for investment.

Pages 14-15. Arrival of Jews in Elmwood section prior to 1895.

Page 15. Temple Beth-El built at Broad and Glenham Streets in 1910 and Temple Beth-Israel on Niagara Street in 1922.

Page 22. Illustrations of several dwellings owned by Jews.

6. *First American Jewish Families*. 600 Genealogies 1654-1977. Compiled by Malcolm H. Stern. American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio and American Jewish Historical Society, Waltham, Massachusetts, 1978. 419 pages.

In essence an update of *Americans of Jewish Descent* compiled by the same author and published in 1960. As was noted in our entry for that work (*RIJHN* 7:446, No 3, Nov. 1977): "This classical work contains many Rhode Island items too numerous to mention". For the newer work one would add the description "monumental".

7. *Wolfson of Harvard: Portrait of a Scholar*. By Leo W. Schwartz. The Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1978. 283 pages.

Page 169. Rabbi William G. Braude of Providence attends Wolfson's 68th birthday celebration.

Page 218. Supplies a priest from his home village the name of a person in Providence, R. I. from that town.

Pages 253-254. Joel G. Braude, son of Rabbi William G. Braude, is graduate student of Wolfson's. Acts as cook, chauffeur, messenger, valet, and sounding board.

Page 256. Wolfson's "living will" witnessed by Joel G. Braude.

NECROLOGY

DR. ALBERT C. BERGER, born in Austria, July 1, 1897, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Berger.

Dr. Berger, an orthodontist, formerly had offices in Providence and New London, Conn. He moved to Florida shortly after his retirement in 1977. He was a 1918 graduate of Tufts University Dental School and was formerly an instructor in orthodontics there.

An avid golfer, he was a former member of the Metacomet Country Club, East Providence, and Ledgemont Country Club, Seekonk. He was founder and past president of the Touro Fraternal Association.

Died in Lauderhill, Florida, August 22, 1979.

DR. DAVID FISH, born in Providence, June 11, 1907, son of the late Joseph and Rose (Eizenberg) Fish.

A psychiatrist, Dr. Fish was chief of the department of neurology and psychiatry at Miriam Hospital from 1955 to 1966, and at Rhode Island Hospital from 1967 to 1976 and president of its medical staff association in 1969 and 1970.

Dr. Fish was former chairman of the Mental Health Committee of the Rhode Island Medical Society and had served on three Governor's Commissions: one for the Charles V. Chapin Hospital; one for the improvement of medical standards at the state hospital at Howard, and one for the study of drugs and narcotics, from 1963 to 1971. He was a member of the board of trustees of the Jewish Home for the Aged.

A 1935 graduate of Brown, he received his medical degree from Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, in 1939. During World War II Dr. Fish was an Army major, serving as chief of the department of psychiatry and neurology at the Waltham Regional Hospital.

Died in Providence, May 3, 1979.

HERMAN S. GALKIN, age 81, long active in the Boy Scouts of Rhode Island.

President of the Galkin Company, he had been associated with the Boy Scouts since 1910. In 1977, he received the Shofar award of the National Council, Boy Scouts of America, for "forming those troops which were sponsored by Jewish institutions" within the Narragansett Council. Governor Garrahy took note of his scouting service when he proclaimed March 18, 1977 as Herman S. Galkin Day in Rhode Island.

Mr. Galkin once served as acting superintendent of the Jewish Orphanage of Rhode Island and during the 1920s organized a scout troop at the Training School for Boys. He also organized the first summer playground at the Jewish Community Center and worked with handicapped children as a member of the Providence Rotary Club. He was also involved with the Jewish Home for the Aged, the Roger Williams Lodge B'Nai Brith, and the Touro Fraternal Association.

Died in Cranston, June 17, 1979.

RABBI ISRAEL M. GOLDMAN, son of the late Morris and Anna (Rosen) Goldman, born in Warsaw, Poland, in 1905. He came to New York City in 1910.

Rabbi Goldman was one of this country's foremost conservative Jewish Leaders, and was a founder of Temple Emanu-El in Providence. Coming to Providence to help establish the Jewish congregation, he led the Temple from the time he was ordained in 1926, until 1948. He helped organize the Rhode Island Seminar on Human Relations and served in several social action programs.

He developed a national reputation as a Jewish religious leader during his 23 years in Rhode Island. In 1946, he was elected president of the Rabbinical Assembly of America. In 1948 he left Temple Emanu-El to lead the Chizuk Amuno Congregation in Baltimore, Maryland.

Rabbi Goldman attended New York public schools, graduating from the City College of New York in 1925. He received a master's degree from Columbia University and then studied Hebraic tradition at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, from which he received his doctorate in Hebrew literature, with honors, in 1926. He was also the recipient of honorary degrees from the Seminary and from Brown University. He was also an author of several books, including the "Life and Times of Rabbi David Ibn Zimbra" and "Lifelong Learning Among Jews." His last book in 1975 was "Adult Education from Biblical Times to the Twentieth Century."

Died in Baltimore, Maryland February 9, 1979.

MERRILL I. HASSENFELD, born in Providence, Rhode Island, February 19, 1918, a son of the late Henry and Marion (Frank) Hassenfeld. A vice chairman and chief executive officer of Hasbro Industries, Inc. of Pawtucket, R. I., he was prominent in Jewish affairs nationally and internationally. He was a founder of Brandeis University, was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, served on the boards of several companies, was a former president of the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island, a co-founder of the Jewish Community Center. He was also a life trustee of the United Jewish Appeal, and was instrumental in restructuring the Jewish Agency in Israel.

Mr. Hassenfeld was a director of the Committee for the Economic Growth of Israel, a member of the Rhode Island Area Committee of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, and was made a Fellow of Brandeis University in 1963. He was a member of the executive committee of Temple Emanu-El, an original incorporator of the Hillel Foundation of Brown University and was on the executive boards of several institutions, and was a generous contributor to many charitable causes.

Died in Providence, Rhode Island, March 21, 1979.

RABBI EMANUEL LAZAR, born in Romania, August 3, 1909, son of Moshe Elya and Rose Lazar.

He was spiritual leader of Congregation Mishkon Tfiloh, having served since 1963. He was ordained at the Rabbinical Academy of Tasnad in Romania and received his secular education at the College of the City of New York.

Died in Providence, April 12, 1979.

BENJAMIN J. PULNER, born in Providence, Rhode Island, July 26, 1911, a son of the late Morris and Rebecca (Rose) Pulner.

A World War II Army Veteran, he saw action at Anzio, and the Omaha Beach landing in Normandy. Mr. Pulner had been awarded two Purple Hearts. He was a member of Temple Beth-El, Roosevelt Lodge, F & AM, the Jewish War Veterans, the Rhode Island Jewish Historical Association, the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, and was active in the Jewish Federation of Rhode Island.

Died in Boca Raton, Florida, March 7, 1979.

DR. MEYER SAKLAD, born in Boston, April 21, 1901, son of the late Jacob and Mary (Karger) Saklad.

Dr. Saklad was chief of the anesthesiology department at Rhode Island Hospital from 1939 until 1962 when he retired to be replaced by his brother, Dr. Elihu Saklad. The brothers collaborated in anesthesiological research for many years, specializing in methods and equipment for patients with respiratory conditions. Upon retirement, Dr. Saklad became physician in charge of anesthesia research, and lectured at Brown University division of biological and medical science.

In 1948 he visited Poland and Finland under a program to train physicians of those countries in new anesthesiological techniques. The trip was sponsored by the World Health Organization.

A noted amateur photographer, his photographs were displayed at the Providence Art Club, of which he was a member.

Died in Providence, July 26, 1979.

ABRAHAM SOLOVEITZIK, born in Westerly, October 17, 1910, long-time editor and reporter for the Westerly Sun.

Known by scores of reporters as "Abe," Mr. Soloveitzik developed a reputation as an unstintingly fair reporter and became a journalistic institution in his home town. He worked for the Sun from 1927 until his retirement in 1975. He was city editor from 1956 until 1975, when after an illness he returned to reporting and occasional city desk duty.

He was a member of the American Legion, the Elks Club and the Westerly Yacht Club. He was an Army veteran of World War II. He was the recipient of numerous awards for his civic and charitable activities, including a special award given him in 1973 by the Rhode Island Heart Association.

Died in Westerly, June 11, 1979.

HAROLD D. SWEET, born in Providence, Rhode Island on April 1, 1910, a son of the late Jacob and Bella (Fromme) Sweet. A life long resident of Providence, he moved to Pawtucket, Rhode Island fifteen years ago. For over forty years, before his retirement, Mr. Sweet had operated the Lion Food Store on Hope Street in Providence. In 1976, he obtained his high school equivalency diploma and was taking courses at Rhode Island College in Providence, toward a degree in gerontology.

Mr. Sweet was a member of Temple Beth David-Anshni-Kovni, the Touro Fraternal Association, Roosevelt Lodge No. 35, F & AM, the Palestine Temple of Shriners, the Rhode Island Jewish His-

torical Association, the Jewish Home for the Aged of Rhode Island, and the Trowel Club of Providence, R. I.

Died in Providence, Rhode Island, March 7, 1979.

AGNES M. SYMONDS, born in Pittsburgh on March 8, 1895, daughter of Bernard and Golda Krieger.

She was past president of the Chopin Club and the Narragansett Council of Campfire Girls and a former member of the boards of directors of the Rhode Island Philharmonic, the State Ballet and the Civic Chorale.

Died on March 14, 1979.

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Jacob Eaton, late of the North End