The Jews of Des Moines

The First Century

by

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Published by The
JEWISH WELFARE FEDERATION
of Des Moines, Iowa

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THE JEWISH WELFARE FEDERATION
OF
DES MOINES, IOWA



Printed in the United States of America
Press of Wallace-Homestead Co.

THE WRITING OF THIS VOLUME
WAS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH
A GRANT OF THE
JEWISH WELFARE FEDERATION
OF DES MOINES, IOWA

DEDICATED TO THE
JEWISH MEN AND WOMEN
OF DES MOINES



HAPPY HE WHO REMEMBERS HIS FOREFATHERS WITH PRIDE, WHO WITH PLEASURE RELATES THE STORY OF THEIR DEEDS, AND WHO SILENTLY REJOICING SEES HIMSELF LINKED TO THE END OF THIS GOODLY CHAIN.

Anonymous

FOREWORD

From the fall of 1954 and through the spring of 1955, Jewish communities throughout the United States celebrated the 300th anniversary of Jewish settlement in the United States. This was the tercentenary year, a milestone of Jewish life in America. It was the 300th year since the establishment of the first Jewish community in the United States.

There is reason for celebration—for what appeared as a dream to a handful of pioneers when they first settled in America, has become a reality in the Liberty and Equality that Jews have enjoyed in America.

On this historic occasion, Des Moines Jewry has also reason to celebrate. In 1845, the first Jewish couple made a long and weary way by covered wagon to central Iowa Territory. From this beginning, a Jewish Community was born, prospered and enjoyed the freedom of their new democracy.

Under the auspices of the Jewish Welfare Federation of Des Moines, Mr. Ellis I. Levitt, Chairman of the Board of Governors, appointed a Tercentenary Committee with Mrs. Eugene Mannheimer as Chairman. The purpose of the committee was to organize observances and celebrations for the tercentenary year, beginning in October, 1954 through May of 1955; and the theme for the celebration was "Man's Opportunities and Responsibilities Under Freedom". Concerts of recorded music by American-Jewish composers and performers, exhibits of painting and sculptures by American artists of Jewish origin were all features of the tercentenary festival of arts. As lasting mementos, the Jewish Community of Des Moines donated to the Des Moines public library's permanent record collection, fifty long-playing recordings of works by American Jewish composers or performers. As an additional lasting gift, the Jewish Community of Des Moines gave the Des Moines Art Center a bronze sculpture, "Sacrifice" by Jacques Lipchitz, a noted sculptor.

It was only fitting on the occasion of the tercentenary celebration that the Jewish people, called the People of the Book,

undertake the compilation of the history of the Jewish Community, its growth and status, its institutions and community endeavors.

A sub-committee assumed the responsibility for the collection of the historical data of the Des Moines Jewish Community with Dr. Frank Rosenthal, then Associate Professor of History at Drake University, given the task of writing the text of the study. The editorial committee included the following:

Mrs. Joseph Barricks
Mr. Albert Berkowitz
Mr. Henry Cowen
Mrs. William Friedman
Mr. Robert Lappen
Mrs. Eugene Mannheimer
Mrs. Hortense Moss
Rabbi Isaac Nadoff
Mr. Sidney Speiglman
Mrs. Irving A. Weingart
Rabbi Irving A. Weingart
Mr. Sam Zeichik
Rabbi Edward Zerin
Dr. Martin Zober

This study is a culmination of painstaking hours of research, reviewing documents and publications and particularly the Memoirs of the late Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer. In order that the author might tell an adequate story of the Jewish people in Des Moines, in addition to the research of the documents, a great number of interviews were held with some of the participants in these early events in the development of the Jewish Community. The focus of this story is upon the religious, economic and social development of the Jew as part of his religious community and also as part of his general community.

We hope the reader will put this book among his cultural treasures to read and reread as a story of the life and experiences of the Jewish people in Des Moines and their contribution to significant phases of general Jewish history in America and, more particularly, as a contribution to the history of Iowa.

Louis I. Nussbaum, *Chairman*
Board of Governors
Jewish Welfare Federation

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INTRODUCTION

THE LAND BETWEEN THE RIVERS

The Iowa country, because of its geographical location, was crossed by many people of diverse background. It became, in part, a crossroad of the nation as 'the way west' led to or through Iowa. For this reason the people of many different nations and religions mingled freely together in the region between the two great rivers.

The religious influence was strong in the Iowa country from the beginning. One of the two white men first credited with exploring part of what is now Iowa was a French missionary priest. Father Jacques Marquette, Jesuit priest, accompanied by Louis Joliet, passed down the Mississippi River from the mouth of the Wisconsin River in 1673. They had ample opportunity to observe the Iowa country along the banks of the great river. A short visit was made to a village of the Illinois Indians near the mouth of the Iowa River. After that other missionaries, along with explorers, trappers, and traders, passed up and down the great river. These men saw the Iowa country, but none remained there for a long period of time.

The idea of freedom has been strong in Iowa even from the beginning of its history. This was found in the relationships with racial minorities as well as in the field of religion. One early instance of this has been reported in connection with Dr. Samuel C. Muir. He was an army surgeon who was stationed at Fort Edwards on the east side of the Mississippi River in Illinois before 1818, more than a decade before the Iowa country was opened for white settlers. Dr. Muir had acquired an Indian wife by whom he had several children. For the good of the service, army officers were forbidden to live with Indian women. It is reported that Dr. Muir refused to abandon his Indian wife and children. Rather than to take such a course of action he resigned his army commission in 1818. Two years later he crossed the

Mississippi River with his family and built a cabin on the present site of Keokuk, Iowa.

The Negroes, as another racial minority group, have been befriended by the people of Iowa. While some slaves were found in the Iowa country, the majority of the white settlers seemed to oppose slavery as an institution. The Missouri Compromise definitely established Iowa as free territory after 1821. Freedom for Negroes in Iowa was further emphasized in 1839. This development came in connection with an Iowa Territorial Supreme Court decision concerning the case of Ralph, a Negro. He was a Missouri slave who had contracted with his master in 1835 for his freedom at the price of $550.00 and interest. His master permitted him to go to the Dubuque lead mines to earn the money to purchase his freedom. When the debt was still unpaid in 1839, the master sent a representative to carry him back to Missouri to slavery. He was taken into custody at the mines. From there he was taken to a boat below Dubuque in order to avoid publicity. A farmer by the name of Alexander Butterworth witnessed the capture of Ralph. Mr. Butterworth disliked the idea of the Missourians carrying the Negro back to slavery. He applied for a writ of habeas corpus for Ralph. The case was quickly taken to the Iowa Territorial Supreme Court. The opinion was delivered by Chief Justice Charles Mason with the two associate justices concurring. The decision was to the effect that human beings could not be regarded as property in the Iowa country, where free soil made free men. Ralph, with his master's consent, had entered the Iowa country, which was then a part of Michigan Territory. He owed his former master a legal debt. For the payment of that debt, however, he could not be carried out of the territory back to slavery.

It was not until Iowa was opened for white settlers, on June 1, 1833, that the religious influence in the new country became stronger. It was in Dubuque, center of lead mining, that the first church in the Iowa country was built. A Methodist circuit rider, Barton Randle, arrived in Dubuque on November 6, 1833,

and held a religious meeting in the Bell Tavern. Later, a small room over a grocery was rented for a meeting place. Since liquor was sold in this grocery, drinking, noise, and confusion during the time of religious services in the room above, made this meeting place unsatisfactory.

Early in the spring of 1834, some devout women in the community organized a Union Sunday School. Also that same spring the Dubuque Methodists decided to build a church. Seventy persons donated money for this purpose. This included three Negroes who may have been slaves. Along with the native Americans there were some persons of Irish, French, and Dutch origin who contributed to the church building. The subscription paper described the proposed building as follows:

> To be built of hewn logs: 20 by 26 feet in the clear; one story, 10 feet high; lower and upper floors, shingled roof; painted with lime and sand; one batten door; four 20 light and one 12 light windows—cost estimated for completing in good plain style $255.00. The above house is built for the Methodist Episcopal Church—but when not occupied by said Church shall be open for Divine service by other Christian Denominations; and may be used for a common school at the discretion of the Trustees.

The records indicate that there was only one Jew, Alexander Levi, residing in Dubuque at that time. That may have been one of the reasons for the failure of the builders of the first church building in Dubuque to make it available for services for non-Christians.

Gradually the number of settlers increased in the Iowa country while it was a part of Michigan Territory and later a part of Wisconsin Territory. By 1838 there were sufficient settlers to justify the organization of the Territory of Iowa. Robert Lucas of Ohio was appointed the first Governor of the Territory of Iowa. He had a good background of military and political experience. Robert Lucas had served with distinction in the War of 1812. He rose in rank until he became a major-general in the militia and a colonel in the United States Army. In addition he had served as a member of the lower house of the Ohio legislature. He served fourteen years in Ohio as state

senator, and in 1832 he was elected Governor of Ohio. National partisan recognition had also been given to Robert Lucas as he was selected as temporary and permanent chairman of the Democratic Convention in Baltimore in 1832.

When Robert Lucas came to Iowa in 1838 as territorial governor, he was an ardent prohibitionist. He stated that he would not appoint anyone to public office who drank liquor or gambled. Governor Lucas was a member of the Methodist Church. He showed great respect, however, for the religious beliefs of others. The first evidence of this came in 1839. At that time an inquiry was received from some Mormon leaders in Missouri, where that religious group was being persecuted, asking Governor Lucas if some of the Mormons could settle in Iowa. Governor Lucas assured them that he knew of no authority that would deprive them of their right to reside in the Territory of Iowa as they were citizens of the United States. Later when a majority of this group left Illinois for the Far West, they crossed Iowa and established several temporary and permanent settlements therein. Thus the Mormons who had been persecuted for their religious beliefs and practices in New York, Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois were hospitably received by the people of Iowa. When a group of European Mormons came to Iowa City in 1856 to begin the long trek to the Great Salt Lake settlement on foot, pushing hand carts, they were befriended and given food by the Iowans. Later, on the trail to Council Bluffs, the Iowans also gave much assistance to the Mormon travelers.

Other religious groups settled in Iowa and continued in their faith without interference. One of the best examples of religious understanding on the part of the Iowans is found in connection with the Amana Society. Not only was this largely a non-English speaking group, but their religious philosophy involved communal living and ownership of property. This was definitely a variation from the individualistic practices of the great mass of the English-speaking frontiersmen. Despite these differences

there is no evidence that the Iowans displayed hostility to this German-speaking, closely integrated, religious group, with their communal way of life. Even the fact that the members of the Amana Society were opposed to war did not seem to arouse antagonism on the part of their Iowa neighbors. The fact that the Amana Society gave the State of Iowa one thousand dollars for military aid early in the Civil War may have counteracted any anti-pacifistic attitude toward members of the Society on the part of Iowans.

With this record of racial and religious toleration, the Iowans accepted the Jewish people without evidence of antagonism when they migrated into the territory and state. As noted before, Alexander Levi was among the early settlers coming to Dubuque after the Iowa country was opened to white settlers on June 1, 1833. Mr. Levi arrived in Dubuque on August 1 of that year and soon opened a grocery store in the frontier mining town on the banks of the Mississippi River. Others soon followed and were found, at first, in the river towns along the Mississippi. Keokuk probably had the largest number of Jewish settlers of any Iowa community before the Civil War. There the first Jewish organization was formed in the Iowa country. As the opportunities in the central part of Iowa began to be recognized, more and more pioneers tended to settle in communities away from the river cities. The Jewish settlers moved west along with the others. With the population expanding westward in Iowa, the capital city at Iowa City was no longer centrally located. As a result agitation for a new location for the state capital became widespread. One unsuccessful attempt was made to locate a capital at Monroe City east of Des Moines. Finally, by 1857, Des Moines was definitely chosen as the new state capital by constitutional provision.

Many persons migrated to the new state capital at Des Moines in order to take advantage of the many opportunities available in a growing western town. People of many religions, races, and nationalities came to the bustling town at the mouth of the

Raccoon River. This migration included Jewish settlers who came as pioneers to aid in the development of the new community. Although their numbers were small, their impact upon the cultural and commercial growth of Des Moines has been very great. Their contributions to the enrichment of life in the capital city of Iowa has continued unabated through the years. This has aided in making Des Moines not only the political capital of Iowa but also a cultural center of great importance.

WILLIAM D. HOULETTE

I

In The Beginning

1845-1870

THE PIONEER

Wilhelm Krauss, the son of Mordecai and Rachel Krauss, was born in Demmelsdorf, Bavaria, in 1823. At the age of sixteen, Wilhelm left the scenes of his happy childhood and sailed across the great sea. After a long and arduous voyage which lasted two months, he arrived in New York with but ten dollars in his pocket. He made his way to Cincinnati, where he started as a peddler. From this point his Americanization proceeded at a rapid pace. He changed his name to William Kraus and soon purchased a horse and buggy, a true indication of economic success. In 1845 he married Minnie Lauer, the girl whom he had met aboard ship on the trip from the "old country."

That same year the young couple left Cincinnati by covered wagon and made their long and weary way across the plains to the forks of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, the site of a small abandoned army post of a few cabins and perhaps fifteen or twenty inhabitants. It was a six hundred mile trip and William and Minnie Krauss decided to try their luck at this outpost of civil-

ization. Word had been sent out that sections of central Iowa territory had been opened to white settlers after the successful conclusion of treaties with the Indians of that region.

The young bride and her husband set up housekeeping in one of the log cabins which had been left standing by the soldiers, and a second cabin was rented to serve as a storeroom and shop from which to sell the supply of drygoods, which the young merchant had brought with him from Cincinnati. A year later they were joined by Minnie's brother, William Lauer, who undoubtedly brought a second load of merchandise with him from the East. During that first year the two young people spent two hundred dollars for household and living expenses, a meager sum even then for life in a frontier village.

The early annalists of Des Moines, J. M. Dixon in 1876 and Will Porter in 1898, listed William Kraus together with Benjamin Hoxie, Chapman and Thomas, B. F. Allen, and Sam Keen among the earliest businessmen of Des Moines: "William Kraus, Clothing ect," and, in 1846, when a census of Raccoon Forks was taken, our friend and his brother-in-law were enumerated. Some of their early loans and land purchases are also found in the records at the Polk County Court House.

> It was in 1845, and I had just married. I built a log store in the settlement called racoon forks, but which is now Des Moines. One day in the road in front of my place, a young Indian buck deliberately shot an arrow through his old father's heart. He fled to the wild country.
>
> The county has just elected officers, and the first jury was impaneled. Our foreman was a lank, big Kentuckian, who got the jury together, and they went, in canoe, across the river to the Indian settlement. According to their custom the Indians had buried the old Indian in the ground, feet first, and had him packed around with earth above his

waist. When the foreman saw him he turned and said "Gentlemen of the Jury, the old Indian is dead, dead, deader than hell! We can't do anything for him—there's no use putting the country to any expense, so the jury will adjourn."

And that was what the first jury in that county did.

And in a letter to Will Porter, dated February 1, 1898, Mr. Kraus related the following incidents:

When I first stepped upon the soil of yours, or rather my city, it was called "Racoon Forks," and I don't think that we could have counted more than 15 or 20 inhabitants. Later, in the Fall of 1848, people commenced to come in, and upon taking the census at the end of that year, we mustered up the great number of 48 souls, and in order to make a larger showing, we over-stepped the town limits, and counted in a large respectable colored family by the name of "Rathburn," thus raising the number to fifty-three. A little later on we organized and made a town of it, and called it "Fort Des Moines." From that time on we commenced to grow very rapidly. A great many of the old settlers, as I believe, are no more, but some such as Hoyt Sherman, P. M. Cassidy, Frank Allen, and others are still in our midst, and long life to them. In those early days I was one of the founders of a Public School, and held a directorate in it. I also aided in building churches, and their completion came in the following order: first the Methodist, then the Presbyterian, Baptist and Universalist, and some years after, the Catholic. To each and every one I was a liberal contributor. Thus you will see the great progress we were making, even in those early days.

In January 1849, I was appointed as one of the lobbyists to Iowa City, to influence the legislation for the removal of the Capitol to "Fort Des Moines," and we carried the day. Those who were sent to the former city on that mission were Judge McKay, Dr. Brooks, Hoyt Sherman, Mr. Berkley and myself. My large acquaintances all over the State aided me materially in bringing my influence to bear to further that object.

Those early days of my life are now looked upon by me

with a great deal of pleasure, and had I the time I could tell you more, but will let the above suffice for the present.

Before long the days of peddling had become a thing of the past for our two young Jewish merchants. On July 24, 1849, THE IOWA STAR, Fort Des Moines' first newspaper, published by Barlow Granger, carried this elaborate advertisement:

Great Attraction
New Spring and Summer Goods
Cheaper Than Ever

Lauer and Co. Have been receiving and opening the largest and most desirable stock of dry goods ever brought to this place, to which they would respectfully invite the attention of their friends and customers generally and the ladies particularly.

We are determined to sell goods cheap, and hope that our friends will call and take a thorough look at our stock before purchasing elsewhere.

For the Gentlemen! A large and splendid stock of ready made clothing of all kinds, from a handkerchief to a fine broadcloth coat. These goods are laid in low, and will be sold for ready pay a little cheaper than the cheapest.

Remember Lauer & Co.'s cheap Dry Goods and Clothing Store, on 2nd Street between Vine and Market, and remember too, that a dime can be saved on every dollar.

In the years which followed the name of the store was frequently changed: Lauer and Co., The German Store, Lauer & Kraus, and Krause and Brother are some of the signatures found in the newspaper advertisements. It seems that William Lauer returned to Cincinnati in 1850, when Max Kraus came out to join his brother, and two years later the following entry was made for the Iowa Census:[2]

William Kraus	No. of males	No. of females	No. of voters	Total
	2	2	2	4
	2	2	2	4

Business methods of the day in an area of little cash and many kinds of currency are illustrated in some of the newspaper notices found:

> All kinds of produce and cash taken in exchange for cash . . . .
>
> Look out. All persons knowing themselves indebted to the firm of Lauer and Kraus are requested to call and settle immediately. . . . .
>
> We intend selling low for cash.[3]

By 1850 some nine dry goods stores had been established in Des Moines, one of the points on the road to California, and to be sure that the Kraus' store would not be forgotten, the local papers often carried two advertisements in the same issues. William Kraus took an active part in civic affairs. He served on the Petit Jury for $2.50, went to Iowa City as a delegate to the State Railroad Convention (February 15, 1850), was a member of the committee petitioning the County Court to enable incorporation of the town (August 30, 1851), and ran, though unsuccessfully, for City Council in 1852.

Even the severe flood of 1851 did not permanently affect the prosperity of William and Max Kraus. Tax records of 1852 show that their real estate and movable property were valued at close to $4,500.00 and that their taxes amounted to $30.74.[4]

Only a few dry goods and clothing stores continued to operate once the first excitement of the gold rush had died down and once it became apparent that the railroads would not be built for some time. The small city continued to grow steadily. More than 700 inhabitants and many more than thirty stores were counted by the end of 1852. Seven or eight medical practitioners and approximately twenty lawyers were listed, the latter a clear

indication of the city's importance for dealings in real estate and land speculation.[5]

It was in 1853 that Mrs. Kraus gave birth to a daughter, Henrietta, the first Jewish child to be born in Des Moines. Later that year William Kraus liquidated his business and returned to his family home in Cincinnati. The following entry, dated February 2, appeared in THE IOWA STAR on February 16, 1854:

> All persons indebted to me on account of the late firm of Kraus and brother, will please take an easy payment of same. I have left all my notes and accounts with Messrs. Cassady and Shearman and W. W. Williams, and unless the same are settled in a reasonable time, I will be compelled to collect . . . Wm. Kraus.

William Kraus was remembered for many years as one of the pioneers of the city; and when in 1896 Des Moines celebrated its semi-centennial, he was officially invited to participate. There is a strange sequel to the story of this Jewish pioneer. The IOWA STATE REGISTER carried two stories, one on October 7, 1861, and the other appeared in the January 15, 1862 issue:

> Max Kraus, agent, an old citizen of Des Moines, well and favorably remembered by early settlers, has returned to this place, and opened up at No. 3 Exchange Block a new Clothing and Dry Goods store. He will have a solid run of custom, for he has a business tact, that will make him successful. He advertises liberally, and no man can do that and suffer for want of customers.
>
> Selling off at Cost!
>
> At No. 3, Exchange Block, Walnut Street.
> On account of sickness in my family I am compelled to leave this place, and therefore will close out at cost my entire stock of Dry Goods, Clothing, Hats, Gent's Furn. Goods, etc.
>
> Max Kraus, agt. No. 3 Exchange Block

The latter advertisement was terminated on February 4, 1862, and nothing further was heard of Max Kraus.[6]

No new Jewish families seem to have made their home in Des Moines for several years to come. An occasional story, such as the one quoted below appeared in THE OCCIDENT although the parties involved may or may not have been Jewish.

> SUNDAY LAWS IN IOWA.—It will be seen from the subjoined that it has been found impossible to collect a fine for laboring on Sunday in Iowa; and it strikes us that a similar result would follow in all the States, if the attempt were made to enforce the collection of a fine, as in the present case.
>
> Philip Alexander was arrested in Washington township, Iowa, for working on the Sabbath day. The justice imposed a fine of five dollars and costs. Alexander paid no attention to the proceedings, and was arrested on the execution. Refusing to pay, he was committed to jail. A habeas corpus was sued out, and the Supreme Court discharged him. (Feb., 1856, vol. XIII: 11; pp. 558-559).

In the meantime, Des Moines continued its slow but steady growth. The Iowa Census of 1856 counted 3,830 inhabitants of whom 139 were naturalized citizens and ninety-three were aliens. By 1860, the number of citizens had risen to 3,965.

In those days Des Moines was a small town. Straddling the Des Moines River near the junction of the Raccoon River, it had developed from a sleepy frontier military outpost, to a county seat. It then became a trading center for immigrants bound for California and for settlers pouring into central and western Iowa. It was "severely isolated by bad roads and hazardous shallow draft steamboating on the Des Moines River, which provided an uncertain outlet through Keokuk to the Mississippi and St. Louis." Travel between St. Louis and Des Moines was

most treacherous. The traveller could foreseeably spend the last two days and nights of this journey going over muddy roads and swollen streams in "mud wagons," built especially with large wheels and broad tires. Inside the town men hurried about with their "trousers tucked in boots and boots generally tucked in mud." Across the river in East Des Moines, "all [was] rude, with stumps of trees, perilous ravines, and walks made of coal slack. . . . Boarding houses on streets were indicated by surveyors' stakes, or by a path through mud of various consistency."[7]

The future was most promising for the city. A new state constitution had been adopted which fixed the capital in Des Moines. In spite of the depression still affecting the United States and despite the difficulties which were to cumulate in a bitter war,

> Building was rampant, and the noise of hammer and saw waked people early at morning and late at night as commercial buildings and shanties went up by the dozens. Real estate men on the east side of the Des Moines River, having won the bitter and scandalous contest against West-siders for the capitol site, were rushing up at their expense, a new capitol building. Things whirled fast, and men were dizzy with schemes as railroad promoters, land seekers, town-lot speculators, settlers, and politicians crowded into town.

Among them were a few Jewish men, with whom the story of the permanent Jewish community began. The most prominent of these were Joseph Kuhn (1826-1895) and his younger brother Isaac, who came to Des Moines in 1856. These men were a part of the wave of German Jewish immigrants who became so prominent in the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

THE COMING OF THE PEDDLER AND THE FIRST PERMANENT SETTLERS

For the European Jews, immigration after 1820 assumed the nature of a mass exodus from their ancient homeland. In western Europe the Jewish population increased much faster than did the general population. This was a tragic development in their already precarious economic situation as small tradesmen who operated in an essentially agricultural society that was being undermined by the first inroads of a new industrial order. Added difficulties were provided when legislative restrictions were imposed by unfriendly governments both before and immediately following 1848, this year of shattered hopes. In Bavaria, Jewish marriages were limited to the eldest son in each family; and schools as well as many occupations remained closed to most Jews. With no future ahead of them, many young Jews joined the ever swelling crowd of their German compatriots who were attracted to America by promises of land and opportunities. Many of these newcomers helped populate the western areas of the United States. The Jewish immigrant of those years rarely became a laborer or farmer, but quite naturally drifted into the field of limited retailing. These men frequently established themselves in the innumerable rural communities throughout the country.

The situation of a typical German-Jewish immigrant might be told in the story of a young man whom we shall call Benjamin. His father was a dealer in second-hand goods or a small store owner some place in Southern Germany. Benjamin, while still in the Old Country, had been apprenticed to a tailor or perhaps another storekeeper. After a harrowing voyage lasting from three to five weeks, he arrived in America with very little, if any

money. Perhaps he found temporary shelter with a relative or friend who had migrated to this country earlier. His prime concern, however, was earning a livelihood. With very little cash he could purchase some yard goods or notions; or if he were penniless, his friend might stake the prospective businessman to a few supplies. He would then set out selling his wares from door to door. In this way our peddler quickly acquired some working capital by which he could expand his activities. Soon his pack carried enough merchandise with which to negotiate a full week's business, and he would set out on foot to visit the farms of the vicinity. Isaac Mayer Wise has given us the following description of the German-Jewish peddler in the 1840's and 1850's:

> (1) The basket peddler—he is as yet altogether dumb and homeless; (2) the trunk-carrier who stammers some little English, and hopes for better times; (3) the pack-carrier, who carries from one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds upon his back, and indulges the thought that he will become a businessman some day. In addition to these, there is the aristocracy, which may be divided into three classes: (1) the wagon-baron, who peddles through the country with a one or two horse team; (2) the jewelry-count, who carries a stock of watches and jewelry in a small trunk, and is considered a rich man even now; (3) the store-prince, who has a shop, and sells goods in it. At first one is the slave of the basket or pack; then the lackey of the horse, in order to become finally the servant of the shop.[8]

In those days of poor communications, with practically no country stores except in the areas of older settlements, the peddler performed a much needed function in the distribution of merchandise. He was a welcome visitor who brought news from the great wide world and who provided the farmer's household with many of the everyday necessities of life and often some small luxuries as

well. All too frequently the farmer lacked even the little bit of cash needed to pay the peddler, who in these cases extended him credit.

Often the peddler accepted farm produce in exchange for his merchandise. However, his problem was getting these bulky farm goods to market and selling them. A horse and wagon for transportation, and a store at his place of residence solved these problems; and every peddler would strive and starve and work to such ends. To become a "horse and buggy baron" was the first step on the long road to success, and it had to be taken at the first possible opportunity since only the strongest and hardiest could weather the hardships of peddler-existence for any great length of time.[9]

The frontier moved westward across the Mississippi just as the railroads sounded the peddler's knell in the East.

> The steam engine was quicker, cheaper and far more efficient than the horse. People preferred trading with a man of their own community when that man could get goods quickly and cheaply by railroad.[10]

In Iowa and other states west of the Mississippi, many Jewish peddlers continued to ply their trade quite profitably until the close of the century. Not that any man could grow rich in this business, but for the immigrant Jew, whether his home was Germany or Eastern Europe, the years he worked as a peddler were his years of Americanization and of learning American business methods. In time many became shopkeepers. They frequently opened peddler-supply stores and later branched out into general merchandise, dry goods, and clothing shops. Some were first class merchants who became the founders and owners of large retail and department stores. The pattern set by the German-Jewish immigrant was re-

peated a generation later by his brethren from Eastern Europe. Once risen from the peddler class, this young merchant could become a dealer of second-hand furniture and eventually an enterprising merchant dealing in new furniture. Others, who had their meager start as hucksters of groceries, fruits and vegetables, soon established themselves as wholesale produce dealers or chain store operators. Still others continued to follow their "German" predecessor as dry goods merchants. This proliferation was evidence of the growing complexities and opportunities of America's economic life.

Let us here illustrate the pre-Civil War phase of Jewish activities in Des Moines. The IOWA STATE JOURNAL of July 25, 1857, the only issue of the Journal on record, carried the following advertisement by J. & I. Kuhn, which was dated April 18, 1957:

> . . . . Gents Furnishings—Piece Goods—Hats & Caps—also Merchant Tailors and Cutters on premises . . . To Country Merchants and Peddlers, we offer great inducement.

Both the advertisement and the store's location changed in January 1858, when the Kuhns also introduced the name "Clothing Emporium."

> THE TRI-WEEKLY CITIZEN, DES MOINES, IOWA, Jan. 30, 1858
>
> WHOLESALE AND RETAIL CLOTHING EMPORIUM
>
> J. & I. Kuhn, Eastside of Second Street, three doors north of Court Avenue.
>
> Have on hand and are constantly receiving ready made clothing. All sizes and qualities, Gents Furnishing Goods. Gent's Dry Goods, Hats and Caps, Trunks and Valises, India Rubber Goods, Yankee Notions etc., All of which will be sold cheaper than ever! We can, and will, give the best bargains in town. Call and See us before purchasing elsewhere. Country Merchants and Strangers will do well to call and see us.

Stores were kept open from 6:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., and on Saturday nights many of them remained open until 11:00 p.m. On warm days both customers and sales-clerks sat around on the stoop and talked; and in the winter they gathered around the belly-stove in the rear of the store.[12]

Because of the continuous currency shortage, "thirty-six merchants agreed to accept Des Moines City Scrip, on par with currency of solvent Western Banks"; and "Cash paid for hides and furs" was a frequent announcement.

With the outbreak of the War Between The States, Iowa merchants anticipated the advantages in raising and marketing wool. Like Isaiah Frankel in Oskaloosa and the Sheuerman Brothers in Marengo, the Des Moines merchants took an active part in this new enterprise. In June of 1862, the Kuhns advertised their desire to purchase one hundred thousand pounds of wool, and Isaac Kahn opened a provision store where the sale of cattle provided a large part of the transactions. The newspapers carried many editorials on the significance of Des Moines in the wool industry of the North.

For several years after 1863 the name of I. Kahn appeared in the newspapers. In the early days of the War, he was driven out of Missouri by the "rebels." He came to Des Moines, where he made an attempt to establish himself. Although in 1863 he claimed to have owned the largest stock of meat and produce in the city, by May of 1864 he gave up this business and became a restaurant owner and saloonkeeper. The following advertisement appeared in the DAILY STATESMAN on May 2, 1864:

> Latest Proclamation! 400,000 recruits wanted—To partake of ice cream at I. Kahn's room on Third Street, between Court Avenue and Walnut Street. Rooms have been fitted

> up expressly for the accommodation of ladies and gentlemen, who can regale themselves to their hearts' content on the most delicious ice cream and lemonade.

Later he advertised the retail sale of strawberries, gooseberries, and fresh oysters. Mr. Kahn was frequently in trouble. From the available records it appears that he was the only Jewish businessman of this period who could not become a success in Des Moines. As a "German saloonkeeper," he felt to the full the virulent attacks of the Republican city administration, which shared the prejudice of the day that saloonkeepers, especially those of German stock, were Democrats and thus only lukewarm in their devotion to the Union. Accusations were numerous, and physical attacks frequently accompanied electioneering in those days of radical reconstruction. In October of 1864, Mr. Kahn was brought before the Mayor's Court on the charge of selling "ginger beer," and his name appeared in and out of the court records until January 27, 1869. On that date the IOWA STATE REGISTER carried the following:

> Kahn vs. the City. The Trial of I. Kahn vs. the city for $20,000.— damages for a broken leg, went to the jury at four o'clock Saturday afternoon. The jury stuck and hung all night, and the next morning reported that they agreed to disagree. The jury was discharged. . . . .

Issac Kahn's name was seen in print for the last time on August 24, 1870. This time it appeared on the Delinquent Tax List of Polk County. Evidently Mr. Kahn had already left the city by that time, and nothing further is known.

Joseph and Isaac Kuhn, however, carried enough weight in the community not to suffer any evil consequences because of their participation in Democratic politics.

Those Revolvers.—It will be remembered by our readers that a few weeks hence ten revolvers were taken from one employee of Messrs. J. & I. Kuhn of this city, who drives a peddling wagon for that firm, at Decatur City, by the order of Captain Summers, who commands a company of "home guards" in Decatur County. Failing to obtain redress in any other quarter, the Messrs. Kuhn made application to the governor to restore the property. Mr. John Lyner, a clerk in the Kuhn store, upon receipt of the order, took it and proceeded immediately to Decatur City, where, after some delay, he succeeded in obtaining the revolvers, but in somewhat damaged condition. They had all been used, and when he reached there, he found they were scattered around in the hands of members of Captain Summers company. The Captain, when interrogated, gave as his authority for taking them, directions from the Marshal, who, he says, further authorized him to come to Des Moines, and "take" more, if he needed them, from the same establishment.

This story, carried in the August 23, 1864, DAILY IOWA STATESMAN, the Democratic paper of the day, is of great interest, since it indicated that the Kuhn's employed peddlers who with their "stores on wheels, drawn by four and six horses" traveled across most of Iowa. The names of these tradesmen were not recorded, though some of them were undoubtedly young Jewish immigrants. The editor of the paper then drew some political conclusion from this incident; and above all, the proof that there existed more "lawlessness among the Republicans than among the good Democrats."

Through it all the Kuhns prospered. As early as 1863, an entire city block was known as Kuhn's Block and their store was referred to as the "Mammoth Mercantile House." THE DAILY STATESMAN of December 4, 1863, recorded at great lengths that Mr. Kuhn introduced in his store a central cash system, which allowed the clerks to give much faster and far more efficient serv-

ice. Theodore Wolf, Joseph Kuhn's brother-in-law, joined the company as a third partner. On July 20, 1864, the public was informed that "one of the Messrs. Kuhn went to the East, the other to Europe; and Mr. Wolf must sell out stock to make place for new merchandise."[12] In those years the cost of a one column ad for twelve months was $140.00; and Kuhn's consistently purchased large space in the papers, while other stores, such as *Simon and Strauss,* advertised very irregularly.

The middle sixties was another period of rapid expansion; with the victorious end of the war in sight and with rich gold fields opening up in the Colorado and Idaho territories, people were willing to invest in new enterprises. In April, 1864, seven clothing and dry goods stores, two of them with Jewish proprietors, were listed in the *Statesman's Business Directory.* A few months later, the list carried nine names, three of which were Jewish-owned stores; J. E. Fleishman of Adel frequently stayed at the Des Moines House; in September of the same year, Julius Mandelbaum and N. L. Goldstone arrived from upstate New York; and another store, *The New York Store* of Jacobs and Wiseman, opened in the same month.[13] Within a year, some of these same Jewish businessmen participated prominently in railroad promotion schemes.[14]

In 1866-67, Mills and Co. published the first Directory of the City of Des Moines. From a population of 7,500 the following have been identified as Jewish:

Jacob Blum, Bookkeeper	Single
David Goldman, Merchant	Single
N. L. Goldstone, Merchant	Single
Saul Herzberg, Merchant	Single
Jos. Hyman, Merchant	Single
Isaac Kahn, Saloonkeeper	Married

Leopold Strauss, Merchant	Single
Leopold Simon, Merchant	Single
Levi Kahn, Clerk	Single
Isaac Kuhn, Merchant	Married
Joseph Kuhn, Merchant	Married
Alex Lederer, Merchant	Single
Julius Mandelbaum, Merchant	Single
David Newman, Clerk	Single

Though they were known to have been in Des Moines, Moses Strauss, Leopold's brother, and Gustave Jacobs were not listed.

These three married couples and the twelve to fifteen single young men formed a Jewish community, too small to maintain a synagogue and regular religious activities, but large enough to worship on the High Holydays and to hold occasional services.

Both in 1863 and 1864, the papers contained short accounts about the celebration of the High Holydays: THE IOWA STATESMAN, September 24, 1863, published this article:

> DAY OF ATONEMENT—Yesterday was the 10th day of tisri, observed by the Israelites, all over the world, as a day of fasting and prayer. Their places of business are closed, and they neither eat nor drink anything from the evening of ninth to the tenth day of tisri. Its observance by our Jewish citizens was to be noted.

One year later on October 11, 1864, the same paper had this to say:

> Yesterday being the Day of Atonement in the Jewish calendar, it was strictly observed by the Israelites of Des Moines by the closing of their places of business, and the holding of religious service.

However, there is no mention of any Jewish religious observances in the papers after 1864. THE IOWA EVE-

NING STATESMAN of October 5, 1868, carried a reference to the singificance of Sukkoth, the biblical feast of Thanksgiving, but without references to the local scene. That the Jewish inhabitants of Des Moines did meet in one of the homes for the major services of the year, can readily be surmised, even though the newspapers of the day did not carry the story.

It was characteristic of the business practices of the day that stores and partnerships were constantly organized and reorganized. Jacobs and Wiseman became S. & G. Jacobs and soon advertised as "The New York Store" of Jacobs and Mandelbaum; all three partnerships remained at the same address, 39 Court Avenue. N. L. Goldstone went into business alone, opening two stores, one at 34 Court Avenue and the other at No. 3 Jones Block on the Eastside. This was a wise step since the various railroad depots were located east of the river. Moses Strauss entered into a partnership with Alexander Lederer. Saul Herzberg came to live in Des Moines to supervise the affairs of Herzberg, Goodman and Co., Dry Goods, and Herzberg and Co., Carpets. These stores were all engaged in retail and "wholesale" trade. Those stores which were willing to equip and extend credit to country merchants and peddlers were known as wholesalers.[15]

Late in the 1860's, Joseph and Isaac Kuhn dissolved partnership, with Joseph operating his business at 33 Court Avenue and Isaac trading at 35 Court Avenue.[16] Joseph retired from retail business in 1874, not yet having reached his fiftieth birthday, and the later city directories listed him as farmer, capitalist, and finally as a retired businessman. He died in 1895, surviving his wife by almost twenty years.[17] Isaac, too, retired from busi-

ness and after 1886 left for New York, where he lived with his two children.

When the second edition of the *Des Moines City Directory and Business Guide* was published in the spring of 1869, approximately thirty-five Jews lived in the city. Five or six marriages had been performed by that time, and several of the families were increasing in size. Those who were listed in this directory for the first time were Henry and Lee Hirsch, clerks; Isaac Hyman, tailor; Levy Ortlieb, clerk; J. Strauss, and E. Thalheimer, salesmen. At that time there was still no mention made of any East-European peddlers or businessmen. The ten or twelve Jewish-owned business houses dealt in dry goods, clothing, haberdashery, notions and furs. Later that year one Moses Walinske, a barber, had a shop at Third and Walnut Streets. After 1871, his name is no longer found in either the newspapers or the directories.

During October and November of 1869, the DES MOINES DAILY BULLETIN published the guest register of some of the local hostelries. Among those names are found the following "Jewish" names: I. Stern of New York, D. Selser of London, M. Rosenfield of Rock Island, H. & L. Sternberg of Mitchellville, A. M. Yanarlzer of Colfax.[19]

As the decade of the Civil War closed, Des Moines, the capital of Iowa, was well on its way as a city and a community; its best days were still in the future.

II

Eastside - Westside

1870-1900

THE 1870's

In the twenty-five years which had elapsed since William and Minnie Kraus had been rowed across the Des Moines River for the first time, the small frontier settlement had become the capital of Iowa and the commercial center of an ever-growing farming area. Residential and commercial construction had continued at a rapid pace, bridges were erected to span the river, railroads connected the city with the industries of the East as well as with the constantly advancing western frontier.

From the early days of the Civil War until the panic of 1873, all of Iowa enjoyed a period of economic prosperity. It was a most opportune time to invest and establish new business ventures, and to speculate in real estate and in agricultural produce. The citizens took full advantage of all these opportunities and many of the fortunes of the later periods began to accumulate at that time.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Jews from the German-speaking countries and Bohemia had

come to the United States in such large numbers that this period became known as the German phase of Jewish immigration. The small trickle of immigrants from the Baltic areas, Poland, and the Balkan states, was easily absorbed by the larger German stream.

After 1860, the political scene in most of the German states changed in favor of greater political and economic emancipation for the Jew and other minority groups. The desire, as well as the urgency for leaving the homeland, diminished. Usually those who did leave the old country came to America because other members of their families had migrated at an earlier time. Long before the catastrophic year of 1881, conditions in the Russian Empire were becoming more and more unbearable. The reality of brutal military service, strangulation of economic opportunities in the overcrowded Pale of Settlement, lack of modern educational facilities, and the all-prevading everyday hatred of a heartless and unjust government combined to convince the young Jew of Poland, and Lithuania, and the Ukraine, that emigration was a necessity. What began in the 1860's as a trickle swelled into a mighty torrent in the 1880's so that nearly two and a half million Jews migrated to the United States in the forty years which preceded World War I. Those who stayed behind prayed for the day when the money for their passage would arrive from their friends and relatives in "the golden land," and the aging parents who could no longer make the trip subsisted on the gifts which came from their Americanized children and relatives.

When the great tide of East-European Jews reached the shores of the United States, these immigrants found themselves transplanted into a country with a strange language, alien social practices, and an equally unfa-

miliar and oft-time unfriendly Jewish Community. In the larger cities, the German-Jewish element had established its congregations, which by the 1870's were moving in the direction of complete reform. Whatever rudimentary community agencies were in existence, such as the B'nai B'rith and local social clubs, usually were adjuncts of the Reform Congregations and shared in the trend toward assimilation.

Reform Judaism, as it began in Germany, was a positive movement with a sound philosophy and a good theology. It had ideas and a magnificent vision of human amelioration.[1] Such leaders as Max Lilienthal and Issac M. Wise brought this enlightened view of Judaism to America. Their lay-followers, all too often, developed a superficial conception of these ideals. In the old country, the religion of these men and women had been a matter of custom, routine, and observance with little philosophy and even less theology to support it. Much of this custom was discarded, leaving many with a philosophy of expediency, and with a Judaism that had become a purely personal faith. Too often their Judaic religion lost all relationship to any real Jewish past or present. Thus, when East-European Jews came to this country, the German Jew often remained distant and aloof. In the eyes of most of the "Americanized" Jews, these East-European newcomers seemed a somewhat unwanted addition to the community. Existing rules of charity toward a fellow-Jew demanded assistance, but the benefactor of this assistance was in no way made to feel that he was equal to those who gave aid. The new arrivals had no desire to join with the "Deitschen." For what sort were these Reform Jews with no Yiddish, praying like the gentiles without hat or *talith,* no Jewish schools, and no observance of the precious

dietary laws? The emasculated faith of the Reform Jew perplexed them; the strange practices of the Reform Temple offended them.[2]

The condescending charity and frequent contempt of the one side was too often reciprocated by disdain and self-righteousness on the part of the other. It was true that the East-European Jew would soon make adjustments to American reality—in time the beard would grow shorter and eventually disappear; the Sabbath would of necessity become indistinguishable from the other workdays; and even the dietary observances would become a memory to many. But despite some of these outward expressions, in their hearts they remained orthodox Jews.

Since the older community was unfriendly and closed its institutions to the newcomers, who would not and could not feel at home so soon, these people began to create their own communal institutions, which followed the familiar pattern set for and by them in the old country. Thus for more than a generation, we might speak of two communities existing side by side with only the most tenuous lines of communications between them. The changed realities of the twentieth century—the First World War, Palestine, and the tragedy of Hitler—were to merge these communities into an homogenerous, workable unit.

Contrary to this usual pattern of development in most Jewish areas of settlement, the lines of growth and differentiation in Des Moines followed their own path. Almost simultaneously, the synagogues of both groups began to take shape and before very long the first steps toward an integrated community were taken. One might suggest that the city of Des Moines was too small during this period to allow the growth of two separate Jewish

communities and that the economic needs and the evolution of its Jewish inhabitants were too similar to perpetuate Old World differences for a long period of time. Perhaps the accident of its geographic location, equidistant from two large rivers, and somewhat off the beaten transcontinental path, may have had as much to do with this changed pattern as the make-up of central Iowa's population.

A word should be said here about the unique background of Des Moines Jews. Practically every East-European immigrant originally came from a very small area in Lithuania and eastern Poland, which bordered East Germany. Until the end of the nineteenth century few Roumanian, Hungarian, and Ukrainian Jews added to the growth of the community; this high degree of homogeneity eliminated the usual quarrels and personal jealousies. It was probably responsible for the absence of any permanent break in the community and the relative ease with which arrangements across congregational lines could be made. It was a family affair, after all, and once the first Eastside Jew was accepted on the Westside of town, his brothers, sisters, cousins and in-laws inevitably followed.

The story of the two communities, their relations, and the beginings of their merger, covers the period from 1870 to World War I. And, again it is the story of new names, increasing numbers, ultimately personal achievement, and consolidation.

In 1869, there were fewer than forty Jews out of a total population of approximately twelve thousand inhabitants. Neither the daily newspapers nor the directories of the day indicated the presence of any East-European Jews in the city. However, both Simon Glazer and Jack Wolfe have recorded that as early as 1867

some East-European peddlers came to Des Moines by way of New York and Rochester.[3] It is quite within the range of possibility that a group of peddlers settled here at that time. Since most of them were unmarried men who spent most of their time traveling through rural Iowa, they did not come to the attention of the census takers and tax collectors. Only with the compilation of J. P. Bushnell's *Des Moines City Directory* of 1871 did the names of this first group of these peddlers appear. Those listed in the directory were:

J. Cominofsky, B. Gotstein, Sol. Grosmer, C. Jacob, and S. Levi, all residing on the Eastside.[4]

Of greater importance was the growth of the Westside community with at least five newcomers mentioned, Solomon Joseph, Jacob Posner and Adolph Samish among them. Posner worked as a tailor for his brother-in-law's firm, Goldman and Hyman, and Samish became associated with Lederer, Strauss & Co., since he was Mr. Lederer's brother-in-law. With approximately nine families and fifteen single men, the total Jewish population numbered forty-five to fifty people.[5] The number of recognized business houses did not increase materially until after the depression of 1873.

The essential accuracy of the 1871 Directory is authenticated by the list of registered voters published in the DES MOINES (DAILY) REPUBLICAN of November 1, 1872. Sixteen names of Jewish voters are enumerated for the two precincts on the Westside; only the name of Solomon "Seigle" has been identified with any certainty as one of the peddlers from Pilvissok.[6] The same Solomon Siegel soon went into partnership with Ben Gottstein in the peddler supply business. This has been ascertained from a laconic story found in the IOWA DAILY STATE REGISTER of April 10, 1873:

> Promissory note signed by Gottstein & Seigle for $266.00 payable March 1 was lost on Eastside by Albert Sunderlwitz.

The newspaper did not mention the recovery of this note.

The 1873 *City Directory* omitted all East-European names excepting the name of Louis Kuttner, peddler. Again this does not necessarily mean that these men had left Des Moines, but rather that they were absent from the city, peddling their wares somewhere across Iowa. Since most of them were not married at that time, they were perhaps regarded as a part of their landlords' families. It is also very possible that many of these recent arrivals from the domains of the Czar avoided the census-taker as they had avoided the officials of Russia who had taken the count in order to tax, to oppress, and to force into hated military service and servitude. That the political reality of the United States was different from that of the old country was something of which they were still unaware.

The peddler of this period would either be gone a week at a time and return to the city for the Sabbath, or perhaps more typically remain away most of the year, returning only for the Passover week in the spring and the High-Holyday season in the fall. The intervening months were spent somewhere within a radius of one hundred fifty to two hundred miles from Des Moines. Frequently, too, these men would settle in the smaller towns, open a dry goods store, and serve the needs of the nearby farms. Eventually most of the peddlers returned to Des Moines, where the presence of other Jews, the opportunities for communal life, and the greater economic advantages offered in the city, proved a powerful magnet.

In the meantime Des Moines wholesalers and jobbers

supplied both the resident and the traveling country merchant with merchandise and credit. Many an immigrant, after spending a successful season or two as peddler, managed to save enough to equip newer arrivals with the necessary goods and the heavy pack; he was then in business as a peddler-supply merchant. Some few remained in this line of merchandising, but most would advance into the regular notions, dry goods, and clothing business. Others started second-hand furniture dealings; and when this endeavor proved successful, they branched out and included new merchandise. Thus the foundations of the present-day furniture stores were laid. A few bought and sold scrap metals and others waste materials. Ready markets were assured once the railroads from the East penetrated into all of Iowa.

Still others became produce hucksters, and from this occupation it was a short step to becoming a grocer. This small grocer fulfilled an important function in the economy of the day: he extended credit to his customers. Each member of the shopkeepers' family helped in the running of the store. This included his own children and ofttimes provided employment to other youngsters in the neighborhood. The operation of such a store would require a relatively small amount of capital, a major factor accounting for the fact that some eighty to ninety Jewish-owned grocery stores were found in Des Moines before the first World War.

Among the Westside Jews, who in the 1870's and 1880's were usually referred to as the "reformed" Jews, a similar stratification of economic activities took place. In the earlier period they had been engaged in the dry-goods and clothing business. By the 1880's, however, Lederer, Strauss & Company was becoming prominent as milliners; S. Joseph, as a watchmaker and jeweler;

M. Riegelman & Sons, as dealers in wholesale notions and *objets d'art;* and some others, as cigar-makers.

The home of the late Victorian period required a great many mirrors, paintings, frames, statues and similar "art." A dealer in these items was a necessity for any city worthy of its name. This was also the age before tobacco products could be shipped a long distance without losing much of their freshness, and when every man of substance chose his own brand. Louis J. Blum was listed as a cigar maker in 1873; John and L. J. Blum, and Henry Block in 1875; and the 1882 directory, J. R. Cohen was listed as a cigar manufacturer.

The 1873 *City Directory* is unique in that it carried a breakdown of each household as to numbers, sex, and country of birth. Regrettably, as mentioned above, none of the East-European immigrants was included in this census. From this tabulation it would appear that the Westside Jewish group consisted of fourteen families numbering eighty-two individuals, forty-two of them males and forty females. Some fifteen young, single men were listed as living in various boarding houses. Twenty-three listed Germany and five indicated Poland as their birthplaces, two were born in Ohio, one in Indiana, and one in New York.[7]

The following is a breakdown of the professions listed in this census:

1 Cigar Manufacturer—(L. J. Blum)

1 Jeweler—(S. Joseph)

5 Merchant Tailors—(A. Frank, Ch. & J. Hyman, J. Posner and A. Weinstock)

8 Dry Goods Merchants, Clothing, etc.—(J. Blum, Goldman & Hyman, N. L. Goldstone, Jacobs and Mandelbaum, I. Kuhn, Rohrbach & Rothschild, Simon & Strauss, Lederer, Strauss & Co.)

1 Farmer—(J. Kuhn)
1 Peddler—(L. Kuttner)
10 Salesmen and Clerks—(including Max Shloss, the four Riegelmans, [father and three sons] and S. I. Redstone).

The IOWA DAILY REGISTER of October 2, 1873, maintained that "there are about one hundred fifty persons of the Jewish Faith in Des Moines," a number which seems to be somewhat overestimated.

Some newspaper stories of these years deserve mention as they illustrate the slow but steady progress of the Jewish pioneers. Mr. H. Sternberg of Mitchellville offered the Mitchellville Steam Flooring Mill for sale. Lederer & Strauss became the agent for Amana Yarn and Flannel; M. Strauss, a director of the Citizen's Bank; and S. Joseph left the employ of Plumb Bros. to open his own shop. The names of M. Strauss and J. Kuhn were among those businessmen who signed a petition for a narrow gauge railroad to Northeastern Iowa.[8]

While these and similar business items are found scattered through the papers of the early 1870's, no vital statistics were recorded. Thus the death of the Goldman baby in 1871, and the births of several children did not warrant a story. Actually the first Jewish birth to be mentioned was in November of 1873, announcing the arrival of "the first girl in M. Strauss' family." While many real estate transactions were listed, nothing was published about the incorporation of *The Emanuel Burial Association* and the purchase of a cemetery in July of 1870. Even religious affairs escaped the newspapers until 1870. The following item was recorded in the DAILY IOWA STATE REGISTER of September 27.

> Holiday among the Jews—Yesterday was New Year's Day with the Jews. All business houses in the city kept by Israelites were closed and no business was done.

After an equally cursory story published a week later concerning Yom Kippur no mention of Jewish holidays was made for two years.

The *City Directory* of 1875 was the first to record a fairly complete census of East-European Jews. Most of them settled in East Des Moines, where rentals were lower than west of the river, and where the railroad stations were within easy walking distance. Some fifteen families gave their addresses on the Eastside, among them being Simon Arenberg, Joseph Blotcky, Ben & R. Cohen, M. & W. Frank, B. & J. Gottstein, Ch. Jacobs, S. Levich, and M. Zelcer. All of these men indicated that they were peddlers.

The home of Wolf Frank at 323 East Sycamore Street evidently served as a boarding house. His children, his sons-in-law Ben Cohen and Meier Zelcer and an additional four or five boarders lived at this address. One Isaac Rabinowicz, the only citizen not a peddler among the Eastside Jews, indicated his profession as "Jewish Rabbi," probably serving as ritual slaughterer for the Jewish community. His name does not recur in any future directory.

Sixteen to eighteen families and some twenty-five unmarried men can be identified on the Westside. Lederer, Strauss and Co., by this time, had become one of the most important Jewish business houses in the community. In addition to the owners, the store also provided a livelihood for three Riegelmans, two Samishes, and Max Shloss, who was later to become a partner in this enterprise. Most of the other stores, which were all partner-

ships, employed one or two clerks and tailors who were usually members of their families.

By the time the 1876 *City Directory* was compiled some one hundred and seventy-five Jews lived in Des Moines. The growth of the Jewish group kept pace with that of the city as a whole. The number of Jewish-owned business houses had risen to more than twenty. Twenty peddlers and itinerant merchants were listed, in addition to the name of Rev. Florian Shauer, the first Rabbi of Temple B'nai Yeshurun.[9] David Cohen, the "shochet" of the Jews on the Eastside until 1878, also performed marriages and provided for the other spiritual needs of his people. The one recorded death of the year was that of Ludwig Samish on July 29, 1875, apparently the first adult Jew to die in Des Moines. The IOWA STATE REGISTER of July 30, 1875, carried the following entry:

> Funeral [was] attended more largely than any that has occurred in Des Moines for many days. In token of regard for the deceased all the Hebrew places of business were closed during the ceremony.

A few months later the citizens of Des Moines were informed that "The rite of circumcision will be performed in Des Moines Saturday," but neither the name of the child nor that of the parents was recorded.

These years also mark the beginnings of some of the large retail establishments that have become a part of the Iowa scene to this day. Of interest is the story of S. Joseph, printed in the IOWA STATE LEADER, Thursday, November 13, 1873.

> JEWELRY. The new establishment of S. Joseph in Savery Block.
>
> Mr. S. Joseph, well-known to the citizens of Des Moines. For the past two years he has been engaged in the Jewelry

business and during that time has made himself a good name both in business and social circles. Owing to his largely increased business, he has found the room heretofore occupied too small, and has moved his establishment into the rooms formerly occupied by the . . . . . in the Savery Block, one of the best locations in the city . . . Mr. Joseph is a practical watchmaker of fourteen years experience, and has in his employ an excellent workman from the old country, etc., etc.

The New York Store of Jacobs and Mandelbaum advertised frequently as did Lederer, Strauss & Co. In the IOWA STATE REGISTER of October 3, 1874, the following advertisement appeared:

Every new store has to give low prices. Call and look at our new goods and compare prices.
Younker Bros.,
McCain's Block, Cor. 6th & Walnut.

In 1851 Benjamin Younker came to the United States from Lipno, Lithuania, and settled in Louisiana, Missouri, some eighty-five miles south of Keokuk. He was soon joined by his brothers Lipman (1834-1902) and Samuel (1837-1879). They peddled in this area until 1856, when they opened their first store in Keokuk, a most prosperous and promising town, the terminal of flourishing river navigation. During these years, two other Younker brothers, Marcus (1839-1926) and Manassah (1842-1902), came to Keokuk; and later Joseph (about 1847-1918) and Herman (1854-1920) joined them. After 1860, Manassah opened at Keokuk a second store, which was operated by his children until 1924. Samuel was a member of the delegation of Keokuk businessmen who were on the first train which rode into Des Moines on that memorable day in August, 1866.

Within a few years, it became clear that Des Moines

rather than Keokuk would become the commercial center of the state. In the fall of 1874, Herman and Barney Younker were sent to Des Moines, where they opened a small store with an initial capital investment of six thousand dollars. When Samuel Younker died in 1879, the main store in Keokuk was closed, and Tina, his widow, together with his brothers Marcus and Joseph moved to Des Moines. The Des Moines store grew with the city. In 1881, enlarged quarters were secured; and for the first time in the history of the city a female salesclerk was engaged.

In 1878, Julius Mandelbaum, whose store eventually was to merge with Younker's, terminated his partnership with Gus Jacobs and opened his own store at 411 Court Avenue. A third company, later to become a part of Younker Bros., was opened in 1867 and was known as the Osgood and Harris store. After several changes, this establishment became the Harris-Emery Co., which in 1901 was purchased by Anselm and Manassah Frankel of Oskaloosa, and their brother-in-law Meyer Rosenfield of Rock Island, Illinois.

Anselm and Manassah were the sons of Isaiah Frankel (1832-1897), who arrived in America in 1853 and opened a dry goods and clothing store at New Washington, Indiana. After three years he and his partner moved to Macon County, Missouri, and eventually, in 1861, came to Oskaloosa, Iowa where their clothing business prospered. During the war Mr. Frankel became active in the wool and sheep-raising business and, in 1873, founded what eventually became known as the Frankel State Bank. In the late 80's and early 90's, his three sons joined him in a partnership; and in 1894 the Frankel Clothing Company was organized in Des Moines.[11]

The big story of 1876 was the failure of B. F. Allen's

COOK COUNTY BANK in Chicago. Because of Mr. Allen's Des Moines background and close business ties, the more responsible and respectable merchants felt obliged to express their confidence in Mr. Allen by a public announcement. Among those who went on record were Isaac and Joseph Kuhn, Goldman & Hyman, Hyman Weinstock & Co., and Lederer & Strauss.[12] It does not appear that any of the Jewish businessmen suffered serious losses in the ultimate Allen bankruptcy; Julius Mandelbaum as well as Moses Strauss became stockholders in the Citizens' Bank, and the latter also a director in the Citizens' National Bank.[13]

In the same year, Des Moines witnessed a political squabble in which one of the participants was abused on the grounds of his being a Jew. John Blum published a long letter, giving the reasons, why he, a German-American, had decided to vote for Hayes in the presidential election. He was immediately attacked in the Democratic paper of Des Moines, and it seems some unkind references were made regarding his Jewishness. In the REGISTER of Friday, July 22, Mr. Blum answered these accusations.

> EDITOR OF REGISTER: I notice in the LEADER of tonight a great tirade of abuse directed against me. For the information of those who do not know me, I say that I was born in Liebau, West Prussia, in 1830, and lived there 22 years and then came to this country. In 1857 I returned to Prussia, and there I was elected to the city council of my native city. In 1864 I returned to the United States and have lived in Iowa since. In reference to what the LEADER says—that the Germans investigated and found out that I said I wrote the article and my son translated it —that is so; but I did not hesitate nor have I spoken to any of them since this publication, etc. . . . I care not to reply to abuse, and have no dirt to throw at any political opponent. (Signed) John Blum.

Then in the REGISTER of Saturday, July 22:

> IGNORANT GERMAN addresses at letter to the editor, in which he says: ". . . This man Blum, a citizen of Des Moines, has committed a great crime in declaring for Hayes." This is a democratic view of it. Personal violence has even been threatened the man, because he dared to express an opinion. The HERALD OF LIBERTY called him an obscure person and a Polish Jew from Posen. Is it a disgrace to be from Posen and to be a Jew? Personal liberty! Tolerance! . . . A Polander says in last evening's LEADER: "Mr. Blum does not represent the intelligent portion of Polanders of this city." Mr. Blum declines that honor, etc. . . .

With Mr. Hayes finally being declared duly elected as president, Mr. Blum undoubtedly felt compensated for all his anguish and discomfort.

This period also saw the first intermarriage to take place in Des Moines, when late in 1874 a young Jewish businessman married a non-Jewish woman of the city.[14] The young couple left Des Moines soon thereafter.

For the remainder of the decade, the Jewish community continued its steady growth to well over two hundred members. Approximately forty-five family-units and at least forty single adults have been identified. For census purposes, the average family was assumed to number three and a half persons; but this figure should not be applied to the Jewish group of the day, since most of the families were much larger. For example, the Mandelbaums had three children by 1880; Marcus Younker, four; Mrs. S. Younker raised six; Moses Strauss, five; Isaiah Frankel, six. The situation among the Eastside Jews was no different.[15]

The number of peddlers decreased slowly, as more and more of the men were in a position to exchange the burdensome pack for the counter of a small grocery, a

second-hand furniture, or dry goods store. The distribution of the business enterprises of the Jews of Des Moines around 1880 is of interest:

Cigars and Tobacco	1
Clothing (retail)	9
Dry Goods	10
Furs and Hairgoods	2
Hats	1
Merchant Tailors	2
Millinery (retail)	2
(wholesale)	1
Grocers	3
Papers and scrap	1
Peddlers	10

In the 1877-78 Church Directory, for the first time, *The Hebrew Synagogue* and its ministers Shauer and Pollak were included, and it is stated that its Religious School met on Sunday mornings. Wolf Frank was listed as operator of a boarding house in 1877 and 1878, but the following year as Hebrew teacher.

Additional families, who came to Des Moines at this time, were M. M. Cohen, J. and S. F. Mandel, M. Newman, and M. Wilchinski; these were in addition to several younger brothers and other relatives who had come to rejoin their families. Two women are listed separately in the Directory, one as a peddler and the other as a clerk in her father's store.

THE EIGHTEEN EIGHTIES

On May 18, 1881, the REGISTER carried a short dispatch from Vienna referring to the JEWISH PERSECUTION IN RUSSIA with "crowds of Jewish refugees crossing the Austrian frontier. . . ."; and as early as May 22, the dispatches state that "many Jewish refugees will emigrate to America." These and similar

stories continued throughout the summer, informing the community about happenings far away which were to result in the largest influx of Jews into the United States.

Des Moines was to feel the full impact of the European catastrophe, when its Jewish population increased from less than 250 in 1881 to more than 1,100 by 1895. The story of this growth is best told in a graph.

DES MOINES JEWRY, 1880-1895[16]

	Total Population	Jewish Population	Jewish Families	Westside Residence	Eastside Residence	Jewish Business Houses	Jewish Peddlers
1880	22,696	225	50	27	23	30	7
1882	30,779	300	65	35	30	42	12
1884	40,000	350	75-80	40	35-40	45	15
1886	42,750	400	90-95	45	45-50	50	15
1888	49,000	500	115-120	50-55	60-65	70-75	15
1892	51,000	600	140-150	55-60	85-90	100	20
1895	56,359	1,106	225-250	90-100	140-150	140-150	40

Rabbis and other religious functionaries as listed in the Directories:

Westside

A. Dushner (1881)
D. Davidson (1882 ff.)
L. Freudenthal (1888 ff.)
I. Muller (1892 ff.)

Eastside

Wolf Frank, Hebrew Teacher (1882)
M. M. Cohen, Shochet (1882)
H. Adleman (1884)
S. Goldstein (1888)
L. Fleischman, Teacher (1888)
L. Shereshefsky (1892)
A. Rubin (1895)

Among the newcomers we find such men as Julius Gottlieb, and Abraham and Leopold Sheuerman, the owners of the Capital City Woolen Mills, who had just

recently transferred their business from Marengo to Des Moines. The Sheuermans regularly employed some fifty workmen, many of whom were recent immigrants. Barney Franklin, first mentioned in 1876 and then again in 1882 and 1884, is of some interest because of his close connection with one of the Jewish Pioneers of the real West.

Barney's brother Harris, born in 1849 at Pilvissok, had come to Rochester, New York, about 1867, and then lived for several years in Davenport and Burlington. When in 1875, stories drifted back about great gold findings in the Black Hills of the Dakota Territories, Harris Franklin and Ben Baer decided to try their luck there. As soon as the army opened the area to white settlement in the spring of 1876, the two young men set out for the Hills with a consignment of liquor and general merchandise. Within a few years, Mr. Franklin was one of the most prominent businessmen and bankers of Deadwood.[17]

Harris brought his brother Barney and his two sisters, Libbie and Dora, to this country, and he looked after their welfare for many years. When he left Davenport for the Hills, it was but natural that Barney and the sisters would move to Des Moines, where so many of their Pilvissok friends had settled. It was here that Barney married Mollie, daughter of Wolf Frank, that Libbie married Sol Levich, and that Dora became the wife of Joseph Blotcky. In 1880, both Barney and his brother-in-law Mose Frank followed Harris to the Black Hills to try their luck, but eventually both returned to Des Moines.[18]

In 1886-1887, the first references are made in the directories to Louis Ginsberg, then a peddler; Mose Jacobs, newsboy; Louis Oransky and Morris Mandelbaum, students at the Iowa Business College; Samuel

Strauss, clerk; and M. J. Werbelowski, peddler. Two years later, Cohen & Seigle were found as pawnbrokers, the Strasburgers were employed at Riegelman; David Wolensky maintained a dyeing establishment; Meier Zelcer had become a grocer; Kasel Ginsberg owned a boot and shoe store and Charles Silberman a men's clothing store; Falk Brody and Isaac Jacobsohn dealt in peddler supplies.[19] Harry Cohen was listed in the directory as the first Jewish policeman; and Max Arenberg, as printer for the DES MOINES LEADER; Sam Cohen bought and sold old iron; Sol Leon ran a second hand store, and B. Leener a dry goods store. Dr. Abraham Polasky was the first Jewish medical man in town, and he enjoyed a very good reputation.

In 1892, Polk & Co. took over the publishing of the City Directory in Des Moines. That our city was included in their ever expanding number of communities served can be regarded as a testimony to its growing importance. The following summary, based on this first Polk Directory, presents a good over-all picture of the economic growth of the Jewish Community.

POLK & CO., DES MOINES CITY DIRECTORY, 1892. —Business Directory (E: located on Eastside)

CARPETS
F. Frank—E
Younker Bros.

CIGARS
Manufacture
J. R. Cohen—E
Lew Marks
M. Stern

Retail
H. Sander—E
J. Schersack—E

CLOTHING
Golden Rule Cloth Hse.
S. Adleman—E
Hirsch Bros.
S. H. Lurie—E
O. Orenfeld—E
C. Panor—E
A. Weinstock
Block & Heyman

DRY GOODS
Wholesale
Blotcky & Son—E

Goldstone, N. L.
Israel Bros.—E
Retail
Golden Rule
Jacobs, Gus
Jacobson, Sara—E
Leener, Barn.—E
Sherman, Abr.
Mandelbaum, Jul.
Seigle, Sol—E
Younker Bros.

DYERS
Wolensky, David—E

FANCY GOODS
M. Riegelman & Co.

FURNITURE
M. Frank—E
S. Davidson
K. Ginsberg—E
L. Ginsberg
M. Neuman
Oransky & Bramson
Rubinson, Sam
Sternburg, G. F.
Yarowsky, S. A.—E

GENERAL STORE
Perosky, Rose—E

GROCERS
Cohen, Abr.
Cohen, A. I.—E
Cohen, A. L.—E
Cohen, Harry—E
Friedman, Dora & Flora—E
Harris, M.—E
Leeber, Moses—E
Levich, Sol—E
Neidig, Sam—E
Silver, M. L.—E
Sternberg, F. E.—E
Zelcer, M—E

HARDWARE STORE
Marcovis, Aron

HIDES & FURS
Gutman, Henry

HOTELS
Goldstone, N. E.—E

JUNK DEALERS
Cohen Bros.—E
Cohen, R.—E
Gottstein, F.—E
Gould, Harris—E
Sandelosky & Sweet—E
Sparkburg, Louis—E
Warford, Abr.—E

LOANS
Cohen, Benj.—E

MEATS & POULTRY
Adelman, M.—E
Chapman, J.—E
Gottstein, Wolf—E

MEN'S FURN.
Goldman, D.
Hirsch Bros.
Posner, J.
Weinstock, S.

MILLINERY
Lederer, Strauss & Co.
Riegelman
Kuttner, Louis
Sheuerman, M. & Bro.

MUSIC TEACHER
Goldsmith, S.

NOTIONS
Wholesale
Blotcky Bros.—E
Brody, Falk—E
Israel Bros.—E
Lederer, Strauss & Co.
Reigelman, M. & Co.
Retail
Blank, Frank—E
Jacobson, Sara—E
Silberman, Ch.—E

OCULIST
Polasky, A.

SECOND HAND GOODS
Denelsky & Jacobson—E
Goldman, N.—E
Jacobson, Sol—E
Marks, Reuben
Oransky & Bramson—E
Oransky & Cohen—E
Seigel, Bennett—E
Siegel, Rachel—E

TAILORS
Bernstein, Simon—E
Katz, Samuel—E
Lemuel, Jacob—E
Weinstock, Leon
Weinstock, Walter

WATCHES & JEWELRY
Idzaly, H.
Joseph, S.
Panor, S.—E

WOOLEN MILLS
Capital City Woolen Mills

By this time, the community had definitely outgrown its childhood; a period of consolidation and institutional solidification was at hand. Until this time, the number of stores had been much greater, by proportion, than the increase in the number of people gainfully employed. This pattern was soon to change. By 1895, Jewish-owned business houses had increased from 100 to approximately 150, a 50 per cent increase since 1892, whereas the number of clerks, salesmen, and the like jumped from 100 to at least 225; the children of the 1870's and 1880's, whether immigrant or native born, were to take their places in the adult community as students, employees, and professional men.[20] In 1892, two Jewish citizens had become government employees, both of them as police officers; three years later there were eight, three of them policemen (Harry Cohen, I. Finkelstein, and A. M. Rosenberg). This was undoubtedly a result of the depression that had upset business

conditions and had made even low-paid government positions an essential source of sustenance.

In the same year, 1895, THE AMERICAN ISRAELITE published a story on Des Moines by its traveling correspondent "SHIRHASHIRIM," a story which pictured the community as the new century approached.

THE AMERICAN ISRAELITE

Vol. 41, No. 48, p. 2

May 30, 1895

The trip through the State of Iowa, which I have just completed, in the aforesaid empire of Western vigor, is full of interest and observation. While times are not exactly flourishing, yet the business men of this state seem to be in pretty good condition, and business is far from being at a stand-still here, as is the case elsewhere. The prospects are good and every one seems hopeful, and encouraged by the fact that the future has a good-sized flavor of prosperity in store for them.

The largest cities of this state are Des Moines, Sioux City, Dubuque, Davenport, Burlington and Council Bluffs. In point of size Des Moines stands at the head with a population of 75,000, while the others make an easy graduation downward, the smallest numbering 20,000. Here the pride of the whole state sems to be centered in the magnificent capitol, and the inhabitant of this interesting city is true to the divinity of his patriotic surroundings when he presses the stranger for an opinion as to the beauty of his state house. The answer, of course, is not likely to be ungrateful to the questioner, for it is truly a picturesque place—fourth in the United States.

Des Moines meets the stranger with the self-satisfied conviction that she almost constitutes *the* State. It is a well known fact that the towns in which the State Houses are located, with the exception of perhaps a half a dozen cities in this country, are never looked upon as good business points. Perhaps because such towns usually contain poli-

ticians, and as a politician is, as a rule, hardly ever a businessman, the opinion in this case ought to be a good criterion for any business man to go by.

This city, however, numbers among the few exceptions, for it is a beautiful, thriving business point, where commerce is not a secondary consideration. It presents a metropolitan-like appearance and puts on an air of a *sure enough* city.

The Jewish people of this city rank high on the commercial list, and are among the leading and solid businessmen of Des Moines. There are about 250 Jewish families in this city, one third of them are of the Reformed class and the others belong to the Orthodox school. This is the only place in the State, with the exception of Keokuk, where Judaism is properly represented and where the Jew is not a Jew in name only, as is the case in many other towns in this State.

Take Sioux City, for instance, where you find about thirty families of the Reformed class, who are doing absolutely nothing that would indicate a flavor of Judaism; in fact, one leading Israelite is the director of a Unitarian church and takes a very prominent and active part to promote the welfare of that institution, just the same as though he were president of some Jewish congregation.

I called to see that gentleman in order to ascertain his views on the subject, but regret to say that he was not to be seen; but his brother was kind enough to enlighten me upon the nature of the situation, and in reply to my query as to why his brother took such an active interest in the Unitarian church in place of working for the purpose of organizing a congregation, said to me, "He considers this step all right, simply because a Jewish paper published in Chicago had some time ago advocated something of that nature."

In the first place, I know of no Jewish paper published in Chicago or elsewhere that ever advocated the adoption of the Unitarian church to take the place of Judaism; and even if it had, it is a very poor excuse for any one who claims to be a Jew.

In a conversation with quite an intelligent young at-

torney, a coreligionist, of course, I was given to understand that a few followers, who have affiliated themselves with the Unitarian church, did so for two reasons: Firstly, in order, as they claim, to do away with the prejudice that seems to prevail in that city towards the Jewish people; and secondly, because they have no congregation. Very poor excuses both of them, I am sure, and it is, to say the least, a very poor method of doing away with any prejudice, if such a thing does prevail there or elsewhere.

These facts prompt me to say that the Hebrew Union College would do a great service to Judaism, in addition to what it has already accomplished, if it would introduce a system of circuit preaching, by sending out some of its brightest students from time to time. The northwest is badly and greatly in need of such an innovation, and I am sure that the results would prove beneficial to all parties concerned.

CONGREGATION B'NAI JESHURUN

with a membership of 41, including two non-residents, owns a modest but handsome temple and the affairs of the congregation are managed by the following officers: A. Sheuerman, President; Ike Lang, Vice President; A. Laderer, Treasurer; L. Joseph, Secretary. Trustees—Joseph Kuhn, Henry Riegelman and D. Goldman. Rabbi I. Mueller, who has been the spiritual guide of the congregation for a number of years, having been elected to a similar position at Louisville, Ky., this congregation elected the Rev. S. Bottigheimer, who graduates from the Hebrew Union College next month. The Reverend gentleman is expected to arrive here the middle of August, when he will assume his duties as minister of this community.

SWEET CHARITY

the broad benevolence of generous aid, and the visible expression in the substantial exhibition of real help, whenever the association may demand it, are sought to be attained by the Hebrew Benevolent Association and by the Ladies' Benevolent Association in this community. The

officers of the former are: A. Sheuerman, President; Ike Lang, Secretary and Treasurer. Trustees—D. Goldman, and M. Strauss. The officers of the latter are: Mrs. M. Strauss, President; Mrs. M. Stern, Vice-President; Mrs. Dr. A. Polasky, Treasurer; Mrs. M. Shloss, Secretary.

OUR CIRCLE

which was organized here on the 5th of January, 1889, is the name of the Jewish club, with a membership of 55, whose mission, so far, has been of a purely social character. It is thought that subjects of intellectual attraction, such as discussions on current questions in the various departments of thought, essays, readings, recitations, etc., will be introduced by the club as soon as it moves into its new quarters on or before September 1. Its officers are: Morris Samish, President; Sam Redstone, Vice-President; Wm. Samish, Treasurer; Lee Sheuerman, Financial Secretary; Milton Goldman, Recording Secretary.

The young lady who is willing to sacrifice her own pleasure in her home of comfort for the sake of rendering personal aid in actual work for those who are poor, ignorant and unfortunate, is surely deserving of much praise and a great deal of well-merited credit. This is just what

THE YOUNG LADIES' SEWING SOCIETY

is doing, composed entirely of young ladies, who meet every Friday at some residence where they devote three hours in the interest of that worthy cause. Its officers are: Miss Bessie Sheuerman, President; Miss Birdie Sheuerman, Vice-President; Directors, Misses Esther Younker and Millie Sheuerman.

A GENTLE HINT

If I am not mistaken there seems to be a total absence of devotion of time and attention to the development of

LITERATURE

and learning among the young gentlemen of this city. Since the talent is not absent, I cannot understand why such

a state of affairs should prevail in a community of this size. Not so with the young ladies; they seem to admire the idea of engaging in literary work, for they have the "Monday Reading Circle," with Miss Helen Dannebaum (now Mrs. E. Livingston) as President and Miss Esther Younker as Secretary.

III

The Call To Prayer

Religious Growth

CONGREGATION B'NAI JESHURUN

The Jewish immigrant who made America his new home left behind him the pleasant memories of childhood, of father, and of mother. He also left behind a way of life as a member of a closely knit community which had provided him with all his religious, educational, social, and even public welfare needs.[1] Central to this order was the Synagogue: the congregation was not just the house of worship; it was *the* community which aided the needy, buried the dead, taught the young, provided kosher meat for daily use, and matzoth for Passover, made possible regular public prayers, and represented the Jew in all governmental matters.

It is true that during the nineteenth century this traditional Jewish community of Western Europe was in the midst of violent changes, as we can deduce from the work of Abraham Geiger and the other fathers of reform and neo-orthodoxy. Some rumors of the new spirit penetrated even into the small villages and towns of Southern German; the boys and young men who left their homeland took to America with them both the de-

sire to transplant the institution they knew and the wish to incorporate within this institution the vitality and modernity of German reform.

This great desire to establish a Synagogue was brought to Des Moines with its first Jewish settlers. As long as there were but a few families in town such a step could not be taken, and these few Jews of necessity were satisfied with quite informal and simple services. All this was to change soon after the Civil War. Each year counted additional settlers in the state and the cycle of birth and death made them realize the need for permanent religious organization.

To perform the last rites for a fellow Jew and to bury him in consecrated ground was the sacred duty of every Jewish adult. Thus it became of utmost importance to purchase a cemetery without further delay. By 1870, there were enough Jews living in Des Moines to make such a step possible; and in July of that year, the men of the Westside bought a piece of land adjoining Woodland Cemetery and THE EMANUEL BURIAL ASSOCIATION was duly incorporated. In 1879, it formally merged with Congregation B'nai Yeshurun and transferred its total assets of $34.00 to the Temple Treasury.[2]

It is not possible to determine when the first burial took place. Morris Riegelman placed a stone in his family plot in memory of his first wife Minnie, who had passed away in 1869 in Indiana; but the date of the unveiling can not be determined. Although there are several unidentifiable stones and graves, it seems that the burial of Harry, infant son of the David Goldmans, on September 9, 1871, was the first time that the members of *Emanuel* performed their sad duties. Eight other head stones have been identified as being set during this decade:

1875 Ludwig Samish (aged fifty-nine years)

1879 Sara Sheuerman (aged eighty-six years), mother of A. & L. Sheuerman
Nellie Shloss (aged fiften years), daughter of Is. Shloss
Lillie Redstone (aged eighteen years), sister of Sam Redstone
Abraham Gottstein (aged fifty-two years)

1880 Mrs. Charles (Ricka) Block (aged twenty-seven years)
Harry Levine (aged three years)

The Gottstein and Levine graves are located at what was then probably the east fence of the grounds, separated from the other graves by the road. This portion of the cemetery was aparently made available to non-members of the Temple, since there were no other Jewish burial grounds anywhere in central Iowa at that time. Even after 1884, when the Eastside Jewish Cemetery was acquired by the Orthodox Children of Israel Congregation, a few graves were added to this section, among them, in 1891, the tomb of Mary Marcovis, daughter of Aaron Marcovis. And today, it is this Eastern section which is being used more and more since the older portion of the cemetery is almost completely filled.

The 1892 minutes of the Board of the Temple contain a short reference to some correspondence with the Congregation of Children of Israel. At that time the orthodox group requested Congregation B'nai Yeshurun to allow no burials of any Eastside Jews on its cemetery since facilities had been made available for the orthodox community. It was ruled that decisions in such matters be left to the discretion of the cemetery warden.

The same men who had taken a leading part in the organization of the Emanuel Burial Association became the charter members of the first synagogue established in Des Moines.[3]

The IOWA DAILY STATE REGISTER of September 21, 1873, carried a short story on the Hebraic New Year.

> Tomorrow occurs the 5634 Jewish New Year's day. It is the first day of the month of Tisri, and the first day of day of Autumn. In the ancient language the day is termed Rosh Hashanah. The various places of business of our Hebrew citizens will be closed, and excellent prayers will be said in all their residences.

Two days later, an additional article on Rosh Hashanah was published carrying the story of the festival, the type of prayers used, and also the statement that reform Jews in America observe only the first day of this Holyday. This story was concluded with the following:

> The Hebrews of Des Moines are among our most respected citizens, honest, industrious, and enterprising. Although too few in number to support a synagogue, they are strict in the performance of all the rites of their faith.

The whole tenor of this article indicated that it was an "inspired" story; all information for it had been provided, if not actually written, by a Jewish citizen of Des Moines who wanted to coax his fellow-Jews into some definite action. A day later, another story appeared which bears out this point:

> The German and English Jews, resident in Des Moines, are making preparation for building a synagogue here. They hope to have their plans perfected and the building commenced soon.

Undoubtedly things moved quickly after this article appeared in print, because on October 2, 1873, the REGISTER was able to report:

> DAY OF ATONEMENT.—Yesterday was the Jewish Day of Atonement, and it was more generally observed by our Hebrew citizens than ever before in Des Moines.

> Service was held by the Reformed Jews at the residence of Mr. Goldman, Fourth Street; and by the Polish Jews at the residence of Mr. Kutner, Locust Street, and in the hall on Court Avenue. There are no rabbis here, but regular prayers were read by persons acting in that capacity.
>
> There are about 150 persons of the Jewish faith in Des Moines—enough to make a good-sized congregation and to maintain regular weekly services—but the two branches, Polish and Reformed, don't worship together. Yesterday all of the stores with Hebrew proprietors were closed and there was fasting in all their homes till sundown.

It is of the greatest interest that even at this early stage, the "German" Jews regard themselves as reformed although this term did not, as yet, mean to its proponents in Des Moines major differences in ritual or ideology. The Reform movement in America had its beginnings in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1824, and in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1842. Temple Emanuel El of New York was founded in 1845 as a reformed congregation. The pace quickened after 1850, when Rabbi I. M. Wise and, five years later, Rabbi Max Lilienthal came to Cincinnati. By 1873, congregations of the South and West joined together to form the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. For many years, the Union was to remain the expression of the religious life and attitudes of the German Jewish immigrant. Thus the affiliation of the Des Moines Westside Jews with the Union followed as a matter of course. Originally this alignment meant only that sermons were delivered in German, that family pews were instituted, and that the business of the congregation was transacted in the mother-tongue of its members. Gradually other reforms were introduced, but the process was slow and frequently accompanied by strong dissension.

The ingrained conservatism of each individual, the

sentimental attachment to customs and habits acquired during childhood, the pressures of American economic conditions, and new social realities, were the background against which every step towards an American form of Judaism was taken.[4]

Before the end of October of 1873, the new congregation had taken organizational shape and was given the Biblical name B'nai Yeshurun. The sixteen or seventeen charter members elected officers, with American-born Sam Redstone as secretary. Mr. Ludwig Samish was asked to arrange and conduct services. A German written constitution and by-laws were adopted; but by January of 1874, a committee was appointed to translate them into English.[5]

Even before the local papers could tell their readers about these events, the REGISTER of October 28, 1873, printed the following:

> The Hebrew congregation on Saturday raised $56.00 for the relief of the sick at Memphis, a most praiseworthy and liberal donation. All the world is kin when when suffering is to be alleviated and charity to be bestowed.

The first public act of this congregational body was in the area of social service, at a time when the Board of the Temple hoped to be able to assess its members between fifty and seventy-five cents a month. The only other income at this early point came from the sale of seats and the total amount of this revenue was $127.20. On November 2, 1873, fourteen double and two single seats were rented which would affix the original membership at sixteen. At the same meeting, arrangements were made for the use of the hall over Kuhn's store at 207 West Court Avenue, as a temporary synagogue. On Tuesday, November 4, the IOWA STATE REGISTER had this to report:

B'NAI YESHURUN. The Hebrew citizens of Des Moines met last Sunday and organized a congregation called B'nai Yeshurun. The following were the officers elected: Pres., J. Kuhn; Vice Pres., J. Mandelbaum; Sec'y. S. I. Redstone; Treas., G. Jacobs. The object of the organization is to form a congregation of worshipping Hebrews, of whom there are 30 in Des Moines. The Congregation will not be strong enough to support a Rabbi but Mr. L. Samish will act in that capacity. The regular meetings will be held each Saturday—the Jewish Sabbath—in the hall over Kuhn's store, which has been leased and fixed up for the purpose.

The Hebrew population of Des Moines includes many excellent citizens—economical, honest, and hard working. Their wealth and public spirit go hand in hand.

And on the following Sunday:

Hebrew Synagogue.—The attendance at the room, fitted up for the worship of the Hebrews in this city, yesterday—being the first since the apartments were engaged—was large. The society has sent to Cincinnati for an ark and parchment copy of the Ten Commandments. The acting rabbi, Mr. Samish, wears a talas—a scarf made of white silk bound with a gold fringe. All the congregation wear their hats, like the Quakers. The prayers are chanted in Hebrew, and consist generally of selections from the psalms.

It was not until the Passover of 1874 that this Torah was received and formally brought into the Synagogue:

Passover.—Today occurs the anniversary of the feast of Passover, or as it is called in the Hebrew, Pesah. It will be appropriately observed by the Des Moines citizens of Jewish faith. The festival continues ordinarily eight days, but here it is only observed for two days. During that time the Hebrews will eat unleavened bread only.

Here in Des Moines there are two classes of Hebrews—orthodox and reformed. The reformed Jews live on the Westside. Their unleavened bread was made in Chicago and was received yesterday. The orthodox Jews are Poland-

> ers and Russians, and reside on the eastside. Their bread was made in Des Moines. The reformed Jews have an apartment fitted up for use as a synagogue, and today in addition to the usual Passover service, the Scroll will be brought into the Synagogue for the first time. The Scroll is of parchment, was made in Europe, and was written entirely by hand. There are about thirty-five adherents to the Hebrew faith in Des Moines, but as there is no regular rabbi here, Mr. Samish officiates in that capacity.[6]

In the meantime, Temple B'nai Yeshurun had joined the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and it was agreed to contribute $25.00 or one dollar per member to the Union for the establishment of a Rabbinical Seminary in Cincinnati.

The record of the same meeting, January 11, 1874, mentions the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society, an indication that the nine women of the group were already taking part in "public" affairs. From the beginning, it appears, they concern themselves with the housekeeping problems of their synagogue. They endeavored to provide an ark curtain and pulpit cover. As their name would indicate, they also took it upon themselves to care for the needy in the community. Mrs. David Goldman served as president of the Society for more than thirty years until her death in 1906.[7] From 1874 until 1894, the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society was the only Jewish charitable agency in Des Moines; some of the surviving residents recall vividly the visits of these ladies distributing baskets of food and other necessities to immigrant families on the eastside. Religious and social divisions between East and West might have existed in Des Moines; there might have been many years when some parents considered intermarriage between German and East European Jews as unthinkable and unpardonable; at no time, however, did they refuse to

extend help to any local Jewish men and women, irrespective of homeland or religious convictions. In this way, too, the people of the Temple kept closer to the idea of "K'lal Israel" than many other reform congregations of the late nineteenth century.

Throughout the 1870's, the young Temple continued its slow growth and groping towards organizational permanence and clear-cut acceptance of reform. The decision to join the Union was soon followed by the adoption of I. M. Wise's MINHAG-AMERIKA (a collection of prayers in Hebrew and German, which omitted certain portions and repetitions of the traditional liturgy), the abolition of the second days of the holidays, a two-hour service even on Rosh Hashanah, and the purchase of an organ by the ladies' group in 1879. These things—the family pew, choice between Hebrew and vernacular prayers, language and length of sermon, mixed choir and organ, and the nature of the Torah service—were fought over with much fervor and sincerity. As early as 1878, a recess of three hours was introduced into the all-day services on Yom Kippur, and in the same year three members resigned their congregational offices as a protest against the introduction of some reform practice; it was not until the summer of 1881 that a decision was reached to make the wearing of hats during the religious services an "optional" item.[8]

Through it all, the membership and the annual budget continued to grow. In December 1874, the twenty-two members were assessed a minimum of seventy-five cents per month, while others contributed as much as $3.25 per month, thus assuring the congregation an annual income of more than five hundred dollars from dues alone.[9] Then, in the fall of 1875, it was decided to sell seats at $2.50 each; people without means, however, were

to be admitted to services free of charge. By 1883, twenty-eight members paid annual dues ranging from $25.00 to $100.00 each; and by 1885, the Temple had thirty-six members and an annual budget of over $2,000.00. Frequently special subscriptions were taken, and the proceeds of the various social affairs were used to defray operating expenses of the congregation. Prospective members were also required to pay an initiation fee. The subject of this fee was a source of continuous trouble and acrimonious debate until it finally was reduced to a nominal consideration in 1893.

It was during this time that Temple B'nai Yeshurun encountered its first experience with professional leadership. A Mr. Jacobs was engaged as rabbi in the summer of 1874, at a monthly salary of $25.00; after six weeks, however, he left the community.[10] Then, in October of the same year, the Reverend Florian Shauer of Milwaukee was elected to serve as rabbi at a salary of $400.00. This sum was raised to $500.00 the following year. He officiated at his first service in the same month and delivered his first sermon in German. Rabbi Shauer knew the importance of publicity. He frequently put his sermon topics in the local paper. Before Purim, 1875, he announced his sermon for that holiday entitled "Liberty"; and the Passover sermon of 1877 was called "Israel and Its Passover."[11]

In November of 1874, Rabbi Shauer officiated at the first Jewish marriage ever performed in the Temple; Solomon Joseph was the groom and his bride was Babette Weisman, sister to Mrs. David Goldman. The DAILY IOWA STATE REGISTER, dated Thursday morning, November 12, 1874, carried the following item:

> THE MARRIAGE LAST EVENING.—Yesterday evening a wedding according to the forms of the Hebrew church

was celebrated in Des Moines, Mr. S. Joseph, a prominent business man of this city, and Miss Babette Wiseman, sister of Mrs. D. Goldman being the contracting parties. The ceremony was said by Rev. J. Shauer, Rabbi, and was witnessed by a large concourse of friends of the bride and groom, bidden to the marriage by the hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Goldman. As the first service of this kind in Des Moines, it attracted the closest attention of the audience. The groom was dressed in the orthodox marriage garb, black, with white vest and gloves, and in addition wore his hat. The bride was elegantly dressed in a grayish material and covered with an immense bridal veil of costly lace, reaching from crown to sole.

At the appointed time the groom was escorted to the altar by the groomsmen, Messrs. M. Reigelman and D. Goldman.

Then appeared the bride, escorted by Mrs. Reigelman and Mrs. Goldman. The Rabbi read prayers in Hebrew, and delivered an excellent address, full of good counsel to the young people about to be married, after which he handed the ring to the groom, who placed it on the finger of the bride. The attendants passed a cup of wine to the celebrants, the Rabbi pronounced a blessing in Hebrew, and read the marriage certificate, and the ceremony was ended.

Then congratulations were in order, and they were bestowed as heartily as they were worthy. Mr. Joseph has fine repute in Des Moines as a business man of integrity, promptness and enterprise. His bride is a young lady of many charms and virtues, worthy of as good a husband as she has secured.

After the ceremony an elegant repast was served in the dining-room, Frank Maloney being the caterer. Among the guests present were many of our prominent citizens and their families. The after-marriage festivities were extremely pleasant, and were protracted to a late hour.

THE PRESENTS

were many and costly, making one of the finest displays of plate ever seen in Des Moines. Among the more important were the following: One marble top table from Mr.

and Mrs. D. Goldman, one silver ice pitcher with tray from Mr. Joseph and Mr. Isaac Hyman, 1 pair vases with bouquets from Mr. and Mrs. J. Blum, 1 silver salad spoon from Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Kuhn, 1 pair vases from Mrs. D. Bush, 1 pair vases from Mr. and Mrs. M. Strauss, 1 China chamber set from Mr. and Mrs. M. Riegelman and son, 1 pair gold chain bracelets from the groom, 1 bed-spread and toilet set from Mr. and Mrs. L. Kuttner, towels and tidy from Mr. and Mrs. Frank, 1 pair bed-spreads from Mr. H. Rothschilds and Mr. B. Freyer, 1 rug from Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kuhn, 1 pair spittoons from Mr. and Mrs. A. Lederer, 1 parlor set from Mr. and Mrs. L. Weissman from New York, and Mrs. B. Goodstein from Brooklyn, 1 China tea set from Mr. and Mrs. Reuben, Chicago; 2 paintings from Mr. and Mrs. H. Joseph, Mineral Point, Wisconsin; call bell from J. Mandelbaum and wife, set silver knives from Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Bush, silver cake knife from Andrew Wessell, night clock from Messrs. Henry Openheimer and Co., Chicago; silver vase from Miss Ella Smith; set knives and forks, L. H. Kurtz and wife; silverware, Wm. A. Hyman, Grand Rapids, Michigan; table spread, Levi Otlieb; pie knife, Patsy O'Connell; silver castor, A. M. Weinstock; silver soup ladle, Mr. Polk, Pennsylvania.

Rabbi Shauer remained in Des Moines until 1878 when he was replaced by Rabbi A. Pollak, who served the congregation until 1879, and then by Rabbi Dushner. When in November 1881, the Board requested Reverend Dushner to deliver his sermons in English, he too resigned; and David Davidson of Ottumwa took his place as rabbi, preacher, and teacher at an annual salary of $800.00. All these men, like their parishioners, felt their way uncertainly in the direction of reform and away from their German background. The Temple was too small to attract leaders of the highest calibre. Even Davidson, probably the best trained of these early rabbis, was semi-orthodox in his leanings and thus could not give consistent guidance. It was under his successors, Rabbi

A. Freudenthal, 1884-1889, Dr. Ignatius Mueller, 1889-1894, and Rabbi Seymour Bottigheimer, 1894-1898, that B'nai Jeshurun completed its passage to reform and laid the pattern that was to continue to be its path for almost fifty years.[12]

Beginning with the year 1875, the members of the Temple arranged annual Purim Balls both for enjoyment and as a means of raising money in a pleasant way. On March 14, 1875, the IOWA STATE REGISTER printed the following:

> PURIM BALL—The Hebrew people of Des Moines inaugurate a new series of entertainment next week, Monday evening—at least new to this city. Elsewhere Purim Balls have been known for years, and recognized as a prominent social gathering of the year among that race, but here they are yet to be inaugurated. The first is to be given at the Aborn House, Monday evening, March 22. That famous hostelry with its elegant apartment and hospitality. It will probably be the most dressiest affair of the season. Tickets can be had of Lederer, Strauss & Company . . . or any of the prominent businessmen of the Hebrew faith.

The proceeds of this affair enriched the treasury of the Temple by several hundred dollars, and a thirty dollar gift was presented to Rabbi Shauer.[13] The Ball of 1876 was an even more elaborate affair with many of the non-Jewish society people participating. There is no record of a similar event in 1877 or 1878, but in 1879 we learn about the program of "Our Circle Club," for all practical purposes the social extension of the Temple. Actually two Purim events were celebrated that year, one being a masked ball held in February by "Our Circle Club," and the other a Purim Ball, in March, sponsored by the Congregation but held in the club rooms. Since the same people were members of both organizations, the only difference seems to be that the "Our Circle" party was

attended by a large number of non-Jewish guests, while the congregational affair was in the nature of a "house-party." [14] Even at this early date, people from the East-side, among them being the Kutners and the Conigiskys, participated in some of these functions, a sign which augured well for the future of the community.

In November, 1877, Reverend Shauer organized the Temple's first religious school; Hebrew was taught to the handful of children and it was several years before the school became a Sabbath School only. The elaborate Purim Party held for the children was duly reported in the REGISTER of March 15 and 16, 1881. By 1883, two members of the congregation assisted Rabbi Davidson in teaching the young people. A stipend was given to these people apparently in the form of a small reduction in their membership fees. By the fall of 1885, the enrollment in the school had reached fifty-seven; while twenty years later, the enrollment dropped to twenty-seven. Since families in those years were quite large and since there was no other Religious School available in the city, it appears that many of the children from the Eastside, particularly the girls, attended the Temple school. Later, when "orthodox" facilities were made available, the school of the Temple primarily served its member-families although at no time were these educational facilities closed to non-members or children of indigent parents.[15]

The earliest reference to the celebration of a Bar Mitzvah is found in the records of the Board Meeting of February 2, 1886; formal confirmation exercises of both boys and girls were probably introduced by Dr. Mueller or Rabbi Bottigheimer some time after 1890.

A milestone in the history of the Congregation was the purchase of a building of its own in 1878. As in the

history of most synagogues, the first permanent home was a former church building which required a minimum of remodeling and which could be acquired at a relatively small price. B'nai Yeshurun was duly incorporated on September 9, 1878. Following this step, the Temple purchased its first structure for the sum of $2000.00 In addition to this original cost, $876.00 was spent for repairs. This building then served the congregation until 1887.

The following is the story in the words of the IOWA STATE REGISTER of September 28, 1878:

> THE SYNAGOGUE.—There are two congregations of Hebrews in Des Moines—reformed and orthodox. The latter (*sic*, should be former!) are mostly residents of the west city, and among our most enterprising, wealthy, and popular citizens. For some time past their place of worship has been a hall on Court Avenue in Kuhn's Block. It was comfortable enough after one had reached it, but that the stairs were tiresome to climb, and besides that, the Hebrew thrift did not fancy the idea of worshipping in a rented house, and so, some two weeks ago, steps were taken to secure a religious home. A few wealthy members of the congregation clubbed together and purchased the old church property at the corner of Seventh and Mulberry Street. It did not present a very inviting appearance when the bargain was consummated, but now, under the skillful touch of the painter and carpenter, it is one of the neatest structures of the kind in the city. The outside has been painted a light drab color, the cupola has been completed, a hood placed over the door, and the old brick building of two weeks since is scarcely recognizable.
>
> But the transformation inside has been still more complete. All the partitions have been removed, stained glass is in the windows, handsome carpets cover the floor, and handsome pews fill the auditorium. A black walnut reading desk for the rabbi has been added behind which is a receptacle for the scroll and the priestly vestments. Handsome chandeliers add to the beauty of the apartment, and altogether it is a model of neatness and comfort.

> Last evening commenced the Jewish New Year, and then, for the first time, services were held in the new synagogue. Rabbi Pollock read the prayers and Rabbi Shauer delivered the dedicatory address, after which Rabbi Pollock closed the exercises with prayer for the entire country, for the President, the Governor, the mayor, and all other authorities ..... etc. The congregation yesterday bid off the pews for one year, the amount realized being nearly one thousand dollars. The property is free from debt, and the congregation, though few in number, are well pleased to be under their new roof tree.

At the time of the dedication, B'nai Yeshurun counted approximately twenty-five members, and this number was raised to thirty within a year. Several out-of-town couples were included in this number, among them being the Frankels of Oskaloosa. Since the Jewish population of Des Moines was rather transient, by 1883 the Temple membership had dwindled to twenty-eight.

It was not until after the middle of the decade that membership began to approach the forty mark, and it was then that some thought was given to the purchase of a second building. A lot on the southwest corner of Eighth and Pleasant Streets was purchased for $6750.00 and the construction of the new building began with the laying of the cornerstone on June 15, 1887.[16] Some $22,000.00 was raised by subscription, with $1500.00 coming from outside the city. Much credit for the success of this subscription was given to the Ladies Benevolent Society. Finally, after the usual financial and "personality" problems, the new building was dedicated on October 21, 1887. Elaborate ceremonies marked the occasion. The SATURDAY TIMES of the same date had this to tell concerning the dedication:

> It is with much pleasure that The Times gives its readers a picture of the new and beautiful Jewish syna-

gogue just completed and thrown open for the first time yesterday, when it was dedicated in due form by the Rev. Dr. Emil G. Hirsch, of Chicago, assisted by Rabbi Freudenthal. The event was a red-letter day in Jewish circles and will live in years to come as being the happiest moment in the whole history of the congregation. No church in Des Moines has been more prosperous or made more rapid strides than has the Jewish. From its organization in 1872, when twenty-five persons constituted its full membership it has rapidly grown and to-day witnesses the brightest fruits of its devoted followers.

The present house of worship is of oriental architecture. It is plain, but very tastefully finished in yellow pine with black walnut trimmings. The auditorium is nicely arranged, the seats being on an incline and the choir stationed in the balcony facing the pulpit. The ark at the back of the pulpit is of beautiful design. On either side of the doors of the ark are the ten commandments in gilt letters. The lower part of the building is divided into Sunday School class, vestry and study rooms.

The dedication yesterday was attended by a large number of people, over three hundred invitations having been issued to friends. The interior of the Temple was festooned with evergreen and the pulpit literally banked with beautiful blooming roses and foilage plants, all combing to make a most pleasing picture. The large chandeliers were lighted for the first time and the church showed off to good effect. The music for the dedication services was given by the united choirs of the First Methodist Church and St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Miss Windus and Mr. C. K. Keeler were the organists.

The following out of town guests were present: Mr. and Mrs. I. Frankel of Oskaloosa, Mrs. H. Friedman of Council Bluffs, Mrs. L. Strauss of Chicago, Mr. Stern of Marengo, Mr. and Mrs. R. R. Grotte of Omaha, Dr. Emil G. Hirsch of Chicago, and Rabbi Fisher of Quincy.[17]

Much of what happened in the twenty years which followed was anticlimactic. There was continued growth; the congregation tried to retain its German-Jewish char-

acter by carefully selecting new members and by keeping at a minimum the religious demands upon its congregants. According to the Board minutes of 1893, considerable emphasis was placed on the closing of stores on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur; and initiation fees were still further reduced. One year earlier the "Jewish Benevolent Society" was formed. In 1895, the City Directory listed a Hebrew Benevolent Society, B'nai B'rith Lodge No. 98, Kesher shel Barzel Capitol City Lodge, and "Our Circle" Club, these being the charitable, social and cultural appendages of the Temple. The eight principal officers of these groups were at the same time the leaders of B'nai Yeshurun.

Finally, in 1895, the Temple was to elect its first reform rabbi in the person of the Hebrew Union College graduate, Seymour Bottigheimer; within a year after his appointment, the Board of the Congregation approved the adoption of the Union Prayer Book.[18] Bar Mitzvah and other traditional ceremonies had been eliminated so that Temple B'nai Yeshurun could regard itself as following in the spirit of Emil Hirsch and David Philipson, the spokesmen of absolute reform. During the next decade, an ever increasing number of older members were to die, and their deaths were duly recorded in special Memorials. The Temple Board was preoccupied with the problem of meeting cemetery expenses and encouraging bequests to the Temple. It was reported that the $1,000.00 gift of the Ladies' Aid Society, the proceeds of their bazaar of 1902, eased the financial burden appreciably. The same year the rabbi suggested that the proceeds of the public Seder should be used for charitable purposes, an indication that this religious function was still observed.[19]

It was this quiescent, self-satisfied congregation of

seventy adult members and twenty-seven children which in August of 1905 invited Eugene Mannheimer, then only about twenty-four years of age, to become its rabbi and teacher. He was to replace the beloved Dr. S. H. Sonneschein, whose failing health had forced his resignation.[20] With Rabbi Mannheimer's arrival in the city of Des Moines, a new chapter was to commence for both Temple B'nai Yeshurun and the wider Jewish Community.

CONGREGATIONS CHILDREN OF ISRAEL AND BETH EL JACOB

During these thirty years, the orthodox community laid the permanent foundations for its institutions. Again, the development was fairly typical: a *minyan* in the course of several years grew into a small congregation which before long split because of some dispute concerning ritual. These disputes were often the rationalization of personal jealousies or the result of different old-country background. Since, however, the "East European" community of Des Moines was very homogeneous, the secessions which took place were the outgrowth of Americanization and not the desire to retain the European past.

It was in April, 1876, that Joseph Blotcky, Moses Frank, Wolf Frank, Ben Cohen, Samuel Arenberg, David Cohen, Isaac Goldberg, and Moses L. Levine signed the Articles of Incorporation of Congregation B'nai Israel, Children of Israel.[21] All of its members were equally poor and equally strange in a new country. They clung to their native Yiddish, to the Hebrew prayers of their youth, and to the traditions of their homes with an almost desperate tenacity. It gave them their only sense of security and in-group feeling. A rented room on the

corner of East Fifth and Walnut Street and, later, in Hoberger's Hall in East Des Moines, served as a house of prayer; the "shochet" provided the families with Kosher meat and at the same time performed other religious functions.

Even before the time of formal incorporation, the 1874 City Directory listed Isaac Rabinowitz as "Jewish Rabbi." Most of these men of the early period, though not ordained rabbis, performed their assigned functions faithfully and capably. They filled an urgent need at a time when men with better theoretic training and more formal qualifications simply were not available in this country. We of the twentieth century owe these humble and often forgotten men a great debt for keeping alive the traditions and aspirations of the Jewish way of life.

In 1877, David Cohen was designated "pastor" of the "Jewish Synagogue"; and in 1884, H. Adleman was listed under the same classification. Four years later, Simon Goldstein became Rabbi of Children of Israel Congregation. About 1890, the orthodox community finally received its first ordained rabbi, Louis Shereshefsky. He was later succeeded by Simon Glazer, the author of the first history of Iowa Jewry. After Rabbi Glazer left Des Moines about the year 1905, the Children of Israel Congregation remained without the services of a rabbi for many years and during this time Nathan Goldstein officiated as its cantor. It is doubtful whether or not the membership was ever much larger than fifty or sixty families since the congregation remained on the Eastside despite the fact that after 1900 the center of Jewish settlement shifted westward.

In early days membership in the congregation meant the right to own a seat and to participate in its affairs.

This membership involved little expense. Nominal dues of $2.50 to $3.00 per year covered the expenditures for rent, heat, and maintenance.[23] The congregation did not maintain a school since boys received private lessons in Hebrew from some of the older men such as Wolf Frank. Emergencies among members were usually met by spontaneous collection of small sums of money.

As early as 1881, a dissension among the members of B'nai Israel Congregation became evident and a small group left the congregation and conducted services of its own. The precise reason for this rift is not determined although Rabbi Glazer relates that B'nai Israel was thought by the "separatists" to have been "not orthodox enough."[24] Despite these difficulties in 1884, Congregation Children of Israel purchased a cemetery on the corner of Delaware Avenue and Easton Boulevard and the following year acquired a lot on the corner of East Sixth Street between Lyon and Des Moines Streets where a frame structure was erected and duly dedicated by Rabbi Freudenthal of B'nai Yeshurun. This building seated about two hundred fifty people. In 1911, a new brick structure was erected and is still in use today. Rabbi Mannheimer officiated at this later dedication. Others participating in the ceremony included Mayor Hanna, Henry Riegelman, Ben Jacobs, and J. R. Cohen, president of the synagogue.

The group, which in 1881 had separated, became the nucleus of Des Moines' second orthodox congregation, BETH EL JACOB, House of the God of Jacob. Its earliest synagogue building was a rented hall on East Walnut Street; in 1898, the congregation moved into its own home on the corner of East Second and Des Moines Streets. This building was in use until 1924, when the structure on West Fifth and University Avenue

was dedicated. Thus the synagogue followed the continuing geographical shift of Jewish settlement from the eastside to the area west of the river, and in 1956 broke ground for a new building west of Polk Boulevard on Cummins Parkway.

The real history of Beth El Jacob Congregation may be said to have begun in 1894, the date of its first Pinkasbook, and from it some ideas of the operation of the congregation may be gleaned.[25] The book, written in a beautiful Yiddish hand with an appropriate Hebrew introduction, represents an actual operating constitution. Of special interest are three of its articles.

ARTICLE 6 dealt with the purchase of seats in the synagogue. Following established East-European customs, a member had the right to purchase fixed seats for a maximum fee of $50.00 and an annual tax of not more than $2.50 depending upon the location of the seat; this fee also entitled the wife of the purchaser to a seat in the women's gallery. Any argument concerning ownership was to be settled by a committee of seven. Should a member want to give up his synagogue seats, he was permitted to sell them to another member. This sale could be completed only if it were satisfactory to those who held the seats to the right and to the left of him and in due consideration of "yichus," prestige and community position.

ARTICLE 8 stated rules of conduct during services and established the principle that a member was to donate a minimum of fifty cents to the synagogue on the occasion of a "Jahrzeit," the anniversary of a death in his family. After 1930 this fee was raised to $1.00.

ARTICLE 9 enumerated additional privileges of membership, especially as they related to sickness and death.

The names of the early presidents and other officers

were also found in the Pinkas. Term of office was semi-annual with meetings during the Passover and Succoth holidays. This arrangement was convenient, since most men, and many were still peddlers, spent the holidays at home. Thus they could easily discharge their congregational responsibilities. The most prominent of these early leaders was Charles Silberman, who in later years was to become the prime force toward the establishment of a community Hebrew School.

It was only in 1934, during the long presidency of Morris Green, that the congregation introduced annual elections and began to operate in accordance with a definite annual budget. Throughout most of its corporate existence Beth El, in the pattern of Children of Israel Congregation and other orthodox synagogues, had as its only function the maintenance of a house of prayer, of a funeral chapel, and of a cemetery. While both chapel and cemetery were normally self-supporting from fees and the sale of lots, the synagogue could not be operated that simply. There were usually payments of both interest and principal for the mortgage of the synagogue building in addition to costs of maintenance and utilities, and fixed expenses for the cantor, sexton and rabbi.[28] The rabbi received a very nominal remuneration since it was expected that the income from his various rabbinic duties, such as weddings, funerals, and the supervision of "Kashrut," would assure him of a good livelihood. In addition to these fees, there were usually periodical gifts which he received from the members and seatholders of the congregation. Both the sexton and cantor had considerably higher salaries, as their additional sources of income were more limited than those of the rabbi.

Only a small part of the income of the congregation

actually came from the dues of its members, which as late as the 1930's were less than $15.00 per member per year. Voluntary donations and contributions for synagogue privileges and honors were the mainstay of the congregation's budget. As in most other religious and charitable institutions of the day, a small group of men could usually be called upon in an emergency; and it was only natural that they would determine the policy of the institution. Perhaps it is the fact of such a dominant group, so frequently self-perpetuating, which accounts for much of the internal history of the Jewish community in America, for the dissensions that very often gave rise to schism, and in many instances for the duplication of agencies.

At about the same time, Temple B'nai Jeshurun and Congregation Beth El Jacob entrusted their spiritual guidance to two young men, Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer and Rabbi Naftali H. Zeichik.[27] These men, who were to remain in Des Moines until their deaths after World War II, gave stability to both orthodox and reform Judaism. Aided by intelligent lay-leadership, they were to bring together in common effort the divergent sections of the community.

CONGREGATION TIFERETH ISRAEL

Both Children of Israel Congregation and Beth El Jacob Synagogue were formed to provide for the needs of the East-European immigrants who reached Des Moines in ever increasing numbers after 1875. They remained orthodox houses of worship; but outside the synagogue, their members and seatholders were subject to the all-pervading pressure of Americanization, almost as much as the openly "reformed" group that had organized the Temple. The Conservative tendencies of

the older people kept the orthodoxy of the two synagogues inviolate though there were signs that these institutions could not retain the loyalty of the youth. Some few went to embrace some kind of reform. A much larger number, which increased with the years as the American-born children grew to adulthood, retained their affiliation with the "shul" of their parents. In their everyday living, they had already moved away from a consistent identification with orthodox theory and practice. Even among the East-European Jews, preoccupation with business was fatal to the old ideal of *Torah lishmo*—"learning for the sake of learning"—and relegated religion and Torah to a secondary place in the scheme of things.

The inability, or perhaps the refusal, of the existing synagogues to establish religious schools for both boys and girls and to obtain English-speaking teachers and rabbis precipitated a crisis which led to the foundation of a fourth congregation, Tifereth Israel, in 1901.[28] This point of view is clearly stated in Ida Jacob's story which appeared in THE REFORM ADVOCATE of December 14, 1912.

CONGREGATION TIFERETH ISRAEL

In 1901, certain members of B'nai Israel and Beth El Jacob led by B. Gottstein, R. Marks, S. Leon, and Louis Oransky, feeling that those two synagogues failed to supply a need that should not be neglected—the proper consideration of the youth of its congregation—withdrew and founded a new congregation, Tifereth Israel, with B. Gottstein as its first president. They felt that these two congregations, by being too conservative, by failure to conduct Hebrew schools for the children, and by services conducted entirely in Hebrew, could not hope to keep the coming generation within its fold and that the history and ideals of Judaism could be brought home to them only in a lan-

> guage that they could understand. . . . Tifereth Israel has been trying to fulfill the punial (?) purpose of its organization by conducting a Hebrew school which is free to the Jewish boys and girls of the city . . . and by sermons in English. Otherwise the service is according to the orthodox rituals.[29]

An ever increasing number of non-reformed Jewish families came to live on the Westside, and the desire to have a house of worship within walking distance and without being forced to cross the river should not be overlooked. Louis Oransky, one of the founders of Tifereth Israel, in a letter written on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the congregation, stated that "the inspiration for the establishment of a conservative synagogue came to me as a result of attending services at the Central Synagogue of New York City . . . For quite some time I (L. Oransky) had felt the need for a modern Synagogue which would appeal and attract the rising generation of American Jewry and be a bulwark for the perpetuation of traditional Judaism in the community."[30]

In any case, on April 16, 1901, sixteen men met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Marks, and organized the new congregation. Upon the suggestion of Solomon Leon, the name Tifereth Israel, "Glory of Israel," was adopted; each man present contributed $4.00 and it was determined to charge a minimum of $15.00 for dues. Within a month, articles of incorporation had been filed and first services were conducted in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Saul Davidson. Soon thereafter a hall on the northeast corner of Seventh and Locust, formerly occupied by the Salvation Army, was rented and Rabbi Morias or Morais was engaged. But "feeling that the new congregation had no future in Des Moines," he left

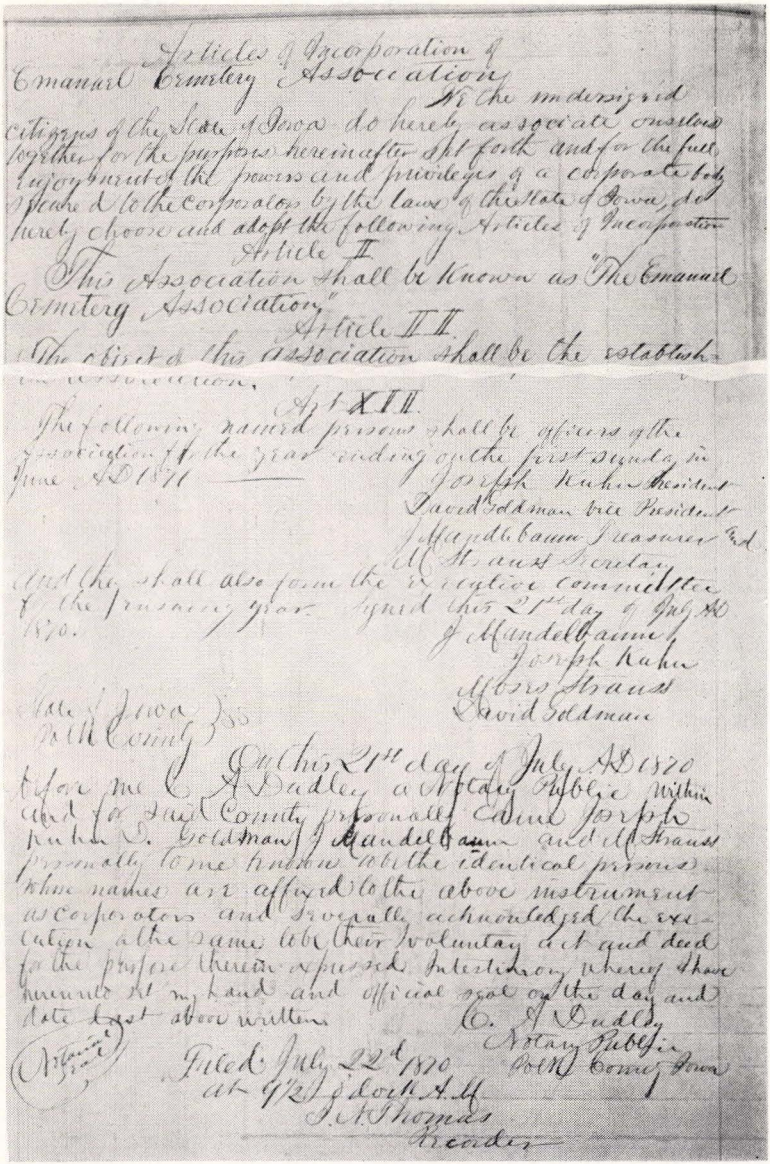
after a stay of six weeks and was replaced by Rabbi Samuel Rabinowitz.[31] A Hebrew school and Sabbath school were organized, and the Ladies Auxiliary became active. It took several years before the new congregation could find a rabbi to remain in Des Moines for any length of time.[32] Dr. Rudolph Farber, serving as its spiritual leader from 1907 until 1912, was the first man with a sound Jewish and secular education to occupy its pulpit. Just before his arrival the congregation had built what was to remain its home for more than twenty years. They chose a site on the corner of Third and Crocker Streets, the part of town which boasted the largest concentration of Jewish homes in the city. By this time the membership had risen to forty-seven families, the attendance at its daily Hebrew school to almost fifty; and more than seventy-five children attended its Sabbath School. When Dr. Farber left in 1912, the congregation was well on its way to becoming a permanent and significant factor in the life of the wider community, and through its rabbis and laymen was to contribute its share to the building of those institutions, which were to bridge the divisions of a religious and social nature.

By 1905, the framework of a viable community existed in Des Moines. The four congregations and their professional leadership could serve the needs of all shades of religious opinions; enough fraternal and social groups had been organized among both the "Germans" and the East-Europeans to satisfy all tastes and desires. A higher degree of comfort if not wealth was achieved among an ever larger number of families.

It was during these early years of the new century that Des Moines Jews first became interested in recording the history of its five decades. Rabbi Simon

Glazer in 1904 and Miss Annette Mann in 1908, followed by Miss Ida Jacobs in 1912, collected the early stories, described the leading men and their accomplishments, and pointed with satisfaction to the achievements of their times.

These writers and their generation did not know that the growth of the past would not answer the needs of the tomorrow; the pogroms in Russia and Roumania, the tragedy of two wars would shatter the self-assurance of American Jews, make unheard of demands, which were met, and made possible the K'LAL ISRAEL among the remnant of Israel here and overseas.



Articles of Incorporation of
Emanuel Cemetery Association

We the undersigned citizens of the State of Iowa do hereby associate ourselves together for the purpose hereinafter set forth and for the full enjoyment of the powers and privileges of a corporate body specially conferred upon corporations by the laws of the State of Iowa, do hereby choose and adopt the following Articles of Incorporation

Article I

This Association shall be known as "The Emanuel Cemetery Association"

Article II

The object of this association shall be the establishment of a cemetery

Article XII

The following named persons shall be officers of the Association for the year ending on the first Sunday in June A.D. 1871

Joseph Kuhn President
David Goldman Vice President
J. Mandelbaum Treasurer and
M. Strauss Secretary

And they shall also form the Executive Committee for the ensuing year. Signed this 21st day of July A.D. 1870.

J. Mandelbaum
Joseph Kuhn
Albert Strauss
David Goldman

State of Iowa } ss
Polk County }

On this 21st day of July A.D. 1870 before me C. A. Dudley a Notary Public within and for said County personally came Joseph Kuhn D. Goldman J. Mandelbaum and M. Strauss personally to me known to be the identical persons whose names are affixed to the above instrument as Corporators and severally acknowledged the execution of the same to be their voluntary act and deed for the purpose therein expressed. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and official seal on the day and date last above written

C. A. Dudley
Notary Public
Polk County Iowa

Filed July 22d 1870
at 9 21 o'clock A.M.
S. K. Thomas
Recorder

Plate I. Record of earliest Jewish organization in Des Moines:
THE EMANUEL CEMETERY ASSOCIATION, July 22, 1870



Plate II. The "OLD" B'NAI JESHURUN, built in 1887 at Eighth and Pleasant Streets

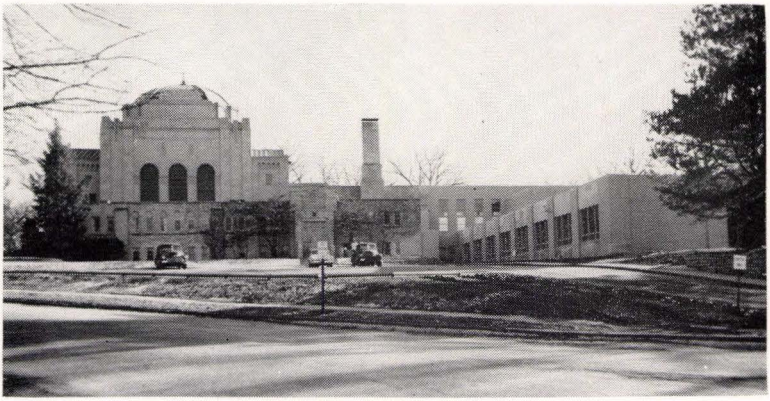


Plate III. TEMPLE B'NAI JESHURUN (1931)
Eugene Mannheimer Memorial Building (1956)



Plate IV. CHILDREN OF ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE, East Des Moines (1911)

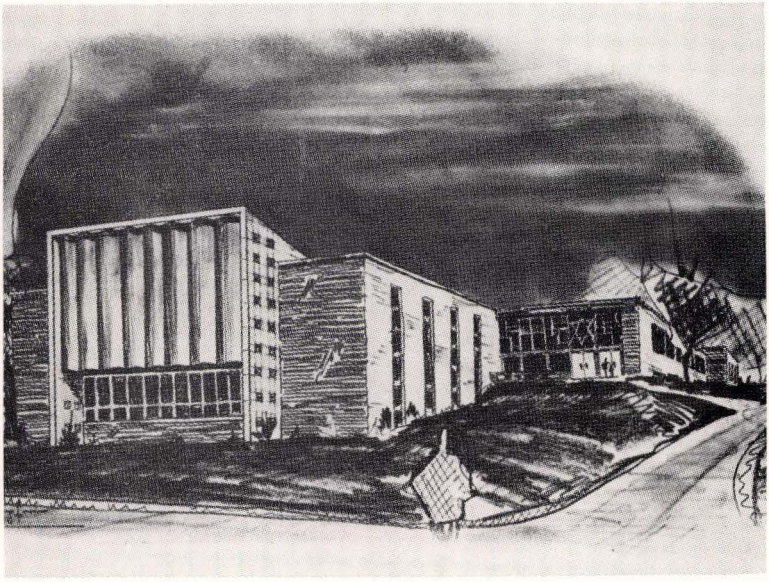


Plate V. BETH EL JACOB SYNAGOGUE (1957)

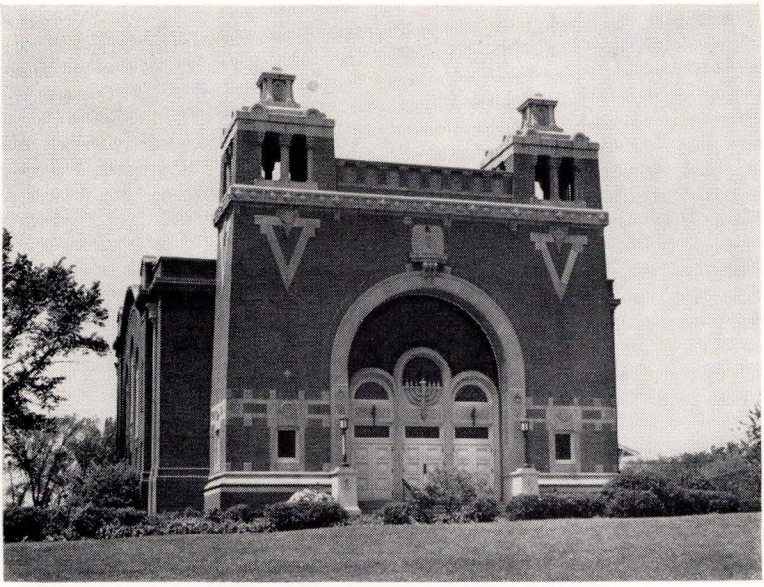


Plate VI. TIFERETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE (1930)

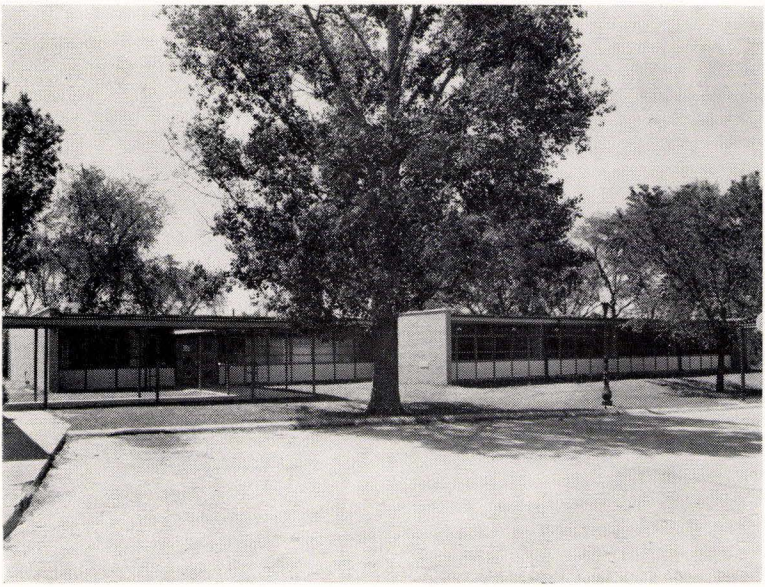


Plate VII. TIFERETH ISRAEL SCHOOL BUILDING (1955)
Home of Des Moines Bureau of Jewish Education



Plate VIII. THE FIRST HOME OF THE JEWISH SETTLEMENT ASSOCIATION on the eastside



Plate IX. JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER, Eighth and Forest (1924)



Plate X. THE IOWA JEWISH HOME FOR AGED
Sixteenth and Pleasant Streets



Plate XI. THE RAYMOND BLANK MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

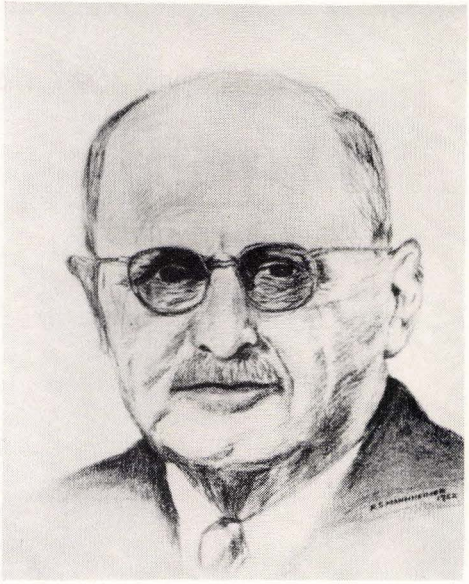


Plate XII. EUGENE MANNHEIMER



Plate XIII. JULIA BLOOM MAYER



Plate XIV. NAFTALI H. ZEICHIK



Plate XV. CELIA JOSEPH WEINSTOCK

IV

Service To Man

Community Institution

THE MANNHEIMER MEMOIRS

The American of today is heir to a rich and colorful tradition of civic responsibility and mutual aid, and to a widening understanding of man's place in society. He takes for granted a whole gamut of institutions, agencies, and services, and frequently does not see the toil, the struggle, and the great devotion from which these have evolved.

Equally, the American Jew of today is the final link in a long chain of philanthropic action and responsibility. The law of Ancient Israel had enjoined the care of the poor and the protection of the weak to all members of the group, whether the family, the clan, the tribe, or the nation. This Biblical emphasis on "tsedakah," righteousness through social action, was further enlarged by Rabbinic Judaism so that mutual aid and communal responsibility to the poor developed into a tradition which regarded philanthropy a normal moral obligation of the individual; to shirk these duties never occurred to the religious Jew. European Jews brought these attitudes along to America, where they became pioneers in

social welfare organizations and techniques. Among these practices one might mention the visiting housekeeper, family counsellor, sheltered workshops, free loan agencies, fund raising methods which have been adopted in the community chest movement and the program of Americanizing the immigrant. And the latter frequently was the initial step which led to the establishment of organized adult education courses in many a city and town.

The development of the Jewish community in Des Moines followed much the same pattern as that in the larger cities of the country. In the attempt to cope with the ever increasing number of immigrants from Eastern Europe, existing social and charitable practices needed enlargement, alteration, and more often than not replacement by new ones. Eventually a Jewish Community Center, a Jewish Social Service, a Jewish Welfare Federation, a city-wide system of Jewish education and related agencies were to emerge and take their place alongside the existing synagogues and eleemosynary and fraternal groups. In this work which was to produce the organic community of the mid-century, orthodox and reform, native-born and immigrant could cooperate from the beginning. And because of this work the earlier religio-social divisions lost much of their sharpness and ultimately their significance.

The social structure of Des Moines Jewry aided in hastening this process of amalgamation. With very little factory work available, most of the newcomers would be absorbed in the retail trade. The "sweatshop phase" of Americanization, so typical of conditions on the east coast, did not prevail in Iowa, and the transition of the peddler or dealer in second-hand goods to store owner or wholesaler took place in a relatively short time. In

those same decades before World War I, American trained professional people, lawyers, physicians, dentists, and university personnel, who were the sons of both "German" and "East-European" Jews, were to emerge.

These factors, which gave Des Moines such a unique livelihood structure, should be given their just place in this story of growth and unification, a story so well told by Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, who left in his *Memoirs* practically a day by day record of the beginnings and the development of the major community institutions. When in 1905 Eugene Mannheimer came to Des Moines as a young rabbi, he had already developed the habits of the careful historian. His daily calendars carried notes of important meetings and appointments, his Jewish calendars recorded events of a religious nature and the titles of his weekly sermon-topics; in addition he kept "little black notebooks," and meticulously preserved his files of correspondence. Since the rabbi served for more than a generation as the chairman or the secretary of many community agencies and functions, his study, his library and the attic of his home became the repositary for varied documents, notes and incidental data. He used much of the leisure time which came with his retirement after World War II to sort and re-arrange this wealth of material. With his excellent memory for things past, he carefully checked all available materials and held innumerable conversations with those who helped formulate these agencies. Before his death in 1952, he had compiled the record for his ministry and typed the draft of the *Memoirs,* which included the following:

1. The Jewish Community Center, originally The Jewish Settlement Association, 1907-1951.
2. The Jewish Social Service, originally The Federated Jewish Charities, 1908-1951.

3. The Jewish Free Loan Society.
4. The Bureau of Jewish Education, originally The Talmud Torah, and later The Board of Jewish Education, 1914-1951, and associated educational enterprises, such as Institutes and Conferences.
5. Jewish Youth Organizations since 1914.
6. The Jewish Welfare Fund, originally the United Jewish Philanthropies, 1914-1951.
7. The Iowa Jewish Home for Aged, 1931-1951.
8. Fund raising activities of Jewish War Sufferer's Relief, 1914-1952.
9. Immigrant Work in Des Moines, 1902-1951.
10. Jewish Welfare Board in both wars.
11. Fraternal and Social Clubs of the Jewish Community.
12. Temple B'nai Jeshurun.
13. The Des Moines Roundtable to become a chapter of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.
14. The School of Religion at the University of Iowa.
15. Jewish Social Clubs and Public Relations Committees.[2]

In his own way Eugene Mannheimer referred to these memoirs simply as "NOTES."

> These NOTES, and all the other NOTES in this series are a compilation of relevant material supplied by the papers which have accumulated in my study over the course of the years, the Des Moines Register, the Des Moines Tribune, the Iowa Jewish News, my personal records (which are anything but as complete as they might and should be), and my personal reflections (which, possibly or probably, are not always completely accurate).

Be that as it may, these notes are indispensable as a primary source of important information without which many facts and events of the past fifty years would be forgotten. If one keeps in mind that the memoirs are the recollections of one individual, written many years after the events took place, one comes to respect the sincerity of the work, and more than anything else, one

comes to appreciate the particular gift which the rabbi possessed.

Eugene Mannheimer sensed the changing role of the rabbi of America. In Eastern Europe of the nineteenth century, the rabbi remained primarily as scholar and a judge. The German rabbi, representing a legally recognized and established congregation (Kultusgemeinde), was the official spokesman and pastor as well as the authority in Jewish affairs.

It was not possible to transplant either pattern to the soil of America. The rabbi here was neither the judge nor the legal spokesman of an almost compulsory community; it was up to him to make a place for himself and find acceptance as the representative of a small, completely voluntary group. The nineteenth century rabbi of Western Europe was still the head of an organized community; the American rabbi was frequently but the leader of a small segment of Jews in competition with other equally small segments. The American Jewish minister served as "preacher, pastor, community worker, teacher of the young and spokesman for the Jewish group."[3]

In the United States, under pressure of a rapidly increasing Jewish population—the five hundred thousand in 1890 had become three million in 1914—the rabbi often became the moving spirit in the establishment of new educational and philanthropic agencies. It was necessary for each rabbi to determine in his own conscience whether or not to give primacy to the old tradition of scholarship or to the organizational and promotional needs of the present.

Eugene Mannheimer became a rabbi at precisely the time when the American Jewish community needed men who could organize and build; who could unify con-

flicting interests, raise funds, speak the language of America for Jews to non-Jewish Americans, and above all else, inspire men of the most diverse backgrounds and interests to cooperate with him and with each other.[4]

Many honors and awards came to Rabbi Mannheimer during his forty-seven years as one of the first citizens of Iowa. It was summed up in the editorial which appeared in the DES MOINES TRIBUNE on September 9, 1952.

"GENE" MANNHEIMER

"Gene" Mannheimer was one of the rare personalities who became virtual "institutions" in their communities. We were reminded almost a decade ago that he was not indestructible, when he had to retire from his principal duties as rabbi of Temple B'nai Jeshurun and take life more gently.

We were fortunate, as a matter of fact, to have had his bold devotion to truth and fairness, his incisive and progressive mind, his warmth and good humor among us over this past decade, despite his limited activity. For he never ceased to pull as much of the load as he could toward achieving a better city, a better nation, and above all a better world.

Rabbi Mannheimer came to Iowa first to take a rabbinate at Sioux City, almost exactly a half century ago. Shortly thereafter he moved to Des Moines, where he had lived ever since. He was a leader here in molding the strong co-operative Jewish social services and cultural institutions that are now characteristic of this region. But his good works were spread ever so much wider than the area of his own faith.

"Gene" was as nearly a citizen of the Human Race as our century has known. He was well-informed about world affairs, and made his influence count for a wise American foreign policy in every way he could.

He was active in the very broadest community welfare enterprises, including the Community Chest and public education projects. He was a member of the original

speakers' "team" for the National Conference of Christians and Jews in Iowa, which has carried on such a broad program of education for tolerance among all of our races and religious faiths.

And so on.

Many a man and woman in this city have engaged in informal debate with Rabbi Manheimer on some current issue, but never in any other spirit than that of fair play, and dispassionate search for the "right," and friendly exchange.

Many a man and woman have sought "Gene's" guidance on difficult personal problems, and were never turned away, although he was humble and never doctrinaire.

The community loses a most able leader, a generous friend, a noble spirit if ever there was one.

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

As in the earlier period, the Eastside of the city still received the greater part of the influx of Jewish immigration after 1900. In the area between East Walnut Street and University Avenue, quite close to the river, was the less desirable section of Jewish settlement, all of it a few minutes' walk from the two orthodox synagogues. Across the river the area from Keosauqua northward and extending past Forest Avenue held the highest concentration of Jewish homes always well interspersed by non-Jewish residences; it was here that the first Tifereth Israel Synagogue was established, some ten blocks from Temple B'nai Jeshurun on Pleasant Street. On Fifth and Eighth Streets respectively, both the Jewish Community Center and the Beth El Synagogue were to be erected shortly after 1920. With the continuous westward growth of the city, it was not long before more and more Jewish families moved west of Thirty-fifth Street and south of University Avenue, and the present site of both the Temple and Tifereth Israel may fairly well be regarded as the

natural foci of this settlement. It is significant, however, that this third area did not constitute a Jewish neighborhood in the same sense as the two earlier concentrations. In this most desirable residential section of the city, Jewish homes are found among a much larger number of non-Jewish residences. That the Des Moines of the mid-century succeeded in doing away with anything resembling racial and religious concentrations speaks to the credit of the community and its people.

But, to come back to 1905, when Eugene Mannheimer began his ministry in Des Moines, he found as leader of the community such men as Charles Silberman, Reuben Marks, Louis Oransky, Morris Samish, Ike Friedlich, Max Shloss, Henry Riegelman and various members of the Younker, Strauss, Frankel, and Mandelbaum families. The great Jewish task of the day was to find homes and jobs for the stream of refugees coming in the wake of Kishinev and the bloody pogroms that accompanied the Russo-Japanese War. In 1901, attempts to disperse as many as possible of the refugees to the smaller cities of the country led to the formation of the Industrial Removal Office (I.R.O.) by the trustees of the Baron de Hirch Fund.[5] Outside of New York, the I.R.O. worked mainly through the local chapters of the B'nai B'rith, at that time the strongest and most comprehensive American-Jewish organization.

Reuben Marks, Solomon Leon, and Henry Riegelman carried most of this load for Iowa. These were the same men who organized a Free Loan Association and who after 1906 acted as local agents for the Galveston Plan, "the first deliberate effort in America to divert immigrants from the Eastern seaboard toward the territory west of the Mississippi by creating a central port of entry in the South."[6]

In Des Moines Reuben Marks, assisted by two or three other men and, we assume, by the officers of the three women's charitable organizations, handled the work of what was called the *Charitable Free Labor Bureau.* He reported to Rabbi Mannheimer on the activities of this Bureau in the following excerpts of a letter dated December 1, 1910:

> . . . Have accepted and provided positions in the last twelve months for 91 people.
> Have given clothing and shoes in the last twelve months to 65 people.
> Have provided homes for two families in the last twelve months.
> Have paid board for unemployed 141 weeks and 2 days.
> All of the above work was carried on at a cost of $1,114.75.
> I am taking care mostly of people who are sent here from Galveston, Texas and New York City, New York. My methods are to pay board for anyone until I find a position for them. If a family man comes, I pay for them one month's rent and furnish groceries to the whole family also coal up to the time when a permanent position is found, to enable him to take proper care of his family.
> I have been interested in the same work ever since 1902. . .

Since 1907, when the Galveston Plan had been authorized by action of the B'nai B'rith, a maximum of three families and five single adults was sent to Iowa each time a steamer landed at Galveston. Of the eighty to one hundred people who thus came to Des Moines, about half settled in the smaller towns of Iowa.[7]

The Industrial Removal Office reported that a total of 1,532 persons came to Iowa via the Eastern ports and Galveston between 1901 and 1917. Thus Mr. Mark's figure, which would put the city's total at about one thousand persons, seems reasonable. This estimate is verified by the rapid growth of the Jewish Community in just those years; the Iowa census of 1905 found nine

hundred fifty-six persons of "Russian" birth living in Polk County; the census of 1915 registered one thousand eight hundred seventy-six. This increase of nine hundred twenty persons over a ten-year period consisted almost completely of Jewish immigrants and would again verify this data. The funds for this aid to newcomers were derived from subscriptions by individuals and, probably, allocations by the B'nai B'rith and the three existing women's aid associations.

On April 26, 1907, Rabbi Mannheimer preached a sermon on "Our Duty to the Immigrant," the nature and content of which are suggested by its text (Deut. 10:18 and 19):

> He doth execute justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye, therefore, the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.

After the well attended service, Miss Flora Dunlap, head resident of the Roadside Settlement, discussed the need for the desirability of Jewish settlement work. Despite strong opposition from some of the Temple's most influential members, she argued conclusively that Des Moines required an agency which would interpret American ideals to the adult immigrant, which would teach him the basic skills needed for successful life here, and which would provide wholesome and useful activities for young adults and children. Before the close of the evening a committee was appointed to study the matter and to act in accordance with the conclusions reached. The committee consisted of Mrs. Anselm Frankel (Edna Kohn), Isaac Friedlich, Morris Samish, Mrs. Sam Weinstock (Celia Joseph), and Rabbi Mannheimer with Miss Dunlap as professional consultant.

Shortly after this episode, Roadside Settlement was

placed under quarantine and no further conferences could be held with Miss Dunlap. By the time the quarantine was lifted, Mr. Samish, the member of the committee most critical of the planned undertaking, had left for Europe; and it appeared that the work would be postponed for an entire year. At this critical point, Isaac Friedlich[8] suggested that Rabbi Mannheimer meet with Miss Dunlap in Cincinnati during the summer and engage a Jewish settlement worker. Mr. Friedlich felt confident that Mr. Samish would accept the *fait accompli* and help raise money to meet the salary for this staff of one. And so it happened. Miss Annette Mann was engaged at a salary of $50.00 per month, plus room and board at Roadside Settlement; and on September 1, 1907 ,she began work under the direction and supervision of Miss Dunlap.

The first problem, which confronted the new Jewish Settlement Association, was that of location. The Roadside Settlement house was too far from the Jewish districts of town to expect people to come there for classes and leisure activities. When the Board of Education made the rooms of the Bremer School on Des Moines Street available, Miss Mann and her volunteer workers visited the homes in the neighborhood of the school to ascertain the needs of the people. The greatest need seemed to be for classes in English Language with teachers who had a knowledge of German and Yiddish. The volunteer staff of twelve teachers embarked on their noble experiment on October 7, 1907, with a registration of one hundred fourteen men and women. Among this number there were approximately twenty non-Jewish registrants. Additional classes in sewing, embroidery, and millinery were organized as well as four groups for boys and girls. Social entertainment was also met with

eagerness, and the Abraham Lincoln Club was organized with forty people joining the group.

Thus, with a total expenditure of less than $525.00 contributed by forty-four Jews, one of the most significant social agencies in Des Moines began. It was to become the great and varied program of the Jewish Community Center.[9]

When the evening classes convened for their second year in the fall of 1908, the Des Moines Board of Education, pleased with the success of the night school, provided two teachers and assigned Miss Ida Jacobs to serve as director; it was but a few years later that the public schools took over the entire program and replaced the volunteer staff with professional teachers. From these humble beginnings emerged the elaborate structure of the Adult Education Department of the Des Moines Public Schools.

The new activities which were planned at the Community Center included a children's story hour, a mothers' club, and probably the most ambitious undertaking of all, a gymnasium. The committe spent many days looking for a suitable location for a gym. Finally, an empty storeroom was found at East Second and Locust Streets which was offered rent free. For the sum total of $207.00, the room was equipped with gymnasium apparatus and showers. Fifty-five boys registered to play basket-ball; of this total forty-three were Jewish.

During the summer of 1909, a supervised playground was maintained on the site where the Armory Building now stands. This was undoubtedly an innovation for the city of Des Moines. In that same year, a party of thirty-five mothers and children from the "congested Jewish area" spent a week at Beulah Lodge at the Ledges. Under the guidance of Miss Jennie Younker, a

second group of seventy-five repeated this "vacation in the country" in 1910.[10]

Most of the funds needed were solicited by Rabbi Mannheimer together with some of the local businessmen. In those days when $25.00 was a large gift, Isaac Younker donated $100.00 for two successive years and thus almost single-handedly assured the success of this much needed undertaking. In 1908-1909, $970.00 was donated by sixty-four contributors.

Finally in the fall of 1909, the young Settlement Association leased the rooms which had been occupied by the TRIBUNE, the Des Moines afternoon newspaper, in the rear of the Capital Bank Building on East Fifth and Locust Streets. These rooms were utilized to the fullest extent. On Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings various meetings took place and the library was kept open; gymnasium activities were held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings;[11] and Boys' Club met on Monday and Wednesday evenings. The Federated Jewish Charities with Mrs. Weinstock in charge opened an office there. The night school and afternoon classes, however, remained at Bremer School and the Abraham Lincoln Club met at the Tifereth Israel Synagogue.

Within two years, Mr. Aaron Younker purchased a house at East Fifth and Maple Streets, which, as a tribute to his mother, he placed at the disposal of the Jewish Settlement; these premises were used by the group for almost a decade. The Jewish Settlement House, as it was known until 1921, when it officially became the Jewish Community Center, developed a full course of activities in its own building. These activities were actually to change the entire character of the organization.

The original Jewish Settlement had been intended as an aid for the Americanization of newly arrived im-

migrants. Once in its own home, while English classes and even bath-and-laundry facilities were of great importance, more and more of its program approximated that of a community center or YMCA. Its sports activities, its many social and literary clubs, the opening of a branch of the Public Library, the use of its rooms by many Jewish organizations, and the early establishment of a religious school under its own roof best illustrate this transition.[12] Its character as a community center is indicated by the large number of non-Jews who aided in and were aided by its various phases of work and its many services.

> This endless list begins in 1907-1908, with the names of Mrs. Harry Polk, Mrs. L. W. Smith, Miss Helen Wilson, Miss Emily Wagner, Miss Bertha Baschenstein, Mrs. James Hume, Mrs. John Getchell, Miss Davis, Miss Foster, Miss McNally, Lester Schoonover, and Philip Noehe. It rounds out, for the time being, at the end of 1949, with the names of Judge Ralph Moore, Judge Edwin Moore, Judge Charles Cooter, John Gilman, and Andrew ("Andy") Hanson. I am sure, however, that none of these would take it amiss if I suggest that, of all these men and women whose names are found scattered through these "notes",—"Andy" Hansen, our Physical Director ever since our gymnasium at 8th and Forest began its work in about 1923, also stands out "in a class of his own," by reason of the faithful service which he has rendered to the Community Center for the past 26½ years.[13]

From 1912 until 1925, Miss Faye Biederman served as the director of the Center. She had been a member of the first team of volunteer workers in 1907, and it was under her capable and conscientious direction that the house on East Fifth and Maple Streets proved inadequate long before 1920. Faye Biederman gave the center-work that continuity of guidance which it so greatly needed and which it never before possessed. When in

the autumn of 1921, all activities were transferred to the newly purchased Turner property on Eighth and Forest Avenue, Miss Biederman published a four-page leaflet describing the work of the Jewish Community Center:

To establish a Jewish Center for every member of our community, young and old.
To provide a home in which you may find sociability, culture, and entertainment, as well as physical and spiritual development.
To foster the ideal of Americanism and development.
To foster the ideal of Americanism and Judaism.
To promote mutual understanding and unity of endeavor.
These are the aims of the

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

The leaflet listed the following activities:

Educational: 12 areas including lectures, concerts, Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls
Business Administration: Courses in six fields
Equipment: 8 facilities such as playgrounds, club and reading rooms, libraries, etc.
Social: 8 branches, including community gatherings, dances and clubs
Physical: 8 activities
Religious: above all the Sunday School of over 125 pupils as well as festival celebrations and Religious Club Programs

Plans were made to build a gymnasium, swimming pool, auditorium, and an adjoining Talmud Torah Building; within a period of three years the necessary $150,000.00 for this undertaking was raised from among the members of the Des Moines Jewish community, and The Jewish Community Center took possession of its new plant in 1924.

The Des Moines Public Welfare Bureau, later known

as the Community Chest, had always recognized the great social services performed by this Jewish agency. The Bureau provided a paid supervisor for the indoor playground of the Settlement House, and for several years made a token grant of $500.00 to the Federated Jewish Charities; in 1922, $5,000.00 was received for the Jewish Charities and the Jewish Community Center.[14] By 1929, the Center obtained a separate grant from the Welfare Bureau amounting to over $14,000.00. This allocation reached $24,000.00 by 1951. This amount constituted three-fifths of the total Center budget, the remaining $16,000.00 being raised through Center activities and from allocations of the Jewish Welfare Fund.

Once in its new building, the Grand Council of the J.C.C. found it feasible to publish a house paper in order "to present to the Jews of Des Moines the product of its own endeavor, the Community Center, and it is planned in future numbers of the paper to cover all departments and activities which are a part of the House."[15] Fortunately for the history of this decade, the "Community News," as this publication was known, did not confine itself to Center activities, but reported on pertinent local and general Jewish affairs. This paper, together with the "Scroll," published for a few years during the middle 1920's by the Junior groups of Temple B'nai Jeshurun, presented a good picture of Des Moines Jewry in those years. The "Community News" appeared until 1932 when THE IOWA JEWISH NEWS, edited by Jack Wolfe, eliminated the need for this non-commercial publication.

In 1925, Faye Biederman resigned her position with the Community Center and went to St. Paul, Minnesota, where she was to take charge of the Central Community

House. Her Des Moines position was filled by Mrs. Max Mayer, who was to remain in this post until her death in 1945.

Julia Bloom Mayer was born in 1872, the eldest daughter of Sarah and Moses Bloom of Iowa City. Her father was the first Jewish member of the Iowa Senate, where he served for four terms. Julia Mayer's entire education was received in various Catholic convents; and as a young matron in Iowa City she took an active part in civic and educational matters. It was only after she and Mr. Mayer moved to Des Moines in the early 20's that she became interested in Jewish communal work. Once she became director of the J.C.C., she devoted herself to it heart and soul. She worked tirelessly to increase its non-sectarian services to the neighborhood and the wider community, and to enlarge the Jewish content of the Center program. In both these efforts her endeavors proved most successful. The full measure of her work can only be ascertained by a careful perusal of her annual reports. The social, athletic, educational, and counseling record for the years during which she served the community is most gratifying and covers some of the outstanding pages in the history of the city.

Julia Mayer contributed greatly toward the civic growth of Des Moines; probably the most significant of these contributions were her sponsorship of "Home Camps" in the years of the great depression, the formation of the Iowa Book Forum, and the establishment of the Civic Forum series.

> Through the cooperation of the community centers and character building agencies of the Public Welfare Bureau and the City Playground Commission efforts will be made to provide supervised play for all children who cannot leave the city for their regular summer vacation. The

plan includes a series of "Day Camps" under the auspices of the Jewish Community Center, Roadside Settlement, South Side Community House, and Community Service, Inc. At the "day camps," regular camping activities are to be carried out, including campcraft, such as building shelter houses, fireplaces and lean-tos, outdoor cooking, nature study and nature trails, and others. The day camps will be supervised by volunteers from Girl Scouts, and volunteers from the city playground.[16]

These Home Day Camps were destined to set a pattern to be followed all over America to this day.

The Iowa Book Forum was another successful project initiated at the Center. September 26, 1929 issues of the "Community News" carried this story:

A NEW ACTIVITY AT THE CENTER. Book lovers of the city will be delighted to know of the new activity about to be inaugurated at the J.C.C. The organization of a Book Lovers' Forum was discussed at a luncheon attended by Forrest Spaulding, City Librarian, Benjamin Rosenbaum, local poet; Louis Schneider, President of the Grand Council, and Mrs. Max Mayer, Director. The Book Lovers' Forum will be open to the public, and all book enthusiasts are urged to attend the organization meeting, to be held at the Center on Tuesday evening, October 1, 1929. You are invited to come.

At this gathering some one hundred twenty-five people met to listen to Ben Rosenbaum read from his new book "Green Nakedness"; it was agreed that they meet monthly for the remainder of the season. For several years the Forum remained the only group of its kind in the city. Mr. Forrest Spaulding, city librarian, was its guiding spirit through all the years of its existence.

The Civic Forums had their beginnings in 1926.

Under the auspices of the Jewish Community Center, a Civic "Open Forum" will be conducted at the Center Forum, beginning on Tuesday evening, January 5th, and

> continuing through January, February, and March. Believing that good citizenship must rest on a basis of common understanding, the aim of the FORUM will be to offer a platform for a broad and unbiased discussion of present-day social, political, and religious questions and conditions by speakers of national prominence and reputation.[17]

Solomon Rivlin, then Rabbi of the Tifereth Israel Synagogue, was the first to suggest the idea of a Civic Forum. This suggestion fired the imagination of Mrs. Mayer whose interest in this type of activity stemmed from her association with the Extension Division of the State University of Iowa with its many conferences, lecturers, and institutes. With the assistance of Eugene Mannheimer, Robert Lappen, Sidney Mandelbaum, and J. L. Sheuerman, arrangements were completed with seven speakers for the 1926 season, Clarence Darrow, Abba Hillel Silver, and Mark Sullivan among them.

Since their inception, the forums were conceived as a public service to the entire community; and for eleven seasons never more than one of the lectures dealt with an exclusively Jewish topic. It was about 1933 or 1934 that John Studebaker, then the Des Moines Superintendent of Schools, developed an adult forum program along similar lines. The Center series thus lost much of its general significance, and in 1936 it was decided to replace it "with a specifically Jewish Forum which would present to a Jewish audience six national Jewish figures, men of letters, Rabbis, musicians etc."[18] This plan was adhered to until the Forums were discontinued at the end of the 1939 season because of the lack of patronage by the members of the Jewish Community.[19] It was in 1946, upon the urging of Rabbi Irving A. Weingart, the new spiritual leader of the Tifereth Israel Synagogue, that the J.C.C. reestablished the Jewish Forums.

At that time the Jewish Welfare Fund agreed to subsidize the lectures in recognition of their great cultural and educational values. Nevertheless, poor response from the community led to a second and final curtailment of the series in 1952.

The growth and decline of this forum series in Des Moines is characteristic of the change in leisure time habits of the American public as a whole. Radio and television have become the media of mass communication. In place of large audience lectures, the American public has been taught to prefer the more intensive type of learning situation of a small group. In its day the J.C.C. Civic Forum fulfilled a great and needed task; because of it the intellectual level of Des Moines was raised, and it set into motion educative forces of vital importance.

Gardner Cowles, publisher of the Des Moines REGISTER AND TRIBUNE, spoke of Mrs. Mayer as "the first lady of Iowa," while she regarded herself simply as "the grandmother of Forums" in Des Moines. In 1932, she received the Des Moines Tribune Community award. Upon her death on April 14, 1945, Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, in his eulogy, said

> As the death of President Roosevelt is a great loss to the nation, so the death of Julia Mayer is a great loss to our community.

When in 1948 the Jewish Community Center Auditorium was dedicated in her memory, a bronze plaque portrait of Mrs. Mayer bearing the following inscription was affixed to the north wall of the lobby:

> **Julia Bloom Mayer**
>
> **September 28, 1872** **April 14, 1945**
>
> Born in Iowa City—a tireless worker in the causes of

peace, temperance, higher education, good citizenship, civic ideals, and community loyalty, Julia Bloom Mayer gave a life-time of finest civic leadership to the people of her native state. This Jewish Community Center—which she loved, and which she so brilliantly directed for twenty years, from August 1, 1925 to the day of her death—stands as a living memorial to her nobility of mind, her high social vision, and her greatness of heart,—which knew no distinction of race, or color, or creed.

After the death of Mrs. Mayer the directorship of the Center was entrusted to Mr. Louis M. Williams, her long time assistant and right hand man. In the years following World War II, the J.C.C. has continued its transition from a Center of Jewish activities to an Agency serving its neighborhood. In the fifty years of its existence, the J.C.C. has thus come full circle. It is no longer "our duty to the immigrant" but rather "our duty to all our citizens" which determines the policy of its board, the work of its staff, and the support it receives from Jew and Christian alike.

THE JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE

In a recent address Dr. James Parkes, a lifelong Christian student of Judaism, conceived of the Jewish mission "as a continuing and gradual process of permeation by ideas which slowly change society."[20] Jewish names, out of all proportion to their number, are prominent in every endeavor for deeper social justice, better education, and more humane public health services. To see in human suffering a communal and social challenge for ever deepening and broadening mutual responsibility, justice, and righteousness in the whole life of the community, seems to Dr. Parkes the particular genius of Judaism.

Throughout history, Jews created their own service

institutions, charitable, educational, and religious. And just as the synagogue of the Second Commonwealth set the pattern for both church and mosque, so in America the Jewish Benevolent Society and the Jewish Welfare Fund frequently became the inspiration for Public Welfare agencies and Community Chests.

In Des Moines the First Jewish charity organization was formed in 1874 by the few women of the newly organized Temple B'nai Yeshurun. Within a very few years, the scope of their charitable work, including food baskets and clothing for newly-arrived fellow Jews and aid to the sick and the needy, was to be enlarged in order to cope with the problems of the increasing immigration from Eastern Europe. In the last decade of the century the women of the orthodox congregations set up their own charitable organizations, the *Hebrew Ladies Aid Society* and the *Hebrew Ladies Relief Society.* Between 1896 and 1908 the latter group disbursed nearly $5,000.00, a creditable sum if it is recalled that monthly dues in those days amounted to twenty-five cents with only an occasional money-raising social.[21] Very early the two orthodox societies had pooled their small resources to establish and maintain a rituarium (mikvah) and a Burial Committee.

Informal cooperation existed between the three women's groups when it came to the investigation of needy cases and to the dispensing of aid. All too frequently, however, efforts were duplicated, and the travelling beggar or the widowed mother, who cried the loudest and longest, took advantage of this triple set-up.

Shortly before 1900, Mr. Sol Engleman and Mr. Louis Oransky had made an attempt to remedy this situation by effecting some kind of consolidation; but as in the

case of the futile Hebrew school attempt of 1894, the times did not yet permit such a move. This perhaps was due to the fact that friction between the communities was still too strong. The leadership in these efforts had to be assumed by one who by his public position and training could command the respect of all and thus speak for all.

In March of 1907, about the time when the first steps were taken toward the formation of the Jewish Settlement Association, Rabbi Mannheimer met with the officers of the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society "to talk over charity organization (which I figure must mean to talk over the organization of a Federated Jewish Charities)."[22] It took another nineteen months of effort, of discussion and of probably countless meetings before the "Federated Jewish Charities of Des Moines" finally came into being on October 22, 1908.

Minutes of First Meeting of the
Federated Jewish Charities

The Committees of the Relief, Benevolent, and Aid Societies met in the vestry rooms of Congregation B'nai Yeshurun, Thursday evening, October 2, and organized for business with Rabbi Mannheimer as temporary Chairman. Because of his untiring effort in bringing about this organization and his interest in the work, Rabbi Mannheimer was unanimously chosen permanent Chairman. The other officers elected are as follows: Mrs. S. Davidson, Vice President, Mr. M. Shloss, Treasurer, and Mrs. S. Levinson, Secretary.

The members expressed unbounded enthusiasm and interest in the cause for which this organization was formed.

It was unanimously adopted that this body be known as the "Federated Jewish Charities of Des Moines." It was decided that each society contribute $50.00 for temporary fund, and that each society turn over monthly dues, and all other contributions, to this body.

It was left to the Chairman to appoint committees to draw up the constitution and bylaws, and also to appoint investigating committees. There was a general discussion in regard to what means should be adopted for the raising of funds for the continuance of the work. No definite action was taken, the question being left open until the next meeting.

Meeting then adjourned to meet November 15, 8:30 P.M. at the vestry rooms of Congregation Tifereth Israel.

Mrs. S. Levinson, Secretary.

In the formation of a Center and in the coordination of charity work, the Jews of Des Moines followed the trend that had been established in the large Jewish communities of the East and the Midwest. But very few of them drew the logical conclusion of coordinating fund raising for these as well as for local and national causes. Des Moines was one of the first of the smaller Jewish communities to adopt such a plan for both the raising and the disbursing of funds. Furthermore, Des Moines Jewry established a central educational agency for the Hebrew training of its children. Thus by the time of World War I an organic, though embryonic Jewish community had emerged which possessed the basic religious, educational, philanthropic, social and fiscal agencies.

From the first days of the Federated Jewish Charities, Celia Weinstock (Mrs. Sam Weinstock) was the chairman of its most important committee, the Committee on Investigation and Relief. This group was composed of three members, each representing one of the women's group, though there was some complaint that "she was doing all the work, as of course she probably was since that was the best, if not the only way the work could be properly done."[23] By 1914, Mrs. Weinstock had become

the "Superintendent" of the Charities. She held this position without receiving any salary until her death in 1938.

As a young girl she had come to Des Moines from Germany and lived in the home of her brother Solomon Joseph until 1894, when she married Sam Weinstock. She had no formal education in the field of social service but was always interested in what was then known as "charity work." What she may have lacked in theoretical training was more than compensated for by her wealth of social vision and her constant search for new ideas, which she introduced into Des Moines whenever practical. Throughout her thirty years of service, she kept abreast of developments by reading available literature, by attending state and national conferences, and by discussing problems, techniques, theories and principles with experts and authorities at every opportunity. Her adventuresome, pioneering spirit, her great sense of humor, her vital personality, and her love for all mankind were the forces which made her an institution in both the Jewish and the general community.[24]

As in the case of Mrs. Mayer, many honors and awards came to Mrs. Weinstock during her long years of public service. When Celia Weinstock passed away in November 1938, it became Rabbi Mannheimer's task to write a final tribute to her, his good and close friend:

> Whereas: Celia Weinstock for more than thirty years served as superintendent of the Federated Charities from the time of its origin to the time of her death and Whereas: Celia Weinstock without remuneration of any kind save the satisfaction and joy of serving her fellowmen, thus gave these years of loving and affectionate service to lighten the burdens, comfort the hearts and brighten the lives of the widows, the sick, the needy and the distressed, and Where-

as: Celia Weinstock with equal devotion and zeal, gave herself, her time and her energy, her wise council and effective cooperation to every cause both Jewish and non-Jewish in our community. Therefore, be it resolved that we, the representatives of the Jewish community and speaking in their behalf, do pay our grateful homage and loving tribute to her whose life thus ever so beautifully spent in good works and deeds of loving kindness in the unselfish service of our entire community shall ever be remembered with blessing in our midst.

The early years of the Federated Jewish Charities were times of severe crises and difficulties. Many groups and individuals doubted the value of such a central agency; even some of the women's organizations, which had agreed to pool their resources, held back some funds to distribute independently, thus undermining the value and effectiveness of the plans which Mrs. Weinstock had so carefully worked out for each individual and each family coming under her care.

It is true that in spite of the fact that all recognize the need of "scientific", modern, methods in business, in government, and in similar departments, there are still too many who cannot see the point when the term "scientific" is used in connection with charity work. It always suggests to them red tape, hard heart, and anything else unseemly, unpleasant, and undesirable. To them charity is charity, and nothing else—giving and just giving. They will not allow themselves to be persuaded that often, unless charity work is carefully planned, on a plan that is intended to help and to protect society, as well as the individual who asks help, more harm than good may be done to the individual and to society, than if the individual received no charity at all. In spite of all experience to the contrary, they cannot bring themselves to believe that any one who is a JEW could be an imposter when it comes to asking aid. Nine times out of ten they believe that, whether he is an

imposter or not, he is entitled to a few dollars, because he looks as if he needed them.

For all this, and for all the smiles and sneers with which the term is greeted, "scientific" charity is the only real charity which is worthy of a civilized community. It goes further than the charity which is satisfied to dole out a few cents or a few dollars to those who have been crushed in the battles of life. It seeks to prevent as well as to preserve. It goes into conditions and circumstances. It is never unwilling to give all possible help, where help is needed. But it also refuses to give more than is necessary, or to give where giving would be a crime. . . .

I realize that a spirit of this sort cannot be made to prevail in a day. But it is toward a goal of mutual understanding, which this spirit would engender, that we need to direct our efforts. "East Side" and "West Side" we need to make ourselves know that we are all members of one community, to work together in peace and concord for the common good.[25]

During the same report period, material aid and relief were given three hundred thirty-nine times, hospital care went to eleven persons, ten Juvenile Court cases were handled by Mrs. Weinstock, and some fifty transients passing through Des Moines were helped along their way by the president of the Charities. In the years which followed, the work of the Charities increased greatly. The outbreak of the War in Europe brought with it a great deal of correspondence and legal work in the attempt to remove relatives of Des Moines citizens from the war zones. By 1915, Mrs. Weinstock had handled more than one hundred legal aid cases. In this work, she was assisted by several young lawyers among whom were Robert Lappen and Joseph Brody. Dr. Edward Posner was the indispensable and ever willing physician at Mrs. Weinstock's constant beck and call.

The Annual Report for 1915 contained the following statement:

> Perhaps the most important social advance during the past year in Iowa was the passing of the Child Labor Law. When .... it went into effect we were notified that ninety percent of the boys who were violating the law (in Des Moines) were Jewish (newsboys). We soon went after the problem and found conditions were very bad. Boys from nine to eleven were on the streets until one and two in the morning, selling papers. We called five meetings of the circulation managers and the street hustlers, and at least they promised to cooperate with us; and today you will not find many boys under the age of sixteen selling papers at night.
>
> The most successful work done this year by the Charities to my mind, is the work we undertook to do with the Jewish inmates of our penal institutions. First of all, we are trying to re-unite them with their families. My visit to the institutions brought me into closer contact with the prisoners and their families both. During the past year, I received one hundred ten letters from the prisoners. We have been instrumental in getting permission for them to observe the Jewish holidays. On Pesach we sent them matzos, and we are now sending them the American Israelite, which is greatly appreciated. Through our efforts three men were paroled.
>
> In order to do the most effective work for the improvement of conditions, the Society must agitate and work for reforms.
>
> I wish to thank, first of all, the Judges of the District Court, and the County Attorneys, who were always ready to cooperate with us; also Dr. Posner for his most faithful services.

With the close of the War and the return of unemployment, the charity work of the agency once again increased so that in 1920 aid which was extended to two hundred eighty-eight families necessitated an increase in the annual budget to more than $5,000.00. Mrs. Wein-

stock's office handled the many details which were a part of foreign relief and immigration work:

> For the past few years we have been assisting residents of this and adjoining cities in sending money, food, and clothing to their suffering relatives in foreign lands. This work has increased from month to month, and we find that during the past year 1874 remittances, amounting to more than $50,000, were sent through our office to persons abroad.
>
> There is a great deal of work required to bring immigrants to this country. But this, too, has been a large phase of our work. We have written three hundred twenty-four sets of affidavits for persons desiring to bring their relatives to this country. We have in this way assisted sixty-eight persons in coming to the United States during 1922.[26]

And as the years passed, there were ever increasing references to the various communal social agencies. Among these was the Public Welfare Bureau, which by this time was making regular annual grants to the Charities, to the Public Health Center, the City Hospital, and to the Des Moines Unemployment Bureau whose services were utilized by Mrs. Weinstock and the Federated Charities. Throughout the twenties, the number of permanent relief families remained fairly constant at about thirty, though with the great depression of 1929 the relief work of the Charities expanded greatly. Unfortunately, no annual breakdown of the work is available for many years after 1930. The scope of activities can, however, be gathered from the annual allocations received by it from both the Jewish Philanthropies and the Public Welfare Bureau.

During her thirty years as director of the Federated Jewish Charities, Celia Weinstock was frequently tempted to resign, because of petty criticism of her work

and the seeming lack of communal support. In those early days Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer used all of his powers to dissuade her from taking such a step. And in later years, Celia would keep him from resigning the presidency by her fiat, "We came in together, and we'll go out together!" It was in 1939, one year after Mrs. Weinstock's passing, that the Rabbi also surrendered the office which he had held for so many, many years.

It was in the same year, with Marcia Sherman, the first trained superintendent of the Federated Jewish Charities, that a cooperative system of relief payments was worked out between the Jewish agency and the Polk County Emergency Relief Administration, which, with some modifications, is still in force to this day.

The coming of World War II and the resulting economic upswing greatly reduced the work of the Federated Jewish Charities, or rather the Jewish Social Service, as it was called after 1940. In the Fall of 1942, the Council of Jewish Federations recommended that the Jewish Social Service and the Jewish Welfare Fund "consider the employment of a male Executive Director, who shall be a trained social worker, and who shall, at the same time, be capable of serving as the Executive Director of the Jewish Welfare Fund."[27] The Community Chest, which carried a large share of the budget of the Jewish Social Service, approved such a dual assignment. In due time Sidney Speiglman was invited to fill this post, which he has held so capably and so efficiently ever since.

The problems of the post-war period are no longer so much those of relief and immigrant aid as those of family counsel and guidance in its widest sense. Many

areas of the traditional forms of charity, to clothe the needy, feed the hungry, and shelter the homeless, are now being carried out by public agencies, not necessarily confined to Jewish auspices. The care of the aged, however, has become more than ever the responsibility of religious communities. The Iowa Jewish Home for Aged is the latest of social agencies created by the Jews of Des Moines, and its history is a fine illustration of how cooperation and coordination have replaced the haphazard trial and error method of the early days.

IOWA JEWISH HOME FOR AGED

In the one hundred years of its existence, the Des Moines Jewish community has seen the growth and also the decay of many an agency, club, and institution. All too often a group of enthusiastic men and women gathered and organized themselves for some good cause, only to find after a relatively short while that the enthusiasm had evaporated or that the needed material support was not forthcoming. Who, today, still remembers the order B'RITH ABRAHAM No. 159 or the ALCOTT CLUB, the Congregation SHAAREI ZEDEK or the YIDDISH LITERARISHE UND DRAMATISHE VEREIN, the MODERN WOODMEN OF AMERICA, ZION CAMP No. 5957, or the ZIONIST SOCIETY, B'NATH ZION? At other times a service agency, such as the Hebrew Free Loan Society, was formed for a specific purpose, and only institutional inertia prevented its formal dissolution once its task was done or once conditions no longer required its operation.

The establishment of the United Jewish Philanthropies, today's Jewish Welfare Federation, has served

to check the mushroom growth of such marginal agencies. Once it was generally accepted that all fund raising for Jewish welfare work should be the responsibility of one central body, it was only a question of time before any new venture was evaluated and, if found to fulfill a necessary task, would receive approval and financial support.

It was late in 1930 that a group of nine women, all members of the WORKMEN'S CIRCLE AUXILIARY, met in the home of Mrs. I. H. Chapman (Mollie Chapman) to discuss the problem of their own aged and needy members. The depression, which was then holding the country in its grip and which showed no signs of abating, gave urgency to these talks. Before the evening was over, these nine women had decided to promote the idea of a Jewish Home for the Aged in Des Moines. Julia Mayer, director of the Jewish Community Center, became vitally interested in this activity and lent it her wholehearted support. In March of 1931, the women participated in the J.C.C. Carnival, and immediately thereafter they incorporated the group as the IOWA HOME FOR THE HEBREW AGED. Dr. Nate Chapman, Louis J. Adelman, Ben Hurwitz, and M. A. Ginsberg were the men signing this document in addition to Mesdames I. H. Chapman, L. A. Mintzer, M. Bernstein, S. W. Cohen, Frank Gottstein, and Max (Julia) Mayer.

During the three years following, the group undertook several fund raising campaigns and membership drives, until, on August 3, 1934, it was anounced that the large and well equipped Younker mansion at 1620 Pleasant Street had been given to the Iowa Home for Aged. We remember that some twenty-five years earlier Aaron

Younker had by a similar gift assured the success of the then young Jewish Settlement Association; when, now, Rachel and Esther Younker honored the memory of their parents, Marcus and Anna Berkson Younker, by their generous donation, they made possible the realization of this dream.

After extensive remodeling, the building was formally dedicated by the three local rabbis on March 24, 1935. Mrs. Sol Wolk was engaged as supervisor and the first nine residents moved into their new home.

It was not long after these events that Rabbi Mannheimer, then president of the United Jewish Philanthropies, became interested in learning about the cost of running a small Jewish home for the aged. As it was his habit in all such matters, he tried to ascertain what the situation was in existing agencies of this type, and so he requested this information from the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds.[28] Although the sponsors of the Iowa Home for Aged assured the Philanthropies that "it would never be called upon to supply funds for the maintenance of the Home." the UJP went ahead and, early in 1936, asked Joseph Brody, Ellis Levitt, and Will Freeman to study and evaluate the present situation and the future development of the Home. This carefully drawn report showed definitely that the resources of the Home could not meet the constantly rising annual expenditures unless additional income could be procured, either by allocations from the various Welfare Funds in the state or by independent annual campaigns.

The foresight of the officers of the Jewish Welfare Fund was proved right. Within four months after this report was submitted, Mr. Irving Stone, treasurer

of the Iowa Jewish Home for Aged, asked that a grant of $1,000.00 be made to the Home by the Welfare Fund. Since that time, the Home has remained a beneficiary of the Jewish community with the allocation in 1955 reaching the amount of $19,000.00. Some twenty-seven men and women, nineteen residents of Des Moines, live in the Home and contribute about $30,000.00 for room, board, and nursing care.

All through these years, only a small fraction of the income of the Home was provided for by the other Jewish communities of Iowa. How to get these communities to assume their equitable share of the financial responsibility for the Home, has been a problem with which the Des Moines Jewish Welfare Fund and the officers of the Home have been concerned ever since the end of the war. A good deal of progress has been made in the solution of this matter.[29]

In its early years, the Iowa Jewish Home for Aged was essentially a kosher boarding house for elderly people with no nursing service and little professional guidance. During the last decade, the character of the Home has changed radically. A twenty-four hour nursing service is provided by practical nurses on duty; the Home is administered by a trained director, Rudolph Beerman; a staff physician conducts a weekly clinic and is available for emergency services; and appropriate recreational and therapeutic activities are scheduled regularly.

Much credit for this change should go to the enthusiasm and hard work of the Iowa Jewish Home Guild, which takes care of many of the internal improvements of the Home. The Golden Ball, conducted by the Guild, has become an important annual event in the social life

of the community. With a chapter in Davenport and members all over Iowa, the Guild is today an important tool in the process of keeping Iowa Jewry informed and interested in the work of the Home, its only statewide agency.

A planning and building committee has been formed to evaluate the existing facilities and to recommend such improvements or new construction as will be necessary to absorb the expected increase in the population of the Home. This examination of the Iowa Jewish Home for Aged is a part of the self-study program in which the Jewish community of Des Moines has been engaged for the past few years. As a result of this particular inquiry, the Board of Governors of the Jewish Welfare Federation passed the following resolution in September, 1956:

> Be it resolved that the Board of Governors in special session this thirteenth day of September 1956 do hereby approve a capital fund drive for the establishment of a new building for the Iowa Jewish Home for Aged, located in Polk County, Iowa, and that the Executive Committee be hereby authorized and directed to determine means and methods of raising the funds, the amount to be raised, and do all things necessary and required therewith.

V

Keren Ami

Fund For My People

THE JEWISH WELFARE FEDERATION

Since Biblical times, "tsedaka"—justice and loving kindness—has been the mainstay of Jewish life. To all religions, benevolence is a virtue; Judaism went further when its law made charity an obligation based on justice. This hallowed concept with its many applications in human affairs was brought to this country by the first Jewish settlers. For more than three hundred years, it has been the inspiration of much of Jewish community life.

Throughout the nineteenth century, American society encouraged the growth of voluntary organizations along sectarian lines. It found the American Jews prepared to move with this stream; they joined existing agencies and created charitable societies and institutions of their own. In the period between 1880 and 1920, these small philanthropies became huge, multifunctional agencies. The professional social worker appeared, and the conflict between traditional attitudes and new concepts developed. Centers were established to Americanize the immigrant. Ever increasing demands for coordination and

centralization in fund raising to supply ever increasing demands for money and services led to the establishment of federations in the larger communities. The tragedy of World War I made overseas aid a principal responsibility. Zionism became significant, and unprecedented efforts were exerted on behalf of Palestine.

A variety of techniques was employed by American Jews to finance their many philanthropic needs. The traditional methods, appeals through the synagogue, through the private collector (meshullah), and through the use of the charity-box, were as unsatisfactory as the irregular income from charity socials and fairs or, as the more regular but too limited income from endowments. The direct individual contribution by membership and subscription was the method most frequently employed.

> But the same donors were asked to contribute to many charities, and the appeals were numerous and incessant. In 1905 fewer than 5,000 of New York City's Jewish population of 750,000 contributed more than $10.00 each in order to support the most important of the city's Jewish institutions.[1]

All of these conditions and the desire to assure more efficient financing and fund raising led to the growth of a movement for the federation of local agencies. The idea spread to this country from England; it was tried in Denver and Boston, and finally, in 1896, Cincinnati formed what most authorities like to call the "first bona fide Jewish federation in the United States." By 1905, Detroit, Kansas City, St. Louis, Cleveland, Chicago, Boston, and Philadelphia had federations which were successful from the very beginning.[2]

There were times, in the early days of the federation

movement, when conflicts arose between the large secular charities and the established orthodox synagogues whose adherents claimed that the new agencies were heartless and not imbued with the traditional ideals of "tsedakah." Usually members of reform congregations spearheaded the movements towards federation and their rabbis and lay-leaders became its most ardent supporters. Wholehearted community cooperation was a slow and gradual achievement.

During these same early decades of the twentieth century, efforts to coordinate fund raising for overseas relief, "the ransoming of captives" of the Shulchan Aruch, led to the formation of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) in 1914. It was to remain the most important Jewish agency for relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction throughout the most crucial period in modern Jewish history.

The United Jewish Appeal, in which the JDC and the United Israel Appeal were the principal partners, channeled the huge outpouring of funds needed for rescue operations in Europe and for the new State of Israel after World War II. The immensity of the crime against mankind by the systematic slaughter of the SIX MILLION wiped away all the earlier fancied divisions of American Jewry who acted as one to save the remnant and restore the age-old hope of Israel.

It was in the course of the annual meeting of the Federation of Jewish Charities on December 12, 1912, that the president, Eugene Mannheimer, suggested two things "which I would desire to place definitely before this community at this time." He outlined the need for engaging a worker to take charge of the charity work

similar to the Center organization and then the rabbi continued:

With regard to the second suggestion, of a real Federated Jewish Charities, to raise all the funds needed for charity in the community, and to embrace all the institutions claiming our support, there is even more to be said in its favor and less against it than in the previous matter, if such a thing is possible. As things are, our Federation is such in name and in name only. The Federation handles local relief work. The Settlement looks after Settlement work. The Free Loan Association goes its way alone. Besides these, the Cleveland Orphan Asylum, the two Denver Hospitals, the New York Immigrant Aid and Hebrew Sheltering Society, the Marks Nathan Home, and one or two others make their separate claims upon us.

If there were a real Federation in our community all funds for charity work would be raised in a lump, without in any way interfering in the slightest with the autonomy and independent action of any organization which would join the Federation. The Board of the Charities would look after the relief work, the Settlement Board after its work, and the Free Loan Association after its interests. But, one central organization, composed for the most part of the businessmen, would raise all the money needed for our work and distribute it to the various organizations.

There would be less bother to the merchants and subscribers than in the past, and less bother for the individual societies. There would also necessarily result a great deal more harmony between us all than has hitherto existed. As I see it, such a Federation would also be the easiest way to raise the additional funds which are needed by all, and especially by our present Federation just at this time. What is more, additional funds would enable us to afford the paid worker who would look after the employment work, the visiting tramps, investigate those applying for loans, and the like, and so again bring all our work closer together.

A real Federation would not interfere in any way with the work of any Society. It would only make the work easier for all of us and enable us to do better work. Again, with-

out having any desire to push the matter at this time, I do hope that the community will think it over carefully and give the matter the earnest consideration which it deserves. Here, too, the experience of other cities should not alone be our guide, but (also) our incentive to similar action.

During the year following, Rabbi Mannheimer and a small committee of laymen planned the groundwork for the federation to come. Information was obtained from Kansas City, St. Paul, and Cincinnati as to the operation of such an organization; and the area of widest possible cooperation among the Jews of Des Moines was explored. It was found that the establishment of the philanthropies hinged on the solution of three "big questions":

1. Would the orthodox members of the community support such an organization?
2. How much money would have to be raised to enable such an agency to function effectively from year to year?
3. How much had individual members of the community contributed in the past to existing local and national causes, such as the Jewish Settlement Association or the Denver Hospitals, and how much could each individual be expected to contribute as a minimum to the proposed fund raising and fund-distributing organization?

The cooperation of the orthodox section of the community was achieved through the inclusion of the Talmud Torah among the local beneficiaries of the philanthropies. Mr. Charles Silberman had, for many years, been the most ardent advocate of Hebrew educational facilities for all Jewish children; by the creation of such a school, to be maintained out of federation funds, tangible evidence was given that the new philanthropies were not just another new fangled idea of assimilationist

Reform Jews. The fate of the school was to remain tied to that of the entire community; that either institution, school or federation, become the private preserve of any one segment of Des Moines Jewry was avoided.

Iowa's capital city was among the first Jewish communities in America that included the complete support of a Hebrew school in the budget of its federation; from its very first days, the rabbi and one or more prominent members of the reform congregation belonged to the Board of the Talmud Torah. For many years, it is true, children of Temple B'nai Jeshurun did not, as a rule, attended any of the Hebrew classes; nevertheless, the significance and value of Hebrew training for all Jews was always recognized by the community.

An answer to the second question, the annual budget, was ascertained by totalling the figures for the Federated Jewish Charities, the Jewish Settlement Association, the estimated cost of operating the Talmud Torah, and the annual collections of the various national agencies in Des Moines; since these agencies would no longer need the services of travelling collectors, a sizable savings could be achieved. It was found that the total came to about $10,000.00.

Federated Jewish Charities	$ 3,000.—
Jewish Settlement Association	2,000.—
Talmud Torah	1,500.—
Free Loan Society	300.—
United Jewish Philanthropies	250.—
Total Local Needs	$ 7,050.—

National Farm School	$	350.—
Nathan Marks Orphan Home		700.—
Jewish Consumpt. Relief Society		575.—
Natl. Jew. Home for Consumption		575.—
Cleveland Jewish Orphan Asylum		750.—
Montefiore Old Folks Home		125.—
Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital		200.—
Orthodox Institutions		100.—
Total National Needs		$ 3,375.—
TOTAL ESTIMATED BUDGET		$10,425.—

A very great surprise came to the group investigating the number of *charitable* Des Moines Jews. It was found that

(1) most individuals supported one or at the most two of the national beneficiaries—a good number contributed to none at all;
(2) in those days before Federal Income Tax most businessmen were sure that "they always gave at least something to every collector for Jewish charities, who called on them"; these men were surprised to realize how little they actually were giving;
(3) ultimately 288 people contributed to the new federation; of these, previously, about one hundred had been subscribers to the Federated Charities and about eighty to the Settlement Association.

In order to raise the needed sums, the people of the community were urged to pledge the total amount of the contributions previously made, plus an additional amount they might reasonably be expected to give to cover the budget for the school and for other new items.[3]

With all the preliminaries out of the way, a mass meeting was called on Sunday, February 21, 1913, at the Community Center. At this meeting the motion "to federate our Jewish Charities fund raising activities" was carried unanimously, and the United Jewish Philanthropies (U.J.P.) opened their books as of March 1, 1914. The officers of the new organization were Reuben Marks, president; Leon Strauss, vice-president; Louis Oransky, treasurer, and Jacob Sachs, secretary.[4] The Board of Directors and an Advisory Board of eighteen men each included both Rabbis Zeichik and Mannheimer, and represented an almost fifty-fifty balance of the "German" and the "East-European" segments. Such large boards were chosen to assure the broadest possible base and to serve as training ground for future leadership.

The stated aims of the U.J.P. were to "exclude all forms of individual solicitation, ticket selling, program advertising, bazaar, fair, etc."; to "discourage the starting of new institutions without the approval of the Philanthropies . . ."; to "be the central organization for the collection and distribution of funds for the maintenance of enumerated institutions; and to raise annually an emergency fund for use in special cases."[5]

Two voucher entries dated April 11, 1914, and April 30, 1914, indicate that Jacob Sachs and Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer spent a total of $21.03 for office supplies, postage and printing, and thus put the United Jewish Philanthropies of Des Moines in business.

The U.J.P. proved its value from the very beginning. It became the all-important factor and force in the development of harmony and unity in the Jewish community. It became the pattern for the Des Moines Public Welfare Bureau, now known as the Community Chest.

For many years, it was the example of what could be accomplished "even in a small Jewish community." Its All-In-One Campaign, inaugurated by Ellis Levitt in 1936, supplied both inspiration and example for many other Jewish centers.

In its first year of operation, $11,600.00 was collected and $10,750.00 disbursed. Soon after the outbreak of World War I, Des Moines Jews pledged themselves to raise $1,000.00 per month for War Sufferers' Relief. In 1915, only about $9,000.00 was raised for the allocated local and national needs. A "valid but *temporary* reason for the shrinkage" was recognized in the annual report:

> The shrinkage in our resources is, of course, to be traced directly to the terrible conditions of our Jewish co-religionists abroad because of the war, especially along the eastern front and in Palestine. It is easily understood that, contributing $1,000.00 a month to the Jewish Relief Fund, and a great deal of money being sent in addition to this by individuals directly to their families and friends abroad, would necessarily have the unfortunate tendency to diminish the income of the United Jewish Philanthropies.

As the war progressed, the Jews of Des Moines, as those all over the United States, were called upon to provide ever greater sums for War Sufferers' Relief. The national fund-raising bodies looked to the leadership of the U.J.P. to carry this work on the local level; and in 1917, the "all-time high" of $70,600.00 was raised. Of this amount $57,500.00 went for overseas aid.

These funds for European relief and for the support of the Jewish settlement of Palestine were usually raised independent of the Philanthropies drive. Until the middle thirties, the relatively small community experienced two and sometimes three major campaigns in the course of a year. Usually the two hundred eighty-eight

original subscribers to the U.J.P. were canvassed continuously. It was not until 1926, that a thorough attempt was made to bring this list up to date. After two hundred eighty-six subscribers had pledged almost $15,000.00, it was found that "there are at least seventy-five potential givers still to be called upon."[7]

The second half of the 1920's was a most difficult time for the Des Moines Jewish community. The U.J.P. was faced by constantly rising demands to meet the increased cost of operating its various beneficiaries. In addition to this, it became involved in a dissension within the community which almost brought about the collapse of U.J.P. The records of the day are none too clear on the issues of this dissension, though it seems safe to assume that a violent clash took place among several of the stronger personalities on the boards of the Jewish Community Center and the United Jewish Philanthropies. The almost simultaneous decisions to erect new buildings for the Temple and the Tifereth Israel Congregation with the opposing factions backing the respective building campaigns were to add to the financial embarrassment of the U.J.P. At the annual meeting of the Philanthropies in January 1927, Rabbi Mannheimer "stressed the need of a new organization, the necessity of starting anew, and the need for all the feuds, misunderstandings, and prejudices to be wiped out."[8] Apparently no meeting took place in 1928 although the usual money came in.

In April of 1929, a Committee of Three was appointed consisting of Harry Ginsberg, Morris Mandelbaum, and A. H. Blank. This committee met to study the existing situation and to carry through all the necessary reforms. Within a fortnight, the three men accepted the resignations of the officers and board of the Philanthropies, and

a new Board of twelve men took over. An annual meeting took place in February 1930, and reports indicate that a successful campaign was conducted and that the number of contributors reached two hundred sixty-eight. In spite of this, it appears that for all practical purposes the Philanthropies went out of existence later that year. The Financial Report of September 27, 1930, shows that almost $1,500.00 was refunded to the 1,930 subscriptions," and within a month the Jewish Community Center was forced to conduct a campaign for the funds which normally came from the U.J.P. Finally, in April, 1931, Rabbi Grossman of Tifereth Israel and Rabbi Mannheimer were instructed to select five men who would serve with the rabbis as a "steering" committee. Rabbi Mannheimer was elected chairman; Rabbi Grossman, as vice-chairman; Ellis Levitt, treasurer; and Albert Schatz, secretary. The difficulties were finally surmounted, a fund-raising campaign was carried through and a successful annual meeting convened on December 16, 1931.[9]

By 1932, the impact of the Great Depression made itself felt when total subscriptions dropped from more than $18,000.00 the previous year to barely $12,000.00 and reached a record low of $9,125.00 in 1933!

Perhaps it was a part of the depression spirit that in 1932, no volunteers could be found to serve as canvassers for the U.J.P. Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, aided by Rabbi Graubart of the Tifereth Israel Synagogue, staged what he called a "one-man campaign" to obtain the renewal of subscriptions. By 1933, with a return of confidence in the consciousness of the nation, Des Moines again found the usual teams to volunteer to collect the necessary funds. It was in these years that the Philanthropies began to allocate a fixed sum to the four-year-

old Jewish Department of the School of Religion at the University of Iowa; previously individual members of the community had been solicited for this purpose; but probably because of the greater scarcity of money, this consolidation was found advisable. It was in these same years, 1934 to 1936, that the Des Moines chapter of B'nai B'rith took over the task providing the manpower necessary for the annual campaign; this practice was to be continued for some time to come.

As previously noted, separate drives for local and overseas needs were held in Des Moines for practically two decades. It was but natural that the men who supported and maintained the philanthropies, would also be called upon to assume leadership for these responsibilities. The same story was virtually repeated every year. A nation-wide drive was organized either by the Joint Distribution Committee, the Jewish War Sufferers' Fund, or the United Palestine Appeal; a quota was agreed upon for Des Moines and the campaign was launched. The Big Givers made their pledges, the rabbis devoted sermons to the Good Cause, mass meetings were held, and the canvassing committees went to work. After the teams had completed calls and obtained the required monies, a victory dinner or some similar affair concluded the drive.

Finally, in 1936, the view gained general acceptance that these different annual fund-raising drives were inefficient in their use of manpower and uneconomical. Ellis Levitt suggested that an "All-In-One" campaign each year should provide for all local, national, and international causes. To indicate this enlargement of function, the United Jewish Philanthropies adopted a new constitution and by-laws, and changed its name to that of the Jewish Welfare Fund. A new chapter in the

history of the Jewish community was to commence with this action.

Much money has been contributed by the Jews of Des Moines over the years. From $1,500.00 in 1914, the amount rose to $1,000.00 a month in 1916, and almost $70,000.00 the following year. Often the same men who devoted much of their time and effort to these campaigns in the city also visited the smaller communities in the state in order to obtain their active participation.[10] In December, 1918, probably the first statewide meeting of the Jews of Iowa was held in Des Moines for the purpose of organizing the "Armenian-Syrian Relief—Jewish War Sufferers Campaign." The meeting and the ensuing drive were most successful, and various Jewish agencies received almost $250,000.00 of the $650,000.00 raised by Christian and Jewish citizens of Iowa as their share for alleviating human suffering. Again, in 1920, a sizable amount was raised for overseas needs, but no campaign took place in 1921, the year when the Jewish community provided $150,000.00 to build the Jewish Community Center. With the relaxation of tensions in the twenties, demands in Europe grew less urgent; and only one state-wide campaign was conducted between 1922 and 1926. In Iowa, this 1922 drive was a combined affair with twenty percent of the funds going to Palestine colonization and the balance to the Joint Distribution Committee. This early "All-In-One," according to some references made in the Manheimer Memoirs, was not regarded with much favor by the central national organizers of those days.[11] Des Moines and Iowa, however, saw the wisdom in the cooperative effort and thus, as so often in the past, pointed the way that was eventually adopted on a nationwide scale.

It is anything but a simple matter, and in some in-

stances it is almost impossible, to determine just how much money the fewer than one thousand Jewish families of Des Moines contributed towards overseas causes between 1914 and 1956; the following tabulation does not include the considerable amounts raised annually by Hadassah and the equally large sums of money which members of the community have sent to their families and friends in Europe and Palestine over the years.

SUMMARY OF MONEYS RAISED, 1914-1956

Year	Overseas Contribution	Local and National Contribution	Total
1914-18 inc.	$ 95,000.00*	$ 55,000.00*	$ 150,000.00
1919-24	250,000.00*	240,000.00*	490,000.00
1925-30	85,000.00*	70,000.00*	155,000.00
1931-35	25,000.00*	65,000.00*	90,000.00
1936-41	180,000.00	130,000.00	310,000.00
1942-45	250,000.00	100,000.00	350,000.00
1946-48	1,040,000.00	270,000.00	1,310,000.00
1949-51	1,000,000.00	200,000.00	1,200,000.00
1952-55	1,015,000.00	640,000.00	1,655,000.00
TOTAL	$3,940,000.00	$1,770,000.00	$5,710,000.00

*These figures represent minimum estimates, on the basis of available data. The figures for local and national contributions do at no time include moneys raised by the various synagogues and congregations for their own requirements.

In the course of the years, some $400,000.00 of this total was contributed by the Jewish residents of Perry, Boone, Madrid, Ames, and Nevada, and by non-Jewish friends in Des Moines. Deducting this amount there is still a balance of a forty-three year total of $5,300,000.00. This would indicate an average annual contribution of $125,000.00 or about $365.00 for each of the fewer than 3,400 men, women, and children who comprise the Jewish community of Des Moines.[12]

This record of "tsedakah,"—justice through social action—fills a significant page in the story of the community. Jew and non-Jew alike have pondered much on this achievement. The editor of the DES MOINES REGISTER published the following statement on Sunday, February 4, 1951:

HEROIC EXAMPLE OF BROTHERHOOD

One of the wonders of Des Moines is a little group of less than a thousand families who think of themselves as Jews.

They are not a race. They include Nordics, Alpines, Mediterraneans. Their ancestral stock comes form every country in Europe and a few outside. They have every color hair, every shape of nose and skull, every blood type—just like the rest of us.

They are not even a religion. Many of them belong to one or more of the Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform Jewish religious congregations in Des Moines, but perhaps as many have no such religious connection—just like the rest of us.

This little group of three or four thousand people recently raised $392,678, almost entirely from among themselves, to finance local Jewish charity and education work, and for overseas Jewish relief. Four-fifths of it went overseas. Something under $30,000 was contributed by non-Jews—unsolicited. The rest came from local Jews, at an average of $365 per family!

Yet this has been happening every year recently. The all-time high was $600,000 collected in 1948, as the infant nation of Israel took place.

* * * * * *

Des Moines Jews, like American Jews Elsewhere—or any Americans—include a few rich families, a number of comfortable ones, and a great many who work very hard and barely make ends meet. Theirs is an incredible record of giving, year after year.

The nearly $400,000 this year, the $600,000 in 1948, are

the same general size as the annual budgets of the Des Moines Community Chest—a grand combination of fund drives for the main private health, welfare, and recreation agencies for the whole community, raised with great effort from among 200,000 possible and 65,000 actual contributors.

Yet the Des Moines Jews; contributions to their own mammoth fund drives are entirely apart from their support of their own rabbis, synagogues and temples; entirely apart from their participation in general community-wide drives like Community Chest, Red Cross, and so on. *To there, too,* they give generously.

In maintaining the city's cultural life—music, drama, literature, art—Jews do far more than their share, also.

How is this possible?

How did this one small group, so full of individualists and of individual differences, come to have this tremendous public spirit, this consciousness of being a community?

This is one of the mysteries of the human spirit which cannot be answered. It can only be admired.

Yet we may hazard a guess.

THE JEWS WERE THE FIRST PEOPLE IN HISTORY TO LEARN HOW TO KEEP THE OLD VILLAGE AND NEIGHBORHOOD TYPE OF SOLIDARITY IN LARGE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL CITIES.

They had to. For without solidarity, they would have been wiped out over and over again, in the repeated persecutions down through the ages.

By the waters of Babylon they ate the bitter fruit of exile in Old Testament times. There, and in the ghettos of Eastern Europe hundreds and thousands of years later, they learned how to be brother to the widow and orphans, how to love learning and to honor righteousness. In the murder camps of Hitler, in the last savage battle in Warsaw, in the gleaming, crowded new city of Tel-Aviv, they maintained the simple virtues of charity and brotherhood and neighborliness that other Europeans and Asiatics somehow lost when they became urbanized—and are only slowly now beginning to rediscover.

We are blessed indeed to have their example. For they have known the true answer to Cain's grim question:

"AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"

As Jews know intuitively out of the suffering of the ages, the answer is simply: "I am my brother's *brother*."

UNIFICATION

As the visual expression of its vitality, the Jewish community of Des Moines has for many years maintained a variety of agencies and organizations. Synagogues, their brotherhoods and women's auxiliaries, and an enviable school system serve its religious and spiritual needs. Social service agencies are available for relief, help to newcomers, as well as for counsel and guidance. A B'nai B'rith, a Blue Lodge, a Hadassah and other Zionist groups, and various youth organizations give expression to fraternal interests and the desire to assist in the upbuilding of Israel and to further such causes in America as Brandeis University.

For a long time, it was felt that the community suffered from over-organization and that a comprehensive scheme of coordination and planning was needed. As early as 1911, an attempt was made to operate the Federated Jewish Charities and the Jewish Settlement Association under a single Board of Directors. Such a plan had been suggested to Rabbi Mannheimer by Jacob Billikopf of Kansas City. At the joint meeting of the two boards on May 14, 1911, a majority vote was registered in favor of such unification. Since, however, one of the three Ladies' Relief Societies violently objected to such a move on the grounds that its implementation would lead to the complete wrecking of the Charities, nothing was done to carry out the mandate.

Within a few years, the Philanthropies and the Talmud

Torah were added to the roster of community agencies. During World War I, Jewish Welfare Board work for the boys at Camp Dodge and at a downtown center was sponsored locally by the B'nai B'rith. Des Moines was one of the first of eight or nine communities in America to carry on this work in this way. David Oransky, Ellis Levitt, and the local rabbis were very interested in this work, and some $3,000.00 for the support of these projects was raised by subscription from local contributors.[13]

During World War II, the Des Moines Jewish Welfare Board operated as a part of the Iowa-Des Moines USO Council, headed by Judge Eskil Carlson. Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer served as second vice-president of the state council with Robert Lappen and Morris O. Kahn as representatives of the Jewish Community. Julia Mayer and innumerable other women served as voluntary workers at the "Every Tuesday is Jewish Welfare Day at USO." The rabbis and the congregational sisterhoods looked after the needs of the WACS stationed at Fort Des Moines. The roster at the USO-JWB Coordinating Committee reads like a Who's Who of Des Moines Jewry.

Some four hundred fifty members of the Jewish community served in the Armed Forces. The following men paid the supreme sacrifice:

> Lieut. Bernard Alvin Bernstein, Lieut. Arthur D. Brody, Ben Caplan, R.F.C., Capt. Norman W. Mandelbaum, Pfc. Joseph M. Haymoff, Pfc. Alvin L. Peshkin, Pvt. Sidney Pruce, Lieut. (j.g.) Norman W. Sandler, Lieut. Morris Steinway, all of Des Moines, as well as Sgt. Charles E. Gettleson of Newton and Lieut. Theodore F. Rosenbaum of Centerville.

During the Korean War, the Jewish community was represented in the local USO by Sam Abramson, Morris O. Kahn, Louis Corn, and Louis Williams. Rabbi Irving A. Weingart was appointed to serve as chaplain at both the Knoxville and Des Moines Veterans' Hospitals.

Throughout these years there was repeated talk about the advisability of establishing a United Jewish Service similar to the plan discussed in 1911. The experience of the War Years and the near-failure of the Philanthropies in the early thirties made this matter all the more urgent. At a meeting of the Jewish Welfare Fund early in 1938, Rabbi Monroe Levens of the Tifereth Israel Synagogue cited the necessity of forming some such central body. After some correspondence with Michael Freund of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds in 1938 and 1940, a decision on this matter was again postponed; this time the delay was caused by the wartime emergency. Late in 1944, when a field representative of the Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds suggested that a survey of the program and activities of the Jewish Community Center be carried out, it was finally realized that such a comprehensive survey was needed for all community agencies. Mr. Joseph Brody was appointed chairman of a study committee, which consisted of the presidents and two members of each of the boards of the Jewish Welfare Fund, Jewish Social Service, Jewish Community Center, Talmud Torah, and Iowa Jewish Home for Aged.

An evaluation of the existing structure in Des Moines and a comparison with that of other communities were made. It was found that two plans of operation, those of Omaha and Dallas, would be most easily adaptable to local needs and purposes. The *Omaha Plan* called for

a Board of Directors representing all adult Jewish organizations in the community, while the *Dallas Plan* consisted of a unified Board elected by the contributors. The Study Committee in a report of October 2, 1945, recommended the establishment of a thirty-six man policy-making Board of Directors following the *Dallas scheme* and the employment of a properly qualified executive director who would administer the program. The members of the Board, to be elected for three year terms at the anual meeting of the Jewish Welfare Federation from and by the contributors to that federation, were to be selected to work only on such projects and agencies in which they showed special interest. This would eliminate the necessity of any one man to serve on more than one major agency. It was not until January 1948, that the "Suggested Articles of Incorporation of the United Jewish Service" were adopted by the five service agencies which were to be incorporated into the new body. All the problems, fear of unitary control, independent action or cooperation, Zionist domination or complete subordination, were discussed heatedly and at great length. The Community Chest Agency, too, made certain specific recommendations in view of its financial stake in the Center and the Social Service. But, again, the plan was tabled, this time because of the uncertainty of the financial status of the Iowa Jewish Home for Aged. Des Moines felt that the other Jewish communities in the state should bear definite and proportional responsibilities for this Home, which served the needs of the aged not only from Des Moines but from all of Iowa.[14]

Finally in April 1952, Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer was asked to assume the chairmanship of another study committee to continue the work tabled three years earlier.

Included in this group were Louis Nussbaum and Boni Druker as well as Frank Sanders and Harold Goldman, who felt that Des Moines had fallen behind in its internal structure as compared to most other American Jewish communities. On the day of his death, five months later, Rabbi Mannheimer was working on the proposed constitution and by-laws of what became the Jewish Welfare Federation of Des Moines on January 27, 1954.

With this reorganization all the non-congregational religious functions of the Jewish community were finally united as to policy making and financial operation. Each of the local agencies was to continue to operate as before under its own officers and Board of Directors. The Federation designated a certain number of its Board of Governors to each of the four subsidiaries whose officers are elected from among these men. Each agency Board, however, co-opts from among the Jewish community those men and women who by training and interest are most qualified to serve on the respective committee or service. Thus, for example, the local rabbis and several members of the faculty of Drake University have been members of the Bureau of Jewish Education, and a number of physicians are among the directors of the Home for Aged. As in the past, centralized fund raising efforts through the anual All-In-One Drive are handled by the Federation as such.

The important functions of the Federation are carried out by a budget committee, a collection committee, a personnel committee, and an All-In-One Campaign committee. As the need arises, the president of the Federation may create additional committees. This was done in 1954, when Mrs. Eugene Mannheimer was asked to serve as chairman of the fifty-five member Jewish Tercentenary Committee. The numerous details of the an-

niversary year celebration, services, ceremonial art exhibits, artistic and historic presentations were handled by this group. And, in 1955, a Des Moines Jewish Community Research Committee was established to analyze existing institutions, to carry through a comprehensive census and analysis of community needs and to project the findings into an organic plan for the years ahead. Since its establishment, the Research Committee has authorized a population census, directed by Sam Baum, sociologist, and an attitude sampling analysis, directed by Dr. Irwin Mahler, psychologist. Both men are on the staff of Drake University. The operation of the Home for Aged and of the Jewish Social Service program are likewise being examined and analyzed.

In the past, some members of the community feared that cooperation of Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox Jews, of Westside wealth and Eastside numbers might lead to the domination of one group over the others. Similarly, the formation of the true Federation led others to confuse *unity* with *uniformity* although the two terms are not synonymous but actually contradictory. Uniformity is not a natural condition in a free society; it is something imposed from without, which eventually will become the cause of all the more bitter antagonisms. Where men have the right to freely choose their associations, where religious and social activities are recognized not as functions of the fiscus but as voluntary agencies, such imposed conformity is neither desirable, nor can it be achieved. Democratic unity, on the other hand, arises from the ability and willingness of men to cooperate freely in the broad area of the common good, accepting and respecting all the while the differences within the group. Thus infinite variety and diversity is possible and desired, since the binding

quality of membership in the larger society transcends the differences which distinguish the smaller units.

It is but a rare incident today, to hear people speak of the prejudices of bygone days or to recall the old bitterness between reform and orthodox; the liberal atmosphere of the mid-century and its wider understanding for human relationships are concerned less with *status* and more with *stature.* Fancied institutional rivalries at times might produce overzealousness of words; a strong personality might temporarily dominate other people and force institutions to accede to his way of thinking. Evenutally, the democratic process will reassert itself; and unity in diversity will emerge again in a steadily expanding area of common interest and action within which differences of background, of religious philosophy, and of economic status are no longer barriers to cooperation.

VI

Thou Shalt Live

The Wider Community

EDUCATION

"When all thy *children* shall be taught of the Lord, great shall be the peace of they children." (Isa. 54:13)
Read not Ba-Na-Yich "Thy Children," but Bo-No-Yich "Thy Builders":

Talmud Berakhot

Little is known of Jewish education in Des Moines before 1914. Prayerbooks and Bibles were brought to Iowa by the early settlers in the 1860's; the appointment of the first rabbis and teachers was, to a large degree, motivated by the desire to provide a minimum of Hebrew and Jewish learning to a steadily increasing number of boys and girls. The East-European immigrants brought their functionaries with them. Their shohet (ritual slaughterer) and melamed (teacher) would pass along their knowledge for a meager pittance. Wolf Frank and Louis Fleischman were among the early teachers of the Eastside orthodox communities.

With continued assimilation, the area of Jewish learning grew smaller among the Reform Jews. By the 1890's, it had been reduced to a Religious School without He-

brew. It met on Sunday mornings, and the object of the school was to prepare the youngsters for a confirmation ceremony around their fourteenth birthday. This training produced people conscious and frequently proud of their Jewish heritage though not too familiar with what this Jewish heritage was.

The male child of orthodox parents received some Hebrew drill to prepare him for his Bar Mitzvah. There was seldom enough time or money to give the girls a Jewish education. Usually, formal training in Hebrew and Bible was terminated by the time the child reached his thirteenth birthday. Then he usually left public school as well. In other words, the children of the pioneers, whether of German or East-European origin, received very little Jewish knowledge in the stress and strain of the acculturation to a new country.

By the turn of the century, some of the more far-sighted leaders of the Jewish community in America became concerned with the uncertain future of Jewish education, and with the dangers inherent in a situation that would raise a generation with such tenuous grasp of its Jewish legacy.

The background of issues and personalities leading to the formation of the conservative Tifereth Israel Congregation included some concern with this need for American-Jewish educational facilities. The orthodox element of the community quite naturally resented this criticism. It speaks for the realism among some of its leaders, however, that within less than a decade one of their most respected men, Charles Silberman, took the lead in bringing about a non-denominational and city-wide Talmud Torah.

Des Moines orthodoxy no doubt was pleased to obtain better schooling for its children and struggling Tifereth

Israel could have had no objection to the lightening of its financial burden. It would seem that everyone concerned immediately recognized the long-term advantages of the new approach. What is surprising is that the strong reform element, so devoted to "Americanizing the immigrant" did not openly object to the establishment of a school which would perpetuate what appeared to many to be the most characteristic element separating Jew from Gentile.[1] Rabbi Mannheimer, intent upon the establishment of the Philanthropies and the social services it would maintain enthusiastically supported Mr. Silberman. Ultimately even the president of the Temple, Morris Samish, served on the first Board of the Talmud Torah. The other members of the Board were the three rabbis, Cantor Goldstein, and Charles Silberman, Sol Wolk, J. I. Brody, Philip Cohen, L. H. Cohen, O. Cohen, M. Ellison, Sol Engleman, M. Gordon, H. Lipsitz, M. Lappen, R. Marks, L. Oransky, C. M. Rosenbaum and A. M. Sherman.

With the formation of this all-inclusive school, supported by the Philanthropies, Des Moines became again one of the first Jewish communities, and certainly the first of the smaller ones, to enter upon this wider area of responsibility.

The new consolidated school proved its value from the first. More than one hundred pupils were registered, with more than seventy attending classes on the Eastside, at an annual tuition fee of six dollars. After rising to a maximum Eastside enrollment of eight-nine in 1916-1917, the number of children there declined rapidly because of the westward shift of the Jewish population. When in 1923, the Talmud Torah moved into its own building next to the Jewish Community Center, one hundred thirty-eight children were enrolled, whereas

the Eastside barely mustered fifty pupils. In 1924, the number of registrants reached two hundred twenty-five, the all-time high in the history of the school.

It seems that even in those far-off days, the instructors attempted to teach Hebrew by the direct method and to include as much history, ceremonies and ethical teaching as time permitted. With children in classes five days a week, more intensive work was possible than in the present two-day school schedule.

Within a few years, a Mother's Club was organized. In addition to the usual duties of a Parent-Teachers Association, this group assumed some specific financial responsibilities for the school. It took on the task of collecting the small tuition; and for the first time in 1921, it made available to the school one thousand dollars to cope with inflation and rising expenses.

Poorly paid instructors frequently resigned from their posts to take other positions; and although salaries were raised from $1,775.00 for three teachers to $4,800.00 in 1919, and to $8,400.00 for four teachers three years later, it became increasingly more difficult to find properly trained personnel.[2] This situation grew worse when free immigration came to an end in 1924. Rabbi Zeichik, who conducted a regular class in Talmud, and his colleagues from Tifereth Israel frequently, and always without remuneration, assumed a part of the teaching load. Rabbi Solomon Rivlin became the perennial collector for the tuition, which from year to year it became more difficult to obtain. As early as 1926, the "difficult times" were given as a reason for the decrease in tuition payments.[3]

The annual reports of the Talmud Torah stress the positive achievements of the school, the success of its Junior Congregation, and the fine cooperation achieved

with the congregations it served. With the depression, however, a "time of troubles" commenced which was to last through the war period. Again it was the responsibility of the Mothers' Club to provide a sizable loan in 1930. The school had to raise an additional $1,700.00 in a special drive similar to the one staged for the Community Center at the same time. Enrollment continued to drop, resulting in the closing of the Eastside branch of the school, the shortening of weekly class meetings, and the reducing of the staff. The declining registration figures are explained by the rapid move of the Jewish population to the "extreme Westside" and by the impact of the depression. As one can learn from occasional stories in the IOWA JEWISH NEWS the school continued its activities as best it could, but the quality of its work did not appear to have suffered appreciably. Regular graduation exercises were held, and it is noted with satisfaction that several of the graduates were accepted for studies at the rabbinic seminaries.

By 1944, the enrollment of the Talmud Torah declined to fewer than sixty students and there was talk of having Tifereth Israel organize its own Hebrew School. It was then that steps were taken towards complete reorganization of the Talmud Torah. Actually, Des Moines Jewry had entered upon this task of self-analysis and reform some years earlier when the United Jewish Philanthropies became the Jewish Welfare Fund and when Sidney Speiglman, professionally trained social worker, was invited to come to the city.

The end of World War II made it possible to turn attention once again to local needs and affairs which had been neglected for many years. Ben Sanders, Harry Goldman, Harry Bookey, Rabbi Monroe Levens, and later his successor Rabbi Irving A. Weingart, took the

lead in this program of rebuilding both the structure and the philosophy of the Talmud Torah. First, the Welfare Fund appropriated sufficient funds to permit the school to operate efficienty. Then, in keeping with the new concept of education as a lifelong task, the same Talmud Torah assumed the title of Board of Jewish Education. A Talmud Torah is a school for children, teaching but the rudiments of a given subject matter. A Board or Bureau of Jewish Education sees as its task the providing of a program of classes for both children and adults.

For three centuries, American Jewry had looked to Europe for its rabbis and teachers. With this reservoir of Jewish knowledge no longer available, they are, of necessity, replaced by American-born men and women whose Jewish education is an addendum, a suplement to school and college. The reality of this change in American Jewish life has caused teachers and rabbis to develop programs of study not only to train the professional leaders of tomorrow but to produce an informed critical laity. This is being achieved by a comprehensive program of education on all age levels.

In 1946, the new Board of Jewish Education in Des Moines invited Dr. Nahum Zackai of Chicago to become its first executive director. Shortly after his arrival, Dr. Zackai presented a five-page *Memorandum* on the aims, functions, and program of the Board, and an additional seven-page monograph dealing with the "cardinal objectives of the Jewish Educational System in Des Moines." These suggestions may appear quite extreme and over-ambitious, but one must recognize that they represent the first attempt to chart a new course. Among other things Dr. Zackai suggested a five-year curriculum for the elementary school to be supplemented by a pre-

school, a Hebrew and English high school curriculum, a teacher's training institute, and adult classes. A library of Jewish books and other resource materials was to be established. Some thirteen additional activities included monthly radio programs, a permanent Jewish Art Gallery, a dramatics workshop, summer camps, junior congregations, and special community projects for children and adults. In addition Dr. Zackai desired the jurisdiction of the Board to extend over all units of Jewish education. The Center Sunday School was incorporated under the direction of the Bureau, but the rabbis successfully opposed an extension of this move. If such a step had been accepted, all congregational Sunday Schools would have been brought under the control of a non-denominational lay-board.

When Dr. Zackai left Des Moines in 1949, a portion of this proposed program had been realized. A high school curriculum was operating, junior congregations were being conducted on the Sabbath and on holidays at both the conservative and orthodox synagogues, and adult classes had been in session for two seasons. Finally, in 1950 a Jewish pre-school, which has played an important part in the early Jewish training of more than one hundred children, was established.

The adult courses were taught by the local rabbis and also by professors of Drake University, but were not well enough attended to be appreciably enlarged. It has been noted that back in 1896 the reporter for the AMERICAN ISRAELITE had complained of the lack of intellectual interest among Des Moines Jews. Fifty years later, the same criticism was still valid. It should be said, however, that adult institutes and forums arranged by congregational groups and led by the respective rabbis met with better response.

The effective enrollment in the Hebrew School was stabilized at approximately one hundred twenty pupils. Contrary to earlier periods when "cheder" was attended almost exclusively by boys, the number of girls receiving Hebrew instruction increased from year to year until in 1955, there were fifty-five girls enrolled out of a total registration of one hundred twenty-seven. This change graphically illustrates the impact of the American environment upon time-honored religious customs. Most Hebrew classes convene twice weekly rather than four times a week as in earlier years. The introduction of the Bas Mitzvah ceremony (consecration at thirteen) for girls and the requirement of three years of Hebrew instruction before confirmation at the conservative synagogue are additional factors which aid in this shift toward a co-educational program.

As yet it is too early to say with any degree of conclusiveness whether or not the re-establishment of Israel, where Hebrew is the national tongue, will create an increased awareness of the language. The Temple, which had introduced a compulsory half-hour of Hebrew instruction in its Sunday morning curriculum for several years after 1945, encourages its more ambitious pupils to attend the regular two-day Hebrew classes.

During the summer of 1953, the Bureau of Jewish Education, then under the direction of Asher Ettinger, conducted a survey of the Jewish community in order to determine the number of children, their ages, family synagogue affiliation, and interests in Jewish and Hebrew education. The final tabulation revealed a total of seven hundred fifty-nine Jewish children below the age of nineteen. Of this number, four hundred one were boys; and three hundred fifty-eight, girls. Four hundred forty-four youngsters, or almost sixty percent of this number, were

born since 1945, the end of the war. Of the four hundred children between the ages of seven and eighteen, fifty were graduates of the Hebrew school; fifty-three had attended the school for one or more years; ninety-six had instruction in Hebrew at the Temple Sunday School; and one hundred twenty-nine were attending Hebrew School at the time of the census. Less than twenty per cent had no contact at all with any phase of Hebrew education.

Among the graduates of the old Talmud Torah were several boys who made a place for themselves in the rabbinate: Stanley Rabinowitz in Minneapolis, Isadore Garsek of Fort Worth, Texas; and Everett Gendler, a senior at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Robert Kahn of Houston, Texas, received his early Hebrew training at Temple B'nai Jeshurun and was later ordained at the Hebrew Union College.

The Bureau of Jewish Education under its three directors, Nahum Zackai, Asher Ettinger, and Ehud Goldberg, has carried through the transition from old-style Talmud Torah to a modern educational institution. Classes are no longer conducted by teacher not too familiar with American youth and modern teaching techniques, in the basement of a synagogue or in a poorly lit classroom. The school of 1956 meets in the building constructed by the Tifereth Israel congregation in 1955, and uses many of the aids and procedures accepted in progressive public schools. It is to be hoped that the end product of the new school will equal the graduates of the old Talmud Torah in their devotion to Judaism and in their willingness to serve the Jewish community in America.

In these same years, the three congregational Religious Schools, meeting on Sundays only, underwent a similar transformation. With Hebrew instruction left

to the Bureau of Jewish Education, the curriculum of these schools concentrated on Jewish history, ritual, and basic ideology. The example of the Tifereth Israel Religious School may serve to illustrate this process. When Rabbi Irving Weingart was called to this pulpit in 1945, he inherited a school of about eighty children with an eight year curriculum and a volunteer staff of non-professional teachers. Two years later, the Board of the synagogue, recognizing the needs of the school, invited Dr. Frank Rosenthal of Drake University to aid the rabbi in the work of reorganizing the educational system of the school. Two additional years of instruction were added to the existing eight year program, and the educational requirements for teachers were gradually raised. By 1955, the enrollment of the school had reached two hundred; and there were eleven classes. The staff by this time consisted of professional teachers and university students-in-training.

By the end of 1956, the Tifereth Israel Synagogue and Temple B'nai Jeshurun had moved their schools into structures built solely for this purpose and Congregation Beth El had broken ground for a completely new building. The Jewish school buildings are available; may they become buildings for Jewish children and adults!

Friendly relations have existed between the Jewish community and Drake University since the early years of their corporate existence. Drake, founded in 1881 as a college of the Disciples of Christ Church, has counted Jewish students and faculty members in its family since the late 1880's. Rabbi Mannheimer recalled with great pleasure his first lecture at a Drake Convocation in 1902, when he discussed the nature of evolution, and his last appearance in its classrooms at the occasion of the "Religious Emphasis Week" in 1950.

Although Rabbi Mannheimer, because of his long tenure of office, developed much closer relations with Drake's presidents and faculty than his other colleagues, the rabbis of Tifereth Israel were always welcome at the school. In 1926, Rabbi Rivlin taught two courses in Biblical history. Rabbi Irving Weingart who received his master's degree from Drake University, regularly delivered the lectures on Judaism to the freshman classes in the social sciences. In 1946, the Jewish Chautauqua Society established a lectureship on Judaism at Drake University. Rabbi Martin Weitz and later Dr. Zackai and Rabbi Bernard Lavine taught these classes over a period of three years. The lectureship was renewed when Rabbi Edward Zerin came to Des Moines in 1954.

Several of the Jewish faculty members at the University, among them Martin Zober and Frank Rosenthal (1946-1955) took an active part in Jewish community affairs. Dr. Zober served as advisor in economic and statistical matters, and Dr. Rosenthal served as counselor for the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at the University. Just as Drake called upon the rabbis and other members of the Jewish community for intellectual contribution as well as material aid, so the non-Jewish faculty members of the school have had close ties with Des Moines Jewry as co-workers in many community causes, as performing artists, lecturers, and speakers, and as friends.

It has been a point of pride at Drake University, that at no time in its history has a religious clause been used in the selection of faculty, students, or even Board members. Mr. William Friedman, vice-president of Younker Bros., has been a member of Drake's Board of Trustees for many years. Because of the school's liberal tradition, Jewish parents have sent their children to Drake University with the same readiness as to the

larger State University of Iowa. At both schools, Jewish fraternities and sororities were organized in the early twenties, and in due course, Jewish cultural and religious groups were established. In 1946, George Beery, then Dean of Students at Drake University, suggested to Mr. Robert Lappen, Des Moines lawyer and a national Hillel Commissioner, that the influx of many Jewish students from out-of-town since the end of World War II made advisable the formation of a Hillel counselorship. The Drake chapter of Alpha Epsilon Pi cooperated in this plan, and with the finances assured by allocations from the local B'nai B'rith chapter and the Jewish Welfare Fund, Hillel began to function on the campus in the fall of 1947. Since that time, the number of Jewish students at Drake has grown from year to year in spite of a drop in the over-all enrollment figures at the time of the Korean War. Eventually, upon the recommendation of the Hillel Director, the school permitted the formation of a Jewish sorority on its campus. This new group affiliated itself with the national Alpha Epsilon Phi sorority. One likes to think that the presence of Jewish cultural and social opportunities on a campus helps in attracting and retaining Jewish students.

Still College of Osteopathy has had many Jewish students on its rolls, a number of whom have settled in Des Moines and other Iowa towns.

The development of Jewish group life at the State University of Iowa and the Iowa State College at Ames has similarly been influenced by Des Moines, the largest Jewish community in the state. The State University of Iowa, for many years the intellectual and educational center of eastern Iowa, has always had a goodly number of Jewish students and faculty members, and as a state institution there was never any question that its services

and facilities were available to all citizens of Iowa on an equal basis. Fraternal organizations and a Hillel Foundation are maintained to serve the needs of more than five hundred Jewish students. The Hillel Director holds the chair of Judaic Studies in the Iowa School of Religion. Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, Robert Lappen, E. P. Adler, and many other Iowa Jews have had a significant share in the creation and maintenance of this school. The contribution made by the Jewish scholars at the State University of Iowa to the intellectual atmosphere of Iowa is significant; their responsibility to counsel and guide the Jewish students present a challenge that must be met anew every year.

Shortly after World War I, the Sisterhood of Temple B'nai Jeshurun established a Scholarship Fund maintained by gifts and bequests. Well over one hundred students have been recipients of this service. Among the list of those benefitting from this fund have been student physicians and osteopaths, lawyers and teachers, engineers and rabbis. In recent years, the Women's League of Congregation of Tifereth Israel has also established a fund of this kind. Mention should also be made of the Saul Davidson Memorial Scholarship which was established in the spring of 1947 at Drake University. Since then, three Jewish graduates of Des Moines high schools have received this grant during their freshman year.

YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

The task of making available to adolescents and young adults a well-balanced program of social and cultural activities has been the concern of rabbis and teachers for many years.

Shortly after his arrival in Des Moines, Rabbi Mann-

heimer organized a post-confirmation group with such a purpose in mind. By 1912, about twenty of these post-confirmands organized and became known as the Temple Council of Jewish Juniors. At the Jewish Community Center, in school, and in their daily business life, the Temple Juniors came into close contact with other young people in the community. Eventually this group took the initiative in the establishment of a city-wide Jewish youth organization. On November 15, 1914, a Council of Jewish Juniors, which later became known as League of Jewish Juniors, was established with some ninety members. To allay the fears of the non-Temple groups that this might be an attempt to "proselytize" the orthodox and conservative youth of the community, the initial meeting was held at the Tifereth Israel Synagogue; among the officers and board elected the non-reform element was clearly in the majority.[5] The League was quite successful; its classes, lectures, musicales, and social affairs were all well attended. As early as 1915, a meeting dealt with the practical accomplishments of Zionism. This would indicate the broad scope of its interests.

Soon the effects of the European conflict were felt by the League of Jewish Juniors; and shortly after the American entry into World War I, the organization became dormant since most of the boys joined the Armed Forces and the girls became involved in Red Cross work and other women's "war activities."

In 1920, an attempt was made to revive this League, but evidently the times were not conducive to such a step. After a short struggle for existence the group was disbanded. Again in January 1934, the League of Jewish Juniors was re-organized. Just as the first League, this one grew out of efforts made by the Temple, and again the fear was expressed that this was an attempt to

proselytize for Reform Jewry. And again the names of the officers could easily dispel such accusations; among them were Dr. Raymond Cohen, Maurice Becker, William Joseph, Frances Aliber, and Milton Weinberger. Since, however, by this time more than twelve youth groups were active in Des Moines, the latter day League had a more limited task than its earlier predecessors. After some four years of active existence, the League came to an end. This group had included among its members people of high-school age and young married couples "many of them college graduates for over five years. . . . . This produces trouble in both the type of program desired, and in the type of entertainment following the program."[6] It is probably not an unreasonable assumption that the failure to solve this problem led to decline of the League.

It was in these same years that the efforts of the rabbis, of Robert Lappen, and of Oscar Jacobson resulted in the formation of a Federation of Jewish Youth. The organizing meeting, in March of 1935, was attended by representatives of the following groups:[7]

ORGANIZATION	MEMBERSHIP	
Junior Hadassah	132	
Beta Kappa Phi	12	
Drake University	28	
Y.P.L.	90	(Tif. Israel)
Talmud Torah Alumni	38	
A.Z.A.	33	
Jewish Youth Program	60	
Phi Epsilon Pi	18	
League of Jewish Juniors	100	
Gamma Tau Chi	18	
Ivre Fraternity	30	
Young Judea	?	

Although the usual number of duplication of member-

ship is evident, it would appear that this list is as comprehensive and accurate as possible. During its two and a half years of existence, the Federation sponsored two institutes of Jewish studies.

Two earlier institutes had been held under the auspices of the "Religion Committee" of the Jewish Community Center in the spring of 1926. The three rabbis, Zeichick, Rivlin, and Mannheimer, Mrs. Mayer and the teachers of the Talmud Torah offered basic courses in Bible, History, and Hebrew. This series was so successful that a second six-week session was set up beginning in January, 1927.[8] Nothing is known, however, concerning attendance or purpose. Rabbi Mannheimer suggested that these institutes were organized to train both teachers and prospective teachers for the three religious schools of the city.

Then, in 1935, the Federation of Jewish Youth revived such classes. The IOWA JEWISH NEWS of December 5, 1935, listed the courses offered: Jewish History, Hebrew, and Contemporary Jewish Problems. Approximately one hundred twenty-five people were registered and paid the enrollment fee of fifty cents. In the year following, some eighty-five people selected essentially these same courses. Later a class in Yiddish was added and again a two-semester program proved successful.

Throughout the years, several State Conferences on Jewish Education were held: in 1934 in Des Moines, 1935 in Davenport, in Cedar Rapids in 1936, and again in Des Moines in the following year. These meetings were organized primarily for teachers of Religious Schools; and though sponsored by the various reform temples, the conservative schools usually cooperated and participated in these affairs. The last of these Temple-sponsored conferences was conducted by Dr. Emanuel Gamoran, and was, in the opinion of Rabbi Eugene Mannhei-

mer, the "very best of any such institutes."[10] Only one such meeting was held after the War, in 1947, under the auspices of the Des Moines Board of Jewish Education.

In this connection reference might be made to several Institutes on Judaism for Christian clergymen and educators which were arranged in 1945, 1948, and 1956. Dr. Julian Morgenstern and Professor Jacob Marcus of Hebrew Union College, and Dr. Max Arzt of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America were the lecturers at these affairs attended by several hundred Protestant and Catholic clergymen.

Throughout the years, interfaith work has played a large part in the thinking of rabbis and layleaders. The Iowa School of Religion, the Des Moines Roundtable, and the National Conference of Christians and Jews, cooperation with women's organizations and church groups testify to the wider scope of education as it has been carried out by the Jews of Des Moines.

Here in Des Moines through the instrumentality of Synagogues and Temple, Talmud Torah and the Jewish Community Center, not to mention the informal process of education which is part of every sermon, of every group activity, of every conference, a broad, year-round program of education has been developed. Present day methods, techniques, teachers, and attitudes are different from what they were in the "good old days" of the "cheder" or even the years preceding the last War, but the ultimate purpose is the same: to train men, women, and children so that Jewish survival as a distinct religious group in America may be assured.

To deepen Jewish consciousness and to raise a generation proud of its heritage and capable of coping with the problems of the present, is the challenge of today. Des

Moines Jewry has provided the tools for this important work.

VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

For more than seventy-five years, the Jews of Des Moines have maintained their own social structure and, at the same time, have been part of the wider civic community. The William Krauses, the Kuhns, and a few others have lived here since the early days of Raccoon Forks and taken their place in the life of the small frontier town, serving on various boards and juries, contributing to the building of churches, and participating in matters political and social.

As the number of Jewish men and women increased, the emergence of specific Jewish institutions became possible. The story of the growth of synagogues, social service, welfare, and educational agencies has been sketched in the previous chapters. The social interests of the Jewish group expressed itself in a variety of activities and organizations, and the historian is hard put to do justice to all these. There is really no need to describe the obvious: the parties, dances and picnics, the afternoon teas and anniversary dinners. What is significant in this story is that the Jews of Des Moines speedily developed a natural and full social program among themselves and for each other without curtailing their wider civic interest, or withdrawing from close, personal contact with non-Jewish friends and neighbors.

In the early days of Des Moines Jewish life, a great many fraternal organizations were established. Of all the groups organized for men, only the B'nai B'rith chapter was destined to continue without a break and the date of its seventy-fifth anniversary was remembered

on April 16, 1957. It was on that day in 1882, that Sam Woolner, president of District Grand Lodge No. 6, Independent Order B'nai B'rith, organized Des Moines' chapter No. 330, and initiated its charter members.[10]

The early minutes of the B'nai B'rith Lodge are full of data concerning the operation of the endowment fund in case of death and concerning requests by members of other lodges asking for help in sickness and distress. Usually, in cases of this kind, a collection was taken up and the proceeds forwarded to the beneficiaries. At times, as in 1889 when the Johnstown flood created so much misery and death, an allocation was made from the Lodge treasury. The Cleveland Orphan Asylum became an early recipient of the chapter's aid. When in 1885, four young children were left destitute in Des Moines through the death of their mother, the order immediately initiated steps to have the children admitted to the orphanage. Eventually, two of the orphans were sent to Cleveland.

Though all the charter members of B'nai B'rith were associated with the Westside Reform congregation, it was just two years after its founding that a man of East-European background was elected to the Des Moines chapter. This man was D. S. Wolinsky, a Ben B'rith from Keokuk. He was duly and unanimously elected and at the same meeting nominated for the office of Guardian. Then, in May, 1889, when Des Moines was visited by the Grand President and Secretary of B'nai B'rith, after the banquet to which "all Israelites of the city and vicinity" were invited, fourteen men were initiated. Three of these men were members of the orthodox community, Max Arenberg among them. Rabbi Louis Shereshefsky of the Children of Israel Synagogue, Falk Brody, Meyer Zelcer and A(?) Blotcky were ad-

mitted shortly afterwards; and since that time B'nai B'rith in Des Moines was open to all Jewish men regardless of background or economic status. This transition from a "German" brotherhood to a Jewish, truly fraternal organization was completed when in 1897 Reuben Marks, one of the most respected men of the orthodox community, became the president of the Lodge. This development was in contrast to many lodges which retained their "German-Jewish" character for many more years.

B'nai B'rith became the great school where all the men who emerged to leadership in the community received their early training and experience. Among them were rabbis and teachers as well as lawyers, other professional men, and merchants. After World War I, B'nai B'rith took the Aleph Zadig Aleph (A.Z.A.) youth group under its sponsorship. In 1924, the Des Moines chapter became the fourth in the country to join in this youth program. Under the leadership of boys, such as Charles Shane, Louis Williams and Stanley Rabinowitz, the Des Moines A.Z.A. began and remained the all-inclusive organization of boys of high school age.

Various women's groups grew up along congregational lines. Their primary tasks were to help those in need and to provide a sense of orderliness and beauty to their respective houses of worship. Today the sisterhoods perform a multitude of tasks for their congregations and cooperate with all the other groups through the Des Moines Federation of Jewish Women's Organizations. Of special interest is the Braille work, being done by both the Temple Sisterhood and the Tifereth Israel Women's League.

Throughout the years, a great service in the history of the Jewish people has been performed by the Zionist

movement. This movement gave expression to the desire, as found in song and prayer for two thousand years, to restore the Holy Land as a home and haven of refuge for Jews. The first organizational activity for Zionism took place in Des Moines some time after the turn of the century. Mrs. J. Kemp and Mrs. S. (Bessie Siegel) Levenson were responsible for founding the B'nath Zion, "Daughters of Zion," which in 1906 had forty members. In the same year, Rabbi Rudolph Farber, assisted by Dr. David Unger, J. S. Isralay and others, formed a Zionist club, the nucleus for both the later Zionist Organization of America and the Mizrachi. Mrs. Aaron Blotcky (Alice Dietz) took an early part in this work and serves as the secretary of the Zionist Organization to the present.

Since the days of the Balfour Declaration in 1917 and the beginnings of a Jewish homeland under the British Mandate, membership in the Des Moines Zionist Organization of America has numbered many hundreds, reaching over six hundred in 1948.[11] For at least the last thirty-five or forty years, this membership has cut across congregational lines, including at all times a goodly number of the Temple though much of its leadership stayed away from political Zionism. At no time, however, did these people who objected to Jewish nationalism as such close their hearts or their hands to the calls of the United Palestine Appeal and the agencies which followed. And throughout the 1920's and 1930's, sizeable sums were allocated by the Philanthropies for these purposes.

In return for this support extended to the upbuilding of Palestine by the central community bodies, the Zionist groups in Des Moines refrained from any major fund-raising campaigns on a city-wide scale but emphasized

their task as one of public relations and political education.

Reuben Marks, Louis Oransky, Joseph Brody, and Dr. Abraham G. Fleischman were prominent in Zionist affairs for many years. When, in 1923, Dr. Chaim Weitzman visited Omaha, the Des Moines Delegation presented him with a gift of $10,000.00, a bankdraft secured by the signatures of Messrs. Louis Oransky, Louis Ginsberg, and Saul Davidson. Some twenty years later, more than one thousand trees were planted in Palestine to honor Rabbi N. H. Zeichik on the fortieth anniversary of his service to the Jews of Iowa. Additional sums were provided for the building of NACHLATH IOWA in Israel. The record of Des Moines' large contribution to the support of the new state has been told in a previous chapter. While these financial reports are impressive and may fill the reader with some pride and satisfaction, they tell only a partial story of commitment and service. It leaves unrecorded the prayers, the individual sacrifices brought year in and year out and the large amounts of money with which so many families supported loved ones overseas both in Europe and now in Israel.

Dr. Joseph Dunner, a member of the staff of Grinnell College since 1946, made an outstanding contribution to the Zionist effort in this area. He is a recognized authority on the recent developments in Europe and the Middle East and lectures extensively, has written numerous articles and published several books in this field. As a regional and national officer in the Zionist Organization of America, his advice and counsel have been sought frequently in all matters relating to Zionist work.

While the ZOA labored to influence and educate public opinion, Hadassah, the Zionist Women's organization, succeeded in uniting the Jewish women of all back-

grounds and religious convictions in the common task of building the educational and health service facilities of Palestine. Rabbi Stephen Wise, on a trip to Des Moines in 1919, interested several women in the work of Hadassah, which was then less than ten years old. Within a year, Celia Weinstock visited in the East and returned to Des Moines convinced that a Hadassah group was both feasible and necessary. A chapter was set up in May 1920, and very soon grew into the largest and most active Jewish women's organization in the city. This is not said to minimize the work of various congregational sisterhoods which have performed important and necessary duties in all the years of their existence. The primary task of a sisterhood, after all, is to support and supplement congregational activities, even though general charitable work may be an essential and permanent adjunct. With Hadassah being almost solely concerned with projects in Israel, the congregational sisterhoods, have taken over activities of local and specific American interest.

Of the many Hadassah projects—the hospital in Jerusalem, the National Jewish Fund, Israeli health centers and health education—none has stirred the heart more than Youth Aliyah, the program which has saved so many thousands of Jewish children and given them new life and hope. For many years now, this work in Des Moines has been the special project, responsibility and love of Mrs. Nate Frankel and of Mrs. Harry Marks.

In all its undertakings, Des Moines Hadassah and its subsidiary groups have given generously, over and beyond the national average. Smaller Zionist groups, such as the Paole Zion and the Mizrachi, have done their share in aiding schools, kibbutzim, institutions, and individuals not provided for by the larger agencies. The support

given to the Zionist cause by such non-Jews as Forrest Spaulding or Ed Greaves cannot be minimized.

JEW AND NON-JEW

The social life of the young Jewish men and women of Des Moines has not been essentially different from that of their non-Jewish friends and associates. Having as children sat in the same schools, played the same games and roamed the same streets and parks, these people adapted similar patterns in their early adulthood. It was the home, the church and synagogue, or the private club which provided the primary area for social intercourse.

As we know from the 1896 story in THE AMERICAN ISRAELITE, the Our Circle Club with a membership of fifty-five was purely social in character; a Monday Reading Circle served the literary needs of the young ladies and the reporter deplored the lack of such an activity among the young men. A few years later, the Alcott Club, which included both boys and girls of Temple B'nai Jeshurun, met regularly for literary readings and discussions. Similar groups of young people undoubtedly were functioning in the community although nothing is remembered concerning them.

At the turn of the century members of the Reform congregation still somehat excluded the East-European Jew and his children from their social life. However, to judge from the not infrequent marriages between Eastside and Westside families, this restriction became less and less rigid as time went on. Nor did the non-Jewish community exclude the American-born Jews, as can be judged again from the frequent incidence of intermarriages involving Jewish and Christian partners.[12]

Our city was too small to allow such artificial separations to be perpetuated.

The incident of mixed marriages was particularly heavy among the second and third generation of American-born Jews and thus affected the older families more than those of more recent immigrants. It is only fair to state that since the time of World War I the rate of marriages uniting Jew and non-Jew, at least here in Iowa, has not decreased though it now affects equally both the descendents of "German" and "East-European" families.

In this connection, it is appropriate to call attention to the high degree of mobility in American-Jewish life. Rarely do families remain in one place any length of time, and rarely do succeeding generations maintain the religious allegiance to the synagogue of their forefathers. Thus it is of interest to learn that the present membership of Temple B'nai Jeshurun contains but a handful of the children and grandchildren of the original founders. Families have moved away; others have died out; and in some instances, whether because of intermarriage or voluntary conversion, disappearance into the non-Jewish majority has been effected. The place of the older families has been taken by the children of people who not so long ago were associated with orthodox and conservative congregations, and by the heavy influx of new families from other communities. It was once maintained that a conservative congregation was, for some, but a stop on the way to Reform Judaism, just as for others the liberal Temple might eventually lead to complete assimilation. The renascence of Jewish identification in America during the last two decades has belied these dire prophesies. Orthodox, Reform, and Conservative Judaism have become valid expressions of

American Jewish life and have proved their survival value in the modern age.

To come back to our story, Our Circle Club, organized in 1876 by members of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, ceased to exist in the autumn of 1907, but a second social club was not organized until fifteen years later. The Park View Club came into being because the existing golf clubs of Des Moines either would not accept Jewish members or exercised a rigid quota system. Early in 1923, at a cost of $25,000.00, the charter members purchased the properties of the Golf and Tennis Club, including the clubhouse, its equipment, and some three acres of land off Polk Boulevard. Morris Mandelbaum headed the first list of officers with Harry Ginsberg, Lawrence Weinstock, and Myron Cohen filling the other offices. Within a year, the membership had risen to about one hundred; and the facilities of the clubhouse were used for many of the larger social functions sponsored by its members and Jewish organizations in the city. In 1928, the Club sold its property to Congregation Tifereth Israel as the site for its present synagogue. The original clubhouse is still in use as a social hall with its interior completely rebuilt and redecorated.

By the close of World War II, the members of the community felt the need for establishing a third social club. This desire was brought about by the fact that the downtown clubs had such long waiting lists. This new club was to have a membership, "which would include members of the already existing clubs, but whose purpose would be both social and communal."[13] The name "Standard Club" was chosen; within less than a year the club had acquired a satisfactory downtown location. Its membership was soon doubled, and it was possible to develop a comprehensive program of social activities.

In the eleven years of its existence, the Standard Club has become an integral part of the Jewish community and many major functions utilize the club facilities.

Since the early days of Des Moines, Christians and Jews have been active participants in the responsibilities for and in the betterment of their city. Iowa has been quite free of religious and racial tensions as has been implied in the words of Governor Lucas, the first territorial governor, and in the action of its courts and its people ever since.

Perhaps more than the other towns of Iowa, the capital city attracted people of various backgrounds, cultures, and education. There was theoretic acceptance of humanistic and religious liberalism; but more important was the reality of living together, where the citizens of Des Moines learned to respect differences and to cooperate as a matter of course, wherever and whenever the welfare of all was concerned. It is no longer possible to state with certainty the first incident of such inter-religious cooperation between Christians and Jews. William Kraus and the Kuhn brothers are mentioned in the early records as having served on juries and school boards, and as having contributed to the building of the churches of the town. This pattern of having Jewish men and women serve on civic boards and committes, and of appointing and electing those qualified to public office has never been altered. One might think here of Henry Riegelman in Democratic politics or Robert Lappen on the Republican side, the lawyers Mose H. Cohen, Sol Glick, Jos. Z. Marks, Louis B. Cohen, Harry Grund, Oscar Strauss; and again of Robert Lappen, who held legal offices for city, county, and state; and of the good number of Jewish law enforcement officers since the 1890's. Jewish physicians and dentists shared in the

civic responsibilities of their colleagues, where matters of public health, charity work, or draft board examinations were concerned. And this record could readily be extended to include all professions, organizations, and many individuals devoted to a special cause, such as an Art Center, a hospital drive, or a symphony series.

Perhaps it all began, as has been suggested by a present day merchant, with the earliest Des Moines Jewish retailers, who by their integrity and devotion, earned the respect of the non-Jewish business community. It was but natural, therefore, that a Joseph Kuhn would serve as city-chairman of the Democratic organization, that a Moses Strauss or a David Goldman would, as a matter of course, fulfill their civic duties. One likes to think that then as now people were chosen on the basis of his individual worth and that the desire of the majority group to have religious and other specific groups represented was never the major consideration.

The situation was different when the Jewish community as such participated or was asked to be represented. Again when such inter-religious cooperation began, can no longer be ascertained. Was it back in 1873, when the newly organized Congregation B'nai Jeshurun donated some fifty dollars to the yellow fever victims of Memphis, Tennessee, or in the 1890's, when the first Union Thanksgiving Services were conducted? Rabbi Sonneschein, who felt Judaism and Unitarianism to be very closely akin, exchanged pulpits and conducted joint services with liberal Protestant ministers. And even before that, the Temple made available its facilities to the Unitarian Church and other Protestant churches in times of emergencies.

Inter-religious cooperation grew to its fullest in the

work for the School of Religion and in the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The decade following World War I brought into existence interfaith agencies of the most varied type. Whether it was the reaction to the inhuman slaughter or to the violent forms of nationalism and isolationism in its wake, many critical religious leaders and sensitive laymen came to realize that here in America the white man and the negro did not speak each other's language, that Jew and Christian, Catholic and Protestant, while proclaiming neighborly love and charity, all too often gave only lip service to the basic concepts of their faith.

On the national scene, this reawakening of conscience led to a re-interpretation of American history and institutions, and to a significant change in the thinking and teaching of many in university and seminary: it found organizational expression in interfaith and interracial agencies, such as the National Council of Christians and Jews, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the American Association on Religion. In Iowa, this same concern led to early support of all these movements and took on an expression unique in American higher education, in the formation of the School of Religion at the State University of Iowa.

From its inception, the Jews of Des Moines and of Iowa gave leadership and support to this school. In the story of the School of Religion, the names of E. P. Adler of Davenport and of Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer loom large. In 1925, these men were chosen to represent Iowa Jewry on the governing board and on the executive committee, and they held these offices until their deaths in 1949 and 1952 respectively. Through these years, both men labored hard to assure the con-

tinuance of the School of Religion as such and of the Jewish department in particular. It was their responsibility to find the men best qualified to serve as professors of Judaica and Hebraica, and to raise the funds both for this lectureship and the extra-curricular Jewish service activities on campus. Until such time that the various Jewish Welfare Federations underwrote a good portion of this budget, voluntary contributions from the Jews of Iowa had to be canvassed. Rabbi Mannheimer's notebooks are full of the records of his annual trips across all of Iowa for this purpose. People, such as Mrs. Jacob L. Sheuerman, Sam Abramson, L. H. Cohen, Nate Frankel, M. O. Kahn, and Rabbi Lewis B. Grossman were among the many who helped in raising money for the school.

Since 1939, the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations have supplied the funds and personnel, with the approval of the State University of Iowa, for the Hebraic Studies Department, School of Religion. Des Moines and other Iowa communities have made specific allocations to the B'nai B'rith National Youth Service. Robert Lappen of Des Moines, a national commissioner of the Hillel Foundation and a member of the Board of Trustees of the School of Religion, carried these negotiations to their successful conclusions with Dr. Abraham Sachar, then National Director of Hillel. In 1957, Mr. Lappen was elected president of the Board of Trustees of the School of Religion. This record of Jewish commitment to the School of Religion is important; as significant, at least, is the impact of this cooperative effort upon Iowa as a whole as are the scholarly contributions made by the Jewish lecturers in the almost thirty years of the existence of the school.

To put interfaith cooperation in place of exclusive-

ness and prejudice, to live and study together constructively without discrimination is a great achievement. When, in 1952, Marcus Bach wrote the story of the School of Religion, OF FAITH AND LEARNING, he quoted Dr. Judah Goldin, the Jewish member of the School of Religion staff at the time, who made one of the best statements concerning the function of the school:

> What, then, is it that the School of Religion does, if it does not *teach* religion? It offers various opportunities, within the limits of the teachers' abilities and time, for the disciplined, critical and sympathetic study of different religious cultures, and, especially, of the religious traditions of the Western world. How have men at different times thought of God and of their gods? What have they said about the nature of man and the universe? How have they expressed their commitments in writing and worship-patterns? These are the questions which courses in the School of Religion attempt to answer. Whatever the specified course, the principal concern is to present the material carefully to the students, so that he will arrive at a deeper understanding of the subjects, and acquire what might be called a genuine knowledge, rather than a market-place notion of it.[14]

In 1937, the School celebrated its tenth anniversary. This union of faiths represented by staff and students was expressed in a public program held in the historic Senate Chamber of the Old Capitol at Iowa City. The meeting consisted of a discussion on the subject, "Making America Safe for Differences," presented by a team consisting of Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, Father Robert Walsh, and Reverend Stoddard Lane with Dean Willard Johnson of Drake University serving as moderator. In the course of the five years since its first appearance in November, 1936, this Good-Will Team had presented well over two hundred programs throughout Iowa and

neighboring states. One feels, however, that this meeting in Iowa City was the climax of its entire history. Before an audience of scholars and students, businessmen and community leaders, the members of the team expressed what they knew was the answer for the only way in which America could be made safe: religion and education, respecting each man's deepest convictions and uniting his highest hopes in the bond of brotherhood and the fellowship of faith.

The story of the National Conference of Christians and Jews in Des Moines and Iowa frequently runs parallel to that of the School of Religion. Often the same men, both Christian and Jewish, labored for this cause, raised and donated money, served on essential committees, and were its speakers and lecturers. As early as May 1925, Des Moines had its first contact with the Committee on Goodwill between Jews and Christians of the Federal Churches of Christ in America, when its secretary, John Herring, addressed a representative group of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. But it was not until 1933, that effective steps were taken to embark upon this kind of interfaith work; the reasons for this delay can be only a matter of conjecture. No records or recollections are available to help in this matter. Perhaps the series of city-wide Union Thanksgiving Services, 1926-1933, was the result of Mr. Herring's visit. Perhaps it was felt by the men responsible that the less informal, person to person approach was more appropriate in the situation at hand, this same approach which had always worked very well in the past. In any case, it was in 1933, that Robert Lappen received letters from Dr. Everett Clinchy of New Work, and Rabbi Soloman Goldman of Chicago, with regard to a possible visit of the Clinchy-Ross-Lazaron Trio to Des Moines. The REGISTER of

November 13, 1933, carried the following story on this matter:

Final plans of the Des Moines Conference of Jews, Catholics and Protestants, at which three prominent leaders of religious thought will speak, were announced Sunday. "The meeting, to consist of half dozen sessions, is sponsored by the local branch of the National Conference and Jews.

The speakers will be Father John Elliot Ross, who in 1930 became professor of the School of Religion at the State University of Iowa; Rabbi Morris Lazaron, of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation; and Rev. Everett R. Clinchy, director of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The opening session Thursday will be at 10:00 a.m. at the Drake University Chapel. Dr. D. W. Morehouse, president of the University will preside.

At 10:30 a.m. Father Robert Walsh of Des Moines Catholic College, and the Rev. Stoddard Lane, pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church, will be co-chairmen of the round table discussion by young people and educators, to be held at the University. The topic will be, "What Can Young People Do About Prejudice and Tolerance?"

Conference speakers will talk at the regular Lions Club Luncheon at Younkers Tearoom at noon.

A conference with clergy will be led by Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, beginning at 1:45 p.m.

"To What Extent Do Women Determine Intercultural Attitudes?" will be the subject of the Women's Club round table to start at 3:30 p.m., with Mrs. Charles Pye as leader.

J. Riley McManus will preside at the Women's Club dinner session at Younkers Tea Room at 6:30 p.m.

The session is a part of the 48-day tour by the three leaders, who will make a swing across the country to the Pacific coast, and back to New York by a southern route. They will come here from Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Local co-chairmen are Dr. Morehouse; H. E. Fosselman, secretary of the Knights of Columbus; and Robert Lappen,

attorney. Local sponsors are Harvey Ingham, editor of the REGISTER and TRIBUNE; Henry S. Nollen, president of the Equitable Life of Iowa; H. G. Conger, general manager of the Northwest Bell Telephone Co.; J. J. Halloran, judge of the Polk County District Court; J. R. McManus, attorney; Dr. Walter Abbott; Norman Wilchinski, president of Younker Brothers; Morris Mandelbaum, merchant; and Harry Ginsberg, president of L. Ginsberg and Co.

Charles F. Pye, secretary of the Iowa State Teachers Association, is secretary of the group.

The purpose of the conference has been stated as an attempt to moderate and finally to eliminate a system of prejudice, which risfigures and distorts business, social and political relations.

Following the very successful visit of this trio, a Des Moines Committee of the National Conference of Christains and Jews was established. This committee arranged for a Brotherhood Week program at Drake University in February 1935. By 1936, W. W. Waymack of the REGISTER and TRIBUNE had assumed the chairmanship of the local chapter; and Willard Johnson, Dean of Men at Drake University, became its part-time executive secretary. He later took over this position on a full-time basis and served in that capacity until 1941, when he left the city.

The program adopted in 1936, as told in the DES MOINES REGISTER of May 26, provided for a permanent Brotherhood Day Conference group, an educational campaign in public and parochial schools, in clubs, and over the radio. It was also responsible for the formation of the Des Moines Roundtable and the Good-Will Team.

The Des Moines chapter of the National Conference could perform so successfully and do such good work because of the many men and women of all three faiths whose deep interest and valuable services were given

most unselfishly. Archbishop Gerald T. Bergan, head of the Catholic Diocese of Des Moines from 1934 until 1948, and the Reverend Stoddard Lane, Pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church, deserve special mention. The entire community remains indebted to them for the fine spirit of understanding which prevails among Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in Des Moines to this day. These men, together with Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer exemplified among the clergy the broad humanitarian spirit of that day. Faced with the very real threat of the new paganisms then abroad, the religious forces in America sensed the need for a united spiritual front to turn back the tide of godlessness. Healthy and harmonious relations between the three religious groups expressed itself in wide interfaith activities and in emphasis upon the common elements rather than upon philosophic and theologic differences. From 1938 until 1945, Interfaith Thanksgiving Day Meetings were conducted. They were sponsored jointly by the Catholic Diocese, the Ministerial Association, and the Synagogues.

Since World War II, interfaith work has entered upon a new phase. At the same time that the secular society and its various institutions which include the courts, the public schools, civic associations, sports and entertainment, and the various media of communication support religious and racial cooperation, inter-religious differences are once again emphasized. With more and more attention placed upon traditional modes of religious teaching, ideological considerations take on substance, and the trend toward fundamentalism both in the Christian and the Jewish community in the country as a whole has left its mark. The large increase of parochial schools and denominational youth and adult organizations is in line with this tendency.

Even the events in Israel have affected Jewish-Christain relations in this country. Aside from the concern about the future of the Holy Places, the miracle of Israel's rebirth has serious theological implications. For some Christians, it is a fulfillment of Biblical phrophecy; for others, it is the apparent end of Jewish homelessness and thus a direct contradiction to traditional concepts. These considerations as well as increased missionary activities of Christians may produce a new pattern of interreligious relations. As citizens of this country, Jews and Christians will cooperate on an ever larger scale in civic, social, and political matters; the rabbi, however, while retaining his function as representative and spokesman of his group, will be an ambassador to the community at large to a lesser degree than the men of the preceding generation.

Such men as Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer and Rabbi Solomon Rivlin were needed in a day when professional leadership was limited largely to men trained in the religious area. With the growth and proliferation of agencies, the base of professional guidance has been broadened; and specialization in many areas requires particular training and abilities. At the same time, the number of people qualified by their Jewish and general education has increased; and these men and women have taken their rightful place in both the Jewish and the wider community. Thus today, again, a rabbi may devote himself more fully to his congregational and religious duties than he was able to do some twenty or thirty years ago.

None of this, however, weakens the impact that a strong personality can exert upon those with whom he comes into contact. Who, after all, can measure the intangible influence of the personality of a teacher, an em-

ployer, a business associate, or a neighbor? At all times, an informal interplay and dialogue takes place and shapes not only the individual but equally the community in which he lives. All this is borne out when considering the four Jews who, in the course of the years, received the REGISTER AND TRIBUNE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD; these four stand for the many who unselfishly gave of themselves and of their time:

JULIA BLOOM MAYER for outstanding work as everybody's neighbor at the Jewish Community Center;

HENRY FRANKEL for his long record for support of every civic project in Des Moines;

IKE SMALLS who made available blood and blood-donors for his neighbors, the underprivileged of Des Moines;

ABE H. BLANK, not the business leader, but the man who built the Raymond Blank Memorial Hospital for his neighbors' children.

One may wonder why a recognition of this nature rarely went to businessmen, such as Ike Friedlich, Norman Wilchinski, or Jake L. Sheuerman, and those who, in our own day, continue this tradition of service. Theirs was and is the type of community service that proceeds imperceptibly day in and day out; a man's worth may not appear in a single conspicuous act but in the sound counsel and example that are the marks of leadership. Intellectual integrity, objectivity, altruism, and true understanding are the qualities which lift a man or woman into the first rank of citizenship; this kind of leadership was always present among the Christains and Jews of Des Moines.

Some thirty years ago, a memorial was written for a man of this type and published in the *History of West Des Moines High School* (June, 1923):

> In over thirty years or residence in this city, I know of no man, among all the fine ones Des Moines proudly claims, who gave to her in any manner as did he. Many men give of money; some of time; and some, of personality; but he, almost alone, gave of all and gave in each class of giving, in greater degree than any other man. . . . He was a businessman of great acumen and ability. His judgment was sound and deferred to. His insight was of the keenest.
>
> In lines of civic helpfulness his work was of the highest order. . . . .
>
> But it was in the field of patriotic and charitable service that his greatest work was done. To enumerate the campaigns for raising funds . . . . in which he assisted, would be to give practically a complete catalogue of every leading drive for such funds carried through in Des Moines for the last (10) years. In many he led, in all he did yeoman service.
>
> The thing that made his appeals, his leadership, irresistible, was the knowledge that all men had, that no matter what Jake Sheuerman asked you to do, *he* had done more; no matter how many hours he asked you to work, *he* had worked longer hours. It is under such captains that the impossible is accomplished. . .[15]

What was said of Jacob L. Sheuerman in 1923, might be said of many other businessmen who represent the same ideas and attitudes. It might also be said of the Jewish teachers and doctors and dentists, not to forget the many women who gave and give of themselves in the service of all. The philosophy of giving, which has set the spirit of the Jewish community, found a response in the liberal tradition of Greater Des Moines. Whether in consistory or service club, women's group or luncheon association, people met as equals and as human beings; and easy social and human relations testify to the spirit of a city remarkably free of tension and prejudice. We like to think that Eugene Mannheimer and Ida Jacobs, the Younkers, the Brodys, the Levitts, the Davidsons, the

Waldingers, and the Robinsons, and the many, many others made it possible by their contribution and their life-long labor, as much as the Cowles, the Nollens, and the Waymacks in the Christian group. They were mindful, all these men and women, of the divine injunction, found in the thirtieth chapter of Deuteronomy:

> I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before thee life and death, the blessing and the curse; therefore choose life, that thou mayest live, thou and thy seed; to love the Lord thy God, to hearken to His voice, and to cleave unto Him; for that is thy life and the length of thy days.

VII

Epilogue

Ancestors and Decendents

". . . . and neither art thou free to desist from it." (Aboth II:21)

Once upon a time, many many years ago, Des Moines, though the capital of Iowa, was little more than a small Midwestern town. It was dusty in summer but muddy most of the other time. It grew slowly to metropolitan stature along both banks of the Des Moines River. The Jews of this city lived in two clearly divided groups. The older settlers and their families dwelt on the west side of the town and were known as the Reformed Jews. Their synagogue was called the Temple.

The immigrants from Lithuania and Poland, most of whom had come here after 1880, lived in East Des Moines, and their small synagogues remained orthodox in belief and practice.

There was little social and fraternal intercourse between both groups: from the beginning, however, even before the organization of ladies' benevolent societies on both sides of the river, material help was extended to newcomers and families in trouble. The Sheuerman's

of the Capital City Woolen Mills and other large employers were often called upon to find a job for the immigrant; a few dollars were always available to equip a prospective peddler with a day's or a week's supply of merchandise. Each worshipper left some coins in the charity boxes in the synagogues; and when necessary the needy would take a small amount from the box with God his only witness. Plain material aid, a basket of groceries or clothes for the children, was provided by the women of both communities. The same grocery store that served the Jewish homes on the Eastside and Westside of town, also transmitted information about needy and hungry families. Such pleas never went unheeded. And when sickness struck or a woman went into confinement, Dr. Joseph Priestley always found a Jewish woman, such as Mrs. Meyer Zelcer, to serve as his practical nurse and, what was probably more important, to serve as his interpreter. After all, frequently the babies arrived long before their mothers had mastered the very rudiments of the English language.

When newly-arrived school-aged children were brought to the principals of Bremer and Bryant Schools, one of the teachers, such as Belle Cohen or Goldie Zelcer, who spoke Yiddish and German, was called and the pupils remained with the women until they were ready to join their proper class groups. The requirements of mutual help, the constant meeting in business affairs, the services of the Kosher butcher still used by several Reform Jews, the demands made upon the rabbis of B'nai Jeshurun, who were often the only ordained men in all of Central Iowa, the mingling of the young in school, at civic and social affairs, blunted differences and brought men together.

Fortunately for our story, this sense of cooperation

and mutual help was soon to grow into institutional forms, the B'nai B'rith, the Jewish Community Center, and the Jewish Social Service, so that the only remaining lines of division were those of a denominational nature and the intangible barriers of economic wealth and status. But even religious distinctions have lost their sharp edge; they still exist, they are still respected, but they no longer divide Jew from fellow-Jew. Perhaps these differences never did exist except in ceremonials and externals.

As the story of the Jewish Community of Des Moines unfolds over the years, some men and women rose to positions of leadership and authority. By the force of their own personalities, they were able to teach two generations the tradition of tsedakah, or what we today refer to, as social service. In this process, institutions and agencies were created; and a new type of non-rabbinic professional leadership came into being. Among these are the youth leader, the social worker, the Center worker, the family counselor, and the fundraiser. The feeling that the presence of one or two powerful personalities might stunt organizational growth and inhibit the emergence of others into positions of responsibility, has proved a fallacy.

Each generation, in its own way, solves the problem of service and leadership, and hands on to its children the problem, not its solution. Giving in the days before World War I was done on an informal basis with a businessman going from store to store, from office to office. Today, with the need so much more complex, it has become a science involving the tax consultant, corporate policy, and public relations almost as much as the old call of the heart. Some were conserned that the young generation had not been taught to give. It is true that

the character of "Philanthropies: 1956" is different from the charities of yesterday; but because of this change, it is not necessarily reduced in quantity or quality.

An unknown author speaks of happiness in a way that belongs to our story:

> Happy he who remembers his progenitors with pride, who relates with pleasure to a listener the story of their greatness and of their deeds, and who silently rejoicing sees himself linked to the end of this goodly chain.

It was in 1954, that the Jews of the United States celebrated the American Jewish Tercentenary, the three hundredth anniversary of the arrival of the first Jews on the Atlantic shores of this country. "Man's Opportunities and Responsibilities Under Freedom" was the theme for this celebration. This was chosen in order to allow the American Jew to take stock of the many opportunities for creativity inspired in the climate of America and to rededicate himself to the responsibility of his heritage of freedom. In Des Moines the Tercentenary year was carefully planned and prepared by a committee of Jewish citizens representing all congregations, organizations, and agencies. Both the beginning and the end of the year gave occasion for religious services of thanksgiving and dedication. In March of 1955, Clara Siegel-Ehrlich and The Fine Arts Quartet of Chicago were presented in a concert. The program consisted of numbers by Mendelssohn, Ernest Bloch, and Manoah Leide-Tedesco. The Des Moines Art Center featured an exhibit of Jewish ritual objects and works by contemporary Jewish artists in America. The Jewish community presented a statue, "SACRIFICE," by Jacques Lipschitz, to the Art Center in appreciation of

its fine cooperation; and a collection of records was purchased for the Music Department of the Des Moines Public Library. In addition, a high school essay contest on the theme "What America Means To Me" was sponsored by the Tercentenary Committee. The first prize was awarded to Kathleen Mullin, a senior at St. Joseph's Academy.

The Lipschitz statue in the Art Center and the records in the Library, it was hoped, will give permanence, in artistic expression, to the celebration of this anniversary year in which the Jewish community and so many non-Jewish citizens of Des Moines have cooperated. It was felt, however, that the permanence of the written word should be used to preserve the story of the past one hundred years. It was out of these considerations that "The Jews of Des Moines — The First Century" emerged.

The Tercentenary gave occasion to evaluate the past and assess its achievements through the fine arts and by means of the written word. Out of this examination came a growing realization that analysis of the present and its projection into the years ahead were most essential. In 1956, the Jewish Welfare Federation authorized a socio-economic census, the third in the history of the community. Mr. Samuel Baum, assistant professor of Sociology at Drake University, was in charge of this project and the ensuing evaluation. The census indicated population changes, economic status and social needs, such as educational facilities and geriatric requirements. It will also form the factual basis for the work of the Committee on Community attitudes. Its objective is to determine the psychological factors which are of importance in making plans for future Jewish community service. The Jewish Community of Des Moines, its con-

gregations, and social and educational agencies are part of the large national Jewish organizations in this country. In their sum total and their leadership, they represent and speak for the American Jew: in the fullest sense they are American Judaism.

It is, after all, in religious, social, and educational bodies that American Judaism finds realization and expresses itself. The structure and philosophy of these organizations will, in the years to come, shape the character of Judaism in this country; we can only wonder, and hope that the future will be in keeping with the record and ideas of the past.

Judaism, as we understand it today, rests on three pillars: religion, culture and people. Faith has been at the center of Jewish life; it has been the thread that has tied the generations of the past to those of the present. This faith which has distinguished us in the eyes of the world, consisting of a cosmogony, an ethical system, and a ritual pattern, has enabled us to survive for thirty-five hundred years. Yet, we as Jews are more than a religious community.

The second basis, culture, includes a history, a language, a land, a literature in Hebrew, Aramaic, and the modern tongues as well as multifarious artistic expression. To function in the area of Jewish life, one is not limited to the synagogue. It may rightfully be said that Judaism includes movements, causes, and institutions which go beyond the area of creed and theology but which in essence enrich and sanctify human existence.

And these two sides of the triangle rest upon the base of Judaism, the Jewish people. Judaism is the product of the interplay of all these forces in the life of its people. We share a common history and a sense of kinship inherited from the past, a common tradition and way of

life in the present, and a common destiny and hope for ourselves and the world in the future.

Thus Judaism has become an original pattern of life, which Jews have expressed in distinctive religious and cultural forms. A satisfying social structure was developed, a form of organized group life which would give expression to spiritual, material and cultural needs and which would maintain the sense of in-group feeling, the sense of belonging. In each land, from Palestine to Babylonia, Egypt, Spain, Central and Eastern Europe to America and back again to the Israel of modern times, we endeavored to create an organic, organized life, and a proper social structure without which our religious and cultural heritage, the content of Judaism, stood in danger of being dissipated.

And this is the problem which still confronts us today: how to establish a community structure which will enable us to travel a Jewish way of life.

In the natural community which existed in ancient Palestine, the individual shared, as part of a group, all aspects of human life. Just as the modern French, American, or Israeli child becomes quite naturally a part of the nation into which he is born, so the ancient Jew knew no other group with which to identify himself. Thus he was a part of the economic, social, religious, and cultural pattern. This organic community was most tolerant of differences; and variety in thought was, if not always encouraged, never frowned upon.

In the two thousand years of exile and diaspora, the compulsory community came into existence. During this long time, the Jewish people wherever they may have settled, were compelled to develop and maintain a social structure of their own because of the consistent pressures of the society in which they lived. Required to

collect taxes from its members for the state, this community maintained jurisdiction in religious and civil matters. In a sense it had the right to govern and influence every area of life. The individual Jew, short of apostacy, had standing and security only as a member of this recognized unit.

This compulsory community, since it existed under constant pressures and was not master of its own destiny, could not tolerate differences. Therefore, it was necessary to maintain a united front at all times. As a result, the printing of the books of a Maimonides might be banned or a Spinoza forced outside the group. Intolerance and uniformity marked the Jewish as well as the larger Christian community.

After the American and French Revolutions, the Jew, as an individual, was granted rights of citizenship and a new era was ushered in. The Jew acquired political freedom, civic equality, and economic opportunity. The old compulsory community gave way to the voluntary Jewish community as we know it today. The individual Jew no longer lives in an exclusively Jewish environment. He has interests and shares activities with his fellow citizens on the broadest secular level. No Jewish agency has any legal or political authority over any Jewish man or woman. Consequently, religious, educational, and philanthropic activities have been the main concern of this community.

American Jews are members of the American community first. Yet they find it necessary to maintain some special social structure of their own. They feel impelled to preserve this heritage, this way of life, in the face of indifference and unconcern from within, encroachment and competition from without.

To preserve Jewish loyalties and assure Jewish sur-

vival, a suitable social structure is required without which the bonds between people, faith, and culture may be severed.

Within the congregational bodies—whether reform temple, conservative or orthodox synagogue—a gradual liberalization of policy has taken place which has all but eliminated the pattern of the past. Through a larger board of trustees and a well publicized record of action of both executive and general meetings, the administration became more widely representative of the membership. Assigned pews and purchased ownership of seats went into discard after the days of World War I; no classification of membership exists, but all are on equal footing, however little or much they contribute. Women play a more prominent part in congregational affairs; they possess the same membership rights as the men and may serve as trustees and officers; what were once Benevolent and Aid Societies have become Sisterhoods, indicating their evolution from primarily charitable societies to important components of the congregational family.

Even the formal relationships of the worshippers have been softened with the introduction of social functions, "Ongai Shabbath" after Friday evening services, and the greater participation of men and women in religious and educational matters.

Nor have the needs of the young been neglected. The Religious Schools have enlarged their curriculum, employed paid professional teachers, acquired modern classrooms and separate school buildings. Congregations sponsor a host of activities, both social and religious, which help draw the young people into the life of the congregation. The BAR MITZVAH ceremony, for thirteen year old boys only, has been supplemented

by the corresponding BAS MITZVAH for girls of the same age and a coeducational confirmation service at high school age.

Experimentation in religious and social expression, and willingness to reinterpret old traditions and to develop new ceremonials and prayers is indicative of the more important, subtle, inner change, a transformation of the Jewish spirit. Effective and informed American-trained rabbinic leadership, natural non-apologetic use of Hebrew and English are a part of this pattern as much as the recognition that religion may be no longer the primary influence in man's life. Perhaps the task that will confront American Judaism in the decades ahead will be to re-interpret the principles, the language, and the ritual so as to capture the mind and the imagination of the American Jew.

But as religion, in the narrower sense, has become less central, a new field of secular activities has opened up. A product of the American scene, this division between the religious and the secular, was unknown in the old pattern of Jewish life. It has served a fine purpose: were synagogues still the center and sole regulator of the community, differences within would easily lead to sectarianism and to permanent differentiation and even separation. The establishment of the broad secular interest and its operation outside the synagogue have permitted the community to remain one. It has, as a matter of fact, made possible a re-unification despite earlier religious separatisms.

Perhaps this distinction between "secular" and "religious" is but a convenient fiction; nevertheless, it has served its purpose. Once the synagogue, the congregation was *the* community; and all social service and educational functions fell within its province. Now that the

community is larger than any one congregation, these functions have developed into joint institutions, the common concern for the maintenance of services and values and for the realization of aspirations, in the face of indifference and unconcern from within, encroachment and competition from without.

No one can foretell the shape of the Jewish community of tomorrow. From the knowledge of the past and from a careful analysis of the present, some suggestions might be obtained, such as have been described by Milton Steinberg in A PARTISAN GUIDE TO THE JEWISH PROBLEM (1945) and by Robert Gordis in JUDAISM FOR THE MODERN AGE (1955).

1. The community of tomorrow should be all-inclusive. Every Jew who wishes to be identified with some phase of Jewish life, every organization which wishes to further Jewish group existence, should be recognized. It should be permeated by a spirit of mutual respect and understanding for differences; it should encourage variety in thought and practice.
2. It should be competent to cope with all sorts of problems, religious, cultural, social, educational. Matters of the defense of Jewish rights or the maintenance of equitable inter-religious activities are as much its concern as any area of Jewish organized activity, so that duplication and overlapping of effort could be discouraged and eventually eliminated.
3. To achieve this, the Jewish community should have some authority, and command the respect of Jews and non-Jews alike. As a completely voluntary association, there can be neither place nor excuse for coercion in Jewish affairs. Self-discipline and a sense of loyalty in group decisions will have to be developed. To surrender personal interests for the sake of larger objectives and to trust the community to look out for the common welfare, will undoubtedly be the hardest thing to achieve.

4. Finally, the Jewish community of tomorrow should be thoroughly democratic, representative of the people it serves and reflecting their prevailing sentiments in its action. Techniques should be found to assure the rights of the majority and to give protection for the requirements of the various minorities.

A story is told of the Duke of Marlborough, who was raised to the peerage by Queen Anne early in the eighteenth century, though he was of lowly origin. One day, when he attended at the Court of the Queen, one of the more arrogant courtiers decided to "twit" him about his family. He confronted the Duke and said: "Your Grace, whose descendant are you?" Marlborough, with great dignity answered: "Sir, I am no descendant; I am an ancestor!"

As we glance back on the first century of Des Moines Jewry, let us resolve to be not merely descendants, but ancestors. Let us keep before us the insight of Rabbi Tarphon, a sage of the second century:

It is not incumbent upon thee to complete the work, but neither art thou free to desist from it.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER I. IN THE BEGINNING: 1845-1870

1. The decendants of William Kraus collected letters and other pertinent data of their family history and left all this material for safekeeping with the AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES, Cincinnati. This collection forms the basis of the story here related. Cf. also
Dixon, J.M., *Centennial History of Polk County,* Des Moines (1876), p. 27 and Porter, Will, *Annals of Polk County and the City of Des Moines,* Des Moines (1898), pp. 143 ff.

2. Iowa Census, Polk County, July 1852, Twp. of Greenfield.

3. THE IOWA STAR, October 19, 1849; January 21, 1850, and similar entries at the beginning of every year; May 15, 1850.

4. Retired records of Polk County, Tax List, 1851; the list indicates $3,074 as taxes paid, an entirely unreasonable figure.

5. THE IOWA STAR, November 11, 1852.

6. The descendants of William Kraus, when compiling the family history, could not find any information about this younger brother of their grandfather. William entered the clothing manufacturing business and eventually moved to New York where he passed away in 1899.

7. Younger, Edward, *John A. Kasson,* State Historical Society, Iowa City (1955), pp. 78-80, for this and the following quotation.

8. *Remininscenses of Isaac M. Wise,* Cincinnati (1901), p. 38, as quoted by Lee M. Friedman, "The Problems of XIXth Century American Jewish Peddlers," in PUBLICATIONS OF THE AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY XLIV (1954) No. 1, p. 1.

9. Julius Mandelbaum, who came to this country in 1952, peddled for several years in upstate New York. Apparently together with N. L. Goldstone, he acquired a horse and buggy. When both young men heard tales of the promising West, they sold their business "property" and purchased tickets to Grinnell, then the end of the road. It was on the train to Grinnell that they heard about the up and coming capital of Iowa; they took the stagecoach to Des Moines and settled here. Family tradition, as told this writer by Sidney Mandelbaum, has it that Julius arrived in Des Moines on September 1, 1864 with $37.—, his total worldly possession. A store was opened up, though it seems that at least one of the partners continued peddling for a short time. This story is a quite typical example of the day.

10. Friedman, *op. cit.,* p. 7.

11. Contemporary newspaper stories provide these measurements for the Frankel store at Oskaloosa: 1861: in one-story frame building, 16 x 40 ft.; 1863: enlarged to 20 x 56 ft. The 1864 store of Goldstone and Mandelbaum in Des Moines measured 20 x 40 ft. for which $40.— rent was paid. In 1864, a large Des Moines store claimed a depth of 135 feet (DAILY IOWA STATESMAN, Oct. 4, 1864).

12. Political feeling ran so high in those days that a Republican paper might not carry ads by Democratic businessmen. Or should we assume that these businessmen did boycott the papers of the other party? In any case, throughout the War, the IOWA STATESMAN contained most of the ads of local Jewish merchants.
IOWA STATESMAN (DAILY): August 19, 1863; February 6, 1864; April 3, 1864; July 20, 1864.

13. *IBID.*, September 16, 1864.
New firm—Jacobs and Wiseman, who have hired the new storeroom of Harry Stephenson, on Court Avenue, are now receiving a large choice stock of Dry Goods, Clothing, and will offer the same for sale next week. They are strangers here, but judging from their appearance they will not be slow to take rank among our first businessmen. We bespeak for them a liberal patronage.

14. *IBID.*, September 27, 1865 lists Isaac Kuhn among the men purchasing stock in the Des Moines Valley Railroad.

15. IOWA STATE REGISTER, August 4, 1866. This summary of business growth is the result of a perusal of local papers of the period. Only the IOWA STATE REGISTER is available in a complete file in the Newspapers Division of the Iowa State Department of History and Archives. The papers carry few local advertisement and are also quite devoid of any complete vital statistics. After all, in a small community such as Des Moines, births, marriages, deaths, and other personal affairs became known without newspaper publicity.

16. Like other successful businessmen, both Kuhns bought real estate for investment and speculation. So, in 1869, I. Kuhn purchased a piece of property near the Capitol for $3,500.— (IOWA STATE REGISTER, Sept. 15, 1869).

17. Joseph Kuhn's monument occupies a prominent place in Woodland Cemetery; the grave or stone of his wife, who had died in 1877, can not be identified.

18. DES MOINES BULLETIN (DAILY), November 25, 1869.

CHAPTER II. EASTSIDE—WESTSIDE: 1870-1900

1. As the nineteenth century understood this vision, the life of man on earth "both can and should be progressively improved through a sus-

tained application of human effort and intelligence." How. R. Murphy, "The Ethical Revolt against Christian Orthodoxy in Early Victorian England," in *American Historical Review*, LX,4 (1955), 800-801.

2. Trachtenberg, Joshua, *Consider The Years*, Easton, Pa., (1944), p. 195.

3. Glazer, Simon, *The Jews Of Iowa*, Des Moines (1904), pp. 233 ff. Jack Wolfe in his *A Century With Iowa Jewry*, Des Moines (1941), pp. 65 ff. repeats this story without additional documentation or evidence.

4. Gottstein, Jacobs, and Levich remained in Des Moines for many years and became prominent in its affairs. This writer feels that S. Levi and S. Levis are identical, the mistaken record of the census taker or a printer's error.

5. The City Directories of this period estimate the size of the average family at 3½ persons; applying this figure to the Jewish families the eight families would add up to 28 individuals. When we then add the 15 single men and a 10 per cent margin, a total of 47 or 48 persons is obtained. Repeated checks along the line and comparison with similar collections at other places, justify a 10 per cent margin to compensate for both compiler's and researcher's errors. It should also be remembered that scanning of poorly printed tabulations can not be completely accurate; even in these early days some Jews carried such "non-Jewish" names as Green, Miller, Harris, or Jacobs (Gus Jacobs was Jewish, but B. Jacobs was not!) In many instances clear and definite identifications can therefore not be made.

6. *Westside names.* 2nd precinct: (N. of Locust)
David Goldman, Isaac Kuhn, Joseph Kuhn, Sol. Joseph, Morris Riegelman, Adolph Samish, Nathan Simon, Joseph Simon, Mose(s) Strauss
1st precinct: (S. of Locust)
N. L. Goldstone, L. Hirsch, Jos. Hyman, Isaac Hyman, Alex. Lederer, Jul. Mandelbaum, M. Riegelman (sic!), E. Riegelman
Lee Township.
A. B. Goldberg, Sam. Harris, A. G. Isaacson, Sol. Siegel; only S. Siegel is found in Directory of same year.

7. The Directory does not indicate whether household servants were counted as family-members, although such inclusion would account for the surprisingly high numbers. Most of the men in question were just recently married. The American-born group included Samuel I. Redstone and the three sons of Morris Riegelman, who had but recently come from Indiana to Des Moines. Also, several of the children of Isaac and Joseph Kuhn had arrived by this time.

8. DES MOINES BULLETIN (DAILY), 11-5-1869.
IOWA STATE REGISTER (DAILY), 9-15-1870; 9-29-1871; 11-29-1872; 1-1-1873; 4-13-1873; cf. Mills, George, *The Little Man With*

The Long Shadow, Des Moines (1955), pp. 61 ff. Precious little local advertisements and news are found in the papers. The incidents related thus give the reader not a complete picture of the development in Des Moines.

9. Peddlers and itinerant merchants: S. Arenberg, W. Balinsky, J. Blotcky, M. Cohen, B. Cohen (is this Ben Cohen?), Mose Frank, B. Franklin, Is. Goldberg, Jacob, Mark, and Wolf Gottstein, Jac. Growgenisky, Ch. Jacobs, Jos. Leventhal, Abr. Levich, Sol. Levich, A. Silverman, David and Sol. Seigel, M. Zelcer.

10. IOWA STATE REGISTER, 11-5-1875.

11. Details concerning the Younker, Mandelbaum, and Frankel families were gathered from interviews with Miss Rachel Younker, Mr. Sidney Mandelbaum, and Mrs. Robert Lubetkin of Des Moines, and Mr. I. L. Younker of Keokuk, Iowa. Mr. William Temple, historian of Younker Bros., made available records and data in his possession. Previously published books and articles on the Des Moines Jewish community also contain valuable biographical information.
In 1864, Isaiah Frankel married Babette Sheuerman, the sister of Abraham and Leopold Sheuerman of Marengo, Iowa. The Sheuermans had been in the woolen business since 1858, and established the Marengo Woolen Mills in 1865. Like the Younker brothers, Abraham and Leopold were eventually to transfer to Des Moines.

12. IOWA STATE REGISTER, Jan. 20 and 21, 1875.

13. *IBID.*, 2-7-1875 and STATE JOURNAL (WEEKLY), 2-16-1876.

14. IOWA STATE REGISTER, Nov. 3, 1874.

15. The six Younker families, both of Keokuk and Des Moines, had a total of thirty-two living children; the two Sheuermans, seventeen together. Families that large were regarded as quite normal in those days.

16. The figures in this graph are approximations based upon examination of available directories. Des Moines Total Population figures, except for 1880 and 1895, are those as given in the various issues of the directories, not U. S. or Iowa Census data. The Board of Delegates of American Israelites and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations published in September 1880 the "Statistics of the Jews of the United States" (Philadelphia, 1880). Existing congregations and the Lodges of the various Jewish Orders were asked to provide the necessary information. The Iowa Census, found on pp. 42-43 of the book, is reproduced here, probably the first enumeration of the Jewish population of the State. The figure for Des Moines verifies essentially the data which this writer obtained independent from this survey:

PLACE	CONGREGATION OR SOCIETY	ORGANIZED	NO. OF MEMBERS OR SEAT HOLDERS	VALUE OF REAL ESTATE	BURYING GROUNDS NOT INCLUDED	VALUE OF OTHER PROPERTY	CHILDREN ATTENDING RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	TEACHERS	EST. JEWISH POPULATION
Davenport	B'nai Israel	1858	21			200	25	1	204
	Ladies' Benev. Society		22						
Boone									17
Keokuk	B'nai Israel	1864	25	$15,000			30	1	152
Dubuque									55
DES MOINES	B'nai Jeshurun	1873	23	3,000		150	10	1	260
Centerville									5
Burlington									121
Albia									14
McGregor									24
Nashua									11
Vinton									16
Keota									1
Iowa City									9
Anamosa									12
Monticello									16
Sigourney									15
Ames									6
Marshalltown									26
Toledo									5
Traer									3
Pella									4
Stuart									4
Villisca									1
Cedar Rapids,									20
Bell Plaine									4
Red Oak									16
Chariton									11
Sioux									48
Osage									5
Webster City									2
Mason City,									4
Cedar Falls									6
Knoxville									4
Charles City									16
Oskaloosa									38
Waterloo									28
New Hampton									5
Clinton									37
Grundy Center,									8
Manchester									6
Indianola									6

In 1895, the Iowa Census placed the number of Jews in Des Moines at 1106 while I arrived at 1000. Considering the 10 per cent margin, previously mentioned, our tabulation can be regarded as essentially accurate.

Numbers of Jewish peddlers in this chart are very rough estimates. It is no longer possible to state at this point who of the men, who are referred to with the title RABBI, had proper rabbinic ordination. It is definitely known that Louis Shereshefsky was ordained and that Wolf Frank did not use the title rabbi.

17. A photograph of Deadwood's one and only street, taken at the time Wild Bill Hickock was assassinated (1876), shows the Herman and Baer marquee; Harris Franklin was then a partner in that store. Material on Franklin is found in Kingsbury-Smith, *History of Dakota*, IV, 207-208, Chicago (1915),; Baldwin, G. P., ed., *The Black Hills Illustrated*, Deadwood (1904), pp. 5 ff; Tallent, Annie D., *The Black Hills*, St. Louis (1899), pp. 401 ff. While visiting Deadwood in the summer of 1955, the author met with Mrs. Belle Parker, the only survivor of the days of 1876. She reminisced at great length about the Franklin family and other pioneers of the Black Hills. Franklin's mansion at Deadwood has been kept unchanged all these years and is still inhabited, though no longer owned by his descendants.

18. For several years Barney ran a store at Central City, two miles from Deadwood; Mose Frank is said to have owned a mine which, however, was destroyed by a fire around 1890, after which he returned to Des Moines.

19. The 1888 Directory is incomplete with the entries from "D" through "R" missing. Fortunately the business directory has not been torn out of the only copy available. Because of the constantly growing numbers of Jews in Des Moines, it was an almost impossible task to keep count of each family accurately, and all too frequently only the initials of the first names are provided in the directories; for example, eighteen entries are found under the name COHEN with several identical initials.

20. So, in 1892, Ben Younker, soon to open his own lawoffice, is listed as the advertising manager of the LEADER, and Samuel Strauss, who was to purchase this paper, was still a clerk in his father's firm. The following are listed as *students:*

    Cohen, Moses at CCCC
    Cohen, Walter S. at Highland Park College
    Frank, Harry at Highland Park College
    Strauss, Gertrude at Callanan College
    Jacobson, Emma, no school indicated.

    Close to ten women are found gainfully employed, one stenographer among them.

CHAPTER III. THE CALL TO PRAYER: religious growth

1. Incorporators included N. L. Goldstone, Jul. Mandelbaum, Dav. Goldman, Alex. Lederer, and Morris Riegelman.

2. Minutes of Temple B'nai Jeshurun Board of Trustees, 2-2-1879. Until about 1900, the Temple spelled its name B'nai Yeshurun, when this was changed to B'nai Jeshurun.

3. The story of the Temple is given in greater detail than that of the other congregations for one very simple reason: Only fragmentary records of the beginnings and growth of Children of Israel, Beth El

Jacob, and Tifereth Israel have been preserved, while the records of the Temple are practically complete. Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer used this data, which is kept in the archives of the congregation, to compile vols. VI and VII of his memoirs.

4. This writer wonders to what degree material published in I. M. Wise's THE ISRAELITE influenced the action of the Des Moines group. There is evidence that this paper was read regularly.

5. There is some question as to the accurate number of charter members. Mannheimer, who made an exhaustive study of this matter, arrived at a minimum of sixteen men; cf. Mannheimer, *Memoirs*, VI, 1-7. Cf. also Congregational Meeting of January 11, 1874; as we know from the stories of other new congregations, meetings were held at great frequency and it is not always easy to distinguish between actions of the Board and those of the Congregation. These are rather technical considerations, when we remember that practically every member was also a member of the Board. The informal reality of some ten or twelve men sitting around a dining room table, talking and smoking, is often overlooked when we read the rather stilted and legalistic minutes of the official record.

6. IOWA STATE REGISTER, April 1, 1874.

7. Mann, Annette, "A History of the Jews of Des Moines," in THE REFORM ADVOCATE, March 9, 1908, pp. 27-28.

8. IOWA STATE REGISTER, 9-18-1877; 4-9-1879; Sept. 5, 7, 9, 1879; Minutes of Temple Board of Jan. 4, 1875 through June 18, 1881.

9. The tabulation shows nine members paying $3.25 p.m.
one member paying $2.50 p.m.
seven members paying $1.25 p.m.
five members paying $ .75 p.m. (single men)

10. Meeting of June 8, 1874.

11. IOWA STATE REGISTER, March 19, 1875 and March 28, 1879.

12. Rabbi Freudenthal's initial salary was $1200.— and Dr. Mueller's $1800.—, a recognition of his prestige. Bottigheimer came here from Hebrew Union College, where he had just received his degree.

13. Meeting of Temple Board, April 4 and 11, 1875.

14. IOWA STATE REGISTER, February 2, 7, and 8, 1879.

15. Meeting of the Temple Board, Nov. 4, 1877; then, in 1883, Rabbi Davidson requested the appointment of a schoolboard to aid him with the school and with the discipline. The latter matter came frequently to the attention of the worthy members of the board. See also Meetings of Dec. 2, 1883 and Oct. 12, 1884.

16. Meeting of the Board, Feb. 22, 1886. There are no records as to the details of the cornerstone laying ceremony.

17. Mr. Leon Strauss remembers that he, then a lad of sixteen, carried the Torah in the procession from the old building to the new Temple.

18. Action of the Board of Febr. 2, 1896; see also THE AMERICAN ISRAELITE of Febr. 20, 1896 (42:34, p. 4, col. 1):

> The Bene Yeshurun Congregation of Des Moines, Iowa, introduced in its temple the Union Prayer Book. This carries it into Iowa, where the Des Moines congregation is the largest and most advanced in the state. Rabbi Bottigheimer, of course, did his duty well.

The Des Moines Temple did not adopt such extreme policies as the Chicago Temple Sinai of Dr. Emil Hirsch, which in 1892 eliminated the Ark and donated the scroll (Torah) to the University of Chicago Semitic Library "since the Torah was no longer needed" in its services; cf. Gutstein, M. A., *A Priceless Heritage,* Bloch Publ. Co., New York (1953), p. 163.

19. Mannheimer *Memoirs,* VI, 52A.

20. Some twenty years earlier, Sonneschein's strong sympathies with Unitarian thought had led to his resignation from the pulpit of Shaare Emeth Congregation in St. Louis. In the same year he became rabbi of newly formed Temple Israel in the same city, and in 1888 he wrote a new prayerbook for his temple, neglecting almost completely the traditional liturgical standards. Perhaps the judgment of one of his colleagues, Dr. Bernhard Felsenthal, may apply to him as it did to Temple Sinai of Chicago: "American Judaism would lose its identity and unique existence, should this example be generally repeated in our country." (Adolf Kober, "Jewish Religious and Cultural Life in America as reflected in the Felsenthal Collection," in *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society,* XLV (2), (1955), pp. 97 and 120, letter of Rabbi Felsenthal to Rabbi Benjamin Szold of Jan. 29, 1889.)

21. IOWA STATE REGISTER, April 30, 1876. Other early members including Abe and J. R. Cohen, Barney and Jacob Gottstein, Abe and Sol Levich, Falk Brody, Charles Jacobs, and Sol Siegel.

22. Mrs. Harry Jacobson of West Des Moines, Rabbi Louis Shereshefsky's granddaughter, told this writer that her grandfather attended the Yeshiva at Volozin and received rabbinic ordination (S'micha) from Isaac Elchanan Spector of Kovno. He left Des Moines for Indianapolis, sometime after 1891, and died there four years later.

23. In 1908 dues came to $5.—, thus the figure given in the text can be regarded as a good approximation.

24. Glazer, *op. cit.,* p. 264, and all later writers repeat the same statement.

25. This book was kept in the office of the Synagogue and was destroyed in the 1956 fire that gutted the interior of the building. This writer

wishes to thank Rabbi Isaac Nadoff, who helped in the reading and interpretation of the Pinkas.

26. Mr. Morris Green (died 1956), longtime president of the Synagogue, provided the writer with the data for this budgetary summary.

27. Rabbi Zeichick and his predecessor Asher L. Zarchy were graduates of the Yeshiva of Volozin. Zarchy (1862-1932) gained prominence for his attempts to create an American Beth Din (Rabbinic Court) and for his part in founding the Union of Orthodox Rabbis; cf. Davis, Moshe, "Jewish Religious Life and Institutions in America," in *The Jews, Their History, Culture, and Religion*, Louis Finkelstein, editor, Harper & Bros., New York (1949) I, 405-406.
Rabbi Zeichik's long tenure in Des Moines (1905-1948) made him one of the most beloved men of the community. He was recognized as a scholar of note and a man with great spiritual qualities. His moral and ethical sense was of a high order; he practiced his religion as he preached it, and "to the day he died gave the traditional tithe and more keeping actual records of his income in order to observe this biblical injunction (letter, dated September 4, 1956 and addressed to this writer by Mrs. Max Schenk, Rabbi Zeichik's daughter).

28. Glazer mentions that Charles Silberman, Reuben Marks, and Louis Ginsberg had attempted in 1894 to establish a Hebrew school in Des Moines. Their efforts were unsuccessful. This writer was not able to verify this story.

29. Glazer and Mann express essentially the same point of view (p. 266 and p. 65 resp.). Miss Mann mentions, too, that family pews were used from the first. According to a story, published on May 13, 1931, in the SYNAGOGUE CALL—the congregational bulletin of the day—Mr. Louis Oransky was to have stated at the initial meeting in 1901 that a need existed for "a Hebrew school where our sons and daughters should be taught the tenets of our faith in the same manner as we have received ours."

30. Letter written on April 16, 1951, by L. Oransky to Is. Robinson quoted with the permission of writer and recipient.

31. Same letter by Mr. Oransky.

32. In the first fifty years of its existence, Tifereth Israel has engaged thirteen rabbis. I. A. Weingart, the present incumbent, is the first man to remain in Des Moines longer than ten years. These frequent changes in leadership are quite in contrast with the long continuity of service of both Rabbis Zeichik and Mannheimer.

CHAPTER IV: SERVICE TO MAN: Community Institutions

1. Duker, Abraham, *The American Jewish Community: Its History and Developments*, American Jewish Committee, New York (1955). This syllabus provides multifarious details on these matters.

2. The MEMOIRS of over 1700 pages are henceforth referred to in these notes with *M.* Copies of the Memoirs are found in the Ben Sanders Memorial Library of Temple B'nai Jeshurun, in the office of the Jewish Welfare Federation and of the Jewish Community Center; a complete set was deposited with the American Jewish Archives of Cincinnati, Ohio. Mrs. Eugene Mannheimer also has in her possession the Rabbi's personal Memoirs; this writer gratefully acknowledges that he was privileged to examine those portions of this draft which relate to Rabbi Mannheimer's public and civic activities.

3. Bamberger, Bern. J., "The American Rabbi—His Changing Role," in *Judaism* III:4 (1954), 489.

4. Eugene Mannheimer was born in 1880 at Rochester, New York. His father, Sigmund Mannheimer, soon moved his family to Cincinnati, where he became professor of Hebrew at the new Hebrew Union College. Eugene graduated from the College in 1902 and was called to Sioux City, Iowa, to serve as rabbi of the reform congregation. Three years later he came to Des Moines, where he was to live until his death in 1952. In 1917, the Rabbi married Irma Shloss, the daughter of the prominent Des Moines merchant Max Shloss. The Mannheimers had two sons, Robert and Richard.

5. The full story is told in Joseph, Samuel, *History of the Baron De Hirsch Fund,* Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia (1935), 184-210.

6. *IBID.,* p. 205.

7. Mann, Annette, *op. cit., p.* 32; cf. also Miss Jacob's article of 1912 and *M* IV: 688-692.

8. Isaac Friedlich and his brother Abe were the owners of the New Utica; for many years Isaac served as vice-president of Roadside Settlement.

9. *M* I: 9 ff., contains the first report of Miss Mann and Miss Dunlap on the activities of the Jewish Settlement Association.

10. *M* I: 21-22.

11. Rabbi Mannheimer relates one incident, perhaps characteristic, of this period; *M* I: 25:

> What is, perhaps my only recollection of that second gymnasium of ours, which we conducted in those rooms at the rear of the Capitol Bank Building, is of the time that one of the boys, who was playing basketball in stocking feet,—as perhaps all of the boys played basketball without any gym shoes, or any kind of shoes, in that gymnasium of ours, ran a piece of wood, very much larger than just a splinter, into one of his feet.—From that accident, one can get a good idea of the kind of gymnasium floor that we had in those rooms. I happened to be at the gym when this accident occurred; and I immediately summoned a doctor, who had his office in the Bank Building, to take care of the wounded young

man. While it had made me feel sick when that boy ran that piece of wood into his foot, I am sure it made me feel much sicker when that doctor informed me that his fee for taking care of that boy would be $5.00!—because $5.00 was a mighty big fee for a doctor to charge for almost anything of that kind "in those days," and that $5.00 had to come out of the rather limited funds which we had at our disposal for our settlement work.

12. The earliest mention of a Sabbath School is found in the Annual Report of 1911-1912, when an average attendance of thirty was reported. The Branch of the Public Library was opened late in 1911. *M* I: 30 and 37.

13. *M* I:36. Mr. Hansen died within a few days after his retirement, only sixty years old. According to Mannheimer, Miss Dunlop and Mr. Hansen were the two non-Jews of greatest service to the Jewish community.

14. *M* I: 38ff. and 100-101; this is based upon Miss Biedermann's 1918 report.

15. October 8, 1924 issue of COMMUNITY, I:1, statement of policy. Simon Neiman and Charles Shane, both active in youth activities, were the first editor and business manager of the paper.

16. Mrs. Mayer's 1932 report as quoted in *M* I: 114-115.

17. *M* I: 68-69, quoting from the November 19, 1925 issue of SCROLL.

18. IOWA JEWISH NEWS, October 2, 1936.

19. This is the judgment of Rabbi Mannheimer.

20. Parkes, James, "The Concept of a Chosen People," in JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY, UAHC (1954), 11.

21. 1910 report of Hebrew Ladies Relief Society, as quoted in *M* I: 153.

22. *M* I: 155.

23. *M* I: 164.

24. Mrs. Weinstock was an active participant in the work of the Associated Charities, now the Family Service, the Travelers Aid, the Y.W.C.A., the Visiting Nurses Association, and above all Broadlawns Hospital, one of whose founders and organizers she became.

25. President's annual report to Federated Jewish Charities of December 29, 1912.

26. 1922 Report, as quoted in *M* I: 175. The following excerpt from the 1923 Report throws an interesting sidelight on the operation of the U. S. Immigration Laws:

. . . . There is one problem that had to be solved before a great many of these men and women could receive their final papers. Under the new immigration law it became impossible for a man,

whose wife and family are abroad, to become naturalized until his family is in the United States. What was to be done? Would these families have to remain separated for years to come, and would the husband and father have to remain an unnaturalized citizen of this country? We found that the attitude assumed by the examiner and judges was not the law, but merely a ruling; and we finally succeeded in influencing them to grant citizenship to these men, who were sincere in their desire to bring their families to this country. Consequently, there will be many families reunited during the coming year; for we are already hard at work attempting to bring wives and families to this country from abroad, to join their newly naturalized husbands and fathers.

27. M I: 192.

28. M III: 646 ff.

29. M III: 653.

CHAPTER V: KEREN AMI: Fund for My People

1. Stein, Herman D., "Jewish Social Work in the United States, 1654-1954," in *American Jewish Yearbook* 1956, Philadelphia (1956), 45 ff.

2. *IBID.*, p. 46. Stein also indicates that federation among Jewish philanthrophies preceded similar developments among Roman Catholics and Protestants and that it gave, at the least, great impetus to the Community Chest movement by demonstrating that combined fund raising was possible.

3. *M* II: 339 ff.

4. *M* II: 343; in November of he same year Thomas Levitt took over Mr. Sachs' office.

5. *M* II:349; unknown to the men of 1914, this emergency fund was to become of the utmost importance within less than a year, when the call came to help the Jewish War Sufferers of Eastern Europe.

6. *M* II: 362; this was the year when American Jewry was to raise for the first time a sum of $1,000,000.00.

7. THE SCROLL of March 25, April 8, and May 27, 1926.

8. From the old minute book of the United Jewish Philanthropies, as quoted in *M* II:230.

9. *M* II: 385-387.

10. For example, early in 1918, Mr. Charles Silberman, Rabbi Cohen, and Rabbi Mannheimer raised some $6,500.00 in a two-day visit to Cedar Rapids and $2,600.00 in Ottumwa; *M* III:497.

11. *M* III: 507.

12. This compilation is based upon data found in the Mannheimer Memoirs and upon the published figures of the Jewish Welfare Fund and the Jewish Welfare Federation for the years since 1935.

13. *M* IV: 769-787; 793-794.

14. *M* III: 624-645.

CHAPTER VI: THOU SHALT LIVE: the Wider Community

1. In his memoirs, Mannheimer indicated several instances of this criticism: cf. *Memoirs,* II, 251 ff.

2. For example, in 1916-1917, it was necessary to replace the entire staff.

3. Annual Report for 1926, given by Milton Weber, as quoted in *M.* II, 267-268.

4. Leon Strauss (b. 1871) as student and Irene Hirsch as teacher were among the earliest Jewish names found on its rolls.

5. The 1914-1915 prospectus of the League lists as officers David Oransky, Rose Hahn, Libby Silberman, Sarah Robinson and Louis B. Cohen. The executive board also included Lawrence Weinstock, Adeline Gutfreund, Ida Jacobs, Robert Lappen, and Rabbis Mannheimer and Cohen.

6. 1935-1936 report of the League's activities, as quoted in *M* II: 318.

7. Minutes of meeting of March 21, 1935, as quoted in *M.* II: 320-321.

8. *THE SCROLL* of April 8, 1926 and *COMMUNITY NEWS* of Dec. 17, 1926.

9. *M* II: 333.

10. This material is taken from the original Minute Book of the Lodge (1882-1909) which was found recently among the papers of the late Abraham Sherman (1865-1955) and returned to Louis Williams, the Secretary of B'nai B'rith.

11. This information is based upon statements made in Jack Wolfe's A CENTURY OF IOWA JEWRY, pp. 157-168, and upon interviews by this writer with Mrs. Aaron Blotcky and Mr. J. S. Israly.

12. For the decade 1905-1915 Rabbi Mannheimer records about ten marriages uniting reform and non-reform families and about ten intermarriages out of a total of forty weddings which he performed in Des Moines. Though the identity of the participants in these marriages can not be determined unequivocally in all cases, these figures will serve to illustrate the case in point.

13. Standard Club, Directory for 1948.

14. Bach, Marcus, *OF FAITH AND LEARNING*, State University of Iowa, (Iowa City), 1952, p. 236, quoted with the author's permission.

15. Excerpts from article written by Alex Fitzhugh in memoriam Jacob L. Sheuerman, which appeared on pp. 136-139 of this HISTORY (Des Moines, June 1923). The book was prepared by the Senior Class of the school under the guidance of Miss Ida T. Jacobs.

I OWE THANKS

To the Jewish Welfare Federation of Des Moines, its Board of Governors, and the Tercentenary Committee for authorizing this work and for the grant that made it possible; to Sidney Speiglman and Irma Mannheimer for always constructive advice and aid; to Robert Lappen, Goldie Zelcer-Marks, Helene Barricks, Joseph Brody, Leon Strauss, Eleanor Friedman, and Ike Younker for significant information and suggestions; to the rabbis of Des Moines, Isaac Nadoff, Irving Weingart, and Edward Zerin for constructive criticism and professional courtesies; to my colleagues, William D. Houlette, Jacob Marcus, and William J. Petersen for sound advice; to Oscar Fleishaker for the use of his manuscript on the history of the Misissippi River Communities; to Thomas M. Kelly for help in matters legal; to the more than thirty citizens of Des Moines who were interviewed by the writer.

To the librarians and staff of the Iowa State Department of History and Archives and of Cowles Library at Drake University, both of Des Moines; to the American Jewish Archives of Cincinnati and to the Des Moines Public Library; to Jack Wolfe for the use of his volumes of THE IOWA JEWISH NEWS (1932-1951); to Temple B'nai Jeshurun for the use of its records and facilities.

To Bernard C. Marks for his artistic contribution; to Jennie Brody for her work as reader and critic.

To my children Elden and Ilene who for two years were understanding enough to do with only a part-time Dad.

And to my wife Ruth for her editorial aid, her patience, and above all, her judgment.

Frank Rosenthal

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