A CENTURY
with
IOWA JEWRY

As Complete a History As Could Be Obtained of Iowa Jewry From 1833 Through 1940.

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JACK WOLFE

FIRST PRINTING
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PART ONE

1833 Through
Civil War

Chapter I

A HOME FOR THE BRAVE

Ever since that day in 1492 when Luis De Torres, a Spanish Jew, became the first white man to set foot on American shores, the Jewish people have held an always increasing stake in the new world.

Whether they settled on the high slopes of the Peruvian Andes or the level plains of the Mississippi Valley, the story of their efforts to accomplish their long-sought goal of security and happiness is worth telling. The province of this volume is to show what was done by the Jews of Iowa as they worked steadily through the years toward the realization of that goal.

The history of the Jews in Iowa finds its roots in the interest of many aristocratic Spanish Jews for western navigation. When Columbus came to the Spanish court to seek the support of Ferdinand and Isabella for his voyage, he found the influential Jews his firmest supporters. Not only did they succeed in persuading the king and queen in the navigator's favor, but they also were able to give him financial aid as well.

From the great Jewish scientists of Spain, Columbus received another kind of assistance, for from them he learned many facts vital to his success in western exploration.

Jews With Columbus

So it is not surprising that of the 120 men on the first voyage of Columbus, six were Jews by birth. One of these, Rodrigo de Triana, was privileged to be the first white man ever to see the new world. He sighted actual land at two o'clock in the morning and excitedly called out the news of his discovery.

When the ships dropped anchor in the harbor of the little island of San Salvador and the landing party put off, the sailors expected Columbus to be the first to step ashore, but as Luis De Torres was the interpreter of the company, he was allowed to be first to feel the new soil under his feet.

However, since the natives were savages instead of the cultured Chinese Columbus expected to meet, De Torres' services as an interpreter were of little value.

Nevertheless, De Torres did make some of the principal discoveries of the voyage. He found the natives using tobacco and was the first man to introduce that weed into Europe. He also named the turkey, calling it "tukki," the Hebrew name for peacock. And finally Luis De Torres returned to make his permanent home in Cuba, the first Jewish settler in the new world.

Settling the New Land

With such a start in American affairs and impelled by the necessity of fleeing persecution in Europe, small wonder that large numbers of Jewish refugees found their way to Mexico, Peru, Brazil and other southern American countries.

But to their dismay they discovered that persecutions continued relentlessly in the new world.

In 1639 Francisco Maldonado de Silva, a physician and poet, along with ten other Jews, was burned to death at Lima, Peru, because he refused to recant. Similar scenes of horror were enacted all over the Spanish and Portugese areas of the new world. The Jews' search for a free home was still not ended.

Toward that end it was a happy stroke of fortune which sent the first Jewish settlers to New Amsterdam, for there they found a tolerance which had seldom been theirs at any time during the Christian era.

Continued Persecution.

High time, too, that the Jewish people had found such a refuge, as conditions in Europe during the seventeenth century had changed for the worse, if that were possible, for the hardpressed, long suffering Jew.

At that time, German atrocities were the most severe. In 1614 the Jews of Worms and Frankfurt were massacred and expelled. And, although two years later they were readmitted to the latter city, they were compelled to found and remain in the notorious Frankfurt Ghetto.

In all other German cities Jews were forced to live in airless shambles on the filthy, narrow streets of their ghettos, always subjected to public degredation and ostracism by their German "neighbors."

The shameful treatment of Italian Jews almost rivaled that of Germany.

Until the uprising of the merciless Chmelitzki and his cossacks in 1648, Poland had offered fair and liberal protection to her Jewish population, but the plunder and destruc-

tion, massacre and debauchery of that bloody cossack added another somber picture to the already gloomy galleries of Polish history. And the Jews were among the first to suffer from this relapse into feudalism.

The annals of almost every country contain the same dismal description of continual anti-Semitism.

Jews in North America

Faced everywhere with the same oppression, wondering which way to turn, it is easy to imagine the delight with which the Jew, intrepid wanderer that he is, welcomed the rapidly spreading news that some of his people had found a really free home in the infant settlements of North America.

For the Jew there was nothing awesome or fearful about the tremendous voyage to the new country. He feared no tricks of witches or evil spirits as did most of his more superstitious contemporaries. He merely welcomed with all his heart the opportunity to engrave on his wander staff the happier and more prosperous epic of a new continent.

In September of 1654 the first ship carrying a group of Jews to North America entered the harbor of New Amsterdam from Brazil. Impoverished by their persecutions, these people were forced to sell their meager belongings at auction in order to pay part of their passage, and two of their men were imprisoned as surety for the rest.

But once started, Jewish participation in the building of the colonies kept pace with that of the other pioneers. The life of the early American Jew was characteristic of his neighbor. He was accepted without much question as a part of the new order; he played a patriotic part in the founding of the new nation, and he too felt the urge to follow the rapidly expanding frontier.

Chapter II

THE PRAIRIES BECKON

The masses of the sturdy hills lifted themselves from the clear blue waters of the Mississippi with an abruptness that was startling. Father Jacques Marquette and his companion, Louis Joliet, stopped paddling and let their canoes drift quietly down the tiredly flowing stream that Thursday, June 17, 1673, while they gazed with admiration on the "large chain of very high mountains" just north of where McGregor stands today.

For a long time history has credited the famous Jesuit priest-explorer and his friend with the first discovery of Iowa by any white man. Recent research has shown, however, that at least a few white men preceded them.

Unbelievable as it sounds, a rune stone discovered in Minnesota not long ago told translators a fascinating tale of white men in the Mississippi Valley before the time of Columbus. Eight Goths and 22 Norsemen, it said, had visited the region in the year 1362, leaving the record of their travels carved on this small rock. From the writing it appears that they must have passed at least a part of Iowa.

In 1634 Jean Nicolet, a Frenchman, came down the

Mississippi, prepared to greet the Chinese on its western shores. He was so sure that he could reach Asia by merely crossing the Mississippi that he dressed himself in Oriental finery so that he would be properly costumed to be received at the Chinese court.

Two French explorers, Pierre Radisson and Medard Grosseilliers, are known to have seen the heights of McGregor fourteen years before Father Marquette and Joliet made their trip.

At any rate the priest and his companion were the first to make any extensive investigations of the Iowa territory. Going on down the river, they came upon marks of many feet, leading from the river bank across the "very fine prairie." They followed these footprints, coming to the first Iowa Indian village ever seen by whites.

Acclaimed by the Indians, given many presents and feasted on roast dog and buffalo steak, the explorers must have thought of Iowa as a very pleasant and hospitable place.

But the Indians were not so friendly to Father Charles Hennepin and his two companions, one of whom was a Jew, as they passed through the Iowa region in 1680. They were taken prisoner by a wandering tribe of Minnesota Indians who wanted to kill them at once. However, the savages changed their minds and forced the whites to begin the long march to their home in Minnesota.

They were ill treated almost every step of the way. When they lagged behind, the Indians would set the prairie grass on fire so they would have to run. They were poorly fed and most of their belongings were taken. Not until a year later were they rescued by Pierre Charles Le Sueur, another explorer.

Several Jews accompanied the famous explorer Zebulon

Pike on his 1804 expedition up the Mississippi. Pike's first stop in Iowa was Fort Madison, which he declared would be a poor place to build a fort. At Burlington two of the party's dogs were lost, and several men, among whom were two of the company's Jews, volunteered to find the animals.

This searching party became lost itself, however, and wandered among the swamps for eight days; finally coming to an Indian village, they were given corn to eat, moccasins to wear and a guide to take them to Dubuque, where they rejoined the expedition.

At McGregor, Pike chose a high bluff as the site of a military post. Today that bluff is known as Pike's Peak, in humorous imitation of the famous Colorado mountain discovered later by Pike.

Julian Dubuque

Of course by the time of the Pike expedition Iowa was beginning to have a few permanent settlers. The first of these, the famous Julian Dubuque, crossed the Mississippi in 1788 to work the lead mines.

The old stone shot tower from whose top Dubuque forced his leaden wealth through wire screens, thus turning the molten metal to bullets which cooled and hardened as they fell, is still standing as one of Iowa's prized relics of a by-gone age.

Gentle Julian Dubuque had been a friend and protector of the Indians, who admired and never harmed him, but on his death in 1810, the Indians refused any other white men permission to work the mines. So settlement in Iowa lagged until 1832, when the end of the Black Hawk War opened the region to settlement.

During all this period of western expansion following the Revolution, Jews had kept up with the earliest settlers.

Names such as Israel, Jacobs, Abrahamson and others are found frequently in the histories and legal documents of the northwest territory. And wherever they chanced to penetrate these Jews made history.

Iowa's First Jew

So it is not surprising that one of the first permanent settlers in Iowa was a Jew; nor is it surprising that the life and works of this Iowa Jew were so outstanding that he deserves the high place which history has given him.

Alexander Levi, founder of Jewry in Iowa, landed at Dubuque with a number of other pioneers on the first day of August, 1833. He was born in France, March 13, 1809, and he traced his ancestry back to a noble family of Spanish Jews, who, during the expulsion, fled to Portugal and later to France.

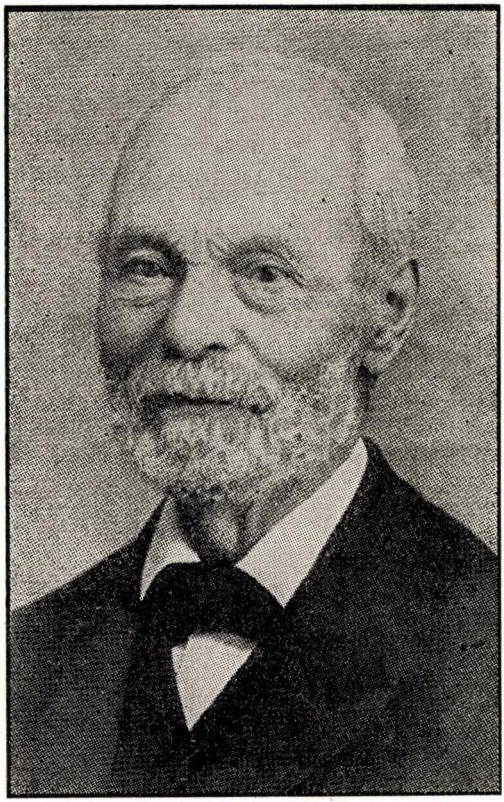
Mr. Levi opened a grocery store in the newly organized village of Dubuque, and a trip to his establishment was almost the only cheery break in the dreary and monotonous life of the desolate little town.

That Mr. Levi was a good business man is shown by his ad in the Dubuque **Visitor** for May 11, 1836, enticingly describing what he had for sale. That he was a man capable of earning and keeping the respect and friendship of his fellow townsmen is shown over and over again in their writings and conversations about him.

In fact, a whole volume could be written about the life of kindly Alexander Levi, a man of true vision, but one interesting incident of his life will have to suffice here.

To Mr. Levi, unexpectedly came an honor which gives him a unique place in Iowa history. In 1837 he and several other foreign born residents of Iowa territory travelled down the Mississippi to St. Louis to become naturalized citizens of the United States.

Waiting in line to be sworn in as a citizen, Mr. Levi was in second place behind a burly Irish miner. But his dread of the unknown rite and his conspicuousness at the head of the



ALEXANDER LEVI

line were too much for the son of Eire, and with a sheepish sigh he asked Mr. Levi to change places with him.

So it was that the first foreigner to become a naturalized citizen of the Iowa territory was none other than Alexander

Levi. This historical distinction is made even more remarkable by the fact that no other Jew ever had the good fortune to be the first citizen of any other state of the union.

So the Iowa prairies, with their tall waving grasses, their wild fowl and thousands of Buffalo and their promise of undreamed richness of crops, were definitely beginning to lure the typical American pioneer, and with him, of course —the Jew.

Chapter III

JUST SIXTEEN

While Dubuque was growing in population and prominence, other parts of the state were being settled, Fort Madison, Fort Des Moines, Fort Dodge, Burlington, Council Bluffs, Davenport and Fort Atkinson, to name but a few.

Fort Atkinson is particularly interesting to Iowans because it is the only one of the many early forts built in Iowa which is still standing today. When Iowa forts were abandoned, most of them were chopped down for fire wood, but since Fort Atkinson was made of stone, it was preserved to become a state historical shrine.

As the numbers of incoming settlers changed from hundreds to thousands, Congress in 1834, made the region of Iowa part of the Michigan territory, then in rapid succession Iowa became part of the Wisconsin territory (with its capitol at Burlington) and finally in 1838 a separate territory.

Representing a population of 22,859 scattered over what is now most of Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota, the first territorial legislative assembly met in stormy session at Burlington in 1837, with Robert Lucas of Ohio as the first territorial governor.

Moving to Iowa City in 1839, the capitol of Iowa remained in that place until 1857. Meanwhile, with the tremendously increased population of 102,388, Iowa was admitted to the Union as a full fledged state late in 1846.

Few Jewish Settlers

However, Jews in the pioneer state were still few and far between. Up to the time Iowa entered the Union, the number of Jewish pioneers in the state probably was no more than 16.

In the history of Jefferson County one D. Morris is mentioned. He came from South Carolina with four other members of his family and laid claim to a tract of land in the western part of Jefferson County near Locust Grove.

Much to his neighbors' surprise, Mr. Morris became the most favored white settler among the Indians of that region, although he never gave the red man a taste of firewater. From traces of the records left behind, it can be shown that Mr. Morris was the first of the Jewish farmers in Iowa.

No sooner had the men of the plow and hoe discovered that the Iowa soil would grow surprising crops than the first Jewish peddlers appeared in the state, a reminder that the Israelite is instantly ready to go to the remotest place if it will offer him the opportunity of establishing himself, through his skill and labor, in a secure home.

From the Fort Madison **Courier** of October 30, 1841, it appears that Nathan Louis and Solomon Fine (apparently of Russian or Polish origin) were the first Jewish peddlers of this state. They seem to have settled later in Keokuk, but there they seem to have disappeared from the records. During the territorial period, there may have been at least three other peddlers in Iowa.

The epic of Des Moines' early days, deals in detail with that city's first Jew, William Krouse, who came in 1848 to what was then Fort Des Moines, but his story will be told more at length later on.

To those names already given should be added those of J. Levi and four members of the Jacobs family. Those sixteen or seventeen hardy Jewish settlers were probably the only Jews who settled in Iowa during the whole territorial period. And as it is very doubtful whether any one of these knew that the other existed in Iowa it is easy to see why no attempt was made by the Jews to form any sort of an organization.

Not until Iowa joined the nation and the new state's potential wealth became known all over the country did the Jews begin to come to Iowa in numbers and make progressive strides in that new land.

Chapter IV

MAN WITH THE PACK

Since most of Iowa's pioneer Jewish merchants began their careers as peddlers with packs on their backs, braving the erratic Iowa weather to accommodate the settlers, a glimpse of the kind of life they led and an understanding of the characters of those itinerant storekeepers will help to explain their future successes as the merchant princes of Iowa.

Peddling in this country was not the product of Jewish ingenuity as most people believe, but rather it came about through necessity, imposed by the conditions of pioneer life.

The scattered ruralists were unable to maintain their own stores of supplies, and the trade of the thinly populated regions would not support nearby merchandising centers. Means of transportation were poor, so there was a great demand for movable stores which could be carried over the country on stages. Small dealers who could not afford stages were forced to carry their goods on foot.

An especially welcome guest during the winter months, the peddler knew frontier hospitality at its best and frontier

hardships at their worst. For the isolated farmer and secluded villager, the appearance of any stranger during the winter months was a cheery break in the monotony, but the peddler was even more eagerly received, for he brought with him in his pack those exciting and almost forgotten products of the outside world.

Peddler's Wonders

Strange wonders indeed the youngsters saw when they were permitted to peer into the peddler's pack. Most of them had been born and raised in a region where home-made articles were the rule. So, when out of that magic pack came presents from their parents and perhaps even a token from the peddler himself, their joy was boundless.

Jewels, handkerchiefs, embroidery, linens and other daintier things proved too much for the calm of the young ladies, and even the mothers became excited over the prospect of new household wares.

Hardships

But in their jubilation over the novelty of the peddler's visit most of his customers forgot the hardships which he had to undergo to bring them their little luxuries.

Winter travelling was the severest experience of the Jewish itinerant merchant. With a pack equalling his own weight slung over his labor-bent shoulders, with every fiber of his body cringing at the cold, his clothes encrusted with snow, and his lungs stabbed with the pain of the cutting frosty air, he slipped and plodded through the snow, his eyes alertly on the watch to guard against his missing a cabin or hut or the smoke of some distant chimney.

As the deep blue of the afternoon sky turns to a cold, twilight grey, the peddler's thoughts go back to a twilight across the Atlantic, a twilight that is deeper and darker and

overshadowed by fear. He sees a youthful, dark-eyed woman and two beautiful children—his family—waiting anxiously for news of his doings in America.

But that scene fades from his mind as loneliness engulfs him, and he finds himself in the murmuringly reverent little synagogue where he used to pray. Fallen away are his ice-covered clothes, gone is the biting winter chill, he is warmed by the Godliness of prayer.

In his fringed prayer shawl and phylacteries, he is praying to the God of Israel for the restoration of Zion, praying for a good year for all the peoples of the earth so that Israel might share in what is left.

Now he is walking with his father down the crooked alleys of the ghetto that was home—and as the ice of the Iowa prairies crackles under his feet, the words of the last Friday night with his parents and family come whispering back—"Do not weep; God will have mercy . . . His people will not continue in exile much longer . . . Fear not! I shall not forget Him! I will continue as you have instructed me, though cast away in a strange land. I here vow myself not to seek other gods and not to forsake my people for others, even though some day I may become the possessor of wealth . . . "

That parting scene, which is so sacred in his heart, appears again and again—until finally, with the tears of his soul in his eyes, he hitches the pack a little higher on his shoulder—and plods on . . .

Business Difficulties

The rigors of winter were not the only misfortune of the early Jewish peddler. He and his farmer-customer were poor alike. The farmer looked to the wandering merchant to tell him about the outside world from which he was cut

off, about markets, the price of produce and the latest news And of course many a farmer had to depend on credit until next years crops would bring money to pay for the goods he and his wife and children must have.

While the poor peddler, stepping hopefully into the farm yard, forgot all his own troubles and concentrated on one thought—to sell the farmer as much as possible . . . for cash . . . in order to have a little extra money to send to his family in the old country.

Unfortunate peddler! Disappointed farmer! They spoke different languages, both orally and financially. Yet they respected one another, perhaps better than ever before or since, for men are most tolerant when bound together by strong ties of mutual hardship.

After the peddler's visit to their farms, most farmers returned to work with a much deeper appreciation of their own sturdy frame house, their good soil and their assurance of food to eat. Of all the poorer classes in the early years of the state, it can properly be said that the Jewish peddler suffered most.

Changing Occupations

In most cases, however, this suffering was short lived, for as soon as the Jew acquired the language, got to know the majority of his customers, their condition, needs and manner of life, after gaining their friendship, confidence and patronage, the Jewish pioneer could lift the yoke of the pack from his shoulders and, with what little money he had been able to gather, begin to climb toward the summit of commercialism. Today, many of our best known and most influential businessmen can trace their ancestry to the days of the man with the pack on his back.

Now the Jewish peddler is a rarity in America; even the

Russian and Polish Jew of later migration have no need for such occupations. Perhaps in time the pushcart of the larger cities can be eliminated.

Chapter V

NEW GROWTH

The early Jewish peddlers of Iowa who subsequently became the commercial leaders of this state are good examples of what the peddler can become after he removes the shoulder pack.

Foundations of this commercial leadership were almost entirely laid before the Civil War days at which time there were only about 100 Jewish peddlers and 125 local Jewish merchants in all of Iowa. But the names of many of those hardworking peddlers and merchants are household names in Iowa today.

Although progress of Judaism in Iowa was slow before 1860, the Jews could well pride themselves on what they did accomplish during the comparatively short time they had lived in various Iowa localities.

First Mynion

Evidences of definite Jewish communities were to be found in Keokuk, Fort Madison, Burlington, Muscatine, Sioux City and Dubuque. Keokuk had the largest Jewish population of any city in Iowa previous to the War, and we find that

at Passover in 1855 (5615) the first "Mynion," ten Israelites over thirteen years of age, was formed in that city, and together these ten celebrated the "Feast of Liberty." This was the first Passover observed in Iowa by a Jewish community.

Meeting together in this way, these pioneers decided that Judaism must be demonstrated in Iowa in the best way possible under the circumstances; not having sufficient number to form a congregation, they decided to organize a charity society among themselves, to aid the sick and needy, to bury the dead and, whenever possible, to hold religious services so that Judaism could gain a foothold in their community and be kept alive.

In this way Keokuk mothered the first Jewish organization in Iowa. The first organized meeting was held on Sunday, April 29, 1855 at the home of one S. Gerstele. Fourteen men were in attendance.

They called themselves "Benevolent Children of Israel," and the following men were elected as the first set of officers: S. Gerstele, president; M. E. Hirsh, vice president; N. Hoffheimer, secretary; and Henry Straus, treasurer.

First Congregation

After some activity as a charity organization, the Benevolent Children of Israel, re-enforced by the later additions of Jewish families, developed into a full fledged congregation (B'nai Israel), November 25, 1855, with cemetery, services and "Schochet."

Two years later, on January 4, 1857, rumblings of Old World Ashkenazi and Sephardic strife echoed through the Keokuk organization, and B'nai Israel's services were suspended pending final decision as to which form of prayer would be used.

First Birth and Death

The appearance of little Eliza Levi, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Levi of Dubuque, gave Iowa its first Jewish birth. While Death put in his initial appearance among Iowa Jews in 1856 when a Mrs. Werl succumbed to the Keokuk cholera epidemic.

New Settlement

Meanwhile the Jews of Iowa had been broadening their activities and the scope of their settlements. Robert Krouse and Henry Abel came to Davenport in 1854 when it was still a village of less than 500 inhabitants. They were leading spirits in the communal and spiritual organization of their community.

Beside Mr. Krouse and Mr. Abel, Davenport in 1854 became the home of Mr. Micheal Rapheal, who later was the first wholesale dealer among the Jews in Iowa and also the first paymaster of the Northwestern railroad in Iowa, undoubtedly the first position of this kind held by a Jew anywhere in the Northwest.

Other early Davenport Jews were John Ochs, the first real estate dealer among the Jews west of the Mississippi, and later the owner of the largest land agency in Iowa; M. Feder, a scholar and the first Jewish minister in Iowa; Louis Ochs, Lippen Ochs and Alex Feder.

To Iowa City came Moses Bloom, later a leading state politician. While Glenwood, in Mills County, welcomed I. and F. Hiensheimer, uncles of D. L. Heinsheimer, the noted financier and Republican politician.

Burlington, headquarters for the largest number of Jewish peddlers in the state, was Iowa's second largest Jewish community in 1854. Des Moines, Sioux City and McGregor, although later the homes of flourishing Jewish com-

munities, had meager and scattered Jewish populations.

The following table, compiled from numerous old newspapers, county histories, state histories and communications of pioneers, speaks volumes for the progress of Jews in Iowa prior to the Civil War and throws light upon the development of the Jewries now existing in the many cities and communities of the state.

JEWS IN IOWA PRIOR TO THE CIVIL WAR

Listed by residence and occupation

ADEL

J. E. Fleishman	Clothing

BONAPART

Benjamin Blum	Dry Goods
Simon Friedman	Clothing

BOONE

Sol Kuh	General Store
Raphael Greenbaum	Gents' Furnishings
William Lobenstein	Gents' Furnishings

BLOOMFIELD

Abraham Hart	Clothing

BRIGHTON

Israel Friend	Clothing

BURLINGTON

Greenbaum Shroeder & Co.	Clothing
S. Kohn	Dry Goods
Joseph Buchman	Furnishing
S. Adler & Bro.	Clothing
E. M. Eisfeld	Clothing
Joseph Lehman & Bro.	Dry Goods
A. Kaiser	Ladies' Goods
Jacob Rosenthal	Clothing
Solomon Hershler	Dry Goods

NEW GROWTH

Ben and Sig Eisicles ..... Clothing
Jacob Epstein ..... Dry Goods

BURR OAK

Frank Friedman ..... Clothing

CEDAR FALLS

M. Frank ..... Clothing
Henry C. Cohen ..... Dry Goods
Solomon Geisman ..... Clothing
L. Ellman ..... Clothing

CEDAR RAPIDS

D. L. Fidler ..... Merchant Tailor
L. Lobenstein ..... Merchant Tailor

CLIFTON

Rothschild & Co. ..... Dry Goods

CLINTON

Nathan Hess ..... Clothing
David Stern ..... Clothing
H. Weiner ..... General Store

COUNCIL BLUFFS

Sol Bloom ..... Clothing
A. B. Bernard ..... Dry Goods
Henry E. Eisman ..... Dry Goods

DAVENPORT

Raphael & Feder ..... Clothing
I. Fleishman ..... Clothing
Samuel Heinsfurter ..... Dry Goods
S. K. Stone ..... Clothing
John Ochs ..... Real Estate
Robert Krouse ..... Clothing
Joseph Levy ..... Dry Goods
Leopold Lowenstein ..... Clothing
Haas & Meyer ..... Wholesale Dry Goods

Abraham Straus	Clothing
Nathan Billstein	Dry Goods
Alex Lederer	Dry Goods
Solomon Hersgberg	Dry Goods
G. Rosenberger	Watch Maker

DES MOINES

Hymon Herzberg	Clothing
Joseph Kuhn	Dry Goods & Clothing
Isaac Kuhn	Dry Goods & Clothing
William Krouse	Merchant
Jacobs & Weissman	Dry Goods
Nathan Goldstone	Clothing
Theodore Wolf	General Store
Leopold Simon	Clothing
Leopold Strauss	Clothing
Moses Strauss	Clothing

DE WITT

A. Bloom	General Store

DUBUQUE

A. Levi	Lead Miner
Abraham Grunwald	Clothing
James Levy	Dry Goods
Moses Leppman	Clothing
L. & B. Rauh	Clothing and Furnishings
I. D. Weil	Clothing
Charles Brezinsky	General Store

FORT DODGE

L. M. Baum	Clothing
C. C. Smeltzer	Clothing

FRANKLIN CENTER

Jacob Weber	Tailor

NEW GROWTH

GLENWOOD

I. & F. Hersheimer ..... Clothing
J. Solomon ..... Real Estate

IOWA CITY

Moses Bloom ..... Dry Goods and Clothing
Rothschild & Co. (branch) ..... Clothing
Emanuel Fleischman ..... Merchant

JEFFERSON

Samuel Jacobson ..... Surveyor

KEOKUK

Younker Bros. ..... Dry Goods and Clothing
J. & I. Spiesberger ..... Dry Goods
Simon Frank & Co. ..... Clothing
L. Solomon ..... Clothing
Raphael Vogel ..... Clothing
Adolph Weissman ..... Physician
Jacobs and Weissman (branch) ..... Clothing
Nathan Louis ..... Peddler
Solomon Fine ..... Peddler

John Blum*
Abe Cohen
H. Frees
Simon Hirschstein
S. Gerstele
M. E. Hirsh
I. Hirsh
I. Hoffheimer
Nathan Hoffheimer
Louis Moore
I. Levi
Henry Strauss
E. Stern
I. Schwabacher
Solomon White

ST. CLAIRE

William Newman ..... Fancy Goods
Henry Rotschild ..... Saloon

LANSING

Freind & Eisen ..... Clothing
F. W. Hahn & Co. ..... Clothing

*This list of names, discovered in the first minute book of the first Jewish Keokuk organization, founded in 1855, does not give the occupation of these men as no trace of their business connection can be found.

LYON CITY

Julius Bernstein ..... Clothing

MARSHALLTOWN

M. Rosenbaum ..... Variety Store
M. Stern ..... Clothing

MUSCATINE

Morris Kahn ..... Commission Merchant
M. & D. Block ..... Clothing
Leopold Winter ..... Commission Merchant
Jacob Oppenheimer ..... Clothing
Siverman Bros. ..... Clothing

MARENGO

Abraham & Leopold Shauerman ..... General Store

OSKALOOSA

J. A. Abram ..... China and Glass
I. Frankel ..... Dry Goods and Clothing
L. Levi ..... Clothing
Emanuel Bach ..... Dry Goods and Clothing

OTTUMWA

Jacob Kohn ..... Clothing

ROCHESTER

Abraham Izenhart ..... Dentist

SABULA

Lichtenstein & Guttle ..... General Store

NEW GROWTH

SIOUX CITY

I. Haas	Dry Goods
Godfrey Hattenbach	Dry Goods
M. Simon	Dry Goods

WAVERLY

L. Geisman	Clothing
A. Israel	Clothing
Isaac Tobias	General Store

WASHINGTON

Leon Meyer	Dry Goods
Silverman & Co.	Clothing

Reference to the above list shows Jews to be residents of thirty-five different Iowa towns, situated in every section of the state. This listing also shows that the Jews were most important elements in the Iowa mercantile business, and that notwithstanding their scattered positions and small number they were potent factors in the state's affairs.

Varied Occupation

Although the large percentage of the early Iowa Jewish settlers established themselves in the fields of clothing and dry goods, other lines were not neglected. Records place the first Jewish tailor in Cedar Rapids, the first watch maker in Davenport, the first dentist in Rochester, the first physician in Keokuk, the first saloon keeper in St. Claire, the first real estate man in Davenport, the first peddler in Keokuk, the first general store in Dubuque, the first variety store in Marshalltown and the first wholesale house in Davenport.

Considered among the wealthiest of Iowa's Jewish merchants were the Rothschilds, Jacobs and Weissmann, Hess and Stern and Levi of Dubuque; Kuhns of Des Moines, Bloom of Iowa City and the Hersheimer's of Glenwood.

The Jews of Iowa had built their foundations well, but the storm of the Civil War had to be weathered before the rest of the structure could be begun.

These names are not supposed to comprise a complete listing of the Jews in Iowa prior to the Civil War. In spite of every precaution, other Jewish personalities seem to creep into Iowa history. The names given are meant for families, and as it is impossible to trace the individuals of each family, there must necessarily have been persons neglected.

Chapter VI

DARK DAYS

As soon as there were Jews in Iowa there were Jewish patriots in Iowa, and the Civil War was ample proof of that fact.

The years since Iowa had entered the Union had brought many changes. Ansell Briggs, Iowa's first governor, had been succeeded by governors Hempsted and Grimes. The constitution of the state itself had been rewritten and the capitol moved from Iowa City to Des Moines.

Then came Samuel Kirkwood as Governor and shortly afterward the fall of Fort Sumter and the beginning of the Civil War. In this excitement Governor Kirkwood stood out like a second Lincoln. At his own risk the governor outfitted the whole First Regiment. No governor ever had to work so hard. He had no aides, no staff, not even a private secretary at first.

Rapid Enlistments

The Jews of Iowa at the time of the Civil War numbered less than five hundred, three-fifths of whom were possibly

under military age, but they all did their part just the same. Over a thousand boys between the ages of 11 and 16 tried to enlist, among them many Jewish sons, of whom Leopold Rosenburg of Davenport was typical.

Jewish women all over Iowa donated their services to make uniforms and help in other ways while their husbands and sons went to meet the southern enemy.

Brother Against Brother

But here was another problem. About three thousand southern Jews from every denomination had joined the army of the Confederacy, and for the first time in the history of Israel in exile the sons of Judaism fought against one another for a country worthy of shedding their blood and sacrificing their lives.

The southern Jew, enlisting in the Confederate army, knew that his bullet would probably wound or kill one of the 3,000 Jews fighting for the North. He also knew that slavery in itself is wholly anti-Jewish. And yet, he gave his life to fight with and for his southern neighbors. He lived there; it was his home. What better proof could there be that the Jewish people are able to assimilate the ideas and sentiments of the people who are their friends and neighbors?

Nevertheless, as was the case when northern brother fought southern brother or southern father fought northern son, the Jews of North and South could not forget blood ties altogether, and many a prayer went up from a northern camp for a southern Jew, while many a southern Jew prayed to their common God for the safety of his northern kinsman.

On the battlefield, the Jews of Iowa fought long and well, a credit to all their people. That the record of their service shall live and be gratefully remembered, the following list is given. Carefully compiled from records in the office

of the Iowa Adjutant General, it shows the Jewish enlistments in the various Iowa battalions.

All of these names have been verified. It is probable, however, that some Jews who served Iowa during the Civil War are not on the list, for many more names sounding Jewish are on the records, but because they could not positively be identified as Jewish, they had to be omitted from this list.

First Infantry

Because of the unusual valor of this regiment, "Remember the First at Wilson's Creek" became a rallying cry for all the succeeding regiments of Iowa's soldiers. They fought on even after their enlistment time had expired to become the "most valorous group of the war." On May 12, 1861, Henry and Theobold Klein enlisted in Company D of this regiment, serving faithfully and well until the expiration of their term.

Second Infantry

The distinction of having enlisted the first Jewish soldier in Iowa goes to Company A of this regiment. This first Jewish volunteer was Henry Straus, who enlisted on May 4, 1861. He received fatal wounds during a skirmish and died July 10, 1863.

Joseph Meyers joined Company C on May 28, 1861 and was killed in action during the battle of Fort Donnelson. Henry Krouse also served in this regiment, but he was more fortunate than these others. He was mustered out of service unharmed at the end of the war.

Second Cavalry

The men of this group "became one of the best cavalry regiments in the American service. The British boys at Balaklava were not more brave than the men of the Second Cavalry charging the murderous guns at Farmington." But

after serving in the thick of almost numberless engagements, William Krause, who enlisted in Company H on August 30, 1862, returned home unharmed. Records show that he distinguished himself in several battles.

Third Infantry

Iowa's only Jewish engineer prior to the Civil War, John A. Levine, served in this regiment.

Fourth Infantry

In the records of this regiment we find the name of Lewis Solomon of Keokuk. Mr. Solomon was wounded at the battles of Shiloh and Pine Ridge and was subsequently discharged for disability. He returned to Keokuk and there for many years was a leader in communal life.

Sixth Cavalry

First Jewish bugler from Iowa was A. Glazer of Company C of this regiment. Records show that he received a promotion and was left in the South in an official capacity. Samuel Levinstein served in Company G and returned unharmed.

Seventh Infantry

This Iowa group saw its first real fighting at the Battle of Belmont, where its men fought the hardest and suffered the most losses of any group in the encounter. Charles Bloom of Company H lost his life in this battle.

Eighth Infantry

Mustered into service in Company I at Davenport, Henry Shauerman left for St. Louis with the rest of his regiment. From St. Louis they were carried by open flat car, through blinding rains, to the battlefront. On this trip the men learned to eat their raw pork and soggy hardtack without complaint.

Gallantly they took part in battles in Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana. Then the regiment suffered a six month imprisonment at the dreaded Libby prison, but on their release they reorganized, returned to the fighting and won highest recognition at Memphis for their repulse of Forrest's cavalry.

Through all these exciting campaigns Mr. Shauerman came unscathed and was mustered out at Davenport unharmed.

Ninth Infantry

This regiment participated in almost numberless battles, in one of which the regiment's bloody colors were snatched from beneath the lifeless body of the color bearer only seconds before they would have been captured by southern troops.

Two Jewish men from Iowa, Joseph and Fred Levy of Company I, unrelated, were in the thick of the fighting of this regiment. They remained in the south after they were mustered out.

Tenth Infantry

Marching over 3,000 miles during their term of enlistment, the Tenth Infantry, in whose ranks were Henry Levin, Company C of Burlington and Joseph Glasser, Company E of Davenport, saw some of the most arduous service of the war. But both of this regiment's Jewish members returned to Iowa unharmed.

Fourteenth Infantry

Company B of the Fourteenth, which has been called "one of Iowa's best all-around regiments" claimed the services of William Hershberger, who returned to his home unharmed at the end of the war.

Fifteenth Infantry

A young German-Jewish emigrant, new to this country, enlisted in Company D of this regiment at the beginning of the war and was cited several times for bravery. During the battle of Corinth, Jacob Goodman, that was his name, was severely wounded, but he persisted in continuing in the battle and bravely distinguished himself. He died in action June 12, 1862.

Sixteenth Infantry

This regiment, which particularly distinguished itself during the battle of Shiloh, had in its ranks the following Jewish soldiers:

Company B—Jacob Jacobson, enlisted December 3, 1861, was promoted at Shiloh. Charles Weissman, enlisted December 18, 1861, was promoted to commissary sergeant November 24, 1862.

Company D—Abraham Myers, enlisted December 20, 1861, participated in the battle of Shiloh and returned unharmed. Jacob Lehman, enlisted December 17, 1861 and was wounded at Shiloh.

Seventeenth Infantry

The only Jew in this regiment was W. Davidson, who enlisted on March 2, 1862. He returned to Iowa after the war.

Twenty-Second Infantry

At their term's end, Fred Bloom, who enlisted in Company G August 9, 1862, and Charles Abel, who enlisted in Company F were both mustered out of service.

Twenty-Fifth Infantry

Jacob Kline enlisted in Company D July 21, 1862 and G. Levi in Company G during the same month.

Twenty-Sixth Infantry

E. William Marks was killed on the battlefield of Arkansas Post June 11, 1863, while A. Meyers and D. Metzger, who enlisted at the same time as Private Marks, August, 1862, completed this regiment's complement of Jewish soldiers.

Twenty-Seventh Infantry

C. W. Schreiber, middle-aged and prosperous business man of Dubuque joined Company C of this regiment. He served valiantly in the sieges and assaults of many battles and was wounded during the battle of Pleasant Hill.

Thirty-First Infantry

Nathan Glick enlisted in Company F and Jacob Glaser enlisted in Company G of this regiment and were mustered out at the expiration of their term.

Thirty-Second Infantry

Henry Vogel of Keokuk served in Company C of this regiment. He enlisted on August 11, 1862 and was mustered out at the end of the conflict without injury, returning to his home to play a prominent part in communal work.

Thirty-Third Infantry

John K. Fidker, Cedar Rapids, enlisted in 1862 in Company G. He returned to his home unharmed after the war.

Thirty-Fifth Infantry

Jacob Block, Company C, Muscatine, and Jacob Hess, also of Company C, enlisted in this regiment in August of 1862. They were both mustered out of service at the end of their term.

Fortieth Infantry

L. Isaacson is the last Jewish name to be found on the books of the Civil War records in the office of the Iowa Ad-

jutant General. He enlisted in Company K in 1862 and served his country exactly one hundred days before being mustered out.

So the Jews who fought for Iowa and the nation in the Civil War struggled, died and became heroes on the battlefield. After such service by members of their group it is not surprising that the Jewish people of the state felt themselves to be more than ever before an integral part of Iowa and its future.

Chapter VII

A HOME AMONG FRIENDS

The end of the Civil War finally came, and with its end the Jewish people could look back and evaluate their more than thirty years of permanent settlement in Iowa. By this time, what were the personal and social characteristics of Iowa's Jews? How did they react toward their neighbors? How, in turn, did their neighbors react toward them. What was typical of the relations of the Jews one with another?

In this respect it is well to remember in the first place that the Jew entered this state normally, not driven here as persecuted refugees in search of a haven but rather as pioneers in the spirit of all the other pioneers.

The few Jewish settlers worked quietly and honestly, so their neighbors, busy with their own building, were not compelled to think of them as an obnoxious minority group but were, rather, allowed to think of them as capable individuals, working shoulder to shoulder with their fellows to build a home and a state.

Most of Iowa's early settlers sprang from the God-fear-

ing, democracy-loving people of Colonial America. They appreciated the right of the individual to engage in free worship and free enterprise; they respected a man's willingness to do a hard day's work for his own betterment, and they honored a man who promoted the improvement of the community.

Won Neighbors' Respect

Both of these qualities the Iowa Jews possessed. The stories of Alexander Levi of Dubuque, Moses Bloom of Iowa City, William Krouse of Des Moines and many others are stories of service to the individual and the community. Undoubtedly the Jewish names which history chose to ignore also contributed hard labor and personal integrity to the development of Iowa.

Not only did the Jew come to Iowa normally, but he also lived a normal life in the state. No freakish traits or unusual habits made him conspicuous. He was not too rich to be envied nor so poor as to be scorned. He did not segregate himself in slum ghettoes or exclusive sections. Moderation in all things was as much the Jew's rule of living as anyone's.

The wholesomeness of the Iowa Jew's relationship to his environment is evidenced by the positions of public prominence and trust which many of the Iowa Jews were given and by the contemporary accounts of many astute observers.

First Official

The first Jew to serve in an official capacity in this state was Mr. Samuel Jacobs of Jefferson County, who held the post of County Surveyor as early as 1840. As Jefferson County's soil was rich and its pioneers of splendid mold, to be an office-holder among them required character, ability and training.

From the various sources available which touch the

history of Jefferson County, it appears that Samuel Jacobs was born in this country and that he came to Iowa and claimed a tract of land. It appears that Mr. Jacobs was a man of considerable means and education and was well liked by his fellow settlers.

Charming Girls

The various newspapers of the state bore more than eloquent witness to the fact that the Jews were well liked and respected in Iowa. The daughters of Israel were particular favorites among the early settlers. A writer of very florid style gave this bouquet to the Iowa members of the Jewish fair sex in the "Iowa Sun" for August 28, 1839:

"The unexcelled beauty of the daughters of Israel might be traced to the legend that Jesus the Jew gave his last glance upon them, and as they were not as stubborn in denouncing him, the ray of light which rested upon his face reflected upon them, and they remained beautiful forever."

This elaborate compliment must have been well received and taken to heart by the pioneers, for the following year a steamboat was, for the first time in Jewish history, named "Jewess."

High Praise

No trace of any distinction being made between the Iowa Jew and his Christian neighbor can be found in any of the early county histories, not even after Jewish wealth and influence began to be conspicuous all over Iowa. On July 8, 1843, the "Lee County Democrat" printed the following graphic tribute:

"The present physical, moral and social condition of the Jew must be a miracle. We can come to no other conclusion. Had they continued from the commencement of the Christian era down to the present hour in some such national state in which we find the Chinese, walled off from the rest of the

human family, and by their selfishness on a national scale and their repulsion of alien elements resisting every assault from without, in the shape of a hostile invasion, and from an overpowering national pride forbidding the introduction of new and foreign customs, we should not see so much miracle interwoven with their existence. But this is not their state; far from it!

"They are neither a united and independent nation, nor a parasitic province. They are peeled and scattered into fragments; but like broken pieces of quick silver, instinct with cohesive power, ever claiming affinity and ever ready to amalgamate.

"Geography, arms, politics and foreign help do not explain their existence; time, climate, and customs equally fail to unravel it. None of these are or can be springs of perpetuity.

"They have spread over every part of the habitable globe; have lived under the reign of every dynasty; they have shared the protection of just laws, the oppression of cruel ones and witnessed the rise and progress of both; they have used every tongue and have lived in every latitude.

"The snows of the Lapland have chilled them, and the sun of Africa has scorched them.

"They have drunk of the Tiber, the Thames, the Jordan and the Mississippi.

"It is not so with any other race. Empires, the most illustrious, have fallen and buried men that constructed them, but the Jew has lived among the ruins, a living monument of indestructibility.

"Persecution has unsheathed the sword and lighted the fagot; Papal superstition, Moslem barbarism have smote them with unsparing ferocity; penal rescript and deep pre-

judice have visited them with the most unrighteous chastisement—notwithstanding, they survive!

"Like their own bush on Mount Horeb, Israel has continued in the flames, but unconsumed.

"A Babylonian, a Theban, a Spartan, an Athenian, a Roman— names known in history only; their shadows, alone, haunt the world and flicker the tablets. A Jew walks every streets, dwells in every capital, traverses every exchange, and relieves the monotony of the nations of the earth.

"The race has inherited the heirloom of immortality, incapable of extinction or amalgamation.

"Like streamlets from a common head and composed of water of peculiar nature, they have flowed along every stream without blending with it or receiving its flavor, and traversed the surface of the globe amidst the lapse of many centuries distinct alone.

"The Jewish race at this day is perhaps the most striking seal of truth of the sacred oracles.

"There is no possibility of accounting for their perpetual isolations, their depressed but distinct being, on any grounds save for those revealed."

What an insight this gives into the feelings of the pioneer for the Jew! In a state whose people pay much tributes to the most persecuted race in history Israel could confidently establish himself and join his new friends in all of their pursuits without the least fear of a sudden change of feeling. This he did.

Some Unpleasantness

Of course, the relationship of the Iowa Jew to his Gentile fellows was not always salutary. An incident of about the year 1843 illustrates this fact. Mr. Sol Kuh, an old settler of this state and later a resident of Sioux Falls, South Dakota,

knew Mr. Alexander Levi intimately. Mr. Kuh tells this story:

"A certain Jewish merchant, said to have come from Alsace, but whose name cannot be learned despite many efforts, settled in Dubuque a few years after Mr. Levi, and, as he was single, began to court a highly cultured Gentile lady, who was respected in society and very prominent in church circles.

"Their wedding, which was the first marriage of a Jew in Iowa, was the talk of the town for many months, and all the staunch church members were delighted indeed to have added to their number such a worthy convert. A year elapsed and the couple still continued to be the center of attraction for the best class of society in Dubuque.

"Mr. Levi, although friendly with everyone and a single man himself at the time, politely declined every invitation, beginning with the urgent request to attend the wedding ceremony, which was solemnized in a church.

"The newlyweds enjoyed their share of temporal happiness during the year; then, either because of miscalculated economy or reckless lavishness, the new church member found himself in financial distress and resorted to disagreeable methods. On a certain day he was discovered packing up some goods belonging to his creditors, intending to ship them across the Mississippi.

"The creditors took action, and he was compelled to face serious charges, which was certainly a discredit to him. His host of new friends suddenly deserted him, not caring whether he was guilty or innocent or what the contributing factors were to his guilt.

"A few days later two preachers came to see Mr. Levi. When they declared with a good deal of heat that they 'Never

thought the Jew would prove so tricky,' that they now believed some of the 'horrible tales told about the Jews' and that henceforth they 'would look out,' the founder of Iowa Jewry replied in the following words which speak volumes for the sentiment of the average Jewish pioneer regarding assimilation:

" 'You have undoubtedly considered the Jew a very good man, else one of your prominent church ladies would have refused to entertain and accept a proposal of marriage from him; you have certainly been of the opinion that he was free from all bad habits, else you would not have accepted him as a member of your church.

" 'You have, I presume, considered him one of the best sons of Israel, else your joy in getting him across the gulf would not have been so great. You have, as you know, thought him to be a gentleman of refinement and good standing, else you would not have frequented his house and suffered yourself to attend so many functions given by him.

" 'Now, how comes it that continuing for but one year as a member of your church, he is no longer a gentleman, no longer honest, no longer successful and no longer fit to be either Jew or Gentile? That he was a good man prior thereto cannot be questioned, since he was honest, successful and upright as long as he continued to be a Jew, as long as I could claim him as a brother in exile, as long as the conduct of his orthodox parents still appealed to his sympathy. Does it not, therefore, appear most strange to you that such a good man shall fall so low in such a brief period?

" 'The truth is this: Till the last minute the Jews could yet claim his as theirs; till the last minute he yet claimed to belong to them; he was that which he was destined to be, that which he was born for, and as such continued to be a credit to his people and a benefit to organized society. But

the minute he joined you, the minute your environment pulled him out of his soil, the minute he lost his originality, he was compelled to please a society, a church and a woman whom he did not understand and who could be contented with anything but his Jewishness.

"Thus he was no longer responsible for his deeds as a Jew. Hence in this case you are the defendants, and all the more honor for those Jews who continue as such.' "

Well Adjusted

However, although some of the Iowa Jews turned to foreign ways or got into difficulty, most of them were fortunate indeed to find the middle path. They neither strayed too far from their traditions nor kept themselves too closely wrapped up in their own affairs. Perhaps nowhere else has the Jew so well achieved the happy medium between complete assimilation by other groups and complete preoccupation with remembering that he is a Jew.

Promoting Jewishness

But the Jew had been too long driven and persecuted with his brethren to wish to be entirely deprived of their friendship. The desire to meet and live with his co-religionists was too deep to be entirely thwarted by the limitless wilds of a new country.

In the cities there was some social activity, although the Iowa Jew was too devoted to his work and his religion to condone any idle enjoyment. Most of his extraneous activities centered about the synagogue or charity organization, to either or both of which he invariably belonged.

The activities of these groups aimed mainly at prompting more Jewishness among their members. Their social life consisted mostly of Sunday afternoon gatherings, conversations along general lines, with tea or coffee for refreshments.

Besides the meetings of his own groups the early Iowa Jew often enjoyed the invitations of the Gentile group. Town hall meetings, discussions of government and political activity found their way into his life.

There were even instances when the Jew was invited to attend church meetings and social functions, and although he at times refused these invitations, his presence was often sought to the extent that repeated invitations were given.

For the rural Jew even these limited social opportunities were not available. Also, much to the dismay of the young men, there were few Jewish girls, either from abroad or in this country, and youthful hearts were forced to beat sadly and alone. The inland Jew had to be content with a good day's work, a good night's rest and the solace and comfort of the Bible and prayer.

Communities Isolated

For many years the early Jews of Iowa had no contact with Jews in other parts of the state. Jewish communities operated as aimless independent units. They had organizations, but each organization was self centered. The little groups lived for themselves. They did not know one another, and, even if they did, the difficulty of maintaining contact was too great to make up for the little interchange of ideas and other benefits which would be accomplished.

From this it would appear that these Jewish groups were a self-satisfied lot, but this was not so. The indifference to contact was the product of isolation rather than the isolation the product of indifference. The infrequent Jewish travellers, it is true, found a hearty welcome, food and rest among their brothers, but when they went on their way, they were unable to draw together the threads of Jewish unity.

Solid Foundation

Yet perhaps this early isolation of the pioneer groups was the best thing that could have happened to them because they had the opportunity of building a solid foundation at home—unhampered, unconfused and unhurried by conflicting thoughts and views. There was no insoluble strife to plague the communities, no half started or unfinished projects to discourage them. Instead, there was solidarity and harmony, minute as they were, for future generations to build them.

Unifying Factor

This isolated condition was soon changed, however, three factors playing an important part in the movement.

The first of these factors was the peddler. He it was who brought stories of the doings of the Iowa City Jews to the ears of the Des Moines Jew, he who praised the accomplishments of the Keokuk Jews to the Jews of Mc Gregor, he who first stirred the Jews to action, guided, of course, by their spiritual leaders. The seed of the desire to unify was planted by him; all that remained was to nurture and care for the seedling as it grew.

The second unifying force was the growth and building of congregations. Where there were congregations there had to be leaders, usually Rabbis; it was these Jewish spiritual heads who first vigorously promoted statewide unity.

With these forces at work, it remained only for the development of advanced modes of transportation and communication, railroad, telegraph, telephone, highway, for the Jews of this state to be molded into one of the most closely integrated groups scattered over a wide area to be found anywhere in America. From isolated, mud-bound hamlets to unified, thriving cities is the story of Iowa Jewry.

Today it is not unusual to find a Jewish family from

Oskaloosa paying a casual Sunday afternoon visit to friends in Iowa City, nor is it unusual to find the Jewish people of Council Bluffs concerning themselves with a problem confronting the Jews of Davenport. The religion, culture, social life and habits of the Jews of Iowa are amazingly uniform throughout the whole state.

Thus we have the Jew in Iowa, free to live as an individual during the pioneer days, untroubled during his development substantial in his modernism, always contributing to the common good—realizing his dream, the rewards which were justly his—a home, respect, honor, charity and religion, all his Iowa birthright.

PART TWO

Des Moines

INTRODUCTION

No historical study can accomplish its objectives if it looks only at the whole. Each item in the structure and each phase of its building must be studied separately if the reader is to have a meaningful picture of the fine and enduring qualities of the edifice in its entirety.

In trying to know and understand the commendable, beautiful and lasting structure which is Jewry in Iowa, consider, if you will, each Jewish individual as a rivet, each organization as a brick; consider each town and its Jewish group as the massive girders and pillars supporting the complex structure; and finally consider the Jewish religious, social and cultural relationships as the forces which placed the girders, drove the rivets and laid the bricks.

Knowing the building in every phase of its construction, you will more readily appreciate the whole as it exists today —tried and strong, admired in its architecture by all passersby.

Using this approach, then, the next section of this volume will deal with the life and work of the Jewish people in Des Moines, while the last portion of the book will consider the other important Jewish communities in the state.

Since history is generally made by men as individuals, men whose accomplishments have been secondary to their own brilliant personalities, the same might be thought to hold true in the history of Des Moines. This is not the case, however. The Jewish individuals in Des Moines, although their personalities were outstanding, subordinated themselves to the growth and welfare of the group to such an extent that the religious, charitable and fraternal groups furnish the basis for the study of most of the progress of the Jews in Des Moines.

Therefore, the story of Des Moines Jewry is, for the most part, the story of the individual's contribution to the organization's contribution to the whole Jewish community.

Chapter VIII

JEWISH PIONEERS IN DES MOINES

The boats bearing Captain James Allen, his command of troops and their military supplies struggled up the Des Moines River, searching for a suitable location for a fort. The high, level terrace at the junction of the Des Moines River and what is now the Racoon River appealed to them.

Landing May 9, 1845, the party began at once to construct barracks and fortifications, calling the newly established post Fort Racoon.

When the first settlers built the first frame houses of the city in August of 1846, they decided to name their town for the larger of the two rivers that flowed past their windows. That river had been named for a group of French monks who had settled near its mouth. Since "Moines" is the French word for monk, the river was called "La Riviere Des Moines" or River of the Monks. So the village at the junction of the Des Moines and Racoon rivers was called Fort Des Moines.

Town Incorporated

During its first year the town possessed only twenty-nine white people, but by 1851 the population had grown to

almost 500, and the town of Fort Des Moines was incorporated with Reverend Thompson Bird as its first mayor.

Greatest triumph for the thriving municipality came in 1855 when the Iowa legislature passed an act making Des Moines the capital of the state. This legislation had been the goal of friends of the city for many years, and the result was an immediate boom and practical assurance of Fort Des Moines' future greatness as a city.

The New Capital

Two years later, when the capital was actually moved from Iowa City, a new charter, which dropped the prefix "Fort" and adopted Des Moines as the name of the city, passed the General Assembly. Census figures for 1857 show a population of 3,563.

The first Jewish settler in Des Moines, William Krouse, came to America from Germany in 1842. After staying in the East for six years he had gathered considerable capital and decided to go west with a group to inquire into the chances the new country offered for business success.

To Mr. Krouse Des Moines seemed an ideal business location, the community had no commercial houses but seemed to be perfectly situated for rapid growth. Mr. Krouse returned to the east, bought supplies, came back to Des Moines and established that town's first store, much to the delight of the settlers.

An Early Account

Staying in Des Moines for five years (1848-1853), Mr. Krouse not only became a prosperous business man but also became actively interested in civic affairs. Following is his own account of life in Des Moines, quoted verbatim:

"Although it is (1905) many years since I left Des Moines, the incidents of the early days are still fresh in my

mind. When I first stepped upon the soil of the city, it was called Raccoon Forks, and I don't think that we could have counted more than fifteen or twenty inhabitants.

"Later, in the fall of 1848, people commenced to come in, and upon taking the census at the end of that year, we



WILLIAM KROUSE

mustered up the great number of forty-eight souls, and in order to make a large showing, we stepped over the town limits and counted in a large, respectable family by the name of Rathbun, 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, Hoyt Sherman, P. M. Casady and Frank Allen among them, I remember working with. In those early days I was one of the founders of public school and was a director in it.

"I also aided in building churches, and their completion came in the following order: First the Methodist, then the Presbyterian, 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."

Mr. Krouse was a leading spirit in the movement designed to change the capitol to Des Moines. Mr. Krouse, Judge Mc Kay, Dr. Brooks, Mr. Hoyt Sherman and Mr. Berkley were appointed to lobby at Iowa City for the scheme. Although Mr. Krouse left Des Moines for the East before the capitol was changed, his work and the work of his partners bore excellent fruit later on.

Other Jewish Settlers

For three years after Mr. Krouse left, Des Moines was without a single Jewish settler. Then Mr. Joseph and Mr. Isaac Kuhn established a home and a business in Des Moines. These men were the actual Jewish pioneers of the city, for they took an active part in the establishment of Jewish communal affairs.

Joseph Kuhn was one of the organizers of Congregation B'nai Yeshurun, the first president of that organization and a member of the committee which purchased the first permanent home of the Temple on the corner of Seventh and Mulberry Streets.

Another leader of early Des Moines Jewry was Moses

Strauss, who came to that city in 1857, establishing himself in the clothing business. He was also one of the charter members of B'nai Yeshurun congregation.

Following Mr. Strauss came N. L. Goldstone, who arrived in Des Moines in 1863 and started a retail dry goods



JULIUS MANDELBAUM

business. A charter member of the congregation, Mr. Goldstone was also a liberal contributor to all philanthropic institutions.

Outstanding among the pioneers who came to Des

Moines during the Civil War was Julius Mandelbaum. He was born in Bavaria in 1837, coming to America at the age of fifteen. He remained in the East for twelve years, then came to Des Moines where he went into the general merchandising business with Mr. Goldstone. Mr. Mandelbaum was an influential character in the Jewish community of Des Moines, a the organization and the moving force behind the purchase of the first home of B'nai Yeshurun.

First Russian Settler

The next Jew to come to Des Moines was not only one of the city's Jewish pioneers but was also the very first Russian Jew to come to Des Moines. He was David Goldman, who came to Des Moines in 1866. He too began, as did most of the other Jewish settlers, in the clothing business.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Goldman, although of Russian origin, took an active part in the formation of Congregation B'nai Yeshurun, a German congregation at distinct variance with his old country doctrines and beliefs. Mr. Goldman was also one of the original members of the Des Moines B'nai B'rith.

Alexander Lederer was another Jewish pioneer who played a large part in the building of the community. He came to Des Moines in 1867, lost no time in starting a small dry goods concern, and soon was one of the leading Des Moines business men of his day. In addition to his activity in the Lederer and Strauss company, he was Vice President of the Citizen's National Bank and director of several other banks. The Emanuel Burial Association, the first Jewish religious organization in Des Moines, claimed Mr. Lederer as one of the five original members of its group. He was also a charter member of the first congregation in Des Moines.

First to marry in the Jewish community following the

formation of the congregation B'nai Yeshurun were Solomon Joseph, who came to Des Moines in 1870, and Miss Babette Wesman of Brooklyn, New York. The ceremony took place in 1875. Mr. Joseph was the founder of the S. Joseph and Sons Jewelry Co., still one of the state's leading jewelry concerns.

East Des Moines

Before the year 1867 there were few Russian and Polish Jews in the city, but with the increase in emigration from southern Europe a number of these found their way to the state of Iowa. Many came to Des Moines and settled on the east bank of the river, where they formed the nucleus of the large orthodox community which flourishes in the city today. They were, in a sense, the founders of orthodoxy here.

Four of these early settlers particularly exerted a marked influence on the Jewish social and religious life of the time. They were Wolf Frank, Ben Cohen, B. Gottstein and Sol Segal.

Mr. Frank was born in Sydarg, Poland, in 1820. At the age of 49 he came to America and settled in Des Moines. He had the advantage of considerable business experience before coming west, and this, combined with a good Hebrew education, gave him a certain prestige among his co-religionists in the city.

Very conservative in his own religious views, Mr. Frank was dismayed to find that many members of the East Side community were leaning toward radicalism. He at once proceeded to bring them back to orthodoxy and was instrumental in the establishment of Congregation B'nai Israel.

Born in Pilvissok, Russia, Ben Cohen came to America when very young and settled in Rochester, New York. Friends there who conducted a peddlers' supply store gave him his start as a peddler, for already he gave evidence of

rare business ability. In 1869 he came to Des Moines where he was representative of the high type of men in the orthodox Jewish community, actively identified with the philanthropic work of the city and a strong member of B'nai Israel.

Other Orthodox Pioneers

Another pioneer of the orthodox community was Barney Gottstein. He too was born in Pilvissok, Russia, emigrating to America in 1868 and settling in Rochester, New York, in which city he opened a peddlers' supply store.

In July of 1869 Mr. Gottstein came west in company of a number of others, first going to Iowa City, then coming to Des Moines in a few months. The lure of California was too strong for him in 1874, and he moved to the far west, but two years later he returned to Des Moines and engaged in business. He lived in that city for many years, a charter member of B'nai Israel, a strong advocate of orthodoxy and an influential member of the community.

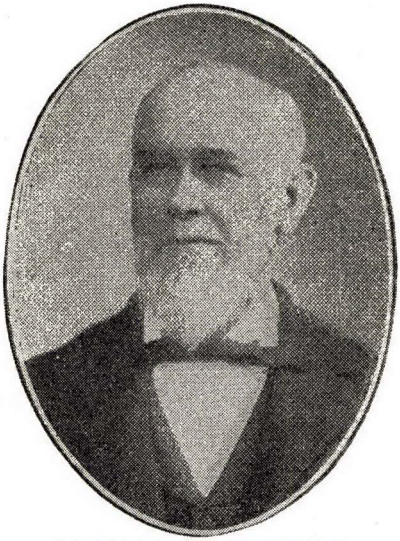
Another name which will long live in the memory of Des Moines orthodox Jews is that of Solomon Segal. Like many of his co-religionists who came to America in the late sixties, he settled in Rochester, New York. There he lived for a year; and in 1871 he came to Des Moines, attracted by the many friends from his home town, Pilvissok, who had preceded him.

On arriving in town he also engaged in the peddler's supply business, which at that time seems to have been about the only business in the orthodox community. Mr. Segal remained in Des Moines all his life. Though he was himself a promoter of orthodoxy, he was, nevertheless, broad and unbiased in his judgments, a man beloved by all who knew him, regarded as one of the strongest influences for good that the community has ever known.

A pioneer Jewish manufacturer in Iowa was Mr. Leopold

Sheuerman. Born in 1837 at Necar Binau, Germany, Mr. Sheuerman came to this country at the age of twenty and settled in Muscatine, Iowa, moving the next year to Marengo.

In that city Mr. Sheuerman and his brother Abraham started a retail woolen mill business on a very small scale. When the brothers moved their concern to Des Moines in



ABRAHAM SHEUERMAN

1882, they called it the "Capital City Woolen Mills," and it soon became the largest business of its kind in the city.

Other Settlers

It is impossible to name all the Jewish leaders who came to Des Moines in the early days, but there are others who must be mentioned. Among these pioneers was Mr. Samuel Redstone, the first American born Jew to come to Des Moines. He was born in Albany, New York in 1855 and came to Iowa's capitol city in 1870.

Another pioneer leader was Henry Reigelman, a native of Indiana, who came to Des Moines in 1870 and engaged in the unusual combination of businesses: millinery and politics. Mr. Reigelman was honored with the post of treasurer of the Democratic State Central Committee and was also a member



HENRY REIGELMAN

of the first Civil Service Commission under the "Des Moines Plan" of commission government.

Max Shloss, Morris Samish, E. Shottenfells, Henry Hirsch, Isaac Hymen, Louis M. Doctor, L. Hirsch, Henry

Hiller, Joe Wolf, Henry Rothschild, Gus Jacobs, Ludwig Samish and Jacob Posner, all are men whose names must be mentioned as pioneer Jewish leaders in Des Moines.

Their Origins

A tabulation of the origins of the Jewish pioneers presents some interesting facts. The following figures are from the "Reform Advocate" for May 9, 1908. Of the 49 early Jewish men and women from Des Moines whose birthplaces are listed, 19 are American born, 14 German born, 8 Russian, 4 Polish and 4 Hungarian.

The first Jews who came to Des Moines were mostly from German provinces, some from Bavaria, Saxony and western Prussia, others from Austria, Alsace, Hungary, the Polish territory under German control and from East Prussia. Nearly all these located themselves in West Des Moines, for during the early sixties what is now East Des Moines was merely a whole series of dismal swamps and mud-drowned prairie.

The Polish and Russian Jews came to Des Moines after the Civil War. As most of them were poor, green peddlers, they went to the east side where they hired headquarters. Many of the Russian-Jewish pioneers were from Suwalk Province, some from Kalvary and Volkovisk provinces.

Most of the Polish Jews who came to Des Moines between the years 1867 and 1869 lived at one time or another in Rochester, New York. Two home townsmen from the Rochester section helped materially in fitting out young and ambitious Jews with peddlers' supplies for their start in the West.

Neither the majority of German nor Russian Jews could boast of possessing any wealth when they first came to Des Moines, but a surprising number made material progress with astonishing rapidity in spite of many hardships.

Chapter IX

EARLY BUSINESS LEADERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

A surprising number of Des Moines firms whose names are household words all over the state were founded by Jewish leaders of the city.

Among the earliest and best known of these is Younker Brothers, the largest department store in the state and one of the best known anywhere in the country. In 1856 Lytton, Samuel and Marcus Younker established the first Younker store at Keokuk. An account by Marcus Younker tells of the beginnings of this establishment.

"I was born at Lipno, Province Polotzk, Poland, August, 1839, and, like all the rest of the boys of that town, I have attended Chedar (Hebrew school) till I was Bar Mizvah (thirteen years, when Jewish boys are confirmed). But as there was no profitable field of labor or any other enterprise open neither for any of my brothers nor for myself, we concluded to emigrate to America.

"Thus my brothers and myself came to New York (1854) to hunt our fortunes. I had a stock of stationery amounting to $2.50 to start my career in this country with. But my sad experience of my first day's adventure is forever imprinted upon my memory.

I was to take a stage to Union Square where I was to search for trade, either on the street or by ascending and descending countless steps leading to offices, but, as I was



MARCUS YOUNKER

getting on the stage, my entire stock fell in a dirty gutter, and there my tearful eyes saw my whole fortune perish.

"Kind-hearted bystanders had remorse upon me and helped me out with the sum of one dollar and that practically was my start in the United States.

"We came to Keokuk in 1856, where we started up a

small business, but as yet, some of us, sometimes myself, and sometimes my brothers Samuel or L. M., would go out and ramble through the country and peddle among the brave and generous pioneers of Lee and Des Moines counties."

The Des Moines Store

In 1874 Herman Younker, a younger brother, had been attracted by the rapid growth of the Capital City and started



YOUNKERS—1874

a dry goods store in Des Moines. His first advertisement read, "We have come to live here and mean to do what is right. It you want honest goods at bottom prices, call at Younker's."

Continuing his story, Marcus Younker tells of the merger of the two firms, "In 1885 we found ourselves too large for Keokuk, our business had outgrown the town, which at that time, along with all other river-front towns, was on the decline, and, ever being ambitious to attain a firm foothold in the business world, we took out $6,000.00 of our capital and invested in a branch store in Des Moines, which was said to be the promising center of commerce in Iowa. That our

investment was a profitable one will be believed by all Iowans."

It will, indeed!

It is interesting to note that Younkers employed the first woman clerk in Des Moines. Additions to the building and establishment of various new departments have come



YOUNKERS—1941

rapidly, and in all ways this pioneer concern started by four foresighted Jewish leaders keeps in step with the latest developments of merchandising, a tribute to its founders' acumen and judgment.

Falk Brody

Mr. Falk Brody was born in Calvary, Poland, in 1842 and came first to New York and then Iowa, where he estab-



FALK BRODY

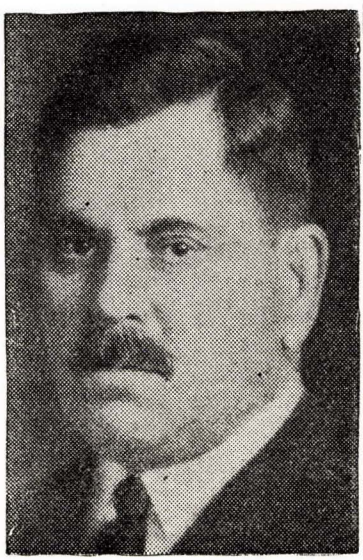
lished F. Brody and Sons Company, at that time a wholesale merchandising concern. For many years Mr. Brody's company was the only Jewish concern in Iowa doing over $250,000 business a year which closed on Sabbath and on all other Jewish holidays.

Mr. Brody died in 1912, but his sons still carry on his

work. Today F. Brody and Sons deal exclusively in men's wholesale furnishings. Meyer Brody is president and his brother Abraham secretary-treasurer.

Ginsbergs

Another early Des Moines merchant whose name is known all over the state was Mr. L. Ginsberg. Mr. Ginsberg came from Poland to Emerson, Iowa, and from there to Des



L. GINSBERG, FOUNDER



HARRY GINSBERG

Moines, where he opened a new and used house furnishings store.

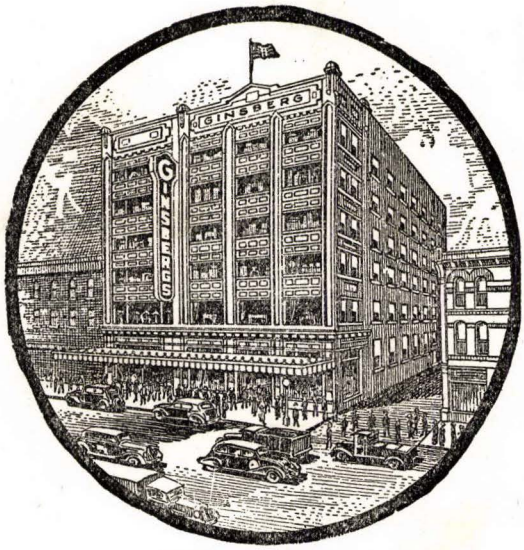
The business grew so rapidly that Mr. Ginsberg was forced to move to larger quarters across the street. After enlarging this store several times, the present large store on Walnut was built.

Mr. Ginsberg was one of the organizers of Congregation Tifereth Israel and the Free Loan Association and a treasurer of the Jewish Welfare Society. One of his most inter-

esting tasks was the bringing of persecuted Jews from Russia, through Galveston, Texas, to Des Moines as part of a national campaign to aid the Russian refugees.

The Tifereth Israel branch of Talmud Torah was contributed by Mr. Ginsberg, and on his death in 1925 he left $25,000 to Jewish charities of the city.

Mrs. Mary Ginsberg was active in philanthropic work



GINSBERGS—1941

all her life. When she died in 1933, she did not forget her needy fellow townsmen. She left $25,000 for charitable work, and the Mary Ginsberg Memorial Fund was organized and operated by her friends to distribute relief to the needy.

Mr. Harry Ginsberg is president of the Ginsberg organization at the present time. His brothers, Sol and I. D., are vice-president and secretary-treasurer respectively. The fourth brother is Herman, also a member of the firm.

Davidsons

Another of Iowa's pioneer furniture families, the Davidsons, made amazing progress from most humble beginnings. At the age of 18 Saul Davidson left Lithuania and came to New York. Disgusted with lack of opportunities for ad-



DAVIDSONS—1941

vancement in the metropolis, he went to St. Louis, finding his way finally to Iowa.

For over five years the strong gangling youth tramped over the states of Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska on his ped-

dler's route, carrying a 150 pound pack. At first he knew little English but soon familiarized himself with the language and other American customs.

Every month he sent $25 home to Lithuania, $50 twice every year at the holidays. As soon as he could save a hundred dollars, he would make a loan of it. When he had accumulated $750, he sent the money to his family and brought his mother, two brothers and four sisters to this land of opportunity.

By the end of another year, Saul Davidson had saved



JACOB DAVIDSON

$480, enough to start a second hand furniture business on Court Street. A little later he married Mary Cohen, and together they worked day and night to make a success of the business.

The business methods of the Davidsons were surprisingly modern. They knew the value of prominently displaying the goods for sale. And, although it meant backbreaking labor, the heavy stoves were hauled outside every day, the



SAUL DAVIDSON

rugs fluttered from the fences, and the curtains hung from lines, a picturesque sight which many Des Moines residents can still remember.

The Davidsons probably inaugurated the system of instalment selling in Des Moines. An old account book of the firm carries this entry: "One piano sold for $15 at $1 a week."

The business grew and prospered until in 1900 Saul and his two brothers, Jacob and Louis, pooled their resources, about $20,000, and formed the present store.

On coming to this country, Jacob had taken a position in a St. Louis wholesale establishment, saving his money until he was able to establish a dry goods store in St. Louis; he came to Des Moines in 1893, where he used $1,000 of his capital to finance a business for his father, Hyman Davidson. Then he established a dry goods store in Muscatine.

When the present store was organized, Jacob became the buyer and general merchandise manager. In 1910, when



MARY DAVIDSON

the business was incorporated, he became vice-president and in 1928 president.

Louis Davidson became the advertising and public relations manager of the firm and served in this capacity until his death in 1923.

Until her death April 30, 1940, Mrs. Saul Davidson was

an outstanding community leader. Affiliated with numerous philanthropic religious and civic activities, Mrs. Davidson had lived in Des Moines more than 60 years, during which time she played a prominent part in the growth and development of the Jewish community.

She had organized the Hebrew Ladies Aid society and the Mothers' club of Talmud Torah and was president of both of those organizations at the time of her death.

In recognition of her many years of active service in Hadassah and of her work as president of the Des Moines branch, she was made an honorary president of this organization for life and also of the Sisterhood of Congregation Tifereth Israel.

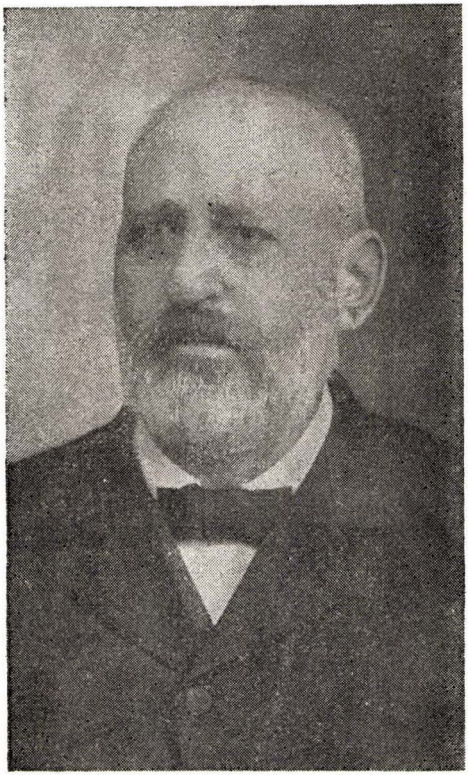
Mrs. Davidson was a member of many other national and local organizations whose aims furthered the welfare of the Jewish people.

The store that Mary and Saul Davidson founded not so very many years ago has, in the course of a generation, grown from a small second-hand store on Court Street with a capital of less than $400 to one of the leading furniture concerns in the middle west, with branches at Waterloo and Tulsa, Oklahoma, and an assessed valuation of over $5,000,000.

Frankels

Another of the city's most prominent business families started in Des Moines in a modest way. Isiah Frankel came to America from Bavaria in 1855. He married Babbette Sheuerman in 1864, and they made their permanent home in Oskaloosa. Soon Mr. Frankel established the Frankel Bank, which later became the Frankel State Bank with Mr. Frankel as president. Mr. Frankel also operated the Frankel Clothing Company until his death in 1924.

In 1894 two sons of the Frankels, Nathan and Manassa, came to Des Moines and started a small clothing store. Joined

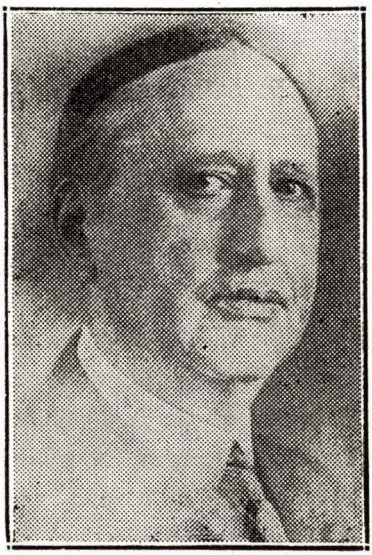


ISIAH FRANKEL

by a brother, Anselm, and by a brother-in-law, Mr. Meyer Rosenfield, in 1899, they expanded their business to the scope of a department store, and in 1901 the partners bought the Harris-Emery department store, with Nathan becoming president of the new concern.

Harris-Emery and Younker Brothers merged in 1927 to

form the present Younker store, and Nathan was vice-president of this consolidated organization until his death in 1935. Manassa Frankel died at the age of 67 in California, where he had been living in retirement.



ANSELM FRANKEL

While the department store was growing, the Frankel brothers, along with their brother Henry, organized the Frankel clothing store, a concern of which Mr. Anselm Frankel is President. Mr. Frankel has been much interested in Boy Scout work, and through his generosity Frankel Lodge at Camp Matigua was built. He is also a member and past president of the National Retail Clothiers association and a member of B'nai Jeshurun Congregation.

Mr. Henry Frankel, born in Oskaloosa in 1881, in addition to being one of the organizers of the Frankel Clothing store, was a buyer for Harris-Emery. When the merger with

Younkers was made, Mr. Frankel became the Secretary-Treasurer of the firm and in 1937 after the death of Norman Wilchinski, he became the president of Younkers Store. He is a member and former chairman of the Greater Des Moines committee.



HENRY FRANKEL

Prominent in another field of endeavor is Mrs. Henry Frankel. In 1933 Mrs. Frankel was awarded a medal for her contribution to conservation work by the American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society.

Mrs. Frankel was chairman of the State Board of Conservation in 1933-34 and first chairman of the consolidated Board in 1935. She resigned from the Board in January of 1937 but remains active in promoting a national park for Iowa.

Oranskys

Starting his business career selling shoelaces on downtown street corners, Louis Oransky, a native of Poland who came to America in 1884, next established businesses in Des Moines and Atlantic and finally organized L. Oransky and Sons Company, a department store. He and his two sons, David and Abe, operated this business until 1934.

In 1929 Mr. Oransky was honored for his contribution to Des Moines civic life by nomination for the Des Moines Tribune's Community Service award. It was twice his privilege to speak before the national conventions of the National Synagogues of America.

When Mr. Oransky left Des Moines for Chicago, his present home, in 1934 he was honored, by a banquet, for his leadership in Jewish affairs, at which time members of Tifereth Israel presented him with a bronze for his untiring efforts in organizing and supporting the congregation.

L. H. Cohen

For years the name of L. H. Cohen has been synonomous with Des Moines orthodoxy. Coming to this country from Poland 53 years ago at the age of 16, Mr. Cohen immediately started his Americanization, entered a business college and soon was a prominent member of the Cohen Brothers Iron and Sheet Metal Company, with which he was affiliated for 23 years.

His brother Samuel was the founder and president of the metal concern. On his death in 1934, Samuel Cohen had been a prominent Des Moines resident for 65 years. Another brother, Ben, was also associated with Samuel and L. H. in the metal business.

At present L. H. Cohen is president of the Home Loan and Investment Company of Des Moines; honesty, shrewd

business judgment and an affable personality have been his stock in trade.

Since its very beginning, Mr. Cohen has been an active member of B'nai B'rith, was president of the organization in 1905 and a treasurer of the group for many years.

He was High Priest of the Des Moines Masonic lodge, past president of Talmud Torah and was a president of B'nai Israel for more than 23 years, a man well worthy of the esteem and position in the community which he has held so long.

Chapter X

LATER BUSINESS LEADERS

Although the early Jewish business leaders left an amazing record of accomplishment, their compatriots who entered the business scene at a later date in a more difficult period have not lagged behind in their progress.

A. H. Blank

The theatre is a picturesque occupation in itself. Add to it the distinctive personality of A. H. Blank, and the result is one of the most colorful business careers in the history of the city.

Mr. Blank came to America at the age of eight, hawked balloons on the streets of Omaha at the age of twelve. When the Trans-Mississippi Exposition opened at Omaha in 1898, he was in his glory.

Even then he loved the excitement, the glamour of show business. He vended on the midway, sold balloons, peanuts and lemonade and thought his big moment had come when he was allowed to ballyhoo for the great seesaw ride.

Real estate business in Des Moines seemed very dull to this born showman, so in 1912 he welcomed the opportunity of starting the city's first motion picture theatre, a vacant Locust Street store with its partitions torn out. With his partner, Abe Frankle, he installed an electric piano and a

wobbly screen, contracted for from three to five assorted reels of film and sat back to wait for the nickels to come in.

Some time later Mr. Blank sold his interest in this



A. H. BLANK

theatre to his partner and opened Des Moines' first "delux" theatre, the Garden. An electric organ, a small orchestra, five reel features, actual ads in the newspapers, boy ushers and upholstered seats were novel features of this venture.

For the "Colossal" picture **Carmen,** starring Geraldine Farrar, Mr. Blank decided something "stupendous" must be done. He took unheard of space in the newspapers and charged 15c instead of a dime. He was surprised to find many "nice" people in the long lines waiting for admission to this feature.

Other Theatres

Theatres in Davenport, Omaha and Cedar Rapids quickly sprang up under Mr. Blank's direction, and soon his name was nationally known as an exhibitor of motion pictures. When First National Pictures was organized by leading exhibitors to produce some of their own films, Mr. Blank was on the executive committee, helping to popularize such stars as Norma and Constance Talmadge and Pola Negri.

Just before the depression years set in, Mr. Blank decided to retire and sold all of his holdings outright, but when Publix Theatres (that was the new name of the chain) went into receivership, Mr. Blank was appointed receiver.

Mr. Blank is now the active head of Tri-States Theatres Corporation and Central States Theatres, Inc. In 1937 associates of Mr. Blank celebrated his 25 years in the motion picture business with an elaborate ceremonial, at which time employes of the two theatre groups presented Mr. and Mrs. Blank with a trip to Honolulu and a complete set of luggage.

Upon his graduation from college in 1933, Mr. Blank's son Myron became associated with the Tri-States Theatres as Secretary, and another son, Raymond, became Secretary of the Central States Theatres in 1937.

Mr. Blank is a Past President of B'nai B'rith and was chairman of the Building Committee of Temple Jeshurun which had charge of the erection of the new Temple. He is a member of the board of the Temple and Chairman of the

Executive Committee of the Jewish Welfare Fund, member of Bankers the Club of America, the Des Moines Club and several other community and civic organizations.

Norman Wilchinski

Death of his father, Morris, forced Norman Wilchinski to take a position in Younkers store at $3 per week, but because of his business and executive ability he rose rapidly



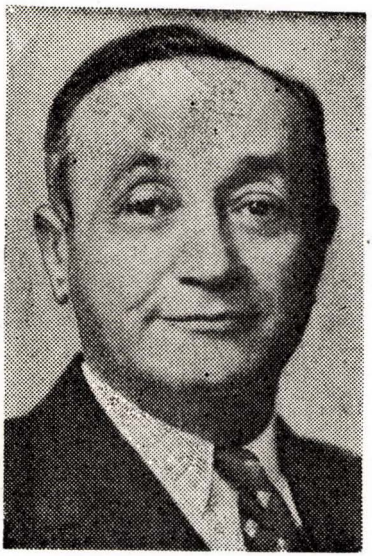
NORMAN WILCHINSKI

from one executive position to another, until finally, on the death of Herman Younker in 1921, he was made president of the concern. When Younkers and Harris-Emery consolidated in 1927, Mr. Wilchinski became president of the merged store.

On Mr. Wilchinski's sudden death by a heart attack in 1937, the whole city was grieved. Employes of the store wept openly, and many Des Moines leaders paid high tribute to Mr. Wilchinski's civic mindedness. "I've lost the best friend I had in Iowa," declared Senator Clyde L. Herring, while another asserted, "Mr. Wilchinski was one of the greatest civic leaders Des Moines ever had.

Harry Goldman

Born in Russia, a resident of Des Moines for 55 years and president of C. C. Taft Company since 1926, Mr. Harry Goldman's tireless efforts have been rewarded by a continual



HARRY GOLDMAN

expansion of his business—the marketing of foods of all kinds, both fresh and canned.

At present Mr. Goldman and his son Harold, manager

of the firm for the past four years, have just completed a new $100,000 building to house the concern. It is located at 2nd on the Des Moines Union Railway tracks.

Mr. Goldman has been active in all Jewish affairs, Past President of B'nai B'rith and a Past President of Temple B'nai Jeshurun.

Harry Bookey

Mr. Harry Bookey was born in Poland, a member of an agricultural family. So it was natural that on Mr. Bookey's



HARRY BOOKEY

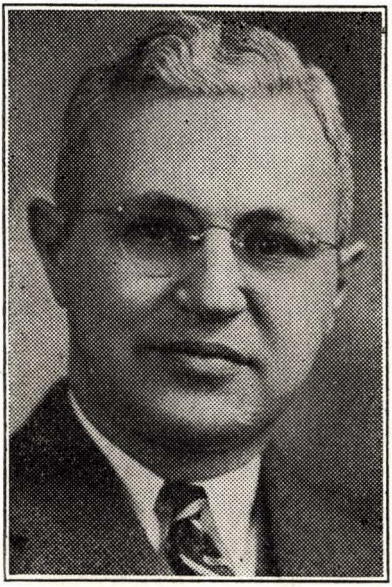
arrival in Des Moines in 1904 he should enter the cattle business.

Mr. Bookey organized the Bookey Packing Company in 1930 and remains at the head of that institution. He is president also of the Des Moines Packing Co., Des Moines

Coaster Co. and Shutes Company. He has been very active in communal affairs, was Co-Chairman of the 1940 "All in One" Campaign and serves on several organization boards. His sons Morton and Lester are associated with his business enterprises.

The Levitts

Like so many other of the Des Moines leaders, Mr. J. Levitt came to this country from Russia and started his



ELLIS LEVITT

business career as a peddler. Modest success greeted his efforts and he persisted. In 1897 Mr. Levitt established the State Finance company in Des Moines.

This business has grown from the single office in the Capital City to a corporation, formed in 1924, with branches

doing business in many states. Mr. Levitt still remains the active President of the concern.

Mr. Levitt has been an active member of Tifereth Israel Synagogue for many years and has also been active in most of the city's other Jewish organizations. His hearty support of the financial welfare of the community and his work for every worthwhile cause could always be depended upon.

In 1912 Mr. Ellis Levitt became associated with his father as a partner in the business. When the incorporation took place Mr. Ellis Levitt became the Vice-President of the organization, a position which he still holds.

In addition to his generous financial support of the city's Jewish activities, Mr. Ellis Levitt has been a President of the local B'nai B'rith and the Tifereth Israel Synagogue Men's club, whch was organized at his suggestion. He headed the first All-In-One drive of the Jewish Welfare Fund and is Vice-President of the Fund's Board. He is a member of the Board of Tifereth Israel and of many other community and civic organizations.

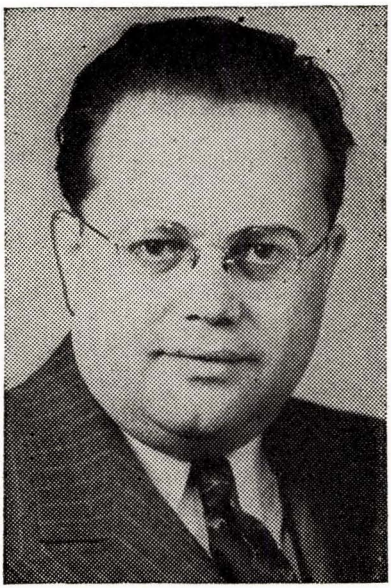
Julius Wolf

In 1929 Mr. Julius Wolf, a son-in-law of Mr. J. Levitt, became associated with the State Finance Company as Secretary, a position which he has held ever since. Prior to coming to Des Moines Mr. Wolf practiced law in Mason City as a member of the firm of Bryant and Wolf.

He is a member of Tifereth Israel Synagogue, was President of the Mason City chapter of B'nai B'rith for two years and of the Des Moines chapter during the year 1936. He has been active in many other Jewish organizations and a consistent worker for the Des Moines Community Chest.

Ben Sanders

Coming to Des Moines in 1932, Mr. Ben Sanders established the Sanders Motor Company in the Capital City. In the years since that time, the Sanders Company has become one of the leading concerns in its field in the state.



BEN SANDERS

Mr. Sanders remains at the head of this concern as President, while his son, Frank, is associated with his father as Vice-President of the Sanders Motor Company.

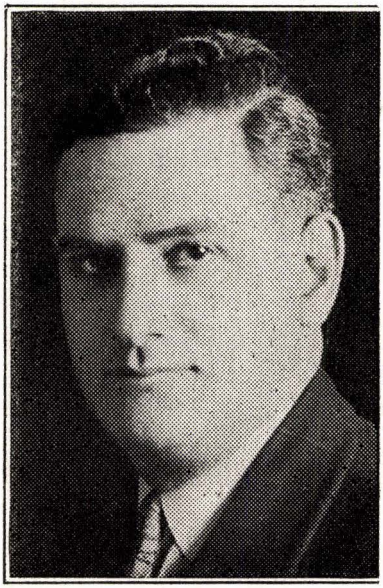
In 1939 Mr. Sanders headed one of the most successful drives of the Jewish Welfare fund. He is the President of Temple B'nai Jeshurun, Past President of B'nai B'rith, Past President Des Moines Automobile Dealers Association, President of the Iowa State Automobile Dealers Association,

a member of Tifereth Israel Synagogue and active in many other Jewish affairs.

Other Business Leaders

In addition to those men whose business careers have been sketched in this chapter, there are hundreds of other Jewish leaders in Des Moines whose careers cannot, for lack of space, be presented in these pages.

There are men like Louis J. Adelman, Louis Ginsberg,



LOUIS J. ADELMAN

I. Musin, Ben Hurwitz, Harry Brody, Meyer Levine, M. O. Kahn, M. L. Kohn, the Sherman Brothers, Aaron Rissien, Harry Davidson, Harry Kneeter, Abe Joseph, Louis Ansher, M. Aliber, Joseph Zox, Nate Sandler, Lou Elman, Sam Horowitz, I. Dubansky, Isador Robinson, Sol Gottlieb, Aaron Blotcky, Jerome and Jacob Israly and B. W. Prusiner

and others, who for many years have taken upon themselves the responsibilities of communal activities and have year after year aided to successful completion the fund raising and civic efforts of Des Moines Jewry.

There are numerous others who in the past few years have added their shoulders to carry the burden along with the so-called old timers and are today doing valuable work in the community and in their chosen fields of business and industry.

Chapter XI

PROFESSIONAL LEADERS

Not only have the Jewish people of Des Moines had among their number some of the city's outstanding business leaders, but they have also had some of the leading professional men of the city.

The first Jewish physician in Des Moines, Dr. E. R. Posner, was a native of the city. He took his medical training at Columbia University in New York and came to Des Moines in 1905 to start his practice. He has maintained his practice in the city ever since.

Dr. Unger

Second Jewish Physician in Des Moines was Dr. D. Unger. Dr. Unger came to Des Moines in 1906 from Creighton Medical University, Nebraska, where he had received his M. D. degree. In 1908 Dr. Unger returned for postgraduate work to the University of Berlin, where he had done undergraduate work before coming to America.

Dr. Unger was intensely interested in Zionist activities, and in the same year in which he came to Des Moines an organization meeting was called to consider the possibilities

of a Zionist group in Des Moines. After compelling speeches by Dr. Unger and Rabbi Zeichik, Des Moines' first Zionist organization was practically assured.

One of the first presidents of the Zionist group, Dr. Unger has remained active in Zionist work ever since.

Professionally, Dr. Unger has been active ever since he opened his practice in Des Moines. He served as examiner for the Zion Camp of Modern Woodmen until it affiliated with the main group and is the examiner for Workman's Circle.

Many a patient who needed treatment urgently but who had no resources to pay for it found Dr. Unger ready with the assistance that saw him through. Dr. Unger's services have been especially valuable in bringing those in need of help to the attention of those willing to give it.

Dr. Unger is a member of Tifereth Israel Synagogue and B'nai B'rith.

Dr. Fleischman

For many years Dr. A. G. Fleischman has been one of Des Moines' leading physicians. Receiving his M. D. degree from the University of Illinois in 1912, he took post-graduate work in New York City and Johns Hopkins, Balitmore, and spent one year in City Hospital, Baltimore, as an associate in urology.

During the World War, Dr. Fleischman headed the urological section of two hospitals and afterwards continued his studies in France. He continued to practice his specialty when he established himself in Des Moines.

His articles on various phases of medicine have received prominent places in many medical journals, while there is a constant demand for presentation of his papers before meetings of medical societies all over the country.

In his readings, researches and writings, Dr. Fleischman

has often stressed medicine as applied to the Bible, particularly the Talmudic conception of sanitation and health.

A member of many community and professional organizations, Dr. Fleischman was, as was his father before him, an organizer and ardent advocate of Zionism and is an active member of Tifereth Israel Synagogue.

Mose Cohen

One of Des Moines best known lawyers for many years was Mr. Mose Cohen. He served six years as City Attorney and Assistant City Solicitor. In 1917 he formed the firm of Parrish and Cohen, which became primarily concerned with the special field of law work among the Des Moines contractors.

Before taking up law as a career, Mr. Cohen had been active in music work, touring the country with Finney's band. In later years he composed many musical works which were performed by leading organizations in many states.

He was a member of Temple B'nai Jeshurun and active in the Jewish work of the city. Illness forced Mr. Cohen to retire from active practice, and his death occurred in 1939.

Robert Lappen

Receiving his Liberal Arts and Doctor of Law degrees from Drake University in 1914, Mr. Robert Lappen entered the law firm of McLaughlin and Shankland and soon became member of the firm. In 1920 he became head of his firm, Lappen-Carlson and Clarke.

Mr. Lappen has led a more active life, has served as chairman for Iowa on the Soldiers' Welfare board, Federal

probation officer for the southern district of Iowa, past dis-



ROBERT LAPPEN

trict president of Grand Lodge No. 6, B'nai B'rith, and as member and officer of many other organizations.

Sam Abramson

Mr. Sam Abramson, another of the city's leading Jewish lawyers, received his training at the college of law, Drake University, and established himself in the practice of law in Des Moines. During his college years Mr. Abramson had worked as a newspaper reporter.

Today Mr. Abramson is known as an expert in the field of tax appeals and does other extensive work in probate and leases. In 1928 Mr. Abramson argued the case of Davidson V. Muloch before the Supreme Court of Iowa and succeeded in having declared unconstitutional a certain phase of the

method of tax appeals. This decision has had a far reaching effect on property owners and lawyers ever since.

Mr. Abramson is a member of the American, Iowa and Polk County Bar Associations, a past President of Temple B'nai Jeshurun and the Temple Brotherhood and is active in Jewish refugee work and many other community activities.

Joseph Brody

Mr. Joseph Brody, today a leading Des Moines attorney, is a native of Iowa. He came to Des Moines in 1915 to begin his practice after receiving his Liberal Arts degree from Grinnell college and his Law degree from the University of Chicago Law school.

In 1929 Mr. Brody became associated with the firm of Brammer, Brody, Charlton and Parker and he continues today to be a member of that firm. His practice has led him to run the gamut of practically every type of court in the country, and he has argued before the Supreme Court of the United States.

Mr. Brody has been active in civic affairs, also taking a very active part in the work of the Jewish community. He has been President of the University Club and the Des Moines Bar Association as well as Chairman of the lawyers division of the Community Chest drive. He is also a past President of Temple B'nai Jeshurun, Des Moines Zionist District, and B.nai B'rith and a member of the Board of the Jewish Welfare Fund.

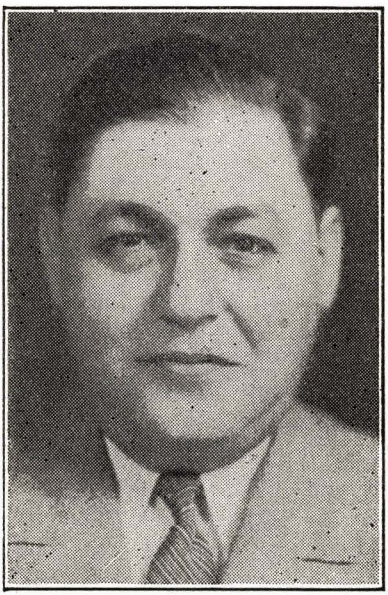
Irving Stone

Another of the present Jewish professional leaders in Des Moines is Mr. Irving Stone. Entering the business world upon his graduation from East High School, Des Moines, Mr. Stone spent ten years in the securities business, then organized and later purchased control of three corporations, Irving

Investment Corporation, Iowa Farm Credit Corporation and American Finance System.

His initiative prompted him to study in night law school and under private tutors, and in less than four years he was admitted to the bar.

As relaxation from his strenuous activities Mr. Stone dons work clothes and helps for a few days on one of his many farms.



IRVING STONE

Mr. Stone's unusual executive ability is best evidenced by his accomplishing the seemingly impossible task of establishing the finances of Tifereth Israel Synagogue on a secure basis, a feat described later in this volume.

Under Mr. Stone's executive leadership the Jewish Wel-

fare Fund drive of 1940 netted the largest contribution, $73,500, of any since World War days. As a director of both the Jewish Welfare Fund and the Iowa Jewish Home for the Aged, Mr. Stone was instrumental in obtaining for the Home's maintainance a grant of over $1,000 per year from the Welfare Fund.

Louis Ansher

A striking example of a fight against odds and the wide open opportunities of the new world over the old is that of Louis Ansher, who came to Des Moines from Russia in 1909



LOUIS ANSHER

and although just a youngster in his teens shouldered the burden of supporting an invalid step-father, his mother and family. He started his career as a newspaper boy and rose

to be in charge of Street Sales for the old Des Moines News.

Graduating from East High he was awarded a scholarship to Drake University where he graduated from a law course in 1922, while at Drake he was president of the Menorah Society.

He is at present past chairman of the Iowa Boxing Commission, past president of B'nai B'rith, a member of the Masonic Lodge, Consistory, Moose, Elks, University Club and is a Phi Beta Delta.

Others

Other Jewish lawyers have been leaders in the community's affairs. Mr. A. J. Myers has been active in all Jewish work, a President of Tifereth Israel Synagogue and of B'nai B'rith. Mr. Isadore Robinson has been a leader in the affairs of Tifereth Israel, and is a past President of that organization.

The Jewish lawyers of Des Moines not already mentioned are listed below: Joseph Rosenfield, Louis I. Adelman, Morton S. Adler, N. L. Friedman, Louis Garsh, Sol Glick, Harry B. Grund, Ben Hockenberg, Burton Joseph, Jr., Charles E. Kramer, Harold Leener, Albert Levich, Joseph Z. Marks, Merrill B. Oransky, David Waldinger, Stanley Swartzman and Milton S. Weinberger.

Other Des Moines Jewish physicians and surgeons include: Henry H. Corn, Milton A. Dushkin, Louie Goldberg, Arnold M. Gordon, Louis J. Noun, M. H. Noun, Herman J. Smith and Maurice J. Rotkow.

Des Moines' Jewish dentists are: N. S. Chapman, Carl C. Grund, S. S. Hockenberg, S. A. Katz, Maurice Lan, M. I. Lutz, E. S. Neufeld, Theodore Siegel and Julius C. Swartz.

Chapter XII

B'NAI JESHURUN

The first Jewish organization in Des Moines, the Emanuel Burial Association, was founded in July, 1870, through the efforts of Julius Mandelbaum, Moses Strauss, Morris Riegelman, Samuel Redstone, David Goldman, Alexander Lederer, Gus Jacobs, Joseph Kuhn and N. L. Goldstone. This organization purchased several acres of ground for burial purposes, later donating this land to Congregation B'nai Yeshurun.

For two years the members of this association formed the only religious organization in the community. Its members met for worship during the holidays at the various residences until 1872 when it was decided to organize a congregation. So the Emanuel Burial Association really formed the nucleus of B'nai Yeshururn* Congregation.

A New Congregation

In the fall of 1872, those who had met for Rosh Hashono services at the home of Alexander Lederer lingered to discuss the desirability of forming a congregation. Before parting they appointed a day to meet at the residence of David Goldman for the purpose of organizing.

From this meeting the infant congregation B'nai Yeshurun emerged. There were seventeen present, and

*The old spelling.

these became the first members of the congregation. Officers elected were: Joseph Kuhn, president; Julius Mandelbaum, vice president; Samuel Redstone, secretary, and Gus Jacobs, treasurer.

For six years after its organization, the congregation held its services in a hall over Joseph Kuhn's clothing store, services which were conducted according to the orthodox ritual. The children's chorus furnished the only music. Originally drafted in German, the constitution was later translated into English by Julius Mandelbaum, Samuel Redstone and Henry Reigelman.

The progress of the newly organized congregation was remarkable. Within two years after its organization in 1874, B'nai Yeshurun purchased its cemetery and elected its first Rabbi, a certain Mr. Jacobs.

Reform

By that time the congregation had dropped all semblance of orthodoxy, joining the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. This step amounted to a public avowal of radicalism and made B'nai Yeshurun the first Jewish congregation in the state of Iowa to embrace reform.

In 1877, during the presidency of Mr. Julius Mandelbaum, the congregation purchased a building on the corner of Seventh and Mulberry, where services were held for eleven years.

The congregation had grown considerably by the year 1886, and Mr. Kuhn, Mr. Lederer and Mr. David Goldman were chosen as a committee to select a suitable location for a permanent house of worship. This committee bought a lot on the corner of 8th and Pleasant streets; a temple was built, and the congregation remained in that location until it moved to its present site in 1932.

A New Temple

Dedication of the new temple on October 21, 1887, was a colorful event. The "Saturday Times" (now no longer published) gives this vivid account of the dedicatory ceremonies:

"It is with much pleasure that the Times gives its readers a picture of the new and beautiful Jewish synagogue just completed and thrown open for the first time yesterday, when it was dedicated in due form by the Rev. 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, it has rapidly grown and today witnesses the brightest fruits of its devoted followers.

"The present house of worship is of oriental architecture. It is plain but very tastefully furnished in yellow pone 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 foliage plants, all combining to make a most beautiful picture.

"The large chandeliers were lighted for the first time,

and showed off to good effect. Music for the dedication services was given by the united choirs of the First Methodist and St. Pauls Episcopal churches. Miss Windus and Mr. C. L. Keeler were the organists."

Rabbi Mannheimer

Some of the ministers who served in the pulpit of B'nai Yeshurun were: Rabbi D. Davidson, 1881-1884; Rabbi A.



RABBI EUGENE MANNHEIMER

Freudenthal, 1884-1889; Dr. I. Mueller, 1889-1894; Rabbi S. Bottigheimer, 1894-1898; Dr. S. H. Sonnenschein, 1898-1905, and the incumbent, Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, who came to the congregation in 1905 and who is still serving B'nai Yeshurun and the community.

Few movements for the welfare of the Jewish people of the city, state and nation have lacked Rabbi Mannheimer's

active support. As is attested in numerous other pages of this work, Rabbi Mannheimer has been instrumental in establishing the Jewish Center, the United Jewish Philanthropies and many other worthwhile endeavors in the city.

He retains his position as a member of the Boards of the above institutions and is, as well, Past Grand Chaplain of the Masonic Lodges of Iowa, President of the Federated Jewish Charities, member of the executive committee of the School of Religion, Iowa City, and an officer or board member of numerous other important local, state or national organizations.

Rabbi Mannheimer's work has become well known throughout the state and nation, and he is much in demand as a speaker or consultant on religious and cultural affairs.

Receiving his undergraduate work in the University of Cincinnati and Hebrew Union college, Rabbi Mannheimer continued in post-graduate work at the University of Chicago and Columbia University, New York, and took his first Rabbinate at Sinai Congregation, Sioux City, which position he held until he came to Des Moines.

Another New Temple

Under the leadership of Rabbi Mannheimer, Congregation B'nai Jeshurun continued to grow and prosper until in 1928 it became apparent that within a few years the old temple building would be inadequate to the needs of the congregation. So in that year plans for a trust fund were drawn up by Mr. Joseph Brody, then vice-president of the congregation.

This trust fund was to receive gifts and bequests of money, securities and real or personal properties and was to be delivered to the congregation when the funds collected were considered sufficient to construct a new temple. To guarantee that the campaign would not be drawn out too

long, a time limit was set for the pledging of Temple funds.

M. H. Cohen, Morris Mandelbaum and Nathan Frankel were trustees of the fund, and under their management the necessary funds were raised. Through the generous support of the congregation and through the satisfactory sale of the old synagogue building and lot, the magnificent new Temple was erected with an almost negligible mortgage.

Soon the building committee, A. H. Blank, chairman, Morris Mandelbaum, vice-chairman, Nathan and Anselm Frankel, Harry Goldman, Meyer Brody and M. O. Kahn, completed their plans for the structure. Construction began early in 1931, and the cornerstone was laid with appropriate ceremonies on June 14, 1931.

The Dedication

The elaborate dedication ceremonies lasted four days, January 29 through February 1, 1932. Ceremonies of the first night of the dedication service included placing of the scrolls in the Ark by Rabbi Mannheimer, lighting of the perpetual lamp by Mrs. Sidney Mandelbaum, presentation of the Temple by Mr. Blank, acceptance on behalf of the congregation by Mr. M. O. Kahn, president of the congregation, a dedicatory prayer by Rabbi Mannheimer and the dedication sermon by Rabbi Samuel H. Goldenson, Congregation Rodef Shalom, Pittsburgh.

Distinguished guest speakers of the second evening's service, the children's dedication, included Rabbi Max Schenk, Temple Judah, Cedar Rapids, Rabbi Samuel S. Mayerberg, Congregation B'nai Jehuda, Kansas City, and Rabbi Aaron Lefkowitz, Temple Emanuel, Davenport. Highlights of this evening included a program by the children of the congregation and a children's choir.

Devoted to community service, ceremonies the third

evening included greetings from Father Vitus Stoll, Chancellor, Catholic Diocese of Des Moines, Rabbi Lewis B. Grossman, Congregation Tifereth Israel, Rev. Charles J. Dutton, First Unitarian Church and Rev. Stoddard Lane, Plymouth Congregational church, all of Des Moines.

A banquet concluded the dedicatory ceremonies. Mrs. Burton Joseph, president of the Sisterhood, presided as toastmaster. Toasts were given by M. O. Kahn, Mrs. Moses



M. O. KAHN

Strauss, the oldest member of the congregation, Mr. Sam Weinstock, "of the older generation," Mr. Irving Redstone, the son of a founder, Mrs. Walter Levi of the Temple Alumni, Mr. Sam Abramson, president of the Brotherhood, Mr. Herbert E. Rich, one of the architects and Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer.

An interesting portion of the banquet program was the

Temple B'nai Jeshurun



sketch "Then and Now" as portrayed by Mrs. J. L. Sheuerman, Mrs. Jack May, Mrs. Sam Abramson, Mrs. Sonia Sands, Mr. Joseph Rosenfield, Mr. Alfred Cohen, Mr. Joseph Brody, Mr. H. L. Sheuerman and Mr. Jack May. Dancing concluded the dedication services.

Officers of the Congregation B'nai Jeshurun at the time of the dedication, aside from those already mentioned, included Joseph Brody, vice president; Sam Shloss, treasurer; William Meyer, recording secretary, a position which Mr. Meyer has held for more than forty years, and Mrs. Celia Hirsch, financial secretary. Mrs. Hirsch held this office in the congregation for more than twenty-five years.

Mrs. Sidney Mandelbaum and Mrs. Burton Joseph were chairman and vice-chairman, respectively, of the Women's Advisory Building committee.

The Brotherhood

Feeling that some steps should be taken to stimulate the interest of the men in the work of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun and in other Jewish work throughout the city, a group of men of the congregation formed the B'nai Jeshurun Brotherhood in the year 1920.

First officers of the Brotherhood were J. L. Sheuerman, president; L. Davidson, vice-president, and J. Brody, secretary-treasurer.

Today the monthly dinner meetings of the Brotherhood are almost purely social, although the group contributes as an organization to the various charitable demands.

Herschel Wolk is the president of the Temple Brotherhood; H. Louis Davidson, vice-president; Burton Joseph, Jr., secretary, and Jerome Wolf, treasurer.

B'nai Jeshurun Today

Membership in the congregation stands at 150, and officers of the congregation for 1940-41 are: Ben Sanders, president; vice-president, Mose Cohen; secretary, William Meyer, and treasurer, J. Davidson. Trustees are Harry Goldman, Mrs. Nathan Frankel, Mrs. William Friedman, Herschel Wolk, A. H. Blank, Harry Ginsberg and Sam Abramson.

Today the stately and imposing $100,000 Temple B'nai Jeshurun Temple at Grand and 51st streets is utilized to the full by the present members and serves as a constant memorial to the efforts of the past which made it possible.

Chapter XIII

B'NAI ISRAEL-BETHEL JACOB

The next synagogue to be formed in Des Moines was, naturally enough since it drew its membership from the Russian-Polish settlement of East Des Moines, strictly orthodox in form. Congregation B'nai Israel of East Des Moines was formally chartered on April 25, 1876, although services had been conducted for the orthodox Jews of East Des Moines since 1869.

Appearing on the charter are the names of Joseph Blotcky, J. R. Cohen, Wolf Frank, M. Frank, Ben Cohen, Samuel Arenberg, David Cohen, Isaac Goldberg and Mosers Levin. As soon as B'nai Israel was chartered, vigorous steps were taken to inaugurate a desirable orthodoxy in Des Moines, and everything possible was done to preserve the faith of the Fathers.

Small as their number was and poor as the majority of them were, they taxed themselves to the limit, paying from three to five hundred dollars annually for the services of a "chazon" (reader) and schochet and for all other expenses necessary to maintain a congregation.

They eagerly procured every institution necessary or desirable for the kind of worship they so much wished to have. When the West Side Jews abolished the institution of S'chita, there were still those few who craved Kosher meat,



J. R. COHEN

so the East Side Jews gladly allowed their butcher to sell Kosher meat to the West Side Jews, even though they paid nothing toward the support of the schochet.

Faithful Workers

For 64 years members of Congregation B'nai Israel have worshiped faithfully in the synagogue on Sixth and Lyon streets. Many of the original group are still active in synagogue work today, men such as L. H. Cohen, Harry Brody and J. Gottlieb.

Officers of the congregation for 1940 include I. Musin, president; Harry Brody, secretary; J. Gottlieb, treasurer, and I. Givant, Ben Rosenfield and Louis Ginsberg, trustees. Services are held three times daily.

One of the earliest cantors of B'nai Israel was N. Goldstein, who served the congregation for 20 years. Present cantor is H. Cooper, who has held that position for the past six years.

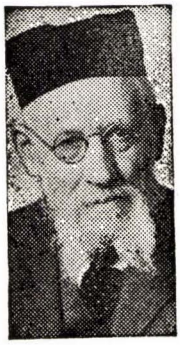
Bethel Jacob

Conservative as Congregation B'nai Israel was it was too liberal to please a number of its own members, who in 1881 broke away from their more "radical" brethren and formed a separate congregation, Bethel Jacob.

First services of the new congregation were held in a room rented for that purpose in a building on the corner of Second and Des Moines streets. In 1908 the membership grew to approximately fifty, and the congregation was able to maintain a full time Rabbi.

Rabbi Zeichik

The first president of the congregation was Mr. Charles



RABBI N. H. ZEICHIK

Silberman, a prominent merchant of the time. Rev. N. H.

Zeichik came to Des Moines in 1907, and is still Rabbi of Congregation Bethel Jacob. For 33 years Rabbi Zeichik has been a spiritual leader of orthodoxy in Des Moines, has been recognized throughout the state as a supreme authority on the orthodox beliefs and as a learned scholar in every field.

Past president of the Orthodox Rabbinical Council of the Western States and of Des Moines Mizrachi, a member of the Union of Orthodox Congregations of America and active in all the Jewish work of the city, Rabbi Zeichik will labor untiringly for any effort designed to make the religious life a nucleous around which the cultural, business and civic life can grow.

New Synagogue

In 1922 Congregation Bethel Jacob built its present fine synagogue on the corner of Fifth and University. Today membership of the congregation is about 400. Still maintaining its strictly orthodox standards, Congregation Bethel Jacob holds services of worship daily, three times a day. Members of the congregation do everything in their power to keep the Jewish customs intact.

Present officers of Congregation Bethel Jacob are: M. Green, president; Myer Rice, secretary, and M. Lappen, treasurer.

Funeral Home

Seeing the need for a funeral home where the poorer members of the Jewish faith could honor their dead with the orthodox ritual, the leaders of Bethel Jacob began to solicit funds for such a purpose. In 1939 a Jewish funeral home was built at Fifth and Laurel by money raised by Congregation Bethel Jacob. Jewish people anywhere in Iowa may have the services of this home, which is strictly a non-profit venture.

Chapter XIV

TIFERETH ISRAEL

Youngest but one of the most active of Des Moines' Jewish congregations is Tifereth Israel, organized in April, 1901, through the combined efforts of B. Gottstein, R. Marks, S. Leon and Louis Oransky.

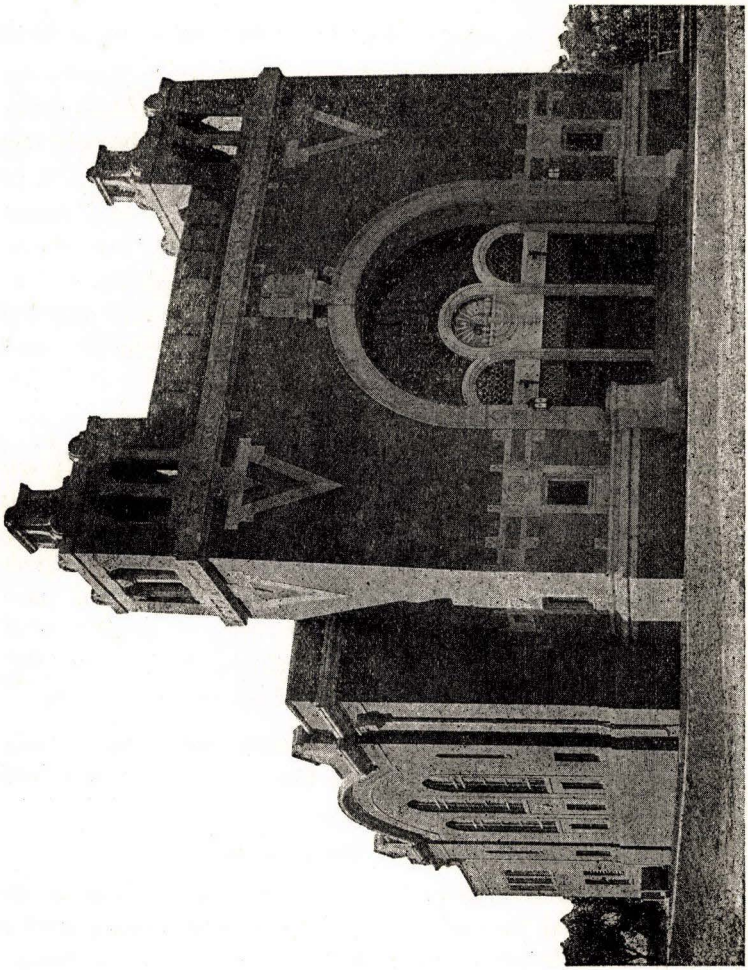
Members of this congregation had belonged to B'nai Israel, but, wholly unlike the founders of Bethel Jacob, the founders of Tifereth Israel considered their parent organization too conservative. They also felt the need for well planned and comprehensive work among the young people of the community.

Mr. B. Gottstein was the first president of the congregation, and first services were held on the festival of Shabouth, May 24, 1901, at the residence of S. Davidson. Soon after, a building on the corner of Seventh and Locust streets was leased, and there services were held until the fall of 1907.

New Synagogue

Funds had been raised in 1905 to build a synagogue. A lot on the corner of Third and Crocker was purchased; the construction of a building was immediately begun, and in the fall of 1907 it was completed.

On Sunday afternoon, September 1, 1907, the new synagogue was dedicated, Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer of the B'nai



TIFERETH ISRAEL SYNAGOGUE

Yeshurun assisting in the ceremony, with Governor A. B. Cummins delivering the opening address. The ceremony was simple but impressive.

Although very young, Tifereth Israel was more than active. By 1908 it had a Sunday School with an enrollment of 115, an afternoon Hebrew class with an average daily attendance of fifty and enjoyed the distinction of having the largest membership of any synagogue in the city.

First record of officers of Congregation Tifereth Israel is found in the reports of 1908 which list O. Cohen, president; L. Ginsberg, vice-president; A. Adler, C. Rosenbaum and J. Levitt, trustees. First Rabbi of Tifereth Israel was Samuel Rabinowitz; he was followed by Rabbi Phineas Israel, and others.

Increased Activities

Gradually the scope of the activities of Tifereth Israel increased, for the most part without events of any unusual significance, until in 1929 it seemed advisable to construct a fine new synagogue. Mr. Louis Oransky, one of the congregation's most active supporters from the very first, had conceived the need for a new building, and, as president of the congregation, he never ceased his efforts until the project had left the realm of a possibility and had become a fact.

Ground for the structure was broken with appropriate ceremonies in October of 1929, and the cornerstone was laid December first.

Dedication of Synagogue

Elaborate ceremonies lasting from September 12 through 14, 1930, dedicated the building to its many uses as a school and synagogue. Rabbi Herman M. Cohen of St. Paul, Minnesota was the distinguished guest speaker at these meetings. The final dedication program included opening of the Ark,

procession with the scrolls, placing the scrolls in the Ark, and a prayer before the Ark, delivered by Rabbi Lewis B. Grossman, Rabbi of the congregation at the time of dedication.

The ark then was closed and the perpetual light kindled by Mrs. L. Ginsberg. A procession of children brought in the key to the synagogue, at which time Mrs. Isador Robinson, chairman of the Building Committee, presented the synagogue, and Mr. Oransky accepted on behalf of the congregation.

Mrs. Saul Davidson next presented the Ark, while greetings from Rabbi Zeichik of Bethel Jacob, Des Moines, and Rabbi Cohen preceded the dedicatory address by Rabbi Grossman. Expressing the spirit of the congregation, Rabbi Grossman declared, "With unmistakable touch this house of worship will continue to express the Judaism that is to have a future in this land, that though modern and progressive in every respect, we depart not from the sacred traditions of our beloved faith."

In tribute to Mr. Oransky, Rabbi Grossman continued, "Well known to all is the gigantic role taken in this colossal enterprise by Mr. Louis Oransky. He has given of his fervid Jewish and religious spirit, of his exceptional sound and prudent judgment, of his generous heart and soul to the building of a sanctuary of abiding beauty."

And so the new synagogue on Polk Boulevard replaced the old at Third and Crocker.

Difficulties

Fine as the new building was, however, it presented its difficulties to the members of the congregation. Just after its erection was started, the financial break of 1929 swept the country. The contractor for the building went into re-

ceivership during the period of construction as did the insurance company holding the contractor's performance bonds.

Mechanics liens to the amount of $25,000 a mortgage and other obligations made the total indebtedness on the building amount to $70,000. As time went on, arrears began to pile up on the salaries of synagogue officials as well as the miscellaneous bills.

Mr. Stone's Work

Into this distressing situation came Mr. Irving Stone as president of the congregation in 1935. Credtors of the synagogue had already started foreclosure proceedings, and a receiver was about to be appointed. The situation seemed hopeless.

For 90 days Mr. Stone worked constantly, meeting and talking with the Synagogue's creditors. At the end of that period he had succeeded in securing amazing concessions from those creditors, concessions which reduced the indebtedness by over one half.

Mr. Stone's next move was to inaugurate a drive for funds for Congregation Tifereth Israel. A $5,000 contribution from Mr. J. Levitt lead off the drive and inspired 200 other contributors to donate to the cause. A total of $26,000 was collected in that drive.

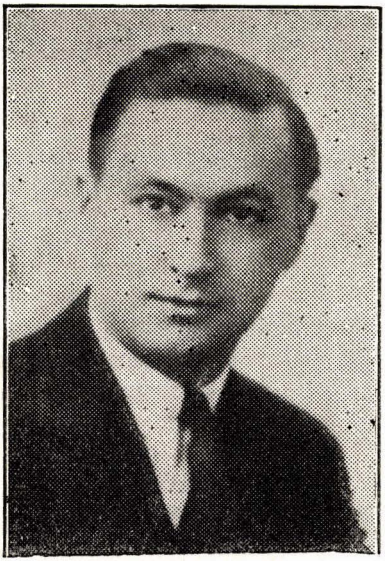
When he left the presidency two years later in 1937, Mr. Stone had reduced the indebtedness of the congregation by $56,000.

In appreciation for his services in painting and repairing the synagogue, his tireless efforts in managing the debt situation, his reduction of the congregation's indebtedness to a manageable sum and his building up of a small reserve balance, the congregation tendered Mr. Stone a written tribute and a banquet of thanks.

Gratifyingly, in the years which followed this disturbing situation, the membership of Congregation Tifereth Israel slowly increased, until in 1940 there were 200 members. Rabbi Monroe Levens, the incumbent, assumed his present duties in 1937.

Rabbi Levens

Members of his congregation have nothing but high praise for Rabbi Levens' many capabilities. As a linguist, a



RABBI MONROE LEVENS

meticulous and broad scholar, a forceful speaker and as a man deeply sympathetic and helpful in the troubles of others, he has, in his short stay in Des Moines, won the affection and esteem of all.

Rabbi Levens is past president of Des Moines chapter of B'nai B'rith, president of Histadruth Ivrith and the Des Moines chapter of the American Hebrew Congress, president

of the Talmud Torah, as well as an ardent supporter and active member of many other Jewish causes.

Recent Activities

One of the most interesting recent activities of Tifereth Israel congregation was the vote of the members to extend full membership privileges to women, privileges which include holding office and voting. Privilege of full membership for women is still unusual among Jewish congregations.

In addition to the branch of Talmud Torah which holds sessions in the synagogue building, the religious school of Tifereth Israel has a membership of 97 for its Sunday morning sessions. While the week day sessions attract an average of 30 pupils. Children begin their training in the religious school at the age of four and continue this work until about the age of fifteen.

This instruction of the young has since the beginning of the congregation been its most important and distinctive contribution to the Jewish religious work of Des Moines. In addition to the classes for younger religious scholars, there are also Bible classes and book review circles for the adult members of the congregation.

Men's Club

In 1938 the Men's Club of Tifereth Israel Synagogue was formed. Mr. Ellis Levitt was the organizer, and, as an auxiliary of the synagogue, the new group proposed to carry out the synagogue purposes to the best of their ability as well as to provide necessary funds whenever needed.

Present officers of the Men's group are Dr. Herman Smith, President; Sam Berke, First Vice-President; Lou Elman, Second Vice-President and Ben Hockenberg, Secretary-Treasurer.

The synagogue Men's Club holds regular monthly dinner

programs and also special events. The most elaborate occasion so far executed by the group was the minstrel show



HARRY L. DAVIDSON

presented at the Jewish Community Center May 21 and 22, 1940 under the capable management of Harry Davidson.

Cemetery Association

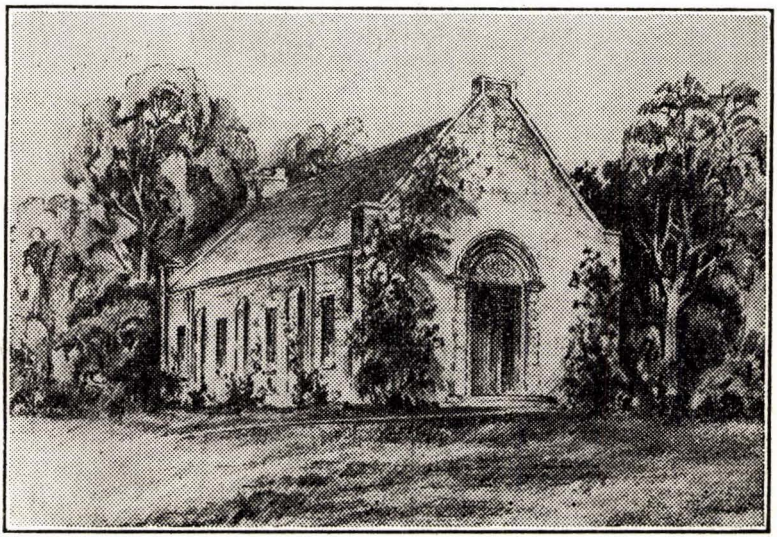
Another important work of the congregation is the Cemetery Association. Organized in 1904, the association now controls for Tifereth Israel congregation the largest portion of Glendale cemetery, a tract of about three acres. In this section of the cemetery is located the beautiful chapel erected by Mr. and Mrs. Sam Rosenbaum of Centerville in memory of his parents, Joseph and Rosie, and of Mrs. Rosenbaum's brother, Jack Levine; this chapel may be used for services of Jewish people living anywhere in Iowa.

Mr. Sam Robinson was the original president of the Tifereth Israel Cemetery association, and held that office for 36 years, passing away recently.

Present Officers

Officers of the congregation for 1940 are: Abe Joseph, President; Meyer Levine, First Vice-President; Henry Seizer, Second Vice-President; Harry Davidson, Financial Secretary; Jack North, Recording Secretary and Louis Ansher, Treasurer. Governing body of the congregation is a board of directors.

Through the periods of prosperity and distress Congregation Tifereth Israel has emerged, conscious of the struggles ahead but also aware that the years to come will bring their rewards of real and appreciated service and the highest type of success.



ROSENBAUM MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Chapter XV

Women Play Their Part

Although the general rule that woman's place was in the home still held, the early Jewish women of Des Moines were able to prove that they could contribute as well as the men toward the city's welfare.

Through the efforts of Mrs. S. D. Goldman and other ladies, Des Moines' first Jewish ladies organization was formed in 1874 and called the Ladies' Benevolent Society. Its ten charter members were: Mrs. Julius Mandelbaum, Mrs. Ludwig Samish, Mrs. Moses Straus, Mrs. Alexander Lederer, Mrs. Gus Jacobs, Mrs. Joseph Kuhn, Mrs. Isaac Kuhn, Mrs. Johanna Wolf and Mrs. David Goldman.

Principal work of the Society was to provide relief for the Jewish poor of the city. During the years 1904 to 1908, for instance, the society distributed $1,744.00 for the support of Jewish widows and deserted wives.

Even though the primary purpose of the Society was charity those faithful women did everything they could to help the men maintain the religious life of the community. The old history of the congregation which was placed in the corner stone of the old Temple in 1887 and removed from it in 1931 contained this tribute to the pioneer women, "This congregation is under lasting obligation to our beloved

Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society for the material aid given at different times during its struggle for existence."

The early records show that in addition to the dues collected by the members funds were raised for the poor by monthly whist parties or "sociables" as they were called.

Broadening Scope

Monthly Kaffee Klatsches after the regular meetings were decided on in 1899 to raise money for the much needed stair carpet in the Temple. This indicates the beginning of the broadening scope of the Benevolent Society's work. From doing only charitable work, the women had turned their attention to the needs of the Temple and the religious school. The minutes begin to mention Hannukkah Festivals, Purim Entertainments and other methods of raising money for the School and Temple.

Temple Sisterhood

Another organization, a section of the Council of Jewish Women, had been organized in 1895. This group functioned until 1904 when the Ladies Auxiliary of the Temple was formed. At the third meeting of this group its name was changed to B'nai Yeshurun Sisterhood.

When the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods was formed on January 21, 1913, this Sisterhood became one of its forty-nine auxiliaries. Total membership of the Federation was 5,000. Today the National Federation prides itself on its Sisterhoods with a total membership of 55,000.

In the following year, 1914, the Benevolent Society and the Sisterhood united under one constitution. At first there was some opposition to the union, as many of the older members were reluctant to have the Benevolent Society lose its identity. To please them the new organization was called the United Benevolent Society, by which name it was known

until 1920 when it became the Temple Sisterhood, its present title.

Today the Des Moines Sisterhood has a membership of 140. It aims to "Further every interest of the Temple and its school, to aid Jewish benevolent societies in all possible ways, to cultivate the religious, educational and civic interests of its members, and to promote closer fellowship among its members and in the congregation."

President of the Temple Sisterhood for 1940 is Mrs. William Friedman; First Vice-President, Mrs. J. J. Singer; Second Vice-President, Mrs. Harry Jacobson; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Maurice Noun; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Raymond Antick, and Treasurer, Mrs. Sam Horowitz.

After 65 years of devoted labor for their cause, the wives, daughters and sisters of B'nai Jeshurun still carry on in their beautiful home, an inspiration for finer and nobler work in the future.

Tifereth Israel Sisterhood

When Tifereth Israel Synagogue was organized in 1901, the ladies who were active in the Hebrew Ladies Aid Society decided that a women's group should be formed to carry on the work of the synagogue. This group, called the Women's Auxiliary, was created almost simultaneously with the beginning of the congregation itself.

Most active in the organization of the Women's Auxiliary were Mrs. L. Davidson, Mrs. L. Ginsberg, Mrs. J. Chapman, Mrs. Sam Robinson, Mrs. S. Chapman and Mrs. Meyer Hockenberg.

Almost at once the Auxiliary took an active interest in the affairs of the congregation, at the same time carrying on charitable work. One of the most important early activities of this group was their continual promotion of the Talmud Torah idea in Des Moines.

In 1920 the name of the Women's Auxiliary was changed to Sisterhood, its present title.

Daughterhood

Wishing to encourage the younger women in more active support of the congregation, the Sisterhood group sponsored the formation of the Daughterhood of Tifereth Israel in 1929.

Mrs. Isador Robinson, Mrs. Hyam Grund, Mrs. Leonard Hockenberg, Mrs. Melvin Kramer, Mrs. Sol Gottlieb, Mrs. Morris Weil and Mrs. Charles Goldstein were most active in the beginning of the Daughterhood work, and the organization began its life with more than 75 members.

For seven years the Daughterhood functioned as an independent and most active organization. Then in 1936 the Daughterhood and the Sisterhood again were merged.

The Tifereth Israel Sisterhood carries on many activities at the present time. The group keeps the synagogue in repair and maintains the synagogue kitchen and the clubhouse. They pay the interest on the synagogue mortgage and, through the Saul and Mary Davidson Fund, they contribute to the retirement of the mortgage principal.

Mary Ginsberg Fund

Through the Mary Ginsberg Memorial Fund, the women of the Tifereth Israel Sisterhood continue their charitable work. Those persons who do not need direct relief except at holidays, in times of sickness or on other special occasions, are aided through this fund. Baskets of food and unleavened bread are distributed to the needy at the holidays, and doctor and hospital bills are paid.

Until her death, Mrs. Saul Davidson was Honorary President of the Tifereth Israel Sisterhood. Mrs. Hyam Grund is the 1940 President; Mrs. H. L. Davidson, First Vice-President; Mrs. Louis Green, Second Vice-President;

Mrs. David Miller, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Leo. Chapman, Financial Secretary; Mrs. Hyman Miller, Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. Sol Gottlieb, Treasurer, and Mrs. B. Schwartz,



MARY GINSBERG

Chaplain. Mrs. Leonard Hockenberg is Secretary of the Mary Ginsberg Memorial Fund.

Bethel Jacob Sisterhood

The Sisterhood group of Congregation Bethel Jacob was formed in 1921, with a group consisting of Mrs. M. Chapman, Mrs. M. Lappen, Mrs. S. W. Cohen, Mrs. C. H. Green and Mrs. S. C. Lipton as its leading organizers. First President of this newly formed women's organization was Mrs. Sara Silver; she was succeeded in this position shortly by Mrs. R. Lappen. Other first officers of the group were Mrs. S. W. Cohen, Secretary, and Mrs. Florence Kramer, Treasurer.

The Sisterhood began its organized existence with a

concerted drive for membership which netted over 140 new members. With this success, the group was able to very actively carry out its primary purpose of promoting the interests of the synagogue.

Utilities bills have been continually paid from the Sisterhood's funds; and during the years of its existence the Sisterhood group has remodeled the outside of the synagogue and kept both inside and outside in good repair, contributed to the support of the Hebrew bath house, helped with the mortgage on the synagogue and bought prayer books. Funds are being collected by the Sisterhood at this writing for a complete remodeling of the synagogue basement.

Officers of the group for 1940 are Mrs. Joe Feintech, President; Mrs. Louis Hyman, Vice-President; Mrs. Louis Fenberg, Secretary, and Mrs. Leon Greenberg, Treasurer. Present membership of the Bethel Jacob Sisterhood is over 100.

B'nai Israel Sisterhood

Youngest of the Sisterhood groups of Des Moines is the sisterhood of Congregation B'nai Israel, formed in 1936 under the leadership of Mrs. Harry Swartz, who was the first president, Mrs. L. Musin and other women of the congregation.

Officers of the B'nai Israel sisterhood for 1940 are Mrs. D. Biber, President; Mrs. H. Weiss, Vice-President; Mrs. Harry Hoffman, Secretary, and Mrs. I. Rapoport, Treasurer. The sisterhood was organized with 50 members and has increased that membership to 65.

Members of the organization are interested principally in work for the congregation or on the building itself, but they also do emergency work, contribute to charity, have entertainments and celebrate holiday occasions.

Chapter XVI

B'NAI B'RITH

Second only to the synagogues in promoting Jewish unity and progress are the fraternal organizations. Dominant among these is B'nai B'rith.

Mr. Morris Riegelman had been a member of the order in Terre Haute, Indiana, before his coming to Des Moines. He soon began to advocate the establishment of a B'nai B'rith chapter in Des Moines.

The general desire for a lodge was evidenced by the almost immediate petition for a charter, signed by the requisite number of names. This petition was sent to the officers of the District Grand Lodge, and on April 16, 1882, Mr. Samuel Woolner, President of District Number 6 and Mr. A. Loeb, Secretary of the District, came to Des Moines with the necessary Grand Lodge dispensation to form the new organization.

First Initiation

The first meeting of the candidates for initiation into the order was held in the Temple of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in the afternoon of April 16, 1882. In addition to Mr. M. Riegelman, there were two others in the city who were already members of the order, Mr. M. Wilchinski and

Mr. M. Younker, and they also became charter members of the new lodge.

Those initiated by the visiting D. G. L. officers were: Herman Younker, D. C. Meyers, B. Berkson, M. Shloss, Wm. Samish, Julius Jacobs, D. Goldman, Leopold Levy, Leopold Hirsch, Samuel Redstone, Rev. D. Davidson, G. Jacobs, Barney Younker, L. Kuttner, S. Joseph, M. Samish, Sr.

H. Riegelman, I. Riegelman and Mr. M. Samish, Jr., had signed the petition for a charter but were unavoidably absent from the first meeting. By unanimous consent, however, their names were added to the list of charter members, and they were initiated at the meeting immediately following the visit of the D. G. L. officers.

Mr. M. Riegelman was honored with the first election to the President's chair, while Mr. Samuel Redstone was chosen for the Vice-Presidency.

The first regular meeting place of the lodge was Red Men's Hall over 412 Walnut Street. Later meetings were held at various places throughout the city until in 1905 the Circle Hall Club Rooms were rented for B'nai B'rith.

At its meetings discussions led by the Committee on Intellectual advancement, debates, general discussions or entertainment were always popular ways to spend an evening. Through its offices, subjects of general interest to Judaism or to the Order were discussed by the lodge or befor it. Purim dances or entertainments of some kind were annual and semi-annual features.

Membership Drive

From time to time the lodge made concerted effort to increase its membership. In May, 1889, at a mass meeting of the Jewish citizens of Des Moines, attended by Messrs. Swimmer and Bamburger, President and Secretary of the D. G. L. Number 6, fourteen new members were convinced

they should affiliate with Des Moines B'nai B'rith. In 1894 a similar meeting again increased the lodge membership by 14.

In 1905 the largest mass meeting ever held up to that time by Jewish citizens of Des Moines welcomed Messrs. Goldberg, Meyer and Seelenfreund, President, First Vice-President and Secretary of the D. G. L.

Aroused to the greatest enthusiasm by their address, a class of forty-five new members was initiated into the order within two or three weeks.

District Convention

In 1904 the Des Moines B'nai B'rith was chosen as the meeting place of the annual District Grand Lodge convention. Mr. Henry Riegelman was again president for that year. He appointed J. Mandelbaum, S. Redstone, M. Shloss, I. Miller, S. Joseph, J. Younker, F. Brody, M. Miller, M. Goldman and M. Glickman to help plan and carry out the program. The men and women of the community united to make the affair a success, and the convention delegates praised their efforts highly.

Through the years the Des Moines chapter of B'nai B'rith grew without any other outstanding incidents marking its progress. Its members continued to be zealous in carrying out the purposes of their organization, support for orphans, the aged and the infirm, for hospitals, technical schools, Americanization classes and immigrant aid, promoting the development and encouragement of youth and protection of the Jewish people.

Loss of Interest

However, during the first years of the 1930's the activities of B'nai B'rith in Des Moines seemed to slacken. World conditions before Hitler's advent had been favorable to the

Jewish people, and there seemed to be less work to do. But with the resurgence of anti-Semitism and the ever increasing need for champions of the Jewish cause, B'nai B'rith experienced a revival.

Mr. Levitt's Work

Under the leadership of Mr. Ellis Levitt, then President, the Des Moines chapter of B'nai B'rith was reorganized, the by-laws were rewritten and a very successful campaign for new members was conducted. Mr. Sol Ginsberg and Mr. Julius Wolf were successive Presidents after Mr. Levitt, and they kept the work going. Consequently the scope of Des Moines B'nai B'rith activities has been constantly increasing.

Highlights of the year's program are a picnic in August and a Fathers and Sons banquet in March. Regular meetings are held once every month in the Jewish Community Center. For the last several years members of B'Nai B'rith have been the spark plug of the drive for funds of the Des Moines' Jewish Welfare Fund.

Through its Hillel foundations, the B'nai B'rith has encouraged Jewish unity on college campuses. Iowa has one branch of the Hillel foundation, at the State University. Another is at the State College at Ames. To these groups the local B'nai B'rith contributes as does the Des Moines Jewish Welfare Fund.

Eastern Iowa Council

For some time the chapters of B'nai B'rith in eastern Iowa had felt the need of some unifying group embracing more than one chapter but smaller and subordinate to the District Grand Lodge. In May of 1940 representatives of eight eastern Iowa B'nai B'rith lodges met at Cedar Rapids to form such a group.

Result of this meeting was the formation of the Eastern Iowa Council, made up of chapters in Cedar Rapids, Water-

loo, Mason City, Ottumwa, Iowa City, Muscatine, Dubuque and Des Moines. Jules Gerelick of Dubuque was named the first President of the council; Henry Carnay of Cedar Rapids, First Vice-President; Louis Shulman of Iowa City, Second Vice-President; Herman Feldman of Ottumwa, Secretary; Dr. Pearlman of Muscatine, Treasurer, and Leo Gradinger of Waterloo, Member of the General Committee for the District Grand Lodge.

A movement is about to be launched to consolidate the Eastern Iowa Council and the Iowa-Nebraska Council of B'nai B'rith.

Membership of Des Moines B'nai B'rith today stands at over 400. This is the largest membership ever attained by Des Moines B'nai B'rith and was accomplished after a membership drive held in February, 1941 and headed by Jack Wolfe. Officers of the chapter for 1941 are: Monitor, Jack Wolfe; President, Dr. A. G. Fleischman; First Vice-President, Ike Sherman; Second Vice-President, Morton Bookey; Secretary, Ben Sherman; Treasurer, Louis Adelman; Warden, Henry Rise.

A. Z. A.

In line with the B'nai B'rith policy of encouraging Jewish youth, that organization now sponsors an organization for Jewish men between the ages of 16 and 21, Aleph Zadik Aleph, or A. Z. A. for short.

Mr. Sam Beber of Omaha originated the idea, and in 1924 a small Des Moines organization of young men called Aleph Aleph read of Mr. Beber's new Jewish organization, asked for and received a charter, becoming the fourth A. Z. A. chapter to be organized anywhere in the country. There were 18 charter members in the Des Moines group.

Charles Shane became the first President of Des Moines A. Z. A., with Lou Williams as Vice-President and Joe Bern-

stein, Secretary. Later, when the national A. Z. A. organization was formed, Charles Shane became the first national president.

At its founding the A. Z. A. was an independent organization, but Mr. Beber worked for and finally secured the sponsorship of B'nai B'rith.

The national convention of A. Z. A. for 1927, which was held in Des Moines, declared the Des Moines chapter to be



A CHARITY FOOD SALE BY A. Z. A. GROUP

the year's most outstanding chapter of A. Z. A. anywhere in the country, and the Des Moines club was awarded a plaque attesting to this fact.

The Des Moines chapter takes part in all the activities sponsored by the A. Z. A., athletics, forensic work, essay

contests and debates, as well as a good deal of certain types of charitable work. The Des Moines group has won several national basketball and other athletic championships.

In 1938 Stanley Rabinowitz became National President, the second Des Moines man to achieve this honor. Mr.



STANLEY RABINOWITZ

Rabinowitz is now a member of the Supreme Advisory Council of the A. Z. A., and Sam Rubinson, another Des Moines man, is also a member of this group.

The idea of a junior Aleph Zadik Aleph organization originated in Des Moines in 1938. In the experimental stage since that time, this junior group has proved very successful, and it is expected to supplant the Cub Scouts organization now sponsored by the national organization.

Officers of the Des Moines A. Z. A. for 1940 are: Bernard Arenson, President; Sheldon Schatz, Vice-President; Milton Zeichik, Secretary and Charles Levine, Treasurer.

Chapter XVII

JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

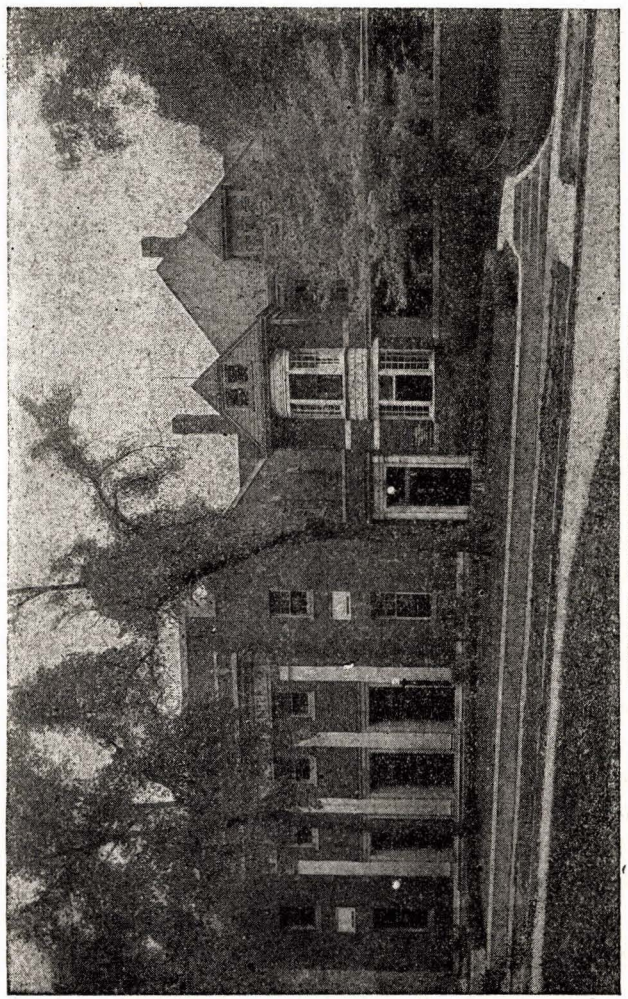
Realization of the need for Jewish settlement work had been growing for some time among Jewish leaders of the city. Finally in April of 1907 a committee consisting of Mrs. Anselm Frankel, Mr. Isaac Friedlich, Mr. Morris Samish, Mrs. Sam Weinstock, Miss Flora Dunlap and Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer met to consider the organization of such work.

As a result of their meeting, plans were made for the supervision of Jewish settlement work by Roadside Settlement, with the Jewish group paying the salary of a social worker and the Roadside group providing the worker with room and board.

Beginning the new work in September, 1907 as first social worker for the Jewish Settlement Association was Miss Annette Mann., who provided efficient direction for the unfamiliar work. Her work was furthered by the splendid leadership of Miss Ida Jacobs, the next social worker for the settlement.

Bremer School

It soon became apparent, however, that the Roadside settlement was too far away from the center of Jewish population on the East Side. To overcome this handicap the Board of Education of the city's public schools graciously permitted



JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER
AND TALMUD TORAH BLDGS.

the Settlement to use Bremer school for afternoon and evening classes, and Miss Anna Stohlgren, then principal of Bremer school, gave encouragement and assistance.

The first night school ever undertaken in Des Moines was begun by the Settlement group in Bremer school. This important work drew the gratifying enrollment of one hundred and fourteen men and women of different nationalities.

Flora Dunlap

Most responsible, perhaps, for the Settlement's continuing life and growth during the period of its infancy and until the group was able to go on its independent way was Miss Flora Dunlap. Unerringly recognizing the needs of the Des Moines Jewish community, Miss Dunlap although not Jewish, contributed her wholehearted effort and support. Ably and sympathetically directing the activities of the Settlement during the crucial period when it was still groping to find its proper sphere.

Soon the Jewish Settlement association, in order to accommodate its gradually expanding program, opened a small gymnasium in a room on East Third and Locust Streets, which was put at the disposal of the group, rent free, by Mr. Frank P. Mattes.

From there the House was moved to two rooms back of the Capital City Bank Building at East Fifth and Locust Streets. Then in 1911, in memory of his mother, Mrs. Tina Younker, Mr. Aaron Younker bought a house at East Fifth and Maple Streets, which he generously put at the disposal of the Settlement group.

New Location

Before many years had passed, even this sizable home proved inadequate. Then Mrs. Sam Weinstock's survey of the growing Jewish population demonstrated definitely that the Jewish population center was moving from the East to

the West Side, along the river and out toward North Des Moines. So in 1921, a successful campaign, confined entirely to the members of the local Jewish community, resulted in the purchase of the Turner property at West Eighth Street and Forest Avenue.

Endless time and energy devoted to the building plans by the building committee, Mr. Nathan Frankel, chairman, Mr. Sol Sheuerman and Mr. Harry Ginsberg, resulted in the first breaking of ground in 1922. On January 20, 1924 the present commodious home was formally dedicated and opened to the public.

Just west of the Center was placed the fine new Talmud Torah school building, while just north of the old Turner homestead the building housing the gymnasium and pool was placed.

In 1912 Miss Faye Biederman became director of the Center, and under her management the Center entered into a program of development and expansion of activities which still continues, giving the Jewish Community Center an ever wider appeal to the people of Des Moines, regardless of creed or nationality. In her many years of devoted service, Miss Biederman laid a fine and lasting foundation upon which stands an institution of unlimited possibilities.

Mrs. Max Mayer

To the present director, Mrs. Max Mayer, the "American Hebrew" pays this tribute, "As a charming hostess as well as a practical business woman, she presides at her work; she has foreseen the heights to which her work might go and, keeping the goal steadily in mind, has constantly striven toward the ideals she has envisioned."

Since Mrs. Mayer's coming in 1925, the "cultural, educational and spiritual growth of the Jewish Community Cen-

ter has been truly marvelous." She gathered together a half a hundred different strands of social and communal life and wove them into one harmonious fabric. "With her ceaseless



MRS. MAX MAYER

energy, enthusiasm and understanding, Mrs. Mayer has won the devotion of all who work with her at the center." In tribute to her work Mrs. Mayer was awarded the Des Moines Tribune's Community Service Award for 1930.

Kovod

A local chapter of "Kovod," the National Honor Society of Jewish Community Centers, was approved by the Board of the Des Moines Center and instituted by the Grand Council in 1930. Purpose of this society is to give merited recognition to men and women, not members of the Board or of the Staff, who render outstanding service to their institution.

At fitting recognition of their long, outstanding leader-

ship and service, the names of Mrs. Aaron Blotcky, Mr. Ben Sherman and Mr. Louis Shneider, Mrs. Louis Shneider, Lloyd Isaacson, Mr. Louis Adelman and Rabbi Mannheimer now appear on the Des Moines Kovod roll.

Silver Anniversary

In 1932 the Jewish Community Center celebrated the silver anniversary of its founding with many social affairs and impressive ceremonies. This anniversary was the occasion for high praise of the Center's work from many distinguished leaders. Mr. J. W. Studebaker, then Superintendent of the Des Moines school, now national Commissioner of Education, declared, "The Jewish Community Center holds a unique position in the lives of the citizens of Des Mones. Its civic forum, its book forum and its educational clubs are inspiring mental stimuli . . . It is significant for the spirit of brotherhood and good will which pervades its entire organization.

Activities

To finance its special projects, such as building, remodeling or Free Home Camp, the Center invites contributions or plans money raising events, of which the Annual County Fair is the most striking example, but for the most part the Center is financed through the Des Moines Community Chest.

Charging no fee for any of its activities, the Free Home Camp, held annually by the Center, is unique among organizations of its kind anywhere in the country. All children, whether privileged or under-privileged, are welcomed to instruction in dramatics, games, sports, handicraft, sewing, dancing, journalism and musical comedy.

The Center's children's play school does important work for the pre-school age children of the city, teaching them at an early age how to live and work successfully and happily together.

The Center's pool and gymnasium attract thousands annually, while the branch of the City Public Library is an ever popular service of the Center, as is the **Community News,** published monthly.

Many of the Center's facilities are available at low rental to various groups; and church, fraternal, political, racial, patriotic and commercial organizations have taken advantage of this privilege. The Center's large auditorium is especially popular in this regard.

Civic Forum

Attracting nationwide attention with its Civic Forum, the Community Center has done everything in its power to aid in making this work worthwhile. A surprising number of nationally known figures have made important contributions to contemporary thought at meetings of the Forum, among them Clarence Darrow, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver, Will Durant, Mark Sullivan, Norman Thomas, Stuart Chase and Ludwig Lewisohn.

Board and Grand Council

The governing body of the Jewish Community Center consists of a Board, headed by Robert Lappen and a Grand Council.

The Grand Council was organized in 1923 under the leadership of Mr. Ben Sherman, Mr. Sam Isaacson, Miss Jeanette Lutz and Miss Ida Grund. The Council is composed of representatives of each of the more than 35 Jewish organizations which meet at the Community Center.

The purpose of the Grand Council is to coordinate the activities of these Jewish groups and to work for the beautifying and enlarging of the facilities of the Center itself.

Since its organization, the Council has provided funds for the creation of the Silver Room, built and furnished the

basement recreation rooms, built the porch on the house, furnished the cyclorama in the auditorium and the drapes for the Center, helped in the building of the addition to the kitchen, which was made possible by the donation of Mrs. Manassah Frankel and her family, and has carried out countless other improvements not included in the regular budget of the Center.

The annual County Fair at the Center is sponsored by the Grand Council and is its only fund raising campaign. From these funds the Council also helps to sponsor the summer Home Camp.

The officers of the Grand Council for 1940 are Mr. Louis Adelman, President; Mr. Sidney Rubin, First Vice-President; Miss Anne Cohen, Second Vice-President; Miss Julia Chapman, Secretary, and Mrs. Aaron Blotcky, Treasurer.

Today, the Jewish Community Center stands as an organization dedicated to all that is cultural, educational, spiritual and intellectual—an organization which offers advantages to everyone in the city.

The year 1940 marks the thirty-third year of Rabbi Mannheimer's continuous service on the Center's Board of Directors, and "to him the entire community owes a debt of appreciation and gratitude."

Chapter XVIII

JEWISH WELFARE FUND

Realizing that solicitation of welfare funds by individual organizations, whether they were local or national, resulted in much duplication of effort and in very unequal distribution, a group of the Jewish leaders of Des Moines, headed by Rabbi Mannheimer, took action to remedy the situation.

On April 15, 1914, an organization called the United Jewish Philanthropies of Des Moines was formed. This was one of the earliest and perhaps the first group ever established to coordinate by a central fund the money-raising campaigns of many Jewish organizations in any given city.

The movement was immediately successful and was much copied by other cities throughout the country.

All-In-One Campaign

Until 1936 two drives were carried on, one for local organizations and another for national and overseas groups. In 1936 it was decided to conduct only one mammoth drive to solicit funds for all organizations. By amendment to the articles of incorporation, the name of the organization was changed to Jewish Welfare Fund at the same time. This was the beginning of the "ALL-IN-ONE" campaign.

The local organization is affiliated with the National Council of Jewish Federations and Welfare Funds, which

gives information as to the needs and significance of various groups applying for funds.

Increased Subscriptions

Since the reorganization of the Welfare fund, the number of subscribers and amount subscribed have shown gratifying increases. In 1935 there were 500 subscribers. In 1936, the first year after the change, there were 650 subscribers.

Ellis I. Levitt was the campaign director for 1936, and workers under his direction raised a total of over $30,000.

Campaign chairman for 1937 was Will Freeman. In that year the quota of $35,000 was reached and passed.

With M. O. Kahn as campaign chairman and Ben Sanders Vice-Chairman, the 1938 campaign succeeded in soliciting pledges totaling more than $36,000.

Ben Sanders and I. E. Stone were the chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively for the 1939 drive, which succeeded in raising a total of $67,432, more than $1,400 above the year's quota.

In 1940 I. E. Stone took over the chairmanship of the Welfare Fund drive, assisted by Harry Bookey as Vice-Chairman. From the 705 subscribers who contributed in this campaign, a total of $73,500 was raised.

Rabbi Mannheimer is present president of the organization; Ellis Levitt is Vice-President; Harold Leener, Secretary, and Morris Mandelbaum, Treasurer. Members of B'nai B'rith lodge are especially active in the work of the Welfare Fund, organizing themselves into teams and indefatigably soliciting funds.

The Jewish people have responded promptly and generously to the drives, and no quota has been undersubscribed.

Eight local, 29 national and nine overseas organizations

now receive funds from the Des Moines Jewish Welfare Fund. In addition small subventions are granted to 55 shivahs of Palestine and Europe.

FEDERATED JEWISH CHARITIES

Responding to the need for a more thorough coordination of charitable activities of the Ladies' Benevolent Society, Hebrew Ladies Aid Society and Hebrew Ladies Relief in order to avoid duplication, representatives of those organizations met in 1908 and formed the Federated Jewish Charities.

Rabbi Mannheimer was the first President of this group, and, with the exception of two years, he has served continuously in that office.

Mrs. Weinstock

As Superintendent of the Federated Jewish Charities, Mrs. Sam Weinstock served without compensation from the beginning of the organization until her death in November of 1938, a period of 30 years. She devoted her whole life to the cause of Jewish welfare in Des Moines.

Mrs. Weinstock was born in Germany and came to this country in 1888. She married Samuel Weinstock in 1894. Always interested in social work, she advocated a state pension for widows and had the satisfaction of seeing this legislation adopted.

One of the founders of the Community Center, Mrs. Weinstock conducted an exhaustive survey of the Jewish population, resulting in the placement of the Community Center in its present location.

Mrs. Weinstock was an organizer and first president of Hadassah, helped in the organization of Broadlawns Public Hospital, the Des Moines health center and the Community Chest. On her death the members of the Jewish Community paid tribute to her memory with a framed memorial.

Activities and Service

Succeeding Mrs. Weinstock as Superintendent in 1939 was Miss Marcia Sherman, who brought to her office the benefit of her previous service in the Emergency Relief work of Polk County.

In addition to Rabbi Mannheimer and Miss Sherman, the 1940 officers of the organization are Mrs. Abe Leener, Secretary and Harry Ginsberg, Treasurer. The late Mrs. S. Davidson was Vice-President of the group until her death, but at this writing no successor to the Vice-Presidency has been appointed.

Office secretaries for the Federated Jewish Charities have been Mrs. Hortense Moss, Belle Silverman and the present secretary, Mrs. Joseph Rogovoi.

During the year 1938, 2,918 persons were given relief by the Federated Jewish Charities and 56 families were carried on direct relief by the organization. Needy persons are discovered in three ways, if they report directly to the office, if they are reported by relatives or friends or if they are referred to the Jewish Charities office by the Polk County Emergency relief.

The Federated Jewish Charities carries on work in 17 distinct fields of charitable and social service: Immigration affidavits, inquiries from persons abroad in regard to relatives living in Des Moines, physical, moral and economic problem, problems of immigration and citizenship, domestic problems, prisoners' service (including petition for paroles and prison religious services), study of family conditions, aid at times of death, providing recreation, education and vocational education, answering out of town inquiries, relief for transients and direct relief and investigation.

With the tremendously growing need, the Federated

Jewish Charities and all other charitable organizations lay increasing stress on refugee and immigration work.

Hebrew Ladies' Relief

Of the three organizations which coordinated their efforts to form the Federated Jewish Charities in 1908, two still maintain an independent existence, Hebrew Ladies Relief and Hebrew Ladies Aid Societies.

The Hebrew Ladies Relief Society was organized in 1896, with 46 charter members. Th founders of the group were Mrs. S. Levinson, Mrs. J. R. Cohen, Mrs. F. Gottstein and Mrs. F. Brody. From its inception the group worked with other charitable organizations and sought to avoid duplication. One of the early efforts of this group was the opening of a public bath house, a venture of great benefit to the orthodox group of the city.

Present officers of the Hebrew Ladies Relief Society are Mrs. T. Rubinson, President; Mrs. M. Kamraz, Secretary, and Mrs. L. Toubes, Treasurer.

Hebrew Ladies' Aid

The Hebrew Ladies Aid Society was the second oldest relief organization in the city. It was founded in 1894 with a charitable membership of twenty. By 1908 it had 116 members and had fifteen families on its pension list in that year, disbursed about $50 per month for relief purposes and had a "Gemiloth Chesid" fund to supply strangers to the city with meals and lodging for three days.

The late Mrs. S. Davidson was President of Hebrew Ladies Aid, and her successor has not yet been appointed. Other officers are Mrs. Joe Sorokin, Vice President; Mrs. Abe Leener, Financial Scretary, and Mrs. Leonard Hockenberg, Treasurer.

In a world gone mad charity looms as a challenge so

enormous that it seemingly cannot possibly be met, but against this challenge the Jewish people of Des Moines have thrown and continue to throw the weight of all their many abilities.

Refugee Work

Through the state coordinating committee, headed by Mr. Joseph Rosenfield and through the Joint Distribution Committee, headed by Rabbi Mannheimer refugee work is carried out in Iowa in cooperation with the Chicago district.



JOSEPH ROSENFIELD

On May 12, 1940, Mr. Rosenfield and Rabbi Mannheimer called a statewide meeting to discuss the overseas refugee situation and the best means of meeting these needs. Response to this call was obtained from all over the state.

Refugee work in Des Moines, with a threefold program of emergency housing, job placement and later complete

orientation, has met with cooperation from almost the whole Jewish community.

In one phase of refugee work, Mr. Sam Abramson and Mr. Julian Brody, as an affidavit committee, prepare affidavits declaring that those Jewish refugees who arrive in the city without funds or relatives will not become public charges.

Another part of the refugee work of exceptional value is also being done by the Women's division of the coordinating committee. With Mrs. Ellis Levitt as Chairman and Mrs. A. G. Fleischman, Mrs. Clarence Marco, Mrs. Ben Stern and Mrs. Merrill Oransky as members, this committee has been surprisingly successful in visiting employers and securing jobs for refugees coming to Des Moines. However, they do not stop with this job placement but visit the refugees in their new homes and do everything possible to aid them in reorienting themselves.

Chapter XIX

ZIONIST ORGANIZATION

Although there had been ardent advocates of the Zionist cause in Des Moines for many years, there had been no organized effort to form a Zionist group until 1906.

Dr. R. Farber, then Rabbi of Tifereth Israel, Dr. D. Unger, F. Phillips, J. S. Isralsy and Rabbi Zeichik were the leaders of the original group whose efforts finally brought the Zionist organization to Des Moines in 1906. These men became, respectively, the President, Vice-President, Secretary and treasurer of the first organization. When Dr. Farber left the city, Dr. Unger became President of the group, a position which he filled faithfully and well.

Others who were active, capable supporters in the early years of the group were Mr. Aaron Blotcky, who served as Secretary of the Zionist organization for several years, Mrs. L. Ginsberg, a devoted worker for the general group until Hadassah was founded and afterwards an untiring member of that group, Mrs. H. Rubenstein and Mr. A. Silverman, whose term as President was served during the trying world war years.

Renewed Interest

Issuance of the Balfour Declaration in 1917, which outlined the British willingness to see the establishment of a

Jewish homeland in Palestine, gave the Zionist movement the impetus it had lacked before. The early Zionist group in Des Moines had been small, not more than thirty or thirty-five members. Naturally its work was not extensive, but after 1917 the membership and scope of the movement progressed rapidly.

At about this time Mrs. Alice Blotcky succeeded her husband as Secretary of the Zionist organization, a position which she still holds. For over twenty-three years Mrs. Blotcky has been active and devoted to the Zionist cause.

In 1923 Dr. Chaim Weizman of London and Rehoboth, Palestine, present President of the World Zionist organization, who held that position even at that early date, was to address a meeting in Omaha. Since this was to be Dr. Weizman's only meeting in the whole midwest region, a delegation of 25 Des Moines Zionist leaders went to Omaha to attend the dinner in honor of the distinguished speaker.

Distinguished Speakers

However, the Des Moines Zionist group has brought many distinguished speakers to this city. Louis Lipsky of New York, then national President of the Zionist Organization of America, has addressed Des Moines Zionists twice.

The city's Zionist groups have also been privileged to hear Judge Morris Rothenberg of New York, another President of the national group, Pierre Van Passen, famous Dutch journalist, Maurice Samuel, noted lecturer, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise of New York, Rabbi Hillel Silver of Cleveland, Ittamar Ben-Avi of Tel Aviv, one of Palestine's outstanding journalists and lecturers and Dr. Solomon Goldman 1940 Z. O. A. President.

In 1926 the first state Zionist conference was brought to Des Moines under the leadership of Mr. Louis Oransky.

More cooperation between the Zionist organizations of the state was Mr. Oransky's aim, and he envisioned a statewide conference as the means of accomplishing this objective.

Delegates to the conference came from almost every city in the state with any considerable Jewish population. Among the officers elected were Mr. Oransky as State Chairman and Mrs. Blotcky as State Secretary.



JACK WOLFE

Again in 1927 a state Zionist conference was held in Des Moines. At this meeting the distinguishd Zionist Judge William Lewis of Philadelphia, then Vice-President of the National group, was the principal speaker.

The primary objective of the first union of the state's Zionist groups was fund raising. These early conferences

did a fine piece of work, but by 1928 their activities had begun to languish.

State Organization

Not until January, 1938 was there another state Zionist convention. Stimulus for this movement came about primarily through the efforts of Jack Wolfe, managing editor of the Iowa Jewish News, and the President of the local Zionist organization since 1936.

The outcome of this statewide meeting of representatives from twelve Iowa cities was the formation of the Zionist Organization of Iowa, with Jack Wolfe as President and Mrs. Blotcky as Secretary. An executive board of 17 members was elected. Professor Gustave Klausner of St. Louis University and Maurice Samuel, noted author and lecturer, were the principal speakers at the 1938 meeting.

New Chapters

Formation of the state group gave added impetus to the movement, and under the direction of the Zionist Organization of Iowa, drives for new chapters were conducted throughout the state, new chapters were formed, a statewide picnic was held in Des Moines, and under the leadership of Mr. Irving Stone, a membership drive added more than 200 new names to the roster of Des Moines Zionists.

In 1939 plans were formulated for the combining of Nebraska Zionists with the Iowa group. The representatives of 23 communities in the two states met in Des Moines on December 17 of that year for meetings at which Rabbi Solomon Goldman, President of the Zionist Organization of America, and Rabbi David Goldstein, Omaha, were the outstanding speakers.

The latter was chosen as first president of the Iowa-Nebraska Zionist organization. Adolph Davis of Sioux City was named first Vice-President; Rabbi Harold Gordon, Wa-

terloo, Second Vice-President; Mrs. Aaron Blotcky, Secretary and Joseph Zox, Des Moines, Treasurer.

Mr. Wolfe was selected as Chairman of the Executive Committee, and other members of the Committee were E. Marks of Omaha and Louis Wolf, Mason City. In appreciaof their services, Mr. Wolfe and Mrs. Blotcky were presented testimonials.

The Des Moines Zionist district played a most important part in the formation of the Iowa and Iowa-Nebraska group, and, from its ineffectual beginnings, the city's Zionist organization has grown to become one of the best known and active groups in the country with a membership of 250.

Officers of the Des Moines group for 1941 are:
Jack Wolfe, Chairman of the Board.
Joe Zox, President.
Dr. A. G. Freischman, Vice-President.
Jack Halevy, Vice-President.
Mrs. Aaron Blotcky, Secretary.
Louis J. Adelman, Treasurer.

Mizrachi

There are two other general Zionist groups in Des Moines, Mizrachi and Farband.

In 1915 Meyer Berlin, famous Zionist leader, came to Des Moines and organized a branch of Mizrachi, for a time the organization flourished, then died completely.

Not until 1936 was Mizrachi reorganized in Des Moines under the direction of Rabbi Miller. Rabbi Zeichik, who feels strongly that the growth of Palestine should be dominated by a return to the old cultural and religious values, has been President of Des Moines Mizrachi since its reorganization.

Treasurer of the group is Mr. M. Lappen and Secretary

is Mr. Sam Joseph, who have also held their positions since the re-forming of the organization.

The Des Moines Mizrachi takes particular interest in the schools of Palestine, and the schools supported by Mizrachi are claimed by many to be the best in that country. However, any movement which has as its aim the cultural and traditional religious development of Palestine will have the support of the Mizrachi group.

In the United States Mizrachi is smaller in membership than the Zionist Organization of America, but in the world at large Mizrachi is the largest of the Zionist groups.

While the Des Moines group is young and small, it has progressed steadily, and now has a membership of about 50. A women's group of this organization is dealt with in another chapter.

Farband

Farband is the third of the Des Moines Zionist groups whose membership is open to both men and women.

Feeling that the 125,000 organized laborers in Palestine were not adequately represented in Des Moines, a group of the Jewish people of the city began to work toward the organization of a Des Moines Farband (Jewish National Workers Alliance). They knew the task would be a difficult one with so many other worthy organizations needing support, but they felt the cause was one which could not be neglected.

So in the fall of 1937 the Des Moines chapter of Farband was organized. Active in initiating and organizing the group were Mr. and Mrs. J. Z. Stadlan, Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Gordon and Mr. and Mrs. M. Glazer. First officers of the Farband were Mr. Gordon, President; Mr. Stadlan, Secretary and Mr. J. Lachman, Treasurer.

Officers for 1940 are Mrs. Stadlan, President; Mr. Gor-

don, Recording Secretary; P. S. Pollen, Financial Secretary; M. Glazer, Treasurer and Joe Schaket, hospitaler.

Of course the primary interest of Farband is the welfare of the workers in Palestine, particularly those newly arrived. Funds from the various chapters go to buy tools for workers, tractors and other farm implements, printing presses and stock. The National group also maintains a children's home for working mothers and makes loans to workers as well as settling workers as they come to Palestine, supporting schools and paying for the printing of books by promising Palestine or Jewish-American authors.

Most of the funds for the local organization come from the Jewish welfare fund, but any additional money needed is raised by functions such as card parties.

The Des Moines Farband has recently contributed $100 for the purchase of Jewish land in Palestine, $100 for the settlement of an Italian refugee in Palestine and $185 to feed the stranded in Rumania. The Farband contributes to local funds as well as national, and the twice monthly business meetings are always followed by a cultural program.

An important part of the local work of Farband is the benefit program. Membership in the group gives any member the low cost advantages of the Farband sick, medical, hospitalization or old age funds.

Three years ago the organization had twenty charter members. Membership in the group today is thirty. However, because of the benefit payments, membership is somewhat restricted by age and health requirements.

Recent events in Europe have been ample justification for the work of the early Zionists and their successors. Today even the most bitter critics of Zionism have been forced to admit that the need for the work far surpasses the present activities of Zionists everywhere. In this great effort Des Moines Zionist groups are playing a diversified and ever more important part.

Chapter XX

HADASSAH

One of the most dynamic of all Jewish organizations in this country is Hadassah. The Des Moines chapter of Hadassah came about almost solely through the efforts of Mrs. Sam Weinstock. Mrs. Weinstock had been in the East where she had seen the fine work of Hadassah chapters there.

Consequently a chapter of Hadassah was organized in Des Moines in May of 1920, with Mrs. Weinstock as President. Subsequent Presidents of the organization have been Mrs. M. L. Kohn, Mrs. S. J. Grund, Mrs. B. Mendelssohn, Mrs. J. Sorokon, Mrs. Saul Davidson and Mrs. Max Mayer, the incumbent, who took office in 1935.

Through the years the members of Hadassah have worked unceasingly to meet the demands of their self-imposed tasks. Every quota of funds has been met, many over-subscribed. Any new project undertaken by the national group has met with instant support from the Des Moines chapter.

In addition to campaigns for funds, the Des Moines chapter holds annually certain other events, the blue box clearance, the linen shower, the Junior-Senior luncheon, the membership tea and the Donor Dinner. This last alone has

yielded, since its beginning in 1934, an average of $1,000 per year. Memorial funds for tree planting and other projects are also often raised.

Hadassah uses these funds in an ever increasing number of ways, infant welfare centers in Palestine, school luncheons, Rothschild-Hadassah Medical Center, Rural Sick Benefit fund, tree planting, and perhaps the two most important, the land buying program of the Jewish National Fund and the Youth Aliyah, not to mention many other important projects.

Each chapter of Hadassah carries out its own cultural work. Monthly meetings are held, in which study and cultural grwth play an important part. Oneg shabbat programs are held regularly.

The Des Moines chapter has been host to two regional conventions and will be host to the southwest regional convenion again in May of 1940. Delegates from the local chapter atted all regional and national conventions, in which they generally play an active part.

Des Moines Hadassah has also sponsored the appearance of a great many nationally and internationally known speakers of all creeds.

Another important work of Hadassah in Des Moines is the sponsorship of Young Judea, an organization which has undergone several periods of inactivity, but which is again very active in Des Moines.

Present officers of Des Moines Hadassah for 1941 are: President, Mrs. Ben Hurwitz; Vice-Presidents, Mrs. M. L. Sherman, Mrs. A. Leener, Mrs. Harry Swartz, Mrs. Max Mayer, Miss Sara Chapman; Treasurer, Mrs. Carl Sokolof; Financial Secretary, Mrs. Joe Ginsberg; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Sam Cohen; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. Joseph Lipshie.

Junior Hadassah

Beginning of the Des Moines Junior Hadassah was unusual. During the World War years, a group of Young Des Moines girls had been actively engaged in war work. At the close of the war Mrs. Nathan Frankel felt that co-operative work among the younger Jewish women should be encouraged to continue. From this idea the city's Junior Hadassah was organized in 1920.

This organization was probably the first group of its kind to be formed anywhere in the country, although the members of the group have never succeeded in getting national recognition of that fact.

Elizabeth Friedman (now Mrs. Leo Pasternack of New York) was the first President of the Junior Hadassah group. Others who were active in the formation of the group included Sara Chapman, Alice Blotcky and Helen Silverman.

The Des Moines Junior Hadassah has been, as the years passed, more and more active in promoting its two principal objectives: the raising of funds and otherwise supporting the work in Palestine and the promotion of Jewish culture at home. Funds are raised by the organization in many ways, dances, carnivals and other activities.

These funds the Des Moines Junior Hadassah contributes to the most important projects of their national organization, Meier Shfeyah (the Children's Village), in which young children (mostly orphans) are trained toward self-sufficiency, the orange grove, in which older children learn citrus culture as a profession, the Nurses Training School (a part of Hebrew University Medical Center in Palestine) and the Jewish National Fund.

In addition to their Palestine activities, Junior Hadassah is vitally nterested in the the building of Jewish culture. Every effort has been made to procure a real course

of study. Rabbi Levens serves as director for these cultural programs, which meet once every month at the home of a member.

Most important single atcivity of the Des Moines Junior Hadassah was the regional conference of 1935, attended by 125 delegates from Iowa and surrounding states, who met in the cit yto discuss their common problems. Rabbi Bromowitz of Chicago was the principal speaker at the banquet which brought the conference to a close.

The 1941 officers of Junior Hadassah include as President, Dorothy Druker; First Vice-President, Edith Arenberg; Second Vice-President, Jane Gordon; Financial Secretary, Elizabeth Arenson; Corresponding Secretaries, Elaine Rosen and Norma Ansher; Treasurer, Ruth Tolchinsky.

Total membership of Des Moines Junior Hadassah is now 118, and both officers and members look forward to another regional conference to be held in Des Moines within the next few years.

Business and Professional Hadassah

Forming in 1936 as a branch of Senior Hadassah, the Des Moines Business and Professional Chapter of Hadasah was organized under the leadership of Jennie Brody, Marcia Sherman, Sara Chapman, Gertrude Leener, Mignon Rubinson, Helen Chapman and Ida Copple; the first three in the order named became President, Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer of the group, positions which they still hold.

The 1940 membership of the group was 35, and their two primary aims are to promote Jewish culture through study groups and to raise funds for Youth Aliyah. For the past two years this organization has maintained a young refugee in Palestine at a cost of $360 per year.

Pioneer Women

Devoted to the couse of furthering the condition of the working girls of Palestine, the Des Moines chapter of Pioneer Women was formed in 1938 at the suggestion of Mrs. B. E. Rothblatt. The original officers have not yet been changed. They are Mrs. Joseph Rosenfield, Chairman; Mrs. Ben Ginsberg, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. B. E. Rothblatt, Secretary, and Mrs. Hyman Ginsberg, Treasurer.

The total membership of the group has grown rapidly from the 12 charter members to the 35 ladies who now make up the society.

Youngest of the four women's Zionist groups in Des Moines is the Women's branch of Mizrachi. Their aims are identical with the men's group of Mizrachi, and their 1940 officers are: President, Mrs. H. Zeichik; Vice-President, Mrs. M. Dworsky; Secretary, Mrs. Ike Smalls, and Treasurer, Mrs. M. Chapman.

Chapter XXI

TALMUD TORAH

To the small number of East-European Jews on the East Side of Des Moines more than forty years ago, "learning" was the measure of success. They could not see it die out in this land of freedom. From this persistent thought came the Talmud Torah idea.

Movement for a Hebrew school made headway in the year 1895-96. In spite of difficulties of organization the Hebrew Free School Society was formed, and an effort was made to establish a permanent Hebrew school for the Jewish children of Des Moines. However, as difficulties increased, this effort proved futile.

For about ten years the Jewish children whose parents insisted upon providing them with a Jewish education were tutored in Hebrew by private teachers.

When Tifereth Israel synagogue was dedicated, a Hebrew school was opened in the same structure, free to all the Jewish children of the city. While the Tifereth Israel Sunday School at that time had 75 to 80 pupils, enrolled, taught by four teachers, the free Hebrew school had a very limited number of pupils, taught by one teacher.

But by 1908 the Hebrew Free School had an average attendance of 50 pupils. In those days the Rabbis of the

congregations themselves used to teach in the Free School, using the Ivrith b'Anglith method. Some of the subjects taught were reading and translating of prayers and translating some portions of the Bible.

Charles Silberman

R. Marks was director of the Free School and chairman of its board. Other directors were B. Gottstein, S. Leonard and Louis Oransky. This limited teaching was continued until 1913, when Charles Silberman began to organize a modern Talmud Torah.

The Des Moines Talmud Torah as a community institution recognizes Charles Silberman as its founder and organizer. A prominent merchant of the city, active in all Jewish communal affairs, Mr. Silberman devoted much of his time and energy to the betterment of Congregation Bethel Jacob and was a generous contributor to all religious and charitable institutions.

Deeply interested in solving the problems of Jewish education, Mr. Silberman was determined to organize a community institution of Jewish learning. As soon as he succeeded in getting the co-operation of the United Jewish Philanthropies, he founded in April, 1914, the Des Moines Talmud Torah.

Two branches were opened, one located in East Des Moines at the Longfellow public school and one in the rooms of Tifereth Israel Synagogue on the West side. The East side branch opened with 30 pupils but by the fall of the year had increased that enrollment to 71. The West side school was attended by 33 children.

The Board

The modern method of Ivrith b'Ivrith was adopted, with courses of study covering seven years. Officers and members of the school board were Charles Silberman, President;

Sol Wolk, Vice-President; Rabbi H. Cohen, Recording Secretary; . I. Brody, Financial Secretary and Treasurer, with Rabbi Zeichik, Rabbi Mannheimer, S. Engelman, Philip Cohen, L. H. Cohen, M. Gordon, M. Lappen, M. Ellison, H. Lipshitz, O. Cohen, L. Oransky, A. Sherman, C. H. Rosenbaum, M. Samish, R. Marks, Rev. N. Goldstein and F. Zarnow as members of the board.

Charles Silberman, the president, remained the guiding spirit of the movement. Ardently he and his board worked for the healthy growth and development of Talmud Torah. In his report for the year 1915 Mr. Silberman writes, "A new spirit of enthusiasm is needed in the field of religious education of our children. The children are indifferent because their parents are. They will respond, however, if their parents will set the example, inspire and guide them as has always been the way of Israel in the past."

During the next year, 1916, 89 pupils enrolled in the East side branch and 31 in the West side branch. At the end of that year, Mr. Silberman reports: "The Mothers' Club of the Talmud Torah has grown considerably in strength during the past year . . . The need of a building of our own is urgent . . . we ask the Jewish community to keep this need of ours in mind."

With great energy and zeal Charles Silberman and his board worked untiringly to enlarge and improve the Talmud Torah.

Enrollment Shift

With the change in residence from East to West side by many of Des Moines' Jewish residents, the enrollment of the two schools began a decided shift. Number of pupils in the East branch had fallen to 83 in 1918, while the West branch had increased to 47. Mr. Silberman writes in his report of that year: "While the work of Talmud Torah has

been most creditable, it has not been entirely satisfactory. We need a building of our own. We herefore present our petition to the United Jewish Philanthropies and through them to the Jewish citizens of Des Moines to raise the funds needed for a Talmud Torah building. It is indispensable."

The population shift continued until the number of pupils in each of the schools was almost equal, 65 in the East and 64 in the West for the year 1919. Four teachers were employed, two in each branch, and two special teachers for religious instruction.

In the report of that year Mr. Silberman writes: 'Great credit is due to the Mothers' Club for their co-operation. It holds frequent meetings, at which plans for co-operation between parents and teachers are discussed. It provides entertainment for the children. Parents often take advantage of these meetings to interview teachers about the progress of their children."

In the year of 1921 the Talmud Torah had a deficit of $1,400.00. When Mr. Silberman appealed to the Mothers' Club for aid, a contribution of $1,000 was granted. The Board of Directors themselves, through their personal contributions, made up the balance of the deficit. At that time 77 pupils were enrolled in the East branch and 70 in the West branch.

New Building

During 1922 plans for a new and splendid building for the Des Moines Talmud Torah were formulated. The constant urging of Charles Silberman had borne fruit. In his annual report for that year, Mr. Silberman, as President of the Board, wrote:

"I am frequently asked why I insist upon the value of teaching Hebrew as a living language to our children. People ask: 'Is not Hebrew a dead language?' My answer is

this, 'Hebrew may be dead to some who do not know it. But a language is an expression of the soul of a people, and I want every Jewish boy and girl to feel that contact with the eternal soul of Israel—to get a bit of the "Shechinah" of the "holy spirit" which comes through a knowledge of the sacred language of their people.'

"I want them to go into life thus armored against the slings and arrows of hatred and prejudice. I want them to go out with their minds filled with the glories of Israel and their souls thrilled with its wonderful promise.

"Because of these things and for other important reasons, an educational institution such as the Des Moines Talmud Torah should not be cramped in its development by sordid financial handicaps. We must allow our spirits to soar higher and higher and higher in the vision of a glorious future, when our Talmud Torah shall stand as the beacon light of Jewish education, radiating the light and inspiration of its educational influence throughout the Jewish community.

"I cannot conclude without expressing our deep appreciation to the President, Mr. Oransky, the Vice-President, Mr. Anselm Frankel, and to the officers and members of the Board of the United Jewish Philanthropies for their making possible the erection of our new Talmud Torah building, which will permit us to carry on our work all the more successfully because it will, for the first time, give us a building erected for this purpose and devoted entirely to this work."

Death of Mr. Silberman

To have seen his beloved Talmud Torah installed and functioning in its grand new building would have been the happiest moment of Mr. Silberman's career, but, like Moses, he was not permitted to cross the Jordan river. After an illness of a few months, he passed away July 2, 1923.

After the deplorable death of Charles Silberman, the first Vice-President of the Des Moines Talmud Torah, his son, Seppy I. Silberman, was elected president. On November 1st the West side school moved into the new Talmud Torah building, Ninth street and Forest, adjoining the Jewish Community Center. According to the president's report of that year, the East Des Moines branch had an enrollment of 56 pupils, while 138 attended in the new Talmud Torah building.

Formation of a junior congregation, with services every Saturday morning and a sermon by a Rabbi or other capable person, marked another forward step in the progress of the work.

On Sunday, December 9th, graduation exercises were held for seven pupils who had completed their course of studies. During the summer of 1924 Rabbi Zeichick taught daily without remuneration, preparing the boys of this graduating class for entry into Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Seminary.

As secretary of Talmud Torah, Rabbi Rivlin was so efficient that the financial condition of the organization improved greatly. The United Jewish Phiilanthropies granted Talmud Torah the amount of $6,000.00, while tuition fees collected were $4,622.25 during 1924.

In that year the East Side branch lost some pupils, while the main school in the new building gained 37. At this time five teachers were employed in the main building and one in the East branch.

Succeeding to the presidency in 1925 was R. Marks, who presided over the second commencement exercises, when again seven pupils were graduated. By this time enrollment was increasing rapidly, and financial statements lengthened accordingly.

Presidents for 1926 and 1927 were L. Oransky and L. H. Cohen, respectively. At the third graduation exercises, 1928,

a class of 13 pupils completed the course of studies. In 1930 eight pupils were graduated; in 1931, 18; 1933, 11; 1935, 9.

During the 10 years of L. H. Cohen's presidency, 1927-1936, the Talmud Torah had its ups and downs. Partly because many Jewish residents continued to move to the extreme West side and partly because of the depression, the East branch was closed, and the enrollment of even the main school fell considerably.

The School at Present

At present the total enrollment is 120 pupils, taught by three teachers, Mr. and Mrs. J. Z. Stadlan and Mr. B. E. Rothblatt, all of whom came to Des Moines in 1935.

The officers of the Des Moines Talmud Torah for 1941 are: Honorary President, L. H. Cohen; President, Rabbi Monroe Levens; Vice-President, Ike Smalls; Secretary, Aaron Blotcky; Treasurer, Isador Robinson, and members of the Board of Education, Rabbi Levens, Rabbi Zeichik and J. S. Isralу.

1940 officers of the Talmud Torah Mothers' Club are: the late Mrs. Saul Davidson, President; Mrs. Robert Lappen, Treasurer; Mrs. B. Schwartz, Financial Secretary, and Mrs. I. Smalls, Recording Secretary.

Present officers of Talmud Torah Alumni are Harold Leener, President, and Beverly Press, Secretary.

Chapter XXII

IOWA JEWISH HOME FOR AGED

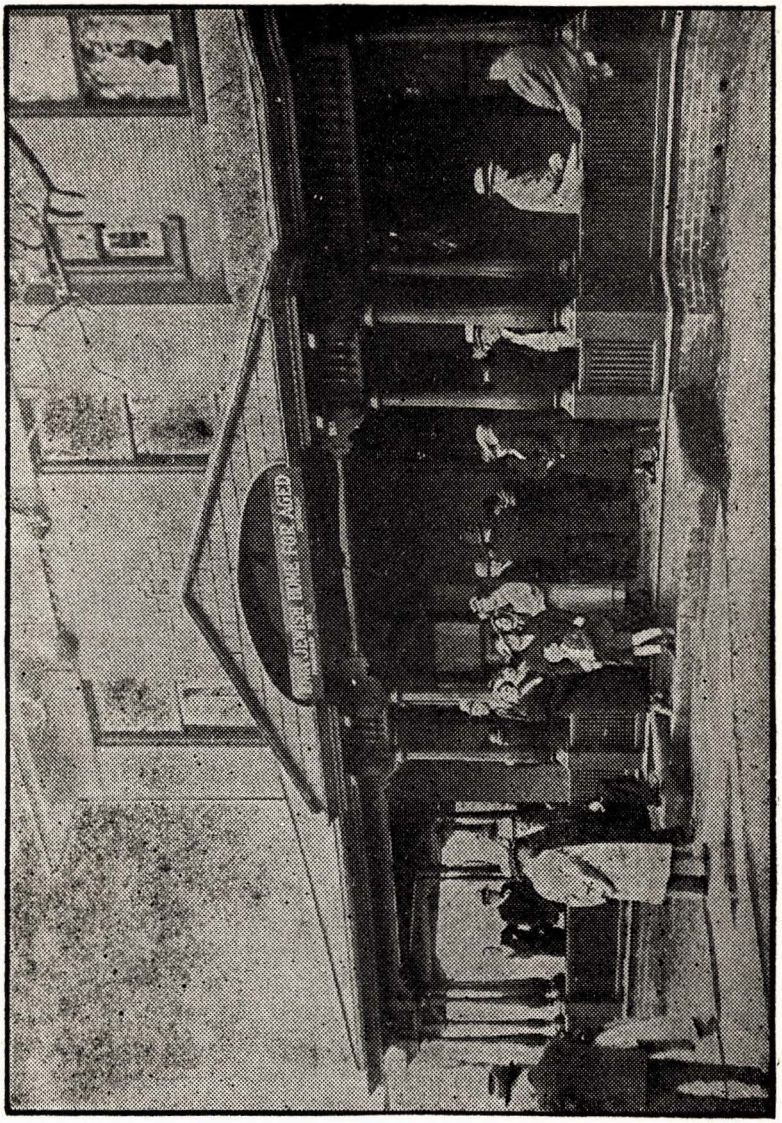
In 1931 a small group of interested workers conceived the idea of a home for aged Jewish people where they could end their days in the traditional environment which they craved. For four years they worked for the establishment of such a home.

When the daughters of Marcus and Annie Berkson Younker, who were sympathetic to the cause of the home and aware of the need of it, presented the organization with their family home, the Iowa Jewish Home for the Aged became a definite possibility. The large brick house was remodeled, and the Home was established on a permanent basis in 1935.

Strictly Orthodox

The Home is maintained along strictly orthodox rules. Each Jewish holiday is observed with traditional ceremonies and festivities. Services are held three times daily in the Home's synagogue.

In most instances the old people who are strictly orthodox have lived with their children. They differ from their children and grandchildren in matters of food, custom, religious observances and points of view on almost every



VISITING THE HOME

subject. It is for these old people that the Home fills a real need.

Kosher food, the synagogue services, the recreation room, the facilities for rest and enjoyment, the services of a nurse and the company of understanding friends all make for the happiness of the residents of the Iowa Jewish Home for the Aged.

The Jewish physicians of Des Moines give their services to residents of the Home without charge, and the Home is open to Jewish people anywhere in the state. As there are many always on the waiting list, the need for more space is acute.

Finances

The Home is financed through three funds, the operating fund, made up of money received from residents who pay for their maintenance by the month, from membership dues in the Home's auxiliary, from special projects, from funds allotted by the various welfare funds of various cities and from gifts.

The endowment fund, of which only the interest may be used, comes from fees paid by residents who pay their admission in a single sum, and from gifts made to this fund.

The building fund is made up of gifts donated for this purpose. All such money is kept for the erection of a much needed addition to the present sleeping and hospital quarters.

Mrs. Sol Wolk was superintendent of the Home for the Aged until her death in 1940 and did a tremendous task in securing both financial and physical aid for the Home from Jewry throughout the entire state. The present superintendent of the Home is Miss Rose Gottstein; Mr. Louis J. Adelman, President; Mrs. Jacob Davidson, First Vice-President; Mrs. L. A. Mintzer, Second Vice-President; Mrs. Harry

Press, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Robert Cohen, Financial Secretary; Mr. Aubrey Fisher, Treasurer; Mrs. I. J. Chapman and Mrs. Harry Ginsberg, Honorary Presidents.

The Home is governed by eleven trustees and eighteen members of a Board of Managers.

Histadruth Ivrith

Two other small but interesting Jewish organizations in Des Moines are the Hebrew Reading Circle, Histadruth Ivrith, and the Des Moines branch of the American Jewish Congress.

Histadruth Ivrith really came about through the suggestion of Dr. and Mrs. James Dubrow, and the city's branch of the national group was organized in the fall of 1937. The original officers of the society are still serving; they are: Rabbi Levens, President; Mrs. Dubrow, Vice-President; Mr. J. Z. Stadlan, Secretary and Mrs. J. S. Isralу, Treasurer. Present membership of the group is about twenty.

Purpose of Histadruth Ivrith is the promotion of Hebrew language and literature. The members meet fortnightly on Saturday nights, and all discussion is carried on in Hebrew. There are generally talks in Hebrew, Bible readings and discussions of authors and their works. Membership fees of the organization are spent for Hebrew books, which are loaned to the members without charge.

American Jewish Congress

There had been a council of the American Jewish Congress in Des Moines since the year 1938, but no regular branch of that organization was established until 1940. Rabbi Levens is also president of this group, with Mr. Frank Goodman and Mr. J. Isralу as first and second Vice-Presidents, respectively; Joe Levine, Secretary, and I. Dubansky, Treasurer.

At the monthly meetings of the organization, the bulletins of the national office are discussed, and the remedies for problems of anti-Semitism and discrimination are sought.

Workman's Circle

Des Moines also has a branch of the Workman's Circle, founded in 1930 through the efforts of Mike Rosenberg, Jack Lachman and Sol Asarch. Although there had been an earlier branch of Workman's Circle it had gone out of existence more than eight years before the present group was organized.

When the Des Moines chapter was granted its charter by the national organization, it had about 65 members. First officers of the group were Mr. Jack Lachman, Chairman; Dave Osherow, Secretary, and Mike Rosenberg, hospitaler.

Purpose in formation of the Des Moines group was fourfold, to promote Jewish culture, to afford its members certain benefit insurance, to furnish aid to Jewish immigrants and to support Yiddish schools.

In line with its policy of cultural promotion, the Des Moines Workman's Circle has brought to the city such speakers as Samuel Nigger, A. Litvok and Yanovsky, as well as Jewish artists, singers and actors.

The Des Moines chapter contributes to the upkeep of the consumptive home at Liberty, New York, to which members suffering from consumption may go for 15 weeks of free care.

The insurance payments of Workman's Circle include sick benefits from $8 to $28 per week for 15 weeks and a life insurance plan open to all members. If a members is unemployed his chapter generally pays his dues in order to keep these benefit payments in force.

If a member of any chapter is in particular need of funds, a call goes out from the national office to all 700

branches, and as much as $1,400 may be raised by a small contribution from each chapter. Officers of Des Moines Workman's Circle for 1940 are Joe Witten, Treasurer; D. Osherow, Recording Secretary; Sol Asarch, Financial Secretary, and Mike Rosenberg, Hospitaler. A new chairman is chosen at each meeting of the organization.

Workman's Circle Auxiliary

To promote the interest of Branch 406 of Workman's Circle, assist the members of both organizations and otherwise further the cause of the Jewish worker, the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Workman's Circle was formed in 1930. Prominent in sponsoring this organization were Mrs. Ed. Mason, Mrs. J. Caplan, Mrs. M. Berson and Mrs. J. Lachman, first Chairlady, Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, of the organization.

Benefit dances, donations to various workers' causes, assistance at Community Center County Fair, personal loans to members, contributions to many philanthropies, the outfitting of a room in the Iowa Jewish Home for the Aged and an active personal interest in the welfare of all members have been some of the highlights in the ten years of the Auxiliary's existence.

Membership in the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Workman's Circle has increased to 40, and the officers for 1940 are: Mrs. J. Rosenfeld, Chairman; Mrs. Sam Beiser, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Morris Givant, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Meyer Berson, Financial Secretary, and Mrs. Hyman Ginsberg, Treasurer.

Mothers' Alliance

In the fall of 1919 a group of Jewish women in California issued an appeal through the newspapers, asking that all Jewish women in the country raise money for the purpose of bringing over the Jewish war orphans to America.

This appeal met an instant response among the Jewish women of Des Moines, who organized the Jewish Mothers' Alliance, under the leadership of Faye Biederman, Director of the Jewish Community Center.

Subsequently, the immigration laws made it impossible for the orphans to be brought to the United States, and it was decided to provide funds for the care and education of these unfortunate children in Poland through the "Ort."

Mrs. H. L. Robinson was the first President, and was succeeded by Mrs. M. Bernstein, who served for seven years. Successive Presidents included Mrs. Morris Beechen, Mrs. L. Mintzer, Mrs. Sam Engman, Mrs. William Oppenham, Mrs. Sam Epstein, Mrs. I. Caplan, Mrs. J. Bassman and Mrs. Louis Zingerman.

Mrs. Max Mayer succeeded Miss Biederman as Secretary and Advisor of the Alliance and has served in that capacity ever since. Other officers of the group are: Mrs. Jack Lachman, President; Mrs. Hyman Ginsberg, Vice-President, and Mrs. Max Rovner, Treasurer. Although the organization never gained national scope, Des Moines' Jewish Mothers' Alliance has continued to carry on its work with unflagging devotion.

Ancient Craft

On August 30, 1933, a group of Des Moines men, headed by Dr. Joseph Brown, Joseph Slate, Robert Lappen, Louis Adelman, E. A. Kaplan and Dr. Ben Lan, succeeded in securing a dispensation to form a chapter of the order of Ancient Craft in Des Moines.

In June of 1923 the organization was formally chartered, with Dr. Brown as first Worshipful Master. Each of the above named men has also been Worshipful Master of the organization since that time.

From its beginning, the Des Moines chapter of Ancient

Craft has been composed primarily of Jewish members, although membership is non-sectarian. The lodge has con-



BEN SHERMAN

tinued since its inception to meet monthly at the Masonic Temple. The original membership of twenty has swelled to 220.

Officers of Ancient Craft for 1941 include Worshipful Master, Harold Leener; Senior Warden, Sheppy Hockenberg; Junior Warden, Theodore Livingston; Treasurer, Louis J. Adelman; Secretary, Ben Sherman; Senior Deacon, Koffey Yarowsky; Junior Deacon, Louis A. Corn; Senior Steward, Melvin Shadur; Junior Steward, Rubin Bassman; Chaplain, Rabbi Monroe Levens; Tyler, John F. Garrison.

PART THREE

State Communities

Sioux City
Tri-Cities
Cedar Rapids
Waterloo
Cedar Falls
Council Bluffs
Dubuque
Iowa City
Ottumwa
Mason City
Marshalltown
Fort Dodge
Oskaloosa
Centerville
Keokuk
Muscatine

Chapter XXIII

SIOUX CITY

One of the earliest Jewish settlers and business leaders in Sioux City was Godfrey Hattenbach, who was born in Germany and came first in this country to Baltimore. His colorful career included work as a peddler, proprietor of a general store, inn-keeper, fisherman and cigar manufacturer.

Mr. Hattenbach's daughter married D. A. Magee, a young Sioux City Gentile who became a convert to the Jewish faith. Mr. Magee took an active part in all Jewish affairs, became one of the city's wealthiest packers and was for a time mayor of Sioux City.

Another prominent Sioux City packer was Mr. Charles Wise, the first Jew in Iowa to take up that occupation.

Mr. Julius Pappe was prominent also as an early Jewish leader in Sioux City, serving during his lifetime as Grand Chancellor of the Iowa Knights of Pythias and President of the Board of the Sioux City public schools.

Davidsons

Coming to Sioux City about 1880, the Davidson brothers, David and Ben, occupied themselves as peddlers in the region. In a few years they were able to form a department store which has since become the leading mercantile establishment in Sioux City.

The Davidsons were leaders in civic affairs, doing, perhaps, more than anyone else to build the town. But they were leaders, too, in Jewish activities, pioneering most of the important Jewish organizations. David was particularly active in this work.

Both David and Ben Davidson are now dead; another brother, Abe, has retired from the business, and now Laurance Davidson, David's son, is President of the Davidson firm. He has been Chairman of the Community Board, Chairman of the Jewish Appeal campaign and active in all other Jewish and civic affairs.

Barons

Some of the other early Jewish settlers included Sam Baron, who came to Sioux City in 1891 to engage in the general merchandise business, later bringing seven brothers and three sisters to the city. He died in 1932.

Barney Baron, a brother of Sam, has been a leading grocer in Sioux City since 1895 and now operates many stores throughout the city. He has been a leader in Jewish affairs almost all his life, holding practically every office of importance in the Jewish community.

The Business Men

J. L. Levitt, now retired, is another of Sioux City's prominent Jewish business and civic leaders. He operated a leading loan and investment business, was a campaign manager of the United Jewish Appeal and has always been much interested in Jewish affairs in general.

For 30 years John Lansburg, a fruit broker, has been an active worker in civic and Jewish activities, has been President of Shaare Zion congregation and other Jewish organizations.

Sam Cohen, who operates one of Sioux City's largest

wholesale grocery establishments, has been a leader in Jewish work in the city for 25 years, while another Jewish wholesale grocer, L. J. Kaplan, has been an ardent participant in Jewish affairs since his arrival in Sioux City in 1935.

A dealer in real estate and bonds, Arthur Sanford has won the title of Sioux City's "biggest landlord," operating some of the largest properties in the city. He has made his home there for about 20 years, was chairman of the Jewish Appeal in 1939, and has been a leading officer in many other groups.

Doctors

B. Courshon, now city health physician, was the first Jewish physician in the city and a resident there for over 40 years. S. Kline became Sioux City's second Jewish doctor. Other Jewish physicians and surgeons now practicing in the city are Drs. Lewis J. Dimsdale, Milton D. Grossman, John H. Henkin, David Kaplan, Joseph and W. M. Krigsten, J. N. Lande and Samuel H. Shulkin.

Dentists

Dr. Mort Henkin, who has practiced in Sioux City for the last 20 years, was the first Jewish dentist. Others of that profession now in the city are Drs. M. R. Bernstein, Frank Epstein, H. A. Levich and L. H. London.

Attorneys

Arnold Fribourg was the first Jewish attorney in Sioux City. He practiced his profession there until his death in 1927. Edward E. Baron, one of the leading attorneys in the city and a prominent figure in Jewish affairs, was the second Jewish resident of Sioux City to practice law there.

Other Jewish attorneys now practicing in Sioux City are Arnold A. and A. H. Baron; Lester C. Davidson; Louis S. Goldberg, Marvin J. Klass, Frank J. Margolin, Sam G.

Pickus, Albert M. Leff, H. N. Slotsky, now assistant City Attorney, and Sam Hill.

First Organization

The history of Jewish organizations in Sioux City dates back to 1869, when there were only about 25 Jewish people in the region. In that year a small Jewish group held a meeting to arrange for a cemetery. Mr. Godfrey Hattenbach donated a lot to the use of the group, and this was the Jewish cemetery until 1884.

That year marked the formation of the Mount Sinai Cemetery Association. Joseph Schulien was chosen President and D. A. Magee, Secretary. Other active in the formation of the Association were Sig Schulien, Charles Wise, J. M. Cohen, J. Feldenheimer, S. Greenwald, H. Heyman and M. Wise.

The new association purchased a plot of ground adjoining the Floyd cemetery, and the bodies in the old Jewish cemetery were disinterred and reburied. At that time such action broke every precedent, for the orthodox law forbade the movement of bodies unless the graves were about to be desecrated.

Ladies Aid

In 1885 the Jewish women of Sioux City organized themselves to promote two objectives, the forming of a reform synagague and carrying on of charitable activities. The leader of the Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society was Mrs. J. M. Cohen, and there were nine charter members. In spite of their efforts, however, no reform synagogue was organized for 14 years.

Mount Sinai

Another strong movement for the establishment of a reform congregation (again led by the women) swept the Sioux City community in 1898. This movement culminated

in the establishment of Mount Sinai Congregation on November 11 of that year.

From the outset this congregation belonged to the radical wing of reform, holding Sunday services and no scrolls of



RABBI ALBERT S. GOLDSTEIN

Pentateuch in their temple. First services of the congregation were conducted in the Masonic temple.

Early leaders of Sinai Congregation were S. I. and Ben Schulien, Charles and Myer Wise, A. L. Fribourg, J. M. Cohen, Julius Pappe, the Davidson brothers, I. J. Trauerman, Dr. M. E. Silver, D. A. Magee and Herman Galinsky.

Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer was chosen as spiritual leader of Sinai Congregation in 1902 and the young Rabbi

gained the admiration of both reform and orthodox Jews in Sioux City. He taught the children of the orthodox group, as they had no Hebrew school of their own. Rabbi Mannheimer remained in Sioux City until 1905, when he was called to the B'nai Jeshurun Temple in Des Moines.

The Temple

The first Mount Sinai Temple, bought and remodeled when the congregation was first organized, still is serving as a place of worship for the group. Rabbi Albert S. Goldstein has recently come to the Temple as its spiritual leader, and there are about 90 members at the present time.

Officers of the Temple for 1940 are J. Kalin, President; Jack Robinson, Vice-President; Herman Miller, Secretary and J. H. Boldstein, Treasurer.

The Sisterhood

The Mount Sinai Temple Sisterhood was formed from the old Hebrew Ladies Aid Society, under the leadership of Mrs. Ben Schulien, Mrs. Ed. Baron and Mrs. I. Miller. There are 102 members at the present time, and Mrs. W. C. Slotsky is the 1940 President; Mrs. Max Rosenstock, Vice-President; Mrs. Dave Alberts, Secretary, and Mrs. Ben Kalin, Treasurer.

The Brotherhood

The Brotherhood of Mount Sinai Temple was formed at about the same time the congregation was organized. Those who were instrumental in organizing the congregation were responsible for the beginnings of the Brotherhood group.

There are now about 40 members in the Temple Brotherhood, with Dr. Louis Dimsdale as President;A. J. Galinsky, Vice-President; Maurice Rusiner, Secretary, and Maurice Skalovsky, Treasurer.

Adath Jeshurun

Even before Mt. Sinai Temple had been completely formed, however, Jews from Russia, Poland and Roumania

had been coming to Sioux City. They were sincere in their desire for orthodox worship. In 1888, in spite of the fact that they were undergoing many struggles financially, they formed Congregation Adath Jeshurun.

They maintained a scholarly Rabbi, S. H. Kaversky, and were active in promoting orthodox Judaism throughout the state. Some of the leading families in the organization of Adath Jeshurun were the Kreugers, Brodkys, Barons, Prusiners, Gottsteins and Levins. Only available records show Sam Bickles as first President and H. Levin as Vice-President. There were 30 charter members.

Membership in Adath Jeshurun today totals 40, and 1940 officers are H. Friedman, President; L. Ginsberg, Vice-President; L. Katz, Secretary, and Sam Albert, Treasurer. The congregation still maintains its strictly orthodox form of worship.

Tifereth Israel

Another orthodox congregation was formed in Sioux City in 1907 under the name of Tifereth Israel. This congregation had about 30 charter members and felt strong enough to erect a synagogue building on the west side. This building was the first Jewish synagogue to be built in Sioux City. Mr. Sam Lipman was one of the leaders in the founding of this group, which, although it began with great indebtedness, has carried on through the years.

At the present time, however, since the membership of the orthodox groups in Sioux City has been steadily diminishing, the Tifereth Israel congregation is not actively organized at the present time. Mr. M. Lazriowich is the President of the group, and Mrs. Charles Barricks is President of the Women's Auxiliary.

Beth Abraham

Congregation Beth Abraham was the third orthodox

congregation established in Sioux City, although it tended to conservatism. Begun in 1910 as an offshot of Tifereth Israel, the Beth Abraham group soon were able to buy and remodel a building at West 6th and Cook streets. By 1915 they had 75 members. Mr. I. Reiffel was instrumental in the establishment of this group.

Although Beth Abraham congregation today numbers only 25 members, they are still active. Joe Gorchow is the 1940 President of the group; L. Rifle, Vice-President; Baresh Baron, Secretary, and Shube Rifle, Treasurer.

Mrs. Paul Kaplan is President of the Women's Auxiliary of Beth Abraham congregation; Mrs. M. Shuman, Vice-President, and Mrs. A. Less, Secretary-Treasurer.

The three orthodox congregations in Sioux City now are served by one Rabbi, Rabbi S. Bolotnikov, who conducts services for each in their turn.

Shaare Zion

The latest congregation to be formed in Sioux City came about as a result of the feeling in the Jewish community that a conservative group was badly needed. Congregation Shaare Zion was founded in 1925 under the leadership of Barney Baron, Dr. M. Helfgott, Nathan Pickus, A. Mazie and J. N. Kreuger. The charter membership was 80.

First President of the conservative group was Dr. Helfgott. J. Robin was Vice-President; Secretary, Eli Rabinow, and Treasurer, A. Mazie. The group at once called Rabbi H. R. Rabinowitz to serve them as their spiritual leader, and Rabbi Rabinowitz is still serving Congregation Shaare Zion.

The New Synagogue

For two years the congregation rented a building, but during that time plans had been laid and were being carried out for an elaborate new building. In 1927 the new syna-

gogue was formally dedicated, with Mr. Barney Baron, who was chairman of the building committee, and Rabbi Rabinowitz taking prominent parts and with Rabbi C. H. Kauvar of Denver as principal speaker.

In 1937 the congregation celebrated the tenth anniversary of the dedication with services as nearly similar as possible. Rabbi Kauver was again the guest speaker.

Today Congregation Shaare Zion, with 180 members, is one of the most active Jewish groups in Sioux City. President for 1940 is Morey Lipshutz; Vice-President, L. J. Kaplan; Secretary, Eli Rabinow; Recording Secretary, Dr. Frank Epstein, and Treasurer, J. Kuntz.

Ladies Auxiliary

The Ladies' Auxiliary of Shaare Zion preceded the establishment of the congregation itself. The ladies were particularly interested in the building of a synagogue and organized themselves for that purpose in 1923. Soon they were able to buy a lot, which they presented to the congregation as a site for the synagogue which would be built as soon as possible.

Talmud Torah

The Shaare Zion synagogue also houses the Sioux City Talmud Torah, which was first formed in 1908, but later almost died out and was reorganized in 1912 under the leadership of Sam Lipman, R. K. Emlein, Nathan Pickus, Dr. Halfgard, Abe Goodsite, Barney Baron and Jake London.

At present the school has 85 students and two teachers, Rabbi J. Brown and Grace Bernstein. The 1940 class had seven graduates. Present officers of the Board include R. K. Emlein, President; George Gorchow, Vice-President; Gean Libowitz, Secretary, and Marx Palk, Treasurer.

B'nai B'rith

B'nai B'rith was first organized in Sioux City in 1904,

with I. G. Trauerman as the original President. Others active in the early group were A. L. Fribourg and Rabbi Joseph Rauch.

The B'nai B'rith activities in the city died down, however, for several years and were not resumed until 1920 through the activity of Morris Pill, David Davidson and A. L. Gilinsky. There were 103 charter members in this reorganized group.

Since that time, the B'nai B'rith organization in Sioux City has almost tripled in size and now has 300 members. An outstanding part of the chapter's yearly program is the annual speakers' forum, which brings nationally known men and women to speak before an audience which is open to the general public.

Of particular interest to the members of the Sioux City group is the fact that B'nai B'rith in that city is constantly attracting the younger members of the Jewish community.

Arnold Baron is the 1940 President of B'nai B'rith Dr. Frank Epstein, Vice-President; Marvin Klass, Corresponding Secretary; Perry Osnowitz, Recording Secretary; Jack Greenberg, Treasurer; A. M. Davis, Monitor; Joe Goldstein, Guardian, and Archie Kroloff, Warden.

A. Z. A.

The chapter of A. Z. A. which was organized in Sioux City in 1926 was the 12th chapter of the organization to be formed anywhere in the country. Sidney Baumstein and Leon Dobrobesky were the organizers of this group.

Sioux City's chapter of A. Z. A. has always been prominent in debate and oratory, winning the regional championship in those fields in 1939. Other events of interest in the life of the Sioux City A. Z. A. were the regional conventions held in the city in 1938 and 1940.

Present membership in the A. Z. A. is 42, and Sam Kaplan is the President for 1940; David Kuntz, Vice-President; Sheldon Singer, Secretary, and Hubert Friedman, Treasurer.

Zionist Organization

The Sioux City Zionist organization was founded in 1905, chiefly through the efforts of Barney Baron, Ben Prusiner, L. A. Baron and L. Krueger. From all available records it seems to be the oldest continually functioning Zionist organization in the state.

Through the years the organization has grown, meeting with a considerable increase in membership during the last few years which has brought the total enrollment up to 125. Adolph Davis is the 1940 President; Barney Baron, First Vice-President; L. I. Kaplan, Second Vice-President; Arnold Baron, Secretary, and Dr. J. M. Lande, Treasurer.

Hadassah

The Hadassah chapter in Sioux City was an outgrowth of the Red Cross work among the Jewish women during the World War days. The Jewish women's Red Cross group instead of being disbanded in 1920 was converted into the city's Hadassah in that year. Mrs. Sam Brown was the first President of that group. Among others who were responsible for the founding of the chapter were Mrs. Barney Baron, Mrs. Dave Prusiner and Mrs. Sam Sudow.

The charter membership of Sioux City's Senior Hadassah was 15.

An event of particular interest in the life of the Hadassah group was the regional convention held in Sioux City in 1934. The Sioux City Hadassah has had over 300 members. However, in recent years the membership has fallen to its present figure of 200, although it has now begun to climb rapidly again.

President of Hadassah for 1940 is Mrs. J. Robinson; Vice-President, Mrs. Louis Goldberg; Secretary, Mrs. Sam Slotsky, and Treasurer, Mrs. Sol Novitsky.

Junior Hadassah

Florence Major, Clara Goldberg, Sybil and Bluma Marlin and Sadie Shulkin were the founders of Junior Hadassah in Sioux City. That organization began its activities in 1926 with 15 charter members and a slate of officers which included Miss Major as President; Leah Herzoff, Vice-President; Freda Shiloff, Secretary, and Mary Daskovsky, Treasurer.

Two regional conventions of Junior Hadassah have been held in Sioux City, one in 1935 the other in 1939.

Present membership of the Sioux City Junior Hadassah is 40, while the 1940 officers are: President, Annabelle Eulien; First Vice-President, Dorothy London; Second Vice-President, Bluma Marlin; Recording Secretary, Sophie Slutsky; Corresponding Secretary, Jan Labowich, and Treasurer, Sara Saboff.

Farband and Pioneer Women

Two other Zionist organizations have chapters in Sioux City. Farband was organized there in 1925. Its 1940 officers are Max Mason, President; Sam Ratner, Secretary, and Louie Schindler, Treasurer. The Pioneer Women's group was formed in 1930, and its current officers are Mrs. L. Chesen, Pesident; Mrs. Phillip Sherman, Secretary; Mrs. L. Lubman, Recording Secretary, and Mrs. Sam Rotman, Treasurer.

All the Zionist groups of the city are bound together by the Sioux City Council of the Jewish National Fund. Dr. J. M. Lande is chairman of this group, which has as its principal function the coordination of all the zionist activities of the city.

Other Organizations

There are many other Jewish organizations in Sioux City. These include Workman's Circle, organized in 1908 and reorganized in 1925 under the direction of L. Weinberg with a charter membership of 150. Present membership is 56, and officers are: I. L. Sineger, Financial Secretary and Chairman of the District committee; Max Dervin, Recording Secretary; Abe Televitz, Treasurer, and Max Manakar, Hospitalar. The Auxiliary of Workman's Circle is under the leadership of Mrs. J. Zeligson as President.

Other organizations are the Hebrew Mothers' Association, an auxiliary of the Talmud Torah, with Mrs. Phillip Sherman, President; the Sioux City Independent Farane, a charitable burial organization, Max Holland, President; Auxiliary of the Independent Farane, Mrs. M. S. Derwin, President; Chevra Kadisha, a funeral group with Sam Lipman as President; the Building Fund Committee, an organization formed with the prospect of some day building a new community center, L. J. Kaplan, Chairman; the Emergency Loan Fund, Si Kreuger, Chairman; the Council of Jewish Women, Mrs. Sol Nivitsky, President, and the Jewish Youth Council, composed of representatives of all the Jewish youth organizations, with Rudolph Schindler as its President.

According to latest estimates, the Jewish community of Sioux City is composed of at least 575 families, or a total of about 2,500 individuals, making it, next to Des Moines, the largest Jewish community in the state.

Chapter XXIV

TRI-CITIES

Since the Jewish activities of the Tri Cities are pretty well bound together, it is difficult to single out those portions of Jewish history which belong particularly to Davenport. However, since this book attempts to deal with the Jewish history of Iowa alone, the scope of this chapter must necessarily be limited as much as possible to those organizations which have particularly to do with Davenport, those organizations which belong to the Tri-Cities Jewish community as a whole, and to those persons who have made their most distinctive contributions in the Davenport group.

Although there were Jewish people in Davenport prior to the year 1860, the Jewish holidays were celebrated for the first time in the Tri-Cities in that year under the leadership of M. Feder.

B'nai Israel

Shortly after that in 1861, during the first trying year of the war, the first Jewish congregation in the Tri-Cities was established at Davenport. The first meeting, held on December 7, decided to name the congregation B'nai Israel, to conduct it upon orthodox principles, to purchase a cemetery and engage a schochet and Hebrew teacher.

In keeping with this policy, the Mount Nebo Cemetery

association was organized in the following year through the efforts of John Ochs and M. Raphael, and land was bought and improved for that purpose.

The B'nai Israel congregation met with great success during its early years, and it was not long before its influence was felt across the Mississippi at Rock Island, Illinois.

Isaac Bernis was the first President of Congregation B'nai Israel of Davenport; A. Straus, Vice-President; L. Lowenstein, "Cashier," and S. Berolsheimer, Secretary. There were 18 charter members of the congregation.

On March 3, 1862, the Davenport congregation engaged the services of Rabbi H. Lowenthol. He was to serve B'nai Israel as Chazen, Schochet and teacher, attend to slaughtering cattle twice a week during the summer and three times a week during the winter, to teach six hours per day four days out of every week in the year and to officiate as reader whenever services were held by the congregation.

For all this he was voted a salary of $350 per year!

However, a few years after its founding, Congregation B'nai Israel seems to have almost ceased to exist. No records have been kept concerning any meetings of the congregation for almost a ten year period.

B'nai Israel Reorganized

Then in September of 1874 Congregation B'nai Israel of Davenport was reorganized, signifying its adoption of reform by joining the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. W. Freund was first President of the reorganized group; Dr. R. Alberty was the first Secretary and prominent leader for many years. Other prominent early leaders were M. Raphael, a President of the congregation for ten years, John Ochs, L. Greenbaum, A. Frank, Jacob Raphael, A. Meyer,

J. Jacobson, Joe Froelich, A. Moritz, H. Deutsch, A. Freudliech, Herman Silberstein and D. Rothschild, Sr.

President for four years during the congregation's period of reconstruction was John Ochs, but he seemed too conservative to many of the advocates of reform. When the congregation joined the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Mr. Ochs tendered his resignation. However, the majority of the members seemed to favor reform.

During Mr. Och's term as President, Reverend I. Fall was engaged as chazan and teacher and served until 1890.

New Synagogue

By the year 1885, the congregation felt strong enough to begin the construction of a permanent synagogue. Largely through Mr. Fall's efforts this work was undertaken.

The building committee was composed of M. Raphael, A. Moritz, Isaac Rothschild, Joseph Ochs and H. Deutsch. The temple cost $5,082 and was called Emanuel in honor of Moses Emanuel Rothschild, who had died just previous to its dedication. Rabbi S. Sale of Chicago delivered the dedicatory address in English.

Radical Steps

In 1886 the congregation decided to take the most radical step so far adopted by any Jewish congregation in Iowa and abolish the wearing of hats during the services.

Another "drastic" regulation was adopted by the Davenport congregation in 1889. This resolution declared that a Mynion might consist of both men and women instead of men only and practically had the effect of giving women equal rights in the congregational affairs.

Dissension

By the year 1890, the congregation had concluded that Mr. Fall was becoming too old for the synagogue and that

even his music was too ancient, so he was discharged, but his successor proved even less stable, and a storm of dissension swept the congregation. Matters became worse as time went on. The congregational meeting of 1892 was so disorderly that no business could be carried on.

Just when it seemed that B'nai Israel could not weather the storm, the aged Mr. M. Raphael stepped in as pacifier and succeeded remarkably.

Rabbi Fineshriber

First Rabbi to direct the affairs of the congregation after its troubled period was Rabbi J. Kahn. After him, Rabbi Maurice Thorner promoted the welfare of the congregation. Then came Rabbi W. H. Fineshriber in 1900. Rabbi Fineshriber at once made his influence felt in the entire community. During the years of his stay in Davenport until he left in 1911, he made tremendous contributions to the welfare of the community.

Many influential members of the Davenport congregation came from the Illinois side of the river. Among these were W. A. Rosenfield, M. A. Loeb, M. C. Rice, Sol Hirsh, Simon Hirsh and L. Rosenstein.

Seeing that the members of the congregation who came from the Illinois side were playing an important but almost unrecognized part, Rabbi Fineshriber arranged for them to be given a voice in the congregation's affairs through representation on the Board of Trustees.

In 1905, with Rabbi Fineshriber's leadership, the congregation was re-incorporated to conform with the new Iowa law.

Rabbi Fineshriber promoted the building of a new Temple Emanuel, and in 1906 he had the satisfaction of presiding at the dedication of the new $12,000 Temple, dedi-

cated to "Justice, Truth and Love." By 1912 the structure was entirely free of indebtedness.

In 1936, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the congregation's founding, the members of B'nai Israel invited all living former Rabbis to return for an elaborate program. Rabbi Fineshriber, then serving a Philadelphia congregation, was among those to address the audience. Two other Rabbis, Baron and Berman, were also present at that time.

The Temple Today

The present spiritual leader of Congregation B'nai Israel is Rabbi Alvin S. Luchs, who came to Temple Emanuel in 1937 from Rochelle, New York. A graduate of the University of Cincinnati and Hebrew Union College, Rabbi Luchs has served for 20 years in the Rabbinate.

The membership of Congregation B'nai Israel has been and is still steadily increasing and has reached 110 at the present time. This includes, of course, membership from all of the Tri-City region.

The present President of Congregation B'nai Israel is a Moline man, Nathan Lesser; other officers are from Davenport and include Dr. H. M. Hurevitz, Vice-President; Richard E. Petersberger, Secretary, and Ben Comenitz, Treasurer.

The Sisterhood

The Temple Sisterhood was organized in 1887 and has full charge of the religious school, participates in the full program of the National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods, does considerable social service work and every year attends to the upkeep and redecoration of the Temple.

Mrs. A. W. Gellman is the President of the Temple Sisterhood for 1940; Mrs. J. J. Rosen, Vice-President; Mrs. H. M. Hurevitz, Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. Sidney Grossman, Recording Secretary, and Mrs. George Margulies,

Treasurer. In addition to these officers, Mrs. Harry Bloch is a member of the Board of the National Federation.

A much more recent organization than the Sisterhood, the Temple Brotherhood was formed in 1938, with Dr. H. M. Hurevitz as its first President. The present officers are Dr. Ralph Hilfman, President; Joseph Kinsky, Vice-President; Bernard Grossman, Secretary, and Harry Levin, Treasurer.

B'nai Ameth

There were only 20 orthodox families in Davenport in the year 1894, but this group decided they were strong enough to form their much desired congregation. So in that year Congregation B'nai Ameth was chartered under the names of Max Ruben and J. Glassman. Mr. Glassman became first Secretary of the group and served faithfully in that capacity for many years.

For a while, members of Congregation B'nai Ameth held their services in private homes. Then a hall was rented for that purpose. In 1907 Rabbi Morris Scudder became the first permanent Rabbi of the Congregation, and in 1909 their present synagogue was bought at a cost of $4,000.

Present Rabbi of Congregation B'nai Ameth is Rabbi S. B. Bozman. President of the congregation for 1940 is Mr. Ben Friedman; Vice-President, M. Niteckman; Secretary, Mr. H. Leman, and Treasurer, Sam Raben.

Zionist Organization

One of the most active Jewish groups in the Tri-Cities at the present time is the Zionist organization. Founded in 1920 with a charter membership of about 25, the Tri-Cities Zionist group had as its first President, Mr. Sam Gellerman; others who were active in the formation of this group were Sam Rivkin, H. Leman, Joseph Bozman, Abraham Mayer and

Max Rattnar. Mr. Rattnar later served as President of the group for a period of over 10 years.

Many members of the original group still are active in Zionist work. Mr. Sam Gellerman of Rock Island is again the President, while Mr. Joseph Bozman now serves as First Vice-President; Abraham Mayer, Second Vice-President; David Citron, Secretary, and David Louis, Treasurer. All the 1940 officers, with the exception of Mr. Gellerman, are residents of Davenport.

The Tri-Cities Zionist group has an active membership of 150, and the organization is making every effort to bring its membership up to the 200 figure. The annual picnic of the Zionist group is the largest held in the Tri-Cities. There are also branches of the Jewish National Council, Farband and Mizrachi in the Tri-Cities.

Hadassah

The women of the Tri-Cities have been active in work for Palestine for almost as long as the men. Founded in 1920 with a very small membership, Tri-Cities Hadassah came into being largely through the efforts of Mrs. Harry Waxenberg and Mrs. M. Verger. Mrs. Waxenberg was first President of the Hadassah group and served in that capacity for eight years. She is now the Honorary President of Tri-Cities Hadassah.

At present the group is large and very active, having 200 members. Not only was Mrs. Max Smith the 1939 President of the local group, but she also served as President of the Iowa conference of Hadassah.

Officers of Tri-Cities Hadassah for 1940 are Mrs. Jerome Zefren, President; Mrs. Herbert Tenenbom, Mrs. Phillip Sitrick, both of Davenport, and Mrs. Sidney Zimel, First, Second and Third Vice-Presidents, respectively; Mrs. Betty Dubinsky, Davenport, Treasurer; Mrs. Max Fagen, Record-

ing Secretary; Mrs. Leo Gamber, Moline, Corresponding Secretary, and Mrs. Meyer Verger, Financial Secretary.

Junior Hadassah

Activities of the Tri-Cities Junior Hadassah group date back to the year 1925, when the group first organized and chose Mrs. Margaret Whitebook Smith as President, a position which she held for seven years. Mrs. Phillip Citric has also been particularly active in Junior Hadassah work.

The present membership of the Tri-Cities Junior Hadassah is 137, and Mrs. Joe Benson is the 1940 President; with Miss Goldye Sofna, Vice-President.

B'nai B'rith

B'nai B'rith activities in the Tri-Cities have passed through several interesting stages. On January 15, 1872, a charter for the Davenport chapter of B'nai B'rith was issued to Julius Bien. Shortly afterward, Rock Island and Moline joined forces and formed a separate B'nai B'rith group.

Finally, however, in 1894 the Illinois men gave up their efforts, surrendered their charter and affiliated with the Davenport chapter.

However, by the year 1938 the B'nai B'rith members from Davenport were so few in number that they, in their turn, surrendered their charter, and a Tri-Cities B'nai B'rith chapter was formed, with the greater percentage of the 1940 membership of 240 coming from the Illinois side of the Mississippi.

The President of Tri-Cities B'nai B'rith for 1940, David Niteckman, is the only officer of the group who comes from Davenport. Other officers are Morris Coppersmith, First Vice-President; Charles Whitebook, Second Vice-President; Harry Wiesman, Secretary; Morris Kelinson, Financial Secretary, and Sam Greenblatt, Treasurer.

A. Z. A.

John and Sam Gellerman and Morris Kelinson were the founders of the Tri-Cities chapter of the A. Z. A., a group which was formed in 1927 with a charter membership of 25. At the installation of members and presentation of the charter in that year, the Grand Aleph Godol himself spoke.

Present membership of the Tri-Cities A. Z. A. is 48, and officers for 1940 are Marvin Krauss, President; Nathan Ander, Vice-President; Elory Gellerman, Secretary, and Louis Pesses, Treasurer.

The Tri-Cities also have a chapter of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the B'nai B'rith order, founded in 1915.

The present membership of this auxiliary group is 37, while Mrs. Max Smith is 1940 President; Mrs. M. Verger, Mrs. Charles Whitebook and Mrs. Jules Slater, First, Second and Third Vice-Presidents, respectively; Mrs. Jerome Zefron, Recording Secrtary; Mrs. Ben Friedman, Corresponding Secretary; Mrs. William Herman, Financial Secretary, and Mrs. Albert Siegel, Treasurer.

Ladies Relief Society

The Jewish community of the Tri-Cities has always remembered its benevolent and charitable duties. On September of 1883 the Davenport Jewish Women's Aid Society was founded, with charitable duties as its principal work. Mrs. Henrietta Mayer was the first President of the new organization; Mrs. Rose Rothschild, Vice-President; Mrs. Frederica Silberstein, Secretary, and Mrs. Johanna Raphael, Treasurer.

In later years the name of the organization was changed to Jewish Ladies' Relief, but its purpose remained the same. Officers of this group for 1940 are, President, Mrs. Harry

Gordon; Vice-President, Mrs. Harry Ander; Secretary, Mrs. B. Liberman, and Treasurer, Mrs. M. Tenenbom.

During the years that followed the establishment of the Jewish Women's Aid Society, other charitable organizations were established in the Tri-Cities. It soon became apparent that some unifying agent was necessary to avoid waste and duplication of effort among these groups.

Tri-Cities Charities

With that object in mind, Rabbi Fineshriber proposed the formation of the Tri-Cities Jewish Charities. His proposal was adopted in 1906, and the first director of the Charities group was George Ellman. However, each charitable group still conducted its own drive for funds.

In 1920 Rabbi Joseph Baron of the Temple perceived the need for collection of charitable funds through one single campaign. With the active cooperation of Mr. E. P. Adler, a Council of representatives from each of the Jewish charitable organizations was formed in that year to plan and carry out such a campaign.

Rabbi Baron was made chairman of this Council and Louis Rosenstein its Secretary.

Under the direction of this Council, the first United Jewish Charities Appeal received $14,255 from its 132 subscribers.

The success of this drive led to the formation of a permanent Board of Directors to carry out this work. Mr. Adler was the first President of that Board, holding the position for more than 15 years. The first Vice-President was Louis Livingston; Secretary, William Frank; Treasurer, Moritz Landauer; Superintendent, Ben Stewart, and Chairman of the Executive Committee, Rabbi Baron.

During the years that followed, the office of the Jewish

Charities began to coordinate more and more of the Jewish activities of the community. A Bureau of Immigrant Relief had been organized and governed under the Charities, while the Betty Adler Waterman Memorial Library was housed in the Charities office.

Community Office

To more fully meet these increasing demands, the Charities group was reorganized in 1937 under the name of Jewish Charities and Community Office. So at the present time the Jewish Community Office, under the supervision of Rabbi Luchs as Director and Mildred Kessler Sable as Executive Secretary, acts as a real clearing house for all the Jewish activities of the community.

The Jewish Charities and Community Office still is governed by a Board of Directors, whose 1940 officers are Ben Comenitz, President; H. Bornstein, Vice-President; Nathan Grant, Secretary, and Samuel I. Siegel, Treasurer.

Tri-Cities Center

Other important changes in the Tri-Cities Jewish community took place in 1937. Previous to that time, all charitable work had been administered from the Davenport office. After 1937, however, the charitable work of the Illinois side was administered from the Tri-Cities Jewish Center at Rock Island, which was formed in that year.

In addition to its charitable work, the Jewish Center serves as a real community center for the whole Jewish community of each of the Tri-Cities. Since its formation, over 30,000 people yearly have used the facilities of the Center, which has converted a spacious old house in Rock Island for its uses.

Rabbi A. S. Goldstein of the Temple was the first Executive Director of the Center. He was succeeded by Rabbi E. L. Neimand, the incumbent.

Mr. I. C. Gellman was Chairman of the organizing committee and first President of the Board of Trustees of the Center. Officers of the Board of Directors for 1940 include Mr. Barney Brotman, President; Louis Andich, First Vice-President; Isador I. Katz, Second Vice-President; Archie Kavensky, Secretary, and Mrs. Ben Andich, Treasurer. Morris Goldfarb is the present Director of Activities.

The Tri-Cities Jewish Center receives the active support of the ladies of Beth Israel Sisterhood. This group was originally formed in 1920 as an auxiliary of one of the Illinois congregations, but it re-formed as an auxiliary of the Center.

Beth Israel Sisterhood

The Beth Israel Sisterhood has taken on the responsibility for the upkeep of the Center, and the Sisterhood's more than 200 members take an active interest in the Center's welfare and growth.

President of the Sisterhood for 1940 is Mrs. Meyer Verger. First, Second, Third and Fourth Vice-Presidents, respectively, are Mrs. Morris Finkelstein, Mrs. Abraham Frankel, Mrs. Jerome Zeffron, and Mrs. Jules Slater; Recording Secretary is Mrs. Ben Geisman; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. A. Levin; Financial Secretary, Mrs. M. Satin, and Treasurer, Mrs. Albert Docterman.

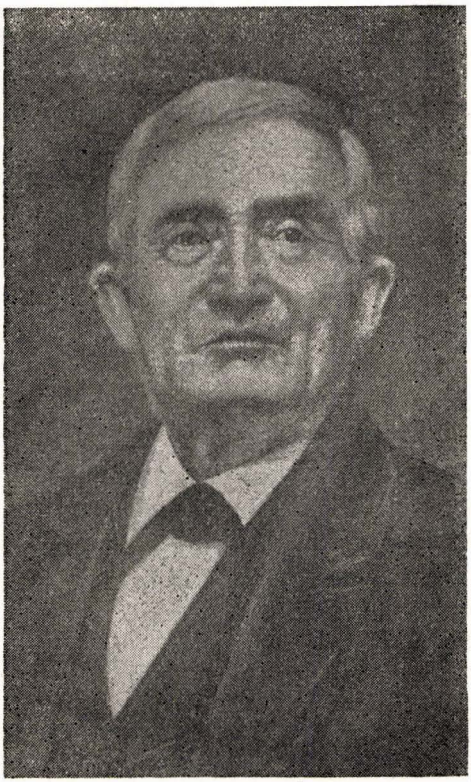
Business Leaders

Although the Jewish community in Davenport itself is not large, about 60 families, some of the outstanding Jewish leaders of the state make or have made their homes there.

One of Davenport's earliest leading Jewish business men was Mr. Henry Deutsch. He came to the city in 1867, starting first in the notions goods business. Later he started the first factory to manufacture coats and suits west of Chicago.

Then he turned to the retail clothing business and established a store called the Bee Hive. He died in 1911.

Mr. Joseph Deutsch became associated with his father in the Bee Hive in 1903 and at the present time manages the



JOHN OCHS

store. He has been a member of the Board of the Charities, the Temple and the United Drive and active in all other Jewish work.

Isaac Deutsch, another member of the same family,

originated the famous "Deutsch System" of outdoor advertising, and was for many years an advertising executive in Davenport.

Abraham Moritz also came to Davenport in 1867. He associated himself in the clothing business with Mr. L. Loewenstein.

The Ochs Family

The Ochs family was one of the most prominent in early Davenport. John Ochs was the first Jewish real estate dealer in the state. He died in 1882. Before his death his sons, Louis and Joseph, had become members of his firm. With the increasing importance of immigration to Iowa, Governor Merrill of Iowa made Louis Ochs Commissioner of Immigration in Germany, a position which he filled very capably.

The Rothschilds

Coming to Davenport from Germany in 1868, Isaac Rothschild established himself in the clothing business of his brother, E. Rothschild, becoming sole owner of the business in 1883.

Another bearer of the Rothschild name, David Rothschild, Sr., began his career as a peddler in the Muscatine area. Soon he owned the largest general store in that city. In 1887 he established the D. Rothschild Grain Company in the Tri-Cities. He died in 1894.

On his death his son, David, Jr., took over the business, which soon became the largest of its time in the middle west. However, when the firm purchased the largest grain elevator in Chicago, Mr. Rothschild moved his headquarters to that city, and the Tri-Cities Jewish community lost a very active leader in Jewish affairs, for Mr. Rothschild had been a President of the Temple for 10 years, a President of B'nai B'rith and had participated in many other Jewish activities.

Isaac Petersberger came to Davenport in 1890 as the

first Jewish lawyer in that city. He was also very active in Jewish organizations and was a President of the Temple and B'nai B'rith. His son, Richard, is now in the insurance field in the Tri-Cities.

Joseph Fleishman, another of Davenport's earlier Jewish settlers, was a prominent dealer in stocks, bonds and real estate.

E. P. Adler

One of the country's foremost newspaper publishers, and one of the outstanding Jewish leaders in this state received his start as a printer's devil. Mr. E. P. Adler began his newspaper career in the old Ottumwa Courier, whose publisher was A. W. Lee. Recognizing the young Mr. Adler's ability, Mr. Lee soon promoted him first to reporter, next to City Editor and then to business manager of the Courier.

Not long after that Mr. Adler decided that greater opportunities in the newspaper field lay in the bigger cities, and he persuaded Mr. Lee to purchase the Davenport Times, a small newspaper with four powerful competitors.

Mr. Adler became the publisher of the Times, and it prospered. Soon the other newspapers found the competition too great and dropped from the field. Only the Democrat and the Times were left, and they consolidated.

The Syndicate

By this time Mr. Lee and Mr. Adler had laid plans to purchase a number of newspapers in several states and form a syndicate. However, just as the Lee Syndicate was starting, Mr. Lee died unexpectedly, leaving Mr. Adler to carry on alone. Gradually the syndicate expanded, taking on such outstanding journals as the Mason City Globe Gazette and the Lincoln (Nebraska) Star. At present the Lee Syndicate, under Mr. Adler's direction, operates newspapers in Iowa,

Illinois, Wisconsin and Nebraska and is considered one of the four largest newspaper affiliations in the country.

Mr. Adler's son, Philip, was associated with his father for some time in Davenport, then became publisher of the Kewanee (Illinois) Star Courier.

Other Activities

Mr. E. P. Adler increased his many activities during the depression years by taking over the presidency of the closed American Bank of Davenport. After months of strenuous effort and what seemed like a miracle of refinancing, Mr. Adler was able to reopen the institution under the name of the Davenport Bank and Trust Company.

Under Mr. Adler's presidency, the bank almost immediately became stronger than it had been previously, and the loss to stockholders and depositors, because of the bank's closing was negligible.

Mr. Adler has also been a first vice-president of the Associated Press and President of Inland Press Association.

In spite of the extremely pressing demands of his many business obligations, Mr. Adler has taken time to participate actively in practically every worthwhile civic and Jewish activity, many of which originated with him.

He was responsible for the creation of the Davenport Industrial Commission, President of the Greater Davenport Committee, Trustee of the Davenport museum and art galleries, a director of the Mississippi Valley Fair and President of the Davenport Airways.

He has been either the originator or president, or both, of every important Jewish organization in the Tri-Cities and a director of the Y. M. C. A.

A sister of Mr. Adler, Mrs. Betty Adler Waterman, was a prominent writer for the Lee Syndicate and also most ac-

tive in Jewish and community affairs. Her early death occurred in 1925, and many memorials of various kinds have been established for her, among these is the library housed in the Jewish Community Office.

Later Business Leaders

Another of the prominent present day Jewish business and civic leaders is Mr. Ben Comenitz, who started as a newsboy on the city's streets and now owns and operates a large Davenport news agency.

Mr. Comenitz is a past President of the Davenport Community Chest, President of the Davenport Y. M. C. A., President of the Community Office Board, a past President of the Davenport Chamber of Commerce, and a past officer and active worker in many Jewish activities.

Mr. Herbert E. Scharff, proprietor of Scharff's Ready to Wear, is another of Davenport's Jewish leaders. He has been President of the Temple and a member of the Board of the Charities, and active in other civic affairs.

Norman Landaur is a Jewish business leader in the field of men's wear.

There are three Jewish doctors in Davenport, Drs. H. M. Hurevitz, Max Krahauer and Cecil M. Zuckerman, and three Jewish dentists, Drs. Ralph Hilfman and Milo Brady, while six Jewish attorneys have made the city the scene of their practice. They are Nathan Grant, Joseph S. Bozman, I. H. Fagen, C. Essler Golder, Albert E. Green and Kopl Vesole.

Chapter XXV

CEDAR RAPIDS

Not until the year 1895 was there a Jewish organization in Cedar Rapids. Before that time there had been too few in the Jewish community to form organized groups. However, in that year several families from Poland increased the number of Jews in Cedar Rapids.

Eben Israel Cemetery Association was chartered and a schochet, who also served as a teacher, was hired in 1895. In 1906, feeling the growing need for a strictly orthodox house of worship in Cedar Rapids, a group of Jewish residents of that city delegated Leon Kopel, Henry Smulekoff, Max Ohsman and Albert Braverman to prepare a building for use as a synagogue.

This committee purchased a building at 218 A Avenue, northwest, which was carefully remodeled for its new uses. There were 37 charter members of Congregation Beth Jacob, and first officers were, Noah Effrow, Chairman; Leon Kopel, Secretary; Max Hirsch, Treasurer; Henry Smulekoff, Max Ohsman and Albert Braverman, Trustees.

The congregation continued its strictly orthodox form for many years, increasing its membership with newcomers to the community, until about 1923, when a more modern orthodox service was put into effect.

At this time Rabbi William P. Mayer of Denver was chosen spiritual leader of the congregation. Under his leadership many new activities were introduced. Among these were the Talmud Torah and the weekly religious school for children.

A milestone in the life of the congregation was the appeal of Mrs. Abe Kopel in 1927 for the raising of sufficient funds to pay off the mortgage on the synagogue. In twenty minutes' time more than $2,000 was realized. This money was used to pay the indebtedness in full, and the burning of the mortgage was celebrated by a banquet.

Under the leadership of Rabbi Adam Neuberger, a children's choir was organized to assist in Friday evening services, classes in Hebrew were conducted daily, and the religious school progressed.

Remodeling

Sponsored primarily by the Ladies' Auxiliary, the remodeling of the synagogue was undertaken in 1933, with Mr. E. Cohn and Mr. and Mrs. Abe Kopel as building committee. The synagogue was completely redecorated, new carpet and linoleum laid, a new heating plant installed; through the donation of Mr. and Mrs. Orrie L. Becker, in memory of Mrs. Becker's mother, the alter was remodeled, and lighted by a fixture which was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. David Padzensky.

On the completion of this building program, impressive rededication ceremonies were held. Mr. E. Cohn, President of the congregation, delivered an address of welcome. Mr. and Mrs. Kopel spoke. Privileges of taking part in the ceremoney were auctioned to the highest bidder, and Dr. Moses Jung of the State University was the principal speaker.

Beth Jacob Today

Rabbi Irving Klibansky, the incumbent, came to Congre-

gation Beth Jacob in 1938. He received his training in the University of Chicago and Hebrew Theological College and came to Cedar Rapids as his first Rabbinate.

Under Rabbi Klibansky's direction, a youth group was organized for the congregation and numbers about 25 members; Saturday morning services were inaugurated for the junior congregation. The congregation sponsors a Sunday school and a daily Hebrew school. Regular services are held Friday evening.

President of Congregation Beth Jacob for 1940 is Mr. E. Cohn; Vice-President, Mr. I. Slutzky; Secretary, Mr. J. Cliffer, and Treasurer, Mr. Joe Berg.

Ladies Auxiliary

Wishing to aid Congregation Beth Jacob in every possible way, the women of the congregation formed the Ladies' Auxiliary in 1923. First President of this group was Mrs. Max Braverman. The Auxiliary has, through its activities, chiefly helped to maintain the Talmud Torah and conducted money-raising affairs for various purposes.

At the Auxiliary's bazaar in 1933, the proceeds were gratifying enough to inspire the ladies with the idea of rebuilding the synagogue. This work was undertaken at their suggestion, and funds from the bazaar were used for this purpose.

In 1937 the members of the congregation decided to place the building of a new synagogue among their plans for the future. The Ladies' Auxiliary held a bazaar for the purpose of starting the building fund, and almost $1,500 was raised by this method. Although the new synagogue is still in the planning stage, members of Congregation Beth Jacob are hopeful of its erection in the near future.

Mrs. Sam Estes is the 1940 President of the Ladies' Auxiliary of Congregation Beth Jacob, and Mrs. L. Rosen is

Vice-President. Other officers are Mrs. I. Tucker, Secretary, and Mrs. Max Padzensky, Treasurer.

Lines Hatzedek

Not an auxiliary of Congregation Beth Jacob but closely associated with it is the Lines Hatzedek Society. E. Cohn, Sam Slutzky, Morris Bugenstein, Max Ohsman, Aaron Rapaport, Louis Rosen, I. Slutsky, Louis K. Rosenthal, Louis Rosenbaum, Ben Kozberg, Sol Rozen and Harry Kozberg were the leading figures in the establishment of this society.

Principal purpose of the organization was to aid the sick, help during times of death in a family and assist with the burial ceremonies.

Recently, however, the Society has taken up other activities of a more social nature in addition to its other work.

Mr. Sam Estes is the 1940 President of Lines Hatzedek Society, with Oscar Berg as Vice-President; Jake Cliffer, Secretary, and Alec Kalinsky, Treasurer.

Temple Judah

Organized in 1922 for those who believe in the value of a progressive religion, Temple Judah of Cedar Rapids was founded upon the spiritual traditions of Israel and was dedicated to the ideals of liberal Judaism. The founder of the congregation was Rabbi Joseph L. Barow, and its first President was Mr. Philip Leibsohn.

In the fall of 1923, the women of Congregation Judah organized the Sisterhood, with about 25 charter members. This group has worked to reduce the mortgaged indebtedness on the Temple building and has been in every way a vital help to the growth of the congregation. Mrs. Philip Leibsohn was the first President of Congregation Judah Sisterhood.

During these first years, however, the congregation had

no regular Rabbi, but services during the holidays were conducted by students from Hebrew Union College.

The religious school was organized by Rabbi Barow in 1924, with an enrollment of about 40 children. Classes were conducted regularly each week. Assisting Rabbi Barow as supervisor of the school was Mrs. Raymond Klass.

Temple Judah Today

Building of a house of worship was decided on in 1926, and work was begun on the new temple, located at Washington Avenue and Twelfth Street. In May of 1927 Temple Judah was dedicated to its many uses.

First President Rabbi of Temple Judah was Rabbi Max Schenk, who served the congregation for four years. He was succeeded by Rabbi Albert S. Goldstein. Present Rabbi is Mr. Hirsch Freund, who came to Cedar Rapids early in 1940.

Dr. Morris Katzoff is President of Temple Judah for 1940-41. Jack Gasway is Vice-President; Z. Salit, Secretary, and Mrs. John Miller, Treasurer.

Mrs. Harry Cohn is President of the Temple Sisterhood for 1940.

Ladies Aid

Recognizing the need for an organization which could coordinate the Jewish charitable activities of the city, the Cedar Rapids Ladies' Aid Society was organized in 1906. There were about 25 charter members.

Through the years, the membership and scope of the services of the Ladies' Aid Society have increased, and this organization has been the only Jewish charitable group in the city which has maintained itself for any considerable period of time. At present there are 40 members in the society.

The only fund raising event of the year for this organi-

zation is the Annual Purim Ball, to which every Jewish resident of Cedar Rapids is asked to subscribe.

The 1940 President of the Ladies' Aid Society is Mrs. A. Rapaport; Vice-President is Mrs. D. Greenberg; Secretary, Mrs. Joe Cohn, and Treasurer, Sadi Birice.

Zionist

While interest in the Zionist movement in Cedar Rapids dates back many years, the present active Zionist organization of that city is only a little over a year old. Organized in 1939 through the leadership of Rabbi Klibansky and Rabbi David Polish of Temple Judah, the group claimed an immediate membership of 45.

First President of the Cedar Rapids Zionists was Mr. M. J. Frankel; Vice President, and Treasurer, Mr. A. Rapaport, and Secretary, Rabbi Klibansky.

Officers of the group for 1940 remain the same, except that the office of Vice-President-Treasurer has been dropped. The organization now has 50 members.

Hadassah

Women, however, were active in Cedar Rapids' Zionist work before the men. The Senior Hadassah of that city was formed in 1934, with Mrs. Raymond Klass as first President, Mrs. A. W. Bass, Vice-President, Mrs. Ben Kadzensky, Recording Secretary, and Mrs. Maurice Rapaport, Corresponding Secretary. Mrs. Rapaport was soon succeeded by Mrs. Nathan Greenberg.

The Hadassah organization of Cedar Rapids has been active in all the work carried on by the national group and in cultural activities as well.

The present membership of the Cedar Rapids chapter of Senior Hadassah is 45, and present officers are, President,

Mrs. Zig Salib; First Vice-President, Mrs. A. N. Gelb; Second Vice-President, Mrs. A. L. Smulekoff; Third Vice-President, Mrs. A. Rapaport; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Henry Jarney, and Treasurer, Mrs. Sam Kozberg.

Junior Hadassah

Cedar Rapids chapter of Junior Hadassah was organized under the leadership of Miss Frieda Slutzky and Rabbi Neuberger. Miss Slutzky subsequently became the first President of the organization. Oddly enough the Junior group of Hadassah is older than the Senior group in Cedar Rapids.

Although able to maintain only a small membership, the Junior Hadassah has been able to support all the activities of the national group and keep a high standard of cultural activities as well. Present membership of Cedar Rapids Junior Hadassah is 15.

Ruth Kadzensky is the 1940 President of Junior Hadassah; Selma Berg, Vice-President; Celia Kratchmer, Secretary, and Ethel Berg, Treasurer.

Personalities

One of the earliest Jewish settlers in Cedar Rapids was Mr. Henry Smulekoff, who came to that city in 1889, opening almost immediately a furniture store which soon became one of the largest in the city. On Mr. Smulekoff's death in 1930 his sons, Leo and A. L., took over the management of the business.

Max Ohsman, who still operates his hide and fur business in Cedar Rapids, was another of the earliest Jewish residents in Cedar Rapids, as was Mr. E. Cohen, a dealer in junk at first, who now operates the Dearborn Brass Co.

Other prominent Cedar Rapids business men are Alex

Gelb, who operates the May Drug Co., Jack Levin, Syndicate Clothing Co., and Morris Greenberg, retail fur.

Mr. Raymond Klass and Mr. Abe Bass are leading Jewish attorneys in Cedar Rapids. Mr. Klass in addition to his law work publishes technical material on law. Dr. Morris Katzoff is Cedar Rapids only Jewish dentist.

Chapter XXVI

WATERLOO

One of the most unusual Jewish organizations in the state was formed in 1932 by the members of the Waterloo community under the leadership of a committee composed of Leo Gradinger, Chairman; Herman Kaplan, Secretary, and Jacob Cohn, Treasurer, with the active support of Rabbi Louis Kaufman.

In this Waterloo plan every Jewish organization of the city sends representatives to a council, the number sent by an organization depending on the strength and size of the organization. At its annual meeting this council then selects its officers, who are empowered to manage the community's affairs.

Although most of the organizations maintain their separate identity and have their own officers, the Waterloo congregation and school have no separate officers and are governed directly by the council; this unique organization has been given the name of Congregation Sons of Jacob and Jewish Federation.

The member organizations of this federation pay annual dues of from $25 to $100. This fee entitles them to the use of the synagogue, use of the cemetery, the Hebrew school, Sunday school, the library and many other privileges.

The 1940 officers of the Federation council are David Cutler, President; Morris Feldman, Vice-President; Jake Kanofsky, Treasurer; J. Levi, Financial Secretary, and Miss Maxine Tenenbaum, Recording Secretary.



RABBI HAROLD GORDON

Rabbi Harold Gordon came to the Waterloo community in 1935 and has served there since that time. Rabbi Gordon received his training at the University of Minnesota, Chicago Hebrew Theological College, the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Hebrew Theological Seminary at Jerusalem.

Early Years

The Congregation Sons of Jacob, which formed the nucleus for the present community organization was formed

originally in 1905, through the efforts of Mr. Jacob Cohn, one of the earliest Jewish residents of Waterloo. Mr. Cohn was chosen as the first President of the group by its 12 charter members, and he retained that position for 31 years until his death in 1936.

By 1907 the membership of the congregation had increased to the point where it was possible to purchase a church building on Fifth Street and remodel it for use as a synagogue.

The congregation continued to grow, and the Jewish activities in Waterloo increased until in the early 1930's it became apparent that more housing facilities were essential. Under the leadership of a committee composed of Herman Kaplan, Chairman; Leo Gradinger, and Jacob Cohn, remodeling of the synagogue was planned and carried out.

On August 6, 1932, the enlarged and remodeled Waterloo synagogue was dedicated to its expanded uses as a place of worship and community center. The dedicatory ceremonies included a dinner under the auspices of the Hebrew Ladies Aid Society and a dance in the new community rooms.

At the present time Jewish members of nearby communities such as Cedar Falls, Waverly, Oelwein, Grundy Center and Independence participate in the activities of the Waterloo community. This brings the membership of the Waterloo congregation to over 100.

Hebrew Ladies Aid

On November 9, 1908, Mrs. Harry Cohn and Mrs. S. W. Hurwich organized the Hebrew Ladies Aid Society, an organization dedicated to charitable purposes. There were 14 charter members, and Mrs. Hurwich was chosen as first President. She remained active in the group until her death in 1933. Mrs. Harry Cohn was the first Secretary, an office

which she held for 16 years, and Mrs. Jacob Cohn was Treasurer.

Mrs. Leo Gradinger is the present President of the Hebrew Ladies Aid Society.

Hadassah and Junior Hadassah

Sponsored by Mrs. Dave Siegel, the Waterloo chapter of Hadassah was organized in 1923. Mrs. Siegel was the first President; Mrs. S. W. Hurwich, Vice-President; Mrs. M. Rotman, Treasurer, and Mrs. Herman Kaplan, Secretary.

During its early years Hadassah adopted and supported two orphans for two years in addition to its regular work.

In its 1939 Youth Aliyah drive, the Waterloo Hadassah raised $3,000, the largest sum per capita raised by any chapter in the country for that year. Hadassah has brought many outstanding speakers to the city, has been active in literary and civic affairs, and Mrs. Siegel and her group have sponsored and helped to organize Hadassah and Junior Hadassah chapters in other cities in the state.

Mrs. Harry Blindman is the 1940 President of the Waterloo Hadassah.

Junior Hadassah work in Waterloo was also sponsored by Mrs. Siegel, who helped to organize that group in 1926. Rose Feinberg was the first President of Waterloo Junior Hadassah. Other early Presidents were Esther Siegel, Bess Unger and Bess Deutchman.

Present membership of Junior Hadassah is 20, and officers of the group for 1940 are: President, Maxine Tenenbaum; Vice-President, Edith Diamond; Secretary, Leah Borg and Treasurer, Dorothy Feinberg.

B'nai B'rith and A. Z. A.

Waterloo's chapter of B'nai B'rith was organized in 1927 with Mr. Davidson as its first President; Mr. Leo Gra-

dinger was another early President, a position which he retained for several years.

There are now 80 members in the Waterloo B'nai B'rith organization; 1940 President of that group is Harry Blindman; Vice-President, Dr. Seymour Krantz; Secretary, Abe Secht, and Treasurer, Charles Tenenbaum.

Feeling that there were enough young Jewish men in Waterloo to form an active chapter of A. Z. A. in that city, a group of Jewish leaders, including Rabbi Gordon, J. Levi, and Dr. Krantz, set about the task of organizing such a group.

The result of their effort was the formation of the Waterloo chapter in 1938, with M. Kaplan as first President; Phillip Dorfman, Vice-President; Bill Birenbaum, Secretary, and Eugene Price, Treasurer.

The original membership of the A. Z. A. has been raised from 13 to 18, and Mr. Kaplan is still the President of the group, with Bill Birenbaum still maintaining the position of Secretary. Other officers are Alan Cutler, Vice-President, and Joe Berger, Treasurer.

In spite of the fact that the Waterloo A. Z. A. had been formed less than a year, that group was chosen to be host to the 1939 regional convention of the organization, and they managed that diffiicult task to the satisfaction of all.

Zionist Organization

For many years there had been a Zionist group in Waterloo, but it gradually went out of existence and was not reorganized until 1937. At that time a group of men led by Ralph Sherman, Phillip Tomin, Aaron Kaplan and Rabbi Gordon formed the present Zionist group. Mr. Sherman was the first President.

Almost from the time of its organization the Waterloo

Zionist group was particularly active, sponsoring such outstanding speakers as Pierre Van Passen, Rabbi Milton Steinberg, Maurice Samuel, Elias Newman and Leo Schwartz. They have taken a strong part in the work of the regional group, and Rabbi Gordon is at present a Vice-President of the Iowa-Nebraska region.

There are now 85 members of the Waterloo Zionist chapter. Harry Strom is the 1940 President; Harry Gradinger, Vice-President; Joe Weissman, Secretary, and Meyer Blindman, Treasurer.

Other Groups

Another Waterloo Jewish organization is the Cele Unger Drama group, named in honor of its founder and first President who died in 1938. This organization meets monthly to read and discuss outstanding plays of the season and discuss critics' opinions. The group presents its own productions from time to time, outstanding among these have been their version of "Queen Esther" and an original play called "Scattered Seed," the story of German refugees, written especially for the Cele Unger group.

There is also a Hebrew Free Loan Society in Waterloo, under the Presidency of Mr. J. Levi.

Business and Professional Leaders

Only a few months after Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Cohn came to Waterloo, S. W. Hurwich arrived in that city. He established himself in the junk business there in 1900 and a year later opened the furniture store which still bears his name. At the present time L. C. Hurwich, a son, operates the business established by his father.

On Mr. Jacob Cohn's death, management of the junk and metal business which he had founded was taken over by Harry Cohn, a brother.

Many of Waterloo's Jewish residents established or now operate clothing concerns there. Jake Kanofsky, owner of Jake and Bills, has been in business in Waterloo for almost 30 years. Frank Brothers clothing store was established by Abe Frank and continues in operation under the direction of Mr. Frank's nephew Harry Frank. Burton and Jack Field are the owners of the Palace Clothiers, and Leo Gradinger operates the New York Fashion shop, one of the city's leading ready-to-wear establishments.

Sol Algase has been for more than 20 years the manager and vice-president of the Davidson furniture store in Waterloo, while Charles Tenenbaum, Feinberg and Julius Levi are jewelers in that city.

Several of Waterloo's Jewish business men operate automotive concerns: among these are Dave and Morris Feldman, Feldman's used car market; Herman Unger of Unger Brothers; Morris Fish, Fish Auto Wrecking, and Dave Siegel, automobile accessories.

B. Schultz manages the Bovee Furnace Company and is a dealer in metals and junk.

Morris Strom and Harry Blot manage the Independent Grocery Company, which operates several stores and a large warehouse in Waterloo; William Greenberg and Morris Galofsky operate fruit stores in the city.

Waterloo's only Jewish attorneys are Leon Diamond and A. A. Secht, while the city's only Jewish dentist is Dr. S. E. Krantz.

The present Jewish population of Waterloo is about 120 families, or approximately 350 individuals, which does not include the population of nearby Jewish communities such as that in Cedar Falls.

Cedar Falls

The Cedar Falls community is not large, but its members

are very active in Jewish work.

Harry Israel, who came first to Waterloo and then established a clothing store in Cedar Falls, is one of the earliest Jewish residents of the city.

The Diamond Brothers, Sam and Paul, came to Cedar Falls in 1920 and opened a small grocery store. In the 20 years since that time they have expanded their business until they now operate 37 stores in various cities over the state, the largest independently owned grocery concern in Iowa.

The Diamonds and members of their family have been active in Jewish and civic affairs.

Although they make their homes in Waterloo, both Max Rotman and Jake Weisman own junk and metal establishments in Cedar Falls. There are about five Jewish families who make their homes in that city.

Chapter XXVII

COUNCIL BLUFFS

Just how early there were Jewish settlers in Council Bluffs is not known exactly, but by 1881 several families had made that city their home, among them H. Mosler, in the clothing business, F. Friedman, millinery, Henry and Simon Eisman, general merchandise, F. Herzberg, millinery, B. Kline, A. Goldstein and L. Harris.

In 1881 this group of Jewish pioneers felt strong enough to form a congregation. So the 25 charter members of the new organization took the name Congregation Bikur Cholim and rented a small brick building on Main Street.

The original officers of this congregation were M. Drohlich, President; Abraham Mordecai Marks, Vice-President and O. Hochman, Secretary. They were unable, however, to have a Rabbi.

Shortly afterward another Jewish group in the city founded a new congregation called Temple Emanuel, but it was in existence only a couple of years and then disbanded.

Reorganization

Then in 1904 Bikur Cholim was enlarged and reorganized, receiving many new members from the former Temple. Leading figures in this reorganization were H. Saltzman, J.

Katelman, I. Gilinsky, Sam Snyder, N. Freiden, B. Gilinsky, G. Whitebook, M. Soloman, M. Marcus and E. Pill. The new group was called Congregation Chevra B'nai Yisroel, and a new wooden building was put up for use as a synagogue.

For many years the life of the congregation proceeded without incident until the synagogue was completely destroyed by fire in 1930. A meeting was hurriedly called to make plans for the erection of a new building. A committee consisting of George Whitebook, S. Sykin, Maurice Hoffman, Dave Fox and Abe Gilinsky, was selected to handle the building arrangements.

New Synagogue

The new brick synagogue building was dedicated for use on Sunday, January 11, 1931, with elaborate ceremonies. The officers at the time of dedication included George Whitebook, President; Abe Gilinsky, Vice-President; O. Hochman, Secretary, and Dave Fox, Treasurer.

The new synagogue building cost $30,000, but at the present time the indebtedness on the structure has been reduced to less than $3,000.

Officers of Chevra B'nai Yisroel for 1940 are, President, S. Shykin, Vice-President; Sam Sacks; Secretary, O. Hochman, and Treasurer, Dave Fox. There are now 45 members.

Members of the congregation now are planning for a community center to be housed in a building close to the synagogue, just donated for that purpose by Sam Sacks. Plans for this project have not yet been completed, however.

The Council Bluffs Hebrew School is held in the synagogue building. Begun in 1918, its organizers were Dave Fox, Morris Hoffman, S. Shykin, A. Aginsky, and Abe Gilinsky. The present enrollment of the school is about 50, and the 1940 officers of the school board are Ben Cuby, Presi-

dent; Morris Grossman, Vice-President; Sam Sacks, Secretary, and Sam Rosenthal, Treasurer.

B'nai B'rith

B'nai B'rith in Council Bluffs was first organized in 1900 under the leadership of O. Hochman, I. Gilinsky, Sam Friedman, Sam Snyder, Julius Rosenfeld, L. Harris, J. Katelman and I. Cherniss, but this original group was disbanded after a few years and was not reorganized until April 25, 1911. Edward Simon and L. Bernstein were the leading figures in this reorganization.

At present Council Bluffs' chapter of B'nai B'rith has 135 members. Leon S. Frankel is present President, Milton Udolson, Vice-President; Abe Katelman, Secretary; Kulman Udolson, Financial Secretary; Louis Katelman, Treasurer, and L. Fox, Monitor.

As one of its many functions, the B'nai B'rith in Council Bluffs conducts the annual drive for funds among residents of the city.

A. Z. A.

The A. Z. A. chapter in Council Bluffs was one of the first to be formed in Iowa. Following very closely the lead of the Des Moines chapter, it was organized in October of 1924 under the leadership of Abe Katelman and his brother Louis. The latter became the first advisor to the group. There were 12 charter members.

Lou Rosenthal was the first President of the Council Bluffs A. Z. A.; Herald Cherniak, Vice-President, and Abe Katelman, Secretary.

Membership in the organization now totals 18. The 1940 President is Leo Meyerson; Vice-President, Yale Yetsdiner; Secretary, Robert Tasser; Treasurer, Robert Lincoln, and Chairman of the Advisory group, Abe Katelman.

Hadassah

Starting with a membership of 30 in 1930, the Hadassah group of Council Bluffs has grown until it now has over 100 members. Mrs. Herman Marowitz was the first President of the chapter; Mrs. Isaac Sternhill, Secretary, and Mrs. Albert Krasne, Treasurer.

Since it is the only Jewish women's group in Council Bluffs, the members of Hadassah are not only active in Zionist work but lend their support to all the Jewish activities of the city.

The 1940 President is Mrs. Harry Cherniss; Vice-President, Mrs. Nathan Nogg; Secretary, Mrs. Abe Bear; Financial Secretary and Treasurer, Mrs. Milton Udolson, and Advisor to Junior Hadassah, Mrs. Richard Gordon.

Junior Hadassah

The chapter of Junior Hadassah in Council Bluffs is of recent origin, an outgrowth of the regional convention of Hadassah which was held in that city late in 1937. In 1938 the Junior group was formed, with June Meyerson as first President. Rose Mendelson was Vice-President; Mildred Balaban, Secretary, and Leona Katelman, Treasurer.

There were about 25 charter members, and the membership has been maintained at just that figure. Doris Friedman is the 1940-41 President of the group; Lorraine Meyerson, Vice-President; Leona Katelman, Secretary, and Beatrice Krasne, Treasurer.

Brotherhood

With a charter membership of about 45, the Agudas Achim brotherhood was formed in Council Bluffs in 1914 for benevolent and charitable purposes. K. Brandies was the first President of the group; H. Whitebook the first Vice-President; A. Bromberg, Recording Secretary; Louis Brandies, Financial Secretary, and J. Sharff, Treasurer.

There are now 60 members of the Agudas Achim organization, and its 1940 officers are: Dr. I. Greenberg, President; Ben Kooler, Vice-President; O. Hochman, Secretary, and Sam Sacks, Treasurer.

Business and Professional Leaders

The Jewish population of Council Bluffs is, of course, subject to the influence of nearby Omaha, and most of its members owe allegiance to at least one Omaha organization, but there are several Jewish business and professional leaders in Council Bluffs in spite of its proximity to the larger city.

The Krasne Brothers, Herman, George, Jack, I. and Frank, were the founders of what is now the city's largest merchandising establishment, the People's store. S. Shykin operates a large business in all kinds of metals and owns many businesses throughout the city. Dave Fox is the proprietor of an auto accessories establishment; Milton Udolson is a dealer in new and used cars, while the foundry established by the late J. Katelman is now operated by his sons, Joe, A., Maurice and Sam.

Several of the leading grocery stores in Council Bluffs have Jewish proprietors; among these are Herman and Sam Myerson, who operate the grocery department of the People's store, Sam Sacks, Ben Kooler and Sam Bob.

Another of the privately operated departments of the People's store is the hardware section, which is operated by Louis and Morris Baumstein.

Several of the members of the Council Bluffs Jewish community have been active in civic affairs. Mr. O. Hochman was a city clerk and Alderman-at-large. Louis Marquis was a member of the city fire and police board and Joe Katelman an Alderman-at-large.

There are three Jewish lawyers in Council Bluffs, Ben

Cuby, Milton K. Udolson and Harry Cherniss, and three Jewish doctors, I. Sternhill, I. Muskovitz and I. Greenberg.

The present Jewish population of Council Bluffs is about 250 families.

Chapter XXVIII

DUBUQUE

Not only was Alexander Levi Iowa's first Jewish settler, Mr. Levi was also one of Dubuque's wealthiest and most influential figures. Engaging first in the grocery and provision business and doing some mining, Mr. Levi later branched into the dry goods and clothing business and into concentrated mining.

"By industry, integrity and good management," says the Dubuque County History, "Mr. Levi has amassed a fortune and has one of the finest and most commodious homes in the city."

Other prominent early Jewish leaders in Dubuque were Isaac and Sigfried Platt, leading merchants of their day, Abe Urbach, who succeeded the Platts as the city's leading merchant, Moses Lipman, Moses Kassler and H. Magdal.

First Congregation

Mr. Levi had been the organizer of Dubuque's first Jewish congregation in the 1860's, but the decrease in the city's Jewish population caused this venture to be short lived.

In 1884, with the population becoming somewhat more stable, another group of men, including Marks Harris, George Klein, M. W. Harris, Isaac Manhoff, H. Magdal, A. Marcus

and Gabriel Blumenthal, enlisted the financial aid of Mr. Levi and began another congregation.

For their meetings they rented a hall at Fifth and Locust streets. The first Rabbi was the Reverend Cohen, who served five years from 1884 to 1889. During those years the peak of Dubuque's Jewish population was reached and at one time there were 150 Jewish families in this congregation.

As soon as the flow of immigration made it possible, another congregation, Knesses Israel, was organized in Dubuque. This occurred in 1896, and the 30 members met in a rented room and chose their first officers, Harry Zideman, President; Maurice Manhoff, Vice-President; William Olanosky, Secretary, and Max Ginsberg, Treasurer.

Within a few years after the founding of Knesses Israel, the members of this congregation were divided into two factions, one group of about ten men finally breaking away entirely and forming a separate congregation. This group chose for itself the name K'hilah, or Jewish Protection Club, a name unique among all the country's congregations.

However, the K'hilah congregation found an independent existance difficult to maintain, so their differences were patched up, and they rejoined the larger group. Meanwhile the Jewish population of Dubuque had been rapidly decreasing, so rapidly in fact that by 1904 Knesses Israel was the strongest congregation in Dubuque. It became apparent that one congregation would serve the community's needs.

Consolidation

So on September 21, 1904, the Knesses Israel congregation was reorganized as Congregation Beth El. Members of the other Dubuque congregation joined this new conservative congregation, and the combined group bought a small house which was remodeled into a synagogue.

Officers at that time were Israel Pochter, Isaac Manhoff, William Kohn, William Olansky and George Klein. The shule was remodeled in 1905, with the enthusiastic help of all the congregation.

This small building served the congregation for many years until it became increasingly evident that a new synagogue building was needed. However, nothing was done in that regard until Meyer Zuckerman became President of B'nai B'rith.

New Synagogue

Under his leadership the Dubuque B'nai B'rith lodge undertook the sponsorship of the new synagogue, one of the first B'nai B'rith chapters in the country to take on such a project.

In August of 1939 the corner stone of the new Beth El synagogue was laid with elaborate ceremonies. Louis Rotman, President of the congregation, Rabbi Monroe Levens of Des Moines, Mr. Zuckerman and representatives of the community and other religious groups took part in the program. The new synagogue was dedicated for use during the ceremonies of the following High Holy days.

Present membership in Congregation Beth El is over 40, and 1940 officers are Al Pau, formerly of Dubuque and now of Chicago, Honorary President; Louis Rotman, President; Sam Barvin, first Vice-President; David Solomon, second Vice-President; Jules Gerelick, Secretary; Meyer Zuckerman, Financial Secretary, and Walter Urbach, Treasurer.

In January of 1940 Rabbi Samuel Schnitzer, the incumbent, came to Beth El congregation from Chicago. He is a graduate of De Paul University and the Hebrew Theological Seminary.

Ladies' Aid

The congregation has never had a Sisterhood as such,

although the Dubuque Jewish Ladies' Aid has performed many of the functions of such a group. Under the leadership of Mrs. Mose Urbach, the Ladies' Aid Society came into being in 1900. At that time 20 women met for the purpose of bringing emergency relief to a poor woman and her family.

The organization continued to function and grow and render service to the Jewish community. Through the years these women have continued to care for the needy Jewish families. In addition to charity for their own people, the society contributes to civic charities, including the Milk Fund and the Community Chest.

However, at the present time the Ladies' Aid Society is undergoing a period of reorganization, destined to make it a definite sisterhood auxiliary of the congregation. Mrs. E. Birndorf is President of this group at the present time.

Community Center

Now that the new synagogue has been built, the members of the Dubuque Jewish community look forward to the rapid expansion of the activities of the Jewish Community Center, now housed in the synagogue building.

The Dubuque Community Center was organized in September of 1933 when the Jewish men and women of the city met to consider the best means of furthering the spiritual life of the Jewish community. This movement was led by Harry Kassler, who became chairman of the Center's executive committee. Other members of the Executive Committee were Louis Rotman, Meyer Zuckerman and Meyer Goodman.

This council has since gone out of existence, however, and the Community Center is administered by the offiicers of the congregation.

B'nai B'rith

The B'nai B'rith organization in Dubuque was formed in 1927. Twenty-nine men, with Dr. Max Kadesky as president,

were charter members. Walter Urbach and Charles Weiner were Treasurer and Secretary, respectively, of the group.

Today the Dubuque B'nai B'rith is probably the most active Jewish group in the city. In addition to sponsoring the building of the new synagogue, the chapter sponsors the refugee work in the city and takes part in many worthwhile activities.

In addition to Mr. Zuckerman, the President, other officers are Charles Rotman, Vice-President; Jules L. Gerelick, Secretary; Louis Rotman, Treasurer, and David Solomon, Monitor.

Zionist Organization

Although Zionist work in Dubuque has been carried on for some time, not until recent years have brought the greatly increased need for such activity has there been any highly organized Zionist work in the city. In 1938 under the direction of Jack Wolfe, then President of the Iowa Zionist Region, Mrs. Max Mayer and Rabbi Monroe Levens, all of Des Moines, a new district was organized.

The 1940 officers of the Dubuque Zionist organization are Mr. Jules Gerelick, President; Meyer Zuckerman, Vice-President; Jack Solomon, Secretary, and Walter Urbach, Treasurer. Present membership is 20.

Hadassah

The Dubuque chapter of Hadassah was organized in June of 1938. The first officers elected were Irene Slivken, President; Mrs. Ben Bernstein, Vice-President; Mrs. Jack Solomon, Recording Secretary; Mrs. M. B. Olanosky, Corresponding Secretary, and Mrs. Joseph Jacobson, Treasurer. In December Mrs. Bernstein resigned and was succeeded by Mrs. Leah Urbach.

The Hadassah officers for 1940 are: President, Irene

Slivken; Vice-President, Mrs. Joseph Jacobson; Recording Secretary, Mrs. Jack Solomon; Corresponding Secretary, Mrs. M. B. Olansky, and Treasurer, Mrs. Jules Gerelick.

Leaders

Some of the later prominent business and communal leaders in Dubuque were Isaac Belsky, Louis Brin and William Olanosky. Abraham Slimmer, a nationally known philanthropist, was another of Dubuque's prominent Jewish residents.

Modern Jewish leaders in Dubuque have been very active. Mr. Charles Belsky served during a trying period as a member of the city's Board of Education. Later he was President of the Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Board of Directors of the Y. M. C. A. and Chairman of the first successful Community Chest Drive.

His brother, Max Belsky, was a president of Rotary club. Dr. Max Kadesky was a president of Kiwanis, and Isadore Olanosky was Exalted Ruler of the Elks Lodge.

Mr. Abe Urbach has been in the clothing business in Dubuque for more than 50 years, and is still active there in that field. Louis Rotman has engaged in the auto accessories business for the last 25 years. Dr. Max Kadesky, a dentist, is at present the only Jewish professional man in the city.

Dubuque's Jewish population is at the present time about 50 families.

Chapter XXIX

IOWA CITY

The first Jewish settler in Iowa City and one of the state's most prominent Jewish leaders was the Honorable Moses Bloom.

Mr. Bloom was born in Alsace and came to this country in 1850, where for some time he was a peddler, studying the language and manner of the people.

He came to Iowa City in the late 1850's, attracted by the bright prospects of the great West, and established a clothing business. During the war years he was a staunch patriot and an alderman of Iowa City.

Political Honors

In the year 1873 Mr. Bloom was elected to the post of Mayor of the city, an honor accorded for the first time to a Jewish citizen in a northwest state. A second term as mayor was offered him, but he declined.

Mr. Bloom was the Democratic nominee for State Representative from his district in 1875 but was defeated. However, in 1877 he was elected to the state legislature by a substantial majority. He was at once named to serve on four of the state's legislative committees.

His highest political honor came in 1875 when the Demo-

cratic state convention, meeting at Council Bluffs, nominated him for Lieutenant Governor of the state, but Mr. Bloom



MOSES BLOOM

declined the honor, never giving his reasons for this action.

In 1887 Mr. Bloom was elected to the state Senate, where he served two terms.

He was a prominent Mason, the founder of the Teutonic lodge of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Grand Chancellor of the Odd Fellows of Iowa and a director of two Iowa City banks.

A daughter of Mr. Bloom, Mrs. Max Mayer, director of the Des Moines Jewish Community Center, has also become one of the state's outstanding Jewish leaders.

Mr. E. Fleishman was the next Jewish settler to arrive in Iowa City following Mr. Bloom. He operated a tobacco store there.

Mr. Bloom died on June 14, 1893.

In 1859 the families of Hesselberger and Rothschild arrived in Iowa City from Germany, the latter starting a clothing store. Other Jewish settlers began to gather in or near Iowa City, including Levi Kaufman, one of the state's few Jewish farmers. A. N. Hilfman was a pioneer jeweler in the city. Aaron Braverman was another of the early Jewish settlers in Iowa City.

Max Mayer

Another of Iowa City's prominent early Jewish residents was Mr. Max Mayer, a native Iowan who came to Iowa City in 1887 and entered the clothing firm of his father-in-law, Moses Bloom.

Mr. Mayer was a leader in the Democratic circles of Iowa City, served as a Committeeman, as a delegate to five national conventions and was finally appointed postmaster of Iowa City by Woodrow Wilson, a position which he held for eight years.

An ardent supporter of athletics at the University, Mr. Mayer was one of three who purchased and donated the old Max Mayer Field for the University. He also donated the Mayer cup for track, the first award of its kind at that institution. He has been called "the grand old man and patron saint of Iowa athletics."

When he retired from the postmastership in 1924, the

Mayers moved to Des Moines, where Mrs. Mayer became the director of the Jewish Community Center.

After a lengthy illness, Mr. Mayer died in Des Moines on September 20, 1939, at the age of 81.

Organizing

The first Jewish organization in Iowa City, the United States Hebrew Association of Iowa City, was formed about 1859 in order to give the Jewish settlers the advantages of a cemetery and as many Jewish services as possible. Members of the Fleishman family were most instrumental in establishing this society.

During the years that followed, the Jewish population of Iowa City grew very slowly, so slowly in fact that no congregation could be formed. However, in 1911 the Iowa City Hebrew School was formed through the efforts of Jacob Glassman, Mr. and Mrs. John Brady, Joe Glassman and O. Saltzman, although at that time there were only about ten Jewish families in Iowa City.

Mr. Joseph Braverman was the first teacher in the school, and the first classes in Hebrew were held at night in the Brady home. At present the school is held in the rooms of the synagogue, and Zalman Pintel is the teacher of about 20 Jewish children who come to the school three times every week for work on a course of study lasting eight years.

High spot in the year's activity for the school is the annual program to raise money. A play is given, and other entertainment presented. The school is governed by a board of education whose present President is Eli Braverman.

In 1912 the Jewish women formed the third Jewish organization in Iowa City—the Jewish Ladies Relief Organization. Mrs. John Brady and Mrs. Joseph Braverman were, respectively, the first Chairman and Secretary of the group.

The Jewish Ladies Relief organization still carries on its charitable work, with Mrs. Harry Shulman present Chairman; Mrs. Joseph Braverman, Secretary, and Mrs. A. Dicker, Treasurer.

Still another group was organized in Iowa City before a congregation was formed. Under the leadership of Dr. Benjamin Kremer, the Zionist group was created in 1915, and Dr. Kremer became the first Chairman.

The Zionist organization of Iowa City now has 30 members, and membership has steadily increased for the last several years. Sam Saltzman is the Chairman of the group for 1940; Harry Shulman, Treasurer, and Ben Whitebook, Vice-President.

Agudas Achim

Not until the year 1916 was a congregation formed in Iowa City. Congregation Agudas Achim was incorporated under the laws of Iowa in that year. First officers of the congregation were Harry Shulman, Chairman; J. Braverman, Vice-Chairman; O. Saltzman, Secretary, and Joe Glassman, Treasurer. However, for several years services of the congregation were conducted only irregularly.

During the Chairmanship and Vice-Chairmanship of Joe Braverman and Harry Shulman in 1920, the present synagogue was purchased and completely remodeled. It has been thoroughly remodeled twice since that time and stands entirely free of indebtedness at the present time.

Since it has been financially impossible to maintain a cantor, Samuel Markovitz, Morris Danovitz, Eli Braverman and A. Dicker have donated their services for all holidays.

Membership in Congregation Agudas Achim has reached 31 in 1940, and Eli Braverman is Chairman; Sam Markovitz, Secretary; Sam Morton, Treasurer.

Sisterhood

Although the Sisterhood of the congregation is a young organization, the Jewish women have always been a vital force in the community. They have raised money by means of programs, dances and other entertainments, have sponsored rummage sales and have sent the money raised by these means to Jewish institutions and those in need. A kosher home is always kept, and the destitute are never turned away.

The Sisterhood was organized in 1932 under the leadership of Mrs. Ben Whitebook. Mrs. Aaron Braverman is the present Chairman; Mrs. Eli Braverman, Secretary, and Mrs. Ben Kimmel, Treasurer. There are 28 members.

Hadassah

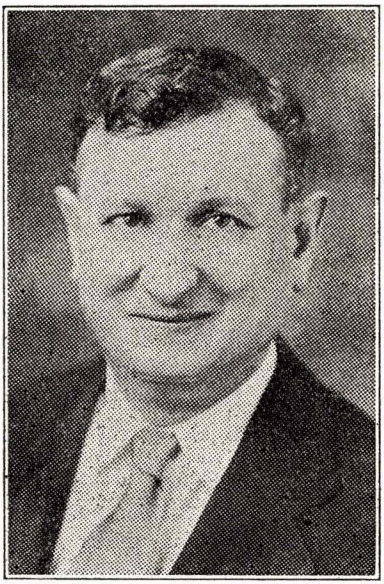
The Jewish women have been active also in the work for Palestine. The Iowa City chapter of Hadassah, organized in November of 1919, was the first chapter of that organization to be formed anywhere in Iowa.

Mrs. A. Abramson was the first Chairman of the Hadassah group and present officers are Mrs. Sam Whitebook, President; Mrs. Herman Worton, Vice-President, and Mrs. Ben Whitebook, Treasurer. Iowa City has also a chapter of Pioneer Women, with Mrs. Harry Shulman as Chairman and Mrs. David Braverman as Secretary.

United Appeal

To coordinate the gathering of funds for benevolent and charitable purposes, the Jewish people of Iowa City organized the United Palestine Appeal in 1920. Mr. Joseph Braverman was the leader in this movement, was the first President of the Appeal and has served in that capacity almost continuously ever since. Mr. Samuel Worton has also been active in the organization since its formation.

In 1938 the organization was incorporated, and its name was changed to the United Jewish Appeal. Each year an intensive drive for funds is carried on, to which almost every Jewish resident of the city makes some contribution.



JOSEPH BRAVERMAN

In addition to Mr. Braverman, the officers for 1940 are Mr. Harry Shulman, Vice-Chairman; Samuel Worton, Treasurer, and Sam Saltzman, Secretary.

Continually growing in importance in Iowa City, as elsewhere, is the refugee committee, formed in 1939. Mr. Abe Shulman has been Chairman of this organization since its beginning.

B'nai B'rith

B'nai B'rith is the youngest Jewish organization in Iowa City. The chapter there was formed in the first weeks of

1940 under the leadership of Rabbi Morris Kertzer and Mr. Lou Shulman. Mr. Shulman became the first President of the group; Mr. Ben Whitebook, Vice-President; Maurice Lazar, Secretary; Leonard Bradsky, Treasurer; Rabbi Kertzer, Secretary, and Archie Saltzman, degree work.

At present the members of Iowa City's B'nai B'rith total 37, and they plan as soon as possible to sponsor a chapter of A. Z. A.

The University

As might be expected, a good deal of the Jewish activity of Iowa City centers around the University. First Jewish organization on the campus was Hillel Club, then a purely local group first conceived by a Mr. Garalnek, a student of law there. Since that time the organization has grown and become more active. In 1930 the name was changed to Philo Club. In 1939 the Iowa City Philo Club affiliated with B'nai B'rith and its national Hillel group and resumed its old name. Arney Levine is the present Chairman of the local Hillel.

Dr. Kurt Lewin, Professor of Psychology at the University and one of the outstanding Jewish ethical and cultural leaders on the campus, has conducted for several years, without compensation, a study of Hebrew culture under Avuchoh. This study group consists largely of graduate students at the University.

There are, of course, other Jewish groups on the campus, but these are almost entirely social in their activities.

Naturally enough the Jewish teacher in the school of religion in the University wields a good deal of influence in the community. Dr. Morris Farbrige was the first to hold this position, while Dr. Moses Jung became widely known for his work in this field.

Rabbi Morris Kertzer was Dr. Jung's immediate succes-

sor. In addition to his duties on the campus Rabbi Kertzer serves as the religious leader of Congregation Agudas Achim.

Another of the University's Jewish leaders, one of the outstanding Jewish leaders in the state and the ranking



DR. ARTHUR STEINDLER

expert in his field is Dr. Arthur Steindler. Many experts call Dr. Steindler the world's greatest bone specialist, while his treatment of children has won him wide acclaim.

In spite of the pressing demands on his time, however, Dr. Steindler is able to participate in many Jwish activities, especially in the United Jewish Appeal and the Zionist work. He has made many contributions to the work in Palestine through his expert interest in the physical welfare of that country.

In addition to Dr. Steindler, there are, perhaps, 20 other

Jewish physicians on the University staff and six other Jewish faculty members in the various other colleges of the University.

Business Leaders

Some of the Jewish business leaders who are active in community and civic affairs are Harry Shulman, a leading



HARRY SHULMAN

dealer in fuel and junk, County Treasurer of the Democratic party and a member of the board of the Community Chest; Aaron and David Braverman, who operate three grocery stores in Iowa City and are the city's leading grocers; Harry Bremer, clothier, Chairman of the city recreational center; Joe Glassman, Ben Whitebook and Joe Braverman, grocers, and Mrs. Nate Chapman, who operates Iowa City's leading moving picture house.

A recent interesting survey shows that there are in

Iowa City twelve Jewish grocers, seven Jewish junk dealers, four automobile sales and accessories dealers, three moving picture operators, three shoe repairers, three furniture dealers, two tailors, two real estate brokers, one beer hall operator, one shoe store proprietor and one journalist.

For at least the last 30 years there have been no instances of delinquency among the 40 Jewish families of Iowa City.

Chapter XXX

OTTUMWA

The Jewish people of Ottumwa have been prominent in many fields of endeavor.

One of the earliest Jewish settlers in Ottumwa was Mr. P. E. Adler, who came to that city in the early 70's to take up the insurance business. His son, E. P. Adler, took up newspaper work on the local paper, became manager and publisher of the Davenport **Times** and **Democrat** and head of the Lee newspaper syndicate, and one of this country's best known journalist.

S. E. Adler was a patent attorney in Ottumwa in 1880, and Clint Adler came to Ottumwa from Illinois in 1888.

Edna Ferber, the famous novelist, spent her early childhood in Ottumwa and frequently returns to that city.

Many of Ottumwa's Jewish residents entered the clothing business. Ottumwa's prominent Jewish clothiers include Sigel Brothers, established by E. & M. Sigel and now managed by E. Sigel's two sons, Ben and Dave; Joe Barmash, whose store is now operated by his wife and son Milo; Hyman Geifman, proprietor of the Golden Eagle; Ellis, Joe and Mrs. Dora Bernstein; Meyer Rich and Max Sigel.

The Spiwak Brothers, Maurice and Louis, operate one of

Ottumwa's leading furniture stores, founded originally by their father, Hyman, deal to a considerable extent in real estate and operate a clothing business there. Other prominent Jewish furniture dealers are Max and Morris Stein, who manage the business established by their father, Sam Stein, and E. Brown and son, who were originally from Ottumwa, left the city and returned recently to establish their furniture concern.

Jewish ready-to-wear firms are those operated by Louie Lyons, Miss Betty Stamm and Mrs. Sophie Dryer, who manages the business created by her late husband, Morris Dryer, and J. J. Frankel's store.

Oscar Bookin has operated a jewelry store in Ottumwa since 1914, and his sons, Nathan, Robert and Norman, are now associated with him in the business.

Mr. Sol Meyer was Ottumwa's only Jewish hardware merchant. Upon his death Mrs. Meyer and their son Dave took over the managament of the business. The Rosenman Brothers and William Finkel are dealers in junk in the city.

Mr. Jake Cohen is Ottumwa's leading theatre owner, and Mr. Clint Adler is the only Jewish resident to operate a cleaning establishment in the city.

The Jewish professional people in Ottumwa are Dr. Sidney Brody, physician and surgeon; Harry Ziffren and Charles Bookin, attorneys; S. J. Bookin, optometrist, and Anita Kalis and Ida Rosenman, teachers in the public schools.

Early Jewish services were held in Ottumwa by the German Jews in rooms over a drug store, but after 1884 these services died out.

B'nai Israel

From that time until 1915, the Jewish people of Ottumwa had no synagogue but held services, sometimes irregular-

ly, at rented halls. Finally, in 1915 the need for a synagogue was so great that a group of men, Dave Spiwak, Nathan Friedman, M. Barmash, E. Brown, B. Redman, Joe Barmash, E. Sigel and Jacob Redman, made plans and built a synagogue building.

Mr. H. Bumstein was elected its first president, and S. Margolis was the first Rabbi to conduct services in the newly erected synagogue. Ben Sigel is the 1940 President of Congregation B'nai Israel; Sam Rosenman, Vice-President; Louie Bumstein, Secretary, and Milo Barmish, Treasurer. The congregation remains orthodox and has a membership of 50 families.

Present Rabbi of the congregation is Rabbi Ben Zion Wells, who came to Ottumwa in 1938.

B'nai B'rith

Wishing to bring the advantages of fraternal association to the Jewish men of Ottumwa and surrounding territory, Oscar Bookin, Herman Feldman, Clint Adler, Harry Zeffren and others of the city's leaders worked for the establishment of a chapter of B'nai B'rith in Ottumwa and realized that goal in 1934.

Officers and members of the Rock Island lodge officiated at the installation ceremonies of the Ottumwa chapter, and tribute was paid at that time to the contribution of energy and time that John Gellerman of the Rock Island group had made toward bringing B'nai B'rith to Ottumwa.

Clint Adler was elected first president of the Ottumwa B'nai B'rith, and through the efforts of Dave Sigel, William Bernstein and Sam Popofsky, who secured the membership of a number of Jewish men from Oskaloosa and surrounding towns, the membership of the city's chapter had increased to 50 during its first year.

Establishment of the chapter made for a unity of the Jews of that section of the state, problems of the people were discussed and able speakers brought in.



This picture was taken November 1, 1935 on the first anniversary of the reorganized Ottumwa lodge. Seated left to right are Rabbi Eugene Mannheimer, Des Moines; I. E. Padway, Milwaukee, then sixth district president of B'nai B'rith; and Clint K. Adler, Ottumwa, then retiring president of the Ottumwa unit. Standing in the rear are Herman Feldman, Ottumwa, 1935-36 president and Harry M. Ziffren, Ottumwa, then retiring first vice president.

At present meetings take place alternately at Ottumwa and Oskaloosa.

Officers of the Ottumwa B'nai B'rith are: President, Emil Feinberg of Oskaloosa; First Vice-President, Bernard Kalis of Ottumwa; Second Vice-President, J. W. Shkolnick

of Centerville; Secretary, Louis Bumstein of Ottumwa, and Treasurer, Dave Meyer, also of Ottumwa.

B'nai B'rith chapter in Ottumwa now has 64 members.

Sr. Hadassah

Encouraged by the success of the men in forming a chapter of B'nai B'rith, the women of Ottumwa were called together in October of 1935 by Mrs. Louis Spiwak for the purpose of forming a local chapter of Senior Hadassah.

After becoming acquainted with the work, the aims and purposes of Hadassah, the women agreed to form an Ottumwa chapter. It was then suggested that the Jewish women from smaller surrounding towns be invited to join the Ottumwa group. This was done, and the United Chapter started its organized life with a membership of 75 women.

First President of the organization was Mrs. Louis Spiwak. The choice of First Vice-President was to go to the Oskaloosa group, who named Mrs. Harry Green to that post. Centerville was to choose the Second Vice-President. Their choice went to Mrs. J. J. Frankel, who died in office. First Secretary was Mrs. Charles Bookin and Treasurer, Mrs. Herman Feldman.

Regular business and cultural meetings have been held once every month, and for the most part the Hadassah activities are similar to those elsewhere.

At a joint meeting of the United Hadassah and B'nai B'rith, Mrs. Max Mayer was principal speaker. Tribute was paid to Mrs. Mayer for her part in first presenting the idea of Hadassah to the Ottumwa group.

Officers of the United Hadassah chapter for 1940 are Mrs. Charles Rich, President; Mrs. Harry Shrago of Oskaloosa, who has charge of the Hadassah meetings there, First

Vice-President; Mrs. Morris Spiwak, Second Vice-President; Mrs. Norville Ullman, Secretary, and Mrs. Charles Ullman, Treasurer.

Chapter XXXI

MASON CITY

Beginning of Mason City's Jewish population dates back before the turn of the century to the year 1898 when Mier Wolf established a hide and fur business in that city.

In 1903 Mr. Wolf entered the furniture business. His efforts prospered until at his death he had several stores in Iowa and Nebraska. Mr. Wolf was active not only in Jewish projects but also in those of the community at large. He served as a member of the Mason City city council and a board member of the Home Loan corporation. The furniture concern established by Mr. Wolf is now managed by his sons, Lewis, Abbott and Robert.

Mr. Wolf aided many Jewish immigrants to Mason City in their search for employment and readjustment. He was one of the founders and an ardent worker for the synagogue and served as its president for over 17 years.

Other Early Residents

Two years after Mr. Wolf became Mason City's pioneer Jewish settler, Morris Schulman took up his residence there, becoming in turn a peddler and groceryman and is now a furniture dealer.

During the years between 1900 and 1910, thirteen new

Jewish families came to Mason City, engaging in a variety of occupations. Frank Kropman, who arrived in 1903, was



MIER WOLF

prominent in Jewish affairs, served as President of the synagogue for three terms and was active in the formation of Mason City's B'nai B'rith. He now operates an auto supply company.

Some Leaders

Others who came to Mason City became particularly active in Jewish affairs. Among these were Nate Kitsis, Sam Raizes, who operates a department store and has been president of both the synagogue and B'nai B'rith, and Joe Robinson.

A leading Mason City business man who came to that city in the early 1920's was Mr. Nate Lapiner, propreitor of one of Mason City's largest automobile concerns. Mr. Lapiner has been active in B'nai B'rith and all other Jewish affairs.

Two lawyers, Leon Raizes and Charles Groman, and a physician and surgeon, Dr. I. J. Sternhill make up Mason City's complement of Jewish professional men.

When Rabbi L. Schultz came to Mason City in 1909, there were only eight Jewish families in the city. Nevertheless, Rabbi Schultz consistently held Sabboth services in his home and high holiday services in the old armory building.

However, he realized that a synagogue was needed, and he made a plea for an organization and a fund. The first response, though it left a fund far below that needed, stirred a desire in the people for cooperation toward their common goal.

Adas Israel

The women took a hand, succeeding by various methods in building up a fund which was invested in a lot. By 1912, largely through the efforts of Rabbi Schultz and Mr. Wolf, the synagogue was completed. Its first president was Mr. Wolf.

In 1913 Rabbi and Mrs. Schultz left Mason City to go to Chicago, but returned in 1920 to again become leaders in the Jewish community.

Rabbi Nate Levinson came to Mason City in 1939 to take charge of the Adas Israel congregation, which remains orthodox in form. The 1940 President of the congregation is Mr. Nate Lapiner; Vice-President, Sam Kitsis; Secretary, William Larner, and Treasurer, Ben Benowitz. There are

at present 125 members, who come not only from Mason City but from many of the surrounding towns as well.

Sisterhood

The Sisterhood of the congregation had its beginnings in the meetings of eight women of the community who took turns at the presidency. Members of this early group included Mrs. Mier Wolf, Mrs. Frank Kropman, Mrs. Sam Bloom, Mrs. Sam Kitsis and Mrs. Sam Woldman.

In 1918 this women's group was re-formed on a more organized basis. Mrs. J. Kropman was the first President, and she was succeeded by Mrs. Nate Lapiner. Mrs. Robert Glazer is now the President of the group.

B'nai B'rith

The first President of Mason City's B'nai B'rith when it was formed in 1924 was Mr. Julius Wolf, now of Des Moines. George Wolf was Vice-President; Joe Robinson, Secretary; William Lariner, Treasurer, and Nate Lapiner, Monitor. There were about 30 charter members.

That number has grown to 50 at the present time. Mr. Sam Richer is the 1940 President; Bob Glazer, Vice-President; Sol Benowitz, Secretary-Treasurer, and Harry Wolf, Monitor.

Hadassah and Junior Hadassah

Next Jewish organization to be founded in Mason City was the chapter of Hadassah. Organized in 1926, this group had as its first President Mrs. Julius Wolf, and there were 18 charter members.

Mrs. Nate Michaels is the 1940 President of the group; Mrs. Amelia Wolf, First Vice-President; Mrs. Irving Sternhill, Second Vice-President; Mrs. Sam Garfin, Jr., Third Vice-President; Mrs. Sylvia Levinson, Fourth Vice-President;

Mrs. Oscar Schaeffer, Secretary, and Mrs. Sam Richer, Treasurer. There are, at present 36 members.

Under the leadership of Florence Bloom, Rose and Dorothy Kropman, Sara Woldman and Dora Garfin, the Mason City chapter of Junior Hadassah was founded at about the same time as the senior group.

Membership of the Junior Hadassah is now 13. Officers for 1940 are: President, Becky Kitsis; Vice-President, Berneice Goldberg; Secretary, Sara Katz, and Treasurer, Eva Kitsis.

Zionist Organization

Latest of the Jewish organizations to be founded in Mason City was the Zionist group. With 50 charter members the city's Zionist group was founded in 1938. Original officers of this group were Robert Glazer, President; Ben Fink, Vice-President, and Leon Raizes, Secretary-Treasurer. Lewis Wolf is now Vice-President, but with that exception the officers of the Mason City Zionist organization have remained unchanged.

Council

Coordinating all of the Jewish organizations of Mason City is a Council, headed by Mr. Sam Richer as President. This Council is composed of members from all the Jewish organizations in the city. It was organized in 1938, and in addition to its coordinating work it carries on the yearly drives and manages all other campaigns for funds.

At present there is 65 Jewish families in Mason City and the Jewish population of that city is steadily growing.

Chapter XXXII

MARSHALLTOWN

First records of any Jewish settlers in Marshalltown occur in August of 1871 when old papers show that Eli and Israel Rubenstein became naturalized citizens.

By 1875 J. Bumbiener had a clothing store in Marshalltown, and in the fall of 1876 Julius and Henry Pappe opened a men's clothing and furnishing goods store on main street.

Many of Marshalltown's Jewish settlers have had varied professions. Sam Siegel, considered by some to be the world's greatest mandolin player, made his home in Marshalltown until 1886. M. Rosenbaum was an early postmaster of the city, while Sam Horowitz operated the first moving picture business in Marshalltown, and continues in that occupation today.

B'nai Israel

A congregation, B'nai Israel, was established by the Marshalltown Jews in 1920, with B. Cherna, Morris Gervich and members of the Levins family as the leaders in its founding. Mr. Gervich was the first President of the congregation.

Orthodox services were held every Saturday and at all holidays at the meeting rooms in the Woodbury Building.

However, a larger place was rented and a cantor secured to take charge of the services during the high holidays.

Then in 1939 under the leadership of Harry Druker, members of Congregation B'nai Israel bought a building which they remodeled for a synagogue.

Mr. Druker is the 1940 President of the congregation; Joseph Krantman, Vice-President; Martin Greenstein, Treasurer, and Morris Druker, Secretary. There are now 45 members.

Hadassah

Hadassah was established in Marshalltown in 1927 with 15 charter members. Mrs. William Hoff was instrumental in the establishment of the group, and she became its first President. Other first officers were Mrs. Ben Reider, Vice-President; Mrs. H. L. Dorosin, Secretary, and Mrs. M. I. Greenstein, Treasurer.

The Hadassah membership today is over 40 and includes almost 100 percent of the eligible women in the city. Marshalltown's chapter of Hadassah has the further distinction of contributing more per capita to the national fund than any other chapter in the country.

The Marshalltown group will be host to the district convention in the spring of 1941.

Present officers of Marshalltown Hadassah are: President, Mrs. Harry Druker; Vice-President, Mrs. H. L. Dorosin; Secretary, Mrs. Maurice Bernstein, and Treasurer, Mrs. Ben Rovner.

Mother's Club

Composed almost entirely of the same membership as Hadassah but formed in 1924 for charitable and benevolent purposes is the Marshalltown Hebrew Mothers' club. Mrs. William Hoff was the first President; Mrs. H. Druker, Vice-

President; Mrs. H. L. Dorosin, Secretary, and Mrs. M. I. Greenstein, Treasurer.

The 1940 membership is about 40, and the President is Mrs. Murray Gorshell; Vice-President, Mrs. Morris Bucksbaum; Secretary, Mrs. Hyman Rovner, and Treasurer, Mrs. Hyman Druker.

Leaders

Mr. Harry Druker is the 1940 chairman of the Marshalltown drive for funds, and he and his brother Morris are the only two Jewish attorneys in the city. Dr. Ralph A. Anrode, who came to this country from Germany in 1938 to practice as an eye specialist, is the only Jewish medical man in the city.

Mr. J. M. Friedman has operated a business in Marshalltown longer than any other Jewish resident of that city, operating his hide and fur establishment for more than 45 years. For 40 years Mr. Morris Gervich has conducted a similar business in Marshalltown, and Mr. Joseph Krantman is another of the city's dealers in hides and furs.

Another of the older Jewish settlers of Marshalltown is Mr. Hyman Druker, who operates a clothing business and has been a resident of the city for 35 years. Mr. H. L. Dorosin is another of Marshalltown's Jewish clothiers, and Herman Goldstein is the owner of Herman's Department store.

There are, at present, about 45 Jewish families in Marshalltown.

Chapter XXXIII

FORT DODGE

Earliest Jewish settlers probably began to appear in Fort Dodge about the turn of the century, with such names as Rothstein, Hyman and Solomon appearing in the records.

Other early Jewish settlers in Fort Dodge were Thomas and Hyman Robinson, veteran Fort Dodge business men, Wolf Rubenstein, Louie Gertner, Barney Rubenstein, Joe Steinberg, Ben Pateck, W. Glazer, Joe Abramson, Louis Mulmed, Abe Belfer, Nathan Lurie and Louie Arkoff.

Coming to the city somewhat later were a group which included some of the city's leading business men, David Lurie, Max Spilka, Louis Rabiner, William Reuben, Sam Kier, Max Halpern, Abe Nagensky, Harry Rabiner, Sam Rabiner and Sam Gordon.

Tifereth Israel

About 1918 the Jewish population of Fort Dodge had increased to the point where a congregation seemed desirable. Especially active in this project were Louis Arkoff, Hyman Robinson, Max Spilka, Bob and Ben Glazer and David Lurie. Through their efforts Congregation Tifereth Israel was organized and incorporated.

First officers of the new congregation were Hyman

Robinson, President; Ben Pateck, Vice-President, and Louie Arkoff, Secretary-Treasurer, and its charter membership stood at 20.

The present membership of Congregation Tifereth Israel is 35, and 1940 officers are: President, Max Spilka; Vice-President, Sidney Robinson, and Secretary-Treasurer, Aaron Glazer.

Congregation Tifereth Israel has continued to hold its services in a rented building, but members have begun to plan building a synagogue on their own lot or buying a church building for use as a synagogue.

Sisterhood

Organization of a Sisterhood of Congregation Tifereth Israel took place in 1925. Mrs. Louis Rabiner was the first President; Mrs. Max Spilka, Vice-President, and Mrs. Sam Kier, Secretary-Treasurer. There were 25 charter members.

Officers of the Sisterhood for 1940 include Jack Mushkin, President; Mrs. Lonis Rabiner, Vice-President and Treasurer, and Mrs. Louis Krickman, Secretary. There are, at present, about 35 members.

Other Movements

Although no chapter of B'nai B'rith has yet been installed at Fort Dodge, a movement, led by Max Spilka, Aaron Glazer, Martin Falk and N. Munsien, is preparing the way for B'nai B'rith in that city. About 22 men have already declared their willingness to join and support such a group.

The yearly drive of the United Palestine Appeal is carried on in Fort Dodge under the leadership of a board, composed of Aaron Glazer, Dave Lurie and Max Spilka.

Business Leaders

In spite of the fact that the Jewish community in Fort Dodge is not large, about 35 families, many of the city's

leading business men are Jewish. Mr. Max Spilka has made Fort Dodge his home for more than 23 years. He operates the leading auto accessories store there and is an outstanding leader in civic as well as Jewish affairs.

The Robinson brothers, Hyman and Tom, are dealers in metal and junk; Jack Mushkin and Martin Faulk, paper; Sam Rabinow, feed and seed; Louis Rabinow, gasoline; Louie Aschkinez, jewelry; Aaron Grazer, clothing; Ed Munsien, ready-to-wear; Louis Sharon and Carl Fantel, both in department stores.

There are two Jewish lawyers in Fort Dodge, Edward Robinson and Allen Loth.

Chapter XXXIV

OSKALOOSA

Mr. Sam Balduf, who came to Oskaloosa in 1880, was one of the earliest Jewish residents of that city. Mr. Balduf for many years operated a department store which was the largest in the city.

Coming to Oskaloosa more than 40 years ago, Rabbi W. S. Handler was another of the earlier Jewish residents, and Rabbi Handler is still active today as the spiritual leader of the community.

Mrs. Rose Morris was an early Jewish settler in Oskaloosa, while Mr. Sol Popofsky came to that city in 1896 and almost at once organized the Reliable Department store, a business which he still manages today, assisted by his sons David and Sam.

Other Leaders

An early dealer in junk, John Shrago was succeeded by his son Max in that business. John Handler was another early dealer in junk. His son Sol now operates the business and has added to it a large automobile sales agency, while Sam Shrago was still another early Jewish dealer in junk, and Sol Shrago was a pioneer Oskaloosa groceryman, as was Mr. N. Hand, who still continues in that occupation.

Several other members of the Oskaloosa Jewish com-

munity operate grocery and fruit businesses, including Sam Green and Bill Gould.

B. Michaelson, with his sons Harry and J., operates the Continental Overall factory; William Bernstein is a leading real estate dealer, and Sol Shrago is now in the wholesale candy business.

A. Green and his sons Earl and Lee operate a department store in Oskaloosa; Ben Meyer and son manage the Star Bottling works; Theodore Gelb is in the drug business; A. Shapera, used furniture; and Marshall Oberstein, ready-to-wear.

First Organization

By 1895 there were enough Jewish settlers in Oskaloosa to establish a congregation. This was done under the leadership of Mr. Sol Popofsky, B. Bernstein, John Shrago, Jacob Morris and B. Webson. There were 35 charter members.

In 1899 Rabbi Handler came to the Oskaloosa congregation and has served that group ever since that time.

Under the leadership of Rabbi Handler, Sol Popofsky, Sol Handler, William Bernstein and Sam Whiteman, a new building was erected by the congregation in 1915.

At the present time there are about 25 Jewish families in Oskaloosa, all of whom are members of the congregation. Max Shrago is the 1940 President; William Bernstein, Vice-President, and Harry Michaelson, Vice-President.

Ladies' Aid

The Ladies' Aid was founded in Oskaloosa in 1914, with a charter membership of 30 and with Mrs. Sam Green as its first President, a position which she held for 10 years, and Mrs. Max Shrago, Secretary. Mrs. Shrago was the Secretary of the group for 20 years and is its 1940 President.

Other officers of the Ladies Aid are Mrs. A. Green, Vice-

President; Mrs. Lee Green, Secretary, and Mrs. Pearl Shrago, Treasurer. There are now 20 members, and the primary purpose of the organization is the aid of transients.

Couples' Club

Another Jewish organization, called the Couples' Club, completes the list of organized Jewish groups in Oskaloosa. This group is social in many of its functions, but it also cares for the maintainance of the synagogue. The only operative office in this organization is that of Treasurer, a position held at this time by Mrs. Max Shrago.

Chapter XXXV

SMALLER JEWISH COMMUNITIES

CENTERVILLE

Jewish settlement in Centerville dates back 55 years to the day in 1885 when Aaron Grinspan first settled in that city with his family. They were followed shortly by the H. Chapmans, and then came the J. Freedlanders, M. Futeronskys and J. Jeffers.

By 1892 there were enough Jewish settlers in Centerville to form a congregation. Jake Freedlander was elected first President of Congregation B'nai Israel, and he was active as well in all Jewish circles. Dave Bromberg was Vice-President and H. Chapman, Treasurer. There were eleven other charter members.

Plans were immediately laid for a synagogue and Jewish school, and in 1894 the synagogue was erected, with A. Israel, E. M. Cohn, E. Titel and J. Feffer as trustees. A. Grinspan had also been an active worker for the congregation during this period.

Funds were not immediately available for a permanent Rabbi, but a certain Cantor Fox who had come to Centerville took over the religious direction of the community. When Mr. Fox left Centerville, the first Rabbi, Rabbi Hertzok, was

sent for. Within a few months he was succeeded by Rabbi Israel, who served for five years.

In 1905 the Ladies Hebrew Aid Society was organized with Mrs. A. Grinspan as President. Among their many accomplishments was the raising of funds to rebuild the parsonage.

In 1912 the congregation was reorganized; L. Salinger was chosen President; Sam Rosenbaum, Secretary; Abe Goldstein, Treasurer; J. Rosenbaum, J. J. Frankel and L. Bromberg, Trustees.

Small as their number was, the Jewish people of Centerville sent eight of their sons across the seas during the First World War, and Congregation B'nai Israel exceeded its war relief quota of $3,000 by $1,500.

The Jewish population of Centerville has steadily decreased for some time, until there are only 18 members of Congregation B'nai Israel. Its 1940 officers are: Sam B. Rosenbaum, President; Sol Rosenbaum, Treasurer, and Arnold E. Levine, Secretary.

In spite of the small number of Jewish residents of Centerville, they are able to maintain a synagogue and a parsonage and hire a Rabbi. Rabbi Chaim Kramer came to Centerville and has since that time served not only that community but the Jewish community at Albia as well.

Paricularly active in the Jewish community of Centerville are the members of the Rosenbaum family, and the Rosenbaum Memorial Chapel at Des Moines, donated by Mr. and Mrs. Sam Rosenbaum, which is described in detail in another chapter of this volume.

Mrs. H. Chapman has also done much for the preservation of the Centerville congregation, as have Sol and Levi Rosenbaum, Mrs. Jack Levine, J. W. Shkolnick, H. Brody, Mrs. James Gavronsky, Mrs. Joe Goldstein, E. A. Faldberg, Louis Rosenbaum, Sol Cohn, Alfred Brody, Max Gold, Louis Ritchell, Max Chapman, P. Norris and Mrs. M. Voxman.

KEOKUK

At the close of the Civil War, Keokuk had the largest numbers of Jewish settlers of any town not only in Iowa but also in Minnesota, Nebraska, Colorado, Kansas and the Dakotas. That city played the leading part in the early history of the Jews west of the Mississippi.

The golden age of the Keokuk Jewry lasted from 1872 to 1895 and corresponds quite closely to the rise and fall of the city's commercialism.

Although Congregation B'nai Israel's activities had been practically discontinued after 1858, the desire for religious activities was strong, and on September 27, 1863, the congregation was re-established.

Immediately after re-forming of the congregation, the Ladies' Benevolent Society was formed, with charitable activities as its principal work, but soon the scope of their work was broadened to include plans for the building of a synagogue.

The $800 in the treasury of the Ladies' Society was used to buy a lot. The men responded and both the Jewish and Gentile residents of the city contributed to the synagogue fund. The B'nai Israel Temple was completed in 1874 and dedicated during the same year. For its time, it was a magnificent structure, far surpassing any of the other synagogues in the state. Its total cost was $12,000.

With the decline of the river towns, however, due to the coming of newer means of transportation and the lessening of the steamboat's importance, the Jewish community of Keokuk suffered serious setbacks. The number of families dwindled, and the synagogue fell into disrepair.

MUSCATINE

First Jewish pioneer in Muscatine was Mr. Jacob Silverman, who came to that city in the early year of 1849 and established a ready-to-wear store there.

Although his business prospered, Mr. Silverman decided to leave the city, selling his business to Mr. Sam Cohn, a former employe. Mr. Cohn entered the political field in 1859, was a committeeman from his district and had a prominent voice in the politics of the region. Later his younger brother Louis came into the firm, which became widely known as the S. and L. Cohn Clothing Store.

Records of any more Jewish settlers in Muscatine from that time until 1882 are obscured, but at that time Mr. Charles Fryer came to the city, took up the junk business and lived there until he went to Palestine to make his home in 1926.

In 1888 and 1889 the first groups of Jewish settlers, numbering nine in all, came to Muscatine.

Although the Jewish group at that time were very poor, they felt keenly the need for a congregation, so keenly in fact that they borrowed the money to pay for a charter. Slowly other equipment followed; finally, Jake and Charlie Smith were designated to undertake the task of building a shule.

By 1893 a simple frame structure was ready to house the age-old Jewish traditions in fitting style. The nine charter members of Congregation B'nai Moses began the orthodox services in Muscatine, services which have continued practically unchanged there to the present day.

Mr. Charles Smith was elected President, while Isaac Helman took over the Rabbinical duties until the congregation could afford to employ a full time Rabbi. By 1894 the influx of immigration had increased the congregation's mem-

bership to approximately thirty, making possible the employment of J. Bleeden as a full time Rabbi.

Rabbi Bleeden exemplified the type of man who could lead his small group through their many hardships. Through his efforts a large share of the debt was paid off. He was so well loved by the community, he remained as head of the religious and social functions until his death in 1916.

OTHER CITIES

Undoubtedly many other Iowa communities have had or still have Jewish communities, but unfortunately the records are not available.

Dr. Max Levine, now head of the department of bacteriology at the State College at Ames, came to that city in 1913. He states that two Jewish families, the Jacobs and the Valentines, had preceded him there and that they were active in civic and fraternal work. Dr. Levine is a well known author on bacteriological and chemical subjects and a member of many scientific organizations.

The only Jewish residents of Iowa Falls are Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Kelberg, who came to that city in 1916. Their son, Dr. M. R. Kelberg, is a member of the staff of the State Hospital in Iowa City, and another son, Paul R. Kelberg, attends the law school at the State University.

At the present time the only Jewish residents of Fontanelle, Iowa, are Mr. and Mrs. Abe J. Friedman and Mr. Mose Friedman. The two brothers, Mose and Abe, now operate the department store of Menzer and Friedman, founded 52 years ago by their grandfather, Moses Menzer.

Undoubtedly many other Iowa communities have had or still have Jewish residents, but unfortunately the records are not available.