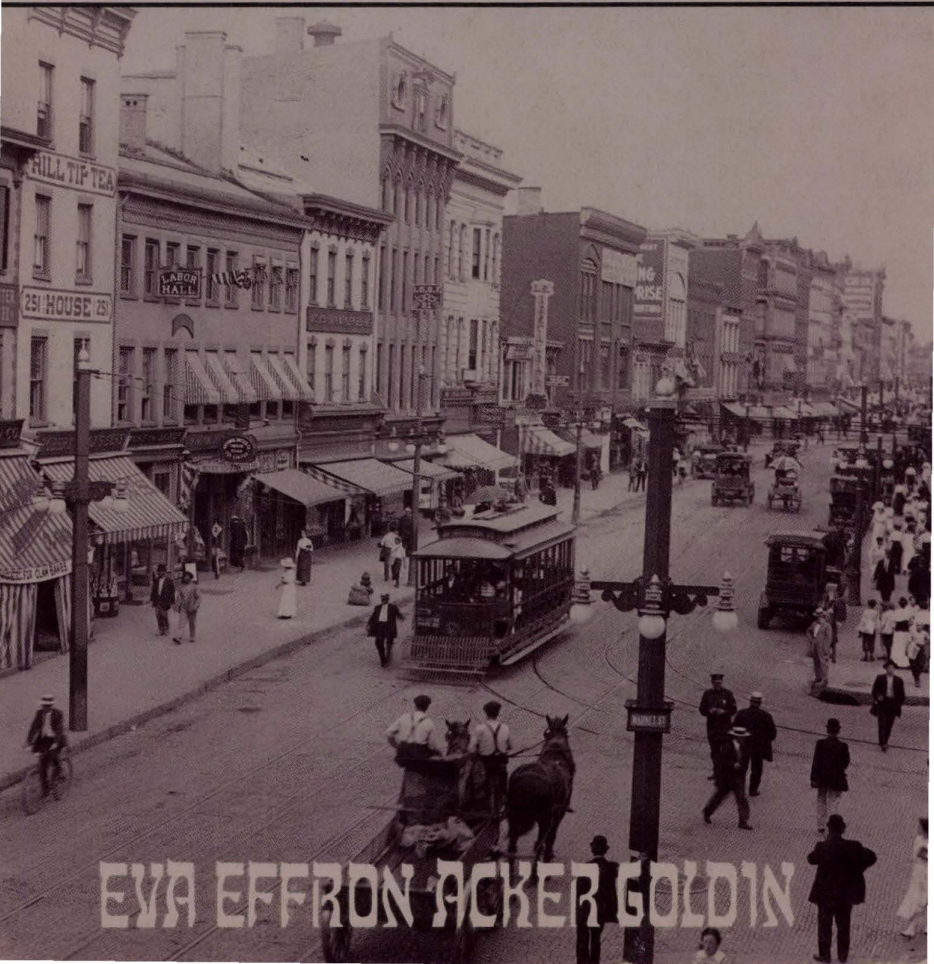
THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

OF POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK: AN ANECDOTAL HISTORY



EVA EFFRON ACKER GOLDIN

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

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Dedicated to the memory of my father,
Samuel Effron, whose devoted participation
in the community and related discussions
with me, from my earliest years,
inspired this work.

About the Author

Eva Effron was born in Poughkeepsie, and with the exception of eight years after college, has lived there her entire life. She was graduated from Cornell University with a Bachelor of Arts degree, has done graduate work at State University of New York at New Paltz, and attained a Master of Library Science degree from State University of New York at Albany in 1967.

She was employed for eight years on the professional staff of the New York State Library in Albany "training on the job", a situation no longer possible. She was the librarian at Vassar Road Elementary School in the Wappingers Central School District for fourteen years until retirement. In the six years since retiring, Mrs. Goldin has been doing volunteer work at Adriance Memorial Library, Poughkeepsie.

Married first to Joseph Acker, a Poughkeepsie attorney, who died in 1956, she was married in 1969 to Irving H. Goldin, a native of Passaic, New Jersey who resided many years in New York City. He is a practicing attorney in Poughkeepsie.

Mrs. Goldin is the mother of two daughters, Theresa Youngelson of Morristown, New Jersey and Miriam Gordon of Shaker Heights, Ohio. She has six grandchildren. Miriam Gordon is a medical college librarian in Cleveland and Mr. Goldin's daughter, Margaret Lincoln, is a high school librarian in the Battle Creek, Michigan area.

Preface

It is with regret that this writer is unable to include more information about the early Jewish population of Poughkeepsie. Early newspapers, chiefly from the 1700's and early 1800's, printed very little local news, concentrating on national and international events. Some information was culled from the sparse amount of advertising. Otherwise local newspapers were a delight to peruse, albeit with the difficulties of micro-film viewing. The early records of Vassar Temple, founded in 1848, were unavailable, having been lost, possibly in an early move.

Unlike the policy of modern city directories, the early volumes, in the collection of the Adriance Memorial Library Local History Department, did not include wives' names; occasionally a spinster or widow was mentioned.

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From the Earliest Years Through the 1890's

It is known that early in the Seventeenth Century, there were Jews, a scattered few, in the New World. Settling here and there, probably earning a living as itinerant peddlers, they were soon swallowed up by the Christian population which dominated. In 1654, the Dutch colony of New Netherlands received a group of Sephardic Jews who came from the Portuguese colony of Brazil. Reluctant at first to allow them as settlers, Governor Peter Stuyvesant was persuaded (probably ordered) to accept them, because of the influence of Jewish members of the Dutch West India Company which controlled the Colony. Doubtless an occasional Jew came up the Hudson River from New Amsterdam, or from the English colonies to the East, and settled in the area of Poughkeepsie, looking for a means of livelihood.

Very early Poughkeepsie newspapers revealed no obviously Jewish names. In 1796, the Poughkeepsie Journal carried an advertisement by Aaron Forman (possibly Jewish) who dealt in dried hides and, in addition, was a shoemaker.

A work by the local writer Helen Wilkinson Reynolds "Dutch Homes in the Hudson Valley before 1776" included a meaningful statement of early Poughkeepsie. Referring to a house that was located at 103 Market Street, now the site of the building constructed for the Mid-Hudson Library System, the statement reads: "The record that three Hebrews of New York City owned this house from 1742 to 1751 is the first instance so far noted of any connection of their race with Dutchess County. Samuel M. Cohen bought the place at a Sheriff's Sale in 1742, and he and the Franks brothers (Moses Benjamin and Jacob) presumably held it as non-resident owners." The records of the Dutchess County Clerk's Office show that that property was owned by Jews in 1742 and for some years thereafter. The Dutchess County Historical Society records that Moses Benjamin Franks from New York City paid taxes on that property from 1743 through 1748. An amusing sidelight is the observation that Moses Benjamin Franks was a good business man who was noted because "He had a dog for which he bought bread by the loaf", and was also remembered as a person who, when visiting New York City twice for lengthy stays, trusted his house to be guarded by a negro and a fourteen year old boy who slept in it in his absence.

One wonders if the "three Hebrews" had bought the property as an investment, and finding the village of Poughkeepsie a desirable place to live and to be in business, one of them, Moses Benjamin

Franks moved to that home from New York.

The records in the Dutchess County Clerk's Office, from the earliest years of the Nineteenth Century, show that Jews were local property owners. The Index of Deeds (and of Mortgages) records as property owners names like Jacob Mendelsohn, Aaron Morris, Joseph Benjamin, Jacob Baker, Solomon Scheldburgher, Isaac Haiman, and many others. Morris, Baker Scheldburger, and Haiman were four of the five men, who in 1845, started the congregation now generally known as Vassar Temple.

The Poughkeepsie Journal in its issue of April 17, 1798 carried a small advertisement stating "Book and stationery store - Naphtali Judah, 47 Water Street, New York City". This appeared in a few subsequent issues. Mr. Judah did not live in Poughkeepsie. It is interesting to note that in the year 1791 Benjamin Gomez was an important publisher and bookseller in New York. His success in that field was sufficient to inspire Naphtali Judah, in 1795, to become America's second Jewish bookseller. Needless to say there were not enough Jews to support the printing of books in Hebrew or Yiddish; those were imported from Europe.

Why an advertisement by Naphtali Judah in the weekly newspaper of the village of Poughkeepsie? Perhaps the circulation of the Poughkeepsie Journal covered quite a wide section in the Mid-Hudson area. Other New York businesses advertised occasionally in the medium. Probably enough Poughkeepsians at that time shopped in New York, using the numerous boats that plied the Hudson River, taking farm products and passengers to that important city.

Another date of Jewish significance was May 17, 1826, when the Poughkeepsie Journal carried an advertisement (small, as was common at that time) announcing "Smith & Shultz; new cheap leather store for soles, etc."; in the following year the business was moved "downstreet". Was business increasing? Mr. Samuel Shultz, an early officer of the first Poughkeepsie synagogue, Congregation Children (later Brethren) of Israel was still listed in business as a shoemaker in the city directory of 1859-60. In that volume, Mr. Shultz paid for a full page advertisement describing himself as "manufacturer and dealer in boots and shoes at 290 Main St." There followed eight stanzas of doggerel praising his merchandise. In the "poem" there is found a slight amount of information about footwear styles of the period.

Now hark the tidings, hear the news
All ye that want good boots and shoes,
A splendid store I did behold,
Where boots and shoes are cheaply sold.

In Main Street I beheld this store
With 290 above the door,
The neat calf boot for gents to wear,
And morocco for the ladies fair.

Neat gaiters, buskins, slips and ties
That fill beholders with surprise
They are so firm, and neatly made
By men experienced in the trade.

Whate'er your fancy may desire,
To fit you all he will aspire,
With boot or shoe, in nimble time
Just as the poet makes his rhyme.

Nice youths' and childrens' neat and fair,
None can excel, some not compare,
For infant young, of every hue,
The black, the orange, the red and blue.

The cowhide boot and stout brogan,
Made of best stock, good oaken tan,
With bottoms wide and sitting loose,
Esteemed the best for laborers' use.

I wish to speak in language plain,
That you a treasure will obtain,
A treasure for a boot to fit,
And otherwise not worth a bit.

The mammoth boot beside the door
Is known throughout the country o'er;
We sell as cheap as elsewhere sold
For good bank notes, for change or gold.

The name of this versifier was spelled in various entries as Shultz or Schultz. This writer remembers having a Miss Shultz as a sewing teacher in the Third Grade at Governor Clinton School; it is possible that she was of the same family.

Contemporary with Mr. S. Shultz was R. Goldsmith advertising a new furniture business — August 30, 1826.

In the 1830's and 1840's H. W. Morris was prominent in the village of Poughkeepsie. He cannot be identified as Jewish and the likelihood is that he was not; there is no way of knowing if he was related to Aaron Morris one of the founders of Congregation Children of Israel in 1845. In 1842 H. W. Morris was Pound Master in charge of a field to hold stray animals and as part of his work had a small advertisement in the May 2, 1842 Poughkeepsie Journal "Clear the track — keep your hogs off the streets. Signed: Henry W. Morris, Pound Master". Through the years he was involved in a number of businesses: a fabric store and auction and commission business.

Morris advertised frequently in his own special style, so different from the staid advertising of others, many of old Poughkeepsie families. The December 28, 1838 Journal advertisement reads "original cash store"; on October 1, 1839 he states "Morris is himself again — not dead yet" (after an illness?); on December 9, 1840 "Cheaper than ever" appeared. Certainly his advertising was attention-getting; perhaps it indicated a certain insecurity.

From 1836 through April 1841, the *Poughkeepsie Casket.* "a semi-monthly literary journal, printed and published by Killey & Lossing" devoted space to personal notices. The issue of October 19, 1829 announced the marriage of Mr. N. Emanuel of Georgetown, South Carolina, to Miss Flora, eldest daughter of Mr. N. Emanuel, Esq. of Poughkeepsie. The death of Hetty, daughter of Mr. N. Emanuel was announced in the issue of April 8, 1840; another daughter, Juliet, died while the family lived in Poughkeepsie. (In the July, 1840 issue, the wedding of Mr. Abram C. Baker to Miss Sarah, daughter of Isaac Mosur was noted.)

The only other information available about the Emanuel family in Poughkeepsie is that Nathan Emanuel had a dry goods-fancy goods store at 7 Market Street in 1842. The Emanuel family, living chiefly in the South, was an important American Jewish family in the early years of this country. This family is mentioned in the Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society, vol. 27, and genealogies are given in Stern's *First American Jewish Families: 600*

genealogies 1854-1977.

Since information about the Emanuel family in Poughkeepsie is sparse, it is appropriate to give information of this family in their life elsewhere. Much of this information was found by the American Jewish Historical Society in the Gomez family Bible, as entered by Nathan Emanuel's mother-in-law, Abigail Gomez. Nathan Emanuel and Sarah Gomez were married February 14, 1816 and had nine children. The Gomezes were a very distinguished family of Spanish Sephardic origin, related to the previously mentioned publishers and booksellers, Benjamin Gomez and Naphtali Judah. They were related to most of the important Sephardic families in America at that time, among them the Seixas, Lopez and Peixotto families.

In the 1820's Nathan Emanuel and his family lived in New York, where he was a member of Congregation Shearith Israel, still a very important synagogue now located on Central Park West and often referred to as the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue. Emanuel's mother-in-law noted in the family Bible various trips made by him and his family to Georgetown and Charleston, South Carolina. Mrs. Nathan Emanuel died in Charleston, April 1852; the family may have moved there from Poughkeepsie.

How Nathan Emanuel was attracted to Poughkeepsie and how long he lived or was in business there is not known. His relatives, the booksellers, may have heard that it was a thriving village. A number of the descendants of the Emanuel family were named Nathan Emanuel; the last listed in the family genealogy was born in Brunswick, Georgia in 1901.

The national Census of 1830 for Poughkeepsie included the following names of residents who were probably Jews: Isaac Benjamin, Jacob Harris, and Francis Rosenkranz. There were probably a few other Jewish residents, but perhaps their itinerant occupations made it difficult for Census takers.

In 1845 a number of the few Jewish families in Poughkeepsie and vicinity organized to provide a "home for Jewish worship." Five men: Jacob Baker, Isaac Haiman, Herman Hart, Aaron Morris and Solomon Sheldburger assembled at a meeting room and called their group Congregation Children of Israel.

Jewish names found in issues of the village directories in the 1840's include:

Henry Goldsmith,
clothing store

Samuel and Morris Hersberg,
tailors

Joseph Spitts, *tailor*
Isaac Marks, *peddler,*
123 Main,
Box 1849, owner of a
porter house
Francis Marks, *shoemaker*
Levi Baker, *tailor*
Abraham Bernheimer,
dry goods
Simon Berg
Isaac Jacobs
Philip Rosenbaum,
draper & tailor
Nathan Emanuel
Aaron Morris
Abraham Gross
Raphael Spring
(Spring & Goldberg)
Joseph Harris
William Hayman

In the January 21, 1843 issue of the Poughkeepsie Journal, J. Moss, merchant tailor and wholesale and retail clothier, advertised with the heading "Economy, economy". The firm of S. & J. Moss, clothing and tailoring appeared a short time later.

In May of that year the Journal printed a list of eighty names of subscribers to the building of new schools ("so that those who cannot pay may go free"). Most gave $15.00, three gave $30.00. There were no obviously Jewish names, but certainly there must have been other lists, which probably included Jewish donors, since the traditions of Jews strongly supported education.

The Occident, a Jewish-American monthly published in Philadelphia in 1848 included an item of special Poughkeepsie interest. "The new Dutch congregation of New York, lately established under the name of Benai Israel, have met with a great loss in the removal of the President Mr. Leonard Goselin who lately established himself in Poughkeepsie on the North River. Mr. Goselin is represented to us as an excellent manager of public affairs and a liberal contributor."

Obviously Mr. Goselin, immediately on his removal to Poughkeepsie, became active in the small Congreation Children of Israel, as the advertisement section in the June 30, 1848 issue of the local Journal and Eagle included a so-called "classified" (small) advertisement: "Wanted to purchase: ½ acre of land suitable for a burying ground. Enquire: Gosling's (spelled thus) Dry Goods Store".

No doubt some misfortune struck Mr. Gosling within the next two years. In the March 9, 1850 issue of the same newspaper there appeared "Auction of dry goods store of Leonard Gosling, by H. W. Morris, auctioneer, also household goods." Was it business failure,

or possibly death that brought a close to Gosling's short but meaningful life in Poughkeepsie?

Did Mr. Gosling's advertisement for "land suitable for a burying ground" have no results? At that time there was a Jewish burial ground on Smith Street near where the railroad runs. There were plans for a replacement because of water seepage at that site. It was not until May 7, 1853, according to Temple records, that land for a cemetery was purchased on East Mansion Street (after World War I, changed to Pershing Avenue.).

Beginning in 1848, advertising in local newspapers by merchants whose names were obviously Jewish became more frequent. That year the partnership of Francks & Hirschberg selling men's clothing had an advertisement in the local Journal & Eagle, unusually large for that time, five inches of a column. This ran for many weeks. The same year the "European Store" at 282 Main Street, owned by Rothschild & Bernheimer, advertised its fabrics. By 1853 the Star Clothing store, H. Rosenbaum, proprietor, advertised frequently.

The early Jewish settlers in Poughkeepsie, often starting as peddlers (sometimes spelled pedlers or pedlars in early directories) remained in that occupation briefly and soon opened stores in the village. The directories of the village and later of the city (Poughkeepsie was incorporated as a city in 1852) reveal many Jewish tailors, owners of men's and women's clothing stores, dry goods stores and "fancy goods" stores. The last listed sold sundry small items of women's wear including hoop skirt forms when they were fashionable. "Gents' furnishings" was the term frequently stores for men; occasionally a variety store was mentioned. Jewish shoemakers were also common. With many changes in merchandising, the term "dry goods store" has long since disappeared from use at the time of this writing (1982).

Some Jewish businessmen sold beer, liquor and wines either in a cafe (also known as porter house or saloon), sometimes part of a fairly small hotel set-up. The directory of 1856 lists the name of Isaac Rosenthal, "saloon and teacher" (possibly a Hebrew teacher?)

The American Jewish Archives based in Cincinnati, Ohio, has in its Documents file, papers of the Mandle family including applications for citizenship, citizenship papers, bills of goods, and a German passport. These are dated 1854-1867, Poughkeepsie, New York. The Mandle family is not listed in the directories of those years, but Daniel Mandell taught in the College Hill School from

1862 to 1865. With the sometimes careless spelling in the early directories, it is a possibility that he was a member of the same family.

Events in Germany which led to the so-called Revolution of 1848 had their origin several years before. Beginning in 1848 harvests were poor in that country and business activities decreased considerably; many Germans were out of work and hungry. In March of 1848 news of a revolt in France instigated an uprising in Germany. A limited measure of democracy was achieved by Germans, but great numbers emigrated to this country, among them many Jews. Most settled in New York and other larger cities, but smaller cities appealed to many.

Several members of the Marx family (also spelled Marcks and Marks) came to Poughkeepsie during that period; there was also a number of families named Baker; Levi, Henry, Hyman and Jacob Baker, all of whom were tailors or maintained clothing businesses. A well known dry goods store, Rothschild & Bros. located at 300 Main Street, was owned by William, Simon and Samuel Rothschild. On a recent visit (November, 1978) by this writer to the early cemetery on Pershing Avenue, there was found among the sadly vandalized grave stones, few of which were recognizable, the stone of one of the Rothschilds, who was born in 1831 and died in 1856.

According to "Natives and Newcomers" by Clyde and Sally Griffen (Harvard University Press, 1978), during the mid-Nineteenth Century period approximately 8% of the immigrant Germans employed in Poughkeepsie were Jews. "Jews, whether of foreign birth or parentage, more often than not began their recorded careers in Poughkeepsie at non-manual employment, and three-fourths of the minority who started at manual jobs in the immigrant generation had become shopkeepers at last report. As in other cities at mid-century, Jews stood out as a small but very successful group among immigrants."

By 1856 the Directory of Poughkeepsie changed from a simple list of residents with occupations, poorly alphabetized, to a bound volume, with the addition of advertisements, often copious. Among the names appearing for the first time in the 1860's are the following: A Wimpelberg (wholesale liquor dealer), Moritz Winkler, Simon and Morris Goldstone, Robert Spring, August Friedman, P. Silberstein, J. Blumenthal, Levi Melhado, S. Jonas, J. Greenberg and several Cohens. Other Jewish residents at that time were: Louis Wolf, Samuel Samuels and August Schneider whom the R. G. Dun

credit ledger of that time listed as "Hoop Skirt Jew".

Elmor Nathan, a Kingston attorney who also practices in Poughkeepsie, is a great-grandson of Simon Goldstone. Mr. Goldstone was an early president of Congregation Brethren of Israel (Vassar Temple).

At the time of this account (1982) there are few known descendants of the Jewish families in this city who were residents of Poughkeepsie prior to 1860. There are some who are not Jewish. The Melhado family (first listed in the 1859-60 directory) was prominent into the Twentieth Century. Descendants of the Melhado family, non-Jewish, are still residents of this city. No doubt their ancestry was Sephardic, and the family may have come to this country by way of the Spanish colonies of this hemisphere.

Most of the early Jewish settlers were of German birth or descent. They had small families and they had a tendency to be snobbish toward the immigrants from Eastern Europe who began to arrive in limited numbers after the Civil War, in greatly increased numbers beginning in the late 1880's, and in great numbers in the Twentieth Century up to World War I.

Members of the early German Jewish families rarely married offspring of the East European group. Some remained bachelors and "old maids" (an expression in recent years replaced with more kindly terms, such as "bachelor girls" or "career women"). Others married non-Jews, sometimes known as "out of the Faith". These groups plus the families who moved out of the community account for the lack of descendants of the early families in this area.

Typical of such disappearance of early Jewish residents of Poughkeepsie was the Rosenbaum family. The village directory of 1847-48 included Philip J. Rosenbaum, merchant tailor. The 1849 entry was Philip J. Rosenbaum, drapers and tailors, 336 Main Street; in 1856 he was at 265 Main Street and resided at 20 Garden Street. By 1860, H. Rosenbaum, clothier had been added to the directory list. By 1870 the following Rosenbaums were listed: Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Morris and Philip. The Sunday Courier of May 9, 1919 printed the obituary of Samuel Rosenbaum, owner of a cafe on Main Street. He was born in this city in 1857, probably the son of Philip or H. Rosenbaum. Survivors included a daughter Etta and three sons living in Pennsylvania. Samuel Rosenbaum was the last male of the family in this area.

With the end of the Civil War, the Jewish population of this city increased considerably. The city directories listed many new names

and firms. In the directory of 1866-67, of the nineteen clothiers listed in the business section, one half were seemingly Jewish.

Among the Jewish names of clothiers in the 1866-67 directory were: Jacob Bloomingthall, Joseph Greenberg, Samuel Jonas, Isaac Marx, Levi Melhado. Other business owners were Isaac Heyman in "dry goods", with the following four owning "fancy goods" stores: Max Friedlander, Isidor Green, Morris Kaliski and Sarah Jacobs. Mrs. Jacobs' business was located at Union Square at the lower end of Union Street. She continued in business into the 1870's and did considerable advertising, unusual at that time. Jacob Rosenbaum was listed as owning a "Gents' furnishing" store; Levi Baker and Morris Lendner were tailors.

In Vol. XXIII (1866) of the previously mentioned Occident, there was a statement of a "contribution for poor Jews of Palestine" collected through the Executive committee of the "Board of delegates of American Israelites". Bnai Berith (as then spelled) acknowledges the receipt of $50.00 from Congregation Bnai Israel, Poughkeepsie, New York through Benjamin Joseph, Secretary.

Herman Hart, later listed as Helman Hart (one of the founders of the early synagogue) conducted a clothing store. The early directories did not indicate whether such stores were for men, as most women at that time wore garments made by tailors or dressmakers, or were sewn at home.

By 1860 Herman Hart was in partnership, Hart and Benjamin, at 289 Main Street. Some directories of the period listed the co-owner as Benjamin Joseph, others as Joseph Benjamin. Later directories seem to indicate that the family name was actually Joseph. In the 1880's Benjamin Joseph had opened a branch store in Catskill, New York. Benjamin Joseph was probably an ancestor of Charles Joseph, owner of a men's clothing store on the north side of Main Street near Market Street. This business was closed some time near the middle of this century.

Other Jews in the city in the 1860's were members of the Jacob family: Harris, Isaac, Julius, and Simon. Later a Jacobs family was listed; it is not possible to determine if that is another spelling for the same family. (Early in the Twentieth Century, a well known women's wear store at the corner of Liberty and Main Streets was owned by Alexander W. Jacobs.) Other names noted in the early 1860's were: J. Feininger, watchmaker; Morris and Simon Goldstone, clothiers, Charles Weinstein, cap maker. An entry in the 1860-61 directory, Weinfleburg (no given name) a peddler, was

probably A. Wimpelberg, later a prominent business man.

In the later 1860's there was still a number of German Jewish peddlers, among them Solomon Cohnen, Moses Freiberg (sometimes spelled Freyburg), Morris Ephraim and Marcks Levy. The business listings of clothiers, dry goods merchants and tailors included a big percentage of Jewish names. Solomon Strauss and Joseph Freiberg were prominent dry goods merchants; members of the Friend and Goodheim families, owners of sizable dry goods stores, were still living in this city into the Twentieth Century, and are remembered from the childhood of this author. The large clothing store of M. Shwartz & Co. was founded during the Civil War. The founder was listed in an early directory as Marcks Schwartz - the "c" was eliminated in both given and family names shortly afterwards.

A prominent dry goods business, founded as early as 1852, was owned by Raphael Spring and Albert Thalheimer, in a partnership known as Spring & Thalheimer. Since both owners lived at 46 Cannon Street, it is possible they were related. Raphael Spring died some time in the 1890's; Mrs. Spring, listed in 1897 as Appolonia Spring, later as Pauline Spring (possibly for simplicity?) lived on into the early 1920's. Their home, a prominent Victorian mansion with a high flight of stone steps, stood for many years and finally was torn down, with the site turned into a parking lot in the 1950's. This writer remembers her mother speaking of Mrs. Spring with a great sense of awe and respect.

The Commemorative Biographical Record of Dutchess County, published in the 1890's, listed Morris Baker, born in Bemberg, Germany, 1842. He came to America with his parents in 1844. Starting in 1867, he was an auctioneer of real estate and personal property in Poughkeepsie for many years. He was married to Marie Boyd and had seven children; a daughter Rebecca married Walter Todd of Poughkeepsie. The article stated that Mr. Baker was a member of the Jewish synagogue; it is not known if he was related to any of the other Baker families. Since Mr. Baker was the only Jewish business man listed in the Commemorative Biographical Record and there were others of more community importance not listed, it is likely that was a work for which one paid to be included.

Most of the previously mentioned businesses continued into the 1870's. Many were started on Main Street below Market and some remained in that neighborhood for many years. The two blocks on Main Street between Market and Academy Streets were the most

prestigious, and many Jewish business men opened new stores or relocated already established businesses in that area.

New names appearing in the city directories of the early 1870's included: John and Samuel Jonas in the clothing business, Jacob Schwob, dealer in fancy goods, Solomon Strauss, for many years a prominent dry goods dealer. There was an Ephraim family, with Frank, Herman, Hyman and Morris living at 72 Church Street, with only Morris' occupation (peddler) given. In one of the directories of businesses at that time, of the groups: Tailors, Clothiers and Merchant Tailors, thirty-one names were listed, one-half of which were known to be Jewish.

During the 1870's and early 1880's there were few important changes in the ownership of businesses conducted by members of the Jewish Community. Some expanded or changed locations; others, chiefly smaller ones, gave up their businesses when there was a downturn in the economy.

In 1873, the Country was swept by what was then known as a "Panic", a serious economic upheaval. James Truslow Adams in his work "The March of Democracy" described this as one of the most calamitous and prolonged economic disasters in this country's history. No doubt the businesses of the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community were seriously affected, but to what extent is not known. The term "Panic" for a great wave of economic reversal was used into the early decades of the Twentieth Century; in the 1930's the term "Great Depression" was substituted, and later for lesser economic upheavals, "Recession" was the common term.

An interesting "aside" found in the research for this period, was an advertisement in the Poughkeepsie Eagle of August 13, 1876, stating that the Board of Trustees of Vassar College had voted to admit students residing with their parents in the city or town of Poughkeepsie, upon payment of $150.00 without requiring residence within the college family. This was a sizable advertisement in large type. The college had been open eleven years at that time. It is interesting to note that the projected cost of tuition only at Vassar College beginning in September, 1982 was $7400.00. This tremendous escalation in cost reflects the very high rate of inflation through the years, particularly since the end of World War II.

The Jewish Community of Poughkeepsie faced many changes during the latter half of the 1880's. As mentioned previously, before that time, most of the Jewish residents were German born or descendants of German Jews. By the end of the 1880's a number of

immigrants from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, chiefly from Hungary, arrived. The first families to reach Poughkeepsie were those headed by Joseph and Isaac Eisner, at first peddlers, shortly afterward, small retail store owners. Soon after came Abraham Stein who opened a men's clothing store on lower Main Street and Michael Weiss, a brother-in-law, who settled "uptown" on Main Street near Cherry Street. Claire Weiss May remembers from her childhood, hearing her grandmother, Mrs. Abraham Stein, telling of the famous "Blizzard of 1888" which occurred shortly after her arrival in Poughkeepsie. Louis Eisner, a shoemaker, arrived about the same time. Marks Eisner, father of the dentist Dr. Milford W. Eisner, came some years later.

Most of the Hungarian newcomers were very Orthodox and had large families. Shortly after their arrival, they founded the Orthodox Synagogue Schomre Hadath. Abraham Stein was the father of the first Jewish woman dentist in Poughkeepsie, Dr. Helen Stein; Michael Weiss was the father of William Weiss who was for many years the Plumbing Inspector of the city. For the most part, offspring of both families left their home city after graduating from high school. Many of them were college graduates; most sought careers elsewhere, chiefly in New York.

A grandson of Abraham Stein, Jacob Stein, a prominent builder and real estate investor on Long Island, was appointed the White House adviser on Jewish affairs early in the Presidency of Ronald Reagan. It is probable his appointment was an attempt to build a strong body of Republican Jewish voters. Not long after his appointment, the sale of five AWACS reconnaissance planes (a highly sophisticated type) to Saudi Arabia was voted by Congress, following lengthy heated debate. Opposed by Jews as a threat to Israel, the sale had the approval of President Reagan. Jacob Stein resigned shortly after the sale was passed in Congress.

Why this group of Hungarian immigrants chose Poughkeepsie is not known. Possibly nearness to New York City and the importance of the Hudson River in commerce were determining factors. A fairly sizable number followed. Among them were Israel Weisberger, Mayer Weiss, Aaron Friedman, a shoemaker, and Edward Friedman, who opened a shoe store, and Louis Grossman also a shoe dealer.

An interesting but objectionable trend indicating attitudes (not related to the Jewish Community) was noted in the research for this work. From the beginning of publication of village, then of city direc-

tories of Poughkeepsie, black residents were indicated by "colored" or "col'd" following their names. By 1889, the identity was changed to a small letter "c". Sad to say in the decade of 1910, "col" was again used. Finally by 1920, a more humane attitude was apparent; such a designation was no longer in use.

Shortly after the group from Hungary, there followed settlers from Russia (chiefly Russian Poland). Adolf and David Lefkowitz were early arrivals before 1885. Many factors in Russia, especially pogroms, harsh military service and difficult economic conditions led to a mass emigration of Russian Jews to the United States by the turn of the century.

By 1889 Louis Golensky had arrived in the city. In the 1890's the following arrived: Charles Cantor (the father of Ethel (Mrs. George Marcus)), H. Epstein (one of the few newcomers who lived on upper Main Street - 699, opposite what is now the Grand Union Supermarket), Joseph Greenfield, Harris Liberman, and Reuben and Joseph Rosenthal. The last two were brothers who started together in the retail fruit and confectionery business, later separately as wholesale produce merchants. Robert, Joseph's son, continued in the wholesale business until his recent retirement. Reuben Rosenthal was the father of Drs. Harold and Ely Rosenthal, the latter a dentist, and Lloyd Rosenthal, a well known attorney.

Others arriving in the 1890's were George Albert, a founder of Temple Beth-El, Max Rattner, a baker, father of the artist Abraham Rattner. The first of the Effron family, David, arrived in the 1890's with this two brothers-in-law, Jacob and Morris; they lived briefly at 699 Main Street. Other arrivals at that time were Leopold Heller (grandfather of Claire Montel), Max Kahn, Herman Klein, Simon King, who was designated simply "lunch wagon" as a way of indicating his occupation in the 1899 directory. The next year the designation was changed to "Court House Square", which was Market Street near Main where his movable restaurant was located. Max Polokoff, M. Weiner, and D. M. Gold arrived about the same time. By 1896 there had arrived Joseph Perlmutter, Joseph Kerlansky, Abraham Cheeger, and Morris S. Rosen, a jeweler at 439 Main Street. By 1898 his business was listed as millinery and jewelry. (Mrs. Rosen was a talented milliner). Harris Goldstein of the cleaning and dyeing establishment in business many years, Goldstein & Rosen, came about the same time, also Herman Wallace, a brother-in-law of M. S. Rosen.

The Twentieth Century

Charles Effron was first listed in 1901, and the same year Jacob Abramsky was found to be the earliest arrival of the large family of that name. Nothing is known of William Cohen, listed as a professor boarding at the Lincoln House.

New arrivals from 1900 to 1906 included Leib Seiden, a baker, Louis Gellert, Max Wrobel, Samuel Maller, Benjamin Mezansky, Max Lippman, Herman Mintzer (in his early years in this country a junk dealer), Samuel Cott, a jeweler, related to the Reuben Rosenthal family, M. Krakower, Louis Miller, Samuel Shostak, and Elias Acker (listed as a meat dealer). Samuel Effron, the father of this writer, was one of the earliest Jewish grocers, in business for many years at the corner of Main and South Clinton Streets. M. Weiner, the father of Mrs. Michael Golensky and Mrs. Morris Effron was in the grocery business before him. By 1903 Simon King's occupation was listed as stock broker, for a period in partnership with Herman Luck, who later conducted a well known travel agency.

The first quarter of the Twentieth Century was a period which witnessed the founding and, in many cases, the rapid growth of numerous Jewish-owned retail businesses, especially in the field of wearing apparel. Some of the owners, starting as peddlers in the farm areas of Dutchess County, within a short time rented stores on Main Street. The section of Main Street below Market Street was the site of many businesses. The term dry goods often used in the early years of the Twentieth Century, especially in the city directory, often included women's dresses and men's apparel, as well as underwear, household goods such as towels and bed linens, and children's garments. Prominent among the dry goods dealers of lower Main Street into the 1920's were: David Taub (the father of Ruby Goldberg), Marks Eisner, David Rock, Ellis Levine, Nathan Levine, father of Herman Levine, attorney, and Mollie Goldberg, Harris Cantor, M. Weiss and son, and Charles Cantor. Men's clothing merchants included: Abram Hoffman (whose business had been started some years before the others), Abraham Stein, Barnet Levine, Shulman Brothers, and Aaron Slote.

A shoe store owned by Edward Friedman was located near South Clover Street, and another Friedman shoe store was farther uptown, near Washington Street. Aaron Sidelman and Louis Grossman also had shoe businesses. A variety of other stores included those of Liebman & Kaston (paints), Barnett Rubin (plate glass), Isaac White and Morris I. Levinsohn (jewelry), the latter a skilled watch repairer (then called "watchmaker"). Isaac Lenner

sold bicycles and Samuel Samovitz was a wholesale dealer of "notions" (a variety of small items somewhat related to wearing apparel).

Main Street above Market and below the two important department stores, Luckey Platt & Co. and Wallace Co., was a higher rent district and attracted stores of what was at that time termed high class merchandise. Morris Effron had a millinery and women's wear business on the site of the present Church Building. In the Twenties, he and several other merchants were the owners of buildings on land owned by the Dutch Reformed Church since Colonial times. The ninety-nine year leases of the buildings were running out; certain members of the Church Board were in favor of renting the land to a single tenant, and refused to negotiate new leases for the building owners, forcing them to move. The buildings were torn down in preparation for a large structure to be built and occupied by the Hilton Company, a men's clothing store chain from New York City. The Depression of 1929 brought about the demise of the Hilton company and the Reformed Church, contrary to its policy of renting land only, contracted to have built the present store and office building on the site. Because of the Depression there were vacancies in stores and offices for many of the first years. Morris Effron moved his business to a building he owned at the corner of Main and South Clinton Streets. It later became a well known children's wear store now owned by Mr. Effron's son Marshall; it is one of the few family owned stores of the early 1900's still in business.

Above Market Street were also located the stores of Arthur Spencer, jeweler, Nathan millinery, Schoenberger shoes, Milton Greenfield, infants' wear, and the housefurnishing business of Joseph Samuels, who had come before 1906 from New York City, selling, according to an early directory, what was then known as crockery (an early term for dishes). Some time in the early 1920's he turned from retail business to hotel management. A large building at the corner of Catharine and Mill Streets, once occupied by a girls' boarding school, Lyndon Hall, was converted by Samuels into a popular small hotel.

Above Hamilton Street on Main, Michael Golensky had a dry goods store, and nearby was H. A. Wallace's shoe store. Michael Weiss was for many years a dry goods merchant at Main and North Cherry Streets. He had many children, and as was the early custom, they made their home in the building where the store was

located. In the 1920's when the children were young they kept a cow in the back of the store; at Passover time they sold milk to other very religious families. The building was a long brick structure occupying most of the Main Street block from North Cherry Street to Rose Street, consisting of stores and "cold water flats" (without central heating). It had been built in the late Nineteenth Century to provide housing for the employees of the Whitehouse shoe factory located to the rear on Cherry Street. Such buildings were called "company houses". The factory building, still standing with its tall brick smoke stack intact, was occupied by various industries in this century. The Consolidated Cigar Company, a Jewish owned concern based in New York, was an occupant for many years and had a number of Jewish employees. Recently the Main Street building, with stores eliminated, was completely renovated and contains dozens of small apartments.

Other stores in the prime business area between Market and Academy Streets were those of Henry Rosenmann and Isaac H. Spitz, both listed as dealers in cloaks, an early term indicating women's suits and coats. Mr. Spitz, who had lived in Rhodesia, on his arrival in Poughkeepsie, opened a lace and trimmings business which was a store of quality and style. Changing fashions decreased the demand for such goods, and he turned to women's ready-to-wear. John Haven maintained a tailors' supply store above Academy Street and Joseph Perlmutter moved his dry goods store to the same area, from Union Square. (This Square and part of its neighborhood, shortly before this writing, had been obliterated for the building of the East-bound Arterial Highway.) In the late 1920's Perlmutter, in partnership with his two sons Fred and Irving, and his son-in-law Jack Steinberg who had had some experience in the furniture business, opened a large furniture store which became the largest in the Hudson Valley, but by 1980 the store was out of existence.
of Lass and Fleishman. The former maintained by Jacob Lass and his son Louis was located above South Hamilton Street. A fire destroyed the business and it was not rebuilt.

The Isaac Fleishman store started at Main and Bayeaux Streets (later called North Perry) an area where many early Jewish owned stores had been located. After more than thirty years at that location, a move was made to Main Street below Hamilton. The owners, father Isaac Fleishman and son Sydney, later joined by another son, Myron, early foresaw the move to the suburbs. They opened a

store specializing in country-style furniture on the Pleasant Valley Road. Later they closed the Main Street store, opening a very large one on Vassar Road near Route 9, a heavily traveled area. A few years ago it was sold to a chain based in Rochester, and after many years in business the Fleishman name was replaced by Flanigan.

A number of small second hand furniture stores in the 1920's were owned by Jews; one of the largest was of Ignatz Feldman at the corner of Main and South Bridge Streets, where previously there had been a small hotel maintained first by Jacob Cantor, later by Samson Sheer. Feldman's son Irving, taking over the second hand furniture operation, developed it into a business of new furnishings only. With dynamic business methods and clever advertising, Irving Feldman overcame the handicap of Main Street below Washington Street as a declining area, and built a very successful business. He and his wife Mickey (Mildred), who died in middle age, were very active in Jewish communal affairs. After his retirement as a store owner, careful investments brought great wealth to Feldman. His brief life of retirement in Florida was shadowed by illness. When he died in the 1970's, his will included large bequests to the Jewish Community Center and Temple Beth El, the most sizable ever received by both organizations. Other institutions of the area were also beneficiaries of the Feldman estate. Betsy Feldman Kopstein, true to her parents' tradition, is active in Jewish Community affairs in Poughkeepsie.

A more recently established Jewish owned furniture business was opened in 1936 at 569 Main Street by Israel Sherman as an appliance store with emphasis on stoves and refrigerators. Coming from New York City, Mr. Sherman soon became active in Temple Beth-El and various community organizations. A move to larger quarters on Main Street just above Hamilton Street was soon made. With Mr. Sherman's youngest son Jonah joining the firm after college, a furniture center was created with emphasis on unusual items. Furniture rentals later became a vital part of the operation. Minnie Sherman, wife of Israel, was an energetic part of the business for many years.

There was a variety of other business in which Jewish entrepreneurs engaged. Jacob Effron, early in the century, became a coal dealer, and sold the product for many years. With the coming of oil as the main source of heating, a cousin Morris L. Effron, joined the firm and helped develop the oil distribution part of the business, together with Jacob's sons Sidney and Harold, who had

entered their father's firm after completing their schooling. Coal was later eliminated. The Effron Oil Company, headed by James Effron, son of Morris L. Effron, is the oldest heating oil business in the area.

Harry Haven, father of Judge Milton Haven, sold barrels and other types of packaging. He later became a coal dealer, and was joined in the business by his son Arnold.

In the business listing of the 1915 City Directory of the eleven junk dealers, nine were Jews. Many of them, starting as peddlers on the streets of Poughkeepsie and in the rural areas of Dutchess County, bought discarded metal and rags. Some went into the wholesale junk business, buying from other peddlers and factories and had large lots called junk yards for the storage of the materials. David and Charles Effron had such businesses; Charles' was for many years at the rear of his home on North Bridge Street. His son Abraham joined his father in the business (then called scrap metal) and maintained it at another location for many years after his father's death.

By the early years of World War I, Samuel Reifler had arrived in Poughkeepsie and established his business of electrical supplies and lighting fixtures. By the 1930's he was joined in the business by his sons, Nathan, Bernard, Aaron and Norman, and the concern, Electra, Inc. entered a period of dynamic development which has continued to the present. Samuel Reifler and Nathan his oldest son died in middle age.

The earliest known Jewish baker was Herman Rattner, starting in the 1890's. According to a statement by his daughter Jenny, he introduced Russian rye bread to this city. After the turn of the century, when the Jewish population increased considerably, there were other bakers, among them: Leib Seiden, Burger and Hutz, and Joseph Gash. The chief products of these early bakers were rye and pumpernickel bread, challah for the Sabbath, and the type of rolls known as Kaiser rolls, though popularly called by the non-Jewish population "Jewish rolls" or more abrasively "Jew buns". Occasionally they baked bagels. Cakes were not in their baking repertory, though some did produce sponge and honey cakes for brises, bar mitzvahs and weddings.

Baked goods were delivered to homes throughout the city, and this writer remembers reading at breakfast newspapers from fairly distant cities, in which the daily rye bread had been wrapped, without wax paper in between. The memory of the delicious rye

bread and pumpernickel still lingers, and one wonders, if, with the high cost of ingredients, the proportion of rye flour to white has been lessened in the breads. Or possibly the use of chemicals, so prevalent in foods today, especially to keep packaged foods fresh for a longer time, may be the reason for a falling off of good taste.

In the first two decades of this century, A.F. Breidenbecker (not Jewish) had a bakery in an alley at 384 Main Street. It is interesting to note that his name entries in the City Directories during those years were followed by the statement "Je l'ai Trouve bread", leading one to believe that his French brand might have been an indication of French nationality (possibly Alsation) rather than German, which his surname would seem to imply. After the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, the French provinces of Alsace and Lorraine had been taken over by Germany and were kept until the Allied victory in World War I. Although the Prussians tried in every way to make these provinces German, the loyalty of the Alsatians to France was kept blatantly alive. The father-in-law of this writer, Elias Acker, born in Alsace before 1870, loyal to France, had an intense hatred for Germany.

Other Early Twentieth Century Businesses

The early years of this Century witnessed the setting up of many small businesses by Jewish newcomers, many of whom had begun in their early years as peddlers. Some were successful, others were forced to close. The greatest percent was based on some phase of wearing apparel. In the 1912 City Directory, of the twenty-eight dry goods stores listed, twenty were Jewish owned. The classifications of tailors, merchant tailors, clothiers and women's wear included many Jewish names. Garden Street for many years was the location of numerous Jewish owned tailor shops. At various times such businesses were maintained by the following: George Albert, Frank Becker (later in the tailoring supplies business), Philip Cheeger, Louis Gellert, Isaac Greenberg, David Goldberg, Sol Hellerman, Samuel Hoffman, Herman Schneider, Joseph Serafin, Jacob Sensiper and Sol Wayne.

Space does not permit mention in this work of more than the names of heads of families, but special tribute must be paid to the mothers of these early Jewish families. In most cases they kept store or maintained other businesses by the side of their husbands, devoting almost as many long hours. Often there was a kitchen behind the store where the wife raised the children, doing the cooking and laundering between customers. Most often the living quarters were "railroad flats" above the store, generally without central heating, and with none of the modern conveniences of today. Yiddish was often the main language at home of the great number of Russian Jewish immigrants.

In the first decade of the 1900's, shoe stores were owned by the following: Edward Friedman, Louis Grossman, Nathan Heiman, Abraham Stein, Herman Klein, Benjamin Kerlansky, and H. A. Wallace. Some of the owners had started in the shoemaking trade (consisting mostly of shoe repair) and added a stock of shoes as a side line.

Of the shoe stores mentioned, only one remains in business at this writing, the Friedman store on the Main Mall, above Academy Street. Continued by Moe Friedman, the son of Edward Friedman, it was moved to its present location from the area below Washington Street many decades ago; with the recent death of Moe Friedman it is now owned by his widow and their son Stanley.

Goldstein and Rosen, cleaners and dyers, continued in business at least fifty years. There were Jewish residents with special skills such as butchers, barbers, carpenters, masons; factory workers were comparatively few. A few peddlers remained in that field for

many years, chiefly in the city. Reuben Caplan was the sole blacksmith.

Louis Hoffman, a barber, and Benjamin Mezansky, a tailor, relatives by marriage, were the only known Jewish volunteer firemen early in the Century. Hoffman suffered a leg injury while serving during a serious fire, and was awarded the job of City Sealer of weights and measures, which he held until retirement. Born in Russia, where he learned his barbering, he had an added skill "cupping", little known in recent years. European barbers sometimes were trained in this skill; this writer remembers, about twenty years ago, passing a barber shop in Little Italy, New York City, with a sign in the window "Cupping done" and a few of the small glass cylinders used in the treatment. These cups were heated and applied to the surface of the skin, on the back of a patient, for drawing blood, thus creating a partial vacuum. These applications were for lowering the temperature especially in a high fever; it is not known if they had other benefits. During the severe Spanish Influenza epidemic of 1918, Mr. Hoffman was called frequently for this work. The Yiddish term for cupping is "bonkes" and there was a saying among East European immigrants, when any kind of treatment was useless "helfen ah zeh vie a tayten bonkes" (as futile as applying cupping to a dead man). Needless to say, with the introduction of antibiotics, cupping fell into disuse.

In the early 1920's Main Street below Washington was a busy shopping area. Prominent among businesses was a fabric store "The Silk Shop" owned by several brothers Pashinsky (later changed to Pashin). For a time maintained as a partnership with a Mr. Poolin, it was humorously nicknamed the "Push and Pull" store. That was in an era when fashionable women, as for many years, often had dressmakers producing gowns for their important social affairs. Fabrics of pure silk, cotton, linen and wool were in vogue, today largely replaced by polyesters and other synthetics.

Insurance Business

Abraham Harris was an insurance agent in this city during the 1880's; how long he continued in that field is not known. Edward Gellert, a son of Henry Gellert, was in the insurance business from the 1890's into the early part of this century. David Rosenberg, father of Murray Rosenberg, who had a brief career as a bartender,

started as an insurance agent in the 1920's; some time later he formed a partnership with Albert Kahn as Rosenberg and Kahn. Later Kahn's son-in-law Matthew Lampell, a West Point graduate, joined the firm. Years after the death of both Rosenberg and Kahn, the firm was renamed Kahn-Lampell.

Other insurance men in business since before World War II were Charles Bloom, Samuel Levine and Charles Rosenberg, all now deceased. Mrs. Isabel Crystal Sacher has been a very active insurance agent for many years.

Automobile Supplies Business

In the 1920's, with the automobile rapidly replacing horse drawn vehicles, there was a number of "automobile supply" stores. Such businesses stocked car batteries, tires and inner tubes, hand pumps for filling the tubes with air, jacks with which to change tires, tire chains for stormy weather, and special varieties of tools for making repairs. There were other needs which are now part of an automobile when manufactured. Some stores stocked "automobile robes" (special types of blankets to cover the laps of passengers in cold weather). Most cars were open like later sports cars and had leather curtains with isinglass windows which snapped into place in rainy or cold weather. Cars were not heated and many owners left them in the garage all winter, sometimes on wooden blocks to protect the tires.

Usually such stores had a gasoline pump at the curb. Manual Rattner, son of Herman Rattner the baker, had such a business at 554 Main Street, and Herman Weisberger had a store at 10 Washington Street near Eastman Business College. Harry Seiden's business was called the Seiden Auto Supply and Vulcanizing Company, located on Main Street. Vulcanizing was a method of patching, with heat, the rubber inner tube, needed within the tires of that day. Tire blow-outs were common and some handy motorists were able to do their own vulcanizing. For a brief period Morris L. Effron and his brother Joseph, early in their business careers, had a shop for such service on South Clinton Street. By 1924 Harry Seiden was the sole Poughkeepsie Jew in the automobile supply business.

"Soda Water" Business

In 1875 R.J. Israel was listed as the owner of the Poughkeepsie Bottling Establishment at 103 Main Street. How long the business lasted is not known. By the first decade of this century Max Gluckman was operating the Poughkeepsie Mineral Water Works at 90 Winnikee Avenue. By 1920, then located in an old carriage house on Grand Street, it was sold to Samuel Sidelman (father of Sidney Sidelman).

Some years later the business was purchased by Joseph Schlachter (father of Selma Streifer) who had constructed a modern plant on Bement Avenue, producing seltzer and many flavors of soda. His best known project was a franchise for bottling the well known drink Pepsi Cola, later changing to another brand Royal Crown Cola. In 1945 he sold the business and retired to Florida.

Cleaning and Dyeing Business

The New York Steam Cleaning and Dyeing works was a business owned by Samuel Gold and Thomas Weissman, beginning in the second decade of this century. With a plant at 114 Smith Street and a store at 6 Liberty Street, the firm, sometimes called Gold & Weissman, attained rapid growth. Several partners entered the firm, Moe Scheer a brother-in-law of Gold, and later Alexander Stall. By the 1930's the business, under the name of United Cleaners, had dozens of stores over a wide area in the Hudson Valley and into Connecticut. Recent years have seen sweeping changes in cleaning methods as well as a lessening demand for dye jobs. Most of the stores were closed; there are now two large stores in the City of Poughkeepsie and one in the outskirts, owned by Myron Gold, a son of the Samuel Golds, and Hamilton Scheer, a son of the Moe Scheers.

Goldstein & Rosen, a smaller firm, was another early concern in the same business.

Theaters

Theaters and theatrical performances have long presented attractive investment possibilities to Jews all over America,

particularly in New York City. The Shuberts, the Erlangers, the Hammersteins and many others were wealthy entrepreneurs in that field. With the coming of motion pictures, production and movie houses, from the earliest nickelodeons, were frequently under Jewish ownership. In 1922 clothing merchant Ely Elting, with several other local business men, formed a corporation and had built the Stratford Theater at the corner of Cannon and Liberty Streets. An attractive brick building, it was the first structure in the city built as a movie theater. Given the Shakespeare-inspired name of Stratford, it later became part of a chain with names related to that writer. The Juliet, newly built in a complex with a number of stores on Raymond Avenue, was another. The Collingwood Opera House, with extensive renovation and a change of name to Bardavon, was the last added to the local group. Several years ago the Bardavon Theater, with demolition threatened, was bought by a public group and the name was extended to the Bardavon 1869 Opera House.

During the 1920's George Cohen of Newburgh was the operator of several movie theaters in Poughkeepsie. The Best Theater was the first bought by him. This was the earliest movie theater in the city not a store-front operation; Kirchner Hall, on the top floor of what is now the Up-to-Date building, was converted into a theater for movies. Access was difficult by a very high staircase. In the 1930's a large building on Main and Little Washington Street, with stores, offices, apartments, and a theater was erected; by the 1960's it was torn down. George Cohen and his son managed the Strand Theater. At the present time there is no movie theater within the city limits. Most are in shopping centers on the outskirts.

Wholesale Produce

Early in this century several members of the local Jewish Community were wholesale produce dealers, supplying the dozens of groceries as well as small fruit and vegetable stores. These wholesale dealers would go at night by train to New York City several times a week to purchase fruits and vegetables not grown in this area. Their buying was done very early in the morning in the large markets located on the lower west side of the City, and the produce was loaded for shipment to Poughkeepsie on one of the freight boats which plied the Hudson River. By the 1920's motor

trucks, for the most part, had taken over such shipments. The noun produce, denoting fruits and vegetables, has somewhat fallen into disuse in recent years, probably the result of tremendous changes in food retailing in the supermarket era.

In addition to Reuben and Joseph Rosenthal, Joseph Kerlansky and his brother Manny were well known produce wholesalers. As office manager for her brother Joseph, Esther Kerlansky helped conduct the business with a degree of efficiency rare for women in that field. Joseph's daughter Ethel Elkind, a retired Poughkeepsie teacher, and her husband Max live in Poughkeepsie only a part of the year, with the rest spent in Stamford, Connecticut and Florida.

A later produce merchant, who was in business briefly was Nate Wallenstein. In more recent years Joseph Taub was a partner in the well known firm - Washington Growers and Distributors.

Houses of Worship

Vassar Temple

In 1845 a small group of Poughkeepsians met to provide for a home for Jewish worship; included were Jacob Baker, Isaac Haiman, Herman Hart, Aaron Morris and Solomon Scheldburgher. They assembled in a so-called "hall", on an upper floor of a building on Main Street, opposite the edifice occupied by the Dutchess County Commissioner of Jurors, formerly the Poughkeepsie Trust Company location. The organization was named "Congregation Children of Israel" and for several years it met at irregular intervals. In 1848, having acquired stability, it applied for a certificate of incorporation under the laws of New York State. The certificate of incorporation "was duly acknowledged and recorded in the office of the Dutchess County Clerk on March 8, 1851." In 1851 the first Board of Trustees was elected, all of whom were the founders listed above. (Further available information of the founders will be given in the Appendix to this work.) At that time the name of the religious organization was changed to Congregation Brethren of Israel.

The group met several years in the Law Library Building (also known as the Library Building) a short distance above the original meeting place on Main Street. Some histories of the Congregation have mistakenly stated that the members met in the Law Library Building on Market Street. The so-called Law Library Building at 54 Market Street was not erected until 1889. In the late 1850's the synagogue held its services briefly in Pine Hall, in what was in later years called the Fallkill Building, recently demolished for arterial highway construction.

In 1860 the synagogue's first permanent home was purchased; at that time the membership numbered 30. Located on Vassar Street at the corner of Mill, it had been occupied by the Congregational Church then moving to a new, larger building on Mill Street. Hasbrouck's History of Dutchess County, published in 1909, gives a revealing account of fairly early local church affairs. In 1831 there was a Second Presbyterian Church which had been organized after a dispute between certain members in the First Presbyterian Church. By 1837 the Congregational Church, an outgrowth of the Second Presbyterian Church, had erected the Grecian type building which was later sold to the "Hebrews" as stated in Hasbrouck's history. This writer, having found in her research certain disputes leading to changes in some of the synagogues, was made to realize that conflicting attitudes may arise in any religious group.

Part of the financing of the Brethren of Israel's new home on Vassar Street was a mortgage of $3000 held by Matthew Vassar, Jr. At the time of its move to that building the Congregation consisted of sixteen families. The officers that year were: Samuel Shultz, J. Benjamin, Jacob Baker, Simon Levy, and J. Freiberg (sometimes spelled Freyberg). There is no record of the date when the Congregation was first called Vassar Temple.

When John Guy Vassar (a nephew of Matthew Vassar the founder of Vassar College) died in 1890, he left legacies of $500 each to fourteen churches; among them was listed "the Israelite Synagogue on Vassar Street". By 1906 a fair and exhibition were organized with A.D. Hoffman (the father of Dr. Charles Hoffman) as chairman. It was for the purpose of cancelling the indebtedness of the Temple; the exhibits and decorations were described as "the finest ever displayed in the city".

As mentioned previously in another part of this work, in 1853 in the presidency of Aaron Morris, land on Mansion Street was purchased for a cemetery. This was used as a burial ground until 1875 when part of the land was sold and another cemetery was established on Davis Avenue in Arlington, still in use today. Isaac Marks was president at that time.

The early cemetery on Mansion Street (that section later renamed East Mansion Street, finally Pershing Avenue in honor of the World War I general) was for a period of time almost forgotten. Through the years vandals overturned gravestones, breaking many of them, and gradually most of the burial ground became a dumping area for neighborhood rubbish. Temple funds had once financed a restoration, but it soon again became cluttered with debris. A suggestion to abandon the cemetery and remove the remains to the newer one in Arlington met with resistance from certain leaders of the Orthodox community which believes that removal after burial is against Jewish tradition.

In the summer of 1981 a young librarian Mark Mandell came from Chicago seeking information about his great grandfather Moses Freiberg. The gravestone of his ancestor was one of the few visible; a visit to the newer cemetery revealed the burial plots of others of the Freiberg family.

The state of the old cemetery at that time was brought to the attention of Leonard Bard, a well-known Poughkeepsie businessman and a member of Vassar Temple. Moved by the deplorable condition of the holy place, Mr. Bard detailed some of his employees to

the gargantuan task of clearing tons of refuse. In addition to donating the manpower of his employees for the clearance, Leonard Bard financed the installation of a sturdy chain link fence with a locked gate. The Temple assumed the cost of the repair and resetting of the gravestones, which was accomplished under the expert supervision of the Superintendent of the Poughkeepsie Rural Cemetery.

On December 12, 1981, a ceremony of re-dedication was held with attendance by members of all the Jewish congregations of the city; the significance of the ceremony was abetted by ideally beautiful weather. The president of the Temple (Mrs. Robert Lipschutz), opened the program and a brief history of an earlier cemetery and of that being re-dedicated was given by this writer. The Temple's Rabbi Stephen Arnold followed with a re-dedication service of deep meaning.

A survey of the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community in 1923 stated that the membership of Vassar Temple at that time numbered one hundred twenty five and the annual budget was $6000.

At the turn of the century, the ritual at Vassar Temple veered away from Orthodoxy and a Conservative form of worship was instituted. In 1923 the Congregation turned to the Reform Movement, adopting the Union Prayer Book. In 1951 the Temple joined the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

The One Hundredth Anniversary of its founding was celebrated by the Temple in 1948; Dr. Albert Rosenberg was the president at that time, and Marcus Kramer was Rabbi. A short time later a lot at the corner of Hooker Avenue and South Cherry Street was given for a new building by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Satz; an additional lot on Underhill Avenue was purchased by a group of ten members and donated for additional space. Building was begun in June 1952. At the time of the move to Hooker Avenue in 1953, the officers were: Lawrence Edell, president, Joseph Weisman, vice president, Dr. Melvin Matlin, secretary, and Aaron Reifler, treasurer.

In 1973 the 125th Anniversary of the founding of Vassar Temple was celebrated; Rabbi Henry Bamberger was the spiritual leader at that time.

Among the rabbis serving the Temple early in its existence were: Joseph Heilbron, Samuel Peck, Abraham Heisman and Wolf Schreier. Among the notable rabbis serving in this century were: Sigmund Israel, Charles Mantinband, Leo Schwartz and Jerome Unger.

Vassar Temple has maintained for many years a very active religious school with sessions on Sunday morning. In the early years teachers were generally Vassar students. In the early years of this century, it was the only such school in the community, and the Temple generously accepted as students the children of families who were not affiliated with the Congregation. When Rabbi Charles Mantinband occupied the pulpit, a "City of Justice" group was developed within the Sunday School, "an organization of student self-government enabling and encouraging the citizens of the Sunday School Community to translate into their child life, the very principles and ideals taught in the classroom." Whether these were the words of the Rabbi is not known. The chief officers at its founding were Zelda Lass, mayor, Selma Schlachter, vice mayor, and Elma Samuels, secretary, with a sizable number of young people in minor offices. Selma Schlachter Streifer and Elma Samuels Rosenberg recall the organization but do not remember how long it lasted.

Vassar Temple has had other significant groups for young people; there was a Young Folks League in the early 1920's. The earliest Boy Scout troop sponsored by a Jewish organization met in one of its assembly rooms. The Temple has long had an active sisterhood and its Men's Club was founded in 1934. During the 1930's and 1940's a Players Group gave impressive amateur performances, directed by Mrs. Isabel Crystal Sacher.

At the time of this writing Rabbi Stephen Arnold is the devoted and popular spiritual leader of Vassar Temple; his wife Cecile Arnold plays an important role in the education of the young people of the Temple.

Congregation Schomre Israel

Late in the 1880's a small group of Orthodox Jews met for worship at the home of Michael Weiss at 510 Main Street. The gathering soon numbered twenty-five men, and a charter was drawn up creating Congregation Schomre Hadath "Guardians of the Faith". The incorporation certificate was dated October 1888. Joseph Eisner was elected the first president; other officers were: Michael Weiss, Abraham Stein and Isaac Eisner.

Shortly afterward the Congregation held services in the Haymarket Building a large warehouse type building on Clinton

Square, which probably had meeting rooms. Shortly after the turn of the century, a room in the Harris Building at the corner of Main and Liberty Streets was used for worship. Soon a building at 50 Noxon Street was purchased and remodeled to conform to the structure of a traditional Orthodox synagogue; Michael Weiss was then president. Other early presidents were Isaac Eisner, Joseph Eisner, Benjamin Weiner, Max Polokoff, Robert Harris and Louis Gellert. In the basement a Talmud Torah or Hebrew School was maintained after regular school hours and into the evening. This writer remembers attending the school briefly as a child with her older brother William; the "Rebbe" or melamed (teacher) at that time was a Mr. Manus. Strict discipline was maintained in an old fashioned way; the Hebrew teacher was not averse to using a stick or strap for the punishment of young people who did not conform to his idea of behavior.

During the first two decades of this century, the Jewish population of this city had increased markedly, chiefly with the great wave of immigrants from Eastern Europe. In 1912 a new congregation was organized by a group of Schomre Hadath members under the name of Children of Israel, the designation early used by Brethren of Israel or Vassar Temple.

The certification of incorporation of the new congregation, dated February 23, 1913 listed as officers Abraham Stein, Joseph Eisner, Joseph Rossman and Isaac Eisner. Trustees were: Michael Weiss, Samuel Gelber(t) and Benjamin Weisberger. The leaders of the group were for the most part members of the first of the Hungarian immigrants in Poughkeepsie, the founders of Schomre Hadath. (A variation of the spelling in English was Schomrie Hadass, or sometimes in the City Directory Schousneir Hadass). A small building on South Bridge Street was erected as a place of worship, and it was commonly referred to in the Jewish Community as the Hungarian Shule.

What led to the establishing of a new congregation by the mostly Hungarian group is not known. Perhaps it was a dispute within its membership, or the feeling that the ritual practices of the newer members, mostly Russian Jews, were not as strictly Orthodox as those of the founders. An early spiritual leader was a Rabbi Solomon from Cork, Ireland. Ephraim Minsberg was the rabbi of Congregation Children of Israel for many years.

By 1921 a site for a new synagogue for Schomre Hadath was purchased at 16 South Bridge Street, and a building campaign was

underway. A few of the members perceiving that the move of the Jewish population uptown had already begun, felt that the choice of site was a mistake, but the greatest number of members lived below Market Street; their choice of site prevailed. Barnett Abramsky, chairman of the fund raising campaign, died shortly after its start. With a new chairman, the drive for funds continued. Dubois Carpenter, a well known architect in the community, who had a number of Jewish clients, donated his services for the building. The construction firm of Worona and Miller was awarded the contract. Included on the building committee were: Louis Morowitz, Samuel Weisman, Benjamin Weiner, Samuel Mandel and Morris Effron.

In 1923, with a ceremony by Obed Lodge of the Masonic Order, the corner stone for the new synagogue was laid at a well publicized gathering. The guest speaker was Rabbi Stephen A. Wise of New York City, probably the best known rabbi in the country at that time; he was a dynamic speaker who helped to raise additional funds for the new building. Officers of the Board of Trustees at that time were: Ellis Levine, Abraham Stein (the father of Drs. Frank and Samuel Stein), Samuel Weisman, Samuel Shulman, and Aaron Ughez.

In 1924 the building was dedicated, with officers of the Board of Trustees including Charles Effron, Barnett Levine, Michael Golensky, Samuel Shulman, and Samuel Levine. There was an active Ladies' Auxiliary helping to raise funds for the new building. The cemetery for the congregation is located on La Grange Avenue.

By 1939 Schomre Hadath had a membership of one hundred ten families. In 1965, Children of Israel which by then had a very small membership and no resident rabbi, decided to merge with the larger synagogue. With the merger a new building in an uptown area was planned with Philip Morowitz and Samuel Heiman heading the Building Drive Committee, and on June 16, 1968, the new synagogue on Park Avenue, with a change of name to Schomre Israel, was dedicated.

The synagogue has a small but enthusiastic membership, with a good percentage of young families devoted to the Orthodox tradition. The very high price of fuel oil, which jumped from approximately 49 cents a gallon in 1977 to nearly $1.30 in 1980 has had a very adverse effect on the finances of the organization. The jump in price of heating oil has been due partly to the general inflation of the times, but mostly to the desire of the Arab nations, supplying most of the world's oil, to pocket huge sums. Many religious organiza-

tions, including churches and temples with their large buildings, have had difficulty meeting their budgets. Schomre Israel is one of many local organizations to accept Bingo games as a fund raiser.

Congregation Children of Israel, Anshe Ungarn

As detailed in the chapter on Congregation Schomre Israel, this synagogue was founded in 1912 by members of Schomre Hadath who became dissatisfied with that house of worship, of which the membership had become predominantly newcomers from Russia. The incorporation of "Ungarn" in the name indicates the desire of the founders to emphasize their Hungarian background.

A newspaper clipping, dated August 1, 1912, from the files of Claire Weiss May, relates facts of the founding of the new synagogue and gives many details of the plans for a new building. The following statement was significant: "This synagogue will be the first one in Poughkeepsie that has been erected from the ground up, as the other two synagogues in this city were remodeled, one from a house and the other from a church." There followed a many detailed account of the features of the new building., including "two swimming pools, one for men and one for women", not actually swimming pools but ritual baths, in Hebrew called mikvas. Interesting to note, in the style of journalism common at the beginning of this century, besides the main headline of the one-column article, there were three additional ones, including "Two swimming pools" and "Fine edifice being erected for 'insurgent' Hebrew congregation" with nothing in the article explaining the insurgency. The Hon. W.W. Smith (the son of one of the famous Smith Brothers) was to be the speaker at the laying of the cornerstone. The closing item of the newspaper article was an appeal for subscriptions for the new building to be sent to Joseph Eisner or A. Stein.

In later years Rabbi Ephraim Minsberg was the spiritual leader of the congregation, assisted by Rabbi Moses Nussbaum. As mentioned in the chapter on Congregation Schomre Israel, in 1965 Congregation Children of Israel was merged with Schomre Hadath.

Temple Beth-El

When Vassar Temple turned to the Reform movement in 1923,

there was a small group of dissenters within the Congregation. Members devoted to a Conservative form of worship were dissatisfied with what some considered a sharp break with tradition. By 1925 a group of Temple members and a few others not associated with that house of worship joined together and in that year and in 1926 held Conservative services on the High Holy Days. Rabbi Sigmund Israel, who had held the rabbinate at Vassar Temple for twelve years, officiated.

The Conservative Temple Beth-El (meaning House of God) was founded by the following devoted group: Mr. and Mrs. George Albert, Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Braw, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Fleishman, Mr. Harris Goldstein, Dr. and Mrs. M. C. Katz, Mr. and Mrs. David Kent, Mr. and Mrs. Julius Klein, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Lass, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Perlmutter, Mr. and Mrs. Herman J. Rosen, Major and Mrs. Reuben Rosen, Mr. and Mrs. Isaac H. Spitz, and Mr. and Mrs. Irvin M. Tofel.

Services were conducted in Rutherford Hall, a large meeting room on the top floor of the Falkill Building, owned by Isaac H. Spitz. This building, recently demolished to make way for an arterial highway, was erected in the 1850's. Named Pine Hall, its early use included numerous concerts and musical performances. It was also the site of a number of other events of meaningful significance in the history of Poughkeepsie's Jewish Community. For a few years before the purchase of its building at Mill and Vassar Streets, Brethren of Israel held services in Pine Hall. In 1923, as the Jewish Community Center was being organized, its meetings were conducted in the same large top floor meeting room, then named Rutherford Hall (Mr. George Rutherford, a well known dancing teacher of that time, conducted classes there).

By 1927 the Conservative group purchased the small building which had been the Meeting House of the Society of Friends at 110-112 Montgomery Street. The synagogue was incorporated as Temple Beth-El of Poughkeepsie, New York, with the Certificate of Incorporation signed by the Founders. They then transferred all their interests and rights to the property to the religious corporation of Temple Beth-El.

The first president of the Congregation was Major Reuben Rosen, who served for three years. The early years were a source of many obstacles which were overcome by the devotion and persistence of the Founders and new members who joined in slowly growing numbers. A decidedly brilliant addition to the services came when

Mr. Samuel Pressman, who had an outstanding voice, joined the Temple and volunteered his services as Cantor. He continued in that position until his death in 1953. A few years after Mr. Pressman's start as Cantor, Samuel Effron (the father of this writer) joined Temple Beth-El and became Bal Coreh, volunteer reader of the Torah. During the first eight years of its existence, the Temple's services were led by "weekend rabbis", young rabbinical students from theological seminaries in New York City. Temple members played host to these fledgling rabbis.

In its early years the Temple acquired a cemetery located on the Pleasant Valley Road; a brick and iron gate was erected, the gift of Joseph Perlmutter and a chapel was built. Fred Perlmutter, the son of Joseph Perlmutter, from the founding of the Temple until death, devoted his special abilities to its financial affairs.

The very active women of the Congregation formed a Women's Auxiliary, and in 1928 Rachel Spitz, now Mrs. Morris Harris of Bloomfield, New Jersey, the daughter of Isaac Spitz, was instrumental in organizing a Sunday School, with the assistance of funds from the women's group. She was the head of the school for a number of years, and was aided in its active development by Henrietta Diamond and Pauline Lutsky.

In 1935 the first full time spiritual leader was engaged, Rabbi Abraham Haselkorn who had served a few years as Rabbi of Vassar Temple. The years of the Depression were difficult for the Congregation, but with the persistent hard work of the Rabbi and devoted members, the Temple continued to grow. When Rabbi Haselkorn left to join the Armed Forces as a chaplain in World War II, Rabbi Isaac Holzer, a learned scholar who had escaped with his wife from Nazi Germany, filled the pulpit for four years.

In 1946 the then President Max Steinberg, assisted by a committee, was instrumental in engaging the services of the present spiritual leader Rabbi Erwin Zimet, who had been Assistant Rabbi of the Park Avenue Synagogue in New York City.

Under the dynamic leadership of Rabbi Zimet, Temple Beth-El has attained depths of religious meaning for its members and for the community rarely reached by any group. We quote from The Story of Temple Beth-El by J. George Spitz in the souvenir book celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of the Temple (1977): "Religious services are presented in a meaningful manner, thus assuming a greater beauty and stimulating a fuller sense of appreciation in the Congregation. All symbolism of Conservative

Judaism is retained, but a deeper comprehension has resulted because Rabbi Zimet never fails to interpret the prayers about to be recited. His informal explanations have evoked added interest and are welcomed as the means of producing more profound understanding of the ritual."

Lilli Zimet, the very talented wife of the Rabbi, was a long time principal of the religious school and has developed and directed choral groups that have enriched the services of the Temple for many years. The High Holy Days Choir under her leadership has added deep liturgical enhancement to the Holiday services. The Junior Choir, adding beauty and significance to many Friday night and holiday services has been a tribute to Lilli's patience, devotion and musical talent.

Mr. Sidney Rabinowitz was the first professional Cantor to serve the Temple, followed by Cantor Joseph Wieselman, who, from his arrival in 1967, continues in a very important liturgical role in the services. His training of Bar and Bat Mitzvahs has been especially significant.

For several years Rabbi Richard Siegel was the assistant to Rabbi Zimet; after his acceptance of a pulpit in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Rabbi Charles Simon has been Associate Rabbi. One of his important duties has been work with teenagers.

The Ladies Auxiliary, renamed the Sisterhood of Temple Beth-El has assisted the growth and maintenance of the Temple, often in a way that adds to the social life of its members with a meaningful religious approach. For many years its Annual Election Day Antique Show and Sale, with Gertrude Tinkelman (the wife of Dr. Abraham Tinkelman) as chairperson, was an important fund raising project.

An important project of Beth-El Sisterhood has been, for almost twenty years, the work of its group of transcribers in Braille, organized by the late Hannah Toporoff (wife of Dr. George Toporoff). It has been of outstanding value to the blind and to people of limited vision. The group in Braille has filled requests from the Library of Congress. Tape recording for the blind has recently become a major part of this program.

During the early difficult years when Temple Beth-El was a small congregation on Montgomery Street, two members distinguished themselves as volunteer overseers, Rose Brond (Mrs. Harry Brond) and Alex Grishman. A self-appointed supervisor of the downstairs vestry room and kitchen, Rose Brond was in charge of almost every housekeeping detail of the building: cleaning (often doing some of

the work herself), keeping an inventory of supplies and equipment, and even baking for social affairs. Alex Grishman as "Shamash" caretaker of ritual objects and prayer books, devoted himself, in addition, to many varied duties, including the opening and closing of the building, and greeting worshipers as they arrived. He was known to have carried lozenges in his pocket to relieve congregants whose coughing might disturb the services. Alex Grishman, by the time of the move to the new Temple had given up his self-appointed duties because of illness; he died a few years later.

With the steady growth of the membership, the limited facilities on Montgomery Street, by the late 1930's became inadequate. In 1954 a Building Fund Committee, with Arthur Levinsohn as general chairman, was named. By 1956 with the financial backing and efforts of many members and a sizable mortgage, the present home of Temple Beth-El at 118 Grand Avenue became a reality.

The Religious School has always been a very important part of the Temple, and with the membership growing constantly, the School has become a prodigious project. At the time of this writing there are more than 850 families, many with young children, in the membership of Temple Beth-El.

The Temple unit of the United Synagogue Youth, a national organization of teenagers, has had a very important role in the activities and religious interests of the young people of the Congregation. The parent organization United Synagogue of America has developed a very viable program and United Synagogue Youth has been deemed one of the most active youth groups in the country.

Conservative Judaism had accepted women as part of the Minyan; at Temple Beth-El women are fully privileged to be counted and called to the Torah. The founding of the Solomon Schechter Hebrew Day School, with Rabbi Zimet very active in its inauguration, will be the subject of another section of this work.

Lack of space prevents the detailing of many of other important events in the life of Temple Beth-El. In 1948 a parsonage for Rabbi and Lilli and family was purchased; a larger, more adequate home for them was built in later years.

The Temple has been fortunate in having the services of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Toth as caretakers for over twenty years. A house on Park Avenue, on a site adjoining the grounds of the Temple, was purchased for their occupancy.

Honor to Rabbi Erwin Zimet

On Friday evening March 26, 1982, a special service of tribute to Rabbi Erwin Zimet was a part of the weekly worship at Temple Beth-El. Honoring Rabbi Zimet's seventieth birthday and his completion of thirty five years as spiritual leader of the Temple, congregation members and guests, including representatives of many important groups of both the Jewish Community and the City and County at large, overflowed the enlarged capacity of the sanctuary.

Brief speeches noting many of Rabbi Zimet's outstanding attributes, and laudatory messages from national and state organizations marked the program of the evening. In an informal manner, the Zimet family, Lilli his wife, and children Michael, Miriam, Seiler and Jonathan, recalled happy incidents in their life together. The Oneg Shabbat which followed the service, one of the most crowded ever held in the Social Hall, reflected the joyous atmosphere of the evening.

Rabbi Erwin Zimet was born in Berlin, Germany, and received his education at the University of Berlin and the Jewish Theological Seminary of that city, from which he was ordained in 1938. He served as Assistant Rabbi of the Park Avenue Synagogue in New York City from 1939 to 1946, and has been the spiritual leader of Temple Beth-El in Poughkeepsie since that time.

Rabbi Zimet served as the Hillel Counselor to the Jewish students at Vassar College from 1950 to 1970. He has also been the Jewish Chaplain at the Green Haven Correctional Facility from 1950 until recently.

A past president of the American Correctional Chaplains Association (1956-66), as well as the American Jewish Correctional Chaplains Association (1964-65), he has served as the president of the Dutchess County Ministerial Association (1963-64) and as a member of the Dutchess County Council of Human Relations (1963-67). He served as president of the Dutchess Interfaith Council for 1981-82.

In 1975 Rabbi Zimet received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from the Jewish Theological Serminary of America, and in 1978 he was presented with the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters by Marist College.

Rabbi Zimet is a member of the Rabbinical Assembly of America and of the New York Board of Rabbis.

According to the records, Rabbi Zimet has filled the rabbinate of

Temple Beth-El longer than any spiritual leader in a Jewish congregation in Poughkeepsie. He has probably addressed more non-Jewish congregations than any other rabbi in the history of the city. It is not unusual for Friday evening services to include as guests groups of young members of churches whose leaders have requested such a visit. Generally, Rabbi Zimet gives a meaningful talk in the sanctuary on Jewish ritual practices to the group, following the services.

Rabbi Zimet's very able wife Lilli, for years principal of the Temple's Religious School, is the continuing director of the Holiday Choir and the Children's Choir for Friday evening services. She has been the director of cantatas and other musical productions for programs of the Dutchess Interfaith Council.

Temple and Synagogue Sisterhoods

Tribute must be paid to three women's groups, the Sisterhoods of Vassar Temple, Congregation Schomre Israel, and Temple Beth-El. All of the organizations, working with great zeal for the benefit of their particular institution, have assumed duties and supported needed programs in a manner that women seem to accomplish most efficiently. Fund-raising, projects concerning housekeeping within the buildings, particularly for the reception areas, assistance with many religious school events for the Holidays, are just a few of the Sisterhoods' activities.

Each year the Sisterhoods of the three congregations meet at a joint breakfast gathering, addressed by a speaker on a subject of Jewish interest.

Temple and Synagogue Youth Groups

United Synagogue Youth (U.S.Y.)

United Synagogue Youth (U.S.Y.) is a group for high school boys and girls within the program of the United Synagogue of America. Temple Beth-El's chapter is one of many branches of the organization throughout the United States and Canada.

The local group sponsors Shabbat and Holiday services and programs which emphasize Jewish value concepts. Social action is en-

couraged and members participate actively in community service. The adult leadership of the chapter plans discussions on meaningful religious and community action topics. A Pre-U.S.Y. group for younger teen-agers is also part of the program at Temple Beth-El.

New York Federation of Temple Youth (N.Y.F.T.Y.)

The Poughkeepsie branch of N.Y.F.T.Y., an organization of Vassar Temple's teen-agers, is an active part of a regional group. Programs and activities of Jewish interest are emphasized and many phases of religious life are studied. Some of the leaders of the local chapter are young adults who have been inspired as members of N.Y.F.T.Y. in their youth. Discussion groups are an important part of the organization's program. Members provide service to the Temple and to the general community.

Within the national organization of Temple Youth, there are well-organized summer camps with meaningful study programs.

National Council of Synagogue Youth

The local chapter, an organization of high school age members of Congregation Schomre Israel, emphasizes a combination of learning and social activity. It is an avowedly religious group, which studies and applies to daily living Orthodox Jewish principles. Members experience the Mitzvot with special devotion to Shabbat, the Holidays, Prayer, Kashrut, Tzedakah among others, both as a group and as individuals.

Week-long seminars are held with members from different communities participating. Discussion sessions and programs of service to the Synagogue are important activities.

Poughkeepsie
Jewish Community Center

Early Hebrew Instruction

Poughkeepsie
Community Hebrew School

Mid-Hudson Hebrew Day School

Poughkeepsie Jewish Community Center

Shortly after the end of World War I a Young Men's Hebrew Association (YMHA) was formed. Whether it was under the aegis of the Jewish Welfare Board with headquarters in New York City is not known; records of the organization have been lost. Another group called the Amicos Club was founded by a number of the returning servicemen. This met in a warehouse type building to the rear of a dwelling on lower Mill Street. It included a small room for meetings and social gatherings and a basketball court. The court must have caused some difficulty to the young athletes because of several supporting pillars in the middle of the floor. (Several years later the Harding Club, then a new organization paid for the use of school gymnasiums by these young players.) In a room above the club rooms, Rabbi William Israelite taught Hebrew classes.

By 1923 the leaders of both organizations met and formed the present institution, which was incorporated as the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community Center. It met for a few years in Rutherford Hall on the top floor of the Fallkill Building. Prominent in its early affairs were: Ely Gellert, Harry Wolpe, Max Cheeger, Chester Isadore and Kalman Satz. Dr. Harry Maltz was elected the first president, and a temporary Board of Governors was created, including: George Albert, Miss Minnie Weisberger, Marks Eisner, Dr. Charles Hoffman, Joseph Schlachter, Jack Siegel, Harold Jacobs, and Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Effron. Other early presidents were: Henry Jacobs, Samuel Levine, Samuel Berlin and Harry Wolpe. For a number of years, the chief fund raiser was an annual ball held at the State Armory.

In 1925 purchase was made of a building at 54 North Hamilton Street facing Mansion Square, previously occupied by a small private hospital; the Center continued at that location for nearly forty years. In 1929 the Hebrew School which had been founded in 1916, was amalgamated with the Center and the building which it owned was sold. Samuel Effron, one of the founders of the Hebrew School, represented the School in its negotiations. The Hebrew School, officially in recent years named the Poughkeepsie Community Hebrew School, is a separate entity holding sessions in the Center; it is supported by the three Congregations and the local fund raising Jewish Welfare Fund, as well as by tuition payments.

In the 1930's a group of young men took a mounting interest in the Center, among them: Joseph Gellert, Milton Haven, Dr. Morris

Katz, Dr. Abraham Krakower, Herman Levine, the late Charles Levy, Nathaniel Rubin and Joseph Worona. During that decade an addition was built at the north side of the Center, creating a medium sized auditorium, used frequently. From its inception, the Center has been used by most Jewish organizations for their meetings.

Plans for a new building were discussed in the late 1950's and a Fund Raising Drive in 1961 yielded $730,000 in pledges. The Building Committee included among others: Elias Bramley, Benjamin Browne and George Marcus. The new building was dedicated April 12, 1964, with Dr. Edward Stamm, Chairman of the Transitional Committee.

The Center has had, for most of its years, emphasis on programs for children. From its earliest years it has operated meaningful day camps, and in the 1940's an overnight camp for youngsters, located in the Bear Mountain Park area was part of its program. In recent years, Jekoce Acres, situated about six miles south of the City, has been the site of the Day Camp, as well as a recreation area for families, all making good use of its recently added large swimming pool. In the Center building there is a "Health Club" with membership in special services for adults.

For many years the Center sponsored both Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, which like the Center itself were non-sectarian in membership. With the move to the suburbs of many young Jewish families, sometimes creating transportation problems for activities, these troops lost strength and are no longer in existence. This writer recalls ten rewarding years as a Girl Scout leader at the Center; Frances Reifler Finnerman and Claire Moselle were among other scout leaders. William Slesar was for over thirty years leader of the Cub Scouts.

Through the years the Center has had a number of devoted executive directors; most memorable among them were Eli Kogos, Samuel Kurzon, and Jules Dorfman. At this writing Richard L. Rubin is the Director. From time to time there have been various organizations in support of the Center, including a Women's Auxiliary, a Center PTA, briefly active in the 1940's, and Junior and Senior Youth Councils. The proliferation of Jewish organizations in the Community, and the increase of activities connected with Temples and the Synagogue, lessened the strength of some groups, and they were given up.

Membership fees in a number of categories are an important part of the Center's income. A devoted group of members is working to

help the Jewish Center to meet its budget and keep up its role as the setting for many Jewish activities. At the time of this writing a period of ever increasing inflation has been in effect for a number of years. The cost of fuel oil for heating and air conditioning has escalated prodigiously and created problems for all institutions. The semi-annual Rummage Sale, efficiently under the chairmanship of Mrs. Herbert Rosenfield, has yielded needed income. It is generally one of the best attended sales in the area.

Selfless volunteers, both men and women, have been conducting weekly bingo games as a viable source of income for the Center since 1975. John Weisman and Martin Hochhauser, chairmen from the beginning, have been long-time workers. Among the many who have worked with the project from the beginning are: Elsie and Sam Ptalis, Billie Davis (Mrs. Morton Davis), Marilyn Hankin (Mrs. Robert Hankin). In addition to the maintenance of the game, the selling of refreshments which involve some cooking, is part of the work of the committee.

From 1945 through 1967, a Women's Auxiliary of the Center was an active organization. Later its activities were amalgamated into the general Center program. Among those who served as president were: Mrs. Jack Brickman, Mrs. Sam Kotch, Mrs. Theodore Rimai, Mrs. Louis Epstein, Mrs. Joseph Herman, Mrs. Leon Bloom and Mrs. Leonard Eisner.

The Poughkeepsie Jewish Center has been guided by numerous dedicated presidents, most of whom have been hard workers with many other important Jewish Community organizations. The first president was Dr. Harry Maltz, followed a few years later by Harry Wolpe. Among fairly recent leaders were: Allan J. Weisman, Barry Grandeau, Dr. Stanley Schwartz, Dr. Seymour Levin, and Claire Belsky. No longer living are: Edward Solomon, Albert L. Hecht, Charles Rosenberg (who also served as president of Temple Beth-El), Irving Feldman, Dr. Elvin Gottdiener.

Early Hebrew Instruction

Very early in the Twentieth Century the Orthodox Jewish Community, for Hebrew instruction of its young, depended on one of several programs, all maintained after the regular public school sessions and on Sunday mornings. There was an occasional cheder conducted by a man of some Hebrew learning, called a

rebbe, not necessarily a rabbi. Some families hired a rebbe as tutor in Hebrew for their children. For a number of years Congregation Schomre Hadath had a Talmud Torah, or Hebrew school, in the basement of its synagogue, with Mr. Faivel Manusowitz as teacher, sometimes called a melamed.

With all these teaching situations there were serious defects. Sometimes the melamed was newly arrived from Eastern Europe, and his limited English created a lack of personal relationship with his pupils; often he lacked patience and frequently used corporal punishment. The surroundings, whether in the home of the rebbe or in the basement of the synagogue, were often shabby and inhospitable. The teachers had no financial security; they had to depend on the generosity of the parents.

Poughkeepsie Community Hebrew School

For a number of years the need for a more organized program of Hebrew instruction was recognized. The Poughkeepsie Community Hebrew School was founded in the fall of 1919. Among the founders and members of the original Board of Directors were: Rabbi Moses Nussbaum, Jack Siegel, Marcus J. Fessler, David Eisner, Morris Effron and Samuel Effron. Opened in a rented house on Garden Street, the School Board shortly afterward purchased a house at 68 Garden Street.

In the mid-1920's a decision was made to assist the Jewish Community Center which was having financial difficulties. The Hebrew School building was sold, with the proceeds donated to the Jewish Center, and the Hebrew School was re-located at the Center building at 54 North Hamilton Street. In 1929, with the incorporation of the Center, its charter stated that one of its aims was to maintain permanently a Community Hebrew School.

In 1947 the Jewish Community adopted a plan that the Hebrew School be sponsored by the religious congregations and the Jewish Community Center. Housed in the Center (from 1964 in a new building on Grand Avenue) it would have its own Board of Directors and would receive financial support from the Poughkeepsie Jewish Welfare Fund.

At this writing Mr. Emanuel Markus is the principal of the Hebrew School. There is a tuition charge, with special consideration for families of limited means. The school population includes the

children of Orthodox, Conservative and Reform families.

Mid-Hudson Hebrew Day School

The school, established in September 1972, is housed at the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community Center. It is one of more than fifty day schools in the United States and Canada affiliated with the United Synagogue of America and named after the founder of Conservative Judaism, Solomon Schecter. The operation of the school is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees, the majority of which must be parents. The program includes classes from kindergarten through sixth grade.

According to a brochure of facts about the school, "The major goal of the Mid-Hudson Hebrew Day School is to provide an educational framework within which children can develop well integrated personalities enriched by both their American and Jewish heritage".

General studies teachers are certified by the State of New York; Judaic teachers are graduates of recognized educational institutions in the United States and Israel. Classes are small, permitting individualized teaching. The general education program of the school is known to exceed the requirements of the New York State Education Department. The Judaic program aims to develop a working knowledge of written and spoken Hebrew; there is stress on the understanding of Jewish life, history and values through participation in prayers, celebration of holidays, and study of Biblical and later literature. Art, music, and physical education are emphasized in the program.

At the time of this writing, Susan Glass Helman is the administrator of the school. The officers of the Board of Trustees include: Marilyn Schwartz, president, Carol Menken, Evelyn Weiss, Hinda Baum and Ann Muldorf.

Early Organizations No Longer in Existence

The Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society

The earliest known Jewish women's organization in Poughkeepsie was The Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society, founded in April, 1912. The Certificate of Incorporation, issued by the office of the New York Secretary of State, is one of the few documents of local Jewry from the early years of this century still available. Attached to the certificate is a hand written membership list without a caption, possibly a list of founders. Of the thirty four names listed, only the following have relatives still living in the Poughkeepsie area: Dora Fleishman, Clara Levinsohn, Lena Golensky, Lena Rubin, Rebecca Taub, Sarah Miller, Fannie Effron, Ida Wallace, Annie Eisner, Lena Mintzer, Lena Weisberger, Jennie Friedman, Ester Heller and Bessie Lass.

The aim of the organization was Tzedakah, meaning charity, particularly when economic needs threatened family life. It supplied food to poor families for holiday use, including Mo-os Chitim (literally: wheat money) funds for the Passover needs of the poor families.

According to a survey of the Jewish Community made in 1924: "This is an organization consisting of over one hundred women, drawn mostly from the Orthodox ranks. It is organized for the purpose of providing emergency relief to Jewish people who may be in need of it. It caters to such few cases as arise from time to time in the local community, furnishing food, clothing, medication, etc. in proportion as the need exists. The organization is maintained by membership fees, contributions, benefits etc."

Progressive Ladies' Aid Society

The same survey states: "An organization similar in purpose and scope of activity to the Hebrew Ladies' Aid Society, though smaller in numbers." It was founded a number of years later, and the reason for the formation of another group for the same charitable purpose is not clear. Perhaps the early members were more comfortable with Yiddish than with English, having arrived from Europe more recently than most of the members of the older group. The members may have been particularly interested in Yiddish as a language. The survey states further: "The society attempts occasional literary programs, as a rule in Yiddish, but with scant success."

There is no record of the earliest members of the Progressive Ladies' Aid Society but among those active in later years were: Sarah Baum, Sarah Lutsky, Lena Millman, Esther Boyarsky, Henrietta Mohler and Ester Ughez.

As the number of Jewish women's organizations grew, the two organizations had difficulty attracting younger members; a decision was made to merge in the 1940's. By the 1950's with the local Jewish Welfare Fund able to deal with financial assistance matters in a more sophisticated manner, the need for this worthy organization diminished. It was disbanded, with the remaining funds given to the Jewish Welfare Fund.

Progress Club

Little is known of this club except that it was a men's group, chiefly of businessmen and its aim was mostly social. It first appeared in the 1913-14 City Directory in the listing of Social Clubs. The meeting place changed frequently: 295 Main Street, 303 Main Street, 5 Garden Street; from the fact that it met Friday nights it probably did not appeal to the religious members of the Community. The 1913 Directory listed the following officers: S. J. Steinbach, Jack Rosenberg and Louis Weiss.

A description from a 1923 survey of the Jewish Community (possibly by the National Jewish Welfare Board) reads: "Originally a social club of Jewish members only, whence a great part of the social and recreational life of the Jewish Community emanated, the club now has a mixed membership with only a small element Jewish. Occasionally it lends itself to co-operation along philanthropic and religious lines of endeavor, but for the most part its energies are devoted to social activity. It meets in rented quarters in the heart of the city."

By 1925 the Progress Club was no longer listed in the City Directory. Gertrude Friedman Weiss recalls going with Charlotte Satz to dances at the club rooms and she believes that some of the Rattner brothers and Ely Gellert and one of his brothers were members of the group.

The Independent Order of Brith Abraham

This was a constitutent unit of a national fraternal order; in 1923

there was a local membership of one hundred. Meetings were held twice monthly in rooms rented for that purpose. In the early part of this century there was a number of such meeting quarters available; with the founding of the Jewish Center its building was used for the meetings of this organization and similar groups.

From time to time lecturers were invited to address the meetings. The lodge contributed to local and national philanthropic causes. As a rule its chief appeal to members, apart from the social and fraternal aspect, was its insurance benefits and cemetery privileges. Eventually the insurance feature of this and other such organizations proved to be actuarially unsound and may have been a source of weakness. The lodge maintained its own cemetery on La Grange Avenue; this was taken over as part of the burial ground of Congregation Schomre Hadath when the group was disbanded.

As older members died and younger men, having other interests, did not join, the organization became too small to continue. Perhaps the growing strength of Obed Lodge, the Jewish Masonic organization, had more appeal to the younger men.

There are no existing records of this organization: several known members in the 1920's were: Morris I. Levinsohn, Solomon Epstein, and Barnett Abramsky.

Arbeiter Ring (Workmen's Circle)

This group, fairly active in the 1920's, was a branch of a national organization with sizable chapters, chiefly in large cities. How long the local chapter existed, or who were the leading members is not known. Since its chief appeal was to immigrant Jews, the membership of the national organization through the years has diminished tremendously and many chapters have ceased to exist. For many years the organization has maintained a children's camp on Sylvan Lake in Dutchess County, with most of the campers from New York City.

The following description of the Poughkeepsie chapter is quoted from a typewritten copy of a survey of the city's Jewish population made, possibly by the National Jewish Welfare Board in 1924: "ARBEITER RING (WORKMEN'S CIRCLE). This is an organization of laborers and small merchants (peddlers, shopkeepers and artisans) meeting twice monthly in rented quarters. Notwithstanding Poughkeepsie's proximity to New York City, the local A.R. is rather

weak because Poughkeepsie is not a factory or union town, also because before long A.R. members graduate from the laboring group into the independent 'capitalist class'. Membership carries an insurance feature, also certain sick benefits and cemetery provisions. A Yiddish library circulates among its members."

There was also a small number of more affluent members who were drawn to the organization by the Yiddish culture programs. Retired Judge Milton M. Haven has recalled that his father was an enthusiastic member of the group.

The statement about Poughkeepsie not being a union town is especially meaningful, as a few years after this survey appeared, during a period when unions were gaining strength, this city became known among unions as a "scab town". A number of manufacturers, chiefly in men's clothing, but a few in women's wear, moved to small cities like Poughkeepsie to avoid the ever growing strength of the unions in New York City.

Hachnosos Orchim

(Hebrew Sheltering Association of Poughkeepsie)

The roots of this organization go back to the ancient tradition of hospitality. In Genesis Chapter XVIII, Abraham welcomed strangers passing by his tent with "Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your heart." Thus the concept of hospitality to the wayfarer has always been a prime mitzvah (good deed) among Jews. In East European communities from which many of Poughkeepsie's immigrants had come, it was customary to house the weary wayfarer in the Bais Midrash (House of study) which was a section of the synagogue set apart for study or discussion, as distinguished from the Bais Tefillah or main sanctuary. Often a village had no better hospitality to offer the stranger than the hard wooden benches on which to sleep.

The Poughkeepsie Sheltering Society was organized shortly after the turn of the century. It was loosely held together without any legal form of association or written documents; there were no minutes of meetings. It was based on the kindness of efforts of a small group of businessmen, most of them members of the two Orthodox congregations. Money was raised informally, with the small active group approaching members of the Jewish Community.

Donations of five or ten dollars, or more generally one or two dollars, were gratefully received and put to beneficial use.

In the early years of this century it was customary for city police stations to allow persons passing through the area, without means for even a low cost hotel, to occupy a cot in a jail cell overnight. Based on the centuries old feeling among Jews that they must take care of their own people when in need, the thought that a Jew might be in such straitened circumstances as to apply to the police station for shelter disturbed the devoted organizers of Hachnosos Orchim.

Arthur Levinsohn joined the group in 1933 and the small room at the rear of his pharmacy at the southwest corner of Main and South Bridge Streets proved to be a convenient meeting place for this and other community committees. At that time the organization consisted of Charles Cantor, father of Ethel (Mrs. George) Marcus, Jacob Effron, David Heiman, Jacob Siegel and Arthur Levinsohn. Mr. Cantor was known for his persistence in collecting funds; "Jack" Siegel (the father of Dr. Martin Siegel) was the spokesman and "rescuer" in City Court. (Occasionally a Jew without means was brought there and charged with vagrancy.) "Jake" Effron is remembered fondly by Arthur Levinsohn as "always ready with a buck", and at the same time lauding bottled Saratoga Water as beneficial to one's health and insisting that everyone drink it. (This drink from Saratoga Springs was recently declared radio-active, with possible dangerous effects.)

David Heiman furnished shelter at his home over his store on lower Main Street, and was paid (in the 1930's) one dollar and fifty cents for an evening kosher meal and a night's lodging. The wanderer had breakfast at the White Tile diner (built by Isaac Burros, but by the 1930's Greek owned); the cost of this meal was thirty-five cents. The home of Wolf Weisman (father of Sam, Jack and Ruby Weisman) 13 South Bridge Street, was available if there was need of sheltering more than one person. After the night's lodging, the visitor was directed North to Kingston or Hudson, or South to Newburgh, where he probably found similar shelter. Unfortunately during the Depression years many young men appeared. The founding of the Jewish Welfare Fund, with a more sophisticated system of help, brought to a close the existence of this organization.

From the earliest years of the Twentieth Century, there was a proliferation of Mishulochim ("persons who came to collect") passing through Poughkeepsie, some representing organizations

either in this country or in Palestine, and a few of somewhat dubious connections. They managed to reach generous Orthodox families at mealtime. This writer recalls from her childhood having such noontime dinner guests in her parents' home. In later years the Welfare Fund arranged payments for the more worthy of the organizations annually, thus eliminating the system of traveling collectors.

Gemillas Chesodim

In the early years of this century there was in existence Gemillas Chesodim, a free loan association. With the aim of aiding people to become independent, such an organization has been part of Jewish life from the time of Maimonides, who considered this one of the highest forms of charity. Frequently immigrants to Poughkeepsie had difficulty in securing steady employment or starting a small business. A modest loan from this organization could assist them to overcome these difficulties.

Following the Maimonides concept of charity, the loans were without interest or security. In some communities such organizations required two endorsers; little is known of the Poughkeepsie group, or whether endorsers were needed. Barnett Rubin, the father of Nathaniel Rubin, headed this organization (actually a fairly small committee); Benjamin Weiner and Ellis Levine also served.

The Yiddish Dramatic Club

In the 1940's the Yiddish Dramatic Club was devoted to the reading and production of plays in Yiddish. At that time there was a large group who spoke Yiddish and were interested in the language as a cultural medium. Meetings were held at the Jewish Center, then on North Hamilton Street, and auditoriums such as that of the Masonic Temple were rented for their public appearances.

Among the members who were involved in either the production of the plays or in participation as actors were: Evelyn Dvorkin, Dora and Sam Dinerstein, Ben Pekarsky, Gertrude and Julius Nadel, Tillie and Sam Kotch, Morris and Isador Prutinsky, David Sperling, Louis Farber and Sam Kaplan. The services of Cantor Jacob Rubin as musical director and of Selma Schlachter Streifer (then Selma

Kahn) as piano accompanist were important assets in the musical presentations by the group.

Zionism
and its Organizations

For hundreds of years, Jews, scattered worldwide, dreamed of the return of what was ancient Judaea to the Jewish people. From the last century, the term Zionists was first used for men and women actively involved in an effort to re-establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. By 1882 Jewish settlement in that country had begun.

In 1897 Theodor Herzl called together the first Zionist Congress in Basel Switzerland; this was the first significant move in the foundation of the Zionist Organization. In 1917, as victory for the Allies in World War I seemed more certain, many Jews rejoiced that Great Britain was "giving" Palestine to the Jews. Actually the Balfour Declaration, named for Arthur James Balfour, then Britain's Foreign Secretary, was a British government document that showed interest in the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Jews worldwide found in Zionism a focus for active idealism. With the Balfour Declaration Zionism was more organized and backing by Jewish communities was more solid. In 1949 Israel emerged as an independent state.

The Poughkeepsie Zionist men's group had its beginnings in the early 1920's, and it was active until recent years. Among the particularly active members in its early years were: Philip Morowitz, Jack and Max Steinberg, Rabbi Abraham Hazelkorn, Benjamin and Berta Friedman, Samuel Pressman and Moe Hodas.

In the decade of 1950, with the State of Israel established and in need of greater financial aid, the local Zionist group had greater activity. Among the leading members were: Israel Prutinsky, Louis Schwartz, Jack and Max Steinberg, Fred Perlmutter, Leon Alpers, Benjamin Friedman, Leon Sohn, Dr. Marc Eckstein, Philip Morowitz, Moe Hodas, Israel Sherman and his son Jonah Sherman, Rabbi Erwin Zimet, Harry Wolpe, Mendel Brown, Dr. Maurice Sitomer, Dr. Joseph Herman and Burton Gold.

With the proliferation of many Jewish organizations in the community, this group rarely meets, but the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community has constantly been generous with funds for Zionism, particularly in Israel's emergencies.

Hadassah

Hadassah, which is the country's leading Jewish women's organization, was founded in 1912 by Henrietta Szold and a small

group of women in New York City. Its early program was the development of public health services for the Jewish settlers in the desolate country of Palestine, then in the realm of Turkey. For the past seventy years, Hadassah, now with a membership of over 350,000 has had a dedicated devotion to fund raising. Hadassah's program of health and other services in the State of Israel has developed into a complex of hospitals, medical research facilities, with experimental medical practices, and public health aid, that is the most important in the Middle East. Hadassah gives medical service to all regardless of religion or creed. A Kuwaiti princess was brought recently to a Hadassah hospital, despite the animosity of Arabs toward Israel. With the Arabs' refusal to cross the borders directly into Israel, she was brought to the hospital by way of Cyprus.

The Poughkeepsie chapter of Hadassah was founded in 1927 by Mrs. Morris S. Rosen (Frances Rosen). As mentioned elsewhere, a trip to Palestine where she witnessed the early work of Hadassah with the Jewish settlers there, inspired her leadership in founding Poughkeepsie Hadassah.

The first five presidents of the local chapter of Hadassah were: Frances Rosen, Stella Carl, Jeanette Slote, Berta Friedman and Edna Silber. The current president is Rita Kaplan (Mrs. Stephen E. Kaplan).

Junior Hadassah

In the 1930's there was an active Junior Hadassah organization of high school seniors and college age young women. There was a limited amount of fund raising for Jewish facilities in Palestine. Food sales, raffles, card parties, and an occasional public dance with a "live" orchestra, attended by adults of the community, of all ages, were popular fund raisers for both "Senior" Hadassah and the Junior group. Many other organizations used the same means to raise money for their causes. Performances by members in plays and variety shows with paid admissions drew sizable audiences. This writer recalls a fund raising play for Junior Hadassah, with a young character named Andy Hardy, which was later played in a radio series by Mickey Rooney; her first husband, Joseph Acker, played one of the leading roles. Isabel Crystal Sacher was the director.

With many of the members leaving the city for college or careers, the group had disbanded by the 1940's. Many of those who remained joined the senior organization. A few of the members of Junior Hadassah were: Henrietta Taub, Selma Schlachter, Henrietta Diamond, Frances Carl, Esther Kinzler, Sadie and Estelle Effron.

Young Judaea

Young Judaea was founded in the latter half of the 1938's under the sponsorship of Hadassah. Selma Schlachter, who had been active with Young Judaea while a college student in Albany, was the advisor to the group, and was the leader of the Kadimah chapter. Among the members, mostly in their early teens, were: Roslyn Bernath, Oscar Feldman, Herman Haven, Ida Kronberg, Solomon Nussbaum, Justin Scheer, Leonard Simon, Herman Stall and Elaine Weiss. Representatives were sent to the State Young Judaea in December 1938. By November 1939, Young Judaea of Poughkeepsie was reorganized into a high school group.

Youth Aliyah

Youth Aliyah, founded by National Hadassah to save Jewish children from Hitler's Germany by transporting them to Palestine, is a fund raising organization for youth services in Israel. Each autumn there is a program for raising funds in the local Jewish Community. Temple Beth-El has an annual appeal during Yom Kippur services, with a speaker from Hadassah; Vassar Temple raises Youth Aliyah funds by the efforts of a committee.

Mizrachi

The Poughkeepsie Chapter of Mizrachi, the Zionist group appealing to Orthodox women, was founded in the late 1940's. One of its prime interests was raising funds for needy children in Israel. Founded by Mrs. Samuel Stein (Frieda) and Mrs. Israel Sherman (Minnie), it was active for a number of years. Among the leading members were: Mrs. Joseph W. Rosenblum (Bessie), Mrs. Morris Gaynor (Fannie), Mrs. Samuel Weisman (Rose), Mrs. Benjamin

Pollok (Rose). Mrs. Joseph Seiden (Goldie) and the sisters and sisters-in-law Mrs. Abraham Shulman and Mrs. Samuel Shulman (Ida and Lillian). It was a closely knit group which enjoyed socializing while raising money for a worthy cause.

Although the Mizrachi group as such is no longer in existence, the Mizrachi Youth Aliyah annual appeal at Congregation Schomre Israel is maintained by Bessie Rosenblum and a group of younger members of the synagogue. The amount raised annually by the devoted effort of this committee is sizable considering the small number approached in the appeal.

The Jewish National Fund

Two important organizations supporting Israel are the Jewish National Fund and the State of Israel Bonds group. Founded in the first decade of this century, the Jewish National Fund, throughout the world, has raised impressive sums for a program of land purchase in Palestine, now Israel. Included in the aims of the organization was the redeeming and reclaiming of land which had turned into deserts because of neglect through many centuries, planting of forests to prevent erosion, and the creation of food systems for wild life. To date the Jewish National Fund has provided land for over 700 rural settlements and has planted more than 150 million trees.

Mrs. Berta Friedman, whose activities in raising funds has given her the nickname of Mrs. J.N.F., has been active with the cause in Dutchess County for more than thirty-five years.

State of Israel Bonds

Mrs. Berta Friedman has also been active in the annual campaigns for the sale of State of Israel Bonds since their inception in 1951. Annually the campaign is inaugurated with a dinner, at which an individual (or a couple), particularly active in the affairs of the Jewish Community, is honored with a testimonial tribute. Mrs. Friedman was so honored in 1980; among others honored in recent years were Rabbi Erwin Zimet, Terry and Harold Fleisher, Dr. Seymour Levin, Harry Raker, and Samuel Silver. Eric Straus was honored in 1982.

During a campaign dinner in the 1960's a phone call indicated

that a bomb had been planted in the Center auditorium where the affair was being held. The building was cleared and the alarm proved false; the dinner was resumed. The prominent Senator Wayne Morse, a known liberal, who was the guest speaker, turned to Chairman Arthur Levinsohn and humorously commented, "It happens all the time, whenever I speak."

The sale of Israel Bonds is an important adjunct to the commercial development of the State of Israel.

He-Halutz Farm

In the 1940's the He-Halutz, an international organization stressing Jewish immigration to Palestine, bought a farm on All Angels Hill Road not far from Poughkeepsie. It was developed as a training center for young people intending to become farmers in that country. It was called in Hebrew a "hakhsharah" farm, and there were several other such farms in this country. Local Jewish residents purchased farm products from the young trainees; the delivery of eggs to customers was a part of their work. The reasons for the lack of success of the farm are not clear, but financial problems probably occurred.

Dr. Maurice Sitomer recalled recently his purchase of two very young calves born on the farm. He had befriended various groups of the young people and did their dental work. He remembers the pleasure of having taken a large party of them on an outing to Bear Mountain Park in a school bus he owned. He later visited some of the young farmers on a kibbutz in Israel.

Lodges

Early Lodges

In the years following the Civil War, particularly in the 1870's and 1880's, there was an upsurge of interest in organizations generally called lodges. In the City Directories of the period they were listed in a group as Secret and Benevolent Societies. The leading Jewish lodge in the 1870's was Aaron Lodge, no. 112 I.O.B.B. (Independent Order of B'nai B'rith) of which further details will be given later in this work. During the same decade there were two Knights of Pythias lodges, which were not of Jewish origin and were non-sectarian in their programs; the membership of these two lodges included a number of Jews.

Two lodges of the Jewish Community in the 1870's, Bond of Friendship and Ark Lodge, no. 74, A.J.O.K.S.B. were in existence a short time. Bond of Friendship was out of existence by 1881, and no trace of Ark Lodge remains. One can only guess that part of the letters following the number of the Lodge perhaps stood for Jewish Order of King Solomon. It is interesting to note that the officers of Ark Lodge were given Hebrew designations, such as Sofer, Sgan, Cohen and Schomer.

In 1873 the officers of Ark Lodge included: M. Hart, W. Goldstone, G. Goldstone, H.B. Gellert, B. Joseph, W. Heyman, M. Levy, I. Levy and M. Brey. Two years later the officers were B. Joseph, H. Wise, H. B. Gellert, B. Klayf, E. Schreier, S. Jonas, H. Heyman, I. Heyman, A. Asher, W. Brey and J. Jacob.

In 1877, Aaron, Ark and Bond of Friendship lodges all held their sessions in the popular meeting hall of the Library Building at 235 Main Street. By 1881 Ark and Aaron were meeting in the synagogue on Vassar Street.

In the City Directory of 1868 Adolph Asher was listed as the owner of a store dealing in "hats, caps and gents' furnishings" at 273 Main Street. In the 1870's Mr. Asher was known to have been an officer of Aaron, Ark, Bond of Friendship, and Knights of Phythias lodges, although probably not all at the same time.

In an 1876 newspaper account of Poughkeepsie's celebration of the Centennial of American Independence, there was included a statement "members of Knights of Pythias marched, led by German Jew Adolph Ascher (spelled thus) past chancellor". He was a member of Poughkeepsie Lodge no. 43, Knights of Pythias.

It is not possible to determine how secret any of these lodges were, and whether the benevolent angle included an amount of life

insurance or funds for burial. The aspect of sociability was probably important in that era. Asher may have been what has been known as a "joiner", possibly as a way of meeting customers for his business.

Obed Lodge, Free & Accepted Masons

In 1921 a group of Poughkeepsians was instrumental in creating a Jewish lodge of the Masonic Order. The two existing local lodges of Masons would not accept Jews. Obed Lodge 984, Free and Accepted Masons was organized with Herman Grossman as Master and David Stein (of the well known Stein family in business on lower Main Street) as Senior Warden. A few members had belonged to the Order in New York City; some had become Masons in Millerton or another village in Dutchess County. Other charter members were: Philip Kaplan, Harold Jacobs, Louis Schwartz, Charles Albert, Samuel Mendel, Joseph Samuels, Harry C. Harris, and Isaac Walder. Henry Morgenthau, junior, who had a farm in the eastern part of Dutchess County, joined Obed shortly after its founding and was its most famous member. Henry Morgenthau, senior had been Ambassador to Turkey during the Wilson administration, and Henry, junior, was Secretary of the Treasury during the four terms of Franklin D. Roosevelt's Presidency.

The greatest growth of the organization was during the first decade of its existence. The first class going through the degrees for membership included: Ely L. Gellert, Harry Schwartz, Samuel Israel, and Albert D. Kahn. Since Obed was the only Jewish Masonic Lodge in the mid-Hudson area, it attracted members from as far away as Kingston and Hudson. Masters in its earliest years included besides Herman Grossman: David Stein, Charles Albert, Arthur Spencer, George Salberg, Harry C. Harris and Ely Gellert.

The Silver Anniversary of the Lodge's receiving its charter was celebrated at a gala affair in June 1947. Dr. Jacob Erdreich was the Master at that time. The Fiftieth Anniversary, celebrated in 1972, was during the Mastership of Louis Feldman. At that affair, George Ress of another local Masonic Lodge commented "There are more doctors, lawyers, and dentists in Obed Lodge than in the rest of the twelve Lodges in the Masonic District".

Obed Lodge has through the years made substantial financial contributions to various Jewish philanthropic organizations. In ad-

dition to its granting of funds for young people's activities in the city, contributions have provided entertainment and gifts for patients at Castle Point Veterans' Hospital, and Passover dinners for inmates at Hudson River State Hospital.

Samuel Effron served as Treasurer of Obed Lodge for over twenty years, resigning from the position when he reached the age of eighty. Raymond Reben, a Past Master, recalled recently that he was one of the most knowledgeable members in the rites of Masonry.

At the time of this writing Marvin Bennett is the Master and Michael Levy is Senior Warden of Obed Lodge. Joseph Gellert has attained the important position of District Deputy Grand Master, and Frank Sherman was recently honored with the appointment as Grand Representative of the Cryptic Council of Israel, a Masonic body in that country. He represents the Israeli group at the Grand Council of New York State.

For almost thirty years there was a Jewish chapter of the women's affiliate of the Masons, the Order of the Eastern Star, named Obed Chapter; it aided various charitable causes. Among the leading members of Obed Chapter were: Rose Postoff, Florence Reben, Gertrude Brickman, Rose Polokoff, Jean Wolpe and Ida Shulman. The organization disbanded because of the ever growing number of Jewish women's organizations working to support various charities; these groups had greater appeal to younger women.

Knights of Pythias

The Knights of Pythias is a national organization almost one hundred twenty five years old. According to a published statement of the founding of the local Dutchess Lodge in 1981, it is "a non-sectarian fraternity of dedicated men and women who have found the secret of true friendship, charity and benevolence". A further description reads "An action oriented organization of devoted men and women who daily involve themselves and their families in both community and benevolent affairs; a dedicated group of people who zealously activate friendship, charity and benevolence into reality". It is included in this work because of the appeal it seems to have to a fairly large number of Jews.

In the 1870's, Poughkeepsie Lodge No. 43 Knights of Pythias had

a roster of officers almost entirely of members of the Jewish Community: Adolph Asher, H. Ephraim, Michael Hart, M. Ephraim, B. Klayfe, John Stone, Simon Jacobs, Isaac Jacobs, Adolph Wimpelberg and Louis Rogaliner. In 1900 there were five Knights of Pythias lodges in the Poughkeepsie area; there is no record of their membership.

Jay Wattenberg was the Chancellor-Commander (equivalent to president) of Dutchess Lodge at the time of its founding. Norman Stillman holds that office in 1982. According to Mr. Stillman, the membership of the local lodge in 1982 is 90% Jewish. Meetings are held in a suburb of Poughkeepsie where many Jewish families reside. A nearby meeting place may appeal to some Jewish members. In addition, the fact that a paid announcement of the founding of Dutchess Lodge was printed in the Jewish Center's Centergram would seem to indicate an appeal to certain Jews in past years.

The national organization is a firm supporter of the Arthritis Foundation, and a part of the benevolence of the local lodge is financial aid to a children's camp for families of limited income.

Other Significant Organizations

The Harding Club

The active Jewish men's club was started in November, 1923. A recent interview with Arthur Levinsohn, a long time member, revealed the details of its origin. At that time there were fraternities and sororities dominating social life at Poughkeepsie High School; they would not accept as members ethnic minorities including Jews. (Some years later these organizations were forced to break their ties with the high school.)

With the assistance of Rabbi Charles Mantinband then spiritual leader of Vassar Temple, three high school students who were members of his Temple, Paul Samuels, Sydney Fleishman and George Schoenbrun, brought together a group of boys who were interested in belonging to a club. There were thirteen founders, aged fourteen to seventeen, when the organization became active in December, 1923. They included Harold Eisner, Charles Kovacs, Leon Nathan, Paul Samuels, Allan Weisman, Sydney Fleishman, Edward Kovacs, Irving Perlmutter, George Schoenbrun, Joseph Gellert, William Mintzer, Morris Rosenman and Martin Siegel. Rabbi Mantinband actively supervised the meetings and parties of the club at first, and meetings were held in the vestry room of the Temple. Paul Samuels was elected the first president and Sydney Fleishman, secretary.

A short time before, President Warren G. Harding had died of a heart attack in a San Francisco hotel, exhausted from a political "fence mending trip", and the club was named Warren G. Harding in his memory. As the members left high school the organization became an adult men's club. Following President Harding's death, scandals connected with members of his Administration were exposed and details of his personal life were shadowed by possible defamation. From time to time there was a movement by members to change the name of the club, but no new name could be agreed on; the name was changed simply to Harding Club, and the organization has flourished through the years.

A meaningful activity in its early years was its sponsorship on November 1, 1934 of the first concert of the Dutchess County Philharmonic Orchestra, with George Hagstrom conductor-soloist. The program presented several numbers by a violin quartet which included Sydney Fleishman, who has been prominent as a violinist in Poughkeepsie musical groups for many years.

The tenets of the club have remained strongly Jewish; as a con-

dition for membership a candidate must be a synagogue member, or make a contribution to the United Jewish Appeal, or donate blood to a charitable cause. The Harding Club donates $5000 a year to the Jewish Community Center, and has contributed to the Mid-Hudson Civic Center, the Red Cross and a number of other local and national causes. During World War II and later military conflicts, eighty percent of the members served in the armed forces. A sizable number of the members are prominent in business and professions.

The Harding Club through the years has thrived on a program of meetings which, in addition to serious discussion, often includes a spirit of fun and banter. It has frequent dinner meetings and an occasional dinner dance, but community service has been the basis for most of its program and activity. At the time of this writing Albert Gelb is president.

B'nai B'rith

B'nai B'rith (Hebrew for Sons of the Covenant), founded in New York City in 1843, is the world's oldest and largest Jewish service organization. Its first overseas lodge was instituted in Berlin in 1882, and there are now in existence many lodges and chapters in Latin America, Europe, Australia, Africa and Israel. Its objectives are moral, social, philanthropic and educational. Its greatest growth has been in the United States, where its program includes strong efforts in combating anti-Semitism and other forms of bigotry. B'nai B'rith Women was founded in 1897.

In two early issues of the previously mentioned monthly periodical "The Occident and American Jewish Advocate", published in Philadelphia, the two following items appeared early in 1868: "A petition from some of the inhabitants of Poughkeepsie, New York for the establishment of a Benai Berith Lodge has been presented to District Grand Lodge no. 1"; later the same year an announcement "Benai Berith Dept.: Poughkeepsie, New York Aaron Lodge no. 112 was installed here on Sunday, June 28, 1868."

Early officers of Aaron Lodge no. 112 I.O.B.B. (Independent Order of B'nai B'rith) were: L. Rogaliner, I. Heyman, M. Lindner, D. Michel, H. Gilbert, A. Stern, S. Jacobs, M. Ephraim. In 1875 the following were officers of Aaron Lodge: A. Asher, M. Schwartz, Isaac Heyman, David Michel, J. Livingston, B. Joseph, S.

Rosenberg, S. Green, I. Jacobs, A. Wimpelberg, J. Stone and R. Spring.

Little is known of the B'nai B'rith in Poughkeepsie later in the 19th Century. By 1898 it was no longer in the list of organizations in the City Directory.

The present B'nai B'rith Lodge no. 1833 was founded in the late 1940's; Herman Cipnic, a pharmacist who lived in the city from 1946 through 1950, was the first president. The group meets Sunday mornings once a month (except during the summer) generally at the Jewish Center. Other early presidents were: Herman Levine, Dr. Maurice Sitomer and Dr. Joseph Tinkelman.

B'nai B'rith, founded as a fraternal organization, became a service group in the present century. Membership is open to Jewish men of good moral character, of the age of twenty one or older. Unlike many early lodges B'nai B'rith has not had payments from the treasury to families of deceased members. A custom, long since abandoned, was the listing of recently deceased members in the national publication, with a request that each member send a dollar to his widow or next of kin.

"Project Brotherhood" is one of B'nai B'rith's very meaningful programs. Members do volunteer duty in local hospitals, relieving staff members on such holidays as Christmas and Easter. A visitation program to patients in nursing homes and to inmates at Green Haven Correctional Facility is an important aspect of members' community services. The Anti-Defamation League with work for Human Rights and emphasis on combating anti-Semitism is high in its list of projects.

Hillel, an organization for college students, has been an important B'nai B'rith program; there is a chapter at State University at New Paltz. Until recently there was a Hillel organization at Vassar College, with local rabbis as advisers, but a reorganization at the request of a number of students created the independent Jewish Students Club. The local B'nai B'rith supplies funds for challah and wine for Friday night services.

Professor I. Jack Lippman of Dutchess Community College is the president of the Lodge for 1982. Among recent presidents were: Eli Gorin, Jack M. Green (the twenty fifth head of the group), Leonard Turkenkopf and Alfred Dresner.

B'nai B'rith Women

B'nai B'rith Women of Poughkeepsie, chapter 1039, has a membership of over two hundred. Many of its programs, such as Project Brotherhood parallel those of the Lodge. In addition members visit patients at Castle Point Veterans' Hospital regularly. "Puppets for Brotherhood" and "Dolls for Democracy" are dramatic presentations given at elementary schools to instill understanding for minority groups.

Among early presidents of B'nai B'rith Women were Sally Klein, Carolyn Heilweil and Libby Lederstein. Roberta Grosman is the 1982 president and Gail Arnold and Trudy Feit were among recent heads of the organization.

Hebrew Fraternal Benevolent Society

The Poughkeepsie Jewish Center holds for the group the incorporation certificate received by the organization in December 1926, with the official name "Hebrew Fraternal Benevolent Society of Poughkeepsie New York". Surrounded by photographs of each of the charter members with their names indicated, the whole is encased in a large frame. A small percentage of the group have descendents still living in Poughkeepsie.

The charter members were Samuel Stein, the father of Pauline Golensky, Samuel Abramsky, Harris Canter, Louis Kovacs, David Grossman, Jacob Canter, Abraham Schwartz, Barnett Lutsky, Louis Gellert, Jacob Abramsky, Abraham Stein, Morris Abramsky, Solomon Epstein, Israel Gelber, Nathan Heiman, Samuel Mohler, and Abraham Alkon. The first president of the organization was Harris Canter. Later leaders were Julius Nadel and Abraham Whitman.

Originally the membership included men only, chiefly heads of families, but in recent years women are included as full members. Hebrew Fraternal Benevolent Society has a cemetery with burial privileges for members and their spouses. Its Charity Committee assists members of the Jewish Community in financial need. The social affairs of the group generally emphasize Jewish interests.

At the time of this writing, Louis Feldman is the president and Norman Greene secretary of the organization.

Private Herman Siegel Post, No. 625

Jewish War Veterans of the United States

The local Post of the national organization was founded in 1948, and was named in memory of Herman Siegel, the first Poughkeepsie Jewish soldier to lose his life in World War II. Interrupting his studies at Clarkson University to enter the Army, he died in the bitter fighting on Anzio Beach in Italy on May 18, 1944.

With the founding of the Post, Louis Katz was elected its first Commander. Other officers included: Daniel Rosenfeld, Joseph A. Perlmutter, Samuel Ptalis, Sidney Diamond, Jesse Jacobs, Louis Jaeger, Morton Oppenheimer and Harvey Pfannenstihl. The Post and its Women's Auxiliary have breakfast meetings jointly on the third Sunday of the month, followed by separate business meetings for each group. Both organizations have programs of community welfare service, especially for war veterans; visits, with gifts, to the patients at the nearby Castle Point Veterans' Hospital are a meaningful part of their program.

At the time of this writing Milton Saka, the owner of a well-known Market Street newspaper store and a member of the small Sephardic group in the Poughkeepsie area, is the Commander of the Private Herman Siegel Post. Harry Siegel, the father of Private Herman Siegel, is the Patron and attends meetings. Molly Kaplan is the head of the Women's Auxiliary.

O R T

The organization O.R.T. (frequently written ORT without punctuation) was founded in Russia in 1880. O.R.T. stood for Russian words which meant "Society for manual (and agricultural) work among Jews". Part of the original philosophy of the group included the desire to interest the average Jew in learning manipulative skills. Some of the founders believed that anti-Semitism could be lessened if Jews turned from business to mechanical trades and agriculture. Vocational training schools were opened first in Russia and there followed a slow growth in many sections of the world.

The greatest era of development in the organization followed World War II; in that period, the title Organization for Rehabilitation and Training was matched to the original letters. The work of ORT is especially important in Israel. In many large cities there are

separate men's and women's groups. As with many fund-raising organizations, the women greatly outnumber the men.

Poughkeepsie ORT, a women's group, was founded in 1940. Ann Kogos, the wife of the executive director of the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community Center, Leo Kogos, invited a group of women to her home to meet her friend Mrs. Lilian Rostow of New Haven. Lilian Rostow, the mother of two famous economists, Eugene Victor Rostow and Walt W. Rostow, was employed by the national office of ORT. She presented the work of the organization in such a vital manner that the group became involved in the founding of a local chapter. Among those present at the initial affair were: Helen Ostrow, Edith Leiser, Ilse Holzer, Estelle Dobo, Bessie Rosen, Jeanette Levin, Ethel Wolfson, Phyllis Haven and this writer. Helen Ostrow was elected the first president.

The growth of the local fund-raising organization lagged in the beginning, but with the outbreak of World War II, the importance of the work of ORT became increasingly evident. It opened many schools and instituted a wide variety of courses to aid men and women of all ages in becoming productive workers, whether in their native countries, or, with emigration, wherever they settled. Among the early presidents of Poughkeepsie ORT were: Jeanne Rubin, Dorothy Haber, Selma Kahn Streifer, and Cynthia Epstein.

In recent years the growth of ORT in Dutchess County has been consistently steady. At this writing there are now three chapters: the original one whose members live for the most part in the city or town of Poughkeepsie, one in the Fishkill area, and another in the northern section of the county. The organization has a special appeal to young married women. Arline Scheinzeit is the 1982 president of the Poughkeepsie chapter.

Brandeis University National Women's Committee

Mid-Hudson Chapter

Brandeis University is the first nonsectarian Jewish-sponsored liberal arts institution of higher learning in America. A group of Jewish communal leaders in New York City was inspired to establish the university, naming it in honor of Justice Louis Dembitz Brandeis of the United States Supreme Court. The campus of Middlesex University, a defunct medical school in Waltham, a

suburb of Boston, Massachusetts, was purchased. In the fall of 1948. Brandeis University was opened with a beginning class of one hundred seven.

With funds raised from philanthropic Jews and non-Jews and other sources, outstanding scholars were engaged as faculty members, impressive buildings were erected and the institution was on its way to becoming an important university within its first decade.

An inspired committee of women across the country, realizing the need for an outstanding library for the university formed Brandeis University National Women's Committee to raise funds for library development. Chapters were organized in many cities.

The Mid-Hudson Chapter of Brandeis University Women's Committee, based in Poughkeepsie, was established in 1966. A college friend visiting the late Norma Tinkelman Neustadt convinced her that Poughkeepsie should have a Brandeis group. Friends were invited to a tea and the organization was founded.

There was some opposition from leaders of other Jewish women's groups in the area because of the great number of fund-raising organizations already in existence. The Mid-Hudson Chapter's balance between cultural programs and fund-raising for the Brandeis University Library has had a decided appeal. Study groups in a variety of subjects form the main plan of procedure of the group. Meaningful one-to-three day trips to areas of cultural and historical significance are also part of the program. An annual "Used Book Sale", held in the fall in a large tent at a shopping plaza, is the chief fund-raising event, with lesser sums gained from various activities.

Shortly after the organization's founding, a new arrival, Sheila Bamberger, the wife of Rabbi Henry Bamberger of Vassar Temple, gave expert aid in developing study groups. She had been a member of a chapter in New Jersey. The earliest study groups were: Art, music, literature, current issues and gourmet cooking. Other fields of interest have been added recently. Following the policy of the University, the Chapter is nonsectarian in membership.

Sylvia Levinsohn was the first president of the Mid-Hudson Chapter. With the propitious start under her dynamic leadership, the membership insisted that she serve three terms. Members are of a wide range in age, from young mothers to retired teachers and businesswomen. Meetings generally are held mornings in

members' homes, a departure from the long-time custom of evening meetings for most groups. At the time of this writing there are over two hundred seventy five members.

Recent presidents of the Chapter have been: Betty Rynowecer, Marsha Lowry, Elaine Spitz and Claire Moselle. Lenore Wurtzel was elected for a two-year term as president beginning in the summer of 1982.

Prominent Families of the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

The Wimpelberg (Sometimes Spelled Wimpleberg) Family

As mentioned previously, in the Poughkeepsie City Directory of 1860-64, there is an entry Weinfleburg _____ (no given name) a peddler. There is reason to believe that name was a misspelling of Wimpelberg. Aaron Wimpelberg was the first resident of that family. In the 1864-65 directory, he was listed as a wholesale liquor dealer, then in the directory of 1870-71, his designation was "gents' furnishings". After 1882, the name was spelled Wimpleberg.

Some of the Wimplebergs were involved in amateur dramatics. The Sunday Courier of April 29, 1880 reported a three-act play "Dearer than Life" to be given at the Byron Theatre in the Parish Building, 311 Main Street (in 1982 the site of the House of Cards II store). Listed are Mr. S. (Samuel?) Wimpelberg, business manager and Miss H. Wimpelberg (possibly his sister) in the cast of characters.

During the latter half of the Nineteenth Century, there was from time to time, a number of small hotels in the central business district of Poughkeepsie, with a saloon or "porter house" on the street floor, and a limited number of bedrooms on two or three upper floors, reached by the high staircases of the period. For a number of years there was a hotel owned by the Wimpelberg family on Mill Street, whether in addition to the one on Main Street is not known.

In 1883, A. Wimpelberg's business was listed as National Hotel and Billiard Saloon, 315-317 Main Street. There were five sons in the family: Louis, Joseph and Charles, who followed their father in the hotel business, which was still in existence in 1905. Benjamin for a few years maintained a business called Grecian Medicine Company at the hotel address, but later became an optometrist with an office in the city. Samuel's medical career will be recounted in a chapter on Jews in professions.

M. Shwartz & Co.

As mentioned previously, the men's clothing store of M. Shwartz & Co. was founded in the Civil War years by Mark Shwartz, and it soon became a thriving business. According to R.G. Dun & Company records, Mark Shwartz in 1880 had sixty employees in the

clothing manufacturing business. In 1881 his store offered "a large, well assorted stock of ready-made goods besides piece goods". In the late 1880's he had three branch stores in Newburgh, Rondout (a part of Kingston) and Albany. When these branches were discontinued is not known.

In 1904 there appeared in a local newspaper a large display advertisement announcing the opening of a men's and boy's store by Reuben Goldberg. The advertisement, illustrated with a picture of Mr. Goldberg, stated "formerly a partner in M. Shwartz _____ twelve years in Rochester". The site of the business was 299-301 Main Street, next door to M. Shwartz. Mr. Goldberg was believed to be a relative of the Shwartz family, and one wonders if the new business was a spite action. By 1908 Goldberg was no longer in business, possibly a victim of the "Panic of 1907".

The Melhado Family

The Melhado family was first listed in the Poughkeepsie City Directory in the 1866-67 issue. By 1890 the following Melhados were named: Isaac, John L., Judith and Levi. In 1902 the following were listed: Isaac, John L., Levi, Lewis and Max. Several of the family maintained stores on lower Main Street, east of Clover Street. The photograph files of the Dutchess County Historical Society include a 1912 picture of the Melhado store at 111 Main Street. A large sign reading Levy Melhado (perhaps a sign painter's error) Poughkeepsie Bridge Clothing House is seen, above a sizable double store displaying in front, numerous hat boxes on which are displayed a variety of men's head gear.

The Poughkeepsie Daily Eagle of August 14, 1911 reported that with Levi Melhado very ill and alleged to be mentally incompetent, his daughter Sarah requested that a local court have him committed to a mental institution. The value of his property was stated as $19,000. The June 18, 1912 Daily Eagle reported the filing of the will of Levi Melhado; Sarah and Isaac each received $25,000; other children, living in New York City, were not mentioned.

Claire Lucas Lynn, whose mother Edith Harris Lucas, was a member of the Harris family of early Jewish settlers, has recalled hearing in her childhood that Sarah Melhado had inherited $90,000 in Central Hudson Gas and Electric Company stock from her father. A friend, a Mr. Dorland, convinced her to invest it in a house to be

used as a nursing home. The house, at the north-west corner of College and Worrall Avenues, is of fieldstone construction, fairly distinguished in appearance. It is not known if it was ever used as a nursing home, but Miss Melhado was reputed to have lost most of her inheritance through it.

Cousins of Miss Melhado were Theodore and Harry Melhado, both of whom lived through the middle years of this century. Theodore, a president of Temple Beth-El shortly after its founding in 1927, was married to an aunt of Ruby Taub Goldberg, whose husband Alexander Goldberg was a prominent attorney. Harry Melhado maintained a novelty store on upper Main Street for many years. His son Leonard, who was in the same business died fairly young. There are no descendents of Theodore; two Melhados, one of them Leonard (jr.?), are listed in the 1982 telephone directory; they are not part of the Jewish Community. A descendant of another branch of the Melhado family, a prominent professional man (not named Melhado), was reputed to be rather anti-Semitic.

The Eltings

The Elting family, Louis and two sons, one of them Ely, arrived in Poughkeepsie early in the 1890's and opened a men's clothing store on Main Street. They owned another clothing business in Newburgh; it is not known if the family originally lived in that city. Maintained under the name of Ely Elting, the business was prominent at the south-west corner of Main and Liberty Streets for many years. Early in this century, Ely Elting was the first Jew appointed to the Poughkeepsie Board of Education. The Eltings had three sons none of whom remained in this area after graduation from college.

The Henry Gellert Family

In 1876, in a sizable advertisement in a local newspaper, Henry B. Gillert (possibly misprinted?) announced the opening of his Grand Central Clothing House at 126 Main Street. By February, 1877, he had moved to 239 Main Street; his name appeared then as Gellert. Needless to say the new address was in a better business area and he was at that address for many years.

The Directory of 1890 listed Henry B. Gellert as a merchant

tailor, with Abram, possibly a son, a bookkeeper at the same address. One son of Henry Gellert, William L. became a lawyer and another son Edward was an insurance broker, both early in the Twentieth Century. In the early decades of the 1900's, a sister Sophie Gellert taught in Governor George Clinton School and is well remembered by this writer as her Third Grade teacher. Sad to relate, Miss Gellert was not remembered for her teaching ability, but for her heavy make-up including rouge and eye shadow, and her hennaed hair, beauty aids not generally found on respectable women at that time. Many years later, this writer's first husband, the late Joseph Acker, revealed that as a pupil at Clinton School, he was sent by Sophie Gellert to purchase her make-up; obviously she did not wish to be seen making such purchases.

Another sister, Jeannette, also unmarried, kept house for the family on South Clinton Street. Edward married a non-Jew and William L. remained a bachelor. There are no descendants of that family. Louis Gellert, who arrived in Poughkeepsie before 1910 and was well known as a tailor of great skill, was not related to the Henry Gellert family. Three of his sons became well known lawyers, Joseph and Ely in Poughkeepsie, and Percy in Yonkers.

The Hoffman Family

The Sunday Courier of October 14, 1877 carried a large advertisement announcing Kaufman Hoffman's new clothing business at 289 Main Street. (The same issue printed an announcement by Mrs. S. Wolf that she was moving her millinery and fancy goods store back to her old place of business at 219 Main Street.) Later Hoffman's son Abram had a shoe store on lower Main Street for many years. Abram was the father of Dr. Charles Hoffman who was a prominent dentist with an office on Main Street a little below the Wallace Co. store, from the late 1920's until his death in the early 1970's. He was married to Mary Lass, a member of the large Lutsky family; their only son, Charles Jr. is an obstetrician practicing in Williamstown, Mass. Charles Sr. was a skillful violinist and his son a capable cellist.

The Harris Families

In the 1840's Isaac Jacobs and Joseph Harris were residents of

the village of Poughkeepsie, but there is no evidence that the two Harris families, prominent from the latter part of the Nineteenth century into the Twentieth, were related to them. Abraham Harris and his brother Robert came from Germany about the time of the Civil War. Abraham established a wine, liquor and grocery business at 3 Liberty Street, near Main. At a later date there was a Harris Hotel (briefly called Arbor Hotel) at that address. Abraham's son Harry C. Harris, as a boy in 1890 attended the Poughkeepsie Military Institute (also known as Warring's Boarding School, at the site of which Warring Elementary School was later built). He and a Sugarman boy whose family was in a candy business were the only known Jewish boys who attended that school. Later he "read" law in the law office of Allison Butts. That was the usual way of becoming a lawyer in those years. By 1898 he was listed as a lawyer in the City Directory and practiced for many years.

Abraham Harris was also the father of Mrs. Alexander Jacobs, who with her husband maintained a quality women's wear store at the corner of Liberty and Main Streets. Their son Harold Jacobs was a lawyer in Poughkeepsie for many years. Robert Harris was the father of Edith Harris Lucas, whose specialty was also women's wear. Her daughter, Claire Lucas Lynn, is the only descendant of that family living in Poughkeepsie at the time of this writing.

Henry Harris, no relation to the other Harrises, settled at 89 Main Street late in the Nineteenth century, and by coincidence he also ran a liquor store and a small hotel called Harris House. He had a daughter Esther and several sons who were in business with him. Esther Harris married Henry Daniels who came to this city as an engineer with the Central Hudson Gas & Electric Company, probably the first Jewish engineer to be employed in the city. He served several terms as a member of the City Board of Education, then an appointive designation.

Charles Kassell Harris, a prominent composer of popular songs, including "After the Ball", was born in Poughkeepsie in 1867, and died in New York in 1930. A charter member of ASCAP, he was known to be Jewish. Research failed to reveal whether he was of one of the families mentioned here.

Well Known Families of the Twentieth Century (In Alphabetical Order, Except for Some Related Families)

This group, mostly of long-time residents, is presented not due to special accomplishments in business or professions, but because of active participation by family members in Temple and Synagogue, and in most cases, true devotion and meaningful contribution to many charitable and community organizations. The first arrivals of some families were in the late 1800's.

The Abramsky Family

Jacob Abramsky arrived in Poughkeepsie from Russia at the turn of the century. As with so many newcomers to this country, his first means of livelihood was peddling. Later he was in the real estate business both as an agent and as an investor. He also spent some years in the grocery business in a store at the corner of Winnikee Avenue and North Cherry Streets, remembered for its wooden marquee, one of the last to remain in the city. Quite common during the Civil War period, the last marquee was at the animal feed store of John J. McCann on Main Street above Clinton, who at his death in the 1960's was revealed to have a fortune of many millions which was left to the McCann Foundation, the funds of which were to be used to benefit local projects.

Jacob Abramsky, who was known affectionately as Yankel Dovid by many of the early Twentieth Century Jewish immigrants, had four children. Only his daughter Ray, married to Samuel Levine a dynamic life insurance agent, remained in Poughkeepsie until an advanced age. Jacob's brothers Barnett and Samuel, arrived a few years after him and were in business in the city. Barnett died in his forties, and his wife Bessie continued for many years his real estate investment interests. Of their four offspring only Evelyn, the widow of Dr. Morris Katz, before World War II, a dentist in Poughkeepsie, is still living at the time of this writing; she makes her home in a suburb of Philadelphia. Elias Bramley, a son of the Barnett Abramskys, until his early death, was active in many Jewish Community projects, with special attention to the local support of the Jewish home for senior citizens in the Capital District. His widow Sylvia, the daughter of the Alexander Stalls and a sister of Dr. Seymour Stall still makes her home in Poughkeepsie.

Samuel Abramsky's daughter Ruth, an outstanding school librarian and the wife of the late Henry Daniels, is one of the few of the large Abramsky family still living in Poughkeepsie. First cousins of the family were the offspring of the Jacob Cantors; of them, Milton is a well-known lawyer and businessman in Washington, D.C. Della Cantor, early a city teacher, and Edith, also a lawyer, were his sisters.

The Leonard Bard Family

The Bard name is an acronym of Ben Rab David, an early ancestor. Under repressive governments in East Europe Jews were sometimes not permitted to use their Hebrew names and they adopted other forms.

Leonard Bard's parents came from the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the 1880's, settling in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, where they remained for the rest of their lives. This area was to become a favored first dwelling place of many immigrant Jewish families; this probably came about because of easy access from the Lower East Side by the Brooklyn Bridge.

Born and growing up in Brownsville where sections of the population were of very low income, Leonard early gained a deep feeling for the poor, and in later years espoused liberal causes for assistance to the underprivileged.

As a young man Bard played the clarinet and attended the Juilliard School of Music; for a career he turned from music to business. The Eastern Cleaning Service, an office cleaning operation, was established by Leonard Bard in Kingston in 1955. Realizing that the Dutchess County area was a more convenient site for the headquarters of his business, Bard moved it to Poughkeepsie in 1962. Eastern Cleaning Service, Inc. an international business, operates through the United States (including Puerto Rico) and Canada. In 1973 Leonard Bard was elected to the Common Council of Poughkeepsie.

Mrs. Elaine (Gordon) Bard, also a native of Brooklyn and a graduate of Brooklyn College, has been a Reading Specialist with the Poughkeepsie City School System. The Bards' three daughters, unlike the offspring of many of today's families who prefer to try life in distant sections of the country, have a deep devotion and love for the Hudson Valley. The eldest Cathie is married to Dr. Ronald Hanovice, a native of Houston, Texas; recently completing his long period of medical studies and residency, Dr. Hanovice will shortly be entering the practice of opthalmologic surgery in Kingston.

Amy and her husband Michael Yarmosky, after living in the Boston area, returned to Poughkeepsie and are teachers in the Poughkeepsie City School System. Michael is the author of a recently published young people's book "I'm gonna hit myself a home run today" (the story of a young girl's thoughts). Lisa, the youngest Bard, is about to enter advanced study in her field of

social work.

The recent rehabilitation of the old Jewish cemetery on Pershing Avenue was a community project to which Leonard Bard devoted himself wholeheartedly. Sadly vandalized through the years, the cemetery which from its early years served the small Jewish Community, from time to time had been under consideration for dismantling. Leonard and Elaine Bard undertook the entire project of saving the old burial ground with funds supplied by them. The site was cleared of tons of refuse, accumulated through years of its being used as a dumping ground. A high sturdy metal fence, with locked gate, was erected, and the broken tombstones were repaired and reset by an expert. At the re-dedication of the cemetery, December 13, 1981, sponsored by Vassar Temple this writer was privileged to give a brief account of early Poughkeepsie Jewish cemeteries.

Leonard Bard is serving as Chairman of the United Jewish Appeal/Jewish Welfare Fund Drive for the current year 1982.

The Bloom Family

In the first quarter of this century, two brothers Herman and Charles Bloom arrived in Poughkeepsie. Charles sold insurance and real estate, and Herman who had attained his training in Brooklyn, was a printer in business for himself under the name of Hamilton Printers. Herman Bloom was especially active in the early years of the Jewish Community Center, and served as its president in 1941-42 and 1946-47. He was prominent in the affairs of Congregation Schomre Hadath.

Herman Bloom's interest in the Jewish Center has also been manifested by his son Leon R. Bloom, who served as its president from 1956 through 1958. The position of president of the Women's Auxiliary of the Center was held by his wife Rhoda (Shelton) Bloom from 1959 to 1961.

Leon Bloom, who has developed his father's business into a large establishment under the name of Hamilton Reproductions, Inc., was honored in 1981 at a testimonial affair at the Center attended by more than two hundred people, for his decades of community service. Many community leaders were in attendance.

Similarly Herman Bloom in 1955 had been honored for his more than thirty years of service to the Jewish Community, by a dinner at

the Hotel Granit, Kerhonkson. Well over one hundred men and women of the community traveled to the foothills of the Catskills to do him honor.

Leon Bloom's efforts for the city of Poughkeepsie have been evinced in volunteer work with many organizations aimed at the development of the city and benefiting its residents, especially those of low income. Mr. Bloom was a chairman of the Poughkeepsie Urban Renewal Agency, bringing federal and state funds for community projects. He was chairman of the City Planning Board and served as president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Leon Bloom was credited with bringing more than seventy five million dollars in federal and state aid to the city over the past decade, giving Poughkeepsie the highest per capita aid in the nation. He was credited with being instrumental in the planning that brought four major renewal projects, leading to the redevelopment of downtown Poughkeepsie, with helping bring Model Cities and other social programs to the city, and with the creation of the county's first anti-poverty agency.

A sister of Leon Bloom, Barbara (Bloom) Eisen has been very active with the affairs of Congregation Schomre Israel.

The Effron Family

The first of the large Effron family to arrive in Poughkeepsie was David Effron. He had settled in the early 1890's in Kingston where there were "landsleit" (fellow townspeople) from his native province of Grodno in Russian Poland. On a trip to Poughkeepsie he felt that this city had more potential, and he and his wife Anna soon moved here.

Probably moved by the horror of the Kishinev pogrom of 1880 in Russia. Baron Moritz Hirsch, a German businessman and philanthropist, (later with a move to France called Baron de Hirsch) founded the Jewish Colonization Association "to assist and promote the emigration of Jews from any part of Europe or Asia". Argentina and South Africa, which were seeking settlers, were the principal areas considered in the movement. Shortly after David Effron's move to the United States, his parents and the other siblings, with help from the Jewish Colonization Association, emigrated from Russia to Argentina. They created farms near the upper reaches of the La Plate River. After a few years of the harsh life there, in the

early years of this century, several of the family decided to move from the rather wild area to the United States. Included were Samuel Effron (the father of this writer), his sister and brother-in-law Ida and Charles Effron, and a cousin Eiman Effron with his wife and several children.

Settled in Poughkeepsie, the men, like many immigrants with almost no knowledge of English, chose peddling as a livelihood. Samuel Effron had a variety of consumer goods including tinware, while Charles and Eiman collected scrap metal (called junk) and rags. All peddled in the city and out into the country. By dint of personal sacrifices and extremely simple modes of living, all were able to turn from peddling to businesses in fixed locations. Samuel Effron opened a grocery store on upper Main Street; Charles, Eiman and David Effron became the operators of "junk yards", buying from the peddlers.

During those years David assisted members of his wife's family to come to the United States from Europe. Settling in Poughkeepsie were his mother-in-law Esther Rachel Effron with her two sons Morris and Jacob and a daughter Eva who a few years later married a cousin of the Golden family and moved to New Milford, Connecticut. Unlike most of the Jewish newcomers to Poughkeepsie who settled in the area below Market Street, many on South Bridge and Jefferson Streets, they lived in a small house on upper Main Street above Corlies Avenue.

The early years of the Twentieth Century was a period when many immigrants went into small businesses. In spite of numerous difficulties, it was an era of tremendous growth in the United States, and many small businesses flourished. Morris Effron opened a dry goods store and his brother Jacob sold coal.

By the 1920's various members of the Effron family had fairly sizable business interests. Samuel Effron turned from a retail grocery to a wholesale business with a sideline of animal feeds and later, bakery supplies. By the late 1920's he had turned exclusively to real estate investment and management. The scrap metal businesses of other members of the family developed significantly and some of the owners made investments in real estate. Eiman Effron, urged by his wife, who felt that in the small Jewish Community of Poughkeepsie their five daughters might not find suitable mates, moved to Brooklyn in the 1920's. Their three sons, Paul, Morris L. and Joseph remained in Poughkeepsie. In Brooklyn the daughter Matilda became a high school teacher and her sisters found jobs in

the field of business. They all married suitable husbands.

Paul Effron operated a diner for many years. Morris L. and Joseph, starting in a few small businesses, later sold automobiles from a large establishment on upper Main Street. After a short involvement in that field, Morris L. Effron joined Jacob Effron, a cousin, and his son Sidney in the coal business which had attained steady growth. His entry into the business marked the beginning of the fuel oil division and the start of its period of greatest growth. Since the death of the earlier owners, James Effron, younger son of Morris L. Effron, has conducted the business; it is now part of a conglomerate, with James as head of the local division. James and his brother Howard are graduates of Princeton University. Howard, after serving in the Armed Forces, maintained a turkey farm started by his father, then turned to other business interests in New York City.

Jacob Effron's son Sidney died at a fairly early age. His brother Harold left the family business and moved to Baltimore to join the scrap metal business of his wife's family. Jacob's daughter Florence, the wife of Dr. Theodore Rimai, in medical practice in Poughkeepsie many years, has been very active in many Jewish communal organizations.

Morris L. Effron's death in his 50's brought to a close a life of devotion to Poughkeepsie community affairs, particularly those of the Jewish Community. He served as a member of the Poughkeepsie Board of Education, and during his service with it was particularly devoted to the planning and construction of the present High School building which replaced the structure now housing the Lady of Lourdes High School.

Morris Effron's dry goods store through the years has changed its merchandising emphasis, early into women's wear and millinery, and more recently, located at the corner of Main and South Clinton Streets, converted into a store of children's and young people's apparel. It was for a number of years managed by Morris's daughter, the late Anna Dorfman. The store is now owned by her brother Marshall. Another daughter of the Morris Effrons Elizabeth is married to Dr. Ben Katz of Litchfield, Connecticut.

The two older sons of the Morris Effrons are attorneys; Merrill is semi-retired from a local legal partnership, and David is with the office of the Dutchess County Public Defender. David's wife Judith is a reading specialist with the Wappingers Central School District. Jesse, another son of the Morris Effrons, and his wife Lee are

owners of The Three Arts, a book and art store opposite the Vassar College campus.

William Effron, the elder son of the Samuel Effrons, shortly after this graduation from Cornell University, revived the defunct baker supply business started by his father. The outfit has developed steadily through the years and now, with emphasis on doughnut mixes, sells its products over a wide area of the United States. Robert Effron, Samuel's other son, has been with the business for many years, and with William Effron's semi-retirement, his three sons Jack, Ira and Michael have been managing the business into further development. Father and sons have continued the deep interest and involvement in Poughkeepsie Jewish Community affairs, a tradition started by the earliest members of the Effron family to arrive in Poughkeepsie. Several years before this writing William Effron was honored by a Testimonial Affair at the Jewish Community Center, marking his many years of service and contributions to that institution; he had served as its president during the year of the Fiftieth Anniversary.

The other siblings in the family of Samuel and Fannie Effron are: Estelle Dobo, the wife of Dr. Steven Dobo, a local psychiatrist, Sadie Cahn, married to Dr. Simon Cahn, a dentist in Beacon, and this writer, Eva Effron Acker Goldin. Thirteen years after the death of her husband Joseph Acker, a local attorney, she was married to Irving H. Goldin, a native of Passaic, New Jersey, who was an engineer and attorney in New York City for many years. He is associated with the law firm of Levine & Levine in Poughkeepsie.

Most of the original settlers of the Effrons had large families. By the 1920's and 1930's there were so many Effron teen-agers in the local high school that teachers had a sense of confusion about how the cousins were connected. A good percentage of the children and grandchildren have remained in Poughkeepsie, in most cases because of businesses in which they could participate.

Abraham, the son of Charles Effron, continued his father's scrap metal business; he retired recently, selling the firm to a Kingston concern, by coincidence, owned by descendants of a couple who had come from the same small town in Russia as most of the Effrons. Abraham's brothers, Dr. Benjamin Effron, a local pediatrician, retired a few years ago and moved to Florida. Matilda Effron Taylor, the widow of Donald Taylor, their sister, for many years held an important executive position with"Women's Wear", the well known fashion trade publication. Their younger sisters are Mary

Guthait in California and Ethel Bruml in New Jersey.

The David Effrons' only son owns a men's apparel store in Connecticut; of his five sisters, three survive, two, Dorothy and Bertha Effron in Poughkeepsie, and Jennie, a Vassar College graduate and a retired librarian in New York City.

From the years of their arrival in Poughkeepsie, members of the first generation of the Effrons were actively involved in the affairs of the religious institutions and related Jewish Community projects. In Congregation Schomre Hadath they were very active members, all serving on its Board of Trustees at various times. Charles was president of the synagogue a number of terms. After the founding of Temple Beth-El Samuel Effron was an actively supportive member, for a time retaining membership in Schomre Hadath as well. He and William Effron served as early presidents of Temple Beth-El. Such important Jewish organizations as the Poughkeepsie Hebrew School, the Jewish Community Center, and Welfare Fund and Israel Bonds drives, as well as lesser groups, have had through the years many of the Effron family on their rosters of devoted workers and board members.

The Eisner Family

Joseph and Isaac Eisner were early arrivals as part of the wave of emigrants from Hungary starting about 1885. They were joined by Louis and Max Eisner. Marks Eisner came later after living in New York City a number of years. By the beginning of the Twentieth Century, there was a large group of Eisner cousins. Joseph and Isaac started in business as peddlers, later opened retail clothing stores. Marks Eisner maintained a dry goods store at 174 Main Street called "The Beehive" with a hive design set in the sidewalk in front of his place of business. This synbol remained for many years until the sidewalk was recently replaced. Meanwhile Mr. Eisner had closed the business to devote himself to managing real estate investments. In the building boom of the 1920's, he had had built an apartment building on South Hamilton Street and another on upper Franklin Street, and had purchased additional buildings. After Marks Eisner's death in the late 1930's, his son Dr. Milford W. Eisner, a practicing dentist, took over the management of the family investments and with his outstanding handiness in building skills, proved to be an excellent manager of the apartment houses which

his father had owned; after Dr. Eisner's death, his wife Gertrude managed the few remaining buildings and was a part-time secretary at Dutchess Community College as well.

Marks Eisner's two daughters Frances and Gertrude, married and for many years had important retailing positions as buyers for R.H. Macy & Co. (now known simply as Macy's). Frances and her husband Lou Hill moved to Palm Beach some years ago. She died in August of 1982. Gertrude Beck is now living in Palm Beach and Harold, the second son, the owner of a liquor store in Larchmont, sold the store a few years ago and is now retired and still living in Westchester.

Of the offspring of the large Eisner family which once numbered in the dozens in Poughkeepsie, only a few remain: Leonard Eisner and his sister Ruth Blumberg, wife of Melvin Blumberg a jeweler, and Miss Bertha Eisner. Leonard and his son Marc conduct a scrap metal business, one of the few in that field in existence in this area, where early in the Century, a sizable number of Jewish immigrants had been in that livelihood.

Dr. Harold and Terry Fleisher

Dr. Harold Fleisher, who was born in Kharkov, Russia, and Terry, a native of Cambridge, Massachusetts, met while both were employed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he as a staff member of the Radiation Laboratory and she as a radar technician. They were married in 1945. Harold earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in physics from the University of Rochester, and a Doctorate in nuclear physics from Case Institute of Technology. Terry attended Bradford Junior College and Hebrew Teachers College, Boston.

Dr. Harold Fleisher is with I.B.M. in Poughkeepsie and is one of the forty-five I.B.M. Fellows throughout the world, an honor awarded for his contributions in the field of computer science. He is a fellow of the Institute of Electronic and Electrical Engineers, and has lectured throughout this country and Europe. He has lectured at the Technion and the Weizmann Institute in Israel, and has been a consultant at Weizman Institute.

Both Fleishers have been extremely active in the Jewish Community of Poughkeepsie, he as vice-president and Board of Trustees member of Temple Beth-El, and president and campaign

chairman for the Jewish Welfare Fund-United Jewish Appeal. Both have been devoted supporters of State of Israel Bonds; the 1981 Testimonial State of Israel Bond dinner was in tribute to them.

Terry is serving, at the time of this account, her second term as president of the Dutchess County Jewish Welfare Fund, and has served for many years as an officer of the Women's Division of that fund. She was president of the local chapter of Hadassah, and has been a member of Hadassah's Regional Board. She has been a member of the Temple Beth-El Board of trustees, and with her husband has served on the Board of the Mid-Hudson Hebrew Day School. They are the parents of two daughters and a son, who with their families, live within easy traveling distance of their home city.

The Fleishman Family

Isaac Fleishman and his wife Dora came to Poughkeepsie from Peekskill early in the present century. They had three sons, Robert, Sydney and Myron. As with the Perlmutter family, their years in the furniture business is recounted in an earlier chapter of this history. Both families were prime movers in the founding of Temple Beth-El.

All three sons of the Isaac Fleishmans were involved in the family furniture business. Robert's death occurred more than twenty years before this account; Myron died in 1981. Their widows Sylvia and Sonya still make their homes in the Poughkeepsie area. The son of Robert and Sylvia, Jay Fleishman is an architect in New York City.

Eugene Fleishman, the son of the Myron Fleishmans, is the head of a well-known accounting firm in Poughkeepsie. He is active in many Jewish Community organizations, and has been a dyhamic president of the Jewish Community Center. His wife, Doris, a mathematics expert, has presented special programs in that subject at Vassar College.

Sydney Fleishman, now retired, and his wife Hilda divide their time between Poughkeepsie and Arizona. Sydney's skilled musicianship, discussed in the chapter on Jews in music, has been generously put to use in Arizona, where he has played with a symphony orchestra. The Sydney Fleishmans' son and daughter and families make their home in the western states.

Benjamin and Berta Friedman Family

Benjamin Friedman arrived in Poughkeepsie in the early 1920's, and shortly afterward started the Westchester-Hudson Coat, Linen and Apron Supply Company which is still in existence at the time of this writing. His second wife Berta and her three daughters became active members of the Jewish Community from their arrival in Poughkeepsie in the 1930's. Benjamin Friedman for many years until his death was an active Zionist and strongly supported the State of Israel. Berta Friedman has been called "Mrs. Jewish National Fund" because of her deep devotion to fund raising for the purchase of land in the Jewish National Homeland, even before the State of Israel came into being. She has been a member of the National Board of the Jewish National Fund.

Mania, married to Dr. Charles Friedman, the son of Benjamin, Fania, the wife of Leon Sohn, and Lola, the wife of Dr. Marc Eckstein, have been especially active in Hadassah. The names of all the family members have appeared on lists of active workers and donors to the Jewish Welfare Fund and other drives, including that for the sale of Bonds for Israel.

In numbers and devotion to Israel the Benjamin and Berta Friedman family has been among the leading family groups in the Poughkeepsie area, in giving and working for Israel especially.

The Louis Gellert Family

Louis Gellert, arriving in Poughkeepsie shortly after the turn of the century, set up a business of tailoring, a skill in which he had great expertise. He and Mrs. Gellert were the parents of a daughter and four sons, three of whom became lawyers, a distinction shared by no other family of the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community. The Gellerts were active members of Congregation Schomre Hadath, and a number of other Jewish organizations.

Ely Gellert, after serving many years as Assistant District Attorney of Dutchess County, became District Attorney; he was later a special prosecutor for the New York State Attorney General's Office. He was in active law practice on Market Street a number of years. A veteran of World War I, in which he served in the Navy, he was a Past Commander of the Lafayette Post of the American Legion and was a District Deputy Grand Master of the Masonic

organization. He died in 1981 at the age of eighty-four.

A younger brother Joseph H. Gellert served as City Judge of Poughkeepsie. He is at the head of a large law firm occupying the landmark building at 54 Market Street, owned by him. When built it was named the Law Library Building; it has been the location of Gellert's legal practice for numerous years. His practice at that address has been in existence longer than any other law practice at one site in the city of Poughkeepsie.

Joseph H. Gellert's son Arthur is a partner in the firm. The third brother, Percy G. Gellert for a long time has maintained an active practice in Yonkers.

The Gold and Scheer Families

Moe Scheer and Samuel Gold of the well-known firm, the New York Steam Cleaning and Dyeing Company (later changed to United Cleaners), were married to sisters. Both couples were active members of Temple Beth-El in its early years, and all four were supporters of many Jewish Community organizations. Mrs. Sophie Gold and Mrs. Mary Scheer devoted much effort to Hadassah and Temple Beth-El Sisterhood; Mrs. Gold, who has survived her sister, has been a member of both groups for many years. Sophie Gold at the time of this writing is in her ninety-first year.

The Golds' son Burton is a well-known builder in the city and has done important work with the "renewal" of the Union Street Historic District. Burton Gold's wife Miriam, a native of Texas, is a teacher in the BOCES program of Dutchess County; for many years she has been an ardent worker for Hadassah, and has served as president of the Poughkeepsie chapter. A daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Gold has made her home in Massachusetts since her marriage.

A son of Mr. and Mrs. Scheer, Dr. Justin Scheer, is a prominent physician and is married to Deborah Satz, the daughter of Selma and the late Richard Satz. Dr. Scheer's sister Fay is the wife of Milton Chazen, a consulting engineer with offices in Poughkeepsie.

For many years Myron and Henry Gold and Hamilton Scheer were associated in the cleaning business with their fathers and other members of the firm. In recent years Myron Gold and Hamilton Scheer have been the owners of three large cleaning establishments in the Poughkeepsie area.

The Harry Haven Family

Harry Haven was born in Niclaev, near Odessa, Russia. At the beginning of the Russo-Japanese war, to avoid service, he and three fellow townsmen stowed away on a ship bound for Buenos Aires. His friends remained in Argentina, but Harry Haven managed to reach this country. His fiancee had gone from Russia to Paterson, New Jersey; on his arrival there in 1908, they were married.

A carpenter by trade, Mr. Haven used his skills to improve property he was able to purchase at low cost, and in addition, he acted as a contractor for others. On his way to Albany to inspect a house for a prospective buyer, Haven's automobile broke down in Poughkeepsie, and he had to wait for repairs. The following year, the strike of silk workers in Paterson, which was a famous early industrial action, caused a recession in the city. With the loss of his means, Harry Haven, having been attracted to Poughkeepsie, decided to move with his family to this city. He worked as a carpenter on many projects, including the high steeple of the First Congregational Church. He did well in carpentry but was attracted to a related field, as a distributor of barrels of all kinds. Many products in the early years of this country and into this century, were packed in barrels: sugar, flour, syrup, apples, road construction materials, as well as wine and whisky; after being emptied the barrels were sold for re-use.

Later, Harry Haven turned to the manufacture of apple barrels, using staves which came packed in bundles, and metal bands. His son, Retired City Judge Milton M. Haven recalls becoming an expert barrel maker in his father's plant. By 1930, barrels had largely been replaced by baskets and fiber tubs, and Mr. Haven and his son Arnold went into the coal business. Active in Congregation Schomre Hadath and a number of other Jewish organizations, Harry Haven is remembered as a possessor of a fine sense of humor.

Other siblings of the Haven family are: Sarah, who with her husband Irving Schwartz lived in Newburgh many years and are now residents of Florida; Louis Haven, after years as a retailer in New Jersey is also a resident of Florida. Herman Haven, the youngest brother, met his death in the Washington, D.C. area in the winter of 1981-1982, in an airplane accident which took the lives of dozens of passengers and a few persons on a city bridge.

Milton Michael Haven, the eldest son of the Harry Havens, was

born in Paterson and came to Poughkeepsie at the age of 4.

A graduate of Syracuse University and its Law School, he was with the law offices of John E. Mack and Edward Conger. Mr. Mack, later a State Supreme Court Judge and Mr. Conger, early a City Court Judge and later a Federal Judge, were prominent in the affairs of the Dutchess County Democratic Party.

Milton Haven served as Assistant City Judge of Poughkeepsie from 1950 to 1954, and as City Judge from 1962 to 1966, and later from 1978 to 1980. First appointed by Governor Averill Herriman and later re-appointed by Governor Nelson Rockefeller, he served on the New York State Mental Hygiene Council. Since 1980 he has been associated as Counsel with the law firm of Corbally, Gartland and Rappleyea.

Mrs. Phyllis (Grossman) Haven, the wife of Judge Haven, who is a native of Hudson, New York, was a member of the Board of Trustees of Adriance Memorial Library for ten years, retiring after four years as president. She has been a Democratic Committeewoman for many years.

The Havens' son Miles, a computer expert, is the vice-president of a large firm in the Washington, D.C. area. Their daughter, Constance travels widely for an investigative service based in New York City.

The Hirsdansky - Ostrow Family

Simon and Dr. Sara Hirsdansky moved to Poughkeepsie after retirement from careers in New York City; this city was the home of their son-in-law and daughter Dr. Irving and Helen Ostrow. Mr. Hirsdansky had been the principal of an elementary school, Public School #4 in the Bronx, and was prominent in education circles. Dr. Sara, a graduate of Hunter College, attained her medical degree at Long Island Medical College when her two daughters were in elementary school. She had previously taught and had been a probation officer in New York City at the turn of the century. After a number of years in private medical practice, she became associated with the Bureau of Child Guidance of the New York City Public School System.

With their move to Poughkeepsie, the two became active members of Temple Beth-El. Through his friendship with Rabbi Erwin Zimet, Simon Hirsdansky was a supportive contributor to the

Adult Education program of the Temple (then on Montgomery Street), and occasionally led meaningful discussion groups. One of his special interests, in his new life in Poughkeepsie, was a Yiddish discussion group that met regularly.

Dr. Sara became associated with a group forming the "Little Red School House" a school for retarded children. At that time there were practically no facilities for educating these children. Dr. Sara worked first as Board member and later as screening psychiatrist; she assisted Cathy Michel in finding a home for the school and in its organization. Eventually the State of New York, through the local school systems, took over the functions of the Little Red School House and other training programs for exceptional children.

From 1960 at the age of 78, Dr. Sara embarked on a third career, as psychiatrist at Anderson School. She died at the age of ninety.

Dr. Irving Ostrow was an Assistant Director of Hudson River State Hospital at the time of his death in 1967. Helen Ostrow has been a social worker in the area. The Hirsdansky's other daughter is married to Norman Lloyd, a noted stage and motion picture producer and director living in California. Dr. Ostrow's sister, the late Mazie Yurdin, was a social worker in New York City. His brother, married to Beatrice Wayne, a niece of Herman Bloom, recently retired from a position with the Post Office.

Mrs. Irving Ostrow's son, Dr. Jonathan H. Ostrow, is a pulmonary specialist in Seattle, Washington.

The Moe Hodas Family

Moe Hodas was born in a small town in Russia, and after living through the Revolution, came to the United States in 1920, settling in New York. His first means of livelihood was as a worker in the millinery trade, then a thriving industry centered in New York City. Prominent in the affairs of the millinery workers' union, he was a board member and an officer. Through that organization he became a close friend of Alex Rose, a well-known labor leader of that era. He participated actively in the Verband, a labor group with Zionist leanings. After his marriage he left the millinery trade and conducted a hand laundry business in Brooklyn, through the Depression years.

In 1946 Moe Hodas purchased the Hudson Valley Laundry from Samuel Cooper and his son Joseph. The move to Poughkeepsie of

Moe and his wife Ethel and their son Daniel stimulated an involvement in Jewish Community affairs quite different from Jewish activities in their life in Brooklyn. They joined Temple Beth-El, then a small congregation less than twenty years old, and immediately became active members. A leading member of the young but vital Zionist organization in the city, he expended great effort for the Jewish Center, the Jewish Welfare Fund and the Daughters of Sarah Home, aiding in successful campaigns for those organizations. In true family tradition, his wife Ethel and their daughter-in-law Rosalie, Daniel's wife, were strong in their efforts for Hadassah and the Women's Division of the Welfare Fund. Rosalie, whose parents, Joseph and Bessie Rosenblum, have been leaders in the affairs of the Orthodox Synagogue Schomre Israel, served two terms as president of Hadassah. Her terms as a County Legislator are recounted elsewhere in this work.

Ethel Hodas predeceased her husband; Moe Hodas died in 1981 at the age of eighty three. Friends and relatives have created in his memory The Moe Hodas Memorial Lecture Fund for a series of lectures to be given annually at the Jewish Center on timely Jewish subjects. As an adjunct to the Dutchess County Jewish Welfare Fund, the 1981 and 1982 lectures, preceded by a "Champagne Breakfast" have each attracted almost two hundred persons. In 1981 Dr. Steven Cohen a professor at the Graduate Center of City College of New York spoke on "Making peace between Egyptian and Israeli societies: the inside story". The May 1982 lecture was by Congressman Samuel Gejdenson of Connecticut who discussed issues of concern to the Jewish Community.

Daniel Hodas is a graduate of the prestigious Stuyvesant High School in New York City, one of two high schools with emphasis on classical programs to which entrance is by open competitive examination. He has a Master's and Doctor of Philosophy degree from New York University. With continued residency in Poughkeepsie, he has served on the Board of Directors of the Jewish Center and of the Jewish Welfare Fund, and was a member of the City Charter Revision Commission. He is a professor of American History at Mercy College, Westchester County.

The Max Kahn Family

Max Kahn, who came to Poughkeepsie in the late 1890's, main-

tained a business dealing in hides, leathers and animal fat, collected for processing. He was the sole Jewish businessman in that field. Kahn and his wife Josephine were very active in Vassar Temple; he served many times on the Board of Trustees, and Josephine Kahn on the Board of its Sisterhood. In her senior years she had the honor of election as President of the Temple, probably the first time a woman was so honored in New York State.

Albert Kahn, their eldest son, was a prominent insurance broker; their second son, in business with his father, continued it after the elder Kahn's death. Leonard, the youngest, a talented pianist who had graduated from the Eastman School of Music, was a piano teacher and the leader of a well known dance orchestra. The three brothers died in middle age; their widows, Evelyn (a member of the Slote family which owned a well known men's clothing store for many years), Anne and Selma (both originally from the New York City area) reside in Poughkeepsie. Albert Kahn's daughter, Muriel Lampell, the only grandchild of Max and Josephine Kahn now living in the city, is prominent in Vassar Temple and community activities.

Simon King and Family

Simon King planned and had built the well known Cannon Street hotel King's Court, and was assisted in its management by his wife. In later years his son Sidney was involved in its management, until in recent years it was sold and converted into a Senior Citizen apartment complex.

The 1920's was a period of a number of real estate investments by the partnership of King and Rosen. In 1922 the Eagle News reported an account of the purchase, by the partnership, of the Cusack House at 200-210 Main Street (below Washington) which had been built not many years previously by John Cusack. This writer remembers the sign on the Cusack House in large letters across the front, "European Plan" (indicating rooms only, no meals) which helped her for many years to remember the difference between that type of hotel, and the designation "American Plan". Some time later the building was taken over by Simon King alone and turned into a development of small apartments, known for many years as the King Apartments.

The March 10, 1922 issue of the Eagle News announced the take over by King and Rosen and Paul Rosen of the distributorship of

Studebaker automobiles "with the intention to build a modern establishment to house the sales rooms for their agency". It is likely that unforeseen problems might have developed; there was no further news of this business project. In a similar branching out in investment, many years later Paul Rosen, then a busy lawyer, bought the Collingwood and Seaman Coal and Oil Company, which had been in existence over a hundred years. The business was phased out some years later.

The partnership of King and Rosen had built the Windsor Hotel on the northwest corner of Main and Catherine Streets, replacing the Morgan House a famous old hotel. They were in the hotel business until a fire destroyed much of it. It was rebuilt into a store and office building, now owned by Irving D. Kraut, commonly known by his nickname "Dutch" Kraut.

The partnership of King and Rosen ended in a dispute some time in the early 1930's.

Simon King's daughter, Florence, a classmate of this writer in the Poughkeepsie High School, was married to a physician, who after practicing briefly in New York City and then in this city, moved his family and practiced in Westchester County; he died in middle age. Florence Weichsel was a founder of an art school in Westchester. A younger brother Samuel left Poughkeepsie after completing his education, and is in business in New York City.

The Krakower Family

The earliest member of this family to arrive in Poughkeepsie, shortly after the turn of the century, was Joseph Krakower, who was a tailor by occupation. After spending some years in the business of "ladies' tailoring", he opened a grocery store. He remained in that trade for a number of years, with a store on Market Street, which was later purchased by Nathan and Pauline Golensky. The Krakowers' only offspring is Dr. Abraham Krakower, a prominent dentist, who started in practice in Poughkeepsie in the early 1930's and is still practicing at the time of this account. His wife is Frances, a daughter of the Josef Silbers and a sister of Carl Silber. The Krakowers have a son Thomas, a dentist in Chester, Pennsylvania, another son Josef in business in the city, and a daughter Ruth, an anatomical illustrator with the University of Pennsylvania.

Two brothers of Joseph Krakower, Hirsch and Louis, arrived in

Poughkeepsie a few years after him. Both had large families. Three of the five sons of Hirsch, Herman, Martin and Abraham, were in a dress manufacturing business together, for a time in Yonkers and New York City, and later in Poughkeepsie for a short period. There was also a Krakower retail dress and coat store in the 1920's. As an investment, the brothers bought a large well-known farm south of the city, which was eventually sold for the site of many single-family homes. The Krakower Fabric Shop is still in existence in that area.

Gwendolyn, a daughter of Abraham Krakower, and one of the few female descendants of the family still living in the area, is married to Marshall Brenner, a local attorney. Her brother Dr. Leon Krakower is a physician in practice in a building on a section of the original farm.

Louis' son Nathan, who as a young man was employed in the Samuel Effron grocery, was later a dealer in a variety of merchandise. A sister Sarah was a skilled secretary, employed in the law offices of Judges Edward Conger and John E. Mack. David Krakower, whose wife was Dorothy Denzig, is the last of Louis's sons to remain in Poughkeepsie. Sophie, the widow of Morris of the same family, has been active in a number of local organizations. She was the sixth president of the Poughkeepsie chapter of Hadassah, and was an early president of Temple Beth-El Sisterhood. For many years she was a member of the Temple Holiday Choir and with her sister, Cyril Gottesman, often served as soloist with the group.

The Josef Silber Family

Josef Silber and his wife settled on Bayeaux Street (later changed to North Perry Street) where he was listed as a "milkman". Later a move was made to South Perry Street where he had erected a brick store and apartment building for his business and home. His business included various milk products and groceries.

The Silbers' son Carl is a well-known local attorney, with whom his son David is associated in practice, and as mentioned in another chapter, was a city alderman. Edna, his wife, has long been active in politics, with the Democratic party, and has served two terms on the Board of Trustees of Dutchess Community College. She was an early president of the Poughkeepsie Chapter of Hadassah and has given service to other Jewish Community organizations.

Another son of the Josef Silbers, the late Samuel Silber, was in a confectionery business on upper Hooker Avenue; he was married to Celia Rosenberg of Hudson, New York, who retired recently as a Poughkeepsie city school teacher. Another daughter of the Joseph Silbers upon her marriage left the city for the Washington, D.C. area.

The Levine-Goldberg Families

Nathan Levine maintained a dry goods and clothing store on the south side of Main Street, in the block between Bridge and Washington Streets. In the first quarter of the Twentieth Century that area of Main Street was a typically ethnic neighborhood, with a number of Jewish owned dry goods and clothing stores. There was a kosher delicatessen and not far away, several butcher shops catering to families which followed the Orthodox Jewish regimen. From the start most of the Jewish store owners lived in flats above their places of business. Later when some of the businessmen bought homes in residential neighborhoods, a few continued to live above the store, often for the convenience of the head of the family who liked to have his mid-day meal (usually dinner) at home; in addition he was saved the walk to and from the store several times a day.

Nathan and Lena Levine had three children, Herman, now a well known Poughkeepsie attorney, Mollie and Doris, both Vassar College graduates, who have had careers in the library field. Mollie married Dr. Louis Goldberg shortly after graduation from college. Doris is married to Alfred Lundin, an engineer and builder; they make their home on Long Island.

Dr. Louis Goldberg was the son of David Goldberg who had turned from an active tailoring business to real estate investment. The elder Goldberg, in his role as investor in apartment buildings, was one of the first of the Jewish businessmen to realize the advantage of building apartment houses with stores in the eastern end of the city. Alexander Goldberg, a brother of Dr. Louis Goldberg, had a brilliant career as an attorney in Poughkeepsie until his death in the sixties. Dr. Goldberg, well known as a surgeon, died a few years after his brother. A sister is married to Milton Berger, also a native Poughkeepsian and an attorney, who has made a career of government service in Washington, D.C.

Kathy Hadley Michel

A very unusual member of the Jewish Community was Kathy Hadley, a Vassar College graduate in the 1940's. A granddaughter of Arthur Hadley, a president of Yale University, and the daughter of Morris Hadley, a prominent Wall Street attorney, and Mrs. Katherine Hadley who served as president of the Vassar College Board of Trustees, Kathy Hadley was an heiress of a wealthy family.

While a student at Vassar College she was befriended by the Samuel Brozans, the owners of a store for bicycle accessories and repairs, opposite the campus. This business served mostly the students of the college, who for many years had used bicycles for transportation around the campus. (In fairly recent years, with the lifting of the ban on student owned cars, bicycles have lost popularity.)

A story relates that through the Brozans the warmth of Judaism had a deep appeal to Kathy, so that she broke ties with her family and joined Vassar Temple, of which the Brozans were members. Thereafter she became a very active member of the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community, donating sizable sums to many Jewish causes. A project in the general Poughkeepsie community supported by Miss Hadley was the Little Red School House, with classes for retarded children, later absorbed by the programs of the Dutchess County Department of Mental Health. She made possible the purchase of a house on Forbus Street as the first site of the school.

Jane Epstein (Mrs. Louis Epstein), a close friend of Miss Hadley, has recalled a number of the organizations which she had supported, including the Jewish Center, Hadassah and other Zionist groups. She served as president of the Women's Auxiliary of the Center from 1965 through 1967.

After a marriage, in a Jewish ceremony, with a local chiropractor which ended in divorce, Miss Hadley was married to Charles Michel, a number of years older, who had come to the area as an early builder of motels. By this marriage she was the mother of three sons; her two older ones became Bar Mitzvahs at Temple Beth-El.

Tragically Kathy Michel and her youngest son lost their lives in an airplane explosion over the Adriatic Sea as they were returning from a trip to Israel. The trip had included an award to Mrs. Michel for her interest in and donations to certain Israel projects.

The Mintzer Family

Arriving from Russia shortly after the turn of the century, Herman Mintzer worked briefly as a baker's assistant in New York City. He then came to Poughkeepsie, and like many other immigrants who later became important businessmen, he started as a junk dealer. By 1915 he had a liquor business at 427 Main Street. After gaining experience in that field, he purchased the well known establishment, the German Tavern on Union Street, above which were located the early quarters of the Amrita Club. Prohibition in 1919 forbade by law the manufacture, transportation, and sale of alcoholic liquors for beverage purposes; Mintzer was forced to close the Tavern.

Herman Mintzer next turned to real estate investment which had a tremendous "boom" in the 1920's. In 1924 David Harris and Carl Lang were in business as Harris, Lang Realty. Like Mintzer, David Harris (of the Harris family that lived at 89 Main Street) and Carl Lang had been in the liquor business. In 1922 Lang had sold his business, Colonial Hotel on Washington Street. Herman Mintzer joined forces with the two and the real estate firm of Mintzer, Lang and Harris became prominent in the investment in important parcels of real property. During this period Mintzer also opened a drug store on Main Street, which he later sold.

When the real estate furor subsided, Herman Mintzer left Poughkeepsie for New York City where he owned a furniture business for a short period. Finally, this dynamic business promoter settled in Mechanicville, New York in the Capital District, buying, with his sons a wholesale oil business, which later became the District Gulf Oil distributorship. With Herman Mintzer's death, his sons Bernard and Joseph, continued the partnership which their father had started. A daughter of Herman Mintzer, Bertha Schaefer, lives in the Schenectady area.

With many families that emigrated from Russia, the first arrival in this country saved money to assist other family members to leave the difficulties Jews faced in Russia. Herman Mintzer's brother Jacob came to Poughkeepsie, later moving to New York City with his wife, son Milton, and daughters Esther and Hattie. (Hattie recently celebrated her eighty seventh birthday.) Clara, Herman's sister, not long after her arrival in Poughkeepsie, was married to Morris I. Levinsohn. A cousin of Herman's, Maurice Mintzer, came in 1904; his wife was the daughter of Jacob Steiner, an early

optometrist in the city. Maurice Mintzer was in the construction metal business, and was an active member of Vassar Temple; after his death at the age of forty five, his wife and children, William and Florence, left Poughkeepsie.

A member of the Mintzer family, Baruch Mintzer, had gone to Vermont as a fur trader in the 1870's or 1880's, and there has been a branch of the family in that state and nearby towns in New York State. At the death of Maurice Mintzer, his business was purchased by George Marcus, a cousin, of that branch.

George Marcus, married to Ethel Cantor of Poughkeepsie, became an active participant in local Jewish affairs, in the tradition of his father-in-law Charles Cantor. A clothing merchant on Main Street below Washington Street, Charles Cantor was well known as a generous donor in the type of charity collections in force in the Jewish Community early in the century.

The son-in-law of the Marcuses, married to Eleanor Marcus, is Joseph Albenda, a graduate of West Point. He is president of the Poughkeepsie Iron and Metal Company, the business which had been started by Maurice Mintzer.

The Levinsohn Family

Morris I. Levinsohn came to Poughkeepsie from the Russian town of Yurbrik in 1904; in Europe he had acquired training in watch repairing and engraving. Then known colloquially as a "watch maker", he opened a jewelry store, with watch repair service, on Main Street below Bridge Street. A linquist in several languages including Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, as well as Yiddish, he learned English with facility. He was often called on to act as an interpreter in those tongues, and to act as a translator of letters from abroad. Morris Levinsohn married Clara Mintzer in 1906. Their daughter Edith became a skilled secretary and Arthur their son, from his youth, became active in numerous Jewish Community Affairs.

Attending the Columbia University School of Pharmacy, Arthur Levinsohn was awarded the Kappa Psi gold medal for excellence in studies. Returning to Poughkeepsie, his first position was at the Hudson River State Hospital (now the Hudson River Psychiatric Center) where most of the pharmaceutical products used in the hospital were manufactured. In October, 1933, he bought the long established Lawrence Pharmacy at the corner of Main and South

Bridge Streets.

In World War II, Levinsohn enlisted in the United States Army in 1943, serving in the European Theater, chiefly in England. He returned home in 1945, and shortly afterward opened a pharmacy on Main Street opposite Crannell Street. As mentioned in the chapter on pharmacists, the store was later moved to the Clinton Square area where he remained until his retirement in 1973. Very involved in the needs of the Jewish Community during his busy years as a pharmacist, since his retirement, he has actively served organizations too numerous to mention, usually as a Board member.

Arthur Levinsohn was Chairman of the Building Fund for the present edifice of Temple Beth-El, and has served as President of the Congregation, as well as a Board member. Since the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 he has been consistently active in the sale of Israel Bonds and was recently honored as "Man of the Year" in that project. He has been president of the Harding Club, and has often served on the Board of the Jewish Center. A member of the Poughkeepsie Rotary Club, he was also voted into membership in the Society of American Magicians as a skillful amateur magician. A member of the Board of Directors of Adriance Memorial Library, he was recently elected president.

With great ability in public speaking, and the added quality of a fine sense of humor, Arthur has been much in demand as a speaker for many types of organizations.

In 1949 he married Sylvia Axelrod of Perth Amboy, New Jersey. A newspaper reporter prior to her marriage, she has more recently been personal secretary to the late Ambassador to Hungary and Portugal Herbert C. Pell. She is an acrostics expert and for several years her "Current Crostics" has been syndicated by the New York Times. A book of these was published by Quadrangle Press. Like her husband she has devoted numerous hours to community activities.

Their daughter, Amy Wendroff Levinsohn, is a graduate of the New York State University, School of the Performing Arts at Purchase; their son Mark Alan, at this writing, has just been graduated from the Cardozo Law School, New York City.

The Myer-Weisman-Gross Family
(Three generations of community service)

Sam Myer and his wife, born in different areas of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, emigrated to this country before the turn of the century. Settling first in Kingston, their move to Poughkeepsie occurred in 1910. With the purchase of the Queen City Hotel at the corner of Church and Water Streets, Myer became a tavern owner. The main business was a bar on the ground floor, with a few rooms for travelers above. The Myer family in their early years had a "flat" in the building. An old brick structure dating from the days when Poughkeepsie was a busy river port, it was demolished in recent years to make way for the North-South Arterial Highway. In later years Mr. Myer was a real estate investor but his means were depleted by the Depression of 1929.

On their arrival in Poughkeepsie the Myers became active with Congregation Schomre Hadath, and later, with the founding of Congregation Children of Israel, Anshe Ungarn, devoted their energies to that synagogue. Both Mr. and Mrs. Myer were involved in fund-raising-for-charity groups active in the early years of this century. The founding of the local Hebrew School was another of their interests.

Rose Myer, one of the five children of the Sam Myers, was married to Samuel Weisman, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Wolf Weisman. The Weisman family also lived in the south-western section of the city, below Market Street, the dwelling area of many Jewish newcomers early in this century. Samuel Weisman, particularly active in the early years of the Jewish Community Center, served as its president in 1930 and again in 1932-1933; he was elected to several terms as president of Congregation Schomre Hadath. Mr. Weisman, who was a real estate investor, died at the age of sixty two.

Rose Weisman's list of Jewish Community organizations included, among others, Hadassah, Hebrew Ladies Aid Society, Mizrachi, the Jewish War Veterans Auxiliary. She also did volunteer work at Vassar Hospital, with the Red Cross, and with the veterans at Castle Point Hospital. For more than twenty-five years Rose Weisman was chiefly devoted to matters concerning the Daughters of Sarah Jewish Home for the Aged. For most of those years, except for a period of residence in Florida, she was a member of the Board of Trustees of the Home and served as the Poughkeepsie

area liaison person in affairs concerning that institution. She died in 1980 at the age of eighty four.

Martin Gross, married to the Samuel Weismans' daughter Beatrice, came to Poughkeepsie from New York City in 1941. He is the owner of the Dutchess Bureau of Medical Economics, which does billing for the medical profession; he is also a consultant to the business angle of medical offices. Mr. Gross has been an active Board member of Vassar Temple and has served on the Board of the local United Jewish Appeal/Jewish Welfare Fund. He represents the Poughkeepsie area on the Board of Trustees of the Daughters of Sarah Jewish Home. Other boards of directors which have been served actively by his membership are those of the Bardavon Theater and of the Economic Development Corporation.

Martin Gross' wife Beatrice, also very active with Vassar Temple, has been a member of its Board and that of its Sisterhood. She has served on the Board of the Girl Scouts and that of the Vassar Brothers Hospital Association. She is a member of the Board of Managers of the Children's Home.

Rabbi Moses Nussbaum and Family

Rabbi Moses Nussbaum was born in Lublin, Poland, then a part of Russia. Married at the age of seventeen, he and his wife went to live in Palestine, where his grandparents had settled in the late 1890's. He completed his rabbinical studies at a yeshivah in Jerusalem and was ordained there; he had also taken training as a shochet and mohel.

In 1915, on a trip to Lublin before leaving for this country as an emissary to raise funds for a yeshivah in Palestine, Rabbi Nussbaum left his wife and four children with his parents, to be sent for at a later date. The intensity of the European War intervened, and it was not until 1920 that the family was reunited in America. In 1918 he had come to Poughkeepsie to serve as the rabbi of Congregation Children of Israel, Anshe Ungarn, which had been founded six years previous. Three children were born in Poughkeepsie.

Rabbi Nussbaum was especially active in the founding of the local Hebrew School, and served on numerous Jewish Community committees. As his family became young adults, he opened a candy and variety store adjoining their home on North Hamilton

Street next to the site of Poughkeepsie High School. A basis for going into business was his concern for occupations for his young people, since most types of employment required work on Saturday, contrary to the family's religious principles. The young adults were successful at business, until each in turn left the city for higher education.

Rabbi Nussbaum retired in the late 1950's and moved to Israel, buying a condominium in a very religious colony near Jerusalem. He died there in 1976. Two of the young Nussbaums remained in Poughkeepsie. Jacob, in the automobile supply business for many years, is a leading member of Congregation Schomre Israel. In addition to years of devotion to the Community Hebrew School, Jacob Nussbaum has been active with many committees of the Jewish Community. His wife Sarah has been a leader in the affairs of Hadassah for many years, and has worked with several other organizations. Belle Nussbaum, married to Harry Wishinsky who died in 1981, has been active with a number of Jewish groups. Recently she and Selma Kahn Streifer developed a Yiddish Study Section for the local Brandeis organization.

The Perlmutter Family

Joseph Perlmutter, born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, arrived in Poughkeepsie before 1896, and soon opened a dry goods store on Union Square, where South Clover joined Union Street. The success of the business led to his purchase of a building on the north side of Main Street below Hamilton Street to which his store was moved. The later switch of the Perlmutter family to the furniture business is recounted in an earlier chapter of this work.

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Perlmutter were leaders among the thirteen founding families of Temple Beth-El. They and their son Fred and his wife were active in Jewish Community projects and were generous donors to many of them. Their offspring remained in Poughkeepsie, Fred and Irving in the family furniture business, along with their brother-in-law Jack Steinberg, the husband of Regina Perlmutter. Helen Perlmutter, the younger daughter, was married to Dr. Frank Stein, a local dentist, who was a son of Abraham Stein, an uptown grocer who later became a real estate investor (not related to the downtown Abraham Stein family, of the original Hungarian settlers). The deaths of Fred, Regina and Helen

occurred at fairly young ages; Irving died in his middle seventies, shortly before this account. Florence Ackerman, a daughter of Regina, lives in a suburb of Poughkeepsie. Her husband Murray is in the furniture business in Pawling.

Two of the extended Perlmutter family have attained a degree of national fame. Alvin Perlmutter, one of the two sons of Fred and Jenny Perlmutter, is a well known television producer, noted for programs of high quality. Dr. Harold J. Morowitz, married to Lucille Stein, the daughter of Helen and Dr. Frank Stein, is an outstanding professor of biophysics at Yale University, and the author of many books.

The Morowitz Family

Mr. Philip M. Morowitz, a pioneer in the wholesale business of newspaper distribution, with his firm the Queen City News Company, has witnessed the narrowing of the field from many New York City newspapers to just a few. The growth, first of radio, and later of television, with their depriving newspapers of much of their principal source of income, has caused the demise of many newspapers across the country. Mr. Morowitz has been the Poughkeepsie area distributor, for many years, of the New York Times, the nation's leading newspaper. His son-in-law Jerome Regenberg has long assisted in the management of the business.

The first wife of Philip Morowitz, Anna, was the daughter of the Ellis Levines, well known clothing store owners on Main Street below Washington Street early in the century; she was an accomplished violinist. Their daughter Bernice Morowitz Regenburg has held executive positions with organizations in the area. Her sister Iris is married to a college professor in Hawaii.

As mentioned previously Dr. Harold J. Morowitz is a noted professor of Yale University. Among his many publications, mostly scientific, is a collection of essays, "The Wine of Life", which was listed by a literary organization among the most outstanding books of 1979.

Samuel Pressman and Family

Samuel Pressman's move to Poughkeepsie coincided with a type

of merchandising that evolved with the end of World War I. With the coming of peace, some businessmen found it possible to buy large stocks of surplus supplies that had been manufactured for use in the War, including clothing, tents, blankets and a great variety of accessories. This led to the opening of so-called Army and Navy stores; Samuel Pressman's was the first of this type of business in Poughkeepsie and it flourished, so that he later opened several in other cities including Troy, New York.

Mr. Pressman was active in many Jewish Community organizations; shortly after the founding of Temple Beth-El he became a devoted member and was assiduous in convincing others to join. Possessed of an outstanding voice, with special cantorial skills, he served without pay as cantor for the holiday services of the growing congregation. With Samuel Effron volunteering as lay reader of the Torah and Mr. Pressman as cantor, the services had special significance and the budget of the young Temple was kept low. Recordings of Samuel Pressman's liturgical renderings have been kept and every year during Slichos services at Temple Beth-El (held at midnight of the Sabbath before Rosh Hashanah) they are heard. This tradition has been maintained by the Temple for the more than twenty years since Mr. Pressman's death.

Mrs. Pressman has been involved in many Jewish Community activities and still makes her home in Poughkeepsie. The three Pressman offspring left their home city after graduating from college.

Harry and Geraldine Raker

Harry and Geraldine (Lieblich) Raker came to Poughkeepsie in 1955. A graduate of George Washington University in Washington, D. C., with the degree of Civil Engineer, Harry Raker became a prominent entrepreneur in land development and home building in Poughkeepsie and its suburbs. He grew up in Olyphant, Pennsylvania, a small city near Scranton, where the Jewish population consisted of only thirty families. His father was a leader in the Jewish Community, which in spite of the limited size, maintained an Orthodox Synagogue and supported many of the national drives to aid Jews and Jewish institutions worldwide.

Serving in many active positions in the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community, the late Harry Raker had filled the positions of Cam-

paign Chairman and President of the Jewish Welfare Fund, had been President of Temple Beth-El and served with expertise on many of its committees. A few years before his untimely death he was honored as "Man of the Year" in an Israel Bond Drive.

Gerry Raker, who left her studies at George Washington University at the time of her marriage, earned a degree at Vassar College, when their three children were growing up. Actively involved in affairs of the Jewish Community, she has been a member of the Boards of Hadassah and Temple Beth-El Sisterhood, and has been chairperson of several divisions of the Jewish Welfare Fund. She was the author of a number of skits for both Hadassah and the Sisterhood and wrote and produced a musical comedy for Hadassah.

In recent years as a staff member of the Poughkeepsie Journal, Gerry Raker has attained an outstanding reputation in a wide area as columnist, feature writer, and fashion editor of that newspaper; in recent months, the role of restaurant reviewer has been added to her work with the Journal.

Adolph Lieblich, Gerry Raker's father, a clothing manufacturer in New York City, was active in support of his Temple, and was especially prominent in the Zionist movement. He served as National treasurer of the Revisionists (the party of Jabotinsky and Menachem Begin) and helped to raise funds for the Irgun, one of the most dynamic groups in the establishing of the State of Israel. Adolph Lieblich had the distinction of attending, as a delegate, the First Zionist Congress following World War II, held in Basel, Switzerland.

Especially active in the National Council of Jewish Women, Bernice Lieblich, Gerry Raker's mother, in the years immediately following World War II, was a leader in the organization's program of aid to newcomers from the war-torn countries. Meeting hundreds of immigrants at the New York port of entry, she put her knowledge of Yiddish to important use in solving many problems faced by the arriving groups.

In recent years, as a resident of Florida "Bess" Lieblich has played an important role in working for Hadassah. She has been president of her chapter and has frequently been sent as a delegate to Regional Conferences. Five generations of her family, including the Rakers, have been enrolled as life members of Hadassah.

Abraham Rattner

The Poughkeepsie Jewish resident who attained the greatest fame in this country and abroad was Abraham Rattner, born in Poughkeepsie in 1895. Most famous as a painter of Abstract Expressionist canvases, with great use of glowing colors, Rattner's art included tapestries, stained glass windows and portfolios of prints.

Abraham Rattner's parents had come to the United States from Kiev, Russia in the late 1880's to escape the pogroms of that area. After living briefly in New York City, the Herman Rattners moved to Poughkeepsie, where Mr. Rattner became a well known baker. According to his daughter Jenny Rattner Allen, he was the first to introduce Russian rye bread in Poughkeepsie, and for a number of years had a fairly flourishing business on Union Street.

In a letter from her home in Los Angeles (May 1979) Mrs. Allen told of her brother's childhood in Poughkeepsie, where he was the victim of actual cruelties committed by anti-Semitic youngsters. He never forgot his miserable years as a child, when he delivered bread to his father's customers (some of them non-payers), or sold newspapers on the streets of the city to help support his family.

Abraham was obliged to engage in fights to defend himself from the hatred and violence of certain downtown young people. One of his father's customers, a policeman, befriended him and taught him boxing for self-protection. For awhile he actually became a boxer, performing before groups of spectators.

According to Mrs. Allen, her father's bakery shop was set on fire by anti-Semites and completely destroyed. Reduced to poverty, the family moved to New York City. After a few years, the quieter life of Poughkeepsie enticed them to return. There they lived for twenty five years; their six children grew up in the city.

In his later years, Abraham Rattner commented on his dislike for the city of his birth because of the blatant anti-Semitism. This writer remembers anti-Semitic remarks directed at her and her siblings in their childhood. During the early decades of the Twentieth Century, there were sizable groups of uneducated persons of all ages. Lacking education and understanding, many had antagonistic and insulting tendencies toward the comparatively small group of Jews, a great percentage of them recent immigrants with language and ways strange to the natives. This was particularly true in villages and smaller cities like Poughkeepsie.

The novelist Edna Ferber, in her autobiography "A Peculiar

Treasure" recalls her difficulties as a child in Ottumwa, Iowa, where tough boys in groups teased her with anti-Semitic remarks, the word "Sheeny" prominent among them. She described graphically the gestures by these frightening boys who waved their hands below their chins in an objectionable manner; no doubt this was a way of indicating the beards of elderly Jews. This gesticulation is well-remembered by this writer.

Abraham Rattner was the second son of the Rattner family. He always demonstrated talent in art during his elementary and high school years. He was art editor of the "Phois", the High School yearbook. At least twenty years before this writing, there was on display at the Adriance Memorial Library, a pen and ink drawing of the Library done by Rattner as a High School student. It had been lent to the Library, and recent inquiries have not revealed who might be the owner, or if it still exists.

Clippings from two local newspapers of the summer of 1911 were recently brought to the attention of this writer by Mrs. Gertrude Friedman Weiss. They lauded the heroic act of Abraham Rattner, then sixteen years of age, saving a young man from drowning in the Hudson River. Young Rattner, a passenger in a boat going up the river, sighted Sam Weiss struggling in the water during a swim. He quickly dove into the water and saved Weiss's life. The rescued man, who refused to give his name, stated only that he was visiting in Poughkeepsie from New York. Some years later he married Gertrude Friedman, a member of a family, which was part of the first Hungarian group to emigrate to Poughkeepsie. Sam Weiss was a resident of this community for many years.

After graduating from Poughkeepsie High School in 1912, Rattner studied at George Washington University and Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D. C. Later he studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia where he was awarded a Cresson Scholarship to study art in Europe.

In 1917, at the beginning of the entry of the United States into World War I, Abraham and two of his brothers enlisted in the armed services. He served as a Sergeant in the Camouflage Section, 40th Engineers; camouflage was a rather new concept in the armed services. Rattner took part in prominent battles, including the Second Battle of the Marne and that of Chateau-Thierry.

After their service in the war, Louis and Manuel Rattner settled in California, followed shortly afterward by their sister Jenny, a graduate of Vassar College. The rest of the family moved from

Poughkeepsie to join them in 1926.

Following his war service, Abraham returned to Europe to continue his study of art in France, with the Cresson Traveling Fellowship. He traveled and studied in many parts of France and in Spain, England, Belgium and Holland. In 1921 in Paris he was a student at the well-known Ecole des Beaux-Arts and later at other noted art schools. After living for a time in Giverny (famous as the home of Monet) he settled in a studio in the Montmartre section of Paris. He married Bettina Bedwell, Paris fashion correspondent for the New York News-Chicago Tribune news syndicate. By 1927 he had exhibited at the Salon d'Automne, the Salon des Independents and the Salon des Printemps; he was a member of the Minotaure group in Paris. Rattner worked in Europe for twenty years, and became an artist of repute. He came under the influence of Picasso and Rouault; their Cubism deeply affected his semi-abstract canvases.

In 1940, the painter returned to America to escape the horrors of Hitler when the Nazis invaded Paris. During the following years, there were many one-man shows. With the author Henry Miller, he traveled across this country on what he called "a voyage of discovery"; this trip produced many meaningful sketches. He taught at the New School for Social Research, at Yale University and the Brooklyn Museum School. He won many awards and his work was part of numerous exhibitions in this country and abroad. After the death of his first wife, he married Esther Gentle, a sculptress. Rattner died of a heart attack at the age of eighty two, February 14, 1978 in New York City.

Among Abraham Rattner's best known works are the paintings "Gomorrah" and "Visions of Ezekiel" and a stained-glass window in a Chicago synagogue called "And God said: 'Let there be light' ".

In 1948 and 1952 one-man shows of his work were held at Vassar College. In the collections of the Vassar College Art Gallery, there is an oil painting on canvas (18½x22) entitled "Sea Coast". It is inscribed on back "To Bettina Rattner, 1947". That was the year of his wife's death.

In March and April of 1981, the Kennedy Galleries on West 57th Street, one of the best known art galleries in New York City, held a show and sale of Abraham Rattner's watercolors. A descriptive brochure of Rattner's work, with reproductions in color, was issued and there was favorable publicity in several publications.

The Reifler Family

With his arrival in Poughkeepsie in the second decade of this century, Samuel Reifler had a store of electrical supplies and lighting fixtures, the first such business, which was Jewish-owned, in the area. He prospered with the building boom of the 1920's. His eldest son Nathan joined the business after attending New York University; Samuel Reifler's death occurred a few years later. The senior Reifler was remembered by friends and associates as a lively, personable man with a good sense of humor.

Under Nathan Reifler's presidency and management the Electra Corporation made great strides toward a very successful operation. The death of Nathan Reifler in 1960 left the business in the management of his three younger brothers Bernard, Aaron, and Norman. All four brothers have played important roles in community affairs. Devoted members of Vassar Temple, they and their wives continue in their commitment to Jewish Community activities and charities. Sally Reifler, the wife of Aaron, with an outstanding voice, has been prominent in musical performances and community music affairs.

Nathan's wife, Martha Gold Reifler, a Cornell University graduate, was a native of Kingston. She was a hard working member of the Poughkeepsie City Board of Education, a president of the Vassar Brothers Hospital Association, and served several terms as president of the local branch of the American Association of University Women. As leader of that group she was a prime mover in the founding of Dutchess Community College. The movement for the establishment of the College was beset by many difficulties, which were ably handled by Mrs. Reifler. Many local citizens, aware of her diligent endeavors, were disappointed that she was not appointed to the first Board of Trustees of the College. With the Democratic Party in power in Albany, the honor was given to Edna Silber (Mrs. Carl Silber) a very active Democrat in the area. Mrs. Silber has fulfilled her role as the first woman Trustee of the College in a very creditable manner. Martha Reifler, now Mrs. George Meyers, resides in Albany.

The widow of Samuel Reifler died in 1980, having survived her husband for more than forty years. In a quiet way she was very supportive of many Jewish causes and activities. A daughter Sylvia died shortly after her marriage. Frances Reifler Finnerman, the wife of Charles Finnerman, a well known real estate broker, has followed

in a significant way the family's devotion to affairs of the Jewish Community.

The M. S. Rosens

As mentioned previously Morris S. Rosen came to Poughkeepsie in the mid-1890's and was listed as a jeweler at 439 Main Street. By 1898 his business combined jewelry and millinery and later for a time, cloaks and suits. He was an early believer in advertising when few of the Jewish merchants spent funds that way; his newspaper advertising appeared frequently. His wife Frances, a skilled milliner, early entered the business. It is not known when jewelry was no longer sold, but the millinery store was a prominent one for many years on the block below Catharine Street. It was conducted chiefly by Mrs. Rosen, later joined by a son Harold.

The Rosens' youngest son, now Judge Samuel R. Rosen of Nashville, Indiana, formerly a Poughkeepsie attorney, recalled recently in a letter to this writer, that his mother made hats for the mother of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and for her relatives the Delanos, a well known "Hudson River family". She received an invitation to the First Inauguration of President Roosevelt, but for some reason, according to her son, she did not attend. In 1927 Mr. and Mrs. Rosen visited Palestine (now Israel). Mrs. Rosen was so deeply impressed by the work of Hadassah in that country that on her return, she was the prime mover in the organization of the Poughkeepsie Chapter, which with her early energetic leadership, developed into the large fund-raising-for-Israel group it is today.

M. S. Rosen, as he was generally referred to, in the 1920's turned mainly to real estate investment and management in partnership with Simon King. King and Rosen, a dynamic pair who were both devoted members of Vassar Temple, maintained the Windsor Hotel as a side line until it was destroyed by fire in the 1940's.

Paul Rosen, the M.S. Rosens' oldest son, entered the practice of law shortly after his discharge from the U.S. Navy at the end of World War I and at that time he was one of only two Jewish lawyers in practice in the city. Some years later he formed the firm of McCabe and Rosen with Joseph McCabe, another native Poughkeepsian. His brother Samuel R. joined the partnership after graduation from law school, and Paul's son Edward after World War II. Later McCabe and his son and the Rosens divided into separate prac-

tices. Samuel R. Rosen served on the Poughkeepsie Board of Education in the 1950's.

For a brief period in the 1920's, Mr. M. S. Rosen owned the Collingwood Opera House, now known as the Bardavon 1869 Opera House, and Paul Rosen is remembered manning the box office (probably in a spirit of fun as a substitute) for a musical comedy "Have a Heart".

With the death of Paul Rosen, Edward is the remaining member of the family firm, which now has a number of partners. Richard Rosen, Samuel's son, formerly law secretary to Supreme Court Justice Grady, is now in private practice.

Joseph W. and Bessie Rosenblum

Joseph W. and Bessie Rosenblum, coming to Poughkeepsie from Monticello in 1945, bought a liquor store in the "Slote Building" at the corner of Main and Washington Streets. In the twenty five years of their ownership it developed into a successful business, which was forced to close because of plans for the arterial highway to include that part of Washington Street.

With the closing of their business in which both were involved, the Rosenblums were able to fulfill their desire to become Schomre Shabbos, or strict observers of the Sabbath. Their years since then have been devoted to important work in the Orthodox Jewish Community.

Joseph Rosenblum serves as Gabbai of Congregation Schomre Israel, and opens the synagogue mornings and evenings for the daily minyans. The last to depart, he locks the building. For Friday evening and Saturday services and for holidays, he has added responsibilities. In addition he supervises the work of the custodian. All his service to the Synagogue is a "labor of love" on a volunteer basis. In his car he frequently transports, for the minyans, men who do not drive.

Bessie Rosenblum concerns herself with many religious activities in the program of Congregation Schomre Israel. She and her husband are supervisors of the Mikva (Ritual Bath) in the Synagogue; since the building must be kept locked for security reasons, they are called to open the Synagogue and supervise the use of the Mikva. Used mostly by very observant Orthodox Jews, women particularly, Mrs. Rosenblum occasionally must act on re-

quests for the use of the Mikva at times inconvenient to her; nevertheless; she performs this Mitzvah cheerfully. Recently a very Orthodox woman called from Swan Lake in the Catskills, with a desire to make use of the Schomre Israel Mikva. Traveling more than forty miles, she lost her way and arrived at the Synagogue after 11:00 p.m. Bessie Rosenblum was waiting for her and prepared the ritual bath for her use. There are Mikvas in the Catskill Mountain region; perhaps she had a special desire to use the attractive rose-tiled, fairly new one in Poughkeepsie.

Elsewhere in this work there is a discussion of the services of the Rosenblums as heads of Chevra Kadisha. With the late Samuel Stein, who was for many years a local carpenter-contractor and a prominent member of the Orthodox Jewish Community, Mrs. Rosenblum undertook the collection of funds for Mois Chritim, organized to aid desperately poor Jews in Poughkeepsie; with a lessening of need for such aid in this area, funds are raised for the needy of Israel. Bessie Rosenblum has carried on this work practically alone.

Mr. and Mrs. Rosenblum are the parents of two daughters: Rosalie Hodas, whose activities in the community are given elsewhere in this work, and another married daughter who lives in Silver Spring, Maryland.

The Rosenthal Family

The arrival in the 1890's of Reuben and Joseph Rosenthal and their business careers were recounted earlier in this work. As mentioned previously they were first partners in a retail confectionery and fruit store, and later in separate wholesale businesses. Joseph's two sons Leon and Robert joined their father's business. After a number of years, Leon the elder son, moved to Birmingham, Alabama, the home city of his wife, while Robert remained with wholesale produce until his retirement several years before this writing. His wife Lee, a member of the Pedolsky family whose arrival in the city occurred early in the century, assisted in the management of the business. Their only child Nada, married with several children, lives in a New York suburb.

The Reuben Rosenthals' first offspring, a daughter, married young and lived on Long Island until her death several years ago. Their three sons, Ely, Harold and Lloyd became prominent profes-

sional men: Ely, a dentist, Harold a surgeon, and Lloyd an attorney. In addition to his private legal practice, Lloyd Rosenthal was for many years the attorney for the Poughkeepsie City Board of Education. In practice with him is his nephew Samuel Brooke, the son of Alvin and the late Rhoda (Levitch) Brooke.

Of the numerous grandchildren of Reuben and Joseph Rosenthal, only one lives in Poughkeepsie at the time of this writing: Robin Rosenthal, the daughter of Lloyd, married to Benton Rayfield, is the mother of three small daughters.

The Barnett Rubin Family

Arriving in Poughkeepsie a few years before, Barnett Rubin was first listed in the 1906 City Directory as "Barnett Reuben, art store, also window and picture glass, 142 Main Street." A later issue entered his name as Barnett Ruben; the canvassers for the Directory were known to make frequent errors. Finally the 1913 issue listed Barnett Rubin. Mr. Rubin, who had purchased the business from a relative, a Mr. Schapiro, remained in that field for many years, chiefly in structural glass for storefronts and homes. Barnett Rubin was an excellent business man with a fine sense of humor; his wife assisted with the bookkeeping.

Both Barnett and Lena Rubin were dedicated to activities of the Jewish Community, especially in their membership in Congregation Schomre Hadath. Many years later, when that Congregation as Schomre Israel moved into a new edifice, their son Nathaniel Rubin and his wife Jeanne donated in their memory a large stained glass window, one of a series representing the important Holidays. Lena Rubin was a founder and early president of the Hebrew Ladies Aid Society.

Nathaniel Rubin, their only offspring, is remembered as an early teen-ager in a then well known children's play "Six Who Pass While the Lentils Boil". The local Community Theater, based at Vassar Institute, was a popular amateur entertainment group, presenting dramatic productions for both adults and children. It is not known if Nathaniel Rubin ever filled any other dramatic roles, but that youthful experience might have led to his choice of a profession in which vocal ability is valuable - the Law.

Nate Rubin a graduate of Cornell and its Law School, is a prominent attorney in practice in Poughkeepsie since the early 1930's.

He has actively supported many projects and organizations of the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community and has held various offices including the presidency of the Jewish Community Center. His wife Jeanne served as an early president of O.R.T. Their son-in-law Martin Charwat, the husband of Eleanor, is associated with the Rubin law firm. The Rubins' other daughter Marjorie, lives with her husband Lester Brody and children in Acton, Massachusetts. Eleanor and Marjorie, like their father, are graduates of Cornell University.

Cantor Jacob Rubin and Family

The subject of this biography was born in Russia in 1888. Possessed of an exceptional voice, in his youth he studied for its development in cantorial skills. In his native country he performed as a cantor before he was fifteen years old and trained for a number of years under the well known Warsaw Cantor Alitza and with Cantor Berman of Bialystok.

At the age of eighteen he emigrated to the United States; he lived first in New York, then after marrying Loretta Goldberg, a kindergarten teacher in the Bronx, he moved to Poughkeepsie. His parents and six brothers and sisters had settled in this city earlier; the father had opened a grocery store on Union Street.

A livelihood as a cantor was limited at that time; Orthodox congregations had paid cantors only for the High Holy Days, and sometimes could not afford them then. Cantor Rubin did painting and paper hanging, and later maintained a fruit store on Main Street a short distance below Washington Street for many years. He later owned a variety of other stores. With assiduous Hebrew studies and skill as a Cantor, he prepared many area boys for their Bar Mitzvahs, particularly in the years before the founding of the Community Hebrew School. He served often as Cantor for Congregation Schomre Hadath without pay. For a period he trained and led a choir of fourteen young men for that synagogue.

Through the years Cantor Jacob Rubin was much in demand for holiday services at well known hotels in the Catskill Mountains. For seventeen years he conducted services at the Pioneer Country Club, and later at the Nevele and Nemerson Hotels. He and Mrs. Rubin were active in many local Jewish organizations.

Of his several sisters who remained in Poughkeepsie for most of

their lives, Augusta was married to Joseph Kerlansky and Frances to Morris Gaynor, associated with the construction firm of Miller and Gaynor. The Gaynors' daughter Marilyn married to William Worona, the youngest of that family, is active in several local organizations.

Of the Rubins' three daughters, only Florence Reben, the wife of Raymond Reben a businessman, remains in Poughkeepsie; Evelyn and Louis Dvorkin and Muriel and Raymond Canter live in Florida. Evelyn and Muriel had been teachers in the Poughkeepsie school system.

Cantor Rubin died in 1979 at the age of ninety-one.

The Joseph Samuels Family

Joseph Samuels was born in Lithuania, a section of Russia, and as a young man migrated to South Africa. After a few years in that country, he decided to try his luck in New York.

He came to Poughkeepsie from New York City in 1905. Newly married, he and his bride wished to leave that city for a less crowded area. Mrs. Samuels was an enthusiastic theater-goer, and this city had a reputation as a "try-out town" for plays and other stage productions before they reached "Broadway". Another attraction was Poughkeepsie's reputation as a "city of schools". There was a number of reputable private schools, and Vassar College founded in the 1860's, was early a leading women's college. Eastman Business School drew hundreds of students from all over the United States and from foreign countries, especially from the Caribbean area and South America. Sebastian S. Kresge, of variety store fame, and other nationally known businessmen attended Eastman School. In later years, when high schools added business subjects to their curriculums, Eastman Business School gradually lost importance and finally closed in the 1930's.

Samuels opened a housewares store on Main Street. Although his earliest entry in the City Directory stated crockery as his business, it is known that he sold general housewares as well as dishes. From the beginning he realized the importance of advertising. His slogan "Everything for housekeeping" appeared often in local newspapers at a time when few Jewish merchants followed such promotion.

Joseph Samuels became active in the community and he and

Mrs. Samuels were prominent in Vassar Temple affairs, both serving in many offices. In 1919 a Central Relief Committee, with headquarters in New York City, was organized to raise funds to aid European Jews suffering as a result of the recent World War. Joseph Samuels served as a member of the Poughkeepsie committee. He was active in the early years of the Jewish Center, and served as treasurer of the United Jewish Appeal. A leader in the organization of the Boy Scout troop which met at Vassar Temple, and also in city-wide Boy Scout affairs, he was made Honorary President of the Dutchess County Boy Scout Council in the early 1930's.

Paul Samuels, son of the Joseph Samuels, after a business career in New York City, set up a law practice in Poughkeepsie. He was especially active in Republican politics and in the American Legion, attaining the position of State Commander of that military organization. He died at the age of sixty in 1969. Elma Samuels Rosenberg, his sister, is the wife of Dr. Albert A. Rosenberg, a well known pediatrician in the city, who retired after fifty years of active practice, in December, 1981. Another daughter of the Samuels family has had an executive position with Time-Life Books for many years.

The Samuel Satz Family

Samuel Satz arrived in Poughkeepsie early in the present century; his wife was a sister of Mrs. Joseph Golden who had arrived with her husband a few years earlier. Settling where one had relatives was a common practice with early immigrant Jewish families. After attempting a few small businesses, Mr. Satz, as mentioned in the chapter Jews in Real Estate, had in the 1920's a store and apartment building erected at the corner of Main Street and Corlies Avenue. For a time he and his family maintained a retail candy and ice cream store in his building. In later years Satz went into business in New York City with a women's coat manufacturer. This writer remembers a beautiful blue silk duster which her mother had ordered from Mr. Satz. Still recalled is a trip to visit relatives in New Milford, Connecticut, over the dusty dirt road climbing the Pawling Mountains (now Route 55), with her mother in her stylish duster placing large rocks behind the back wheels of the family automobile to prevent its sliding back. Dusters were long coats to protect one's dresses or suits from the dust of unpaved roads. Most

early automobiles were "open", enclosed only for rainy or cold weather with isinglass (a kind of clear plastic) curtains.

The four sons of the Satzes remained in Poughkeepsie for most of their lives. The oldest Kalman maintained a trucking business; Louis was a salesman in the floor covering department of Luckey Platt and Company for a number of years, and Richard the youngest was with the DeLaval Company for fifteen years. Eventually Louis and his wife Betty opened a confectionery-cigar store and Richard joined Kalman in the trucking business.

Isadore Chester Satz, after owning an automobile agency in Hyde Park, later developed a successful business in office supplies in Poughkeepsie, still maintained by his widow.

All four Satz brothers had sizable investments in real estate, Kalman with a valuable farm in Dutchess County until his move to Florida. Louis's investments were for the most part in Poughkeepsie Main Street property; Richard purchased the large Windsor Hotel property later turned into stores and offices, once the property of King and Rosen. Both Richard and Chester, foreseeing the boom in property on the South Road, had investments in that area.

All four brothers died before reaching the age of seventy. Selma Friedman Satz, the widow of Richard and Belle Slote Satz (a member of the well-known Slote family in the men's clothing business for many years) live in Poughkeepsie. At the time of this writing, the only daughter of the Satz family, Charlotte Stone, the widow of an Amsterdam, New York, merchant who was a brother of Mrs. Simon King, makes her home in a retirement complex in Pennsylvania.

Naomi Satz Goldberg, a daughter of the Louis Satzes, and her husband Paul are prominent merchants on the Main Mall, the prime section of Main Street changed into a walking mall. Naomi is one of the few grandchildren of the Samuel Satzes still resident in Poughkeepsie, Selma Friedman Satz and her sister Gertrude Friedman Weiss are the remaining siblings of the large family of the Edward Friedmans, early Hungarian settlers in Poughkeepsie.

The Louis Schwartz Family

Louis Schwartz was born in Russia, and after spending some years in the Bronx, he came to Poughkeepsie in 1918. An early City Directory listed him as a sign painter; with the known fact that some

famous artists had their start as sign painters, one wonders if he might have become an artist if he had not turned to business. Organizing the Highway Displays Corporation, a well known billboard advertising concern, Mr. Schwartz guided its growth into a business that has spread many miles from it home base in Poughkeepsie, into the Catskill Mountain area, into Connecticut and other areas. His wife Jean was an able assistant in the large concern for many years.

Louis and Jean's two sons Jules and Joseph, had joined their father in the business at fairly young ages and have ably continued it since their parents' deaths. The Louis Schwartzes suffered the loss of their only daughter at the age of fourteen.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Schwartz were involved in many important Jewish Community projects. In addition to their leadership in Jewish Welfare Fund drives, they were among the most generous donors. Their sizable purchases of Israel Bonds have always been a family project. Jules Schwartz and his wife have followed his parents' leadership; Jules Schwartz has been Chairman for the sale of Israel Bonds for a number of years.

The Jack Siegel Family

Jacob Siegel, from his arrival in Poughkeepsie in an early decade of the century, was a well known Main Street businessman, as the manager of the People's Store, known as a "credit store". There were several such stores on Main Street, where men's and women's clothing was sold, with payments being extended over weeks or months. Department stores had long allowed charge accounts and other businesses later followed the practice. Unable to meet the competition "credit stores" soon closed. People's Store was part of a chain and Mr. Siegel became the owner of the local store when the organization went out of business.

Jack Siegel was a man of pleasant personality and of outstanding business ability. His store became a progressive one after his takeover. Very active in Jewish Community affairs, he was a devoted member of important organizations, and took part in various fundraising drives. He was a strong supporter of Congregation Schomre Hadath.

Mr. and Mrs. Siegel's son Dr. Martin Siegel, until his recent retirement, was a prominent dentist, also active in the community. He

served several terms on the Poughkeepsie City Board of Education and was its dynamic president in trying times. His wife Betty, a native of Columbus, Ohio, is an accomplished pianist. Dr. Martin Siegel's brother Dr. Edward Siegel chose to open his medical practice in Plattsburg, New York, to the great disappointment of his parents, who had purchased an office building on Cannon Street, to be shared by the two brothers. In recent years Dr. Edward Siegel has been Executive Vice-President of the New York State Medical Society, with headquarters in the town of Lake Success, Long Island.

Samuel and Paula Silver

Within the memory of members of the Jewish Community who have lived in Poughkeepsie many years, there has been hardly anyone of the Community who has served as selflessly or devoted as much effort for a greater number of organizations than Samuel Silver. Retiring in 1974 after more than thirty five years as Chief Accountant at the local Post Office, he plunged into a whirlpool of activity for important causes.

After serving a number of years on the Board of Trustees of Temple Beth-El, he is at the time of this writing a member of the Advisory Board. His position of Chairman of Membership brings him constantly to the Temple for interviews with newcomers who wish to join the congregation. Among other committees in his charge are those of surveillance of dues delinquency, and holiday seating arrangements.

Sam Silver has committed himself to attendance at the Temple's morning minyan daily. During rush periods in the Temple office, he comes forward as a general factotum, taking on any job needing quick assistance: hurrying in his car on an errand, helping with the monthly bulletin, and even "stuffing envelopes". At the hospitals, he is a self-appointed visitor to patients who are members of the entire Jewish Community.

Active for years with the Jewish Community Center, Sam has held a number of offices with its Board. He is constantly appearing at the Center office. There is no need for him to announce "What can I do to help today"; the office staff puts him to work at a variety of tasks. He is an important help with the semi-annual Rummage Sale, an important fund-raiser; he is ever ready to go with his car to

collect items for the sale. Sam and his wife Paula have worked with the Center Bingo Game for over eight years.

With the Community Hebrew School and the Mid-Hudson Hebrew Day School, both located in the Jewish Center, Sam is most generous in giving his time and effort. He is a financial sponsor of both and assists in general clerical work when needed; from time to time he is called on to transport a sick child home. Though not yet retired, Paula Silver assists her husband in many endeavors.

Sam has been a Division Chairman with the local United Jewish Appeal since 1979, and is a mainstay in its campaigns. In the 1982 campaign for State of Israel Bonds, he served as co-chairman; throughout the year the on-going sale of these bonds is capably managed by him.

The Silvers are supportive members of most local Jewish organizations, B'nai B'rith, O.R.T. and Jewish War Veterans among them. Sam is a member of Hadassah Associates, a small but growing group of husbands of Hadassah members, who wish to give added assistance to Israel. Sam and Paula are generous donors to Hadassah's fund-raising programs.

The Simon - Erdreich Families

Arriving in Poughkeepsie early in the second decade of this century, Isaac Simon was one of several owners of kosher butcher stores. The typical Jewish housewife of foreign background had a tendency to claim that the kosher butcher could not be trusted; this attitude was like the old Yankee tradition of the butcher putting his hand on the scale along with the meat. But those who were in that trade really had the trust of kashruth, the doctrine of kosher foods. First on lower Main Street, then farther uptown, Mr. Simon was in business as a kosher butcher longer than any other.

Isaac Simon and his first wife had three sons, the eldest of whom Dr. Max M. Simon became a well known surgeon and practiced in Poughkeepsie until his retirement. The other Simon sons ewre Dr. Samuel Simon, a urologist, who died in middle age, and Moses Simon a pharmacist who was in business in the city for many years.

Dr. Max M. Simon and his late wife Zerline had three daughters, all married to physicians: Drs. Irving Dreishpoon, Seymour Stall and Jack Goodman, practicing in Poughkeepsie. The offspring of the other Simon brothers no longer live in the area.

Attracted by the Mid-Hudson Valley, Mrs. Zerline Simon's sister Lucile and her husband Dr. Jacob Erdreich, a dentist, and other members of the family moved to Poughkeepsie from New York in the 1940's. Among them were Dr. Ulysses Erdreich and his wife Vivian. Neither Dr. Jacob nor Dr. Ulysses Erdreich survived into this decade. The latter was one of the earliest Jewish orthodontists in Dutchess County.

Dr. Maurice Sitomer and Family

The Sitomer family had its origins in the Russian city of Zhitomir, not far from Odessa. For centuries Zhitomir was noted for the production of Torahs, with skilled scribes making their home there. Dr. Sitomer's father emigrated to this country as a young man. A circumstance of deep significance in his life was his marriage in New York City to a young woman from Vilna, which took place on the day of the tragic Triangle shirtwaist factory fire in which over one hundred forty women died. His bride, an employee, had taken leave to be married that day. Maurice was born in Brooklyn.

Like many Jewish immigrants, hoping for a better life away from New York City, the Sitomer family moved to the lower Catskills, settling in the village of Woodbourne. In the first quarter of this century, that area had become a busy Jewish summer resort section. Not completely satisfied, Mr. Sitomer tried his luck with the purchase of a farm in the Poconos. After a year of difficulties during which baby Maurice almost died of malnutrition, the Sitomer family returned to Woodbourne, with the parents remaining there for almost fifty years.

With the fear of his very Orthodox grandparents that young Maurice would not have proper Bar Mitzvah training in Woodbourne, the boy went to live with them in Brooklyn. There he remained from the age of almost twelve through most of his high school years. Summers he returned to the Catskills to help in the busy season of his father's wholesale-retail kosher butcher market. According to Dr. Sitomer, this trade, which included the handling of live chickens, would make an interesting episode in an economic history of Jewish life in that era.

Maurice Sitomer's teen years in Brooklyn were greatly influenced by a young uncle who was a typical "yeshivah bucher" (one deeply involved in Hebrew studies). It was the period of

multitudinous Yiddish cultural events in New York City, with lectures, concerts, and the Yiddish theater, all of which have to a great extent disappeared. Uncle Max enjoyed having young Maurice as a companion at these events.

Maurice entered City College of New York, transferring after a year to Ohio State University, where he earned Bachelor's and Doctor of Dental Science degrees. He set up a dental practice in Woodbourne, later adding one in Loch Sehldrake not far away. Both were interrupted by a short period of service in the United States Army.

Early in the 1940's, on a trip through Poughkeepsie, he telephoned Mendel Boss, a dental mechanic with whom he was acquainted. Learning of a dental office for sale at the corner of Main Street and Raymond Avenue, he decided to make the move to Poughkeepsie. His dental practice was later moved to La Grange Avenue. He soon became active in many organizations in the Arlington section and in the city itself. Among the many groups to which he was devoted were: the Arlington Civic Association, the Business and Professional group, the American Legion, with which he served as Commander, the Rotary Club, the Red Cross and the local Cancer Drive organization.

Dr. Sitomer's commitment to the Jewish Community has strengthened through his years in Poughkeepsie. He served as president of the United Jewish Appeal for a number of years, has been chairman of the drive to sell State of Israel bonds, and was honored for his devotion to that project with a tribute dinner. Long active with the local B'nai B'rith he has served as its president and also as president of the Hudson Valley Council of that organization.

In addition to an active dental practice, Dr. Sitomer has been involved in many businesses, including that of real estate investment. Within the large acreage adjoining his home site, he maintained a children's camp for a number of summers. Bus transportation needed for this operation led to the development of a school bus service under contract to school districts. In recent years Dr. Sitomer has been retired from a regular dental practice but is the Administrator of Community Dental Services, a program for city children of low-income families, funded in part by the Community Development Fund.

Dr. Sitomer's wife Arlene, active with B'nai B'rith Women for many years, served as president of the Eleanor Roosevelt Chapter in New York City. She was recently cited as a Benefactor of the Brandeis University National Women's Committee. Her daughter

Linda Peck, with a doctorate from Yale University, is an Associate Professor at Purdue University. Her recently completed work on English History has been accepted for publication by a well known textbook company for use in colleges. Dr. Sitomer's son is an attorney in Washington; his daughter Toby makes her home in Honolulu.

The Spitz Family

As mentioned previously in the chapter on early Twentieth Century Main Street merchants, Isaac H. Spitz had owned, during his early years in the city, several well known stores. In the 1920's when real estate investment became an especially important business venture, Mr. Spitz turned to such interests, including the management of his holdings. He was the owner of some important business properties in the prime area of Main Street and other sections.

Isaac H. Spitz was a member of the original Poughkeepsie City Zoning Board of Appeals, which was created in 1929; he served for twenty-six years, reappointed by mayors of both major political parties. The role of Mr. and Mrs. Spitz as founders of Temple Beth-El, along with the founding of its Religious School by their daughter Rachel Spitz, is given in the section of this work on the Temple. J. George Spitz, their son, has served as President of the Congregation.

J. George Spitz is a well known Poughkeepsie attorney, who has had the distinction of being elected the first Jewish mayor of the city, serving in 1958 and 1959. He had previously served for seven years as an Alderman on the Common Council. At the time of this writing Mr. Spitz is completing nineteen years (in his third nine year term) as a member of the Board of Trustees of Dutchess Community College, reputed to be one of the leading community colleges in the State. His wife Elaine has been active in a number of local Jewish organizations, and has been president of several of them.

The Eric Straus Family

Born in Stuttgart, Eric Straus left Germany in 1939, coming to the United States after a year in England. After serving with the United

States Armed Forces in Europe from 1943 to 1945, he earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees at the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Employed by I.B.M., he and his family came to Poughkeepsie in 1966.

Eric Straus has been prominent in many aspects of the community since his arrival in Poughkeepsie. He has been a long-time member of the Temple Beth-El Board of Trustees, and its president from 1976 through 1978. A tireless worker for the Dutchess County Jewish Welfare Fund, he is a former Campaign Chairman, and has worked many years on the Campaign Committees for the sale of State of Israel Bonds. The 1982 Bond dinner of tribute was in honor of Eric Straus.

Marlene, his wife, is a reading specialist with the Wappingers Central School District. The deep devotion of the Strauses and their three sons to Jewish life is reflected in the future rabbinic ordination of David in 1983 from the Hebrew Union College, and Andrew's starting his rabbinic training at the same institution in the fall of 1982. Alan is a sophomore at Cornell University.

The Tinkelman Family

In 1924 the Tinkelman brothers, Charles, Isadore, Harry and Morris moved to Poughkeepsie their manufacturing plant in the so-called "needle industry". Producing children's dresses at first, they later changed to women's wear with a plant on Jefferson Street and later on Rose Street. Charles and Frieda Tinkelman and Morris and Dorothy Tinkelman played active roles in the middle years of Temple Beth-El. The women were especially active in the Sisterhood of the Temple; for years Frieda was chairperson of hostesses for meetings and the Oneg Shabbat following Friday night services.

The offspring of the Tinkelman families did not remain in Poughkeepsie with the exception of those of the Charles Tinkelmans. Drs. Abraham and Joseph Tinkelman, both dentists, were devoted to the activities of Temple Beth-El. Gertrude, wife of Abraham, served as chairperson of the Sisterhood's annual Antique Sale which ran for many years; Rosalyn, the wife of Joseph, was active with many committees. Before retiring and moving to Orlando, Florida, Abe and Gert Tinkelman were chairpersons of the gala Champagne Ball celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of Temple Beth-El. It was one of the earliest special events held

in the Mid-Hudson Civic Center, shortly after the building was dedicated.

A Few Families No Longer in Poughkeepsie

A quiet, unassuming individual, Lewis Jaeger was in the printing business on lower Main Street for many years. His father had been a melamed and his Hebrew teachings had a great effect on Lew. Upon his retirement from business, he became especially active in Temple Beth-El; he could always be counted in attendance at the daily minyans in the fairly early years of the Temple when ten men arriving for the two minyans could not always be realized. Lewis was a long time active member of the House Committee of the Temple. With his devotion to Obed Lodge, his Masonic interests led to his wife Frances' activities in the charity efforts in the Obed Chapter of the Eastern Star. After the death of Lewis in the 1970's, Frances Jaeger moved to Florida.

Mendel and Bertha Boss were active in many Jewish Community affairs, with special devotion to Temple Beth-El. They were active in Zionist matters long before the establishment of the State of Israel; with that new country their Zionist fervor became even stronger. Mendel Boss was one of two known Jewish dental mechanics in the city.

Samuel Goler was in the electrical supply business on Main Street above South Hamilton. He and his wife Mildred were active Temple Beth-El members and supported many Jewish causes. Their son and daughter participated actively in Jewish Center youth affairs. With their children having left the city when they were married, the senior Golers liquidated their business and moved to Florida. Samuel Goler's death occurred there in 1982.

Benjamin and Hannah Browne came to Poughkeepsie in 1952 with his purchase of the Eighmie Moving and Storage Company. He soon became involved in local Jewish Community affairs, with special devotion to fund-raising. He was president of Temple Beth-El. With retirement from business in the late 1960's, the Brownes remained in the city until 1980, when they moved to Florida.

Lillian and Henry Ysskin, the owners of a children's wear store on Main Street, were very active in Temple Beth-El affairs. She was an early president of the Sisterhood. The Ysskins died within a few years of each other.

Special Tribute

Tribute must be paid to many more members of the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community whose energetic efforts and financial support for local and national Jewish institutions and for overseas needs have helped bring about strength and deep meaning. Many have been mentioned for their activities elsewhere in this work; many others are omitted, with regret.

Active Vassar Temple members who are frequently listed as strong supporters of important Jewish Community projects include, among others, Muriel and Matthew Lampell, Elaine and Robert Lipschutz, and Claire and Dr. Philip Moselle. Robert Lipschutz has served as president of the Jewish Community Center.

Leon Alpers, Kurt Strauss and Solomon Neustat are past presidents of Temple Beth-El, Leon Alpers having served in the early years of the Temple. Iby Heller, the wife of George Heller was elected the first woman president of that Temple. Sol Neustat has been a president of the Metropolitan Region of the United Synagogue of America, the supervising organization of Conservative Jewry; Ruth Ashman has also been active in the Metropolitan Region. Irving and Gloria Schlossberg and Joseph and Rosa Cohen have been prominent supporters of many Jewish causes. Long-time active sustainers of important local Jewish organizations include, among others, Bertram Cohen, a leading Zionist, Dr. Mordecai Gottesman, Drs. Jerome and Murray Sigalow, Frieda Lipman, Lilian Weiss, Jennie Pressman and Gertrude (Goldie) Brickman.

Phases of Jewish Life in Poughkeepsie
Jews in Professions

Physicians

The earliest recorded physician, probably Jewish, was in the village directory of 1850, entered as "Blauenstein, Felix (German), Clover corner Main Street". In 1851 the listing of residents had him as Blauenstein, Felix (MD) drug store, 402 Main Street. Could it be that his practice as a physician was limited and needed the addition of a related retail business to make a living? Or perhaps it was a custom for physicians at that time to serve as pharmacists as well. The designation "German" in Dr. Blauenstein's 1850 listing was an indication of the world repute of German trained physicians which lasted for many years, perhaps going back to medieval times. Some time between the two World Wars, American physicians and medical services seemed to gain an ascendancy over most other nations.

An advertisement in the Poughkeepsie Eagle April 6, 1859, states "Dr. William Levingston electric magnetic physician". By 1861 his name appeared in a listing of merchant tailors. He was probably not a real doctor, but a manipulator with some sort of appliance.

Early records give information of Dr. Ludwig Ebstein, born in Germany in 1818, who was a graduate of the University of Berlin. He lived in Poughkeepsie from 1850 to 1867, conducting a medical practice; he returned to Germany where he died in 1886. In the directory of 1859-60 he is listed as follows: physician, chemist, and paint works; in that of 1862-63, physician on Perry Street. The directories of 1864-65 and 1866-67 list Dr. Emmanuel Seligmann; Martin Rosenheim, physician, is found in the listing of 1871-73. An advertisement in 1896 lists Dr. J. P. Kessler selling "stomach bitters, tea and wines". Nothing is known of him.

In the 1880's the name of another Jewish physician appeared, that of Dr. Samuel Wimpelberg, son of Adolf Wimpelberg, well known local business man. The directory of 1880-81 lists him as follows: Wimpelberg, Samuel (M.S.) living at 317 Main Street; Samuel was born in Poughkeepsie in 1861. Adolph Wimpelberg owned the "National Hotel and Billiard Saloon" at that address. By 1883 Samuel, a graduate of Jefferson Medical College, is listed as physician and surgeon, 8 Cannon Street, resident at 46 Cannon Street. By 1885 he was at 264 Main Street. In 1886 his name was no longer listed.

In an advertisement in the January 22, 1905 issue of the Poughkeepsie Sunday Courier, his long absence from the city was ex-

plained "Dr. S. Wimpelberg, formerly U.S. Pension Surgeon, after an absence of several years, takes pleasure in notifying his former friends and patients that he has returned to Poughkeepsie and is located at 331 Mill Street." His practice in this city was brief, terminated by his death on July 12, 1907. Dr. Wimpelberg was the only Jewish physician listed in Frank Hasbrouck's History of Dutchess County, published in 1909.

There is no record of another Jewish physician until the arrival of Dr. Aaron Sobel, who was born in 1885 and set up practice in Poughkeepsie in 1909, coming from Newburgh. In Dr. John F. Rogers' "History of the Dutchess County Medical Society, 1806-1956", published (195-?) he pays tribute to Dr. Sobel: "As one scans the minutes for forty seven years, from October 1909, there has been hardly an absence by Dr. Sobel. He has always carried his share of committee work, and held all the important offices, including those of the District. He was of great assistance in preparing this historic paper, with many helpful suggestions. He prepared the chapter on the Poughkeepsie Academy of Medicine." A popular, successful physician, he maintained his practice well past the age of seventy and for a long time was the sole Jewish doctor in practice in Poughkeepsie, for many years on Mill Street, which early in the century was the site of many medical offices.

In the 1930's many more Jewish physicians opened offices, Dr. Harold C. Rosenthal, Dr. Albert Rosenberg (the husband of Elma Samuels) and Dr. Max M. Simon among the earliest. The end of World War II and the tremendous growth of the International Business Machines Company, with three very large plants in the area, attracted many physicians to set up practice in Poughkeepsie and environs, chiefly in specialties which, during that time, began to take the place of general practice. An impressive number of young people, among them the offspring of local physicians, became doctors, but few returned to their home area. Most local medical graduates seem to prefer to settle in larger cities.

Among the physicians in practice in Poughkeepsie since before World War II are: Drs. Marc Eckstein, Benjamin Effron, Florence Gottdiener, Kurt Holzer, Reuben Lapidus, Theodore Rimai, Albert Rosenberg, Harold Rosenthal and Max Simon. Those no longer living are: Drs. Louis Goldberg, Elvin Gottdiener, Lloyd Harris, Martin Leiser, Louis Lipman, Irving Ostrow, Samuel Simon and Aaron Sobel. At this writing there are over fifty Jewish physicians practicing in Poughkeepsie and within a few miles of the city.

For a period in the late 1930's there was a discussion among certain Jewish Community leaders of the possibility of establishing a Jewish sponsored hospital in the city. It was during a period when Jewish physicians faced difficulty in being admitted to internships and residencies in many hospitals. In that decade a Jewish plastic surgeon had settled on Lafayette Place in Poughkeepsie, and finding that he could not get a hospital affiliation, left after a short stay.

The back room of Art Levinsohn's pharmacy, then at the corner of Main and Bridge Streets, was the scene of many meetings on various Jewish causes. The proponents of the Jewish hospital met there and a committee was appointed. Jack Siegel, whose son Edward was a medical student, was a member of the committee. According to Art Levinsohn, a factional strife between two of the then leading Jewish physicians was a blow to the idea, and "it never got off the ground".

Lawyers

The earliest known Jewish lawyer was William Strauss, the son of Solomon Strauss, a well known dry goods store owner on Main Street. His law practice, at 47 Market Street, lasted from the late 1880's through the 1890's. There was no listing of him in 1900, and there is no known reason for his fairly brief period of law practice. The Strauss family lived for many years at 125 Academy Street. A newspaper item of February 18, 1922 stated that Miss Mary Strauss, aged sixty, represented in court by Attorney Anna Dayley, was being held against her will. Further information about the case was not published.

Harry C. Harris (a son of Abraham Harris) was born in Poughkeepsie in 1872. As a teen ager he attended the Poughkeepsie Military Institute, headed by C. B. Warring, on the site of which Warring Elementary School now stands. Young Harris was one of the very few Jewish youths to attend that school. He was admitted to the Bar in 1897 and practiced during the first quarter of the Twentieth Century. He was married to a non-Jew and his children, Beckwith, Maybelle and Pauline were not a part of the Jewish community. Harris died in 1928. In 1901 William Gellert, a son of Henry B. Gellert, was listed as a law clerk, going into practice a few years later. Harris's cousin, Harold Jacobs, a bachelor, practiced law in the city for many years starting before 1920; Paul Rosen was also

established in the practice of law in the same decade.

Included among lawyers who were in practice in Poughkeepsie before World War II (1941) are: David and Merrill Effron, Joseph and Percy Gellert, Milton Haven, Herman Levine, Samuel Rosen, Lloyd Rosenthal, Nathaniel Rubin, George Schoenbrun, Carl Silber, J. George Spitz, Allen Weisman and Joseph Worona. Those of that period no longer living are: Joseph Acker, Ely Gellert (a brother of Joseph), Alexander Goldberg, Edward Kovacs, Paul Rosen and Paul Samuels.

At the time of this writing, there are over fifty Jewish lawyers in Poughkeepsie and near vicinity. Included are a number of father and son firms: Abraham and Paul Banner, Joseph and Arthur Gellert, Herman and Robert Levine, Carl and David Silber and J. George and Andrew Spitz. Nathaniel Rubin and his son-in-law Martin Charwat are in practice together.

In the last decade the number of women entering law schools has increased markedly. At present there are the following Jewish women practicing law in Poughkeepsie: Lynn Hanig, Rose Baum Kraut, Raina Maissel, Jacqueline Martin and Jode Millman.

Dentists

In 1910 Dr. N. S. Traub from Yonkers was listed in the City Directory as maintaining a dental practice in Poughkeepsie, but it is not known if it was a full-time practice; the Directory does not indicate that he had a residence in the city. The earliest known dentists in regular practice were Drs. Samuel Lang and Samuel Levitch, both of whom arrived, a short time apart, before 1913. Nothing is known of the length of practice of Dr. Lang. Dr. Levitch, the father of Mrs. Lloyd Rosenthal (Winona) and the late Mrs. Alvin Brooke (Rhoda), had his office on the corner of Garden and Main Streets. After his death in the early 1930's, another dentist, Dr. Irving Hoffman, was located in the same office.

In the decade of 1920, Dr. Maurice Katz and Dr. Charles Hoffman opened dental offices mid-town on Main Street. Dr. Hoffman was a native Poughkeepsian; Dr. Katz was married to Eva Albert of a well known local family. Their daughter Mrs. Fred Jaeger (Doris) is a lifetime resident of this city.

At the present time there are more than twenty-five Jewish dentists in practice in Poughkeepsie and near environs; the practice of

many is in a dental specialty. Among the dentists who have been practicing since before World War II are: Drs. Abraham Krakower, Martin Siegel, Maurice Sitomer, Sheldon Solomon, Frank Stein and Abraham Tinkelman. Those no longer living are: Drs. Isaac Becker, Milford Eisner, Jacob Erdreich, Charles Hoffman, Irving Hoffman, Ely Rosenthal and Samuel Stein.

Dr. Sara Goldberg, the daughter of Paul and Naomi Satz Goldberg, is practicing dentistry in Wappingers Falls. It is not known whether there has been any Jewish woman dentist in the Poughkeepsie area between the 1920's when Dr. Helen Stein, of one of the earliest local Hungarian families, maintained a practice, and Dr. Goldberg, who opened her practice in the last several years.

Pharmacists

The earliest Jewish pharmacist of this Century was Moses Sobel, a younger brother of Dr. Aaron Sobel, the well known physician. The younger Sobel opened a pharmacy at 639 Main Street before 1912, but lived only until 1918, a victim of the horrendous Spanish Influenza epidemic which swept many parts of the world after the end of World War I. Early in the 1920's Leon Seley opened a pharmacy at 98 Main Street, at the corner of South Clover Street, and was at that location for many years before moving uptown. Later in the same decade Herman Katzen bought the long established Vassar Pharmacy on Market Street. A short time later it was sold to Herman Godes and Jacob Wofsey who maintained it for many years.

After graduating from pharmacy college in the late 1920's, Arthur Levinsohn purchased an old established drug store (a more popular term for a pharmacy at that time) at the south-west corner of Main and Bridge Streets. Arthur's outstanding personality and sense of humor, and his early involvement in Jewish Community affairs, made his pharmacy a gathering place of friends and customers. Certain young physicians and other professionals, starting in practice and not too busy, were fond of stopping at Art Levinsohn's drug store for chit-chat in the room in the back. With tongue-in-check, Levinsohn claimed that young doctors "hung around", hoping that someone would phone him to recommend a physician.

Entering the armed forces during World War II (serving part of the time in England), Levinsohn sold his business to Solomon Neustat,

who later developed a small chain of pharmacies. His wife Betty is the author of several plays which have been produced. On his return Arthur opened a pharmacy on Main Street opposite Crannel, at a site where David Harris had conducted a variety store, with emphasis on patent medicines. The new pharmacy included a soda fountain which was a feature of many drug stores at that time. Some years later the location was sold for a new building for Woolworth's and Levinsohn moved to the Clinton Square area, in business there until he retired.

Other well known pharmacists of recent years have been: Samuel Berlin, William Haber, Joseph Meyerson, Irving Blatt, Michael Schneller, Sidney Sidelman, Moses Simon and Harry Wishinsky.

Opticians and Related Eye Specialists

The earliest Jewish optician of whom there is a record was Dr. Nathan Rosenthal in practice at 205 Church Street for a few years beginning in 1870. In 1888 Louis Calisher was in a list of practicing opticians. From 1912 to 1915 Jacob Steiner was an eye specialist with an office on Main Street. The City Directories of three different years listed his profession in varied terms: optician, oculist and optometrist. The February 2, 1919 issue of the Poughkeepsie Eagle contained a display advertisement stating "B. Wimpelberg O.D. registered eye specialist". He practiced in the city from 1917 to 1922.

In recent years among the practicing optometrists have been: Drs. Phillip Moselle, David Perlberg, both of whom started before World War II, Leonard Goldstein, Bernard Kovacs, Saul Polenberg, Joseph Seidenfeld, Richard Shuldiner, and Jerome and Murray Sigalow.

Podiatrists

The late Irving Pashin was a prominent podiatrist for many years. Starting in practice in the 1930's with an office over a store at the corner of Main and South Hamilton Streets, he later moved to a larger ground floor office in the building that was formerly the Windsor Hotel. His wife Edna maintained a shoe store next door in the

same building.

Among the podiatrists now in practice in the area are: Leonard Mishkin, Allen Rosenberg, Lewis Sims, and Edward Stamm, who started with his uncle Irving Pashin, and David B. Stamm.

Chiropractors

An early chiropractor, in the 1920's, was John S. Schoenbrun, the father of George Schoenbrun, an attorney and stamp expert. John Schoenbrun's widow Bessie maintained a well known collection agency for many years.

Some years later Harry R. Maltz moved to Poughkeepsie and set up a practice. He was an active supporter of the Jewish Community Center during its years on North Hamilton Street. He was succeeded in the practice by his son Manus Maltz who retired recently and moved to Florida. Lester Lutz practices in Pleasant Valley.

Accountants

Before 1914 the City Directory had no business listing in the category of Accountants; that year there was only one accountant named. The growth of accountancy as a profession accompanied the ever developing tax problems in the years following World War I. In 1960 among accountants listed were: Godfrey Goldman, Joseph Kahn, Milton Klein, Walter Levine and Jules Shayo. In the Business section of the 1981 telephone directory there are several dozen accountants; among the Jewish accountants listed are: Harold Ahrens, Stanley Cornell, Finger and Gross, Eugene Fleishman, Bernard Handel, Stephen Kirshon, Milton Klein, Carl Kopstein, Stephen and Lawrence Landau, David Lewittes, Jules Shayo, and Sheldon Teitelbaum.

Engineers

In the Business section of the 1915 Poughkeepsie City Directory there was a single consulting engineer; by 1932 there were seven engineers, none of them Jewish. By the 1950's one Jewish engineering firm appeared, Robert Hopp Associates; Robert Hopp

moved from the city during the next decade. At the time of this writing among the consulting engineers listed are Milton Chazen, Harold Haywood and Harold Miller. It is known that a number of Jewish engineers are employed by I.B.M. and Texaco in this area.

Until almost mid-point of this century a dastardly form of anti-Semitism was practiced by most large corporations employing engineers and chemists; they refused to hire Jews except for a token few. Law schools and accountancy colleges had numerous students retraining because they could not find employment in the fields of engineering and chemistry. Finally laws were passed forbidding any questions of religious affiliation on job applications. In addition, with World War II, when industries sought skilled professional workers in these sciences, Jewish engineers and chemists have been able to prove their ability, which in many situations was shown to be superior.

Jews in Public Life

In 1922 George Salberg, the owner of the men's clothing store M. Shwartz and Company was appointed Police Commissioner, an honorary city position. With thorough changes in City government in fairly recent years that position has been eliminated.

The first Jewish mayor was J. George Spitz; Arthur Weinberg has been mayor in more recent years. Albert Rosenblatt, who came to Poughkeepsie in his thirties, served two terms as District Attorney of Dutchess County, later was County Judge, and in 1982 has begun a term as Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of New York.

Milton Haven was the first Jewish Judge of the City Court; Joseph Gellert also served in that position and was later County Attorney. Allen Weisman was Clerk of the City Court and Assistant City Judge; he now makes his home in Florida. Barry Grandeau for a period was Acting City Court Judge. In addition to City judgeships local Jews have held similar positions in other jurisdictions. Abraham Banner and Harold Epstein have been Justices in the Town of Poughkeepsie and George Marlow is presently serving in that capacity.

Herman Levine has been Chairman of the Poughkeepsie Urban Renewal Agency and a member of the City of Poughkeepsie Planning Commission.

Ely L. Gellert, after serving as Assistant District Attorney of

Dutchess County from 1926 through 1951, filled the office of District Attorney. After completing the unexpired term of the late Emeel Betros, Stephen Saland, a local attorney, in 1980 was elected the present Assemblyman from the district which includes Poughkeepsie. Rosalie Hodas has been a County Legislator for three terms. She was the first Jew to serve in the Dutchess County Legislature. Martin Kurkhill was appointed to serve an unexpired term. In the early years of his law practice Carl Silber was elected for a number of terms as Alderman of the downtown district in which he then lived; he has since moved to the Town of Poughkeepsie. Albert Hecht, recently deceased, represented the Democratic Party on the County Election Board.

In February 1982 Bernard Kessler, a prominent attorney, was designated by Gov. Hugh Carey as Dutchess County Judge to serve in 1982, as the result of the election of former County Judge Albert M. Rosenblatt to the State Supreme Court.

For many years the Poughkeepsie City Board of Education has been elected without party designations. In previous years ethnic considerations were sometimes a part of the appointments; although choosing for the Board of Education was not strictly in the realm of politics, there were occasionally political overtones in the choice of members. The earliest Jewish member in the 1920's was Ely Elting, the men's clothing store owner whose name still graces the tower of the building at the corner of Main and Liberty Streets, where his business was located. Those who served in more recent years were: Morris L. Effron, Samuel Rosen, Martha Reifler (Mrs. Nathan Reifler), Henry Daniels and Dr. Martin Siegel. Until recently Barry Grandeau was a member of the Poughkeepsie City Board of Education.

A. Louis Rubin was for years head of the Poughkeepsie office of the Internal Revenue Service.

Early Jewish Teachers in Poughkeepsie Schools

The earliest known Jewish teacher in Poughkeepsie public schools was Sophie Gellert, the daughter of Henry Gellert. Graduated from Poughkeepsie High School in 1889, she attended the New Paltz Normal School, then a two-year teacher training school. From 1893 into the 1920's she taught in the Governor Clinton School, then on upper Cannon Street in a building that has since

become a factory. Her sister Jeannette was listed as a teacher in an early Twentieth Century city directory, but there is no record of her having taught in Poughkeepsie. During the second decade of the present century, in addition to Sophie Gellert, two young women not residents of the city taught in the Poughkeepsie School System: Lilian Mufson and Rose Ginsberg.

It was not until the latter part of the 1920's that other Jews were hired as teachers. One of the earliest was Frances Wallace, the daughter of the H.A. Wallaces. Others employed a few years after her were: Della Cantor (the first to teach in the high school), Estelle (Effron) Dobo, Ethel (Kerlansky) Elkind, Selma (Schlachter) Streifer, Mollie (Levine) Goldberg, and Ruth (Abramsky) Daniels. The last two were librarians in the school system.

In recent years there have been many Jewish teachers in the Poughkeepsie School System as well as in the many schools of the surrounding suburbs.

Poughkeepsie Jews in Real Estate

In the year 1915 scholars of Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology made a study in depth of immigrants arriving in great numbers from Europe; treating the Jews as a group, they reported among them an enormous hunger for acquiring real estate. The desire of Jewish newcomers to own real estate is easily explained by history through many centuries. Certain countries did not permit the ownership of land by Jews. Owning land denoted to many a certain stability, which through years of persecution, the Jews did not have. Besides real estate was generally a good investment.

The local newspapers of the Nineteenth Century rarely reported real estate transactions. Early in this century sales of real property were reported; this continued until fairly recent years. One of the earliest items available was a 1904 transfer, briefly stated "Weaver to Jacob Abramsky, west side of East Mansion Street $1,300". By 1912 reports of Jewish owned real estate were fairly frequent. In the boom years following the end of World War I until the Depression of 1929, many Jewish businessmen and women turned to real estate as a side line and as a good investment. During that period many substantial brick apartment buildings in the central area of Poughkeepsie were erected, with Jewish businessmen not only ar-

ranging the financing of the deals, chiefly with mortgages, but also giving the building contractor advice on just how they wanted the job done.

An early store and apartment building of the period was an investment by Barnett Abramsky on Main Street below North Cherry Street. Quite an ambitious project, the brick building consisted of five stores with a number of apartments on two floors above. Another early investor was A. Steinberg who lived in Poughkeepsie briefly and was actually in the construction business. On the south side of Main Street below Palmer Avenue he built three buildings in a row, one was a lengthy store and apartment structure, another had apartments only, and there was a building to house a movie theatre, which he named Vassar Theatre. This writer recalls seeing there an early film "Great Expectations" based on the Dickens novel, with Jack Pickford, the brother of the famous Mary Pickford, playing the lead. This theatre, the first built outside the main business section, was not a success. It was discontinued after a number of years and stores were built in its place.

Another early store and apartment building was built on Main Street near Corlies Avenue by Samuel Satz the father of four sons who later became prominent Poughkeepsie businessmen. To clear the site for the building, a wooden two family house was moved around the corner to Corlies Avenue, with Satz's daughter Charlotte sitting gleefully on the upper porch during the move.

Abraham Stein, (no relation to the earlier settler of the same name on lower Main Street) the owner of a grocery store at the corner of Main and Rose Streets, became interested in real estate and had built a large red brick apartment house on South Hamilton Street and also smaller twin buildings, one on upper Main Street and another on Cannon Street above South Hamilton Street. New York City apartment builders often gave names to their structures; following their example, Mr. Stein named one of the twin buildings Abington, for himself and the other Essington, for his wife Esther. These names were probably thought up by their two sons, Drs. Frank and Samuel Stein, both dentists.

Jacob Lass, who had turned from shoe repairing to the furniture business, had contracted for two apartment buildings of moderate size, one a store and apartment structure on upper Main Street and the other of apartments only on Carroll Street. Barclay Street is the site of an apartment building contracted for by M. Becker, a tailor and later a dealer in tailor's supplies on Garden Street. Joseph

Silber, who sold milk and milk products on South Perry Street, had constructed a brick building with a store and apartments. He was the father of Carl Silber, well known local attorney.

David Goldberg, the father of the late Dr. Louis Goldberg and the late Alexander Goldberg, an attorney, had maintained a busy tailoring business; he retired and turned to real estate in the middle Twenties, contracting for three store-apartment buildings in a row on Main Street at Roosevelt Avenue. Around the corner, Hyman Worona (the father of the attorney Joseph Worona), who was a masonry contractor, built two sizable apartment buildings, Mr. Worona was also the contractor in the construction of many of the buildings erected for Jewish entrepreneurs at that time.

Samuel Effron's start in having building construction done occurred just before World War I, with a store and apartment building on South Clinton Street near Main. It contained a duplex apartment for himself and his family. By then Mr. Effron had turned from the grocery business to a store supplying animal feeds, with a limited stock of bakery supplies. At the rear of the South Clinton Street building, he had built an adjunct to his business, a small grist mill, which, in addition to animal feeds, produced whole wheat flour. This was, in a sense, a hobby of Sam Effron's. In the second half of the 1920's he had built a large apartment building at the corner of Carroll and Franklin Streets.

Samuel Effron's brother David went into real estate with a different approach. In his early years in this city he had been a junk dealer (a designation more recently changed to scrap metal dealer) and later invested in apartment buildings which he had reconstructed from large Victorian homes.

Many other Jewish residents of the community had buildings of various types and sizes constructed, and others bought houses already standing, to keep as investments, or to sell on the rising market. During the Depression which started in 1929, sometimes mortgage payments or other expenses could not be met by property owners, and the buildings had to be given up.

In the 1920's with the tremendous boom in real estate buying and selling, and great activity in building construction, the real estate agent or broker became an important medium of transactions. Isadore Bloch, who came to Poughkeepsie about 1910 had an office in mid-town, but most operated from their homes, carrying their listings "in their hats" so to speak. Among the well known real estate agents of that boom period were: Charles Bloom, Morris

Guralnick, Harry Wrobel and Herman Weisberger. Others who could barely read and write were swept into the business at a time when a house was sometimes sold at a profit when the ink was hardly dry on a previous contract. Sometimes they would approach a possible buyer with "Have I got a 'possel' (parcel) for you!"

In the 1910's and 1920's two family houses were favored dwelling places for many middle-class residents of cities like Poughkeepsie, but hardly any were built after 1925. Samuel Stein was a carpenter-contractor in this field. The construction firm of Miller and Gaynor (Samuel Miller and Morris Gaynor) was among the well known builders of large public edifices.

By the latter half of this Century, shopping center development had started, and Harold Miller, an engineer and son of Samuel Miller, was prominent in this field. As shopping centers proliferated, large contracting firms from out of the area, many specializing in such complexes, took over. The new developments were generally called shopping plazas or malls, and most popular have been "covered malls" with air conditioning in summer and heat in winter. These complexes became favorite family strolling areas.

Garden type apartments, generally in fairly small buildings of two stories, surrounded by lawns and some landscaping, have been the most favored multiple dwellings in this era. Most were developed by outside builders, two of whom James Klein and Igal Bash (an Israeli) remained in Dutchess County for a number of years. Attractive one family homes, many in the Town of Poughkeepsie have been the specialty of the late Harry Raker and the firm of Sam Hankin and son Robert. Burton Gold and David Silverman together built small homes, first developing almost the whole of Whittier Boulevard; Gold later branched out into public housing.

Sidney Diamond, Charles Finnerman, Irving Spevack and the late Carl Turner have been well known realtors in recent years.

War Service

Frank Hasbrouck's History of Dutchess County published in 1909 names Poughkeepsie residents who served in the American Revolution. Listed are four names of men who were probably Jewish: David and Moses Harris, Aaron Israel and Jacob Levey. There was a Harris family in the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community early in the nineteenth century and there is a possibility that David

and Moses were of that family. The last two of the group had names that were definitely Jewish.

Records of Jews who served in the Civil War and the Spanish-American War have not been available to this researcher; probably there have been no such lists, due to the separation of Church and State in this nation's history.

When the United States entered World War I in 1917, there was much emphasis within the general population on war effort activities on the "home front" (a newly created term). "Keep the Home Fires Burning" had been composed earlier in the war; it became a rallying song for the war efforts of civilians. Immediately after the declaration of war by this country, a huge fund raising drive for the Red Cross was organized; Joseph Semuels was appointed chairman of the Jewish Committee in Poughkeepsie. Later a Jewish Women's Auxiliary of the Red Cross was formed with Mr. and Mrs. Samuels in lead roles as organizers. Over thirty women comprised a sewing group for the war effort. A souvenir book of the period includes a photograph of this organization, the women clad in white, with a special Red Cross headdress, busily sewing. Also included is a photograph of the Jewish Women's Auxiliary of the Red Cross marching in a Liberty Loan Parade (organized to emphasize the purchase of government bonds to raise funds for the war).

A partial list of Jewish men serving in World War I included: Louis Albert, Max Cheeger, Ely Gellert, Nathan Golensky, Morris Guralnick, two brothers named Manus (possibly the sons of the Hebrew teacher Faivel Manusewitz, who was generally called Mr. Manus), three sons of Herman Rattner, Louis, Manuel and Abraham, and Paul Rosen. Abraham Rattner, the artist was in a Camouflage Division which had come into prominence in that war. Dr. Moses Eisner, of the Medical Corps, died in an epidemic while in service.

Many dozens of local Jewish men and a few women served in World War II. Those who lost their lives in the conflict were Bernard Goodkin, Isaac Graubart, Martin Greenberg, and Herman Siegel. Herman Siegel, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Siegel, who died in combat in Europe, was memorialized with the naming of the local Jewish War Veterans organization, the Private Herman Siegel Post.

Music

The earliest mention of a member of the Jewish Community involved in musical performance is found in Helen Andrus' "A Century of Music in Poughkeepsie, 1802-1911". In the later 1860's Samelson's Orchestra was organized by Samuel Samelson soon after his arrival in Poughkeepsie. It was popular in concert playing as well as at social functions. She mentions Pine Hall which opened in February 1861 (in what was later the Falkill Building) as the scene of many musical entertainments.

The business section of the City Directory of 1870 included a listing "Bands" with what was probably advertising "Samelson's Poughkeepsie String Band (furnish brass and string music — Samuel Samelson, leader; headquarters 165 Main Street)". That was the location of his fancy goods store.

In the 1870's a small orchestra named the Poughkeepsie Philharmonic Society was organized and conducted by S. Samelson "for the performance of high-class concert music". For several years this orchestra performed in many concerts in some of which additional musicians participated. In 1873 Samelson played first violin in an orchestra accompanying the Mendelsohn Society at the Opera House (no doubt the old Collingwood Opera House).

Further information of Samelson from Miss Andrus' work indicates that his orchestra accompanied a performance of the oratorio "Esther" also given at the Opera House. In 1876 the oratorio "Belchazzar", accompanied by his orchestra, was sung. In addition to other concerts, in 1878 Samelson's group played at two programs given by the Germania Singing Society.

Samelson's musicians were popular at picnics and other informal gatherings; in the late 1870's, an advertisement featured a St. Mary's Sunday School picnic with Samelson's Orchestra. In the Sunday Courier of February 22, 1880 a sizable display advertisement read "Grand Purim Masquerade and Civic Ball of Aaron Lodge of B'nai B'rith. Music by Samelson's full orchestra. Tickets for sale by A. Asher, H. B. Gellert, B. Joseph, M. Schwartz, A. Wimpelberg and M. Goldstone."

By the 1880's several other bands and orchestras were performing in the city, according to Miss Andrus "but Samelson's orchestra still remained very popular during the greater part of the '80's until Mr. Samelson left the city." When he departed and when he returned is not known, but in the 1901 Directory he was listed as residing at

30 North Hamilton Street.

In an 1875 newspaper advertisement, Samelson's fancy goods store, his other means of livelihood, featured hats, silks, ribbons, gloves, parasols and umbrellas. By April 16, 1876 he was advertising the grand opening of a clothing and accessory business with the term "new goods" probably indicating a changeover from women's "fancy goods".

In existence from 1900 to 1915, the Poughkeepsie Symphony Society with William Lyon Dobbs, director, was probably formed of professional and amateur musicians. Mr. Dobbs was a music teacher whose one time studio at 89 Cannon Street is still indicated by stained glass windows with musical motifs. James W. Watts, for many years a well known violin teacher in the city, was the concertmaster. In 1907 Reuben Goldberg and Reuben M. Rosen were part of the group; in 1914 Harold K. Joseph was also a member.

By 1928 Mr. Watts was the conductor of the Poughkeepsie Symphony Society which performed at a concert in the High School on April 23. Morris Perlman (later a well known plastic surgeon in California known as Dr. Maurice Parkes) was the piano accompanist. The organization of the orchestra had among its officers Dr. Charles Hoffman and Anna Morowitz. Active members (players) included among others the following violinists: Ida Baskin, David Effron, Sydney Fleishman (concertmaster), Mrs. Philip (Anna) Morowitz, Nathan Reifler and Dr. Charles Hoffman. Also listed on the program were Honorary and Associate members of the Society, including: Morris Effron, Philip Morowitz, Joseph Perlman, and Dr. Charles Hoffman, the last named of the orchestra and the rest relatives of other instrumentalists. Many of Mr. Watts' violin students gained experience with the orchestra, maintained chiefly by him.

Estelle Dobo, a sister of this writer, remembers playing with the orchestra as one of Watts' violin students in the 1920's, at a noontime concert to entertain the employees of the Hull Manufacturing Company. This factory, located in a large one-story building on Crannel Street, produced trousers (chiefly for working men) and had a catchy slogan "Ten cents a button, a dollar a rip". Whether any purchaser ever tested the validity of this slogan by bringing to the management a detached button or an open seam, is not known.

In the early 1940's the Dutchess County Philharmonic Society was formed, with both professional and amateur instrumentalists. Through the approximately twenty years of its existence, its

membership included at various times Dr. Sidney Miller, Sydney Fleishman, Rose Lehv, Ethel Grauer, Jerome Rabinowitz, Kurt Grishman, and Rudolph Efram. It was later replaced by the wholly professional Hudson Valley Philharmonic Orchestra. For a number of years it was led by Claude Monteux, a son of Pierre Monteux, a world famous conductor. The recent leadership of Imre Pallo, a conductor of international repute, has led to the orchestra's development as an outstanding musical force in the mid-Hudson area.

The 1920's often referred to as the "Jazz Age" offered young musicians income possibilities through playing with dance bands. Many clubs and other organizations scheduled dances both for sociability and for fund raising; young and old were crowding the dance floors. The old Knights of Columbus Hall on Washington Street had a large dance floor, and was a favored site for social affairs.

Among the talented instrumentalists was George Weiss (father of Miriam Niesen (Mrs. Seymour Niesen)), a dry goods store owner on lower Main Street as well as a professional pianist. Henry Rose, a later pianist of note, on leaving Poughkeepsie, played with an orchestra performing for Eddie Cantor's program on national radio. Leonard Kahn, pianist, and Sydney Fleishman, violinist were other talented performers with dance bands. Others in a long list of jazz musicians were: Sidney Miller (saxophone), Morris Perlman (piano), William Friedman (trumpet), Sam Stein (banjo), Irving Friedman (drums), Charles Millman (drums), and Milton Haven (violin). College expenses for some were earned by their musical ability.

Into the Later Years of the Twentieth Century

Mrs. Selma Kahn Streifer was born in Cleveland; she moved to Poughkeepsie with her parents Joseph and Minnie Schlachter and a brother and sister in 1920. With piano lessons from an early age, she developed a special talent as an accompanist. A graduate of State College at Albany (since renamed State University of New York at Albany), she has a Master's degree from Columbia University. Raising two children and following a career in high school teaching did not deter her from keeping up her musical skills. Her son Henry is a physician in Atlanta and her daughter Olga is an architect in the Boston area. Mrs. Streifer has taught business

subjects in the Poughkeepsie High School and in schools in other areas; in recent years she has been a substitute teacher in music in addition to business subjects.

Through the years many organizations in the city had the benefit of Selma Kahn Streifer's musical talent. She was a founder of Young Judaea in the late 1930's; in her leadership, the programs of the group were enhanced with instruction in Hebrew and Yiddish songs. In the 1940's the Yiddish Dramatic Club, of which she was a member, benefited from her piano accompaniments in musical dramas and other programs.

It has not been unusual for her services as an accompanist for soloists or for group singing to be requested by organizations in which she was not a member. She willingly performed without recompense. Among the numerous groups for which she has played the piano have been: the Hebrew Progressive Ladies Aid Society, the Hebrew Benevolent Society, Obed Lodge of the Masonic Order, Hadassah, O.R.T., the Jewish Center and its Good Companions group and Temple Beth-El Sisterhood.

Included in the study groups which the local chapter of Brandeis University Women has initiated in the year 1981-82 has been Yiddish Studies. With Selma Kahn Streifer and Belle Wishinsky as leaders, it has had special emphasis on Yiddish music.

Refugees From Hitler's Atrocities

When Hitler became Chancellor of Germany in 1933, the fate of that country's Jews immediately became apparent, but no one foresaw the horrors of the Holocaust with its murder of six million Jews. A rabid anti-Semite who had been taught his hatred of Jews by his father, Hitler's measures against the Jews were slightly limited at first, but they soon developed into a program of mass murder.

In the early days of Nazi command, a small percentage of Jews escaped from Germany and later from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria and other countries overrun by his armies. Some escaped to England, the United States, South Africa, and a number of other countries, none of which accepted a really large number of refugees from the terror. At first, Germans were allowed to take with them a limited amount of household goods, but in a short time that was not permitted.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt, in accepting a comparatively small number of refugees for entry into the United States, was said to have been prevented from increasing the number by the laws and public opinion; yet, as the head of a nation in a state of war later, he could have found ways of saving more lives. To enter this country, a foreigner was required to have a sponsor in the United States who would guarantee that the new arrival would not become a public charge. Many American Jews became sponsors, very often for total strangers; this writer recalls having served as a sponsor for a German couple. In Poughkeepsie many sponsors came forward. Organizations such as the National Refugee Service, H.I.A.S. and local fund-raising groups were successful in saving some lives. Committees of scientists, musicians and prominent people in the arts extended help to people of great talent.

In the almost forty years since the Holocaust, it may be that this country has developed a greater sense of humanity. The recent admission of many thousands of natives of certain East Asian countries and of several Caribbean islands would seem to attest to that.

Among the earliest of the several hundred refugees who at some time made their home in Poughkeepsie were: Dr. Martin Leiser, his wife Edith, his parents and a brother, and her mother, Mrs. Irma Seckel, Dr. Kurt and Ilse Holzer, and his parents, Rabbi Isaac and Betty Holzer, Dr. Steven Dobo, Alex Grishman and his wife Rosalie, Mrs. Toni Grishman and her children Leoni and Kurt (now a well known member of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic Orchestra), Morris and Clara Haas, Felix and Irma Adler and their daughter and son-in-law Bruno and Gertrude Forsher. In addition to Kurt Grishman, Edith Leiser, Dr. Steven Dobo and Dr. Kurt and Ilse Holzer are still living in Poughkeepsie.

The Move to the South

Shortly after World War I a move to the southern states, involving manufacturing, occurred. The cotton mills, a leading industry in New England, particularly in Connecticut and Massachusetts, found new locations in the South. The owners, often large corporations, sought cheap labor, more available in that area; in addition they wished to escape the ever-strengthening labor unions of the North.

In the years following World War II a different departure from the

North developed, the trek of settlers and visitors with a strong desire to escape cold winters and to enjoy longer seasons of outdoor pleasures. This migration was abetted by the prosperity for many which followed World War II; Southern Florida, with its semi-tropical weather generally in effect, had great drawing power for Jews living in the North. Many Poughkeepsians, especially those nearing retirement age, bought or rented living quarters. Some changed their year-round residences, others lived in Florida for the winter months, or a month or two in that season. Some early settlers chose the Miami area, particularly Miami Beach; neighboring Hollywood and Hallandale had their share of enthusiasts.

A building boom of apartment houses developed, especially of the condominium type. With land values less inflated north of the Miami area, the tremendous growth of apartment construction advanced farther up the coast and considerably inland. Some were in self-contained communities with their own social, cultural and athletic facilities. The population of some of these communities exceed that of some northern cities.

Poughkeepsians have been occupying apartments, generally by purchase, in most of the well-known areas, including Fort Lauderdale, Lake Worth, Palm Beach, West Palm Beach, Boca Raton, Deerfield Beach, among others.

The Louwisch Affair

Probably the most shocking event in the history of the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community took place in the Fall of 1920.

The Poughkeepsie Hebrew School had been founded in 1919, and in the September 10, 1920 issue of the Poughkeepsie Eagle-News, the city's morning newspaper, the celebration of the school's first birthday, at a well-attended gathering was described in a lengthy article. Mr. M. J. Fessler presided. Rabbi Joseph Louwisch, the principal of the school, brought forward "a class of four pupils ranging in age from six to fourteen, who read and translated from Hebrew into English". Three re-elected trustees were presented: David Eisner, Samuel Effron, and Morris Effron; new trustees were: Joseph Perlmutter, Barnett Abramsky, and Isaac Fleishman. The treasurer's report indicated the amount of six thousand dollars, and subscriptions amounting to eight hundred dollars were pledged at the meeting. Formal addresses were given

by Mayor Ralph Butts, and H. A. Schatz, head of an important manufacturing concern and president of the Chamber of Commerce.

Three days later, in a news item, Rabbi Louwisch was reported as having conducted Yom Kippur services for Congregation Schomre Hadath, meeting temporarily at Masonic Temple prior to its move to a new building. He preached a sermon entitled: The Day of Atonement.

On Sunday evening, October 24th, as reported in the Eagle-News the following day, Dr. Joseph Louwisch was saved by police from a band of nearly one hundred Jewish women who had learned of the suicide of his former wife Sheva Levine, twenty eight years old. Louwisch had started an action for an annulment two days after their marriage. They were married August 24th on her arrival in this country from Odessa, Russia. He charged that she had Bolshevistic tendencies and that she believed in "free love". The band of women (and some men) waited outside Rabbi Louwisch's boarding house at the corner of South Bridge and Union Streets, with shouts of "Lynch him".

He was known as Dr. Louwisch or Rabbi Louwisch. (The origin of both titles was not known definitely, or even if he was an ordained Rabbi, since he was educated in Russia) but he was very bright and seemingly well learned. He had arrived in this country ten years before, and strove to earn enough money to send for his fiancee. The European War intervened. He had sent her a thousand dollars, of which two hundred fifty dollars, according to testimony in the court action, she had spent for the benefit of a man with whom she lived for two years in Russia.

In the court action for the annulment, Mrs. Louwisch admitted she believed in "free love". The annulment was granted October 2nd; meanwhile she had left Poughkeepsie to live at the home of an uncle in Boston. There on the 6th of October, she committed suicide. Rumor indicated that she was pregnant.

Sheva's uncle Benjamin Rabalsky, wrote to some local Jewish women upbraiding them for their delay in showing interest in what he termed brutal and unfair treatment of his niece. A statement from Louwisch read: "I secured an annulment from my wife because of her ideas on free love, and because she was a Bolshevist. Now these women are angry at me." He intimated he was being persecuted for his opposition to socialistic doctrines.

At a meeting of the Hebrew School Board of Trustees the Sunday

following the fracas, it was voted to take no action in the matter, inasmuch as no legal action was taken against Dr. Louwisch; if the case did not become a municipal matter, it would not receive further attention from the Board.

Miss Ida Lippman and Mrs. E. Levine were summoned to City Court charged with having incited a riot. Mrs. Jeanie Friedman, at whose boarding house Louwisch lived, stated she was harassed by leaders of the group because she had testified for Dr. Louwisch during annulment proceedings. Miss Lippman, a young woman then, later became a lawyer in Miami, Florida. She died there in the Fall of 1980.

A mass meeting of the local Jews was called for Sunday afternoon October 30th. The uncle of Sheva Levine, the suicide, and a representative of the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society of New York City were present. During the meeting, a statement indicated that Samuel Effron (father of this author) and Michael Weiss, local citizens prominent in the founding of the Hebrew School, had been called to Dr. Louwisch's boarding house in connection with his annulment action. In their presence the school principal asked his wife to tell what she had told him. She admitted believing in Bolshevism and "free love", but refused to state that she had lived with a man for two years in Russia.

As reported in a long article in the Eagle-News the day after the Mass Meeting, the gathering was extremely emotional, and included Prayers for the dead. The last letter of the dead woman was read, and a resolution was passed in which Rabbi Louwisch was called "a detestable rascal".

In the November 2nd issue of the same newspaper, Samuel Effron made a statement that Rabbi Louwisch had deceived him. Previously Mr. Effron, as a founder and trustee of the Hebrew School, had felt it important to support the head of the school. In his support of the school principal, he had suffered much misapprehension on the part of the leaders of the so-called riot, and for many years he retained a great deal of resentment.

With the prolific news of the National election which made Warren G. Harding President, as well as the New York State gubernatorial election of Nathan Miller, for a few days little publicity of the Louwisch affair appeared. (Some years later, the New York State Constitution was amended so that Governors could not be elected during a year of a Presidential election.)

A few days after the election, a statement by the late Mrs.

Louwisch's uncle was printed, accusing the school principal of being a Communist himself, and quoting him as saying that he hoped to return to Russia. In 1920 Russia was very much in the news because of the Revolution a few years before, and so-called "Free love", one of the tenets of the Revolutionary movement, was the basis for much argumentative discussion in this country.

A short time later the annulment case was re-opened and the original witnesses called. A banner headline "Louwisch case to Grand Jury; warrant for his arrest issued" appeared in the Eagle-News. Another Mass Meeting to attest to the purity of the dead woman was called by the Committee involved in the original protest. During this meeting, the bed sheet with which the suicide had hanged herself was displayed.

As reported in the same newspaper (November 16th) the Grand Jury found two indictments in the case: Perjury and Subornation of Perjury. During the Jewish Community embroilment, the accused was said to be in a "rest cure establishment" for the treatment of his nervous condition.

A final Mass Meeting, poorly attended, took place November 15th. A reward of two hundred dollars was offered for the apprehension of the former Hebrew School principal, now a fugitive from justice. It was suggested that the trustees of the Hebrew School resign, but no action was taken. Louwisch's disappearance was so complete, there was no knowledge by any known member of the local Jewish community of his whereabouts even many years afterward.

The affair probably received some countrywide notice in newspapers, as there were several articles in the New York Times. The New York Daily News, which was founded several years before, sent reporters and photographers to record some of the gatherings. One of their reports, with a photograph, was an item on the front page of an issue.

Some years later, Judge Milton H. Haven was asked by an officer of the Poughkeepsie Savings Bank, if he had a way of ascertaining the present residence of the fugitive, as there was a small account in the bank in his name. Judge Haven could state only that he had heard the man had a brother in Canada.

During the early part of this century, the term "Mass Meeting" was commonly used to indicate a sizable gathering called together for a definite purpose, such as, to help the poor Jewish victims of World War I. The term seems to be in general disuse at the time of

this account (1982).

A Ku Klux Klan Action

The Ku Klux Klan was founded in the South immediately after the Civil War to terrorize the newly freed slaves. Dressed in long white garments, with high peaked headgear covering their faces, usually made of bed sheets, the malicious members often tortured Blacks, and in some cases committed murder. This group virtually disappeared some years into the 1870's. In the early decades of the Twentieth Century, the KKK was revived and this group was prejudiced in thought and action, not only to Blacks, but to Catholics, Jews, and to certain classes of foreigners. They set fire to large wooden crosses as their symbol; these were displayed at outdoor meetings of the Klan.

In the early part of this century, in the area of Poughkeepsie where Grand and Hooker Avenues converge, there was a large outdoor arena known as the Driving Park (Harness races and county fairs were held there; a small section of it is now the site of Krieger Elementary School).

In the early years of the 1920's, a large meeting of the Klan was organized in the Driving Park and Simon King, the well known Poughkeepsie businessman, attempted to attend. The story has been told that he mistakenly received a ticket that was intended for John D. King, known popularly as John D. the gasoline king. He loudly denounced the organization, and was forcibly expelled, with the result that he was somewhat bruised. King was a rugged individualist and it took courage to face such a hateful group. Unfortunately at the time of this writing, coteries of the same organization, with its appeal to prejudice, have been forming, especially in the Middle West.

Areas of Special Significance

Drives for the Relief of Jews in Need

With the limited number of Jews in the United States before the Civil War, organized drives for the relief of fellow Jews in scattered areas of the world were limited in size and scope. In an 1866 issue of The Occident and American Jewish Advocate, mention is made of a collection by the "Executive Committee of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites of Benai Berith". Congregation Bnai Israel, now generally known as Vassar Temple, had contributed through its secretary, Benjamin Joseph, the sum of fifty dollars for poor Jews of Palestine. The Poughkeepsie branch of Benai Berith, Aaron Lodge, was not established until 1868.

During the rest of the Nineteenth Century and into the Twentieth, relief committees organized campaigns to raise funds for poor Jews in Europe and the Middle East (then called the Near East), but it was not until the European War, later called World War I, that large scale relief drives were organized. In that period the National Jewish Relief Committee was formed. During the war, the Jewish Welfare Board which had recently been organized to conduct welfare work of Jewish servicement, approached smaller Jewish communities like that of Poughkeepsie for funds to carry on their work.

In 1919, with parts of Europe severely devastated by the war which ended the year before, a Central Relief Committee was in operation, with headquarters in New York City. This absorbed a number of smaller committees. It was committed to the raising of funds for the aid of European Jews suffering as a result of the war (estimated to number three million). A lengthy double column article on the front page of the Poughkeepsie Sunday Courier of March 2, 1919 recounted the setting up of a campaign in Poughkeepsie, with a meeting called at the Court House. With the official name of United Jewish Central Relief Committee, arrangements for the campaign were in the charge of co-chairmen George Salberg of M. Shwartz & Co. and A. M. Nathan, the owner of a well known millinery store. Others serving on the committee were: Joseph Samuels, Arthur Spencer, George Albert, Simon King, Dr. Aaron Sobel, I. Walder, Rabbi Sigmund Israel, Joseph Eisner and Isaac Eisner.

In 1939, the national organization United Jewish Appeal (U.J.A.) was founded. With well-organized local Jewish community committees all over the United States, its fund-raising efforts have had remarkable success. From 1938 through 1967 the organization

raised an estimated total of one billion, nine hundred twenty five million dollars. In many communities there is a special Women's Committee, as well as the general committee. Before the United Jewish Appeal, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the United Palestine Appeal were principal partners in national Jewish fund raising, with the National Refugee Service as a beneficiary. The National Jewish Welfare Board, in addition to help for Jewish servicemen and women, added the surveillance of Y.M.H.A.'s and Y.W.H.A.'s and Jewish Centers (a more commonly used term) to its program.

Dutchess County Jewish Welfare Fund/ United Jewish Appeal

The above official name of the local administration devoted to fund raising for Jewish needs was adopted in recent years. For many years it was referred to simply as the United Jewish Appeal, using the designation of the national organization. The Poughkeepsie group joined the National United Jewish Appeal shortly after its founding in 1939. Early chairmen were: Jack Siegel, Albert Schlesinger, Samuel Effron and Louis Schwartz. Philip Morowitz served as secretary for many years.

Mrs. Terry Fleisher is serving a second term as president of the local organization (1982). The other officers include Frank Rubin, vice-president, Leonard Bard, general campaign chairman, Dr. Allen Ackerman, treasurer, and Beatrice Fried, secretary. Local organizations supported by the funds are: Jewish Community Center, Poughkeepsie Community Hebrew School, Mid-Hudson Hebrew Day School and Daughters of Sarah Jewish Nursing Home; Jewish educational institutions in other sections of the country are sometimes recipients of limited amounts. The greatest proportion of the funds helps support Jews in need world-wide.

Chevra Kadisha

The purpose of this organization is the preparation for burial of the body of a deceased Jew in the truly Orthodox Jewish tradition. At the funeral home the body is washed shortly before the funeral by either a women's or men's group, generally of three or four

persons. The body is clad in a very simple white cotton garment. These are known as Tachrichem in Hebrew. The women's garment has very simple lace at the neck. A cap to cover the hair and a veil for the face complete the outfit. There is also a plain white garment for men; both are purchased from an Orthodox Jewish supply company.

Mrs. Bessie Rosenblum is in charge of the women's group; Dorothy Teitelbaum, Rita Kaplan, Matilda Goldwitz and several others are assistants, from time to time. The men's committee includes among others: Mr. Rosenblum, Jacob Nussbaum and Solomon Pollack.

Chevra Kadisha of Poughkeepsie is not only for members of Congregation Schomre Israel, although all of the volunteer group are of that synagogue. At the time of this writing, a special committee has been formed for the creation of a Chevra Kadisha with volunteers from Temple Beth-El.

In the 1950's a funeral home in the Jewish tradition was opened at 233 South Avenue in Poughkeepsie. Named Mount Sinai, it closed in less than two years due to lack of business. In 1980 the Mulvey Funeral Home was purchased by a director whose wife was Jewish and was a member of several organizations of the local Jewish Community. Unfortunately for the young people, the neighborhood of the building was not suitable for such a project. After a very brief stay, the business was sold and it is believed the couple moved to Florida.

Daughters of Sarah Jewish Home for the Aged

Bearing in mind the admonition of Psalms 71:9 "Cast me not off in time of old age; forsake me not when my strength faileth", Jewish communities in this country have sponsored facilities for the elderly for more than a century and a half. The Daughters of Sarah Home for the Aged was opened in Troy, New York in 1949 on land donated, with an endowment, by the Goodman family of that city. The founders of the Home included plans for financial support by Jewish communities in a wide area of Eastern New York State from Glens Falls to Newburgh. It was planned as a residence for the aged from those communities.

The Daughters of Sarah Home when completed was in a very functional one-story building with "wings" from the central area in-

cluding sections for its many services. It included an attractive chapel and a sizable library with books in Hebrew, Yiddish and other languages. Judaism was emphasized and the food was kosher. Within the first ten years it was found to be too limited in size to accommodate the many who were in need of its services.

Early in the existence of the Home, the Poughkeepsie Jewish Community was found to be lax in supplying funds for the support of the facility, and it was eliminated from the organization for a few years. A committee consisting of Arthur Levinsohn, Irving Feldman, Moe Hodas, Julius Dorfman (the then Director of the Jewish Community Center) and Dr. Martin Dreyfuss drove up to Troy to discuss re-affiliation. The Poughkeepsie Community once more became part of the organization with a pledge of thirty thousand dollars. The sum was advanced by a local bank and it was paid off in five years with funds from the United Jewish Appeal.

By 1959, a campaign for the expansion of the Daughters of Sarah Home was initiated, with the goal to be raised in the Poughkeepsie area set at sixty thousand dollars of the needed six hundred fifty thousand dollars. Elias Bramley, a local plastics manufacturer, was selected as chairman of the Building Fund campaign. Committees were formed in each of the three congregations, the Jewish Center, and the Hebrew Fraternal Benevolent Society. The focus of the campaign was to raise funds for expanding the capacity of the Home from seventy two to one hundred twenty two residents and to enlarge all service facilities.

In the 1970's, with Federal funds available for many health care facilities, the Home became a nursing home for the elderly. A new location in the Capital District was found on Washington Avenue in Albany, and the Home is now in a new very modern building.

The Daughters of Sarah Home for the Aged is assisted with financial support from the Poughkeepsie United Jewish Appeal/Jewish Welfare Fund, which conducts an annual appeal and drive for funds.

Kosher Butchers

The earliest known kosher butcher was Benjamin Goldstein, listed in the mid-1890's as a rabbi and owner of a meat store. Somewhat later Benjamin Weisberger, of the group of early Hungarian settlers in the area, was listed in the City Directory

selling meat on Clover Street. It is interesting to note that until the mid-1900's, kosher meat stores were not included in the list of meat suppliers in the business section of the City Directories. It may be that the publishers considered them religious institutions.

In the first quarter of this century Michael Greenberg had a kosher meat market (as meat stores were generally known); his daughter Eva, from her early teens, functioned as bookkeeper and general assistant. As Mrs. Eva Greenberg Feinberg, in her later years, she became a wealthy real estate investor in Putnam Valley, Putnam County, New York; her death occurred in 1981 at the age of eighty two.

Isaac Simon and his brother-in-law Jacob Denzig were kosher butchers for many years, first in the downtown area and later above Hamilton Street. Samuel Bodner, whose son Gadlin later became a well-known teacher in the Arlington School District, was an uptown butcher in the era when most Jews lived above Academy Street. Alex Levine, buying the business, maintained it for a number of years. Levine had briefly been a city policeman.

In the middle years of the century there were always at least two kosher butchers; in 1948 there were three; Alex Levine, Hyman Sabo and Ben Vogel. In recent years Rubin Rosenthal has been the sole such dealer. In March, 1982 he announced his retirement and closed the last kosher meat store in Poughkeepsie. Although adherence to Orthodoxy in the local Jewish Community has lessened, there is a fair number of the Conservative Temple Beth-El who consume only kosher meat. With the popularity of home freezers some families prefer to purchase in quantity from out-of-town suppliers, where prices may be more attractive and the surveillance of Kashruth more exact.

The mention of Alex Levine as a former city policeman brings to mind Herman Soloway. He was the son of William Soloway, a colorful peddler who collected rags and scrap metal. A jovial, rotund figure, he pushed a hand cart through the streets of Poughkeepsie long after others in that trade were using horse-drawn wagons. Perhaps he did not wish the responsibility of taking care of a horse. Herman Soloway, as far as is known, the only other Jewish policeman in the city, served a number of years as traffic "cop" at Main and Market Streets. In the years before arterial highways when the New York to Albany route ran right through Market Street, many travelers remembered his pleasant personality. Soloway was one of the most popular members of the police force. He served as

a detective with that group and later became City Marshall. At the time of this writing he is living in retirement in the Poughkeepsie area.

Appendix

The "Founding Fathers" of Vassar Temple

Information about the earliest Jewish residents of Poughkeepsie is almost non-existent. The earliest village directory (1845) available in Adriance Memorial Library, listing a few Jewish names, is incomplete in many phases. Late Eighteenth and early Nineteenth Century newspapers gave very little local news.

It is known that many Jewish newcomers to this country, from the late Eighteenth Century and into the early Twentieth Century, were peddlers in farm areas. Like the famed Yankee peddlers, many walked great distances with packs on their backs, and by living very frugally managed to save enough to purchase a horse and small wagon. Eventually many opened stores in a nearby village or town.

We can assume that that was the possible pattern of livelihood of the five founders of Vassar Temple, originally known as Children of Israel, now with the official name of Brethren of Israel: Jacob Baker, Isaac Haiman (misspelling of Hayman?), Herman Hart, Aaron Morris and Solomon Scheldburger. Perhaps one or more was born in this country; probably most were immigrants from Germany.

The earliest listing in a Poughkeepsie village directory was in 1845 with the entry Morris _____ (given name probably unavailable to the editor) living on Union Street. In the directory of 1856-57, the first complete listing for Aaron Morris, identifies him as a clothier at 253 Main Street, residing at 18 Mansion Street.

Jacob Baker was first listed in 1856-57, although he may have lived in Poughkeepsie before those dates. Luyster's Directory of the village of Poughkeepsie, published for those dates was the first of the bound volume directories; earlier lists were pamphlets, obviously of incomplete compilation. Jacob Baker was listed as clothier at 317 Main Street, with residence at 8 Garden Street. There was a number of other Bakers, some probably not Jews.

Isaac Haiman was first listed in 1848 as Heyman, Isaac, 22 Clover Street, no occupation given; in the 1850 listing his business is "fancy store" 139 Main Street. Then in 1860 he is listed as the owner of a variety store. "Fancy goods store" sold supplies for ladies, such as hoop skirts, hosiery, corsets, ribbons and laces and related sundries, also some regular "dry goods".

The Mid-Nineteenth Century credit reports by R. G. Dun and Company (the predecessor of Dun & Bradstreet) stated that Isaac Heyman had started out as a small peddler with limited means, and

was not recommended for credit. The same source reported that in 1866 he was the owner of a ready-made clothing store "nice store and nice goods"; his worth was reported as twenty thousand dollars. As he prospered, Dun and Company stated "a fair man, for a Jew", an example of anti-Semitism which was common at that time.

Herman Hart was listed as follows:

1850 Hart, Heris, tailor 286 Main Street
1851 Hart, Henry, tailor 223 Main Street
Home: 21 Cannon Street
1856-57 Hart, Helman, clothier, Bridge Street

There is no listing of Solomon Scheldburger (or Sheldburger), from the first directory in Adriance Memorial Library, 1844, through 1856-57. It is possible he did business or lived in an outlying area.

There are no known descendants in Poughkeepsie of the founding families. There may be some who are not Jews.

Some Facts About the Old Jewish Community Cemetery on Pershing Avenue

(Read by Eva E. Goldin at the Re-dedication of the Cemetery December 13, 1981)

It is not generally known that there was another Jewish cemetery before the burial ground we are now re-dedicating. My brother Bill has mentioned that a part of the land on which his business is located was once a Jewish cemetery. Furthermore, in my research for the book I am writing on the history of the Jewish Community of Poughkeepsie, I found in the Local History Department of Adriance Memorial Library, a scrap book compiled by Henry Booth, a relative of Matthew Vassar. This book which has newspaper clippings from 1892 through 1899 includes one stating that there had been a Jewish cemetery on Smith Street "where the railroad runs" and that it had been given up because of water seepage. It is not known when that burial ground had been established, but we do know that before the 1840's there were few Jews living in the Poughkeepsie area.

We shall digress for a few moments. The Occident, a Jewish-American monthly published in Philadelphia in the 1840's, included an item of special Poughkeepsie interest. I now quote from an issue in 1848: "The new Dutch Congregation of New York, lately established under the name of Benai Israel, have met with a great

loss in the removal of their President Mr. Leonard Goselin who lately established himself in Poughkeepsie on the North River. Mr. Goselin is represented to us as an excellent manager of public affairs and a liberal contributor."

Obviously Mr. Goselin, immediately on his removal to Poughkeepsie, became active in the small Congregation Children of Israel, as the June 30, 1848 issue of the local newspaper Journal and Eagle included a so-called "classified" (small) advertisement: Wanted to purchase: half acre of land suitable for a burying ground. Enquire: Gosling's (spelled thus) Dry Goods Store". As records show, Vassar Temple, when founded in 1848 was named Congregation Children of Israel. In 1851 when the first Board of Trustees was elected, the name was changed to Congregation Brethren of Israel, which is still the official name.

No doubt some misfortune struck Mr. Goselin within the next two years. In the March 9, 1850 issue of the same newspaper there appeared "Auction of dry goods store of Leonard Gosling, by H.W. Morris, auctioneer, also Household goods." Was it business failure or possibly death that brought to a close Goselin's short but meaningful life in Poughkeepsie? It is not known whether the land for a burying ground sought by Goselin was the Smith Street site, or another because the newly founded Congregation desired its own cemetery.

In 1853 Congregation Brethren of Israel (later with its move to Vassar Street more generally known as Vassar Temple) purchased land on Mansion Street for a cemetery, this land. At that time Mansion Street probably made a turn to the south to Main Street. In my childhood the street where we are now gathered was called East Mansion Street, later renamed Pershing Avenue in honor of the World War I general. This cemetery was used until 1875 when another burying ground was established on Davis Avenue in the Arlington section, still in use today. At that time part of the land here not holding graves was sold by the Temple.

I visited this cemetery several years ago when it was in its past deplorable state. At that time almost the only gravestone not turned over or hidden by undergrowth was that of a member of the Rothschild family who was born in 1831 and died in 1856. The Rothschild family business was a dry goods store on Main Street. On a visit a few years ago Muriel Lampell had also noticed that monument. Now it is missing, probably removed by disrespectful vandals.

As you probably know, in very recent years there has been a great revival of interest in one's forebears, no doubt spurred by the television program "Roots". Last summer, a young man Mark Mandell, a business librarian from Chicago, came in search of information of his mother's family, the Freyburgs. Mr. and Mrs. Lampell brought him here. How lucky he was! The stone of his great-grandfather, Moses Freyberg, was one of the few then visible. The rest of Mark's day here was spent in Adriance Library seeking further information of his family.

Addendum

In mid-Eighteenth Century Dutchess County history, there is a story involving a "French doctor" who was proved to be not French, but a Jewish physician named Isaac Marks. His home was on King's Highway, now Market Street, near the site of Adriance Memorial Library. He had moved to Poughkeepsie from the Rombout Precinct, where he had owned land from 1743 to 1748. In October 1756 he was paid by a local court for attending and issuing drugs to a soldier named John Lane.

Whether there was any relationship between Dr. Marks and Moses Benjamin Franks who lived in the same neighborhood during the middle decades of the Eighteenth Century is not known.


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