

MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

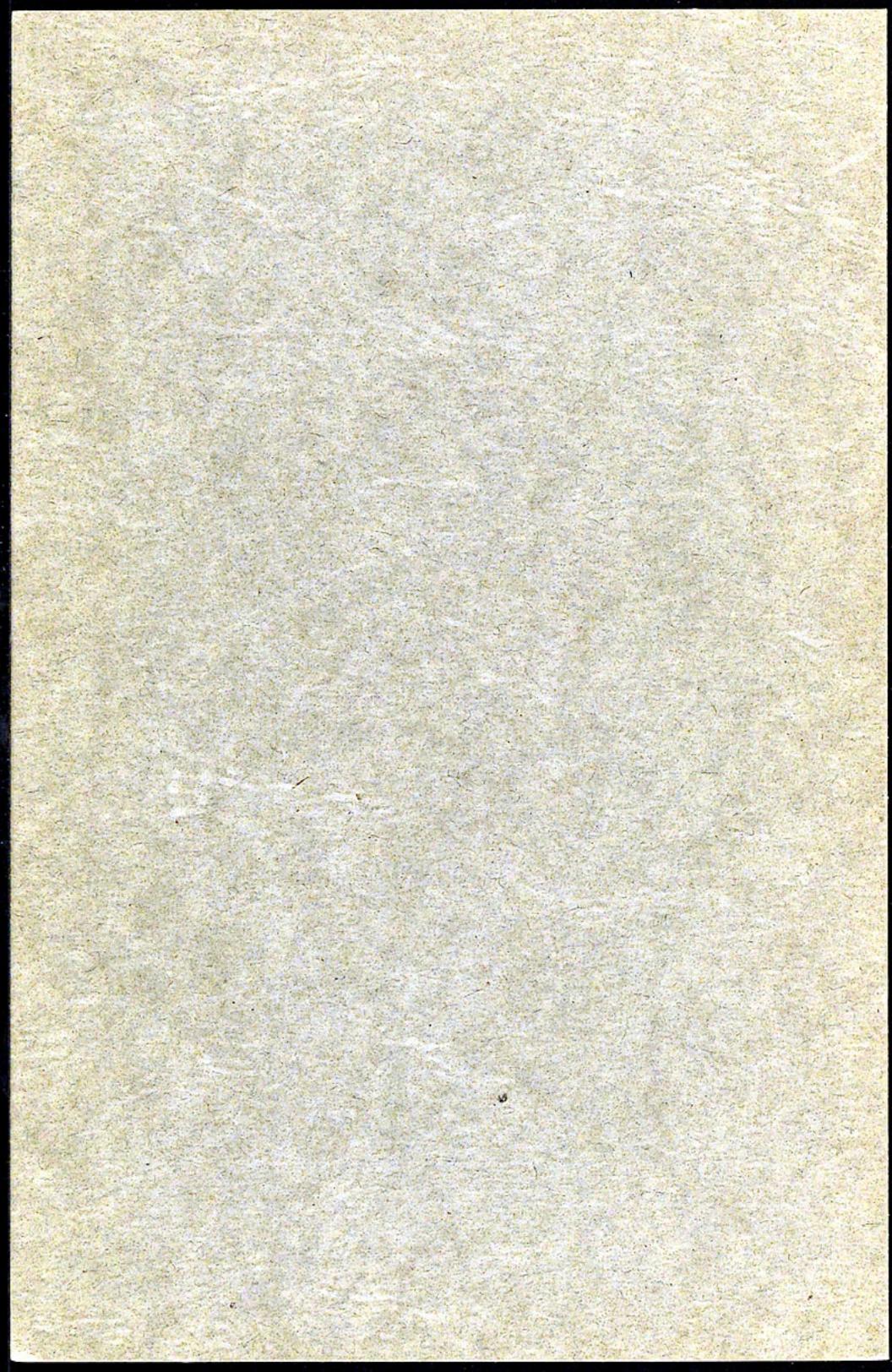


Volume III

Heshvan, 5723 — November, 1962

Number 2





... אשר ישאלון בניכם מחר את אבותם... (יהושע ד:כא)

"When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come . . ."
— Joshua 4:21

MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

Official Publication of the
JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN

Volume III Heshvan, 5723 — November, 1962 Number 2

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The Halevi Singing Society - Dan Frohman Chorus

by SARAH K. STEIN

Writing, in the 20th Anniversary Program Book of the Halevi Singing Society, Eugene Franzblau, a veteran member, neatly explained the durability of Michigan's oldest Jewish chorus: "Music expresses that which cannot be said and on which it is impossible to be silent."

In the 38 years of its existence, many hundreds of Detroit men and women have expressed in thousands of songs, moods, ideas and attitudes, sentiments on which it was "impossible to be silent."

Halevi (now the "Don Frohman Chorus") was organized by a group of Detroit citizens — the late Israel M. Hertz, William Gayman and Morris and Emma Schaves, Eugene Franzblau, among others, devoted to Jewish cultural enrichment through the development of what is true and fine in choral art.

Many of the early supporters and members of the Singing Society were identified with Farband (the fraternal arm of the Labor Zionist Movement in America), but the Chorus itself has always been independent of doctrinaire sponsorship and has been self-supporting.



First Photo of the Halevi Musical Society taken after the First Concert given by the chorus.

HALEVI SINGING SOCIETY—DON FROHMAN CHORUS

At a recent rehearsal, a roomful of tired choritsters (rehearsals are from 8:00 to 10:00 p.m., Monday evenings, at Mumford High School) sang a beautiful melody correctly, but lacking in zest and expression.

Snapped Conductor Frohman, "You sing as if you are being *paid* for it! Sing as if you are enjoying it!" With a smart tap on the music stand, a reminding, glance and an appropriate note, hum . . . hum . . . hum . . . hum!" for each section, Frohman led off a group of singers who have performed for hundreds of civic, fraternal and musical audiences in Michigan, Ohio, Iowa and Pennsylvania.

Members of the Chorus are members of the community and their vocational and avocational activities are that of any cross-section — engineers, salesmen, secretaries, teachers, writers, artists, housewives.

About one-third of the Chorus membership are also singing students of the Conductor. Jeanette Pohl, soprano, has been with the Chorus since its inception. Edith Rosberg and Lillian Newberg have been singing with the Chorus for about twenty years. Lillian, an alto-soloist, has the authority of a "pro". Alex and Ben Joffe, bass and baritone, respectively, Irene Pianan, soprano, and Rose Rozanoff, mezzo, have been with the Chorus for more than ten years. This is a sampling. There are many others.

When Halevi Singing Society was first envisioned as a "Repository of Jewish musical creativity" Julius Miller was its first conductor. Later William Gayman served as Choral Director. Both of these men were non-professionals, but great devotees of Jewish music. Gayman was actively involved with the Chorus until he died. Miller moved to Chicago.

The Halevi Singing Society was a promising organization but it needed professional direction. Its officers called in Leo Leow of New York City, a renowned composer and conductor, to evaluate its potential. The Chorus looked good, sounded wonderful. Leow recommended a promising young musician, Don Frohman, to fulfill the Chorus' purpose.

Frohman was then studying piano with Berl Rubinstein in Cleveland. He had variously been music director of three Cleveland congregations—the Temple, the Euclid Avenue Temple, and the Jewish Center (now Park Synagogue).



Dan Frohman

HALEVI SINGING SOCIETY—DON FROHMAN CHORUS

In two years, he built a Chorus of 45 members to a singing society of 100 men and women. In 38 years, Frohman has auditioned thousands of voices and many of them won the proud title of "Soprano," "Alto," "Tenor" and "Bass."

The files of the Chorus contain a precious profusion of choral art in English, Yiddish, Hebrew, German, French and Italian. They contain folk songs, pastorals, elegiacs, odes, oratorios, choral cantatas, classical operatic and light operatic selections, spirituals and liturgy.

This harvest of music has been sung by the entire Chorus, by the Men's Chorus, the Women's Chorus, in ensemble, quartets, trios, duets and solos. In short, the ingenious and prodigious Conductor has made good theatre of choral music, using every device to enhance, evoke, excite, to touch and charm the audience.

A typical program may include a composition by Leo Leow, inspired by a poem of Yehoash; an aria from "Don Carlos" by Verdi; the liturgical "Kaddish" by Engel; "Viut Vitre," an Ukrainian Folk Song; and such beloved Yiddish melodies as "Reb Dovidl," "Nechtele," or "Meyerne Mein Zun."

The programs include the works of every great contemporary Jewish composer — Saminsky, Binder, Helfman, Bloch, Achron, Leow, Gelbert, Ellstein, Weinberg, Lazar, Weiner, and others. Their themes are inspired by the Bible, Jewish literature, life and legend, concepts of social and moral justice.

The poet Avraham Reizen has translated for the Chorus many classical works from French, German, etc., into Yiddish. Audiences were surprised one year to hear the familiar aria "La Calunna (The Gossip)" from the "Barber of Seville," sung in good, homespun Yiddish. In translation, the title of the number became "R'chilos."

Another delectation which became a hit and won much fan mail was "Moshe Ganvet Arbes (Moshe's Stealing the Chick Peas)" — a humoresque by Vladimir Heifetz, based on a Tchaikowsky theme.

The lyrics of the songs selected by Frohman are as distinguished as the music. "The poetry of a composition must have as much value as the music," Frohman said.

That is not all. At rehearsals, the Conductor may request the Chorus to sing a single phrase over and over again until he is satisfied with the music reflects exquisitely the profound meaning of the text.

HALEVI SINGING SOCIETY—DON FROHMAN CHORUS

Frohman also conducts the Choir of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, the Choral Group of the Music Study Club of Detroit (he was recently feted for 25 years of work with them), the Workmen's Circle Chorus in Cleveland and is a member of the permanent company of the Verdi Opera Company.

The Conductor believes in explicit direction. If the music calls for a passage to be sung "fortissimo," Frohman instructs: "I want a BLAST, Chorus."

If the Chorus sings a tender phrase heavily when "pianissimo" is called for, he bawls out: "Woo the audience, don't smother it."

In 1950, Frohman took a year's leave-of-absence (he refers to it as his "sabbatical") and toured America with the Verdi Opera Company. He still performs with the Company several times a week.

When the singing Conductor returned, he was confronted with evidence of his Chorus' esteem. Hereafter, the Singing Group was to be known as the "Don Frohman Chorus."

In 1962 the Chorus presented its 37th Annual Concert at Mumford High School. Previous to that, the Chorus performed jointly with the Workmen's Circle Choir of Cleveland, a 60-year old musical institution. During the course of the year, the Chorus membership participated in a round-robin of recitals, show-cases for the singing students.

The principal "show" of the Chorus is choral music, but the concerts are enhanced by the addition of instrumental music; oft'times accompaniment by such community groups as ensembles from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. At one time the Chorus invited prominent artists like Igor Gorin as concert soloists. Now, members of the Chorus, Gene Slobin, tenor, Marian Bates, soprano, Estelle Kadish, alto, and others receive the solo assignments.

In the wings, waiting with the Chorus and the Conductor for the "curtain to go up" are two women, Bella Goldberg, erstwhile alto soloist, and Rebecca Frohman, indomitable ladies who serve the Chorus as accompanists. Both are musicians of repute in Detroit.

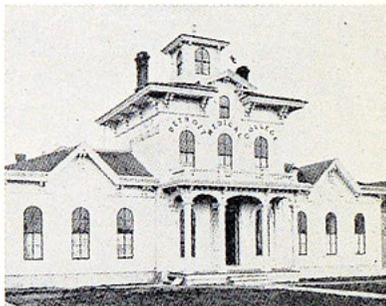
With humor, with faith, with affection, the Chorus and its Conductor sow and reap a rich harvest of music for Detroit.

Early Jewish Physicians in Michigan*

by IRVING I. EDGAR

DR. EDWARD E. SLOMAN

Dr. Edward E. Sloman, son of Mark and Amelia Sloman, was born December 25, 1863, in the city of Detroit. The Sloman family was among the first Jewish families in Detroit and played an important role in the life of the Detroit Jewish community and of the general community at large. The father, Mark Sloman, came to Detroit from Kevolova, near Berlin, Prussia, in 1850, and engaged in the leather and wool trade. Later his business was in furs. A brother of Dr. Edward Sloman, Adolph Sloman, was one of the prominent leaders of the Detroit Bar Association.



Detroit Medical College, 1868

Dr. Sloman was the first Jew, born in Detroit, to enter the Michigan College of Medicine, which was organized in 1879. The 1882 Detroit City Directory lists him as a medical student living with his parents at 159 Adams Avenue. From 1883 to 1885, he is listed in the Catalogue and Announcement lists of the Michigan College of Medicine with Dr. Hal C. Wyman as his preceptor. He graduated in 1885. The City Directory lists him as physician in 1885 and 1886, living at 159 Adams. The 1887 Detroit Directory states that he moved to Omaha, Nebraska. During 1886-1887, he went to Hancock, Michigan, to assume the position of surgeon of the Quincy Mines.

In 1888, he located in Omaha, where he built up a successful practice. He met with an accidental death by drowning on Lake Monawa, near Omaha, on July 14, 1892. He was married to Fannie Mandelbaum of Detroit and, at his death, left an 8 month old son.

Polk's *Medical Directory*, Vol. 2, 1886, p. 699, lists him as living in Omaha, Nebraska, and as having graduated from the Detroit College of Medicine in 1884. It lists him as examining physician for the National Life Insurance Company of Vermont and the American Order of United Woodmen.

* Third in a series. See, Edgar, Irving I. A History of Some Eearly Jewish Physicians of Michigan; MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY, I:1, 13-24; II:2, 18-19.

EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS IN MICHIGAN

DR. CHARLES D. AARON

Dr. Charles D. Aaron was the first Jewish physician to have been born in the United States and to have practiced medicine in Detroit all of his life. He was preceded by only one year by Dr. Joseph Beisman who belongs to the East-European group and who settled in Detroit in 1890. However, Dr. Beisman was born in Russia.

During the course of his long career in the practice of medicine in Detroit, Dr. Aaron developed an international reputation, and his books were adopted as text books in a great many medical schools throughout the English-speaking world. He was an innovator, especially in the field of the diseases of the gastro-intestinal tract, and contributed much to the develop-



Dr. Charles D. Aaron

ment of this area of specialization in medicine. He has been listed in *Who's Who in America* and in most of the *Who's Who in Medicine* as well as in Solomon R. Kagan's *Jewish Contributions to Medicine in America From Colonial Times to the Present Day*.

Dr. Aaron was born at Lockport, New York, on May 8, 1866, the son of Higham and Hanna (Bartnett) Aaron, who immigrated to the United States from Germany. He attended Syracuse University for two years and obtained his M.D. degree in 1891 at the University of Buffalo. He came to Detroit that same year and was house surgeon at Harper Hospital for one to two years. From 1891 to 1893, he was also a Detroit City Physician.

Apparently Dr. Aaron felt the need for further study in medicine and so we find him doing post-graduate study in the greatest centers for medical education of Europe at that time. During the years 1896-98 he studied in the clinics of the University of Berlin with the most prominent professors of that time. Between 1899 and 1902, he studied at the Universities of Glessen, Vienna, Wurzburg, Paris and London. He returned to Detroit and on June 3, 1902, was married to Miss Winifred Comstock, of a socially prominent family of Michigan. Dau's Detroit Socitey Blue Book of 1904 lists Dr. and Mrs. Charles D. Aaron as among the socially elite of the community.

EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS IN MICHIGAN

It was while in Europe that Dr. Aaron decided to focus his interest in the specialized field of gastro-intestinal diseases. In 1898 he joined the faculty of the Detroit College of Medicine and Surgery as lecturer in *Materia Medica* and Therapeutics. He was Professor of Gastroenterology and Dietetics at the Detroit College of Medicine and Surgery (now Wayne State University) from 1905 to 1938, and Professor Emeritus till his death. He was also Professor of Gastroenterology at the Detroit Post-Graduate School of Medicine. He was awarded the honorary Degree of Doctor of Science by the University of Heidelberg in 1910. In 1916, he became a Fellow of the American College of Physicians and was a member of its Council for several years. He was one of the main founders of the American Gastroenterological Association and its Secretary-Treasurer for 14 years (1897-1910). He was president of the Northern Tri-State Medical Association, president of the Detroit Academy of Medicine, first vice-president of the American Therapeutic Society, as well as a member of the American Congress of International Medicine. He was a fellow of the West London Medico-Chirurgical Society (England), and an honorary member of the Jackson County Medical Society. He was a member of the Michigan Medical Editors and Authors Association and numerous other scientific organizations.

He was the chief gastro-enterologist in Detroit for many years, and helped train many medical men in this field. He served on the staff of most of the important hospitals in the city of Detroit. He was the author of over seventy scientific articles in American and foreign journals and gave many papers before numerous medical societies. He was the author of *Diseases of the Stomach* (1911) and *Diseases of the Digestive Organs*, (1915; 4th Edition, 1927), both of which books had a large circulation among the medical profession, and were adopted as text books in many medical schools. He was also author of the chapter on "Dietetic Treatment of Disease" in *The Oxford Index of Therapeutics* (1921). In addition, he translated, from the German, Professor Adolph Schmidt's then noted book *Test Diet in Intestinal Diseases*, a revised edition of which was published in 1909.

Dr. Aaron was a member of Temple Beth El. He died at the age of 85, on December 3, 1951, and was interred at Beth El's Section of Woodmere Cemetery.

EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS IN MICHIGAN

DR. EMIL AMBERG

Dr. Emil Amberg was one of the most prominent physicians of Detroit and contributed much in his field of Otolaryngology, particularly in the field of aural surgery. He is mentioned in many of the *Who's Who in Medicine and Science* books as well as in Solomon R. Kagan's *Jewish Contributions to Medicine*.

He was born at Santa Fe, New Mexico, on May 1, 1868, the son of Jacob and Minna (Lowenbein) Amberg, both of whom were born in Germany. His mother apparently came to the United States early in life and settled in New York. The father came to the United States in 1848 and settled in New Mexico where he engaged in merchandising. Later, he went to Mexico where he entered into many successful commercial pursuits.



Dr. Emil Amberg

Dr. Amberg must have been taken to Europe at an early age, for he obtained his early education at Cannstat, (Wurtemberg). He graduated from the Gymnasium at Ebersfield, Germany in 1887 and from Arnsberg in 1888. He then entered the University of Heidelberg where he obtained his M.D. degree in 1894. He returned to the United States and from January 1896 to April 1897, he was House Surgeon in the Department of Otology of the Massachusetts Charitable Eye and Ear Infirmary at Boston. He then returned to Europe for post-graduate work in his field at the Universities and Clinics of Berlin and Vienna.

Dr. Amberg was indeed highly qualified in his field of the Healing Art when he settled in Detroit in 1898. Except for further post-graduate work in Vienna in 1907, he practiced his speciality of diseases of the ear almost until his death at the age of 80. He was early regarded as one of the leading ear, nose, and throat specialists in the country, although in the latter half of his career, his work was mainly in relation to the ear.

On November 16, 1909, Dr. Amberg married Miss Cecille Siegel, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Siegel, a prominent Jewish pioneer family of Detroit.

Dr. Amberg had a large private practice. He was on the staff of several Detroit hospitals, including Grace and Harper Hospitals. He

EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS IN MICHIGAN

was the consultant in Otolaryngology to the North End Community Clinic. He was the aurist for the Detroit Day School for the Deaf. He was president of the Detroit League for the Hard of Hearing as well as of the American Society for the Hard of Hearing. He was the Editor of "The Rainbow", the official publication of the Detroit League for the Hard of Hearing.

He was president of the Detroit Otolaryngological Society of which he was also a founder. He was a member of the Advisory Council of the Association to promote Teaching of Speech to the Deaf. He was a member of the Maimonides Medical Society. In January 1938, he was made an honor member of the Wayne County Medical Society and in 1944, an Emeritus Member of the Michigan State Medical Society. In 1947, he was one of a small group of octogenarians entertained by the Trustees and Council of the Wayne County Medical Society on their attainment of a half century in the practice of medicine.

Dr. Amberg was a prolific writer in his specialty and his scientific contribution were many. He developed and modified various instruments in his field of Aural Surgery.

He was active in numerous capacities for various medical societies, particularly in the field of medical legislation. Thus, he was Secretary to the committee of the Wayne County Medical Society on Interstate Reciprocity for the License to Practice Medicine; Secretary to the Committee on Interstate Reciprocity and Uniform Medical Legislation of the National Conferation of State Medical Examining Boards; Secretary to the Committee on Uniform Medical Legislation of the Conference of the Committee on National Medical Legislation of American Medical Association and Affiliated Medical Societies; Michigan member of the Committee on National Legislation of the American Medical Association from 1900 to 1905.

In this field of his endeavor, Dr. Amberg helped create sentiment for reform leading to the raising of the standards of medical education in the United States, and the development of uniformity in this field throughout the country. The medical reciprocity between states that he helped establish has been of great value to thousands of physicians.

His death on April 12, 1948, was recognized by the medical profession of Detroit as marking the passing of one of Detroit's oldest and more famous of the practitioners of the Healing Art.

EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS IN MICHIGAN

DR. MOSES A. FECHHEIMER

Dr. Moses A. Fechheimer was born in Detroit on July 30, 1875, the son of Morris C. and Iske (Amberg) Fechheimer. The Fechheimer family is one of the pioneer Jewish families of Detroit and has been prominent in Jewish affairs as well as in the general metropolitan community. Dr. Moses A. Fechheimer and his brother, Dr. Karl M. Fechheimer (D.D.S.), are listed in Dau's Detroit Society Blue Book of 1904 among the socially elite of the community.

The *Detroit College of Medicine Announcement* of 1899-1901 lists him as a medical student with Dr. Charles D. Aaron, then lecturer in *Materia Medica*, as his preceptor.

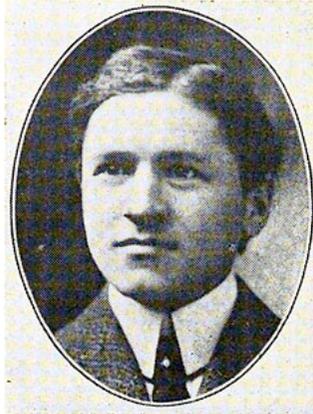
The *Detroit City Directory* lists him as a student in 1896 and 1897, living at 45 Adelaide Street. He was educated in the public schools of Detroit.

He graduated M.D. May 11, 1899, although the *Detroit City Directory* of 1898 and that of 1899 lists him as a physician living at 45 Adelaide. He interned at St. Mary's Hospital 1899-1900. He apparently joined the staff as a faculty member of the *Detroit College of Medicine* soon thereafter, for he is listed in the "*Detroit College of Medicine Announcement*" for 1904-05 as an "Instructor in Biology".

According to his listing in *Polk's Medical Register and Directory*, Dr. Fechheimer took post-graduate courses in London, Berlin, Vienna, and Paris. He was a *Detroit City Physician* in 1903-05. He specialized in genito-urinary diseases and limited his practice to this specialty. He was a member of the *American Urological Association*, the *Detroit Urological Society*, and *Associate Member* of the *Chicago Urological Society*. He was *Genito-Urinary Surgeon* to the *United Jewish Charities of Detroit*.

His photograph, along with Drs. Charles D. Aaron, Max Ballin, Emil Amberg, Joseph Beisman and Isaac L. Polozker, appears in *Men of Michigan*, published in 1904 by the *Michigan Art Co.*

He died November 4, 1924 of a heart attack while at the old *Phoenix Club*, a social club made up of the then most prominent members of the Jewish community.



Dr. Moses A. Fechheimer

Congregation Shaarey Zedek Centennial Notes On Its Leadership

by ELI GRAD

The recent Centennial celebrations of Detroit's Congregation Shaarey Zedek and its forthcoming move to a new Synagogue home in the City of Southfield bring to mind the dedication and devotion that built both present and past Shaarey Zedek sanctuaries.

In a prior issue of *Michigan Jewish History* we presented a brief biography of William Saulson through whose personal leadership the first English-speaking Rabbi was brought to Shaarey Zedek and who was instrumental in inviting to the Congregation's pulpit Rabbi A. M. Hershman, of blessed memory, whose ministry to the Congregation spanned over half a century.

At this time, I should like to devote my comments to the leaders who guided the Congregation's affairs at the crucial periods of erecting the Synagogue homes at Willis and Brush Avenues and at Chicago Boulevard.

The name of D. W. Simons is one of the outstanding ones in the history of Shaarey Zedek. His breadth of view, his innate sense of dignity, his genuine devotion to traditional Judaism, his exceptional leadership qualities have impressed his personality upon the Congregation whose lay-head he was from 1908 to 1920. "D.W.," as he was affectionately yet respectfully called, raised the Synagogue to a new status in the community and helped to stimulate and deepen interest in it and its traditions. Mr. Simons' interests and efforts were by no means limited to guiding the welfare of the Congregation. Throughout his lifetime he was actively interested in the rebuilding of Palestine and aided many institutions of learning. He distinguished himself through his active role in many business and civic interests. He organized the Hamtramck State Bank of which he was President. When the Public Lighting Commission was organized in 1893, Mr. Simons was appointed a member of the Commission and subsequently served as a member of the first nine-man council of Detroit, having been drafted for this post by the Detroit Citizens League. Mr. Simons served only one term and declined re-election because of advancing years and the pressure of other business. His record as a member of the council was so outstanding, however, that the council



D. W. Simons

CONGREGATION SHAAREY ZEDEK CENTENNIAL

voted him the freedom of the floor for the remainder of his life.

Having served as President of the Congregation continuously for twelve years, Mr. Simons was elected the first Honorary President of the Congregation.

* * * * *



A. Louis Gordon

A. Louis Gordon assumed the helm of Presidency in 1929 at a time when a severe depression had already struck our country. Mr. Gordon was elected President at a time of unrest and despair when the Congregation shared the grave difficulties of the entire community. Under the leadership of Mr. Gordon, the Congregation's Synagogue home on Chicago Boulevard was erected.

* * * * *

Isaac Shetzer assumed the Presidency in the crucial days of 1932. His statesmanlike bearing and decisions added strength to the Congregation. As trustee, treasurer and vice-president, Mr. Shetzer saw the bitter interlude when an injunction halted the building program on Chicago Boulevard. He was in on the epochal struggle that smashed the barrier of bigotry; he saw victory become rather shallow when financial disaster decimated the rolls of the Congregation and impoverished the many who remained faithful.



Isaac Shetzer

Through unlimited dedication, Mr. Shetzer set out to lift the Congregation from the depths of despair and built up its morale. That he was successful in his endeavor against odds which would stagger most men is evident from the large number of applicants for membership who started flocking to the Congregational doors within a relatively short period of time.

Under Mr. Shetzer's leadership the Congregation withstood with fortitude and resolve the ordeal which it was passing and looked forward to new and brighter days.

CONGREGATION SHAAREY ZEDEK CENTENNIAL

Judge Harry B. Keidan served the Congregation as Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Chairman of the Committee on Education, and in many other leadership capacities. Profound and rugged in his Americanism, he was a loyal and faithful Jew. Judge Keidan carried his spiritual convictions from his Synagogue to his Court. His private office was ever a sanctuary where he gave people not only advice but courage and strength with which to meet their problems.



Judge
Harry B. Keidan

The narrative of great men and ideals which have guided Congregation Shaary Zedek in its service to our community is by no means exhausted with this presentation. Further chapters from Shaarey Zedek's past will follow in forthcoming issues of this journal.

An Early Jewish Mason in Grand Rapids

by IRVING I. KATZ

Jacob Barth, brother of the distinguished Grand Rapids physician, Louis Barth, was born in Germany in 1841. He arrived in the United States at an early age, resided in several places in this country, and came to Grand Rapids in 1863, from Cleveland, Ohio. He engaged in the wholesale and retail dry goods business. His establishment was located on the site of the present Wurzburg's. His name was a "synonym for integrity and probity of the highest order, for absolute honor in his public and private relations. He greatly esteemed by all who knew him."



He was one of the incorporators of Temple Emanuel in 1871 and served as its first treasurer. He served as treasurer of the Scottish Rite Masons, director and treasurer of the Michigan Masonic Home Board and the Masonic Mutual Benefit Association of Western Michigan, and held other positions of trust.

When he died in Grand Rapids on January 5, 1892, the Michigan Masonic Mutual Benefit Association of Western Michigan passed a resolution of condolence, a copy of which is reproduced below.

"To the Board of Trustees of the Masonic Mutual Benefit Association of Western Michigan:

'Brothers — Your committee, to whom was instructed the melancholy duty of expressing our deep sorrow occasioned by the death of our beloved brother and co-trustee, Jacob Barth, approach this duty with fear and trembling of our ability to faithfully set forth our feelings of irreparable loss we, as members of the board of trustees of the Masonic Mutual Benefit association and the craft at large, have sustained in the untimely death of this good man and Mason. In the prime of life, in the vigor of manhood, after a brief illness of a few days, our brother, surrounded by his beloved wife and numerous relatives and friends, laid down the burdens of this life to take upon himself the higher duties of the great hereafter. He died at his residence in Grand Rapids on th fifth day of January, 1892, at the age of fifty-one years.

"Brother Barth was a bright light in the Masonic world. He was respected by the craft for his strict adherence to his Masonic vows. As a citizen he was upright and just, and his dealings with

AN EARLY JEWISH MASON IN GRAND RAPIDS

his fellow men were marked as upon the line of strictest integrity. But it was in the home circle that he was most beloved, honored and respected. As a husband he was everything which that name implies—loving, devoted and faithful. As a father he was painstaking, indulgent, and as a relative and friend, faithful and true.

“To his beloved wife we offer such consolation as only human hearts can give, but in this, her hour of trouble and deep affliction we commend her to the fatherly care of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, who has given His pledge ‘that He does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men.’

“To the many relatives and friends of our departed brother, we join in sorrow and mingle our tears with theirs.

“To the members of the craft we also send our words of sorrow, assuring them that we join in mourning with them the loss of our departed brother.

“Resolved, That a copy of the above be furnished the family of our deceased brother, and that the same be spread on the minutes of the association.”

A Checklist of Materials in the Kastle Collection, Wayne State University

Relating to Detroit and Michigan Jewry

by ALFRED ABRAHAM GREENBAUM

This list is generally limited to books, pamphlets, theses and some parts of collective works. Among journal articles we have only listed those discovered incidentally, and we refer the reader to the periodical indexes for others. The Library has a good collection of bibliographies, indexes, biographical dictionaries, and Jewish encyclopedic works. We call attention to the entries "Detroit" and/or "Michigan" in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, *Encyclopedia Judaica* (German), *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, *ha-Entsiklopediyah ha-ivrit* (Hebrew), and in the printed catalog of the New York Public Library's Jewish collection. Among biographical dictionaries, *Who's Who in American Jewry* and its successor, *Who's Who in World Jewry*, should be noted. Users of periodical indexes should not overlook *Palestine and Zionism*, an index to Jewish literature much broader in scope than its name implies. This publication of the Zionist Archives and Library seems to be defunct at this moment, and earnestly hope that funds for its continuation can be found.

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CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS IN THE KASLE COLLECTION

troit, Wayne University Press, 1944. (Wayne University studies in intergroup conflicts in Detroit, no. 1)

A Prayer Book, apparently printed in Germany early in the 19th century, once in the possession of the Butzel family. Has miscellaneous notes about family's emigration from Bavaria, and about births and deaths in Detroit.

* * * *

Historical Notes About the Kasle Collection at Wayne State University

About the middle of the previous decade some members of the Wayne faculty felt that the University Library should acquire and build a substantial collection in the field of Judaica. It was expected that a collection of this type would have regional importance, and would in turn serve as the nucleus of a significant collection in the field of religion.

Dr. Milton Covensky, Professor of History, first conceived the idea and enlisted the active support of G. Flint Purdy, University Librarian. In 1955, Abe Kasle, president of the Kasle Steel Corporation, made a generous grant for the purchase and development of private collections. Mr. Kasle's purpose in doing so was to foster interfaith understanding by means of scholarship. He hoped that "such a collection could contribute to better understanding and finer mutual relations between the diverse creeds within the community."

The following year, the Library purchased two collections aggregating about 5,000 volumes, of which over 3,000 were in Hebrew and Yiddish. The collections had previously been owned by I. Edward Kiev, librarian of the Jewish Institute of Religion, and Menahem Vaxer, a New York bookseller and scholar. These books, and the additions to them in the field of religion, became the Kasle Collection of the Humanities Division in the University Library.

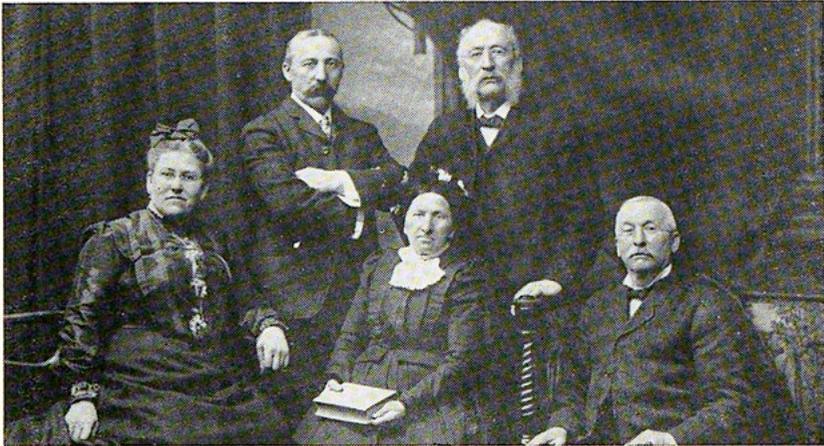
The original Kasle Collection is rich in Bible, Jewish scholarship, periodicals, Hebrew literature of the early twentieth century, and Yiddish literature. It has been expanded (with Kasle funds, other donations, and regular departmental allotments) in the directions indicated by its own scope and by the current University program. The most recent addition of note is the rabbinic collection of Joseph Kan-cepolsky, which is especially rich in responsa.

When "Bubie Gitel" Came to Detroit

by DEVERA STEINBERG STOCKER

It is now almost one hundred years since "Bubie Gitel" Mincer came to Detroit in 1867 with her husband, Charles and their four children. The children were: Rebecca (Shana Riva), Benjamin (Behrel), Jacob (Yankel), and Israel. Israel then was fourteen. My grandmother, Rebecca Mincer Lipsitz, was nineteen at the time, and my grandfather, Isaac Lipsitz, was twenty-five. "Zeide Charles," as my grandfather was called, I never knew; he passed away in the 1880's. Benjamin and Jacob became optometrists. They travelled the neighboring communities with horse and buggy, examining eyes and fitting eyeglasses (we have a picture of Benjamin with his horse and buggy taken in Brighton, Michigan). My mother told me they ground their own glass for the spectacles they made for their customers. Benjamin later moved to Chicago where he and his wife, Pauline, raised their family. Jacob remained in Detroit. His marriages were unsuccessful and he lived in my grandparents' home.

Israel settled in Texas. He had left Detroit with a circus, in 1871, when he was seventeen. We doubt very much that he had permission from the family. When the circus arrived in Waxahachie, Texas, the "Elks" were having an amateur play. They asked Israel to join their cast with his juggling act and promised to get him a job when the play was over. He accepted the offer and remained in



Seated, left to right: Bubie Gitel Mincer, Benjamin
Standing, left to right: Israel, Jacob Photo Circa 1900

WHEN "BUBIE GITEL" CAME TO DETROIT

Waxahachie for sixty-five years, until his death in 1936. He married a Jewish girl from a neighboring village, still smaller than Waxahachie. He became a cotton broker. His youngest child, Sylvan Miner, still lives in Dallas, Texas. As we were reminiscing recently, he told me of his childhood recollections of visits to Detroit to see "Bubie Gitel" and the family.

In my grandparents' home were "Uncle Yankel," "Bubie Gitel" and my grandparents. It was a traditional Jewish home. From my earliest recollections, the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue seemed to be an extension of my grandparents' home. They lived on Winder Street across from the "shul". I remember watching from the parlor window for the men to come out of the synagogue. This was the signal for my mother and grandmother to get busy putting the food on the table. I remember that on Friday nights, "Bubie Gitel" wore a lace cap over her "shaytel" or wig (sometimes called a kupkie) and the lace cap was always trimmed with violets or purple ribbons. My grandmother had a "shaytel" too when they come from Europe.

My mother, Minnie Lipsitz, was born October 28, 1872, at 291 Macomb Street, a short distance from the first Shaarey Zedek Synagogue which was located at Congress and St. Antoine. She went to the Clay School. In 1871, one year before her birth, the first Compulsory School Attendance law was passed in Michigan. She also studied at the Detroit Conservatory of Music which was founded in 1874. She was a fine musician and had a lovely singing voice. She often sang at the weddings of her friends.

My mother grew up in Detroit. In her youth, most of the people lived within walking distance of the river and of each other.

One must keep in mind, however, that people were more willing to walk in those days. There were no telephones and no automobiles. My mother could recall when there were no street lights. At night it was pitch dark. If she were out after dark she went with their dog, Baron, a large St. Bernard. The dog was for direction as well as for protection. She remembered the first horse drawn street cars with hooks on the outside to hold the baby carriages of the passengers.

During the Civil War there was "strong anti-slavery sentiment prevalent in Detroit and considerable activity assisting escaped slaves to find freedom in Canada."¹ I recall that my mother told me that among her playmates were the children of a Negro physician who lived in their block. Evidently some of the freed slaves were able to secure an education in the early years following the Civil War and there were

WHEN "BUBIE GITEL" CAME TO DETROIT

already educated Negroes in the United States at this early date.

The Frederic Warde Dramatic Club, presented theatricals at Harmonie Hall, was a creative interest of Jewish youth in the 1890's. My mother's brother, Mose Lipsitz, was an active member of this group. He was six year older than my mother. Although my mother was much younger than the others, she took part in some of the plays. Her red-plush covered autograph album of 1885 was presented to her by the club. Other members of the club were Meyer Bing, Mattie Breitenbach, Max and Israel Cohn, Clara Greenthal, Libby and Lena Grabowsky, Frank Hamburger, Max Oppenheim and Albert Kahn, the architect.²

My mother was married on August 25, 1896 to Jacob Steinberg, the son of another early immigrant family, which had settled in 1865 in Traverse City, Michigan. "Bubie Gitel" conferred personally with Mrs. Kern of the Ernst Kern Company concerning her granddaughter's trousseau. Ticking for pillows, trimming for petticoats, etc., were ordered, to be purchased by Mr. Kern on his next buying trip in Europe.

"Bubie Gitel" remained sturdy and alert and quite active to the end of her life. She was ill only a few days before her death in 1905. She was buried in Detroit's Beth Olam Cemetery.

1) Grad, Eli, *Centennial History of Congregation Shaarey Zedek*, Chapter I.

2) Gravure Supplement, *Detroit Free Press*, January 18, 1931.

Book Reviews

THE POLITICAL WORLD OF AMERICAN ZIONISM, Samuel Halperin, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1961, 431 pp.

This fascinating study of efforts to re-establish a Jewish homeland—Israel, was very much needed for an understanding of American Zionism and its political influence in relation to the total social context of the Zionist theme. One can not understand and struggle of the Zionist movement in the United States to rectify an historical injustice to the Jewish people without a substantial understanding of the American Jewish community. The author deals with the backdrop of conflicting Jewish claims, deriving from differences in national origin, religious outlook, socio-economic status, ideological persuasion and organizational attachment — so that the shifting fortunes of the movement may adequately be portrayed as well as analyzed. He points out that American Jewish life for many years was not synagogue centered, as it now seems to have developed, but rather, was a potpourri of diverse politics and actions of varying shades of secular affiliations.

The author points to the fact that the Zionist movement in the United States was for a long period of time of prime concern mainly to the poor or the middle class. Many of the local Jewish federations and welfare funds, under the domination of the wealthier elements of the community did not support Zionist demands. A movement like Zionism was viewed by many prominent Jews as not particularly status-designed. This class favored non-political and non-ideological relief programs that stressed helping Jews to remain in the lands of their birth rather than to aid emmigration to Israel.

As the Zionist objective of a Jewish state became acceptable to more Americans it became increasingly difficult to identify Zionists as opposed to non-Zionists in the Jewish community. The author states "It is possible to argue both that Zionist leadership succumbed to the lure of philanthropy and that Jewish philanthropy accepted the minimal political program of Zionism".

Wayne State University Press is to be commended for publishing the work of Dr. Halperin of it's Department of Political Science.

Emanuel Applebaum

Biographical Notes on Contributors

SARAH K. STEIN, attended New York University, the New School for Social Research and the Seminary College, J.T.S. Active in Zionist affairs, in Jewish social work and in religious education.

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DEVERA STEINBERG STOCKER, A.B., M.S.N., grew up in Traverse City, Michigan. She received her education at the University of Michigan. In 1922 she married Dr. Harry Stocker, a physician. Following the death of her husband in 1953, she became actively engaged in social work.

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