

# MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

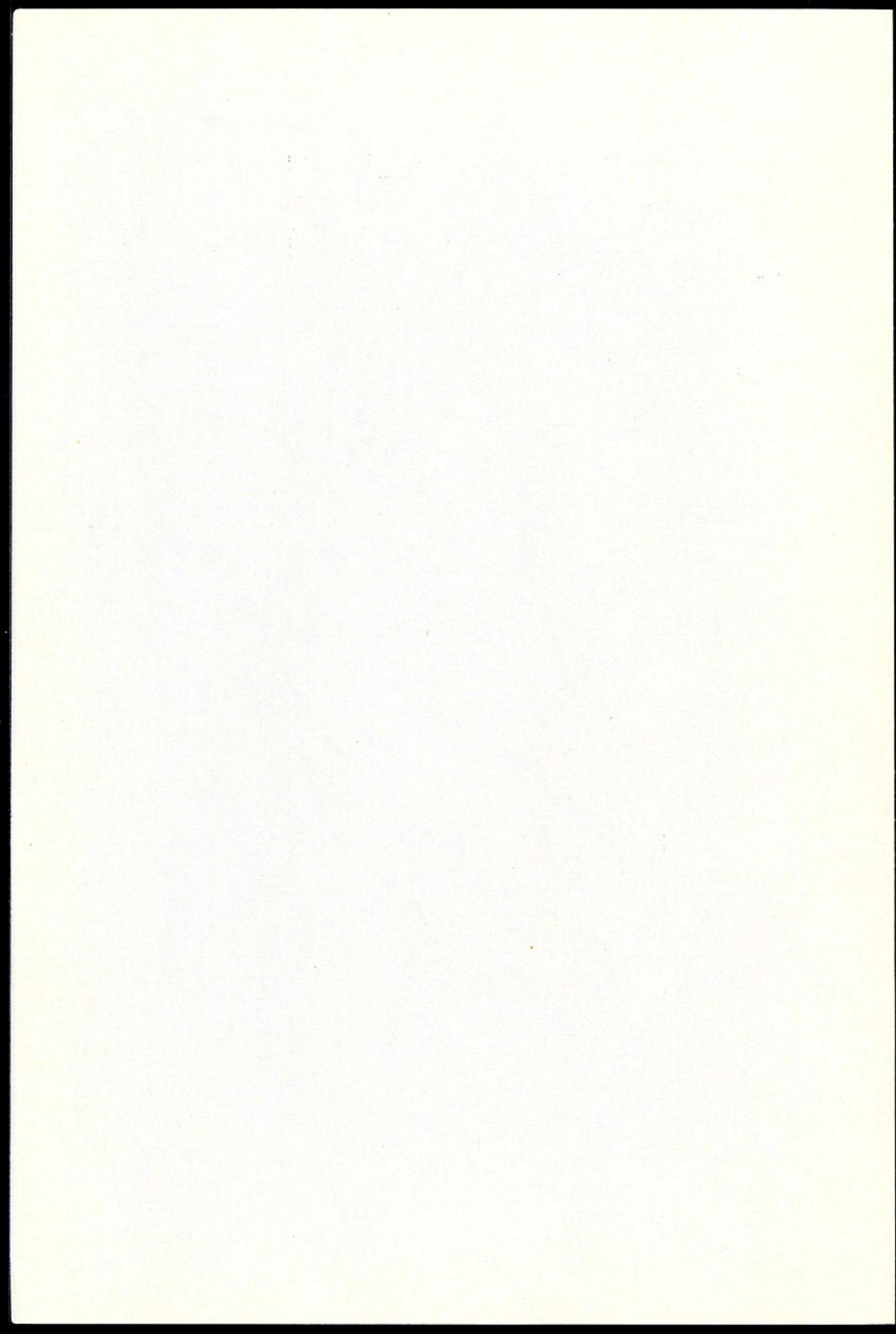


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# MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

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

*When your children shall ask their parents in time to come . . .*

Joshua 4:21

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## THE FIRST JEWS OF ANN ARBOR

By Helen Aminoff

In the fall of 1980 a tombstone—engraved in beautiful Hebrew script in the name of Reila Weil and dated 1858—was turned over to Rabbi Allan D. Kensky of Beth Israel Congregation in Ann Arbor. The stone had been discovered by the new occupants of a campus fraternity house who had come upon it during a housecleaning. It was extremely well preserved. Apparently used as a stepping-stone or doormat, it had been kept face down and was protected from the elements. We were intrigued by this discovery, and thus began the author's odyssey into the past. It was a journey embarked upon to determine the original resting place of the stone itself. However, as more and more facts were uncovered, a picture of Jewish life in Ann Arbor over a century ago soon emerged.

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Reila Weil<sup>1</sup> was the first wife of Moses Weil, the third of five surviving sons born to Joseph and Fannie in Bohumelitz, Austria-Hungary. Joseph Weil's forebears traced their origins to Spain, at which time their family name was Levi. According to family tradition, during the Inquisition, the family name was changed to Weil, an anagram of Levi. They fled to France, and when conditions for Jews there became intolerable, they went to Bohemia. They were welcomed by the emperor under the proviso that the children be sent to Bohemian as well as to Hebrew schools. It was there that Joseph Weil was born in 1777, married his wife Fannie, in 1798, and had seven sons, five of whom survived infancy: Leopold (born 1820), Solomon (1821), Moses (1824), Jacob (1827), and Marcus (1829). Fannie Weil died while the children were still young; Joseph married Sarah Stein, who lived in the same village.



Joseph Weil

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, information on the Weil family was obtained from *Record and History of the Weil Family*, compiled and edited by their children and grandchildren, 1914; the book and other pertinent information were provided to the author by members of the Weil family now living in Chicago. The author also extends her gratitude to Charles B. Bernstein of Chicago, whose response to her notice in the *Sentinel* provided information which led to her contact with members of the Weil family.

HELEN AMINOFF was born in London, England, and brought up in New York. She came to Ann Arbor in 1960 with her husband, David Aminoff, a member of the University of Michigan faculty. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, she has been active in Jewish causes. She is a past treasurer, Board member and administrator of Beth Israel Congregation of Ann Arbor, and a past president and current treasurer of the Ann Arbor chapter of Hadassah. She is employed as the office manager of Osler/Milling Architects, Ann Arbor.

Solomon was the first of the family to immigrate to America. He was a peddler of dry goods and notions throughout the state of Michigan, settling in Ann Arbor in 1845. At that time, he was joined by his eldest brother, Leopold, who arrived with his wife, Rachel Sittig, and two children. A deed, registered on March 24, 1848, indicates purchase of farmland in the town of Lima by "Mary Sittig and Rosi Weill [sic] of the County of Prachine in Bohemia."<sup>2</sup> It is believed that the Rosi referred to in the deed is Rachel, wife of Leopold, who also was known as Rosa, and that the farm was owned jointly by them with her brother, Judah Sittig, and his wife, Mary. Moses and his first wife, Reila/Rosa, also had attempted farming upon their arrival in Michigan. Together with his younger brother, Marcus, Moses opened a general store in Pontiac, Michigan. Jacob, the last of the brothers to arrive, joined Moses and Marcus in this enterprise, helping with the bookkeeping. Jacob Weil had studied to be a rabbi and had graduated with honors from the University of Hungary. He was fluent in French and acted as interpreter with the Canadian and Indian traders. The



Author Helen Aminoff and Rabbi Allan Kensky with the Reila Weil gravestone. Directly above hangs a rubbing made from the stone, along with rubbings of other tombstones from the early Ann Arbor Jewish cemetery.

store became known as the French Shop. Jacob traveled extensively among the Indians and traded furs and skins for supplies. The three brothers, seeing great potential in the tanning business, joined forces with Leopold and Solomon and formed the firm, J. Weil and Brothers, tannery, in Ann Arbor, a partnership that was to last throughout their lives. Jacob was the president, and Marcus the treasurer. Loomis and Talbot's *City Directory* of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti for 1860 lists the firm of "Weil, J. and Bros. manufacturers of leather and morocco and dealers in wool and furs," located at Huron near First Street. The business gradually was enlarged until it employed over one hundred men.

The 1850 U.S. census listed the brothers (as Wiel) all living in one household, with Bohemia as their place of birth and peddler as their oc-

<sup>2</sup> Liber Z, p.699, Deeds. The author is indebted to Jeffrey R. Gallatin of the Gallatin Realty Company for guidance in the research of records in the Register of Deeds office.

cupation. By the time of the 1860 census all but Marcus, who still was single and living with Jacob, maintained their own households in the second ward, staffed with domestics; they listed their occupation as leather manufacturers. Leopold's household in the 1860 census registered his wife, Reosa (Rachel), and children, Hiram (Aaron), born in Bohemia; Reosa, Mary, Samuel, Caroline, and Lewis, ranging in ages from 17 years to 5 months. Also living in the same household were Regina Gregor, milliner, and Mary Miller, domestic. Solomon was listed with his wife Dory (Dora), for whom he had sent two years after his arrival in Michigan, together with their children Frank, Julia, Henry, Isaac, Fanny, and Reosa, ages 2 to 13. Denise Weisenger, age 14, also is listed. Moses' household listed his second wife, Gerressa (Theresa Lederer), also born in Bohemia, whom he had met and married in Chicago after the death of his first wife Reila in 1858; Michael and Emanuel, ages 7 and 5, from his first marriage; and Rosa, 7 months. Also listed were Bertha Lederer, age 18, presumably Theresa's sister; Margaret Newman, domestic from France; and Charles Cohn, laborer from Prussia. Jacob Weil's household included his wife, Deborah Fantle, whom he had married in 1859; their son Samuel, age 1 month; Jacob's brother, Marcus; Charles Fantle (brother of Deborah), listed as merchant, age 18; and Isa Weisenger, age 14, of Switzerland. Also in their own household were Joseph and Sarah Weil, who had been sent for by their sons. (The *Michigan Argus* newspaper of December 21, 1860 lists the marriage of the youngest brother, Marcus, to Bertha Lederer at the residence of Moses Weil on December 16, 1860. The ceremony was performed by the Reverend L. Adler of Detroit. Charles Fantle's marriage to Regina Gregor on February 2, 1862 was performed by the Reverend A. Lasar of Detroit at the residence of Leopold Weil, as listed in the *Michigan Argus* of February 7, 1862.)

Strangers to a new land and environment, the Weil brothers soon became prosperous business people. By September 1856 they had purchased the site of their successful tannery business.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps because of their orthodox religious beliefs and their activities within the community, they formed the cornerstone and foundation of the Jewish community at that time. Their homes became the headquarters for all the wayfaring Jews. The brothers maintained a kosher household, and conducted the first *minyanim* held in Michigan. The first were held in 1845 on the *shabatot* and holy days in the house occupied by Leopold Weil and Judah Sittig in Lower Town in Ann Arbor. Later, services were held in the homes of Leopold and Moses on Washington Street, or those of Solomon and Marcus on Huron Street. After the parents, Joseph and Sarah, arrived in 1850, services were held regularly in the brick house at the corner of Washington and First streets near the tannery. (The first synagogue in Ann Arbor thus was located at 300 Washington, currently the site of a University of Michigan building.) When Solomon Weil's oldest son, Frank, was born on February 11, 1848, the *mohel* was brought from one of the Lake Erie cities. It is said that before arriving in 1850, Joseph Weil, at the request of his sons, purchased a *sefer*

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<sup>3</sup> Liber 40, p.784, Deeds.

*Tora* in Prague and bore the scroll in his arms all the way to Ann Arbor.<sup>4</sup> Joseph was a very well-preserved man who was said to be the tallest and spryest of all the oldest men of the town to take part in the Washington Birthday parade held in 1861, in which he acted as captain. (Although the 1860 census listed his age as 80, he died three years later at the age of 86.) Leopold, who was known for his unostentatious charity, served both as *hazan* and *shohet*. He would not accept payment for these services, rejoicing that he could be of service in helping to maintain the Jewish traditions and laws. Jacob, who had studied to become a rabbi, was known to be an excellent extemporaneous speaker and served as chaplain of his masonic lodge until age prevented him from attending the meetings. In April 1859, he was elected alderman for the second ward of Ann Arbor for a period of one year, having drawn the short lot to determine the length of his term. In April 1860, he was reelected by a clear majority of 131 votes against the 107 of his opponent. He was an active participant, and references to him appear throughout the minutes. On November 8, 1860, for example, he called for the report of the committee which had been established to study the erection of a lamppost on Huron near the Chapin furnace. The family obviously was very closely knit; their homes were adjacent one to the other along Huron and First streets. Their partnership in the tannery business attested to their belief that in "union there is strength."

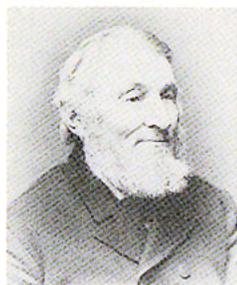
In the early 1860s, Moses and his family moved to Chicago, and Jacob and his family to Newark, New Jersey. The tannery was flourishing, and Chicago and New York had become large trade and commercial centers. It was natural for Moses to move to Chicago, the hometown of his wife, Theresa, and the site of many previous business visits by him. In time, the remaining brothers also moved to Chicago to join Moses: Marcus, the treasurer, in 1862; Solomon in 1870; and finally, Leopold, by that time a widower. Although the business had been wound down, the family still had extensive land holdings in Ann Arbor, and we find a listing in the 1878-79 *City Directory* for Louis Weil (son of Solomon): "hides and pelts, W. Huron, res. 26 E. Liberty." By the time of the next *City Directory*, 1883-84, the only Jewish family listed is Fantle: "dry goods, 40 S. Main, res. 26 E. Liberty."

The "Great Fire of 1871" not only destroyed the tannery in Chicago but caused severe health injury to Moses. He remained an invalid until his death on November 18, 1880. The Goose Island (Chicago) branch on the tannery remained untouched, however, and the business soon flourished again. In view of the fact that Moses still owned property in Ann Arbor at the time of his death, a copy of his last will and testament was filed in the office of the Register of Deeds.<sup>5</sup> It is fascinating to read of the disposition of his estate. He divided his holdings between his wife, Theresa, and his children by his second marriage. He was careful to note that he was leaving nothing to his two eldest sons, Michael and Emanuel, children by his first wife, not because he loved them any the less, but because they were not in need. He

<sup>4</sup> Irving I. Katz, *The Beth El Story* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1955), p.52.

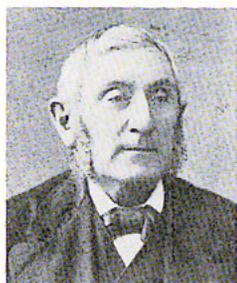
<sup>5</sup> Liber 101, p.58, Deeds.

Leopold and Rachel Weil



Solomon and Dora Weil

Moses and Theresa Weil



Jacob and Deborah Weil

Marcus and Bertha Weil



noted that he already had expended substantial sums of money on their upbringing and education. (Michael at that time was listed as living in Keokuk, the location of the University of Iowa Medical School.)

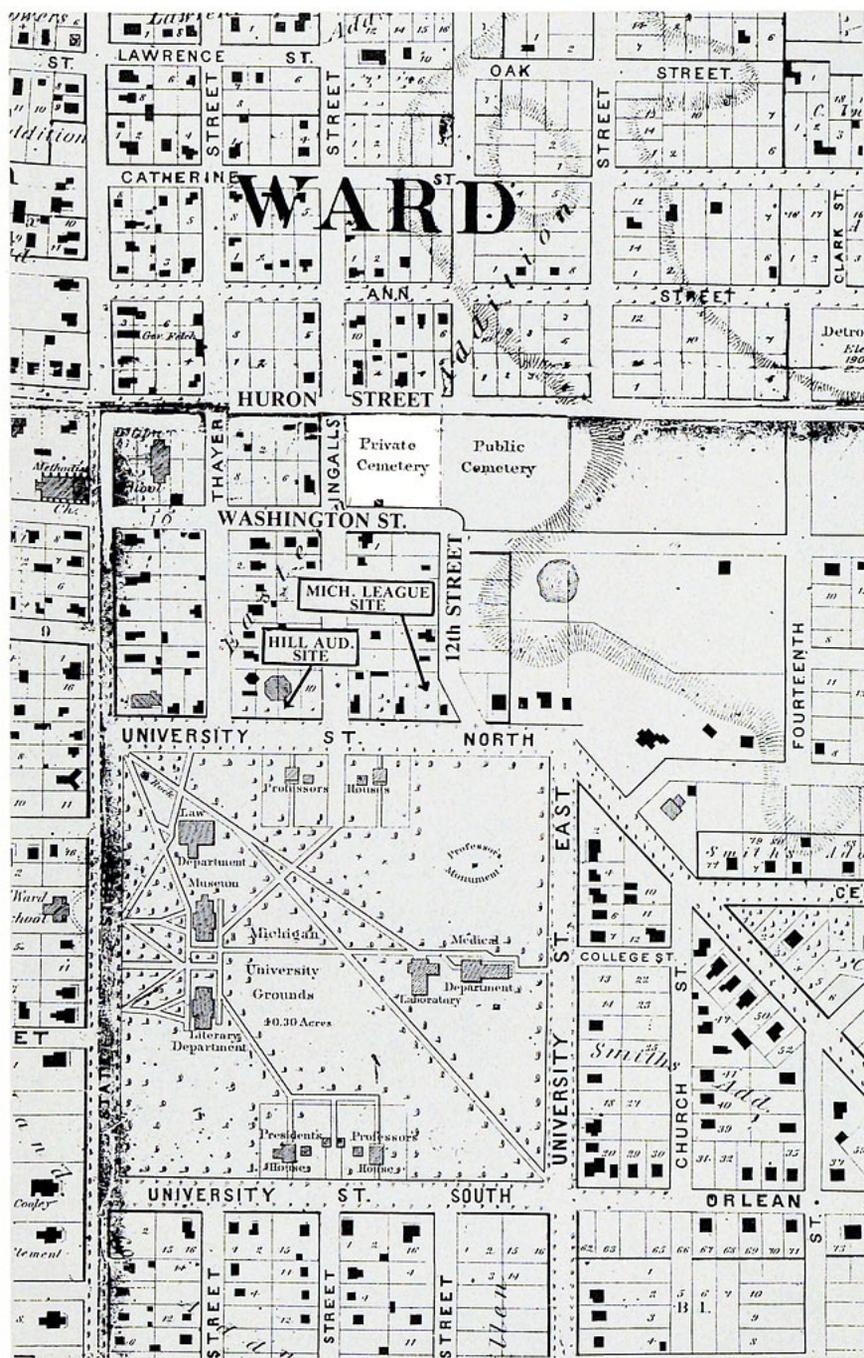
In a paper presented at the Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the American Jewish Historical Society on the "Jewish Beginnings in Michigan Before 1850,"<sup>6</sup> David E. Heineman provided interesting information indicating that the first Jews arrived in the middle of the nineteenth century, after the erroneous reputation that Michigan was a swampland had been corrected. In 1840, Washtenaw County, the fifth to be organized in the state, was known as the best for farm stock. The county was settled largely by Germans, and it was here, among those with familiar traditions and language, that the German Jewish immigrants seeking freedom settled. The first Jews known in the area were Solomon Bendit and Moses Rindskopf, who subsequently moved to Detroit. Other members of the Jewish community by 1850 included the Lederer family, who ultimately established a tannery, soap factory, and general store in Lansing; David Weidenfeld and brother; Charles Adolph; Adam Hersch; Isaac Altman; Simon Sloman; and the Guiterman, Sondheim, Goodkind, and Fantle families. The immigrants came from Bohemia, Hungary, Silesia, and Bavaria. In a footnote, Heineman presented information based on an interview with Jacob Weil, the last surviving brother, who by that time had moved to Newark, New Jersey. According to Weil, the Jewish cemetery in Ann Arbor was acquired in 1848 or 1849; the deed, containing an entirely incorrect description, was not procured until later. Indeed, search through the documents has determined that they are replete with inaccuracies, and the accuracy of the statement made by Jacob Weil has been borne out.<sup>7</sup>

The Jewish cemetery actually was located in the area designated as Block 1 South, Range XII East, bounded by Washington, Ingalls, and Huron streets, in the Village of Ann Arbor. The land was part of a much larger area obtained in 1825 by Thomas Charles from the U.S. government through a land grant. One year later, Mr. Charles sold most of the property to Andrew Nowland, and the area became known as Nowland Farms. In 1834, in consideration of the sum of twenty-three dollars, Andrew Nowland conveyed a small part of his farm to the Town of Ann Arbor for use as a cemetery. In 1830 the entire farm, including the cemetery, was purchased by the Ann Arbor Land Company, E.W. Morgan and William S. Maynard, trustees, and by E.W. Morgan and his wife, Lucy. A map of the Eastern Addition to the Village of Ann Arbor surveyed in 1839 clearly demarcates the cemetery, measuring 16 rods square, as "Private Cemetery." Subsequent maps of Ann Arbor show a separate square of land, slightly larger,

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<sup>6</sup> *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 13 (1905): 47-70.

<sup>7</sup> The Detroit Jewish community, whose first cemetery was founded on Lafayette Street in December 1850, was undoubtedly aware of the existence of the Ann Arbor Jewish cemetery prior to its own. More than 100 years later, Leonard N. Simons, in his letter to the Michigan Historical Commission in support of the application for a historical marker at the Lafayette Street cemetery, acknowledged the prior establishment of the Ann Arbor cemetery; he erroneously believed the cemetery to have been held privately by the Weil family. Letter to Harry Kelsey, director, Michigan Historical Commission, August 18, 1971.



An 1870 map of Ann Arbor, showing the Jewish burial ground designated as Private Cemetery.

adjacent to and abutting the private cemetery, designated "Public Cemetery." (This public cemetery was converted to a park in 1891 on the occasion of the ninetieth birthday of Governor Felch, and was named Felch Park to commemorate the event. The land currently is the site of the University of Michigan Power Center for Performing Arts.) A deed between "Elijah W. Morgan and wife and L. Weil and others for burying ground" was received for record on March 24, 1870.<sup>8</sup> The Notary Public certification indicates separate acknowledgments by E.W. Morgan and wife "on this [?] day of December A.D. 1853." The contents of the deed indicate that for and in consideration of the sum of forty dollars, the Morgans quitclaimed unto "Leopold Weil, Solomon Weil, Moses Rindskopf of Ann Arbor City and David Widenplatt [sic] of Ypsilanti . . . that certain tract or parcel of land situated in the Eastern Addition to the Village of Ann Arbor in said County known bounded and described as follows viz: Block number three South in range number three and four East in the private cemetery in the City of Ann Arbor . . . in trust and as and for a burying ground for the Jews Society of Ann Arbor."

The history of the land continues with a deed showing a mortgage foreclosure sale conveying it by sheriff's sale to William P. Groves in 1871.<sup>9</sup> On November 7, 1899, a deed between "Leopold Weil Etal by Exr" to Samuel Langsdorf was received for record indicating that agreement had been made January 30, 1894 between the executors of Leopold Weil and Solomon Weil of Chicago and Samuel Langsdorf of Ann Arbor.<sup>10</sup> In consideration of the sum of one dollar, the land described as being in the "Eastern Addition of the Village now City of Ann Arbor being block Number Three South Range Number Three and Four East in the private cemetery," was sold and conveyed. Terms of the deed indicated that Mr. Langsdorf was to purchase and obtain a clear title to a lot (or lots) in Forest Hill Cemetery of equal size or more; to cause to be removed the bodies now lying buried on the land to Forest Hill Cemetery and reinterred therein in new coffins or boxes when necessary; to place the tombstones over the bodies so removed and in their proper places. A contract in the offices of the Forest Hill Cemetery, dated May 31, 1900 between A.D. and E.W. Groves and D.O. Marx, "Trustee of Jewish Cemetery," indicates there are ten grave lots and six burials. (The Forest Hill Cemetery is located at the corner of Geddes and Observatory; it was dedicated by act of Council on May 11, 1859.)

Beginning in the fall of 1935, the University of Michigan purchased the plots of land which had been the Private Cemetery.<sup>12</sup> By that time, subdi-

<sup>8</sup> Liber 67, p.464, Deeds.

<sup>9</sup> Liber 45, p.64, Mortgages.

<sup>10</sup> Liber 142, p.123, Deeds.

<sup>11</sup> There is no record of D. O. Marx as a resident of Ann Arbor at that time, although the *City Directory* does list a D. Marx Clothiers as late as 1878-79. (The Marx name is also not familiar to Lillian Smith, nee Lansky, whose family settled in Ann Arbor in 1895—see note 16.) The last known burial was of a member of the Marx family, and perhaps for this reason the trusteeship fell to a member of that family, even though no longer resident in Ann Arbor.

<sup>12</sup> The author is indebted to Roderick K. Daane, general counsel of the University of

vided and with residences built on it, the land subsequently became the site of the University of Michigan Horace Rackham Graduate School.<sup>13</sup>

Intriguing and puzzling questions have been raised by these documents. As indicated by Jacob Weil, the description in the the 1870 deed of the cemetery location indeed was incorrect. The deed indicates rights to the land were obtained in December 1853, yet the deed itself was not recorded until 1870. According to Jacob Weil, the actual date of the origin of the cemetery was 1848 or 1849. And, there are burials that took place much earlier than December 1853 — Edward Weil in January 1853, and Frances Weil in September 1853.

One only can speculate about the answers to these questions. It is the belief of this author that the cemetery indeed was founded by the Jews Society of Ann Arbor in 1848 (49), as indicated by Jacob Weil. Rights to the land were obtained, rather than purchased outright, possibly due to financial considerations. As the Weil family began to leave in the 1860s (possibly even aware of the impending mortgage foreclosure), they may have felt the need to legitimize the rights of the Jews Society of Ann Arbor to the land, and to protect their dead. Solomon Weil left for Chicago in 1870, and it is possible that just prior to his departure a deed was filed and backdated so that the acquisition to the land could be legalized. The date of 1853 perhaps was chosen as that is the year indicated on the tombstones of two of the earliest burials. It could have been the month of December, which was remembered as the month the rights were obtained, but over twenty years later the exact year would have been difficult to recall. Jacob already had moved to Newark in 1861 and Moses to Chicago, and it is possible all the documentation was done in a hurry without too much care for detail, but with concern to secure and protect the land rights.

Also of interest is the fact that the Agreement on file at Forest Hill Cemetery indicates that ten lots were purchased, but there is a record of only six burials. The site of these plots recently has been restored and demarcated, and rubbings have been made of all the headstones, some of them so badly weathered that they are illegible; there are two stones that cannot be read. The Weil family headstone names the following members: Joseph, died in 1863 at the age of 86; Fannie, Joseph's first wife who was buried in Bohumelitz (but presumably listed to preserve her memory); Sarah, Joseph's second wife, died in 1868; Rosa (Reila), who died in 1858 (and whose stone began this story); Edward, aged 1 year and 5 months, who died in January 1853; and Frances, aged 9 years and 2 days, died September 1853—both children of Leopold and Rachel. There are headstones also for

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Michigan, who together with Frederick W. Mayer, university planner, directed her to the sources for information concerning the acquisition of university property. The author also extends her gratitude to Michael E. Peal, construction inspector in the Engineering Services Department at the university, who not only provided blueprints and opened files of the university land transactions, but took the time to plat each parcel of land at the site of the Rackham Building as it existed when purchased by the university.

<sup>13</sup> Application has been approved by the Michigan Historical Commission for a historical marker to be erected in the east courtyard of the Rackham Building, designating the area as the site of the first Jewish cemetery in the state of Michigan.

Samie Marx, died in 1881 at the age of 10; Minnie Weidenfeld, buried in 1861 at the age of 2 years and 10 months; and Max Guiterman, son of Simon and Rosalie, who died at the age of 5 years, 4 months, and 7 days in August 1857. The Washtenaw County records indicate the burial of Charles Weil, son of Leopold and Rachel, at the age of 7 years and 10 months in November 1869. The Weil family history also notes the death of Mary Weil, another child of Leopold and Rachel, again in childhood. This listing would account for the ten lots, but with only six burials the whereabouts of the remains of the other four is a mystery. Perhaps they were lost in the move, or perhaps they fell victim to grave robbers — mainly medical students — who were active in those days.<sup>14</sup>

There have been rumors, persistent until this day, that Ann Arbor was the site of a pogrom and for this reason all the Jews had left. The author has been unable to find any basis in fact for this assertion.<sup>15</sup> That anti-Semitism existed, there is no question. A front page advertisement in the *Ann Arbor Argus* of January 14, 1852 is headed "OPPOSITION TO JEWS." The ad was placed by one Wm. O'Hara, who ran a dry goods store and who took great pains to point out that his goods were none of the "Eastern Shelf-worn Slop Work." The ad measured approximately 2½" by 4½" and obviously was directed at his Jewish competitors.

Ann Arbor, Nov. 12, 1851

## OPPOSITION TO JEWS!

WM. O'HARA respectfully informs the inhabitants of Ann Arbor and vicinity that he has just returned from the city of New York, with a large and well selected Stock of Cloths, Cassimeres, Sarinettes, Vestings, Overcoatings and Trimmings, which he will sell cheaper than any other house in the city, having no rents or clerk hire to pay, and determined not to be undersold by any. All he requires is a call before purchasing elsewhere, and as for his work, his customers have had a good chance of testing it, for 12 years back. You will bear in mind that those goods are none of the Eastern Shelf-worm

## Slop Work,

Such as is brought into this market and sold for good stock, which creates a prejudice against Ready Made Clothing, where people are deceived. These are all fresh from the Importers, and all made under the supervision of the subscriber, and

**Warranted not to Rip.**

All garments bought in this establishment, if they rip will be sewed free of expense, as the proprietor pledges himself that his work will be well done, and of

## Good Materials.

Store south side of Court House Square.

WM. O'HARA.

N. B. Cutting and Tailoring done as usual according to the latest styles and

**WARRANTED TO FIT.**

An advertisement from the *Michigan Argus*, January 14, 1852.

<sup>14</sup> In September 1955 the Jewish cemetery in Ann Arbor, Beth Israel Memorial Gardens—an enclave within Arborcrest Cemetery—was incorporated. Although the possibility of removing the graves from Forest Hill and reintering them in the Jewish cemetery was considered briefly, it was decided that to do so would be yet another desecration; the graves had been disturbed enough. As noted in the text, however, the Forest Hill gravestones underwent restoration.

<sup>15</sup> In addition to conducting a thorough study of the early Ann Arbor newspapers, conversations were held with Prof. Louis Doll, who researched the newspapers; Mary Jo Pugh, archivist, Michigan Historical Collections (who was also most helpful in aspects of the cemetery research); and Mr. Wystan Stevens, Ann Arbor historian.

It is the author's belief that as the Weils prospered and their business expanded, they sought new and more challenging frontiers in Chicago and New York. With their departure and without their leadership, no doubt it was difficult to sustain a viable Jewish life in Ann Arbor. By then, the Detroit Jewish community was growing, and it would have been natural for many of the declining Ann Arbor Jewish population to veer toward more active centers of Jewish life. The last known family residents in Ann Arbor were the Fantles, listed in the *City Directory* of 1883-84. By the date of publication of the next directory in 1886, they had gone; their migration, and that of the Sondheim family before them, has been traced to Minnesota.

From that time until the arrival of William Lansky and his family in 1895, there was no Jewish life in Ann Arbor. (We do know, however, that Moses Gomberg, a Jew and member of the University of Michigan chemistry faculty was residing in Ann Arbor during that time.) When the Lansky family settled here, they were unaware that previously there had been an active and thriving Jewish community in the area. As Mr. Lansky took over the role of leader in the Jewish community, he learned of the existence of Jewish gravestones—possibly at the time they were reinterred—but he knew nothing else. According to Lillian Smith, daughter of William Lansky, the family came to Ann Arbor via Canada and Ohio because they had heard that it was a wonderful place to bring up children, and there were no Jews living there. They felt it was incumbent upon them to settle in Ann Arbor and to establish a Jewish community. William, together with his wife Hattie, set up a grocery/general store at 24 Broadway, where they also resided. By 1902 Lansky's junkyard was established, a landmark in Ann Arbor yet today, and still run by members of the family. Soon they were joined by other Jewish families—Abraham Levy, the shoemaker, and his wife Jenny; and, in 1904, Osias Zwerdling, employed by Mack and Co. furriers. The Lansky home was the center of Jewish activity and the stopping place for wayfarers. Ms. Smith fondly remembers how they would await expectantly the arrival of the coach from Detroit every Friday which carried the kosher food with the Shabat bread sitting on the top of the parcel. In the fall, her father would kill the geese which later were cooked and dismembered by her mother and then stored in the attic between the layers of goose fat. These provided extra food for unexpected visitors throughout the winter months. From these beginnings, the current Ann Arbor Jewish community, numbering approximately twelve hundred families, can trace its roots.<sup>16</sup>

With the publication of an article in the *Ann Arbor News* January 31, 1982, describing the research on the early Jewish history, this cycle and story has come full circle. On that day the author received a telephone call from Jane Berliss, who just had arrived in Ann Arbor to seek employment and to further her education. She had read the article in the newspaper, and introduced herself as the great-great granddaughter of Solomon Weil.

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<sup>16</sup> Lillian Lansky Smith, interview with the author, Southfield, Michigan, summer 1982.

In addition to those persons already mentioned in the body of the article, the author wishes to thank: Marguerite N. Lambert, for her compilation of marriage and death notices from Ann Arbor newspapers; the staff members in the Washtenaw County Register of Deeds offices, and in the microfilm room of the University of Michigan Harlan Hatcher Graduate Library; David W. Osler, Osler/Milling Architects, Inc., for the loan of an 1853 map of Ann Arbor showing the locations of the Jewish cemetery and the Weil family tannery; the *Ann Arbor Observer*, for copies of the overlay map published in connection with an article on Allen's Creek; Phillip Applebaum, president of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, who urged the author to set pen to paper; the author's family for their support in her endeavors; Rabbi Allan D. Kensky (Beth Israel Congregation), who initially charged the author with this project and sustained her efforts by his continual encouragement.

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## MICHIGAN JUDICIARY OF JEWISH LINEAGE, PAST AND PRESENT: PART II\*

By Ira G. Kaufman

### Judges of the Federal Courts (continued)

#### Lawrence Gubow

Lawrence Gubow was a native Detroiter, born January 10, 1919 to Jacob and Dora (Rubin) Gubow. After attending the Detroit public schools, he attended the University of Michigan, from which he received a B.A. degree in 1940. He entered the U.S. Army as a private in January 1941, and by January 1943 earned a commission as a second lieutenant. While serving as a company commander with the 48th Infantry in Europe, he was wounded and captured on January 20, 1945; he was released in May. Part of his left heel had been shot off by mortar shrapnel during battlefield action.

The army played a pivotal role in his life, for it was during his battle service in World War II that he met Philip A. Hart, later to become the beloved U.S. Senator from Michigan. It was Hart who later espoused Gubow's candidacy for appointment to the Federal bench.

After the war, Gubow returned to Detroit and earned a degree at the University of Michigan Law School in 1950.

In 1956 he was appointed by Governor G. Mennen Williams to the Michigan Corporation and Securities Commission. During his tenure as commissioner, Gubow attained national attention by his challenge of the notorious "point system" of Grosse Pointe, Michigan—a form of racial discrimination used to keep undesirable home buyers out of the all-white upper-class suburb. As a result of that probe, MCSC Rule Nine was enacted to prohibit discrimination by real-estate brokers. He served as commissioner until March 1961, when he was appointed U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan. Chief Judge Theodore J. Levin administered the oath of office. He served in that post until his appointment to the federal bench by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 20, 1968.



Lawrence Gubow

\*See Part I in *Michigan Jewish History*, Volume 21, Number 1 (January 1981), pp. 10-16.

IRA G. KAUFMAN is a judge of the Wayne County Probate Court, having been first elected to that post in 1958. He received a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from the New York University Law School, is a past presiding judge of the Wayne County Probate Court, a past president of the Michigan Probate and Juvenile Court Judges Association, a past president of the Zionist Organization of Detroit, and Honorary Life President of Adat Shalom Synagogue.

As U.S. Attorney, Gubow was praised for his reform of bail procedures in the Federal courts, which resulted in a decrease in the cost of bonds assessed against defendants, and in an increase in releases on personal recognizance. It is of interest to note that neither of these measures increased the rate of failure to appear at the time of trial. Consequently, a substantial savings in housing costs and public assistance to prisoners' families was effectuated. In modified form, this measure became the Bail Reform Act of 1966.

Two openings to the Federal bench in Michigan were occasioned by the elevation of Judge Wade H. McCree to the Federal Appeals Court in Cincinnati and by the retirement of Judge Thomas T. Thornton in February 1966. At first, it was speculated that Judge McCree would be succeeded by Justice Otis Smith of the Michigan Supreme Court; but when Smith took a high position with the General Motors Corporation, Senator Philip Hart nominated Damon Keith, head of the Michigan Civil Service Commission. Keith was strongly endorsed by the American Bar Association and the Detroit black community. He was subsequently appointed a Federal judge. Senator Hart also nominated Lawrence Gubow to the second Federal judgeship. But the American Bar Association protested, claiming that Gubow had little trial experience. A sharp controversy erupted. But with the solid support of the Michigan Bar Association, U.S. Senator Robert P. Griffin and U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, Gubow prevailed. He assumed the judgeship in 1968.

Larry Gubow was always active in Jewish community affairs. He served as a member of the Board of Governors of the Jewish Welfare Federation of Detroit, director of the JWF's Detroit Service Group, director of the Jewish National Fund, trustee of Sinai Hospital of Detroit, and president of the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Detroit. He was also awarded the Gold Medal of Merit of the Jewish War Veterans, its highest award.

An illustration of his strength of character as well as his dedication to the state of Israel was his involvement on January 20, 1969 in the picketing of the French Consulate to protest the embargo of French arms to Israel. This was an unprecedented act for a Federal judge. *The Detroit Free Press* objected to Gubow's action and figuratively gave him a "tap on the wrist," as it headlined its editorial. To the *Free Press*, Gubow's participation was an act of politics which should have been eschewed by a member of the judiciary who should, at all times, be objective and non-committal. The Jewish community and others, however, felt that the judge's action was in perfect accord with his feelings as a human being and a seeker of justice.

Shortly before his death in 1978, there was an unforgettable meeting at Shaarey Zedek synagogue in Larry Gubow's honor. His son, David, electrified the audience with a moving commentary on his father. This gathering took place shortly after a session of the moot court held in the Supervisors Room of the City-County Building in Detroit, which Judge Gubow addressed. The occasion was Law Day USA, and state public-school children who had won the essay and moot-court contests were the participants. Judge Gubow later said that while he was speaking he suddenly lost his eyesight. Unable to give the speech in the text before him, he continued his message extemporaneously.

Thereafter, his physical condition grew worse, but he continued to appear in his courtroom every day, even though he required some assistance moving about the Federal Building.

After lengthy illness, he died on March 26, 1978. Funeral services were conducted in Shaarey Zedek; interment was in Clover Hill Park Cemetery. He was survived by his wife, Estelle (Schmalberg), and three children: David, Mona and Janey.

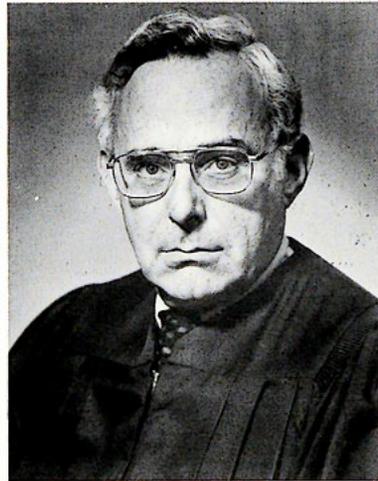
In 1981 an artist was commissioned to paint the judge's portrait; in spring of 1982 the completed painting was hung in the Federal Court Building in Detroit.

### Avern Cohn

An old song has it that the apple does not fall far from the tree. And certainly, the adage fits the combination of Irwin I. Cohn and his son, Avern Cohn. For the mold into which each fits has identical qualities of love and faith, of dedication to community—both public and religious—of successful careers, and of creative character and mind.

To picture Irwin I. Cohn, the father, is to see him as a participant in practically every Jewish organization, whether it be the United Hebrew Schools, Allied Jewish Campaign, the Zionist cause, or those synagogue movements which out of sheer dedication to helpfulness, he joined and gave his strength.

But what about Federal Judge Avern Cohn? He was born to Irwin I. and Sadie (Levin) Cohn on Churchill Street in the city of Detroit on July 23, 1924. The Detroit public schools, the United Hebrew Schools, and the Shaarey Zedek Sunday school all were the scenes of his early learning. He attended the University of Michigan from 1942 to 1943, leaving for Army service. Two years were spent at John Tarleton Agricultural College and at Stanford University. He then matriculated at Loyola University School of Medicine in 1945, but evidencing the independence of mind and spirit that has always motivated him, he withdrew from medical school and returned to the University of Michigan Law School (whence his father had been graduated before him) and was graduated in 1949. He was admitted to the Michigan Bar in that same year.



Avern Cohn

Avern practiced law with his father from 1949 to 1961, when the office merged with one of the very outstanding legal firms of Michigan: Honigman, Miller and Schwartz, to become Honigman, Miller, Schwartz and Cohn. He became a principal member of the firm.

His career at the law prior to his judgeship was of such a solid character that he soon attained the respect of the fellow members of his profession and of the judiciary.

At the same time, Avern's participation in Jewish life has been extensive and varied. His extra-curricular activities have been marked by a series of positions culminating in election to the presidency of the Jewish Welfare Federation of Detroit in 1981. Before that, he had been active in the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Detroit and the Detroit chapter of the American Jewish Committee. He is affiliated with Congregation Shaarey Zedek, Temple Beth El, and Congregation T'chayah.

Along with these activities, his non-judicial adult life has been characterized by a distinguished record of service to the entire community. He has been a member of the Michigan Social Services Commission, chairman of both the Michigan Civil Rights Commission and the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners. He is a past director of the Detroit Bar Association, and was appointed by the president of the State Bar of Michigan in 1977 to serve as chairman of a special committee on court congestion. He also served in the Representative Assembly of the State Bar of Michigan from 1972 to 1978. He has been an active member of the Democratic Party on both the state and national levels.

In 1979 President Jimmy Carter, upon the recommendation of Michigan's U.S. Senator Donald Riegle, appointed Avern to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan. He was sworn in on October 9th of that year.

Avern has been married to Joyce Hochman since 1954, and they have three children: Sheldon, Thomas and Leslie (Mrs. Paul Magy).

### Stewart A. Newblatt

In Stewart A. Newblatt's interview with U.S. Senator Donald Riegle, prior to Riegle's nomination of Newblatt to the Federal bench, he was asked what he saw as his strengths and weaknesses. Stewart's reply was, "I felt that my strength was the ability to accomplish things without the use of the coercive power of the court. My weakness was that I sometimes had difficulty distinguishing when it was not worthwhile to cogitate and research more. There is a value to resolving disputes."

Such is the man whose many friends, in company with almost the entire Genesee County Bar, jammed the Federal district courtroom on September 28, 1979 to witness the swearing-in of Stewart A. Newblatt as a Federal judge for the northern division of the Eastern District of Michigan.

The assembled guests heard Frederick G. Buesser, Jr., Detroit lawyer representing the American Bar Association; Ivan E. Barris, president of the Michigan Bar Association, and Ronald H. Ring, vice president of the Genesee Bar Association, speak of him as "a man of competence and integrity of the highest order," and as "a man of dignity and honor; a judge who will steer a tight judicial ship, and who will exercise his judicial duties in a fair and even manner." As for Newblatt, he called it "a joyous day; a day in which a professional fantasy has been fulfilled." The product of a modest childhood, he had indeed come a long way.

Robert A. Newblatt, Stewart's father, was born in the Brownsville section of Brooklyn, New York. He ran away from home at the age of 10 and ultimately, through knowledge acquired while working in large hotel kitchens, became a master chef. Fanny, Stewart's mother, was born in

Lapiz, on the Russian-Polish border. Her first husband was killed by the Bolsheviks. Soon after the revolution, she left Russia with her daughter, Anita. Mother and child walked across Poland and finally obtained the means to come to the United States, where Fanny married Robert in 1925. A son, Harry, was born to them in 1926, and Stewart in 1927 in Detroit.

The Newblatts first opened a one-table poolroom in Detroit, and then a small grocery store. Later, they opened a dining-car restaurant in Dearborn. Around 1931, they moved to Flint and opened another dining-car restaurant. Ultimately, Mrs. Newblatt owned and operated "Fanny's Hollywood Grill" in downtown Flint, while Robert owned and operated "Uncle Bob's" at the other end of the downtown district.

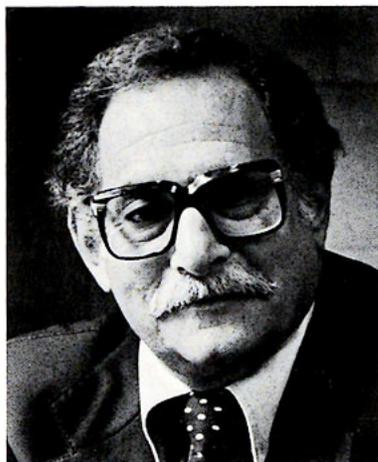
Stewart was educated at the Millersburg Military Institute in Millersburg, Kentucky, 1941-45, and was graduated as valedictorian. He attended the University of Michigan 1945-46 and 1947-50, earning a B.A. degree with Distinction in history and political science. (From 1946 to 1947 he served in the U.S. Army in the Philippines as an agent of the Criminal Investigation Division.)

A student at the University of Michigan Law School from 1950 to 1952, he was graduated with a Juris Doctor degree with Distinction; he was also admitted to the Order of the Coif. Though Law Review eligible, he resigned after writing several notes, since he found that working his way through school together with trying to complete the law curriculum in two years did not give him enough time to complete all law-review assignments.

Judge Newblatt's career was closely bound to the Democrats of Genesee County where he fashioned the county campaigns of state and national office seekers in the 1950s. In 1953 he entered private practice, and on May 4, 1962 he began serving as Circuit judge in the 7th Judicial Circuit of the state of Michigan (Genesee County), a post he held until February 1, 1970. He resigned in order to return to private practice.

His extracurricular activities have been varied, including: former member, Special Commission on Court Congestion; former chairman, Rules Committee of the Michigan Judges Association; former secretary, Genesee County Bar Association; former secretary, treasurer and vice president, Michigan Judges Association; former member, (Mackinac) International Bridge Authority. He also joined the Flint Jewish Community Council and the American Jewish Congress.

Judge Newblatt married Flora Sandweiss in March 1965. They have three children: Robert, David and Joshua. Flora became an attorney in 1976 and is currently an assistant Genesee County prosecutor.



Stewart A. Newblatt

## MEMORIES OF LOUIS JAMES ROSENBERG

By Devera Steinberg Stocker

I met Louis James Rosenberg when he and my mother, Minnie Steinberg, were residents of the Jewish Home for Aged in Detroit. My mother, Mr. Rosenberg and Mr. Nathan Alper became a trio of good friends and I saw them usually when I visited her. Mr. Rosenberg had beautiful photographs of Jane Adams of Hull House in his room; he also had literature describing her work. It was obvious he prized highly his long friendship with her. In his later years he was still pursuing his intellectual interests. He spoke of his studies as an important part of his daily routine. It was a sad loss to him when his two friends, my mother and Mr. Alper, died within a day of each other in July 1959. I kept in touch with him for a while and visited him occasionally. He died October 16, 1964. He was a cultured gentleman of an earlier time and is a pleasant memory to all who knew him.

The following reprint from *The Legal Record* and accompanying photograph were given to me by Mr. Rosenberg in 1959.

Although the *Legal Record* article gives an extensive profile of Louis J. Rosenberg's professional career, it does not mention his Jewish activities, which were numerous. A brief review would include his active involvement with the Jewish Publication Society of America. In fact, he was the first Detroitier to be named to the JPS Board of Directors, a post he held for fifteen years, when he was replaced by Philip Slomovitz. He was a Zionist and was active in all of the major Jewish community organizations. He was married to Mildred Simons (died 1944), daughter of the renowned David W. Simons and sister of Judge Charles C. Simons.<sup>1</sup>

From *The Legal Record*<sup>2</sup> (Detroit, Michigan), September 12, 1935

### SHORT SKETCHES of the BENCH and BAR

LOUIS ROSENBERG waited a hundred years after the independence of the American Colonies before deciding to enrich the American populace with his presence.<sup>3</sup> He chose as his parents Abraham and Zelda Rosenberg and admits that he was always satisfied with the selection.

At a tender age he was exposed to erudition through public schools and private tutors and finally at the turn of the century was graduated from the

<sup>1</sup> According to Philip Slomovitz (Ed.).

<sup>2</sup> Merged with the *Detroit Legal News* in 1952.

<sup>3</sup> Born in Russia on August 3, 1876.

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DEVERA STEINBERG STOCKER, born in Detroit and raised in Traverse City, Michigan, was graduated from the University of Michigan in 1922 with an AB degree and a teaching certificate. She earned a Master's degree in Social Work from the same institution in 1942. A member of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, she has written extensively on her family history and on the history of the Jewish community of Traverse City.



Louis James Rosenberg  
1876-1964

Detroit College of Law. He was admitted to the Michigan Bar in 1900. He practiced law in Detroit until 1906 and then embarked upon a career in the consular service.

Prior to taking up his legal studies, Mr. Rosenberg had studied foreign languages in several European countries and thus was well fitted for service abroad. From 1906 to 1909 he served as American Consul at Seville, Spain, where he and the well-known barber became great friends. The year of 1909-10 he served as American Consul at Pernambuco, Brazil, where his knowledge of the Portuguese language stood him in good stead and his sweat glands worked overtime.

Returning to Detroit in 1910, when Harry Mead and a lot of fellows like that were graduating from high school, Mr. Rosenberg became Legal Advisor to the State Board of Escheats, General Counsel of the Independent Telephone Line in Michigan, legal counsel to Canada in extradition cases, and counsel in Michigan for various diplomatic and consular officers. Finding time still a little heavy on his hands, Louis went in for a flock of varied activities in a big way.

He was the first official delegate to the American Tuberculosis Congress, he was the agent in Michigan for the International Bureau of the International Exposition which was held at Turin, Italy, in 1911. They selected him as a delegate to the Pan-American Conference in 1919 and a representative of Michigan to the National Dante Conference in 1921. He has been Honorary Consul for Panama in Detroit since 1923.

Along with all these various duties Mr. Rosenberg found time to do a little writing on the side. He is the author of "Mazzini, the Prophet of Religion and Humanity" (1903), of "The Medical Expert and Other Papers" (1911), of "Scraps and Bits" (1916), and a collaborator in the writing of "Sociologic Studies of a Medico-Legal Nature" (1902).

As a joiner Mr. Rosenberg takes off his hat to no one but Nick Salowich. He is a member of the American Society of International Law, and a life member of the Navy League of United States. He was elected a life member of the Civil Legion, belongs to the Detroit Philosophical Society and at one time was president of this organization. His name appears upon the rolls of the Michigan Authors Association, the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters, Pi Gamma Mu, and the International Academy of Diplomacy (France). He is a Knight of the Royal Order of Isabel the Catholic (Spain)



**LOUIS JAMES ROSENBERG**  
Member of the Detroit Bar

and a member of the Lawyers Club, the Detroit Economic Club, the National Arts Club (New York) and the Royal Society (London). We haven't checked yet on the Elks or the Sons of Malta.

Mr. Rosenberg is not a large fellow physically. He is built close to the daisies, as it were. His varied interests have given him more sides than the Koo-i-noor diamond and all of them just as highly polished. His pleasing personality and high degree of integrity have won for him a host of friends at home and abroad and the profound respect of his brothers in the legal profession.

—O.Z. IDE.

## REPORT ON THE TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL MEETING

The twenty-third annual meeting of the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan was held on Sunday, June 13, 1982 in Beth Abraham Hillel Moses synagogue in West Bloomfield Township, Michigan.

Pursuant to our constitution, elections for the Board of Directors and Officers were held. The following were elected (all positions are one-year terms): Phillip Applebaum, president; Lenore Miller, H. Saul Sugar, vice presidents; Ida Levine, treasurer; Esther Klein, recording secretary; Gertrude F. Edgar, corresponding secretary; Sarah Rogoff, financial secretary. Board of Directors: Sarah Bell, Judy Cantor, Laurence Deitch, Walter L. Field, Carol Finerman, Leon Fram, Morris Friedman, Philip Handleman, Laurence R. Imerman, Walter E. Klein,\* Esther LaMed, Reuben Levine, Stanley Meretsky, Harold Norris, Evelyn Noveck, Patricia Pilling, Bette A. Roth, Abraham Satovsky, Bette Schein, Howard B. Sherizen, Oscar D. Schwartz, Adele Staller, George M. Stutz, Lee Waldbott. (All past presidents are automatic members of the Board.)

Guest speaker at the meeting was Norma Goldman, adjunct assistant professor of Classics at Wayne State University. Her talk, accompanied by a slide presentation, was on "Caesarea: Digging Up the Past," a look at the ancient Israeli town as revealed by a recent archeological excavation.

In his annual report, president Phillip Applebaum outlined the great variety of activities undertaken by the Historical Society over the past 12 months: "Of greatest excitement was the work done by our members in Ann Arbor, who located the site of the first Jewish cemetery in Michigan. Until Helen Aminoff and Rabbi Allan Kensky undertook their research, it was generally assumed that Temple Beth El's Lafayette Street Cemetery in Detroit was Michigan's first Jewish burial ground. But Helen and Allan

\*deceased



Officers elected at the twenty-third annual meeting. *Left to right:* Phillip Applebaum, president; Ida Levine, treasurer; Lenore Miller, vice-president; Gertrude F. Edgar, corresponding secretary. *Not pictured:* H. Saul Sugar, vice-president; Esther Klein, recording secretary; Sarah Rogoff, financial secretary.

have determined, and can prove with documentation, that the Ann Arbor community established the first Jewish cemetery. It was located on what is today the site of the Rackham Building on the main campus of the University of Michigan. In 1900 the remains of the few graves were reinterred in Forest Hill Cemetery, where they form a separate section. Together with Beth Israel Congregation of Ann Arbor (with which Aminoff and Kensky are primarily affiliated) we have applied to the Michigan History Division of the Secretary of State's office for an official state historical marker.

"With regard to other marker projects, we have applied to the Detroit Historical Commission for permission to install a plaque in the Detroit Historical Museum in memory of David E. Heineman, designer of the flag of the city of Detroit. Heineman, who lived from 1865 to 1935, was the first historian of Michigan Jewry and was active in the general community as well, having served as president of the Detroit Common Council. A stained-glass window which depicts the city flag was installed above the main entrance to the Historical Museum at our behest in 1972; the window had formerly hung in the council chamber of the old Detroit City Hall. We are optimistic about an early approval from the Historical Commission.

"In line with the news of our two marker projects, it is significant to note the creation of a Historic Projects Fund, authorized by our Board of Directors at its meeting in March 1982. The fund will support all of our special projects, such as the two markers just mentioned. The fund will be supported with money derived from interest earned in our regular savings account, special contributions, income from the sale of journals, and all donations made to our Tribute Fund. The idea for a Historic Projects Fund was advanced years ago when the Society was still young, by the late Abe Kasle, who donated \$300 for the purpose. We have started the fund with a larger amount and hope to see it grow through the years.

"For the first time, our Society has undertaken the publishing of a membership brochure. Until now, we had no special literature available with which to publicize our organization. With our new brochure, we will



Members of the Board of Directors elected at the twenty-third annual meeting. *Standing, left to right:* Harold Norris, Irving I. Edgar (past president), Oscar D. Schwartz, Howard B. Sherizen, George Stutz, Laurence Imerman, Morris Friedman, Stanley Meretsky, Adele W. Staller, Judy Cantor. *Sitting, left to right:* Sarah Bell, Reuben Levine, Lee Waldbott, Ida Levine, Allen A. Warsen (past president), Evelyn Noveck. *Not pictured:* Laurence B. Deitch, Walter L. Field, Carol Finerman, Leon Fram, Philip Handleman, Walter E. Klein (*now deceased*), Esther LaMed, Patricia Pilling, Bette A. Roth, Abraham Satovsky, Bette Schein, Devera Stocker.

be able to distribute information on our activities throughout the state. The brochure was designed and produced with the capable assistance of our member, Stanley Meretsky.

"We began a new project last summer which we call the Michigan Jewish Genealogical Index. It is a file composed of birth and death records of Jewish communities throughout the state. The bulk of the records is stored in the form of a card file which is housed in the library of the Midrasha College of Jewish Studies in Southfield. Sources for the file range from Jewish and general newspapers, to synagogues and cemetery registers. To the best of our knowledge, we are the first and only Jewish historical organization in the country to have undertaken this sort of project. Project Coordinator is Sarah Bell, librarian at the Midrasha, who is doing an outstanding job of maintaining the file. We have a small but dedicated group of volunteers who are helping with newspaper clipping, record procurement and transcription. They are Carol Finerman, Walter E. Klein, Ruth Podolsky, Ruth Ann Rosenberg, Betty Starkman and Saul Sugar. We wish to extend thanks to the United Hebrew Schools and the Midrasha for allowing us the space in their library.

"Earlier this year, I along with Board member, Leonard Antel, approached the head of the United Hebrew Schools to explore the possibility of introducing the study of Michigan Jewish history in the UHS curriculum. We met with UHS Superintendent Dr. Gerald Teller and with Renee Wohl, educational consultant, who, I am pleased to report, gave us their enthusiastic support. We are currently working out a proposed curriculum of local Jewish history to be inserted as a special segment in the UHS regular course in American Jewish history. I wish to thank Sol Drachler, Walter E. Klein, Dr. Robert Rockaway and Bette A. Roth for their assistance in working out a course outline with me.

"In our other program activities, we were pleased to co-sponsor with our regular partners, the Jewish Parents Institute, a speaker at the annual Book Fair at the Jewish Community Center. Our guest author last November was Sylvia Rothchild, author of *Voices of the Holocaust*, a compendium of oral histories taken from Holocaust survivors. We had excellent attendance. As always we owe thanks to our book-fair chairman, Sarah Friedman, for an outstanding job.

"Dr. Jehuda Reinharz was our guest speaker at the semi-annual meeting held in January 1982. Dr. Reinharz, who is professor of Jewish history at the University of Michigan, gave us a fascinating glimpse into the life of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, first president of Israel, about whom he is writing a three-volume biography.

"In the last week in April (1982) I had the pleasure to represent the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan at the annual meeting of the American Jewish Historical Society in Kansas City, Missouri. I had the opportunity to speak with people from all over the country, and I'm happy to tell you that our organization is widely known. Many persons I spoke with knew about our Society, and those who didn't were strongly impressed with what we have achieved over the past 23 years. Very few other local historical societies can boast of a membership as large as ours, a journal such as ours and projects such as we devise. We have much to be proud of."

## IN MEMORIAM: WALTER E. KLEIN

The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan mourns the passing of Walter E. Klein, who died in Southfield, Michigan on August 22, 1982 following a prolonged illness.

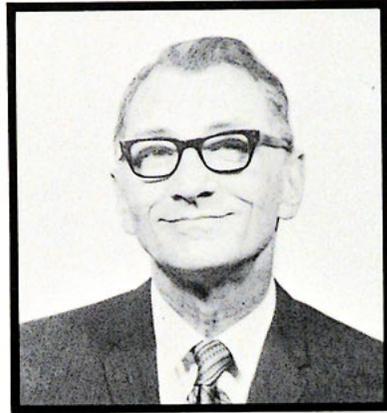
Walter was first elected to the Board of Directors in June 1978. He served as a vice president from June 1979 to June 1982, remaining a member of the Board until his death.

He was born on February 21, 1911 in Cleveland, Ohio. His father, Adolph Klein, a Hungarian immigrant, owned a men's clothing store; his mother, Hannah Brown Klein, was a Cleveland native.

Walter earned a B.S. degree in business administration at Ohio State University, and a M.S. degree in social science at Western Reserve University. During World War II he served for four years in the U.S. Navy in domestic duty, emerging as a lieutenant, senior grade. In 1944 he met Esther Shevitz of Detroit, whom he married in San Francisco, California on July 21, 1944. Following his discharge from the Navy in October 1945, he and Esther returned to Detroit.

Walter went to work for the Jewish Community Council, then headed by Boris Joffe. Following Joffe's death in 1960, Walter was named Council's executive director, a post he held until his retirement in 1973. A member of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, as well as numerous other Jewish and general community organizations, Walter was recognized and praised for his community involvement. He played many roles in the Historical Society, as well. A fine writer, he was the author of a history of the early years of the Jewish Community Council (*Michigan Jewish History* January 1978) as well as a number of book reviews. He took his responsibilities as a Board member seriously and never failed to attend meetings; his sound advice often helped to resolve tangled issues. Moreover, he generously gave of his time and effort when called upon; it was he who helped to load and transport the two card catalog cabinets used to house the Society's Genealogical Index. Although offered the nomination for president of the Society, he refused, explaining that he preferred his life of retirement, for it gave him the time for golf and for travel with Esther.

Walter is survived by his wife, Esther (our Recording Secretary); five daughters: Mrs. Alan (Miriam) Belinsky, Mrs. Elliot (Hannah) Wilhelm, Mrs. David (Naomi) Levine, Mrs. Richard (Deborah) Miner, and Leah; two grandchildren, Stacey and Charles Belinsky; two brothers, Nelson of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, and Herbert of Tucson, Arizona. Burial was in Clover Hill Park Cemetery, Royal Oak, Michigan.



Walter E. Klein  
1911-1982

וואַלף בן אברהם ז"ל  
תרע"א - תשמ"ב

## CORRECTIONS

Corrections to *Michigan Jewish History*, Volume 22, Number 2 (June 1982):

“Irving I. Edgar at 80” (page 15):

Irving’s maternal grandfather was Shmuel Dovid Schlusel.  
Irving was first married to Claire Stein.

Necrology (page 21):

Arthur L. Glazer, died September 1, 1981.

*We respectfully wish to inform our  
membership that they can benefit the  
Jewish Historical Society of Michigan  
by means of bequests from wills,  
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*For further information,  
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*Phillip Applebaum*

*24680 Rensselaer*

*Oak Park, Michigan 48237*

*(313) 548-9176.*

*All inquiries will be handled  
in strict confidence.*

## NEW MEMBERS

We warmly welcome our new members with the hope that their association with us will be fruitful and rewarding.

Melvin F. Annis

Henry Auslander

B'nai B'rith Metropolitan Detroit Council

Helene Engel

Alvin N. Foon

Mrs. David A. Goldman

Norma Goldman

Mark A. Goldsmith

Dr. and Mrs. Sol Grossman

Melvin L. Holden

Joseph Kramer

Edith N. Lipton

Nita Lowe

Vivian Shapiro

Janis Waxenberg

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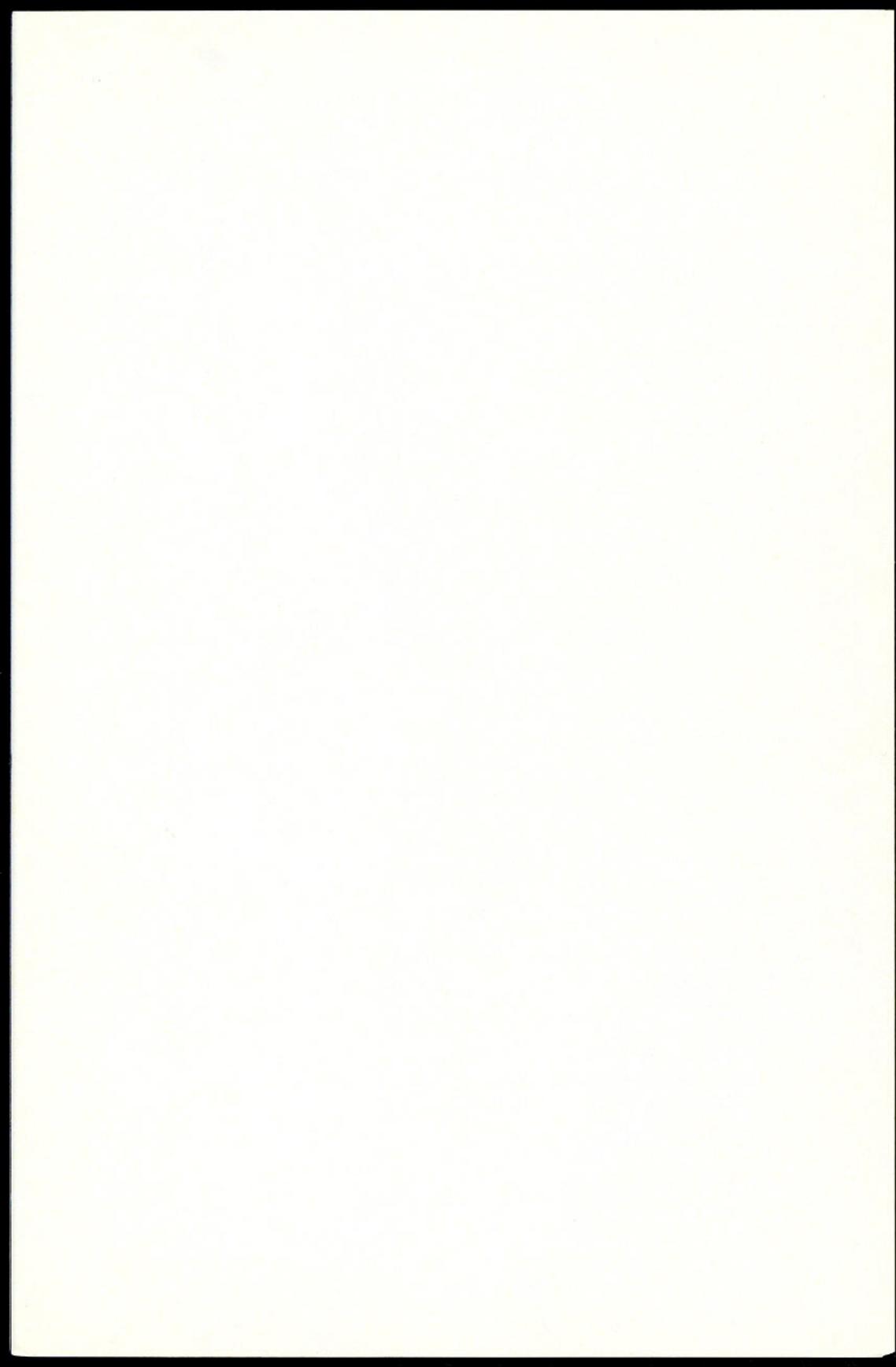
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