

MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY



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MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

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

"When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come . . ."

— Joshua 4:21

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Some Early Jewish Physicians of Michigan*

by DR. IRVING I. EDGAR

DR. SIMON LEVIN

At least three early Jewish physicians of Michigan participated as pioneers in the early medical development of the Upper Peninsula during the heyday of its mining supremacy. Of these three, Dr. Simon Levin practiced the longest and became the most prominent, although Dr. Fredrick Hirschman and Dr. Edward Sloman preceded him by many years.⁽¹⁾

Dr. Simon Levin was born May 8, 1877, at Vensburg, Sweden, of Marcus and Sara Levin.

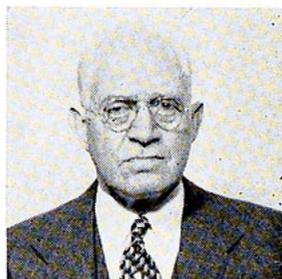
In 1881, when he was four years old, the family emigrated to the United States and soon settled in Michigamme in the Northern Peninsula of Michigan, which had attracted many Swedish settlers previously.

Apparently his father went into the clothing business. The *Michigan State Gazetteer* of 1887 and 1889 lists him in business under "Gotthebson and Levin (Jacob Gotthebson and Marcus Levin) Clothing." In the 1891, 1897, 1901, and 1905 *Michigan State Gazetteer*, he appears to be in business for himself under the listing of "Marcus Levin. Dry Goods, Clothing, Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps, and Furnishing Goods."

From 1891 to 1894, Dr. Simon Levin attended the Michigamme High School; but from 1894 to 1895, he attended Ann Arbor High School at Ann Arbor, Michigan, from which school he graduated.

He then enrolled at the University of Michigan in the same city. Here he remained from 1895 to 1901, the last four years of which (1897-1901) were in the Medical School of this University. Here he was granted his M.D. in 1901.

During these years, especially from 1899 to 1900, he was a mem-



* This is the 7th article in a series. See Edgar, Irving I. "A History of Early Jewish Physicians in Michigan," *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. I, No. 1, pp. 13-24; II, 2, 18-19; III, 2, 6-11; III, 3, 31-35; VI:1, 18-20.

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ber of the University of Michigan Journal Club and did research in pathology.

From 1901 to 1902 he served as interne at the Calumet and Hecla Mining Company Hospital, located at Calumet, Michigan; and from January, 1902, to June, 1902, he continued at this hospital as a resident physician in surgery.

He was then appointed physician and surgeon to the Calumet and Hecla Mining Company at Lake Linden, Michigan, which position he continued to fill from 1902 to 1922.

On October 21, 1907, he married Laura Schroeder, member of a well-known family of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

As evidence of Dr. Levin's continuing and persistent interest in furthering his medical knowledge is the fact that in 1912 he took post-graduate work at the Illinois Medical College in the specialty of cystoscopy.

From 1921 to 1932 he was Chief Surgeon to the Isle Royal Mining Company.

In 1922 he moved to Houghton, Michigan, where he continued to reside until his death in 1965.

During his early years in practice, he "Did major surgery in homes from 1902 to 1905, consisting of amputations of limbs and radical breast operations, and laporotomies for appendectomies, pelvic surgery and gall bladder, etc."⁽²⁾

In this respect, he was indeed a pioneer physician and surgeon in the Upper Peninsula with all that this implies in hardships and self-reliance for

"Until the nineties, and in many places later, the life of the physician was a hard one. Often as early as October, he would be forced to change his buggy for a sleigh; and through the long winter, often severely cold, he would have to work his way through deep snow or over high drifts. Many times it would be necessary to get out of his sleigh to keep it from tipping; and with a heavy buffalo coat to contend with, it was tiresome; or on account of the driving snow, he would be forced to drop his lines, depending on his horse, and would cover his face to protect himself. Not rarely would snow shoes be necessary, if he were called out in the night after a heavy storm and the roads unbroken. Even in some of the larger towns, this would be necessary. In those sections of the country, the practice of medicine was hard . . . and the

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early doctors were real heroes and pioneers.

"There would also be a single doctor in a small mining community, twenty miles or more from any assistance, and it made an all-day trip for a consultant to come. During the winter, this would be impossible and he would be practically isolated. Such was the case with many doctors.

"Until very recent years, with an increase in hospital facilities, the Upper Peninsula doctor would practice obstetrics, treat serious illness, and even serious accidents in a small home; and best of all, he succeeded, and his mortality rate compared very favorably with those more favorably situated; nor was it easy to send cases to surgical centers. Milwaukee, the nearest point, was four hundred miles from Houghton; Ann Arbor and Detroit, much farther. This made it necessary for the doctor to do most of his surgery himself and in the people's homes. Many operations not now attempted outside of a hospital, even hysterectomies and nephrectomies, were not infrequently done, and done successfully."⁽³⁾

And "Among the early medical men from Houghton County . . . Drs. H. M. Joy, Baurland and Simon Levin were also members of this group."⁽⁴⁾

From 1916 until his death (1965), Dr. Simon Levin was a fellow of the American College of Surgeons (FACS). From 1947 to 1951 he was a member of the Michigan Industrial Surgery Association.

As already mentioned, Dr. Simon Levin is mentioned at least twice as a pioneer physician of the Upper Peninsula and as a Mining Company surgeon in the *Medical History of Michigan* 1930).⁽⁵⁾

He was on the attending staff at St. Joseph's Hospital, Hancock, Michigan, from 1922 until his death.

He was also physician for several local industrial establishments from 1923 almost until his death.

During World War I, he served his country by being Medical Chairman, Draft Board #2, Houghton County, Michigan.

He was a member of the American Council of Research, and on its committee on goitre, in which he was much interested. He published several articles in this field as well as in other fields of medicine and surgery.⁽⁶⁾

SOME EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS OF MICHIGAN

He contributed several articles to a Gorgas Memorial "which was a dedication to Dr. Gorgas, who helped conquer yellow fever and made possible the building of the Panama Canal."⁽⁷⁾

He is listed in *Who's Who Among Physicians and Surgeons* (1938, p. 707), and in *Who's Important in Medicine* (1952, p. 600).

In 1953, Dr. Simon Levin was honored by the Houghton, Keweenaw and Baraga County Medical Societies of the Upper Peninsula by being nominated "as best qualified to be named Michigan's Foremost Family Physician."⁽⁸⁾

He was a member of the Masons for more than 40 years,⁽⁹⁾ of the Elks for over 35 years, of Rotary International for over 12 years, of the Onigaming Yacht Club for over 40 years, and of hunting and fishing clubs.

Several months prior to his death, Dr. Simon Levin donated many of his old medical instruments and publications as well as his textbooks to the Department of Biological Sciences of Michigan Technological University; and these have been especially displayed in an exhibit case in Hubbell Hall of that University.⁽¹⁰⁾

Dr. Levin was a member of Temple Jacob at Hancock, Michigan, for a long time. Although "Dr. Levin was not an active member in Temple Jacob, and had very few Jewish affiliations, he gave to Jewish charities."⁽¹¹⁾

Dr. Simon Levin died August 20, 1965, at the age of 88. He was buried at a Jewish cemetery (Greenwood) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Dr. Alfred LaBine, a friend and colleague of Dr. Levin's, "probably the most adequately informed medico in the copper country today about Dr. Levin's contributions to medical science," has this to say about him:

"Dr. and I early met in our medical lives. When I first came as an interne to the Calumet and Hecla Hospital, I did a considerable amount of work with Dr. Levin. When he was on the regular staff at Lake Linden, I realized then that he was an able and learned doctor and surgeon.

"He was a real pioneer in the goitre field, and the affliction was highly prominent in those days. Later he was a leader in the interpretation of the electrocardiograph readings. Also, he was constantly abreast of anything new in medicine and surgery."⁽¹²⁾

SOME EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS OF MICHIGAN

REFERENCES

- 1) Dr. Hirshman began medical and surgical practice in 1873 as surgeon to the Republic Mine Company, Republic, Michigan. He remained in the Upper Peninsula till his death in 1886. Dr. Edward Sloman was surgeon to the Quincy Mines at Hancock, Michigan, only a short time (1886-1888).
- 2) From a summary of qualifications proposing Dr. Simon Levin to be named as the foremost Family Physician by Houghton, Keweenaw and Baraga County Medical Societies after having been in practice for over 51 years (summary in possession of the author); also from a personal communication from Dr. Levin dated May 17, 1960, in possession of the author.
- 3) **Medical History of Michigan**, published under the auspices of the Michigan State Medical Society, The Bruce Publishing Company, Minneapolis and St. Paul, 1930. Vol II, pp. 546-547.
- 4) *Ibid.* p. 575.
- 5) **Medical History of Michigan**. Vol. II, compiled and edited by a committee, C. B. Burr, MD, Chairman, and published under the auspices of the Michigan State Medical Society, Bruce Publishing Company, Minneapolis and St. Paul, 1930, pp. 557, 575.
- 6) "A Discussion of Goitres in 583 Registrants," **Michigan State Medical Society Journal**, 1921. "Intrathoracic Goitres," **Michigan State Medical Society Journal**, 1924. "1146 Goitres in 1783 Persons," **Archives of Internal Medicine**, 1921. He also wrote "Cancer," **Michigan State Medical Society Journal**, 1908; "So-called Bladder Diseases," **Michigan State Medical Society Journal**, 1918; "Errors in Surgical Diagnosis," **Michigan State Medical Society Journal**, 1930.
- 7) From a communication from Dr. Simon Levin dated May 17, 1960, and in possession of the author.
- 8) From a copy of the nomination proposal in possession of the author.
- 9) Quincy Lodge, 135, Fond, A.M.
- 10) From an article in the **Daily Mining Gazette** of Houghton, Michigan, Saturday, October 22, 1966.
- 11) From a personal communication from Jay Joffee, an officer of Temple Jacob, in possession of the author.
- 12) From an article in the **Daily Mining Gazette** of Houghton, Michigan, October 22, 1966.

DEDICATED TO DR. JOSEPH BEISMAN,
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 23RD
ANNIVERSARY IN THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE.

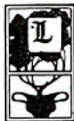
Written by Dr. N. E. Aronstam.



THOUGH a quarter of a century are the years
of twenty-three;
To you and me they seem so vast and
yet but twenty-three.
The memories of olden days come passing
in review,
The pictures rise of golden days, half faded it is
true,
Yet all these pictures vividly recall to you and me,
What came to pass within a space embracing
twenty-three.



YOU might have aged and grown old,
just old by twenty-three,
The spark of youth is still in you, so
keen and bold and free;
Indeed, my friend, you've grown
young, and young from day to day,
You still can try, you still can fight, a soldier in
the fray;
With such a spirit in your heart you look upon
the sea
Of time, that harbors cheers for another twenty-
three.



LAY on, the world belongs to you, to you
of twenty-three,
What care you what the future bides,
your work is its decree;
Humanity has found in you a servant
good and true,
And any aid you render it, is to live your life
anew.
I raise my cup, this toast to you, from all of us
and me:
"Let's hope to meet once more again in another
twenty-three!"

Presented by Dr. W. W. Kahn.

SOME EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS OF MICHIGAN

DR. JOSEPH BEISMAN

Dr. Joseph Beisman was the first Jewish physician of East European origin to have settled and practiced medicine in the City of Detroit throughout his whole professional life—from 1890 until his death in 1927.

He was a man of determined purpose and tireless energy, and he reached a position of distinction as a physician and surgeon in Detroit.

He is listed in the *Men of Michigan* (1904).⁽¹⁾

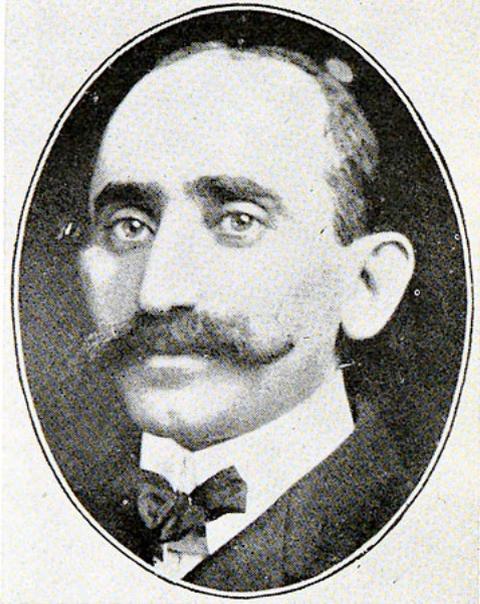
He was born in southern Russia September 23, 1863, a son of Mordecai and Jenny (Schwartz) Beisman, both of whom were natives of Russia.

His boyhood was spent in Czarist Russia until the age of 18 when the family emigrated to the United States. They arrived in Brooklyn, New York, in 1881. Two years later, however, we find them established in Newport, Arkansas, his father devoting his attention there to farming.

However, the material conditions of the country at that time forced them to leave Arkansas. The family settled in St. Louis where his parents spent the rest of their lives.

Dr. Joseph Beisman did not leave Brooklyn with the family. He remained in that city and learned the cigar trade, the manufacture of basket bottoms, and perhaps other occupations. For a time, he worked in the cotton mills of Bedford Maine.

During all this time, he went to night school and supplemented the limited educational opportunities afforded him in his early years in Russia.



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In 1883, he joined his father in St. Louis and took up the study of bookkeeping, which he afterwards followed as an occupation for three years.

By dint of rigid economy and industry, he was eventually able to study medicine, an ambition which he had cherished for a long time, possibly as far back as his youth in Russia.

In 1886, five years after his arrival in the United States, he entered Washington University in St. Louis; and he received his M.D. degree from this University in 1890, in the meantime having become a U.S. citizen on September 13, 1888.

Almost immediately thereafter, he settled in the City of Detroit and practiced his profession here till the end of his life. Here he married Miss Hildegarde Levyson of San Antonio, Texas, on September 16, 1900.

Dr. Joseph Beisman was truly a pioneer physician in the Detroit Jewish community. Although there may have been other Jewish physicians practicing in Detroit in the 1890's, these did not practice in the Jewish community. For a while, indeed, he was the only Jewish physician practicing in this community; and many people now living were his patients from those early years.

He helped many young Jewish physicians, who soon came after him.

Dr. Noah E. Aronstam, a later contemporary of his, in some "Personal Reminiscences,"⁽²⁾ calls him the "only Jewish doctor in the city" to whom he had come "for friendly advice and suggestions" (in 1895). He also speaks of him as "the first Jewish pioneer in medicine in this city" and "the dean of the Jewish Medical Fraternity in Detroit" (1927).

An anonymous writer in the *Detroit Evening News* of September 13, 1896, in an article titled "The Ghetto,"⁽³⁾ says this of Dr. Beisman:

"Dr. Beisman, who lives on Hastings Street, is the physician who is most popular in the Ghetto. He gives his services by the year, taking from each family what they can afford to pay, giving his service to the poor for less and to the rich for more."

Apropos of Dr. Beisman's services to the poor, the earliest minutes of the United Jewish Charities (1899-1900) mention him thus:

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"Moved and supported that a vote of thanks be recorded to Drs. Hirschman, Beisman and Feschheimer for valuable services so cheerfully rendered by them at all times when called upon to attend the poor. Carried."(4)

Dr. Joseph Beisman was always active in the Detroit Jewish community. He was one of the earliest members of the Jewish Publication Society. He was active in Zionist circles, being one of the pioneer Zionists in Detroit. Thus, following the Kishineff pogrom in Russia April 17-19, 1903, which aroused the conscience of the civilized world, brought protests from the numerous Jewish communities of America, and stimulated the raising of funds for the victims of the Kishineff Massacre, Dr. Joseph Beisman chaired the meeting of the Detroit "Zionist Societies' Benefit For Kishineff Victims."(5)

"For the benefit of the Kishineff immigration fund, the United Zionists of Detroit gave an entertainment and a hop Tuesday evening at Wheelman's Hall. About 300 gathered at the hall, but many more tickets were sold, so the three local Zionist societies will probably realize a handsome sum.

"The musical numbers on the program were especially pleasing. Miss Emma Fredrick at the upright piano and Miss Lillian Smilansky at the grand piano played Loew's 'Ungarische Rhapsodie' most effectively; and Wallenhaupt-Berg's 'Hungarian March' was rendered with great spirit by Miss Weingarden and Miss Smilansky at the grand piano, with Miss Gittleman and Miss Brown at the upright . . .

"Dr. N. E. Aronstam delivered an address, 'The Jew, the Living Evidence of the Survival of the Fittest.'" Referring to the remarkable survival of the Jew throughout great vicissitudes, the doctor's address discussed the Zionist hope for a rebirth of the Jewish nation . . .

"The Rev. Saul Silver of New York was the next introduced, and the rabbi delivered an address in Hebrew. He spoke in a thrilling manner of the bloody city of Kishineff . . .

"Dr. Joseph Beisman, chairman of the meeting, installed the new officers of the various 'gates.' B'nai Sion, Gate No. 21, has now the following officers: President, Dr. N. E. Aronstam; Vice-President, J. B. Laski; Recording Secretary, E. Lightstone; Financial Secretary, S. Goldstick; Treasurer, J. Levin . . ."

The Jewish American (the precursor of the present *Detroit Jewish News* of October 9, 1903, has the following item, of a later period in the year, evidencing Dr. Beisman's activities:

SOME EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS OF MICHIGAN

"The United Zionists of Detroit"

The United Zionists of Detroit have instituted a course of Friday evening lectures at the Talmud Torah Hall at 47 Division Street . . . Each lecture will be followed by an address by Dr. Joseph Beisman on Jewish History."

A membership and financial record of the Kadimah Zionist Society, "one of the earliest Zionists groups in Detroit," lists Dr. Beisman as a pioneer member.⁽⁶⁾ (It also lists Dr. Noah E. Aronstam and A. E. Bernstein.) From a newspaper clipping of January, 1904, we also find the following item:⁽⁷⁾

First Anniversary

"In celebration of its first anniversary, the fifty members of the Young Man's Zion Gate Society No. 47, of the Knights of Zion, assembled last night in the Hannah Schloss Memorial Building on East High Street. The order of the evening was a musical program followed by a banquet and appropriate toasts.

"The Society was organized January 8, 1903, with seven members; and in one year the number has increased to fifty. The purpose of the organization is, among other things, to acquire Palestine for the persecuted Jews in Russia. The motto of the Society is friendliness and fraternity, and the only requisite for membership is that the applicant be a Jew of good moral character.

"Dr. Joseph Beisman acted as the toastmaster of the evening, and those who spoke were: Sol Fishbein, President of the Society, Dr. Noah E. Aronstam, Louis Smilansky . . . All told of the progress made by the different societies in the national organization . . ."

"The musical program consisted of mandolin, vocal and instrumental solos, with an address by Dr. Beisman."

Dr. Joseph Beisman was the recipient of many tributes in his life. In 1913, on the occasion of his 23rd year in the practice of medicine, he received a citation in the form of a poem written by Dr. Noah E. Aronstam for the occasion and presented to him by Dr. W. W. Kahn at a meeting of the Maimonides Medical Society, of which he was one of the six original founders.

Another tribute for this occasion was written to him by the Gold-

SOME EARLY JEWISH PHYSICIANS OF MICHIGAN

man Bros. and some of their friends.⁽⁸⁾

Dr. Joseph Beisman was a member of Shaarey Zedek and Temple Beth El. He was active in the development of Woman's Hospital of Detroit. He participated most actively in the early beginning of Jewish hospital movement in Detroit.

He died in June, 1927.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1) In the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library.
- 2) "Maimonides Bulletin" of June, 1927.
- 3) This article was reprinted in **Michigan Jewish History**, June, 1966, pp. 9-13, Vol. 6, No. 2.
- 4) **The History of the United Jewish Charities** from 1899-1949 by Anna W. Chapin, p.5.
- 5) From a Detroit newspaper clipping of this period, in possession of the author.
- 6) **The Detroit Jewish News, February 11, 1966**. This record is now in possession of the Zionist Organization of Detroit.
- 7) The clipping is in possession of the author.
- 8) The Goldman Bros. were influential steamship ticket agents who helped many immigrants who came to Detroit.

From Washington, D.C. - "The Record"

The RECORD published by the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington, D.C., is the most recent addition to publications concerning local Jewish history. Its editors are Evelyn Levow Greenberg, Robert Shosteck and Samuel H. Holland.

Volume 2, number 1 is especially interesting. Its leading article tells the story of Washington, D. C.'s Jewish Virginia Dare, Miss Rosa Mordecai, the daughter of Major Alfred Mordecai and Richea Gratz, the sister of Rebecca Gratz who was the founder of the first Jewish Sunday school in the United States. Rosa, born in 1839, died at the age of ninety-seven on October 22, 1936. (This information inspires the question, "Who were the first children born to Jewish parents in Michigan and Detroit?")

Noteworthy is the article "May Weyl, Painter of Pre-Urban Washington" by Evelyn Levow Greenberg. Max Weyl born in Germany came to Washington in 1861 where he at first opened a watch repair business; but soon gave up this vocation, and devoted all his time to landscape painting. Some of the most important Washingtonians were his patrons. Among these were the Brazilian Minister, Senhor Salvador De Mendonca and Mrs. Grover Cleveland.

Of interest is Robert Shosteck's article "Jewish D.P.'s of the Civil War." The author relates that among the thousands of people who came to Washington, D. C. from the South, many were Jews. Of these, a number were arrested for various reasons. Thus Gustave Rosenthal was apprehended as a "blockade runner." Johannes Wolf was accused of being a "Jew contrabandist." Mrs. Fanny Levy was "sentenced and committed to the Secretary of War to Fortress Monroe" for an unknown reason. It should be noted that more than 16,000 people were arrested in and near Washington during the war years. They were charged with being "contrabandists," "blockade runners," "spies," "refugees" or suspected of "disloyalty."

The Society's president is Judge Milton Stanley Kronbein, third generation Washingtonian.

We congratulate the Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington on publishing "The RECORD."

— Allen A. Warsen

Jewish Historical Society of Michigan



Resolution

WHEREAS, The Jewish Welfare Federation of Detroit pioneered in contributing its historic records to the Burton Historical Collection, and

WHEREAS, The Jewish Welfare Federation by this action has helped to establish a JEWISH RESEARCH CENTER which will enable social scientists in general and students of Jewish history in particular to pursue their investigations of the past of Michigan

Jewry: therefore be it

RESOLVED BY THE JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MICHIGAN, that its members express their appreciation and congratulate the JEWISH WELFARE FEDERATION; MR. HYMAN SAFRAN, President; MR. WILLIAM AVRUNIN, Executive Director; and MR. SAMUEL COHEN, Assistant Director, for their dedication to Jewish scholarship and their joint efforts to provide the source materials necessary for scientific inquiry and interpretation of Michigan Jewish history; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be presented to the Jewish Welfare Federation, Mr. Hyman Safran, Mr. William Avrunin and Mr. Samuel Cohen.

Dr. Irving I. Edgar

President

June 21, 1967

Detroit, Michigan

Leonard N. Simons - A Friend of Man

By HENRY D. BROWN
Director Detroit Historical Museum

Leonard N. Simons and the City of Detroit share the same birthday, July 24, and for the past two score years Leonard Simons and the City of Detroit have been joined in a multitude of activities and good works. While born in Youngstown, Ohio (1904), Leonard Simons has lived in Detroit since a boy, and in a very special way Detroit has become his City and hometown.

From the time he was a student at Old Central High he has been active in the community. He joined fully in student life and was advertising manager of the student publication, the *Centralite*.

Business partnerships often are of short duration, but the partnership of Leonard N. Simons and Lawrence Michelson Company Advertising Agency, has survived and flourished through the boom of the late 1920's, the depression of the thirties, the stress of World War II and the fluctuation of the post war years. These are partners whose respect for each other exceeded transient business expediency.

A biographical sketch of a person active and busy in business and community affairs can easily skip over the fact that the private and personal life of a biographical subject actually forms the basis for all other activities. Leonard's wife, the former Harrietta Lieberman, is a native Detroiter. They have two daughters, Mary Louise (Mrs. Morton) Zieve and Susan (Mrs. Monte) Nagler. The Leonard Simons' are thrice grandparents. There is a close bond of affection and understanding in the home, which makes possible a meaningful contribution to the larger community.

As is the case with family, religious activities and associations have been a foundation for his service to his City and country. For many years he has been deeply involved in the activities of Temple Beth El and has served the congregation in numerous capacities, up to and including the Presidency. Because his religious concern extends not only to the Sabbath, but beyond, he served as Vice-President of the Jewish Welfare Federation of Detroit; and one time



LEONARD N. SIMONS — A FRIEND OF MAN

Chairman of the Allied Jewish Campaign of Detroit. He is a member of the Board of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations; Jewish Home for the Aged; Jewish Joint Distribution Committee; and the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan.

When it was time for men of good will to stand up and be counted, there was Leonard N. Simons, with a concern for the dignity of man. He was involved in the civil rights movement long before the field was crowded. He is an active worker for the Negro College Fund, and one time Michigan Chairman. He has received the Leadership Award from the Urban League of Detroit. He has served on the Board of the B'nai B'rith Anti Defamation League of Michigan; the Detroit Round Table of Catholics, Jews and Protestants; and the National Council of Christians and Jews. Service to his fellow man includes all of his fellowmen.

When the nation was under unusual stress during World War II, it was said of Leonard Simons that he took "pride in ability to serve his country in time of peril." He served on committees, he gave generously of his talent in the advertising skills of copy and layout; he wrote and spoke. He received citations from the Red Cross, Navy, Coast Guard, Air Corps, Marine Corps, Nurses Corps, and the War Shipping Administration. He received a gold medal from the U. S. Treasury for service as local World War II, Advertising Director, Michigan War Finance Committee; and a gold medal award, U. S. Army 6th Service Command, for his services. Most of all, he received the satisfaction of a worthwhile job well done.

Leonard Simons is a good team member. He has served as Treasurer, Greater Detroit Board of Commerce; Board, City National Bank of Detroit; Vice-President Detroit Grand Opera Association; Honorary Member, Jewish War Veterans; and member, Hundred Club of Detroit. He joins and works for the common goal whether he is in a leadership responsibility or just a member of the group — his interest and concern are not bounded by position.

A man with concern for others, he has become involved in many community health and welfare activities. A mere listing of boards on which he has served or continues to serve is a testimonial to his willingness to be involved when there is need. They include, among others, Sinai Hospital; Michigan Cancer Foundation — of which he is now Chairman; former Chairman S. E. Michigan, National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis; and board member, United Community Services and the United Foundation.

Raising funds is often a difficult and discouraging activity.

LEONARD N. SIMONS — A FRIEND OF MAN

When doubts arose as the possibility of success, or the feasibility of trying, Leonard would quip, "All they can do is say no." So by continuing the effort, even with doubtful prospects, often the goal was achieved.

He has a many faceted interest in education, and has enlisted the assistance of others to forward educational programs. As a Central High graduate, and a one time student at the College of the City of Detroit, he has a most active interest in its present day successor, Wayne State University. He helped to organize the Advisory Board, Wayne State University Press, which has raised funds to make possible the publication of many significant books. He has been deeply involved in persuading families and foundations to consider what Wayne is doing for American youth, and to give support in the University's building expansion programs. He is on the Board of the Wayne State Fund. In this activity, as in others, it is not his name which is seen, but it is his influence which is felt, that the University may grow. His interest in education is broad and he serves as a board member of American Friends of the Hebrew University; on the Board of Marygrove College; and has been a visiting lecturer at the New York University School of Business Administration. In 1954 he was awarded a LL.D. degree by Wayne State University and in 1964 a D.H.L. by the Hebrew Union College, Jewish Institute of Religion; he is a Fellow, Brandeis University; and named to the Mackenzie Honor Society, Wayne State University.

As is to be expected, because of his active leadership, he has been recognized by many civic awards. Only samples and examples can be cited which include Americanism Award, American Legion; Fred M. Butzel Award, Jewish Welfare Federation of Detroit; Citation Award, St. Cyprian's Protestant Episcopal Church; Democratic Living Award, B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League of Michigan; Citation, Detroit Board of Education; Outstanding Citizen, Probus Club; Citation Award, Lions Club; and a Testimonial Resolution from Mayor and Common Council, City of Detroit.

He was drawn into interest in local history, first because he respected the people involved and secondly because he loved Detroit. George W. Stark was President of the Detroit Historical Society, and projecting a fund for a museum building. He asked Leonard Simons for assistance, and Leonard became involved, first in raising the building fund, then as Detroit Historical Society Trustee. With the founding of the Detroit Historical Commission in 1946, as a City Department, Mr. Simons served as Vice-President, under George W. Stark, for its first twenty years, and with the passing of his friend, Mr. Stark, he became President. He has given of time and energy in for

LEONARD N. SIMONS — A FRIEND OF MAN

warding the Museum. He has been instrumental in the growth of the institution, through the addition of the Dossin Great Lakes Museum; the Aaron DeRoy Hall; and the Kresge Exhibit Hall at the main Museum. His discernment of public interest has produced many significant suggestions on making the Museum exhibit program a vital activity for a broad segment of Detroit area citizens.

His collection of volumes, on Detroit and Michigan history, has been given to Wayne State University, and is presented in a special room at the University Library. The volumes have been beautifully bound, embossed and stamped with gold lettering and design. He has subsequently assembled a most significant collection of Judaica. In many subject areas this collection is unique. This collection has also been handsomely bound, as befits the interest and care which has attended their collecting, and the importance of the subject.

Leonard Simons is a man of deep concern, and he is unafraid to have an emotional interest in people and causes. This is not the stereotype for a hard working and eminently successful businessman — but then, Leonard Simons is no stereotype. In discussing the giving of time and means, he mentions the historic adage, "The Shroud has no Pockets" — better known today by the flip comment, "You can't take it with you." He enjoys sharing here and now, and somehow he has encouraged a host of Detroiters to learn of the fulfillment found in sharing.

As many faceted as the town whose birthday he shares, Leonard N. Simons is an interesting man to know — he may shatter your complacency, but your life could well be richer for the vistas of deeper and richer living, by sharing, which he has opened.

The First Issue of The Jewish News— May 1942

By CHARLOTTE HYAMS DUBIN

"In order that the Jewish communities may keep abreast with all that is transpiring in Jewish life and with the various shades of opinion among us, we pledge ourselves to serve as a clearing house for these opinions, and to approach Jewish issues *without partisan coloration*. An *effective* Jewish public opinion must be an *informed* Jewish public opinion, and our task is to achieve that end."

Twenty-five years ago, Philip Slomovitz affirmed the credo of The Jewish News. This March 17, in a special issue, the editor and publisher reaffirmed that platform, a policy which has guided the weekly English-Jewish newspaper for the past quarter-century.

The anniversary paper was a far cry from that fledgling edition put out 1,300 issues ago at the Penobscot Building, Room 2114. Nevertheless, it revealed the social conscience that has continued to mark the editorial columns of The Jewish News since that time. "We pledge," it said, "to help build up the morale of the Jews in this war-torn world by fostering that spirit of brotherhood which will assure amity and good will among all faiths of the United States, the world's greatest nation."



Philip Slomovitz

Claiming at the time to be "the only community-sponsored paper in the U.S.," The Jewish News was supported by a board of directors consisting of Maurice Aronsson, Fred M. Butzel, Theodore Levin, Maurice H. Schwartz, Slomovitz (himself the former city editor of the Detroit Jewish Chronicle, which was incorporated into The Jewish News in 1951), Isidore Sobeloff, Abraham Sreer and Henry Wineman. A community advisory committee consisting of leaders from all areas of Detroit Jewish life included such men as Rabbi Morris Adler; Lawrence Crohn, president of the Zionist Council of Detroit; Mrs. Joseph H. Ehrlich; James I. Ellmann, president of the Jewish Community Council; Maurice E. Engass, president of the Better Business Bureau; Rabbi Moses Fischer of

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Congregation B'nai Moshe; Dr. Leo M. Franklin, rabbi emeritus of Temple Beth El; Rabbi Leon Fram; attorney Morris Garvett; Drs. B. Benedict Glazer of Beth El and A. M. Hershman of Shaarey Zedek; William Hordes, president of the Jewish National Fund Council; Bernard Isaacs, superintendent of the United Hebrew Schools; Herman Jacobs, director of the Jewish Center; Julian H. Krohlik; Prof. Samuel M. Levin of Wayne State University; Leon Kay; Isadore Levin; Max Osnos; Aaron Rosenberg, chairman of the cultural section of the Jewish Community Council; Louis Robinson, president of the United Hebrew Schools; Morris Schaver, president of the Detroit Labor Committee for Palestine; Rabbis S. Z. Fineberg of Flint and Nahum Schulman of Windsor; Leonard N. Simons; Judge Charles C. Simons of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals; Nate S. Shapero; Rabbis Joshua Sperka of Congregation B'nai David and Isaac Stollman of Mishkan Israel; Harry Yudkoff; and Rabbi Max J. Wohlgeleinter of Beth Tefilo Emanuel Congregation.

The first paper honored Fred M. Butzel as "First Citizen of the Community on his selection as chairman of the Allied Jewish Campaign." That 1942 campaign sought to raise \$1,100,000.

Slomovitz's editorial, "Social Justice on Trial," underscored the menace from Father Charles E. Coughlin's anti-Semitic sheet published in Royal Oak. It was a relentless campaign that Slomovitz had taken up long before and would continue to wage until "Social Justice" was banned from the U.S. mails.

In that first issue, also, were an article by Julius Chajes on "The Influence of Palestine on Jewish Music"; a story about Maurice Schwartz's son Alan (today president of Federal Department Stores) chosen to captain the basketball team at Cranbrook School; and Danny Raskin's column which continues to this day, then called the "Jewish Youth Listening Post."

An exclusive to The Jewish News, written by the noted Dorothy Thompson, made reference to the plight of the Jews in Europe, their degradation under Hitler. But looking back, the reader becomes aware that in March 1942, neither Dorothy Thompson nor The Jewish News nor anyone else in the Jewish community was aware of the extent of that degradation. The first reports of atrocities in forced labor camps were miniscule compared to what would come later when the Allies liberated the camps.

Slomovitz's crusade for a Jewish homeland took on new impetus with the cessation of the war, and with the establishment of the

THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE JEWISH NEWS — MAY, 1942

State of Israel. His love for Zion has continued to be present in the editorial columns of his paper. There is concern for a strong Jewish life in America, which draws equal attention.

To capsule 1,300 weekly chronicles of Detroit and American Jewish history is impossible here, and 25 years from now the task will be 25 times greater. However, in recalling that first issue of The Jewish News we perhaps come closer to experiencing one man's dream and enjoying with him the fruition of that dream.

IN MEMORIAM



DR. ALEXANDER SANDERS

1898 — 1967

Respected and Dedicated Member of the
Detroit Jewish Community.

Esteemed Member of the Board of Directors
Jewish Historical Society of Michigan

B'nai B'rith In Action

By ALLEN A. WARSEN

Since its inception in 1843, B'nai B'rith, the oldest and largest Jewish fraternal and service organization, has been involved in every phase and aspect of American Jewry. It is no wonder then that its documents have served as a prime source for the person studying and recording the social history of the American Jewish community.

Many B'nai B'rith documents in the form of circulars, appeals, messages and letters were received during the early 1880's by Mishan Lodge of Kalamazoo, Michigan. While quite a few of these records were lost, those that remain have proved to be of great interest and historical value. Certain of these items were referred to in the June, 1966 issue of MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY. Others will be discussed in this article.

An examination into some of the records reveals that numerous problems presently being encountered on the Jewish scene have a long history. An example would be the desecration and vandalizing of synagogues and cemeteries. An account of one such incident follows.

To Our Honored Jewish Co-Religionists In America

BRETHREN IN NAME AND RACE:

About two years ago an Isrealitish Congregation was organized in this city under the name "Kehillath Anshe Russia," which, as the name indicates, is composed of Russian Israelites. A young society, called into life primarily by poor Refugees, is naturally forced to make especial efforts and great sacrifices to meet the current expenses. Holy zeal and a true spirit of devotion on the part of the members, hitherto, enabled the society to continue the good work without the aid of others. Now, however, we are compelled, by a sad occurrence, to appeal to your charitable inclinations and your liberal sympathies, dear Jewish Brethren of our common race.

In the night of the 13th-14th of this month, our synagogue was entered by vandals, and not only were the windows, tables

B'NAI B'RITH IN ACTION

and benches, etc. demolished, but the perpetrators of the outrage cut also three new Siphre Torah, tore into shred one Meguillah, broke a Shophar, ruined by cuts and tears a large number of recently bought Talmudim, Posokim, Medrashim, etc., rendered absolutely unfit for further use several dozen of Tallethim, Tephillin, Prayerbooks, and thus caused great damage to the Congregation, which the circumstances of the Society are not equal to repair. How deeply our religious feelings were wounded by this criminal act of vandalism, no pen can describe.

In our need we appeal to you, our Brethren. Come to our aid and He in the heights above, from whom all blessings flow, will reward you richly for whatever you may do in our behalf.

With the aid of our Co-religionists, we hope to bring the perpetrators of this outrageous crime to justice.

For the Congregation,

A. Bernstine, Chairman	}	Committee
M. Swarts		
S. Feldstein		
S. Weinstock		
A. Simon		
S. Sachs		
A. Grollman		
Henry M. Shabad, Sec'y		

The undersigned confirm the full truth of the foregoing statement of facts. We were enabled to verify the assertions contained in this circular from a personal inspection of the Synagogue, on the day when the crime was discovered. May the appeal find a ready response.

DR. B. FELSENTHAL, Rabbi Zion Congregation

DR. E. G. HIRSCH, Rabbi Sinai Congregation

P.S. — Communications may be addressed to the undersigned.

A. BERNSTINE, 462 S. State St.
MARKS SWARTS, 300 S. Canal St.

Chicago, Dec. 20, 1883.

B'NAI B'RITH IN ACTION

Synagogue vandalism, as evidenced by the above document, has a long and continuous history in the United States. The most recent synagogue desecration occurred on March 1, 1967 at Trenton, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. On that date, desecrators set fire to the newly built Beth Isaac Synagogue which destroyed the Holy Ark, the Sifray Torah, and the prayer books, and badly damaged the interior of this holy place. The DETROIT FREE PRESS (3-3-1967) called it an "Act of Hatred" and the DETROIT NEWS (3-3-1967) headlined it "Flash of Hate Flames Out."

The DETROIT NEWS, too, offered a reward of \$5,000 for the arrest and conviction of those involved in the desecration and burning of the synagogue. "A crime like this, against a synagogue in Trenton," wrote Robert H. Darcy in the DETROIT NEWS of March 10, 1967, "is also a crime against every house of worship in America, and against every American."



COURTESY THE DETROIT NEWS

Fire damage to Beth Isaac Synagogue,
Trenton, Michigan

Early Jewish traders in this country risked their lives while pursuing their business. This was especially true of the itinerant peddler, who was often robbed and on occasion even murdered.

Ezekiel Solomon and Chapman Abraham, Michigan's and Detroit's first Jews respectively were both itinerant traders who miraculously escaped death at the hands of local Indians. Even years later traveling salesmen met similar hazards as they carried on their trade. An account of one such tragic occurrence follows:

B'NAI B'RITH IN ACTION

B. B. L. & H.
HALL OF ASAPH No. 286, I. O. B. B.
Meridian, Miss., June 19th, 1881

To The Officers and Members of
Mishan Lodge, Kalamazoo, Mich.

Brethren :

It is our painful duty to inform you, that Bro. Solomon Silverstein, a worthy member of our Lodge, was brutally murdered on the 13th of June 1881, at Poplar Bluff in the State of Arkansas.

At the time of his murder, our brother was peacefully pursuing his avocation of acquiring means for the support of his wife and children. His slayer, who committed the cowardly and unprovoked deed, was arrested, but afterwards escaped, and is now at large.

We respectfully and fraternally appeal to you as a part of our brotherhood, for contributions and to aid us in arresting the murderer and bringing him to justice. Our late brother left surviving him a highly respected family consisting of a wife and eight helpless children, who are without the means necessary to procure the apprehension and legal prosecution of the murderer of the husband and father, who was their only stay and support.

Asaph Lodge, No. 286, only young in existence has taken the initiary step to avenge the death of our late brother; contributed handsomely for the cause; we therefore hope will aid us with your advice and purse.

The committee appointed by our Lodge, will see that all funds shall be faithfully applied to the purpose for which it is intended.

With fraternal greetings in

B. B. L & H.

S. L. WINNER,
Secretary.

Send contributions to our worthy
Bro. Secretary.

Care A. Proskauer & Co., Meridian, Miss.

Consent given by D. G. L. No. 7, I. O. B. B.

B'NAI B'RITH IN ACTION

Family desertion has been a problem among Jews since ancient times. An aggravating aspect of this problem has been the religious law which forbids the deserted wife from remarrying as long as no conclusive proof exists of the deserter's death. To alleviate this vexing situation in this country, the National Desertion Bureau was established in New York City. However until this agency came into being, B'nai B'rith lodges were often expected to help locate the missing person. The following circular represents just such a request for assistance.

DISTRICT GRAND LOGE No 6,

I. O. B. B.

Office of the Secretary, 170 LaSalle St.

Chicago, October, 1882

To the Lodges of the I. O. B. B.

BRETHREN:

Brother' JULIUS HORWITZ, whose likeness appears herewith, a member in good standing of Sovereignty Lodge No. 148, Chicago, has been missing for some time, and at the request of the Lodge and his wife, who is now living at London, England, we take this method to utilize the machinery of our Order, to ascertain, if possible, his whereabouts, if living, or the particulars of his demise, if dead.

The General Committee of this Grand Lodge, at a recent meeting, has resolved to send out a Circular to all the B. B. Lodges, requesting their co-operation in this matter, and we send you for this purpose a description of the brother together with a wood-cut of his photograph.

Requesting your' best efforts in the above, I would ask you to please communicate to me as soon as you should hear of any clue, likely to lead to the discovery of the missing brother, and greatly oblige.

Yours fraternally,

ADOLPH LOEB, Secretary

B'NAI B'RITH IN ACTION



JULIUS HORWITZ.

Age 48—Height 5 feet 4 inches—medium stout, brown hair and eyes—one eye a little smaller than the other, complexion fair, but tanned from exposure. He is represented to be of very genial disposition, always full of jokes and a very good penman. He was last heard of in St. Paul, Minn., on September 24th, 1880, when he was engaged in the medicine advertising business.

Incidentally, it would seem that J. Sempliner referred to in the first article of this series (MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY, Vol. 7, No. 1) was a predecessor of the well-known Detroit family by that name; and A. Proskauer referred to in this article was an ancestor of the famous Proscauer family of New York.

Jewish Historical Society of Michigan

The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan was organized on June 1, 1959, for the following main purposes:

1. To promote the study and research of Michigan Jewish history by encouraging all efforts to create a wider interest on the part of Michigan Jews in the growth and development of their many respective communities.

2. To foster the collection, preservation and publication of materials on the history of the Jews of Michigan, to which purposes the society publishes *Michigan Jewish History*, a semi-annual journal, and has established the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library as a permanent archive-depository for Michigan Jewish historical source material.

3. To encourage all projects, celebrations and other activities which tend to spread authentic information concerning Michigan Jewish history, such as the erection by the Society in conjunction with the Michigan Historical Commission, of the historical marker commemorating Michigan's first Jewish settler, at the restored Fort Michilimackinac.

4. To cooperate with national Jewish historical societies as well as with other state and regional Jewish historical groups.

Membership is open to all who have an interest in Michigan Jewish history and in supporting the goals of the organization. Income of the Society is derived entirely from the annual dues and is used for publishing the journal and related projects.

Members of the Society are invited and encouraged to submit articles, pictures, or reminiscences for future issues of the journal. Such items need not be lengthy, but should relate to the Detroit or Michigan historical scene. Material can be sent to the Editor, 21721 Parklawn Avenue, Oak Park, Michigan 48237.

