

# MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

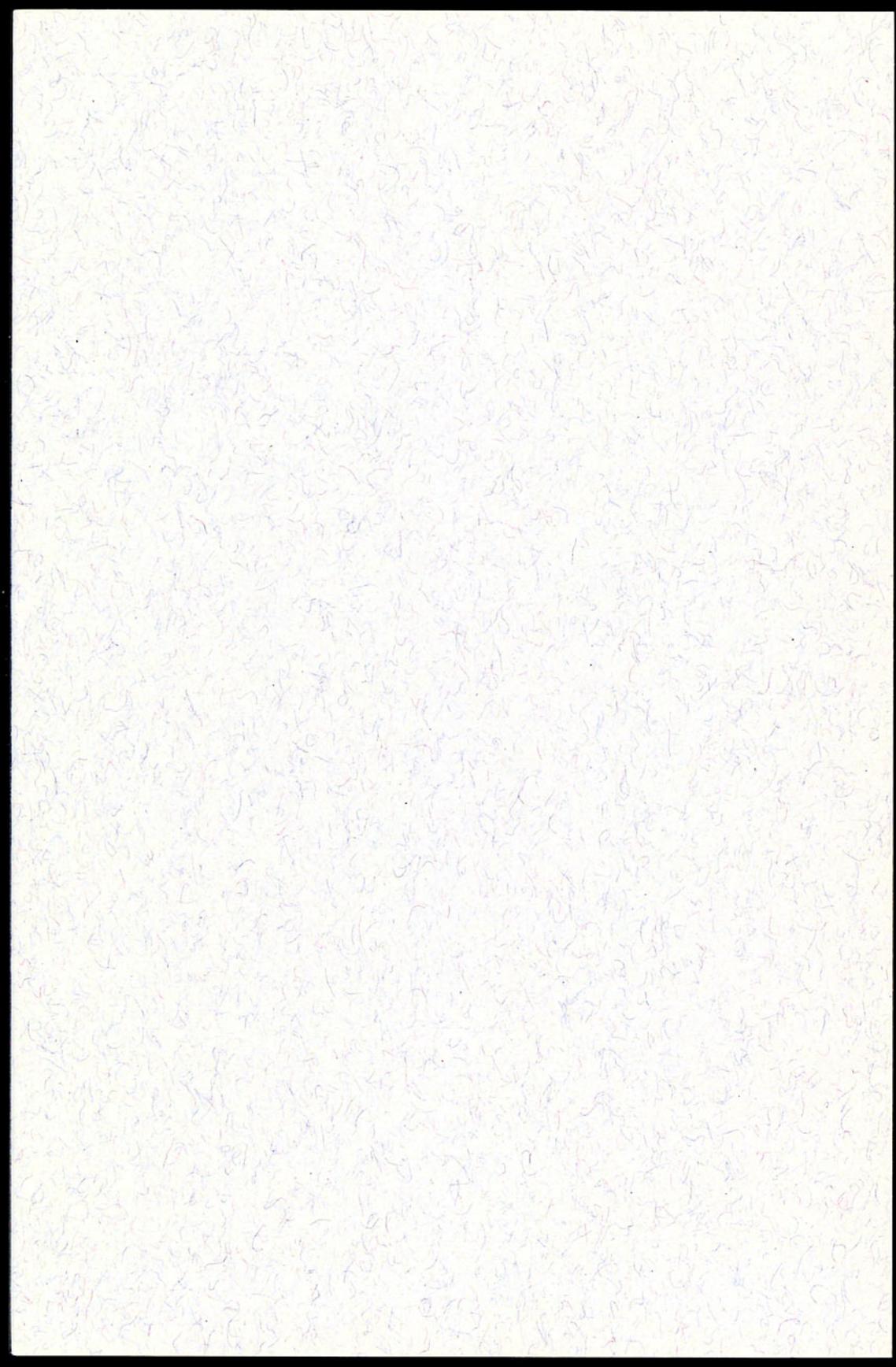


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January-June 1985 — Tevet-Sivan 5745



# MICHIGAN JEWISH HISTORY

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יְהוֹשֻׁעַ ד: כח

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

Joshua 4:21

Volume 25

January-June 1985 — Tevet-Sivan 5745

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EDITOR  
Phillip Applebaum

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The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, founded in 1959, promotes the study and research of Michigan Jewish history, publishes periodicals, collects documents and records which are deposited in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library, and commemorates sites of Jewish historical significance.

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Allen A. Warsen  
1903-1985

אברהם בן יעקב ז"ל  
תרס"ג - תשמ"ה

## IN MEMORIAM: ALLEN A. WARSEN

The Jewish Historical Society of Michigan mourns the passing of our founder, Allen A. Warsen, who died January 11, 1985 in Farmington, Michigan

According to his own accounting of events as described in the premier issue of *Michigan Jewish History*, March 1960, Allen's interest in forming an organization devoted to the study of local Jewish history began in 1951. It was not until December 7, 1958, however, when he called a meeting of like-minded persons in his home, that his long hoped-for dream began to take form. Allen and his associates formally founded the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan on June 21, 1959.

The Historical Society was Allen's pride and joy. He invested much of his spare time to it, undertaking complex research and commemorative projects. He was elected the society's first president, serving for two one-year terms. He was then named honorary president for life. He served as editor of *Michigan Jewish History* from 1965 to 1970, and also contributed numerous articles.

On the occasion of Allen's seventy-fifth birthday, the Historical Society published a biographical sketch of him in the June 1978 issue of *Michigan Jewish History*.

Allen is survived by his daughter, Annette Friedman, his son-in-law, Lee Friedman, and two grandchildren. Burial was in Adat Shalom Memorial Park, Livonia, Michigan.

In tribute to his devotion to the Jewish Historical Society of Michigan, we present on the following pages a brief history of the Jewish Children's Home, the last article written by Allen A. Warsen.

## THE JEWISH CHILDREN'S HOME

By Allen A. Warsen

The Jewish Children's Home represented a merger of the former Detroit Hebrew Orphan's Home and the Detroit Hebrew Infant's Home.

The Detroit Hebrew Orphan's Home at 47 Rowena Avenue was founded in 1920 "as a protest against the policy of the United Hebrew Charities of boarding dependent children in private families."<sup>1</sup>

The first officers of the Home were: S.B. Kahn, president; Mrs. F. Rodin, first vice-president; Mrs. A. Cott, second vice-president; Mrs. M. Weiswasser, treasurer; Mrs. A. Rogvov, secretary. Mr. Weiswasser acted as a volunteer superintendent of the Home.

The Detroit Hebrew Infant's Home at 545 E. Canfield Avenue was established in 1921 for the purpose of providing asylum care for children five years of age who were too young to be admitted to the Hebrew Orphan's Home.<sup>2</sup>

Its founders and the first officers were: Mrs. P. Rottenberg, president; Mrs. A. Lott, vice-president; Mrs. Fanny Rodin, treasurer; Mrs. A. Rogvov, financial secretary.

The Home had a membership of eight hundred paying three dollars annually. Its annual income amounted to \$2,500. Its income was derived mostly from membership dues plus entertainments and parties.

The two homes in 1931 were united into the Jewish Children's Home. Its quarters were the structure newly built by the United Jewish Charities at Burlingame and Petoskey avenues.

The Jewish Children's Home cared for the needs of orphans and dependent children who came from broken homes resulting from deaths, illnesses and parents' separation. The children ranged in age from a few weeks to sixteen years. Those under age six lived in the infant department, where a registered nurse with two day assistants and a night assistant cared for them. Children between the ages of three and six were under constant supervision of a trained worker who guided them in good habit formation during those crucial years. In the juvenile department, a supervisor looked after the older children.

In 1935, the Home cared for thirty-eight children, and in 1936 for fifty-three children. The program included medical and nursing attention, attendance at public and Hebrew schools and the neighborhood synagogues, and the opportunities for personality development through free and supervised play and vocational guidance.

Income was secured from the Detroit Community Fund, membership dues, donations, service fees and miscellaneous sources. The budget did not include medical services, which was rendered by a volunteer medical staff.

<sup>1</sup> Harry L. Lurie, "Survey of the Jewish Community of Detroit, Michigan" (New York: Bureau of Social Research, 1923), p. 334.

<sup>2</sup> "Directory of Social Agencies" (Detroit, 1928), p. 29.

(The late Fred Butzel told the author that prior to the formation of the Infants' Home, Jewish infants often were boarded out to non-Jewish families, where boys were not circumcised according to the Halachically prescribed time).

The Home worked in cooperation with other agencies in the community: the Jewish Social Service Bureau did the investigation for placement, the North End Clinic assisted medically, the facilities of the Jewish Community Center were utilized, and the advice and help of the Detroit Recreation Commission were made use of.

Beginning, however, in 1937, the population of the Jewish Children's Home began to dwindle, and "by the middle of 1941 the population of the Jewish Children's Home declined to twelve (the capacity was at least fifty), and it became no longer economical to operate the institution. Accordingly, on August 1, the building was closed and the remaining children transferred elsewhere."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Harold Silver, "Jewish Child Placement Services in Detroit, 1933-1944," *Michigan Jewish History* 1, (November 1960).

## CHARLES GROSBERG: Super Market pioneer

By Merwin Grosberg

Charles Grosberg, a recognized pioneer in the super market industry in the United States, was born in Troy, New York, in 1885, the son of Anna (Lasky) and Jacob Grosberg. He was educated in the public schools of Troy, and in Schenectady, where his family moved in later years. His father and his older brother, Joseph, had established a small wholesale grocery business in Troy, which gave him an opportunity to acquire some knowledge of the food business.

While on a visit to Detroit to visit his uncle, Jacob D. Lasky (who was known in the furniture business), Charles met Sadie Wolf, whom he married in January 1910. Settling in Detroit, Mr. Grosberg established a wholesale grocery business on 18th Street near Michigan Avenue, on what was at that time the Western Market. He took in as a partner John A. Reuter, who at one time had been in partnership with Mr. Grosberg's father-in-law, Joseph Wolf, in the wholesale and retail food business. The new firm's name was Grosberg & Reuter, Wholesale Grocers.

During the years 1915 through 1930, the firm established a small chain of neighborhood retail grocery and meat markets under the trade name of Wolf's Cash Markets. Grosberg & Reuter incorporated the retail stores of Joseph Wolf, Grosberg's father-in-law, who became a partner in the entire chain. The stores were located on Michigan Avenue, Hastings Street, and two other locations on the west side of Detroit. The stores were also in the downriver communities of River Rouge, Wyandotte, Trenton, and later in Inkster, Wayne, Plymouth, Northville, and on Fenkell Avenue in Brightmoor, which is now within the city of Detroit. Ultimately, the business became a chain of twenty stores.

The Grosberg & Reuter wholesale food business, which included only dry groceries, served not only as a supply source for the Wolf retail chain, but also became a significant source of supply for many other retail grocery merchants in the Detroit area. Mr. Grosberg pioneered the concept of "cash-and-carry" wholesale merchandising, in which the merchants picked up their purchases at the wholesale warehouse and paid cash. The resulting economy to the wholesale business of eliminating delivery charges and the cost of supplying credit to the retail merchants made it possible to undersell the traditional wholesalers of the area who delivered merchandise to the retailers and carried the accounts receivable. The cash-and-carry concept resulted in a large number of active retail customers of Grosberg & Reuter.

The wholesale business was further augmented by establishing, under Mr. Grosberg's guidance, a so-called voluntary chain of independent merchants who banded together under a common advertising name. This enabled them to advertise with similar circulars or handbills in their respective neighborhoods, with the circulars differing only with respect to the store addresses. The nominal fees for membership in the group paid for the adver

tising. Also, by purchasing quantities of the advertised items, the group obtained the advantage of lower costs.

The depression years, 1930 to 1936, brought substantial changes to the business. Bank closings made it extremely difficult for many merchants to pay cash for their purchases. The city of Detroit paid its bills and its employees by issuing scrip in lieu of money. The scrip circulated in the community the same as cash. The theory of this program was that eventually any debts and taxes owed to the city would be paid with scrip. This was the only way the scrip could be redeemed. The retailers accepted scrip from their customers, and in turn used it to pay for their purchases from wholesalers. The wholesalers attempted to use scrip to pay the food manufacturers, located largely in other parts of the country. The manufacturers were reluctant to accept scrip, as they felt they had no way to redeem it. Mr. Grosberg's position in the wholesale food business in Detroit enabled him to exert pressure on the manufacturers, and they finally agreed to accept scrip in partial payment of the accounts owed to them for purchases. This facilitated the flow of scrip throughout the food industry and made it possible for many small merchants to survive.

In the spring of 1931 the Welfare Department of the city of Detroit was faced with an acute shortage of funds with which to supply food to needy families. Mr. Grosberg took an active leadership role in organizing a food show at Convention Hall on Woodward Avenue. At that show, all kinds of food products were displayed, demonstrated, sold, and also given away as prizes. The proceeds of the show, raised from moderate admission fees and from booths featuring various games of chance, such as betting on numbers on a spinning wheel, were entirely turned over to the Welfare Department to assist in feeding the hungry.

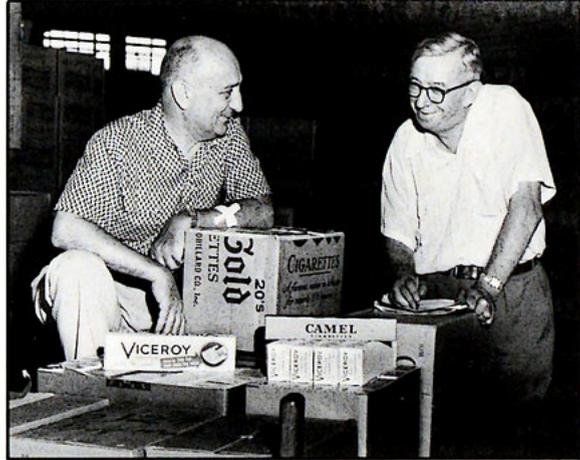
A major change in food merchandising occurred in the years 1930 to 1932 with the advent of warehouse-type food stores. These stores offered groceries on a self-service basis in mass displays, sometimes in the original packing cases, at lower prices than those prevailing in conventional retail stores, with further reductions for purchases in case lots. The original stores of this kind featured to a great extent surplus or distressed grocery merchandise from packers, canners, and other manufacturers whose sales had been adversely affected by the depression. Very few other food items were offered.

Mr. Grosberg established a store of this kind in 1931, followed by several others in rapid succession. However, he modified the merchandising concept to feature national brands of merchandise, offered not as distressed merchandise, but as an inventory of regular grocery store merchandise at prices below those of small service-type retail stores. Mr. Grosberg's stores were complete food markets, offering groceries, meats, dairy products and fresh produce.

The stores were large, making use of available facilities such as vacant industrial buildings, automobile showrooms, furniture showrooms, and other buildings on major thoroughfares with 5,000 square feet or more of floor space, some with parking facilities in addition to available street parking. The grocery fixtures were planks laid on saw horses. The refrigerated counters for meat and dairy products were such state-of-the-art equipment as was available in those years. Groceries were offered on a self-service

basis. Meat and dairy products were sold by clerks behind the counter. Produce was sold by clerks who weighed and packaged the items. The stores were operated under the name Packers Outlet, which was changed in later years to Packers Super Markets. This came at a time when the super market concept became more widely accepted, and also as physical facilities, equipment, and merchandising techniques improved, replacing the original "outlet" concept of merchandising.\*

In 1931, Mr. Grosberg entered into a leasing arrangement with the Crowley-Milner Department Store to establish a self-service food operation in the basement of the Farmer Street building of Crowley-Milner in downtown Detroit. Other operators took on the operation of meat, dairy, and produce departments on leases from Crowley-Milner. The operations were successful because there was a need for retail food facilities in downtown Detroit, which in those years enjoyed the traffic to support retail activities. After about one and one-half years of this operation, the grocery department was sold back to Crowley-Milner to operate for their own account.



Charles Grosberg (left) and his partner, John A. Reuter, in the 1940s.

One of the outstanding characteristics of Mr. Grosberg that contributed greatly to his success in the food business was his ability to make friends in the industry among suppliers, manufacturers, manufacturers' representatives, food brokers, and even direct competitors. Many strong lasting friendships grew out of Mr. Grosberg's relationships with these people because of their respect and admiration for his ability and integrity.

Another important aspect of Mr. Grosberg's personality was his ability to inspire great loyalty and respect from his employees, many of whom remained in his employ for many years. The respect and admiration evidenced by his employees contributed much to the growth and efficiency of the business.

By 1935 the Grosberg & Reuter business had outgrown the warehousing facility on 18th Street, and the offices and warehouse were moved in that year to the Michigan Central Railroad Terminal at 140 12th Street, fronting

\* *The Super Market, a Revolution in Distribution* by M.M. Zimmerman (McGraw-Hill, 1955), mentions the names of Charles Grosberg and John Reuter as pioneers in the super market industry in connection with the Packers Outlet that opened in 1931.

on the Detroit River. Here the additional space and available railroad sidings contributed further efficiencies which enabled the company to expand its super markets to a total of forty-two stores by 1951. The stores were located in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, and Monroe counties.

During the years 1936 to 1951, the Wolf's Cash Market chain of small stores was gradually reduced by closing the smaller stores or by converting the larger ones to Packers Super Markets, until that chain no longer existed.

After 1936, the wholesale grocery business supplying the independent merchants was gradually reduced, until this element of the business was virtually eliminated by 1945.

During the years 1936 to 1951, other major chains of super markets were established in the greater Detroit area. This competition resulted in extensive advertising by all the companies in newspapers and handbills. The Packers Super Markets began to use radio advertising in 1934 with a fifteen-minute morning radio presentation. This continued for several years. In 1950, the Packer stores began sponsorship of a prime-time twice weekly nationally syndicated radio show, "The Cisco Kid." In 1951 the television rights to that series of programs was acquired by Packers Super Markets, and the program came to enjoy great popularity and was a very effective advertising medium.

In 1951 the Packers Super Market chain was merged with the Wrigley Super Markets of Detroit. The merged operation thereafter continued under the name of Wrigley's Super Markets. The Grosberg & Reuter warehousing operation was discontinued. Mr. Grosberg and Mr. Reuter then retired from active participation in the food business and devoted themselves to various personal interests.

One of Mr. Grosberg's major interests was philanthropy. A charitable foundation which he had established in his name made substantial contributions to such institutions as Sinai Hospital of Detroit, Wayne State University, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Bar-Ilan University, and numerous others. He was also very active in the Bonds for Israel campaigns through substantial personal purchases of bonds, and in encouraging many others to make substantial purchases. Institutions that benefitted from Mr. Grosberg's generosity named various facilities in his honor, including the Grosberg Religious Center at Wayne State University, the Charles Grosberg Education Building at Bar-Ilan University, and the Charles Grosberg Stadium at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Mr. Grosberg was a long-standing member of Congregation Shaarey Zedek, and also belonged to Adat Shalom Synagogue. He was a 32nd degree Mason, a member of Perfection Lodge 486, and a member of the Moslem Shrine.

Mr. Reuter died in 1959. Mr. Grosberg continued to pursue his various interests, including foreign travel, until his death in December 1968. He was survived by his wife Sadie, their three children: Merwin, Jean (Mrs. Sam Frankel), and Norma (Mrs. Joseph O. Grant); eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

The Charles Grosberg Foundation continues to make his generosity available for the benefit of many worthy institutions.

The Grosberg & Reuter name survives today in various real estate holdings acquired during the existence of the partnership.

## THE PEDDLERS OF BAY CITY

By Lillian R. Greenstein

The impact of the immigrant peddler on regional development has been widely recognized in American literature. By the middle of the 19th century the New England Yankee peddler was turning to storekeeper and the peddling role began to be filled by waves of immigrants, first from Germany and later from Eastern Europe.<sup>1</sup> For the new arrivals, it was a way to get started earning a living. Golden estimated that a quarter of a million Jewish men became peddlers between 1850 and 1920.<sup>2</sup>

Among Golden's stories were the experiences of Jewish peddlers in southern communities, where they brought dry goods and notions to rural households and had salient roles in the development of the southern economy. Similar tales of the immigrant Jewish peddler could be told in hundreds of developing communities throughout the North American continent and with each new wave of immigrants. Leonoff, in reporting on the Jewish settlements in British Columbia, noted that the early Jews in Vancouver were destitute eastern European immigrants who turned to peddling scrap materials with a horse and wagon in order to earn a living.<sup>3</sup> Adler, in describing the Buffalo Jews in the latter half of the nineteenth century (*The Early Ballibotim of Buffalo*), showed that it was primarily a "peddler" community.<sup>4</sup> For these horse-and-wagon peddlers, an incapacitated horse was an utmost tragedy. The entire Jewish community would seek to help the owner in his struggle for survival.

Similarly, immigrants were turning to peddling throughout northern Michigan. Bay City was a gateway to this region, and frequently Bay City peddlers, first by pack and later by horse and wagon, brought household materials to the rural Michigan areas in exchange for scrap "junk," which was sold in Bay City salvage yards. The story of the Glazer family illustrates the role of Bay City peddlers in rural development.<sup>5</sup> Zundel Glazer, the

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<sup>1</sup>Harry Golden, *Forgotten Pioneer* (Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1963), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>Cyril E. Leonoff, *Pioneers, Peddlers, and Prayer Shawls* (Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1978), p. 85.

<sup>4</sup>Della R. Adler, "Girlhood Memories" in *Golden Door to America*, Abraham J. Karp, editor (New York: The Viking Press, 1976), pp. 225-231.

<sup>5</sup>Phillip Applebaum, "The Jews of Kalkaska County, Michigan," *Michigan Jewish History* 19 (January 1979), pp. 4-6.

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LILLIAN R. GREENSTEIN grew up in the Bay City peddler community. She earned a master's degree in education from the University of Michigan, and a doctoral degree in educational psychology from the University of Alabama. She has authored a number of articles in the field of occupational therapy. Now retired, her interests are in American Jewish history.

father, arrived in Bay City in 1886 and became a pack peddler, traveling throughout the thumb area. The 1893-94 *Bay City Directory* lists him as "Sundal Glazer, 1500 - 12th St."<sup>6</sup> His son, Louis, peddled with a horse and wagon, also in the Michigan thumb. Later, Louis developed a business in Kalkaska County and he and his family were among the early Jewish residents of that county.

Another example is the settlement of the Jewish agricultural colony named Palestine by their Zionist founders. According to Herscher, it was settled by Russian Jews who had been peddlers in Bay City.<sup>7</sup> The idea for the colony was instigated by Hyman Lewenberg while peddling in the Bad Axe area. Thus the ventures of the Bay City peddlers impacted rural areas throughout northern Michigan.

Within Bay City, by the close of the nineteenth century, a thriving Jewish community was developing. An influx of multi-ethnic immigrants contributed to a healthy lumbering economy, each in their own way, from the French-Canadian lumberjack to the Jewish merchandise provider. Among the Jews were the earlier immigrants from Germany and the later groups from eastern Europe, many turning to peddling as a ready means of earning a livelihood.

The names of seventeen peddlers listed in the 1893-94 *Bay City Directory* can be identified as Jewish. The 1900 U.S. Census, several years later, also suggests the importance of the peddler occupation in Bay City, with twenty-five identifiable Jewish names listed as peddlers. Although there is an occasional duplication of names extracted from the *Directory* and the Census, there are also a number of others that were undoubtedly missed, so that it can be roughly estimated that a minimum of forty Jewish peddlers were plying their wares in Bay City by the close of the century.\*

The 1893-94 *Directory* offered some interesting additional information relative to the peddlers and their families, their culture, their aspirations and their struggle for economic survival.

By that year, two congregations had been established. The "Hebrew Churches" were listed in the *Directory* as Anshe Chesed, Reform, and Schari Zadeck (Shaary Zedek), Orthodox. The schedules for services are entered for each congregation as are "Sabbath School" for the Reform and "Religious School" for the Orthodox congregations. The Reform rabbi was Rev. Wolf Landau, who lived close to the synagogue at 417 Adams; the Orthodox rabbi was Rev. Joseph Taub, whose residence was 1009-12th Street, the hub area of Jewish living. By the 1900 census, 12th Street acquired its present name, Columbus Avenue. To the peddlers and their families, however, this important center of Jewish activity would always be "12th Street."

Here were the Jewish meat market, the bakery, the grocery stores, the drug store.<sup>8</sup> The *Directory* lists the druggist George S. Layerer, 1102-12th

<sup>6</sup>The *Bay City Directory* (Detroit: R.L. Polk & Co., 1893-94).

<sup>7</sup>Uri D. Herscher, *Jewish Agricultural Utopias in America, 1880-1910* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1981), pp. 61-70.

<sup>8</sup>Anecdotal information was derived from girlhood experiences of the writer and August 12, 1983 interviews with Bessie Diamond Jaffe and Howard Kraska in Bay City.

\*Listings gleaned from the *Directories* and Census reports are entered in the Appendix.

St. Layerer's Drug Store (still standing) serviced generations of peddler families and probably had more impact on their health than any other factor.

Other personalities that impacted the Jewish community appear in the *Directory*, such as Miss Mary E. Hamet, teacher, Farragut School. Miss Hamet taught the seventh grade, the highest elementary grade in the school commonly attended by the children in immigrant families. She instilled a love of learning among these students that carried into the high school grades.

The firm of Carroll, Hurley and Company is listed as dealing with produce. This was the forerunner of the wholesale business owned by "Mike" Carroll, who supplied produce to the "fruit peddlers." A number of peddlers had discovered that they could earn a living more comfortably by peddling within the growing city, rather than the rural areas. They drove their horses and wagons through regular routes, either selling produce as "fruit peddlers" or collecting salvage as "junk peddlers." Mike Carroll knew every fruit peddler by name, encouraged them in their ventures, offered credit willingly, and attended the family *simchas* (bar mitzvas, weddings).

The junk peddlers, too, had their guardian angel. Herman Hirshfield is listed as a peddler in the *Directory*, but, as many others, he later established a business for processing salvage purchased from the peddlers, showing great compassion and helpfulness toward his clients. Although some peddlers were working within the city, many continued to take their wares, either by pack or horse and wagon, to country villages and farms where the peddler traded household goods and notions for the farmer's scrap salvage. Frequently, the collected salvage was sent by railroad to Hirshfield, who kept the accounts for his clients and many times made advance payments to the families when their meager reserve of cash was completely depleted. He helped a number of immigrant families to survive.

Several early publications offer information on community organizations and demographic data that attest to strident Bay City Jewish growth at the turn of the century.

The first edition of the *American Jewish Yearbook*, 1899-1900, was primarily a directory of existing Jewish organizations.<sup>9</sup> Included were the two Bay City congregations described above. Gansser's *History of Bay County*<sup>10</sup> also described the "Hebrew Congregations" with information on membership, rabbis, and locations. The author offered the following explanation for the development of two separate congregations: About the same time that the Reform congregation purchased its temple from a German Lutheran Society (1884) ". . . 12 families who believed in adhering to the old forms and methods of conducting Hebrew worship withdrew from the Anshe Chesed Reform Hebrew Congregation" (p. 305) and held their meetings in a temporary building until their synagogue was built in 1889. In his list of organizations, Gansser also includes the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith, Bay City Lodge No. 178.

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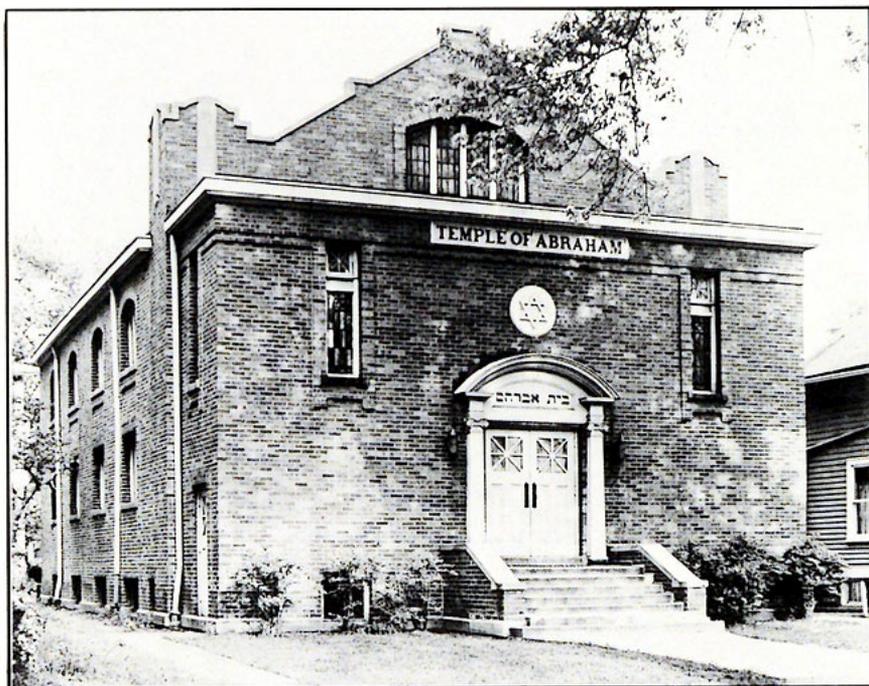
<sup>9</sup> *The American Jewish Yearbook, 1899-1900*, Cyrus Adler, editor (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1899).

<sup>10</sup> Augustus H. Gansser, *History of Bay County, Michigan and Representative Citizens* (Chicago: Richmond & Arnold, 1905), pp. 305, 339.

The development of these institutions in primarily an immigrant community was not easy. Even the Reform congregation, whose members had an earlier acculturation, found it necessary to appeal for funds in order to acquire a synagogue building. In June 1883, B'nai B'rith Lodge No. 178 appealed for donations in order to "procure a more suitable place of Worship." The appeal goes on to explain that "Our membership being small in numbers, we are unable to undertake this task ourselves . . ."

The 1907 issue of the *American Jewish Yearbook*, edited by Henrietta Szold, offered considerable demographic data that reflected Jewish growth in Bay City.<sup>12</sup> The estimated Jewish population of Bay City was 900, only surpassed by Detroit, with 10,000. After Bay City, smaller Jewish growth areas existed in the western part of the state, with 450 in Grand Rapids, 432 in Benton Harbor and 300 in Kalamazoo. The total estimated Jewish population in Michigan was 16,000.

This yearbook also listed the Bay City Jewish organizations. The officers, income, membership, and activities of the two congregations are preserved with exquisite detail, although there are some discrepancies in dates. The weekly religious classes offered at the Anshe Chesed Temple are note-



Temple of Abraham synagogue, founded in 1914. The building was sold in the 1950s and currently houses St. George Byzantine Catholic Church.

<sup>11</sup> Allen A. Warsen, "B'nai B'rith in Action," *Michigan Jewish History* 7 (November 1966, N. 1), pp. 14-15.

<sup>12</sup> *The American Jewish Yearbook, 1907-1908*, Henrietta Szold, editor (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1907), pp. 217-222.

worthy. Although the peddlers were staunch participants in the traditional Orthodox congregation, their children were prone to attend the "Sunday School" classes offered by Anshe Chesed. Whereas in their own synagogue, the children learned the centuries-old Hebrew ritual, here they heard Biblical stories in understandable English. At Hanuka, they received gift boxes of candy and fruit from their instructors, their first experience with knowing Hanuka as a gift-giving holiday.

In addition to the synagogues, the 1907 *Yearbook* offered data on the Bikur Cholim Benevolent Society and the two adjoining cemeteries, the B'nai B'rith (Reform) and the Chevra Kadisha (Orthodox).

It is clear that the Bay City Jewish Community, pioneered by the immigrant peddlers, revealed vibrant development in the early twentieth century.

A third synagogue, the Temple of Abraham (Orthodox), was established in 1914 and was identified as the New Shul to differentiate it from the older congregation, Shaary Zedek, the Old Shul. What prompted the building of a second Orthodox synagogue is uncertain; personal dissension may have been implicated. Some fifteen years after the new synagogue opened, the Bay City Daily Times described the building with the headline "Jews Boast Grand Temple."<sup>13</sup> The article stated that the Temple of Abraham, built by a handful of Orthodox Jews, was probably the most beautiful "among the smaller and more recently erected churches of the city." Officers were listed and charter members named. A number of the charter members were, or had been, peddlers. At the time of the article, Rabbi Mendel Glancz, formerly from Shaary Zedek, served the congregation. Rabbi Glancz was a lifelong rabbi in the community, truly a peddler's rabbi, a combination religious leader, cantor, and storyteller.



Rabbi Mendel Glancz, who served the community in many roles, including Hebrew teacher, *shochet*, and *mohel*.

The peddler economy remained strong, with close to thirty Jewish peddlers identified in the 1915 *Bay City Directory*.<sup>14</sup> Residential patterns indicated a northerly move by the peddlers, who left the four-hundred blocks south of Columbus Avenue (12th Street), an area that the Polish immigrants populated. The move was closer in toward Columbus, continuing Jewish residential areas just south of Columbus, crossing Columbus to 11th Street and on to 10th Street. A *Bay City Times* report reviewed the early residential patterns of four ethnic groups around Columbus Avenue: the Irish, Germans, Jewish, and Polish.<sup>15</sup> Each had its own traditions and businesses and each group had "an important place in the continuing history of the community."

<sup>13</sup>"Jews Boast Grand Temple," *The Bay City Daily Times*, May 4, 1929.

<sup>14</sup>*The Bay City Directory* (Detroit: R.L. Polk & Co., 1915).

<sup>15</sup>"Columbus Ave.—Where Ethnic Groups Meet," *The Bay City Times*, February 16, 1975.

Between 1910 and 1920, the overall Bay City Jewish population was reaching a plateau. A later *American Jewish Yearbook* included Bay City among communities with one thousand Jews in 1917-18,<sup>16</sup> but Bay City was not in the forefront of growth. Grand Rapids and Saginaw had also attained that number. Detroit had leaped five-fold from ten thousand in 1907 to fifty thousand in 1917. Subsequent *Yearbooks* showed changing patterns of Jewish population in Michigan, with a steady decline in Bay City. The growth and loss of Jewish population in Bay City was consistent with overall Bay City population changes. U.S. Census reports indicated a 1900 population of 27,628, almost doubling to 45,100 in 1910 and then plateauing to 47,554 in 1920.

Golden stated that pack peddlers on New York's Lower East Side were making their rounds into the second decade of the twentieth century.<sup>17</sup> In Bay City, although most of the peddlers had found other livelihoods, a nucleus of immigrants continued to earn a living with a horse and wagon in the 1930s<sup>18</sup> and a few into the 1950s.

In most cases, the immigrants had been friends since their arrival, discussing their mutual concerns and experiences over tea on a Sabbath tablecloth, lightening the worries with interjections of Jewish humor. They learned American ways and yet adhered to their own *shtetl*-like culture. In spite of constant struggles with day-to-day survival, these peddlers viewed their lives in a mid-American town as good. They eventually owned their own houses, installed indoor plumbing and electricity; coal burning furnaces replaced the wood burning stoves.

Above all, the Bay City peddlers saw their children educated. Although the eldest child often quit school to go to work and help support the family, those born after 1910 usually completed high school. The schooling route for the Jewish children was first, Farragut elementary school, two blocks north of Columbus Avenue. Many an immigrant mother had confrontations with the patient principal, Ida C. Ueborhorst, as the mother aggressively pushed her child's achievement.

Upon entering eighth grade, Jewish children attended Eastern Junior High School, and the tenth grade meant entrance to Bay City Central High School. The older siblings in the peddler families usually pursued a commercial course so that, upon graduation, they could find employment as a bookkeeper (a status occupation).

In the mid-1920s, Bay City Junior College was established, and by the end of that decade the children of the Jewish peddlers began to realize they could set their sights on something more than high school graduation.

The Junior College program was located in a wing of Central High School and most of the instructors were transferred from the high school. For fifteen dollars a semester tuition, students could enter the world of higher learning and, while living at home, acquire a background for enter-

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<sup>16</sup> *The American Jewish Yearbook, 1920-1921*, Harry Schneiderman, editor (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1920), p. 373.

<sup>17</sup> Golden, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>18</sup> *The Bay City Directory* (Detroit: R.L. Polk & Co., 1931).

ing a professional program in a university. Although the fifteen dollars was a modest sum compared to tuition elsewhere, the peddlers usually did not have that extra cash over food, housing, and clothing. As with immigrant families elsewhere, older siblings helped younger ones, and they became university educated.

The offspring of the Bay City peddlers, now widely dispersed, are business leaders, professors, dentists, physicians, attorneys—a wide range of professionals. Most of them are probably retired, but the story of their beginnings is an important part of Michigan Jewish history.

## APPENDIX

### Jewish Peddlers Listed in the 1893-94 *Bay City Directory*

Biller, Robert; 220 S. Sherman  
 Blumlo, John; 818-16th St.  
 Glazer, Sundal; 1500-12th St.  
 Goldberg, Ephraim; 416 S. Farragut  
 Goldberg, Mark; 411 N. Monroe  
 Goldman, Charles; 409 N. Monroe  
 Golstrom, Bernhardt; 414 S. Farragut  
 Gordon, Hyman; 1303-12th St.  
 Gordon, Joseph; 1501-12th St.  
 Graff, Samuel; 1416-14th St.  
 Hershfield, Herman; 310 S. Farragut  
 Kahn, Isaac; 200 S. Sheridan  
 Lewin, Phillip; 200 N. Lincoln  
 Rosenberg, Isaac; 420 S. Farragut  
 Rosenberg, Moses; 214 N. Monroe  
 Sonnenstrahl, Samuel; 1513-18th St.  
 Weiner, Marcus; 608 S. Sherman

### Jewish Peddlers Listed in the 1900 U.S. Census, Bay City Section

Abramson, Julius; 314 S. Lincoln; Germany  
 Beckman, Joseph; 518 S. Farragut; Russia  
 Biller, Jake; 300 S. Lincoln; Germany  
 Biller, Robert; 220 S. Sherman; Germany  
 Fairberg, Meyer; 906 S. Van Buren; Russia  
 Goldberg, L.; 1300 Columbus; Russia  
 Golden, Max; 513 S. Farragut; Russia  
 Goldman, Abraham; 300 S. Farragut; Germany  
 Grabowsky, George; 205 Monroe  
 Greenberg, Samuel; 512 S. Sheridan; Russia  
 Kaufman, Hyman; 501 S. Farragut; Russia  
 Kintz, Abraham; 314 S. Sherman; Germany  
 Kramer, Joseph; 415 S. Sherman; Russia

Jeffe, C.; 302 Lincoln; Germany  
Livingston, M.; 106 S. Farragut; Russia  
Mandel, I.; 420 S. Farragut; Russia  
Mangold, Herman; 308 S. Farragut; Germany  
Marienthal, Aaron; 1300 Columbus; Germany  
Mendell, Joseph; 112 N. Farragut; Germany  
Miller, Thomas; 207 Monroe; Russia  
Newman, Louis; 107 N. Farragut  
Rausoff, Max; 310 S. Farragut; Germany  
Rosenburg, Isaac; 312 S. Sheridan; Germany  
Sonnenstrahl, S.; 318 S. Farragut; Germany  
Vahloff, Sam; 209 S. Sherman; Germany

**Jewish Peddlers Listed in the 1915 *Bay City Directory***

Diamond, David; 208 N. Sheridan  
Feldman, Daniel; 1304-14th St.  
Fagan, Aaron; 920 Columbus  
Goldberg, Morris; 207 N. Farragut  
Golden, Max; 218 S. Sherman  
Golden, Robert; 1109-11th St.  
Golden, Samuel; 1220-14th St.  
Goldman, Hyman; 217 N. Farragut  
Goldman, Max; 102 S. Birney  
Goldstein, Max; 216 S. Sheridan  
Gordon, Charles; 208 Washington  
Green, David; 215 N. Lincoln  
Greenstein, Ben; 212 S. Sherman  
Greenstein, Isaac; 316 S. Farragut  
Hertzenberg, Samuel; 412 S. Van Buren  
Hirschberg, Bernard; 220 S. Sheridan  
Immerman, Harry; 211 N. Grant  
Koffman, Samuel; 409 N. Sherman  
Levin, Benjamin; 906-13th St.  
Levy, Louis; 200 S. Sheridan  
Magidson, Louis; 1104-11th St.  
Magidson, Morris; 1104-11th St.  
Morris, Max; 203 N. Grant  
Pearlman, Barney; 1013-11th St.  
Sonnenstrahl, Samuel; 910-13th St.  
Surath, Harry; 221 S. Lincoln  
Werbellow, Samuel; 209 S. Sherman

## HARRY STOCKER, M.D. His Life and Times (1897-1953)

By Devera Steinberg Stocker

“Doctors and mothers have a work day that never ends.” This comment was made by Dr. Harry Stocker, who practiced medicine in Detroit in the days when doctors made night calls as well as day calls, and had evening as well as daytime office hours. It was a rugged life, but we were young and optimistic and ambitious along with our circle of medical friends who were also general practitioners. The specialist was the butt of jokes: “He couldn’t remove the sliver from the patient’s right eye because he was a left eye specialist!”

Though the times were changing, the practice of medicine still retained the aura of the country doctor. He was your friend; he came to your home to see you when you were ill. He delivered all the babies in the family and he knew most of your relatives. The practice of medicine was only beginning to make the necessary adjustments to the technological age. Meanwhile, the doctor journeyed to your home in an automobile instead of a horse and buggy, and you reached him by telephone. It was no longer possible to send Johnny to “go fetch the doctor.” While the old-time thoughts of the family doctor lingered, the outskirts of Detroit offered an opportunity to a young physician to build a family practice.



Dr. Harry Stocker

Harry Stocker was born February 9, 1897, on Junction Avenue in Springwells, a township adjacent to Detroit, Michigan. His father, Julius, came to this country, around 1885, from Makova, a suburb of Warsaw (Russian Poland at that time). The family had come to Makova from Bialystok and were known as the Bialystokers. When Julius arrived here he gave his name as Julius Bialystoker. The United States customs officers evidently thought Bialy was a middle name and, as a consequence, the family name became

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DEVERA STEINBERG STOCKER was born in Detroit and raised in Traverse City, Michigan. A former 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.

Stocker. Harry's mother, Hannah Rose Bloomgarden, came from Vierzbelavo, Lithuania, also in the 1880s, to her nephew, Max Bloomgarden, in Detroit. Max came to this country much earlier; his son, Abe, who was well known in the Jewish community, was born here in 1862.<sup>1</sup> The famous Yiddish poet and writer, Yehoash, was Hannah Rose's cousin, her father's nephew. Yehoash was a pseudonym of Solomon Bloomgarden.<sup>2</sup>

Hannah Rose and Julius were married in 1888. Harry was the youngest of their four children. The three who preceded him were Etta, Ben and Dorie. Starting out as a peddler, in time Julius established a men's clothing store on Michigan Avenue. This business venture flourished until Julius retired in 1923. Meanwhile, Etta, their first child, took the required two-year training program to become a teacher and taught in the Detroit Public Schools until her marriage to Morris Pearl, a young man from New York. He established a jewelry store on Gratiot Avenue, on Detroit's east side, and remained in business there for many years.<sup>3</sup> Dorie took the required library course of study and was a librarian in a Detroit Public Library until her marriage to Monie Mitshkun, son of a Detroit family. Ben remained in the family business with his father until 1923, when he opened a jewelry store on Michigan Avenue. He stayed with the jewelry business for seventeen years. After that, his interests and his business activity were in coin collecting. He married Anna Rosen of New York.

The main Jewish community in Detroit was located east of Woodward. There were, however, other smaller Jewish communities and one of these was west of Woodward where Harry grew up. By the 1890s, many Jewish businessmen were located on Michigan Avenue. Junction Avenue was a main thoroughfare and the predominant ethnic group was Polish.

Harry received his early education in the Detroit Public Schools, completing John S. Newberry (grade school) in 1911, and Western High School<sup>4</sup> in 1915. At both the grade school and the high school graduation exercises, the programs list Harry as president of his class. He entered the University of Michigan in the fall of 1915, a premedical candidate for a B.S. degree. This was achieved in 1919, and on April 23 of that year, he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Harry was in the ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) at the university from 1917, when the United States entered World War I, until January 1919, when he received his honorable discharge. He was never called to active duty.

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<sup>1</sup>See "Occupations and Organizational Affiliations of the Detroit Jews prior to 1920", *Michigan Jewish History*, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 17, by Allen A. Warsen (Max's name appears mistakenly as Jacob).

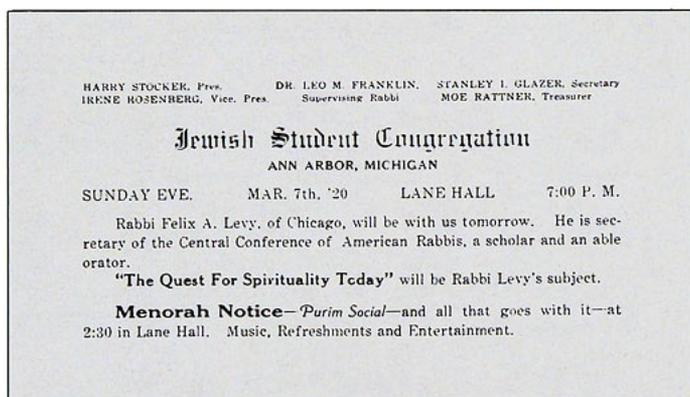
<sup>2</sup>Yehoash (1872-1927), came to the United States in 1890 and remained until 1914 when he went to Palestine. He returned when the Turks entered World War I on the side of the Axis.

<sup>3</sup>Etta and Morris's son, Richard Pearl, achieved fame in his field. He was a professor of geology at Colorado College and co-founder of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies. He was the author of more than thirty books and achieved international recognition as an authority in this field.

<sup>4</sup>A photograph of Western High School was given to the Burton Historical Library by the author. The photo was of special interest, since Western High School was destroyed in a fire in 1935.

In 1919–1920 he was president of the Jewish Student Congregation in Ann Arbor. The congregation was established in 1914 at the University of Michigan by Rabbi Leo M. Franklin of Detroit's Temple Beth El. It was the first in the United States and the forerunner of the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation.

Harry and his friend, Sol Meyers, were roommates throughout college; Sol is remembered for his years of dedicated medical practice in Detroit. After two years in medical school at the University of Michigan, they decided to continue their education in Chicago where the large city hospitals had more to offer a medical student. In the fall of 1920, Harry entered medical school at Northwestern University in Evanston-Chicago, and Sol entered Rush University in Chicago.



A postal card issued by the Jewish Student Organization at the University of Michigan, 1920, of which Harry Stocker was president.

On January 16, 1922, Harry and I were married. In June 1922 he received his M.D. degree from Northwestern University and I received my A.B. degree with a Teachers Certificate from the University of Michigan. (There was no separate school of education at the University of Michigan at that time.)

Following his internship at City Hospital in Louisville, Kentucky, we came to Detroit, and Harry opened his first office in July 1923. It was located over a jewelry store next to the bank on the corner of Chene and Milwaukee, a streetcar intersection. The office consisted of three rooms: a rather dim waiting room and two light and airy rooms with large windows facing Chene Street. French doors were all that separated the waiting room from the apartment at the back where we lived. Frequent break-ins and attempted break-ins at the bank and the jewelry store brought the police in response to the alarm. It was not unusual for the police to come dashing up the stairway at the back of the building and point a flashlight into our bedroom window! Patients were not slow in coming. This had been a doc-

tor's office previously. They came in off the street and it was a cash practice.<sup>5</sup>

After a few months, however, Harry was not satisfied. He wanted to build a family practice, and the families and individuals he was seeing were transients. He wanted to move further out to the new neighborhoods. It was also essential to move from our living quarters, which were not suitable for the baby we expected in May. Both moves presented more problems than anticipated, for neither office space nor family residence were available on the far east side. As it became more urgent to move our home, we considered the possibility of living on the west side, nearer to friends and relatives. This, however, was unrealistic, as we soon learned. The pleasant small apartment to which we moved was not only a considerable distance from the east side, but two railroad crossings en route frequently added further delay. Our return to the east side took several months before we located a residence. Meanwhile, our baby son arrived on May 3, 1924.<sup>6</sup>

Continuing our search for office space, late one afternoon we passed an excavation at Gratiot Avenue and Westphalia. Since the workmen were still there, Harry inquired and was told that a bank branch was under construction with space above it for doctors' and dentists' offices! The next morning he called the bank and was able to have his office constructed according to his specifications.

Finding a home was less of a success. We moved to a large lower flat in a new brick duplex on an unpaved street. The new neighborhoods were indeed new and undeveloped. Telephone service was not available, awaiting the laying of more cable; our neighbors upstairs gave us an extension on their telephone. Gas had not been piped in yet and cooking was limited to a portable electrical appliance. When the doctor received a call, someone from the drug store on the corner of Gratiot and Westphalia took the message to him that a call awaited him at home. Most streets were not paved and it was frequently necessary in bad weather for Harry to call AAA to get his car out of the mud or out of the snow. It was especially trying when he visited patients in East Detroit and Roseville.

Harry soon added a nurse to his practice. Since babies were born in the home at that time, she accompanied him on obstetrical cases, and also served as the office receptionist. Harry's primary hospital affiliation throughout his thirty years of practice was East Side General on Cadillac Boulevard. He performed tonsillectomies and other minor surgery. Later, obstetrical cases were delivered in the hospital.

Our daughter, Jill, was born February 22, 1929. Economic growth in the United States in the 1920s gave the impression of solid prosperity for many years to come. New inventions bolstered the economy: radio, talking movies, frozen foods, to mention a few. The general feeling was "Happy

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<sup>5</sup> In the author's memory, an office visit was two dollars and a home call was three dollars. This could not be confirmed, no records available.

<sup>6</sup> A case of smallpox was discovered in the hospital and more cases were reported in the city. Our young medical friends had a serious discussion as to whether a newborn should be vaccinated. Interesting to note that smallpox was still a hazard in 1924.

Days Are Here Again" (the song that came out at the close of that decade). Harry was fortunate in having had a chance to build a practice before the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression of the 1930s that followed.

Barter was not uncommon during the Depression. We had a beautiful magnolia tree given to us in lieu of payment for an obstetrical case. A patient who was a photographer gave us a framed picture of a laughing child in payment for some service. Best of all, a patient who was a taxidermist gave us a stuffed owl. The children promptly named it "Owliver." It was a delightful conversation piece.

Coping with the Depression was very similar to coping with the years of building a practice. In general, Harry's patients were able to weather the economic hardships. There were some patients who were unable to pay for service, and even occasional times when Harry left money for the family to buy medication for the patient. He had a family practice, one might say an extended family practice, including grandparents and other relatives. Many of his patients knew each other. When he delivered the baby of one member of a woman's bridge club, the chances were he would deliver the babies of the other three members. We estimate he delivered nearly a thousand babies in his thirty years of practice. What he could not resist in his later years, in spite of his desire to avoid night calls, was an opportunity to deliver a second generation. When a woman for whom he had delivered a baby girl some twenty years earlier came to him with her now-grown daughter who needed his services, he was very pleased to accept the case. He had a number of these.

In 1936 we bought our home on Devonshire Road, near East Outer Drive. The children were growing up. Jack was bar mitzva in 1937 at Beth Itzhok Synagogue on Fischer Avenue.<sup>7</sup> Even when the children were quite young, we managed to adapt our plans to Harry's work hours. A picnic trip to Belle Isle was a favorite frequent outing all summer. Harry called for us after his afternoon office hours, and we returned in time for his evening hours. After his evening hours, whenever practical, he called for me on his way to house calls. I waited in the car while he completed his calls. Afterwards, we were free to relax, to go for a walk, or to a restaurant, or to stop in at the neighborhood pharmacy for conversation and an ice cream sundae. We and our medical friends made our own simple innovative adjustments to the long and unpredictable work hours of the general practitioner.

World War II was approaching and the Depression was not yet over. Despite the disquiet in the air, life went on as usual as nearly as possible. Harry liked to work in the garden. I remember how pleased he was when he found that one of his tomatoes weighed a pound. He played the piano well, and enjoyed golf and fishing. He was a member of the Wayne County Medical Society, the Michigan Medical Society, the Maimonides Medical

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<sup>7</sup>Beth Itzhok Synagogue followed a custom, traditional at some time in our history, of throwing candy to the bar mitzva boy.

Society,\* the American Medical Association and was a founding member of Sinai Hospital. He held membership in his medical fraternity, Phi Delta Epsilon, in both the Alpha Chapter at the University of Michigan and the Alpha Beta Chapter at Northwestern Medical School.

By the late 1930s, the horror of the Holocaust was confirmed. Anguish and confusion ruled our thoughts. Many of the German and Austrian doctors who escaped Hitler were psychoanalysts. This gave a considerable boost to that specialty in the 1940s, introducing it to larger segments of the population.

As Harry's practice grew, the night calls became more exhausting and he considered limiting his practice to a specialty field. Psychosomatic medicine appealed to him. He studied the literature, and soon had a sizable library of books and articles on psychosomatic medicine and related subjects. It became his chief interest.

The shock of the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese on December 7, 1941, was matched only by the suddenness with which we found ourselves engaged in World War II. On December 11, 1941, Germany and Italy declared war on the United States. The doctors were among the first to be drafted. Called up were the doctors under forty-five years of age. Harry missed the draft by a few days, but almost all of our friends were drafted.

The tumult of the war years demanded unexpected and often difficult adjustments. Of particular hardship to the doctors were the dislocations in the hospitals. The shortage of nurses, as well as doctors, following the great numbers taken for the military, resulted in a scarcity of beds to accommodate patients who required hospitalization. There were also the patients who "had nothing wrong with them," nothing, that is, except the worry and heartache and concern for their loved ones in uniform. Harry believed it was the province of the doctor to find ways to treat these patients. He gave more time to anxious mothers; he knew the *art* of medicine. His experience with these patients reinforced his interest in psychosomatic medicine.

The proliferation of "miracle drugs" in the 1940s was a new development. Most of these were new discoveries; some, however, were new uses for drugs known earlier. The value of penicillin, discovered in 1928, was not fully recognized until the 1940s. Antibiotics, especially, were known as "miracle drugs." The general public accepted the idea of "miracle drugs" to the point where some patients came in asking the doctor for a shot of this or that to prevent or cure an ailment for which the drug was not intended. Many of the "miracle drugs" had side effects which were not discovered until some time later.

The Second World War finally came to an end, but the years of overwork took their toll of Harry. We talked of moving to a milder climate and of a less demanding medical practice. We visited El Paso, Texas, and were pleased with the city, but there was neither suitable office space nor available residences at the time. Sadly, Harry did not live to realize his plans. He passed away May 5, 1953 of a coronary thrombosis.<sup>8</sup> In memoriam, *The*

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\*A society of Jewish physicians.

<sup>8</sup>Dr. Stocker was laid to rest in Clover Hill Park Cemetery in Birmingham, Michigan.

*Detroit Medical News* gave expression to the following, in an article by our friend, the late Dr. Louis Barnett:

Dr. Stocker was not only an excellent, kindhearted, sympathetic physician, but he also achieved that extremely rare quality, known as empathy, the ability to place oneself in the other person's psychological frame of mind and thereby understand that person's problem. A large part of Dr. Stocker's practice consisted of psychosomatic medicine which he did, not for the financial gain, but because he loved human beings. He would remark that he did not care to limit his work to any one field of medicine because he liked general practice and the people among whom he practiced. The type of physician he represented is rapidly disappearing and the effort of the medical profession to integrate the new with the old order appears to be an extremely difficult matter to accomplish.<sup>9</sup>

By the end of Harry's life, medical practice had almost completed the transition from the country doctor to the city specialist. Favored was more specialization, less personal relationship, less time with the patient and more dependence on laboratory tests. The new technology had arrived and the interim period had come to an end. Dr. Harry Stocker was an outstanding representative of the family doctor of that interim period in American medical history.

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<sup>9</sup>*Detroit Medical News*, June 15, 1953, Vol. XLIV, No. 44, p. 21.

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The author is indebted to Ben Stocker for the background information on the Stocker Family; to Dr. Arthur Feuer for the information on the proliferation of "miracle drugs" in the 1940s; to Sara Bell, librarian at the Midrasha College of Jewish Studies, for the information on Yehoash and for the location and spelling of the villages mentioned.

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

By Ira G. Kaufman

Judges of the Michigan Supreme Court

### CHARLES L. LEVIN

Charles L. Levin will be remembered in Michigan judicial history for the impact which his scholarly opinions have had on the direction of the Michigan Supreme Court.

He was born on April 28, 1926 in Detroit, the son of Theodore and Rhoda (Katzin) Levin. He was graduated with a B.A. degree from the University of Michigan in 1946 and with its L.L.B. degree in 1947. He married Patricia Joyce Oppenheim in 1956 and together they parented three children, Arthur, Amy and Frederick. He was admitted to the Michigan Bar in June 1949; to the District of Columbia Bar in October 1954; and to the Bar of the Supreme Court of the United States in April 1953

The Justice is and has been active in Jewish and communal affairs. He is a member of the following organizations and commissions,

among other public services: Michigan Law Revision Commission, 1966; American Law Institute; American Bar Association; Detroit Bar Association; Association of the Bar of the City of New York and The American Judicature Society. He is also a member of the visitors' committees of the University of Michigan, Michigan State University and the University of Chicago Law Schools.

Elected to fill a vacancy in the Michigan Court of Appeals for the First District in 1966, Justice Levin continued to serve six years in that capacity.



Charles Levin

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\*See Part Two in *Michigan Jewish History*, January 1983, pp. 15-16, and Part One in *MJH*, January 1981, pp. 10-16.

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IRA G. KAUFMAN is a retired judge of the Wayne County Probate Court. He received a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from the New York University Law School. He is a past presiding judge of the Wayne County Probate and Juvenile Court Judges Association, a past president of the Zionist Organization of Detroit, and Honorary Life President of Adat Shalom Synagogue.

In 1972, the voters of the state of Michigan elected him Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court, the highest post in the judicial system of the state. He remains in this position as Supreme Court Justice to this date.

Prior to his election to the Michigan Court of Appeals, Justice Levin practiced law with the firm of Levin, Levin, Garvett and Dill, founded by his late father, United States District Judge Theodore Levin.

Other members of Justice Levin's illustrious family include his uncle, the late Saul R. Levin, outstanding lawyer and activist in the public and Jewish communities of Michigan and father of United States Senator Carl Levin and United States Congressman Sander Levin. Justice Levin's brother, Joseph Levin, is a practicing lawyer in Detroit, Michigan.

The Justice is an exponent of the principle of gradualism, stating that "sudden abrupt changes from established precedent in common law should be avoided." And at another point in time, Justice Levin has expressed his judicial attitude with the words: "Each case should be taken on its own merits and no case should serve as a vehicle to accomplish some pre-determined result. If legislative law and Constitution are in conflict, a body of judge-made laws must be established gradually and as objectively as possible." That well-reasoned statement reflects Supreme Court Justice Charles Levin — a man who takes his judgeship seriously and who approaches his position with a mature sense of responsibility and dedication.

His opinions are the epitome of scholarship, style and judicial reasoning, such that the citizens, the Bench and the Bar of the state of Michigan and of other states of the nation look with approval and admiration at his judicial output.

### HENRY MAGNUS BUTZEL

The writer retains a vivid picture of a reception held in honor of Justice Henry Butzel on his ninetieth birthday, which happened to be at the same time as the Annual Meeting of the Michigan State Bar Association.

The Justice had come into the great ballroom of the Sheraton Cadillac Hotel, after the official meeting. He was carrying a cane, was seated in an armchair, and as usual, was attended by his respected lawyer son-in-law and former law clerk, Erwin S. Simon. Mr. Simon, who was as a son to the Justice, still practices law in the Michigan State and Federal Courts.

They were an interesting pair: Mr. Justice Butzel, member of a great Michigan family, amiable, cultured, man of the world, mustachioed, learned, possessed of a keenly honed legal mind; yet withal, sociable and warm in fraternity with his fellow members of the bar—and Mr. Simon, his com-



Henry M. Butzel

panion, the youthful generation standing at the threshold of a fine legal career; expressive of a warm and helpful sort of buffer and intermediary between the elderly Justice and practically the entire hall of lawyers as they gathered in line to greet and converse with the esteemed and beloved human being who bore such judicial and personal pre-eminence.

The Justice was born May 24, 1871 in Detroit, Michigan to Henrietta and Mangus Butzel. He graduated from the University of Michigan as a Ph.B. in 1891; L.L.B., 1892; L.L.D., 1942; L.L.D., 1947, Wayne State University; was admitted to the Michigan Bar in 1892, and headed the law firm of Butzel, Levin and Winston, from 1915 to 1920.

Justice Butzel was elected to the Michigan Supreme Court in 1929, and was re-elected for successive six-year terms from 1930 to 1947. His tenure as Justice covered the years from 1929 to 1956. He was Chief Justice of the Michigan Supreme Court in 1931, 1939, 1945, 1954, and participated in at least ten thousand law cases.

He carried on a private law practice from 1957 to 1963. Some of his judicial and community activities included the Michigan Judiciary Council, the Legal Aid Committee, World War member of the American, Michigan and Detroit Bar Associations. He was father of Detroit's Free Legal Aid Bureau.

Justice Butzel was a lifelong Republican and a Mason. He was twice president of the Detroit Bar Association; served as president of Temple Beth El, 1908-09; was a trustee of the Jewish Widows Aid Society; and a Michigan member of the United Jewish Community.

He was considered one of the top legal minds of his generation, and was described as having "a wonderful insight into human nature, a deep sense of justice and a keen appreciation of the duties of the high court." He represented a number of automobile companies and other top corporations as well as the Detroit District Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of the United States. Busied as he was with industrial and capital clients, he yet served impoverished clients at no expense, as did his brother, Fred Butzel, the beloved lawyer-philanthropist.

Justice Butzel's long career exemplified the best traditions of his American-Germanic-Jewish heritage: his judicial position and various activities were all based on a combination of merit and energy of purpose which tied in with his keen mind responding to the judicial needs of a modern capital and industrial economy.

He was one of the new crop of Supreme Court judges who provided the means for a freshened judicial system and outlook in our industrial world which was typified and undergirded by Michigan factory production and world consumption. He was one of those who grappled with the industrial revolution in America, and brought into harmony and law and justice the forces of industry, capital and labor.

Justice Butzel died on June 9, 1963 at ninety-two years of age. He had married Mae Schlesinger of Chicago in 1907, and she had preceded him in death in 1954.

Indicative of his impact upon Detroit, Michigan and the nation is the fact that both the *Detroit News* and *Detroit Free Press* headlined their first-page lead articles of June 9, 1963 with his picture and the complete story of his life and passing.

## FROM OUR HISTORY ALBUM



Isaac Lipsitz with his niece, Lena Libman, in Detroit around 1908. A native of Lithuania, Isaac Lipsitz settled with his family in Detroit in 1868. He was an active member of Congregation Shaarey Zedek. He died in Detroit in 1918. Lena Libman was a newly arrived immigrant from Russia at the time this photograph was taken. A resident of Chicago, she came to Detroit to visit her relatives. Her grandmother, Rachel Lipsitz Oleiski, was Isaac Lipsitz's sister.

See also "The Lipsitz Families: Early Jewish Settlers in Detroit," *Michigan Jewish History*, June 1982, pp. 6-13.

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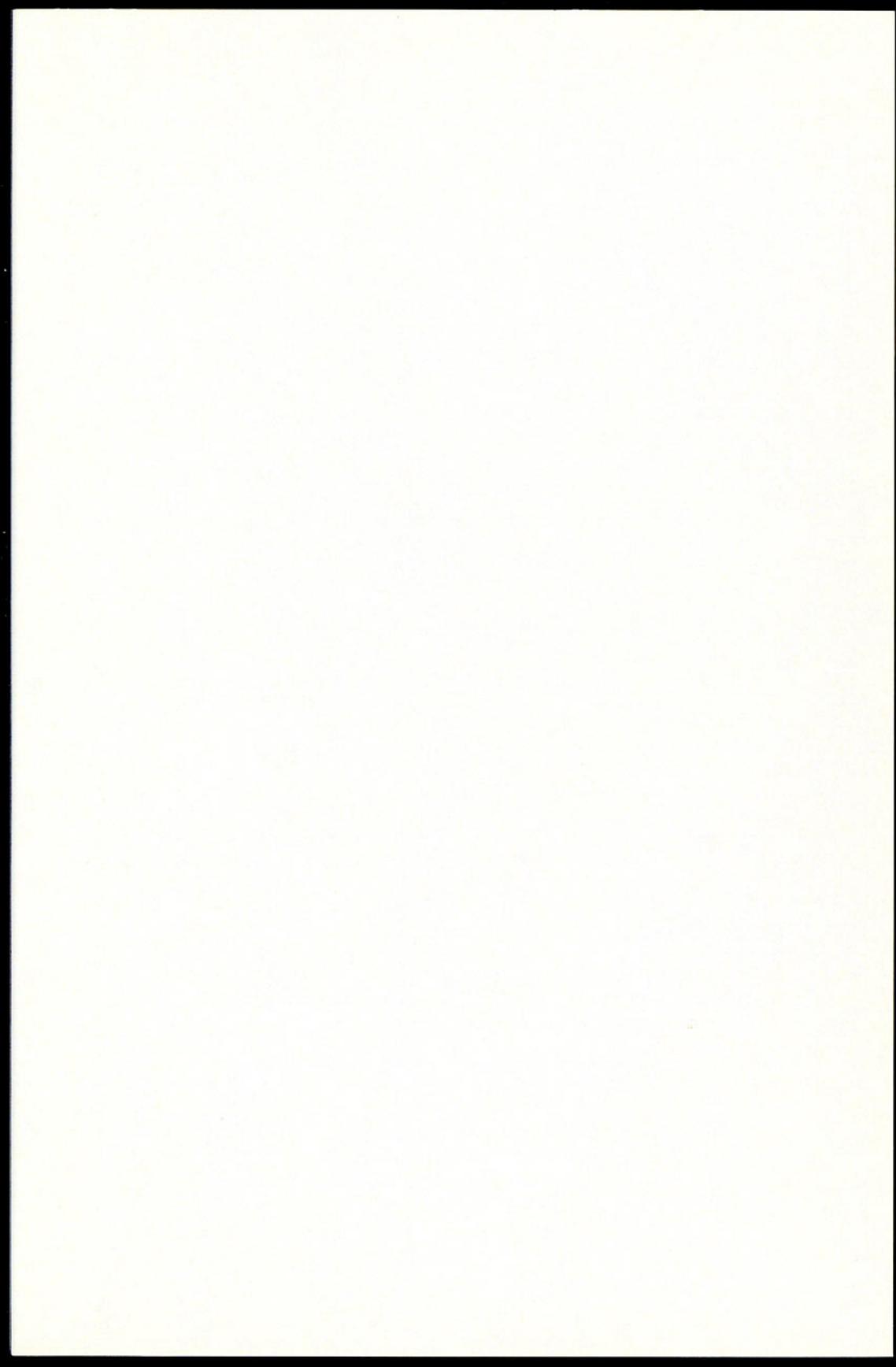
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