

# Australian Jewish Historical Society

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## CONTENTS

	Page
BARNETT LEVEY'S THEATRE ROYAL — A REASSESSMENT .....	185-206
(By Eric Irvin)	
AUSTRALIAN JEWRY IN 1966 .....	206-213
(By Walter M. Lippmann)	
THE KALGOORLIE HEBREW CONGREGATION .....	214-232
(By Harold Boas, O.B.E.)	
SOME GENEALOGICAL NOTES — REBECCA LEVI .....	233
(By Dr. Anthony Joseph)	
JOSEPH AARONS, Sen. ....	234-239
(By Dr. G. Bergman)	
DAVID POOLE .....	239-247
(By Dr. G. Bergman)	
NOTES—PROFESSOR SAMUEL ALEXANDER .....	247-249
ISRAEL AND NOEL CHAPMAN .....	249-255
(By Dr. G. Bergman)	
OBITUARIES—ETTA APPLEBAUM .....	} 256-259
BELLA GREEN .....	
SOL KRUPA .....	
PHILIP MASEL, O.B.E., E.D. ....	

## ILLUSTRATIONS

LOUIS ARTHUR ALMAN .....	216
Mrs. L. A. ALMAN .....	225
THE LATE PHILIP MASEL, O.B.E., E.D. ....	258



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## BARNETT LEVEY'S THEATRE ROYAL — A REASSESSMENT

ERIC IRVIN

It is no news to you, ladies and gentlemen, any more than it is to me, that throughout history the Jewish people have been among the world's leaders in the arts and sciences, in law, and in the humanities generally. It is not my purpose tonight to tell you something you already know, but to deal with something not yet generally known, and, in some quarters, known but not recognised. I shall talk, in other words, of some of the Jewish people associated with the foundation and growth of the theatre in Australia.

I am a man who has a fair to good working knowledge of the history of the theatre generally, and a slowly increasing knowledge of the history of the theatre in Australia. But I am not a walking encyclopaedia or historical compendium. I have the time and ability to do a certain amount of original research, but to fill a great many gaps in my knowledge I must confess that I have occasionally to turn to work done by others before me, and by others contemporary with me. In the last group is your distinguished Vice-President, Dr. G. F. J. Bergman, whose articles on Solomon and Barnett Levey and their family I have read with the deepest gratitude, not simply because they saved me from having to do some of the arduous research they involved, but also because without them I am sure I could not have obtained the information I wanted when I wanted it.

Among the Jewish people who helped to found the Australian theatre there are several major figures and a great many minor figures. While I will deal in this talk with both, even if only briefly, I shall naturally devote more time to the major figures—to Barnett Levey, who is unquestionably the father of Australian theatre; to Joseph Simmons, to John Lazar, to Isaac Nathan, to W. L. Montefiore, to the Josephsons and others. With such a vast

canvas to cover I must remind myself that time and your patience are limited, and so I can deal only with the highlights of my subject.

Barnett Levey established the permanent theatre in Australia. This fact is known to almost everybody who is at all interested in our history; but very, very few of them know any more than this fact. How did he establish the theatre? What kind of theatre was it? What plays did it present? How long did it last? Who and what are its actors? What kind of audiences did it have?

It is a peculiar thing that among those people who tell me with confidence that they know Barnett Levey established the Australian theatre, the majority will go on to say that of course his theatre was of no real importance. Theatre, they say, really started in the 1840's or 1850's. Now, they tell me this with the greatest assurance, verbally, and in writing by way of books and articles on the theatre. Yet it is obvious that they know nothing whatever about Barnett Levey or his theatre, and not much more of the theatres which succeeded it and about which they speak with confidence as the "real" theatre. They don't know, for instance, that during its brief reign Levey's theatre introduced all the 18th century plays which we today regard as classics. Such plays as *The School for Scandal*, *The Rivals*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, as well as plays by German and French playwrights, operas by 18th and early 19th century writers, and, as you will soon see, the plays of Shakespeare. Far from being negligible as a theatre, or a theatrical company, Levey's had a repertoire unequalled by any single Australian theatre company since it was established. In the period late 1832 to early 1838, when it was closed, the Theatre Royal presented the staggering total of 342 first performances of works for the stage—that is, comedies, tragedies, operas, operettas, burlesques and ballets. Nearly all of them, of course, were given many repeat performances. And the influence of Barnett Levey on the Australian theatre—through the men and women who learnt most of what they knew while with his theatre—lasted from 1832 until at least 1880, when the last of the originals began to leave life's stage.

To illustrate one or two of the points I have so far made I should now like to digress a little to discuss one of the most recent of the few books published on the early Australian theatre. This is a book published in 1965 and called, or miscalled, *Coppin the Great. Father of the Australian Theatre*.

Coppin may have been great, though I take leave to doubt it. He was certainly not the father of the Australian theatre, for he did not come to Australia until eleven years after that theatre was established. How does the author of this book get over such an awkward fact? One looks in vain in the index for any mention of Barnett Levey or his Theatre Royal. This is not so surprising, perhaps, for it would be extremely embarrassing to have two fathers for the one child. One then turns to the introduction, where one reads: "It is true enough that it was he—(and by "he" the writer means Coppin)—who really established Shakespeare as an integral part of Australian theatre. Great Scott! I said to myself when I read this, for I was really astounded. True enough for whom?"

Barnett Levey's Theatre Royal was opened in Sydney as the first permanent Australian theatre on 26 December, 1832. It was closed early in 1838, so that it had an active life of five full years. What did Barnett Levey and his theatre do for Shakespeare in that time? First performances of no less than seven of Shakespeare's plays were given in that five-year period, and each one of them had subsequent performances. But that is not all. The Theatre Royal's successor, the Victoria, opened early in 1838. Its company was made up almost exclusively of Barnett Levey's original players, and its owner and manager were both men who had received whatever theatrical experience they had in Barnett Levey's Theatre Royal. Up to 1843, the year in which Coppin arrived in Australia, the Victoria Theatre presented first performances of a further five of Shakespeare's plays. This means that in the eleven years before Coppin arrived in Australia no less than twelve of Shakespeare's plays were in the Australian theatrical repertoire. I ask you, who was it "really established Shakespeare as an integral part of Australian theatre"?

Having got over the shock of that particular piece of nonsense, I persisted a little further with this book, for I knew the writer could not shirk for ever the task of explaining how Coppin was the "father" of the Australian theatre, and yet come to play in a theatre already established. This is how he did it, and I quote: "In 1843 the established theatre in Australia was barely ten years old. Emerging from a disreputable beginning sponsored by soldiers and Her Majesty's servants who had formerly been Her Majesty's prisoners, it had not yet reached the standard of respectability where its activities could command columns of free publicity."

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask for your patience for just a few minutes more while we take a closer look at those extraordinary statements. "In 1843 the established theatre in Australia was barely ten years old . . ." If it was an established theatre then somebody must have established it, and surely *he* was the father of the Australian theatre? But not according to the author of the book on Coppin. Now for the next sentence. "Emerging from a disreputable beginning sponsored by soldiers and Her Majesty's servants who had formerly been Her Majesty's prisoners . . ." The theatre in Australia did *not* have a disreputable beginning. If it did, then the theatre of the time in England, France, America and Germany was also disreputable, which we know is nonsense. It was *not* sponsored by soldiers. And as for the phrase "Her Majesty's servants who had formerly been Her Majesty's prisoners," that is equally nonsensical. The convicts were permitted to establish a theatre in Sydney in 1796, which was closed in 1800. Those convicts were not "Her" Majesty's servants, for King George III was on England's throne. The convicts at Emu Plains were also permitted to establish a theatre in 1827, which was closed in 1830. Again, they were not "Her" Majesty's servants, for King George IV was on the throne. If, as I suspect, the phrase is meant to refer to Barnett Levey's theatre, it is still hopelessly wrong, for King William was the reigning monarch in 1832, and the only proviso made to granting Levey a theatre licence in that year was that no convicts were to be employed in his theatre. It was not for nothing that Levey's successor in 1838 called his theatre the Victoria, for "Her" Majesty had ascended the throne only the year before.

Finally we come to the last phrase in the passage quoted, the one in which it is said that in 1843 the theatre "had not reached the standard of respectability where its activities could command columns of free publicity," by which the writer means that the theatre in 1843 or earlier was not respectable enough to deserve notice by Sydney's newspapers. In 1832 there were seven different newspapers being published each week in Sydney; in 1833 there were five; in 1834, six; in 1835, seven; and in both 1836 and 1837 there were eight. With perhaps only one exception, every one of those newspapers, every week in which Barnett Levey's theatre was operating, devoted generous space to a coverage of the plays he presented. Every one of those newspapers is on file in the Mitchell Library in Sydney, available to all research workers willing to take the trouble to read through them. From them I have learned almost everything I know about Barnett Levey's theatre.

I would not have wearied you with these details were it not for the fact that the book I mention was published by a reputable university press, and is going to be taken for some years as *the* most authoritative book on the early Australian theatre. But please do not misunderstand me. I do not believe, I can see no reason for believing, there was any malice in this writer's non-recognition of Levey and his theatre. George Coppin was his subject, and he made the fatal mistake of thinking that George Coppin lived in a vacuum, or in a world of Coppin's own creating. And so this writer did not do his homework; he did not do the research necessary to reveal the already established world into which Coppin entered when he first came to Australia.

The writer has also done his subject, and history, a disservice by whitewashing Coppin. If a man's life story is to be properly written it must show him true to life—warts and all. This is how I am going to present to you tonight some aspects not only of Barnett Levey's life, but also of the lives of many of the people associated with him. But do not be alarmed. They were neither criminals nor scoundrels—they were merely human beings.

Throughout his life Levey never lacked supporters. He had them in their hundreds. But he soon learnt, as most of us do when we walk out into the public arena, that the support of thousands is of very little use if the real power is in the hands of half a dozen men. He was a man literally obsessed with the desire or need to establish a theatre, and he did not much care what he did so long as he got it. But at the same time he was also an intensely humane man; a man who not only supported every appeal made to him on behalf of charity, but a man who was also at various stages during his life the victim of a great army of hangers-on and sycophants who wanted him only for what they could get out of him. And most of them got a lot more out of him than they either earned or deserved.

There were two attempts made to establish a theatre in Sydney before Barnett Levey actually made a start on his. The first was started in George Street, alongside the offices of the *Gazette* newspaper. Unfortunately, in digging the foundations for the theatre part of the foundations of the *Gazette* building were endangered, and the newspaper sued the builder, who lost the case and later sold the shell of what was to have been a theatre for use as a factory. In the second instance, a group of men toyed with the idea of raising money in shares to build a theatre. Somehow they either got wind of the Governor's displeasure at the idea, or were otherwise satisfied a theatre would be frowned

on, and so dropped the scheme. Barnett was the third to try, and the only one to succeed, but only after a hard and bitter fight against the opposition of the established church and Governor Darling.

I must now telescope a great deal of interesting history so as finally to arrive at the opening of the theatre, and to deal with its subsequent history. The first mention of the fact that Barnett Levey was building a theatre was made in the *Monitor* of 7 July, 1826. This theatre was first used publicly in 1829.

Levey apparently had a great contempt for, or indifference to, officialdom. He first got into trouble when he decided to install a huge windmill on top of his building in George Street. When the Acting Attorney General remonstrated with him about this, Levey got his lawyer, William Charles Wentworth, to draft a most impolitic letter which concluded to the effect that if the Government made him, Levey, take down his windmill he would insist that all Government windmills should be similarly dismantled. Governor Darling, an autocrat who had never, before he came to Australia, been thwarted by the "lowest class"—as he referred to convicts and free men alike who did not agree with his policies—was naturally infuriated with this reply. But he bided his time. Just the same, he sent the whole correspondence, with his comments, back home to England. It can be seen to this day in the Mitchell Library, along with Levey's letters of all kinds.

Barnett also tried to interest shareholders in his theatre. As first he got good support, by way of promises, but drought and an economic depression deprived him of all the promised money, and he finally decided to go it alone. For Barnett Levey believed, despite everything everybody told him, that the people wanted a theatre and that there was money to be made in it.

The *Gazette* warned Levey indirectly in 1828 that it was very likely he would not be permitted to use his theatre when he had completed it. Levey's reply to this was a statement that he had no intention of applying for a licence, as his theatre was to be a private one. Again the *Gazette* warned him. It felt sure, it said, that a private theatre would not be allowed; and again Levey ignored the warning. Then the newly-appointed Colonial Secretary, Alexander Macleay, stepped in to make these warnings official. "I am directed distinctly to apprise you, that the Governor will not license a theatre," Macleay wrote to Levey in a letter dated 4 July, 1828, "and further that his Excellency is fully determined to resort to every means in his power, to

put a stop to your unauthorised proceedings in this and other respects."

Levey's reply to this was to mortgage his uncompleted Waverley Cottage on the South Head Road, so as to get the money he needed to complete his theatre; then to rehearse his assembled company for three days a week during August, and to announce in an advertisement in the *Gazette* of 3 September, 1828, that those who did not pay by 12 September for the theatre boxes they had reserved would lose them. By one of those ironies of fate which occasionally dogged Levey, in the same issue of this newspaper appeared another advertisement, a notice that the Government had hurried through the Legislative Council an Act for regulating places of public exhibition and entertainment. This Act made illegal any kind of public performance given without a licence. It was an Act designed to make a clean sweep of everyone connected with such a performance. Not only the producer or manager and his company, but also the owner of the premises in which the performance was given and the audience which watched it would be held culpable. All would be deemed "rogues and vagabonds", and subjected to the drastic penalties laid down for such at that time.

Levey thus learnt that if he had never done anything else, he had become the first man in Australia to have a special Council Act promulgated to put a stop to his activities.

It was now the turn of the moralists to move in. They knew Levey did not lack support, but now they also knew *their* views carried more weight with the Governor than those of Levey's supporters. So it was that clergymen were seen hawking a petition against the theatre, and all kinds of other people were seen hawking a petition *for* the theatre about the town. Not even Thomas Livingstone Mitchell, famous soldier, surveyor and explorer, escaped. He wrote to his brother in Scotland on 3 October, 1828: "I have just been called on by the two clergymen to sign a petition *against a theatre* which has been erected, on the plea that the people are too bad, and that the theatre will make them worse!! Who would live in such a country! Yet *I* must, for I can't afford to come back . . ." From the fact that Mitchell heavily underlined the words "against a theatre," and used double and single exclamation marks at the end of his sentences, it is easy to deduce that he found it incredible there should be any movement against the establishment of a theatre. But he signed the petition, because he, too, had to live.

The newspapers also took sides in the dispute, with almost all of them for Barnett Levey and his theatre. But here we must recognise a further fact. In this instance Levey was to some extent the meat in the sandwich. It was not so much that the majority were for Barnett Levey—though they undoubtedly supported and admired this little David in his fight against Goliath—as that they were all anti-Darling. Governor Darling's restrictive measures of all kinds annoyed and infuriated the "lowest class", and they welcomed any opportunity, by word of mouth or in print, to let him know what they thought of him.

Needless to say, the clergy's petition signed by the few prevailed against Levey's signed by the many, and when Levey—as he had to—applied for a licence to open his theatre it was refused. But he would not admit defeat, for he was now fighting an enemy more insidious even than Darling—approaching bankruptcy. Levey began to bargain, without the other side realising for a while what he was up to. He offered to dismantle the contentious mill and re-erect it outside the town environs on a site to be chosen by the government. At the same time he was thinking back to a series of highly successful concerts given in Sydney in 1826, at which he first sang some of his comic songs. He decided to apply for a licence to hold concerts in his theatre. Meantime, he kept the ball rolling with correspondence on the removal of his mill. For at least the first four months of 1829 letters on its removal circulated between Levey, the Colonial Secretary, and the Surveyor General. From the beginning of these negotiations the circle seems to have been: Levey suggests site to Colonial Secretary; Colonial Secretary refers to Surveyor General; Surveyor General refers back to Colonial Secretary objecting to site, and suggesting another; Colonial Secretary suggests new site to Levey; Levey rejects new site and suggests yet another to Colonial Secretary, Colonial Secretary refers back to Surveyor General—and so the wheel kept on revolving. The upshot was that Levey, as a seemingly "reformed" character, got his licence to hold concerts, and the windmill stayed where it was.

The concerts were attended by all the "best" people in Sydney, audiences which were in themselves testimony against Darling's restrictive Act. Levey gave a second and a third concert, all of them packed to the doors, and in between the musical items he regaled the audience with some of his comical songs. The newspapers were enthusiastic about the success of these concerts, and said quite boldly it was a pity Levey was not allowed to "act" rather

than have what should have been a stage performance spoiled by musical items. This was enough for the ambitious, effervescent little Barnett Levey. He announced that for his fourth concert he would be "at Home" a la Charles Mathews. Now, Charles Mathews was a famous early nineteenth century actor, singer and ventriloquist who gave highly successful one-man performances to packed audiences in London. What Levey was proposing to do, in effect, was defy the law by giving a theatrical performance without a licence. But he announced his plan quite openly in the Press, as though to show the contempt he felt for the Governor and his laws in the face of such widespread public support for his concerts.

The people of Sydney proved no different from the people of London when faced with the prospect of seeing a one-man performance. Levey had a full house, and also an unwelcome but surely not unexpected visitor. The "laird" himself, the angry Colonial Secretary, Alexander Macleay appeared backstage in person and attempted to stop the performance. But once again Levey had presented the opposition with a *fait accompli*, a full house, and after a great deal of bitter talk and argument on both sides the Colonial Secretary allowed this one performance to be held, rather than send seven or eight hundred people home disappointed.

What followed is fairly well known. Levey tried again and again to get a licence for his theatre, but the Governor was adamant; and then Barnett Levey's peculiar ideas of business conduct caught up with him and he went bankrupt and lost everything, including his theatre.

It is not at all surprising that when, in 1832, it was learned that the hated Governor Darling was to be replaced by Governor Bourke, Levey should be a signatory to an address to His Majesty in England which made three points, the last being "for the benefit conferred upon the colony by the recall of Lieutenant General Darling, and the appointment of a successor in the person of Major General Bourke, and praying that His Majesty will be pleased to adopt such measures as may be calculated to prevent the recurrence of various grievances, which have taken place during the existing administration." It is easy to imagine the bitter thoughts of Governor Darling when he parcelled this address, with his comments scrawled against Levey's name and those of others who had subscribed to it, and sent it home to England.

As is well known by now, Levey finally obtained his theatre licence, and opened a temporary theatre in the

saloon of the Royal Hotel in December, 1832. The next year he and his company were in their theatre proper and the saloon theatre was demolished.

From the opening of his theatre Levey's real troubles started. He had gathered together a group of ambitious amateurs, very few of whom had had any but the slightest previous acting experience. There were fools among them, but there were also a number of talented and devoted players who formed the core of the company for as long as it existed at the Theatre Royal, and for many years afterwards at the Victoria and other theatres.

By today's standards the company was grossly overworked. Very often six different plays were presented each week, and in addition to having to learn these plays, and the lines of the plays which were to succeed them the following week, the actors also had to "double" as singers, dancers, musicians, and even backstage crew and scene-painters. In other words, the more talents a man could summon to his aid the better the place he held in the company. This applied not simply in Australia, but in the theatres of the time all over the world. A man like Knowles, the company's leading male actor, or Simmons, or Lazar, or any of the other leaders of the stage would have to play the leading part in a three to five act melodrama, then sing a song or dance a hornpipe between curtains, then play in a farce or afterpiece which would make still greater demands on his ability and endurance—and this for three nights every week. Inevitably, having to work under such constant pressure, the whole of the company, from Levey down to the humblest candle-snuffer, lived on their nerves and consequently fought and argued among themselves interminably.

To complicate matters ever further, the theatre of the period—that is, the theatre of the eighteenth century and early nineteenth century all over the world—was ruled by its audiences. If an audience did not like what was happening on the stage—if it did not like an actor or singer or dancer, or had a grudge against the manager for some reason or other, it hissed and groaned at the unfortunate actors, or threw things at them. As well, members of the audience took sides in these matters, and fought among themselves. The audience of the time could and did frequently demonstrate and even riot until it had forced an actor or a theatre manager to give way to its demands. Not even the famous Goethe was able to control his audiences at his Weimar theatre, and in the 1820's when some of London's leading actors took a company to Paris their

performance ended with the audience throwing the theatre benches at the actors, and the police being called into clear the theatre. Now this sort of thing was a two-way weapon. An unscrupulous actor could use an audience for *his* ends, by "wording it up" before the performance, and thus inducing a riot or demonstration so as to gain whatever he hoped to achieve. As a result, theatrical performances in theatres all over the world were often quite rowdy affairs until well into the 1850's. It is as well to remember this fact, ladies and gentlemen, when we read one of those articles one still sees occasionally about the uncouth, drunken, villainous audiences of the early Australian theatre. Anyone who visualises the nineteenth century theatre in terms of that of the twentieth is being quite unreal. Those theatres were the theatres of their time and must be judged in their time, not by twentieth century standards. There was nothing done in the early Australian theatre that cannot be matched with similar happenings in the theatres of the time all over the world.

Barnett Levey was a man who, unlike the majority of actors, seems to have known and recognised his limitations on the stage. He was good at comic songs and humorous monologues, and rarely ventured beyond them except in an emergency. But theatrically he had no limitations. He was passionately fond of the theatre, and his knowledge of it was very wide. He had gained that knowledge, I must assume, by visits during his boyhood and youth in London to Covent Garden, Drury Lane, Sadler's Wells, the Lyceum, and Coburg Theatres.

It is necessary to have some knowledge of the history of the English theatre of the early nineteenth century if we are to understand the early Australian theatre. You will remember I said the author of the book on Coppin made a fatal mistake in thinking that Coppin lived in a vacuum—was self-contained. It is equally fatal to believe the Australian theatre of this period also lived or was contained in a vacuum. It was not. It was to all intents and purposes the English Theatre of the time transplanted in Australia. Therefore, anyone with a knowledge of the early nineteenth century English theatre can, in reading the reports on Levey's theatre, read between the lines and match what they say with what is known of the architecture, plays, acting styles, audience and stage of the period, and see how wide his knowledge really was; how he always knew what he wanted, and that what he wanted was invariably right. He can also see that although Levey and his company were more than two thousand miles from its source, they were carrying on a long established tradition.

A little more than a month after the opening of the Theatre Royal its unqualified success so far turned the heads of a few of Levey's actors that they began to assume the airs of prima donnas or stars. They grew self-opinionated and assertive, and began to adopt airs and graces not only with their employer but also, in some instances, with members of the audience. With the obvious financial success of the theatre before them, some of them attempted to gain a bigger share of the profits for themselves. Even though the *Gazette* lost no time in telling these malcontents that but for Levey most of them would be behind a plough, they tried various ways of coercing into giving them more money, finally threatening not to appear on stage unless their demands were met. Levey did the only thing he could—he dismissed two of the ringleaders just a few hours before a performance was due to begin. They were players he could ill afford to be without, but he also could ill afford to give them a victory. At that night's performance Levey and his remaining players had their first taste of "London" manners from a displeased theatre audience. There was, of course, a claque to lead the audience in its demonstration; a claque carefully primed and placed by the disaffected players, who had spread the tale that Levey had grossly mistreated them, and had dismissed them when they remonstrated. There were loud calls from all over the house for the missing players once the curtain went up that night, and every attempt made by Levey or the members of his company to explain matters was howled down by an enraged audience. The demonstration sent Levey, never the most equable of men, into a high-pitched frenzy. The curtain fell on him dancing up and down in impotent fury at the audience's disregard of his willingness and right to give an explanation. But the audience was enjoying itself and, as one newspaper reported, Levey was "permitted to perform a little ballet, but as to speech, not one word could be gathered." Then followed a general fight between some of the audience and some of Levey's players, with Levey's stage manager, John Meredith, delightedly contesting the right of members of the audience to clamber up on to the stage. In the course of the fight grappling antagonists fell and rolled together under the curtain from view of the audience, and then back on to the front of the stage again. Finally, Meredith prevailed, and cleared the stage of intruders. The next day, of course, the disaffected players came to their senses. Audiences might give verbal support to real and imagined grievances, but they wouldn't pay wages. So the actors

apologised to Levey, and for about a fortnight or more there was peace.

The season at the saloon Theatre Royal continued until October, 1833. In this month Levey announced the opening of his real Theatre Royal, which was to be held on October 5. Now fully launched on the treacherous and unpredictable seas of theatrical management, Levey had already experienced some of its squalls, and had not always shown himself to be the wisest of captains. He was to learn as he went. Meantime he had established a new industry in Sydney; one which, with the opening of his new theatre, would provide employment for more than one hundred people. In addition, his activities had helped to swell the annual profit of the various chandlers, haberdashers, hatters, clothiers and other stores from which he and his company bought their theatrical supplies, from canvas to dress lengths, from candles to men's slops. And his theatre was also an unforeseen and unexpected boon to Sydney's infant printing and newspaper industries. From no other source in the town did so many orders emanate for advertisements, posters, and "bills of the day," or programmes.

By yet another of those coincidences which occasionally dogged Levey's activities, on the day in 1833 when his final advertisement for the opening of his renovated Theatre Royal appeared the *Gazette* carried a paragraph announcing the retirement from his fashion and haberdashery store in Pitt Street of Joseph Wyatt. Mr. Wyatt, the newspaper said, had retired from shopkeeping to live on his means, "acquired without a breath of calumny." It was a retirement which was to bring Wyatt much more before the public than his earlier undertakings had done. I suspect that the canny Wyatt, who was quite young at this time, and had made his fortune early, was looking for a way to build on that fortune and had noticed that Levey's theatre was making money, and would no doubt continue to make money.

The years passed with Levey's company presenting an amazing variety of plays, sometimes successfully, sometimes not, but with few periods in which houses were not full and financially satisfactory. The peaks during these years were the occasional visits to the theatre by the Governor and his party, on which occasions the Governor chose the programme for the night, as Royalty did in England. In between were fights and law cases between Levey and his players; disturbances in the audience; too much conviviality backstage (with the proprietor himself some-

times setting the example); criticism of his actors and their methods by Levey, and criticism of *his* methods by his actors; occasional slipshod stage performances, and occasional poor houses. Not only was his company living on its nerves, but so was Levey—and inevitably they all resorted to alcohol in a lesser or greater degree to help keep them going.

The truth is Levey now found that having a theatre was one thing, controlling it another. Whatever his many faults may have been; whatever enemies his bad temper, his lack of assurance, his now fair now foul reactions to his favourites of the moment may have made, he was at heart a man with a wish to do well by his fellow men. He could be cajoled or even importuned, but not held to ransom or tyrannised. Nor, in these early years, did he ask his company to do anything he was not prepared to do himself. In the first year of his theatrical activities his must have been close on a twenty-hour working day. It was all proving too much for him, and towards the end of 1833 he advertised for a partner willing to supply a small capital and to take an active part in the management of the theatre. In February, 1834, it was announced that Mr. Joseph Simmons, lately from London, had taken a share in the Theatre Royal and was to have the entire management of the stage. "He will be a valuable acquisition," one newspaper said, "as Mr. Simmons is perfectly conversant with theatricals." That is a claim which I have yet to establish. That he was an acquisition to Sydney's Theatre Royal there is no doubt whatever. He was a most gifted and versatile player. There seems to have been nothing he could not do—sing, dance, act in a wide variety of parts, manage a theatre with unusual ability, and even write plays—everything, in fact, except get on with Levey. They inevitably fell out, their temporary disagreement being fostered and fanned by the internal jealousies of the rest of the company, particularly that of the theatre's original leading man, Conrad Knowles. They parted company in 1835, by which time Simmons had firmly established himself as a favourite with Sydney audiences. At the same time Levey announced that he had leased his theatre and company to a syndicate of six Sydney business men.

When Levey came on stage at Simmon's farewell performance to make some announcements about the changes which were to take place, the audience showed what it thought of things by ordering him off the stage with loud and repeated cries of "Off! Off!" They would not listen to him, for Simmons was a favourite. They were not to know,

or perhaps they knew and did not care, that Levey was far from well. Worry and an over-indulgence in alcohol were aggravating an inherent sickness. He needed quiet and rest, which he could not get in his theatre.

The combine leased the theatre from Levey for two years at an annual rental of £1,300, a large sum for those days, and sufficient indication that despite its real and alleged irregularities it was certainly not losing money. Among this combine or syndicate were two men who at the time knew nothing whatever of the theatre, but who in a few years learned all they needed to know to establish and run a number of the theatres which succeeded Barnett Levey's. One of these men was Joseph Wyatt, the retired haberdasher, and the other William Knight.

The fickle Press, with an indecent "off with the old love, on with the new" haste, welcomed the new management, and lost no time in telling it how the theatre should be run. They were enthusiastic about the change, for a while, for they were quite sure most of the theatre's faults, or what they said were its faults, were due to Levey's mismanagement. They soon found that no matter who was the management, the old troubles continued—fights among the actors, disturbances in the audience, and the same round of hard, trying work for all connected with the theatre.

The new lessees installed Simmons as manager, and as time progressed they in turn found that running a theatre was no sinecure, so that in November, 1835, they farmed the remainder of their lease to Simmons. Now there ensued what could be called a fight for power between Conrad Knowles, Barnett Levey and Joseph Simmons—who could not get on with each other. Knowles was jealous of Simmons's acting ability and popularity with the audience; Levey was annoyed because control of *his* theatre had fallen to Simmons, and Simmons was doing his best to cope with two men whom he felt he could well do without. Simmons apparently had his lease, or sub-lease until May, 1836. Knowing this, Levey did his best to influence the main lessees to refuse a renewal to Simmons. He was more successful than he had perhaps hoped. The six lessees offered Levey £30 a week to manage the theatre for them, thus sparking off an explosion of domestic politics whose repercussions were to be felt for the next few years.

Simmons was dismissed, and immediately retaliated by inserting an advertisement in the newspapers detailing his wrongs, in the course of which he said that "Mr. Levey had consented to receive £30 per week as manager of the

theatre, and that any dog who breakfasted upon his, Levey's, generosity would not be liable to choke upon it." Levey, not to be outdone in invective, at once wrote an advertisement of his own which he planned to have printed as a handbill and distributed by the town bellman. But it was so strong the printer refused to print it. Instead, he very maliciously passed the copy to Simmons, who handed it to his solicitor and instituted court proceedings. Meantime Knowles took advantage of the general excitability to press his interests. The upshot was that the astute Joseph Wyatt moved in, bought out the five other lessees, and installed Knowles as manager until such time as the lease expired and Levey regained control of his theatre.

Needless to say, when Levey did regain control of his theatre in 1837 Knowles was not among the company. Which meant that without Simmons or Knowles the company was short of a good leading man. This shortage was filled the next month, when John Lazar made his Sydney debut in the part of Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*. Despite a mixed reception from the newspapers, Lazar's performances drew the wildest enthusiasm from the packed audiences which witnessed them.

Levey, in this year of 1837, was at last back at the helm of his beloved theatre with a company purged of nearly all of its trouble-making elements. But he was not to be left long to enjoy it. Sydney's newspaper readers on Monday, October 2, 1837, opening their *Monitor* (the first newspaper to be published that week) were disappointed if they were looking for a report of the previous Saturday's performances at the theatre. There was not the usual page-two article headed "The Theatre". Instead, tucked away among the "Local Intelligence," was a brief paragraph which read: "In consequence of the death of Mr. Barnett Levey, the theatre will be closed for one week . . ."

Everyone, of course, rallied to the aid of Mrs. Barnett Levey, the former Sarah Emma Wilson, who from then on conducted the theatre under the guidance of Joseph Simmons (who had again secured a "part lease"), John Lazar, and her step-father, Jacob Josephson.

But the Theatre Royal's days were numbered, for Wyatt had almost completed his Victoria Theatre on a site near his former haberdashery store in Pitt Street. He and Mrs. Levey came to an arrangement whereby the Theatre Royal was closed, and a few months later Wyatt bought the whole of Levey's former property so as to ensure that the Royal remained closed and could not open in competition with his Victoria Theatre. About twenty years

later Wyatt's lease on the land on which his theatre was built ran out, and theatre and land were bought by a member of the Josephson family. Wyatt then built his first Prince of Wales Theatre on the site in Castlereagh Street occupied by today's Theatre Royal (soon to be demolished).

When the Victoria opened it had a company of twenty players—that is, twenty actors whose names were considered important enough to be listed on the playbill. Sixteen of these were from Barnett Levey's theatre, and as time went on the Victoria company was made up almost exclusively of Barnett Levey's original players.

I think I have now told you enough about Barnett Levey's Theatre Royal and his players, ladies and gentlemen, to give you an inkling of how much I have *not* told you. The history of this theatre, I find, is fascinating, but it is also long and involved and one cannot do justice to it in a talk. But perhaps you can see now that it was far from negligible as a theatre, and is the solid foundation on which our subsequent theatrical history was built. Despite the fights which marred their dealings with each other, Levey and his company presented many great plays, ably and well. And Levey's theatre was the training ground for a long list of people who were to take their experience into theatres in Sydney, Adelaide, Melbourne and Tasmania. They helped to build what we today know as—or perhaps I should say, once knew as—the Australian theatre.

I should also have made it possible for you to see how foolhardy it is for any writer to attempt to judge the merits of a theatre such as Levey's without first finding out everything about it. It could be said with a great deal of truth that we find in history what we bring to it. The more we know about affairs of all kinds in the world outside Australia in a given period in our history, the better we will understand, the more we will learn about Australian history. Only when its performances have been thoroughly analysed can one really see what kind of theatre Levey's was, and what kind of actors it had. One could talk for hours and not exhaust this subject.

One could talk, for instance, of Eliza Winstanley, who came to Australia from England at the age of fifteen when her father was engaged as scenepainter to Levey's Theatre Royal. A year later, at the age of sixteen, she made her stage debut at that theatre, and ultimately became the first Australian-trained actress to achieve success in New York, Philadelphia, Manchester, and then London. In 1851 she joined Charles Kean's company at the Princess's Theatre in London, just at the start of his now historically

famous Shakespeare revivals, and she remained there with him until he gave the theatre up in 1859. During this period she also made at least eight appearances in command performances before Her Majesty Queen Victoria, at Windsor Castle. Even if we allow for the possibility that Eliza Winstanley had a natural talent as an actress, we still must recognise that the only stage training she ever had was received at Barnett Levey's Theatre Royal. In view of her success this could not have been negligible.

Next we could talk of the operas and musical plays presented by Levey's company. But we must remember that "opera" in the early nineteenth century meant something a little different from what it means today. Today when we say "opera" we mean a theatrical performance in which every word is sung instead of spoken. In Levey's day, and before it, an opera was a play with songs interspersed. These songs were sometimes solos, sometimes trios or quartets, sometimes choruses. Today we class these as semi-operas—that is, part sung and part spoken. Levey's company presented an astonishing number of these semi-operas, of both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the year 1833 alone they performed *The Devil To Pay*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Inkle and Yarico*, *The Lord of the Manor*, *The Mountaineers*, *The Miller and His Men*, and *The Children in the Wood*. I might mention in passing that *The Marriage of Figaro* was Mozart's opera "arranged" by Henry Bishop—that is, turned from an opera into a part-spoken, part-sung play. In fact, it was Mozart's music horribly mutilated to suit the English audiences of the day, which had not yet become opera minded, or had not yet come to appreciate what we today call "grand opera".

Then, if we turn to the year 1835 we have our first meeting with Isaac Nathan. Certain aspects of this composer's life are by now familiar enough—how in 1815-1822 he set Byron's *Hebrew Melodies* to music, and how in 1841 he emigrated to Australia, where he taught singing, organised vocal and instrumental concerts, worked for a while in or with the theatre, and continued with his composing, meeting his death by accident in 1864. What is not so well known is that he wrote or was associated with the music for at least three works for the stage in England, of which one was extremely popular in both England and Australia. In England Isaac Nathan had the well-known farce writer James Kenney as his librettist, and in Australia he had Charles Nagel and J. L. Montefiore. It may be assumed from the available evidence that James Kenney was responsible for Nathan turning his attention to the

theatre—or that he gave him the necessary encouragement. On 7 July, 1823, Kenney's comic opera, *Sweethearts and Wives*, was produced at the Haymarket Theatre in London with music by Whitaker, Nathan, Cooke and Perry. The inclusion in this semi-opera of songs by four composers indicates that it was a *pasticcio* opera, and it is possible that Nathan compounded this particular work. In any event, this introduction led to another work by Kenney the following year, for which Nathan wrote all the music. This was an Oriental story called *The Alcaid; or, The Secrets of Office*, first given at the Haymarket on 10 August, 1824. Three years later Nathan wrote the music for another work of Kenney's, *The Illustrious Stranger; or, Married and Buried*, presented at Drury Lane in 1827. This was by far the most popular of the three works with which Kenney and Nathan were associated, and was the first opera by Nathan to be produced in Australia. It provided a perfect vehicle for the versatile Joseph Simmons, who first played and sang in it at Levey's Theatre Royal on 28 May, 1835. In fact, Nathan's *Sweethearts and Wives* and *The Illustrious Stranger* were given many performances in Levey's theatre long before Nathan arrived in Australia. *The Illustrious Stranger* was also presented at a benefit performance for Nathan at the Victoria in 1847, and at a benefit for Joseph Simmons as late as 1879, when, at the age of at least 70 Simmons again played the part he had first played at the Theatre Royal 44 years before.

Inevitably, when Nathan wrote his opera *Don John of Austria*, for which J. L. Montefiore provided the libretto, it was also a semi-opera—with Francis Nesbitt playing the leading speaking part, and the brothers Howson and Mrs. Guerin, later to become the mother of the famous Nellie Stewart, providing the singing leads. This opera was first presented in Sydney in May, 1847. It is still not generally known that while he was in Sydney Nathan wrote the music for three other stage works beside his *Don John of Austria*.

I could next talk about some of the actors themselves—Joseph Simmons, for instance, who in his years at the Theatre Royal played such differing roles as Petrucchio in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Iago in *Othello*, Lorenzo in *The Merchant of Venice*, Horatio in *Hamlet*, Pierre in *Venice Preserved*, Leporello in *Don Giovanni*, Macbeth, Mercurio in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the lead in a host of melodramas of the period, including the first Australian performance of *The Flying Dutchman*, the play which preceded Wagner's opera of that name. And yet this extraordinarily

versatile man specialised in stage Irishmen. He brought down the house night after night in the various comic Irishman parts featured in so many of the plays of this period, and in which he also sang a variety of Irish comic songs and danced a jig or two. When the Victoria Theatre first opened he was, theatrically, unemployed for a few months, but by September, 1838, he was playing Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*, and a month later was made stage manager. The following year he became a publican, but in 1842 he was back at the Victoria again as manager. In 1843 he opened his own theatre in Market Street near George Street, on a site now occupied by Farmers. It was, architecturally, a beautiful little theatre, but it was never a success and by the following year Simmons was back at the Victoria again and playing the lead in a melodrama which he wrote himself, *The Duellist; or, The Minister's Daughter*.

While Simmons was at his Royal City Theatre in Market Street in 1843, John Lazar played a leading role in J. L. Montefiore's play, *La Duchesse de Chevreuse*, which Montefiore had translated from the French and presented to the Victoria Theatre before leaving on one of his trips to Europe. John Lazar was another perfect example of the extraordinary versatility of these gifted men of the early Australian theatre. They were not only versatile on the stage, but also off it. They conducted hotels and stores, they held auctions, they built or opened theatres, they even, as in John Lazar's case, held office in city councils. Another extraordinary thing about them is the way they fought and called each other eternal enemies. But as soon as one of them was in trouble of any kind, the rest rushed to his rescue. When Wyatt was in trouble because a rival theatre opened in Hunter Street, it was Simmons and Lazar who helped him. When, in turn, Wyatt tried unsuccessfully to block Simmons from building his Royal City Theatre, it was all the old original leading players of Levey's company who came to the aid of Simmons, including his so-called mortal enemy—the man whom he said he would never act with again, Conrad Knowles. And when, by their defection, Wyatt was left with only the dregs of the players in Sydney, it was Lazar who came to his assistance and, by working like a madman, knocked a company of sorts into shape. It was in this year, 1843, that John Lazar's son, Samuel, first appeared on the stage, at the age of five, in the part of Tom Thumb in the play of the same name. Thirty-two years later the same Samuel Lazar opened what is, in effect, today's Theatre Royal in Castle-streagh Street.

Of Lazar the elder the *Herald* said when he first appeared at the Theatre Royal in 1837: "We are glad to find that, notwithstanding his partial failure in the important characters he first appeared in, he will be a useful addition to the company—besides which he is said to be a very decent man, having lately arrived in the Colony with his wife and family." And in September, 1843, towards the end of his managerial role at the Victoria, the *Australian* complimented him on the work he had done for that theatre, adding: "Mr. Lazar, in his capacity of impressario, has done much to secure the best wishes of the lovers of the drama—his revivals of some of the finest productions of Shakespeare, Otway, Milman, Sheridan, Colman, and Sheridan Knowles would of themselves obtain for him the warmest thanks of the friends of the stage . . ." This was the year, ladies and gentlemen, in which George Coppin arrived in Sydney—the year in which, according to his biographer, the Sydney theatre was not important enough to merit the notice of the newspapers.

One could, in fact, talk for hours about the variety of plays presented at Levey's theatre and during the first few years at the Victoria—or one could write about them, as I have. I have had an article on his Shakespearian productions accepted for inclusion in a publication of the Cambridge University Press. I have had another on his opera productions accepted by a London musical magazine. I have had an article on the eighteenth century plays presented in the early Sydney theatre accepted by an American university journal. Once again, I could not have done this, I could not have written those articles if Levey's theatre had been as negligible as some would have us believe. Even his theatre tickets are a source of interest in themselves. I have discovered that the Sydney printers, W. C. Penfold and Co. Pty. Ltd. have in their possession one or two of the original engraved plates used for these. I have had a brief article on these tickets accepted by a London theatre research journal.

At this stage you could well be asking yourselves why on earth anyone in England or America should be so interested in the Australian theatre of the 1830's. The truth is that, everywhere but in Australia, there is an enormous, a world-wide interest in theatre research. Universities in England, France, Germany, Italy and America, all with their drama and theatre departments, are studying theatre history in the minutest detail. America, England, and other countries have their Theatre Research Societies, all of which are members of the world

body, the International Federation for Theatre Research. Each society, and the federation, produces its own quarterly journals. Six American universities that I know of publish journals on specialist aspects of theatre history. All these, of course, provide a vast body of interesting and valuable information on theatre history all over the world. A man doing research in England or America—or anywhere else, for that matter—on the kind of stage performances given in London in the 1830's is astonished and delighted to find that much the same programmes were being given at this period in history not only in England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, America, and even India, but also in far away Australia. Even the design of Sydney's Theatre Royal tickets was much the same as those in use in the overseas theatres of the time—a direct carryover of a style established in England in the late eighteenth century.

In conclusion, ladies and gentlemen, I should like to say: Never accept a judgment on our history or on our forbears unless you are certain the one who makes that judgment has established his claims. In the case of Barnett Levey's Theatre Royal, if ever you hear anybody say, in effect: 'Nobody will deny that the first permanent Australian theatre was of little importance,' be like the famous German playwright, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing in a somewhat similar circumstance, and say: 'I am that nobody! I deny it absolutely!' Thank you.

## AUSTRALIAN JEWRY IN 1966

WALTER M. LIPPMANN

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My earlier analysis, "The Demography of Australian Jewry",<sup>1</sup> based upon the 1961 Census, concluded with the observation that

. . . Jewish life in Australia has reached a peak. However, below the surface of the vitality of the committed and involved, the alluring pressures of the free society are causing a steady drift of the uninterested, if not disaffected, away from Jewish communal life. . . .

In the years ahead, numbers, emotional motivation, and intensity of involvement are likely to decline as second and third generation attitudes replace those of the colesly-knit communities deriving their current vitality largely from the impetus of first generation immigrants . . .

The 1966 Commonwealth Census has now offered a welcome opportunity to test these conclusions against the

changes and trends disclosed by the previous quinquennial census. As a result, a series of observations emerges clearly enough to enable us to conclude that:

1. the spectacular growth of Australian Jewry since the Second World War has slowed down and been almost arrested;
2. the birth rate of Australian Jewry is declining and is insufficient to maintain present numbers;
3. Australian Jewry, which I described in my earlier article as a predominantly first-generation immigrant community, is losing its immigrant character and, following the pattern of American Jewry,<sup>2</sup> is rapidly changing into one in which the native-born generation will outnumber its immigrant forbears; and
4. though detailed statistics of the religions of marriage partners are not yet accessible, an analysis of such particulars as are available points to a marked increase in the number of Jews who chose their spouses outside the Jewish community.

These conclusions will undoubtedly be disturbing to those who saw in the great progress made by Australian Jewry during the past two decades the emergence of a new and vital force in Jewish life. This paper is designed to examine in detail the evidence upon which my assessment is based.

The total number of persons declaring their adherence to the Hebrew religion in the 1966 census was 63,271 (59,329 in 1961)—an increase of 6.65 per cent. for the five-year period. This compares with an increase of 51 per cent. in the seven-year period 1947-54 and 18.4 per cent. between 1954 and 1961. However, during the five years under review (1961-66), 3,778 Jews are known to have migrated to Australia. (The nature of records kept in this regard is such that the true number of Jewish immigrants can be assumed to have been greater: the Australian Government does not classify immigrants according to religion; and the figure of 3,778 does not include the Jewish immigrants who came to Australia at their own expense and did not contact a Jewish welfare society for information or assistance). As a result, one is led to the inevitable conclusion that the natural growth (surplus of births over deaths and defections) of Australian Jewry is minimal and that the 1971 census may reveal a decline in the overall number of Jews in Australia.

Table 1 pinpoints the changes recorded in the various States and indicates that, for the first time since 1933, the growth in Victoria, home of the largest number of Jews in Australia, has been proportionately the smallest in all States. Even if the figures were adjusted to allow for the fact that disclosure of religion in the census is voluntary, this conclusion would not materially be affected since the rate of "no reply" has varied only slightly between the various States (from 9 per cent in New South Wales to 10.8 per cent. in Western Australia). Such tests as have been made (for instance, *Sociological Study of the Jewish Community of Melbourne, 1967*)<sup>3</sup> have shown that the Jewish rate of non-disclosure follows closely that of the general population. We can therefore arrive at an adjusted Jewish population figure for the whole of Australia in 1966 of 69,481 (as against the 1961 adjusted total of 65,985).

The increase in the number of Jews in Tasmania is worth noting. Although the overall numbers of Jews in Tasmania is small, and Tasmanian Jewry has been regarded as a "dying" community, this accession of mainly Australian-born Jews (142 in 1966 as against 61 in 1961) appears to have been due to an internal migration from other States of some younger families with children.

An examination of the age distribution of Australian Jewry (Tables 2 and 3) shows that the major growth has not taken place in the age group 0-5 where it would indicate the natural growth factor, but rather in the middle age groups as well as in the age groups 10-19, indicating the continuing influx of migrants with children as the main source of strength. The age groups 55 years and over disclose the expected losses through death. Of overriding importance, however, is the fact that the number of children in the 0-4 age group is significantly smaller in 1966 than it was in 1961 (3,990 in 1961; 3,435 in 1966; a drop of almost 15 per cent.). In 1966 the Jewish fertility ratio (children aged 0-4 as a percentage of females aged 15-44) in Australia dropped to 22.7 (general population 48.3), a rate somewhat half-way between those recorded in 1933 (23.3) and 1921 (35), and significantly lower than that of 1954 (39.4) or 1961 (35.3). The larger number of 15-19-year-olds may hold some promise of increased fecundity in the near future, but the sharp drop in the number of younger children indicates that, even should this materialize, it will be only a very temporary respite from the general low birth-rates.

Finally, the lower birth-rate and possibly also the longer expectation of life are reflected in the fact that 33.6 per cent. of the community is aged 50 and over, compared with 22.6 per cent. of the Australian nation as a whole; while 30.1 per cent. of the Jewish community is under 20 years of age compared with 38.5 per cent. of the Australian general population.

An overall analysis of net changes in the Jewish population by country of birth between 1961 and 1966 shows (see Table 4) that there has been a marked increase in the number of Australian-born persons (2,925). In contrast to the earlier post-war pattern, the United Kingdom is now emerging as the major country from which immigrants join the Australian Jewish community (net increase 561), while Asia (primarily Israel) follows with a net increase of 341.

The 1966 Census has also revealed that, with the exception of Victoria, all the States of the Commonwealth now have a majority of Jews born in Australia and the United Kingdom. Even in Victoria, the Australian-born component has risen from 37.5 per cent. in 1961 to 40.3 per cent. in 1966, while the percentage of those born in the United Kingdom has not diminished: 6.8 in 1961 and 6.9 in 1966.

Table 4 also shows that although there has been an increase in the total number of Jews born in continental Europe, the percentage of that component in the total Jewish population has in fact decreased from 44.4 in 1961 to 41.2 in 1966. (Some States show a net loss in the number of Jews born in continental Europe: Western Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory, and Victoria in particular where the loss amounted to 488. Other States record increases: New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and the Australian Capital Territory).

To sum up. The spectacular post-war growth of the Australian Jewish community has clearly been arrested and, failing further immigration, the future of the community rests precariously upon the generation of young people currently aged 10-20. Only if this relatively small group (5,811 males and 5,483 females) marry Jewish partners will Australian Jewry have a prospect of surviving in some strength. However, assimilatory trends and disaffections from the community of many young people point to only a proportion of them remaining within Jewish society. The pattern of intermarriage previously noted<sup>4</sup> will probably continue to aggravate the imbalance of the sexes, thus causing us to conclude that, unless a

remarkable consolidation and revival of Jewish identification and loyalties occur in the next few years, Australian Jewry will have passed the peak attained during the past two decades.

## NOTES

- 1 W. M. Lippman, *The Jewish Journal of Sociology*, Vol. VIII, No. 2, Dec., 1966, pp. 213-39.
- 2 Jacob Marcus, "Background for the History of American Jewry", in Oscar I. Janowsky, ed., *The American Jew*, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1964, and Community Survey Reports: San Francisco, 1959; Providence, R.I., 1964; Rochester, N.Y., 1961; Greater Washington D.C., 1957; and Los Angeles, 1968.
- 3 Unpublished manuscripts by R. Taft and Walter M. Lippmann. The Jewish Social Service Council of Victoria sponsored this study, which was directed by the authors in 1966-67.
- 4 Lippmann, *op. cit.*

TABLE 1: *Jewish population of Australia*

	1966			Total	1961 Increase 1961-66		General Population Growth 1961-66	1966 Proportion of Population
	Male	Female	Total		Number	Percentage		
Victoria .....	15,456	15,602	31,058	29,932	1,126	3.6	9.88	0.96
N.S.W. ....	12,627	13,286	25,913	24,026	1,887	7.8	8.09	0.61
Western Australia .....	1,510	1,486	2,996	2,782	214	7.7	13.43	0.36
South Australia ....	622	627	1,249	985	264	26.0	12.52	0.11
Queensland .....	839	790	1,629	1,334	295	22.1	9.54	0.10
A.C.T. ....	118	85	203	111	92	82.9	63.21	0.21
Tasmania .....	119	88	207	136	71	34.3	6.02	0.06
N. Territory .....	10	6	16	23	—7	dec.		0.05
Australia .....	31,301	31,970	63,271	59,329	3,942	6.65	9.92	0.55

Australian Jewry in 1966

TABLE 2. Numbers of Persons who stated "Hebrew" in answer to the religious question by age\* (grouped ages): Australia—Census, 30 June, 1966

	Age last birthday (years)																		90 Total and all ages	
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85-89	20	31,301
Males	1,765	2,168	2,689	3,122	1,976	1,268	1,308	1,628	2,373	2,484	2,756	2,810	1,931	1,328	846	508	235	86	20	31,301
Females	1,670	2,172	2,510	2,973	1,885	1,395	1,349	1,964	2,844	2,538	2,640	2,263	1,810	1,571	1,031	723	440	151	41	31,970
Persons	3,435	4,340	5,199	6,095	3,861	2,663	2,657	3,592	5,217	5,022	5,396	5,073	3,741	2,899	1,877	1,231	675	237	61	63,271

\* Recorded ages adjusted by the distribution of ages "not stated".

TABLE 3.  
Variation in age distribution of Australian Jewry

	1961 figures projected by 5 years	Actual 1966	Variation + or —
0-4		3,435	— 555
5-9	3,990	4,340	+ 50
10-14	4,758	5,199	+ 441
15-19	5,699	6,095	+ 396
20-24	3,832	3,861	+ 29
25-29	2,510	2,663	+ 153
30-35	2,504	2,657	+ 153
35-39	3,381	3,592	+ 111
40-44	4,854	5,217	+ 363
45-49	4,780	5,022	+ 242
50-54	5,232	5,396	+ 164
55-59	5,126	5,073	— 53
60-64	3,882	3,741	— 141
65-69	3,220	2,899	— 321
70 and over	5,561	4,101	—1,460

TABLE 4.  
Origin of Australian Jewry

	1966		1961	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Australasia	26,133	41.3	23,208	39.1
United Kingdom	5,754	9.1	5,193	8.8
Western and Central Europe <sup>1</sup>	12,247	19.4	11,588	19.5
Southern Europe <sup>2</sup>	194	0.3	167	0.3
Eastern Europe <sup>3</sup>	13,533	21.4	12,712	21.4
Other Europe	93	0.1	1,908	3.2
Total Europe	26,067	41.2	26,375	44.4
Israel	1,787	2.8		
Other Asian	1,517	2.4		
Total Asian	3,304	5.2	2,963	5.0
Africa	1,555	2.5	1,273	2.2
America	437	0.7	302	0.5
Unspecified	21		15	
Total .....	63,271	100.0	59,329	100.0

1 Western and Central Europe includes : Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland.

2 Southern Europe includes : Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain.

3 Eastern Europe includes : Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania, U.S.S.R., Yugoslavia.

**A SHORT HISTORY  
OF  
THE KALGOORLIE HEBREW  
CONGREGATION  
1901 - 1969**

by

HAROLD BOAS, O.B.E., J.P.

PERTH  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
1970

**CONTENTS**

Preface  
 The Kalgoorlie Hebrew Congregation 1901-1969  
 Board of Management and Executive Officers  
 Land and Buildings  
 National Council of Jewish Women—Kalgoorlie Section  
 Financial Contributions to Jewish Causes  
 Liberal Judaism  
 Services, Festivals and High Holy Days  
 Association with the Perth Hebrew Congregation  
 Visit of the Governor General, Sir Isaac Isaacs and Lady Isaacs  
 in 1931  
 Vital Statistics

**PREFACE**

I have thought it necessary to preface this short history of the Kalgoorlie Congregation by a resume of the history of the Coolgardie Congregation which preceded that of Kalgoorlie by some few years.

This history of the Coolgardie Congregation was recorded by the late Mr. David Benjamin, LL.B., of Sydney, who was a member of the Publications Committee of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, and its assistant honorary secretary. He wrote this history during his stay in Western Australia on war service, and it was published by the Society in its Journal of July, 1947, and is Part III of four sections in the Journal recording his investigations into the establishment of the Jewish communities of Fremantle, Perth, the Goldfields and Northam.

As his records on Kalgoorlie take us only up to 1897, which saw the demise of the Coolgardie Congregation and the rise of Kalgoorlie consequent upon the discovery of the rich gold mines there, and the migration of most Coolgardie citizens to Kalgoorlie, the object of this record

is to continue Kalgoorlie history from that time to its ultimate demise in 1968. Unfortunately, as far as this writer has been able to ascertain, no records of the activities of the Coolgardie Congregation have been preserved, and Mr. Benjamin secured his information mainly from public records, private persons and the Press.

The first Jewish service was held in Coolgardie on the Jewish New Year's Day of 1894, and was held in a tent, with eleven men present. In May, 1895, a meeting decided to apply to the Government for a block of land upon which to erect a Synagogue, and lot 405 was approved and a grant issued on 29th July, 1896.

This lot was on the Northern side of Shaw Street, near the corner of Hunt Street. The Congregation called itself the Goldfields Hebrew Congregation, although by that time the Kalgoorlie Congregation had already begun to function. A wooden building was erected on the site and was ready for the High Holy Days in November, 1896.

By the end of 1899 the Congregation was so small, caused by the growth of Kalgoorlie that ultimately it ceased to exist, and the Synagogue property was sold to the Loyal Orange Institution of W.A. There is no record of what became of the purchase price of this building and land. One significant piece of history omitted by Mr. Benjamin in his record of the Coolgardie Congregation, was the visit of the Rev. A. T. Boas, Minister of the Adelaide Hebrew Congregation, who was on a visit to Western Australia for the purpose of laying the foundation stone of the new Synagogue in Perth in September, 1896.

He was invited to come to Coolgardie to Consecrate the new Synagogue as well as the local Jewish cemetery, in which he conducted the first burial, that of Mr. T. Soller.

Amongst other activities there, he delivered a public lecture on "the Jew in Fiction and Drama", and was entertained at a luncheon by the Mayor and leading citizens at the Grand Hotel. He was also entertained by the local Jewish Community at the Cafe de Paris, presided over by Councillor Levinson. He spent two days in Coolgardie, and returned to Perth on 12th November.

These events are recorded in the *Coolgardie Miner*, together with a photo of the new Synagogue, in its issue of November 21st, 1896.



*LOUIS ARTHUR ALMAN*  
*President 1931-1969*

## THE KALGOORLIE HEBREW CONGREGATION

1901-1969

No history of this Congregation would be adequate without a biographical sketch of the life of *Louis Arthur Abman* who, for nearly forty years, helped to keep the flame of Judaism alive in that far-distant outpost—the last twenty-four years of which, practically single handed.

By his death on April 1st, 1969, that flame was extinguished, and the Congregation as such ceased to exist.

At the age of 82, and as Mayor of Kalgoorlie, the goldfields lost one of its most respected citizens and Western Australian Jewry one of its most stalwart sons. He was Mayor for two years and four months, and a member of the Kalgoorlie Municipal Council for forty-seven years, during twenty of which he was Acting or Deputy Mayor. He was first elected to the Council on 22nd November, 1922, and as Mayor on 5th November, 1966.

In many other ways he served the general community, including 38 years as honorary secretary of the Kalgoorlie Masonic Lodge and as Past Grand President of the Druids.

He was a delegate to the conference of the Goldfields Local Government Bodies, the Country Town Councils Association, the Eastern Goldfields Transport Board, the Eastern Goldfields Repatriation Board, and the Lake Douglas Committee.

He was also a member of the Kalgoorlie Chamber of Commerce, and the Kalgoorlie Rotary Club and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Goldfields Pictures Ltd., and of M. Kelly Ltd.

He was appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1966, and carried on his business as a painter and interior decorator until his retirement in 1965.

In addition to all the above activities, he was the President of the Kalgoorlie Hebrew Congregation since 1931.

A special service was held in the Town Hall prior to his burial in the Jewish section of the Kalgoorlie Cemetery, which was attended by Rabbi Dr. S. Coleman, who officiated, together with members of the Perth Hebrew Congregation, and by all sections of Goldfields citizens and organisations including the Bishop of Kalgoorlie, and striking tributes were paid to his long public service and character.

His death was greatly deplored by a large section of the Goldfields citizens, and business and communal asso-

ciats. Flags were flown at half-mast throughout the city as a mark of this esteem.

Mr. Alman was born in Ballarat, Victoria, on 28th January, 1887, and came to Kalgoorlie at the age of ten on 12th March, 1897. He married Rosetta Katz in September, 1912, Rabbi D. I. Freedman, of Perth, officiating. They had two sons and three daughters, all of whom, including his wife, survive him.

By prefacing this history with this personal reference to its last President, it will in no way diminish the sterling, conscientious and devoted men and women who, also from its inception in 1901, carried on year by year, the difficult job of banding together for their faith the small group of Jewish souls—perhaps never more than 70 to 80, the ever-changing memberships which constituted the Jewish citizens in a relatively unstable goldmining community in its early days.

The basis of this history has been drawn mainly from the few remaining records and documents handed to the Secretary of the Perth Hebrew Congregation, Mr. E. Pachtman, by Mr. Alman's family, who, with Rabbi Dr. S. Coleman, went to Kalgoorlie to carry out the last burial rites.

These documents consist of:

- (1) Two minute books covering the period from 9th October, 1901 to 15th September, 1946.
- (2) One small volume of copies of outward correspondence contained in the old-fashioned wet letterpress book—a great deal of which is illegible owing to faulty copying and old age—covering the period between October, 1901 and September, 1912.
- (3) A Quantity of inward correspondence and various papers.
- (4) Various accounts, bank and receipt books.

All these records are now placed with the office of the Perth Hebrew Congregation, Perth, Western Australia.

In the history of West Australian Jewry 1829-1897 Part III on "The Goldfields", the late Mr. David Benjamin, of Sydney, has written up the history of the Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie Hebrew Congregations up to the year 1897. This was published in the Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, Volume II, Part VII, 1947.

In this account, Mr. Benjamin states, on page 378, that the first glimpse of any attempt at communal organisation in Kalgoorlie was a meeting at the end of August,

1896, when an application was made to the Minister of Lands for a grant of land, and then proceeds to give some detail of the men associated with it. No records exist as far as this writer is aware of, of the further activities of this meeting.

From the records now available there is a hiatus of some four years to October, 1901, when a new endeavour was made to re-establish an organised community.

What happened during this period is not known to the writer who has not the facilities for the research necessary to establish the facts, and there are no living members of the community in Kalgoorlie or Perth who are in a position to know what these conditions were during that period.

According to Mrs. L. A. Alman, who arrived in Kalgoorlie in 1900, there were 70 members of the Congregation at the time the Synagogue was built in 1902.

In 1897 there were 55 Jews in Coolgardie, including 40 males and 15 females. These gradually diminished by migration to Kalgoorlie and thus formed the nucleus of what subsequently became the Kalgoorlie Congregation.

Similarly over the years, the same cause was the ultimate demise of the Kalgoorlie Congregation, whose membership gradually declined by death and moving to Perth and other centres. Curiously, Kalgoorlie has not attracted Jewish migrants to Western Australia prior to and after the World War; most of them settled in Perth.

Of the records available of the Kalgoorlie Congregation, the first meeting of the newly formed Committee is contained in the minute book, and was held on 9th October, 1901, at Mr. Gouldston's establishment opposite the Post Office in Hannan Street. The meeting is referred to as

"The first Committee meeting of the Executive appointed of a permanent character"

and proceeds to record those present as follows: Mr. Morris Cohen, President; Messrs. H. B. Silberberg, A. Flegeltaub, I. Davis, S. Epstein, A. Gouldston, Committee. Mr. M. Rosenberg, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer.

Messrs. F. H. Mendoza and H. M. Levy's names also appear as Committeemen on the printed circular sent to all Jewish residents announcing the formation of the Congregation as resolved by the Committee.

The minutes make reference to the recent services held on New Year's Day and Day of Atonement, but there is no reference to any general meeting having been held, as there must have been to have elected this Committee.

This meeting resolved that the name of the Congregation be *The Kalgoorlie Hebrew Congregation*, and that the membership fee be 10/6 p.a. Also, that an application be made to the Minister of Lands for a block of land upon which to build a Synagogue—an identical request made by the meeting held in 1896, as recorded by Mr. David Benjamin.

It was also resolved that the Committee meet once a month.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the President invited the members to "a mozzling" for the future prosperity of the newly formed congregation.

In accordance with its resolution, monthly meetings were held fairly regularly over the years up to 1911, but seemed to have been considerably reduced or abandoned or not recorded thereafter, but the annual general meetings seemed to have been regularly held up until 1946, as well as some special general meetings on occasions to deal with special matters. In a letter written in 1953 by the President, Mr. Alman, he indicated that no committee had been in existence for over seven years.

From 1946 no further minutes are available, and it is presumed that as from this time, congregational matters were left entirely in the hands of the President, Mr. Alman, a fact emphasized by the outward correspondence available, which is mainly in his name.

It is now intended to indicate in a broad manner, some of the most important activities of the Congregation over its lifetime, as far as the records disclose.

In 1907 there is a minute recording that a history of the Congregation was placed under the foundation stone of the Town Hall then being built, but it does not state who was the author, nor is any copy available. Time alone may ultimately disclose this history.

The Congregation was incorporated in July, 1904. It is recorded that the constitutions of both the Perth and Melbourne Congregations were sought and amended, and adapted by a general meeting of the Congregation.

### **BOARD OF MANAGEMENT EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

The conduct of the Congregation was carried on by what was called in the minutes the "Committee", which would be equivalent to the Board of Management of most congregations.

The Committee was elected at the annual general meetings, and had power to add to its numbers, which it did from time to time.

Mostly these Committee meetings were held once a month, in various places. Usually the attendance did not exceed an average of four or five members. On many occasions, meetings had to be abandoned because of the lack of a quorum.

Annual meetings were usually held, but were poorly attended, frequently by only the members of the Committee, and in many cases the whole of the Executive Officers were re-elected.

It would be safe to say that very few of the congregants took an active interest in the affairs of the Congregation, apart from the office bearers, and most of the finances and even the charitable contributions were supported mainly by these few devoted men, and by the efforts of the women, comprising the local branch of the National Council of Jewish Women.

During the whole period of its existence, financial problems seemed to have been their greatest difficulty.

An analysis of the names recorded in the records available indicates that over the 45 years of its existence, a little over 100 adult males are mentioned.

Circularisation shows that not more than 70 people were contacted, which suggests that the community did not exceed 200 souls during that period, including men, women and children. The largest number of children mentioned as participating in the spasmodic efforts made to create a Hebrew School numbered only 14.

The following is a list of Office Bearers:

	OFFICE BEARERS	
<i>Presidents:</i>	1901	Morris Cohen
	1902-6	S. Epstein
	1907-17	D. J. Steenbohm
	1918-30	B. Abadee
	1931-69	L. A. Alman
<i>Vice Presidents:</i>	1923-30	J. Wolinski
	1931	B. Abadee
	1935	J. Wolinski
<i>Treasurers:</i>	1901-6	M. Rosenberg
	1907-9	S. Herman
	1910-11	M. Samuel
	1912	H. Freidlander
	1915-17	D. J. Steenbohm (acting)
	1918	P. Walters
	1919-36	I. Masel
	1937-44	I. Alman
1945-46	Kinesler	

<i>Hon. Secretaries:</i> 1901-5	M. Rosenberg
1906	D. J. Steenbohm
1907-9	Elias Cohen
1910-11	E. Bromberg (acting)
1912-13	
1914-17	A. Salinger
1918	J. Swartz
1919-20	A. Salinger
1921	L. Zeffert
1922-29	A. Salinger
1930-34	L. Zeffert
1935-38	L. Woodman
1939-46	J. Wolinski Jr.

### LAND AND BUILDINGS

As will be seen by Mr. Benjamin's records, the first act of the original committee formed in 1896 was identical to that of the newly formed body in 1901, in applying to the Minister for Lands for a block of land upon which to build a Synagogue. In both cases this was done before either committee was properly organized or had any funds.

These early acts emphasize the importance that each attributed to the act of worship and the principle that the Synagogue is the pivot around which Jewish congregations revolve.

Two or three applications were made for specific blocks which were not approved by the Government, and eventually Reserve 8213, Lot 465 of 39 perches in Brookman Street was approved and gazetted on 23rd April, 1902. The land was leased on a 999 years lease, and was to be used for religious purposes.

Owing to the difficulty of raising sufficient finance, nothing of a practical nature about building was done until a year later, when it was decided to secure plans which were prepared by Messrs. Draper & Edmonds, Architects, tenders for which varied between \$170.0.0 and £385.0.0. After prolonged negotiations, the tender of Messrs. Ellis and Pitman was accepted at £344.10.0 payable on terms over 12 months. The price and the undertaking to erect the building in five weeks make it obvious that the building must have been small and built of timber. Curiously, the building has been referred to several times throughout the minutes as a "hall", and was used as such many times, when it was let for dancing and other purposes, so as to raise money to liquidate its cost. In the end a bank overdraft had to be arranged to pay the builders, and this financial obligation seems to have

been a source of continuous worry to the small band of committee men over the years.

These difficulties arising out of a congregation of anything between 50 and 70 people seem to indicate that the individuals generally were not in any fairly substantial financial circumstances, although evidence does show that many of them were generous.

Mr. H. Landau, of London—on a visit to Kalgoorlie, apparently in connection with mining interests—promised £100.0.0 to the building fund, and this was subsequently received.

The first annual general meeting held in the Synagogue was held on Sunday, 13th September, 1903. There seems to be no reference to the building being consecrated, maybe on account of the cost of bringing the Rabbi from Perth to perform it. Over the years, considerable expense and inconvenience were caused by necessary repairs and cleaning, and some damage done during use by tenants. Subsequently in 1933, arrangements were made between Mr. Leon Woodman and the Committee for a caretaker's cottage to be built by him, at his own cost, at the rear of the hall for his use, in return for his undertaking to look after the premises.

Mr. Woodman was an optician, and for many years acted as Hon. Secretary of the Congregation.

During 1941 to 1948, the hall was leased to the Girl Guides' Association, and also let to the Goldfields Repertory Club at 10/- per week for a period of 5 years, and subsequently sold, presumably to the club, as it has now been built on in front and a large stage and dressing rooms built inside. In 1940, the Perth Hebrew Congregation wrote to Mr. Alman and asked that the Kalgoorlie Congregation hand over its property to Perth. This request was sharply declined by Mr. Alman.

Again in 1952, the Perth Congregation asked for the transfer of its Scrolls of the Law and Prayer Books, and this request also was refused.

In correspondence between the late Mr. Alman and the solicitors for the Goldfields Repertory Club of 1967, it appears that the crown lease originally granted to the Congregation was surrendered and granted to the Club, which paid Mr. Alman the value of the improvements which the writer presumes was the source of the donation by Mr. Alman, on behalf of the Congregation, of the sum of \$1000.00 to the Maurice Zeffert Jewish Memorial Home in Perth in 1967.

### **NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN KALGOORLIE SECTION**

The only Jewish organisation on the goldfields that compared in any way with the activities of the Congregation was the Kalgoorlie section of the National Council of Jewish Women.

Indeed, in many ways, it was more active—more dedicated to many Jewish causes, and was intellectually, culturally and charitably superior in every way to the committee of men of the Congregation as shown by its work and activities.

It was formed in 1929 during the visit of that grand old lady of the Council in Australia, Dr. Fanny Reading, the founding President of the Australian movement.

The limited records available indicate that its inauguration occurred at the Kalgoorlie Railway Station in 1929, when Dr. Reading passed through Kalgoorlie on her way from Perth, where she had inaugurated the Perth section. She again visited Kalgoorlie in 1939 and stayed for two days.

The records available are contained in the Australian Council Bulletin and indicate the activities each quarter up to the year 1953, when it too, like the Congregation, faded out by loss of membership, by death and the many families leaving the district, mainly for Perth.

Mrs. Leon Zeffert was the first President, and she was followed by Mrs. L. A. Alman, widow of the late Mayor of Kalgoorlie, who held office for practically the whole life of the section, and who still lives in retirement in Kalgoorlie.

There is a limited record available of the names of the members, but in the first year practically every Jewish woman in Kalgoorlie joined up, as well as three junior members. Subsequently a junior branch was formed, but this later merged into the main body.

Meetings were held monthly in the homes of various members, at which they decided on their activities dealing with congregational matters, especially for the Festivals and High Holy Days—rendering financial help on occasions and generally taking part in communal affairs. They were responsible for the introduction into the Synagogue of the regular Friday night services and the custom of having addresses given by officiating men of the community.

Their charitable activities extended widely to Jewish and non-Jewish causes, the sum total of which was many



*Mrs. L. A. ALMAN*  
*President*  
*National Council of Jewish Women*  
*1930-1950*

times that given by the Congregation in support of their own communal affairs.

As evidence of their active support the Congregation permitted all ladies to become subscribing members. They organised a ball, a ladies' cricket match, a bazaar and many other activities to raise money.

One of their outstanding efforts was a forum which was organized to discuss "world affairs". It was held on Sunday, October 8th, 1944, and 50 delegates from 14 women's organizations in Kalgoorlie and Boulder attended. Miss G. Hartstein presided, and the speeches by the various delegates were of the highest order.

Generally the group was a major factor in stimulating the Congregation in its religious and social activities. In August, 1949, the Council contributed £100.0.0 to the United Israel Appeal.

In October, 1950, Rabbi Rubin-Zacks of Perth, visited Kalgoorlie, and was entertained by the ladies. In 1950, the Kalgoorlie members went to Coolgardie to hold their usual meeting with the local Jewish women, but there could have been only a few. Apparently by the nineteen fifties, the local Congregation became so depleted that some of the few remaining members of the Council went to Perth for the High Holy Days.

In all, this stalwart band of women, never more than 30 or 40, over the years, co-operated and kept alive, with the men, the spirit of Judaism in this far outpost of Western Australia.

### **FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO JEWISH CAUSES**

It is remarkable that in spite of the fact that the Congregation was always in a state of impecuniosity, and could hardly sustain itself on the very small annual membership fee of 10/6, it made many and generous gifts to several Jewish causes in other parts of Australia and abroad. Amongst these were the Mogen Dovid Adom in Australia, which was Israel's first aid, blood transfusion and ambulance service, to which over the years from 1956 to 1967, through the late Mr. L. A. Alman, the President of the Congregation, \$1,050.00 was contributed.

The Keren Hayesod-Polish Relief Fund, the Great Orphan Asylum of Jerusalem and the Palestine Restoration Fund were also contributed to, as well as the Appeal for Victims of the Russian Massacres. In 1968, apparently as a result of the sale of the Congregation's property in Kalgoorlie, as already stated, Mr. Alman forwarded to

the Maurice Zeffert Memorial Home for the Jewish aged in Perth, the sum of \$1,000.00.

Action was taken to form local branches of the W.A. Jewish National Fund Committee, the W.A. Zionist Association and the W.A. Jewish Education Association, but little record is available of their activities.

### **LIBERAL JUDAISM**

It is surprising to find that the Kalgoorlie Congregation thought seriously about, and made an application as early as 16th November, 1931, to become affiliated with the Liberal Synagogue Beth Israel in Melbourne, long before any action was taken to create a Liberal Jewish Movement in Perth—in fact 21 years earlier.

On the above date, the Secretary, Mr. Leon Zeffert, as a result of a resolution passed by a general meeting of the Congregation, wrote to the Hon. Sec. of Temple Beth Israel, Miss M. Phillips, asking for information about the movement, to which he received what he describes as a comprehensive and lucid reply from the then Liberal Rabbi, Jerome Mark.

Unfortunately, the Rabbi's letter is not amongst the records of the now defunct Congregation. Correspondence continued between the two bodies up to May, 1932, when affiliation lapsed because of the limited numbers of Jews living in Kalgoorlie—then estimated at about 28, including adults and children, due to deaths and departures from the area.

It is interesting to note that one of the main reasons in influencing its desire for affiliation was to attract the younger members of the community. It had already adopted much English into its services, and also had an organ for choral sections for its Friday evening services, which were held regularly for some considerable period. Miss Phoebe Alman acted as organist.

Subsequently in 1952, when the Perth Liberal Jewish Group (the forerunner of the Temple David Congregation) was formed, it made an application to the Kalgoorlie Congregation for the loan of its two Scrolls of the Law. Only one, however, was made available, but subsequently in 1953, the second one was handed over. Also in this year a Kiddush Cup and a Shofar were received. One of these Scrolls was bought by the Kalgoorlie Congregation from a Mr. A. Mendelawitz for £4.0.0, and was donated to the Congregation by Mr. H. B. Silberberg. The records show that two of its Scrolls came from the Coolgardie Congregation.

Negotiations also took place to purchase its organ, which, after it arrived in Perth, was found to be considerably out of order and was sold by the Group for £10.0.0, which it remitted to Kalgoorlie.

At that time the following members of the Kalgoorlie Congregation were then living in Perth.

S. Hartstein; J. Wolinski; S. F. Feldman; M. Gray; M. Kahner; L. Zeffert; H. Horry; and L. Woodman; indicating the drift away from the goldfields then taking place.

### **SERVICES, FESTIVALS AND HOLY DAYS**

For many years arrangements were made either through the Perth Hebrew Congregation, or direct from the manufacturers, "Sniders" of Melbourne, to supply Matzos for Passover to a conforming few of the Congregation.

As the accounts were comparatively small, it is evident that this passover facility was not availed of to any great extent.

Most of the Festivals and the High Holy Days were celebrated with services, and with the assistance of the ladies of the community catering, and with floral decorations on minor services, fraternal spirit was added to the occasions.

Indeed the Board of Management called upon the ladies on many occasions to co-operate and help them with their communal responsibilities.

Friday evening services for the Sabbath were a feature for a considerable period, and the introduction of an organ and addresses by laymen were much appreciated. These innovations were sponsored to a considerable extent by the ladies.

To the New Year and Day of Atonement Service the difficulty of securing the services of competent officers was an annual problem and expense, and on occasion help was secured from the Perth Hebrew Congregation.

Each year, the whole Jewish community was circularized about these services, and they were advertised in the local press. Anzac Services were held on some occasions.

In 1905, Mr. N. Harris volunteered to start a class for children. A general meeting was held to consider the formation of a Scripture School and donations were offered to meet the cost of teaching. The use of the Synagogue was agreed for this purpose. In 1924 there were fourteen children at school during the year, the teachers being Mr. Leon Zeffert and Miss Green.

Several attempts were made at different periods to secure a supply of kosher meat, but without success.

Two Scrolls of the Law, as well as other accoutrements of services, were secured from the defunct Coolgardie Congregation through Mr. H. M. Levy, trustee of that body.

In 1905, some attempt was made to conduct services at Boulder, but no evidence is available that they were ever held.

Special reference should be made to the late Mr. Leon Zeffert, who acted as Hon. Sec. for fourteen years, during which time he also conducted the Hebrew School, and altogether revitalized the congregational affairs. He left Kalgoorlie in 1934 and came to Perth, where he took an active part in congregational affairs for many years. He was made a Life Member of the Kalgoorlie Congregation for his services.

### **ASSOCIATION WITH THE PERTH HEBREW CONGREGATION**

From the records available, there does not appear to have been a close association between the Perth Congregation and the local one.

A few visits were made to Kalgoorlie by some lay members of the Perth community on the High Holy Days, to undertake divine services on those special occasions, but there does not seem to have been any official policy of the major congregation to assume any responsibility to see that Judaism in the outlying country districts received the necessary co-operation and stimulus to help it carry on.

Indeed there is on record a long Letter from an early secretary of the Perth Congregation, disclaiming any responsibility for assistance, unless the members of the Kalgoorlie Congregation became paying members of the Perth Congregation.

The Rev. D. I. Freedman visited Kalgoorlie in February, 1903, and held services in the Trades Hall. He was met by representatives of Kalgoorlie and stayed at the Palace Hotel. He also visited again in September, 1910, to perform the "bris" on the son of Mr. and Mrs. Rockman. Mr. S. L. Horowitz visited Kalgoorlie on several occasions to conduct services for the High Holy Days. Mr. Horowitz was one of the founding members of the Perth Congregation, and was its president for some years. In the records of the Kalgoorlie Branch of The Australian Council of Jewish Women, it is recorded that Rabbi Rubin-Zacks also visited Kalgoorlie.

In addition there are records of the visits of Mr. E. S. Lazarus, B. Frieze and A. Raphael, members of the Board of Management of the Perth Congregation.

### **VISIT OF THE GOVERNOR, SIR ISAAC ISAACS AND LADY ISAACS IN 1931**

When Sir Isaac Isaacs was appointed Governor General in 1930, the Kalgoorlie Congregation sent Sir Isaac a telegram of congratulations and application was made to the Perth Hebrew Congregation as to what steps were being taken to welcome their Excellencies.

An attempt was made by the Congregation for a deputation to wait upon His Excellency whilst in Kalgoorlie, and although half an hour was set apart for this, later advice indicated that this arrangement had been cancelled, by direction of His Excellency's Military Secretary.

### **VITAL STATISTICS**

Records in regard to births, circumcisions, barmitzvahs, marriages and deaths are rare and incomplete, but presumably details could be secured by application to the local Registrar. Some Congregational records were lost by the hon. secretary reporting on one occasion at a committee meeting that an important file had been inadvertently left in an exposed position, and had been eaten by some goats, which were a generous supplier in those days of family milk supplies.

Considerable negotiations were carried on for a lengthy period over the appointment of a Registrar to perform marriages, and in which the Rev. D. I. Freedman, of Perth, the hon. solicitor, Mr. George Joseph, and Mr. M. L. Moss, a well known solicitor of Perth endeavoured to secure some amendment to the Act to permit the hon. secretary of the Kalgoorlie Congregation to perform same.

Ultimately, on 23rd June, 1905, Mr. M. Rosenberg was gazetted to act, and in 1906 the Act was amended accordingly. Mr. Rosenberg subsequently became Mayor of Kalgoorlie.

Mr. George Joseph subsequently went to Perth to practice with his brother, Horace, who was for some time President of the Perth Congregation, and George acted for one year as Treasurer of this Congregation.

Mr. M. L. Moss was at one time a member of the Legislative Council in Western Australia, and in later years went to London as the Agent General for Western Australia.

In September, 1903, a Levy-Altman wedding was performed, with Mr. Daniel Cohen, of Perth, acting as Officiating Chazan.

The first marriage carried out in the Shule was between Mr. A. E. Abadee and Miss Fisher, who celebrated the occasion by planting trees in front of the building.

### Some Genealogical Notes on the Family of Rebecca, wife of Walter Jacob Levi

Dr. Bergman's article on Walter Jacob Levi in Volume 6, Part 8, includes an extract from Levi's Will which is "interesting from the point of view of certain English Jewish customs, which are now forgotten as the present of a 'mourning ring' to relatives, and also from the point of view of genealogy concerning his own and his wife's family". From the point of view of genealogy it amplifies my article in Volume 6, part 6, on the connections that exist between Australian Jewry and the old Jewish communities of South West England.

Rebecca Levi (1798-1876) was the daughter of Lemon Hart (1768-1845) by his second wife, Mary, daughter of Lazarus Solomon (d.1835). She was born in Penzance and represents the very earliest Cornish Jewish connection with Australia in that she lived in New South Wales from 1827 to 1831. Her father, Lemon Hart, was a distiller and became one of the largest spirits merchants in the country, for many years holding the contract for supplying the British Navy with rum, that all-important accessory of Nelson's victories. Lemon Hart's family had already been established in Penzance for some time, his father, Lazarus Hart (1739-1803), and his grandfather, "Rabbi" Abraham Hart (d.1784) having enjoyed some local reputation as scholars. Lemon Hart himself became the perpetual Warden (Parnass) of the Penzance Synagogue and was the man responsible for engaging the services for his community of Rabbi Barnet Asher Simmons (1784-1860), an ancestor of a number of Australian Jewish families. Simmons served the Penzance community for upward of 40 years. He was married to Flora Jacob (1790-1872) whose sister, Rebecca Jacob (1781-1853) (also an ancestress of many Australian Jews) was married to Lemon Wolf (1783-1848), the nephew, and cousin of Lemon Hart and his business partner in the spirits supplying firm. A niece of Rebecca Wolf and Flora Simmons mar-

ried Rev. Benjamin Aaron Selig (1812-72), at first an assistant to Rabbi Simmons, subsequently Minister to a Melbourne congregation and finally the first Minister to the Canterbury Hebrew Congregation at Christchurch, New Zealand. He was the father of Phineas Selig (1856-1941) who became the first President of the New Zealand Newspapers' Proprietors' Association.

Lemon Hart's spirits supplying business was incorporated within a commercial firm in 1878 and his name is commemorated to this day as a well-known brand name of rum. After the death of his son-in-law in New South Wales in 1828 his daughter returned home where she married her first cousin, Frederick Jacobs, a son of Lemon Hart's sister. By her marriage to Walter J. Levi she had four children but of their issue I have no information.

Dr. A. P. JOSEPH.



## JOSEPH AARONS, Sen. (1777-1865)

The Session's file of the Gaol Delivery, September, 1821, contains the indictment of Joseph Aarons and Rachael Aarons for stealing on 6th September, 1821, eighteen yards of woollen cloth value £15, the goods of James Blakeley and William Lister, in their warehouse.<sup>1</sup>

Joseph pleaded "not guilty", and it seems, indeed, that he was not guilty at all and had to suffer for misdemeanours committed by his wife. The Jury found him guilty of stealing to the value of £14.19.0 and sentenced both Joseph and Rachael to be transported for life. According to the printed proceedings, the couple called at the warehouse in Basinghall Street a few days previously. On their second visit, being left alone, while the clerk went for patterns, the woman left, but was apprehended on her way out and the cloth was found on her. Joseph, in his defence, through an interpreter, because he was a native of Holland, said that he knew nothing of what his wife had done and Rachael too said that what she had done was unknown to her husband. But the Jury did not believe them.

Rachael, who was then aged 30, was subsequently sentenced at the Lancaster Quarter Sessions, held at Manchester on 21st October, 1822, to seven years' transportation, for having stolen at Manchester 5 dresses and other articles, the property of William Joseph Kaye and 60 silk handkerchiefs, the property of Richard Potter, Jun.

Joseph was transported to Australia in *Princess Royal*, which arrived on 11th March, 1823, in Sydney, whilst his wife was transported in *Mary*<sup>2</sup> arriving on 18th October, 1823.

Joseph Aarons is described in the *Princess Royal* indent as a shopkeeper, aged 35, a native of Holland, whilst his wife gave as her native town Hamburg in Germany. She too is described as a shopkeeper. It is interesting to note that the indent mentions only the Lancaster conviction of 7 years' transportation, and it appears that the London conviction of transportation for life had been overlooked. . . . On her arrival she was assigned to Mr. Richard Campbell, but seems soon to have lived with her husband, because the Census 1828 noted a daughter, Sarah, born in 1824 in the Colony. We first hear from him in February, 1827, when he had a shop at 70 George Street, selling mainly piece goods, stockings, etc., as he advertised<sup>3</sup> on 14th February, 1827, that he "requires accounts to be paid", it must be assumed that he had opened the shop in 1826. He extended his business in 1828, becoming agent

for the vessel *Monitor* which was trading between Sydney and Newcastle and advertised "Newcastle pork" for sale.<sup>4</sup> In this year he and his wife received Tickets-of-leave. The *Sydney Gazette* reported in August, 1828, that Aarons was to open a brick built store at Wallis Plains in the Hunter Valley, on 80 rods which he had bought "at the enormous price of £80".<sup>5</sup> Nothing is further heard of this venture.

On 5th November, 1827, Aarons had petitioned Governor Darling for a conditional pardon, and this petition is interesting enough, to record it in full.<sup>6</sup>

He stated that "in consequence of Memorialist having a wife and a young family, his late Excellency, Sir Thomas Brisbane, permitted him to employ himself in the best honest manner he could for their support, since which period to the present, Memorialist has continued in the faithful discharge of honest industry, for the support of his increasing family which now amounts to six children<sup>7</sup> and he respectfully trusts the indulgence he now has arises from his unwearied attention to the strictest propriety of conduct.

That Memorialist has been engaged in many contracts with the Local Government which he submissively hopes have in every case been completed with credit to himself and satisfaction to the Government. That Memorialist has had very large dealings with merchants of the first respectability and for the faithful discharge of his engagements he respectfully refers to the recommendations.

That Memorialist has lately been indulged with a Pass from the Hon. The Secretary for Colonial Affairs to enable him to carry his business to Hunters River for which indulgence Memorialist is most grateful".

He then pointed out that "although he is highly favoured as stated, he still feels the want of freedom and therefore humbly solicits His Excellency's Beneficence and prays your Excellency will take his case into your gracious consideration and grant him a Conditional Pardon".

There were several recommendations attached to the petition. Mr. A. Spark, J.P., wrote that he "had known Aarons for many years, and having had confidence in his integrity, has trusted him frequently to a large amount".

Mr. E. Scott, J.P., "always found him honest and correct in his dealings and he is a sober and industrious character".

Ed. Wolstonecraft, J.P., concurred with Mr. Spark's opinion. Mm. Wemyss, D.C.G., confirmed Aarons' statement regarding his supplies to the Commissariat General "to the fullest extent" and Mr. S. Laidley, also a D.C.G.,

certified that he "has punctually and satisfactorily fulfilled the engagements he entered into to supply the Commissariat with 5000 bushels of Maize." Finally, James Norton, the solicitor, who had probably composed the petition, recommended "the petitioner to the consideration of Your Excellency".

The petition was forwarded to London with others on 29th May, 1828, and was recommended by the Governor as follows: "This petitioner who has reared a large family in a manner which is highly creditable to himself, possesses considerable property and is deserving of the Indulgence he solicits".<sup>8</sup>

The Conditional Pardon for Aarons was approved by the Secretary of State in a despatch, dated 14th January, 1829, "in consequence of his having held a ticket-of-leave for a number of years and being strongly recommended by Magistrates and others".<sup>9</sup>

He had been lucky, because in the same despatch, Sir George Murray had written to Governor Darling that "it appears that the practice of granting pardons to convicts who had been transported for life, and who have been but a few years in the colony, will tend to defeat the ends of Public Justice and to diminish the effects of that example which is the object of all punishments. I have therefore to desire that, in future, you will not grant any pardons to this class of convicts, until a period of 10 years at the least of their sentences shall have elapsed". Sir John pointed, however, out that cases may occur in which the Governor might think it expedient to infringe this rule, but then, before granting a pardon, he should report on the subject to the Colonial Secretary."

Aarons had a large family indeed,<sup>7</sup> two daughters and his son, Joseph, who had come out from England, and two other daughters which had been born in the family and another child was on the way. His Conditional Pardon was made public in the *Australian* on 22nd July, 1829.

Once he had received his Conditional Pardon, he became a little wanton and in September, 1829, he applied for two convict servants, but his application was refused.<sup>11</sup> Yet, when in August, 1831, he applied again, one servant was assigned to him,<sup>11A</sup> and when in 1832 he applied for one servant, Governor Bourke assigned even three to his services.

In 1828, Aarons had decided to try the lucrative profession of a publican and became the owner of the Emu Inn at the corner of George and Bathurst Streets.<sup>12</sup>

He had hardly established himself in the inn, when misfortune overtook him and his family. On 13th January, 1829, the *Sydney Gazette* reported that Aarons's public house had been severely damaged by a hailstorm. The damage to furniture alone amounted to £70.0.0.<sup>13</sup> It was a bitter blow to him, and in April his stock in trade of the Emu Inn was sold by the Sheriff in settlement of action brought against him by one Solomon and others.<sup>14</sup> But he recovered and we find that a licence of the Emu Inn was granted to him in 1830 and 1832.<sup>15</sup> In 1834, he transferred the Emu Inn to Sarah Tye.<sup>16</sup> He seems to have become a shopkeeper again, because in 1838 we find him at 41 Castlereagh Street, selling Yorkshire hams.<sup>17</sup> But in the same year he went with his wife and 2 children to England. This shows that he must have received an absolute pardon. When he returned in January, 1839, to Sydney, he found himself in the midst of a severe depression. On 2nd April, 1842, *The Australian* reported that he had to surrender his estate with a deficit of £3,353. He was not discharged until March, 1844.<sup>18</sup>

In 1840 he had been noted in the Citizen's List, Macquarie Ward<sup>19</sup> and in 1842 he appears among the Jewish voters in Sydney's first municipal election, whilst still living in Castlereagh Street.<sup>20</sup>

His fortunes did not improve and went from bad to worse. On 19.3.1845 *The Morning Chronicle* reported that Rachael Aarons had been sentenced to 2 years in the Female Factory for stealing goods from Isaac Levey and on 3.5.1845 the same paper, in a lengthy article, related that Joseph Aarons had been indicted in Sydney Quarter Sessions for having received property stolen from Isaac Levey, which he subsequently hawked in the Hawkesbury District. He had absconded from bail, but was caught by the police after a long search. The paper mentioned that the affair had created some sensation in town, because Aarons was well known. I was unable to find further reference to his sentence, but it may be assumed he, too, went to gaol for at least 2 years.

We find him mentioned in Sand's Directory until 1865. On 4th December, 1865, he died, aged 88, at his residence at 472 Elizabeth Street. He was buried at the Jewish Burial Ground and the Burial Register of the York Street Synagogue records that he had been married in 1813 to Rachael Schlesinger and that he was survived by three sons and four daughters, whilst 3 sons and 2 daughters had died before him.

Aarons does not seem to have been closely connected with the Jewish community in Sydney.

Although the *Sydney Gazette* recorded in 1826 a quarrel with Joseph Raphael, when Raphael took his adopted son, a (Gentile) orphan, to Mr. D. Thurston's Parramatta Commercial College, and Aarons subsequently took his two children away from the school and obviously persuaded other people to do the same,<sup>21</sup> the 1845 Report of the Committee of the York Street Synagogue does not mention him as a seat-holder, neither did he donate to the building fund, but his wife gave one guinea.<sup>22</sup>

The reason for his estrangement with the Jewish community was probably the fact that his son, Joseph Aarons, jun., (1821-1904) who in 1829 had settled in Bathurst and later in Wellington district, where in 1849 he acquired the valuable Nanima property from J. B. Montefiore, had left the Jewish faith.<sup>23</sup> Two of his daughters had also "married out"; one married Mr. E. J. H. Knapp, another Mr. Saville.<sup>24</sup> His younger sons had received an excellent education. Henry Aarons often won first prizes at the College High School<sup>25</sup> and so did his son, Isaac,<sup>26</sup> who later migrated to New Zealand.<sup>27</sup>

The fate of the Aarons family is typical for the early Jewish emancipist families. The children marry out and are lost to the Jewish community.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the valuable help given me by the Staff of the Mitchell Library, Sydney, and the support I found from the following persons:—

The Deputy Keeper of Records, Corporation of London.

The County Archivist, Lancashire Record Office, Preston (Lanc.)

Mr. D. I. McDonald, Canberra.

F A biography of Joseph Aarons, Jun., was published in Vol. III of the Australian Dictionary of Biography (Melbourne, 1969).

#### NOTES

1. Information from the Corporation of London.
2. Information from the Lancashire Record Office. The 1828 Census recorded wrongly that Joseph Aarons was deported in *Prince Regent*.
3. *Australian*, 14.2.1827.
4. *Sydney Gazette*, 6.6.1828.
5. *Sydney Gazette*, 18.8.1828.
6. Darling Despatches, C 1202, p. 1021/23.
7. The Census 1828 mentions:—  
 Rosanna aged 13, came free.  
 Ann, aged 9, came free.  
 Joseph, aged 7, came free.  
 Sarah, aged 4, born in the colony.  
 Rebecca, age 1, born in the colony.  
*Sydney Gazette* of 13.10.1829 records the birth of a son to Joseph Aarons.

8. Darling Despatches, C 1202, p. 1057.
9. Darling Despatches, C 1209, p. 47.
10. Darling Despatches, C 1206, p. 322.
11. Bourk Despatches, C 1210, p. 174.
- 11A. Bourke Despatches, C 1211, pp. 161, 618.
12. Old Chum (Mr. M. T. Forde) in *Truth*, 11.7.1920.
13. *Sydney Gazette*, 17.1.1829.
14. *Sydney Gazette*, 23.4.1829.
15. *The Australian*, 9.7.1830; 27.7.1832.
16. *The Australian*, 10.1.1834.
17. *The Australian*, 10.4.1838.
18. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6.2.1844, 8.3.1844.
19. *The Australian*, 16.9.1840.
20. *Aust. Jew. Hist. Soc. Journal & Proc.*, Vol. I, Part VIII, 275.
21. *Sydney Gazette*, 23.8. and 2.9.1826.
22. Report of the Committee of the York Street Synagogues, 1845, p. 15.
23. *Wellington Times*, 27.6.1904.
24. Old Chum (Mr. Forde), *Truth*, 25.12.1910.
25. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1.12.1842; 21.12.1843.
26. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19.12.1842.

## DAVID POOLE

### The First Jewish Lawyer in Australia

by

Dr. G. F. J. BERGMAN

On 15th September, 1839, a meeting of local Jews took place at the Synagogue Chambers in Bridge Street, Sydney, for the purpose of electing a Building Committee for the planned erection of a permanent Synagogue in Sydney. At the meeting, Mr. Poole, a Sydney solicitor, was elected solicitor of the Committee and he pledged £50 for the building fund.<sup>1</sup> On 23rd February, 1840, the Bridge Street Synagogue Committee resolved to request Mr. Poole to apply to the Government for a grant of land on which the new Synagogue was to be erected.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Poole duly applied for the grant and on 11th January, 1841, was informed by the Governor that his request on behalf of the Jewish Community had been approved.<sup>2</sup>

On 29th January, 1841, the *Voice of Jacob* reported that "the Committee of the Synagogue felt themselves so much indebted to Mr. D. Poole, solicitor, for his assistance that they forwarded a letter of thanks to the gentleman to which he made a very suitable response. Subscriptions are in progress for a handsome silver salver to be presented to Mr. Poole,<sup>3</sup> in acknowledgement for his services."<sup>4</sup> The subscription was successful and Mr. Poole gratefully accepted the silver salver.

The late David Benjamin, in a note to this report<sup>4</sup> commented that "that Mr. Poole was not Jewish, but

appears to have worked hard in the interests of the congregation”.

But was David Poole indeed “not Jewish”? Research has shown that he was a Jew and consequently the first Jewish lawyer in Australia.

David Poole, of Old Broad Street, London, was in 1795 admitted as attorney and solicitor of H.M.’s Court of King’s Bench at Westminster.<sup>5</sup> In December, 1827, he left London with his wife and three children and arrived in Sydney on 31st July, 1828, by *Sarah*.<sup>6</sup>

According to the Census 1828, he was then already aged 52, his wife, Elizabeth, 15 years younger, and the children David, Sarah and Amelia were 8, 4 and 2 years of age respectively. The religion of the whole family was stated as “Protestant”.<sup>7</sup>

A fortnight after his arrival, on 15th August, 1828, Poole was admitted as a barrister, solicitor, attorney and proctor of the Supreme Court of N.S.W.<sup>8</sup> and for seventeen years practised very efficiently in Sydney.

From the start, he had strong connections with the Jewish community. It appears typical for these connections, that, five days after his admission to the Bar, Mrs. Rebecca Levi, the widow of Mr. Walter Jacob Levi, the rich Jewish planter, who had tried to introduce cotton and sugar planting into Australia and whose untimely death had shocked the Jewish community, chose Poole to be her proctor.<sup>8</sup>

And it was David Poole, who in March, 1829, was representing Esther Johnston, the Jewish widow of Lieutenant-Colonel George Johnston, when she was arraigned in Court by her son, Robert Johnston.<sup>9</sup>

He established his offices in Castlereagh Street and on 11th November, 1829, applied to the Governor for a “town allotment to build a gentleman’s residence”,<sup>10</sup> but had to wait until August, 1834, when he was permitted to buy land at Double Bay which he actually bought a year later.<sup>10</sup>

In 1831 he moved his office to the Morris Building in George Street.<sup>11</sup> Poole was at once admitted into Sydney’s “Society” and became active in civic affairs.

In 1832, he was on the E. S. Hall Committee<sup>12</sup> and signed a request for a meeting of A. E. Hayes’ friends.<sup>12</sup> In January, 1833, he took part in the movement of the colonists to get a Legislative Assembly.<sup>13</sup> He soon occupied important commercial positions. In May, 1833, he became Vice-Chairman of an Australian Steam Conveyance Company<sup>14</sup> (which in the forties became a victim of the Depres-

sion), in March, 1835, Director of the Australian Wheat Company,<sup>15</sup> and in April, 1836, Director of the Sydney Gas Company.<sup>16</sup>

He was an active Freemason,<sup>17</sup> subscribed to the Patriotic Fund<sup>18</sup> and was present at the Mayor's dinners.<sup>19</sup> In January, 1840, he was appointed Agent for the new Colony of Victoria<sup>20</sup> and became solicitor of the Mutual Indemnity Assurance Association.<sup>21</sup>

Obviously he also had landed interests in New Zealand<sup>22</sup> and was a member of the New Zealand Association.<sup>23</sup> In 1839 he had sent his son, David Poole, Jun., to New Zealand,<sup>24</sup> in 1841 to the Whale fisheries,<sup>25</sup> and in 1842, probably on a business mission to Tahiti and Valparaiso.<sup>26</sup>

In 1842, he established a company to employ steamers from Sydney to Kissing Point, a forerunner of the Sydney ferries.<sup>27</sup>

As a prominent lawyer he had been asked to give evidence in 1838 in the debate on the "Insolvent Debtors and Imprisonment for Debt Bill", which was introduced in the depression years to alleviate the debtors' position and although, in 1838, he had been against this Bill, he had in 1841 to concede that the Bill, which was then passed, Bill 5 Victoria 1841, was a "good, sensible and well-arranged Bill". Yet he still had objections. No wonder, for he mostly represented the creditors, although the majority of the merchants regarded the Bill as "much wanted, because it at once afforded relief for the insolvent and protection for the creditors".<sup>28</sup>

As already mentioned, it was during the years 1839-1842 that Poole was most active for the general Jewish community.

In September, 1842, he decided to stand for election as councillor of the Brisbane Ward in the Sydney Municipal Elections.<sup>29</sup> In an advertisement in the *Sydney Gazette* he pointed out to the electors what "he had already accomplished for the City's advancement and prosperity, namely the introduction of steam vessels on our rivers and shores and that useful help to our comfort and security, the Gas light, a Company, which", he said, "was formed greatly with my help and assistance".<sup>30</sup>

Poole failed to be elected.<sup>31</sup> He was, however, honoured by the citizens who placed him in the chair at the Mayor's Dinner on 21st December, 1842.<sup>32</sup> In March, 1843, he was elected Auditor for the Brisbane Ward.<sup>33</sup>

Poole was now aged 66 and it appears that he grew restless. Two years later he made known that he was to leave Sydney, allegedly returning to England.

What were his reasons for deciding to give up a well-established practice? Was it the depression, in which many of his clients became insolvent? He might even have left Sydney to avoid further complications with the Jewish community. Although he was a Jew, he had never become a member of the congregation and he had not even honoured the pledge given in 1839 for the Building Fund of the new Synagogue, which was soon to be inaugurated in York Street. His relations with the Community might have become strained.

In January, 1845, he had his very valuable furniture sold at auction<sup>34</sup> and on 24th February, 1845, he left Sydney with his wife and four daughters, the youngest one born in Sydney.<sup>35</sup>

He went, however, not to England, as indicated in the auctioneer's advertisement,<sup>34</sup> but to Hobart Town, where he arrived by *Louisa* on 5th March, 1845.<sup>36</sup>

He applied at once for admission as barrister, solicitor, attorney and proctor of the Supreme Court of Van Diemen's Land and was sworn in in open Court at Hobart Town on 30th May, 1845.<sup>37</sup>

He established himself in the fashionable district of Davey Street and started to practise again.

And then something curious and unexpected happened.

The Minutes of the Hobart Town Hebrew Congregation record in 1845 that David Poole, solicitor of Hobart Town, enrolled himself and his whole family as members of the Hobart Town Hebrew Congregation. His wife and daughters were allotted seats in the gallery of the Synagogue. He attended services at the High Holidays in 1845, was called up to the Reading of the Law and offered £5.0.0, but at the Simchas Thora Festival refused to act as "Chaten Bereshit", for which he was fined one guinea, but refused to pay.

So, David Poole, was definitely Jewish. And his wife was indeed Jewish, too. She was the daughter of the renowned London Jewish painter, Solomon Polack, the sister of Abraham Polack, the well-known Jewish emancipist, who by 1845, unfortunately had already lost the great fortune he had made as an auctioneer in the City of Sydney.<sup>38</sup> It may well be that Abraham Polack, who in 1828 had been one of the leaders of the budding Jewish congregation in Sydney, had persuaded his brother-in-law

## Notice

It is hereby given that I David Poole formerly of  
 Old Broad Street in the City of London  
 Gentleman. one of the Attorneys of Her  
 Majesty's Court of Queen's Bench at Westminster  
 and a Solicitor of the High Court of  
 Chancery and late of George & Castle Street  
 Street Sydney one of the Attorneys Solicitors  
 and Proctors of Her Majesty's Supreme Court of  
 New South Wales at present of No. 10 Quay Street  
 Hobart Town in Van Diemens Land do intend  
 to apply on the last day of this present  
 Term to be admitted a Barrister Attorney  
 Solicitor and Proctor of the Honourable the  
 Supreme Court of Van Diemens Land and  
 which said Term commences on this present  
 day.

Dated the fifth day of May 1845

David Poole

This is the copy which is referred to  
 in the annexed affidavit of D.  
 Poole sworn before me this 30<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup>  
 day of May 1845. Witness  
 my hand this 30<sup>th</sup> day of May 1845.

to migrate to Sydney, where there was a growing Jewish merchants' community and no Jewish solicitor.

That Poole was Jewish, was suspected in Australia, shortly after his arrival. On 5th March, 1830, the *Tasmanian and Australasiatic Review* of Hobart Town had reported that "Mr. Poole (who, we are informed, is of Israelite persuasion) has been offered the vacant position as Solicitor General in Sydney. Mr. Poole has refused it, considering his Practice as Attorney more profitable". Significantly no Sydney newspaper reported this incident.

There had been Jewish families with the name of Poole in Pool (Dorset) in England. Their name had originally been Abrahams and they had immigrated from Holland. Members of this family were wardens of London's Great Synagogue in the 19th century.<sup>39</sup>

Why had Poole, in the Census 1828, declared himself and his family as Protestants? The only explanation for this denial of his faith I can think of, is that he may have thought it opportune to hide his Jewish origin, with the consent of his brother-in-law, because at the time of his arrival, the Jewish community almost entirely consisted of convicts and emancipists and was anything but respectable, and the then Governor, Sir Ralph Darling, did not favour the Jews. Yet he, at once, became the trusted attorney of the Jews in the Colony, and the Jewish community at this time seems to have closed their eyes to this state of affairs. But in 1845, where there was already a large congregation of Free Jewish settlers in Sydney, the situation had changed and his denial of the faith might have become a real stumbling block for him.

That he was in social terms with the better-class Jews, becomes obvious, when we read on 12th September, 1837, in the *Sydney Gazette* that a serious accident nearly occurred when Mr. S. Levien, the proprietor of the Pulteney Hotel, who was highly regarded in the City, and his wife, nearly fell with Poole into a ditch in Parramatta Road, when riding with Mr. Poole in his carriage.

Why did Poole suddenly change his mind, when he went to Hobart? Poole was now aged 68 and the old man probably felt remorse. He wanted to be a Jew again and was now happy once more to sit in a Synagogue with his Jewish brethren.

Yet it was not to last for very long. At the end of 1845 he decided definitely to return to England with his family. Maybe his new practice was not what he expected from it—after all, the colonies were still in a state of depression—or his wife and his marriageable daughters

did not feel at home in provincial Hobart Town which was then still the capital of a convict settlement, whilst transportation to N.S.W. had ceased five years earlier.

On 31st December, 1845, the *Hobart Town Courier* carried an advertisement, saying that on the 5th January, 1846, Messrs. Lowes and MacMichael, auctioneers, will sell in public auction "on the premises in Davey Street, the whole of the valuable furniture and effects, the property of David Poole, Esq., previous to the gentleman's departure for England". The advertisement shows that Poole quite obviously had the intention to stay in Hobart Town for good, because the house had been lavishly furnished with good taste and among the objects to be sold, were even valuable paintings by famous Dutch painters such as Ostade and Wouwerman, as well as a large library. "The sundries", it was said, "consist of everything required in a large establishment".

Poole must have had serious reasons to leave Hobart Town after such a short sojourn in Van Diemen's Land. Before leaving, he donated £5.0.0 to the Hobart Town Synagogue.<sup>40</sup>

David Poole and his family left Hobart Town on 10th January, 1846, by *Calcutta*<sup>41</sup> and so ended the astonishing, but perhaps somewhere tragic story of David Poole, the first Jewish lawyer in Australia.

It remains to relate what happened to David Poole, Jun., who had not accompanied the family when they left for Hobart and had not returned with them to England.

David Poole, Jun., had been in employment with a Mr. G. Ralston in Bathurst. His dismissal led in 1839 to a law suit between his father and Mr. Ralston and to proceedings in the Police Court, at which Mr. Ralston was fined 5/- for having assaulted Mr. David Poole, Sen., at the Royal Hotel.<sup>42</sup>

He then was, as already related, sent by his father in 1841 and 1842 to the whale fisheries, to South America and to Tahiti.

The Poole family was closely connected with Tahiti, because another daughter of Solomon Polack, Rebecca, Elizabeth Poole's sister, had married the South Sea trader, John Salmon, whose son, Alexander Salmon, married the Tahitian princess, Aritarimari. Their daughter, Marau taaroa, became the wife of King Pomare V., the last King of Tahiti.<sup>43</sup>

This connection, as the *Sydney Gazette* reported on 5th July, 1842, brought honour to David Poole, Sen., because, according to the paper, "Mr. David Poole had been

honoured by the Queen of Tahiti with her public and private seal". The paper commented humorously:—"This favour has conferred on Mr. Poole the offices of Lord Chancellor and Lord Private Seal of her sable Majesty".

When on 19th September, 1842, the British residents at Tahiti sent an address to the French Rear Admiral, Abel du Petit Thouars, who started the French occupation of Tahiti, there were among the signataires of this address David Poole, Jun., and Alexander Salmon.<sup>44</sup>

David Poole, Jun., had therefore gone back to Tahiti and had preferred the lovely South Sea Island and its girls to cold Hobart Town.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the assistance given me by:—

The Staff of the Mitchell Library; the late Professor Cecil Roth, Jerusalem; Mr. M. J. Sealier, Principal Archivist, Archives Office of Tasmania; Rabbi John Levi, B.H.L., M.A., Dip.Ed., Melbourne; and Mr. James L. Sanderson, Sydney.

#### NOTES

1. Australian Jewish Historical Society, Journal & Proceedings, Vol. I, p. 23; Vol. II, p. 63; Vol. VI, p. 39.
2. Ditto.
3. In the Minutes of the Bridge Street Synagogue congregation the name is spelled "Pool".
4. Australian Jewish Historical Society, Journal & Proceedings, Vol. III, pp. 350, 359.
5. *The Australian*, 16.9.1841; Supreme Court papers of Van Diemen's Land, file SC 207/85 in the Archives Office of Tasmania.
6. *Sydney Gazette*, 1.8.1828.
7. Census 1828 (Mitchell Library).
8. G. F. J. Bergman, Walter Jacob Levi and Governor Darling, in Australian Jewish Historical Society, Journal & Proceedings, Vol. VI, p. 461ff.
9. G. F. J. Bergman, Esther Johnston, the Lt-Governor's wife, in Australian Jewish Historical Society, Journal & Proceedings, Vol. VI, p. 109.
10. Col. Secretary's in-letters re land, Vol. 2/7951 (Mitchell Library).
11. *The Australian*, 13.5.1831.
12. *The Australian*, 17.12.1832.
13. *The Australian*, 11.1.1833.
14. *The Australian*, 3.5.1833.
15. *The Australian*, 13.3.1835.
16. *The Australian*, 19.4.1836.
17. *The Australian*, 3.6.1834, *Sydney Gazette*, 5.6.1834.
18. *The Australian*, 12.6.1835.
19. *The Australian*, 8.12.1837, 27.2.1838, 23.12.1842.
20. *Australian Chronicle*, 7.1.1840.
21. *Australian Chronicle*, 24.4.1840.
22. *The Australian*, 24.2.1840.
23. *The Australian*, 4.4.1840.
24. *The Australian*, 12.10.1839.
25. *The Australian*, 25.6.1841.
26. *The Australian*, 5.6.1842.
27. *The Australian*, 23.11.1842.
28. *The Australian*, 16.9.1841.

29. *The Australian*, 19.9.1842.
30. *Sydney Gazette* 22.9.1842.
31. *The Australian*, 4.11.1842.
32. *The Australian*, 31.12.1842.
33. *The Colonial Observer*, 4.3.1843.
34. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2.1.1845.
35. *The Weekly Register*, 1.3.1845.
36. *Hobart Town Courier*, 5.3.1845.
37. Supreme Court Papers of V.D. Land, SC 207/85.
38. Family tree of the Polack family, supplied by Mrs. J. L. Sanderson, née Polack, descendant of Abraham Polack.
39. Information supplied by the late Professor Dr. Cecil Roth.
40. Minutes of the Hobart Town Hebrew Congregation.
41. *Hobart Town Courier*, 10.1.1846.
42. *Sydney Gazette*, 13.2.1839.
43. Eric Ramsden, Alexander Salmon, an English Jew who made history in Tahiti and his family. Australian Jewish Historical Society, Journal & Proceedings, Vol. I, p. 57ff.  
A descendant of Alexander Salmon, Monsieur Ernest Salmon, wrote his biography "Alexandre Salmon (1820-1866) et sa femme Ariitaimari (1821-1897)", published by "Publications de la Société des Océanistes", No. 11, Paris, 1964.  
From this book it becomes clear that certain data given (1) by Mr. Eric Ramsden in AJHS, Vol. I, Part III, and (2) by A. M. Gurau in AJHS, Vol. I, Part VIII, are wrong.  
Alexander Salmon married in 1843 and not in 1833. He was born in 1820 and not in 1802 and arrived in Tahiti in 1841. He died during a dysentery epidemic in August, 1866, aged only 46.  
His grandson, Ernest Salmon, became Presiding Judge of the Court of Appeals in St. Denis in the island of Réunion.
44. South Australian Register, 7.1.1843.

## PROFESSOR SAMUEL ALEXANDER, O.M., F.B.A.

Dr. G. F. J. BERGMAN

When in 1941, Mr. Hirsch Munz published in Vol. I, Part VI, pages 170 ff., a biography of this famous philosopher who was born in Sydney in 1859 and died in Manchester in 1938, a book which had appeared in 1939 had obviously escaped his attention.

It was in this year that Mr. John Laird, a disciple and friend of Alexander, published posthumously a number of his essays under the title "Philosophical and Literary Pieces" by Samuel Alexander. These essays were prefaced by Mr. Laird by a "Memoir" on Alexander of more than 90 pages, giving intimate details of his life and evaluation of his efforts. Any student of the life of Alexander will be obliged to read this "Memoir" which touches aspects of his life not elaborated by Mr. Munz in his biography. This applies especially to the "Jewishness" of Alexander. Apart from the fact, mentioned by Mr. Munz, that his last years

were clouded by the persecution of the Jews in Central Europe which deeply distressed him and that he did all he possibly could to alleviate their fate, little was known about his relationship to the Jews.

We learn from the "Memoir" that he was not only proud to be a Jew, but an early Zionist and an intimate friend of Chaim Weizman, who was professor at the University of Manchester at the same time as himself. He was Vice President of the Friends of the Hebrew University and represented the University on several public occasions, and sent all books he could spare to the Library of the Hebrew University, to which he also left £1,000 in his will.

The most interesting testimonial for Alexander's Jewishness is a letter which Chaim Weizman wrote to Mr. Laird in this connection and which shows that Alexander played an important role, perhaps the most important role in the History of the Jewish State. It was, indeed, Alexander who introduced Weizman to Lord Balfour.

The letter reads:—

"You ask me, what kind of a Jew was this man? He was from his early youth deeply attached to Jewish tradition. The first boiled egg I ate in his house was placed in front of me in a small silver egg-cup. He looked at me for a moment with his usual air of intent innocence and then said: 'I was given this cup, when I was thirteen, at my barmitzvah.' He himself told me, in his youth he had known some famous German Jews, including Steinthal<sup>1</sup> and Lazarus<sup>2</sup> and others. When he became famous, he lost no opportunity of appearing among his co-religionists.<sup>3</sup> To the end of his life he was a member of the Kehillah.

It was he who introduced me to Lord Balfour on one of the latter's visits to Manchester. He said of himself that he was 'a total assimilationist who had ceased to believe in the possibility of assimilation' and he wholeheartedly supported Zionism long before it became fashionable".

After his death, Alexander left his large collection of letters from contemporaries to the Library of Manchester University and there might be many unpublished letters which would shed light not only on himself, but also on early Zionism.

It is a singular fact that this great Jewish son of Australia, who was a Fellow of the British Academy and had been honoured by the Crown with the high distinction of the Order of Merit, who had received honourable degrees from many English universities, has never been honoured in any way in Australia.

## NOTES

1. Heyman Steintal (1823-1899), linguist and Philosopher, Professor of Philosophy at Berlin University and co-ordinator with his brother-in-law, Moritz Lazarus, of the system of the "Psychology of Nations". His studies on the psychological problems of language were of great importance.
2. Moritz Lazarus (1824-1903), philosopher, Professor of Philosophy at Berne and Berlin Universities, German Jewish leader, founder of the "Lehrenstalt für die Wissenschafts des Judentums".
3. Samuel Alexander delivered in May, 1921, the 4th Arthur Davis Lecture before the Jewish Historical Society of England at London University College on "Spinoza and Time" and lectured on Jewish and other subjects to many Jewish bodies in various English cities.

## MORE ABOUT ISRAEL AND NOEL CHAPMAN

from the **SYDNEY GAZETTE** and **OTHER RECORDS**

by Dr. G. F. J. BERGMAN and TERRY NEWMAN

*SYDNEY GAZETTE*—

- 16 March, 1833: Mr. Israel Chapman is about to resume his former situation on the police establishment. (as wardsman).
- 2.4.1833: Police Officer Chapman has actually commenced operations. Mr. Israel Chapman has again received the staff of office. The villains who infest the town had better mind their Ps and Qs. They will not be enabled to elude the vigilance of this very active officer for a long period. They had better take the hint and betake themselves to honest industry.
- 14.11.1833: On 12.11 evening that active police officer, Chapman, after returning to Sydney from a journey of upwards a hundred miles into the interior, apprehended a noted bushranger, named McDonald, in Kent Street. Chapman, having some private information, took him into custody for having a stolen mare in his possession. It turned out that the prisoner was also a runaway from a chain gang. When arrested, he had with him a certificate of freedom under the name of Stewart.
- 10.12.1833: The *Sydney Gazette* wishes that Chapman would pay a visit to Cooks River Road, where robberies are frequent.
- 18.1.1844—ISRAEL CHAPMAN. When so many robberies are continually occurring in the vicinity of Sydney, and when the necessity for vigilant and ex-

perienced officers is so very apparent, we do think that limiting of this person to one division of the town is actually preventing him from being useful to the public. When he acted as police runner, there was no officer of whom the rogues and thieves stood so much in awe. He knew, and still knows his customers and promoting him to the situation of Skinner (who we hear is about to resign) or to some other post in which he might be afforded ample scope, would not only be wise but a necessary act.

4.3.44: Chapman, the Police Officer, was ordered to be fined 10/- on Saturday for non-attendance, to prosecute a charge at Police Office, unless he should adduce satisfactory cause for his absence. It appears that Chapman was actually engaged at the time in tracing the perpetrators of a robbery committed the previous night.

20.3.44: Chapman, the police officer, arrested Jackson, the debtor who had escaped from custody and was just on the point of sailing to the sister colony.

29.3.44: Chapman got £5 reward for capturing the debtor Jackson.

19.4.44: Chapman arrested a man named George Crewe in King Street. His warrant had been altered by a clerk from 12 to 6 months in irons and so he got free after 6 months. The Bench sentenced him to work out the residue of his sentence.

*THE AUSTRALIAN*, 6.5.1834: The immaculate Izzey Chapman was bowled out by the "Colonel" (Mr. Henry C. Wilson) on Thursday night (1.5), having a little too much in his head, and in consequence was consigned to that place where he had so often put others, and was let out the following morning, only on payment of the usual fine of five shillings.

*THE MONITOR*, 7.5.1834: Chapman, the conductor, has been discharged owing to insubordinate behaviour to the Chief Magistrate of Police.

*SYDNEY GAZETTE*, 8.5.1834:—

(ADVERTISEMENT)

TO the Editor of the Sydney Gazette,  
SIR,

The Editors of the "Australian" and "Sydney Monitor" having respectively published of me, the first that I was confined, and fined for drunkenness on Thursday evening last, and the latter, that I have been dismissed from my situation for insubordinate conduct to the Chief

Police Magistrate, I beg leave to request the insertion, in your journal, of the following explanation of those circumstances:—On Thursday evening last, having occasion to present myself before Colonel Wilson, to make a report to him connected with my police duties, he was pleased to order me into confinement, and in the course of the night, the words “drunk and disorderly” were inserted, (I believe by his command) against my name in the watch-house reports.

On the following morning, I yielded to the advice of my friends, and tendered to the Colonel the customary fine for drunkenness, although I could have proved that I was not drunk. This was accepted, and I was ordered to return to my duty, but on the next day, without the assignment of any reason, I was informed I had been superseded, in my situation, and was to consider myself dismissed from the Police Department, where I have been employed for years. I leave it to the public and my superiors to say how efficiently. I have addressed a memorial to His Excellency the Governor, praying my case to be investigated, and if it be granted, I shall be enabled to prove, by unexceptional testimony, that my dismissal has been produced from ill-feeling towards me, and not from any misconduct of my own.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant

ISRAEL CHAPMAN

Kent-street, Sydney  
7th May, 1834.

29.7.1834. Edw. John Keith indicted at Quarter Sessions for assaulting Israel Chapman, late the wardsman in the Sydney Police, on 20.4.1834, when in the execution of his office. The Jury could not agree and “nor was it likely that they should do so and the affair terminated after a whole day’s sitting”.

9.8.1834: We have been informed that Mr. Chapman has again gone with a gang of hands to Newcastle to make an attempt to get the schooner *Ann* off the beach at this place. We hope that he will be successful.

11.9.34: Mrs. Chapman, wife of Israel Chapman, late wardsman of the police, summoned the wife of a neighbour, named Garnett for assaulting her, tearing her clothes, etc. It appears that Mrs. Chapman had allegedly told Mr. Garnett that his wife had false keys. Upon this Mrs. Garnett assaulted Mrs. Chapman in her house and also threw stones on her. The Bench fine Mrs. Garnett 20/- plus costs and ordered her under bonds

to keep the peace for 12 months. The parties left the Court unreconciled.

5.9.1835: J. Coughley, a runaway convict from No. 3 Road Party, was apprehended in George Street, by Israel Chapman, formerly a wardsman in the Sydney Police, on suspicion of being him who had lately committed a robbery at Liverpool Plains.

1.12.1835: Chapman in Police Court, sworn, states that he arrested the prisoner Stapleton who was remanded.

*N.S.W. GOVERNMENT GAZETTE*, 25.11.1835, No. 196, page 837:

Colon. Secretary's Office, Sydney, 24th November, 1835.

*ALTERATIONS TO THE POLICE*, Sydney:—

"To be conductor:—Israel Chapman, from the 16th instant.

*SYDNEY MONITOR*, 28.11.1835:—Amongst the recent appointments to the Police we perceive the well-known Israel Chapman has been made a conductor".

(Chapman was previously a "wardsman" with a salary of £73 per annum, on re-instatement he was demoted to "conductor" with £59.6.3 p.a.).

*SYDNEY GAZETTE*, 30.1.1836: Israel (better known as Izzey) Chapman, ex-conductor (??) of the Sydney Police, apprehended on Thursday afternoon, a notorious runaway prisoner.

24.8.37: *A new instrument*. The far famed Izzey Chapman stated at the Police Office Tuesday that upon being called out of his warm bed in the previous night, he stood shivering and shaking in the open door, with nothing on but his night cap, when he was applied to by some drunken reprobates, to come out and have a mill. "I will, replied Izzey, only wait till I get my perwenter". This repeated several times, caused no little fun in the office, as Izzey declined describing what a "perwenter" was.

7.3.37: Izzey Chapman was charged by his wife, Mary Ann, with having thrashed her most unmercifully. The poor woman, with tears in her eyes, stated that since she had been married to him she had acted not only as his wife but also as a mother to him and he had assaulted her without the slightest grounds. Izzey was consequently ordered to find a security to keep the peace, himself in £20 and two sureties of £10 each.

2.4.1836: A charge was preferred against a female named Chapman, wife of the well-known "Izzey" for wilful and corrupt perjury by her neighbour, Mrs. Anderson,

with whom she had quarreled. The charge was dismissed as not proved.

16.5.1837: At the Police Office, Izzey Chapman, John Leahy, Hugh Donnelly and William Smith, all special constables, appointed to preserve the peace of the Royal Theatre, were charged with an assault on constable Whalan of the Sydney police at the Theatre.

The report of the S.G. is long-winded and Barnett Levey was also alleged to be implicated in the affair. Yet as Levey was not in attendance, the case was adjourned.

20.5.1837: When the case came up again in the Police Court, it was dismissed.

In my Paper on Israel and Noel Chapman in Vol. VI, Part 7, I related that Israel at the beginning of the forties apparently resigned and went to live with his brother, Noel, at Berrima, from where he directed two unsuccessful petitions to the Governor. I also wrote that Noel "may have stayed for many years at Berrima" and that it appears that his two sons had died in childhood.

Further research into the life of the two brothers has, however, shown that these statements were wrong and new facts have also emerged.

From a curious incident, related in the *Sydney Gazette* on 7.2.1839, it emerged that Noel Chapman had already been a constable, when in Windsor. The story reads as follows:—

"Chapman, District Constable at Windsor, was giving evidence at the trial of J. Carroll for horse stealing. He observed that he had apprehended the prisoner on suspicion of being a runaway. In reply to a question from the Chief Justice, Chapman observed that he always apprehended strangers who came into town, if he at first could not ascertain, who they were. 'What', said His Honour, 'Would you also apprehend me?' 'Most certainly, I would', replied Chapman, 'if I suspected you!' The only answer to this by His Honour, was a terrible large pinch of snuff and, 'Mr. Attorney General, you can go on!'"

Noel Chapman was appointed Chief Constable at Berrima on 1st January, 1840<sup>1</sup> and remained there for 9 years, until on 12.3.1849 he was transferred as Chief Constable to Yass.<sup>2</sup> In December, 1849, he became seriously ill and was replaced by Matthew Morrison.<sup>2</sup> He died intestate on 29th December, 1849, "after a painful illness".<sup>3</sup> Administration of his estate—worth £50—was granted to his widow, Rebecca Chapman. Apparently his two sons, Benjamin and Henry Edward, were then still alive, because they are mentioned as next-of-kin. It may be noted that one of the witnesses to Rebecca's testimony was Jacob Meyers, "housekeeper", residing at Yass.<sup>4</sup>

The maiden name of his wife Rebecca was not Arnfield but Armfield and their marriage took place on 14th February, 1831, not 1834 as published. Rebecca was the daughter of Edward Armfield, a policeman, and Elizabeth Wells Ruse, the daughter of James Ruse, a well-known convict of the First Fleet who had been transported in the "Scarborough" and as emancipist became a highly regarded settler pioneer in the Hawkesbury district.

Rebecca's younger sister, Ann, married on 12th February, 1838,<sup>5</sup> John Taylor, Rebecca Chapman and George Armfield being witnesses to this marriage.<sup>6</sup> But after Mr. Taylor's death, Ann married in August, 1840, at Sutton Forest, Mr. Lewis Levy, the great-granduncle of Mr. Terry Newman, member of the Council of our Society.

The death of his brother apparently forced Israel Chapman to return to Sydney, where, as the following report, published in "Bell's Life in Sydney" on 5th June, 1852, shows, he was employed as a bailiff.

"George Phillips, Izzy Chapman and Richard Ensall, as ugly looking rips as ever composed a trio, were ranged, side by side, in the police dock, charged by an aged shoemaker of very sanctimonious appearance named Amen Wilcock, with robbing him of seven one pound notes and some silver, together with 2 pairs of Hessian boots, which Wilcock had just finished half soling for 4/6 per pair. The prisoners had pretended that the venerable old son of St. Crispin was in arrears of rent and that Phillips and Izzy came to distraint, by virtue of their office as bailiffs. Old "death and glory" (Edsall) lived in the same rookery in Kent street with Wilcock. Last Saturday, 3 p.m., the ancient snob was sitting in his room, busily engaged in hammering out a sole and singing "Oh, be joyful", when the ill-omened visage of Phillips met his gaze. Wilcock's garments were thrown across a line in the room, and pitched shirt, trousers and all down to the other two worthies who were on the staircase. In the pocket of one of the pairs were seven one pound notes, and the trousers were flung back into the room, rifled of their contents. Mr. P. Long defended Phillips and Mr. Cory tormented the witnesses on behalf of Izzy Chapman. Urged by the legal lore of the two luminaries, Wilcock admitted that he had fought a round with Edsall and gave him a backhanded spank on the right peeper. He did not know exactly what Phillips and Izzy were, but he imagined they were men, although ill-favoured ones. He had first told his story to "lawyer" Egan, who had referred him to the Police office. The landlord of the house occupied by Amen

and Edsall, Mr. Cooper, negatived the plea that either of the prisoners was authorised to distrain for rent. A female named Mrs. Visay, who apologized to the Mayor for the infrequency of her visits at his court, saw Phillips take two pairs of boots from Amen's domicile. The Mayor said it was a curious case, and he would take until Wednesday to consider decision, but in the meantime he would allow the prisoners bail. On Wednesday, they were all committed for trial at the next Quarter Sessions. Bail was allowed—£80 and two sureties of £40. (Sureties for Chapman were provided by Henry Bennett, publican, York Street, and Joseph Ward, householder, Druitt Street).<sup>7</sup>

On 16th June, 1852, the three prisoners were indicted at Quarter Sessions. Phillips and Edsall were sentenced to hard labour on the roads for three years and Israel Chapman to six months at Darlinghurst gaol, with hard labour.<sup>8</sup>

And so Israel Chapman's career ended in disgrace . . .

#### NOTES

1. Returns of the Colony of N.S.W., 1840.
2. Returns of the Colony of N.S.W., 1850.
3. Bell's Life in Sydney, 6.1.1850.
4. N.S.W. Probate Office Series I, No. 2078.
5. Australian Dictionary of Biography, Vol. I, pp. 404/405.
6. Mutch's marriage registers, Mitchell Library.
7. Sydney Quarter Sessions Book, 1852, No. 62 (Archives of N.S.W., 2928).
8. The Empire, Sydney, 1.6.1852, 2.6.1852, 17.6.1852.

## OBITUARIES

### Etta Applebaum

Etta Applebaum, who died on 15th April last, was the second daughter of Joel and Dinah Goldberg and fourth of their seven children. She was married to Victor Applebaum at the Great Synagogue by Rabbi Francis L. Cohen on 14th September, 1924, and was the mother of Ralph and Neville Applebaum and Valda Cohen, of Perth. She was widowed on 20th November, 1960.

She supported many communal activities, including Trustee of the Help in Need Society, member of the Australian Jewish Historical Society and with her husband was deeply involved in the formation of the North Shore Synagogue.

She was a member of the Great Synagogue all her life and continued to occupy the seat held by her Maternal Great Grandmother since the opening of the Great Synagogue. Her great grandfather, John Isaacs, was Hon. Treasurer of the York St. Synagogue in 1849 and on the completion of the building of the Great Synagogue was elected to its first Board of Management. His eldest daughter, Phoebe, was married by Rev. A. B. Davis in 1869 to Elias Cohen, who also took a great interest in communal affairs, and together with his father-in-law and committee was instrumental in opening the Sydney Hebrew Certified Denominational School in 1868.

In 1890, Dinah, the second daughter of Phoebe and Elias Cohen, was married by Rev. A. B. Davis at the Great Synagogue to Joel Goldberg, who had arrived in Sydney from Shillel, Russia, in 1885 with two brothers. These three men played a large part in the establishment of the Newtown Synagogue, all taking Executive positions on the Board of Management.

Etta Applebaum was a typical Jewish mother, devoted to her family, who were encouraged to be observant orthodox Jews. The three children of Victor and Etta Applebaum continue the family tradition of involvement in communal activities.

The family is characterised by its close knit and strong ties of family unity and her two brothers and four sisters exemplified the importance and value of sound family structure.

Mrs. Applebaum will always be remembered for her kindness and friendliness.

—P.D.

### Mrs. Bella Green

Mrs. Bella Miriam Green, wife of Mr. Israel Green, O.B.E., passed away on 4th April, 1972, leaving a devoted husband and family, a large circle of friends, and the whole Jewish Community to mourn their loss.

Born in Melbourne (nee Bella Miriam Salmonow), she came to Sydney on her marriage in 1922, and so Mr. and Mrs. Green would thus have celebrated their Golden Wedding in August this year.

Mrs. Green immediately identified herself with the work of the Sydney Jewish Community and became an industrious worker and ardent supporter of Jewish and other Civic Causes. She was one of the founders of the Women's Auxiliary of the Great Synagogue, later serving as its President for eight years. She was an untiring worker for the Montefiore Home, and served as President of the Ball Committee for four terms. She worked continuously for the Jewish Welfare Society, The Great Synagogue Youth, (G.S.Y.), Hospital Committees, and the Auxiliary of Sydney Legacy of which her husband was President and Committee member. She was a foundation member of this Society and became a Benefactor many years ago.

She shared with her husband, Mr. Isadore Green, a love for people, a love for everything Jewish and a respectful sympathy for those in need of help and encouragement. Her home became "an open house" for young and old where everybody was graciously received with true hospitality.

She was an outstanding example of true Jewish Womanhood, and will be sadly missed for her loving kindness and high sense of duty.

—M.H.K.

### Mr. Sol Krupa

The Society records with deep regret the recent passing of Mr. Sol Krupa. As a young man of twenty he arrived in Sydney from his native Poland, and soon identified himself with his fellow religionists. In a quiet and unassuming manner he gave generously to any appeal or individual needing help, and was a member of various organizations.

With the capacity for making friends, he formed friendships with many in all walks of life.

Saddened by the early passing of his wife, Elsie, he was devoted to his two daughters, Nanette and Beverley.

—R.R.

### **The late Philip Masel, O.B.E., E.D.**

Australian Jewry and the Commonwealth of Australia in general and Western Australian Jewry in particular suffered a great loss with the sudden death of the late Philip Masel at sea on his way home from a holiday with his wife on 27th February last.

Philip Masel was born in Perth, Western Australia, on 25th May, 1908, the youngest son of four of the late Mr. and Mrs. Esor Masel. His father was a devoted Communal worker and office bearer of the Perth Hebrew Congregation and the founder of Worths, one of Perth's leading merchandise stores of which Philip was General Manager at the time of his death.

In his early communal life he took a full part in the Religious, Social, Cultural and Sporting activities of the Perth Hebrew Congregation—specially those of its youth.



*THE LATE PHILIP MASEL, O.B.E., E.D.*

He wrote a History of the Congregation at the request of the Board.

He was also founder and co-editor of *The Judean*, a West Australian monthly journal of Jewish affairs.

He was a Founding Member of the Liberal Judaism Movement which evolved into the present Temple David Congregation in which he participated with its services and activities. In this capacity he wrote the history of the first and second decades of the Congregation.

He was not a Zionist and was opposed to Political Zionism in the early stages of the creation of the State of Israel and, with others, founded and published "The Australian Jewish Outlook" which formulated the theory of "Australians of the Jewish Faith" as distinct from other National identities.

He had a distinguished military career, having joined the C.M.F. in 1938 and particularly in World War II when he served with the 2/28th Battalion at Tobruk, Alamein and Borneo. After the war he was appointed Officer Commanding the 13th Infantry Brigade with the rank of Brigadier. He was granted the Freedom of the City of Perth on behalf of the Royal West Australian Regiment.

He was actively associated with many major organisations and was a Past President of Perth Legacy and took interest in the War Widows' Guild, the Boy Scouts' Association, was a member of the A.B.C. Talks' Advisory Committee, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Committee, and the Arts' Advisory Council.

He organised and commanded the opening and closing ceremonies of the Empire Games held in Perth in 1962.

He was a writer of distinction and in his earlier years was active in sports as a member of Cricket, Tennis, Golf and Bowling Clubs.

As a tribute to his literary abilities he was appointed by the Commonwealth Government Commissioner for this State on the Australian Broadcasting Commission and was in his second term of office at the time of his death.

For his public and wartime services he was made an O.B.E. in 1952.

He was also awarded the honour of E.D. (Efficiency Decoration) granted by the Commonwealth Government for twenty years' service in the Armed Services.

He was a liberal, progressive and intellectual personality, well esteemed by all who knew him in his business, cultural and military activities.

—H.B.

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