

# Australian Jewish Historical Society

VOL. VIII

PART 6



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# Australian Jewish Historical Society

## JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

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### THE INITIATIVES AND INFLUENCES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AUSTRALIAN ZIONISM, 1850-1948

by

ALAN D. CROWN, M.A., Ph.D.

The Zionist movement had complex origins, occasioned internecine arguments with the Jewish communities of the world and met with a mixed reception in the outside world. Tracing the motives, causes and influences which shaped the movement in Europe and in America is no simple matter. There are complexities introduced by the size of communities, the rapidity with which ideas diffused, and the sheer volume of literature, documents and papers that have to be sifted to provide accurate information. Australian Zionism is to some degree a microcosm of European Zionism. The influences which shaped it are more readily understood because of the small size of the community and the paucity of the literature, though that is also something of a handicap.<sup>1</sup> For this reason its history, the native initiatives and the foreign influences which moved it, is an interesting subject for investigation, and a useful adjunct to the study of European Zionism. It is a worthwhile study in its own right, especially since it is largely unrecorded. An examination of the article on Zionism in Australia and New Zealand in the new *Encyclopaedia Judaica* indicates that the article is based largely on the inadequate data in the Central Zionist Archives, Jerusalem, which reflect, but do not describe, the cross-currents within Australian Jewish society.

The Zionist movement in Australia has antecedents which reach toward the start of Jewish settlement there. Its progress and development not only parallel the situation in Europe — stirrings of Zionism in the decades before Herzl, to cite but one example — but also reflect the numerical strength of the Jewish settlers in Australia and their progress towards emancipation. The movement was influenced by the backgrounds of the immigrants who came to the colony, while there are good reasons to believe that Zionism itself became a critical factor in moulding the Australian Jewish environment. Thus Australian Zionism has to be considered in direct relationship to Australian Jewish demography.

After 1850, Australian Jews began to assume some sort of respon-

sibility for supporting their brothers in Palestine. Doubtless, the first efforts were of the nature of *Halukah*, funds collected to support the needy and pious. Sometimes these funds were substantial. Australian Jews, because of their ties with British Jews, participated in every stage of the birth of the Zionist movement in which British Jewry was involved. The early date of this identification with Palestine may well depend upon the very emancipation in the colony. Whereas European Jewish nationalism was hindered by the prior need for emancipation, there was no such bar to a wider identification on the part of Australian Jewry.<sup>2</sup>

The first traceable act of *Halukah* was the decision by the Board of the York Street Synagogue, Sydney, to vote an annual contribution to a Jerusalem fund.<sup>3</sup> Barely four years later, Australian Jewry, not quite totalling two thousand in number, contributed munificently to the fund organized by Moses Montefiore in support of his various projects in Palestine.<sup>4</sup> To the extent that Montefiore's works involved not merely the collection and disbursement of funds, but also the establishment of industrial and agricultural projects,<sup>5</sup> support of Montefiore might well be regarded as the first Zionist fund raising campaign in Australia.<sup>6</sup> Australian Jewry raised some eight thousand pounds — more than one third of the subscribed twenty thousand pounds. It is notable that the campaign was extensively supported by non-Jews, especially by leading churchmen. The subscription took place in the very year, 1854, that the Jewish battle for complete religious freedom was finally won in the legislative councils of New South Wales and Victoria. Many influential non-Jews supported the Jewish demand for equality. Their friendly relationships were marked in the public nature of the collection for Montefiore's fund. In a subsequent appeal by Montefiore, in 1874, when funds were sought for the relief of famine and the establishment of agricultural settlements, the Sunday collection of St. Paul's Church, Melbourne, yielded some twenty-two pounds for the special appeal.<sup>7</sup>

Fund raising for Palestine became a feature of communal life after this first, successful campaign. A series of *shlihim* from Palestine made the long voyage to the Antipodes in search of resources for causes ranging from the support of the Jerusalem poor to the construction of houses on Mt. Zion. Appeals were also received from other quarters. In 1860, the Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, Dr. Adler, appealed for relief of the Jews in Syria. As before, the non-Jewish community was urged to help. Letters were sent to the Governor General of the Colony, the Mayors and the newspapers.<sup>8</sup> The result of the appeal to the civic authorities is unknown but the appeal itself testifies to the relationship between the Jewish community and the rest of the citizenry. Perhaps the most celebrated *shaliah* of the era was Jacob Levi Saphir who was sent abroad by the Ashkenazi community of Jerusalem to collect for the relief of the poor in the city. Saphir published a travelogue, *Even Sappir*,<sup>9</sup> in which he made some shrewd observations about the nature of the community. He wrote, "In this land . . . they have learned that

the Jew also possesses good qualities and hatred towards him has entirely disappeared there . . . There is no discrimination made between nation and nation. The Jews live in safety and take their share in all the good things of the country. They also occupy Government positions and administrative posts.<sup>10</sup> In this comment about Australian Jewry in 1861, Saphir described a situation that was to colour the development of Zionist activities in Australia and later in the 1940s, was to lead to public hostilities between the Zionist and anti-Zionist forces.

Another *shaliach* was Chaim Zvi Schneersohn whose mission was to raise funds for the building of houses on Mount Zion. Moses Hess, the author of *Rome and Jerusalem*, a classic of Zionist writing, described Schneersohn's visit to Australia in an appendix to his work. He portrayed the co-operation in the colonies between Jew and Christian while raising funds for Zionist purposes. The extract is worth quoting in detail.

*Hamagid* . . . prints . . . a report of a meeting held in Melbourne, Australia, in December 1861, in which Christian as well as Jewish notables participated. The president, Lyons, opened the meeting and declared its purpose to be, 'to enable the Jews to acquire land on Mount Zion, on which houses for the accommodation of Jewish pilgrims should be built and that this may serve as the first step towards a Jewish settlement in Palestine.' After him, a Jewish scholar spoke in Hebrew . . . Then a Christian Minister addressed the audience on behalf of the restoration of the Jews . . . Finally the Dean of Melbourne University declared that for years he had continually told his countrymen that it would not take long before the Jews regain possession of the land which belongs to them and which was promised to them . . . It was then decided to appoint a committee for the purpose of soliciting contributions throughout Australia to acquire land for the Jews in the Holy Land.<sup>11</sup>

The scheme for resettling Palestine, which received widespread publicity as a result of Schneersohn's visit, was not without its opponents,<sup>12</sup> but, on the whole, both the Jewish and the non-Jewish members of the community were in favour of the idea. Their support, especially the support of the Church in Australia, brought a grateful letter to the Australian press from Haim David Hassan, the Chief Rabbi of Palestine. Among these funds were contributions for refugees reaching Jerusalem, a fund for the Portuguese community in Jerusalem and a fund for the Ets Haim Yeshivah. This system proved to be more acceptable to Australian Jewry than the emissary system. Such local generosity caused word to spread that money was available in Australia and the number of *shlihim* reaching the colony provoked angry reactions from the community. It was claimed that too much money was spent on the expenses of emissaries and the community began to remit funds directly to the British Consul in Jerusalem.

From 1871 to 1911, the Jewish population of Australia increased nearly fourfold — most of the immigration coming from Russia. By

1890, the Russian Jews totalled about 52 per cent of the Jewish census. The newcomers were mostly involved in the textile industry, general dealing and skilled, independent trades. The wealthier, second generation families were moving into the professions and the more remunerative category to storekeeping. It was not merely the contrast between the vibrant Judaism of the newcomers and the anglicized respectability of the second generation Australian Jews, or the wealth-social distinction which coloured their attitudes to the newly developing European Zionism. Part of their attitude was caused by the reaction of the non-Jewish community to the influx of Russian Jews at a time when the Australian economy was depressed. In short, there was a sudden expression of antisemitism in a country where the Jew had not only been equal, but had also participated in all levels of the governing system. Reports of the persecution of Russian Jewry aroused the protests and sympathies of both the Jewish and non-Jewish press but later, when it was rumoured that Baron Maurice de Hirsch wanted to send 500,000 Russian Jews to Australia, their attitudes changed.<sup>13</sup>

The Melbourne Hebrew Congregation took a stand against Russian Jewish migration. The Premier of Victoria, parliamentarians and churchmen not only spoke against the immigration of impoverished Jews but also expressed doubts in the press about the loyalty of Russian Jews, particularly those of the Hoveve Zion, who wished to live in Palestine. The anti-immigration protests took a marked antisemitic turn.<sup>14</sup> Significantly, the leader and spokesman of the anti-Zionist faction in the 1940s, Isaac Isaacs (later to become the first non-British Governor General of Australia), had been honorary secretary of the Melbourne Jewish Young Men's Russian Relief Fund in the 1880s. He was also involved in the formation of the United Jewish Education Board but resigned because of the pressure of work as attorney-general.<sup>15</sup> In view of his early sensitivity to antisemitism and his known strong reaction to any suggestion of a tension between his religion and British citizenship,<sup>16</sup> it is probable that the antisemitic campaign of the 1890s, with its divisive effect on the Jewish community coloured his attitude to Zionism.

The first traceable, direct reaction to the European Zionism of the 1890s is an editorial note in the *Melbourne Jewish Herald*, 1893, where the editor, although sympathetic to the ideals of the Hoveve Zion movement, described those objectives as visionary and claimed that the misguided pioneers were attempting the impossible. He stressed that the Jews should pray for the restoration of the Israelite nation but this lay with God alone.<sup>17</sup>

The first organized Zionist movement in Australia would seem to have been born in Sydney when, in October 1894, the goals of the Hoveve Zion movement were expounded during a drawing-room meeting.<sup>18</sup> Those aims, reported in the Jewish press, were the colonization of Palestine and the preservation of Hebrew.<sup>19</sup> The founders of the movement here were eastern European Jews; the chairman of the first meeting was an immigrant from Russia. However, the

initial impetus may well have come from an English Jew named Aaron Vecht who had been on the Home Committee of the Hoveve Zion movement in London.<sup>20</sup> Vecht left London sometime in 1893 and subsequently immigrated to Sydney. The Hoveve Zion society of Sydney was short-lived. One payment of fifteen pounds in 1895 is recorded in the balance sheets of the movement.<sup>21</sup>

When the news of Herzl's scheme for a Jewish State in Palestine reached Australia, the local Jewish press was mainly opposed to the idea,<sup>22</sup> although not unanimously so.<sup>23</sup> There was substantial hostility among some elements in the community to the calling of the first Zionist Congress. It was clear that the opposition was coming from the Anglicized Jewry, who saw in Zionism a challenge to the place of Jews in Australia.

Herzlian Zionism began in Western Australia in 1900 when Rabbi D. I. Freedman, the Rabbi in Perth, appealed for support of Herzl. Subsequently, on 15 February 1900, a Zionist society was formed of which he was President. Freedman, although educated in England, was Hungarian-born and very few members of his community were second generation Australians. Most had been attracted to Western Australia by the Gold Rush and a surprising number were of Palestinian origin.<sup>24</sup>

Thus few of the inhibiting factors that were found in the older communities of the eastern States existed in Perth. Zionist activities began in the eastern States of Australia a few years later, after an abortive attempt by an Adelaide Jew, Leon Jona, to establish a Zionist society shortly after the first Congress. In 1900, a Sydney solicitor, P. J. Marks, began recruiting shareholders in the Jewish Colonial Trust, having announced in the Jewish press on 9 February 1900 that he had received the articles of association of the "Zionist Bank"<sup>25</sup> from England. In January 1901, the New South Wales Zionist League was formed. Ironically it was convened by Henry Harris, the printer of the *Hebrew Standard* and father of Alfred Harris, the editor of the paper, who was to become one of the moving forces in the anti-Zionist ranks. Herzl sent the new society a special address which was published in the *Hebrew Standard* on 19 April 1901. A year later the Victorian Zionist League was established and again, in contrast to subsequent events, the leaders of the movement were supported by scions of the older Australian Jewish families.<sup>26</sup>

By 1903, the fledgling movement in New South Wales had presented its first balance sheet<sup>27</sup> showing the remission to London of five pounds eighteen shillings and four pence, probably the first sum sent out of the colony by the Herzlian movement. We are not fully informed on the first decade of the Australian movement but there are indications of steady progress in all States of the colony for the World Zionist Organisation/Central Zionist League and, in 1909, for the Jewish National Fund. Within this decade Ladies Branches and Juvenile Leagues were established, affiliated with the Eastern States' Zionist organizations.<sup>28</sup>

Early Australian Zionism was hampered by the territorialist move-

ment in European Zionism. At the Sixth Zionist Congress there were two Australian delegates, Reuben Beards<sup>29</sup> and Aaron Vecht, both from Sydney.<sup>30</sup> Beards supported Herzl's Uganda plan. When the Seventh Congress in 1905 rejected all plans for settlement outside Palestine and when Israel Zangwill founded the Jewish Territorial Organization, a number of Australian Zionists, especially in New South Wales, espoused Zangwill's plan and split the Australian movement.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, as it turned out, Alfred Harris, never a convinced Zionist, though involved at this point in Zionist activity, and Rabbi Francis Cohen, the new (June 1905) Rabbi of the Great Synagogue, also espoused Zangwill's scheme.<sup>32</sup> The reaction to the territorialist movement in Australia, similar to that in Europe, eventually forced both of these influential men to take public stances hostile to Zionism. Rabbi Cohen influenced many members of his congregation, the principal congregation in New South Wales, to uphold his anti-Zionist position.<sup>33</sup> Alfred Harris, after his initial support, turned the *Hebrew Standard*, one of New South Wales' two Jewish papers, into an anti-Zionist paper, in direct contrast to the *Jewish Herald* which at least remained, "neutral on this question" while giving prominence to Zionist news.<sup>34</sup>

In 1906, Dr. Richard A. Arthur, M.L.A., President of the Immigration League of Australia, suggested that a Jewish colony might be founded in the Northern Territory of Australia, or Queensland.<sup>35</sup> He wrote to Zangwill advocating his plan and Rabbi Cohen added his influential voice to the plea. The *Hebrew Standard* gave the project considerable publicity. Zangwill's interest was aroused and he gave serious consideration to Australia as the site of the new Jewish home because he felt that Australia would have to make a choice between a white Jewish population or Asiatics.<sup>36</sup> Plans were made to buy one million acres of land in the Northern Territory for the settlement of five hundred to one thousand families.<sup>37</sup> In the end, the scheme came to nought when the Australian Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin, met Zangwill in London and advised him that although Australia welcomed Jewish immigrants, it would never tolerate the establishment of an enclave under separate laws. It was, moreover, suggested that tropical Australia was not suitable for white settlement and that it would be dangerous to introduce a substantial body of Jewish unskilled labourers who would eventually migrate to the eastern States.<sup>38</sup> In 1920, after Zangwill's other ideas had failed, he again turned his attention to Western Australia.<sup>39</sup> When the Premier of Western Australia, Sir Newton Moore, was in London during that year, Zangwill proposed to him that one million Jews should be allowed to settle in that region. Zangwill wanted a self-contained colony where the Jewish religion, including the complete suspension of work on the sabbath, could be the basis of life for the settlers. The Premier of Western Australia rejected this proposal on the same grounds as Deakin. The failure of these plans marked the schism between the Australian Zionist movement and an influential section of the Jewish press. Henceforth,



the Anglo-Jewish Australian Press consistently opposed the Zionist movement until the very foundation of the State.

In 1907, an attempt was made to establish a Zionist Federation of Australia and New Zealand under the auspices of the Zionistische Zentral Bureau so that the two Australian delegates might join the central executive of the Zionist movement.<sup>40</sup> However, since opinion in Australia was divided on the issue,<sup>41</sup> and the English Zionist Federation claimed to represent Australia, their opposition to the move caused its failure. The "Basel Programme" was accepted, however, despite the efforts of the Territorialists; but the struggle between the Territorialists and their opponents, the antipathy of the Great Synagogue in Sydney and the hostility of the *Hebrew Standard* shattered Australian Zionism. A letter from Aaron Vecht in 1908, from his new home in Belgium to the Zentral Bureau in Berlin, claimed that there were twenty different Zionist societies in Australia with a preponderance of English-speaking workers.<sup>42</sup> Yet it was clear, despite Vecht's optimism which was coloured, perhaps, by his absence from the country, that there was a solid antipathy, if not opposition, to Zionism in the community. A report on Zionist activity in New South Wales in 1911 indicated that there were four Zionist societies in Melbourne, one in Ballarat, four in New South Wales, and a defunct Ladies' League which had lapsed from lack of support. In fact, the true position was not expressed by the number of societies:

"The general attitude of the Jewish community is one of apathy and there are comparatively few enthusiastic Zionists. The majority of the Jews here are, if anything, non-Zionists. There is no hostility, and we have even received contributions to the different funds from gentlemen who candidly say they are not Zionists. The non-Jewish press gives hardly any prominence to the movement, but, so far as one can judge, they are not unfavourably disposed towards us . . ."<sup>43</sup>

Despite Vecht's note of 1908, the new members entering the Zionist ranks were Yiddish-speaking immigrants from Poland and Russia who formed the Sydney Lovers of Zion Society which merged with the Sydney Zionist Society in 1911.<sup>44</sup> Indicative of the situation is that the greater part of a pamphlet, *The Aims and Practical Objects of Zionism*, issued by the Sydney Zionist Society in 1908, was devoted to answering objections raised about Zionism.<sup>45</sup> Significantly enough, those disagreements seemed to have been given a religious rather than a political expression,<sup>46</sup> and it is probable that the antisemitic feeling of the 1890s no longer coloured attitudes to Zionism.<sup>47</sup>

World War I saw the temporary cessation of Jewish migration but, immediately after the war, there was another influx of European Jews, especially Polish Jews, who had been displaced by the war and were seeking to escape the rising tide of antisemitism. After the introduction of restrictive immigration quotas by the United States in 1922, the number of Polish immigrants to Australia increased rapidly. In 1924 restrictive visas were also introduced in Australia and by 1930 the financial restrictions on immigrants were tightened even further in

response to a changed economic situation. Nevertheless, the Australian government remained anxious to receive Jewish immigrants from Britain and Dr. Arthur, speaking to the Federal Congress of Australian Zionists in 1930 for the New South Wales government said:

"Whilst I am prepared to wish success to this great national and historic movement, I would still put in a plea, which I urged in London, twenty years ago, that if there are people of your race and my race [because they were all British in Great Britain] who are not prepared to go to Palestine, well let them come to Australia. When I was in London I went down and met the Jewish Board of Guardians in Whitechapel and I arranged that they should send out a number of lads to go on the land in Australia and that was done."<sup>48</sup>

The pre-war Russo-Jewish immigrants had been, by this time, thoroughly assimilated into the Jewish community and had given it a flavour of its own. The Balfour Declaration had, to some extent, allayed the apprehensions of the Anglo-Jews, and the acceptance of the Mandate in Palestine, by Britain, had earned the support of the wealthy, established Jews.<sup>49</sup>

The Balfour Declaration brought appeals to Australia from the London offices of the Zionist Bureau for urgent financial support. These, as well as the effect of the Declaration on the leading Anglo-Jews, prodded the community into action. The response to a cabled request from Samuel Goldreich in London, in 1917, "Balfour Declaration = Palestine Declaration, British Government, necessitates great efforts. Can you collect two thousand pounds privately and cable me to Jewish Colonial Trust, London,"<sup>50</sup> reflected the Zionist attitudes of the community: Solomon Pechter in Sydney answered Weizmann, "Re Cable Goldreich, Zionists here financially weak, community indifferent. If request endorsed by Lord Rothschild amount may be collected privately."<sup>51</sup> By 1918 the efforts to raise funds for the Jewish Colonial Trust had stimulated activity in most States. In Victoria, the president of the Zionist Association declared in a letter to London<sup>52</sup> that, "I am pleased that our organization is daily gaining strength in influential quarters where we receive both moral and financial support in spite of a small click [sic!] of anti-Zionists."<sup>53</sup> In Sydney, special fund raising groups, especially among the professionals, were organized<sup>54</sup> and, by 1919, the Zionist movement had begun to turn to political activity, the first of a series of concerted efforts to use the Australian Zionist movement to influence the Australian government.<sup>55</sup>

The display of life in the Australian Jewish community was enough to inspire the Zionist executive in London to send Israel Cohen on a fund raising mission for the Palestine Restoration Fund in 1920.<sup>56</sup> For years thereafter, Cohen kept a friendly and helpful eye on the Australian Zionist movement and fostered its development. The colour of Australian Zionism at this time is described by Cohen, both in his *Journal* and in his private correspondence. He wrote, "The devotion of the Jews to the British Crown is sincere and ever present, and struck me as more demonstrative than that of their co-religionists in the mother

country. So fond were they of singing the National Anthem at the gatherings at which I appeared that I was almost inclined to think that they regarded me not so much as an emissary of the Zionist executive [but] as an envoy of His Majesty."<sup>57</sup>

The direction of Australian Zionism depended now on the activities of a few individuals in key positions in the Anglo-Jewish community. It is clear that in Perth Anglo-Jews, "have shown hardly any sympathy to the movement and have subscribed very little."<sup>58</sup> The principal support in that city came from European and Palestinian Jews, the latter being in the city in some number. However, as economic conditions worsened after the war, the European and Palestinian Jews, generally less wealthy than the Anglo-Jews, were unable to honour pledges made during Israel Cohen's campaign. Also, with the restoration of communications with Russia, Poland, Rumania and Austria after the war, private calls for assistance from parents and close relatives in Europe and a special effort to care for Ukranian Jewish orphans left little spare capital for Zionist collections.<sup>59</sup>

In Melbourne, the Zionist movement was poorly led but the sympathies of Sir John Monash, the Jewish-Australian war hero, and the silence of Rabbi J. Danglow, who was rabbi of the principal Anglo-Jewish congregation in the city, meant that there was little "active opposition to Zionism in Melbourne though there may be a certain amount of criticism and indifference that must be combatted."<sup>60</sup> Rabbi Danglow, later to take an active anti-Zionist stance, may have been silent at this time because he was a former friend and fellow student of Israel Cohen<sup>61</sup> and because Rabbi Israel Brodie, later to become Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, was beginning to take a leading interest in the Zionist movement.<sup>62</sup>

In Sydney the European immigrants formed the active part of the community. The *Hebrew Standard* was colouring the opinions of its readers with its negative stance and Rabbi Cohen seemed to have become steadily more hostile to the Zionist movement. His attitude may have been hardened by the active role of such leading churchmen as Dean Talbot in supporting the Zionist movement.<sup>63</sup> These factors are reflected in shekel sales which, in the early twenties marked membership in the Zionist movement. In 1921, one hundred shekels were sold in Sydney, two hundred in 1922 and the same number in 1923. In Perth, 93 shekels were sold in 1922 and five hundred in 1923. In Melbourne, 1500 shekels were sold in 1923.<sup>64</sup> The same factors coloured the fund raising during Cohen's visit. The total sum pledged was some £67,817, of which Melbourne pledged £26,000 while the larger Sydney community pledged only £15,500 and Perth, £10,200. The rest of the sum was from the tiny communities in Brisbane (100 shekels, £3,100), Newcastle (£12,000) and Adelaide (£1,017).<sup>65</sup>

Following the campaign, there was a period of near quiescence in Australian Zionism broken only by a fund raising visit by Madame Pevsner on behalf of the Jewish National Fund. She established a Western Australian Jewish Women's League in Perth in 1924. Records

in the Central Zionist Archives show a constant flow of letters from London to the various States trying to rally them to produce some financial or organizational support, but all to little avail. Internal organization was fragile: leadership transferred from place to place inside the same city,<sup>66</sup> new organizations appeared and disappeared,<sup>67</sup> while in Victoria, the Palestine Welfare League, a new group, was formed, including "Rabbi Danglow and other non-Zionists,"<sup>68</sup> for the probable foiling of the political endeavours of the Zionist oriented societies. The anti-Zionists were unwittingly assisted in their objective by the establishment by well-meaning members of the community of a fund throughout Australia and New Zealand on behalf of Infant Welfare Centres in Palestine. The fund gave "those who are afraid of being associated with Zionism . . . the opportunity to help in this philanthropic work in Palestine . . ."<sup>69</sup> When Alexander Goldstein visited Australia in 1927 on behalf of the Keren Hayesod, his reports to Jerusalem gave a dismal picture of Australian Zionism.<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, he was able to convene a two day conference of representatives of Zionist societies in Australia to discuss Zionist, Keren Hayesod and National Fund problems and the creation of a Zionist Federation of Australia.<sup>71</sup> Unfortunately, despite Goldstein's optimistic comment that he was able to make the *Hebrew Standard* behave "quite decently" during his visit,<sup>72</sup> its opposition restricted the participation of Sydney Zionists to the one organization, the Union of Sydney Zionists.

The new Zionist Federation was led by two Jews from Victoria — the National War hero, General Sir John Monash and by Rabbi Israel Brodie. They were a factor in influencing some of the Victorian Anglo-Jews to support the Zionist movement. It was difficult for anti-Zionist Victorian Anglo-Jews to accuse Monash of disloyalty to the Crown. One of the first acts of the new Federation was the appointment of a Palestinian Jew, Mark Ettinger, to the paid position of general secretary and organizer — the first Zionist professional post in the community.<sup>73</sup> Ettinger settled in Melbourne in April 1928. Though he travelled to Sydney and to other capital cities in the Commonwealth, he found contact between the Zionist societies difficult to maintain<sup>74</sup> and his residence in Melbourne focused his activities in that city, sharpening the other factors which worked to make Victorian Jewry dominant in Australian Zionist activity in the 1930s and 1940s. To some extent Ettinger was able to bridge the gap of "the more or less marked psychological difference between Australian and English-born Jews on the one side and between those who hail from Eastern Europe"<sup>75</sup> and to unite both groups into a working organization, in Melbourne at least. The distance between the cities and the novelty of undertaking Zionist work on a systematic basis prevented him from introducing a uniform organizational pattern in the cities and to unite the disparate Zionist and para-Zionist societies. Nor was he able to centralize fund raising and communications within the Federation. Nevertheless, during the disputes within the Australian Jewish community at the time of the Wailing Wall incident in 1928 (see below), the Zionist movement in

all the States behaved in a disciplined fashion, obeying Ettinger's instructions and presenting a common front.<sup>76</sup>

The years 1928-1929 saw the end of the decade of co-operation or at least peaceful co-existence in Zionist or Palestine oriented activities between the Australian Anglo-Jews and Eastern European immigrants. The steadily developing conflict in Palestine between the Mandatory power and the Jewish Agency began to erode the support of the Australian Anglo-Jews for the movement, especially in Sydney.<sup>77</sup> Australian Jewry, recalling the role of the Jewish citizenry of the Commonwealth during World War I, felt that they had a stake in the bond of military nationalism between Australia and Britain. Synagogues included the phrase "war memorial centre" in their names and housed shrines to the war dead. Rabbi Cohen, whose Great Synagogue was the principal such Jewish war memorial centre in Sydney, had long advocated defence policies identifying with British foreign policy,<sup>78</sup> thus confronting some of his congregation with the issue of divided loyalty.

The first signs of the schism began to appear when a large number of Palestinian Jews emigrated to Australia between 1927-1928. Firm statistics are unavailable but the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, in a report of 8 May 1928, based on a Melbourne weekly called the *Australian Jewish Herald*, observed that in the previous eighteen months more than 2,000 Jewish immigrants had come to Australia and that over 40 per cent of the total Jewish immigration, in the six month period between August 1927 and February 1928 came from Palestine.<sup>79</sup> The new arrivals spread unfavourable reports of conditions in Palestine and their presence was used to create anti-Zionist sentiment in the community.<sup>80</sup> (Many of these immigrants returned to Palestine or became active workers in Zionist causes. In Perth, especially, where many of these immigrants had settled, Hebrew classes were conducted.<sup>81</sup>)

The anti-Zionist current crystallized into open hostility with the affair of the Wailing Wall and the Arab riots. On Yom Kippur, 24 September 1928, British police officers removed a wooden partition, *mehitsah*, erected between male and female worshipers at the Wall, alleging that its installation constituted an infraction of the status quo. The incident, which was one of the triggers of the riots in August 1929, aroused widespread indignation and protest in Jewish communities throughout the diaspora.<sup>82</sup> The Australian Zionist Federation conveyed a resolution to the Commonwealth Government "deploring the action of certain British officials of the Palestine Government" who denied worshipers free access to the Wall.<sup>83</sup> In Sydney, the rabbinate spoke against the Federation from the pulpits, and the Melbourne Jewish Advisory Board, which in reality represented the Anglo-Jewish component of the Victoria Jewish community, publicly disassociated itself from this resolution and sought to prevent the Australian Government from transmitting the text of the resolution to London. The Advisory Board set the tone for the controversy with the words that Australian Jews as "loyal British Jews" should make every effort

to "uphold the authority of the British Government . . . and do nothing to embarrass it in its already difficult task."<sup>84</sup> Complaints were also made by the anti-Zionist faction to the police, attempting to prevent rallies of the Jewish community.<sup>85</sup> This active opposition and the counter demonstrations seem to have hardened opinion among those who were previously not committed. Ettinger claimed that as a direct result of such vigorous opposition, the Zionist movement gained a good deal of support and interest from the majority of the (non-Anglo) Jewish community.<sup>86</sup> Perhaps these anti-British demonstrations in several Australian cities illustrate the increasing interest in Palestine.

A phenomenon of this period of disagreement within Jewish ranks is the degree of support given to the Zionist movement in Australia by church bodies and individual non-Jews. Despite the charges of "disloyalty" by the Anglo-Jews, the long standing support of the movement by such men as Dean Talbot and Dr. Richard A. Arthur, continued to be of considerable moral and, sometimes, financial support.<sup>87</sup> A number of groups, led by the Christadelphians, co-operated in raising funds to plant a forest in the Jezreel Valley.<sup>88</sup>

The schism grew wider with the development of events. Bitter controversy within the community was caused by the British (Passfield) White Paper of 1930, which restricted Jewish immigration into Palestine. In Sydney a protest meeting was organized at the Town Hall<sup>89</sup> and the resolutions were couched in terms which sought to placate the Anglo-Jews while expressing indignation at the White Paper.<sup>90</sup> The same resolutions, *mutatis mutandis*, were passed at meetings in Melbourne and Perth.<sup>91</sup> However, the placatory attempts failed and the *Hebrew Standard* continued its anti-Zionist campaign on the grounds that the Jewish communal leaders were not in sympathy with the need to protest although, in fact, leaders of all sections of the community were found on platforms in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. The heat of the controversy was temporarily ameliorated by the letter of 13 February 1931 from Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister of Britain, to Chaim Weizmann, which sought to explain away some of the more objectionable passages of the Passfield White Paper. In the subsequently calmer climate the Zionist movement in Australia made some headway.

The 1930s was a period of rapid growth of the Jewish population of Australia. From 1935 onward, as a result of Nazi persecution, the number of Jewish immigrants again began to increase, even though Jewish immigration was still restricted to but one hundred permits per week. This was far too few for the number of applicants and the Australian Government agreed after the Evian Conference to increase the number to fifteen thousand refugees (including non-Jews). The outbreak of war prevented this quota from being reached but at least seven thousand Jewish immigrants reached Australia between 1934 and 1940. The impact of these newcomers was felt in the enrichment of the religious fabric of Australian Jewry.<sup>92</sup> Some 75 per cent of these newcomers came from eastern Europe. These immigrants began to play a

key role of the Australian Jewish community and they ensured that, ultimately, the official policy of that community would fully support the aims and aspirations of the Zionist movement.

It took time for their influence to be felt, especially since their very coming to Australian shores engendered hostility on the part of the Anglo-Jews who were afraid of antisemitism developing in the country. Ida Benzion, who came to Australia on behalf of WIZO in 1937, gave her impression of the Australian Jewish community as she found it, in a confidential letter to the editor of the *Palestine Review*:

"Australia is so far away from the rest of the world, and its Jewry is less interested in Jewish affairs than any other I have visited. Even the report [the Peel Commission] and the partition scheme failed to awaken the slightest flicker of interest in all but a small portion of foreign Jews. Sir Isaac Isaacs worried as to whether the Arabs were getting a fair deal! Not a word about the Jews. Some are a bit worried lest Palestine be unable to take all the refugee Jews and that might bring them to Australia. Some people are trying to shut the doors to the refugees and, alas, the Jews are amongst them. It is a spiritually poor, intellectually poor, nationally poor, Jewry, without leaders and without any feeling of responsibility."<sup>93</sup>

This judgement may seem overly harsh for a period which saw some expansion in Zionist activity, especially in the development of youth movements, cultural groups and women's organizations.<sup>94</sup> Yet it is apparent that the Zionist movement was badly organized and even unable, in the words of Rabbi Brodie, President of the Federation, to "do elementary things such as replying to correspondence or urgent wires."<sup>95</sup> As late as 1940, Shlomo Loewy, who had come to Australia on behalf of the Zionist Federation,<sup>96</sup> wrote to the Jewish Agency: "The greatest mistake done by our central institution was that in the last ten years Australia was visited only in connection with fund-raising activities. That was detrimental to the movement, and, on my arrival [in 1939] I found only miserable remnants of what we call an organization."<sup>97</sup>

A symptom of the mood of the community and of the relationship between Anglo-Jews and the newer immigrants is found in the brief but eventful tenure in office of Rabbi E. M. Levy, who succeeded Rabbi Francis Cohen at the pulpit of the Great Synagogue, upon the latter's death in 1934. Rabbi Levy, in contrast to his predecessor, was an ardent Zionist and was appointed President of the Zionist Federation of Australia at its sixth congress in 1937, succeeding Rabbi Brodie.<sup>98</sup> Levy replied to a statement by Claude Montefiore of London, published in the *Hebrew Standard*, in which Zionism was described as a child of antisemitism, whereas Judaism was solely a religion and not a nationalism. Levy's reply noted that "even a friendly Englishman considers it absurd for a Jew to pretend he is an Englishman . . . We are all Jews no matter where we live."<sup>99</sup>

Immediately, Sir Isaac Isaacs, the Governor General of Australia, and Sir Samuel Cohen, the President of the Great Synagogue, protested

against Rabbi Levy's arguments which they said implied that Jews were "disloyal" to the Crown<sup>100</sup> — a strange about face since, in earlier years, Isaacs had strongly argued a case similar to that about which he was now objecting.<sup>101</sup> The Zionist executive felt constrained to proclaim its loyalty to the Crown. Rabbi Levy was given notice by the Great Synagogue that his contract would not be renewed and he was obliged to return to England, although the Great Synagogue Board was forced, through a series of unpleasant incidents, to negotiate a settlement with him. This was, perhaps, the zenith of the Anglo-Jewish opposition to Zionism in Australia. Though the debate continued until the very founding of the State of Israel, the fate of European Jewry and the wrath of the community inspired by the MacDonald White Paper of 1930, which further restricted Jewish immigration into Palestine, gave cohesion to most of the disparate elements of the community.

At the onset of World War II the Zionist movement in Australia received stimulation from a steady stream of visitors who would not normally have visited Australian shores. The direct route between Palestine and America was closed and air traffic came via Australia. Among the visitors was David Ben-Gurion who addressed a packed meeting in Sydney. The disruption of normal world-wide communications had severe disadvantages because the geographical isolation of Australia meant that the Zionist movement was often without contact for weeks — occasionally months — with the headquarters of the movement in Jerusalem and London.<sup>102</sup> It was therefore decided to give special care to the reorganization of the Department of Zionist Policy which was placed in 1942 under the chairmanship of Dr. J. Machover.<sup>103</sup> Numerous publications during, and immediately after, the war carried the message of Zionism and Jewish nationhood around the Jewish Commonwealth. A monthly magazine, *The Zionist*, also began publication in 1943 and continued for more than a decade.<sup>104</sup> On the example of Great Britain, an "Australia-Palestine Committee" was established and included many non-Jewish Zionist friends. Men such as the State premiers, bishops, leading academics and trade unionists became active in these committees to promote repeal of the 1939 White Paper.<sup>105</sup> It was under the aegis of these committees that another stream of pamphlets tried to mould public opinion in favour of the Jewish national home.<sup>106</sup>

At this time, when the Zionist movement was organizing political pressure against the British Government with a little success,<sup>107</sup> it was forced to divert some of its efforts to combat a resurgence of the Freeland League and the territorial movement. Dr. I. N. Steinberg, an emissary of the Freeland League, proposed that colonies should be established in Australia for emigrants from central and eastern Europe. These colonies were to be based on both agriculture and industry but would be free from political aspirations. Steinberg believed that a suitable area for settlement would be the Kimberly district of Western Australia.<sup>108</sup> A number of pamphlets, including detailed maps of the



area, were published by the Freeland League and they also published supporting statements from the press, the Australian Council of Trade Unions and from some churchmen.<sup>109</sup> The League was thus capitalizing on the sympathy for the Jewish cause won by the Zionist movement through its Australia-Palestine Committee. The Freeland League also published its own paper, *The Australian Jewish Forum*, until 1950 even though the Australian Government had rejected the scheme for fear of creating an "enclave".

In December 1942, twelve days after Anthony Eden made known Hitler's plans for European Jewry in "A Declaration on Behalf of the Allies", the Zionist Federation joined the other communal organizations in setting up the United Emergency Committee for the Rescue of European Jewry.<sup>110</sup> The chairman of the Department of Zionist Policy was also chairman of the Rescue Committee and the program developed was not only one of trying to save lives but also one of co-ordinating these attempts with pressure for a repeal of the May 1939 White Paper, the freedom of migration to Palestine and representation of "the Jewish People" at all international bodies concerned with Palestine. This plan was formulated and approved at the 1943 Conference of the Australian Zionist Federation. While it was only binding on the Zionist Federation, there was complete agreement that the United Emergency Committee would respect this program as its own.

For a time it seemed as though the anti-Zionist forces would be stilled and the community would work in harmony. In fact, events proved these hopes to be false and the anti-Zionist Anglo-Jews began a period of intensive activity. The leaders of the Anglo-Jewish group were Rabbi Danglow of Melbourne, Sir Archie Michaelis, M.L.A., and Sir Isaac Isaacs, who was perhaps the most prominent Jew in Australia. Sir Isaac was the spokesman for the group and his statements received a receptive press in the *Hebrew Standard*, which was still edited by Alfred Harris.<sup>111</sup> From 1941-1943 Isaacs had made various attacks on the Zionist movement in the Jewish press, but in 1943 had launched a series of stinging assaults on the "pestilential doctrines of Zionism" which were printed in the public press. The series reached a climax during October and November 1943.<sup>112</sup> His open hostility was a challenge that could not be resisted. The Zionist Federation had tried to avoid a public breach with so eminent a man whose prestige could prejudice the success of their activities at a time when the Australian Government was being courted by the Zionist movement. The situation suddenly became crucial because Isaacs was in constant communication with Dr. Herbert Vere Evatt, Minister for External Affairs, whose help was urgently needed. Isaacs was silenced for a while by the publication of a close and detailed criticism of his arguments by Julius Stone, Professor of International Law at Sydney University, who showed in *Stand Up and Be Counted*,<sup>113</sup> that many of them were specious. Stone's pamphlet ran to two editions. Between the publication of the first and second editions Isaacs suddenly put down his pen and the anti-Zionist voices were quieted for a while. In April 1945, it was

learned that Dr. Evatt was to attend the San Francisco Conference to help draft a charter for the new United Nations Organisation. The Zionist Federation immediately sought the help of the Australia-Palestine Committee to present petitions to the Prime Minister, John Curtin, and to Evatt. An impressive petition was raised by the committee and was presented to the Prime Minister shortly before Evatt's departure. Evatt received a delegation of leading Zionists who were also armed by a statement from Mr. Peter Fraser, Prime Minister of New Zealand, to the effect that Jewish aspirations in Palestine should be respected. Evatt promised the full support of the Australian Government. It is probable that the controversy with Isaacs was counter-productive to the anti-Zionist cause for it gave all the issues involved a public airing and may have strengthened Evatt's "sense of mission" toward the establishment of a Jewish State.<sup>114</sup> Certainly Evatt received (and read?) a copy of *Stand Up and Be Counted*.<sup>115</sup>

In 1946 Isaacs returned to the fray with a publication entitled *Political Zionism, Undemocratic, Unjust, Dangerous*,<sup>116</sup> and the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the federal governing body of the community, was forced to disassociate Australian Jewry, officially, from Isaacs's views, affirming that the Jewish community supported demands for a Jewish State and free migration to Palestine. The statement of disassociation was given wide circulation and publicity in political circles, among the churches, trade unions and the press. Thus, again, anti-Zionism had proven unsuccessful and spurred the whole community to throw its weight behind the Zionist movement. This exchange and further statements from Isaacs received widespread publicity in the daily press<sup>117</sup> and roused a good deal of anger against Isaacs who was subjected to abuse at public meetings. Though the controversy was described as a crisis for the community by the daily press, it was not so in the sense that the Anglo-Jews were now reduced to the true vocal anti-Zionists, Isaacs, Danglow and Michaelis. The rest of the community supported the Zionist movement wholeheartedly. Eventually, the President of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, Mr. Alec Masel, who was also a former president of the Zionist Federation, was able to extract a promise from Isaacs that no more public statements would be made until they had first been discussed with him.<sup>118</sup> This was the swan-song of the Jewish anti-Zionist movement in Australia until the late 1960s.<sup>119</sup>

The cordial relationship between Australian Zionist leaders and members of the Australian Government, especially the personal regard that had developed between Max Freilich and Horace Newman, two veteran Zionists, and Dr. H. V. Evatt,<sup>120</sup> now was to ensure that the numerically small community was to have substantial influence on events at Lake Success in 1947. Evatt was elected chairman of both the ad hoc Committee on Palestine of the United Nations General Assembly and president of the United Nations Assembly of 1948-1949, during the crucial period when the decisions on partition were made. He broke all precedents by inviting the Jewish Agency to be repre-

sented at the deliberations of the committee so that it could present its own view. Evatt has described the tenacity he needed to steer the committee to a vote on 25 November 1947, and attempts made to void the decision taken then and at the vote in General Assembly on 29 November 1947. Officials in the Australian delegation were of the opinion that in their joy at passage of the resolution, Jewish Agency leaders were substantially unappreciative of Evatt's influence in steering the vote to a successful conclusion.<sup>121</sup> The same might also be said of the attitude of Australian Zionism which, from a slow beginning, grew to play a critical role in the final stages of pre-State Zionist history.<sup>122</sup>

*This article was contributed by the author to Jewish Social Studies, Vol. XXXIX, Fall 1977, No. 4 and is reprinted subject to some editing. The Society is grateful to Dr. Crown and the publishers for the opportunity to present the article to the readers of this Journal. The subject has been dealt with in other papers in the Journal but Dr. Crown has added more details and introduced new material particularly for the period after the early twenties. The Zionist Movement now plays a major role in Australia in Jewish life but it remains surprising that so little has been recorded of its history. For that reason alone the author's learned contribution is timely and valuable. (Editor)*

## NOTES

- 1 The files in the Zionist Central Archives, Jerusalem, have very little information on Australia for the period before 1917. The subsequent period is fairly well documented but the material is not too abundant to make study an inordinately long process.
- 2 Cf., the article "Zionism" in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 16, p. 1034.
- 3 Morris Z. Forbes, "Palestine Appeals in the Fifties and Sixties," *Australian Jewish Historical Society, Journal and Proceedings* (hereafter A.J.H.S.) 3, No. 7 (1952) 313-33.
- 4 Cf., Goldman, pp. 109-21; also, Forbes, above.
- 5 Cf., "Montefiore" in Raphael Patai, *Encyclopaedia of Zionism and Israel* (New York, 1971) for a concise summary of Montefiore's activities.
- 6 An entry in Montefiore's diary saying that he would like to divert Jewish immigrants from Australia to Palestine was almost a prophetic foreshadowing of the conflict facing Australian Jewry in 1948 and 1949. In those years the Australian Jewish community was forced to call a special conference to discuss whether Jewish migration to Australia should be encouraged — in competition with Israel — because such migration would benefit the community.
- 7 Cf., Goldman, p. 292 — The Jews in Victoria in the 19th Century.
- 8 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 5 December 1860.

- 9 *Even Sappir* [A Sapphire] (Lyck, 1866), 1 v. The section dealing with Australia has been translated by L. A. Falk, in A.J.H.S., 1: 19-22; 43-50; 86-92; 116-20; 153-59; 192-97.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 45.
- 11 Moses Hess, *Rome and Jerusalem* (New York, 1943), p. 175.
- 12 Cf., *The Argus*, 4 January, 1862. "[Many] Jews . . . declare that no greater calamity could come to them than to be obliged to repossess themselves of that very undesirable country known as the Holy Land . . . The Jews do not desire to be evangelized and they do not wish to go back to Jerusalem."
- 13 Cf., *The Jewish Herald*, 8 March 1891.
- 14 Cf., New South Wales *Parliamentary Debates*, 2 October 1895, and the *Bulletin*, 11 November 1899.
- 15 Cf., Goldman, p. 392.
- 16 Cf., Zelman Cowen, *Isaac Isaacs*, (Melbourne, 1967), p. 226.
- 17 1 December 1893.
- 18 *Melbourne Jewish Herald*, 2 November 1894.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 Cf., *Palestina* 1, October (1892). Committee lists.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 1895.
- 22 Cf., *Australian Hebrew*, 28 February 1896.
- 23 See the *Hebrew Standard*, 28 February 1896.
- 24 Cf., David J. Benjamin, "Western Australian Jewry, 1829-1897, Part 2, Perth," A.J.H.S., 2 (1946), 6, 311; Charles A. Price, *Jewish Settlers in Australia* (J.S.A.), p.35 and Appendix.
- 25 *Hebrew Standard*, 9 February 1900.
- 26 A record of a debate of 12 June 1901, "The Z'ionist Movement Should Be Encouraged", found in the minutes of the Great Synagogue, Sydney, shows many Jewish members of the establishment present. Cf., Morris Z. Forbes, "Early Zionism in Sydney, 1900-1920", A.J.H.S., 3 (1950), part 4, pp. 165-87. Note that the data in the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* for this period of Zionism in Australia is entirely unreliable and inadequate.
- 27 This is preserved in the library of Elias Green, Sydney.
- 28 Cf., File Z3, 50/BIg, Central Zionist Archives (hereafter C.Z.A.). A circular letter of 6 April 1906 showed that the managerial meeting of the Ladies' Branch of the International Zionist Organization was to be held at the Athenaeum Hall, Little Collins Street, Melbourne. A membership subscription of two shillings and sixpence was charged, one shilling of which was to be a shekel. (The C.Z.A. filing system is very complex. Numbers are quoted as found. They are often inconsistent.)
- 29 See letter 18 October 1910, C.Z.A., 50 BIg<sup>2</sup>.
- 30 See note 20.
- 31 C.Z.A., file 23/500/BIg<sup>2</sup>.
- 32 Cf., Suzanne Rutland, "Seventy Five Years, The History of a Jewish Newspaper", (Monograph of the A.J.H.S., November

1970), pp. 18 f.

- 33 Despite Rabbi Cohen's condemnation of Zionism, his attitude was most probably coloured by his experiences after 1906. His opposition was personally directed to his opponents at this time. In 1924 he secretly donated one hundred pounds to the Palestine Restoration Fund. He wrote in a private letter to London, "Unfortunately, Zionist affairs in this city are in the hands of the very intolerant persons, rancorous towards those who cannot see eye to eye with them in every respect and lacking in the courtesy due to public men who have convictions of their own. *This explains why the great majority of my congregation have held aloof despite a vigorous propaganda, and, indeed, in consequence of its tactless and bitter character [my italics].*" Cf., C.Z.A., 24, 1106/11.
- 34 Cf., C.Z.A., 500, B1g<sup>2</sup>.
- 35 Cf., *Hebrew Standard*, 6 July 1906. Cf. also C.Z.A., Z4/32171. Speech of Dr. Richard A. Arthur on behalf of the New South Wales Government to the Australian Zionist Federation, 1930. "I am here tonight to have the honour on behalf of the New South Wales Government of welcoming the delegates from the other States . . . In a humble way I have been connected with the Zionist Movement. Twenty-three or twenty-four years ago, a long time ago, I founded the Immigration League of Australia and I was casting my eye all around the world for worthy and desirable immigrants and about the same time I heard that the British Government had offered the Zionist Movement an area in East Africa . . . It seemed to me that at that time Palestine seemed out of the question as the grip of the Turk upon that land, although not very secure, was also overshadowed by the possible menace of the Great Russian Empire and that as circumstances were it seemed impossible that the ideal which in another miraculous way has now come to pass, that the miracle could be brought about so I then wrote to the Prime Minister and suggested that he should offer the Zionists a tract of land in Australia for a settlement. I wrote to the "Jewish Herald" in London. I had some very interesting correspondence with Israel Zangwill and when I went home to London a year or two afterwards, I had to go to a hospital; the meeting did not come off and I had to make a hasty return to Australia."
- 36 *Ibid.*, 10 May 1907.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 8 February 1907.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 9 October, 1907.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 14 October 1910.
- 40 Cf., C.Z.A., 502, B1g<sup>2</sup>.
- 41 *Ibid.*, Victorian Zionists were opposed on the grounds that distances between the State capitals were too great for a Federation to work effectively.
- 42 C.Z.A., ZB Koln 503/B1g<sup>2</sup>. Vecht represented Australian Zionists

- at the Congress in 1909 (see C.Z.A., 122 B11/2), and Solomon Pechter represented Australia in 1920 (See C.Z.A., 189/B1). Both lived in Europe after periods of residence in Australia. The community could not yet afford to send a delegate from Australia. Cf., C.Z.A., 500/B1g.
- 43 C.Z.A., 500 B1 GZ. Report on Zionist activity in New South Wales. The report shows that in 1911 the community had two hundred Zionists of whom ninety were children. In Victoria there were a Victorian Zionist League, a Children's Society, and a Woman's Zionist League (Melbourne) and a Young People's Zionist Society. New Zealand had a Chovevei (Hoveve) Zion Movement and several other Zionist societies unnamed.
  - 44 Cf., C.Z.A., 500 B1 G2, letter 30 January 1911.
  - 45 Cf., C.Z.A., 502 B1g, for a copy of "The Aims and Practical Objects of Zionism", issued under the auspices of Percy J. Marks, president of the Sydney Zionist Society.
  - 46 The tenor of the answer to the objections was as follows: "The opponents to Zionism have a favourite argument that we should wait till the Almighty gives Palestine to the Jews, and not anticipate the ways of Providence. The reply to this, of course, is that God helps those who help themselves. We are not to sit down and do nothing, but bestir ourselves and do all we can to bring about the return to the Holy Land. Providence always works through human agencies. The anti-Zionists are not even logical in their arguments, for they only quote scripture so far as it suits them, and then give a meaning to passages which in other circumstances they would not. To take only one out of many examples. Psalm 146, verse 7, reads "the Lord which gives food to the hungry". Here, if they applied the same argument as they do in connection with Zionism, they would not work or do anything so as to be in a position to obtain food, but simply rely on God's promise to feed them. They, however, in this case recognise its true meaning, but will not do so in similar quotations having reference to the restoration of the Jews to Palestine."
  - 47 Indicative is the fact that the New South Wales State elections were postponed until 14 October 1910 because of Yom Kippur and the danger of disenfranchising Jewish citizens and discommoding Jewish candidates for Parliament. The non-Jewish press carried occasional pro-Zionist articles, cf., *Adelaide Advertiser*, 17 December 1910; *Maitland Daily Mercury*, 21 December 1910; the *Sydney Evening News*, 1911 is reported as having a friendly article.
  - 48 C.Z.A., Z4/32171.
  - 49 Cf., Peter Y. Medding, *From Assimilation to Group Survival* (Melbourne, 1969), pp. 127 f.
  - 50 C.Z.A. Z4/293.
  - 51 *Ibid.*
  - 52 *Ibid.*, 5 December 1918.

- 53 *Ibid.*, letter of 23 September 1918. The Victorian Zionist Organization was formed in that year. The report of the State Zionist Council of Victoria stated that the year had been most active.
- 54 *Ibid.*, The Sydney Zionists' Association and the Young Men's Zionist Association combined to form the Union of Sydney Zionists.
- 55 The Union of Sydney Zionists had sent a copy of a resolution to the British government expressing their thanks to the government for their statement in 1918 on behalf of Rumanian Jewry. In 1919 members of the Victorian Zionist organization interviewed the Minister of Defence, Senator George Foster Pearce, and obtained an offer of help from the Australian government when Senator Pearce would be in London. Private Louis Phillips was given special army leave to act as Australian representative to the 1919 Zionist Conference. Cf. C.Z.A., Z4/293.
- 56 Cf., Israel Cohen, *The Journal of a Jewish Traveller* (London, 1925).
- 57 *Ibid.*, p. 47.
- 58 C.Z.A., Z4 1106/11, letter to Israel Cohen, 2 March 1922.
- 59 *Ibid.*, with a detailed account of the situation of Perth Jewry.
- 60 C.Z.A., Z7/2097, letter of 27 July 1923 from Israel Cohen to Rabbi Brodie.
- 61 *Ibid.*
- 62 *Ibid.* "Mr Zeltner is the president of the Victorian Zionist organization but I am afraid that this organisation is little more than a matter of form and I have not heard of it holding any meetings. I am therefore most anxious that the Victorian Zionist Organization should become a real live body and I should be most grateful if you would do everything in your power to bring this about . . ."
- 63 C.Z.A., Z4/1106/11. Letter to Dean Talbot; and *ibid.*, letter from Morris Symonds of the Union of Sydney Zionists to Israel Cohen.
- 64 C.Z.A., Z4/2097.
- 65 *Ibid.* Of this sum only £30,499 had been collected by 1923. The fact that so much had been pledged by European immigrants who were involved in trying to help their families overseas, made it difficult to have pledges redeemed.
- 66 *Ibid.* Letter of Zeltner to Israel Cohen; transfer of activities from Victorian Zionist Association to the Zionist Association Hatchia, June 1923.
- 67 C.Z.A., 11061, 11 August 1924. Letter to Israel Cohen. "South Australian interest in Zionism is moribund: we have not the right leader or leaders. Perhaps the new Rabbi from London will awaken us." A Newcastle Zionist association had existed, but it is described as moribund in 1924. A letter of 25 March 1924 shows a new Brisbane group, the Daughters of Zion, remitting small funds to London for a girls' agricultural college. In Broken Hill some Zionist activity must have been conducted because the sum of £ten was collected in 1924, (letter 28 January 1924)

- but no more is known about this group.
- 68 C.Z.A., Z4/3217 I. Letter by Alexander Goldstein to Keren Hayesod, London, 1 July 1927.
  - 69 *Ibid.*
  - 70 *Ibid.* "Union of Sydney Zionists, Maccabean Hall, Darlinghurst, Sydney . . . The *Hebrew Standard* is under the influence of Rabbi Cohen who is a pronounced anti-Zionist. I succeeded, however, in making the *Hebrew Standard* behave quite decently during my campaign, most probably because I promised him to discuss at the end of my campaign, the arrangements for your and the National Fund subsidy to that paper. The Sydney Campaign . . . I do not think that I have ever worked so hard or had to face such a great lot of difficulties . . . The greatest of them is the complete absence of Zionist workers . . . Every penny collected was got either at my meetings or by my personal canvassing . . . not one Zionist had done any canvassing."
  - 71 *Ibid.* See also the Report of the First Interstate Australian Zionist Conference, 19-20 September 1927.
  - 72 Letter, sent nt. 70.
  - 73 Report of Mark Ettinger to the Jewish Agency, cf., C.Z.A., Z4/32141.
  - 74 Letter of Ettinger to the Keren Hayesod, Jerusalem, 21 December 1928. Cf., C.Z.A., Z4/3217 I.
  - 75 Report, C.Z.A., Z4/3214 I.
  - 76 *Ibid.*
  - 77 Cf., *The Jewish Herald*, 3 January 1929.
  - 78 Cf., *The Hebrew Standard*, 10 August, 1906; 6 December 1907.
  - 79 The report worried the Jewish Agency who asked Ettinger to supply them with authentic figures and details of the effect on Australian Jewry. Cf., C.Z.A., Z4/3217 I, 1515.
  - 80 *Ibid.*, and Ettinger's report in the same file.
  - 81 Ettinger's aforementioned report.
  - 82 Cf., "Western Wall" in *Encyclopaedia of Zionism*, II: 1215-16, for a full description of the incident and the consequences.
  - 83 Cf., *The Hebrew Standard*, 8 and 15 February 1929.
  - 84 Cf., *The Jewish Herald*, 3 January 1929.
  - 85 Cf., C.Z.A., Z4/3217 I, letter of Ettinger 21 December 1928.
  - 86 *Ibid.*
  - 87 Cf., Ettinger's report of 1930, C.Z.A., Z4/3217 I, p. 5, where he discusses non-Jewish support for Australian Zionism.
  - 88 *Ibid.*
  - 89 See copy of the leaflet, "Fellow Jews" advertising the meeting on 2 November 1930, in C.Z.A., Z4/3217 II.
  - 90 The resolutions are typed on the back of the copy of the leaflet (see note 87) in the Central Zionist Archives. It reads:
    1. That this meeting, held on the 2nd November 1930, by the Jews of Sydney, whilst expressing its loyalty to His Majesty, King George V, protests against the recent White Paper issued



by the British Government in connection with Palestine. It regards the same as a breach of the terms of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate under which Palestine is administered.

2. That this meeting pledges its loyalty to the Zionist cause and expresses confidence in the action of the leaders.
3. That these resolutions be communicated to the Prime Minister of England and also to the Prime Minister of Australia.
4. That this meeting pledges itself to continue the Shekel Campaign and endeavours to secure an Australian delegate to the forthcoming Zionist Congress.

91 *Ibid.*, marginal notation.

92 A convenient summary of the population data appears in Encel, Buckley, *et al.*, pp. 27-41, *The Demographic History of the N.S.W. Jewish Community 1933-1966*, Jewish Social Studies, 34, No 2 (1972).

93 Cf., C.Z.A., S5/485.

94 Cf., "Australian Zionism" in *Encyclopaedia of Zionism*, chapters 5-9, and Medding, chapter 6.

95 Cf., letter by Brodie to Israel Cohen, C.Z.A., S5/495.

96 See letter of 14 November 1938, C.Z.A., S5/495.

97 Cf., Loewy to Lauterback, 18 September 1940, C.Z.A. S5/495.

98 Report of the Sixth Congress of the Federation, 3 March 1937, in C.Z.A., S5/495. It is interesting to observe how the resolutions of the Congress reflected the controversy between Zionists and Anglo-Jews, with statements of loyalty to the King and appreciation of Weizmann's work, all in the same resolution.

99 Cf., *Hebrew Standard*, 1 November, 1937.

100 Cf., *Hebrew Standard*, 18 November 1937.

101 C.Z.A., letter by Israel Cohen to Rabbi Levy, 26 January 1938, drawing attention to discussions between Cohen and Isaac Isaacs in the 1921 campaign. S5/495.

102 C.Z.A., S5/495 contains many copies of letters begging for information from Australia. It took at least four weeks for mail to arrive and many letters were lost. Eventually a procedure was adopted whereby mail was sent in duplicate via New York, ensuring the arrival of at least one copy.

103 Cf., J. M. Machover, *Towards Rescue: The Story of Australian Jewry's Stand for the Jewish Cause, 1940-1948* (Jerusalem, 1972), p. 13.

104 Cf., Solomon Stedman, "The Jewish Press in Australia", A.J.H.S., 6 (1964), part 1, pp.39-49.

105 Cf., Freilich, pp. 94-107, 113, 132-33, *Zion In Our Time* (1967).

106 E.g., Bishop Charles Venn Pilcher, *Palestine, A National Home for the Jews* (Australian Palestine Committee, New South Wales Section, n.d.); Dorothy Thompson, *Palestine and the Arabs* (Australian Palestine Committee, New South Wales Section, n.d.).

107 Publicity given to an approach by the Australian Zionist

- Federation to the Commonwealth Government, and a pledge of support by the Acting Prime Minister, Sir Arthur Fadden, may have been instrumental in persuading Churchill to authorize the establishment of a Palestinian Brigade in the British Army. Cf., Freilich, p. 87. Robert Menzies went to Palestine in February 1941 on his way home from a war cabinet meeting in London. He was greeted there by Moshe Shertok and Chaim Weizmann. Cf., C.Z.A., S5/15203.
- 108 Cf., Isaac N. Steinberg, *Australia, the Unpromised Land* (London, 1948).
- 109 Cf., S. Stedman, *A Jewish Settlement in Australia* (Sydney, n.d.); *Australians and Jewish Settlement in the Kimberleys*, Sydney, n.d.); *Jewish Settlement in the Kimberleys supported by Australians, A Collection of Articles and Documents*, (Sydney, n.d.).
- 110 Cf., Machover, pp. 16f.
- 111 Cf., Rutland, chapter 6, "Controversies over Zionism:" Medding, chapter 6, "Zionism, Nationalism, Charity and Psychological Security", and Cowen, pp. 232-37.
- 112 *Hebrew Standard*, 28 October 1943, 4, 11 November 1943.
- 113 Julius Stone, *Stand Up and Be Counted* (Sydney, 1944).
- 114 Cf., Machover, pp. 45 f. Freilich, in a personal communication, indicated that Evatt had a very strong feeling that his special mission was to help in the establishment of a Jewish State. Evatt had almost a messianic sense of his place in the establishment of the State of Israel.
- 115 Cf., Cowen, pp. 238 and 243.
- 116 Sir Isaac Alfred Isaacs, *Political Zionism* (Sydney, 1946).
- 117 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 July 1946; *The Argus*, 11 July 1946.
- 118 For a description of the negotiations, cf. Medding, pp. 132-33.
- 119 Cf., Mark Braham, *Jews Don't Hate* (Melbourne, 1970).
- 120 Cf., Freilich, *passim*, for a description of their friendly relationships. Cf., also, H. V. Evatt, "Australia's Part in the Creation of Israel", A.J.H.S., 5 (1961), part 4, pp. 151-70, where Evatt testifies to those friendships.
- 121 Cf., Freilich, p. 197.
- 122 Ben Gurion's latest work, *Israel, A Personal History* (Tel Aviv, 1972), has neither Evatt's name nor the name Australia in its pages. His name also does not appear in the *Encyclopaedia of Zionism*, except in a passing reference in the entry on "Australian Zionism".

NOTES ON EARLY EMISSARIES  
FROM THE HOLY LAND TO AUSTRALIA

by

Rabbi Shmuel Gorr\*

In the Journal of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, Vol. III, Part VII (1952), M. Z. Forbes, the author of "Palestinian Appeals in the 'Fifties' and 'Sixties'" comments in foot-note 49 as follows:

"It would be interesting to know the exact site and the subsequent history of these rooms."

It is the intention of this writer to not only answer this query, but also to illustrate those very rooms.

A small historic description would not be out of place. Notwithstanding the earlier abortive attempt to create a permanent Ashkenazi settlement in Eretz Israel, and particularly in Jerusalem, a new and successful endeavour was made in the second half of the 18th Century, first by Chassidim from Russia, and a little later, by disciples of the Vilna Gaon who started arriving in the Holy Land from the beginning of the 19th Century in ever increasing numbers. Gradually Jews started coming from all communities of Europe, Eastern and Western.<sup>1</sup>

At first there was one organised roof-body<sup>2</sup> for handling the monies that were received from all parts of Europe. The Jewish population was basically organised around *Kollelim* which were very similar to what we today know as *Landsmanschaften*, meaning that Jews from similar geographic origin were grouped together around such a fraternity known as *Kollel*, and were supported financially by their brethren still living in the city or district of their origin.

One of the strongest and richest of these *Kollelim* was the one which represented the Jews of German and Dutch origins. As they received the greatest amounts of money, they decided to break off from the parent general *Kollel* and to receive their monies from abroad for themselves, and to give only a smaller amount for the roof *Kollel*. Thus, these Jews of Holland and Deutschland were the first to break off and create their own independent *Kollel*.<sup>3</sup> They called their *Kollel*, *Kollel Ho'd*, being an acrostic of the first letters of Holland and Deutschland.

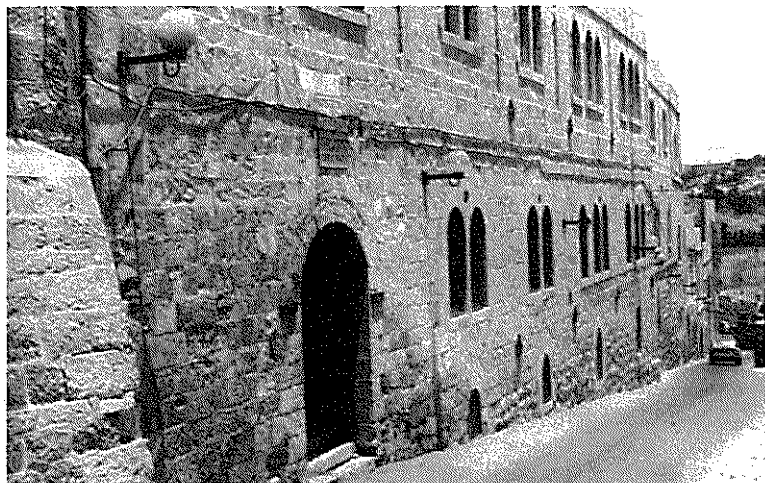
This breaking away caused much bitterness in the Jerusalem Ashkenazi community. There existed in Jerusalem a large property that remained from the earlier unsuccessful attempt at settling Ashkenazi Jews in Jerusalem. It was, and still is called 'The Churvah of Rabbi Yehudah Ha-Chosid'. Many taxes were still owing on the land and building, and before the Ashkenazim could start to physically redeem the place they had to pay all those taxes. Rabbinic Emissaries were sent out to all parts of Europe and the New World in order to raise the money to redeem 'The Churvah'.

Rabbi Hayam Zeev Sneersohn, although himself a Chabadnik, was sent to Australia to solicit funds for the *Kollel Ho'd*. Their intention

was to build 'Houses of Shelter' for the poor on Mont Zion.<sup>4</sup> By historic chance, the parent *Kollel* had despatched an equally distinguished scholar in the person of Rabbi Yakov Sapir, to collect funds for the redemption and rebuilding of the 'Churvah', at the exact time when Rabbi Sneersohn was in Australia.

With these facts in mind, it will become easier to understand why Rabbi Sapir attacked Rabbi Sneersohn whilst visiting Melbourne.<sup>5</sup> These attacks were even printed in the Melbourne daily newspapers. Knowing of the great success of Rabbi Sneersohn's mission, Rabbi Sapir was convinced that the financial success of his mission had been jeopardised, thus vindicating the animosity felt by the parent *Kollel* against the *Kollel Ho''d* and its independent fund-raising appeals. It is this author's opinion that the attack made on Sneersohn by Sapir was more intended against Sneersohn's *Kollel*, than the man himself. Historically informative as Sapir's published travelogue was, which included Australia and New Zealand, his financial attempts on behalf of the parent *Kollel* were not really successful.<sup>6</sup>





From the monies that Rabbi Sneersohn collected in Australia, eight two-storied buildings were built for the poor on Mount Zion.<sup>7</sup> In the photograph of these buildings we can see these houses stretching from the entrance to the inner courtyard to the right. The lower smaller windows are in the basements.



In the second photograph we see the Hebrew sign reading – “Shelter Houses for the Poor on Mount Zion, may it be rebuilt”. This stone slab

was discovered directly beneath the arch-way in two pieces, during the current reconstruction of the Old City of Jerusalem. These eight two-storied 'Shelter Houses' were built by Australian monies, both Jewish and non-Jewish, and Australian Jewry can take pride in knowing that today these rooms are the premises of the '*Yeshivat Ha-Kotel*', a Talmudical Academy sponsored by the Bnai Akivah movement. The outside is probably much the same as it was on completion. The interior has been made usable for the Yeshivah, with the main Synagogue, learning hall, and dormitories and classrooms.

Any visitor may feel assured that he or she would be very happily shown around these premises on inquiry. One last point of information would not be out of place. Today, Mount Zion refers to a section of the Old City of Jerusalem that is beyond the Walls of the Old City of Jerusalem. Historically it was actually all of the Mount, and all of the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem.

In Vol. III (A.J.H.S.), p. 323, there is a discussion as to the identity of Rabbi Hayam Zevee Sneersohn,<sup>†</sup> Rabbi Hayam Levi and a Rabbi Zevee. (Note 29 on that page asks whether there is any connection between Hayam Zevee Sneersohn and the famous Lubavitcher Dynasty. I am in a position to answer the query of Note 49 at p.328 of the same Volume.

a) Rabbi Hayam Levi was in Melbourne as early as September 1856. He received half the contents of the Jerusalem Charity Box, p.322.

b) Rabbi Zevee (who according to the Argus, 2-1-1857 was present at the levee of His Excellency Sir Henry Barkly) was in Melbourne in January 1857, p.323, note 28).

c) Rabbi Hayam Zevee Sneersohn arrived in Melbourne in December 1861.

The itinerary of Sneersohn is well known and has been documented by major Israeli scholars. He was in Australia from December 1861 until 1863. He is not identical with Hayam Levi (as he was not of Levitical descent) nor is he identical with Rabbi Zevee. Both of them preceded Sneersohn in Australia. Amongst the rare photos that have found their way into my archive there is a photo of (Rabbi) Hakham Gedaliah Zevee of Hebron. The photo was taken by George Richards in Ballarat in 1857. The wood engraving of Sneersohn, which is in the Mocatta Library in London shows another person in other clothing to the photo that I have of Rabbi Gedaliah Zevee. Gedaliah Zevee was also not a Levi. I have as yet no further details about Rabbi Hayam Levi.

The Shelter Houses that were built on Mount Zion are readily identified. On Mount Zion (within the Walls of the Old City) there is a row of buildings known as the 'Batei Mahse' (Houses of Shelter) which, on the liberation of the Old City in 1967 were taken over by the Bnei Akivah Movement and turned into the Yeshivat Ha-Kotel where today a couple of hundred Talmudic students pursue their learning. The buildings were completely renovated. These were the buildings that were partly built by Australian Jewry in the years 1861-1863 by donations to the appeal of Rabbi Hayam Zevee Sneersohn. (There was a heavy

dispute in 1967 between the Bnei Akivah Movement and the Trustees of these buildings which were originally built for and housed itinerant scholars. Unfortunately the political pressure of the National Religious Party of Israel forced the issue in the government and the Bnei Akivah won; without any historic justification.

At page 144 of the *History of the Jews of New Zealand*, Rabbi Goldman names a few Rabbinic Emissaries: Rabbi Judah Assuri is dealt with to a degree by his grand-daughter R. Robinovitz, Vol. VII, p. 324. Rabbi Yechiel (Bechor) Cohen is mentioned in the same book as having been in New Zealand. In Vol. III, pp.323-324 he is mentioned under the name of Yechiel Cohen. In the work called 'Sefer Hevron' his name appears as a Shadar (Rabbinic Emissary) who travelled to America c. 1847 and in 1849 for the 'Bet El' Congregation of Jerusalem in 1849. No mention is made of his Australian and New Zealand visit. (The *Sefer Hevron* was published in Jerusalem in 1970.)

Rabbi Kassan is mentioned on p. 144 of Goldman's *History*. In 'Sefer Hevron' there is listed a Rabbi Hayyim Shushanah (Shmuel) Hassan of Hebron. It is possible that he is the one referred to here as Kassan. Anglo-Saxons have a difficult time pronouncing the guttural Hebrew 'Het'. It is possible that it ended up as 'K'.

At p. 322 of Vol. III there is mentioned a Rabbi Israel Cohen. 'Sefer Hevron' lists a Rabbi (Rahamim) Israel Ha-Cohen. As he visited Irak in 1855 it is possible that this is the same Rabbi Israel Ha-Cohen of Hebron as mentioned in your *Journal* for the same year.

Allow me further to draw your attention to what, I believe, are a few minor errors in the Falk translation of the visit of Rabbi Yakov Sapir to Australia and New Zealand. Rabbi Falk wrote, Sapir returned from Dunedin to Melbourne, on 16th of Tammuz 5622 (14-7-1862). This must be a mistake in the original made by Sapir himself. The voyage from Melbourne to Dunedin was only eight days, from Adar II, 2nd 5622 until Adar II 10th (4-12 March 1862). The return voyage should have been recorded as arriving on 16th Sivan 5622 (14-6-1862); or that he left Dunedin a month later. (This cannot be as he states that he left Dunedin on the 'morrow' of Shevuoth which is 8th of Sivan (6 June). If I am incorrect — then why did the return journey from Dunedin take 39 days instead of eight days? One suggestion can be made. In the footnotes to the translation of his voyage it is suggested that he never actually visited Hobart and that what he states is from hearsay. Maybe his boat visited Hobart on the way back from Dunedin but he did not record his actual visit to the community as it was possibly a great failure.

Another point in Vol. I, p. 192, is the date of departure for Adelaide ... 1st of Av 5622 (incorrectly stated as August 3, 1862). The equivalent date was June 28, 1862.

A last comment on Sapir. In Vol. I, p. 197, the crossing of the equator is mentioned as a reason for a doubt in the Observance of the true day of Sabbath. The 'crossing of the equator' does not affect the Jewish Sabbath. Change in longitude, only, can affect the observance

of the Jewish Sabbath. Hence Sapir acted correctly 'in counting' days. It is the movement of sun that causes the halakhic ruling.

† Born Russia 1834, died Jerusalem, 1882.

*\*Rabbi Gorr, formerly of Melbourne and presently Director of Central Archives And Research Institute For The History Of Gedolei Israel, Jerusalem, corresponds regularly with our Society, furnishing details of historical data which he has researched especially relating to the Palestine Rabbis who visited Australia in the second half of the 19th century. New material has been contributed by Rabbi Gorr and it is appropriate that it should be appended to the article by Dr. Crown. This material now adds some significant and interesting data to the previous items appearing in this Journal some years ago. (Editor)*

#### FOOTNOTES

- 1 Encyclopaedia Judaica (hereinafter E.J.) Vol. 9, pps. 1447-1449, and 1454-1456.
- 2 *Kollel Perushim*. *Perushim* is the name used to refer to non-Chasidic Ashkenazic Jews in Eretz Israel.
- 3 "*Ha-Chalukah*" by Avraham Moshe Luncz, Jerusalem 1912, pps. 59-60.
- 4 E. J. Vol. 9, p. 1456. Also 'The Jews in Victoria in the 19th Century' by L. M. Goldman, Melbourne 1954, pps. 155-161.
- 5 'The Jews in Victoria in the 19th Century', p. 159.
- 6 Ibid. p. 159.
7. Ibid. p. 158. A.J.H.S. Vol. III, Part VII, p. 328.





The Appeal document, handwritten in Hebrew — from the archives of this Society — is addressed to the Congregation, Beth Israel, Sydney, Australia and it nominates Rabbi Hyam Zevee Sneersohn as the Appeal Committee's representative for the collection of funds to build homes for the poor on Mount Zion. It is worthy of note that bearing date June 21, 1861, James Finn, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul — Jerusalem, certifies to the signatories of the Appeal and states: "I . . . sincerely recommend to favourable notice the object of this petition as the Jews of Jerusalem are much in want of house accommodation and their numbers are increasing every year." James Finn, whose signature and seal is affixed — "British Consulate, Palestine", held that post for about 20 years. It appears that he was very kindly disposed, and most helpful to the Jews of the Holy City. (Editor)

## JOEL FREDMAN

by

R. M. Fredman, M.B., B.S., F.R.A.C.G.P., D. (Obst.), R.C.O.G.

In the Australian Jewish Herald of 11 March, 1943, amongst all the news items about the plight of Nazi persecuted Jewry and the problems of their resettlement, was an obituary article and a comment in the Editor's column:

"Following a long illness, the death occurred last Thursday of Mr. Joel Fredman in his 83rd year. Rabbi Danglow officiated at the burial and he was quoted as saying —

'I am moved by an especially deep and painful sense of personal deprivation because by his passing I have lost, alas, a very dearly beloved and faithful colleague, with whom I had the privilege of working in blissful and uninterrupted harmony for over 30 years in the service of St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation from the day I was inducted into office as its minister, and for whom, because of his sterling qualities, I developed a strong and ever growing affection and esteem which will never perish from my heart.'"

The Editor, in his column, seemed to sum up contemporary feeling thus:—

"Another link with the early origins of this community has been broken with the passing of Mr. Joel Fredman. An officer of the St. Kilda Hebrew Congregation for 55 years, he endeared himself to large numbers who will hold his memory in grateful affection. From his vantage point as a synagogue officer, he not only watched but actively helped to mould the development of Jewish life in this city. He had an exceptionally clear recollection of events, and to listen to his account of conditions in Melbourne 60 years ago was a delight. He educated three generations of Jewish youth. In recent years many of his students were the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of his pupils back in the 80's and 90's of last century. His great kindness and charm bound all who knew him in a warm human bond. He will be sadly missed."

No one appears to have written any biographic studies to date, and so his significance is yet to be realised. May I offer this paper as an introduction to the subject, and hope that others competent in history, education and music will find it interesting enough to develop.

The material for this paper is mainly based on family recollections and anecdotes, personal interviews and correspondence with some of those who knew him well, and Joel's own press cuttings and scrap book. He wrote no diary or memoirs, and no personal correspondence file has survived. The scrap book commences from 1876, the year of his matriculation, up to 1895. Why it ceased then, when he was aged 35 is uncertain, but the following events of that year may be relevant:—

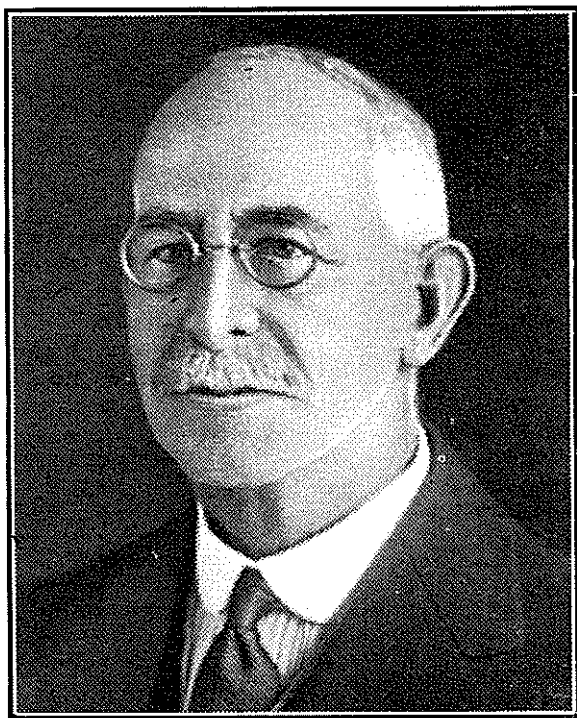
1. Tonic Sol-fa had now become the recognised system of singing teaching in State schools, the method that Joel had used and promoted

since 1880, the start of his career.

2. On 15 August, 1895, he conducted his pupils from the St.Kilda Hebrew School in a Grand Concert at the St.Kilda Town Hall, which raised the money needed for a new school room, even though the economy was still depressed.

3. His father, Henry Fredman, died on 31 August.

4. Some time during 1895 he visited Sydney to see Miriam Berrick, whom he married in 1898.



*Joel Fredman*

Joel Fredman was born in Fitzroy in 1860, the sixth of eight children born to Henry and Jane (nee Jacobson). Henry Fredman was born in Romford, Essex in 1822, married in London in 1845, and arrived in Victoria in 1854. The family movements can be traced during Joel's childhood from the Sands and McDougal directories of the day. In 1861 Henry Fredman was a carpenter and draper at 15 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy and 288 Brunswick Street, Collingwood. In 1865 they

moved to 175 Brunswick Street and in 1868 Henry had a separate drapery at 146 Lonsdale Street West. By 1871 Henry was a cabinet maker at 19 Peel Street, Hotham,\* which remained unchanged until 1889 when he moved to 65 Peel Street. The last business entry was 1892, and he died in 1895, with the following press notice:—

Fredman — On 31st inst., at "Mizpah", Park Road, St.Kilda, Henry Fredman, dearly beloved husband of Jane, father of Mrs.Krakowski, Mrs. Michael Cohen, Messrs Abraham, Isidore and Joel Fredman, Misses Harriet, Louisa and Celia Fredman, and brother of Samuel.

He was buried next day, 1 September, at the St.Kilda Cemetery.

Henry Fredman seems to have been a typical tradesman merchant of 19th century Anglo-Jewry. Charles Price<sup>1</sup> mentions how early Jewish settlers clustered round the shops and businesses of Collins, Bourke and Elizabeth Streets. Even in 1871, after the gold expansion, 80 per cent of Jews still lived in the city or inner suburbs. Fredman's movements are thus consistent with this pattern of the first Jewish immigrant phase.

Joel went to school at the Melbourne Hebrew School, behind the Bourke Street Synagogue, where he was to progress from pupil, pupil teacher, teacher to headmaster. This institution goes back to 1841, two years after Melbourne's first Jews arrived. The 57 Jews of Melbourne formed the Jewish Congregational Society, changing its name in 1844 to "The Holy Congregation of the Remnant of Israel", which continues to this day. The first synagogue was built in 1847, and Mr.Lindenthal the Cantor Chazan set up the first school the next year. The big new synagogue was consecrated in 1854 still with walls and ceiling hung with calico. The interior was finished in 1858. The old premises were used for overflow services. In 1859 the Denominational schools board was set up, which allotted moneys to Jews, as with other religious groups, to encourage them to establish their own schools. In May 1860, a Jewish school was set up under the patronage of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation and called the West Melbourne Grammar School, teaching Hebrew, religion and secular subjects, with an Anglo-Jewish bias.

In 1862 the Heales Ministry abolished the Denomination Board, and passed the Common Schools Act. The next year the school was renamed Common School 180 (Jewish School). A new Act of Parliament in 1865 established the payment of teachers of secular subjects by the Victorian Education Department. In 1872 the Education Act was passed, abolishing State aid to denominational schools. It was designed to make education free, compulsory and secular, and to overcome sectarian differences, so that no child could be deprived of education because of religion. The denominational schools were given a year's grace, so Common School 180 closed on 31 December, 1873, and the Melbourne Hebrew School commenced immediately, with J. T. Symthe as headmaster. Melbourne Jewry, after much debate, had opted for continuing the school as a denominational

\*Hotham was later renamed North Melbourne.

school, without subsidy, and as a communal rather than congregational responsibility. Some would-be secularists supported the school because of the Christian bias and distasteful dogma in the State school text books..

The press report<sup>2</sup> of the annual prize giving at the Melbourne Hebrew School included Joel Fredman as Dux of the School and Dux in English, and receiver of the teachers prize for sixth class, for the year 1875. For 1876, the press report included the following comment by the President of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation, Mr Lewis Myers:

"Since the school must, in the first place, be regarded as a primary school, where the pupils leave when they are between 13 and 14 years of age, no candidates have been sent up to the University; however, during the past year, two pupils remained to go on with the higher branches of education, and it is gratifying to find that on those two pupils being presented to the University, neither of them being 16 years old; one, Joel Fredman, passed both the matriculation and Civil Service examination, and the other, Albert Cohen, passed the Civil Service examination."

The Melbourne University matriculation examination for July, 1876 had 13 successful candidates, six of whom were women, and for the Civil Service examination there were 16 passes. The daily press stated — "The Melbourne Hebrew School presented two candidates, one of whom, viz. Joel Fredman, passed both matriculation and Civil Service, and the other passed in four subjects. This is the first occasion on which pupils have been sent up from this school."

To matriculate in those days was a recognised achievement. All successful candidates had their names permanently placed in the University calendar even if they did not progress on to a degree.

The school prize list for the 1876 year included Joel Fredman winning the matriculation prize of ten guineas, donated by Edward Cohen to the first pupil to so achieve. His sister Cecilia won a general prize in class five, and his nieces Ada and Flora Krakowski won prizes in the junior grades.

#### Rev. Raphael Benjamin

While reading of the period of Joel's early development, I was looking for people or movements that were integral to his growth, accomplishments and style. There seems little doubt that the key figure was the Reverend Raphael Benjamin who had been a teacher at the Jews' Free School, in the East End of London where both he and the school enjoyed a high reputation. He is also said to have been a pioneer of the Tonic Solfa practical singing teaching system. From his initial appointment as Second Reader of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation Benjamin had become school principal, choirmaster, and acting Congregational Minister by 1874. His talents speak for themselves. As headmaster, he improved the Melbourne Hebrew School to the point where after 12 months it was described as "being second to none in the Australian colonies"; its English pass rate was 90 per cent compared to 61 per cent in State schools. After four years in office the enrolment

had doubled from 100 to 200.<sup>3</sup> In 1875, the School was taken over by the Congregation, and in so doing school funding left nothing for choristers. As choirmaster, Benjamin kept the choir going successfully without payment. Within the congregation, he was never appointed Senior Minister because of his unorthodox views, and there were frequent clashes with the synagogue officers.

In 1878 the number of pupils was dropping. Benjamin stated that he had to act as minister, the school had no headmaster, there were constant changes of staff, there was lack of finance, and the proximity of the East Melbourne Hebrew School to the new Jewish residential areas had reduced the school's appeal. The pupil teacher and the matriculation classes were suspended. In 1879 Benjamin resigned as school principal; for there was deep division between the synagogue and the school. He was disillusioned with his inadequate status and recognition, and the conflicts arising from his unorthodox views. He opened up the Angel College in Fitzroy for private schooling, with Hebrew classes for Jewish pupils three times a week, and his reputation as an ex teacher from the London Jews' Free School stood him well. At this stage he helped establish the Tonic Solfa Association of Victoria, and conducted its first concert at the Melbourne Town Hall, on 27 November 1880. However, his liberal views had estranged him from any synagogue pulpit in Australia, and thus ostracised, he left for America, after his Jewish friends, including Joel Fredman, presented him with an illuminated address, and the Tonic Solfa Association farewelled him at its first social concert. Benjamin joined the Reform Movement in the U.S.A. and took over the ministry of B'nai Israel Congregation in Cincinnati in 1882, from Rabbi Dr. Max Lilienthal, and he became close colleague to the famous Rabbi Dr. Isaac Meyer Wise of B'nai Yeshurun Congregation in Cincinnati. In 1889 he was called to the 15th Street Temple in New York, and he eventually died there, aged 60.

The significance of all this is that Fredman's press cuttings book contains cuttings from the Cincinnati daily press featuring reports on two of Benjamin's sermons, during 1883. Although there are no surviving letters, it certainly appears that the two men had remained in touch.

### FREDMAN AS HEADMASTER

Joel's teaching career seems to have started when he was engaged to take the infant class in Hebrew at the Melbourne Hebrew School in 1878. I do not know if he undertook any formal teacher training following his matriculation. Certainly the Melbourne Hebrew School employed pupil teachers undergoing in-service training under the Victorian Education Department.

Within 12 months or so, chaos descended, the principal, Raphael Benjamin resigned, and the headmaster, A. L. Brucke disappeared, and no one could find him. Joel took temporary charge of the school.

About this stage, the Congregation refused to pay the subsidy, and the school board resigned. Brucke returned, was reinstated, then resigned, and Joel became acting headmaster. The school once again was made subject to the congregation under an Education Committee, which abolished the matriculation class, making the State School Certificate the upper limit. Joel pressed on in spite of staffing problems and his own ill health which at one stage forced him to resign temporarily. He established a school choir taught by Tonic Solfa method.

In his annual report for 1882, Joel mentioned that the school had an enrolment of 141, average attendance of 110, and 35 attended free of charge. The prevalence of "blight" had decreased the averages. The staff that year totalled six. The school numbers and standards must have been thought satisfactory, for in 1883, the evidence given to the Royal Commission into Religious Instruction in State Schools by the three Hebrew congregation presidents and the three school headmasters, was uniformly in favour of no change to the Education Act.

In 1883-4, Joel officially became headmaster. He reintroduced the matriculation class, increased the staff, and the number of pupils increased, but only briefly, for in 1885, numbers dropped, and the precarious finances produced strong moves to close the secular classes, in spite of Thomas Brodribb, the Senior State School Inspector having given the school an excellent report. Decision was postponed because of divided opinion, but by 1886 the secular school was forced to close, and Joel Fredman's services were dispensed with. How he filled his time between December 1886, and his new appointment at St.Kilda in 1888 is uncertain, but it is stated that he opened up Hebrew classes at Carlton Grammar School, and the late Abe Davis recalled Joel teaching at the Peel Street State School in 1887, but whether full or part time is not known.

During his years as headmaster, Joel was also one of the two vice presidents of the Melbourne Jewish Literary Society, re-formed after some financial wranglings with the ailing Melbourne Jewish Club. The Society flourished, with lectures, debates and concerts. It was not without its internal conflicts between orthodox and reform. John Monash was a member, and gave a talk on Islam.

### MUSICIAN

On 21 December, 1882, the pupils of the Melbourne Hebrew School gave their first concert to a capacity audience of about 250 people at St.Patrick's Hall. The programme was signed by Fredman, and seems to mark a debut both for the school musical life and for Joel's personal musical achievements. The programme included an overture performed by some 15 boys, who played on combs through tissue paper, the effect of which elicited much applause. After the performance, Alderman Benjamin proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Fredman, the energetic conductor, who in thanking the audience, assured all present that the work was one of pleasure as the children were almost all readers of music, making the task all the easier. The children had taken only one



month's preparation for the work under the Tonic Solfa system.<sup>4</sup> Joel's interest in this system must have originated from his contact with Raphael Benjamin, and as early as 27 November 1880, at 20 years of age, he sang at the Melbourne Town Hall with the Tonic Solfa Association Choir. About 1883, he commenced his singing classes at the Mechanics Institute, Williamstown, every Tuesday evening, both elementary and advanced level, and terms 10 shillings quarterly in advance. Why did he choose Williamstown? Probably because Krakowski and Fredman, his brother-in-law and brother, already had an established furniture retailing business in Thompson Street, and said to be Williamstown's first furniture shop.

He prepared his singing pupils for the Australian Certificate of the Tonic Solfa College of London, and there are records of him having two successful candidates for elementary in 1884-5, and 20 elementary passes for 1886-8. In 1884 he passed the College Matriculation Certificate with staff notation and became qualified to examine for the elementary and intermediate certificate.

On 29 September, 1883, the induction service was held for the Reverend Dr. Joseph Abrahams, who had arrived on the 'Lusitania' from London to take charge of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation. Joel conducted the Young Men's Choir for this occasion.

In December 1883, the First Grand Concert by the Williamstown Tonic Solfa Singing Classes was held, and conducted by Fredman, and a share of the proceeds was contributed to the Local Ladies Benevolent Society. The Williamstown Advertiser and the Williamstown Chronicle in their subsequent issues gave it a glowing report.<sup>5</sup> In 1884, he read a paper entitled "Hebrew Melodies, Their Origin and Character", to the monthly meeting of the Victorian Tonic Solfa Association. On 14 April 1885, the Junior Choir boys of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation participated in the first Competition of the Tonic Solfa Association of Victoria under the baton of Joel, and won the prize for sight reading in two parts.<sup>6</sup> One of his pupils also carried off the first prize for ear exercise or musical dictation. Following the conclusion of the competition, the boys choir sang in a concert, and were compelled to give an encore in answer to repeated calls.

At some stage, Fredman wanted to introduce women into the Choir at Bourke Street; his request was approved by the Committee and the majority of members, but a vocal minority pressed for a Chief Rabbi ruling, which was that it contravened Jewish law, and so was abandoned. Later, in 1895, this decision was reversed following a precedent set in London.

The merits or otherwise of Tonic Solfa tuition raised heated correspondence in the press. In 1888, *The Age* ran a large article on Musical Instruction in State Schools, accompanied by an editorial leader, provoked by the annual expenditure of £7,000 by the Victorian Government for State school education and the dubious results to show for it, and blamed the failure to adopt Tonic Solfa methods. Correspondence ensued, including a letter from Joel, who endorsed the

criticism of State school music instruction, reminded readers that it was used in all the Board schools in London, and laid the challenge open to match a group of his Tonic Solfa children against a similar group trained by the ordinary method. He went on — "As we shall be visited during the currency of our great Exhibition by a number of experts on education, advantage should be taken of their presence, and their counsel solicited on this important feature of our education system. If Melbourne is to be a musical city, and Australia a musical nation, proper treatment should be extended to the rising generation, and a systematic grounding made in our State schools."

That same year, 1888, he read a paper on the Musical Instruments of the Bible, to the monthly meeting of the Tonic Solfa Association. He traced their history and development from the earliest times. The various instruments used in the Tabernacle and Temple worship were described in detail, and charts were exhibited to show the several forms.<sup>7</sup> In reply to questions, Fredman explained the objections of the Jewish people to the use of instruments in the synagogue services and said that the mere use of the instruments was not held by many orthodox Jews as objectionable in itself, but that the breaking of a string in a harp or violin, or an analogous accident to a keyed instrument would be looked upon as a breach of the Sabbath, the risk of which should be particularly avoided.

In May of 1888, he resigned as choirmaster of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation. On 5 June, he was presented by the Board of Management of the Congregation with an illuminated address, which read as follows:—<sup>8</sup>

To Mr. Joel Fredman, Choirmaster of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation,

I have the honour, by direction of the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Melbourne, Alderman B. Benjamin J.P., President, to convey to you a copy of the following resolution which was unanimously adopted at the meeting of the Executive of the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation held on Monday, 30 May, 1888-5648, viz:—

This Committee desire to place on record their appreciation of the services of Mr. Joel Fredman, during his long career in connection with the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation, and bear testimony to the zeal and energy at all times evinced by that gentleman in the discharge of his duties, and that a copy of this resolution be engrossed and presented to him. I have the honour to be, Sir

Yours obediently,  
S. M. Solomon, Secretary.

Zeal and energy there was indeed. While as headmaster and as choir-master, he often treated pupils and choristers to parties and picnics, including the annual bayside picnic. One such picnic was given by E. L. Zox, M.L.A., President of the Congregation to the pupils on 12 March 1884, when 200 children went to Mordialloc by train. As

headmaster he arranged all the races and dancing competition, and Zox awarded the prizes.

That August, of 1888, at the weekly rehearsal of the Bourke Street Synagogue choir, he was presented with a silver watch as a gift from the choir boys. "Mr. Fredman, in thanking the boys for their present, stated that he had always done his best in the interest of the Congregation and also in giving the choristers a good musical education. Mr. Fredman remarked that upwards of 90 Jewish boys had been trained for the choir by him during the last ten years. The choir had sung with much success in the Exhibition Building at the request of Mr. E. L. Zox, M.L.A., on behalf of the Women's Hospital, at the Melbourne Town Hall, Protestant Hall, Athenaeum, and recently at the Juvenile Exhibition, where a prize of 11 guineas had been won. Mr. Fredman exhorted the boys to behave well in the Synagogue, to show respect and obedience to their leader, Mr. Mendoza, and also their instructor, Mr. W. J. Turner, so that the choir may uphold its present state of efficiency."<sup>9</sup> Mr. Mendoza apparently lasted only six months — he resigned claiming gross insubordination and unruly behaviour of the choristers.

The year 1888 also saw the formation of the Melbourne Hebrew Choral Society, formed for the purpose of cultivating sacred music. Joel was honorary conductor. In August, the Society sang at the Athenaeum, with other performers for a charity evening to aid the library fund of the Jewish Literary Society. Later that year was his move to St. Kilda, where he was to serve for 50 years. Once established, he formed a boys choir of 40 voices, which soon won the praise of critics and frequently took part in charity concerts. The first concert of the St. Kilda Hebrew School and Choir was held at the Alfred Hall, Barkly Street, in June 1889; this enabled Joel to present £10 from the proceeds to aid the Hospital for Sick Children.

In October 1889, the members of the Melbourne Hebrew Choral Society requested their President, Rev. Myers, to present Fredman with an illuminated address,<sup>10</sup> which duly described their appreciation of his efforts and services as honorary conductor.

Joel was the conductor of a dramatic entertainment at St. Joseph's School on 16 August 1892, to celebrate the opening of Mrs G. B. W. Lewis's Academy of Elocution. The next year, on 18 April 1893, the pupils of the Hebrew School at St. Kilda presented their third concert at the Alfred Hall, in the form of a school cantata entitled "An Hour In Fairyland". Also in 1893, when the retrenchment of the Government Inspector of singing in State Schools, Dr. M. Burney, was announced, Fredman wrote a letter to *The Argus* condemning the decision, and recommending that his valued services be retained, and his salary reduced according to the already published retrenchment scale. The black cloud of the depression was to lift, however, at least for music. Tonic Solfa was introduced into State schools for 1895 and as vice-president of the Victorian Tonic Solfa Association, Joel wrote a triumphant letter to *The Age* on 20 February, and applauded the

consistent advocacy of that journal in supporting the method over the years. On 18 June that year, the fourth concert of the pupils of the St. Kilda Hebrew School was held at the Alfred Hall. The operetta "Red Riding Hood" and tableau vivants were performed. The Jewish Herald wrote up the performance and mentioned that the management of the East Melbourne Bazaar had requested a repeat performance. It was repeated on 15 August at the St. Kilda Town Hall in aid of the school building fund, under the patronage of the Mayor and Councillors of the City of St. Kilda. In December 1895, Fredman conducted a school concert at St. Joseph's schoolroom, Fitzgerald Street, South Yarra in aid of the school prize fund. The press report was favourable — "It was evident that Mr. Fredman spares neither time nor trouble in bringing his pupils to a high state of musical perfection." For many years after joining St. Kilda he supplemented his income with outside singing teaching, including in schools. The music at St. Kilda in later years was based on the book "The Voice of Prayer and Praise; A Handbook of Synagogue Music", which was the standard repertoire of Anglo-Jewish congregations. It first appeared in 1899, and included compositions by Mombach, Hast and Saloman. Joel disliked the operatic style of Lewandowski of Berlin, and the austere style of Sulzer, the Viennese Chazan. He loved melody, and would extract a tune from anywhere including non-Jewish material and classical music. He was very fond of the work of Naumbourg, 1850-1900, the Parisian Chazan, who adapted the music of his contemporaries, including Offenbach.

Fredman wrote each chorister's part out on the stave in later years, although his own conductor's book remained in Tonic Solfa. By the time of his retirement, Tonic Solfa was obsolete. His musical career was well summarised by the entry in the book, *Music Makers of the Sunny South*:—<sup>11</sup>

Fredman, Joel. Born in Fitzroy. As a small boy a chorister in the Bourke Street Synagogue under David Miranda. He became conductor of the Jewish Synagogue in Melbourne, first at Bourke Street and then at St. Kilda (for over 40 years), where he formed a boys' choir, which competed in juvenile competitions successfully. Later he organised a mixed choir, which is now in charge of the Rev. Jacob Danglow. He was singing master for many years at the Presbyterian Ladies' College and other schools, also many State schools.

## MARRIAGE

In 1898, Fredman married Miriam Berrick, who was then head chorister at the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation. She was the second youngest of the nine children of Lewin and Theresa Berrick. Lewin Berrick was born in Liverpool in 1833, and initially migrated to the South Island of New Zealand. However, following a robbery, he came to Melbourne where he eventually became successful, setting up branches of Faulk's jewellery shops, he being a jeweller by trade.

Berrick had migrated with Jacobs Hart as a travelling companion, who was to become a wealthy warehouseman. Lewin Berrick married Theresa Nathan in Ballarat in 1857; this was Ballarat's second Jewish wedding, and pre-dated the present synagogue. The first wedding was between Theresa Nathan's sister and Charles Dyte. Rabbi Goldman's book<sup>12</sup> makes frequent mention of an L. Berrick and also a 'Lewis' Berrick, who seems to have held various positions of office with the Melbourne Hebrew Congregation. It seems highly probable that these names and Lewin Berrick were one and the same person, especially with his daughter becoming chief chorister once females became acceptable, somewhere about 1895.

Miriam gave birth to their only child Stanley in 1901. Joel and Miriam were often involved in choral and singing projects and worked well together. She continued to sing as leading soprano with a thin silvery voice for many years. Her health was never robust and she died suddenly in 1930, at the age of 56.

### ST.KILDA

The St.Kilda Hebrew Congregation was founded in 1872 by Moritz Michaelis. The wealthier established families were moving south of the city, and fit in with Charles Price's concept of the "uptown" or second stage of settlement. Joel's own family movements also demonstrated this. His brother Isidore settled in St.Kilda in 1891, brother Abraham in 1892 and brother Fred also in 1892.

The original families were of German or Anglo German origin, compared with the Central Europeans at East Melbourne, and Anglo-Jewry at Bourke Street. People of Anglo-Jewish origins had a strong influence on Victorian Jewish education and religion. Their way of life epitomised orthodoxy and efficiency, piety and dignity, modernity of method with strict adherence to tradition, and stemmed from the early 19th century influence of the German born Chief Rabbi Dr.Nathan Adler. Many of the St.Kilda congregants remained in contact with their native Germany where Reform had made great progress. The struggle for Reform was never absent for long at St.Kilda in its early years. The congregation refused to recognise the Chief Rabbi's jurisdiction initially, although the broad-minded Reverend Blaubaum stated that he had promised before coming to Australia to adhere to orthodox principles. This, then, was the atmosphere to greet Joel who was already familiar with progressive ideas from his mentor Rev.Benjamin.

The Hebrew and Sabbath schools commenced in primitive form in 1874. In 1886 the Rev.Friedlander from Jews' College, London, was appointed to position of teacher and reader as no local man was available. He resigned after two years, feeling there was little scope for his oratory, and accepted the position of headmaster of the Melbourne Hebrew School, which was now only a congregational religious school. The position of teacher, second reader, choirmaster and secretary was advertised, and Joel was the only applicant. At this stage, St.Kilda had 33 Hebrew school pupils, Bourke Street had 39 and East Melbourne

had 120. This was 1888, the year of the great Melbourne Exhibition, and the height of the land boom. Melbourne had almost doubled its population in the decade and now contained two fifths of the Victorian population. Joel soon established himself at St.Kilda, teaching choral and vocal music and dramatics, taking the pupils on Purim picnics, and running school concerts for both pleasure and fund raising.

The United Jewish Education Board was formed in 1895 to take over the functions of the Hebrew schools at Bourke Street and East Melbourne which were closed down. St.Kilda initially refused to join; by 1897 Fredman was a member of this board.

With the population growth in the mid 90's following the depression, Joel expanded the teaching, with twice weekly classes at Albert Park and five sessions per week in the Alfred Hall. The Hebrew school now had 15 pupils, the Sabbath school 80. During the mid 1890's the St.Kilda Dialectic Society formed a literary circle for which Joel was a committee member. In 1896 Joel offered to have a school room erected free of cost to the congregation, and requested a specification not from Nahum Barnett, the honorary architect of the congregation, but elsewhere. Joel promised to pay the balance above that of cash in hand, from funds earned by the choir's concerts. All this suggests that he was rather frustrated with his teaching facilities and with congregational mismanagement. By 1900, and still independent of the U.J.E.B., extra classes were started in Centennial Hall, Commercial Road, South Yarra, and new classes were opened for advanced Hebrew and history, and Rev.Blaubaum and Joel pioneered special children's service on Yom Kippur and Chanukah. Also in 1900, Joe convened meetings of women for the purpose of forming a ladies' choir. When he asked the Board of Management where they could sing from, Joel was told they could join in from their respective seats!

In 1901, Joel was invited to, and attended the opening of the Commonwealth Parliament at the Exhibition Building. In April 1904, Rev.Blaubaum died, aged 54, after a long illness, having served the congregation since its inception. A memorial service was held on 3 June 1904, conducted by Reverends Dr.Abrahams, Lenzer and Goldreich, as well as Joel Fredman and Abraham Feuerman. Fredman and Abraham Feuerman ran the synagogue affairs and services for over a year, with Joel giving sermons and addressing Barmitzvah boys, until the arrival and induction of Reverend Jacob Danglow. Joel met the ship at Port Melbourne on Danglow's arrival, and conducted a mixed choir at his induction service in September 1905. The young Danglow is said to have rapidly infused new life and enthusiasm into Melbourne Jewry. However, he needed a helping hand. Joel had to teach him how to sing, and wrote out his first sermons for him in longhand. It is probable that the responsibility of running the synagogue services led to the interesting entries in the trade directories at the time. Following the last entry in 1886 as headmaster of Melbourne Hebrew School, Joel does not appear again till 1900 at 24 Park Street, St.Kilda; he was now a married man with a permanent address; not quite stable, however, as it changed twice before becoming 61 Wellington Street in

1907; this was his new Edwardian red brick cottage where he was to live for the rest of his life.

In 1915, Joel and Abraham Feuerman both had illnesses, the latter eventually dying that year having served the congregation for 21 years as reader and shamas. Reverend Falk succeeded him as second reader. Rev. Danglow left on war service and Joel and Reverend Falk ran the synagogue services and affairs until his return in 1918.

From Fred Michaelis onwards, many boys from St. Kilda families went to Wesley, a school with a reputation for open acceptance of minority groups, which it still enjoys to the present day. It is not surprising, then, that Joel's son went to Wesley for his secondary education. The Michaelis family were responsible from 1918 to 1924 for providing the finance to cover university fees for Stanley to go through medical school.

Arthur Groenwood, on the board during the 1920's recalls the conservative, genteel, cosy atmosphere. Joel as secretary was regarded as the backbone of the congregation; he took initiatives, and the board respected his ideas. During the 1920's Trevor Rapke was a prime mover in establishing the third St. Kilda Jewish scout troop, which initially met at the old synagogue hall. Rapke also started a boys' choir which included many of the scouts. This viable group was later entrusted to Joel who incorporated it with his adult singers. During the 20's, the St. Kilda congregation, its school, choir and scouts formed an active and tightly knit community group. The self satisfaction and optimism produced by such a group later led the congregation to feel the need for a new and bigger synagogue. Joel, however, was against the idea, fearing the loss of intimacy and cohesion which characterised the institution. He was against the new building designs, feeling the whole concept too extravagant, especially the large vestibule, and the large dome, which literally was 33 per cent of the total building costs. He was amazed that the T. & G. would even lend money on it. Joel conducted the choir at the laying of the foundation stone on 28 February 1926, but next year on 13 March 1927, he was too ill to attend the opening of the new synagogue, and Trevor Rapke had to take over as acting secretary. Due to failing health, Joel had already sought assistance, and in March 1927 Trevor Rapke had commenced as teacher and assistant secretary. This was on the understanding that he would be appointed secretary if and when the job fell vacant. However, it was not offered to him on Joel's retirement. Judge Rapke's anecdote bears retelling:—

"If you ask why I didn't become secretary, I assure you it was no fault of mine. I had the misfortune to win a free place at the Melbourne University. When I explained to the then president, Myer Zeltner, that I would need time off from my teaching and assistant secretaryship, he refused, saying 'We don't need an educated secretary'."<sup>13</sup>

In 1929, then aged 69, Fredman asked the Board of Management to be relieved of his duties as headmaster. He continued on as secretary and choirmaster. His choir for 1930 was of boys only, and of this there

is a surviving photo. Joel organised this photo, complete with names attached, for historical record. One of the boys recalls his note whistle, his partial deafness, and his almost frightening efficiency. Their tight working conditions as a choral team created a bond of friendship between the boys that still continues today among the survivors.

In July 1930, the congregational committee declined an invitation from the Australian Zionist Federation to be represented at a conference. The committee considered it "neither necessary or desirable that the congregation should be represented either by the president, members of the board, or its minister, seeing that political Zionism is not an integral part of Judaism and also in view of the fact that members of this congregation are by no means of one opinion in regard to the aims and methods of the Zionist organisation." Zionism was indeed a live issue of the day. Dr. J. Leon Jona was on the St. Kilda board, and also had been involved in the growth of the Zionist movement in Victoria. As a gesture of contempt for Rabbi Danglow's lack of interest in Zionism, Dr. Jona had refused to take his turn as congregation president. Joel, like many from pioneer families, was an *anti* Zionist. He moved in the world not only of Rabbi Danglow, but also I. H. Boas, the Sir Isaac Isaacs, the Jewish Australians, who saw their role as Australian rather than Jewish nationalists. At that stage theirs was a parochial rather than a global concept of Judaism. This general position, combined with financial conservatism, caused Joel to often state that congregational needs came first, then community needs, with the Jewish national fund last.

Mr. Justice Kaye<sup>14</sup> has commented in reference to Rabbi Dr. Sanger's policy during the pre 1939 era:—

"This was at a time when Zionism had not been found acceptable by most Jewish people in Melbourne who were concerned with allegations of divided loyalties."

One man seems to have coped with this situation and that was Fredman's contemporary and close friend, Sir John Monash. Sir John was President of the Australian Zionist Federation. He claimed to be an Australian national and a Jew by religion, and did not believe in Jewish nationalism. However, this did not preclude for him an active and sympathetic interest in a Jewish homeland for those wanting to go there, with internationally guaranteed security.

1932 was an active year. Joel organised a party for the St. Kilda congregation at the Palais Theatre on the occasion of its Diamond Jubilee. He conducted the combined choirs of the St. Kilda and Melbourne Hebrew congregations for the special choral sections of the United Anzac Day Service. Rabbi Danglow, Matthew Harrison and Joel were responsible for converting the old synagogue into a communal multi purpose hall which was opened on 28 August 1932. It must have left something to be desired, for by 1939 the Samuel Meyers Hall had been built, and within two years, the old synagogue was demolished. Also in 1932 the St. Kilda choir sang at the opening ceremony of the Jewish National Library, Kadimah. And in November of that year,



Reverend Ephraim Kowadlo was appointed as reader. In November 1939, Joel resigned after 51 years of service, and was granted leave of absence on full salary until 30 October 1940 when his resignation took effect. He died only two years later. The St.Kilda congregation was his whole life, a passionate concern; he was devoted to it and asked little in return. He never missed a day unless ill, and never took annual leave. He reduced his own salary during the 1930's depression. He was a watchdog over the congregation's financial affairs, and was often in disagreement with the board in this regard. He enjoyed an unparalleled relation of harmony with Rabbi Danglow, except whenever the Rabbi's salary expectations and Joel's assessment of the congregation's solvency were at variance. He was thoughtful regarding the congregants, and always wrote personal letters to them at times of joy or sadness. He was against insurance, superannuation, and retirement benefits, which the officers were coming to expect. He was against cash for shechita, the Chief Rabbi's fund etc., to minimise extraneous drains on the congregation's fund.

Being an old style educated Anglo Jew, Fredman deprecated money lenders, and dubious businessmen, and was no doubt comfortable with the policy in the days of the old synagogue, that money lenders had been refused membership of the St.Kilda congregation. This policy gradually mellowed to the point where money lenders were only ineligible to become president, and was finally tested when Louis Ellinson, having served as treasurer for two years, was due for his term as president. The conservatives prevailed upon Sir Archie Michaelis, a trustee and former president, to stand against him. Joel voted for Sir Archie. Trevor Rapke voted for Louis Ellinson. Sir Archie lost, and a new era began in the congregation's style, image and attitudes.

### PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

There were still many people who vividly recall Joel, the most notable being Judge Trevor Rapke, his assistant secretary. I will attempt to summarise their thoughts. He was dapper, meticulously dressed, often with a white vest. He was courteous, but could be abrupt. He did not suffer fools gladly, and expected the same excellence from others as from himself. He was hard to get close to personally, rather introverted, and frowned on any display of extroversion or exuberance by his son as he grew up. He was parsimonious in his personal tastes and way of life, and had no respect for wealth unaccompanied by gracious living. He disliked ostentation, over-energetic display of piety, and *koved* seeking. He was conscious of the personal injustice that could occur if rigid adherence to orthodoxy was maintained. For example, his contemporary, H. I. Cohen, later a Q.C. and M.L.C. and Minister of Education, married a Miss. Keon, but she could not be converted, because he was a Cohen. Cohen used to come to the synagogue alone. They had a son Brian Keon-Cohen, who became a leading orthopaedic surgeon in Melbourne.

He was an avid pipe smoker, and bits of tobacco were to be found in his books. He was a keen amateur photographer in the early days. He never owned a car and was getting on in years by the time they had reached reasonable comfort and reliability; his income was modest, he was financially conservative in outlook, and his work was within walking distance. He was a member of the St. Kilda Cricket Club, a game of which he was fond. He initially hated football, called it a larrikins' game, and disliked his son going to watch. This attitude mellowed in time.

Joel's talents in music, teaching, Hebrew and Jewish culture, and administration, clearly identify him as a 19th century man. It is unlikely that any one person could have ever replaced him, in this era of specialisation and narrow expertise. The biographical sketch that I now conclude shows a life whose significance seems to lie, not in the alteration of historical events, but in terms of services rendered, to music, to education, to Judaism, to the management of a congregation's affairs, and also in terms of the uniformity of affection he inspired in the children for whose education he was responsible. In terms of the crucial role of education for the cultural transmission of Judaism, and the crucial role of the teacher in the ultimate life satisfactions of the adult, it would appear that his life's work was not in vain.

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## NOTES

- 1 A.J.H.S. Journal, Vol. 5, Part 8.
- 2 "The Argus", 19 March, 1877.
- 3 In February, 1875 average attendance figures were:  
 Day pupils: 88; Sunday pupils: 45. By August 1875 these had  
 grown to – Day pupils: 167; Sunday pupils 212.  
 Extracted from Melbourne Hebrew School Report, 1875, pp. 18-22.
- 4 Tonic Sol-fa – etc. (See separate note).\*
- 5 Williamstown Advertiser and Williamstown Chronicle of  
 8 December 1883.
- 6 The Jewish Herald, 17 April 1885.
- 7 See – "For The Good Of The Race, and other stories", by Bert  
 Levy etc. (See separate note).†
- 8 The Jewish Herald, 6 July, 1888.
- 9 The Jewish Herald, 31 August, 1888.
- 10 The Jewish Herald, 25 October, 1889.
- 11 "Music Makers of the Sunny South" – A general survey of Music  
 and Musicians in Victoria, by Gladys Rhys Davies.  
 However, Joel's name is not mentioned in either of the two books  
 on P.L.C. – "The Ladies Came To Stay", and "P.L.C. Melbourne,  
 the First Century", by Kathleen Fitzpatrick, suggesting that he  
 was only a visiting teacher, and had no staff position.
- 12 "The Jews in Victoria in the Nineteenth Century", by Rabbi  
 L. M. Goldman, 1954.
- 13 Rapke, Judge Trevor, A.J.H.S. Journal, Vol. 7, Part 4, 1973,  
 p. 294.
- 14 This statement was extracted from Mr. Justice Kaye's address at  
 Rabbi Dr. Herman Sanger's Farewell Dinner.

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*\*The Tonic Sol-fa system was a system of singing teaching, involving the familiar do-ray-me-fah-so-la-te-do, which commenced in 1812, to be fully developed by the Rev. John Curwen in his Grammar of Vocal Music of 1848. It was admitted to an equal standing with the ordinary notation in 1872 in English schools, and by the early 1880's, the majority of English schools were using the system. Progress in the colonies however was to be much slower. A regular Journal, the Tonic Sol-fa Reporter, was published from London from 1883 to 1890, changing its name then to the Musical Herald, to cease publication in 1920.*

*†"For the Good of the Race, and other Stories", by Bert Levy, 1921, New York.*

Levy was born in Ballarat, attended the Melbourne Hebrew School, later apprenticed to George Gordon, scenic artist at the Theatre Royal. He became a freelance illustrator and writer of short pieces for the Bulletin and other papers, cartoonist and illustrator for "The Age", then migrated to the U.S.A.

In the preface to this book of short stories and articles, he wrote: "Of my Hebrew school days, I entertain the tenderest memories of Joel Fredman, the headmaster, an affectionate and true man who inspired me with one or two ideas I have never forgotten. In my scrapbook, I have the first notice of my work ever published. It is the review of some drawings — "Musical Instruments of the Bible" — I made for a lecture delivered by Joel Fredman at the Oddfellows Hall, Carlton."

Joel thus discovered Levy's talent while still at school, and in so doing, salvaged him from a life in his father's boot factory and later as a pawn-broker's boy. Finally Levy's father organised the apprenticeship with George Gordon which started his career.

**A YIDDISHE GHOST  
JOSEPH LEVY  
THE BREWER OF BERRIMA (1799-1862)**

**By G. F. J. Bergman, D.Ec., LL.B.**

"A Yiddishe Ghost?" asked the Sydney Jewish News of 7 July, 1967 and wrote under this headline that "The ghost of Joseph Levy has returned to Berrima, a N.S.W. country town, or at least that's what the local residents are saying".

"Levy", the paper said, "was one of the first Jews to come to Australia. Records show that he was a convict with the First Fleet and after his pardon became an innkeeper."

Here, the editor of the newspaper erred, because, as you will see later, this Joseph Levy arrived here 32 years after the First Fleet. There had, indeed, been a namesake in that Fleet, but he died on 15 April, 1788 and was the first Jew to be buried on Australian soil.

"Now it is said," the newspaper continued, "that Joseph Levy is returning to his inn which was converted into four home units, on Friday and Saturday nights. Residents of Arlington House, built in 1834 and previously Levy's Victoria Inn, say that Levy is the mysterious knocker who has visited them mostly on Friday nights for the past few months. The knocks occur at different times at night and are clear and distinct like the knock of a person with an urgent mission. Close investigation by the owners and tenants have failed to find an answer."

The Daily Telegraph, on 9 July, 1967, picked up the story and wrote that the tenant recounted that "his terrier went mad every time he heard the knock, racing around the house like a wild thing". "Several theories," said the Sydney Jewish News "have been put forward by amateur ghost hunters, but there is no real explanation. One Jewish resident of the area says that, while he doesn't believe in ghosts, he hopes Levy doesn't round up a Minyan of his fellow spirits on Friday nights." (The correct name for the house, incidentally, is Allington and not Arlington House.)

So much for the Berrima Ghost, but who was Joseph Levy of Berrima? His story is again one of rehabilitation and success of a Jewish convict.

Joseph Levy, the son of Mordecai, a general dealer, was a labourer of the parish of St. Saviour within the town and borough of Southwark in the County of Surrey, when aged 19, he was on 1 October, 1819 indicted at the Surrey Quarter Sessions before Mr. John Eamer, a Justice of the Peace for the town and borough of Southwark for "feloniously stealing, on 23 September, 1829, one watch of the value of £10, one watch chain of the value of £4, one watch key of the value of 1 and one seal of the value of £5, of the goods and chattels of Theophilus Hearsay, from the person." Mr. Hearsay, as a witness stated, was robbed, whilst he was walking to the Town Hall to attend a meeting. "Joseph

Levy," it was alleged, "came up to him and thrust his arm across his breast . . . and pushed him on to the footpath, at the same time looking steadfastly in his face. He then suddenly ran from him in a stooping posture and Mr. Hearsay immediately missed his watch and called out: "I have lost my watch!" Constable John Kinsay arrested Levy who tried to hide the stolen goods under the horse waggons parked in front of the Town Hall. Levy was sentenced to be transported for life to New South Wales.<sup>1</sup> He sailed from Falmouth on 11 April, 1820 in the convict transport "Mangles", which arrived at Port Jackson on 7 August 1820.<sup>2</sup> At sometime in the 1820s, he was made an overseer of a convict gang and as such he found his place in early Australian literature, although with a rather unfavourable reputation.

In 1845 a novel was published in Sydney under the title "Ralph Rashleigh or The Life of an Exile". This novel has been attributed, although not conclusively, to a convict who had been sentenced under the name of James Tucker, but whose real name was allegedly Rosenberg. Rashleigh related that, "whilst being drafted into a chain gang he was sent by the principal overseer to a gang, employed in clearing land, burning off trees etc. which was commanded by Joseph Levy or shortly called "Joe", described by him as a "bandy-legged, chocolate-cheeked Jew". In the story "Joe" appeared to delight in oppressing his men as much as possible. "The superintendent," Rashleigh wrote, "was very anxious to get as much work done as possible by any means. To this effect he selected from among the convicts under his charge the worst behaved and most indolent of the number of his overseers, who, as he rightly judged, by being the most afraid of the hardships of work themselves, would exercise all manners of rigour towards their prisoners and exact as much labour as possible from each, in order to keep their places. The overseers were working a gang of 50 men and had ten of them flogged every week."<sup>3</sup>

In reading this description of the cruel treatment of a convict by another convict, one is very much reminded of the behaviour of the so-called "Kapos" in the German concentration camps. To what extent, however, the author of "Ralph Rashleigh" used literary licence, and if Levy was really as inhuman as depicted in the book, will never be known.

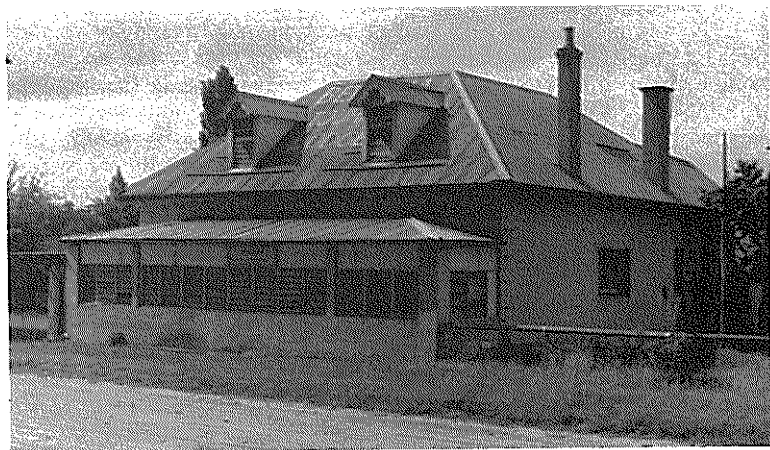
When, in 1827, Levy received his ticket-of-leave, he left the gang and hired himself out as a labourer. In the 1828 Census, he is mentioned as a "Hebrew, aged 28, a labourer of George's Field", which was the property of David Johnston, Esther Johnston's son. The ticket-of-leave was restricted to the District of Evan. Levy wrote to the Government that he had employment with Lewis Solomon in Sydney and that the district specified must be a clerical error. This was denied and Levy remained in Evan until 1832, where he finally worked for John Moses, licensee of the King's Head Inn at Penrith. (When Moses left for Sydney, Levy asked for permission to go with him. This was refused, because his dossier showed that he had forged a pass and received a sentence of three months for refusing to work.) As such he appears to have taken produce to the market in Sydney when, on

6 May 1831 he was the subject of an accident in York Street. It was rather satirically described in the "Sydney Gazette" as follows:<sup>6</sup>

"On Friday last, a man named Joseph Levy, was driving a cart along York Street, when, one of the wheels rising on the footpath, tilted Levy, who had taken a drop, on the ground. When he lay insensible for some moments, till recovering gradually, and pretty well sobered by this tumble, poor Moses remounted and jogged homewards, but so much indisposed as to be forced to lie up for many days in a rather dangerous plight."

On 5 August, 1834, he received his Conditional Pardon,<sup>6</sup> whereupon he decided, like many other Jews had done before him, to go to the country and try his luck in business. In January 1835 he went to Berrima, a thriving small town, south of Sydney, where he opened a general store, selling the usual sundry goods, slops (ready made clothes) etc and also supplied the settlers with rations for the convicts.<sup>7</sup> Less probably because he himself "liked a drop" (as the Gazette had reported on the occasion of his accident), than because of the steadily increasing demand for this precious beverage, Levy founded in 1837 the "Imperial Brewery" in Berrima.<sup>8</sup> How he had acquired the knowledge of brewing is not known. Maybe he had once been employed in a brewery, or more likely, he had found a convict who knew this trade and whom he employed as brewer. In any case, he soon acquired some knowledge of the trade, because his brewery flourished for several years.

In October, 1838, in an advertisement in "The Australian", he returned thanks for the liberal support by his customers in the last year and informed them that he had "commenced brewing for this season" and that he "likewise commenced Ginger Beer brewing, where constant supply is always on roads from Bargo to Sutton Forest", which shows that the beverages were available in summer only. He also made known that he had "engaged an experienced cooper".<sup>9</sup>



*Allington House*

He experienced, of course, also the usual troubles of a country pioneer, in that an escaped convict, known as "Big Jem", stole his chestnut filly in January 1838 which, as well as a "stolen or stray Bay horse", had not been recovered by July of the year,<sup>10</sup> although in January he had offered a reward of £2, which in July he raised, obviously without any result, to £5.

Levy acted as an auctioneer at Berrima. In January, 1839 "The Australian" reported that he was selling in auction at Berrima the unexpired lease of a farm, a bullock team, cattle, horses and farm implements, as well as 10 tons of hay.<sup>11</sup>

When, in October 1839, he began again to brew beer for the summer season, his beer was now praised as the "best Colonial beer, equal to any in the colony". And he announced that he had "added to his establishment the trade of Cooperage in all branches".<sup>12</sup> To still better dispose of the products of his brewery, he then decided to become a publican. On 2 June, 1840 he advertised the sale of the entire stock of his Berrima store by auction, because he was commencing business as, what was then called, a "licensed victualler".<sup>13</sup> Thanking the public for its liberal patronage as a storekeeper at Berrima for five years, Levy advertised in July, 1840 that he had opened the Victoria Inn at Berrima.<sup>14</sup> The inn was well situated on the main road to the south of the Colony, and on 1 January, 1845 the "Sydney Morning Herald" reported that Levy's Victoria Inn had become the "booking office for the Sydney-Goulburn coach". After the opening of the inn, he disposed of his remaining stock-in-trade to a co-religionist who traded as Hyam Phillips & Co. This firm also took over the brewery and, when, in October 1840, Phillips commenced brewing, Levy advertised that he would assist him in the brewery.<sup>15</sup>

Being now so well established, Levy applied for an Absolute Pardon and was successful. With despatch of 19 May, 1841, he was recommended by the Governor, Sir George Gipps, for an Absolute Pardon,<sup>16</sup> which was granted and dated 21 October, 1841.<sup>17</sup>

Levy was now a free man and at once moved to Sydney to start business there. And so that people should not think that he was in trouble again, on 30 September, 1841, he advertised in the "Sydney Morning Herald" that "the Boy, named Joseph Levy who was tried at Berrima Assizes for perjury, is not identical with Mr. Joseph Levy who resided formerly at Berrima".<sup>18</sup> He had, however, chosen the worst time to start a new enterprise, because the severe depression which affected the country for several years in the early forties, had just begun. It was therefore not surprising, that Hyam Phillips was not able to pay Levy for the store, and that he had to take it back again, to be managed by his nephew, Lewis Levy, who later also took over the inn, being, in 1861, still listed as innkeeper at Berrima.<sup>19</sup>

In Sydney, he seems to have worked in partnership with Abraham Levy, an old convict, licensee of the "Sign of the Red Cross",<sup>20</sup> and a devoted member of the Bridge Street Synagogue. According to the 1845 York Street Synagogue report, it was Abraham Levy who, in



1830, had induced Archdeacon William Cowper to allot a burial ground to the Jews of Sydney.

If he was fortunate in business in Sydney, despite the depression, he was less fortunate in the choice of his new house in Sydney, because on 3 February, 1842, he was forced to place the following advertisement in the "Sydney Gazette":—

#### CAUTION

Mr J. Levey, formerly of Berrima, hotel keeper, but now in Bathurst Street, in the town of Sydney, wishes to warn all gentlemen, particularly settlers from up the country, that having had the misfortune to take the house, formerly occupied by the notorious Mother Heywood, he has also secured the services of a bull dog of the "first water", who goes by the name of "Boxer". Gentlemen are therefore advised from not visiting this house, more especially the gentleman who left his name in the waistband of his breeches only a few nights back in the jaws of "Boxer".

Mr J. Levey hopes this will be a sufficient caution!

January 31, 1842.

J. Levey.

It is interesting to note from this advertisement that Levy, who had formerly written his name as LEVY, changed it to LEVEY, maybe in the hope that people would believe that he belonged to the well-known Levey clan of Solomon, Barnet and Isaac Levey.<sup>21</sup>

In 1842 Levy is noted as a ratepayer in the Macquarie Ward. He had become a merchant and dealer and in December, 1844 despatched two cases of haberdashery to Port Phillip.<sup>22</sup> But he also retained his interest at Berrima, because in 1844 he nominated, together with Hyam Phillips (whose fortunes had improved and who was now the brewer in Berrima), as "electors of Town and District of Berrima", a Mr James Harper as District Councillor for Berrima.<sup>23</sup> He is noted in "The Atlas" of 7 June, 1845 at his Victoria Inn as agent for that paper at Berrima, and according to the "Sydney Chronicle" of 20 November, 1847 he won government contracts for forage for Picton and Berrima for the year 1848.

He certainly hoped to gain from the 1850 goldrush, advertising his Victoria Inn on 17 January, 1852 in "Bell's Life in Sydney" with the curious advertisement:—

"THE MAIL, THE MAIL, THE ROYAL MAIL  
BREAKFAST READY WITHOUT FAIL!"

This was meant for the "information of passengers travelling on the Mail to and from Goulburn".

On 13 September, 1851 "The Sydney Morning Herald" reported that Levy, as elector for Berrima, had signed a testimonial to Dr. Robert Forster at a meeting held at Berrima on 10 September, 1851. It is obvious that, when as a result of the Victorian gold finds, traffic to, and business in, Berrima had considerably improved, he had returned to his little country town. On 14 March, 1856 "The Sydney Morning Herald" noted that Levy had become the agent for the paper at Berrima.

Throughout he kept in touch with the Jewish congregation in

Sydney, and paid his dues to the Bridge Street and later to York Street Synagogue as a member of the congregation. When, in November 1843, the Committee of Bridge Street Synagogue appointed members in the country as representatives of the Synagogue, Joseph Levy and Hyam Phillips were selected for the Berrima district.

In 1845 York Street Synagogue report shows that Joseph Levy donated £9 for the purpose of defraying the expenses for ground and building of the York Street Synagogue, whilst Hyam Phillips gave £20, which was an unusually large donation. In the Committee report of 1847 Levy is mentioned as seat holder of the Synagogue, probably to assure him a seat on the holidays, when he travelled to Sydney for the services.

In a collection list "for the distressed Jews in Palestine",<sup>24</sup> the first such appeal in Sydney, published on 7 September, 1854, in "The Empire", Levy's name appears with the large donation of £3, whilst most Jews donated 10/- only.

In November, 1860 he sent a letter to the Secretary of York Street Synagogue,<sup>25</sup> detailing the circumstances of an outrage, allegedly committed at Berrima to a man of the Jewish faith by the name of Michael or Lewis Garcia — one of the rare Sephardi names encountered in the colony, asking for assistance to the injured Garcia in his endeavours to prosecute his aggressors. His letter was accompanied by a letter from the Chief Constable at Berrima, confirming the facts and recommending prosecution of the parties who had molested Garcia. The President of the Synagogue told his Committee that he had spoken to Lewis Garcia, when he was in Sydney, and that the man, for some unknown reasons, had not mentioned the assault at all.

Joseph Levy died at the age of 63 in Sydney. The York Street Synagogue Burial Register records that he died on 25 September, 1862 in Pitt Street, Sydney and that he was buried at the Devonshire Street Cemetery as one of the last burials in that cemetery. In 1901 the cemetery had to make way for the Central Railway Station, and Levy's tombstone was transferred to Rookwood Cemetery where it still stands. Permission for the transfer was given by Mrs. M. Solomon of Penkivil Street, Bondi.<sup>26</sup>

It appears from Levy's death certificate that his wife's maiden name was Merriman, obviously a fictitious name. It was also recorded that he was survived by a son and a daughter. His son, Lionel Levy, whose name had not been entered in the Birth Register of the Sydney Synagogue, became a country commercial traveller. He died from heat exhaustion and was buried on 1 December, 1899 at Bombala. Mrs. M. Solomon, who gave the permission to remove the remains and tombstone of Joseph Levy, was his daughter, Rebecca.

On 23 March, 1930 the "Hebrew Standard" published an interview which Mrs. Solomon gave on her 97th birthday for the wife of the paper's editor, Mrs. Alfred Harris. She told Mrs. Harris that she was born in 1833 in George Street, Brickfield Hill, Sydney and that later the family had moved to Berrima. The old lady had vivid recollections of

the times of the York Street Synagogue and hers is one of the very rare contemporary Jewish accounts of this period. Her father, she said, was one of the first seat holders of the Synagogue. The Jewish community in those days was one big family. After the service it was customary on the festivals for the congregants to meet in the large hall attached to the Synagogue and the children were regaled with nuts and sweets. The majority of the congregation was poor and all alike strove to assure fellowship in religion. She remembered well George Street's pillory for prisoners and the fun the children of the day had tickling the feet of the chained prisoners with straw. She also remembered the "goldrush" of the fifties and the arrival of the gold escorts from the goldfields. She had been a good sportswoman, liked swimming and especially riding. She thought little of riding from Eden where she had lived, when married, to Cooma to visit her father-in-law. She had married, she said, Mr. Maurice Solomon in 1853 in the York Street Synagogue. According to the York Street register, her marriage was celebrated on 1 September, 1854. Maurice Solomon was the third son of S. Solomon of Monaro and the marriage had been witnessed by Abraham Levy, who had a store at Queanbeyan in the Monaro district.



*Rebecca Solomon*

And here the second "ghost" makes its appearance. Mr. S. Samuel Solomon was a convict, who curiously enough was also transported in the same ship, the "Mangles" on which Rebecca's father had arrived, but on the sixth voyage of this ship to the colony, which berthed at Port Jackson on 19 April, 1833. He was an umbrella maker and salesman of London, aged already 50, who had also been sentenced for stealing, to be transported for life. The indent of the "Mangles" noted that he could read and write and that he was the father of four male and five female children and that he was the cousin of Mrs. Josephson of Sydney.

Perhaps through Josephson's influence he was able to settle in the Monaro district. On 1 February, 1835, his wife Rebecca arrived in "Britomark" with five daughters and three sons, one of whom was Maurice, then aged six. The family had first settled at "Reid's or Dr. Reed's Flats" which later became known as "Jews' Flats" and later moved to Cooma, where they founded a large store. The youngest brother of Maurice, Charles Solomon, became the first Mayor of Cooma. After his marriage, Maurice took over the store and hotel of Solomon Solomon, who was probably an uncle, at "Jews' Flats", and later moved to Eden, where he opened a store.<sup>27</sup>

Rebecca Solomon had fond memories of the Reverend Jacob Isaacs who had married her and of the Reverend A. B. Davis whose wife she had often assisted when visiting the sick and the poor. She had now many grand-children and three great-grand-children, she said, whilst two of her grand-children had given their life for the country in the Great War. Mrs. Harris noted that Mrs. Solomon was in the full use of her faculties and an avid reader of good literature. When she suddenly died, two months after this interview, on 1 May, 1930 at No. 11, Tusculum Street, Potts Point, she was survived by four sons, three daughters and numerous other descendants. The "Hebrew Standard" of 6 May, 1930 reported that one of her sons was S. H. Solomon, the City Treasurer.<sup>27a</sup>

Rebecca Solomon was buried in the same tomb as her father Joseph Levy.

And now, the third "ghost" makes its appearance.

The Bridge Street Register shows, indeed, that Rebecca Levy was born on 19 February, 1833, the daughter of Joseph Levy of Berrima, but who was her mother? There is no trace in the records of the Synagogue of Joseph Levy's marriage. This is understandable, because Church records show that Joseph Levy, aged 32, was married on 23 August, 1832, to Sophia Smith, a seventeen year old girl, "born in the colony", by the Reverend John Dunmore Lang, the famous Presbyterian clergyman and politician in Sydney.<sup>28</sup> The fact that her birth was entered in the Synagogue's Birth Register, although she was born of a non-converted gentile woman, was in accordance with the Laws and Rules of the Synagogue, published in 1833, allowing daughters of persons married before April 1833 to be accepted as proselytes.

And so Rebecca, daughter of a convict and daughter-in-law of a convict, became a worthy Jewish mother, who founded a large and respected family.

## NOTES

- 1 Sessions papers, 1819, at Records Office, Corporation of London.
- 2 Indent of "Mangles" (Mitchell Library).
- 3 Ralph Rashleigh (James Tucker-Rosenberg) "Ralph Rashleigh or the Life of an Exile, with annotation by Colin Roderick, Sydney, 1952, Chapter 11.
- 4 Sydney Gazette, 14.9.1827.
- 5 Ibid, 13.5.1831.
- 6 Ibid, 5. 9-9. 1835; Gov. Darling Despatches Mitch. A. 1271,p.221.
- 7 The Australian, 2, 4, 6, 9 October 1838.
- 8 Ibid, 2.10.1838.
- 9 Ibid, 2.1.1838.
- 10 Ibid, 6.7.1838.
- 11 Ibid, 5.1.1839.
- 12 Ibid, 12.10.1839.
- 13 Ibid, 2.6.1840.
- 14 Ibid, 18.7.1840.
- 15 21.11.1840. Hyam Phillips died 14.6.1877 and was buried at Raphael Cemetery. He probably arrived by convict ship "Morley" in 1833.
- 16 Gov. Gipps Despatches, 1841 (Mitch. A. 1224, p. 1197/99).
- 17 Ibid, 1842. (Mitch. A. 1231, p. 271/74).
- 18 The Australian, 27.5.1841.
- 19 The Australian Post Office Directory, 1861. Lewis Levy, great grand-uncle of Terry Newman, Committee Member of this Society, died at Berrima on 15.10.1879, aged 64. He was buried at Rookwood Cemetery. See, also, A.J.H.S. Journal, Vol. VII, Part 3, p. 254.
- 20 The Australian, 30.9.1841.
- 21 Ibid, 16, 28 September, 24.10.1842.
- 22 Ibid, 12.1.1844.
- 23 Ibid, 11.4.1844.
- 24 Report of the Committee of the York Street (Sydney) Synagogue, 1845.
- 25 Minutes of the York Street (Sydney Synagogue) 3.12.1860.
- 26 Devonshire Street Cemetery Register at Botany Cemetery Office.
- 27 Felix F. Mitchell, "Back to Cooma Celebrations", Cooma 1926,

- reprinted 1967; see A.J.H.S. Journal, Vol. VI, Part VIII, p. 537f. Solomon Solomon was married to Rachel Abrahams by Rev. Jacob Isaacs on 12.8.1840 in Sydney. He died at Eden on 12.6.1900, age 79. His wife died eleven days previously, age 84.
- 27a Samuel Henry Solomon married in Great Synagogue, 9 November, 1887, Dora Hollander, daughter of Jacob Hollander, formerly of Ballarat. S. H. Solomon holds the record of the longest serving City Treasurer of Sydney City Council – over 30 years. He died in Sydney 2.8.37, age 77.
- 28 Convicts applications for marriage C.O.D. 12 Mitch. 4/4509 No. 261, page 60.

BOOK REVIEWS

"HALF A MILLION CHILDREN" —

Studies of Non-Government Education in Australia  
Edited by John Cleverley  
Longman Cheshire Pty Ltd, Melbourne. 282 Pages. \$6.95

Following the Public Instruction Acts of the late 19th century, denominational and other non-government schools that had provided all educational facilities to that time were now required to share enrolments and to play a relatively minor but still influential role in the Australian educational system, often with great parental sacrifice and under economic stress, while State schools made tremendous progress in their provision of education for all.

In all States, however, some "private" schools and colleges developed the highest tradition for service based on standards, achievements and moral principles. These in some way inspired others so that at all times alternative and parallel private schools of varying sizes existed. By the middle of the 20th century, over 20% of the school population or about half a million, was organised in this sector. That its voice for state aid and participation in framing educational policy was loud enough to be heard is a matter of history, and is reflected in the trend towards greater demand from parents for the enrolment of their children in non-government schools and away from government controlled public schools.

Government policy supports and perhaps influences this trend towards what might be called "the drift to private schools".

During a Seminar in October, 1978, on this development and the reasons for parents' choice of schools, Senator Carrick stated:

"If I were to look for the major reform of education in Australia at the primary and secondary level it would be fighting for this idea of the freedom of choice and the qualitative changes that would result from it."

Clearly, in a highly centralised State system freedom of choice is necessarily somewhat restricted, and parents with greater involvement believe the private schools are better able to provide what they desire.

There has been a complete turn-round in attitude. Whereas no more than 20 years ago non-government schools were required to be totally self-reliant, at present they share in grants for capital expenditure, resource material and family assistance. For 1979, parents in N.S.W. for 220,000 pupils in private schools will receive allowances of \$157 for each primary pupil, and \$266 for each secondary pupil, increase of 13.8% and 15.7% respectively. This represents a total cost to the government of \$41 million a year. Not all agree with this policy and reasons for differences of opinions are not always clear.

This book, "Half A Million Children", is timely and authoritative. Set out in the form of a symposium, for an introduction it "presents an

overview of the current national scene, followed by a section on the colonial background which has helped shape the 20th century pattern". This is valuable for perspective, but the more detailed descriptions of the historical developments of the education systems of various churches and social groups, the organisation and administration of their schools and colleges, and the principles underlying their educational philosophies are a distinct and vital contribution to the flood of educational literature flowing from so many sources at the present time. Some aspects, it is agreed, are not new – as John Cleverley points out, there are numerous reports and other accounts, but this is the first time an attempt is made "to bring together significant historical and contemporary educational concerns in a national perspective".

The contributors are all recognised authorities in various educational fields, education – teacher training, Catholic education, psychology, religious education, and of the nine, five come from New South Wales, three from Victoria and one from U.S.A. The editor who co-ordinated the studies and contributed two, is senior lecturer in education at Sydney University, and the others are professors, principals, or lecturers, and although only two Australian States are represented, developments and statistics from the rest are included in all surveys and descriptions.

The subject matter shows a balance between an overview and historical background, on the one hand, and specific developments within the Christian churches – Anglican, Catholic, General Protestant, Seventh Day Adventist and Lutheran, non-Christian – Jewish and non-denominational, on the other. Although the matter is confined within the space of less than 300 pages, provision is made for a list of figures and tables, a full and detailed index of 11 pages, and copious references and notes following each study. It is from these notes that additional material regarding other States may be obtained together with relevant authorities. Each study is a complete paper within itself, at the same time contributing to the theme as a whole.

Dr. Cleverley in "A Commonwealth Perspective" classifies types of pupils, compares resources and grants, and traces historical development of Commonwealth Aid and the Schools Commission.

Dr. Burns in "The Colonial Background" retraces the events to the time when all education was private and discusses the gradual change to government responsibility together with remnants of the old system. His analysis of the relative position of each and the discussion of the State challenge in education is most revealing. He discusses, too, the attitude of churches to education and their reaction to change, particularly in curriculum content. An interesting section is one he introduces on developments in secondary education and in the education of women.

In the more specific sections following these two general studies, the influence of the Church of England is discussed in some detail, the establishment of the Catholic system to ensure an adequate religious basis, and a Protestant Church series of schools and colleges following



the traditions of the Great Public Schools are included in ensuing studies.

From about 1870, when government schools were mooted, there emerged bitter attacks on those favouring the transfer of education to the State, and a spirit of intolerance existed until 1914. Victoria, in 1872, was the first State to pass legislation transferring administration from the churches, and by 1895 State Aid and religious instruction were removed from all church schools.

The Victorian Act precipitated the section of the Catholic Church to establish its own system of education on a "firm religious base".

Professor Selleck deals in absorbing detail with the developments connected with Primary education — Teaching Orders, standards, staffing, curricula and the centralisation of administration through the Catholic Education Office.

Brother Alban Doyle of the Marist Brothers, in an entirely separate and complete study complements the primary school aspect with an interesting description of Secondary Catholic Education. He traces its foundation from 1837, its relationship to university education, and the foundation of famous Catholic schools and colleges in each State.

Professor Turney in *Tradition and Innovation in Non-Anglican Protestant Secondary Schools* shows how their counterparts in Australia based on the great public schools of Britain were developed. Following the ideas and ideals of Matthew Arnold, headmaster of Rugby, the founders adopted a policy allowing freedom for innovation, trying of new ideas, flexibility and experimentation.

Dr. Standish, U.S.A., introduces a not so generally well-known aspect of educational facilities in Australia, Seventh Day Adventist Education. This is a well-knit progressive unit with nearly 6,000 pupils in 63 primary and 19 secondary schools, and over 600 students in senior College. In essence, education is primarily evangelical for members of the church. It is more directly related to religious beliefs than in any other system, and the author sets out the underlying principles and practices basic to achieve this. Seventh Day Adventists hold that the "highest purposes of education are achieved in the restoration of the image of God in man" — so the three broad aims of education to embody this ideal are a knowledge and understanding of the word of God, recognition of the claims of religion on life and a training in service for God and man.

Mr. J. W. Hayes describes in detail the topic, Education and the Lutheran Church. In this system mainly centred in South Australia, stress is on home preparation as the essential influence on education. It is based on the use of the German language with resource material from Germany. Pastors and teachers are specially trained and the system shares in the benefits issuing from the Karmel Report. The separatist concept is well illustrated by the use of German language, special texts, and religious beliefs.

A final significant segment of non-state schools, seven per cent, consists of schools not aligned to any particular church, but nevertheless Christian in character, and those which do not teach religion. Dr.

Cleverley traces the history of these schools known by a variety of names from the early 19th century, but now generally known as Normal or Academy, alternative and progressive. The author discusses the principles incorporated in each school's constitution, the place of religion, and the emphasis on games and outdoor activities as adjuncts to character building. The Grammar School movement is included in this study, and some assessment is made of the influence of public examinations and university requirements on such schools.

Education of girls and their well-known schools form an important section of this study, which is completed by a consideration of New Education in Australia and other current developments designed to increase opportunities for freedom of choice.

Dr. Geulah Solomon in 30 pages provides a clearly expressed summary of the development of Day School and part-time education for the very small Jewish minority group with distinctive religions and social ties. The system is based on the concept of education as part of devotion, and this colours the curriculum content. Underlying the whole system is its importance to survival.

In a well-composed paper Dr. Solomon traces the historical background of Jewish education, the need for part-time instruction, and the progress of what is considered to be a community investment and examines possible future consolidation and developments.

The book is recommended to students and teachers of education and to those connected with schools and their administration. It helps to clarify the position occupied by government and non-government schools and explains why "a growing number is as strongly influenced by the distinctive educational offerings of schools as by their institutional affiliation".

In non-denominational schools the present mood in education may be summed up as the school should be "secular and non-discriminating in matters of colour, sex, race, religion and background in respect of staff and students".

For denomination schools much of the heat has gone from past dogmatic arguments supporting "the one best system", "with the broadening of specifically denominational teaching, the development of ecumenical schools, the growing acceptance of courses in comparative and world religions, a lowering of feeling of religious distinctiveness in Australian society" (p.269).

In this book, Jewish education is seen as a system resembling that of the Seventh Day Adventists, and that of the Lutheran, where education becomes part of the religion and its practices. The concept of Jewish survival as a factor plays an essential role in course content, home attitude, and Synagogue participation and authority.

Dr. Geulah Solomon from sure knowledge and keen insight traces the development of Jewish education generally and analyses the advent and functioning of Jewish day schools, at the same time highlighting the inadequacies of part-time after school Jewish instruction.

The background to the "peculiar" preoccupation of Jewish people

with education, secular and religious is set out in the section, "Philosophical and Historical Background"; this is clear, and instructive. It is an important guide to the understanding of Jewish education as a "community investment in the future".

Secular education can be seen as part of the still on-going process of Jewish enlightenment which has accompanied Jewish emancipation; it has been a major agent in the process of assimilation and integration, leading to high levels of literacy resulting in the Jewish population having five times more university graduates than the Australian national average.

Jewish education is a private area concerned with the child's identity and education which is distinctively Jewish in nature, content and objective. Its role is to promote specifically Jewish values, ideals, ethics and morality; to foster an identifiable Jewish personality; to inculcate knowledge and the practice of Judaism; and to encourage commitment to the Jewish religion, nation and community. Within Australian historical context the education of Jewish children has always been compartmentalised into these two separate elements.

The Colonial Background describes the gradual growth of Jewish communities in Sydney and Melbourne and expansion to other States from earliest times, from denominational day schools, their eclipse, and re-emergence. The stories of Mt.Scopus, Moriah, and Masada are used as vehicles to analyse present day expansion and standards. Useful statistical tables are incorporated to illustrate factors influencing the development of day schools, and to describe the present scene. Despite the aim of the Jewish day school movement "that every child receive a day school education" serious consideration must be given to the important aspect "Expansion and Education Pluralism". Dr.Solomon treats this topic with sympathy and characteristic clarity. Up-to-date information is given about types of day schools, their classification based on community orientation, and organisations. Part-time education is also summarised, and complete assessment of the position of teachers, curriculum, administration and finance round off the factual approach.

An objective stocktaking of Jewish education points out weaknesses, achievements to date, areas of consolidation and future development. The author concludes from her research that "if Jewish schools are to provide Jews with survival, then Jewish education needs to develop a philosophy based on a dynamic view of Jewish culture and knowledge, providing scope for creativity and innovation".

What this means and how it may be achieved will probably be made clear by a careful reading of this book. There is no doubt that it will give pleasure as well as understanding.

— M. H. Kellerman

**"AUSTRALIAN INVENTORS"**

by Leo Port with Brian Murray  
Cassell, Australia, \$12.95

There is a saying — "Three things a man should do — plant a tree, sire a son and write a book".

Leo Port achieved all these before his untimely death in August, 1978. His book "Australian Inventors" was released a few weeks later.

The Port (Rappaport) family arrived from Poland before World War II. Educated at Sydney Boys' High School and Sydney University, Leo married Edith Lucas, daughter of a physician. A family man, he enjoyed taking his children (three sons and a daughter) ski-ing and bicycle riding. He was well-known for his interest and generosity in community and charitable enterprises.

Well-known also as an engineer and a member of both the American and Australian Institutes, he was honorary secretary of the latter before becoming an alderman on the Sydney City Council in 1969.

As Lord Mayor of Sydney, elected for his fourth term just before he died, tree planting was only one of the many projects in which he was interested for the beautification of the city he loved. These included the establishment of pedestrian precincts and the restoration of historic premises. The many important visitors he entertained officially included Royalty, the Pope, the Chief Rabbi, academics and politicians, people prominent in the professions, the arts, in sport.

Overseas, he was honoured with the Freedom of the City of London. As Sydney's Lord Mayor he visited many European cities, Moscow, Tokyo and Sapporo for the Ice Sculpture Exhibition featuring the Sydney Town Hall. While guest of King Hussein in Jordan, he tried to persuade the authorities in Aqaba to pool their resources with those in Eilat for the benefit of both communities' development. In Jerusalem he gave advice to a team planning pedestrian precincts and in Bethlehem to the Arab mayor about tourist hotels and car parking.

The Jewish community of Sydney knew Leo Port and his wife well. Both loved and respected, they played many parts during the 1978 celebrations for the Great Synagogue Centenary and the 150th Anniversary of Jewish communal life in Australia.

As a member of ABC Channel 2's judging panel for "The Inventors" series from its commencement, his experience of recent Australian inventions must be unparalleled. It was natural that he should become interested in earlier inventors and their products. This comprehensive book is the result.

It is a pity that there is no Foreword in "Australian Inventors" to inform readers about its author who was an inventor himself and had great sympathy for the strivings and ideas of others.

Australians have always had a reputation for resourcefulness and for dreaming up practical solutions to everyday problems. As Leo Port wrote in the first sentence of this book — "Give an Australian a pair of pliers

and a piece of wire and he'll invent something".

The reader then learns that most inventors received little support or encouragement and few made any money from their brainwaves which, when developed, proved a boon to others. Citizens and authorities were sceptical or stingy or both. Some inventors of independent means were able to produce and market their inventions. Some in recent days, like Ralph Sarich, have had the backing of industry. Some, like George Nicholas with aspirin tablets and Mervyn Victor Richardson with his lightweight rotary lawn mower, made fortunes.

This book is interesting and readable and liberally illustrated with photographs and diagrams. Its chapters are short with evocative titles, such as "Lawrence Hargrave Walked On Water And Unlocked The Secret Of Powered Flight" and "Putting The Screws On Wool". Details are given of over fifty inventors and the successful products of their imagination — ranging from combine harvesters to utility trucks to Geometrik golf sticks (Leo's own invention); from the pedal wireless, backbone of both Flying Doctor and School of the Air services, to the now famous Interscan system for aircraft safety.

The inventors featured come from all States, from city and country, from rich and poor backgrounds. The one thing they have in common is inventiveness.

The final chapter of the book is devoted to the television programme and brings a message of hope to future Australian inventors.

— Lysbeth Cohen

**"SIDNEY MYER"**

By Ambrose Pratt

Published by Quartet Books Australia Pty Ltd — \$12.50

In 1978 Simcha Baevski "arrived". He became history, officially, as Sidney Myer, the name he later assumed, with the publication of Ambrose Pratt's fine biography, "Sidney Myer", more than forty years after it was written. It was commissioned by the Trustees of Myer's estate a short time after his death in 1934. The author, himself, died in 1944.

Sidney Myer was born on 2 February, 1878, in Kritschew, a small town in the Mogilev district of Western Russia, the youngest of the eleven children born to Israel Izakel Baevski-Myer and Koonu-Dubrusha (nee Schur) between 1865 and 1878. The term 'Baevski' (literally 'of Baev') was rather a title than a surname and it had been coupled with the patronymic 'Myer' to signify his family's first place of settlement in Russia. Israel Baevski-Myer, a Talmudic student, was "a dreamer and an idealist who would for ever be incompetent to earn a decent livelihood for himself and his descendants . . ." On the other hand, Koonu-Dubrusha, who was her father's favourite, was the practical one. "At sixteen she was one of the most capable and beautiful young women in the province." She knew her father's drapery business as well as he. In the first years of their marriage Israel became a part of the Schur household. Pratt gives a faithful reconstruction of the prevailing custom for studious young Russian Jewish husbands (perhaps strange to Australian readers): "They represent perpetual scholarship endowments which are universally considered to confer honour upon all parties concerned." Such scholarly husbands are supported by their wives after the death of their fathers-in-law. The dependent scholarly husbands do not suffer on this account any loss of prestige or esteem. Sidney's father is described by Pratt as "... a gentle son-in-law and a perfect husband". He excelled as a Talmudist. His wife "insensibly" became the matriarch. Koonu-Dubrusha's principal attributes were her beauty, her quality of heart, and the texture of her mind. Possibly because Sidney was the youngest, the happiest and the healthiest of all her children, Koonu-Dubrusha liked to have him with her during the time she was working in the business amongst her admiring friends and customers. Here, "he was often praised and petted publicly — especially when he could anticipate his mother by piping forth the price of some article to an enquiring customer". He knew, even before he was old enough to go to school, the purchase and selling prices of most of his mother's goods, and, could debate the vital question of reasonable profits.

His father, also, was a strong influence on his early life, but in a different way. "The Jewish scheme of classical education produced inevitably an unbroken succession of intensely nationalistic and intensely religious generations. It did this by seizing every male child and

plunging him into a world of long ago. It informed with life the vast procession of his ancestors so that the most ancient of them seemed to have perished only yesterday. He learned to see himself as a link in a chain stretching from era to era."

From the time Sidney was four years old, he was introduced to the Cheder where he learned the value and virtue of study; and, he proved a diligent scholar. At this time, there were 6,000,000 Jews in Russia, and there were harsh anti-Semitic laws. All Jewish parents taught their children that it was their chief concern to realise that they should grow up as sharply differentiated as possible from the race of their oppressors. The children were debarred from access to the secular Russian schools; and, the early 1880s brought to the Pale of Settlement where they lived, pogroms, insecurity and discrimination. Although Sidney and his brothers and sisters were shielded as far as possible from the harshest of the rigours, Sidney became subject to fits of nervous depression which continued until he died. He learned, together with his contemporaries, the value of education, which would ensure the "perpetual continuation of a race of meek but incontrovertible Talmudic Jews".

Pratt devotes considerable attention to the relationships Sidney had with his parents. The older children scarcely got to know their father, "a stern and lonely man, passionately and exclusively devoted to his literary studies, he was almost a stranger to his off-spring". Sidney was the only one who "broke a way through the walls of reserve that encompassed Israel Baevski's soul". As the years passed, Sidney's brother, Jacob Myer, the eldest in the family, married; as also did his sisters, Miriam, Esther and Marshi Rishe. As they left home, Sidney and his brother Elcon were the ones remaining to help their mother in the drapery business. By 1894, with the two boys aged, respectively 19 and 16, and in order to avoid their being conscripted into the Russian Army, the suggestion was made that they leave home, to go to a friendly foreign country. Already Lazar Slutzkin, son of one of Sidney's sitters, had emigrated to Australia. Elcon left, sailing for Australia via Hamburg, to join Lazar, in Bendigo.

Elcon and Sidney had together completed a manuscript of almost 4,000 Biblical Hebrew words, translated into Yiddish. When Sidney left for Australia in 1898, he took the manuscript with him. He was then a tall, handsome youth, aged 20, with blue eyes and an erect carriage — with slender, sensitive hands, "which were rarely still". He already had much of his mother's compelling charm. Sidney found Australia just emerging from a period of economic depression; there was already the signs of a great industrial change. He went to work for Lazar Slutzkin, at Bendigo, as a hawker.

It was little wonder, with such a background, that Sidney's first wife, Nancy Flegeltaub, of Ballarat, whom he married in 1906, could not hope to be of help to him in his resolve to free himself from the protective barriers of his childhood and youth. Pratt writes of the marriage, "he treated her with unflinching kindness and courtesy and she

endeavoured to reciprocate. But their mental planes were poles apart." Nancy could not keep up with his ambition to climb to the top. Sidney began to relinquish most of his early values; in their stead he embraced more materialistic ideals. By 1911, he was the proprietor of two large stores, one in Bendigo and the other in Melbourne; and Elcon was a successful manufacturer; Sidney was his biggest customer. Elcon remained loyal to his Jewish teachings, whilst Sidney "compromised by standing aloof from all religions while according them an equal measure of respectful attention". The two brothers decided to amalgamate and work together, and it seemed such a good idea, in practice, that Sidney wrote inviting two of his nephews, Norman, son of his eldest brother, Jacob, and Samuel Ettinghov, son of his sister, Miriam, to come to Australia to join them. Norman was to play a large part in the building of his uncle's business. As was the man who became Sidney's partner and friend, Edwin Lee Neil. Lee Neil was six years his senior, and, had been born in Scotland; his father was one of the founders of Robert Reid & Co. In April, 1911, Sidney heard that the old established drapery business of Wright and Neil in Bourke Street, Melbourne, was for sale. He bought it, and Lee Neil agreed to stay on as manager.

An important principle which undoubtedly contributed to much of the success of Sidney Myer was his "cordial co-operation between management and staff". Ultimately, his staff were to become shareholders in the business. He introduced many new methods of salesmanship, such as displaying the goods on tables where customers could examine, at first hand, the articles they were being attracted to. He bought up lines which his judgment told him could be made to sell, when other retailers hesitated; he realised the value of small profits and a quick turnover. He wrote his own advertisements, wording them with imagination. He would instruct his staff in what he called "Myer principles". His powers of concentration, his clear-sighted goals, his enterprise, were his main strengths. He was subsisting on four hours' sleep, at one stage. "However remorselessly he drove himself, the sources of his energy showed no signs of exhaustion."

Through Sidney's two nephews, he came to know Mrs. George Baillieu, a widow with three children. Her youngest child was Mervyn. She was twenty years Sidney's junior, but they fell in love and married. There were three children of their marriage, Kenneth, Marigold and Neilma. The latter, Neilma Sidney, has written a revealing Prologue to the story, in 1978; in it she speaks of her father's charm and elegance of manner. "When he was around there was constant movement, irresistible joy, a kind of madness in the air. And laughter . . . He was very attractive, had command of every situation he was in . . . I often think of how difficult it would be today for anyone to produce his kind of achievement in this very different world, and have so much fun along with it, so much *camaraderie* with his business associates, and so much happiness with his family and friends." Also, the Epilogue was written in 1978, by A. H. Tolley, who went to work at Myer's in the early 1920s and, became managing director and chairman of the board. His description of Myer is worth noting:



"Mostly he would listen to everyone with gravity and close attention, then at least appear to give the speaker's words deliberate thought before saying something in reply which was usually direct, simple and illuminating . . . One of his greatest assets was his ability to get people to give a little better than their best . . . He made you feel larger than life, not smaller, and he was never interested in cutting you down to size by demonstrating his own superiority. In this sense, at least, he was basically a humble man as well as a big one."

The Foreword to the book was written by Robert G. Menzies, in 1936. But, when the book was eventually being prepared for publication, several years before the death of Menzies, he was asked if he wished to amend what he had written. Menzies replied: "I consider this Preface to be one of the best I ever wrote; and I would not want to change a word of it". In it, Menzies makes an important observation, "The story of Sidney Myer's life is one which must be read and understood if you are to appreciate how the Australian nation is being built up, and how, at the very antipodes of the British world, the race can absorb an apparently foreign element and derive from it new vigour and a strengthened patriotism". He suggests that Myer's motto was "When in doubt, go forward".

In this Society's more than forty years of publishing Australian Jewish history, there has only been one brief reference to Sidney Myer. It is noted in Volume 4, Part 4, that he opened a drapery business in Bendigo, which was "the foundation of a vast retail empire". His life and success, like that of Isaac Isaacs and John Monash, in other spheres, demonstrates the driving force and tenacity that has motivated Jews of humble origins to aspire to the very pinnacle of achievement — 'per ardua ad astra'. Here are but three outstanding examples of the opportunities that Australia has provided to migrants (in the case of Myer) and to the children of migrants (as with Isaacs and Monash). Much as one must admire the commercial empire that Myer built, and the single-minded ambition which motivated him, it is more than a pity that his prodigious talents found no scope within the Jewish community.

Despite his reputation for flashes of gaiety, the isolation of spirit which beset Myer in his early days in Australia remained with him permanently. As a rare act of self-indulgence, he once replied to a lady who suggested he must sometimes feel very lonely in Australia, by telling her a story of his boyhood. It was a winter morning in Russia, and he was on a message for his mother:

"In the midst of miles and miles of frozen whiteness I came upon a big grey goose who stood sadly and quietly and did not move when I approached. It had escaped from some farmhouse. It was lost. That is why it stood so sadly and so still in the snow. Often in this country, Ma'am, I feel like that big grey goose."

This reviewer, on a recent stay in Melbourne, chanced to visit Box Hill Cemetery. Asking an attendant the whereabouts of the Jewish Section, she was told, "There's Sidney Myer's Memorial." It turned out that there was no Jewish Section. Was it fortuitous that my search

for Jewish history brought me to the last resting place of one who began life in an orthodox Jewish family, but, who shed his original identity as he finally established a commercial empire?

This fascinating biography includes a useful Index and a number of appropriate photographs.

Louise Rosenberg

**"HISTORIC CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA"**

By T. T. Reed

The Macmillan Company of Australia, Melbourne, \$24.95

Until recent times Anglican Archbishop of Adelaide, Dr. T. T. Reed, an experienced author and historian with undoubted literary talent, has now written the story of forty churches, many of them Anglican, all built before the discovery of gold began to transform Australian society. When economic conditions improved, some of these edifices were later improved or replaced and many were the work of the pioneer settlers who laid no claims to architectural expertise. They were built when attendance at Divine worship was generally regarded as obligatory and when, as the author observes, a township without at least one church was unthinkable. Sites for the churches and even financial support for their erection was quite often forthcoming from Government sources. Every State is represented in this volume and, in addition, the Australian Capital Territory is represented by one church only, the historic church of St John at Canberra, caused to be built in 19th century by the enthusiasm of Robert Campbell of Duntroon Station on the Limestone Plains.

Most of these churches have since been classified by the National Trusts of the various States. As perhaps befits the oldest colony, the New South Wales list numbers ten churches which include the three well-known Greenway buildings — St Lukes, Liverpool, St Matthews, Windsor and St James, King Street, Sydney. Another Sydney landmark featured is the Pitt Street Congregational Church, Sydney opened in 1833 and described as the finest example of neo-classical ecclesiastical architecture in Australia. As regards Victoria, it is of course to be expected to find St James Old Cathedral, Melbourne, the first permanent church in that place and the pioneer Anglican church and cathedral.

Of the seven houses of worship included in the book's Tasmanian list, one of them is the Hobart Synagogue. It was opened in 1845 and it is referred to as the most comprehensive example of the Regency Egyptian style in Australia. The author very correctly states that: "the erection of such a building was a remarkable example of the single-minded dedication of those involved", considering the small Jewish population. The Synagogue still stands today unchanged on its original site; it was portion of the garden, the gift of Judah Solomon, an ex-convict and prosperous Hobart businessman. The Government did not at that stage grant any assistance to the Jewish community towards the Synagogue project.

Dr. Reed acknowledges the ready co-operation of those who assisted him in obtaining the information upon which the book's text is based. He includes Mrs. H. T. Pritchard who furnished the material relating to the Hobart Synagogue. The author concludes his introduction: "One thing, however, is certain — they will continue to be silent witnesses to the faith of the pioneers and to the foundation upon

which they began to build a natural life." Those words are indeed applicable to Hobart's Synagogue, truly a monument to the faith of the pioneers in this outpost of Jewish settlement.

Perhaps nostalgia will move some writer to publish a companion volume devoted to some of Australian Jewry's historic shrines of prayer. Dr. Reed's book may well serve as a model for such an enterprise. His book is lavishly produced and illustrated by photographs, many in beautiful colour, the work of Richard Beck. This Society welcomes the opportunity to review the book and to bring it to the notice of the readers of this journal.

— M.Z.F.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Society's Half-Yearly General Meeting in August last featured the three concluding papers of the Symposium, "A Century of Australian Jewry", which represented part of our contribution to the Great Synagogue Centenary celebrations. These papers were, "Rabbis and Ministers", by Rabbi Raymond Apple; "Leaders and Members", by Louise Rosenberg, and "The Great Synagogue - Growth and Change", by M. Z. Forbes. The two earlier papers, read at the July General Meeting, were "Setting The Scene - Australian Jewry in 1878", by Dr. Bergman, and "The Expansion of Sydney Jewry", by Suzanne Rutland. All these papers were of a high standard and their publication in the Journal or in a single book is justified.

Dr. Bergman's paper, "Judaism And Its Australian History", read before the Jewish-Christian Study Centre, in July, was taken to Israel by Rabbi Apple, together with a copy of Rabbi Porush's book, "House of Israel", to the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, Beit Hatefutsoth, in December. It has since been suggested that we arrange to have made a documentary film relating to the Jewish Community in Australia, with the assistance of "Film Australia".

At a committee meeting in September, it was decided to appoint, immediately, an Archivist-Librarian: She is Mrs. Helen Bersten, who, after a preliminary inspection of our numerous files commenced work in March on the cataloguing of our early newspapers.

Mr. Forbes conferred with the President of the Great Synagogue, Mr. Sidney Sinclair, regarding accommodation for the Society's steel cupboards and filing cabinets, early newspapers and other publications. As a result of this discussion we were allocated a section on the top floor of the Synagogue. The new arrangement is acceptable to all concerned for the immediate future. Mrs. Bersten would like a sub-committee to assist her in ascertaining where records and publications are within the community which might become available, or which are in danger of being destroyed.

Mr. Arthur Rosebery was recently handed some handwritten pages of poems, composed in the 1840s in Hobart by his ancestor, Henry Moss. The poems are presently in the care of Nancy Keesing. Also, Mr. Rosebery recently discovered the Will of an ancestor, Charles Connolly, dated 1825. The Will dealt with extensive areas of land in Hobart which had been an original grant of the Government.

Terry Newman represented the Society at the Royal Australian Historical Society's Conference of Affiliated Societies, held at Goulburn. Whilst there, he made contact with a Canberra member, Mr. Earle Hoffman, regarding the historic old Jewish burial ground at Goulburn. This old cemetery is being cleared and some of the memorials restored. Those involved in the project, besides ourselves and the Canberra community, are the Goulburn & District Historical Society and the Goulburn City Council.

There has been further discussion within the Society regarding the development of our library on a more formal basis. We already have

something like 100 books and publications and a considerable amount of newspapers and other periodicals relating to Australian Judaica and Jewish history. We have been participating in the newly formed Library Committee, set up under the auspices of the New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies, which commissioned a survey, for the purpose of rationalising all Jewish libraries in Sydney and bringing them up-to-date so that they may be utilised by the community. Towards the costs of this work, we contributed \$50. An initial proposal is that a professional librarian will be appointed to spend time at the libraries concerned assisting with the cataloguing, co-ordinating purchases, and advising on library administration and security.

It has been suggested that there should be a better system of communication between members of the Society. The possibility of a regular column in the Jewish press detailing the Society's activities and projects, plus an abbreviated version of the discussions which take place at meetings, details of various topics for research, and requests for information or material, etc., was explored. Enquiries produced the fact that at present the costs involved for this means of communication would be rather high. The idea has been suspended until more funds are available to warrant the outlay of something like \$1,000 a year.

The Society, having joined the Joint Jewish Communal Appeal, in 1978, received its first allocation in February this year. When a distribution was made we received \$2,000. Although we had hoped that the allocation would have been larger, we appreciate the assistance. It will materially aid the work of the Society.

We have more archival material and other acquisitions, as well as material for papers and articles for publication. These include the Montefiore Home Minute Books, Annual Reports and other records which Mr. and Mrs. David Levine sent in. They had been gathered together by the late Judge Aaron Levine in preparation for the writing of the history of the Montefiore Home. Dr. Eric Goulston, with assistance from members of his family, has prepared a short paper on the life and work — part genealogical, part biographical — of his late father, John Goulston. Professor Henry J. Cowan, Professor of Architectural Science at the University of Sydney, sent us some of the B. L. Monasch memoirs, translated into English. Although we may not use this yet, in its entirety, we intend to use extracts for a small article to accompany the copies of portraits of the grand-parents of Sir John Monash, sent to us earlier, by the Leo Baeck Institute in New York.

Shmuel Gorr of Jerusalem has sent some historic photographs and items of interest. The photographs are for publication with notes that he has prepared on early emissaries to Australia from the Holy Land. Mr. Abe Troy of Perth sent two articles in the series on prominent Western Australian families who have made history in that State. Those received so far are of the families Korsunski and Seeligson. He is preparing another on the Breckler family.

Our plan to publish histories of the three congregations at Canberra, the Gold Coast and Wollongong, with a Government grant, has already produced one of the histories — that of Wollongong. We have received books for review: "Historic Churches of Australia", by The Most

Reverend T. T. Reed, published by the MacMillan Company. It contains a fine section, with photograph, on the Hobart Synagogue. Longman Cheshire sent us Dr. John Cleverley's book, "Half A Million Children", containing edited studies of Non-Government Education, together with statistics relating to that subject. Another book, a biography of Sidney Myer, by Ambrose Pratt, published by Quartet, Melbourne, has been received. We are grateful for these additions to our Library, and they will be reviewed in the Journal. We have now received from Dudley Davis, in New Zealand, Part 2 of his family monograph on the Joseph-David-Nathan-Cohen genealogies. The work is a valuable source of information, and is supplementary to Lawrence Nathan's genealogical charts with index, received earlier. Mr. Gavin M. Cashman of the Australian Catholic Historical Society has given us a history of Corowa, "Flow Gently Past" by Brian Burton, as it contains reference to Jewish pioneers of that district, and some relevant photographs.

We have applied to the Grants Advisory Committee, Ethnic Affairs Commission for financial assistance in the publication of our Journal. We have received word, unofficially, that our application has the favourable recommendation of the Advisory Committee, but, still requires ratification by the Premier's Office.

Our Journal, Volume 8 Part 5, was finally ready by November — four months later than scheduled. It had been delayed by printer's problems. Partly as a result of this, we intend to have our Journal printed in future, by Highlight Printing, a firm which has given satisfactory service in the past, but, which has required more time to work on the job.

Early in December, we were represented at the Australian Catholic Historical Society function in the Crypt of St. Mary's Cathedral to honour Monsignor C. J. Duffy, the Society's president, on the occasion of the Jubilee of his ordination as a Priest. This offered an opportunity for us to make further contacts with a friendly circle of historians who have frequently indicated a desire to co-operate with the work of our Society.

Sales of complete issues of the Journal, or back issues that people may "fill in the gaps", have brought us to the point where there are now about five or six issues out-of-print. The importance of having these re-printed is demonstrated by the fact that the Royal Australian Historical Society is prepared to give us small grants towards the cost of having this done. We received \$150 towards this work from the Cultural Grants Advisory Council, in its 1978 allocation.

In November, Rabbi Porush spoke to the Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies on the history of the Society, its work and its value to the community in general. As a direct result of this, we were requested to submit for publication to the Melbourne Chronicle a brief account of the history of the Society. It was prepared by Mr. Solomon Stedman and Louise Rosenberg, and is published in the April, 1979 issue of the Chronicle, copies of which are available from the English Section Editor, Dr. Serge Liberman, 16 Ward Avenue, Caulfield North. He is preparing a paper for the 70th anniversary of Yiddish Theatre in

Australia. At the suggestion of Terry Newman, an abbreviated history of our Society was sent to interstate and New Zealand publications with a request to editors to publish our invitation to readers to become members and contributors to the Journal; thus addressing ourselves to a wider audience and broaden our spheres of interest.

The Victorian Branch of the Society now has a membership of more than 130, and, is flourishing under the chairmanship of its president, Trevor Cohen, and secretary, Beverley Davis. Mrs. Davis is recording inscriptions from many cemeteries around Australia, with the co-operation of members in other States. She has also obtained microfilm of the early birth, marriage and burial registers of the Great Synagogue, London, and congregations in Sheerness, Kent, as well as from other communities in the United Kingdom. Her contact with the Toledot, The Journal of Jewish Genealogy, published in New York, has resulted in our being requested to send a "history" of the Australian Jewish Community, as well as requests for information on families known to have come to this country and now being sought by members of the Journal's associate body, the Jewish Genealogical Society. Recent general meetings of the Victorian Branch have featured papers and addresses on highly relevant topics. In November, last, Mr. Brian Kino and Mr. Manuel Gelman presented "The History of Jewish Sport in Australia". Mr. Kino is the author of "History of the Carnivals", published in 1974, as the first official history of the Australian Maccabi Federation. On April 15, the Branch heard Mr. Benzion Patkin — whose new book on the Tatura Camp is soon to be published — speaking on the pre-war structure of the Jewish community in Melbourne, and the pressure it underwent as a result of the sudden influx of Jews escaping from threatened Europe.

We have given the Victorian Branch \$100 towards the cost of obtaining microfilms of the Toorak Synagogue Registers.

Members of the Society in New South Wales who received honours in the recent New Year and Australia Day awards were Mr. Sidney Sinclair, OBE; Mr. John Einfeld, Order of Australia; Rabbi Apple, Order of Australia; Nancy Keesing, Order of Australia, and Lou Rose, MBE. We have congratulated these members and wish them well in the knowledge that they have merited the distinction conferred upon them.

For the first time, this Society accepted an invitation, in January, to give an Australia Day message for broadcasting over the Jewish Radio Hour. The full text of the message, most of which was broadcast, read as follows:

"Almost 200 years ago, Captain Arthur Phillip, on January 26, 1788, established a British colony at Sydney Cove, Port Jackson. The vessels of the First Fleet disembarked their cargo, consisting largely of convicts who had been sentenced to transportation to Botany Bay. They had offended against the laws of their society; they were despised and considered of ill-repute, although today, their crimes would not be regarded as serious. There is certainly no longer any need for us to wish to conceal the fact that among the 751 convicts of the First Fleet at least eight and possibly 14 can be identified as



Jews. We cannot know how many of these Jews may have been included in the assembly when, but a few days later, the Reverend Richard Johnson conducted the first open-air service in Australia, preaching from the text, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" (Psalm 116).

Of course, not all of the early Australian Jewish settlers were convicts, but it has been estimated that a total of about 1,000 Jews came to this country before it had ceased to be a penal colony. They came here, torn from their families and friends, to start a new life in a strange land. They were followed by the free settlers, and even by 1828, a Jewish Kehillah was already in existence here in Sydney.

Since those early days, Jews have migrated to this country from the four corners of the globe. We all know so very well that these migrants and their descendants have contributed a great deal to the progress and welfare of Australia. They have also stretched forth their hands to aid their kinsfolk when necessary in other countries, including the Holy Land before and after the establishment of the State of Israel.

Theodore Herzl wrote of Palestine as the 'Altneu-land' (Old New Land), where Jews would live in a model new society, with right and justice and freedom and equality for all. That dream is becoming a reality after 30 years since the creation of the State of Israel. It should not be forgotten that Australian soldiers helped to bring Palestine under British rule during World War I, and also that Australian leaders were most active in the United Nations when the State of Israel emerged.

For the Jewish people of this country, Australia is also an 'Altneu-land'. Jews were among the convicts and the early settlers, and some of these have continuous links of five and six generations. This country became a refuge for thousands who were to start new lives in a new land, free from the horrors and persecution of their former homes. They have made valued contributions to the general society, and also to the Jewish communities of this country.

Australia Day, therefore, has a special meaning for all Jews of this land. When we recall the history of Australian Jews, the efforts of the pioneers, the fine leaders in so many fields, we should all acknowledge, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" Every Australian Jew, whether native born or a migrant, greatly values his citizenship of this country and the many opportunities which it offers to all of us, to succeed as worthy Australians and as conscientious Jews, loyal also to our own Jewish traditions and heritage."

The Annual General Meeting of December 19, last, featured just one paper, Dr. Bergman's "The Rise and Tragic Fall of George Moss". All members of the executive and committee were returned to office unopposed, and a new member of the committee, Helen Bersten, our archivist, was elected. Also, an honorary life membership was conferred upon Dr. Bergman in recognition of the devotion he has given the Society in many areas over more than 20 years.

Mr. Frank Brophy made the suggestion that an annual or biennial lecture should be inaugurated, in the name of a distinguished Jew, delivered by an eminent citizen who would speak on a subject relating to any person or event connected with the Jewish community. He invited the committee to investigate the feasibility of such a project.

Terry Newman continues to record the births, marriages and deaths, as published in the earliest copies of the Sydney Morning Herald. These will be indexed, and, it is hoped, published for all members. This work is expected to be completed by 1980, and will be a most valuable source of reference. Terry is also donating to the Library of the Society the 30 microfilm reels Index to the London Jewish Chronicle, 1841-1890.

In April, the Society was represented by the president and secretary at the launching of Lysbeth Cohen's book, "Elizabeth Macquarie, Her Life and Times", by Sir Hermann Black, at The National Trust building on Observatory Hill. The book has been published by Wentworth Books Pty Ltd, and is highly recommended for those who, as Sir Hermann said, "wish to know more about Mrs. Macquarie and her times than that she had a 'chair'."

In March, Mrs. Valerie Hamson, recording officer of the Maitland and District Historical Society, came to Sydney to discuss several important matters relating to our mutual interests in Maitland. These were the old Jewish burial ground at Louth Park, South Maitland, the old synagogue building, now the property of R. J. Taylor, farm machinery repairers, and now in its centenary year, and the forthcoming Sesqui-centenary celebrations of Maitland, to be held from 11-18 August, next. The Maitland Society invites the Jewish community to participate in the celebrations. It is proposed that participation might take the form of a series of articles and stories concerning the Jewish pioneers of the district, published in the Maitland press; the mounting of an exhibition of photos, documents and other historic and religious items concerning the early Jewish community in Maitland. Towards this end, the local Historical Society has obtained the use of a large shop window in the main street of Maitland. We are pleased to participate in this project as the Jews of Maitland contributed greatly to its development and progress in the early years of its establishment. Also, Mrs. Hamson has volunteered to write an article on the houses formerly owned by Cohen and Levy families, "Cintra" and "Bennholme", both of which had been handed over by their owners to the local townsfolk as, respectively, a hospital and an elderly people's home. "Leholme", the original home of L. W. Levy, was one of the largest residences in the district. It has been demolished.

The Maitland City Council rejected the recommendations of their Town Planner, and the surveyors, that the old synagogue building should be restored and used as a Museum and meeting place. Now, Mrs. Hamson has spoken with the owners, and the Town Planner, to ascertain whether interested persons and organisations might seek the assistance of the Heritage Council. The position now is that the only bodies concerned to have the building preserved and developed for

cultural use, more in keeping with its original purpose are the Jewish community, the Maitland and District Historical Society and the architect, Ian W. Pender, whose ancestor was the architect of the building. It has been suggested that the present owners might be prepared to negotiate with the Council for the changeover of a suitable property or section of land. Other suggestions have been put forward, but, for the present, the only real achievement is that people have been made aware of the building's existence, and of the interest which lies in it.

The efforts to rescue the old burial ground at Louth Park are attended with much greater success. Rabbi Apple visited the area and was moved by what he saw of the last resting place of these pioneers. In an address from the pulpit the following day, he spoke of the pitiable sights of neglect and deterioration he had seen. "Here is one instance where we cannot blame 'the enemy': we ourselves are responsible for the desecration of Jewish history and Jewish memorials," he said. His words struck a responsive chord in some areas. Rabbi Apple estimated that \$2,000 would be required to clear the overgrown cemetery and restore some fallen memorials, and to have a protective fence erected around the area. Some descendants of families buried there came forward with money, as did others who were impelled to pay respect to Jewish pioneers. A heartwarming response was the Great Synagogue Youth's offer to make an excursion to Maitland as part of its community awareness programme. A contingent of 12 youngsters went up by train, and were met at the station by members of the Newcastle congregation, Fred Boas and Leon Erder, and members of the Maitland Historical Society, who had arranged with the Maitland Mercury to send a representative. Those in the team from GSY were, headed by Steve Seidman and Adam Garfield, Mark and Keren Solomon, Simeon and Riva Apple, Danielle Burman, Jeff Holloway, Michael Glick, Pamela and Greg Fisher and Sarah McNorton.

The story of the "rescue" of the old Maitland Cemetery gives us cause to consider whether the time has not come for the establishment of a co-ordinating body to form a Jewish Country Cemeteries' Trust, to be recognised as having powers to act on behalf of the Jewish community in the rescuing of old Jewish burial grounds in country areas — whether private or public. Such a Trust might comprise representatives from the Board of Deputies, the AJHS, the Chevre Kadisha, the Cemetery Trust, etc. The Trust would need to obtain the co-operation of the local historical society, the local council, and where possible, descendants of the pioneers.

Much has been learned in the rescuing of the Maitland Cemetery — in many ways, good fortune attended the project from the start — but it is only one of many neglected graveyards in country towns in New South Wales alone. Some such include Goulburn, Broken Hill, Gulgong, Eden, Katoomba, Forbes, Wollongong, Grafton . . . Until now, there has been no planned effort for the reclaiming of early memorials in areas outside the metropolis. Vital historical evidence, in some cases the only remaining record of the life and work of the earliest Jews to come to this country, is found on these tombstones, many of which are

already beginning to crumble away. The cost and effort required is a small price for the whole Jewish community to pay.

Once again we find ourselves indebted to the Great Synagogue, Mr Goodman and his office staff, and to staunch workers like Phoebe Davis, Rabbi Apple, Terry Newman, and others who give so much of their time, effort and thought to the cause of Australian Jewish history, and whose contributions go a long way towards making the Society's work effective and enjoyable, and appreciated by historians and scholars who realise the importance of our history.

The death occurred in February of Mrs Sadie Rosenblum. She and her family have been valued supporters of our work over many years, and we extend sincere sympathy to her children and grand-children.

## **NEW MEMBERS**

### **NEW SOUTH WALES**

Apple, Mrs Marion  
Bersten, Mrs Ian  
Bliss, Mr C. K  
Davis, Mr & Mrs A.  
Grunstein, Mr W.  
Guthrie, Miss Robin A.  
Hammer, Mrs G.  
Lewin, Dr Robert D.  
Lvoff, Mrs D.  
McMullen, Mrs M. A.  
Pizem, Mr Sam  
Phillips, Mrs O. E.  
Price, Mr Alfred L.  
Redelman, Mr Shya  
Symonds, Mr Ken  
Symonds, Mrs Queenie  
Swart, Mr M  
Weinreich, Miss Lilian  
Weinreich, Miss Michelle  
White, Mr Alfred

### **VICTORIA**

Bach, Miss Susi  
Chapman, Mrs M.  
Cohen, Mrs Heather  
Davis, Mr Robert  
Ellis, Miss Betty  
Felts, Mrs Eve  
Kosky, Mr A.  
Patkin, Mr and Mrs B.  
Revelman, Mr G.  
Roseman, Mrs A.  
Rosefield, Mrs Iris  
Sackville, Mrs Wilma  
Segal, Mr and Mrs S.  
Taft, Professor Ron  
United Jewish Education Board

### **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Zacks, Rabbi L. Rubin

### **NEW ZEALAND**

Gluckman, Dr L.

## **JEWISH COMMUNAL APPEAL**

This Society was recently admitted as a participating Organisation in the above Appeal which strives to raise adequate finance for the support of vital local Jewish institutions, whether Charitable, Educational, Cultural, or community services. All donations to the Appeal are tax deductible. (The Australian Jewish Historical Society is itself a body to which contributions are tax deductible, provided the donation is made to its Library Fund.)

It behoves all our Jewish members to support the Appeal especially as this Society has now gained acceptance from the Appeal. By generously subscribing to the current campaign, our members are assisting to maintain essential services provided to the Jewish Community by the participating Organisations, including our own Society whose work will be enhanced and expanded by the additional funds that will flow from contributions made to the Appeal. The Executive and Committee of the Australian Jewish Historical Society commend this cause to its membership.

**BENEFACTIONS IN MEMORY  
OF**

**ERNEST SAMUEL MARKS, C.B.E.  
ADOLPH AND AMELIA ALEXANDER  
GERALD AND ISABELLE BENJAMIN  
ERNEST R. BARUCH  
SIMON JOSEPH GUSS  
SIR SAMUEL AND LADY COHEN  
HYAM SHOLOM AND KATHLEEN HIMMELFERB  
HERMAN AND RACHEL AHRONSON  
WILLIAM L. AND GLADYS N. COHEN  
ELIAS AND LEBA GREEN  
SIR BENJAMIN BENJAMIN AND LADY BENJAMIN  
ALFRED AND MAY PHILLIPS  
FREDERICK DAVID AND ESTHER ZILLAH MICHAELIS  
JACOB AND EMMA GLASS  
PERCY BRIGHTON COHEN  
LIONEL COHEN  
PHILIP SCHNEIDEMAN  
SYDNEY BENJAMIN GLASS  
DAVID JAMES BENJAMIN  
JUDAH AND FANNY ELLIS  
RABBI LAZARUS MORRIS GOLDMAN  
RALPH SYMONDS  
JUDAH GREEN  
PHILLIP MORRIS AND DORA ELIZABETH HART  
REV. ABRAHAM TOBIAS BOAS  
SAM ROSENBERG  
Mrs. REBECCA HAYMAN (nee Josephson)  
BELLA GREEN  
CELIA ROSENBERG  
PERCY WOLFSON**

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**Dr. ANTHONY JOSEPH**  
25 Westbourne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 15.

**CORRESPONDING MEMBER FOR U.S.A.:**

**Dr. ISIDORE MEYER**  
90 Laurel Hill Terrace, New York, N.Y. 10033

**BENEFACITOR MEMBERS:**

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ISRAEL GREEN, O.B.E.  
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M. HARRY KELLERMAN, O.B.E.  
MILLIE KELLERMAN  
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SYDNEY SCOTT**

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A person donating an amount of not less than \$100 in one sum may be elected by the Committee a Benefactor Member of the Society.

