

THE BRIEF, BUT EVENTFUL LIFE OF LEWIS FLEGELTAUB

Morris S. Ochert

HIS NAME

'These are the names...' (Exod. 1 — i).

Names are the building blocks of historians and genealogists. Since the dawn of mankind, parents have allocated 'given' or 'first' names to their offspring. However, surnames are a relatively recent innovation. The increase in the world's population and various other pressures has made essential the acquisition of 'family names' or 'surnames.' Over the past one thousand years, the possession of a surname has increased from a rarity to an almost universal feature of life. The change did not come about simultaneously in all places. The movement spread worldwide, town by town, country by country, not following any pattern. As the need arose, so were surnames introduced. In places of closer settlement, in more 'civilised' areas, amongst the 'upper,' more educated and wealthier classes — these people acquired surnames earlier. In more backward communities, amongst the landless peasantry and the labouring classes, change came much later.

Not all people were happy with this innovation, for they felt it was intrusive and often feared that 'if anyone is going to profit by it, it won't be us.' Among the Jewish people the imposition of a surname was particularly resented, for Jews felt that they already possessed adequate and meaningful names. A person whose name was, say, Shlomo ben Avraham (Solomon, the son of Abraham) would insist that he had all the names that he needed. An easy compromise, whether he approved or not, was to recognise him as Solomon Abrahams. Even as recently as two hundred years ago, some Jewish people were without surnames. In Turkey, surnames were still being allotted, as late as 1931!

This is an account of the sojourn of Lewis Flegeltaub in Brisbane towards the end of the nineteenth century. We will never know

whether that name was intended to be derogatory or not. The former Director of the Institute of Modern Languages states that one interpretation of *'flegel'* is 'a retarded or recalcitrant boy,' while *'taub'* can mean 'deaf.' So 'a deaf mute' may be intended. He states that, in a 'live'¹ language, a word may have varying meanings according to who uses it, or when or where it is used. Some other possible meanings of *'taub'* are 'a dove's wing' or 'the wooden paddle used to beat the grain from the chaff when winnowing' or 'something used to dabble with' or 'a large wooden spatula used in cooking.' It is not at all clear, therefore, whether the name was intended to be derogatory or not. If it was meant to be uncomplimentary, it would have been due to the first Flegeltaub having resisted this intrusion in his life.

There have been many who bear that name all over Australia, as well as those who have abbreviated it to forms such as Fleg, Flig, Flegg, and so on. Few are now Jewish. The man of whom I write was born in Suwalki in Russian Poland in 1848, the son of Zarach (Azariah) and Hannah Flegeltaub (née Youdelevna). His given name was Leif. His Hebrew name was Levi. In Australia he took the name Lewis. He was one of six siblings who were taken by their parents to Liverpool, England when young. They migrated to Victoria, Australia in 1864. I will write only of Lewis and leave the overall Flegeltaub history to my colleague of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, Travers Herman, of Western Australia. He has an archive of cognate history, which he proposes to record in a manuscript, probably on his retirement. Travers' great grandfather, Aaron, was Lewis Flegeltaub's brother, so that Lewis was his great grand-uncle.

Lewis led a busy and financially rewarding life in Australia. He lived first in Bendigo and Ballarat,² becoming wealthy during the period of the gold rushes as did many others of his kin. It is not recorded whether this was from gold mining or from supplying equipment, food and clothing to the miners. He married Esther Hannah Phillips at the East Melbourne Synagogue on 21 October 1868, when he was twenty-two and she was nineteen. She was the daughter of James Phillips, pawnbroker, and Rosalie (née Sherkover). Seven of their children were born in Ballarat up to 1879, in which year he was naturalised. By that time, gold production was petering out and they moved to Brisbane about 1880, where their eighth child was born in 1888.

HIS PARNOSSOH

Soon after arriving in Brisbane, Lewis acquired The Goldsmith's Hall, a large jewellery, watch and clock store. It was near the upper end of Queen Street, the city's main thoroughfare, near the Victoria

Bridge. Originally it was No. 44 but, in subsequent renumbering, it became 139 and then 210. No record remains of his experiences in that business, but his opulent lifestyle indicates that it provided him a fulsome income.

After his death in September 1897, his oldest son, Lionel, carried on the management of the firm, aided by his mother. She was in poor health and passed away in December 1902, aged only fifty-four years. Lionel then sold the firm to the Heindorff Jewellery Co. (Heindorff Bros.) after holding a major sale of the stock as per an advertisement, a copy of which has been preserved. It states that the sale was 'By Order of the Executrix in the Estate of Goldsmiths' Hall Co., Established 30 Years.' This indicates that Lewis must have bought the store as a going concern, for he did not live in Brisbane for that length of time. The advertisement appeared in *The Queensland Figaro* of 5 December 1901. Soon after, Lionel opened a jewellery store in Sydney. Included in the sale of The Goldsmith's Hall to the Heindorff Brothers was a giant clock, popularly known as 'Big Ben.' Its story follows.

HIS CLOCK NAMED 'BIG BEN'

In 1890 an elderly Birmingham clockmaker made a very large, two-faced clock. 'He designed the entire movement and hand-cut each item from sheets of the finest brass.' It was a one-off project, which took a year to complete. Lewis imported it and erected it at the edge of the footpath outside the Queen Street store. The case is 3 feet (0.91m) in diameter. The height is 15 feet 3 inches (4.65m), which includes its cast iron fluted column and the concrete plinth at the base. (A plinth was provided when it was erected outside the store and when it was subsequently on display at the International Exhibition and in its present position at Nudgee College). To this day, it is known as 'Big Ben.'

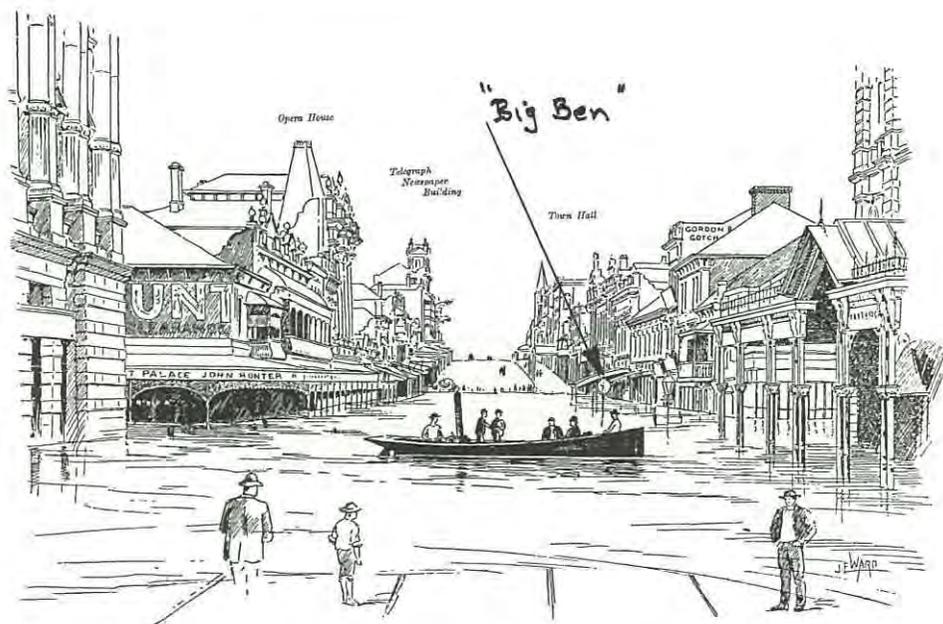
In Queen Street it was a major feature of the streetscape, with one face visible up to Victoria Bridge, while the other face could be seen from the GPO. In 1896 it was loaned to The Great International Exhibition, held to honour Queen Victoria's Jubilee.³ Later, it was returned to its earlier position, where it remained until long after the sale of the firm to the Heindorff Bros. About 1917 the City Council issued an edict that 'all impediments on city streets are to be removed.' The Nudgee Boys' College successfully tendered forty-one pounds for its purchase and removal and ever since it has graced its quadrangle. The movement originally was powered by a falling weight inside the column. Using a crank handle, this was wound back up, weekly. About 1980 that was replaced by radio con-



Big Ben at Nudgee College

trol from a master clock in the principal's office. The old mechanism is held by the College Archivist, Brother Wallis, to whom I am indebted for some of the above data. It runs with great accuracy despite its age. It is kept a quarter-hour early, in keeping with 'College time,' as are the clocks at Buckingham Palace.

A plaque on the base of the clock states that it was brought to Brisbane to be shown at the above mentioned Exhibition. However, photos held at the Oxley Library show it outside Flegeltaub's shop, with the column partly submerged, in the two extraordinary floods of 1893.⁴



STEAMER IN QUEEN STREET, FEBRUARY 10, 1893,

A SCENE OF THE SECOND FLOOD.

Another matter arising from Queen Victoria's Jubilee was that Lewis 'was to be a member of a delegation of Brisbane's Jewish Elders, chosen to wait upon the Governor in order to convey expressions of fealty and a tastefully illustrated address signed by each of them, on the occasion of Her Majesty's Sixtieth Jubilee. This took place at Government House, in conjunction with similar delegations from many other loyal groups, societies, lodges and congregations. The date was to be 24 May 1897, the sixtieth anniversary of Victoria's coronation. They were most cordially welcomed by the Governor, Charles Baillie (Lord Lamington, after whom the Lamington Plateau was named). Regrettably, by that time, Lewis Flegeltaub's health was rapidly failing, his attendance was not possible and he passed away only four days later,' aged forty-nine years.⁵

HIS RESIDENCES

The homes which Lewis and Esther Flegeltaub occupied reflected their wealth, social standing and good taste. No record has been found of those homes in which they lived in the earlier part of their stay in Brisbane. However, details are given below of the last three which they occupied. Of these, the first was *Palma Rosa* in 1889-90.



Palma Rosa, the Flegeltaub's family home, 1889-1890

It still stands.⁶ It was recorded as 'probably the most magnificent residence in Brisbane, designed in the Tuscan Doric order and built of Helidon sandstone, on three levels and with a five-level, 90 foot tower, with vast river views.' The publication *More Historic Homes of Brisbane* states 'it was one of the largest private residences ever built in Brisbane' and it tells of its elaborate design and rich features. The Italian architect, Andrea Stombuco, built it for his family home, but never lived in it. He was bankrupted a few years later due, it was recorded, to 'ill-advised business deals and lavish spending on an opulent lifestyle.'

Stombuco also designed the façade of the Brisbane Synagogue, and this first brought him into contact with Flegeltaub, but he experienced problems with the congregation.⁷ The Brisbane Hebrew Congregation was founded in 1865 and utilised rented premises for its first twenty-one years. Many attempts were made to procure a suitable piece of land and to construct a synagogue, but it was only in late 1885 that they felt they were ready to go ahead. A Building Committee was formed, charged with the task of bringing their dream to fulfilment. Lewis, not yet forty years of age, was its secretary. They proposed to proceed in three phases.

The first phase was to invite architects to submit sketches of their concept of the façade, following the well-known procedure of an 'Architect's Competition'.⁸ The winner was to receive a substantial cash prize. Conditions were that 'all entries were to remain the property of the congregation, which was to be free to do as it wished with them.' Stombuco's sketch, copies of which are still held by the congregation, won the prize, which was remitted to him. (The sketches of some of the other contestants are also still in the archives).

The second phase was fund raising. Realising that all their efforts would be futile if the cost of the precinct could not be met, a circular was sent out to all known Jewish folk in Brisbane, to many interstate people and advertisements were placed in the Jewish press in Australia and in England. With each circular a copy of Stombuco's sketch was appended, to show potential donors the form of the proposed building. (Note that the sketch was their property). The result of this appeal for funds was such that the Committee was encouraged to go ahead with the project. (In fact, when the synagogue was opened in July 1886, it was free of debt).

Once sufficient funds had been raised, the third phase was to invite architects to tender for:

- Designing the entire building, to incorporate the façade pictured in Stombuco's sketch. (Again I stress, it belonged to the congregation);
- Preparing working drawings and details of every part of the structure;
- Preparing specifications for the guidance of each trade, such as bricklayer, plasterer, gas fitter, carpenter, painter, glazier, plumber, etc.;
- Taking out quantities to assist in the procurement of materials;
- Submitting to the Committee an estimate of the cost of the project;
- Calling tenders for the construction;
- In conjunction with the Committee, considering tenders, deciding which one should be awarded the contract and placement thereof;
- Supervision of the contractor and subcontractors and inspecting their work and nominating when progress payments were to be made;
- Maintaining close contact with the Committee at all stages of the above; and
- Adjudicating on any claims which may be made during the twelve month's warranty period.

No sooner was this invitation to quote issued to the architects than Stombuco declared that the Committee was acting illegally. He claimed that the fact that his sketch had won him the Façade Concept prize, and that it had been used in the appeal for funds and that the Committee made public (in its invitation to architects to tender, item three above), that his sketch was to be the basis of the design of the façade, that he had every right to expect that the architectural contract would be his without tendering. The Committee met with its solicitors and all agreed that their obligations to Stombuco ended with the payment of the prize; that it was made very clear that 'all entries become the property of the congregation,' that it would not be legal for them to forgo the process of openly-invited public tenders, especially as they were to spend donated funds and that Stombuco was free to respond to their 'Invitation to Quote,' when his tender would receive equal attention to that afforded to his competitors. He angrily rejected these statements, saying he would not tender. He used some intemperate expressions and threatened legal action to recover 'large amounts of damages,' and that he would 'go to the press.' At a further meeting, to which he was invited but which he declined to attend, it was decided to reject his claims outright and proceed as planned. No further contact was made by either party.

The winning tender was from architect, Arthur Midson. In 1986, at the time of the centenary of the synagogue, the Brisbane City Council requested permission to place on the façade an historical plaque, which shows an early picture of the synagogue and a brief account of its design and origin. The wording, which I provided, mentions that 'the façade was designed by Andrea Stombuco, while Midson was the Supervising Architect.' It may be relevant to point out that the synagogue is included in four Heritage Listings, those of the Brisbane City Council, the Federal and State Heritage Departments and the National Trust. Currently, large sums are being expended, some donated by congregants and the balance from outside sources, on major renovations to bring it to its original form. After over one hundred and thirteen years, the synagogue remains in full use.

Returning to the story of the dwellings of the Flegeltaubs, their next move was to Newstead House. It still stands and is now a Queensland History Museum. It is beautifully situated on a high grassy knoll at the confluence of Breakfast Creek with the Brisbane River. The booklet *Newstead House — the History*, describes this home and grounds and states that, in early 1891, 'it had been leased to Lewis Flegeltaub and family. He was a jeweller and manager of Goldsmith's Hall at Queen Street and a prominent member of the Jewish Community.' It described the wedding there of their eldest



*The Flegeltaub family at Newstead House about 1893
From L to R: Lewis Flegeltaub with his daughters Annie, Lily and Leah, son Alexander and wife Esther.*

daughter, Annie, to Victor Rosenthal⁹ on 15 February 1893, reporting that the proceedings were:

...on an unusually elaborate scale. J.M. Myers (the Rev. Jonas Myer Myers),¹⁰ leader of the Hebrew Synagogue, conducted the ceremony in the drawing room. A string band entertained before the wedding breakfast was served in the dining room. Clearly, Newstead House remains the social centre of Brisbane.

The Flegeltaubs moved to Wickham Terrace in 1894. That move was to the former *Mon Repos*, a large handsome residence overlooking the city. Long ago, it was greatly 'redeveloped' to provide a number of surgeries for doctors.

HIS COMMUNAL SERVICE

The Minutes of the congregation's Board of Management show that Lewis was a Board Member already in 1883; he was its educational superintendent in November 1885 and reported on the satisfactory operation of the *Talmud Torah*¹¹ for some years after. At the meeting of 4 July 1886, just prior to the consecration of the newly built synagogue, he donated a set of engraved *Klei Kodesh*¹² and a large pendulum clock and it was recorded that he had resilvered all the *Klei Kodesh*.



*Klei Kodesh donated by
Lewis Flegeltaub*

In 1890 he became the honorary treasurer and, in 1894/95, he was the president. He opposed the use of a harmonium in the *Kol Nidre*¹³ Services, despite the fact that Rev. Chodowski approved it, if it was played by a non-Jew, but his motion was defeated. (Subsequently that practice was terminated on the instructions of the Chief Rabbi in 1888). During his presidency, he founded and operated the congregation's Benevolent Fund and generously contributed to it.

While he was a Board Member, a scandal broke regarding a forged *Shechita*¹⁴ stamp. In 1896 a wholesale butchery, which had been entrusted with the supply of kosher¹⁵ meat to the congregation, was found to have ordered a copy of the stamp, used to identify those animal carcasses which had been ritually slaughtered by the *Shochet*.¹⁶ This was additionally serious as the Brisbane General Hospital had contracted for 7,000 pounds weight of kosher meat to be purveyed weekly by the congregation. The Hospital Board

believed that their normal supplies of *treif*¹⁷ meat had caused a serious outbreak of food poisoning among its patients. Flegeltaub was placed in charge of the investigation and, though he complained of 'little co-operation from the Police,' he quickly resolved the matter. The butchery was repentant and paid a substantial fine to the Board. It was obvious that the fraudulent stamp had not yet been used¹⁸ and they were allowed to continue to supply kosher meat only under very strict surveillance. Flegeltaub was 'delighted to report that he took the illicit stamp to his home, where he destroyed it by repeated blows with a hammer upon a convenient rock.' (It would have made an interesting exhibit in the Australian Jewish Museum). Lewis served as the congregation's '*Segan*' (second in charge) from 1896 until his death in 1897.

HIS PASSING

Lewis passed away on 28 May 1897, aged only forty-nine years. The cause of death is not recorded. The local press carried lavish tributes to his memory referring, *inter alia*, incorrectly to the fact that 'he had been the President of the Ballarat Hebrew Congregation;¹⁹ correctly to his presidency of the Brisbane Congregation; that he had achieved very high rank in the craft of Freemasonry and had been involved in the launching of three new Lodges; that he was most generous towards every genuine cause which came to his attention; that few men in the commercial life of Brisbane held as admirable a reputation as he; that he had helped all who came to him, whatever may have been their need, never expecting or demanding any reward or acclaim; and that he reflected great credit upon his People.' Another paper recalled that 'when much of Brisbane was inundated by the great floods of 1893 (there were two within two weeks of one another) and boats were being used in Queen Street, he gave aid to many who were in distress, despite that the water covered the floor of his store. After it subsided, he helped many to restore their businesses.'

In regard to his family, the newspapers recorded that 'he left his widow, Esther, and their seven children' (though eight children had been born to this couple, one, Sarah, had died in her infancy, in 1872); that the eldest, Lionel, would now take over the management of Goldsmith's Hall assisted by his mother (who was no longer in robust health); that one daughter was married to Victor Rosenthal of Brisbane; that his niece, Juliette Wray, 'is highly successful in comic opera.'²⁰

After the funeral, the press heaped further generous praise upon Lewis. The point was made that 'the huge numbers of Jewish

people who attended, as well as the great contingent of Freemasons (whose colourful funereal rituals followed on after the traditional Hebrew Services), together with numbers of people of all beliefs representing the commercial and religious life of this State, all attested to the high regard in which the deceased was held.' It was reported that the funeral was conducted by the congregation's minister, the Rev. A.T. Chodowski²¹ and that the funeral procession 'moved off from the Flegeltaub family residence, *Mon Repos*, on Wickham Terrace.'

A permanent tribute was erected in the Brisbane Synagogue in the form of a handsome white marble plaque. The Hebrew words read '*Liskor Alom*' (In Everlasting Memory). The English inscription reads:

This tablet is erected by Affectionate Friends in Loving Memory of Lewis Flegeltaub Esq. Who was 'gathered to his People' on the 28th Day of May 1897 at the age of 49 years. He faithfully and earnestly served this congregation as its Treasurer on many occasions and as its President for one year and was intensely zealous for both its spiritual and financial success. He was of a most charitable and benevolent disposition and open-handed to all who called upon him in distress. His last act previous to his lamentable death was the embellishment of the Sanctuary²² and on a prior occasion, the presentation of a pair of silver-gilt bells²³ for the adornment of the Sepher'.²⁴ This is followed by 'Tishri 5660. September 1899'

It is followed by five Hebrew letters, which are an abbreviation of the widely-used inscription 'May he be bound up in the bond of Eternal Life'.²⁵

Subsequently, Lewis was memorialised by the erection of what is still the loftiest monument in the Toowong Cemetery. It is in the form of a high column, executed in red granite.²⁶ His widow, Esther, did not survive him for long, for she passed away on 5 December 1902, aged fifty-four, and was laid to rest alongside her husband.

At the Board Meeting of 13 June 1897, it was resolved to convey sympathy to his widow and children. A most eloquent and sincere letter was sent and a copy was appended to the Minutes. The same was done with regard to the passing of another congregational stalwart, Behr Raphael Lewin,²⁷ who had died on 3 April 1897, only seven weeks earlier. The congregation was deeply shocked at the loss of these two indefatigable workers. In his Annual Report of 1899, the president, A.M. Hertzberg, wrote that marble tablets to the memory of each man had, that year, been erected in the synagogue



Left: Plaque in Synagogue



Right: Monument at Toowong Cemetery

and that 'whilst they mark the Community's grateful recognition of work well done, I hope they will also be as beacon lights to the younger members, and induce them to emulate good examples, left behind by men who were worthy members of the congregation.'

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The archives of the Brisbane Hebrew Congregation.

The Courier-Mail.

The John Oxley Library.

The Daily Mail.

The Brisbane Post Office Directory.

Toowong Jewish Cemetery records.

Travers Herman, a great grand-nephew of Lewis Flegeltaub.

Beverly Davis OAM, Archivist of the Australian Jewish Historical Society, Victoria.

Queensland Mining Gazette.

Queensland Punch (a company advertisement in 1891).

The Queensland Place Names Board.

Figaro, a Queensland newspaper at the turn of the century.

Week, a social publication, dated 3 March 1893.

More Historical Homes of Brisbane.

John Davis, a descendant of one of the Heindorff Bros.

Newstead House — the History, published by Friends of Newstead.

Brother Wallis of Nudgee Boys' College.

NOTES

1. A 'live' language is one which is still evolving, such as English, as distinct from Classical Hebrew, Classical Greek and Latin, which are static and are referred to as 'dead' languages.
2. Bendigo and Ballarat are towns in central Victoria, which were at the centre of the gold rushes, triggered by major finds by John Hargreaves in 1851.
3. I call attention to note 24 appended to my manuscript 'Darling Downs Jewry and the Toowoomba Hebrew Congregation,' in this Society's Journal, Vol. XIII, Part 4, 1997. I pointed out that the term 'Jubilee,' of Hebrew origin, indicates a fiftieth anniversary, but English usage has widened its application to most significant anniversaries. Thus, the year 1897 was actually the **SIXTIETH** anniversary of Victoria's ascent to the throne, but it universally has been referred to as the year of her 'Jubilee.' When I was at primary and secondary schools in the 1920s and 1930s, 24 May was commemorated as 'Empire Day,' a public holiday with speeches, flag flying, bunting, medal wearing, parades and other celebrations.
4. Many photos are extant, of people in boats being ferried in Queen Street, at that time.
5. In my manuscripts on Cooktown and Toowoomba Jewries, I called attention to the short life spans of many folk a century ago. In the old Toowong Cemetery in Brisbane, are the monuments to numbers of our folk who passed away around the age of fifty. In the Mount Gravatt Cemetery, which was opened in 1968, many of the headstones record lives of over eighty, over ninety and even over one hundred years. Infant mortality has also dropped dramatically.
6. In World War II, it was used as an administrative centre for the US Forces. For a period it was neglected but, since it was acquired by the English Speaking Union, many repairs have been carried out. In 1998, \$800,000 of Commonwealth funds were allocated towards the estimated \$2 million needed for a complete restoration.
7. Ochert, Morris S. (1986). 'Further History of Brisbane Hebrew Congregation', *AJHS Journal* Vol. X, Part 1, p29.
8. Often, architects are initially invited to compete for a prize for the preferred general concept. Subsequently, when tenders are received for the detailed design and the supervision of construction, the con-

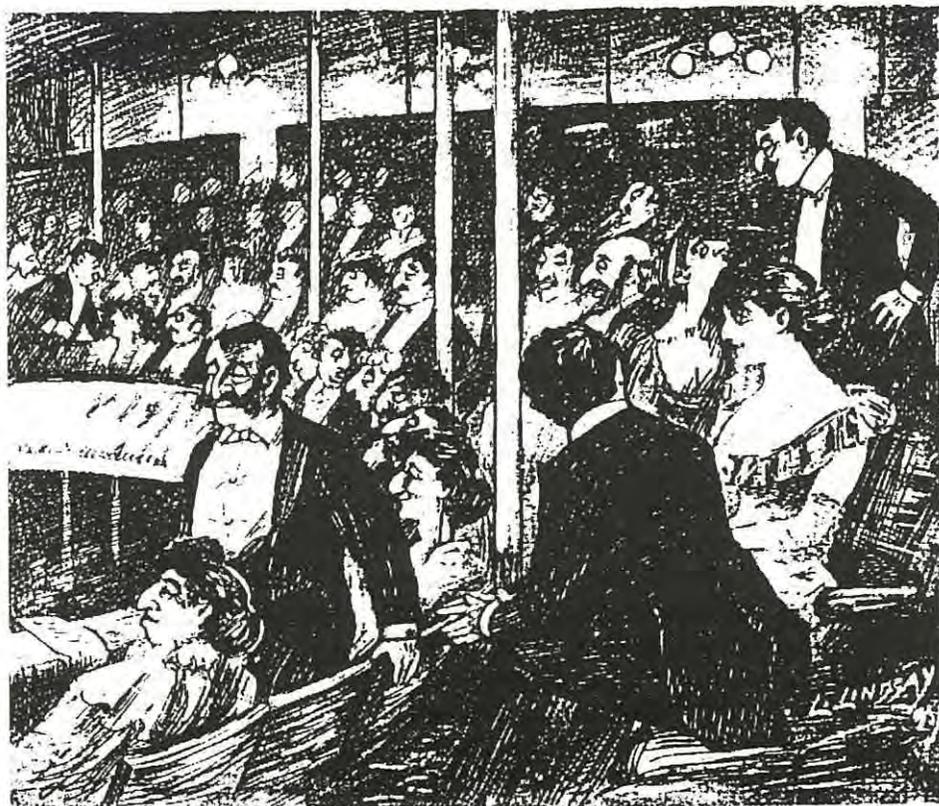
tract may be awarded to an architect other than the one who submitted the winning concept.

9. Exactly 107 years after that wedding, another Jewish wedding was held at Newstead House. That was between Michelle Taylor and Guy Kronenberg. The grave of Harold, infant son of Annie and Victor Rosenthal, adjoins that of Annie's parents, but no monument to Annie and Victor is in the Toowong Cemetery.
10. Ochert, Morris S. (1984). 'A History of the Brisbane Hebrew Congregation', *AJHS Journal* Vol. IX, Part 6, pp457 onwards re Rev. Jonas Myer Myers.
11. *Talmud Torah* (Heb.). Hebrew and Religious Classes.
12. *Klei Kodesh* (Heb.). 'Holy items.' The silver embellishments with which a Torah scroll is dressed. These usually consist of a breast plate, a pair of bell-crowns and a 'yad,' i.e. a pointer with which the Reader follows the place, when reading from the scroll.
13. *Kol Nidre* (Heb.). 'All oaths...' The opening words of the solemn prayer at the commencement of the service on the Eve of the Day of Atonement Services. This prayer and, indeed, the entire service, is known as 'Kol Nidre.'
14. *Shechita* (Heb.). The term applied to the ritual slaughter of animals.
15. Kosher (Heb.). Food which has been prepared in accordance with the Jewish dietary laws and may therefore be eaten by Jewish people.
16. *Shochet* (Heb.). A person qualified to slaughter animals for food, in accordance with the stringent requirements of *Shechita*.
17. *Treif* (Heb.) (torn). The dietary laws forbid, *inter alia*, the eating of meat from an animal which has been 'torn,' e.g. by a wild animal or a fall or a weapon. The term has been expanded to refer to all foods which are not 'kosher,' i.e. not to be eaten by Jewish people.
18. The plot was poorly planned and both the new stamp and the invoice for its manufacture were delivered to Mr Flegeltaub's store, by the stamp maker around the corner. As recorded in the Minutes, 'the cat was then out of the bag.'
19. The archives of the Society in Victoria do not reveal that he was President of the Ballarat Congregation. The Archivist has, however, found a record in Goldman's *Jews of Victoria in the Nineteenth Century*, that he was a committee member of the Ballarat branch of the Anglo-Jewish Association. As he was only thirty-two when he left there, he would have been a very young president of a congregation.
20. Juliette Wray was the stage pseudonym of Julie Flegeltaub. Born in Ballarat in 1870, she was the fourth child of the ten born to Wolf Flegeltaub and his wife, Phoebe Florence (née Goldberg). Wolf was the third child of the eight born to Sorieba Zorach Flegeltaub and his wife, Hannah (née Youdelevna). Leif Lewis Flegeltaub, the subject of this essay, was the sixth child of Sorieba and Hannah. Therefore, Julie was the niece of Lewis. I quote from data supplied by her kinsman, Travers Herman (above mentioned), as follows... 'Julie had a superbly melodious voice and acting flair, which was sprung in a hotbed of musical cultivation at Ballarat, a place which was preoccupied with many

brass bands and choirs, eventually leading to the establishment of the annual Ballarat Festival as a national event. First appearing on stage aged 15 years, she became 'The Darling of Melbourne Jewry' and was acclaimed by critics. She was engaged by J.C. Williamson and became one of their principal singers, touring the Australia/New Zealand circuit.' In the possibility that Julie had a daughter, to whom the surname 'Wray' may have been passed, and that this daughter may have been Fay Wray, the famed actress of the silent screen, I phoned a number of folk with that surname, in Victoria. From one elderly lady I had the reply that her late husband used to say that 'Aunty Julie was a famous singer and Aunty Faigel (Fay, I presume) was a great actress and was known as 'Hollywood's Greatest Screamer'.' (In her part as the female lead in the original 'King Kong,' she had plenty of opportunities to display that talent!). Fay Wray, then 92 years old, was in Israel and Italy in 1999, when she received recognition for her pioneering work in the 'silent' era and in the early days of 'the talkies.'

Anti-Semites are always ready to come out of the woodwork! In my manuscript on 'Dr Fanny Reading Versus *Smith's Weekly*' (in this Society's Journal of June 1996), I wrote of the scurrilous libel which was created and bruited about by that ill-famed publication. *The Bulletin*, which commenced publication about forty years before *Smith's* came on the scene, also purveyed anti-Jewish material as seen in a cartoon from the *Bulletin* of 28 September 1885, the caption being 'TRIAL BY JEWRY at Melbourne Princess's dress-circle during the 'Wray' season.' It purports to depict Jewish people, with the features favoured by Julius Streicher, at a performance by Juliette Wray. In the Hilary Rubinstein's *Chosen*, Juliette is mentioned as 'a member of the well-known Flegeltaub family, whose communal importance extended from Perth to Brisbane.'

21. Ochert, Morris S. (1984) 'A History of the Brisbane Hebrew Congregation', *AJHS Journal* Vol. IX, Part 7, p509 re Rev. A.T. Chodowski.
22. Sanctuary. The Ark or, in Hebrew, the *Oren Kodesh*, which, in a synagogue, is the repository in which the sacred scrolls of the Torah are kept.
23. Called '*rimmonim*' in Hebrew, that is 'pomegranates,' after the shape in which they are often made. Invariably, small silver bells hang from the *rimmonim*, giving a pleasing tinkle as the Torah is being carried.
24. What seems to have been overlooked is the fact that he also had given a '*yad*' — a pointer used when reading from a Torah scroll. It is inscribed 'Presented to the Brisbane Hebrew Congregation. New Year 5647 (1886) by Lewis Flegeltaub.' This was a few months after the synagogue had been consecrated.
25. These five letters are inscribed on every Jewish headstone.
26. Red granite is the dearest of the granites. A stonemason has estimated that it would cost over \$150,000 to make this monument today.
27. Ochert, Morris S. (1997) 'Darling Downs Jewry and the Toowoomba Hebrew Congregation', *AJHS Journal* Vol. XIII, Part 4, p583.



*'Trial by Jewry: at Melbourne Princess's dress-circle during the
'Wray' season'*

*Caption under this cartoon published in the Bulletin,
28 September 1885.*