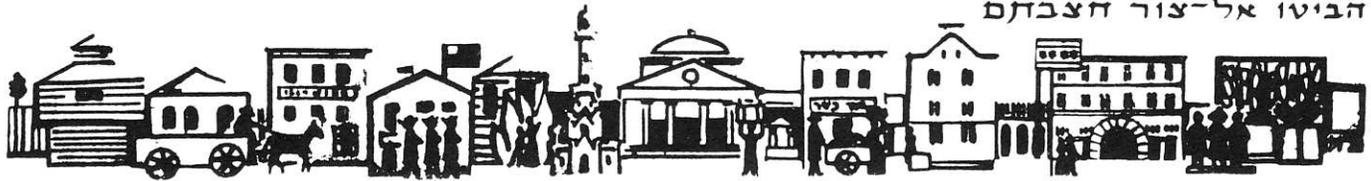


Look to the rock from which you were hewn  
הביטו אל-צור הצבתם



# chicago jewish historical society

618 South Michigan • Chicago, Illinois 60605 • Telephone: (312) 663-5634

## society news

VOLUME VI - NUMBER 4

JUNE, 1983

### MEMBERS URGED TO BRING OLD PHOTOS, SCRAPBOOKS TO JUNE MEETING

Old photographs will be featured at the next meeting of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, 1 pm Sunday, June 5. The program will be co-sponsored by the Chicago Jewish Archives. Everyone attending is asked to bring old photos and scrapbooks for display that afternoon. The program will be held in Bederman Hall, Spertus College of Judaica, 618 South Michigan Avenue. The public is invited and there is no charge.

The program includes a panel of experts who will present "The Eye to Our Past," a discussion on the use, care and description of historical photographs. Participating will be Ira Berlin, hospital archivist, Northwestern Memorial Hospital; Alan Teller, writer, photographer and partner in The Collected Image; and Maureen Will, assistant graphics curator, Chicago Historical Society. Moderator will be Richard Marcus, administrator, Chicago Jewish Archives.

The photographs and memorabilia that persons bring will be exhibited from 1 to 2 pm, during the social hour. The panel will begin at 2 pm.

The Chicago Jewish Archives is part of the Asher Library at Spertus College and is the only archive in Illinois specifically documenting the Jewish community. The Society works actively in the collection and maintenance of the Archives through its Archives chairman, Elsie Orlinsky.

Refreshments will be served during the social hour by the hospitality chairman, Shirley Sorkin, and her committee.

### BUS TOURS FEATURE OLD NEIGHBORHOODS, JEWISH LABOR SITES, SYNAGOGUE ART

#### Cutler To Lead First Tour On July 10; Reserve Now

Plans for the Society's annual series of summer bus tours have been announced by Tours Chairman Leah Axelrod. The first of these popular day trips to areas of local Jewish historic interest will be held on Sunday, July 10, and will be led by Dr. Irving Cutler.

Two other tours have been scheduled for July 24 and August 21 and will feature Chicago Jewish labor history and synagogue art, respectively.

Titled "Chicago's Jewish Roots," the July 10 bus tour will be a sentimental journey to Maxwell Street, North Lawndale, Humboldt Park, Logan Square, Albany Park, and West Rogers Park with a number of stops along the way. This is a repeat of Dr. Cutler's tour that is sold-out every summer, so early reservations are advised.

#### Bus Leaves from Horwich Center

The tour will begin with pick-up at the Bernard Horwich JCC (3003 West Touhy Avenue) at 12:30 pm and will return to that same location at 4:30 pm.

Reservations may be made using the tour reservation form on page eleven of this newsletter. Checks must accompany each reservation to cover the cost for each tour, which is \$8.00 for members of CJHS and \$11.00 for non-members. Individuals joining the Society at the time of reservation (annual dues begin at \$15.00 with a \$10.00 dues for seniors) may join

[Continued on Page 11]

President's Message

WHERE DOES CHICAGO'S JEWISH HISTORY BEGIN? AND END?

What is Chicago Jewish history? And what should be the concerns of a society dedicated to Chicago Jewish History?

These questions do arise from time to time. Our programming and activities throughout these past six years reflect a very broad definition of our purpose. Our tours this summer on Jewish labor and art will further broaden our scope.

In response to the basic questions,



President Heimovics

some feel we should focus only on what has happened in the past as it deals with Jewish residents of Chicago. But is the past alone history? What of the present and even the future that will eventually be history? How much emphasis should we give to that, if any?

What about Secular Achievements?

What, too, about Jewish personalities in Chicago's history whose endeavors had nothing to do with their Jewishness--such as in fields of commerce, science, medicine, the arts, labor and so forth?

Some with a more sociological view feel that our focus should not be on in-

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SUMMER DATES TO REMEMBER

- June 5: CJHS Meeting at Spertus
- July 10: Jewish Neighborhood Tour
- July 24: Jewish Labor History Tour
- August 21: Synagogue Art Tour

Reserve Your Tours - See Page 11

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dividual personalities as much as on Jewish organizations, institutions and congregations that comprise the fabric of the Jewish community.

Obviously, the institutions that serve the Jewish community are important to Chicago Jewish history. But, what of institutions, such as hospitals, that also serve large portions of the non-Jewish community? And what of non-Jewish hospitals that serve large numbers of Jews? What, too, of the non-Jewish missions that have always been present in Chicago's history for the purpose of converting Jews away from Judaism? Is that part of Chicago's Jewish history?

What about Non-Chicago Roots?

Research into family history and study of certain local organizations, such as the verein, take us back to European communities. Where does the concern of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society begin and end? What of the holocaust experiences of survivors--and liberators--who now live in Chicago? And what about the emigration experiences of Chicagoans who have made aliya? How much of the world Jewish experience is the Chicago Jewish experience?

If any members have any strong feelings about these questions, please let us know. Meanwhile, we will continue to welcome any and all contributions to our Society (and to our purpose) in terms of archives, oral histories, research projects, photo and film documentation, tours, programs that reveal in the broadest terms any facet of the complex montage of Chicago Jewish history.

Rachel B. Heimovics

# *society news*

Society News is published by the Chicago Jewish Historical Society at 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60605. Telephone: (312)663-5634.

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Marian Cutler, Rachel Heimovics,  
Mark Mandle, Burt Robin, Sidney Sorkin

## PHOTO EXHIBIT OF FORMER JEWISH COMMUNITIES CONTINUES THROUGH JUNE

### Spertus Display Proves To Be "Truly Impressive"

Society members have until June 30 to view an important photo exhibit of former Jewish community landmarks in Chicago. The exhibit, titled "How Goodly Were Thy Tents, O Jacob: Former Jewish Communities of Chicago," will be at Spertus College until that date. It is open to the public without charge.

Sponsored by the Chicago Jewish Archives of the College, the exhibit contains over sixty photographs of buildings of former Jewish institutions as they appear today. Included are such buildings as Congregation KAM, The Jewish People's Institute, Hebrew Theological College (Douglas Boulevard), Anshe Sholom (Maxwell Street area), South Shore Temple, Congregation Habonim (South Shore), Albany Park Hebrew Congregation, Deborah Boys Club, Arie Crown Hebrew Day School (Albany Park).

#### Photographer Witnessed Neighborhood Change

The photographer, Sarah Hultmark of Grand Junction, Michigan, and a former Chicagoan, had herself witnessed the demise of her own Chicago Jewish community--South Shore--and finally left in 1976. Haunted by the waste of financial and human resources and by the continued rootlessness of the Jewish people despite their freedom in the United States, Ms. Hultmark felt compelled to return to these areas of Jewish settlement and document the final remains of these once thriving communities.

Supported by an anonymous sponsor (who himself has left two formerly Jewish neighborhoods), and armed with a camera and a bodyguard, she photographed as many Jewish community buildings as she could locate. In some instances, they are now churches or school buildings. In other cases, they appear abandoned. She found the varying efforts to deface the signs of the buildings' former use stories in themselves.

#### Taking Photos Was Sometimes Dangerous

Assembling the photos was not easy,

## SOCIETY TO ELECT SIX BOARD MEMBERS AT JUNE 5 MEETING

CJHS members will vote at the June 5 meeting upon nominations for six directors for the Society. The six, nominated by a committee headed by Sol Brandzel, will serve three-year terms expiring in 1986.

Nominees are Sol Brandzel, Clare Greenberg, Sara Jacobson, Doris Minsky, Burt Robin and Moselle Schwartz.

If elected they will join continuing board members Leah Axelrod, Irving Cutler, Mark Mandle, Elsie Orlinsky, and Shirley and Sidney Sorkin, whose terms expire in 1984; and Ruth Brandzel, Charles Bernstein, Rachel Heimovics, Norman Schwartz, and Elaine and Irwin Suloway, whose terms expire in 1985.

Also on the board are past presidents Muriel Robin and Adele Hast.

CJHS officers were elected last year to two-year terms and will continue to serve through June of 1984.

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for in addition to braving the vagaries of Chicago's changeable weather, she also had to withstand the danger some of these neighborhoods threatened. In one case, while photographing one synagogue, her car window was shot out and her camera and purse were taken from her. Ironically, her assailant first posed for her picture before committing his crime.

The exhibit is sponsored by the Chicago Jewish Archives of the Asher Library at the College. The Chicago Jewish Historical Society co-sponsored the reception marking the official opening of the exhibit on Tuesday afternoon, April 26.

#### Exhibit "Truly Impressive"

Society President Rachel Heimovics found the exhibit "truly impressive" and feels that Ms. Hultmark has made a real contribution to local Jewish records. Mrs. Heimovics urges CJHS members to view the stimulating and nostalgic exhibit before it closes.

The exhibit, at 618 South Michigan Avenue, can be visited from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Mondays through Thursdays, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm on Fridays, and from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm on Sundays.

## TWENTY PROMINENT JEWS HAVE BEEN HONORED BY HAVING CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS NAMED AFTER THEM

### List Includes Six Non-Chicagoans, One Woman, One Rabbi

By Sidney Sorkin

Approximately 600 buildings constitute the Chicago public school system and, many years ago, the decision was made to give a name to each building--unlike New York City which chose instead to give numbers to its elementary schools. This decision has resulted in the naming of at least twenty schools after Jewish individuals. Who are the Jews so honored in Chicago?

Through the years the Chicago Board of Education, which decides on names to be given, has operated under different rules in this regard, the only apparently firm rule being that persons so honored have to have been dead before a school was named after them. But consistently there seems to have been the practice of naming schools after local civic leaders, nationally and internationally famous persons, and former members of the school board itself.

#### Variety of Jews Chosen

The Jews so honored fall into all these categories and sometimes overlap into two or more categories. The first school named after a Jew opened ninety years ago, the most recent in 1969.

Three Jews, Edwin G. Foreman (1928), Emil G. Hirsch (1926), and Charles P. Steinmetz (1934) have had high schools named after them. The years indicate dates the schools opened.

The others, all honored with elementary school buildings, are Lorenz Brentano (1893), Sol Crown (1961), Albert Einstein (1960), Herman Felsenthal (1901), Nathan Goldblatt (1965), Samuel Gompers (1926), Simon Guggenheim (1962), Theodore Herzl (1916), Julius Hess (1957), Henry Horner (1944), Alfred Kohn (1911), Charles Kozminski (1897), Moses Montefiore (probably named in 1906), Bernhard Moos (1907), Julius Rosenwald (1954), Hannah Greenebaum Solomon (1953), and Louis Wirth (1969).

#### Six Non-Chicagoans Included

Of this group six were not Chicagoans but Jews who attained national or international status. These include Einstein, the world-renowned scientist; Gompers, founder and longtime president of the American Federation of Labor; Theodore Herzl, father of the State of Israel and an Austrian; Montefiore, an English philanthropist and leader of world Jewry; and Steinmetz, a scientist and engineer.

Six of the Chicago Jews with schools named for them were members of the local Board of Education, but they had other achievements which had culminated in their appointments to the board. These include Brentano, Felsenthal, Hirsch, Kohn, Kozminski, and Moos. Brentano, who served as president of the school board, had been a newspaper editor, state legislator, and U.S. consul; Felsenthal and Kozminski were bankers and leaders in local Jewish affairs. Moos was a merchant and library board member.

#### One Rabbi Honored

Hirsch, longtime rabbi at Chicago Sinai Congregation, for twelve years headed the Chicago Public Library Board and was a noted civic leader; Kohn, a Harvard-educated physician of great promise, died at age forty leaving a widow who was to become famous as a social worker during her long life.

Among Chicago Jews who were not school board members the first honored was Foreman, a noted banker in the early years of this century; second was Henry Horner, jurist and distinguished Illinois governor. Hannah Solomon, the only woman, was best known, among many achievements, for the founding and leadership of the National Council of Jewish Women. Rosenwald was the longtime Sears Roebuck head, philanthropist, and founder of the Museum of Science and Industry.

#### Former Jewish Institutions Become School

When the Jewish Peoples Institute and the Hebrew Theological College on Douglas

## THE CHICAGO JEWISH EXPERIENCE LIVES AT CUTLER'S SLIDE PRESENTATION

### March Speaker Traces Areas of Settlement over 150 Years

Two hundred people braved bad weather on Sunday, March 20, to make the trip --figuratively speaking--from Maxwell Street to Highland Park. Using a choice collection of slides and the results of his careful scholarship through the years, Dr. Irving Cutler addressed members of the Society on "Chicago Jewry: From Maxwell Street to Highland Park" at an afternoon meeting at Emanuel Congregation.

The presentation was divided into sections dealing with four different areas of metropolitan Chicago which, more or less in turn, became centers of Jewish settlement. Beginning with the earliest center, the South Side, Dr. Cutler then moved to the "old" and "newer" West Side, the North Side and, now, the North suburbs. However, he also dealt with several "fringe" areas of Jewish settlement elsewhere in Chicagoland.

#### Slides Add to Appeal

For each geographical area he had slides, many of them nostalgic, of congregations and other Jewish institutions, as well as street scenes and historical memorabilia. There were humorous anecdotes to supplement the well-organized facts.

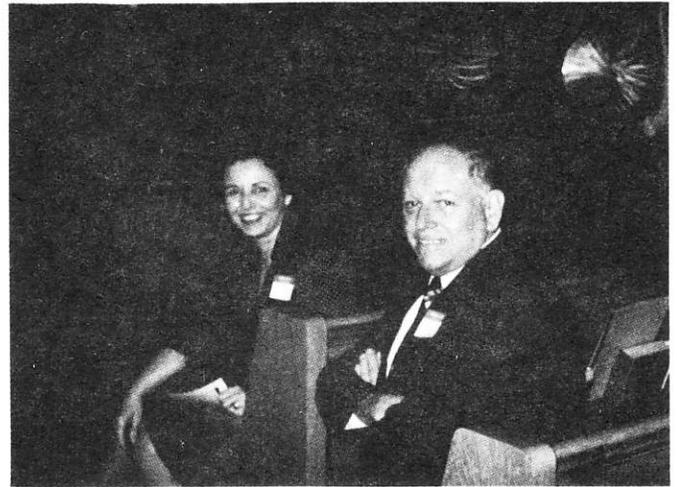
Although primarily an urban geographer (he is chairman of the geography

#### Public School Buildings [cont'd]

Boulevard were taken over for conversion into a public school, they were named the Hess School after the eminent pediatrician and founder of Sarah Morris Hospital.

The most recent honorees were Crown, founder of the Material Service Corporation; Goldblatt, the retailer and philanthropist; and Wirth, eminent sociologist at the University of Chicago and student of Chicago Jewry.

It is possible that somewhere among the 600 Chicago schools there are additional buildings named after Jews. If any reader knows of one, please let us know.



March Speaker Irving Cutler photographed with President Heimovics before his presentation. Photo by Moselle A. Schwartz

department at Chicago State University), Dr. Cutler has spent years researching and photographing the Chicago Jewish community. The fruit of this research is to be found in his chapter on Jews in Ethnic Chicago, a book published in 1981. His most popular title, Chicago: Metropolis of the Mid-Continent, was published last year in a third edition. Through the generosity of former Society President Muriel Robin, both volumes were available for sale to the audience at the meeting, with proceeds going to the Society.

#### Conducts CJHS Tours in the Summer

Dr. Cutler is familiar to CJHS members as a conductor of local bus tours operated by the Society each summer. He has promised to conduct another this year.

Like others in the audience this writer has heard him speak on local Jewish subjects before, but--to quote another person in the audience--"this talk was similar yet quite different, and more fascinating than before."

Refreshments were served during the social hour which preceded Dr. Cutler's presentation. Shirley Sorkin is chairman of the hospitality committee.

The Society is grateful both to Program Chairman Burt Robin, who arranged the meeting and introduced the speaker, and to Emanuel Congregation, which so generously hosted such a successful meeting.

I.J.S.

## HOW A WIDOWED JEWISH SHOPKEEPER BECAME THE UNOFFICIAL MAYOR OF BRIDGEPORT COMMUNITY

### Immigrant Woman Earns Love and Respect in a Gentile Neighborhood

By Marian Cutler

Chicago's Bridgeport area around 35th Street and Ashland Avenue is known for the Chicago mayors it has produced in recent decades: Kelly, Kennelly, Daley, Bilandic. But to a great many people of the area the real "Mayor of 35th Street" was a little Jewish immigrant woman named Ida Margolis. She reigned for over half a century from a small general store on 35th Street and Paulina, and her warmth and compassion in both words and deeds earned her the great respect and love of the gentile community in which she lived.

Ida Margolis was born in Vilna, Lithuania, in 1896, and in 1902 she and her family immigrated to Spring Valley, New York. At age thirteen she was sent to live with a rabbi and his family in Suffern, New York, where she worked in a jewelry store for three years. Married at the age of sixteen, Ida and her husband moved to Chicago, where they opened a general store in 1912.

#### A Jew Among the Gentiles

The store, which at first also contained their living quarters, was located on 35th Street and Paulina on a busy bus corner and near a school and church. The area was almost wholly gentile with Poles predominating but also with Germans, Irish, Bohemians, and Lithuanians. It was here that Ida lived for almost 70 years--at times the only Jewish adult in a Christian community.

The Margolis' store was open all hours of the day and night. No one was ever turned away. To stimulate business and good will, the Margolis' never added service charges to their customers' electric and gas bill payments. This resulted in a constant flow of people into the store, people whom they soon came to know on a personal basis. The Margolis' were called "White Jews" by them, a term they used designating acceptance, if not broad tolerance.

In 1930, Ida's husband died of a ruptured appendix and she was left with four children, two boys and two girls, to care for in addition to running the store. With the help of her children and her own indomitable spirit she managed to survive and thrive. Her love of people and her sense of humor helped her through adversity. She tried always to see the good in people and was always willing to help others despite her own struggles.

#### Provided Free Housing for Needy

She eventually owned the building in which the store was located as well as a family home nearby. Above the store were a number of apartments and one of the families renting an apartment there had thirteen children. The mother died in childbirth and, with the father out of work, the children were sent to the Guardian Angels Orphanage. But the children kept running away from the orphanage back to Ida Margolis and to the place they knew as home. Ida could not turn them away.

She told them to return to the apartment in her building, and all thirteen children and the grandmother moved back into Ida's apartment building. They lived there, rent-free, for the next seven years. Ida also helped with additional food when the city did not provide enough for them. This was just one of the many acts of kindness that she performed throughout the years.

#### A Helping Hand for Many

If anyone needed help or credit, Ida was always willing to extend herself. A neighborhood man with a drinking problem became her handyman, and Ida gave him a place to sleep and eat whenever he needed it. If the woman on the corner needed a safe shelter when her husband started beating her, she would run to Ida's for protection.

When people were out of money and needed food, Ida extended credit and never pushed when they could not pay. She had stacks of unpaid bills owed to her, but she did not go after them because she understood the economic plight of many of

Ida Margolis in her Bridgeport store before her husband died nearly fifty years ago.



these people. Some of them paid their bills many years later.

#### Cultivated by Politicians

During World War II she turned a few of the apartments into a type of rooming house. A large trucking terminal nearby sent their truckers for overnight lodging there. The truckers came to know and love Ida; they would call her "Ma" whenever they came. To this day, many of those truckers still send her cards on the holidays.

She knew the Daleys, the Bilandics, the Kellys, but she had a closer association with her precinct captain, Pat Dillon. He would always be coming into the store because he knew Ida had a great deal of influence with her many customers and could swing a great many Democratic votes his way if she chose to.

#### Maintaining a Jewish Identity

There were eventually a number of small Jewish businesses in the area. Among them was the tailor shop owned by the Rosemarins, who helped Ida and her family in many ways through the years. At 33rd Street and Emerald Avenue was a small orthodox synagogue, Anshe Emunah, with a membership of 30 families. Ida's family attended Sabbath and holiday services there. Ida's sons were tutored in Hebrew at home by the rabbi of the congregation. Ida kept and still keeps a kosher home, as do her daughters.

Ida allowed her children to join the Good Will Center near their home on 35th

Street. It was run by a Methodist minister, J. Hickman, who was liberal in his beliefs and advocated universality. Her children were able to participate in Scouts, plays, sports, and other cultural activities without losing sight of their Jewish heritage.

#### The Churches Respond in Kind

When Ida became very ill and needed a special type of hospital, the priests of the neighboring churches in the area intervened and got her into the Good Samaritan Hospital in Milwaukee, a hospital to which only Catholics were normally admitted. She had helped the churches countless times, providing things for the poor parishioners among many other services, and in return the priests helped her.

Ida attended the weddings, wakes, and baptisms of her customers; and not too long ago, when she went back to attend a wake, the people of the neighborhood gathered around her and welcomed her with love.

After closing the store, Ida continued to live in the old house; it is only in recent years that she moved north to be near her family.

There are many large organizations that try, with some success, to improve Jewish-Christian relations. But it is often unheralded individuals like this warm and caring "Mayor of 35th Street," Ida Margolis, who are truly leading the way.

## LOCAL MAN CONTINUES SEARCH FOR AMERICAN FLAG PRESENTED TO LINCOLN BY A CHICAGO JEW BEFORE 1861 INAUGURATION

### Kohn Flag with Biblical Message Becomes Widely Known but Disappears

By Joseph Levinson

American presidents have invariably been recipients of gifts of varying, sometimes exotic, nature. Every Thanksgiving, for example, an exceptionally plump turkey is sent to the White House for a holiday dinner. Indian tribes have presented presidents with elaborate, fully plumed tribal headdresses. Foreign heads of state and other foreign dignitaries, on the occasion of visits to the White House, invariably come laden with gifts.

It is doubtful, however, whether any gift to a president was more touching or more meaningful than one given to Abraham Lincoln in February, 1861, while he was en route to Washington for his inauguration as president. This was an American flag presented to him by Abraham Kohn, one of the founders of KAM Temple and, at the time of this presentation, the City Clerk of Chicago in the administration of Mayor John Wentworth.

#### The Man behind the Flag

Before detailing the search, fruitless to date, for the flag, some observations concerning Mr. Kohn and his family may be of interest. He was born in Bavaria in 1819 and came to America in 1842. Like many other German Jews beginning to feel the effects of repressive measures directed against them, he came to America, the land referred to in Germany as "das gebenschte Land"--the blessed land. Abraham Kohn and his brothers, Moses and Judas, engaged in perhaps the most common occupation of immigrant Jews of that time, peddling merchandise from house to house.

Abraham Kohn was, perhaps, the quintessential Jew of an appreciably large class of Jews of the middle 1800's: successful in business after early struggles, devoted to his synagogue and active in public life.



Abraham Kohn, friend of Lincoln

#### Kohn's Message for Lincoln

Kohn had been introduced to Lincoln shortly after the 1860 convention which nominated Lincoln for the presidency. The overhanging clouds of possible secession of Southern states and the possibility of fratricidal war between the North and the South made the time the most critical period since the founding of the Republic.

Kohn had conceived a great admiration for Lincoln, and, implementing this feeling, presented to him a most touching gift. This was a satin American flag, on the white bars of which Kohn inscribed in his own hand, in Hebrew, the following lines from the biblical Book of Joshua:

There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swore unto their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt have good success. Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not affrighted,

neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

### The Flag Attains Notoriety

Thereafter there appeared a number of documented references to the flag. The following letter, the original of which is in the archival collection of KAM, was sent by a presidential aide:

Chicago, August 28, 1861  
Abraham Kohn, Esq.  
My dear Sir:

The enclosed acknowledgment of the receipt of your beautiful painting of the American flag by the President got lost among my letters or it would have been sent to you before. Regretting the delay, I am,

Truly your friend,  
J. Scammon Young

Unfortunately, Lincoln's acknowledgment was never found.

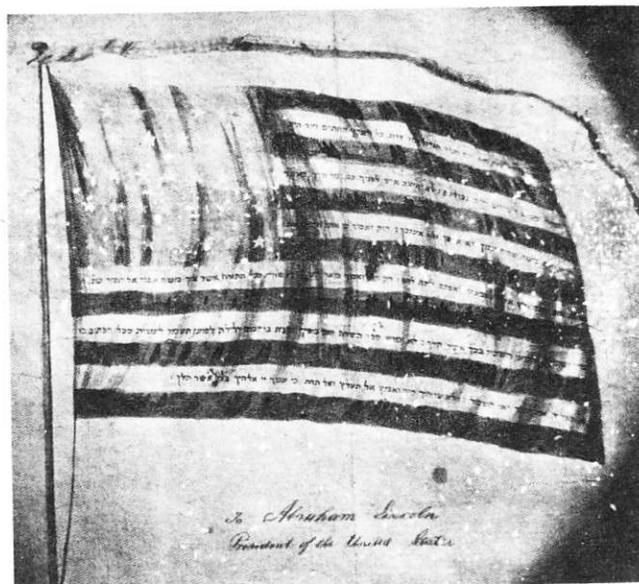
George Henry Preble, in his definitive History of the Flag of the United States of America, in both the 1872 and 1880 editions, wrote as follows concerning the flag and Lincoln:

Before leaving Springfield, he received from Abraham Kohn, City Clerk of Chicago, a fine picture of the flag of the Union, bearing an inscription in Hebrew on its folds, the verses being the 4th to 9th verses of the first chapter of Joshua, in which Joshua was commanded to reign over a whole land, the last verse being: "Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord, thy God, is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

### President McKinley's Interest in the Flag

For a number of years thereafter, there appears to be a gap in any disclosed documentation concerning the flag. However, on June 20, 1895, in a speech at Ottawa, Kansas, Governor William McKinley of Ohio, later President McKinley, referred to the flag as follows:

What more beautiful conception than that which prompted Abraham Kohn, of Chicago, in February, 1861, to send to Mr. Lincoln, on the eve of his



The Kohn Flag, showing the Hebrew lettering on the white stripes. From an old glass negative.

starting to Washington to assume the office of president, a flag of our country, bearing upon its silken folds these words from the first chapter of Joshua:....Could anything have given Mr. Lincoln more cheer, or been better calculated to sustain his courage or to strengthen his faith in the almighty work before him? Thus commanded, thus assured, Mr. Lincoln journeyed to the capital, where he took the oath of office and registered in heaven an oath to save the Union. And the Lord, our God, was with him, until every obligation of oath and duty was sacredly kept and honored. Not any man was able to stand before him. Liberty was the more firmly enthroned, the Union was saved, and the flag which he carried, floated in triumph and glory from every flagstaff of the republic.

In a later letter to Mrs. Dankmar Adler, the wife of the well-known architect and the daughter of Abraham Kohn, McKinley wrote, in part, as follows: The incident deeply impressed me when I first learned of it, and I have taken occasion to use it, as in my speech at Ottawa, to which you refer....I am glad to have been able to give publicity to this striking in-

[Continued on Page 10]

## Search for Kohn Flag [cont'd]

[Continued from page 9]  
cident, and I am sure that the family of Mr. Kohn should feel very proud of his patriotic act.

The original letter from Mr. McKinley is also in the archival collection of KAM.

### Where Is the Flag Today?

The flag itself, as a priceless historical object, has been the subject of intensive searches and researches by many individuals and agencies. The writer, during his incumbency as Chairman of the Archives Committee of KAM Temple, became infected with this fever and added his efforts to those of prior researchers. But, where archaeologists searching for lost civilizations, or anthropologists digging for skeletal remains of early man, achieved some measure of success, the writer, alas,--to date at least,--experienced the same frustrations encountered by legendary Arthurian knights in their search for the fabled Holy Grail.

Correspondence has been had concerning the whereabouts of the elusive flag with the American Jewish Historical Society, American Jewish Archives, Chicago Historical Society, Illinois State Historical Library, Department of Armed Forces History of the Smithsonian Institution, Historical Services Division of the Department of the Army, American Antiquarian Society, all of which were suggested as possible sources.

Individuals to whom inquiries were addressed were most cooperative, their appetites for research whetted by requests for information. Thus, Dr. David C. Mearns of the Library of Congress sent the writer a lengthy letter listing many references to the flag and further suggesting recourses to some of the agencies listed above. An extensive colloquy, via correspondence, was had with Miss Josephine Cobb, of the National Archives in Washington, who had herself previously undertaken a search.

### The Search Goes On

It was also suggested that an inquiry be printed in a monthly magazine, "Museum News," published by the American Association of Museums. This publication occasionally prints requests for assistance in

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## Bertha Read Rissman (1888-1983)

A woman of valor who graced the CJHS with her presence and her participation, a founder and president of the Chicago chapter of Hadassah, Bertha had a long and inspiring life as an involved and prominent woman in the activities of her city.

When we founded CJHS, she immediately joined us, graciously allowing us to record her memoirs of life as a Jewish girl and adult in Chicago, thus becoming our first oral history subject. She was a featured speaker at our program on the Zionist movement in Chicago.

Her great interest in our Society, her regular attendance at our open meetings, and her belief in the need for the Society encouraged us. Her life inspired countless people to greater achievement, and we are grateful that she chose to walk with us.

Muriel Robin

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locating specific historical items. This was done and elicited a response from someone who offered to send a picture of the flag. Since the writer is in possession of the original glass negative from which all pictures were made, this was a gracious, though unfruitful, gesture.

Books, of course, by writers of American Jewish history, specifically Jacob Marcus, Isaac Markens, Bertram Korn, and others, were combed; but these simply contained references to the flag and its presentation to Lincoln.

One may ask, why the search? Simply stated, the response would be that we Jews have always been a remembering people. We have always looked back upon the past with shining eyes, with an understandable and persistent zeal for evocations and memorabilia of Jewish worlds gone by. Particularly applicable to Jews, perhaps, is an expressive statement by Goethe, appearing as a preface to the translation of the diary of Abraham Kohn:

Happy is he who remembers his progenitors with pride, who relates with pleasure to the listener the story of their greatness, of their deeds, and silently rejoicing, sees himself linked to the end of this goodly chain.

Bus Tours [cont'd]

[Continued from page 1]

tours at members' rates.

Jewish Labor and Art Tours To Follow

The Chicago Jewish Labor History Tour, scheduled for Sunday afternoon, July 24, will be led by Sol Brandzel, Chicago civic and labor leader, Professor Stanley Rosen of the University of Illinois at Chicago, and Sidney Sorkin, educator. It will include visits to several sites important to the Jewish labor union movement. Further details will be announced in a mailing to CJHS members.

For the labor tour only, the routing will permit a pickup and return at the Marriott Hotel at 540 North Michigan Ave.

The Synagogue Art Tour set for August 21 will include viewings of selected examples of synagogue art. Co-sponsored by the Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Needlework, the tour will be led by Aviva Silberman. Details will be announced in the later mailing.

Third Jewish Folk Arts Festival  
Set for June 12 in Evanston

On Sunday, June 12, 1983, the Third Greater Chicago Jewish Folk Arts Festival will be held in Centennial Park in Evanston as a celebration of Jewish culture. The festival will feature such stars as Fred Holstein, Eclectricity, and Kol Sasson, a children's program, an art fair, a crafts bazaar and an ethnic food fair.

Festival hours are between 11 am and 5 pm. Admission is free. Centennial Park is located along the lakefront south of the Northwestern University campus.

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society will have a table at the festival with displays and information about the Society and some publications for sale.

Mrs. Axelrod, who is arranging the tours for the seventh consecutive season, advises early reservations as bus capacity is limited, tours often sell out, and advance registration is an absolute necessity.

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TOUR RESERVATION FORM

Mail with check to Mrs. Leah Axelrod, 2100 Linden, Highland Park, IL 60035

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City & Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ DAY; \_\_\_\_\_ NIGHT

Please reserve seats for the "Chicago Jewish Roots" Bus Tour, Sunday, July 10, 1983.

\_\_\_\_\_ reservations @ \$8.00 each for CJHS members.

\_\_\_\_\_ reservations @ \$11.00 each for non-CJHS members.

\_\_\_\_\_ reservations @ \$4.00 each for children of members.

\_\_\_\_\_ reservations @ \$5.00 each for children of non-members  
(Through high school age at children's rates)

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Total amount enclosed.

NOTE: If CJHS memberships are included in the check, indicate name(s) and address of new members and list their tour reservations at member's rates. Annual memberships begin at \$15.00 for individuals/families and \$10.00 for senior citizens.

PLEASE CONTACT ME with more information about the

July 24 Labor Tour \_\_\_\_\_; August 21 Synagogue Art Tour \_\_\_\_\_.

(Additional Information is available from CJHS at 663-5634 or Mrs. Axelrod at 432-7003.)