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**The Cemetery in a Community's Life, Death, and Afterlife:  
A study of the cemeteries of extinct and nearly dissolved  
Jewish communities in Mississippi and Louisiana**

**By Michael Zachary Birnholz**

**Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Ordination**

**Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion  
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**Referee: Professor Gary P. Zola**



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## Acknowledgements

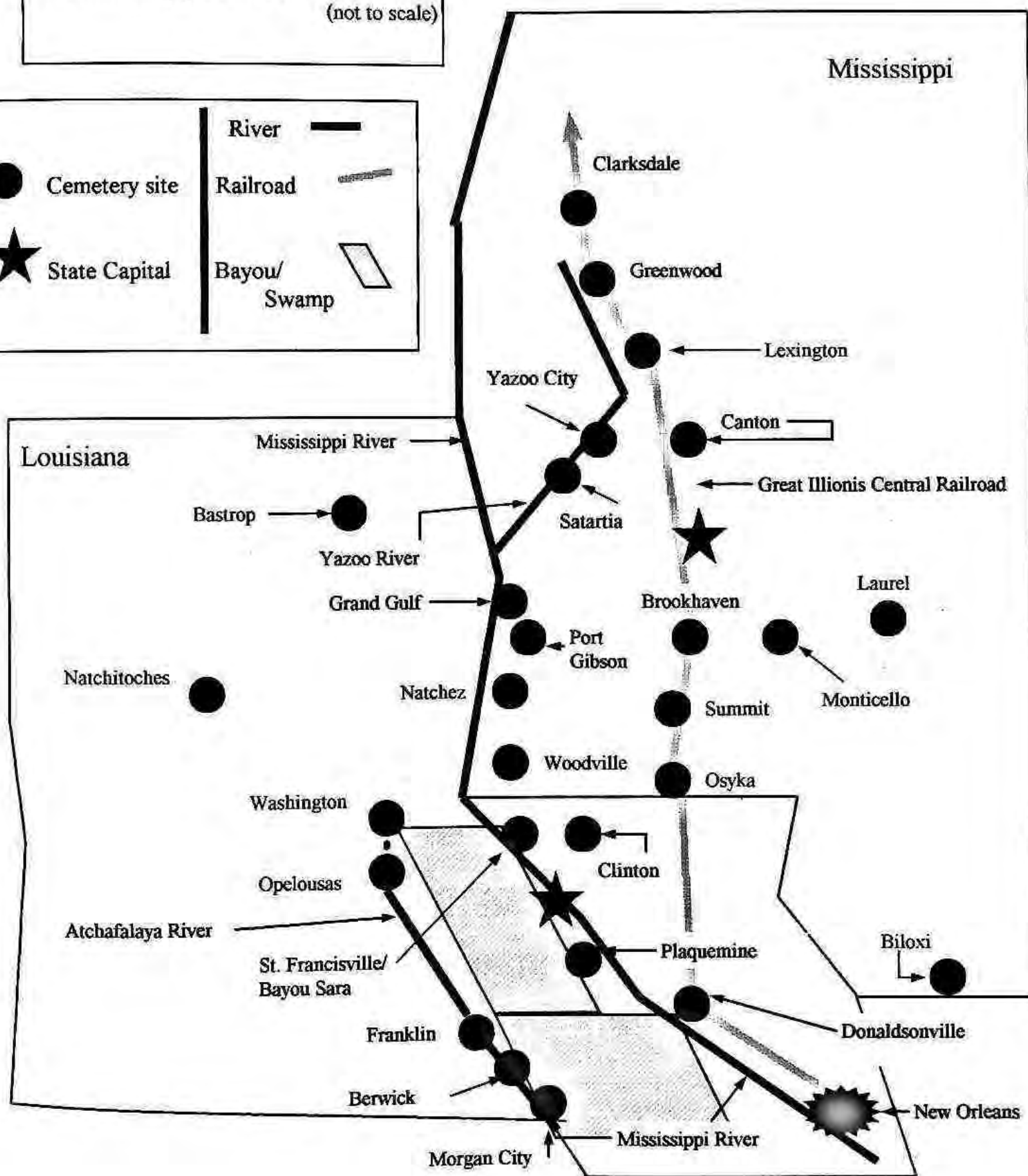
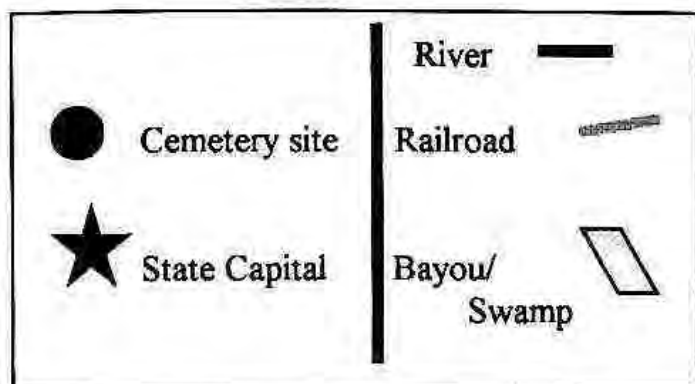
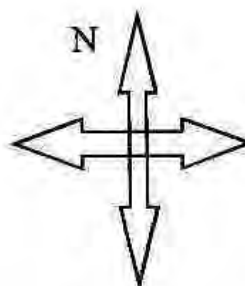
I would like to thank all of the people in all of the places I visited in person or by phone. You shared your community and personal histories with me, gave me unique and important historical documents, and welcomed me to your towns and into your homes. Without your truly Southern hospitality, this study would not have been possible.

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Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Jill, and my daughter, Anna. They gave me their love and encouragement. With their incredible support I have come to the end of one journey and can now look forward to another.

I dedicate this thesis to all of those who have been a part of the small-town Jewish communities of Mississippi and Louisiana. May they be remembered for a blessing.

# Map of cemeteries studied in Mississippi and Louisiana (not to scale)



## Digest

In Mississippi and Louisiana more than two dozen cemeteries are associated with a Jewish community that no longer exists, or which is nearly dissolved. The cemeteries of these communities represent the last concrete artifact of a community's presence. They are worthy of our scholarly attention and historical study for, by studying these cemeteries, we gain access to a useful discussion of the life, death, and afterlife of Jewish communities in the Deep South.

This thesis addresses two questions relating to the cemeteries of extinct and nearly dissolved Jewish communities in small rural villages and towns of Mississippi and Louisiana. First, why would a community of Jews cease to exist? Second, what then happens to the cemetery associated with that community? In order to unpack all of the issues associated with these two questions, it is necessary to set the stage with two preliminary questions: Why did Jews settle in these small (isolated) rural villages and towns as opposed to larger urban areas like cities in the northeast or even southern cities like New Orleans and Memphis? Second, what role did the cemetery play in the life of a community?

Chapter 1 establishes the parameters of this study. Why study the cemetery of rural Jewish communities in Mississippi and Louisiana? In this chapter the prior historiography of southern Jewish history is reviewed to place this thesis into a historiographical context.

The purpose of Chapter 2 is to describe Jewish settlement in small rural communities of Mississippi and Louisiana and to explore the role of cemeteries in the



organization of Jewish community life. The physical design and characteristics of some cemeteries are also addressed in this chapter.

Chapter 3 focuses on what happened to the cemetery during the decline and dissolution of the Jewish community. In order to understand the issues relating to cemetery care and its role in the community's history, it is necessary to explore the process of community dissolution. The process of dissolution is, in fact, intimately tied to the act of caring for the cemetery. The end of a community's existence directly challenges the foundational intention of perpetual care. This chapter explores how and when a community, and then its "survivors", responded to the challenges of dissolution — especially in terms of the disposition of the cemetery.

Chapter 4 analyzes the cemetery's history after the end of organized Jewish life. The existence of the cemetery and the history of the community it represents become the legacy of that community's life experience. These cemeteries were established to fulfill the Jewish value of *zachor hamet*, the memory and care for the dead. Once the community has dissolved, the issue of *zachor hamet* shifts from the individuals buried within the cemetery to the character and life of the community as a whole. This chapter considers the care that was administered in the past and what the nature of cemetery care will be in the future.

In addition to the text of this study there are extensive appendices that contain valuable historical data on the cemeteries studies here. Appendix I includes the statistical tables condensing demographic and historical information about the communities in this study. The known headstone inscriptions for many of the cemeteries of this study can be found in Appendix II. Appendix III has selected photographs which illustrate some of

the monuments and cemetery design characteristics, as well as some of the damage that has occurred in these cemeteries over the years. Sample documents including deeds for some of the cemeteries are in Appendix IV. Appendix V contains the narrative of a Henry S. Jacobs Camp trip to an abandoned cemetery in Claiborne, Alabama.

## Introduction

One Saturday morning in Osyka, Mississippi, Lyn Decareaux was working around her house. Her neighbor from across the street came up and rang the bell. Did Lyn want to go with her and look at an old cemetery? Not being an outdoors woman, Lyn was not interested in trekking through the underbrush to look at some old graveyard. Her friend pleaded; she did not want to go alone. Lyn gave in, figuring it just might prove to be an interesting adventure. So, off they went. They drove a few miles down the highway and turned off on a dirt road, Old German Cemetery Road to be exact. They wound their way through the woods and came out in a clearing. There it was: a cemetery with old gravestones and large Catholic-style mausoleums. They got out of the car and climbed up the slight rise. The grass was high but they could see the headstones, some of which were surrounded by old wrought-iron fences. As they walked around and read the names, Ricks and Sassone, Lyn noticed a brick wall crumbling in the back of the cemetery. What's back there? she wondered. She made her way to the wall and through the gap. There, under an umbrella of pine trees, was another cemetery. Unlike the outer Catholic cemetery, it was overgrown, covered in vines, bushes, and pine needles. As she pushed away some of the debris she could make out some of the inscriptions. She started to read the names and realized this was a Jewish cemetery.

As Lyn left that day, vowing to do what she could to care for this seemingly forgotten cemetery, she was full of questions: Who were these Jews buried here in the middle of the woods, near Osyka, a town of a few hundred people? There had never been any Jews in the area for as long as she could remember. When did these Jews live in Osyka? What



was their life like? Where did they all go and why did they leave the area, abandoning the cemetery? Does anyone care for this cemetery? Do any Jews know about this place?

Her experience and her questions are, lamentably, not unique. Across many states in the Deep South, this phenomenon is a familiar reality. In Mississippi and Louisiana alone, there are more than two dozen cemeteries like the one in Osyka: cemeteries that are associated with a Jewish communal population that no longer exists or is nearly dissolved.

Table as of January 2002

Communities that have dissolved	Communities nearly dissolved
Bastrop, LA	Brookhaven, MS
Berwick, LA	Clarksdale, MS
Biloxi, MS*	Lexington, MS
Canton, MS	Morgan City, LA ^
Clinton, LA	Natchez, MS
Donaldsonville, LA	Opelousas, LA
Franklin, LA	
Grand Gulf, MS	
Greenwood, MS	
Laurel, MS	
Monticello, MS	
Natchitoches, LA	
Osyka, MS	
Plaquemine, LA	
Port Gibson	
St Francisville/Bayou Sara, LA	
Sartartia, MS	
Summit, MS	
Washington, LA	
Woodville, MS	
Yazoo City, MS	

^While the Jews who live in Morgan City sold their congregational building many years ago, they still gather occasionally for Jewish holiday observance.

\* The Jewish community that established the cemetery in the 1850s has disappeared. A new community, not connected to the earlier community formed in the 1950s. They established their own separate burial ground.

The cemeteries of these communities represent the last concrete artifacts of a community's presence. They are worthy of our scholarly attention and historical study.

By studying these cemeteries, we gain access to a useful discussion of the life, death, and afterlife of Jewish community life in the Deep South.<sup>A</sup>

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<sup>A</sup> The word "community" will be used extensively in this study. Chapter 2 will take up the issue of how we determine if a population of Jews is a "community." For the purposes of this study, a Jewish "community" is a place where Jews come together regularly to express their Jewish identity.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Background and parameters for the study of southern Jewish cemeteries**

This thesis seeks to answer two questions through the study of cemeteries of extinct and nearly dissolved Jewish communities in small rural villages and towns of Mississippi and Louisiana. First, why would a community of Jews cease to exist? Second, what then happens to the cemetery associated with that community? In order to reveal all of the issues associated with these two questions, it is necessary to set the stage with two preliminary questions: Why did Jews settle in these small (isolated) rural villages and towns as opposed to larger urban areas like cities in the northeast or even southern cities like New Orleans and Memphis? Second, what role did the cemetery play in the community's life?

#### Why focus on the cemetery?

When we study the history of a Jewish community, why should the cemetery attract our attention from the outset? The cemetery is a primary institution of a Jewish community. Frequently, it is one of the first communal institutions to come into existence. Throughout American Jewish history, the establishment of a cemetery and the creation of a burial society are intimately tied to the formation of a community. "A community was usually founded by an individual who rounded up a religious quorum or who created an institution around which the Jews agglomerated Frequently a town started with a cemetery...From 1784 to 1880 dozens of new communities were partial to this primary form of communal organization. This was an all-purpose confraternity that provided mutual aid and charity, sick-care, burial, a cemetery, and a religious service."<sup>1</sup>

This pattern certainly was true throughout the South, from Natchez to Woodville to Port Gibson, where the establishment of the cemetery and the burial society predates the organization of the congregation by a few years.<sup>2</sup> Once the cemetery had been established it quickly became one of the community's artifacts, a physical entity that testified to the presence of the people and to the Jewish activities which characterized that community. The amount of activity that centers around the cemetery can be an indicator of the ebb and flow of a community's life.

While the cemetery is a part of a congregation's life, the cemetery is also of vital historical importance when a community dissolves. In these cases the cemetery becomes the last remnant of a community's existence. When the members of a community die or move away, the cemetery is often the last reminder of their presence.<sup>3</sup> Synagogue buildings can be sold, turned into churches, or torn down. Businesses can be turned over to new owners. Cemeteries, however, are "sacred/holy" ground. There is a lot of emotion and reverence given to the cemetery. As time passes and memories dim, the connections and care of these cemeteries frequently diminish as well. The cemetery becomes like the Biblical Israel when "there arose a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph."<sup>4</sup> Instead of a connection to ancestors or a community, it becomes "that old graveyard" or even worse, a forgotten clearing of stones in the middle of nowhere.<sup>A</sup> Historical research analyzing these southern Jewish cemeteries becomes a useful tool for the reconstruction and the preservation of the story of Jewish communities and their members in the Deep South.

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<sup>A</sup> See the Introduction and Epilogue for the stories of Osyka and Satartia, Mississippi.



### Why study rural communities?

The first motivation for the focus on smaller rural communities comes from the writings of scholar Lee Shai Weissbach. He noted:

The emphasis that has been placed on the history of America's major communities is understandable, for the vast majority of U.S. Jews lived in America's largest cities. The problem, however, is that by concentrating on the history of those communities where most of America's Jews have lived, scholars have tended to ignore the history of most of America's Jewish communities. If a full understanding of the history of American Jewry is to be developed, the experience of Jews who lived in smaller, more isolated communities must be taken into consideration.<sup>5</sup>

By ignoring Jewish rural communities, scholars do more than leave out the important story of a number of Jewish communities. The Jewish life in these communities represents something vital in the American Jewish experience. Data from the *Statistics of the Jews of the United States*, a population study published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Board of Delegates of American Israelites in 1880, indicated that, in the 1870s, 84 percent of American Jewry lived in the one hundred sixty cities and towns that had one hundred or more Jews in them. These one hundred sixty towns and cities represented the more important urban areas of the United States. One hundred thirty six of them had populations of five thousand or more. After all of the math: 83 percent of the two hundred fifty thousand Jews in the United States in the 1870s lived in urban centers of five thousand or more. While the great majority of Jews may have lived in urban centers, most non-Jewish Americans did not. Weissbach, citing the 1880 census, stated that only 25 percent of Americans lived in urban centers of five thousand or more. Why are these facts important for the study of rural Jews? These statistics illuminate the fact that, in the last half of the nineteenth century, 16 percent of Jews lived in areas where 75 percent of non-Jewish Americans lived. "It was the [Jewish] solitary individuals and families dispersed throughout the United States who

represented Judaism to their fellow citizens in hundreds of American towns and villages."<sup>6</sup> The story of Jews of rural, small-town America then, is the story of Jews who had the greatest probability of contact with the highest percentage of non-Jewish Americans. The life these Jews lived was the Judaism the majority of Americans of the nineteenth and early twentieth century experienced.

Jews in smaller communities have a history worth telling. Moreover, these communities are prone to dissolution. With smaller populations, these communities are closer to losing the critical mass necessary to maintain communal activities and institutions. A small shift in the economy, a few more children not returning to the community after college, a few more immigrants moving on to the next town or city, a few deaths, a few intermarriages, and suddenly, a small Jewish community no longer has the wherewithal to sustain its community life. They no longer have the resources, numbers, or the vitality they need to gather for holidays or Shabbat, to educate their children, etc.

Unfortunately, the histories of these communities are increasingly difficult to retrieve. The end of a Jewish community makes it difficult to tell the history of Jews from these places. The loss of a few families here and a few families there is not just the end of a community's life, it also weakens the ability of any "survivors" to maintain, protect, and preserve the artifacts of the community's history (cemetery, congregational building, homes, or businesses). As the people of a community scatter to the four winds, fewer people with fewer resources remain to tell the story of Jewish life in that place. The history and artifacts of communities with small populations were more vulnerable in extinction than the history of larger Jewish communities in New Orleans, Baton Rouge,

or Jackson. In an urban area, even if a particular part of the community (one congregation) ceases to exist, other congregations or community institutions are able to take over the management and maintenance of the cemetery and the preservation of the community's history. In smaller settlements where there is only one Jewish "community" (and therefore all institutions revolve around the same people), it is all or nothing. When the Jews who are part of this tiny community are gone, all of the institutions associated with that community (including the cemetery) are effected.

#### Why in Mississippi and Louisiana?

The dissolution of small, non-urban Jewish communities, the loss of their history and the destruction of the remnant evidence to their existence is an issue in many parts of the country. For example, Susan Morris, senior director of Special Collections at the Judah Magnes Museum in Berkley, California, wrote a book on pioneer cemeteries associated with the California Gold Rush. Many of these cemeteries had been abandoned for almost a century. Morris, building on the research of Robert Levinson, sought to create this guidebook which would preserve the history of these Jewish communities as she focused on their cemeteries.<sup>7</sup> Ze'ev Chafets, in his book *Members of the Tribe*, points out that throughout the midwest, communities are struggling with the same issues that Jewish communities are struggling with in the South.<sup>8</sup> In researching this topic, it became clear that numerous communities in Alabama, Arkansas, and Texas found themselves in the same predicament. The issues of communal dissolution exist in many parts of America. Mississippi and Louisiana provide an especially good focus for study because these two states contain a high density of small town Jewish communities. This higher



density provides more data for study. It is reasonable to speculate that the generalizations we are able to identify from our analysis of data from Mississippi and Louisiana will pertain to Jewish life throughout the South. Furthermore, the study of these communities can then give insight into the issues of dissolution of small-town Jewish communities in other regions of the United States.

### Historiography

In order to tell the story of these small-town Jewish communities in Mississippi and Louisiana through their cemeteries, it is first necessary to review prior scholarship. There are four categories of study that provide the paradigms and details necessary to begin the process of this study.

The first two categories of scholarship, studies of Jewish life in the South and studies of the role of the cemetery in community life, set the context and provide background on the general subjects of this thesis. Individual community histories written by laymen and local scholars make up the third category of scholarship. These community histories are a rich source of information about the formation of these communities, the life of Jews who lived in these communities, and in some cases, the dissolution of the community. The fourth and final category of prior scholarship is the limited number of studies which begin the process of examining the historical issues pertaining to the dissolution of a community. Building from the background of the first two categories, using data from the third category, this present study seeks to clarify and supplement the limited scholarship that elucidates the fourth category.

### *Scholarship on Southern Jewish life*

Scholars have used two genres to relate the story of Jews living in the southern United States. The first genre is the anecdotal writings that relate the stories of families and individuals in order to describe Jewish identity and life in the South. *The Provincials* and *The Lonely Days were Sundays* by Eli Evans and *Our Southern Landsman* by Harry Golden exemplify this type of work.<sup>9</sup> In these books, Evans and Golden wrestle with the issues Jews faced as they settled and made a life for themselves in the South. *The Jew Store* and *Peddler's Grandson* are autobiographical works that use the same styles to recount similar adventures in southern Jewish life by focusing on the experiences of a particular family.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast to this form of anecdotal scholarship which tries to paint the whole image of the southern Jewish experience, a number of writers have focused on one particular issue, era, dynamic, or element of the southern Jewish experience. Volumes edited by Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson,<sup>11</sup> and Nathan Kaganoff and Melvin Urofsky<sup>12</sup> are sources for a number of these articles which focus on issues like religious life, political views, or social attitudes. Scholarly journals on the American Jewish experience such as *American Jewish History*, *Southern Jewish History*, or *The American Jewish Archives Journal* all contain articles that discuss a wide variety of elements of the history of Jewish life in the South.<sup>13</sup> Of particular interest are the studies that focused on the settlement and economic patterns of Jews coming to the South--specifically focused on Jewish life in Mississippi and Louisiana. One does not have to look far in any work on Jews in the South to see that economic opportunity was a primary motivation for Jewish settlement in the South. As David Goldberg noted, "The Jewish desire to settle in

the South was not a cultural one, but for economic reasons. Here he could work hard and prosper."<sup>14</sup> Works like Elliot Ashkenazi's *Business of Jews in Louisiana 1840-1875*<sup>15</sup> and Thomas Clark's article "The Post-Civil War Economy in the South" from the Dinnerstein and Palsson volume<sup>16</sup> provide invaluable information for explaining reasons why Jews settled in the South--especially in the small towns and cities examined in this study.

### *Study of Cemeteries*

This thesis aspires to fill a gap in scholarship. To date, there has been only one study of a Jewish cemetery in Mississippi or Louisiana. Recently, Charles Riles, a long time resident and funeral director in Vicksburg, Mississippi, wrote a book on the cemetery of the Jewish community in Vicksburg.<sup>17</sup> This work on the Anshe Chesed cemetery stands alone. So, in order to develop a methodology here, it is necessary to supplement this work by turning to studies on cemeteries outside of the target area. There are few works on cemeteries in general. *The Last Great Necessity* by David Charles Sloane describes the history of the cemetery in American life. Returning to the cemeteries of Europe, Sloane explains the evolution of the architecture, burial culture, design, and location of cemeteries in United States.<sup>18</sup> The book *Ethnicity and the American Cemetery*, edited by Richard E. Meyer, discusses how different ethnic groups (including Jews) in America handle these issues differently.<sup>19</sup> Other studies have focused on the histories of various individual cemeteries. There are some articles on non-Jewish cemeteries. Two articles of note include the study of two abandoned cemeteries in Florida. These articles provide insight into what happens to a cemetery that has no caretaker.<sup>20</sup> There are also a number

of articles on Jewish cemeteries in the United States and abroad. The *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly* contains numerous articles which tell the history of Jewish communities during Gold Rush and in the western states through their cemeteries. Scholars have also detailed the history of early cemeteries in two of the original southern Jewish communities: Charleston, South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia.<sup>21</sup> A. Stanley Dreyfus did a similar study exploring the origins of Hebrew Cemetery No. 1 of Galveston, Texas.<sup>22</sup> Stephen Udelsohn used a different strategy to research the "Jewish community and cemetery of Brownsville (Tennessee)." On the basis of headstone inscriptions in the Brownsville cemetery, Udelsohn reconstructed a demographic study of the Brownsville community.<sup>23</sup> While these studies do not provide details on cemeteries of Mississippi and Louisiana, they do provide methodological models and strategies for what to look for, what to consider, and what information about the cemeteries here can be elucidated.

#### *Studies of Individual Communities in Mississippi and Louisiana*

Following the pattern of Bertram Korn's study *Early Jews of New Orleans*,<sup>24</sup> scholars and laymen have used local records and documents, along with oral histories, which sketch out the history of some individual communities involved in this study. Jewish life in Natchez, Woodville, Satartia, Laurel, and Port Gibson, Mississippi, and in Natchitoches, Louisiana, has been described at some length.<sup>25</sup> To varying degrees the authors of studies on these communities have described the settlement of Jews in these towns, the genesis of the community, the religious, social, and economic life, and the dissolution of the community. In addition, there are histories of the Jews in Louisiana and Mississippi



which give some data on the beginning of Jewish life in these towns, as well as describe the personalities of the Jews who helped found and establish them.<sup>26</sup>

There are many small communities in Mississippi and Louisiana that still await historical analysis. To supplement the printed data on the Jewish community in these states, two field study trips into Mississippi and Louisiana were conducted. During these field study trips, the author visited the cemeteries examined in this study to gather additional information so that more communities can be analyzed. This data includes history pamphlets that some congregations have prepared; oral interviews with local historians, remaining Jews, descendants of former residents, and cemetery caretakers; and an array of documents such as deeds, congregational minutes, and headstone transcriptions. There are more data to be collected, which could then be used to create studies similar to the ones that have been done on the communities in Port Gibson or Natchitoches.<sup>27</sup> This type of study is not the goal of this thesis. The creation of a full history of each community is beyond the scope of this study. The data collected for this study will enable the author to compare and contrast these communities specifically on issues involving the cemetery and its place in the community during its existence, in the midst of its dissolution, and after its extinction.

#### *Studies on the dissolution of small-town Jewish communities in Mississippi and Louisiana*

Four researchers have reported on and wrestled with the dissolution of Jewish communities in small southern towns. In 1957, Benjamin Kaplan recognized and tried to explain the dissolution phenomenon in his book *The Eternal Stranger*.<sup>28</sup> Kaplan

examined three small-town communities in Louisiana: Clinton, Opelousas, and New Iberia. He chose these communities in particular because for him they represented the spectrum of a community's life span: Clinton was extinct, Opelousas was (as Kaplan saw it<sup>B</sup>) on the verge of dissolution, and New Iberia was thriving. By comparing and contrasting these three communities, Kaplan sought to describe the social elements that can weaken a community's integrity and lead to its dissolution.

Lee Shai Weissbach focused on another aspect of the phenomenon of dissolving communities. In his article "Decline in an Age of Expansion: Disappearing Jewish Communities in the Era of Mass Migration," Weissbach observed that a number of small communities founded during the German wave of immigration did not enjoy the fruits of the massive immigration of East Europeans in the 1880s.

Still, not every Jewish center established in the United States by the turn of the century was expanding in the era of mass migration, for while the overall Jewish population of the country was burgeoning...there was a simultaneous little-noticed countercurrent in American Jewish demography...A few of the small but significant Jewish communities that had flourished in the later part of the nineteenth century or in the first few years of the twentieth century went into decline, and a few disappeared completely.<sup>29</sup>

This study is important for two reasons. First, Weissbach examined the characteristics of this phenomenon as it occurred throughout the country. Second, he included data on the dynamics of this phenomenon in three of cities included in this study: St. Francisville/Bayou Sara, Louisiana; Donaldsonville, Louisiana; and Port Gibson, Mississippi.

Louis Lettes and David Goldberg both wrote theses dealing with the difficulties of life for Jews living in small towns of the South. Lettes's study, "On the verge of Extinction: Small-town Jewish communities of the deep South,"<sup>30</sup> used the community of

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<sup>B</sup> The reinvigoration of the community in Opelousas will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Natchez, Mississippi, as a case study to analyze the issues of dissolution which confront many communities throughout the South. David Goldberg also discusses many of these same issues in "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand: A study of Small-city Jewry in Five Southeastern States." While Goldberg included more communities in his study, the dissolution of these communities is not explored in depth, as it is only one of many topics discussed.<sup>31</sup>

One place where the dissolution of communities and the loss of community artifacts and their histories receive much attention is in the popular press. Article after article, in newspapers and magazines, describes the dangers of extinction: which communities are gone or at risk, who is left to tell the tale, and what organizations (especially the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience) are trying to preserve the stories of the communities.<sup>32</sup> Some of the articles focus on one community in particular. Others cover a number of communities dealing with this problem. Whichever strategy is used, one thing is clear: on some level the disappearance of these communities, the loss of their history, and the endangerment of their artifacts including the community cemetery--is a newsworthy and captivating story.

These articles in the popular press communicate the concern of this thesis: who cares for these communities and their cemeteries. Therefore, this study will combine scholarship and original research in order to confront the issues of the dissolution of small-town Jewish communities. By comparing and contrasting the situation of extinct and dissipating Jewish communities in Mississippi and Louisiana, this thesis will attempt to create a picture of the role of the cemetery in a community's life, explore reasons why



these communities dissolve, and consider what happens to the cemetery when extinction occurs.

#### Chapter 1 Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Jacob R. Marcus, *United States Jewry, 1776-1985* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 197.
- <sup>2</sup> Leo E. Turitz and Evelyn Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi* (Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 1995).
- <sup>3</sup> Susan Morris, *A Traveler's Guide to Pioneer Cemeteries of the California Gold Rush* (Berkeley, Calif.: Judah Magnes Museum, 1996).
- <sup>4</sup> Exodus 1:8.
- <sup>5</sup> Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration: Some comments on Geography and Bibliography," in *American Jewish History*, vol. 2, Jeffery S. Gurock, ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 1998), 343-44.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 353.
- <sup>7</sup> Morris, *A Traveler's Guide*; Robert E. Levinson, *The Jews in the California Gold Rush* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, Inc., 1978).
- <sup>8</sup> Ze'ev Chafets, *Members of the Tribe: On the Road in Jewish America* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1988), 40-41.
- <sup>9</sup> Eli Evans, *The Provincials: A Personal history of Jews in the South* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997); Eli N. Evans, *The Lonely Days were Sundays: Reflections of a Jewish Southerner* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1993); Harry Golden, *Our Southern Landsman* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1974).
- <sup>10</sup> Edward Cohen, *The Peddler's Grandson: growing up Jewish in Mississippi* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1999); Stella Suberman, *The Jew Store* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1998).
- <sup>11</sup> Leonard Dinnerstein and Mary Dale Palsson, (comp.) *Jews of the South* (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press, 1973).
- <sup>12</sup> Nathan M. Kaganoff and Melvin L. Urofsky, "Turn to the South": *Essays on Southern Jewry*. (Charlottesville, Va.: Published for the American Jewish Historical Society by University Press of Virginia, 1979).
- <sup>13</sup> One example is Gary P. Zola, "Why Study Southern Jewish History," in *Southern Jewish History: Journal of the Southern Jewish Historical Society*, Vol. 1, (1998). This article is a survey of the recent literature and provides a justification for the subject.
- <sup>14</sup> David J. Goldberg, "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand: A study of Small city Jewry in Five Southeastern States" (1974) the Jacob Rader Marcus Center for American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio hereafter [AJA], 53.
- <sup>15</sup> Elliot Ashkenai, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana 1840-1875* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1987).
- <sup>16</sup> Thomas D. Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy in the South" in Dinnerstein, Leonard and Palsson, Mary Dale (comp.) *Jews of the South* (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana State University Press 1973).
- <sup>17</sup> Charles Riles, *Anshe Chesed: Vicksburg's Jewish Cemetery* (Vicksburg, Ms: self published, 2001).
- <sup>18</sup> David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).
- <sup>19</sup> Richard E. Meyer, ed. *Ethnicity and the American Cemetery* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1993).
- <sup>20</sup> Josephine Johnson, "Pioneer Cemetery," *Tequesta* 51:29-48 (1991); Oby Bonawit, "History of Pinewood Cemetery," *Tequesta* 38:63-71 (1978).
- <sup>21</sup> Barnett A. Elzas, *The Old Jewish Cemeteries at Charleston 1762-1903* (Charleston, S.C. 1903); B. H. Levy, *Savannah's Old Jewish Community Cemeteries* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1983); Thomas J. Tobias, "The Cemetery We Rededicate," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*, Volume LIII, N. 4. (June 1964).
- <sup>22</sup> A. Stanley Dreyfus, Hebrew Cemetery No. 1 of Galveston (March 22, 1965) [AJA].
- <sup>23</sup> Stephen Udelsohn, "Jewish Community and Cemetery Study of Brownsville" [AJA].
- <sup>24</sup> Bertram Wallace Korn, *The early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, Ma: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969).

- <sup>25</sup> Louis Lettes, "On the verge of extinction: Small-town Jewish communities of the Deep South," (bachelors thesis, Princeton University. Natchez, MS 1986) [AJA]; Marsha R Oates, "Wilkinson County's Jewish Community" *Jewish Life in Wilkinson County, 1820-1920: Views of a Vanished Community*. Marsha Oates, ed, (Woodville, MS: Published by the Wilkinson County Museum, 1995); Richard J Birnholz, "Who were the Jews of Satartia, Mississippi," (1981) Histories Files, [AJA]; David B Marcus, "Historical Analysis of the First Thirty Years of Laurel Jewry," (1931) Histories Files [AJA]; Kenneth Ross Hoffman, "The small town Southern Jewish experience: Port Gibson, Mississippi a case study." (Master's Thesis Tulane University, 1993); Elliot Goldman, "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches". Masters Thesis for Northwestern State College of Louisiana, (1968) Histories Files [AJA].
- <sup>26</sup> Leo E Turitz and Evelyn Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi*; Shpall, *The Jews of Louisiana*. (New Orleans, 1936).
- <sup>27</sup> Hoffman, "The small town Southern Jewish experience"; Goldman, "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches".
- <sup>28</sup> Benjamin Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger: A study of Jewish life in the small community* (New York: Bookman Associates: 1957).
- <sup>29</sup> Lee Shai Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion: Disappearing Jewish Communities in the Era of Mass Migration" in *American Jewish Archives Journal*, Vol. xlix N. 1 and 2, (1997), 39-40.
- <sup>30</sup> Lettes, "On the verge of extinction"
- <sup>31</sup> Goldberg, "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand."
- <sup>32</sup> Larry Bleiberg, "Jewish immigrants' final home in La." *The Dallas Morning News*. (Sunday May 10, 1998), 6G; Connie Priest, "Bastrop's Jewish Cemetery is a Record of History" *Bastrop (La.) Daily Enterprise*. (Thursday February 27, 1997), 4. Includes the Deed to the cemetery and tombstone inscriptions; Claire Punecky, "Down the Bayou: Cemetery" *Times-Picayune, New Orleans, La.* (Sunday morning May 30 1976). Anne Butler Hamilton, "Church members trade recipes for AC, Heat" *Morning Advocate, Baton Rouge, La.*, (8/10/89), 7E; Andrea Oppenheimer Dean, "Dixie Diaspora" *Preservation* (July/August 2000); Lewis Lord, "Matzos and Magnolias" *US News and World Report* (May 25, 1998). Ray Thompson, "The Disappearing Jewish Cemetery" *The Daily Herald* (Biloxi, Mississippi) (1957).

## Chapter 2

### Community formation and cemetery establishment in the Deep South

The stated purpose of this thesis is to study the cemetery in a community's life, death, and afterlife.<sup>A</sup> In order to study the cemetery there has to be a community, an organized group of people who established it, some of whom are buried in it. The purpose of this chapter is to set the context of how and why Jews settled in small rural communities in Mississippi and Louisiana and to explore the role the cemetery played in the establishment of these Jewish communities. Two central questions to be answered in this chapter are: What role did the cemetery play in the formation of a Jewish community in these places? and What did these cemeteries look like?

#### Part I: Background: Bring in the Jews

Prior to 1803, the year of the Louisiana Purchase, Jews were few and far between in the South. Historian Leo Shpall noted that the story of Louisiana Jews prior to 1803 was a history of individuals.<sup>1</sup> These individuals like Judah P. Benjamin and Judah Touro were, like the majority of Jews in early America, of Sephardic origin.<sup>2</sup> They came to America to escape the Spanish and Portuguese Inquisition in Europe and in the colonies. "This influx occurred during the pre-Revolutionary days and continued during the early decades of the nineteenth century. By that time [the early nineteenth century] the Jewish

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<sup>A</sup> This study focuses only on community cemeteries. There are cases where Jews were buried on family property or in a single plot in a non-Jewish cemetery. These graves reflect family or individual decisions and not community dynamics. Therefore, they are excluded from the study. The small Jewish plots in the cemeteries of Satartia and Monticello, Mississippi, are the exception. While these cemetery areas have a few graves, they represent more than one family, and the graves are purposefully located around one another. These cemeteries never became part of a community, though there seems to be group interaction in their establishment.



community in America numbered approximately 15,000."<sup>3</sup> The "Black Code," a set of laws that prohibited settlers who did not belong to the Catholic Church, limited the number of Jews who entered the Louisiana territory up until its purchase in 1803 and for a time afterward. Immigration to this region continued as a trickle even after the provision of the Black Code was nullified when the territory of the Louisiana Purchase came under U.S. jurisdiction. Still, a Jewish presence was documented. As historian Louis Lettes asserted "Thus by the close of the eighteenth century, the South had become a home for Jews. While it would be misleading to suggest a glaring Jewish presence in the South, or even in the Northeast at the time... these early Jewish immigrants would quickly find commercial opportunities, both on the seaboard and later on the Mississippi River."<sup>4</sup> These early Jewish settlers did not have the numbers, or the interest, to establish permanent communal organizations. They focused on setting up businesses and integrated themselves into the local culture. Although the stories of these individuals are an important and fascinating part of early Jewish life in the American South, this study focuses intently on the community life of Jews in Mississippi and Louisiana. While these early settlers founded one congregation in New Orleans in the 1820s, it was not until the German migration of the 1840s and 1850s that Jewish communities coalesced in the lower Mississippi River region.<sup>5</sup>

"Most Jewish Southerners... were Ashkenazic immigrants who in the 1840s and 1850s had fled Bavaria, Prussia, Alsace, Hesse, Baden, Swabia, Westphalia, Hungary, Poznan (Posen), and Silesia in Prussian Poland and Russian Poland to America, the fabled land of freedom."<sup>6</sup> This so-called German immigration was a watershed, increasing the population of Jews in America by tenfold. While the numbers differ from

report to report,<sup>B</sup> it is clear that the demographics of the American Jewish community was changed dramatically following this new wave of immigration. This immigration had a profound impact on all parts of the country, including the South. It was this group of German immigrants that created the backbone of the Jewish communities in Mississippi and Louisiana.<sup>7</sup> They not only augmented the earlier Sephardic immigrants, they absorbed and eclipsed them. It was these Central European immigrants who founded Jewish communal life in the small towns of Mississippi and Louisiana. For example, between 1840 and 1880 (the beginning of the Eastern European immigration), a Jewish cemetery was established in twenty-one of the twenty-seven communities in this study.<sup>C</sup> Of the eighteen communities in this study that established congregations, eleven had done so by 1880.<sup>D</sup>

The motivations for immigration and settlement in the South can be illustrated with the story of Henry and Minna Oppenheimer (originally of Hanover), who arrived in Clinton, Louisiana, in 1845.

When they reached Clinton they found a small but growing community... Here, they must have thought it the place to settle, to plant roots deeply, to live in peace, and here to earn a living as a free people. Here, the Oppenheimers had heard were no Judengassen, here no anti-Jewish signs which both Minna and Henry had seen displayed in many places in Hanover. Here were opportunities to buy land, to build homes, to worship and to trade with people in a dignified way.<sup>8</sup>

There are a number of different issues intertwined in this one illustration, the first being the Oppenheimers' need to escape the restrictive, antisemitic environment of Europe.

<sup>B</sup> Rosen (page 16) reports that between 1800 and 1860 one hundred thousand immigrants came from Central Europe; Ashkenazi (page 9) indicates that the Jewish population of the U.S. was one hundred fifty thousand in 1860; Hoffman (page 12) notes that in 1820 there were six thousand Jews in America and one hundred fifty thousand by 1860; Turitz (page xiv) estimates that by 1890 there were approximately two hundred fifty thousand German Jewish immigrants in the United States.

<sup>C</sup> Only one congregation was founded in Louisiana before 1840, Shaarai Chesed in New Orleans. Leo Shpall, *The Jews of Louisiana*. For a list of the dates of congregational formation, see Table 1: Timing of Cemetery and Congregation in Appendix I.

<sup>D</sup> See Table 1: Timing of Cemetery and Congregation in Appendix I.

Nineteenth-century Europe was a place of great upheavals. First came Napoleon and the French Revolution, followed by the rule of Baron Von Metternich and his fellow reactionaries, which signaled the reversal of the rights and protection that the Jews had gained during the French Revolution. The failed German Revolution of 1848 again undermined civil and religious liberties offered to the Jews. It seemed to some that with each revolution and then reaction, Jews would take one step forward and two steps backward. Jews living in the German states faced a host of restrictions. There were restrictions on where they could live and where they could travel. There were laws barring them from land ownership and prohibiting Jews from educational opportunities and particular trades. "Thousands were young men who had fled their German fatherlands to avoid serving a tyrannical government in brutal anti-Semitic armies."<sup>9</sup> There were even parts of Germany where Jews had to receive specific permission from the ruler in order to marry.<sup>10</sup>

This intolerance and persecution was just one of the issues which pulled immigrants from their homes in Europe and sent them across the sea to America. Returning to the Oppenheimer story, another factor is clear:

When they reached Clinton they found a small but growing community... Here, they must have thought it the place to settle, to plant roots deeply, to live in peace, and here to earn a living as a free people. ... Here were opportunities to buy land, to build homes, to worship and to trade with people in a dignified way.<sup>11</sup>

These types of economic factors dominated every analysis of the motivations for Jewish immigration and the pattern of settlement in the U.S.<sup>E</sup> In addition to the loss of political and religious liberties, there were economic problems in the wake of the failed

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<sup>E</sup> In his thesis "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand," David J. Goldberg reports that 92 percent of the respondents of his questionnaire said that the family business was the reason for settling in their present



revolutions in the mid-nineteenth century. These difficulties affected Jew and non-Jew alike. "Unemployment and overpopulation cast an economic pall over Europe and not only the Jews but the Italians, Irish, English and Dutch were emigrating (to escape to a place of better opportunity) as well."<sup>12</sup> Even as Europe's economy fluctuated with the waves of revolution, economic opportunities abounded in America as the frontier expanded west and south.<sup>13</sup> "Thus the Jewish desire to settle in the South was not a cultural one, but for economic reasons. Here he (the Jewish immigrant) could work hard and prosper."<sup>14</sup>

These settlements were not solely shaped by the German immigration. The East European immigration wave, which started in 1881 with the assassination of Czar Alexander II and the ascendancy of Alexander III,<sup>15</sup> increased the American Jewish population by a factor of ten. From 1880 to 1920 the Jewish population grew from less than half a million to over two million. The numerical effect on the South specifically was significantly less. One scholar "estimates that of the 2,800,000 East Europeans who came to America over the forty year period, no more than 40,000 traveled South."<sup>16</sup>

Like their German predecessors, persecution and intolerance also pushed the East European Jews to America. Following the assassination of Czar Alexander II, cycles of violence and restrictions were brought to bear on Jewish communities of the Pale of Settlement. Any gains that had been made under more liberal czars were reversed as the Russian government attempted to use lengthy military service, peasant riots, travel and job restrictions, and secular schooling to convert the Jews away from Judaism to Russian Orthodoxy.<sup>17</sup> Like their predecessors, these East European immigrants were pulled to the

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community. David J. Goldberg, "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand: A study of Small-city Jewry in Five Southeastern States" (1974), Histories Files [AJA] 11.

United States by economic opportunity just as they were pushed out of Europe by religious and political persecution. Indeed, these new immigrants followed the same settlement patterns as the German immigrants did a generation earlier. Following the footsteps of relatives, these immigrants peddled their way into an economically promising area seeking economic opportunity.<sup>18</sup> While they may have followed the same pattern, they did not always end up in the same places as their German predecessors. Some established communities, like Opelousas, Louisiana, benefited from an influx of new immigrants around the turn of the century. Others, such as Plaquemine and Clinton, Louisiana, or Port Gibson, Mississippi, were for the most part ignored by these new immigrants. In other cases, East European immigrants settled in places that had previously seen few Jews and no Jewish community. Clarksdale and Laurel, Mississippi, and Bogalusa, Louisiana, exemplify this trend.<sup>19</sup>

The arrival of Jewish immigrants into Mississippi and Louisiana, whether during the German immigration or the East European immigration, was mutually beneficial for all parties involved. The Jews who settled in small towns found the opportunities they lacked in Europe. They were able to make a better life for themselves and to help family and friends find success as well. Once settled in America, the young<sup>F</sup> immigrant hoped to quickly make as much money as possible in order to bring over more relatives to the safe and secure environment of America.<sup>20</sup> They also wanted to take advantage of a fresh start and make a better life for themselves and the families they would build. "As individuals they found here freedom and opportunity for economic endeavor, here were

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<sup>F</sup> Port Gibson's community is a good example of this youth. "Most of Port Gibson's earliest Jews came from Europe without families, waiting until they were settled in Mississippi to have children." Kenneth Ross Hoffman, "The small town Southern Jewish experience", 13. The average age in the community in 1850 was eighteen and was less than twenty-five as late as 1900!

many good schools for their children, which accepted them without question. Here the Jews were able to rear large families and to give those families the things which make for a good life. The good life, which in turn, enabled their children to become lawyers, physicians, merchants, manufacturers, teachers and politicians.<sup>21</sup>

Even as Jewish immigrants took advantage of these new economic opportunities in the South, the cities and towns where they settled benefited from their presence. First, it is necessary to explain that there was a void in the economy of the South. Throughout the South at this time there was a need for merchant middlemen who could help get the cash crops (cotton or sugar cane) to market turning the agricultural bounty of the South into goods (food, clothes, household goods, implements for the farm, etc.) for farmers, planters, and slaves.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, there was a psychological basis for the lack of a merchant class in the South. "In the South before and after the Civil War, there were basically three economic groups — aristocratic-type landowners (planters), poor white farmers, and Negroes. The farmer felt that the only respectable way to make a living was in a 'productive' manner. The merchant group did not produce anything, and was not envied nor respected by whites."<sup>23</sup> Peddlers and storeowners were necessary but looked at with disdain. Merchants may have been central to the functioning of the agricultural system, but real honor lay in growing cotton, "King of the South." The Jews who came to the South saw this void as a great opportunity. They were primed to fill this role. Many had experiences serving as merchants and peddlers for the agricultural economy of rural areas in Europe and in the Carolinas.<sup>24</sup>

The Civil War created an entirely new economic situation in the South, making the need for a new influx of people willing to be merchants even greater. In the wake of



the destruction and dislocation of the Civil War, proponents of Reconstruction were convinced that cotton, which had driven the southern economy and the way of life both before and after the war, was the key to rising out of the ashes. They said, "One thing, however, was clear — cotton was bringing a good price, and it seemed that the Southern farmer could begin all over again devoting their attention to the production of this staple crop."<sup>25</sup> But while cotton could still be grown, the factors or cotton brokers, who had been the key to the whole process of exchanging cotton for credit, were gone, bankrupted by the war. This meant the organization of a new credit and market system which would bring much needed cash and goods to the South and transport cotton efficiently and effectively to markets in the North and in Europe. The storekeepers and peddlers who had served the smaller-scale farmers and slaves during the antebellum period now stepped in to fill this void.<sup>26</sup> These Jewish immigrants had connections to northern suppliers and financial backers to bring goods and credit to help in the reconstruction of the South.<sup>27</sup> In an article in *U.S. News and World Report*, Lewis Lord commented that in Natchez, "The town prospered, and so too, did its Jewish businessmen."<sup>28</sup> Jews gave the South the opportunity to rebuild after the Civil War. "Jews became involved from top to bottom, as wholesalers in big cities, as general store owners, and as peddlers working out of the stores. By providing simple credit to farmers and by serving as the 'eyes and ears' of the speculative cotton trade, the merchants became indispensable to the recovery of the South."<sup>29</sup>

At the same time they were working to get the South back on its feet, these Jews did more than set up stores and become businessmen. The South provided Jews with the economic opportunities they lacked in their native Europe. Immigrants of the 1840s and



beyond achieved their goals. Jews were able to succeed economically and socially, settling in towns, establishing businesses, and raising families. They thrived in an environment free of the political and religious restrictions and persecution of Central and Eastern Europe, integrating into the social and political life of the towns in which they lived. Indeed, Jews eagerly joined fraternal organizations like the Masons, the Elks, and the Oddfellows and service organizations such as the Rotary Club, the Garden Club, and the Chamber of Commerce. They helped to found community schools like the Peabody School in Summit, Mississippi.<sup>30</sup> Jewish citizens of these towns served as mayors, county commissioners, and community leaders.<sup>G</sup> Through their dry goods and clothing stores, "they set the styles of their communities because they had the outside purchasing contacts from which they imported new goods and styles into their trade. Where stores evolved through the stages of general store to department store these merchants were to have a marked influence on the tastes of their customers."<sup>31</sup>

Jewish immigrants were welcomed to these small towns and they took advantage of the freedom and hospitality of their neighbors. They worked to make a life for themselves by making their new hometown a good place to live. This was a whole new sphere of life and activity for these Jewish immigrants. In Mississippi and Louisiana they did not face the same political and social limitations as they had in Europe. On the contrary, they were an integral part of the social and political fabric of the new places they called home. Even as they built new lives for themselves, however, these Jews made a concerted effort not to give up their Judaism. They came together to create

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<sup>G</sup> Andrew Cohen (undated newspaper article) reported, "Although they were less than a tenth of the population, Jews filled almost a quarter of the elective offices." Issac Landman, ed. "Louisiana" and "Mississippi" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*. (New York: The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, inc. 1939-1943) lists examples in the various paragraphs on each community.

institutions and organizations to express Judaism in all phases and aspects of life. There were congregations, religious schools, ladies auxiliaries, B'nai B'rith chapters, benevolent societies, and cemeteries.

Jewish cemeteries were and still are powerful signs of the integration of European Jews in the South. Cemeteries were established as these Jews made a life for themselves in the South and wanted to be buried in their new home. Being a southerner was not the only identity these immigrants expressed. They did not just want to be buried- they wanted to be buried as Jews. Moreover, the establishment of a burial site was not a task for a single individual. Rather, it was a documented, organized communal activity. Therefore, the cemetery, as a nexus of these three concepts—hometown, Jewish life, and communal activity—can provide insight into the experience of Jews as they formed communities in their new hometowns.

## **Part II: Cemetery as a part of community**

It has already been demonstrated that the cemetery is an important part of community life. As a primary institution, the cemetery is integral to the formation and continued existence of a community. Any analysis of the process of community formation raises an important question: What can the establishment of the cemetery tell us about the process and timing of the community's formation?

### **1. Why look at the cemetery as a sign of communal establishment?**

The cemetery is proof of a Jewish presence and intention to make a permanent home and community. For example, "The History of the Chev'r Bicur Cholem"<sup>H</sup> of Brookhaven,

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<sup>H</sup> Chev'r Bicur Cholem (Society for Visiting the Sick) is a curious name for a burial society. While this name is related to one of the functions of a benevolent society (burial is another function), this organization

Mississippi, related, "In 1861 a young Jewish boy died at Holmesville, Mississippi, and his body was brought to Brookhaven. There was at that time no Jewish burial ground in Brookhaven, so four public spirited Jewish citizens, Abram Kersky, A. M. Marks, a Mr. Pincus and a Mr. Lubinsky organized what is today the 'Chevra Bicur Cholem,' purchased a piece of land and had the boy buried."<sup>32</sup> Just as the story of the Oppenheimers provided insight into the motivations for immigration, this story helps explain why Jewish cemeteries appeared in some places but not others. The facts of the story are simple: a Jewish boy dies. His family lives in Holmesville, which does not have a Jewish cemetery. His family must decide where to bury him. Why do they bring him from Holmesville to Brookhaven, a distance of thirty miles, to another place that does not have a Jewish cemetery?

It seems counter intuitive for this family to bury their son in a location far away from where they lived. One could logically expect them to bury their son in Holmesville so that they could visit and care for his grave. Why did they go to Brookhaven? One possible answer to this question helps explain how the establishment of a Jewish cemetery helps in understanding the formation of a Jewish community. Presumably, they saw something in Brookhaven that they lacked in Holmesville, a Jewish future. Lee Shai Weissbach stated, "One indication that the Jewish residents of the communities we are exploring were indeed thinking in terms of a secure future is that, like their co-religionist in other places, they developed Jewish institutional structures along familiar lines."<sup>33</sup> This concept of a secure future would seem to apply to a cemetery as well. It is logical to suggest that one does not start a cemetery which cannot be maintained. Burial is part of

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in Brookhaven was formed specifically to bury the dead. Did the founders intend for this to be a benevolent society or did they know the words associated with this kind of act but not know their meaning?



the act of *zachor hamet*, respect for the memory of the dead. We bury our loved ones in a place where they will be remembered and in a place that will be cared for in the future.

The implication is that a cemetery is only started when the Jews of a particular place feel that they have a future there, and as part of that future can care for those who are buried in the Jewish cemetery. We can only speculate that by taking their son to be buried in Brookhaven, this family did not foresee the development of a Jewish community in Holmesville that would care for the grave of their child after they had died or moved on. So, they went to the nearest town which they felt had a secure Jewish future, namely, Brookhaven.

How does this notion of needing a sense of a secure future before establishing a cemetery help in dating the formation of the Jewish community in particular places? In the transcriptions of the headstones for these cemeteries, there are some entries of interest. Aron Teutsch and Abraham Mayer, both of whom died in Bayou Sara, are buried in the Beth Shalom cemetery in Woodville.<sup>J</sup> Rueben Simon died from yellow fever on January 24, 1856, in Canton, Mississippi, while Joseph Frey died in 1853 in Port Gibson. Both were buried in the original Jewish cemetery<sup>K</sup> in Vicksburg and then relocated to the Anshe Chesed Cemetery, also in Vicksburg, when it opened in 1864.<sup>34</sup> What do these examples have in common? A Jewish cemetery was eventually established in the place of death: St. Francisville/Bayou Sara (1891), Canton (1872), and Port Gibson (1871). What this suggests is that, at the time of death, the family, or the survivors of the deceased, did not feel secure in the Jewish future at the place where the

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<sup>J</sup> See page 25

<sup>J</sup> See Headstone inscriptions for Beth Shalom Cemetery Woodville, MS in Appendix II

<sup>K</sup> In his book on the Anshe Chesed Cemetery, Charles Riles discusses the relocation of the graves from the original cemetery and the possible location of this site. Page 33ff.



person lived and died. So they used a burial site that was close by geographically or socially.<sup>L</sup>

If the survivors had established a cemetery in this place and at that time, they were unsure if there would be enough of a Jewish presence to maintain, protect, and preserve the graves. The fact that cemeteries were later established in these places indicates that in these three towns- Bayou Sara/St. Francisville, Canton, and Port Gibson- this reality changed. In addition, with the documentation of the out-of-town burial and then the establishment of the cemetery in town, it is possible to date the period of time when Jews were able to develop a permanent presence as a community, capable of maintaining a cemetery. For example, between 1856 and 1872, the something in the situation in Canton changed so that the Jews did not send their dead to Vicksburg for burial. Instead, by 1872 they felt the Jewish community developing in Canton was strong enough to ensure the perpetual care of a cemetery.<sup>M</sup>

2. Can the establishment of a cemetery help us to decide what the threshold is for the formation of a community?

Something occurs in a town to cause the Jewish residents to decide that there will be a Jewish future in that place, and as such they would be inclined to establish a cemetery. Is it possible to document a particular threshold that must be crossed in order to feel secure

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<sup>L</sup> There are many examples of a person being buried in a place where he did not reside. People frequently used other burial sites for familial and religious reasons. In these cases, no other family is buried in these cemeteries.

<sup>M</sup> The Jews of some towns never felt secure in a Jewish communal future. For example, there are a number of graves of individuals who died in Kosciusko, Mississippi in the cemetery in Canton, Mississippi. This would seem to indicate that the small group of Jews in Kosciusko did not feel that a Jewish cemetery there would be cared for over time. In these cases the group in question would develop associations with nearby communities for the burial of their dead. See headstone inscriptions for Canton, Mississippi in Appendix II.

in a Jewish future? Is it a critical mass, a particular number of people in a community which signals that a community has enough resources to be self-sustaining over a period of time? Or is it a critical event, something that happens which draws Jewish residents of a town (or a group of towns) together to create communal institutions like a cemetery?

The concept of a critical mass comes from the writings of historian Lee Shai Weissbach. In his article "Jewish Communities on the Eve of Mass Migration," Weissbach separates Jewish settlements into three categories according to population: less than one thousand, nine hundred ninety nine to one hundred, and less than one hundred. For Weissbach, one hundred Jews in a given area is the critical mass necessary for the creation of Jewish communal life. While he noted that this number was arbitrary the data he collected seems to support his hypothesis. Of the one hundred sixty settlements with one hundred or more Jews in 1878, 89 percent of them had Jewish communal organizations. There was, in fact, at least one functioning congregation in one hundred thirty three of the one hundred and sixty communities in this category. The data for settlements of less than one hundred Jews shows a completely different picture. In 1878 "All together, there were at least 868 points of Jewish settlement in the United States where Jews lived in concentrations of less than one hundred individuals."<sup>35</sup> Of these, the 1878 population survey, *Statistics of the Jews*<sup>N</sup> suggests there were Jewish organizations and institutions in only sixty-six of these places. From these measures Weissbach concluded, "Not surprisingly, of course, the establishment of Jewish

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<sup>N</sup> This survey was done by the Board of Delegates of American Israelites and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. It is one of the first surveys of the American Jewish population. For more information on the history of this survey, see: Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration", 345.

communal institutions in a city or town very often went hand-in-hand with the achievement of a triple-digit population.<sup>36</sup>

The population data from the communities involved in this study<sup>o</sup> supports the notion that a population of one hundred was necessary to achieve the critical mass for the creation of communal institutions in some cases. Of the twenty-seven communities in this study, ten places had more than one hundred Jews at some point in their history. From this group of ten, we can demonstrate that seven had more than one hundred Jews in the community when the cemetery was established.

City with Jewish population greater than 100	Population by year						Year cemetery established
	1878	1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	
St Francisville/Bayou Sara	<b>133</b>		90	24	<10		1891
Canton	<b>150</b>		100	<b>108</b>	<b>85</b>		1872
Clarksdale					<b>412</b>	<b>280</b>	1914
Donaldsonville	179		85	<b>80</b>	<b>75</b>		1856
Greenwood			125	<b>250</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>160</b>	N/a
Natchez	<b>220</b>	<b>450</b>	575	<b>151</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>198</b>	1840
Port Gibson	<b>109</b>	<b>171</b>	151	<b>48</b>	<b>44</b>		1871

Numbers in bold from Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People: American Jewish Population data, 1585-1984*. (Lanham: University Press of America, 1990). Numbers in plain text from Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration" or Lee Shai Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion".

Three other communities are reported to have had Jewish populations of more than one hundred at some point in their history. Two, Plaquemine and Morgan City, did not achieve hundred or more Jews until many years after the establishment of the cemetery and the congregation.

<sup>o</sup> For a full table, see Table 2: Building an institution with a population of 100" in Appendix I.



City with Jewish population of 100 after congregational formation	Population by year						Year cemetery established
	1878	1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	
Morgan City		<b>35</b>		<b>97</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>1878</b>
Plaquemine	<b>61</b>		<b>125</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>55</b>		1856

Numbers in bold from Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People* numbers in plain text from Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration" or Lee Shai Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion".

The population data from Opelousas indicates a pattern which challenges Weissbach's assertion that a population of one hundred was necessary for the formation of communal institutions, at least in the geographical area of this study. The data from *To Count a People* suggests that there were never one hundred Jews in Opelousas.<sup>37</sup> And yet an organization (congregation or benevolent society) known as Gemuloth Chasadim was chartered in 1869 for the purpose of obtaining land for the establishment of a cemetery in Opelousas.<sup>38</sup>

	Population by year						Year cemetery established
	1878	1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	
Opelousas	<b>70</b>			<b>75</b>	<b>60</b>		1869

Numbers in bold from Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People*.

Population data from *To Count a People* is not the only data available for Opelousas. In his study of the community, Ben Kaplan provided two crucial figures. He stated that in 1885 there were one hundred Jews organized into thirteen families within five miles of Opelousas (this includes Washington, Louisiana<sup>P</sup>).<sup>39</sup> This data indicates that Opelousas was similar to Morgan City and Plaquemine in that its Jewish population numbered less than one hundred when the cemetery was established. Another piece of data included in Kaplan's study further challenges Weissbach's parameters. "In 1929 Ten paying

<sup>P</sup> Should the Jews of Washington be included in the population of Opelousas? The Jews of Washington established their own cemetery, but participated in the congregation in Opelousas.



members (families) consisting of 65 souls' pooled their resources and efforts and built a Temple in which services were held somewhat regularly until 1942 at which time it was closed."<sup>40</sup> This would suggest that a group of less than one hundred people could organize and raise the funds to build a congregational building. This building, however, was not in service long. So, one could argue that this proves Weissbach's point. Sixty-five individuals may have built a Temple, but they could not sustain it for even twenty years. This, however, is not the only data available. In fact, the closure was only temporary. After the completion of Kaplan's study, the congregation saw a rebirth in the 1950s and continued operating into the early 1990s.<sup>41</sup>

Data from the Opelousas, Morgan City, and Plaquemine communities — which reached populations of more than one hundred after institutional formation — reinforces the population data from the other seventeen settlements featured here that never reached a population of 100 Jews and yet built institutions.

City with Jewish population less than 100	Congregation	Population by year						Year Cemetery established
		1878	1890	1905	1907	1927	1937	
Bastrop	1877	<b>65</b>		<b>40</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>39</b>	1878
Berwick	Morgan City						<b>13</b>	1877
Biloxi	no data							1855
Brookhaven	1894						<b>50</b>	1861
Clinton	no	<b>78</b>	<b>85</b>		<b>0</b>			1853
Grand Gulf	no data	No data						N/a
Franklin	Morgan City	<b>31</b>					<b>25</b>	1854
Laurel	1906					<b>74</b>	<b>65</b>	1918
Lexington	1904	<b>24</b>				<b>77</b>	<b>64</b>	1904
Monticello	no							1848
Natchitoches	1871	<b>96</b>				<b>60</b>	<b>45</b>	1847
Osyka	1860s	<b>56</b>						1878
Sartoria	no	<b>3</b>						1845
Summit	no date	<b>78</b>						mid 1850s?
Washington	Opelousas							1867
Woodville	1878	<b>74</b>				<b>11</b>		1848
Yazoo City	Jackson	<b>44</b>					<b>61</b>	1887

Numbers in bold from Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People*.

As this table demonstrates, over half of the settlements with populations of fewer than one hundred Jews established cemeteries. Jews from seven of these towns even formed congregations that built or purchased a congregational building. Including Morgan City, Plaquemine and Opelousas, a greater number of communities in this study had fewer than one hundred people when they established the cemetery and formed a congregation.

While Weissbach noted that there were exceptions to his "population of 100" rule, the high number of examples of communities with institutions and populations less than one hundred seems out of step with the statistics from the 1878 census, which only had sixty-six out of eight hundred sixty-eight communities with populations under one hundred having organizations and thirty-seven of those having congregations.

In contrast to his definition of community based on population, Weissbach offers the contrasting position described in the work of historian Rudolph Glanz. Glanz wrote a study on the Jewish communities in the United States before the Civil War. According to Weissbach, Glanz "goes as far as to ignore the question of population size all together and define 'Jewish communities' simply as places where 'local settlers were possessed of a will to continue their communal existence through the creation of some kind of Jewish institution.'"<sup>42</sup> This definition of community would fit all of the locations included in this study. These are all places where a group of Jews established a cemetery, a communal institution. The discussion above (page 33) indicates, however, that this will for communal existence is not present in every group of Jews. As seen with Canton, Port Gibson, and St. Francisville/Bayou Sara, the will for communal existence did not exist at one point in time. This desire to create communal institutions only arose years later.

The stories and documents of the establishment of cemeteries in these communities indicate that in many cases it was a critical event, and not a critical mass, which encouraged the Jews to form communal institutions. In the case of the establishment of the cemetery there are two types of events that led the Jews of these communities to establish a cemetery.

The first type of critical event that led to the establishment of a cemetery is the death of a Jew. Some of the communities of this study only came to deal with the question of how they would care for the dead after someone had died. The establishment of Chevra Bicur Cholem in Brookhaven, Mississippi serves as an example of this phenomenon. When faced with the burial of the boy from Holmesville, four members of this

community decided it was time for the Jews of Brookhaven to deal with this issue in a formal way.<sup>43</sup>

Another example of this type of critical event leading to the establishment of a cemetery can be found in the history of Woodville, Mississippi. "The (Jewish) cemetery was established in 1849 when two Jewish peddlers, Jacob Schwarz and Jacob Cohen,<sup>Q</sup> paid \$50 for a small plot in which to bury a fellow peddler, Henry Burgance."<sup>44</sup> One could argue that this is an isolated event of two individuals arranging a burial place for a third, and not the formation of a community. Two facts seem to indicate that this burial began the process of cohesion of a communal structure. According to the *Jewish Tourist's Guide*, Jewish services began just a few years after this particular burial. This is corroborated in the history of the Jewish community produced by the Wilkinson County Museum.<sup>45</sup> In addition, though Schwarz and Cohen purchased the land for only one burial, this location became the Beth Israel cemetery. Since records do not exist for the establishment of this cemetery, it is impossible to say if Schwarz or Cohen intended for this to be the communal burial ground. Both the *Jewish Tourist's Guide* and the history of the Woodville Jewish community indicate, however, that the cemetery established by Cohen and Schwarz became the Beth Israel cemetery.<sup>46</sup> As these two men became central leaders of this community, the connection between cemetery formation and communal cohesion seems to be a reasonable assumption. Following the model of Abraham purchasing the cave of Machpelah for Sara's burial in Genesis 23, the Jewish citizens of these places felt that when a Jew had died in their area, they were obligated to provide a

<sup>Q</sup> Jacob Schwarz is spelled Schwartz in Oates, Marsha "Wilkinson County's Jewish Community" *Jewish Life in Wilkinson County, 1820-1920: Views of a Vanished Community* page 12. There is more information on these two men (Jacob Schwartz and Jacob Cohen) in this source.



proper Jewish burial site if they could. In responding to this call from tradition, these individuals began the process of community formation.

In some cases it was not the death of one individual that called the Jewish citizens of a particular place to come together and establish a burial ground. Some communities had to face the issue of burying many in a short period of time. The best example of a tragedy leading to the establishment of a cemetery is in Grand Gulf, Mississippi. Tommy Wixon,<sup>R</sup> a local historian, related in an interview that the Jewish cemetery at Grand Gulf was established following a steamboat accident on the nearby Mississippi River. A number of young Alsatian Jewish immigrants on the boat were killed and needed to be buried. Jews in the area purchased land for a cemetery and buried the victims.<sup>47</sup> Wixon is the only source for the story of the steamboat incident, and it is not mentioned in other scant resources. There is, however, another tragic event that occurred in Grand Gulf and in many other places throughout this region that (even if the steamboat accident had not occurred) would have necessitated the formation of a cemetery. Grand Gulf and nearby Port Gibson residents were struck by yellow fever in 1853.<sup>48</sup> All of the headstones available for this study from the Grand Gulf cemetery date from September 1853.<sup>S</sup>

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<sup>R</sup> Tommy Wixon is one of a number of people who have become interested in southern Jewish history through the exploration of his own family roots. In a biography he noted, "My paternal family is the Sokolo(w)ski and Levi families who came into New Orleans in 1851. They are a Jewish family and my mother's family are Christian and in the country for 400 years." Sokolosky-Wixon, Thomas C. undated biography.

<sup>S</sup> Wixon provides the inscriptions of headstone fragments from the Grand Gulf Jewish cemetery. Much of the cemetery is destroyed, but the surviving headstones list deaths in September 1853. The inscriptions of these fragments can be found in Appendix IV Sample deeds and documents. If these deaths had been from the steamboat accident, we would expect them to have occurred on the same day. The people memorialized by these stones died over the course of a week in September of 1853, none dying on the same day. This would seem to indicate a pandemic rather than a large-scale accident caused these deaths.

Multiple deaths in yellow fever epidemics also played a role in the formation of cemeteries in such places as Washington<sup>T</sup> and Osyka<sup>U</sup>.

All of the extant statistics and data<sup>49</sup> indicate that communal formation is not dependent on numbers alone. Only a critical event is necessary to spark a group of people to organize communal organizations. When presented with a burial, these communities, regardless of size, demonstrated that they had a will to establish a Jewish burial ground. According to Glanz's definition, at that moment these settlements became Jewish communities.

A critical event may be all that is necessary to lead to the establishment of a cemetery, but is this single event or type of event (the same event, like a death, occurring multiple times) enough to sustain a community over a period of time? In examining the location where the cemetery was founded because of a critical event, there is evidence to suggest that while the event may be a catalyst, it does not sustain a community in the long term. The formation stories of the cemeteries in Monticello and Satartia, Mississippi demonstrate that in addition to a critical event that may start the process of community cohesion, a community needs a critical mass of people to direct energy from an event, (which was the establishment of a cemetery) into the formation of other institutions of community life: congregations, religious schools, ladies auxiliaries, or the B'nai B'rith, for example.

<sup>T</sup> There were six deaths in September/October of 1867 (see Appendix II). In addition, Estelle Perrault, of the St. Landry Parish Genealogical and Historical Society reports that the cemetery was founded because of yellow fever epidemic. 7/20/01

<sup>U</sup> A yellow fever epidemic occurred in the fall of 1878. Fifty-three deaths occurred in Osyka as a whole. Nine of the victims were buried in the Jewish cemetery (see Appendix II). US Genealogical Society Website. [ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/la/tangipahoa/cemeteries/german.text](http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/la/tangipahoa/cemeteries/german.text)

There is no information available which describes the formation of the cemeteries in Satartia and Monticello. There are, however, transcriptions of the headstones and some information on the life of these two communities.<sup>50</sup> The data indicates that the few burials that took place in these locations were for young people.<sup>v</sup> This suggests that these cemeteries were established when the Jews here faced the same critical events as other Jews in the region. A Jewish person died and they had a responsibility to bury him as a Jew. The Jews of Satartia and Monticello did not use the nearest established Jewish cemetery, but instead established their own cemetery. Presumably, these groups felt there was a Jewish future in these towns. Recent studies of cemeteries in Monticello and Satartia indicate that a number of Jews lived in these towns and that they were active in the commercial and political life of the community.<sup>51</sup> These were places of great promise: "Satartia was at one time the busiest river port on Yazoo County. Cotton came down the Mississippi from Greenwood and was loaded onto steamships the Satartia port. It was destined for New Orleans. Jews who came opened business to sell supplies to the townspeople and to those who passed through."<sup>52</sup> Local historian Anita Clinton related a similar story about Monticello. "Between 1830 and 1860 Monticello was a flourishing town and made quite an impact on the State of Mississippi politically and otherwise."<sup>53</sup>

Two pieces of the equation were present: a critical event and a belief in a Jewish future. The conclusion of the story of these communities suggests that a critical mass of people over a period of time is needed to sustain Jewish communal institutions. All of the burials in Satartia (there are eight headstones) took place between 1845 and 1850.

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<sup>v</sup> See Appendix II.



The situation in Monticello is similar. There are only three headstones,<sup>w</sup> dated between 1848 and 1855. While Jews in these towns may have envisioned a community when they started these cemeteries, the hopes of a growing Jewish community quickly disappeared. Of Satartia, Birnholz theorized, "I think the Jews were probably seeking a larger Jewish community. Had business gone as expected, other Jews would have come to Satartia. But when it didn't, the Jewish peddlers probably sought a bigger community elsewhere."<sup>54</sup> In the cases of Monticello and Satartia, a critical event - the death of a young Jew - led to the establishment of a cemetery. The inability to attract more Jews and the departure of the initial core of people left the cemetery as the solitary institution of Jewish community.

Clearly, even in a place with few Jewish residents, a critical event can be enough to begin the process of communal formation. In many of the communities under study, when faced with the task of a Jewish burial, the people of the community demonstrated, in Glanz's words, "a will to continue their continued Jewish communal existence through the creation of some kind of Jewish institution"<sup>55</sup>, in this case a cemetery. Setting in motion the process of communal formation does not guarantee the outcome. As Monticello and Satartia indicate, a critical mass of people must be present for communal life to continue.

#### What if a critical event did not occur?

Cemeteries were established not just when Jewish citizens of a town or village responded to the death (or deaths) of a fellow Jew. In some places the critical event that led to the establishment of the cemetery was the cohesion of Jewish residents into a

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<sup>w</sup> Ms. Clinton indicates that there seems to be space for other graves, but they are not recorded or marked. The non-Jewish parts of this cemetery have since encroached on the area. See photograph in Appendix III.



congregational structure. In these places, the creation of a congregation and the establishment of a cemetery seemed to go hand in hand. As a group of people went through the process of creating a Jewish congregation, they felt that establishing a Jewish burial ground was one of their tasks. In Plaquemine the Hebrew Benevolent Society was founded on April 20, 1856. "The Society acquired the present Jewish Cemetery<sup>x</sup> on November 11, 1856 from Bernard Hersch (one of the members), said lot measuring 63' 9" on Division Street by 150' on Federal Street."<sup>56</sup> Similarly, Congregation Bikur Cholim,<sup>y</sup> in nearby Donaldsonville, was founded in 1856,<sup>57</sup> with the cemetery established a short time later that same year.<sup>z</sup><sup>58</sup> As in Plaquemine and Donaldsonville, the organization of the B'nai Sholom Congregation was the impetus for establishing the B'nai Sholom Cemetery in Bastrop, Louisiana.<sup>59</sup>

Unlike the communities that formed around the establishment of a cemetery, these communities organized their communal life around a congregation, and then later, as a congregation, established a cemetery. These communities came together when they reached a critical mass. When you get enough people together who desire to live Jewishly together, they need to create formal institutions to do so. The population data from these communities makes it easy to determine the number of Jews that need to be in an area to create this effect.

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<sup>x</sup> This cemetery had the name "Chavi Sholom" (Lovers of Peace) according to Ben Kaplan, from *Inventory of the Church and Synagogue Archives of Louisiana* (1941).

<sup>y</sup> At some point in time the name of the cemetery became Bikur Sholim. This name appears in current legal documents, the cemetery sign, and pamphlets on the history of the cemetery and community.

<sup>z</sup> Ben Kaplan, using the *Inventory of the Church and Synagogue Archives of Louisiana* (1941), gives 1860 as the date the cemetery was established.

	Population by year					Congregation formed	Cemetery established
	1878	1905	1907	1927	1937		
Bastrop	<b>65</b>	<b>40</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>39</b>	1877	1878
Plaquemine	<b>61</b>		<b>125</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>55</b>	1856	1856
Donaldsonville	179		85	<b>80</b>	<b>75</b>	1856	1856

Numbers in bold from Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People* numbers in plain text from Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration" or Lee Shai Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion".

All three of these places had more than fifty people present when the community was organized. Another look at the table reveals that the places that had fewer than fifty people never seemed to have more than a cemetery.<sup>AA</sup> Within this sample, even if a community forms in response to a critical event, a critical mass of fifty people is necessary for the cemetery establishment to begin the process of community formation.

### 3. Does Jewish burial indicate Jewish community?

The only formal Jewish institution in nine<sup>BB</sup> of these communities was a cemetery. While the Jews were buried in their hometown, four of these nine communities, associated with congregations in nearby locations. For example, Benjamin Kaplan counted the Jews in Washington as members of the community in Opelousas.<sup>60</sup> Interviews with Jews in Franklin, Berwick, and Morgan City reveal a close relationship between these three places.<sup>61</sup> Separate cemeteries exist in Berwick and Franklin,<sup>CC</sup> but on holidays the Jews from these places traveled to Morgan City's Shaare Zedek congregation

<sup>AA</sup> See Table 2: Building institutions with the population of 100 in Appendix I

<sup>BB</sup> Berwick, Biloxi, Clinton, Franklin, Grand Gulf, Monticello, Satartia, Washington, Yazoo City. See Table 7: Communities with only a cemetery in Appendix I

<sup>CC</sup> The Jews of Franklin also associated with the community to the north of them in New Iberia. According to Henry Friedman, by the 1950s and 1960s eight to ten families were left in Franklin and they buried their dead in New Iberia or New Orleans.

for worship.<sup>62</sup> Finally, the Jewish residents of Yazoo City, in addition to attending High Holy Days in Jackson, usually took their children to Jackson's Beth Israel for religious school.<sup>63</sup>

The Jews of four other towns established cemeteries, but the population there did not grow or even remain stable. In fact, in Biloxi, Grand Gulf, Satartia, and Monticello the Jewish population dispersed within a few years of establishing the cemetery.<sup>DD</sup> Apparently, there was insufficient momentum to create other institutions.

From this sample of nine communities, only the Jews of Clinton, Louisiana, seemed to have had no interest in Jewish life beyond the cemetery. Clinton was the seat of East Feliciana Parish in Louisiana. "It is said that the particular site was selected because of its abundance of clear spring water, favorable altitude, and general healthfulness of the climate. One of the most imposing structures in the state at that time was the court house erected at the cost of \$27,000."<sup>64</sup> A number of Jews were attracted by the economic opportunities and rich cultural life in this area. Records show that about eighty-five Jews lived in Clinton at the height of the community in the early 1890s.<sup>65</sup> Even with this many people, the only Jewish institution established in Clinton and its surrounding towns, such as Jackson, was a cemetery in the 1850s (earliest recorded burial). In terms of other Jewish activities, "the group met as a unit, and this only rarely, at religious services on the high holy days, in the public school building. Otherwise, there seems to have been little, if any, effort at participating in particularly Jewish activities."<sup>66</sup> Among all of the communities included in this study, Clinton stands out as an anomaly. It had a significant Jewish population. In fact, no other community with a population of more than sixty-five

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<sup>DD</sup> The rapid dissolution of these and other communities in this study will be discussed in Chapter 3.



individuals failed to create a congregation.<sup>EE</sup> Even within the subgroup of communities that had a cemetery but no congregation, Clinton was unique. Clearly, this group experienced a critical event - the death of a Jewish citizen of Clinton - and established a cemetery in response. For some unknown reason organized Jewish activities never extended beyond the cemetery and the act of burial.<sup>FF</sup>

Jewish settlements that established a cemetery but sought out other Jewish activities elsewhere, or held no other Jewish activities, leads to another question. Why start a cemetery if you don't plan to, or at least are not sure about forming a more organized community to express other aspects of Judaism?<sup>GG\*</sup> It seems reasonable to suggest that the threshold of interest and resources needed to establish a cemetery is lower than the threshold of interest and resources necessary to found a congregation. The activities of congregational life demand more constant energy than the maintenance of a cemetery. These communities may have felt they had enough of a secure future to take care of their cemetery, but they lacked the critical mass to sustain a congregation.<sup>HH</sup>

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<sup>EE</sup> Yazoo City approaches this anomalous status. Yazoo City had sixty-one Jewish citizens beginning in the 1930s. The cemetery and the pattern of associating with other nearby communities, like Jackson, for other Jewish activities had been established long before this time.

<sup>FF</sup> Ben Kaplan offers some explanations for this situation in his study of the community.

<sup>GG</sup> It seems that other than the Jews in Clinton, the Jews of all the other places did express their Jewish identities in other forums.

\* The cemeteries in Washington and Berwick were established before the cemeteries in their "synagogue" communities of Opelousas and Morgan City, respectively. The question of why here, has an additional aspect in these communities. With two communities so close together (there are four miles between Opelousas and Washington and even less between Morgan City and Berwick), why start a cemetery in the town with a smaller Jewish presence? The answer may be that even while they participated in the congregation of the larger town, the Jews of Washington and Berwick wanted to maintain their own sense of identity and autonomy at least on some level.

<sup>HH</sup> There are examples of communities which founded congregations but did not establish cemeteries (see below page 50ff.) Ultimately, while we can suggest possibilities as to why a community would develop one institution but not others, there is not enough data to discern a pattern in how these communities made these decisions.



A real conundrum!

Washington, Louisiana is four miles away from Opelousas. Evidently, this was far enough away that the Jews of Washington felt they needed their own distinct burial ground. Yet it was close enough that they could participate in the Jewish congregation in Opelousas. In contrast, Bogalusa, Louisiana is seventy miles from New Orleans. This was far enough away that the Jews of Bogalusa felt they needed to establish their own congregation for worship services, holiday observance, and religious education. Yet, it was close enough that the Jews of Bogalusa evidently felt they did not need a separate cemetery- they could just go to New Orleans (seven hours round trip by train or car across Lake Ponchartrain!) for burial.<sup>67</sup> Hazelhurst, Mississippi is thirty-two miles from Jackson and one hundred fifty miles from New Orleans. There were two large extended families in Hazelhurst. The Jews who lived in Hazelhurst went to Jackson for worship services and religious education, but buried their dead in family plots in New Orleans.<sup>68</sup>

Communities with a cemetery but associate with a congregation in another town	Associate with a congregation in	Population by year			Cemetery established
		1878	1937	1948	
Berwick	Morgan City		<b>13</b>		1877
Franklin	Morgan City	<b>31</b>	<b>25</b>		1854
Washington	Opelousas				1867
Yazoo City	Jackson	<b>44</b>	<b>61</b>		1887

Communities with a congregation and no cemetery	Population by year						Burial place
	1878	1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	
Bogalusa				<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>		New Orleans
Cleveland				<b>30</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>250</b>	Greenville
Tupelo	<b>6</b>				<b>14</b>	<b>200</b>	Memphis

Settlements with Jewish populations that associate with other communities.	congregational Association	Population by year			Burial Place
		1878	1937	1948	
Hazelhurst	Jackson	<b>37</b>	<b>24</b>		New Orleans
Indianola	Greenville		<b>48</b>		Greenville
Leland	Greenville		<b>24</b>		Greenville

Numbers in bold from Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People*. Numbers in plain text from Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration" or Lee Shai Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion".

As these tables indicate, Washington, Bogalusa, and Hazelhurst exemplify patterns replicated in other places in Mississippi and Louisiana. Each community in question deals with the issue of burial and congregational participation in very different ways. Naturally, we want to take each community and use its demographic and cultural history to explain why it followed one pattern and not the other. There are some commonalities among the communities within each paradigm. The Jews of Bogalusa, Tupelo, and Cleveland all came together as communities relatively late (Bogalusa and Cleveland after the turn of the twentieth century and Tupelo in the 1930s). These also tended to be communities of mostly East European immigrants who generally followed a more Orthodox Jewish ritual practice. Perhaps this type of community had stricter rules on cemetery formation making establishing and maintaining a cemetery at their own cost a prohibitive endeavor. If this were true, we would expect to see the same pattern in communities like Lexington, Clarksdale, and Greenwood. East Europeans formed the

Jewish communities at the beginning of the twentieth century. Moreover, they are in the same general area of northern Mississippi as Tupelo and Cleveland. Maybe one could argue that the places where a cemetery was established had larger populations.

Population data, however, on the three similar communities that founded congregations and established cemeteries demonstrates this is not the case.

	Congregation	Population by year					Cemetery established
		1878	1907	1927	1937	1948	
Greenwood	1893/1897		125	<b>250</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>160</b>	N/A
Clarksdale	1896				<b>412</b>	<b>280</b>	1914
Lexington	1904	<b>24</b>		<b>77</b>	<b>64</b>		1904

N/A data not obtained by researcher.

Greenwood and Clarksdale may have had more people than Tupelo or Cleveland, but both of these towns certainly had larger Jewish populations than Lexington.

An examination of some places like Hazelhurst, Leland, and Indianola reveals the same patterns. There are commonalities among these three towns in terms of settlement and population density. However, looking at other communities included in the study we find places like Washington or Berwick which demonstrate similar characteristics and yet do establish a cemetery, even if they participate in other activities in a larger community. In the final analysis it seems impossible to draw firm conclusions about the relationship between cemetery establishment and congregational formation for these communities. Ultimately, the decision to establish a cemetery or to organize a congregation comes down to how the members of each community assess the secure future of their community and how they will express their connection to their new hometown.

4. Which came first, the congregation or the cemetery?

In the introduction to his book on the *Jews in Early Mississippi*, Leo Turitz described one of the common patterns of communal formation. "The early immigrants found it necessary to establish the beginning of a Jewish cemetery. When enough Jews had gathered at a central point, they established a congregation. Sometimes they gathered in a home and sometimes they rented a room over a store for the purpose of worship. The next step was to consider the building of a synagogue."<sup>69</sup> By analyzing the dating of the cemetery establishment against formation of the congregation, we can see how frequently the communities of this region followed this pattern.

Table 4: Congregational formation in relation to cemetery establishment:

Cemetery established before congregation	Congregation formed				
	Cemetery	Congregation	then cemetery	Cemetery	Congregation
Bayou Sara	1891	1901	Bastrop	1878	1877
Brookhaven	1861	1894	Clarksdale	1914	1896
Canton	1872	1877	Donaldsonville <sup>II</sup>	1856	1856
Natchez	1840	1845	Laurel	1918	1906
Natchitoches	1847	1871	Lexington	1904	1904
Opelousas	1869	1929	Morgan City	1878	1871
Woodville	1848	1878	Plaquemine <sup>JJ</sup>	1856	1856
			Port Gibson	1871	1856
			Osyka	1878	1860s

In this study eighteen communities<sup>KK</sup> founded congregations. Of this group nine of these communities only established cemeteries *after* the congregation was founded. Indeed, in these communities the cemetery did not lead to the organization of a congregation, but rather congregational formation proceeded cemetery establishment. In these places a

<sup>II</sup> See page 46

<sup>JJ</sup> See page 46

<sup>KK</sup> The congregations in Greenwood were established in the 1890s. The dates for the cemetery in Greenwood and the congregation and cemetery in Summit could not be determined by this researcher.



group of people realized they wanted a more organized Jewish life.<sup>LL</sup> In response they formed a congregation to express their Jewish identity. Either as part of this process of formation or after a period of existence, this community decided that a cemetery was a necessary aspect of communal life.

Donaldsonville is one of these nine communities which founded a congregation and then established a cemetery. Available data could lead one to ask if Donaldsonville should be included as a community that actually follows the pattern described by Turitz and others. Their synagogue's name, *Bicur Cholim*, Healing the Sick, does hint that this organization was thought of as a benevolent society. Moreover, land for a building was not purchased until 1869. One could argue that the only function of this organization until 1869 was to bury the dead and care for the sick and poor (duties of a benevolent society). In fact, one community history even notes, "Jewish communities often established burial societies before they came together as a Congregation - thus the 1856 cemetery and then the Bikur Cholim Synagogue in 1870."<sup>70</sup> The categorization of Donaldsonville as a community which has a congregation before the cemetery is based on dating from the *Jewish Encyclopedia* and the *Inventory of Churches and Synagogues*. An argument might be made that Donaldsonville could be classified in either category.

In the other half of the communities in this sample establishment of the cemetery by a burial or benevolent society was part of the process leading up to the formation of the congregation. Natchez and Brookhaven illustrate this pattern. The Jewish community of Natchez formed under the name "Hevrah Kadisha," literally burial society.

<sup>LL</sup> In some of the community histories from these places there are comments about informal worship services and Jewish activities occurring before the formal organization of the congregation. See Martin Nathanson, "Temple B'nai Israel" pamphlet history of the Natchez, MS community. (Natchez file from the

In his history of the community, Martin Nathanson recounts that the first Jewish cemetery<sup>MM</sup> was purchased in 1840. By the early 1840s, a number of families had settled in Natchez, "and soon there was a Jewish Community. At first their worship was conducted in homes, and rented quarters, then above firehouse in different parts of town. The Hebrew School was conducted in another place." After a hiatus during the Civil War, the separate elements of this community coalesced completely into the congregation of Hevra Kadishah<sup>NN</sup>. By the 1870s all vestiges of its benevolent society origins disappeared when the name of the congregation shifted to Temple B'nai Israel.<sup>71</sup> The organization of Temple B'nai Sholom in Brookhaven followed a similar path of development. The formation of the benevolent society, in this case Chevra Bicur Cholem was discussed above (see page 33). Between 1861 and 1894, the year of B'nai Sholom's formation, the community held services at either Heuck's Opera House or the Masonic Hall. Then in 1894 the Jewish residents of Brookhaven felt they had the resources to build their own house of worship. The cornerstone for this building was laid on May 27, 1896.<sup>72</sup> Presumably, the other communities that established cemeteries before the congregation also followed a pattern similar to Natchez or Brookhaven.

Of the communities in this study that eventually founded congregations, approximately half started with a cemetery and a burial society. In the other half of the communities that founded a congregation, the cemetery was a later step of congregational formation. Clearly it was common in the Deep South for the process of community formation to begin with the establishment of the cemetery. We can also determine that

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Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, Jackson, MS [MSJE], 1955) and David B Marcus, "Historical Analysis of the First Thirty Years of Laurel Jewry". (Histories Files [AJA], 1931)

<sup>MM</sup> There are Jewish graves in three areas of the Natchez cemetery.

<sup>NN</sup> Here the congregation actually takes on the name/task of the burial society, "Hevra Kadishah."

this pattern was not the *dominant* path of community development. Whenever or wherever these communities came into being in Mississippi or Louisiana, they were just as likely to begin as a congregation and then establish a cemetery as to originate as a burial society associated with a cemetery and then evolve into a congregation.

### Part III: Cemetery characteristics

Now that we have dealt with the issues of cemetery and communal establishment, we can ask: Are there any discernable patterns among these cemeteries? A complete description of the headstone art and styles for all graves in all cemeteries is beyond the scope of this study. A few generalizations, however, can be made. The most central generalization that can be made about the physical aspects of these cemeteries is that they all share great variety. Except for the cemetery in Laurel (see page 59 below), all of the cemeteries demonstrated a mixture of headstone styles, artwork, and plot arrangements. For example, in his book on the Anshe Chesed cemetery of Vicksburg, Charles Riles used photographs and explanations to document the variety of headstone styles and symbols represented in that cemetery. In the Anshe Chesed cemetery he noted repeated themes such as the dove, the lamb, the Levitical hands, the urn, flowers, the broken column, the sleeping cherub, clasped hands, and the Star of David.<sup>73</sup> All of these themes appeared throughout the cemeteries of Mississippi and Louisiana.<sup>00</sup> Each cemetery had at least one of these symbols on the headstones. Of course, adjacent to ornate headstones is a simple flat footstone listing just a name and the birth and death dates. The monuments in these cemeteries were also adorned with the symbols of various fraternal organizations.

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<sup>00</sup> See photographs in Appendix III.



The one exception to these variations is the cemetery in Laurel. According to the description of different cemetery types in *The Last Great Necessity* by David Sloane, the Laurel cemetery, which contains a Jewish section, is an example of a memorial park. Concerning this design which began to appear in the early twentieth century, Sloane noted, "The new designs responded to charges of ostentatiousness and extravagance. The monument-free sections were egalitarian. Rich and poor could have a lot that was not overshadowed by a neighboring obelisk or mausoleum. Simple markers of granite or bronze set at ground level identified the graves."<sup>74</sup> The Jewish section of the Laurel cemetery was originally established separately but then incorporated as a part of the community cemetery for the purpose of maintenance.<sup>PP</sup> In the Jewish section of this cemetery the two or three oldest stones are similar to the headstones that one would see in any other cemetery in the study. These stones have some Hebrew and some English.<sup>QQ</sup> In contrast to these headstones, the other stones in the cemetery reflect the culture of the rest of the memorial park. They are flat headstones, with little decoration or information. The basic stone has just a name and birth and death dates.<sup>RR</sup> Some of the stones had simple decoration in the form of a Star of David or a Masonic symbol.<sup>75</sup>

Just as most of the cemeteries share a common variety of headstone and monument styles, they also demonstrate similar styles of burial plot arrangements. For the most part the graves were arranged in rows with a mixture of single and grouped, or family, graves. Some chronological order can be discerned in the grave arrangement, with the oldest graves lying either at the front (Donaldsonville and Brookhaven) or back

<sup>PP</sup> Harold Frohman, one of the last Jews of Laurel, reported that the unused burial plots in the Jewish section were sold to the cemetery in exchange for perpetual care. Interview with Harold Frohman 8/9/01.

<sup>QQ</sup> See photographs in Appendix III.

<sup>RR</sup> See photographs in Appendix III.



(Plaquemine and Canton) of the cemetery. There are exceptions to this pattern. In some places a person died and the surviving spouse purchased a double plot, upsetting the chronological order of burial. Children's graves, which were smaller than adult graves, also tended to be "out of line," either off to the side or doubled up in a row.<sup>ss</sup> Jewish cemetery sections in Brookhaven, Natchez, and Morgan City, three of the larger cemeteries in terms of area, had fewer rows. Rather in these cemeteries the area was divided into large family plots with smaller, single graves placed between these sections.<sup>76</sup>

Now that we have discussed the details of the burial place used by Jews in the communities of this study, we can focus on where Jews found burial space within the community they called home. In order to be included in this study, the community in question had to have a specific Jewish section or area for burial.<sup>tt</sup> While each had a dedicated area for Jewish burial, the Jewish cemeteries varied widely in their proximity and association with the cemeteries for other religions.

In some communities the Jewish cemetery is actually part of a community cemetery where all of the religious groups have a section.

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<sup>ss</sup> Examples of this can be found in the cemeteries at Opelousas, Donaldsonville, Canton, and Plaquemine. One child's grave in Donaldsonville is completely out of the normal burial area and is located under evergreen trees on the edge of the property.

<sup>tt</sup> The second parameter for this study was that the community had to have already dissolved or be nearly dissolved.

Table 3: Cemetery proximity

Cemetery	Established	Transcript	Proximity	Change <sup>^</sup>
Franklin	1854	yes	within	
Morgan City	1878	yes	within	
Brookhaven	1861	*	within	merge
Canton	1872	yes	within	merge
Clarksdale	1914	*	within	
Laurel	1918	yes	within	merge
Lexington	1904	yes	within	merge
Monticello	1848	yes	within	
Natchez	1840s		within	
Yazoo City	1887	yes	within	

\* transcribed but not available for this study

<sup>^</sup> "Change" indicates that these cemeteries were established separately from the community cemetery and then merged into the community cemetery at a later date.

For this full Table, see Table 3: Cemetery Proximity in Appendix I

The physical situation of all of these Jewish cemeteries is the same; they are part of the area of a community cemetery. At the same time, these cemeteries present a variety of differences in the way that they were established and situated within the surrounding cemeteries.

Of all the cemeteries in this group, Monticello and Franklin have the fewest graves. These two cemetery sections, though, have a few characteristics in common. In its article on cemeteries, *Encyclopedia Judaica* cites that when Jews of a community bury their dead in a cemetery also used for people of other faiths, "Leading rabbinical authorities held that if the Jewish section is given to the Jewish community as a permanent possession, this section may be used as a Jewish burial ground but it must be fenced-off with a space of four cubits between the Jewish and general section."<sup>77</sup> It is interesting to note that of all the cemetery sections in this study, Franklin and Monticello represented the furthest departure from this tradition. The Jewish graves in both cemeteries were

located in one group, but they are surrounded immediately by graves representing other religious (or civic<sup>uu</sup>) groups.<sup>vv</sup> A wrought-iron fence surrounds only one of the three Jewish graves in the Monticello cemetery.<sup>ww</sup> There are concrete borders in the vicinity of the Jewish graves in Franklin, but while they separate these graves from one section, there is no border or boundary from any other neighboring section. It is possible that this section was originally supposed to be set aside. Clearly, over time non-Jewish graves have encroached on this area.

The Jewish cemetery sections in Canton, Brookhaven, Laurel and Lexington,<sup>xx</sup> Mississippi, have characteristics in common in terms of their relationship to the community cemetery. These four Jewish cemeteries are all located firmly within the physical area of the wider community cemetery, yet they were all established separately as Jewish cemeteries either adjacent to or directly on land that was part of the Christian cemetery. At some point in time the Jews of these communities made agreements with officials for the rest of the cemetery to exchange unused land for perpetual care<sup>yy</sup> or ground maintenance.<sup>78</sup> In the process these cemeteries, which had been separate legal entities, now had a closer association with the community cemetery. They became in a sense part of the whole community cemetery, both physically — by being within the gates or area of the cemetery — and legally, as they are taken care of as part of the whole

<sup>uu</sup> Such as Elks, Masons, Oddfellows.

<sup>vv</sup> See photograph in Appendix III.

<sup>ww</sup> See photograph in Appendix III.

<sup>xx</sup> There is another small section of Jewish graves on the other side of the cemetery. This is the Sontheimer family plot established in 1877. The Sontheimers were the first Jewish family in Lexington. When the Jewish community coalesced in 1904, and was looking for a burial place, they looked in another place away from the Sontheimer section. The individuals buried in the Sontheimer section are recognized in the headstone inscription of the Lexington cemetery in Appendix II.

<sup>yy</sup> The Jewish community of Brookhaven still controls Brookhaven's Jewish cemetery section. The community recently sold unused burial plots to the community cemetery and the money from the sale of the land went toward perpetual care and cemetery maintenance.

cemetery. Of these four cemeteries, only the cemetery in Brookhaven maintains an entry marker denoting it as the Jewish cemetery.

The Jewish section in Morgan City is similar to the above cemeteries in that it is part of the wider community cemetery. Unlike Canton, Laurel, Lexington or Brookhaven, the Morgan City cemetery's Jewish section appears to have always been a part of that cemetery. It is located in the middle of the cemetery complex, demarcated by a concrete boundary and tile mosaic strip along the entry way, marking this as the Shaare Zedek Cemetery.<sup>zz</sup>

Of all of the Jewish cemetery sections that are within the confines of a community cemetery, the Natchez Jewish cemetery may have the most unique situation. The Natchez community cemetery is located on a series of hills dramatically overlooking the Mississippi River. Within this cemetery are the Jewish graves situated in three separate areas. The oldest section is a small strip of land on "Jewish Hill." Just two or three graves deep, this wide swath of land contains many individual graves from the antebellum and Civil War eras. Below this area and across one of the winding roadways of the cemetery is another section of Jewish graves which is not firmly delineated from the contiguous non-Jewish section. This area contains many of the more recent burials. The third section is "down the road" from Jewish Hill. These graves are on another hill that looks out directly onto the Mississippi. This area is segmented into family plots and contains many elaborate headstones and sculptures. This is the largest section of Jewish graves in the Natchez cemetery. It runs from one edge of the hill all the way down the slope of the hill. There are still unused burial plots in the lower edge of this section. A

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<sup>zz</sup> See photograph in Appendix III.



stone wall separates one side of this section from other graves, while the slope and road mark the boundaries at the rest of the perimeter.

This Jewish cemetery is unique within the study for yet another reason. The Natchez Cemetery Association, not the Jewish community, manages, maintains, and distributes the burial plots for the Jewish section, along with the other areas of the cemetery. The Jews of Natchez have been active members of this association from its inception. Although the Jewish community per se has not controlled the Jewish cemetery as an autonomous entity, members of the Jewish community have looked after the interests of the Jewish burial areas even while they fulfilled a civic duty by serving with the cemetery association.<sup>79</sup>

The final cemetery of this group is the Jewish section of the Yazoo City cemetery. A stone marker in this cemetery reads, "This cemetery donated to Yazoo City by Captain John Willis and Annie Willis, his wife, March 3, 1856." According to city clerks of Yazoo City, Willis donated the cemetery for the use of Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and black citizens.<sup>80</sup> The deed for this land,<sup>81</sup> however, reveals different information and gives insight into the life of Jews in Yazoo City. The deed for this land, dated August 1, 1875, indicated that the land which Captain Willis donated was already being used by the white Catholic and Protestant citizens of the city. Captain Willis always had intended the land to be used for this purpose, but now took this opportunity to record the transfer of land to the city to be administered exclusively as a cemetery. The land is "to have and to hold the same to said Yazoo City as long as the same may be used by said city for the burial of the White Protestant and Catholic inhabitants to thereof [*sic*] and White Strangers and sojourners in said city."<sup>82</sup> Clearly, at the outset Jews could be buried as

"strangers and sojourners" but did not seem to have a specific section within this cemetery. It is unclear when the change occurred, but by 1887 Jews were being buried in the "Jewish" section of this cemetery.<sup>AAA</sup> At this time, Jews were an accepted religious group in the city alongside the Christian majority. Like Natchez, the individual plots of this section are still managed, maintained, and distributed by the operators of the cemetery, in this case the city manager's office. This situation illustrates Yazoo City's Jews lack of desire to create an organized Jewish community. While the City of Yazoo owns the land in the cemetery, the Catholic Church distributes and manages the graves of the Catholic individuals buried in the cemetery. While it is not known if the Jewish community had a similar opportunity to manage the Jewish section of the cemetery, there is no evidence that the Jews of Yazoo City were inclined to organize and control the distribution of graves in their section. One last word needs to be said of this cemetery. The Jewish section shares half of an "island," a section of land surrounded by roadways, which includes an area of non-Jewish graves. This island is in a prominent area located at the cemetery's entrance. A sign marks this as the Jewish section and a row of stones separates the Jewish section from the non-Jewish graves on the island, indicating that from the beginning Jews were included in this cemetery and were not just shunted off to the side. (The Jewish section of the Canton cemetery is in the back corner of the complex, for example.)

In contrast to Jewish cemetery sections, which form part of the main community cemetery, the rest of the cemeteries in this study are distinct entities. These separate

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<sup>AAA</sup> The earliest marked burial in the Jewish section of the Yazoo City cemetery was in 1887. On August 22, 1891, Louis and Herman Wise purchased lots two and four in the Jewish cemetery. So at the latest, by 1891, there was a dedicated section for Jewish burial in the Yazoo City cemetery. The plots for the Jewish

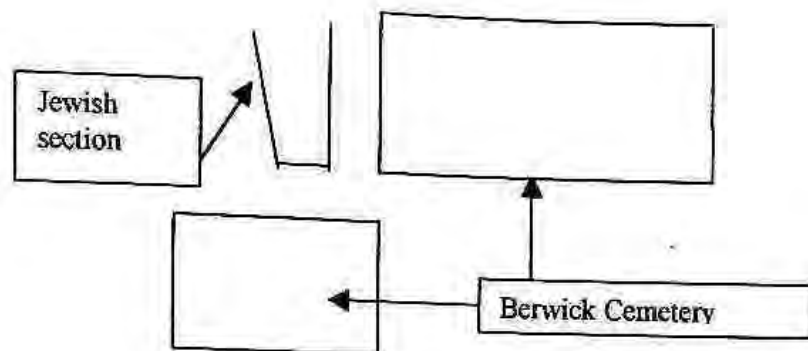
cemeteries can be broken down into two groups based on their proximity to the other cemeteries in their towns or cities. The first group of separate cemeteries are those cemeteries that are adjacent to other cemeteries in town.

Cemetery	Year of Establishment	Graves Transcribed	Proximity	Adjacent to
Berwick	1877	Yes	adjacent	City cemetery
Clinton	1850	Yes	adjacent	City cemetery
Donaldsonville	1856	Yes	adjacent	Religious cemetery
Opelousas	1869	Yes	adjacent	Religious cemeteries
Plaquemine	1856	Yes	adjacent	Religious cemeteries
Osyka	1878	Yes	adjacent	Catholic cemetery
Port Gibson	1887	Yes	adjacent	Catholic cemetery
Woodville	1848	Yes	adjacent	Religious cemetery
Washington	1867	Yes	adjacent	Religious cemetery

Of this group, three cemeteries have stories or situations that must be considered separately. The first is the Jewish cemetery at Berwick, Louisiana. The proximity between Berwick and Morgan City was discussed above (see pages 49ff). Although only separated by a river, the two communities established separate cemeteries. Even though Jews of these towns established their own cemeteries, there may be similarities in how their cemeteries are situated vis-à-vis the community cemetery. As stated above, the Shaare Zedek cemetery of Morgan City is a section in the center of the Morgan City cemetery. The Jewish cemetery in Berwick is located on a street corner, set apart from the other cemetery areas of Berwick. Yet, the street corner is right between two divided areas of the Berwick cemetery.

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section were sold separately by the office of the Mayor of Yazoo City. Each of the plots was individually deeded. For example, see Wise Brothers Deed Book A-0 page 790, copy of the deed in Appendix IV.



In Berwick, in contrast to other communities with adjacent cemeteries, cemeteries for all religious and fraternal groups are part of one complex. Even while the Jewish section is physically separated from the other sections (some of which are divided by streets as well), it is clearly associated with the community cemetery as a whole. The separation of the Jewish graves may fulfill the needs of the Jewish community to be a separate entity, yet being in such close proximity to the rest of the communal cemetery allowed them to remain part of the polity.

The Jewish cemetery in Clinton, Louisiana, is now part of what is known as the Masonic Cemetery. Originally, the Jews of Clinton had established their own cemetery and even had a building at the site for ritual care of the body.<sup>83</sup> The Jewish cemetery was located next to the main city cemetery which (at least now) is managed by the Masons. When the Jews left Clinton in the early twentieth century, they turned over the Jewish section for the Masons to manage. The building associated with this cemetery was destroyed long ago. The Jewish section is separated from the rest of the cemetery by a wide swath of grass. It is unclear if this is a formal demarcation or just unused burial space.



The Jews of Osyka, Mississippi, are buried in a small cemetery section adjacent to a German Catholic cemetery a few miles south of Osyka, just across the Louisiana border. This raises the question: Why are the Jews and Catholics of Osyka not buried in Osyka? The answer presents Osyka as one of the few communities in this study where Jews were actively excluded from wider communal burial practices. According to the descendants of those buried in the Catholic cemetery, the Protestant community of Osyka refused to allow the German Catholics or German Jews to be buried in the community cemetery.<sup>BBB</sup> In response, the Ricks family (one of the German Catholic families of Osyka) began to bury family members on land across the state line, purchased from the Bergold family. Originally, this land was supposed to become the town of Kirkville.<sup>CCC</sup> After a few burials by the Ricks family, Edward Ricks donated the land to the newly chartered German Association in order to transform the area from a family burial site to a formal cemetery for the Catholics of Osyka. At some point, the Jewish community of Osyka joined in this endeavor and established their cemetery in the back of the Catholic cemetery. The Jews of Osyka demonstrated the same pattern of other Jewish cemeteries which are adjacent to the non-Jewish cemeteries in town. They separated the Jewish section from other non-Jewish cemetery with a physical barrier. Rather than the typical

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<sup>BBB</sup> This ostracization is unique and strange on two accounts. First, in no other community in this study do we find evidence of this form of bigotry. In addition, accounts of the Jewish community of Osyka seem to indicate they were very active and integrated into the wider community. According to the MSJE "History of Jewish life in Osyka, Mississippi," "Osyka's Jewish citizens were fully integrated into town life. They served as alderman on the town council and in other important civic posts." If the Jews were fully integrated in life, why suddenly would they be ostracized in death? With no documents and no witnesses, the answer may be lost forever.

<sup>CCC</sup> "In response to the thriving communities around Osyka, several long-time land owners developed a detailed street plan for a town to be called Kirkville. The breakout of the Civil War and a yellow fever epidemic in 1878 prevented the town from ever being established." Craig Malisow, "Long-forgotten cemetery holds piece of area's history" *Daily Star* (Hammond, Louisiana) (8/7/2000).

wrought-iron fence, the Jewish cemetery is separated from the Catholic cemetery by a thick, ornate brick wall.<sup>DDD</sup>

The Jewish cemeteries in Port Gibson, Woodville, Donaldsonville, Plaquemine, Washington, and Opelousas are all similar in that they have the same relationship to the other cemeteries of their respective towns. In terms of physical proximity, from any of these Jewish cemeteries, one can see other cemeteries close by. In some cases another cemetery is in the next lot but separated by a fence. In others, much like the situation in Berwick, the other non-Jewish cemeteries for the community are across the street. Unlike Berwick there is not one community cemetery; instead, each religious community established and managed its own burial ground.

The last group of Jewish cemeteries are those the cemeteries that are physically

Cemetery	Established	Transcript	Proximity
Bastrop	1878	yes	separate
Nachitoches	1847	yes	separate
St Francisville	1891	yes	separate
Summit	N/A	N/A	separate
Grand Gulf	1840s	yes	separate

distant or separate from any of the other cemeteries in town.

The cemeteries in St.

Francisville/Bayou Sara and Grand Gulf reflect a similar condition as Osyka. There are community cemeteries in both of these towns, but for some reason the Jews have their own burial ground in a different location. It is impossible to determine who decided that the Jews would have physically separate burial grounds.

In terms of cemetery location, the Jews seem to have followed the local situation and culture. The Jews of these communities, for the most part, all established separate, demarcated, burial places. At the same time they endeavored to locate their cemetery

<sup>DDD</sup> There was a brick factory in Osyka. The Jews needed a wall and so they built one using the native materials.

section in a way that followed the local custom. Only in a few places is the cemetery not separated physically (like Franklin and some of the graves in Natchez) or out of contact with the rest of the community (Osyka, St. Francisville/Bayou Sara or Summit).

## Chapter 2 Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Leo Shpall, *The Jews of Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1936).
- <sup>2</sup> Robert Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2000).
- <sup>3</sup> Harry Golden, *Our Southern Landsman* (New York: G P Putnam's Sons, 1974), 30.
- <sup>4</sup> Louis Lettes, "On the verge of extinction: Small-town Jewish communities of the Deep South," (bachelors thesis, Princeton University. Natchez, MS, 1986) Histories Files, [AJA], 14
- <sup>5</sup> Leo Shpall, *The Jews of Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1936), 8-11.
- <sup>6</sup> Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates*, 9.
- <sup>7</sup> Elliot Ashkenai, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana 1840-1875* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1987), and Lee Shai Weissbach, "Eastern European Immigrants and the Image of Jew in the Small Town South," in *American Jewish History* (September, 1997).
- <sup>8</sup> Benjamin Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger: A study of Jewish life in the small community* (New York: Bookman Associates: 1957), 81.
- <sup>9</sup> Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates*, 9.
- <sup>10</sup> Kenneth Ross Hoffman, "The small town Southern Jewish experience: Port Gibson, Mississippi a case study" (Master's Thesis Tulane University, 1993), 19.
- <sup>11</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 81.
- <sup>12</sup> Eli Evans, *The Provincials: A personal history of Jews in the South* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 43.
- <sup>13</sup> Lettes, "On the verge of extinction," 14.
- <sup>14</sup> David J. Goldberg, "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand: A study of Small city Jewry in Five Southeastern States" (1974) Histories Files [AJA], 53.
- <sup>15</sup> H. H. Ben-Sasson, ed. *A history of the Jewish People*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976).
- <sup>16</sup> Lettes, "On the verge of extinction," 16. citing historian Harry Golden
- <sup>17</sup> Ben-Sasson, ed. *A history of the Jewish People*; Howard M. Sachar, *The Course of Modern Jewish History* (New York: Dell, 1977).
- <sup>18</sup> Goldberg, "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand," 9-11.
- <sup>19</sup> Weissbach, "Eastern European Immigrants."
- <sup>20</sup> Ashkenai, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana*, 12.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid., 87.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid., and Thomas D. Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy in the South" in Dinnerstein, Leonard and Palsson, Mary Dale (comp.) *Jews of the South*. (Baton Rouge, La: Louisiana State University Press 1973).
- <sup>23</sup> Goldberg, "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand," 9.
- <sup>24</sup> Ashkenai, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana*, 3.
- <sup>25</sup> Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy," 159.
- <sup>26</sup> Evans, *The Provincials*, 66.
- <sup>27</sup> Ashkenai, *The Business of Jews in Louisiana*; Thomas D. Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy"; Evans, *The Provincials*; Elliot Goldman, "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches". (Masters Thesis for Northwestern State College of Louisiana, 1968) Histories Files [AJA].
- <sup>28</sup> Lord, "Matzos and Magnolias," *US News and World Report* (May 25, 1998).
- <sup>29</sup> Lord, "Matzos and Magnolias," 20.
- <sup>30</sup> Leo E Turitz and Evelyn Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi* (Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 1995), 109.
- <sup>31</sup> Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy," 164
- <sup>32</sup> "Chevra Bicur Cholem: The Society to Help the Sick and Needy" a pamphlet from the community in Brookhaven, MS. To be deposited by author in the Jacob Rader Marcus Center for American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH. Hereafter To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>33</sup> Lee Shai Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion: Disappearing Jewish Communities in the Era of Mass Migration" in *American Jewish Archives Journal*, Vol. xlix N. 1 and 2, (1997), 44.
- <sup>34</sup> Charles Riles, *Anshe Chesed: Vicksburg's Jewish Cemetery*. (Vicksburg, Ms: self published, 2001), 36-37.



- <sup>35</sup> Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration: Some comments on Geography and Bibliography," in *American Jewish History*, vol. 2, Jeffery S. Gurock, ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 1998), 353.
- <sup>36</sup> Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States," 354.
- <sup>37</sup> Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People: American Jewish Population data, 1585-1984* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1990).
- <sup>38</sup> Saint Landry Clerk of Court, "Act of Donation for Hebrew Cemetery (Opelousas)" *N'oubliez Pas Journal of the Imperial St. Landry Genealogical and Historical Society* Volume 1 No. 1., (1993), 24-25.
- <sup>39</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 94.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 95.
- <sup>41</sup> Interview with Gerald and Kathleen Schiff of Opelousas 7/19/01.
- <sup>42</sup> Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States," 354.
- <sup>43</sup> "Chevra Bicur Cholem: The Society to Help the Sick and Needy" a pamphlet from the community in Brookhaven, MS. To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>44</sup> *A Jewish Tourist's Guide to the U.S.* (Jewish Publication Society of America: Philadelphia, PA, 1954), 267.
- <sup>45</sup> Marsha R. Oates, "Wilkinson County's Jewish Community" *Jewish Life in Wilkinson County, 1820-1920: Views of a Vanished Community*. Marsha Oates, ed. (Woodville, MS: Published by the Wilkinson County Museum, 1995).
- <sup>46</sup> Oates, "Wilkinson County's Jewish Community," 13; *A Jewish Tourist's Guide to the U.S.*, 267.
- <sup>47</sup> Interview with Tommy Wixon 11/15/01
- <sup>48</sup> Hoffman, "The small town Southern Jewish experience," 20.
- <sup>49</sup> Marcus, *To Count a People* and Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States."
- <sup>50</sup> Richard J. Birnholz, "Who were the Jews of Satartia, Mississippi". (1981) Histories Files, [AJA],; Anita Clinton, letter to Jack Elliot of the Museum of Southern Jewish Experience. (8/12/88) The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, Jackson, Mississippi, Monticello File. Hereafter MSJE.
- <sup>51</sup> Birnholz, "Who were the Jews of Satartia, Mississippi," 1; Clinton, letter to Jack Elliot.
- <sup>52</sup> Birnholz, "Who were the Jews of Satartia, Mississippi," 1.
- <sup>53</sup> Clinton letter to Jack Elliot.
- <sup>54</sup> Birnholz, "Who were the Jews of Satartia, Mississippi," 2.
- <sup>55</sup> Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States," 354.
- <sup>56</sup> Albert L. Grace, *The Heart of The Sugar Bowl* (The Franklin Press: Baton Rouge, La, 1946).
- <sup>57</sup> Issac Landman, ed. "Louisiana" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*. (New York: The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, inc., 1939-1943), 207. Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 171 from *The inventory of the Church and Synagogue archives of Louisisana*. This information does not appear in the community history pamphlets created by the Chamber of Commerce of Donaldsonville.
- <sup>58</sup> Bikur Sholim Cemetery "Garden of Peace" pamphlet created by the Chamber of Commerce of Donaldsonville.
- <sup>59</sup> Connie Priest, "Bastrop's Jewish Cemetery is a Record of History" *Bastrop (La.) Daily Enterprise*. (Thursday February 27, 1997), 4. "The congregation saw the need for a Jewish cemetery and there for purchased the property." The deed for this sale notes that this occurred on May 31, 1878.
- <sup>60</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 94.
- <sup>61</sup> Interview with Paula Nelken 7/19/01, Leon Kahn 7/18/01 and Henry Friedman 7/21/01.
- <sup>62</sup> Interview with Henry Friedman and Leon Kahn 7/21/01.
- <sup>63</sup> Interview with Bee Gotthelf 8/14/01.
- <sup>64</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 77.
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.
- <sup>67</sup> Interview with Sara Stone 1/17/02.
- <sup>68</sup> Interview with Deborah Jacobs 8/9/01.
- <sup>69</sup> Leo E Turitz and Evelyn Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi*, xvi. For other examples see Marcie C. Ferris, "The Southern Jewish Experience" *Jewish Life in Wilkinson County, 1820-1920: Views of a Vanished Community*. Marsha Oates, ed. (Published by the Wilkinson County Museum, Woodville, MS, 1995); and Lettes, "On the verge of extinction," 22.

- <sup>70</sup> Bikur Sholim Cemetery "Garden of Peace" pamphlet created by the Chamber of Commerce of Donaldsonville.
- <sup>71</sup> Martin Nathanson, "Temple B'nai Israel" pamphlet history of the Natchez, MS community. (1955) Natchez file in MSJE
- <sup>72</sup> Program for the Centennial Commemorative Service September 20, 1996. To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>73</sup> Riles, *Anshe Chesed: Vicksburg's Jewish Cemetery*, 193-212.
- <sup>74</sup> David Charles Sloane, *The Last Great Necessity*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991)..
- <sup>75</sup> Field study trip to Laurel, MS 8/12/01
- <sup>76</sup> Field study trips through Mississippi and Louisiana 7/16/01-7/22/01 and 8/11/01-8/15/01
- <sup>77</sup> *Encyclopedia Judaica*, "Cemetery" p 275.
- <sup>78</sup> Interviews with Harold Frohman (8/9/01), Eugene Hessdoffer 8/14/01, Harold Samuels 8/12/01, Phil Cohen 8/13/01 and Dudley Farmer 6/8/01.
- <sup>79</sup> Interview with Jerry Krouse 8/11/01 and Louis Lettes, "On the verge of extinction."
- <sup>80</sup> Interview with Chancery Clerks of Yazoo City 8/14/01
- <sup>81</sup> The deed is at the Chancery Clerks of Yazoo City, deed book TT page 469.
- <sup>82</sup> The deed is at the Chancery Clerks of Yazoo City, deed book TT page 469.
- <sup>83</sup> Interview with Richard Kilborne Jr 7/18/01.

### **Chapter 3**

## **Caring for the dead when the community is dying.**

This chapter will focus on what happens to the cemetery during the decline and dissolution of a Jewish community. In order to reveal the issues relating to the care for the cemetery and the part of the community's history it represents, it is necessary to explore the process of community dissolution. The process of dissolution is in fact intimately tied to the act of caring for the cemetery. As stated in chapter 2, a cemetery is established with a secure future in mind. One does not establish a cemetery to remember and honor the dead when one does not intend to care for that cemetery over the long term. The end of a community's existence directly challenges the intention of perpetual care. This chapter will explore how and when a community, and then its "survivors," respond to the challenges of dissolution, especially in terms of the disposition of the cemetery - the last concrete remnant of the community's existence and the hallowed resting place of loved ones.

#### **A. Is it possible to determine when dissolution occurs?**

Although many of the communities in this study exist in close proximity to each other and have many characteristics in common, their histories present many differences as well. Some built congregational buildings; some did not. Some had sisterhoods. Some had B'nai B'rith chapters. Some of these communities had chartered organizations which purchased and oversaw the cemetery, while some made arrangements with the town cemetery. Because each community contains different elements, there is no single criterion that can indicate the end of a community. It is impossible to say, X happened and then the community was gone. Instead, one has to look at a range of variables that together describe the decrease and ultimate cessation of Jewish life in a given town.

Some variables do more to indicate the death of a community than others. The best indicator of the end of a community is the absence of any Jews. Some of the communities in the study could claim this: Clinton, Osyka, Monticello, Satartia, Summit, St. Francisville/Bayou Sara, Woodville, Canton, Natchitoches, Grand Gulf, and Washington. Yet just as Jacob Rader Marcus argued that you could never pinpoint the first Jew in any one place because there was always some peddler or pioneer before him, it seems that a similar point can be made about being the last Jew in a community. In a number of these communities, there is at least one surviving individual who had some form of Jewish identity. This situation exists in the towns of Laurel, Donaldsonville, Yazoo City, Berwick, Franklin, Plaquemine, and Port Gibson. Being the last Jew in a town indicates the near end of any form of Jewish presence other than the cemetery.

We can say with certainty that a town that has no Jewish population, or only one or two people, no longer contains a Jewish community. But knowing that the last Jew has left a community or died does not give much information on the end of community life. This thesis is not just about Jewish presence but Jewish community. In order to understand the end of the community, we have to examine the elements of community life and mark when they cease to function in these communities.

One indicator of a community's life is the establishment of a congregation and the construction or the inhabitation of a congregational building. Of the twenty-seven communities in this study, more than half had synagogue organizations and/or buildings. One way of measuring a community's decline is to determine when the community no longer has enough cohesion to use or support the upkeep of the temple building. Of the



eighteen communities that did have a synagogue building<sup>A</sup> at one point in their history, twelve have been sold or destroyed: Woodville (1920s),<sup>1</sup> Donaldsonville (1954),<sup>2</sup> St. Francisville/Bayou Sara (1922),<sup>3</sup> Summit (1924),<sup>4</sup> Port Gibson (1987),<sup>5</sup> Plaquemine (before 1930s),<sup>6</sup> Laurel (1927),<sup>7</sup> Canton,<sup>8</sup> Morgan City (1970s),<sup>9</sup> Natchitoches, Bastrop (1938),<sup>10</sup> and Osyka.<sup>11 B</sup>

The loss of the synagogue building confirms the end of at least part of a community's life. Many accounts show that the decision to sell the congregational building marked the end of the process of decline. By the time the building was sold, the community often had already ceased to exist. We, therefore, have to look at other variables which specify the end of the community. Reports of ceased community activities (including religious school, sisterhoods, B'nai B'rith meetings, services/holiday celebrations, or the presence of a rabbi) indicate the end of community life. In Natchez, "as the number of congregants dropped from 89 in 1948 to 76 in 1960 to 60 in 1971, the first visible signs of crisis began to appear. The B'nai B'rith folded in 1962 and the Temple Youth Group has virtually disappeared."<sup>12</sup> Ze'ev Chafets reporting a few years later, noted that there are only four Jewish children remained in Natchez and no religious school existed. These four children traveled one hundred sixty miles round trip to the congregation in Alexandria, Louisiana.<sup>13</sup> In Natchitoches "a Sunday school was in operation from 1904 until 1925 when the congregation found that due to a loss in membership over the years it was a congregation in name only."<sup>14</sup> "In 1920 the Jews of

<sup>A</sup> See Table I: Timing of cemetery establishment and congregational formation in Appendix I.

<sup>B</sup> We can say that communities are nearly dissolved when they are engaged in the process of selling their congregational building. Brookhaven, Natchez, Clarksdale, Lexington are working with the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience in order to decide what will happen to their building as the congregation shrinks in near future. Interviews with Jerry Krouse 8/11/01, Harold Samuels 8/12/01, Ira Kaufman, and Phil Cohen 8/13/01.

Opelousas organized a B'nai B'rith Lodge which was at first very active. In later years, however, it was only partially active and became at last defunct in 1940.<sup>15</sup> The history of the Jewish community in Laurel reports that by 1931 temple membership dropped from forty-five to fourteen, the sisterhood from thirty to ten and the Sunday School from thirty-five to fifteen. Handwritten notes by the anonymous author of this Laurel history indicate that by 1971 the Temple and the sisterhood (and presumably the Sunday School) had disbanded.<sup>16</sup> For a community the last graduating confirmation class is a significant event, as it marks the end of religious training of young people. The last confirmation class in Canton, Mississippi was in the late 1920,<sup>17</sup> 1973<sup>18</sup> in Brookhaven, and the 1980s<sup>19</sup> in Opelousas. None of these records tell the whole story of the decline of these communities, but they account for the decrease in activity in each town.

Much of Jewish organizational life (except for the cemetery) was informal in many of these communities.<sup>c</sup> In addition to making it difficult to pinpoint and describe the origins of the community,<sup>d</sup> this informality makes it nearly impossible to define the end of a community. Unfortunately, few communities leave behind a communal history or timeline noting the closing of the religious school, the name and date of the last rabbi (or student rabbi), the sale of the congregational building and the establishment of an organization to maintain the cemetery. For most communities we do not have the opportunity to witness the reverse progression as seen in the establishment of the

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<sup>c</sup> Unlike cemeteries and congregational organizations, Ladies auxiliaries and religious schools did not have to be legally chartered. A group of Jews did not have to check in with the town clerk to have a worship service or a holiday observance. Many of the activities of congregational life fall into this category. Only a few community activities require the documentation that becomes part of historical record.

<sup>d</sup> For example, we know that there was an informal minyan in Natchez before the organization of the Hevra Kadisha benevolent society. We have no way of telling when these started or who participated. If we would say this is the beginning of community formation, it places the formation of the community into a past we cannot verify or describe.

community. Just as the creation of these communities was not neat and orderly and certainly not always documented, neither in many cases was the demise. We get hints and clues but few firm details (which have been noted above), especially in communities such as Clinton, Yazoo City, Franklin, Berwick, or Washington which were never big, or inclined or active enough to build a congregational building.

The informality of Jewish activity and the lack of records are not the only problem in trying to describe and date the dissolution of the communities involved in this study. Many of these communities put up a strong fight against dissolution. Jewish life would appear to slow down and even stop and then some group or family would activate the community again. "Indeed, given the early deterioration of the communities we are examining, it is remarkable how long some Jewish institutional life was perpetuated in many of them.... Much more characteristic were attempts by at least some Jews who remained in declining communities to maintain a sense of optimism about the future and at least some vestige of Jewish communal life even as prospects for communal survival dwindled."<sup>20</sup> Lee Shai Weissbach noted that the Jews of St. Francisville/Bayou Sara dedicated their temple building in 1902, which is just a few years before the congregation stopped functioning.<sup>E</sup> More dramatic is the story of the community in Opelousas. The cemetery in Opelousas was chartered in 1865. Throughout the late nineteenth century, community life was episodic, then "in 1929 ten paying members (families) consisting of

<sup>E</sup> Ben Kaplan quoted the November 25, 1904 *New Orleans Jewish Ledger* article, "The affairs of Congregation Temple Sinai are in a most satisfactory condition and our Sabbath School, in particular is flourishing." *Eternal Stranger* page 90 note 28. Kaplan then declared that by January 1905 the congregation had dissolved. To go from "flourishing" in November 1904 to dissolved in January 1905 seems sudden. Another source of information on the St. Francisville community provides an alternative timetable. A history of the Temple Sinai community noted that while the community no longer could afford the services of a rabbi by 1905 and that many members had been laid to rest or had moved away, there were attempts to have worship services into the 1910s. Holdeman, Quintin L. *Forty-Seven Forty Prosperity Street: Notes on Temple Sinai and the Presbyterian Church of St. Francisville, LA.* Page 5.



65 souls' pooled their resources and efforts and built a Temple in which services were held somewhat regularly until 1942 at which time it closed. As a matter of fact, there have been no religious services of any kind held there by the Jewish people since 1942.<sup>21</sup> Writing in 1957, Benjamin Kaplan noted the decline in activity and predicted the impending end of the Jewish community in Opelousas. This prediction turned out to be premature. A few new families moved to Opelousas in the 1950s and reinvigorated the Jewish community, resuming religious services and bringing families into the religious school. The offspring of this generation remained (or returned after college and graduate training) in Opelousas, raising their children in town. This generation marked another active period in the 1970s and 1980s as their children filled the religious school, necessitating an expansion of the temple building.<sup>22</sup> Donaldsonville and Plaquemine also demonstrated these cycles in Jewish life in small communities. Just as one prepares to proclaim the end of a community, a new flourish of activity can occur.

In conclusion, we can list the signs of dissolution and in many cases note when a community ceases to exist. But because the two firm markers (no Jewish population and sale of the temple) happen after the community for the most part has dissolved, it is hard to rely on those instances to date the time of dissolution. It is more satisfactory to use markers like the cessation of certain activities, such as religious school, sisterhoods, B'nai B'rith meetings, Shabbat, and holiday celebrations. The informality of these activities (the community can get together to educate its youth and have services without a formal announcement or legal documentation) makes it hard to pinpoint when they really ceased. Also, in some communities activities come to an end only to revive with an infusion of



new people or new energy. Ultimately, the act of describing the process of dissolution and marking its occurrence is a process of hindsight.

On what level did the residents of these communities sense the process of dissolution and how did they respond to it? Certainly, some of these communities realized their end was near. Even as they sought to sell a building and find a new home for their ritual objects, they were looking for a way to provide for the perpetual care of the cemetery. It is important and helpful to document those communities which made arrangements, for this serves as an indicator that the remaining members of a community acknowledged the end of the community's existence. On November 14, 1954, at the same meeting in which the Bikur Cholim congregation (Donaldsonville) decided to sell the building, they created the Perpetual Care and Trust Fund of the Bikur Cholim Congregation. This committee had the responsibility of using the funds from the sale of the temple building for the care and upkeep of the cemetery.<sup>23</sup> Donaldsonville was not the only community that made arrangements for its cemetery. In 1917 a group of former citizens of Clinton formed an organization to look after the cemetery.<sup>24</sup> A similar organization was formed in Natchitoches as well. "A dwindling and aging Jewish community in Natchitoches Parish presented the possibility that there might come a time when the cemetery could lack for proper care. To prevent this happening, a trust fund was established in 1965 by the B'nai Israel Cemetery Association with the People's Bank and Trust of Natchitoches.... The necessity for the establishment of the trust fund indicates the members of the Jewish community in Natchitoches believe that a Jewish community in the parish will soon disappear."<sup>25</sup> Similar arrangements were made in the

towns of Laurel, Woodville, Morgan City, Canton, Plaquemine, Washington, Clarksdale, and Port Gibson.<sup>F</sup>

It is clear that at some point the remaining members of these communities became aware that the community's life was coming to an end. In response they created some mechanism to ensure the future care of the cemetery. As one looks at the difference in the date of dissolution versus the date of perpetual care arrangement, one can see a pattern. In the case of Clinton, former residents formed the cemetery association, as by 1917 there were no more Jews in town. In Natchitoches, the B'nai Israel congregation had dissolved by 1925 (it was a congregation in name only), but a cemetery trust fund was not established until 1965. There were no worship services in Bikur Cholim's synagogue for a number of years before it was sold, with the proceeds going for a cemetery trust fund in 1955. In each of these cases the community was either gone, or dwindling to its last few members, when perpetual care arrangements were made. If it is difficult for us as outside observers to note the decline and dissolution of a Jewish community, this act of awareness must be much more difficult for those living through it.

#### B. The factors in the departure of individuals and how it affected the community and its cemetery

In Chapter 2 we saw how Jewish immigrants were eager to come and seize the economic opportunities in the American South. They established cemeteries and formed congregations even as they built up bustling mercantile businesses. Now scattered across the South are the remains of the communities they worked so hard to build. What led to

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<sup>F</sup> See Chapter 4 for details of these arrangements.

this complete reversal of fortune between the height of these communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the onset of communal dissolution in the early and mid-twentieth century? Ultimately, we can say these communities dissolved because of a loss of population. The issue in this discussion is what caused the population decline that led to communal disintegration.

We are studying these communities in part because they all have cemeteries. These cemeteries represent a portion of the people who lived in these communities. Jews came to these small towns to make a life for themselves and their families. Inevitably, that life comes to an end. With the passage of time, members of a community die and then are buried in the community's cemetery. This decreases a community's population and creates a need for the perpetual care of the cemetery.

It is difficult to imagine that the one hundred seven graves in Plaquemine, or the twenty-six in Osyka, or the sixty-five in Berwick, represent all the Jews who ever lived in that place. The historical records demonstrate that people regularly moved in and out of these communities.<sup>G</sup> The question now becomes why people moved out of these communities. There are some definite patterns — particular events and dynamics — that cause people to leave the community they called home. There are four factors, in addition to death, that cause a decline in the population of these communities: loss of economic opportunity, generational migration, assimilation or fear of assimilation, and a

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<sup>G</sup> In his study of *Business of Jews in Louisiana 1840-1875*, Elliot Ashkenazi remarks on the mobility of Southern Jewry:

They changed locations and business associations frequently, to the wonder of local populations. (12) But the participation of a group of recent Jewish immigrants in the California mania is indicative of the mobility of southern Jews. (14) The Jewish residents of rural Louisiana were, if anything, even more mobile than their counter parts in New Orleans. (14) Having uprooted themselves from friends and family in Europe, Jewish immigrants had little trouble traveling through out America to build a viable economic base for themselves. (19) [Also see Kenneth Hoffman "The small town Southern Jewish experience," where this phenomenon is called geographic persistence.]

lack of new immigration. Each of these factors created its own unique constituency of people with a particular relationship to the community's cemetery that was left behind.

**1. Loss of economic opportunity:** The great majority of Jews who came to the South and especially those who came to the small towns sought and found better economic opportunities than they had in Europe. In these small towns people were able to become prosperous merchants serving the agricultural economy of the South. However, when their economic fortunes changed, they left in search of better economic opportunity, just as they had in Europe. The goal was economic success and a better life for oneself and one's children. When a community could not fulfill this goal, the family moved on.<sup>26</sup>

There are of course a number of examples of economic loss where a merchant or peddler suffered a run of bad luck or showed poor management skills. While these did affect communal life to some degree, these individual cases do not compare to the three systemic problems that shook the southern agricultural system leading to widespread economic failure and population decline.

First, there came the boll weevil. This crop parasite arrived and decimated the cotton dependent communities in northern Louisiana and southern Mississippi in the early twentieth century. Within the first year of its arrival it wiped out 50 percent of the cotton crop.<sup>27</sup> Harvests failed and farmers could not repay the loans they had received from Jewish merchants. Even if a merchant had a lien on the farmer's land, it was meaningless, as the boll weevil rendered the land valueless. Farmers and merchants alike fled communities in the wake of the weevil's arrival.<sup>H</sup>

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<sup>H</sup> See below (page 93ff) for the story of the Jews of Clinton, Louisiana.



Following the Civil War there was great optimism that with capital investment and a steady labor force, cotton and the other staples of the South could undo the damage wrought by war.<sup>28</sup> This situation, envisioning an agricultural South which could compete with the industry of the North, never came to fruition. When crop yields increased, prices fell. When prices rose it was because crop yields decreased. For the most part the southern farmer could never get ahead. Farmers would have a bad crop and then borrow more money to plant more crops so they could get back on their feet. Or a planter would bring in a good harvest, pay off all of his debt, and then have a crop failure the next year.<sup>29</sup> "In Mississippi, with the exception of the Yazoo Delta, economic conditions never returned to the normalcy associated with antebellum days." There was enough success for Jewish merchants to get established, even build up good businesses and communities. But over time, as soils outside of the Delta wore out and the credit situation got worse and worse, they were no longer able to maintain themselves. Again, like the boll weevil, this watershed occurred in the early part of the twentieth century.

The Yazoo Delta was spared both the boll weevil and crop failures. Even while communities in areas further south became extinct or dissipated in the 1920s, communities in the Delta came into being and flourished. While Natchez and Port Gibson saw their communities shrink in the 1920s, Clarksdale's and Lexington's Jewish communities grew to their heights. The communities of the Delta faced a different agricultural difficulty that decreased the opportunities available to people in the mercantile business. Up until the middle of the twentieth century, cotton cultivation was done by hand. Cotton farms were labor intensive, requiring great human effort for each part of the process. Then in the late 1940s and early 1950s, following World War II, the

cotton industry was mechanized. Suddenly, machines became available which could do the work of many human laborers. Large numbers of people who had made their living growing, harvesting, or ginning cotton suddenly found opportunities dwindling in the Delta. Ira Kaufman, a member of the Clarksdale Jewish community noted that approximately thirty thousand people left the county in a twenty-year period. These laborers (many of whom were African American), who headed north seeking better economic opportunities in the factories of industrial cities, comprised a large percentage of Jewish merchants' customers. The cotton was growing, there was no one to sell goods to.<sup>30</sup>

For the most part, people who migrated due to economic loss severed their relationship with the Jewish community. These people left and did not look back. The shorter a person's or a family's stay in town or the fewer relatives they had buried in the cemetery, the weaker the relationship and interest was.<sup>1</sup> There are examples of families who do retain an interest in the cemetery after leaving a town following economic loss. For example, the Dampf family who left Woodville following the boll weevil disaster retained ties to the community and thereby played a role in the cemetery's upkeep until the city assumed this responsibility.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, the former Jewish residents of Clinton, Louisiana, driven out by the boll weevil, chartered a cemetery care association in 1917.<sup>32</sup> Such examples are few and far between.

More common is the story of Summit and Osyka, where members of these communities left and no one saw to the care of the cemetery. All of these examples

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<sup>1</sup> The author's own grandfather was born in Donaldsonville. With the help of his uncle, the author's great-grandfather came to Donaldsonville to open a store so he could take care of his pregnant wife. Five weeks after the author's grandfather was born, the store failed and the family moved to Dallas, Texas. While the

come from communities that ended abruptly. It is more difficult to find an example of a family that leaves a community which dissipated and severed its ties to the community upon departure. The people who leave without helping those remaining in the community deal to with issues of dissolution tend not to be remembered by those stay behind.

## **2. Generational migration**

Losses due to economic problems only account for a part of the people who left these small communities in Mississippi and Louisiana. A second factor in the dissolution of Jewish communities was the loss of young people. Eli Evans proclaimed, "The story of Jews in the South is the story of fathers who build businesses to give to their sons who didn't want them. It is a drama played over and over again thousands of times across the South."<sup>33</sup> In the communities who survived the boll weevil<sup>3</sup> this was the refrain, repeated over and over again: "We sent our children to school (university) and they did not come back."

This phenomenon of generational migration is the paradox of these small-town Jewish communities. It seems that the loss of young people who represented the community's future was built into the fabric of the community from its genesis. Jews came to these small towns because they offered opportunities for economic security and advancement. The whole reason for the immigration from Europe was to make a better life for oneself and one's family. How did these Jews define a better life? The answer is given by Benjamin Kaplan: "Here the Jews were able to rear large families and to give

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family participated in the Jewish community for a short time, there was never any sense of deep allegiance or loyalty formed. When the family left, they did not look back.

those families the things which make for a good life. The good life, which in turn, enabled their children to become lawyers, physicians, merchants, manufacturers, teachers and politicians."<sup>34</sup> In achieving this very goal the citizens of small town Jewish communities were creating a problem for their future. As Alfred Hero noted, "Young Jews who received sophisticated higher educations and became interested and thoughtful about world issues were even more inclined to migrate to big cities and college communities than were equally cosmopolitan Gentiles."<sup>35</sup> The desire to leave resulted from more than receiving an education in places like Harvard, Princeton, Yale, the University of Chicago, or even close-by Tulane, Louisiana State University, or Emory. Young people who went off to school developed a world-view and interests beyond the small town. In these universities, either in the South or far beyond, they received training for jobs that were few in number or limited in their hometowns.<sup>K 36</sup> As each generation went off to school, fewer returned and the community shrank. The community came into existence and raised children in a particular way, a way that led to the dissolution of the community.

The young people who leave these communities in search of new social, economic, or religious opportunities develop one of three responses to their town of origin. In a number of these towns lived adults who had either gone to university, gotten married, and returned or who had never left. In Opelousas Gerald Schiff went away to law school. After earning his law degree he returned home to live and work in Opelousas.<sup>37</sup> Jerry Krouse's life journey in Natchez followed a similar route. Phil Cohen

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<sup>1</sup> The sudden dissolution of communities disrupted this cycle from taking place. The father's business failed and so the whole family left. Presumably, if the economy had not collapsed and the families had stayed, later generations would have gone off to school and not returned.



of Lexington and Harold Frohman in Laurel both took over their fathers' stores.<sup>38</sup> Some of the young people who left their hometown in search of a Jewish spouse or university education did not return to their hometown, but remained connected nonetheless. In Port Gibson, Mississippi, and Plaquemine, Louisiana, the current caretaker of the cemetery is a former resident who left to go to school. It is worth noting that in both of these cases, these out-of-town caretakers are related to an earlier generation of caretakers of the cemetery. For these individuals, the care of the cemetery, which they inherited, functions to keep them connected to the community they left behind. For every few that either return (Natchez or Lexington) or maintain a connection (Plaquemine and Port Gibson), there are a number that break free from their roots. Both Phil Cohen and Jerry Krouse remarked that while they and a few of their peers did return to take care of the community where they grew up, the majority of their peers did not.<sup>39</sup>

We can see different responses within a single family as well. Henry Libby, caretaker in Plaquemine, stated that from among the four grandchildren of Belle Levy Kaufman, the former caretaker of the cemetery, only he has shown any interest in the history of the family, the history of the cemetery or the history of the Jewish community there.<sup>40</sup> For many of the young people who leave these small communities in search of new opportunity the sentiment seems to be, "I left that place because it does not meet my economic/social needs. Why should I care about the cemetery?"

**3. Assimilation/fear of assimilation:** Not all Jews left these communities seeking better economic opportunities.

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<sup>38</sup> One exception seems to be Opelousas. The Jews who returned in the 1950s and the 1970s were doctors and lawyers. For some reason, the city of Opelousas presented more of a market to these professionals.

In Benjamin Kaplan's discussion of the Jewish community of New Iberia, Louisiana, he records a number of family departures:

In 1892 the Schokelt family moved to Lake Charles for no other apparent reason than they wanted to live in a large community. In 1905, a Klotz family which had arrived in New Iberia after 1885, moved to Shreveport. The family was well-to-do financially but wanted their children to live in larger Jewish community. In 1906 the Marx family moved to New Orleans because its members preferred a larger community for their children. One by one the Max Levy Children moved to various larger communities... One can cite innumerable cases of Jews who had very successful businesses but left them to search for more desirable communities in which to live.<sup>41</sup>

In this account the "larger community" is not a just a city with a greater population, but a larger Jewish community with more educational resources, more activities and more potential mates for children. On the whole these small communities lacked regular rabbinic attention, trained religious school teachers, and well-developed Jewish libraries. Immigrants moved to these small towns seeking economic opportunities. In the process they sought to build the best Jewish communities they were able to, for, in addition to being economically secure, they did not want to lose their Judaism.<sup>42</sup> Those who felt that the economic opportunities were not worth endangering the Jewish identity of their children moved to a larger community.

The goal of seeking a larger Jewish community did not apply only to families. In addition to seeking economic interests to fit their education, the desire to find a Jewish mate drew many young people away from their hometowns.<sup>43</sup> In a discussion with a group of small-town residents, this researcher commented on how it seemed so many southern Jews went to Tulane. Why not Mississippi State or the University of Mississippi? The answer was that Jews attend Tulane in order to meet other Jews. The young people who had grown up in places with small Jewish populations sought not only wider educational and economic horizons but Jewish ones as well.<sup>44</sup>

Some Jews depart from a Jewish community without leaving the town or city in which they live. Their departure is one of the spirit, not the body. They assimilate into the non-Jewish culture and leave the Jewish community through interfaith marriage. According to numerous interviews, there are still Cohens, Schwartzes, and Levis around, but they are Catholic (or Protestant) now. The lack of Jewish experiences and of potential Jewish mates has led to a significant number of interfaith marriages and a corresponding disappearance of people from the Jewish community due to assimilation. In his article on interfaith marriage in the Deep South, Sidney Goldstein explained why the phenomenon of intermarriage weakens these small communities. He noted that "to be sure, the same or perhaps even a higher percentage of mixed marriage may be found in larger communities, but the larger concentration of Jewish persons in an urban setting blunts the threat which this phenomenon poses for the continuity of Judaism."<sup>45</sup> Continuity is the very issue for these communities. Along with people leaving in search of better economic opportunity, or young people leaving to fulfill life goals, people marrying out of the community contributed to the depopulation and dissolution of the communities in this study.

Individuals who assimilate and intermarry have a complicated relationship with the community they leave behind. They have left the community religiously but are still present physically and in some cases socially. At least one individual, the child of an intermarriage, who was raised outside of the Jewish community, retained a strong connection to her Jewish roots. Hannah Wood, whose father was ostracized from the congregation for marrying a Methodist woman, is the current caretaker of the cemetery. Indeed, even though Mrs. Wood is now Catholic, she regards herself as the last Jew of St.

Francisville/Bayou Sara and lovingly calls those buried in the cemetery "her Jews."<sup>46</sup> A similar situation exists in the case of Port Gibson. Powel Dungan, a non-Jew, married Rose Weil, one of the last members of a core family in the Port Gibson's Jewish community.<sup>47</sup> As the community declined to its last few members, Dungan took over the care of the cemetery. When he passed away in 1995 his daughter, who no longer lives in Port Gibson, assumed this responsibility from her father.<sup>48</sup> These examples seem to be the exception rather than the rule. While there are a few cases where the people who intermarry, and/or their children, participated in the community or played a role in the perpetual care of the cemetery, the more common response seems to be disinterest and ambivalence. These individuals took an active step away from the community, and now, even though the community is dissipating or the cemetery needs care, this is not enough to pull them back in.

Just as in the case of departures caused by economic factors or generational migration, the stories of individuals who retain their community ties despite interfaith marriage are more readily accessible than those who do not. The people who left the community via assimilation are categorized by those they leave behind as "those people," an unnamed, indefinite, but large group. It seems that those who stay in the community want to tell you that people left, and why and how, but do not want to point a finger at a specific person and say, "He abandoned us".<sup>49</sup>

#### **4. Lack of new immigration**

In addition to causing the departure of many people from these communities, the lack of economic opportunity available in these towns discouraged new immigration. Immigrants go where the opportunities are. If the situation in a community cannot



support a settled family, one suspects it would be difficult for a new immigrant to get a start (especially without the support of settled families).

When the boll weevil or other misfortune struck, many of them left. In other counties or towns many other descendants became Protestants and disappeared as Jews. Unless the community had access over the years to a resident or nearby rabbi, or was in contact with Urban Jewish organizations, or attracted "new" Jews from outside within the last two generations, it is usually had few or no inhabitants who considered themselves Jewish by 1960.<sup>50</sup>

As Alfred Hero made clear, what ultimately doomed these communities to dissolution was their inability to replace what they had lost. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these communities had the opportunity to draw in the East European immigrants who streamed into the country. These immigrants were looking for the same opportunities that German immigrants enjoyed a few decades before. Some communities such as Clarksdale, Bogalusa, Opelousas, and Laurel were attractive to these new immigrants. They came into being or expanded in this era. Not all communities benefited from this immigration. Communities like Clinton, Port Gibson, Donaldsonville, or Canton suffered from a loss of population during this era. "Unlike the more successful counterparts, these communities were left virtually untouched by the great wave of East European immigration that augmented the population of so many American Jewish centers and accounted for the creation of so many new ones."<sup>51</sup>

The effects from the East European immigration would have only lasted into the middle of the twentieth century. A lack of new blood was a problem for Jewish communities up to the present. Even places like Bogalusa, Clarksdale, and Lexington which had benefited from the East European immigration dissolved. If a community had been able to attract new settlers even as the children of one generation were leaving, the community may have been able to survive. This was not the case. As children of one

generation left, new immigrant families or individuals who departed from another place did not replace them. The reality for dozens of smaller communities in the Deep South was the relocation of many of the young people and their families who concentrated in the larger cities, where they could find better opportunities - economic and religious.<sup>52</sup>

Ultimately, these communities dissolved as the members of the communities died and filled the cemeteries the future caretakers were leaving and not being replaced. All that was left was the cemetery.

C. Does the time frame of dissolution affect a community's ability to make arrangements for the perpetual care of the cemetery?

There are two time frames to this process of dissolution: rapid extinction and slow dissipation. By looking at case studies of both processes, it is possible to consider whether the speed of dissolution affects the way a community makes perpetual care arrangements for its cemetery.

Extinction

In the extinction pattern, a community goes from a period of high activity to disintegration in a short time. The end of communities such as Woodville, Clinton, Summit, and Osyka was abrupt and fits into this category.<sup>L</sup> In life and in death the communities of Woodville, Summit, Osyka, and Clinton have a lot in common. All of these communities were "first-line" market centers for rural areas. These were the county or parish seats or dominant towns in the rural areas where, for the most part, small farmers brought their produce to merchants to be sent off to larger markets. Off of the

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<sup>L</sup> For a full list of communities in this category, see Appendix I, Table 5: Type of dissolution.

main rail line and the river, Woodville and Clinton had secondary railroad connections to ports on the Mississippi (Bayou Sara and Port Hudson, respectively).<sup>53</sup> Summit and Osyka were on the Illinois-Central railroad between Jackson and New Orleans and would gather cotton to send directly to New Orleans. While these tended to be smaller towns, the Jewish communities were robust and active. Woodville was called "Little Jerusalem."<sup>54</sup> Clinton had a Jewish mayor and several men who served as head of the Masonic Lodge.<sup>55</sup> Summit's Jewish community sent nineteen of its young men to serve the Confederate Army. In Osyka, Jews served as alderman and on other civic posts.<sup>56</sup>

Life in these communities peaked in the late 1890s but by the 1920s they had disappeared. Of Clinton it is said, "It appears from all accounts that in the period between 1890 and 1900 this area was most prosperous from the point of view of the population growth, income, cultural achievement and general well-being."<sup>57</sup> "In 1907 came the complete collapse of cotton production. The Boll Weevil and man-made erosion had done a thorough job. Waves of pessimism began to sweep over the area. By 1910 the entire Jewish group had left the community."<sup>58</sup> This story of abrupt extinction repeated itself in Woodville,<sup>59</sup> Summit,<sup>60</sup> and Osyka.<sup>61</sup>

How did the rapid disappearance of the Jewish population affect the community's awareness of and response to its dissolution? Of the communities that became extinct within a matter of years, who made arrangements for the care and upkeep of the cemetery? Like the examples given earlier, the two communities which made arrangements for the perpetual care of the cemetery they had established, did so after the dissolution of the community was complete. In Clinton the first act to care for the cemetery after the dissolution was the formation of a cemetery care association. Former

residents of Clinton chartered the Clinton Louisiana Hebrew Association on May 30, 1917. The goal of this group was "the maintenance of the Jewish cemetery in Clinton."<sup>62</sup> After this beginning, the history of the group is unclear. At some point in time the Jewish cemetery merged with the contiguous "Masonic cemetery," which is the community cemetery for Clinton. In this process the group managing the perpetual care of the Masonic cemetery took over the care of the Jewish cemetery as well.<sup>63</sup> It is not clear if the Clinton Louisiana Hebrew Association still exists and plays a role in the upkeep of the Clinton Jewish cemetery.<sup>M</sup>

Unlike Clinton, the Jews of Woodville never created a cemetery management organization to take care of the cemetery after the dissolution of the Jewish community in the early twentieth century. There is no information on the care of the cemetery directly after the community fell apart. Woodville is like other communities in this study, and either one or two Jews left in the area or "survivors/descendants" of the community who lived nearby cared for the cemetery for a period of time after dissolution. At some point in time,<sup>N</sup> representatives of the now-defunct community made an agreement with the city of Woodville. In exchange for a piece of land called "Lake Roseman Camp," the city agreed to care for the Beth Israel Cemetery in perpetuity.<sup>64</sup>

In contrast to Woodville and Clinton, the descendants of those who lived in Summit and Osyka seem to have made no arrangements for the extended care of the cemetery. They were for all intents and purposes abandoned. According to various sources they were cared for sporadically by concerned local citizens,<sup>65</sup> but over time

<sup>M</sup> When the author talked to local residents about the cemetery during a field study trip to Clinton (7/18/01), no one mentioned a group of former Jewish residents still showing an interest in taking care of the cemetery, instead they said the same people who take care of the Masonic cemetery care for this Jewish section as well.



even the non-Jewish residents of these towns forgot about the cemeteries' existence.

Both were then rediscovered in the 1970s and 1980s and are now under the care of different individuals and organizations. The Jewish communities in Grand Gulf,<sup>O</sup> Biloxi,<sup>P</sup> and Satartia<sup>Q</sup> also follow this pattern. They became extinct in a short period of time and, in their rapid departure, the community did not create a method of perpetual care. In the case of Satartia and possibly Biloxi, there has been some family care but it has been sporadic. Only two of the seven communities<sup>R</sup> that dissolved rapidly made arrangements for perpetual care of the community cemetery and history.

### Dissipation

In contrast to these seven communities, the other towns<sup>S</sup> involved in this study have experienced a different pattern of dissolution. In these places the population and activity of the Jewish community did not disappear suddenly, but dissipated slowly over the course of the twentieth century. Whereas in the extinction model of dissolution Jewish presence and community end simultaneously, this dissipation is a mirror image of the formation of communities described in Chapter 2. In most communities a Jewish population was present and active before the formal formation of a community. In the

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<sup>N</sup> The date of this transaction is unknown and documents are not available to this researcher.

<sup>O</sup> For the story of Grand Gulf's extinction, see Kenneth Ross Hoffman, "The small town Southern Jewish experience," 9.

<sup>P</sup> The Old Jewish Cemetery was established by immigrants coming to Biloxi in the midnineteenth century. It is unclear when or why they left. There are only twelve burial plots in the cemetery. Ray Thompson, "The Disappearing Jewish Cemetery" *The Daily Herald* (Biloxi, Mississippi) (1957). Thompson states that many people drive past the cemetery daily and very few even note its existence.

<sup>Q</sup> All of the burials (with one possible exception) occurred between 1845 and 1850. The land was purchased by Lizzie Kling in 1889. Mrs. Kling had familial ties to one of the Jews of Satartia (Abe Kling, her brother in law was a Jewish peddler). In his history on the Jews of Satartia, Richard Birnholz reasons, "I think Lizzie did this to preserve the Jewish graves. Being part of a Jewish family probably made her feel responsible." Richard J Birnholz, "Who were the Jews of Satartia, Mississippi," 3. How long this care lasted is unclear. By the 1980s, when the author and his family visited this cemetery, it was overgrown and abandoned.

<sup>R</sup> None of these seven communities had Jewish populations over one hundred raising the question about the relationship between having a smaller Jewish population and the undergoing rapid extinction.

dissolution of these communities Jewish presence and activity tapered off slowly, with the presence of Jews in an area lasting sometimes decades after the end of the formal community. The following two case studies illustrate this pattern of dissipation and provide a basis for a comparison of how communities that dissipated provided perpetual care in contrast to those communities which suffered rapid extinction.

**Natchitoches:** Elliot Goldman's study of the Jewish community in Natchitoches Parish, Louisiana, describes a process of slow dissipation of the community. Like many of the communities in this study, Natchitoches reached its height in the late nineteenth century. Goldman noted that the B'nai B'rith chapter had its highest membership between 1873 and 1881. The congregation was established in 1871, purchasing a building in 1904. This was also the year a Sunday School opened. By 1925, however, "the congregation found that due to a loss of membership over the years, it was apparent that the Jewish congregation was a congregation in name only."<sup>66</sup> While this may have been the end of Jewish organizational life, it was not the end of Jewish presence in Natchitoches Parish. In his discussion of the cemetery and the creation of a body to maintain it, Goldman stated, "The cemetery was still in use by resident and non-resident members of the Jewish community in 1967." Not as robust as the community was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Natchitoches Parish's Jewish community was described as "dwindling and aging" in the late 1960s.<sup>67</sup>

**Plaquemine:** The history of the community in Plaquemine is less documented than some of the other communities in this study. Articles from area newspapers, a book on the history of Plaquemine, interviews with the cemetery caretaker, and discussions with one

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<sup>66</sup> For a full list, see Appendix I, Table 5: Type of Dissolution

of the last Jews of Plaquemine indicate that the population and activity of Jews here was subject to extreme variation. The 1946 *Heart of the Sugar Bowl* notes that a Jewish community under the name "Hebrew Benevolent Society" was organized in 1856. This group, led by Jacob Gugenheim, Samuel Kahn, and Bernard Hersch founded the cemetery a short time later.<sup>68</sup> There is also a remark from a local newspaper indicating this congregation had some form of a congregational building.<sup>69</sup> Twenty-two years later a different group of people organized a congregation under a different name in Plaquemine.<sup>T</sup> In 1878, the *Iberville South* reports, "Our friends of the Jewish faith, appreciating the necessity for such an organization, have organized a Congregation, known as "Ohava Sholom" Congregation of Plaquemine, La."<sup>70</sup> This particular organization (Ohava Sholom) in Plaquemine, which built two congregational buildings of its own, founded a religious school, and endured floods and yellow fever epidemics, survived into the early twentieth century. There is no record of the end of the community. Allen Tater, one of the last Jewish residents of Plaquemine, reported that the congregational building (either purchased or built) in 1905 was torn down. Tater did not date this later event, but did add that there was an attempt to restart the congregation in the 1930s<sup>U</sup> with meetings occurring on the upper floor of the Hirsch Building.<sup>71</sup> This

<sup>T</sup> The wording of an 1878 *Iberville South* article seems to indicate that other than the cemetery, the people and organization represented by the Hebrew Benevolent Society were no longer present (or remembered) in 1878. It was common in this study for a group to rename the congregation as it moved from one phase of life to another (Natchez and Opelousas for example), but it is unclear if that is what occurred in Plaquemine. Selections concerning the Jewish community in Plaquemine from *Iberville South* and the *Gazette and Sentinel* can be found in Appendix IV.

<sup>U</sup> The Louisiana entry in the *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* states that, "The congregation was ministered to by Dr. Mendel Silber, of New Orleans, from 1915 to 1932." This indicates some level of activity in the 1920s and early 1930s, although the amount is unclear. The attempt to restart worship and Jewish activity must have occurred in the late 1930s, after Dr. Silber's tenure.



attempt at reorganization was unsuccessful, and there were few Jews left in Plaquemine by the 1960s.<sup>v 72</sup>

These two case studies represent the life history of the majority of communities in this study. They also model the two perpetual care responses that occur in communities that dissipate slowly. In both Natchitoches<sup>w</sup> and Plaquemine<sup>x</sup> there were still Jews present for many years after Jewish communal institutions had ceased to function. These remaining Jews took care of the cemetery, even as their numbers dissipated (died or left<sup>y</sup>). In Natchitoches the survivors continued this care until 1965 when "a dwindling and aging Jewish community in Natchitoches Parish presented the possibility that there might come a time when the cemetery could lack for proper care. To prevent this from happening, a trust fund was established in 1965 by the B'nai Israel Cemetery Association with the People's Bank and Trust of Natchitoches. Its purpose was to serve as a continuing source of income for the upkeep of the cemetery."<sup>73</sup> In contrast to this formal organization, the survivors of the Jewish community in Plaquemine never created a formal cemetery care association. Cemetery care has been arranged informally by descendants of one of the last Jewish families in Plaquemine.<sup>74</sup>

<sup>v</sup> Dr Jacob Rader Marcus's book, *To Count a People* notes that according to the *American Jewish Yearbook* there were fifty-five Jews in Plaquemine in 1938. How did the community dissipate to a handful of people by the 1960s as stated by Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez? The transcriptions of the headstones in the cemetery in Plaquemine reveal that twenty-four burials took place between 1942 and 1959. Another five burials occurred between 1960 and 1969. After 1969 there is a steep drop-off in the number of burials a year. This data indicates that a large percentage of the people who could have been counted in the 1938 or 1942 census of the Jews of Plaquemine died between the census 1942 and 1959. These deaths would have greatly reduced the size of the Jewish community in Plaquemine during the period in question.

<sup>w</sup> B'nai Israel of Natchitoches was a congregation in name only by 1925. Elliot Goldman, "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches," 47.

<sup>x</sup> In Plaquemine there was no communal activity after 1940. Allan Tater Interview 7/19/01.

<sup>y</sup> One common pattern in these communities is for a child to leave the community to go to college. Upon completing college this person settles in a large city. As the parent of this child ages and is no longer able to care for him/herself, the grown child moves the parent to the larger city where the grown child can care for his/her elderly parent. Interview with Anne Stewart 1/7/02 from Meridian.



In contrast to the lack of care for the cemeteries of rapidly extinct communities, as far as this researcher is able to ascertain, all of the cemeteries established by communities which experience the process of slow dissipation are taken of cared for in some form.<sup>Z</sup>

Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that slow dissipation provide more opportunities for the remnants of a community to make arrangements for perpetual care.

Table 6: Cemetery Care in Appendix I that indicates how the communities that follow the dissipation paradigm arranged for cemetery care.<sup>AA</sup>

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<sup>Z</sup> They are cared by either a Cemetery association, an individual, the community cemetery, or an outside group like a temple youth group or a boy scout troop.

<sup>AA</sup> The communities, which are within a community cemetery, are naturally cared for by the person or organization that manages the cemetery as a whole.

## Chapter 3 Notes

<sup>1</sup> The first building was built in 1878 and then destroyed by fire in 1896. A second more substantial structure was constructed a short time later. This building went out of use in the 1920s and it was sold to the American Legion. It was being used as a movie theater when it burned down in the 1930s. Source: Marsha R Oates, "Wilkinson County's Jewish Community," *Jewish Life in Wilkinson County, 1820-1920: Views of a Vanished Community*. Marsha Oates, ed, (Woodville, MS: Published by the Wilkinson County Museum, 1995). The dates are from Stella Pitts, *Journal of Wilkinson County History* 3 (1992) page 266-67.

<sup>2</sup> Bill of sale of the building and the land dated November 28, 1954. The congregation sold the land to Ascension Stores, Inc. for \$8,000.

<sup>3</sup> "On May 19, 1922, the Jewish synagogue, Temple Sinai, was sold to the congregation of the newly chartered Presbyterian Church of St. Francisville, for the sum of \$2,250... The transfer involved the entire parcel of land... with the buildings and improvements and the furnishings with the exception of certain items sacred to the Jewish faith." Quintin L. Holdeman, *Forty-Seven Forty Prosperity Street: Notes on Temple Sinai and the Presbyterian Church of St. Francisville, LA*. This document includes a copy of the conveyance of Temple Sinai to Presbyterian Church.

<sup>4</sup> The abandoned Temple building was destroyed by a tornado in 1924. Interview with David Feldman 7/17/01

<sup>5</sup> "The synagogue was saved from the wrecking ball in 1987 by Bill and Martha Lum, neither of whom is Jews." Andrea Oppenheimer Dean, "Dixie Diaspora" *Preservation* (July/August 2000).

<sup>6</sup> There are records of two temple buildings. One built in the 1878 gave way to the levee in 1904 and was replaced. Albert L. Grace, *The Heart of The Sugar Bowl* (The Franklin Press: Baton Rouge, La, 1946). There is no report of the destruction of this second building but oral interview with Allen Tater indicates it was not in existence by the 1930s when there was another attempt (unsuccessful) to organize a congregation in Plaquemine. Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez, current caretaker of the cemetery, confirms that there was no Jewish community (few Jewish families) in Plaquemine when she was growing up in the 1960s. Interviews conducted 7/19/2001.

<sup>7</sup> "Twenty years after the erection of the first synagogue in Laurel; namely, in 1927, the building was sold and demolished to give way to business expansion. In exchange for their church, the congregation accepted a lot in the heart of the best residential section. At the present time the contract for the erection of an inexpensive Sunday School building is about to be let." From page 2 of David B Marcus, "Historical Analysis of the First Thirty Years of Laurel Jewry". (1931) Histories Files [AJA], with notes from 1971. It is unclear whether the building was ever built, but the history seems to indicate not. The community never really grew and was wracked with infighting.

<sup>8</sup> The site of the former synagogue is now a funeral home. There is a stone marker at the corner of the property noting this as the site of the congregational building. Field study trip 8/13/01

<sup>9</sup> Shaare Zedek in Morgan City was purchased by the Mormon Church in the 1970s and then became the headquarters for the Shrimp and Petroleum Festival. Sue Anne Pressely, "Southern Jews Close Up Shop; Small-Town Traders Go the Way of Main Street." (4/4/00)

<sup>10</sup> "Issac Landman, ed. "Louisiana" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*. (New York: The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, inc., 1939-1943), 208 reports, "A brick synagogue was built in 1885. By 1923 the services of the congregation were discontinued, and in 1938 the synagogue was torn down."

<sup>11</sup> There is a reference to the existence of a congregational building in a number of articles. The building is now a private house.

<sup>12</sup> Louis Lettes, "On the verge of extinction: Small-town Jewish communities of the Deep South," (bachelors thesis, Princeton University. 1986) Natchez, MS Histories Files. [AJA], 44.

<sup>13</sup> Ze'ev Chafets, *Members of the Tribe: On the Road in Jewish America* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1988), 20-22.

<sup>14</sup> Elliot Goldman, "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches". (Masters Thesis for Northwestern State College of Louisiana, 1968) Histories Files [AJA], 47.

<sup>15</sup> Benjamin Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger: A study of Jewish life in the small community* (New York: Bookman Associates: 1957), 95.

<sup>16</sup> Marcus, "Historical Analysis of the First Thirty Years of Laurel Jewry," 4.

- <sup>17</sup> Interview with Dr Eugene Hesdoffer of Jackson, MS 8/14/01. Dr. Hesdoffer was a member of the last class.
- <sup>18</sup> Interview with Dr. Stephen Liverman 12/12/01. His sister was a member of the last class.
- <sup>19</sup> Interview with Gerald and Kathleen Schiff of Opelousas 7/20/01.
- <sup>20</sup> Lee Shai Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion: Disappearing Jewish Communities in the Era of Mass Migration" in *American Jewish Archives Journal*, Vol. xlix N. 1 and 2, (1997), 50.
- <sup>21</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 95.
- <sup>22</sup> Interview with Gerald and Kathleen Schiff of Opelousas 7/20/01.
- <sup>23</sup> Minutes from the Meeting of the Bikur Cholim Congregation November 14, 1954.
- <sup>24</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*.
- <sup>25</sup> Goldman, "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches," 45.
- <sup>26</sup> Ibid. 42, Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 115, Pressely, (4/4/00), Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion," 47.
- <sup>27</sup> Robert L. Brandfon, *Cotton Kingdom of the New South: a history of the Yazoo Mississippi Delta from Reconstruction to the twentieth century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967) 121.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid.: Thomas D. Clark, "The Post-Civil War Economy in the South" in Dinnerstein, Leonard and Palsson, Mary Dale (comp.) *Jews of the South* (Baton Rouge, La: Louisiana State University Press 1973).
- <sup>29</sup> Ibid., 166.
- <sup>30</sup> Interview with Ira Kaufman (he lives in Memphis but is a member of the community in Clarksdale) 1/7/02.
- <sup>31</sup> Interview with Aileen Dampf 7/21/01.
- <sup>32</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 90.
- <sup>33</sup> Eli Evans, *The Provincials: A personal history of Jews in the South* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 28.
- <sup>34</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 87.
- <sup>35</sup> Alfred O. Hero, "Southern Jews" Dinnerstein, Leonard and Palsson, Mary Dale (comp.) (1973). *Jews of the South* (Baton Rouge, La: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), 236/
- <sup>36</sup> Lettes, "On the verge of extinction," 63.
- <sup>37</sup> Interview with Gerald and Kathleen Schiff 7/20/01.
- <sup>38</sup> Interview with Jerry Krouse 8/11/01, Harold Frohman 8/7/01 and Phil Cohen 8/13/01.
- <sup>39</sup> Interview with Jerry Krouse 8/11/01 and Phil Cohen 8/13/01.
- <sup>40</sup> Interview with Henry Libby 7/15/01.
- <sup>41</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 113 and 136.
- <sup>42</sup> Hero, "Southern Jews".
- <sup>43</sup> David J. Goldberg, "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand: A study of Small city Jewry in Five Southeastern States" (1974) Histories Files [AJA].
- <sup>44</sup> Interview with Gerald and Kathleen Schiff 7/20/01 and David J. Goldberg, "In Dixie Land I Take My Stand".
- <sup>45</sup> Sidney I. Goldstein, "Mixed Marriages in the Deep South" *Jews of the South*, Dinnerstein, Leonard and Palsson, Mary Dale (comp.) (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), 284.
- <sup>46</sup> Interview with Hannah Wood 7/17/01.
- <sup>47</sup> Kenneth Ross Hoffman, "The small town Southern Jewish experience: Port Gibson, Mississippi a case study." (Master's Thesis Tulane University, 1993).
- <sup>48</sup> Interview with Peggy Marx 2/5/02.
- <sup>49</sup> Interviews with Estelle Perrault and Dorothy Siegal 7/20/01, Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez 7/19/01, David Smith 7/18/01.
- <sup>50</sup> Hero, "Southern Jews," 236.
- <sup>51</sup> Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion," 50. Also discussed in Lee Shai Weissbach, "Eastern European Immigrants and the Image of Jew in the Small Town South," in *American Jewish History*. (September, 1997).
- <sup>52</sup> Lewis Lord, "Matzos and Magnolias" *US News and World Report* (May 25, 1998).
- <sup>53</sup> Oates, "Wilkinson County's Jewish Community", Interview with Richard Kilbourne Jr 7/17/01.
- <sup>54</sup> Oates, "Wilkinson County's Jewish Community", 15, Leo E Turitz and Evelyn Turitz, *Jews in Early Mississippi* (Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 1995), 3.
- <sup>55</sup> Interview with Richard Kilbourne Jr 7/17/01; Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 85.

<sup>56</sup> "A short History of Jewish Life in Osyka, Mississippi" from the Museum of Southern Jewish Experience, Jackson, Mississippi.

<sup>57</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 79.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>59</sup> Oates, "Wilkinson County's Jewish Community",

<sup>60</sup> Interview with David Feldman 7/17/2001 and Bob Fortenberry 8/7/2001

<sup>61</sup> "A short History of Jewish Life in Osyka, Mississippi" from the Museum of Southern Jewish Experience, Jackson, Mississippi.

<sup>62</sup> Kaplan, *The Eternal Stranger*, 90.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Richard Kilbourne Jr and county clerks of Clinton, LA 7/18/01.

<sup>64</sup> Interview with Aileen Dampf 7/21/01

<sup>65</sup> Interviews with Bob Fortenberry 8/7/01 and Frank Ricks III 7/14/01. Both men gave examples of their relatives working to clean up these cemeteries at one point in time. They also indicated that there was a feeling of sadness that the Jewish community had no interest in caring for these burial places. Their relatives felt they could do a little to clean up some of the brush, but the long term care of these cemeteries was too much. This care was done sporadically.

<sup>66</sup> Goldman, "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches," 47-48.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>68</sup> Grace, *The Heart of The Sugar Bowl*

<sup>69</sup> Advertisement in *Gazette and Sentinel* April 14, 1860. "The public is invited to attend a Ceremonia to be given by the Israelites on Saturday April 21. AT that time a procession in front of the Leopold Kahn on Main St. and proceed to the Synagogue." To be deposited AJA.

<sup>70</sup> *Iberville South* February 9, 1878. To be deposited AJA.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Allen Tater 7/19/01.

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez 7/19/01.

<sup>73</sup> Goldman, "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches," 45.

<sup>74</sup> Interviews with Henry Libby 7/15/01 and Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez 7/19/01.



## Chapter 4

### Preserving the life of the dead: Who cares for the cemetery's and community's history in a community's afterlife

This chapter will consider the cemetery's history after the dissolution of the community which established it. The continuity of the cemetery, and the history of the community it represents, becomes the legacy of that community's life experience. These cemeteries are established to fulfill the Jewish value of *zachor hamet*, the memory and care for the dead. Once the community dissolved, the focus of *zachor hamet* shifts from the individuals buried within the cemetery to the character and life of the community as a whole.

#### I. Who takes care of the physical upkeep of the cemetery and its grounds?

Just as Abraham Maslow, the educational psychologist, reported a hierarchy of human needs, there is a hierarchy of cemetery needs. The biggest issue facing cemeteries when the community exists, and more so after it has dissolved, is the maintenance of the grounds, specifically the headstones, graves, landscaping, and fencing. First, we will explore the types of upkeep a cemetery requires. Then we will turn to the question of who carries out this care after the community has dissolved.<sup>A</sup> It is important to realize that both natural processes and human actions can cause damage and lead to deterioration of the physical plant of a cemetery.

#### Mother Nature

The vaults, monuments, fences, trees and shrubs of these cemeteries have been exposed to rain, sun and wind for decades. What do these forces of nature do to the physical plant of the cemetery? The weathering of the inscription on the face of the

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<sup>A</sup> It seems logical to assume that while a community still exists it cares for its own cemetery.

headstone is the most obvious symptom of nature. The cemetery in Osyka presents a dramatic example of how much a headstone can suffer from weathering. Along the back wall stand a number of headstones. One made of granite marks the graves for Moses Heuman (1827-1900), Sara Heuman (1822-1899), and Hannah Levy (1851-1899). This headstone is in pristine condition, with no discoloration or wearing away of the inscription. The headstones to the right of this monument are apparently made from a different material, probably marble, and are damaged from weathering. The inscriptions on two are almost unreadable, while the other two are very discolored.<sup>B</sup> According to one monument maker, marble is no more than bonded sand and will always wear down when exposed to the elements. There is no way to repair the marble once this damage has been done.<sup>C</sup> Granite, on the other hand, is an igneous rock, formed by volcanic action in the earth. It is much harder than marble and does not deteriorate.

Why was granite not used more often? First of all, granite was only available later in the nineteenth century. Granite is so hard it took many years for stonecutters to discover how to carve it. In addition, granite is heavier and more expensive than marble. Few would have been able to afford to use it for a monument.<sup>1</sup> There are examples of the wearing away of inscriptions in all of the cemeteries of this study. One newspaper discussing the cemetery in Bastrop, Louisiana, noted, "Some of the headstones are so old that one cannot read what is written on them, and a few of them are broken — not from vandalism, but through the years of weather damage."<sup>2</sup>

Wear of the inscription on the headstone is not the only damage long-term exposure to the elements can cause. The physical integrity of the headstone and vault can

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<sup>B</sup> See photograph in Appendix III.

also be weakened. In Washington, Louisiana, the headstones were actually part of the cover to the vault.<sup>3</sup> Because these pieces of stone lay flat, water collected on the surface, which led to cracking and depressions in the vault cover. Some of the vaults in Opelousas, Louisiana are made of bricks.<sup>D</sup> Over time the mortar holding the bricks together has crumbled damaging some grave sites and making others unsteady. The effects of weathering have caused breaks and cracks in some of the urns, sculptures, and whole headstones in each of the cemeteries.<sup>E</sup>

Weather is not the only force of nature that damages cemetery markers and fences. The trees, shrubs, and grass planted to beautify the cemetery grounds can also damage the fences and headstones if left untended. In Osyka new pine trees grew in the middle of the brick wall surrounding the cemetery, creating huge gaps in this wall. The roots of evergreen trees growing in the Beth Israel Cemetery in Woodville are undermining a few of the graves, leaving holes in the ground.<sup>F G</sup> Headstones in Franklin and Clinton were completely covered by grass, with the roots burrowing into stones.<sup>H</sup>

#### Human hand

Short of the absurd proposition of doming these cemeteries, damage and deterioration of the physical plant by the forces of nature is inevitable. Sadly, however, another form of damage is done to cemeteries: vandalism. Not everyone sees a cemetery as a sacred place deserving care and respect. Almost every cemetery in this study

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<sup>C</sup> One monument maker suggested placing a small, inscribed granite footstone next to a deteriorated or broken marble headstone. This way one can mark the grave and present significant data at low cost.

<sup>D</sup> The wall surrounding the cemetery in Osyka is made of bricks as well and has the same problem

<sup>E</sup> See photograph in Appendix III.

<sup>F</sup> The caretakers of the cemetery recently had one of these trees removed. It was used as the town Christmas tree. Interview with David Smith 7/18/01.

<sup>G</sup> See photograph in Appendix III.

<sup>H</sup> See photograph in Appendix III.

reported some degree of damage caused by vandals.<sup>1</sup> Some of the damage is minor. For example, in Opelousas, Louisiana, members of the Jewish community and the St. Landry Genealogical and Historical Society stated that school children pass through the cemeteries of the community on their way home from school. These children may pick up some loose stones or bricks or damage plants or trees and leave trash in the cemetery.<sup>J</sup> The Jewish cemetery in Canton, Mississippi, is now situated in the back corner of the community cemetery. There was a breach in the fencing separating this part of the cemetery from the residential neighborhood on the next street. During the field study to this cemetery, this researcher found broken beer bottles, cigarette butts, and other debris around a number of headstones.<sup>4</sup> Some of these headstones had fallen over, but it is unclear if this was a deliberate act or one caused by weathering.

In contrast to these two examples of relatively minor vandalism, the cemeteries in Summit and Yazoo City, Mississippi, have been subjected to acts of purposeful human destruction. In Summit people on horseback would ride through the cemetery, which stands on its own near wooded areas around town. As they came to the cemetery these people practiced lassoing on the headstones, trying to see what they could break off or pull over.<sup>5</sup> In addition to this damage, one person who grew up in the area reported that there is a grave which is currently unmarked in the cemetery. According to Bob Fortenberry, the headstone of a Mr. Hart<sup>K</sup> stood at to the edge of the cemetery. After identifying the graves on a visit to his parents in the mid-1960s, he saw an article in McComb's newspaper (a town next to Summit)<sup>6</sup> which told of a headstone that some teenagers had

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<sup>1</sup> Vandalism was reported in Canton, Summit, Plaquemine, St. Francisville, Yazoo City, Donaldsonville, and Opelousas.



taken from the Jewish cemetery in Summit all the way up to Ohio. When the theft was discovered in Ohio, the police found the inscription "died in Summit, MS" on the headstone and contacted people in Summit and McComb.<sup>L</sup> The story of vandalism from Yazoo City is equally horrendous. Teenagers in there tore through the cemetery in a Jeep, damaging Jewish and non-Jewish monuments.<sup>7</sup>

Some vandalism involves the theft of headstones, sculptures, and bricks from the cemetery. These items are used either for garden and yard decorations or sold.<sup>M</sup>

### Caretaking

All of the cemeteries in this study require regular maintenance. This means tending to the landscaping (cutting grass, trimming bushes and trees), the monuments, and other parts of the cemetery. Presumably, community members care for the cemetery while the community still exists.<sup>N</sup> But who takes over this care when the community dissolves?

The question of cemetery maintenance is tied closely to the issue of proximity discussed in Chapter 2. In communities where Jews are buried in a section of the wider town cemetery, maintenance of the Jewish cemetery is included in the care of the rest of

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<sup>J</sup> It is worth noting that as soon as this researcher sat down to talk with the members of the Jewish community and the genealogical society, they said, "there is damage in the cemetery, but it is cemetery vandalism not anti-Semitism."

<sup>K</sup> Mr. Hart's first name is not documented.

<sup>L</sup> Bob Fortenberry was writing to David Feldman, current caretaker for the Jewish cemetery in May 2001 about this unmarked grave. He does not report why the headstone from Mr. Hart was not replaced.

<sup>M</sup> The Jewish cemeteries in Summit, St. Francisville and Donaldsonville are all locked due to past vandalism problems.

<sup>N</sup> Of the communities that have not dissolved at the time of this writing many have cemetery sections (Natchez, Brookhaven, Morgan City, Lexington) in part of the community cemetery and therefore it is the cemetery association and not the Jewish community which cares for the cemetery. In the other two communities (Clarksdale, Opelousas) that have not fully dissolved, the Jews in these communities care for the cemetery. There are discussions going on in both communities as to what will happen when there is no one left from the community to care for the cemetery.

the cemetery.<sup>Q</sup> Even the cemetery sections in Lexington, Canton, Laurel, Brookhaven, and Clinton, which started as separate entities but have since merged with the community cemetery,<sup>P</sup> are maintained this way.

The care of graves not associated with the community cemetery is another story. In towns where the each religious group established its own burial ground, or where the Jews were not included in the community cemetery, an interested party had to step forward and take over the care of the cemetery when the Jewish community dissolved. This "interested party" takes on different forms in different cities.

In Washington, Louisiana and Woodville, Mississippi, the city government took over care for the cemetery. In both towns each religious group established its own cemetery and the Jewish cemeteries were laid adjacent to other cemeteries in the area. While the prospect of a growing Jewish community in Washington died with end of the steamboat era,<sup>Q</sup> a few descendants of the core families who established the cemetery remained in Washington.<sup>8</sup> When these individuals were no longer able to care for the cemetery, the city government agreed take over the cemetery as part of a community-wide historical preservation project. The story of cemetery preservation is similar in Woodville. While the community in Woodville disappeared quickly in the wake of the boll weevil, a few individuals either remained in Woodville or maintained contacts with people in town. At some point the city became interested in a piece of land still owned

<sup>Q</sup> Cemeteries in Franklin, Morgan City, Brookhaven, Canton, Lexington, Laurel, Monticello, Natchez, Clinton, Yazoo City, and Berwick fit this pattern.

<sup>P</sup> See Chapter 2 page 61.

<sup>Q</sup> "For much of the nineteenth century, Washington was the largest inland port between New Orleans and St. Louis." A group of Jews settled in this busy port, building their own cemetery but going to nearby Opelousas for religious services. The group dwindled as railroads were built north and west, taking business away from the steamboat. Brochure "Historic Washington, Louisiana" discussions with Estelle Perrault and Dorothy Siegal 7/20/01.

by descendants of the community. In exchange for the land at Lake Roseman Camp, the city agreed to take responsibility for the care of the Jewish cemetery.<sup>9</sup>

The situation where some individual is responsible for the care of the cemetery is as common as the situation where a city or town government is responsible for the Jewish cemetery. Who are these individuals and why do they take care of a Jewish cemetery? This question is hard to answer because each caretaker seems to have a different answer. In other words, the sum of their life story brought them to this point: i.e., caring for the Jewish cemetery. By exploring the situation of each cemetery, we can begin to generalize the motivation behind taking on this task.

Jewish cemeteries in Port Gibson, Plaquemine, and Clarksdale, are cared for by a descendant of one of the core families in the community. In the case of all three caretakers, they no longer live in town, but have made arrangements with local individuals to take care of the regular physical upkeep of the cemetery. In Port Gibson the Bernheimer-Weil family has taken care of the cemetery for many years. Powel Dungan, a non-Jew who married into the family, managed the money for the cemetery association<sup>R</sup> and hired people to care for the headstones and landscaping. Following his death, his daughter, who lives in Little Rock, Arkansas, has taken over this role.<sup>10</sup>

Care of the cemetery in Plaquemine follows much the same pattern, with an interesting twist. For many years Belle Levy Kaufman,<sup>8</sup> the matriarch of one of the last remaining core families in town, arranged for the care of the cemetery. Upon her death in

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<sup>R</sup> At least some of the money for the perpetual care of the cemetery was raised with the sale of the congregational building in the late 1980s. Kenneth Hoffman noted that by the 1970s and 1980s the attention of the surviving Jews of Port Gibson shifted from the temple to the cemetery. Kenneth Ross Hoffman, "The small town Southern Jewish experience: Port Gibson, Mississippi a case study." (Master's Thesis Tulane University, 1993), 84.



1984 one of her grandsons, Henry Libby, who had relocated to Baltimore, contacted one of Belle Levy Kaufman's non-Jewish friends, Mercedes Ohlmeyer, about tending to the Jewish cemetery. Mrs. Ohlmeyer, who once took care of both the Catholic and Protestant cemeteries in Plaquemine, agreed.<sup>T</sup> Libby provided the funds and Ohlmeyer arranged for the care of the cemetery. When Mercedes died in the late 1990s her daughter, who returned to Plaquemine to care for her sick father, assumed responsibility for the Jewish cemetery.<sup>11</sup> While there is still a functioning Jewish community in Clarksdale, MS, a former resident who now lives in Memphis but stays engaged in congregational life cares for the cemetery.<sup>12</sup>

"New immigrants," people who have come to town after the community already started to decline or had already dissolved, care for the Jewish cemeteries in Summit, Mississippi and Bastrop and Donaldsonville, Louisiana. David Feldman, whose father is Jewish, moved to Summit in 1971. In 1973 he was told of the "abandoned"<sup>U</sup> Jewish cemetery located just out of town. Feeling responsible because of his Jewish heritage, he took over care of the overgrown and deteriorated cemetery. In the early 1980s, with help from campers from Henry S. Jacob's Camp in Utica, Mississippi, Mr. Feldman restored the fencing to keep out vandals (see page 107) and cleared away the undergrowth.<sup>13</sup>

In Bastrop, a newcomer has also taken over the care of the cemetery. For many years Morton Levy, a long-time resident of Bastrop, worked with his friend Jacob Seligman to care for the cemetery. Said Levy in a 1997 interview, "Until his death, Jacob

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<sup>S</sup> This family also has direct roots in the Kahn family featured in the book and film, *Driving Miss Daisy*. Interview with Henry Libby 7/15/01.

<sup>T</sup> This is truly a case of passing a sense of duty from one generation to the next. Mercedes took over the care of the Protestant cemetery from her father who had done it as part of his charity work. Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez 6/18/01

<sup>U</sup> This cemetery received care from some concerned citizens during the 1960s. Interview with Bob Fortenberry 8/7/01



Seligman and I kept this cemetery up. He knew a lot about the history of the Jewish people of Bastrop and the history of this cemetery. I have some information and a list of the people buried out here."<sup>14</sup> As Mr. Levy advanced in years he looked to a younger man who had moved to Bastrop just a few years ago, Ron Israel. Since 1997, Israel has taken over the care of the cemetery.<sup>15</sup>

Of all of the case studies, Donaldsonville's history encapsulates many of the characteristics of the caretaking phenomenon. Care of the Bikur Sholim cemetery in Donaldsonville centers around a man named Gaston Hirsch. Like many immigrants to this area, Hirsch was from the Alsace-Lorraine region of France. Unlike other countrymen (including his parents and sister), who migrated to Mississippi and Louisiana in the mid and late nineteenth century, Hirsch did not come to the United States until after World War II.<sup>v</sup> According to an autobiographical account of his experiences in the war, Hirsch was a soldier in the French army. He was taken prisoner in July 1940, and he and the other Jewish soldiers were separated from the rest of the French POWs. In addition to the hardships of life of a concentration camp, Hirsch discussed the situation with his non-Jewish wife, Olga. The Germans forced Hirsch to sign a letter accepting a divorce. "And with the help of God, Olga found a lawyer who then delayed the divorce long enough so there was no final divorce decree." Eventually, the American Army liberated Hirsch and his compatriots. One of his first acts was to write a letter to his parents in Donaldsonville. Then, Hirsch made his way home to his wife Olga and their young son, Michel. Once back in his hometown of Metz, Hirsch has great difficulty

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<sup>v</sup> Hirsch's parents and sister had been in Donaldsonville for many years. They were presumably involved (either directly as immigrants or indirectly as children of immigrants) in an earlier Alsatian wave of immigration, however, no specific data has been discovered.

finding a job and, "on the insistence of my parents and my sister... in May 1947, we departed for the United States to start a new life."<sup>16</sup>

From new immigrant to cemetery caretaker

"When (Gaston) Hirsch (the longtime caretaker of the Bikur Sholim<sup>w</sup> cemetery) arrived in town, after World War II, there was still a congregation."<sup>17</sup> But the activity of this congregation diminished rapidly, so that by November 1954 a group of remaining members gathered to discuss the future of the congregational building and the congregation itself.<sup>x</sup> After "pointing out that the building was no longer used and gradually falling in a state of disrepair," this group decided to sell the structure.<sup>18</sup> They voted to use the funds from the sale of the building for the perpetual care of the cemetery and created a board of trustees to oversee this fund. Hirsch had arrived in Donaldsonville by this time, but was not listed as being at the meeting or involved with this group.<sup>y</sup> He did, however, have connections with the group. Dave Bloch, a two-year member of this board of trustees was his brother-in-law. One article on the Bikur Sholim cemetery noted that when Bloch became ill, Hirsch took over the care of the cemetery as part of his volunteer work.<sup>19</sup> According to later documents of the Bikur Sholim Cemetery Trust and Care Fund, Hirsch began this work in 1961, just seven years after the decision to sell the building and create the trust fund.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>w</sup> The original name of the cemetery was Bikur Cholim (visiting the sick). At some point the name, Bikur Sholim, "Garden of Peace", became associated with the Donaldsonville Jewish cemetery.

<sup>x</sup> Headstone inscriptions from the Bikur Sholim cemetery reveal the number of burials over time that the community was dissolving. Between the time Gaston Hirsch arrived and the congregational building was sold (1947-1954) there were four burials. Between 1954 and 1961, when Hirsch took over care of the cemetery there were nine burials. Between 1961 and 1971 there were five burials. Between 1971 and 1981 there were six burials. Between 1981 and this study there were four burials. In the fourteen years between Gaston's arrival and the beginning of his tenure as caretaker there were almost as many burials as in the forty years since. This data would seem to corroborate the correspondence of the dissolving congregation, that the community's integrity collapsed between 1947 and 1961. For these headstone transcriptions, see Appendix II.

### What Hirsch did for the Bikur Sholim cemetery:

In a letter from 1987 Hirsch wrote, "For the past 26 years this cemetery has been under my volunteer care. Throughout these years I have been taking care of it, bringing it from a neglected condition to one of the most improved burial grounds in the community, with pine trees and shrubs, clean tombstones and repaired graves."<sup>21</sup> Up until this point Hirsch had funded his work by collecting donations from the descendants of those buried in the cemetery and with money from his own pocket. Now, in 1987, Hirsch saw his ability to care for the cemetery coming to an end. "However, I am going into my 78<sup>th</sup> year and have nobody to take my place. The only way I see to continue the up keep of the cemetery is to try to start a trust fund."<sup>22</sup> To this end, Hirsch, on behalf of the board of trustees,<sup>AA</sup> sent out hundreds of letters all over the country asking for donations in order to create a stable trust fund for the care of the cemetery.<sup>BB</sup> His campaign received wide-scale notice: "Those appeals caught the attention of area and out-of-state newspapers, which published articles about Hirsch and the cemetery."<sup>22</sup> This donation drive was successful and the trust fund was established. Over the years, Hirsch sent out thank-you notes and updates to cemetery contributors. There were also occasions in which the cost of upkeep outstripped available funds and Hirsch had to request more money.<sup>23</sup>

### Passing the torch

At the outset of his campaign, Hirsch noted that he was aging and he feared that there would be no one left in Donaldsonville to take care of the cemetery after him. At

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<sup>Y</sup> Original trustees include: Sam Klotz, Leo Bloch, Dave Bloch, Walter Kahn, and Barbara Cohen. Also mentioned in this document are: Walter Lemann Jr., and Herbert Kahn.

<sup>Z</sup> Had the proceeds from the sale of the congregational building been exhausted?

<sup>AA</sup> The letter dated June 24, 1991 includes Gaston Hirsch, Ellen H Saltz, Janice Hyman, and Pierre and Lisa Hirsch, as members of the cemetery Board. Gaston is the only Jewish person in Donaldsonville.

<sup>BB</sup> Gaston estimated that it would take a trust fund of \$25,000 to guarantee the upkeep of the cemetery in perpetuity.



some point between the letter written in 1991 and Hirsch's death in 1994, Irving Birnbaum from Baton Rouge married a woman from Donaldsonville and moved to town. Although he had no prior connection to the Donaldsonville Jewish community, Mr. Birnbaum agreed to take care of the cemetery. He continued Hirsch's work, sending out a new letter seeking donations in 1999 as the cost of cemetery maintenance increased.<sup>CC24</sup>

Unlike the cemeteries in Summit, Donaldsonville, and Bastrop, the Hebrew Rest cemetery in St. Francisville/Bayou Sara is not cared for by a newcomer. In fact, the current caretaker has been a resident of St. Francisville for much of her life. Hannah Wood's family has been in town for three generations. She and her husband, Kenneth, who died in January 2001, have taken care of the cemetery since 1953 when its previous caretaker, Hannah's uncle Sam Rosenthal passed away. This is not, however, the whole story. Hannah is not Jewish but is in fact Catholic. Her father married a non-Jewish woman and lost his membership in the congregation, Temple Sinai. Hannah was raised in the Methodist church, but found her way to the Catholic church over the years. Despite the congregation's rejection of her, Hannah has always had a special connection to the Jewish community and to the cemetery. In her words, the people buried there are, "her Jews." At eighty-five years old, she stills cares for the cemetery.<sup>25</sup>

The final caretaking story is that of Osyka, Mississippi, rediscovered by Lyn Decareaux in the 1980s.<sup>DD</sup> This story reflects the important shift in the caretaking from concerned individuals to interested institutions. The Old German cemetery in Osyka is

<sup>CC</sup> Mr. Birnbaum estimated that the normal yearly expenses would be \$3,400 for maintenance of the grounds, \$1,500+ for grave and headstone maintenance, and \$1,500+ for miscellaneous maintenance and repair. In addition, there are occasional extra expenses like repairs to the wrought iron fence. Also in this letter dated July 15, 1999, is a list of new trust fund board members: Irving Birnbaum, Sidney A. Marchand III, and Ben Valentine. This researcher did not find any information to explain why the board changed completely following the death of Gaston Hirsch.

<sup>DD</sup> The story of Mrs. Decareaux's rediscovery of this cemetery was relayed in the introduction.



actually two cemeteries-the German Catholic cemetery and the attached Jewish section. For much of their history these cemeteries were cared for separately. There is no record of anyone tending to the Jewish cemetery following the dissolution of the community around the turn of the century. Members of the Ricks family, who established the Catholic cemetery, took care of the Catholic section. In 1959 the son of the founder, Edward Ricks, died and the family relocated to New Orleans. Over the next few decades there were sporadic burials in the Catholic cemetery, along with few efforts to clean and maintain it. Primarily, each family took care of its own plots. At some point, concerned about the deterioration of the Jewish section of the cemetery, a member of the Ricks family contacted one of the Jewish communities in New Orleans. This query never received a response, and so the Jewish section continued to be untended.<sup>26</sup>

Over the years the surrounding forest encroached on both cemeteries. On occasion interest in the cemeteries was sparked as highway construction or timber cutting revealed forgotten graves. Interest, however, waned quickly and the German Cemetery was forgotten once again.<sup>27</sup> Then, in the mid-1980s Lyn Decareaux joined her friend for a trip to locate the oft forgotten cemetery. When she found it, "the whole place is covered with vines, heavy underbrush and trees. The front gate you cannot get to because of all the growth."<sup>28</sup> Following this trip Decareaux sent letters locally and nationally to individuals and organizations in the hope of finding someone who would care for the cemetery. In January 1987 she received a response from the Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans, indicating that the Southern Jewish Historical Society was aware of the cemetery, but had no plans to renovate it. Undeterred, Decareaux continued to clean the site and look for interest from the Jewish community.

Help came in 1992 when Macy Hart, then director of Henry S. Jacobs Camp in Utica, Mississippi, and the director of the newly formed Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, made contact with Decareaux. While he had known about the cemetery for three years,<sup>EE</sup> he had not had an opportunity to see it or to correspond with Decareaux. Documents and photos of the cemetery were added to the museum collection and campers from the Henry S. Jacobs became involved in the cemetery's restoration. In 1992, groups of summer campers from Jacobs Camp came to Osyka and cleaned away years of overgrowth and fallen trees.<sup>29</sup> Then, five years later, the youth group from congregation Gates of Prayer (GOPTY<sup>FF</sup>) in Metairie, Louisiana took on the project as part of a Mitzvah Day event. This group "adopted" the cemetery, visiting a few times each year to continue the clearing the site, stacking fallen bricks from the deteriorating wall and cleaning and restoring broken monuments and headstones.<sup>30</sup>

GOPTY is not the only organization caring for this cemetery. In 1998 members of the Ricks family, the family that established the Catholic part of the cemetery, discovered that a local organization had started the legal process to have the cemetery declared abandoned. The goal of this organization was to restore the cemetery and include it on a local sightseeing bus tour.<sup>GG</sup> Fearing that tourist interest in the cemetery would lead to an increase in vandalism and cemetery desecration, Frank Ricks III set out to block the abandonment motion. He discovered the original deed for the cemetery in which Edward Ricks donated the land to the German Association for a cemetery. Since

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<sup>EE</sup> In a 1992 letter to Lyn and Rusty Hamilton, former mayor of Osyka who had gotten involved in the cemetery project, Macy indicated he had heard of the cemetery three years also but was not sure who had originally informed him of its existence.

<sup>FF</sup> GOPTY stands for Gates of Prayer Temple Youth.

<sup>GG</sup> Kentwood, Louisiana, the town closest to the cemetery, is the hometown of popular music singer Britney Spears. Her recent fame has sparked tourist interest in the area.

there was no time limit on this charter and title,<sup>HH</sup> Frank Ricks III was able to reorganize the German Association. This new association has taken a more active role in the care of both the Catholic and Jewish parts of the cemetery. Members of the association have contributed money to pay for the maintenance of the cemetery. A band of trees surrounding the area has been bulldozed to prevent forest overgrowth and a new fence installed to prevent vandalism.<sup>31</sup>

#### Cemeteries not cared for as part of larger cemetery

Cemeteries	abandoned	Newcomer	Characteristics of the caretaker				
			Out of town	Non Jew with Jewish parent	Non-Jew	pass to family	pass to Non-family
Donaldsonville		x				x	x
Plaquemine			x		x	x	
Osyka	X/R		x		x		
Port Gibson			x			x	
Biloxi		x					
Bastrop		x					x
Nachitoches							
St Francisville				x		x	
Sartartia	x						
Summit	X/R	x		x			x
Grand Gulf	x						

"X/R" indicates that the cemetery was abandoned but later rediscovered. Plaquemine has non-Jewish in-town and Jewish out of town caretakers. "Pass to family" indicates that the caretaker role has passed from one relative to another.

What does above data indicate? Although we would like to generalize as to what leads a person to take responsibility for the care of a cemetery for a community that no longer exists, we now see that there is no one path to becoming a caretaker. Although the story of each caretaker has unique elements, we can also discern certain commonalities. However, (as the above table illustrates), the commonality between the stories in Summit and Bastrop (where the caretaker is a newcomer to town) is different from the

<sup>HH</sup> Many of the congregational and organizational charters include a time limit. For example, the charter for the original Hebrew Benevolent Society in Plaquemine, LA was only for 25 years. Albert L. Grace, *The*



commonality between the circumstances in Summit and St. Francisville/Bayou Sara where non-Jewish caretakers who had Jewish parents have taken charge of the cemetery. The shared characteristics exist, but not enough to establish a pattern as to why a person would become the caretaker for the cemetery of a community that no longer exists.

What is clear is that even if the caretaker did not feel a connection to the community, he/she felt a responsibility to the memory of those buried in the cemetery to care for its upkeep. A number of these caretakers echoed statement, "Even if you do not know the person, you care for his grave."<sup>32</sup> Jill Levin, a member of the Metairie, Louisiana youth group who cares for the Osyka cemetery summed up this sentiment when she said, "It is so important for us to do this because no one else will. My Mom's family has been living in the South for many generations, and we are helping to save a piece of Southern Jewish history... Without us, these people would be forgotten and that is really sad."<sup>33</sup> Ultimately, it did not matter if the caretakers were Jewish or not, old-timers or newcomers, in town or out of town, young or old, the trait these people share is either a respect for the cemetery or love for the community represented by the cemetery.

## **II. Who collects, records, and recounts the history of the community?**

As the Metairie, Louisiana, teenager Jill Levin indicated, the work of caretaking is not just about the work of maintaining the physical plant of the cemetery. In order to fulfill the principle of *zachor hamet*, respect the memory of the dead, the historical experience of the Jews of that place must be cared for as well. The form of historical preservation is just as unique to each town as the cemetery caretaking arrangements.

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*Heart of The Sugar Bowl* (The Franklin Press: Baton Rouge, La, 1946).



Community responses: Woodville and Port Gibson, Mississippi and Opelousas,  
Louisiana

In some towns, community organizations were interested in preserving the whole of the town's history. In these places, the history of the Jewish community was viewed as an integral part of this history. "The Jewish community left a wonderful legacy in this county. Though the synagogues vanished decades ago, the Jewish people are hardly forgotten. They were an important part of our history and they are remembered fondly."<sup>34</sup>

The following examples demonstrate how this theme was repeated over and over again in a number of communities. In Woodville the Woodville Civic Club founded the Wilkinson County Museum whose "mission is to interpret the entire history of this county and recognize the contributions of that history."<sup>35</sup> As a part of the fulfillment of this mission this organization obtained grants, collected artifacts and documents, and staged an exhibit on "Jewish Life in Wilkinson County." Photographs, newspaper advertisements, paintings, store ledgers, bibles, Judaica, and synagogue furniture were included in this exhibit. In addition, the Civic Club in conjunction with the museum produced a book of essays<sup>11</sup> which told the story of small-town Judaism in general and the history of Jewish life in Woodville/Wilkinson County specifically. David Smith, one of the driving forces behind this historiographical effort, is also involved with the care of the Beth Israel cemetery in Woodville.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The essays were written by Lee Shai Weissbach, who writes on small-town Jewish communities, Marcie Cohn Ferris, who writes on culture of the southern Jewish community, and Marsha R. Oates, who helped stage and organize the exhibit.

<sup>12</sup> The foreword of the book reads, "We are grateful to David Abner Smith, who has toiled diligently these past years as volunteer director of the Wilkinson County Museum, for coordinating this, our first project funded by a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council." Ernesto Caldeira, "Wilkinson County's Jewish

Miles north of Woodville along the Mississippi River is the town of Port Gibson. In Port Gibson the chamber of commerce is the driving force behind historical preservation in town. Driving down the main street of Port Gibson, one sees historical markers on almost every front lawn. The efforts of the chamber of commerce extend to the preservation of the history of the now dissolved Jewish community as well.<sup>KK</sup> "The history of the Jews in Port Gibson is a very important part of Port Gibson history, and we want to keep it alive."<sup>36</sup> The Tourism Center, run by members of the chamber of commerce, has maps and brochures which include Jewish landmarks and their histories.<sup>LL</sup>

The community historical organization in Opelousas is different from those in Port Gibson and Woodville. In Opelousas, Louisiana (one hour east of Baton Rouge), a six hundred member, parish-wide genealogical society was founded in 1993. This organization has busily transcribed headstones in the cemeteries around the parish and collected documents related to the cemeteries specifically and the history of St. Landry Parish in general. Members of the St. Landry Genealogical and Historical Society met with this researcher and presented documents related to the Jewish community and a list of the Jewish businessmen from Opelousas. These genealogists communicated the same feelings as the people of Woodville and Port Gibson. The history of Opelousas can only be told with the history of the Jewish community in mind.<sup>37</sup>

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Community" *Jewish Life in Wilkinson County, 1820-1920: Views of a Vanished Community*. Marsha Oates, ed. (Woodville, MS: Published by the Wilkinson County Museum, 1995).

<sup>KK</sup> A masters' thesis on the Jewish community of Port Gibson by Kenneth Hoffman supplemented and extended the work of the concerned members at the chamber of commerce. This chamber of commerce also distributes a history of the Port Gibson Jewish community: "Port Gibson, Mississippi: A Southern Community's Jewish Heritage".

<sup>LL</sup> Jewish landmarks such as the cemetery, houses of Jewish notables, and the congregational building are listed on a number of town historical walking tour maps and brochures. Some examples of this are in Donaldsonville, Woodville, Washington, and Port Gibson.

Individual responses: St. Francisville/Bayou Sara, Summit, Plaquemine

While historical preservation is part of the culture of some communities, it did not occur in all of the towns in this study. In some places an individual rather than a community organization did the work of collecting and recording the history of the Jewish community. In many cases, where an individual acted as the historian for the community, the same person took care of the cemetery and the community's history. For example, in addition to managing the cemetery, Hannah Wood — the Catholic woman who is a descendant of one of the core families of the former Jewish community — collects the historical documents of Temple Sinai of St. Francisville/Bayou Sara. In contrast to this situation where documents were passed from one generation to another in the same family, David Feldman has had to build from scratch his collection of information on the Jews of Summit. As he became involved with the cemetery he wanted to know something about the Jews who were buried there. Using newspaper articles and corresponding with descendants of those buried in the cemetery, Feldman has begun to paint a picture of the now-vanished Jewish life in Summit.<sup>38</sup> This work is not only done by those who care for the cemeteries, but by numerous local historians. One example of this type of historian is Anthony Fama in Plaquemine. He is researching the history of the community as a whole. In addition to his writing he has collected photographs of many of the buildings and people that formed the fabric of history. While he is not focusing on the Jewish community, he does have information on the Jewish community since it played a significant role in Plaquemine's history. For example, using newspaper



articles and data from a local history book, he has uncovered the dates of the Jewish community's formation.<sup>MM</sup>

### Organizational responses

With each community making its own arrangements for the collection of the history of the Jewish community, some communities slipped through the cracks. In places like Clinton or Biloxi, no individual, Jewish or non-Jewish, had the time or inclination to collect, record, and recount the history of the Jewish community. In Clinton the cemetery was cared for, while in Biloxi it was not. In either case the human stories behind the names on the headstones were lost. Jewish leaders in the South noted that "for some time, Jewish religious objects had been turning up in boutiques and antiques shops around the South, Historic Temples had been crumbling for lack of attention, and Jewish cemeteries had gone untended."<sup>39</sup> One of those concerned about this vanishing heritage was Macy Hart, who had grown up in the small town of Winona, Mississippi. In the late 1960s and early 1970s Hart was asked to become the director of Henry S. Jacobs Camp, a summer camping institute of the Reform Movement located in Utica, Mississippi. As the director of Jacobs Camp, Hart became a figure in southern Jewish life and a guardian of small town Jewish history in that region. As he came across sacred articles, Torah scrolls, prayer books, photographs, etc., Hart brought them to Jacobs Camp for preservation. An item here and an item there began to add up and it was apparent to Hart that the task went beyond the collection of a few items from a few dying communities. "Gradually, he became determined to create a museum at the camp as a memorial to

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<sup>MM</sup> This information can be found in Chapter 3 of this study. Also in the newspaper articles is an answer to a mystery in the cemetery. In the back row of the Jewish cemetery in Plaquemine is a headstone for William Sablman. The *Iberville South* of 10/12/1878 reports that Mr. Sablman was one of a number of Howard Association nurses who came up from New Orleans to help the community respond to a yellow



southern Jewry and to provide aid to those communities that could no longer help themselves."<sup>40</sup> The result of his efforts is the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience. This organization builds on the work of other organizations and individuals who care for the history of Jewish communities that no longer exist or are in the process of dissolution. On its website, the Museum of the Southern Jewish experience states its mission:

Ten years ago, the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience was formed as a response to an outcry from small-town southern Jews in need of a repository for artifacts, sacred objects, historical documents, photographs, and stories. The Museum provided a place to help small, rural areas make the transition from active to inactive status and to ensure that the stories and impact of the southern Jewish community would not be forgotten.<sup>41</sup>

Now, instead of relying solely on the efforts of a single community or individual, there is an organization working to preserve and tell the story of Jewish life in these communities after they have dissolved.

### **III. The future of the Jewish cemeteries of extinct and nearly dissolved communities in Mississippi and Louisiana**

All of the caretakers have one concern in common. They ask, sometimes with a shudder, "What will happen in the future." As much as they worry about being able to take good care of their cemetery, keeping the landscape in good condition, repairing damage to monuments or fences, and preserving the history of these deceased communities, they are also preoccupied with what will happen in the future.

As he neared the end of his life, Gaston Hirsch, caretaker of the Donaldsonville's Bikur Sholim cemetery, asked, "Who will look after us then, after I am no longer here?"<sup>42</sup> At one point he was in a discussion with three non-Jewish men who had Jewish parents. Would they take over the cemetery when he was no longer able to maintain it? Then

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fever epidemic. Sablman became ill while attending the sick and died. The city dedicated a marker in the Jewish cemetery in his memory.

Irving Birnbaum arrived in Donaldsonville and forestalled the issue. But Irving Birnbaum is an older man and now that Hirsch has died, he is asking the same question.

Henry Libby, who funds the cemetery in Plaquemine deals with the same problem. He is the only one of Belle Levy Kaufman's four grandchildren interested in the cemetery or the history of the Jewish community in Plaquemine. Moreover, he relies on the child of his grandmother's friend, whom he does not know personally, to manage the day-to-day care of the cemetery. Who will he turn to if Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez loses interest in the cemetery? Will his children take over the responsibility he assumed from his grandmother?

The problem may be even more acute in St. Francisville/Bayou Sara. Hannah Wood cared for the cemetery with her husband, Kenneth, for almost fifty years. He died in January 2001 and Hannah is now eighty-five. How much longer will she be able to oversee the care of the cemetery where many members of her family are buried? Her father was the last Jew in her family. She grew up Methodist and is now Catholic. Her children and grandchildren have no memories or attachments to the now-defunct Jewish community. Will they care for the cemetery after their mother? What will happen to all of the community and family artifacts that Hannah collected over the years?

From Donaldsonville to Canton to Opelousas and Lexington and Woodville, this is a serious issue. Who will look after the graves of the Jews of these places after the last resident Jews or caretakers are gone? Looking at the case studies presented to this point, one can always hope. After all, even in Osyka and Summit, where the cemeteries were abandoned for many years, some arrived on the scene who worked to provide the care these cemeteries needed.

Some of the stories of cemetery abandonment had unhappy resolutions. The Jewish cemetery of Satartia stands in the middle of a field far from town. If not for a chance encounter by hunters who contacted Rabbi Birnholz at Temple Beth Israel in Jackson, Mississippi, there was a high probability that these graves would have been forgotten.<sup>43</sup> The cemetery in Biloxi, Mississippi was abandoned when the members of the community that established it drifted away to larger southern cities like New Orleans and Houston. "Ignored and unused the old Jewish Cemetery gradually became a forgotten page of Biloxi history."<sup>44</sup> This cemetery was more than forgotten, it was erased.<sup>NN</sup> "The actual Jewish cemetery is more difficult to find and almost impossible to define its limits. Encroached upon and covered by buildings, most of its gravestones removed over the years... Only a surveyor could now establish its four sides."<sup>45</sup>

The cemetery in Grand Gulf, Mississippi has likewise been destroyed over the years. Rather than disappearing with the encroachment of the city, this cemetery was affected by the disappearance of the city. Grand Gulf was a blossoming Mississippi River port in the early nineteenth century. In fact, "until 1850 Grand Gulf distributed more cotton than any other city in Mississippi, including Natchez and Vicksburg."<sup>46</sup> Beginning in the late 1830s Grand Gulf suffered a series of disastrous setbacks which not only slowed its growth, but led to its demise. First, there was a steamboat explosion which destroyed its dock facilities. Then there were storms with tornadoes and yellow

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<sup>NN</sup> There is some effort to preserve what is left. Ray Thompson's 1957 article on the cemetery stated. "over the last few years present day Jewish groups have tried to find a workable way of re-fencing and restoring it to its original dignity. Actually the local B'nai B'rith Lodge is engaged in plans and preparations to that end right now." Tommy Wixon (his father's family was Jewish) has been interested for many years in Jewish history in Mississippi. In 1996 he wrote Scott Cohen in Biloxi about a project involving the Jewish cemetery. He proposed a Tombstone Treasure Hunt. For every verifiable headstone from the Old Jewish cemetery in Biloxi, he would pay \$100. Even into 1996 Wixon was searching for other people to assist in the repair of the Biloxi Jewish cemetery and looking for a way to rediscover the headstones which were missing.



fever epidemics. Finally, "the worst disaster came between 1855 and 1860. The Mississippi River, constantly meandering before its levies were built, shifted eastward at Grand Gulf eroding away fifty-five of the city's seventy-three blocks in those years."<sup>47</sup> This spelled doom for the city, which by the Civil War was just a shell of its former self. The Jews and all the residents of Grand Gulf scattered throughout the South and the country. While the community cemetery was in close proximity to the Civil War forts positioned on the site of Grand Gulf, the Jewish cemetery was further away. Over time the land that the cemetery sat upon became private property and the owners did not know of the cemetery's existence. After years of untreated weathering and vandalism almost all of the monuments have been broken and removed from their original place. In both Grand Gulf and Biloxi it is possible to see the fragments of some of the headstones. Some burials can be accounted for, but how many stones and burial sites have been lost over time? These are some of the worst-case scenarios for Jewish cemeteries. This is what the cemetery caretakers of Donaldsonville or St. Francisville fear will happen to the cemeteries and the memories of those buried there.

There are two parts to the act of cemetery caretaking (separate even from collecting the history of the Jewish community involved): physical care and fund raising. First, one has to arrange for the physical maintenance of the cemetery: mowing the grass, trimming bushes and trees, caring for headstones and monuments, maintaining fencing. Many of the cemeteries are attached or part of a larger community cemetery. In these cases, the caretakers of the community cemetery take care of this kind of maintenance. This does not negate the necessity for a representative for the Jewish cemetery section. Even places like Natchez and Canton, whose Jewish cemeteries are part of the



community cemetery, need a person to act as advocate for the maintenance of the Jewish graves. The Jewish cemeteries in these places still need someone to keep an eye on the graves and the physical plant and go to those who manage the cemetery if there is a problem or a letdown in care.

The second responsibility of the caretaker is raising money for the care. The costs of cemetery care taking can add up quickly. In his letter to Donaldsonville's Bikur Sholim Trust and Care Fund supporters, Irving Birnbaum estimated that it would cost approximately \$7,500 a year to maintain the cemetery<sup>48</sup>. In order to pay for these expenses regularly, a cemetery trust fund would need approximately \$200,000, earning between 3 and 5 percent in simple interest. Many cemetery caretakers do not have access to this amount of money. For example, in Bastrop Ron Israel commented that there was enough money for mowing the grass and trimming hedges, but not for repairing damaged or fallen monuments or for repairing the falling fencing. As he said, "there is no money to take care of the cemetery the way it should be."<sup>49</sup> B'nai Sholom cemetery in Bastrop is not alone in this predicament. A number of cemeteries in this study had only a few hundred to a few thousand dollars available for their care. Caretakers were paying for maintenance out of their own pockets and from periodic donations.<sup>50</sup>

All of this, of course, is not a new problem. Each time a caretaker ages, gets sick, or contemplates moving, they ask, "Who will care for the cemetery?" They fear that no one will come forward to take care of the physical plant of the cemetery and that there will be no money available to complete this task. There is always the hope that another Jew (or someone with Jewish roots) moves to town and has an interest in Jewish

cemeteries. The communities of this study have tried any and all of these responses to find the next generation of caretakers.

Many of these responses are predicated on luck, finding the right person at the right time. How long before that luck runs out? On the horizon there is a response that will provide a safety net for those caretakers who are not able to find a replacement or do not even want to engage in the exercise. In addition to preserving the history of small town Jewish communities, the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience sees a role for itself in the care of cemeteries and congregational buildings whose Jewish community has dissolved or is in the process of dissolution.

As Jews disappear from small towns throughout the South, synagogues and cemeteries face an uncertain future. When all the members are gone, who will keep the temple lights burning, say Kaddish, and care for the graves? The Institute of Southern Jewish Life<sup>oo</sup> saves historic synagogues and cemeteries from demolition or neglect by working in partnership with declining congregations to create "living wills" for their buildings and trust funds for their cemeteries. With these efforts, a southern Jewish presence will remain for generations to come.<sup>51</sup>

In terms of the cemeteries of these communities, the plan of the Museum is to create a "Super Trust Fund." This fund will pool all available caretaking monies so that the limited resources will go a longer way. The Museum will employ local or regional ombudsmen to oversee each cemetery. The ombudsman would have access to the money from the trust fund to maintain the physical plant of the cemetery. In the case of Jewish sections which are part of a wider city cemetery, the ombudsman would act as the advocate for the Jewish area with the cemetery caretaker.<sup>pp</sup>

<sup>oo</sup> The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience has expanded beyond the Museum to become the Institute of Southern Jewish Life.

<sup>pp</sup> There is a model for this structure in the western United States. The Commission for the Preservation of Pioneer Cemeteries takes care of cemeteries of former gold rush communities. For more information see Susan Morris, *A Traveler's Guide to Pioneer Cemeteries of the California Gold Rush*. (Berkeley, CA: Judah Magnes Museum, 1996).

This plan has yet to come to fruition. It is still in its theoretical and planning stages. While there have been discussions between some dissolving congregations and the Museum, no one has signed on and no arrangements have been made for the Super Trust Fund or the ombudsmen. In a recent interview, Macy Hart explained that the plan for cemetery care is a low priority for the Museum. As Hart stated, "the cemeteries are not going anywhere." His concern, is for the Judaica, Torah scrolls, books, furniture, memorial plaques, etc. that are in the congregational buildings of dissolving communities. A generation ago, he attempted to collect these artifacts of Jewish communal life after the fact of dissolution. Now, through the Museum, he has the opportunity to do this before these items disappear into closets, antique stores, churches, and second-hand stores. After the Museum has developed a protocol and resources to care for the congregational buildings and their contents, it will be able to turn assist cemeteries.<sup>52</sup>

The Museum's Super Trust Fund is not the only proposed organizational response to the issue of finding the next generation of cemetery caretakers. At some point before 1988<sup>QQ</sup> someone drew up a "Proposal to Preserve the Jewish cemetery in Donaldsonville, LA."<sup>53</sup> What is in this proposal? A fund would be established by the Jewish Endowment Foundation to be managed by the New Orleans Rabbinical Council and the "Hebrew Rest Assn."<sup>RR</sup> Using money from this fund, the rabbinical council would annually bring a group of seventh or eighth graders from New Orleans to Donaldsonville. "The purpose of the visit is to have the kids help clean and maintain the cemetery, let them see the

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<sup>QQ</sup> There is a faint date stamped on this document from the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience Archives which reads "October 18, 1988, Henry S. Jacobs Camp." This would date the document during the tenure of Gaston Hirsch as caretaker and reflects his concern for what would happen to the cemetery after he is no longer able to take care of it. (see page 110ff) The author of the document is not identified.



cemetery and learn about a small Jewish community, and give them ideas as to the Jewish values and responsibilities."

What is attractive about this proposal? The first aspect of this proposal that makes it plausible is its concept of joint funding. The funding for this program will be shared by a number of organizations which would benefit from this relationship. The New Orleans Jewish community that would use the experience to teach its young people the Jewish value of *zachor hamet* would be responsible for part of the money. The cemetery trust fund which would receive free maintenance once or twice a year as well as the attention of a live community contributing its share. In addition, organizations from Donaldsonville, which would benefit by having a maintained cemetery and a constant reminder of the Jewish community, that contributed to the foundation of the city, would provide some funds. No one constituency is left to bear the entire burden.

The second positive attribute of this proposal is its focus on the involvement of youth. There are a number of examples of the positive effect young people felt from this work of historical and communal preservation. For many years campers from Henry S. Jacobs Camp have cleaned up cemeteries whose communities no longer exist or are able to take care of them. Over the years there have been trips to Grand Gulf, Summit, Osyka, and Claiborne, AL.<sup>ss</sup> On these field work trips campers have cleaned away brush, transcribed and taken headstone rubbings, and repaired fencing. In addition, campers have learned about the community that established the cemetery and have held a memorial service as a way of remembering the dead. Jacobs Camp is not alone in this endeavor. As seen above, youth groupers from Metairie, Louisiana go regularly to Osyka

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<sup>RR</sup> Is this the Bikur Sholim Cemetery Care and Trust Fund? If Gaston Hirsch wrote (or had a role in the writing) this document, why is the name different?



to care for the German cemetery. Recently, members of the youth group from Temple Beth Israel in Jackson, Mississippi went to help care for the cemetery in Brookhaven. They cleared some branches and bushes, but mainly they transcribed the headstones of that cemetery, creating an up-to-date map of burials there.<sup>54</sup> Through this work these young people bridge the gap between generations, linking themselves to many generations of southern Jews. They develop a sense of history and a sense of responsibility. If they do not step forward to care for these cemeteries, there is a chance no one will.

This proposal does have its drawbacks, the largest being the fact that it would be hard to replicate this program for a large number of the cemeteries studied here. Why? The shifting demographics of southern Jewish life mean that there are more cemeteries than communities with young people! New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Jackson, and Memphis are the only cities with a significant number of young people who could participate in this type of program and are close enough geographically to make this a regular one-day program. There are not enough young people within a close enough proximity to care for all of the cemeteries in this region which could benefit from their attention.

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<sup>55</sup> The description of this trip can be found in Appendix V.

## Chapter 4 Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Interview with Mr. Houpt, a third generation stonecutter and monument maker. 1/16/02
- <sup>2</sup> Connie Priest, "Bastrop's Jewish Cemetery is a Record of History" *Bastrop (La.) Daily Enterprise*. (Thursday February 27, 1997), 5.
- <sup>3</sup> Field study trip to Washington, LA 7/20/01
- <sup>4</sup> Field study trip to Canton, MS 8/13/01
- <sup>5</sup> Interview with David Feldman 7/17/01 and Bob Fortenberry 8/7/01
- <sup>6</sup> Letter from Bob Fortenberry to David Feldman 5/15/01 and interview with Bob Fortenberry 8/7/01.
- <sup>7</sup> Interview with clerks in city managers office of Yazoo City. This cemetery is managed by the city manager's office.
- <sup>8</sup> An American Jewish Archives survey indicates that Miriam M Klaus (who died and was buried in Washington July 18, 1992) resided in Washington at least as late as 1980. American Jewish Archives Survey completed by Miriam Mae Klaus April 2, 1980. [AJA].
- <sup>9</sup> Interview with Aileen Dampf 7/22/01.
- <sup>10</sup> Interview with Peggy Marx (her husband Henry is a descendant of the Frischman family whose former store is still marked in Port Gibson) 2/5/02; and interview with Joan Beasley, head of chamber of commerce 8/1/01.
- <sup>11</sup> Interview with Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez 6/19/01 and Henry Libby 7/15/01.
- <sup>12</sup> Interview with Ira Kaufman 1/7/02.
- <sup>13</sup> Interview with David Feldman 7/17/01. Mr. Feldman has pictures of the work done by the campers from Henry S. Jacobs Camp.
- <sup>14</sup> Priest, "Bastrop's Jewish Cemetery is a Record of History".
- <sup>15</sup> Interviews with Morton Levy and Ron Israel 1/17/01.
- <sup>16</sup> Autobiographical statement by Gaston Hirsch. To be deposited in the Jacob Rader Marcus Center for American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio. Hereafter To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>17</sup> Ze'ev Chafets, *Members of the Tribe: On the Road in Jewish America* (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1988), 15.
- <sup>18</sup> Minutes of the meeting of Bikur Cholim Congregation 11/14/1954. To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>19</sup> Claire Punecky, "Down the Bayou: Cemetery" *Times-Picayune, New Orleans, La.* (Sunday morning May 30 1976), 14A.
- <sup>20</sup> Undated letter from Gaston Hirsch to concerned parties on behalf of the Bikur Sholim Cemetery trust and Care Fund. To be deposited AJA. In this letter he says he has cared for the cemetery for 26 years and he is 78 years old. Gaston Hirsch died in 1994 at the age of 85. (Ferstel, Vicki. (7/15/1994) "Cemetery's advocate to rest there" *The Advocate*, Baton Rouge, LA. This would date Gaston Hirsch's succession of David Bloch as caretaker to 1961 and the letter to 1987.
- <sup>21</sup> Undated letter from Gaston Hirsch to concerned parties on behalf of the Bikur Sholim Cemetery trust and Care Fund. To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>22</sup> Punecky, "Down the Bayou: Cemetery".
- <sup>23</sup> Various letters from Gaston Hirsch to Supporters of the Bikur Sholim Cemetery Trust and Care Fund.
- <sup>24</sup> Bikur Sholim Cemetery Trust and Care Fund Letter from Irving Birnbaum to Friend. This letter is a request for assistance in finding descendants and family members of those buried in the Bikur Sholim Cemetery. To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>25</sup> Interview with Hannah Wood 7/17/01.
- <sup>26</sup> Interview with Frank Ricks III 7/14/01.
- <sup>27</sup> Malisow, Craig. "Long-Forgotten cemetery holds piece of area's history," *Daily Star Hammond, Louisiana*, (8/7/2000)
- <sup>28</sup> Letter from Lyn Decareaux dated January 1, 1986. A note at the top of the letter indicates an earlier version of this letter was sent on January 1, 1985 along with 24 pictures. To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>29</sup> Chalew, Gail Naron "Jewish history uncovered: Gates of Prayer Youth Group clean up an abandoned Jewish cemetery in Osyka" *Jewish News New Orleans*. Interview with Marty Waterman 6/18/01
- <sup>30</sup> Interview with Marty Waterman 6/18/01.
- <sup>31</sup> Interview with Frank Ricks III.

- <sup>32</sup> Interview with Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez 7/19/01, David Feldman 7/17/01, Irving Birnbaum 7/19/01, Dudley Farmer 6/8/01.
- <sup>33</sup> Gail Naron Chalew, "Jewish history uncovered: Gates of Prayer Youth Group clean up an abandoned Jewish cemetery in Osyka" *Jewish News* New Orleans.
- <sup>34</sup> Ernesto Caldeira, "Foreword" "Wilkinson County's Jewish Community" *Jewish Life in Wilkinson County, 1820-1920: Views of a Vanished Community*. Marsha Oates, ed. (Woodville, MS: Published by the Wilkinson County Museum, 1995); Caldeira was the Executive Director of the Wilkinson County Museum and the Woodville Civic Club, Inc.
- <sup>35</sup> Caldeira, "Foreword."
- <sup>36</sup> Interview with Joan Beasley president of the Chamber of Commerce 8/1/01.
- <sup>37</sup> Interview with Estelle Perrault and Dorothy Siegal 6/20/01.
- <sup>38</sup> Visit and Interview with David Feldman 7/17/01.
- <sup>39</sup> Chafets, *Members of the Tribe*, 11.
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.
- <sup>41</sup> From Museum of Southern Jewish Experience website: [www.msje.org](http://www.msje.org) 2/18/02.
- <sup>42</sup> Chafets, *Members of the Tribe*, 15.
- <sup>43</sup> Interview with Rabbi Richard Birnholz 12/20/01.
- <sup>44</sup> Ray Thompson, "The Disappearing Jewish Cemetery" *The Daily Herald* (Biloxi, Mississippi) (1957).
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>46</sup> Kenneth Ross Hoffman, "The small town Southern Jewish experience: Port Gibson, Mississippi a case study." (Master's Thesis Tulane University, 1993), 8.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* 9. Also see pamphlet from Grand Gulf Military Monument.
- <sup>48</sup> Letter from Irving Birnbaum to supporters of Bikur Sholim Trust and Care Fund, dated July 15, 1999. Mr. Birnbaum estimated that the normal yearly expenses would be \$3,400 for maintenance of the grounds, \$1,500+ for grave and headstone maintenance, and \$1,500+ for miscellaneous maintenance and repair. In addition, there are occasional extra expenses like repairs to the wrought iron fence. To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>49</sup> Interview with Ron Israel 1/17/02.
- <sup>50</sup> Interview with Hannah Wood 7/17/01 and David Feldman 7/17/01.
- <sup>51</sup> From Museum of Southern Jewish Experience website: [www.msje.org](http://www.msje.org) 2/18/02.
- <sup>52</sup> Interview with Macy Hart 1/28/02.
- <sup>53</sup> Proposal to Preserve the Jewish Cemetery Donaldsonville, LA dated October 18, 1988 Henry S. Jacobs Camp. To be deposited AJA.
- <sup>54</sup> Interview with Dr. Stephen Liverman 1/15/02.

## Epilogue

Growing up as a Jew in Mississippi led to many interesting experiences. Summers were spent at Henry S. Jacobs Camp in Utica; at public school I explained Jewish holidays to non-Jewish classmates; my brother, five of our friends, and I were featured in the Jackson paper as we served as the shofar blowers for Temple Beth Israel. There is, however, one memory that sticks out from among others. It was a "field trip" my family took when I was about eight years old to a place in central Mississippi called Satartia. I did not know much beyond the strange name of this place. I knew there was something special there, but was not sure what to expect. As we left the interstate and headed onto smaller country roads similar to the ones we took on our way to Jacobs Camp, my father suddenly pulled off the road in the middle of nowhere. He looked at some notes and said, "I think this is it." There was nothing around, just hills and trees and grass and an empty road. We took a couple of cameras and started to hike into the woods. I knew we were looking for Satartia and wondered why we couldn't drive the final stretch. In a clearing of long grass and branches and debris all around were tombstones. This was Satartia. There, in the middle of nowhere, in a clearing in the woods, was a Jewish cemetery. We spent the afternoon walking around, cleaning up the area, and trying to make out the Hebrew words on the headstones.

Those few hours in the Jewish cemetery of Satartia left me with many questions. Why was there a cemetery in the middle of nowhere? Why were the Jews buried in this place? Why were people buried here and then forgotten?

Now as we conclude this study of the cemeteries of extinct and nearly dissolved communities in Mississippi and Louisiana, we have some answers to these questions. We



have seen how Central and East European Jewish immigrants arrived in the South through the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, searching for political and religious freedom as well as economic opportunity. The immigrants who journeyed into the Deep South found towns and villages eager for these peddlers and merchants. They helped their new hometowns grow and prosper even as they made a better life for themselves. When faced with the death of a fellow Jew, or when they had a desire to engage in Jewish activities such as holiday observance or religious education, the Jews of these towns came together to form communities.

Many people came, settled, and lived their lives in these towns. Eventually it was necessary to establish a cemetery. Over the years, some members of these communities responded to changes in economic opportunity or experienced a shift in their own economic, educational, social, or religious needs by leaving their community. These small, solitary communities could suffer only so much attrition before the integrity of the entire community collapsed. Sometimes this collapse happened at once, but more often it occurred over a period of many years. In either case, the situation was the same. While the living Jewish presence had disappeared, the legacy of that community, especially the cemetery, remained. The challenge was to care for this physical reminder of these communities and the people who built them. This thesis acknowledges that the communities which became extinct suddenly were less successful at making perpetual care arrangements for their cemeteries than those communities that dissolved slowly. Ultimately, most of the cemeteries discussed in this study are cared for, but the delay in the beginning of care has resulted in the loss of portions of the history of some of these communities.

This study provides insight into those who struggled with the issues of community dissolution and cemetery care. For communities facing dissolution, this thesis can introduce the idea of long-term cemetery care after dissolution and provide examples of how communities in Mississippi and Louisiana responded. For individuals or communities who discover the cemetery of a community that no longer exists, this study illustrates the steps that a number of people took when faced with a similar situation. The stories of Lyn Decareaux and Gaston Hirsch inspire us to consider what we can do to care for the memories of these lost communities.

A study of cemeteries in Mississippi and Louisiana provides insight into the history of small-town Jewish life in the South. Aside from a few exceptions, the basic needs of historical and physical preservation are being fulfilled. These cemeteries, and the legacy of the communities they represent, demand continued attention into the future. The future, however, is full of question marks. As the pool of individual caretakers shrinks, new institutional responses are being created. Many of these future endeavors relate to the work of the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience, along with projects involving the young people of the region. Through these projects these you are taking part in the preservation of their history. The future of these cemeteries and how their situation relates to the cemeteries of other small-town Jewish communities across the United States invites future research.

**Appendix I**  
**Tables**

Table 1:

Timing of cemetery establishment and congregational formation

City	Congregation founding	Cemetery establishment
<b>Bastrop</b>	1877	1878
<b>Berwick</b>	Morgan City*	1877
Biloxi	no congregation	1855
Brookhaven	1894	1861
Canton	1877	<b>1872</b>
Clarksdale	1896	1914
<b>Clinton</b>	no congregation	1853
<b>Donaldsonville</b>	1856	1856
<b>Franklin</b>	Morgan City*	1854
Grand Gulf	no congregation	n/a
Greenwood	<b>1897</b>	n/a
Laurel	1906	1917
Lexington	1904	1904
Monticello	no congregation	1848
<b>Morgan City</b>	1871	<b>1878</b>
Natchez	1845	1840
<b>Natchitoches</b>	1871	1847
<b>Opelousas *</b>	1929	1869
Osyka	1860s?	1878
<b>Plaquemine</b>	1856	1856
Port Gibson	1859	<b>1871</b>
Sartaria	no congregation	1845
<b>St. Francisville/Bayou Sara</b>	1901	1891
Summit	no date	n/a
<b>Washington</b>	Opelousas*	1867
Woodville	1878	1848
<b>Yazoo City</b>	Jackson, MS	1887

**Louisiana****Mississippi**

For sources of this data see Sources for Jewish community institutional information after the Bibliography

\* Jews from Franklin, Berwick, Washington and Yazoo City belonged to congregations in indicated cities.

n/a =not available to researcher at the time of writing



Table 2:

## Building an institution with a population of 100

City with Jewish population less than 100	Form a Congregation?	Population by year							Cemetery established
		1878	1890	1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	
Bastrop	1877	<b>65</b>		<b>40</b>		<b>29</b>	<b>39</b>		1878
Berwick	Morgan City						<b>13</b>		1877
Biloxi	no	no data							1855
Brookhaven	1894						<b>50</b>		1861
Clinton	no	<b>78</b>	<b>85</b>		<b>0</b>				1853
Grand Gulf	no								n/a
Franklin	Morgan City	<b>31</b>					<b>25</b>		1854
Laurel	1906					<b>74</b>	<b>65</b>		1918
Lexington	1904	<b>24</b>				<b>77</b>	<b>64</b>		1904
Monticello	no	no data							1848
Natchitoches	1871	<b>96</b>				<b>60</b>	<b>45</b>		1847
Osyka	1860s	<b>56</b>							1878
Satartia	no	<b>3</b>							1850s
Summit	no date	<b>78</b>							mid 1850s?
Washington	Opelousas								1867
Woodville	1878	<b>74</b>				<b>11</b>			1848
Yazoo City	Jackson	<b>44</b>					<b>61</b>		1887
City with Jewish population of 100 after congregational formation		Population by year							Cemetery established
		1878	1890	1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	
Morgan City	1871			<b>35</b>		<b>97</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>1878</b>
Plaquemine	1856	<b>61</b>			<b>125</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>55</b>		1856
City with Jewish population greater than 100		Population by year							Cemetery established
		1878	1890	1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	
Canton	1877	<b>150</b>			100	<b>108</b>	<b>85</b>		<b>1872</b>
Clarksdale	1896						<b>412</b>	<b>280</b>	1914
Donaldsonville	1856	179			85	<b>80</b>	<b>75</b>		1856
Greenwood	<b>1897</b>				125	<b>250</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>160</b>	n/a
Natchez	1845	<b>220</b>		<b>450</b>	575 <sup>^</sup>	<b>151</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>198</b>	1840
Port Gibson	1859	<b>109</b>		<b>171</b>	151	<b>48</b>	<b>44</b>		<b>1871</b>
Opelousas *	1929	<b>70</b>				<b>75</b>	<b>60</b>		1869
St. Francisville/Bayou Sara	1901	<b>133</b>			90	24	<10		1891

\* Washington had a cemetery but the people belonged to the congregation in Opelousas and were included as part of the population of that community

n/a=not available to researcher at the time of writing

The Jews of Berwick and Franklin also had their own cemeteries but went to the congregation in Morgan City or New Iberia.

<sup>^</sup> Lee Shai Weissbach reports 513 in 1970

Numbers in bold from Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People*

Numbers in plain text from Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration"

or Lee Shai Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion".

Communities with a congregation and no cemetery				Population by year					Burial place
		1878		1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	
Bogalusa						<b>100</b>	<b>80</b>		New Orleans
Cleveland						<b>30</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>250</b>	Greenville
Tupelo		<b>6</b>					<b>14</b>	<b>200</b>	Memphis

Settlements with Jewish populations who associate with other communities									
	association	1878		1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	Burial Place
Hazelhurst	Jackson	<b>37</b>					<b>24</b>		New Orleans
Indianola	Cleveland						<b>48</b>		Greenville
Leland	Greenville						<b>24</b>		Greenville

Communities that have a cemetery but associate with a congregation in another town									
	congregational								cemetery established
	association	1878		1905	1907	1927	1937	1948	
Berwick	Morgan City						<b>13</b>		1877
Franklin	Morgan City	<b>31</b>					<b>25</b>		1854
Washington	Opelousas								1867
Yazoo City	Jackson	<b>44</b>					<b>61</b>		1887

Numbers in bold from Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People*

Numbers in plain text from Lee Shai Weissbach, "The Jewish Communities of the United States on the Eve of Mass Migration" or Lee Shai Weissbach, "Decline in an Age of Expansion".

Table 3: Cemetery proximity

State	City	Founded <sup>a</sup>	Transcribed	Proximity	type of cemetery
LA	Bastrop	1878	t	separate	
	Berwick	1877	t	adjacent	city
	Clinton	1850	t	adjacent-m	Masonic
	Donaldsonville	1856	t	adjacent	religious
	Franklin	1854	t	within	
	Morgan City	1878	t	within	
	Nachitoches	1847	t	separate	
	Opelousas	1869	t	adjacent	religious
	Plaquemine	1856	t	adjacent	religious
	St Francisville	1891	t	separate	
	Washington	1867	t	adjacent	religious
MS	Biloxi	1855		separate	
	Brookhaven	1861	t&	within-m	city
	Canton	1872	t	within-m	city
	Clarksdale	1914	t&	within	
	Grand Gulf	n/a		separate	
	Greenwood	n/a			
	Laurel	1918	t	within-m	city
	Lexington	1904*	t	within-m	Odd fellows
	Monticello	1848	t	within	
	Natchez	1840		within	
	Osyka	1878	t	adjacent	Catholic
	Port Gibson	1887	t	adjacent	religious
	Summit	n/a		separate	
	Sartartia	1847	t	within	family
	Woodville	1848	t	adjacent	religious
	Yazoo City	1887	t	within	

\* a family area for the Sontheimer family was started in 1879

For sources of this data see Sources for Jewish community institutional information after the Bibliography

adjacent-m=originally adjacent but has since merged.

Table 4:

## Congregational formation in relation to cemetery establishment

Cemetery established before congregation	Cemetery	Congregation formed then cemetery	Cemetery	Congregation
St. Francisville	1891	1901	Bastrop	1878
Brookhaven	1861	1894	Clarksdale	1914
Canton	1872	1877	Donaldsonville	1856
Natchez	1840	1845	Laurel	1918
Natchitoches	1847	1871	Lexington	1904
Opelousas	1869	1929	Morgan City	1878
Woodville	1848	1878	Plaquemine	1856
			Port Gibson	1871
			Osyka	1878
				1860s

For sources of this data see Sources for Jewish community  
institutional information after the Bibliography

Data for this measure not available for

Summit

Greenwood



Table 5: Types of Dissolution

dissipation	extinction
Bastrop	Osyka
Berwick	Woodville
Brookhaven	Summit
Franklin	Grand Gulf
Laurel	Clinton
Lexington	Satartia
Monticello	Biloxi
Natchitoches	
Washington	Unclear
Yazoo City	Biloxi
Morgan City	St. Francisville/Bayou Sara
Plaquemine	
Canton	
Clarksdale	
Donaldsonville	
Greenwood	
Natchez	
Port Gibson	
Opelousas	

Table 6:

## Who cares for cemetery

near dissolution	Proximity	Caretaker	change?
Bastrop	separate	individual	
Brookhaven*	adjacent-m	community	sold land
Clarksdale	within	congregation	
Lexington	within	city/cemetery	sold land
Morgan City	within	city/cemetery	
Natchez	within	cemetery/family	
Opelousas	adjacent	congregation	
Extinct			
Biloxi	separate	city property-now a street	unknown
Canton	within-m	city	sold plots
Clinton	within-m	Masons/city	originally adjacent
Donaldsonville	adjacent	individual/trust fund	
Franklin	within	city	
Grand Gulf	separate	private property	
Laurel	within-m	city	sold plots
Monticello	within	city	
Natchitoches	separate	cemetery association	
Osyka	adjacent	German Association/TYG	
Plaquemine	adjacent	individual	
St Francisville/Bayou Sara	separate	individual	
Summit	separate	individual	
Washington	adjacent	City	
Woodville	adjacent	city/historical society	sold camp property
Yazoo City	within	city	
* attached to another cemetery but not part of community cemetery			

within-m= originally separate but has since merged.

Table 7: Communities with only a cemetery

City	Congregational Association?
<b>Berwick</b>	Morgan City
Biloxi	no
<b>Clinton</b>	no
Grand Gulf	no
<b>Franklin</b>	Morgan City
Monticello	no
Satartia	no
Yazoo City	Jackson

Louisiana  
Mississippi

## Appendix II

### Inscriptions of known headstones

The inscriptions in this appendix represent the legible existing headstone inscriptions for many of the cemeteries in this study. It is possible that there are burials in the cemeteries with transcriptions that are not listed. Why? First, a headstone could have been damaged or removed by weathering or vandalism. Second, a grave marker could have been made of wood, which disintegrated over time. Last, a family or individual could have not placed a marker to note a burial. There are a few mentions of spaces in cemeteries which could be graves that are now unmarked. One example is in the Donaldsonville Bikur Cholim Cemetery. "It is believed that many older graves are situated in the open expanse near the entrance, whose wooden markers deteriorated over time. These unmarked graves probably include those of Jacob Lemann and members of his immediate family."<sup>1</sup> A similar situation may exist in Plaquemine where in the back row there are a number of unmarked burial plots amongst the oldest (and most deteriorated) headstones. Anita Clinton also stated that there may be unmarked graves in the Monticello cemetery. (see page 47).

Headstone transcriptions are from: Bastrop, Berwick, Clinton, Donaldsonville, Franklin, Morgan City, Natchitoches, Opelousas, Plaquemine, St. Francisville/Bayou Sara, and Washington, Louisiana; and Canton, Laurel, Lexington, Monticello, Osyka, Port Gibson, Satartia, Woodville, and Yazoo City, Mississippi. Sources for these transcriptions can be found at the end of the Bibliography in the Sources for Jewihs community institutional data.

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<sup>1</sup> Monahan, Carol Levy (August 1999) "Judeo-Alsatians in the Deep South"



Headstone Inscriptions  
from Cemeteries of Extinct Jewish Communities  
in Mississippi & Louisiana

**Bastrop, Louisiana**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Abrahamsen	Harold			1843	1889	10/12/1843	11/15/1889		
Cohn	Dave	Bayou Sara		1868	1890	10/17/1868	09/08/1890		
Heller	Babette				1843		06/27/1843	wife of J. S. Heller	
Heller	Inys			1877	1878	10/15/1877	09/02/1878	child of J.S. & B. Heller	
Heller	J. S.			1832	1900	02/22/1832	11/23/1900	husband of Babette Heller	double with Babette Heller, Mason
Heller	Louise			1873	1883	11/22/1873	06/30/1883	child of J. S. and B. Heller	double with Inys Heller
Hiller	H. Lilly	Canton, MS	Bastrop, LA	1876	1895	11/08/1876	11/11/1895	daughter of Jonas and Rosalie Hiller	
Kern	Max			1875	1939				
Kimpel	Ben	Bavaria		1865	1896	05/28/1865	06/12/1896		
Lazarus	Louis			1855	1901				
Lazarus	Nannette			1858	1928				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Levy	Amabel			1885	1886	12/02/1885	08/20/1886	infant daughter of Hiller and Lulia Levy	
Levy	Archille	Marmontier Alsace, France	Bastrop, LA		1917		11/16/1917		
Levy	Elisa			1897	1897	01/02/1897	04/20/1897	daughter of J. B. Levy and Clara Heller Levy	
Levy (Freidheim)	Elisa	Lamsheim, Germany	Bastrop, LA	1830	1895	04/17/1830	12/04/1895	wife of Michel Levy	double with Michel Levy
Levy	Helene	Marmontier Alsace Lorraine, France			1931		02/15/1931		aged 69 years
Levy	Infant			1888	1888	06/11/1888	06/11/1888	infant daughter of J. B. Levy and Clara Heller Levy	
Levy	Infant			1947	1947	06/16/1947	06/16/1947	infant daughter of Morton and Ruby Levy	
Levy	Joseph	Marmontier Alsace, France	Bastrop, LA		1889		03/06/1889		aged 39 years
Levy	Michel	Marmontier Alsace, France	Bastrop, LA	1825	1895	06/01/1825	06/01/1895	husband of Elisa Freidheim Levy	double with Elisa Freidheim Levy
Marks	Jennie			1860	1951			mother	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Oehlber	Abraham			1852	1902				
Oehlber	Laura			1861	1923				
Silverstein	Solmon				1881		06/12/1881		aged 52 years
Simon	August	Lueibruেকে Pealz, Germany			1884		03/19/1884		aged 47 years, Mason
Sugar	Matilda	Kingdom of Wurtemberg	Monroe, LA	1829	1905	09/12/1829	09/06/1905		
Sugar	Solomon			1815	1884	11/28/1815	06/08/1884		
Wolff	Ferdinand			1880	1950	01/03/1880	08/19/1950		Mason
Wolff (Heller)	Florencece				1916		07/21/1916	wife and infant daughter of Ferdinand Wolff	Florence Wolff and infant
Wolff	Gladys			1892	0895	04/09/1892	12/05/1895		
Wolff	Miriam			1897	1899	06/06/1897	03/10/1899		

Headstone Inscriptions  
from Cemeteries of Extinct Jewish Communities  
in Mississippi & Louisiana

**Berwick, Louisiana**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
	Hattie	Morgan City	Lake Charles, LA	1883	1887	11/05/1883	07/11/1887		Our little darling
Allmont	Nettie			1878	1959	01/03/1878	01/27/1959	wife of Henry Leopold	
Baginsky	Dora	Rosenberg, Germany	Berwick, LA	1844	1914	08/10/1844	10/31/1914	wife of Charles Leopold	
Blum	Addele			1829	1910	08/19/1829	06/29/1910		gone but not forgotten
Blum	Mariam	Dettweiler Alsace	Berwick, LA	1842	1907	01/10/1842	02/17/1907	wife of H. P. Fortini	
Coguehem	Paul			1863	0895	04/15/1863	03/29/1895		
Coguenheim	Hayem			1825	1901			husband of Augustine Eryoux	
de Puysean	Sarah	Dettweiler Alsace	Berwick, LA	1847	1921	10/31/1847	11/20/1921		
Eryoux	Augustine			1849	1895			wife of Hayem Coguenheim	
Fortin	Bertha			1861	1912	07/21/1861	03/06/1912	wife of Robert Emil Isaac Toerner	
Fortin	Henry			1871	1960			husband of	



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
								Mary O. Fortin	
Fortin (Woodman)	Mary			1873	1957			wife of Henry B. Fortin	
Fortini	H. P.			1830	1915			husband of Mariam Blum	
Fortini	Joseph			1880	1898	06/26/1880	10/04/1898		
Fortins	Edward			1882	1966	11/21/1882	09/21/1966		
Geisler	Albert			1904	1990				
Geisler	Edla			1910	2001				
Geisler	Esther Jeanette			1906	1999	11/15/1906	07/25/1999		
Geisler	Mathilda			1878	1979	03/12/1878	01/02/1979		
Geisler	Paul			1909	1956	06/10/1909	08/22/1956		LA Major AF Res WWII
Geisler	William			1870	1954	10/16/1870	03/23/1954		
Gogouenheim	M.	Metz, France		182-	1874		11/01/1874	husband of Babette L. Loeb	Mason, broken headstone, aged 47 years
Goldenberg	Eliza			1849	1924	12/16/1849	12/22/1924	wife of Alfred Alltmont	
Gougenheim	Feliciana	New Orleans	Lake Charles, LA	1868	1888	02/17/1868	10/26/1888	wife of Simon Marx	
Gougenheim	Louis	Obernai	Morgan City,	1816	1900	12/06/1816	11/29/1900	husband of	Mason

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
		Alsace	AL					Sara Worms	
Gougenheim	Sam			1872	1937				
Hadda	Rosa			1868	1957	10/26/1868	07/26/1957		
Hanson	Albert			1875	1950	09/11/1875	11/07/1950		
Hanson (Labe)	Mabel			1881	1954	09/08/0181	06/17/1954		
Hirsch	Jeannette	Alsace Lorraine		1842	1923	07/05/1842	08/01/1923		
Jacobs (Alltmont)	Bertha			1875	1962	11/29/1875	08/05/1962		
Kahn	Amalia	Kirweiler Rheimbayeru		1835	1877	06/27/1835	09/01/1877		Malka bat Shlomo
Kahn	Eugene	Morgan City	New Orleans	1860	1882	03/02/1860	06/16/1882		aged 22 years
Kahn	Mathias	Osthofen Alsace			1879		04/29/1879		aged 60 years
Kahn	Solomon	Morgan City	Berwick, LA	1875	1879	11/01/1875	10/04/1879		
Kling	Jules	Mommenhei m Alsace		1879	1898	12/04/1879	03/07/1898		
Klotz	"Darling" Marcelle				1882		02/10/1882	only child of late Saloman Klotz	aged 2 years, 13 days
Labe	Albert			1856	1922				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Labe Toerner (Hiller)	Carrye			1893	1967	09/07/1893	02/14/1967	wife of Louis Labe	
Labe	Louis			1879	1918			husband of Carrye Hiller	woodman
Lehman	Cecile			1875	1953				
Lehman	Leon			1876	1948				
Leopold	Bertha			1858	1922			wife of Albert Labe	
Leopold	Charles	New Orleans	Berwick, LA	1851	1913	03/06/1851	02/23/1913	husband of Dora Baginsky	
Leopold	Henry			1867	1918	07/22/1867	06/22/1918	husband of Nettie Allmont	
Leopold	Manasses			1861	1928				
Leopold	Simon	New Orleans		1865	1914	07/06/1865	09/04/1914	husband of Mena Wormser	
Levy	Gertrude			1890	1902	07/31/1890	01/08/1902	daughter of Leopold and Blanch Levy	sheltered and safe from sorrow
Loeb	Babette	Kirweiler, Bavaria	Morgan City	1837	1994	02/28/1837	01/08/1994	wife of M. Gogouenheim	
Neuberger	Hermann	Ruchheim Rheinpfalz, Germany	New Orleans	1852	1885	12/29/1852	04/20/1885		
Neuberger	Solomon			1875	1897	09/15/1875	03/06/1897		



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Reinauer	Isaac	Muhrinsen Wurtemberg, Germany	Lake Charles, LA	1842	1909	12/07/1842	01/02/1909	husband of Rebecca	
Reinauer	Raphael		Berwick, LA	1878	1879			son of Isaac and Rebecca Reinauer	
Reinauer	Rebecca	Kirrweiler Rheinpfalz, Germany	Lake Charles, LA	1845	1889	12/17/1845	01/04/1889	wife of Isaac Reinauer	
Seligman Salomon	Samuel	Morgan City	Lake Charles, LA	1883	1892	11/05/1883	08/07/1892		headstone broken
Sommer	Marx	Herrlisheim Alsace		1876	1904	05/14/1876	05/08/1904		Zecher Tzadik L'vracha
Toerner	Adolph			1885	1928	09/02/1885	03/23/1928		
Toerner	Albert			1879	1938	05/18/1879	03/03/1938		
Toerner	M. Adelyne			1888	1945	08/04/1888	08/06/1945	wife of Edward David Newland	RN
Toerner	Morris			1882	1927	12/20/1882	09/18/1927		
Toerner	Robert Emil Isaac	Prussia	Berwick, LA	1846	1901	10/16/1846	05/26/1901	husband of Bertha Fortin	broken headstone
Wilson	Henry								
Wilson	Meme								
Wilson (Leopold)	Mena			1887	1932	02/05/1887	02/08/1932	wife of Milton H. Wilson	



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Wilson	Pauline	Dedwiller, France	Berwick, LA	1845	1919				loving memory of our dear Mother
Worms	Sara	Boulley, France		1827	1892	02/27/1827	12/19/1892	wife of Louis Gougenheim	

Headstone Inscriptions  
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Clinton, Louisiana

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
	Edith			1880	1881	12/29/1880	06/17/1881		
	Newman			1859	1883	01/04/1859	10/01/1883	son of J. Aronstein and Louisa Ward	
Adler	Caroline	Heichelheim, _____, Landau Rh Bay'n		1830					aged 25 years
Adler	Infant			1888	1888	04/27/1888	05/14/1888	infant son of J. and E. Adler	
Adler	Israel	Heichelheim Rheinpfaiz Baiern			1851		05/29/1851		
Adler	Jerome			1873	1873	08/16/1873	10/28/1873	son of Leon and Rebecca Adler	
Adler	Lena	Clinton, LA	Port Hudson	1850	1876		09/23/1876	wife of Charles Wolf	
Adler	Leon	Clinton, LA		1848	1878	01/19/1848	12/21/1878		
Adler	Louis			1864	1915				K of P
Adler	Samuel			1859	1904	09/17/1859	04/06/1904		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Adler	Solomon	Heichelheim Bavaria, Germany		1829	1888	03/17/1829	09/24/1888		
Block	Adolph			1866	1894	01/26/1866	05/21/1894		
Block	Ferdinand	Clinton, LA	New Orleans, LA	1875	1908	06/30/1875	02/02/1908		
Block	Fredricka	Germany			1877		12/17/1877	wife of J. Block	aged 43 years
Block	Joseph			1830	1910	01/17/1830	07/10/1910		
Block	Leon Frank			1870	1945	05/21/1870	01/20/1945		
Bloom	Fannie	Laumersheim, Bavaria	New Orleans, LA	1853	1886	04/21/1853	02/15/1886	wife of Joseph Hirsch	
Bloom	Minnie			1866	1876	08/28/1866	09/15/1876	daughter of Charlotte and Slomon Bloom	
Bloom	Moses	Essingen Rheinpfalz, Bayern		1824	1853	09/24/1824	11/28/1853		
Bloom	Solomon	Lamersheim, Bavaria	Jackson, LA	1815	1879	05/08/1851	10/04/1879		
Blum	Rebecca	Essingen, Bavaria	Clinton, LA	1832	1907		12/28/1907		
Carow	Rudolph	Berlin, Germnay	Baton Rouge, LA	1830	1893	01/03/1830	01/03/1893	husband of Caroline Meyers	
Casper	Michael	Prussia	St. Francisville		1863		03/24/1863		aged 60 years

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Davis	Esther			1863	1900	05/12/1863	11/14/1900	wife of S. Davis	
Davis	Simon	Russia	New Orleans, LA		1905		02/01/1905	husband of Esther Davis	
Dryfus	Emanuel	Ingenheim Rheinpfalz Bayern		1820	1853		10/03/1853		
Flonacher (Hirsch)	Charlotte	Fiederroden, Elsace, Germany		1845	1893	10/25/1845	02/11/1893		
Flonacher	Emily				1887		03/15/1887		aged 55 years
Flonacher	Joseph	Germany	New Orleans		1905		11/25/1905	husband of Matilda Heyman	aged 79 years
Flonacher	Lena			1902	1902	02/15/1902	11/14/1902	daughter of Abe and Stella Flonacher	
Franck	Lehmann				1853		09/30/1853		A.M.
Frank	Jacob	Alsace	Clinton, LA	1827	1863	08/02/1827	06/20/1863		
Glucksmann	Alexander	Koblin, Prussia		1833	1891	09/09/1833	09/11/1891		Pvt Co G 1st La Cav CSA
Haas	David			1865	1869	12/08/1865	08/12/1869	son of Moses and Mina Haas	
Heyman	Abraham Meyer	Phalsbourg, Alsace	Clinton, LA	1805	1879	05/16/1805	07/02/1879		corresponding with the 11th day of Tamuz 5639, in his 74th year



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Heyman	Elsie May			1889	1889	06/06/1889	11/12/1889		
Heyman (Meyer)	Emily	Drachabron, Alsace	Clinton, LA	1808	1888	07/08/1808	01/23/1888		
Heyman	Julia				1924		05/04/1924	wife of Joseph Block	
Heyman	Matilda				1885		10/24/1885	wife of Jacob Flonacher	aged 44 years
Hirsch	Alphonse			1851	1877	05/08/1851	09/28/1877		
Hirsch	Gustave			1859	1877	08/31/1859	07/22/1877		
Hirsch	Sadie	Jackson, LA		1881	1890	11/11/1881	01/23/1890	daughter of Joseph and Fannie Hirsch	
Labe	Jules			1868	1894	03/01/1868	05/21/1894		
Levey	Isaac	Dieiefenbach Alsace			1886		01/06/1886		aged 30 years
Levey	Rosalie			1868	1889	02/14/1865	10/01/1889		
Levi	Ophilia			1849	1850	01/31/1849	07/23/1850	daughter of Abraham Levi	
Levy	Abraham	Klingenmunster, Germany	Jackson, LA	1819	1899	05/23/1819	12/16/1899		
Levy	David	Williamsport, LA	Lavonia, LA		1863		03/24/1863		aged 3 years, 6 months
Levy	Emanuel	Bayou Sara	Jackson, LA	1854	1881	07/01/1854	12/15/1881		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Levy	Hattie	Bayou Sara	New Orleans	1861	1881	10/27/1861	07/06/1881		
Levy	Henry			1859	1866	02/28/1859	07/28/1866		
Levy	Juleus			1856	1859	12/29/1856	07/21/1859		
Levy (Weill)	Pauline	Paris, France		1846	1893	04/27/1846	02/27/1893		
Mayer	Addie				1897		11/02/1897	wife of Leopold E. Mayer	
Mayer	Edith			1891	1891	02/03/1891	10/22/1891	daughter of Isidor and Deborah Mayer	
Mayer	I.	Lambach, France			1856		09/05/1856		aged 28 years
Mayer	Irma Rebecca			1878	1879	11/14/1878	06/30/1879	daughter of Albert and Bertha Mayer	
Mayer	Leopold	Klingenmunster Rheinpfalz, Germany	Jackson, LA	1857	1895	08/07/1857	06/07/1895	husband of Addie Mayer	
Mayer	Simon	Kallstadt Rhein Pfalz, Germany		1868	1902	05/07/1868	07/14/1902		
Meyer	Beulah			1872	1873	02/14/1872	10/19/1873	daughter of Emanuel and Rosa Meyer	
Meyer	Henry	Bavaria, Germany		1844	1921	12/25/1844	04/07/1921		
Meyer	Lewis	Lembach, Alsace,	Clinton, LA	1834	1853	03/11/1834	10/25/1853		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
		France							
Meyer	Sanche			1851	1892	01/15/1851	06/11/1892	wife of Henry Meyer	
Meyers	Caroline	Lathen Rheinfalz, Germany	New Orleans	1838	1907			wife of Rudolph Carow	
Michel	Harriet			1871	1875	08/19/1871	08/09/1875	daughter of J. and C. Michel	
Miller	Sadie			1884	1887	05/04/1884	09/21/1884	daughter of Simon and Augusta Miller	
Moses	Amalia	Speyer, Bavaria		1830	1874	03/16/1830	09/17/1874	wife of Augustus Worms	
Moses	Dorothy			1900	1901	12/21/1900	05/24/1901	daughter of Simon ayer and Gertrude Moses	
Oppenheimer	Hirsch				1856		04/21/1856		
Oppenheimer (Wolf)	Minna	Polk, Hanover	Clinton, LA	1815	1889	12/25/1815	10/23/1889	widow of Henry Oppenheimer	
Oppenheimer	Rebecca	Epingen Baden	Port Hudson	1823	1874	03/04/1823	06/27/1874	wife of M. Levy	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Oppenheimer	William	Jackson, LA	Houston, TX	1847	1872	09/26/1847	10/04/1872		far from home, Beloved by all who knew him, his most remarkable characteristic was his ardent devotion to his widowed mother, for whom he forgot not to pray, even in the hour of his death
Oppenheimer	Yette	Epingen Baden	Jackson, LA	1827	1877	11/11/1827	04/29/1877	wife of Abraham Levy	
Reinberg	Carrie			1869	1884	12/01/1869	02/06/1884	daughter of Henry and Ernestine Reinberg	
Reinberg (Hiller)	Dorothea	Breslaw, Silesia		1820	1898	01/02/1820	11/29/1898		
Reinberg	Julius	Breslaw, Prussia			1884		04/30/1884		ages 64 years
Reinberg	Rosalie				1864		02/02/1864		aged 2 years, 6 months, 6 days
Reise	Matilda			1811	1866	12/09/1811	09/23/1866	wife of Daniel Wolf	
Seligman	Aaron	Spezerin, Germany		1849	1908		02/25/1908	husband of Victoria Aronstein	
Spiro	Henry				1884		01/22/1884		aged 50 years



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Starn	Ella	Germany		1816	1881		10/22/1881	wife of Levi Starn	
Stein	Clara	Mussbach Rheimpfalz Bayern		1831	1853		10/21/1853		
Ward	Louisa			1842	1877	05/27/1842	01/18/1877	wife of J. Aronstine	
Weill	Abe				1884		11/24/1884		aged 33 years
Weill	Hanna				1888		09/14/1888		aged 74 years
Weill	Rosalie				1874		05/06/1874		age 18 years, 10 months, 22 days
Wolf	Agatha			1807	1888	10/18/1801	09/13/1888		
Wolf	Charles			1843	1899	05/25/1843	04/23/1899		
Wolf	Daniel	Ingenheim Bavaria	Clinton, LA		1872		11/18/1872	husband of Matilda Reise	aged 64 years
Wolf	Jacob	Durkheim, Rheimpfalz, Bavaria			1857		09/13/1857		
Wolf	Leonhard				1854		11/12/1854		
Womack	Martha			1862	1922				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Worms	Augustus	Boulay, France		1809	1879	04/15/1809	07/30/1879		
Zoller	Julius William			1868	1903	02/04/1868	10/26/1903		

Headstone Inscriptions  
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Donaldsonville, Louisiana

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
									Child's grave, inscription in Hebrew
	Hattie			1906	1907	09/21/1906	08/09/1907	infant daughter of Jos. Mendelson and Dina Samsowitz	
	Henry			1863	1887	01/10/1863	02/06/1887	son of Louis Weil and Minna Katz	
	Lisette				1915		02/21/1915	daughter of Sol Klotz and Fannie Wolf	
	Milton			1890	1890	02/27/1890		son of (illegible) Levy and Ernestine Isreal (?)	child's grave
	Regina			1883	1889	12/30/1883	03/20/1889	daughter of Salomon Klotz and Fannie Wolf	
Aaron	Aaron	Steinbach		1850	1871	04/18/1850	09/05/1871		
Abraham	Julia	Reichshoffen			1871		08/15/1871	wife of A. Klotz	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Abraham	Pauline			1853	1916	07/12/1853	03/07/1916	wife of Abraham Klotz	
Adler	Sigmond	Heichelkrim (?), Rhine, B(illegible)		1810		11/28/1810			aged 27 years
Barron	Moses	New Orleans			1877		08/20/1877		aged 21 years
Baum	Jeannette	Weisenau		1850	1881	08/09/1850	11/20/1881	widow of Max Herrmann	
Bernheim	Fernand			1875	1928	04/18/1875	02/19/1928	husband of Sadye Kern	A loving husband and devoted father
Bloch	Arnaud			1866	1934	01/01/1866	01/23/1934		
Bloch	Caroline				1963		03/06/1963	wife of Joseph Leumas of Saverrie, Alsace	aged 77 years
Bloch	David			1894	1973				
Bloch (Labe)	Gertrude			1873	1969	03/16/1873	06/30/1969		
Bloch (Labe)	Julie			1893	1950	09/19/1893	06/11/1950		
Bloch	Leon			1889	1969	09/26/1889	01/03/1969		
Bloch	Leone Frances								
Bloch	Leonora			1872	1946	09/23/1872	12/27/1946		Mother ..... Father



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Bloch	Marcel			1892	1947	11/20/1892	10/12/1947		
Bloch	Maurice			1861	1944	09/12/1861	12/25/1944	husband of Mathilda Himmler	
Bloch	Yvonne			1905	1994				
Bloch Cohen (Links)	Barbara			1902	1970	01/26/1902	01/22/1970		
Block	Alice			1880	1883	03/02/1880	07/19/1883	daughter of A. Block and (illegible)	
Block	Maurice			1890	1941	07/01/1890	05/31/1941		
Blum	Daniel	Germany			1872		12/29/1872		aged 83 years
Blum	Esther				1861		04/27/1861	wife of Daniel Blum	aged approximately 3 years
Blum	Jeanne			1897	1898	11/13/1897	01/07/1898	daughter of Leon and Irma Blum	
Blum	Joseph			1833	1863	12/15/1833	04/23/1863		
Blum	Joseph				1896		06/18/1896		
Blum	Leon				1867		05/26/1867		
Blum	Mary				1896		10/08/1896		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Blum (Hirschman)	Mathilde				1867		10/20/1867		
Blum	Melanie	Niederbroun, Alsace	Donaldsonville, LA					wife of Joseph Blum	aged 88 years
Blum	Samuel				1915		10/08/1915	husband of Babette Fogel	aged 94 years, 6 months
Blum	Sylvain				1867		10/30/1867		
Blumenthal	Babette	Loeb, Bavaria	Bayou Lafourche, LA	1830	1876	03/20/1830	08/11/1876		
Bryn	Heyman	Krusznie_ye, Russia, Poland			1884		10/19/1884		aged 29 years
Casso (Loeb)	Bella			1878	1921	03/10/1878	12/21/1921	wife of Lucien Casso	
Don	Ike			1886	1972	11/15/1886	10/17/1972	Father, Grandfather, Great- grandfather	
Feitel	Isaac			1884	1894	06/27/1884	12/27/1894	son of G. Feitel and E. Joseph	
Feitel	Stella							wife of Samuel Polmer	
Fernandez	Ida			1901	1962	10/08/1901	12/17/1962		
Fogel	Babette				1909		07/16/1909	wife of Samuel Blum	
Freund	Emile	Mellingen, Elsuss			1886		10/18/1886		aged 10 years, 6 months

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Friedenthal	Isaac	Kuruick, Prussia	Thibodaux, LA		1870		12/02/1870		aged 17 years
Goldstein (Klotz)	Carrie			1890	1944				In memory of our beloved mother
Goldstein	Julia			1870	1956	08/19/1870	05/05/1956		
Hemendinger	Leon	Schlettstadt, Alsace		1838	1913	09/26/1838	11/04/1913		
Himmler	Marcel	Gundershoffe n, Alsace		1888	1927	12/16/1888	12/12/1927		
Himmler	Mathilda			1863	1929	07/14/1863	03/12/1929	wife of Maurice Bloch	
Himmler (Bloch)	Sophie	Donaldsonvill e, LA		1895	1976	12/03/1895	07/23/1976		Mother ..... Father
Hirsch	Gaston			1909	1994	02/21/1909	07/13/1994		
Hirsch	Harriet	Frauenberg, Lorraine	Assumption, LA		1875		10/20/1875	wife of I. Lebanan	aged 28 years
Hirsch	Mamy	Frauenberg, Lorraine, France			1877		09/22/1877		aged 32 years
Hirsh (Levy)	Coralie			1865	1938	08/14/1865	04/30/1938		
Hirsh	Sol			1857	1941	04/29/1857	09/12/1941		
Jacobs	Marcus				1880		11/21/1880		aged 57 years

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Joseph (Feitel)	Bertha			1851	1925	08/18/1854	03/22/1925		
Joseph	Estelle	Gross Bliddersdorf, Lorraine	Donaldsonville, LA	1842	1897	02/04/1842	12/29/1897	wife of G. Feitel	
Joseph	Helen			1910	1910	09/21/1910	10/15/1910		
Joseph	Joseph			1855	1929	11/20/1855	02/04/1929		
Joseph	Josephine	Gros__ld__d ersdorf, Lorraine	lberville	1860	1885	10/02/1860	06/25/1885		
Joseph	William			1911	1911	03/06/1911	03/12/1911	son of Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Joseph	
Josephe	Leon	ne__ ?assbliedder stroff Lorr__	Donaldsonville, LA	1858	1878	11/20/1858	09/27/1878		
Kahn	Eugene	Imlingen, Lorraine, France		1870	1940	05/01/1870	06/02/1940		
Kahn	Gustave	Imlingenofrai a		1874	1909	10/11/1874	12/04/1909	son of Selig Kahn	
Kahn	Mathilde	Morgan City, LA		1859	1892	01/21/1859	12/31/1892	wife of David Kling	
Kahn (Kessler)	Mathilde	Alsace Lorraine		1864	1945	04/01/1864	09/02/1945		
Kaufman	Abraham			1897	1960	10/30/1897	01/11/1960		
Kaufman	Charles	Alsace,		1852	1913	12/13/1852	11/22/1913		



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
		Germany							
Kaufman	Dora			1893	1976	07/21/1893	2/6/1976		
Kaufman	Nathan			1891	1985				
Kaufman (Wolf)	Regina	New Orleans, LA		1860	1919	05/06/1860	02/19/1919		
Kaufman	Samuel			1887	1959	12/14/1887	08/05/1959		
Kaufman	Sarah			1895	1981				
Kern	Abram			1885	1910	10/03/1885	12/03/1910		
Kern	Mathilde			1865	1928	02/19/1865	08/03/1928		
Kern	Sadye			1886	1921	07/12/1886	03/17/1921	wife of Ferd. Bernheim	A loving wife and devoted mother
Kessler (Schwartz)	Edah			1888	1957	10/08/1888	08/31/1957		
Kessler	Isador	Merzweiler, Alsace		1878	1909	05/18/1878	06/11/1909		
Kessler	Leon			1872	1948	04/03/1872	07/20/1948		
Kessler	Sarah	Alsace			1921		02/03/1921		aged 82 years
Klein	Marx	Hatten Alsace	Donaldsonville, LA	1853	1908	02/02/1853	05/15/1908		Rabbi

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Kling	Alphonse	Lixheim, Lorraine, France			1878		10/20/1878		aged 30 years and 6 months
Kling	David	Dunc_durk, Alsace	Donaldsonville, LA	1845	1883		04/07/1883		In memory of my beloved husband
Kling	Joseph	Lixheim, Lorraine, France			1878		10/05/1878		aged 43 years
Kling	Mathilde	Lixheim, France			1880		09/15/1880	wife of Leon Hemmindinger	aged 32 years
Kling	Maurice				1895		07/08/1895	son of David and Mathilde Kling	aged 14 years
Klotz	David	Uhweiler, Alsace			1890		12/21/1890		aged 64 years
Klotz	David			1893	1893	02/28/1893	05/20/1893	son of Sol Klotz	
Klotz	Delia			1869	1897	12/16/1869	08/29/1897		
Klotz (Wolf)	Fanny			1859	1922	02/03/1859	01/19/1922		
Klotz	Solomon	Urrwoiler, Alsace	Napoleonville	1854	1931	06/15/1854	05/10/1931		...devoted son, loving husband, good father...
Landmann (Weil)	Sarah				1877		09/22/1877		aged 32 years
Lemann	Arthur			1885	1947	07/07/1885	12/09/1947		
Lemann	Hilda			1873	1875	07/20/1873	04/26/1875	daughter of Bernard and	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
								Harriet Lemann	
Lemann, Sr.	David Ker			1944	1994	02/27/1944	02/25/1994		
Lemmel (Kahn)	Blanche			1868	1930				
Lemmel	Leon			1893	1943				
Leumas (Lazard)					1911		01/07/1911		aged 49 years
Leumas	Felicie			1875	1957				
Leumas	Joseph	Helmire, Lorraine, France		1831	1870		10/01/1870		
Leumas	Joseph				1913		10/01/1913		aged 52 years, 10 months
Leumas	Jules			1865	1958				
Levy	Alvin			1881	1882	04/27/1881	10/24/1882	infant son of David and Sanche Levy	
Levy (Bombett)	Clara	Insaverne, Alsace		1838	1902	10/31/1838	01/18/1902	wife of Lazard Levy	A good wife and mother...
Levy	Djella			1873	1953	07/28/1873	04/14/1953		
Levy	Julie	Lixheim, Lorraine	Donaldsonville, LA		1891		06/12/1891	wife of Simon Levy	
Levy	Lazard			1828	1908	08/26/1828	12/10/1908		

<b>Surname (Maiden Name)</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Place of Birth</b>	<b>Place of Death</b>	<b>Year of Birth</b>	<b>Year of Death</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Other</b>



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Levy	Mabel				1881		12/17/1881	daughter of Moise and Leonora Levy	aged 6 years, 11 days
Levy	Rita			1893	1931	09/07/1893	07/03/1931		
Levy	Simon	Gersheim, Bavaria		1820	1902	04/06/1820	04/06/1902		
Levy	Simon			1868	1936	07/03/1868	04/19/1936		
Links (Simon)	Bettie			1865	1957	09/29/1865	05/15/1957		
Lionel	Judah			1875	1879	04/06/1875	05/11/1879	son of Bernard and Harriet Lemann	
Loeb	Henry	Eden Koben		1833	1878	06/25/1833	09/18/1878		
Loeb, Jr.	Henry				1914		09/17/1914	son of Henry Loeb and Lizzie McManue	
Mason	Hylida			1897	1973	01/26/1897	05/27/1973		
Mason	Louis			1895	1956	05/03/1895	04/16/1956		La. Pvt. 195 Aero Sq. W.W. I
Mason	Richard			1923	1974	05/23/1923	02/09/1974		Sgt. Army Air Forces
Mayer	Elie			1849	1897	12/16/1849	01/12/1897		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Meyer	Harriet	Donaldsonville, LA	Thibodaux, LA	1854	1874	11/22/1854	08/03/1874	wife of Lehman Meyer	
Meyer	Rachel	Wofenheim, France			1881		09/15/1881	wife of David Klotz	age 67 years
Moyse	Henry	Nancy, France		1856	1878	08/13/1856	10/10/1878		
Moyse	Therese	Nancy, France	Donaldsonville, LA	1850	1880	08/04/1850	05/02/1880	wife of Salomon Bloch	
Muller	Isidore	Dehlinger Alsace		1847	1878	02/27/1847	10/09/1878		
Muller	Moise	Forbach, Lorraine		1856	1878	05/25/1856	09/27/1878		
Netter	Henry	Ingeviller, France	Donaldsonville, LA	1850	1925	07/09/1850	11/30/1925		
Newman	Leon				1919		09/03/1919		aged 5 years
Newman (Weil)	Pauline			1860	1943	05/16/1860	08/27/1943		
Pforzheimer	Caroline	Donaldsonville, LA	Donaldsonville, LA		1946		05/08/1946	daughter of Henry Pforzheimer and Clara Weinhaus	lifelong resident of Donaldsonville
Pforzheimer	Emma	Donaldsonville, LA	Donaldsonville, LA		1840		08/30/1840	daughter of Henry Pforzheimer and Clara Weinhaus	lifelong resident of Donaldsonville
Pforzheimer	Henry	Weiler Baden,		1818	1903	12/03/1818	08/08/1903		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
		Germany							
Pforzheimer	Ida	Donaldsonville, LA	Donaldsonville, LA		1938		04/28/1938	daughter of Henry Pforzheimer and Clara Weinhaus	lifelong resident of Donaldsonville
Pforzheimer	Lena	Donaldsonville, LA	Donaldsonville, LA		1927		04/09/1927	daughter of Henry Pforzheimer and Clara Weinhaus	lifelong resident of Donaldsonville
Pforzheimer	Leopold				1878		11/03/1878		
Pforzheimer	Sophie	Donaldsonville, LA	Donaldsonville, LA		1927		11/29/1927	daughter of Henry Pforzheimer and Clara Weinhaus	lifelong resident of Donaldsonville
Pforzheimer	Victoria	Donaldsonville, LA	Donaldsonville, LA		1935		01/27/1935	daughter of Henry Pforzheimer and Clara Weinhaus	lifelong resident of Donaldsonville
Pforzheimer	William Adolphe	Donaldsonville, LA	Donaldsonville, LA		1931		11/13/1931	son of Henry Pforzheimer and Clara Weinhaus	lifelong resident of Donaldsonville
Polmer	Rosaline			1900	1900	01/20/1900	07/15/1900	daughter of Adolph and Annie Polmer	
Polmer	Samuel		Schriever, LA	1890	1940	09/01/1890	12/31/1940	husband of Stella Feitel	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Prins	Anna	New Orleans		1847	1870	01/30/1847	07/05/1870	wife of Marx Schoenberg	
Raphael	Adelaide	Milltelbroun, Alsace Lorraine		1838	1879	09/10/1838	12/21/1879	wife of Joseph Kline	
Roes	Harold			1903	1903	06/12/1903	11/03/1903		
Samuelson	Morris			1911	1920	07/15/1911	11/21/1920	son of Samuel and Rebecca Samuelson	
Schoenberg	Marx	Germany		1833	1870		11/09/1870		murdered
Schonebr	E.			1850	1911				
Schram	Adele	Schweighaus en, Alsace			1878		10/02/1878		aged 22 years
Schuster	Isaac				1928		04/17/1928		a resident of Geismer, LA
Shonberg	Solomon	Cincinnati, OH		1853	1885	02/14/1853	07/21/1885		
Singer	Agathine			1868	1952				A woman of valor
Singer	Raphael			1856	1944				He served the Lord
Singer	Rosina			1896	1939				Blessed be her memory
Sternfels (Kessler)	Carrie	Alsace Lorraine		1869	1943	09/03/1869	07/18/1943		
Sternfels	Emile			1894	1960	06/16/1894	07/05/1960		



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Sternfels	Eunice Eris			1902	1947	03/05/1902	07/19/1947		
Sternfels	Julius	Erfelden, Germany		1863	1923	07/19/1863	10/16/1923		
Tobais	Lillian				1926		01/21/1926	daughter of Jonas and Augusta Tobias	aged 31 years
Tobias					1892			infant of Jonas and Augusta Tobias	
Tobias	Adelah				1881		10/22/1881	daughter of Moses and Marie Tobias	aged 9 years, 8 months
Tobias	Jonas			1860	1914	02/14/1860	01/11/1914		Wood Men of the World marker
Tobias	Maas	Cutno, Poland, Russia	Baton Rouge, LA		1891		10/10/1891		aged 59 years
Walbrette	Lazare	Schweinheim , Alsace	Bayou Lafourche, LA	1857	1878	11/14/1857	09/08/1878		died of yellow fever
Weil	Gertrude	Reichshoffen, Alsace		1825	1892	01/29/1825	11/29/1892		
Weil	Henry				1863		01/03/1863		aged 5 years
Weil	Herman	Heilingon, Grand Duchy of Baden	Napoleonville	1818	1882				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Weil	Hermenia			1869	1933				
Weil	Louis	Germany			1893		05/25/1893		aged 74 years
Weil	Moise			1877	1897	09/08/1877	04/07/1897		
Weill	Charles	Schirhoffen, Alsace	Ascension Parish		1878		10/25/1878	son of Abraham Weill	aged 26 years
Weill	Guss			1864	1925				
Weill	Hannah	Schirhoffens, Germany		1913		01/15/1913		wife of Samuel Metter	
Weill	Lester Isaac			1899	1918			son of Hermenia and Guss Weil	
Weill	Marie	Schirhoffen, Alsace	Donaldsonville, LA	1831	1887	02/03/1831	02/09/1887	wife of M. Tobias	
Weinhaus	Clara	F____h		1838	1885	06/16/1838	10/01/1885	wife of Henry Pforzheimer	
Weinschenk	Henriette	Ingenheim, Germany			1885		02/07/1885		
Weinschenk	Solomon	Kucheim, Bavaria		1809	1881	04/19/1809	10/30/1881		
Wolf	Pauline	New Orleans, LA		1862	1940	09/01/1862	01/16/1940		
Wolfson	____ephrian_ -			1908	1908	10/20/1908	12/08/1908	son of Aaron and Eva Wolfson	stone broken

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Franklin, Louisiana

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Bacharach	Fannie	New Orleans, LA	Franklin, LA	1854	1907	10/09/1854	02/24/1907		
Bloch (Godchaux)	Brunette	Fenetrangle, France	Abbeville, LA		1906		02/11/1906		
Bloch	Florede	Fenetrangle							
Bloch	Moise	Fenetrangle, France	Franklin, LA	1828	1902		11/09/1902		
Bloch	Reine		Franklin, LA	1830	1879	12/10/1830	11/27/1879		
Bloch	Samson	Saverne, Bas Rhine, France	Franklin, LA	1810	1855		07/04/1855		
Cozine, Jr.	Cornelius Henry		at sea	1846	1859	03/08/1846	07/14/1859		lost on the T.D. Hine 7/4/1859 No eye to pity and no arm to save Or snatch him from a watry grave In the midst of life we are in death
Durst	Henry		Franklin, LA	1844	1852	02/12/1844	07/31/1852	son of Charles and Theresa Durst	At Rest, aged 9 years, 7 months

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Godchaux	David	Fenetrangle, France	Abbeville, LA	1819	1900	04/10/1819	06/29/1900		
Godchaux	Hariette	Franklin, LA	Franklin, LA	1855	1881	12/23/1855	12/10/1881		
Godchaux	Jacob	Franklin, LA	New Orleans, LA	1847	1879	12/12/1847	03/25/1879		
Godchaux	Malani	Fenetrangle, France	Franklin, LA	1821	1874		12/07/1874		
Hausman	Felix	Patterson, LA	Patterson, LA	1853	1918	02/14/1853	02/13/1918		
Hausman	Henry	Patterson, LA	New Orleans, LA	1857	1914	05/24/1857	12/12/1914		
Hausmann	"Father"								
Hausmann	"Mother"								
Hausmann	David			1854	1926				
Levy	Eli	Hellimer, France	Franklin, LA	1840	1854				
Levy	Florence			1891	1908	01/03/1891	08/04/1908		
Levy	Henriette	Hellimer, France	Franklin, LA	1838	1854				
Lurie	Selig	Kempen		1819	1851		07/26/1851		aged 32 years
Mayer	Camile	Franklin, LA	Franklin, LA	1865	1913	12/16/1865	02/24/1913		



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Mayer	Henry	Franklin, LA	Franklin, LA	1858	1915	11/07/1858	02/02/1915		
Mayer	Issac	Franklin, LA	New Orleans, AL	1857	1928	09/20/1857	05/04/1928		
Mayer	Johanna	Monsheim, Germany	Franklin, LA	1828	1912		03/17/1912		
Mayer	Joseph	Franklin, LA	Greenwood, LA	1862	1917	01/24/1862	01/16/1917		
Mayer	Lazurus	Monsheim, Germany	Franklin, LA	1824	1858		09/02/1858		
Mayer	Mayer	Monsheim, Germany	Franklin, LA	1820	1891	12/24/1820	07/20/1891		
Meier	Mary	Kittelsheim, Alsace	Houma, LA	1839	1891		01/20/1891	wife of Charles Meier	aged 51 years
Schumuler	Michel	Glencoe, LA	Tibbs, MS	1886	1919	03/01/1886	07/27/1919		
Seligman	Lina		Glencoe, LA	1847	1907	10/03/1847	03/06/1907	wife of Rudolf Hanf	
Simon	Sarah			1869	1877	10/07/1869	07/18/1877	adopted daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Hanf	In Memory of
Stiffel	Julia	New Orleans, LA	Helena, Ark.	1860	1940	12/16/1860	09/12/1940		

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**Morgan City, Louisiana**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Becker	Nathan	Schwechausen, Germany		1867	1914	03/02/1867	07/24/1914		
Blum	Armund Harold			1896	1940				
Blum	Arthur			1872	1937	02/23/1872	10/05/1937		
Blum (Loeb)	Cora			1868	1942				
Blum	Fannie	Alsace		1839	1915	08/13/1839	11/23/1915	wife of Solomon Blum	
Blum	Isidore				1937		12/05/1937		
Blum	Jennie			1871	1954	11/14/1871	10/19/1954		
Blum	Julius				1927		10/04/1927		
Blum	Leon			1865	1919	12/05/1865	07/14/1919	husband of Irma Levy	
Blum	Louis			1872	1926			husband of Isabel Alwes (?)	
Blum	Melanie			1881	1951	03/29/1881	07/04/1951		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Blum	Sam			1859	1929				
Blum	Solomon	Alsace	Thibodaux, LA	1824	1906	05/18/1824	11/02/1906		
Blum	Stella			1876	1966	01/06/1876	02/17/1966		
Blumenthal	Emanuel			1886	1928	02/15/1886	04/07/1828	husband of Celine Lehmann	
Cambell	Joseph				1919				
Cambell	Richard				1951		07/18/1951		
Colman (?)	Lou			1888	1920	11/09/1888	03/20/1920		aged 32 years
Fisher	Aubrey			1888	1953				
Fisher	Joseph			1882	1938				
Fisher	M. Albert			1914	1919				
Forgotston (Norman)	Mildred			1904	1958	08/17/1904	01/16/1958		
Freund (Blumenthal)	Celia			1858	1943				
Gougenheim	Ester				1949		02/19/1949	wife of Chandos St. John Brennen	
Grozier (?)	Spurceon			1899	1944	04/16/1899	05/02/1944		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Kahn (Levy)	Bertha			1872	1937	12/10/1872	10/05/1937		
Kahn	Charles			1901	1956	10/12/1901	01/14/1956		
Kahn	Henry			1870	1937	08/21/1870	10/05/1937		
Kahn	Leon	Hatten, Alsace		1866	1922	03/28/1866	02/23/1922	husband of Tillie Loeb	
Kahn	Louis	Hatten, Alsace		1868	1914	12/13/1868	12/06/1914	husband of Agnes LeBlanc	
Kahn	Phillip David	Morgan City, LA	New Orleans, LA	1934	1940	05/14/1934	12/12/1940	son of Chas. E. Kahn and Estelle Cohen	aged 6 years, 7 months
Kahn (Loeb)	Tillie			1873	1958	01/03/1873	07/17/1958		
Lehmann	Albertine				1916		06/10/1916		
Lehmann	Celine Esther			1868	1953	04/03/1868	01/07/1953	wife of Emanuel Blumenthal	
Lehmann	Charley	Zellweiller, France	Morgan City, LA	1851	1878	08/01/1851	09/27/1878		
Lehmann (Levy)	Elsie	Obernal, France		1848	1926	05/22/1848	04/25/1923		God in mercy giving, took her to His heavenly home.
Lehmann	Jacques	Zellweiller, France	New Orleans, LA	1845	1896	10/29/1845	09/16/1896		



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Lehmann	Meyer			1872	1933	12/20/1872	07/26/1933		
Lehmann	Octavia				1946		06/07/1946		
Lehmann	Theresa			1879	1947	12/24/1879	06/26/1947		
Levy	Amelia	Kerveille, Germany	Morgan City, LA	1852	1878	08/10/1852	09/23/1878	wife of Louis Levy	
Levy	D. Meyer			1900	1970	06/02/1900	09/28/1970		
Levy	Irma			1869	1914	09/06/1869	12/05/1914	wife of Leon Blum	
Levy	Louis	Scarbourg, France			1879		12/02/1879		aged 31 years, Peace to his ashes
Levy	Milton Sidney			1908	1956	05/19/1908	11/30/1956		
Levy	Wolfe Jacob			1866	1930	03/12/1866	05/27/1930		
Lobenstein	Henry	Columbus, Mississippi			1878		10/11/1878	son of Rosalia and Sigmund Lobenstein	
Lobenstein	Rosalia	Poland			1878		10/05/1878	wife of Sigmund Lobenstein	
Lobenstein	Sigmund	Germany			1878		10/09/1878		Minister of Congregation Schaarey Zedeck, Morgan City

<b>Surname (Maiden Name)</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Place of Birth</b>	<b>Place of Death</b>	<b>Year of Birth</b>	<b>Year of Death</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Other</b>
Loeb (Neuberg)	Amalia	Rheinpfaiz, Germany		1850	1911	07/15/1850	04/09/1911		
Loeb (Lob)	Carroe			1883	1964	01/15/1883	03/03/1964		
Loeb	Emanuel			1860	1879	04/08/1860	09/17/1879		
Loeb	Jos.			1881	1969	01/08/1881	06/07/1969		
Loeb	Leopold	Kerweiler, Bavaria, Germany		1839	1921	02/12/1839	03/04/1921		
Loeb	Ralph			1867	1955	02/11/1867	01/16/1955		
Loeb (Mayer)	Reine			1886	1971	07/14/1886	10/21/1971		
Loeb (Fisher)	Retta								
Loeb	Sol			1875	1963	09/29/1875	05/07/1963		
Loeb	Sol			1910	1935	01/24/1910	07/31/1935		
Mayer	Max			1876	1949	08/06/1876	11/07/1949		
Mayer (Johnson)	Rose			1891	1954	10/10/1891	06/30/1954		
Moch	Julia			1859	1940				
Moch	Ralph		Beaumont	1886	1899	06/26/1886	06/29/1899		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Moch	Solomon	Sherviller, Alsace	Beaumont, TX	1844	1898	03/23/1844	08/21/1898		
Monch	Maurice			1875	1926	01/07/1875	12/19/1926		
Moore	Charles				1908		02/17/1908		aged 57 years
Nathan	Samuel			1878	1938				
Norman (Loeb)	Hilda			1878	1969	04/04/1878	12/24/1969		
Norman	Maurice			1874	1931	06/02/1874	07/28/1931		
Rose	W.							son of Lou Colman	
Schreier	Paul			1898	1961	09/30/1898	02/14/1961		
Schwartz	Malvina			1882	1956	01/01/1882	08/26/1956	wife of Wolf Jacob Levy	
Silber (Lehmann)	Clara			1879	1941	11/05/1879	07/12/1941		
Silber	Samuel				1929		05/10/1929	husband of Clara Lehmann	
Suss	Caroline	Kerville, Germany	Morgan City, LA	1856	1878	06/07/1856	10/02/1878		

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Natchitoches, Louisiana

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Aaron	Edward			1861	1913	08/27/1861	01/16/1913		
Aaron	Morris			1866	1943	10/12/1866	05/29/1943		
Aaron	Samuel	Prussia			1873		10/16/1873		aged 37 years
Bath	Emily	Jefferson, IN.	Natchitoches, LA	1842	1924	08/12/1842	02/20/1924		
Brown	Henrietta	Prussia	Natchitoches, LA	1819	1897		03/11/1897		
Caspari (Levy)	Anne			1870	1928				
Caspari	Sam			1868	1941				
Cohen	Philipina				1874		04/17/1874	wife of A. Harris	aged 38 years
Dreyfus	Charlotte			1866	1954	08/08/1866	07/06/1954		
Friedman	Caroline			1847	1906	05/20/1847	12/20/1906		
Friedman	Elizabeth			1912	1969	10/16/1912	07/03/1969		
Friedman	Harry				1895		10/22/1895	son of Samuel	aged 14 years,



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
								and Caroline Friedman	10 months, 2 days
Friedman	Harry			1911	1965	12/20/1911	01/09/1965		
Friedman	Henrietta			1872	1959	07/03/1872	05/28/1959	daughter of Samuel and Caroline Friedman	
Friedman	Infant				1945		11/07/1945	son of Sylvan and Elizabeth Friedman	
Friedman	Isadore			1885	1943	01/22/1885	11/29/1943	son of Samuel and Caroline Friedman	
Friedman	J. Isaac			1871	1949			son of Samuel and Caroline Friedman	
Friedman	Leon	Natchez, LA		1886	1948	10/23/1886	09/01/1948	son of Samuel and Caroline Friedman	
Friedman	Mamye			1880	1959	01/09/1880	11/12/1959		
Friedman	Sadye			1892	1965	08/24/1892	03/07/1965	wife of Isadore Friedman	
Friedman	Samuel			1868	1931	03/16/1868	10/30/1931		
Friedman	Samuel			1848	1888	02/20/1848	02/16/1888		
Friedman	Sylvan			1908	1979	05/19/1908	03/18/1979		double stone Elizabeth H.

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
									Friedman
Ganns	Marmaduke			1869	1867	11/27/1869	08/15/1867	son of Michael Ganns	
Genuis	James			1869	1946				
Harris	John				1874		09/10/1874		aged 35 years
Heller	Samuel			1884	1953	08/11/1884	04/18/1953		
Heymann	Sara	Gouersheim, Germany		1839	1888		05/24/1888	wife of Harris Simon	
Hirsch	Ernestine			1851	1896		08/02/1896		
Hirsch	Martin			1848	1884	05/16/1848	08/20/1884		
Hirsch	Mina			1873	1958			wife of James A. Genuis	
Hyams	Andrew Jackson	Charleston, SC	New Orleans, LA	1818	1870	01/29/1818			
Hyams	Eleazer Levy	Charleston, SC	Natchitoches, LA	1810	1860	09/26/1810	07/09/1860		
Hyman	Bath	Prussia			1881		10/11/1881		aged 16 years
Israel	Bertha			1868	1934				
Israel	Gustave			1860	1935				
Israel	Jacob			1817	1872	09/26/1817	01/29/1872		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Jacob	Isaac	Kempen, Prussia	Natchitoches, LA	1836	1891	03/15/1836	03/01/1891		
Jacob	Son			1887	1892	10/21/1887	03/09/1892	minor son of Isaac and Esther Jacob	
Jaffa	Harris			1833	1911				
Jaffa	Hyman			1854	1943				
Kaffie	Edna			1885	1926				
Kaffie	Adolph			1854	1916				
Kaffie (Pincus)	Annie			1862	1938				
Kaffie	Bertha			1879	1955				
Kaffie	Dora			1888	1962				
Kaffie	Harrie			1845	1925				
Kaffie	Isadore Ivan			1886	1948				
Kaffie	Joseph			1856	1917				
Kaffie (Levy)	Julia			1855	1948				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Kaffie	Samuel			1876	1877				
Kranson	Abraham			1889	1918	11/14/1889	10/04/1918		
Kranson	Jake			1885	1886	08/06/1885	02/26/1886		
Kranson	Julius			1895	1896	11/27/1895	10/11/1896		
Kranson	Willie Lewis			1887	1892	12/11/1887	10/11/1892		
Levy	Aleen Dorothy			1901	1903	11/30/1901	05/14/1903		
Levy	Edna			1875	1962				
Levy	Ette			1887	1960	09/20/1887	07/31/1960		
Levy	Harry	Kalwary Suwalk, Poland		1843	1908	04/14/1843	01/25/1908		
Levy (Blanton)	Helen			1888	1977	04/27/1888	02/11/1977		
Levy	Isaac			1863	1905	04/15/1863	10/09/1905	husband of Lena Levy	
Levy	Jacob	France	Natchitoches, LA	1827	1906		01/22/1906		
Levy	Joseph			1891	1971	10/22/1891	04/05/1971		
Levy	Julie			1898	1909	11/03/1898	06/16/1909		



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Levy (Dreyfus)	Justine			1862	1917	10/26/1862	12/03/1917		
Levy	Leola			1879	1953				
Levy	Leopold			1853	1937	01/15/1853	12/21/1937		
Levy	Nannette	Louterbourg, Alsace		1836	1902	12/08/1836	11/16/1902	wife of Jacob Israel	
Levy	Paul			1885	1961				
Levy	Raoul Alfred			1894	1973	03/12/1894	07/27/1973		
Lieber	Jacob			1888	1964	11/12/1888	03/01/1964		
Lisso	Mary				1884		11/03/1884	wife of Sam Lisso	aged 30 years, 3 months, 5 days
Lisso (Samuels)	Pauline	Posen, Prussia			1854		08/22/1854	wife of Abraham Michael Lisso	
Littman	Benny			1885	1897	05/05/1885	09/18/1897	son of M. and F. Littman	
Littman	Monarch			1841	1888		09/25/1888		
Lucas (Simon)	Fannie			1874	1948	06/06/1874	09/25/1948		
Lucas	Isaac			1864	1945	05/05/1864	05/08/1945		
Lucas	Satie				1896		07/06/1896	daughter of	aged 1 year, 9

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
								Isaac and Fannie Lucas	months, 19 days
Lucas	Sidney			1893	1932	07/23/1893	09/12/1932		
Lucas	Wilbert				1897		06/23/1897	son of Isaac and Fannie Lucas	aged 3 months, 7 days
Marcus	Isaac			1884	1939	01/04/1884	01/02/1939		
Nachman	Julius Benjamin			1899	1964	02/15/1899	08/26/1964		
Nelken	Abraham			1880	1951				
Nelken	Augusta			1874	1961				
Nelken	Bessie			1890	1893	05/13/1890	07/29/1893		
Nelken	Emanuel			1882	1942				
Nelken	Fannie			1878	1975				
Nelken	Lillian			1887	1972	05/12/1887	04/04/1972		
Nelken	Miriam			1893	1978				
Nelken	Samuel			1851	1927				
Nelken (Abrams)	Sarah			1855	1931				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Nelken	William			1876	1895	03/19/1876	10/15/1895	son of Sam and Sarah Nelken	
Phillips	Edward	Liverpool, England		1843	1918				adjacent to: Joanna Phillips and Robert Phillips
Phillips	Elizabeth				1897		01/04/1897		
Phillips	Esther Anna	Liverpool, England	Natchitoches, LA	1845	1924	10/22/1845	05/18/1924		
Phillips	Harold			1872	1884	10/10/1872	07/07/1884		
Phillips	Jacob				1866		07/27/1866		
Phillips	Joanna	Vicksburg, Miss.		1853	1935				
Phillips	Rena			1874	1909	11/21/1874	10/04/1909		adjacent to: Harold Phillips
Phillips	Robert	Natchitoches, LA		1878	1946	12/10/1878	12/21/1946		
Pincus	Sarah	Prussia			1885		03/15/1885		aged 102 years
Raphael (Nathan)	Anna				1904		03/21/1904	wife of Samuel Raphael	aged 58 years
Raphael	Mina				1909		02/10/1909	wife of E. D. S. Pope	aged 64 years
Raphael	Robert Nathan			1878	1889	08/16/1878	02/25/1889		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Raphael	Samuel	Sumpter	Campti	1833	1881	08/22/1833	09/10/1881		
Rapheil	Stella			1886	1946	12/26/1886	05/10/1946	wife of Jake Lieber	
Raphael	Albert			1897	1960				
Raphael	Esther			1878	1949	10/05/1878	04/30/1949		
Raphael	Howard				1901				
Raphael	Howard	Sumter, Prussia		1818	1887	12/20/1818	05/02/1887		
Raphael	Ida			1880	1953	07/19/1880	09/29/1953		
Raphael (Bertrand)	Louise			1854	1925		11/29/1925	wife of Howard Raphael	
Raphael	Mary Belle			1903	1962				adjacent to: Albert Raphael
Raphael	Sam Maurice			1889	1918	10/05/1889	12/05/1918		
Sachse	Edward				1913		07/21/1913		aged 44 years, adjacent to: Mary Simon Sachse
Sachse (Simon)	Mary			1873	1961	01/11/1873	07/14/1961		
Seaburn (Raphael)	Annie			1862	1943				
Simon	Abraham			1871	1934	07/24/1871	12/11/1934		



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Simon	Harris	Russia		1825	1910		01/24/1910		
Simon	Simeon			1868	1925	01/01/1868	12/14/1925		
Suddath (Levy)	Bessie			1881	1947	05/14/1881	02/28/1947		
Sutton	George			1889	1965	03/31/1889	06/01/1965		
Unter	Charles			1866	1926				
Unter	Jos.			1892	1926				
Unter	Sarah			1876	1964			wife of Charles Unter	
Weinburg	Harold			1883	1890	01/09/1883	01/19/1890	son of S. and C. Weinburg	
Winbarg	Albert			1886	1964	08/12/1886	11/09/1964		
Winbarg	E.			1877	1948	02/28/1877	01/28/1948		
Winbarg	Elodie			1883	1950	03/03/1883	04/07/1950		
Winbarg	H.								
Winbarg	Howard			1891	1947	07/17/1891	11/12/1947		Sgt. 164 Infantry 41 Div. WWI

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Winbarg	Simon	Kempen, Prussia		1832	1910	04/25/1832	06/02/1910		

Headstone Inscriptions  
from Cemeteries of Extinct Jewish Communities  
in Mississippi & Louisiana

Opelousas, Louisiana

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Anselm	Ida			1883	1961	10/30/1883	10/01/1961		
Asher	Baby				1927		11/12/192_		
Asher	Philip	Jackson, Miss.	New Orleans, LA	1859	1911	09/23/1859	07/20/1911		
Asher	Sylvain			1891	1898	03/03/1891	10/28/1898		
Benjamin	Charles	New Orleans, LA		1856	1884	08/20/1856	09/18/1884		
Benjamin	Rosa			1880	1881	09/21/1880	10/31/1881		
Bloch	Oscar			1873	1874	01/05/1873	12/02/1874	son of Joseph and Bertha Bloch	
Bloch	Rosalie			1841	1896	11/05/1841	03/27/1896	wife of Solomon Isaac	
Bourdier (Jacobs)	Lillian			1907	1973	09/29/1907	05/14/1973	wife of James Bourdier, daughter of Aaron and Hannah Jacobs	
Budd	Celestine			1895	1932			wife of Robert	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
(Roos)								E. Budd	
Budd	Robert			1894	1957	12/31/1894	01/24/1897		
Davis	Lottie			1901	1903	09/08/1901	04/17/1903	daughter of David B. Davis and Della Goudchaux	
Davlin (Orkin)	May			1904	1892	07/04/1904	09/17/1982		
Davlin	Zalman Orkin			1925	1981	08/19/1925	07/20/1981		
Eilert	Lottie		Big Cane St. Landry Parish, LA	1849	1881	10/12/1849	12/17/1881	Consort of Leopold Goudchaux	
Firnberg	Marx			1858	1909	12/10/1858	12/10/1909		
Firnberg	Robert			1867	1912	01/07/1867	12/13/1912		
Firnberg	Solomon				1884		05/27/1884		aged 52 years
Firnberg	Tillie				1888		08/11/1888		aged 15 years
Frankel (Loeb)	Emma			1868	1922			wife of Jacob Frankel	
Frankel	Esther			1888	1890	05/15/1888	07/22/1890	child of Jos Frankel and Emma Loeb	
Frankel	Gustave			1890	1890	01/29/1890	07/10/1890	child of Jos Frankel and Emma Loeb	



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Frankel	Jacob			1858	1941				
Friedman (Siegel)	Selma			1914	1989	09/05/1914	04/19/1989	wife of Samuel F. Friedman	
Goudchaux	Abraham			1884	1957	06/19/1884	05/19/1957		
Goudchaux	Callie			1874	1893	07/15/1874	07/14/1893	daughter of Jake L. and Josephine Goudchaux	
Goudchaux	Charles			1871	1940	02/15/1871	01/27/1940		Dr.
Goudchaux	Eugene			1899	1929			son of Jacke L. and Josephine Goudchaux	
Goudchaux (Wolff)	Florence			1883	1962	09/04/1883	11/18/1962	wife of Dr. C. A. Goudchaux	
Goudchaux	Jacke			1869	1937				
Goudchaux (Weil)	Josephine	Schirhofen, Alsace, France		1868	1938			wife of Jacke Goudchaux	
Goudchaux	Leon			1881	1944	12/17/1881	10/17/1944		
Goudchaux	Leopold	Brumath, Alsace		1844	1920	08/29/1844	03/24/1920		
Haas	A.M.			1876	1922	08/03/1876	11/17/1922		Dr.
Haas (Roos)	Elise			1898	1898	05/23/1898	07/05/1898		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Haas	John			1863	1822	01/02/1863	10/02/1922		Dr.
Haas	Leon Samuel			1878	1947	05/07/1878	02/28/1947		Woodman and Masonic Emblems
Haas	Leonard			1899	1904	11/15/1899	02/22/1904		
Haas	Martha Elaine			1920	1970			daughter of Mattye Loeb and Dr. A. M. Haas	
Haas (Loeb)	Mattye			1880	1947			wife of Dr. A. M. Haas	
Hard	Noah Leon			1915	1990	01/06/1915	11/29/1990		M.D.
Hart (Jacobs)	Fannie			1871	1966	04/25/1871	01/31/1966	wife of Frederick A. Hart	
Hart	Frederick Adolphus			1870	1941	10/28/1870	03/09/1941		
Hart	Rosa Lucille			1900	1964	08/27/1900	06/07/1964	daughter of Fannie Jacobs and Frederick Adolphus Hart	
Heymann (Lurch)	Sarah			1873	1951				
Hirsch	Morris Aron			1893	1947	07/11/1893	07/11/1947		
Isaac	Corinne							wife of Isaac Roos	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Isaac	I.			1875	1937				
Isaac	Ida			1864	1870	05/02/1864	09/22/1870	daughter of Solomon Isaac and Rosalie Bloch	
Isaac	Pauline				1933		04/02/1933		
Isaac	Solomon			1829	1898	03/06/1829	06/09/1898		
Jacobs	Aaron			1873	1959				
Jacobs	Adolphe			1875	1950	03/25/1875	04/06/1950		
Jacobs (Hirschman)	Hannah			1881	1943			wife of Aaron Jacobs	
Jacobs	Hannah			1882	1963	12/09/1882	06/03/1963		
Jacobs	Jonas			1869	1907	01/18/1869	04/02/1907	son of Sol. Jacobs and Rosa Lucas	
Jacobs (Heilbron)	Leah			1887	1964	08/15/1887	07/28/1964	wife of Adolphe Jacobs	
Jacobs	Leonce			1879	1930	02/04/1879	03/13/1930		
Jacobs	Solomon			1839	1917				Masonic Emblem
Jacobs	Yetta			1867	1949	03/04/1867	04/26/1949		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Kaufman	Joseph			1844	1878	09/14/1844	06/22/1878		
Landau	Joseph			1867	1936	03/06/1867	03/18/1936		
Lerner	Ethel			1958	1933	10/15/1858	11/12/1933		
Levy	Benoît	Surbourg, Alsace		1863	1881	03/26/1863	09/10/1881		
Levy	Israel	Bauxieiller, Alsace	Opelousas, LA		1881		07/19/1881		aged 87 years
Levy	Marion			1900	1900	09/17/1900	11/08/1900	son of Marx M. and Bonnye G. Levy	
Lewis	Rose Mamie			1881	1881	04/10/1881	08/01/1881	daughter of J. and H. Lewis	
Liberman	Juanita				1874		07/09/1874	daughter of Lina and Hyman Liberman	aged 6 months
Lieberman	Isidore			1872	1876	05/22/1872	06/05/1876	son of Linda Kreeger and Hyman Liberman	
Loeb	Edward Lee			1872	1943	08/16/1872	11/07/1943		
Loeb (Wolff)	Rosetta			1880	1977	12/26/1880	09/16/1977	wife of Edward Lee Loeb	
Loeb	Sarah	Ruhlheim, Germnay		1841	1903	03/15/1841	08/26/1903	wife of Solomon Loeb	
Loeb	Solomon	Gerolsheim,	New Orleans,		1893		06/25/1893		aged 53 years,



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
		Rhein Pfalz, Bavaria	LA						6 months, 17 days [Additional Inscription] **"Kurscheedt, N.O."
Lucas	Rosa			1846	1916			wife of Solomon Jacobs	
Marks	Elese			1844	1887	10/14/1844	11/03/1887	wife of David Roos	
Mitchell	David			1875	1944				
Mitchell (Loeb)	Fannye			1873	1942			wife of David Mitchell	
Munzesheimer	Moses			1872	1872	02/27/1872	08/25/1872		
Munzesheimer	Rita			1875	1876	12/28/1875	07/01/1876	daughter of F. Munzesheimer and Sara Loeb	[Inscription] "Kurscheedt & Bienvenu, 120 Camp St., N.O."
Phillips	Juanita			1878	1878	04/24/1878	09/23/1878	daughter of Fanny Kreeger and Emanuel Phillips	
Pressburg	Israel			1876	1933	05/27/1876	02/08/1933		
Pressburg (Maples)	Vita			1878	1959	12/03/1878	05/30/1959	wife of Israel Pressburg	
Riseman	Anna Mae			1912	1988	12/02/1912	03/16/1988		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Riseman	Benjamin			1879	1931	12/27/1879	10/10/1931		
Riseman (Lerner)	Dora			1883	1981	08/15/1883	12/22/1981	wife of Benjamin Riseman	
Roach	Emma			1872	1947	10/19/1872	07/06/1947	wife of Jonas Roos	
Roos	Adolph			1882	1882	07/12/1882	07/23/1882		[French Inscription] L'Innocence 'a Triumphee Au Ciel els Anges l'ont Rappele
Roos	David			1836	1918				
Roos	Eda Louise				1928			daughter [of Isaac Roos and Corinne Isaac]	
Roos	Isaac			1866	1928				
Roos	Jeanette			1875	1959	05/20/1875	08/20/1959	wife of Dr. John A. Haas	
Roos	Jonas			1873	1943	05/24/1873	05/04/1943		
Roos	Leonce			1869	1875	04/13/1869	08/20/1875		
Roos	Leonce			1897	1976	03/03/1897	05/19/1976		PFC US Army World War 1
Roos	Mary			1877	1970	05/26/1877	02/11/1970	wife of Leon S.	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
								Haas	
Roos	Nathan			1871	1900	09/19/1871..	08/14/1900	son of David Roos and Elese Marks	
Schiff	Calvin Edward			1939	1966	10/09/1939	03/01/1966	son of George and N. Schiff	
Schiff	George Samuel			1904	1949	11/03/1904	01/01/1949		
Schiff (Blotner)	Nellie			1898	1984	06/05/1898	09/19/1984	wife of George S. Schiff	
Siegel	Abe			1883	1949	02/16/1883	03/28/1949		
Siegel	Hattie				1934		05/02/1934	wife of Joseph Landau	
Stander	Bertha			1886	1976	08/02/1886	03/03/1976	wife of Julius Stander	
Stander	Julius			1881	1950	03/16/1881	09/22/1950		
Weil	Cleona			1865	1918	12/28/1865	06/22/1918	wife of Phil L. Asher	
Weil	Felix	Shirhoffen Alsace Lorraine	Rosa, LA	1881	1899	05/19/1881	09/29/1899		
Winsberg	Arnold			1903	1990	08/09/1903	12/08/1990		
Winsberg (Lurch)	Frances			1875	1954			wife of Mayer Winsberg	
Winsberg	Julius Aaron			1906	1967	04/28/1906	02/27/1967		

<b>Surname (Maiden Name)</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Place of Birth</b>	<b>Place of Death</b>	<b>Year of Birth</b>	<b>Year of Death</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Date of Death</b>	<b>Relationship</b>	<b>Other</b>
Winsberg	Mayer			1886	1935				
Winsberg	William Jacob			1908	1966	12/14/1908	02/09/1966		

\* The inscription of "Kursheedt and Bienvenu New Orleans" is the imprint of the monument maker in New Orleans.



Headstone Inscriptions  
from Cemeteries of Extinct Jewish Communities  
in Mississippi & Louisiana

Plaquemine, Louisiana

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Bear	Abraham	Burgkundstadt, Bavaria	Baton Rouge, LA	1786	1858		04/01/1858		
Bear	Caroline			1837	1886	01/21/1837	04/26/1886	wife of S. Hirsch	
Blumenthal (Mayer)	Fannie	Wolfisheim Germany		1854	1911	08/31/1854	03/29/1911		
Blumenthal	Lazarus	Hesse Germany		1813	1906	04/10/1813	06/05/1906		
Blumenthal	Moses			1892	1907	08/31/1892	12/01/1907		
Bluestein	Dora			1839	1896	10/12/1839	10/03/1896	wife of V. Bluestein	
Bluestein	Louis			1863	1922				
Bluestein	M.			1836	1905		10/29/1905		
Bluestein (Levy)	Rebecca			1869	1954	10/15/1869	08/12/1954		
Blumenthal	Meyer			1884	1919	12/15/1884	01/19/1919		
Cohen	Jacob				1901				doves on grave

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Cohn	Dora			1888	1962	01/03/1888	05/23/1962		
Cohn	Mayer			1858	1933	09/27/1858	07/26/1933		
Cuthbert Levy	Simon			1873	1959	11/22/1873	06/01/1959		Dr., mason
Dalsheimer	Jeannette			1835	1933			wife of A. Kowalski	
Dardenne (Cohn)	Esther			1886	1949	11/18/1886	09/04/1949		
Dardenne	Henry Dupre			1849	1910	09/26/1849	05/10/1910		
David	Clarence			1889	1890	09/26/1889	05/23/1890	son of Charles and Emma Kahn	
Ephraim (Levy)	Henrietta			1863	1942	11/07/1863	01/01/1942		
Ephraim (Cohn)	Henrietta			1890	1960	06/20/1890	08/04/1960	wife of Maurice J. Ephraim	
Ephraim	Henry			1886	1962	07/26/1886	02/22/1962		
Ephraim	Maurice			1884	1956	05/02/1884	05/02/1956		
Ephraim	David	Alsace-Lorraine		1854	1930	07/15/1854	10/01/1930		
Froehling	Henrietta			1885	1950				
Froehling	Joe			1887	1942	09/04/1887	02/19/1942		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Ginsburg	Ernestine			1852	1932	08/05/1852	10/29/1932		
Goldstein	Abraham			1864	1924		10/19/1924		
Goldstein	H.				1906		02/06/1906		aged 62 years
Goldstein	Jake			1883	1929				Father
Goldstein	O.			1884	1922	10/27/1884	12/27/1922		
Goudchaux	Floret	Brumath France			1887		03/20/1887	wife of Lippman Kahn	aged 53 years
Grant	Edward Talbot			1902	1978	03/09/1902	03/04/1978		US Army WWI
Grant (Dardenne)	Flow			1902		03/31/1902			
Grant, Jr.	E.			1928	1935	06/15/1928	05/20/1935		
Hirsch	Samuel			1839	1858	12/05/1839	10/04/1858		
Jacobs	Harriet			1861	1935	09/17/1861	12/23/1935	wife of Henry Dardenne	
Kahn	Charles			1852	1862	07/04/1852	02/16/1862		small headstone
Kahn	Earnest			1876	1944	09/13/1876	02/24/1944		
Kahn	Julius				1891		11/08/1891	son of Seligman Kahn and Pauline	aged 21 years

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
								Dahlman	
Kahn	Maise Jacob			1891	1892	11/16/1891	04/05/1892	son of Felix and Henrietta Kahn	
Kahn	Marx			1879	1924	07/05/1879	06/03/1924		
Kahn (Dahlman)	Pauline			1840	1987	02/22/1840	08/15/1987		Bilah bat Naftali
Kahn	Seligman	Alsace		1834	1888	11/21/1834	10/07/1888		
Kaufman (Levy)	Belle			1895	?	09/27/1895	12/21/?		Care taker of cemetery until death
Kern	David	New Orleans, LA	Plaquemine, LA	1864	1938	08/05/1864	12/24/1938		
Kern	Lazard			1862	1916	02/06/1862	02/11/1916		our dear brother
Kern	Leopold			1868	1945	01/17/1868	08/13/1945		
Kern (Wolf)	Selina			1880	1955	09/08/1880	12/31/1955		
Kern (Wolf)	Theresa			1884	1954	02/29/1884	10/07/1954		
Kling	Doville			1877	1901	01/18/1877	07/01/1901		
Kling	Gabriel			1886	1899	09/22/1886	06/13/1899		aged 33 years
Kowalski	Abraham			1833	1906	09/24/1833	03/23/1906		He giveth his beloved sleep



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Kowalski	Jonas			1861	1908	08/31/1861	03/21/1908		loving brother and son
Kowalski	Rosina Clara			1870	1913	09/25/1870	05/14/1913	wife of Benjamin Blumenthal	
Levi	Yonah			1875		08/09/1875			Hebrew
Levy	Alexander				1900		03/01/1900		To the Memory of
Levy (Kahn)	Corrine			1872	1948	05/09/1872	03/31/1948		
Levy	Daniel	Barshinger Lorraine		1823	1897		04/02/1897		
Levy	Delphine	Borschinger Lorraine	Plaquemine, LA	1845	1924	03/14/1845	11/26/1924	wife of Simon Wolf	
Levy	Harry			1881	1924	03/10/1881	11/08/1924	son of Moise and Millie Levy	
Levy	Henry			1864	1948	02/10/1864	02/01/1948		
Levy	Leon				1903		11/27/1903		aged 87
Levy	Michel				1908		06/11/1908		aged 52 years
Levy	Moise Lionel			1859	1908	07/23/1859	10/07/1908		Tree Monument/wo dmen Baruch din ha'emet
Levy	Seligman			1891	1955	10/07/1891	02/10/1955		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Levy	Sylvain	Borschingner Lorraine		1840	1884	06/17/1840	07/08/1884		
Littman	Gertrude			1898	1953	09/05/1898	06/07/1953	wife of Henry Ephraim	
Lozano	Ethel			1881	1912	03/04/1881	09/11/1912		our loving sister
Lozano	Sam				1956				aged 75 years
Mayer	Bettie	Prussia		1842	1903	05/01/1842	11/27/1903	wife of Daniel Mayer	
Mayer	Melanie				1930		05/06/1930		
Meyer	Leon	Alsace		1837	1898	07/20/1837	01/14/1898		aged 81 years
Sablman	William				1878		09/17/1878		Howard's ass'n nurse, Died of Yellow fever, Honored though unknown erected to his memory citizens of Plaquemine
Saloman	Pauline	Oberman Alsacem			1890		06/22/1890	wife of Daniel Levy	aged 63 years
Salomon	Millie			1862	1945	01/30/1862	05/16/1945	wife of Moise Levy	picture!
Scharff	Erle Louis			1883	1884	03/30/1883	07/20/1884		
Scharff	Henry	Essinger Rheinpflz		1813	1893	03/06/1813	12/27/1893		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Scharff	Leon	Landau, Germany		1850	1909	10/27/1850	04/04/1909		
Scharff (Levy)	Melanie			1856	1941				Mother
Schwartz (Kern)	Rosina			1900	1961	06/18/1900	12/09/1961		
Schwawrtz	Solomon	Woodville, MS		1887	1959	02/08/1887	10/29/1959		
Schwing (Bluestein)	Hilda			1888	1972	06/29/1888	02/13/1972		
Silber	Abe			1875	1928				
Silber (Bluementhal)	Bertha			1844	1910			wife of Louis Silber	
Silber	Edward			1870	1941				
Silber	I.			1887	1951				
Silber	Leopold			1869	1948				
Silber	Lilly			1882	1934	10/09/1882	05/28/1934	wife of Dr. S. C. levy	
Silber	Louis			1843	1918				
Silber	Mitchell			1876	1945				
Silber Furst	(damaged)			1881	1942				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Stern	Rosa			1863	1945	05/10/1863	03/20/1945		
Weil	Jules	Hagenau, France		1820	1859	11/11/1820	05/25/1859		
Weil	Solomon				1878				
Wilbert (Silber)	Carrie			1885	1962	10/23/1885	01/11/1962		
Wolbrette	Lazare			1883	1885	07/17/1883	01/28/1885		
Wolf	Henrietta			1852	1922	06/02/1852	03/17/1922	wife of Harris Goldstein	
Wolf	Simon	Worrstadt Hesse Darmstadt		1852	1917	04/14/1852	06/14/1917		?D Ephraim and son clothing store



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**St. Francisville/ Bayou Sara, Louisiana**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Aschaffenburg (Stern)	Sara			1880	1953	03/28/1880	12/14/1953		
Blum	Sigmund			1848	1901	01/03/1848	10/26/1901		
Goldman	Joseph			1847	1895	12/15/1847	02/18/1895		
Harris	Abraham			1823	1916				
Harris	Alexander			1869	1941	08/06/1869	02/27/1941		
Harris	Ben			1904	1953	11/28/1904	11/02/1953		
Harris (Denekamp)	Leah			1882	1959	03/06/1882	02/27/1959		
Harris	Rosalie				1930		12/10/1930		no marker
Hartson	William			1845	1926	10/18/1845	07/20/1926		
Levy	Albert			1886	1962	01/28/1886	10/03/1962		
Levy	David Solomon			1889	1918	07/01/1889	09/07/1918		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Levy	Hariet				1937		02/26/1937		
Levy	Maurice Aerf			1842	1911	03/21/1842	04/30/1911		
Levy	Mena			1881	1946	09/06/1881	01/06/1946		
Mann	Abe			1868	1933	04/01/1868	12/12/1933		
Mann	Anna			1867	1927				
Mann	Benjam			1863	1924				
Mann	Latta			1898	1900	11/08/1898	12/26/1900		
Marks	Bertha				1909		10/19/1909		
Marks	Louis				1896		11/02/1896		
Meyer	Hannah			1840	1904	02/06/1840	11/10/1904	wife of Morris Rosenthal	
Meyer	Joseph			1843	1907	06/05/1843	04/25/1907		
Meyer	Mary			1849	1928	06/15/1849	06/23/1928		
Rosenthal	Adolph			1878	1938	08/07/1878	09/05/1938		
Rosenthal	Moritz			1838	1907	07/21/1838	09/20/1907		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Rosenthal	Samuel			1872	1955	11/05/1872	04/08/1955		
Sackerman	Sarah				1895		10/27/1895		aged 56 years
Schaffer	Morris				1914		03/22/1914		aged 49 years, 6 months
Stern	Abraham			1876	1970	04/16/1876	08/18/1970		
Stern	Barbara			1899	1973	10/30/1899	12/28/1973		
Stern	Frida				1928		07/03/1928		sister
Stern	Joseph			1848	1924	04/01/1848	04/02/1924		
Stern	Louis			1878	1919	03/25/1878	04/24/1919		
Stern (Harris)	Mary			1852	1918	07/12/1852	06/03/1918		
Stern	Sam				1938		01/16/1938		brother (no marker)
Teutsch	Adolph			1855	1903	08/07/1855	03/18/1903		
Teutsch	Bernard			1848	1912	07/24/1848	07/03/1912		
Teutsch	Hannah			1845	1915	08/10/1845	11/21/1915	wife of Joseph Goldman	
Teutsch	Herman			1854	1913	11/21/1854	12/12/1913		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Teutsch	Justine			1859	1908	08/06/1859	05/06/1908		
Teutsch	Louis			1856	1902	08/21/1856	02/12/1902		
Teutsch	Maritz			1865	1907	02/24/1865	08/31/1907		
Teutsch	Mase			1895	1896	11/06/1895	02/04/1896		
Teutsch	Regina			1849	1910	03/16/1849	09/09/1910		
Teutsch	Ricka			1851	1912	03/02/1851	01/26/1912	wife of Sigmund Blum	
Teutsch	Rudolph			1865	1949	09/20/1864	12/05/1949		
Weil	A.				1902		01/26/1902		aged 59 years



Headstone Inscriptions  
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Washington, Louisiana

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
	Baby								otherwise unmarked child's grave next to grave of Rosa Theodore Isaackson
Folse, Jr.	Raphael			1913	1918	12/15/1913	10/09/1918		
Goetz	Gus				1922		11/23/1922		aged 58 years
Goetz	Isaac	Brezen, West Prussia, Germany		1870	1929	10/15/1870	09/15/1929	husband of Selena Meyer	
Goetz (Meyer)	Selena	New Orleans, LA		1876	1945	12/29/1876	10/17/1945	wife of Isaac Goetz	
Isaackson (Theodore)	Rosa	Marmondier, Alsace, France	Rosa, LA		1898		08/12/1898	wife of Simon Isaackson	aged 24 years
Kaufman	A.			1877	1878	01/24/1877	11/01/1878		
Kaufman	Abe	Alsace			1882		01/22/1882		aged 19 years
Klaus (Gussye)	Brunette			1904	1975	02/26/1904	06/11/1975		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Klaus	Hannah			1894	1967	07/31/1894	10/30/1967		
Klaus	Hinda Sarah			1889	1971	09/06/1889	11/18/1971		
Klaus	Max			1863	1936	07/08/1863	12/08/1936	husband of Sarah Rebecca Wolff	
Klaus	Miriam			1896	1992	04/23/1896	07/18/1992		
Klaus (Wolff)	Sarah Rebecca			1870	1952	07/18/1870	01/07/1952	wife of Max Klaus	
Kuntz	Bertha			1898	1963				
Levy (Plonsky)	Frimmit				1894		05/11/1894	wife of Lazarus Levy	aged 62 years
Levy	Lazarus				1908		02/25/1908	husband of Frimmit Plonsky	aged 71 years
Meyer	Abraham	Brezen, West Prussia, Germany		1852	1925	03/04/1852	06/13/1925	husband of Henrietta Goetz	
Meyer (Solomon)	Bertha				1887		08/24/1887	wife of Abram Meyer	aged 45 years
Meyer	Charles			1879	1949	06/10/1879	12/30/1949		
Meyer (Freiman)	Eva	Schwetz, West Prussia		1818	1912	07/04/1818	06/25/1912	wife of Isaac Meyer	
Meyer	Harry			1891	1966	12/02/1891	10/15/1966		La PFC US ARMY WW I

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Meyer (Goetz)	Henrietta	Brezen, West Prussia		1864	1930	01/10/1864	07/12/1930	wife of Abraham Meyer	
Meyer	Infant							of A. Meyer	
Meyer	Infant							of A. Meyer	
Meyer	Isaac	Bresin, Prussia	Palmett (sic), LA	1827	1905	11/05/1827	06/22/1905	husband of Eva Freiman	
Meyer	Jake			1888	1945	11/27/1888	09/13/1945		
Meyer	Louis			1893	1924	02/22/1893	02/06/1924	son of Abe Meyer and Henrietta Goetz	
Meyer	Samuel			1877	1878	07/30/1877	10/05/1878	son of A. Meyer	
Meyer	Sarah			1897	1973	01/07/1897	04/13/1973		
Meyer	Sophie			1901	1990	09/11/1901	03/03/1990		
Plonsky (Alexander)	Caroline			1846	1925	07/27/1846	09/15/1925	wife of Jacob Plonsky	
Plonsky (Preus)	Caroline	Sembach, Bavaria			1886		04/16/1886	wife of Edward Plonsky	aged 51 years
Plonsky	Edward	Gohib, Prussia		1832	1882		08/24/1882		
Plonsky	Isadore				1867				aged 28 years

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Plonsky	Jacob			1847	1920	04/30/1847	07/11/1920	husband of Caroline Alexander	
Plonsky	Lena				1867		10/05/1867		aged 21 years
Plonsky	Mary				1887			daughter of Jacob Plonsky and Caroline Alexander	aged 15 days
Plonsky	Samuel Morris			1874	1936	12/27/1874	07/22/1936	husband of Maud Bergman	
Plonsky	Willy			1880	1894	01/21/1880	09/12/1894	son of Jacob Plonsky and Caroline Alexander	
Raudabaugh (Rosenberg)	Cecelia			1888	1933	08/30/1888	10/24/1933	wife of Samuel B. Raudabaugh	
Rosenberg	Adolph			1847	1921	03/04/1847	02/22/1921	husband of Ernestine Meyers	
Rosenberg	Bertha			1893	1982	12/14/1893	11/15/1982		
Rosenberg (Meyers)	Ernestine			1857	1941	02/01/1857	01/14/1941	wife of Adolph Rosenberg	
Rosenberg	Esma			1878	1960	12/23/1878	07/30/1960		
Rosenberg	Sam			1880	1930	08/12/1880	05/09/1930		
Samual	Simon				1867		09/18/1867		aged 33 years



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Tobiah	Jacob				1867				aged 35 years
White (Meyer)	Clara			1880	1964				
Wolff	Carel			1834	1917		07/05/1917	husband of Hannah Plonsky	
Wolff	Edouard			1892	1896	07/25/1892	10/21/1896	son of Leon Wolff and Rebecca Weil	
Wolff	Fannie			1861	1897	05/06/1861	10/28/1867		
Wolff	Gussye			1874	1958	03/18/1874	12/31/1958		
Wolff (Plonsky)	Hannah				1893		06/25/1893	wife of Carel Wolff	aged 62 years
Wolff	Julian Edouard			1897	1972	10/13/1897	09/16/1972	son of Rebecca Weil and Leon Wolff	La PVT US ARMY WW I
Wolff (Heymann)	Lena	New River, Ascension Parish, LA		1854	1888	08/11/1854	08/23/1888	wife of Leon Wolff	
Wolff	Leon	Ingwiller, Alsace, France		1850	1937	06/10/1850	09/19/1937	husband of Rebecca Weil	
Wolff (Weil)	Rebecca			1856	1927	06/21/1856	07/09/1927	wife of Leon Wolff	
Wolff	Samuel			1866	1867	12/10/1866	10/28/1867		

Headstone Inscriptions  
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**Canton, Mississippi**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Aaron	Joe			1858	1910			brother of Samuel Aaron	
Aaron	Samuel	Gembitz Germany		1824	1895	12/23/1824	03/23/1895		
Abramovitz	Edith			1861	1919			mother	
Abramovitz	Simon			1852	1931			father	
Bearman	Arnold			1889	1918	12/03/1889	06/14/1918		
Berman	W.	Seibersbach Rheinprusse n	Durant, MS	1854	1893	10/05/1854	01/01/1893		
Bloom	Gertrude								aged 15 years
Brill	Charles	Germany			1897		10/04/1897		Mason
Brown	Aolphus			1833	1882				
Cohen	Esther				1878		07/18/1878	wife of Henry Cohen	aged 40 years

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Cohn				1898	1890	11/09/1898	07/05/1890	son of M and H Cohn	
Cohn	Abe				1918		11/02/1918		aged 54 years
Cohn	Esther			1912	1947				
Cohn	Henrietta			1878	1936			wife of Morris Cohn	
Cohn	Morris			1871	1931	05/23/1871	02/18/1931		mason
Davitts (Hesdorffer)	Hattie			1878	1931	11/24/1878	02/16/1931		Eastern Star
Davitts	Max			1867	1940	08/25/1867	06/17/1940		
Dobrowsky	Eva			1890	1918	12/06/1890	10/23/1918	wife of Julius L. Schwartz	
Dobson	Morris Lewis			1857	1925		04/08/1925		a devoted husband and kind father
Dobson	Sarah			1859	1928		05/10/1928		a devoted mother
Dreyfuss	Rosalie			1853	1887		08/15/1887	wife of H. A. Rosenthal	Ayshet Chayil
Emmich	Rachel				1881		07/08/1881	wife of Isaac Emmich	
Feibelman	Frederick			1870	1918	08/14/1870	10/16/1918		woodman

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Feibelman	Hattie			1880	1960	09/12/1880	02/15/1960		
Feibelman	Marie	Rulzheim Germany	Kosciusko, MS	1842	1915	05/28/1842	05/26/1915	wife of Isaac W. Simon	
Forchheimer	Aunt Nannie			1832	1915				
Frank	Julius			1875	1925				
Frey	Joseph			1878	1936				father
Frey	Leon	Terswiller Alsace			1896		12/04/1896		aged 43 years beloved son and brother and upright to his fellow man
Gallome (Garry)	Jennie			1893	1965			mother	
Gollome	Harry			1890	1948			father	
Goodman (Stein)	Claudia			1892	1972	01/08/1892	10/05/1972		
Goodman	Herman			1888	1949	11/22/1888	02/13/1949	brother of Henrietta Hesdorffer	
Gross	Albert			1867	1934	06/15/1867	05/09/1934		
Gross	C.			1839	1898	12/17/1839	09/21/1898		



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Gross	Fannye			1870	1927	03/24/1870	04/20/1927		
Gross	Isidor			1852	1945	08/15/1852	06/06/1945		
Gross	Leon			1869	1874	01/23/1869	03/10/1874		
Gross	Samuel			1877	1887	11/24/1877	04/15/1887		Samuel died and all assembled themselves together and wept for him
Gross	Sophie			1839	1907	10/24/1839	11/25/1907		
Gruenwald	Joseph	Rheinbellen Germany	McCool, MS	1847	1906	04/25/1847	01/05/1906		
Grunweld	Jake	Germany	Hot Springs, Arkansas	1851	1896	09/14/1857	10/15/1896		beloved hubby
Harris	Charles			1860	1918				
Harris	Julius			1828	1907	02/22/1828	09/02/1907		mason
Harris	Theresa			1838	1902	08/18/1838	04/24/1902		
Hart	Joseph	Germany	Canton, MS		1891		12/05/1891		
Hesdoffer			Carthage	1863	1940	11/27/1863	6/8/1940		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Hesdorffer	Albert			1867	1935	08/10/2001	11/06/1935		
Hesdorffer	Ben			1861	1921	09/12/1861	02/17/1921	husband of Leotine Hiller	
Hesdorffer	Cora			1879	1962	08/05/1879	04/28/1962		
Hesdorffer (Tuteur)	Dora								
Hesdorffer	Eugene			1865	1925	02/21/1865	03/04/1925		Mason
Hesdorffer	Harriet	Putteling Lorraine		1840	1903	09/17/1840	12/24/1903	gramma, married to M. B. Hesdorffer	
Hesdorffer	Henrietta			1878	1931	11/24/1878	02/16/1931	wife of Max Davitts	
Hesdorffer	Isadore			1863	1940	11/27/1863	06/08/1940		
Hesdorffer	Leon			1870	1923	05/12/1870	04/07/1923	married to Dora Hesdorffer	
Hesdorffer (Hiller)	Leotine			1868	1937	02/12/1868	12/12/1937		
Hesdorffer	Louis	Madison County, MS		1862	1889	11/21/1862	06/29/1889		
Hesdorffer	M.	Fulda Germany		1825	1896	01/16/1825	07/29/1896	grampa, married to Harriet Hesdorffer	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Hesdorffer	Mose Benjuim			1909	1953	03/06/1909	09/02/1953		
Heyman	Louis	Prussia	Kosciusko, MS	1845	1897		08/29/1897		raised in Philadelphia
Hiller	Adele			1840	1921	08/15/1840	10/25/1921		
Hiller	Charles			1858	1903	05/03/1858	08/24/1903	father	
Hiller	Cylla			1872	1920	08/08/1872	02/03/1920		
Hiller	Emanuel			1869	1926	10/23/1869	06/10/1926		
Hiller	Felix			1860	1920	09/14/1860	12/04/1920		
Hiller	Mathieu	Niederroeder n Alsace		1825	1899	12/28/1825	12/16/1899		
Hiller	Matthew			1901	1928	08/06/1901	10/06/1928		
Hiller	Nathan	Hederroldern Alsace		1842	1911	09/16/1842	01/31/1911		
Hiller	Pearl			1885	1915	07/03/1885	12/06/1915	wife of W. Abramson	
Hiller (Klotz)	Sallie			1886	1904	02/22/1886	08/13/1904		
Hiller	Sophia	Alsace			1909		05/24/1909		aged 79 years

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Hiller	Viola			1890	1901	03/27/1890		daughter of Dan Hiller and Julia Levy	
Hindes	Saul			1898	1920				
Joel	Bettie	Amsterdam, Holland		1912		07/07/1912			aged 84 years
Joel	Moses	Ingenheim Bavaria		1874		11/01/1874			aged 43 years
Kaplan	Jacob			1908	1943	09/15/1908	07/30/1943		his memory is blessed BPOE (Elks?)
Kaplan	Joseph			1892	1978	07/04/1892	06/11/1978		
Kaplan	Sarah			1896	1983	07/16/1896	12/02/1983		
Karpe (Cahn)	Agnes	Puttelance France	Baton Rouge, LA	1846	1923	01/18/1846	06/14/1923		
Karpe	Anchel			1825	1897	01/01/1825	02/05/1897		
Karpe	Benjamin			1869	1921	03/12/1869	12/20/1921		
Karpe	Sidney			1880	1922	11/22/1880	07/11/1922		
Kohlman	Henrietta			1841	1926	12/26/1841	10/14/1926	mother, wife of Charles Myer	
Kuhn	Emiel	Sherman, MS		1875	1875	02/01/1875	09/08/1875	son of Isidor and Sara Kuhn	damaged



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Lazard	Charles	Canton, MS	Braden, TN	1899	1917	10/19/1899	08/12/1917		our darling boy, those that knew him loved him, those that knew him best loved him most
Lazard	Charlie			1868	1943	06/25/1868	07/26/1943		
Lazard	Flora			1874	1946	05/17/1874	02/15/1946		
Lehman	Cora	Louisville, KY							
Lehman	Fanny			1898	1899	04/15/1898	07/15/1899	daughter of Louis and Lena Lehman	
Lehman	Gerald			1891	1961	03/18/1891	03/25/1961		
Lehman	Irwin			1888	1962	12/26/1888	05/06/1962		
Lehman (Smith)	Josephine			1903	1984	05/03/1903	03/08/1984		
Lehman	Lena			1860	1947	06/07/1860	05/16/1947		
Lehman	Leo			1884	1969	01/26/1884	06/11/1969		
Lehman	Louis			1842	1934	01/18/1842	12/20/1934		
Lehman	Maude			1886	1978	09/01/1886	08/02/1978		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Lehman	Samy		Costallion Spring, MS	1888	1889	01/09/1888	06/11/1889		
Levy	Alma	Columbus	Canton, MS	1882	1975	01/30/1882	09/09/1975		
Levy	Alvin William	Canton, MS	Canton, MS	1907	1999	03/05/1907	07/19/1999	son	
Levy	Louis	New Orleans, LA	Canton, MS	1874	1947	03/20/1874	12/23/1947		
Levy	Stanley	Canton, MS	Canton, MS	1907	1976	04/22/1907	03/20/1976	son	
Links	Rachel	Kosciusko, MS		1892	1892	09/15/1892	11/24/1892	infant daughter of A. and Bette Links	
Loeb	Ana			1879	1884	04/24/1879	10/07/1884	daughter of Jacob and Mary Loeb	
Loeb	Bertha			1869	1956	02/02/1869	03/19/1956	daughter of Jacob and Mary Loeb	
Loeb	Jacob			1834	1911	02/22/1834	10/13/1911		
Loeb	Julius			1871	1954	11/12/1871	07/01/1954	brother of Bertha Loeb	
Loeb	Leon			1875	1945	09/07/1875	03/21/1945		
Loeb (Holliday)	Lillian			1900	1976	09/11/1900	03/01/1976		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Loeb (Gross)	Mamie			1881	1954	01/17/1881	11/17/1954		
Loeb (Gross)	Mary			1844	1900	12/22/1844	09/04/1900		
Loeb	Maxine			1880	1965	06/03/1880	04/28/1965		
Loeb	Samuel Gross			1885	1972	06/26/1885	09/04/1972		
Loeb (Lasting)	Sophie Marie			1911	1965	12/14/1911	10/14/1965		
Loeb	Stella				1928		01/18/1928	daughter of Jacob and Mary Loeb	
Loeb	Tillie	Canton, MS	San Antonio, TX	1870	1897	02/28/1870	12/20/1897	wife of Sam Weiner	
Loewenberg			Kosciusko, MS	1868	1911	04/03/1868	05/03/1911		
Lowenberg	Judith			1872	1957	01/29/1872	10/19/1957		
Maas	Charles	Gross Bokenheim Germany		1842	1875	04/15/1842	08/18/1875		mason
Maas	David	Clairborne, AL	Meridian	1863	1890	09/09/1863	11/07/1890		
Maas	Leopold			1813	1878	04/18/1813	11/03/1878		
Maas	Theresa	Asselheim Bavaria	Meridian	1821	1904	11/14/1821	01/02/1904	wife of Leopold Maas	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Marseilles	J.			1855	1920	12/10/1855	04/06/1920		
Mary	Leopold			1853	1880	10/04/1853	02/08/1880		
Mayer	Fanny	Hagenau Alsace		1893		06/28/1893			aged 72 years
Meyer	Daniel	Kettig Germany	Kosciusko, MS	1827	1913	09/24/1827	06/18/1913		
Michel	Arnaud			1880	1939	02/02/1880	08/17/1939		
Michel	Pauline			1884	1977	10/29/1884	05/03/1977		
Myer	Charles	Gross Bokenheim Germany	Oxford, MS	1834	1902	07/06/1834	01/23/1902		
Myer	Harry			1876	1931	01/25/1876	02/05/1931	brother	
Myer	Marcus	Oxford, MS		1872	1903	09/06/1872	07/17/1903		
Peavy	Emanuel	Krotoschin, Prussia		1822	1896	09/01/1822	06/29/1896		
Perlinsky	Clara			1891	1891	01/09/1891	04/07/1891	daughter of Joseph and Sophia Perlinsky	
Perlinsky	David			1878	1953	09/18/1878	03/02/1953		
Perlinsky	Isidor			1892	1974	12/06/1892	12/18/1974		sold temple



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Perlinsky	Joseph			1849	1932	10/20/1849	01/04/1932		habidashery store on square sold temple
Perlinsky (Pace)	Minnie			1887	1959	11/12/1887	12/02/1959		
Perlinsky	Peggy Melissa			1910	1957	04/18/1910	02/26/1957		
Perlinsky	Sadie			1882	1895	09/25/1882	11/03/1895		
Perlinsky (Meyer)	Sophia			1853	1929	05/12/1853	12/04/1929		
Schild	Abraham	Germany		1818	1903	01/19/1818	07/06/1903		
Schild	William			1848	1923				
Schneider	Bertha	Canton, MS	New Orleans, LA	1862	1915	02/08/1862			
Schneider (Maas)	Bertha	Gross Bokenheim Germany	Canton, MS	1851	1907	08/24/1851	02/04/1907		
Schwartz	Julius			1883	1940				
Shlomborg	Abraham			1895	1896	03/02/1895	03/12/1896	our beloved son	
Simon	Isaac	Kaldalbershe in Germany	Kosciusko, MS	1835	1888	12/25/1835	10/31/1888		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Simons	Elias			1869	1872	08/17/1869	04/03/1872	son of Isaac and Mary Simons	Eliahu bar Yitzchak
Sproles (Cohn)	Sara				1960		03/23/1960		may her memory be blessed and never forgotten
Stein (Friedman)	Alice			1907	1999	09/09/1907	04/17/1999		
Stein	Freida	Gomersheim Germany		1861	1955	10/21/1861	04/20/1955	mother of Claudia Stein	
Stein	Leopold	Ingenheim, Germany	Canton, MS	1847	1906	03/26/1847	11/05/1906		
Stein	Louis			1893	1978	08/29/1893	08/04/1978		
Tuteur	A.	Winiveller Germany	Canton, MS	1851	1904	03/06/2001	11/11/1904		
Tuteur	David				1957		08/18/1957		
Tuteur	Jacob Aaron				1948		11/03/1948		
Tuteur	Merl				1968		11/16/1968		
Tuteur	Moses			1892	1893	08/10/1892	06/14/1893		
Tuteur	Pauline				1946		03/12/1946		
Tuteur	Rachel			1894	1899	11/12/1894	02/12/1899		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Weiler	Blanche			1847	1898	11/15/1847	07/30/1898		immortal in our love
Weiner	Caroline	Afflatrach Germany		1836	1912	07/15/1836	01/13/1912		
Weiner (Loeb)	Carrie		Canton, MS	1877	1957	02/22/1877	10/27/1957		
Weiner	Mary			1920	1920	02/24/1920	03/02/1920		
Weiner	Rachel			1872	1890	01/16/1872	07/24/1890	daughter of S. and C. Weiner	
Weiner	Samson	Heinsheim Germany		1834	1899	05/25/1834	11/30/1899		
Weiner	William	Vaiden, MS	Canton, MS	1863	1938	05/29/1863	04/30/1938		father
Wile				1900	1901	11/09/1900	03/04/1901		infant
Wile				1898	1898	09/09/1898	11/09/1898		infant
Wile	Samuel	Grenada, MS		1858	1901	04/04/1858	11/28/1901		in life beloved in death lamented

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Laurel, Mississippi

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Berger	Lottie			1877	1944	03/24/1877	09/05/1944		
Berger	Martin			1877	1943	05/28/1877	05/28/1943		mason
Danziger	Celia			1863	1918				
Danziger	Pauline			1892	1939	07/29/1892	06/27/1939		star
Eagle	Josef			1862	1935	11/10/1862	03/07/1935		star on front face
Eagle (Wise)	Lena			1967	1939	08/10/1867	07/23/1939		star on front face
Fine (Matison)	Anna			1881	1957				
Fine (Sack)	Hannah			1891	1988				
Fine	Harry			1885	1967				
Fine (Matison)	Jennie			1884	1933				
Fine	Milton			1917	1997				



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Fine	Nathan			1880	1953				mason
Fine	Sam			1888	1946	07/07/1888	11/24/1946		
Fogel	Robert			1856	1918	03/15/1856	02/02/1918		woodman, "at rest" Headstone!
Frohman	Robert			1936	1996	05/14/1936	05/20/1996		
Frohman, Jr.	Arthur			1952	1960	08/01/1952	08/02/1960		
Ginsburg					1916		06/28/1916	infant son of Ellis and Bessie Ginsburg	
Ginsburg	Betsy			1893	1974	10/28/1893	01/22/1974		
Ginsburg	Ellis			1887	1971	08/07/1887	12/04/1971		
Ginsburg	Henry			1924	1995	09/09/1924	09/04/1995		
Hosen	Abraham Zelig			1877	1944		12/13/1944	dear father	Hebrew: Rabbi Avraham Zelig bar Sarga Feivel, naftar 27Kislev tesha tendeve
Joseph					1919		02/18/1919	infant son of Robert and Bessie Joseph	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Kaplan (Ginsburg)	Annie			1890	1918				
Kaplan (Stark)	Fannie			1889	1935				
Kaplan	Samuel			1887	1944				
Klein	Elizabeth			1911	1964				
Klein	Ella			1911	1984				
Klein	Irma			1880	1949				
Klein	Simon			1871	1934				
Lefkowitz	Pincus			1851	1934				star on front face
Lefkowitz	Sarah			1857	1936				star of front face
Levine (Eagle)	Frances			1898	1953	02/23/1898	09/15/1953		star on front face
Levine	Joseph			1891	1956	09/22/1891	04/09/1956		star on front face
Levine	Leon			1921	1923	05/19/1921	10/21/1923		
Marcus	Abraham			1871	1935				
Marcus	Dave			1901	1989	01/01/1901	01/01/1989		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Marcus	Donal			1946	1994	01/10/1946	02/14/1994		
Marcus	Eva			1902	1986				
Marcus	Hazel			1909	1992	03/21/1909	06/04/1992		
Marcus	Lena			1876	1936				
Mark (Mae)	Sara			1912	1975	07/25/1912	06/15/1975		
Matison	Dave			1884	1949				mason
Matison	Esther			1897	1949				
Matison	Harold Morris			1921	1972				
Matison (Walts)	Lena			1923	1984				no star!
Matison, Jr.	Dave Arnold			1923	1992				
May	Harry			1898	1965	08/27/1898	01/27/1965		
Pollack	Benjamin			1870	1940	03/07/1870	03/03/1940		woodmen/mason n Hebrew: Rabbi Baruch Dov Pollack, – azi, b'shishim v'tesha shanim limi chain, azav eretz hachaim

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
									b'yom 25 Adar 5700



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Pollack (Hilda)	Gussie			1875	1925	06/01/1875	06/01/1925		Hebrew: Hinda Gitel Pollack b'chamshid shana l'mi chaim azva eretz hachaim b'yom 9 Iyun 5685, Eastern Star
Pollack	Reuben			1901	1943				
Rubenstein			Hattisburg		1920		06/26/1920	infant son of Esther and Jacob Rubenstein	
Schwartz	Leo			1896	1977				
Schwartz	Lillie			1903	1983				
Weinberger	Jennie			1884	1942				star on front face
Weinberger	Nathan			1870	1943				star on front face
Wise	Hannah			1873	1941				star on front face
Yawn	Bob			1915	1987	08/31/1915	12/24/1987		crown/mason
Yawn (Klein)	Olga			1909	1966	03/27/1909	05/24/1966		

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Lexington, Mississippi

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Applebaum	Abe				1928		11/22/1928		aged 48 years
Applebaum	Abram Manuel			1918	1931	02/23/1918	08/10/1931		
Applebaum	Nathan			1885	1939	03/25/1885	06/20/1939		
Applebaum	Rosebud			1890	1923	09/24/1890	04/25/1923		
Applebaum	Sol			1882	1940	07/20/1882	03/22/1940		
Auerback (Sontheimer)	Sarah			1853	1902	04/06/1853	04/16/1902		
Cohen	Philip			1894	1926	11/11/1894	02/05/1926	husband of Rebecca Levingston	
Cohen (Schur)	Rosa			1867	1949	07/02/1867	12/07/1949		
Cohen	Samuel			1862	1943	04/26/1862	03/11/1943		
Fisher	Bettie			1861	1926	03/06/1861	08/08/1926		
Fisher	Simen			1859	1932	10/22/1859	03/01/1932		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Flink	Meyer Noah			1884	1928				
Flink	Myra Norma			1930	1943				
Flink	Nathan Samuel			1884	1918				
Flower (Hyman)	Esther			1867	1930	04/12/1867	06/06/1930		
Flower	Isaac			1862	1931	01/21/1862	07/09/1931		
Flower	Louis			1894	1914	07/04/1897	09/09/1914	son of Isaac and Esther Flower	
Flowers					1938		02/09/1938	infant daughter of Sam and Flora Flowers	
Flowers	Abram			1886	1945	04/17/1886	04/21/1945		
Flowers	Mildred			1884	1918			wife of Morris Flink	
Flowers	Samuel			1891	1943	05/26/1891	10/12/1943		
Hargon	Otis Reed			1859	1932		10/18/1932		
Hargon (Marks)	Rosa			1874	1927	01/18/1874	01/19/1927		
Harrman	Isodore			1888	1945	10/04/1888	10/20/1945		
Herman	Abraham			1833	1924	11/17/1833	02/12/1924		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Herman	Delia			1847	1935	08/24/1847	01/18/1935		
Herrman	Morris			1876	1949	04/14/1876	12/20/1949		
Herrman	Sam			1874	1934	09/23/1874	08/29/1934		
Hooke (Gillespie)	Anna								
Hooke	John								
Hooke	John Gillespie								
Hyman	Bettie			1891	1891	08/01/1891	08/01/1891	daughter of Isdore and Rosa Hyman	
Hyman	Isodore			1861	1921	03/10/1861	05/20/1921		
Jacobson	Aaron			1884	1949	02/02/1884	12/06/1949		
Kern	Flora			1863	1939	08/19/1863	03/04/1939		
Levy	Herrman			1889	1936	03/15/1889	10/10/1936		
Levy	Isadore			1856	1932				
Levy	Joseph			1886	1939				



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Levy	Lena			1865	1942	12/25/1865	06/29/1942		
Levy	Martin			1891	1929	04/04/1891	07/05/1929		
Lewis					1909		03/20/1909	son of Morris and Julia Lewis	
Lewis				1904	1904	05/05/1904	05/09/1904	infant son of Morris and Julia Lewis	
Lewis (Harman)	Julia			1873	1935	04/02/1873	01/18/1935		
Maddex	Sam Alford				1953		09/15/1953		aged 78 years
Maddox	Arlie				1947		02/03/1947	wife	aged 72 years
Miller	David			1882	1926	03/16/1882	02/28/1926	husband of Eva Cohen	
Miller	Herbert Leonard			1917	1944	04/07/1917	07/06/1944		
Reinhard	Norman Victor			1902	1933				
Reinhard	Victor			1863	1942				
Riteman	Harriet				1951		09/19/1951		aged 81 years
Rosenthal (Sentheimer)	Carrie			1855	1904	06/14/1855	06/24/1904		
Rosenthal	Henry			1852	1921	03/14/1852	06/25/1921		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Rosenthal	Joseph			1866	1923				
Rosenthal (Dreyfuss)	Rosa			1863	1935	03/02/1863	02/12/1935		
Sentheimer	Rosa			1850	1911	03/06/1850	05/27/1911	wife of Isodore Hymen	
Sontheimer	Bilkney			1862	1868	12/06/1862	08/09/1868	child of Jacob and Mary Sontheimer	
Sontheimer	Emma			1855	1905	10/23/1855	09/18/1905		
Sontheimer	Fannie	Herxheim, Germany		1829	1913	03/10/1829	02/25/1913		
Sontheimer	Hannah			1846	1847	05/22/1846	05/14/1847	daughter of Jacob and Mary Sontheimer	
Sontheimer	Jacob			1819	1886	10/20/1819	06/24/1886		
Sontheimer	Jeanette			1858	1896	02/08/1858	10/26/1896		
Sontheimer	Jonas			1869	1879	11/27/1869	08/16/1879		
Sontheimer	Lily			1867	1948	01/11/1867	07/24/1948		
Sontheimer	Mary			1821	1895	07/04/1821	01/30/1895		
Sontheimer	Moses			1848	1849	08/12/1848	10/01/1849	son of Jacob and Mary Sontheimer	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Sontheimer	Necie			1851	1947	10/13/1851	09/08/1947		
Sontheimer	Solomon	Wurtenburg, Germany		1825	1890	02/11/1825	08/20/1890		

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**Monticello, Mississippi**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Hyman	Elias	Soutz Sousforetz France	Monticello, MS		1949		08/19/1949		aged 32 years Hebrew: Eliahu bar Tsendel full Hebrew date
Klotz	Isaac	Sultz, France	Monticello, MS		1853		09/15/1853	son of Joseph Klotz	aged 19 years Hebrew inscription badly worn
Kottwitz	Hyman	Posen, Prussia		1820	1854		09/30/1854		aged 29 years, 6 months Hebrew: Nekver Tartou erev Yom Kippur//nolad b'shnat takfi l'dak b'sheva shel Pesach



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**Osyka, Mississippi**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Cahn	Emile	Bavaria, Germany			1880		10/29/1880		aged 36 years
Cahn	Lena			1854	1898	03/26/1854	11/17/1898		
Cerf	Emanuel	Amite County, MS	Amite County, MS	1854	1878	04/10/1854	10/15/1878		
Cerf	Estelle			1820	1902	05/18/1820	06/08/1902		
Cerf	Isaiah	Haguenau, Alsace	Osyka, MS	1828	1878	05/15/1828	10/07/1878		
Cohn	Polina	Fordon, Prussia		1839	1888	01/01/1839	10/22/1888	wife of Simon Cohn	
Dryfuss	Lehman			1855	1878		10/23/1878		
Hart	Mary	Powidz, Prussia	Osyka, MS	1828	1878	12/20/1828	09/30/1878	wife of Hyman Hart	
Hart	Susan	Witkowo, Prussia	Osyka, MS		1878		11/17/1878	wife of Joseph Hart	aged 67 years
Heuman	Isaac	Osyka, MS		1861	1878	07/11/1861	09/29/1878	son of Moses and Sarah Heuman	
Heuman	Moses			1827	1900				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Heuman	Sara			1822	1899				
Keiffer	Blanche			1883	1883	04/22/1883	09/07/1883	daughter of Leopold and Carrie Keiffer	
Levine	Jacob				1881		09/26/1881		aged 47 years
Levy	Hannah			1851	1899				
Moyse	Jules	Les Etangs, France	Osyka, MS	1852	1878	05/31/1852	12/01/1878		
Mundt	Bunna	Witkowo, Prussia		1808	1881		12/12/1881		
Mundt	Moritz	Posen, Prussia			1886		10/25/1886		aged 44 years
Wolf (Mock)	Harriet	Mertzweiler, Alsace	New Orleans, LA	1829	1906	06/28/1829	03/23/1906		
Wolf	Henry			1873	1878	09/19/1873	10/10/1878	son of Samuel and Harriet Wolf	
Wolf	Lazar			1826	1900	02/11/1826	08/14/1900		
Wolf	Mina	Lambsheim, Bavaria, Germany	Osyka, MS		1896		08/31/1896	wife of Lazar Wolf	
Wolf	Myer	Amite County, MS		1857	1878	01/24/1857	10/24/1878	son of Samuel and Harriet Wolf	
Wolf	Samuel	Buchsweiler, Alsace	Osyka, MS	1824	1899	05/18/1824	06/26/1899		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Young (Grunau)	Ernestine	Germany		1861	1900	05/08/1861	10/05/1900		

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**Port Gibson, Mississippi**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Abraham	Berthold			1882	1918	12/20/1882	02/20/1918		Woodmen of the World Memorial
Abraham	Julia			1856	1916	11/03/1856	05/02/1916		
Abraham	Leonard			1886	1937	04/28/1886	12/14/1937		
Abraham	Louis			1847	1924	10/28/1847	05/02/1924		
Abraham, Jr.	Laz			1913	1918	04/11/1913	04/13/1918		
Bernheimer (Cahn)	Henrietta	Wittgenborn, Kuhrhessen, Germany		1827	1904		01/16/1904		
Bernheimer	Jacob			1863	1911	10/08/1863	06/27/1911		
Bernheimer	Samuel	Hohenems, Tyrol, Austria		1912	1888	09/14/1912	10/23/1888		
Bernhold				1909	1909	09/28/1909	12/02/1909	daughter of J. and R. Bernhold	
Bernhold (Cahn)	Julia			1874	1900	01/17/1874	10/02/1900	wife of Jacob Bernhold	



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Bloch	Aaron			1862		07/24/1862			(the rest in Hebrew)
Bock	Ester			1874	1906	05/10/1874	10/12/1906	wife of David Bock	
Bock	Felix			1873	1933	03/29/1873	04/12/1933		
Bock (Miller)	Rosa			1880	1960	07/20/1880	06/30/1960		
Brod	Ethel	Tunica	Memphis, TN	1919	1926	08/24/1919	03/24/1926		
Cahn	Edwin			1877	1940	04/14/1877	07/31/1940		
Cahn	Louis Kiefer			1887	1956	12/16/1887	01/31/1956		Mississippi Pvt. Co. K 5 Regt. USMC
Cahn	Maurice			1870	1932	10/24/1870	08/31/1932		
Cahn (Kiefer)	Minnie			1848	1896	02/28/1848	10/18/1896	wife of William Cahn	
Cahn	William			1831	1920	12/27/1831	01/24/1920		
Cohn	Aubrey			1927	1983	03/07/1927	10/25/1983		blank space for wife
Cohn	Daniel			1885	1950	05/06/1885	05/19/1950	husband	
Cohn (Titche)	Rose			1886	1975	06/27/1886	01/04/1975	wife	
Desmond	Leah			1888	1959				a Heidenreich

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Dryfus	Solomon Maurice			1890	1895	10/08/1890	08/02/1895	son of David and Rosa	
Dungan (Weil)	Rose			1919	1987	06/19/1919	05/13/1987	sister of Karl Weil	
Fisher (Levy)	Julia			1861	1929				
Fisher	Moses			1857	1905	04/12/1857	07/10/1905		
Frishman	Aaron			1891	1940				
Frishman	Abe	Natchez		1867	1909	11/26/1867	10/09/1909		
Frishman	Celia			1869	1923	08/11/1869	11/15/1923	wife of Harris Frishman	
Frishman	Dora			1912	1913				
Frishman	Harris			1862	1927				
Frishman (Spiel)	Ida			1889	1925				
Frishman	Moses			1869	1925				
Frishman	Rebecca			1897	1951	05/18/1897	12/15/1951		
Frishman	Rosa				1897		12/25/1897	mother	
Frishman	Samuel			1880	1915	03/08/1880	04/30/1915		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Frishman	Samuel			1894	1895			son of H. and C. Frishman	
Harris	Simon								died of Yellow Fever
Heidenreich	L.			1858	1936				
Heidenreich	Lazer Woolf			1824	1907	12/29/1824	06/07/1907		
Heidenreich	Viola			1876	1953				
Heidenreich (Meck)	Zelda			1831	1910		04/05/1910		
Herman	Rebecca			1872	1878	02/20/1872	09/10/1878	daughter of S. and R. Herman	
Herrmann	Charles			1862	1898	11/15/1862	07/25/1898	son of S. and R. Herrmann	
Herrmann	Edward			1877	1933				
Herrmann	Maurice			1874	1915	06/15/1874	04/01/1915	son of S. and R. Herrmann	
Herrmann	Rosalee			1838	1910	04/04/1838	05/31/1910	mother	
Herrmann	Rosalie			1881	1932				
Honigman	Henriette			1854	1890	04/14/1854	10/28/1890	wife of S. Honigman, daughter of Laz. W. Heidenreich	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Kahn (Levy)	Marie			1891	1979	10/12/1891	09/26/1979		
Kaufman	Joseph				1917		01/17/1917		
Kaufman	Josie			1882	1925	11/15/1882	05/22/1925		
Kaufman (Klotz)	Julia	Soulet-Son. Fore, Alsace		1847	1912	08/20/1847	05/23/1912		
Kaufman	Moise			1849	1929	11/10/1849	10/09/1929		
Kaufman	Moses	Trimbac-- Alsace			18--		12/19/1800		aged 69 years, stone half buried
Kaufman	Pearl			1884	1909	12/24/1884	06/30/1909	daughter of Mose and Julia	
Kiefer	Emanuel			1845	1894	06/05/1845	08/25/1894		
Kiefer	Louis			1890	1891				
Kiefer	Louis	Lembach		1811	1886	10/18/1811	12/12/1886		
Kiefer	Marie			1886	1886	02/10/1886	07/13/1886		
Kiefer (Roser)	Marie	Lembeck, Alsace		1814	1882	06/02/1814	08/31/1882	wife of Louis Kiefer	
Labenberg	H.			1836	1875		08/05/1875		
Labenberg	Marcus			1875	1933				



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Labenberg	Regina	Wittgenborn Korhessen, Germany		1829	1898	10/31/1829	09/03/1898	wife of Henry T.	
Levy	Benjamin			1854	1908	10/15/1854	11/04/1908		
Levy (Picard)	Bertha	New York City, NY		1855	1907	12/15/1855	02/07/1907		
Levy	Byron			1858	1935	01/24/1858	02/18/1935		
Levy (Baer)	Emma			1864	1956				
Levy	Estelle	Soult-Sous- Forets, Alsace	Farmersville, LA	1821	1892	03/08/1821	08/31/1892	wife of Mayer Levy	
Levy	Harriet				1900		12/15/1900		aged 75 years
Levy	Henry			1850	1895		12/12/1895		
Levy	Julia			1863	1944	04/29/1863	01/19/1944		
Levy	Julian			1885	1887			son of Byron H. and Julia G.	
Levy	L.			1862	1914	08/31/1862	03/24/1914		Woodmen of the World Memorial
Levy	Laz	Alsace, France		1832	1887	10/29/1832	02/27/1887		
Levy	Leopold	Drainback Elsas, Germany			1907		08/30/1907		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Levy (Neter)	Mary	Swindratsheim, Alsace		1830	1910	10/26/1830	04/22/1910		
Levy	Mayer	Soultz-Sous-Forêts, Alsace		1831	1914	07/10/1831	10/26/1914		
Levy	Willard			1889	1916			son of Byron H. and Julia G.	
Lion	Mary			1850	1869	11/10/1850	09/06/1869	wife of Solomon Lion, daughter of Moses Kaufman	
Marx	Ethel			1890	1892	03/08/1890	11/20/1892	daughter of Jacob and Bertha Marx	
Marx	Florence			1894	1963	03/11/1894	10/12/1963		
Marx	Henry			1853	1904	04/29/1853	08/15/1904		
Marx	Herman			1877	1947				
Marx	Joseph			1890	1929	03/18/1890	01/17/1929		
Marx	Julia			1853	1915	07/16/1853	09/26/1915	wife of Henry	
Marx	Maurice			1872	1884	02/25/1872	01/11/1884	son of Sarah and Sol Marx	
Marx	Miriam			1890	1970			wife of Herman	
Marx	Moses			1878	1911	12/31/1878	08/13/1911		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Marx	Simon			1887	1938				
Meyer	Agnes	Detroit, MI		1905		12/21/1905		wife of Herbert M. Meyer	
Meyer	Hortense			1880	1945	01/01/1880	08/29/1945	wife of Isaac Meyer	
Meyer	Isaac			1871	1960	08/24/1871	11/11/1960		
Moog	Julia			1872		01/10/1872			(unsure if date is for birth or for death)
Moser	Edourd			1855	1914	11/08/1855	11/08/1914		Woodmen of the World Memorial
Moser	Josephine			1871	1934	10/10/1871	11/09/1934		
Newman	Corinne							daughter of L. T. and Julia	
Newman (Kiefer)	Julia			1841	1878	04/14/1841	10/11/1878		
Newman	Louis			1835	1903	01/16/1835	08/21/1903		
Newman	Sidney Kiefer							son of L. T. and Julia	
Riteman	Jacob			1839	1909	04/02/1839	08/14/1909		(blank space for wife)
Roser	Bernard				1875				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Sence	Aaron								all in Hebrew
Sence	Rosa	Schocren, Prussia	Baton Rouge, LA	1886		03/14/1886			
Sommer	Louis	Lembach, Alsace, France		1813	1891	07/03/1813	04/14/1891		
Sommer	Margaret	Lembach, Alsace, France		1810	1891	09/24/1810	04/14/1891		
Titche	A.			1847	1928				
Titche	H.			1884	1930	03/05/1884	10/11/1930		
Titche	I.			1862	1929			wife of A. Titche	
Traxler	David			1897	1948				
Traxler	Ester			1875	1930			wife of Phillip	
Traxler	Sammie			1898	1898	04/02/1898	06/22/1898	son of P. H. and E.	
Unger (Klotz)	Rosalie	Soultz-Sous Forets, Alsace		1825	1886	12/17/1825	03/24/1886	wife of Elias Unger	
Unger	Solomon	Grand Gulf		1845	1882	12/28/1845	10/20/1882		
Weil					1916		06/02/1916	infant daughter of Zerlene and Samuel Weil	



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Weil	Karl			1909	1991	04/18/1909	06/10/1991	son of Samuel and Zerlene	
Weil	Samuel			1866	1940	11/05/1866	11/15/1940		
Weil (Haas)	Zerlene			1880	1954	03/16/1880	09/06/1954		
Welsch	Bertram			1891	1899	07/26/1891	12/06/1899		
Zadek (Hyams)	Ester	New York City, NY			1896		08/24/1896	daughter of J. and K. Hyams, wife of Isidore Zadek	
Zadek	Hiram			1893	1964				
Zadek	Izidore			1846	1933	06/14/1846	11/23/1933		Mason symbol
Zadek (Woolf)	Katy			1860	1952				

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**Sartartia, Mississippi**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Friedlander	Josephina				1850		08/11/1850		
Gould	Alfred			1827	1883				not sure he is Jewish
Hirsch	Mary								
Kohler	Hannah			1845	1847	01/14/1845	09/06/1847		
Kohler	Leah			1847	1847	09/08/1847	09/26/1847		
Kohler	Nathan			1849	1850	04/29/1849	07/06/1850		
Rauh	Abraham				1845		12/12/1845		

Headstone Inscriptions  
from Cemeteries of Extinct Jewish Communities  
in Mississippi & Louisiana

**Woodville, Mississippi**

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
								infant son of ___ and S. Schlesinger	
					1891		08/19/1891	infant son of E. and M. Aaron	
								infant of R. T. and H. Joseph	
		Woodville, MS		1906	1906	12/17/1906	12/22/1906	infant son of Alex (Celes?) Eva and G. Schloss	
	Alexander							son of H. and Rester	
	Frances			1889	1889	04/05/1889	09/02/1889	daughter of I. S. and A. G. Joseph	
	Rosa			1884	1885	07/25/1884	09/20/1885	daughter of Joc and Caroline Benjamin	
	Sarah			1875	1875	12/05/1875	12/09/1875	daughter of Benjamin (Joc and Caroline)	
Aaron	Joseph			1852	1897	07/11/1852	09/18/1897	husband of Louisa G.	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Aaron	Louisa			1864	1954	08/12/1864	01/16/1954	wife of Joseph Aaron	
Adolphus	Josephine	Trenton, NJ	Lake Charles		1929		08/17/1929	wife of Isaac Hart	
Alexander	Arthur	Bayou Sara, LA		1879	1891	12/16/1879	03/27/1891	son of M. and D. Alexander	
Baum	Isaac			1859	1901	10/12/1859	07/07/1901		
Berger	Hanna			1845	1897	04/11/1845	07/26/1897		
Blanch	Lillian			1893	1899	06/28/1893	11/16/1899	daughter of F. A. and Fannie Hart	
Brown	John			1857	1917	02/02/1857	10/10/1917	husband of Emma A. Schlesinger	
Cohen	Abraham			1871	1941	06/27/1871	02/16/1941	son of Jacob and Louise Cohen	
Cohen	Annie	Woodville, MS	Woodville, MS	1861	1893	01/20/1861	08/23/1893	daughter of Jacob and Louise Cohen	
Cohen	Bella			1856	1935	01/17/1856	10/07/1935	daughter of Jacob and Louis Cohen	
Cohen	Charles			1860	1945				
Cohen	Daniel			1866	1877	04/14/1866	01/21/1877	son of J. and L. Cohen	
Cohen	Edward			1859	1861	04/14/1859	09/17/1861	son of Jacob	



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
								and Louis Cohen	
Cohen	Isai			1817	1862		06/02/1862		
Cohen	Marx			1868	1934	05/02/1868	11/10/1934	son of Jacob and Louise Cohen	
Crandes	Joseph								d. 7 June ____, age 45 years, 6 months
Dampf	Ernest			1877	1950	05/24/1877	05/08/1950		
Dampf	Max	Nordseetten Germany	Plaquemine, LA	1866	1940	10/25/1866	01/24/1940		
Dampf (Schwartz)	Nanette	Woodville, LA	Alexandria, LA	1871	1943	06/02/1871	06/18/1943		
Dampf	Percye Joseph			1888	1962	04/20/1888	06/15/1962		
Davidson	Jacob Adolphus			1864	1908	02/05/1864	05/25/1908		
Davidson (Schwartz)	Rosa			1876	1958	10/24/1876	12/09/1958		
Dreyfus	Nathan			1868	1921				
Frank	Mina	New York City, NY	Bayou Sara, LA	1862	1891	07/24/1862	03/03/1891	wife of Gus Brown	
Goldstein	Jacob				1862		08/14/1862		aged 35 years

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Gonslensky	Gustave	Posen Germany	Woodville, MS	1826	1906	08/12/1826			
Goodman	Abraham	Bayou Sara, LA		1891	1891	01/10/1891	05/01/1891	son of Mina and Gus Brown	
Goslinks	Frances	New Orleans, LA	Baton Rouge, LA	1873	1965	04/16/1873	12/17/1965		
Goslinski	Benjamin	New Orleans, LA	Greenville, MS	1857	1922	10/11/1857	05/15/1922		
Goslinski	Jacob			1887	1973				
Goslinski	Louis	New Orleans, LA	Memphis, TN	1860	1942	02/23/1860	06/13/1942		
Gugenheim	Louise	Strasburg	Woodville, MS	1834	1912	02/20/1834	11/09/1912	wife of Jacob Cohen	
Gunst	April Lawrence			1896	1914	09/24/1896	07/14/1914	son of R. and M. L. Gunst	
Gunst	Israel	Bangor, ME	New Orleans, LA	1848	1929	04/19/1848	10/17/1929		
Gunst	Mary			1820	1890	07/03/1820	09/22/1890		
Gunst	Maude	Woodville, MS	New Orleans, LA	1877	1969	06/06/1877	11/13/1969	wife of John Laswell	
Hart	David Meyer			1872		05/06/1872			aged 3 months
Hart	Ellis			18—	1926	11/14/1800	05/02/1926		WOW
Hart	Henry	Kingston, Jamaica	Lake Charles	1837	1911	04/03/1837	11/20/1911		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Hart	Isaac	Kingston, Jamaica	Woodville, MS	1834	1904	01/06/1834	11/23/1904		
Hart	Julia	Kingston, Jamaica	New Orleans, LA	1830	1908	04/24/1830	12/14/1908	wife of Edward Joseph	aged 78 years, 8 months, 20 days
Henriques	Eliza Laura				1868		05/20/1868		aged 21 years, 8 months, 4 days
Henriques	Presocia	Philadelphia, PA	New Orleans, LA	1868	1951	10/31/1868	05/05/1951	wife of Israel Gunst	
Joseph (Cahn)	Anna			1868	1859	07/17/1868	06/12/1859		
Joseph	Edward	Bordun Prussia		1818	1882	05/15/1818	07/14/1882		
Joseph (Gunst)	Hannah	New York City, NY	Woodville, MS	1858	1952	11/23/1858	06/22/1952		
Joseph	Isaac Sinclair			1862	1920	10/21/1862	09/07/1920		
Joseph	Jacob Bunst			1866	1951	12/06/1866	10/27/1951		
Joseph	Percy				1888		02/12/1888		aged 27 years, 1 month, 22 days
Kaiser	Amelia			1822	1900	03/16/1822	04/09/1900		
Kaiser	Carlie			1864	1865	11/26/1864	01/20/1865	daughter of S. and M. Kaiser	
Kaiser	Isaac			1814	1899	05/15/1814	07/12/1899		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Karin	Gabe			1843	1922	06/17/1843	02/27/1922	husband of Julia Aronstein	
Krain	Raphael	Baryou Sara, LA		1879	18--	04/20/1879	12/31/1800	son of Joseph and Theresa Krain	
Leopold	Nathan			1888	1877	12/30/1888	10/19/1877		
Lesetta	Mary							daughter of J. B. and Rester	
Levy	S.			1835	1851	03/08/1835	08/30/1851		
Loeb	Amelia	Gerolsheim Rhein Pfalz	Woodville, MS	1831	1853	03/22/1831	11/26/1853	daughter of Aaron and Fanny Loeb	
Loeb	Henrietta				1850		08/02/1850	wife of Salomon Oury	aged 18 years
Loeb	Regina	Gerolsheim, Rheim, Pfalz Bavaria Germany	St. Francisville, LA	1833	1920	01/16/1833	08/22/1920	wife of Jacob Schlesinger	
Lowenstein	Rosa	Kircheimbola nden, Germany			1905		07/14/1905	wife of Herman Lowenstein	aged 86 years
Mann	Heltie			1869	1944	08/31/1869	03/07/1944		
Mann	Max			1867	1934	09/03/1867	08/18/1934		
Martin	Edgar	Woodville, MS	Baton Rouge, LA	1890	1893	02/02/1890	07/10/1893	youngest son of Louis and Mathilda Cahn	



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Marx	Jeanette	Edeshiem in the Palainane		1827	1855	06/02/1827	10/08/1855		erected by her brother Edward Marx
Mayer	Abraham	Venningen Rhein Pfalz	Bayou Sara, LA	1843	1890	06/05/1843	11/15/1890		
Meyer	Rosina				1858		10/23/1858	wife of Charles Curey	aged 22 years
Meyer	Salomon	Kulua, Poland			1863		06/28/1863	aged 40 years	
Meyers	Edward Salmon			1891	1892	12/09/1891	10/31/1892		
Meyers	Ernestine								marker fallen and buried
Meyers	Melanie							wife of Salomon Meyer	
Meyers	Seraphine				1922		01/25/1922		
Moritz	Jeanette			1813	1850		10/28/1850	wife of Isai Cohen	aged 37 years
Morritz	Judith			1816	1863	01/16/1816	03/26/1863	wife of Jacob Schwartz	
Mushkowitz	Moses	Kolash Poland		1840	1878		12/25/1878		
Newman	Leopold				1871		04/29/1871		aged 29 years
Riems	Bella				1855		07/11/1855	wife of Charles Oury	aged 25 years
Rothschild	Edward			1886	1939	10/10/1886	02/14/1939		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Rothschild	Martin	Nordsletter, Germany		1859	1900	05/18/1859	11/15/1900	husband and father	Masonic Emblem
Sandman	Alexander Henry			1851	1919	06/05/1851	08/29/1919		
Sandman	Jacob			1894	1894	07/13/1894	12/08/1894	son of A. H. and T. Sandman	
Sandman (Gunst)	Therese			1858	1938	03/27/1858	01/13/1938		
Schlesinger	Emma			1856	1932	05/28/1856	04/19/1932	wife of John L. Brown	
Schlesinger	Eunice Louis			1888	1889	11/21/1888	02/10/1889	wife of Gus Brown	
Schlesinger	Isaac	Woodville, MS	Greenville	1860	1891	11/21/1860	05/14/1891		
Schlesinger	Jacob	Stuttgart, Wortembur, Germany	Bayou Sara, LA	1832	1899	12/13/1832	04/28/1899	husband of Regina Loeb	
Schloss	Lee Charles	Memphis, TN	Woodville, MS	1863	1933	01/03/1863	09/26/1933		
Schwabz	Fanny			1848	1863	03/14/1848	07/21/1863	daughter of Jacob and Judith Schwarbz	
Schwartz	Infant		Natchez, MS		190-		09/08/1900	son of Solomon and Rosina Schwartz	

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Schwartz	Jacob	Ingenheim Germany	Woodville, MS	1815	1894	04/06/1815	03/14/1894		
Schwartz	Joseph			1865	1936		07/30/1936		
Schwartz	Sarah			1843	1859	09/12/1849	08/02/1859	daughter of Jacob and M. Schwartz	
Schwartz	Sophie			1845	1923	09/14/1845	08/28/1823	wife of Jacob Schwartz	
Sessler	Louisa	Philadelphia, PA		1847	1901	09/06/1847	12/26/1901	wife of Rabbi M. Sessler	
Stern	Clarence	Woodville, MS	Baton Rouge, LA	1887	1903	08/03/1887	05/31/1903		
Stern	May	Bayou Sara, LA		1879		06/17/1879			
Strauss	Aaron	Neider Roedeven BLASAS Germany	Woodville, MS	1841	1882		11/17/1882		
Teutsch	Aron	Venningen	Bayou Sara, LA	1844	1880	12/19/1844	04/26/1880		
Wolf	Jette							wife of Jacob Wolf	d. 3 Sept ____, age 3-

Headstone Inscriptions  
from Cemeteries of Extinct Jewish Communities  
in Mississippi & Louisiana

Yazoo City, Mississippi

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Applebaum (Simons)	Bella			1894	1967	03/15/1894	06/09/1967		
Applebaum	Harry			1888	1972	12/18/1888	03/04/1972		
Asher	Abraham			1823	1891	05/15/1823	07/04/1891		
Asher	Albert								aged 63 years
Asher	Eugenia				1943		10/03/1943		
Asher	Henry			1868	1889	02/16/1868	04/01/1889	son of Abraham and Rosalie Asher	
Asher	Rosalie								aged 86 years
Blundell (Schaefer)	Adeline			1882	1937	08/01/1882	07/02/1937		
Blundell	Frank Hawthorne			1876	1939	09/23/1876	03/22/1939		
Davidow	Dona			1898	1950	03/15/1898	01/06/1950		
Davidow	Marcus			1862	1926	08/15/1862	05/21/1926		



Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Davidow	Rebecca			1864	1926	07/31/1864	02/07/1926		
Duniew	Selma								
Duview	Leon								
Edsall (Schaefer)	Hilda			1879	1949				
Fisher (Wise)	Pauline			1883	1980	02/11/1883	02/25/1980		
Frenkel	Emile			1846	1897				
Goldstein	Bejamine			1889	1964	01/01/1889	09/16/1964		
Goldstein	Esther			1897	1963	03/17/1897	11/26/1963		
Gordon	George			1908	1965				
Hanneberg	Harry			1876	1933				
Hanneberg	Israel			1848	1906	05/18/1848	11/11/1906		
Hanneberg	Theresa			1843	1916				
Hanneberg	Zola			1882	1948	03/15/1882	11/08/1948		
Harbaugh	Natalie				1944		07/26/1944		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Hirsch	Myer			1845	1904	11/08/1845	02/20/1904		
Hirsch	Rose			1851	1922	02/22/1851	02/23/1922		
Hirsch	William			1878	1945	06/10/1878	02/05/1945		
Levine	Lazan			1893	1958				
Linde	Bill				1900		11/09/1900		aged 24 years
Linde	Louis			1869	1941	05/22/1869	05/22/1941		
Linken	L.			1838	1892	12/24/1838	08/04/1892		
Littman	Ella			1880	1906	06/09/1880	04/23/1906	wife of W. Hirsch	
Littmann	Minnia			1821	1898	03/15/2001	12/09/1898		
Marx	Clara			1860	1941				
Ostrov	Lillian			1886	1969	06/28/1886	03/18/1969		
Ostrov	Nanthan			1884	1951	11/18/1884	01/27/1951		
Pinkus	Helen			1838	1915	08/27/1838	08/27/1915	wife of Samuel Pinkus	
Pinkus	Jacob			1870	1934				

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Schaefer	Emile			1839	1918	02/24/1839	02/27/1918		
Schaefer	Hannah				1897		08/10/1897		aged 81 years
Schaefer	Helen Mae			1905	1977	04/06/1905	07/12/1977	sister of Wmille Tracy Schaefer	
Schaefer	Julia May			1853	1908	08/24/1853	02/24/1908		
Schaefer	Marx			1878	1948	02/28/1878	01/25/1948		
Schaefer	Ray			1878	1953	06/27/1878	08/22/1953		
Schaefer	Wmille Tracy (Bud)			1906	1975	06/01/1906	02/03/1975	brother of Helen Mae Schaefer	
Segal	Max			1876	1925	01/07/1876	01/25/1925		
Sklan (Ostrov)	Esther			1908		04/10/1908			
Sklan	William			1900	1974	03/10/1900	07/24/1974		
Summerfield	Fanny			1864	1938	01/18/1864	09/20/1938		
Summerfield	Harry			1886	1919	04/12/1886	04/30/1919		
Summerfield	Natalie			1890	1895	04/03/1890	12/14/1895	daughter of M. and E. Summerfield	
Summerfield	Sahly			1864	1938	01/18/1864	09/20/1938		

Surname (Maiden Name)	First Name	Place of Birth	Place of Death	Year of Birth	Year of Death	Date of Birth	Date of Death	Relationship	Other
Wise	Eugenia			1856	1889	08/05/1856	08/04/1889	wife of Herman Wise	
Wise	Henry Clay			1881	1884	09/07/1881	04/28/1884	son of Louis and Julia Wise	
Wise	Herman			1885	1905	07/25/1885	11/09/1905		
Wise	Herman			1848	1926	02/10/1848	05/10/1926		
Wise (Cohn)	Ida			1881	1955	06/06/1881	03/25/1955		
Wise	Jacob Samuel			1889	1969	10/09/1889	10/17/1969		
Wise	Josephine				1888		11/10/1888	daughter of Louis and Julia Wise	born November 1, _____
Wise	Julia			1856	1943	08/05/1856	12/12/1943		
Wise	Louis			1843	1899	12/11/1843	08/04/1899		
Wise	Louise			1887	1887	01/15/1887	09/07/1887	daughter of L. and J. Wise	
Wise	William			1896	1964	02/17/1896	05/24/1964		
Wolerstein	John				1890		01/01/1890		aged 50 years
Wolerstein	Minnie				1910		04/17/1910	wife of John Wolerstein	aged 70 years



### **Appendix III**

### **Photographs**

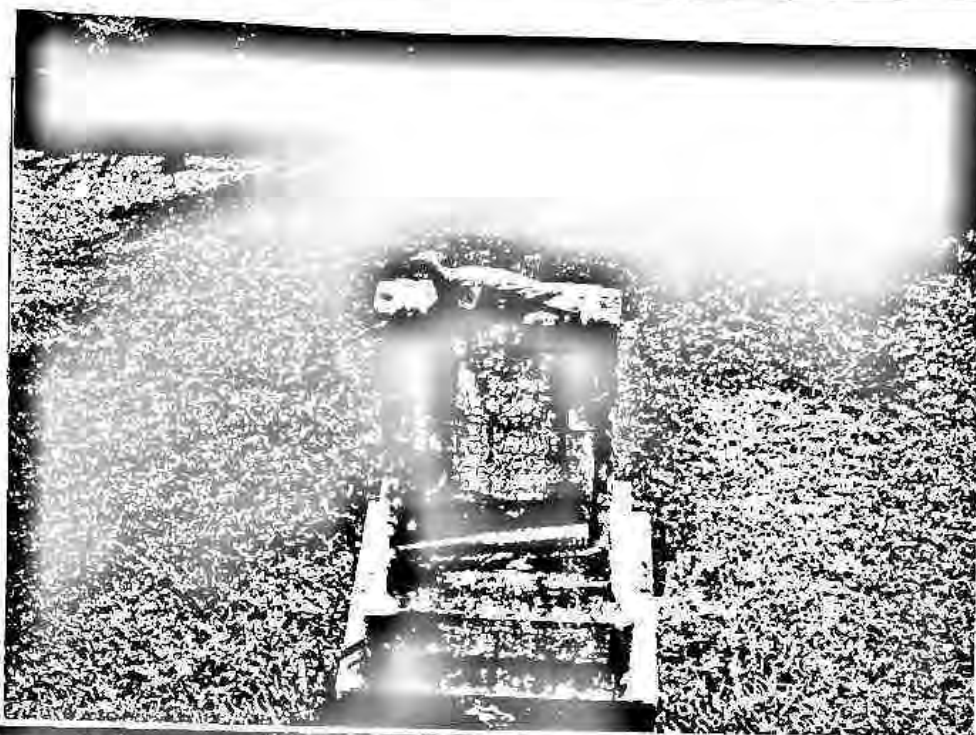
Monticello, MS



Jewish graves surrounded by non-Jewish graves



Dove decorations  
Clinton, LA



Masonic symbol  
on monument

Lamb  
Osyka, MS



Flowers  
Clinton, LA



Sleeping Cherub  
Donaldsonville, LA



Flowers  
Osyka, MS





Levitical hands  
Osyka, MS



Urn  
Clinton, LA



Urn  
Woodville, MS



Clasped hands  
Summit, MS



Star of David  
Laurel, MS



Fraternal organization  
symbols  
also see page 2 of  
Appendix III

Opelousas, LA  
Eastern Star



Plaquemine, LA  
Masons



Woodville, MS  
Masons



Diversity of  
monument  
styles in one  
cemetery

Brookhaven,  
MS



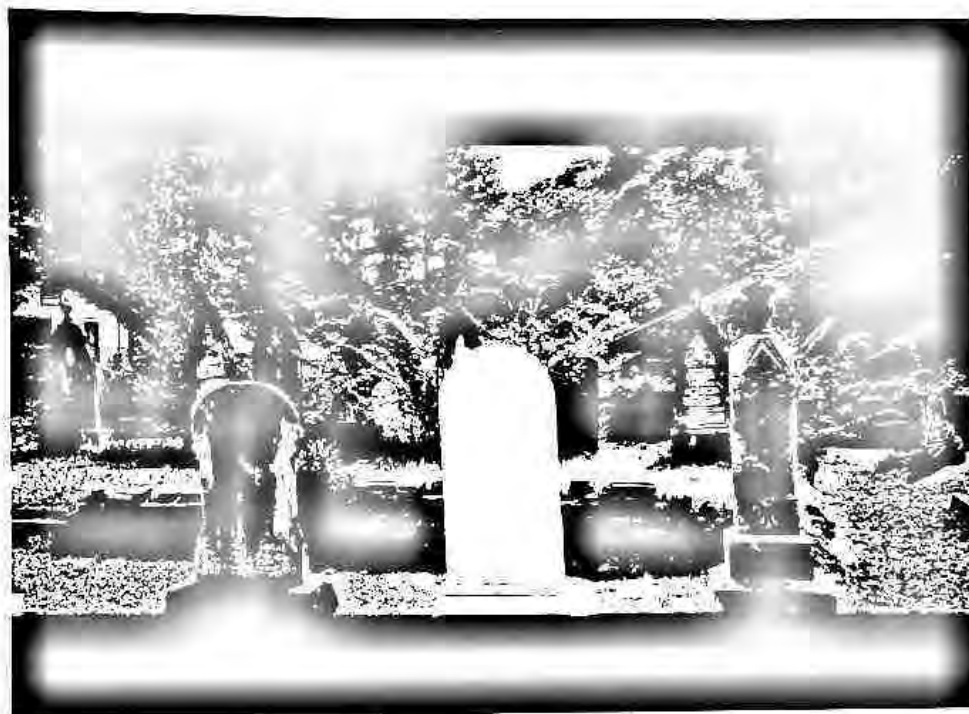
Canton, MS



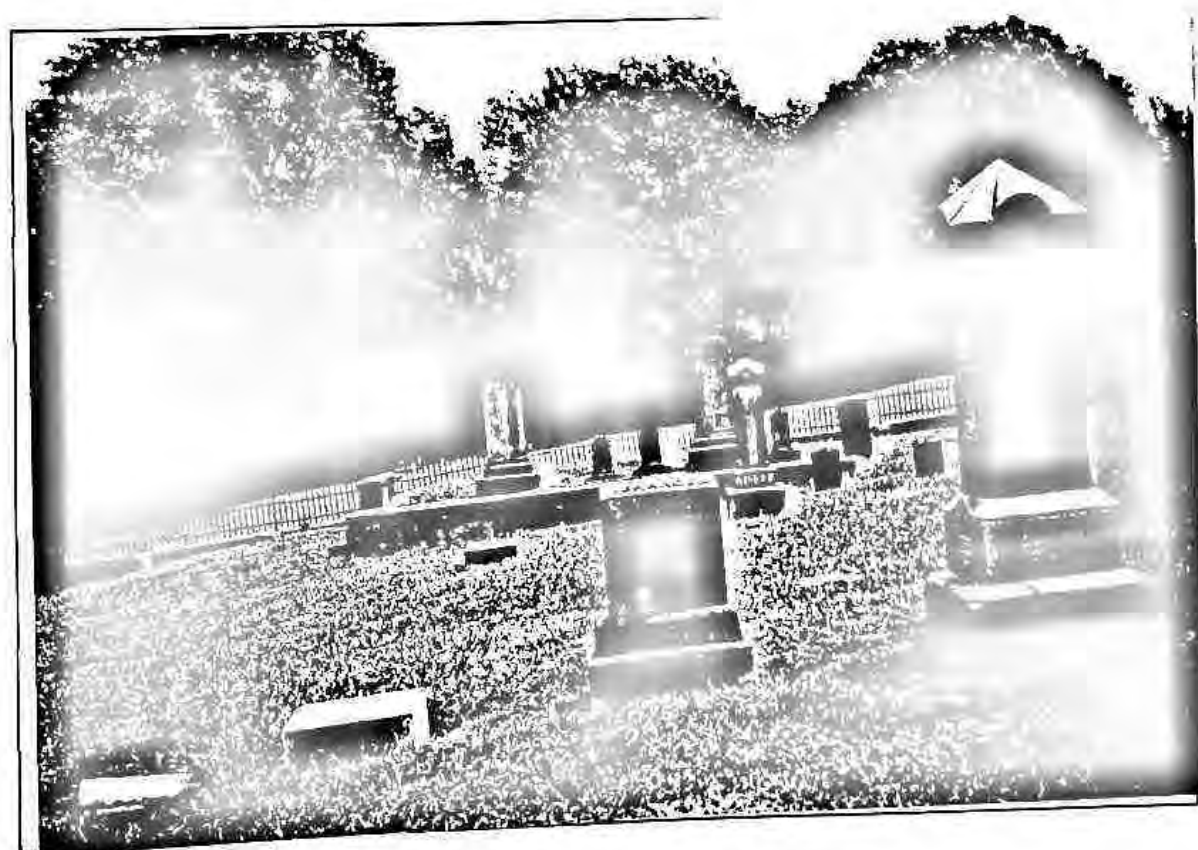


Diversity of monument  
styles in one cemetery

Clinton, LA



Port Gibson, MS



Laurel, MS

Oldest  
Graves



flat head-  
stones  
memorial  
park style



Laurel, MS

flat head-  
stones  
memorial  
park style





Franklin, LA  
Close proximity of non-Jewish graves

non-Jewish  
graves



Jewish graves



non-Jewish  
graves



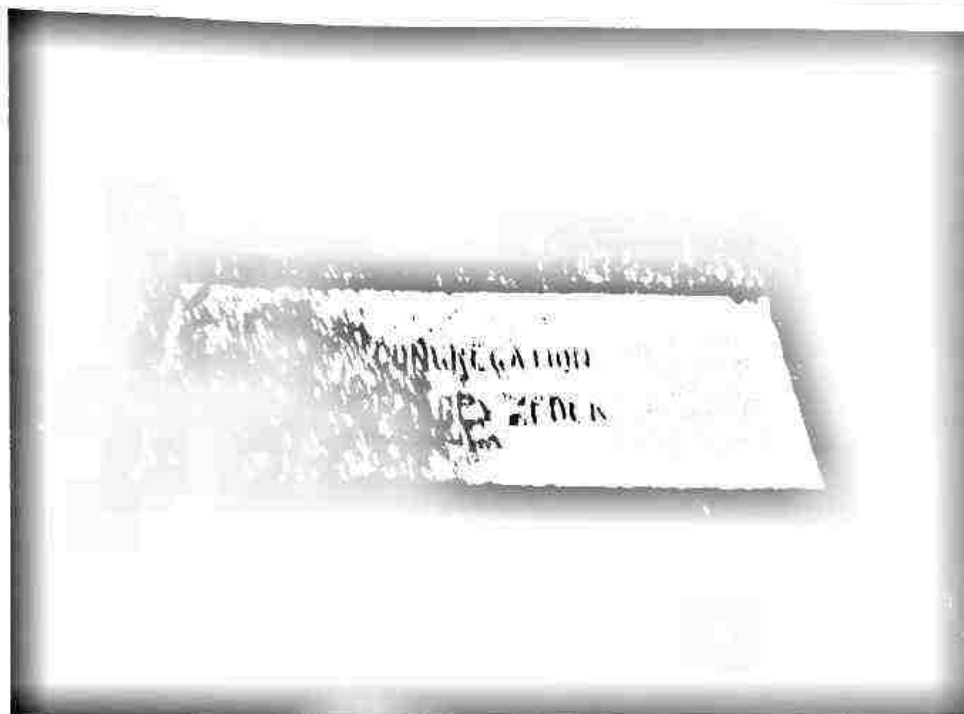
Jewish graves



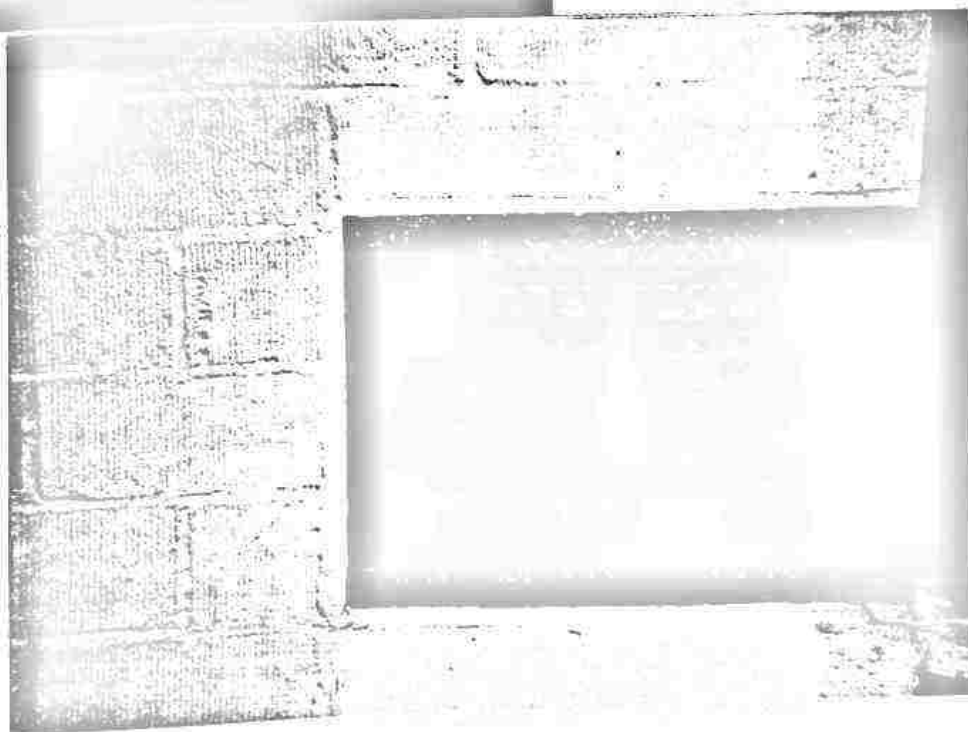


Morgan City, LA

Entrance to Shaare Zedek  
Cemetery section



Former Congregation  
Shaare Zedek  
congregational building



Osyka, MS



Marble

Versus

Granite



Woodville, MS  
Fallen headstones



Woodville, MS  
Sinking ground



Franklin, LA

Grass growing  
over headstone



Franklin, LA

Broken  
headstones





Osyka, MS

tree growing in the  
middle of the wall



Donaldsonville, LA

Damage repaired

Opelousas, LA

Broken headstones



**Appendix IV**  
**Sample deeds and documents**

April 14, 1860 Gazette & Sentinel  
advertisement

#### Notice

The public is invited to attend a Ceremonia to be given by the Israelites on Saturday April, 21. At that time a procession in front of Leopold Kahn on Main St. and proceed to the Synagogue.

---

March 17, 1877 Iberville South:

#### Presbyterian Church

Rev. Dr. David Stern will deliver a lecture tomorrow (Sunday evening) at the Presbyterian church at 3 o'clock. Subject; "Has Judaism any right to existence in modern civilization." L. Meyer, Rev. Mr. Shepperdson, Mr. J. McWilliams, Mr. D. Levy and Mr. Ernest Gourrier, are the committee of arrangement.

---

1060 1026 2010 1141 1128 1332

February 9, 1878 Iberville South:

#### Jewish Temple

Our friends of the Jewish faith, appreciating the necessity for such an organization, have organized a Congregation, known as "Ohava Sholom" Congregation of Plaquemine, La. The officers elect are L. Meyer, Esq., President; A. Kowalski, Treasurer; Dr. M. J. Lehman, Secretary, A. Kowalski and Sylvan Levy, Wardens of the "Jewish Rest."

The ultimate object of the Congregation is to establish a Synagogue in our midst. In the meanwhile the organization of a "Sabbath School" and the embellishment of their Cemetery is their present intention.

The resident Israelites, and those in the vicinity of Plaquemine, are invited to attend an important meeting, Sunday at 4 P. M. at the residence of L. Meyer, Esq.

---

1060 1026 1141 1128 1178

March 2, 1878 Iberville South:

We take pleasure in chronicling the organization of the "Mt. Sinai Sabbath School." An association attached to the newly organized Jewish Congregation of this town.

The Mt. Sinai Sabbath School, consisting of all the Israelitish children in this community, is controlled by the following officer: Mr. L. Meyer, Ex-officio superintendent; Dr. M. J. Lebman and Moise Levy,

Essq., Superintendent; Miss Sallie Kowalski, Assistant; Master Mailor Kahn, President, and Miss Julia Kowalski, Secretary and Treasurer.

We see in the future, and not distantly, the establishment of a "House of Worship;" and all of this will enhance our town.

---

1060 2010

June 8, 1878 Iberville South:

**Our friends of the Jewish Faith dedicated their new Synagogue on Thursday of this week.**

---

1060

June 29, 1878 Iberville South:

#### **Editor Jewish South**

June 9, 1878

Our Congregation having leased a beautiful little residence, formerly a law office, furnished it with elegant pews, altar, and sanctuary. Thursday the "Eve of Pentecost duly opened their service. The program embrace the usual Liturgy and "Choir."  
ETC.

---

1060 1019

September 28, 1878 Iberville South:

The able young Jewish lawyer, Mr. E. T. Fiorance of New Orleans, representing the Touro Infirmary and the Hebrew Benevolent Association was in town a day or two since. He came at the instance of the Association that he represents, with instructions to relieve the distressed Jewish residents of Plaquemine. With many thanks the Israelites declined the offer, as they are in no need, though having had a number of their creed down with the prevalent disease.

---

October 12, 1878 Iberville South:

#### **Howard Nurses**

This week witnessed the departure of the male nurses sent us by the Howard Association. These young men were assiduous and untiring in the discharge of their duties, and went from a convalescent to a new case as fast as they could be called upon. Even in their hours of rest, they were always ready to respond to extra calls in cases of emergency. We regret their departure before the termination of the epidemic and sincerely thank the Howard Association of New Orleans for their valuable services. They, not as the came for they leave behind one of their number in our silent little Jewish cemetery to mark the field of their labors. Poor William Sablman. Would



that he too had been spared to take leave of the people he had come serve with his faithful companions.

---

1060

September 13, 1879 Iberville South:

### To The Public

We respectfully notify the public that the "Monument" erected to the memory of William Sahiman will be dedicated Sunday evening, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1879 at half past three o'clock at "Jewish cemetery." The residents of Plaquemine are cordially invited to be present at the occasion.

### Program

Remarks: Hon. C.O. Lace, President of Howard Association: Oration: Hon. Geo. Wailes: Religious Services according to the rites of the "Jewish Church."

Dr. R. A. Kearny, James L. Barker, A. Kowalski, J. H. Shanks, Wm. L. Roche, Dr. M. J. Lehman, Committee of arrangements.

---

1060

December 19, 1885 Iberville South:

Mr. Charles Cropper is having a handsome one story frame building erected on Plaquemine street, near the Synagogue. It will be an excellent business stand. Mr. Lane F. Hooper is the contractor and builder.

---

1060

January 29, 1887 Iberville South:

**I notice the Jews were very active at this time in Plaquemine.**

---

1060 1141

October 5, 1889 Iberville South:

Owing to the fact that the hall on Plaquemine St., owned by Leon Meyer, and for many years occupied as a lodge room by Plaquemine Lodge No. 51, I. O. O. F., had been vacated by that organization, the Congregation Ohave Sholom have rented it for a Synagogue, and henceforth used for that purpose. **CHECK if this is the first Synagogue**

---

1060 1026 1188 2010

The new tower of the Jewish Synagogue has been completed and credit for the skill of P. W. Briggs.

---

September 12, 1891 Iberville South:

1060 1011 2010

The ladies of the Hebrew congregation of this place will give a grand ball on the 30th of October, for the purpose of raising funds to erect an iron fence around their grave yard. It is a laudable move and should meet with public favor.

February 4, 1905 Iberville South

There is a movement on foot to build a Synagogue by the Jewish Congregation here. There will be a fund raiser in the near future.

1060

March 12, 1910 Iberville South

Last Sunday in the Jewish cemetery, in the presence of a number of relatives and friends, a monument marking the grave of Leon Scharff, who died one year ago was unveiled. Rabbi Rothstein of Alexandria officiating. Dr. F. H. Scharff of Chicago and Attorney Moses Scharff of New Orleans, sons of the deceased were present.

It is no doubt in my mind the most successful business man in Plaquemine was Leon Scharff. He owned most of Main Street. He owned many business and real estate. His children moved away from Plaquemine. I knew of one was a dentist..

The following was in the newspaper when he died.

### Sudden Death Of Leon Scharff

The sudden and unexpected death of Leon Scharff at his home on Railroad Ave. April 4, 1909 sent a distinct shock over this entire community where Mr. Scharff has resided and achieved much success as a man of affairs.

Mr. Scharff was a distinct character in this community. whenever any question arose, public or private, he would always found championing the cause of his friends, always true, always loyal.

Born in Landau, Rheinfaltz, Germany, fifty eight years and a half ago, Mr. Scharff came this country when he was 18 years old. For five years he went from place to place remaining in Pittsburgh, quite a while where he found employment in a glass factory.

Then he came to Plaquemine. This was 35 years ago.

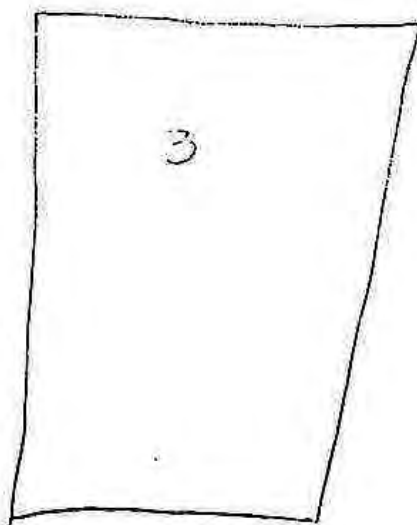
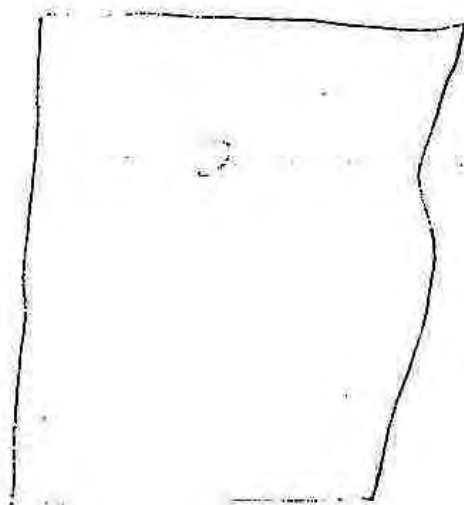
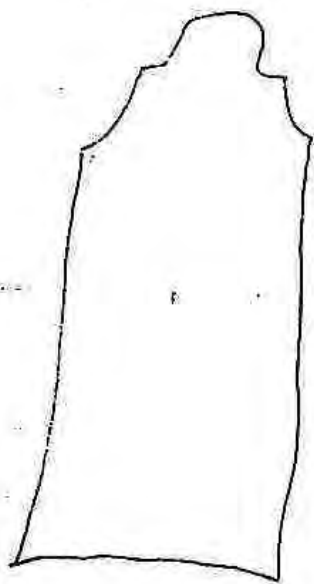
Here he married Miss Melanie Levy, a sister of Henry Levy and Dr. S. C. Levy, and who survives him, together with their three sons and one daughter, namely: Doctor E. S. Scharff, Doctor and F. H. Scharff, Attorney

M. C. Scharff and Mrs. Philip Etyinge of Baltimore. While in New Orleans, on her way to visit her parents, Mrs. Etyinge was when the sad news of the sudden death of father from acute indigestion was announce.

The funeral services were held at the residence Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock, the burial taking place in the Jewish cemetery.

If you notice that the Jewish cemetery was in existence in 1878, so it was establish prior to that date.

From Grand Gulf, MS.



#1

2 P 11 1 12 12 12 12

Louis Benjamine  
Died Sept 14 1853  
Age 20 years

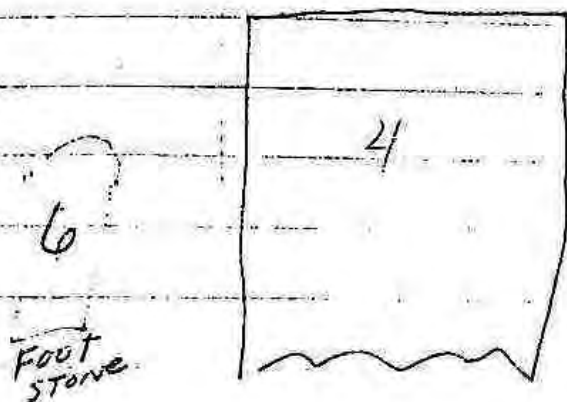
#3

ISAAC Ullman  
Died Sept 23, 1853  
Age 40 years

#2

Broken  
(no name)  
Sept 20, 1853  
Age 57





#4

Isidore Aaron

Native of France

died Sept 22, 1853

age 55

- 32-18 -

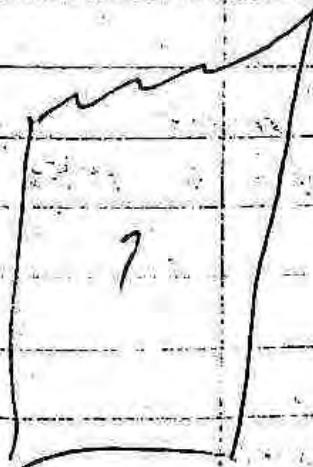


#5

M M

#6

I A



#7

Babet

HARON

Died Sept 26, 1853

18 years old

Native of France



#8

may she  
Rest in Peace  
By her Beloved husband

(Position of #4)

Bottom of  
next page

This is in now corrected



41

D.K.



#10

אברהם

דנה

Died

Sept 1853

37 age

Native of France

#8 is the bottom of #4

May she rest in Peace

This is erected by her

ACT OF DONATION FOR CEMETERY  
BY SAINT LANDRY PARISH POLICE JURY  
TO THE OPELOUSAS HEBREW COMMUNITY

State of Louisiana  
Parish of St Landry      February 15th 1869

Be it known that J. John G. Brooks a resident of the Parish of St Landry and of the State of Louisiana, President of the Police Jury of the said Parish, in accordance with a resolution of the said Jury passed on the third day of the month of December of the year of our Lord Eighteen hundred and sixty eight giving and donating "into Joseph Bloch, Joseph Blum, Emanuel Phillips and others, corporators under the name and style of 'Gemillus Hasodin' for the purpose of establishing a 'Hebrew Cemetery, one Acre of Land to be surveyed out of the tract belonging to the Parish adjoining the Protestant Cemetery near the town of Opelousas", and in accordance with a subsequent resolution of the said Jury authorizing me, their president to act for them and in their behalf in executing the said donation, have this day, and as by these presents for and in the behalf of the said Jury donate transfer alienate and deliver unto the said Joseph Bloch, Joseph Blum, Emanuel Phillips and others, corporators aforesaid through their president, the said Joseph Bloch, who is here present and accepts for them and their successors.

A certain piece of Land bounded as follows: Beginning at a Post on the north side of Bellevue Street, being on the continuation of the back line of the Protestant Cemetery on a course  $N 90^{\circ} 8'$  - Thence from said Post on the north side of Bellevue Street  $N 81^{\circ} 30'$   $N 3.16$  chs. & set a Post Thence  $N 90^{\circ} 8'$   $3.16$  chs. to a post - Thence  $S 81^{\circ} 30'$   $3.16$  chs. to a post Thence  $S 90^{\circ}$   $N 3.16$  chs. to the place of beginning, containing one superficial acre. The said acre being in the south East corner of a tract belonging to the parish and represented upon the plat hereto annexed.

Executed and signed on the day and date first above written and in the presence of Vincent Baigne and Michel Lavigne subscribing witnesses hereto

Witness  
Vincent Baigne  
Michel Lavigne

J. G. Brooks

Notary

*[Signature]*  
Notary

Remains for the parish of St. Landy &c

m:8692

Jos. Bloch & others -  
Feby 15<sup>th</sup> 1869 -

Police Jury of St. Landy, Parish  
Donation  
to

Deposited the 16<sup>th</sup> February  
1869. and recorded in -  
book V page 282 & 283  
annexed hereto -  
Donations m:869 page 128.



1891 May 11 - 1891.

We the undersigned subscribers, & members of an Association to be hereafter known, as the Hebrew Rest Association of West Feliciana, have this day appointed Joe Meyer as Pres<sup>t</sup>. - Joe Stern & R. G. Hill, Secretary, & do hereby authorize the Pres<sup>t</sup> to purchase a piece of land for a burying ground, to be known as "Hebrew Rest". This are furthermore empowered to receive & accept the title of the said piece of land for same, & also are authorized to have same enclosed & fenced in.

Joseph Stern - R. G. Hill

F. Hill - Leon Block

State of Louisiana

Parish of West Feliciana

Know all men by these presents, that the undersigned authority duly constituted and qualified in & for said parish & State, Come Mrs. Hattie C. Gastall, formerly F. D. Gastall, residents of said Parish, herein aided, assisted & authorized by her said husband, who is here present for that purpose, on this the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of May 1891. - And the said Mrs. Hattie C. Gastall declares that she does hereby sell, transfer & deliver with full warranty of title to the "Hebrew Rest Association" of West Feliciana Parish, herein represented by Joseph Meyer, President thereof, who is specially authorized in writing hereto annexed to collect said sale for said Association, pay the price thereof & take receipt for same of the following described property, to-wit: - A lot of ground measuring Two hundred & ninety feet front on the Woodville road by Two Hundred & fifty six depth, situated in this said Parish on the east side of said road, bounded West by said road, North by lands of Mrs. J. P. Bowman, the Roadown place, East & South by lands of Mrs. Hattie C. Gastall, commencing on the North at a China tree on the boundary line between said Mrs. J. P. Bowman & said Mrs. H. C. Gastall on said Woodville road, thence with said road South 390 feet to a Cedar tree, thence East 200 feet to a post, thence North to the lands of Mrs. J. P. Bowman, thence with the line West to the beginning, on the Woodville road. Said sale is made & accepted for & in consideration of the price & sum of One thousand dollars cash, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged. The parties to this act dispense with the certificate of privileges & mortgages required by law. Thus done & passed on the day & date herein above written in the presence of Whifton & Joe H. McQueen, competent witnesses, who together with said parties & one Notary, subscribe their names hereto.

Witnesses

Notary

Notary

Mrs. Hattie C. Gastall - F. D. Gastall

Joe Meyer, President of Hebrew Rest Ass

Robert Montgomery, Notary Public

Filed & Recorded May 20/91

J. T. Brandon

Clerk

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIKUR CHOLIM CONGREGATION

Donaldsonville, Louisiana, Nov. 14, 1954

Pursuant to a notice by mail, the Bikur Cholim Congregation met this day in the Synagogue at Donaldsonville at 10 a.m. President Sam Klotz, presiding.

The president asked Mr. Leo Bloch to lead the group in prayer. Mr. Klotz then stated that the purpose of the meeting was to decide on the disposition of the Synagogue, pointing out that the building was no longer used and gradually falling in a state of disrepair.

After some discussion it was moved by Mr. Bloch, seconded by Mr. David Bloch that the building be sold. The resulting vote was 18 yeas and 1 nay with Mr. Klotz voting 8 proxies.

The president then appointed Mr. Leo Bloch acting secretary. Mr. Klotz explained that he contacted several persons with a view of buying the property and had received a bid from Drs. Lake and Schexnayder for \$8,000. Mr. Klotz also advised the group that he had competent appraisers appraise the property and that \$8,000 was the figure arrived at.

Mr. Walter Lemann Jr., moved that a committee be appointed to sell the building for the best possible sum obtainable and in the best interests of the Congregation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Walter Kahn and carried by voice vote. The chair then appointed himself, Mr. Dave Bloch and Mr. Herbert Kahn.

Mr. Dave Bloch then moved that a board of trustees be appointed as a Perpetual Care Trust Fund and that the proceeds received from the sale of the property be dedicated to the care and upkeep of the Jewish Cemetery in Donaldsonville. On unanimous vote of those present the following Trustees of the PERPETUAL CARE AND TRUST FUND OF THE BIKUR CHOLIM CONGREGATION were elected with their terms of office designated.

Sam Klotz	5 years	Leo Bloch	4 years
Walter Kahn	3 years	Dave Bloch	2 years
Mrs. Barbara Cohen	1 year.		

The Board was constituted with full powers to act in its official capacity and conduct its business along lines of similar bodies, to enact by laws, to deposit and invest monies and to pay such Cemetery upkeep as agreed by said Board.

There being no further business to come before the group, the meeting was duly adjourned on proper motion.

Minutes approved and read

Sam Klotz  
President

Leo Bloch  
Acting Secretary

## CHEVRA BICUR CHOLEM

*The Society to Help  
The Sick and Needy*



### HISTORY OF CHEVRA BICUR CHOLEM

In 1861 a young Jewish boy died at Holmesville, Mississippi, and his body was brought to Brookhaven. There was at that time no Jewish burial ground in Brookhaven, so four public-spirited Jewish citizens, Abram Kersky, A. M. Marks, a Mr. Pincus and a Mr. Lubinsky organized what is today the "CHEVRA BICUR CHOLEM," purchased a piece of land and had the boy buried.

To this plot of land was added a piece contributed by Mr. George Bowsky, and later a piece was dedicated by the City of Brookhaven.

Due to the efforts of the above named persons and others the Jewish Cemetery at Brookhaven today is a beautiful and spacious burial ground.

## CHEVRA BICUR CHOLEM

*The Society to Help  
The Sick and Needy*



MR. GEORGE BOWSKY  
*Chairman of the Board*



185  
This Indenture, MADE This Twenty first day June  
IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD, ONE THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED AND SIXTY ONE  
between M. J. Whitworth and Sarah J. Whitworth  
his wife of Lawrence County, Mississippi, of the first part, and Habrah Bickar Chalam  
of the Lawrence County and State aforesaid of the second part.

WITNESSETH: That the said Parties of the first part, for and in consideration of the sum of  
Fifty Dollars, to them in hand paid by the said party of  
the second part, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, have bargained, sold, conveyed, released  
and delivered, and by these Presents do bargain, sell, convey release, deliver and confirm, to the  
second party of the second part, a CERTAIN PIECE OR PARCEL OF LAND, situated in  
Brookhaven Lawrence County, Mississippi, and particularly described

by a Plan of Brookhaven being a portion  
of Block 80 to wit 100 feet in hand deed part  
laying on the East end of the Block 80  
joining the Brookhaven Publick Busing  
Ground the 100 feet front Monticella Street  
and runs back a depth of 437 feet  
containing one acre more or less

To have and to hold the said lot or parcel of land with all the appurtenances thereto, belonging to the said  
Party of the second part, his heirs and assigns, and the said M. J. Whitworth  
and S. J. Whitworth his wife, do covenant and agree with the said  
Party of the Second part that they will warrant and forever defend the title  
of the said described land unto the said Habrah Bickar Chalam and the alienees  
under them free from and against the right title or claim of themselves or their heirs, or the  
legal claims of any and all persons whatsoever.

In Testimony Whereof the said M. J. Whitworth and  
S. J. Whitworth his wife, have hereto set their hands and seals  
on the day and year first aforesaid.

M. J. Whitworth L.S.  
S. J. Whitworth L.S.







# **SALUTING Morehouse Hist**

## **Bastrop's Jewish Cemetery is a**

by Connie Priest  
Enterprise Staff Writer

Just west of town is a landmark cemetery that many people pass everyday. The Jewish cemetery located on West Madison was purchased May 31, 1878. At that time, Bastrop had approximately 30 Jewish families living here and a Jewish synagogue, the B'nai Sholom. The congregation of the synagogue saw the need for a Jewish cemetery and therefore purchased the property.

For a number of years now, Morton Levy of Bastrop has taken care of the cemetery. Until his death, Jacob Seligman and I kept this cemetery up. He knew a lot about the history of the

Jewish people in Bastrop and the history of this cemetery. I have some information and a list of the people buried out here," Levy said.

Levy has a copy of the original deed. This is very interesting. Of course, everything recorded that long ago was handwritten, not typed. The handwriting of the court recorder is beautiful. Mr. Henry H. Naff was the recorder and Ex-Officio Notary Public in 1878. The following is a sample of what the deed states.

State of Louisiana  
Parish of Morehouse  
Be it remembered that on this the 31st day of May A.D. 1878 before me Henry H. Naff Recorder and Ex-Officio

Notary Public duly commissioned and sworn in and foresaid Parish and State

Personally came and appeared Robus-Bruser Traylor of said Parish and State and Amidick Silbernayd, president of the congregation of the "B'nai Sholom" Congregation, an incorporated body domiciliated in the town Bastrop, said Parish and State, who declared that they had entered into the contract of bargain and sale to wit: the said R. B. Traylor

Declared that for the consideration herein after expressed, has granted, bargained, sold, transferred, alienated and delivered and by these presents does grant,



### **Entrance to**

The Jewish Cemetery owned by the cemetery. through this archway. No bargain, sell, transfer and deliver unto Benediel Silbernayd, dent of the congreg B'nai Sholom and l cession in office, and forever the fo described property in said Parish and together with all the titles, privileges immovements theret



# Use History

Pride '97

## metery is a record of history

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### Entrance to cemetery

Photo by Connie Priest

The Jewish Cemetery on West Madison has a very old wrought iron fence around part of the property owned by the cemetery. This picture is of the front entrance. The gates open at the front and one can walk through this archway. No one knows how old this fence is.

bargain, sell, transfer, alien-  
ate and deliver unto the said  
Benediel Silbernayd, presi-  
dent of the congregation of  
B'nai Sholum and his suc-  
cession in office, and assigns  
forever the following  
described property situated  
in said Parish and State  
together with all the rights,  
titles, and privileges and  
improvements thereto belong-  
ing or in anywise appertaining to  
wit:

the old Pruett headright, in  
Township twenty one, north  
of Range Five East, lying  
immediately east of and  
adjoining the lot owned by  
Peter Crane, and having a  
front of sixty nine and  
71/100 yards on the Point  
Pleasant road and running  
back on north between paral-  
lel lines one hundred and  
thirty 43/100 yards, con-  
taining two acres of land  
more or less.

Said lot is sold and pur-  
chased to be used as a ceme-  
tery for the use of the congrega-

gation of the "B'nai Sholum"  
located at Bastrop in said  
parish.

To have and to hold said  
property unto the said  
Silbernayd, president for the  
use of B'nai Sholum congrega-  
tion and his succession in  
office and assigns forever  
with a full and perfect guar-  
antee of title against the  
claims of said vendor his  
heirs and assigns and all  
parties whomsoever.

The price and considera-  
tion for which this said  
See DEED on file





## Cemetery caretaker

Morton Levy of Bastrop has made a special effort in keeping the Jewish cemetery clean, and also taking care of special needs for the cemetery. Until his death, the late Jacob Seligman helped Levy with the cemetery.

Photo by Connie Priest

## Deed

Continued from Page 4

made is the sum of forty dollars cash in hand paid the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged. The parties hereto dispense with the production of the certificate of mortgages and release me said Recorder from all liabilities contained in article 3364 of the Revised Civil Code of Louisiana. This done, passed, and signed in my office at Bastrop on the date and date above written in the presence of Leon Sugar and G.W. Naff, the undersigned legal and competent witnesses and me said recorder attest.

Levy does not think that there will be any future plans for the cemetery. "When the synagogue moved to Monroe, the cemetery was not used much. Now I just make sure the cemetery stays clean, keeping it mowed and whatever needs to be done," said Levy.

The first person buried in the cemetery was an infant, Inys Heller, born Oct. 15, 1877, died Sept. 2, 1878. The entire Heller family is buried in the cemetery, and quite interesting also is the headstone. On one side of the headstone is the father's name, J. S. Heller, on the opposite side of the stone is the mother's name, Babette Heller.

Another interesting monument in the cemetery is also the largest one, The Ferdinand Wolff Family. The

was a businessman in Bastrop. The monument has a very touching verse on it; his wife and infant daughter died in 1916 and he died in 1950. He apparently expressed his personal feelings when he

had the monument made. The verse says:

*Thy memory shall always fill my heart and revive in me, the love and self denial which distinguished*



Photo by Connie Priest

## Hebrew writing

buried the headstone one cannot written of them from through weather

The cemetery two acres it is not wrought been there can remember a portion that has it," Levy says. The cemetery land back and never be

The following the burial

Harold born Oct. Nov. 15, 1868; died

Note: Born Babette June 27, death given with J. S.



# House History

Pride '97



Photo by Connie Priest

ry clean, and also taking  
ped Levy with the ceme-

Continued from Page 4

a monument made.  
se says:

memory shall always

and revive in me, the

self denial which dis-

thy noble heart and  
sweetened the  
days of my life  
I will cherish thy memo-  
ry as  
long as I live and thine  
image  
shall forever live in my  
heart.

In studying the different headstones and markers in the cemetery, one can spend a lot of time; it is very interesting. One of the headstones has a verse written in Hebrew, another will have where the person was born or a special dedication to whomever is buried there. Some of the headstones are so old that one cannot read what is written on them, and a few of them are broken — not from vandalism, but through the years of weather damage.

The cemetery consists of two acres of land; however, it is not all fenced in. The wrought iron fence has been there as long as Levy can remember. "This is just a portion of the property that has the fence around it," Levy stated. "The cemetery land actually runs back and across, but it will never be used."

The following is a list of the burials in the cemetery:

Harold L. Abrahamsen, born Oct. 12, 1843; died Nov. 15, 1889;

Dave Cohn, born Oct. 17, 1868; died Sept. 8, 1890;

Both in Bayou Sara.

Heller, born



Photo by Connie Priest

## Levy headstone

Another interesting headstone at the Jewish Cemetery is this one with Levy across the bottom. Buried here is Elisa Freidheim Levy, mother, born in Lamshein, Germany April 17, 1830; died in Bastrop, La. Dec. 4, 1895. Also buried here is Michel Levy, father, born at Marmontier-Alsace, France on July 1, 1825; died in Bastrop, La., on June 1, 1895.

S. Heller, born Feb. 22,

Levy Heller, born Oct. 15, 1832; died Nov. 23, 1900;

died Sept. 2, 1878. Note Double with Babette

Double with Louise Heller/husband of Babette

Double with B. Heller/Mason

See RECORD on Page 7



Louise Heller, born Nov. 22, 1873; died June 30, 1883; \*Note: Double with Inys Heller/ child of J. S. and B. Heller.  
 H. Lilly Hiller, born Nov. 8, 1876; died Nov. 11, 1895; \*Note: Daughter of Jonas and Rosalie Hiller born in Canton, Miss. died at Bastrop, La.  
 Max Kern, born 1875; died 1939.  
 Ben Kimpel, born May 28, 1865; died June 12, 1896; \*Note: Born in Bavaria.  
 Louis Lazarus, born 1855; died 1901.  
 Nannette Lazarus, born 1858; died 1928.  
 Amabel Levy, born Dec. 2, 1885; died Aug. 20, 1886; \*Note: Infant daughter of Hiller and Lulia Levy.  
 Archille Levy, died Nov. 16, 1917; \*Note: Born in Marmontier Alsace, France, died in Bastrop, La.  
 Elisa Levy, born Jan. 2, 1897; died April 20, 1897; \*Note: Daughter of J. B. Levy and Clara Heller Levy.  
 Elisa Freidheim Levy, born April 17, 1830; died Dec. 4, 1895; \*Note: Double with Michel Levy/ wife of Michel Levy. Born in Lamsheim, Germany, died in Bastrop, La.  
 Helene Levy, died Feb. 15, 1931; \*Note: Age 69 yrs. Marmontier Alsace Lorraine, France.  
 Infant Levy, born June 11, 1888; died June 11, 1888; \*Note: infant daughter of J.B. Levy and Clara Heller Levy.  
 Infant Levy, born July 16, 1947, died July 16, 1947; \*Note: infant daughter of Morton and Ruby Levy.  
 Joseph Levy, died March 6, 1889; \*Note: Aged 39 years, born in Marmontier Alsace, France died in Bastrop, La.  
 Michel Levy, born July 1, 1825; died June 1, 1895; \*Note: Double with Elisa Freidheim Levy, born in Marmontier Alsace, France died at Bastrop, La.  
 Jennie Marks, born 1860; died 1951; \*Note: Mother.  
 Abraham Oehlber, born 1852; died 1902.  
 Laura Oehlber, born 1861; died 1923.  
 Solmon Silverstein, died June 12, 1881; \*Note: Aged 52 years.  
 August Simon, died March 19, 1884; \*Note: Aged 47 years, born Lueibruecke Pealz, Germany/ Mason.  
 Matilda Sugar, born Sept. 12, 1829; died Sept. 6, 1905; \*Note: Born in Kingdom of Wurtemberg died in Monroe, La.  
 Solomon Sugar, born Nov. 28, 1815; died June 8, 1884.  
 Ferdinand Wolff, born Jan. 3, 1880; died Aug. 19, 1950; \*Note: Mason.  
 Florenece Heller Wolff, died July 21, 1916; \*Note: Florence Wolff and infant/ wife and infant daughter of Ferdinand Wolff.  
 Gladys Wolff, born April 9, 1892; died Dec. 8, 1895.  
 Miriam Wolff, born June 6, 1897; died March 10, 1899.

A total of thirty-one burials are in the entire cemetery. This landmark in our city will probably never be used again, the last burial having been in 1950, but we know it is there and will remain a part of our history.

# House Cemetery

ary Public duly commis-  
 ned and sworn in and  
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 Personally came and  
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 Declared that for the con-  
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 these presents does grant,



Improvements

## Appendix V

### Restoring Claiborne's Jewish Cemetery

by Addie Lewis, MSJE Summer Intern

We looked at each other cautiously as we bounced down a dirt road in rural Monroe County, Alabama. After driving more than five hours from Jackson, we were not sure what we would find. Museum historian Mark Greenberg, Jacobs Camp director Jonathan Cohen, Rabbi Valerie Cohen, and I were on a scouting mission to see the Jewish cemetery in Claiborne. We had heard that it was rustic and in desperate need of attention, but we had not expected it to be quite this rural. How could we bring eighty-two Henry S. Jacobs Camp Talmidim campers and sixteen staff to this place for their annual summer mitzvah project?

A few minutes later we were amazed by what we saw. Dawn Crooks, cemetery preservationist of the Monroe County Heritage Museum, led us down a path separating cornfields from dense woods. She asked us to help her look through the trees for glimpses of the headstones. Finally, we spotted one. We carefully walked through thick brush into the woods and encountered a few standing marble gravestones and many partially buried stone fragments. Apparently, cows had wandered through the area and knocked the stones over. It was the saddest, most desolate graveyard any of us had ever seen. Intrigued by the story of Claiborne's Jewish community, we instantly committed ourselves to preserving and documenting the community's remains.

Claiborne was once a bustling cotton town along the Alabama River. At its peak the town had several Jewish families, most of whom emigrated from Bavaria. Claiborne Jews opened stores, built homes, and established a cemetery on the outskirts of downtown. Historical records mention members of the community serving as rabbis and hazans. By 1912 there was not a single Jew left in Claiborne.

The town narrowly missed being named Alabama's capital but lost to Tuscaloosa by one vote in the state legislature. This marked the beginnings of Claiborne's decline, a pattern exacerbated by periodic yellow fever outbreaks and being bypassed by the railroad. By 1873 Claiborne had all but died out. Today it is a ghost town. The former downtown area is now either farmland or woods. I knew that Claiborne's dramatic story would serve as a powerful backdrop for the Museum's and Camp's joint venture to restore the cemetery.

I realized that the Talmidim's lasting legacy in the cemetery would be the documentation they produced, so I needed to teach them how to record the stones carefully and professionally. I contacted Anne Gerache, Betty England, and Julius Herscovici in Vicksburg about organizing a "training day" for the campers in Vicksburg's beautiful and historic Anshe Chesed cemetery. I had two goals for the training. First, to teach the campers how to make grave rubbings and create accurate maps of the site, and second to expose them to a well preserved cemetery. Despite a heat index well above 100 degrees, we accomplished both goals.

Two days later we load the buses, drove to Claiborne, and walked through the cornfield to the cemetery. I could tell by looking at the campers' faces that they were shocked by what they saw. Alix D'Angelo exclaimed, "Huge trees and branches are blocking all of the gravestones from sight!"



We spent the first hour and a half clearing away dead branches, vines, and old barbed wire. All of a sudden, the place resembled a graveyard again instead of the deep woods. For the next two days we raked away the remaining ground cover, built a fence around the perimeter to keep the cows out, and dug up and washed all of the stones. We also documented the cemetery by doing charcoal rubbings of each grave, writing down every bit of information etched on each gravestone, measuring and sketching each grave, photographing the stones, and making map of the area.

I cannot express how diligently the campers worked on this project. Their maturity and respect for the job awed me. A few times during the afternoon the staff and I insisted that everyone stop for a water break, but just as we managed to get everyone seated in the shade with their water bottles and granola bars, a few campers began wandering back to their jobs. I did not have to ask anyone to go back to their tasks. They were so excited they couldn't wait to get started again.

Our work utterly transformed the cemetery. A few scattered gravestones in the woods had become a charming Jewish cemetery in a shaded clearing. Where we once saw just a few stones, we could now see thirty-three headstones and nearly as many footstones. As we were packing up camper Hunter Glass remarked: "When we got here it was covered with weeds. Everything was covered. You couldn't read any of the stones. Now that we are done it looks like a real cemetery. I feel good that we helped these people and their families. I hope they come visit the graves now."

Jonathan and Valerie Cohen, Cantor Jessical Roskind, and Mark Greenberg joined us for the conclusion of the trip. We congregated in the cemetery to honor the memories of Claiborne's Jewish community by reading psalms and reciting Kaddish. The service touched all of us and helped us frame our hard work in a Jewish context. Camper Shira Glazer later reflected that restoring the cemetery and remembering our ancestors is a very important principle in Judaism. She felt that the work she did in Claiborne was a wonderful mitzvah.

In every aspect, restoration of Claiborne's Jewish cemetery was a huge success. It provided us with an excellent opportunity to document history for the Museum and allowed us to preserve the memory of Claiborne's Jews. I know that all the campers appreciated the learning experience. Camper Sophie Katz expressed it very well when she told me that it was "interesting to learn about Claiborne and be there working at the same time. I feel good that we helped keep the memory of the Jews in this part of Alabama alive."



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### Brookhaven

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### Monticello, MS

- Letters between Anita Clinton and Macy Hart and writings on the Jews of Monticello by Anita Clinton. MSJE file on Monticello.

### Osyka, MS

- Letter from Jane K. Buchsbaum to Lyn Decareaux January 1987. To be deposited AJA.
- Letter from Jacob Lowenstein to Rusty Hamilton August 16, 1987. To be deposited AJA.
- Letter from Lyn Decareaux to parties that may be interested in the Osyka German Jewish cemetery January 1986. To be deposited AJA.
- Letter from Macy B. Hart to Lyn Decareaux July 15, 1992. Osyka file MSJE. To be deposited AJA.

#### Summit, MS

- Letter from Bob Fortenberry to David Feldman May 15, 2001. To be deposited AJA.
- Letter from Bob Fortenberry to David Feldman July 13, 2001. To be deposited AJA.
- Letter from Jean Korn to David Feldman July 1, 2001. To be deposited AJA.
- Letter from L. J. Schwartz to David Feldman. July 2001.

#### Yazoo City, MS

- John Willis deed to Yazoo City (August 15, 1875) Deed book TT page 469. To be deposited AJA.
- Louis and Herman Wise deed for burial plots in Yazoo City Cemetery Deed Book A-0 page 790. To be deposited AJA.

#### Donaldsonville, LA

- Hirsch, Gaston. (June 1978) Letter for contributions to the Donaldsonville/Bikur Sholim cemetery Trust and Care Fund. MSJE file on Donaldsonville.
- Minutes of the meeting of Bikur Cholim Congregation 11/14/1954 To be deposited AJA.
- Autobiographical statement by Gaston Hirsch To be deposited AJA
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- Bikur Sholim Cemetery Trust and Care Fund Letter from Gaston Hirsch to All Contributors and Families of Bikur Sholim Cemetery (June 1978) To be deposited AJA.
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#### Opelousas, LA

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- Personal History of Julian M. Kurtz. To be deposited AJA.

#### St. Francisville/Bayou Sara, LA

- Charter for Congregation Temple Sinai, July 12, 1901. To be deposited AJA.
- Charter for Hebrew Rest Association and Deed for Hebrew Rest Cemetery May 11, 1891. To be deposited AJA.

#### **List of Interviews**

There are no audio recordings of these interviews and all data from the interviews is present in the thesis text.

Mr. Houpt, a third generation stonecutter and monument maker, Marion, Ohio, 1/16/02.  
 Morton Levy, Bastrop, Louisiana, 1/17/01.  
 Ron Israel, Bastrop, Louisiana, 1/17/01.  
 Dudley Farmer, Lexington, 6/8/01.  
 Marty Waterman, Metairie, Louisiana, 6/18/01.  
 Frank Ricks III, New Orleans, Louisiana, 7/14/01.  
 Henry Libby, Annapolis, Maryland, 7/15/01.  
 Hannah Wood, St. Francisville, Louisiana, 7/17/01.  
 David Feldman, Summit, Mississippi, 7/17/2001.  
 Paula Nelken, Morgan City, Louisiana, 7/18/01.  
 Leon Kahn Morgan City, Louisiana, 7/18/01.  
 Richard Kilborne Jr. Clinton, Louisiana, 7/18/01.  
 Allan Tater, Plaquemine, Louisiana, 7/19/01.  
 Annelies Ohlmeyer Martinez, Plaquemine, Louisiana, 7/19/2001.  
 Gerald and Kathleen Schiff, Opelousas, Louisiana, 7/20/01.  
 Estelle Perrault, Opelousas, Louisiana, 7/20/01.  
 Dorothy Siegal, Opelousas, Louisiana, 7/20/01.  
 Henry Friedman, Morgan City, Louisiana, 7/21/01.  
 Aileen Dampf, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 7/21/01.  
 Joan Beasely, Port Gibson, Mississippi, 8/1/01.  
 Bob Fortenberry, Atlanta, Georgia, 8/7/2001.  
 Deborah Jacobs, Jackson, Mississippi, 8/9/01.  
 Harold Frohman, Laurel, Mississippi, 8/9/01.  
 Jerry Krouse, Natchez Mississippi, 8/11/01.  
 Harold Samuels, Brookhaven, Mississippi, 8/12/01.  
 Phil Cohen, Lexington, Mississippi, 8/13/01.  
 Bee Gotthelf, Jackson, Mississippi, 8/14/01.  
 Eugene Hessdorffer Jackson, Mississippi, 8/14/01.  
 Chancery Clerks of Yazoo City Mississippi, 8/14/01.  
 Tommy Wixon, Biloxi, Mississippi, 11/15/01.  
 Dr. Stephen Liverman, Brookhaven, Mississippi, 12/12/01.  
 Rabbi Richard Birnholz, Tampa, Florida, 12/20/01.

Ira Kaufman, Memphis, Tennessee, 1/7/02.  
 Anne Stewart, Meridian, Mississippi, 1/7/02.  
 Sara Stone New Orleans, Louisiana, 1/17/02.  
 Macy Hart, Jackson, Mississippi, 1/28/02.  
 Peggy Marx, Port Gibson, Mississippi, 2/5/02.  
 Sue Morris, Berkley, California, 2/15/02.

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#### Bastrop: B'nai Sholom

Cemetery established: May 31, 1878 Connie Priest, "Bastrop's Jewish Cemetery is a Record of History" *Bastrop (La.) Daily Enterprise*. (Thursday February 27, 1997), 4. Includes the Deed to the cemetery and tombstone inscriptions.

Congregation formed: 1877 from Landman, Isaac ed. "Louisiana" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*. New York: The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, inc., 1939-1943.

Headstone transcriptions from Priest, Connie. (Thursday February 27, 1997)

#### Berwick:

Cemetery established: 1877 from earliest known headstone inscription

Headstone transcriptions by Michael Birnholz 7/2001

#### Clinton:

Cemetery established: 1853 from earliest known headstone inscription

Headstone transcriptions from Kaplan, Benjamin. *The Eternal Stranger: A study of Jewish life in the small community*. New York: Bookman Associates, 1957.

#### Donaldsonville: Bikur Cholim (Sholim in some places)

Cemetery established: 1856 from Pamphlet "Bikur Sholim Cemetery: 'Garden of Peace'" Donaldsonville, LA. To be deposited [AJA]

Congregation formed: 1856 from Landman, Isaac ed. "Louisiana" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*.

Headstone transcriptions by Audrey B Westerman, Cathy D Shannon and Nancy L. Wright September 1986 (Updated since 1994)

#### Franklin:

Cemetery established: 1854 from earliest known headstone inscription

Headstone transcriptions by Katie Godchaux Derby

#### Morgan City: Shaara Zedek

Cemetery established: 1878 from earliest known headstone inscription

Congregation formed: 1871 from Landman, Isaac ed. "Louisiana" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*.

Headstone transcriptions from Morgan City file [MSJE]

#### Natchitoches: B'nai Israel Synagogue

Cemetery established: 1847 from Goldman, Elliot. "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches". Masters Thesis for Northwestern State College of Louisiana. 1968 Histories Files [AJA].

Congregation formed: March 30, 1871 from Goldman, Elliot. "The Jewish Community of Natchitoches".

Headstone transcriptions from <http://www.rootsweb.com/~lanatchi/Jewish.htm>

**Opelousas: Gemiluth Chassodim and then Temple Emanu El**

Cemetery established: February 15, 1869 from Saint Landry Clerk of Court. "Act of Donation for Hebrew Cemetery (Opelousas)" *N'oubliez Pas Journal of the Imperial St. Landry Genealogical and Historical Society* Volume 1 No. 1., 1993, 24-25.

Congregation formed: 1929 from Landman, Isaac ed. "Louisiana" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*.

Headstone transcriptions from Perrault, Estelle M. and Dorothy Siegel "Opelousas Hebrew Cemetery" *N'oubliez Pas Journal of the Imperial St. Landry Genealogical and Historical Society* Volume 1 No. 1. 1993, 18-23.

**Plaquemine: Hebrew Benevolent Society and then Temple Ohavi Sholom**

Cemetery established: November 11, 1856 from Grace, Albert L. *The Heart of The Sugar Bowl* Baton Rouge, La.: The Franklin Press, 1946.

Congregation formed: Hebrew Benevolent Society April 20, 1856 (Act 178 of 1856), Ohavi Sholom October 31, 1905 all dates from Grace, Albert L. *The Heart of The Sugar Bowl*.

Headstone transcriptions by Michael Birnholz 7/2001.

**St. Francisville/Bayou Sara: Temple Israel**

Cemetery established: May 11, 1891 from Charter for Hebrew Rest Association and Deed for Hebrew Rest Cemetery May 11, 1891. To be deposited [AJA].

Congregation formed: July 12, 1901 from Charter for Congregation Temple Sinai, July 12, 1901. To be deposited [AJA] and Holdeman, Quintin L. *Forty-Seven Forty Prosperity Street: Notes on Temple Sinai and the Presbyterian Church of St. Francisville, LA*. To be deposited [AJA].

Headstone transcriptions by Hannah and Kenneth Wood

**Washington, LA: Hebrew Rest Cemetery**

Cemetery established: 1867 from earliest known headstone inscription  
Headstone transcriptions from Perrault, Estelle M. and Dorothy Siegel "Inscriptions of Hebrew Rest Cemetery, Washington, LA" *N'oubliez Pas Journal of the Imperial St. Landry Genealogical and Historical Society* Volume 3 No. 4, 1995.

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**Mississippi**

**Biloxi:**

Cemetery established: 1855 from Mississippi entry from Jewish Genealogy website: International Jewish Cemetery Project.

[www.jewishgen.org/cemetery/northamerica/miss.html](http://www.jewishgen.org/cemetery/northamerica/miss.html)

No Headstone transcriptions available

**Brookhaven: Temple B'nai Sholom**

Cemetery established: June 21, 1861 from deed for Cemetery property to be deposited [AJA]

Congregation formed: 1894 from Temple B'nai Sholom Centennial Commemorative Service Program 9/20/1996. To be deposited [AJA]

Headstone transcriptions September 2001 unavailable to author at the time of writing

**Canton: Temple of B'nai Israel**

Cemetery established: 1872 from earliest headstone inscription (purchased 1870 Landman, Isaac ed. "Mississippi" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*. New York: The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, inc., 1939-1943.

Congregation formed: 1877 from Michel, Pauline Perlinsky "History of Temple B'nai Israel Canton, Mississippi." (August 1934) Canton file MSJE

Headstone transcriptions by Michael Birnholz 8/2001

**Clarksdale: Congregation Beth Israel**

Cemetery established: 1914 interview with Ira Kaufman 1/7/02

Congregation formed: 1896 from Landman, Isaac ed. "Mississippi" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*.

Headstone transcriptions unavailable to author at the time of writing.

**Grand Gulf**

Cemetery established: unknown, inscriptions from some fragments of headstones in Appendix IV.

**Greenwood: Congregation Beth Israel (Reform)**

Cemetery established: unknown

Congregation formed: 1897 Landman, Isaac ed. "Mississippi" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*.

**Laurel: Kneseth Israel Congregation**

Cemetery established: 1917 from Marcus, David B. "Historical Analysis of the First Thirty Years of Laurel Jewry". (1931) Histories Files [AJA].

Congregation formed: February 20, 1906 from Marcus, David B. "Historical Analysis of the First Thirty Years of Laurel Jewry".

Headstone transcriptions by Michael Birnholz 8/2001

**Lexington: Congregation Beth El**

Cemetery established: 1904 from interview with Phil Cohen 8/13/01

Congregation formed: 1904 from Landman, Isaac ed. "Mississippi" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*.

Headstone transcriptions from Lexington file MSJE

**Monticello**

Cemetery established: 1848 from earliest known headstone inscription

Headstone transcriptions by Michael Birnholz 8/2001



**Natchez: Hevra Kadishah and then Temple B'nai Israel**

Cemetery established: 1840 from Nathanson, Martin. "Temple B'nai Israel" pamphlet history of the Natchez, MS community. Natchez file from Museum of Southern Jewish Experience, Jackson, MS [MSJE].

Congregation formed: 1845 from Nathanson, Martin. "Temple B'nai Israel" pamphlet history of the Natchez, MS community.

Headstone transcriptions unavailable to author at time of writing

**Osyka**

Cemetery established: 1878 from earliest known headstone inscription

Congregation formed: a congregation is mentioned existing in the 1860s in "A Short History of Jewish Life in Osyka, Mississippi" MSJE

Headstone transcriptions from "GERMAN CEMETERY" Tangipahoa Parish, Louisiana Submitted to the LaGenWeb Archives by Debbie Cutrer Powers. Updated by Belford Carver, April 20, 2001 Updated by Frank A. Ricks III, 19 May 2001, 2 Jun 2001, 17 Jul 2001. <http://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/la/tangipahoa/cemeteries/german.txt>.

**Port Gibson: Congregation Gemiluth Chassed**

Cemetery establishment: 1871 or 1872 from Hoffman, Kenneth Ross. "The small town Southern Jewish experience: Port Gibson, Mississippi a case study." Master's Thesis Tulane University, 1993 and Pamphlet "Port Gibson, Mississippi: A Southern Community's Jewish Heritage".

Congregation formed: 1859 from Hoffman, Kenneth Ross. "The small town Southern Jewish experience".

Headstone transcriptions from Hoffman, Kenneth Ross. "The small town Southern Jewish experience."

**Satartia**

Cemetery establishment: 1845 from earliest known headstone transcription

Headstone transcriptions from Birnholz, Richard J. "Who were the Jews of Satartia, Mississippi". 1981 Histories Files, [AJA].

**Summit**

Cemetery establishment: no date available

Congregation formation: no date available, but Landman, Isaac ed. "Mississippi" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* notes that the congregation was in existence in 1870.

Headstone transcriptions unavailable to researcher at time of writing

**Woodville: Temple Beth Israel**

Cemetery establishment: 1848 from Landman, Isaac ed. "Mississippi" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*; Oates, Marsha R. *Jewish Life in Wilkinson County, 1820-1920: Views of a Vanished Community*. Marsha Oates, ed. Published by the Wilkinson County Museum, Woodville, MS, 1995; and *A Jewish Tourist's Guide to the U.S.* Jewish Publication Society of America: Philadelphia, Penn. 1954.

Congregation formed: 1878 from Landman, Isaac ed. "Mississippi" *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*.

Headstone transcriptions from Broders, Nell (September 1977) "Beth Israel Cemetery" *The Louisiana Genealogical Register* Volume 24 No. 3

**Yazoo City**

Cemetery establishment: 1887 from earliest known headstone transcription

Headstone transcriptions from Jones, Georgia and Anne R Masterson "Transcription of Glenwood Cemetery (Yazoo City)" Yazoo City, Miss.: Yazoo City Records, 1989.



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