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JEWISH RELIGIOUS LIFE IN  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, 1851-1918

Ronald D. Gerson

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the Degree of Master  
of Arts in Hebrew Letters and Ordination

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

1974

Referee, Dr. Stanley F. Chyet

## DIGEST

This thesis examines, in detail, the origins and early development of Jewish religious life in the city of San Diego, California, lying at the southwestern corner of the United States. After an introductory preface, which elaborates upon the precise scope of the work and points out the sources which were utilized, the presentation is divided into six chapters.

The first chapter provides the reader with the basic historical background of the city of San Diego. It shows how San Diego, after being under Spanish and then Mexican control, became American territory. Furthermore, it describes the setting of "Old Town" (the earlier site of San Diego) in 1851; it was there that Jewish religious life began.

Chapter II, covering the time-span 1851-1885, analyzes the beginnings of Jewish communal religious activity in what was, throughout this period, a very small frontier town. The recorded religious life taking place in Old Town during the initial decade--leading to the establishment of the first (although apparently short-lived) congregation in 1861--is examined. The formation in 1871 of a new religious organization, the First Hebrew Benevolent Society of San Diego

--in the midst of the "Scott Boom" taking place at that time --is subsequently discussed. The continuance of communal religious life in the difficult economic period 1874-1880 (Jewish activity having shifted, a few years earlier, to New San Diego) is analyzed. Finally, the presentation moves to the heightened religious activity of the more prosperous 1881-1885 period, which culminated in the desire to form what would be the permanent Congregation Beth Israel.

In Chapter III, the active San Diego Jewish community of 1886-1892, flourishing during and immediately after the "Big Boom," is portrayed. It is shown that two of San Diego's major--and permanent--Jewish organizations, Reform Congregation Beth Israel and Lasker Lodge No. 370 of the B'nai B'rith, were established during this remarkable economic boom of 1886-1888. Most of this chapter is devoted to the early years of Congregation Beth Israel--its congregational activity, its first two rabbis, and the building of its first synagogue.

Chapter IV, covering the years 1893-1909, deals with a twelve-year period of severe decline in Jewish religious life, followed by a new upsurge in religious activity beginning in 1905. It reveals that during the period 1893-1904, most of which saw San Diego business in a dismal condition, the activity of both Congregation Beth Israel and Lasker



Lodge decreased dramatically. With respect to Beth Israel during this time, the chapter takes a look at the small group of men who kept the organization--functioning on a limited basis--from dissolving completely.

It is then shown that, beginning in 1905, with the city experiencing new business activity and with the advent of a number of East European Jews, a new upsurge in Jewish religious activity took place. There is discussion of the formation and early activity of Orthodox Congregation Tifereth Israel and of the progress of Beth Israel and Lasker Lodge. The analysis demonstrates that, by the end of 1909, San Diego's Jewish religious life was finally back on a firm footing, with the two congregations functioning regularly and Lasker Lodge showing renewed growth.

Chapter V examines the final period covered by the study, the era commencing in 1910 and extending through the end of World War I. The chapter shows that, in this period, the three major institutions--Congregations Beth Israel and Tifereth Israel and Lasker Lodge--were improving the nature of their respective activities and, in doing so, were providing the foundations for the modern Jewish community. Within the discussion of Beth Israel's development during this period, its different rabbis--and the nature of their respective ministries--are described. With regard to the

presentation of Tifereth Israel, a major part of the discussion involves the building of its synagogue. This chapter also shows how the three major Jewish institutions, along with the San Diego branch of the Jewish Welfare Board, responded to the religious needs of Jewish servicemen stationed in this key military center.

Chapter VI, the concluding section of the work, summarizes some of the main characteristics of the overall Jewish religious experience in San Diego during these first sixty-eight years. Following this summary, there is a final discussion regarding the relationship of the period covered by this study to the overall history of San Diego's Jewish religious life.

Dedicated to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Gerson

## PREFACE

This is a religious history. It attempts to show how the Jews of San Diego, from 1851 through the end of World War I, carried out their Judaism through the leadership of certain key individuals and by means of various organizations and institutions. In dealing with these important formative years in the overall development of San Diego's Jewish religious life, it traces the long, difficult process by which an active, organized Jewish community was gradually created.

The thesis is not a general history of the Jews in San Diego during these years. Such a massive undertaking would require--in addition to the area of religious life, covered here--detailed analysis of the economic, cultural, political, and civic activities of the San Diego Jews. These latter, secular concerns are treated only very peripherally in this work.

Because the thesis focusses upon the religious activity of the San Diego Jews, it deals mostly with the Jewish congregations of the city--as it is primarily through the congregation that the Jew carries out his religion. In this regard, it devotes the most attention to Congregation Beth Israel, on account of the great length of time that it was in

existence during this period and the central position it constantly occupied in San Diego's Jewish religious life. Other organizations which provided additional means through which the San Diego Jews could practice their Judaism--such as the local B'nai B'rith lodge and various ladies' organizations--have been dealt with secondarily.

As for source material, there has been an attempt to use, as much as possible, primary written records--congregational minutes and records, public documents, letters, and manuscript material in the files of the San Diego Historical Society. Unfortunately, for such a study which emphasizes congregational life, there are no congregational minutes and very few congregational records available for the years prior to 1909, and only a handful of public documents pertaining to congregations before that time. (For the period 1909-1918, a complete set of minutes and abundant records are available for Congregation Beth Israel; however such material for Congregation Tifereth Israel is generally lacking.) Therefore, with regard to much of the period covered by the thesis, it has been necessary to rely quite heavily on newspaper reports--from both the local secular press and the Jewish papers of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and the East.

Whenever possible, Jewish publications of the time--C.C.A.R. Year Book, American Jewish Year Book, etc.--were

consulted. In addition, a number of long-time Jewish residents of the city were interviewed in order to supplement the research into written materials and to add a human dimension to the study. As for the background of general San Siego local history which is seen throughout the work, a number of respected works on San Diego history were utilized, the names of which appear in the appropriate footnotes.

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Many persons have helped me in this most interesting and fulfilling task, and I would like to acknowledge their help at this time.

From the initial steps of formulating the topic, through the final stages of the writing, my thesis-advisor, Dr. Stanley F. Chyet, has constantly provided help and guidance. His interest in the project and his many suggestions pertaining to the research and writing involved have made this task a true learning experience.

I owe a great deal to Dr. Norton B. Stern of Santa Monica, California, noted scholar of Western Jewish history and editor of the Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly. Dr. Stern, at the very outset, provided very helpful advice regarding the general direction of the work. In addition, he directed me to much source material of which I, otherwise,

would have been unaware.

Mrs. Sylvia Arden, Research Librarian of the San Diego Historical Society at the Serra Museum in San Diego, has also helped make this work possible. During my recent summer in San Diego, she not only helped me to locate many important materials in the files of the Historical Society; but, also, through her very enthusiasm and interest in this undertaking, my own enthusiasm towards the research was heightened.

Mr. Henry Schwartz, local historian in San Diego, has offered me a great deal of guidance in the areas of both general San Diego history and San Diego Jewish history. I am very grateful to him for the great amount of time he spent with me.

I would like to extend my appreciation to Congregation Beth Israel, along with its rabbis (and my good friends) Joel S. Goor and Michael Sternfield, for giving me complete and unrestricted use of all records, minutes, and correspondence available at the temple.

The librarians in the California Room of the San Diego Public Library deserve a great deal of thanks. Their helpfulness--and patience--in constantly bringing to me reels of microfilm and books are very much appreciated.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to all the



people in San Diego--many of whom are long time residents--who, in the course of my interviews with them, provided a great deal of information. Everyone whom I approached for this purpose was eager to contribute, which was most gratifying and, of course, extremely helpful.

I am also extremely grateful to Mrs. Alice Reyer of Cincinnati, who carried out the painstaking task of typing the final copy of the thesis. The diligence and care with which she proceeded in this task are reflected in every page of the work.

And, finally, to a certain friend on "the third floor" of the library...thanks, for brightening many nights by being there.

Ronald Gerson

Cincinnati, Ohio  
March, 1974



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## CHAPTER I: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND<sup>1</sup>

When, in 1851, Jewish religious life began quietly and inconspicuously in San Diego, the setting was a small American frontier town which already possessed a long, rich history. Indeed, the distinct Mexican appearance of the town and its many Mexican inhabitants reflected some of that history; as San Diego had been, until 1847, under the respective dominion of Spain and independent Mexico.

Spain's possession of San Diego began in 1542, when the Spanish explorer Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, sailing north from Mexico, discovered San Diego Bay and its surroundings. As far as we know, the men whom he sent ashore were the first white men to set foot on California soil.<sup>2</sup> In his official diary, Cabrillo noted a feature which has always been associated with San Diego--its excellent harbor: "Being in this port there passed a very great tempest, but on account of this port's being very good they [his two ships] suffered nothing."<sup>3</sup>

It was not until 1602 that Spanish ships again came to San Diego. At that time, with King Phillip III taking steps to improve Spanish possessions on the coast of California, the explorer Sebastian Vizcaino was sent to explore that area; and, on November 10, 1602, he entered San Diego Bay en route

from Acapulco. He, like Cabrillo before him, was impressed by the quality of the harbor, describing San Diego as " . . . a port which must be the best to be found in all the South Sea [the Pacific] . . . protected on all sides and having a good anchorage."<sup>4</sup> It was Vizcaino who gave the port its name, San Diego de Alcala; for it was on the feast day of San Diego de Alcala, a Spanish Franciscan of the fifteenth century, that Vizcaino and his men held the first Catholic service at this seaport.<sup>5</sup> Vizcaino urged the Spanish government to establish settlements in California, but his words went unheeded for over 150 years.

Finally, in 1769, a Spanish settlement was formed in San Diego. At that time, Spain's absentee ownership of California, established through right of discovery, was threatened by southward Russian advancement; and it was decided to send missionaries and soldiers to settle and secure the area.<sup>6</sup> On July 16, 1769, San Diego was officially founded on a hill which was near water and was reasonably safe from Indian and foreign attacks.<sup>7</sup> Upon this hill, the two major institutions were dedicated by Father Junipero Serra; the mission (first of the California missions) and the presidio, or military settlement. Throughout the remainder of Spanish rule, which lasted until 1822, San Diego remained primarily a small military post upon the hill - - within the

adobe walls of the presidio. An exception involved the Franciscan missionaries who relocated their mission about six miles up the valley from the presidio; as with the other California missions, San Diego Mission possessed extensive land-holdings.

San Diego came under the control of newly independent Mexico in 1822. During the period of Mexican rule (1822-1846), two important developments took place which dramatically altered the physical setting of San Diego.

First, in the 1820s, people began to build adobe houses at the bottom of Presidio Hill, because of the pacification of the Indians and the diminishing fear of foreign enemies.<sup>8</sup> Gradually this building progressed, and, in 1834, San Diego was made a pueblo, or town, instead of a military post. This collection of adobe dwellings at the bottom of the hill provided the beginnings of what would become known as "Old Town," the site of the American city of San Diego for its first twenty years. Indeed, this is where the San Diego Jewish community would originate.

Secondly, in 1833, the Mexican government confiscated the property of the California missions, including that of San Diego Mission. After this, the San Diego Mission's land was parceled out by Mexico to private individuals in enormous grants. The grants of land were given to both established

Mexican citizens and new American settlers as an incentive to settle the country.<sup>9</sup> These parcels of land - - lying outside of the growing town--became large ranchos; stocked with cattle, they were involved in an active hide trade. By 1846 there were many of these ranchos scattered about the area.<sup>10</sup> Soon they would do a great deal of business with the Jewish merchants in town.

In the period 1846-1850, a rapid sequence of events took place which made San Diego, officially, a city of the United States. In July, 1846, war broke out between Mexico and the United States; by January, 1847, the United States was victorious, making California--and San Diego--American soil. In March, 1850, the first California legislature chartered San Diego as an incorporated city, even though, at the time, it contained only some 800 persons. Finally, in September of the same year, California was admitted as a state of the Union.

These political and military events of 1846-1850 led to the formal establishment of San Diego as a United States city. But, in essence, what really brought some Americanization to the town, around 1850, was the significant number of Americans who came there--as a result of the all-important California Gold Rush. At this time, the Gold Rush not only brought Americans to Northern California where the mining took place;

it also brought them to other parts of the state, including the southernmost town of San Diego. As of 1850, ships traveled frequently between Northern California and San Diego, introducing Americans to the little town in the south. Some--including a few recently-immigrated Jews--were attracted very much to San Diego and decided to settle there. They saw that the climate was most pleasant. Furthermore, they sensed the considerable economic possibility which existed for them in San Diego: During this Gold Rush period, there was a cattle boom there, as the swelling population in the north required meat for food and tallow for light<sup>11</sup>; and there was the opportunity to supply the town itself--and its surrounding ranchos--with goods, services, and labor. These new residents brought their American life-style to San Diego.

By 1851, when Jewish religious life began in San Diego, the town provided a most interesting setting: a small American frontier town of about 800 persons which still possessed its Mexican appearance and a large number of Mexican inhabitants.

Displaying this Mexican appearance, the town--known as Old Town--was still centered around a plaza. The old adobe houses around the plaza still remained, but they were now being converted by the Americans into offices and business



establishments.<sup>12</sup> The many Mexican residents continued to cling to their old ways and wear their characteristic garb.<sup>13</sup>

And yet, despite this lingering Mexican character of San Diego, the Americans (among whom were some recently-immigrated individuals from Europe) were clearly dominating the affairs of the town.<sup>14</sup> By their presence--and especially through their economic and governmental activity--they were exerting a strong American influence there.<sup>15</sup> By 1851, Americans had quickly become land owners and cattlemen. In addition, they had set up around the plaza a few hotels, stores, a slaughter-house, a saloon, a courthouse, and offices for the mayor and sheriff.<sup>16</sup> And while the Americans were utilizing the old Mexican-type adobe houses for their offices and business establishments, they were also building new brick and frame structures--which, again, made their influence felt strongly in the small town.<sup>17</sup>

Thus, in 1851, San Diego was just beginning its growth as an American frontier town. Homes, businesses, and offices were gradually sprouting up around the plaza; and Americans were slowly trickling in from other parts of the state and country. It was in this rugged, sparsely-populated frontier setting of 1851, that Jewish religious life began.

## CHAPTER II: BEGINNINGS, 1851-1885

According to the Federal Census, there were four individuals, whom we can definitely designate as Jewish, who came to San Diego in 1850--the first year in which San Diego was, officially, a United States city.<sup>1</sup> Louis Rose, Lewis A. Franklin, Jacob Marks, and Charles Fletcher were all European immigrants, having recently arrived in the United States. And, by the fall of 1851, all were merchants, doing business in the plaza area of Old Town.<sup>2</sup>

At this time--specifically, on October 6, 1851--three of these men, in the midst of their difficult frontier existence, met in a private home to observe together the holiday of Yom Kippur. It was the first known Jewish service in the small town, thereby marking the beginning of Jewish religious life in San Diego. The San Diego Herald reported the simple observance in its October 9 edition:

The Israelites of San Diego, faithful to the religion of their forefathers, observed their New Years days and day of Atonement with due solemnity. The day of Atonement--one of the most solemn and sacred days in the Jewish calendar--was observed by Messrs. Lewis Franklin, Jacob Marks, and Chas. A. Fletcher (the only three Hebrews in town) by their assembling in the house of the former gentleman and passing the entire day in fasting and prayers. We are glad to record such an act of religious faith under circumstances the most unfavorable.<sup>3</sup>



It must here be noted that when Herald editor J. Judson Ames described Lewis Franklin, Jacob Marks, and Charles Fletcher as "the only three Hebrews in town," he must have meant that they were the three Jews who were in town on that particular day.<sup>4</sup> For Louis Rose was, along with Franklin, Marks, and Fletcher, definitely a Jewish resident of San Diego at that time. Indeed, he is generally acknowledged as the first Jew to settle in San Diego.<sup>5</sup>

Jews in the eastern part of the country soon learned of this beginning of Jewish religious activity in San Diego, when Isaac Leaser praised Franklin, Marks, and Fletcher in The Occident. After noting their observance, Leaser commented, "This....proves conclusively what has been often advanced, that give the Jew of right feeling an opportunity, and he will show his attachment to his faith by joining with others to honor his God after the ancestral rites."<sup>6</sup>

Regarding the participants in this first Jewish service, a number of sources show that Lewis Franklin and Jacob Marks (soon to be known as Marks Jacobs) were both devout, knowledgeable Jews from England. (Marks had lived, originally, in Poland.<sup>7</sup>) They represented the type of Jew who would not allow his devotion to Judaism to be thwarted by "the most unfavorable circumstances" of rugged frontier life. Unfortunately, while we know that Charles Fletcher was a Bohemian

Jew, we have no information about his particular religiosity beyond his appearance at the 1851 service.

Franklin's background of Jewish religious activity in California prior to his coming to San Diego is particularly interesting. Indeed, it was most fitting that this first San Diego service was held in his home; for two years earlier, in San Francisco, the first Jewish service in California had been held in his tent room. An account from the archives of San Francisco's Temple Emanuel states:

Among the first settlers of our people on the Pacific Coast, after the purchase of California by the government of the United States we find the following names: Major A.C. Labatt, Mr. M. Schaefer, Mr. Sharp, Mr. A. Hess, Mr. Ph. Schloss, Mr. Louis Franklin, Mr. Bodenheim. The first religious meeting of our people in this city was held on Yom Kippur 5609 (1849) in a tent room occupied by Mr. Louis Franklin, situated on Jackson near the corner of Kearney street; there were about ten persons present.<sup>8</sup>

Franklin's dedication to Judaism in California was seen again during the High Holy Days of 1850, at which time he was still residing in San Francisco, just prior to his departure for San Diego. On Yom Kippur, he officiated at the evening services at the Kearney Street Hebrew Congregation. Moreover, on that holiday he preached a sermon which The Asmonean, of New York, praised as "an able address" and reprinted for its readers.<sup>9</sup> In his letter of thanks to The Asmonean, Franklin--displaying his typically eloquent style--

described his forthright loyalty to Jews and to Judaism, which he would soon bring to the frontier setting of San Diego: He saw himself as "a son in Israel, ever ready to stand forth in the defense of his coreligionists, against any foe, whether it be the clamorous tongue of deluded fanatics or the more insidious machinations of the ruler of sin, and my only ambition is to aid the Jew to remove the odium, which his own inertness has cast upon him."<sup>10</sup> By the end of the year, Franklin had moved to San Diego where, the following autumn, he hosted another pioneer service--the Yom Kippur observance of 1851.

After this first San Diego service, Jewish religious activity continued during the initial decade, 1851-1860, in a particular fashion. This was a period in which the San Diego Jews were without formal organization, but did practice their Judaism together, as evidenced by the reports of various religious observances which have come down to us. During this decade, the town was expanding greatly in population, with many more Americans settling there. Having been a town of 798 persons in 1850, San Diego had a population of 4324 in 1860.<sup>11</sup> Throughout this period San Diego remained situated in Mexican-looking Old Town, with the business-life of the town clustered around the plaza. As the decade progressed, several more Jewish merchants appeared on the scene,

sensing the "commercial vacuum"--the need for goods and supplies--which existed in the growing frontier town.<sup>12</sup> This handful of industrious Jews, as will be seen, made a conscious effort to observe various religious events together during this period, despite difficult frontier conditions and lack of an organization. And, the original worshippers--Lewis Franklin and Jacob Marks--continued to stand at the forefront of this religious activity.

By 1853, there was a number of new Jewish merchants in Old Town: Maurice Franklin had come to join his brother Lewis in business. Lewis Strauss, H.L. Kohn, Marcus Katz, and J.A. Goldman were doing business there. In addition, the Mannasse brothers, Joseph and Heyman, had arrived, along with their cousin Moses;<sup>13</sup> indeed, Joseph would be a pillar in the Jewish community for many years. Like the original four Jewish residents, these were all immigrants from Europe; and most of them were German.<sup>14</sup>

At this time, several of these Jews gathered together for another pioneer Jewish observance in San Diego, the first Jewish wedding ceremony of which we know. Again, Jacob Marks figured prominently, as it was the wedding of his daughter Leah to the merchant Marcus Katz, a recent arrival in San Diego. Reporting this wedding of August 24, 1853, the Herald stated:

Hebrew Marriage: Married in San Diego, on Wednesday, the 24th inst, by Rabbi Kohn, in accordance with the rites of the Jewish religion, Miss Leah Marks, daughter of our esteemed fellow-citizen Jacob Marks, to Mr. Morris Katz.<sup>15</sup>

The Aramaic Ketubah from this wedding is still in existence; and at the bottom of it we can see the names of some of those who were present:

ח"ל ע"ס כהן	(Chaim Leib, i.e., H.L., Kohn, officiant)
א"י בן אברהם זאנצאן	(J.A. Goldman, witness)
ה"א בן מנחם	(Heyman Mannasse, witness)
מורדכי ק"ל	(Mordecai, i.e., Marcus, Katz, groom) <sup>16</sup>

With this ceremony, we see, for the first time, a typical phenomenon of the small Jewish community in America, which would be an important part of the Jewish religious experience in San Diego, at various times, all the way up to the beginning of the twentieth century: that of the learned layman functioning as leader of Jewish ritual in the community.<sup>17</sup> H.L. Kohn was the first of a number of learned, unordained Jews of San Diego who performed ritual functions for their coreligionists in the town. In the years ahead, Jacob Marks, Louis Rose, H. Meyer, Louis Mendelson, and others would assume this responsibility. Obviously, this phenomenon of the learned, unordained Jew serving as leader of Jewish ritual was extremely important in a frontier out-



post like San Diego of the 1850s; for it was only through his knowledge and leadership that the Jews of San Diego were able to maintain their Jewish religious practice in this isolated frontier setting.

Jewish religious commitment continued in the middle years of the decade with recorded High Holy Day observance in 1854-55-56. (Indeed, following the 1851 service, the San Diego Jews probably met each year of this initial decade for the High Holy Days; unfortunately, actual written evidence is lacking for some of these years.)

Jacob Marks, now known as Marks Jacobs, continued to play a central role, hosting the 1854 services in his home, as Franklin had done earlier. He placed the following notice in the Herald:

To the Members of the Hebrew Faith in San Diego:  
The approaching Sacred Festivals commencing on Friday evening next, the 22nd inst, will be observed with the accustomed ceremonies by assembling at my house for Religious Worship. All my Brethren in faith are invited to attend. Services will commence in the morning at 7, and evening at half past 6 o'clock.

Marks Jacobs  
P.S.--On Saturday and Sunday, the 24th and 25th of September, inst, and Monday, the 2nd of October, the stores of the Israelitish faith will be closed.<sup>18</sup>

We note in Jacobs' postscript--and in the following report--that the Jews during this time followed the traditional minhaq, observing two days of Rosh Hashanah and beginning

their worship early in the morning and evening. And we also observe here what was to be a perennial visible sign of the Jewish High Holy Days in San Diego--the closed stores of the Jewish merchants.

In reporting the 1855 High Holy Day observance of the small San Diego Jewish community, the Herald--in a humorous way--alluded to the difficult conditions under which Judaism was maintained in this small town. Referring, most likely, to the rugged frontier life of Southern California--and to the sparse Jewish population existing there--editor Ames labeled San Diego as a "section of the 'Vale of Tears'":

The Jewish New Year: That portion of the family of the 'Children of Israel' residing in this section of the 'Vale of Tears', have been celebrating the advent of their New Year, during the past two days [another indication of the traditional minhag] with the usual pomp and ceremonies, which will conclude this evening. We are given to understand that next Saturday will be observed as a Fast instead of a Feast Day, by the brethren of Israelitish persuasion, in commemoration of the sacrifice of atonement.<sup>19</sup>

The following year, when Judge Benjamin Hayes of Los Angeles passed through San Diego, he noted the Jewish observance of Rosh Hashanah, visibly evident by the closing of stores, in his diary: "September 30, 1856, Sunday-- This is the Jewish New Year; their [the Jews'] stores are all closed."<sup>20</sup>

Incidentally, in his diary entry a week earlier, Hayes

had made an observation regarding the observance of the Jewish Sabbath in San Diego. From Hayes' comment, we see that only Lewis Franklin closed his store on Saturdays. "September 23, 1856, Sunday--The Jewish Sabbath yesterday was kept by only one person, Mr. L.A.F."<sup>21</sup> (Indeed, the Herald had pointed out a few years earlier that it had always been Franklin's custom to do so.<sup>22</sup>) The operation of all the other stores on the Sabbath is one illustration of an important point which must be kept in mind regarding San Diego's Jews during this period: While they engaged in a good deal of religious activity, there is no doubt that the pressures of frontier life hindered their piety in certain respects. In the present example, we see that the pressure of making a living in the small, sparsely-populated frontier town made it very difficult for practically all of them to close up on an important business day. In order for them--and their families--to survive economically in the frontier outpost of San Diego, this was one mitzvah, among others, which they would have to forego.

Marks Jacobs led the ritual in 1857, when the Jews of San Diego gathered together for another wedding--that of his third daughter Victoria and Maurice Franklin. Thus, the families of the two important leaders in Jewish religious life of this first decade--Lewis Franklin and Marks



Jacobs--were now joined together through marriage:

Married: On Tuesday, March 31, at the residence of, and by the bride's father, according to Jewish rites, Maurice A. Franklin, late of London, England, to Victoria, third daughter of Marx and Hannah Jacobs, late of Manchester, England.<sup>23</sup>

By 1859, San Diego contained "some twelve or fourteen Israelites," according to the observation of Lewis Franklin.<sup>24</sup> And, at this time, the Jews' angry reaction to an unfortunate incident revealed, in a dramatic way, their forthright determination to practice their Judaism freely and unharrassed in the frontier town.

In a long letter to editor Julius Eckman of the Weekly Gleaner, a San Francisco Jewish paper, one of the two leaders, Lewis Franklin, described the incident. On Yom Kippur of that year, Moses Mannasse--now engaged in grape-growing and other business in the northern part of the county--traveled some fifty miles to Old Town in order to complete the minyan for services. As the Jews were worshipping together in "a room set apart by us as a temporary synagogue," a deputy sheriff appeared and requested Mannasse to testify before the grand jury. Mannasse refused, "pleading as an excuse that he was engaged in his devotions." When the deputy sheriff returned within fifteen minutes with a subpoena, the Jews protested the interruption in their holy worship: They

insisted that Mannasse was indispensable for the minyan and that it was improper to serve a subpoena in a synagogue. When the Jews asserted that "force alone could convey Mr. Mannasse from our midst," the deputy sheriff returned with a posse, rushed into the room, and took Mannasse to the Grand Jury. Mannasse, standing up for his religious rights, refused to testify and was put in custody of the sheriff, who released him on his own recognizance. He returned to pray with his fellow Jews; and, after sundown, finally went back before the Grand Jury to answer what turned out to be merely routine questions about a drunken brawl which had occurred in town.

Franklin, in his eloquent letter to Eckman, expressed the outrage felt by every member of the Jewish community at this governmental interference with the Jewish religious practice to which they were committed:

I know not what feeling mostly activates me, in recapitulating to you the occurrences which have disgraced civilization in this our remote little town of San Diego. Were I to say that unmitigated disgust fills my bosom, I would scarcely express myself as a wrong of the nature I shall here recount to you knows no parallel in the annals of the civilized world. An offense has been committed against all decency, and I, in common with all my coreligionists, call upon you to give publicity in the matter, so that the perpetrators may be marked with the rebuke of scorn by a free and independent press....although we are but few in number here, we are yet resolved to

seek redress for this untoward outrage, and with this object, a full statement of facts is being forwarded to one of the most able counsels in the state, for him to represent us in any action which he, in his wisdom, thinks we can sustain in the Supreme Court of this state....<sup>25</sup>

This angry response on the part of the San Diego Jews illustrated once again--this time in dramatic terms--their strong effort to assert their religious identity in frontier society.

Through the reporting of this incident--and the San Diego Jews' response--in several different newspapers (in addition to the Weekly Gleaner of San Francisco, it appeared in Southern Vineyard of Los Angeles<sup>26</sup> and Leeser's The Occident<sup>27</sup>), the San Diego Jewish community received much exposure. More Jews in other parts of the state and country became cognizant of the small, but committed group of Jews in the distant frontier outpost of San Diego. Indeed, the Mannasse episode appeared on the front page of The Occident, along with Leeser's angry editorial criticism of the San Diego court: "It is certainly curious that such things should be done under the aegis of liberty, and that freedom of conscience should be so singularly defined."<sup>28</sup>

Finally, in early 1860, the San Diego Jewish community expressed its religious commitment through a collective act of charity. Although far away from the centers of Jewish

activity in the country, they joined the national Jewish philanthropic effort to aid the destitute Jews in Morocco. To this small group of San Diego Jews, this collective act of tzedakah was another important way of practicing Judaism together in their isolated frontier setting. In addition, it made them feel more a part of the American Jewish community, from which they were, geographically, very distant. Both the Weekly Gleaner and the San Diego Herald acknowledged that Heyman Mannasse, who organized the San Diego effort, had submitted \$61.00 from the San Diego Jewish community to the national Morocco Fund.<sup>29</sup>

Thus, in this initial decade, 1851-1860, the small group of San Diego Jews--under very difficult frontier conditions and with no religious organization--did remarkably well in keeping Jewish religious life alive. Under the leadership of Lewis Franklin and Marks Jacobs, these Jews had sustained an interest in Jewish practice which would, in the next year, lead to the formation of an actual congregation. By the end of 1860, both Jacobs and Franklin had left San Diego to try their business skill elsewhere. Jacobs settled in San Bernardino, becoming a leader of the Jewish community there; indeed, a Weekly Gleaner report in March indicated that he had spear-headed the Morocco Fund drive in that town.<sup>30</sup> It is not certain where Franklin relocated, although there

is one report that he sold his most recent business--the Franklin House hotel--and went east to be married.<sup>31</sup>

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As the year 1861 unfolded, San Diego's overall population had grown to 4324.<sup>32</sup> San Diego was still mainly situated in Old Town, which had retained its Mexican appearance; but this would be the final decade in which that was so. Despite the rise in the overall population, the Jewish population had not changed much; according to the 1860 Federal Census, there were approximately ten Jewish males in town, a few of them being married. As was the case previously, practically all of them were German Jews, their birthplaces listed in the Census as "Prussia," "Bavaria," "Hanover," and "Darmstadt."<sup>33</sup> (It should be noted that the census designation "Prussia" can refer to Prussian Poland.) And, as before, practically all of them were merchants in the Old Town plaza area.<sup>34</sup>

At this time, with Marks Jacobs and Lewis Franklin gone, a new leader of Jewish religious activity stepped forth who would retain a leadership role for over forty years; his name, Marcus Schiller.

Schiller, from Posen (in Prussian Poland), had come to San Diego in 1856, after having spent time in New York.



Alabama, Georgia, and San Francisco, California.<sup>35</sup> In partnership with Joseph Mannasse--another pillar of the Jewish community--until 1888, he became one of San Diego's most successful businessmen. With Mannasse, he was involved in general merchandising, land-investment, shipping, the lumber trade, and ranching.<sup>36</sup> What is important for our study is the fact that Schiller was a major force behind Jewish religious organizations in San Diego until his death in 1904; indeed, he was the president of successive major religious organizations in San Diego until his final year. His important leadership role will be seen continually in the pages that follow.

Schiller first assumed this role of leadership in Jewish religious activity when he led the formation of San Diego's first Jewish congregation. By June of 1861, after ten years of religious activity without a formal organization, the desire was present among the small group of San Diego Jews to establish a congregation. Led by Schiller, the group of ten met during that month in Old Town and organized congregation Adath Yeshurun ( אֲדַת יֵשׁוּרֻן ).<sup>37</sup>

In a letter to Julius Eckman, editor of the Weekly Gleaner, Schiller described the organizational meeting of Adath Yeshurun and sought from Eckman some written guidance for the new congregation:

To the Rev. Dr. Julius Eckman, Editor "Gleaner"  
Dear Sir! I would beg you to notice a called  
meeting, held here these days by the small num-  
ber of Israelites residing at San Diego.

San Diego, June 20, 1861

A meeting was held by us, the few Israelites at  
the above place. Mr. Marcus Schiller being  
called to occupy the chair, he opened the meeting  
by stating the object of the call: to be to form  
ourselves into a congregation. This proposition  
was unanimously adopted. It was further resolved  
(viz): Since we could number ten persons only,  
it was resolved to call our congregation by that  
simple name of "Adath Yeshurun." אדת ישורון and  
resolved also: That we solicit the Rev. Dr. Julius  
Eckman, the Editor of the "Gleaner," to aid us in  
instructing us, by sending us a form of "Rules and  
Regulations" for our guide, and hereby enable us  
to succeed in our laudable undertaking; and, as we  
have heretofore noticed "Whereas communications of  
this cause have always met with the liveliest in-  
terest on the part of the Editor "Gleaner"!--and  
whereas we at this time most need your aid, we  
avail ourselves of the opportunity he gives out to  
all. In hopes that the foregoing preamble will  
find room in your "Gleaner," or, as the Rev. Sir  
may see, we seek his aid by instructing us how to  
found a congregation, and it would matter little  
in what way we receive it. Rev. Sir may use his  
time and convenience and we shall await his  
pleasure.

Respectfully your most obedient  
Marcus Schiller<sup>38</sup>

The founding of the congregation received the attention  
of Jews in other parts of the country when Leeser's The  
Occident reported the momentous event a few months later.  
In his comments, Leeser stressed the importance of the con-  
gregation as a means of unifying the Jews in the area. "We

hope that the present effort may be eminently successful, as San Diego, being situated in the southern part of California, would form eminently a point of union for the many [?] Israelites scattered in that vicinity; Mr. Marcus Schiller appears to be the principal person among the new society."<sup>39</sup>

Schiller assumed the presidency of the new congregation, a position to which he would become very accustomed in various religious organizations during the years ahead. Joseph Mannasse and Louis Rose--men who would play important roles in religious activity for years--formed, with Schiller, the nucleus of the little congregation.<sup>40</sup>

As is typical with pioneer congregations, the first order of business was to procure land for a Jewish cemetery for the Jewish community. And it is in this endeavor--occurring in April, 1862--that we see the first main involvement of Louis Rose in Jewish religious life.

Before examining the actual attainment of land for the Jewish cemetery, a few words must be said here concerning Louis Rose. As was stated earlier, Rose--born in Hanover, Germany<sup>41</sup>--is generally considered to be the first Jewish resident of San Diego, arriving there in May, 1850, from Texas.<sup>42</sup> Involved in a number of business ventures, he is best remembered for his heavy land investment in the Roseville



area (the harbor-side of Point Loma); this investment was based upon his mistaken belief that this area would become the terminus for a railroad from the east and the future site of San Diego. For a long time it was thought by local historians that Rose was not connected with Jewish religious activity until the early 1870s;<sup>43</sup> however, we now know this to be false, as first seen in his important role involving the first Jewish cemetery in 1862.

With Adath Yeshurun in need of cemetery land, Rose came forth, in April of 1862, to donate to the new congregation five acres of his Roseville land for burial purposes. The original deed of April 24, 1862--describing the transfer of the land--is still in existence at the San Diego Recorder's Office. In it, we see that, as a necessary formality, Rose had to be given the nominal sum of ten dollars by Adath Yeshurun to complete the legal transfer of title for the property.<sup>44</sup> The deed described the legal transfer of land "between Louis Rose, of San Diego, State of California, party of the first part, and the Hebrew Society, known as Adath Yeshurun, of the City of San Diego, County aforesaid, party of the second part."<sup>45</sup> According to the deed, Rose presented the land to "the said party of the second part, their successors, and heirs....to be used, occupied and

enjoyed in all time to come by the said Hebrew Society (Adath Yeshurun) ...as a public cemetery for said society."<sup>46</sup>

This plot of land, located in the present Midway area of San Diego, remained the Jewish cemetery for thirty years, until, in 1892, a new cemetery was established at Mt. Hope. Our evidence shows that the small group of Jews took pride in keeping up the sacred burial site which Rose had donated. Joseph Mannasse and Marcus Schiller gave the lumber to fence the cemetery.<sup>47</sup> And, in 1873, Mr. M. Cohn had the cemetery beautified by the planting of about fifty pepper trees within it.<sup>48</sup>

There is a very interesting historical note regarding this original Jewish cemetery: The land in which the cemetery was situated remained under the ownership of later Jewish organizations--Temple Beth Israel and Home of Peace Cemetery Corporation--all the way up until 1965, when it was sold to Doctor's Hospital for \$210,000. At that time, over one hundred years after the original deed had been written, the Home of Peace Cemetery Corporation honored the spirit of that deed by using the money from the land-sale strictly for cemetery purposes. With this money, the corporation purchased 1200 new crypts for its Cyprus View mausoleum.<sup>49</sup>

Subsequent to its formation and procurement of cemetery

land, Congregation Adath Yeshurun--according to a later report by Samuel I. Fox who knew its active members--met for services principally on the Jewish holidays. It met--without a rabbi--at private residences in Old Town, most often at the home of President Marcus Schiller.<sup>50</sup>

It was, most likely, the congregation itself which celebrated, in June, 1863, the wedding of Heyman Mannasse and Hannah Schiller (sister of Marcus), members of two of the leading San Diego Jewish families. The wedding took place at the home of Marcus Schiller, and an original invitation to the affair has been preserved in the files of the San Diego Historical Society.<sup>51</sup> From the Los Angeles Star's account of this wedding, we see that Louis Rose was another layman who performed Jewish ritual for the community; for he was the officiant at the joyous ceremony.<sup>52</sup>

It appears that this first congregation had, unfortunately, a very short life, due to the very difficult economic conditions which existed in Old Town in the mid-1860s. In 1864, the drought which had begun in 1862 reached its worst in San Diego County. Cattle herds on the ranches were decimated, and crops were destroyed.<sup>53</sup> The economy of Old Town took a sharp turn downward, and the population declined. Along with many of the overall population, several Jews were forced to leave Old Town. By 1868, there were

only a few Jewish families in San Diego, according to a communication received by the San Francisco Jewish paper, The Hebrew.<sup>54</sup> We can assume that Adath Yeshurun dissolved around this time. For this same communication states that after this low point in Jewish population, when more Jews had come to San Diego again (1870), an attempt was made to form either a congregation (showing that the former congregation Adath Yeshurun had dissolved) or a benevolent society.<sup>55</sup>

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The early 1870s brought a new increase in the number of San Diego's Jewish residents. These arrivals were part of a general movement of people into San Diego, which raised the city's population from only 2,305 at the beginning of the decade<sup>56</sup> to 5,000 by 1873.<sup>57</sup> And this general population expansion was the result of two major developments in the San Diego area.

First, at this time, "New Town," the present center of San Diego, was growing rapidly--thereby ending the importance of Old Town. Lying south of Old Town near the bay, this land had been purchased in 1867 by Alonzo E. Horton.<sup>58</sup> Now, in the early 1870s, New Town was being quickly built up--under Horton's leadership--with many new business buildings and

homes. Instead of being centered in Old Town, the original Mexican pueblo which was now dying economically, San Diego was now located in "New San Diego," making it a vibrant, growing town. As a result, there was much business opportunity for potential newcomers; and many seized that opportunity, settling in New San Diego.

Secondly, in 1871, there arose strong speculation in San Diego that a railroad was coming to the town. With the project organized by Col. Thomas A. Scott, San Diego was to become the western terminus of the Texas and Pacific Railway, linking it with the East. The resulting business and real estate boom, known as the "Scott Boom," lasted until 1873; and it was the additional impetus for an influx of new residents during the early 1870s.

Among the newcomers during this period were many Jews, seeking, along with the others, the economic opportunity available in growing New San Diego. By September, 1871, there were, according to a communication received by the San Francisco Jewish paper The Hebrew, about fifty Jewish men in San Diego, along with fourteen women and thirty-four children.<sup>59</sup> And, a count of the Jewish population in 1872 by the Jewish restaurateur Hyman Solomon produced similar findings, showing forty-one men in the San Diego Jewish community.<sup>60</sup> As was the case previously, these were primarily German Jews,



some of those listed from "Prussia" probably being from Prussian Poland.<sup>61</sup>

With this rise in the size of the Jewish community, Jewish religious life surfaced once again, with the formation of a new religious organization in 1871. Actually, as early as 1870, when it was apparent that Jews were beginning to come to San Diego again, there had been an initial attempt to form a religious organization to replace the dissolved congregation Adath Yeshurun. As mentioned above, the San Diego Jews were, at this time, faced with the choice of forming either another congregation or a benevolent society; and they made an attempt at the latter.<sup>62</sup> In early 1870, a report in the San Diego Union announced that a meeting had taken place in Marcus Schiller's home for the purpose of forming the benevolent society. At that meeting, the following resolution was adopted:

Whereas the population of Israelites in Old and South [New] San Diego has been and is increasing rapidly, it becomes necessary that we establish a society strictly in accordance with our faith, for the purpose of assisting the needy, attending to the sick, and burying the dead; accordingly, a committee was appointed to report at a meeting for organization, to be held on the first Sunday of February 1870 at the house of M. Schiller, where all the Israelites of San Diego county are cordially invited to join us.

M. Cohn President, pro tem.  
Charles Wolfsheimer, Secretary<sup>63</sup>



Unfortunately, this initial attempt to form a benevolent society failed. The number of Jews was still quite small; and, according to the report in The Hebrew, "the lack of spirit at that time prevented it."<sup>64</sup>

In the fall of 1871, with more Jews having arrived in town, another effort to form the benevolent society was this time successful. This effort--which resulted in the formation of the "First Hebrew Benevolent Society of San Diego"--took place during the High Holy Days, when the Jews were holding their services for the last time in Old Town. (The pioneer Louis Rose--an active Mason--had obtained the Masonic Hall for the services and had "fitted the same up in splendid style.") On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, the benevolent society was proposed, while the Jews were gathered for services.<sup>65</sup> And, on the afternoon before Yom Kippur, at Rose's Old Town home, the society was formally organized.<sup>66</sup>

As had been the case with San Diego's first religious organization--Congregation Adath Yeshurun--Marcus Schiller assumed the presidency of the benevolent society. Forty men signed up as members. Among the officers of the society were Joseph Mannasse, long-time member of the Jewish community, as well as Charles Wolfsheimer and Rudolph Schiller (brother of Marcus), new arrivals whose names would, for

many years, figure prominently in San Diego Jewish life. In structuring itself, the new benevolent society adopted "the constitution and by-laws of the Los Angeles Congregation [Congregation B'nai Brith]...with a few exceptions."<sup>67</sup> In addition to attending to burials and assisting the needy and the sick, the society was apparently to fulfill worship and educational functions; for, at this organizational meeting, the society hired a Rev. H. Meyer as "Reader and Teacher."

Incidentally, while H. Meyer remains a somewhat mysterious figure because of the paucity of information about him, he does occupy a unique place in San Diego's Jewish religious history as the first hired religious leader in the community. (It should be noted that he, most likely, did not have actual rabbinic ordination.) He had originally sought a position of "Reader, Teacher, and Shochet" in Los Angeles; but upon failing to procure that position had come to San Diego.<sup>68</sup> We know that he performed ceremonial functions in San Diego at least through 1873, when he officiated at the circumcision of Abraham Klauber's son--which, the Union reported, was the first ceremony of brit milah in New San Diego.<sup>69</sup>

Strangely, the Hebrew Benevolent Society is never mentioned again in our sources following the reports of its organization on Erev Yom Kuppur, 1871. Thus, we are unable

to determine precisely how long it remained as a formal body. What is significant, however, is that the establishment of this society signified an important revival in communal religious activity which would continue. For during the years that followed--until the formation of another, this time permanent, congregation in 1886--the loosely organized Jewish community met regularly for the High Holy Days and other festive occasions. As to how long the Hebrew Benevolent Society was the actual body around which this communal religious activity revolved, we cannot be certain.

In 1872, the revived Jewish community met on the High Holy Days for what turned out to be momentous services. Recognizing that New Town had now completely supplanted Old Town (the final blow to Old Town was a devastating fire in April, 1872), the Jews moved their communal observances to New San Diego for the first time. These religious services, held in the Odd Fellow's Hall, marked the shift of San Diego's Jewish religious life from Old Town to New San Diego; and it was a shift which would be permanent. The Union revealed this momentous change in its report of the Yom Kippur services:

The Day of Atonement: The Jewish fast day known as the "Day of Atonement" was generally celebrated by the Hebrews of this city yesterday. All of their places of business were closed, and services were held at the

temporary synagogue in the Odd Fellows' Hall [in New Town].<sup>70</sup>

Hard times returned to San Diego in September, 1873. Plans for the railroad fell through; the business and real estate boom which had taken place collapsed; and people poured out of San Diego. In a matter of months, the population of the city--which had risen to 5,000--dropped to 1500.<sup>71</sup> Through 1880, San Diego experienced difficult economic conditions. There was little business and industry<sup>72</sup>; and matters were made worse with severe draughts hitting San Diego in the winter and spring of 1876.<sup>73</sup> In this period of economic difficulty, there was very little population growth; from the low of 1500, the population of the city only moved up to 2,637 as of 1880.<sup>74</sup>

During these difficult years, 1874-1880, the Jewish population was considerably lower than it had been in the prosperous early 1870s. And yet, this smaller Jewish community--about fifteen men, and families<sup>75</sup>--continued the communal religious activity which had revived in the early years of the decade. As a loosely organized group--without a building and without a rabbi--this communal religious life took several forms.

First, the most obvious form of religious activity was the regular High Holy Day services in various halls in New

San Diego. It made little difference to this small group of Jews where they met, as long as they had a room for their "temporary synagogue." According to a later recollection, in 1876 they rented a hall at Sixth and F Streets.<sup>76</sup> We know that in 1879 and 1880 they met in a hall over the post office.<sup>77</sup> The minhag was still traditional, as evidenced by the two-day observance of Rosh Hashanah and the all-day nature of these New Year services.<sup>78</sup> Because of the significant number of stores now operated by Jewish merchants in New San Diego, the Jewish High Holy Days--bringing the closing of these stores--were visibly evident in the town as illustrated in this Union report of 1874:

The Hebrew Fast Day of Yom Kippur was strictly observed yesterday. The town looked more lively when the numerous stores which had been closed during the day were opened last evening.<sup>79</sup>

Secondly, during this period, the small group of San Diego Jews began gathering together socially to celebrate Purim, an exciting event which assumed a prominent place in the religious life of this frontier Jewish community. The first "Purim Ball" of which we know was reported by the Union in 1878, having taken place at the home of the long-time San Diego Jewish pioneer Joseph Mannasse:

The feast of "Purim" was quietly celebrated on Tuesday by our Jewish friends. In the evening there was a full gathering at the residence of Mr. J.S. Mannasse, where an exceedingly pleasant



reunion took place. The social dance was kept up until nearly daylight. At midnight all marched from the dancing hall to an adjoining room, where a large table was found spread with all the delicacies of the season. All present heartily enjoyed the festival.<sup>80</sup>

It appears that the Purim Ball became an annual affair after this celebration at the Mannasse home, as more of them are reported in the early 1880s.

Finally, there is an indication that during this period, though isolated from the centers of Jewish intellectual activity, the small Jewish community tried, when possible, to enrich itself with Jewish knowledge. An 1875 report tells of a lecture organized by the San Diego Jews in which a Rev. Abram Meyers, from Melbourne, Australia, came in to speak on "Scripture and Science" at Horton's Hall (the primary meeting hall in town).<sup>81</sup> There may well have been other Jewish educational ventures of this kind, when speakers (perhaps from Los Angeles and San Francisco) passed through town.

In the five-year period following 1880, the economic pendulum swun upward once again, as San Diego's long time dream of a railroad to the East gradually became a reality. With the construction beginning in National City (located between New San Diego and Mexico) in 1881, the new California Southern Railroad inched its way northward until it



finally reached Barstow in 1885. There it connected with the Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe, thereby linking San Diego with the East.<sup>82</sup> During this period, 1881-1885, when it was apparent that the railroad would become a reality, business and real estate investment picked up again and there was a rise in population. At the time of the railroad's completion in November, 1885, the population was up to 5,000. (from 2,637 in 1880);<sup>83</sup> And this upward economic trend was really a prelude to the "big boom" which, as a result of the completion of the railroad, came in 1886.

These five years represented an important period of growth for Jewish religious life in San Diego. During this time, because of the economic upsurge, more Jews came into San Diego, pushing their numbers up again to about forty men and families.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, some key individuals in San Diego's Jewish religious history--Simon Levi, Abraham Blochman, and Louis Mendelson--began to figure prominently in Jewish life, bolstering the leadership still provided by pioneers Marcus Schiller, Rudolph Schiller, and Joseph Mannasse. (More will be said about Levi, Blochman, and Mendelson, individually, later on.) As a result, enthusiasm for Jewish religious activity gradually increased, culminating--at the end of 1885--in the desire to form what turned out to be Congregation Beth Israel, which still exists today.

The enthusiastic Jewish religious life of this five year period which immediately preceded the congregation is warmly portrayed in a later reminiscence of Lucien A. Blochman--son of Abraham Blochman--who, during this period, was in his late teens. With his family he had come to San Diego from San Francisco in 1881<sup>85</sup>, and here, he describes San Diego's Jewish life in the years before the "big boom":

....Those were the days when all of the Jews of San Diego were united by a bond that made them one great family....no cliques, no mutual admiration bunch, not even a rabbi, but all were Jews, all were friends, everyone was ready and willing to help the other.... Those Purim parties where we danced the good old waltzes and polkas, and after the dancing came the eats, and such eats! The platters piled up with turkey and duck and chicken, and those salads, and the home-made cakes that everyone vied with the other to see who could make the best....Memories of the holidays and the fast days! [During this period, the Jews continued to worship primarily on the High Holy Days, services which Blochman now describes.] When the Jews of the town gathered together in some hall, and Joe Mannasse furnished his Torah and Marcus Schiller and Louis Mendelson read the prayers and A. Blochman, Simon Levi, Rudolph Schiller, and others assisted, and year after year all of the Jews met together, sometimes in one hall, and sometimes in another...<sup>86</sup>

As part of the rising interest in Jewish religious activity during this period, there was--in 1882--a new desire to beautify the Jewish cemetery, which still lay on the plot of land in Roseville donated by Louis Rose (now a man of 74) twenty years earlier. As a result,

a "Jewish Cemetery Organization" was established that summer, with thirty-one contributing members, whose purpose was "to fix up the cemetery by fencing it, laying out avenues, setting out trees, shrubs, etc. and making it an ornament to the city."<sup>87</sup> Among the officers of the organization were Abraham Blochman (vice-president) and Simon Levi (treasurer), new Jewish leaders of this period who would remain very involved in the years ahead.<sup>88</sup> Interestingly, the president of the Jewish Cemetery Organization was Abraham Klauber, pioneer San Diego Jewish merchant since 1869--who, after this involvement with the cemetery, is no longer seen in connection with San Diego's Jewish religious activity.

During this "pre-congregation" period of increased Jewish population and increased religious activity, traditional worship--which had been the minhag since the beginning of Jewish religious life here--was gradually losing its prominence. In 1881, we know that the traditional form of worship in communal services was still unchallenged. For the Union reported two days of public Rosh Hashanah worship<sup>89</sup>; and then, in a rather humorous way, further revealed the traditional minhag by adding, in reference to the service led by Rudolph Schiller, "as it was all Hebrew to us, we didn't understand it."<sup>90</sup> However, by the next year, a more liberal spirit had set in, with the communal New Year

services being held only on Erev Rosh Hashanah and on the first day until noon.<sup>91</sup> (This apparently became the established practice at this time, as this Rosh Hashanah format was reported again in 1885.)<sup>92</sup> The Jewish community, during this period, was undoubtedly moving--in its worship--towards Reform Judaism, which would be the definite religious form of the soon-to-be Congregation Beth Israel by 1887. Indeed, a report which referred to this pre-congregational period noted that only "a few who still retain the old-fashioned ideas" still observed, privately, the second day of Rosh Hashanah.<sup>93</sup>

By the end of 1885, the larger number of Jews and increased Jewish activity had led to the desire on the part of the community to form a congregation. Once again, Marcus Schiller took the lead in the organizational activity, assisted by Charles Wolfsheimer (who had helped to form the old Hebrew Benevolent Society in 1871) and new leaders Simon Levi and Abraham Blochman.<sup>94</sup> The first meeting, in late November, to begin the organization of what would be Congregation Beth Israel was described tersely by the Union: "A meeting of the Hebrew Community held in Masonic Hall Sunday afternoon was largely attended. Officers were elected and a temporary organization effected."<sup>95</sup> As an indication of the growing size of the Jewish community over the past five years,

about forty men were involved in this new endeavor to form a religious organization.<sup>96</sup> Another meeting to complete the organization of the congregation was scheduled for late December, but was postponed because of a funeral in the Jewish community.<sup>97</sup> As 1885 drew to a close, the congregation was almost a reality. Within the first week of the following year, that reality would take place.

### CHAPTER III: AN ACTIVE JEWISH COMMUNITY, 1886-1892

The year 1886 marked the beginning of the "Big Boom" in San Diego--and, for that matter, in San Diego's Jewish religious life. For San Diego, the completion of the railroad brought on a remarkable period of business prosperity and population expansion--lasting until about February, 1888--in which the frontier town finally became a real city.<sup>1</sup> During this period lots were doubling and tripling in value with each successive sale.<sup>2</sup> It was estimated that, within these two years, ten million dollars were invested in the city, as fifteen large business buildings were constructed, along with many new hotels and homes, and a number of theatres, churches, and schools.<sup>3</sup> The growth in population was phenomenal. With thousands arriving each month, the population had shot up to 35,000 by 1887, and to a peak of 40,000 by early 1888.<sup>4</sup>

Writing a historical sketch of San Diego in 1887, T.S. Van Dyke described the lightning-quick growth of San Diego taking place at that time:

New stores, hotels and dwellings are arising on every hand from the center to the farthest outskirts in more bewildering numbers than before, and people are pouring in at double the rate they did but six months ago. It is now impossible to keep track of its [San Diego's] progress. No one seems any longer to know or care who is putting up the big buildings, and it is becoming



difficult to find a familiar face in the crowd or at the hotels. It may well be doubted if any city has ever before had such a growth of the same character.<sup>5</sup>

During this major boom, not only did business and population soar, but, in addition, a great deal of modernization took place. In 1886, electricity came to San Diego, giving the city electric lights.<sup>6</sup> That same year, street car lines were developed in the city.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, in these boom years, hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent on grading the streets, putting in water and gas pipes, and perfecting the sewer system.<sup>8</sup> In short, the "Big Boom" changed the whole nature of San Diego. After almost forty years of being a frontier town, it was now an active city with a good-sized population.

As could be expected, these boom years, 1886-February, 1888, brought a new phase in San Diego's Jewish religious life, a phase in which the larger number of Jews developed an active, well-organized Jewish community. In 1886, approximately forty men--many having families--made up this Jewish community<sup>9</sup>; by 1888, there were over sixty men along with families.<sup>10</sup> During the boom, this larger Jewish population created several new organizations in which to carry out its Jewish religious activity.

First, at the beginning of 1886, a congregation--soon to appear in county records as "Congregation Beth

Israel"--formally came into being. As said at the end of the previous chapter, the preliminary organization of this congregation had actually taken place at the end of 1885, under the leadership of Marcus Schiller, Abraham Blochman, Charles Wolfsheimer, and Simon Levi. On January 3, 1886, that congregation was formally organized, with forty members.<sup>11</sup> (It should be here noted that the name "Beth Israel" does not appear in our written sources until the incorporation of the congregation in February, 1887). The historic occasion was noted succinctly in the San Diego Union:

A meeting to organize a congregation of Israelites was held at Eintracht Hall Sunday afternoon. A permanent organization was effected with the following officers: Marcus Schiller, President; A. Blochman, Vice-President; Charles Wolfsheimer, Secretary; S. Levi, Treasurer. Services will be held on Friday evening at a place to be announced.<sup>12</sup>

During this "Boom " period, the new congregation concentrated on three main endeavors: Meeting together for regular Sabbath and High Holy Day services, and occasional lectures (although they still had no rabbi); providing a school for the children; and taking the initial steps toward the building of their own synagogue.

Regarding the first endeavor, we know that, in addition to High Holy Day services, the congregation was meeting in homes, halls, or the Unitarian Church for what was probably

the first sustained period of regular public Sabbath worship in the city<sup>13</sup>; and it also gathered for occasional lectures at the Unitarian Church.<sup>14</sup> From the nature of one set of these lectures, we see that the congregation was indeed "started on reform lines," as mentioned in a later report.<sup>15</sup> For in order to educate themselves better in the Reform Judaism with which they identified, they arranged, towards the end of 1886, for the Rev. G. Schreiber of Congregation B'nai B'rith of Los Angeles to speak on "Judaism and other Religions" and "Reform Judaism," (the latter lecture explaining, in detail, the history and ideology of Reform).<sup>16</sup> Indeed, by the 1887 High Holiday services at the Unitarian Church--conducted, in the absence of a rabbi, by Abe Spring and Abraham Blochman--Beth Israel was clearly a Reform congregation. There was an organ and choir to perform hymns by Jewish composers "both ancient and modern"<sup>17</sup>; and, the few traditional members in the congregation went to President Marcus Schiller for consent to have their own private second day observance, showing that the official religious policy was Reform.<sup>18</sup>

Secondly, the congregation set up a religious school for the children during this period: The school was started by Mrs. Abraham Blochman,<sup>19</sup> and it was definitely functioning by 1887 when, at the Rosh Hashanah service, "the members of

the Sunday School, under the direction of Mrs. Blochman... sang the old Hebrew anthem En Kelohenu." <sup>20</sup> Interestingly, among the first teachers were Misses Celita Mannasse and Celia Schiller, respective daughters of the original pioneers of the 1850s, Joseph Mannasse and Marcus Schiller. <sup>21</sup> These two women--who never married--were active in the religious school for many years, as still recalled by long-time San Diego Jewish residents today. <sup>22</sup>

Third, and perhaps most importantly, the congregation--during the "Big Boom"--embarked upon plans to build its own synagogue, after some thirty-five years in which the Jewish community had never really had a "home." The first indication of this planning was the following report in the fall of 1886: "The Jewish citizens of San Diego are taking steps for the erection of a building to be used as a synagogue and a school for religious instruction. At a meeting a few days ago \$500 was subscribed." <sup>23</sup>

Then, in February, 1887, the congregation was incorporated so that it could acquire property for its future temple. <sup>24</sup> The event is a most important one--not only with regard to the planning of the synagogue, but also because it is the first known instance in which the congregation's name, "Congregation Beth Israel," appears in written records. (This is, of course, the name it still possesses today.)

In the original incorporation papers--which still exist in the office of the county clerk--the members of the congregation officially declared the organization's name and purpose:

First: That the name of such incorporation shall be the Congregation of Beth Israel.

Second: That the purpose for which it is formed is for the purpose of religious worship after the manner of the Jews, and for constructing a synagogue for that purpose, and acquiring real estate for the site of such synagogue and for burial purposes...<sup>25</sup>

As the idea of a synagogue gained momentum, the members of Beth Israel--caught up in the building fervor of the "boom"--envisioned a building much more elaborate than their efforts would ultimately produce. By the fall of 1887, they were contemplating "the erection of a \$20,000 synagogue at an early day," having pledged over half the amount.<sup>26</sup> (The actual synagogue, completed in 1889, cost about \$8500, the total of the land purchase and construction cost.)<sup>27</sup> At any rate, during the "boom," the congregational plans for the Beech Street Temple had been firmly laid--they would be realized in the fall of 1889.

Another Jewish organization which sprang up during the "Big Boom" to help the San Diego Jew carry out his Judaism was the Eduard Lasker Lodge No. 370 of the B'nai B'rith (now called the Henry Weinberger Lodge.)<sup>28</sup> In a later recollection,



L.A. Blochman--a charter member of the organization-- explained how, in 1887, the influx of Jews gave rise to the lodge:

It was under the stress of these boom days that Lasker Lodge No.370, I.O.B.B., was born. Many of our co-religionists with no place to go were glad to be able to join in meeting others of their faith and thus was started a prosperous lodge. The wives and families also were glad to join in the many social gatherings and so to meet the other strangers in a strange land.<sup>29</sup>

The new Lasker Lodge--chartered in June, 1887, with twenty six members, under the presidency of Simon Levi<sup>30</sup>-- represented an important outlet through which San Diego Jews could carry out two central aspects of their Judaism. First, as a fraternal organization, the lodge gave them another means of maintaining their group unity in a rapidly-growing city in which they were now an even tinier porpor-tion of the overall population. Secondly, it enabled them to participate directly in the B'nai B'rith's Jewish phil-anthropic efforts at that time. During the "boom," and in the years immediately following it, the lodge remained active, meeting every two weeks at the Odd Fellows' Hall, and later on, at the A.O.U.W. Hall.<sup>31</sup>

Finally, toward the end of the boom period--in February, 1888--there was a sufficient number of young Jewish people to create their own organization for Jewish fellowship.



Once again, the Abraham Blochman family displayed its key role in San Diego's Jewish activity (Abraham, it will be recalled, participated in the establishment of Congregation Beth Israel, while his wife led the formation of its religious school); for it was the two Blochman daughters who organized this "Clonian Society."<sup>32</sup> A communication to the Jewish Progress of San Francisco told of the enthusiasm evoked among the young people by the group's first event, a "Pink Domino Purim Ball":

Our new society the "Clonian" is now in full blast. We have had our domino Purim ball, and the little world in which we scintillate and have our being is satisfied. It took place last Saturday evening (Purim) and everything passed off with great eclat...<sup>33</sup>

While it is not certain just how long this interesting group sustained itself, we know that they were still going strong toward the end of the year, when they put on a play--"A Lover's Strategem"--before "a select audience assembled at Odd Fellows' Hall."<sup>34</sup>

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Around March, 1888, the Great Boom came to an end. Speculators and investors became fewer; business activity dropped dramatically; suddenly the short period of prosperity had turned into a time of economic difficulty. As

had happened with the collapse of the "Scott Boom" of the early 1870s, people poured out of the city. Within a few months, the population dropped to 16,000; during that time, two million dollars were withdrawn from local banks, leaving them in a precarious condition.<sup>35</sup>

Yet, despite the sudden drop in economic activity and population, the basic effect of the "big boom" would be permanent. San Diego now had a much larger population than it had ever had before, possessing a stable population of 16,000 which would fluctuate very little in the next twelve years. As mentioned above, the former frontier town had become a legitimate city, because of the building and modernization which had taken place.

The boom also left a lasting effect on the Jewish community, which, with its numbers still substantial, maintained its strong religious activity for the next five years. It was only when the depression of the early 1890s was acutely felt by many of the San Diego Jews that this religious activity underwent a serious decline.

The continuing strong Jewish religious activity during this ensuing period--from the end of the boom in March, 1888, through 1892--is reflected by three main developments, which occurred chronologically: 1) The ministry of Rabbi Samuel Freuder, the first rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel, and

the first San Diego Jewish religious leader who was, for certain, ordained (mid-1888--mid-1889); 2) The completion of the Beech Street Temple (September, 1889); and 3) The ministry of Rabbi Marx Moses (March, 1890-February, 1893).

Sometime between February and June, 1888,<sup>36</sup> Congregation Beth Israel finally acquired a rabbi to provide the necessary religious and educational leadership for its members--who now numbered over sixty men, along with families.<sup>37</sup> In Rabbi Samuel Freuder, the congregation acquired an individual whose bizarre career surely made him the most unusual of all of San Diego's rabbis and, indeed, one of the strangest figures in the Reform rabbinate of his day.

Freuder had been born in Hungary, the son and grandson of orthodox cantors. After attending orthodox talmudical academies in Pressburg, Hungary, and Berlin, his radical religious philosophy drove him to leave this orthodoxy; he came to the United States in 1883. Coming in contact with Isaac Mayer Wise, president of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, he entered the college that year and was ordained a Reform rabbi in 1886.<sup>38</sup>

In his second pulpit, at St. Paul, Minnesota, in 1887, Freuder was quickly emerging as an outspoken--and impatient--radical reformer.<sup>39</sup> In a fatherly letter to him, his former mentor Isaac M. Wise counseled him to slow down and to refrain

from attempting to introduce so many changes at once--which had strained the relationship between Freuder and his congregation:

....What tells against you is that you have only a few friends because you are unmindful of the [saying] Puk Chazi Mo Ame Debar (Go out and observe what the people are saying). You want to figure as an authority without having had time enough to acquire the confidence and the good-will of the public, even as others want to get rich in a hurry and without much labor, and if they don't succeed in short order, they grow despondent, despair, and give up the ship! That will never do....It takes years of patience and perserverence to acquire a reasonable measure of honor and confidence. There is no thriving by rapid changes....and this (the gaining of respect) takes a little longer in America than in Europe; it requires patience, prudence, humility, and forbearance with human frailties.<sup>40</sup>

After St. Paul, Freuder came to San Diego in 1888, in the wake of the big boom." While his radical philosophy remained, he--apparently heeding Dr. Wise's advice--had undoubtedly mellowed a bit. And, through his Friday evening services, accompanied by interesting lectures, at the Unitarian Church,<sup>41</sup> he quickly established a good relationship with the congregation.

As an indication of this good relationship with the congregation, Freuder was unanimously re-elected for another year at a congregational meeting in September, 1888. Reporting this meeting, the Daily Bee of San Diego (in an article reprinted in the American Israelite) described

Freuder as "scholarly and popular...a man of culture, refinement, and liberal scholarship, somewhat advanced in his views... [whose] lectures are always an intellectual treat." <sup>42</sup>

Freuder's interesting lectures also made him popular with the non-Jewish community. Many Gentiles came to hear him at Friday evening services at the Unitarian Church, or later on, at the Methodist Church. <sup>43</sup> They also heard him speak on other occasions, such as this public lecture reported in January, 1889:

The lecture of Rabbi Freuder at the D Street theater last night, upon the subject "Superstitions," drew out an intelligent audience. The address was written in a philosophico-humorous form, dealing largely with the folklore and omenology of Greece, Rome, India, Ireland, Africa, Sweden, and other parts of the globe... <sup>44</sup>

As a result of Freuder's popularity with the non-Jewish community, Congregation Beth Israel was brought into a closer relationship with that community. The American Israelite reported that his ministry was characterized by a situation in which "the most cordial feelings exist between Jews and Gentiles." <sup>45</sup>

Freuder played an important role in Beth Israel's development as he encouraged the congregation in its plans to build its own synagogue, which, after he left, became a reality. For example, a report of his 1888 Rosh Hashanah



sermon to the congregation noted that "he strongly urged his hearers to renew their allegiance to the sacred faith by endeavoring to establish a permanent place of worship in the city of San Diego."<sup>46</sup> Undoubtedly spurred on by Freuder's encouragement, the members of Beth Israel took two important steps toward building the temple while he was their rabbi.

In December, 1888, with sufficient funds having been raised, the congregation finally purchased a lot upon which to build its edifice.<sup>47</sup> Samuel I. Fox and Adolph Levi (brother of Simon Levi), who would be leaders of the congregation for many years, were instrumental in selecting the sight<sup>48</sup>; they chose a lot at the corner of Second and Beech Streets, in what is now downtown San Diego. The deed for this land purchase still exists in the County Recorder's Office which, in its brief official statement, signifies this most important--and expensive--accomplishment of the young congregation:

We, Chas. R. Dauer and Channing Westover...  
for and in consideration of the sum of Five  
Thousand 00/100 Dollars do hereby grant to  
Adolph Levi, Sam Brust, and Abe Spring, all  
of the same place, being the Trustees of the  
Hebrew Congregation "Beth Israel" to them and  
their successors....Lots G and H in Block 207  
of Horton's Addition to San Diego....<sup>49</sup>

Then, with the property purchased, the ladies of the congregation proceeded to hold a major week-long fund



raising event, in February-March, 1889, in order to raise money from both the Jewish and Gentile communities to build the temple. This "Jewish Fair"--replete with many booths, full meals, entertainment, and dancing--not only raised \$1500,<sup>50</sup> a significant proportion of the eventual building cost; but also turned out to be one of the leading social events in the city that year. It received a tremendous amount of publicity in the local press and, because of the many Gentiles who attended (and contributed), it increased the already strong relationship between Beth Israel and the Christian community.

In describing the opening of the "Jewish Fair," the Union reported:

Last evening occurred the opening of the Jewish Fair at Armory Hall. The Ladies who have had the preparations in charge have succeeded in transforming the hall into a perfect paradise of beauty. The booths are arranged around the sides of the hall, and all<sup>51</sup> of them are filled up in excellent taste....

The report proceeded to describe the many booths--"Fancy Booth," "Raffle Booth," "William Tell Tree," "Fair Post Office," "Toy Counter," "Gypsy Camp," "Fish Pond," "Lemonade Well," "Flower Booth," and others--and then reprinted Rabbi Freuder's opening address in which he emphasized the fact that both Jews and Gentiles were contributing to this cause:

And when, in the near future, the walls of a Jewish Temple will rise in this our beautiful city, they will be a sparkling monument not only of the generosity of the Jewish community, but also of the liberality of the mind and heart our fellow citizens of every sect and denomination have manifested by their hearty support given to this cause.<sup>52</sup>

Freuder left San Diego sometime around mid-1889. The last report we have concerning him is his presence at the Jewish Fair (ending March, 1889)<sup>53</sup>; he definitely was no longer at Beth Israel by the High Holy Days of that year.<sup>54</sup> As far as Beth Israel was concerned, Freuder had helped the congregation greatly. During a difficult economic period in San Diego, he had kept them worshipping and meeting together; indeed, on more than one occasion, he specifically encouraged them to keep their organization strong despite the hard times.<sup>55</sup> As seen above, he had urged them on in their plans to build a synagogue.

However, judging from what took place in his career a short time after he left San Diego, it appears that he had not found much personal satisfaction in this ministry. In 1891, with his original radical Reform outlook changing into rejection of Judaism, he was baptized into the Christian faith at the Chicago Hebrew Mission.<sup>56</sup> For seventeen years he was a Christian missionary. Then, in 1908, at a national conference of missionaries in Boston's historic Park Street

Church, he declared his return to Judaism, in which faith he spent the rest of his life.<sup>57</sup> After this return to Judaism, which he described as "the supreme moment of my life,"<sup>58</sup> he chronicled his strange career in an autobiography, A Missionary's Return to Judaism.

A second development which reflects the strong religious activity in the period following the boom was the completion of the Beech Street Temple in September, 1889. By the summer of that year (with Rabbi Freuder most likely having already departed), sufficient funds had been raised to undertake the actual construction of the Temple. A good portion of these funds had come from the Jewish Fair. In addition, as noted by Adolph Levi in a later reminiscence, other money had been raised through members buying permanent pews in the soon-to-be synagogue.<sup>59</sup> In selecting the type of structure to be built, the building committee had chosen an "unpretentious building" similar to the Unitarian Church--which the congregation had used so often for their own services.<sup>60</sup> (Indeed, when we compare the completed Beech Street Temple with an old photograph of that Unitarian Church, we see that the two bear a striking resemblance.<sup>61</sup>) After receiving bids from various companies, the construction began in July.<sup>62</sup>

After a relatively short period--of what must have been

intensive building activity--the first synagogue in San Diego was completed in time for Erev Rosh Hashanah services.<sup>63</sup> Costing about \$3500 to construct,<sup>64</sup> the Beech Street Temple was only the second temple ever built in Southern California.<sup>65</sup> Without a doubt, this marked one of the most important developments in the religious history of the San Diego Jewish community. For almost forty years, it had been a "wandering community," shifting around between various homes, halls, and churches. Now, finally, it had a physical meeting place of its own, one around which the community could revolve.

The small temple at Second and Beech Streets--which still stands today as one of the two oldest existing synagogue structures in California<sup>66</sup>--had a most interesting appearance, as described by the San Diego Sun in its 1889 High Holy Day report:

The Temple is a neat redwood structure 56X30 feet with a five-foot wing for anterooms on each side of the entrance, which is a square front with the tablets of the law rising from the gable peak above. The temple is a light brown with chocolate trimmings. Six ground glass windows stained yellow, blue, and rose, light it, and four rose-windows cut the upper front to light the gallery [up above at the rear].

The upper half of the entrance doors is of ground glass. The interior woodwork is oiled redwood, comprising a wainscoting and four arched tresses, supporting a garbled ceiling painted sky blue. The walls are French gray. The front of the gallery is arched, and it has a seating capacity of forty or fifty.

The pulpit is carpeted with body brussels. In the wall at the rear the doors of the Ark of the Covenant stand out in fine relief. The carved work is of sugar pine and the panels of redwood.

The aisles are for the present carpeted with striped cocoa matting, and plain matting covers the entrance hall and ante-rooms. The audience room [main sanctuary] is seated with 250 chairs, which are numbered, and a handsome chandelier depends from the center.<sup>67</sup>

In a recent visit to this building, now a Spiritualist Church, this writer found that the basic structure is very much the same as the Sun article described. All of the original windows are intact, the Stars of David in the front windows still there; the "anterooms" (now used as mens' and ladies' rest rooms) and gallery (now sealed off) remain; and, interestingly, the faint outline of the ark is still seen at the back of the pulpit, though many later coats of paint cover it.<sup>68</sup> It is a small, intimate building, in which the congregation must have had a feeling of closeness when worshipping together there; interviews with long-time congregational members certainly suggest this.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, the Union's corresponding article, in 1889, was quite accurate when it succinctly described the temple as "very unique in arrangement and quite a cozy house of worship."<sup>70</sup>

Ironically, at the momentous first service held in the Beech Street Temple, on Erev Rosh Hashanah of 1889, the congregation was without a rabbi. Freuder had gone, and



his successor would not arrive until March of the following year. Still, it must have seemed in a way fitting that, at this first service, Jewish laymen of San Diego ("Mr. Lippman, Mr. Blochman, Mr. Schiller, and Mr. Jacobs of Ocean-side"<sup>71</sup>) led the worship. For within the new, freshly-painted synagogue, there was at the same time a definite touch of the past which had led up to this long-awaited day--a past in which the San Diego Jews, for the most part without rabbinic leadership and always without their own synagogue, had had to put forth a definite "extra effort" in order to keep Jewish religious activity alive.

The third major development of this post boom period--reflecting a continuance of strong Jewish religious activity--was the ministry of Rabbi Marx Moses, the first rabbi to serve Beth Israel in its new synagogue. Rabbi Moses, arriving in March, 1890,<sup>72</sup> came at a time when Beth Israel's membership was at its peak in this century, despite the difficult post-boom economic conditions. According to a local history written at that time, the congregation numbered eighty men--many with families--and had fifty children in the Sunday School.<sup>73</sup>

During Rabbi Moses' stay, which lasted nearly three full years, San Diego's economic state grew, unfortunately, even more dismal. The general depression of the nation in



1891-1893 hit the city hard. As was the case throughout the country, there were a number of bank crashes in the city, wiping out the savings of many San Diegans.<sup>74</sup> In addition, real estate was in the doldrums, and business slackened off considerably (a telling example involved San Diego's cable railway which was forced into receivership).<sup>75</sup> In the midst of this depression, Rabbi Moses carried out a very active rabbinate until, in early 1893, with the congregation's membership and financial resources having sunk tremendously, he had to depart.

Compared to the case of his predecessor Rabbi Freuder, we know few specifics about Rabbi Marx Moses' background. From the descriptions of him in the press and his sermons--and on the basis of his association with the Union of American Hebrew Congregations--we know that he was an exponent of Reform Judaism, which, of course, made him fitted for Reform congregation Beth Israel. However, he was not an ordinee of the American Reform rabbinical seminary, Hebrew Union College<sup>76</sup>; judging from his age when he came to San Diego (52),<sup>77</sup> it is very likely that he had been ordained at a liberal European seminary a good many years earlier. Before coming to San Diego in 1890, he had served a congregation in Goldsboro, North Carolina, where--according to a dispatch from that city's newspaper--his work had gained

him "hosts of friends."<sup>78</sup>

Under Rabbi Moses, the new Beech Street Temple quickly became an active "house of worship" in the community, in which regular Friday evening services were held with uninterrupted regularity during his three-year tenure.<sup>79</sup> We know from weekly reports in the local press that his sermons embraced a wide range of subjects. In his theologically-oriented sermons, Rabbi Moses drilled home to his congregation the basic concepts of Reform Judaism, speaking often about religious universalism, Judaism rationally understood, liberalism in religion, and the importance of the moral law in Judaism.<sup>80</sup> In addition, he would, on other occasions, discuss important current issues of the day; during his three years, we find him speaking about capital punishment, the Sunday closing law as it related specifically to the World's Fair, the economic depression in the country which was hitting San Diego severely, and other issues.<sup>81</sup>

As had his predecessor, Rabbi Moses drew a number of Gentiles--as well as his own congregants--to services on Friday evenings, people who were stimulated by his liberal religious and political outlook. According to a report of March, 1891, "Dr. Marx Moses' lectures at the Hebrew Temple on Friday Nights are regularly listened to, as well by others of various denominations who appreciate the doctor's liber-

ality and eloquence..."<sup>82</sup> And this attraction of Gentiles, as well as Beth Israel's members, to the liberal outlook which came forth from his sermons is vividly seen in the report of his Thanksgiving Day sermon the same year:

The Hebrew Temple was filled to overflowing on Thursday afternoon to hear Rabbi Moses' eloquent lecture on "Liberalism, Its Nature and True End." A number of those who heard it have requested that it be repeated at an early date.<sup>83</sup>

Under Rabbi Moses, one aspect of the weekly Sabbath services which was very much emphasized, along with the sermon, was the singing by the choir--primarily composed of Gentiles. The notices of upcoming services would, in many cases, emphasize special musical selections and special solos prepared by this choir.<sup>84</sup> Sometimes the choir would prepare special numbers appropriate to Rabbi Moses' sermon topic.<sup>85</sup>

Through the efforts of Rabbi Moses, the young San Diego congregation--very much isolated from the centers of Reform Jewish activity in the East and Midwest--received considerable publicity within the American Reform movement. In June, 1892, he went, as part of his summer vacation, as a delegate to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations' national convention in New York and there gave a speech to 900 convention delegates about the congregation and the city itself. According to a press report:

Deep interest was manifested, and a number of the guests subsequently called on him at his hotel to inquire about this city. As a result of this one little after dinner speech, the rabbi thinks a large number of his eastern friends will visit San Diego during the coming winter with a view of locating.<sup>86</sup> [Unfortunately, this movement of Eastern Jews to San Diego, hoped for by the rabbi, did not take place.]

During Rabbi Moses' ministry in San Diego--and undoubtedly, in large part, due to his support--the Jewish ladies of the city for the first time formally organized themselves; indeed, they established both a Ladies Hebrew Aid Society (not directly connected with the congregation) and a "Mothers' Club" (which served as a ladies' auxillary to the Temple).

In late March, 1890--shortly after Rabbi Moses' arrival in San Diego--the Ladies Hebrew Aid Society was organized, its objective being "to render relief to the sick and needy, to rehabilitate families and to aid the orphan and half-orphan."<sup>87</sup> The main force behind this non-congregational humanitarian group was Mrs. Simon Levi, who was the treasurer of the organization for its first thirty years. According to a later recollection by another prominent member of the society, "the Ladies' Hebrew Aid Society was her [Mrs. Simon Levi's] life and all the energy and the love that she had were put into her work."<sup>88</sup> The organi-

zation--at its outset in 1890--had a membership of twenty ladies.<sup>89</sup>

In order to raise money for its humanitarian work, the society began in 1891 to give a large "Annual Jewish Charity Ball" each year.<sup>90</sup> Although we do not know exactly how long these dances were held, we do have reports for the first six "Charity Balls"; the colorful descriptions of them corroborate L.A. Blochman's later reflection that this event "was one of the Social Events of the City...awaited for by Jew and Gentile alike."<sup>91</sup>

A second ladies' organization, formed about 1892,<sup>92</sup> was the "Mothers' Club" of Congregation Beth Israel; it served as a ladies' auxiliary to the Temple throughout the period covered by this study. Its primary objective was the support of the Temple's religious school; with the funds that it raised, it remunerated the teachers, gave gifts to the children, and provided for other needs of the small school.<sup>93</sup> Another of its functions was the maintenance of the Temple's choir.<sup>94</sup>

The Mothers' Club was a most important factor in the continuance of the congregation--especially in the difficult times of the early twentieth century through World War I. Beth Israel's financial records reveal that the Mothers' Club constantly came forth with monetary contributions to



help the congregation during these difficult years.

Finally, it was under Rabbi Moses' leadership that Congregation Beth Israel, in early 1892, acquired land in the Mount Hope city cemetery for a new Jewish burial ground to replace the old Roseville cemetery. The Roseville cemetery was now far from the main part of the city. (When it was established in 1862, it had been close to Old Town, the site of San Diego at that time.) The congregation now undoubtedly wanted to have its cemetery within the general city cemetery tract. In the summer of 1891, the congregation petitioned the city council, asking that "five acres be set aside in the city cemetery as a Jewish burial place."<sup>95</sup> In February, 1892, that petition was granted in a city council ordinance, giving Beth Israel the land for its "Home of Peace" cemetery--which remains today San Diego's Jewish burial site.<sup>96</sup> Interestingly, that council ordinance, which exists today in the office of the San Diego City Clerk, bears the signature of Simon Levi, who at the time held the important city-governmental position of President of the Board of Aldermen.<sup>97</sup>

By February, 1893, the harsh economic conditions of the depression had finally caught up with Congregation Beth Israel. Membership and finances had dropped considerably; the congregation was about to enter a long phase of limited



religious activity. Therefore, with both the city and the congregation in a troubled economic state, Rabbi Moses-- after an active rabbinate of nearly three years--decided to leave Beth Israel. (There would not be another full-time rabbi there until 1909). In reporting Moses' departure-- and his new congregational position in Woodville, Mississippi--the Union emphasized the popularity which he had earned both in the Jewish and non-Jewish communities of San Diego: "The rabbi will be much missed both in and out of the church in which he served, for by his learning and liberality of sentiment, he has made many friends here on the Pacific Coast."98

Thus, in the midst of a painful business depression, the seven year period which had represented, for San Diego Jews, the high point of Jewish religious life in the nineteenth century came to an end. In early 1893, the San Diego Jew must have identified very strongly with the following verses written at that time by a former local Jewish resident David Wallach; they appeared in the Jewish Progress of San Francisco. Like Wallach, the San Diego Jew must have been longing for another business boom in the region--which would, perhaps, give rise to a new upsurge in communal Jewish religious activity:

Father in heaven to Thee we pray  
Give us a good dinner every day

Goose and Turkey, Sauce and Cake  
That's all we have to take.  
As to drinks, Champagne and Wine  
Remember us our God divine.  
Bless our children with all your grace  
With Ribbons, fringes, and Brussels Lace  
Our wives and Daughters Thou does behold  
Give them diamonds and all the gold  
Give peace and plenty all over the land.  
O Thou, who causes the flowers to bloom,  
Give us, O give us another boom.  
We pray to thee from early till late  
Give us a raise in Real Estate.  
Many blessings, Wealth galore  
That's all we ask, nothing more

Amen

(say Kaddish)<sup>99</sup>

#### CHAPTER IV: DECLINE AND RECOVERY, 1893-1909

The departure of Rabbi Marx Moses in early 1893 signalled the beginning of a quiet twelve year period in San Diego's Jewish religious life. For most of this time, the city itself, hurt by the nation-wide depression of 1891-1893, remained in a dismal business situation and thus experienced little population growth.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, in 1900, San Diego's city population of 17,000 represented an increase of only 1000 over 1890's figure.<sup>2</sup> And, it was only after the turn of the century that the city snapped out of its lethargic business condition.<sup>3</sup>

During this twelve year span, 1893-1904, Congregation Beth Israel--around which San Diego's Jewish religious life primarily revolved--struggled to maintain its existence. While possessing a synagogue only five years old, it had no rabbi, its membership was very small, and its activity was extremely limited. Regarding membership, by 1896 Beth Israel contained only about eighteen to twenty families<sup>4</sup>; four years later that membership had further dropped to the figure of about fourteen families.<sup>5</sup> With its financial resources tremendously depleted by this loss of membership, Beth Israel experienced a difficult period in which yearly High Holy Day services and a small religious school repre-

sented, for the most part, the extent of its activity. An 1896 report in the Jewish Progress of San Francisco succinctly revealed the decline in Beth Israel's activity following Rabbi Moses' departure, a decline which remained throughout this twelve-year interval:

San Diego Notes: This town has about eighteen to twenty Jewish families, a temple that cost with all the grounds about \$3500. For the past few years they have had no rabbi--Rev. Dr. Ma [x] Moses was their Jewish divine--hence hold no divine service during the year, with the exception of Jewish New Year and the Day of Atonement, when one of their members officiates...<sup>6</sup>

During this period 1893-1904, it was a small group of men who, through their financial support and maintenance of this reduced activity, kept the congregation from dissolving completely. Despite the fact that Beth Israel was meeting only on a limited number of occasions, these men felt it important to maintain the organization itself, hoping for a more prosperous time which would bring Jews into the city and make Beth Israel once again an active congregation. These individuals--Louis Mendelson, Abraham Blochman, Simon and Adolph Levi, and Samuel I. Fox--all having been in San Diego for some time, now had essentially replaced the original pioneers of the 1850s as the real leaders of the congregation. (Joseph Mannasse died in 1897; and Marcus Schiller, in his seventies and still honored with the

office of president, would die in 1904.)<sup>7</sup> We would do well at this point to take a look at each one individually, in order to see the types of individuals who were leading Beth Israel into the twentieth century.

As far as the actual worship activity of the congregation is concerned, the most important figure of this twelve year span was Louis Mendelson who, with Beth Israel lacking a rabbi, led the High Holy Day services throughout the period. Mendelson had a most interesting background. Of Polish birth, he was one of the first Jews, if not the first, to settle in Mexico's Baja (Lower) California; attracted by gold discovered in that area, he moved there in 1871 and, in addition to owning a ranch, was also involved in mining.<sup>8</sup> With his Mexican wife, he then moved to San Diego around 1890 where he became a shipping agent for a coastal shipping firm.<sup>9</sup>

Mendelson, well-versed in Hebrew and Judaism,<sup>10</sup> was able to fulfill the important role of leading the congregation in worship when it gathered yearly for the High Holy Days. From 1895 through 1898 and from 1901 through 1904 he conducted these High Holy Day services.<sup>11</sup> In 1894, when Beth Israel brought in a Los Angeles cantor to lead the services, Mendelson was still importantly involved, preaching a sermon<sup>12</sup>; even in 1899, when the congregation hired Rabbi

Sydney Menkus of San Francisco to lead the worship, Mendelson assisted the rabbi.<sup>13</sup> In addition to this consistent High Holy Day role, Mendelson also led the first known confirmation services held by the congregation, in 1895:

Louis Mendelson last evening conducted the services in the Jewish Temple, when Bernard Lippman, Bernard Levi, James Lesem, and Theodore Naumann were confirmed as members of the synagogue. The catechism conducted by Mr. Mendelson was followed by a prayer in which each lad took a part.<sup>14</sup>

It appears that, because of his constant role in leading the worship, Mendelson was generally regarded by the congregation and by the general community as the lay rabbi of Beth Israel during this period. A 1901 High Holiday press report notes, "The congregation has no rabbi, Mr. Mendelson serving in that place."<sup>15</sup> And, in that same report, Mendelson, as the representative religious leader of the congregation, points out the strong theme of universalism in Beth Israel's reform services.<sup>16</sup>

Another key leader of Beth Israel during this difficult period was the French-born banker Abraham Blochman, who had been a San Diego resident--and active member of the San Diego Jewish community--since 1881.<sup>17</sup> Blochman, who had come to San Diego from San Francisco, was very prominent within the general community. In 1893, with his son Lucien, he established the Blochman Banking Company, which he directed until



1912.<sup>18</sup> During this period, he was a member of the city council and the French consul for San Diego.<sup>19</sup>

As will be recalled from previous pages, Blochman-- along with his wife--had been actively involved in Congregation Beth Israel since its formation (in which he had participated). And in this period of 1893-1904, despite his many business and community obligations, he still found time to be one of the key leaders of the now struggling congregation.

Blochman, like Louis Mendelson, was well-trained in Hebrew and Judaism; therefore, he assisted the latter in leading the small congregation in worship. Many times he assisted Mendelson in conducting the yearly High Holy Day services<sup>20</sup>; in 1894, when Beth Israel hired a Los Angeles cantor to lead the High Holy Day services, he gave what the Union called "an interesting sermon" on Rosh Hashanah morning.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, with the congregation lacking a rabbi, he filled the important function of reading the burial service at funerals.<sup>22</sup>

As a indication of his strong position of leadership within the congregation during this period, Blochman succeeded to the presidency of Beth Israel following Marcus Schiller's death in 1904.<sup>23</sup> He held the position until 1909, when he had to resign because of old age.<sup>24</sup>

Two more men who helped keep Beth Israel alive during this difficult period were the brothers Simon and Adolph Levi, each a highly successful businessman in the city. The Levi brothers, natives of Austria,<sup>25</sup> had already been in San Diego for a number of years: Simon, after operating a general merchandise store in the nearby small town of Temecula, had come to the city in 1876,<sup>26</sup> while Adolph arrived in San Diego in 1877 (after which he operated a store in nearby Julian and then moved back to San Diego).<sup>27</sup>

These two brothers were noted for different business achievements during this period. Simon, in 1896, formed a grocery and produce enterprise called the Simon Levi Company which still exists today as a wholesale house in liquor, wines, and spirits.<sup>28</sup> Adolph, on the other hand, around 1899 opened a hack and transfer company in the city which he operated until 1906, after which he devoted his time to real estate and ranching.<sup>29</sup> In addition to his business life, Simon Levi was extremely prominent within San Diego. Indeed, during this period, he served on the city Board of Alderman,<sup>30</sup> having already been president of the Chamber of Commerce, master of the masonic lodge, Vice-president of the San Diego Gas and Electric Light Company, vice-president of the San Diego Telephone Company, and president of the Building and Loan Association.<sup>31</sup>

The continued existence of Beth Israel during this difficult era, 1893-1904, was largely due to the interest which the Levi brothers took in the Temple and the financial support which they provided. Their leadership continued into the early part of the twentieth century, when both occupied the presidency of the congregation.<sup>32</sup>

Finally, the small nucleus of leadership and support during this period was rounded out by the highly popular Samuel I. Fox, a Hungarian immigrant, who came to San Diego in 1886. In 1898, after twelve years in real estate, he founded Lions Clothing Company, which still stands today in the Samuel I. Fox Building in downtown San Diego.<sup>33</sup> Remembered by many long time San Diego Jewish residents today, all seem to agree that Fox was the epitome of the fine, up-standing, good-looking gentleman--admired both within the congregation and within the community at large.<sup>34</sup>

Fox's record of leadership in Congregation Beth Israel is a remarkable one. Shortly after arriving in the city, he began to take an active role in the congregation: it will be recalled from the previous chapter that it was he who, with Adolph Levi in 1888, led the fund raising for the projected new synagogue and selected the building site for that synagogue.<sup>35</sup> From that point on--for more than fifty years--he was one of the primary forces behind the congre-

gation. Indeed, he was twice president of Beth Israel, his second term extending from 1927 all the way up to 1939, when he died.<sup>36</sup> And, his leadership was particularly important in these trying years, 1893-1904, for at this time, his determination--along with that of the other leaders--to keep a congregation in San Diego prevented the weakened congregation from dissolving.

What was the nature of Beth Israel's limited activity during these difficult twelve years, as a result of the efforts of these congregational leaders? As far as communal worship is concerned, regular Sabbath services were not held. (We know this from the many references to this effect throughout the period: The Jewish Progress in 1896; the B'nai B'rith Messenger in 1899 and 1901; the American Jewish Year Book in 1900; and a later reminiscence of long time Jewish resident Hyman S. Wolf referring to the years immediately prior to 1905.)<sup>37</sup> There may have been some special Friday evening services held when Jewish speakers of note passed through San Diego; for we do have a recorded instance of the San Francisco Jewish writer G.A. Danziger giving a lecture at a Friday evening service at the end of 1893 (Danziger, apparently popular with the San Diego Jews, had also spoken there in early 1886).<sup>38</sup> But, there was definitely no Sabbath worship on a regular basis. Therefore,

the yearly High Holy Day Services--the one time when the congregation gathered together for communal worship--took on an even greater importance than usual.

Though the congregation, in practically all of these years, utilized its own members (most notably Louis Mendelson) to lead the High Holy Day services, it did, each year, hire "well-known local [Gentile] singers" from the community to make up most of the choir; for the musical aspect of the services was very much emphasized.<sup>39</sup> A press report of the 1903 High Holy Day services commented on the excellent musical presentation of this choir and the extensive practice required by the Gentile singers in order to learn the Hebrew hymns for the services:

A choir of nine voices rendered excellent music. One peculiar feature was that most of these selections were in the Hebrew tongue. At their rehearsals these young people, who come from various local musical bodies, had to learn the scores syllable by syllable. The Hebrew is not the easiest tongue to acquire, particularly because pronunciation is, to an English ear, at least erratic. The singers mastered the good old hymns, however, and their work was a success...<sup>40</sup>

It should be noted here that, while the majority of the choir was Gentile, several Beth Israel members--namely Laura and Nathan Schiller, Feodor and Fannie Naumann, Edgar and Selma Levi, and Pearl Jacobs--also, at various times, voluntarily participated in the choir, either singing or



playing violin. Indeed, Fannie Naumann Rosenfeld, still residing in San Diego today, began playing Kol Nidre as a violin solo in 1901, and continued in that role for about thirteen years.<sup>41</sup>

As indicated above, there were a few years during this period 1893-1904 in which Beth Israel was able to secure a cantor or rabbi from out of town to lead the High Holy Day worship. In 1894, they brought in a Cantor Sande, an "eminent tenor" from Los Angeles, to conduct the services and preach a sermon.<sup>42</sup> In 1899 and 1900, Rabbi Sydney Menkus came in--first from San Francisco, and then from Little Rock, Arkansas--to lead the services.<sup>43</sup> In 1904, Beth Israel engaged Rabbi Hirsch Werner of Los Angeles to deliver a series of High Holiday sermons.<sup>44</sup> Interestingly, as mentioned above, even when these professionals were obtained, the lay leader Louis Mendelson still played an important part in the conducting of the services.<sup>45</sup>

In addition to the yearly High Holy Day services, the other important aspect of Beth Israel during this difficult period was the religious school which continued to function. As of 1900, despite the weak condition of the congregation, the school was still meeting weekly, with eighteen pupils.<sup>46</sup> It is interesting to note that one of the main forces behind this small school was now Mrs. Sam Brust (formerly



Minna Blochman), the daughter of Mrs. Abraham Blochman who had started the school some years back.<sup>47</sup> In addition, the original teachers Celita Mannasse and Celia Schiller continued to instruct the children.<sup>48</sup>

As a result of the school's work, there were confirmations of students in 1895 and 1899, at which times special confirmation services were held in the Beech Street Temple.<sup>49</sup> One member of the 1899 confirmation class--Mrs. Fannie Naumann Rosenfeld--vividly recalls the class instruction by Mrs. Sam Brust, in which the Dreyfus affair, still going on at that time, was discussed frequently.<sup>50</sup> The report of the confirmation service of this 1899 class reveals how the Beech Street Sanctuary, unused by the congregation during practically all of the year, suddenly became alive and colorful for this special event involving the religious school graduates:

The confirmation exercises held in the Jewish synagogue last night [Erev Succot] were beautiful and impressive. The decorations of the church consisted of simlax, flowers, and the stars and stripes. Suspended in golden letters over the altar was the class motto: "Onward! Upward!" There were two arches near the altar. The church was filled to overflowing with the members of the congregation and invited friends. The names of the confirmants are: Adele Wellisch, Sadie Naumann, Julius B. Brown, Fanny Naumann, Louise Mendelson [daughter of Louis Mendelson], Edgar Bernard Levi [son of Adolph Levi], and Henry Frank Lesem. The class had been prepared

by Mrs. Samuel Brust, and the results showed with what care she had taught her pupils...<sup>51</sup>

Thus, the yearly High Holy Day services and the operation of the religious school (with the few confirmation services connected with it) represented the extent of Beth Israel's activity during the difficult period of 1893-1904. Ironically, in these years, the new Beech Street Temple was used primarily by a few Christian churches; for, in an effort to bolster its sagging financial situation, Beth Israel rented out its sanctuary on Sundays to the Universalist, and then to the Christian Science churches.<sup>52</sup>

In this twelve-year period, most of which saw San Diego in a dismal business condition, the other major Jewish organization, Lasker Lodge No. 370 of the B'nai B'rith, also had its activity strongly curtailed, due to loss of membership and a precarious financial situation. (In 1894, the difficult business situation of San Diego had hit some of the Lasker Lodge members so hard that the Lodge was empowered to accept for delinquent dues promissory notes payable in six months.)<sup>53</sup> It will be recalled that the lodge had begun by meeting every two weeks; but during this period, the frequency of those meetings decreased dramatically. According to the lodge's minutes--as later read by charter member Lucien Blochman--from January 1899 to December 1904, only

thirty-six meetings were held. Said Blochman of these years, "Many a night the faithful few met together and adjourned for the lack of a quorum."<sup>54</sup> Despite its sharp decline in activity, the lodge continued, nevertheless, to carry out what philanthropy it could, including a donation, in 1900, to the Jews in Bessarabia who were victims of the uprisings there.<sup>55</sup>

As in the case of Congregation Beth Israel, a handful of key members kept Lasker Lodge from dissolving completely during this difficult period, through supporting the lodge financially and keeping up its limited activity.<sup>56</sup> Among them were Samuel I. Fox, Sam Brust, Rudolph Schiller, Gus Kuhn, Isaac Kuhn, Adolph Levi, and Julius Naumann, who served as president during these years, as well as Simon Levi who had been the lodge's first president.<sup>57</sup>

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In 1905, a new rise in Jewish religious activity began which would, by 1909, put the Jewish community on a firm footing permanently. This revival of Jewish religious life took place as more Jews now came into San Diego--which was the result of two important factors.

First, with regard to the city itself, San Diego, for the past few years, had been experiencing a spurt of new

business development and a resulting large population growth. A new breed of businessmen--Louis J. Wilde, D.C. Collier, O.W. Cotton, Ed Fletcher, and, most importantly, John D. Spreckels--were building up the city; and, as a result, many more people were coming into San Diego.<sup>58</sup> By 1906, the population had grown to 35,000, more than double that of 1900.<sup>59</sup> And, after Spreckels' announcement in December, 1906, that he would build a railroad going directly eastward to Yuma, Arizona (not to be completed until 1919), business activity and population grew even more<sup>60</sup>; indeed, by 1910, the population was nearly 40,000.<sup>61</sup> As had been the pattern in earlier periods, with a rise in business opportunity, generally more Jews came into the city.

Secondly, the massive emigration of Eastern European Jews to the United States at this time brought a good number of these Jews, in particular, to the city. These Russian and Rumanian Jews--fleeing the intense persecution in their homelands--significantly increased the size of San Diego's Jewish community around 1905.<sup>62</sup>

The ensuing rise in Jewish religious life, in 1905, was dramatically seen in the formation of a new, Orthodox congregation that year--Congregation Tifereth Israel (which is now Conservative)--composed mainly of these new Russian and Rumanian Jews who had come into San Diego.<sup>63</sup> The way in

which this congregaion initially came about is most interesting, as gleaned from the reminiscences of Hyman S. Wolf--first president of the congregation and a major force behind it--as well as from written records of that time. For, as is common, it arose out of a conflict between Reform and Orthodox elements within the Jewish community.

In 1905, a group of Orthodox Jews in the city--many of whom were newly arrived East European immigrants--received permission from Beth Israel's officers to hold their own High Holiday services at the Beech Street Temple. This group was lead by Elias Jacobson and I. Frank. The arrangement for the mornings of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur called for the Orthodox group to begin their worship early, and for the Reform services to begin when this Orthodox service had concluded.

On Rosh Hashanah, the arrangement was carried out smoothly. However, at the Yom Kippur morning service, a conflict arose. With the Orthodox minyan still praying, the time arrived for Beth Israel to begin its Reform worship. Thus, one of the members of Beth Israel approached Elias Jacobson and asked him to shorten his group's service. Irritated at this interruption of their worship, the Orthodox group left the temple and adjourned to the Jacobsons' home where they apparently finished their service.



Recognizing the need for a separate Orthodox congregation, Jacobson (generally considered as the founder of Tifereth Israel) called an initial meeting at his home during the week of Succot "to devise ways and means of organizing an orthodox congregation and renting a place [at which] to conduct services." A few days later, on Sunday during the week of Succot, another meeting took place at Castle Hall, in downtown San Diego, and the congregation was formally organized.<sup>64</sup>

In his reminiscences, Hyman S. Wolf describes this organizational meeting in October 1905, at which the congregation--numbering about thirty-six men along with families<sup>65</sup>--formally came into being:

A mass meeting was called for Sunday Chol HaMoed Succot at 2pm at Castle Hall, 631 Sixth Street, and every Jew was invited to participate. The response was very satisfactory and the hall was filled... the assembly [was] all of one mind with a desire to have a house of worship of their own. Mr. Jacobson acted as chairman, and we proceeded to complete the organization, the following officers being elected for the ensuing year: President, H.S. Wolf; Vice-president, I. Frank; Treasurer, W. Plame; Secretary, I.T. Davidson; Trustees, R. Meyer, W. Katz, M.L. Davidson...<sup>66</sup>

It was, apparently, at this organizational meeting that the new congregation selected its name "Tifereth Israel" (Glory of Israel) and secured Castle Hall for a place to hold its services. For, a press report of this meeting already referred to the new congregation as "the orthodox Jewish



congregation Tifereth Israel" and referred to Castle Hall as "its place of worship on Sixth Street."<sup>67</sup> Immediately, the congregation began regular Friday evening and Saturday morning services (led by its members), and Sunday evening meetings at Castle Hall.<sup>68</sup>

With an eye towards building its own synagogue (which would not actually take place until 1917), Tifereth Israel was incorporated by the State in February, 1906. In its incorporation papers, which still can be seen in the office of the San Diego County Clerk, the young congregation declared its purposes: "...to establish and maintain a place of religious worship at San Diego, California, according to the teachings of our religion; to purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire real estate sufficient, and to erect thereon a suitable building wherein to worship."<sup>69</sup> Interestingly, the Notary Public who certified the papers--whose signature appears on the original document--was Abraham Blochman, president of Reform Congregation Beth Israel at that time.<sup>70</sup>

An event of the following month, fondly recalled by Wolf, was the congregational dedication of the Sefer Torah, its purchase made possible through donations. In the original invitation to this event, preserved by the San Diego Historical Society, we see that the well-known Rabbi Isadore Meyers of Los Angeles came to San Diego to conduct the joyous ceremony.<sup>71</sup> And, in Wolf's recollection of the event, we observe

the good feeling present in the new, closely-knit Orthodox congregation:

The response of our co-religionists to celebrate with us was good and the hall was filled to capacity, everybody happy and in good humor. I shall never forget the joy of A. Pomeranz (father of Frank Pomeranz, now prominent attorney), dancing and expressing his joy that he expects his wife's arrival with two boys from Russia, and now we have a "Shul." The customary style of selling letters in the Torah was followed, Mr. Pomeranz (who I was told was working for fifty cents a day) bought the first letter Aleph, in honor of A. Blochman, a banker, and president of the reform congregation Beth Israel. Good fellowship and harmony prevailed...<sup>72</sup>

Through 1909, Tifereth Israel--its membership staying about the same<sup>73</sup>--continued to meet regularly for services (conducted by members) and congregational meetings. As in the case of Congregation Beth Israel before the Beech Street Temple, the small Orthodox congregation shifted around between numerous rented halls in downtown San Diego.<sup>74</sup> Later in 1906, while meeting at an old church building at Seventh and F Streets, a "cheder" for the children of members was established under the guidance of a Rabbi Friedman.<sup>75</sup>

During these formative years, Hyman S. Wolf and I. Frank (who succeeded Wolf as president) remained the main leaders of the congregation, as seen in this communication to the B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles) regarding Tifereth Israel's recent activity:

...Services are held regularly every Friday evening and Saturday morning. On Sh'buoth the attendance was better than usual, and on the first day one of the members, Bro. Plame, treated the worshippers to make Kiddush, in which every one present took part. Harmony prevails among the flock, despite the fact that the Shepherd is a "Wolf." [This is, of course, a reference to the leadership of Hyman S. Wolf]...

Mr. I. Frank, who has been on a visit to Los Angeles, has returned to again take up his position as one of the "hustlers" for the congregation. Mr. Frank has been one of the most active workers from the start and has not relaxed his interest--it will have to be below Zero in San Diego when Bro. Frank does not succeed in making up a "minyan," as he tells every man he is the last one needed.<sup>76</sup>

One final note of interest concerning Tifereth Israel during these early years of its existence involves a certain amount of Zionist activity coming forth from some of its members. In 1908, the B'nai B'rith Messenger received a letter from M.E. Meyer, a charter member of Tifereth Israel, relating the activity of a small Zionist organization in San Diego called Dorshey Zion, of which he was the secretary.<sup>77</sup> Hyman S. Wolf, an avid Zionist who later lived for a time in Tel Aviv,<sup>78</sup> was also undoubtedly active in this group. Unfortunately, we have no additional references to this Zionist organization and thus cannot determine how long it continued to function.

Meanwhile, during this 1905-1909 period, Reform Congre-

gation Beth Israel progressed more slowly, as the influx of Eastern European Jews was mainly absorbed by the Orthodox congregation. Through 1908, the membership grew gradually, due to the general movement of people into the city which brought with it some Reform-oriented Jews. As of 1907, the membership--only about fourteen families at the turn of the century--had slowly increased to about twenty families;<sup>79</sup> by 1908, that number had inched upward to twenty-two.<sup>80</sup> As before, services were held only on the High Holy Days, conducted either by members--most notably Louis Mendelson-- or by visiting rabbis such as H. Meyer of Los Angeles in 1907.<sup>81</sup> The religious school was improved through the guidance of Rabbi Hirsch Werner of Los Angeles, who had come to San Diego to preach during the High Holy Days some years back.<sup>82</sup>

However, in 1909, a further increase in membership gave rise to a new upsurge in religious activity--which lifted the congregation, for good, out of the quiet state which had characterized it during the past sixteen years.<sup>83</sup> Desiring to hold regular worship again, Beth Israel secured a fulltime rabbi (the first since 1893)--Emil Ellinger-- who came to San Diego sometime around September of that year.<sup>84</sup>

Ellinger, who had received his rabbinical education in his native Hungary and his secular education at the University of Vienna, had been in the United States for some time

and had aligned himself with the Reform Movement. He had previously served congregations in Mount Vernon, Indiana; Sioux City, Iowa; Alexandria, Louisiana; and Austin, Texas.<sup>85</sup> (His rabbinate in San Diego, lasting until January of 1912, will be discussed in some detail in the following chapter.)

Ellinger's arrival in San Diego marked the resumption of weekly services--which were to be permanent--at Beth Israel, after a long period in which the Beech Street Temple had been empty on Friday evenings. In connection with this resumption of regular worship, the synagogue was renovated and re-dedicated on Friday evening, September 10, 1909.<sup>86</sup> In addition, the arrival of the rabbi brought high level Jewish education to the religious school and adults, after so many years without a rabbi in the congregation. Once again, for the first time since 1893, Beth Israel could be considered an active Reform congregation--and has remained so until the present day.

Finally, regarding Lasker Lodge No.370 of the B'nai B'rith, though we have little information for this 1905-1909 period, we know that the lodge too showed some development during this time. According to charter member Lucien Blochman, who later examined the lodge's minutes, "from 1908.... a steady growth is shown."<sup>87</sup> As an example of this stronger activity after many very difficult years, the lodge, in 1908,

formed an anti-defamation committee. Its formation was in response to a disturbing tendency in some of the local media of the time, namely the affixing of the word "Jew" to law-breakers.<sup>88</sup>

Thus, as the year 1909 drew to a close, San Diego's Jewish religious life was finally back on a firm footing again--and this time it would be permanent. There were now two active congregations, giving the San Diego Jew an opportunity to practice either Reform or Orthodox Judaism on a regular basis. In addition, the B'nai B'rith lodge was progressing again and would be quite active in the years ahead, especially during the World War I period. With its major institutions on solid ground, the San Diego Jewish community was now ready for a decade of achievement and growth.



CHAPTER V: FOUNDATIONS FOR  
THE MODERN JEWISH COMMUNITY, 1910-1918

The period 1910-1918 was most important in the history of San Diego's Jewish religious life. Now that the major Jewish organizations had a degree of stability and were actively functioning, they could concentrate on improving the nature of their respective activities. In so doing, they provided the foundations for the modern Jewish community of San Diego.

During this period, the city--which saw its general population increase to 70,000 by the end of the war<sup>1</sup>--continued to gain more Jews. This increase in the size of the Jewish community was due, in part, to two important developments of the period, developments which not only brought more Jews to San Diego, but also added permanently to the very character of the city.

First, in the years 1915-1916, a large garden fair--the Panama California Exposition--was held in San Diego, to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal. Five years of preparation had gone into this large exposition.<sup>2</sup> The city park, named, in 1910, Balboa Park, was greatly developed and many Spanish-style buildings were constructed within it.<sup>3</sup> (Today, the park, now further beautified, and many of these buildings

remain, forming one of the most scenic parts of the city.) Over the two-year period of the Exposition, a total of 3,747,916 persons attended the fair, practically all of them obviously visitors to San Diego.<sup>4</sup> Some of these visitors were attracted into settling in the pretty city. As recalled by Hyman S. Wolf, with these new arrivals of the Exposition years came a good number of Jewish families.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, in 1917, with the United States directly involved in World War I, San Diego became an important military base--a feature which the city has retained up to the present day. When Franklin D. Roosevelt, then Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and his superior Josephus Daniels, attended the Panama California Exposition, they were impressed with San Diego's potential as a key Navy base, for the protection of the border and the West Coast. As a result, in November, 1917, the Naval Air Station was set up on North Island, enhancing the Naval presence already in San Diego due to the warships which docked in its harbor.<sup>6</sup> (Soon to follow would be a destroyer base, the Naval Hospital, and the Marine Base.)<sup>7</sup> Earlier that same year the Army had established a large training camp, Camp Kearny, in San Diego and had set up an airfield, Rockwell Field, on North Island.<sup>8</sup> This establishment of San Diego as a key military center brought many Jewish servicemen into the city; in addition, some Jewish civilians,

attracted by rising economic possibilities, decided to locate there.

In these years 1910-1918, Congregation Beth Israel continued to be the primary organ of San Diego's Jewish religious life. And, during the period, the congregation not only grew in number, but, moreover, expanded and improved its activity to provide a solid foundation for congregational life in the years ahead.

The key development of Beth Israel actually took place under the leadership of Rabbi Emil Ellinger's successor, Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen, who did not begin his San Diego ministry until the summer of 1912.<sup>9</sup> But, before taking a look at this important ministry, we must examine the precise circumstances surrounding Ellinger's resignation in August, 1911; for, in doing so, we are supplied with some interesting information about him--and especially about the congregation--at this time.

After a relatively successful ministry (he was re-elected in early 1910 and again in early 1911)<sup>10</sup>, the strongly-liberal Ellinger suddenly touched sensitive feelings in the congregation, now numbering forty-five paying members,<sup>11</sup> when he performed a mixed marriage around early May of 1911.<sup>12</sup> This event, a wedding between a Catholic woman, Miss May Elizabeth Kilpatrick, and a Jew, Stanley F.

Schneider, was quickly reported by the B'nai B'rith Messenger to its many Southern California Jewish readers, along with the following angry editorial comment:

That Miss Kilpatrick and Mr. Schneider should see fit to become life partners is not surprising, but that a Jewish rabbi should draw up the contract is an anomaly, as it is against the principle of even our most radical reformers....<sup>13</sup>

It was now seen that, while Beth Israel was a Reform congregation and one which was now accustomed to liberally-minded rabbis, its members, at the same time, had deep feelings about certain traditions--such as marriage within the Jewish faith--and would not permit their rabbi to violate these traditions. At its May meeting, the directors of the Congregation--reflecting the outrage of its members--were already making plans for a special election of a new rabbi, with the intention, evidently, of terminating Ellinger's service.<sup>14</sup> And, at that same meeting, the directors wasted little time in drafting a strong, unequivocal resolution against any Beth Israel rabbi repeating Ellinger's act:

Motion by A. Levi, seconded by S.I. Fox, that the following resolution be adopted. Resolved that hereafter the Rabbi of this congregation shall not be permitted to perform the marriage ceremony to persons except of our own faith. Motion carried.<sup>15</sup>

Realizing that his act had placed him in a precarious position in the congregation, Ellinger, in August, 1911,

wrote his letter of resignation (effective January, 1912) to the Board of Directors--a letter which still remains today in the files of Temple Beth Israel.<sup>16</sup> The episode marked the first known serious controversy between Beth Israel and one of its rabbis, and revealed the strong feeling on certain religious issues which existed within the congregation.

Ellinger's successor, the Englishman Montague N.A. Cohen, arrived in the summer of 1912, to begin a four-year rabbinate which produced the most significant development of Beth Israel during the period. Cohen's background was most interesting and diversified. He had received all of his education in his native England, having attended Manchester Jews' School, higher grades Board School, Jews' College of London, and University College of London.<sup>17</sup> Having come to the United States where he aligned himself with the American Reform Movement, he had served congregations in Tacoma, Washington, Sacramento, California, and--most recently--Butte, Montana.<sup>18</sup> In addition to performing congregational rabbinic functions, he had also been an active Jewish journalist: While he was in Tacoma (1903-1904), a biographical sketch of him in the American Jewish Year Book referred to him as "Associate editor of [the] Jewish Tribune" and "contributor to English, Canadian, and American press."<sup>19</sup> (Indeed, during



his San Diego ministry, his journalistic activity continued, as his editorials appeared constantly in the B'nai B'rith Messenger, of which he was associate editor.)<sup>20</sup> As to his religious and intellectual outlook, the Butte newspaper, upon his departure, described him as "an ardent liberal, a rationalist, a sturdy advocate of American principles.... a firm believer in social service and social welfare."<sup>21</sup>

Cohen's four year rabbinate at the congregation was the longest tenure of any of the Beth Israel rabbis in the time covered by this study. And, during his ministry, he brought solid improvement to the congregation's activity--the effect of which would be permanent--in two very important ways.

First, Cohen--especially through his stimulating lectures at services--set a new, higher standard of intellectual activity at Beth Israel. The same depth of thought seen in his regularly-appearing editorials in the B'nai B'rith Messenger found its way into his addresses on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings; indeed, many of these addresses--covering theology, politics, literature, and other areas--were reprinted, in part, for the readers of the San Diego Union.<sup>22</sup> (These regular, intellectually-stimulating addresses represented quite a welcome change for the congregation which, in 1911, had had to send a formal request to Rabbi Ellinger that he "deliver his lectures regularly each



Friday evening," which he, apparently, was not doing at the time).<sup>23</sup> Cohen's provocative talks left a deep impression upon the members of the congregation; indeed, of the different rabbis of this period, it is he who now stands out in the minds of long time members of Beth Israel, as a skillful, interesting speaker.<sup>24</sup> (One of these members recalled that Cohen, during these addresses, never used notes).<sup>25</sup> In addition to stimulating intellectual activity through his weekly lectures at services, Cohen also felt it important to make his congregants more knowledgeable in Judaism through adult study sessions; for example, in 1914-1916, we see that he was teaching an adult Bible class twice a month, the subject for 1915-1916 being "The Kings of Israel and Judah."<sup>26</sup> During the four years of Rabbi Cohen's ministry, Beth Israel's members became accustomed to a high standard of intellectual activity--one which they would require of future rabbis.

Secondly, Cohen--who had brought many new features to the overall organization of his former congregation in Butte<sup>27</sup>--now did the same thing at Beth Israel. In his installation address of September 6, 1912 in the Beech Street Temple, entitled "The Future of Beth Israel," Cohen immediately impressed upon his new congregants the need to add certain new facets to its organization, in order to make available a full

Jewish experience to members of the growing San Diego Jewish community:

....We must to this end come forth out of past provincialism and metropolitanize, do things on a somewhat larger scale, so that we may even create the need of a still larger scale; in short, heed the words of our text, culled from the addresses of that keen post exilic seer whose homilies have pierced the ear of eternal times: 'Enlarge the space of the tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations--spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes.'

Our membership is on the increase--a natural and permanent increase....We need, therefore, to expand our activities, other than gatherings for temple prayer services. We need to introduce such features as will strengthen our organization. We need the social and literary features for men and women, old and young.... We need to thoroughly systematize and coordinate our religious school with parental interest and cooperation. Our ladies--the wives and daughters of our members--need to band together under Temple auspices as a sisterhood for the furtherance of this work, supplementary to the Mothers' Club, which has done noble service....<sup>28</sup>

Following this initial charge to the congregation, Cohen proceeded to bring to Beth Israel's organization the very things he had mentioned in his opening sermon. In October, 1912, the Beth Israel Sisterhood was formed "with comprehensive committees covering every aspect of congregational activity."<sup>29</sup> The Sisterhood, as an auxiliary to the congregation, was to supplement the initial womens' organization, the Mothers' Club (it will be recalled that the primary

purpose of the Mother's Club was to keep up the religious school). One of the most important contributions of this new womens' organization was its preparation of the highly successful congregational seder in 1913--held at the Wednesday Club House--which was apparently, the first of its kind in San Diego.<sup>30</sup> And, as Rabbi Cohen accurately predicted in his June report to the Board, it would become an important fixed event in the years to come.<sup>31</sup>

For Beth Israel's younger set, Rabbi Cohen formed, in October, 1914, the Beth Israel Young People's Club--open to "all the young people over seventeen years of age."<sup>32</sup> The rabbi took a particular interest in this segment of the congregation, urging the Board on more than one occasion to involve these young men and women more actively in congregational life.<sup>33</sup>

Finally, Cohen also produced a more active and systematic religious school, another organizational objective he had set out in his inaugural sermon. By 1915, he had divided the school into Kindergarten, Junior, Senior, and Confirmation grades, as well as a Post-confirmation department.<sup>34</sup> In addition, Hebrew was taught by him during the week.<sup>35</sup> In order to better acquaint the children with Jewish worship, he scheduled special Sabbath services for them during the year.<sup>36</sup>

With Cohen thus greatly improving Beth Israel's activity in these two ways, a number of new Jewish residents of San Diego were attracted to the congregation during the period of his rabbinate, and, as a result, the congregation grew in size. In early 1912, just prior to Cohen's ministry, the congregational minutes showed a paying membership of forty-three.<sup>37</sup> By February, 1914, with Cohen having been at the congregation for some time, that number had shot up to seventy-three.<sup>38</sup> As of 1916, the year that he left Beth Israel, the congregation still numbered over sixty members,<sup>39</sup> representing a sizeable overall increase from the time that his San Diego rabbinate had begun.

As might have been expected, a successful congregational rabbi like Cohen was eventually lured away from San Diego-- still isolated from the Eastern centers of Jewish activity-- to a larger rabbinical opportunity in the East, as he himself revealed in his letter of resignation in June, 1916:

....I have recently received a call to the pulpit of Congregation Beth Israel, Hazelton, Pa., through the recommendation of the President of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. I have every confidence that I shall be happy in my new field of labor, since it is in the very centre of Jewish activity...<sup>40</sup>

In the letter of response from the Board of Directors, regretfully accepting this resignation, we clearly see the warm admiration and respect which Cohen had earned from the

congregation as a result of his strong, successful effort to improve its activity:

....It is with much regret that we learn that the Jews of this community, and more particularly the members of Beth Israel Temple, are to lose the services of their Rabbi, associate, and friend....it [the acceptance of his resignation] is done with the confidence that you are fulfilling a duty to yourself, and accomplishing the goal for which you are striving. The Trustees feel that in your going, they are losing a valued advisor, one who has strived with them to further the interests of Beth Israel Temple....<sup>41</sup>

Indeed, when, in the summer of 1916, Cohen departed for Pennsylvania, the congregation he left behind was far different than the Beth Israel of four years earlier; not only was its membership a good deal larger, but, moreover, it was much more active and much better organized than the Beth Israel of early 1912.

Inheriting this much-improved congregation in the fall of 1916 was Rabbi Julius Halprin, who had been ordained at Cincinnati's Hebrew Union College only a year earlier.<sup>42</sup> Probably a bit leary because of Halprin's inexperience, the Board, at first, brought Halprin to San Diego for the High Holy Days on a trial basis; indeed, they made this very clear in their minutes of August 10, 1916:

Motion by L.A. Unger, seconded by M. Schoenbrun, that we telegraph Dr. Halprin to be here on September 15 on trial for the coming Holidays; and if after that time he proved satisfactory



to the congregation, we engage him at the salary of \$100.00 per month; that if not satisfactory, we pay his traveling expenses. Motion was carried.<sup>43</sup>

On the basis of his High Holy Day "trial," Halprin proved to be acceptable to the Board; and, upon being elected full time rabbi of Beth Israel at an October, 1919, board meeting,<sup>44</sup> he embarked upon a San Diego ministry which covered about two years.

In the early part of his rabbinate, the young Halprin continued the process which Montague N.A. Cohen had begun, that of developing Beth Israel's overall organization. One of Halprin's primary concerns was to promote a better communal feeling among the members of the congregation at services; and, in this regard, he formed a "Temple Fellowship Committee" in January, 1917.<sup>45</sup> (The precise way in which this committee carried out its activity is not known.) Furthermore, continuing Cohen's concern with the young people of Beth Israel, Halprin attempted to stimulate their intellectual interest in Judaism by establishing a Junior History Class around February of that same year.<sup>46</sup>

However, the main significance of Halprin's Beth Israel rabbinate--a rabbinate which took place during the years of direct United States involvement in World War I (1917-1918)--lies in the fact that he led Beth Israel as it reached out



to the many Jewish soldiers and navy men stationed in this key military center. Under Halprin's leadership, the Temple fulfilled the religious needs of these men in several ways: Many of them frequently attended Halprin's weekly services<sup>47</sup>; on the High Holy Days, the men were given seats free of charge and entertained by congregants<sup>48</sup>; and, similarly, they were guests at the congregational seders.<sup>49</sup> As for Beth Israel's own young men who had joined the Armed Services, they were given free, honorary membership in the congregation--as seen in the cases of Marcel Brust (grandson of the Beth Israel pioneer Abraham Blochman) and Leon DeVille.<sup>50</sup>

Unfortunately, as 1917 drew to a close, the members of Beth Israel began to become generally dissatisfied with Halprin's services to the congregation. (Here we are handicapped by minutes which do not supply many specifics).<sup>51</sup> At a December meeting that year, President Adolph Levi reported to his board that many complaints had arisen among the members "having to do with [Halprin's] non-compliance with the by-laws of the congregation."<sup>52</sup> Accordingly, as the minutes go on to relate, the secretary was instructed to inform Halprin of this discontent among the congregants regarding his work. During the first half of 1918, the situation worsened. There was further consideration of the matter at meetings in January and March<sup>53</sup>; and then, at the end of a May meeting,

what would be the Board's last action in the matter took place:

Discussion followed regarding the dissatisfaction expressed by members of the congregation with Dr. Halprin, and the secretary was instructed to again inform Dr. Halprin of this condition, with a request that he advise the Board of his views....<sup>54</sup>

Realizing the impossibility of reconciling the situation, Halprin's written answer to this request, in June, contained his resignation, effective at the end of August, 1918.<sup>55</sup>

In the last few months before the November conclusion of World War I, the congregation was under the leadership of Rabbi Alexander Segel, hired in September<sup>56</sup>, after being ordained only a few months earlier at the Hebrew Union College of Cincinnati.<sup>57</sup> At this time the congregation still numbered about sixty members.<sup>58</sup> And, during these months, Beth Israel demonstrated the organizational strength it had acquired over the past decade, by continuing to function actively and systematically despite some difficult circumstances.

Financially, with many expenditures over the past year, the congregation was running at a deficit, encountering substantial difficulty in paying its outstanding bills. (Indeed, in October, in order to meet its necessary payments, \$250.00 had to be borrowed from the cemetery fund).<sup>59</sup> In addition, the massive influenza epidemic of fall of 1918 not

only exacerbated this difficult financial situation (as it made it impossible to collect all the dues on time),<sup>60</sup> but it also significantly hurt attendance at congregational events. Yet, in the midst of these difficulties, the organization itself, which had been strengthened over the past decade--with its regular schedule of worship, its religious school, its ladies' organizations and young peoples' group--remained active. And, with this strong, active organization, Beth Israel remained the focal point of San Diego's Jewish religious life.

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During the period 1910-1918, the other congregation--Orthodox Congregation Tifereth Israel--also improved the nature of its activity. Still meeting (until 1917) in rented halls in downtown San Diego, the small congregation, in 1913, obtained some needed religious and educational leadership with the arrival of Rabbi Jonas Wrottenberg.<sup>61</sup> Having received his s'michah from the outstanding rabbi E.J. Spector of Kovno, Lithuania, Wrottenberg was recognized as an authority on the Talmud. Before coming to San Diego (where he continued to reside until his death in 1942), he had been rabbi and schochet in Los Angeles.<sup>62</sup> In this period, going up through the end of World War I, Wrottenberg not

only performed traditional rabbinical functions for the congregation; but, in addition, he was one of the major forces behind the building of Tifereth Israel's first synagogue in 1917, as will be later described. By the fall of 1914, Wrotenberg had been joined by another orthodox rabbi in the congregation, a Rabbi S. Jacob Zimmerman; unfortunately, we do not know how long he remained in the city, nor anything about him--except for the fact that he was the grandfather of the prominent Ratner family of San Diego.<sup>63</sup>

With regard to the women of Tifereth Israel, by 1911 a Ladies' Auxiliary had been formed.<sup>64</sup> The success of one of their fund-raising events for the small congregation, in November, 1912, was reflected in the following communication to the B'nai B'rith Messenger:

The second grand benefit held by the Ladies' Auxiliary of Tifereth Israel Sunday November 3, at K of P [Knights of Pythias] Hall, was a big success. The hall was filled to overflowing, and through the good work of the President, Mrs. Segal, and her committees, everybody declared it to be the most successful Jewish dance ever held in San Diego. The success of this affair has encouraged the club to hold monthly dances.<sup>65</sup>

As with Reform Congregation Beth Israel, Tifereth Israel also reached out to many of the Jewish servicemen in the city during the years 1917-1918--namely to those men who followed a more traditional form of Judaism. Many of these servicemen

attended Tifereth Israel's weekly worship services and were provided with home hospitality by the women.<sup>66</sup> In particular, on the High Holidays, the congregation--as Beth Israel did--invited the men as guests to its services and entertained them while they were away from camp.<sup>67</sup>

Of course, the most important aspect of Tifereth Israel's development during this period was its continuing effort to build a synagogue--an effort which finally reached success in 1917. As early as 1910, the congregation took an initial step in this effort, buying a lot at the corner of Seventeenth and K Streets on which to build<sup>68</sup>; however, before any construction was begun, the property was sold.<sup>69</sup> By 1914, under the leadership of Rabbi Wrottenberg, I.T. Davidson, Hyman S. Wolf, and I. Frank, funds were being raised to buy another lot; and, in an October, 1914, communication to the B'nai B'rith Messenger, sixteen members were listed as having made new pledges, totaling \$169.00, for this purpose.<sup>70</sup> When, during the Panama California Exposition of 1915-1916, Joseph Goldgraber came to San Diego and joined Tifereth Israel (of which he was to become president), he became another key leader in this process of raising money in order to purchase the property.<sup>71</sup>

As a result of this new collection of funds, property was subsequently acquired on Eighteenth Street near Market, upon which the synagogue was built. In May of 1917, the cornerstone



of the synagogue was laid.<sup>72</sup> And, by the High Holy Days of that year, the new synagogue was completed and in use, as the Union reported Rosh Hashanah services "at Tifereth Israel, on Eighteenth Street and Market."<sup>73</sup> Interestingly, the trust deed to the synagogue was taken in the name of Rabbi Jonas Wrottenberg, not only a religious leader in the congregation, but one of the key figures in this successful building effort.<sup>74</sup>

As an Orthodox synagogue, the new Tifereth Israel structure was entirely different from the Reform Beech Street Temple built twenty-eight years earlier. As seen in photographs--and according to descriptions supplied by present rabbi of Tifereth Israel Monroe Levens who was in the synagogue years ago--the synagogue was built in typical Orthodox style, with the lectern in the center. The decor was basically Spanish-Portugese. Going around the upper part of the "shul" was a balcony--used as both a womens' gallery during services and as a social area at other times.<sup>75</sup> The congregation remained in this downtown facility for thirty-one years, until, in 1948, they moved to their present location on Howard Street in the North Park section of the city.

Having finally acquired its own meeting place, Congregation Tifereth Israel, during the last year of World War I, was a much stronger entity than it had previously been, when it had had to wander from one downtown rented hall to another--



in a situation aptly described by Hyman S. Wolf as "in Golus."<sup>76</sup> In its own intimate quarters at Eighteenth Street near Market, Tifereth Israel provided an active, closely-knit Orthodox community for those San Diego Jews who wished to practice a more traditional form of Judaism.

As we conclude our discussion of San Diego's two Jewish congregations during this period 1910-1918, we must deal with one further matter--that of the relationship between the two congregations during the period. Generally, it appears that there was not much interchange between members of the Reform and Orthodox congregations. The long-time members of Beth Israel whom this writer interviewed related that they had very little, or no personal contact at all, with the Orthodox congregation.<sup>77</sup> One of these individuals remarked that the two congregations rarely were involved in joint activities<sup>78</sup>; and her statement is born out by the Beth Israel minutes which reflect this situation.<sup>79</sup>

However, because the overall San Diego Jewish community was small, the two congregations, during this period, naturally became somewhat associated with each other in certain ways. The most obvious means of association was the Home of Peace Jewish Cemetery which fulfilled the burial needs of both congregations. With the actual property still formally belonging to Beth Israel, the cemetery, by 1914, was being operated

jointly by the two congregations; for by this time a "Home of Peace Cemetery Association" had been formed, on whose board were two members of Beth Israel and one member of Tifereth Israel.<sup>80</sup> That year, the will of a recently-deceased Tifereth Israel member, Mrs. Esther Rosenblum, provided a very significant contribution to the cemetery, with \$2000.00 bequeathed for cemetery improvement and, especially, for a plot for poor and indigent Jews.<sup>81</sup>

Another means of association was created by a few of Beth Israel's rabbis, who, on various special occasions, would speak at the Orthodox congregation. In 1914, Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen gave the principle address at Tifereth Israel's Hanukkah party at Castle Hall.<sup>82</sup> And, the following year, Cohen gave the sermon for the second day of Rosh Hashanah at Tifereth Israel's services<sup>83</sup>--a practice repeated by Rabbi Julius Halprin in 1917 when he addressed the Orthodox congregation at its first High Holy Day services held in its new synagogue.<sup>84</sup>

A final way in which the two congregations were somewhat associated involved some of Tifereth Israel's members who sent their children to Beth Israel's religious school.<sup>85</sup> During this period, it was, apparently, only Beth Israel which had a well-organized educational program for the children.<sup>86</sup> Thus, some of the parents at Tifereth Israel took

advantage of this aspect of the Reform congregation and enrolled their children in its school.

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In this era, 1910-1918, Lasker Lodge No.370 of the B'nai B'rith became once again--as it had been during the "Big Boom"--a very active Jewish organization. This increased activity stemmed from the fact that the lodge was growing in size, along with the rise in the number of Jews in the city, as reflected in the following communication to the B'nai B'rith Messenger in early 1913:

Members of Lasker Lodge No.370, I.O.B.B. attended in unprecedented numbers last Tuesday evening, a week ago. The occasion was the initiation of a class of twelve. The lodge is increasing in numbers and influence in the city, and it is regarded as a privilege to enter its membership....<sup>87</sup>

In the years before World War I broke out, the lodge--meeting twice a month<sup>88</sup>--began to provide informative presentations on various current issues at some of these meetings. Sometimes this took the form of lectures, such as in April, 1912, when the lodge brought in a speaker to lecture on the Kishinev pogrom and other persecutions of Jews in Russia, North Africa, and Asia.<sup>89</sup> At other times, the presentation was in the form of interesting debates between members of the lodge on such subjects as "Zionism" (October, 1912),<sup>90</sup> "Resolved, that Immigration be Restricted" (March,

1913),<sup>91</sup> and "Is War Necessary?" (1914).<sup>92</sup> Interestingly, in the debate on Zionism, the position supporting the Jewish State was represented by Hyman S. Wolf, probably the most avid Zionist in the San Diego Jewish community, who later, in 1937-1938, lived in Palestine.<sup>93</sup>

Furthermore, during these pre-war years, Lasker Lodge's Jewish philanthropic work was very strong. The 1911 minutes show that the organization made several donations to assist various B'nai B'rith lodges in the Orient.<sup>94</sup> In November, 1912, the lodge--according to the minutes--gathered funds for Jewish sufferers in the Balkan countries.<sup>95</sup>

When World War I broke out in 1914, the lodge saw its activity further increase, as it became involved in raising funds for European war sufferers and, during 1917-1918, in reaching out to the many Jewish servicemen stationed in San Diego. With regard to the latter, the lodge, in 1917 and 1918, provided many social activities for the Jewish soldiers and navy men in the area, sponsoring stag parties, smokers, dances, dinners, plays, and picnics.<sup>96</sup> In addition, it opened up a library for the men; and, at the end of the war in November, 1918, it helped many of the servicemen find employment in the area.<sup>97</sup>

Before leaving our presentation of Jewish religious activity during this 1910-1918 period, we must take a brief

look at one additional organization--and the man behind it-- which played a most important role in helping many of the Jewish servicemen in the area. We refer here, of course, to the active San Diego branch of the Jewish Welfare Board, led by its chairman Jacob Weinberger--who, in his 90s, still resides in the city today as a distinguished Federal judge.

The Welfare Board work during World War I represents only one aspect of Weinberger's long, interesting career, about which an entire biography has been recently written.<sup>98</sup> Before coming to San Diego in 1911 as a young attorney, he had lived in Arizona--where he had been one of fifty-two men who drafted the Arizona constitution in 1910.<sup>99</sup> In San Diego, he was a successful attorney, a leader in Democratic politics, and--from 1943 on--a distinguished judge in the Superior, and then Federal Court.<sup>100</sup> But our concern here is his effective leadership of the San Diego branch of the Jewish Welfare Board in these World War I years, which arranged for the area's many Jewish servicemen much social and religious activity.

The local branch--under Weinberger--made its most important contribution in 1918 when it had a special Jewish Welfare Building constructed at Camp Kearny for some 450 Jewish soldiers stationed there.<sup>101</sup> Early that year, Weinberger had learned of the need, expressed by the Jewish men



at the camp, for a building in which to hold Jewish services and activities. One letter he received from a Jewish soldier there explained how--at the time--the many Jews at the camp were crowded for services into a small conference room of the Y.M.C.A. building which had poor ventilation. In addition, the letter added, the men were subjected to a certain amount of prejudice at the camp and needed a place where they could feel at home Jewishly.<sup>102</sup>

Responding to this need, the San Diego branch of the J.W.B., under Weinberger's direction, procured over \$4000 from the national organization to have such a building constructed at Camp Kearny.<sup>103</sup> The building was completed at the end of 1918 and dedicated January 12, 1919, at which time Weinberger, Rabbi Alexander Segel of Temple Beth Israel, and Rabbi Sigmund Hecht of the B'nai B'rith Congregation in Los Angeles spoke.<sup>104</sup> The building would be important not only to the Jewish soldiers of Camp Kearny, but in the near future, to the entire San Diego Jewish community. For, at the end of 1920, it was moved adjacent to Temple Beth Israel at Second and Beech Streets, where it was used as a community center, wherein took place many Beth Israel activities, J.W.B. social affairs for the servicemen, and meetings of a few other local Jewish organizations.<sup>105</sup>

Thus, as World War I came to an end in November, 1918,



it was evident that great strides had been made in San Diego's Jewish religious life over the past nine years. The three major institutions--Reform Congregation Beth Israel, Orthodox Congregation Tifereth Israel, and Lasker Lodge of the B'nai B'rith--had improved the nature of their activity in order to serve a growing Jewish community, a community bolstered during the final two years by a great number of Jewish servicemen. In short, it was a key period in the historical development of San Diego's Jewish religious life; for, as the major institutions became more active and better organized, they provided the solid foundations for Jewish life over the next fifty years.

## CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

In the previous four chapters, we have observed the development of Jewish religious life in San Diego--from that initial 1851 Yom Kippur service held by three individuals in the sleepy village of Old Town, to the active, organized Jewish community found in San Diego at the close of World War I. Now, in this concluding section, we would do well to summarize some of the main characteristics of the overall Jewish religious experience in San Diego during this period, which have emerged from the preceding chapters.

First, what has been, perhaps, most apparent is that the various rises and declines in San Diego's Jewish religious activity during this time were almost a direct reflection of the sharp economic turns which took place in the city. On one hand, it was in the periods of significant economic growth that the major Jewish religious organizations arose. The first congregation, Adath Yeshurun, was established in 1861 in the midst of the early growth of Old Town. Similarly, the next organization, the First Hebrew Benevolent Society of San Diego, arose during the "Scott Boom" of the early 1870s. The formation of Congregation Beth Israel--the primary Jewish religious organization in the city--and Lasker Lodge No. 370 of the B'nai B'rith was directly

connected with the "Big Boom" of 1886-1888. The establishment of Orthodox Congregation Tifereth Israel, in 1905, came as San Diego was experiencing a new upturn in business activity and population growth which had begun after the turn of the century.

On the other hand, the various periods in which the city went through painful economic conditions had a direct effect on Jewish religious activity. Adath Yeshurun apparently dissolved as a result of the harsh conditions which struck Old Town in the mid-1860s. Later, in 1873, when the "Scott Boom" collapsed, the Jewish community--its numbers severely diminished--had to struggle to maintain its limited communal religious life. Following the collapse of the "Big Boom" and the nation-wide depression of 1891-1893, Jewish religious life entered a long twelve-year period of very limited organizational activity.

Second, throughout the time covered by this study, it was always a very small group of individual Jews who provided the impetus for communal religious activity--as is typical in the Jewish communities of small American towns. During the greater part of the first thirty years, this nucleus of leadership was made up of, most notably, Marcus Schiller, along with Joseph Mannasse, Louis Rose, and Charles Wolfsheimer. In the 1880s, this original leadership was

bolstered by Simon Levi, Adolph Levi, Louis Mendelson, Abraham Blochman, and Samuel I. Fox, who would gradually replace the "old guard" as the main force behind Jewish religious life--leading Congregation Beth Israel and, indeed, the Jewish community itself into the twentieth century. After 1905, this second group of leaders was joined by Hyman S. Wolf and I. Frank, who stood at the head of the newly-organized Orthodox congregation. As an indication of this phenomenon of communal Jewish religious life led by a few dedicated individuals, the figure of Marcus Schiller dramatically stands out. Schiller, remarkably, was the only president of San Diego's Jewish congregations and Benevolent Society (beginning with Congregation Adath Yeshurun, whose formation he led in 1861) all the way up through 1904 when he died.

Third, one measure of the strength of San Diego's Jewish religious activity is that it was sustained in what was one of the country's most isolated communities in relation to the centers of American Jewish life. Until 1886, San Diego was little more than a small frontier town at the southwestern corner of the country, to which few people were attracted. Not only was it almost completely cut off from the Eastern centers of American Jewish life, but it even stood very much apart from San Francisco, the center of California Jewish activity, as seen by the paucity of references

to San Diego in the San Francisco Jewish papers. Thus, in galut in the fullest sense of that term, San Diego obviously derived no benefit at all from the activity--or the religious leaders--in these far-off Jewish centers. It was forced to maintain Jewish communal activity strictly on its own--and struggled to do so. Even after 1886, when the "Big Boom" transformed the frontier town into a legitimate city, San Diego, because of its location, remained basically isolated from the mainstream of American Jewish life. As a result it was very difficult for this remote Jewish community to attract--and to keep--rabbis who would supply needed religious leadership; indeed, it will be recalled that as late as 1916, Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen frankly told Congregation Beth Israel, in his letter of resignation, that he was leaving the congregation because of an opportunity to go to a Pennsylvania congregation which was "in the very center of Jewish activity." Despite this extreme isolation, Jewish religious life survived in San Diego, largely due to knowledgeable laymen in the community who were capable of supplying religious leadership.

Fourth, because the San Diego Jewish community was, for so long, extremely small, and thus had to be satisfied with participating in any form of Jewish communal worship, it was not until the early 1880s that the division between Orthodoxy

and Reform began to set in. (Prior to that, the minhag had been traditional;) In these years, the community--moving toward Reform--began meeting formally for only one day of Rosh Hashanah, while the small group of traditionally-minded Jews observed the second day privately. By January, 1886, Reform had taken a powerful hold in the Jewish community; for at that time, when the congregation soon to appear as "Beth Israel" was formed, it was started as a Reform congregation with a small traditional element remaining within the congregation. Until 1905, with Beth Israel the only congregation in the city, Reform was the only form of public worship available, at which time the influx of East European Jews gave rise to a second congregation, Orthodox Congregation Tifereth Israel.

A fifth characteristic of San Diego's Jewish religious activity during this time involved the community's extremely good relationship with its Christian neighbors. Throughout the period, Jewish religious activity received a great amount of publicity in the local press (seemingly more so than today); evidently the predominantly-Christian society of San Diego was quite interested in the different type of religious activity practiced by the small group of Jews who were there. This good relationship was seen especially after



the formation of Congregation Beth Israel. Not only was the Christian community, as far as we know, devoid of antagonism toward the congregation; but, moreover, it was interested in it and participated in some of its activities. During the ministries of the earlier Rabbis Freuder and Moses, in particular, many Christians attended services to hear the lectures of these men. Furthermore, when Beth Israel was about to build its long-awaited synagogue, many Christians attended the major fund-raising event, the Jewish Fair, and contributed funds for this important Jewish undertaking.

Finally, we have seen that there was a great deal of Jewish social activity in San Diego--which must, indeed, be considered an important part of the Jewish religious experience there since it enabled this small number of Jews to carry out the Jewish value of community. As a small group of Jewish immigrants in a city in which they made up an extremely tiny percentage, they undoubtedly felt a pressing need for the comfort of socializing with one another. Thus, from the very beginnings of San Diego's Jewish religious life in the 1850s and early 1860s, we see this small group of Jewish immigrants gathering together for weddings. Later on, Purim balls became an important social event in the Jewish community. When Lasker Lodge No. 370 of the B'nai B'rith

was formed in 1887, it, according to Lucien Blochman, provided many social gatherings in which whole families participated. The "Clionian Society" of 1888 was formed for the very purpose of enabling young Jewish people to socialize together. Finally, during the first part of the twentieth century through World War I, this Jewish social activity became even more pronounced, with the Mothers' Club of Beth Israel constantly putting on card parties, bazaars, and dances to raise money for the congregation. Indeed, a longtime member of the congregation specifically remembered Beth Israel during these years as "a very social congregation" in which "we really enjoyed each other."

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As a final note, a word must be said concerning the precise period in the history of San Diego's Jewish religious life which has been covered by this study. In examining the time-span 1851-1918, we have dealt with the formative years in the development of San Diego's Jewish religious life. They are the years in which the major institutions were formed and had their initial growth, providing foundations for the future. However, we must keep in mind that they by no means provide the full picture of San Diego's Jewish religious development; for in the ensuing fifty-six year

period, a great deal of activity has taken place to make San Diego an important American Jewish community.

In this latter era, reaching up to the present day, new synagogue structures arose, several new congregations and B'nai B'rith lodges were established, and many other Jewish organizations came into existence. Many rabbis served in the city and several of them, who served for long periods of time, left their individual marks on the Jewish community. As far as the number of Jews is concerned, from a very small Jewish community in 1918, the Jewish population of San Diego--bolstered by the recent rapid growth of Southern California--rose to an estimated 13,000 by 1972.

This thesis, in order to be placed in its proper perspective, must thus be seen as having covered a particular stage in the overall development of San Diego's Jewish religious life. It was, indeed, the stage which made possible the tremendous growth in communal religious life which took place in the more recent period.

NOTES

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. This historical background of San Diego is culled from the following six sources: Jim Mills, "San Diego....Where California Began," in The Journal of San Diego History, Vol.XIII, no.4, and Vol. IV, no.1(1967-1968); Clarence Alan McGrew, City of San Diego and San Diego County (New York, 1922); Richard F. Pourade, The History of San Diego; The Silver Dons (San Diego, 1963), III; William E. Smythe, History of San Diego 1542-1908 (San Diego, 1908), I; T.S. Van Dyke, The City and County of San Diego (San Diego, 1888); and Max Vorspan and Lloyd P. Gartner, History of the Jews of Los Angeles (San Marino, 1970).

2. McGrew, p.1.
3. Mills, p.10.
4. Ibid., p.11.
5. Smythe, I, 33.
6. Mills, p.13.
7. Smythe, I, 45.
8. Mills, p.20.
9. Van Dyke, p.9.
10. McGrew, p.53.
11. Vorspan, p.5.
12. Pourade, III, 169.
13. Ibid., III, 158.
14. Ibid., III, 158.
15. McGrew, p.55.

16. Pourade, III, 169-70.
17. McGrew, p.53.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. San Diego County Census of 1850: First Federal Census Taken in San Diego, California, copied for the San Diego Public Library by Mrs. O.F. Weissgerber. We know that these four were Jewish, since they were each subsequently involved in Jewish religious activity.
2. Richard F. Pourade, The History of San Diego; The Silver Dons (San Diego, 1963), III, 170; and various advertisements from the San Diego Herald of 1851.
3. San Diego Herald, October 9, 1851.
4. Norton B. Stern and William M. Kramer, "The Rose of San Diego," in The Journal of San Diego History, Vol. XIX, no.4 (San Diego, 1973), p.35.
5. Ibid, p.28.
6. The Occident, Vol.X, no.1, p.60, April, 1852.
7. San Diego Census of 1850.
8. Jack B. Goldman, Pioneer Jews in California, 1849-1870 (University of California, 1939), p.55.
9. The Asmonean (New York), November 15, 1850.
10. Ibid.
11. History of San Diego County, California, with Illustrations (San Francisco, 1883), p.33. It should be noted that these are, technically, Federal Census totals for San Diego County. (For 1850, city and county are virtually one and the same). Subsequent San Diego population totals, for 1870 on, will be for the city of San Diego only, which are then available to us, and which are a bit more helpful as it is with the city of San Diego that our study is concerned.

12. Norton B. Stern, California Jewish History, A Descriptive Bibliography (Glendale, 1967), p.9.
13. Various advertisements in the San Diego Herald of 1853.
14. The Mannasses had come from Berlin; cf. Biography File, "Simon Mannasse, " San Diego Historical Society, Serra Museum, San Diego, California. Goldman was listed as from "Germany" in the 1852 California Census. As for Katz, he was from a small town in Germany; cf. "Memoirs of Marcus Katz: San Bernardino Pioneer," in Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly, Vol.1, no.1 (Los Angeles, 1968), p.20.
15. San Diego Herald, September 3, 1853.
16. Biography File, "Marcus Katz," San Diego Historical Society, Serra Museum, San Diego, California; "Memoirs of Marcus Katz: San Bernardino Pioneer."
17. Correspondence from Norton B. Stern, August 13, 1973.
18. San Diego Herald, September 16, 1854.
19. Ibid., September 15, 1855.
20. Judge Benjamin Hayes, Pioneer Notes from the Diaries of Judge Benjamin Hayes (Los Angeles, 1929), p.133.
21. Ibid.
22. San Diego Herald, August 13, 1853.
23. Ibid., April 4, 1857.
24. Weekly Gleaner (San Francisco), November 11, 1859.
25. Ibid.
26. Southern Vineyard (Los Angeles), 1859 (exact date unclear); as quoted in Max Vorspan and Lloyd P. Gartner, History of the Jews in Los Angeles (San Marino, 1970), pp.16,303.
27. The Occident, Vol.XVII, pp.229-230, December 22, 1859.
28. Ibid.
29. Weekly Gleaner (San Francisco), March 2, 1860; San



- Diego Herald, March 17, 1860.
30. Weekly Gleaner (San Francisco), March 2, 1860.
  31. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), October 31, 1969.
  32. History of San Diego County, California, with Illustrations (San Diego, 1888), p.33.
  33. Federal Census of San Diego, 1860.
  34. Ibid.
  35. T.S. Van Dyke, The City and County of San Diego Illustrated (San Diego, 1888). pp.93-95.
  36. James L. Allen, "Marcus Schiller--San Diego's Jewish Horatio Alger," in Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly, Vol.3 (Los Angeles, 1970), p.30.
  37. Weekly Gleaner (San Francisco), July 12, 1861.
  38. Ibid.
  39. The Occident, Vol.XIX, no.6, p.283, September, 1861.
  40. Samuel I. Fox, "Looking Backward," in The San Diego Jewish Community News, September 20, 1922.
  41. San Diego Census of 1850.
  42. Stern and Kramer, "The Rose of San Diego," p.28.
  43. Myron Lustig, editor, The Anniversary Story of Congregation Beth Israel, San Diego, California, 5637-5712 (San Diego, 1952), p.3.
  44. Deed Book no.2, p.59, April 24, 1862, in the office of the San Diego County Recorder.
  45. Ibid.
  46. Ibid.
  47. San Diego Weekly Bulletin, January 8, 1870.
  48. San Diego Union, December 14, 1873.

49. Interview with Richard C. Levi, August, 1973.
50. Fox, "Looking Backward."
51. Document File, "Invitations," San Diego Historical Society, Serra Museum, San Diego.
52. Los Angeles Star, July 11, 1863.
53. Pourade, History of San Diego, III, 268.
54. The Hebrew (San Francisco), October 13, 1871.
55. Ibid.
56. Elizabeth C. MacPhail, The Story of New San Diego (San Diego, 1969), p.35.
57. Ibid., p.49.
58. Ibid., p.9.
59. The Hebrew (San Francisco), October 13, 1871.
60. San Diego Union, October 5, 1872.
61. Federal Census of San Diego, 1870.
62. The Hebrew (San Francisco), October 13, 1871.
63. San Diego Union (Weekly Edition), January 13, 1870.
64. The Hebrew (San Francisco), October 13, 1871.
65. Ibid.
66. The Hebrew, October 13, 1871; San Diego Union, September 21, 1871.
67. The Hebrew (San Francisco), October 13, 1871.
68. Ibid.
69. San Diego Union, June 3, 1873.
70. Ibid., October 13, 1872.

71. MacPhail, p.49.
72. Ibid., p.53.
73. Richard F. Pourade, The History of San Diego; The Glory Years (San Diego, 1964), IV, 85.
74. MacPhail, p.64.
75. Federal Census of San Diego, 1880. This is a rather rough estimate, based upon eleven Jewish men found in the census (along with the families which belonged to some of them), plus a few more Jewish individuals whom we know were in San Diego but were not found in the census reports.
76. Publication found in the records of Congregation Beth Israel.
77. San Diego Union, September 19, 1879; September 7, 1880; September 16, 1880.
78. San Diego Union, September 13, 1874; September 19, 1876; September 19, 1879; September 7, 1880.
79. Ibid., September 22, 1874.
80. Ibid., March 21, 1878.
81. Ibid., December 2, 1875.
82. MacPhail, p.64.
83. Ibid., pp.64,71.
84. This again, is a rather rough estimate, based on the number of men who signed as members of the new congregation, soon to appear as Congregation Beth Israel, in the first week of 1886. It should be noted that from this point on, statements regarding Jewish population must be based upon congregational figures, as the 1880 Federal Census is the last San Diego Census available to us.
85. Clarence Alan McGrew, City of San Diego and San Diego County (Chicago, 1922), II, 153.
86. Lucien A. Blochman, "The Congregation as I Knew It," in The San Diego Jewish Community News, September 20, 1922.

87. San Diego Union, July 15, 1882; July 18, 1882.
88. Ibid., July 18, 1882.
89. Ibid., September 22, 1881.
90. Ibid., September 25, 1881.
91. Ibid., September 13, 1882.
92. Ibid., September 9, 1885.
93. Ibid., September 20, 1887.
94. Ibid., January 5, 1886.
95. Ibid., December 1, 1885.
96. An Illustrated History of Southern California Embracing the Counties of San Diego, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, and Orange (Chicago, 1890), p.78.
97. San Diego Union, December 29, 1885.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. Richard F. Pourade, The History of San Diego; The Glory Years (San Diego, 1964), IV, 166.
2. Elizabeth C. MacPhail, The Story of New San Diego (San Diego, 1969), p.75.
3. Ibid., p.99.
4. Ibid., p.71.
5. T.S. Van Dyke, The City and County of San Diego Illustrated (San Diego, 1888), p.28.
6. MacPhail, p.74.
7. Ibid., p.73.

8. Van Dyke, p.28.
9. An Illustrated History of Southern California Embracing the Counties of San Diego, San Bernardino, Los Angeles, and Orange (Chicago, 1890), p.78. This is the number of men who, at the end of 1885, were involved in the temporary organization of what would soon be Congregation Beth Israel. Thus it approximated the Jewish population as 1886 unfolded.
10. San Diego Union, September 7, 1888. This is the number of men who were members of Congregation Beth Israel at that time.
11. An Illustrated History, p.78. See note 9. These forty men certainly became the members of the formal organization.
12. San Diego Union, January 5, 1886.
13. Samuel I. Fox, "Looking Backward," and Clara Grossmayer, "Temple Auxiliary," in The San Diego Jewish Community News, September 20, 1922. Grossmayer notes that "when the Congregation Beth Israel was formally organized...services were regularly conducted by the members." Fox adds that, during this period, the congregation was meeting at homes, halls, or Keener Chapel of the Unitarian Church.
14. San Diego Union, January 8, 1886 (announcement of a lecture by the noted Jewish writer of San Francisco, G.A. Danziger); San Diego Union, November 4, 1886 (report of lectures by Rev. G. Schreiber of Los Angeles).
15. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), May 14, 1906.
16. San Diego Union, November 4, 1886.
17. Ibid., September 20, 1887.
18. Ibid., September 20, 1887.
19. Lucien A. Blochman, "The Congregation as I Knew It," in The San Diego Jewish Community News, September 20, 1922.
20. San Diego Union, September 20, 1887.
21. Grossmayer, "Temple Auxiliary."
22. Interviews with Mrs. Fannie Rosenfeld (August 22, 1973)

and Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973).

23. San Diego Union, September 25, 1886.

24. San Diego Sun, February 15, 1887; Daily San Diegan, February 16, 1887; San Diego Union, February 16, 1887.

25. Incorporation papers of Congregation Beth Israel, February 14, 1887, in the Office of the County Clerk, San Diego, California.

26. Jewish Progress (San Francisco), September 23, 1887.

27. Deed Book no.142, p.365, January 19, 1889, in the Office of the San Diego County Recorder (the deed for the purchase of the Beech Street property, stating a cost of \$5000); San Diego Union, September 7, 1889 (revealing a construction cost of about \$3500).

28. Eduard Lasker (1829-1884), a famous Jew of the time after whom the lodge was originally named, was known as a great German Liberal politician. He was leader of the majority party in the House of Deputies in Germany and was noted for his struggle on behalf of the German workingmen. Cf. "Eduard Lasker" in Encyclopedia Judaica; and Carl M. Esenoff and Rabbi Moise Bergman, editors, The Yoval, Commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of Lasker Lodge No.370, B'nai B'rith (San Diego, 1937), p.20.

It is interesting that these San Diego Jews, in forming their B'nai B'rith lodge, selected his name. As Jewish immigrants now striving to take an active part in the business and civic life of their city, they must have seen Lasker as a fine model, a Jew who had risen to a position of respect and popularity in his country. In addition, they must have identified strongly with Lasker's liberalism and concern for the German common man.

29. Esenoff and Bergman, p.54.

30. Esenoff and Bergman, p.20; San Diego Union, June 28, 1887.

31. Esenoff and Bergman, pp. 21-24.

32. San Diego Union, February 26, 1888.

33. Jewish Progress (San Francisco), March 9, 1888.



34. San Diego Union, October 15, 1888.
35. MacPhail, p.95.
36. In February of 1888 San Diego was still without a rabbi (cf. Jewish Progress, February 24, 1888). By June 1, Rabbi Freuder was in the city, leading services (cf. San Diego Union, June 1, 1888).
37. San Diego Union, September 7, 1888.
38. Samuel Freuder, A Missionary's Return to Judaism (New York, 1915), pp.28-34.
39. W. Gunther Plaut, The Jews in Minnesota (New York, 1959), p.187.
40. Freuder, p.35.
41. San Diego Union, June 1, 1888; June 8, 1888; American Israelite, November 23, 1888.
42. American Israelite (Cincinnati), November 23, 1888 (reprinting article from San Diego Daily Bee, September 16, 1888).
43. American Israelite, December 14, 1888.
44. San Diego Sun (Weekly Edition), January 10, 1889.
45. American Israelite, December 14, 1888.
46. San Diego Union, September 7, 1888.
47. San Diego Sun (Weekly Edition), December 27, 1888.
48. Fox, "Looking Backward."
49. Deed Book no.142, p.365, January 19, 1889, in the Office of the San Diego County Recorder.
50. San Diego Union, March 3, 1889.
51. Ibid., February 26, 1889.
52. Ibid., February 26, 1889.

53. Ibid., February 26, 1889.
54. Ibid., September 27, 1889.
55. American Israelite, November 23, 1888; San Diego Union, October 18, 1888.
56. Freuder, p.37.
57. Ibid., p.7ff.
58. Ibid., p.7
59. Adolph Levi, "Our Growth," in The San Diego Jewish Community News, September 20, 1922.
60. San Diego Sun (Weekly Edition ), April 4, 1889.
61. One Hundreth Anniversary Centennial Celebration, 1873-1973, First Unitarian Church of San Diego (San Diego, 1883), p.11.
62. San Diego Union, July 18, 1889.
63. San Diego Sun, September 25, 1889.
64. San Diego Union, September 7, 1889.
65. Ibid., September 27, 1889
66. Southwest Jewish Press (San Diego), June 22, 1973.
67. San Diego Sun, September 25, 1889.
68. Visit to the Fraternal Spiritualist Church of San Diego, September 2, 1973.
69. Interviews with Mrs. Fannie Rosenfeld (August 22, 1973); Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973); Mr. Ted Naumann (August 29, 1973).
70. San Diego Union, September 27, 1889.
71. Ibid.
72. Ibid., March 14, 1890.

73. Illustrated History, p.78.
74. MacPhail, p.109.
75. Ibid.
76. "Alumni By Classes," in Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Catalogue (Cincinnati, 1955), p.107.
77. San Diego Union, February 18, 1893. In 1893 Rabbi Moses' age was given as 55, making him 52 in 1890, when he came to San Diego.
78. Ibid., March 14, 1890.
79. Cf. Weekly announcements of Beth Israel's services throughout the three year period in which Moses is in San Diego, in the San Diego Union.
80. Moses' subject matter was always mentioned in the weekly announcement of Beth Israel's services in the San Diego Union.
81. See note 80.
82. San Diego Union, March 6, 1891.
83. Ibid., November 28, 1891.
84. cf. Ibid., July 11, 1890; October 17, 1890; February 27, 1891; May 8, 1891; May 29, 1891; March 25, 1892.
85. Ibid., November 21, 1890.
86. Ibid., August 25, 1892.
87. Mrs. Lucien A. Blochman, "Ladies' Aid Society," in The San Diego Jewish Community News, September 20, 1922.
88. Ibid.
89. Ibid.
90. San Diego Union, October 23, 1891.
91. Lucien A. Blochman, "The Congregation as I Knew It."

92. Grossmayer, "Temple Auxiliary."
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. San Diego Union, August 12, 1891.
96. Ordinance No.155, Book 3, Page 148, File 7, February 29, 1892, in the office of the City Clerk, San Diego, California.
97. Ibid.
98. San Diego Union, February 3, 1893.
99. Jewish Progress (San Francisco), April 14, 1893.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. Elizabeth C. MacPhail, The Story of New San Diego (San Diego, 1969). p.107.
2. Ibid., p.125.
3. Ibid., p.131.
4. Jewish Progress (San Francisco), April 17, 1896.
5. American Jewish Year Book (1900-1901) (Philadelphia, 1900), p.196.
6. Jewish Progress (San Francisco), April 17, 1896.
- 7.. Inscription on the tombstone of Marcus Schiller in the Home of Peace Cemetery, San Diego, California.
8. Norton B. Stern, Baja California: Jewish Refuge and Homeland (Los Angeles, 1973), pp.22-24.
9. Ibid., p.25.
10. Samuel I. Fox, "Looking Backward," in The San Diego Jewish Community News, September 20, 1922.

11. San Diego Union, September 22, 1895; September 6, 1896; September 27, 1897; September 17, 1898; September 10, 1901; October 1, 1902; October 2, 1903; and September 8, 1904. And cf. Stern, p.27.
12. San Diego Union, October 11, 1894.
13. Ibid., September 15, 1899.
14. San Diego Sun, April 27, 1895.
15. San Diego Union, September 10, 1901.
16. Ibid.
17. Clarence A. McGrew, City of San Diego and San Diego County: The Birthplace of California (New York, 1922), II, 153.
18. Ibid.
19. William E. Smythe, History of San Diego 1542-1908 (San Diego, 1908), II, 643; and Jewish Progress (San Francisco), April 17, 1896.
20. Cf. San Diego Union, September 16, 1898; September 15, 1899; September 15, 1901; October 3, 1902.
21. Ibid., October 2, 1894.
22. Ibid., September 11, 1915.
23. Fox, "Looking Backward."
24. Ibid.; and Martin A. Meyer, Western Jewry (San Francisco, 1916), p.71.
25. Federal Census of San Diego, 1880.
26. T.S. Van Dyke, The City and County of San Diego Illustrated (San Diego, 1888), p.152.
27. Henry Schwartz, "Simon and Adolph Levi" (Unpublished manuscript on file in the San Diego Historical Society, Serra Museum, San Diego), pp.7,8-11.
28. Ibid., p.13; Samuel F. Black, San Diego County

- California: A Record of Settlement, Organization, Progress, and Achievement (Chicago, 1913), II, 262-63.
29. Schwartz, pp.11,16.
  30. San Diego Sun, November 13, 1899.
  31. Van Dyke, p.154.
  32. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, San Diego, California.
  33. McGrew, II, 238.
  34. Interviews with Mrs. Fannie Rosenfeld (August 22, 1973); Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973).
  35. Fox, "Looking Backward."
  36. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, San Diego , California.
  37. Exact references are the following: Jewish Progress (San Francisco), April 17, 1896; B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), September 22, 1899; September 30, 1901; American Jewish Year Book (1900-1901), p.196; Hyman S. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry" (Unpublished manuscript in Vertical File, "Jews in San Diego," San Diego Historical Society Serra Museum, San Diego).
  38. San Diego Union, January 8, 1886; December 15, 1893.
  39. Ibid., September 17, 1898.
  40. Ibid., September 22, 1903.
  41. Interview with Mrs. Fannie Rosenfeld (August 22, 1973); and Ibid., September 22, 1901; October 1, 1903; September 8, 1907; October 4, 1908.
  42. San Diego Union, October 2, 1894; October 11, 1894; September 29, 1894.
  43. Ibid., September 3, 1899; September 13, 1899; September 19, 1899; September 20, 1899.
  44. Ibid., September 8, 1904.



45. Ibid., October 11, 1894; September 8, 1904; San Diego Sun, September 15, 1899.
46. American Jewish Year Book (1900-1909).
47. Interview with Mrs. Fannie Rosenfeld (August 22, 1973); San Diego Union, September 20, 1899.
48. Interview with Mrs. Fannie Rosenfeld (August 22, 1973).
49. San Diego Sun, April 27, 1895; San Diego Union, September 20, 1899.
50. Interview with Mrs. Fannie Rosenfeld (August 22, 1973).
51. San Diego Union September 20, 1899; B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), September 22, 1899.
52. Cf. San Diego Sun, December 1, 1894; March 16, 1895; San Diego Union, December 2, 1899; B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), June 15, 1906.
53. Carl M. Esenoff and Rabbi Moise Bergman, editors, The Yoal, Commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of Lasker Lodge No. 370, B'nai B'rith (San Diego, 1937), p.24.
54. Lucien A. Blochman, "Lasker Lodge, " in The San Diego Jewish Community News, September 20, 1922.
55. Esenoff and Bergman, p.24..
56. Blochman, "Lasker Lodge."
57. Esenoff and Bergman, p.30..
58. MacPhail, p.125.
59. Ibid., p.135.
60. Ibid., p.135.
61. Ibid., p.142; and Richard F. Pourade, The History of San Diego; Gold in the Sun (San Diego, 1965), V, 113.
62. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), May 14, 1906.

63. Ibid. Also interviews with Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973) and Mrs. Selma Moore (November 13, 1972, conducted by Mr. Henry Schwartz): both of these women, who are sister-in-laws, recalled that Tifereth Israel contained mainly the Russian Jews of the city. Indeed, Mrs. Moore remarked that she never saw a Russian Jew in San Diego until 1905.
64. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry."
65. This number is derived from the list of members appearing on an original invitation to the congregational dedication of the Sefer Torah in March 1906 (see p.90). These are generally considered to be the charter members of Tifereth Israel. Original invitation is in Box File, "Churches," San Diego Historical Society, Serra Museum, San Diego.
66. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry."
67. Newspaper report of October, 1905, exact newspaper unknown, in Box File, "Churches," San Diego Historical Society, Serra Museum, San Diego.
68. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry."
69. Incorporation papers of Congregation Tifereth Israel, February 14, 1906, in the Office of the County Clerk, San Diego, California.
70. Ibid.
71. Original invitation in Box File, "Churches," San Diego Historical Society, Serra Museum, San Diego.
72. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry."
73. American Jewish Year Book (1907-1908).
74. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry."
75. Ibid.
76. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), June 15, 1906.
77. Ibid., July 31, 1908.
78. Esenoff and Bergman, pp.25, 57-58.

79. American Jewish Year Book (1907-1908).
80. William E. Smythe, History of San Diego 1542-1908 (San Diego, 1908), I, 557.
81. San Diego Union, September 10, 1907.
82. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), June 15, 1906.
83. Meyer, Western Jewry, pp.70-71.
84. Ellinger was definitely Beth Israel's fulltime rabbi by the fall of 1909: After his conducting of the High Holiday services (cf. San Diego Sun, September 23, 1909), he appears in the Temple minutes with regard to an October communication concerning the religious school (cf. Minutes of December 2, 1909; December 30, 1909). In addition, he is listed in the 1909 San Diego City and County Directory, for the first time, as rabbi of Beth Israel. He probably came sometime around (perhaps a little before) September, for it was then (September 10) that the synagogue was re-dedicated for regular worship.
85. American Jewish Year Book (1903-1904) (1905-1906). His alignment with the Reform movement is evidenced by his appearance in the CCAR Yearbook's listing of rabbis in the years prior to his Beth Israel rabbinate.
86. Meyer, p.71.
87. Blochman, "Lasker Lodge."
88. Esenoff and Bergman, p.24.

#### NOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. Richard F. Pourade, The History of San Diego; Gold in the Sun (San Diego, 1965), V, 231.
2. Ibid., p.183.
3. Elizabeth C. MacPhail, The Story of New San Diego (San Diego, 1969), p.142.

4. Pourade, V, 218.
5. Hyman S. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry" (Unpublished manuscript in Vertical File; "Jews in San Diego," San Diego Historical Society, Serra Museum, San Diego).
6. MacPhail, p.143; Pourade, V, 227; and Report of Rabbi Montague N. A. Cohen, August 16, 1914, in the files of Congregation Beth Israel, San Diego, California, in which he notes the presence of warships in San Diego upon which there were Jewish sailors..
7. MacPhail, p.143; and Pourade, V, 263.
8. Pourade, V, 225-227.
9. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), August 16, 1912.
10. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, January 19, 1910; February 17, 1911.
11. Ibid., February 17, 1911.
12. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), May 28, 1911; June 16, 1911.
13. Ibid., May 28, 1911.
14. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, May 17, 1911.
15. Ibid.
16. Letter from Rabbi Emil Ellinger to Board of Directors of Congregation Beth Israel, August 5, 1911, in the files of Congregation Beth Israel, San Diego, California.
17. American Jewish Year Book (1903-1904) (Philadelphia, 1903), p.49.
18. American Jewish Year Book (1903-1904), p.49; American Jewish Year Book (1905-1906), p.120; B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), April 12, 1912.
19. American Jewish Year Book (1903-1904), p.49.
20. For example, in 1913, his editorials are appearing on such subjects as literature (April 11, 1913), Prohibition

(May 23, 1913), and liberal Judaism. By September 1914, his name is appearing in the masthead as "associate editor."

21. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), April 12, 1912, citing Anaconda Standard (Butte), April 2, 1912.

22. Cf. San Diego Union, September 28, 1912; November 11, 1912; December 21, 1912; December 28, 1912, etc.

23. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, January 18, 1911.

24. Interviews with Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973); Mr. Ted Naumann (August 29, 1973).

25. Interview with Mr. Ted Naumann (August 29, 1973).

26. Report of Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen, October 20, 1914; "Bulletin No. 4 of Congregation Beth Israel, 1915-1916," in the files of Congregation Beth Israel, San Diego, California.

27. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), July 12, 1912.

28. San Diego Union, September 7, 1912.

29. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), October 11, 1912; Report of Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen, November 19, 1912, in the files of Congregation Beth Israel, San Diego, California.

30. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), April 25, 1913; Report of Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen, June 10, 1913.

31. Report of Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen, June 10, 1913; Interviews with Mrs. Fannie Rosenfeld (August 22, 1973), Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973), Mr. Ted Naumann (August 29, 1973).

32. Report of Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen, October 20, 1914.

33. Reports of Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen, July 14, 1914; October 20, 1914.

34. "Bulletin No. 4 of Congregation Beth Israel, 1915-1916."

35. Report of Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen, October 20, 1914.

36. "Bulletin No. 4 of Congregation Beth Israel, 1915-1916."

37. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, January 18, 1912.
38. Ibid., February 18, 1914.
39. Martin A. Meyer, Western Jewry (San Francisco, 1916), p.71.
40. Letter of Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen to the Board of Directors and members of Congregation Beth Israel, June 18, 1916.
41. Letter of Board of Directors to Rabbi Montague N.A. Cohen, June 29, 1916.
42. "Alumni by Classes," in Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Catalogue (Cincinnati, 1955), p.107.
43. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, August 10, 1916.
44. Ibid., October 6, 1916.
45. Ibid., January 24, 1917; February 21, 1917.
46. Ibid., February 21, 1917.
47. Interview with Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973).
48. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, September 27, 1917; San Diego Union, September 16, 1917; September 7, 1918.
49. Interview with Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973).
50. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, January 16, 1918; June 20, 1918.
51. Ibid., December 27, 1917 (Here we see the first indication of the dissatisfaction with Halprin); January 16, 1918 (Now we further learn that it was dissatisfaction "regarding the character of the services rendered" by Halprin).
52. Ibid., December 27, 1917.
53. Ibid., January 16, 1918; March 20, 1918.
54. Ibid., May 21, 1918.
55. Ibid., June 20, 1918.



56. Ibid., September 18, 1918.
57. "Alumni by Classes," p. 107.
58. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, August 7, 1917.
59. Ibid., October 16, 1918.
60. Report of Rabbi Alexander Segel, January 15, 1919.
61. San Diego Union, August 6, 1933.
62. Ibid., and Mrs. Rolf Hass, Golden Jubilee, Tifereth Israel Synagogue and Center (San Diego, 1956), p.39.
63. Sixtieth Anniversary Celebration, Tifereth Israel Synagogue (San Diego, 1966) (Unpaginated); and B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), October 16, 1914, in which we see that Rabbi Zimmerman was among the Tifereth Israel members who had made new pledges to help the congregation purchase property for its proposed synagogue.
64. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), November 15, 1912.
65. Ibid.
66. Interview with Rabbi Monroe Levens of Congregation Tifereth Israel (August 28, 1973).
67. San Diego Union, September 16, 1917; September 7, 1918.
68. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry."
69. Hass, p.7.
70. Ibid., p.39; B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), October 16, 1914.
71. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry."
72. Hass, p.39.
73. San Diego Union, September 16, 1917.
74. Hass, p.39.
75. Ibid., pp.7,9 (pictures of the synagogue); and Interview

- with Rabbi Monroe Levens of Congregation Tifereth Israel (August 28, 1973).
76. Wolf, "Reminiscences of San Diego Jewry."
77. Interviews with Mrs. Fannie Rosenfeld (August 22, 1973); Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973); and Mr. Ted Naumann (August 29, 1973).
78. Interview with Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973).
79. In the Congregational minutes of this 1910-1918 period, no joint endeavors between the two congregations are indicated, with the exception of the operation of the Home of Peace Cemetery (see page 108).
80. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, September 10, 1914 (in which are added excerpts from the minutes of a special meeting of Congregation Tifereth Israel on August 25, 1914).
81. Ibid.,
82. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), December 18, 1914.
83. San Diego Union, September 8, 1915; and "Bulletin No.4 of Congregation Beth Israel, 1915-1916."
84. San Diego Union, September 16, 1917.
85. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, October 26, 1916; December 14, 1916; Report of Rabbi Julius Halprin, December 13, 1916; and Interview with Rabbi Monroe Levens of Congregation Tifereth Israel (August 28, 1973).
86. Interview with Rabbi Monroe Levens of Congregation Tifereth Israel (August 28, 1973); cf. American Jewish Year Book (1907-1908). This is the last we hear of Tifereth Israel's "cheder," set up in 1906, which is here listed as having only five students under one teacher.
87. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), April 11, 1913.
88. Ibid., January 19, 1912.
89. Ibid., February 29, 1912.
90. Carl M. Esenoff and Rabbi Moise Bergman, editors, The

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91. B'nai B'rith Messenger (Los Angeles), March 14, 1913.
  92. Esenoff and Bergman, p.57.
  93. Ibid., p.25; and Norton B. Stern, Baja California: Jewish Refuge and Homeland (Los Angeles, 1973), p.68.
  94. Esenoff and Bergman p.25.
  95. Ibid.
  96. Ibid., p.27.
  97. Ibid., p.27.
  98. Leland G. Stanford, Ninety Weinberger Years: The Jacob Weinberger Story (Stanford, 1971).
  99. Ibid., p.64.
  100. Ibid., pp.74, 77-78, 80-82.
  101. Letter to Jacob Weinberger from Isaac Silberstein, a soldier in the 115th Mobile Ordinance at Camp Kearny, February 26, 1918, supplied by Judge Jacob Weinberger, San Diego, California.
  102. Ibid.
  103. Letter to Jacob Weinberger from Adelphi Security Company, October 5, 1918, regarding all the expenses for construction of the Jewish Welfare Building, supplied by Judge Jacob Weinberger, San Diego, California.
  104. Program of dedication for the Jewish Welfare Building, January 12, 1919, supplied by Judge Jacob Weinberger, San Diego, California.
  105. Minutes of Congregation Beth Israel, September 27, 1920; December 15, 1920; Edward H. Samisch, "Going Ahead," in The San Diego Jewish Community News, September 20, 1922; Interview with Mrs. Estelle Levi (August 22, 1973).

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