



chicago jewish history

Judge Samuel Alschuler of the Seventh Circuit

BY WALTER ROTH



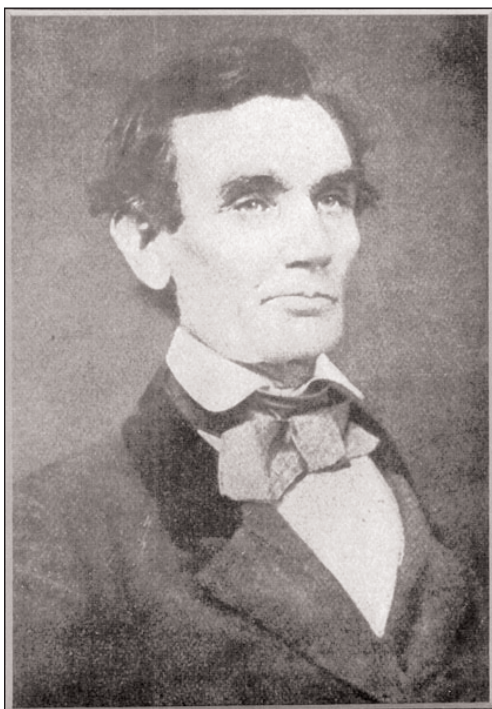
Judge Samuel Alschuler
(1859-1939).

History of the Jews of Chicago.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, Chicago was home to a number of Jewish attorneys who became leading figures in the American judiciary. First among them was Julian Mack (see *Chicago Jewish History*, Summer 2007), who became a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in 1911. He was followed on the Court by Samuel Alschuler, who was appointed to the position in 1915, making two Jews of German immigrant origin serving on this, one of the most important Federal Courts in the nation. A year after Alschuler's appointment, Louis D. Brandeis, also a child of European-born parents, became the first Jewish Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

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Another Samuel Alschuler: Photographer of Abraham Lincoln and Father of Chicago Architect Alfred Alschuler



Photographer Samuel G. Alschuler was born in Bavaria in 1826, arrived in America in 1849, and settled in Illinois. He was operating a photographic studio in Urbana when, in 1858 (or 1857), political hopeful Abraham Lincoln came by to have a portrait taken.

Lincoln was wearing an old linen duster which was inappropriate for the portrait, and had no other coat available. The photographer, about a foot shorter than the circuit lawyer, loaned him his own coat. Lincoln's arms extended through

continued on page 6

Abraham Lincoln, 1858 (1857?).

Meserve #5. The photograph is a copy of the ambrotype by Samuel G. Alschuler in the collection of Jean Soman. The original ambrotype is at the Illinois State Historical Society.

Jews in Chicago Politics Since 1920

BY LEON M. DESPRES

This article first appeared in our January 1990 issue. We are republishing it in celebration of the 100th birthday of Leon Despres.

Article begins on page 7

President's Column



Walter Roth.

LEON M. DESPRES WAS BORN IN CHICAGO THE SAME YEAR THE CUBS LAST WON THE WORLD SERIES.

Alderman Despres, a revered, longtime member of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, was born on February 2, 1908. We congratulate him on his personal centennial. (Perhaps the Cubs will amaze us with a centennial pennant.)

Leon Despres grew up in Hyde Park and graduated from the University of Chicago Law School in 1929. He and Marian Alschuler were married in 1931. They were blessed with two children, Linda and Robert.

Marian, daughter of famed Chicago architect Alfred Alschuler, could trace her local ancestry back to her great-grandfather, Michael Greenebaum, who immigrated to our city from Germany in 1849. Leon's forebears were more recent arrivals.

I have had a number of conversations with Leon about his search for his roots in Europe. I believe that this search led him to a greater identification with the Jewish people and his own Jewish heritage.

Leon Despres was, and still is, a brilliant lawyer, specializing in civil matters. He has always been a liberal in his political beliefs.

Among his interesting life experiences was the occasion when, on behalf of a fellow lawyer, he delivered a package of clothing to Leon Trotsky, the exiled Soviet leader, in Mexico City. This occurred in 1937. Trotsky was living at the home of the artists Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo, then husband and wife. While Marian Despres sat for a portrait by Diego, Leon Despres escorted Frida to the movies.

In 1938, the Republic Steel "Memorial Day Massacre" occurred in Chicago, a strike in which a number of demonstrators were killed by the police. Leon represented some of the workers facing prosecution for their participation in the strike. I had occasion to talk with Leon about his involvement when I was writing an article about Meyer Levin's book, *Citizens*, which deals with the strike.

Leon has always taken the high road, whether in his legal practice (he still maintains his Loop office), or in his political activities with the Independent Voters of Illinois (IVI). He became well-known as the alderman of the Fifth Ward who stood in opposition to Mayor Richard J. Daley in City Council battles.

His bicycle trips from his Hyde Park home to his Loop office exemplified his lifelong fortitude and vigor.

After voluntary retirement after twenty years as alderman, he served as a parliamentarian for Mayor Jane Byrne and then for Mayor Harold Washington during the raucous "Council Wars."

Marian Despres died on January 4, 2007. Today, Leon resides in their apartment on South Stony Island Avenue, overlooking the Jackson Park Lagoon, located very close to the apartment where another great Chicagoan, Clarence Darrow, once lived.

Our Board of Directors and our entire membership join me in wishing Leon Despres "Happy Birthday" on reaching this milestone!



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Save the Date! CJHS Open Meeting on Sunday, March 30 “Chicago’s Forgotten Synagogues” by Robert Packer

Robert Packer, a private building and environmental inspector, who has written two books of photographs and anecdotes about many of Chicago’s past houses of worship and their congregants, will present the next program of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society on Sunday, March 30, at Temple Sholom, 3480 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago.

The program will begin at 2:00 p.m., following a social hour and refreshments at 1:00 p.m. Admission is free and open to the public.

Mr. Packer will be pleased to sign his two books, *Doors of Redemption: The Forgotten Synagogues of Chicago* and *Chicago’s Forgotten Synagogues*, before and after his slide lecture.



Former Cong. Anshe Sholom, South Independence Blvd. and West Polk St.
Now a Seventh Day Adventist Church. Collection of Robert A. Packer.

Further Research on Civil War Veterans Buried in Jewish Graceland Cemetery

In the article in Vol. 20, No. 1, Winter 2005 of *Chicago Jewish History*, on Civil War veterans buried in Jewish Graceland Cemetery, I listed Theodore Hirsch, a Confederate soldier, among them. Recently, a careful perusal of an old Jewish Graceland Cemetery record book showed the following entry on page 11:

17 Theodore Hirsch Dec 15 1864 Pris Camp Douglas

Under the column heading “Place of residence at the time of death or place of nativity” I interpret “Pris” to mean “prisoner.” Even though there is a double line through the numeral “17” and a line drawn through the entry, I think this brings us closer to the conclusion that Hirsch was buried in this cemetery even though we never found a grave marker. There are many markers by the east fence which have been moved from their original positions (which have not been inventoried).

—CJHS Past President Norman D. Schwartz

14	Adolf Beckenbacher	July 21 1864	Chicago
15	Eda F. Rosenthal		Chicago
15	Hannah Jacobson	Oct 15 1864	Chicago
16	Robert Schramfeld	Nov 11 1864	Chicago
17	Theodore Hirsch	Dec 15 1864	Pris Camp Douglas
18	Salomon Samuels	Dec 16 1864	Chicago
18	Caroline Koppel	Dec 8 1864	Chicago
19	Mrs. Lupat	April 10 1865	Chicago
20	Primorski & family Lot 52	Oct 30 1865	Chicago
21	Adolph Kraus	March 27 1866	"

Photocopied page from an old Jewish Graceland Cemetery record book (detail). Number 17 is Theodore Hirsch.

Judge Alschuler *continued from page 1*

Samuel Alschuler was born in Chicago on November 20, 1859. His grandparents and parents had left Southern Germany as part of a mass migration of Jews to America following a series of unsuccessful social revolts in their German states. In 1861, the Alschulers moved to Aurora, a small town to the west of Chicago (and now the second largest city in Illinois).

Samuel was the second of Jacob and Caroline Stiefel Alschuler's six children. The oldest, Clara, became a teacher in Aurora. The third, Edward, died at age 25, a few years after he and his father established a real estate and insurance company, J. & E. A. Alschuler.

The fourth child was George Alexander. He began as a printer's devil at the *Aurora Daily News* in 1879, and worked there as a printer and foreman of the composing room for eight years. He then went into business with his father in the firm which became George W. Alschuler & Co. after his father's death. It was the largest real estate firm in Aurora. He was Mayor of Aurora in 1901-03 and oversaw installation of the first paved streets. He also served two terms in the state legislature starting in 1909 and was minority leader of the Democratic Party in his second term. He was the Democratic nominee for State Treasurer in 1928.

The fifth Alschuler child, Fannie, died in infancy.

Benjamin, the youngest child, practiced law. He was Vice President and General Counsel of Western United Gas & Electric Company. He also represented the Copley Press, Copley Hospital, and the Chicago, Aurora & Elgin Railroad. Benjamin was a Democratic nominee for Congress and Judge of the Illinois Court of Claims. He was the grandfather of Albert W. Alschuler, the Julius Kreeger Professor of Law and Criminology emeritus at Northwestern University School of Law, who graciously provided this writer with the preceding information about the close-knit Alschuler family.

Samuel attended Aurora public schools and had various jobs, some as a laborer and others as a bookkeeper. In 1878 he began his studies in the law offices of A.C. Little, a well known Aurora attorney. During his law clerkship, which he completed in three years, he also did a great deal of studying in the liberal arts. He was admitted to the Illinois Bar in 1887, and immediately began a successful legal practice in Aurora. He was a plaintiff's attorney and developed an excellent reputation with substantial clients.

In 1901, he moved to Chicago. In these early years as a lawyer, Samuel also became involved in Democratic

party politics. He was known throughout the state as a member of the liberal wing of the party and was in constant contradiction to the "boss"-controlled Chicago faction. He became close to John Peter Altgeld.

In 1892, Altgeld ran for Governor of Illinois, as one of the leaders of the "Free Silver" movement led by the Democratic Party's Presidential candidate, William Jennings Bryan. Altgeld was victorious, but Samuel Alschuler, Democratic candidate for U.S. Representative from Illinois, lost his race.

Governor Altgeld rewarded Alschuler for his support by appointing him to the State Commission on Claims in 1893. Samuel resigned this post in 1896 to run for, and win, a seat in the Illinois House of Representatives. He was elected Minority Leader in 1898. He was widely lauded for leading the fight against the Chicago utility bosses led by Charles Yerkes and his corrupt street railroad and elevated train syndicates. The bosses gained benefits for the utilities they controlled by buying the votes of state legislators. Alschuler and his friends waged a losing fight but gained wide public respect.

The fact that Alschuler was Jewish may have been a hindrance to his political ambitions in various parts of Illinois, but because of his reputation for honesty, the Democratic Party slated him as their candidate for Governor in 1900. Alschuler's nomination may also have been an attempt to obtain the votes of Jews, who in those years usually voted Republican. His opponent was Richard Yates, the son of Illinois' popular Civil War governor. Alschuler lost the election, but it was close. He carried Chicago, unusual for a Democrat in those days. No Democrat would become Governor of Illinois until Henry Horner in 1933.

Samuel then returned to the practice of law, and joined the firm of Kraus, Alschuler, and Holden. Adolf Kraus was a Democrat and had been appointed to important city offices under Mayor Harrison. He also was becoming increasingly active in the Jewish community in Chicago. Both Kraus and Alschuler were members of the leading Reform congregations.

The firm prospered, handling plaintiff cases in jury trials as well as other matters. Samuel worked with Clarence Darrow on several cases, including one involving publisher William Randolph Hearst and some of his employees who were charged with contempt of court for ridiculing the opinion of a state court judge in Hearst newspaper cartoons. Samuel also worked on many pro bono cases, including work on the reform of Chicago public schools. He continued his activities in the Democratic Party, campaigning for candidates in

Illinois elections in the early 1900s, including Henry Horner and Julian Mack in judicial races.

In 1912, Samuel again sought the Democratic Party nomination for Governor, but due to schisms in the Party and his unwillingness to make deals with the “bosses,” he was unsuccessful. Though twice defeated in his gubernatorial aspirations, he was still a prominent personage in the Democratic Party. With the election of his friend J. Hamilton Lewis to the Senate from Illinois and Woodrow Wilson to the Presidency, Samuel was called upon regularly to give advice on appointments.

Alschuler himself was appointed by President Wilson to the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit where his friend Julian Mack was already serving. He took his seat on October 1, 1915.

“It would be natural to compare Judges Alschuler and Mack. Both were well known German Jews who belonged to Jewish Reform Congregations (Sinai and K.A.M.). The two men, however, were markedly different. Mack was a Jewish activist, social reformer, and an intellectual who only tangentially became involved in elective politics and the Democratic Party. Alschuler was a consummate politician and loyal Democrat who supported progressive reforms within the party organization.” —Rayman L. Solomon, *History of the Seventh Circuit 1891-1941*.

Judge Alschuler’s grandnephew, Professor Albert Alschuler, informed this writer that the Judge told President Wilson that he did not deserve his nomination because he had not attended college or law

school, but Wilson convinced Samuel Alschuler that he had demonstrated his “legal astuteness and his learning.”

Neither Mack nor Alschuler experienced organized opposition to his nominations. While Mack was an active leader of Zionist organizations and causes, Alschuler played no such public role. While he stated that he saw the need for a land where persecuted Jews could live safely, he kept his efforts on behalf of Zionism a private matter. It was said that “his sympathy for his fellow Jews was strong.”

During World War I, in addition to his duties as Federal Judge, Alschuler received the distinction of special legislation which appointed him as a special arbiter of labor disputes that were affecting production for the war effort. His work in this area was on the cutting edge of enlightened labor negotiations, with concessions made by business owners to their employees, such as the eight hour work day, health benefits, and a raise in wages. Of major importance was his success in settling the disputes between Chicago packinghouse workers and their employers.

On October 9, 1918, Judge Alschuler was asked by the Jewish Historical Society of Illinois to give the main speech on the hundredth anniversary of Illinois statehood, at the dedication of a tablet located on a new post office at the corner of Clark Street and Jackson Boulevard. The tablet honored Chicago’s first house of worship, K.A.M., built on that spot in 1851. (The Kluczynski Federal Building was erected on that site and a new commemorative tablet was dedicated in 1975.)

Alschuler’s speech is recorded in *History of the Jews of Chicago* by H.L. Meites. It is a poetic expression of his faith in America and the Jewish



Tablet on Chicago Post Office, 1918.
History of the Jews of Chicago.

people. It was certainly a public affirmation of his Jewish identity by Alschuler, as the meeting of the Jewish Historical Society of Illinois was held in his chambers.

In 1922, President Harding appointed Alschuler to the Federal Coal Commission. Again, a special law was passed by Congress to enable him to hold this job in addition to his Federal Judgeship. He also continued his work as a labor-management arbitrator.

In 1935, an uproar occurred in the U.S. House of Representatives. Everett M. Dirksen, Republican of Illinois, had made an attack on Alschuler’s character and demanded his impeachment for improper involvement in a patent case. House members of both parties quickly came to the Judge’s defense and the House cleared him of all charges.

Alschuler was failing in health and resigned from the Federal Bench in 1936.

Samuel Alschuler was a bachelor until 1923 when he married Ella Kahn, daughter of Felix Kahn, a Chicago clothing manufacturer. The couple had no children. Samuel Alschuler died on November 10, 1939, at age 80, at his home at 5421 South Cornell Avenue. Funeral services were held at the home of his brother Benjamin at 146 Grand Avenue, Aurora, and he was interred at Spring Lake Cemetery in Aurora on November 14, 1939. ❖

Photographer Alschuler *continued from page 1*

“about a quarter of a yard.” A witness wrote later that Lincoln “was overcome with merriment” when the short coat “proved to be a bad misfit.”

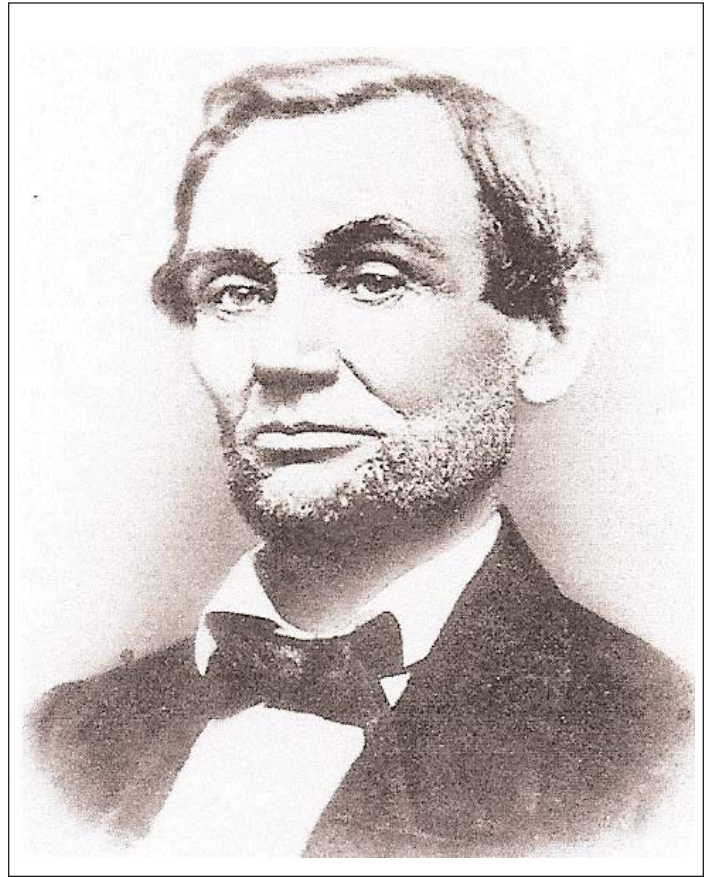
“The original glass ambrotype was bought directly from Alschuler by W. H. Somers, a circuit court clerk who knew and admired Lincoln. A photographic copy of the ambrotype was subsequently owned by Lincoln’s fellow lawyer and biographer, Henry C. Whitney, who first met Lincoln in 1854 while traveling from Danville to Springfield.”—*Lincoln in Photographs* by Charles Hamilton and Lloyd Ostendorf (Morningside, Dayton Ohio, 1985, page 11).

Whitney tells the story of the photographer’s coat in *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln*:

“In the fall of 1857, Lincoln attended at the photograph gallery of Sam. Alschuler in Urbana, to have his picture taken: he was attired in a linen coat: doubtless the same one which he wore to Cincinnati just before, and which Stanton so rudely lampooned. The artist suggested that he should wear his black coat. Lincoln replied that he had left it home, and had none other there.

“‘Try my coat,’ said the accommodating artist: and the future emancipator was taken in a borrowed coat, with a velvet collar on, which shows plainly:—the picture being still in existence. On another occasion, earlier, a very poor artist induced him to sit and took a daguerreotype which resembled (not Lincoln but—say) the Wandering Jew: and exposed it in his outer showcase.”—*Life on the Circuit with Lincoln* by Henry Clay Whitney (Caldwell, Idaho, 1940, page 70.)

Nearly three years later, President-elect Lincoln posed again for Alschuler, this time in Chicago, at the request of Whitney. This 1860 portrait was the first to show Abraham Lincoln with a beard.



Samuel G. Alschuler:
Abraham Lincoln with half-beard, November 25, 1860.
Lincoln In Photographs, by Charles Hamilton & Lloyd Ostendorf, 1985, Page 67. Courtesy of Jean Soman.



Oil Portrait of Samuel G. Alschuler.
Collection of Jean Soman.

Photographer Samuel G. Alschuler was married twice. He and his second wife, Fannie Guggenheimer, had three sons: Leon, a Chicago lawyer (grandfather of Jean Soman); Alfred, a famous Chicago architect (father of Marian Despres, the late wife of Leon Despres); and Samuel, a businessman. The photographer lived in Urbana, Chicago, and finally Mattoon, Illinois, where he died in 1882. Judge Samuel Alschuler was a relative. ❖

CJH found most of this fascinating story of Lincoln’s Jewish photographer on the website of the Jewish-American History Documentation Foundation—www.jewish-history.com—in an entry written by L. M. Berkowitz, based on material contributed by Jean Soman, who added biographical details for us.

Jean Powers Soman is the great-great granddaughter of Marcus Spiegel, a Jewish colonel in the Union Army, on one side of her family, and the great granddaughter of photographer Samuel G. Alschuler on the other side of her family. In January, she took part in the panel discussion—“Lincoln and the Jews”—sponsored by the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and the Jewish Museum of Florida in celebration of Florida Jewish History Month. She is co-editor, with Frank L. Byrne, of the book, *A Jewish Colonel in the Civil War: Marcus M. Spiegel of the Ohio Volunteers* (1995, University of Nebraska Press).

A Candid Assessment of Jews in Chicago Politics Since 1920

A Veteran Independent Looks Back at Varied Achievements, Shortcomings

BY LEON M. DESPRES

Jews in Chicago Politics' is a fascinating subject. A complete and accurate account would require the careful attention of a historian, assisted by several students. At best, I am prepared to sketch some aspects in the hope of inspiring someone to carry the subject further. I have taken the period from 1920 on because it covers part of my lifetime and provides me with a frame of reference for the material. I think I can deal with it more accurately than if I tried to go back to the Civil War.

Since about 1920, there has been a Jewish population base large enough to encourage ambitious Jewish people to become candidates for public office. I have gone through the records of local aldermen, congressmen, state representatives, state senators, city officials and state officials and compiled a list of Jews among them. You are not interested in the details of that list—how many aldermen there were, how many senators—but it is important to note that there were a great many.

Never a mayor, however. There were two Jewish candidates, Bernard Epton and Bill Singer, but never a Jewish Mayor of Chicago. There were many state representatives and state senators and several Jewish congressmen, but no U.S. Senator from Illinois. There was one elected Governor of Illinois, Henry Horner, and a lieutenant governor, Samuel Shapiro, who became acting governor [but lost his race for election].

Many Jewish Judges

There were many, many Jewish elected judges because our tradition has attracted Jews into the legal profession. A study of Chicago's Jewish judges could yield an interesting analysis of their contribution to the law. Among distinguished judges I mention only Arthur Goldberg, the Chicago lawyer who became a Justice of the United States Supreme Court, and Seymour Simon, a Chicago lawyer who became an outstanding Justice of the Illinois Supreme Court. We also have a couple of others who received sentences and one who committed suicide as a result of the Greylord investigation...

Contributions Not Always Good

That brings me to the next point I want to make, an important one. Generally, when an ethnic or cultural or religious group talks about its contributions to the society of which it is a part, the tendency is to stress "the great people...the great accomplishments...." In fact, the contributions of such groups are always mixed.... This is most evident when you hear the Italian-American societies talk about the contributions of Italian-Americans in Chicago, but there is also Al Capone and some others they'd rather not mention. But there they are!

continued on page 8



Leon M. Despres, 1985.

Courtesy of the Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.

THIS ARTICLE WAS FIRST PRINTED IN THE JANUARY 1990 ISSUE OF CJH

This introduction, the headline, and the headings were written at that time by our late editor emeritus, Irwin J. Suloway.

Although it is well over a hundred years since the first local Jews attained political office, the real heyday of Jewish politicians was the decades following World War I. As the Jewish population disperses itself more widely through the metropolitan area, there are signs that that heyday may be drawing to a close.

The writer of the accompanying article, attorney Leon Despres, has been active in politics for over a half-century, most prominently as an independent and fearless alderman for two decades before retiring undefeated. He here provides an assessment of "representative" local Jewish politicians since 1920 as well as thoughtful insights into recent political history. This paper was adapted from an address given at a recent Society meeting [on April 23, 1989, at Congregation B'nai Zion, 6759 North Greenview].

Leon Despres *continued from page 7*

When a historical society considers the contributions of Jews to politics in Chicago, it owes an obligation to be accurate and complete. We can talk about our contributions with pride, but we have to take into account that the contribution is varied. It is a coat of many colors, and not all of the colors are handsome.

As an example of a proud claim, I cite a statement by Jacob Freed, who wrote about Jews in the modern world. In his chapter on the American Jew as a civil servant, he makes this claim for the Jewish contribution:

“Pledged to the service and freedom of many for full opportunity to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, they ally the moral qualities and ethical principles of prophetic Judaism to those qualities of the Enlightenment and American life which have given this nation so much of its spiritual stature and civilization, and they implemented their insights in the spheres of public life—in the court chamber, the legislative hall, and the executive office, in the marketplace, public accommodations, and the halls of learning.”

You might try, after reading this article, to judge how well Chicago’s contributions meet this standard.

The German sociologist Max Weber said that in politics there are two kinds of activists—those who live *for* politics and those who live *off* politics. In all the history of Chicago, most people active in politics have been those who lived *off* politics. Some were mixed: they lived off politics, but they lived also for the goals of good government.

Having gone through the list of Jewish persons who have been active in Chicago politics, I noted that in these past seventy years nearly all were men. Thus, there is no use in saying “his or her” about them—since almost without exception, “his” is appropriate.

Because I cannot give you a detailed history or an enumeration of hundreds of names, I have taken five individuals to illustrate the history of Jews in Chicago politics: Julius Rosenwald, Henry Horner, Jack Arvey, Earl Bush, and Sidney Yates.

Rosenwald and the Republicans

Everyone [here] knows who Julius Rosenwald was. Although he did not run for public office, Julius Rosenwald was intensely interested in politics and never shied away from it. He was a committed Republican, but in the 1920s most Jews were still Republicans. Why

were most Jews of that time Republicans? Because the Republican Party was the party of Abraham Lincoln.

My maternal grandfather, for example, who came here from Hungary in 1867, became a Republican because that was the party that had freed the slaves. It was the party of the Union and freedom, while the other party was the party of the former slaveholders. So a liberal, forward-looking person imbued with the ideals of prophetic Judaism would be a Republican.

Emil G. Hirsch, Chicago’s leading Reform rabbi, and considered a liberal, was a Republican. In public lectures he spoke with sarcasm about the Democratic Party. (My own father, who had populist views, was a Democrat, but the prevailing view was Republican.) Julius Rosenwald, a member of Dr. Hirsch’s congregation, shared the views of most other respectable, successful Jewish persons in support of the Republican Party. In 1926, Rosenwald did something very interesting, something I consider noble and fine and in the best Jewish tradition, even though it was unwise.

One branch of the Republican Party, which included Chicago Mayor William Hale Thompson and State’s Attorney Robert E. Crowe, was supporting a candidate named Frank Smith for the United States Senate. Smith had been the chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission, and as chairman he had been unduly favorable to the utilities. He had accepted large sums of money from them.

Unwise but Noble Gesture

In his race for the Senate, Smith received enormous contributions from Samuel Insull, Ira Copley, and Clement Studebaker, Jr., the leading utility magnates in Illinois. He had accepted so much money that the election was effectively being bought. Even before he was elected, the Senate itself conducted an investigation of Smith’s campaign. Yet he won the primary.

Rosenwald, even though he was a Republican and strongly oriented toward business, was horrified by the corruption. He issued a strong statement against Smith. Rosenwald decided to support another candidate, Hugh McGill, a former state senator with fine qualifications. Rosenwald rallied the best elements in the party in support of McGill.

Then, on his own, Rosenwald took a daring action. He went to see Smith at the Congress Hotel, in hopes that he might prevent the harm Smith would do to the state and the country he loved, and limit the damage Smith was doing to his Republican Party. Fortunately, Frank Smith immediately wrote down what occurred at their meeting and disclosed his notes five years later.



Julius Rosenwald and his family at their Ravinia estate, ca. 1915 (detail).
 Augusta Rosenwald is seated in the center; her son Julius is seated on her right.
 Courtesy of the Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.

Thus we have a reliable contemporaneous account: Here is part of what Smith put down:

“After we shook hands, Mr. Rosenwald said, ‘You would just about as soon expect the Deity himself here as you would me.’ And I answered, ‘It is said the Deity is ever present. Sit down.’”

“Rosenwald said, ‘May I talk plainly? I do not want to hurt your feelings. You know that if you are elected United States Senator, you can’t be seated, don’t you?’ I said I knew no such thing.

“Then Rosenwald said, ‘Last Friday, when we were discussing ways and means of financing a campaign for Mr. McGill, I told them I didn’t want to be the angel of the campaign, but if I

thought we could elect McGill, I would put up \$500,000. Now I want to say something to you, Mr. Smith. Not in the interest of any candidate, but just because I am a Republican and interested in the Republican Party and the State of Illinois. If you withdraw from the Senate race, I am here to offer you 10,000 shares of Sears Roebuck stock the moment you sign your withdrawal notice. In a few months the stock will be worth \$750,000. You can give as your reason for withdrawing that your health won’t permit you to take the campaign or any other reason you want to give. The shares will be deposited in escrow in any bank you name, to be turned

over to you when your withdrawal occurs.’”

Well, Smith declined Rosenwald’s offer and he was elected. The Senate, however, refused to seat him. It was imprudent of Rosenwald to make such an offer. It was unwise to offer a candidate 10,000 shares of stock to withdraw in favor of another candidate. Yet it was a very noble act, and I have chosen it as an illustration of the period from 1920 to about 1932, because it exemplifies Republican predominance and also gives us an example of a public-spirited Jewish Republican actuated by the highest ideals. In his political activities, he lived *for* politics, not *off* politics.

A Different Kind of Republican

Lest I create a false picture of that period, at the same time there was a Jewish “boss” named Morris Eller who was one of the worst committeemen we have ever had. He was a trustee of the Sanitary District during its most scandalous days. He was the City Collector. In the same summer of 1926 that saw Rosenwald’s effort to cleanse the party, Eller took part in the “Pineapple Primary”—in which bombs were used to win elections.

In the summer of 1926, the vote in the 20th Ward for the key candidates was: Savage 6,918; Trude, the reform candidate, 377. Eller had delivered 94.8 percent of the vote! That was impossible without massive vote fraud and an environment of fraud and coercion.

Two years later, when Eller ran for committeeman again, the ward was beginning to change color, and an African-American named Octavius Granaday filed to run against Eller. When Granaday refused to

continued on page 10

Despres *continued from page 11*

bow out, he was killed by a bullet, not by Eller himself, but by the people who worked for him. During Prohibition, Eller was a close ally of the Capone gang. He was not to be opposed. I mention Eller only to give balance to the account....

Horner Runs for Governor

Henry Horner is the Jewish person who has achieved the highest office in Illinois. It is still a source of satisfaction to think that he was elected and that he amassed a record without blemish. He was a Democrat. He illustrates the swing of the Jewish vote to the Democratic Party, which has persisted since his 1932 election as Governor of Illinois.

Horner had been an exemplary judge of the Probate Court since 1914. I remember seeing him in court—a figure of great dignity. He was a man of good humor, of splendid appearance, and, above all, of probity and legal ability. In 1918, when he first came up for re-election, 1,400 lawyers formed a non-partisan committee in his behalf. Henry Horner had the total admiration of the Chicago Bar.

In 1932, the boss of Chicago politics, Anton Cermak, wanted to run for governor himself. Judge Horner decided to enter the primary. Cermak realized that his own reputation was not good enough to win statewide—he was

not even sure the Democratic Party could win. So he backed Horner as a long shot, even a probable loser, calculating that it would help the local ticket even if he lost.

Horner's campaign caught on like wildfire. There were "Physicians for Horner," "Lawyers for Horner," "Nonpartisan Speakers for Horner," "Restaurant Owners for Horner," and a "Citizens for Horner" group that attracted 100,000 adherents.

With an honorable Jewish candidate for Governor, there was an

candidacy. There had been a fine Jewish candidate for Governor of Illinois thirty-two years earlier, when Samuel Alschuler of Aurora ran against Richard Yates, but Alschuler was a Democrat, Illinois was a then a Republican state, and most Jewish voters were Republicans. In 1932, even Republican Reform Jews supported Horner, a member of Sinai Congregation. Conservative and Orthodox Jews supported him.

As the votes showed, he also appealed to Poles and Swedes and Germans. Two hundred University of Chicago faculty members formed a committee for Horner. President Robert Maynard Hutchins declared for him, something a University of Chicago president would not do today.

In the primary, Horner won the 24th Ward, where Mo Rosenberg and Jack Arvey were active. Horner received 15,614 votes; Michael Igoe, 241. That was 98.4 percent—better than Eller had done in the Pineapple Primary. There undoubtedly were irregularities, but in this case, the high percentage and large turnout were clearly attributable to the Jewish vote.



Illinois Governor Henry Horner, 1937.

Oil painting by John Doctoroff. Courtesy of the Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.

outpouring of Jewish support as had never occurred here. The only phenomenon like it happened in our lifetime with the 1983 and 1987 African-American support for Mayor Harold Washington.

There was enthusiasm, really super-enthusiasm, over Horner's

Hale "Big Bill" Thompson campaigned against Horner around Illinois. He argued that "they've gone to Jerusalem to get a Governor for you." If Horner is elected, he told farmers, the price of pork will go down. ...But when the 1932 election returns came in, it was a

Anti-Semitism Appears

In the general election, Chicago Mayor William

Roosevelt sweep, and Horner ran far ahead of him. FDR's Illinois majority was 449,000; Horner's was 566,000.

He was a very good governor, although always a Democratic Party man. I remember the time he addressed University of Chicago faculty members at the Quadrangle Club. Professor Jerome Kerwin told me about it afterwards. The faculty questioned him about patronage appointments. He answered, "I'm going to appoint the best people the Party can find for me." I was a little shocked, then, by his statement, but I suppose I was expecting too much of him. He did appoint the best people the Party could find, and he initiated excellent programs.

One of his best programs was the strengthening of the Illinois Commerce Commission in protecting consumers of electricity, telephone service, and gas.

Then, toward the end of his first term, Chicago Mayor Edward J. Kelly was able to drive through the Illinois legislature a bill to license handbooks, betting establishments controlled by the Mob and the Machine. Horner was shocked by the measure, and without consulting Kelly, vetoed it with a very strong veto message. That finished Horner with Kelly.

When the 1936 primary came, Kelly found a candidate to run against him, Chicago Health Commissioner Dr. Herman N. Bundesen. Kelly figured that Bundesen's free book on baby care, which had a very wide circulation, would get him enough votes to beat Horner.

Running Against the Bosses

Horner rose to the occasion. Instead of giving in, this judge, who had never been in such a campaign before, really lashed out. He went up and down the state talking about "Boss Kelly," "Let's have honest elections," and "Let's have permanent voter registration." Pat Nash, the co-chairman of the Cook County Democratic Party, said permanent registration would cost the Machine 200,000 votes, and he mobilized all his forces to defeat Horner.

Horner had a good friend, Ben Lindheimer, who was very rich himself and was able to raise money from others for the campaign. He raised money from state employes and from contractors doing business with the state. Edmund Jarecki, the judge in charge of Cook County election machinery, was on the outs with Kelly and favored Horner. Many Republicans crossed over to vote for him.

On the other hand, Bundesen was indeed very well known. Forty-seven out of Chicago's fifty Democratic

ward committeemen supported him. Even some Orthodox Jewish leaders came out for him. Just as Democratic National Chairman Ron Brown came to Chicago to support Richard M. Daley for Mayor, Harry Hopkins and the WPA threw resources into Chicago to help Bundesen. The national party supports the official nominee, be it Bundesen or Washington or Daley.

Horner won the primary. In the 24th Ward, almost entirely Jewish, where Arvey was ward committeeman, the vote was overwhelmingly for Bundesen. The Machine had to deliver, and the committeeman was first of all a Party Democrat. He delivered.

In the fall, Horner was the nominee and was re-elected. In his second term he was very good again. He sponsored, supported, and pushed through important social programs. In the 1938 primary, he won another victory when Scott Lucas won the nomination for United States Senator with Horner's strong support. Tragically, two days before the 1938 election, Horner suffered a cerebral thrombosis, a stroke, from which he never recovered. From then until the end of his term, he was only nominally Governor. A group of men around him ran the state. In October 1940, he died. Like Julius Rosenwald, Henry Horner was a person who lived almost entirely *for* politics and not *off* politics.

Arvey, an Interesting Character

Jack Arvey's record illustrates the fact that careers could be built in the Democratic Party. He lived *off* politics, but also, to a great extent, he lived *for* politics. He was primarily a ward committeeman, primarily in the business of politics, but also a man deeply interested in the goals of government.

He dropped out of Crane High School, but later attended John Marshall Night Law School. In 1914, at the age of nineteen, he engaged in his first political activity. It was anti-Machine. He was supporting the campaign of an Independent, William J. Lindsay, for judge of the municipal court. After Lindsay lost, Arvey joined up. Years later, when he had gained power in the Democratic Party, Arvey made Lindsay a judge.

In 1918, Arvey became an assistant State's Attorney. At that time the office was in Republican hands. Arvey became a bipartisan protege of a Republican State's Attorney. Abe Marovitz, a lifelong Democrat, followed this same career path. This was a reflection of the predominance of the Republican Party at that time.

In 1923, Arvey became 24th Ward Alderman, where the solid Jewish population provided a base for ambitious Jewish candidates. He was alderman for

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eighteen years. In 1934, he became committeeman and ran the ward organization very efficiently. He saw to it that the vote was enormous.

In the 1936 election, the ward's Presidential vote was 98 percent Democratic. 29,000 for Franklin D. Roosevelt to 700 for Alf Landon. FDR said that Chicago's 24th Ward was "the best Democratic ward in America." That was just eight months after Arvey had corralled votes to try to beat Horner.

Alderman Arvey became chairman of the City Council finance committee and the number three political figure in Chicago, after Ed Kelly and Pat Nash. He was as effective in the City Council as he was in the ward. In 1941, he joined the Illinois National Guard and served in the Pacific until 1945 as a judge advocate with the rank of colonel. He returned and became Cook County party chairman in 1946. He had a very good vision of the party's future. Although Mayor Ed Kelly had backed him for the chairmanship, Arvey decided that he could not be the candidate in 1947.

Kelly had acquired a bad reputation among reform political elements for his debasement of the public schools and the corrupt atmosphere of his administration. However, what finished him was a strong statement he made on the right of people to live anywhere in Chicago regardless of race. In doing so he aroused such strong hostility that Arvey felt he could not win. I am sure Arvey did not advocate racial prejudice, but he concluded that the mayor's statement must cause him to be dumped. The Democrats did win with Kelly's successor, Martin Kennelly, who served for eight years. Arvey had saved the office for his party.

Political Acumen Pays Off

In 1948, the political outlook seemed dismal. It was believed that Truman would lose to Dewey and the Democratic Party would be out of national office. It was already out of state office. With brilliant insight, Arvey decided to throw the dice, take a chance, and back a couple of distinguished non-professional candidates. Under his influence, the party regulars agreed to support Professor Paul H. Douglas for Governor and Adlai E. Stevenson for U.S. Senator. Then they realized that that decision might be a mistake. They feared that Douglas might show dangerous independence as governor, just as Horner had done. So they nominated Douglas for senator and Stevenson for governor.

It was a tough election contest. Nobody knew how it would turn out. But Douglas and Stevenson won by more than half a million votes, and President Truman carried Illinois. The morning after Election Day, at a general meeting of the Democratic precinct workers, Arvey announced, "We're in business wholesale." It was a great phrase. He was thinking, "We've got the President, we've got the Governor, we've got the Senator, we've got the State's Attorney. We've got everybody up and down the line. We're in business wholesale." He had made a brilliant, brilliant move. Illinois was indebted to him for his farsightedness.

Arvey Stumbles and Falls

In 1950, Arvey stumbled. He backed Daniel Gilbert for Sheriff of Cook County. "Tubbo" Gilbert had been a Chicago police captain and a top assistant State's Attorney. It was disclosed that on a modest police officer's pay he had amassed a fortune. "I made wise investments," he explained.

When the press disclosed Gilbert's wealth, the whole Democratic ticket was discredited and went down in defeat. Arvey was removed as chairman and given the far less important position of national committeeman. He did not get along well with Richard J. Daley, who became Cook County chairman as well as mayor in 1955. In 1960, Arvey wanted to support Stevenson for President, Daley was for Kennedy, and they disagreed openly. In 1972, Arvey voted for liberal changes in the rules for seating national convention delegates, and Daley did not even put Arvey's name on the slate. Arvey commented, "I've been a delegate to every Democratic National Convention, except 1944 when I was in the Pacific. I might not have gone to the convention if I had been elected, but I feel hurt not even to have been named." As long as Daley lived, Arvey played no effective part in the Democratic Party organization.

The Final Years

Jack Arvey became wealthy through his law practice. He energetically devoted himself to raising money for The Hebrew University, State of Israel Bonds, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, Brandeis University, and Weiss Memorial Hospital. He achieved an enviable name and reputation.

When Richard J. Daley died, the party elected Arvey chairman emeritus, with the intention of restoring some honors to him. Arvey said, "I have been a Democrat all my life and I will die one." When asked what he thought of Daley, his mortal party enemy, Arvey said, "I regard Daley as a good friend and ally. All through his political career I have been at his side to help him. I

did not hurt him. He was a very impulsive man, but he was a great mayor and a great leader.” Jack Arvey was not a person to say anything mean about anyone.

In the summer of the year he died, in an interview with Roger Simon, Arvey said, “I want to say one more thing, to sum up what politics and the organization mean to me. I am not strictly a religious man, this I know; but my life has been guided by what I learned at a Yom Kippur service. No, no, you cannot print it. This is too corny. Not while I’m alive. Wait. Wait until I’m gone. Then you tell them what I learned from Isaiah: that you do not please the Lord by wearing sackcloth and ashes and by showing grief. You please the Lord by feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, and doing justice to your fellow man. When I’m gone, you tell them that this quote explains me.”

A Mixed Legacy

Arvey lived *off* politics and he lived *for* politics, too. He was a remarkable person. He elected U.S. Representative Adolph Sabath, who was a useful congressman for many years. He put his law partner, Samuel Epstein, on the bench. Epstein was an outstanding judge. Arvey was responsible for the political careers of dozens of officeholders.

I met Arvey when he became a master in chancery, around 1932. That position was very lucrative because in mortgage foreclosures—and there a great many of them then—you had to take your case before a master in chancery, and he got a fee depending mostly on the size of the mortgage. I was then a beginning lawyer working for the Sonnenschein firm, and we handled a lot of mortgage foreclosures. While I was there, Arvey’s law partner, Samuel Epstein, whom I knew, came



President Harry S Truman and Jack Arvey, undated. *Courtesy of the Chicago Jewish Archives (Arvey Collection), Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.*

in and told me that this was Arvey’s first case as master in chancery. Epstein pointed to a picture on the wall by John Doctoroff, a skilled portraitist who was then very popular, and said, “That’s Mo Rosenberg, Master Arvey’s sponsor.”

I did not know what a “sponsor” was. I was inexperienced in politics and barely experienced in law, but I was impressed by the portrait and the idea that a man had a “sponsor.”

Epstein explained that Arvey was a political protege of Mike and Mo Rosenberg. The 24th Ward organization was Mike and Mo Rosenberg’s organization.

Mo Rosenberg and Corruption

Soon after my visit to Master in Chancery Arvey, Mo Rosenberg was indicted for income tax evasion.

In the 1920s and ’30s, he had been given, at very favorable sub-market prices, the scrap metal that utility companies had to get rid of. He was able to resell the junk

through Rosenberg Iron and Metal Company at enormous profits, which he used, in part for himself and in part (as the utilities expected), to support Democratic Party candidates. It was a way the utilities had of making what were essentially cash contributions to the Machine.

Mayor Kelly and others went to President Roosevelt to ask that the case be dismissed. FDR sent for the file, opened it, looked through it, closed it, and said, “I think you’d better go back to Chicago.” He declined to intervene. Rosenberg then tried to stave off the inevitable by making a full confession. He went to the Department of Justice in Washington, and in the presence of the U.S. District Attorney told how much money he had obtained and to whom he had given it....

The confession wasn’t enough. The case against him was continued, for one reason or another, until finally, the judge said it would go to

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trial the next Monday. On Friday, Mo Rosenberg entered Michael Reese Hospital for an appendectomy and died on the operating table. To this day, nobody on the outside knows for sure whether he really had appendicitis or was just making another effort to stave off the trial.

At the funeral on the following Tuesday, Judge Harry Fisher, a great man, but a product of the Machine, said, "Today, Mo Rosenberg appeals to a higher court."

Earl Bush, an Underrated Politician

The fourth figure I wish to discuss is Earl Bush. He is an example of Jewish people who have been active and influential in politics without holding office. I think he never got his full recognition. Earl Bush was a newspaperman who became Daley's press attache in the 1954-55 mayoral campaign. He was a genius at publicity. After winning the election, Mayor Daley kept him on as his public relations man.

Bush was personally responsible for the successful public image which Daley projected. Daley had the brilliance to see how valuable Bush was. "The City That Works" and "The 'I Will' Spirit" were phrases that Bush publicized. Daley would end almost every speech with an appeal to "The 'I Will' Spirit." Nobody ever knew what that spirit was, but it had a great effect. "The City That Works" was certainly a great slogan. The city did not work, but the slogan did.

He was constantly covering for Mayor Daley. He pressured advertisers to influence the television and radio stations and the newspapers. Under Daley's orders, he required that all movie scripts filmed in

Chicago be shown to him first. He wanted to make certain that they presented a good image of the city. When, during the riots after the King assassination, Daley gave his order to "shoot to kill" looters, and then denied saying it—although the television stations replayed the Mayor making the statement—Bush said it was "damned bad reporting." "You should have reported what he meant," Bush argued, "not what he said." When the BBC produced a fine documentary on Chicago, Bush made sure it could not be shown publicly anywhere in the city. I had to see it in a private home. It was a great documentary, but it was not totally complimentary to Chicago.

With the impending 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Bush warned, "I'll give the police permission to chase the cameras." Sure enough, he did—with a very bad result for Chicago. All in all, however, Bush was phenomenally successful at his job.

There are other Jewish persons for whom he is a prototype, other Jews who have had important roles in government affairs without holding office.

Three examples are Ben Lindheimer, who was Henry Horner's intimate friend, adviser, and supporter; Charles Swibel, who was Jane Byrne's intimate adviser, less admirable than Lindheimer; and David Axelrod, who was recently the second Mayor Daley's campaign public relations person and virtually a "sub-candidate" like Earl Bush.

A Genuinely Admirable Politician

The fifth and last individual I have chosen to discuss is Sidney Yates. I take him as an example of a genuinely admirable Jewish person now in public life. His parents were immigrants from Vilna. He was born in Michael Reese Hospital, lived on Maxwell Street, moved to Lakeview, attended Nettelhorst Elementary School, graduated from Lake View High School, and went on to the University of Chicago, the College and the Law School.

Between college and law school he played professional basketball (at five dollars a game—the going rate in those days).

Yates graduated from the University of Chicago Law School in 1933, began to practice law, and in 1936, went to work for Governor Henry Horner's Illinois Commerce



Sidney Yates, undated. *Courtesy of the Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.*

Commission. He also worked on Horner's re-election campaign. In 1939, he joined his father-in-law's firm. Then, like Arvey, he tried independent politics. He ran for 46th Ward Alderman as an anti-

Machine candidate. He lost, and like Arvey, he then joined the “regulars.”

During World War II, Yates served in the U.S. Navy. When he returned, he was still in the 46th Ward organization under Committeeman Joe Gill. Early in 1948, Yates went to Gill, saying he'd like to run for Congress. Gill laughed at him. They were in a “swing district,” sometimes Republican, sometimes Democratic. Gill told Yates that they needed a candidate of German heritage, and it was going to be John Haderlein.

However, in August, the incumbent Chicago Postmaster died, the Party decided it needed a German-American replacement, Haderlein was appointed, and that created a vacancy on the ticket. Gill asked Yates if he still wanted to run. Yes, he did. Could he finance his own campaign? Yes, he could.... He campaigned vigorously, and in the surprising Democratic sweep of 1948, he carried his district by 18,000 votes.

An Outstanding Congressman

There are two sides to Sidney Yates. In Congress, he is courageous, independent, and fearless. In the city organization, he goes along quietly.

When McCarthyism arose, he was one of seven Representatives who opposed the terrible Hobbs Bill, and he was one of the very few to vote against the Internal Security Law.... He was always on the ball on housing. Always on health issues. He has been and is a great champion of the arts. He was slow to oppose the Vietnam War, but he finally began voting against appropriations....

When I first ran for alderman in 1955, Yates had been a congressman for seven years. By chance, we were once on the same plane to Washington, D.C. During the flight he

gave me excellent advice on how to be a candidate, what to do, how to act. He was most encouraging. But after we landed he said, “Don't tell anybody I told you this.” He had told me no secrets, but he knew I was running against Committeeman Barnet Hodes' candidate in the 5th Ward, and he didn't want me to go around saying that Sidney Yates had told me how to behave....

Inspired Excellence in Public Service

He has been an example for a number of others in politics. He is the prototype for Abner Mikva, Seymour Simon, and Robert Mann; for Robert Marks, Aaron Jaffe, Martin Oberman, and Harold Katz; and for Alan Greiman, Ellis Levin, and Arthur Berman.

At the beginning of my talk, I quoted what Jacob Freed wrote about American Jews in public service and the prophetic ideals. Have Jews in Chicago's public life been faithful to those ideals? The picture is mixed, like that of other peoples in Chicago politics.

But I think we have an edge. We have been a persecuted people, and we understand the burdens of discrimination. We have a greater sensitivity to social injustice than most others do. I think that for our numbers, we have contributed just a few more than our arithmetical share of people in public life who have been responsive to the prophetic ideal of Judaism.

What is the ideal? I think it was best stated in Scripture (Amos 5:24). I think it is what we would like to have from every Jewish person in public life. It was repeated by Martin Luther King in his 1963 Washington speech: “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” ❖

From the current editor-designer:

An editor cannot resist tweaking the text for clarity, and an editorial designer cannot resist tweaking the text for appearance. The urge to fact-check is also irresistible, even for an article by Alderman Despres, when the editor knows that her readers are themselves historians. So I have shortened and sharpened the original article somewhat.—B.C.

I urge you to read:

Challenging the Daley Machine: A Chicago Alderman's Memoir.

By Leon M. Despres with Kenan Heise (Northwestern University Press, 2005).

Chicago Afternoons with Leon: 99¹/₂ years old and looking forward.

By Kenan Heise (AuthorHouse, 2007).

Welcome, New Members of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society!

Richard Chasman
 Dr. Irving H. Distelheim
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 Jay & Irene Frank
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 Steven & Priscilla Kersten
 Gertrude L. Kahn
 Maury Kravitz
 Sheldon Loewy
 William H. Marks
 Gerald & Maia Mullin
 Rabbi Gedalia Dov Schwartz
 Jack Siegel
 Jean Powers Soman
 Sylvia Stone
 Jay H. Zimble
 Louis Weber

Behind the Scenes at the Chicago Jewish Archives

Text and Photographs by Joy Kingsolver

When you enter the new Spertus building at 610 South Michigan Avenue, the first thing you notice is the light, open space. This theme of openness is not just an architectural feature; it reflects an institution-wide effort to make visitors feel welcome. For readers of *Chicago Jewish History* who may not be able to visit in person, we offer this look around the new spaces of the Chicago Jewish Archives, one of the Asher Library's Special Collections.

This was a complex move for the Archives, involving the re-ordering of all of the archival collections and a completely new shelving arrangement. For the previous year, we had been closed to researchers in order to update our database of collection descriptions and make sure every box was packed securely for moving.

During the move, staff put in long hours and worked closely with professional movers to tag every box with its new location. The Archives holds about 2500 linear feet of archival boxes, plus oversize items such as awards and large photographs. Each oversize item was wrapped and tagged. The regular Archives staff numbers just two, so we were fortunate to have extra help during this period. A grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities allowed us to hire a special assistant, and we made good use of volunteers, including Norma Spungen and Sue Weiler of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society. Even the archivist's son was pressed into service whenever school was out.

Finally, we were ready for the pros to take over!



Chicago Jewish Archives Workroom.

The Asher Library's book collections had already been moved, and now it was the turn of the Asher Library Special Collections—which includes archival collections, rare books and maps. Our first moving day began early, and work continued until evening for several days. Staff monitored the process at every step and personally carried the most fragile items over to the new building.

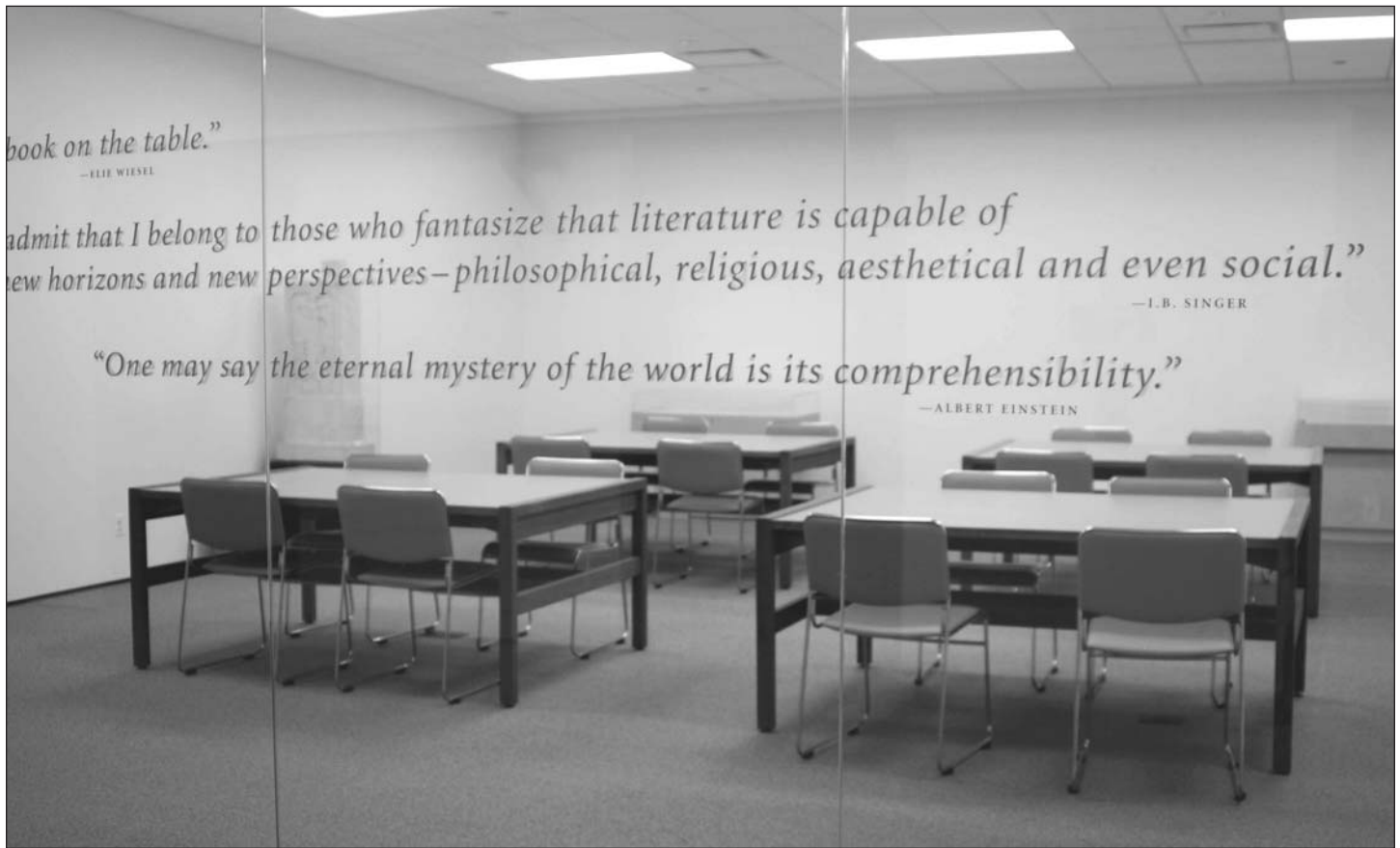
Finally, all the special collections were housed in the new Special Collections Vault. Once the move was complete, we began the task of counting boxes, verifying shelf locations, shifting collections to allow for growth, and making other adjustments. Material that had been specially packed must be unpacked and checked. Likewise, rare books are being carefully unpacked and shelved by the conservators.

The new Special Collections Vault is climate-controlled; both temperature and humidity are regulated and monitored to ensure the preservation of archival collections, rare books and maps. Our NEH grant funded the purchase of compact shelving, which is designed to make the most efficient use of space. When shelves are not in use, they are closed together, eliminating the space-wasting aisles between them. This has almost doubled our capacity, and we have many empty shelves that are designated for future acquisitions.

When new archival material is received, we process it and prepare it for researchers in the new Archives Workroom. This room is large enough to accommodate



Asher Library Special Collections Vault.



Asher Library Special Collections Reading Room.

our current staff and volunteers, and permits work on different collections to proceed at the same time. After a collection is organized and housed in acid-free folders and boxes, we prepare collection inventories to assist researchers to locate material on their topics. The workroom also hosts our digitizing workstation, where photographs are scanned and cataloged.

Next door is the Special Collections Reading Room, where material from the archives as well as rare books and maps will be presented to researchers. At this writing, all Special Collections are still closed to researchers, but we hope to make them available to the public later in the spring. Updates will be posted to the Spertus website at www.spertus.edu.

We have continued to actively solicit and accept donations of material throughout the moving period, and have acquired two large collections of material during the past six months. We continue to receive small donations as well, sometimes a single item at a time. Large or small, each gift of historical material is significant and appreciated. In the work of saving the raw material of Chicago Jewish history, our partnership with the Chicago Jewish Historical Society remains crucial. The Society serves as our eyes and ears in the community, alerting the archivist when collections

become available and gathering material to bring to the Archives. Many collections would have been lost forever without the vigilant efforts of the Society, and we are continuing to work together to save the historical record of Jewish Chicago for the future.

We are especially interested in expanding our holdings of synagogue material; many seem to have disappeared without leaving a trace. We're interested in any synagogue bulletins, fliers, correspondence, memos, photographs, or memorabilia that our readers might have stashed away. Even news clippings are of interest.

We are also looking for family histories or family trees. If someone in your family has compiled a family history, please consider depositing a copy with the Archives. These are invaluable for genealogy research, and are especially treasured when they are accompanied by photographs and other documents.

To contact the Chicago Jewish Archives, call or write to Archives Director Joy Kingsolver. Mail: Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute, 610 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago IL 60605. Email: archives@spertus.edu. Phone: 312-322-1741.

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THE NEW SPERTUS IS OPEN!

Spertus invites people of all ages and backgrounds to explore the multifaceted Jewish experience. Through its innovative public programming, exhibitions, collections, research facilities and degree programs, Spertus inspires learning, serves diverse communities, and fosters understanding, for Jews and people of all faiths, locally, regionally and around the world.

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The International Association of Jewish Genealogy (IAJGS) announces that registration is open for

The 28th Annual International Conference on Jewish Genealogy **August 17-22**

Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile

The conference is co-hosted with the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois and the Illiana Jewish Genealogical Society

For information, see the conference website:

www.Chicago2008.org

Hibbard Elementary School **Class of '53 Reunion, August 9**

Hilton Garden Inn-O'Hare

On August 8, there will be a tour of Hibbard, 3244 West Ainslie. See e-mail address below for further reunion information. Alumni are urged to send material about the Hibbard principal at that time, **Sophie H. Reiffel**, who had such a huge influence on the lives of the students.

Contact:

Jackye Epstein Sullins and Leoni Zverow McVey
jsullins@roadrunner.com

April 2008: **Garfield Park Conservatory** **Centennial Celebration**

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“CONSERVE-A-STORY: **A Community Exhibition”**

This exhibition is a collaborative community project in which former and current residents will bring neighborhood history to life through a collection of narratives and portraits. Stories will be told using autobiographical objects, audio interviews, photographs, and recipes.

Former Garfield Parkers: participate in this valuable project by adding your own history!
Contact Rachel Moore, facilitating artist, at
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Available at bookstores now:

Inspired by Nature: **The Garfield Park Conservatory** **and Chicago's West Side**

By Julia S. Bachrach and Jo Ann Nathan
 With a Foreword by Alex Kotlowitz

Chicago YIVO Society English-Yiddish Lecture

Samuel D. Kassow

Charles Northam Professor of History at Trinity College will discuss and sign his book:

Who Will Write Our History? ***Emanuel Ringelblum, the Warsaw Ghetto,*** ***and the Oyneg Shabes Archive***

Sunday, April 13

2:00 p.m.

Beth Hillel Congregation Bnai Emunah
3220 Big Tree Lane, Wilmette

Kosher refreshments • Admission \$5.00

www.chicagoyivo.org

ED MAZUR'S PAGES FROM THE PAST

My source for these selections is the Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey Microfilm Collection at the Chicago Public Library, Harold Washington Library Center.

In the autumn of 1936 the Chicago Foreign Language Press Survey was organized under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) of Illinois. The purpose of the Survey was to translate and classify selected news articles appearing in Chicago's foreign language press from 1861 to 1938.

Financial curtailments in the WPA program ended the Survey in October 1941. The Chicago Public Library published the work in 1942. The project consists of a file of 120,000 typewritten pages from newspapers of 22 different foreign language communities in Chicago.

Yiddish is the foreign language of the Jewish press in the Survey. English language periodicals are also included, as well as the publications of charitable institutions, communal organizations, and synagogues.

THOUSANDS OF JEWS PARTICI- PATE IN DEDICATION OF MARKS NATHAN ORPHAN ASYLUM

The dedication of the Marks Nathan Orphan Asylum began officially at 2 p.m. yesterday. The chairman of the Floor Committee ordered the doors closed due to lack of space, while hundreds remained standing outside.

At 3 o'clock Nicolas J. Pritzker, chairman of the Dedication Committee, opened the meeting and introduced Rabbi Pinchas Saul Katkoff who invoked a prayer in Hebrew. Jacob Levi, president of the Home, then read a message to the Chicago Jewish public.

Rabbi Saul Silber of the Ahave Sholom Congregation, delivered the keynote speech in Yiddish and Dr. Tobias Schoenfarber spoke in English.

H.M. Barnett was urged to make an appeal for the Home, and J. Deneals was the first to purchase a room for \$325.00; Rabbi Schoenfarber bought another room for \$125.00; Mr. Jacobs bought the third room for \$120.00.

Mr. Barnett distinguished himself as a good auctioneer. He sold the key to the Home to H.R. Tish. A grand sum of \$13,000.00 was donated.

The great crowd was then entertained by Cantor Alexandrovitz and a delicious dinner was served. —*Daily Jewish Courier*, November 18, 1912

ORTHODOX AND REFORM CHARITIES UNITE

Chicago will have no more than one Jewish charity organization, beginning January 1. The Orthodox and Reform charities have united under one name and one management. The name will be The Jewish Charities of Chicago.

The Orthodox charities will cater a dinner in the Morrison Hotel, Monday evening. Here they will open their campaign for \$65,000 to settle all debts of the "Federated" before uniting with the "Associated."

The speakers will be Judge Harry Fisher, Jacob M. Loeb, Judge Henry Horner, James Davis, Samuel Deutsch and S.J. Rosenblatt, chairman of the campaign committee.

Mr. Rosenblatt believes that the uniting of the two charities is an important step forward in the life of the Jewish community in

Chicago. The alliance will add many benefits to the philanthropic institutions in the city.

One of the conditions of uniting, said Mr. Rosenblatt, "is that every institution must settle its debts before the first of January. We must therefore, raise \$65,000 in order to cover all deficits and pay all bills."

Mr. Rosenblatt also stated that the Mt. Sinai Hospital will unite with the Jewish Charities of Chicago. —*Daily Jewish Forward*, October 22, 1922

THE GREAT AMALGAMATED CENTER OPENED YESTERDAY WITH BEAUTIFUL CEREMONIES

Yesterday, May 1, was a double holiday: the celebration of May 1st, and laying the cornerstone of the Amalgamated Union Temple at Ashland Boulevard and Van Buren Street. The traffic was completely stopped for one half hour on the surrounding streets when the cornerstone was laid.

The two thousand members of the Amalgamated Clothing workers filled the Auditorium of the Amalgamated yesterday afternoon at the occasion of the official opening of the organized clothing workers' own home.

Sam Levin, the manager of the Amalgamated Joint Board, introduced President Hillman, who, in the name of the Chicago organization, greeted all the members present with a very hearty welcome, in their own magnificent home....—*Daily Jewish Forward*, May 2, 1927

DR. EDWARD H. MAZUR, *treasurer of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society and member of the Board of Directors, is an urban historian, professor emeritus at City Colleges of Chicago, and consultant to the International Visitors Center of Chicago.*

About the Society

What We Are

The Chicago Jewish Historical Society was founded in 1977, and is in part an outgrowth of local Jewish participation in the American Bicentennial Celebration of 1976. Muriel Robin was the founding president. The Society has as its purpose the discovery, preservation and dissemination of information concerning the Jewish experience in the Chicago area.

Tribute Cards for Celebrations or Memorials The card design features the Society's logo, our mission statement, and space for a personal message. A pack of eight cards and envelopes is \$10.00. Individual cards can be mailed for you from our office at \$5.00 per card, postage included. Order cards from the Society office (312) 663-5634.

Remember the Society Name the Chicago Jewish Historical Society as a beneficiary under your Last Will, Living Trust, IRA or other retirement account. Any gift to CJHS avoids all estate taxes and can be used to support any activity of our Society that you choose—publication, exhibition, public program, or research. For information please call the Society office at (312) 663-5634.

Browse Our Website for information about our upcoming programs. Read past issues of *Chicago Jewish History*. Discover links to other Jewish sites. Use the printable membership application. We welcome your inquiries and comments. E-mail: info@chicagojewishhistory.org

www.chicagojewishhistory.org

What We Do

The Society seeks out, collects and preserves written, spoken and photographic records, in close cooperation with the Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies. The Society publishes historical information; holds public meetings at which various aspects of Chicago Jewish history are treated; mounts appropriate exhibits; and offers tours of Jewish historical sites.

Membership

Membership in the Society is open to all interested persons and organizations and includes a subscription to *Chicago Jewish History*, discounts on Society tours and at the Spertus Museum store, and the opportunity to learn and inform others about Chicago Jewish history and its preservation.

Dues Structure

Membership runs on a calendar year, from January through December. New members joining after July 1 are given an initial membership through December of the following year.

Life Membership	\$1000
Annual Dues:	
Historian	500
Scholar	250
Sponsor	100
Patron	50
Basic Membership	35

Make checks payable to the Chicago Jewish Historical Society, and mail to our office at 610 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60605. Dues are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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