



# chicago jewish history

## Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue



### ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Statue by August St. Gaudens in Lincoln Park;  
photograph from H.L. Meites  
"History of the Jews of Chicago," 1924

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### *Society Open Meeting on February 20 to Feature Rabbi Arnold Jacob Wolf*

Judaism in "The Encyclopedia of Chicago" will be the topic of a lecture by the distinguished rabbi emeritus of KAM Isaiah Israel Congregation, Arnold Jacob Wolf.

He will preview the soon-to-be-published reference work about our city for which he has been invited to write an article about Judaism. Rabbi Wolf has written on theology and contemporary issues for many periodicals. "Unfinished Rabbi," a selection of his writings was published in 1998.

Save the date—Sunday, February 20, 2000. Rabbi Wolf will speak at 2:00 p.m. following a social hour and refreshments at 1:00 p.m. at Bederman Hall, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago. Admission is free and open to the public. ❖

## President's Column



Walter Roth

**MOSES "MOE" ANNENBERG BUILT A GREAT FORTUNE IN HIS EARLY LIFE** in Chicago. A recently published book, "Legacy—A Biography of Moses and Walter Annenberg" by Christopher Ogden (Little Brown, 1999), recounts the story of Moe and his son Walter, who made an even greater fortune than his father.

Moe was 13 years old in 1885 when he arrived here from East Prussia with his family. He quickly took to the rough, bare-knuckled capitalism of Chicago's South Side. Moe's brutal tactics in the "newspaper wars" of the early 1900s, and his strong-arm methods for increasing the circulation of the Hearst newspapers are described here in full.

By 1922, Moe had bought the hugely profitable *Daily Racing Form* and acquired the General News Bureau with a "racing wire" that gave Moe a huge edge over his competition (in placing bets on horse races). After amassing his fortune, Moe moved on to acquire publications in Milwaukee and Philadelphia, though he remained active in Chicago's social life. For example, his name is listed as a member of the Executive Committee for *The Romance of A People*, the pageant staged by Chicago's Jewry at the 1933 World's Fair. The program notes that "Moe L. Annenberg made possible attendance at the Pageant by a large number of awards to charitable institutions." (Unfortunately, "Legacy" does not mention the pageant.)

Moe ran afoul of the law at various times in his career. In the late 1930s, he was indicted for income tax evasion. The author of "Legacy" strongly implies that it was political revenge that had caused the indictment to be filed. Moe's newspapers, together with Colonel McCormick's *Chicago Tribune*, had waged a continuous war of words against President Roosevelt and the New Deal.

Moe's trial took place in Chicago. His chief defense lawyer was Weymouth Kirkland, the leading partner in a very powerful Chicago law firm. Hammond Chafetz, a Jewish lawyer in Kirkland's firm, also participated in the defense. In the end, Moe pleaded guilty and received a three year sentence. He served nearly the entire term. Within six months of his release, he died of a brain tumor.

"Legacy" continues with Walter Annenberg's story—the great publishing empire that he built and his dedication to redeeming the good name of his father. He donated millions of dollars to many charitable institutions, particularly universities. For his help to the Republican Party, he was named Ambassador to Great Britain. After the 1987 sale of his Triangle Publications to Rupert Murdoch for \$3.2 billion, Annenberg's charitable giving increased even more.

The biographer would like us to conclude that Moe's name has been redeemed and his sins of the Hearst era can be forgiven. That is a matter of opinion. But "Legacy" is a fascinating story of how an immigrant Jewish family achieved great wealth "the American way." Walter Annenberg, now age 91, lives on his estate in California. ❖



chicago jewish historical society

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### Chicago Jewish History

*Chicago Jewish History* is published quarterly by the Chicago Jewish Historical Society at 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60605. Telephone (312)663-5634. Please send submissions to the editor, Beverly Chubat, at 415 West Fullerton Parkway, #1102, Chicago, Illinois 60614-2859. Single copies \$2.00 postpaid. Successor to *Society News*.

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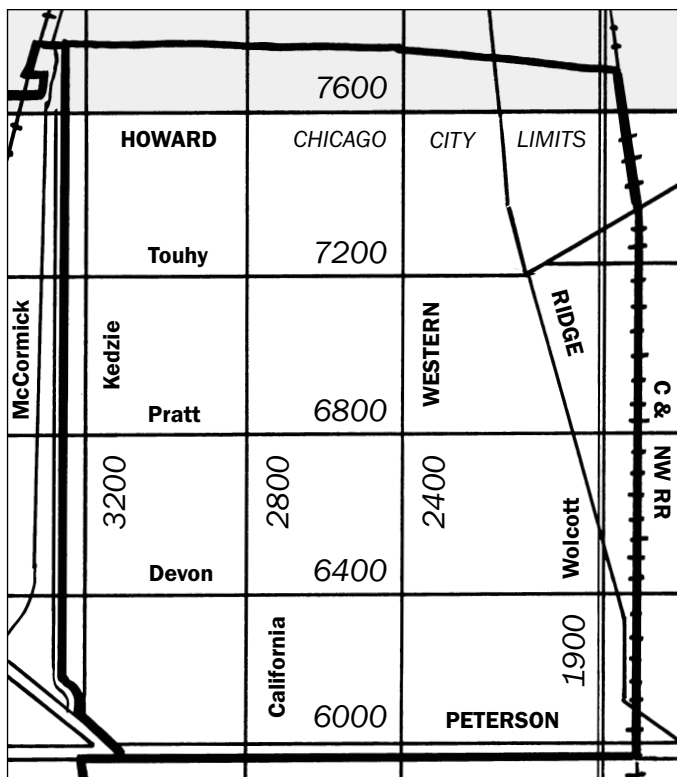
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 and Milton Shulman

## Robert Matanky Offers Overview of the Three-Generation Jewish Community in West Rogers Park

Attorney, realtor and Jewish communal leader Robert Matanky impressed the audience at the Society's December 12, 1999 Open Meeting with his detailed knowledge of West Rogers Park's Jewish history.

Many changes have occurred since the opening of its first synagogue, Ner Tamid, in 1938. In response to a classic decline in the mid 1960s, the neighborhood was revitalized by the construction of condos for "empty nesters" and the influx of young Orthodox Jewish families. Today, West Rogers Park is unique—a three-generation Chicago Jewish community. ❖



### THE WEST ROGERS PARK ERUV

Since becoming operational on December 26, 1992, with railroads, a canal and strung wires used as boundaries, the West Rogers Park eruv has allowed observant Jews to carry things on the Sabbath, something otherwise not allowed under Jewish law.

### Seeking Information about Golden Age of Yiddish Radio in Chicago

National Public Radio is preparing a documentary about the heyday of Yiddish-American radio (1925-1955), and we want to make sure our city's history is included. CJHS member Sima Miller would like to hear from any of our readers who have memorabilia, anecdotes or recollections of Chicago's "Jewish Hour" (*Die Yiddishe Shtunde*), hosted by Julius Miller. Please phone Sima Miller at (847)673-6409. ❖

### CJHS Reprints Program from 1933 World's Fair Jewish Day Pageant, *The Romance of A People*

Production has begun on the printing of a facsimile of the decorative souvenir program book for *The Romance*, the spectacular evocation of Jewish history first performed on July 3, 1933, by a cast of 3,500 Chicago area Jewish singers and dancers before an audience of 125,000 at Soldier Field. A new foreword by Stephen J. Whitfield of Brandeis University and a comprehensive background article by CJHS president Walter Roth have been added to the original text. ❖

### Genealogist Compiles Database of Marriages Performed by Rabbi Bernard Felsenthal

A database is now available of 526 marriages performed by Rabbi Felsenthal from 1861 to 1905 at Sinai Congregation and others known to have been performed at Zion Congregation in Chicago.

The records were contained in two small leather-bound pocket books with handwritten notations attributed to Rabbi Felsenthal. The American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati holds the originals.

A transcription was made of the records by genealogist Fran Loeb Luebke of Brookfield, Wisconsin, who presented a spiral-bound printout of the transcription to Norman D. Schwartz, past president of the Society. Researchers can find the printout at the Chicago Jewish Archives, Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies.

The database is also available on the Internet at: [www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org) under the title: Sinai Congregation, Chicago, Marriages. ❖

## Eulogies for Abraham Lincoln by Rabbis Bernard Felsenthal and Liebman Adler

A rare book presented to CJHS president Walter Roth will serve to dramatically transport our readers back to the dark days of April, 1865, immediately following the assassination of President Lincoln.

We can read the eloquent words of Felsenthal and Adler as they respond to the terrible event, because they have been collected in the book "Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue," which was given as a gift to Walter Roth by Dr. Joseph and Raya Shapiro.

The book is a collection of rabbinical tributes to Lincoln, edited by Emanuel Hertz and published by Bloch Publishing Co. in 1927. There is a foreword by the Very Rev. J. H. Hertz, Chief Rabbi of the British Empire, and a preface by Nicholas Murray Butler, President of Columbia University.

The collected works date from the 1860s to the 1920s. The Felsenthal and Adler speeches are unique in that they are the only ones in the German language. ❖

*About the translator:*

**SUSAN WAGNER** is a fourth year student at the University of Chicago. Since 1853, when her forebears immigrated from Germany to Freeport, Illinois, six generations of her family have operated Wagner Printing in that town, the site of a significant Lincoln-Douglas debate. In fact, her ancestor reported on the event, sending his story to New York. Ms. Wagner sharpened her language skills when she was an exchange student in Germany and Switzerland.

## Rabbi Bernard Felsenthal The Murder of the President

*Translated from the German by Susan Wagner*

In the same hour, my dear friends, in which we have gathered in this house, thousands of places of worship are open for the same purpose; hundreds of thousands of people are gathered for the same purpose. Like our temple with its symbols of grief and emblems of pain, today innumerable public and private buildings are clothed in ornaments of sadness. The same feeling of deepest anguish that is now going through the souls of all those present here today lives in the hearts of millions. What is the reason for this magnificent, imposing, and impressive national grief? A father has suddenly been taken from his family. The father of the fatherland has been killed at the hand of a murderer. The life of the highest officer and the first and outstanding citizen has been cut short, in a way never before recorded in the annals of the United States. To be sure, this past week we have already twice expressed our feelings. When we return again today to the great death, we are following a powerful tug of our hearts, a feeling that has radiated from Washington out into the nation.

In this hour, in the capital, the mortal remains of President Lincoln are being escorted in a ceremonial procession out of the White House to the Capitol. In spirit we are also accompanying the body and fulfilling the duty long held high by the Israelites, that of honoring the dead. In spirit, millions are with us and follow the casket in the same way, and sadness is seen in every eye. An incredible funeral procession, one such as only few people have deserved.

What form of light precedes the dead? This we can answer with the words of the prophet:

"Thy righteousness shall go before thy face, and the glory of the Lord shall gather thee up. (Isaiah 58:8)"

His righteousness draws him here. The biblical sense of "righteousness" is nothing other than that which in our present language we call spiritual and moral greatness, the sum of magnificent and noble deeds. And Lincoln was great. He was great, first, in that he undertook with wisdom and steadfastness to solve, and did solve, the problem which fell to him: a recreation of the Union; secondly, in that he made true the magnificent sentence of the Declaration of Independence: "All men are created equal;" and, thirdly, in that he paired justice and peace with gentleness and love in all of his endeavors.

1. *His righteousness goes before him.* The reputation precedes him, that he recreated the Union. Nearly 80 years ago, in 1787, the Union was brought about through the acceptance of the Constitution. The Union, dear to all friends of freedom on Earth, became an object of hate for all enemies of freedom, a source of inner fear for all bearers of a crown. The Star Spangled Banner, the symbol of freedom, to which all oppressed nations look up in love and in hope, created hate and hostility everywhere that freedom was hated. Some aristocratic parties in the South, irresponsible and driven by heinous motives, became all-powerful and wanted to destroy the Union, to kick the flag into dust. What

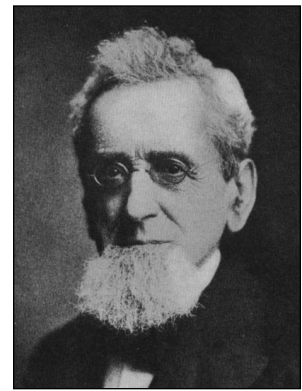
would have been the consequences if we had let the rebellion continue without trying to stop it? The nation and the government would have stood dishonored before the world, an object of mockery and scorn. And what would have been the consequences if the rebellion had succeeded and the Union had been ripped apart? Two rival powers would have come into being, who would have torn each other to pieces in continually recurring wars, who would have been without influence in the council of nations, and without the power of enforcing their own just demands. History is full of examples of how disastrous it is for nations when unity, which is created through both land and history, is destroyed.

**O**ur old German fatherland is weak and politically meaningless, because it is divided into so many states. In spite of all battles, unity has not yet been achieved. But also our own Jewish history gives us enlightening examples of the ruinous consequences of the destruction of a Union. After Solomon's death, his kingdom was divided into two—Judah and Ephraim. And what misery was brought to the people! How these kingdoms became the playthings and bones of contention of neighboring nations! How their decline was accelerated! The prophets, those incomparable patriots and men of the people, speak often in words of deepest pain about the unlucky division, and when they look into the long-awaited and magnificent future, a nation, one and undivided, stands before their eyes. And so said Ezekiel (37: 22) "And I will make them one nation in the land...and they shall no more be two nations, neither shall they be divided any more into two kingdoms."

The crushing of the rebellion and the recreation and management of the Union was the great task given to our departed President Lincoln. With a steadfast approach, he steered our country through high, unmerciful waves. With a sure hand, he saved the Union from sinking in threatening currents....He had to chart the proper course in order to reach the desired goal, the harbor of peace. The safe port lay ahead of us, rescue was in sight...Then Death called: "Time is up." Death, brought by the hand of an assassin. "The ship drifts," says an old Jewish tune, "that has lost its steersman." But no! He saved us from the greatest danger, and the relatively easier task can be handled by his successor. We, however, see his value and offer him our thanks, and honor him. The judgement of history will be more unbiased. On a clean slate it will be engraved: Abraham Lincoln, Reunitor of the Union.

2. *His righteousness goes before him.* The reputation also precedes him, that he turned the words freedom and equality into deed and truth. "All men are created equal." Never has a greater, more magnificent sentence been spoken in a political document, as these on the 4th of July, 1776, in the Declaration of Independence by the American people convened in Congress. But oddly enough, until now, this sentence has remained a dead letter. If it is true that the people are unequal with respect to bodily and mental gifts, possessions and so on, they should, however, be considered equal in the halls of lawmakers and before the seats of justice. But that men struggled against taking this sentence into the lawbooks and acknowledging it in life, that men in a free land tolerated the institution of slavery, not only tolerated but

*continued on Page 6*



**Bernard Felsenthal (1822-1908)**

As a young man, in 1861, he became Chicago's first Reform rabbi, the first spiritual leader of Sinai Congregation. As a 70-year-old, he became an ardent Zionist, who went against the prevailing Reform sentiment of the time—the first non-Polish American Jewish leader to embrace the cause, he proudly stated. His disciples called Rabbi Felsenthal "the aged yet youthful master."

He was born at Meunchweiler, near Kaiserslautern, in the Rhenish Palatinate. While still a young boy he amassed a great store of rabbinic and talmudic learning, though he didn't originally set out to become a rabbi. His ambition was to enter the civil service of his native Bavaria, but he soon learned that as a Jew he could have no hopes in that field. Instead, he became a teacher of Hebrew language and literature in his native village until 1854, when he immigrated with his family to the United States.

Felsenthal served as rabbi of Sinai Congregation for just three years. In 1864 he became spiritual leader of Zion Congregation, a new temple on Chicago's growing West Side, where he served for 23 years until his retirement in 1886. That congregation would later evolve into today's Oak Park Temple B'nai Abraham Zion.

These brief biographical notes are excerpted from the historical profile, "Zionist Pioneer: Bernard Felsenthal," by Society president Walter Roth, which was featured in the Spring 1996 issue of *Chicago Jewish History*. ❖

## Felsenthal *continued from Page 5*

also intensively strengthened, not only intensively strengthened but also extensively spread, that revenged itself in the end. He who reads the history of the last half century impartially cannot close his eyes to the realization that nothing but slavery was the source of disaster out of which this great war finally emerged. He who lists other causes remains imprisoned on the surface of things... We understand the reasons, although we don't approve of them, that swayed many early on to the opinion that men should not attack slavery. We understand that earlier many let themselves be led by the consideration that the abolition of slavery might threaten the welfare of the land and the continued existence of the Union. Such doubts are fading, and those who were mastered by them should say before everyone: "Slavery is dead; we should make sure that it never again prevails to carry the seeds of future terrible wars, that it never again holds the spark that can ignite the destroying flame."

To whom do we owe the glory of carrying the shining flag forward in this direction? It was Lincoln, the emancipator Lincoln, who through his undying proclamation freed the Union from the disgrace of slavery. And for this our warmest thanks, our sincerest honor. Posterity will honor and admire him and an unbiased history will, furthermore, when the names of the benefactors of mankind are named, add another shining name: Abraham Lincoln, the liberator.

3. *His righteousness goes before him.* And it also belongs to him, that in his nature and in his deeds justice and mildness were united in splendor. This showed itself the entire time he stood at the head of the government. Everyone admits today that the accusation of tyrannical instincts was nothing but an unfounded, partisan accusation, and that nothing was more foreign to him than a despotical and authoritarian character. But only in the last days of his life did his mild, loving nature show itself, show that he was inclined to handle the rebels with the greatest consideration, to open the gate wide to them, and to say to them: Come and be true members of our nation's family, and our words will be: forgive and forget! In the beginning, as it was said in the Talmudic writings, God wanted to rule the world in strict justice, but in consideration of the world, He added compassionate love. The late president similarly united justice with love. We

should all follow his example, so that we, too, no longer hold feelings of hatred and revenge towards the rebels after their will has been broken. Sorrow has to make a nation better and raise it up rather than make it worse. A tragedy might be shocking, but it must cleanse and consecrate the inner person. So let us foster a loving and reconciling nature, as we admiringly saw revealed in the transfigured President. And certainly, later generations will read it on the unbiased pages of history: Abraham Lincoln, the man, in his private and public life united justice and love, steadfastness and mildness into the greatest beauty possible.

**T**he relatively short history of America already has a number of brilliant names to name, shining stars in the firmament of the fatherland's history: Roger Williams, the tested fighter, the first in modern times to make the basic law of freedom of religion and freedom of conscience legal within a state; George Washington, the noble patriot, who was first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen; Benjamin Franklin, the plainspoken yet outstanding man of the people, who took the lightning from the sky and the scepter from the throne; Alexander Hamilton, the ingenious statesman, who built our finances on a safe and secure basis; Thomas Jefferson, the fervent freedom president, who brought the principle of a true and pure self-government to continual rule; Andrew Jackson, the uncompromising, who said the celebratory words, "For the future, the Union should and must be maintained." Beside them the name Abraham Lincoln shines as a star of the first magnitude—Abraham Lincoln, the reunitor of the Union, the liberator, the man of justice and love! "May the memory of righteousness be blessed!" ❖

## Rabbi Liebman Adler Speech 1.

*Translated from the German by Susan Wagner*

**I**n this hour the earthly remains of the father of the fatherland are leaving the White House in Washington. As the bells toll throughout the land, far and wide, so also beat the hearts of all thinking and feeling beings in this land.

The mind can deceive itself and can also be tempted; it tends to the wrong paths. Not the mind of a single person, but that of millions. We only need to consider how many sensible Israelites,

Christians, Muslims and pagans there are and how differently they all think in terms of religion, and how differently the political parties think in the important matters of people. The heart can also be led astray, when it is taught to do so. But if the heart is met surprised and unprepared, all good men feel the same. The voice of the heart is God's voice.

While the beloved leader has lain murdered in Washington, few hearts in the land have been happy. The first news of the hideous event shocked all hearts and startled all feelings. Like an electric current the pain flowed in one moment over millions of square miles through millions of hearts. In this hour our hearts beat faster, the feelings are more excited, the pain is sharp again. It is as if one person whispers to another the question which was whispered to Elisha on the day that his master, Elijah, ascended into heaven, "Do you know that the Lord is going to take your master from you today? (2 Kings 2:3)" This simultaneous sensation in an entire people is a holy revelation...that it is truly a great man, a noble person, a wise leader, that today in Abraham Lincoln is borne to the grave.

Is his memory worthy of the honor that is presently being shown to him? Is he worthy of the greatest and highest of the land gathering in Washington around his corpse in solemn, expressive ceremonies? Is he worthy of the honor and the tribute which his memory is receiving at this hour from millions of reverent people in tens of thousands of places of worship in cities and villages, even in the wigwams of the wild ones? In ancient Egypt, there existed a Judgment Hall, which had to carry out a formal, strict investigation of the personal record of the deceased before a solemn, respectable burial was permitted. Over you, O Lincoln, the civilized world is sitting in judgment, a court of millions, and calling with one voice, "You are worthy of the honor! You are to be honored, sympathized with, and at the same time praised, by all countries, by all peoples, and by all times!" Thus, the manual workers will proudly call: "He was one of us, blessed be his memory!" The merchant class will proudly remember the fact that he also once ranked among its members and will honor his memory. The judicature will engrave in marble in their holy halls that he was a member of this class and will consecrate his memory. History's rulers will read with elation that Abraham Lincoln was a ruler who sat among them.

Ring, bells, dully and terribly; the faithful echo

of our hearts! And the bells, as we hear them here, will ring from village to village, from city to city. Hearts will overflow with melancholy for your sad return trip from Washington, which was the glittering scene of your public deeds and the field of your concerns and sufferings after your peaceful, quiet, once so happy home in Springfield. A short time ago, the people called and you were led to Washington to the ruler's seat; today, God is leading you back. His calls you must follow. We must give in to them. O, how we would have rejoiced...How gladly we would have seen your life's luck tied to that of our country. How happy it would have made us, if you could have enjoyed the remainder of your term in peace and quiet and reconciliation, after your lot in the president's seat was so much unrest, worry and sorrow.

But God wanted it otherwise. Providence gave the country a mild ruler in a time of war. Perhaps it now needs a stronger one in the forthcoming work of peace, so that the severe always goes hand in hand with the tender. However, the full, warm joy has been removed from that which time may reveal as a happy message. The sad fate of the leader, the dreadful act against the chosen one of the people, will remain the bitter drop that spoils the sweetest goblet of joy.

**P**raise be to God, that he, who committed the terrible act, was not among us in faith, that the Israelites did not produce such a monster! At any rate, as men may be, we now have to read in the newspapers that this act is reminiscent of the "wicked Jews who killed Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> As men may be, our ancestors, who 2000 years ago condemned to death a private man working against the legal order under the observation of all legal forms, are being called from the grave and set as counterparts on the side of the presidential murderers. This reproach would hurt Christianity even more, that after 2000 years of existence, in our enlightened age, in the century of schools and books, members of its confession were capable of such a horrible act. But we are far from such narrow-mindedness, to seriously blame the entirety of a religion for something for which individuals are responsible. We would commit a serious sin if we wanted to call out in our pain, "The wicked Christians have killed our Abe Lincoln. They have killed the savior of their own country!"<sup>2</sup> We mourn, rather, the shared leader together, Jews and

*continued on Page 10*

FROM THE  
CHICAGO JEWISH  
*archives*

## Preserving Your Family Photographs

*By Joy Kingsolver*

**T**he first photographs were daguerreotypes, produced by J.L.M. Daguerre and others beginning in 1839. These early images not only introduced a new technology, but also created a new type of historical record. In the years since its invention, photography has passed through many stages and the technology has changed dramatically. As time passes, old photographs become even more important as visual records of eras long gone.

The Chicago Jewish Archives has several thousand negatives and photographs in its collections. The photograph on this page shows Philip Weinstein, owner of Lawrence-Philip Studios and photographer for the Jewish Federation for 50 years, at work in his office. The Weinstein Photo Archive contains more than 2000 sets of negatives, representing the work he did for

the Federation, for synagogues, and for other Jewish organizations in Chicago.

Many families keep a photographic record of their history, handing down historic photographs from generation to generation. It can be more difficult to maintain ideal conditions in the home than it is in an archive, but there are simple steps that can be taken to make sure photographs last as long as possible. Photographs should ideally be kept cool (archivists use 68 degrees and 45% humidity as a guideline), and in a place where the temperature is relatively stable. Wide fluctuations in temperature can be just as damaging as heat. Light and dust both cause fading of the image, and the oil from human skin can interact with the surface of the photograph to cause damage. Handle photographs by their edges or with cotton gloves.

Archivists use mylar sleeves or acid-free paper envelopes or folders to store photos; black and white photos should be stored separately from color, and negatives kept separate from prints.

Identification of photographs is an ongoing problem in most archives. Many times collections of photographs will arrive with no clue to the individuals pictured or dates. Equally troublesome, they often arrive fully identified on the back, but in felt-tip marker or ink, which will eventually bleed through the front of the image. Identification is important, but should be done in pencil or on a separate sheet of paper folded around the photograph. Modern photos are sometimes too slick



**Philip Weinstein**





**Dinner, Rabbinical Association of Hebrew Theological College, 1940**

to take regular pencil markings, but special photo pencils can be found at art supply stores and are safe to use.

Sometimes photographs like the one on this page arrive in an archive tightly rolled; this is especially common with panoramic photographs, which tend to curl naturally because of their long, narrow shape. The photograph shown here was placed in a humid environment temporarily to relax it. (Archivists use a “humidity box,” which allows the air to become humid without wetting the surface of the photograph.) It was then flattened under weights for several days. When this photograph was donated to the archives, it was a “mystery picture;” after it was treated we could see that it shows a dinner of the Rabbinical Association of Hebrew Theological College in 1940. Because the photograph was never forced open after it began to curl, it is undamaged; forcing it to unroll would have cracked the emulsion layer, which holds the image.

Tears and other damage can sometimes be repaired by an archivist or conservator, but should never be fixed at home with tape, as this will cause

further damage in the long run. Tape, paper clips, sticky notes, rubber bands, and ink all pose dangers to photographs and other historic documents. Handled correctly and treated with care, photographs will last for many years, providing a valuable record of the past and the present for future generations.

An upcoming exhibition will highlight photographs and other documents from family collections in the archives. The exhibition is called “Jewish Roots in Chicago: Family Papers at the Chicago Jewish Archives.” It will be open to the public from March 13 through August 31, 2000, in the 6th floor gallery of the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, 618 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago. Hours are 9-5, Monday through Thursday and 9-3 on Fridays. ❖

**JOY KINGSOLVER** is Director, Chicago Jewish Archives at the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies. If you have any questions about the preservation techniques discussed in this article, or the upcoming exhibition, please phone Ms. Kingsolver at (312)322-1741.

## Adler *continued from Page 7*

Christians, and pray, Jews as well as Christians, for the peace of a soul; of course, by our religious teachings the devout of all peoples and every belief take part in blessedness. He may also, even as non-Israelite, stand before us as an enlightening model in his strict honesty, in his pure morality, in his non-hypocritical devoutness, in his generosity, in his good heart and in his luminescent patriotism. We should do modestly in our limited lives what he practiced to the furthest extent in his high position.

While the body of our great, beloved, former President is being carried out of the White House, the new head of government is moving in. It is now our obligation to the fatherland to be faithful to its head and not to wait with honor and acknowledgement until death makes us soft. The new president remained firm and unshakingly true to the Union, when all around him wavered and fell; we forget that he once wavered when all stood firm around him. By forgetting, we act in the spirit of the late president, the confirmed patriot.

Your body, Abe Lincoln, is carried now from city to city, from state to state, until its final resting place, to add dust to dust. Your spirit, however, rises to God. He looks after the worlds, He measures the celestial spheres, all the puzzles of the world are solvable for Him. He looks after a magnificence in the circle of the just, against which the magnificence of Washington sinks into dust. In the book of history, the pencil is already busy... ensuring your immortality.

Your spirit, Abe Lincoln, is before the judicial bench of God. There your acts are angels speaking for you. Let our prayer for the welfare of your soul ascend from the depth of our hearts, together with the praying nation, into heaven. ❖

<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: Text in quotes originally in English

<sup>2</sup> Translator's note: Text in quotes originally in English



**Michigan Avenue Seen from Park Row, in Civil War Times**  
from H.L. Meites "History of the Jews of Chicago," 1924

## Rabbi Liebman Adler Speech 2.

*Translated from the German by Susan Wagner*

**T**ime, the powerful healer and reliever of wounds and sorrows, has also proved her worth for our pain over the sorrowful end of our president, Abraham Lincoln. The deadening of hearts, which followed the first news of the horror, has moved out of its place; the tears have dried. The lively participation, as the body moved from state to state, city to city, towards its final resting place, a participation and an emotion of the entire people which swelled over all banks, this has abated. What, however, the emotional expression has lost in power and intensity since then, the cool judgment of rationality has won. In the clamor of feelings, the judgment of rationality is unable to speak. Only after feelings retreat tiredly and their loud expression wanes, may one hear what reason and rationality say.

When the heart mourns, it mourns passionately, and therefore it exhausts itself even earlier and weakens. Rationality and reason mourn, when they mourn, with restraint, but therefore more lastingly. At times, rationality and reason want absolutely nothing in common with the mourning of the heart, they don't acknowledge it, in that they deny its legitimacy. But the mourning for Abraham Lincoln's passing away is now advancing through rationality and reason, since the heart is tired from so much mourning. This progression shows that the pain of the nation as it has revealed itself in the past weeks with an intensity without comparison, was not the product of a momentary surge, no sickly, sentimental or even artificially brought forth excitement, but deep, bitter earnestness. We don't need to be ashamed of the weakness in our hearts; strong men do not need to deny their tears for Lincoln, because cool rationality and sober reason, which have neither heart nor tears, are also mourning.

When we consider a viewpoint that is far removed from criticism about weaknesses of the heart and entirely isolated from everything that could cloud a cool, unbiased judgement, we would always return in our judgment to what our heart felt and said in the first surprised moment of feeling upon reception of the terrible news.

The more we think back about Lincoln, the

more dear he becomes to us and the more unmotivated we find his murder and the greater the loss of him seems for the nation.

Rare qualities were united in Lincoln. Statesmanly size, a noble heart, an incorruptible honesty, a deep piety and fear of God; a person, a man, a citizen; the great and the high; depth and intimacy; a mental education to the height of the times with the disposition and the uninhibitedness of an innocent child that still reads ABC books. If not in bodily stature, but in his effectiveness during the most dangerous time on the presidential seat, he looks like David in his fight with Goliath. The Goliath of the rebellious Confederacy stepped out like a giant, a monster, on whose growth and on whose armor evil spirits had already worked long, in darkness as well as in sunlight. Goliath blasphemed God and Israel. Against him we see David step out, the son of Jesse, with ruddy cheeks, a child in his entire relaxed appearance. His weapons were smooth stones of the river, thrown with a slingshot, a shepherd's bag carrying the stones. But what are we missing? The giant falls, hit on his head. He falls with his iron armor and with a cry, like a tree swaying, he falls, and David chops his head off; David, who came against him in the name of the living God; the God of Israel. David was Lincoln. Lincoln's smooth stones were his simple morality and his good-natured jokes.

Rationality and reason mourn the man, who was at home in the realm of rationality and reason, like the heart mourns him, who had so much heart.

Rationality and reason console us also and let us take comfort in him. The contemplation of Lincoln and his life is a heart-lifting phenomenon for our land and the joy over his life is more for us than the sadness at his death.

For Lincoln himself death was not bad luck, if death ever is bad luck. Before his death, he enjoyed the greatest happiness. He saw the enemy overthrown, the Union saved, the chains of slavery broken, and his own honor saved. A difficult task, an unpleasant job, the Reconstruction, lay before him. A step left would bring millions of bitter enemies from the right; a step right, millions of bitter enemies from the left. In this question, many of our statesmen will be swayed and lose the rewards of their long political lives. The expected unpleasant fight with a defeated and therefore enraged brother stands before us. In Congress, in the Senate, in the Cabinet and in everything that we

have together, he is already staring us in the face with a determined fury in his heart; he feels as if his unrestrained pride has been mortally wounded. A quick death freed you from this unpleasant future. You don't need to pronounce any death sentences, you don't need to take anyone into custody, you don't need to hunt anyone from house and home, all of which awaited your soft soul in life. The sad fate of punishing has been saved for your successor.

The appearance of Lincoln at the head of society was a revelation of the youth and ability sleeping within him. Lincoln, the ruler in the White House, was not like a competent ruler on the king's throne who owed to the land only the chance of his birth. Lincoln was chosen by millions, and the honor of choice falls back upon those who choose. It shows that our people's government and the administration of our public affairs are not as corrupt and ruined as is mistakenly claimed. A people that chooses an unassuming, honest man out of thousands of opportunistic politicians must have some of his virtue themselves.

And men such as Lincoln are not rare in our republic. One need not look at the pinnacle of society or at the military in the largest cities. One has to look for them where Lincoln was found, where Samuel searched for the first king of Israel, among the humble, working citizens. When looking for them, one must not overlook the log cabins and the modest farm houses. An able, honest man may also live behind a marble facade, an able modest man may also ride in a fine carriage, but one need not look exclusively there for them.

**L**incoln's life comforts us today in important ways. Lincoln made it further in four years with his honesty than many weighty statesmen with shining abilities and wide knowledge accomplish in an entire lifetime. One of the greatest statesmen of England, who sits at the helm of the country and is morally one of the best, Lord John Russell, said in a public Parliament meeting about the murder of Lincoln by the South, that the murder was more than a crime, it was a mistake, a miscalculation. That is the way that statesmen speak. To them, honesty is less important than intelligent calculation and a misconception more inexcusable than a scientific, coldly calculated crime for a specific purpose. But Lincoln did not think so. Honest and Abe have grown into one another, like Siamese twins. And Honest Abe shines among the stars of

*continued on Page 15*

# *West Side Memoir*

## My First Year in the Yeshiva

BY SENDER LEIB ARONIN

**I**t was 1955. I was a senior at Washington High School in Milwaukee. Three years before, the Aronin family had moved from the tiny town of Mayville, Wisconsin (population about 3,000), where we were the only Jewish family, to the metropolis of Milwaukee so my siblings and I could obtain a formal Jewish education.

We enrolled in the Beth Jehudah Hebrew School, which was headed by Rabbi Abraham Joshua “Shea” Twerski. What would you teach a young man who is haltingly able to read Hebrew and can translate a few verses of Chumash? Toss him into the sea of the Talmud, of course! After three years of navigating, guided by Shea’s voluminous word lists, I became fairly proficient. Moreover, Shea’s enthusiasm for teaching Torah had affected me, and I was really enjoying studying Talmud.

Then one day Shea announced that he felt he could better serve his community through medicine, and he had enrolled in the medical school of Marquette University.\* I was devastated. Where could I pursue my Talmudic studies? The answer was in Chicago, at the *Bet HaMidrash LaTorah*—Hebrew Theological College.

Shea’s two younger brothers, the twins Michael (now Rabbi of Cong. Beth Jehudah and director of the Torah Foundation of Milwaukee) and Aaron (now professor at Brooklyn Law School) took the responsibility of preparing me for the yeshiva’s entrance exam in Talmud. They were successful, and I was accepted.

**T**he Hebrew Theological College (HTC) occupied a large, imposing building at 3448 West Douglas Blvd. on Chicago’s West Side. East and west of HTC on the boulevard were many large and beautiful synagogues. Nearby, Stone Temple Baptist Church at 3622 West Douglas—formerly the First Romanian Congregation Shaarei Shomayim—made it obvious that this was a neighborhood in transition. The yeshiva dormitory was no longer used. Out-of-town students lived in apartments near Jackson Blvd. and Pulaski Rd. Friday night services and meals

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\*Rabbi Doctor Abraham J. Twerski is founder-medical director of Gateway Rehabilitation Center, a residential treatment program for drug addicts and alcoholics in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania.

were at the yeshiva. After a study session, all the students left the yeshiva together and were accompanied on our walk west on Douglas and north on Independence Blvd. by a motorcycle policeman.

*Shabbos* morning services were also held at the yeshiva. The noon meals took place in a storefront at 409 South Pulaski, lovingly known as the Four-O-Nine Club. *Mincha* was prayed at the Chicago Jewish Academy on Wilcox. *Seudah shlishis*, the third *Shabbos* meal, was here also. This meal consisted of an apple and a *d’var Torah* (a word of Torah) given by our *mashgiach ruchani*—spiritual supervisor—Rabbi Moshe Wernick, of blessed memory. He once questioned this practice and gave the following explanation: “One can fulfill his obligation to eat the Third Meal by listening to a *d’var Torah*. Then what is the need for the apple? Just in case the *d’var Torah* is shown to be incorrect, one has fulfilled his obligation with the apple.”

**A**nother rabbi at the yeshiva who greatly influenced me was Rabbi Hertzl Kaplan, of blessed memory. A product of the Slobodka Yeshiva in Europe, he was really “with it.” A popular song at the time was *Sixteen Tons*, sung by Tennessee Ernie Ford, that described the plight of coal miners:

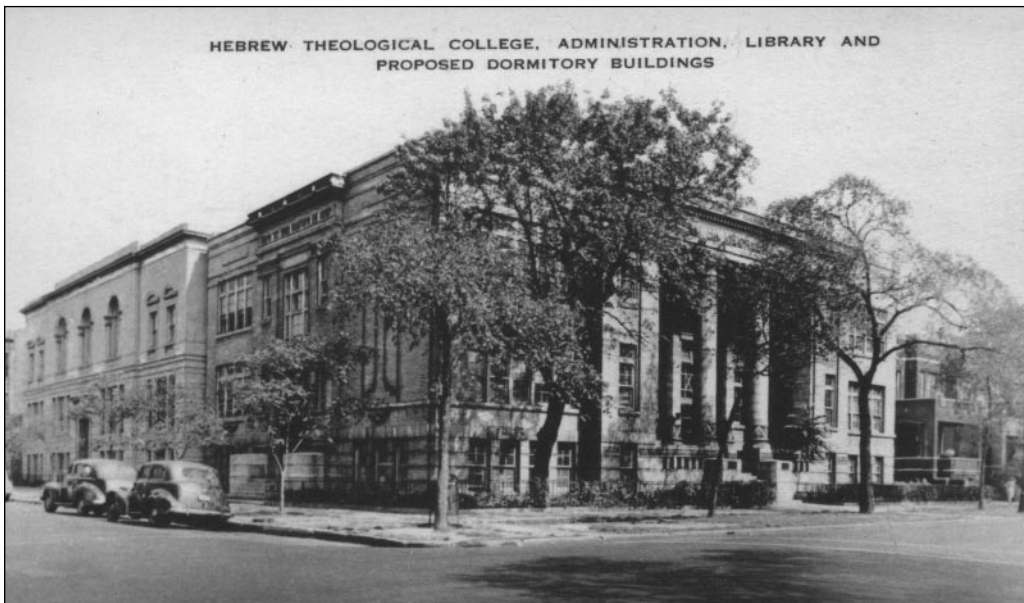
*You load sixteen tons and what do you get?  
Another day older and deeper in debt.  
St. Peter, don’t you call me ‘cause I can’t go—  
I owe my soul to the company store.*

Rabbi Kaplan devoted a large portion of a class period comparing the benefits of a life containing Torah and *mitzvos* complementing a career, with a life pursuing only the “almighty dollar” from the company store.

During another class he discussed a passage from the Talmud: Rabbi Chananya ben Akashya says: The Holy One, blessed be He, wished to give merit to Israel. Therefore he gave them much Torah and many *mitzvos*. . . (*Makos*, end of the third chapter). Said Rabbi Kaplan: “If G-d wanted to benefit Israel, He should have given us a small amount of Torah and a few *mitzvos*. So much Torah and so many *mitzvos*: how can we do it all? The answer is that G-d gave us so much Torah and so many *mitzvos* that it is impossible for each of us not to find one part of the Torah or one *mitzvah* that we can do with proficiency and enjoyment. With this small start, we will search for other Torah and other

*mitzvos* to enjoy. In this way, we will find ourselves studying all the Torah and performing all the *mitzvos!*" (Almost 30 years later, this message was the theme of my son Shmuel's Bar Mitzvah speech.)

The apartment which I shared with five other out-of-town students—*yeshiva bochurim*—was located on Jackson Blvd., about a block west of Pulaski. Milwaukee, Seattle, Toronto and Santo Domingo were the cities we called home. We developed lasting friendships as a result of dorming together. Those who remained in Chicago to attend college, work and raise their families include Irwin Broderick, George Horovitz, David Langsner and I. We developed unique



**The Yeshiva at 3448 West Douglas Blvd** Postcard from the author's collection

skills dorming together. I learned that foods fried in peanut butter do not taste as bad as the idea sounds!

One day we were visited by "Uncle Ben" Aronin, who brought some money for our "refrigerator fund." He also brought a booklet that he had written: an aid to studying Talmud tractate *Baba Kama*, which the students at the yeshiva were then studying. (Ben Aronin was actually my father's first cousin. A gifted writer, translator, dramatist and educator, Ben was affectionately known as "Uncle" by the young people of the Chicago Jewish community of the 1940s and '50s.)

In the *bais midrash* (study hall) of HTC I met several *alter bochurim* (senior students) whom I often meet today. Rabbi Ben Tzion Stern is a Kashrus Supervisor for the Chicago Rabbinical Council. He can be seen at the most elegant parties. Rabbi Joshua Levinson was a senior member of the Bellows Kollel for Advanced Studies before he and his family moved to Israel.

"Z"eke" Sender is now Rav Yitzchak Sender, a senior *rosh yeshiva* at the HTC in Skokie. When he was still a young *bochur*, he had already written a book in Hebrew called *Trumas Moshe*, concerning the complex topic of priestly gifts. Besides five other books in Hebrew, he has to his credit the "Commentators" series, containing insights of Jewish sages on various topics. His books are distributed by Phillip Feldheim, Inc., and are available at local Hebrew book stores. (When I was in the process of putting together my own book, "A Student Looks at the Siddur," it was Rabbi Sender to whom I went for counsel. I was proud that he was the first scholar to give me a written approbation on my book, which is also available at local Hebrew bookstores.)

As this was my first year in yeshiva and I had many lost years to catch up, I devoted my full efforts to my Hebrew studies and did not attend evening college as did many of my fellow students. The end of the school year approached, and I learned that the HTC was to leave its Douglas Blvd. location and move to Congregation Anshe Sholom, a large synagogue at 754 South Independence Blvd. This would be its location for a two-year

transition period until the HTC's new suburban Skokie campus, at 7135 North Carpenter Road, would be completed. I decided to try out a yeshiva in the East.

Two years later found me back at my yeshiva, the Hebrew Theological College in Skokie! ❖

**SANDY ARONIN** writes of himself: "I am still associated with the yeshiva. My older son attended Fasnman Yeshiva High School and continues his study of Torah while supporting his wife Nechama and my two grandsons. My younger son has returned to the yeshiva from its Israel program. For almost 30 years I have been leading a Talmud class in Peterson Park, as part of the HTC's community service program. The introduction to my book, "A Student Looks at the Siddur," acknowledges my great debt to this institution. (To support my family I do accounting work.)"

## The Boy Scouts of America: Historic Chicago Jewish Troops

A *Chicago Tribune* article on October 13, 1985, "How a Chicagoan brought scouting to American boys," recounts the founding of the BSA:

"A favorite [Boy Scout campfire] story was that of an unknown scout who helped globetrotting Chicago publisher William Dixon Boyce find his way through a dense London fog. The scout refused a tip, saying it was his 'good turn' for the day.

Intrigued, Boyce visited the headquarters of Lt. Gen. Sir Robert S.S. Baden-Powell, who had established scouting in Great Britain, and resolved to do the same in the United States. Boyce, who published the *Chicago Saturday Blade*, the *Chicago Ledger* and *Boyce's Weekly*, employed thousands of young men in the sale and delivery of his journals and had a keen appreciation of the value of honesty, industry and obedience in youth.

In 1910, upon his return to Chicago from abroad, Boyce began to carry out his plan, launching one of the great organizational efforts of all time. Within a year the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America had been established, with headquarters in New York."

The National Council of the BSA had a Jewish connection from its founding. Banker Mortimer L. Schiff, son of the great Jewish financier, communal leader and philanthropist Jacob H. Schiff, was a vice-president of the organization from 1910 until 1931 when he was elected president. Tragically, he died within a month of his election. The following year, his mother Therese Loeb [Mrs. Jacob H.] Schiff presented the Mortimer L. Schiff Scout Reservation at Mendham, N.J., in memory of her son. (A genealogical note supplied by CJHS board member Charles B. Bernstein: he tells us that the great-grandson of Mortimer is Andrew Schiff, who is married to Karenna Gore, the daughter of Vice President Al Gore. However, for two generations the Schiffs have not practiced Judaism.)

But our subject is the involvement of Chicago Jewish youths in scouting! CJHS board member Harold T. Berc has compiled a list of West Side troops, c. 1928, that were entirely or mostly comprised of Jewish boys. Mr. Berc recalls that all West Side troops could subscribe for two weeks or more to summer camps at Camp Black Hawk on the Big Blue Lake near

Muskegon, Michigan, and that all Chicago troops had day or weekend camping privileges at Camp Fort Dearborn, located on the Des Plaines River in what is now the Seymour Simon Forest Preserve, at Belmont and Cumberland.

Board member Dr. Milton Shulman has added two troops that he remembers from the Hyde Park neighborhood, and notes that not until kosher food was introduced at scout camps could all Jewish boys fully avail themselves of the Boy Scout experience. ❖

### WEST SIDE c. 1928

**Troop 210: American Boys Commonwealth (ABC) Clubhouse** Roosevelt Rd. near California  
Scoutmaster: Mac Goldsban [sp]

**Troop 225: Union Park** Ashland Ave. near Ogden  
Scoutmaster: Iz Granatstein

**Troop 315(?): Basement Clubhouse of Apt. Bldg.** Christiana or adjacent street south of Roosevelt Rd.  
Scoutmaster: Sam Mendelsohn

**Troop 318: Millard Avenue Presbyterian Church** Millard north of Ogden. (Scoutmasters tried to revive old active church troop with new membership from Jewish Lawndale)  
Scoutmasters: Irving Epstein & Harry Steiner

**Troop 323: Jewish Old Peoples Home (cheder rooms used as clubhouse)** Ogden Ave. and Albany  
Scoutmaster: David Friedman, who also was principal of cheder

**Troops 332 and 333: Jewish People's Institute (JPI)** Douglas Blvd. and St. Louis  
Scoutmasters: Norman Horwitz & B. Idzent

**Troop 335: Fillmore Police Station Squad Room** Grenshaw and Crawford (Pulaski)  
Scoutmaster: Iz Granatstein

**Troop 3\_\_?: Temple Judea** Independence Blvd. near Roosevelt Rd. Scoutmaster: ?

### HYDE PARK

**Troop 510: Temple Isaiah Israel**

**Troop 529(?): KAM Temple**

### NORTH SIDE? NORTHWEST SIDE? SOUTH SHORE? SUBURBS?

*We ask our readers for their memories of other historic Chicago Jewish Troops.*

**Adler** *continued from Page 11*

the greatest magnitude while John Russell and those like him will be forgotten much like servants after they have been paid.

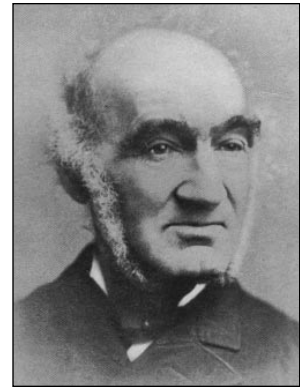
And Lincoln's appearance offers us the comfort that the institutions of our land are of the sort that we get our ruler, if I may call our president so, not through birth, which is the same as chance, but through the vote. We do not need to allow ourselves to be ruled by generations of stupidity; instead we can choose the best man in our opinion, and when we make a mistake, when through a misvote an unworthy man manages to arrive at the president's seat, we can correct the mistake in four years. Our governmental institutions additionally give us the comfort, through the appearance of Lincoln in the presidency, that our governors are raised through work, among the people, unaware of their future status. Imagine Lincoln in his youth as a hereditary prince, surrounded by chamberlains and servants bending down before him while he is still in the cradle, instructed and taught by court tutors on their knees, with the consequence that for money and favor he is smiled at, made angry, rebuked and praised, as can be read in the history of princes, intentionally misled and weakened and disinherited by corrupt, paid friends: would such a Lincoln have grown to his place? Would Lincoln, so raised, have been able to carry out his duty? Work and seclusion alone ensure a good upbringing. The young plant that is set in the sun too early is stunted. Children who are raised in the sun of too much favor, too much general attention, are ruined for their future development. And that is why there are so relatively few able rulers on the throne...

**O**f those who took the throne, only a few have actually ruled. Only a few of these were actually capable of doing the bad and the good that was brought about by their reign. The entourages and the parties that surrounded the throne ruled, not the kings. Their upbringings spoiled their independence. Not so for Lincoln and our presidents. In particular Lincoln had nothing like a princely upbringing. The boatmen on the Mississippi were no flatterers. No chamberlains helped him build his houses or his fences. And in his mature years, when he made a mistake that he was not reproached for, he heard about it from his opponent Douglas, who grew up with work just as he did. In this way, our governors are brought up and prepared for office. In this way, we get something sweet from that which is strong, we win something good out of our struggle.

"The saints shall rejoice in glory; they shall be joyful in their beds. (Psalm 149)"

Tyrants are praised in life, cursed in death. Just rulers hear a lot of reproaches in life, but their praise begins with death. The just are first glorified when they are no longer in this world. As they lie dying on their deathbeds, in the quiet of the grave, their souls hear sweet harmonies rising as an echo of their deeds on earth.

So, sleep softly, pious one, in honor! Out of your grave, from your place in the bosom of the earth, the praise of justice is rising out of the here and now and the afterlife, a choir of angels calling and urging the fear of God, love, and justice. ❖



**Liebman Adler (1812-1892)**

He was born in Lengsfeld, in the Grand Duchy of Saxe-Weimar. From an early age he was educated by prominent Hebrew scholars, including his father and the father of [Chicago's very first rabbi] Reverend Ignatz Kunreuther. In 1854 he immigrated to America where he served a Detroit congregation until 1861 when he was called to Chicago, to the pulpit at KAM, a position he occupied continuously, with the exception of 1872-76, until his retirement in 1882. Rabbi Adler was a widely published scholarly writer as well as a preacher.

He was the father of Dankmar Adler (1844-1900), the great Chicago architect-engineer. Young Dankmar enlisted in the Union army on his eighteenth birthday in August, 1862, serving in the First Illinois Artillery and later in the Engineer Corps of the Military Division of the Tennessee.

These notes about the Adlers are drawn from H.L. Meites "History of the Jews of Chicago" and a feature article in *CJH*, Spring 1990. ❖

## Society Welcomes New Members

Dr. & Mrs. Morton Doblin  
Linda Gaibel  
Carolyn Gaines  
Howard Gilbert  
Sandra J. Lerner  
Hamilton M. Loeb, Jr.  
Mr. & Mrs. Bud Rosenbaum  
George Rosenbaum  
Jerome Wolf

# 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.

## What We Do

The Society seeks out, collects and preserves appropriate written, spoken and photographic records; 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.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Would you like to become more involved in the activities of the Chicago Jewish Historical Society? We'd love to have you! Following are the various committees on which you can serve. Contact the Society at (312)663-5634 or any of the Chairpersons listed here.

### ■ PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Do you have a great idea for a meeting topic? If you are organized and creative, friendly and outgoing, the Program Committee would welcome your help in planning and implementing our bi-monthly and annual meetings. Contact Burt Robin (773)667-6251

### ■ MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Society's membership continues to grow, and you could help us introduce Chicago Jewish history to even more people. Share your ideas and energy! Contact Elise Ginsparg (847)679-6793 or Janet Iltis (773)761-1224

### ■ TOUR COMMITTEE

Bring your creativity and organization to planning and promoting our popular roster of tours on Jewish history. Contact Leah Axelrod (847)432-7003

### ■ EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Do you like to write? Are you a great proofreader? You can contribute to our quarterly publication, *Chicago Jewish History*. Contact our editor, Bev Chubat (773)525-4888

## 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
Historian .....	500
Scholar .....	250
Sponsor .....	100
Patron or Family .....	50
Senior Family or Individual .....	35
Synagogue or Organization .....	25
Senior Individual or Student .....	20

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