

The Eighth Ward Years of Keshet Israel Synagogue, 1902-1949

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When the Jews left their homes in Europe to come to America to escape persecution and anti-Semitism, the most important item on their agenda was to establish a home for their families.¹ The next most important objective for the new immigrants was to establish a place of worship. “The spiritual resources of the ancient faith and its institutions give the Jews the power to suffer and endure and to produce a new vitality...In the New World the struggle for livelihood would fail to alter the authentic quality of devotion to the Almighty” (Keshet Israel 75TH Anniversary Book, 1902-1977, p. 1). The early history of Keshet Israel, the subject of this paper, is a testament to the strength and devotion that the Jews of Harrisburg’s Eighth Ward had to their faith.

“A House of Worship—a Bet Tefilah—was the core of a community, and Keshet Israel was the repository of the ancient tenets in Harrisburg” (KI 75th, p. 1). As stated above, Jews from Europe’s villages, towns, and cities came to America looking for a new beginning. Their first obligations were to earn a living. Jews in early America had no political or social influence, but when they came to America, they had not had political or social influence in their homeland either. The Jews’ religion gave them the strength, hope, and courage that they needed to start over.

The synagogue was the center of their lives when they lived in Europe. In 1902, a few Jewish men of Harrisburg had a vision, and they came together to establish a new synagogue (KI 75th, p. 1). The name Keshet Israel (KI) means Crown of Israel, and it was not the first synagogue or the first orthodox congregation in Harrisburg (Traditions, p.18). Already established were the Chevra Talmud Torah and the Chisuk Emuna Synagogue. The Chevra Talmud Torah members joined with the KI synagogue one year after KI was formed (Traditions, p. 18).

¹ This paper has been edited by Stephanie Patterson Gilbert, webmaster of Harrisburg’s Old Eighth Ward website, found at <<http://www.old8thward.com>>.

To understand why KI formed, we must begin with a little history about Chisuk Emuna Synagogue. In 1883 Orthodox Judaism returned to Harrisburg with the formation of Chisuk Emuna B'nai Russia Synagogue (Coleman, p. 39). The major goal of the new Shul was devotion to "stricter religious observance" (Coleman, p. 39). Chisuk Emuna was granted a charter on December 3, 1883 (Coleman, p. 39).

Ohev Sholom (originally Ohaf Shalem meaning loving peace), the first synagogue in Harrisburg, had originally been an orthodox synagogue, but it returned to Reformed Judaism in 1867 (Coleman, p. 40). Chisuk Emuna Synagogue was founded by Russian, more specifically Lithuanian, Jews who did not feel comfortable with Reformed Judaism (Coleman, p. 41). "The founding of Chisuk Emuna was really a reaction against modernity and a return to what the founders considered a purer form of Judaism" (Coleman, p. 41).

David Goldberg, a Lithuanian and interpreter for the Pennsylvania Railroad, had for a time been rabbi at Chisuk Emuna. Mr. Goldberg was not trained as a rabbi. He just happened to be a knowledgeable and learned man who acted as the rabbi of Chisuk Emuna until they could afford a full-time rabbi. Mr. Goldberg was a relative of Joseph O. Nathanson, who was a founder of Chisuk Emuna and had been a partner with Abel Cohen in Cohen's first shop (Chisuk Emuna Anniversary Book, Chapter 3, p.1). Nathanson also worked as an interpreter for the PA Railroad. Although Mr. Cohen and Mr. Goldberg were relatives, they disliked each other intensely; each man often stopped at Abel Cohen's shop to complain about the other.

Mr. Goldberg's piety had been questioned at times although he was considered a competent rabbi (Chisuk Emuna, chap. 3 p. 2). Between the doubts about Mr. Goldberg's piety and other tensions that had been building up within Chisuk Emuna, a permanent rift occurred in the Shul (synagogue). It is thought that this may have been the motivation for the founding of Keshet Israel, which originally had been named "Chasseur Israel" (Chisuk Emuna, chap. 3 p. 2).

David Goldberg, Levin Cohen (or Cohn), and Abel Cohen (instrumental in founding Chisuk Emuna) moved over to Keshet Israel. Other noted members of Chisuk Emuna's congregation also joined Keshet Israel although some of the new members of KI retained membership at Chisuk Emuna (Chisuk

Emuna, chap. 3 p. 2). The formation of Keshet Israel created a split within Harrisburg's Lithuanian Jewish community, and the division "went deep" (Chisuk Emuna, p. 2).

The split had two dimensions. One level was personal. There were some feuds within Chisuk Emuna which split families. On several occasions the antagonism that existed ended in brawls at Chisuk Emuna Synagogue which was located at Filbert Street (Chisuk Emuna, p. 2). Hyman Claster had been censured for conducting a separate Minyan (Prayer group of ten men). It was unknown what incident had caused Lewis Cohn, who was considered a knight in shining armor at Chisuk Emuna, to turn into a maverick there (Chisuk Emuna, p. 2).

One explanation given for the rift at Chisuk Emuna was that there may have been a misunderstanding between a member of Claster's family and a clergyman, possibly Iman Naticoff, who did not speak English (Chisuk Emuna, p. 2). It was said that the clergyman was arrested on Yom Kippur "and could not explain either his position or his pressing need for release" (Chisuk Emuna, p.2).

Another explanation for the rift among the members of Chisuk Emuna was attributed to the fact that a majority of Chisuk Emuna's members came from Lithuania. The Lithuanians wanted to continue the lifestyle they were accustomed to in the Old Country. The Lithuanians failed to understand the relationship between Jewish Orthodoxy and American culture (Chisuk Emuna, p. 3). "Chisuk Emuna was not just Orthodox Judaism, but was Lithuanian also" (Chisuk Emuna, p. 3). There was unwillingness on the part of the members of the Shul to conduct secular business in any language other than Yiddish (Chisuk Emuna, p. 3). Conducting their business only in Yiddish further distanced the members of the Shul from the society in Harrisburg. In order to survive and thrive in Harrisburg, the members of Chisuk Emuna needed to accommodate American life.

Keshet Israel was founded by those members of Chisuk Emuna who felt that the secular culture could be integrated into Orthodox Judaism without losing any of the principles or spirit of Orthodox Judaism (Chisuk Emuna, p. 3). "By default Keshet Israel attracted Orthodox Jews willing to become Americanized while still retaining their Orthodox beliefs" (Chisuk Emuna, p.). As of 1910 there were only sixty-two people who were members of Keshet Israel (Yeshiva Academy of Harrisburg Tradition, p.18).

The first building to house Keshet Israel was located at Fourth and State Streets. In 1917 the synagogue was sold to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for \$25,000 as part of the Commonwealth expansion program (KI Tradition, p.19). The synagogue was relocated to Capital and Briggs Streets from 1918 to 1949 (Yeshiva Traditions, p.19). During the years between 1938 and 1939, fifty new members joined the KI Congregation. In 1942 Samuel Lehrman and his family gave a gift of \$3,000 to the Shul, and with that money, KI paid off its mortgage (Yeshiva Traditions, p.19). In 1945 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania wanted to extend its Capitol Park northward. On November 12, 1947, Keshet Israel purchased land located at Third and Schuylkill Streets (across from Polyclinic's Memorial Building) and built a new synagogue which still houses the KI congregation to the present (Yeshiva Traditions, p. 19).

In 1909 Rabbi Eliezer, whose English name was Louis, became the rabbi of Keshet Israel. Rabbi Silver was a strict Orthodox figure who had a "powerful personality [that] led to another of the periodic explosions that Chisuk Emuna seemed to find unavoidable" (Chisuk Emuna Anniversary, p.4). From 1907 until Rabbi Silver became rabbi of Keshet Israel in 1909, he was the rabbi of Chisuk Emuna. Rabbi Silver's departure from Chisuk Emuna was due to a "continued factionalism within [that] Congregation" (Chisuk Emuna, p.4).

Rabbi Silver's presence at KI was considered a tremendous "boom" to that Shul (Chisuk Emuna, p. 4). His presence at Keshet Israel made that Shul "a major alternative Orthodox Synagogue" (Chisuk Emuna, p. 4). Because Rabbi Silver had such a dominant and powerful presence, Keshet Israel became the major Orthodox Synagogue in Harrisburg (Chisuk Emuna, p. 4). Rabbi Silver flourished at KI, and KI flourished under Rabbi Silver (Chisuk Emuna, p. 4). Rabbi Silver was Keshet Israel's rabbi until 1925 when he left to accept a pulpit in Springfield, Massachusetts. Under Rabbi Silver's direction, many different groups developed: the Hebrew Free Loan Society, the first Talmud Torah, a Chevra Shas, a Mikveh (the ritual bath), and the new KI building at Capital and Briggs Streets. In addition, Rabbi Silver was also responsible for helping the local people raise \$75,000 to send to their families abroad, and he assisted the Eras Torah, Jewish National Fund, and Mizrahi (Yeshiva Traditions, p. 19).

Rabbi Silver was credited with helping to settle numerous court cases through Din Torah, and he delivered over "1400 Talmudic lectures and discourses" (Yeshiva Traditions, p.19). He was a former

treasurer of the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of the United States, and he later became their President (Yeshiva, p. 19). He was Vice President of the Erzas Torah. He was also a member of the rabbinic delegation to President W. H. Taft in 1911 (Yeshiva Traditions, p. 19).

As mentioned earlier, Keshet Israel was established in 1902. There was an advertisement in the Harrisburg newspapers on October 15, 1902, announcing the formation of Keshet Israel (KI 75th Anniversary Book, p.1). “In October, 1902 Levin Cohen, Max Williams, David Houck, Max Isaacman, Dave Garonzik, Barnet Handler, and David Goldberg witnessed and signed the official synagogue charter” (75th Anniversary, p.1). Early records show that the founders of the Shul intended that the new synagogue was to serve a middle position between Ultra Orthodoxy (Hassidic Jews) and Radical Reform (75th Anniversary, p. 1).

The purpose of the new synagogue was a place not only to worship but a place to educate the young and old. The Shul held a dual function; it served as a place of education and as a social institution (KI 75th Anniversary, p.1). Thirty-nine members of the Jewish Community had met prior to October 1902 in order to search for a building to house the new Shul. The members of the committee voted to purchase the First Free Baptist Church located at the corner of Fourth and State Streets. The committee paid \$11,500 for the building (KI 75th p. 1). Keshet Israel remained at this location until 1918.

Sometime in 1903, many members of the Chevra (House) Talmud Torah, led by Nachman (Nathan) Friedberg and Meyer Katz, merged with Keshet Israel. In 1910 the young men and women of the Shul, headed by Jacob Friedberg, raised \$550 to purchase stained glass windows. Six years after signing the charter, the first Constitution was drafted and signed by a committee of fifteen people (KI 75th, p. 1). In the Constitution, the roles of the members were clearly defined “along with the outlining [of] the organizational provisions, the Constitution outlined benefits for the sick and the needy” (75th, p. 1). The document was printed by H. L. Meyerowitz, a Yiddish printer, who was located on Filbert Street in Harrisburg (75th, p.1).

Applicants for membership in Keshet Israel were screened as to their character and age. Some of the men who participated in documenting the synagogue charter also served on the Constitution Committee. Members on the committee included: Max Williams, Wolf Friedman, Lewis Hoffman,

Abraham Abramson, Meyer Katz, Simon Cooper, Henry Claster, J. Yoselowitz, David Houck, Abraham Garner, Isaac Sneiderman, Eli Goldstein, Max Cohen, and Max Levin (KI, 75th p. 1).

Members of the synagogue were required to visit sick members on a daily basis. A sick member was able to receive \$5.00 weekly provided that the illness was not chronic (75th, p. 1). Sick payments lasted for three months, and after that, the invalid could receive \$2.50 for another three months (75th, p. 4). If a death occurred in someone's family, the member was eligible to receive \$3.00 for the week of Shiva (the 7 day mourning period) to compensate for time off work (75th, p. 4). The synagogue was also required to provide a Minyon (a group of ten men) to pray twice daily for the week of Shiva. The Shul also provided a hearse and two carriages (75th, p. 4). If the family of the deceased was not of means, the widow and her immediate family would receive \$1.00 from every member of the Shul. All members of the Shul were required to attend the funeral and say Kaddish (in order to pray as an adult a male had to be at least 13 years of age).

Nachman Heller was one of several members of the congregation who taught the children about the ways of Judaism. Later on most children received their Judaic education in a private Hebrew School run by Reverend Klein and H. L. Meyerowitz and under the supervision of Rabbi Eliezer Silver. Rabbi Silver also started at Keshet Israel in 1909. The KI 75th Anniversary Book states that Rabbi Silver officially accepted the pulpit of KI on February 19, 1911. He received a salary of \$6.00 a week obtained from members' contributions (75th Anniversary, p. 4). Rabbi Silver had been responsible for instituting morning and evening Talmud Study and a regular Minyan three times a day (75th, p.4).

In 1911 the Chevra Tillim (prayer), under the direction of Max Cohen, David Shulman, Benjamin Klawansky, and Max Schein, presented silver ornaments for the synagogue's Scrolls (Torahs). These ornaments are still in use today (75th, p. 4). Social activities during Keshet Israel's early years were infrequent because the women were busy with their families and businesses. The Chevra Shas and the Chevra Kadisha (Holy) did hold several parties yearly.

The women of Keshet Israel founded the Hebrew Free Loan Society. This organization, along with the Hachnosas Orchim (transient home), was among the early organizations that met in the

synagogue. Between 1910 and 1916 Keshet Israel housed the Machzikai Hadas Congregation (the Hassidic Jews' Synagogue which is still in existence) (KI 75th, p. 4).

Keshet Israel in its early years had two Cantors (Chazzan): Lewis Cohen who served without pay and Reverend Israel Kanterowitz (my great uncle, that everyone just called Kanter), who trained the Shul's first choir. A Baal Torah (Torah Reader) was hired for \$10.00 a year. Expenses at the Shul included sweeping the floor for 25 cents, turning the Shabbas (the Sabbath) lights on for 30 cents, the use of a gas mantle at 20 cents, and the cost of a broom which was 40 cents. Records indicate that in April 1911, the Young Men's Hebrew Association rented three back rooms from the Shul for \$5.00 a month (KI 75th, p. 4).

In 1915 Rabbi Silver had gone home to visit his parents in Russia. When World War I broke out, Rabbi Silver had to go into hiding because he was a native-born Russian and had been subject to their draft. After a number of months, the Rabbi managed to cross the Norwegian border (KI 75th, p. 4). During this period of time, the Capitol Extension Project got underway, and the Shul had to sell their building. In 1917 the building was sold to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for \$25,000, and a new site was purchased at Capital and Briggs Streets. The first chapter in Keshet Israel's history came to an end (KI 75th, p. 5). The Commonwealth's Capitol Expansion Program just happened to have coincided with the members of Keshet Israel contemplating the relocation of the synagogue. The Shul hired Morris Silberstein from Washington, D.C., to erect a new building (KI 75th, p. 5). "The trowel used on June 24, 1917, [for the] cornerstone at Capital and Briggs Streets remains as a treasured memento" (p. 7).

"The arched ceiling, the indirect lighting system, the Bima (the Platform) [the Ark and the Bima were finished in white enamel and gold] in the center of the main sanctuary...was so erected as to enable the Torah reading to be heard by all, the library, the hand washing room for [the] Kohanim [there are three types of Jews: the Kohanim, the Levites, and the Israelites. The Kohanim are the highest ranking Jews--the Priests, the Levites are the Priests' assistants, and everybody else is an Israelite.], and the scrupulous attention to religious detail are but a few of the innovations that made this one of exceptional merit" (p. 7). The new Shul also had new stained glass windows with Judaic historical designs (these will be described in detail in conjunction with its move in 1949). The dedication services for the new

synagogue were held on Sunday, June 23, 1918, under the supervision of Rabbi Eliezer Silver (p. 7).

Ceremonies began at 10 am with Rabbi Silver heading a procession of dignitaries and members of the Shul, parading through the main streets of downtown Harrisburg (p. 7).

On hand for the dedication ceremonies was Rabbi Bernard L. Levinthal of Philadelphia, Reverend H. Maslionsky of New York, a noted Jewish orator, and the celebrated Cantor-tenor Joseph Rosenblatt accompanied by a choir of five of the best voices from his New York synagogue (p. 7). Keshet Israel officers who were on hand for the ceremonies were: Nathan Gross, President; Max Cohen and H. Kerdeman, Vice Presidents; M. B. Rosenzweig, Secretary; Meyer Katz, Treasurer; and Joseph Silberman, Aaron Gordon, and Simon Toor, Trustees (p. 7).

During the last years of World War I until 1921, the Cantor at Keshet Israel was Nathan Daniel Newmark. Cantor Newmark was born in Svadash, Lithuania, in Kovna, Gubernia, and he trained as a cantor in Riga (p. 7). Cantor Newmark also served as the Mohel (he performed the circumcisions on eight day old male babies) (p. 7). In Cantor Newmark's choir were boys from Harrisburg, including Samuel Ronen, and his nephews Philip and Cecil Newmark (p. 7). The adult members of the choir came from New York.

During the 1920's America was prosperous, and the businessmen of Keshet Israel were economically successful, allowing them to donate money to aid the Shul. The members of the synagogue usually lived within the border of the Shul neighborhood (p. 11). In March of 1925, Rabbi Eliezer Silver accepted the pulpit at a synagogue in Springfield, Massachusetts, and he was succeeded by Rabbi H. B. Notelovitz (p. 11).

In 1926 Mrs. Ida Marcus became the President of the newly organized Ladies' Auxiliary (p. 11). The women of the synagogue also "continued their work with the Free Loan, the Transient Relief, and the Talmud Torah auxiliary" (p. 11). Mrs. Fanny Nathan headed the auxiliary from 1928 until 1939, when the women decided to make a real kitchen in the synagogue in a space provided just for them (p. 11). The women raised funds in order to purchase the equipment, to decorate the facilities, and to prepare the food for functions held at Shul.

In the early 1930s, Rabbi Notelovitz left Keshet Israel to accept a pulpit in Louisville, Kentucky. He had been the rabbi of Keshet Israel since 1925. In 1932 Rabbi David L. Silver, the son of Rabbi Eliezer Silver, became the rabbi of Keshet Israel. Due to the economic conditions of the time, the synagogue could not afford to pay for a regular cantor. On the High Holy Days (Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), guest cantors from outside the Harrisburg area filled in.

When Rabbi Silver (the son) became the new rabbi, Keshet Israel's debts totaled \$16,500 which was \$1500 higher than when Rabbi Silver (the father) had left the synagogue in 1925. On March 6, 1933, the day Rabbi David Silver was to be installed as the new rabbi, all banks were ordered closed for several days by Presidential order (p. 11). The banquet scheduled to be held in honor of the new Shul took place at the Jewish Community Center (JCC) located at 1100 North Third Street. Later, the JCC building was sold to the Harrisburg Police and was known as the Police Athletic League or PAL (p. 11). Tickets to the banquet were sold for \$1.00 each, and the money collected became Rabbi Silver's salary (p. 11).

The selection of Rabbi David Silver as the new rabbi of the Shul was a break of custom (KI 75th p. 12). This was the first time that an English speaking person, one who was educated in secular, as well as Judaic subjects, would be leading the congregation of Keshet Israel. Rabbi David Silver was certainly qualified to lead the congregation given his heritage. Under Rabbi Silver different organizations developed such as the Sisterhood, the Junior Sisterhood, and the Brotherhood. Oneg Shabbat (the welcoming of the Sabbath) get-togethers were held in various members' homes. Members of the Shul planned a celebration for the Eighteenth (Chai) (Hebrew meaning life) Anniversary of the Shul at Capital and Briggs Streets. The celebration also marked the thirty-fifth anniversary of Keshet Israel's existence.

Samuel Lehrman, President of the Synagogue, had appointed M. B. Rosenzweig as Chairman of the supper. Admission to the dinner was \$1.00 per person. The Committee in charge of planning the celebration included Mrs. Fanny Nathan, Mrs. Mary Yaverbaum, Mrs. Jacob Shooman, Mrs. Sol Levin, Mrs. Robert Kleinman, Yoel Hervitz, Israel Lemka, Ike Woolf, Julius Nicoll, and Morton Cohen (KI 75th, p. 13).

After nineteen years of constant use, the physical interior of the synagogue was in desperate need of repair. A committee raised enough money to restore the synagogue's interior to its former beauty (75th,

p. 14). About the same time (1937) Reverend Nathan Fox of Philadelphia became the new Cantor of the Shul. Cantor Fox had been born in Russia, and he studied at the Yeshivas of Koretz and Kovno. Cantor Fox came to the United States in 1930 (75th, p. 14).

In 1938 the Keshet Israel Synagogue celebrated the marriage of Rabbi David Silver to Marion Eisenberg of Jersey City, New Jersey. Rabbi Silver lived in Harrisburg for five years, boarding with different members of the synagogue, prior to his marriage. In 1939 the Ladies Auxiliary and the Sisterhood merged because the consensus was that if both women's groups merged they would be even more effective in supporting the needs of the synagogue (75th, p. 14). On October 8, 1939, Mr. and Mrs. John Hervitz presented the synagogue with a Sefer Torah (KI Dedication Book, 1949 p. 15). In 1942 Keshet Israel was able to pay off its mortgage thanks to a generous gift from Samuel Lehrman. The synagogue held a celebration dinner in honor of its Fortieth Anniversary highlighted with the burning of its mortgage (75th, p. 15).

In 1945 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania decided to expand, and again the synagogue was asked to move. The men responsible for representing the State in the negotiation for purchasing of the synagogue were George Reily, Arthur Hull, and Franklin Moore. Samuel Brenner, President of the Shul for fourteen years, was authorized to form two committees (Dedication, p. 19). The first committee was made up of Samuel Brenner, Samuel Finkelstein, Jacob Friedberg, Nathan Gross, and Irving Yaverbaum. This was the committee that had negotiated with the Commonwealth (Dedication, p. 19). On April 11, 1947, Keshet Israel received a check from the State for \$74,000 (Dedication. P. 19).

The second committee consisted of Emanuel Cohen, Jacob Cohen, Samuel Glass, Jack Gittlen, Oscar Kasoff, Samuel Lehrman, and Joseph Silberman (Dedication, p. 19). It was their job to find a site suitable for a new synagogue in Uptown Harrisburg. Jewish families were moving uptown, and it was important that the synagogue be close to its members (Dedication, p. 20).

There were three different Building Campaigns carried on in order to raise enough money to help build the new synagogue. A total of over \$160,000 was raised from these campaigns from 315 contributors. With the sale of the Shul at Capital and Briggs Streets and the three campaigns, there was

only \$234,850. This amount fell short of the \$325,000 needed to build the new Shul (Dedication, p. 20). The synagogue took out a mortgage again and built the Shul at Third and Schuylkill Streets. The present Shul is the same age as me—fifty-four years old and still standing.

Keshar Israel's Stained Glass Windows

Of interest are the stained glass windows of the synagogue at Third and Schuylkill Streets. The reason for describing the windows is because many of the stained glass windows are duplications of those in the synagogue at Capitol and Briggs Streets. They were designed by Rabbi Eliezer Silver. The symbols have been rearranged, and new symbols of historic importance were added by Rabbi David Silver. Since the Capitol and Briggs building is no longer in existence, a description of the windows in the current building would be the closest model for the ones in the old synagogue.

The current synagogue faces Third Street, and Schuylkill Street borders the synagogue on the right if one faces the street. The narrow street behind the synagogue is Susquehanna Street. There are windows in the front, side, and in back of the synagogue. All information about the windows comes from the Keshar Israel Dedication Book.

The synagogue has sixteen stained glass windows: four in the main sanctuary along Schuylkill Street; eight windows in the social hall of which four are along Third Street, and four are on the back facing Susquehanna Street. Each window has three sections of amber glass, and in the center of each section is a multi-colored panel depicting a significant religious symbol.

The first window on Schuylkill Street—the window closest to the Holy Ark—has three panels representing the most sacred spots in Israel. The top section is that of the Tower of David in Jerusalem, the basic part of which was built by King Herod for defense of the city almost 2000 years ago (p.29). The center section represents the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem, Israel's most sacred shrine. It is the only portion of the Holy Temple left; that is, the only part that was not destroyed by the Romans when they destroyed the Second Temple (p. 29). The bottom panel portrays Rachal's Tomb. Rachel was buried on the road near Bethlehem, and she is often referred to as Mother Rachal (Rachel's Hebrew name) (p. 29).

The next four windows represent the emblems on the flags of the twelve tribes of Israel (p. 29). When the Jews marched out of Egypt from bondage, they were divided into four divisions (as directed by Moses and carried out by Joshua). Each division consisted of three tribes. Each tribe had its own flag and emblem (p. 29).

The second window on Schuylkill Street has on its panels the emblems of the tribes of Judah (sky blue background with a lion which is symbolic of strength and royal majesty), Issachar (navy blue background containing the sun and moon which is symbolic of scholars who absorbed learning and radiated it to others), and Zebulon (white background with a ship because it was “famous in navigation”) (p. 29).

The third window’s panel has the flags of Reuben, Simeon, and Gad. Reuben’s emblem has a red background with mandrakes which are herbs with a whitish or violet-like flowers deemed “as a love charm in the Orient” (p. 29). This symbolism comes from a passage in Genesis XXX about Reuben, the first born of Jacob (p. 29). Simeon’s flag has a green background, and on it is a picture of the City of Tents—Schechen. Simeon was a son of Jacob who conquered Schechen (p. 29). Gad’s flag has a gray background with a picture of an army regiment because of its “warlike quality” (p. 30).

The fourth window’s panels depict the flags of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin. Ephraim’s flag has a black background with a picture of a bull, a symbol of its “strength and aggressive conquests” (p. 30). The flag of Manasseh also has a black background, but it has a picture of a wild-ox or buffalo, symbolic of “unbridled physical might” (p. 30). Benjamin’s flag has a combination of all the colors of the other flags with a picture of a wolf symbolizing its “warlike character” (p. 30)

The last window depicts the final group of tribal flags which include Dan, Naphtali, and Asher. Dan’s flag is a sapphire color with the figure of a serpent representing “its skill in guerilla tactics, it darts out upon the passing enemy” (p. 30). Naphtali’s flag is wine colored with the figure of a hand because “this tribe was known for its swiftness and grace in movement” (p. 30). The background color of Asher’s

flag is light blue with an olive tree on it “because it was through olive culture that this tribe prospered” (p. 30).

The sixth window on Schuylkill Street contains three panels with a picture of the Shield of David (better known as the Star of David or the Mogen David) breastplate and a scroll. The breastplate was worn by the High Priest (p. 30). The Star of David is the emblem on the official flag of Israel, and it is also the official seal.

The four windows along Susquehanna Street contain three panels per window. The window panel depicts the twelve signs of the Zodiac. It is explained that “the Zodiac is supposedly the zone of the Heavens containing the twelve signs within which lie the paths of the principal planets and through which the sun passes in its annual course” (p. 30).

The twelve signs represent the twelve months of the year. Each sign represents “a historical or moral significance” (p. 30). The Hebrew month of Tishrai is represented by the scales because Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur fall in that month, and G-d weighs the future of every soul. Tishrai is first month of the New Year. (p. 30). Heshvon is represented by a scorpion to symbolize punishment to those who willfully violate their pledges of repentance (p. 30). Kislev is represented by a bow and arrow which “some say also symbolize punishment and casting way of sins committed” (p. 31).

Tebes is represented by a young goat which symbolized innocence, a goal the remorseful should strive for (p. 31). Shevat is represented by the bucket used to draw water from a spring symbolizing “purification” (p. 31). Adar is represented by a pair of fishes symbolizing fruitfulness (p. 31). Nisan is represented by the lamb symbolic of the sacrifice offered at Passover to honor the Jews’ deliverance from Egyptian bondage (p. 31).

Iyar is represented by an ox which is thought to represent the food served by Abraham to the angels (p.31). Sivan is represented by a pair of doves representing the cherubs which adorned the Holy Ark in the Temple (of Solomon). The Ark (of the covenant) contained the Ten Commandments (actually there are 613 commandments in the complete Torah) which the Jews received on Mt. Sinai during the

month of Sivan (p. 31). Tameiz is represented by the crab to symbolize those who injure the Jew.

Tameiz was the month in Jewish history in which our ancestors received many sorrows (p. 31).

Ab is represented by the lion, for it is this month that both Temples were destroyed. The Messiah, descended from the royal line of David, when he is born will restore full splendor to Israel (p. 31). Ellul is represented by a dove which symbolizes peacefulness which results if one lives a religious life that comes from sincere atonement (p. 31). Ellul is the month preceding Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur (the Jewish New Year and Day of Atonement when Jews are to repent for their sins and make peace with G-d) (p. 31).

The four windows on Third Street have three panels each. The panels represent the musical instruments used in the Holy Temple. Nowadays it is forbidden to use music in a religious service as a sign of mourning for the destruction of the Temple (the Reform and Reconstructionist movements allow some music) (p. 31). The instruments shown in the panels are the harp, the trumpet, the drum, and the cymbals (p. 31). Four panels represent animals, the lion, the deer, the tiger, and the eagle, each with a Talmudic quotation below (p. 31). Four panels represent the Menorah, the Tablets of the Law, the Priestly Benediction, and the burning bush (p. 31).

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Keshet Israel 75th Anniversary Edition: 5662-5737/1902-1977.

Silver, Rabbi David L. *Tradition, 5741 (1976)*. Harrisburg: Yeshiva Academy, 1976. Dauphin County Historical Society.

Appendix 1: Members of Keshet Israel Synagogue, 1902-1949

The table listing the members of the Keshet Israel Synagogue lists the name of the member and occupation of the husband when known. When available, the husband and wife's names are listed. In some cases a man is listed twice—before and after he was married. In the column Date the “BD” stands for *Boyd's Directory*.

What the directory cannot address is how strict a member was to the rules of Judaism. Let me address this issue. An observant Jew is one who adheres to the rules of kasherth (kosher), and that person is Shomer Sabbas (observes the Sabbath to the letter). What this means is that when the sun sets Friday evening until one hour after the sun sets on Saturday, the observant Jew will not drive or ride in any type of vehicle. Some members lived very close to the synagogue and had to walk only a short distance. Other members lived further away from the synagogue, for one reason or another, and that person walked to synagogue even if it meant walking one or two miles.

In other cases some members were not as strict, and those members rode to services Friday evening and Saturday morning. For those people who rode to synagogue, they lived wherever they wanted. Not living within the Eight Ward, therefore, is not a true indicator of who was very strict and who wasn't. There were instances when members may not have been able to find living quarters close to the synagogue, and in that event, they may have chosen to stay with other religious members who lived close to the synagogue for the Sabbath.

Name	Address	Date
Abraham (Abram) and Irene Abramson	113 Cumberland Street	(BD) 1923
Abram? Baturin (clothier)	418 Walnut Street	(BD) 1909
Nathan and Gussie Bogatz (Robert Bogatz and Lee Kovnor's parents)	320 Reily Street	(BD) 1923
Robert Bogatz (laborer)	320 Reily Street	(BD) 1923
Robert and Alda Bogatz		
Hyman and Sara Boster		
Henry and Jesse Brenner	1933 N. Second Street	(BD) 1923

Morris and Lena Brenner	2128 N. Third Street	(BD)1923
Nachum (Nathan) Brenner	426 Walnut Street	(BD) 1904
N. Brenner	1315 N. Third Street	(BD) 1909
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Brenner	253 Liberty Street	(BD)1909
William Bristol		
Louis and Celia Buch (grocer)	1625 Penn Street	(BD) 1909
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Claster (jeweler)	2001 N. Third Street	(BD) 1909
Emanuel and Rae Cohen	812 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1926
Jacob Cohen (tailor)	508 Cowden Street	(BD) 1909
Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Cohen (furniture dealer)	114 Short Street	(BD) 1904
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Cohen (tailor)	119 Short Street	(BD) 1904
Mr. and Mrs. Max Cohen (clothier)	Steelton	(BD) 1904
Morton Cohen (student)	256 Verbeke Street	(BD) 1926)
Morton Cohen		
Philip Cohen (tailor)	1508 Wallace Street	(BD) 1910
Simon and Sara Cooper (horse dealer)	600 North Street	(BD) 1909
Aaron S. and Sara Feinerman (principal of Harrisburg Hebrew School)	1118 N. Third Street	(BD) 1936-37
John and Mary Feldman (insurance agent-New York Life Insurance Co.)	19 N. Fourth Street	(BD) 1925)
Samuel Finkelstein (dyer)	206 S. Second Street	(BD) 1909
Marcus Fisher		
Samuel and Gertrude Fishman (moving pictures)	576 Walnut Street	(BD) 1910
Barney Forman		
Mr. and Mrs. Herman Freedman (salesman)	1531 Green Street	(BD) 1925
Wolf and Rachel Freedman	607 Boas Street	(BD) 1909
Reverend and Mrs. Samuel Freedman	1602 Penn Street	(BD) 1900
Jacob Friedberg	2121 N. Street	(BD) 1926
Nachman Friedberg (confectioner, bottler)	442 North Street	(BD) 1910
Abraham Garner (clothier)	1005 Green Street	(BD) 1910
David Garonzik (salesman)	409 Cumberland Street	(BD) 1905
Morris and Jennie Gerber (grocer)	1646 N. Third Street	(BD) 1925
Lewis Gilbert		
Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Gittlen		
Berre Goldberg		
Reverend David Goldberg (interpreter PA R.R.)	17 Cowden Street	(BD) 1909
Reverend David and Rebecca Goldberg	609 Forester Street	(BD) 1920
Jacob and Ethel Y. Goldberg (junk)	1628 Fulton Street	(BD) 1920
Eli Goldstein	626 Herr Street	(BD) 1900
Aaron and Lena Gordon (grocer)	1243 Cameron Street	(BD) 1925
Meyer Gross (grocer)	428 Short Street	(BD) 1904
Nathan Gross (grocer)	2015 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1909
Hyman and Mollie Hamburger (junk) (great uncle to Arlene Benson)	1217 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1923
Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Hamburger (salesman)	14 N. Second Street	(BD) 1904
Mr. David Hammer		

Barnet and Rose L. Handler (real estate)	2129 Green Street	(BD) 1925
Mr. and Mrs. Manny Hartman	1531 Green Street	(BD) 1925
Mr. and Mrs. Herman Hervitz (salesman)	2339 N. Second Street	(BD) 1936-37
John and Ida Hervitz (meat)	1146 S. Cameron Street	(BD)
Yoel and Chaya Hervitz		
Jacob and Fannie Hess (grocer)	1513 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1920
Lewis Hoffman (shoemaker)	1006 N. Seventh Street	(BD) 1904
David and Lena Horowitz (grocer)	526 Schuylkill Street	(BD) 1923
David Houck (clothier)	512 N. Fifth Street	(BD) 1904
Max B. Isaacman (grocer)	1917 Derry Street	(BD) 1905
Julius and Anna Kantor (cutting supervisor at Harrisburg Children's Dress Co.)	2439 N. Second Street	(BD) 1920
Reverend Isaac A. Kantrowitz Reverend Isaac A. and Dora Kantrowitz (musician) (great aunt and uncle to Arlene Benson)	423 Strawberry Street 1525 Wallace Street	(BD) 1904 (BD) 1923
Oscar and Jennie Kasoff (grocer)	563 S. Tenth Street	(BD) 1925
Meyer Katz	17 Cowden Street	(BD) 1900
Reverend Joseph Klein (principal-Herzle Hebrew School)	412 Briggs Street	(BD) 1909
Reverend Joseph Klein Reverend Joseph and Sophia Klein	102 Cowden Street	(BD) 1909
Hyman and Anna Kerdeman (patent medicine)	1642 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1925
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kleinman (clerk)	1220 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1925
Jacob Kodesh (peddler)	1111 N. Seventh Street	(BD) 1904 and 1910
A. Harold Kopp (originally Koplovitz) (student) (uncle to Arlene Benson)	624 Verbeke	(BD) 1926
Isaac and Sadie Koplovitz (laborer) (grandparents to Arlene Benson)	624 Verbeke Street	(BD) 1923
Isaac and Sadie Koplovitz (children Julius, Benjamin and Samuel) (grandparents to Arlene Benson, her father, and his brothers)	1802 Penn Street	(BD) 1946
Julius and Eleanor Koplovitz (salesman) (parents of Arlene Benson)	1021 N. Third Street	(BD) 1947
Albert Kovner (Al's Auto Radiator Service)	1309 N. Third Street	(BD) 1936-37
Albert and Lee Kovner (Keystone Auto Radiator Co.) (cousins to Arlene Benson)	322 Reily Street	(BD) 1946
Mr. and Mrs. David Kovner (possibly Albert's and Samuel's parents)	322 Reily Street	(BD) 1946
Samuel Kovner (Albert's brother)	322 Reily Street	(BD) 1946
Israel and Freda Lemka (junk)	1621 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1925
Samuel and Helen Lehrman (Harrisburg Grocery Co.)	2114 N. Third Street	(BD) 1925
Abraham and Bessie Levin (peddler)	612 Boas Street	(BD) 1923
Samuel and Sarah Levy	320 Emerald Street	(BD) 1923

Mr. Sol Levin (clerk)	612 Boas Street	(BD) 1925
Samuel Lever		
Nathan and Esther Lipsitz		
Chaim London		
Isaac Marcus (moving pictures)	1103 N. Third Street	(BD) 1909
Samuel Marcus (cigar making)	507 Cowden Street	(BD) 1909
Harry and Bessie Margolis (salesman)	1735 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1925
Henry L. Meyerowitz (teacher)	712 South Street	(BD) 1904
Simon and Fanny Nathan	1629 Green Street	(BD) 1926
Cantor Nathan Daniel and Nettie Newmark	421 Foster Street	(BD) 1920
Mr. Julius Nicoll (clerk) (sometime later married 1 st wife who died, married Lillian)	1836 Fulton Street	(BD) 1925
Benjamin Perceman		
Max and Bessie Press (junk)	634 Herr Street	(BD) 1920
Max Reiter (salesman)	1108 N. Seventh Street	(BD) 1910
Reverend Abraham and Lena Rochman		
David Rosen (student) (sometime later married wife Helen)	531 Cameron Street	(BD) 1926
Harry and Mary Rosenberg		
Meyer B. Rosenzweig	2234 Green Street	(BD) 1923
Benjamin and Edna Silberman (salesmen)	2109 N. Third Street	(BD) 1936-37
Joseph and Jennie Silberman	2109 N. Third Street	(BD) 1923
Rabbi Eliezer and Bessie Silver (Father of Rabbi David L. Silver)	606 North Street 712 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1909 (BD)1923
Louis and Sarah Silver (men's furnishings) (grandparents of Arlene Benson)	1019 N. Third Street	(BD) 1923
Selig and Alta Silver (glove manufacturer) (brother to Louis)	708 S. Twenty-Fourth Street	(BD) 1925
Jacob and Lena Shooman (tailor)	347 Muench Street	(BD) 1925
Cantor Hyman and Ida Smigel	231 Hamilton Street	(BD) 1925
Isaac Sneidman		
Simon Stein (laborer)	2138 Greenwood Street	(BD) 1904
Simon Toor (tailor)	1320 N. Sixth Street	(BD) 1904
Max and Lena Williams	1600 N. Fifth Street	(BD) 1925
Irving and Mary Yaverbaum (stenographer)	1623 N. Third Street	(BD) 1925
Jacob Yoselovitz (jeweler and optical)	868 S. Second Street	(BD) 1920
Samuel Zack		