

FIRST ROUMANIAN



CONGREGATION

# History

of the

FIRST ROUMANIAN CONGREGATION

of

Chicago



EDITED BY

JAMES S. WINNER

Thirtieth Anniversary

1929



BARUCH WRITING JEREMIAH'S PROPHECY

*By Doré*

*"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me?" saith the Lord. "I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to offer before Me, who hath required this at your hand, to thred My courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me; the new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hateth; they are a trouble unto Me; I am weary to hear them." What does God demand of man? "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doing from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do good; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Ib. I:11-17)*



## PREFACE

There is a story of a people, that has not become generally known. The story of a people who suffered the ignominy of persecution in the land of their first adoption; a people in whose blood surged the longing for freedom; and in whose prayers were voiced the hopes and yearnings for respect and understanding. This was a people whose very heart beats, through centuries of oppression, were attuned to the sweeter cadence of liberty. And, at length, these smoldering fires within their breasts were fanned to flames. They cast aside old bonds, and old restraints. Then raising their eyes towards the West, they commenced the hegira that led them to happiness and their Avalon.

And so in the spring of 1878 the Roumanian Jew first felt the press of American soil beneath his feet. And how he responded to that touch! Old restraints had disappeared. Here he felt the inner fire of a new life, in a paradise of inspiring work. Rapidly he came to know that a place existed for him in the scheme of things. He was to become a part and parcel of this new country, a cog in its remarkable economic machinery. It needed not long for him to assume his place of responsibility. In the channels of industrial life, he took his place side by side with the children of other lands. In the financial marts, his power became known and respected. He became, above all, a significant figure in American life.

It is perhaps in the larger cities that we find him more of an active figure, since his natural capacities and instincts fit him better for the trading and financial marts of the city. The Roumanian Jew of Chicago furnishes, no doubt, as interesting a study as one might seek.

In the final analysis the one standard by which a people's usefulness to society can be judged is the manner in which it adapts itself to new environs. Logically it follows the only judgment possible is that of his actual contributions in the various fields in which his energy is expended.

The Roumanian Jew in Chicago has satisfied to the final letter the exacting standards of modern life. His very effort in the fields of activity, whatever might be their scope,

have brought him prestige and admiration.

We find him in the field of Medicine, as well as in Law, Finance and Merchandising; and, lastly, as an integral part of fraternal enterprises. His energy and initiative is everywhere in evidence.

Proudly at the head of that roll of honor stand the names of those who labored to bring into existence Chicago's First Roumanian Congregation. Some of those earlier workers are still happily active in our midst. Their deep religious zeal will be an everlasting monument to future generations. They gave a good account of themselves, winning the confidence and esteem of the community, who accepted and welcomed them.

A survey of the progress of the Roumanian Jew cannot be complete without the question, "What of tomorrow?" The few years in which he has made such progress in an entirely new land, is it an indication of a greater progress in the future?

Shall the Roumanian Jew, aside from rendering a good account as a citizen, make a definite contribution to American life? These are questions that await the morrow for an answer. Still they are worth considering, for who can question but that another decade will not find even greater achievements credited to him.

The life of the Roumanian Jew in America, reckoned in the terms of years familiar to us, has been short. Yet it has been memorable. And there may come, in later years, the sweet melody of a half forgotten song to greet us on the dawn of a far greater achievement, the moment when the Roumanian Jew shall have made his influence felt throughout the land. Where once there was oppression and restraint, there shall be but the living realities of deeds and accomplishments conceived in the openness of mind, and wrought by unshackled hands. This will be the heritage made possible by the heart that has thrilled to the name of America.

James S. Winner, Editor.

Chicago, 1929.



*Sincerely yours  
James S. Winnes.*





## History of the

### First Roumanian Congregation of Chicago



IN THE summer of 1898, eleven Roumanian Jews who had but recently set foot on the soil of America, met at the Home of Aron Goldenberg and concluded to organize a benevolent society under a charter from the I. O. B. A. order, the object of which was to extend financial assistance to their countrymen and to foster fellowship and social intercourse.

The following participated: Abraham Friend, A. Orenstein, A. Glickman, Aron Goldenberg, Abraham Goldenberg, Adolph Bernard, Ike Friend, Samuel Brill, William Hildebrand, M. Gottesman and Meier Reizler. A. Glickman was elected temporary chairman of the first organization of Roumanian Jews of Chicago.

Though originally not so intended, the organization soon assumed a religious character. In 1899 a charter was obtained under the name, the First Roumanian Congregation of Chicago. The following were the first officers elected: A. Glickman, President; Aron Goldenberg, Secretary, and Abraham Friend, Treasurer.

The first services were held in a room fitted up above the store of A. Glickman, the newly elected president, on West Twelfth St. (Roosevelt Rd.),



First Roumanian Congregation  
Judd and Clinton Street

corner Clinton. In a small room religious services were held for a while, since only about ten were present at the services. Whenever one of the worshipers left the room, they had to suspend services and wait for his return.

The Sefer Torah used at these services was borrowed from another congregation.

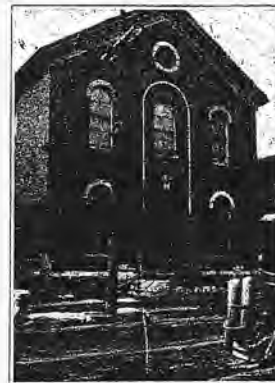
Women as well as men were regular worshipers, but owing to the absence of a gallery, the women sat on the same floor as the men, but they occupied the rear seats partitioned by a curtain. The religious services were conducted by Abraham Friend, assisted by A. Glickman.

They kept the Sabbath holy, refraining from work or business on the day of rest.

They continued in that little room for about eight months, during which time the attendance became too great for it. A committee was appointed to secure a desirable location where they could conduct daily services. A flat above a grocery store on the corner of Judd and Clinton Sts. was selected as best suited to the purpose, and the Congregation, numbering about 40 members, moved to their new house of worship.

One of the most interesting early Roumanian Jewish families in Chicago were the Friends, pious and God fearing people. They were a tower of strength in the early community.

With such stalwart Jews as the Friends, A. Orenstein, Abraham Goldenberg, Adolph Bernard, Sam Brill, Meier Reizler, M. Gotesman, and A. Glickman, it was not long before efforts were made to establish a larger house of worship, to take care of the influx of Roumanian Jews into the vicinity. Joseph Cohen, President, authorized a committee consisting of Aron Glickman, Abraham Goldenberg and Adolph Bernard to purchase the Catholic church at the corner of Union and Four-



First Romanian Congregation  
Union Ave. and 14th Street

teenth Sts. The deal was consummated on the 6th day of May, 1902, for the sum of \$8,500. The church was converted into a synagogue on the 3rd day of June, 1902, with great ceremony, the Elders



carrying with reverence the Sefer Torahs and holy books to their new domicile.

The joy of those struggling pioneers who made the new synagogue possible was unbounded. It appeared to them as a sweet dream that they were found worthy to set foot into their own house of God.

From the South, North and West Side, Roumanian Jews flocked to the *Chanikas Abaius* of the new synagogue, like children gathering around their lost mother. Services were held daily as well as Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, when special services were conducted by Abraham Friend and elders of the Congregation. During the Sabbath day a Chevra Mishneis studied the law of the Mishna.

So active were the leaders and so successful their methods, that a year later President Joseph Cohen authorized a committee to purchase a burial ground to be known as the Cemetery of the First Roumanian Congregation. A. Orenstein was elected the first superintendent, and Anchel Leibovitz assistant of the cemetery in 1908. In addition to a Chevra Mikra and Chevra Mishneis, the Congregation maintained a Sabbath School conducted by Anna Goldberg.

It is interesting to note that soon after the formation of the Congregation, a Ladies' Aid Society was formed, which proved quite helpful in its way. A. Bernard was the first President of the Ladies' Aid Society.

The Congregation continued to prosper and broaden its activities during the following years, but the shifting of the Jewish population to the Lawndale district made it difficult for the Congregation to remain intact without changing the location of its Synagogue. Accordingly in 1919 President C. J. Wolfson and the more progressive leaders of the Congregation decided to hold high holiday services in the Douglas Park Auditorium, which proved quite successful.

Satisfied that the Union Avenue building had outlived its usefulness, the President and Board of Directors authorized Charles Bernard, son of Ex-President A. Bernard, a real estate broker, to negotiate for the purchase of two lots on the corner of Douglas Blvd. and Millard Ave.

The deal was consummated on November 10, 1911, and plans were immediately drawn for a community center to contain adequate facilities, not only for religious services but for study and recreational uses as well. The building committee consisted of 20 members as follows:

Henry Friend, Honorary Chairman	
C. J. Wolfson, Chairman	
A. Bernard, Vice-Chairman	
A. Goldenberg, Treasurer	
B. J. Braunstein	} Secretaries
Harry Feldman	

A. G. Feldman
A. Leibovitz
A. Orenstein
A. Z. Elescu
B. Hirsch
H. Shimelfarb
I. Rosenfeld
J. Cohen
L. Cooper
M. Corre
M. Luftig
N. Orenstein
O. Abramowitz
S. Epstein

At the laying of the cornerstone, a fine spirit of generosity manifested itself. When Mrs. Rifka Friend paid a handsome sum for the honor of laying the cornerstone, others likewise paid record prices for the remaining "privileges." Thus thousands of dollars were placed at the disposal of the building committee, enabling them to proceed with the construction of the new building without delay. The building was completed in time for the Rosh Hashuna and Yom Kipur Holidays. The total expenditure amounted to the round sum of \$33,000.

The Congregation progressed rapidly by reason of the zeal and self-sacrifice of its members and their harmonious co-operation with their leaders. The membership increased to 250 families

A great public honor was accorded to the Roumanian Jews and all Jewry, when in 1922, Henry Friend, son of Abraham Friend, and a stalwart of the Roumanian Congregation, visited his birthplace, where he donated large sums to various institutions regardless of creed. For these benefactions he was received by the King and Queen of Roumania who bestowed upon him the medal of the highest Roumanian Order and the title of H. of Cavalier.

With the gradual building up of the Jewish community on the West Side larger quarters became a real necessity, and with the accession of B. J. Braunstein to the presidency, plans for a new building began to assume significant proportions, a vigorous campaign was started to awaken interest and secure support from as many Roumanian Jews as possible. An active building committee was appointed consisting of the following members:

B. J. Braunstein, Chairman, Abraham Goldenberg, Vice-Chairman, Benjamin Itzkovitz, Treasurer, Jacob Greenberg, M. Wortman, Secretaries, Henry Buchman, Joseph Schiller, Maier Corre, Louis Marcus, Sam Rosenbaum, Morris Mendelsohn, Harry Abramovice, Leon Axelrod, Abraham S. Brod, M. M. Braun, Sam Brill, Max Bernard, Louis Cooper, Max D. Cohen, Chas Gross, Sam Goldberg, Aaron Glickman, Abe Lauer, Anchel Leibovitz, Norbert Leibovitz, Morris Luftig, Morris Marcovitz, Alter Marcus, Sam Nadler, Aron Orenstein,



Nathan Orenstein, Sam Palmer, Isidore Reiss, Morris Rubin, George Ross, Meyer Reisler, Lupu Rosenthal, Charles Rosenzweig, William Silberman, Harry Siegel, Samuel Schoenberg, Sam Schwartz, James S. Winner, and Leon Weisman.

Having in mind a magnificent Temple befitting

the generous amounts paid for the various *Mitzvas* at the dedication.

The work was now carried further by a committee headed by James S. Winner, which organized and conducted a bazaar on the premises February 1-8, 1927, which netted a large sum,



First Roumanian Congregation  
Douglas Boulevard and Millard Avenue

the Roumanian Community of Chicago, President B. J. Braunstein laid his plans before the building committee who received them with great enthusiasm. Under his leadership, preliminary work was completed and 6 months later contracts were awarded for the erection of a building to cost \$200,000. The Ladies' Auxiliary, under the leadership of Fannie Goldenberg, who have been a bulwark of strength and assurance of success in all undertakings, gave the sum of \$10,000 as their gift towards the erection of the new temple.

The cornerstone for the new temple was laid May 23, 1925, with exercises typical of the progressive spirit of the Roumanian Congregation. Many notables of all denominations were present at the impressive ceremonies.

The honor of laying the cornerstone was allotted to S. H. Weiss, who paid a record price for that "privilege."

The sum of \$59,000 was given by the members on this occasion. The work of construction was pushed with great zeal and the structure was completed in the fall of 1926 and formally dedicated August 15, 1926.

Considerable revenue was again secured from

The annex to the Congregation was dedicated to the Ladies' Auxiliary, those fine women who have occupied an important place in the development of the temple.

With the completion of the building, the first thought was of children, for whom space was allotted for a modern Hebrew school under the guidance of the Jewish Educational Society, with a daily attendance of 250 pupils. Besides the Hebrew day school, a free Sabbath school is held every Saturday morning.

The visit of Queen Marie of Roumania to the Synagogue on November 19, 1926, created quite a sensation in local Jewish circles. The Queen was accompanied by Princess Ileana and Prince Nicholas.

The impressive ceremonies were witnessed by one of the largest crowds ever assembled in the synagogue. About 20,000 people gathered without to get a glimpse of the royal visitors.

It was a novel and yet a beautiful spectacle. The synagogue was decorated with flowers, American, Zionist and Roumanian flags.

The national anthem, *Hatickwo* and *Traiasa Regelè* was sung by the choir under leadership of Hirsch. Then came a prayer in Hebrew sung by Cantor Katay.





B. J. Braunstein, chairman of the arrangement committee, welcomed the Queen in Roumanian and Henry Friend read a short address. The principal address was made by Judge Harry M. Fisher. Much credit is due to A. G. Feldman, President of the Congregation, and the members of the Arrangement Committee for the order and decorum that prevailed within the Congregation as well as without, where about 20,000 people gathered to get a glimpse of the royal visitors.

The year following the visit of the Queen was marked by happenings which brought grief to the Roumanian Jews of Chicago as well as to world Jewry. December 27 and 28 are the dates of the Oradea Mare and Cluj pogroms, two large cities in Roumanian where the population is three-fourths Jewish and where hordes of hoodlums desecrated synagogues and beat up inoffensive Jewish inhabitants.

A mass meeting was held at the Congregation on January 3, 1928, where Jews and Christians of prominence voiced their indignation and drew up resolutions of protest and took steps toward substantial aid for the sufferers. The meeting was addressed by Miss Jane Addams, Rev. J. M. Thompson, Judge John M. O'Connor, Judge Harry M. Fisher and B. J. Braunstein.

With the accession of the Maniu Government, the condition of the Jews in Roumania has improved considerably and Leon Weisman, President of the Congregation, called a monster mass meeting at the synagogue to applaud the reforms introduced by the new government.

At this meeting speaker after speaker arose and expressed the fervent hope that the new Maniu administration might have a long lease of life. Many prominent Jews and non-Jews were present, including George Boncescu, Counselor of American Legation at Washington; Harry M. Fisher, Judge Circuit Court; Lawrence Bungardean, Consul of Roumania; Rev. Stephen Opreanu and others. James S. Winner was chairman of the meeting and speakers were Leon Weisman, Max Swartz, Judge Harry M. Fisher, L. Bungardean and George Boncescu. A resolution was adopted, reading as follows:

*Whereas*, We the Roumanian Jews, are aware of the great change that is taking place in Roumanian political life, a change which augurs well for the whole Roumanian people and the Jews of Roumania as well, and

*Whereas*, The Maniu government has established law and order and the citizens feel themselves secure in the enjoyment of their constitutional rights, and

*Whereas*, The Regency Council consisting of Prince Nicholas, Patriach Miron Christea and G. V. Buzdugan have approved the policies of Dr. Juliu Maniu and are all anxious to protect the rights of minorites, be it

*Resolved*, That the Roumanian Jews of Chicago, in meeting assembled Sunday, February 10, 1929, at the First Roumanian Congregation, applaud the liberal policies adopted by the new Roumanian government and express their fervent hope that the Maniu administration have a long lease of life so that it can bring to fruition its ambitious program of reforms for the happiness of all its citizens.

The Roumanian Jews of Chicago attended the meeting in great numbers with a joyous heart, and filled with ideal hopes for their brethren abroad.

Today with a membership of 400 families the First Roumanian Congregation is a stronghold of Judaism, one of the foremost in the city. It is due to the unusual men who filled the office of President from its beginning. All of them have been men of great force of character and sound judgment. The list complete is as follows:

- A. Glickman, 1898-99.
- Joseph Hoffman, 1899-1900.
- M. Kovashenki, 1900-1901.
- Joseph Cohen, 1901-13.
- A. Bernard, 1913-15.
- C. J. Wolfson, 1915-21.
- A. G. Feldman, 1921-22.
- C. J. Wolfson, 1922-23.
- B. J. Itzkovitz, 1923-24.
- B. J. Braunstein, 1924-26.
- A. G. Feldman, 1926-27.
- Leon Weisman, 1927-29.

Assisting Leon Weisman in his responsibilities as President are Isidor Rosenfield, 1st Vice-President; J. Locker, Vice-President; M. Luftig, Treasurer; Jacob Greenberg, Recording Secretary; Wolf Ehrlich, Financial Secretary; Meier Corre, Cemetery Superintendent; Max Bernard, Building Superintendent; Isador Rice, Conductor; Anchel Leibovitz, Mark Weisler, Emil Friedman, M. Mendelson, S. Feldman, S. Rosenbaum and M. J. Braun. Trustees, and the directorate.

- M. SWARTZ
- D. MAIMAN
- B. GOLDENBERG
- B. ITZKOVITZ
- A. LAUER
- H. LIEBERMAN
- J. S. WINNER
- J. SCHILLER
- L. MARCUS
- H. MALKIN
- M. MARCOVITZ
- J. COOPERMAN
- L. COOPER
- A. GOLDENBERG
- H. SIEGEL
- D. BERKOVITZ
- M. ROSENZWEIG
- M. SCHWARTZ
- S. SCHOENBERG

- WM. SILBERMAN
- S. L. GREENSTEIN
- A. S. BROD
- H. BUCHMAN
- SAM BRILL
- J. DAVICH
- M. WORTMAN
- M. WEXLER
- H. ABRAMOVITZ
- O. ABRAMOVITZ
- M. M. BRAUN
- A. MARCUS
- N. ORENSTEIN
- GEO. ROSS
- M. RUBIN
- R. GERSHKOVITZ
- A. BERNARD
- H. F. COHEN
- H. ALBIN





## LADIES' AUXILIARY

One of the most progressive in the city is F. R. C. Ladies' Auxiliary. It was founded on the 30th day of April, 1904. The purpose of the Auxiliary is to promote the religious, social and intellectual advancement of its members. The first directors selected were as follows: Leah Orenstein, Fannie Cohen, Adela Glickman, Fannie Goldenberg, Helen Bernard, Mollie Brill, Clara Goldenberg, Rifka Friend, Hinda Schonfeld, Hanna Reissler, Clara Katz, S. Canal and Rissel Friend. A. Bernard was first President and Fannie Goldenberg first Secretary of the newly formed society. They keep busy with an abundance of Congregational interests. Their first gift to the struggling young Shul was a Sefer Torah which they purchased with the proceeds of a social function. From a handful of women their membership grew to 300. During the purchase of the Union Avenue Synagogue the Ladies' Auxiliary played a leading part, donating first \$500 towards the purchase of the building. The construction of a chapel on the cemetery of the Congregation at a cost of \$4,000 stands out as a noteworthy achievement of the Ladies' Auxiliary. War service of exceptional merit, and a wide range of charitable effort are also credited to the Auxiliary. They have always offered their aid freely. Their gift to the new temple was a check for \$10,000 presented by Fannie Goldenberg, President, to the building committee.

The past officers of Ladies' Auxiliary were as follows:

- A. Bernard, 1904-07.
- L. Greenstein, 1907-09.
- Fannie Cohen, 1909-1920.
- Fannie Goldenberg, 1920-28.
- Lena Erlich, 1928-29.

The Ladies' Auxiliary of the First Roumanian Congregation have a membership of 400. The present officers include:

Fannie Goldenberg President; Anna Goldstein, Vice-President; Jeannette Feldman, Financial Secretary; Leah Cornfield, Recording Secretary; Jeannette Cooperman, Treasurer; Adela Weissman, Marie Greenberg and Sophia Ross, Trustees; Libby Abramovitch, Chairman Social; Fannie Gerschkovitz, Chairman Visiting; M. Catarin, Chairman Membership; Minnie Itskovitch, Chairman Publicity; Adele Goldenberg, Chaplain; Yetty Siegel, Conductor.

## Board of Directors:

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| S. Berkovitz  | Dora Kamenir    |
| A. Buck       | Anne Malkin     |
| H. Bernard    | E. Markovitz    |
| A. Braunstein | L. Rosenfeld    |
| R. Corre      | Sarah Reiss     |
| J. Greenstein | L. Schiller     |
| F. Marcowitz  | Pearl Silberman |
| N. Cohn       | M. Winner       |
| B. Brod       | N. Gartner      |

## 30TH ANNIVERSARY BANQUET

One of the great events in the history of the Congregation was the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the birth of the Congregation. This notable celebration took place on Sunday eve, March 17th, 1929, at the Morrison Hotel (Cameo Room).

It was an impressive spectacle. The Cameo Room was tastefully decorated with flags, evergreens and flowers. It was filled to capacity with the most respectable and interested audiences we have ever seen among them some prominent leaders in Jewish and non-Jewish communal circles.

The ceremonies were opened by Leon Weisman, President of the Congregation, who welcomed those assembled after an invocation by Rabbi H. Goldstein, the President introduced Max Schwartz, chairman of the Jubilee who acted as toastmaster for the evening.

In his opening remarks the toastmaster dwelt upon the splendid progress made by the Roumanian Jews during the thirty years of their existence, in which they brought out their high qualities and their splendid citizenship and loyalty to their adopted country.

James S. Winner, in his effective speech, urged all friends of reform to unite and lay the foundation for a reform congregation and to abolish customs and rites which are either defunct or are based on erroneous views.

Dignified and earnest speeches that went straight to the hearts of the hearers were delivered by ex-President A. G. Feldman, Paul W. Rothenberg, Alderman Jacob M. Arvey, Consul Laurence Bungeard, C. J. Wolfsohn, Joseph Schiller, Fannie Goldenberg, Isador Rosenfeld, Lena Ehrlich, Louis Cooper, Anchel Leibovitch, Meier Corre, Paul Tomey and Louis Marcus. The musical program, under the direction of Cantor Barney Schiffman, completed the program.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONGREGATION

It is a great privilege, coupled with an exceptional honor, to speak a message to the men and women who contributed their diligent efforts toward making the Historical Book a great success.

Many there are who deserve credit for advancing the welfare of Judaism and love! Love to God and love to man.

They are the earnest folk who carry upon their shoulders a heavy and almost overwhelming responsibility to maintain our present-day Jewish life and to perpetuate our faith by transmitting it to the younger generation.

It is impossible in the short space allotted to me to enumerate all the chairmen and committees who contributed so much to the cause, but suffice to say that our success bears testimony to their earnest co-operation.

I feel confident that I express the desire of the entire Congregation as well as the officers and directors when I come forward and express my gratitude to the editor of the Historical Book.

He is a warrior in the service of God, a loyal member of the Congregation with a heart full of enthusiasm and fiery zeal for Judaism. His task was great, and most difficult, but it has been accomplished.

The Jubilee officers and committee have been a strong factor in helping our congregation to attain its present phenomenal status and to enjoy a great era of prosperity.

It is my ardent hope that all active men and women be encouraged in their endeavors by the co-operation of the entire membership so that their hopes and plans may be realized and a deeper love for our religion may be called forth.

I wish to extend my appreciation to all who have advertised in our Historical Book and hope that these advertisements will prove profitable to all.

With best wishes,

Leon Weisman.



## [ THE SPOTLIGHT ]

There is one man who doesn't care for honors or speech making, but his work is important to the success of the congregation. That is President Leon Weisman. He sees that the affairs of the congregation are safe and that the bills are paid promptly. Weisman goes about his work in a quiet, business-like manner, and is deserving much credit for the way he is conducting the office of President. Fine work, Leo.



To Fannie Goldenberg, president of the Ladies' Auxiliary, we extend our sincere thanks and admiration, appreciating what she is doing for the congregation, we bequeath her the opportunity of continuing her splendid work.



To office of the Vice-President is ably filled by Theodore Rosenfeld, an old and faithful worker, liked immensely by his fellow members.



A. G. Feldman, the successful President of the Storckline Furniture Co., is a great asset to the First Roumanian Congregation. His donations run into thousands. Long life to you, Abraham, and may the God of Israel bestow his blessings on you and your family.



It is our firm belief that the realization of our dream, a greater Synagogue, a new and finer edifice, was made possible through the efforts of B. J. Braunstein.



Little does one think of the colossal work connected with the office of cemetery superintendent—hours spent day and night in the effort to satisfy the wants of the community. Meier Corre has filled this office with great ability and we are surely grateful to him.



Anchel Leibovitz is rendering efficient and loyal service as First Trustee of the First Roumanian Congregation, a willing worker for the cause.



In the election of Morris Luftig as Treasurer, we have learned what it means to have an efficient trustworthy official.



The members of the congregation appreciate the aid given by Lena Ehrlich, ex-president of the Ladies' Auxiliary.



The services rendered by Jack Greenberg as secretary were magnificent. He is one of the shining lights of the congregation.



Wolf Ehrlich is a valuable official as financial secretary. He is painstaking in his duties.

Foremost among the large contributors to the cause, stands Henry Friend, who has earned a place among the city's greatest philanthropists. The benefactions of this remarkable man have wrought an incalculable influence in awakening the public conscience and in teaching others to give.



Max Swartz, the genial real estate man, was a success in his first undertaking as chairman of the 30th Anniversary Celebration, held on March 17, 1929, at the Morrison Hotel.



Joseph Schiller has given valuable service as a member of the subcommittee during the construction of the new Temple. Through his vigilance thousands of dollars were saved in the purchase of materials and equipment.



The members are under great obligations to Max Bernard, our dignified building superintendent. It is a rare pleasure to see Max work.



C. J. Wolfson, ex-president of the First Roumanian Congregation, had much to do with shaping both the early and more recent history of that great institution—the First Roumanian Synagogue.



S. L. Greenstein and his wonderful son, Joseph, always on hand with their generous contributions for a worthy cause. It is indeed fortunate for the congregation to number them among its members.



Probably no other member has devoted so much time and money and given loyal service both as officer and member as old faithful Louis Cooper.



All honor to Abraham Goldenberg for his loyalty and liberality to the congregation from its inception, when he signed the charter to the present day. His record cannot be surpassed.



Samuel Brill, the pioneer, is a loyal and devoted member to the First Roumanian Congregation. He has demonstrated that time and again.



A. Orenstein is another pioneer who has attained prominence in the First Roumanian Congregation, serving as the first cemetery superintendent and one of the first workers and organizers of the congregation.



Jake Cooperman has been of great assistance to the officers of the Congregation as well as to the organization, and thanks are owing for his consistent interest and helpfulness.





## [ THE SPOTLIGHT ]

Mark Weissler as Trustee has achieved a lasting reputation as a loyal and alert official.

Louis Marcus is an aggressive and faithful worker and his influence is felt in the councils of the congregation.

Benjamin Itzkovitz did as much as any other man to make the First Roumanian Congregation the best institution in the world.

An eager worker in all undertakings is Liba Abramovice. She takes a lively interest in all matters of the congregation, both religious and social. She is a noble woman with lofty ideals and high morals.

Morris Mendelson is entitled to a vote of thanks; it is through his untiring efforts as a Trustee that the Congregation has attained success.

M. J. Braum has always executed his work with precision and good judgment to the delight of everyone.

H. Siegel, Waukegan, Ill., has made a splendid record and sincerely hope his good work may continue.

One of the most important members of the Congregation is Ozias Abramovitz. His zeal has directed many financial and business problems of the institution.

Meyer Rosenzweig was another who performed yeoman service in times of difficulty and whose interest in the Congregation never waned.

Benjamin Goldenberg (old reliable) is a brilliant and powerful force for good in the affairs of the First Roumanian Congregation.

A. Brod is always willing to serve and very generous about devoting his time and money doing it.

Undivided acclamation will be given to Dave Berkovitz who filled the office of Financial Secretary with great zeal.

Prominently represented in all activities for years is Wm. Silberman who always takes a lively interest in the welfare of the congregation.

A. Lauer, a pioneer in the First Roumanian Congregation, has given long years of service in communal affairs, his services to the Roumanian Congregation have continued to the present.

The zeal of Anna Malkin has helped the Ladies' Auxiliary to forge ahead and prosper.

It is a great joy to have Harry Feldman with us. We wish we could see him often.

The success of the First Roumanian Congregation is largely due to loyal members of the type of S. Schoenberg, Alter Marcus and Nathan Orenstein.

D. Maimon has always rallied round the standard and shouldered his share of responsibility.

Many hours of voluntary work were cheerfully given by the three Moscow brothers in the painting and decorating of Ladies Auxiliary Hall and Community House.

Elias Feinstein, Waukegan, Ill., is doing great work for the cause. He is fast becoming one of the most indispensable and capable members.

Jeanette Feldman proved a successful secretary to the Ladies' Auxiliary. She has gained full confidence and support of all officers and members.

The appreciation of the Congregation for the good work of George Ross cannot be overstressed. He has done everything in his power to aid the officers and has given his time and energy toward the success of the Congregation.

Acknowledgment is due Milton Braun, that staunch supporter of the First Roumanian Congregation, for his zealous cooperation in all activities.

To Harry Siegel an expression of indebtedness for his unfailing and vigorous support for the cause.

In the affairs of the Ladies Auxiliary, Anna Goldstein took a large share as an officer and member, always in the forefront of all its activities.

Emil Friedman's interest in the activities of the First Roumanian Congregation have gradually widened and deepened with the years.

The splendid work of Henry Cohn has gained the respect and admiration of all members of the Congregation.

The generous support given by Joe Orenstein is very much appreciated.



## [ THE SPOTLIGHT ]

What a joy it would be to Gabai I. Buchman to know that many hundreds of people have been influenced for good by his life of devotion to his friends, his family and to his God.

Henry Buchman, is an energetic worker and a generous contributor to the First Roumanian Congregation.

Benjamin Bald, one of the signers of the Charter has made many substantial contributions to the First Roumanian Congregation.

We desire to express in this public fashion our very great appreciation to Sam Siegel, of Waukegan, Ill., for his loyalty to the Congregation.

Brother I. Michael has been wearing the active harness of the congregation for years. We are very proud of you, brother.

H. Lieberman has been one of our most faithful synagogue workers.

We are grateful to Harry Abramovice and realize more and more the great work he is accomplishing

H. Malkin was among those who worked hard for the success of the Congregation. We hereby express our heartfelt thanks.

Mrs. Anna Braunstein has carried on brilliantly the high record of communal service. She is prominent in the work of the Ladies' Auxiliary of the F. R. C.

Mrs. S. Reiss has lent her personal effort to every worthy cause.

Mrs. Pearl Silberman has been identified with many of the most important Jewish activities, religious, charitable and educational.

Mrs. Adella Goldenberg has found no labor too strenuous, no duty too humble or irksome, if it would help the Congregation.

Mrs. E. Siegel has to her credit many achievements of substantial worth.

Mrs. Jeanette Cooperman is a valuable acquisition to the Ladies' Auxiliary of the F. R. C.

Mrs. Sophie Berkovitz's record of service finds place among the foremost in the Ladies' Auxiliary of the F. R. C.

Mrs. M. Greenberg may well be proud of the record she made as Trustee.

Fannie Gerschkovitz, chairlady of sick, has made a splendid record; due to her boundless energy,

Among the workers who have given years of devotion to the cause is the record of Mrs. Brill.

Never for a moment should the kindness and self-sacrifice of Sima Cooper be forgotten.

The Congregation owes Mrs. H. Bernard, who worked in various affairs, a debt of gratitude beyond payment.

Mrs. Lillian Schiller has served zealously and effectively in all activities of the Ladies' Auxiliary.

Mrs. E. Marcovitz is always ready to serve at any time at a moment's summons.

Mrs. Nettie Cohen has given not only her time and high ability, her tact and patience, but her strength almost beyond her endurance.

Mrs. B. Brod has brought to her huge task her customary devotion and energy.

Mrs. N. Gartner has a record of tireless activity for the benefit of communal, cultural, civic and philanthropic endeavor.

Mrs. Dora Kamenir has found in the Ladies' Auxiliary a field for her rare abilities which won her a reputation as an organizer and director.

Mrs. Fannie Markovitz has always taken an energetic part in many movements for the betterment of the community.

Mrs. Jeanette Cooperman has given years of service to the F. R. C. steadily; her field of effort has grown until she carries a burden of communal responsibility that few could shoulder.

The Ladies Auxiliary, The First Roumanian Congregation and other numerous organizations are the beneficiaries of the devoted service of Mrs. Rachel Corre.

Mrs. A. Weissman has lent her personal effort and material support to the cause. She is a noble woman.

Mrs. Sophie Ross has been an outstanding factor in all activities of the Ladies' Auxiliary as well as the Congregation.

Mrs. L. Rosenfeld has rendered important service on the board of Directors of the Ladies Auxiliary of the F. R. C.

The success of the Ladies' Auxiliary is due in large measure to the devoted work of Mrs. L. Cornfield as Recording Secretary.

Mrs. M. Itzkovitz has been associated in an executive capacity with almost every work in which women could serve.

The Congregation is fortunate to number among its members Isidor Reiss. He is an able and energetic worker.



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—towards—

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## THE JEWS IN CHICAGO

By H. B. RITMAN  
Assistant Corporation Counsel

At this time when the Thirtieth Anniversary of First Roumanian Congregation is being celebrated, the growth and development of the Jewry in Chicago naturally suggests itself.

Jews were first known to settle in Chicago back in 1838. At that time, Michigan City was considered, so to speak, a metropolis, a town of importance, while Chicago was more or less a backwoods village with a swampy shore along the lake. But time has wrought a remarkable change and we find the backwoods village of a former day develop into the fourth largest city in the world with the very good prospect of becoming the first. It is still wrestling with its problems with an abundance of faith and with a vigor characteristic of youth. The result is inevitable—it spells greater triumphs in economic, civic and even artistic development.

That the Jews have contributed largely to this progress constitutes an interesting topic for discussion, and while much cannot be said in detail in this short essay, an occasional allusion to facts of outstanding interest will be made. We find the history of Chicago replete with incidents of Jewish interest. It is, of course, generally well known that the early settlements of our people were made along the Eastern coastline, particularly in the State of New York, and it was only around the early part of the Nineteenth Century when the steady westward movement started.

We learn from reliable sources that the first Jew landed in Chicago in 1838. His name was J. Gottlieb and he was a peddler by occupation. At that time the total population of Chicago was 4,000 and in the short span of ninety years, we find the phenomenal growth in population generally to over three and one-half million and the Jewish population increased to over 325,000.

The first public religious service of Jews in Chicago was held on "Yom Kippur" in 1845. The services were held in a room above a store on Wells Street near Lake Street, in the district that is now known the wide world over as the Great Chicago Loop.

It is perhaps of some significance to observe that eighty-one years later an orthodox "Schul" was again established in Chicago's greatest business center. In that first gathering of worshippers there were only ten Jews present, so that when one left, the services had to be suspended until he returned.

Two years later, in 1847, the first plot of ground used as a Jewish cemetery was purchased for \$46.00. In this instance, too, we find time has brought about an interesting change. The location formerly of the first Jewish cemetery is now known as Lincoln Park. The first Congregation was organized and formed on November 3rd, 1847, and was known as "Khilanshe Mariv," and we learn that at that time the Jews numbered less than one hundred. It was in that year that the first Rabbi came to Chicago. His name was Ignatz Kunreuther, and there is an interesting story connected with his coming.

It is said that there was present in the Jewish community at that time, a very orthodox old lady who refused to eat meat of any kind because it was not butchered in accordance with the Mosaic Law. Her sons became very much alarmed over her weakened physical condition and organized to import a "Shochet". The result was in bringing of Rabbi Kunreuther, who was strictly orthodox, acting not only as a Rabbi but Shochet and Chazan as well.

A year later, in 1848, the first Jewish wedding took place, the entire Jewish community being invited. It was indeed a great affair, as everyone



participated in the festivities. It brought about a closer social and religious contact.

In 1851 the first one to become "Bar Mitzvah" in this new and established community was one Louis Newburgh.

By this time there was present a number of Jews who made their influence felt through their social, business and religious activities. One name in particular stands out quite prominently—that of "Greenebaum". In 1855, the first bank organized by Jews was organized by the Greenebaums. One of the Greenebaums was also active in forming the first B'nai Brith Lodge, known as "Ramah No. 33," and later, in 1862, Henry Greenebaum became president of the Concordia Club, which carried on great patriotic work as well as marking a milestone in the progress of the Jewish community.

In 1861 the Ladies' Sewing Society was organized, and while intending to provide for the "United Hebrew Relief Association," it spread out its sphere of activity by rendering fine service during the Civil War in the way of meeting the needs of the soldiers. On September 2nd, 1867, the cornerstone for the first Jewish Hospital was laid.

And so we trace the activities of our people from the time of the first settler down to the present. We see the steady growth of progress. The first

humble "Schul" has been replaced by many magnificent Synagogues of noble architecture and contented and prosperous worshippers.

Surely one of the finest of these is the First Roumanian Congregation. Today it stands at the very head of the Jewish Community, shedding its spiritual light. It is indeed a friendly place and its people a friendly people, and while it is orthodox, its spirit is in agreement with the modern outlook. It numbers in its membership, many of the younger generation and it sounds a note of religious fellowship that binds all who enter its sacred walls. Of its devoted and active servants one can only speak in the superlative.

Visualize, if you can, a picture of men and women working without reward for this beautiful Synagogue, and you have a picture that is indeed inspiring!

But the progress of the Jews in Chicago has not only been in the direction of building synagogues and temples. We find Jews prominent in every walk of life. We have our judges, lawyers, doctors, political leaders and men and women eminent in the world of philanthropy. The names are too numerous to mention. But looking from a perspective of ninety-one years of growth, we may conservatively come to the proud conclusion that the Jewish people of Chicago have contributed their full quota to the industrial, commercial, spiritual and aesthetic life of this throbbing city.







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A. BRAUNSTEIN  
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