

The Economic Life of the Jews in San Francisco During the 1860's as Reflected in the City Directories

SETH BERNSTEIN

In order to begin considering what occupations the Jews held in San Francisco during the 1860's, one must first estimate the number of Jews in the city. According to the city directories, San Francisco's population increased from over 80,000 in 1861 to 119,100 in 1865. In 1861, the city directory stated that the number of Jews was thought to be between 5,000 and 8,000.¹ Two references noted by Rudolph Glanz, referring to the number of Jews in San Francisco, suggested that the actual number of Jews was somewhat less than the estimate of the city directories: according to Daniel Levy, Jews in San Francisco numbered more than 3,000 in 1855; by the Civil War, about 5,000.² In the second source, Glanz shows that the *Wiener Jahrbuch's* approximation was somewhat less, about 2,500 Jews.³ Assuming that there were from 2,500 to 5,000 Jews in San Francisco between 1861 and 1865, my research indicates that 1,167 were employed.

Immediately a question arises: How does one know if a given person is a Jew or not? The answer can be seen from the methodology used for selecting a name from the directory and calling it "Jewish." The procedure relied on three kinds of information which gave names of those who were "definite" Jews: source books, archival material, and organizational records. Certain source books listed many names of people who, as other authors and scholars showed, were Jews:

Dibre Yeme Immanuel: The Chronicle of Emanu-El (1900), by Jacob Voorsanger; *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (1972): "San Francisco"; *Glimpses*

Mr. Bernstein is a candidate for ordination at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati.

¹ *San Francisco City Directory, 1861*, p. 31.

² Rudolph Glanz, *The Jews of California from the Discovery of Gold until 1880* (New York, 1960), p. 27.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

of *Jewish Life in San Francisco* (1952), by Michael M. Zarchin; *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (1905): "San Francisco"; *The Jews of California from the Discovery of Gold Until 1880* (1960), by Rudolph Glanz; "The Trend in Jewish Religious Observance in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America," by Jeremiah J. Berman, in *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, Volume XXXVII (1947); *Three Years in America 1859-1862*, Volume I, by I. J. Benjamin; and *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* (1943): "San Francisco."

Names were obtained also from sources found in the American Jewish Archives: The Bachrach collection of the Bloch, Wise, Tandler and Mack Families; "Early San Francisco Jewry," by Edgar M. Kahn; and records of Congregation Shaari Zedeck, San Francisco.

The third source was the city directory itself. Before and after the listing of names were organizational and synagogal lists of members and officers. This material established an individual as "definitely" a Jew. In sum, a person was a "definite" Jew if he was listed as being a Jew in the source books or the archival material or if he belonged to, or was an officer in, any of the organizations listed in the city directories:

A. J. O. K. S. B. (Ancient Jewish Order Keshet Shel Barzel); B'nai B'rith; Chebra Achim Rachmonim Association; Chebra Bikur Cholim Ukedisha Society; Chebra B'nai Lessla; Chebra Brith Shalome; Congregation and Benevolent Society, Beth Yisrael; Eureka Benevolent Association; First Hebrew Benevolent Society; First Hebrew Ladies Mutual Benefit Association; Hebrew Benevolent Society; Hebrew Self Protection Association; Hebrew Young Men's Literary Association; Ladies Society of Israelites; Ladies United Hebrew Benevolent Society; and Montefiore Lodge.

The next step was to find in the city directory the exact names of those previously listed as "definite" Jews. Only 443 "definite" Jews out of 700 had their given names and surnames identical both in the city directory and in the sources previously mentioned.

A man or woman was termed a "probable" Jew, if his/her circumstance was as follows: 1) If the given name and surname of the person were not completely identical in the directory and the sources; or 2) If the surname of a person was an unusual "Jewish-sounding" name but the given name or initial did not correspond to the record from the sources. If a person's last name as listed in the directory was similar to the last name of a "definite" Jew and if he lived in the financial district of downtown San Francisco, then he was presumed to be a "possible" Jew.

The economic situation of the Jews in San Francisco is shown on the following charts. The majority (53.48 percent) of the Jews in San Francisco were clothing dealers, clerks, drygoods dealers, salesmen, tobacco dealers, bookkeepers, and merchants. The remaining percentage involved people who were in a large number of varied occupations. Economically, most of the Jews were in the middle class and were concentrated for the most part in what was, and to the present date is, the financial district of San Francisco.

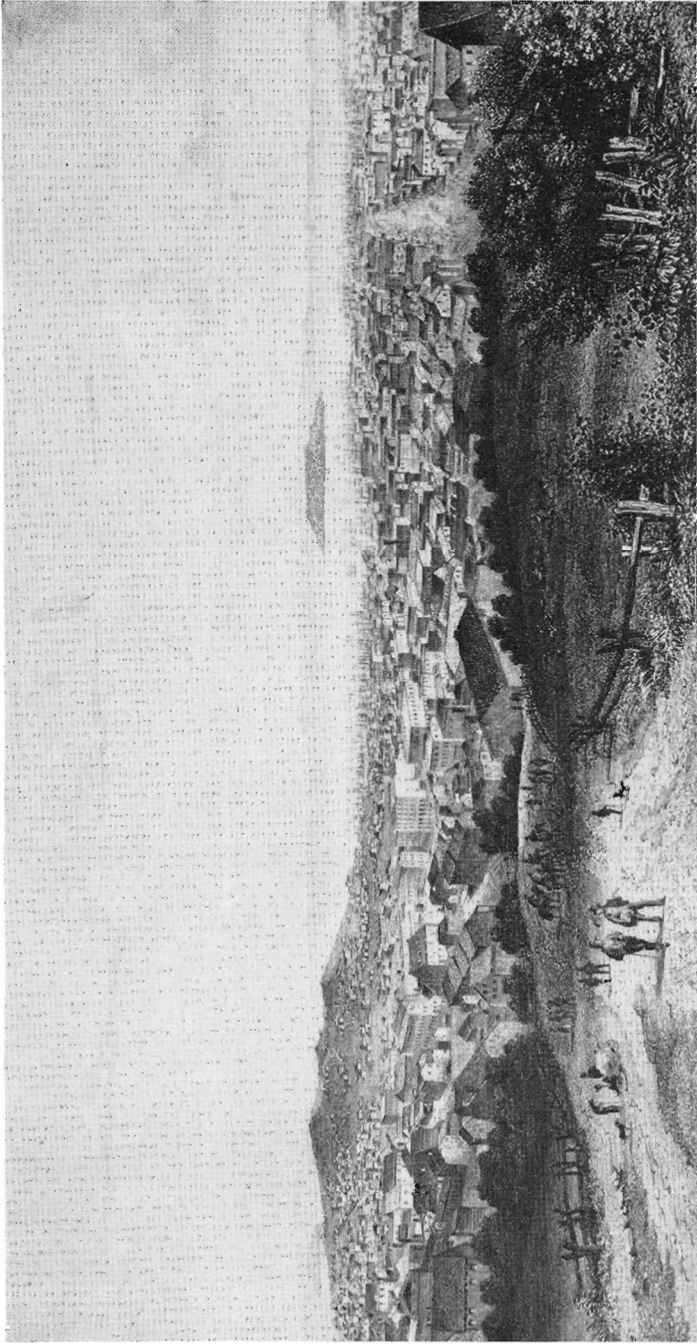
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF JEWS IN GIVEN OCCUPATIONS

OCCUPATION	"DEFINITE" JEWS	"PROBABLE" JEWS	"POSSIBLE" JEWS	TOTAL	PERCENT- AGE*
Agents	2	—	1	3	.26
Attorneys	6	1	3	10	.86
Bakers	1	—	2	3	.26
Bankers, Brokers, Stock-dealers	9	3	1	13	1.11
Bookkeepers	30	14	16	60	5.14
Book dealers	3	—	—	3	.26
Butchers	7	4	9	20	1.71
Commission Merchants, Auctioneers	10	2	5	17	1.46
Clerks	29	40	38	107	9.17
Clothing Dealers	53	30	36	119	10.20
Coal Dealers	4	2	—	6	.51
Collectors	2	2	3	7	.60
Crockery Dealers	8	—	1	9	.77
Draymen & Laborers	14	21	10	45	3.86
Drygoods Dealers	55	29	42	126	10.80
Drivers	8	8	8	24	2.06
Engineers	—	—	1	1	.09
Food Dealers	12	14	20	46	3.94
Furniture Dealers	6	7	6	19	1.63
Government Employees	4	3	—	7	.60
Hairdressers/Barbers	1	6	1	8	.69
Hat Dealers	13	3	15	31	2.66
Hotel Owners, Employees	1	1	1	3	.26
Jewelers	7	10	4	21	1.80
Liquor Dealers	8	2	3	13	1.11
Manufacturing Dealers	7	7	7	21	1.80

* Please note that these are not accurate percentages as they were calculated only in order to give a rough idea of the percentage of people in each occupation. The percentages in this chart total 100.01.

Courtesy, California State Library, Sacramento

Panorama of San Francisco



NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF JEWS IN GIVEN OCCUPATIONS (Cont'd)

OCCUPATION	"DEFINITE" JEWS	"PROBABLE" JEWS	"POSSIBLE" JEWS	TOTAL	PERCENT- AGE*
Merchants	28	21	11	60	5.14
Metal Dealers	6	9	4	19	1.63
Musicians	—	2	1	3	.23
Paper Businessmen	2	4	3	9	.77
Newspaper Employees	3	3	2	8	.69
Pawnbrokers	6	4	2	12	1.03
Peddlers	2	11	3	16	1.37
Physicians, Professionals in the medical field	2	4	7	13	1.11
Printers	1	1	1	3	.26
Publishers	2	—	—	2	.17
Real Estate Agents	10	3	9	22	1.89
Sales, Retail Agents	35	28	23	86	7.37
Synagogue Employees	5	—	2	7	.60
Shoemakers	11	15	16	42	3.60
Tailors	5	16	25	46	3.94
Teachers	4	1	6	11	.94
Tobacco Dealers	21	19	26	66	5.66
	443	350	374	1,167	

* Please note that these are not accurate percentages as they were calculated only in order to give a rough idea of the percentage of people in each occupation. The percentages in this chart total 100.01.

SUPPLEMENT TO THE NAME LIST

NAME	EMPLOYER	ADDRESS
BAKERS		
Frank, Charles		326 Kearny
BANKERS, BROKERS STOCKDEALERS		
Galland, A.	Abraham	6 John
May, J. J.		1521 Powell
BOOKKEEPERS		
Blumingdale, Israel		652 Sacramento
Boscowitz, Leopold		Sullivans Building
Dormitzer, L. P.		1605 Powell
Goodman, G. S.		
Hellman, Max	J. Seligman	710 Washington
Jacoby, Louis		Pine Street

SUPPLEMENT TO THE NAME LIST—*Continued*

NAME	EMPLOYER	ADDRESS
Meyer, Cauffman H.		137 Montgomery
Rothfeld, Joseph		633 California
BOOK DEALER		
Brown, L.		Lawrence Street
BUTCHERS		
Frankenheimer, Joseph	Menges & Frankenheimer	
Rosenberg, S. S.		1603 Powell
Yehl, Abraham		626 Green
COMMISSION MERCHANTS & AUCTIONEERS		
Ashim, M. B.		Geary & Dupont
Blum, Leopold		743 Howard
Robinson, Julius	R. D. W. Davis & Co.	Sansom & California
CLERKS		
Fechheimer, M. S.		
Fletcher, C. A.		137 Montgomery
Friedlander, M.		
Oppenheimer, M.		406 Sacramento
Wasserman, Elkan		Kearny & California
Wolf, S.		505 East
CLOTHING DEALERS		
Blumenthal, Julius		11 & 14 Government House
Figel, Joseph	Samuel Kigel	7 Anthony
King, Aaron		
King, L.		30 Geary
Neustadter, Henry		California & Sansom
Seligman, Henry	J. Seligman	622 Green
Seligman, Leopold	J. Seligman	622 Green
Stein, H. W.		612 Sacramento
Triest, Bernard	Triest & Livingston	424 Sacramento
Wolf, Bernard		822 Vallejo
Wormser, Simon		516 Sutter
COAL DEALERS		
Hiller, Albert		1116 Powell
CROCKERY DEALERS		
Blumenthal, M.		St. Nicholas Hotel
Eger, A.	C. A. Helbing	
Thurnauer, William		322 Battery

SUPPLEMENT TO THE NAME LIST—*Continued*

NAME	EMPLOYER	ADDRESS
DRAYMEN & LABORERS		
Englander, Moses	A. S. Rosenbaum Co.	141 Natoma
Kraus, Joseph		148 Natoma
Strauss, Kleber H.	Hecht Brothers	Stevenson Street
DRYGOODS		
Altman, S. A.		124 Sutter
Bohm, S.		Green Street
Cahn, Israel	Uhlfelder & Cahn	10 Anthony
Goldstein, E. L.		532 Mission
Goodman, Jacob		
Goodman, M.		
Hamburger, Bernard		820 Vallejo
Heynemann, Leopold		
Kraus, Charles		134 Third
Langstadter, S.		44 Second
Lazard, Eli		215 Battery
Lazard, Simon		714 Howard
Levy, Hermann		1023 Dupont
Pepper, Charles		103 Third
Sachs, Martin	William Heller	306 Stockton
Scholle, Abraham		
Scholle, William		
Schubert, Elias	Rosenbaum & Fried- mann	118 Prospect Place
Siegmund, L.		Washington Street
Steinhardt, Fredrick		
Steinhardt, Siegmund		California & Battery
Strauss, Louis		215 Minna
Uhlfelder, S.	Uhlfelder & Cahn	Green Street
Wachenheimer, L.		1310 Kearny
Weiss, M.		275 Stevenson
Wellhof, Meyer		328 Kearny
DRIVERS		
Wolff, Morris		Dupont & Clay
FOOD DEALERS		
Bachman, Isaac		109 Natoma
Blockman, E.		Emanuel Street
Heller, K.		1021 Kearny
Messenger, Simon		112 Jessie
Newman, Leopold	Rasett Market	1515 Stockton
Saulmann, Augustus J.	Solomon & Lauenstein	
Walter, Edward		Montgomery & Pacific

SUPPLEMENT TO THE NAME LIST—*Continued*

NAME	EMPLOYER	ADDRESS
FURNITURE DEALERS		
Ackerman, J.	McEluee & Ackerman	518 Stockton
Heyman, M.		1131 Dupont
Marx, Samuel	Selting Co.	227 Geary
Walter, David		76 Clementina
Walter, Emanuel		
GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES		
Englander, Leopold		404 Sutter
May, Julius		
HAT DEALERS		
Greenebaum, J.	H. Cohn & Co.	22 Montgomery
Reinhart, F. M.	Henry Cohn & Co.	512 Mission
Steinhart, I.		211 Minna
Woodleaf, Henry		714 Howard
JEWELERS		
Cerf, David		827 Vallejo
Lehman, George		433 Kearny
Levy, John	Levy & Braverman	654 Folsom
Newman, Hermoine		9 Third Street
LIQUOR DEALERS		
Lang, J. L.	Tandler & Co.	719 Broadway
Wormser, Lewis		715 Mission
MERCHANTS		
Benjamin, F. A.		Powell & Jackson
Goldstone, Louis		540 Mission
Greenberg, Henry		828 Pacific
Herzog, Hermann		Hardie Place
Koshland, Simon		619 Mission
Levy, Charles		22 Minna
Lindauer, A. C.		St. Nicholas Hotel
Newburger, Elias		63 Minna
Price, B.		738 Mission
Strauss, Maurice		214 Sanson
Sweet, Solomon		
METAL DEALERS		
Heineberg, A.		17 Anthony
PUBLISHER		
Bien, H. M.	True Pacific Manager	
REAL ESTATE AGENTS		
Vogelsdorf, B. W.		

SUPPLEMENT TO THE NAME LIST—*Continued*

NAME	EMPLOYER	ADDRESS
SALES, RETAIL AGENTS		
Adler, Jonas	Seiler & Co.	
Bloch, Isaac	Aaron Cohn & Co.	
Goldsmith, Alexander	B. Hamburger	773 Mission
Goldsmith, H.		Minna Street
Greenberg, L.	Leopold & Greenberg	1517 Stockton
Gutte, Isidor	Simon Brothers	Washington Street
Hockstadter, E.	Hockstadter Brothers	Maryville St.
Moore, Charles		733 Howard
Reinhart, Benjamin	Reinhart Brothers	67 Minna
Robitscheck, H.	Pollack Brothers	403 California
Rosenbaum, F.		228 Front
Schloss, Benjamin	Bachman & Co.	
Schmitt, Henry	Schmitt & Klein	729 California
Tichner, Lewis		308 Sutter
Wolf, Abraham	Hager Co.	Green Street
SHOEMAKERS		
Bloch, William		1032 Dupont
Greenberg, Charles		600 Kearny
Hecht, Isaac	Hecht Brothers	St. Nicholas Hotel
Lustig, Isaac		235 Jackson
TEACHERS		
Zadig, Philip		613 Stockton
TOBACCO DEALERS		
Aron, Joseph	Weil & Co.	226 Front
Beer, Julius		Stockton & Broadway
Bradenstein, Joseph	A. S. Rosenbaum	
Essberg, M.	M. Essberg Co.	305 Kearny
Frank, Lewis P.	Haas & Davidson	650 Sacramento
Holz, G.		144 Ecken
Meyerfield, M.	Falkenstein & Co.	21 Minna
Morgenthau, M.		1119 Stockton
Wasserman, A.		306 Sutter
Wertheimer, E.		Stockton & Post