

Book Review

Berman, Myron, *Richmond's Jewry, 1769-1976: Shabbat in Shockoe*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia for the Jewish Community Federation of Richmond. xxii, 438 pp. \$12.50

Koheleth's lament that the production of books is endless cannot fairly be taken up among students of American Jewish history. The field of American Jewish studies need fear no inundation by what in his foreword to *Richmond's Jewry* Jacob R. Marcus calls "good, carefully researched accounts of urban American Jewish communities."

Myron Berman deserves our gratitude for *Richmond's Jewry*, a serious effort to examine "the gamut of Jewish history in Richmond from the arrival of its first Israelites in the colonial era to the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War" in 1973. His book—to no small degree, as he himself testifies (p. xx), an addendum to the pioneering study published in 1917 by Herbert T. Ezekiel and Gaston Lichtenstein—offers a relaxed, though exceedingly well documented, discussion of the Jewish experience in the region dominated by Richmond.

Rabbi Berman permits himself a tone that often verges on the conversational, as when he tells us that "in Richmond since the days of the [mid-seventeenth-century] Berkeley Plantation, *yichus*, or status, has played an all-important role" (p. 242), or when he observes that "Scions of the Hagenbachers and their [South German] *landsleit* continue to be identified with Jewish causes, and to many Richmonders they still represent the Jewish community" (p. 328). What Berman appears disinclined to investigate is why *yichus* achieved such emphasis or why the Hagenbachers held on to their Jewish loyalties. *Richmond's Jewry*, in short, is less a historical exploration than a chronicle account of the Jewish community in the Virginia capital. Berman evinces little interest in developing a conceptual framework for the data he has been so adroit in assembling.

Berman has constructed a colorful chronicle, one in which, it must be said to the author's credit, some richness of personality is conveyed, even if no one will come away from the book with a sufficient sense of the dynamic reflected by or shaping Richmond Jewry. Berman, who serves as rabbi of Richmond's Temple Beth-El, displays great affection for his community and praises it for having "finally attained a feeling of unity, which had existed in the post-Revolutionary period also. Richmond Jewry has reaffirmed both the Pentateuchal promise of the Land and the prophetic injunction of preserving its spiritual roots in the Diaspora" (p. 330).

It should be noted also that Berman, a Conservative rabbi, is at pains to give an impartial account of Orthodoxy and of the Reform movement in Richmond. The Jewish Community Federation of Richmond and the University Press of Virginia have cooperated with him to produce a handsome example of contemporary bookcraft.

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Brief Notices

Blum, Leon L. *My Life in Two Worlds*. Terre Haute, Indiana, 1979. 103 pp.

Dr. Blum's memoir is a telling reminiscence of an Eastern European Jew who studied medicine in Berlin and was forced to flee the Nazi takeover. His subsequent arrival in the United States, his rapid "Americanization" and the opportunity to pursue his medical practice despite a profound hearing loss are part of this most interesting testament.

Dash, Joan. *Summoned to Jerusalem. The Life of Henrietta Szold*. New York: Harper and Row, 1979. x, 348 pp. \$15.00

There is something slightly unbelievable about the life of Henrietta Szold. She was a woman whose potential and brilliance were unquestioned by everyone except herself, whose Jewish learning was probably unmatched by any other American Jewish woman of her day. Yet for the first fifty years of her life, Henrietta Szold lived a spartan, asexual existence, devoted first to playing out the academic fantasies of her frustrated rabbinical father, Benjamin, then chained to the thankless editorial tasks assigned to her by the Jewish Publication Society of America, and, finally, entering into a fantasy-filled emotional relationship with Louis Ginzberg, the brilliant young author of *Legends of the Jews*, a bitter affair which left her full of hate and remorse.

It is remarkable, then, that, as Joan Dash capably describes, all of Szold's achievements on behalf of Zionism—the establishment of Hadassah, her contributions to the establishment of Jewish social services in Palestine, and her successful rescue of thousands of Jewish children from Nazi hands—came during the last third of her life. This is a book filled with psychological innuendo and with human pain. One cannot help but cheer for Henrietta Szold as she finally shattered the emotional shell which had repressed her as a woman and a contributor to the future of the Jewish people.

Eisenberg, Ariel, Edited by. *Eyewitnesses to American Jewish History. Part III: The Eastern European Immigration, 1881-1920*. New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1979. x, 177 pp. \$4.00

This work is the companion piece to two earlier volumes on the history of American Jewry. The projected fourth volume will be entitled "The American Jew" and will complete a distinguished and highly useful educational series that offers younger students an excellent introduction to the documentary and pictorial history of the American Jewish experience.

Grand, Samuel, and Mamie G. Gamoran, Edited by. *Emanuel Gamoran: His Life and Work*. New York: Emanuel Gamoran Memorial Fund, 1979. viii, 165 pp.

Emanuel Gamoran (1895-1962) was a teacher, writer and counselor, a man associated with the Reform Jewish Movement but equally at home in Zionism. Gamoran was passionately devoted to the education of the American Jewish child, and it was this outstanding Jewish pedagogue who created the vision of Reform Jewish Day Schools. This

volume presents essays and lectures, both by Gamoran himself and by those who knew, loved and admired this important contributor to Jewish education in America.

Gurock, Jeffrey S. *When Harlem Was Jewish, 1870-1930*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979, xi, 216 pp. \$15.00

This is a book which must be read carefully. Mixed in with an outstanding re-creation of the history of the second largest center for new Jewish immigrants after the Lower East Side is a series of probing challenges to numerous widely accepted views of the Jewish immigrant experience: the confrontation between Eastern European Jewish immigrants and the established German-Jewish community; the flight of German Jews from neighborhoods invaded by the Eastern European immigrants; the confrontation between Reform and Orthodox Judaism; and, finally, the Black-Jewish encounter. Professor Gurock's book is an outstanding contribution to the history of the American Jewish experience. It is one of the rare volumes, so infrequent in their appearance, that shake the foundations of our historical understanding.

Harris, Leon. *Merchant Princes: An Intimate History of Jewish Families Who Built Great Department Stores*. New York: Harper and Row, 1979. xx, 411 pp. \$12.95

If nothing else, at least the publisher of this book has correctly termed the subtitle an "intimate" history. Intimate it is, delving into the very private lives of a group of very wealthy Jewish businessmen and women and their families. Perhaps only one such as Leon Harris could have written such an "intimate" book. He is, after all, a scion of the Harrises of Dallas, and as such has an automatic entree into the "Our Crowd" of Jewish department store families in America. What do we learn about the lives of the Filenes, the Gimbels, the Strauses, the Riches and Kaufmanns, among others? Beyond their successes and failures as people and empire builders, we learn that the very rich are indeed different from you and me, even more so than we ever assumed.

Howe, Irving, and Kenneth Libo, Edited by. *How We Lived: A Documentary History of Immigrant Jews in America, 1880-1930*.—New York: Richard Marek Publishers, 1979. 360 pp. \$22.50

Irving Howe and Kenneth Libo's *How We Lived* attempts to portray, as the authors have stated, "both the vitality and the weaknesses of the immigrant Jewish experience—the intensities of belief and aspiration toward idealistic goals, and also the high cost of suffering, frustration, and defeat." As far as photographic stills and translated snatches of life and thought in the immigrant Lower East Side of New York can do so, they have achieved their stated aims. But the volume should be used in conjunction with Howe's *World of Our Fathers* (*AJA*, November, 1977), for in this instance the picture is not worth a thousand words. Because of Howe's superb literary style, the photographs do not match the written description of the events. In fact, without having *World of Our Fathers* to clarify our emotions, to introduce historical perspective, analysis, and transition, pitfalls which are clearly common to documentaries, there is the distinct danger in reading *How We Lived* of experiencing exactly what the authors warn against in the volume's preface, "the impulse to prettify the immigrant experience; a wish to make the past seem all quaint and 'colorful' with our own little fiddler on our own little roof."

Kaganoff, Nathan M., and Melvin I. Urofsky, Edited by. *Turn to the South. Essays on Southern Jewry.* Charlottesville, Virginia: University Press of Virginia, 1979. xiii, 205 pp. \$7.95

In the 1980's it is a clearly accepted fact that the South has risen again. Not of course in terms of an armed rebellion against the concept of a union of American states, but in terms of a "sun-belt" milieu which has attracted industry, commerce and population.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of this renaissance of Southern activity is the renewed interest in the history of the Southern Jewish experience. The fourteen articles that make up this volume result from a conference on Southern Jewish history held in Richmond, Virginia, in 1976. That conference was the prime motivator for the re-creation of the Southern Jewish Historical Society, and as the editors correctly assess in the foreword to this volume, this was a "milestone in American Jewish history." For that meeting turned the spotlight of historical inquiry onto a section of American Jewry so important to the first three centuries of its existence.

Now, four years later, the Southern Jewish Historical Society is alive and well. Names such as Arnold Shankman, Louis Schmier, Steven Hertzberg, Malcolm H. Stern, Kenneth Stein, Eli Evans and Samuel Proctor, among others, attest to the positive mix of newer and more seasoned historians of the Southern Jewish experience who are contributing to our knowledge of the South and its Jews.

Leonoff, Cyril Edel. *The Architecture of Jewish Settlements in the Prairies: A Pictorial History.* Winnipeg, Canada: Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada. 48 pp.

_____. *Wapella Farm Settlement: The First Successful Jewish Farm Settlement in Canada.* Winnipeg, Canada: Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba and Jewish Historical Society of Western Canada. 35 pp.

It is entirely proper that Cyril Edel Leonoff should be the author of both of these brief but important contributions to the history of Jewish life on the Canadian prairies. He is after all a descendant of one of the original Wapella farm settlement families and he is a very competent historian. He has obviously retained a strong feeling for his Canadian prairie roots, and that emotion is evident in the narrative he has written for both works. Also evident is Leonoff's skill in recording the words of the pioneers of Wapella as well as his finesse in selecting an outstanding group of photographs to demonstrate the architectural styles devised by the early Jewish prairie settlers.

Levine, Joseph. *From Peddlers to Merchants.* Ft. Wayne, Indiana: Indiana Jewish Historical Society, 1979. iv, 27 pp.

In his introduction to this publication, Joseph Levine, the energetic and capable executive secretary of the Indiana Jewish Historical Society, states that "when the history of Indiana is written, it will be important to record the story of the role of the Jew in the economic life of the state." Levine has taken his own sentiment to heart, detailing the histories of four Jewish-owned businesses in Indiana founded by Jews over a century ago and still operated by members of the same families. It is the strong sense of continuity that highlights this study, both in terms of family traditions and the long-standing ties of Indiana to its Jewish community.

Miller, Rita Seiden, Edited by. *Brooklyn, U.S.A: The Fourth Largest City in America*. New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1979. xii, 371 pp. \$16.95

For millions of American Jews, the city of Brooklyn evokes strong memories of home. Brooklyn left its stamp on their speech patterns, their sense of humor, their *Weltanschauung*. In many respects, although they have long since left its geographic locale, they have never left. Wherever these Jews have gone, to Manhattan or beyond, the stereotypical image of the place has made them objects of awe, derision and humor.

The essays in this volume are both nostalgic and disturbing. While they chronicle the delights of Coney Island and the original Nathan's, the Brooklyn Dodgers and Ebbets Field, they also discuss the new symbols of Brooklyn—Bedford-Stuyvesant and urban decay. Two of the essays in this volume—by Egon Mayer on the Jews in Boro Park and Joseph A.D. Sutton on the Syrian Jews of Brooklyn—have become full-scale monographs.

Porter, Jack Nusan, Edited by. *The Sociology of American Jews: A Critical Anthology*. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1978. vii, 282 pp. \$9.75

For those interested in the sociology of the American Jewish community, Jack Nusan Porter has assembled a group of somewhat uneven essays whose scholarship is not always of the first rank. Porter is an advocate of the "activist" approach to American Jewish sociology which he defines in part as Jewish sociologists who "slide easily from the intellectual into the political; from social research to social commentary; from scholarship to opinion-making; and even from academia to the outside world."

There is nothing substantially new about this position: it is a reflection of the intellectual and political turmoil of the 1960's which affected any number of academic disciplines. As envisioned by Porter, this anthology is the answer to the call put forth by Professor Marshall Sklare (labelled by Porter as a representative of the "survivalist" period of Jewish sociology) in 1974 for new anthologies on the sociology of the American Jew which he hoped would eclipse his own distinguished work. There is no reason to believe, however, based on the contributions to this work, that *The Sociology of American Jews* has even a remote connection to Professor Sklare's wish.

Postal, Bernard, and Lionel Koppman. *American Jewish Landmarks: A Travel Guide and History. Volume II—The South and Southwest*. New York: Fleet Press, 1979. 334 pp. \$13.95; paperback, \$7.50

The second of three (the first volume covers the twelve Northeastern states and the District of Columbia), this volume deals with fifteen states from Virginia to Arizona, plus Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Inside its 334 pages, one can find facts about Jewish leaders, institutions, and achievements, all done in a state-by-state, city-by-city analysis.

Raphael, Marc Lee. *Jews and Judaism in a Midwestern Community: Columbus, Ohio, 1840-1975*. Columbus, Ohio: Ohio Historical Society, 1979. x, 483 pp. \$19.50

Professor Raphael's book is an attempt to study the Jewish community of Columbus, Ohio, a group of Jews who "shaped their community to reflect Jewish acculturation to America even as they built and pursued Jewish ethnicity." The result of this study is a massive volume reflecting all that is positive in the historian's arsenal of methodologies.

Raphael is a master historian as sociologist and this has aided him in looking at certain aspects of the community's history which would normally not come under the historian's scrutiny. As a result, Professor Raphael has covered more ground than most in this important communal history. His work reflects solid history written by a solid historian.

Raphael, Marc Lee, Edited by. *Understanding American Jewish Philanthropy*. New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1979, xiv, 257 pp. \$15.00

The phenomenon of American Jewish giving is one that is coming under closer and closer scrutiny, especially by those who see philanthropy as one of the "market indicators" of the American Jewish future. This volume of essays (including some very good ones) is an important step in the attempt to view the overall and many-faceted picture of the American Jewish philanthropic structure. Among the very best of these essays is the editor's own, entitled "Getting In and Getting On: Reward Systems in Federated Jewish Philanthropy," which drives to the very heart of an American Jewish self-identity.

Rosenbaum, E., and A. J. Sherman. *M.M. Warburg and Co., 1798-1938: Merchant Bankers of Hamburg*. New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc, 1979. xiii, 190 pp. \$24.50

Until now we have not had a monograph on the Warburgs which has adequately focused both on their financial dealings and the inevitable social and political questions arising from this family's position as Jewish financiers in nineteenth and twentieth century Germany.

This work has not solved the problem. It is essentially a business history of the nearly one hundred and fifty years of this distinguished banking firm's existence. Both authors are quite at ease with banking terminology and the proceedings of high finance, a knowledge which is denied to the average professional historian or layman.

Yet there are glimmerings in this book in which the political and social questions shine through. Unfortunately, neither historian does more than note these questions and pass on to matters of high finance. They only cite, for instance, the comment by Max Warburg that the older generation of Warburgs had avoided business travel to Scandinavia because "Grandmother was afraid they would not eat kosher food there. I did not labour under this handicap." What this said for Max Warburg as German and Jew needs to be studied and defined.

It is the fascinating character of Max Warburg, in fact, which dominates the book. His shrewd business sense is made clear as are some elements of his political involvement and the firm's (the Morocco voyage of Wilhelm Ch. Regendanz, the connection between investment capitalism and German war aims in 1914, the close economic ties between the German and American Warburg concerns). Yet we do not have the type of analysis that one finds in Fritz Stern's study of the Bleichroeders in his *Gold and Iron*. There one was able to see the increasing *embourgeoisement* of Germany, the aping of the German aristocracy and the sight of the German middle classes on the make, as it were. One does not find in this volume an attempt to analyze, as did Stern, the theses that the German Jewish elite exemplified the "luxurious wretchedness" of the German bourgeoisie and the "anguished ambiguity" of Jewish success. Unlike Bleichroeder, there is every indication that Max Warburg was an exception to this view, as Werner Angress has demonstrated in a recent article. It seems likely that the Hanseatic spirit allowed Max Warburg to con-

front a number of German aristocrats over a question of anti-Semitism in 1916 with an unusual amount of force and candor, traits which could not be imagined in similar situations with the Berlin Jewish elite.

As business history, then, this is an admirable work. But the challenge and the mystery of the Warburgs, and especially Max, remain in a number of other important areas.

Shapiro, Amy. *A Guide to the Jewish Rockies: Colorado, Montana, Wyoming.* Denver: Rocky Mountain Jewish Historical Society, 1979. xi, 189 pp. \$5.95

Although there are less than a thousand Jews in all of Montana and Wyoming, and not many more, outside of Denver, in Colorado, Amy Shapiro has managed to fill nearly 200 pages of her book with facts and figures, some extremely rare. There are also photographs, some of which would be welcome in any major historical study of this region. Not only the author but the extremely active Rocky Mountain Jewish Historical Society are to be congratulated on a first-class publication. The *Guide* is available from the Center of Judaic Studies at the University of Denver, University Park, Denver, Colorado 80208, for the postpaid price of \$6.70.

Silverman, Sam. I. *Sami: 65 Years on the Road.* Chicago: Academy Press Limited, 1978. 228 pp. \$9.95

In a style that is reminiscent of Leo Rosten's *The Education of Hyman Kaplan*, Sam Silverman traces his journey from Pinsk, Russia, to Chicago, America. Sam Silverman became Sam the Super Salesman of costume jewelry, and in this volume (superbly illustrated by J. Blatchley) he chronicles a humorous yet significant addition to the history of the American Jewish experience.

Synnott, Marcia Graham. *The Half-Opened Door: Discrimination and Admissions at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, 1900-1970.* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1979. xxi, 310 pp. \$23.95

In an infamous act of 1916, the Prussian Minister of War sent an order to all German military commands, asking that they determine, by means of a census, how many Jews were serving in every unit of the German armies. This *Judenzaehlung*, as we now know, was issued at the behest of right-wing anti-Semitic organizations in Germany through their agents in the German Supreme Command. The object of the exercise was obvious: to try to substantiate the charges of the anti-Jewish elements that German Jews were avoiding military service in a time of great national need, thereby demonstrating their "unGerman" character.

Less than a decade later, similar sorts of *Judenzaehlungen* were undertaken at some of America's most prestigious universities. This time the problem was not a question of too few Jews, but of too many, and the impact they would have upon the basic homogeneity of the WASP educational environment in which America's future leaders were trained.

Professor Synnott demonstrates how the "Big Three" of American higher education were seized by the same fears that had forced Columbia University years earlier to search for a way to repel the "invasion" of foreign-born or first-generation Polish and Russian Jewish students.

Although Professor Synnott also deals with Harvard, Yale and Princeton attitudes toward other American minorities, including Blacks, it is clear that because of their numbers and their academic aggressiveness, Jewish students were considered the main

threat. Just as Harold Wechsler has documented the role played by Columbia's president, Nicholas Murray Butler, in attempts to restrict the number of Jews at his university (*The Qualified Student*, *AJA*, November, 1977), so too has Synnott shown the similar role of Harvard's president, A. Lawrence Lowell.

There is little doubt that the Brahmin set which ran all three universities believed seriously the warning issued in 1916 by Madison Grant in his book, *The Passing of the Great Race*. Anglo-Saxonism was threatened, they believed, even the concept and ideals of America, by unrestricted immigration, and especially of Eastern European Jews, who hungered after an Ivy League education. Lowell of Harvard believed this more, perhaps, than any of his contemporaries at Yale and Princeton. Three years after becoming president of Harvard, he assumed the national vice-presidency of the Immigrant Restriction League.

Young, Toni, Edited by. *Delaware and the Jews*. Wilmington, Delaware: Jewish Historical Society of Delaware, 1979. 137 pp.

This volume is a collection of essays commemorating the centennial of Delaware Jewry. Among the authors whose essays appear in this work are Leon Jick, David Gefen, Carol Hoffecker, William P. Frank, Toni Young, and Harriet Kalin, among others.