“Members of this Book”: The Pinkas of Vermont’s First Jewish Congregation

Robert S. Schine

Place

If you set out from the town green in East Poultney, Vermont, and walk eastward, you first pass the now-shuttered Eagle Hotel, once a landmark building in the village. Guidebooks to historical Poultney will inform that Horace Greeley, founder of the New York Herald-Tribune in 1841, lived there during his years in Poultney as a printer’s apprentice. Taking the dirt road at the fork beyond the hotel, up toward the left, you will soon find yourself flanked by two cemeteries, the large Christian cemetery on the right and, gently sloping down to the gate on the opposite side, a small Jewish cemetery, its Hebrew inscriptions and Jewish symbols on the headstones facing the Christian monuments beyond. It is the oldest Jewish cemetery in Vermont.

In the spring of 2005, the Slate Valley Museum in nearby Granville, New York, was assembling an exhibit on the history of the Jews in the towns along that border region of Vermont and New York, where slate quarries were opened before the Civil War. The quarries yielded red, purple, black, and green slate that was sought for roofs, school slates, and other uses and that made the area a hub of economic activity. On behalf of the museum, I sent a query to the American Jewish Archives at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in Cincinnati, looking for any materials about the Jews of the Slate Valley and listing some of the towns: Fairhaven, Poultney, and East Poultney in Vermont; or Granville, Hartford, and Salem in New York. The archives reported just one item: a notebook containing the minutes of the meetings of the Jewish community of Poultney, Vermont, from 1867 to 1874.

This “Poultney minutes book” has turned out to be the oldest document of Jewish communal life in the state of Vermont, chronicling the beginnings of the first Jewish congregation in the Green Mountain State. It was in German, interspersed with Hebrew words, some in block letters and others in cursive script. A few English words had infiltrated as well. The envelope from the archives included a partial transcript of the minutes book, dated 1966, and containing many gaps and misunderstandings. A note across the top indicated that the book was the gift of Rabbi Joseph Goldman of Denver, Colorado.

Mystified at the curious route taken by the Poultney minutes book, I attempted to contact Rabbi Goldman. The trail went cold at a disconnected telephone number. I then searched the Internet for synagogues in Denver and, led by a loose logic of association—that the archives is housed by HUC-JIR, the
rabbinical school of the Reform movement—called one of the Reform temples, Temple Sinai. The secretary of the congregation had never heard of Rabbi Goldman but gave me the email address for the congregation’s rabbi emeritus, Raymond Zwerin, and assured me that he knew every rabbi and Jewish personage in Denver. I wrote, and within minutes Rabbi Zwerin responded with the number of Rabbi Goldman’s cell phone.

Rabbi Goldman conjured up his memory of the circumstances in 1966. He had been ordained rabbi at Hebrew Union College (HUC) in 1959 and took a pulpit with a congregation in Denver. One day, sifting through the sundry collections of a Denver antique shop, he happened upon this slender notebook, with a worn, reddish-brown marbled cover, handwritten, and in German. A self-described history buff, he realized the importance of his find. However, his own interests were focused on the resettlement of the Jews in Britain, not on American Jewish history. He looked into the history of the Jews of Poultney but eventually sent the notebook to his former teacher and friend, Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus, at HUC. Dr. Marcus, known as the dean of historians of American Jewry, deposited the book in the American Jewish Archives. In our conversation, Rabbi Goldman disavowed any responsibility for the partial German transcription; its author is unknown. Likewise unknown are the circumstances of the migration of the Poultney minutes book from Vermont to Colorado. But this much is established: If, in 1966, Rabbi Goldman had not acted out of a sense of stewardship for the past, it would have been impossible to recover the beginnings of the Poultney Jewish community.

The Poultney Minutes Book or Pinkas

The notebook contains the minutes of the meetings of the Poultney Jewish congregation from its founding in 1867 through 1874, as well as the records of births and deaths in the congregation reaching into the 1890s. It is a “minutes book,” in which all of the discussions, transactions, levies of dues, decisions, statutes, and other matters deemed worthy of preservation were set down in a permanent record. Although the Poultney minutes book does not bear a title, it is a pinkas, the Hebrew term for precisely this kind of communal record. In some communities, a pinkas also encompassed the memorbuch, the book in which the names of deceased members of the community were recorded. In this respect, too, the Poultney pinkas follows its traditional model. One better-known pinkas, spanning more than a century of communal history, was that of the Jewish community of Cleves, a German town close to the Dutch border. A pinkas is also the main source for understanding the circumstances of the founding of the Ohavi Zedek synagogue in Burlington, Vermont’s largest city, in 1885.

As the earliest-known document of the history of Vermont’s Jews, the significance of the Poultney pinkas is manifold. First, it establishes the founding
date of Vermont’s earliest organized Jewish community. Second, it yields up a skeletal chronology of the history of that community that can be correlated in part to epitaphs in the Poultney Jewish cemetery. Beyond its value as a document of local history, however, the Poultney pinkas is also a significant linguistic document. The matrix is German, but other elements are embedded in it: English words, Hebrew terms, and idioms peculiar to jüdischdeutsch, the Judeo-German once spoken by rural and small-town Jews in Germany and later fondly recalled by the final generations of German Jewry. Judeo-German preserved many remnants of Yiddish, embedded like fossils in the vernacular of German Jews.

Context

The Poultney Jews came as part of the wave of Jewish immigration that had started in the 1830s, ushering in the age of the “German Jews” in nineteenth century American Jewish history. Instead of settling in the cities, like the majority of Jewish immigrants, many of these German Jews set out for the rural United States. They were mostly young men, unattached and energetic, venturing into small towns in the South, Midwest, West, and New England. In the 1830s, the U.S. Jewish population had risen to somewhere between 4,000 and 6,000; by 1860 American Jewry numbered more than 100,000—in some estimates, 200,000. This wave of immigration was the result of both “push” and “pull” factors in central Europe. The push resulted from disappointment among Jews in the Austro-Hungarian empire, Prussia, and Alsace-Lorraine at halting progress toward civil rights. Laws limited Jews’ access to many occupations and even their freedom to marry and start families. The pull was the promise America offered. A vanguard emigrated. Their letters home were published in newspapers and magazines. While some complained of loneliness, hardship, and isolation, others extolled the advantages of life in the United States, the freedom of trade, the religious tolerance, and the opportunities open to anyone prepared for hard, sustained work. Their relatives followed, setting off a process of “chain immigration.” The pinkas demonstrates that such a chain brought families together in Poultney as well. To be sure, the Poultney Jews were not the first Jews ever in the state of Vermont. Jacob Rader Marcus has written that “the careful historian soon comes to the unfailing rule that no Jew is the first Jew in any town, as there is always one who had been there before him.” Jews were in Burlington as early as 1820, but no organized community or synagogue existed until the 1870s. The Jewish community of Plattsburgh, New York, on the western shore of Lake Champlain, was founded in the 1840s.

Many of the young Jews who ventured beyond the port cities started out as packpeddlers. By one estimate, “most of the 16,000 peddlers who wandered across all parts of the United States on the eve of the Civil War were Jews.” In the German lands that these young men had left, peddling had been considered...
a lowly occupation. Since the guilds that governed more prestigious occupations excluded Jews, their opportunities in Germany in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were limited. However, in the United States, Jews who “took up the pack” did so freely, following the example of the Yankee peddlers—and shadowed by their reputation for williness. Yet they pursued a livelihood that promised an ascent up the economic ladder for the adventurous and enterprising young man.

The spectacular “rags to riches” stories of some of these peddlers have attracted historians’ attention. The best-known history is Stephen Birmingham’s popular 1967 book, Our Crowd: The Great Jewish Families of New York, relating the stories of immigrants such as the Seligman brothers—Joseph, William, Jesse, and James—who came in the 1830s and 1840s from Baiersdorf, Bavaria. They started with a modest store in Selma, Alabama, which Joseph tended while his brothers peddled in the countryside. From retailing they moved into clothes manufacturing and, during the Civil War, into banking. When Jesse died in 1894 his fortune was estimated by the newspapers to be between $10 million and $30 million.

But the sensational, by definition, is not typical, and is therefore of less interest if our purpose is to understand more common lives. Unfortunately, we have no memoirs by the Poultney peddlers and merchants. But their lives probably did not differ much from that of Abraham Kohn, a young Jew who left his family in Bavaria for America in 1842, and did leave a memoir. He was discouraged by the difficulties he encountered, first in New York:

…trying in vain to find a job as clerk in a store. But business was too slow, and I had to do as all the others; with a bundle on my back I had to go out into the country, peddling various articles. This, then, is the vaunted luck of the immigrants from Bavaria! O misguided fools, led astray by avarice and cupidity! You have left your friends and acquaintances, your relatives and your parents, your home and your fatherland, your language and your customs, your faith and your religion—only to sell your wares in the wild places of America, in isolated farmhouses and tiny hamlets.

Kohn also reports meeting a peddler on the road by the name of Marx, an immigrant from Frankenthal, a town in southern Germany. Marx was a member of the Jewish congregation in Albany. Kohn writes bitterly:

Wretched business! This unfortunate man has been driving himself in this miserable trade for three years to furnish a bare living for himself and his family. O God and Father, consider thy little band of the house of Israel. Behold how they are compelled to profane Thy holy Torah in pursuit of their daily bread. In three years this poor fellow could observe the Sabbath less than ten times…. This is the cherished liberty of America.
A similar, painful sense of loneliness may have strengthened the desire of the Poultney merchants and peddlers to put in place the essential foundation stones of Jewish communal life.

Peddlers would stop over in Poultney on their journey from New York City to Plattsburgh in the north, where a Jewish community had existed since the 1840s. The quarries in Poultney and the surrounding towns had started producing slate in 1841, spurring, by midcentury, significant economic activity in the towns of Poultney and Granville and making the Slate Valley a promising destination for enterprising peddlers. The Jews of Poultney, and of the Slate Valley altogether, did not engage in the slate trade itself, neither as owners nor as operators of the quarries. The economy of the Slate Valley was ethnically stratified: the quarry owners were of Anglo-Saxon origin. Slovak workers hauled the stone, while Welsh artisans finished the slates. In Poultney, according to census records, Irish immigrants, too, labored in the quarries. The role of Jewish immigrants in this economic machine was that of supplier. Jews sold the workers and their bosses all the essentials of life, from groceries to linens to work boots. Professions listed for the Jews of Poultney in the pages of the United States census of 1870 include two dry goods peddlers, but also a tailor and tailoress, a dry goods merchant, and three butchers. None of them were farmers, farmhands, common laborers, or laborers in the slate quarries, the other occupations that figure frequently in the census. The Poultney Jews were peddlers and merchants.

**Founding Families**

On Sunday, 1 September 1867, two years after the end of the Civil War, the Jewish men of the town of Poultney gathered to discuss their plans for the approaching holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. They resolved to call their congregation the “Israelite Assembly” and recorded their articles of association on the first page of the Poultney *pinkas*, misspelling the title of their founding document: “Organation.” (See Figure 1) The minutes list the names of all those in attendance: Benedict Theise, A. Salomon, S. Mineberg, his brother, D. Mineberg, Z. Levis, H. Glück, Jacob A. Salomon, Jacob Hess, Herman Stern, and Isaac Theise. Solomon Mineberg was elected the first president, A. Salomon vice president, and Benedict Theise secretary.

Solomon Mineberg, the president of the congregation, was born in Westphalia. A butcher, his name appears on an 1869 map of East Poultney as the owner of a house. (See Figure 2) The census of 1870 lists his real estate at a value of $12,000, and other personal property valued at $3,000. Those assets place Mineberg on par with several of the farmers of the town and with a certain Benjamin Ward, the owner of livery stables, whose real property was valued at $10,000. While two other heads of household are listed with property of double that value, most owned property varying in value between $500 and $2,500,
with $1,000 appearing as the most common amount. Thus, it seems that in 1870 Solomon Mineberg, then thirty-nine years old, was comfortably able to support his wife Rosa, also born in Westphalia, and their eight-year-old daughter, Lizzie, who had been born in New York, presumably the family’s first way-station before settling in Poultney.

Solomon’s brother David Mineberg, aged thirty-five, was also a butcher. He lived in Poultney with his wife Matilda, aged twenty-six, and their three children, Carrie, eight years old, Rebecca, six years old, and Solomon, age one, all of whom were born in Vermont. David and Solomon’s father, Moses Mineberg, is shown in the 1870 census as a “retired butcher” living with Solomon’s family. From the census, it seems that David Mineberg, who owned no real property and boasted only $100 in other possessions, could not match the financial independence of his brother.

Benedict Theise, elected secretary of the “Israelite Assembly” on that Sunday in September, arrived in the United States at the age of sixteen, in September 1857. Along with David and Isaac, he was one of three sons born in the 1840s
to Jacob Theise and Fanny Wertheim or Wertheimer, from Prussia. The three brothers were all members of the Jewish congregation of Poultney. Benedict married a woman from Bavaria whom we know only by her first name, Emma. Settling in Vermont, they had three sons: Moses, born in 1862; David, born in 1868; and Isaac, born in 1872. The 1870 census lists the older David Theise as living in Poultney and indicates that he “peddles dry goods.” Benedict owned a house in West Poultney (later Poultney). The Theise family is mentioned in the *pinkas* of the Poultney congregation from 1867 through 1871. However, by 1880, the Benedict and Emma Theise family had moved to Fort Edward, in Washington County, New York, thirty miles to the southwest. The 1880 census gives Benedict’s occupation there as “peddler.” Several others of those listed in the minutes of the first meeting are not to be found in the 1870 census. They may have moved away by then, or they were not residents of Poultney proper.

From 1868 on, the Cane family joins the Mineberg and Theise families as leaders in the young congregation. Marcus Cane, probably one of the first Jews to settle in Poultney, and certainly one of the oldest, was born in 1793 and is listed in the 1870 census as a “retired dry goods merchant.” The epitaph on his headstone states that he was born in “Zuschen, Germany,” properly “Züschen,” a small village in the central German region of Hessen-Darmstadt. His wife Elisa was born, according to her epitaph, in Naumburg. Although there are a number of towns by that name, the epitaph almost certainly refers to the small village of Naumburg that neighbors Züschen. Marcus Cane may have followed a relative, a certain William Cane, to America. Marcus and Elisa Cane had three sons, Isaac, Salomon, and Jacob. They may also have had a fourth and older son, Nathan, who was born in Hessen-Darmstadt. High Holiday services were held in Nathan Cane’s house in Poultney in 1868, but by the time of the 1870 census, he was living as a peddler in Bridport, Vermont, about thirty miles to the north. Nathan’s name appears often. Son of Marcus and Elisa or not, it is virtually certain that he was part of the same clan. The Canes seem to have delighted in the religious life of their Poultney community. The minutes book records that in 1873 Marcus Cane, by then eighty years old, led the congregation in prayer on the New Year. It also records the special duties in the liturgy that the elder Cane and his sons performed as kohanim (descendants of the ancient line of priests who ministered in the Temple in Jerusalem).

**The Chronicle of The Poultney Pinkas**

The Theise, Mineberg, and Cane families were the pillars of the Israelite Assembly congregation. The *pinkas* chronicles their progress, their finances, their moments of satisfaction, their setbacks, and even their quarrels, through 1874. Business meetings usually took place twice a year. At the first of the two meetings, held before the High Holidays, the secretary recorded the preparations for the services; then, in the next meeting, he recorded how they went.
Sometimes the group met as often as three or four times a year, when there was special work to accomplish.

They called the founding meeting not only to plan the services for the approaching High Holidays but also to ensure more equitable sharing of responsibility. The bylaws stipulate that, if costs are incurred for the observance of the holidays, such costs should be borne equally, both by those present at the meeting—the members of this new congregation—and by guests who join the members for services. The bylaws also provide for the election of officers: a president, vice-president, secretary, and prayer-leaders. The officers are assigned the thankless responsibility of collecting from the nonmembers who attend the High Holiday services a contribution equal to that collected from the members.

The first page of the Poultney minutes book, titled “Organation,” is the earliest document of Jewish communal life in the state of Vermont. With a dose of interpretive imagination, the bylaws passed at the first meeting bring the situation of the Jews of Poultney into focus. The town had become a popular place for Jews to congregate on the holidays, but those few Jews who actually lived in Poultney had begun to feel burdened by their role as the hosts by default for those who had nowhere else to observe the holidays. With the holidays just a month away, they wanted to establish clear expectations: The costs of holding services, such as they were, should be shared equally among Poultney residents and outsiders. The minutes book thus corroborates the reminiscences of other Slate Valley Jews that Poultney had been a favored stopping place for the itinerant peddlers of this area of New York and Vermont.22 In Poultney they found fellowship, respite from the hardships of the road, and the chance to observe some of the elements of a Jewish life.

The second entry in the Poultney pinkas, titled “Obtaining a Torah Scroll” [“Die Erhaltung des הָגֵן תִּשָּׁב”], records all the preparations for the holidays in detail. Mr. A. Salomon arranged to borrow a scroll of the Torah from New York, from a Mr. S. Hyman. As payment, the congregation agreed to send Mr. Hyman all the voluntary contributions its members pledged in the synagogue. The secretary, Benedict Theise, notes in parentheses that the agreement refers to what is “called Schnedergeld.”23 Over Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur in Poultney in 1867, these pledges amounted to $17.69. The pinkas records that, one day after Yom Kippur, the Torah scroll was sent back to Mr. Hyman in New York, with the payment of $17.69, “zur Freude der Gemeinde”—“to the delight of the congregation.”

In addition, the pinkas gives an itemization of its purchases, “necessary for the full conduct of services”: a shofar for $5.50; a Holy Ark to house the Torah for a mere 63¢ (!); a reading lectern, or shulchan,24 for the Torah scroll for $1.50; and a parochet, the curtain that veils the Torah scroll in the Holy Ark, for 98¢.
The costs were shared equally. Every contribution is noted with gratitude: Mr. A. Salomon contributed a ner, a lamp, while Mrs. Mineberg gave the congregation a small decorative curtain to drape over the parochet of the Ark.

The attention to detail seems to reflect a sense of satisfaction about the cooperation of the congregational members. Mr. and Mrs. Solomon Mineberg were thanked for the use of their home for services, presumably the same home shown on the 1869 map of East Poultney. It was the site of the first worship services of the newly organized Israelite Assembly of Poultney.

When the members of the Assembly reconvened in August 1868, once again to prepare for the impending holidays, some unpleasantness erupted over arrangements for the Torah scroll. Isaac Cane, then a newcomer, was assigned the task of obtaining a scroll from New York. But others present sought more permanence and proposed that the congregation purchase its own scroll. Solomon Mineberg, whose butcher shop must have been thriving, made what today would be called a challenge grant. He offered to pay half of the cost of the scroll himself “for the benefit of the Poultney congregation,” but with a condition: Every member of the congregation would have to attend services on every Sabbath!

At the next meeting two weeks later, Isaac Cane reported that he had located a Torah scroll, which could be either purchased for seventy-five dollars or rented for fifteen dollars. Solomon Mineberg took the floor. He retracted his proposal from the previous meeting and offered instead to purchase the scroll outright and place it at the disposal of the congregation for as long as he was living in Poultney. If he moved away, he would take the scroll with him. As an alternative he offered to cover forty dollars of the cost, but only if all the members of the congregation contributed toward its purchase. If even one demurred, he would “pay nothing.”

The group rejected both proposals, perhaps wary of the disproportionate influence that can accompany disproportionate generosity. Mr. Mineberg did not take rejection well. Feeling insulted, he announced that he “wanted nothing to do with the Poultney sefer Torah…. Business is finished for the day.” The Cane family must have arrived in Poultney that year. The brothers participated at that meeting, and Isaac Cane was elected vice president.

With Mineberg’s generous schemes off the table, David Theise was then given the task of dunning every member for five dollars toward the purchase of a sefer Torah, and within a day he had ten donors. (See Figure 3) The list even includes a contribution from S. Mineberg. However, it looks as if the donation initially came from Mrs. Mineberg and that the secretary later crossed out the “s” to produce Mr. That stroke of the pen seems to indicate that Mrs. Mineberg either mollified her husband’s pique or embarrassed him into cooperating by usurping his male role as the representative of the household in the congregation’s business.

"Members of this Book": The Pinkas of Vermont’s First Jewish Congregation • 59
By the time the High Holidays came around, Solomon Mineberg seems to have regained his equanimity. One day after Yom Kippur, on 27 September 1868, Isaac Cane, vice president of the congregation, noted with satisfaction in the minutes book that the holidays had been celebrated in “proper devotion” (“in ordentlicher Andacht”). Mineberg led the morning services on both days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, “for the benefit of the congregation,” and he blew the shofar. The Cane brothers pronounced the priestly blessing, “May the Lord bless you and keep you…” (Num 6:22–26), joined by their brother Jacob. The group had made purchases: a cover for the reading table and six candle stands. Mrs. Seimen Mannes did the necessary sewing, and would accept no payment for her work. The sefer Torah seems to have been paid for without difficulty, after combining the contributions collected in advance with the pledges made by the congregants during services. The minutes book also recorded the names of the guests—probably pack peddlers—who came from Hartford, over the state line in New York, and from Bristol and Fairhaven, Vermont. The minutes book also indicates—a sore point—whether each individual had paid his contribution promptly or not. Attendance by women is not recorded.

The congregation had thus established its modus operandi. The expenses were to be shared equally, and each contributed his or her talents: leading prayers, sewing, arranging for the simple necessities of communal worship. Their services migrated from one family’s home to the next: in 1867 in the Minebergs’ house and in 1868 in the home of Nathan Cane. However, from 1869 onward, a room over Isaac Cane’s store served as the shul, the synagogue. (The house has survived and is known now as the “Pine Tree House.” Local lore has it that the room on the second floor used for the synagogue was one of the rooms oriented toward the east, toward Jerusalem.) The congregation paid Cane rent.

Discussions among the leadership were not always harmonious. Frictions persisted between the settled Jewish community of Poultney and the itinerant peddlers who sought their hospitality, a nineteenth-century New England reprise of the age-old enmity between the nomadic and settled ways of life.

The leadership of the congregation rotated among a few members of the group: Solomon Mineberg, Isaac Cane, Jacob Hess, and Benedict Theise. (In the pinkas, Theise is recognizable by his graceful handwriting.) At their August meeting in 1870, it was Theise who proposed more formal rules for...
the congregation, a set of resolutions that met with ready acceptance. One can only surmise, with greater and lesser degrees of certainty, what circumstances prompted each of these provisions. The first stipulates that nothing is to be moved from the synagogue before April 1 and that Isaac Cane is to receive his full rent. Was a move to another site being contemplated? Was there a dispute over rent? The record is silent on these questions. The second resolution establishes a new name for the congregation, *Benai Israel*, “Children of Israel.” Did the change in name imply a move toward greater organization? The third resolution calls for all funds that are pledged in the synagogue, *Schnedergeld*, to be used without distinction for the purposes of the synagogue. Had funds been diverted for other purposes? The fourth resolution stipulates that such pledges must be paid within thirty days. The best resolution is saved for last: Every member is obligated to attend services once a month, and specifically, on the Sabbath preceding the new moon, when the blessing for the new month is recited. Anyone who fails to appear is subject to a fifty cent fine, and the president is authorized to collect it! Finally, Solomon Mineberg was elected president.

The pinkas also records frustrations: In that very same year, 1870, Benedict Theise wrote that Rosh Hashanah services had “very little meaning.” They were disrupted by five men, whose names are recorded for posterity, and who objected that they were expected to pay one dollar for attending services. Theise wrote that they “snuck” into services, behaved in an undignified manner, and were a nuisance. The members “were helpless” and bore it all with patience. The five miscreants were fined a total of fifteen dollars. The next day they appeared again but were fined once more and sent home. Benedict Theise’s account of this episode raises intriguing questions, both about the use of fines and about the relationship of the synagogue to the civil authority. Why was the congregation helpless, as Theise reports, “since it was Sunday”? Theise also reported that on Yom Kippur, all the services went off smoothly and “every member left the House of God deeply satisfied.”

The next year’s episode could be titled “On Yom Kippur the prayer leader arrived late.” Benedict Theise unsparingly reports that Jacob Hess, who was scheduled to lead the prayers, was late. When Hess finally arrived at ten o’clock, he found none other than Benedict leading services in his stead. Hess was ill tempered for the rest of the day, constantly interrupting.

From the minutes book, it is difficult to determine just how often in the course of a year the congregation met for prayer. The coercive resolution requiring monthly attendance at risk of a fine seems, like many resolutions, to have remained wishful thinking. A note on 4 February 1872 tells us that the congregation gathered for Shabbat services for the first time since the High Holidays—a hiatus of almost five months. The Torah portion that week was *Yitro*; the congregation may not have wanted to miss the story of the giving of the Ten Commandments. Benedict Theise notes, however, that Mineberg and Hess were absent.

"Members of This Book": *The Pinkas of Vermont’s First Jewish Congregation* • 61
Their absence may have been cause for foreboding, for 1872 seems to be the year of the Poultney schism. Solomon Mineberg, whose proposal for the acquisition of a Torah scroll had been rejected five years before, secured a Torah on his own, a direct affront to the congregation. He also held his own services, causing a heated controversy in the small congregation. Six men from Granville joined Mineberg’s minyan, and Hess led the renegade congregation in prayer. Although the minutes book is terse—these are, after all, mere minutes—Theise’s annoyance over the break is unmistakable:

Salmon [sic] Mineberg out of spite toward the congregation got hold of a sefer [scroll] for himself, giving rise to great discord…. 29

 Nonetheless, the main congregation carried on. From 1872 to 1873, despite the schism, or perhaps in response to it, the religious life of the community intensified. Services were held not only on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, but also during Sukkot and on Simhat Torah, when the Torah scroll was paraded around the synagogue. The community was saddened by the death of Salomon Cane’s son, and the minutes book records the congregation’s sympathy for him. He had to take his son to Schenectady to be buried in the Jewish cemetery there on the first day of Sukkot.

In the fall of 1873, the small Poultney synagogue was apparently crowded with worshippers. The office of secretary had passed, meanwhile, to Herman Stern, who records a general feeling of joy at the end of Yom Kippur, when the Cane brothers, Salomon and Jacob, called out the priestly blessing and a mixed crowd of members and guests ended the fast day.

The year 1873 was decisive for the Poultney Jewish community. In addition to Salomon Cane’s son’s death, Solomon Mineberg had passed away in May. Benedict Theise recorded in the minutes book that he was one of the first members of the community and that he was “mourned by all” as he was “summoned to a better world beyond.” Community members felt the need for a cemetery and appointed a small...
committee to find an appropriate plot of land. They purchased a half-acre across the road from the Christian cemetery in East Poultney.

It is not easy to extract the issues in the negotiations from the barely literate record entered in the pinkas by the secretary of the congregation, Herman Stern. However, two points seemed particularly important: First, the lawyer prepared a written contract stipulating that “this is an absentee community [eine abwesende Gemeinde] that is paid for and preserved by this book.”\(^\text{30}\) Second, Stern, on his own authority, declared that no individual member of the community may claim authority over the cemetery. The issue seems to have been opening the cemetery to nonmembers; such an accommodation could be made only by a formal decision of the congregation.\(^\text{31}\)

On a page at the back of the Poultney pinkas, the names of those buried in the cemetery were recorded, in both Judeo-German script and in English. The deaths of Marcus and Elisa Cane are the first entries: “Marcus Cane Died November 13\(^\text{th}\) 1874 first one buried.” (See Figure 4)

The headstones of Marcus and his wife Elisa are located at the northwest corner of the cemetery. Marcus Cane’s epitaph indicates that he passed away on Friday, too close to sundown to be buried before the onset of the Sabbath, and was therefore laid to rest on Sunday. Elisa’s Hebrew name is uncertain, given here as Elia, but in the register of burials as Elle.

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<td>מנה גבר</td>
<td>Died on Friday and buried on Sunday 6th of Kislev 635 by the abbreviated calendar</td>
<td>May his soul be bound up in the bond of life</td>
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Moses Mineberg’s grave is the third oldest in the cemetery. His headstone reads: “Wayfarer, stand still!/Do not tread here!/Here lies Moses son of Solomon/ Died on Thursday the 29th of Cheshvan [5]636.” (He died on the evening of 15 November 1876.) The last burial recorded in the pinkas is that of Lena Goldberg of Granville, New York, who died on 31 March 1891, leaving her husband Nathan a widower at age twenty-six with two young sons.32

In the following year, 1874, the Poultney schism was apparently resolved. Perhaps the acquisition of property made it necessary to define membership unambiguously. It was 5 September 1874, not long before Rosh Hashanah. The congregation had gathered for the penitential prayers, selichot—in Judeo-German, s’lichess. Herman Stern, the secretary, recorded in the minutes book that a special meeting was held after s’lichess in West Poultney, at which the two “sections,” the result of the schism, decided to reunite. The meeting marked a fresh start: All those who were present for the meeting would be recorded as members of the reconstituted congregation. Then the secretary continued: “And all other former members of this book are now in the status of having abandoned this congregation.”33

With this defining, weighty sentence, the record of congregational meetings in the Poultney pinkas comes to an abrupt end. The pages of the minutes book that follow contain the registers of births up to 1882 and of deaths up to that of Lena Goldberg in 1891. Although the chronicle stops here, we know from one document that in 1888 the Poultney congregation was chartered as “The Congregation of Benai Israel and the Hebrew Cemetery Association,” thus confirming the name change from “Israelite Assembly” to “Benai Israel” that the congregation had resolved at its meeting in August 1870.34 No other written records of the Poultney congregation are known to have survived. Its end came after a mere quarter century of existence, in the 1890s, when the membership dispersed. Some of Poultney’s Jews settled in other towns in Vermont and New York. The census of 1900 shows Salomon and Fanny Cane living on East Eighty-Eighth Street in Manhattan, where their son Nathan, then thirty-one years old, appears to be supporting the family from his wages as a cloth “cutter.”35 In Vermont, the Rutland Jewish Congregation, which was founded on 22 May 1910, became the focus of Jewish life in the region, drawing into the city the Jews that remained in outlying towns. It moved to its own building in the late 1920s.36 The Jewish congregation of Poultney faded away, leaving the cemetery and the minutes book, the Poultney pinkas, as sole surviving witnesses to its existence.

Analysis: Language

The Poultney Jews came from small towns of Prussia, from Westphalia and Franconia. Like other German-Jewish immigrants of the early to midnineteenth century, they do not fit the later image of the “German Jews” as worldly, even urbane and liberal, or as advocates of religious reform. As Leon Jick has
argued, the idea that German Jewry was always synonymous with a cultured bourgeoisie—Bildungsbürgertum—was the self-serving myth of German Jews in the last decades of the nineteenth century, a fabrication springing from their conceit of superiority to the later arrivals from eastern Europe. In truth, the early immigrants from Germany were of modest means and had enjoyed little education, secular or Jewish.

This is most certainly the case with the secretaries of the congregation, Benedict Theise, Isaac Cane, and Herman Stern. Their uncertain German spelling yielded readily to intrusions from the phonetics of their English-speaking surroundings. Moreover, their German is strained in its syntax and strewn with errors in grammar and diction. Similarly, their Hebrew betrays minimal Jewish education. They frequently misspell the few Hebrew terms they use, the names of holidays, ritual objects, and months of the Jewish calendar. The misspellings extend to Judeo-German phrases as well, which they write in the variation of Hebrew script typical of nineteenth-century German Jews. Moreover, the misspellings in both Hebrew and Judeo-German are quite consistent: They transcribe the words as they sound. Thus, these “phonetic misspellings” are invaluable linguistic fossils that preserve, in a written record, the distinctive pronunciation of central and southern German Jews in midcentury.

The minutes book offers many examples of the intrusion of English phonetics into the secretaries’ unsteady German. In Isaac Cane’s entries the letter “f” takes the place of “v,” which, in German, is pronounced like the English “f”: Fersammlung instead of Versammlung (assembly), forschläge instead of Vorschläge (suggestions). Occasionally the errors in orthography are combined with errors in grammatical form, as in the report on Rosh Hashanah services in 1868: “Jacob Hess led the prayers for Ma’ariv and Musaf…” (“Jacob Hess led the prayers for Ma’ariv and Musaph.”). The verb should be “vorgebetet.” The error is the result of confusion of the verb “bitten” (“to ask or request”) with “bieten” (“to pray”). Sometimes the hybridization of German and English went even farther. For instance, in a meeting on 7 August 1870, it was resolved that, until a decision about a new location for the synagogue was reached, nothing should be moved from the shul: “gemouved.”

While such mixing of language is quaint and typical of the experience of linguistic contact among expatriates, the phonetic misspellings of Hebrew are unusual and preciously instructive. They leave us a key to Hebrew pronunciation in Poultney, Vermont, which was, in effect, an export of German dialect as spoken by the Jews of their regions of provenance. The pinkas is thus a linguistic quarry for Jüdischdeutsch or Judeo-German, once in daily use by German Jews and now, with the passing of the last generation of German Jewry, slipping into extinction.

Yiddish scholars are inclined to see the sort of Judeo-German in the Poultney pinkas as the lexical residue of what was once the western branch of Yiddish,
called “Western Yiddish” (to distinguish it from the Eastern Yiddish, which evolved from the Middle High German spoken by German Jews who migrated to eastern Europe). Whereas Eastern Yiddish continued to evolve until the annihilation of eastern European Jewry, West Yiddish, by the nineteenth century, was no longer a discreet dialect of contemporary German. The Jews of Germany spoke the German dialect of their respective region, such as Bavarian, Saxonian or Allemannic, but it was interwoven with words and idioms that were the special linguistic possession of Jewish culture. The dialectal variant spoken by Jews was thus defined and named not by region but by ethnic group. Lexical differences set it apart.

Whereas in the nineteenth century, when the Poultney Jews left Europe for America, Jüdischdeutsch was the Jewish vernacular, by the beginning of the twentieth century, it was already falling into desuetude. E. Weill, who compiled a dictionary of the Jewish dialect of Alsace-Lorraine in 1920, wrote that the language of the Jews of these reconquered regions was “destined to disappear sooner rather than later” and that the time had arrived to document its expressive richness. Nonetheless, Werner Weinberg has claimed that it is not well known just how vibrant the Judeo-German idiom remained even into the 1930s, especially in the towns and villages of the German countryside. To be sure, class distinctions played a role. Rural Jews, merchants, and horse and cattle traders spoke Judeo-German, while urbanized Jews tended to disdain it. After the demise of European Jewry, a very few linguists undertook to preserve this language, gathering the testimony of living witnesses, some of whom were in Germany but most of whom were scattered throughout Europe, the Americas, and Israel.

The Poultney minutes book, however, is a time machine that transports the reader to a small New England town where this language was the vernacular of a small circle of immigrant families. The first way in which it sheds light is linguistically, through spelling and pronunciation. The phonetic spelling of the congregation’s secretaries provides many examples of what Weinberg termed “informal” Hebrew pronunciation—that is, the Judeo-German way of pronouncing Hebrew words—in distinction to a more proper pronunciation of Hebrew customarily heard in formal situations, such as in prayer or in reading from the Torah. These misspellings, whether names of Jewish holidays, months of the Jewish calendar, prayers, or synagogue paraphernalia, are all evidence that the Poultney Jews used this informal pronunciation and demonstrate many characteristic phonetic shifts. For example, an unvoiced “s” at the beginning of a word morphs into its corresponding fricative “tz” (the Hebrew letter tzadeh). The Passover seder becomes “tzeder.” In the minutes book, we find two versions of the word “sefer,” or scroll. Sometimes the secretaries write it in block letters, and with the proper Hebrew spelling, ספ, and at other times in cursive Hebrew script, spelled as it is pronounced informally—thus, sefer Torah.
Weinberg also notes that the unvoiced consonant \( b \) can morph into \( p \), or, in the reverse, a \( p \) into a \( b \). The same can occur with the sound \( v \) and \( f \). The Poultney pinkas offers many instances of both: Isaac Cane, in his minutes for 23 August 1868, writes Yom Kiebur (in Hebrew script יומ קיבו) instead of Yom Kippur, and on 7 September of that year Marif (in German transliteration) for the evening prayer, instead of Ma’ariv.

Marif is also testimony to another phenomenon in the informal pronunciation of Hebrew. Speakers of Judeo-German tended to “cluster” consonants. Thus, where a Hebrew word might begin with a shewa, audible as a half-syllable, in informal pronunciation the shewa vanishes. The word berocha, “blessing,” becomes brocha. In the case of ma’ariv, the second syllable is absorbed, yielding marif. The same occurs with, for example, the word ne’ilah, the final service in the liturgy for the Day of Atonement. It collapses to nile or nilo, as in Benedict Theise’s report on the high holiday services for 1870. (See Figure 6)46 Some regional differences also come into play. In and around Frankfurt but also elsewhere, the long Hebrew “o” (the holem vav) is spoken “ow,” as in “cow,” so that the Torah becomes “Touro.” When transliterated into phonetic German, it appears as “Tsouro.” Isaac Cane’s transliteration of Yom Kippur, “Jaumkebur” is an example: The “o” of Yom is pronounced “ow.” On the same line in the minutes book, but in Hebrew script, Cane also provides a fine example of the compression of Hebrew words in everyday speech: יומ קיוו, which I would transliterate as “Yom Kiebur.” It is a phonetic rendition of the Judeo-German pronunciation of רוש הסנהד, Rosh Hashanah. We thus know that in the Cane family, one spoke of the holidays as “Rishone” and “Yownkebur.” To be sure, Cane is not always consistent. Elsewhere, he writes not Rosh Chodesh ( elemento) for the new moon, but roshkhoysedeb as one word, in a string of misspelled Judeo-German script: יומ הסנהד (See Figure 7)

The second way in which the Poultney pinkas provides insight is through its treasure trove of Judeo-German vocabulary. Poultney Jews did not use the German verb “to pray” (“beten”) or the well-known Eastern Yiddish verb, davenen, but the Western Yiddish, “oren.” Like davenen, which is probably from the Latin “devovere,” “oren” derives from the Latin verb “orare,” to pray. In the
Poultney pinkas, the verb is used for anyone who led the services. In the entry for 24 September 1870, Jacob Hess “ohrde”—led the prayers. (See Figure 8) Furthermore, every member of the congregation was asked to bring his own “tefille,” the term for a prayer book.

Semantically, the word is an instance of metonymy; “tfillah” is the Hebrew word for “prayer,” but in Western Yiddish its meaning expands to refer to the entire prayer book. (The corresponding Hebrew—and Eastern Yiddish—term is siddur.)

While some Judeo-German vocabulary consists of single words such as these, stemming either from Hebrew or Latin (or a Romance intermediary), other Judeo-German words are composed solely of German elements but were used, in this combination, only in a Jewish context. One such example is “schulengeben,” to go to the synagogue, to the shul. Thus Benedict Theise noted on 4 February 1872 that the Poultney Jews had attended synagogue (“gingen wir … schulen…”) the day before, on the Sabbath, for the first time since the High Holidays the previous autumn.

Other composite words are an amalgamation of Hebrew and German elements. One word in this category conjures up the drama of synagogal ritual: Schnodergeld. The term refers to an old Ashkenazic custom. When the Poultney Israelite Assembly rented a Torah scroll in its first year, the congregants promised the owner of the scroll all the volunteer contributions collected during services as payment: the Schnodergeld. When, in synagogue, a congregant is called up for the honor of reading from the Torah, the prayer-leader often recites a blessing for the honoree known as the “mishbeirach”—“May He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob also bless…”—at which moment the prayer-leader gives the Hebrew name of the congregant. At that moment during the benediction it is the custom in some congregations to announce the amount the individual has pledged to the congregation or to some other charitable purpose. As Werner Weinberg recalls this custom from the synagogues of his youth in Germany, the reader would confer with the congregant in a whisper and then announce the amount and purpose of his pledge. Now, when the word from that benediction meaning “who has pledged”—shenadar—is pronounced in the manner of Ashkenazic Jews, it yields “shenadar,” and, when further contracted in the informal Hebrew pronunciation of German Jews, “schnoder.” When combined with the German word for “money,” the result is...
the Judeo-German expression used by Benedict Theise in the Poultney pinkas: “Schnöndergeld”—“pledge money,” a product of linguistic symbiosis and, like the collections practiced in Christian churches, a substantial source of revenue for the maintenance of a congregation.50

The keepers of the minutes also mention explicitly the special role in the synagogue that the Cane brothers, as descendants of the priestly line, assumed: “duchenen.” Indeed, the Anglicized surname “Cane” indicates their status as “kohanim” (sg. “kohen”). Likewise, the headstone of their father, Marcus Cane, the first one buried in the Poultney cemetery, indicates that he was the son of “Solomon the Kohen” and displays the symbol of the priestly line: two hands with fingers spread, the position in which the priests hold their hands when reciting the priestly blessing, or Birkat Kohanim. The Judeo-German verb, duch-enen, refers to the entire ritual act, as when the brothers Cane “haben geduchent” (they “duchen-ed”). In Herman Stern’s pinkas entry about Yom Kippur 1873, he reports that after the ne’ilah prayer—the concluding prayer for the fast day—the priestly blessing was “getuchend מימאמהותכיתך” by the brothers Isaac, Solomon, and Jacob Cane. (See Figure 9) Thus we must imagine the three brothers, with their prayer shawls over their heads, their hands raised in the particular posture of the priests, reciting the priestly blessing at the end of the Day of Atonement in the small room above Isaac Cane’s store that served as a synagogue. “May the Lord bless you and keep you…” (Num 6:24–26). In the ancient temple in Jerusalem, it was the priests’ practice to bless the people by reciting these verses twice each day, just before the thanksgiving offering, standing atop a platform at the entrance to the Temple that was called the duchan. Thus, here a Hebrew noun is inflected as a German verb, yielding a ritual term that invokes the memory of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Analysis: Religious and Communal Practices

The Poultney pinkas is not only a historical and linguistic document, but also a source for the religious practice of Jewish immigrants from Germany in nineteenth-century America. Significant by its absence is any evidence of the Reform movement that, at the time, was sowing controversy in Germany and beginning to spread to America. Indeed, not far from Poultney, in Albany, New York, the resolute leader of Reform Judaism, Isaac Mayer Wise, had served a...

Figure 9: “Getuchend” in German and Hebrew script. Minutes Book, 14 September 1873.
(Courtesy American Jewish Archives)
controversial term as rabbi of Congregation Beth El for eight years, from 1846 to 1854. During that time the congregation split and Wise moved with the more liberal faction. Reform Judaism was limited to cities, especially the large cities such as New York and Baltimore.51

The Poultney Jews, by contrast, were traditionalists. Their purpose seems to have been to transplant familiar customs from Germany and to recreate in Vermont the communal practice they associated with home. As Leon Jick has written,

[F]ew if any German-Jewish immigrants came to America with ideas for reform. On the contrary, in the period immediately following their arrival in the United States they generally rejected proposals that seemed to be reformist. The compromises they made in modifying their ritual practices in their private lives were dictated by economic necessity, not religious ideology.52

Thus, there is no trace of Reform practice or ideology in the records of the Poultney Jews. The very custom of selling or auctioning off synagogal honors in return for Schmiedergeld was in fact a flashpoint of controversy in the first half of the nineteenth century from Paris to London to Charleston, South Carolina. Reformers sought to abolish the practice, considering it unseemly and crude.53 Instead, the Poultney Jews held fast to the old ways. The pinkas presents a picture of a group of Jews intent to create, on a modest scale, the structures for traditional Jewish communal life in this remote slate-mining town.

To be sure, the sequence they followed deviated from the norm in other rural communities. In his book *Jewish Life in Small-Town America*, Lee Shai Weissbach noted that “community formation in the cities and towns of the American hinterland usually began with the creation of some sort of mutual benefit institution, most often a benevolent society concerned with care of the sick and burial of the dead, and that Jewish congregational activity came only later.”54 However, there were also communities like Poultney that deviated from this pattern, communities where Jews put their energy into congregational activities first.55 In Poultney they set up their shul in their homes and migrated from one home to another until they rented space from one of their own for the longer term. They never built a synagogue. While there appears to be no formal charitable society (gemilut hasadim), the minutes book does mention a resolution to pay Mrs. David Mineberg one dollar per week and three dollars before Passover (to account for the increased costs of preparing for the holiday). The payments may have represented a kind of widow’s stipend and thus be evidence of the group’s sense of obligation to assume the traditional function of a benevolent society as well.56

The small congregation was entirely lay-led. There was much discussion at the meetings over assigning roles in the services to those individuals who had the synagogue skills: leading prayers, blowing the shofar, chanting from the
There was neither a rabbi nor a trained cantor. There is also no mention of a Jewish school. In fact, aside from the register of births at the back of the book, the only mentions of children are during 1872. In that year, we read, Salomon Cane’s child died; it is also during that year that we are told the children took particular delight in the celebration of Simhat Torah, when congregations customarily parade the Torah scrolls around the synagogue.

It is also clear from the pinkas that congregational business was entirely the affair of men. Women are not listed as members of the congregation and indeed are only mentioned three times in the fourteen years the pinkas covered. In 1867 the Israelite Assembly recorded its gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Mineberg for the use of their house as a synagogue and to Mrs. Mineberg for a small curtain for the ark. The following year Isaac Cane recorded the effusive gratitude of the assembly to Mrs. Seimen Mannes for her work as seamstress, for which she would accept nothing. “She even made the congregation a beautiful Brathches and Torah mantle of silk as a present.” In general, the position of women in the Poultney congregation seems to have been typical for Jewish congregations in the nineteenth century: Their role was domestic, not public, and where they contributed to the public life of the community, they contributed the products of their domestic skills. The impetus for greater recognition of women in communal life would come later, from the Reform movement, but there is no evidence of change in Poultney before the congregation dispersed.

The minutes book is also evidence that the congregation did not meet often. Because the secretaries of the congregation took careful attendance, we know the names of those who prayed together and relied on the Poultney congregation for High Holiday services. They came from the towns of Granville, Middle Granville, and Hartford in New York, and from Fair Haven and as far away as Bristol in Vermont. However, it is clear from the minutes book that these gatherings were quite infrequent. In the seven years documented in the pinkas, the Poultney congregation gathered for the major holidays and an occasional Sabbath, no more.

Conclusion

The minutes book establishes 1867 as the founding date of the Poultney congregation, a date that is often hard to fix accurately for congregations in rural America. At the same time, it raises many questions for which there are no answers. For instance, one can only speculate about the reasons for the 1872 schism or the causes of the congregation’s dissolution in the 1890s. One account cites the sale of Isaac Cane’s house, where the congregation met, as the reason. In fact, however, we do not know whether that was a contributing cause or one of the effects. Thus the Poultney Jewish community seems to have had a history of just a quarter-century: from the founding meeting in 1867 to sometime in the 1890s.
Finally, the keeping of a pinkas itself, the act of constituting the Poultney congregation by drafting articles of association (the “Organation” of 27 September 1868) and entering them in a pinkas, is a sign of the Poultney Jews’ traditionalism. Their articles of association are reminiscent of the constitutions of Jewish communities in Germany, where, the Emancipation notwithstanding, Jews were required to belong to legally constituted Jewish communities. Their constitutions were modeled on those of German civil administrations. The Poultney articles also bear some similarity to other constitutional documents of American Jewry, in which the preamble states the purposes of the association. The stated purposes of the Poultney Jews were modest: to achieve a more orderly service and to insure an equal sharing of the costs and responsibilities for High Holiday services. Their modest scope notwithstanding, the articles of association represented nothing less than the covenant of the Poultney congregation. This original document would be superseded in 1888 by articles of association that were broader in scope and that served the purpose “of procuring, holding and keeping in repair a house of public worship” and of maintaining a cemetery.

It is striking that Herman Stern, in that final entry of 5 September 1874—in which he records the dismissal of inactive members—speaks of “members of this book” and “members” of the congregation as synonyms. It is likewise striking that Stern, in his convoluted and nearly indecipherable report on the purchase of the cemetery, explains that a legal document had to be drawn up to make clear that the Poultney congregation was an “absentee community that is paid and maintained by [virtue of] this book.” Whatever this obscure statement may mean, it seems to attribute to the pinkas itself the authority and power to constitute a community. The “members of this book” were the members of the congregation. It also seems that they wrote their pinkas not just out of a sense of fidelity to tradition, but also out of a sense of stewardship for their communal history. With all its cumbersome syntax, grammatical blunders, and phonetic misspellings, the Poultney pinkas was an expression of historical consciousness.
The Poultney Pinkas
Annotated Transcription and Translation

The Poultney pinkas is the work of three secretaries of the congregation: Benedict Theise, Isaac Cane, and Herman Stern. Theise documented the communal records in the first year of the existence of the “Israelite Assembly” and Cane in the second. Theise resumed as secretary from 7 August 1870 to 14 September 1873 and was succeeded by Stern, who served for only one year but had much to record, since his term also covered the negotiations for the purchase of the congregation’s cemetery in November 1873. The election of Jacob Cane as the next secretary was the last act Stern documented. Jacob Cane must have decided to start afresh in a new notebook, which, if it survived, has not yet surfaced.

The text of the Poultney pinkas is reproduced here exactly as it was written, in German, with an admixture of Judeo-German vocabulary, Hebrew terms, and an occasional English word. In the transcription, I have endeavored to preserve all the errors in spelling and grammar contained in the original but drawn attention to them only when they seemed linguistically interesting. Similarly, the English translation does not seek to smooth over infelicitous syntax in the original, but only to render it comprehensible. In places where the meaning of the original is obscure, the translation seeks faithfully to reflect its obscurity. Herman Stern, in particular, was so minimally literate that it requires conjecture to make sense of his account of the cemetery purchase. Any corrections or editorial improvements to the writing of any of the three would have effaced the character of the pinkas and compromised its value as a historical and linguistic document.

In the translation, English words in the original have been left unchanged. Hebrew and Judeo-German words are transliterated into Latin letters and translated into English only when their meaning may not be generally known.

Hebrew letters in a serif font (e.g. תָּהֹחַ) indicate Hebrew block letters in the original. Hebrew letters in sans serif font (e.g. סֹלוֹל) indicate cursive Hebrew script in the original.
1 Organization

Wir, die Unterzeichneten Mitglieder von der israelitischen Versammlung, um bessere Ordnung zu erhalten während des Gottesdienstes für die kommenden Feiertagen, sind hierbei vereinigt, daß ein Jeder eine gleichmäßige Beisteuer leisten will zu einigen Kosten, sollen solche vorkommen.

I. Um Obengenanntes zu erleichtern sol ein President, Vice President u. Secretary erwählt werden, deren Verpflichtung es sein soll, Gesetz u. Ordnung, nach den Gesetzen u. Ordnungen des (States) of Vermont den Religionsverein anbelangend, zu erhalten.

II. Ferner soll es die Schultigkeit sein von den obengenannten drei Beamten, allen denjenigen welche nicht ihren Namen als Mitglieder unterschrieben haben, und während den Feiertagen mit uns den Gottesdienst als Glaubensgenossen abhalten wollen die gleichmäßige Beisteuer abzuverlangen.

III. In Abwesenheit des Presidenten hat der Vice-President das Recht, eine Versammlung der Mitglieder zu verlangen, um Verbesserungen für das Wohl der Gemeinde zu veranstalten.

IV. Durch die meisten Stimmen der Gemeinde sollen von Zeit zu Zeit die Beamten und Vorbeter für die verschiedenen Feiertagen und Gebeten erwählt werden.

Benedict Theise
A. Salomon  Poultney September
S. Mineberg 1st 1867
Z. Levis
H. Glück
D. Mineberg
Jacob A. Salomon
Jacob Heß
Herman Stern
Isaac Theise

— Election of Officers —

A. Salmon  S. Mineberg  President
A. Salmon  Vice President
B. Theise  Sec’y
Poultney, September 1, 1867

2 Organization [Organization]

We the undersigned members of the Israelite Assembly, in order to establish better order during worship for the approaching holidays, are herewith agreed that every man should contribute an equal payment for the costs, should any such occur.

I. To facilitate the abovementioned, a President, Vice President a. Secretary should be elected, whose obligation it will be to preserve law and order, in accordance with the laws and regulations of the State of Vermont pertaining to a religious association.

II. Furthermore, it should be the obligation of the abovementioned three officials to require an equal contribution of all those who have not signed their names as members and wish to hold services with us as co-religionists during the holidays.

III. In the absence of the president the vice president has the right to call a meeting of the members to bring about improvements for the good of the congregation.

IV. From time to time the officials and prayer-leaders for the various holidays and prayers should be elected by a majority of the votes of the congregation.

Benedict Theise
A. Salomon  Poultney September
S. Mineberg 1st 1867
Z. Levis
H. Glück
D. Mineberg
Jacob A. Salomon
Jacob Heß
Herman Stern
Isaac Theise

— Election of Officers —

A. Salmon  S. Mineberg  President
A. Salmon  Vice President
B. Theise  Sec’y
Poultney, September 1, 1867
Die Erhaltung des

Anstalt wurde gemacht von Mr. A. Salmon um ein und erreichten ein solches von Mr. S. Hyman von New York, unter folgender Bedingung nämlich: daß alle freiwilligen Gaben (Schnoder-Geld) genannt, die Gemeinde schicken muß, für den gebrauch des dieses zur Freude der Gemeinde wurde ein Tag nach retour geschickt und Mr. S. Hyman erhielt Cash $17.69.

Die häufigsten Sachen welche zur völligen Ausführung des Gottesdienstes angeschafft wurden, kosteten,

Ein [Sefar] kostete $5 50
Ein [Aron HaKodesch] kostete 63
Ein [Shulchan] kostete 1 50
Ein [Parochet] kostete 98

$ 8 61

als Geschenk von Mr. B. Theise

Ein [Sefar] als Geschenk von Mr. A. Salmon.

Alle vorhergenannte Sachen wurden durch eine gleichmäßige Beisteuer von einem jeden Mitglied erhoben, und von Mr. A. Salomon den 10ten October 1867 ausbezahlt, zugleichzeit wurden alle obigen Sachen in die Hände des Mr S. Mineberg zur Aufbewahrung für die Gemeinde überliefert.

Einen herzlichen Dank wurde von der Gemeinde zu Mr. & Mrs S. Mineberg für Ihre Bemühung und für den Gebrauch des Schulzimmers abgestattet.

Ein kleines Vorhänge abhängend über dem [Sefar] zum Geschenk von Mrs Salomon Mineberg.

The Receipt of the

Arrangements were made by Mr. A. Salmon for a [Sefar] and [we] received it from Mr. S. Hyman from New York under the following condition: that the congregation must send all voluntary donations ("Schnoder-Geld") for the use of the [Sefar]. The latter, to the delight of the congregation, was sent back one day after [Yom Kippur] and Mr. S. Hyman received $17.69 in cash.

The most common items which were obtained for the complete conduct of worship services cost

A [Sefar] cost $5 50
A [Aron HaKodesh] cost 63
A [Shulchan] cost 1 50

$ 8 61

as a gift from Mr. B. Theise

A [Sefar] as a gift from Mr. A. Salmon.

All the above-mentioned items were paid for by means of an equal contribution from every member, paid out by Mr. A. Salomon on the 10th of October 1867. At the same time, all the above-mentioned items were delivered to Mr. S. Mineberg for safekeeping for the congregation.

The congregation expressed its sincere gratitude to Mr. & Mrs S. Mineberg for their efforts and for the use of the prayer room.

A small curtain over the [Sefar] as a gift from Mrs Salomon Mineberg.
Meeting of the congregation following members were present:

President S. Meinberg
Jacob Hess
M. Mineberg
Daniel Mineberg
Is. Theise
Isaac Cane
Sam Wertheim

It was suggested that we hold services on [Roshoneh und Yom Kiebur] in the house of B. Theise if the same can be had. Moreover Isaac Cane was assigned to arrange for a [sefer Torah] from New York or where one can be gotten. Was also suggested by I. Theise that we could buy a [sefer Torah], for which S. Meinberg voluntarily offered to pay half of the costs of the Tzeifor for the benefit of the Poultney congregation, if it would make money every Shabbos and every member attends. Furthermore, I. Theise and Jacob Hess were assigned to arrange for the paraphernalia necessary for services, also that I. Theise informs the brothers present that we have services and voluntary entrance fee on Roshoneh Yom Kiebur with legal regulation as stated above. As candidates were accepted

Isaac Cane
Salomon Cane
Sam Wertheim
Simon Mannes

Officers were elected

Press. Salomon Mineberg
Vice Isaac Cane
Sectr Salomon Cane

Each member offered to put out for a Thefielle [prayer book] for Roshoneh und Yom Kiebur for leading the services. With that business was finished for today until Aug. 30, scheduled for a meeting, should anything transpire.

Isaac Cane
Folgende Mitglieder waren Present:

Salomon Meinberg
David Meinberg
Jacob Heß
Sam Wertheim
David Theise
Isaac Theise
Isaac Cane

Comittee berichtet Isaac Cane daß ein
Ztuer toherv zu bekommen ist für Seventy
five Dollars oder Fifteen zum Leihen einen
Tag nach Jaumiebur alle Eckspanses frey
hin zu schücken und abzunehmen und
gut order abliefern zu thun. S. Meinberg
hatte sein Word genommen was
er versprochen hat in letzter Prottecall. S. Meinberg
hatte sein Word genommen was
er versprochen hat in letzter Prottecall. Derselbe macht einen Forschlag daß er
wolle das kaufen und bezahlen und
kunde das Poultney-Gemeinte lassen so
lange derselbe in Poultney wohnhaft ist dan
wolte er das withnehmen. dritten Forschlag machte S. Meinberg das er werde
forty Dollars bezahlen wenn keiner von die
Members werde fehlen zu Müngen aber
erhöht nichts bezahlen bis er zu frieden gestellt
wolte es die Poultney-Gemeinte lassen so
lange derselbe in Poultney wohnhaft ist dan
wolte er das withnehmen. der zweiten
Forschlag machte S. Meinberg das er werde
forty Dollars bezahlen wenn keiner von die
Members werde fehlen zu Müngen aber
erhöht nichts bezahlen bis er zu frieden gestellt
wolte es die Poultney-Gemeinte lassen so
lange derselbe in Poultney wohnhaft ist dan
wolte er das withnehmen. beide forschläge wurden
nicht angenommen es wurde von Isaac Cane
fogeschlagen daß wen wir das bezahlen thäten ein jeder Member 500 five
Dollars Eintrigeld zu zahlen hat und jeder
München machen muß bei Two Dollars Strafe. S. Meinberg fand sich beleidigt machte die Erwiderung
daß derselbe mit der Poultney Gemeinte nichts zu thun haben will gar keine
ansprüche damit wurden — Geschäfte für
heute geschloßen es wurde beauftragt David
Theise von jedem Member 500 five Dollar zu
coleckten. u. Bericht abzustatten.

Isaac Cane
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Paid</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Theise</td>
<td>five</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Solomon Mineberg</td>
<td>five</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Mineberg</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Heß</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Wertheim</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seimen Mannes</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac Cane</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salomon Cane</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herman Stern</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathan Cane</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jacob Hess led the prayers for Ma’ariv and Mussaph on both days of Rosh Hashanah and Y.K. all … Mussaph and Ne’ilah of Yom Kippur for the benefit of the community. Solomon Meinberg led the prayers for Shacharit and blew the shofar for both days of Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur shacharit and minchah for the benefit of the community.

Isaac Cane and S. Cane recited the priestly blessing on Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur with Jacob Cane. The holidays were observed in proper devotion. we had the following visitors for services from Hartford, N.Y.

L. Wolf
Wolf
Morris Sanmir have promptly paid
Facks " "
L. Löb " "
Jacob Cane " "
Isaac Stern " "
from Fairhaven the Sumter brothers not paid
S. Stern from Bristol Vt. " "

we bought a Shulchan covering, a torah mantle and wrapper, with trim, cost with trim 5 11
6 light stands 20 1 20
Mrs. Seimen Mannes did the sewing for these items and did not want to take anything for her work and even presented the community with a gift of beautiful blessing and mantle of silk

The community expressed its sincere thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Mannes, also to Mr. Nathan Cane its heartfelt thanks for the venue for the shul.

The tzedek was paid for and the money sent with D. Theise I. Cane lent 35 dollars toward the money 25 15/100 collected on Yontef in voluntary [contributions] from the members … 50

David Theise saved the community 10 dollars on the tzedek. the community expressed its sincere thanks to him.

Oct. 2/68 Vice Pres. I. Cane
13 1869 Poultney Aug. 1869

Heute versammelte sich die Poultney Israelitische Gemeinde um neue Officer wurden erwählt, es wurde beschlossen und ernannt folgende

auf ein Jahr  Seimen Mannes  President
Jacob Hess       Vice
Isaac Cane       Sactyr

Die Geschäfte wurden beendict
Der Sactyr David Theise hat heute am 23ten August seine Rechnung überliefert

Ecounts    7 54
Cash       05
Für 6 Stühl bezahlt  4 50
Lichten "    08
Salomon Cane      80
Isaac Cane für eine woolene Däcke 1 05
1 05
14 02

14 Die Poultney Gemeinte Fersamelte sich am 26 ten September folgende members waren present
Jacob Heß
David Meineberg
Sam Wertheim
Isaac Cane
Nathan Cane
Seimen Mannes
Salomon Meineberg
David Theise

es wurde beschlossen den George Tepplen 2.50 für Lichten zu butzen zu zahlen von 1868–69. Ferner wurde angenommen dass ein jeder 60 ¢ für das halbe Jahr was fallich ist zu zahlen hat und wurde von N. Cane forgeschlagen nicht mehr als 25 Dollars zu übersteigen an den Bank zu deposiden oder zu thun damit wurden die Geschäfte für heute geschloßen.

Poultney Sept. 26/69  Sactr. Isaac Cane

16 1869 Poultney Aug. 1869

Today the Poultney Israelite Congregation met to elect new officers. It was resolved and named the following

for one year  Seimen Mannes  President
Jacob Hess       Vice
Isaac Cane       Sactyr

Business was adjourned.

Today on the 23rd of August the Sactyr David Theise submitted his accounts

Ecounts    7 54
Cash       05
Paid for 6 chairs  4 50
Lights "     08
Salomon Cane      80
Isaac Cane for a wool blanket 1 05
1 05
14 02

The Poultney Congregation met on the 26th of September following members were present
Jacob Hess
David Meineberg
Sam Wertheim
Isaac Cane
Nathan Cane
Seimen Mannes
Salomon Meineberg
David Theise

It was resolved to pay George Tepplen 2.50 for cleaning the lights from 1868–69. Further it was passed that each individual should pay 60¢ fur the half year just due and it was suggested by N. Cane to put or deposit in the bank an amount not to exceed 25 dollars. Business was adjourned for today.

Poultney Sept. 26/69  Sactr. Isaac Cane
General Versammlung der Israelitische Gemeinde fand heute im Schulenzimmer über dem Store des Herrn Isaacs Canes stadt. folgenden Mitgliedern dieser Gemeinde waren presend
B. Theise
I. Cane
S. Mineberg
S. Cane
D. Mineberg
D. Theise
J. Heß

Folgende Resoluationen wurden von B. Theise fortertragen und von den obengenannten Mitgliedern einstimmig angenommen. nämlich
I. dass nichts soll gemoved werden von den angehörigen Sachen dieser Gemeinde bis den 1. April 1871, und dass Isaac Cane sein vollen Rend haben soll bis zum 1ten April 71,

II. Die Gemeinde erhielt von David Theise den Namen Benai Israel was alle Mitglieder zu einstimten.

III. Wurde beschlossen dass alle Gelder welche in der Schule versprochen werden, (ohne Unterschied) auch zum Gebrauch der Schule eingehen müssen. -

IV. dass alle solche Gelder, innerhalb 30 Tagen bezahlt werden müssen. —

V. Ein jedes Mitglied ist verpflichtet jeden 4IBCCFT 3PTI)PEFTI gebeten wird sich einzufinden ob י.Exists oder keine י.Exists ist. Wo nicht, der President das recht hat solches Mitglied mit 50¢ zu strafen. —

Dann wurde die Erwählung der Beamten vorgenommen und volgende Beamten wurden für 1 Jahr erwählt. —
Salomon Mineberg President
Salomon Cane Vice Presidt und Treasure
Benedict Theise Secretary

Das heilige Neujahr beging am 24 ten September 1870.

continued next page

Annotated Transcription and Translation: The Pinkas of Vermont’s First Jewish Congregation • 81
Leider war die Zusammenkunft in der Schule von sehr weniger Bedeutung — indem als man in der Schule trad, sich dort 5 — befanden, welche nur um Störung und um nichtswürdiges anstellen sich zuerst hingeschlichen hatten — Die Mitglieder konnten sich nicht helfen da es grote Sonntag war, und nahmen alles mit Geduld an, die Ursache des schlechten betragens war daß Ihnen einen Dollar eintritt abverlangt wurde von den den Mitgliedern und Sie sich weigerten zu bezahlen. —


Dienstag den zweiten Tag ließen oben-genannte 5 die Mitglieder aufnehmen fanden aber kein gehör und mußten 7 49/100 kosten bezahlen und wurden nach Haus geschicht.

Sonst war noch hier Ralph Ganns, Reuben Ganns and David Levi —

Jacob Heß (ohrde תורשש) B. Theise (ומיש) den ersten Tag__den zweiten Tag (ohrte) Jacob Heß תורשש und Marcus Cane (ומיש) wurde ziemlich gut gefeierd Gebrüder Siegel und Jacob Cane waren auch present sonst alle wie usu Jacob Hess ohrde הדרש וברקע Marcus Cane ohrde הבכש, und Benedict Theise ohrde הדרש וברקע sonst geschah alles in guter Ordnung so daß ein jedes Mitglied mit der größten Zufriedenheit das Gotteshaus verließ.

B. Theise Secry

Unfortunately the gathering in the synagogue had very little meaning, for when we entered the synagogue there were five [persons] who had snuck in first and had in mind only disruption and undignified [behavior]— The members were helpless since it was a Sunday, and bore everything with patience, the cause of their bad conduct was that a dollar entrance fee was requested of them by the members and they refused to pay. —

The abovementioned were Isaac Rothschild – Salmon Strauss – Henry Siegel – Acher Siegel and Joseph Siegel — Monday the first day of Rosh Hachanah these five were admitted and punished which, with costs, amounted to about 15 dollars.

Tuesday the second day the members allowed the aforementioned 5 to be admitted but they would not listen to them and had to pay $7.49/100 in costs and were sent home.

Others who were here Ralph Ganns, Reuben Ganns and David Levi —

Jacob Heß (led shahari) B. Theise (muaph) the first day__the second day (led) Jacob Hess shahari and Marcus Cane (muaph)

Yom Kippur was celebrated rather well. The brothers Siegel and Jacob Cane were also present otherwise everyone as on Rosh Hashanah. Jacob Hess led Kol Nidrè and Shaharis_ Marcus Cane muaph David Theise minah, and Benedict Theise Nilah. Everything else went properly so that every member left the House of God with the greatest sense of satisfaction.

B. Theise Secry
Die Mitglieder der Gemeinde Benai Israel versammelte sich im Schulenzimmer über Isaac Cane Store und folgende Sachen wurden beschlossen

I. nämlich daß die Schule für ein Jahr bleiben soll wo sie jetzt ist, und Isaac Cane zwölf Dollar Rent dafür bekommen soll. II daß die Frau des David Mineberg von jetzt bis drei Dollar aus der Gemeinde Casse erhalten soll. — Sonst wurde nichts besonderes vorgetragen und wurde für heute beschlossen

B. Theise Secy

Heute morgen wurde der Purim Gottesdienst sehr schön gefeiert — Mr. Katz Joseph Siegel Mr. Friedman und Mr. Wolf waren present.

B. Theise Secrty.

This morning Purim services were celebrated very beautifully — Mr. Katz Joseph Siegel Mr. Friedman and Mr. Wolf were present.

B. Theise Secrty.

Heute morgen gingen wir zum erstenmal um den Gottesdienst abzuhalten, nach dem Gottesdienst wurden die Beamten fürs kommende Jahr erwählt. — anwesende Mitglieder waren folgende:

Isaac Cane
Sal. Cane
Jacob Heß
H. Stern
B. Theise
Simon Mannes

Mr. S. Mineberg war in New York sowie David Theise — Mr. Salmon Cane wurde erwählt Presdt und Benedict Theise Secraty

Messrs. Jacob Hess and Marcus Cane- led the services both days of Rosh Hashanah and Mr. B. Theise Bâdil Koreb (or layende) [torah reader]
Mr. und Mrs. Seiff Gebrüder Gans — und Gebr Siegels waren die Fremden wo hier waren — nach der wurden beschlossen von wegen vorbeten an zu machen wie folgt —

Jacob Heß und Marcus Cane — und B. Theise lasende und — Dieser Beschuß wurde freiwillig von obengenannte drei Mitglieder angenommen — als nun herannahete so war natürlich Mr. Heß an seinem Pfosten bei aber kamen alle außer Mr. Heß Mr. B. Theise fing an und es wurde ungefähr 10 Uhr bis Mr. Heß kam — der Prsdt aber Mr. S. Cane behauptete sein Amt und gab nicht zu daß irgend einen Scandal statt fand.

Marcus Cane ohrte und Benedict Theise und lajende. Dieselben fremden wo hier waren — waren auch hier — hinzugefügt Mr. Ashman u. Mr. Peck von Rutland

Isaac Cane hatte und Mr. Mannes hatten beide gaben zum Besten — zum Wohl der Mitglieder. — Sitze waren frei für alle über die ganze Feiertage —

Mr. and Mrs. Seiff the Gans brothers — and the Siegels brothers were the guests who were here — After R’H [Rosh Hashanah] it was resolved concerning leading services on Yaum Kippur as follows — Jacob Hess Kol Nidre and shabaris Marcus Cane musaph and minhab. B. Theise reading Torah and Nila.

This resolution was passed voluntarily by the aforementioned three members — when Kol Nidre drew near, Mr. Hess was of course at his post. But at shabaris everyone except Mr. Hess came. Mr. B. Theise began shabaris and it was about 10 o’clock before Mr. Hess came — the latter behaved himself very badly the entire of day Yaum Kippur and always tried to create a disturbance. However, the Prsdt Mr. S. Cane asserted his authority and did not allow any scandal to occur.

Marcus Cane led Musaph and Minhab and Benedict Theise Nila and reading Torah. The same guests who were here on R’H [Rosh Hashanah] were also here on Y’K [Yom Kippur], additionally Mr. Ashman and Mr. Peck from Rutland

Meier Strauss and Isaac Stern Rosh Hashona and Yom Kippur were celebrated with devotion and sanctity in the name of God — the congregation (Benai Israel) received approximately $25.00 in pledges.103 Simhat Torah everyone was very merry.

Isaac Cane had Chatan Torah and Mr. Mannes had Chatan Bereishit.104 Both of them gave it their best for the welfare of the members. Seats were available for all throughout all the holidays.

B. Theise, Sectry

Poultnay February 4th 1872

Gestern gingen die Mitglieder hiesiger Gemeinde (Benai Israel) zum ersten male wieder seid die Schullen außer Mr. Heß und Mr. S Mineberg

B. Theise Sectry

Poultnay February 4th 1872

Yesterday Parashat Yithro105 the members of this congregation (Benai Israel) went to synagogue for the first time since the Yaum tovim106 with the exception of Mr. Hess and Mr. S. Mineberg.

B. Theise Sectry
Poultney den 1 ten March 1872

Im Auftrag des Presidenten Salmon Cane wurde durch Benedict Theise ein Aron Haqodesh gebracht und aufgestellt. Mr. Wilson seine Rechnung war $37 23/00 — indem er aber beim angehen des Aron Haqodesh nur $15- verlangte, und nachdem er begonnen hatte daran zu arbeiten fand er sich selbst ungeheuer getäuscht – und machte den Vorschlag die $3,23 weniger zu nehmen und es wurde denn von Mr. S. Cane genehmigt daß er $34 00/00 erhalten soll —

Poultney March 25th 1872
B. Theise Secry.

Poultney October 2 nd 1872

Heute morgen gingend wir zum ersten mal schule-dieses zu bedauern, dies konnte nicht geändert werden, indem Salmon Mineberg zum Trotz der Gemeinde für sich selbst ein 527 für sich holte, u. dadurch eine große Zwiedracht entstand, 6 Mann von Granville gingen zu M. Mineberg zu Mr. Heß war auch da und (ohrte).


Poultney the 1st of March 1872

At the request of the President Salmon Cane an Aron Haqodesh was ordered by Benedict Theise from J.S. Wilson — the Aron was brought to the synagogue and set up on March 22nd. Mr. Wilson's bill was $37 23/00 — inasmuch as he, when the details for the Aron Haqodesh were given, he demanded only $15, and after he had begun to work on it, he found himself greatly mistaken and made the proposal that he take $3.23 less and it was approved by Mr. S. Cane that he should receive $34 00/00.

Purim we went to synagogue — Mr and Mrs. Seif — Mr and Mrs. J. Engländer from Middle Granvill were here, as well as A. & H. Siegel and Pfiferling.

Poultney March 25th 1872
B. Theise Secry.

Poultney October 2 nd 1872

This morning Erev Rosh Hashanah we went to synagogue for the first time—this to our regret, this could not be changed, that is, that Salmon Mineberg out of spite toward the congregation got hold of a sefer for himself, giving rise to great discord, 6 men from Granville went to M. Mineberg for Minyan. Mr. Hess was also there and led services.

Members were present today. I. Cane, H. Stern, Salmon Cane, B. Theise u. S. Mannes — It was resolved that Salmon Cane should serve as president and Benedict Theise as Scy for the coming year — Both days of Rosh HaShanah were celebrated in the best order — on both days B. Theise led Shacharis and Marcus Cane Musaph. guests were E. Levi, A. Spiegel — H. Glück — Anshel Stern. Henry Siegel and Salmon Strauss.

Yom Kippur

Was observed in deepest devotion – B. Theise led Kol Nidre, Shacharis, Minchab and reading Torah. M. Cane led Musaph and Nila.

Guests were Mr. Peck and two others from Rutland S. Bachman — N. & P. Cane, S. Katz — J.A. & H. Siegel and H. Glück.
The first days were observed beautifully — yet to the dismay of Salmon Cane — who, on the first day, brought a child to be buried in Schenectady, which caused general mourning, the two final days especially (Simhah Torah) were celebrated in marvelous fashion and will remain especially in the memory of the children.

B. Theise Secty
Poultney Oct. 27th 1972

The members of this congregation went to synagogue this morning for Selichot. After services the officers were elected for the following year, to wit:

Jacob Heß Presid  u.
H. Stern Secty

Members present were:
B. Theise
J. Cane
S. Cane

S. Mannes  In the past year services were held more often, and there was general peace among the members. One of the first members of this congregation Salmon Mineberg was summoned to a better world beyond on the 16th of May of this year — his death was mourned by all.

The books were transferred today by B. Theise along with his resignation as Secty to H. Stern.

B. Theise Secty.
Heute morgen gingen wir Schule, nach dem Gottesdienste wurde gefragt, um ein Todten-Hof endlich ein zu kaufen, wurde von den einstän-digen beschlossen, daß solches, nach Verlauf der Feiertage gekauft soll werden, nehmlich folgende Mitglieder waren es einverstanden:

Isaac Cane. Salomon Cane
Jacob Heß B. Theise
Simon Manneß. H. Stern

Folglich wurde eine Committee erwählt um solches zu kaufen & zustande zu bringen. —

Committee
Isaac Cane
B. Thyse
H. Stern

Wir alle genannten Mitglieder hoffen, daß solches, um der Nöthigkeit, in unserer Gemeinde, zu Werke gebracht wird.

H. Stern Secty

Poultnwy Sept 23, 1873
Wurde in der größten Feierlichkeit vollbracht den 1 Tag ohrte J. Heß und Markus Cane und den 2 Tag ohrte J. Heß und M. Cane.

Folgende Mitglieder waren schulen J. Cane S. Cane J. Heß S. Manneß und H. Stern folglich noch einige fremde Mitglieder welches für die Gemeinde eine schöne Versammlung machte

Wurde mit Andacht vollbracht J. Heß ohrte נלך נוטץ ושרית וילל M. Cane ohrte מיתן וסימן und H. Stern Die Versammlung war von Mitgliedern und Fremden Persohnen bedeutend Wir frohlokten alle, den Tag mit einer drengende Versammlung der Versöhnung zu über-schreiten Und wurde zur Ehre Gottes nach dem beten von den Brüdern Isac Salmon und Jacob Cane getuchend

Poultnwy Sept 21, 1873
This morning, Evr. Rosh Hashanah, we went to synagogue, after the services it was asked, to purchase, at long last, a graveyard, a Bayis Gevurot was resolved by those present that one should be purchased after the holidays have passed, that is, the following members were in agreement on it.

Isaac Cane. Salomon Cane
Jacob Hess B. Theise
Simon Manness. H. Stern

Accordingly a committee was elected for the purpose of purchasing such a cemetery and bringing it about. — Committee
Isaac Cane
B. Thyse
H. Stern

All of us members hope that such can be made a reality because of the necessity in our community.

H. Stern Secty

Poultnwy Sept 23, 1873
Rosh Hashanah was observed with the greatest solemnity The first day J. Hess and Markus Cane led Musaph the 2nd day J. Hess led Musaph and Marcus Cane Shacharit H. Stern Balteki'a. Following members attended synagogue J. Cane, S. Cane J. Hess, S. Manness and H. Stern, also a few guest members which made for a nice assembly for the congregation.

Yom Kippur
Was observed with devotion. J. Hess led Nila and Shacharit and Kol Nitre M. Cane ohrte Musaph und H. Stern Mincha The assembly was considerable, of members and visitors. We all rejoiced, to pass the day with a crowded assembly of atonement And after the Nila prayer the priestly blessing was recited by the brothers Isac, Salmon and Jacob Cane, for the glory of God.

Annotated Transcription and Translation: The Pinkas of Vermont’s First Jewish Congregation • 87

H. Stern Secky


Und dafür bemerke ich daß diejenige Members welche in diesem Buch einge- tragen sind nie kein Antheil oder irgend nur etwaß zu sagen oder dazu Erlangen … chten\textsuperscript{12} nicht ohne daß die Gemeinde über diesen Todtenhof und Fremden ein Beschluß macht wenn sich ein Fremder davon mit einer zahlbaren Suma sich mit der Willigung der Gemeinde einkaufen wird.

\textsuperscript{112} And thus I note that those members who are entered in this book never will have a share or anything at all to say or acquire [a right] to it … unless the congregation makes a resolution on this graveyard and non-members when a non-member wants to buy in with a cash sum with the approval of the congregation.
Heute morgen gingen wir zu 
schulen und nach dem Gottesdienst gingen
wir zusammen nach West Poultney und wurde daselbst eine Versammlung von
der Gemeinde abgehalten. Es wurden für
das kommende Jahr die Offices erwehlt
und zwar so, indem wir noch für daß letzte
Jahr 2 Abtheilung hatten, welches schon
vorher in diesem Buche bemerkt war, jetzt
zur Vereinigung, daß Mitgliedern von allen
Gemeinden beschlossen wurde dießes von
heute an zu einer Abtheilung zu übergehen
und wurde dazu gebracht Nur von den
Mitgliedern dießes Buches welche zu dieser
Zeit an dem heutigen Tage einfanden als
Mitgliedern eingetragen in der Erneuerten
Gemeinden Und alle andern vorhergehen-
den Mitgliedern dießes Buches sich befinden
von dieser Gemeinde abgefallen. Es wurde
E. Levy Preid. Jacob Caney Secty. Poultney
Sept. 5, 1874.

Herman Stern Sec.
i  Birds
Glara Cane July 2nd July 1866
Josie Cane Dec. 31th 1867
Salome Cane April 24th 1870
Linna Cane Janner 6th 1874
L. Morres, Sohn gebohren am 28ten November 1879
N. Levi ein Sohn Gebohren am 27th August 1882
Aaron Mineberg. Died August 4th 1875
Moses Mineberg J. " Oct. 8 1880
Joseph Frank. Died May 3/. 81
Age 4 Jairs & 10 months
Joseph Mineberg Died June 1. 1883
Age 10 years

1883
Aug 21 Abraham Cane Died Aug. 21/83
Age 36 years

1886
Janny 26 Rosa Englander Whitehall Burred Age 6 jears

1889
Januar 25
Edward Abrams Died 23 Shevat 649*
Age 2 months Burred January 27/89
Aug 23
Himan Rand of Rutland Vt
died 23/89 Age 4 months & 16 days
Burred 25/7/89

Birds [Births]
Glara Cane July 2nd July 1866
Josie Cane Dec. 31th 1867
Salome Cane April 24th 1870 on 13 Nisan 43014
Linna Cane January 6th 1874
L. Morres, son born on 28th November 1879
13 Kislev 13 day in Kislev 640*
L. Morres, son born on 28th November 1879
13 Ellul 13 in Ellul 642*
Aaron Mineberg. Died August 4th 1875
Moses Mineberg J. " Oct. 8 1880
Joseph Frank. Died May 3/. 81
Age 4 Jairs & 10 months
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 13th, 1874</td>
<td>Marcus Cane Died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 7th, 1876</td>
<td>Eliesa Cane Died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 15th, 1876</td>
<td>Moses Mineberg Died</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>May 29 Abraham Volinsky west Rutland Vt buried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Mrs. Lena Goldberg, Granville N.Y. March 30 Buried 5651 c ADurdya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Markus Kahn passed away on 4 four day in Kislev
- Elie Kahn passed away 10 o. of Tevet 536*
- Mozes Meinberg Cesven 28 passed away 537*
- Abraham Kahn passed away 18 Av 643* 5643
- Reiseg Englisher passed away 18 Shevat 646* [corrected date]

*Dates and events are transcribed from the document.
Robert S. Schine is the Curt C. and Else Silberman Professor of Jewish Studies at Middlebury College, where he also served as dean of the faculty. He is the author of Jewish Thought Adrift: Max Wiener 1882–1950 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992).

Notes

*I wish to express my gratitude to the institutions and individuals on whose help I have drawn in reconstructing the history of the Jewish community of Poultney: to the staff of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives; to Mary Lou Willits, director of the Slate Valley Museum in Granville, New York; to the Poultney Historical Society; to Sharon Duckman, Constance Kenna, and Shimrit Paley for research assistance; and to Laura Lieber, A. Joshua Sherman, Jonathan Sarna, and Bernard Wasserstein for critical comment. I am especially grateful for instructive help from Erika Timm, University of Trier and to the careful editors and proofreaders at The American Jewish Archives Journal. The Curt C. and Else Silberman Chair in Jewish Studies at Middlebury College subsidized the cost of the reproductions. Finally, it had been my intention to review the intriguing and delightful use of Yiddish in the Poultney minutes book with my colleague Mark R.V. Southern, an expert in German linguistics. His untimely death in the spring of 2006 deprived us of the opportunity for that conversation. This study is dedicated to his memory.

**To view a color reproduction of the pinkas please visit http://www.americanjewisharchives.org/journal/PDF/2008_pinkas.pdf

1The exhibit, titled “From Packpeddlers to Professionals: The Jews of the Slate Valley of Vermont and New York,” opened in August 2005 and is ongoing.

2Marcus (1896–1995) founded the archives in 1947. It now bears his name: The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives.

3The Poultney pinkas measures 6 ½ inches wide, by 7 ¾ inches tall, by 3/8 inch thick, including the covers.

4The Cleves pinkas, covering the years from 1690 to 1807, was published by Fritz (Yitzhaq) Baer, Das Protokollbuch der Landjudenschaft des Herzogtums Kleve (Berlin: C.A. Schwetschke & Sohn, 1922).

5On the Burlington pinkas, see Myron Samuelson, The Story of the Jewish Community of Burlington, Vermont (Burlington, VT: published by the author, 1976), 61ff.

6One of Poultney’s residents, Charles Parker, set down his recollections of the Poultney Jewish community in Reflections on Poultney’s Past (Poultney, VT: Poultney Historical Society, 1989), 35. His reminiscences telescope the early immigration of the German Jews with that of the eastern European Jews, who did not figure in the founding years of the Poultney community. Parker’s reminiscences were published in several booklets, starting in 1985.

7For the broad sweep of American Jewish history, see Jonathan D. Sarna, American Judaism: A History (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004). For the German-Jewish immigration in the nineteenth century, the authoritative work is Avraham Barkai, Branching Out: German-Jewish Immigration to the United States, 1820–1914 (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1994).

8Samuelson, 22.

9Barkai, 44.


11Ibid., Vol. 2, 5f.

12Ibid., Vol. 2, 18. Kohn believes that Frankenthal is in Württemberg. Marcus corrects him: Frankenthal is a small town in the Palatinate between Worms and Speyer.
The only exception I know was Siegmund Weinberg of Granville, New York. He emigrated from the town of Treysa in central Germany in 1874, at age seventeen. Starting as a pack peddler, he eventually flourished in Granville as a real estate developer, a sawmill operator, and proprietor of S. Weinberg and Co., a hardware and building supplies store. He also had substantial land holdings in the Slate Valley, some of which were leased to quarry operators who paid Weinberg royalties on the slate they extracted.

The town known as "Poultney" at the time of the Civil War is known today as "East Poultney." It was at that time more populous than "West Poultney." However, the preponderance of population slowly then shifted to West Poultney, attracted by the founding of the Troy Conference Academy in 1835 (now Green Mountain College), by the opening of a bank in 1841, and, decisively, by the arrival of the Rutland and Washington Railroad in 1852. West Poultney then became Poultney, and the former Poultney was demoted to East Poultney. A map from 1869 in the possession of the Poultney Historical Society shows that by that year the shift in names had taken hold.

If the census records are correct, Benedict and Emma named their son David after his living uncle, a breach of Ashkenazic custom.

Züschen is a small village in the principality of Waldeck. The 1870 census indicates Waldeck as Cane’s place of birth.

William Cane is known to have presented the Jewish community of Plattsburgh, New York, with land for a cemetery in 1859. See Lee Shai Weissbach, *Jewish Life in Small-Town America: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 42.

Aside from Charles Parker, in his *Reflections*, Morris Roterosen, of nearby Granville, New York, reported on Poultney’s history in his column “Main Street,” *The Granville Sentinel* (11 April 1957). Born in Mariampol in Czarist Russia, Roterosen wrote the column weekly as well as served as town clerk for more than fifty years.

On Schoedergeld, see the discussion of Judeo-German expressions, 68.

Werner Weinberg and Walter Röll, *Lexikon zum religiösen Wortschatz und Brauchtum der deutschen Juden* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1994), 245. *Shulchan* is Hebrew for table. The Poultney Jews would have used an Ashkenazic pronunciation: *shulchon* or *shulchen*.

The Poultney Jews were not unique in imposing fines. The Jewish community of Sharon, Pennsylvania, too, had to deal with members "with little or no decorum in the Services or in the business meetings" and subjected disorderly members to fines. See Weissbach, 173. The use of fines as a penalty for communal misconduct ebbed in the course of the nineteenth century, along with the authority of synagogues altogether. See the discussion in Jonathan D. Sarna, "What is American about the Constitutional Documents of American Jewry?" in *A Double Bond: the Constitutional Documents of American Jewry*, ed. Daniel J. Elazar, Jonathan D. Sarna, and Rela G. Monson (Lanham, NY and London: University Press of America, 1992), 42.

Entry for 2 October 1872.

Entry for 3 November 1873.

“Members of this Book”: The Pinkas of Vermont’s First Jewish Congregation • 93
Nathan later married Ida Freydberg, the sister of Moses Freydberg, one of the early Jewish merchants of Granville, New York. Nathan brought his brother Bert from Europe and started a business in Granville in 1896. An advertisement for the grand opening of Goldberg Brothers on Saturday, 10 October 1896, boasts fine fabrics and a full line of clothes for all the family. (Collection of the Slate Valley Museum, Granville, New York)

Entry for 5 September 1874.

For the 1888 charter, see Samuelson, 26f.


Entry for 23 August 1868.

Entry for 6 September 1868. Other examples are found in the entries for 27 September 1868 and 26 September 1869.

The minority view, espoused by Werner Weinberg (d. 1997), construes Jüdischdeutsch as a dialect that developed independently of Yiddish. Weinberg thus avoids the term “West Yiddish.” A professor of Hebrew language and literature at Hebrew Union College, he documented Judeo-German in two books: Die Reste des Jüdischdeutschen, 2nd ed., Vol. 12 of Studia Delitzschianna (Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln, Mainz: Kohlhammer, 1973) and Lexikon zum religiösen Wortschatz und Brauchtum der deutschen Juden (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1994). He defines Jüdischdeutsch as “the remnants of the old idiom of the German Jews, that was used as a vernacular, and even brought forth a literature, but never became an autonomous language in its German environs and, in the wake of the Enlightenment and the Emancipation, has shrunk in both its scope and its territory.” (Die Reste des Jüdischdeutschen, 14f.) In the majority view, however, Yiddish was the language of both central and eastern European Jews, distinct from German, and extending across Europe in a continuous spectrum of dialects. Erika Timm makes a persuasive case that “Eastern” and “Western Yiddish” are thus appropriate terms and that Weinberg’s juxtaposition of Jüdischdeutsch and Yiddish is misleading. Cf. Timm, Graphische und phonische Struktur des Westjiddischen (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1987), 357f.

My own late teacher, Professor Eugen Kullmann (1915–2002), who was born in the small rural town of Erlenbach bei Dahn in the Palatinate, also recounted—and could imitate—differences in pronunciation as well, which distinguished the Palatine dialect as spoken by Jews from that of Christians, subtle but specific phonetic markers.


On the distinction between “formal” and “informal” Hebrew pronunciation, see Werner Weinberg, Lexikon zum religiösen Wortschatz und Brauchtum der Deutschen Juden (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Günther Holzboog, 1994), 19–22. For the substitution of “tz” for an initial hard “s” in particular, 21. See also Weinberg, Reste, 22.

Technically a half-syllable.

For nilo and the particular behavior of the guttural consonant ayin in Ashkenazic Hebrew, see Weinberg, Lexikon, 20. Eugen Kullmann (see above, n. 41) occasionally used the expression “Es geht gegen nilo” in a secular sense: “It’s getting on toward the end.”
The large, lectern-sized congregational prayer book used by the cantor or prayer-leader was known as the kals-tefillé, an expression that combines the Hebrew tefillah with kahal (congregation) into a typical compound German noun. Kullmann recalled such prayer books from the synagogues of his youth in Germany.


Jick, 79.

See Meyer, 170 (France), 178 (London), and 228 (Charleston). The abolition of this practice was one of the reforms Isaac Mayer Wise achieved in Albany (241).

Weissbach, 39.

Ibid., 42.

See minutes for 27 February 1871.

See annotations on the minutes for 27 September 1868. The Judeo-German Braucheis is probably a plural form of berachah ("blessing") and must refer to a blessing of some kind embroidered in a cloth, perhaps a challah cover.

Although it has been generally known that Poultney was Vermont’s oldest Jewish community, various dates for the founding of the Poultney congregation have been in circulation. Charles Parker wrote in Reflections on Poultney’s Past that it was 1870 (35). The minutes book, however, testifies that 1870 was the year not of the founding but the year when the Poultney congregation adopted the name Bnai Israel. Myron Samuelson, unaware of the existence of the Poultney pinkas, assumes that the first articles of association were from the year 1888, the year the congregation registered a charter with the State of Vermont. (Samuelson, 26f.)

See the careful and informative study by Alan Mittleman, "Continuity and Change in the Constitutional Experience of the German Jews," Publius 30, no. 4 (Fall 2000): 43–70.

For a characterization and example of the preambles of American Jewish constitutions, see A Double Bond, 21ff.

Samuelson, 26. It appears that no synagogue was ever built in Poultney.

For “members of this book” see the minutes for 5 September 1874, and for “absentee community” the entry for 3 November 1873 (“... daß dieses eine Abwesende Gemeinde von dieser Buche ersetzt und erhalten wird.” [sic]).

An example of hybrid spelling: an English noun with a German declension.

The spelling of some family names is inconsistent throughout the pinkas: Salomon is often compressed to Salmon, and Meinberg is often anglicized to Mineberg.

Sefer Torah, a “scroll of the Torah.”

See above, 68.

In Yom Kippur, “Kippur” has been abbreviated. It is also phonetically misspelled קַפְּרוּ, with a long בּוּרָא instead of the correct בּוּרָא, indicating the Judeo-German lengthening of the “i” vowel. The pronunciation of the “i” in Yom Kippur is also evident where Isaac Cane transliterates the Hebrew name of the holiday into Latin letters or into Judeo-German Hebrew script. His minutes for 23 August 1868 contain two examples of such phonetic misspelling in Judeo-German Hebrew script letters: יומ קפרים, where “י” represents a transliteration of the long German vowel “ie.” The same lengthening is evident when Cane writes the word in Latin letters, Jaumkiebur (in the minutes for 6 September 1868) and Jaumkieber (27 September 1868).
Cane’s misspelling, in which he also replaces the letter peh in Kippur with a bet, also indicates that “p” was pronounced “b.” Such consonantal shifts, either from the plosive to the unvoiced form of a consonant or in the other direction, are characteristic of Judeo-German and common in other German dialects.

68 A Holy Ark. The cost is implausibly low.

69 IVMIBO, or table. In this context, TIVMIBO has a specific meaning: the table on which the Torah scroll is laid for reading. The Hebrew תיבוב is misspelled; reflecting the absence of any distinction in Ashkenazic pronunciation between the two guttural letters chet and khaft.

70 The “curtain” hung before the scroll in the ark. The misspelling (ת”פ) of the Hebrew word תפריר is a phonetically accurate rendition of the Ashkenazic pronunciation, in which “parochet” becomes “paroches.” An “s” (samekh) is substituted for the “t” (tav). As in shulhan, the bet has been replaced by kaf.

71 Asret HaDibrot, “Ten Commandments,” an ornamental representation of the two tablets of the Ten Commandments, a common motif in synagogue décor. Charles Parker, in his Reflections on Poultney’s Past, written in 1989, recalls (on p. 35) the “Ten Commandments” being part of a small exhibit on the Poultney Jewish community in the East Poultney schoolhouse, now the Poultney Historical Society. Probably the “Ten Commandments” mentioned here; the ornament is now lost.

72 Schulzimmer, referring to the room in the Meinberg house that the congregation used as a synagogue.

73 The handwriting is not crystal-clear, but the phrase is most likely München machen, an idiom from Rotwelsch, a dialect also known as Gaunersprache (“thieves’ cant”), spoken by itinerant peddlers, vagrants, and other “marginal” groups, among them, Jews. Thus, the dialect sometimes overlaps with Judeo-German. München is a variant of Minnige, which derives from Hebrew מחנה, donation or tribute, and, in Rotwelsch, simply denotes money. In another variant, Manich machen refers to taking up a collection after an act or show, to “passing the hat.” Thus, one may surmise that the secretary of the minutes book, Isaac Cane, has used München machen, an idiom he knew from Rotwelsch, to refer to the collection of pledge money (Schnodergeld) during the Sabbath service. I am indebted to Professor Erika Timm of the University of Trier for this conjecture, which is based on Siegmund A. Wolf, Wörterbuch der Rotwelschen: Deutsche Gaunersprache, 2nd ed. (Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1985), s.v. “Minnige” (No. 3613).

74 i.e. President.

75 i.e. “Vize.” The German short form for Vice President, with English “f” instead of the homophone German “v”.

76 Secretary.

77 Although Salomon Cane was elected secretary, his brother Isaac keeps minutes in the meetings that follow.

78 In Judeo-German, a tefilla, from the Hebrew word for prayer, signifies a prayerbook, usually the daily prayerbook. Normally, a prayerbook for the high holidays is called a Machsor. It seems that the members agreed to contribute toward the purchase of a prayerbook for the use of the prayer-leader. A large prayerbook for the prayer-leader was called a Kolot-tefilla, the prayerbook belonging to the congregation, the kabal. Vorbettung—the proper form would be Vorbeiten—is to lead the congregation in prayer.

79 Misspelled English: “expenses.”

80 Should read schicken.

81 Note the admixture of misspelled English, Eckspanse and the hybrid expression gut order.

82 Proper spelling would be retour, i.e. he took back.

83 German: Protokoll.

96 • American Jewish Archives Journal
Isaac Cane inserted the phrase zu Müngen above the line. Müngen is probably a variation on the spelling of the word München explained above (see n. 73). The substitution of “g” for “ch” is probably due to the similarity in sound of a “ch” and “g” in Cane’s native region of Hesse-Darmstadt. In the Westphalian and Hessian dialects, “g” is pronounced softly.

The two Hebrew words for the New Moon (Rosh Hodesh), joined as one, in Judeo-German script, with a phonetic misspelling indicating the Ashkenazic pronunciation.

The English verb “collect” is treated as a German infinitive.

The repetition is in the original.

The date is Sunday, one day following Yom Kippur.

An ink blotch has made the text illegible.

“recited the priestly blessing” is an expansive rendering of “duchenen.”

Hartford, New York, ca. fifteen miles southwest of Poultney.

Mäntelchen, the cover for the Torah scroll. See Weinberg, Lexikon, 270.

Mappe, Hebrew המפה, In Judeo-German, also called a wimpel, a long swath of linen in which the Torah is wrapped. In Jewish communities in Germany, it was customary to prepare an embroidered wimpel for use as a swaddling cloth at a circumcision, which parents of the boy then donated to the synagogue for use as a wrapper for the Torah scroll. It appears that, in Poultney, the wrapper was sewn for the Torah scroll itself.

Schulzimmer, i.e. the room used for the shul.

Putzen, to clean. A further example of consonantal shifting, see n. 67.

Another example of an English verb morphed into a German infinitive.

“When Rosh Hodesh (the New Moon) is prayed” refers to the benediction recited on the Sabbath before the beginning of a new month on the Jewish calendar.

Should read either began or wurde begangen.

Misspelling of המפה.

with a lengthening of the vowel hireq.

An example of the absorption of the guttural ayin, see n. 46.

Theise is giving both the Hebrew and Judeo-German terms for his role in the service: Hebrew שנער עצרת (misspelled in the pinkas), and Judeo-German lainen.

That is, Schneidergeld.

Chatan Torah, Groom of the Torah, is the name given to the member of congregation who has the honor, on Simhat Torah, of reading the last verses of Deuteronomy. Chatan Bereishit, Groom of the Book of Bereishit, is the name given to him who, immediately after the Chatan Torah, has the honor of starting the cycle of the annual lectionary over by reading the first verses of Genesis.

The Torah portion Yitro encompasses Exodus 18:1 to 20:23 and thus includes the drama of the giving of the Ten Commandments at Sinai. The Poultney congregation apparently went to extra pains to hold services on this particular Sabbath.

Yom Tovim is a colloquial Judeo-German plural for Yom Tov, a holiday.

Selihot. The penitential prayers recited in the days preceding the New Year and Day of Atonement.

Stern’s minutes give a Judeo-German phonetic (mis)spelling of הבט’ הדבר (mis), cemetery, graveyard.

Phonetic misspelling for בַּעַל תְּכִיָּ֣ב (bal tikva), shofar blower. Ba’al becomes bal, a further example of the phonetic contraction encountered above in ne’elah > nile.

The translation reflects the convoluted syntax of the German original.
111“[T]he priestly blessing was recited … ” renders the Judeo-German “getuchend” דַּעְטֶהֹד.

112Illegible.

113The German verb here is *abfallen*, literally to fall away, and encompasses the idea of apostasy [Abfall] and defection. The secretary of the congregation is pronouncing on the status of those who have willfully left the Jewish community.

114For the births and deaths of its members, the secretaries of the congregation entered both Christian and Jewish years. The Jewish year is usually indicated as the sum of the numerical values of a group of Hebrew letters, following the custom in epitaphs. The formula הָלָךְ, an abbreviation for הָליַּכְוָּךְ קָהָלָה, indicates that the “abbreviated calendar” has been used, i.e. that the thousands digit of the Jewish year has been omitted. Hence, הָלָךְ equals 400 + 200 + 30, or 630, which, when the thousands digit is added, yields 5630, the equivalent of 1870. Years given by the abbreviated calendar are marked by an asterisk (*) in the translation.

115Significance of this number is unclear.

116“Years,” with the German “j” substituted for “y.”

117The entries that follow for Mozes [Moses] Mineberg, Abraham Kahn and Reisge Englander on p. iii of the register of burials repeat in Judeo-German the corresponding English entries on the facing page in the pinkas (p. ii of the burial register, on p. 90). The alignment could not be reproduced here, obscuring the connection between these three Judeo-German entries and their English counterparts. Thus the individuals mentioned here and there are identical. (“Cesven,” in Moses Mineberg’s entry indicates the Hebrew month of *Cheshvan*).

118The Rosa Englander listed in English on p. 90, a girl who died at the age of six years, is the same as the “Reisge” listed here in Judeo-German. It is very likely that the little girl was known by a diminutive such as “Rösche(n)” or “Raiske” and that the “ge” represents one of these two possible diminutive endings.
Organisation

1. Den Jahresanfangs-Tag Mitglieber und der Geschäftsstelle der Gemeindeplanung und Helfen, die Kirche zu verwalten und zu einem Tag einladen, in dem bekannt zu werden, wer der neue Präsident ist.

2. Einige der Mitglieder werden eine Stellung des Bereitschafts-Ortskomitees übernehmen.


4. Die neuen Präsidenten sollen die folgenden Aufgaben übernehmen:

   a. Die Verwaltung der Gemeindeplanung
   b. Die Organisation der Gemeindegänge
   c. Die Bereitschaft des Ortskomitees

Datum: 1867
Alle angemeldeten Geburten

1. Ein M. K. 

2. Ein F.: 

3. Ein F.: 

4. Ein [unleserlich] 

5. [unleserlich] 50

6. Aus [unleserlich] 1

7. Aus [unleserlich] 1

8. Aus [unleserlich] 1

9. Aus [unleserlich] 1

July 14th, 1868

Seymour B. Benben $500

David Theiss paid $500

Salomon Mirelberg fine $500

David Mirelberg $5

Jacob Hey $5

Sam Wurtheim $5

Leimen Manes $5

Reu C. Bane $5

Salomon Bane $5

Herman Stern $5

Nathan Bane $5
Pauline Sept. 6 A. 1861
folgten Jüdischen waren: Bessert
Samuel Mienberg
Fried Mienberg
Jacob Mien
Isaak Theisen

ich habe
comittta berichtet. Dort ward
vielleicht auch die belegung
für zwanzig Doppelmiete
oder die Mieter zu Hülfe
in Mienberg. Der Mühlen
15. Juli 1861
werden genannt war in der
Presse. Es in letzter Zeit das
Kapital recht gewachst und
sollte es wohl den B. J. auch
nicht besonders wachsen. Die Paulines
Gemeinde hatte so lange Zeit bisher

in Paulines Nachbarschaft war wohl
ja das Regime nicht ganz
konstant, möchte S. Mienberg sich als nicht
sehr vorteilhaft halten, was man
in Mienberg meine, dass es aber auch
ist, dass ein Dr. Mienberg so mal und der
nicht begonnen habe. Besonders wurde
muss angenommen, wo möchten
Isaac Theisen von der Stadt, als wir
die 1883 hochmein, dass in ganz
Mienberg 300 Doppelmiete mit der
15. Juli 1861
zweimal gegen den 18. Juli 1861
mit, dass S. Mienberg sich nicht an
Made Mienberg. Es soll beklagt worden
zu wissen, dass die Stadt
im Inland nicht wohl zu ihm sehen will, dass
15. Juli 1861
anstatt damit nicht genügt
die Stadt, sondern ab worden ist, dass
Isaac Theisen von der Stadt, die
feste zu halten und nicht
abzuwarten

Frau Theisen

SC-9880: American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio.
Sonnabend Sept 21st 1868

Jacob Kupf fand irgendeinen Mann, der
Wolle von einer Frau kauft, und
im Raum von 6 Uhr nach Sonntagnachmittag,
und an 10 Uhr, die Morgenzeit in Würzburg,
und dabei die Sache in der Gemeinde.

Das Ganze ist erneut erstellt und
wieder von einer Frau gekauft, und
und ein Mann, der die Sache übernimmt.

Dank abgelehnt.

Le Wolf

Hans Lanner, Leben Pomm. Segolst

Fack

L Lab

Jacob Bank

Isaac Hauen
1869 Schalttag 17. März

Ende: Erscheinungszeiten

Jüdische Zeitung

1. April

Jüdisches Forum

Jacob Helft

Friedrich Weinberg

Samuel Weinberg

Sohn: Catharina

Catharina Weinberg

Solomon Weinberg

Johann Weinberg

Solomon Weinberg

Einzahlung: Georg Weinberg 2.5

für Teil der Bezugspflicht von 1869

für Bezugspflicht von 1870

8.5

1. April

Jüdische Zeitung

Samuel Weinberg

18. Februar 1869

Ende: Erscheinungszeiten

1869 Schalttag 21. März
Pultney, August 7th, 1870.

General Verkaufung der Besitzungen der Gemeinde und jeder Mitgliedern über ihre Pflichten haben.

B. Schein
D. Mignegger
J. Marnies
D. Cane
D. Mignegger
D. Spree
D. Cane

Folgende Abgaben an die Gemeinde zu zahlen:

1. 100 Schilling pro Familie.
2. 20 Schilling pro Familienmitglied.
3. 10 Schilling pro Familienmitglied.
4. 5 Schilling pro Familienmitglied.
5. 2 Schilling pro Familienmitglied.

Die Gemeinde Mitglieder wurden gebeten, ihre Abgaben innerhalb von 4 Wochen zu zahlen.

Sohlen, der Präsident
Salomon Marnies, der Sekretär
Benedict Schein, der Schatzmeister

[Signature]
Das jüdische Jüdisches Archiv, 1799. Sehr interessante und seltene Aufzeichnungen, die in guter Hand aufbewahrt werden sollen. Die Mitglieder hielten die Sache. Der erste Tag der Woche war der Sabbat. Der Schriftzücker überschrieb die Tage, wie von der Hand des Propheten.

Alfred H. H. B. Stein (1917)

Jacob H. (tod) und Marcus Cane (1917)

Siegel und Jacob Cane waren mit genannter Sache. Alle drei waren Jacob H. (tod) und Marcus Cane (1917)

David Stein und Benedict Stein (1927)

Dem ersten Mitglied und dem gedruckten Programm (1927)

O. T. Stein, 1927

Paul Hey, February 17, 1927

Dennarlasch starb nicht, als der erste Mitglied und dem gedruckten Programm (1927)
July 15th 1871

Pittsburg September 15th 1871

June 15th 1871

Pittsburg March 15th 1871

Jacob Cane

Joseph Cole

A. Thein

Theen

Mr. W. M. Hill was in New York from

David Thein

Salam Cane went to New York, and

Benedict Thein

Mrs. Jacob Cole and Marcus Cane

came to made the sale. The

and Mrs. B. Thein

Mrs. Mr. Reiff Gohn, and Gana, and Gana,

Reif held Gabrielle Cane, and gave

Thein received the rent from

Saratoga

July 29th 1871
Petitfeu. Dee 1. of March 1872.

Am 1. März 1872.


Petitfeu. October 2d 1872.

Am 2. Oktober 1872.

Am 2. Oktober 1872.


Paulnig September 14th 1873

Die Mitglieder der jüdischen Gemeinde

- B. Theise
- H. Sterng
- B. Cane
- S. Kané
- S. Manners
- Jacob Siegel
- Brecht
- Dr. Stern

Sich auf den Abschluss der Verhandlungen über die Grundlage der Gemeinde

B. Theise, Secy.
Paulnig, Oct. 27th 1872

In October 1872, the community met to discuss and finalize the constitution of the Jewish community in Paulnig. The meeting was chaired by B. Theise, with the assistance of H. Sterng and B. Cane. The discussion centered around the establishment of the community's rules and regulations, as well as the election of officers. The minutes were recorded by S. Kané, with the assistance of S. Manners. The meeting concluded with a vote to adopt the new constitution, which was signed by all members present.

The minutes also noted that the community would continue to meet regularly to address any issues or concerns that arose. The community members were encouraged to participate in the decision-making process and to take an active role in the governance of the community.
Ballung Sept 23rd 1873

J. H. H. Kühler in der größten Tonnerei, gebrauch von 1 Tag Alter J. Kehl 2571 und Markis heute von 2 Tagen Alter J. Kehl 2571

D. canal 7782 H. Lew 77862

Gesamte Mitglieder waren jetzt in Kehl.

J. Kuhle 1. Mannh. 4. Kehl

Nachmittag wurde eine Kommission eingesetzt.

I. Committee: Jacob B. Stein

Mit dem neuen Mitglied zu Fuß.

Mr. david Stein

Mr. David Stein von der Tonnerei Kuhle.

Von der Gemeinde eine Spende gemacht.

G. S. Nov 1 1873
10. Oktober 1873

17. Oktober 1873

15. November 1873

2. Dezember 1873

15. Dezember 1873

Leipziger_Tagblatt_1874

1873_01_01

1873_01_02
Birns

Gleena born July 2nd, July 1860

Jose born Dec 31th, 1867

Solome born April 24th, 1870

Lima born Jan 6th, 1874

L. Horros born Jan 28th 1879

N. Levi born Jan 27th 1882
Amos Weinberg died August 4th, 1876
Abraham Weinberg 6 Oct 8 1880
Joseph Frank died December 31, 1881
Aged 40 years

Joseph Weinberg died June 1, 1853
Aged 70 years

1882
Sara Abraham born Feb 4th, 1853
Aged 36 years

1884
Jemima Rosa Englander Whitehall born
Aged 6 years

1890
Benjamin Edward Abrams died 22, June 16
Aged 2 months. Buried January 27, 1891.

Aug 23. Heman born of Portland 17
Died 29th June 4 months 26 days.
Buried 29th June.
1890
May 29 Abraham Polansky went Hathland VT
buried 235 235 235 235 2

1891 Sue Lena Goldberg Franville Dr.
March 31 Passed Died 3/31/23 5651 5677