

RAMSEY COUNTY
History
A Publication of the Ramsey County Historical Society

Cass Gilbert Designs

318 Summit

Page 17

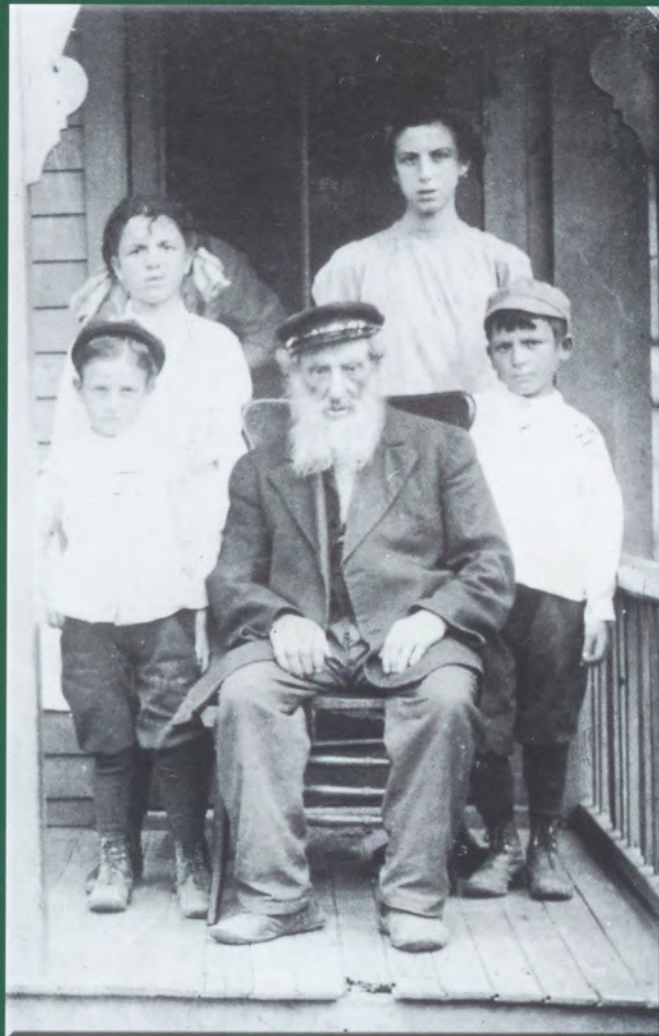
Spring 2007

Volume 42, Number 1

Lost Neighborhood

The Jews of Fourteenth Street Remembered

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Simon Note Silberstein, the patriarch of the Silberstein family, with his grandchildren in 1909 on the porch of 549 L'Orient Street. Born Simon Rubelske, he fled the small village of Filipowa with his grandchildren Sarah, Mary, Louis and Ben. He changed his name to Silberstein after his three sons, who preceded him, had done so in Sweden, on their way to the United States. He had four sons and one daughter, Jennie, who married Isadore Marofsky. One of

his sons, Isaac, had come directly to the United States, and changed his name to Robinson. Simon lived with Isadore Marofsky. The house at 549 L'Orient had an outside toilet, and they took baths in a washtub. They used kerosene lamps for lighting, and coal and wood for heating. Simon Silberstein lived with the Marofsky family until 1916, when he died. He is buried in the West Side Cemetery. Photo courtesy of Edith Marofsky, Isadore's granddaughter.

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RAMSEY COUNTY History

Volume 42, Number 1

Spring 2007

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN JULY 2003:

The Ramsey County Historical Society shall discover, collect, preserve and interpret the history of the county for the general public, recreate the historical context in which we live and work, and make available the historical resources of the county. The Society's major responsibility is its stewardship over this history.

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Benjamin Rose
Patrick Hill and Cindy Rose Torfin

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A Message from the Editorial Board

This issue shows us two perspectives on places in Ramsey County: the history of a whole neighborhood and that of a single building. The first article, Gene Rosenblum's "The Jews of Fourteenth Street Remembered," provides a fascinating glimpse into the Jewish community that flourished from the 1880's to the 1950's near the site of present-day Region's Hospital. The article draws on numerous sources—photographs, maps, census data, and RCHS's own building permit collection—to document the families, businesses, synagogues, and community organizations of the neighborhood. Many present-day St. Paul Jewish families, who later moved to other parts of the city, can trace their roots to this area, which first welcomed Russian Jewish emigrants in 1882. In the second article, Paul Clifford Larson examines the history and architecture of 318 Summit Avenue, a home designed by Cass Gilbert for prominent St. Paul attorney William Lightner and his wife Carrie. Gilbert worked on the Lightner house, the third of his designs to be built on Summit Avenue, in the early 1890's, before he won the competition to design the new State Capitol. The house, which is bilaterally symmetrical and faced with quartzite and brownstone, reflects the transition between the Richardson Romanesque and Beaux-Arts architectural styles. Ramsey County is lucky that the home's current owners, Richard and Nancy Nicholson, have carefully restored one of St. Paul's social and architectural landmarks, and our readers are even luckier to access this comprehensive view of its history.

Anne Cowie,
Chair, Editorial Board



The Meyer Winer family shortly after they bought and moved into a large Civil War-era double house at 197–199 East Fourteenth Street. In rear, left to right, are Alexander, Jeanette and Mina. In the second row are Freda Winer, Samuel, Meyer Winer, and Louis. In front is Ethel (the author's mother). Photo courtesy of Michael Gene Winer, their grandson.

Lost Neighborhood

The Jews of Fourteenth Street Remembered

Gene H. Rosenblum

One hundred years ago, my maternal grandparents, Meyer and Freda Winer, moved to the Fourteenth Street neighborhood on May 25, 1907, from the West Side flats. Prior to that move, these recent Lithuanian immigrants and their family of eight had been living in a modest home at 109 Eva Street on the flats. The city's building permits, which are now preserved by the Ramsey County Historical Society in its St. Paul Building Permits Collection, document that the Eva Street house was a small, one and one-half story frame house, measuring fifteen feet wide by twenty-five feet long, that had been constructed in 1884. The home that the Winers moved into at 197–199

E. Fourteenth Street was a large Civil War-era double house that could better accommodate their growing family. The Winer family lived in one half of the house and rented out the other half. It was a wood-frame structure with a large iron fence around its yard.

My mother, Ethel, who was only three years old and the baby of the family when they moved to Fourteenth Street, had fond memories of growing up in the neighborhood and the time she spent living in that community. Over the years, this house became known as the "Winer Flats." In 1931 a fire severely damaged the building. Consequently on September 6, 1931, the city of St. Paul issued a permit to

the American Lumber and Wrecking Company to demolish the remains of Winer Flats. For many years following the demolition of this home, the now vacant lot provided a pathway to Central Community House, which was located at 190 E. University Avenue (formerly Fifteenth Street).

When St. Paul's Fourteenth Street was the home to a large community of Jews, it was not a single street. It was the collective name for about a dozen streets that all lay in the shadow of the Minnesota State Capitol. Here, on Fourteenth Street, between 1882 and the 1950s, was a place where people of the Jewish faith lived, worked, prayed, prospered, raised their large families, and died.

According to St. Paul historian Donald Empson in his book, *The Street Where You Live* (2006), Fourteenth Street was platted in 1856 and was the city's fourteenth street from the Mississippi River. The plat map for 1884 shows Fourteenth Street running from Cedar Street on the west, crossing Minnesota, Robert, Jackson, and Canada streets, before intersecting Broadway on the east. A check of the 1887 plat for this part of the city shows a shortened Fourteenth Street that now ran from Jackson Street to Broadway. Between 1884 and 1887, the city administration had platted Central Park. In creating this park, the portion of Fourteenth Street that had earlier run between Jackson and Cedar was eliminated and included in the plat for Central Park. Today the neighborhood around Fourteenth Street no longer exists. It lies buried beneath U.S. Interstates 35E and 94 and the grounds of Regions Hospital.

Bill Hoffman, the author of various tales about St. Paul's Jewish community on the West Side flats, called Fourteenth Street a "city within a city." Some called it "Uptown," to distinguish it from "Lowertown," which lay alongside the Mississippi east of downtown. Dr. Milton Hurwitz, who grew up on Fourteenth Street, calls the area St. Paul's "last shtetel" or ethnic enclave. Those who lived there called it home.

Fourteenth Street had two synagogues, one Talmud Torah (Hebrew school), one community center, many grocery stores, bakeries, and kosher meat markets, many



This photograph from about 1905 shows some of the 2,203 Polish and Russian immigrants who crossed the Atlantic in steerage class on one of the many ships that brought newcomers to the United States. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

large-frame homes, lots of duplexes, three public schools, and one high school (Mechanic Arts). Unlike the West Side flats that Bill Hoffman knew, Fourteenth Street and all its neighboring thoroughfares were paved. It was a prosperous neighborhood. Some of the original residents of the old West Side flats moved there as their financial circumstances improved. Some settled there as soon as they arrived in St. Paul so that they could be near relatives and fellow Jews.

The neighborhood adjacent to where the Capitol was built was almost, but not completely, Jewish. Its origin as an area populated by Jews began over a decade before construction of the present-day Capitol was completed. Minnesota's first capitol burned down in 1881. A second capitol was built on the same site, the block bounded by Wabasha, Cedar, Exchange, and Tenth streets, but this building soon proved to be too small for a growing state government. In 1886 ground for the third

(and present) building was broken but construction wasn't completed until 1905.

The earliest Jewish residents of this neighborhood were part of a contingent of Russian refugees who had unexpectedly arrived in St. Paul in May 1882. The community they became lasted until the late 1950s when planning began for the expansion of the city-county hospital (then known as Ancker) and its eventual relocation in 1965 (as St. Paul-Ramsey Hospital) to its present site (now known as Regions Hospital) at Jackson Street and University Avenue, just north of I-94 and east of I-35E. In 1956 federal law established the interstate highway system in the United States. Construction of I-94 and I-35E in St. Paul began in the early 1960s. Over time these two projects obliterated the Fourteenth Street community.

The story of the Jews of Fourteenth Street begins in March 1881 in the village of Filipow and a thousand other little hamlets, villages, and towns in Russia and Poland. The news that the "liberal"



Plat map of the central Fourteenth Street area including all streets within that area circa 1916. Published by G.M. Hopkins Co. of Philadelphia. Copy courtesy of Sam Fudenberg.

czar, Alexander II, had been assassinated circulated quickly among all the people of these countries. Under Alexander II, circumstances for Jews had generally improved, but now they wondered what would happen under Alexander III.

They soon found out. The so-called May Laws of 1882 instituted policies to expel Jews and carry out pogroms. Like a scene from the musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*, the mass exodus of Jews from Russia and Eastern Europe began. First it was a trickle, then a deluge. Thousands of men, who would have been forced to serve in the Russian army, ran for their lives, many of them taking their families with them. Not only did families run from this persecution, but also whole towns and villages left en masse. Many of these refugees headed for the United States by way of Sweden, England, and South America. Others went to South Africa.

Historically the Jews had been in Russia since the eighth century B.C., even

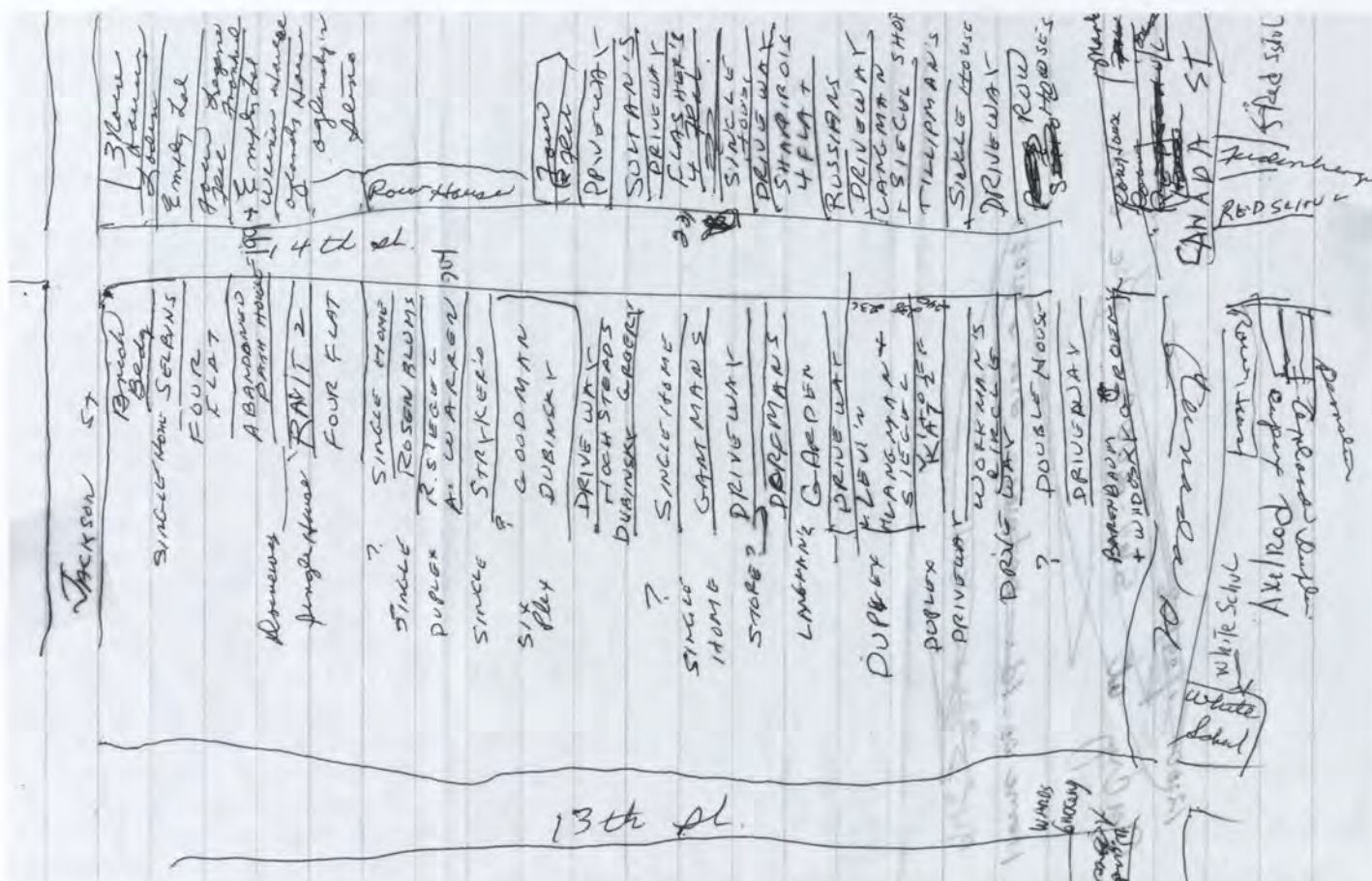
before the Russian tribes. They had also been in Poland from the ninth century B.C. Their roots in the land were ancient, but they were in danger and had to choose between converting to Christianity or leaving. Over the next forty years, more than three million Russian Jews left their native country.

When the first Russian Jews arrived in the United States, the Jewish agencies that tried to help them struggled to support these newcomers. Many of the Jewish refugees settled in New York City on its lower East Side along Delancey Street. Thousands more went to Chicago, especially along Maxwell Street. In May 1882 some 200 Jewish refugees from Russia came to St. Paul.

At the time, the local Jewish community consisted of a small number of Jews whose roots were in Germany, France, Hungary, the Austrian empire, Alsace-Lorraine, and also included some English and native-born Sephardic Jews. This

group was ill equipped to help the Russian newcomers. In June another thirty-five Jewish refugees arrived in St. Paul followed a month later by another 200. The ladies of Mt. Zion Temple, which was the larger of the two synagogues in the city, struggled to help the new arrivals with food and shelter. This synagogue was the oldest and wealthiest in St. Paul and many of its members traced their heritage to Germany. The other synagogue was the Orthodox Sons of Jacob (established 1872) whose members were predominately Polish Jews. This congregation had just purchased a cemetery and thus had little to offer in the way of financial help to the refugees.

Faced with a crisis of need, the local Jewish leadership met at the Standard Club on Sixth Street, a private club organized by the city's Jewish merchants as a place to make social and business contacts, to consider what could be done. Together with Minnesota's governor, Lucius



This hand-drawn map captures Jeanette Rabinowitz's recent effort to place the families, homes, and other buildings that existed on Fourteenth Street when she was growing up there in the 1920s. Map courtesy of Jeanette Rabinowitz.

F. Hubbard, St. Paul's mayor, the city council, the chamber of commerce, and the local community enough money was raised to feed and clothe the newly arrived refugees and to disperse the newcomers to other communities, thereby spreading the burden and avoiding the creation of a ghetto. Some of the refugees went to North Minneapolis; eleven families were sent to Cable, Wisconsin; nine went to Crookston,

Minnesota; and six families to Wells, Minnesota.

In St. Paul forty Jewish families were settled around the Sons of Jacob synagogue, which was located at Tenth and Robert streets. Other Russian refugee families found housing on the near East Side along Payne Avenue. Some twenty families were settled on the West Side flats; a small number remained in the Fourteenth Street area.

U.S. Census Data for Ward 1 in St. Paul 1880-1920

Census Year	Total St. Paul Population	Number of Wards	Population of Ward 1	Population Change	Population Change %
1880	41,473	6	6,344		
1890	133,156	11	17,080	10,736	169.23%
1900	163,065	11	20,245	3,165	18.53%
1910	214,744	11	23,863	3,618	17.87%
1920	234,698	12	23,851	-12	-0.05%

The majority of the refugees who came to Minnesota were peddlers. Some were small merchants. Others were tailors and seamstresses or had worked in other occupations. These eastern European Jews also differed from the Jews who were already living in St. Paul in their cultural background, their dress, their language (primarily Yiddish), and were generally less educated. Nevertheless they settled in and developed a homogeneous and tight-knit community that survived for more than seventy years before circumstances that were outside their control once more caused them to move on.

Based on the 1885 St. Paul City Directory published by the R.L. Polk Company, the table on page 9 lists the individuals who were the earliest Jewish residents of the Fourteenth Street neighborhood.

In the years that followed, the Jewish community in the Fourteenth Street area flourished and grew in numbers. Between 1872 and 1900, ten different Jewish



Evelyn Levy sits for an itinerant photographer in her favorite goat cart in an undated photo. The Levy family owned a grocery store at 235–237 Grove Street, which was part of the Fourteenth Street neighborhood. Evelyn's father, Philip, first worked as a painter, wall preparer, and handyman until he had saved enough money to buy the grocery on Grove Street. Evelyn's grandfather, Abraham Levy, was a well-known tailor who lived on Thirteenth Street. His son, Benjamin Levy, was also an early resident of the area. Photo courtesy of Richard Bloom, son of Evelyn Levy.



The Jewish refugees and immigrants who settled in the Fourteenth Street neighborhood not only brought their luggage and other personal possessions, they also brought their political and social views. In the early 1890s, a number of Socialist-oriented Jews in New York City organized a fraternal organization known as the Workmen's Circle. It provided cultural and social activities in Yiddish, which was a cross between the Russian and Hebrew languages. The Fourteenth Street neighborhood had a local branch of the Workman's Club, which was organized in 1910. Initially its primary activities were card playing and providing some sick benefits to members. In 1920 the club's members organized a separate organization known as

the Workmen's Circle Loan Association. It was a cooperative that encouraged immigrant self-help. The Association also had a pool of money that provided sustenance to peddlers and their horses over the winter months. The Workmen's Circle had its club rooms on Canada Street, between Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets. Thus undated photo shows the officers of the club, seated from left to right, Harry Lax, Louis Levi (father of Jeanette Levi), Harry Roast, Ben Volensky, and Sam Smoliak. Standing, left to right, are Max Goldstein, Nathan Ward, Joseph Liebman, and Morris Latzer. Photo courtesy of Jeanette Levi Rabinowitz.



Rabbi Joseph Hurwitz's family is shown sitting on the front porch of their home on Thirteenth Street. From left to right in rear are Ann (Holland), Mrs. Rachel Hurwitz, the rabbi's wife, and Archie, the baby. In front are William, Harry and Rose (Baker). This photo was taken before the birth of Milton, the youngest child. Photo courtesy of Dr. Milton M. Hurwitz, the Rabbi's youngest son.



A 1909 photograph of Harry S. Silberstein, third from the left, and his wife, Sara, far right, and their children, left to right, Gilbert, Hazel, Horace, and Norman. Photo courtesy of the Silberstein family.



The Abraham Fineberg family, circa 1905. Left to right, sitting down in front row: Isadore, Ida, and Fannie; second row sitting or standing: Sarah, Tillie, the mother, Rose, Abraham, the father and Tillie Polski, Abraham's sister. Standing in back of Abraham is Morris. Abraham Fineberg was one of the founders of the Talmud Torah when they lived at 210 East Fourteenth Steet. Photo courtesy of Dr. Milton M. Hurwitz.



The Sons of Moses synagogue, the oldest of the two synagogues in the Fourteenth Street area, at Canada and Thirteenth streets, is shown shortly after a disastrous fire in March of 1931. The fire, which took place at about 3 A.M., "lit up the whole sky," according to witnesses. It was one of the largest synagogue congregations in St. Paul at one time. As the residents of the Fourteenth Street area moved out, it had to be abandoned to the wrecking ball when the City of St. Paul acquired the land for the expansion of the Ramsey County hospital. Originally the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church, it was built in 1876. When the Sons of Moses purchased it, it became known as the "white schul." Photograph courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Earliest Jewish Residents of the Fourteenth Street Neighborhood (1885)

Name	Occupation	Residence
Lena Aronson	seamstress	587 Temperance Street
Julius Bloom	clerk	569 Canada Street
Abraham Cohen	peddler	533 Park Street
Barnet Cohen	peddler	133 E. Thirteenth Street
Isaac Cohen	gentlemen's clothes	133 E. Thirteenth Street
Louis Cohen	peddler	134 E. Thirteenth Street
Abraham Cohn	peddler	514 Temperance Street
Anna Cohn	furnishings	365 Park Street
Max Cohn	clerk	613 E. Thirteenth Street
Samuel Cohn	gentlemen's clothes	133 E. Thirteenth Street
Abraham Goodman	peddler	133 E. Thirteenth Street
John Goodman	peddler	133 E. Thirteenth Street
Julius Goodman	peddler	133 E. Thirteenth Street
Simon Greenberg	shoemaker	438 1/2 Broadway
Joseph Levy	clothing	195 Grove Street
Henry Rothschild	clothing	467 Temperance Street
Manuel Rothstein		249 Grove Street
Jacob Sigel	peddler	133 E. Thirteenth Street
Max Sigel	peddler	133 E. Thirteenth Street
Imen Silverstein	carpenter	Thirteenth and Minnesota
Fromsin Solomon	tailor	438 Broadway

congregations worshipped in various locations in St. Paul. Of these congregations, six were on the West Side flats, two were in the downtown, and the other two were located in the Fourteenth Street area.

Life for the Jewish children in the Fourteenth Street area was much improved over their life on the West Side flats, where they were required to work to support their families. Their summers were spent playing in the streets or in Central Park, which lay adjacent to their neighborhood. Their winters were spent sliding down the long Broadway hill on homemade sleds or skating in Central Park.

From 1880 to 1920, Fourteenth Street was located in Ward 1 of St. Paul. U.S. Census figures for this period (see table on page 6) document a dramatic population increase in the ward between 1880 and 1890, but from 1890 to 1910, the ward's population shows steady growth. From 1910 to 1920 there was a small net loss of residents in Ward 1. After 1920, new laws severely restricted immigration to the United States. In the 1910 census, the enumerators counted foreign white stock by certain nationalities in cities of 100,000 or more people. According to the 1910 census, the city of St. Paul had a total of 149,922 white residents who

Rabbi Joseph B. Hurwitz. Rabbi Hurwitz came to St. Paul from Poland in 1908 at the age of thirty-six. Initially he rented a house on Fourteenth Street, but in 1915 he bought a home at 191 East Thirteenth Street from Lazar Mogelson, who was the president of the Sons of Moses synagogue, and lived there the remainder of his life. Known as the "Fourteenth Street Rabbi" and as the "Roiter Rov," on account of his red beard, at various times he served as the rabbi for Sons of Jacob, Sons of Moses, Sons of Abraham, and Adath Yeshurun congregations. A much-beloved community leader, Rabbi Hurwitz retired in 1940. Photo courtesy of Dr. Milton Hurwitz, his son.



Adath Yeshurun synagogue is shown at Fourteenth and Canada streets. Organized on October 14, 1914, by a group of Lithuanian Jewish refugees, it was long known as the "red" schul because of its exterior color. It was originally the Immanuel Norwegian Lutheran Church, and was originally built in 1888. It, too, succumbed to the wrecking ball in 1954, when the city of St. Paul acquired the land for expansion of the Ramsey County hospital. Its congregation was about half the size of the Sons of Moses. The Fudenberg family house at 656 Canada Street is to the left of the synagogue. Photo courtesy of Betty Fudenberg Kohn (originally a Minnesota Historical Society photo).



were either foreign-born or who had a parent who was foreign-born. Of this total, 45,739 were from Germany, 24,640 were from Sweden, and 16,871 were from Ireland. The census figures also indicate there were 7,007 from Russia. On June 21, 1909, the heads of thirty Russian refugee families in St. Paul organized the Sons of Moses synagogue, which for a time was the largest synagogue in the city. The founders of the Sons of Moses are listed in the table at the top of page 11.

Because Lithuania was a part of Russia at this time, a number of Lithuanian Jews had also come to St. Paul in 1882 and later. They were in a quandary in

terms of which synagogue to attend. These Lithuanians chose to buy a former church on Canada Street, where on October 14, 1914, they organized the smaller Adath Yeshurun synagogue, which was within walking distance of their homes. The heads of the eight founding Litvak families of Adath Yeshurun are listed in the table at the bottom of page 11.

One day in March 1931, the Sons of Moses synagogue was gutted by fire. The loss of their beloved building precipitated a crisis of faith for the Russian Jews. Members of Adath Yeshurun opened their arms and welcomed their fellow Jews. Some of the members of the Sons of Moses chose,

however, to attend services at the Sons of Abraham synagogue. The organizers of the Sons of Abraham had purchased the former Mount Zion building at Tenth and Minnesota streets, when the Mount Zion congregation had moved in 1903 to the Hill District and a new synagogue at Holly and Avon avenues. The Sons of Moses building was later rebuilt.

Regardless of where Jews came from, the synagogue was the central institution in their communal life. For Orthodox Jews, there was a compelling desire to worship with people who came from the same European country or area. In addition, regional variations in religious practices

Founders of the Sons of Moses Congregation in St. Paul

Name	Occupation	Residence
Max Belkin	mattress maker	221 Norris Street
Meyer Bercovitz	peddler	244 E. Fourteenth Street
Morris Borenstein	agent	270 E. Ninth Street
Charles Couplin	real estate agent	977 Selby Street
Jacob Dubensky	tailor	248 Rondo Avenue
Samuel Dubensky	tailor	248 Rondo Avenue
Morris Feldstein	furniture dealer	286 E. Thirteenth Street
Adolph Fink	tailor	531 L'Orient Street
Benjamin Fink	actor	531 L'Orient Street
Morris Fink	saloon keeper	543 Broadway
William Fink	saloon keeper	205 E. Fourteenth Street
Nathan Gordon		285 E. Fourteenth Street
Morris Kanevsky		214 Grove Street
Hyman Katz	tailor	198 E. Fourteenth Street
Herman Korsch	hat maker	43 E. Eleventh Street
Abraham Makiesky	peddler	622 Canada Street
Morris Mayeron	cloth cutter	633 Mississippi Street
Lozer Mogelson	cigar merchant	191 E. Thirteenth Street
David Moscowich		188 E. University Avenue
Jonas M. Moscowich	cabinet maker	309 Olmstead Street
Nathan Nadler	tailor	176 W. University Avenue
Jacob Nahinsky	grocer	273 E. Thirteenth Street
Zydell Nemerovsky		address unknown
Isaac Orloff	leather dealer	470 Robert Street
Morris Rossman	grocer	291 Grove Street
Mandel Schatonofsky	tailor	222 E. University Avenue
Samuel Shilkroun		270 E. Ninth Street
Samuel Strauss		208 E. Fourteenth Street
Louis Unowsky		211 E. Thirteenth Street
Harry Yavitch	tailor	343 Waverly Place



The expanded Benjamin Franklin School, at Broadway and Tenth Street, about 1900. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.



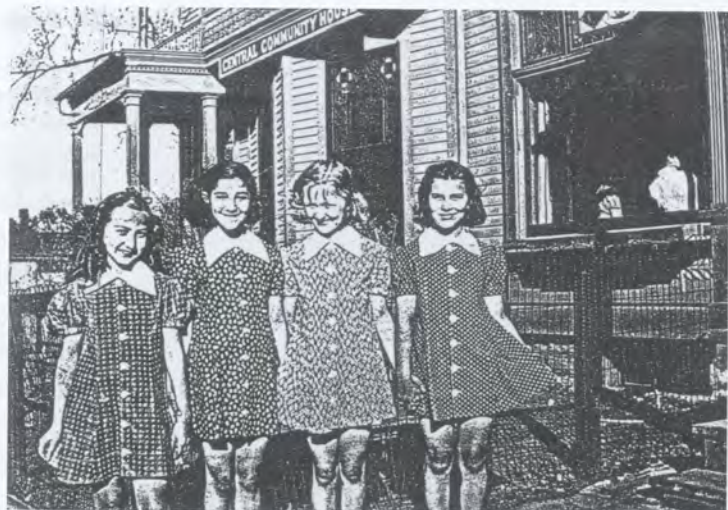
The St. Paul Bread Company plant at 97 Twelfth Street about 1913. Anyone walking or riding down Jackson Street into the Fourteenth Street area could not help but smell the sweet smells emanating from the Taystee Bread Baking company on Twelfth Street. Originally known as the St. Paul Bread Company, it later became the Purity Baking Company. On Friday nights, these smells, together with smells coming from the various Jewish bakeries, provided a delicious aroma for residents and nonresidents alike. C.P. Gibson photo. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Founders of the Adath Yeshurun Congregation in St. Paul

Name	Occupation	Residence
Hyman Abramovsky	rabbi	265 E. Fourteenth Street
Isadore Abramovsky	peddler	277 E. Fourteenth Street
Isadore Butwin	teacher	249 E. Thirteenth Street
Morris Oglansky	peddler	233 E. Fourteenth Street
Joseph Schwartz		213 E. Fourteenth Street
Samuel Streiker		193 E. Fourteenth Street
Morris Sussel	box maker	313 E. Fourteenth Street
Samuel Tilsner	peddler	246 E. Fourteenth Street

Central Community House, seen here in the background, was located at 190 East Fifteenth Street (later University Avenue).

Rabbi Harry Margolis and members of the Mount Zion Temple, which he served, organized Central Community House in 1921 to provide educational, social, and athletic opportunities for the Fourteenth Street community. Central Community House was incorporated in 1923 and in 1925 moved into an old double house, which it had purchased, on Fifteenth Street, near Jackson. Following renovation, the house was used for sewing and cooking classes, had a library, and offered a day camp. The first president of Central Community House was Isaac Summerfield. The four girls standing in front of Central Community House are unidentified. In 1957 the building was sold to the St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority and demolished. Photo courtesy of Helen Gordon Kipp.



The three Silberstein boys in 1919. Left to right, Horace, Gilbert, and Norman. They are standing next to the fence along their front yard on Canada Street. The camera is looking toward Wacouta Street. Rev. John Mattocks, a pioneer educator, built the house at 586 Canada Street. Photo courtesy of Janet Silberstein, the boys' sister.

Morris Cohen, second from the left, and his wife, Jennie, with their sons, Abraham, standing rear, who later became known as George, and Isadore, standing left, who later was known as Jim. Morris Cohen was not typical of the Russian refugees who settled in the Fourteenth Street neighborhood in the early twentieth century. Cohen, who was already in his forties and a skilled glazier when he came to St. Paul in 1907, entered the county at Galveston, Texas, rather than at Ellis Island in New York. He became a U.S. citizen in 1921. At the time, the Cohen family lived on St. Paul's West Side flats. A third son, Roy, was born in 1922. About that time, the Cohen family moved to 235 East Thirteenth Street and all the Cohen children attended Franklin School. Both the older Cohen boys adopted first names which they thought sounded more American than their given names. Photo courtesy of Jody A. Press, his granddaughter.





A 1930s photograph of the Mothers Club at a social function in the main room at the Central Community House. Parents were an important support group for Central Community House. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Nettie Beers.



This is the Fourteenth Street Boys Club in 1933, which was formerly a mikvah. In ancient days, Jews used the mikvah as a place for ritual bathing. It was usually a body of natural water, such as a river or lake. Today a mikvah is located inside a building and looks like a small swimming pool that is filled with rainwater or water from a spring or stream. For many years, the residents of Fourteenth Street used a mikvah that was located on the old West Side flats, near the Mississippi River. In 1926 a group of wealthy Jewish men hired Max Buetow, a prominent architect, to design a mikvah for the property at 180 East Fourteenth, at the corner with Jackson Street. Using Buetow's plans, in 1926 they built this handsome, brick-and-tile,

one-story building with separate entrances for men and women. The total cost was \$11,000 (the equivalent of \$127,710 in 2007). When the national economic depression hit St. Paul, the building was abandoned and those who wanted to use a mikvah resumed using the one on the West Side flats. In 1933 the League of Protestant Women took over the vacant building at 180-182 Fourteenth Street for the Fourteenth Street Boys Club. Jewish boys in the area, however, used the Central Community House. In 1949 a brush manufacturing company occupied the building until it was demolished in the 1950s. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Bob Berkowitz, age 10, in front of his house at 208 East Fourteenth Street in 1952. Soon this neighborhood would be gone. Photo courtesy of Bob Berkowitz.



The Levi family. In the background is the shop of Langman and Siegel. Photo courtesy of Jeanette Levi Rabenowitz family.



Around 1937 Adele Millunchick posed for the camera standing in front of the fountain in Central Park. Photo courtesy of Helen Gordon Kipp.

When the St. Paul Community Fund decided in 1923 that it would use some moving pictures of the people who lived in Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets area as a way to help raise money for the fund, they had Howard Cress, shown here at the camera, take the movies. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.





The Farmers Market was a place to purchase live chickens before they were taken to the schocet (religious poultry and beef processor) for slaughter. Located adjacent to the Fourteenth Street area, many a Jewish housewife would walk the three blocks to get her poultry for Friday night dinners. It was also a place for peddlers to buy fresh produce to sell to their many customers.

This picture was taken in 1902 by Charles P. Gibson, shortly after the Farmers Market opened for business. It extended 236 feet east from Jackson to Temperance streets and 490 feet north from East Tenth to East Eleventh streets. The Embassy Suites Hotel currently occupies this site. C. P. Gibson photo. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Kosher Grocery Stores in the Fourteenth Street Area

Proprietor /Name	Address
Morris Bisnow	177 E. Fourteenth Street
Simon Bloom	455 Broadway
A.L. Divine	628 Jackson Street
Morris Dubinsky	214 E. Fourteenth Street
Maurice Feldstein	279 E. Thirteenth Street
Max Frankel	217 Mt. Airy Street
Louis Goldstein	591 Broadway
Langman and Siegel	Fourteenth and Canada streets
Legan Grocery	656 Broadway
Levy Grocery	237 Grove Street
Lulechinsky and Rosenfeld	670 Canada Street
Jacob Nahinsky	213 E. Thirteenth Street
Harry Oglansky	627 Canada Street
Harry Pearlman	223 E. Fourteenth Street
Joseph Piel	228 E. Fourteenth Street
Max Raskin	301 E. Thirteenth Street
Charles Vinitsky	664 Canada Street
Warren Grocery	Grove Street
Weiner Grocery	Canada and Fifteenth streets
H.A. Yaffe	275 E. Thirteenth Street
Isadore Yblonsky	307 1/2 E. Thirteenth Street
Marchak's Grocery	Fourteenth Street
Tartarsky Grocery Store	Grove Street

and customs often resulted in the organization of multiple synagogues within St. Paul. The Fourteenth Street neighborhood was home to two of them.

The Franklin, Madison, and Hawthorne public schools served the Fourteenth Street community. Most Jewish children attended Franklin School, which had served as a distribution center for the mass of refugees in 1882. This building had been expanded. Then one winter the weight from all the snow on its roof caused the roof to collapse, which led to the city putting up a new school building. Madison School (formerly the Central High School), which had been built in 1872, stood next to the Mechanic Arts High School building which opened in 1911. Hawthorne School had fewer students from the Fourteenth Street neighborhood because it was too distant for most children to walk there easily. There were no private schools in this neighborhood then, but the Talmud Torah, which was quite far away on College Avenue (near the present location of the Cathedral of St. Paul), served the needs of the Fourteenth Street Jewish community in St. Paul as the Hebrew school for young Jewish males. Much later in the twentieth century, young Jewish girls began to attend Talmud Torah.

In addition to these schools, several kosher meat markets and grocery stores

served the Fourteenth Street community for many years. The principal kosher meat markets in the area were those of Peter and Abraham Lisowsky (645 Canada Street), Samuel Rapaport (620 Canada Street), Louis Unowsky and Morris Borenstein (211 E. Thirteenth Street), the Schway Brothers store (245 E. Fourteenth Street), David Gantman (225 E. Fourteenth Street), and Meyer Garber (173 Grove Street). There were also twenty-three kosher grocery stores. The most prominent among these are listed in the table on page 15.

As the Fourteenth Street neighborhood matured in the middle decades of the twentieth century, where a Jew had come from in Europe became less and less an organizing principal for the synagogues and businesses of the community. Secular life in Minnesota slowly challenged Old World customs and practices. As Jewish families in this area prospered, some moved out and made their homes in the Hill District or elsewhere. Fourteenth Street slowly changed. Then in the 1960s interstate highway construction and the building of St. Paul-Ramsey Hospital wiped out those distinctively Jewish elements that still remained.

Gene H. Rosenblum is a retired St. Paul attorney who spent many years working for the Minnesota Department of Transportation, as Of-Counsel for Minnesota's attorney general. He is also a former St. Paul Assistant City Attorney.



Hillel Edelstein, seated, with his daughters. Hillel's wife, Frieda, died in 1943, so this photo likely dates from some time after her death. The daughters are, left to right, Bertha (Bes) Steinman, Estelle Titner, Betty Williams, Ann Chemrinow, Eva Unovich, Sue Kantrowich, and Mary Charoh. Photo courtesy of Louise Kantrowich Yim, his granddaughter.

Sources:

In researching this history of the Jews of Fourteenth Street, I have relied upon the Archives of the Sons of Moses, courtesy of Tom Shaw, and R.L. Polk's *St. Paul City Directory* for the early years of the community. I also interviewed a number of descendants of early Jewish residents of the Fourteenth Street neighborhood. My published sources included "The Jews" by Hyman Berman in *They Chose Minnesota: A Survey of the State's Ethnic Groups*, edited by June Drenning Holmquist (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1981) and Hyman Berman and Linda Mack Schloff's *Jews in Minnesota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2002). My own books, *Jewish Pioneers of St.*

Paul, 1849-1874 (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing Co., 2001) and *The Lost Jewish Community of the West Side Flats, 1882-1962* (Chicago: Arcadia Publishing Company, 2002), have full bibliographies of archival and published sources that have been invaluable to me in my research on the Jews of St. Paul. In addition I found the new edition of Donald L. Empson, *The Street Where You Live: A Guide to the Place Names of St. Paul* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006) very helpful. I also thank Maureen McGinn and Jana Armstead for their research assistance in the St. Paul Building Permits Collection at the Ramsey County Historical Society, St. Paul, Minn.



This view of Fourteenth Street was taken by Richard Winer, who was then an NBC photographer, in November of 1955. A week after this photo was taken, all of the homes in the picture had been torn down. It was the end of an era, an end of a small Jewish neighborhood, known as "Fourteenth Street." Photo courtesy of Richard Allen Winer.



Rendering by Cass Gilbert of the Lightner House design, showing the porte cochere originally planned; private collection. See Paul Clifford Larson's article on page 17.

R.C.H.S.

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