



# Temple Israel FOUNDATION

## Biographical Information Sheet

### Arkush

Ezekiel Arkush

Born: 1856

Died: January 24, 1908

Married to: Eda Mayer

In Leadville: 1886-1890

Eda (Mayer) Arkush

Born: 1863

Died: Unknown

Married to: Ezekiel Arkush

Ralph Arkush<sup>1</sup>

Born: May 5, 1887 (Illinois)

Died: August 1965

Eda L. Arkush<sup>2</sup>

Born: April 1890 (Illinois)

Died: 1962

Ezekiel Arkush was a successful clothing store manager and merchant who spent four years in the Carbonate city. He came to Leadville in late 1886 to manage Leopold Guldman's<sup>3</sup> Golden Eagle clothing store at the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Harrison Avenue, where he worked until 1889.<sup>4</sup> Ezekiel was probably a younger brother of Samuel Arkush, also a prominent clothing merchant and grocer who operated stores in Denver, Central City, and Pueblo from the 1860s until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Colorado newspapers reveal the presence of an Arkush in the territory as far back as 1862. In May that year, "S. Arkush" arrived on an express wagon with A. Sands and his wife.<sup>5</sup> In July, "S. Arkush" was listed as a passenger on a stagecoach to the newly boom Central City gold fields.<sup>6</sup> A few days later, S. had opened a clothing store on Central City's main street, partnered with "Kline".<sup>7</sup> A one-sentence obituary in 1910 proves this was Samuel Arkush, "*Samuel Arkush, a resident of Colorado since 1862, and many years in Denver, died in Santa Monica, Cal.*"<sup>8</sup> The importance of this individual is the connection Ezekiel had to Colorado; Samuel was likely his older brother.

As determined by the United States Census of 1870, Samuel was a dry goods merchant in Central City and lived with wife Flora, and children Abraham, Amelia, and Solomon.<sup>9</sup> Ten years later, the 1880 census identified the same family and Samuel as a grocer on Santa Fe Drive in Pueblo.<sup>10</sup> After legal trouble in 1872, the store was referred to as F. Arkush for the rest of the years it was open.<sup>11</sup> Samuel and his wife Flora operated a successful business in Pueblo until the 1890s. Both are buried in Denver's Emanuel Cemetery.<sup>12</sup>

First employed in Denver during the early 1880s, Ezekiel probably gained most of his experience in the clothing trade while living in New York. According to the 1870 Census, Ezekiel was listed as a 14-year-old tailor's apprentice.<sup>13</sup> Ezekiel was the second oldest of eight children born to Polish immigrants Isaac and Sophia Arkush. His father Isaac was listed in the census as a tailor and apprenticed Ezekiel in 1870. Ezekiel was the only Arkush child born in England; all the younger children were born in New York and Samuel was born in Poland. It was common during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century for Jewish immigrants from Poland, the Baltic States, and Russia to spend time in London as they fled from pogroms in their homelands; in-route to the United States. The family's oldest child Samuel- mentioned above- moved to Colorado in the early 1860s.

Ezekiel first appeared in a Colorado newspaper in 1884. A short business notice in November mentioned he sold his Denver clothing stock to David Davidson for about \$5000, indicating he operated small clothing business in the capital.<sup>14</sup> Ezekiel first appeared in Leadville social columns during the spring of 1887. In April, he attended the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Purim Masque Ball at the Tabor Opera House and was part of the reception committee. Along with such notables as David May, Mayor Dougan, and Isaac Baer, he wore a yellow badge with the initials of the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Society, painted in silver.<sup>15</sup> The next month, Dora Arkush was listed as an attendee of a ball hosted by



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the local Milkman's Union.<sup>16</sup> Dora was probably a visiting cousin, niece, or sister, but her identity has not been confirmed; she was probably not a full time resident of the city. Ezekiel's son Ralph was born in Illinois on May 5, 1887. Ezekiel's wife Eda as well as Ralph probably joined him in Leadville later in 1887 or early in 1888.<sup>17</sup> In September, Ezekiel was listed as one of over 2,000 passengers on a Colorado Midland excursion train hired by the Miner's Union, which spent the afternoon in Robinson's Canyon. The event included rock drilling and a picnic, but heavy rain deterred many of the spectators.<sup>18</sup> In February of 1888, Ezekiel was listed for the first time alongside his wife as guests at a party hosted for Mr. and Mrs. Lou Shoenberg and Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Baer. The event at the 6<sup>th</sup> Street City Hall venue celebrated the return of the Shoeborgs and Baers from their European honeymoon. Other names on the list reveal that the event was made up of exclusively Jewish names. Toasts to Temple Israel and the Jews of Leadville were made by Ben Davies and David May.<sup>19</sup>

News was quiet on the topic of the Arkush household in Leadville during the rest of 1888. The 1888 City directory recorded that Ezekiel changed his residence from 134 W. 6<sup>th</sup> to 118 E. 9<sup>th</sup> street in 1888, perhaps as a result of the arrival of his wife and son Ralph. Another unknown or perhaps misspelled Arkush appeared briefly in October. "Sig" Arkush was listed in a social notice for the birthday party of Pauline Simons.<sup>20</sup> The exact identity of this individual is unknown but was probably a visiting cousin, nephew or other relation who was also associated with the Simon family.<sup>21</sup> None of Ezekiel's siblings were named Sig according to the 1870 census cited above.

In March of 1889, Ezekiel appeared as a juror for the trial of George Hull vs. John Hurley.<sup>22</sup> The following month the *Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle* announced that "Ed" Arkush went away "to the valley" on business from April 15 until the 29<sup>th</sup>.<sup>23</sup> Later that spring, Ezekiel's wife Eda entertained a number of "young people" in the Arkush household at 118 East 9<sup>th</sup> Street.<sup>24</sup> In August, Ezekiel's younger sister Emma visited Leadville.<sup>25</sup> Again in late August, Eda entertained guests at the house on 9<sup>th</sup> street. Mrs. Pelton, wife to a fellow Jewish clothing merchant was listed as a visiting attendee from Denver, in addition to local individuals such as Mrs. Hiemberger and several members of the Kahn family.<sup>26</sup> Another unknown Arkush appeared in Leadville social columns in the autumn of 1889. "Rebecca" Arkush was given a farewell party, in conjunction with Lizzie Schayer. Rebecca was likely a younger sister of Ezekiel who spent the summer of 1889 in Leadville.<sup>27</sup> Ezekiel was always referred to as "E." as well as "Ed" in local newspapers. A short notice in November 1889 read, "*Ed Arkush. The Golden Eagle is doing its share of the business, and it has been as good this season as it was last. The future to me looks very promising.*"<sup>28</sup> A month later he again appeared as Ed in the *Carbonate Chronicle* to express his opinion regarding a movement to re-convene the state legislature on the topic of Leadville taxes. Ezekiel responded, "*I fail to see how a re-assembling can benefit the state.*"<sup>29</sup> Ezekiel's economic enthusiasm the previous spring became unfounded in January of 1890, when the Golden Eagle owner Leopold Guldman announced he would close the Leadville store on February 1.<sup>30</sup> Unlike Harrison Avenue merchant contemporaries such as Samuel and Elias Pelton, who prolonged closing sales with hype and circumstance for years, the Golden Eagle indeed was gone by February. A new millinery business was announced at 617 Harrison by the end of the month.<sup>31</sup>



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According to the Leadville city directory for 1890, Ezekiel quickly found employment as a clerk at the Palace of Fashion following the closure of the Golden Eagle.<sup>32</sup> According to the 1900 census, Ezekiel's daughter Eda was born in April 1890 in Chicago; Eda and Ralph had departed Leadville before this date, and there is no evidence they returned. Ezekiel's final social notice in a Leadville newspaper came in June. He was listed as an attendee of the Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Association Strawberry Festival at City Hall and he attended alone. There is no evidence of Ezekiel's presence in Leadville after the summer of 1890. His next appearance is the 1900 United States census;

he and his family were residents of Manhattan that year and was listed as a "salesman-shoes". Ezekiel died in New York in early 1908, at the relatively young age of 54 years. His children Ralph and Eda lived well into the 1960s. The death date and place of his wife Eda remains unknown.

Ezekiel came to Leadville shortly after the most important early economic years of the Carbonate city. However, he still arrived early enough to be a participant in the strong economic and social fervor of the city. He was also witness to the distinct importance of Leadville's Jewish community.



<sup>1</sup> U.S., Social Security Death Index, 1935-2014 Number: 087-32-5114; Issue State: New York; Issue Date: 1957-1958

<sup>2</sup> "United States Census, 1900," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MSK9-WZS> : accessed 2 February 2019), Eda L Arkush in household of Ezekiel Arkush, Borough of Manhattan, Election District 13 New York City Ward 21, New York County, New York, United States; citing enumeration district (ED) 529, sheet 7B, family 144, NARA microfilm publication T623 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1972.); FHL microfilm 1,241,105.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the Guldman store see <http://jewishleadville.org/guldman.html>

<sup>4</sup> "Holiday Gifts" Herald Democrat, December 10, 1886 p. 4

<sup>5</sup> "Daily Evening News" Rocky Mountain News, May 26, 1862 p. 3

<sup>6</sup> "The Weekly News" Rocky Mountain News Weekly, July 12, 1862 p. 4

<sup>7</sup> "Central City Folks Take Notice" Rocky Mountain News, July 17, 1862 p. 3

<sup>8</sup> "Little Colorado Items" San Juan Prospector, September 17, 1910 p. 1

<sup>9</sup> Year: 1870; Census Place: Central City, Gilpin, Colorado Territory; Roll: M593\_95; Page 272A; Family History Library Film: 545594

<sup>10</sup> Year: 1880; Census Place: Pueblo, Pueblo, Colorado; Roll 92; Page: 224B; Enumeration District: 093

<sup>11</sup> "Constable Sale" Colorado Daily Chieftain, July 27, 1872 p. 4

<sup>12</sup> Find A Grave, database and images (findagrave.com: accessed 28 January 2019) memorial page for Samuel Arkush (1833-1910) Find a Grave Memorial no. 10631020, citing Congregation Emanuel Cemetery, Denver, Denver County, Colorado USA. Maintained by Digginrellies (contributor 46522347)

<sup>13</sup> "United States Census, 1870," database with images, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:M8V6-VGM> : 12 April 2016), Ezekiel Arkush in household of Isaac J Arkush, New York, United States; citing p. 163, family 1298, NARA microfilm publication M593 (Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.); FHL microfilm 552,562.

<sup>14</sup> "Business Changes" Leadville Daily Herald, November 30, 1884 p. 2

<sup>15</sup> "Eighth Annual Purim Ball" Carbonate Chronicle, April 4, 1887 p. 2

<sup>16</sup> "Milkmen's Ball" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, May 13, 1887 p. 3

<sup>17</sup> Registration State: New York; Registration County: New York; Roll: 1766376; Draft Board: 135

<sup>18</sup> "Jolly Junketeers" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, September 12, 1887 p. 1

<sup>19</sup> "Banqueting the Brides" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, February 4, 1888 p.3

<sup>20</sup> "A Birthday Party" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, October 13, 1888 p. 4

<sup>21</sup> For more information on the Simons see <http://jewishleadville.org/simons>

<sup>22</sup> "Legal Log" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, March 14, 1889 p. 3

<sup>23</sup> "In the Society World" Carbonate Chronicle, April 15, 1889 p. 5

<sup>24</sup> "Society" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, April 29, 1889 p.3

<sup>24</sup> "Pleasantly Entertained" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, May 27, 1889 p. 2

<sup>25</sup> "Personal Mention" Herald Democrat, August 11, 1889 p. 5

<sup>26</sup> "Mrs. Arkush Entertains" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, August 26, 1889 p. 3

<sup>27</sup> "A Farewell Party" Herald Democrat, October 13, 1889 p. 2

<sup>28</sup> "Status of Local Trade" Carbonate Chronicle, November 18, 1889 p. 1

<sup>29</sup> "No Extra Session Wanted" Carbonate Chronicle, December 16, 1889 p. 1

<sup>30</sup> "Nearing the End" Herald Democrat, January 30, 1890 p. 5

<sup>31</sup> "Wait for Us" Herald Democrat, February 23, 1890 p. 4

<sup>32</sup> 1890 Leadville City Directory p. 62



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