



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Bernstein

Millie Bernstein
Occupation: N/A
Born: N/A
Birthplace: N/A
Died: N/A

Little is known about Millie Bernstein. The only mentions of her presence in Leadville are three newspaper articles between January and March 1890 which indicate that she was very much involved with Leadville's Jewish community for a brief time. Millie attended two parties hosted by the Baer¹ and Kahn² families respectively along with many prominent Jewish³ community members.⁴ She was also listed as a guest at the 1890 Purim Ball, a large event hosted by the *Ladies' Hebrew Benevolent Society* at Leadville's City Hall.⁵ She was seemingly unmarried as the guest list for the ball referred to her as Miss M. Bernstein.

Her connection to Isaac, Esther, and Bettie, if any existed, is not known. Her name does not match any of their siblings listed in the 1880 census.



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Bernstein

Annie Bernstein
Occupation: N/A
Born: 1862
Birthplace: Kansas, United States
Died: N/A

Esther Bernstein Bergerman
Occupation: Worker at wholesale liquor store
Born: est. 1864-1870
Birthplace: Kansas, United States
Died: N/A

Isaac (“Ike”) Bernstein
Occupation: Store owner
Born: est. 1871
Birthplace: Kansas, United States
Died: N/A

Bettie Bernstein
Occupation: Clerk
Born: est. 1873
Birthplace: Kansas, United States
Died: N/A

The four Bernstein siblings arrived in Leadville at different times. Esther likely arrived first due to her and Isaac’s early connections with the Bergerman family.⁶ All four were born in Kansas with Annie’s birth estimated as 1862, Esther’s sometime between 1864 and 1870, Isaac’s as 1871, and Bettie’s as 1873.⁷ Their family was large and included their father and mother, immigrants from Poland and Germany respectively, and three additional siblings. Prior to the siblings’ relocation to Leadville, the family had moved from Kansas to Ophir, Colorado, a mining town located in the southwest corner of the state near Telluride.⁸

Esther married Jacob Bergerman, a prominent Jewish merchant in Leadville, sometime between 1880 and 1890.⁹ She lived in Leadville until 1895 when the Bergerman family moved to Salt Lake City.¹⁰ Annie was in Leadville by 1888 when the *Leadville Evening Chronicle* noted her attendance at a concert and ball hosted by members of Temple Israel.¹¹ The length of Annie’s stay in the city is unclear, however her second and final mention in local newspapers was in an Alpha Club dance guest list published on April 4, 1890.¹² It is estimated that Isaac arrived in 1890, using Esther’s connection to the Bergerman family to eventually become proprietor of the Gem candy store located on Harrison Avenue. Isaac lived in Leadville between 1890 and 1894, the first and last years he appeared in Leadville’s city directories and local newspapers. Bettie was the last of the siblings to arrive and subsequently resided in town the shortest amount of time, from 1892 to 1894.¹³

Isaac was first recorded in the 1890 Leadville city directory working as a porter at the Bergerman’s wholesale liquor store and living at the Bergerman’s 208 West 5th Street residence.¹⁴ By 1891, Isaac was listed as a clerk at the Bergerman store and continued to live with the family.¹⁵ Isaac moved to a new residence in 1892, listed in the directory as 130 East 5th Street, and had become a bartender at the Bergerman business.¹⁶ Bettie visited Esther for a few months in 1892 but decided to remain in Leadville, eventually obtaining a job at *Beggs Dry Goods Co.*¹⁷ Much like Isaac, Bettie also lived at the Bergerman residence.¹⁸ The final mention of her presence in the Leadville area was her attendance of a basket picnic arranged by the Jewish community of Twin Lakes on August 12, 1894.¹⁹



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Bernstein

1893 was perhaps Isaac's defining year in Leadville. He became the owner of the Gem candy store located at 418 Harrison Avenue in late January and quickly began renovations to make the business more appealing.²⁰ Soon after, it became clear that the store's original owner, William Slatore, had debt troubles and was being chased by a "small army of creditors" after he alighted from town.²¹ The *Herald Democrat* article relaying the events noted that some of Slatore's creditors considered "bringing proceedings against Bernstein for settlement."²² The article mentions that Slatore, upon returning to town, met with Jacob Bergerman who had apparently furnished the check to transfer ownership of the Gem to Bernstein.

Renovations of the Gem continued for months after the original purchase; however, Isaac quickly hired a candy maker and was open for business by January 29.²³ By March 26, Isaac had refurnished the store's ice cream parlor and was continuing

renovations of other portions.²⁴ A soda fountain was the final major addition to the store, added only a month after the ice cream parlor renovation.²⁵ The Gem was highly regarded by reporters for the *Herald Democrat* who lauded it as the finest candy store west of Denver.

Management of the Gem changed once again in February 1894 to J.C. Moorehouse, a partner of Bergerman & Co.²⁶ Isaac's time in Leadville ended sometime prior to the change in management, though it is not clear why he left or where he went. His departure marked the conclusion of the Bernstein's time in Leadville.



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Bernstein

¹ For more information on the Baer family, see: Jeffrey P. Grant, *Baer* (Leadville, CO: Temple Israel Foundation), 2019: <http://www.jewishleadville.org/baer.html>.

² For more information on the Kahn family, see: Trevor Mark, *Kahn* (Leadville, CO: Temple Israel Foundation), 2019: <http://www.jewishleadville.org/kahn.html>.

³ *Mrs. Baer Entertains* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), January 26, 1890, P4.

⁴ *The People You Know* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), March 2, 1890, P4.

⁵ *The Season of Rejoicing* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), March 8, 1890, P4.

⁶ For more information on the Bergerman family, see: Jeffrey P. Grant, *Bergerman* (Leadville, CO: Temple Israel Foundation), 2018: <http://www.jewishleadville.org/bergerman.html>.

⁷ "United States Census, 1880," database with images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:MFDV-K2J>; accessed November 19, 2020) Bettie Bernstein in household of Isador Bernstein, Ophir, Ouray, Colorado, United States; citing enumeration district ED 91, sheet 153B, NARA microfilm publication T9 (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, n.d.), FHL microfilm 1,254,092.

⁸ "United States Census, 1880," Bettie Bernstein in household of Isador Bernstein.

⁹ Jeffrey P. Grant, *Bergerman* (Leadville, CO: Temple Israel Foundation), 2018: <http://www.jewishleadville.org/bergerman.html>.

¹⁰ Jeffrey P. Grant, *Bergerman*, 2018.

¹¹ *Very Fashionable Event* (Leadville, CO: *Leadville Evening Herald*), August 30, 1888, P4.

¹² *Their Second Dance* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), April 4, 1890, P4.

¹³ J. H. Ballenger and Richards, *Ballenger & Richard's Twentieth Annual City Directory: Containing a Complete List of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms etc. in The City of Leadville for 1892* (Leadville, CO: Ballenger and Richards Publishers, 1892), P70.

¹⁴ J. H. Ballenger and Richards, *Ballenger & Richard's Eleventh Annual City Directory: Containing a Complete List of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms etc. in The City of Leadville for 1890* (Leadville, CO: Ballenger and Richards Publishers, 1890), P68.

¹⁵ J. H. Ballenger and Richards, *Ballenger & Richard's Nineteenth Annual City Directory: Containing a Complete List of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms etc. in The City of Leadville for 1891* (Leadville, CO: Ballenger and Richards Publishers, 1891), P68.

¹⁶ Ballenger and Richards, Leadville, CO: USA, 1892, P70.

¹⁷ *Personal Mention*, (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*) August 7, 1892, P7.

¹⁸ Ballenger and Richards, Leadville, CO: USA, 1892, P70.

¹⁹ *In Realms of Gaiety* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), August 12, 1894.

²⁰ *A Business Change* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), January 25, 1893, P8.

²¹ *Chased by Creditors*, (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), January 26, 1893, P8.

²² *Chased by Creditors* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), January 26, 1893, P8.

²³ *It's a Gem* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), January 29, 1893, P8.

²⁴ *The Only Gem* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), March 26, 1893, P8.

²⁵ *It's the Gem* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), April 30, 1893, P8.

²⁶ *Truly a "Gem"* (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*), February 24, 1894, P6.



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