



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Hoffman

Isaac Hoffman
Born: 1858
Born in: Ohio
Married in 1883
Married Jennie Block

Jennie Block Hoffman
Born: 1863
Born in Iowa
Married in 1883
Married Isaac Hoffman

Harold Hoffman
Born: 1886
Born in Iowa

Alfred Hoffman
Born: 1863
Born in Ohio
Married in 1906
Married to Annie Hoffman
Died: 1923

Annie Hughes Hoffman
Born 1868
Born in Ireland
Married in 1906
Died: 1911

The Hoffmans were a family from Ohio, some of whom moved to Leadville in the late 19th century. Bertha Hoffman was born in 1857, along with her brother Isaac in 1858 and Alfred in 1863.¹ Their parents were Abraham and Rachel, both of whom were from Bavaria.² The Hoffman children also included, Eliza, Emma, Henry, Samuel and William.³ Bertha, Isaac and Alfred were the only Hoffman's who would become involved with Leadville. By 1880, Isaac had moved to Muscatine, Iowa, where he and his brother Samuel were living with the Cohn Family.⁴ In 1883, Isaac was married to Jennie Block⁵ and three years later they had a son named

Harold.⁶ Bertha Hoffman married Samuel Berry, a Jewish immigrant from Germany in 1881.⁷ During this period, it is unclear where Alfred lived.

The Hoffmans began arriving in Leadville in the 1880s. In 1887, Alfred briefly worked as a driver for Charles Boettcher.⁸ In 1889 he settled down for a job at Sam Berry & Co.,⁹ a clothing store owned by Bertha's husband. Sam's store is first listed in the city directories in 1880.¹⁰ Alfred would work with Sam until 1901.¹¹ In 1897 Isaac Hoffman is listed as a clerk in the city directories¹² and in 1898 he began working with his brother Alfred at Sam Berry's store.¹³

The Hoffmans were involved in multiple aspects of Jewish Leadville society including dances, reading clubs, and confirmations. Alfred Hoffman attended some dances affiliated with Leadville's Jewish society. In 1892, he attended the thirteenth annual Simchas Torah Ball, which both Mr. and Mrs. Berry visited.¹⁴ In 1894, the Jewish Ladies Reading Club put on a dance at the Vendome and Bertha was listed as the treasurer of the JLRC.¹⁵ The event was well attended and Alfred appears as one of the guests.¹⁶ In 1899, Harold was part of the graduating class of the Temple Israel Sunday School.¹⁷ According to the *Herald Democrat*, "It was doubtful if a more successful confirmation has ever been held in Leadville than that of the class of 1899. The discipline and class work were indeed pleasing surprises to the large audience and the young people were assuredly deserving of congratulations that were showered upon them at the conclusion of the exercises."¹⁸ During 1900, the Ladies Reading Club is mentioned as meeting at Mrs. Hoffman's home.¹⁹ When they weren't attending social events, the Hoffmans were pursuing more official endeavors.

During Independence Day in 1900, Isaac Hoffman was appointed collector of funds for the



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celebration, where he helped arrange festivities.²⁰ Next, in 1905, Isaac Hoffman was reelected as secretary of the board of trade and served with Ed Jackson, who was second vice president.²¹ Ed Jackson was a successful Jewish tailor in Leadville. Pursuant to his duties as secretary of the Board of Trade, Isaac traveled to the Trans – Mississippi Congress in Portland as part of the Colorado delegation which included, H. M. Hoggs of Telluride, William Stapleton of Denver, and S. N. Nye of Colorado Springs.²²

In 1902, Alfred started his own men's clothing and furnishing goods store²³ which was known as the "Hoffman Toggery."²⁴ Isaac joined Alfred and worked as a clerk at the Toggery.²⁵ In 1903, Harold also began working at Alfred's clothing store.²⁶ Both Isaac and Harold would work with Alfred until after 1905²⁷ when they moved to Chicago.²⁸ The Hoffman Toggery was initially at 400 – 402 Harrison Avenue²⁹ and in 1906 it was permanently relocated to 510 Harrison Avenue.³⁰

In 1906 Alfred Hoffman was married to Annie Hughes.³¹ Annie was from Ireland and was born in 1868.³² She immigrated to the United States in 1894³³. Their marriage was sadly cut short in 1911 when Annie passed away.³⁴ In 1907, Alfred traveled Chicago to visit his sick brother in law, Julius Berry, who was the brother of Samuel Berry.³⁵ In 1919, Alfred sold all the stock in the Hoffman Toggery and placed a notice in the *Herald Democrat* advertising the sale and instructing anyone to whom he was indebted to contact him for repayment.³⁶ In September of 1923 Hoffman returned to Leadville from a stay in Denver.³⁷ Sadly, Hoffman passed away from kidney complications the next month.³⁸ It was apparent his health had been failing for the previous year. The *Herald Democrat* elucidates Alfred's last weeks:

"Mr. Hoffman who was well in his sixties, showed no signs of failing health until last May. He seemed to age very rapidly and he set down considerably in his business activities. He went to the Michael Resse hospital in Chicago and remained there for six weeks, returning to Leadville apparently considerably improved in health... During September, however, the symptoms of kidney trouble became very marked and he went to Boulder sanitarium, where he was placed on a strict diet. As he felt that there was no improvement Mr. Hoffman returned to the Chicago hospital. He has a brother, Isaac and two nieces living in that city, and they were with him when the end came."³⁹

Alfred passed away in Chicago in the company of his brother Isaac. Accordingly, he is not buried in the Hebrew Cemetery in Leadville. Alfred's obituary revealed that "during the past few months Mr. Hoffman's mercantile interests here have been in charge of his old friend and business associate, S. E. Abbett."⁴⁰ His obituary also had some praise for Leadville's late citizen:

"Alfred Hoffman was a sterling and representative citizen of the type that Leadville can least afford to spare at this time. When he became firmly established on his own feet here Mr. Hoffman took an active interest in every movement looking to the promotion of whatever enterprises would contribute to the general benefit of the city and district. He spent much money in leasing and several of his ventures turned out quite well but he usually put his earnings back in the ground. Enterprises that required financial backing and which held out any reasonable promise whatever could count on his support. He was one of the promoters of the present zinc smelter, and also helped finance the Wilfley mill project at Kokomo. He is also a stockholder in the Canterbury tunnel. "I am always ready to take my chances with the



rest of the boys, if it will help Leadville," was his way of putting it."⁴¹

With the passing of Alfred Hoffman, Leadville lost a valuable member of its community. Isaac Hoffman

remained in Chicago with his remaining family, while Bertha lived in Seattle where her husband Sam Berry had relocated.⁴²

¹ U.S. Census Bureau 1870 Census

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau 1880 Census

⁵ Iowa Marriage Records 1883

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. 1900 Census

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ 1887 Leadville City Directory

⁹ 1889 Leadville City Directory

¹⁰ 1880 Leadville City Directory

¹¹ 1887 – 1901 Leadville city directories

¹² 1897 Leadville City Directory

¹³ 1898 Leadville City Directory

¹⁴ "Simchas Torah." *Herald Democrat*, October 19, 1892. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹⁵ "An Evening of Pleasures." *Leadville Daily Chronicle*, October 19, 1894. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ "Bright Confirmants." *Herald Democrat*, May 15, 1899. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ "In Society." *The Herald Democrat*, January 7, 1900. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²⁰ "For Fourth of July." *Herald Democrat*, June 2, 1900. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²¹ "Board of Trade Elects Officers." *Herald Democrat*, February 16, 1905. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²² "Delegates to Portland." *Herald Democrat*, July 23, 1905. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²³ 1902 Leadville City Directory

²⁴ "Advertisement." *Herald Democrat*, March 30, 1907. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²⁵ 1902 Leadville City Directory

²⁶ 1903 Leadville City Directory

²⁷ 1905 Leadville City Directory



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²⁸ U.S. Census Bureau. 1910 Census.

²⁹ 1902 Leadville City Directory

³⁰ 1906 Leadville City Directory

³¹ U.S. Census Bureau. 1910 Census

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ "Alfred Hoffman." *Herald Democrat*, October 17, 1923. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

³⁵ "Illness of Julius Berry." *Herald Democrat*, June 7, 1907. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

³⁶ "To The Public Of Leadville, Colorado." October 8, 1919. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

³⁷ "Personal Mention." *Herald Democrat*, September 5, 1923. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

³⁸ "Alfred Hoffman." *Herald Democrat*, October 17, 1923. Accessed September 24, 2016.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.