



# Temple Israel FOUNDATION

## Biographical Information

### Mitchell

Louis Mitchell  
Born: Russia, 1842  
Died:

Katherine "Mina" Mitchell  
Born: Germany, 1852  
Died: Denver, May 17, 1910

David Mitchell  
Born: Illinois, 1882  
Died:

Florence Mitchell  
Born: Colorado, 1883  
Died:

Infant Mitchell  
Born: Leadville, May 14, 1885  
Death: Leadville, May 17, 1885

Louis, Kate, David, and Florence Mitchell<sup>1</sup> came to Leadville from Cheyenne, Wyoming in January of 1885, when Louis leased the popular *Hyman's Saloon* and purchased its fixtures and stock from Mannie Hyman,<sup>2</sup> a well-known Leadville entrepreneur.<sup>3</sup> Louis enjoyed dealing faro while the proprietor of the establishment and the family took up residence at 201 West 5<sup>th</sup> Street,<sup>4</sup> the former home of the Morris Schoenberg family,<sup>5</sup> and remained at this address for their brief stay in Leadville<sup>6</sup> which appears to have ended sometime in August of the same year. The couple gave birth to one child in Leadville, an unnamed infant born on May 14, 1885.<sup>7</sup> Sadly the child lived only three days and is interred at Leadville's historic Hebrew Cemetery.<sup>8</sup>

It wasn't long before Louis was mentioned in a negative article related to sour and dark underbelly of gambling in Leadville that appeared in the February 21, 1885 edition of the *Carbonate Chronicle* newspaper:

*...Some fashionable young fellow who is a worshipper at the shrine of the spotted enchantress, and who prides himself upon stacking his chips so high that the dealer reminds him that he is "crowding the limit," becomes so absorbed in the dealing box that he does not see the hand thrust forward from the crowd of bystanders and clasp a stack of reds that may represent any amount from \$5 to \$50. He hasn't time to wonder at the reduction in his roll, and goes along while the "sleeper hunter" proceeds to another table and cashes in his plunder. He then becomes a player by the side of his victim, and the chances are ten to nothing that if the player does not lose on the square turn of the cards, the parasite will have swept them into his rack. Louis Mitchell, who conducts one of the most extensive gambling houses in the state jumped into the business where Mannie Hyman left off, and without a knowledge of such scenes as are depicted each night, he is naturally bewildered. In a chat with the reporter he said he was at a loss as to the best way to make him popular with the masses. In referring to his experience he said that when he had come hither he was appealed to by a fellow, who, with tears in his eyes, begged a loan of \$5, saying he was about to be ejected from his boarding house, and required that amount to protect himself. Mr. Mitchell's emotions were touched by the fellow's despair and reaching into his pocket gave it to him. A few moments after he had multiplied it several times through a lucky deal, and with \$60 was at the bar abusing his benefactor, and swearing he could buy him out. This was "Sheeny Joe," as he is known among his pals and the police, and a premium is offered to anyone who will discover that he has performed a stroke of labor for three years, or during his residence in Leadville. This is only one of the many characters that make the grand ensemble of bums on*



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*Sabbath night. How they live and dress well is a mystery that the policeman is the only one who is able to explain.<sup>9</sup>*

On June 20, 1885, while Louis was away attending a national meeting of the *Farmers' Credit Services of America* at Denver, an outbuilding on the former Shoenberg property that Louis had been renting to miners as a boarding house burned to the ground. The main house was spared any damage, but the boarding house was a total loss.<sup>10</sup> Louis supplied the second place prize of a nickel-plated lantern, a pick, and \$50 in gold, for the Miner's Picnic drilling competition on June 21.<sup>11</sup> The articles were on display at Hyman's Saloon until the two-man team, hand-drilling contest took place. The prize was ultimately awarded to the team of Michael O'Connell and Thomas Rinker.<sup>12</sup>

The last incident of note for the Mitchell family in Leadville was reported in the *Carbonate Chronicle* newspaper on August 1, 1885:

*J.A. Slaves, whose head resembled a crazy quilt in its patch work, was called upon, and after examination discharged. He had been under the influence of liquor yesterday, and going into Louie Mitchell's club rooms became engaged in and altercation with one of the attaches, who whipped out a bottle and brought it several times in contact with the crown of his head. He was taken by the police, and this morning after a lecture from his honor (Judge Rose) in open court, given his liberty.<sup>13</sup>*

It is likely that the family left Leadville by mid-August of 1885, as notices appear for unclaimed mail begins to appear at the post office on August 22,<sup>14</sup> and no further documenting of the family in Leadville can be found after that date.

After leaving Leadville in 1885, the Mitchell family's whereabouts are unknown until they resurface in Denver, Colorado, in 1910. Unfortunately, their time in the public eye while in Denver was not flattering and resulted in the death of Katie Mitchell. On May 18, 1910, *The Herald Democrat* reported that upon "...Learning that her daughter (Florence), who was constant companion to her, had been married secretly six months ago, Mrs. Katie Mitchell locked herself in her room and fired a bullet into her left breast tonight. She was taken to the county hospital where it was said that she would not live."<sup>15</sup> Curiously the incident occurred on May 17, 1885, twenty-five years to the day after the death of the family's Leadville born infant.<sup>16</sup> Where Katie Mitchell was buried remains unknown as are the subsequent whereabouts of the Mitchell family.



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### Mitchell

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<sup>1</sup> The National Archives at Washington, D.C.; (Washington, D.C.; Record Group Title: *Records of the Bureau of the Census, 1790 - 2007*; Record Group Number: 29; Series Number: M158; NARA Roll Number: 5)

<sup>2</sup> *Business Change*. (Leadville, CO: Leadville Daily Herald). January 14, 1885. P4.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on Mannie Hyman and his family, please visit: <http://www.jewishleadville.org/hyman.html>

<sup>4</sup> TB Corbett and JH Ballenger. *Corbet, and Ballenger's Thirteenth Annual City Directory: Containing a Complete List Of The Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business, Business Firms etc. in The City Of Denver For 1885*. (Leadville, CO: Corbet and Ballenger Publishers.1885). P182.

<sup>5</sup> For more information on Moses Shoenberg and his family, please visit: <http://www.jewishleadville.org/shoenberg.html>

<sup>6</sup> *Lake County, Colorado State Special Census Index for 1885. Historical Research Cooperative*. Leadville, CO; USA. 1985.

<sup>7</sup> *Yisrael's Yoemanry*. (Leadville, CO: Carbonate Chronicle.) September 19, 1885. P7.

<sup>8</sup> Hebrew Cemetery of Leadville (Leadville, Lake County, Colorado), Infant Mitchell, Headstone, 2016

<sup>9</sup> *Bum And Bachus*. (Leadville, CO: Carbonate Chronicle). February 21, 1885. P1.

<sup>10</sup> "Mountain View" House Burned. (Leadville, CO: Carbonate Chronicle). June 20, 1885. P2.

<sup>11</sup> *The Miner's Picnic*. (Leadville, CO: Carbonate Chronicle). June 6, 1885. P6.

<sup>12</sup> *The Drilling Contest*. (Leadville, CO: Carbonate Chronicle). June 27, 1885. P4.

<sup>13</sup> *Police Court*. (Leadville, CO: Carbonate Chronicle). August 1, 1885. P1.

<sup>14</sup> *Sabbath Scraps*. (Leadville, CO: Carbonate Chronicle). August 22, 1885. P5.

<sup>15</sup> *Former Leadville, Woman Tries To Kill Herself*. (Leadville, CO: *Herald Democrat*.) May 18, 1910. P1.

<sup>16</sup> Hebrew Cemetery of Leadville (Leadville, Lake County, Colorado), Infant Mitchell, Headstone, 2016.



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*Yisrael's Yoemanry.* Leadville, CO: Carbonate Chronicle. September 19, 1885.

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