



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Monash

Isaac Morris Monash (also Monach)¹

Born: April 9, 1853 (Germany)

Died: September 17, 1918 (Charleston, SC)

Married to: Annie (née Schaul) Monash (1886)²

In Leadville: 1879-1882

Isaac Morris Monash was a pioneer clothing store merchant, jeweler, and German immigrant who spent several years in early Leadville. He operated a short-lived clothing store on Chestnut Street and later worked as clerk in one of Leadville's most prominent and important clothing businesses; the Palace of Fashion. Isaac arrived in the United States in 1862 at the age of 10.³ By 1870, he was a resident of Brooklyn and was listed with the occupation of salesman at the clothing store of David Harrison in that city.⁴ By the late 1870s Isaac probably became aware of the well-publicized promise of Leadville and perhaps through his New York connections or independently, relocated to the Carbonate City. While Isaac was not listed in the 1879 Leadville city directory, in February of 1879 he published an advertisement for his future store, "Monash & Co." in a local newspaper. Titled with the quote "Coming in the Spring", Isaac claimed to have, "laid the largest stock of clothing ever brought into the Rocky Mountain country." Advertisements for the store regularly appeared in Leadville newspapers until the early spring of 1879. In late February of 1879, Isaac published a series of notices for a meeting of "P.H.S.C." at his store; he was also listed as the secretary of this organization.⁵ Beyond this acronym, the organization was not found in directories or existent newspapers beyond this single notice and its function, members, and purpose are not known. It is possible that the P.H.S.C. was an early Masonic organization; Isaac participated in a Masonic organization several years later. In late March and early April, Isaac was listed as a merchant with "freights on the road"; an

indication that stock was on the way to his store at the corner of Harrison and Chestnut Street.⁶ As noted above, the 1879 Leadville city directory did not list Isaac or his store. However, of the 11 clothing stores listed in the 1879 directory, all but two were located on Chestnut Street in the vicinity of "Harrison Ave., near the Corner of Chestnut."; Isaac's location. Of these, 5 were operated by Jewish merchants, and most certainly had some connection to each other. It would appear that although Isaac's store did not appear in the directory, the area in which he advertised his store earlier in the winter of '79 was something of a clothing "district".⁷ It is possible that for unknown reasons Isaac combined his assets with another Jewish clothing store in the vicinity or sold his stock to a competitor in the early summer or autumn of 1879. Such a merger would explain the abrupt end of advertisements and the lack of a directory listing in later 1879. It is certain however, that by 1880 Isaac was working as a clerk at Frankle and Butler.

According to the United States Census of 1880, Isaac lived at 111 "Upper" or East Chestnut Street. He was listed as 27 years old and lived with eight other young men between the ages of 21 and 40, as well as one 16-year-old woman. Five of the fellow boarders were from Prussia, Russia, or Germany, one was from Alabama, and two were from New York. All were immigrants or children of immigrants from Poland, Russia, Prussia, Bavaria, or Germany. The house was apparently owned or operated by Jewish clothing merchant Henry Frankle. All boarders including Isaac were listed as clerks; probably at "Frankle & Butler", a clothing store located at 111-113 Upper Chestnut Street, also known as "The Palace of Fashion". Fellow Jewish-German clothing merchant Fred Butler was also a resident of the house. In addition, other Jewish residents included: Marcus Cohen, Morris Zippert,



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Joseph Silverberg, Emanuel Jandorf, and Carrie Pflugradt. All are confirmed members of Leadville's extensive Jewish community.⁸ Isaac was also listed with his surname spelled "Monash" in the 1880 Leadville City Directory.⁹ From a contemporary lithograph of the Palace of Fashion store, it can be surmised that the boarding house in which Isaac is listed as a tenant was located in the second story above the store. This was a common practice of the time and as a result of demand for housing, nearly all commercial structures were also equipped with upstairs living areas.

In 1881, Morris was listed as a resident of 112 East Chestnut Street; a structure directly across from the Palace of Fashion. In the autumn of 1880, 112 East Chestnut was listed as the meeting hall of Leadville's first Jewish organization; Rocky Mountain B'nai B'rith No. 322.¹⁰ In addition to Isaac's residence place, the hall was listed as the meeting hall for three additional organizations; The Good Templars, Knights of Honor, Knights of Pythias and the Knights of Robert Emmet.¹¹ This hall was probably on the second story of the structure, while the street level storefront housed the Herman Bros. clothing store and 112 ½ was the barber shop of Joseph Henry.¹² Two boarders in addition to Isaac were also listed at this address in the city directory of 1881. Isaac did not appear in newspaper columns or advertisements during this year and his profession was not listed in the directory. He likely continued to work in the clothing business and was probably still a clerk at the Palace of Fashion.

In 1882, Isaac was listed as a clerk and a resident of 601 Harrison Avenue; it is unknown which of the multiple businesses at this location for which Isaac was a clerk. 601 Harrison Avenue is still standing on the corner of Harrison Avenue and 6th Street. In 1882, as it is today, it was probably commercial

space on the street level and a boarding house or apartments on the second story. According to the directory, there were a saloon and drugstore in the street level space. It was not until February 1882, that Isaac appeared again in a newspaper column. On the 11th, he appeared as an attendee of a masque ball hosted by Leadville Dancing Academy.¹³ While he did not appear in notices and news surrounding the May 19th Palace of Fashion fire, newspaper articles from the following spring reveal that Isaac played a major role in the investigation. This will be explored in further sections of this report. In early October, Isaac was listed as the signatory of an invitation from Leadville's Masonic lodge to attend the funeral of a deceased member.¹⁴

On March 16, two articles appeared in the *Leadville Daily Herald* which reveal Isaac's unique and important contribution to the Palace of Fashion arson trial. The first is a publication of the affidavit of James Brogan, an inmate of the Federal Prison in Canyon City. It was reported that during the winter of 1882-1883, Isaac went "undercover" at the Central Fire Station after he applied to be a firefighter and ingratiated himself into the company. On a "carousal", several of the firefighters revealed to Isaac that they knew Brogan and several others had lit the fire at the Palace of Fashion on the evening of May 19, 1882. Isaac tipped attorney J. Waldhiemer and Palace of Fashion owner Henry Frankle that James Brogan at Canyon City could provide the confession that the fire had been set by three firefighters. At a trial in March 1883, Waldhiemer produced the affidavit, which would be crucial evidence in the acquittal of Fred Butler and his colleagues.¹⁵ In the same paper which reported these events, members of the Central Fire Department responded with evident disdain directed specifically at Isaac. In an article entitled, "An Explanation From the Members of the Central Fire Station", the firefighters responded to Isaac's



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association with them, "...He never associated with the firemen at the Central Fire station in any way, and the information he obtained was secured from an individual who at one time was acting as a substitute in Hose Two. As for going 'on carousals' with Mr. Monash, we wish to state that under no circumstances would he be a genial companion, even in a carousel..."¹⁶ While the Central firemen denied the legitimacy of the affidavit, it was enough to contribute to the eventual acquittal of Fred Butler, Isaac Kamak and Rubin Weil.¹⁷

One week later, Isaac was listed as an attendee of the annual Purim Ball.¹⁸ This notice was the final time Isaac appeared in a Leadville newspaper and he did not appear in the 1883 Leadville City Directory.¹⁹ Isaac was naturalized while living in Manhattan in January of 1885, and probably moved from Leadville directly to that city in 1883. According to the naturalization document, Isaac was listed with the profession of merchant and lived on East 6th Street between Avenues A and B; the center of the German neighborhood of "Klein Deutschland" at the time.²⁰

Later in his life, Isaac operated a series of shops in South Carolina, and was often referred to in local papers as Morris. According to the 1900 United States Census, he lived in Charleston, South Carolina with his wife Anna, children, and two boarders. His profession at that time changed from tailor and clothier to jeweler.²¹ He lived the remainder of his life in Charleston and was a well-known personality in that city. An obituary referred to him as "Uncle Morris", and touted his well-known and long-lived shop on Charleston's Market street. The obituary also revealed that he was a cousin to a prominent World War One general commanding ANZAC forces in Europe at the time.²² Morris was 65 years old when he passed and was buried in Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Cemetery in that city.²³



¹ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 18 May 2019), memorial page for Isaac Morris Monash (9 Apr 1853–17 Sep 1918), Find A Grave Memorial no. 57417996, citing Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Cemetery, Charleston, Charleston County, South Carolina, USA ; Maintained by Tonya Sapp Hames (contributor 46793226) .

² Year: 1900; Census Place: Charleston Ward 3, Charleston, South Carolina; Page: 4; Enumeration District: 0081; FHL microfilm: 1241520 Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1900 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. Original data: United States of America, Bureau of the Census. Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900. T623, 1854 rolls.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Year: 1870; Census Place: Brooklyn Ward 2, Kings, New York; Roll: M593_946; Page: 173A; Family History Library Film: 552445. Source Information: Ancestry.com. 1870 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2009. Images reproduced by FamilySearch.

⁵ "Great Chance" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, Volume 1, Number 25, February 27, 1879 p. 1

⁶ "Freights on the Road" Leadville Daily/Evening Chronicle, Volume 1, Number 53, April 1, 1879 p.2

⁷ 1879 Leadville City Directory p. 176-177

⁸ Year: 1880; Census Place: Leadville, Lake, Colorado; Roll: 91; Page: 382D; Enumeration District: 078 Source Information: Ancestry.com and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 1880 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Lehi, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2010.

⁹ 1880 Leadville City Directory p. 266

¹⁰ "Social" Leadville Daily Herald, November 14, 1880 p.

¹¹ 1881 Leadville City Directory p. 181

¹² 1881 Leadville City Directory p. 321

¹³ "Bal Masque" Leadville Daily Herald, February 11, 1882 p. 4

¹⁴ "Society Notices" Leadville Daily Herald, October 1, 1882 p. 4

¹⁵ "The Arson Case" Leadville Daily Herald, March 16, 1883 p. 4

¹⁶ "The Fire Department" Leadville Daily Herald, March 16, 1883 p. 4

¹⁷ For more information on the Palace of Fashion Trial, see <http://jewishleadville.org/palaceoffashiontrial.html>

¹⁸ "The Purim Ball" Carbonate Chronicle, March 24, 1883 p. 4

¹⁹ 1883 Leadville City Directory p. 202

²⁰ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA); Washington, D.C.; Soundex Index to Petitions for Naturalizations Filed in Federal, State, and Local Courts in New York City, 1792-1906 (M1674); Microfilm Serial: M1674; Microfilm Roll: 180

²¹ Year: 1900; Census Place: Charleston Ward 3, Charleston, South Carolina; Page: 4; Enumeration District: 0081; FHL microfilm: 1241520. Ancestry.com. 1900 United States Federal Census [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. Original data: United States of America, Bureau of the Census. Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1900. T623, 1854 rolls.

²² "I. Morris Monash Dead" Charleston News and Courier (published as The News and Courier), September 18, 1918, Page 10

²³ Find A Grave, database and images (<https://www.findagrave.com> : accessed 28 May 2019), memorial page for Isaac Morris Monash (9 Apr 1853–17 Sep 1918), Find A Grave Memorial no. 57417996, citing Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim Cemetery, Charleston, Charleston County, South Carolina, USA ; Maintained by Tonya Sapp Hames (contributor 46793226) .



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Leadville Daily Herald (Leadville, Lake County, Colorado)

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Maps and Photographs:

Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Leadville, Lake County, Colorado. Sanborn Map Company, Sep, 1883.
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STABLE URL: <http://www.jewishleadville.org/monash.html>