



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Sands (Sandelowsky)

Jacob Sands
Born 1853
Russian Poland
Married 1892
Married to Leah

Leah (Huffman) Sands
Born 1866
England
Father from Russian Poland
Mother from Germany
Married 1892
Married to Jacob

Charles Sands
Born 1855
Russian Poland
Died 1909 Buried in Denver
Married 1895
Married to Mrs. S. Sands

Mrs. S. (Herman) Sands
Married 1895
Married to Charles

Bernard Sands
Born 1846
Russia (Poland)
Immigrated 1860
Married 1876
Married to Fannie
Daughters:
Florence
Blanche
Lillian

Isidore Sands
Clerk for Sands Bros.

The Sandelowskys were a family from the border regions of Russian and German Poland. They had a large business presence in Leadville during its prosperous years. The family included Bernard, Jacob (Jake), Charles, and Isidore. Bernard was born in 1846,¹ Jacob in 1853,² and Charles in 1855.³ It is unknown when Isidore was born.⁴ The Sandelowskys changed their name to Sands upon moving to America. Bernard was the first to immigrate, settling in New York during 1860. Bernard married Fannie (surname unknown) in 1876. Bernard was a partner in much of the business the Sands family conducted in Colorado, however he lived in New York for much of the period the family were in Leadville. Bernard only lived in Leadville from 1891 to 1901. It is unknown when Charles and Isidore immigrated, but Charles initially resided in New York before moving to Leadville. Before Jake arrived in Leadville, he was involved with Samuel Pelton in Central City and Black Hawk.⁵

Sands Pelton & Co. first appeared in the 1880 city directory,⁶ the Sands partnering with Samuel Pelton. Sands Pelton & Co. was located at 312 Harrison Avenue,⁷ in the Tabor Opera House, and eventually changed its address to 314-316 Harrison Avenue (Manny Hyman's recently built commercial property) in 1894.⁸ The store would remain in the Hyman Block until 1901.⁹ In 1903, the store is listed at 609 – 611 Harrison Avenue.¹⁰ Sands Bros. was in business for 25 years in Leadville; this length of time attests to its success in the mining community. The store specialized in clothing and gentlemen's furnishing goods.¹¹ In 1885, a glowing review of the Sands Brothers' business appeared in the *Herald Democrat*:

“A reporter of the Herald yesterday had the pleasure of visiting the large and well known establishment of Mr. Charles Sands, successor to Sands, Pelton & Co., in the Opera House block. From the amount of business done in this house,



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one would not suppose that there ever had been dull times in Leadville. Here everything is activity and bustle. Active service is required in waiting upon the many attracted to this house through the medium of low prices and a very large and well selected stock of goods, in which all the latest styles are to be found. We were convinced ere ten minutes had been passed in the establishment that the proprietor was a gentleman who understood thoroughly all that was expected of him as one of the leading business men of the city. Nothing was lacking that could add to the completeness of every department. The stock consists of clothing, gents' furnishing goods, hats, caps, etc. In the clothing department we found an immense line of suits of every description, from the most elegant evening costume to the plain, but good and substantial, business or miners' suits. In the line of gents' furnishing goods may be found a stock such as few houses in the west can display. The proprietor has full confidence in the prosperity of the city, and is making extensive preparations for doing an immense business during the coming spring and summer. If low prices and fair and honorable dealings with all patrons can bring about such a result, Mr. Charles Sands' trade for the coming year will be larger than it ever has been before."¹²

In February of 1885, the *Carbonate Chronicle*, interviewed Charles and Jacob about the state of their business and prospects for the city's fortunes that year. The following excerpt reveals how prosperous business was for the Sands family:

"Charlie Sands, the popular successor to Sands, Pelton & Co., was fitting an overcoat upon a customer when the man of the pencil interrupted and abruptly asked, "How is business?" The smile that radiated his face was a sufficient answer, and dismissing the customer with a brand new outfit, he turned and answered, "Business! The prospects were never more encouraging. Everybody seems to have been striking it rich during the past two

weeks, and I never saw a year start off with better assurances of a lively season. Of course our business is not subject to spasmodic fits and starts, like many others, but it has a standard and when it is above or below we have pretty reliable evidence of the condition of the money market I believe that we are going to see the old days of '80 this year, and convinced of it, I have increased my stock very materially. The mines are all under development and large forces of men are being employed. The smelters are all running steadily and there is everything to indicate that the present season will be one of the best the merchant has ever enjoyed."

"What the traveling men say is the best evidence" interpolated Col. Jake Sands, who arrived from Denver yesterday morning, "and they, one and all admit Leadville to be the best town in the state. They say they feel secure in all their orders, and pay the greatest compliment to the merchants for their promptness in cancelling their obligations. I, myself, am in Denver at present, and I am free to confess that Leadville to-day does on comparison a larger business."

"We are perfectly satisfied with the outlook," put in the proprietor. "And I'm willing to wager a new hat that Leadville will outdo Denver the present season."

This interview shows why Leadville was such a tantalizing business prospect to the many Jews who moved to the city in the 1880s. There are also hints that much of the Sands' business was hinged on the fortunes of the mining industry and this explains why their store went bankrupt in 1905 during Leadville's long decline.

In 1881, newspapers reveal that Bernard Sands visited Leadville and a going away party was thrown for him by the Monheimer brothers, another prominent Jewish mercantile family in Leadville. "Mr. S. Goldstein of the great jewelry



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establishment of H.S. Brodie & Co., and Mr. B. Sands, of Sands, Pelton & Co., leave for their homes in New York this morning. The admiring friends of these two gentlemen, the Monheimer Bros., spread a sumptuous parting feast for the voyagers last night in their elegant bachelor apartments on Harrison avenue. The spacious tables literally groaned under their weight of costly viands and sparkling wines from the blue Moselle and the Rhine banks, and the large number of guests thoroughly enjoyed the pleasant occasion. The list of invited guests were Mr. Jacob Sands, Mr. H. S. Brodie, Charley Sands, Sam Adams, Sol Ricce, J. Hauser, Lewis Meyer, Charles Negebaner, Mr. J. Waldheimer, Mr. William Klopman, Jude Hoffman and Mr. F. H. Conant, of the Herald.”¹³

In addition to their small business, the Sands Bros. were also involved in mining whereas most Jews in Leadville were primarily concerned with the mercantile industry. However, there were some like the Sands who branched out into other activities. In 1885, the Sands experienced some luck. “There is no one who will not be delighted to learn that a strike has been made by Charlie and Jake Sands in their property, located in the Clear Creek district. For several years they have been developing a group of claims with the most indomitable energy, and in a tunnel a good vein of high grade mineral from six to eight inches in width is at present explored. It carries gray copper and native silver, and was found after drifting on a true fissure vein about 300 feet from the surface. It has been a long struggle and an expensive one, but the reward is finally there for them to reap. Preparations will be made to ship at once, and mill returns secured on the ore which will no doubt prove very rich.”¹⁴

Jake Sands frequently appeared in Leadville papers due to his business ventures and lively social activities. Newspaper articles suggest Jake was

quite involved with his community and usually well liked amongst his friends. In 1882, Jake was the director and founding member of one of Leadville’s baseball clubs.¹⁵ In August of the same year, Sands went on a fishing trip with George Gibson, J. S. Gardner, Robert L. Rhom, Ed Lindsey, and Samuel Riehl.¹⁶ He was an active member of the Colorado National Guard, often appearing in the newspaper associated with militia events and banquets.¹⁷ In 1883, Jake was one of the attendees of the Purim Ball.¹⁸ Jake was also involved in improving Leadville’s infrastructure. In January, 1882, he was part of the committee which discussed how to bring electric lights to the city.¹⁹ In 1884, Jake held a lunch for his friends and fellow guardsman at Armory Hall:

“Last night after the theatre was out, Colonel Jake Sands, quarter master of Leadville post, gave the boys a fine lunch in Armory hall. Quite a number assembled to partake of it, and blue coats and brass buttons made the hall look like war times.

After the company had assembled, Colonel Sands proposed a toast to Governor Tabor, who had given the militia the use of the Opera house free of charge. The proposition was answered with three cheers for Governor Tabor.

...Altogether, Colonel Sands’ entertainment was well worthy of that gentleman’s ability as a host.”²⁰

Sometimes Jake’s activities did not always end well. In 1883, there was a fire in the Clipper Building which Jake and his brother, Charles, owned. There was a loss of \$2,000 from the building and \$2,000 due to ruined furnishings. Luckily this catastrophe did not end the Sands family’s involvement in Leadville.²¹ In 1885, there was a dispute between Sands, Pelton & Co. and the Blumbergs. The following newspaper account relates the complicated dispute:



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“On Wednesday morning at 10 o’clock Sheriff Becker took possession of the store of Blumberg Brothers, dry goods dealers at No. 514 Harrison avenue, under an attachment issued by Judge Goddard, of the district court, in the case of Bernard Sands, Samuel Pelton and Jacob Sands, Sands, Pelton & Co., against Louis E. Blumberg and Albert Blumberg. The action is brought to recover the sum of \$3,000 due to the plaintiffs, who, as it appears by the complaint, endorsed for the Blumbergs.

A reporter of this paper called on Mr. Jacob Sands, of the firm Sands, Pelton & Co., soon after the attachment was levied, and obtained the following account of the causes which led to the attachment.

He said his firm had been very friendly with the Blumbergs, and when they wanted ready money very badly during the past six months both Mr. Jacob and Mr. Charles Sands and the firm of Sands, Pelton & Co. endorsed paper for them from time to time, believing that the Blumbergs would soon ride the waves of financial distress and be able to return the money. On Tuesday night Mr. Jacob Sands learned that Abe Blumberg, who is a resident of Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, but a partner of Lewis E. Blumberg’s had come to Leadville with J. Ryttenberg and his sons, of Sumpter, South Carolina and after taking an inventory of the stock on Sunday, sold out to Ryttenberg & Sons, between 6 and 7 o’clock on Monday morning. Abe Blumberg is a son-in-law of J. Ryttenberg, and Mr. Jacob Sands declares that the sale is a part of a plan, conspiracy and combination on the part of the Blumbergs and Ryttenburg to swindle his firm and other creditors of the Blumbergs out of money, which the latter owe them.

Lewis E. Blumberg is still in Leadville, but Abe Blumberg returned to Pittsburg Pennsylvania, on Tuesday night.

The plans for the sale of the stock were perfected on Sunday, and the sale made on Monday, as before stated, and the Ryttenbergs took charge about 7 o’clock Monday morning, so that the business was continued as usual, without any apparent change of possession, except the advent of the Ryttenbergs behind the counter.

Mr. Jacob Sands says his firm can show that the sale is not a bona fide transfer, and, in fact, not a transfer at all, as the Ryttenbergs and Blumbergs are to all intents and purposes one and the same family, and that the pretended sale of the stock and business at 514 Harrison avenue, was made for the mutual benefit and profit of the two families, that have a community of interests, and will divide the profits made out of the alleged sale, by which the creditors are swindled, according to the plan and ratio heretofore agreed upon by them in family session.”²²

Luckily, the Sands Brothers were able to recoup their losses when the case came up in court and the Judge “awarded the plaintiffs for \$4,000, the amount demanded.” The remaining Blumberg stock was auctioned off in January, 1886, in an effort to reduce that firm’s debts.²³

While Jake was fairly active socially, he was not always on good terms with all of his fellow citizens. In October, 1881, he was charged with assaulting Ellis Harris.²⁴ This was not the last time Jake was mentioned in a dispute regarding Mr. Harris. In 1885, Harris accused Jake of having an affair with his wife, Augusta, who denied any explicit relation with Sands. Shortly afterwards Augusta filed for divorce against Ellis on the grounds of his repeated defamation of her character.²⁵ If there were any basis to these allegations it would not have been the first time Jake was involved in such an affair. Prior to his arrival in Leadville, Sands had an affair with “Baby Doe” Elizabeth McCourt, during 1878–18 80 in Central City while she was still married to



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Harvey Doe. Scandalously, Baby Doe became pregnant in 1878 and there were rumors that Jake was the father. Jake was even present at the child's delivery (unfortunately a stillbirth) along with Baby Doe's then husband Harvey Doe. In 1880, after divorcing her husband, Baby Doe followed Jake to Leadville to start a new life. There she eventually met Jake's landlord at the Opera House, Horace Tabor, and married him instead, becoming part of Colorado's best known legend.²⁶

Jake Sands was in Leadville until 1890 when he moved to Aspen.²⁷ While Jake was in Aspen he remained involved with Leadville and the running of Sands Bros as he is still listed in Leadville directories.²⁸ In 1892, Jake was married in Aspen. "Friends of Mr. Jacob Sands received a telegram today announcing the marriage of that gentleman to Miss Huffman, of Chicago, yesterday. Mr. Sands is one of the leading merchants of Aspen and was a prime favorite among his bachelor friends. They now fear that he will desert them entirely, and though they rejoice in his happiness they sympathize with each other."²⁹ In 1895, Jake Sands returned to Leadville with his new wife Leah.³⁰ Jake continued to help manage the family business until 1900 when he briefly moved to Victor, Colorado,³¹ but this enterprise only lasted until 1902.³² Jake subsequently moved to Red Cliff, near Leadville, where he began a new mining venture.³³

Charles Sands was not as active as Jake in Leadville's social scene, although he is listed as

attending the 1883, "Feast of the Dedication" ball thrown by the Hebrew Benevolent Association. The event commemorated the end of the Babylonian Captivity for the Jews.³⁴ Charles seemed to be more involved in the Sands Bros. business and is listed in every city directory from 1882 to 1903.³⁵ Charles first appeared in Leadville in the 1880 census, so it is possible he was involved with Sands Bros. from the beginning.³⁶ In 1895, Charles was married to Sadie³⁷ Herman of Denver."³⁸ The couple continued to live in Leadville until the dissolution of Sands brothers in 1905.³⁹

In addition to Bernard, Jacob and Charles, there was also an Isidore Sands, yet another Sands brother. Isidore only appears in the 1885 – 1887 Leadville city directories⁴⁰ as a clerk. It is not known what became of Isidore thereafter.⁴¹

The Sands family's time in Leadville ended in 1905 when their business closed due to bankruptcy.⁴² It is unknown what became of Charles after the closure of the store. Jacob was active at his mining property in Red Cliff until at least 1906.⁴³ Afterwards, Jake's trail runs cold.

The Sands family was part of both the vibrant merchant and mining communities in Leadville. They were somewhat unique among their Jewish neighbors since they were involved in both the mercantile and mining industries. Overall, the Sands managed to experience a wide swath of "the Old West," dealing with enterprise, intrigue, scandals and romance.



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Addresses of the Sands in Leadville City Directories and Census Records

Year	Sands Bros.	Bernard	Jacob	Charles	Isidore
1880	312 Harrison	New York	312 Harrison	New York	N/A
1881	312 Harrison	N/A	312 Harrison	N/A	N/A
1882	312 Harrison	N/A	303 Harrison	312 Harrison	N/A
1883	312 Harrison	New York	312 Harrison	312 Harrison	N/A
1884	312 Harrison	New York	319 Harrison	Callaway Blk.	N/A
1885	312 Harrison	N/A	N/A	319 Harrison	312 Harrison
1886	312 Harrison	N/A	319 Harrison	319 Harrison	119 W 4th
1887	312 Harrison	N/A	312 Harrison	312 Harrison	Union Blk.
1888	312 Harrison	N/A	312 Harrison	319 Harrison	N/A
1889	312 Harrison	N/A	312 Harrison	319 Harrison	N/A
1890	312 Harrison	New York	Aspen	315 Harrison	N/A
1891	312 Harrison	312 Harrison	Aspen	315 Harrison	N/A
1892	312 Harrison	312 Harrison	Aspen	315 Harrison	N/A
1894	314 – 316 Harrison	314 Harrison	Aspen	315 Harrison	N/A
1895	314 – 316 Harrison	316 Harrison	316 Harrison	135 W 4th	N/A
1897	314 – 316 Harrison Ave	316 Harrison	316 Harrison	124 W 7th	N/A
1898	314 – 316 Harrison	316 Harrison	316 Harrison	124 W 7th	N/A
1899	314 – 316 Harrison	316 Harrison	316 Harrison	124 W 7th	N/A
1900	314 – 316 Harrison	316 Harrison	316 Harrison / Victor, Co	124 W 7th	N/A
1901	314 – 316 Harrison	316 Harrison	316 Harrison	124 W 7th	N/A
1902	N/A	N/A	N/A	124 W 7th	N/A
1903	609 – 611 Harrison	New York	N/A	320 W 7th	N/A
1904	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1905	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



¹ U.S. Census Bureau. 1900 Census.

² U.S. Census Bureau. 1880 Census.

³ U.S. Census Bureau. 1880 Census.

⁴ Isidore Sands does not show up in census records. Instead he shows up in several city directories and family photos with the other Sands Brothers.

⁵ Burke, John. *The Legend of Baby Doe*. University of Nebraska Press. Lincoln. 1989. Pg. 31 – 38.

⁶ 1880 Leadville City Directory.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ 1894 Leadville City Directory.

⁹ 1901 Leadville City Directory

¹⁰ 1903 Leadville City Directory

¹¹ 1880 Leadville City Directory

¹² "To the Interest of All." *Leadville Daily Herald*. February 12, 1885. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹³ "Off For Home." *Leadville Democrat*. January 6, 1881. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹⁴ "Another Strike." *Carbonate Chronicle*. August 29, 1885. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹⁵ "Our Base Ball Club." *Leadville Daily Herald*. May 2, 1882. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹⁶ "Personal." *Leadville Daily Herald*. August 28, 1882. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹⁷ "The Leadville Militia." *Carbonate Chronicle*. January 3, 1885. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹⁸ "The Purim Ball." *Carbonate Chronicle*. March 24, 1883. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

¹⁹ "The Electric Light." *Leadville Daily Herald*. January 1, 1882. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²⁰ "Colonel Sand's Lunch." *Leadville Daily Herald*. July 27th 1884. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²¹ "The Clipper." *Carbonate Chronicle*. July 7, 1883. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²² "Said To Be Swindlers." *Carbonate Chronicle*. November 28, 1885. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²³ "The Sheriffs Hammer." *Leadville Daily Chronicle*. January 8, 1886. Accessed May 16, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²⁴ "Leadville Laconics." *Leadville Daily Herald*. October 21, 1881. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²⁵ "Ruined Her Reputation." *Carbonate Chronicle*. November 7, 1885. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

²⁶ Burke, John. *The Legend of Baby Doe*. University of Nebraska Press. Lincoln. 1989. Pg. 31 – 38.

²⁷ 1890 Leadville City Directory.



²⁸ 1890 – 1894 Leadville city directories.

²⁹ “Mr. Sands Gets Married.” *Aspen Evening Chronicle*. February 22, 1892. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

³⁰ 1895 Leadville City Directory

³¹ U.S. Census Bureau. 1900 Census.

³² “Personal Mention.” *Herald Democrat*. January 28, 1902. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ “A Brilliant Affair.” *Carbonate Chronicle*. December 29, 1883. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

³⁵ 1882 – 1903 Leadville city directories.

³⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. 1880 Census.

³⁷ U.S. Census Bureau. 1900 Census.

³⁸ “Sands-Herman” *Herald Democrat*. February 15, 1895. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

³⁹ “Sand’s Bankrupt Sale.” *Herald Democrat*. May 17, 1905. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

⁴⁰ 1885 – 1887 Leadville City Directories.

⁴¹ 1887 Leadville City Directory.

⁴² “Sand’s Bankrupt Sale.” *Herald Democrat*. May 17, 1905. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

⁴³ “Personal Mention.” *Herald Democrat*. July 10, 1906. Accessed May 15, 2017.

<https://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>