



Temple Israel FOUNDATION

Biographical Information Sheet

Schayer

From the Leadville Herald Democrat, Tuesday,
November 16, 1909:

ADOLPH SCHAYER DIES SUDDENLY

One of Leadville's Early Day Business Men Receives Last Summons at His Home

Adolph Schayer, the well known former business man of Leadville died at his home, 122 East Eighth street, shortly after noon yesterday, aged 55 years. Death was caused by heart failure.

Mr. Schayer had complained of not feeling well for several days, but his illness was not regarded as serious by his immediate family and his sudden demise was a great shock coming as it did without a moment's warning.

In the passing away of Mr. Schayer Leadville loses one of the pioneer merchants, a man whose whole life, or at least the better part of it, was spent in advancing business and economic conditions in this city. Coming to Leadville in 1880 Mr. Schayer in company with Julius Wolf, now of Cincinnati, engaged in the wholesale liquor business on Third street, the firm being known as Schayer and Wolf. Commencing on a small scale the patronage of the firm increased so rapidly that in a brief period of two years bigger accommodations were needed for the handling of the company's affairs and in 1882 commodious quarters were secured on Sixth street some few doors off Harrison avenue where the business was continued on a large scale. Later desirous of having a more central location the firm occupied a structure known as 418 Harrison Avenue.

Shortly thereafter Mr. Wolf being desirous of retiring from active business disposed of his interest to Mr. Schayer and moved to Cincinnati, Mr. Schayer continuing the business under the name of A. Schayer Mercantile Co., this firm being dissolved in 1900 when located at 521 Harrison Avenue.

During the same year a daughter, Miss Essie, died as the result of an operation and immediately afterwards Mr. Schayer went to Denver and organized the Schayer Grestte(sic?) company which subsequently was absorbed by the Sam Baretz Importing company of which Mr. Schayer was made a director. After five years spent in the capital city, however, Mr. Schayer's love for Leadville could not be overcome and in January, 1906, again took up his residence here since which time he has been variously connected with different business houses. Mr. Schayer in former years was also heavily interested in several mining enterprises.

Born in Germany Mr. Schayer came to this country at the age of 15 years, taking up his residence in Denver where he was in the employ of his uncle. C. M. Schayer, of the Schayer General Merchandise company. A few years later, ambitious and energetic he left Denver going to various parts of the state and early in 1880 came to this city while it was still in its infancy. He immediately took a great interest in public affairs and many of the early day business enterprises owe their inception to his untiring efforts to build up the camp.

Generous to a fault, Mr. Schayer was constantly being appealed to for assistance in years gone by and much of the snug fortune which he had accumulated by able effort went for the uplifting of many unfortunates in need of help.

His benevolence, however, was never mentioned by Mr. Schayer himself and the world will probably never know of the happiness he brought to others during his lifetime. His efforts on behalf of charitable institutions and the needy poor stand as a beautiful monument to the character of him who today rests in silent death with the work of life well done.

Mr. Schayer, always faithful to Jewish ideals, was often called on to conduct the rituals of his faith and was always willing and anxious to be of any benefit



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and service to his fellowmen, and during the past fifteen years had presided at many obituary services over the remains of former Jewish residents of the city.

Mr. Schayer was married some twenty-five years ago to Miss Carry Elsbach, of Cincinnati, who with four sons and one daughter mourn his death.

The sons are Ralph, Julius, David and Arthur Schayer, and the daughter, Miss Bertha. Three brothers, two of Denver and one residing in Chicago and four sisters all of Denver, also survive. No arrangements for the funeral have been announced.

One of the important contributors to the Jewish domination of Leadville's liquor trade, Adolph had been born during August of 1854 in Prussia. He emigrated in 1870 and by 1880 was in business in Leadville with Julius Wolf (dba Wolf & Schayer, a saloon, according to the city directories) at 142 East 3rd Street which was also his and Wolf's residence. His brother/cousin(?) Max, two years younger, also used this address for his cider and vinegar distributorship while living a block away at 113 East 4th Street. In 1882 the business, Adolph, and Julius moved to 118 East 6th Street, Max having dropped from the record in 1881. Adolph relocated his abode to the adjacent 116 East 6th Street, again rooming with Julius who had sought a year of presumed solitude elsewhere, in 1884 and to 400 West 4th Street the next year as his family situation changed. 1884 also marked the year that the focus of the business focused on the wholesale liquor trade (and cigars) as the city directories no longer refer to the enterprise as a saloon. It appears that two cousins, Isman and George Schayer, worked for Wolf & Schayer during 1883-4 and 1885, respectively. Isman lived at the business address, but George set up independently at 134 West 6th Street. Another apparent cousin, Lizzie, lived with the family in 1887 while working as a clerk for W.H. Fox & Co. Yet another Schayer, Emil R., worked from 1890 through 1892 for the firm and lived with the family.

By 1897 Emil was working as an agent for the Denver Republican and living at 617 1/2 Harrison Avenue. In 1899 he moved to 112 West 4th Street and to 218 East 8th Street in 1900 and his old job back in the family business. By 1906 Emil had married Julia Greenwald and moved into that family's orbit. Adolph took sole control of the business in 1889 and the next year moved it to 315 Harrison Avenue where it remained until a final relocation to 521 Harrison Avenue during 1897, all under the name of Schayer Mercantile Co. Active in other aspects of local business life, Schayer joined "a syndicate of gentlemen" who purchased the Hotel Kitchen (before and after known as the Tabor Grand Hotel) on January 13, 1893 for the price of \$25,000.

Adolph married Carrie (born in Tennessee in August of 1863 to a German immigrant father and a native Pennsylvania mother) in 1884 or 1885 and the union was blessed in November of 1886 with the birth of Esher E. Ralph C. arrived the following October. Julius I. was born during August, 1889; Bertha during June, 1891; David E. in July, 1893; and Arthur during December, 1896. To accommodate the growing clan, a residence at 122 East 8th Street was acquired in 1889 and remained with the family for the next twenty three years.

Like many prominent families, the Schayers were active both in the secular and spiritual communities. The Leadville Chronicle reported in 1883 that Adolph was an officer of the Knights of Pythias, a fraternal organization. Then on August 14, 1887, Carrie attended a "coffee klatch" in honor of Mrs. Sam Mayer's mother, Mrs. J. H. Frank of Dennison, Texas. Virtually all of the twenty four married ladies in attendance were Jewish. Distressingly, three years later Adolph was drawn into the Raabe/Davies/Raabe triangle during August of 1890. As acting secretary of the Congregation Israel, Schayer was required to record that Ben Davies had been suspended from his services as cantor as a consequence of his elopement with Mrs. Raabe. On the political/judicial front, Adolph appeared as a witness for the prosecution during the 1896 bribery



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trial of Sheriff Michael Newman. The vulnerable Sheriff Newman fell victim to the mine managers because of his pro-labor affiliation with the Western Federation of Miners and his affinity for gambling graft.

The Schayers' eldest daughter died on May 10, 1901 and was interred in the Hebrew Cemetery, Block C, Lot 2, grave 4. The effect on the family was dramatic, as noted above, and Adolph sold the business to Siegfried Ballin, his bookkeeper, to facilitate his departure from Leadville.

After returning from Denver in 1906, Adolph first worked for his former competitors, Schloss Bros. Mercantile, as their treasurer and manager, but returned to his sole proprietorship the next year in the company of one of his sons, Ralph, who worked as a clerk. The arrangement was apparently not entirely satisfactory and both Ralph and Julius were employed as millmen by the American Zinc Extraction Co. by 1908. The year that Adolph died, 1909, saw Ralph become a fireman for the Denver & Rio Grand Rail Road. Carrie remained in the family home with, for varying periods, Ralph, Bertha (a bookkeeper for the Leadville Wallpaper & Paint Co. in 1911), and David (an electrician for the Princess Theatre 1911-13) who moved to his own residence at 204 East 9th Street in 1913.

Carrie Elsbach Schayer joined her husband and eldest daughter in the Hebrew Cemetery on October 8, 1921.